

D. JAMES
KENNEDY
TOPICAL
STUDY BIBLE



M O D E R N
E N G L I S H
V E R S I O N

PASSIO

D. James Kennedy Topical Study Bible
Published by Passio
Charisma Media/Charisma House Book Group
600 Rinehart Road
Lake Mary, Florida 32746
www.charismahouse.com

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15 16 17 18 19 — 9 8 7 6 5 4 3 2 1

Printed in the United States of America

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FOR TOPICAL STUDY

This master index will help you identify and utilize the particular mega-themes found in the *D. James Kennedy Topical Study Bible*. You can select one of the twelve main categories (Westminster Confession of Faith, Apostles' Creed, Christian Living, Church, Doctrines, Education, Family, Humanity, Nation, Personalities of the Bible, Profiles: Lives Touched, or World) and then do a topical study of Scriptures to find commentaries that relate to each category. There will be an icon at the bottom right-hand corner of the article that will take you to the next article within that specific theme. This topical plan has been designed for individual, small group, and/or Sunday school study.



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GENESIS

The Creation

1 In the beginning^a God created the heavens and the earth.^b **2** The earth was formless and void,^{a1} darkness was over the surface of the deep, and the Spirit of God was moving² over the surface of the water.^b

1 *a* Jn 1:1-2
b Heb 11:3;
Rev 4:11
2 *a* Jer 4:23
b Ps 104:30
3 *a* Ps 33:6
b 2Co 4:6
5 *a* Ps 74:16
6 *a* Job 37:18

.....

7 *a* Ps 148:4;
Pr 8:28-29
9 *a* Jer 5:22;
2Pe 3:5
11 *a* Ps 104:14

3 God said,^a “Let there be light,” and there was light.^b **4** God saw that the light was good, and God separated the light from the darkness. **5** God called the light Day, and the darkness He called Night.^a So the evening and the morning were the first day.

6 Then God said, “Let there be an expanse in the midst of the waters,^a and let it separate the waters from the waters.”

7 So God made the expanse and separated the waters which were under the

expanse from the waters which were above the expanse.^a And it was so.

8 God called the expanse Heaven. So the evening and the morning were the second day.

9 Then God said, “Let the waters under the heavens be gathered together into one place,^a and let the dry land appear.” And it was so. **10** God called the dry land Earth, and the gathering together of the waters He called Seas. Then God saw that it was good.

11 Then God said, “Let the earth produce vegetation:^{a3} plants yielding seed and fruit trees on the earth yielding fruit after their kind with seed in them.” And it was so. **12** The earth produced vegetation, plants yielding seed after their kind and trees yielding fruit with seed in them after their



World

Genesis: Beginning of Truth Genesis 1:1

Genesis is the book of beginnings. There is nothing else like it in all the world. It gives us the origin of all things. The first verse of the first chapter of the Bible says this: “In the beginning God created the heavens and the earth” (Genesis 1:1). Among the many truths we can glean from this verse alone is the understanding that it obliterates most of the erroneous philosophies that have come up during the history of mankind. Notice what is refuted by that single statement:

Atheism. Atheism means “no God.” It is contradicted by the declarations that God was “in the beginning” and the universe was created by God. **Pantheism.** Pantheism is the belief that everything is God. It is the basis of Hinduism, Buddhism, and other religions. Since it teaches that everything is God, it obliterates all moral distinctions, because if everything is God, then everything ultimately must be good. **Polytheism.** Polytheistic religions say there are many gods. This is repudiated because verse 1

declares that “God” created; that one God is the Creator of all things. **Materialism.** Materialism is the shared view of humanism, secularism, and communism. It is the idea that there is nothing in the universe but matter. But here the Bible tells us that matter had a beginning. Before there was matter, there was God. **Dualism.** Dualism is the basis of religions, like Zoroastrianism, which say, in effect, that there are two gods: one evil and one good. Clearly this verse contradicts that by saying there is one God who created all things. **Evolutionism.** Genesis 1:1 refutes the belief that the heavens and earth evolved because it declares that God created them.

All of those philosophical systems exhibit the basic concept of unbelief. They are part and parcel of man’s rejection of God’s revelation of Himself as the Creator of all things.



For the next message on World, turn to Genesis 1:29, page 6.

