

TRUTH AND LIFE

Doctrinal and Ethical Notes on the Bible

G. Wright Doyle, M.Div., Ph.D.

Part I

THE OLD TESTAMENT

Volume 1

THE PENTATEUCH

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THE PENTATEUCH

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Note: *Truth and Life* is a work in progress. Sections will be posted over time and may be incomplete. Check back for new and updated documents. This is *Truth and Life: The Old Testament - The Pentateuch, Version 1 (March 2020)*.

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INTRODUCTION to *TRUTH AND LIFE*

Origin and Nature of this Book

Truth and Life: Doctrinal and Ethical Notes on the Bible grew out of a study that I did with several men over a period of three-and-a-half years. Following the order found in *Search the Scriptures*,¹ a Bible reading guide I used at the beginning of my Christian life, we asked two questions of each passage:

What does it say about the usual topics discussed in books on systematic theology (such as the doctrines of revelation, God, Christ, man, sin, salvation, God's people, and "the last things")?

What does it say about how we should live? That is, what does it say about what is usually called "Christian ethics"?

As time went on, I discovered that this way of looking at the Bible was quite helpful for me, since it required me to look closely at the biblical text and to search it carefully for teachings not only on doctrine – that is, general "truth" – but also on the application of doctrine to daily life. Thus, the title: "Truth and Life." Of course, all that the Bible says is true, and all of it bears upon life. Indeed, Jesus said, "The words that I speak to you are spirit, and they are life."² We cannot separate doctrine from our proper response to it.

That is why this book includes notes both about general truths revealed by God in the Bible and about ways in which we could apply these truths at home, school, work, and church, and in society. As much as possible, the advice in each "Life" section comes directly from the corresponding passage of the Scriptures.

Distinctive Features

To my knowledge, this book is unique, at least at present.

¹ Alan M. Stibbs, general editor, *Search the Scriptures: A Three-Year Bible Study Course* (Downers Grove, IL: InterVarsity Press, 1984).

² John 6:63.

There are plenty of study Bibles, Bible commentaries of all sorts, and books on systematic theology and on Christian ethics. I am not aware that anything exists that provides brief comments on what each passage of the Bible says both about the usual topics [*topoi*, or *loci*] of theology and about ethics.

As a glance at any page of this book will show, the “Truth” sections follow a topical order based on the standard theological categories, as mentioned above. The “Life” sections follow the order of the passage itself and are not arranged topically.

In treating the theology of each passage, I sometimes spend a large amount of time drawing out what we can learn from it about the doctrine of revelation – that is, mostly about the Scriptures themselves (“special revelation”). How God has revealed himself to us in his written Word is foundational to everything else we believe about him and his works in the world and in our lives. Sometimes we also find teaching on what is often called “general revelation” – revealed through our moral constitution, the created order, and the events of history.

You will also see that I devote significant attention to the doctrine of God – Father, Son, and Holy Spirit – which I usually discuss under the headings of “His greatness” and “His goodness.” My goal is to draw our attention away from ourselves and this world so that we may focus again on our great, glorious, and gracious God. Such a reorientation of thinking has been very beneficial to my own soul and life.

After looking at God and his works, we examine what the passage might teach about angels, Satan and demons, mankind, sin, salvation, God’s people, and the last things.

Other Characteristics

Since the Bible is a big book and since the authors of the Scriptures, under God’s inspiration, frequently write about the same topics many times, you will encounter a great deal of repetition here. It simply could not be avoided. Please be patient with me – and with how God has chosen to present what he thinks we need to know! I have found in my own life that I need constant exposure to the same truths day after day, year after year, for them to “sink in” and then be “worked out” into my life.

I have attempted to express myself as concisely as possible. Most sections are presented in outline form for easy reading. I have not aimed for literary elegance or fullness of expression; otherwise, the book would be twice as long. My goal is to give

you as much information as possible in the briefest format. I have written other non-scholarly commentaries and thematic biblical studies in the usual expository style.³

Truth and Life is not a study Bible or a commentary in the usual sense. It is not at all meant to replace these fundamental aids to understanding the Scriptures, but to be used in conjunction with them. You will not find extensive explanations of historical or cultural backgrounds, word studies, or a verse-by-verse or even paragraph-by-paragraph running commentary.

This book is not exhaustive, but suggestive; much more could have been said. Nor is it an academic publication, though I have drawn upon the writings of learned scholars.

In addition, the wording and format of these notes are not always consistent. I wrote them over a period of several years and did not always adhere to the same format. My editorial assistants and I have tried to make the text consistent as much as possible, but irregularities remain.

In particular, some passages receive very detailed treatment, while others are discussed much more briefly. Further, some include references to a number of parallel or related passages of Scripture, while others merely cite the relevant verse(s) in the section under consideration. Again, this disparity reflects the long time I have spent writing the notes, as well as the amount of energy I had on any particular day! As I said above, the notes are meant to be suggestive, not exhaustive.

Note: When only verse numbers are given, they refer to the chapter (or psalm) being discussed. Thus, in the notes on Romans 1:1–17, “1, 5” means “1:3, 5.” If chapter and verse are given, but no book, the reference is to the book being discussed.

My Background

³ G. Wright Doyle, *Worship and Wisdom: Daily Readings from Psalms and Proverbs with Commentary* (Durham, NC: Torchflame Books, 2015); *Christ the King: Meditations on Matthew* (Durham, NC: Light Messages, 2011); *Jesus: The Complete Man* (Bloomington, IN: AuthorHouse, 2008); and *The Lord's Healing Words: Six Months of Daily Readings from the Bible on Physical, Mental, and Spiritual Health (with Commentary)* (Bloomington, IN: AuthorHouse, 2008).

Though I am not now a professional biblical scholar or an academic theologian, I have had some opportunities to engage in advanced study of the Bible and theology.

At the University of North Carolina at Chapel Hill, I majored in Latin but also took three years of classical Greek. After graduation I attended the Virginia Theological Seminary in Alexandria. Though it was (and is) a theologically liberal Episcopal school, the seminary faculty included a few outstanding evangelicals, and I was able to learn some things even from those who did not believe that the Bible is God's Word written.

From seminary I moved to the pastorate, serving three small Episcopal churches in Eastern North Carolina for two years. This entailed careful study and exposition of the Scriptures along with daily pastoral visitation and care for the people of these congregations.

In 1971, I began doctoral studies in Classics at the University of North Carolina at Chapel Hill, with the aim of equipping myself to teach in a seminary. For two years, I read Greek and Latin literature under the instruction of some of the finest Classicists in the world. My doctoral exams dealt with the Greek New Testament, Hellenistic philosophy, and early Christian rhetoric – that is, preaching. My dissertation focused on Augustine's theory of the exegesis and exposition of Scripture as outlined in *de Doctrina Christiana*, as well as on how Augustine "applied" his theory to his sermons on the Gospel of John. The year that I spent with this master-student of the Bible has profoundly affected the way I read and teach the Bible. Always, Augustine aimed to communicate the truths of Scripture in a fashion that would change people's lives.

My wife Dori and I went to Asia as missionaries in 1975. After two years of Chinese language study and two years away on furlough, we returned to Taiwan, where I began teaching Greek and New Testament at China Evangelical Seminary, Taipei. Over the next seven years, I labored to help Chinese Christians understand and apply the Bible to their culture. My familiarity with the Bible also benefitted immensely from the five years I spent supervising the translation of Bauer-Arndt-Gingrich's *Lexicon of the Greek New Testament* into Chinese (and then, later, from five more years revising the work).

Since our permanent return to the United States in 1988, I have taught intensive courses on New Testament and Systematic Theology for various seminaries in Taiwan and North America, preached regularly, composed the volumes mentioned in the note

on page ii, and continued my daily study of the Bible. I have also learned a great deal from Carl F. H. Henry. I made an abridgment of his six-volume *God, Revelation, and Authority* for publication in Chinese, and I authored an introduction to his *magnum opus*.⁴ From him I was taught just how fundamental is the doctrine of revelation.

Sources

In addition to my own daily reading of the Bible over the past 54 years, other sources have contributed to *Truth and Life*. These are too many to list individually, but here are the main ones:

Systematic Theology

Augustine of Hippo. *Enchiridion; City of God; Confessions; and On Christian Doctrine (Teaching)*. Various editions.

John Calvin. *Institutes of the Christian Religion*. Edited by John T. McNeill. Translated by Ford Lewis Battles. Louisville, KY: Westminster John Knox Press, 1960.

Jonathan Edwards. *Religious Affections; The End for Which God Created the World; Charity and its Fruits*; various sermons; and other works. Various editions.

Carl F. H. Henry. *God, Revelation, and Authority*. 6 vols. Waco, TX: Word Books, 1976–83.

Douglas F. Kelly. *Systematic Theology*. Vols. 1 and 2. Tain, Scotland: Christian Focus Publications, 2008, 2014.

Matthew Levering. *The Theology of Augustine. An Introductory Guide to His Most Important Works*. Ada, MI: Baker Academic, 2013.

Gordon R. Lewis and Bruce A. Demarest. *Integrative Theology: Historical, Biblical, Systematic, Apologetic, Practical*. 3 vols. in 1. Grand Rapids, MI: Zondervan Publishing House, 1996.

Michael J. McClymond and Gerald R. McDermott. *The Theology of Jonathan Edwards*. Oxford: Oxford University Press, 2012.

⁴ G. Wright Doyle, *Carl Henry: Theologian for All Seasons. An Introduction and Guide to Carl Henry's God, Revelation, and Authority* (Eugene, OR: Pickwick Publications, 2010).

Biblical Theology

Several works of biblical theology have helped to shape my general outlook and interpretative stance:

Richard Bauckham. *The Theology of the Book of Revelation*. Cambridge: Cambridge University Press, 1993.

Philip Edgcumbe Hughes. *Interpreting Prophecy: An Essay in Biblical Perspectives*. Grand Rapids: Eerdmans Publishing Company, 1976.

George Eldon Ladd. *A Theology of the New Testament*. Grand Rapids: Eerdmans, 1974.

Leon Morris. *The Cross in the New Testament*. Grand Rapids: Eerdmans, 1965.

Leon Morris. *New Testament Theology*. Grand Rapids: Zondervan, 1990.

Herman Ridderbos. *Paul: An Outline of His Theology*. Grand Rapids, Eerdmans, 1975.

Study Bibles

To supplement those mostly older studies, in the composition of this book I have relied heavily upon recently published study Bibles. These contain the results of the best evangelical scholarship. After writing my notes, I mined study Bibles for further information about background, parallel passages in the Scriptures, and generally accepted interpretations. In this way, I hope that I have avoided major errors of interpretation. I freely and gladly acknowledge my debt to the scholars who have contributed to these essential guides for understanding the Bible.

The most useful to me have been:

ESVSB: *ESV [English Standard Version] Study Bible*. Wayne Grudem, general editor. Wheaton, IL: Crossway Bibles, 2008.

HCSBSB: *HCSB [Holman Christian Standard Bible] Study Bible*. Nashville, TN: B & H Publishing Group, 2010.

MSB: *MacArthur Study Bible*. John MacArthur, author and general editor. Nashville: Thomas Nelson Incorporated, 1997.

NIVSB: *NIV [New International Version] Study Bible*. Kenneth Barker, general editor. Grand Rapids: Zondervan Bible Publishers, 1985.

ZNIVSB: Zondervan NIV Study Bible. D. A. Carson, general editor. Grand Rapids: Zondervan, 2015.

Commentaries

Over the years, I have read a number of commentaries on various parts of the Bible. It would be tedious to list all the volumes that have helped me understand the Scriptures, but I shall merely acknowledge my debt to the many able scholars who have enriched my understanding of the Scriptures.

Finally, I thank Anna Barnes and Casey Houseworth for their painstaking and skillful editing of my initial draft. They have eliminated many mistakes, made excellent suggestions for improvement, and reduced the inconsistencies to a minimum.

The Purpose of *Truth and Life*

Despite all its limitations, this series of doctrinal and ethical notes on the Bible aims to help the ordinary reader discern in the Holy Scriptures what God has said about himself – his nature, will, and ways – and about how we should live in response to his Word.

I pray that God will use these notes to encourage you to read the Bible both *theologically* and *ethically*, with the goal of loving God and your neighbor by the power of the Holy Spirit.

To him be all the glory, through Jesus Christ our Lord.

G. Wright Doyle

Bastrop, Texas

GENESIS

Genesis 1

Truth

Revelation

Its content

- ◆ Throughout, the Bible speaks of
 - God, his ways, his will, his Word
 - His creation of the world, 1
 - Providence in the world, his salvation of fallen men and women, and his eventual renewal of the world; *see Revelation 21–22*.
- ◆ The Bible nowhere tries to “prove” the existence of God; he is assumed to exist “in the beginning,” and before “the beginning,” 1.
- ◆ Biblical revelation mostly deals with the Earth and its inhabitants, though it also speaks of the heavens, that is the stars and planets which we can see, but it focuses on God’s dealings with this earth, 1–31.
- ◆ Much of biblical revelation, including the first chapters of Genesis, purports to be history, and should be taken as such. This is not myth, but recorded history. It should be read as we read any other history, looking for the “story line,” with characters, a setting, and a progression of events.

Its veracity

- ◆ Biblical revelation does not contradict science, nor do the current “findings” of science contradict biblical revelation, including the first chapters of Genesis.
- ◆ Science does not deal with history; it only deals with phenomena that can be repeatedly investigated.
- ◆ Genesis 1–3 records the events of the creation of the earth and the first people; science cannot speak about such matters, for they are long past, and cannot be repeated. Nor can they be investigated now.
- ◆ If biblical revelation says something that is different from what the current “science,” as interpreted and expounded by its self-appointed spokesmen, affirms, then we must believe biblical revelation.
- ◆ For one thing, the theories of science are constantly being revised.

- ◆ For another, scientific facts do not contradict the Bible; only certain interpretations of the evidence do, and these interpretations are founded upon unproven assumptions.
- ◆ Evolutionism, for example, flows from certain presuppositions that have not been proven to be true. Even the account of the origins of the world given in standard Darwinian evolution has been seriously challenged on scientific grounds.

Its source: Biblical revelation begins with God, 1.

Its recipients: Because men and women are created in the image of God, they are innately endowed with the capacity to receive and understand God's revelation, either through direct speech, as sometimes happened, 28–30, or, as it is for us now, through the written words of God's chosen messengers. There is no inherent impossibility of hearing and understanding God's revealed word.

God

His Triune nature

- ◆ God exists as a unified plurality. In this chapter, the subject noun "God" ("Elohim") is plural, but the verb "created" is singular, as are all the other verbs with "God" as subject, 1.
- ◆ God speaks of himself as "Us" but has only one image and likeness, and he is himself one, as the singular verb, the pronoun "his," and the singular nouns "image" and "likeness" indicate, 26–27.
- ◆ He is "God" (the Father), 1; his Spirit, 2; and God's eternal Word, 3.

His greatness

- ◆ God is eternal, before "the beginning" of this created world, 1.
- ◆ He is almighty, having all the resources to create the world out of nothing, 1.
- ◆ He is infinitely intelligent, possessing the "information" necessary to create and sustain the world, and implanting information into his created order.
- ◆ He is
 - Infinitely energetic, with power to create and sustain the world
 - Infinitely alive, the source and giver of all life

- Infinitely beautiful, the source of all beauty in our world
- Infinitely sovereign, ruling the world by his word, as the repeated references to “he said” indicate, and granting secondary authority to the heavenly bodies, 16, and especially to human beings, 28
- Infinitely creative, possessing in himself the “originality” and “variety” that are reflected in the almost-infinite variety of the created order
- Infinitely immense, greater far than the huge universe, including the vast array of stars, which he created and sustains (*see also 1 Kings 8:27 and 2 Chronicles 2:6*); the author and ruler of time, 5 (“evening and morning”), 14 (“seasons, days, years”)

His goodness

- ◆ God is good and therefore created a world that was “good,” 4, 10.
- ◆ He is often light and the source of all physical and moral light, 3–4. *See John 8:12 and 1 John 1:5.*
- ◆ He is generous, needing nothing, but creating the universe as an overflow and arena of his glory and beauty, and then giving it to his image-bearers, 29–30.
- ◆ He revealed himself to men and women, 28.
- ◆ He blessed them, 28.
- ◆ God is personal
 - He acts, 1.
 - He speaks, 3, and often.
 - He sees, 4.
 - He gives names, 5.
 - He creates personal human beings, 26–27.
 - He relates as a person to the persons whom he created, 28–30.

Christ

His person

- ◆ Though not named in this passage, we know that Christ is the eternal Word of God, through whom the world was created, and by whom it is sustained, 3. *See Psalm 33:6; John 1:1–3; Colossians 1:16–17; and Hebrews 1:3.*
- ◆ He is also the original and true image of God, in whose likeness man was created, 26–27. *See John 14:9; Colossians 1:16; and Hebrews 1:3.*

The Holy Spirit

His person: As God, the Holy Spirit was present at the beginning of creation, 1.

Mankind

Our created nature

- ◆ The first man and the first woman were created mature on the sixth day, as adults.
- ◆ They were made in God’s image, and thus different from all other animals.
- ◆ They are, therefore, given authority, like God, to rule the earth and all in it (though not, of course, to despoil it).
- ◆ God blessed them and told them to reproduce, to fill the earth (as he had filled the world) and to rule over it (as his vice-regents).
- ◆ Mankind consists of only two genders, male and female. Though each individual, married or single, shares in and bears the image of God, men and women also express God’s glory in some fundamentally different ways in a complementary fashion. Marring these essential distinctions defaces the very image of God.
- ◆ Created in the image of God, men and women share in his moral and mental characteristics, though as finite, not infinite beings; all our capacities are derivative and therefore limited.
- ◆ Still, humans can think, feel, act, communicate, and relate to others, including God and fellow humans.
- ◆ Such a capacity for relationship reflects the “relationship” between the three Persons of the Trinity as indicated in this chapter and seen, for example, in the Father’s speaking to his Son (and perhaps also the Spirit), 26.
- ◆ Thus, as with God, so with man, there is a unity of essence and being – “man” – and a plurality of existences – “male and female” – though of course this

resemblance does not fully exhaust or explain the inner nature and dynamics of the Trinity.

Our age

- ◆ The supposed antiquity of mankind, as alleged by those who have found fossil bones and put their interpretation upon them, is a myth. All the so-called “ancestors” of modern man are either monkeys, ancient humans, or frauds.
- ◆ For scientific criticisms of evolutionism see: Michael Behe, *Darwin's Black Box*; Michael Denton, *Evolution: A Theory in Crisis*; Philip E. Johnson, *Darwin on Trial*; Jonathan Wells, *Icons of Evolution: Science or Myth?*.
- ◆ For evidence for creation as described in the Bible, see Kurt Wise, *Faith, Form, and Time*.

The People of God

Their identity

- ◆ Adam and Eve are the first parents of all mankind.
- ◆ They are also the ancestors of all who trust and follow God, for they knew God through his revealed Word.

Their relationship with God

- ◆ Some interpreters think that 27–29 describe a primeval covenant between God and mankind, the so-called “covenant of works.”
- ◆ The word “covenant” is not mentioned here but is used elsewhere in the Old Testament to refer to this event. In any case, God entered into a gracious relationship with his people.

Creation

Its nature

- ◆ As originally created, the world is “good,” 4, 10, 12, 18, 21, 25, 31. Matter is not evil, as in Buddhism and other religions. This goodness reflects God’s own goodness in every respect.

- ◆ The world is marked by order and complexity, all held together by God’s Word. *See Hebrews 1:3.*
- ◆ The created order consists of (at least) time, space, “matter” (however that is defined and explained), energy, information, and – for animate creatures – “life.”

Its beginning

- ◆ The universe was created by God out of nothing in six 24-hour days. Although the Hebrew word for “day” can mean a longer period of time, in this passage it must refer to the time it takes for the earth to rotate on its axis, distinguishing evening and morning, 5.
Note: Light was directly created by God on the first day, so the creation of the sun on the fourth day does not mean that before then there was no distinction between day and night.
- ◆ In the Hebrew Bible, *every* time “day” is connected with a number, as in “the first day,” it *always* refers to a 24-hour day; there is no exception. Further, verses 14–18 make it perfectly clear that “day” refers to a 24-hour period and is distinguished clearly from longer periods of time, such as seasons and years.

Its stages

- ◆ Creation took place in orderly stages, as God brought “form” by separating things that were previously mixed together, such as light and darkness, waters above and waters below, sea and dry land, 4, 6, 9.
- ◆ On successive days, God filled the “void” that originally existed, filling the day with light, the earth with vegetation, the seas with sea creatures of all sorts, the air with domesticated animals, wild animals, and finally human beings, 11–27.

Life

Ethical imperatives

- ◆ Worship God as our almighty and good Maker. *See Psalms 95:3–7; 100:3–5; and Romans 1:18–21.*
- ◆ Thank him daily for making us, providing for us, and placing us into this beautiful world.

- ◆ Care for the creation and not exploit or defile it.
- ◆ Treat all people as fellow image-bearers of God, regardless of age, sex, race, ethnicity, class, or any other social distinction.
- ◆ Seek to know the God who made us by listening to his words, which are now written for us in the Bible. Created in his image, we are made to know, love, and serve him.
- ◆ Seek to exercise faithful stewardship of all that God has given us, including our bodies, minds, our personal property, and whatever land or animals we possess.
- ◆ See our work as a reflection of God's work in creation and ongoing providence and seek to imitate him as workers made in his image. (E.g., have a plan; proceed in an orderly fashion; apportion work according to time; take time to enjoy the fruits of our labor; involve others in our work when possible, especially our spouse and children.)
- ◆ Marry, have children, and fill the earth with godly offspring, as God allows. *See Malachi 2:15.*
- ◆ Fill the earth with the knowledge of God through the proclamation of his Word, that the gospel may "bear fruit and grow" throughout the world. *See Colossians 1:6.*

Genesis 2

Truth

Revelation

Its cumulative fullness: Biblical revelation is cumulative, with later passages referring to earlier ones.

- ◆ The Tree of Life appears in Revelation, where not only the restoration, but the intensification, of the ideal conditions of Eden (“Paradise”) are promised and described, 9. *See Revelation 2:7; 22:2, 14.*
- ◆ The one-flesh union of man and woman, 24, is mentioned in Malachi 2:15, Matthew 19:5; Mark 10:7–8; 1 Corinthians 6:16; and Ephesians 5:31.

Its content

- ◆ Biblical revelation often describes an event from different perspectives (as in the four Gospels).
 - Here, chapter 2 describes in more detail the activities of God on the sixth day of creation, when he made mankind in his own image, male and female.
 - There is no contradiction between these two accounts, nor is there evidence that they come from different authors or editors, as some critical scholars used to claim.

God

Note: In the previous chapter, God was referred to as “Elohim,” “God.” Here, his personal name Yahweh is added, as he enters into a more personal relationship with the people he created. In later years, Jews revered the name Yahweh so much that they would not pronounce it when reading the Bible, but read it as if it were “Adonai,” “Lord.” When the Old Testament was translated into Greek, Yahweh was rendered as “Kurios,” or “Lord,” and that is how God is referred to in the New Testament.

His greatness: He is eternal, infinite, and almighty in every way, as seen in his creation of the heavens and the earth, 1, 4.

His goodness

- ◆ He blessed the seventh day as a day of rest and reflection upon God’s works, 3.
- ◆ He created man and gave him the breath of life, 7.
- ◆ He planted a lovely garden and placed Adam in it to enjoy its fruits and lush vegetation, 8–9.
- ◆ He is both beautiful and good, as seen in the plants which he put in the garden, 9.
- ◆ He gave both royal and priestly authority and responsibility to the man, as guardian and custodian of the dwelling place of God on earth, 15.
- ◆ He offered the Tree of Life and the fruit of all the other trees to the man for food, 9.
- ◆ God distinguishes between good and evil, and abhors all contact with evil, 16–17.
- ◆ He provided a companion for Adam, 19–24.

Christ

His person

- ◆ Though not named in this passage, Christ is called elsewhere “the last Adam.” *See 1 Corinthians 15:45.*
- ◆ He is compared with Adam as the head and representative of mankind. *See Romans 5:12–21.*
- ◆ He is also the promised Bridegroom of his people. *See Ephesians 5:22–32, where Genesis 2:24 is quoted.*

His work: In his death and resurrection, Christ undoes the effects of Adam’s sin and restores life to repentant and believing men and women.

Mankind

Our created nature

- ◆ Men and women were created specially by God on the sixth day of the creation week; they did not “evolve” from “lower” forms of mammal life.
- ◆ Men and women, as God’s image-bearers, are superior to animals and should care for them as fellow living beings, 19–20.
- ◆ Men and women were created to know and serve God in the spheres in which he placed them, 15–25.

- ◆ Men and women were created good, without sin or any cause for shame, 25.
- ◆ Men and women were created to complement each other, give companionship to each other, and to work together to fulfill God's mission for them, 18, 23–24. *See 1 Corinthians 11:11–12.*
- ◆ Men and women share the same essential human nature and are thus equally image-bearers of God, 20–23.
- ◆ The woman is the “glory of the man,” perhaps because she is the more beautiful of the two and the capstone of creation. *See 1 Corinthians 11:7.*
- ◆ The man was created first and therefore exercises priority and leadership in the home, the church, and – probably – society, 15–24. *See 1 Corinthians 11:8–9; 14:34–36; Ephesians 5:22–32; 1 Timothy 2:11–14; Titus 2:4–5; and 1 Peter 3:1–7.*
- ◆ The woman was created for man to be his indispensable helper, 18, 20. *See 1 Corinthians 11:9.*

Marriage

Its nature and purpose

- ◆ Marriage is the closest possible human relationship, 23–25. *See Ephesians 5:22–31.* Sexual relations within marriage, therefore, are good and holy.
- ◆ Marriage is a reflection of the relationship between God and his people. *See Ephesians 5:22–32.*
- ◆ Marriage is meant to be an exclusive, lifelong relationship between one man and one woman. There is no other form of marriage instituted by God.

Life

Ethical imperatives

- ◆ Care for the world around us, including animals and plants.
- ◆ See our work as God-given and do it as unto God. *See Colossians 3:23–24.*
- ◆ Honor marriage, as instituted by God for our good and his glory. *See Hebrews 13:4.*
- ◆ Honor the distinctive characteristics of men and women. The man is meant to lead and to care for his wife; the wife is meant to respect and obey her husband, to help him, and to bear and bring up their children. A wife's work should be

focused on the home; if she works outside the home, this should not interfere with her primary calling to help her husband.

- ◆ Honor these distinctions in society, too, where men should lead in a loving way and women should try to support men, not seeking to rule over them. *See Isaiah 3:12.*

Genesis 3

Truth

Revelation

Its cumulative fullness: Biblical revelation is cumulative, with all the rest of the Bible assuming and illustrating the baneful consequences of the events of this chapter, as well as narrating God's grand design to overcome the results of sin and restore the world to a condition even better than the Garden of Eden. *See Revelation 21–22.*

- ◆ In particular, Genesis 3:15 is seen as a “proto-gospel,” in which the ultimate victory of the “seed of the woman” over Satan is promised. Though Satan “bruised the heel” of Jesus by killing him, the resurrection, ascension, current reign, and coming earthly kingdom of Christ represent a mortal wound to the devil’s “head.” *See also Revelation 12:1–12; 20:10.*

Its roots in history

- ◆ The fall of Adam and Eve into sin, estrangement from God, and eventual death were events of history, as Paul’s comparison of Adam and Christ demonstrates beyond doubt.
- ◆ As Jesus was an historical person, so was Adam; as the action of Adam affected all mankind, so the action of Christ affects all his people. *See Romans 5:12–21; 1 Corinthians 15:22; and 1 Timothy 2:12–14.*

God

His greatness

- ◆ As sovereign Ruler of the universe, God has the authority and power not only to bless but also to curse.
- ◆ He can change the destiny of a whole species, as he changed the way the serpent moves, and he can change the nature of childbirth and of man’s labor to bring food out of the ground, 14–19.
- ◆ He has authority to banish mankind from his presence and to order angels to guard the way back into Paradise, 22–24.

His goodness

- ◆ Though Adam and Eve had flagrantly and willfully violated his clear command and despised his clear warnings, God
 - Drew near to them in the garden
 - Addressed them gently with questions
 - Punished Satan for his role in the Fall
 - Allowed them to continue to live and to procreate
 - Indicated his forgiveness of them by making garments of skin for them
 - Kept them from living forever in their sin by banishing them from the Garden so that they could not partake of the Tree of Life, 8–24
 - Promised eventual salvation through a descendant of Eve, 15

Christ

His person

- ◆ Jesus Christ is prefigured in
 - The “seed of the woman” who would crush the head of Satan, 15; *see Revelation 12:1–12; 20:10.*
 - The slain animals whose skins God used to make coverings for Adam and Eve, 21; *see Hebrews 9:13–14, 22.*
 - The Last Adam who would save mankind as their federal head, just as in Adam we all died; *see Romans 5:12–21 and 1 Corinthians 15:22.*

Mankind

Our fallen state: In our fallen state

- ◆ We are still capable of “hearing” God’s Word, as Adam did in the garden. The Fall has greatly distorted our mental capacities but has not erased the image of God, which includes the mental ability to understand what God is saying to us about our sin and its consequences, as well as about his promises of grace, 9–13, 16–19. *See Romans 1:18–21, 28.*
- ◆ The originally good sexual distinctions seen in the human body are now connected with shame, 7.
- ◆ Men and women still marry, bear and bring up children, and work, though now with conflict, pain, and frustration, 16–20.

- ◆ Wives have a desire to rule over their husbands (and women generally want to dominate men), just as sin desired to rule over Cain (4:7), but men still rule over women, though not with love and gentleness as they should, 16.
- ◆ There is now no possibility of enjoying a life of harmony among men or between mankind and the world; all political promises to bring about an ideal society are doomed to fail, 24.

Spiritual Beings

Satan

- ◆ As Satan used the serpent to deceive Eve, 1–5, he is described as the ancient serpent, the great and evil dragon. *See Revelation 12:9.*
- ◆ He works mostly by deception. *See 2 Corinthians 11:3 and Ephesians 6:11.*
- ◆ This included twisting or outright denying God’s Word, 1, 4–5. *See Matthew 4:3–10.*
- ◆ Scripture does not tell us when the serpent, who was created good, became evil, and turned into the adversary (“Satan” means adversary) of God and mankind.
- ◆ Nor does Scripture in any way explain why God allowed Satan to tempt Adam and Eve; it does not “solve” the question of the origin of evil. All attempts to explain this mystery fail.
- ◆ Because of God’s curse, all snakes now travel on their bellies and, like conquered prisoners of war, must grovel before men and eat dust, and be relentlessly abhorred and trampled upon by people, 14–15.
- ◆ Through faith in Christ, believers now have authority over Satan, to resist him and to cast out demons, just as Jesus did. *See Matthew 10:1; Romans 16:20; James 4:7; and 1 Peter 5:8–9.*

Sin

Its nature

- ◆ We are all implicated in the sin of Adam, in three ways.
 - He is our federal head, who represented us in his actions, just as a head of state represents his people.
 - We share his (now) fallen nature, which is inevitably prone to sin.
 - We imitate his sins. *See John 8:34, 38, 41, 44; Romans 5:12–21; and Ephesians 2:1–4.*

It includes

- ◆ Giving heed to Satan's tempting voice and entering into dialogue with doubting thoughts, 1–5
- ◆ Basing our decisions not upon God's Word but upon what our senses tell us, 6
- ◆ Indulging the lusts of the flesh ("good to eat"), lusts of the eyes ("saw"), and pride of life ("make one wise"); *see 1 John 2:15–16*.
- ◆ Trying to cover our sin and our shame through our own efforts, 7
- ◆ Attempting to hide from God, 8–10
- ◆ Refusing to admit responsibility for our sins, 10–13
- ◆ Blaming others, including God and Satan, for our transgressions, 12–13; *see Romans 10:1–3 and 1 John 1:8–10*.

Its consequences

- ◆ A sense of shame for things that should be good, 7
- ◆ Alienation from God, which is spiritual death, and therefore liability to his wrath, condemnation, and eternal punishment, 8–9; *see Ephesians 2:1–13*.
- ◆ Alienation from each other, and in particular the fracture of the original harmony between man and woman, 10–11, 16
- ◆ Constant conflict with Satan, demons, and all evil, 15
- ◆ Pain in the entire system of childbirth, 16
- ◆ Alienation from the land and from our work, with constant frustration and pain, 17–19
- ◆ Physical death, which is the dissolution of the bond between body and soul, 19
- ◆ Expulsion from Paradise throughout history, until Christ returns, 23–24

Salvation

Its source

- ◆ Salvation from the guilt and penalty of sin comes from the shedding of blood, prefigured here by the killing of animals to provide skins to clothe Adam and Eve, 21. *See Hebrews 9:22*.

- ◆ The prefiguration is fulfilled in the shedding of the blood of Jesus to cleanse us from the guilt of our sins. *See Romans 8:1, 31–39 and 1 John 1:9.*

Its conveyance: Salvation from the power of sin and the deception of Satan comes to us from the death, resurrection, ascension, intercession, and giving of the Holy Spirit by Christ, who has overcome Satan and given us freedom over sin, 15. *See John 8:32–34; Romans 6:1–14; 8:8–17; Ephesians 1:20–23; 2:1–10; 6:10–18; Colossians 2:9–15; 3:1–11; and 1 Peter 3:8–9, 21–22.*

Its fulfillment: Salvation from the presence of sin will come when Satan is cast into the lake of fire and Christ establishes a new heaven and new earth where righteousness dwells. *See 2 Peter 3:13 and Revelation 20:10–21:5.*

Life

Ethical imperatives

- ◆ Meditate upon God’s written Word daily and use it to resist Satan’s deceptive temptations, as Jesus did. *See Matthew 4:1–11 and Ephesians 6:10–18.*
- ◆ Do not add to God’s Word or subtract from it, as Eve did. *See Revelation 22:18–19.*
- ◆ Humbly accept rebuke from God and from others, admitting our responsibility for our sins.
- ◆ Do not blame others in order to deflect criticism from ourselves.
- ◆ Do not blame God for the people he has put into our lives, as Adam did.
- ◆ Do not blame our circumstances, as Adam and Eve both did.
- ◆ Accept the pain and labor of childbirth and work as God’s just punishment for the sin of mankind and persevere in both with the knowledge that God will reward us. *See Colossians 3:23.*
- ◆ Expect trouble and frustration in this life and set our hope fully on the grace to be brought to us when Christ returns. *See Romans 8:18–39 and 1 Peter 1:13.*

Genesis 4

Truth

Revelation

Its cumulative fullness: Biblical revelation is cumulative, with later passages referring to earlier ones.

- ◆ Abel's offering is attributed to faith, which produces righteousness in Hebrews 11:4.
- ◆ Abel's righteousness in 1 John 3:12
- ◆ The cry of Abel's blood for vengeance in Matthew 23:35
- ◆ Cain's sin in 1 John 3:12 and Jude 11
- ◆ The genealogy of Jesus shows that he was descended from Seth, one of the righteous descendants of Adam, 25–26. *See Luke 3:38.*

Its content

- ◆ Biblical revelation includes narratives of early human history.
- ◆ These are trustworthy and to be believed, despite alternative narratives from anthropology and paleontology, which are based on non-theistic assumptions and marked by major flaws in the interpretation of evidence.

God

His greatness

- ◆ He is the author of human life; all childbirth comes from him, 1–2.
- ◆ He knows everything. His questions to Cain (as to Adam and Eve) indicate not ignorance but a gentle way of evoking admission of guilt 6, 9, 10.
- ◆ He is judge of all mankind, with authority to inflict penalties that fit the crime, 10–12.
- ◆ He rules even over the productivity of the earth, 11–12.

His goodness

- ◆ He gives new life through the act of marriage, 1.
- ◆ He accepts worship offered in faith, 4. *See Hebrews 11:4.*
- ◆ He does not accept worship that comes from an evil heart, 5–6.
- ◆ He rebukes sin but also provides opportunity to resist sin and do right, 6–7.

- ◆ He accepts actions that are done rightly, 7.
- ◆ He justly punishes sin, 10–12.
- ◆ He also tempers his justice with mercy, 12–15.
- ◆ He sometimes restores our loss with another gift, 25.
- ◆ He allowed Adam and Eve to begin a new line of godly descendants, 25–26.
- ◆ He revealed his personal name to mankind very early in history, 26.
- ◆ He allows people to call upon his name in prayer, 26.

Mankind

Our fallen state: Even in our fallen state, we are

- ◆ Still capable of intimacy in marriage, 1, 17, 25
- ◆ Meant to worship God with offerings from our work, 4
- ◆ To call upon him in prayer, 26
- ◆ To congregate together and build cities, 17
- ◆ To herd livestock, 20
- ◆ To invent and play musical instruments, 21
- ◆ To work with metal to create tools and other things, 22

Sin

It includes

- ◆ Being angry with God when he does not accept our worship, 5–6
- ◆ Envy, 5–6
- ◆ Murderous intent and action, 8
- ◆ Lying to God (or anyone else), 9
- ◆ Refusing to accept our responsibility to care for others, 9
- ◆ Wandering away from the presence of God farther and farther (“east of Eden” indicates distance from God’s dwelling place), 16
- ◆ Bigamy, 19
- ◆ Revenge, especially revenge that does not fit the original offense against us, 23–24

Salvation

Its conveyance: Salvation comes to us through faith, which produces righteous living.
See Hebrews 11:4 and 1 John 3:12.

Life

Ethical imperatives

- ◆ See children as a gift from God, as Eve did, 1.
- ◆ Offer our best to God, like Abel, 4 (“firstborn,” “fat portions”). *See Romans 12:1–2.*
- ◆ Beware of envy and anger when God appears to treat others better than he does us.
- ◆ Deal with resentment, lest it breed hatred and then malice and perhaps even murder.
- ◆ Admit our sins when confronted by God or his messengers.
- ◆ Accept responsibility for the welfare of others. This includes doing what we can to bring the gospel to people who have never heard. *See Matthew 28:18–20 and Mark 16:15.*
- ◆ Seek the Lord’s presence and lament his perceived absence, 14, 16. *See Psalm 105:4.*
- ◆ Constantly call upon the name of the LORD.

Genesis 5

Truth

Revelation

Its cumulative fullness: Biblical revelation is a consecutive, cumulative, and coherent whole, with later passages referring to and incorporating earlier ones.

- ◆ The “generations” (“records,” “account”) passage is the second of eleven such statements which introduce new sections of Genesis and structure its contents (2:4; 6:9; 10:1; 11:10, 27; 25:12, 19; 36:1, 9; 37:2). This genealogy appears in part later in the genealogy of Jesus in Luke 3:36–38 and shows that Jesus was truly human.
- ◆ Enoch’s close walk with God and immediate translation to God’s presence without going through death is recalled in Hebrews 11:5.

Its content

- ◆ Biblical revelation contains some things that raise questions, like the extremely long lives of the descendants of Adam before the Flood. Ancient Sumerian king lists also say that kings before the Flood lived thousands of years, probably reflecting the shorter, but still long, lives of the men recorded in Genesis 5. Some believe that the pre-Flood environment was conducive to long life, since people after the Flood lived about as long as we do today.
- ◆ The Hebrew Old Testament often uses names to communicate meaning.
 - “Mehalalel,” 12, means “praising God.”
 - “Jared,” 15, means “[God] has descended [from heaven].”
 - “Enoch,” 18, means “dedicate” or “dedication.”
 - “Noah,” 29, sounds like the Hebrew word “comfort.” These names suggest that Seth’s line including some God-fearing men.

Its literary forms: Biblical revelation uses literary structure to convey meaning in an indirect way. For example, though the records of the line of Cain end with the seventh generation, the genealogy of righteous Seth contains ten names, perhaps pointing to their greater importance for redemptive history and maybe also the benefits of righteous living.

God

His greatness

- ◆ He is personal, as we know from his creation of man in his image, 1.
- ◆ He is a unity in plurality and a plurality in unity, as the creation of mankind as male and female shows, 2.
- ◆ He is almighty, the Creator of the world, including mankind, and the source of all energy, matter, information, and life, 1.
- ◆ He is eternal, existing before the creation of the world, 1–2.

His goodness

- ◆ He made mankind in his own image, to know him and reflect his own character, 1–2.
- ◆ He blessed the man and the woman, 2.
- ◆ He named them and thus entered into a personal relationship with them, 2.
- ◆ He kept his promises and carried out his threats: People did bear children and multiply, but they also all died, 3–32.

Christ

His person: Christ is prefigured in the naming of Noah, whose name means “rest,” for he has brought real rest to those who trust in him, 29. *See Matthew 11:28–30 and Hebrews 4:3, 9–10.*

Mankind

Our fallen state: In our fallen state, we are

- ◆ Still created in the image of God, 1, and still share some of his mental and moral attributes, such as a sense of right and wrong and of truth and falsehood, as well as the laws of logic
- ◆ Also now born into the image of Adam, who sinned, 3, and thus we suffer not only from a sinful nature and distorted thinking and affections, but also experience pain and labor in childbirth and work, 29, and inevitable bodily death, 5, 8, 11, 14, 17, 27, 31

Life

Ethical imperatives

- ◆ Honor all people as created in the image of God.
- ◆ Remember that all people have also sinned and fall short of the glory of God. *See Romans 3:23.*
- ◆ Seek to “walk with God,” like Enoch, by faith in His Word and reliance upon his Holy Spirit, in holiness and righteousness. *See Hebrews 11:6; Leviticus 26:3; Deuteronomy 8:6; 10:12; Joshua 22:5; 1 Kings 2:4; Psalm 86:11; Isaiah 2:3, 5; John 12:35; Romans 6:4; Galatians 5:16; and Ephesians 2:10; 4:1; 5:2, 8.*
- ◆ Trust in Christ and find soul rest in him.
- ◆ Remember that we are dust, and that we shall all die, no matter how long we live. With this awareness, we should steward our time carefully, avoiding evil and seeking to do God’s will. *See Psalm 90, especially verse 12; and Ephesians 5:6–17.*

Genesis 6

Truth

Revelation

Special revelation: God revealed his ways and his will to chosen messengers like Noah, 13, making him a prophet. *See 2 Peter 2:5. See also Genesis 18:17 and Amos 3:7.*

Its cumulative fullness: Biblical revelation is a consecutive, cumulative, and coherent whole, with later passages referring to and incorporating earlier ones.

- ◆ The universal wickedness of mankind, 5, 11, is repeatedly stressed throughout the Bible. *See Romans 1:18–32; 3:9–23; Ephesians 2:1–3; 4:17–19; and 1 Peter 4:3–4.*
- ◆ Relatively righteous Noah, 8–9, is referred to in Ezekiel 14:14; Hebrews 11:7; and 2 Peter 2:5.

Its content

- ◆ Biblical revelation contains passages that are hard to understand, and about which godly interpreters differ.
 - The “sons of God,” 2, 4, have been interpreted as
 - ◆ The descendants of righteous Seth who married descendants of wicked Cain
 - ◆ Powerful kings
 - ◆ Fallen angels who possessed men (or took the form of men) and cohabited with women
 - ◆ Elsewhere in the Bible, the phrase refers to angels. *See Job 1:6; 2:1; 38:7; 2 Peter 2:4–5; and Jude 6.* However, Jesus said that angels do not marry, and Paul calls Christians “sons of God,” so many evangelicals prefer the first interpretation above.
 - Likewise, there is no agreement about
 - ◆ The meaning of the word, “spirit,” which could refer to God’s Spirit or to the spirit of men, 3
 - ◆ “Remain with,” 3

- ♦ “120 years,” 3, which could refer to the time between God’s warning and the Deluge, or to the life span of people after the Flood
- ♦ “Nephilim” (fallen ones), often translated as “giants,” 4

Its authority

- ♦ Biblical revelation is historically reliable.
 - Almost all nations preserve a memory of a universal deluge, 7, 13, 17.
 - The ark which God commanded Noah to make, 14–16, 19–21, was not only large enough to hold two members of every species of creatures on earth, but also very seaworthy. The space within it, 1.4 million cubic feet, equals that of 522 standard railroad boxcars. Pairs of very large animals would have been represented by very young ones.

Note: For various exegetical and scientific reasons, some evangelicals believe that the Flood was only regional.

God

His greatness

- ♦ He is omnipresent and omniscient, seeing everything, including the hearts of men and woman, 5.
- ♦ He is omnipotent, able to destroy all living things on the earth with a universal Flood, 7, 13, 17.
- ♦ He is all-wise, knowing how to instruct Noah to build an ark that would be big enough to contain representatives of all species and stable enough to endure the massive forces of a worldwide deluge, 14–16.

His goodness

- ♦ He abhors sin and must punish it, 3, 5–6, 11–13, in fulfillment of his warning to Adam and Eve. *See Genesis 2:17.*
- ♦ He is capable of moral feelings, such as a kind of sorrow over the fallenness of his creatures, 6–7. *See Psalm 78:40–41 and Isaiah 63:10.*
- ♦ He is just and the rewarder of those who trust him and seek to follow his ways, as Noah did, 8–9. *See Hebrews 11:7.*

- ◆ He revealed himself and his will to Noah, 13–22.
- ◆ He made a covenant of salvation (and later sustenance) with Noah, 18–21, as he would with Israel through Moses, David and his descendants, and finally with believers of all nations through Jesus Christ. *See Genesis 9:1–17; Exodus 19–20, 24; 2 Samuel 7; Psalm 89:1–37; Matthew 26:26–29; 2 Corinthians 3:7–18; and Hebrews 8–10.*

Mankind

Our fallen state

- ◆ In our fallen state, we
 - Are subject to strong passions of the flesh, 1–2
 - Are mortal, 3
 - Tend to seek and honor power and prestige, 4
 - Are fundamentally and comprehensively corrupt, 5, 11–12
 - Are subject to God’s punishment (or correction) for sin, 7, 13
- ◆ We are also
 - Capable of doing good according to our conscience, as Noah did, 9
 - Capable of receiving God’s special revelation, 13–21
 - Capable, at least to some degree, of obeying God’s revealed will, 22 (though we know from his later conduct that Noah was also a sinner, as were his children); *see Genesis 8:20–23.*

The People of God

Their identity: Just as God saved not only Noah but also his sons and their wives, so he also tends to bring salvation to believers and then to their families, as family members also believe, 18. *See Matthew 4:18–22; and Acts 2:38–40; 16:31–34.*

Note: Family members must believe in order to be saved; these passages do not support the baptism of infants who do not yet believe.

Sin

It includes

- ◆ Lusting after beautiful women, 2

- ◆ Marrying unbelievers (assuming that “sons of God” refers to the descendants of Seth), 1–2
- ◆ Putting excessive value on power and prestige, 4
- ◆ Evil thoughts and desires, 5
- ◆ Wickedness and corruption of every kind, including violence, 11–13

Its consequences: Sin, though committed only by humans, affects the entire created order, and leads to death, 17. *See Genesis 3:17–18 and Romans 5:12; 8:19–22.*

Salvation

Its source: Salvation came to Noah as

- ◆ Favor from God, that is, acceptance by God’s grace because of his faith, 8; *see Hebrews 11:7.*
- ◆ Revelation of God’s will, 13–21
- ◆ Deliverance from God’s penal judgment upon the earth, 14–18
- ◆ Participation in God’s plan to redeem the entire creation, 19–20
- ◆ Provision for his physical needs in time of catastrophic disaster, 21
- ◆ The ability to obey God’s commands and thus to be saved, 22
- ◆ The privilege of passing on God’s words and warning to others; *see 1 Peter 3:20* – assuming that this passage refers to the activity of the Spirit of Christ speaking through Noah to his contemporaries.

The Last Things

Christ's return: The universal destruction of the world by water (and later renewal) in Noah's time prefigures the universal destruction and then renovation of this world at the return of Christ, with only those who repent and believe being assured of salvation. *See Matthew 24:37-39; 1 Peter 3:18-21; and 2 Peter 3:5-7, 10-13.*

Life

Ethical imperatives

- ◆ Do not value external appearance rather than internal character and beauty, especially in women. *See Proverbs 31; 1 Timothy 2:9-11; and 1 Peter 3:3-4.*
- ◆ Do not marry unbelievers.
- ◆ Do not seek or honor power and prestige.
- ◆ Seek to control our thoughts and restrain our thinking from corruption and wickedness.
- ◆ Hate evil as much as God does.
- ◆ Seek to walk with God, by faith in his word and obedience to his commands.
- ◆ Trust in Christ as the only Ark which will save us from the judgment of God.
- ◆ Prepare for God's coming judgment.
- ◆ Warn others of impending judgment from God.
- ◆ Prepare ourselves and our families for temporal disasters, which are forewarnings of the coming judgment of the whole world. Such precautions include reasonable planning and provision for safety and survival in times of natural disaster, war, and civil unrest. At the time of this writing, the United States and perhaps much of the world seems to be on the brink of multiple catastrophes.

