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Title of extract: **Paradise Lost**

Name of Author: **Alexander, T.D**

Title/Author of book/edition (if applicable): **From Paradise to the Promised Land.**

Alexander, T.D.

Name of Visual Creator or other acknowledgement (if applicable):

Journal details –title/Vol/Year (if applicable):

Publisher: **Paternoster Press**

Pages scanned: **19 - 32**

Course of Study (Module name and number): **The Book of Genesis TRDL7089**

Name of Designated Person authorising scanning: E-L-Hamo

Date authorised: 18 .07.12

Moodle/~~Powerpoint~~

[3]

Paradise Lost

SUMMARY

The motif of 'land' is important in Genesis due to the special relationship which God establishes between the first man and the ground; a relationship reflected in their respective names *'ādām* and *'ădāmâ*. At harmony with God, each is dependent upon the other. However, when the first human couple disobeyed the LORD God and ate of the forbidden fruit, two important consequences followed. First, their relationship with the ground was severely affected; no longer did the earth give willingly of its bounty to satisfy their needs. Secondly, they were expelled from Eden and so deprived of a unique environment in which to commune with God. With every subsequent unrighteous act humankind was further alienated from the earth. The accounts of Cain killing Abel, Noah and the flood, and the tower of Babel all reveal the increasing tension which existed between humanity and the earth. In each episode divine judgement comes in the form of exile and alienation from the earth. Against this background the divine gift of land to Abraham is significant. It is indicative of Abraham's positive relationship with the LORD and anticipates the divine presence in the midst of the nation of Israel.

INTRODUCTION

A careful reading of Genesis reveals that the concept of land figures prominently in the thinking of the author. From the initial creation of the dry land through to Joseph's desire that his bones be buried in the land promised by God to Abraham, Isaac and Jacob, there is hardly an episode in the entire book which does not in one way or another mention land. While not all references to land are to be viewed as equally important, it is

clear that the relationship between human beings and the earth is of major interest to the author.

Before looking at the theme of land in Genesis it may be helpful to observe briefly that in the Hebrew text three different terms are used for 'land'. By far the most common is the word *'ereṣ* (*'erets*) which comes 312 times in Genesis. Usually *'ereṣ* (*'erets*) denotes either the earth as a whole (e.g. 1:1,10,26) or a particular country (e.g. 12:1,5). The term *'ădāmâ* occurs 43 times and normally means 'ground' or 'soil' (e.g. 2:5,7,19). The third term is *śādēh*, which comes approximately 50 times in Genesis and usually refers to wide open spaces; it is often translated 'field' (e.g. 2:19,20). Although it is possible to view each term as having distinctive aspects, they may on occasions be used to denote the same thing.[1]

THE CREATION OF THE EARTH

The opening chapter of Genesis establishes the nature of the earth's relationship to both God and humanity. Of fundamental importance is the belief that the earth is created by God; by merely speaking he brings order to that which is 'formless and empty' (1:2). With the creation of the dry land, God establishes three distinct realms: 'sky', 'land' and 'seas' (1:6–10). Of these the most important is the land. Unlike the sky and the seas, the land plays an active role in God's creative activity. It is divinely commanded to produce both vegetation (1:11–12) and living creatures (1:24). Having created the earth, God delegates authority to human beings to govern it and its creatures (cf. 1:28).

Complementing Genesis 1, the account in 2:4–25 develops more fully the close relationship which exists between the man and the ground. Two factors highlight this close relationship. First, the man is actually made from the ground: 'the LORD God formed the man from the dust of the ground and breathed into his nostrils the breath of life, and the man became a living being' (2:7). Second, in the Hebrew original the terms for 'man' and 'ground' are very similar; they are respectively *'ādām* and *'ădāmâ*. This unique relationship between the first man and the ground is further emphasised when the LORD God places him in the Garden of Eden with responsibility 'to work it and take care of it' (2:15). Here the man is portrayed as a tenant placed in charge of his master's garden, and, with one exception, permitted to enjoy freely all of its produce (2:16–17). Thus, Genesis 1–2 highlights the special relationship which exists between God, humanity and the land/ground. Human beings are charged by God to exercise authority over the earth, and

the earth is divinely empowered to produce food in abundance for humankind. Dependent upon each other humanity and the earth are both accountable to God.

THE GARDEN OF EDEN AS SANCTUARY

In Genesis 2–3 the Garden of Eden functions as the meeting place between the LORD God and the first human couple. Interesting parallels exist between Eden and the later sanctuaries, in particular the tabernacle and Jerusalem temple.[2] (1) The LORD God walks in Eden as he later does in the tabernacle (3:8; cf. Lev 26:12; Deut 23:15; 2 Sam 7:6–7). (2) Eden and the later sanctuaries are entered from the east and guarded by cherubim (3:24; Exod 25:18–22; 26:31; 1 Kgs 6:23–29). (3) The tabernacle menorah (or lampstand) possibly symbolises the tree of life (2:9; 3:22; cf. Exod 25:31–35). (4) The pair of Hebrew verbs in God's command to the man 'to work it (the garden) and take care of it'(2:15) are only used in combination elsewhere in the Pentateuch of the duties of the Levities in the sanctuary (cf. Num 3:7–8; 8:26; 18:5–6).[3] (5) The river flowing from Eden (2:10) is reminiscent of Ezek 47:1–12 which envisages a river flowing from a future Jerusalem temple and bringing life to the Dead Sea. Finally, gold and onyx which are mentioned in 2:11–12 are used extensively to decorate the later sanctuaries and priestly garments (e.g. Exod 25:7,11,17,31).[4] Gold in particular is associated with the divine presence.

