

# Genesis and Real People

Genesis 1–4

Don Ruhl • Savage Street, Grants Pass, Oregon • July 19, In the year of our Lord, 2015

Scripture Reader and Reading: Wayne Duncan – Mark 10.2–12

Song Leader and Song Suggestions: Larry Amberg – No Suggestions

## Prelude:

### I. Views of Genesis

A. Some see Genesis as pure myth.

1. It is too much for them to believe
2. that God made Adam from the dust and Eve from Adam's rib.
  - a) They scoff at the whole Garden of Eden scenario.
  - b) They cannot believe the ages of pre-flood man.
3. These scoffers hold to evolution, or
  - a) to portions of it,
  - b) leading them to deny the veracity of Genesis.
    - (1) Something coming from nothing,
    - (2) order coming from chaos,
    - (3) life coming from non-life, and
    - (4) life turning itself to infinite forms of life
      - (a) they believe as pure science and fact!
      - (b) Something about that does not seem right.

B. Some think that what you about the first 11 chapters is not important.

C. However,

1. what you believe about creation versus evolution, and
2. what you believe about the first 11 chapters,
  - a) will effect what you believe about the rest of the Bible.
  - b) Check your beliefs.

### II. Why All 50 Chapters of Genesis Is Crucial

A. Genesis 1–11 is important for the rest of the Bible.

1. In Exodus 20.11, in the Ten Commandments,

- a) you will discover that the six-day work week and
- b) one day of rest for the Jews
  - (1) was based on the work of God,
  - (2) creating the heavens and the earth in six days and
  - (3) resting on the seventh,

**11 “For in six days the LORD made the heavens and the earth, the sea, and all that is in them, and rested the seventh day. Therefore the LORD blessed the Sabbath day and hallowed it” (Exo 20.11).**

2. From Mark 10.6–12 we learn

- a) that what Jesus taught on marriage, divorce and remarriage
- b) was grounded in those first eleven chapters of Genesis,

**6 “But from the beginning of the creation, God ‘made them male and female. 7 For this reason a man shall leave his father and mother and be joined to his wife, 8 and the two shall become one flesh’; so then they are no longer two, but one flesh. 9 Therefore what God has joined together, let not man separate.”**

**10 In the house His disciples also asked Him again about the same matter. 11 So He said to them, “Whoever divorces his wife and marries another commits adultery against her. 12 And if a woman divorces her husband and marries another, she commits adultery” (Mark 10.6–12).**

3. In First Timothy 2.13, Paul explains

- a) that a woman is not to teach or to have authority over a man, because

**13 Adam was formed first, then Eve.**

4. Even the assurance of the return of Christ

- a) is based on both the creation of the world and the Great Flood,
  - b) according to Second Peter 3.1–7.
- B. If Genesis 1–11 is myth, so is the rest of the Bible.

### III. The Story of Kevin May and Tomas [*“Is Genesis myth or reality?” Creation Ex Nihilo, (17:3), June–August 1995, pp. 22, 23.*]

- A. When Tomas, a translation helper, told Kevin May, who was translating the Old Testament into the Nimboran language, that Cain’s sacrifice was not accepted because of the smoke, Kevin realized that the Nimboran people, who live in the valley of the Grimi and Nembu rivers in the north-east of Irian Jaya, had accepted some very unusual ideas about Genesis.
- B. Thus in addition to the translation work he would have to teach the people what the Bible, especially Genesis, really says.
- C. In the course of doing this it became apparent to Tomas that the people in Genesis were real people, because they were just like Tomas’s people, and we will discover that the people of Genesis are just like us.
- D. Therefore Genesis is real history, and if it is real history, then so is the rest of the Bible, for it is all built upon what happened in the Bible’s first book.

#### Persuasion:

##### I. The Origin of Sin

- A. As the two worked together on translating,
  - 1. they began at Genesis and they came to Genesis 2.8–9,
  - 2. which reads in English, and in the New King James Version, as follows,

**The LORD God planted a garden eastward in Eden, and there He put the man whom He had formed. And out of the ground the LORD God made every tree grow that is pleasant to the sight and good for food. The tree of life was also in the midst of the garden, and the tree of the knowledge of good and evil.**

- B. Tomas added “And the two evil trees!”
  - 1. Kevin pointed out that in Genesis 1.31 Moses wrote,

**Then God saw everything that He had made, and indeed it was very**

**good.**

2. Tomas said, “Oh, they were the trees that tricked Adam into sinning.”
3. Again Kevin reminded Tomas of the truth of Genesis 1.31.
4. Tomas insisted, “No, there were evil trees there too.”

C. By discussing the matter more

1. it became obvious that Nimborans had believed
2. that Adam was tricked into sinning.
  - a) They believe that no one is evil, and
  - b) that bad things only happen when a nature-spirit
  - c) has been offended by one of the Nimborans.
    - (1) Therefore it was not Adam’s fault
    - (2) that his relationship was severed with God, but
    - (3) it was the tree’s fault.

D. They continued to translate chapter two and they came to verses 16 and 17,

**And the LORD God commanded the man, saying, “Of every tree of the garden you may freely eat; but of the tree of the knowledge of good and evil you shall not eat, for in the day that you eat of it you shall surely die.”**

1. Based on these clear instructions from God,
2. Adam knew exactly what to do and what not to do.
  - a) Therefore if Adam—and Eve—ate from the tree
  - b) of which God said not to eat, then
    - (1) it was in rebellion to God’s commands,
    - (2) Adam knowingly disobeyed the command of God.