Genesis 7

Truth

Revelation

Its cumulative fullness: Biblical revelation is cumulative, with later parts referring to earlier ones. *See notes on Genesis 6.*

- ◆ The Flood, the heedless condition of people beforehand, and God's deliverance of Noah and his family, are referred to in Matthew 24:38–39; Luke 17:26–27; Hebrews 11:7; 1 Peter 3:20; and 2 Peter 2:5.
- ◆ Likewise, some numbers appear repeatedly throughout the Bible, such as the number forty. *See Genesis 25:20; 26:34; Exodus 24:18; 34:28; Deuteronomy 9:11, 18, 25; Numbers 32:13; Judges 3:11; 5:31; 8:28; 13:1; 1 Samuel 4:18; 2 Samuel 5:4; 1 Kings 11:42; 2 Kings 12:1; Matthew 4:2; and Acts 13:21.*

Its literary forms: Biblical revelation uses literary features such as repetition and synonyms to convey important truths.

- ◆ Here, the repeated statements that “all” creatures were destroyed match the repeated descriptions of the people of that day as “corrupt,” *See Genesis 6:3, 5, 11, 12–13.*
- ◆ The repeated references to the ferocity, depth, and extent of the flood waters highlight God's judgment on the entire earth and point to a worldwide deluge, 4, 11–23. *See also the double use of the word “kosmos” (“world”) in 2 Peter 2:5.*

Its veracity: Biblical revelation is historically accurate and reliable.

- ◆ Jesus' references to the time of Noah confirm that the Genesis record is historically true. Nothing in science contradicts the occurrence, let alone the possibility, of a worldwide deluge. Much of modern geology is founded upon the principle of uniformitarianism, which is an unproven – and anti-scriptural – assumption that “all things continue as they have been since the beginning of creation” (2 Peter 3:4). Until the nineteenth century, geologists assumed the validity of catastrophism, which recognizes that major geological events have caused sudden changes in the earth, a fact that was demonstrated in 1980 by

the eruption of Mt. St. Helens. That event created a new lake and produced petrified wood within a few months.

- ◆ In fact, an early worldwide flood explains major geological formations such as the Grand Canyon, as well as oil and coal deposits, better than uniformitarian geology does.
- ◆ Some evangelicals believe that the Flood was only a regional event, but this chapter shows in many explicit ways that the waters covered the whole earth, even exceeding the heights of mountains (whatever that height was at the time, which we don't know), 17–20. Otherwise, how could all the living land and air creatures have been wiped out, and why did God command Noah to preserve a pair of each species and seven pairs of ritually clean animals, 2, 9?
- ◆ The immense amount of water came, first, from the bursting open of the “fountains of the deep,” which would have also spewed water throughout the atmosphere. It then came from the forty days of incessant rainfall, possibly from a canopy that had hitherto covered the air above the earth, 11. The tremendous power of enormous surges of water all over the globe for 150 days would have formed canyons, rivers, and lakes, and altered the geography of the pre-Flood era.
- ◆ The burial of vast numbers of plants and living creatures would have produced the fossil beds we see today, which are marked by chaotic deposits in many places, with, for example, fish fossils on mountaintops in the Alps.

God

His greatness

- ◆ He is able to wreak universal havoc through geological and atmospheric events, 11–12, 17–20.
- ◆ He is able to direct animals and birds willingly to enter the Ark, 14–15.
- ◆ He is able to destroy all that had come under his judgment, 21–23.

His goodness

- ◆ He rewarded Noah for his faith and the righteous works that flowed from faith, 1.

- ◆ He warned Noah of impending disaster and instructed him how to escape it, 2–5.
- ◆ He provided for Noah to have both enough to live on and enough to worship him in sacrifice, 2.
- ◆ He tenderly shut the door of the Ark so that all inside would be kept safe, 16.
- ◆ He preserved Noah and those with him from the ravages of the Flood, 23, and will preserve his elect through many trials until they attain to eternal life. *See 1 Peter 1:5–9.*
- ◆ Though his patience had endured perhaps 120 years (on one interpretation of “120 years,” 3) since his initial response of disgust and grief over the wickedness of Noah’s generation – and perhaps for centuries – yet it has limits, and then his judgment, like the Flood, can come “suddenly,” though not without warning, 11–12.
- ◆ This patience is meant to lead his people to repentance and to renewed efforts to preach righteousness. *See 2 Peter 2:5; 3:8–10.*

Christ

His person: He is prefigured in the Ark, into which Noah and his family entered for safety from the judgment of God, 2, 13, 23.

Mankind

Our fallen state: In our fallen state, we tend to ignore the warnings of “preachers of righteousness” like Noah and to go our way as usual, only to be surprised when sudden judgment (as in unexpected death or natural disaster) strikes us. *See Matthew 24:38–39 and 2 Peter 2:5.*

Salvation

Its conveyance

- ◆ Salvation came to Noah and his family through God’s mercy, received by a faith that led to righteous conduct, 1. *See Hebrews 11:7.*

- ◆ It comes to us now through faith in Jesus Christ, expressed in baptism. *See 1 Peter 3:20–21.*

Its benefits

- ◆ Receiving God’s special revelation, 1–5
- ◆ Receiving the grace to obey God’s commands, 6
- ◆ Salvation from God’s judgment, 23
- ◆ Salvation of our souls and an eternal inheritance; *see 1 Peter 1:3–9.*

The Last Things

The end of the age: As in the days of Noah, so at the end of this age, God will destroy every living thing, 21–23, only this time by fire, to be followed by the creation of a new heaven and new earth in which righteousness dwells. *See 2 Peter 3:5–7, 10–13; and Revelation 21–22.*

Life

Ethical imperatives

- ◆ Be ready for the return of the Lord Jesus at any time, for he will come like a thief in the night.
- ◆ Be ready to “meet our God” at any time, for we might die suddenly from illness or accident or natural disaster.
- ◆ Warn our neighbors of the impending judgment of God upon all mankind and urge them to turn to Christ in repentance and faith.
- ◆ Live in holiness and righteousness in these last days even though others around us, as in the days of Noah, are wicked and heedless of God.
- ◆ See this world as temporary and set our hope fully on the grace to be brought to us at the revelation of Jesus Christ.
- ◆ Take reasonable measures to prepare and protect our families from sudden disasters, such as hurricanes, fires, earthquakes, tornadoes, and floods and – now – financial collapse, social chaos, terrorist attacks, or even war.

Genesis 8

Truth

Revelation

Its content: Biblical revelation contains historical portions, such as the book of Genesis, which are marked by careful attention to details, including the timing of events, when these are important, 3-7, 10-14.

Note: The "year" in this passage refers to the year of Noah's lifetime.

God

His greatness

- ◆ As almighty Creator, he has power over the wind and the water, so that he could make the waters recede and eventually return to their appointed boundaries in the oceans, 1-5, 9, 13-14.
- ◆ He controls the timing of events in the created order and often works his purposes out gradually, 5-14.
- ◆ He is omniscient and knows the hearts of all men and women, 21.
- ◆ He is eternal and thus could make a promise concerning ages to come on the earth, 21.
- ◆ He causes the production of successive generations of living beings, including plants, through the generative life he has put into each kind, 22.
- ◆ He controls the motions of the Earth and planets, causing seasons and the alteration of day and night, 22.

His goodness

- ◆ He remembered Noah, his family, and all the creatures in the Ark, and he caused the wind to blow and the waters to recede so that they could come out and live and flourish in a new earth, 1, 15-18.
- ◆ He grants specific guidance to his faithful people, such as telling Noah to come out of the Ark with his family and the living creatures, 15.

- ◆ He graciously renewed the commission to “be fruitful and multiply,” after cleansing the earth of the pollution of the previous generations, 17. *See Genesis 9:1.*
- ◆ He receives the worship of his people, 20–21.
- ◆ He graciously promised never again to destroy the earth and all living creatures by water, 2.
- ◆ He is faithful, keeping this promise for several thousand years now.

Mankind

Our created nature: We are creatures of God, entirely dependent upon him for life and breath, sustenance, and a favorable environment, 1–17, 22.

Our purpose: We are made for the purpose of worshiping God and offering what we have to him in gratitude and dedication, 20.

Our fallen state: We are now fallen into sin so that “the inclinations of the human heart is evil from youth onward,” 21. *See Psalm 51:5; and Romans 3:21–23; 6:10–23.*

Life

Ethical imperatives

- ◆ Worship the God who created this world and who sustains it.
- ◆ Thank God for delivering us from danger.
- ◆ Thank God for promising to care for us. *See Matthew 6:33.*
- ◆ Thank God for his faithfulness to his promise to Noah and to all his promises.
- ◆ Offer ourselves and all we possess to God. *See Romans 12:1–2.*
- ◆ Keep records of God’s dealings with us, like Noah.

Genesis 9

Truth

Revelation

Its content: Biblical revelation includes frank descriptions of the sins of God's chosen people, 21–22.

God

His greatness

- ◆ He exists as a personal being of plurality with unity, as seen in his image, as male and female, 6. *See Genesis 1:26–27.*
- ◆ He controls all life, including human and animal life, and he may order things as he wills, 2–3.
- ◆ He controls the weather and all earthly phenomena, 11–16.

His goodness

- ◆ He renewed his blessing to Adam and Eve, using almost the same words, “Be fruitful and multiply,” 1, 7. *See Genesis 1:28.*
- ◆ He confirmed the blessedness of marriage, the blessedness of having children, and the blessedness of family life, 1.
- ◆ He renewed the commission of dominion over all the animals, 2–3.
- ◆ He provided food for people in a devastated environment, 3.
- ◆ He protected human life with the sanction of capital punishment, 5–6.
- ◆ He made a covenant with Noah and his descendants, and with all living beings, not to destroy them all again with water, 11–12.
- ◆ He confirmed his covenant with a permanent recurring sign of the rainbow, 13–14.
- ◆ He remains faithful to his promise, as he has until the present time, 14–17.
- ◆ He is inherently beautiful and reveals some of his beauty in the colorful rainbow, 13–16.

Mankind

Our created nature

- ◆ Men and women are created in God's image, 6.
- ◆ Their physical life is therefore precious to God, 5–6.
- ◆ They are meant to marry, have children, and fill the earth, 1, 7.
- ◆ They exercise dominion over all animals, 3.
- ◆ They are meant also to work the land and enjoy the fruits of their labor, 20–21.

Our fallen state

- ◆ In our sinful state, we are vulnerable to indulging in physical pleasures, such as wine, 21.
- ◆ We have a natural sense of shame about nakedness, 22.
- ◆ We have a natural desire to honor our parents, 22–23.

Sin

It includes

- ◆ Violence and murder, and any lack of respect toward any person, since all are created in God's image, 5–6
- ◆ Refusing to have children after marriage, 2
- ◆ Getting drunk (through not partaking of wine moderately), 21
- ◆ Dishonoring our parents in any way, 22, 25–27

Its consequences: Sin has consequences in our life and in the lives of our descendants, 24–27. *See Exodus 20:5.*

Salvation

Its conveyance

- ◆ Salvation came to Noah and his family as
 - Deliverance from death
 - Provision for future needs
 - God's favor and blessing
 - A covenant reminding them of God's unfailing grace
- ◆ It comes to us especially in the New Covenant ratified by the blood of Christ, constantly remembered in the Lord's Supper. *See Matthew 26:28.*

Life

Ethical imperatives

- ◆ Carry out God's "cultural mandate" by getting married (if God leads us), having children, and working.
- ◆ Eat meat, though recent research has shown that we are meant to live on plant products, with animal products as a sort of condiment.
- ◆ Do not eat meat that still has blood in it, 4. *See Acts 15:20, 29; research has shown this to be much healthier.*
- ◆ Remember God's faithfulness to all his covenants every time we see a rainbow.
- ◆ Avoid excess alcohol and any use of drugs that alter our state of mind.
- ◆ Seek to honor our parents in every way, even when they act shamefully.

Genesis 10–11

Truth

Revelation

Its cumulative fullness: Biblical revelation is cumulative, with later passages building upon earlier ones and earlier ones foreshadowing later ones.

- ◆ Babel is probably the forerunner of Babylon, later the greatest enemy of Israel, and symbol of the evil and blasphemous world city, 11:9. *See Revelation 18–19.*
- ◆ The confusion of tongues at Babel was later miraculously reversed on the day of Pentecost, 11:9. *See Acts 2.*

Its content

- ◆ Biblical revelation includes genealogies that trace the family history of mankind in general (10:1–20) and of God’s chosen people in particular (10:21–32; 11:10–32).
- ◆ These are essential to our understanding of biblical history. They may, however, not be complete listings of every generation; some generations may be skipped.
- ◆ The genealogy in chapter ten is chronologically later than the events recorded in 11:1–9.

God

His greatness

- ◆ He has to “come down” to see a tower that was supposed to reach to the top of the sky, 11:4–5.
- ◆ He is able in one word to confuse the language of all mankind and divide it into many “tongues,” 11:7–9.
- ◆ He is thus able to force the people to abandon their plan to concentrate in one great anti-god city and to be scattered throughout the earth instead, 11:9.

His goodness: Rather than destroying mankind again, he graciously scatters them, so that they could not combine into one powerful race in rebellion against him, 11:9.

Christ

His person: Christ is foreshadowed in the genealogies of Shem and then Terah, 10:21–21; 11:27–30. *See Matthew 1:1 and Luke 3:23–38.*

Mankind

Our ancestors

- ◆ All humans are descended from the sons of Noah, chapter 10.
- ◆ They are thus related to each other, all in God’s image, and all equal in value and dignity. No race is superior to another.

Sin

It includes (and basically consists in)

- ◆ Self-centeredness, as the people sought to be a tower for themselves and to make a name (reputation) for themselves, 11:3–4
- ◆ Ambition to undertake great projects not for God, and pride, a desire for reputation (“face” and “name”), 11:4
- ◆ Refusal to scatter and “fill the earth,” as God had commanded; instead, they gathered together to build a city, 11:3–4

Life

Ethical imperatives

- ◆ Honor all people as our distant relatives, equally created in the image of God and equally valuable in his sight.
- ◆ Avoid undertaking projects without consulting God and his will, and those projects which are not for God’s glory.
- ◆ Do not imagine that men can build a one-world community without God. The genealogies in chapter 10 and the story of Babel, suggest that we are meant by God to live in separate people-groups, though of course violence and war are wrong.
- ◆ Do not be impressed by great “towers” – physical or otherwise – constructed for the glory of man. All these will be temporary.

- ◆ Seek to do only what God directs us to do and to do all for his glory, not ours. The origin and goal of all our plans must be God's will and his glory, not our will or our glory. *See Matthew 6:9-11 and 1 Corinthians 10:31.*

Genesis 12

Truth

Revelation

Its cumulative fullness: Biblical revelation is cumulative, with later passages referring to and building upon earlier ones, as God works out his grand plan of redemption in stages.

- ◆ This chapter marks the beginning of God's choice of Israel as his special people, through whom he would bring salvation to the world, 3.
- ◆ All the rest of the Bible will grow out of the epochal calling of Abraham by God.

Its content

- ◆ Much (some would say all) of the Bible centers upon covenants which God made with mankind.
 - Beginning with the covenant with Noah, Genesis 9:8–11 (some would say the first covenant was with Adam and Eve, 3:15)
 - Then God's promise to Abraham, 12:1–3, ratified several times in his life; *see Genesis 15:18–21; 17:1–21.*
 - Then later to his descendants Isaac, 26:2–5, and Jacob, 28:10–17
 - The covenant with Israel through Moses at Sinai; *see Exodus 20.*
 - The covenant with David; *see 2 Samuel 7:1–17.*
 - Finally, the New Covenant in Christ

Its literary forms: Biblical revelation uses literary structure, such as contrast, to convey its message.

- ◆ God's promise to make a great nation out of Abraham's descendants and a great name for Abraham, in contrast to his frustration of the attempt of the people at Babel to make a city and a name for themselves, 2; *see Genesis 11:3–9.*
- ◆ God's call to Abraham to leave a great city and to take up a nomadic life, in contrast to the desire of the nations to settle in one city, 1; *see Genesis 11:3–4.*

Its content

- ◆ Biblical revelation also uses certain numbers, such as seven, which indicates fullness and especially the fullness of God and his blessings; there are seven promises to Abraham in 12:2–3.
- ◆ Sarah’s obedience is held up as an example to godly women in 1 Peter 3:1–6.

God

His greatness

- ◆ He has the authority to command people to leave everything and follow his will, 1.
- ◆ He has the power to make them believe his word and obey it, 4.
- ◆ He has the authority over all the earth and may give any portion of it to whomever he pleases, 7.
- ◆ He has knowledge of, and sovereignty over, the future, 2–3, 7.
- ◆ He has the power to inflict terrible diseases on people as a consequence of sin, 17.

His goodness

- ◆ In a major initial fulfillment of his promise to overcome the effects of the Fall, including shame, slavery, and expulsion from his presence (the Garden), (*see Genesis 3:15*), God chose Abraham to be the father of a people through whom his descendants and then people of all nations of the world would receive blessing, dominion (“great nation”), honor, the privilege of being a blessing to others, and permanent possession of a “land,” 1–3, 7.
- ◆ He also protected Pharaoh from a terrible sin, 17–20, and sent Abraham away from a place of temptation, 20.

Christ

His person: Christ is foreshadowed in the promise that in Abraham all nations would be blessed, 3. *See Matthew 1:1; Luke 3:34; Acts 3:25; and Galatians 3:8, 16.*

Mankind

Our purpose

- ◆ We are meant to know, worship, and obey God, 1–4, 7, 8.
- ◆ Even in our unregenerate state, we are able to hear, understand, and partially obey God's revelation, 4.
- ◆ Marriage is meant to be a lifelong union of one man and one woman, 17–20.

Sin

It includes

- ◆ Not believing in God's promises, and therefore placing others in a situation where they will be tempted to sin, or where they will tempt others to sin, as Abraham did with Sarah, 12–20
- ◆ Lusting after beautiful women, 11–12
- ◆ Putting one's own interest, including our very life, before the spiritual and physical interests of another, 13
- ◆ Deception, 13
- ◆ Taking another man's wife, 19
- ◆ Violating our marriage vows in any way, 12–19

Its consequences: Sin brings consequences, such as illness and shame.

Salvation

Its conveyance

- ◆ Salvation came to Abraham as an unconditional promise of blessing (God's favor) and many earthly blessings besides, 1–3, 7.
- ◆ It was received by faith, indicated by obedience, 4. *See Galatians 3:8, 16 and Hebrews 11:8.*
- ◆ Salvation comes to us now from God through faith in his word and consists in God's favor and presence now, with great blessing of the Holy Spirit and with the promise of the New Heaven and the New Earth forever after Christ returns. *See Galatians 3:5–14; and Hebrews 11:9–10, 13–16.*

Life

Ethical imperatives

- ◆ Like Abraham, believe God's promises.
- ◆ Like Abraham, obey God's commands.
- ◆ Make allegiance to God and his kingdom, and to Christ, preeminent in our lives, being willing to forsake all and follow him. *See Matthew 4:18-22.*
- ◆ Do not lust after beautiful women.
- ◆ Do not put ourselves or others into places of temptation.
- ◆ Do not take another person's spouse as ours while that person is still living. This includes remarriage after divorce.
- ◆ Do not commit any of the sins of which Abraham was guilty, including unbelief, deception to save ourselves, and placing our own interests ahead of those of another.

Genesis 13

Truth

Revelation

Its literary forms

- ◆ Biblical revelation uses repetition to highlight some themes, such as travelling “east” of Eden or “east” from God’s people, as Lot did, 11. *See also Genesis 4:16, where Cain traveled east of Eden, and Genesis 11:2, where the people journeyed from the east to try to build the Tower of Babel.*
- ◆ Forewarnings hint of things to come, as the mention of the destruction of Sodom, 10, and the statement that the “men of Sodom were very wicked and sinful against the Lord,” 13.
- ◆ These show that the Bible is a coherent literary and theological whole.

God

His greatness: He was able to destroy Sodom and Gomorrah, 10. *See Genesis 19:24.*

His goodness

- ◆ He either enriched Abram while he was in Egypt or allowed him to keep his wealth after his sin forced his departure from Egypt, 2.
- ◆ He allowed Abram to return to the Promised Land after his sojourn and sin in Egypt and allowed him to worship him and call on his name, 3–4, 18.
- ◆ He once again spoke to Abram, 14–17.
- ◆ He renewed his promise to give the land to Abram and his descendants, 14–17.

Mankind

Our fallen state

- ◆ In our fallen state, we inevitably face conflicts with others over scarce resources, 6.
- ◆ These conflicts sometimes lead to actual strife and even warfare, 7.

Sin

It includes

- ◆ Fighting over scarce resources, rather than trusting God, 7
- ◆ Making decisions based on sight, that is, our sense perceptions as we interpret them – rather than on faith in God’s Word, 10
- ◆ Not keeping a distance from, and even getting closer and closer to, places and people known for wickedness, 13
- ◆ Any rebellion against God or disregard for God, 13

Salvation

Its conveyance

- ◆ Salvation came to Abram in the form of
 - God’s provision of wealth, 2
 - Access to God in worship and prayer, 4
 - The grace to treat Lot better than himself, 8–9
 - Trust in God’s promises, as seen by his worship and his actions
 - God’s self–revelation and renewed promises, of the land of Canaan, as well as a numerous posterity, 14–17
- ◆ Salvation also comes to us from God through faith which leads to obedience and includes God’s promises of favor, blessing, the Holy Spirit, and eternal life on a renewed earth. *See Romans 4:1–25; Galatians 3:1–9, 13–14, 29; and Hebrews 11:8–16.*

The Christian Life

Its source and content

- ◆ A godly life flows from faith in God’s promises and leads to giving place to others rather than fighting with them. Abram could give Lot his choice of land, because he believed God’s promise to give him the land of Canaan, make him into a great nation, and bless others through him, 4.
- ◆ It also includes regularly offering worship, including our resources and ourselves, to God, 4, 18.

Life

Ethical imperatives

- ◆ Return to earlier acts of consecration and worship after we have turned from our sins.
- ◆ Trust that God will not reject us but will continue to be with us and bless us.
- ◆ Constantly worship God.
- ◆ Back off when others seek to exploit us and seek to live peacefully with all (there are some exceptions to this principle).
- ◆ Do not approach places known for wickedness, such as bars, or watch TV programs known to be filled with bad language, violence, and sexual immorality.
- ◆ Sometimes review the promises God has given to us, as if we were walking with Abram through the Promised Land, in order to renew our faith and hope.

Genesis 14

Truth

Revelation

General revelation: General revelation allows some people to know enough by observing the created order to realize that there must be a powerful God who rules eternally over the world, and who deserves to be worshiped, 18–19. *See Romans 1:18–20.*

Its content: Biblical revelation communicates its message in many ways, often without explicit statements. Thus, God’s promise to make Abraham great (Genesis 12:2) is partially fulfilled here by his “kingly” actions of military victory and later dispersing the spoils to others.

God

His greatness

- ◆ He is transcendent and sovereign, as God Most High, 19, 20, 22.
- ◆ He possesses the entire universe and all in it, 19, 22.

His goodness

- ◆ He had mercy on Lot by rescuing him from captivity after he had foolishly moved into notoriously wicked Sodom, 16. *See Genesis 13:12–13.*
- ◆ He is faithful to his promise to give the land to Abraham (Genesis 13:14–17), which is shown in how he enabled Abram to defeat foreign kings to protect his nephew Lot, his family, and his property, 16, 20.

Christ

His person: Christ is foreshadowed (or typified) in

- ◆ The priest Melchizedek (“king of righteousness”)
- ◆ The king of Salem (Jerusalem, see Psalm 76:2), who blessed Abram, 18–20; *see Psalm 110:4; and Hebrews 5:5–10; 6:20–7:28.*

Mankind

Our fallen state: In our fallen state, we are ruled over by “kings” who are ambitious, greedy, and violent, and who ally themselves with other kings to invade and plunder neighboring lands, 1–12.

The People of God

Their identity: The people of God are those who, like Abram, trust God to fulfill his promises and do not seek by human means to “possess” the land by force or commerce, like Abram, who refused to take possession of the land by force or victory, 23.

Their home: The people of God live in a world that is wracked by sin, power struggles, danger, and violence. Sometimes they may have to join with non-believers in non-religious actions to resist aggression and preserve justice and peace, 13–14.

Life

Ethical imperatives

- ◆ Expect constant conflict and even wars in this life.
- ◆ Avoid the sin of Lot, who enmeshed himself so tightly into sinful society that he suffered unnecessarily.
- ◆ Help our “family” members when we can. *See Galatians 6:10.*
- ◆ Train up people to engage in spiritual warfare, like Abram did. *See 2 Timothy 2:2.*
- ◆ Ascribe all deliverances from danger, and all success, to God.
- ◆ Give a tithe of what we possess to Christian work and worship.
- ◆ Do not seek to profit from helping others.
- ◆ Avoid putting ourselves into debt of any kind, but especially to unbelievers.

Genesis 15

Truth

Revelation

Its literary forms: Biblical revelation uses literary structure to communicate some meaning and increase impact.

- ◆ Here, after Abram's battle with the foreign kings and his refusal to take any part of the spoils, God calls himself "shield" and promises that his "reward will be very great" (or that God is his great reward), 1.
- ◆ Abram's childlessness and thus the apparent impossibility of God's promise is emphasized by repetition, 3-5.
- ◆ A new "creative" act of God takes place while Abram is overcome with a deep sleep from God, 12. *See Genesis 2:21.*

God

His greatness

- ◆ He is Elohim ("God"), creator of heaven and earth, and thus possessor of all of it, 2, 8, 18-21.
- ◆ He rules the events of individuals, families, and nations, 4-5, 7, 13-14.
- ◆ He is Judge of all mankind, 14.
- ◆ He is the mighty Savior of his people, 14, 16.

His goodness

- ◆ He is Yahweh (the LORD), the faithful and loving covenant-keeping God, 1.
- ◆ He reveals himself by speaking to his chosen people, 1, 4-7, 13-16, 18-21.
- ◆ He protects and rewards those who trust and follow him, 1.
- ◆ He promised Abram that his descendants would become a great nation, 5.
- ◆ He sealed his promise with a covenant ceremony that included animal sacrifice, 9-10, 17.
- ◆ Though he allows his people to suffer greatly and sometimes suffer for many years, he promises deliverance to his people, 13, 16.

- ◆ He keeps his promises, for not only have the Jews greatly multiplied over the centuries, but believers in Christ, the new people of God, are almost innumerable, 5.

Christ

His person: Christ is foreshadowed in

- ◆ The “heir” whom Abram’s wife Sarah would bear, 4; *see Galatians 3:16*.
- ◆ The animals that were sacrificed in making the covenant with Abram, 9–10
- ◆ Perhaps also in the smoking pot that went down between the slain animals, 17

The People of God

Their identity

- ◆ Physically, the people of God are those who are descendants of Abraham through Sarah, 4. *See Genesis 12:3 and Romans 9:3–5*.
- ◆ Since the death, resurrection, ascension, and outpouring of the Holy Spirit upon all who repent and believe, the people of God now also include those from every nation who truly trust in Christ alone for righteousness and salvation. *See Romans 2:1–16, 28; 4:16–25; 9:6–13, 30–32*.

Their marks: God’s people are sojourners on this earth and must expect to suffer hardship and persecution at the hands of God’s enemies, followed by deliverance, either through earthly freedom or through death, 13–14, 16. *See 1 Peter 1:1; 2:11–12; and Hebrews 11:13–16*.

Salvation

Its conveyance

- ◆ Salvation came to Abram from God, through faith in God’s word of promise, in the form of fellowship with God and the promise of numerous posterity and an inheritance, 5–6, 18–21.
- ◆ It comes to us the same way. *See Romans 4:1–15 and Galatians 3:1–9*.
- ◆ It also came as deliverance from the pagan city of Ur, and then Haran, to live in the land of God’s promise and presence, 7.

- ◆ It comes to us now as deliverance from the dominion of Satan and of this world system, and with citizenship in God's kingdom. *See John 17:6, 11 and Colossians 1:13.*

Life

Ethical imperatives

- ◆ Do not be afraid but look to God, who will be our defense (shield) and great reward.
- ◆ Trust the promises of God written in the Bible that pertain to us, even though their fulfillment may seem to be physically impossible.
- ◆ Thank God for providing Christ as the sacrifice to seal and guarantee the New Covenant.
- ◆ Frequently engage in the New Covenant ordinance of the Lord's Supper to remind ourselves of the promise of forgiveness of sins through Christ and our hope of his return.
- ◆ Expect hardship and suffering in this world, which is not our home.
- ◆ Eagerly await the return of Christ when the whole world will be given to his followers as an inheritance. *See Romans 4:13.*

Genesis 16

Truth

Revelation

Its cumulative fullness: Biblical revelation is a consecutive, cumulative, and coherent whole, with later passages referring to and incorporating earlier ones.

- ♦ The Angel of the Lord, first mentioned here, reappears in Genesis 22:11–18; 31:11–13; Exodus 3:2–5; Numbers 22:22–35; Judges 6:11–23; 13:2–5; and 1 Kings 19:5–7.
- ♦ Hagar and her son, 1, 15; *see Galatians 4:21–31*.

Its roots in history: Biblical revelation records not only what happened in the past but its meaning for the present. Here, the Angel’s characterization of Hagar’s son as a violent and bellicose man describes his descendants, the Arabs, down to the present, 12.

God

His greatness: He is omniscient, “seeing” all things, including the hearts and conditions of all people, 13.

His goodness

- ♦ He not only “sees,” but cares for, the afflicted and oppressed, 11, 13.
- ♦ He is faithful to his promises, shown here by promising that the son of Abram and Hagar would become the ancestor of a great multitude, 10. *See Genesis 13:16; 15:5*.
- ♦ He communicates to people by word and sometimes by some sort of visible appearance, 13.

Christ

His person: Many believe that the Angel of the Lord is an appearance of the pre-incarnate Christ, because he possesses divine attributes and is treated as if he is God.

- ♦ He issues commands, 9.

- ◆ He utters promises that echo the promises of God, 10.
- ◆ He predicts the future, 11–12.
- ◆ He is called “the God who sees” by Hagar, 13.

Mankind

Our created nature: We are meant to married to one person at a time and not to have sexual relationships with anyone other than our lawful spouse. When this principle is broken, human relationships also break down, as between Hagar and Sarai, and Sarai and Abram, 4–6.

Sin

It includes

- ◆ Not trusting God’s promises, but rushing ahead to gain what we think we need in our own way, as Abram and Sarai sought to get an heir in an unlawful manner, 2–4
- ◆ Sexual relations with anyone other than our legal spouse, 4
- ◆ Disrespect towards our earthly masters, 4
- ◆ Blaming others for the consequences of our own sins, 5
- ◆ Overturning the natural order in families by having a husband overrule his conscience in order to please his wife, 2–3; *see Genesis 3:6, 17.*
- ◆ Running away from our responsibilities and commitments, 6
- ◆ Violence against others, 12

Life

Ethical imperatives

- ◆ Acknowledge that children are a gift from God, given according to sovereign plan, 2.
- ◆ Do not run ahead of God’s timing or try to make things “work” according to our plans, as Sarai did, 2.

- ◆ Refuse to listen to or heed the advice of those who tempt us not to obey God's promises, as Sarai tempted Abraham not to trust that God would give him a son through her, 2-4.
- ◆ Do not despise others when we have been blessed by God and they have not, 5.
- ◆ Do not deal harshly with those who treat us with disrespect, 6.
- ◆ Do not run away from trouble or difficulty, 8-9.
- ◆ Trust God to provide for us, even in a literal or figurative "wilderness," 14.

Genesis 17

Truth

Revelation

Its cumulative fullness: Biblical revelation is a consecutive, cumulative, and coherent whole, with later passages referring to and incorporating earlier ones.

- ◆ “The LORD appeared to Abram,” 1; *see Genesis 12:7; 18:1; 35:9; and Joshua 5:13.*
- ◆ “I am Almighty God [El Shaddai],” 1; *see Genesis 28:3; 35:11; 43:14; 48:3; Exodus 6:3; Job 5:17; 6:4, and often in Job; Psalm 91:1; Ezekiel 1:24; 10:5; 2 Corinthians 6:18; Revelation 1:8; 4:8, and often in Revelation.*
- ◆ “Walk before Me,” 1; *see Genesis 5:22; 6:9 and 2 Kings 20:3.*
- ◆ “Be blameless,” 1; *see Genesis 6:9; Deuteronomy 18:13; 2 Samuel 22:24, 33; Psalms 37:18; 101:2, 6; 119:1; Proverbs 11:20; 13:6; 28:10; Ephesians 1:4; 5:27; Colossians 1:22; Jude 24; and Revelation 14:5.*
- ◆ “And I will make My covenant between Me and you,” 2, 4, 7; *see Genesis 12:2–3; 13:14–16; 15:4–5, 18; 24:7.*
- ◆ “And I will make you exceedingly fruitful,” 2, 6; *see Genesis 1:28; 9:1; 12:2; 13:16; 15:5; 18:18; 26:24; 35:11; 48:4; Exodus 1:7, 20.*
- ◆ “You shall be the father of many nations,” 4; *see Genesis 16:1–16; 25:23; Romans 4:11, 12, 16; 15:8–12; Galatians 3:6–9, 29; and Revelation 7:9; 21:24.*
- ◆ “And kings shall come from you,” 6; *see Genesis 35:11 and Matthew 1:1–11.*
- ◆ “To be God to you and to your descendants,” 7, 8; *see Genesis 26:24; 28:13, 21; Exodus 6:7; 20:5–6; Leviticus 18:2; 26:12; Numbers 15:41; Deuteronomy 4:20; 7:6, 21; 29:13; 2 Samuel 7:24; Matthew 22:32; 2 Corinthians 6:16; and Revelation 21:7.*
- ◆ “I give to you and your descendants after you . . . all the land of Canaan,” 8; *see Genesis 12:7; 13:14–15; 15:7, 18–21; 28:4; Psalm 105:44; Acts 7:4–5. See also Romans 4:13.*
- ◆ “The land in which you are a stranger,” 8; *see Genesis 23:4; 28:4; 47:9; Hebrews 11:9; and 1 Peter 1:1; 2:11.*
- ◆ “Every male child among you shall be circumcised,” 10–14; *see Genesis 21:4 and Acts 7:8.*

- ◆ The announcement of the coming birth of a son to an aged couple evokes disbelief, 17–18; *see Genesis 18:9–15 and Luke 1:5–18.*
- ◆ “I . . . will make [Ishmael] fruitful and will multiply him exceedingly. He shall beget twelve princes and I will make him a great nation,” 20; *see Genesis 16:10; 21:13; 25:12–16.*

Its source: Sometimes God “appeared” to people in the Old Testament, 22. *See Genesis 12:7; 18:1.*

God

His greatness

- ◆ He is omnipotent, “God Almighty,” El Shaddai, 1. *See Revelation 21:22.*
- ◆ As Almighty God he can command people to do his will, 1.
- ◆ He is omnipresent; all our conduct is, and should be done, “before him,” 1.
- ◆ He has the power to give life and cause us to produce children, 2, 4.
- ◆ He holds all authority and can confer earthly rule upon whom he wishes, 6.
- ◆ He is eternal and can thus both determine and predict the future, foreseeing “many generations,” and making an “everlasting covenant,” 7.
- ◆ He owns the earth and can bestow parts of it upon whom he pleases, 8.
- ◆ He also owns our bodies and can command our complete obedience over any part of our body, 9–13. *See Romans 12:1 and 1 Corinthians 6:11, 20.*
- ◆ He is Lord of our sexual life and the production of children, 12–13, 15–16.
- ◆ As our owner and Master, he can give us names that reflect his authority over us and his purposes for us, 15.
- ◆ As Almighty God, he can produce a child even when it seems humanly impossible, 17, 19.

His goodness

- ◆ He is holy and righteous and thus can command us to be blameless also, 1.
- ◆ He graciously entered into a covenant with Abraham and his descendants, 2.
- ◆ He promised to be their God, that is, the God who would guide, govern, and bestow good things upon them and also have an intimate relationship with them, 7.
- ◆ He kindly blessed Sarai, Abraham’s wife, 16.

- ◆ He graciously promised Sarai that she would have a son even in her old age, 16.
- ◆ He kindly talked with his chosen people, 22.
- ◆ He is faithful, keeping all his promises to Abraham, as subsequent narratives in the Bible confirm.

Christ

His person

- ◆ Christ may be prefigured or represented by the “appearance” of God to Abram. Since God is spirit and no one can see him, perhaps he “appeared” in some form as the pre-incarnate Christ, 1.
- ◆ God’s changing of Abram’s name, 5, points forward to the changing of disciples’ names by Jesus. *See John 1:42*. This is a divine prerogative.
- ◆ Jesus is the last and final king to be descended from Abraham, 6. *See Matthew 1:1–17; John 1:49; 19:19; and Revelation 19:16*.
- ◆ Jesus is the fulfillment (“Amen”) to all the promises given to Abraham, 6–8. *See 2 Corinthians 1:20*.
- ◆ As a descendant of Abraham, Jesus was circumcised on the eighth day, 12. *See Luke 2:21*.
- ◆ The covenant of circumcision, 9–14, points toward the circumcision believers have in Christ, which is a putting off of the body of sin – that is, being released from the dominating power of sin. *See Colossians 2:9–15*.

The People of God

Their identity

- ◆ In the Old Testament, the people of God were primarily the descendants of Abraham through Isaac and Jacob (not through Ishmael or Esau), 7, 18–21. *See Genesis 25:1–6, 20–27, 29–34; 27:1–40*.
- ◆ The sign of membership in the people of God was male circumcision, 9–14.
- ◆ Those who were not born to Abraham but who lived in his camp and were circumcised were also, it seems, members of the people of God.
- ◆ In the New Testament, all those who truly believe in and follow Jesus Christ belong to the people of God. *See Acts 2:5, where “devout men” refers to God-*

fearing Gentiles, Acts 2:38–39; Romans 3:20–4:25; 9:6–13, 22–33; 1 Corinthians 1:2; Galatians 3:22–4:7; Ephesians 2:19–22; and Revelation 7:9–17.

- ◆ Now, faith followed by baptism has replaced circumcision as the sign of membership in the people of God. *See Acts 2:38–39; Galatians 3:2–8; and Colossians 2:11–14.*

Sin

It includes

- ◆ Disobeying God’s commands, 14
- ◆ Not believing God’s promises, 17; *see Luke 1:18–20.*

Its consequences: The consequences of sin include being “cut off” from God’s people, 14. Here, that probably meant death. In the New Testament, it entailed being excluded from the fellowship of believers until the sinner had fully repented. *See Matthew 18:17; Romans 16:17; 1 Corinthians 5:4–5, 11; and 2 John 7–11.*

Salvation

It includes

- ◆ In the Old Testament, “salvation” included receiving all the blessings promised by God to Abraham and his descendants, such as
 - Being in the covenant of God, with all its attendant benefits, 2–23
 - Children, 6
 - Possession of the Promised Land, 8
 - Having God as their God, 8
 - Children, 16
- ◆ In the New Testament, these promises are replaced by “spiritual” ones, as enumerated, for example in Ephesians 1:3–22.
 - All these come to those who believe in Jesus Christ as Savior, and all are connected with our union with him, termed by Paul being “in Christ.”
 - The possession of the land will take place when Christ returns to establish a new heaven and new earth. *See 1 Peter 1:3–5; 2 Peter 3:13; and Revelation 3:12; 21:1–22:5.*

The Last Things

Christ's return: When Christ returns, he will establish a new heaven and new earth, where he will be worshiped by people of all nations who have trusted Christ, and who will dwell forever in the presence of God, the true "land" God has promised us. *See Revelation 7:9-17; 21:1-8; 22:1-5.*

Life

Ethical imperatives

- ◆ Walk before God, that is, live as if in the presence of God at all times. *See Colossians 3:17, 23.*
- ◆ Seek, by the power of the Holy Spirit, to be blameless in the sight of God and man. *See Ephesians 1:4; Philippians 2:14-15; and Titus 1:6.*
- ◆ Thank God for including us in his people, along with believing Jews and followers of Christ from all nations.
- ◆ Impress upon new believers the necessity of receiving baptism as the new circumcision.
- ◆ Trust God to fulfill his promises even if, as in the case of aged Abraham and Sarah, this will require the working of God's supernatural power.
- ◆ Obey God immediately, as Abraham did when he circumcised himself and all in his household.
- ◆ Consecrate our sexuality to God, as is symbolized by circumcision.
- ◆ See this world as the place of our sojourn and pilgrimage and not become too attached to it as if it were our permanent home.
- ◆ Look instead to the new heaven and new earth as our future and permanent dwelling place.

Genesis 18

Truth

Revelation

Its cumulative fullness: Biblical revelation is a consecutive, cumulative, and coherent whole, with later passages referring to and incorporating earlier ones.

- ◆ The LORD appeared to him, 1; *see Genesis 12:7.*
- ◆ “Sarah your wife shall have a son,” 10; *see Genesis 17:15–16, 19.*
- ◆ “Sarah laughed,” 12; *see Genesis 17:17.*
- ◆ “After I have grown old, shall I have pleasure, my lord being old also?” 12; *see Genesis 17:17 and Luke 1:18.*
- ◆ “Is anything too hard for the LORD?” 14; *see Jeremiah 32:17; Luke 1:37; 18:27.*
- ◆ “Shall I hide from Abraham what I am doing?” 17; *see Psalm 25:14 and John 15:15.*
- ◆ “Abraham shall surely become a great and mighty nation,” 18; *see Genesis 12:2; 17:6.*
- ◆ “And all the nations of the earth shall be blessed in him,” 18; *see Genesis 12:3 and Acts 3:25.*
- ◆ The great sin of Sodom and Gomorrah, 20–21; *see Genesis 13:13; 19:1–11; Lamentations 4:6; and Ezekiel 16:49.*
- ◆ Parents’ responsibility to teach their children the way of the Lord, 19; *see Deuteronomy 4:9–10; 6:6–7; and Ephesians 6:4.*
- ◆ The outcry of Sodom and Gomorrah, 20; *see Genesis 4:10; 19:13.*
- ◆ Drawing near to God in confident prayer, 23; *see Ephesians 3:12 and Hebrews 4:16; 10:22.*
- ◆ The man of God intercedes for sinners, 22–32; *see Matthew 5:44; Luke 23:34; and Romans 10:1.*

Its source: Sometimes God “appeared” to people in the Old Testament, 1; *see Genesis 12:7; 17:1.*

God

His Triune nature: From this passage, it seems that God appeared to Abraham in human form, as one of three visitors, 1–3, 10, 13–14, 17–33. This must have been the pre-incarnate Christ, the second Person of the Trinity.

His greatness

- ◆ As Creator and Lord, he has the authority and power to be the Judge of all the earth, 25. *See Genesis 15:14; Judges 11:27; 1 Samuel 2:10; 1 Chronicles 16:33; Psalms 7:11; 50:6; 96:13; Joel 3:12; Micah 4:3; Acts 10:42; 17:31; 2 Timothy 4:1; Hebrews 12:23; and 1 Peter 4:5.*
- ◆ He has the power to create human life, even in aged persons, 9–14.
- ◆ He is eternal and omniscient, knowing and able to predict and determine the future, 10.
- ◆ He is omnipresent and omniscient, knowing what takes place everywhere, 12–15.

His goodness

- ◆ He kindly appeared to Abraham and other servants of God, 1.
- ◆ He graciously renewed his promise to give Abraham and Sarah a son in their old age, 10, 14.
- ◆ He kindly revealed to Abraham what he was going to do to Sodom and Gomorrah, 17.
- ◆ He “knew” Abraham, that is, he entered into an intimate personal relationship with him, 19. *See Genesis 4:1; Amos 3:2; John 17:25; 1 Corinthians 8:3; and Galatians 4:9.*
- ◆ He is just and will judge justly, 23–32.
- ◆ He is gracious and merciful, longsuffering and slow to punish, 20–32.

Christ

His person

- ◆ Christ could appear in human form before his incarnation by the Virgin Mary, 1–2; *see notes on God, above.*

- ◆ As pre-incarnate Christ and Yahweh, he “came down” to see about the sins of Sodom and Gomorrah, 21; as the incarnate Savior and Lord, he “came down” from heaven to save us from our sins. *See John 3:13; 6:33, 41; and Ephesians 4:9.*

The People of God

Their identity

- ◆ In the Old Testament, the people of God were all those who were descended from Abraham and Sarah, through Isaac and Jacob, 10–14, 18.
- ◆ God promised that this people would become a “mighty nation,” which it did, 18.
- ◆ God intended that “all nations” would be blessed through Abraham’s offspring, 18; thus, from the beginning, God intended his people to look outward and bless the nations.
- ◆ In the New Testament, we find that God also intended that all those of all nations who truly believe in and follow Jesus Christ would be included as spiritual descendants of Abraham and therefore belong to the people of God. *See Acts 2:5, where “devout men” refers to God-fearing Gentiles, Acts 2:38–39; Romans 3:20–4:25; 9:6–13, 22–33; 1 Corinthians 1:2; Galatians 3:22–4:7; Ephesians 2:20–22; and Revelation 7:9–17.*
- ◆ God’s people are those who receive special revelation from him through his chosen messengers, like Abraham, 17–19.
- ◆ They also pass on knowledge of God’s revealed will to their children, 19.

Spiritual Beings

Angels: Angels can appear in human form, 2, 22; *see Genesis 19:1.*

Sin

It includes

- ◆ Not believing the promises of God, 12–15; though God only rebuked her lightly, Sarah was guilty of unbelief.
- ◆ Whatever was going on in Sodom and Gomorrah, 20; *see Genesis 19:5*, where we learn that they were guilty of homosexual activity.

Salvation

It includes: Salvation – that is, being reconciled to God and receiving his sovereign grace – includes many benefits, some of which are

- ◆ God’s self-revelation to us, 1; *see John 1:14, 18; 14:7–9.*
- ◆ God’s promise of deliverance through the seed of Abraham, 10; *see Genesis 12:3 and Galatians 3:16.*
- ◆ Being “known” by God, 19
- ◆ The revelation of his moral will, so that we might walk in righteousness and thus fulfill the moral destiny for which we were created, 19
- ◆ The revelation of God’s purposes for this world, 20–21; *see Ephesians 1:9–10.*
- ◆ The privilege of access to God through prayer, 22–32; *see John 14:13–14; 16:24; Ephesians 3:12–21; and Hebrews 4:14–16.*

Life

Ethical imperatives

- ◆ Be eager to entertain people who come to us, being aware that we might someday “entertain angels unwittingly,” as Abraham did; *see 1 Timothy 3:2; Titus 1:8; and Hebrews 13:2.*
- ◆ Believe that God can and will fulfill his promises to us as revealed in Scripture, even if such a fulfillment seems humanly possible.
- ◆ Specifically, older people should believe that God can still work miracles in their lives.
- ◆ Train our children in the ways of God and do all we can to lead them in paths of righteousness.
- ◆ Heed the warnings of the prophets, Christ, and the apostles, who have all told us that God will judge this world for its grievous sin.
- ◆ Take the biblical narratives of his judgment upon cities and nations, and the many examples in history, seriously, as applicable to our own time as well.
- ◆ Intercede for sinful people around us.
- ◆ Trust that “the Judge of all the earth” will “do right.”

Genesis 19

Truth

Revelation

Its cumulative fullness: Biblical revelation is a consecutive, cumulative, and coherent whole, with later passages referring to and incorporating earlier ones.

- ◆ Lot's offering hospitality to strangers in order to protect them from the wickedness of the local inhabitants, 1–8; *see Judges 18:20–26.*
- ◆ The general wickedness of the people of Sodom, 4–10; *see Genesis 18:20; Isaiah 1:10–17; 2 Peter 2:8; and Jude 7.*
- ◆ The extraordinary sexual depravity of the men of Sodom, that is, their practice of homosexuality, which in Scripture is called an “abomination” to God, 4–5; *see Leviticus 18:22; 20:13; Isaiah 3:9; Ezekiel 16:49–51; Jeremiah 23:14; and Jude 7.*

Note: Some scholars deny that the major sin of Sodom was homosexual practice, but their specious arguments have been totally demolished by Brian Neil Peters in “The Sin of Sodom Revisited: Reading Genesis 19 in Light of Torah.” Journal of the Evangelical Society. Volume 59, No. 1, March 2016, 17–31.

