

WEEK 1 SCRIPTURE READING

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by Roly Buys



*This cycle is focussed on loving your neighbour ...
how creation reflects that same message.*

Amanda Buys' Spiritual Covering

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Parashah Breisheet | “in the beginning” | בראשית

Week 1

MADE IN HIS IMAGE

As we start this new cycle of Biblical studies, we are challenged to think about the purpose for which we (as individual and community) have been created, and then to evaluate whether we are fully aligned with the goal.

This portion in **Genesis** provides us with a clue about the magnitude of our **potential legacy**.

Originally the first Adam was made in the Image of YHWH.

Genesis 1.27 “So GOD created humankind in His own Image; in the Image of GOD He created him: male and female He created them.”

- ◆ This image tarnished and broken by the fall of mankind, results in a vessel which needs to be restored.
- ◆ By the completed work of Messiah Y’shua, we have the potential to once more fulfill this goal.
- ◆ It requires of us the desire and willingness to transform from a broken vessel to one that has been remoulded into the form which best reveals YHWH’s Character in these two dimensions:

1. A walk of loving our neighbour as we love ourselves

YHWH creates as an act of **giving**.

We initially receive, but the potential placed inside of us is to reflect HIS Character ... this therefore implies that we will in turn also be **givers**.

We all have talents, abilities, an innovative / creative spirit ... it is therefore logical that we have the potential to ‘give’ whatever is needed by our fellow man. Mostly people think of giving as money / things, but in reality we have so much more to give;

- ◆ **Words** of encouragement
- ◆ **Hands** that touch caringly
- ◆ **Eyes** that reflect understanding
- ◆ **Ears** that hear with compassion

2. The role-modelling of GODLY Authority

In the pursuit of taking **dominion** over the earth, the animal’s, the birds and the fish.

This may seem like a physical action only.

- ◆ However, YHWH 'MADE' the Garden of Eden for a reason.
- ◆ He wants us **to re-create that same domain where His Will reigns supreme**. If we say that we love YHWH but fail to build that Heavenly Tabernacle (Holy Space), then how can He come to dwell with us?
- ◆ One attribute of our "made in the Image" clearly is this role of **living the responsibility of stewardship**. This requires of us to be accountable to YHWH for the STATUS of those creatures which He made and placed in our hands to care for and preserve.
- ◆ In fact, these two actions reflect the Character of YHWH ... we are to be in balance loving YHWH and looking after my neighbour / His creation. That balance is paramount. Some people tend to be so spiritual that they have little or no impact on the real world.



We need to deal with the Old-Man / Ego

Fact is that we allow our old-man to rule much of our thought processes. And then we allow our feelings to rule over our minds.

And then we allow the body to have its say as well ... "***I am tired, I am lonely*** ..." etc.

It is pretty easy to see that we are very tuned to our physical senses. This in turn means that we are focused on receiving, on getting presents, words of affirmation, our own way.

Paul confirms this for us in the following passage. While we are inward-focused, we will not have the capacity to reach out to others, nor will we make any positive contribution to the community.

2 Timothy 3.1-9 *"Moreover, understand this: in the acharit-hayamim will come trying times. **People will be self-loving, money-loving, proud, arrogant, insulting, disobedient to parents, ungrateful, unholy, heartless, unappeasable, slanderous, uncontrolled, brutal, hateful of good, traitorous, headstrong, swollen with conceit, loving pleasure rather than GOD, as they retain the outer form of religion but deny its power. Stay away from these people! For some of them worm their way into homes and get control of weak-willed women who are heaped with sins and swayed by various impulses, who are always learning but never able to come to full knowledge of the truth. In the same way as Jannes and Jambres opposed Moshe, so also these people oppose the truth. They are people with corrupted minds, whose trust cannot pass the test. However, they won't get very far; because everyone will see how stupid they are, just as happened with those two.***"

This week's portion covers what is known as "**The Creation Story**". It is also the part where mankind manages to mess things up completely.

- ☑ **What exactly happened?**
- ☑ **What exactly does this 'sin' entail?**
- ☑ **Why did both Adam and Eve (the perfect couple who are both opposite yet equal), fail at the same time?**

Surely the job of keeping and guarding could not be that complicated?

Clearly there is more to this event that meets the eye. The events that follow, highlight for us that we have a difficult and complex problem to deal with. It will require **our complete dedication to the task**.

We cannot be half-hearted in our endeavours, and as Paul says ... we must persevere until the end of the race.

Genesis 2.15 *"ADONAI, GOD, took the person and put him in the Garden of Eden to cultivate and care for it."*

My reflection of YHWH's Character ...

a) Love my neighbour

It does not take us long to see the depth of human depravity ... Cain says *"am I my brother's keeper"*. Cain says this about his flesh and blood brother. How very easy is it to say that about people from a different race, or culture!

Genesis 4.9 *And he replied, "I don't know; am I my brother's guardian?"*

This same attitude prevails today.

We read in **Ezekiel** that the people of Sodom:

- had much wealth,
- were arrogant,
- and refused to care for others.

We all have different talents and gifts ... some of us grow up in homes where we are encouraged to utilise that which we have.

However, others are prevented from developing (how many countries are there today who still prevent women from attending schools?)