¹2 Or a waste and emptiness. ²2 Or hovering. ³11 Or grass.

kind. And God saw that it was good.

¹³So the evening and the morning were the third day.

¹⁴And God said, “Let there be lights in the expanse of the heavens to separate the day from the night,^a and let them be signs to indicate seasons, and days, and years.^b ¹⁵Let them be lights in the expanse of the heavens to give light on the earth.” And it was so. ¹⁶God made two great lights: the greater light to rule the day and the lesser light to rule the night. He made the stars also.^a

¹⁷Then God set them in the expanse of the heavens to give light on the earth, ¹⁸to rule over the day and over the night, and to divide the light from the darkness.^a Then God saw that it was good. ¹⁹So the evening and the morning were the fourth day.

²⁰Then God said, “Let the waters swarm with swarms of living creatures and let the birds fly above the earth in the open

¹⁴ a Ps 74:16
b Ps 104:19;
Isa 40:26;
Jer 10:2
¹⁶ a Job 38:7;
Ps 8:3
¹⁸ a Jer 31:35

.....
²² a Ge 1:28;
8:17
²⁴ a Ge 6:20;
7:14
²⁶ a Ge 9:6;
1Co 11:7;
Jas 3:9

expanse of the heavens.”²¹ So God created great sea creatures and every living thing that moves, with which the waters swarmed, according to their kind, and every winged bird according to its kind. And God saw that it was good. ²²Then God blessed them, saying, “Be fruitful and multiply and fill the waters in the seas, and let the birds multiply on the earth.”^a ²³So the evening and the morning were the fifth day.

²⁴Then God said, “Let the earth bring forth living creatures according to their kinds: livestock, and creeping things, and beasts of the earth according to their kinds.”^a And it was so. ²⁵So God made the beasts of the earth according to their kind, and the livestock according to their kind, and everything that creeps on the earth according to its kind. And God saw that it was good.

²⁶Then God said, “Let us make man in our image, after our likeness,^a and



Westminster Confession of Faith

Not a Flawed Design Genesis 1:26

We Christians are overly sensitive in reacting to the argument that a good God would not allow evil to infect creation.

What was the providence of God toward man in the estate in which he was created? *The providence of God toward man in the estate in which he was created, was the placing him in paradise, appointing him to dress it, giving him liberty to eat of the fruit of the earth; putting the creatures under his dominion, and ordaining marriage for his help; affording him communion with himself; instituting the sabbath; entering into a covenant of life with him, upon condition of personal, perfect, and perpetual obedience, of which the tree of life was a pledge; and forbidding to eat of the tree of knowledge of good and evil, upon the pain of death.*

**Westminster Larger Catechism,
Question 20**

Was there a flaw in the design? Consider the lives of the first humans. The *Larger Catechism*'s description states that they had a nurturing environment. Our first parents were perfectly placed in a garden ideally suited to their needs and purpose (Genesis 1:26–31). They enjoyed employment for which they were perfectly equipped. They were given what has been called the cultural mandate—a mandate that all human culture still shares—to be fruitful through the bearing and nurturing of children and to care for the land. Work fulfilled the joy of accomplishing praise to the Creator. Genesis 1:28 exults in the high calling of humanity.

In this Bible you will find many references to the *Westminster Confession of Faith* (1646) and *Larger and Shorter Catechisms* because they are one of the most comprehensive explanations of the faith in Christian history.



For the next message on Westminster Confession of Faith, turn to Genesis 3:10, page 9.

let them have dominion over the fish of the sea, and over the birds of the air, and over the livestock, and over all the earth, and over every creeping thing that creeps on the earth.”

27 a Mt 19:4; Mk 10:6
28 a Ge 9:1, 7
.....

29 a Ge 9:3; Ps 104:14–15
30 a Ps 104:14; 147:9
31 a Ps 104:24; 1Ti 4:4
1 a Dt 4:19; 17:3
2 a Ex 31:17; Heb 4:4

27 So God created man in His own image; in the image of God He created him; male and female He created them.^a

28 God blessed them and said to them, “Be fruitful and multiply, and replenish the earth and subdue it.^a Rule over the fish of the sea and over the birds of the air and over every living thing that moves on the earth.”

