

## LESSON ONE \* PART I \* BOOK 1

### Attributes of God

#### Genesis 1:1- 5

**"Transcriber's note: Shortly after the television program began airing on Channel 53 in Denver, a listener from Longmont, Colorado, Sharon Congdon, asked permission to transcribe the first couple of books. Then, Nancy Carter, who had been so instrumental in getting the Tulsa class going, volunteered to prepare the manuscripts for the printer. The ministry will always be grateful for these two ladies in getting the printing of our little books off the ground. Both of these ladies did this as a labor of love with no compensation except what the Lord is laying up for them in heaven. After the first four lessons had played on television for a few years, Les decided that he wanted to re-tape those programs. So in 1997 this was accomplished, and this is the transcription of those lessons. We have also decided that we would go ahead and transcribe more completely all of those first two books."**

Now as we begin this first program we trust that as we open the Word that you will learn, and grow in the Grace and knowledge, which is why the Lord has left us here. Now let's just get right into the meat of the Word of God, and since we're going to be following a format of **"Through the Bible"** as our program title indicates, we'll be starting in the Book of Genesis, but before we start looking at the Scriptures which we will probably do in our next program, for this lesson today I just want to give an overview of the plan of the ages that the Almighty Triune God precipitated sometime way back in eternity past. That's when, according to Acts chapter 2, the Triune God met in counsel, and with the foreknowledge of God, set everything in motion.

Of course the beauty of Bible study is to see that God as Sovereign as He is, nevertheless let men and nations exercise their free will and yet here we are as close as we can tell nearly 6000 years from the creation of man's beginning. Also everything since that time has fallen right in place according to God's timetable. Now how He does that without making human beings simply robots is beyond our understanding, but it's so factual, and we can see it. Everything that was prophesied concerning His first coming was all fulfilled to the last jot and tittle. Everything that has been more or less prophesied concerning the end time, we can now see that these prophecies are falling into place. And it's all according to His timetable, and yet He has never made man or governments just robots.

So as we consider the subject matter in this half hour we want to look at the overall scheme of things as God laid it out from eternity past beginning with the creation of man. Now I don't like to get involved with controversy to the origin of the universe. I always say, so what. What difference does it make, because the main thing we have to understand is at sometime in the past, **"God created it out of nothing"** and we'll be covering that in the next lesson.

At this time I'm going to put a timeline on the chalkboard, and I've been doing this now for the 20 some years that I've been teaching. I also want to explain why I prefer a chalkboard, and why I put information on the timeline as we teach rather than using transparencies, overheads, and some of the other technologies. Way back in my college days, if I had a professor who would write the things he was teaching on the chalkboard as he taught, then I could identify with it, and could write it in my

notes and could remember it. On the other hand I could look at something that was pre-prepared and laid out on a note page for me, and when test time came I didn't know it. So I'm still using that same old format, that when I put it on the board, I want you to possibly put it on your own note page. **I think I personally have lead more completely indifferent, and ungodly (no sign of God in their life) people from that kind of background to a knowledge of salvation using this timeline than any other one thing.**

I remember years ago, a gentlemen came up to my ranch, and it was at the end of a long day of ranching. I got off my tractor and he was waiting for me. He had a lot of questions, so I took him into the house and set a cup of coffee in front of him, I ask him, "Well where are you coming from? What are you thinking?" And I'll never forget the question he asked me, and I've said many, many times, that I wish more people would ask that same question, and it relates to the biggest problem in Christianity and the world today. His question was, **"Who in the world is Jesus Christ?"** You see, the world doesn't really know who He is. In our study of the Corinthian letters show how He is above every name. He is above everything that has ever been named or created. And one day He's going to defeat the final enemy of mankind, death itself. But it's the same Jesus Christ that created the universe.

### *Ephesians 3:9*

***"And to make all men see what is the fellowship of the mystery, which from the beginning of the world hath been hid in God, who created all things by Jesus Christ."***

Remember as we lay out this timeline it brings the whole Bible into focus, so I would encourage you to learn to use this timeline. Many people have shared with me, "this timeline is what got them interested, this is what began to make sense out of what the Bible is saying." So I'm going to go over to the very left hand end of the timeline and begin. And remember this timeline will show the unfolding of human history which is God's term for His story.

