

## MAN'S PURPOSE

Scripture verses are NKJV unless otherwise noted; words in brackets [ ] were added by Bible translators; words in parenthesis ( ) and any underlining is my emphasis.

There is a biblically fixed system of time on which the historical events of the Bible can be brought to light.

Revealing the true timeline will put to rest all the innuendoes and false ideas so many have about the historic value of the Bible. A foundation of truth must be laid. Ask yourself what does the Father and Christ want to accomplish through the act of creation?

**Genesis 1:26** comes to our attention as we delve deeply into the first three chapters of the Bible. Here God lays out His foundational purpose for making this complex world, with all the beauty and infinite detail it contains. It is so complex that a man could spend his lifetime studying a single plant or animal or any other singular aspect of this magnificent creation.

In a very simple pronouncement by the two beings of the Godhead an important work is revealed which has occupied their full attention for more than 6,000 years. Notice in **Genesis 1:26** ***“Then God said, ‘Let Us make man in Our image, according to Our likeness; let them have dominion over the fish of the sea, over the birds of the air, and over the cattle, over all the earth and every creeping thing that creeps on the earth.’”***

Most will read over this passage and make the assumption that the two words used here, “image” and “likeness” mean the same thing. However, they are two very different words with independent meanings. In Strong’s numbering system of bible words, the number for image is 6754, and the number for likeness is 1823.

By understanding what these words are meant to convey and not how they are translated, God reveals the core reason for placing man on this complex and beautiful planet.

The word “likeness,” #1823, means that God created man with the same outward shape as Himself—head, arms, legs, body, feet, etc. The more important part of man’s construction was the development of his character, typified by the word, image. God wanted to give man the ability to solve problems, to anticipate outcomes before they might happen. God gave man the opportunity to rule his environment, as given in **Genesis 1:28** ***“Then God blessed them, and God said to them, ‘Be fruitful and multiply; fill the earth and subdue it; have dominion over the fish of the sea, over the birds of the air, and over every living thing that moves on the earth.’”***

The word “subdue” is #3533, and the following understanding of this word is found in the Theological Word Book of the Old Testament. *“Therefore “subdue” in Genesis 1:28 implies that creation will not do man’s bidding gladly or easily and that man must now bring creation into submission by main strength. It is not to rule man.”* This was the primary method that God planned on using to develop His character in man.

Now God also admonished Adam that by making wrong choices man would suffer a bitter pill—the end of his life. He gave the first man and woman the power to independently choose how to conduct their lives and it's termed "free moral agency," which is the freedom to decide for oneself what is right and what is wrong. So what brings a man happiness and satisfaction? And on the opposite side what brings pain, suffering and disillusionment?

The most important part of man's makeup is his character. God intended man to rule this physical creation, making right decisions. The Theological Word Book of the Old Testament, at the top of page 768 says, "*Man was made in God's image (selem) and likeness (dmu) which is then explained as his having dominion over God's creation as vice-regent. Psalm 8:5-8 is similar, citing man's given glory, honor and rule. God's image obviously does not consist in man's body which was formed from earthly matter, but in his spiritual, intellectual, moral likeness to God from whom his animating breath came.*"

It was the character of God that He intended to build in man in his allotted time, not something that could be created by fiat such as one finds in the animal kingdom. Animals act according to a given circumstance that God has programmed into them, very different from how He created man. The man and woman were free to make up their own minds, what we term "free moral agency."

Today we think that every human has free moral agency just as our original parents, Adam and Eve had. The truth is that man, in his present state is prevented from understanding truth. The fact that we have many competing systems all claiming to have truth or the right way to life, proves that man is not free or capable of choosing that right way. There is only one right way, or more correctly, one truth which teaches the right way.

In **Matthew 7:13-14** Christ defines the way to truth when He says, <sup>13</sup>***Enter by the narrow gate; for wide [is] the gate and broad [is] the way that leads to destruction, and there are many that go in by it. <sup>14</sup>Because narrow [is] the gate and difficult [is] the way which leads to life, and there are few who find it.*** It is the "few who find it," not the large religious organizations who presently claim to have the truth.