29 Then God said, “See, I have given you every plant yielding seed which is on the face of all the earth and every tree which has fruit yielding seed. It

shall be food for you.^a 30 To every beast of the earth and to every bird of the air and to everything that creeps on the earth which has the breath of life in it, I have given every green plant for food.^a And it was so.

31 God saw everything that He had made, and indeed it was very good.^a So the evening and the morning were the sixth day.

2 So the heavens and the earth, and all their hosts,^a were finished.

2 On the seventh day God completed His work which He had done, and He rested on the seventh day from all His work which He had done.^a 3 Then God blessed the seventh day and made it holy, because on it He had rested

 World | Genesis: Beginning of Fully Functioning Systems
Genesis 1:29

In the first week we see a miraculous creation taking place. God created not only the energy-generating star but also the entire trail of light that comes to this earth. He created a fully functional system that, although it gives the appearance of age, is not really old at all. I believe God did create a fully functional system right from the beginning.

Now those who oppose creationism obviously reject this, but God tells us very plainly in His

Word that this is what He did on the days of His creation. If we want to reject His Word and His interpretation and try to figure it out for ourselves, then we only lead ourselves into a blind alley of confusion about what is true.

 For the next message on World, see Genesis 2:2, below.

 World | Creation and the First Law of Thermodynamics
Genesis 2:2

Where did matter come from? We are told in Genesis 1:1 that God created it. We cannot create it because God already has—and He has suspended the creative process. This is the basis of the first law of thermodynamics, which states that total energy in a system is constant. It can change form but cannot be created or destroyed. We see that He rested from His creative work on the seventh day. He ceased creating, the Bible says; creation is no longer going on in the

universe today. This of course causes a problem for evolution. Evolutionists would like to have us believe that creation is continuing. The Bible refutes it, declaring that God created, and He stopped. Whatever His creative processes were, they are no longer operative.

 For the next message on World, turn to Genesis 3:17, page 10.

from all His work which He had created and made.^a

Adam and Eve

⁴This is the account¹ of the heavens and the earth when they were created.

In the day that the LORD God made the earth and the heavens,⁵ no shrub of the field was yet on the earth, and no plant of the field had yet sprouted,^a for the LORD God had not caused it to rain on the earth, and there was no man to cultivate the ground.^b ⁶But a mist² arose from the earth and watered the whole surface of the ground. ⁷Then the LORD God formed man from the dust of the ground^a and breathed into his nostrils the breath of life, and man became a living being.^b

⁸The LORD God planted a garden in the east, in Eden,^a and there He placed the man whom He had formed. ⁹Out of the ground the LORD God made to grow every tree that is pleasant to the sight and good for food. The tree of life was also in the midst of the garden,^a along with the tree of knowledge of good and evil.

¹⁰A river flowed out of Eden to water the garden, and from there it parted and became four rivers. ¹¹The name of the first is Pishon; it encompasses the whole land of Havilah,^a where there is gold. ¹²The gold of that land is good; bdellium and the onyx stone are there. ¹³The name of the second river is Gihon; it encompasses the whole land of Cush. ¹⁴The

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¹⁸Then the LORD God said, “It is not good that the man should be alone. I will make him a helper suitable for him.”^a

¹⁹Out of the ground the LORD God formed every beast of the field and every bird of the sky,^a and brought them to the man to see what he would call them. Whatever the man called every living creature, that was its name.^b ²⁰The man gave names to all the livestock, to the birds of the sky, and to every beast of the field, but for Adam³ there was not found a helper suitable for him.

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²³Then Adam said,

“This is now bone of my bones
and flesh of my flesh;^a
she will be called Woman,
for she was taken out of Man.”



Doctrines

The New Garden Genesis 2:8

The word *Eden* comes from a word meaning “delight.” It was a garden of delight. Everything that was needed was provided, and it was beautiful. God Himself planted the garden. Then God created Adam in the garden and took a rib from man and fashioned a woman, Eve. So the first marriage took place in the garden. But then there came sin, then guilt, and then shame, because shame is the product of guilt,

and guilt is the product of sin. And so society sinks deeper into the mire of sin and guilt today. Thank God, there is another Adam—a second Adam—God’s Son, whom He sent also into this world seeking a bride. We are that bride.