We'll start back here with the creation of Adam and Eve at approximately 4004 BC, and we'll just keep moving on up through time. As you can see I already have the cross out here in about the middle of the timeline, so I always like to go to about the middle between Adam and the cross and put in the man Abraham, and that would be at 2000 BC. But before we move on toward the cross after Abraham, let's back up about 400 years from Abraham to Noah's flood, and that would make the flood at approximately 2400 BC. In other words, about 400 years before Abraham comes on the scene we have the flood of Noah.

**So from Adam to the flood is a period of about 1600 years during which time the whole human race had opportunity to have a knowledge of God after the format that He gave to Cain and Abel, that if they would bring a blood sacrifice when they sinned, God would accept them on the basis of their faith, but for the most part the human race then was no different than it is now, and so they walked it all underfoot, until finally God had to destroy them.**

Now coming back to our timeline, we have one other important event that took place between Noah's flood and Abraham at approximately 2200 BC or 200 years before Abraham and that was the Tower of Babel. **The one thing that I always like to emphasize when we teach the Tower of Babel is that every false religion, every pagan religion, every cult, every mythological, every**

**idolatrous religion, has it's roots at the Tower of Babel.** Remember God had ordered mankind to scatter after the flood, and they would not. So that group of people was determined to find an alterative way to approach God, and that was the whole idea of the Tower of Babel. It was a place of false worship. So from the Tower of Babel for the next 200 years the human race just goes deeper and deeper in false religions so that by the time you get to the call of Abraham at 2000 BC, I maintain that there wasn't a single believer in the true God left on earth. Once again the whole human race has succumbed to Satan's counterfeit religions which had begun at Babel. In other words, they were all idolaters including Abraham himself.

*Joshua 24:2*

*"And Joshua said unto all the people, Thus saith the LORD God of Israel, Your fathers dwelt on the other side of the flood in old time, even Terah, the father of Abraham, and the father of Nachor, and they served other gods."*

So after that debacle at the Tower of Babel, God does something totally different when He calls out Abraham. Remember from Adam to Abraham, approximately 2000 years mankind has had opportunity of experiencing a salvation as Adam, Abel, Noah and so forth, but for the most part mankind had rejected it. So God had seen in 2000 years of human history man would not succumb to His offer of simply being obedient and believing what He said, and so now He's going to do something totally different, when He calls out this man Abram (Abraham). God is going to bring out of this river of humanity that's headed for a lost eternity, this one man Abraham. He's going to give him a covenant in Genesis chapter 12, and He's going to tell this man, "that out of him will come a nation of people, the nation of Israel or as we better know them **"the Jews."** So from Genesis chapter 12 all the way up into our New Testament, the Bible is dealing almost totally with the nation of Israel.

*Genesis 12:1-3*

*"Now the LORD had said unto Abram, Get thee out of thy country, and from thy kindred, and from thy father's house, unto a land that I will shew thee: 2. And I will make of thee a great nation, and I will bless thee, and make thy name great; and thou shalt be a blessing: 3. And I will bless them that bless thee, and curse him that curseth thee: and in thee, shall all families of the earth be blessed."*

God put that nation of people in one geographical area of land between the Mediterranean Sea and the Jordan River, which we call the Holy Land. The ancients even before Abraham, for one reason or another referred to that land as the Divine land, and they didn't really know why. It was evident that God had his finger on that little piece of real estate. Well after Abraham had been promised a nation of people, in a geographical area of land, the third part of that covenant, as we always emphasize, was the coming of a government, in the person of a king. So here is the beginning, then, of God dealing with the nation of Israel, under covenant promises, and is setting the stage for the coming of their King who would be the government. You know common sense tells you that you can't have a nation of people operating as a society if there is no kind of a government, because then all you have is anarchy. Of course that happened often in Israel's history. The Book of Judges tells us so plainly as we see in the last verse of the Book.