E. Tomas reacted, “Well! We never heard that before. And that means that we do the same thing as Adam. We know what our fathers tell us to do, but we

disobey and they get angry with us. We do just what Adam did! So God was right to send Adam out from the garden.”

## II. The First Murder

A. A few days later Kevin and Tomas came to the story of Cain and Abel.

1. Genesis 4.3–5 says,

**And in the process of time it came to pass that Cain brought an offering of the fruit of the ground to the LORD. Abel also brought of the firstlings of his flock and of their fat. And the LORD respected Abel and his offering, but He did not respect Cain and his offering. And Cain was very angry, and his countenance fell.**

2. Tomas thought that he knew just exactly

- a) why God rejected Cain’s offering, saying,
- b) “That was because of the smoke, wasn’t it!”

3. Kevin naturally did not know what Tomas was speaking about,

- a) so he explained further,
- b) “When Abel offered his sacrifice, the smoke went straight up to Heaven, and that pleased God. But when Cain offered his, the smoke went up crooked, and that was what made God angry.”

B. Evidently Tomas and his people had been influenced by pictures

1. in which the artist, by means of images and symbols,

2. was trying to show Cain’s unacceptable sacrifice

- a) with the smoke going up crooked, but
- b) Abel’s going straight up into heaven.

(1) You and I might see the symbolic nature of the artist’s work, but

(2) to the Nimborans it was literal.

(a) Therefore they had concluded

(b) that God was angry at Cain for merely a chance event.

(3) It was not Cain’s fault, but

- (a) maybe the wind or something else
- (b) affected the smoke.

C. However, animal sacrifices were something

1. that the early humans would already know about, because
2. in Genesis 3.21 the Bible says,

**Also for Adam and his wife the LORD God made tunics of skin, and clothed them.**

- a) Obviously some animals had to die for Adam and Eve
  - b) to be able to wear clothes of skins.
    - (1) Undoubtedly their sons Cain and Abel
    - (2) had learned about sacrifices.
3. Hebrews 11.4 reveals
    - a) that Abel's sacrifice was more excellent than Cain's because
    - b) Abel offered his by faith,

**By faith Abel offered to God a more excellent sacrifice than Cain, through which he obtained witness that he was righteous, God testifying of his gifts; and through it he being dead still speaks.**

- (1) Abel offered what God had commanded and
  - (2) Cain offered just what he felt like offering.
4. Remember that Romans 10.17 says faith comes by hearing the word.
    - a) So Abel offered his sacrifice by faith, because
    - b) God spoke to both Cain and Abel, but
      - (1) it was Abel who offered what God had spoken.

D. Then Tomas understood, saying,

1. "Why we do just the same to our elders. We are just like Cain, and when our elders get cross with us, we get angry."

E. As Kevin and Tomas continued their translation of Genesis 4,

1. Tomas learned that Cain killed Abel and
2. God banished Cain from the land where his parents lived.

a) Genesis 4.8, 11–12, 16 says,

**8 Now Cain talked with Abel his brother; and it came to pass, when they were in the field, that Cain rose against Abel his brother and killed him. Then the LORD said to Cain,**

**11–12 “...So now you are cursed from the earth, which has opened its mouth to receive your brother's blood from your hand. When you till the ground, it shall no longer yield its strength to you. A fugitive and a vagabond you shall be on the earth.”**

**16 ...Then Cain went out from the presence of the LORD and dwelt in the land of Nod on the east of Eden.**

b) Apparently Tomas was excited and said, “That is just what we would do too! We would be likely to kill the person with whom we were angry, and then we would have to run far away from our father’s land and live separately, so that the avenger of blood couldn’t kill us in return. What happened to Cain is just right.”

### III. Genesis Is Reality

- A. Kevin May said, “Tomas could see clearly that the story in Genesis is the truth, because it shows Adam, Eve, Cain, and Abel doing what people still do today. This is in tremendous contrast to their own mythology, in which stories are told of people doing impossible feats using magic. What the Bible says fits properly with what real people do.”
- B. It is popular today with religious liberals to believe
  1. that the Bible is not about real history
  2. (Richard Christenson of the Congregational Church was featured on the front page of the *Herald and News*, saying that the Bible stories surrounding the birth of Christ are not real), but
  3. the stories of the Bible,
    - a) especially the first eleven chapters of Genesis,

- b) are in the Bible simply to teach a spiritual lesson.
- C. We are fascinated by our
  - 1. scientific,
  - 2. medical, and
  - 3. technological advances,
    - a) priding ourselves as being in the know,
    - b) that we cannot fall for such “myths” as are in the Bible.
- D. However, time after time we have learned
  - 1. that the Bible presents people in differing situations of life and
  - 2. we see that those people were just like us.
- E. When we see the real people of the Scriptures and how the Scriptures,
  - 1. though ancient,
  - 2. address all the problems of life,
    - a) even the problems of today,
    - b) we can then see the truthfulness of First Corinthians 1.19–20,
      - (1) that man is not as wise as he thinks, but
      - (2) God has revealed the truth about us long ago,

**For it is written: “I will destroy the wisdom of the wise, and bring to nothing the understanding of the prudent.” Where is the wise? Where is the scribe? Where is the disputer of this age? Has not God made foolish the wisdom of this world?**

**Exhortation:**

**I. Let us not glory in our own wisdom.**

- A. When we glory in our wisdom,
- B. we miss the truths that God has planted
  - 1. in the Scriptures and

2. in the world.

**II. Therefore, whatever the word of God says about us is true.**

A. Let us accept what it says.

B. Let us worship and magnify Him

1. for giving us a Book

2. that points us to the way of truth.

C. Let us be as Abel and live by faith,

1. which means that we will both

2. believe what God says and

3. do what He says.