- ◆ Offering one's daughters to suffer sexual violence in order to protect strangers to whom one has given hospitality, 5–8; *see Judges 19:22–24.*
- ◆ Lot's relative righteousness, compared to the people of Sodom, 7; *see Genesis 18:32 and 2 Peter 2:7–8.*
- ◆ The earth is polluted by the sexual deviance and violence of its inhabitants, 1–11; *see Genesis 6:1–11.*
- ◆ Mocking those who live (relatively) righteously and who warn of judgment to come, 14; *see 1 Peter 4:3–5 and 2 Peter 3:3–4.*
- ◆ One man and his family escape destruction, 12–29; *see Genesis 6:18.*
- ◆ The destruction of Sodom and Gomorrah, 24–25, 28–29; *see Jeremiah 49:18; 50:40; Amos 4:11; and 2 Peter 2:6.*
- ◆ Lot's wife looked back, 26; *see Luke 17:32.*

- ◆ After the destruction of Sodom and Gomorrah, “God remembered Abraham,” 29, who had interceded for the righteous in that city, as he had remembered Noah after the Flood; *see Genesis 8:1; 18:23.*
- ◆ Following deliverance from judgment, children engage in sexually immoral behavior against their drunken father, 30–36; *see Genesis 9:21–23.*
- ◆ The children of these illicit unions are excluded from God’s people and even cursed, 37–38; *see Genesis 9:25–27 and Deuteronomy 23:3–4.*

God

His greatness: He has the power to bring destruction upon cities and nations, 14, 24–25, 29. *See Amos 1:3–2:5; and Revelation 18:1–24.*

His goodness

- ◆ He extends mercy to those he intends to save, 16, 19, 29. *See Romans 9:14–29.*
- ◆ Indeed, he overcomes our natural resistance to his grace and compels us to come out of sin into his kingdom, 16.

Sin

It includes

- ◆ Forming unnecessarily close relationships with those who do not know God and flagrantly violate his laws, as Lot did by moving into Sodom and then joining its leadership, as his sitting at the gate implies, 1
- ◆ Homosexual activity, 5–7; *see Romans 1:26–29 and 1 Corinthians 6:9.*
- ◆ Failure to protect our children, especially our daughters, from physical and moral damage, 8
- ◆ Making an idol out of local customs, as Lot did when he allowed the code of hospitality to override God’s clear commands and his own natural responsibility to his daughters, 1–8
- ◆ Compromise with evil, 8
- ◆ Any intention to harm others, 9
- ◆ Refusing to heed warnings of impending judgment, 14
- ◆ Failing to act quickly to respond to God’s warnings, 15–16
- ◆ Not making a decisive break with sin and evil but looking back to its pleasures rather than forward to the salvation of God, 26

- ◆ Making an idol out of marriage and children, 31–35
- ◆ Drinking to the point of intoxication, 32–35
- ◆ Leading others to indulge in intoxicating substances, 32–35
- ◆ Incest, 32–38

Its consequences

- ◆ Physical disability, 11
- ◆ Violent destruction of cities and nations by God, 24–26, 29
- ◆ Loss of all our possessions, as Lot lost everything when Sodom was destroyed
- ◆ Vulnerability to the sins of others whom we have offended, as Lot was evilly treated by his daughters after he had offered them to the wicked men of Sodom

Salvation

Its conveyance

- ◆ Salvation comes to the unworthy, like Lot, who, though relatively righteous, was still a sinner (see notes above).
- ◆ Salvation comes from God, not man, 29.
- ◆ Salvation comes to us not because of our own merit, but because God remembers his covenant promises to Abraham and his descendants, whose descendants we are if we believe as he did, 29. *See Romans 4:12–25 and Galatians 3:15–18, 26–29.*
- ◆ Salvation comes as irresistible grace to those who of themselves cannot will to be saved, 16. *See Ephesians 2:1–10.*

The Last Things

The final judgment: The destruction of Sodom and Gomorrah points toward the final judgment of God, when all but a small minority will be utterly destroyed by the righteous wrath of God, 29. *See Matthew 7:13–14; and Revelation 14–15; 18–19; 21:27.*

Life

Ethical imperatives

- ◆ Extend hospitality to strangers as Lot did.
- ◆ Do not enter into close relationships and binding commitments with unbelievers, especially those who have given themselves over to rank dissipation and debauchery.
- ◆ Do all we can to protect those under our care.
- ◆ Do all we can to keep our children from marrying unbelievers, as Lot's daughters did.
- ◆ Take God's warnings of impending judgment seriously and do all we can to prepare for the final judgment.
- ◆ Prepare for the coming judgment of God upon nations or cities that officially set themselves against God and his laws, like the United States of America and all nations that persecute God's people as a matter of policy. If we can, we should seek ways to move to a place that has not formally turned its back on God. *See Mark 13:14–18.*
- ◆ Do all we can to warn others of the impending temporal calamities that God sends upon people who consciously rebel against him.
- ◆ Exert every effort to warn people of the coming Day of Judgment, when Christ shall save his people and consign all unrepentant sinners to eternal hell. *See Matthew 25:25–46.*

Genesis 20

Truth

Revelation

Its cumulative fullness: Biblical revelation is a consecutive, cumulative, and coherent whole, with later passages referring to and incorporating earlier ones.

- ◆ Abraham's fear led him to say that Sarah was his sister, 2. *See Genesis 12:11–13; 26:7.*
- ◆ The local ruler took Sarah into his house, 2. *See Genesis 12:14–15.*
- ◆ God punished the ruler for taking another man's wife, though the man did so unwittingly, 18. *See Genesis 12:17.*
- ◆ God showed the local ruler that Sarah was another man's wife, and, after rebuking Abraham, he quickly restored her to Abraham before he had had sexual relations with her, 3–7. *See Genesis 12:17–20; 26:8–11.*
- ◆ God revealed his will through dreams, 3, 6. *See Genesis 28:12; 31:10–11; 37:5–9; 40:5; 41:1; Numbers 12:6; Judges 7:13; 1 Kings 3:5; Daniel 2:3; 4:5; 7:1; and Matthew 1:20; 2:13–14.*
- ◆ Abraham became even richer because of this incident, 14–16. *See Genesis 12:16; 26:12–13.*
- ◆ God heard Abraham's intercessory prayer, 17. *See Genesis 18:23–32; 19:29.*

God

His greatness

- ◆ He is omnipresent and omniscient, seeing and knowing everything, 3, 6, 7.
- ◆ He is omnipotent, able to punish and even kill those who break his holy laws, 7, 18.
- ◆ He has life in himself and the power to recreate life in humans through sexual relations, 17.
- ◆ He has the power to heal, 17.

His goodness

- ◆ He graciously warned Abimelech not to touch Sarah, Abraham's wife, 3.
- ◆ He cares passionately for the sanctity of marriage, 3–7, 18.
- ◆ He is just and will not punish the righteous when they repent of their sins, 4.
- ◆ He kindly prevented Abimelech from having sexual relations with Sarah and thus incurring divine judgment, 6.
- ◆ He is the God of truth and he hates all lying, 12.
- ◆ He took Abraham from Ur to wander into the promised land, 13.
- ◆ He lavished grace upon sinful Abraham by moving Abimelech to offer him flocks and land and to give him money as a proof of his innocence, 16.
- ◆ He hears and answers the prayers of his people, 17.

Christ

His person: Christ is prefigured by Abraham, who interceded for sinners under God's judgment, 17.

The Holy Spirit

His person: The Holy Spirit is probably the one through whom God spoke to Abimelech in a dream, 3, 6. *See Joel 2:28.*

Sin

It includes

- ◆ All adultery, that is, sexual relations with someone other than one's spouse of the opposite sex, 3, 9, 18. This includes having more than one wife, either at one time or serially. *See Genesis 2:24; Matthew 5:31–32; and 1 Timothy 3:2.*
- ◆ Covetousness, as when Abimelech, who already had at least one wife, took another woman whom he could use for sexual pleasure, 2, 6–7, 17
- ◆ Lying, which includes dissimulation, that is, giving a false impression, 5, 9–13
- ◆ Disobeying God's law, even if one is not fully aware of all his commands and all the factors in any situation, 6–7
- ◆ Fear that leads to sin, 11
- ◆ Causing others to sin, as Abraham did when he forced Sarah to risk adultery in order to save his life, 11, 13

- ◆ Not believing God's promises, and even acting in a way that threatens to block the fulfillment of God's promises, as Abraham did when he gave Sarah, to whom God had promised a son, to the foreign king, 2, 11-13

Its consequences

- ◆ Bringing others into the path of God's judgment by causing them to sin, 3, 7, 9
- ◆ Infertility, 18
- ◆ Death, 3, 7
- ◆ The coming of God's wrath upon others under one's care, 4, 7, 18

Salvation

It includes

- ◆ Restraining us from further sin, 6
- ◆ Restoration of what we had lost because of our sin, 14
- ◆ Lavish blessings even after we have sinned, 14-17
- ◆ Answers to our prayers, 17-18

Note: These are indications of God's free grace and mercy, not his overlooking our sin.

Life

Ethical imperatives

- ◆ Honor and preserve God's plan for marriage by resolutely refusing to have more than one wife or husband.
- ◆ Ask God to deliver us from covetousness, including sexual lust.
- ◆ Obey God's warnings and his rebukes immediately.
- ◆ Refrain from giving false impressions, even to save ourselves from loss or danger.
- ◆ Pay any price to avoid committing a sin.
- ◆ Pray for people in need.

Genesis 21

Truth

Revelation

Its cumulative fullness: Biblical revelation is a consecutive, cumulative, and coherent whole, with later passages referring to and incorporating earlier ones.

- ◆ God's promise to give Sarah a son by Abraham, 1, 2; *see Genesis 15:4; 17:15–19, 21; 18:10, 14.*
- ◆ His name will be Isaac, 2, 4, 5, 8, 12; *see Genesis 17:19, 21.*

Note: the name of Hagar's son, Ishmael, is not once mentioned in this chapter, though much of it deals with him.

- ◆ Circumcision on the eighth day, 4; *see Genesis 17:10–14.*
- ◆ The great age of Abraham and Sarah and thus the great joy in the birth of Isaac, 5–7; *see Genesis 18:11–12 and Romans 4:16–19.*
- ◆ Hagar's son (Ishmael), and God's promise to Hagar about him, to make his descendants into a great nation, 9, 13, 18; *see Genesis 16:10; 17:20; 25:12–18.*
- ◆ "Cast out this bondwoman and her son," 10; *see Galatians 4:21–31, especially 30.*
- ◆ God hears Hagar's prayer, and the Angel of the Lord speaks to her in her distress, 17–19; *see Genesis 16:6–14.*
- ◆ A covenant between Abraham and Abimelech, 22–34; Isaac made a similar agreement with Abimelech's successor by the same name (or perhaps this was a dynastic title), *see Genesis 26:26–33.*
- ◆ Beersheba, 33; *see Genesis 26:33.*
- ◆ Abraham called on the name of the LORD, 33; *see Genesis 12:8; 13:4; 26:25.*

Its source

- ◆ God spoke to his chosen servants and messengers, communicating his will to them, 1–2, 4, 12–13.
- ◆ He also spoke to those who did not belong to his chosen people, 17–18.

God

His greatness

- ◆ He is omnipotent, enabling an aged couple to have a child, 1–2.
- ◆ He is omnipresent and omniscient, seeing and hearing everything that happens, 17, and also being present to those for whom he had a special regard, 20, 22.
- ◆ He hears oaths and covenants, 23.
- ◆ He is the everlasting God, 33.

His goodness

- ◆ He graciously spoke to Abraham and Sarah, promising them a son, 1.
- ◆ He kindly provided for Hagar and her son, 19.
- ◆ He was with Ishmael in some special way, 20.
- ◆ He was with Abraham in all he did, in such a way that his presence and blessing were evident even to pagans, 22.
- ◆ He honors his covenants and also requires that we honor covenants that we have made, 23.

Christ

His person: He is possibly prefigured in the Angel of God who spoke to Hagar, 17.

The Holy Spirit

His person: He may be prefigured in the angel who opened the eyes of Hagar to see the well, 19: *see Ephesians 1:17–18*.

The People of God

Their identity: The people of God are those who call upon his name in faith, 33.

Their marks: The people of God must expect to be persecuted, 9. *See Galatians 4:29*.

Sin

It includes

- ◆ Mocking God's people, 9
- ◆ Giving into the fear that God has abandoned us, 17

Salvation

Its conveyance

- ◆ Salvation – here in the form of rescue from physical death – comes even to non-Jews and women, 17–19. *See John 4:10–42.*
- ◆ Salvation comes to us when we are utterly at the end of our resources, 15–19.
- ◆ Salvation comes when God opens the eyes of our hearts to see the life – here represented by water – that he offers us in Christ, 19. *See John 4:10–14; 7:37–39; 9:1–41.*
- ◆ Salvation of the soul comes to those who do not rely on their performance – represented here by Hagar – but on God's free grace. *See Galatians 3:1–4:7, 21–31.*

Life

Ethical imperatives

- ◆ Trust God to fulfill all his promises to us as recorded in Scripture, even when such fulfillment seems an impossibility.
- ◆ Obey God, even when he commands us to get rid of something every important to us or separate from someone whom we love but who is hindering the will of God in us or causing trouble to our family. This is not an excuse for divorce. *See 1 Corinthians 7:12–14.*
- ◆ Cry out to God when we are utterly hopeless and helpless.
- ◆ Ask God to open the eyes of our hearts to see the spiritual provision he has given us in Christ.

Genesis 22

Truth

Revelation

Its cumulative fullness: Biblical revelation is a consecutive, cumulative, and coherent whole, with later passages referring to and incorporating earlier ones.

- ◆ “God tested Abraham,” 1; *see Hebrews 11:17; James 1:2–5, 12–18; 1 Peter 1:6–7; 4:12–13; and Revelation 3:10.*
- ◆ “Your only son,” 2, 12, 16; *see John 3:16, where the same Greek word, “monogenēs,” is used as in the Greek translation of the Old Testament.*
- ◆ A burnt offering, 2; *see Genesis 8:20; 31:54.*
- ◆ An offering on a mountain, 2; *see Genesis 31:54.*
- ◆ The land of Moriah, that is, the area near Jerusalem, 2; *see 2 Chronicles 3:1, where we learn that David built the Temple of God on this mountain.*
- ◆ “Abraham rose early in the morning,” 3; *see Genesis 21:14.*
- ◆ “Where is the lamb for a burnt offering?” 7; *see Exodus 12:3–5; 29:39–41; 34:20; Leviticus 3:7; 5:6–7; 12:6–8; 14:10–13, 21, 24–25; Isaiah 53:7; John 1:29, 36; 1 Peter 1:19; and Revelation 5:6, 12.*
- ◆ “Abraham built an altar,” 9; *see Genesis 12:8; 13:4.*
- ◆ “The Angel of the LORD,” 11; *see Genesis 16:7–11; 21:17, 18; 31:11.*
- ◆ “Abraham lifted up his eyes and looked,” 13; *see Genesis 21:19.*
- ◆ “The LORD will provide,” YHWH, or “Yahweh Yireh,” Jehovah Jireh in older Bibles, 14; *see Matthew 6:33.*
- ◆ “By Myself I have sworn, says the LORD,” 16; *see Psalm 105:9.*
- ◆ “Blessing I will bless you,” that is, “I will surely,” or, “abundantly, bless you,” 17; *see Genesis 22:17–19; 26:3–4.*
- ◆ God’s covenant with Abraham and his descendants, 17–18; *see Genesis 12:2–3.*
- ◆ “I will multiply your descendants,” 17; *see Genesis 13:16; 15:5; 26:4; 32:12; and Hebrews 11:12.*
- ◆ “Your descendants shall possess the gate of their enemies,” 17; *see Genesis 24:60.*
- ◆ “In your seed all the nations of the earth shall be blessed,” 18; *see Genesis 12:3; 18:18; 26:4; Galatians 3:7–9, 14–18; Revelation 5:9–10; 7:9–10.*

God

His greatness

- ◆ He has the authority to command us to do anything, 2.
- ◆ He is omniscient, seeing and knowing everything, 11.
- ◆ He is able to make a ram get caught in a bush to serve as an offering, 13.
- ◆ He is able to provide all that we need, 14.
- ◆ He has the power to give all sorts of blessings, including children and lands, 17.

His goodness

- ◆ He graciously communicates to his chosen people, 1–2, 15–18.
- ◆ He prevented Abraham from killing Isaac, 12.
- ◆ He provided a substitute sacrifice, 13.
- ◆ He provides all that we need to serve him, 14. *See 2 Corinthians 9:8.*
- ◆ He is faithful, keeping his promises, 17.
- ◆ He cares for all peoples of the earth, 18.
- ◆ He rewards obedience, 16–19.

Christ

His person: Christ is prefigured here in

- ◆ Isaac, the only and beloved son who was offered as a sacrifice; *see notes above.*
- ◆ The Angel of the LORD, 11, 15; *see Genesis 16:7–14; 31:11, 13; Exodus 3:2–5; Numbers 22:22–35; Judges 6:11–12; 13:2–25; 1 Chronicles 21:15–17; and 1 Kings 19:5–7.*

The People of God

Their identity: The people of God include Abraham's descendants as well as people from all nations who are blessed if they have faith in Jesus Christ, 18; *see Genesis 12:3; 18:18; 26:4; Galatians 3:7–9, 14–18; Revelation 5:9–10; 7:9–10.*

Salvation

Its conveyance: Salvation comes to us through the self-sacrifice of Jesus Christ, the eternal Son of God, who became the Lamb of God who takes away the sin of the world, 7, 13-14; *see Exodus 12:3-5; 29:39-41; 34:20; Leviticus 3:7; 5:6-7; 12:6-8; 14:10-13, 21, 24-25; Isaiah 53:7; John 1:29, 36; 1 Peter 1:19; and Revelation 5:6, 12.*

The Last Things

The end of the age: The final state of the redeemed in the new heaven and new earth is prefigured in the promises to Abraham that his descendants would be multiplied from all nations of the earth, victorious over all their foes and greatly blessed, 17-18. *See Revelation 5:9-10; 7:9-10; 21-22.*

Note: These promises were partly fulfilled in the Conquest of Canaan by the Israelites under Joshua, the later conquests of David, and the inclusion of the Gentiles in the early church. They await the return of Jesus in glory before their complete fulfillment.

Life

Ethical imperatives

- ◆ Obey the clear commands of God immediately, no matter what the cost to ourselves.
- ◆ Offer ourselves as a living sacrifice to God. *See Romans 6:13; 12:1-2.*
- ◆ Trust God to fulfill his promises to us as contained in Scripture, as Abraham believed that God would raise Isaac from the dead. *See Hebrews 11:17-19.*
- ◆ Trust God to reward our acts of obedience, either now or when Christ returns.
- ◆ Praise God for providing Jesus as our Lamb who takes away our sin by his self-offering on the Cross. *See 1 Peter 1:18-21; 2:21-25.*
- ◆ Thank God for bringing the blessing of Abraham upon us.

Genesis 23

Truth

Revelation

Its cumulative fullness: Biblical revelation is a consecutive, cumulative, and coherent whole, with later passages referring to and incorporating earlier ones.

- ◆ Sarah's advanced age, 1; *see Genesis 17:17.*
Note: Sarah died in about the year 2028 B.C.
- ◆ Kirjath (or, Kirath) Arba, that is, Hebron, 2; *see Genesis 13:18.*
- ◆ "I am a foreigner and visitor among you," 4; *see Genesis 17:8; Hebrews 11:13; and 1 Peter 1:1; 2:11.*
- ◆ The fields and oaks of Mamre, 17, 19; *see Genesis 13:18.*
- ◆ The sons of Heth, that is, Hittites who had settled far from their homeland in Anatolia (modern Turkey), 3, 5, 7, 10, 18, 20; *see Genesis 29-32.*
- ◆ The family cemetery at the cave of Machpelah in the fields of Mamre, that is, Hebron, 17-20; *see Genesis 25:9; 35:27-29; 49:29-32; 50:12-13.*

Mankind

Our fallen state

- ◆ We will all die, sooner or later, 1-2.
- ◆ We naturally grieve and weep over the death of our loved ones, 2.

The People of God

Their identity: Like Abraham and his descendants for hundreds of years, God's people are pilgrims, aliens, and sojourners on this earth, 4; *see Hebrews 11:13; 13:14; and 1 Peter 1:1; 2:11.*

Sin

Its consequences

- ◆ The main consequence of sin is death for all mankind, 1-3.

- ◆ We also need rules and customs, with accepted means of verification, for transactions involving property, 6–20.

Life

Ethical imperatives

- ◆ Prepare for death, which comes to all of us, no matter how long we live.
- ◆ Such preparation may include buying a burial plot for ourselves and family.
- ◆ Expect to grieve the loss of our loved ones and to weep in sorrow, though, now, for Christians, not as those without hope. *See Acts 9:39 and 1 Thessalonians 4:13.*
- ◆ Honor our dead by giving them a proper burial.
- ◆ Do not, however, pay exorbitant prices for funeral expenses, as Abraham did because he was an alien resident. Simple burials should be encouraged, since we are stewards of God's money.
- ◆ See ourselves as pilgrims, aliens, and sojourners on this earth, and set our hope fully on the grace to be brought to us at the coming of Jesus Christ. *See 1 Peter 1:13.*

Genesis 24

Truth

Revelation

Its cumulative fullness: Biblical revelation is a consecutive, cumulative, and coherent whole, with later passages referring to and incorporating earlier ones.

- ◆ Abraham's advanced age, 1; *see Genesis 18:11; 21:5.*
- ◆ The LORD had blessed Abraham in all things, 1, 35; *see Genesis 12:2, 16; 13:2; 20:14.*
- ◆ "Swear by the LORD," 3; *see Genesis 14:22 and Matthew 5:33–37.*
- ◆ "You will not take a wife for my son from the daughters of the Canaanites," 3; *see Genesis 27:46; 28:6; Deuteronomy 7:3; and 1 Corinthians 7:39.*
- ◆ "Go to my . . . family, and take a wife for my son Isaac," 4; *see Genesis 12:1; 28:2.*
- ◆ "The LORD . . . who took me from my father's house . . . and who spoke to me," 7; *see Genesis 12:1–3; 13:15; 15:18; 17:8.*
- ◆ "He will send His angel before you," 7, 40; *see Exodus 23:20, 23; 33:2.*
- ◆ The city of Nahor, 10; *see Genesis 11:31–32; 22:20; 27:43; 29:5.*
- ◆ Women come to draw water in the evening, 13–14, 43, 45; *see Exodus 2:16 and John 4:6–14.*
- ◆ The young woman was very beautiful, 16; *see Genesis 12:11; 26:7; 29:17.*
- ◆ Mercy [*chesed*, New Testament, grace] and truth [faithfulness], 27; *see Genesis 32:10; Exodus 34:6–7; and John 1:14.*
- ◆ Hospitality to strangers, 31–33; *see Genesis 18:1–8; 19:1–3; 1 Timothy 3:2; Titus 1:8; and Hebrews 13:2.*
- ◆ Sarah bore a son in her extreme old age, 36; *see Genesis 21:1–7.*
- ◆ "The LORD, before whom I walk," 40; *see Genesis 5:22, 24; 17:1; Proverbs 4:11–12; Ephesians 4:1, 17; 5:2, 15; and Colossians 4:5.*
- ◆ "The LORD God, . . . who led me in the way of truth," 48; *see Psalm 25:5, 10.*
- ◆ "They blessed Rebekah," 60; *see Genesis 27:27–29; 28:1; 48:9, 15–16, 20; 49:1–28.*
- ◆ "She became his wife, and he loved her," 67; *see Ephesians 5:25–33 and Colossians 3:19.*

Its literary structure: Like the rest of Genesis, and indeed much of the Bible, this chapter tells the beautiful story of finding a bride for Isaac in a beautifully artful fashion.

God

His greatness

- ◆ He is transcendent, omnipotent, omniscient, and omnipresent, the “God of heaven and earth,” 3, 7.
- ◆ He is Yahweh, the LORD; this is his personal name, 7, 12.
- ◆ He is God, Elohim; this is a title indicating deity and power, 7, 12.
- ◆ He governs our lives individually and can ordain our path and our destiny, 7.
- ◆ He owns all the earth and can give parts of it to anyone he chooses, 7.
- ◆ He decides whether our ways will prosper, 21.

His goodness

- ◆ He graciously chose Abraham, took him from Ur to Canaan, and made precious promises to him, 7.
- ◆ He is the God of individuals, 12, 27, 42–48.
- ◆ He keeps mercy [lovingkindness] and truth [faithfulness] forever, 27.
- ◆ He leads us to places he wants us to go, 27, 48.
- ◆ He blesses people with prosperity, 31, 35.
- ◆ He sends his angel to make our way prosperous, 40.
- ◆ He answers prayer, 12–14, 42–48.
- ◆ He indicates his particular will by “speaking” through events, 51.

Christ

His person: Christ is prefigured here

- ◆ In Isaac, for whom a bride was sought by his father; *see Matthew 22:1–4 and Ephesians 5:22–33.*
- ◆ By Abraham’s servant, for Jesus was the Servant of God, who came from the Father to us, who were “far off,” to seek and to save us.

The Holy Spirit

His person: The Holy Spirit may be prefigured by the servant of Abraham, who was sent to persuade the girl to leave home and her family to let her go to marry a relative stranger.

The People of God

Their identity: The people of God are the believing descendants of Abraham and all others who, like Rebekah, leave everything, including foreign idols, to follow him.

Salvation

Its substance: If we see Rebekah as a type, or prefiguring, of the church, then salvation

- ◆ Originates with the Father's decision to seek a bride for his son, 4
- ◆ Comes to us through the message of the gospel about Jesus, who is portrayed as a very rich person who is worthy of our total dedication, 35
- ◆ Brings spiritual wealth beyond computing, 53
- ◆ Involves our free decision to leave all and transfer our allegiance to him, regardless of the cost to us, 58
- ◆ Takes us to someone who loves us, 67

The Last Things

The end of time: Like all marriages, the union of Isaac and Rebekah points toward the final marriage supper of the Lamb and his redeemed people. *See Ephesians 5:32 and Revelation 19:7, 9; 21:2-3.*

Life

Ethical imperatives

- ◆ Marry only those who belong to the family of God, that is, those who trust and follow Jesus.
- ◆ Go to great lengths to seek those currently outside the family, so that we may tell them of Christ and his rich salvation.
- ◆ Faithfully communicate the gospel of God, as the servant did.

- ◆ Recommend that young women remain under the loving leadership of their fathers or older brothers and that they seek the counsel and blessing of the male leaders of the family in their choice of a mate.
- ◆ See Jesus as our true husband and cleave to him above all others and all else.

Genesis 25

Truth

Revelation

Its cumulative fullness: Biblical revelation is a consecutive, cumulative, and coherent whole, with later passages referring to and incorporating earlier ones.

- ◆ Genealogies, 2–4, 12–25; *see Genesis 5:1–22; 10:1–32; 35:23–26; 1 Chronicles 1:1–11:47; Matthew 1:1–17; and Luke 3:23–38.*

Note: These genealogies show that God’s revelation in the Scriptures is historical.

- ◆ Abraham’s burial at Machpelah, which is near Mamre, 9; *see Genesis 23:1–20; 35:27–29.*
- ◆ God blessed Isaac, 11; *see Genesis 12:3.*
- ◆ Beer Lahai Roi, where there was a well, 11; *see Genesis 16:13–14.*
- ◆ Isaac’s wife was barren, that is, infertile, 21; *see Genesis 11:30; 15:2–3; 16:1–2; and 1 Samuel 1:2.*
- ◆ Rebekah went and inquired of the Lord, that is, sought to know his will, 22; *see 1 Samuel 1:15; 9:9; 10:22.*
- ◆ “Two nations are in your womb,” 23; *see Genesis 17:4–6, 16.*
- ◆ “One people shall be stronger than the other,” 23, 30; *see 2 Samuel 8:14.*
- ◆ “The older shall serve the younger,” 23; *see Romans 9:6–13, especially 9:12.*
- ◆ Esau was hairy, 25; *see Genesis 27:11–23.*
- ◆ “Isaac loved Esau because he ate of his game,” 27–28; *see Genesis 27:1–7.*
- ◆ Rebekah loved Jacob, 28; *see Genesis 27:5–17, 42–46.*
- ◆ “Esau despised his birthright,” 34; *see Hebrews 12:16–17.*

God

His greatness

- ◆ He has the power to overcome barrenness and give children, 21.
- ◆ He knows everything, 22.

His goodness

- ◆ He fulfilled his promise to give Abraham a son by Sarah, 19–20.
- ◆ He hears and answers prayer, 21. *See Matthew 6:6–7; 7:7–12; 21:21–22; and 1 John 5:14.*
- ◆ He grants insight to those who ask in faith, 22–23. *See James 1:5.*
- ◆ He blesses his people, 11.

Christ

His person: Christ is prefigured in Isaac, the “only son” and heir of Abraham, to whom his father gave everything he had, 5. *See John 15:15.*

The People of God

Their identity

- ◆ In the Old Testament, the people of God were the descendants of Abraham through Isaac, 5, as distinct from the descendants of Abraham through Hagar and Keturah, 1–6, 8.
- ◆ In the New Testament, the people of God are all those who truly trust in Christ Jesus. *See Galatians 4:21–31.*

Salvation

Its substance: Our salvation is prefigured in the receiving of good gifts and the right of inheritance given to Isaac, for in Christ we are also heirs, 6. *See Romans 8:17 and Ephesians 1:3, 11.*

The Last Things

Our future: Here is a hint of a belief in an afterlife in the phrase, “was gathered to his people,” 8.

Life

Ethical imperatives

- ◆ Trust God to fulfill his promises to us as he did for Abraham, 5, 20.
- ◆ Leave an inheritance to our children, 5.
- ◆ Treat non-believers with generosity, as Abraham was generous to his children by his concubines, 6.
- ◆ Pray for God to give us children if it is his will.
- ◆ Acknowledge God's sovereignty in our salvation, 23.
- ◆ Love our children equally and not have favorites like Isaac and Rebekah, 28.
- ◆ Do not live ungodly and worldly lives as Esau did. *See Hebrews 12:16.*
- ◆ Do not despise our heavenly birthright as Esau did, 34. *See Hebrews 12:16.*

Genesis 26

Truth

Revelation

Its cumulative fullness: Biblical revelation is a consecutive, cumulative, and coherent whole, with later passages referring to and incorporating earlier ones.

- ◆ “The first famine that was in the days of Abraham,” 1; *see Genesis 12:10–20.*
- ◆ “Abimelech king of the Philistines,” 1; *he was probably a son or grandson of the king mentioned in Genesis 20:1–2.*
- ◆ “The LORD appeared to him,” 2; *see Genesis 12:7; 17:1; 18:1; 35:9.*
- ◆ “Do not go down to Egypt,” as Abraham had in a similar situation, 2; *see Genesis 12:10–20.*
- ◆ “The land of which I shall tell you,” 2–3; *see Genesis 12:1; 15:7; 17:8; and Acts 7:4–5.*
- ◆ “I will be with you,” 3; *see Genesis 28:15; 31:3; Exodus 3:12; Deuteronomy 31:23; Joshua 1:5; 3:7; 1 Kings 11:38; Isaiah 43:2; Jeremiah 1:8, 19; 15:20; 30:11; 42:11; 46:28; Matthew 28:20; Acts 18:10; and Hebrews 13:5.*
- ◆ “And bless you,” 3; *see Genesis 12:2; 22:17; 24:35; and Galatians 3:13–14.*
- ◆ “The oath which I swore to Abraham your father,” 3; *see Genesis 22:16.*
- ◆ “Your descendants . . . as the stars of the heaven,” 4; *Genesis 15:5; 22:17; and Romans 4:18.*
- ◆ “In your seed all the nations of the earth shall be blessed,” 4; *see Genesis 12:3; 22:18; Galatians 3:8–9, 16; Matthew 28:18–19; and Revelation 7:9–12.*
- ◆ “Abraham obeyed My voice,” 5; *see Genesis 22:18; and James 2:21–23.*
- ◆ “She is my sister,” 7; *see Genesis 12:13; 20:2, 12–13.*
- ◆ Placing his wife in danger of adultery, 10; *see Genesis 12:10–12; 20:1–18.*
- ◆ “The LORD blessed him,” 12; *see Genesis 12:16; 13:2; 20:14; 24:1; 25:11; 26:3.*
- ◆ “The wells which his father’s servants had dug,” 15; *see Genesis 21:25, 30.*
- ◆ “Go away from us, for you are much mightier than we,” 16; *see Exodus 1:9.*
- ◆ “He called [the wells] by the names which his father had called them,” 18; *see Genesis 21:31.*
- ◆ “The herdsmen of Gerar quarreled with Isaac’s herdsmen,” 20; *see Genesis 21:25.*

- ◆ “We shall be fruitful in the land,” 22; *see Genesis 1:28; 17:6; 28:3; 41:52; and Exodus 1:7.*
- ◆ “And the LORD appeared to him,” 24; *see Genesis 12:7; 17:1; 18:1; 26:2; 35:9; 48:3; Exodus 3:16; 6:3; 16:10; Leviticus 9:23; Numbers 16:19; Judges 6:12; 1 Samuel 3:21; 1 Kings 3:5; 9:2; 2 Chronicles 1:7; 3:1; Jeremiah 31:3; Matthew 1:20; 2:19; Mark 16:9, 12, 14; Acts 7:2, 26, 30; 26:16; and 1 Corinthians 15:6–8.*
- ◆ “I am the God of your father Abraham,” 24; *see Genesis 17:7–8; 24:12; and Exodus 3:6.*
- ◆ “Do not fear, for I am with you,” 24; *see Genesis 15:1 and Isaiah 41:10.*
- ◆ “I will bless you and multiply your descendants,” 24; *see Genesis 26:4 and verses cited there; Genesis 17:7; 22:17; 28:14; 30:27; 39:5; and Deuteronomy 13:17.*
- ◆ “And called on the name of the LORD,” 25; *see Genesis 4:26; 12:8; 13:4; 21:33; 33:20; Psalm 116:17; Joel 2:32; Zephaniah 3:9; Acts 2:21; and 1 Corinthians 1:2.*
- ◆ Abimelech and Philcol, 26; *see Genesis 21:22; since this event took place 90 years after the treaty previously made with Abraham, these must be titles or perhaps the sons or grandsons had the same names.*
- ◆ “An oath, . . . a covenant,” 28, 31; *see Genesis 21:22–32, which records an earlier pact between Abraham and the leaders of Gerar.*
- ◆ Beersheba, 33; “Well of the oath,” or “well of the seven”; this is the same place where Abraham had made a covenant with Abimelech and Philcol, and which Abraham had named Beersheba; *see Genesis 21:32.*
- ◆ Isaac “took wives,” both of them Hittites, that is, not descendants of Abraham, 34; *see Genesis 24:3–4; 36:2; and Ruth 1:4. This practice was later explicitly forbidden for Israel by God, and the same rule applies to Christians; see Deuteronomy 7:3; 1 Corinthians 7:39; and 2 Corinthians 6:14–16.*
- ◆ “They were a grief . . . to Isaac and Rebekah,” 35; *see Genesis 27:46; 28:1.*

God

His greatness

- ◆ He owns the whole world and can give parts of it to whomever he wishes, 2–3.

- ◆ He has the power to give many children and descendants, 4.

His goodness

- ◆ He appeared to his chosen people at different times in their history, 2, 23.
- ◆ He warned Isaac not to go to Egypt but to remain in the Promised Land, thus saving Isaac from temptation, 2.
- ◆ He gave the Promised Land to the descendants of Abraham, 2–4.
- ◆ He was with his people always, 3, 24, 28, and he still is for believers in Christ. *See Matthew 28:20.*
- ◆ He blesses his people, 3.
- ◆ He gives children, 4.
- ◆ He plans to bring blessing to all the peoples of the earth through faith in Christ, 4. *See Matthew 28:18–20 and Scriptures cited above.*
- ◆ He revealed his will and his ways to his chosen messengers and through them to his people, 5. *See Psalm 147:19–20.*
- ◆ He sometimes protects his people (in this case Sarah) from sin, 6–9. *See 1 Corinthians 10:13.*
- ◆ He blessed Isaac even after he had sinned by lying about his wife Sarah, 12–13.
- ◆ He protects his people and provides for them, 16–33.
- ◆ He is the faithful God of Abraham, the patriarchs, and all his believing people, 24.
- ◆ He revealed his personal, covenant name, to his chosen people, 25.
- ◆ He allows painful consequences to come to those who disobey him and dishonor their parents, 34–35.

Christ

His person: Christ is prefigured in

- ◆ The “seed” or descendant, of Abraham and Isaac (and later Jacob) in whom all nations will be blessed, 4; *see Galatians 3:16.*
- ◆ The heir of God, to whom all things have been given, 4; *see Psalm 2:8; Romans 8:17; and Hebrews 1:4.*

- ◆ The only one who fully and completely kept all God's commandments, 5; *see 1 John 2:1.*
- ◆ The one whom God has blessed with all the riches of heaven and earth, 12–13; *see Colossians 2:3, 9.*
- ◆ The Great Shepherd who owns myriads of “sheep,” that is, his redeemed people, 14; *see John 10:11–16; and Hebrews 13:20.*
- ◆ The one who gives us the water of life, 32; *see John 4:10–14.*

Note: This event took place at a well that Jacob, Isaac's son, had dug.

The Holy Spirit

His person: He is prefigured in the constant supply of refreshing waters of life, 32. *See Romans 8:10* (where the NKJV has the correct translation, “the Spirit is life”).

Mankind

Our fallen state: Even in our fallen condition, we still have some knowledge of right and wrong, 8–11.

The People of God

Their identity

- ◆ In the Old Testament, the people of God were the descendants of Abraham through Isaac and Jacob, whose name was changed to Israel. *See Genesis 12:1–3; 15:5; 17:1–19; 18:9–15; 22:17–18; and Exodus 3:15.*
- ◆ In the New Testament, all those who truly believe in and follow Jesus Christ belong to the people of God. *See Acts 2:5, where “devout men” refers to God-fearing Gentiles, Acts 2:38–39; Romans 3:20–4:25; 9:6–13, 22–33; 1 Corinthians 1:2; Galatians 3:22–4:7; Ephesians 2:20–22; and Revelation 7:9–17.*

Sin

It includes

- ◆ Lying, 7, 9
- ◆ Adultery, that is, having sexual relations, or sexual intimacy, with anyone other than our spouse in a lifelong one–man, one–woman marriage

- ◆ Mistreating God's people, 15, 18, 20

Salvation

Its benefits

- ◆ God's blessing, 3; *see Galatians 3:16 and Ephesians 1:3-14.*
- ◆ The constant and eternal presence of God in Christ, 24; *see Matthew 28:10.*
- ◆ Membership in the people of God, that is, all who trust in God's Word, now revealed to us as Jesus Christ, as Abraham and the patriarchs did, 4, 24; *Galatians 3:26-29.*
- ◆ The promise that we shall inherit the world when Christ returns, 3; *Matthew 5:5; Romans 4:13; and 1 Peter 1:3-4.*

Life

Ethical imperatives

- ◆ Thank God for including us in the people of God, and thus making us recipients of many blessings and heirs of all that he has promised
- ◆ Trust that God will supply all our needs, 2, 12-13.
- ◆ Trust God to take care of us and not resort to sinful practices to save our lives.
- ◆ Honor the marriage bond and vows and not expose ourselves or our spouses to temptation to adultery.
- ◆ Expect to find common grace among non-believers, 8-10.
- ◆ Expect to be treated badly and even persecuted by unbelievers, 15-21. *See 2 Timothy 3:12 and 1 Peter 4:12.*
- ◆ Insofar as it is in our power, live peaceably with our neighbors, even giving way to their encroachments on our "rights" when we can, as Isaac did repeatedly. *See Matthew 5:28-48 and Romans 12:14, 17-18.*
- ◆ Come to Christ constantly for a fresh supply of the Holy Spirit, as the ancients came daily to their wells. *See John 7:37-39.*
- ◆ Marry only sincere believers in Christ, not unbelievers or nominal "Christians," 34-35.

Genesis 27

Truth

Revelation

Its cumulative fullness: Biblical revelation is a consecutive, cumulative, and coherent whole, with later passages referring to and incorporating earlier ones.

- ◆ “When Isaac was old,” 1; *see Genesis 35:28.*
- ◆ “His eyes were dim,” 1; *see Genesis 48:10 and 1 Samuel 3:2.*
- ◆ “I do not know the day of my death,” 2; *see Proverbs 27:1 and James 4:14.*
- ◆ “Take your weapons,” 3; *see Genesis 25:27–28.*
- ◆ “Make me savory food,” 4; *see Genesis 25:29–35.*
- ◆ “Esau is a hairy man,” 11; *see Genesis 25:25.*
- ◆ “I shall bring a curse upon myself,” 12; *see Genesis 9:25.*
- ◆ “Kissed him,” 27; *see Genesis 29:13.*
- ◆ “May God give you . . .,” 28; *see Hebrews 11:20.*
- ◆ “The dew of heaven,” 28, 39; *see Deuteronomy 33:13, 28; 2 Samuel 1:21; Micah 5:7; and Zechariah 8:12–13.*
- ◆ “The fatness of the earth,” 28; *see Genesis 45:18 and Numbers 18:12.*
- ◆ “Plenty of grain and wine,” 28; *see Deuteronomy 7:13; 33:28.*
- ◆ “He cried with an exceedingly great and bitter cry, and said to his father, ‘Bless me – me also, O my father!’” 34; *see Hebrews 12:17.*
- ◆ “Is he not rightly named Jacob [supplanter, lit., “one who takes the heel”]?” 36; *see Genesis 25:26, 32–34.*
- ◆ “He took away my birthright,” 36; *see Genesis 25:29–34 and Hebrews 12:16–17.*
- ◆ “I have made him your master,” 37, 40.
- ◆ “Isaac his father blessed him,” 39; *see Hebrews 11:20.*
- ◆ “You shall break his yoke from your neck,” 40; *see 2 Kings 8:20–22.*

God

His greatness

- ◆ He is God, Elohim, the all–powerful one, 20.
- ◆ He has power over all natural and human phenomena and actions, 27–29.

- ◆ He can even use human sin to accomplish his divine purposes, as his use of Rebecca and Jacob illustrates. *See Romans 9:6–13.*

His goodness

- ◆ He bestows blessing, including salvation, upon those whom he sovereignly chooses. *See Romans 9:6–13.*
- ◆ He is Yahweh, translated as LORD, the personal name of the covenant God of Abraham and his descendants, 20.
- ◆ He gives earthly blessings to his people, 28.

Mankind

Our lives

- ◆ We are set in families.
- ◆ Within families, fathers have a unique authority, 1–4, 27–29, 37, 39–40.
- ◆ The words, especially blessing and “cursing,” of parents, specifically fathers, have a mysterious power to affect the minds and lives of their wives and children. *See Scriptures cited above, as well as 13.*
- ◆ Wives often usurp the authority of their husbands, to everyone’s harm, 5–17. *See Ephesians 5:22–24.*

The People of God

Their identity: In the Old Testament, the people of God were those descended from Abraham through Isaac and Jacob, as Isaac’s blessing of Jacob, using words and concepts from God’s blessing of Abraham, demonstrates, 27–29. *See Genesis 12:1–3.*

Sin

It includes

- ◆ All lying and deception, 7–26, 35
- ◆ Usurping the rightful authority of husbands and fathers, 7–15
- ◆ Theft, taking something that belongs to someone else, 36
- ◆ Hatred, 41

- ◆ Intent to kill, 41
- ◆ Marrying someone who does not belong to the people of God, 36; for Christians, that includes all who are not “in the Lord,” that is, in a vital relationship with Christ by faith and regeneration; *see 1 Corinthians 7:39 and 2 Corinthians 6:14.*
- ◆ Loving or favoring one child over another, 42–46

Life

Ethical imperatives

- ◆ Prepare for our deaths by making proper arrangements for the welfare of our families.
- ◆ Speak words of affirmation and blessing to our children.
- ◆ Honor the authority of our parents, especially our fathers, but also our mothers. *See Exodus 20:12.*
- ◆ Thank God for his sovereign choice of his people in Christ.

Genesis 28

Truth

Revelation

Its conveyance and forms

- ◆ God's revelation, or, unveiling, of himself and his will sometimes came through dreams, 12–16.
- ◆ These dreams were almost always interpreted by words that made the meaning clear, 13–15.

God

His greatness

- ◆ He is Elohim, creator of the world, 3; *see Genesis 1:1.*
- ◆ He is, therefore, Almighty and omnipotent, 3.
- ◆ He has the power to enable people to have children, 3.
- ◆ He dwells in heaven, far above us, 12.
- ◆ He rules over armies of angels, 12.
- ◆ He is eternal and living, 13.
Note: Yahweh, translated "LORD," is connected to the verb "to be"; see Exodus 3:14.
- ◆ He owns the entire earth and can give parcels of it to whom he chooses, 13.
- ◆ He is omnipresent, 15.
- ◆ He has the power to protect his people, 15.

His goodness

- ◆ He blesses his people in many ways, 3–4. *See Ephesians 1:3–14.*
- ◆ He chose Abraham and his descendants to be his special people, 4, 13–14. *See Genesis 12:1–3.*
- ◆ He revealed himself to his chosen servants and messengers, 13, 16–17.
- ◆ He is faithful to his promises, as he was faithful to his promise to Abraham, to multiply his descendants, 4, 13–14. *See Genesis 17:16; 35:11; 48:3.*
- ◆ He also promised to give the land of Canaan to Abraham's descendants, 4, 13. *See Genesis 17:8.*

- ◆ He promises to be with his people wherever they go at his command, 15. *See Genesis 26:3, 24; 31:3; and Matthew 28:20.*
- ◆ He will never forsake his people, 15. *See Deuteronomy 7:9; 31:6; and Hebrews 13:5.*
- ◆ He will fulfill all his purposes for us, 15. *See Numbers 23:19; Romans 8:29–30; and Philippians 1:6.*
- ◆ He treats his people with grace and mercy, forgiving their sins and showering them with blessings, as he did with deceitful Jacob, 13–15. *See Romans 9:10–15.*

Christ

His person: Jesus Christ is prefigured in

- ◆ The one in whom, by faith, there is now a multitude of the redeemed and assembly of peoples, 3; *see Galatians 3:14 and Revelation 5:9–10.*
- ◆ The true heir of all the world, 4; *see Psalm 2:8; Romans 8:17; and Hebrews 1:14.*
- ◆ The “ladder” between heaven and earth; that is, the one Mediator between God and mankind, 12; *see John 1:51; 1 Timothy 2:5.*
- ◆ The “seed,” or descendant of Abraham and Isaac and Jacob, in whom believing people from all the nations of the earth are blessed, 14; *see Galatians 3:16.*
- ◆ The one who is, by his Spirit, with his followers wherever they go, 15; *see Matthew 28:20.*
- ◆ The true house, or temple, of God, 17; *see John 2:19–21.*
- ◆ The true “gate of heaven,” through whom believers have access to God, 17; *see John 10:7–9; and 1 Peter 3:18.*

Mankind

Our lives

- ◆ God has set us in families; this is the story of the family chosen by God.
- ◆ In our fallen state, these families are marked by rivalry, favoritism, envy, deceit, and strife, but God can use these bad things to bring about his gracious purposes, as he did with Jacob’s fleeing his family.

- ◆ God tends to work in families, bringing several from one family to know him and receive his blessings, 13–15.

The People of God

Their identity

- ◆ In the Old Testament, the people of God were the descendants of Abraham, 3–4. *See Genesis 12:1–3; 15:5; 17:1–19; 18:9–15; 22:17–18; and Exodus 3:15.*
- ◆ In the New Testament, all those who truly believe in and follow Jesus Christ belong to the people of God. *See Acts 2:5, where “devout men” refers to God-fearing Gentiles, Acts 2:38–39; Romans 3:20–4:25; 9:6–13, 22–33; 1 Corinthians 1:2; Galatians 3:22–4:7; Ephesians 2:20–22; and Revelation 7:9–17.*
- ◆ From the beginning, God’s people have been pilgrims, not really belonging to this world, but looking forward to their true and eternal inheritance in the new heaven and new earth, 4. *See Hebrews 11:8–10, 13–16; and 1 Peter 1:4; 2:11.*

Sin

It includes

- ◆ Marrying someone who does not belong to the people of God, 1, 6–9; for Christians, that includes all who are not “in the Lord,” that is, in a vital relationship with Christ by faith and regeneration; *see 1 Corinthians 7:39 and 2 Corinthians 6:14.*
- ◆ Flagrantly disobeying the express will of our parents, 8–9

Salvation

Its source: Salvation comes to us entirely from God’s grace and not from our merit, as God’s dealing with Jacob abundantly illustrate, 13–15.

Its benefits

- ◆ The revelation of God to us, 13
- ◆ The promise of inheriting the renewed world when Christ returns, 13; *see Romans 4:13; 1 Peter 1:4; and 2 Peter 3:13.*

- ◆ God's manifold blessings, 14; *see Ephesians 1:3–14*.
- ◆ God's constant presence, protection, provision, and guidance, 15; *see Matthew 28:20 and Hebrews 13:5*.
- ◆ Constant access to God through faith in Jesus Christ, 17; *see Ephesians 2:18*.