## *Judges 21:25*

***"In those days there was no king in Israel: every man did that which was right in his own eyes."***

Well that's anarchy, but they had that constant promise out there in front of them, that the time would come when God would provide their government in the person of the King, the Messiah, who would be the Son of God! **So your whole Old Testament, whether it's history, Psalms, or the Books of the prophets, is preparing the nation of Israel for the coming of their King, and their Messiah, and Redeemer, because there had to be salvation before any of the rest of the promises could come to past.** Now then as we come up through the Old Testament, and we reach the time of Christ and His three years of earthly ministry, this is going to be the whole vortex of His ministry. **The reason for all His signs and miracles was to prove to this nation of Israel that He was the Messiah, and a lot of people miss this.**

They think He performed His miracles only out of compassion, because He felt so sorry for the sick, blind and so forth. Now that was certainly true, but the main thrust of His signs, miracles and wonders was to prove to the nation of Israel who He was. We'll emphasize that when we get to our study of the four gospels. For example in Matthew chapter 16 as they have nearly come to the end of that 3 years of earthly ministry, and Jesus and the twelve are up there in northern Israel, up at the head waters of the Jordan River, and Jesus asked them the question:

## *Matthew 16:13b-16*

***"Whom do men say that I the Son of man am? 14. And they said, Some say that thou art John the Baptist: some, Elisas; and others, Jeremias, or one of the prophets. 15. He saith unto them, But whom say ye that I am? 16. And Simon Peter answered and said, Thou art the Christ, the Son of the living God."***

When we read those portions, I always point out to people, Peter didn't add anything about the cross to his profession of faith because he didn't know about the cross. Peter doesn't say a word about resurrection, because he doesn't know about the resurrection, and yet Peter said everything that needed to be said, because Jesus never said a word against it, but rather He commended him by saying:

## *Matthew 16:17*

***"Blessed art thou; Simon Barjonia, for flesh and blood hath not revealed it unto thee, but my Father which is in heaven."***

So was Peter right? Absolutely he was right, and we see this throughout the four gospels account. Then there was Martha at the account of Lazarus's death, and she was a little up tight you know that Jesus had been absent when He should have been there to heal him from his sick bed, but Jesus' answer was what?

## *John 11:23-27*

***"Jesus saith unto her, Thy brother shall rise again. 24. Martha said unto him, I know that he shall rise again in the resurrection at the last day. (then Jesus gave that classic answer) 25. Jesus***

*said unto her, I am the resurrection, and the life: he that believeth in me, though he were dead, yet shall he live. 26. And whosoever liveth and believeth in me shall never die. Believest thou this? 27. She said unto him, Yea, Lord, I believe that thou art the Christ, the Son of God, which should come into the world."*

Then you can come all the way up to Saul's conversion, before the Gospel of Grace had even been whispered, and Saul has that tremendous conversion experience on the road to Damascus. After he had his body replenished with food, and he'd gotten his sight back, he goes straight to the synagogue of the Jews, and what does he preach?

*Acts 9:20*

*"And straightway he preached Christ in the synagogues, that he is the Son of God."*

So the whole thrust of the Old Testament promises is that their government, in the person of the King and Messiah and Redeemer, would one day come to the nation of Israel. **Well we know now from history, as well as from the Book, that Israel didn't believe who Jesus was, for the most part. Only a small percentage believed that He was the Promised One,** and so the majority cried out for His death. And that is where we have another classic statement, which was word for word from the Old Testament Scriptures *"We'll not have this man to rule over us!"*

And so Rome carried it out at Israel's request and He was crucified. Alright then, that takes us into that area of the timeline beyond the cross when Israel now, because of their rejection, is funneled back into the mainstream of humanity which we call the dispersion. This is when they were sent into every nation under heaven. This is when the temple was destroyed, and the priesthood was destroyed, and when Israel almost loses her national identity, for sure, as they are dispersed into the main line of humanity. **And it was all because they rejected their Messiah and their opportunity for their king.**

But you see, even though Satan may have thought that he had won the victory here, he may have thought he was close to destroying everything that was prophesied through the nation of Israel. But Satan didn't know that just shortly before 70 A.D. when the temple would be destroyed, that God raises up the other apostle, the Apostle Paul. **It was through Paul's preaching of the Gospel of the Grace of God, God pulls out a people for His name which the Bible calls the Body of Christ, which is the Church.** It's a whole new concept which was never known back here in the Old Testament or the four gospels or even in the early Book of Acts. They had no idea that God would, without Israel, pull off of the mainstream of Gentile humanity, as well as the Jew, and would put them into one Body, which we call the Church, and it's all by Grace.