For the next message on Doctrines, turn to Genesis 7:11–13, page 14.

¹⁴ Lit. *These are the generations.* ²⁶ Or *flow.* ³²⁰ MT *the man, or the Adam.*

²⁴Therefore a man will leave his father and his mother and be joined to his wife, and they will become one flesh.^a

²⁵They were both naked, the man and his wife,^a and were not ashamed.

^{24 a} Mal 2:15;
1Co 7:10–11
^{25 a} Ge 3:7,
10–11
^{1 a} 2Co 11:3;
Rev 12:9

.....
^{4 a} Jn 8:44
^{5 a} Ge 2:17;
Eze 28:2

²And the woman said to the serpent, “We may eat of the fruit from the trees of the garden; ³but from the fruit of the tree which is in the midst of the garden, God has said, “You will not eat of it, nor will you touch it, or else you will die.”

⁴Then the serpent said to the woman, “You surely will not die!^a ⁵For God knows that on the day you eat of it your eyes will be opened and you will be like God, knowing good and evil.”^a

⁶When the woman saw that the tree was good for food, that it was pleasing

The Fall

3 Now the serpent was more subtle than any beast of the field which the LORD God had made.^a And he said to the woman, “Has God said, ‘You shall not eat of any tree of the garden?’”



**Family | The Importance of Marriage
Genesis 2:24**

Before the state and before the church, God created the oldest institution on this planet: the institution of marriage. When God established marriage, He did so for the primary purpose that one man and one woman should be one flesh and should go forth and multiply—something entirely impossible under the Supreme Court’s recent novel and illogical redefinition of marriage.

We now have the very definition of tyranny. It hasn’t come with guns and prisons but with robes and gavels.

What do they want with this new legalization of same-sex marriage? What they want to

do is make us like them and open the door to all kinds of sexual chaos. It will produce absolute cultural chaos in this country. Mother and father, husband and wife would be old-fashioned ideas within a generation.

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For the next message on Family, turn to Exodus 20:12, page 113.



**Church | New Age: The Big Lie
Genesis 3:5**

What thoughts are conjured up in your mind when you think of New Age? Enlightenment? Mysticism? Metaphysical knowledge? Our problem is not metaphysical ignorance; our problem is rebellion, sin, and transgression of His holy law, and therefore we are in need of a Redeemer. But God, in infinite love, sent His only begotten Son to suffer and die upon a cross, having had imputed unto Him all of our guilt and transgression and sin. There He shed His precious blood to make atonement for us and to reconcile us unto the living God, whereby we have experienced a personal transformation. We have been born anew.

The New Age? Oh, how the devil loves to lie. My friends, the New Age religion—this mixture

of the Eastern mystical religions of Hinduism and Buddhism and Daoism combined with Western neo-pagan occultism and all mixed together with some modern psychology and physics—is nothing more than the original lie that Satan gave to mankind. Do you remember what it was? Genesis 3:5 tells us: “For God knows that on the day you eat of it your eyes will be opened”—enlightenment—“and you will be like”—like whom?—“God”! There’s the New Age movement. The ancient religion of Satan. The big lie.



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For the next message on Church, turn to Exodus 20:2–3, page 111.



The Scripture passage in Genesis 14:8–20 describes the first “just” war. Let me say, unequivocally, that I hate war. In fact, every right-minded person hates war. War is a great evil. Only tyrants, aggressors, madmen, and the devil love war. Thousands, millions, even tens of millions of people have lost their lives in the thunderous inferno that is war.

I am definitely not a materialist or a militarist. But, on the other hand, I am not a pacifist either. The pacifist position is that no war is justified; there is no such thing, they say, as a “just” war. In perusing the Holy Book, you will find that the Bible nowhere says war is justified or war is not justified. It doesn’t deal specifically with the issue, but there are a great many instances from which we can draw very definite conclusions.

This passage where Abraham rescues Lot does indeed describe the first just war. In fact, it grows out of the first war in all of recorded history—about two thousand years before Julius Caesar conquered Gaul, about seventeen hundred years before Alexander led his phalanxes from Macedonia into Persia, and about a thousand years before the wooden horse was pulled foolishly through the gates of Troy in the Trojan War.