The Last Things

Christ's return: When Jesus Christ returns, he will fulfill all the promises that God has made to his people, including those to Abraham and his family, in a renewed universe. *See Scriptures cited above.*

Life

Ethical imperatives

- ◆ Marry only those of the same spiritual family, that is, the household of faith, consisting of baptized and faithful followers of Jesus Christ, 2.
- ◆ Whenever possible, marry one of whom our parents approve, 1–2, 6–9.
- ◆ Believe all the promises of God as revealed in his written Word, as they are properly interpreted and applied to followers of Jesus Christ.
- ◆ Trust that God will guide, provide for, and protect us.
- ◆ Be sensitive to the presence of God even when we can't "see" or "feel" him.
- ◆ Set up spiritual "altars" to God, that is, consciously seek to record and remember God's special dealings with us, perhaps in a journal.
- ◆ Give a tithe of all our income for the work of God in and through his people, 22.

Genesis 29

Truth

Revelation

Its cumulative fullness: Biblical revelation is a consecutive, cumulative, and coherent whole, with later passages referring to and incorporating earlier ones.

- ♦ The country of the east, 1; *see Genesis 3:24; 25:6; Numbers 23:7; Judges 6:3, 33; and Hosea 12:12.*
Note: The land of the east generally speaks of a place far from God and his people, and even hostile to God and his people.
- ♦ Haran, 4; *see Genesis 11:31; 28:10.*
- ♦ Nahor, 5; *see Genesis 24:24; 28:2.*
- ♦ A well where flocks were watered, often by women in the evening, 2, 6–7; *see Genesis 24:10–11 and Exodus 2:15–16. Thus, a woman drawing water from a well at noon was very unusual. See John 4:6–26.*
- ♦ A shepherdess, 6, 9; *see Exodus 2:16.*
- ♦ A man who helps a woman at a well, 10; *see Exodus 2:15–16 and John 4:6–26.*
- ♦ Kissing as a sign of affection, 11; *see Genesis 33:4; 45:14–15.*
- ♦ Her father's relative, 12; *see Genesis 13:8; 14:14; 28:5.*
- ♦ "He ran to meet him," 13; *see Genesis 24:29–31 and Luke 15:20.*
- ♦ "My bone and flesh," 14; *see Genesis 2:23; 37:27; Judges 9:2; and 2 Samuel 5:1; 19:12–13.*

God

His greatness

- ♦ He is omnipotent, sovereignly governing all human actions so that they fulfill his redemptive purpose, as the "chance" meeting of Jacob and Rachel illustrates, 1–12.
- ♦ He is omnipresent and omniscient, seeing all things and understanding their significance, 13, 32, 33.
- ♦ He is the author of life and can cause women to conceive, 31.

His goodness: He not only sees, but cares about, the suffering of weaker people, 31.

Christ

His person: Christ is prefigured by

- ♦ Jacob, the man who helps a woman at a well, 10; *see John 4:1–26*.
- ♦ Jacob, the man who was extraordinarily strong and thus able to move the stone by himself, 10; *see Luke 11:21–22*.
- ♦ Jacob, the man who went to a far country to find and win a bride, 1–20.
- ♦ Jacob, the man who paid a high price for the bride upon whom he had set his love, 18–20; *see Ephesians 1:7; 5:2, 22–33*.

Mankind

Our characteristics

- ♦ In general, men are physically stronger than women, 10. *See 1 Peter 3:7*.
- ♦ In general, men are attracted to pretty women more than to ones who are not as pretty, 17; *but see Proverbs 31:30*.
- ♦ In the eyes of men, a pretty figure is almost as important as a pretty face, 17.
- ♦ In Scripture, fathers and older brothers have the authority and responsibility to “give” their daughters and younger sisters to a man in marriage, 15–28. *See Matthew 22:30 and 1 Corinthians 7:38*.
- ♦ There is a natural desire of women to please their husbands and be loved by them, 32.
- ♦ There is a natural desire in women to bear children, 31–35.

The People of God

Their identity

- ♦ In the Old Testament, the people of God were the descendants of Abraham through Isaac and Jacob, whose name was changed to Israel; all the tribes of Israel came from Jacob’s twelve sons. *See Genesis 12:1–3; 15:5; 17:1–19; 18:9–15; 22:17–18; and Exodus 3:15*.
- ♦ In the New Testament, all those who truly believe in and follow Jesus Christ belong to the people of God. *See Acts 2:5, where “devout men” refers to God-fearing Gentiles, Acts 2:38–39; Romans 3:20–4:25; 9:6–13, 22–33; 1 Corinthians 1:2; Galatians 3:22–4:7; Ephesians 2:20–22; and Revelation 7:9–17*.

Sin

It includes

- ◆ All deception, 23, 25
- ◆ Polygamy, for it inevitably produces envy and strife, 30–35, and the continuation of the narrative in chapter 30; in this case, Jacob thought he had no choice and, of course, having more than one wife was a common practice in those days. *See Genesis 2:24.*

Life

Ethical imperatives

- ◆ Marry someone who belongs to the household of faith, as Jacob married two of his relatives. *See 1 Corinthians 7:39.*
- ◆ Be willing to pay a high price to gain the woman we love, 27–30.
- ◆ Praise God when he showers us with blessings, 35. *See Ephesians 1:3–14.*
- ◆ Marry with the intent to have children. *See Genesis 1:28.*
Note: Some think that we have already “filled” the earth with people, or for other reasons decide not to have children. This attitude is wrong and selfish.
- ◆ Be understanding and kind towards wives who are unable to bear children.

Genesis 30

Truth

Revelation

Its veracity: The Bible does not gloss over the sins of mankind, including God's people, but speaks honestly about them, as this chapter, with narratives of competition between Rachel and Leah, and Jacob's crafty dealings with Laban, demonstrates.

Note: In contrast to the section about the two women, there is no mention of God by Jacob in the latter passage, nor of any prayer by Jacob to God.

Its interpretation: The Bible has some passages that are very difficult to interpret, including the stories about the use of mandrakes in conception, 14–17, and of how Jacob increased his flocks by some sort of selective breeding, 32–42.

God

His greatness

- ◆ He has the power to give or to withhold children, 6, 17–18, 20, 22–24, and to bring material prosperity, 27, 30.
- ◆ He is omniscient and omnipresent and can thus hear the prayers of his people anywhere, 6, 17, 22.

His goodness

- ◆ He is just and will vindicate his people and give them what is their due, 6. *See Genesis 18:25.*
- ◆ He hears the prayers of his people and sometimes grants what they have requested, 6, 17, 20, 23.
- ◆ He gives children to his people (and to others also, of course), 6.
- ◆ He deals fairly with people, 18. *See Ephesians 6:8.*

Mankind

Our fallen state

- ◆ Women naturally desire to have children, 1–24.
- ◆ In many cultures, sons are more desired than daughters, 6, 24.
- ◆ In many cultures, not having children is a cause for shame, 23.

The People of God

Their identity

- ◆ In the Old Testament, the people of God were the descendants of Abraham through Isaac and Jacob, whose name was changed to Israel; all the tribes of Israel came from Jacob's twelve sons. *See Genesis 12:1–3; 15:5; 17:1–19; 18:9–15; 22:17–18; and Exodus 3:15.*
- ◆ In the New Testament, all those who truly believe in and follow Jesus Christ belong to the people of God. *See Acts 2:5, where “devout men” refers to God-fearing Gentiles, Acts 2:38–39; Romans 3:20–4:25; 9:6–13, 22–33; 1 Corinthians 1:2; Galatians 3:22–4:7; Ephesians 2:20–22; and Revelation 7:9–17.*

Sin

It includes

- ◆ Envy, 1
- ◆ Thinking that children come from our own will, rather than from God, 2; *see Psalms 127:3–4; 128:3–4.*
- ◆ Sibling rivalry, 8, and the entire passage
- ◆ Dishonest dealings that lead to another's loss, 37–40

Life

Ethical imperatives

- ◆ Recognize that children come from God, not from our own will or action.
- ◆ Give thanks to God for the children he gives to us, 6, 18, 20, 23.

- ◆ Thank God for his sovereignty in using the sins of Laban, Jacob, and the two sisters to accomplish his purpose to make Abraham's descendants into a multitude, and in using all things to bring good to those who love him and are the called according to his purpose. *See Genesis 12:2; 15:4-5; and Romans 8:28.*
- ◆ Entrust ourselves to God and his care when others mistreat us.

Genesis 31

Truth

Revelation

Its cumulative fullness: Biblical revelation is a consecutive, cumulative, and coherent whole, with later passages referring to and incorporating earlier ones.

- ◆ The countenance shows unhappiness or anger, 2; *see Genesis 4:5.*
- ◆ “Return to the land of your fathers,” 3; *see Genesis 28:15, 20–21.*
- ◆ “I will be with you,” 3; *see Genesis 28:15; Exodus 3:12; Deuteronomy 31:23; Joshua 1:5; 3:7; 1 Kings 11:38; Isaiah 41:10; 43:2; Jeremiah 1:8, 19; 15:20; 30:11; 42:11; 46:28; Matthew 28:20; Acts 18:10; and Hebrews 13:5.*
- ◆ “The God of my father has been with me,” 5, 29, 42, 53; *see Genesis 21:22; 28:13.*
- ◆ “You know that . . . I have served your father,” 6, 38–41; *see Genesis 30:29.*
- ◆ “Changed my wages,” 7; *see Genesis 29:25.*
- ◆ “God did not allow him to hurt me,” 7, 29; *see Genesis 15:1; 20:6; Job 1:10; and Psalms 37:28; 105:14.*
- ◆ “God has taken away the livestock of your father and given them to me,” 9; *see Genesis 31:1, 16.*
- ◆ “The Angel of God,” 11; *see Genesis 16:7–12; 22:11, 15; 31:11–13; 48:16. He is the Angel of the LORD.*
- ◆ “The Angel . . . spoke to me in a dream,” 11; *see Matthew 1:20; 2:13, 19–20.*
- ◆ “I have seen all that Laban is doing to you,” 12, 42; *see Exodus 3:7 and Psalm 139:3.*
- ◆ “I am the God of Bethel,” 13; *see Genesis 28:16–22; 35:1, 6, 15.*
- ◆ “Now arise, get out of this land,” 13; *see Genesis 31:3; 32:9; and Matthew 2:12–14, 20–21.*
- ◆ “For he has sold us,” 15; *see Genesis 29:15, 20, 23, 27.*
- ◆ Household idols, 19; *see Genesis 35:2; Joshua 24:2; and Judges 17:5.*
- ◆ “But God had come to Laban in a dream,” 24; *see Genesis 20:3–7.*
- ◆ “You have deceived me,” 26; *see Genesis 25:26; 27:13–29, 36.*
- ◆ “Because I was afraid,” 31; *see Genesis 26:7; 32:7, 11.*

- ◆ “With whomever you find your gods, do not let him live,” 32; *see Genesis 44:7–12.*
- ◆ Making a covenant for mutual protection, 44; *see Genesis 21:27, 32; 26:28–29.*
- ◆ Stones (and sometimes a pillar of stones) as a witness, 46–48, 51–52; *see Genesis 28:18; 35:14; and Joshua 24:26–27.*

Its literary forms

- ◆ God sometimes revealed himself in dreams and visions, 11, 24; *see Genesis 46:2–4; Daniel 4:4–27; 7:1–28; 8:1–27.*
- ◆ But he always explained his will and his ways in specific words, 3, 11–13, 16, 24, 29.

God

His Triune nature: Although God is only one, there is some sort of plurality within this unity, as seen in the use of the term “The Angel” of God, who also appears to be God; some think this is a prefiguration of Christ, 11.

His greatness

- ◆ He is omnipresent, 3.
- ◆ He has the power to protect his people by governing the actions of men, even the enemies of his people, 7.
- ◆ He owns everything and can distribute goods to whomever he pleases, 9, 16.
- ◆ He is omniscient, seeing and knowing everything, 12, 49–50.

His goodness

- ◆ He reveals his will to his people, 3, 11, 16.
- ◆ He promises to be with his people, 3.
- ◆ He protects his people, 7, 42.
- ◆ He honors vows made to him by his people, 13.
- ◆ He sometimes even spoke words of warning directly to those who were not among his people, for the sake of his people, 24, 29.
- ◆ He is the faithful God of Abraham and the patriarchs and all who trust in him, 29, 53. *See Matthew 22:32.*

- ♦ He is awesome, properly inspiring reverence and fear, 42, 53. *See Hebrews 12:28–29.*

Mankind

Our lives

- ♦ God has placed us in families, with parents and siblings and children, as this entire chapter illustrates.
- ♦ Within this structure, the ties of marriage are – or ought to be – stronger than the ties between parents and children, 14–16. *See Genesis 2:24.*

Sin

It includes

- ♦ Envy, 1
- ♦ Deception, 7
- ♦ Exploitation, 7; *see James 5:4.*
- ♦ Mistreating and defrauding our children, 14–16
- ♦ All forms of idolatry, 19, 30, 35
- ♦ Theft, 19, 30

Its consequences

- ♦ Family strife, as the entire chapter illustrates
- ♦ God's displeasure, 24, 29, 42
- ♦ More sin, 34–35

Life

Ethical imperatives

- ♦ Work well and wholeheartedly for our bosses, 38–39. *See Ephesians 6:5–8.*
- ♦ Treat those who labor for us fairly and honestly. *See Ephesians 6:9.*
- ♦ Forsake the idols and futile ways of our forefathers, unlike Rachel. *See 1 Peter 1:18 and 1 John 5:21.*

- ◆ Trust in God to reward our labors, to watch over us when others are exploiting us, and eventually to vindicate us and provide for us, if not in this life then in the next. *See Ephesians 6:5–9 and Colossians 3:22–25.*
- ◆ Do not seek to hold onto our married children and our grandchildren but give them into the care of their spouses and of God.

Genesis 32

Truth

Revelation

Its cumulative fullness: Biblical revelation is a consecutive, cumulative, and coherent whole, with later passages referring to and incorporating earlier ones.

- ◆ “The angels of God,” 1; *see Psalms 34:7; 91:11; 103:20–21; 148:2; Numbers 22:31; 2 Kings 6:16–17; and Hebrews 1:14.*
- ◆ Calling a place by a new name because of a revelation of God’s presence, 2, 24–30; *see Genesis 28:12–19.*
- ◆ Discerning God in the appearance of an angel, 2, 24–30; *see Joshua 5:13–19.*

Note: No one has seen God the Father face-to-face, but only in the appearance of the Angel of God or of Jesus. See John 1:18 and 2 Corinthians 3:18.

- ◆ Speaking softly to appease another’s anger, 4–5, 9–12; *see Proverbs 15:1.*
- ◆ “Who said to me, ‘Return to your country,’” 9; *see Genesis 31:3.*
- ◆ “I am not worthy,” 10; *see Matthew 3:11; Luke 15:18–19; and Ephesians 3:8.*
- ◆ “I will not let you go until you bless me,” 26; *see Mathew 15:21–28; and Luke 18:1–5.*
- ◆ God changes a person’s name, 28; *see Genesis 17:5, 15; 35:10; and John 1:42.*

Its literary forms: Scripture is everywhere marked by exquisite literary features that add to its beauty and persuasive power.

- ◆ There is a play on the names Esau and Edom. Both mean “red,” 3.
- ◆ That Esau now lived in Edom indirectly indicates that he has given up the right to live in Canaan, the Promised Land, for he sold his rights to Jacob for a bowl of porridge, 3.
- ◆ The humble manner in which Jacob spoke to Esau through messengers stands in stark contrast to the way he mistreated his brother earlier, 17–20.
- ◆ There is a play on the name “Israel,” for it means “struggle with God.”

God

His greatness

- ◆ He commands an army of angels to do his will among men, 1–2. *See Psalms 24:10; 68:17; Deuteronomy 33:2; Joshua 5:14; and Habakkuk 3:8.*
- ◆ He has the power and resources to protect and provide for his people, 10, 12.

His goodness

- ◆ He keeps his promise to his people to be with them at all times and places, 1–2, 9, 30. *See Genesis 28:16; 31:3; Exodus 3:12; Deuteronomy 31:23; Joshua 1:5; 3:7; 6:16; 1 Kings 11:38; Isaiah 43:2; Jeremiah 1:8, 19; 15:20; 30:11; 42:11; 46:28; Matthew 28:20; Acts 18:10; and Hebrews 13:5.*
- ◆ He keeps his promise to provide for us and, sometimes, as with Jacob, to prosper his servants, 5, 12. *See Matthew 6:33.*
- ◆ He guides his people into the right paths, 9. *See Psalms 23:3; 32:8.*
- ◆ He is full of lovingkindness and truth, that is, faithfulness, and deals with his people out of love and faithfulness, 10. *See Exodus 34:6–7; Numbers 14:18; Nehemiah 9:17; Psalms 86:15; 103:7–10; 145:8; Joel 2:13; and Jonah 4:2.*
- ◆ He delivers his people from danger and death when it is his will to do so and will eventually deliver us from eternal death, 11. *See Psalms 40:1; 89:15, 29; Hosea 6:1–2; 1 Corinthians 15:20–28; 2 Corinthians 1:9–10; and James 5:15.*
- ◆ He kept his promise to multiply Abraham’s descendants through Isaac and Jacob, 12, 22. *See Genesis 26:4 and verses cited there; Genesis 17:7; 22:17; 28:14; 30:27; 39:5; and Deuteronomy 13:17.*
- ◆ He sometimes appeared to his people, 30. *See Genesis 12:7; 17:1; 18:1; 26:2; 35:9; 48:3; Exodus 3:16; 6:3; 16:10; Leviticus 9:23; Numbers 16:19; Deuteronomy 21:15; Judges 6:12; 1 Samuel 3:21; 1 Kings 3:5; 9:2; 2 Chronicles 1:7; 3:1; Jeremiah 31:3; Matthew 1:20; 2:19; Mark 16:9, 12, 14; Acts 7:2, 26, 30; Acts 26:16; and 1 Corinthians 15:6–8.*
- ◆ He blesses his believing people, 29. *See Genesis 12:2–3 and Ephesians 1:3–14.*

Christ

His person

- ◆ Jesus Christ is prefigured in the Man who wrestled with Jacob, whom Jacob rightly recognized as God in human form, 28, 30. Sometimes he is called the Angel of the LORD. *See Genesis 16:7–14; 22:11–18; 31:11, 13; Exodus 3:2–5;*

Numbers 22:22–35; Judges 6:11–12; 13:2–25; 1 Chronicles 21:15–17; and 1 Kings 19:5–7.

Note: Evangelical interpreters generally believe that this Angel was the pre-incarnate Son of God, who temporarily took on human form to appear to people before his incarnation as Jesus; since then, this God–Man has always had a human body joined to the Son of God.

- ◆ He often gives physical infirmities to his people, to remind them of their weaknesses and the need to rely on his strength, 25, 31. *See 1 Corinthians 12:7–10.*

Life

Ethical imperatives

- ◆ Expect God to send “angels” to us in human form to remind us of his love and care, 1.

Note: These are not usually real angelic beings, but people whom God uses to demonstrate his presence; sometimes, however, he does send heavenly angels to us.

- ◆ Read the Old Testament often, to see how God has blessed his believing people ever since the days of Abraham, 9.
- ◆ Exercise prudence in material possessions, realizing that unexpected but foreseeable losses could come to us, 7–8. *See Proverbs 27:12, 23–27.*
- ◆ Recognize that all we have comes from God’s merciful bounty, not our own wisdom or diligence, 10.
- ◆ Thank God for his manifold blessings to us, 10.
- ◆ Confess our fears to God, 11. *See Philipians 4:6–7.*
- ◆ Recall God’s promises to us in prayer to him, 12.
- ◆ Wrestle with God in prayer until he leads us to stop, 24–28. *See Luke 18:1–7; 2 Corinthians 12:7–10; and Colossians 2:1–2.*
- ◆ Thank God for sending his Son to become Jesus Christ, God in the flesh, who was seen face to face by many, whose “face” we may now behold in His Word by faith, and who will someday come in glory for us to see with our eyes, 30. *See John 1:14–18; 14:7; 2 Corinthians 3:18; 4:4, 6; and 1 John 3:2.*

Genesis 33

Truth

Revelation

Its cumulative fullness: Biblical revelation is a consecutive, cumulative, and coherent whole, with later passages referring to and incorporating earlier ones.

- ◆ Four hundred men, 1; *see Genesis 14:14–15; Abraham defeated an army of several kings with 318 men from his household.*
- ◆ “Esau ran to meet him and embraced him and fell on his neck and kissed him,” 4; *see Luke 15:20.*
- ◆ “Who are these [children]?” 5; *see Genesis 48:8.*
- ◆ “The children whom God has graciously given,” 5; *see Psalm 127:3 and Isaiah 8:18.*
- ◆ Seeing another’s face as a sign of favor, forgiveness, and acceptance, 10; *see Genesis 43:3; and 2 Samuel 14:24, 28, 32.*
- ◆ Material “blessings,” 11; *see Judges 1:15.*
- ◆ Appeasing another’s anger through a gift, 10; *see 1 Samuel 25:27; 30:26.*
- ◆ Tender care for women, children, and flocks, 13; *see Isaiah 40:11.*
- ◆ Jacob came to Shechem, 18; *see John 4:5.*
- ◆ “He bought the parcel of land,” 19; *see Joshua 24:32 and John 4:5.*
- ◆ “He erected an altar there,” 20; *see Genesis 8:20; 12:7; 35:7; and Exodus 29:18.*

Its literary forms: Scripture is everywhere marked by exquisite literary features that add to its beauty and persuasive power.

- ◆ Jacob, who stole Esau’s blessing and his inheritance by deception, now confers a blessing and material wealth upon his brother, 11. *See Genesis 25:29–34; chapter 27.*
- ◆ There is a play on the name “Succoth,” which means “booths,” 17.

God

His greatness

- ◆ He has the power and authority to give children, 5.
- ◆ He is God, the Creator of the world, and the only true God, 20. *See Genesis 1:1.*

His goodness

- ◆ He is full of mercy and kindness and often uses people to reflect his love to the unworthy, 10. *See Exodus 34:6–7; Numbers 14:18; Nehemiah 9:17; Psalms 86:15; 103:7–10; 145:8; Joel 2:13; Jonah 4:2; Ephesians 4:32–5:1; and Colossians 3:12.*
- ◆ He graciously became the God of Israel (Jacob), as he had been the God of Abraham, 20. *See Genesis 17:7–8; 24:12; and Exodus 3:6.*

Christ

His person: Jesus Christ is prefigured in the gracious attitude of Esau toward his brother, whom he had once rightly considered his mortal enemy, 4–9. *See John 20:19–21; Acts 9:1–6; and Galatians 2:20.*

Mankind

Our lives: We are created for harmonious relationships with others, so we greatly desire family harmony, 4–12.

Life

Ethical imperatives

- ◆ Seek reconciliation with estranged family members, regardless of the cost to us, 8–11. *See Genesis 32:13–21; Matthew 5:21–26; and Ephesians 4:1–3, 32.*
- ◆ Restore to others what we have wrongfully taken from them, as Jacob sought to do.
- ◆ Forgive those who have hurt us and defrauded us, being willing to forget and overlook their harmful actions toward us, 4. *See Matthew 5:43–48.*
- ◆ Erect “altars” to God to remember his gracious and faithful dealings with us; these may be physical, like a book or a plaque of remembrance, or mental, as we give thanks to God for taking care of us.

Genesis 34

Truth

Revelation

Its cumulative fullness: Biblical revelation is a consecutive, cumulative, and coherent whole, with later passages referring to and incorporating earlier ones.

- ◆ Dinah the daughter of Leah, 1; *see Genesis 30:21*.
- ◆ “When Shechem . . . saw her,” 2; *see Genesis 6:2; Judges 14:1; and 2 Samuel 11:2*.
- ◆ “He took her,” 2; *see Genesis 20:2 and 2 Samuel 11:4*.
- ◆ “And lay with her and violated her,” 2; *see 2 Samuel 13:14*.
- ◆ “Give me this young woman as a wife,” 4; *see Judges 14:2*.
- ◆ “A disgraceful thing in Israel . . . a thing which ought not to be done,” 7; *see Deuteronomy 22:28–29; Joshua 7:15; Judges 20:6; and 2 Samuel 13:12*.
- ◆ “Make marriages with us,” 9; *see Deuteronomy 7:3 and 1 Corinthians 7:39*.
- ◆ “The sons of Jacob . . . spoke deceitfully,” 13; *see Genesis 27:6–36*.
- ◆ “To give our sister to one who is uncircumcised, for that would be a reproach to us,” 14; *Exodus 12:48*.
- ◆ “He was more honorable,” 19; *see 1 Chronicles 4:9*.

Its content: The Bible describes people as they really are and doesn’t try to hide the flaws of God’s people, as in this entire chapter.

Mankind

Our characteristics

- Men have a strong sexual drive that often impels them to take women by force and have sexual relations with them, 2.
- Women are generally physically weaker than men and are thus vulnerable to aggressive men, 2. *See 1 Peter 3:7*.
- Men can develop a strong emotional attachment to women, such that they will do anything to have the woman they love, 4, 8, 11–12.

- “Love” has many meanings, including a deep emotional desire to be with the person you love and a willingness to sacrifice for the beloved, 4, 8, 11–12.
- Fathers and brothers have, and often feel, an obligation to protect and care for their daughters and sisters, 6, 7, 13.

Sin

It includes

- ◆ Exposing oneself to temptation and trouble by leaving the protection of God’s people, 1
- ◆ Rape, 2
- ◆ Deceit, 13
- ◆ Marrying those who do not belong to the people of God, that is, unbelievers, 14
- ◆ Revenge and murder, 25–31
- ◆ Causing our parents shame and trouble, 30

Its consequences

- ◆ Physical harm and personal shame, 2
- ◆ The hatred of others, 13, 30
- ◆ Death, 23–26
- ◆ Material loss, 27
- ◆ Family life, 30

Life

Ethical imperatives

- ◆ Avoid close friendships with unbelievers.
- ◆ Avoid situations that would involve temptation or danger.
- ◆ Watch over our women and protect them.
- ◆ Avoid marriage with unbelievers.
- ◆ Refrain from hatred and vengeance. *See Romans 12:17–21.*

Genesis 35

Truth

Revelation

Its cumulative fullness: Biblical revelation is a consecutive, cumulative, and coherent whole, with later passages referring to and incorporating earlier ones.

- ◆ “I will make an altar there,” 3, 7; *see Genesis 12:7–8; 13:4, 18; 26:25; 28:18; 33:20.*
- ◆ “God, who answered me in the day of my distress,” 3; *see Genesis 32:7–33:16; Psalms 34:4, 6; 107:6.*
- ◆ “And has been with me,” 3; *see Genesis 28:15, 20; 31:3, 42; and Matthew 28:20.*
- ◆ Earrings used for idol worship, 4; *see Hosea 2:13.*
- ◆ A large tree used as a place of remembrance, 4, 8; *see Joshua 24:26 and Judges 9:6.*
- ◆ “The terror of God” protected his people from potential enemies, 5; *see Exodus 15:16; 32:27; Deuteronomy 2:25; 11:25; Joshua 2:9; and 1 Samuel 14:15.*
- ◆ “Luz (that is, Bethel),” 6, 15; *see Genesis 28:19, 22; 48:3.*
- ◆ “There God appeared to him,” 7; *see Genesis 28:13.*
- ◆ Deborah, Rebekah’s nurse, 8; *see Genesis 24:59.*
- ◆ “God appeared to him again,” 9; *see Genesis 32:30.*
- ◆ God blessed Jacob, 9; *see Genesis 32:29 and Hosea 12:4.*
- ◆ “Your name shall not be called Jacob anymore, but Israel,” 10; *see Genesis 17:5; 32:28; and John 1:42.*
- ◆ “I am God Almighty,” 11; *see Genesis 17:1; 28:3–4; and Exodus 6:3.*
- ◆ “Be fruitful and multiply,” 11; *see Genesis 1:28; 9:1, 7.*
- ◆ “A nation and a company of nations shall proceed from you,” 11; *see Genesis 12:2; 17:5–6, 16; 28:3; 48:4; and Romans 4:17.*
- ◆ “The land which I gave to Abraham and Isaac I give to you,” 12; *see Genesis 12:7; 13:15; 26:3–4; 28:13; 48:4; and Exodus 32:13.*
- ◆ “God went up from him,” 13; *see Genesis 17:22; 18:33.*
- ◆ “Jacob set up a pillar,” 14; *see Genesis 28:18–19.*
- ◆ “Poured a drink offering on it,” 14; *see Genesis 28:18 and Philipians 2:17.*

- ◆ Rachel died and was buried near Ephrath, that is, Bethlehem, 19; *see Genesis 48:7; Ruth 1:2; 4:11; Micah 5:2–3; and Matthew 2:6.*
- ◆ Rachel’s tomb, 20; *see 1 Samuel 10:2.*
- ◆ “Reuben lay with Bilhah, his father’s concubine,” 22; *see Genesis 49:4 and 1 Chronicles 5:1.*
- ◆ Jacob’s twelve sons, 22–26; *see Genesis 29:31–35; 30:18–20; 46:8–25; and Exodus 1:1–4.*
- ◆ “Mamre, or Kirjath Arba (that is, Hebron), where Abraham and Isaac had dwelt,” 27; *see Genesis 13:18; 18:1; 23:19; and Joshua 14:15.*
- ◆ “Was gathered to his people,” 29; *see Genesis 15:15; 25:8; 49:33.*

Its roots in history

- ◆ Biblical revelation is set within history, as these names of people and places and events reveal. These are real people who lived in identifiable places at particular times in history.
- ◆ Biblical revelation is not mythical or legendary, or exaggerated, like other “histories” in the Ancient Near East.

God

His greatness

- ◆ He has the authority to command people to go and do his will, 1.
- ◆ He is awe-inspiring, even terrifying, to his enemies, 5.
- ◆ He has the authority to change our names and command our destiny, 10.
- ◆ He is Almighty, the Creator and Ruler of the universe, 11.
- ◆ He has the power to give children, 11.
- ◆ He has the authority to prosper families and dynasties and to raise up rulers, 11.
- ◆ He owns the world and can give parcels of it to whomever he chooses, 12.

His goodness: (See Scriptures referenced above)

- ◆ He graciously appeared to his chosen servants, 1, 7, 9.
- ◆ He revealed himself in words to his chosen people, 1, 11, 15.
- ◆ He answered his people when they called to him for help, 3.
- ◆ He is with his people wherever they go, 3.

- ◆ He protects his people from premature or excessive harm, 5.
- ◆ He kindly allowed Jacob to wrestle with his Angel – the pre-incarnate Son of God – and to be transformed by him, and thus to have a new name, 10.
- ◆ He graciously promised to give the land of Canaan to Abraham’s descendants, 12.

Christ

His person: Jesus Christ is prefigured in

- ◆ The One who appeared to Jacob at Bethel, 1; *see Genesis 28:19 and John 1:51.*
- ◆ The One with whom Jacob wrestled and who changed his name to Israel, 10; *see Genesis 32:22–32.*
- ◆ The name Bethel, which means “house of God,” for he is the true Temple and dwelling place of God, 15; *see John 2:19, 22; and Colossians 1:19; 2:9.*

Mankind

Our fallen state

- ◆ Even in our fallen state, we are meant to bear children, 11, 22–26. *See Genesis 1:28.*
- ◆ Even in our fallen state, we are meant to reflect the kingly rule of Adam over the domains God has given us (such as our bodies, home, work, etc.), 11. *See Genesis 1:28.*

The People of God

Their identity

- ◆ In the Old Testament, the people of God were the descendants of Abraham through Isaac and Jacob, whose name was changed to Israel, 11. *See Genesis 12:1–3; 15:5; 17:1–19; 18:9–15; 22:17–18; and Exodus 3:15.*
- ◆ In the New Testament, all those who truly believe in and follow Jesus Christ belong to the people of God. *See Acts 2:5, where “devout men” refers to God-fearing Gentiles, Acts 2:38–39; Romans 3:20–4:25; 9:6–13, 22–33; 1 Corinthians 1:2; Galatians 3:22–4:7; Ephesians 2:20–22; and Revelation 7:9–17.*

Sin

It includes

- ◆ All forms of idolatry, both material and mental, 2, 4
- ◆ Fornication, that is, any sexual relations with anyone outside of marriage (which is a lifelong union between one man and one woman), 22; *see Genesis 2:24 and Exodus 20:14.*
- ◆ Incest, that is, sexual relations with a person in your immediate family, 22; *see Leviticus 18:6–19.*

Its consequences

- ◆ Death, 8, 18, 29; *see Genesis 2:17 and Romans 6:23.*
- ◆ Pain in childbirth, and in all that is associated with bearing children, 17; *see Genesis 3:16.*
- ◆ Deprivation of privileges, 22; *see Genesis 49:4.*

Salvation

Its benefits

- ◆ The gracious self-revelation of God, 1, 7, 9
- ◆ God's blessing and his blessings, 9; *see Ephesians 1:3–14.*
- ◆ A transformed character, 10
- ◆ God's promises of a prosperous future inheritance, 12; *see Ephesians 1:11, 14, 18 (though some scholars think that 11 and 14 refer to God's inheritance of his people); Colossians 1:12; and 1 Peter 1:3–4.*

Its recipients

- ◆ People who are morally unworthy to receive anything good from God, as deceitful Jacob was
- ◆ People who put away their idols, 2
- ◆ People who trust in God, as Jacob did, 10

Life

Ethical imperatives

- ◆ Listen for, and obey, God's leading in our lives, 1–3.

- ◆ Put away from us all that represents or tempts to idolatry, no matter how valuable or precious, 2, 4.
- ◆ Remember God's previous dealings with us, 3, 7, 14–15.
- ◆ Claim the promises of spiritual blessings that come to those who trust in Christ.
- ◆ Remember our departed loved ones with reverence and gratitude, 8, 20, 29.
- ◆ Thank God for including us in the people of God, those who trust in his Son Jesus.
- ◆ Welcome the arrival of children as a gift from God, 11.
- ◆ Expect women to have difficulty in all aspects of child-bearing; husbands should especially be tender to their wives when this aspect of the primal curse afflicts them, 17. *See 1 Peter 3:7.*
- ◆ Avoid all temptations to fornication and all forms of it.

Genesis 36

Truth

Revelation

Its cumulative fullness: Biblical revelation is a consecutive, cumulative, and coherent whole, with later passages referring to and incorporating earlier ones.

- ◆ “This is the genealogy [account, *NIV*] of Esau,” 1; *see Genesis 2:4; 5:1; 6:9; 10:1; 11:10; 11:27; 25:12; 25:19; 37:2.*
- ◆ “Esau, who is Edom,” that is “red,” 1; *see Genesis 25:30.*
Note: “Reddish rock formations, primarily sandstone, are conspicuous in the territory of the Edomites, located south and southeast of the Dead Sea.” (NIVSB)
- ◆ Amalek, the ancient enemy of Israel, 12; *see Exodus 17:8–16; Numbers 24:20; Deuteronomy 25:17–19; and 1 Samuel 15:2–3.*

Its roots in history: The Bible is set in history and records historical people and events, as this and other genealogies demonstrate.

God

His goodness

- ◆ He fulfilled his command/promise to Adam to “be fruitful and multiply.” *See Genesis 1:28.*
- ◆ He fulfilled his promise to Abraham that nations and kings would come forth from him. *See Genesis 17:6.*
- ◆ He shows his concern for the eventual salvation of people from many nations by listing the descendants of Esau, who was not the son of Isaac chosen by God. *See Genesis 12:3; 25:23; Malachi 1:2–3; Matthew 28:19; Romans 9:12–13; and Revelation 7:9.*

Mankind

Our lives

- ◆ God set us all in families.

- ◆ In the family, the father is normally the head of the household, so sons are named in most genealogies. *See Ephesians 5:22–24; 6:1–4; Colossians 3:18–21; and 1 Peter 3:1–7.*
- ◆ In general, God has appointed men to rule, as the list of sons, chiefs, and kings illustrates, though there are exceptions in Scripture. *See 1 Timothy 2:12; 3:1–13; and Titus 1:5–9.*

Life

Ethical imperatives

- ◆ Thank God for including Gentiles who believe in Christ among his chosen people. *See Ephesians 2:11–22; 3:6.*
- ◆ Thank God for our ancestors, even if they were not believers.
- ◆ Try to keep genealogical records for the sake of our posterity.

Genesis 37

Truth

Revelation

Its cumulative fullness: Biblical revelation is a consecutive, cumulative, and coherent whole, with later passages referring to and incorporating earlier ones.

- ◆ “Canaan, where his father was a stranger,” 1; *see Genesis 17:8; 23:4; 28:4; 36:7; Hebrews 11:9; and 1 Peter 1:1; 2:11.*
- ◆ “The sons of Bilhah and the sons of Zilpah,” 2; *see Genesis 35:25–26.*
- ◆ “A bad report,” 2; *see 1 Samuel 2:22–24.*
- ◆ Parental favoritism, 3; *see Genesis 27:1–10; 44:20.*
- ◆ “A tunic of many colors,” or, a long-sleeved robe, a mark of special status among the brothers, 3; *see Genesis 37:23, 32; Judges 5:30; and 1 Samuel 2:19.*
- ◆ “They hated him,” 4–5; *see Genesis 27:41; 49:23; 1 Samuel 17:28; and John 15:18–20.*
- ◆ Revelation through dreams, 5–10; *see Genesis 28:12–17; Daniel 2:1–46; 4:1–33; 7:1–28; and Matthew 1:20–25; 2:12.*
- ◆ “Your sheaves . . . bowed down to my sheaf,” 7; *see Genesis 42:6–7; 43:26; 44:14; 50:18.*
- ◆ “Shall you indeed reign over us?” 8; *see Genesis 42:6; 44:18–24, 30–34 (note how often the brothers refers to themselves as Joseph’s “servants”); Exodus 2:14; and Acts 7:27.*
- ◆ “His brothers envied him,” 11; *see Matthew 27:17–18; and Acts 7:9.*
- ◆ The youngest son sent to his brothers by their father, 14; *see 1 Samuel 17:12–19.*
- ◆ “They conspired against him to kill him,” 18; *see 1 Samuel 19:1; Psalm 31:13; 37:12, 32; Matthew 21:38; 26:3–4; 27:1; Mark 14:1; John 11:53; and Acts 23:12.*
- ◆ The favored son is stripped of his outer clothing, 23; *see Matthew 27:28.*
- ◆ Ishmaelites, that is, Midianites, 25, 27–28, 36; *see Genesis 25:4 and Judges 8:22, 24, 26.*
- ◆ Deceiving one’s father, 32–35; *see Genesis 27:14–29.*

Its content and source

- ◆ Sometimes revelation came through dreams, 5–10.
- ◆ Genesis 37–50 is the tenth and last section of Genesis, all of which are introduced by “this is the history [account] of,” or “this is the genealogy of.”

Its typological nature: Many people, institutions, and events of the Old Testament serve as “types,” or foreshadowings, of Christ; Joseph is one of these.

God

His greatness: Though God is not named in this chapter, Joseph later correctly saw the hand of divine providence in his brothers’ betrayal, thus indicating his belief in the complete sovereignty of God. *See Genesis 50:20.*

His goodness: Likewise, he believed that God’s providence was working for his good and the good of God’s people. *See Genesis 50:20.*

Christ

His person: Jesus Christ is prefigured by his

- ◆ Being the favored son of his father, 3; *see Matthew 3:17.*
- ◆ Being hated by his own people for insufficient cause, 4; *see John 15:18–20.*
- ◆ Being envied by his people, 11; *see Matthew 27:17–18.*
- ◆ Being rejected as Lord by his people, 8; *see John 1:11.*
- ◆ Being conspired against by his enemies, 18; *see Matthew 21:38.*
- ◆ Being stripped of his clothing, 23; *see Matthew 27:28.*
- ◆ Going down into a deadly pit, 20, 22; *see Acts 2:23–24.*
- ◆ Being brought out of the deadly pit, 28; *see Acts 2:24.*
- ◆ Being sold for the price of a slave (20 shekels in those days, 30 shekels in Jesus’ day), 28; *see Matthew 27:9.*
- ◆ Being taken down to Egypt early in life, 28; *see Matthew 2:13–15.*

Mankind

Our lives

- ◆ In our current fallen state, family dynamics are often complicated, with a mixture of love and “hate,” 3–4.
- ◆ Older children, especially sons, have a responsibility to care for their younger siblings, 21–22, 26–27.
- ◆ Siblings feel some kinship with each other, even if they aren’t on good terms with each other, 27.

The People of God

Their marks: From the beginning, the people of God have been marked by gross sin and disobedience, like the sons of Jacob/Israel.

Sin

It includes

- ◆ Speaking badly about people behind their back, 2; *see 1 Peter 2:1.*
- ◆ Favoritism; loving one child more than the others, 3
Note: The tunic may have been a sign of the birthright, which Jacob intended to give to Joseph, though he was not the oldest.
- ◆ Envy, 4, 11
- ◆ Hatred, 4, 8
- ◆ Foolishly telling others of God’s messages to you, 5–10
- ◆ Intent to kill, 20
- ◆ Conspiring to kill, 18–20
- ◆ Betraying one’s relatives, 27
- ◆ Slavery, 28
- ◆ Lying and deception, 31–34
- ◆ Causing our parents unnecessary sorrow and grief, 31–35

Salvation

Its prefiguration: Salvation from eternal death is prefigured by Joseph’s being brought out of the pit.

Life

Ethical imperatives

- ◆ See ourselves as “strangers,” that is, foreigners, alien residents, on this earth.
See 1 Corinthians 7:29–31 and Colossians 3:1–4.
- ◆ Avoid any form of multiple wives and husbands; these only bring trouble.
- ◆ Guard our hearts and our actions against any semblance of favoritism.
- ◆ Refrain from envy and hatred when others are favored more than we are.
- ◆ Do not foolishly tell others what we think God has told us about our future blessedness.
- ◆ Avoid all the sins featured in this chapter.
- ◆ Read the Old Testament to see how God dealt with his people in previous ages.
- ◆ Seek to discern whether there are types of Christ in an Old Testament passages, even as we exercise restraint and try to avoid allegorical readings.
- ◆ Try to protect the weak against the strong.
- ◆ Trust God to take care of us even when our enemies do us grave harm.
- ◆ Thank God for sending Jesus to suffer in our place and to rise for our salvation.

Genesis 38

Truth

Revelation

Its veracity: The Bible almost never glosses over the sins of God's people, as this chapter demonstrates.

God

His greatness

- ◆ He sees and knows everything we do, 7.
- ◆ He has the power to give life and to take it, 7, 10.

His goodness

- ◆ He is holy and righteous and must punish sin, 7, 10.
- ◆ He is able to make something good come out of something evil, as Jesus' descent from Judah by Tamar demonstrates, 29. *See Matthew 1:3.*

Christ

His person

- ◆ He was descended from Judah and Tamar, 18–29; *see Matthew 1:3.*
- ◆ Though sinless, he was identified with us in our sins, partly by his descent from egregious sinners like Judah.

Mankind

Our fallen state

- ◆ Men are subject to a very powerful sex drive, partly as a result of the strong hormone testosterone, which often leads them to commit sexual sin, 16–18.
- ◆ Women are subject to a very powerful desire to be married and to have children, 11–30.
- ◆ Our simple word cannot be trusted in certain situations, 17–18.
- ◆ We have an inborn sense of right and wrong, even though we often violate it, 26.

The People of God

Their marks: From the beginning, the people of God have been marked by egregious sins, as this chapter illustrates.

Sin

It includes

- ◆ Forming close alliances, especially marriage, with those who do not belong to God's people; for Christians, that means those who are not faithful followers of Jesus Christ, 1–2; *see 1 Corinthians 7:38 and 2 Corinthians 6:14–18.*
- ◆ Having sexual intercourse without the intent of possibly conceiving and bearing children; for men, willfully having an emission outside of sexual intercourse with one's wife, 9–10
Note: The question of whether married Christians may use birth control methods is highly controversial. This passage alone does not decide the issue, though it points in a certain direction.
- ◆ Failure to keep our promises, 26
- ◆ Any form of adultery, that is, having sexual intercourse outside the bounds of lifelong marriage between one man and one woman, including incest and harlotry, 16–26

Salvation

Its conveyance: Salvation comes to us through Jesus Christ, who became one with our human nature through his descent from Judah.

Life

Ethical imperatives

- ◆ Avoid dating and marriage with those who are not faithful followers of Jesus Christ.
- ◆ Reverently steward our sexual energies and abilities in a way that glorifies God and keeps his commands.
- ◆ Keep our promises.
- ◆ Ask God's help to avoid fornication and adultery.

- ◆ Avoid contact with those who are known to be sexually immoral, like prostitutes.
- ◆ Thank God for sending Jesus to become one of us, though without sin, to save us from our sins. *See Hebrews 2:14–18.*

Genesis 39

Truth

Revelation

Its cumulative fullness: Biblical revelation is a consecutive, cumulative, and coherent whole, with later passages referring to and incorporating earlier ones.

- ♦ “The LORD was with Joseph,” 2, 3, 21, 23; *see Genesis 26:24, 28; 28:15; 35:3; 1 Samuel 16:18; 18:12, 14, 28; Acts 7:9; and Matthew 28:20.*
- ♦ “The LORD made all he did to prosper,” 3; *see Psalm 1:3 and Joshua 1:8.*
- ♦ “Joseph found favor in his sight,” 4; *see Genesis 18:3; 19:19.*
- ♦ “Overseer of his house,” 4–5; *see Genesis 24:2, 10.*
- ♦ “The LORD blessed the Egyptian’s house for Joseph’s sake,” 5; *see Genesis 18:26; 30:27.*
- ♦ “Joseph was handsome,” 6; *see Genesis 29:17 and 1 Samuel 16:12.*
- ♦ Sinning against God, 9; *see Genesis 20:6; 42:18; 2 Samuel 12:13; and Psalm 51:4.*
- ♦ Potiphar’s “anger was aroused,” 19; *see Proverbs 6:34–35.*

God

His greatness

- ♦ He is omnipresent, 2.
- ♦ He is able to bring prosperity, 3.
- ♦ He is omniscient and sees what men do not see, 9.

His goodness

- ♦ He will always be with his people, 2.
- ♦ He blesses his faithful servants, 3.
- ♦ He is holy and must punish sin, 9.
- ♦ He shows mercy to his faithful servants, 21.

Mankind

Our created nature: We are created in the image of God, and we are meant to rule and to live in a hierarchical, though not despotic, social system.

- ◆ Joseph was put into a position of authority by the one who had authority over him, 2–4, 22–23.

Our fallen nature

- ◆ Some people are more good-looking than others, 6.
- ◆ We find good-looking people of the opposite sex attractive, 7.

Sin

It includes

- ◆ Sexual lust, 7; *see Proverbs 6:25; Matthew 5:27–30; and Ephesians 5:3–5.*
- ◆ Seeking to have an intimate relationship with someone else's spouse, 7–12; *see Exodus 20:14 and Matthew 5:27–32; 15:19.*
- ◆ Falsely accusing another, 13–18; *see Exodus 20:16.*
- ◆ Believing an accusation without making a thorough investigation, 19–20

Life

Ethical imperatives

- ◆ Trust that God is with us, even in the most adverse situations, 2, 21, 23.
- ◆ Do our work well, to the glory of God, 3–5. *See Colossians 3:22–25.*
- ◆ Expect sexual temptation.
- ◆ Ask God to keep us from falling into temptation. *See Matthew 6:13 and Luke 22:46.*
- ◆ Do all we can to avoid sexual temptation and sin, 12. *See 1 Corinthians 6:18.*
- ◆ Expect to be falsely accused, 13–18. *See Matthew 5:10–11 and 1 Peter 4:4.*

Genesis 40

Truth

Revelation

Its cumulative fullness: Biblical revelation is cumulative, because (1) God's ways of dealing with people were consistent and his plan of redemption was gradually unveiled over many centuries; (2) people tend to act in similar ways; and (3) certain customs were retained over time.

- ◆ The king's butler, that is, cupbearer, 1; *see Nehemiah 1:11.*
- ◆ The deadly anger of kings, 2; *see Proverbs 16:14.*
- ◆ Dreams and their interpretation, 5–22; *see Genesis 37:5–10; 41:1–36; Daniel 2:1–45; and Matthew 1:20–23.*
- ◆ Interpretation of dreams comes from God alone, 8; *see Daniel 2:11, 2:22, 27–28, 47.*
- ◆ The king holds a feast on his birthday, 20; *see Matthew 14:6–10.*

Its roots in history: Biblical revelation is set within history.

