

20240512_IshmailToSarahDeath

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[0 : 00] Well, we'll keep it. Yes. Happy Mother's Day. And as we're thinking about that, I know it'll be announced, but those baby bottles that are in the hallway there, those are for filling for the Pregnancy Resource Center as a donation.

So by filling, I mean with money. You can use gold, diamonds, even silver.

Anyway, Genesis chapter 17, we've gone through about a three-month study with Les Feldick in the beginnings of Acts to remind ourselves of the difference between the early believers there, that is the Jewish believers, and the church that gathered in Jerusalem right after Pentecost, or Pentecost and immediately thereafter, for several years.

And then God brings on the Apostle Paul, which is a different gospel. It's a different gospel.

It's the gospel of salvation by grace through faith, regardless of sign, that is the sign of the covenant. We'll get into that.

[1 : 44] We'll touch on that in this study. Regardless of the sign of the covenant, regardless of the keeping of the law. And there are differences even before Jesus ascended to heaven and the early believers.

There's a difference between that group, which was a kingdom group, and the promise of the kingdom under the law, and where we are now with Abraham.

So we'll review a little bit about where we've been. Let's look to the Lord in prayer. Father, thanks so much for this day. Thank you for bringing us together.

There are those of our number, Lord, who are suffering not only pain, but also mortal suffering.

But we're thankful for those whose hope is in you, where you have said the body dies because of sin. And buddy, we are alive in our spirits and made new regularly.

[3 : 04] We are being renewed because of faith in you. We're thankful for that. We are thankful for what you've done on the cross whereby we can be saved.

And as we look into your word today, Lord, bless us together. We pray in Jesus' name. Amen. Amen. Okay. Now, this series of lessons is from Ishmael to the death of Sarah.

At least that's kind of the plan, although so far there are 36 pages. I don't know about that. You may get... No.

The plan is from Ishmael to the death of Sarah. Now, incidentally, and this has nothing to do with the Scripture or with God, one of the most famous opening lines of any novel, call me Ishmael.

Hold up your hand if you know from where that comes. We have three persons. Where does it come from, Lee? It has to do with old men and seas.

[4 : 28] Moby Dick. Call me Ishmael. Okay, that had nothing to do with the study. Okay. I'm going to go back to where we began in Genesis chapter 1 long ago.

It's a quote from Bertrand Russell. He knows the truth now. He died in 1970. But this was his quote. In answer to a person who asked him, well, what if you're wrong?

What if... What are you going to say when you stand before God? His quote, if I ever met God, the first thing I would say is, you didn't give me enough evidence.

Now, what's God say about that? Say it again. What basically says what?

You have no excuse. I gave you enough evidence. Now, who's been confronted with, well, something along this line.

[5 : 50] I don't care about about Christianity. I don't believe in God.

Now, who's heard something along that line? I know most of you have. Somewhere. Here's the thing.

If no one has heard about you, Pam, do you cease to exist? See, that's a ridiculous thing, isn't it?

Just because I don't believe in something doesn't mean it doesn't exist. And just because I don't believe in God certainly doesn't mean he doesn't exist.

In fact, God will say later in the prophets, when the day comes that I judge, when the day of the Lord comes, when the day comes that I judge, I will laugh at your calamity.

[6 : 53] That's tough. Why? Because he can't deny himself. He knows he's God, right?

That one I'm confident of. He knows he is God. Therefore, he cannot share his glory with any other. Because he is the only God.

And that's why time after time after time in the scripture, he is described not only as holy, but as the only God.

The maker of heaven and earth. Now, back to Romans. Why are they without excuse?

Because what can be known of God, he has shown them. You can turn there to Romans chapter 1 if you want. This wasn't in the plan, but we'll get, we rehearse it.

[7 : 58] Yes? No, I'm not. If I'm being less felicitous, I'm not standing here talking anymore. I'm with the Lord.

So, let's be careful. Okay. So, you turn to Romans chapter 1 there, and what does he say? Because they refuse to what?

Okay, let's back up. At least verse 19. Someone read out verse 19. Chapter 1, verse 19, Romans.