In this example those early kings made one mistake (aggressors always seem to make fatal mistakes): they took Lot, his family, and his

possessions captive and made their way back to Mesopotamia, the land of Shinar. One of Lot’s servants managed to escape. He ran back to Abram (or Abraham) and told him what had happened—that Abraham’s nephew Lot (the son of his brother), together with his family and all of his goods, had been taken captive.

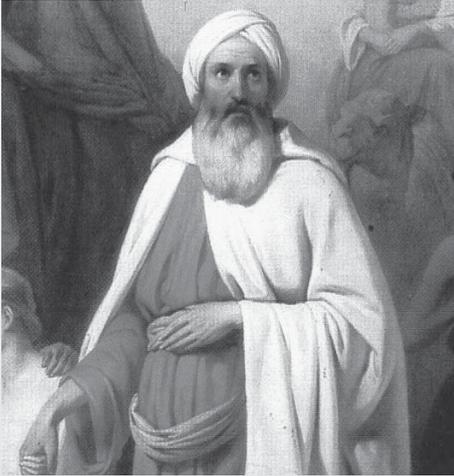
Many a person in those circumstances might say to himself, “Is that a fact? Tell me about it. You mean my nephew Lot, who had the audacity to choose the most fertile region when I offered him his choice of the southern or the northern part of what is now Israel, has been taken captive? Not only did he set his tent toward Sodom [that wicked city which has lent its name to the vile perversion and sin now known by that name], but soon he was close by—and then he was living within the gates of that city. Well, he made his bed; he can just lie in it. It serves him right, taking up with such sinners as those.” But Abraham rescued Lot and took nothing for his efforts. He acted in a completely righteous way.

Abraham was a man noted for his piety and godliness. He would certainly not be a man who would be likely to engage in warfare. Or, if he were, that he would do it successfully. But Abraham’s piety did not prevent his military exploit. In fact, it undergirded and strengthened him in the task, because he trusted in God. They sang hymns as they marched into war and never lost a battle.

However, what about the New Testament? Doesn’t Jesus, the Prince of Peace, change all of that? Didn’t He tell us that we are to be peacemakers? Didn’t He tell us that we should resist not evil? Absolutely He did! Unfortunately there are many people who do not understand this teaching and twist it and distort it to the hurt of many. These statements, found in Jesus’ Sermon on the Mount, are part of His teaching of personal Christian ethics. They are not intended to be instructions on how nations are to govern themselves in the courts of law or how they are to behave in their dealings in international relationships.



For the next message on World, turn to Genesis 19:3–8, page 27.



Many people think they can work their way to heaven. Or they think that the Old Testament teaches salvation by works, while the New Testament teaches salvation by faith. But salvation by faith is actually taught throughout the Scriptures.

Paul points out that this is not some novel doctrine he invented, but indeed, it has been the teaching of the religion of Israel since its beginning with Abraham, who was the father of the nation: “What then shall we say that Abraham, our father according to the flesh, has found?” (Romans 4:1). Why is Abraham such a great man? He is the father of the Jews, the father of the Christians, and the father even claimed as such by the Muslims.

“If Abraham was justified by works [which is antithetical to being justified or pardoned by grace], he has something to boast about” (verse 2). Right! If you or I had gotten into heaven by being good, keeping the commandments, and doing the best we could, we would have something to glory about. I would see you in heaven, and I would say, “John, Phil, Mary, hi! What did you do to get in? And hurry up, because I want to tell you what I did!” (That is a more interesting story.)

It is “not of works, so that no one should boast” (Ephesians 2:9). No one is going to be glorifying themselves in heaven about what they did to get there. They are there by the pure grace of God—undeserved, unmerited, unearned, freely given, and paid for in full by

Jesus Christ upon the cross. We have whereof to glory, but not before God. “Jesus paid it all, all to Him I owe,” as the old hymn goes. It is nothing we have done. If you think that your life will get you into heaven, you are deluded.

We won’t be glorying before God. “What does the Scripture say? ‘Abraham believed God, and it was credited to him as righteousness’” (Romans 4:3). Abraham was saved not because of anything he did. In fact, if you read the Old Testament carefully, you will see that very clearly articulated are two very grievous sins that Abraham committed.