- ◆ The Pharaoh at this time was Senusert II, who reigned about 1894–1878 B.C.
- ◆ The chief butler, that is, cup-bearer, and the chief baker had to be completely trustworthy men, not vulnerable to being used by the king's enemies.
- ◆ Dreams and their interpretation were taken very seriously in the Ancient Near East.

Its source: Revelation sometimes came from God through dreams and their inspired interpretation.

God

His greatness

- ◆ He is sovereign over all men and events.
- ◆ He decrees what will come to pass and can thus reveal it ahead of time through dreams and prophecies, 12–13; 19–22.

His goodness: He often uses his people to bless the pagans around them, as Joseph blessed the cupbearer.

Mankind

Our attributes

- ◆ Our dreams can reveal things about us.
- ◆ People tend to forget those who have helped them, 23.

Sin

It includes

- ◆ Selling another into slavery, 15
- ◆ Punishing someone unjustly, 15
- ◆ Forgetting those who have helped us, 23

Life

Ethical imperatives

- ◆ Notice how others seem to be doing emotionally, 6.
- ◆ Ask people how they are doing if they seem to be sad, 7.
- ◆ Give glory to God for any special gifts we have, 8.
- ◆ Pay attention to our dreams to see whether there are patterns in them or whether God might be speaking to us through them. We cannot, of course, rely on them for guidance about important decisions unless the Word of God and other indications point in the same direction.
- ◆ Remember those who have helped us.

Genesis 41

Truth

Revelation

Its cumulative fullness: Biblical revelation is a consecutive, cumulative, and coherent whole, with later passages referring to and incorporating earlier ones.

- ♦ God used the dreams of pagans, including pagan rulers, to communicate his will when they were interpreted by God's chosen servants, 1–36; *see Genesis 40:1–19 and Daniel 2:1–45; 4:1–37.*
- ♦ God elevated his servants to places of power as a result of their interpretation of pagan rulers' dreams, 37–45; *see Daniel 2:48; 5:1–29.*
- ♦ God used the interpretation of dreams to move pagan rulers to glorify him as a great God, 38–39; *see Daniel 2:47; 5:24–29.*

Its source

- ♦ God sometimes used dreams to communicate his ways and his will to his servants, 1–36.
- ♦ God gave wisdom to his servants to interpret these dreams, 16. *See Daniel 2:30.* The dream without a divine interpretation was meaningless to pagans.

God

His Triune nature: God has a Spirit, through whom he can reveal himself to men, 38.

His greatness

- ♦ He is sovereign over all events and can cause both plenty and famine, as Pharaoh's dreams and their interpretation demonstrate, 32.
- ♦ He determines, and therefore knows, the future, and thus can reveal what will happen through dreams and their interpretation, 25.
- ♦ He is the ultimate King, with the authority and power to raise up men to positions of authority, 39, 44. *See Romans 13:1–7 and 1 Peter 2:13–17.*
- ♦ He possesses all wisdom and knowledge and can give these to men, 39.

His goodness

- ◆ Though he does not save all people, and though he pours out his wrath on sinful nations, he still cares for the people whom he has made and often gives them the food they need, 47–49, 55–56. *See Psalm 104:14–15, 27–30.*
- ◆ He often vindicates his innocent servants and even sometimes raises them to positions of authority, 41–44.
- ◆ He often reverses the ill “fortune” of his people and gives them good things that make them forget the bitterness of the past, 50–52.
- ◆ He makes his people a blessing to their pagan neighbors and even to faraway nations, 46–49, 55–57. *See Genesis 12:3 and Acts 1:8.*

Christ

His person: Jesus Christ is prefigured in Joseph, who

- ◆ Was raised by the Father from the depths to the second highest position of authority in the universe, 40–41; *see Ephesians 1:20–22.*
- ◆ Provided food for needy people, 55–57; *see Matthew 14:13–22.*

The Holy Spirit

His person and work

- ◆ He is the Spirit of God, 38.
- ◆ He reveals God’s truth to men, 38–39.

Sin

It includes: Forgetting what good others have done for us, 9; *see Genesis 40:23.*

Life

Ethical imperatives

- ◆ Ask God to show us what meaning our dreams have, if any.
- ◆ Remember our promises to help people who have helped us, 9–13.
- ◆ Seek to be a blessing to the unbelieving people around us, as Joseph was.
- ◆ Prepare for future times of need and even desperation; lay up savings for the future, but not excessively so. *See Matthew 6:19–21, 25–34.*

Note: Preparing for coming troubles may we done out of prudence and faith, or fear. We need to guard against unbelief in God's provision.

- ◆ Trust that God will eventually vindicate us, if not in this life then in the next life.
- ◆ Thank God for raising Jesus from the dead and exalting him to his right hand, as ruler over all things for the sake of the church, as he did for Joseph.

Genesis 42

Truth

Revelation

Its cumulative fullness: Biblical revelation is a consecutive, cumulative, and coherent whole, with later passages referring to and incorporating earlier ones.

- ♦ Going to Egypt in time of famine, 2; *see Genesis 12:10–20.*
- ♦ “Joseph’s brothers . . . bowed down before him,” 6; *see Genesis 37:7–10; 41:43; and Isaiah 60:14.*
- ♦ “Joseph remembered the dreams which he had dreamed,” 9; *see Genesis 37:5–9.*
- ♦ Deliverance after three days, or, on the third day, 17–19; *see 1 Corinthians 15:3–4.*
- ♦ Remembrance of past sin, 21; *see Genesis 37:26–28.*
- ♦ “His blood is required of us,” 22; *see Genesis 9:5–6; 1 Kings 2:32; 2 Chronicles 24:22; Psalm 9:12; and Luke 11:50–51.*
- ♦ Joseph wept, 24; *see Genesis 43:30; 45:14.*
- ♦ Simeon, 24; *see Genesis 34:25–26, 30.*
- ♦ One person suffers in the place of many, 19; *see John 11:50 and Mark 10:45.*

God

His greatness: He determines and thus knows the future, as the fulfillment of Joseph’s dreams demonstrates, 9.

His goodness: He sometimes hides his face from us and speaks roughly to us, in order to cause us to recognize and repent of our sins, 22.

Christ

His person: Jesus Christ is prefigured in Joseph, who

- ♦ Was governor of all the land, 6; *see Ephesians 1:22.*
- ♦ Was honored with low bowing, 6; *see Philippians 2:10.*
- ♦ Provided food for his people, 19, 25–28, 35; *see John 6:1–14.*
- ♦ Wept for the sin and sorrow of his people, 24; *see Luke 19:41 and John 11:35.*
- ♦ Generously dealt with his treacherous brothers, 35

Mankind

Our fallen state

- ◆ We are subject to all sorts of dangers and calamities, including famine, 2. *See Genesis 41:56 and Matthew 24:6-7.*
- ◆ We live in countries that are governed by rulers and their subordinates, 6.
- ◆ We have a natural love and concern for our immediate family, 21, 24, 36-38.

Sin

It includes

- ◆ Lying or dissimulation, 13, 32
- ◆ Closing our hearts to cries for pity and help, 21-22
- ◆ Murder of any kind, 22

Life

Ethical imperatives

- ◆ Read the Old Testament, not only for its beautiful stories, but to understand our place in the overall history of redemption; Israel's story is our story.
- ◆ Read the Old Testament with attention to potential types of Christ, like Joseph.
- ◆ Take danger and difficulties as sent from God to show us our sin and give us a change to repent.
- ◆ Treat our enemies kindly, as Joseph did.
- ◆ Be willing to sacrifice ourselves for the good of others, as Reuben was.
- ◆ Have regard and pity for the cares of our parents.

Genesis 43

Truth

Revelation

Its cumulative fullness: Biblical revelation is a consecutive, cumulative, and coherent whole, with later passages referring to and incorporating earlier ones.

- ◆ “They bowed their heads down and prostrated themselves,” 28; *see Genesis 37:7, 10.*
- ◆ “Benjamin, his mother’s son,” 29; *see Genesis 35:17–18.*
- ◆ “The firstborn according to his birthright,” 33; *see Genesis 27:36 and Deuteronomy 21:16–17.*

God

His greatness

- ◆ He is God Almighty, 14.
- ◆ He controls the attitudes and actions of men in authority, 14, 23.

His goodness

- ◆ He provides for his people, 23.
- ◆ He is the faithful God of Abraham, Isaac, and Jacob, 23.
- ◆ He extends grace through the prayers and blessings of his people, 29.

Christ

His person: Christ is prefigured in

- ◆ Judah, who offered to forfeit his own life for Benjamin’s life, 9
Note: Jesus was descended from Judah.
- ◆ Joseph, who was willing to eat with sinners who had betrayed him, 16–34
- ◆ Joseph, who wept from affection for his brother, 30

Sin

It includes: Lying, 7; *see Genesis 42:10–13.*

Life

Ethical imperatives

- ◆ Trust God to give us favor with people in authority over us, 14.
- ◆ Treat our enemies with grace, as Joseph did, 19–34.

Genesis 44

Truth

Revelation

Its literary forms

- ♦ Biblical revelation exhibits literary and dramatic beauty, reflecting the beauty of God and his dealings with mankind.
- ♦ One feature of this beauty is intentional repetition that highlights crucial points, as Judah's speech illustrates, 14–34.

God

His greatness: He knows everything, even our secret sins, 16.

His goodness

- ♦ He brings calamity upon us, often to cause us to face the fact of our sin and guilt, 16. *See Psalm 119:59.*
- ♦ He can change people from bad to better, as he did with Judah, who emerges as the leader of the brothers, 16–34. *See Genesis 37:26–27; 38:1; 43:3, 8.*

Christ

His person: Christ is prefigured in Judah, who

- ♦ Intercedes for his brothers, 18–34; *see John 17:6–26; Romans 8:34; and Hebrews 7:25.*
- ♦ Was willing to sacrifice himself to save others, 33; *see Mark 10:45.*

Mankind

Our attributes

- ♦ We often need difficulty and danger to force us to face our faults and admit them, 16.

- ◆ We are bound to our family members, especially to our children, by strong ties of love and affection, as Judah was and as Jacob was, 18–34.

Life

Ethical imperatives

- ◆ Look upon troubles as God's gift, prompting us to examine our lives and see how we have sinned.
- ◆ Be willing to sacrifice ourselves for the sake of others, especially other Christians. *See John 15:13 and 1 John 3:23.*
- ◆ Thank God for sending Jesus to act as our Mediator, Redeemer, and High Priest.

Genesis 45

Truth

God

His greatness

- ♦ He is sovereign over all events, using evil men and their deeds to accomplish his purpose to redeem his people, 5–9. *See Acts 2:23–24; 3:18; 4:24–28.*
- ♦ He owns the wealth of this world and governs the rulers of the world, often using them to provide for his people, 16–23.

His goodness: He “sent” Joseph to Egypt so that he could eventually become the “savior” of his family, God’s people, 5–11.

Christ

His person: Christ is prefigured in Joseph, who

- ♦ Revealed his new, “glorious” identity at first only to his closest associates, 1; *see John 20:1–29.*
- ♦ Convinced his brothers that he was alive by showing them his face and speaking with them, 4; *see Luke 24:28–32; 36–42.*
- ♦ Commanded his brothers to go quickly and announce to their father that he was alive, 9, 13; *see John 20:17.*
- ♦ By his words and actions demonstrated that he had forgiven his brothers; *see John 20:19–23.*

Salvation

Its prefiguration: New Testament salvation is prefigured here by the ways in which Joseph both forgave his brothers and promised to provide for all their needs in the future.

Life

Ethical imperatives

- ◆ Read the Old Testament to see how Christ and his salvation are prefigured throughout. *See Luke 24:25-27, 32, 43-47.*
- ◆ Believe that all things, even years of “undeserved” suffering, will work together for our good if we love God and trust in Jesus. *See Romans 8:28.*
- ◆ Thank God for sending Jesus to die and rise for our salvation.
- ◆ Hasten to tell everyone about the risen Lord and the salvation he brings. *See Luke 24:47-49 and Acts 1:8.*

Genesis 46

Truth

Revelation

Its cumulative fullness: Biblical revelation is a consecutive, cumulative, and coherent whole, with later passages referring to and incorporating earlier ones.

- ◆ Israel (Jacob) offered sacrifices at Beersheba, 1; *see Genesis 21:33; 26:23–25.*
- ◆ “God spoke to Israel in the visions of the night,” 2; *see Genesis 26:24.*
- ◆ “Jacob! Jacob!” “Here I am,” 2; *see Genesis 22:11.*
- ◆ “I am the God . . . of your father; do not fear to go down to Egypt, 3; *see Genesis 26:24.*
- ◆ “I will make of you a great nation,” 3; *see Genesis 12:2; 17:1; 28:13.*
- ◆ “I will go down with you,” 4; *see Genesis 28:15; 48:2, 11.*
- ◆ Jacob’s sons, 8–27; *see Genesis 35:22–26 and Exodus 1:1–5. Acts 7:14, following the Greek translation of the Old Testament, says “seventy-five”; this number comes from adding “two sons of Manasseh, two of Ephraim, and one grandson” of Ephraim (NIVSB).*

Its source: God sometimes spoke to his servants in dreams and visions, almost always with interpretive words, 2–4.

God

His greatness

- ◆ He is God – Elohim – the almighty Creator of the world, 1–3.
- ◆ He is omnipresent and omniscient, knowing everything and able to speak to his people anywhere about anything, present, past or future, 2–3.
- ◆ He can be with his people anywhere, no matter where they go, 4.
- ◆ He is the living God and the God of the living (though they be dead), 3. *See Matthew 22:31–32.*
- ◆ He is sovereign over life and death and over procreation and birth, 3.
- ◆ As the living God, he can give life to people through procreation, 3.

His goodness

- ◆ He reveals himself to his people, 2–4.
- ◆ He is faithful to his promises to his people, beginning with his promises to Abraham and Isaac and Jacob, 2–4. *See Genesis 12:1–3.*
- ◆ He is with his people to protect and prosper them, 3–4. *See Matthew 28:20.*
- ◆ He commands our destiny according to his loving plans for us, 4.
- ◆ He uses everything, including the occupations of his people and the customs of the nations, to advance his saving work in and through his people, 33–34.

Life

Ethical imperatives

- ◆ Offer worship of gratitude to God at crucial moments, 1.
- ◆ Trust that God is with us wherever we go, even to strange lands or situations, 4. *See Mathew 28:20.*
- ◆ Trust God to fulfill his promises to us, as he did to the patriarchs, 4. *See Genesis 50:24 and Exodus 14:19.*
- ◆ Read the Old Testament histories often, to see God’s faithfulness and to understand the rest of the Bible, especially the New Testament. *See Luke 24:27, 44 and John 5:45–47.*

Genesis 47

Truth

Revelation

Its cumulative fullness: Biblical revelation is a consecutive, cumulative, and coherent whole, with later passages referring to and incorporating earlier ones.

- ♦ Jacob blessed Pharaoh, 7, 10; *see Genesis 12:3 (“In you all the families of the earth will be blessed”) and Genesis 27:29.*
- ♦ “The years of my pilgrimage,” 9; *see Hebrews 11:9–19 and 1 Peter 1:1; 2:11.*
- ♦ “Few and evil have been the days of my life,” 9; *see Genesis 29:13–31:55; 37:31–36; and Job 14:11.*
- ♦ “The years of my fathers,” 9; *see Genesis 11:10–11; 25:7–8; 35:28. Jacob was 130 at this time; Abraham and Isaac had lived to be 175 and 180, respectively.*
- ♦ The land of Rameses, 11; *see Exodus 1:11; 12:27.*

Its roots in history

- ♦ The events and writings of the Bible are set within human history and reflect the times of which they speak and in which the writers lived.
- ♦ The final editor of Genesis, knowing that the area where the sons of Jacob lived was in a later time called Rameses, used that name in his edition of Moses’ book.
- ♦ Alternately, the name Rameses may have been used for that region centuries before Pharaoh Rameses.
- ♦ That does not prove that the Exodus took place in 1225 B.C., during the reign of Rameses II, as many critics say.
- ♦ Biblical and historical evidence show that the Exodus took place in 1486 B.C.

God

His greatness

- ♦ He is omniscient and sovereign over all human events, so he could predict to Abraham that his descendants would go down to Egypt and live there, 1–11, 27. *See Genesis 15:13.*

- ◆ He can move the hearts of kings to care for his people, 6.
- ◆ He has the power to cause prosperity and give posterity, 27.

His goodness: He took care of Israel and his family during a time of famine, 11–12.

Christ

His person: Christ is prefigured in Joseph, who

- ◆ Provided his brothers and family with bread, 12; *see John 6:1–14*.
- ◆ Did good to those who had hated him and treated him very badly, 12; *see Matthew 5:44*.

Mankind

Our fallen state

- ◆ We are subject to famines and other disasters that hit everyone, even God’s people, 13–26.
- ◆ Such disasters often result in the expansion of the power of central governments, 14–26.

Life

Ethical imperatives

- ◆ Bless and pray for those in authority over us, even if they are pagans, 7, 10.
- ◆ Expect trouble in this world, 9. *See John 16:33*.
- ◆ See ourselves as pilgrims, strangers, and temporary resident aliens in this world, 9.
- ◆ Provide for the needs of others in God’s family, 12. *See Galatians 6:10 and 1 John 3:23*.
- ◆ Expect governments to seek to expand their power.
- ◆ Prepare for our imminent death, 29.
- ◆ See heaven (or, the new heaven and new earth) as our true home and not “bury” our futures in this world, 29–30. *See Hebrews 11:13–16, 21; 1 Peter 2:12–13; and 2 Peter 3:13*.

Genesis 48

Truth

Revelation

Its cumulative fullness: Biblical revelation is a consecutive, cumulative, and coherent whole, with later passages referring to and incorporating earlier ones.

- ♦ “God . . . appeared to me at Luz [i.e., Bethel] and blessed me,” 3; *see Genesis 28:13–15*.
- ♦ “I will make you fruitful and multiply you,” 4; *see Genesis 1:28; 12:2; 15:5*.
- ♦ “And give this land to your descendants,” 4; *see Genesis 15:18*.
- ♦ The younger son is preferred over the firstborn, or over older sons, 13–14, 17–20, 22; *see Genesis 27:1–40; 35:22; 49:3–4; and 1 Chronicles 5:1–2*.
- ♦ “God . . . before whom my fathers walked,” 15; *see Genesis 5:24; 17:1; 24:40; and Ephesians 5:2*.

God

His greatness

- ♦ He is “God Almighty.” *See Genesis 43:14; 49:25*.
- ♦ He sometimes appeared as the Angel of the LORD, 16.
- ♦ He is omnipresent and omniscient; his servants “walk before” him, 15.
- ♦ He ordains and therefore knows the future and can give his servants the power to prophesy what will come later, 19.

His goodness

- ♦ He appeared to his chosen servants, 3.
- ♦ He blessed his chosen servants and continues to bless his people, 3. *See Ephesians 1:3–14*.
- ♦ He is faithful to his promises to his people, 4. *See Genesis 15:14; 46:4; 50:24*.
- ♦ He gives the gift of children, 9.
- ♦ He feeds and cares for his people all their lives “along the way” of obedience and faith, 15. *See Psalm 23:5; and Matthew 6:11; 14:13–21*.

- ◆ He redeems us from evil, including death and hell, 16. *See Psalm 103:4 and Ephesians 1:7.*
- ◆ He promises to be with his people and their faithful descendants, 21. *See Genesis 28:15; 46:4; 50:24; and Matthew 28:20.*

Christ

His person: Christ is prefigured in

- ◆ The God who appeared to Jacob at Luz [Bethel], 3; *see Genesis 28:12–19 and John 1:51.*
- ◆ The Angel who “redeemed” Israel “from all evil,” 16. *See Matthew 1:21; Titus 2:13–14; and Revelation 5:9.*

Mankind

Our fallen state: We are all subject to sickness and death, 1, 7, 21. *See Genesis 3:19 and Romans 5:12.*

Salvation

Its benefits: The blessings of salvation include redemption from sin and death and God’s wrath through the blood of Jesus Christ, 16. *See Romans 3:24 and Ephesians 1:7.*

Life

Ethical imperatives

- ◆ Attend to our parents when they are old and especially when they are ill, 1–2.
- ◆ Be honest with ourselves and our families about terminal illness, so we can say, “Goodbye,” 1.
- ◆ Remember, and tell our children about, the blessings of God in our lives, 3–4, 15–16.
- ◆ Speak words of blessing to our children and grandchildren, rather than criticizing them needlessly, 10–16, 20.
- ◆ Walk before God, consciously aware of his presence, in all holiness and righteousness, 15. *See Ephesians 4:1, 17; 5:2, 15.*

- ◆ Accept God's sovereignty in the way he deals with our children, 19–20.
- ◆ Reward our children when they act according to God's will, 22.
- ◆ Thank God for sending us his Son Jesus to redeem us from sin and incorporate us into the worldwide people of God, 4, 15–16. *See Revelation 5:9–12; 7:9–11.*
- ◆ Trust that God is with us wherever we go and whatever happens to us, 14–16.
- ◆ Thank God for giving “precious and very great promises” to all who trust and follow Christ. *See 2 Peter 1:4; 3:13.*

Genesis 49

Truth

Revelation

Its cumulative fullness: This chapter is especially rich in predictions of future events.

- ♦ The father blesses his sons, with predictions of their future embedded in the blessing, 1; *see Genesis 27:1–28:5.*
- ♦ “The last [latter] days,” 1; *see Isaiah 2:2.*
- ♦ “Reuben, my firstborn,” 3; *see Genesis 29:32.*
- ♦ “Because you went up to your father’s bed,” 4; *see Genesis 35:22 and 1 Chronicles 5:1.*
- ♦ “In anger they slew a man,” 6; *see Genesis 34:26.*
- ♦ “I will divide them in Jacob and scatter them in Israel,” 7; *see Joshua 19:1, 9; 21:1–42.*
- ♦ “Judah, you are he whom your brothers shall praise,” 8.
Note: “Judah” means “praise.”
- ♦ “Your father’s children shall bow down before you,” 8; *see 1 Chronicles 5:2.*
- ♦ “Judah is a lion’s whelp,” 9; *see Revelation 5:5.*
- ♦ “The scepter [that is, royal authority], shall not depart from Judah,” 10; *see Numbers 24:17.*
- ♦ Zebulun will dwell by the sea, 13; *see Deuteronomy 33:18–19.*
- ♦ “I have waited for your salvation, O LORD!” 18; *see Isaiah 25:9.*
- ♦ “Bread from Asher . . . royal dainties,” 20; *see Deuteronomy 33:24–25.*
- ♦ His enemies “bitterly grieved” Joseph, 23; *see Genesis 37:4, 24.*
- ♦ “The arms of his hands were made strong,” 24; *see Genesis 41:37–46.*
- ♦ “The blessings of my ancestors,” 26; *see Genesis 12:1–3 and Hebrews 11:8–21.*
- ♦ Blessings upon the head of Joseph and his descendants, 26; *see Deuteronomy 33:16.*
- ♦ “Bury me with my fathers in the cave . . . at Macpelah,” 29–32; *see Genesis 23:3–20; 50:13.*
- ♦ “There they buried Abraham and Sarah,” 31; *see Genesis 25:9–10.*
- ♦ “There they buried Isaac and Rebekah,” 31; *see Genesis 35:29.*

Its literary forms

- ◆ Though the book of Genesis is mostly written in prose, parts of it, like this long blessing, are couched in poetic form, featuring dramatic figures of speech.
- ◆ Some terms and images are unclear, like “Shiloh,” which may mean “he whose it is,” a Messianic title.

God

His greatness

- ◆ He determines and therefore knows the future, and he can give this knowledge, in part, to his chosen servants, who can pass it on to others in the form of prophecy, here couched within Israel’s “blessing” of his sons, 1. *See Deuteronomy 33:1–19.*
- ◆ He is the Mighty God, the Almighty, omnipotent in every way, 24–25.
- ◆ He has the resources to confer blessings of all sorts upon his people, 25–27.
- ◆ He is eternal, lasting from generation to generation, 26.

His goodness

- ◆ He reveals the future to his chosen servants, who then pass on this knowledge to others, 1.
- ◆ He remains faithful to all his promises to his people, from Abraham onward, 24–26.
- ◆ He helps his people, 25.
- ◆ He richly blesses his people, 25–26. *See Psalm 103 and Ephesians 1:3–14.*

Christ

His person: Christ is prefigured in

- ◆ Judah
 - He is likened to a lion, 9. *See Revelation 5:5.*
 - His brothers will bow down to him, 8. *See Philippians 2:10 and Hebrews 7:14.*
 - He will possess royal authority, 10. *See Isaiah 9:6–7 and John 1:49.*

- His descendant will be a lawgiver, 10. *See Psalm 60:7 and Matthew 5:17–7:29; 22:34–40.*
- His descendant will command the obedience of the people, 10. *See John 14:21.*
- ♦ The Shepherd, 24; *see Psalm 23:1; 80:1; John 10:11; Hebrews 13:20; and 1 Peter 2:25.*
- ♦ The Stone of Israel, 24; *see Isaiah 28:16 and 1 Peter 2:6–8.*

Mankind

Our characteristics

- ♦ Each person differs in personality, ability, and moral character.
- ♦ Generally speaking, the firstborn child excels over the others. A very high percentage of them become outstanding leaders in all domains of society.
- ♦ However, there are exceptions, like Reuben.
- ♦ Actions have consequences. What we do even in our youth will impact not only our lives but the lives of our children and their children.

The People of God

Their identity: The people of God include Abraham's descendants through Isaac and Jacob (Israel) as well as people from all nations who are blessed if they have faith in Jesus Christ, 18. *See Genesis 12:3; 18:18; 26:4; Galatians 3:7–9, 14–18; and Revelation 5:9–10; 7:9–10.*

Sin

It includes

- ♦ Sexual intercourse with anyone outside of a lifelong marriage of one man and one woman, 4; *see Exodus 20:14.*
- ♦ Murder, 7; *see Exodus 20:13.*
- ♦ Loving ease at the expense of freedom, 15

Salvation

Its source

- ◆ Salvation comes entirely from God, 18.
- ◆ Salvation comes to us through Jesus Christ, the descendant of Judah, 10.

Its recipients: Salvation comes to those who wait for God in faith, 18.

Life

Ethical imperatives

- ◆ Know each of our children (and our spiritual children) well enough to distinguish among them and treat them according to their unique personalities.
- ◆ Rebuke our children when they disobey God's commands.
- ◆ Bless our children with a blessing from God.
- ◆ Look to Jesus Christ, the son of Judah through David, as our only Savior, Rock, Shepherd, and King.
- ◆ Trust in God as our Almighty God who alone can give us true blessings.
- ◆ Prepare our children for our death.
- ◆ Set our hope on the new heaven and new earth that will come when Jesus returns, and not on this world and our property in it.

Genesis 50

Truth

Revelation

Its cumulative fullness: Biblical revelation is a consecutive, cumulative, and coherent whole, with later passages referring to and incorporating earlier ones.

- ◆ “Bury me in my grave . . . in the land of Canaan,” 5, 13; *see Genesis 23:16–20; 47:29–31; and Acts 7:16.*
- ◆ “They did evil to you,” 17, 20; *see Genesis 37:4–5, 8, 18–28.*
- ◆ “The God of your father,” 17; *see Genesis 49:25; 26:24; 28:13; and Matthew 22:32.*
- ◆ They “fell down before his face, and they said, ‘Behold, we are your servants,’” 18; *see Genesis 37:7–10; 41:43; 44:14.*
- ◆ “God will surely visit you, and bring you out of this land . . .,” 24; *see Genesis 15:1–6 and Exodus 3:16–17.*
- ◆ “The land of which He swore to Abraham, to Isaac, and to Jacob,” 24; *see Genesis 26:3; 35:12; 46:4.*

God

His greatness

- ◆ He is eternal, being the God of one generation after another, 17, 24.
- ◆ He ordains all events, even those that are evil, in order to effect his purposes; he has this power and authority, 20. *See Romans 8:28.*

His goodness

- ◆ He blesses all nations through his faithful people, as he did for Egypt through Joseph, evoking their grief for his sorrow over his father’s death, 6–11. *See Genesis 12:3.*
- ◆ He was faithful to Abraham and his descendants, 17, 24.
- ◆ He turns evil into good in order to benefit his people, 20. *See Romans 8:28.*
- ◆ He keeps his promises, 24.

Christ

His person: Christ is prefigured in Joseph, who

- ◆ Forgave his enemies when they asked for mercy, 17
- ◆ Was terribly treated by his people (his brothers), who meant evil towards him, 19; *see Mark 3:6; and Acts 2:23; 3:14–15.*
- ◆ Suffered according to God's good plan so that many of his people could be saved, 19; *see Acts 2:23–24, 33–39; 3:13–26; 4:10–12; 27–28.*
- ◆ Provides for his people, even though they don't deserve it, 21; *see Psalm 23:1–3; and John 6:1–14, 22–59.*

Sin

It includes

- ◆ Doing evil to others, 15
- ◆ Lying, 16–17
- ◆ Intending evil and harm towards others, 20

Salvation

Its benefits

- ◆ Forgiveness, 17
- ◆ Restoration of fellowship with God (here represented by Joseph), 17–21

Its recipients

- ◆ Those who admit their sin, 15, 17
- ◆ Those who ask for forgiveness, 17

Life

Ethical imperatives

- ◆ Feel free to grieve the death of loved ones, 1, 10–11.
- ◆ Honor the last wishes of our parents (and others, when possible), 4–14. *See Genesis 49:29–33.*

- ◆ Pay respects to the deceased loved ones of those who have blessed us or who are otherwise important to us, 7–11.
- ◆ Make provision for our burial, when possible, 13. *See Genesis 49:29–32.*
- ◆ Admit our offenses to each other and forgive each other, 17–21. *See Ephesians 4:32 and Colossians 3:12–13.*
- ◆ Believe God’s promises to deliver his people, 24–25.

EXODUS

Exodus 1

Truth

Revelation

Its cumulative fullness: Biblical revelation is cumulative, with later passages referring to or building upon earlier ones.

- ◆ The names of the children of Israel (Jacob), 1:1–5, come from Genesis 46:8–27.
- ◆ Joseph's death, 1:6, is recorded in Genesis 50:26.
- ◆ The fruitfulness of Abraham's descendants, 1:7, was foretold by God to him (*see Genesis 35:11–12*), and fulfills the command/promise of God to Adam and Eve (*see Genesis 1:22*) and Noah (*see Genesis 9:1*).
- ◆ The oppression of Abraham's descendants in Egypt, 1:8–19, was foretold by God to Abraham. *See Genesis 15:13.*
- ◆ The attempt of a wicked ruler to kill God's servant Moses when he was an infant, 1:22, foreshadows Herod's attempt to kill baby Jesus. *See Matthew 2:13–18.*

Its roots in history: Biblical revelation is set within history.

- ◆ The Exodus itself took place in 1446 B.C., during the reign of Amenhotep II. *See 12:40; 1 Kings 6:1; and Judges 11:26.* A later date, around 1225 B.C., is affirmed by many, but not supported by biblical evidence.

God

His greatness

- ◆ He knows, governs, and therefore can predict all events, as seen in the oppression of the people of Israel in Egypt, which he foretold to Abraham. *See above.*

His goodness

- ◆ He is faithful to his promises, as he was to Abraham; *see above.*
- ◆ He rewards those who fear him rather than man, 1:17–21.
- ◆ He providentially equipped Moses to lead his people out of Egypt by having him brought up in the palace and educated in all the wisdom of the Egyptians. *See Acts 7:20–22.*
- ◆ He providentially guided Moses to the household of the priest of Midian and his daughters, 2:15–22.

- ◆ He providentially allowed Moses to live forty years in the very wilderness through which he would later lead the people of Israel after they left Egypt. *See Acts 7:30.*
- ◆ He heard the groaning of the oppressed people of Israel, remembered his covenant with Abraham and his descendants, looked upon his people, and acknowledged them as his own, 2:24–25.

Christ

His person: He is foreshadowed in the deliverance of baby Moses from danger and his early life in Egypt. *See Matthew 2:13–20.*

The People of God

Their identity

- ◆ In the Old Testament, God’s people are Abraham and his descendants, 1:1–7; 2:23–25.
- ◆ God’s people frequently suffer at the hands of evil men, as part of God’s plan for their salvation, 1:8–22; 2:23–25.
- ◆ God sends special servants like Moses (and later Christ) to deliver his people.
- ◆ However, God’s people regularly reject these servants, 2:13–14. *See Acts 7:17–28, 34–43.*
- ◆ God’s people are never completely abandoned by him, 2:1–25.

Life

Ethical imperatives

- ◆ Read the entire Bible, including the Old Testament, in order to understand its flow and the relationships of each part of the story to other parts of the story of God’s saving design.
- ◆ Expect to suffer for following Christ.
- ◆ Refuse to obey rulers when they command us to violate a command of God.
- ◆ Trust God to take care of us when others reject us.
- ◆ Expect to be rejected by his people, if you want to be a servant of God and his people.
- ◆ Expect to be prepared by long years of study, work, and hardship, like Moses in Egypt and then in the wilderness, if you want to be a servant of God.
- ◆ Worship God for his providential governance of all that takes place.

Exodus 2

Truth

Revelation

Its cumulative fullness: Biblical revelation is cumulative, with later passages referring to or building upon earlier ones.

- ◆ The birth and early years of Moses, 1–15; *see Acts 7:19–29*.
- ◆ An ark saves the remnant of the people of God from destruction, 2–6; *see Genesis 6–8 and 1 Peter 3:20*.
- ◆ A kind man helps women at the well, 16–17; *see Genesis 29:3–10*.
- ◆ “A stranger in a foreign land,” 22; *see Genesis 47:9; Acts 7:29; and 1 Peter 2:11*.

Its roots in history: Moses was born in 1525 B.C. (he was 80 years old at the time of the Exodus), during the reign of Thutmose I, and grew up during the reigns of Thutmose II and Queen Hatshepsut; his time in Midian took place during the reign of Thutmose III.

God

His greatness

- ◆ He is omnipresent and omniscient, knowing everything that happens and hearing every groan of the oppressed, 23–24.
- ◆ He is all-powerful, governing all events, great and small governs even the smallest events for his purposes, as he arranged for Pharaoh’s daughter to find Moses in the reeds and for his sister Miriam to be there and suggest that his mother be Moses’ nurse, 3–10.
- ◆ He is omniscient, hearing and seeing all that his people suffer, 24–25.

His goodness

- ◆ He provided for the salvation of his people by rescuing and educating Moses in the palace of Pharaoh, 1–10.
- ◆ He graciously made a covenant with Abraham and his descendants, and he kept his promises, 24. *See Genesis 12:1–3; 15:13–16; 17:1–14*.
- ◆ He is faithful to his promises to Israel, “knowing” and loving them in a special way, 25. *See Genesis 12:1–3 and Amos 3:2*.

Christ

His person: Jesus Christ is prefigured in Moses.

- ♦ The baby whose life was in danger by order of the king, 2; *see Exodus 1:22 and Matthew 2:13-18.*
- ♦ The rescuer who was rejected by his people, 11-13; *see Acts 7:27-28.*
- ♦ Who gave water to women at a well, 17; *see John 4:1-26.*
Note: Jesus offered to give spiritual, living water.
- ♦ The helpful stranger receives the daughter of the local host and chieftain, 21; *see Genesis 29:9-20.*

Sin

It includes

- ♦ Oppressing the powerless, 11
- ♦ Murder, 12
- ♦ Fighting, 13
- ♦ Rejecting the attempts of others, especially those in authority (Moses was the adopted son of Pharaoh's daughter), 14

Life

Ethical imperatives

- ♦ Expect rulers to be tyrants some of the time, as Pharaoh was toward Israel, 1:22.
- ♦ Trust God to take care of his people during times of oppression.
- ♦ Worship God for his particular providence and governance of all that happens.
- ♦ Help the weak and powerless, including women.
- ♦ Offer hospitality to strangers and aliens when we can.
- ♦ Cry out to God when we are in trouble.
- ♦ Believe that God hears our groans of distress and sorrow.
- ♦ Trust that God hears our cries and will send deliverance, sooner or later.
- ♦ Thank God for sending Jesus to save us from bondage to our sins.

Exodus 3:1–4:18

Truth

Revelation

Its cumulative fullness: Biblical revelation is cumulative, with later passages referring to earlier ones.

- ♦ God often appears in connection with fire, 3:2. *See Exodus 13:21–22; 14:24; 19:18; 24:15–17; 40:38.*
- ♦ The command to Moses to take off his shoes, 5, is repeated to Joshua, Moses' successor. *See Joshua 5:15.*
- ♦ The covenant that God “remembered,” 7, is the promise given to Abraham in Genesis 15:16.
- ♦ The list of the pagan nations inhabiting Canaan, 8, is similar to those given in Genesis 13:7; 15:19–21; Numbers 13:29; and Deuteronomy 7:1.
- ♦ The use of the word “serve” [i.e., worship], 12, recalls the way that Pharaoh made the Hebrews “serve” him. *See Exodus 1:13–14; 5:18.*

God

His greatness

- ♦ He is omnipotent, able to make a fire that does not consume, 3:2.
- ♦ He is omnipresent and omniscient, seeing all that happens on earth, 3:4, 7.
- ♦ He is omnipotent, able to deliver his people from the mightiest of enemies, 3:8.
- ♦ He owns the earth and can give parts of it to whom he pleases, 3:8.
- ♦ He is eternal and self-existent, I AM, 3:14. This may also be translated, “I will be what I will be.” It refers to God’s unchanging nature, especially his faithfulness to his people.
- ♦ He knows, governs, and is able to predict events which are in the future to the people to whom he speaks, 3:18–22.
- ♦ He is omnipotent, able to work wonders and miracles in the created order, 3:20; 4:2–9.

His goodness

- ◆ He is holy, here manifested as a flaming fire, 2, upon whose face no one can look and live, 6. *See Hebrews 12:29.*
- ◆ He manifested himself to Moses as the mediator and redeemer of his people, 4–12.
- ◆ He is the faithful covenant God of Abraham and his descendants, 6, 15–16.
- ◆ He hears the cry of his people and cares about them enough to deliver them, 9–10, 16–17.
- ◆ He will be with his servants and all his people as they follow his commands, 3:12; 4:10–15.
- ◆ He becomes angry when his people disbelieve or disobey him, 14.
- ◆ He revealed his will, his ways, and his words to Moses, and through Moses to Aaron and then to succeeding generations, 4:15–16.

Christ

His person

- ◆ He may be the Angel of the LORD who appeared to Moses in the burning bush and to others in Old Testament times, 3:2. *See Genesis 16:7–14; 22:11–18; 31:11, 13; Numbers 22:22–35; Judges 6:11–23; 13:2–25; 1 Chronicles 21:15–17; 1 Kings 19:5–7.*
Note: He is distinct from Yahweh but regarded as deity (God). He is probably the same angel who protected the Israelites from the Egyptian army, 14:19, and the one whom God promised would lead them into Canaan, 23:20–23; 33:2.
- ◆ He is foreshadowed as the God who would “come down and deliver” his people, 3:8.
- ◆ He is foreshadowed in Moses, through whom God delivered his people from oppression in Egypt, 3:10, 12.
- ◆ He is the I AM – that is Yahweh – equal with God in every way, 3:14. *See especially John 8:24, 28, 58.*
- ◆ He is foreshadowed in Moses, through whom God spoke his words to the people, 4:15–16. *See John 3:34; 6:63; 8:47; 14:10; 17:8.*

Salvation

Its conveyance

- ◆ In Old Testament times, salvation came mostly as deliverance from earthly enemies, including pagan nations like Egypt, 3:8, 10, 12, 17.
- ◆ Even in Old Testament times, however, salvation also came as the self-revelation of God to his people through the words and actions of mediators like Moses and other prophets, 3:14–17; 4:1–9.
- ◆ Salvation included earthly blessings, such as the gift of the rich land of Canaan, 3:8.
- ◆ Salvation also came as the privilege of worshiping God, 3:12.
- ◆ In the New Testament, salvation includes physical deliverance, such as healing; deliverance from demons; the knowledge of God in Christ; access to God in worship by the Spirit through Christ; and the promise of entrance into a New Heaven and New Earth when Christ returns.

Life

Ethical imperatives

- ◆ Believe that God knows our troubles, cares about us, and will deliver us in his time and manner.
- ◆ Thank God for sending Jesus as the great and final Savior, who delivers us from Satan and brings us into eternal life. *See Colossians 1:13.*
- ◆ Do not focus on your weakness or inability when God gives you a task; focus, rather, on God's promise to be with you and enable you to accomplish his will through you.

Exodus 4:19–6:9

Truth

Revelation

Its cumulative fullness: Biblical revelation is cumulative, with later passages building upon earlier ones.

- ◆ Israel is God's son, 4:22; *see Isaiah 63:16; 64:8; Hosea 11:1; Romans 9:4; and 2 Corinthians 6:1.*
- ◆ His firstborn son, 4:22; *see Jeremiah 31:9; see also James 1:18.*
- ◆ God's threat to kill the firstborn of Egypt if they disobey him, 4:23; *see Exodus 11:5; 12:29; and Psalms 105:36; 135:8; 136:10.*
- ◆ God's requirement that all Hebrew boys must be circumcised, on penalty of death, 4:24–26; *see Genesis 17:9–14.*
- ◆ God's self-revelation to Abraham, Isaac, and Jacob as "God Almighty," 6:3; *see Genesis 17:1; 38:3; 35:9, 11; 48:3.*
- ◆ God's covenant promises to give the land of Canaan to Abraham's descendants, 6:4, 8; *see Genesis 12:7; 15:18; 17:4, 7, 8; 26:3; 28:4, 13.*

God

His greatness

- ◆ He has the authority and power to order events by hardening the hearts of kings against his people, 4:21.
- ◆ He has power to kill those who disobey him, 4:23–24.
- ◆ He has the power to move people somewhere else to do his will, 4:27.
- ◆ He has power to do miracles through his servants, 4:28, 30; 6:6.
- ◆ He has the power to compel kings to treat his people well, 6:1, 6, 7.
- ◆ He owns the earth and can give parts of it to whom he pleases, 6:8.

His goodness

- ◆ He provided Moses' brother Aaron to help him, 4:27–31.
- ◆ He sometimes allows his people to suffer a long time before he delivers them, for reasons which he sometimes does not reveal, but often in order to make the deliverance even more wonderful, 5:1–6:8.

- ◆ He revealed himself as Yahweh, the faithful, self-existent covenant God of his people, 6:2–3.
- ◆ He established a covenant with Abraham and his descendants, and he promised to fulfill all provisions of that covenant, including deliverance from bondage in Egypt and the gift of the Promised Land as their inheritance, 6:4–8.

Life

Ethical imperatives

- ◆ Obey God's commands to go and do what he tells you, 4:18–21.
- ◆ To receive all God's covenant blessings, fulfill all the stipulations (like circumcision in the Old Testament), 4:24–26.
- ◆ Believe that God knows about our troubles and will deliver us in his good time, even if he takes much longer than we had expected or hoped.
- ◆ Expect trouble in this life, and expect the enemies of God to treat us poorly.

Exodus 6:10–7:25

Truth

Revelation

Its cumulative fullness: Biblical revelation is cumulative, with later passages referring to earlier ones.

- ◆ Genealogies in the Bible show the generational and familial relationships among the people named in the narrative, 6:14–27.
- ◆ Reuben, 14, Simeon, 15, and Levi, 16, were sons of Jacob. *See Genesis 46:9–11.*
- ◆ Kohath and Merari, 16, or descendants of theirs by the same name, later led a rebellion against Moses and Aaron, 16. *See Numbers 16.*
- ◆ God's intention that the Egyptians would "know that [he is] the LORD (that is, Yahweh) is repeated throughout Exodus. *See Exodus 7:17; 8:10, 22; 14:4, 18; see also Ezekiel's similar words, 28:22; 36:23.*

Its authority: Biblical revelation is the Word of God in the words he has given to his servants. The words of Moses and other prophets are the very words God spoke to them, and carry divine authority, 7:1–2.

God

His greatness

- ◆ He sovereignly works in men's hearts to incline them to do his will, 3, yet without eradicating their own "free" choice, for they "freely" choose to obey or disobey him, 7:13, 23.
Note: The interplay of God's sovereign will and the freedom and responsibility of men is a mystery that cannot be understood. Both truths are presented in the Bible without any attempt to explain the relationship of one to the other.
- ◆ He is omnipotent and can deliver weak nations from strong ones, 7:4–5.
- ◆ His power can work miracles and wonders through his servants, 7:9–12, 15–21.
- ◆ He has the authority to command pagan kings to do what he wants them to, as he told Pharaoh to let the Hebrews go free, 7:16.
- ◆ He has the power to punish disobedient pagan kings and nations, 7:16–17.

His goodness

- ◆ He revealed himself to and through Moses, 7:1.

- ◆ He demonstrated his power and his saving love for Israel by delivering them from Egypt, 4–5.

Life

Ethical imperatives

- ◆ Read the Bible, including the Old Testament, so that we understand both the history of Israel and the family histories of the leading characters.
- ◆ Obey God even when we think we don't have the power to do so, trusting in him to provide either ability for the task or others to help us in it.
- ◆ Bravely communicate God's words of command to pagan neighbors and even rulers.
- ◆ Trust that God can work miracles to deliver his people.
- ◆ Don't be surprised when Satan counterfeits the works of God through magical means. Note that these almost always bring harm to others, as the "signs" of the Egyptian magicians did.

Exodus 8

Truth

Revelation

Its content: Biblical revelation contains accounts of miracles, especially at critical times, such as the Exodus, wilderness warnings, and entrance into Canaan; the times of Elijah and Elisha; and the times of Jesus and the Apostles. These cannot be explained away by naturalistic causes, but are mighty acts of God.

God

His greatness

- ♦ He can cause living creatures to do his will and inflict plagues, 13, 16–18, 21–24, 29, 31.
- ♦ He is the only true God, 10.

His goodness

- ♦ He gives evil men warning of coming judgment and gives them opportunity to repent, 1–32.
- ♦ He answers the believing prayers of his servants, 10–13, 29–31.
- ♦ He sometimes spares his people the punishments he is inflicting on their evil neighbors, 22–23.

Spiritual Beings

Satan: Satan and his servants can sometimes imitate the powers of God, but always to evil ends, and often they are manifestly inferior to God in power, 7, 18–19.

Life

Ethical imperatives

- ♦ Praise God for his mighty power.
- ♦ Praise and thank God for his patience and longsuffering towards sinners.
- ♦ Fear God and what he can do to those who persist in rebellion.
- ♦ Pray for our enemies.

- ◆ See so-called “natural disasters” as warnings from God of impending judgment on the whole earth, and as reminders that we must serve him and him alone.

Exodus 9

Truth

God

His greatness

- ◆ As King of the universe, he can command earthly kings to do his will, 1.
- ◆ As Creator, Judge, and King, he can and will punish those who disobey him by sending disasters in the created order, 2-3, 6, 9-10, 18, 22-25.
- ◆ He uses calamities in the created order to demonstrate his power to unrepentant pagans, 16.
- ◆ He can miraculously protect his people from surrounding disasters, 4, 26.
- ◆ He saves his people in order that they may give him the worship that is due to him, 1, 13.
- ◆ He sovereignly hardens the hearts of men so that he can demonstrate his power and his grace to his people, 12. This does not override the will of men who harden their hearts against him, 7, 34-35. The relationship between these two is an impenetrable mystery. *See Romans 9:14-24; 11:33-36.*

His goodness

- ◆ He remains faithful to his covenant people and delivers them from their enemies, 1, 13.
- ◆ He graciously warns pagans of impending judgment, giving them opportunity to repent and escape, 1-3, 13-14, 20, 27-33.
- ◆ He patiently delays his total judgment in the form of complete annihilation, in order to show his power and cause his name to be declared in all the earth, 15-16.

Life

Ethical imperatives

- ◆ Serve God, who alone deserves our full devotion.
- ◆ Worship God who saves us, for this is why he deals graciously with us.
- ◆ Do not despise the patience of God, but repent while there is still time to escape punishment. *See Romans 2:4-11.*

- ◆ Earnestly warn non-believers that God's wrath will soon come upon all mankind, and urge them to trust in Christ while there is still time.

Exodus 10–11

Truth

God

His greatness

- ◆ He sovereignly rules over all mankind and can harden the hearts of rulers so that he will have greater opportunities to demonstrate his power in judgment and salvation, 10:1–2, 20; 11:9–10.
- ◆ God is all powerful and can cause disasters in the created order, like locusts and supernatural darkness for three days, 10:1–29.
- ◆ He governs the hearts of all people and can move even pagans to give their treasures to his people, 11:2–3.
- ◆ He is author of life and ruler of life and death, and he can decree the death of anyone he chooses, 11:4–7.
- ◆ He can direct events so that his people are spared the disasters that fall upon others, 10:23; 11:7.