Once Adam and Eve chose the wrong system by eating of the Tree of the Knowledge of Good and Evil—a plan that Satan promoted of competition and survival of the fittest—it brought into existence a way of life that man is presently living with—a world of war, disease, and the constant battle to achieve dominion by force and/or deception. There is only one way to understand truth. In **John 6:44** this statement by Christ explains: ***"No one can come to Me unless the Father who sent Me draws him; and I will raise him up at the last day."*** This drawing by the Father, through His Holy Spirit, is not a physical "pulling," but a mental opening of the mind. Once again it is giving that individual, the one being called, free moral agency—an opportunity to make the choice to follow the truth (God's way of life), or to continue in his present hopeless way of life, which has been designed by Satan to lead man to destruction.

This does not mean that man cannot make choices, such as where to live, where to work or what he will eat. He can also understand the complexities of the world he lives in. What is meant here is that man cannot understand the true reason for his existence. He stumbles through life inventing scenarios that will somehow put meaning into his life. This is the reason that there are so many competing religious organizations. Some men go so far as to believe that life is only a time to enjoy the moment, denying any kind of life after death, or any other meaning to this life. Man lives his life to get whatever pleasure he can, in any way that he can, thinking, “I need to get mine while the getting is good.” This is atheistic materialism and is the basis for much of our present society’s problems.

### FOR MANY ARE CALLED

Where do you stand in this world of confusing ideas about the purpose of life on this earth? Do you understand what it means to be called by the Father? **Matthew 20:16** “*So the last will be first, and the first last. For many are called, but few chosen.*” Again, in **Matthew 22:14** “*For many are called, but few [are] chosen.*” This makes it clear that being called is no guarantee of salvation. At this point those called have their minds opened, thus being free to choose that new way of life the Father is offering—an opportunity to enter the narrow gate. Once again those called will have free moral agency—the freedom to choose. They can either chose to enter the narrow gate or pass it by. It is definitely the many who pass it by.

**John 6:17** adds truth to the earlier statement about the two God beings in **Genesis 1:26**. What have these two been doing? Christ reveals not only what they were doing, but who they were, and in **Genesis 1:26** the “us” is revealed. Then in **John 5:17** we read, “*But Jesus answered them, ‘My Father has been working until now, and I have been working.’*” Their work began at creation and continues to this day.

Who they were and the work they were doing is shown in **John 15:1-6** <sup>1</sup>“*I am the true vine, and My Father is the vinedresser.*” <sup>2</sup>*Every [branch] in Me that does not bear fruit He takes away; and every branch that bears fruit He prunes, that it may bear more fruit.* <sup>3</sup>*You are already clean because of the word which I have spoken to you.* <sup>4</sup>*Abide in Me, and I in you. As the branch cannot bear fruit of itself, unless it abides in the vine, neither can you, unless you abide in Me.* <sup>5</sup>*I am the vine, you [are] the branches. He who abides in Me, and I in him, bears much fruit; for without Me you can do nothing.* <sup>6</sup>*If anyone does not abide in Me, he is cast out as a branch and is withered; and they gather them and throw [them] into the fire, and they are burned.* Burned up!

### MAN’S PURPOSE DEFINED

Unfortunately, the idea of “bearing more fruit” is taken to mean the saving of souls by getting others to accept Christ as their savior. Nothing could be further from the truth! As has been shown it is only the Father who decides who is called, not another man. Man’s part is the revealing of the written word. In **Ephesians 4:13** Paul explains what this fruit is. “*till we all come to the unity of the faith and the knowledge of the Son of God, to a perfect man, to the measure*

***of the stature of the fullness of Christ;***” Christ also clarifies this in **Matthew 5:48** ***“Therefore you shall be perfect, just as your Father in heaven is perfect.”***

Man needs to develop moral upright character. He must be an individual capable of conducting his life so as to recognize who gave life, having a deep respect for the God who gave him this gift. He must recognize and celebrate this gift on a weekly basis. It is necessary to have the right attitude to those with whom they have daily contact. This entails not lying, nor stealing or killing. It means honoring those who continue to give life. It means not interfering with the special bonding relationship between husband and wife, and most importantly, not to contemplate anything contrary to how we should be dealing with God and our fellow man, which would be the harbinger of deceitful character. Thought should always precede action.