The culture that we are brought up in will also either enable us or prevent us from achieving any sort of goals

We will cross paths with a multitude of people in this next week ...

- how we **react** towards them,
- how we **encourage** them,
- how we **lift up** their arms to achieve in some goal

will determine whether we have transformed to a position where we can say ... *"I am my brother's keeper"*

Some people are very needy. Their hurts and wounds have been set so far back in their DNA that they require constant attention. These people are so focused on their need that they can consume all of the resource that is available to them. They "take" constantly, simply because they have nothing to give. Cain seems to have been one of these people. His world view was to consider only what he needed.

Whatever our spiritual and emotional condition is, we still have to realize that, even if we have little, that we must still GIVE.

- ◆ I wonder what Adam and Eve thought.
- ◆ They had been receiving the Intimacy and the Blessings of a Relationship with YHWH.
- ◆ They would clearly know what they were missing.

Did they understand that they had to emulate YHWH and give?

Did they live differently after being exiled from the Garden?

One would hope so ... after all, we must learn from our mistakes if we want this world to be a better place.

b) My role of stewardship

Huge sections of forests are being harvested for personal wealth with very little or no thought of the future generations. Greed always destroys creation.

At the same time we read how the people from Gaza are releasing balloons which act as fire bombs (as the helium ignites other incendiary devices) to senselessly destroy 1,000's of hectares of forest / fields.

At the time of writing, over 250 fires had been started, more than half of these in nature reserves ... which represent man's efforts to conserve, protect and revitalize YHWH's Creation.

- ◆ Those fires are not only harming the Israelites ... it's a direct attack on the Plan of YHWH.
- ◆ And it's another example of mankind **destroying the Garden of Eden CONCEPT**. Any one who wantonly destroys any part of creation is REPEATING the action of eating from the forbidden fruit in the Garden.

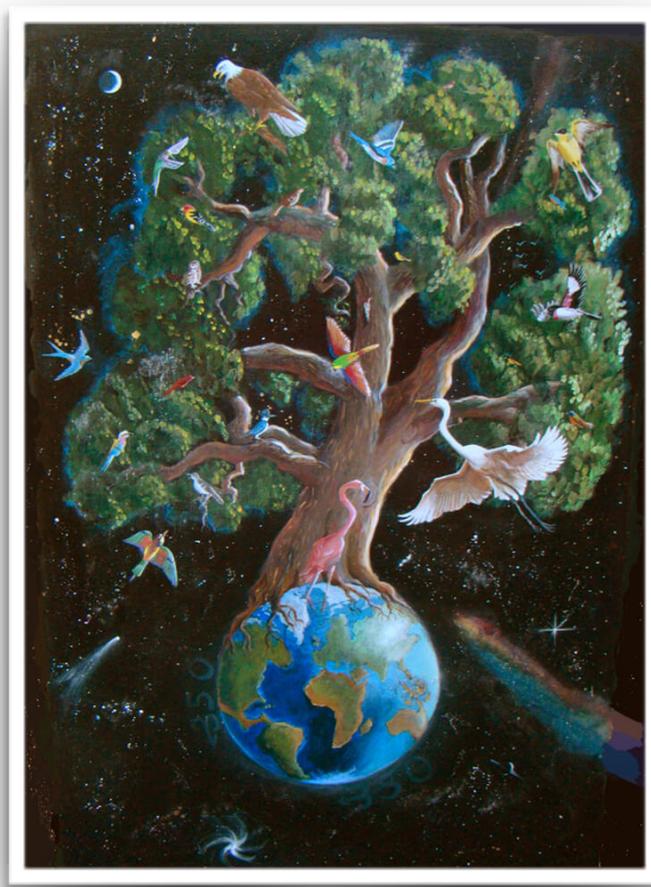
These are two of many such examples ... how humans are failing in their role of stewardship.

We can only expect that YHWH will be concerned at our apparent lack of purpose ... our disregard for His Creation.

The Bible tells me that trees will (one of these days) sing out at the Presence of YHWH ... when He comes to Judge the earth and where mankind failed to act.

How sad a day.

Will you be one that will hear that Creation "reported" you to YHWH?



1 Chronicles 16.33 *"Then the trees in the forest will sing before ADONAI, because He has come to judge the earth."*

QUESTION

1. Have you given any thought to the Spiritual Purpose for which you were created ... has your vision only been focused on the physical domain and the striving to exist in the world of today?
2. What will you do with the time remaining in your life here on earth?



A FINAL THOUGHT

We have been given a wonderful creation, and the opportunity to do something of significance.

Will we take that opportunity in both hands and run with it?

- ❖ The Bible tells us that it is almost impossible for man to rectify that which he has broken.
- ❖ We need to do the right thing now! It's a matter of choice ... your freedom of choice.

Ecclesiastes 7.13 "Consider the work of GOD: who can make straight what He has made crooked?"

BLESSING

Numbers 6:24-27

“Y’varekh’kha YHVH v’yishmerekha.
May YHVH bless you and keep you.

Ya’er YHVH panav eleikha vichunekka.
May YHVH make His Face shine on you and show you His favour.

Yissa YHVH panav eleikha v’yasem l’kha shalom.
May YHVH lift up His Face toward you and give you peace.

Numbers 6:27 *“In this way they are to put My Name on the people of Isra’el, so that I will Bless them.”*