His goodness

- ◆ He warns pagans of impending judgment so that they may repent and come to know him, 1–2, 7; 11:1, 4.
- ◆ He graciously saved his people Israel from Egypt by mighty signs and wonders, 11:1–2.
- ◆ He saved his people so that they might know him, 10:2.
- ◆ He saved them from the false religions of Egypt so that they might worship him with all they had, 10:9, 25–26.

Life

Ethical imperatives

- ◆ Expect God to work signs and wonders to save his people.
- ◆ Be ready to worship God with all that we and our families possess.
- ◆ Realize that we are saved in order to serve God, not ourselves. *See Romans 14:8–9.*

Exodus 12:1–36

Truth

Revelation

Its cumulative fullness: Biblical revelation is cumulative, with later passages referring to earlier ones, in reflection of God's unfolding plan of salvation and judgment.

- ◆ The Passover, and the Exodus which it commemorates, is the defining ceremony–event for the nation of Israel. *See Numbers 9:1–5; Joshua 5:10; 1 Kings 23:21–23; and Ezra 6:19–22.*
- ◆ The Passover lamb, 5, looks forward to, and is fulfilled by, the redemption in Christ Jesus. *See John 1:29; 1 Corinthians 5:7; and 1 Peter 1:19.*
- ◆ The Passover lamb must be without defect, 5. *See Leviticus 22:18–25 and Malachi 1:6–14.*
- ◆ The blood represents the life of the animal, here violently taken as a sacrificial offering, 7. *See Leviticus 17:11.*
- ◆ Blood, 7, is used for atonement (30:10) and for consecration (29:19–21; 24:6–8), and looks forward to the blood of Jesus which atones for sin. *See Hebrews 9:22.*
- ◆ The Passover meal points forward to the Passover, Last Supper, and death of Christ for us, 14. *See Matthew 26:17–19; Luke 2:41; and John 11:55.*
- ◆ The Feast of Unleavened Bread, 17, is described later. *See Leviticus 23:6 and Numbers 28:17.*
- ◆ Yeast becomes a symbol for that which is sinful, especially sinful behavior, 15. *See Luke 12:1 and 1 Corinthians 5:6–8.*
- ◆ Hyssop was a plant with a straight stalk and hairy–textured leaves that was used for sprinkling, 22. *See Leviticus 14:4, 6, 49, 51–52; Numbers 19:6, 18; Hebrews 9:19; and Psalm 51:7.*
- ◆ The “destroyer,” 23, probably refers to a destroying angel sent by God. *See 2 Samuel 24:15–16; 2 Kings 19:35; and 1 Corinthians 10:10.*

God

His greatness

- ◆ As eternal Creator and King, he is Lord of time and of the calendar, 2, 14–20.
- ◆ He is owner and Lord of all our possessions and activities, 3–11, 14–20.

- ◆ He has the power to take life, 12.
- ◆ He is Judge of all mankind and has the authority and power to execute judgment on unrepentant people, 12.
- ◆ He has the power to bring proud kings and unrepentant peoples to utter despair and reluctant submission to his will, 29–33.

His goodness

- ◆ He instituted the Passover to provide a substitutionary sacrifice so that his people might not suffer the same punishment as the Egyptians, though they deserved it, 3–7, 12–13, 23.
- ◆ He saved his people from Egypt, as he had promised, 12, 25, 27, 28.
- ◆ He also provided for their material needs – they had been slaves – by moving the Egyptians to give them all that they asked, 35–36.

Christ

His person: He is foreshadowed by the Passover lamb, who was slain so that God's people could be redeemed from slavery and from God's judgment. *See John 1:29; 1 Corinthians 5:7; and 1 Peter 1:19.*

The People of God

Their identity

- ◆ In the Old Testament, the people of God were marked by observing the ceremonies God ordained, including circumcision of boys and especially the annual Passover and Feast of Unleavened Bread, 1–20.
- ◆ They were saved from slavery and from God's judgment not because they deserved it but because God had promised Abraham that he would give the land of Canaan to his descendants, 25.
- ◆ They were saved by the shedding of blood, 7, 13, 22–23.
- ◆ In New Testament times – that is, now – God's people are also saved from his wrath and from bondage to Satan and sin by the shedding of the blood of Christ. *See 1 Peter 1:19.*

Life

Ethical imperatives

- ◆ Read the Old Testament to understand the salvation we have in Christ.
- ◆ Thank God for keeping his promises to Israel and also to all his people in all ages.
- ◆ Thank God for sending Jesus to be the lamb of God who takes (took) away the sin of people of all nations. *See John 1:29.*
- ◆ Trust in the blood of Christ alone for salvation from God's righteous wrath.
- ◆ Trust in the redemption we have in Christ Jesus for ongoing deliverance from the power of sin and of Satan. *See Colossians 1:13.*
- ◆ Celebrate the Lord's Supper as often as possible to commemorate the saving work of Christ for us. *See 1 Corinthians 11:23-26.*

Exodus 12:37–13:16

Truth

Revelation

Its cumulative fullness: Biblical revelation is cumulative, with later passages referring to earlier ones.

- ◆ Israel's sojourn in Egypt lasted exactly 430 years, 12:40–41. *See God's prophecy to Abraham of 400 years, probably a round number, Genesis 15:13, 14, 16; Acts 7:6.*
- ◆ Non-Jews could share in the Passover meal if they submitted to circumcision, 48–49, just as non-Jews are now members of the church of God if they believe in Jesus and submit to baptism, 12:19. *See 1 Corinthians 11:27–30.*
- ◆ The consecration of the firstborn son, 13:2, 11–16, who was to be redeemed by a sacrificial animal, was later replaced by the consecration of the Levites. *See Numbers 3:12, 41, 45; 8:15–18.*

Christ

His person

- ◆ Christ is foreshadowed in the stipulation that the lamb or kid to be eaten must not have its bones broken, 12:46. *See John 19:36.*
- ◆ He is also foreshadowed by the consecration of the firstborn son, whose life was redeemed by a lamb or kid, 13:2, 13, since he is God's unique "firstborn" son, that is, the son who is pre-eminent over all creation. *See Colossians 1:15.*

Salvation

Its substance and conveyance

- ◆ For the Old Testament Israelites, salvation consisted of redemption from slavery in Egypt and the sparing of their firstborn son, at the price of the slaying of an animal, 12:37, 41; 13:2–3, 11–16.
- ◆ This deliverance was to be commemorated annually by the Passover supper and the Feast of Unleavened Bread, 12:42–49; 13:10.
- ◆ For believers in Christ, salvation consists in deliverance from the wrath of God and from bondage to sin and Satan. *See Romans 5:6–11; 6:1–23.*

- ◆ For Christians, salvation is to be commemorated by observing baptism and the Lord's Supper. *See Matthew 26:17-30; 28:18-20; and 1 Corinthians 11:23-26.*

Life

Ethical imperatives

- ◆ Thank God for demonstrating his power and his faithful love to his people by delivering them from Egypt.
- ◆ Thank God for saving us from sin through the redemption that is in Christ Jesus.
- ◆ Believe that God can save us from all of Satan's wiles and all of sin's power as we trust in him daily. *See Ephesians 1:15-23; 6:10-20.*

Exodus 13:17–14:20

Truth

Revelation

Its cumulative fullness: Biblical revelation is cumulative, with later passages referring to earlier ones.

- ♦ The LORD fights for his people, 14:14. *See Exodus 14:20–30; Habakkuk 3:3–15; Haggai 2:1–22; Zechariah 14:3–15; and Revelation 19:11–16.*

God

His greatness

- ♦ He is very wise and knows how to lead his people in a way that is best for them, 13:17–18. *See Psalm 23:3.*
- ♦ He can create a pillar of cloud and a pillar of light to lead his people, 13:21.
- ♦ He sovereignly guided his people to camp in a place that would entice the Egyptians out with their army, so that he might demonstrate his power in utterly destroying them, 14:1–9.
- ♦ He can harden the hearts of kings to do his will, 14:4.
- ♦ He is zealous for his reputation among men, 14:4.

His goodness

- ♦ In his love, he led his people in a way that was most conducive to their spiritual good, 13:17–18.
- ♦ He is faithful to his promises to his people, 13:19. *See Genesis 50:24–25.*
- ♦ He led his people clearly by a pillar of cloud by day and a pillar of fire by night, 13:21–22.
- ♦ He protected his people from his enemies by that same pillar, 14:19–20.

Christ

His person: The Angel of the Lord, who protected God's people and who was intimately associated with the pillar of cloud and of fire, may be a pre-incarnation theophany of Christ, 14:19–20. This passage reminds us that Christ is with his people at all times. *See Matthew 28:20.*

The People of God

Their characteristics

- ◆ God's people easily forget his past benefits and present protection and provision, and they fear for their future, 14:10–13.
- ◆ God provides leaders for his people, who can transmit his words to them and encourage them to trust him, 14:13–18.

Salvation

Its conveyance

- ◆ Salvation comes to us when we are in extreme trouble and can't help ourselves, 14:13–18.
- ◆ Salvation comes from God's mighty and gracious hand, not from ourselves, 14:13.
- ◆ Salvation comes so that God may gain glory by his people's deliverance, 14:17–18.

Life

Ethical imperatives

- ◆ Think often of God's great works of salvation for his people in the Old Testament, that we might have courage.
- ◆ Do not be surprised if God leads us into extremely difficult and even dangerous situations. He does this to demonstrate his glory by saving us when we can't save ourselves.
- ◆ Trust in God, even when things seem completely hopeless. He is with us and he will save us from all spiritual harm, even if he allows us to suffer physical troubles or even death.

Exodus 14:21–15:21

Truth

Revelation

Its cumulative fullness: Biblical revelation is cumulative, with later passages referring to earlier ones.

- ◆ Later writers recalled the Exodus events constantly. *See Psalms 66:6; 106:9; 136:13–14; and Isaiah 51:10; 63:11–13.*
- ◆ God’s power over water, 14:21–22; *see Joshua 3:14–17; 2 Kings 2:8, 14; and Luke 8:25.*
- ◆ God provides a wall of protection, 14:22. *See 1 Samuel 25:16; Ezra 9:9; and Jeremiah 15:20.*
- ◆ Yahweh’s uniqueness among the “gods” of the pagans, especially the “gods” of Egypt (see Exodus 12:12), 15:11; *see 1 Samuel 2:2; Psalms 35:10; 71:19; 89:6; 113:5; and Micah 7:18.*
- ◆ Earth swallowing up people, 15:12; *see Numbers 16:28–34; and Psalms 63:9; 71:20.*
- ◆ “The LORD is my strength and song, and he has become my salvation,” 15:2. *See Psalm 118:14 and Isaiah 12:2.*
- ◆ God’s saving his people from Egypt, 14:30, looks forward to the saving work of Jesus Christ. *See Titus 3:5.*
- ◆ The redemption of God’s people, 15:13, 16, looks forward to the redemption that Jesus accomplished by his shed blood. *See Mark 10:45 and Luke 9:31 [where Jesus and the other spoke of the “exodus” which he would accomplish at Jerusalem], Titus 2:1; and Revelation 5:9.*
- ◆ Redemption, 15:13, could also refer to God’s serving as kinsman–redeemer. *See Leviticus 25:25 and Ruth 3:9–13.*
- ◆ God’s holy habitation (i.e., dwelling), 15:13, 17 could be
 - The Israelites’ present campsite, or more probably Mt. Sinai, described as holy; *see Exodus 3:5; 19:23.*
 - The tabernacle later
 - Jerusalem; *see Psalms 3:6; 44:2; 68:16; 76:2; 78:54, 68; 80:8; 132:13; Matthew 4:4.*
 - Christ as God’s dwelling–place; *see John 1:14.*

- The church as the temple of God; *see 1 Corinthians 6:19 and 2 Corinthians 6:16.*
- The final new Jerusalem; *see Revelation 21:2–3.*
- ♦ The people who will hear and tremble with fear, 15:14–17, are those through whose territory Israel would pass, or those in the Promised Land who will be defeated, destroyed, and displaced by Israel. *See Deuteronomy 2:4–9; Numbers 22:3–5; and Joshua 2:9–11; 5:1.*
- ♦ Miriam the prophetess is a forerunner of other female prophets, 15:20–21. *See Numbers 12; Judges 4:4; 2 Kings 22:14; Nehemiah 6:14; Luke 2:36; and Acts 21:9.*

God

His greatness

- ♦ He is omnipotent, 14:26–29; 15:1–2, 4, 6–8, 10, 11–13, 16, 19, 21.
- ♦ His power rules the winds and the waves, 14:26–29; 15:8, 10, 19.
- ♦ He is a mighty warrior, 15:1–17.
- ♦ He is glorious in his supreme power, 15:6.
- ♦ His wrath consumes all his enemies, 15:7.
- ♦ He is unique, the only true and living God, 15:11. *See John 17:3 and 1 Thessalonians 1:9.*

His goodness

- ♦ He saved his people from the Egyptians, 14:30; 15:2.
- ♦ He was faithful to his promises to the patriarchs, that is, the “fathers” of Israel, 15:2.
- ♦ He is excellent in every way, 15:7.
- ♦ He burns with holy wrath against unrepentant sinners, 15:7.
- ♦ He is glorious in holiness, 15:11.
- ♦ He redeemed his people, that is, he “purchased” their freedom through the death of the firstborn of Egypt and the firstborn of animals offered by Israelites, 15:13. *See Exodus 13:11–15.*
- ♦ He guided the people whom he had redeemed to his holy dwelling place, 15:13.
- ♦ This dwelling place of God was among his people, 15:13, 17.

Christ

His person and work

- ◆ Christ may be represented here by the pillar of fire and cloud, 14:24, in which God himself seemed to be present and active.
- ◆ Christ's saving work is the fulfillment of what God did in the Exodus.

The People of God

Their identity

- ◆ In the Old Testament, God's people were formed by their deliverance from bondage in Egypt at the Exodus, 14:21–30.
- ◆ God's people fear the LORD and believe both him and his chosen messengers, starting with Moses, 14:31.
- ◆ God's people sing his praises for his greatness and his goodness, especially his saving works on their behalf, 15:1–18, 21.
- ◆ God's people will be hated and feared by pagans who don't know or love God, 15:9, 14–16.
- ◆ God's people worship him alone and no other "gods," 15:11.
- ◆ God's people follow his leading to the place(s) he has chosen for them to encounter him, 15:13.

Life

Ethical imperatives

- ◆ Remember what God did for his people at the Exodus.
- ◆ Realize that if God could save them from Pharaoh and lead them through the sea on dry land, he can do anything for his people.
- ◆ Recognize God's saving presence in the midst of great difficulties. He will never leave us or forsake us. *See Hebrews 13:5.*
- ◆ Thank God for sending Jesus to save us from Satan and all his demons, as well as from God's wrath and the power of our sin.
- ◆ Trust God to take us all the way to his holy habitation, which will be the new heaven and new earth to be established when Christ returns.
- ◆ Sing God's praises often, with God's people.

Exodus 16

Truth

Revelation

Its cumulative fullness: Biblical revelation is cumulative, with later passages referring to earlier ones.

- ◆ The complaining of the people of God continues, 2. *See Exodus 14:11; 15:24; Psalm 106:25; and 1 Corinthians 10:10.*
- ◆ The Israelites express a wish that they had remained in Egypt, or even died there, where they enjoyed meat in abundance, 3. *See Exodus 17:3; Numbers 14:2–3; 20:3; and Lamentations 4:9.*
- ◆ Miraculous provision of food in the wilderness, 4, 12, 14–21, 31, 35; *see Matthew 14:13–21; 15:32–38.*
- ◆ “Bread from heaven,” 4; *see John 6:31–35.*
- ◆ Birds coming at God’s command to feed the people, 13; *see Numbers 11:31–33.*
- ◆ God testing his people, 4; *see Exodus 15:25 and Deuteronomy 8:2, 16.*
- ◆ The appearance of the glory of the Lord, 10; *see Exodus 13:21; 16:7; Numbers 16:19; and 1 Kings 8:10.*
- ◆ The Sabbath ordinance, 5, 22–30; *see Exodus 20:8–11; the pattern was set at creation, Genesis 2:3.*
- ◆ Each person gathered what he needed, 18. *See 2 Corinthians 8:15 for Paul’s application of this principle to Christian giving and mutual love.*
- ◆ Storing up some manna for a memorial, 33; *see Hebrews 9:4.*
- ◆ The [Ark of the] Testimony, 33–34; *see Exodus 25:16, 21–22; 26:33; 31:18; 32:15; 34:29; Hebrews 9:4; and Revelation 2:17.*
Note: These scriptures show that the “Testimony” referred to tablets of stone and to the Ark where they were kept.
- ◆ The manna continued until Israel entered the land of Canaan, 35. *See Joshua 5:10–12.*

God

His greatness

- ◆ He can rain down food from heaven and sustain a multitude in a wilderness for forty years, 4, 35.

- ◆ He can cause a wind to drive a flock of birds into the midst of his people, 13.
- ◆ He is glorious, uniquely so, 10.
- ◆ He has authority over time and can order us to use it according to his will, 25–29.

His goodness

- ◆ He patiently bore with the complaints of the people for a while and even provided food for them.
- ◆ He revealed his will to them through Moses and Aaron, 9–11.
- ◆ He gave them a Sabbath rest, 23–26.

Christ

His person and work

- ◆ He was the manifestation of God’s glory in the flesh, 7, 10. *See John 1:14.*
- ◆ A prophet like Moses, but greater than he, he fed people in the wilderness. *See Deuteronomy 18:15; Matthew 14:13–21; and parallels.*
- ◆ He is the true bread from heaven, who gives eternal life to all who trust in him. *See John 6:31–35, 51, 63.*
- ◆ He taught us to pray to God the Father, “Give us this day our daily bread.” *See Matthew 6:11.*
- ◆ As the true and new Israel, when tempted in the wilderness to turn stones to bread, he referred to Moses’ comment on this incident in response to Satan, teaching us that we live by God’s Word, not by bread alone. *See Deuteronomy 8:3 and Matthew 4:4.*

Sin

Its elements

- ◆ Grumbling or complaining against God’s arranging of our lives is a very serious sin. It reveals unbelief in his goodness and greatness.
- ◆ Complaining against other people, especially people in authority over us, is really complaining about God, and to him, 7–8.

Note: This does not mean that we may not ask those in authority over us to explain their actions to appeal for a change.

Salvation

Its conveyance

- ◆ In Old Testament times, salvation came as material provision.

- ◆ It also came as revelation from God and of God, 9–10.
- ◆ In New Testament times and since then, salvation comes primarily as the gift of eternal life, and fellowship with the Father and the Son, through the Spirit, as we believe in Jesus, the true bread of life.

Life

Ethical imperatives

- ◆ Don't complain about your circumstances. They are from God and they are meant for your good.
- ◆ Trust that God will provide, even in a "wilderness."
- ◆ Read the Bible to see how God has taken good care of his people in ancient times.
- ◆ Like the manna stored up as a memorial, keep a record of how God has provided for you.
- ◆ Trust in Jesus to satisfy your deepest desires and needs by giving you true life in himself.
- ◆ Observe one day in seven as a rest from work, trusting God to provide all that you need.

Exodus 17

Truth

Revelation

Its cumulative fullness: Biblical revelation is cumulative, with later passages building upon earlier ones.

- ◆ The complaints of the people in the wilderness when they encountered hardship, 2–3; *see Exodus 14:11; 15:24; 16:2; Psalms 95:7–11; 106:25; 1 Corinthians 10:10; and Hebrews 3:7–4:13.*
- ◆ Testing God by unbelief, 7; *see John 6:30.*
- ◆ Massah and Meribah, 7; *see Deuteronomy 33:8; Numbers 27:14; and Psalms 95:8; 106:32.*
- ◆ Provision of water in the wilderness, 6; *see Exodus 15:22–27 and Numbers 20:10–12.*
- ◆ The Amalekites were descendants of Jacob’s brother Esau by a pagan woman, 8; *see Genesis 36:12.*
- ◆ Joshua, later successor to Moses, 9; *see Exodus 24:13; 33:11; and Numbers 13:16; 27:12–23. His name means, “Yahweh saves,” and points toward Jesus as Savior.*
- ◆ Moses’ staff used as an instrument of God’s judgment and presence with Israel, 9; *see Exodus 7:20; 8:5–6, 17; 9:23; 10:13.*
- ◆ God’s command to Moses to write, 14; *see Exodus 24:4; 34:27–29; Numbers 33:2; and Deuteronomy 31:9, 19, 22, 24.*
- ◆ God’s unending warfare against the Amalekites, 14–16; *see Deuteronomy 25:17–19; and 1 Samuel 15:3.*

God

His greatness

- ◆ He can bring water out of a rock, 6.
- ◆ He can defeat the enemies of his people through natural means (warfare) and reliance on God’s help (lifting up the hands in prayer), 10–13.

His goodness

- ◆ He provided water for his people, 6.

- ◆ He defeated the malicious enemies of his people, 13–16.

Christ

His person: He is prefigured in the rock that was struck, as God's presence with his people and the source of water – physical and spiritual – for them, 6. *See 1 Corinthians 10:3–4 and John 7:37–39.*

Sin

It includes: Sin includes grumbling against God and not believing in his presence with us, 2–3, 7.

Life

Ethical imperatives

- ◆ Expect God to lead us into various kinds of waterless “wilderness.”
- ◆ Trust that God will be with us even in such a wilderness.
- ◆ Trust that God will provide for us in such times.
- ◆ Trust Jesus to give living waters of the Holy Spirit to all who continually trust in him. *See John 7:37–39.*
- ◆ Expect to have enemies, both human and spiritual, attack us.
- ◆ Make war against spiritual enemies, such as besetting sins (bad habits, addictions, etc.) through both human action and reliance on divine help.
- ◆ Pray for those who are in spiritual warfare, including pastors.

Exodus 18

Truth

Revelation

Its cumulative fullness: Biblical revelation is cumulative, with later passages building upon earlier ones.

- ◆ Moses' father-in-law Jethro, 1; *see Exodus 2:16, 18:3:1.*
- ◆ Moses' wife Zipporah, 2; *see Exodus 2:21; 4:24-26.*
- ◆ God's actions make him known, 11; *see Exodus 5:2; 6:7; 8:10; 9:16, 29.*
- ◆ God's name will be "great among the nations," 11; *see Malachi 1:11 and 1 Corinthians 1:2.*
- ◆ Gentiles are blessed through fellowship with the descendants of Abraham, 12; *see Genesis 12:3.*
- ◆ The appointment of elders under Moses, 13-27; *see Numbers 11:16-17; Deuteronomy 1:9-18; see also Acts 14:23; 1 Timothy 3:1-13; and Titus 1:5-9.*
- ◆ God's decrees and instructions, 16; *see Exodus 15:25; 20:22-23:33; 24:7.*

General revelation: Biblical revelation is supplemented by wisdom given to pagans, who are created in God's image and can therefore understand some things about how to live wisely in this world, 13-26. This is sometimes called "general revelation," but it does not reveal the way of salvation.

God

His greatness

- ◆ He delivered Israel from the Egyptians by his great power, 8-10.
- ◆ He is greater than all the "gods" of the pagans, 11.
- ◆ He is omnipresent, and can hear and see what is going on among men, 15, 19.
- ◆ He has authority to issue commands and statutes, 16.

His goodness

- ◆ He kindly saved Israel from bondage to Egypt, 8-10.
- ◆ He provided for them along the way from Egypt and delivered them from troubles, 8.

- ◆ He deigns to dwell among his people when they worship him together, 12. *See Matthew 18:20.*
- ◆ He enables leaders to judge and rule his people justly, 15–26.
- ◆ He gives wisdom even to pagans, from whom believers may learn, 14–26.

Christ

His person and work

- ◆ Christ is prefigured in Moses as Judge and revealer of God’s laws, 13, 16. *See Matthew 5:17–48; 7:7:21–23; John 5:22–30; 8:16, 26; Acts 10:42; and 2 Corinthians 5:10.*
- ◆ Christ also appointed apostles, and then seventy others, to carry out his work of preaching and of ruling, and then judging. *See Matthew 10:1–15; 19:28; and Luke 10:1.*

Salvation

Its conveyance

- ◆ In Old Testament times, salvation came as deliverance from human enemies, help during hardship, guidance, provision, and protection, as well as through fellowship with God in worship.
- ◆ In New Testament times, and since then, salvation comes as deliverance from the power of sin and Satan, from God’s wrath, and from ultimate death, as well as through God’s constant presence with us, guidance, provision, and hope of eternal life.

Life

Ethical imperatives

- ◆ We should tell our relatives and others what God has done for us and for his people, 8.
- ◆ We should welcome our non-believing relatives and friends into our homes and hearts.
- ◆ We should let them see our worship and our service of God.
- ◆ We should listen to wise counsel from pagans. For example, Christian leaders may learn from secular books on management, as long as they place these under the authority of Scripture.

- ◆ Christian leaders, including parents, should delegate responsibility and authority to others as much as possible. For this, they must first train these helpers.

Exodus 19

Truth

Revelation

Its cumulative fullness: Biblical revelation is cumulative, with later passages referring to earlier ones.

- ♦ What God did to the Egyptians, 4; *see Exodus 7 and Deuteronomy 29:2.*
- ♦ Israel being borne on eagle's wings by God, 4; *see Deuteronomy 32:10–11 and Isaiah 63:9.*
- ♦ God's covenant with Israel, 5; *see Exodus 20:1–23:19; 24:1–18; 32:1–34:35; Joshua 24.*
- ♦ Israel as God's treasured possession, his special people, 5; *see Deuteronomy 7:6; 14:2; 26:18; Psalm 135:4; and Malachi 3:17.*
- ♦ Israel as a kingdom of priests, that is, a kingdom composed of priests, 6; *see 1 Peter 2:5, 9, where it is applied to Christians.*
- ♦ Israel as a holy nation, that is, a people set apart for God's possession and service, 6; *see Deuteronomy 7:6; 14:2, 21; 26:19; 1 Peter 2: and Revelation 1:6; 5:10.*
- ♦ The people agree to do what God commands, 8; *see Exodus 24:3, 7.*
- ♦ Ritual cleansing, 11; *see Exodus 3:5 and Leviticus 11:25, 32, 40.*
- ♦ Abstention from sex as a means of preserving ritual purity, 15; *see Leviticus 15:16–18 and 1 Samuel 21:4–5.*
- ♦ God's awesome and terrifying presence on the mountain, 16–19; *see Hebrews 12:18–29.*
- ♦ The danger of unauthorized communion with or service of God, 22; *see Leviticus 10:1–2; 16:1.*

Its veracity: Biblical revelation, including the writings of Moses, are the very words of God, who spoke to and through them exactly what he wanted to reveal to his people and to the world, 3–7, 9, 21, 25.

God

His greatness

- ♦ He was able to defeat the Egyptians and deliver Israel, 4.

- ◆ He has the authority to issue commands, 5.
- ◆ He owns the entire earth and all mankind, and he has the authority to choose a nation to be his special people, 5.
- ◆ His coming to Moses in a black cloud indicates that much about him remains unknown, hidden, and mysterious to us, unless he chooses to reveal himself to us, 16.
- ◆ He is holy and cannot be approached by unholy people, 10.
- ◆ He controls thunder, lightning, smoke, fire, and heavenly sounds; he is Lord of all creation, 16, 18.

His goodness

- ◆ He delivered Israel from bondage in Egypt and brought them to himself at Sinai, 4.
- ◆ He graciously entered into covenant with his people, 5.
- ◆ He chose Israel to be his own special people, 5.
- ◆ He made Israel a royal priesthood, meaning that they could worship him and have fellowship with him, 6.
- ◆ He is holy and shared his holiness with his people by setting them apart for his possession and use, 6.
- ◆ He graciously came down upon the mountain to meet Moses, 11, 16, 20.

Christ

His person and work

- ◆ Christ is foreshadowed by Moses, who acted as an intermediary, even mediator, between God and his people, 3–15, 25. *See 1 Timothy 2:5 and Hebrews 3:1–6.*
- ◆ Like Moses, but with even greater authority, Christ spoke the words of God to humans, 3, 7, 9, 10, 14, 21, 25. *See Matthew 5:17–48; 24:35; and John 3:34; 5:46–47; 8:47; 17:8.*
- ◆ Being greater than Moses, Christ has abolished the relational gap between God and mankind and has granted us free access to God by faith, and he has brought us into a relationship of permanent grace. *See Romans 5:1 and Hebrews 10:19–21.*
- ◆ Christ has also brought us to a “mountain” of grace, not a place of God’s holy wrath. *See Hebrews 12:18–24.*

Life

Ethical imperatives

- ◆ “As he who called you is holy, you also be holy in all your conduct,” *1 Peter 1:15*.
- ◆ “And if you call on the Father, who without partiality judges according to each one’s work, conduct yourselves throughout the time of your stay here in fear,” *1 Peter 1:17*.
- ◆ “Pursue . . . holiness, without which no one will see the Lord,” *Hebrews 12:14*.
- ◆ Thank God the Father for sending Jesus his Son to become our divine–human mediator.
- ◆ Thank God for giving us ritual cleansing through the shed blood of Jesus and the sanctifying work of the Holy Spirit. *See 1 Corinthians 6:11; Hebrews 10:22; 1 Peter 1:2; and 1 John 1:9*.
- ◆ “Having . . . a new high priest over the house of God, let us draw near with a true heart in full assurance of faith, having our hearts sprinkled from an evil conscience and our bodies washed with pure water” (that is, baptism), *Hebrews 10:19,21*.

Exodus 20

Truth

Revelation

Its cumulative fullness: Biblical revelation is cumulative, with later passages referring to earlier ones.

- ◆ Moses repeats these commands, with some variations, in Deuteronomy 5:6–21.
- ◆ Jesus repeats some of them in various contexts. *See Matthew 5:21–27; 19:18–19; Mark 10:19; and Luke 18:20.*
- ◆ Paul repeats some of them. *See Romans 13:9 and Ephesians 6:1–2.*

Its stages: Biblical revelation is progressive, with later passages clarifying, intensifying, amending, or even abrogating earlier ones.

- ◆ Jesus comments on some of the Commandments, with clarification and intensification. *See Matthew 5:21–27.*
- ◆ Jesus summarizes the Ten Commandments and all commandments in the Mosaic Law, in two. *See Matthew 22:37–40 and Mark 12:29–31.*
- ◆ Paul declares that Christians are “dead to the law through the body of Christ, that you may be married to another,” that is, Christ, and that “we have been delivered from the law, having died to what we were held by, so that we should serve in the newness of the Spirit and not in the oldness of the letter.” *See Romans 7:3,6.*
- ◆ Paul declares that Jesus is “the end of the [Mosaic] Law for righteousness to everyone who believes.” *See Romans 10:4.*
- ◆ Hebrews says that “the priesthood being changed, of necessity there is also a change of the law, “ (see Hebrews 7:12), and that Christ has come as a mediator of a new and better covenant, rendering the earlier, Mosaic one obsolete. *See Hebrews 7:6–13.*

Conclusion: While the ethical principles of at least nine of the Ten Commandments (with the possible exception of the Fourth Commandment about the Sabbath, which is not repeated in the New Testament) still hold, the Mosaic Law as a whole is no longer binding on Christians.

God

His greatness

- ◆ He exercised his power by bringing Israel out of bondage in Egypt, 1.
- ◆ He is unique, the only true God, and thus deserving of exclusive worship, 3.
- ◆ He is Spirit and thus cannot, and must not, be represented by any material likeness or image, 4. *See Deuteronomy 4:15–18; Isaiah 40:18–20; 44:9–20; and John 1:18; 4:24.*
- ◆ He is eternal and can punish or bless people for a thousand generations, 5–6. *See Exodus 34:6–7; Numbers 16:31–34; and Joshua 7:24–25.*
- ◆ He is personal and has a name, an exclusive name, Yahweh, 7.
- ◆ He is the Lord of time, 8–11.
- ◆ He made the universe by his infinite power in six (24-hour) days, 11. *See Genesis 2:2–3.*
Note: A day is measured by the rotation of the earth on its axis, not by its relationship to the sun.
- ◆ He is the source of all fatherhood and parenthood and thus of all authority; he is King, 12.
- ◆ He is both one and plural; when making mankind in his own image, he made them male and female, and thus capable of bearing children and becoming fathers and mothers, 12. *See Genesis 1:26–27.*
- ◆ He is the source and ruler of life, 12.
- ◆ He owns the world and can give it to whom he pleases, 12.
- ◆ He is the Lord of our sexuality and how we steward it, 14.
- ◆ He owns the world and gives resources to people according to his will; he has the right to punish those who steal his property, 15.
- ◆ He knows all and can tell when words are true or false, 16.
- ◆ He knows all and can discern the thoughts and desires of our hearts, 17.
- ◆ He demands exclusive worship, expressed by gratitude for what he has given us; any discontent amounts to idolatry, 17. *See Romans 1:18–23 and Ephesians 5:3–5.*
- ◆ His unmediated presence, with thunder, lightning, the trumpet sound, and smoke was terrifying in its might and awesomeness, 18–19.
- ◆ He could not be seen or known directly, but dwelt in a darkness that only Moses was able to enter, 21.
- ◆ He dwells in heaven, 22.

His goodness

- ◆ He made a covenant (“words”) with his people at Sinai, 1.
- ◆ He revealed his ways and his will to his people in explicit commands, 1–17 (and throughout Exodus, Leviticus, and Deuteronomy).
- ◆ He rescued his people from bondage in Egypt, 2.
- ◆ He protects us from seeking “life” from false “gods” who can profit us nothing, 3.
- ◆ He protects us from making any image of God that would distort his true nature and thus lead us astray in our worship and service of him, 3.
- ◆ He punishes evildoers who do not repent, 5.
- ◆ He shows mercy to generations of those who love and obey him, 6.
- ◆ He gives us rest, one day in seven, to remember his creation work, 8–11.
- ◆ He establishes order and harmony in the family by asserting the proper authority of parents, 12.
- ◆ He protects human life, 13.
- ◆ He is the Husband of his people Israel, and thus protects marriage; therefore, he also protects both the parents and their children, since adultery wreaks havoc in all involved, 14. *See Isaiah 54:5 and Jeremiah 31:32.*
- ◆ He protects our property from theft, 15.
- ◆ He is true and safeguards truth in the law courts but also in daily communication, 16. *See Psalm 100:5; Proverbs 30:5–6; and Hebrews 6:18.*
- ◆ He protects us against longing for anything else than himself and what he has generously given us, and thus he saves us from profound futility and disappointment, 17.

Christ

His person and work

- ◆ Christ has taught us the true meaning of the Ten Commandments.
- ◆ Christ alone has obeyed all the Ten Commandments.
- ◆ Christ has come as a Mediator of a new and better covenant.
- ◆ Christ has given a new commandment to supplement other commands in the New Testament, namely, that we should love other believers as he has loved us. *See John 13:34–35.*

Life

Ethical imperatives

- ◆ Study the Ten Commandments as revealing that nature of God.
- ◆ Repent of any thoughts, words, or actions that violate God's laws.
- ◆ Ask God for power to obey his commands as revealed in the New Testament, out of gratitude for God's mercy to us in Christ, and by the power of the Spirit.
- ◆ Praise God for sending Jesus to die in our place, taking the penalty for our disobedience. *See Romans 5:6-11; 8:3-4.*
- ◆ Teach others, especially our children, the Ten Commandments and their further explanation in the New Testament.

Exodus 21

Truth

Revelation

Its source

- ◆ God spoke directly to his chosen messengers, giving revelation from himself, 1, 16.
- ◆ God spoke in human language, 1–23.
- ◆ God spoke in words that he chose, 1–12.
- ◆ God spoke in sentences; biblical revelation is propositional, that is, it comes to us in sentences, or can be restated in sentences, expressing a complete meaning, 1–12.

Its content

- ◆ Biblical revelation contains laws, here called “judgment,” that regulate the actions of God’s people.
- ◆ Old Testament laws apply only to the people of Israel in Old Testament times; they have been supplanted by New Testament laws. *See Romans 6:14; 7:1–6; and Galatians 4:21–5:6.*
- ◆ Mosaic Law recognizes and regulates the practice of slavery, to make it more humane, 1–11.

God

His greatness: He is sovereign over the affairs of each person, 13.

His goodness

- ◆ He instituted laws to protect the weak, guard human life and health, and protect property rights (animals being major assets), 1–36.
- ◆ He instituted the Levitical priesthood so that his people could, through the priests, worship him, 1, 6.
- ◆ He is holy and wants his people to reflect his holiness through strict distinctions between ritually and morally clean and unclean things, actions, and people, 1, 6–8, 15, 1–23.
- ◆ He kindly condescended to dwell among his people in the tabernacle, 12, 23.

- ◆ He graciously chose to “sanctify,” that is, to render ritually clean, certain people and places, so that his people could draw near to a holy God, 8, 21. *See 1 Corinthians 6:11; Ephesians 1:4; 5:25–27; and 1 Peter 1:2.*

Christ

His person: Christ is prefigured in the payment of thirty shekels as the price for a human, 32. *See Matthew 26:15; 27:3, 9.*

Mankind

Their characteristics

- ◆ Men and women are equal in God’s sight, for he created both in his image, so women must be treated with honor and respect, 7–11.
- ◆ Since all people are created in the image of God, the life and bodily health of each one is precious, 12–27.
- ◆ As image-bearers of God, men and women are superior in worth to animals, 28–36.
- ◆ As creatures of God, animals also possess worth, 28–36.

The People of God

Their identity: In the Old Testament, the people of God were almost completely restricted to the descendants of Abraham, here called Hebrews, 2.

Sin

It includes

- ◆ Mistreating a servant, 3–10
- ◆ Disregarding the legitimate marital expectations and rights, including sexual rights, of a wife, 8–11; *see 1 Corinthians 7:3–5.*
- ◆ Committing manslaughter, 12, especially premeditated murder, 1–3
- ◆ Striking one’s parents, 15
- ◆ Kidnapping, 16
- ◆ Cursing one’s father or mother, or in any other way showing disrespect or failing to give them their due, 17; *see Mark 7:10.*
- ◆ Committing assault and battery, 18
- ◆ Beating someone under one’s care or supervision, 20, 26
- ◆ Causing harm to a pregnant woman, 22

- ◆ Committing criminal negligence, 28–36

Its consequences

- ◆ Sin must be punished.
- ◆ Some sins call for capital punishment, 12, 15–17, 23.

Note: Godly interpreters differ about whether, and for which crimes, capital punishment should now be imposed today. God's command to Noah seems to favor of using capital now, since all people are created in God's image. See Genesis 9:6–7.

Salvation

Its nature

- ◆ The purchase of a servant/slave points toward the purchase of his people by Christ; they now belong to him and are not their own, 2. *See 1 Corinthians 6:19.*
- ◆ The freeing of a slave after six years of service points forward to the freeing of believers from bondage to sin and to the law through the work of Christ, though it is not their service that “merits” freedom, but the sacrifice of Christ, 2. *See Romans 6:9–10, 14; 15–23; 8:1, where “condemnation” can also mean, “penal servitude”; and Galatians 5:1.*
- ◆ Redemption: Redeeming salve or an animal looks forward to the redemption of God's people from sin through the shedding of the blood of Jesus Christ, 8,30 (see Ephesians 1:7; 1 Peter 1:18).

Life

Ethical imperatives

- ◆ Read the Old Testament laws in order to understand basic principles of justice, even if we are not now under the Mosaic Law personally or as societies.
- ◆ Thank God for redeeming us from sin and its consequences through the shed blood of Jesus Christ.
- ◆ Honor and care for women.
- ◆ Work for justice for those who are relatively powerless, like women and servants.

Exodus 22

Truth

Revelation

Its cumulative fullness: Biblical revelation is cumulative, with later passages building upon earlier ones.

- ◆ The sanctity of private property, 1–19, 28–36; *see Exodus 20:15.*
- ◆ The binding nature of oaths, 11; *see Exodus 20:7.*
- ◆ A bride price, 16; *see Genesis 24:53; 34:12.*
- ◆ Death for those who practice witchcraft and sorcery, 18; *see Deuteronomy 18:10, 14; 1 Samuel 28:9; and Isaiah 47:12–14.*
- ◆ Sacrificing to, or in any way worshiping, another “god” is forbidden, 20; *see Exodus 20:3–5.*
- ◆ The Canaanites who engaged in abominable practices in the worship of their idols must be totally eradicated from the Promised Land, lest they tempt God’s people, 20; *see Numbers 21:2; Deuteronomy 2:34; 3:6; 7:2; 13:15; 20:17; Joshua 2:10; 6:17, 21; 8:25; 10:1, 28, 35, 37, 39–40; 11:11–12, 20–21; and Judges 1:17.*
- ◆ Care for weak and defenseless people, like the poor, widows, orphans, and alien residents, 21–25; *see Exodus 21:26–27; 23:6–12; Leviticus 19:9–10; Deuteronomy 14:29; 16:11, 14; 24:19–21; 26:12–13; Psalm 10:14, 17–18; Isaiah 1:23; 10:2; and often in the Old Testament; and James 1:27.*
- ◆ Laws dealing with interest and loans, 25–27; *see Leviticus 25:35–37; Deuteronomy 15:7–11; 23:1–20; Nehemiah 5:7–12; Job 24:9; Proverbs 28:8; Ezekiel 18:13; 22:12; and Luke 6:34–35.*
- ◆ Prohibition of eating meat that had blood in it, 31; *see Leviticus 17:13–14.*

God

His greatness

- ◆ He alone is God and he deserves and demands unique worship, honor, and allegiance, 20, 28.
- ◆ He is omnipresent, omniscient, and omnipotent, able to hear and respond to the cry of the oppressed, 23, 27.

- ◆ He stands behind all earthly authority, 28. *See Romans 13:1–7; and 1 Peter 2:13–17.*
- ◆ He owns all people, especially Israel, and requires the dedication of our best to him, 29–30.

His goodness

- ◆ He is eminently fair and just, as these laws show.
- ◆ He cares for the weak and defenseless, 16, 21, 22. *See note above.*
- ◆ He burns with holy wrath against all who oppress widows, orphans, and the helpless, 24.
- ◆ He chose Israel to be his special people, 25.
- ◆ He is gracious, 27.
- ◆ He is holy and requires his people to be holy, 31.

Christ

His person: Christ is prefigured as the firstborn son who is dedicated to God, 29. *See Luke 2:22–24.*

Mankind

Their characteristics

- ◆ We are responsible beings who can and must be held accountable for all our actions.
- ◆ We are sinful, will inevitably have conflicts, and need human judges to adjudicate between us, 9, 28.
- ◆ An unmarried woman is in some sense under the care and authority of her father, 16–17.
- ◆ We are all equally valuable in God’s sight and should be treated as such by each other, 21.

The People of God

Their identity

- ◆ In the Old Testament, God’s people were Israel, set apart and “holy” to him, 31.

- ◆ In the New Testament, all those who trust and follow Christ are his people, “saints,” and are called to a holy lifestyle. *See 1 Corinthians 1:2; Ephesians 1:1; and 1 Peter 1:15–16.*

Sin

It includes

- ◆ Theft, 1, 12
- ◆ Negligence that leads to loss, 5–8, 14
- ◆ Exploiting or seducing a woman, 16
- ◆ Sorcery or witchcraft of any kind, 18
- ◆ Bestiality, 19
- ◆ Idolatry of any kind, 20
- ◆ Oppressing the weak and powerless, 21–27
- ◆ Dishonoring rulers and those in authority, 28; *see Acts 23:5.*
- ◆ Dishonoring God in speech, 28
- ◆ Withholding his due from God, 29–30

Salvation

Its purpose: These laws all point to our obligation to be entirely holy, 31, and our inability to fulfill God’s righteous requirements for us. They thus point to the need for a Savior from sin. *See Romans 7:7 and Galatians 3:19–24.*

The Last Things

The final judgment: The wrath of God inflicted upon Israel for disobedience points toward the final outpouring of God’s wrath upon unrepentant sinners at the end of the age (see Romans 2:8), from which Jesus will deliver those who trust and follow him. *See Romans 5:10 and 1 Thessalonians 1:10.*

Life

Ethical imperatives

- ◆ Read the Old Testament often, including the Pentateuch, to see the detailed implications of the Ten Commandments and thus to know, in general, God’s will for us today. Though we are not under the Law of Moses, it reveals God’s will and ways and can serve as a guide to our conduct now.

- ◆ Thank God for sending Jesus, the Firstborn, who saves us from the penalty and power of sin.
- ◆ Ask God to enable us to follow his commands in all areas of life, including our property, worship, sexual morality, care for the relatively weak and powerless.

Exodus 23

Truth

Revelation

Its cumulative fullness: Biblical revelation is a cumulative whole, with later passages building upon earlier ones.

- ◆ The command against giving false testimony, 1–9; *see Exodus 20:16.*
- ◆ The commandment to honor the Sabbath, 10–12; *see Exodus 20:8–11.*
- ◆ The commandment to worship God alone, 13, 24; *see Exodus 20:3.*
- ◆ The three annual feasts, 14–17; *see Exodus 34:22–23; and Leviticus 23:1–22, 33–44.*
- ◆ The Feast of Unleavened Bread, commemorating the Exodus, 15; *see Exodus 12:14–20.*
- ◆ The Feast of Harvest, also called Feast of Weeks, because it was held seven weeks after the Feast of unleavened Bread 16; *see Exodus 34:22; in New Testament times it was called Pentecost because it was held fifty days after the giving of the Law; see Leviticus 23:16; Acts 2:1; 20:6; and 1 Corinthians 16:8.*
- ◆ God’s protecting Angel, 20–23; *see Exodus 14:19 and Genesis 16:7; possibly related to the Angel of the Lord; see Exodus 3:2, 4; Genesis 16:7; 19:1, 21; 31:11, 13; Judges 2:1–5; 6:11–12, 14; 13:3–23; and Zechariah 3:1–6; 12:8. Note: Some think he is the pre-incarnate Second Person of the Trinity; others believe he is the personal representative of the Lord and can thus speak and act in his name.*
- ◆ God’s promise to put fear of the Israelites into the hearts of the pagan inhabitants of Canaan before the Israelites so they could take possession of the land that God had promised Abraham, 27–31; *see Numbers 22:3; and Joshua 2:9, 11; 5:1; 9:24.*
- ◆ The boundaries of the Promised Land, 31; *see Genesis 15:18; Deuteronomy 1:7, 8; 11:24; and 1 Kings 4:21, 24.*
- ◆ “You shall make no covenant with” the pagan inhabitants of Canaan, “lest they make you sin against Me” by serving their gods, 32–33; *see Exodus 34:12; Genesis 26:28; Deuteronomy 7:2; Joshua 9:7; Judges 2:2; 1 Samuel 11:1; and Kings 15:19.*

God

His greatness

- ◆ He is the Lord of time, 10–12.
- ◆ He created the world in six days, 12. *See Genesis 2:1–2.*
- ◆ He alone is God, and he demands exclusive worship, 13, 32.
- ◆ He owns all people and can command their presence at any time, 17.
- ◆ He is all powerful, as he showed when he rescued his people from Egypt, 15.
- ◆ He demands absolute obedience 21, 24, 25.
- ◆ He owns the entire earth and can give any part of it to whom he pleases, 31.

His goodness

- ◆ He cares about the truth, 1.
- ◆ He cares about justice, 3, 7.
- ◆ He loves his enemies, 4.
- ◆ He cares for the poor, 6.
- ◆ He wills to come close to his people in regular times of worship and fellowship, 14–19.
- ◆ He rescued his people from Egypt, 15.
- ◆ He dwelt among his people in the person of the Angel, 20–23.
- ◆ He protects his people, 20.
- ◆ He fights for his people, 22.
- ◆ He is faithful to his covenant promises, including his promise to give Canaan to Abraham’s descendants, 23.
- ◆ He abundantly blesses those who serve him faithfully, 25–26.
- ◆ He frustrates and disciplines his people when they leave him to serve other so-called “gods,” 32–33.

Christ

His person and work

- ◆ He is the true and faithful Witness, 23. *See John 8:13–18; and Revelation 1:5.*
- ◆ He may be prefigured in the Angel of God’s presence, 20–23.
- ◆ He fulfilled the promise of healing in his own healing ministry, 25. *See Matthew 8:14–17.*

The Holy Spirit

His person and work

- ◆ He was poured out upon the early disciples on the Day of Pentecost, which is also the feast of the harvest or day of first fruits. 16. *See Numbers 28:26.*
- ◆ He is the first fruits, or down payment, or guarantee, of the eternal bliss that will be for all who trust and follow Christ. *See Acts 2:1-4; 2 Corinthians 1:22; 5:5; and Ephesians 1:14.*

Mankind

Their characteristics

- ◆ We tend to be influenced by those around us, 2.
- ◆ All people are created in God's image and deserve just and loving treatment, 3-9, 11.
- ◆ We need regular rest, 10-12.
- ◆ There is some sort of connection between sin and sickness, 25-26. *See 1 Corinthians 11:30 and James 5:14-15.* The connection is not direct, however. *See John 9:1-2.*

Note: See also G. Wright Doyle, The Lord's Healing Words, published by AuthorHouse.