And so here on the timeline a few years after the cross I like to call this unknown period of time the Age of Grace, the calling out of a people by His name. This period has been going on now for 1900 + years. Now when the Church is complete and filled up then God has to take it out. So I am a strong proponent of the Rapture of the Church just shortly before the beginning of that final seven years. The Old Testament prophesied this final seven years of Tribulation, and always split it into, 3 ½ and 3 ½ . So as we come to the end of the Church Age and she is taken out of the way by what we call the Rapture, and God can then finish where He had left off with Israel back here where they crucified their king.

Again, we know that the Scripture is so meticulous all the way through prophecy. I guess I could take you back, at least mentally, to Daniel chapter 2. And you remember that great dream of Nebuchadnezzar, and how he lost his dream, and couldn't remember it? But Daniel was brought out of his place and because of this interpretation he was elevated to the second man in the kingdom. But nevertheless, Daniel recovered the dream and interpreted it. And the dream, you remember was a great image of a human man. And his head was made of gold. The chest area was made of silver. The belly area of brass. The legs of iron. And then the ten toes were made of mixture of iron and clay.

Now you want to remember that as you come down the line of these metals we go from the most valuable, gold, all the way down to the least valuable, iron, and that which was isn't even good for anything and that's the iron and the clay. But the Scripture says that Babylon was that first empire. It was the greatest empire that the world, up to that time, had ever seen. But the amazing thing that it says is that an inferior empire would destroy it. I can remember about 25 or 30 years ago that's the word that made me dig a little deeper. How could he call an empire that would defeat another empire "inferior". Well, when you come down these metals, as I've already mentioned, you go from gold to silver to brass to iron, which are decreasing in value, but they are increasing in their hardness, or their ability to be used for manufacture.

In other words, I always give the example that you certainly wouldn't make a plow with gold, even though it was as cheap as dirt because it has no strength. But iron, then, is the metal of choice. So what we have is a descending value which shows the descending ability of government to govern from an absolute dictator such as Nebuchadnezzar, down to the Medes and Persians who now had to have the consensus of two to the Greek Empire which was divided before 4 generals (you had to have a consensus of four) and then you come down to the Roman Empire, which was the first republic in human history. Yes, the Romans had a senate. If you remember correctly it was a senator who assassinated Julius Caesar. And then you come down to a weaker consortium of material and that's the iron and clay, which we feel is the revived Roman Empire, which is coming upon western Europe even tonight.

Now then, what is the opposite? Well, as they ascended in military power, they descended in political power. That's the quickest way I can explain it. And so everything through human history is an increase in military power of one kingdom over the next. But as the next empire came along and divided the authority, it weakened their political structure.

You know we love democracy, absolutely we do. But when it comes to getting things done, it's the most inefficient government that man ever dreamed of. And yet, we can see that prophetically the world had to come to the place where we are tonight. And that is that every little nation from here to Timbuktu wants to have a democratic form of government. Who would have ever dreamed 50 years ago that the world in general would come under democratic forms of government? It's prophetic! When you get down to the ten toes of Nebuchadnezzar's vision, all of our democratic governments are as weak as cotton thread. And if you don't believe that all you have to do is look what happened in Albania just a few months ago. Just over the fact of losing their investments, the little nation went into total anarchy. Well, that would have never happened under a strong armed dictator. But under a republic form of government, or a democratic form of government, the people can topple a government just by simply marching down the street. And this is what causes the instability.

So the Church's is going to be Raptured out and the last 7 years of Tribulation comes to an end with the Second Coming of Christ as I've already shown here on the timeline. At that time Christ will return at His Second Coming and then He will be ready to set up the Kingdom that has been promised to Israel ever since Genesis chapter 12. And so there we have in this sort of an overall nutshell, the whole picture of human history from Adam to the cross, to the calling out of the Body of Christ, the Church, whereupon the Tribulation will come in under the rule of the anti-Christ, another world ruler. And then at the end of that Christ returns victoriously and the earth will revert back as it was in the Garden of Eden. And then we go into those final 1,000 years when He will rule and reign as King of Kings and Lord of Lords.