How?

How? That's it.

[9 : 05] That's it. This is called natural revelation. The heavens, finish that. Declare the glory of God.

Day unto day, it shouts, God exists. And he said, because you look outside, and you see things as things are, you know I exist.

and you know more than just I exist. What about his, his eternity, you know? Because, what exists has to have been made, right?

As far as the physical realm. Now, there has to come a point of, what the philosophers called, used to call, first cause. that is, it stops somewhere.

And it stops with God. God created. In the beginning, this is chapter 1, verse 1 of Genesis.

[10 : 19] In the beginning, God created the heaven and the earth. And then he goes on to explain why. Or how. Or what, maybe, is better.

From what did God create the heavens and the earth? I'm sorry? Nothing. That's important.

The universe, as we see it, the cosmos, I'll put it that way. The cosmos, what has been created, is not eternal.

There is one who inhabits eternity. What's his name? Jehovah. Good. So it says in the Old Testament, we call him God.

God inhabits eternity and he alone inhabits eternity. That's going to be important in understanding some of his attributes. But, I digressed further than I intended to.

[11 : 27] so that we may infer from the observable cosmos that God does exist and he exists eternally. That is, his eternal attributes.

Romans chapter 1, right? Yes. I am. That's the name he gives. That, incidentally, is the name before Abraham was.

Jesus. Who said that? Jesus. Now, why did the Pharisees gnash their teeth and get furious?

He said he's God. For those who said that Jesus never said he was God, that's not true. That's only true if I try to anglicize everything.

but those Jews knew what he was saying, didn't they? Those Jews knew what he was saying. As a matter of fact, this is another digression, I apologize, but go back to Nazareth.

[12 : 34] When he's in that, when Jesus visits Nazareth, you'll read in there that he, he's handed the scroll of Isaiah and he reads from Isaiah, what is it, 61?

where, you know, the sight to the blind and where he stops is short of the judgment, but where he stops, the people marveled, I think it's Luke 4, the people marveled at his words.

That is, they were, ah, these are gracious words. Now, if Jesus would have listened to me, he would have stopped there, but no, he didn't stop there.

It kind of goes back to, to what Nathan was talking about last week, it was it, that, about the fig tree, or was that a couple of weeks ago, was that last week?

You know, the, the creator of the fig tree knew what the season for figs was, didn't he? he knew that there wouldn't be figs on that tree.

[13 : 50] It's a parable, if you will, or a, a picture of Israel, because Israel should have been bearing fruit, but they weren't.

Now, go back to Nazareth, where he's talking, Jesus didn't stop where the crowd liked him, he said, his next words were along this line, you're going to quote to me the proverb, physician heal thyself.

You do the things now, here, that you did elsewhere. Go to the cross. What did they say? He saved others, why can't he save himself?

Physician heal thyself. And then, their response, they got angry, they wanted to toss him off the hill.

That was a big digression, I apologize for that. Back to Genesis. So, the created order, we can see something of God's eternity, and something about God.

[15 : 07] His existence, his eternal existence, and his holiness. Now, usually in the church, or often in the church, we use holiness as a moral attribute, but technically it's not a moral attribute, it has to do with the complete otherness of God.

So, God creates a universe, and he creates angels, he creates spiritual, a spiritual part of that universe, and he creates a physical part of that universe, but he is not constrained by the universe he created.

He is not contained within it. He acts wholly. He is completely other. He is completely set apart.

Now, that doesn't mean he doesn't act in it, he acts in history. He says so time and again. It doesn't mean that he doesn't love us. He interacts with people.

He, but he's not constrained by it. So, back to the Bertrand Russell thing. God says, it doesn't matter what you say.

[16 : 24] I have given you enough evidence. Back to the person who has said to you, I don't believe in God, as though that's supposed to make God disappear.

And God says, I offer you salvation, but, if you resist it, I exist quite separate from you, and you can't make me not exist.

Go ahead. Go ahead. I recognize God who basically didn't look in the right place. Now, you would know if Pam was sister that you looked in the right place.