The People of God

Their marks

- ◆ God holds his people to an ethical standard that far transcends those of ancient peoples, 1-12. *See also Matthew 5:1-48.*
- ◆ God's people worship him exclusively, 13, 32-33. *See 1 Corinthians 6:9 and 1 John 5:21.*
- ◆ God's people Israel identified themselves as a people dedicated to him by gathering three times a year for special feasts commemorating their salvation from bondage in Egypt, 14-19.
- ◆ God gave his people Israel an inheritance in the land of Canaan, according to his promise to Abraham and the patriarchs; in doing so, he expelled idolatrous and wicked pagans, 20-33.

Sin

It includes

- ◆ Circulating a false report or bearing false witness, 1–2, 6
- ◆ Joining others in doing evil, 2
- ◆ Favoring a poor man in a legal action, 3
- ◆ Refusing to help your enemy, 4–5
- ◆ Depriving the poor of justice in a dispute, 6
- ◆ Punishing the innocent, 7
- ◆ Receiving (or giving) a bribe, 9
- ◆ Oppressing strangers and alien residents, 9
- ◆ Working seven days a week, 12
- ◆ Giving false “gods” any sort of honor or recognition, 13, 24, 32–33
- ◆ Disobeying God’s Angel, who for us now is Christ, 20–22

Salvation

Its source: Salvation for Israel began with deliverance from Egypt in the Exodus; for Christians it includes all that has been done for us in and through Christ, 15. *See, for example, Matthew 1:21; Luke 2:11; and Titus 2:11–14.*

The Last Things

The new creation

- ◆ Many of the promises given to Israel about the blessings of living in the Promised Land, which they forfeited when they consistently disobeyed God, will be fulfilled in the New Heaven and New Earth, 25–26. *See Revelation 21:4.*
- ◆ The complete expulsion of wicked pagans from the land of Israel looks forward to the exclusion of all unrepentant sinners from the New Jerusalem, 29–33. *See Revelation 21:8; 22:15.*

Life

Ethical imperatives

- ◆ Read the Old Testament often and carefully, so that we may know the will and ways of God. Though specifics of his requirements for his people have changed under the New Testament, the character of God has not.
- ◆ Ask God to give us grace to love others, even our enemies, as ourselves.

- ◆ Gather with God's people regularly to celebrate his mighty acts of salvation to Israel and now to us in Christ.
- ◆ Avoid any intimate associations with unbelievers and pagans, lest we be influenced by them.
- ◆ Look forward with eagerness to our inheriting an eternal kingdom in which righteousness dwells. *See 2 Peter 3:13.*

Exodus 24

Truth

Revelation

Its cumulative fullness: Biblical revelation is a cumulative whole, with later passages referring to earlier ones.

- ◆ God's mediator (Moses) goes up to a mountain with three close disciples to experience God's glory, 1-18; *see Matthew 17:1-13*.
- ◆ Aaron, Moses' brother, 1; *see Luke 4:14-17*.
- ◆ Nadab and Abihu, sons of Aaron; *see Leviticus 10:1-2*.
- ◆ "Moses alone shall come near the LORD," 2; *see Numbers 12:8*.
- ◆ "All the words which the LORD has said we will do," 3; *see Luke 19:8*.
- ◆ "Moses wrote all the words of the LORD," 4; *see Luke 17:14; 34:28; and Deuteronomy 31:9*.
- ◆ Burnt offerings, 5; *see Luke 10:25; 18:12*.
- ◆ Peace offerings, 5; *see Luke 20:24*.
- ◆ Sprinkling blood, 6; *see Hebrews 9:18-22*.
- ◆ "The Book of the Covenant," 7; *see Luke 20:1-21; 20:22-23:33*.
- ◆ "The blood of the covenant," 8; *see Matthew 26:28; Mark 4:24; 1 Corinthians 10:16; 11:25; and Hebrews 9:1-2*.

Its nature and content

- ◆ Biblical revelation is given in words and sentences. These words – not concepts – are the means by which God revealed his will and his ways, 1, 3, 4. *See John 15:7*.
- ◆ God caused his revelation to be written down, 4.
- ◆ He also wrote the Ten Commandments on tablets of stone, 12.

Its source: God gave his words to his chosen messengers, who wrote or spoke what he said for others to read or hear, 3-4; Moses was the greatest of these "writing prophets" in the Old Testament, along with David, Isaiah, Jeremiah, and Ezekiel, and others. In the New Testament, Matthew, Mark, Luke, John, and Paul are the major communicators, next to Jesus, the premier messenger – indeed, the Message – of God.

God

His greatness

- ◆ He is transcendent, “high and lifted up,” “the High and Lofty One,” who dwells in “a high and holy place,” (Isaiah 6:1; 57:15), as signified by his inapproachability to ordinary men, 2, and by his meeting even his mediator Moses on a high mountain, 12.
- ◆ He dwells in a place of transcendent beauty and purity, 9.
- ◆ He has the authority to issue binding commands to his people, 12.
- ◆ He is surrounded in mystery, represented by the dark and glorious cloud; he cannot be known as he is in himself unless he reveals himself to his people, 15.
- ◆ He is utterly glorious – weighty, possessing immensity and blinding splendor, 17. That is, he dwells in “unapproachable light.” *See 1 Timothy 6:16.*
- ◆ He is utterly holy, “a consuming fire,” 17. *See Deuteronomy 4:26, 36:9:3; and Hebrews 12:29.*

His goodness

- ◆ He chooses to become immanent in order to reveal himself to his people and save them; thus, he invited Moses and others up to the mountain to be with him, 1–2, 9–18.
- ◆ He revealed his will and his ways to his people through his Word, as given to chosen messengers like Moses and, finally, his Son, Jesus Christ our Lord, 3–4. *See Hebrews 1:1–2; and John 1:14, 18.*
- ◆ He instituted a sacrificial system that would remove the barrier of sin between himself and his people, 5–8.
- ◆ He made a covenant with his people Israel, binding himself to them as their God, 7–8.
- ◆ He allowed himself to be seen (see below) by Moses and a few others, 10.
Note: Though the Scriptures say that “no one has seen God at any time,” (John 1:18; see Exodus 3:6), this refers to God in his essence, or God the Father in his unmediated deity. In Old Testament times, he allowed himself to be seen as the pre-incarnate Son of God on several occasions, as here, 11. See Genesis 16:13; 32:30; Numbers 12:8; Ezekiel 1:28; Isaiah 6:1, with John 12:39–41.
- ◆ At those times of self-revelation, he “did not lay His hand” upon those people to slay them, as they deserved, 11. *See Exodus 19:21.*
- ◆ He even allowed them to “eat and drink” with them, in an act of intimate communion, 11.

Christ

His person and work: Christ is prefigured in

- ◆ Moses, who went up the mountain with three trusted disciples to meet God, 1, 9–10.
- ◆ The whole burnt offerings and peace offerings, 5; *see Ephesians 2:14; 5:2.*
- ◆ The blood of the covenant sprinkled on the altar, 6; *see Matthew 26:28; Mark 4:24; 1 Corinthians 10:16; 11:25; Hebrews 9:1–2, 11–28; and 1 John 1:9.*
- ◆ Moses, the mediator of the old covenant, 12–18; *see John 1:17; 2 Corinthians 3:7–18; and Hebrews 3:1–6.*

Mankind

Our fallen nature: In our current fallen state, we cannot stand in the presence of a holy God, but must have a Mediator, 2.

The People of God

Their identity: In the Old Testament

- ◆ They were brought out of Egypt by God under the leadership of Moses and Aaron, assisted by Joshua, 1, 13.
- ◆ In the wilderness, they were given clear oral and written revelation from God through Moses, 3, 12
- ◆ They worshiped God according to his instructions, 4–5.
- ◆ They were joined to God in a covenant initiated by God, 7–8.
- ◆ They agreed to fulfill all the stipulations of this covenant, 7.
- ◆ They were governed also by elders, 9.
- ◆ From a distance, they saw the glory of God as manifested in a thick cloud and fire, 15–18.

Sin

Its consequences: Sin separates us from a holy God, and must be atoned for by the shedding of blood, 5–8. *See Isaiah 59:1–2 and Hebrews 9:22.*

Salvation

Its source: Salvation comes entirely from God, on his own initiative, as all the events of this chapter show.

Its benefits

- ◆ Receiving revelation from God through his chosen agent(s), 1–4
- ◆ Membership in the people of God, 2–8
- ◆ Inclusion in the covenants of God, 8
- ◆ Fellowship with God; in the Old Testament, for only Moses, the priests, and a few others; in the New Testament, for all believers, 9–11; *see 1 Corinthians 11:23–26; 2 Corinthians 6:11–7:1; and 1 John 1:3.*

The Last Things

The new creation

- ◆ There will be a new heaven and new earth of resplendent beauty, 10. *See Revelation 9–22.*
- ◆ God will dwell among his people and will “eat and drink” with them, 11. *See Luke 22:30 and Revelation 19:9; 21:3.*
- ◆ Believers will see God face to face, 4. *See Matthew 5:8; 1 Corinthians 13:12; and 1 John 3:2.*

Life

Ethical imperatives

- ◆ Thank God for giving us the New Covenant, which is much better than the Old. *See 2 Corinthians 3:7–18; and Hebrews 8:7–13.*
- ◆ Read the teachings of Jesus and the apostles in the New Testament and ask God for the ability to do all that he requires
- ◆ Thank God that we can “see” his glory by “looking” by faith at the “face” of Jesus as revealed to us in the gospel. *See 2 Corinthians 3:18 and John 1:14.*
- ◆ Thank God for the hope of everlasting life with him in a new heaven and new earth.

Exodus 25

Truth

Revelation

Its cumulative fullness: Biblical revelation is cumulative, with later passages referring to earlier ones.

- ◆ Details of the tabernacle in 25:1–31:17 recall the Garden of Eden: “the east-facing entrance guarded by cherubim, the gold, the tree of life (lampstand), and the tree of knowledge (the law)” (*ESV Study Bible*).
- ◆ An offering (literally a “heave offering”), a voluntary contribution, 2–7; *see Exodus 35:4–9, 21, 22, 26–27, 29; 15:7; 36:2; 2 Kings 12:4; 1 Chronicles 29:5–9; 2 Chronicles 24:10; 29:31; Ezra 2:68; Nehemiah 7:70–72; and 2 Corinthians 8:11–12; 9:7.*
- ◆ The objects to be offered probably came from what the Egyptians gave to the Israelites when they left Egypt, 3–7; *see Exodus 3:21–22; 11:2; 12:35–36.*
- ◆ Spices, 6; *see Exodus 25:6.*
- ◆ Its careful organization and literary structure, 1–5
Note: “The tabernacle is seen as the tented palace for Israel’s divine king. He is enthroned on the ark of the covenant in the innermost Holy of Holies [the Most Holy Place]. His royalty is symbolized by the purple of the curtains and his divinity by the blue. The closer items are to the Holy of Holies, the more valuable are the metals [bronze, then silver, then gold] of which they are made” (ESV Study Bible).
- ◆ The “sanctuary” (holy place) for God, here referring to the tabernacle, 8; *see Hebrews 9:1–2.*
- ◆ “The pattern of the tabernacle,” that God would show Moses, 9, 40; *see Exodus 26:30; 27:8.*
- ◆ “That I may dwell among them,” 8; *see Exodus 29:45; Leviticus 26:11–12; Numbers 2:1–34; 5:3; Deuteronomy 12:11; 1 Kings 6:13; Zechariah 2:10; John 1:14; and 2 Corinthians 16:16.*
- ◆ The Ark of the Covenant, or Testimony, the earthly throne of God where he will meet with the representatives of his people, 10, 22; *see Exodus 37:1–9.*
- ◆ The Testimony, that is, the Ten Commandments that God wrote on stone and gave to Moses, 16, 21; *see Exodus 20:1–17; 16:34; 31:18; 1 Kings 8:9; and Hebrews 9:4.*

- ◆ The mercy seat, 17–22; *see Exodus 26:34; 40:20; Leviticus 16:2; 13–15; Numbers 7:89; 1 Chronicles 28:11; and Hebrews 9:5*. This can also be translated as “atonement cover” [NIV], and it is applied to Jesus in the New Testament. *See below*.
- ◆ Two cherubim, that is, figures of angelic beings, 18–20; *see Genesis 3:22–24; 1 Kings 8:7; 1 Chronicles 28:18; and Hebrews 9:5*.
- ◆ “I will meet with you . . . from between the cherubim,” 22; *see Numbers 7:89*. *Note: God is sometimes said to be “enthroned” upon the cherubim or to dwell between them. See Psalm 80:1; 1 Samuel 4:4; 2 Samuel 6:2; and Isaiah 37:16.*
- ◆ The table for the Showbread, or “Bread of [God’s] Presence,” 23–20; *see Exodus 33:14–15; 37:10–16; 40:4; 1 Kings 7:48; 2 Chronicles 4:8; and Hebrews 9:2*. “The bread of the Presence consisted of 12 flat loaves of bread, symbolizing the 12 tribes of Israel (Lev. 24:5–9), and also their consecration of the results of their labors to God. Facing the lampstand, they enjoyed the perpetual light of divine blessing” (*ESV Study Bible*). The loaves were considered holy, 1 Samuel 21:4, but Jesus offered a different application of their use. *See Matthew 12:3–4*.
- ◆ The gold lampstand, 31–40; *see Exodus 37:17–24; Numbers 8:2–4; 1 Kings 7:49; Zechariah 4:2; Hebrews 9:2; and Revelation 1:12*.
- ◆ Seven lamps, 37; *see Exodus 27:20–21; Leviticus 24:4; and 2 Chronicles 13:11*. In the Bible, seven symbolizes completeness. This lampstand represents the light of the glory of God, “reflected in the consecrated lives of the Israelites – Israel’s glory answering to God’s glory in the tabernacle.’

God

His greatness

- ◆ He has the authority to command his people to offer to him all their most precious possessions, 1–7.
- ◆ He dwells in heaven, he is transcendent, all–powerful, and all–knowing, and he can “show” to Moses a pattern of the tabernacle to be built for him, 9.
- ◆ He is surrounded, served, and worshiped by heavenly beings – angels – whose forms he commanded to be represented in the tabernacle (the cherubim), 18–20.

His goodness

- ◆ He condescends to live among his people, 8.
- ◆ He is holy; the sanctuary is really a “Holy place,” 8.

- ◆ He is utterly pure, precious, and beautiful, as reflected in the gold and precious materials used for the tabernacle and its furnishings, 15.
- ◆ He provides atonement for the sins of his people so that they may have communion with him; this is represented by the mercy seat, where blood would be sprinkled for the ritual cleansing from sin, 17. *See Leviticus 16:2–3, 14–16.*
- ◆ He regularly met with the High Priest and Moses and spoke to them, 22.
- ◆ He kindly revealed his will to his people through Moses and the written law, 22.
- ◆ He is light, as represented by the lampstand, 31–40. *See 1 John 1:5 and John 8:12.*

Christ

His person: Christ is prefigured here by

- ◆ The tabernacle, in which God dwelt and allowed representatives of his people to have regular communion with him, 1–40; *see John 1:14, where “dwelt” can be literally translated as “tabernacled” [lived in a tent] among us; and Colossians 1:19; 2:9.*
- ◆ Moses, the mediator between God and his people, 1–2, 22; *see John 1:18 and Hebrews 3:1–6.*
- ◆ The Testimony, that is, the tablets with the Ten Commandments written upon them, as the revelation of God’s moral will for his people, as well as of his covenant with them, 16, 21; *see John 1:18 and 2 Corinthians 3:3.*
- ◆ The mercy seat, that is, the “place” where God made atonement for the sins of his people by the shedding of blood, 17; *see Romans 3:25, where “propitiation” in Greek is the same word as “mercy seat” in the Greek translation of the Old Testament.*
- ◆ The showbread, or bread of the Presence, 30; *see John 6:35: “I am the bread of life.”*
Note: Jesus is the physical manifestation both of the spiritual sustenance God gives us through his life and redemptive work, as well as of the offerings which are brought by redeemed mankind to their God. See also 1 Corinthians 11:24, the words spoken by Jesus at the Last Supper, where his body is said to be the physical manifestation of God’s gracious presence and his provision of communion with God.
- ◆ The lampstand, 31–40; *see John 8:12: “I am the light of the world.”*

The Holy Spirit

His person: The Holy Spirit is prefigured by the seven lamps on the lampstand, representing the fullness of God’s self-revelation to his people, 37. *See Revelation 1:4.*

Mankind

Our created nature: We were made to worship God, 2–9, 30.

Our fallen state: In our fallen condition, we may not approach God directly; there must be a mediator. In the Old Testament this role was fulfilled by Moses and the High Priest, 22; in the New Testament, by the Risen Lord Jesus Christ, through whom we now have full access to God by faith. *See Romans 5:1–2; Ephesians 2:13, 18; and Hebrews 10:22.*

The People of God

Their identity

- ♦ In the Old Testament, God's people were "the children of Israel," 2, that is, descendants of Abraham, Isaac, and Jacob [Israel], 3:6; in the New Testament, they are all who believe in Jesus Christ and are thus "sons" of Abraham, who was justified by faith in God's promise; *see Romans 9:6–8 and Galatians 3:5–9, 26–29.*
- ♦ God's people show their allegiance to him by offering to him what he has given them, 2–7.
- ♦ God's people are those among whom he uniquely dwells, 8, and – in the Old Testament – with whose representatives he meets, 22.

Salvation

It includes

- ♦ The privilege of offering our best to God, 1–7
- ♦ Meeting with God in his designated holy place and having God dwell in our midst; in the Old Testament, this was the tabernacle, 8; in the New Testament, God dwells in individual believers and among his gathered people; *see 1 Corinthians 3:16; 6:19; 2 Corinthians 6:16; and Ephesians 2:19–22.*
Note: In the New Testament, the dwelling place, or house, or sanctuary of God is never a physical building.
- ♦ Forgiveness of sins through the redemption that is in Christ Jesus, who offered himself as an atoning sacrifice for our sins, as foreshadowed in the mercy seat, 17; *see Romans 3:24–25.*
- ♦ The ongoing self-revelation of God through his chosen messengers; in the Old Testament, these were Moses, 22, and the prophets, and now God reveals

himself to us through his written Word, as the Holy Spirit illumines our minds to understand it; *see John 16:13; Ephesians 1:17–23; and Hebrews 1:1–3.*

Note: The promise in John’s Gospel was to the apostles, who would write authoritative Scriptures for us by the inspiration of the Holy Spirit; see 2 Timothy 3:16 and 2 Peter 3:14–16. Now, the illumination of the Spirit comes as he allows us to understand what was written. The Spirit does not lead believers into additional, new authoritative revelation; he “only” enables us to understand the prophetic and apostolic revelation as written in the Old Testament and also New Testament.

- ◆ The illumination, or “light” of Christ, as given to us by the Holy Spirit, 31–40; *see John 8:12 and Ephesians 1:17–23.*

The Last Things

The new creation: God’s promises to dwell among his people in the tabernacle point forward to the new heaven and new earth, the new Jerusalem, when God will dwell among his redeemed and resurrected people (*see Revelation 21:3*); when he will himself be the temple or tabernacle (*see Revelation 21:22*); where his throne will be visible and near to them (*see Revelation 22:3*); and they will see his face (*see Revelation 22:4*).

Life

Ethical imperatives

- ◆ Read the Old Testament often to understand how God dealt with his people Israel in the past and to appreciate the greater spiritual access we have to God now in Christ Jesus.
- ◆ Offer everything that we have, including our own bodies, to God for his service and use. *See Romans 12:1–2.*
- ◆ Worship and serve God according to his written instructions in the Bible, especially, now, the ethical instructions in the New Testament.
- ◆ Thank God for his dwelling among us now by the Holy Spirit, both individually and corporately as assemblies of believers in Jesus Christ.
- ◆ Look forward eagerly to the coming of Christ, when we will be given unrestricted access to the presence and glory of God.

Exodus 26

Truth

Revelation

Its cumulative fullness: Biblical revelation is cumulative, with later passages referring to earlier ones.

- ◆ The tabernacle, including the tent itself and the screen of wood surrounding the tabernacle area, 1–39; *see Exodus 26:8 and Hebrews 9:2.*
- ◆ The layout of the interior of the tabernacle and also all the furnishings of the tabernacle, 31–37; *see Exodus 25:10–40 and Hebrews 9:1–5.*
- ◆ The precious metals and colors (which were made of very rare and costly materials) used for the tents, sockets, and screens, 1, 6, 11, 14, 19, 21, 29, 31, 31–32, 36–37; *see Exodus 25:2–7; these all came from the Egyptians when Israel left Egypt, 11:2–3.*
- ◆ Cherubim, 31; *see Exodus 25:18.*
- ◆ The plan that God showed Moses on the mountain, 30; *see Exodus 25:9, 40; 27:8.*
- ◆ The Ark of the Testimony, or Covenant, 33; *see Exodus 25:10–16 and Hebrews 9:4.*

God

His greatness

- ◆ He possesses infinite wisdom, extending to the smallest details of the structure of the tabernacle, including the light but durable materials and the provision for its portability.
- ◆ He rules from heaven, where he is attended and worshiped by heavenly beings like the cherubim, 1.

His goodness

- ◆ He is very beautiful, as seen in the structure, symmetry, colors, and materials of the tabernacle 1, 36, 37, 31, and the entire chapter.
- ◆ He provides for the forgiveness of his people's sins, as seen in the covering of rams' skins died red. The rams would have to be slain, and the red symbolizes blood shed for the forgiveness of sins, 14.

- ◆ He is holy, as reflected in the double separation of sinful people (except for the priests) by the veil dividing the Holy Place from the Holiest Place and the screen separating the tabernacle from the outside, 3–33.
- ◆ He is merciful, as seen by the mercy seat, 34, and faithful, as seen by the ark of the Testimony [Covenant], 33–34.

Christ

His person: Christ is prefigured in

- ◆ The entire tabernacle, where God dwelt among his people and met with them, 1–33; *see John 1:14 and Colossians 1:18; 2:9.*
- ◆ The covering of rams' skins dyed red, 14, prefiguring his blood, shed for the forgiveness of sins, 14; *see Ephesians 1:7 and Colossians 1:20.*
- ◆ The veil, perhaps pointing towards the veil of the temple that was rent in two when Jesus died, but also the “veil” of his flesh, 31–33; *see Matthew 27:51 and Hebrews 10:19–21.*
- ◆ The mercy seat, that is, the “place” where God made atonement for the sins of his people by the shedding of blood, 34; *see Romans 3:25, where “propitiation” in Greek is the same word as “mercy seat” in the Greek translation of the Old Testament.*
- ◆ The lampstand, 35; *see John 8:12: “I am the light of the world.”*

The Holy Spirit

His person: The Holy Spirit is prefigured by the lampstand, with its seven lamps, representing the fullness of God's light and self-revelation, 35. *See Revelation 1:4.*

Mankind

Our created nature: Being created by God in his image, we are able, under his guidance, to make things that are beautiful and functional and that enable others to worship God, 1–37.

Our fallen state: Being fallen into sin, and thus alienated from a holy God, we may not directly approach him, as the veil and the screen of the sanctuary indicate, 33, 36. Now, of course, believers have direct access to God through Jesus Christ. *See Romans 5:1–2 and Hebrews 10:22.*

Sin

Its consequences: Our sins have separated us from God, as the hiddenness of the sanctuary, and within it, the Holy of Holies, symbolize. *See Isaiah 59:2.*

Salvation

It includes

- ◆ Revelation from God about how to worship him, 1–37
- ◆ The presence of God among his people in the Old Testament tabernacle; the incarnation of God in the person of Jesus Christ (*see John 1:14*); and, now, the dwelling of God among believers in Christ; *see 1 Corinthians 3:16; 6:19.*

The Last Things

The new creation: God's promises to dwell among his people in the tabernacle point forward to the new heaven and new earth, the new Jerusalem, when God will dwell among his redeemed and resurrected people (*see Revelation 21:3*); when he will himself be the temple or tabernacle (*see Revelation 21:22*); where his throne will be visible and near to them (*see Revelation 22:3*); and they will see his face (*see Revelation 22:4*).

Life

Ethical imperatives

- ◆ Read the Old Testament often so that we can understand the background of the New Testament.
- ◆ Seek to worship and serve God with order and beauty.
- ◆ Respect the various gifts and beauties of each person who believes in Christ; they are the temple of God, and in their variety and ordered connections they fulfill what was seen only partially in the tabernacle, with its different furnishings and harmonious construction.
- ◆ Eagerly anticipate the day when God will dwell with his people in a new heaven and new earth.

Exodus 27

Truth

Revelation

Its cumulative fullness: Biblical revelation is cumulative, with later passages referring to earlier ones.

- ◆ The altar of burnt offering, 1–8; *see Exodus 38:1–7 and Ezekiel 43:13–17.*
- ◆ The pattern shown on the mountain, 8; *see Exodus 25:40; 26:30; Acts 7:44; and Hebrews 8:5.*
- ◆ The court of the tabernacle, 9–19; *see Exodus 38:9–20.*
- ◆ The sanctuary, like the Garden of Eden, faces east, 13; *see Genesis 3:24.*
- ◆ The lampstand, 20–21; *see Exodus 25:31–40.*
- ◆ The oil for the lampstand, 20; *see Exodus 35:8, 28; and Leviticus 24:1–4.*
- ◆ The care of the lampstand, 20–21; *see Exodus 30:8; Leviticus 24:1–4; 1 Samuel 3:3; and 2 Chronicles 13:11.*
- ◆ A perpetual commandment, 21; *see Exodus 28:43; 39:9; Leviticus 3:17; 16:34; Numbers 18:23; 19:21; and 1 Samuel 30:25.*

Note: When Jesus had finished his work and ascended to heaven, these commandments were abolished for Christians, since he has fulfilled all that the tabernacle, its furnishings, and its offerings had foreshadowed. See Hebrews 7:1–10:25.

God

His greatness

- ◆ He is sovereign over all and deserves our entire consecration and worship, to the point of offering things to him that will be consumed, as represented by the altar of burnt offering, 1–8.
- ◆ He possesses consummate wisdom, artistry, and “engineering” knowledge, as seen in the materials and construction of the tabernacle and its furnishings, all of which were strong, durable, and portable, 1–19.
- ◆ He is a God of order and symmetry, reflected in the symmetry of the tabernacle and its court, 9–20.
- ◆ He is everlasting and can give commands of perpetual standing, 21.

His goodness

- ◆ He is beautiful, as seen in the colors of the materials for the tabernacle screen, 16.
- ◆ He is holy and transcendent, as seen in the screen separating the people from the tabernacle, 16, and by the outer “wall” of tall boards and linen, preventing anyone other than the priests from seeing the tabernacle, 9–18.
- ◆ He is a consuming fire, that is, his holiness consumes all moral impurity, as seen in the altar of burnt offering, 1–8. *See Hebrews 12:29.*
- ◆ He is light, as represented by the lampstand, 20–21. *See 1 John 1:5.*
- ◆ He condescends to dwell among his people: here, the lampstand and its care are “before the Lord,” indicating that he was present in the tabernacle, 21.
- ◆ He instituted an hereditary priesthood so that his people would have representatives through whom they could worship God, 21.

Christ

His person: Christ is prefigured in

- ◆ The entire tabernacle, where God dwelt among his people and met with them, 1–21; *see John 1:14 and Colossians 1:18; 2:9.*
- ◆ The lampstand, 20–21; *see John 8:12: “I am the light of the world.”*
- ◆ The veil of the tabernacle separating the Holy Place from the Most Holy Place, 21, perhaps pointing towards the veil of the temple that was rent in two when Jesus died, but also the “veil” of his flesh, 20–21; *see Matthew 27:51 and Hebrews 10:19–21.*

The Holy Spirit

His person: The Holy Spirit is also prefigured by the lampstand, with its seven lamps, representing the fullness of God’s light and self-revelation, 20–21. *See Revelation 1:4.*

Sin

Its consequences: Our sins have separated us from God, as the hiddenness of the sanctuary, and within it, the Holy of Holies, symbolize. *See Isaiah 59:2.*

Salvation

It includes

- ◆ Revelation from God about how to worship him, 1–21

- ◆ The presence of God among his people in the Old Testament tabernacle; the incarnation of God in the person of Jesus Christ (*see John 1:14*); and, now, the dwelling of God among believers in Christ (*see 1 Corinthians 3:16; 6:19*).

The People of God

Their identity

- ◆ In the Old Testament, God's people were those who worshiped him according to the instructions given by God through Moses, 1–21.
- ◆ In the Old Testament, God's people were “the children of Israel,” 21, that is, descendants of Abraham, Isaac, and Jacob [Israel], 3:6; in the New Testament, they are all who believe in Jesus Christ and are thus “sons” of Abraham, who was justified by faith in God's promise. *See Romans 9:6–8; and Galatians 3:5–9, 26–29.*

The Last Things

The new creation: God's promises to dwell among his people in the tabernacle point forward to the new heaven and new earth, the new Jerusalem, when God will dwell among his redeemed and resurrected people (*see Revelation 21:3*); when he will himself be the temple or tabernacle (*see Revelation 21:22*); where his throne will be visible and near to them (*see Revelation 22:3*); and they will see his face (*see Revelation 22:4*).

Life

Ethical imperatives

- ◆ Thank God for giving us the privilege of worshiping him.
- ◆ Praise God for his beauty, as seen in the tabernacle and, indeed, in all his revealed Word.
- ◆ Praise God for giving us light, as seen in the lampstand, but also the light of his revelation in his Word and later in Jesus Christ.
- ◆ Worship God day and night. *See Ephesians 6:18; Philippians 4:4; Colossians 4:2; and 1 Thessalonians 5:18.*

Exodus 28

Truth

Revelation

Its cumulative fullness: Biblical revelation is cumulative, with later passages referring to earlier ones.

- ◆ Aaron, the brother of Moses, both of them being descendants of Levi, 1; *see Exodus 4:4.*
- ◆ Aaron and his sons Nadab, Abihu, Eleazar, and Ithamar, who served as the first priests of a long succession of Aaronic (or Levitical) priests, 1; *see Exodus 6:23; 24:1, 9; Leviticus 10:1–3, 6, 16; Numbers 3:10; Psalm 99:6; and Hebrews 5:1–4.*
- ◆ Holy garments for the high priest and the other priests, 2–4; *see Exodus 29:4–5; 31:10; 39:1–31; and Leviticus 8:7–9.*
- ◆ “Filled with the spirit of wisdom,” 3; *see 1 Corinthians 12:8; Ephesians 1:17; and Colossians 1:9.*
- ◆ The twelve sons of Israel [Jacob], in the order of their birth, 9–10; *see Genesis 29:31–30:24; 35:16–18.*
- ◆ The skilled engraver, 11; *see Exodus 35:35.*
- ◆ The high priest bears the names of the sons of Israel upon himself as he enters the presence of God, 12; *see Exodus 28:29–30.*
- ◆ The names of the twelve tribes of Israel in the sanctuary of God; *see Revelation 21:12–13.*
- ◆ “As a memorial” before the Lord and for the people of God, 12; *see Leviticus 24:7; Numbers 31:54; Joshua 4:7; Zechariah 6:14; and 1 Corinthians 11:24.*
- ◆ The “breastplate of judgment,” 15; *see Exodus 39:8–21.*
- ◆ Precious stones in the sanctuary of God, 17–20; *see Revelation 21:11, 10–21.*
- ◆ The Urim and the Thummim, 30; *see Leviticus 8:8; Numbers 27:21; Deuteronomy 33:8; 1 Samuel 28:6; Ezra 2:63; and Nehemiah 7:65.*
Note: The Urim and Thummim were two stones used for discerning the will of God. Otherwise, we know little about them.
- ◆ The robe of the ephod and other priestly garments, 31–43; *see Exodus 29:22–31.*
- ◆ “A plate of pure gold,” 36; *see Exodus 39:30 and Leviticus 8:9.*
- ◆ “HOLINESS TO THE LORD,” 36; *see Zechariah 14:20.*

- ◆ The high priest bears the iniquity of the people, even the imperfection of their worship, 38; *see Exodus 28:43; Leviticus 10:17; 22:9, 16; Numbers 18:1; 1 Peter 2:24; and Hebrews 7:26–27.*
- ◆ Linen garments, 39, 42–43; *see Exodus 35:35; 39:27–29.*
- ◆ Garments and hats “for glory [honor] and for beauty,” 1, 40; *see Exodus 39:27–29.*
- ◆ Anointing the priests for their service, 41; *see Exodus 29:7–9; 30:30; 40:15; Leviticus 8:12; 10:7.*
- ◆ Consecrating – that is, setting apart as holy and dedicated to God and his service – the priests, 41; *see Romans 29:9; Leviticus 8; and Hebrews 7:28.*

God

His greatness

- ◆ He is omnipresent, so that ministry by the priests is ministry “to” him, 1.
- ◆ He is wise in every way and can give skill and intelligence to men to make beautiful things, 3.

His goodness

- ◆ He is holy and pure, so his servants must be dressed in holy garments, 2.
- ◆ He is gracious, and he established a sacrificial system served by a family of priests, 1.
- ◆ He is beautiful, and he is served by priests clothed in beautiful attire, 2–43.
- ◆ He is faithful to his covenant promises to Abraham and his descendants, “remembering” them as their names are brought before him in the ephod of the high priest, 9–12. *See Genesis 12:1–3; 15:1–21.*
- ◆ He is merciful, using in his service sinful people, like Jacob and his sons. *See Genesis 25–50.*
- ◆ He is holy, and he must destroy all that is not holy in his presence, 35.
- ◆ His holiness also requires that those who serve him must do so in sexual purity, signified by the covering of nakedness, 42–43. *See Exodus 20:26 and Genesis 3:21, where God clothes the now-sinful Adam and Eve so that they may dwell in his presence in the Garden.*

Christ

His person: Christ is prefigured in

- ◆ Aaron the high priest and those descended from him, though Jesus is not descended from Aaron, 1; *see Hebrews 4:14–5:11; 7:1–28.*
- ◆ The high priest bearing the judgment of God's people on their behalf, 30; *see 2 Corinthians 5:21; Hebrews 9:27–28; and 1 Peter 2:24; 3:18.*
- ◆ The holiness of the high priest, 36; *see Hebrews 7:26.*
- ◆ The anointing of the priests with oil, which points towards the anointing of Jesus as the "Christ" [Messiah], that is, Anointed One, with the Holy Spirit, 41; *see Matthew 1:1; 3:16–17; Luke 4:18; John 1:32; Acts 10:38; and 2 Corinthians 1:21.*

The Holy Spirit

His person: The Holy Spirit is prefigured by the holy anointing oil used to consecrate the priests, 41; *see verses on "Christ," above; also 1 John 2:20, 27.*

Mankind

Their nature and purpose

- ◆ By God's grace and specific appointment, sinful men are privileged to receive his revelation and to serve him, 1.
- ◆ As created in the image of God and guided by his Spirit, people are able to make things of beauty and utility, 3–4, 15, 28.
- ◆ Each person is valuable to God, as seen in the names of the sons of Jacob that the Lord wanted to have brought before him in remembrance of his covenant promises, 9–12, 21.
- ◆ In our current sinful state, we deserve only judgement by God, 29–30.
- ◆ God has constituted humanity in such a way that, without denying individual responsibility, we are also represented corporately, as by the high priest, 29–30, 38. This corporate identity is, first, in the sin of Adam, but also, now, in Christ for all believers. *See Romans 5:12–21.*

The People of God

Their identity

- ◆ In the Old Testament, the people of God were the descendants of Abraham, who were brought out from Egypt by God through Moses and who worship and

served him according to the laws given to them by God through Moses, 1. *See Exodus 20:1.*

- ◆ Now, the people of God are all true believers in Jesus Christ who worship and serve him together in the Body of Christ according to his Word and by the power of the indwelling Holy Spirit. *See Ephesians 2:11–22; and Colossians 3:16.*

Sin

Its nature: All mankind, even the chosen people of God, are now naturally in sin, 38. *See Romans 3:23.*

Its consequences: The consequence of sin is judgement, 30.

Its effects: The result of sin is death, unless God intervenes by his grace, 43. *See Romans 6:23.*

Salvation

It includes

- ◆ The privilege of contributing all that God gives us, whether possessions or abilities, to serve and worship God, 2–4; *see Romans 12:1–8; and 1 Peter 4:10–11.*
- ◆ Membership in the people of God, each with different gifts and resources, in a common life of worship and service, 1–4; *see New Testament references above, as well as 1 Corinthians 12 and Ephesians 4.*
- ◆ The gracious, personal attention and affection of our great God, through the work of his chosen mediators, 12, 21, 29–30; *see Hebrews 3:1–6.*
- ◆ The status of being considered holy now by God's grace [i.e., saints, those who are set apart for God's possession and use] and the ongoing work of the Holy Spirit to make us practically holy, with the assured destiny of being completely holy when Christ returns, 36; *see Romans 1:7; 2 Corinthians 7:1; Ephesians 1:1, 4; Hebrews 2:11; and 1 Peter 1:15–16.*
- ◆ The anointing of the Holy Spirit for communion with God and for ministry, 41; *see 1 John 2:10–27.*

The Last Things

Christ's return: When Christ returns, all that was prefigured by the tabernacle and the service of the priests will be realized in a new heaven and new earth in which we shall enjoy the unmediated presence of God with his redeemed people. *See Revelation 21–22.*

Life

Ethical imperatives

- ◆ Thank God for his character, including his manifold beauty and his wisdom.
- ◆ Praise God for giving us access by faith into his gracious presence now through the work of Jesus, our great High Priest.
- ◆ Offer all that God has given us back to him in joyful worship and service with all his people.
- ◆ Seek to be holy in all our conduct.
- ◆ Read the Old Testament often to understand the privileges and promises we now have in Christ.
- ◆ Eagerly anticipate the beauty and joy of life in the New Jerusalem with Christ and all his perfected saints forever.

Exodus 29

Truth

Revelation

Its cumulative fullness: Biblical revelation is cumulative, with later passages referring to earlier ones.

- ♦ Sacrificing a young bull and ram, 1–37; *see Leviticus 1:1–7; 4:1–12; and Hebrews 7:26–28.*
- ♦ Offerings of bread, cakes, and wafers made with unleavened wheat flour, 2, 32; *see Leviticus 2:4; 6:19–20.*
- ♦ Washing and consecrating priests at the door of the tabernacle, 4–35; *see Exodus 49:12; Leviticus 8:6; and Hebrews 10:22.*
- ♦ The priestly garments, 5–6, 29–31; *see Exodus 28:2 and Leviticus 8:7.*
- ♦ Anointing the priests, 7, 21; *see Exodus 25:6; 30:22–33; Leviticus 8:12; 10:7; 21:10; Numbers 35:25; and Psalm 133:2.*
- ♦ A perpetual priesthood, 9; *see Exodus 40:15; Numbers 3:10; 18:7; 25:13; and Deuteronomy 18:5.*
- ♦ The burnt offering, 15–18; *see Leviticus 1:4–9; 8:18.*
- ♦ Giving honor to the right hand, 20; *see Genesis 47:17–19.*
- ♦ Putting blood on the priests and on the altar, 21; *see Exodus 24:6–8.*
- ♦ The offering is a sweet aroma to God, 25; *see Ephesians 5:2.*
- ♦ A wave offering, also called the heave offering, or the peace offering, 26–28; *see Leviticus 7:30; 10:14.*
- ♦ Outsiders are not to eat the offering food, 33; *see Leviticus 22:10.*
- ♦ The seven-day period of consecration, 30, 35–37; *see Leviticus 8:33–36; also Genesis 1:31–2:3.*
- ♦ God dwells, meets with, speaks to, and consecrates his people in the tabernacle, 42–45; *see Exodus 25:22; 1 Kings 8:11; and Revelation 21:3.*
- ♦ He will be their God, 45–46; *see Genesis 17:8.*

God

His greatness

- ♦ He is the sovereign Lord who can direct his people to worship him, 1.
- ♦ He is eternal, 9.

- ◆ He is glorious, that is, beautiful and “heavy” in his divine presence, but also gracious, 43.
- ◆ He saved his people from slavery in Egypt by mighty signs and wonders, 46.
- ◆ He is Yahweh, the eternal self-subsisting personal God of his people, 46.
- ◆ He is God – Elohim – the mighty creator of the world, 46. *See Genesis 1:1.*

His goodness

- ◆ He established a priesthood and a system of sacrifices so that his people could draw near to him in worship, 1–45.
- ◆ Specifically, he instituted sacrifices to make atonement for sin, 33–37. *See Romans 3:24–25.*
- ◆ He is omnipresent and thus able to “savor” the offerings made to him on earth, 18, 42.
- ◆ He is holy and sanctifies his servants so that they may draw near to him, 33–34, 43–44.
- ◆ Though he is transcendent, he condescends to dwell among his people and to be their God, 45–46. *See John 1:14.*
- ◆ He saved his people Israel from bondage in Egypt, 46.

Christ

His person: Christ is prefigured in

- ◆ The young bull that is used for a sin offering, 1, 14; *see Hebrews 10:1–8; and 1 John 2:2.*
- ◆ The sweet-smelling sacrifice, 18, 25, 41; *see Ephesians 5:2.*
- ◆ The Aaronic priests, 1, 44; *see Hebrews 4:14–12; 7:11–8:6; 9:11–15, 23–28.*
- ◆ God dwelling among his people, 45; *see John 1:14, where “dwelt” means “tabernacled.”*

The Holy Spirit

His person: The Holy Spirit is prefigured by the anointing oil, 21. *See Matthew 1:1; 3:16–17; Luke 4:18; John 1:32–33; Acts 10:38; 2 Corinthians 1:21; and 1 John 2:20, 27.*

Mankind

Our fallen state: In our fallen state, we are ritually and morally unclean, and need to be “washed” by God in order to be able to stand in his presence, 4. *See John 13:10–19; 1 Corinthians 6:11; and 1 John 1:9.*

The People of God

Their marks

- ◆ They live under the Word of God that he gave through his chosen messengers, starting with Moses, 1–46.
- ◆ They worship God according to the instructions he gave to his chosen messengers, starting with Moses, 1–46, and continuing with Jesus and the apostles. *See John 4:23–24; and Corinthians 11:17–24.*
- ◆ They draw near to God by virtue of the shed blood of animals in the Old Testament and now, of the shed blood of Christ, 10–21, 33, 36–37. *See Romans 5:1–11; and Hebrews 10:19–25.*
- ◆ In the Old Testament, only Aaron and his descendants served as priests, 1–42; now, all believers in Christ are priests, with full access to the presence of God to offer sacrifices of praise, consecrated lives and good deeds. *See Romans 12:1–2; Hebrews 13:15–16; and 1 Peter 2:9.*
- ◆ God’s people enjoy the presence of God among them, 45–46. *See Matthew 18:20; 28:20; 1 Corinthians 3:9, 17; and 2 Corinthians 5:16.*

Sin

Its consequences: The consequence of sin is moral and ritual uncleanness that must be removed before we can have communion with God, 1–46. *See Isaiah 59:2–3.*

Salvation

It includes

- ◆ Purification from sins – that is, forgiveness – by blood; *see Hebrews 9:22 and 1 John 1:9.*
- ◆ Access to God through forgiveness of sins, 45–46; *see Ephesians 2:11–22.*
- ◆ The presence of God among his people, 45–46; *see 2 Corinthians 6:16.*
- ◆ Deliverance from bondage to sin and Satan, represented by Pharaoh, 46; *see Romans 6:15–23.*

Life

Ethical imperatives

- ◆ Read the Old Testament often to understand how God has dealt with his people throughout the ages, how we should worship him, and how Christ fulfills all Old Testament types and promises.
- ◆ Worship God according to his revelation as given in the New Testament.
- ◆ Thank God for sending Jesus to shed his blood for our sins so that we could draw near to him, worship him, and serve him.
- ◆ Offer ourselves to him daily as a living sacrifice.
- ◆ Thank God for bringing us out from the dominion of Satan and into the kingdom of his beloved Son, 46. *See Colossians 1:13.*

Exodus 30:1–16

Truth

Revelation

Its cumulative fullness: Biblical revelation is cumulative, with later passages referring to earlier ones.

- ◆ The altar of incense, 1–10; *see Exodus 37:25–29; 1 Chronicles 28:18; 2 Chronicles 26:16; Luke 1:9–11; and Hebrews 9:4.*
- ◆ Incense, symbolizing prayer, 1; *see Psalm 141:2; and Revelation 5:8; 8:3–4.*
- ◆ Horns of an altar, 3; *see Exodus 27:2; Psalm 118:27; and Revelation 9:13.*
- ◆ The veil before the ark, 6; *see Exodus 26:31–35; 40:3; 36:35; Leviticus 4:6; 16:2; 12, 15; 21:23; Matthew 27:51; and Hebrews 9:3; 10:20.*
- ◆ The Mercy Seat, literally, “atonement cover, propitiation,” 6; *see Exodus 25:22; 26:34; and Hebrews 9:5.*
- ◆ “Burn sweet incense every morning,” 7; *see 1 Samuel 2:28.*
- ◆ “You shall not offer strange incense on it,” 9; *see Leviticus 10:1–3.*
- ◆ “The sin offering of atonement,” 10; *see Leviticus 16:3–34.*
- ◆ Taking a census, 12; *see Numbers 1:2; 26:2.*
- ◆ “Every man shall give a ransom for himself to the LORD,” 12; *see Exodus 38:26; Numbers 31:50; Matthew 28:20; and 1 Peter 1:18–19.*
- ◆ “That there may be no plague among them,” 12; *see 1 Chronicles 21.*
- ◆ Money appointed for the service of the tabernacle, 16; *see Exodus 38:25–31.*

God

His goodness

- ◆ He instituted a system of worship so that his people could draw near to him, 1–10.
- ◆ He gave explicit instructions about the tabernacle and regulations for worship, so that his people could worship in an acceptable way, 1–10.
- ◆ He instituted a sacrificial system, centered on the Mercy Seat, that allowed sinners to come before him on the basis of a sacrifice that was acceptable to him, 6, 9.
- ◆ He met with his people, 6.

- ◆ He protected the people from false worship by giving detailed instructions about what was acceptable and what was idolatrous, 9.
- ◆ He is holy, 10.
- ◆ He allowed men to escape his wrath by providing a way for them to be ransomed, 11–16.

Christ

His person: Jesus Christ is prefigured by

- ◆ The mercy seat, where propitiation was made for sins, 6; *see Romans 3:25 and 1 John 2:1.*
- ◆ The meeting of God with his people, 6; *see Matthew 1:23 and John 1:14.*
- ◆ Aaron, the high priest who was taken from among the Israelites and was thus sympathetic to their weaknesses, 7; *see Hebrews 4:14–5:4.*
- ◆ The atoning sacrifice that was made annually, 10; *see Leviticus 16:3–34; Romans 8:3 (where “on account of sin” could also be translated “as a sin offering”); and 2 Corinthians 5:21.*
- ◆ The ransom money that was to be paid for each person as an atonement, 12, 16; *see Mark 10:45 and 1 Peter 1:18–19.*

Mankind

Our created nature: We are created in the image of God, and we are all equal in God’s sight, despite our obvious other differences, such as class, 15. *See Genesis 1:26–27; and Proverbs 22:2.*

The People of God

Their identity

- ◆ In the Old Testament, the people of God were the descendants of Abraham through Isaac and Jacob, whose name was changed to Israel; they were called “the children of Israel” and could be numbered, 12. *See Genesis 12:1–3; 15:5; 17:1–19; 18:9–15; 22:17–18; and Exodus 3:15.*
- ◆ In the New Testament, all those who truly believe in and follow Jesus Christ belong to the people of God; they are so numerous that they can’t be numbered. *See Acts 2:5, where “devout men” refers to God-fearing Gentiles, Acts 2:38–39; Romans 3:20–4:25; 9:6–13, 22–33; 1 Corinthians 1:2; Galatians 3:22–4:7; Ephesians 2:22–23; and Revelation 7:9–17.*

Sin

It includes

- ◆ Failure to worship God according to his revealed will
- ◆ Offering “strange incense,” that is, worshiping God with any admixture of pagan elements; these come in almost unnoticed but have a deleterious effect, 9.
- ◆ Favoring the rich over the poor, or vice versa, 15

Salvation

Its benefits

- ◆ Fellowship with the living God, 6; *see 2 Corinthians 6:16 and 1 John 1:3.*
- ◆ The privilege of prayer, 7–8
- ◆ Forgiveness of sins through atonement provided by God, 10, 12

Life

Ethical imperatives

- ◆ Thank God for giving us the privilege of prayer, here symbolized by the offering of incense.
- ◆ Pray at least twice a day, 7–8.
- ◆ Thank God for giving us Jesus as our Great High Priest, who prays for us; *see Romans 8:34 and Hebrews 7:25.*
- ◆ Thank God for the atonement effected for us by the offering of Christ once for all for our sins.
- ◆ Thank him also for redeeming us from sin and wrath by the blood of Christ.