One of the ways that we know the Bible is inspired by God is because all of its heroes are revealed with all of their warts, blotches, and scars. It is all spelled out right there, because our faith doesn’t rest in the goodness of any mere human being but in the perfection of Jesus Christ alone. This amazing text goes on to say: “Now to him who works, wages are not given as a gift, but as a debt. But to him who does not work, but believes in Him who justifies the ungodly, his faith is credited as righteousness” (verses 4–5).

We are justified by faith in Jesus Christ, by the perfect atoning work of Christ, the only individual who ever lived and never sinned. “Which of you convicts Me of sin?” said Jesus (John 8:46)—and no one opened their mouth. No one has ever found any fault in Him. He was the altogether lovely One, the only One in whom we can trust.

Christ should be your only hope. He is the only One who has died for you. Examine the founders of all other religions. See if you can find any of them who died for anyone else. You will not find it in Buddha, Lao Tzu, Confucius, or Muhammad. No. None of them died for others. Some of them commanded their followers to kill a lot of others, but none of them died for anyone, only Christ. Most assuredly, not one of them ever rose from the dead except Jesus Christ. The evidence for His resurrection is overwhelming. That is why He is our hope, our blessed hope, our blessed assurance that we shall live forever with Him.



For the next message on Doctrines, turn to Genesis 49:9–14, page 78.



Abraham's servant went to find a wife for Isaac. He relied on God's guidance to help him do this, and God graciously answered his prayer.

Guidance. Do you need it? It is interesting that there are some people who call themselves Christians who don't seem to think that they do. On the other hand, there are many Christians who are so exercised about it that they are extremely troubled because they don't know how to find God's will and guidance for their lives. Do you fit into one of those categories?

Let me say that every one of us is desperately in need of guidance, even though we may not think so. Oh, you might get through life—everybody does, one way or the other. But that doesn't mean you are going to accomplish anything of any eternal worth in the sight of Christ. For without Him, He told us, we can do nothing. I am thoroughly convinced that there are multitudes of church members whose lives never amount to much because they have never really sought the guidance of God. How about you?

God's Promises

Did you ever think about the fact that we were born to be led? Now that sort of goes cross-grain for many of us because there are many people who would much prefer to think of themselves as leaders than the led. But if we are Christians, we are born to be led because we are sheep—and sheep must be led. We all profess such: "The LORD is my shepherd; I shall not want.... He leads me beside still waters" (Psalm 23:1-2). If the Lord is our shepherd and we are His sheep, then we are to be led.

How do we discover the will of God and the guidance of God for our lives? We most certainly will drive our lives into the ditch if God is not giving us guidance. I think one of the first things any smart Christian will do is say, "Lord, You drive"—and relinquish the steering wheel of his life to the Savior.

Over and over again God promises in His Word to provide guidance:

- "For this God is our God forever and ever; He will be our guide even to death" (Psalm 48:14).

- "You will guide me with Your counsel, and afterward receive me to glory" (Psalm 73:24).
- "He led them on a level road, that they might go to a city to live in" (Psalm 107:7).
- "To him [said Jesus, the Good Shepherd] the doorkeeper opens, and the sheep hear his voice. He calls his own sheep by name, and he leads them out" (John 10:3).
- "But when the Spirit of truth comes, He will guide you into all truth" (John 16:13).

Then comes that categorical description of who is a son of God or a child of God. It is nontechnical, nontheological. Anybody should be able to understand it, but it is very true. Said Paul in Romans 8:14, "For as many as are led by the Spirit of God, these are the sons of God." How wonderful it is that God has provided such guidance. Are you being led by the Spirit of God?

God's Provision

Not only does God promise us His guidance, but He also provides that guidance and has done so from the very beginning:

- He led Enoch on a walk that took him all the way to heaven.
- He led Noah into an ark and through the great deluge.
- He led Abram up from Ur of the Chaldees to Canaan.
- He led Joseph from a dungeon to the throne of Egypt.
- He led Moses through the wilderness all the way to Sinai and back to Egypt to lead His people forth.
- He led David from keeping his father's sheep to sitting upon the throne of Israel.

And He leads His people evermore. He has led them and continues to lead them down through the years.