You would know she existed. And we have to look at God in his terms. Okay, now, does my ignorance absolve me?

No. God says, I don't care where you look, you see me. So, Bertrand Russell's problem was not that he wasn't looking in the right place.

[17 : 42] He was looking in the right place, but refusing to see the evidence. He denied God. And that's what Romans chapter 1 says. Even though they knew that God is there and that God is God, they refused to acknowledge him as God.

Therefore, God gave them over to a depraved mind to believe things that ought not be believed and to do things that ought not be done.

And they know it. So, there is really no such thing as a completely ignorant person of God.

He says, I've given you the evidence. Now, most of the attributes of God must be understood and derived from revelation.

That is, from the word of God, from scripture, what he says about himself. There are most of the attributes, but his existence and his holiness and his eternity are known through natural revelation, so that man is without excuse.

[18 : 59] We went through that in early in Genesis. Now, by the way, on Mars Hill, when Paul's waiting on the rest of the people to come to him in Athens, he says that because you see this God, then you ought not believe that God is somehow contained within the creation.

You know that he's not a God that has to be worshipped with your hands. That is, you don't have to actually do anything for him because he doesn't. He has, it says there in Acts chapter 17, he has no need of anything.

He is complete within himself. He doesn't need it. He offers, that's what makes this, that's what makes the gospel of grace such a wonderful thing.

God did not create because he's lonely. He created because he decided to. And then he offers us a personal relationship with the Lord Jesus Christ.

Is that amazing or what? the creator of the universe who exists eternally in and of himself.

[20 : 27] I am that I am. Offers me eternal life and he offers me a personal relationship. That's astounding.

That's astounding or should be. Yes. Yes. Yes. Yes. Yes. I does that for us and we want to love him back because of what he does for us he does not need anything like you say does he want us to love others the others that he loves is that how we love him by loving others that he loves how do we love him how do we love him okay I have to be careful with that because showing my love and is see love as it's used in relation to God both God is love let's use that as an example God is love that love especially understanding the Greek word is not the way I commonly use it it doesn't mean affection it's not an emotion that love is the action it is the beneficence it is the I do good for you so yes we love others but we don't show love that way so much as we do love now that does not mean that does not mean that everybody that you're you're called and if you don't give fifteen dollars to every bum you see on the street that you're not loving them that's not what that word says and in fact the church is never enjoined the church's care there is only one ministry that is outside the body which one is it evangelism when you look at all the the functions of the church and the relationships of the church and what we do and they're all about the body except for evangelism so it you're not precluded from giving the bum money but that does not that is not an enjoyment for the church

I do need to remember that yes we're not a social institution although we socialize we we are a social institution relationally one with another but we're not a social institution as it's commonly used when you think of that's all we are that's not all we are we are brothers and sisters in Christ saints which is equally amazing because when I look in the mirror if I'm honest with myself I don't see myself the way God sees me I'm thankful for that grace whereby I stand before God looking like Christ that's amazing that's amazing and that's where my justification lies and that's why we have security otherwise there's no security if if God doesn't see

Christ I'm lost I have no hope right God has to see Christ okay now what we're doing in the study of Genesis boy this introduction is taking a long time what we're doing in the study of Genesis is seeing how God's plan is unfolding it's really an historical look because this isn't marching orders for the church we should I can and ought to the scripture tells me this by the way these things are written for your edification so that you can know what to do and Paul says to the Corinthians what not to do so so they're written for for my learning they're written for my edification I should be gleaning principles but they're not marching orders for the church they're not marching orders for the church and I need to remember that too but I learned

I learned from it and this is how God has unfolding his plan has God's plan changed that's a trick question isn't it the answer is no the plan hasn't changed but he didn't show the whole plan from the beginning did he what did he show Adam and Eve nothing other than a relationship he walked with them in the cool of the evening right the the Christophany he walked with them but he didn't show them anything well that's after the fall before the okay and I didn't clarify that before the fall he didn't tell them much well he told them not to do something one thing well he told them to till it but he didn't tell them about his plan he didn't say that later on you're going to fall you're going to die you're going to