Exodus 30:17–38

Truth

Revelation

Its cumulative fullness: Biblical revelation is cumulative, with later passages building upon earlier ones.

- ◆ The bronze laver, 17–21; *see Exodus 38:8; 40:30; 1 Kings 7:38.*
- ◆ Ritual washing to make the worshiper “clean” before God, 19–21; *see Exodus 40:31–32; Psalm 26:6; 51:7; Isaiah 52:11; John 13:7; and Hebrews 10:22.*
- ◆ Holy anointing oil, 2–33; *see Exodus 37:29; 40:9.*
- ◆ Quality spices, 23; *see Song of Solomon 4:14; Ezekiel 27:22; Mark 16:1; and Luke 23:56.*
- ◆ Myrrh, 23; *see Psalm 45:8; Proverbs 7:17; and Matthew 2:11.*
- ◆ Anointing God’s chosen servants, such as priests and kings, 30; *see Exodus 29:7; Leviticus 8:12; Numbers 35:25; and Psalms 89:20; 133:2.*
- ◆ Sweet-smelling incense, 34; *see Exodus 25:6; 37:29.*
- ◆ Frankincense, 34; *see Matthew 2:11.*

Its messengers

- ◆ God spoke directly to his chosen messengers, who wrote down what they heard from God, 17–38. *See Hebrews 1:1.*
- ◆ The words of Moses and the other chosen messengers of God are nothing less than the words of God himself, 17–38.

God

His greatness

- ◆ He is able to transcend his infinite transcendence by communicating with humans, whom he made in his own image, 17–38.
- ◆ He is omnipresent, 20.

His goodness

- ◆ He kindly revealed his will to his chosen servants, including Moses, so that his people could know and serve him, 17, 22, 34.

- ◆ He is holy, and both requires and enables people to offer holy worship to him, 25, 29, 31, 37–38.
- ◆ He cannot abide the presence of any sin, represented here by physical uncleanness, 17–21, and ritual purity, 31–33, 36–38.
- ◆ He graciously designed a way for people to become ritually clean in his sight, 17–21.
- ◆ He instituted the sacrificial system and priesthood, to allow his people, represented by the priests, to have fellowship with him, 19, 30. *See Hebrews 5:1–11; 8:1–9:28.*
- ◆ He is beautiful and lovely in all respects and to all the senses, including smell, 34–38.
- ◆ He kindly dwelt among his people in the tabernacle and later the temple in Jerusalem, 36.

Christ

His person

- ◆ Jesus as the temple of God is prefigured by the tabernacle, 26. *See John 1:14 (where “dwelt” is literally “tabernacled”); 2:19–21; and Colossians 1:19; 2:9.*
- ◆ Jesus as Messiah, the Christ, the anointed one of God, is prefigured by the anointing oil for Aaron and his sons, 30. *See Luke 4:18.*
- ◆ He is the “most holy” priest, 29. *See Hebrews 7:26.*

His work

- ◆ His work as the one whose blood cleanses us from our sins and regenerates us through the Holy Spirit is prefigured in the function of the bronze laver, 18–21. *See John 3:5 (where “water and the Holy Spirit” probably means “water = the cleansing work of the Holy Spirit”); 1 Corinthians 6:11; Titus 3:5; 1 John 1:9; and Revelation 1:5.*
- ◆ His work as Priest is prefigured in Aaron as High Priest, 30. *See Hebrews 4:14; 7:20–8:6.*

The Holy Spirit

His prefiguration

- ◆ The ritual washing by water in the bronze laver, 17–21; *see John 3:5 and Titus 3:5.*

- ◆ The holy anointing oil for the priests, 30; *see Luke 4:18 and 1 John 2:10.*

Sin

It includes

- ◆ Seeking to worship and serve God without the cleansing of Jesus' blood and washing in the Holy Spirit, 17–21
- ◆ Failing to adhere strictly to biblical instructions on how to worship God, 33; *see 1 Corinthians 14:26–40.*
- ◆ Seeking illicit pleasure, especially pleasure from perverting the prescribed use of holy things, 37–38; *see Acts 5:1–11.*

Its consequences: Sin's consequences include excommunication and exclusion from fellowship with God's people, leading to spiritual ruin, 33. *See Romans 16:16–18.*

Salvation

Its benefits

- ◆ Washing from the guilt and moral stain (not though of the remaining sin nature, the "flesh") by the blood of Jesus Christ at regeneration, and then in an ongoing manner as we confess our sins and trust Christ for forgiveness daily, 17–21; *see references above, as well as Ephesians 5:25–27.*
- ◆ Membership in a "royal priesthood," in which all believers are priests unto God, 19–21; *see 1 Peter 2:9 and Revelation 1:6.*
- ◆ The anointing of the Holy Spirit at regeneration, marking us as set apart and holy unto God, 22–32; *see 2 Corinthians 1:21 and 1 John 2:20, 27.*
- ◆ The privilege of prayers that reach God's throne, like the incense of old, 34–37; *see Revelation 5:8.*
- ◆ The blessings of God's immediate presence in the new tabernacle, which is the Body of Christ, 36; *see 1 Corinthians 3:9, 16; and Ephesians 2:21–22.*

The Last Things

Christ's return: When Christ returns, he will usher in a new heaven and a new earth, in which God will dwell among his people directly, as prefigured in the tabernacle. *See Revelation 21:3.*

Life

Ethical imperatives

- ◆ Conduct all our worship according to what God has revealed to us in the New Testament, including 1 Corinthians 14.
- ◆ Come to Christ daily for forgiveness of sins and cleansing from guilt.
- ◆ Thank God for sending Jesus to cleanse us from the guilt of sin so that we may draw near to him.
- ◆ Thank God for giving us the Holy Spirit to guide and teach us, as well as to give us gifts of service and speech.
- ◆ See ourselves as consecrated to God for his possession and use.
- ◆ Offer our prayers to God in the assurance that, through our faith in Jesus our High Priest, they do reach the throne of grace. *See Hebrews 4:14–16; 10:19–22.*

Exodus 31

Truth

Revelation

Its cumulative fullness: Biblical revelation is cumulative, with later passages referring to earlier ones.

- ◆ Spirit-filled artisans, 2–3, 6; *see Exodus 35:30–36:1.*
- ◆ The tabernacle and all its furnishings and materials for worship, 7–11; *see Exodus 25:1–28:43; 30:1–38; 36:8–38.*
- ◆ The ark of the testimony (or ark of the covenant), 7; *see Exodus 37:1–5.*
- ◆ The Sabbath law, 12–17; *see Exodus 20:8–11; Genesis 2–3; Ezekiel 20:12, 20; Numbers 15:32–36; Isaiah 58:13–14; Romans 14:5–6; and Colossians 2:16.*
- ◆ God's creation of the world in six 24-hour days, 17; *see Genesis 1:1–2:1.*
- ◆ Two stone tablets on which God wrote the law (probably the Ten Commandments), 18; *see Exodus 24:12; 32:15–16.*

God

His Triune nature: He exists as Father, Son, and Holy Spirit, 3.

His greatness

- ◆ He is Spirit, 3. *See John 4:24.*
- ◆ He is infinitely valuable, as seen by the precious materials to be used in worshiping him, 4–5.
- ◆ He possesses all wisdom, even “practical” wisdom for making things of beauty and usefulness, 3–11.
- ◆ He is omniscient and omnipresent, knowing the names of everyone, 2, 6.
- ◆ He is sovereign and has the right to assign to us our work, 3–6.

His goodness

- ◆ He instituted a sacrificial system that allowed sinful people to approach him in worship without being killed, as seen in the mercy seat, 7, the offering of atonement, 9.
- ◆ He is holy, that is, utterly unique and morally pure, requiring that his people be the same in all their actions, 14–15, 18.

- ◆ He graciously made a covenant with his people Israel, 17; in the New Testament, this covenant is replaced by the New Covenant in the blood of Jesus. *See Mark 14:24; 2 Corinthians 3:7-18; and Hebrews 8:7-13.*

Christ

His person: Christ is prefigured by

- ◆ The mercy seat, where sins were atoned for and God met with his people, 6; *see Romans 3:25, where the word “atonement” in the Greek is the same as the Greek translation of “mercy seat.”*
- ◆ The priestly office and work of Aaron and his sons, who offered incense, representing prayers, for God’s people, 7-10, 30; *see Romans 8:34; John 17; Hebrews 4:14-5:11; 7:11-1:6; 9:11-15; 10:21.*
- ◆ The sweet-smelling incense, 7, 34-38; *see Ephesians 5:2.*
- ◆ The laver and the washing to make his people ritually clean, 9; *see John 13:1-15; 1 Corinthians 6:11; and Ephesians 5:25-26.*
- ◆ The anointed priest and servant of God, 10; *see Luke 3:22; Acts 4:27-28, and all uses of the word “Christ,” which means “anointed one” in the New Testament.*

The Holy Spirit

His person: The Holy Spirit is prefigured by the anointing oil for the priests, 11. *See Luke 4:18; Acts 4:27; and 2 Corinthians 1:21.*

Mankind

Our created nature: We were created for communion with God to glorify him and worship him; this entire chapter deals with regulations for proper worship and for resting before the Lord. *See Genesis 3:8-9; Psalm 102:18; and Isaiah 43:7.*

Our fallen state: In our fallen state, we cannot approach God directly, but must do so through mediators, such as the Old Testament priests and now Jesus Christ, 10. *See Ephesians 2:18 and Hebrews 10:22.*

The People of God

Their identity

- ◆ In the Old Testament, God’s people were the Israelites, descendants of Abraham, who worshiped him

- According to the instructions given by God to Moses, 1–18
- Through the mediating work of Aaron and his descendants, 10, 18
- In ceremonies centered upon the tabernacle and then the temple, 7–11
- On the basis of animal sacrifices, especially the sacrifice of atonement, 7, 9
- ♦ In the New Testament, since Pentecost, God’s people are those from all nations who
 - Follow the teachings of Christ and his apostles; *see Matthew 28:18–20; and Ephesians 2:19–20.*
 - Trust and follow Jesus Christ; *see Acts 2:39; Galatians 3:7–9, 26–29; Ephesians 2:11–22; and 1 Peter 2:9–10.*
 - Draw near to God by virtue of shed blood of Christ; *see Romans 5:1–11; and Hebrews 10:19–25.*
 - Are now priests, with full access to the presence of God to offer sacrifices of praise, consecrated lives and good deeds; *see Romans 12:1–2; Hebrews 13:15–16; and 1 Peter 2:9.*

Sin

It includes: Sin includes failing to obey God’s laws about rest, 14–15, though now under the New Testament this has become a principle of wisdom, based on the creation ordinance of God and on the precedent of the Mosaic Law. *See Exodus 20:8–11; Genesis 2–3; Ezekiel 20:12, 20; Numbers 15:32–36; Isaiah 58:13–14; Romans 14:5–6; and Colossians 2:16.*

Salvation

It includes

- ♦ In the Old Testament, salvation included
 - Forgiveness of sins through sacrifices of atonement, 7, 9
 - Access to God through prayer, represented by the incense offerings, 8
 - Ritual cleansing from sin and guilt, 9
 - Anointing with holy oil for the priests, who represented the people, 10–11
 - The weekly Sabbath rest, 12–17
- ♦ In the New Testament, all these find fulfillment in Christ for all who believe in him. *See Ephesians 1:7; Ephesians 2:18; Hebrews 10:15–16; and the references above.*

The Last Things

The new creation: The Sabbath rest prefigures the rest to be enjoyed now by those who trust in Christ and eternally in the new heaven and new earth by all God's people throughout the ages, 12–17. *See Hebrews 4:1–10; and Revelation 21:4.*

Life

Ethical imperatives

- ◆ Read the Old Testament often to understand the background of the salvation brought to us in Jesus Christ.
- ◆ Thank God for giving us Jesus as our faithful High Priest, through whom we have direct access to God by the Holy Spirit.
- ◆ Worship God according to the instructions given to us in his Word; *see 1 Corinthians 11:1–31; 14:1–30.*
- ◆ Offer prayers to him continually, as the incense burned day and night; *see Luke 18:1; Ephesians 6:18; and 1 Thessalonians 5:18.*
- ◆ Find rest for our souls by trusting in Jesus Christ and his saving work for us and ceasing from attempting to justify ourselves by our good works; *see Hebrews 4:10.*
- ◆ Take one day in seven to rest from our ordinary work and to enjoy God's love.
- ◆ Thank God for the eternal rest to be brought to us when Christ returns. (This is not to deny that we shall have “work” to do, but that it will not seem like burdensome toil to us.)

Exodus 32

Truth

Revelation

Its cumulative fullness: Biblical revelation is cumulative, with later passages referring to earlier ones.

Note: This chapter records a pivotal event in the history of Israel and contains many key concepts. Thus, it is linked to many other passages in the Bible, explicitly or implicitly.

- ◆ The Exodus, 1, 4, 7, 11–12; *see Exodus 7:1–15:22.*
- ◆ Making idols and worshiping them, 4; *see Deuteronomy 4:6–10; 1 Kings 12:26–28; Psalm 106:19–20; and Romans 1:23.*
- ◆ The jewelry that had been given to Israel by the Egyptians, 2–3; *see Exodus 11:2; 35:22.*
- ◆ Burnt offerings, fellowship offerings 6; *see Leviticus 1, 3.*
- ◆ Indulging in pagan worship, including licentiousness, 7; *see Acts 7:40–41; 1 Corinthians 10:7.*
- ◆ "Have corrupted themselves," or, acted corruptly, 7; *see Exodus 8:24; Genesis 6:12–13; 19:13; and Jeremiah 12:10; 13:7.*
- ◆ Israel is a stiff-necked, that is, stubborn, people, 9; *see Exodus 33:3–5; 34:9; Deuteronomy 10:16; 31:27; Nehemiah 9:16; Jeremiah 19:15; and Acts 7:51.*
- ◆ God's wrath against his rebellious people, 10–12; *see Exodus 22:24; Numbers 16:46; Deuteronomy 9:8, 22; 29:28; 2 Kings 22:13; 2 Chronicles 24:18; 29:8; 43:25; Ezra 5:12; Psalm 90:7; 106:32; Isaiah 60:10; and often in the Old Testament.*
- ◆ Moses intercedes for the people, 11–13; *see Exodus 33:12–16; 34:8–9; and Numbers 14:13–19.*
- ◆ "I will make of you a great nation," 10; *see Genesis 12:2.*
- ◆ Appealing to God's reputation among the pagans, 12; *see Deuteronomy 9:29 and Numbers 14:13–19.*
- ◆ "I will multiply your descendants as the stars of heaven," 13; *see Genesis 12:7; 22:17; 26:4; 35:11, 12.*
- ◆ "All this land . . . I give to your descendants, and they shall inherit it," 13; *see Genesis 13:15; 15:7, 18.*

- ◆ “The LORD relented from the harm which He said He would do to His people,” 14.
Note: “Relented” here means “felt sorrow” or “had compassion.” (Zondervan NIV Study Bible). See Genesis 6:6 and 2 Samuel 24:16.
- ◆ “Two tablets of the Testimony,” 15; *see Exodus 24:12; 31:18.*
- ◆ Joshua, 17; *see Exodus 17:9; 24:13.*
- ◆ Grinding a pagan altar to dust, 20; *see 2 Kings 23:15.*
- ◆ Drinking water mixed with dust as a form of punishment or of discovering guilt, 20; *see Numbers 5:17, 24; and Deuteronomy 9:21.*
- ◆ “So great a sin,” 21, 30, 31.
Note: This is a term used for adultery in Near Eastern languages, and underlines the spiritual adultery of Israel. See Genesis 26:10.
- ◆ Making excuses for one’s sin, 21–24; *see Genesis 3:9–19.*
- ◆ “As for this Moses,” 23; *see Acts 7:39.*
- ◆ “To their shame among their enemies,” 25; *see Genesis 38:23; Numbers 14:13–16; and Deuteronomy 9:28.*
- ◆ “Whoever is on the Lord’s side, come to me,” 26; *see Joshua 24:15; 1 Kings 18:21; and Matthew 6:24.*
- ◆ “Consecrate yourselves,” 29; *see Exodus 28:41.*
- ◆ “I will go up to the LORD; perhaps I can make atonement for your sin,” that is, find forgiveness from God, 30; *see 1 Samuel 12:20, 23; and Numbers 25:13.*
- ◆ “Blot me out of Your book,” 32; *see Romans 9:1–3.*
- ◆ God’s book of life, 32; *see Psalm 69:28; Isaiah 4:3; Daniel 12:1; Malachi 3:16; Luke 10:20; Philippians 4:3; and Revelation 3:5; 20:12, 15; 21:27.*
- ◆ “Whoever has sinned against Me, I will blot him out of My book,” 33; *see Exodus 17:14; Leviticus 23:30; Deuteronomy 29:20; Psalm 9:5; and Ezekiel 18:4; 33:2, 14, 15.*
- ◆ “Lead the people to the place of which I have spoken to you,” 33; *see Exodus 3:8, 17; 23:23; 33:1–3.*
- ◆ “My Angel shall go before you,” 34; *see Exodus 23:20; 33:2; and Joshua 5:13–15.*
- ◆ “In the day when I visit for punishment,” 34; *see Deuteronomy 32:35; and Romans 2:5–6.*
- ◆ “I will visit punishment upon them for their sin,” 34–35; *see Psalm 89:32.*
- ◆ “So the LORD plagued the people,” 35; *see 1 Corinthians 10:8.*

Its source: Biblical revelation is by definition written down; some of it came directly from God in the form of writing, 16.

God

His greatness

- ◆ He is omniscient, knowing everything, and he is omnipresent. Thus, he can see what happens anywhere in the world at any time, 7–9.
- ◆ He is omnipotent, able to punish his people with a plague, 35.

His goodness

- ◆ He burns with wrath against sin, 10. *See Exodus 20:5; Numbers 16:46; Deuteronomy 9:8, 22; 29:28; 2 Kings 22:13; 2 Chronicles 24:18; 29:8; 43:25; Ezra 5:12; Psalms 90:7; 106:32; Isaiah 60:10; and often in the Old Testament.*
- ◆ He graciously communicates with his chosen servants, especially Moses, the mediator of the Old Covenant, 7–10, 16, 33–34.
- ◆ He is holy and must punish sin, 34.
- ◆ He is fair, punishing only the guilty, 33.
- ◆ He graciously chastises the people for their sin, that they might not sin again, 35. *See Proverbs 3:11–12; Deuteronomy 8:5; Hebrews 12:5–11; and Revelation 3:19.*
- ◆ He kindly sent his Angel to go with his people, 34.

Christ

His person: Jesus Christ is foreshadowed by

- ◆ Moses, who interceded for the people, 11–14; 30–32; *see John 17; Romans 8:34; and Hebrews 7:25; 9:24.*
- ◆ Moses, when he offered to be blotted out of God's book of life as a substitute for Israel, 32; *see Philippians 2:5–8; Hebrews 9:15; and 1 John 2:1.*
- ◆ Moses, as the recipient and transmitter of special revelation from God, 15–16; *see John 7:16; 8:26, 38.*
- ◆ Moses as the judge and executor of God's holy will, 25–29; *see Matthew 25:31–46; John 5:24–30; and Revelation 1:16; 19:11–16.*
- ◆ Moses, who was to lead God's people to the place he had promised to them, 34; *see John 10:3–4, 9, 27–29; 14:2–4; and 1 Peter 3:18.*

The Holy Spirit

His person: The Holy Spirit is prefigured by the writing of God, by the “finger of God,” upon the tablets of stone, 16. *See Exodus 31:18; Luke 11:20; 2 Corinthians 3:3; and 1 Timothy 3:16.*

Mankind

Our nature

- ◆ We are “hardwired” to worship one or more gods; this is natural for all people, 1–6.
- ◆ In our fallen condition, we worship man-made “gods,” idols, whether material or mental, 1–6. *See Isaiah 40:18–20; 41:21–24; 44:9–17; and Romans 1:20–23.*
- ◆ Idolatry inevitably leads to sexual immorality, self-indulgence, and all sorts of wickedness, 6. *See Romans 1:24–32.*

The People of God

Their identity

- ◆ In the Old Testament, the people of God
 - Was Israel, the descendants of Abraham, Isaac and Jacob, 4, 13
 - Was Israel, whom God had delivered from slavery in Egypt, 1, 8, 11, 12, 23
 - Was also within Israel, where there was always a faithful remnant who obeyed God and were spared his full wrath, 26–29; see 1 Kings 19:10–18; 2 Kings 25:11, 22; Isaiah 1:7–9; Lamentations 3:22; and Romans 9:14–29; 11:1–6.

Sin

It includes

- ◆ Ascribing to men (in this case Moses), what God has done, 1; *see Exodus 20:2; 29:46.*
- ◆ Making an idol as a representation of God, 4; *see Exodus 20:2; 29:46; Deuteronomy 4:6–10; and Romans 1:23, 25.*
- ◆ Ascribing to an idol what God has done, 4
- ◆ Self-indulgence, especially eating, drinking, and dancing, in false worship, 6; *see 1 Corinthians 10:7.*

- ◆ Making any excuses for our sins, especially claiming that others are responsible for our sin, 21–24; *see Genesis 3:9–19*.
- ◆ Going along with a crowd in doing evil, 21–24; *see Exodus 23:2 and Matthew 27:11–26*.

Salvation

It includes

- ◆ Being saved from God’s wrath and the full consequences of our sins, 14; *see Romans 5:6–7*.
- ◆ The ability to do what is right, 27–29; *see Philippians 2:13*.
- ◆ The continuing leading and presence of God, 34; *see Matthew 28:20*.

The Last Things

The final judgment

- ◆ God’s warning that he would pour out his wrath upon rebellious people, 10, 25–28, is fulfilled in the last days, when he does afflict the entire unbelieving world with terrible wrath and punishment. *See Romans 1:18; 2:5–10; and Revelation 14:10; 15:1; 16:19; chapter 19; 21:8; 22:15*.
- ◆ Those whose names are written in God’s book of life will be saved, but those who have worshipped idols without repentance will be blotted out of his book, 33. *See Luke 10:20; Philippians 4:3; and Revelation 3:5; 21:27*.

Life

Ethical imperatives

- ◆ Do not lose heart or become impatient with God when he fails to “appear” to us or seems absent from us; rather, we should wait patiently for his appearing, both in this life and at the end of the age. *See Psalms 37:7–11; 40:1–3; Romans 12:12a; and 2 Peter 3:1–13*.
- ◆ Resist all attempts to take our lives into our own hands or to put our trust in anything or anyone but God, that is, we should turn from all idolatry.
- ◆ Do not go along with the crowd when they urge us to do something we know is wrong.
- ◆ Take sides with the minority who want to follow and serve God regardless of the cost.

- ◆ Deal ruthlessly with sin and all temptations to sin.
- ◆ Pray for brothers and sisters in Christ who have gone astray, asking God to forgive and restore them, and warning them sternly of the consequences of continued sin. *See James 1:19–20; and 1 John 5:16.*
- ◆ Wait patiently for the Lord's second coming, even while we warn people of the wrath to fall upon all persistent, unrepentant unbelievers and idolaters.

Exodus 33

Truth

Revelation

Its cumulative fullness: Biblical revelation is cumulative, with later passages referring to earlier ones.

- ◆ “You and the people whom you have brought out of the land of Egypt,” 1; *see Exodus 32:1, 7.*
Note: God says Moses brought the people out, thus distancing himself from the people.
- ◆ “The land which I swore to Abraham, Isaac, and Jacob,” 1; *see Genesis 12:7.*
- ◆ “I will send My Angel before you,” 2; *see Exodus 32:34 and Joshua 5:14.*
- ◆ “Drive out the Canaanite . . .,” 2; *see Exodus 23:27–31; and Joshua 24:11.*
- ◆ “A land flowing with milk and honey,” 3; *see Exodus 3:8.*
- ◆ “Lest I consume you” [with divine wrath], 3; *see Exodus 32:10; and Numbers 16:21, 45.*
- ◆ “You are a stiff-necked people,” 3, 5; *see Exodus 32:9 and Acts 7:51.*
- ◆ “Take off your ornaments,” as a sign of mourning for sin, 5; *see Ezekiel 26:16.*
- ◆ The “Tabernacle of meeting,” 7–11; *see Exodus 29:42–43;* this is not the tent of meeting, which could be in the center of the camp, but a temporary structure where God would meet with Moses and his people.
- ◆ “Everyone who sought the LORD,” inquiring to know his will or humbly seeking his forgiveness and favor, 7; *see Genesis 25:22; Deuteronomy 4:29; 1 Kings 22:5; and Colossians 3:1.*
- ◆ The pillar of cloud, representing God’s presence, 9; *see Exodus 13:21; 40:33–34; and Psalm 99:7.*
- ◆ “The LORD talked to Moses,” “face to face,” 9, 11, 21–23; *see Exodus 25:22; 31:18; Numbers 12:8; Deuteronomy 34:10; and Psalm 99:7.*
- ◆ “His servant Joshua,” 11; *see Exodus 24:13.*
- ◆ “I know you by name,” 12, 17; *see Isaiah 43:1; 45:3; 49:1; John 10:14–19; and 2 Timothy 2:19.*
- ◆ “You have found grace in My sight [favor with Me, NIV],” 12, 13, 16; *see Genesis 6:8; 18:3; Numbers 11:15; Judges 6:17; 2 Samuel 15:25; Acts 7:46; and almost all the greetings of the New Testament epistles, “Grace to you and peace from God our Father and the Lord Jesus Christ.”*

- ◆ "Show me . . . Your way," 13; *see Exodus 34:6-7; Psalms 25:4, 8-10; 103:7-10; and John 14:6.*
- ◆ "We shall be separate," 16; *see Exodus 34:10; Isaiah 52:11; and 2 Corinthians 6:17.*
- ◆ "Show me Your glory," 18; *see Luke 9:30-32; John 1:14; 2:11; 17:1-5; and 2 Corinthians 3:18.*
- ◆ "All my goodness," 19; *see Psalms 25:8; 100:5; 118:1.*
- ◆ "I will be gracious to whom I will be gracious," 19; *see Romans 9:15, 16, 18.*
- ◆ "You cannot see My face," 20; *see Genesis 32:30 and John 1:18.*
- ◆ "I will put you in the cleft of the rock, and will cover you with My hand while I pass by," 22; *see 2 Kings 19:13 and Isaiah 2:21.*

God

His greatness: He has the power to take land from pagan nations and give it to his people, 1-2.

His goodness

- ◆ He promised to give the land of Canaan to Abraham and his descendants, 1.
- ◆ He is so holy that to be near him without a mediator is to be consumed, 3, 5. *See Numbers 16:21; Isaiah 6:1-5; and Hebrews 12:32.*
- ◆ He condescended to manifest himself to his people in the pillar of cloud (by day, and fire by night), 9-10.
- ◆ He condescended to speak with Moses, his chosen mediator with Israel, 11.
- ◆ He promised that his Presence would go with Moses and the people, 14.
- ◆ He "knew" Moses by name, that is, he chose to have an intimate and personal relationship with Moses, 17.
- ◆ He is sovereignly gracious to those whom he has chosen, 19.
- ◆ He allowed Moses to see his "back," though not his face, 23.

Christ

His person: Christ is prefigured by

- ◆ The Angel of the LORD, whom the Lord identifies with himself, 2; *see Exodus 3:2-5; Genesis 16:7-14; 22:11; 31:11, 13; Numbers 22:22-35; Judges 6:11-23; 13:2, 5; 1 Chronicles 21:15-17; 1 Kings 19:5-7; and Isaiah 63:9.*

- ◆ Moses, with whom the LORD spoke face to face, and to whom he gave uniquely authoritative revelation, 9, 11; *see Deuteronomy 34:10 and John 1:14–18.*
- ◆ The Presence of God, 14; *see Isaiah 63:9; John 1:1; Matthew 28:20.* Or, the Presence might prefigure the Holy Spirit.
- ◆ The revealed glory of God; *see John 1:14 and 2 Corinthians 3:18.*

The Holy Spirit

His person: The Holy Spirit might be prefigured by the Presence of God (but see above on Christ), as the Presence seems to be identified as God in “I will give you rest,” 14.

Mankind

Our nature

- ◆ In our fallen state, we are “stiff-necked,” that is, stubborn, in our rebellion against God, 3.
- ◆ We are naturally made and inclined for worship, 10.
- ◆ We naturally seek to know God intimately, 18.
- ◆ We are unable to see God’s “face,” that is, his essence, without being consumed, 20.

The People of God

Their identity

- ◆ In the Old Testament, the people of God
 - Are the descendants of Abraham, 1, 13
 - Receive the promises of God, 1–3
 - Mourn over their sins, 4
 - Seek God and his guidance, 7
 - Worship God when he reveals himself, 8, 10
 - Are separate from all other nations, 16
 - Receive God’s grace and compassion, 19; *see Psalm 103:7–10.*
- ◆ In the New Testament, all these blessings come to people of all nations who trust in Jesus Christ. *See Acts 2:39; 11:17–18; Romans 4:13–25; Ephesians 2:14–22; 1 Peter 2:9–10; and Revelation 7:9–10.*

Sin

It includes: Sin includes persistent refusal to obey God, 3, 5.

Its consequences

- ◆ Being consumed by God's wrath, 3, 5
- ◆ Sorrow over the loss of God's favor, 4
- ◆ Loss of the privilege of enjoying some good things, 5–6
- ◆ Loss of God's immediate presence, 7

Salvation

It includes

- ◆ The Presence of God, 14
- ◆ Receiving God's grace and compassion despite our sins, 19

Its source

- ◆ Salvation comes through a Mediator.
 - In the Old Testament, the mediator was Moses, who interceded for God's people, 12–16.
 - In the New Testament, the Mediator is Jesus Christ. *See 1 Timothy 2:5–6.*
 - He replaces Moses as the only Mediator between God and mankind. *See Hebrews 3:1–6.*

The Last Things

The new creation: God's speaking face to face with Moses prefigures the final state in a new heaven and new earth when all the redeemed will see God's face. *See 1 John 3:2 and Revelation 22:4.*

Life

Ethical imperatives

- ◆ Mourn deeply for our sins, especially any form of idolatry, material or mental, 4.
- ◆ Consider not wearing ornaments during our time of mourning for sin, 4, 6.
- ◆ Seek the Lord and his guidance continually, 7, 13. *See 1 Chronicles 16:11; 22:19; 28:9; 2 Chronicles 7:14; 15:2, 12, 13; 30:19; Psalms 14:2; 24:6; 27:4, 8–9, 11; 34:4, 10; 105:4; Hosea 10:12; Amos 5:4; and Colossians 1:1.*
- ◆ Thank God for giving us Jesus as our new and perfect Mediator.

- ◆ Thank God for showing us his glory in the face of Jesus Christ, whom we see now by faith in the words about him recorded in the Scriptures. *See 2 Corinthians 3:18.*

Exodus 34

Truth

Revelation

Its cumulative fullness: Biblical revelation is cumulative, with later passages referring to earlier ones.

- ◆ Two tablets of stone like the first ones, 1; *see Exodus 24:12; 31:18; 32:15, 16, 21; and 2 Corinthians 3:7.*
- ◆ Rising early in the morning to commune with God, 2, 4; *see Mark 1:35.*
- ◆ “The LORD descended in the cloud,” 5; *see Exodus 19:9; Matthew 17:5 and parallels.*
- ◆ “Proclaimed the name of the LORD,” 5; *see Exodus 33:19 and John 17:6.*
- ◆ “The LORD, the LORD God, merciful and gracious, longsuffering, and abounding the goodness and truth,” 6; *see Numbers 14:18; Nehemiah 9:17; Psalms 86:15; 103:7–10; 145:8; Joel 2:13; Jonah 4:2; and Nahum 1:3.*
- ◆ “By no means clearing the guilty,” 7; *see Job 10:14.*
- ◆ “Visiting the iniquity of the fathers upon the children,” 7; *see Exodus 20:5; Numbers 14:18; but see also Jeremiah 31:29–30; and Ezekiel 18:1–18.*
- ◆ “Take us as Your inheritance,” 9; *see Deuteronomy 7:6; Psalms 28:9; 33:12; 94:14; Titus 2:14; 1 Peter 2:9; and perhaps also Ephesians 1:11.*
- ◆ “Behold, I make a covenant,” that is, a renewal of the covenant already made, 10; *see chapters 19–24; Deuteronomy 5:2–5, 6–22. This renewal includes more instructions about ritual matters, since Israel had broken the first covenant by false worship.*
- ◆ “I will do marvels,” 10; *see Exodus 3:10 and Psalm 77:14.*
- ◆ “Observe what I command you this day,” 11; *see Deuteronomy 6:25.*
- ◆ “I am driving out before you the Amorite,” etc., 11; *see Exodus 23:20–33; 33:2.*
- ◆ “Take heed to yourself, lest you make a covenant with the inhabitants of the land,” 2; *see Exodus 23:32, 33; 1 Corinthians 7:39; and 2 Corinthians 6:14–18.*
- ◆ “You shall destroy their altars . . . and cut down their wooden images,” 13; *see Deuteronomy 12:3; Judges 6:25; and 2 Kings 18:4.*
- ◆ “You shall worship no other gods,” 14; *see Exodus 20:3–5.*
- ◆ “The LORD . . . is a jealous God,” 14; *see Exodus 20:5 and Deuteronomy 4:24.*

- ◆ “And they play the harlot [that is, commit spiritual adultery] with their gods,” 15; *see 1 Corinthians 8:4, 7, 10.*
Note: “By establishing his covenant with Israel, the Lord had metaphorically become Israel’s ‘husband’ (Isaiah 54:5–6; Jeremiah 3:14; 31:32; Hosea 2:2; Ezekiel 16:8, 32, 45; 23:4, 37). Israel’s unfaithfulness was commonly expressed by crediting other gods (called ‘lovers’; e.g. Ezekiel 16:33, 36; Hosea 2:5) with the protection or provision that the Lord alone could supply.” (NIVZSB)
- ◆ “And you take of his daughters for your sons,” 16; *see Genesis 24:3; 28:1; and Numbers 25:1–2.*
- ◆ “You shall make no molded gods,” 17; *see Exodus 20:4, 23; 32:8.*
- ◆ The Feast of Unleavened Bread, 18; *see Exodus 32:15–16.*
- ◆ “In the month of Abib you came out of Egypt,” 18; *see Exodus 12:2; 13:4.*
- ◆ “All that open the womb [that is, the first to be born] are mine,” 19; *see Exodus 13:2; 22:29.*
- ◆ “Six days you shall work,” 21; *see Exodus 20:9; 23:12; 31:15; 35:2; Leviticus 23:3; and Deuteronomy 5:13.*
- ◆ The three annual feasts, 22–23; *see Exodus 23:14–17.*
- ◆ Offering the first of the harvest to God, 26; *see Exodus 23:19 and Deuteronomy 26:2.*
- ◆ “He was with the LORD forty days and forty nights,” 28; *see Exodus 24:18 and Matthew 4:2.*
- ◆ The shining face of Moses, 29–35; *see Matthew 17:2 and 2 Corinthians 3:7.*
- ◆ Veiling Moses’ shining face, 33–35; *see 2 Corinthians 3:13–16.*

Its written nature: God gave Moses another set of stone tablets, upon which Moses wrote God’s words, probably the Ten Commandments, but perhaps including the words revealed in this chapter (6–7, 10–38), 1, 4, 27, 28. *See Deuteronomy 10:2; Galatians 6:11; 2 Peter 1:20; 3:1, 15–16; and Revelation 22:9, 18–19.*

God

His greatness

- ◆ He is transcendent, dwelling “on high,” so that he must “come down” to meet with people on earth, 5. *See Isaiah 57:15.*
- ◆ He has the authority and power to punish men for their sins, 7.
- ◆ He is eternal, lasting throughout all human history (and before and after that), 7.

Note: His name "Yahweh," revealed here, means something like, "I am who I am," or "I will be who I will be," implying eternity. See Exodus 3:6, 14.

- ◆ He is almighty, able to work wonders on behalf of his people, 10.
- ◆ He owns the earth and may sovereignly dispose of any part of it as he pleases, 11. (But note that he drove out the pagan nations because of their sins. See Genesis 15:16 and Leviticus 18:25–28).
- ◆ He has the authority to issue binding commands to his people, 11–28.
- ◆ He is a jealous God, requiring unique and absolute worship, 14.
- ◆ He owns all his people and their possessions, 19–20, 26.
- ◆ He is the Lord of time and of our time, 21.
- ◆ He is glorious, resplendent in beauty and majesty, so that his beauty and light were reflected on the face of Moses after forty days, 29.

His goodness

- ◆ He graciously offered to rewrite the Ten Commandments for Moses, indicating that he was still with his people, 1.
- ◆ He condescended to come down to the mountain to meet with Moses, 5. *See Isaiah 57:15.*
- ◆ He revealed his name – that is, his essential character and being – to Moses, 6–7.
- ◆ He is fundamentally merciful and gracious, longsuffering and abounding in goodness and truth [faithfulness of word and deed], 6–7a.
- ◆ He is just and holy, and he will punish sin, 7.
- ◆ He graciously made a covenant, that is, renewed the covenant, with Israel, despite their awful sin, 10.
- ◆ He is good and gracious and holy, as reflected in the commands he gave to his people, 11–28.
- ◆ He allows us to rest one day a week, 21.
- ◆ He wants us to take time off during the year to remember his great works for us, 22–23.

Christ

His person: Jesus Christ is prefigured, or alluded to, by

- ◆ The divine one who forgives sins, 7; *see Matthew 9:2.*
- ◆ The miracles God wrought on behalf of his people, 10; *see Matthew 8:1–6, 23–34; 9:1–8; 18–34; etc.*

- ◆ His observance of the required feasts, 18, 22; *see Luke 22:1; and John 2:23; 4:5; 7:2-14; 10:22; 13:1ff.*
- ◆ His being redeemed as firstborn, 20; *see Luke 2:22-24.*
- ◆ The sacrifice of the Feast of the Passover, 25; *see 1 Corinthians 5:7.*
- ◆ Moses' spending forty days and forty nights with God in the wilderness, neither eating nor drinking, 28; *see Matthew 4:1-2.*
- ◆ The shining face of Moses, 29, 35; *see Matthew 17:1-2.*

Mankind

Our characteristics

- ◆ We are joined to previous generations in various ways; one way is that we are impacted by our forefathers' sins, 7.
- ◆ We need to rest one day a week, 21.
- ◆ We are capable to going without food for a month or more, 28.

The People of God

Their identity

- ◆ In the Old Testament, the people of God was Israel, who had been
 - Brought out of bondage in Egypt and into the land of promise in Canaan, 10-11
 - Brought into a covenant relationship with God based upon his written revelation of his will, 1, 5-9.
- ◆ In the New Testament, the people of God are all who trust fully in Jesus Christ. *See Acts 2:38-39; Romans 3:27-31; 4:13-15; and Ephesians 2:11-32.*

Sin

It includes

- ◆ Violation of any of the moral commands of God listed in this passage; we are not now bound by the ceremonial commands.
- ◆ Being stubborn in the face of God's continuing mercy and discipline, 9.
- ◆ Joining nonbelievers in their worship, or having intimate fellowship with them or partnership with them in worship or marriage, 14-16.
- ◆ Worshiping God in any way that he does not reveal, or in ways that his revelation shows to be displeasing to him, 25.

Its consequences: The consequences of sin fall upon our children and their children, 7.

Salvation

It includes

- ◆ Receiving the revelation of God's will and ways from him through his chosen messengers, 1–28
- ◆ The knowledge of God's name, or his character, as gracious, merciful, etc., 6
- ◆ Forgiveness of sins, 6
- ◆ For Israel, entrance into, and possession of, Canaan, and the expulsion of its inhabitants, 10–11
- ◆ For believers in Christ, entrance into the kingdom of God by grace, through faith in Jesus Christ, and the promise that we will inherit the earth when Christ returns; *see John 3:3,5; and Romans 4:13; 5:1–2; 8:16–30.*
- ◆ For Israel, the sight of God's glory on Moses' shining face, 29–35
- ◆ For believers in Christ, the sight of the glory of God in the face of Christ Jesus, seen by us now by faith as we ponder the Word of God in Scripture; *see 2 Corinthians 3:18.*

The Last Things

Their prefiguration: The last things are prefigured by the temporary and partial “glorification” of Moses, which looks forward to our eternal and total glorification, 29–35. *See Romans 8:18–30; 1 Corinthians 15:42–49; Philippians 3:20–21; Colossians 1:27; 1 Thessalonians 2:12; and 1 Peter 1:6–7, 11.*

Life

Ethical imperatives

- ◆ Read the Old Testament often so that we might understand both God and the salvation that he brings us in Jesus Christ.
- ◆ Ponder the revelation of God's name and nature in 34:6–7.
- ◆ Trust in God's promises to overcome all obstacles to bring us into the full enjoyment of our eternal and glorious inheritance.
- ◆ Break off from all connections with pagan worship, whether it be outwardly religious or more subtle, such as an inordinate love for the things of this world. *See 1 John 2:15; 5:21.*

- ◆ Follow the commandments of God that are revealed to us in the New Testament, which often restate or parallel those in the Old Testament.
- ◆ Gaze constantly upon the face of Jesus by reading, meditating upon, and trusting the revelation of him given to us in the whole Bible, but especially in the New Testament.

Exodus 35

Truth

Revelation

Its cumulative fullness: Biblical revelation is cumulative, with later passages referring to earlier ones.

- ◆ Sabbath regulations and the penalty for disobedience, 1–3; *see Exodus 20:9–10; Leviticus 23:3; Numbers 15:32–36; and Deuteronomy 5:13.*
- ◆ A willing heart, 5, 21–22, 29; *see Exodus 25:2; and 2 Corinthians 8:12; 9:2, 7.*
- ◆ Offerings for the tabernacle, 4–9, 21–29; *see Exodus 25:3–7.*
- ◆ Gifted artisans, 10, 25–26, 30–35; *see Exodus 31:2–6; 36:1–2.*
- ◆ Articles for the tabernacle, 11–19; *see Exodus 25:10–40.*

God

His greatness

- ◆ He has the authority to issue binding commands and to punish disobedience, 1–3, 4, 10.
- ◆ He is the Lord of time and of our time, 2–3.
- ◆ He owns all that we have, 4–9.
- ◆ He deserves our willing worship and service, 10, 20–29.
- ◆ He possesses all wisdom of all sorts and can bestow some of it upon people, 30–35.

His goodness

- ◆ He graciously revealed his will to his people, 1–19.
- ◆ He kindly allows us to rest one day in seven, 2.
- ◆ He invites us to participate in worship, 4–19.
- ◆ He supplies all that we need to serve him, both material and mental, 4–19, 30–35. *See 2 Corinthians 9:8.*
Note: the precious materials came from the Egyptians when Israel left Egypt.
- ◆ He is a God of beauty and order, whose tabernacle was lovely in all respects, 4–28.

Christ

His person: Jesus Christ is prefigured throughout this chapter by

- ◆ The one through whom we now find true rest, 1–3; *see Matthew 11:28–30; and Hebrews 4:1–10.*
- ◆ The tabernacle and all its furnishings, as he is the dwelling place of God in all his fullness and beauty, 10–29; *see John 2:16–22; and Colossians 1:19; 2:9.*
- ◆ The freewill offerings of the people, for he offered himself freely to serve God at any cost, 20–29; *see Hebrews 10:5–10.*

The Holy Spirit

His person

- ◆ He is the Spirit of God (and of Christ), co-eternal and co-equal with the Father and the Son, 31. *See Romans 8:9–11.*
- ◆ He is given by God to fill his people to equip them for special tasks, 31. *See 1 Corinthians 12:4–11.*
Note: This filling for service is not the same as the gift of regeneration by the Holy Spirit, also called the baptism with the Spirit or receiving the Holy Spirit, which took place only at and after Pentecost, and which comes with true faith, sincere repentance, and new life. See John 3:3–5; Acts 1:8; 10:44–47; 11:15–18; and Romans 8:15.
- ◆ The Holy Spirit gives wisdom, broadly defined, including the “wisdom” to know how to make beautiful things for God’s service, 31, 34. *See Exodus 36:1; 1 Corinthians 12:8; and Ephesians 1:17.*

Mankind

Our created nature: As created in the image of God, we are

- ◆ Made for work, 2; *see Genesis 1:28; 2:15.*
- ◆ Made to rest one day in seven, 2; *see Genesis 2:1–3.*
- ◆ Gifted by God for different kinds of work, 10, 21, 25–26, 31–35; *see Ephesians 4:7, 16.*
- ◆ Gifted with a “heart,” that is, a seat of thought and emotions, that makes decisions, that is, resolutions of the will, 5, 21, 29
- ◆ Created to worship God together, 4–29
- ◆ Created as male and female, with different gifts and roles, 10, 22, 25, 27, 29
Note: There are only two sexes, which are the same as genders.
- ◆ Created to perform both intellectual and manual tasks, 32–35
- ◆ Organized in society, by God’s design, for different roles, including leadership and teaching, 27, 34

Note: In the Bible, leadership and teaching were given almost exclusively to men, except that women were to teach other women and children, 27, 34. See 1 Timothy 2:11–15; 3:1–13; and Titus 2:4.

- ◆ Gifted with an aesthetic sense that delights in beauty and all, to one degree or another, able to reflect God’s beauty in different ways, 4–35
- ◆ Created as individuals meant to live and work in community; each individual’s contribution is essential to the achievements of the whole, as the words “whoever,” “each,” “every,” “all” (in the sense of “everyone”) demonstrate, 5, 10, all, 21–27, 29; *see Ephesians 4:7–16.*

Sin

It includes

- ◆ Failure to rest one day a week; working too hard, 2–3
- ◆ Failure to offer our best to God, including our possessions and our abilities, 4–35

Life

Ethical imperatives

- ◆ Work six days a week; work includes all that we have to do, including housework, home maintenance, etc., 2.
- ◆ Rest one day in seven from all our ordinary work, 2–3.
- ◆ Thank God for giving us true spiritual rest in Christ and the promise of eternal rest when he returns.
- ◆ Offer all that we have, especially our wealth and our abilities, to God for his use and worship, 4–35.

Note: We should give our best to God, as the quality of the materials offered demonstrates.

Exodus 36–40

Truth

Revelation

Its literary forms

- ◆ Exodus 36:1–40:33 repeats, in narrative form, the instructions given to Moses by God, and through Moses to the people.
- ◆ For the doctrinal and ethical teaching of these chapters, therefore, please see the notes on chapters 25–28, and 30:1–10, 17–38.
- ◆ In the Bible, as in common human speech, repetition serves to emphasize what is being said. In this case, the repetition highlights the central importance of worship in the relationship between God and his people.
- ◆ The Bible contains many different literary forms, including commandments/teachings/instructions, and narrative. Much of the narrative in the Old Testament tells a sad story of Israel’s violation of God’s clear commands, but this passage relates how, at this crucial time of a new beginning in their history, God’s people obeyed his commands to the letter.

God

His greatness: He is immense and unbearably “heavy” (the root meaning of the Hebrew word for “glory”), so much so that mere humans cannot stand in his presence, 34–35. *See 1 Kings 8:10–11.*

His goodness

- ◆ He condescended to dwell among his people in the tabernacle, 4–35.
- ◆ He guided his people through the trackless wilderness by the fiery cloud of glory by day and by night, 36–38. *See Exodus 13:21 and Numbers 9:15–23.*

Christ

His person: Jesus Christ is prefigured by

- ◆ The tabernacle and all its furnishings and elements of worship; *see John 2:16–22; and Colossians 1:19; 2:9.*
- ◆ The cloud of glory, 34; *see John 1:14 and 2 Corinthians 3:8; 4:4.*

Life

Ethical imperatives

- ◆ Read the Old Testament often to know the truth about God and his dealings with his people, as well as basic ethical principles.
- ◆ Read the Old Testament to see how it points to Christ in all its types, ordinances, commandments, promises, and key people.
- ◆ Make the worship of God the main priority of our lives.
- ◆ Look for, and follow, God's daily leading in our lives, 34–38.
- ◆ Thank God that we now can worship him anywhere, by his Spirit, through faith in Jesus Christ. *See John 4:24 and Ephesians 2:18–22.*

LEVITICUS *(currently unavailable)*

NUMBERS *(currently unavailable)*

DEUTERONOMY (currently unavailable)