How we conduct our lives belies our character. Our actions underscore our character, either righteous or unrighteous. The Bible is the instruction book given to man by God.

### **MAN’S FLAWED UNDERSTANDING**

In **Genesis 3** is the record of Adam and Eve exercising free moral agency. They chose the wrong way and man, throughout history has followed that way and paid the price. From that point forward men’s minds were clouded to the truth of God. Even when presented with the truth most cannot or will not see or understand that their way of life is evil. **Matthew 13:14-15** proves this. ***“And in them the prophecy of Isaiah is fulfilled, which says: <sup>14</sup>‘HEARING YOU WILL HEAR AND SHALL NOT UNDERSTAND, AND SEEING YOU WILL SEE AND NOT PERCEIVE; <sup>15</sup>FOR THE HEARTS OF THIS PEOPLE HAVE GROWN DULL. THEIR EARS ARE HARD OF HEARING, AND THEIR EYES THEY HAVE CLOSED, LEST THEY SHOULD SEE WITH THEIR EYES AND HEAR WITH THEIR EARS, LEST THEY SHOULD UNDERSTAND WITH THEIR HEARTS AND TURN, SO THAT I SHOULD HEAL THEM.’”***

No matter how logical and persuasive the evidence is presented to a man he cannot accept it because it is so contrary to the competitive world he lives in. Some may even admit that God’s way of life, if practiced, would result in utopia for man, but without the Father opening their minds it seems impossible and unrealistic in the present society, so they continue in their present way of life.

Man only sees that he needs to defend himself from others, or beat them down in his climb to the top, or to a perch he deems secure to live out his life.

### **FREE MORAL AGENCY**

To mankind, without the Father opening one’s mind to His way of life, it seems impossible and unrealistic to live His way in our society, past or present; to believe one can live according to biblical principles. Do you remember the statement Christ made in **Matthew 20:16** and **Matthew 22:14**? ***“Many are called, but few chosen.”*** And in **Matthew 7:14** only a few find and enter the narrow gate to traverse the difficult way of life. It is when the Father opens a person’s mind to

see truth that returns one to the state of being a free moral agent. When this happens they are free to search out the narrow gate and enter it.

All this can be brought into focus by correctly understanding the parable of the sower in **Matthew 13:1-9**. The Father—the one who calls—is the sower. The seed represents God’s call. The first seed spoken of falls on the wayside, and is then immediately consumed by birds. These are those who are called and shown the gate but fail to enter. Satan’s world is too alluring for them to give up and even though they take note of the narrow gate they turn back to Satan’s way because of the pull of the world.

The chosen are those who enter the gate. Remember! The way is narrow and difficult. Those who enter fall into one of three categories. First are those who fall among the rocks, being enthusiastic when first chosen, but losing heart when they find the way is hard. The next group is choked by the weeds, but they are more determined, lasting longer but making the mistake of looking back, remembering only the good times. They are choked out by the problems they face of overcoming the pull of this world. The final group is those who fall into rich ground, nourished by God’s Holy Spirit and the words of our Redeemer, Christ. They deeply understand that God’s way of living is the only way that man can exist without enduring the pain and suffering of this world.

The more those chosen desire the truth, the more God grants His Holy Spirit to them with the power to overcome. Thus, this allows them to hold fast to God’s way of life—to traverse that path to life eternal, even if it means losing their physical life.

### MEANING OF “EAT”

Now it is better understood what God meant when He said that Adam and Eve should not eat of the tree of the knowledge of good and evil. By eating of the forbidden tree they bought into the system that Satan promoted, a system of “get.” Previous to his appearance God showed Adam and Eve the tree of life, representative of His system of love and concern for their fellow man.

Are we to conclude that these two trees were not real? That they only represented philosophical ways of living? No! These were real trees with real fruit. We understand that we age because the cells in our bodies are programed to gradually lose genetic information, so the body slowly ages and dies.