[27 : 07] I'm going to judge the world I'm going to judge your progeny by sending a flood that's going to kill everybody but eight and it's going to kill a bunch most of the animals too they're going to die because of you he didn't tell them that he didn't tell them that however I'm going to raise up Abraham and we're getting way ahead of ourselves aren't we so we've gone through that part and we've gotten to the call of Abraham by the way where was Abraham when he was called Earl of the Chaldees what do we know about Abraham was he going to church was he going to tabernacle he was worshiping idols kind of like now

I don't mean to draw a distinct parallel remember I'm sorry remember when you read parables that's exactly what it means it's parabolic it approaches it approaches the subject but it doesn't touch the subject the same thing with metaphor the same thing with analogy the same thing with simile certain parts of it are alike but you can't take it one for one so when I say Abraham's a little bit like the call of Paul it's not one for one but it's a little bit that way Abraham was in Ur of the Chaldees doing the wrong thing apparently he's worshipping false gods Paul was on his way to a tent meeting right what was he going to why was he going to

Damascus to a prayer meeting no he's going to destroy the church as it existed then the believer the Jewish believers he's going to destroy them what God do called him out didn't he okay God's plan is eternal turn turn if you will to Ephesians chapter three verse eight this is what in this dispensation is written to the church okay look at that section unto whom is it written he says unto me who's me

Paul okay okay he's what well he argued in synagogues too and he went and his final argument was in well okay in Rome he visited with people and and he did teach but specifically his last recorded speeches are in Jerusalem that's why he went to Rome by the way so well unless you count unless you discount I'm discounting Felix and Festus okay back to this point unto me Paul he says I'm least of all the saints is this grace given what grace is given what to preach okay but what is the grace that is given to

Paul to do this is a gift grace gift they're the same word what is Paul called to do to the don't make me pull teeth right and to make all men see what is what the fellowship of the mystery which now let's talk about this mystery since when is it a new plan it's just been kept secret see God didn't wake up and say oh no Adam sinned what am I going to do he didn't wake up and say oh no these people are bad what am

[32 : 31] I going to do he didn't wake up and say oh no Israel failed the law what am I going to do I guess I'm going to become man and give my life for him no this plan is in God from when eternity he just didn't reveal it all now if I can use a very poor example in American football you would have a play something like an end around what's the trick in that now here's where we're careful with parabolic phrases right because does God trick me no so let's remember I always remember by the way I'm going to digress again I always remember when it comes to parables and inferences that I take from parables remember the unrighteous judge that parable is a reference to whom

God now am I supposed to learn that God is unrighteous from that parable no I'm supposed to learn that I'm supposed to tarry in Jerusalem to pray and not until I receive the spirit you can check that one out God to pray without ceasing right I don't learn that God is unrighteous I learn about prayer so in a parabolic reference we're being very careful about what the parabola refers to so on the end around the end comes swinging back to carry a ball the play looks like it's going to be a pass play but it's not a pass play it's a running play and it's not a running play from the running back it's a running play from the from the end so

God's plan never changed it just didn't unfold the same way as he only gives this much window each time and it gets fuller and fuller and fuller it's not that well here we see our salvation is in God's mind in eternity it's good to know that God has a plan and that it doesn't fail yeah yeah okay it's a it's a mystery it has not yet been revealed but the important thing is not that I understand that it's different

I do need to know it's different the important thing is what is the revelation now that's why the church has to be careful as we've been studying in Mark and in Acts as we've been going through the early part of Acts is the church called to communistic communal living see otherwise you have a pretty bad problem there with the apostle Paul don't you because here the church sells everything and everybody uses that is early Acts that church sold everything everybody lived communally later on Paul's going to say hey don't do that I want everybody to work with his hands so that he has something to provide for whom his family and then others but it if a man doesn't work he should not okay that that's quite different than early