We need to pray daily for guidance. One of my most frequent prayers is, "Guide me,



I'm afraid that dear Isaac, the son of Abraham and the father of Jacob, is often overlooked, ignored, forgotten, and rarely preached about, and yet we wonder if we need to. To be perfectly candid with you, one day I decided I was going to preach a sermon on Isaac. Poor fellow hardly ever gets preached upon. I looked into it the next day and came back and told my secretary, "Forget what is in the bulletin. I am going to change my sermon. Why, there is nothing to say about Isaac. He's practically a nobody."

But then I went back into my study and started thinking: "If Isaac is such a nobody, why is he in the Bible at all?" Then it dawned on me that we preach a great deal about the heroes of the Bible: about Adam, the founder of the human race; about Abraham, the progenitor of nations; about Jacob, the father of the twelve tribes of Israel; about David, the slayer of giants; about Solomon, the builder of temples; and about Paul, the great apostle to the Gentiles.

But how many of us here are progenitors of nations, founders of empires, conquerors of giants, or any of those things? We are all pretty much common folk. We live rather subdued lives that don't involve a great deal of adventure, excitement, fame, or notoriety. It occurred to

me that Isaac is a person very much like most of us. So maybe you will relax, knowing you don't have to go out and slay a giant, build a temple, or start an empire. The story of Isaac is really about every man—particularly about every man who is the son of a famous father.

Now that includes a fair number of Christians, although the fame may be different. You don't have to be world famous to have a famous father. He may be famous in his business circles or in some other way. A lot of men have trouble with a famous father. A lot of people have gotten into trouble because of famous fathers. They are trying to live up to, equal, or exceed the accomplishments of a famous father. Some people just despair. Some say, "Well, I can never get out of the shadow of my father." We have heard this many times. How many people have been driven to drink or other things because of a famous father?

Isaac certainly had a famous father in Abraham. It is interesting that you almost never read anything about Isaac where he isn't overshadowed by somebody. He is a rather retiring, meditative, thoughtful, passive kind of personality. He is overshadowed by his father, who is about to offer him as a sacrifice. He is overshadowed by his wife. He is overshadowed by his sons. No matter what stage he is on, he is always playing second fiddle to somebody else, and believe me, that is a hard position to play.

In fact, the great Charles Spurgeon put it incomparably, I think, when he said, "It takes more grace than I can tell to play the second fiddle well." And how many second fiddlers have discovered that—whether they are in the orchestra, on the football team, in the business office, or even at home? Isaac was an excellent player of the second fiddle. That is all he ever got to do, but he did it well. He was the least conspicuous and the least traveled; he had the fewest adventures and the least extraordinary life. But he outlived all of them. He had a rather peaceful life, all in all—a man of quietness, gentleness, and long-suffering. Isaac was a man who would rather give in than fight. But he is always given equal honor with Abraham and Jacob, the great heroes, the patriarchs of the



In this passage Jacob has his family destroy all the household idols. From now on, they will worship the Lord alone and no graven images. The second commandment prohibits graven images. It is, in essence, a command for intolerance. This is a strange-sounding command in our time, when tolerance has been elevated to a virtue.

Ancient Idols

One thing the Old Testament made very plain is that it has no use for any such thoughts as these. God is not tolerant of other gods or other religions, and He has not told us that we are to worship Him according to the dictates of our own hearts. We are to worship Him according to the dictates of His own will as they are revealed in His Word. What God wants us to do is what He has told us to do—only that and nothing else.

We live in a time when we are supposed to be tolerant of every sort of false religion. The Hebrew prophets were not tolerant. They condemned false religions as spiritual whoredom. If we are going to develop a lasting

civilization, it must be on the basis of belief in the true God and His will for us. I don't mean an intolerance that will lead to an inquisition. I mean an intolerance that refuses to accept error as truth—an intolerance that is willing to stand up and proclaim the truth, even in the midst of opposition. This must be done in love, and also with character and with strength.

This commandment was the first of the Ten Commandments to be broken. It is the commandment most frequently repeated in Scripture. God says in this commandment that those who break it hate Him and that the consequences and punishment of their transgression will be passed down to their children and their children's children to the third and fourth generation.

The commandment didn't end with the New Testament. Go all the way to the end of the first century to the oldest of the apostles. All of the other apostles had gone to be with Christ in paradise, and there was left only that one solitary figure—that ancient one who had laid his head upon the breast of