The fruit of the Tree of Knowledge of Good and Evil caused the aging process to begin. In **Genesis 2:17** the Ferrar Fenton Bible translation says: ***“For food you may eat of the whole of the trees of the Garden: “But from the Tree of the Knowledge of Good and Evil you shall not eat; because in the day you eat from it dying; you shall die.”***

In contrast, the fruit of the Tree of Life would have maintained the accurate replication of the cells of Adam and Eve thus enabling them to live an indefinite amount of time without aging. This is confirmed in **Genesis 3:24** ***“So He drove out the man; and He placed cherubim at the east of***

***the Garden of Eden, and a flaming sword which turned every way, to guard the way to the Tree of Life.”***

This is speaking of the electrical/chemical existence of the human body.

The fact that God showed them this tree is indicative of Him teaching them His way; the narrow, difficult way that leads to eternal life. Because they rejected God’s way man has paid the penalty ever since. As the two trees, the tree of life and the tree of the knowledge of good and evil was a metaphor for the two basic ways of conduct.

Just as the term serpent was a metaphor depicting Satan’s cunningly destructive character, not his physical form. He had a very different appearance when he approached Eve, and then Adam. Some may question why Satan was allowed to sneak into the garden. Was God not watching? On the contrary! Satan was allowed to enter the garden to present his system of life to Eve, not just to give her a piece of fruit to eat. Satan painted a rosy picture of a good and exciting way to strive for mastery or ruler ship. In turn, Eve convinced Adam that it would be to their advantage. They chose the broad way that leads to death, as God had warned them before Satan appeared.

**Ezekiel 28:12-15** describes what they saw. <sup>12</sup> ***"Son of man, take up a lamentation for the king of Tyre, and say to him, 'Thus says the Lord GOD: "You [were] the seal of perfection, Full of wisdom and perfect in beauty. <sup>13</sup>You were in Eden, the garden of God; Every precious stone [was] your covering: The sardius, topaz, and diamond, Beryl, onyx, and jasper, Sapphire, turquoise, and emerald with gold. The workmanship of your timbrels and pipes Was prepared for you on the day you were created. <sup>14</sup>You [were] the anointed cherub who covers; I established you; You were on the holy mountain of God; You walked back and forth in the midst of fiery stones. <sup>15</sup>You [were] perfect in your ways from the day you were created, Till iniquity was found in you.***

Some think that the term “serpent” is indicative of Satan’s appearance, but in fact it was representative of his character. Being allowed into the garden was a test for Satan. His impressive appearance was just as described in **Ezekiel 28**. This was a test for Satan as well as for Adam and Eve. God did not force him to lie and deceive Eve, and you should consider that there were three options open to him. He could have said nothing and gone his way. He could have explained the power of God and his caring nature, and advised them to follow God’s instructions on how to live their lives. But Satan chose the way of deceit. It wasn’t until after he had deceived Eve that Satan received his punishment. **Genesis 3:14-15** <sup>14</sup>***“So the LORD God said to the serpent: "Because you have done this, You are cursed more than all cattle, And more than every beast of the field; On your belly you shall go, And you shall eat dust All the days of your life. <sup>15</sup>And I will put enmity Between you and the woman, And between your seed and her Seed; He shall bruise your head, And you shall bruise His heel.”*** Is it any wonder that Eve was impressed with him? All logic went out the window, and Adam, not wanting to lose the only being like him went along with her, but he was not fooled by Satan. **1 Timothy 2:14** ***“And Adam was not deceived, but the woman being deceived, fell into transgression.”*** It should be noted that this did not exonerate Adam, but makes it obvious that he knew better but failed to act as he should have. Adam failed in his leadership role.

By comparison, God's appearance was much like that of Adam and Eve. Read the article "Has God Appeared in Physical Form?" <https://bit.ly/30TUskc> Adam and Eve made the choice to follow Satan's way, and man has paid the price for more than 6,000 years. That is about to change! The material universe, the galaxy, the solar system and time itself were created to fulfill a divine purpose in an eternal plan. As Sir Winston Churchill said, "He indeed must be a blind soul who cannot see that there is a divine purpose being worked out here below."

Mankind has yet to fulfill his destiny. The final chapter of this timeline remains to be realized by man. This series of cycles that God has allotted will continue to unfold exactly as God has proposed, from the beginning of Genesis to the end of Revelation, until His purpose of building righteous character in man as exemplified by our Savior, Jesus Christ has been accomplished.

Don Roth, Oct. 20, 2017