Jerusalem isn't it so but the plan didn't change the phase of the plan has changed that's important the phase of the plan has changed so then well and he goes on in first corinthians he says I speak the wisdom of God in the mystery incidentally there if you read that if you're still in Ephesians chapter three you'll read why this plan is in God's mind in the beginning because he's going to display this plan before angelic beings to glorify himself it's for God's glory so um in second timothy he says God saved us and called us with a holy calling not according to works but according to his own purpose and grace which was given us in

[38 : 03] Christ Jesus before the world began so the plan is an eternal plan the unfolding is very temporal it's very time oriented and of course I don't see eternity do I you can answer that safely I don't I see temporally I'm locked in space and time I don't really get how God sees everything all at once but then God's incomprehensible I'm finite God is infinite I need to get over it the first order of theology there is a God the second one I'm not him right nor can

I be nor should I be and if I try to be which we go back to Romans 1 don't we that that's why it's important okay dispensations the order of ministry the the order it's the dispensing of what God has said yes that's where we get the word dispensation because that's what the word that's the word for administration this is how God is administering now the plan but the plan so the plan is eternal and we're secure in that but it isn't unfolded all at once so I cannot take from the apostle Paul and try to read into here and why did

Abraham do this and why didn't Abraham do that and why so Abraham must have known this he didn't he didn't and and that's okay because God did not intend it that way God calls it a mystery that he kept hidden in himself and that's up to God isn't it he told Israel the things that belong to God leave to God and the things but the things that I've told you Israel are for you and your children for how long forever see and that kind of takes me back to where the problem is do I need to know God thoroughly to believe in him no because

I can't know God thoroughly can I know God truly yes I do not have to comprehend and I use that word carefully I do not have to comprehend God to know truly about God that is by the way those folks who say well you know the kind of the Bertrand Russell thing he didn't give me enough evidence well I don't really understand how God is working here you will notice that they never will use that I never will use that in any other area of life except when it comes the most important one which is my eternity because I don't have to know how to build an airplane from atoms in order to fly it do

I well I being a very general I Dave he doesn't have to be able to make the metal he doesn't have to be able to build the engine he has to know how to fly it now if I never got in a car that I didn't thoroughly understand I'd never get in a car right you notice I only use that where it matters most well I can't comprehend God well you're right you can't but I don't need to know everything about electricity to use lights either I'm thankful for that I'm thankful for that okay

[43 : 12] Adam and Eve innocence how did they appear before they ate the fruit they were naked and they were not ashamed they ate the fruit and their eyes were opened by the way you remember that because that that's going to appear in our study later on but their eyes were opened what did they do they sewed fig leaves together and made themselves aprons and they hid in the garden and when God said why are you hiding what did Adam say we're naked so we hid who told you you were naked now did God know who told them yeah but he wanted them to answer didn't he it's a rhetorical who told you you were naked how do you know did you eat the fruit well she gave it to me yeah passing the buck right passing the fruit okay then came the fall their eyes are open now there's a curse isn't there what's the curse by the sweat of your your brow you will make bread right you're going to eat because you're going to work hard now they were working before but it yielded easily now you're going to strive you're going to fight for it now so in

Romans chapter 8 you look around verse 19 you don't have to turn there if you don't wish you'll remember these verses what do we know about the whole creation being subjected see the whole creation is under a curse because of Adam's sin isn't it death enters now animals are dying now humans are dying now the thoughts and intentions of men's heart are wicked from his birth and we're going to end with this we're not even through the intro but we're going to end with this why is it subjected Romans chapter 8 around verse 19 if you want to look there it's subjected because of sin okay

I'll read it for the earnest expectation of the creature that is the creation waiteth for the manifestation of the sons of God for the creature was made subject to vanity not willingly but by reason of him who has subjected the same in hope who subjected the creation to vanity well it's because of Adam's sin but God did in hope what because the creature itself shall be delivered from the bondage of corruption into the glorious liberty of the children of God when the church is revealed that is when God brings everything into summation and reveals the children of God all of creation has grown and travailed from the fall until now until that time so that everything will be brought to fruition at the revelation of the church thank you very much we'll pick up going to babble later have a wonderful day