Since Eden is a paradise where divinity and humanity enjoy each other's presence, it is hardly surprising that it becomes a prototype for later sanctuaries. Although human beings enjoy close fellowship with God within the tabernacle and Jerusalem temple, direct access into God's immediate presence is limited to once a year and then only for the high priest.[5] However, within Eden the first man and woman have the unique privilege of being able to relate to God face to face without fear or shame. Against this background the account of their disobedience is all the more tragic.

EXPELLED FROM EDEN

The harmony of Eden ends when the man and the woman knowingly disobey God and eat from the tree of the knowledge of good and evil (3:1–13; cf. 2:16–17). Two consequences are significant regarding the subject of land. First, God curses the ground because of Adam's disobedience (3:17–19). No longer is the ground divinely empowered to produce food in abundance. Man must work by the sweat of his brow in order to eat.

Furthermore, his task is made more difficult because the ground 'will produce thorns and thistles' (3:18). No longer is the man at harmony with the ground from which he was taken and upon which he depends for food.

Second, the man and the woman are banished from the Garden of Eden (3:23). Like a landlord expelling an unsatisfactory tenant, God ousts them from Eden. The reason for their expulsion is recorded by the narrator: 'He must not be allowed to reach out his hand and take also from the tree of life and eat, and live for ever' (3:22). Separated from the tree of life, each human will experience death, the divine punishment for eating from the tree of the knowledge of good and evil (2:17). To ensure that human beings may not return to Eden, God places 'cherubim and a flaming sword flashing back and forth to guard the way to the tree of life' (3:24). Expelled from Eden, Adam and Eve will no longer enjoy the intimacy of God's presence. While this does not mark the end of God's relationship with humanity, it does indicate a dramatic change. The special relationship which was established at creation will exist only with those to whom God now makes himself known. No longer will humanity automatically have a personal knowledge of God. Thus, as a result of human disobedience the initial harmony of creation between God, humanity and the land is replaced by alienation.

CAIN — A RESTLESS WANDERER ON THE EARTH

The relationship between human beings and the ground is important in the story of Cain killing his brother Abel. Initially, Cain is described as one who 'worked the soil (ground)' (4:2). When, out of jealousy, he kills his brother, the LORD God confronts him regarding his crime. The relationship between Cain's action and the ground is highlighted in God's speech:

> What have you done? Listen! Your brother's blood cries out to me from the ground. Now you are under a curse and driven from the ground, which opened its mouth to receive you brother's blood from your hand. When you work the ground, it will no longer yield its crop for you. You will be a restless wanderer on the earth (4:10–12).

Whereas Adam's punishment resulted in the ground being difficult to toil, Cain is actually 'driven from the ground' and forced to become a restless wanderer. He must also go out from the LORD's presence (4:14,16). Alienated from both God and the ground, Cain's punishment resembles that of his parents.

Two points are worth underlining from the story of Cain killing Abel. First, the narrative highlights the continuing relationship between humanity and the ground. Cain's actions have a direct bearing upon the ground; it is stained by Abel's blood. Second, each unrighteous action increases humanity's alienation from the ground. The ground, which was to nourish humankind, is now the agent of divine punishment. The natural environment no longer automatically favours humanity as God intended; it is now hostile and the extent of this hostility is in direct proportion to the unrighteousness of human beings.

THE FLOOD NARRATIVE

The subject of land is prominent in the account of Noah's rescue from the flood. It first appears in the naming of Noah by his father Lamech.

> When Lamech had lived 182 years, he had a son. He named him Noah and said, 'He will comfort us in the labour and painful toil of our hands caused by the ground the LORD has cursed' (5:28–29).[6]

Here Noah is presented as the one who will bring relief to those already heavily burdened by the task of working the ground. Behind this comment is the hope that the ever worsening relationship between humanity and the ground will be reversed by Noah.

God's decision to send a flood which will destroy all living creatures is clearly linked to the wickedness of humankind (cf. 6:5).

> Now the earth was corrupt in God's sight and was full of violence. God saw how corrupt the earth had become, for all the people on earth had corrupted their ways. So God said to Noah, 'I am going to put an end to all people, for the earth is filled with violence because of them. I am surely going to destroy both them and the earth' (6:11–13).

Once again we see how the continual violence of humanity has a direct bearing upon the earth. Through the shedding of innocent blood the ground is polluted, reducing its fertility. Consequently, the task of tilling the ground had become almost unbearable by the time of Noah.

The flood narrative in 6:9–9:19 exhibits close parallels with Genesis 1. The description of the flood waters gradually covering the entire earth, including the highest mountains, portrays a return to the earth's original state prior to the separation of the land and seas (cf. 1:9–10). With the retreat of the flood waters and Noah's departure from the ark, we have the re-creation of the earth.[7] Consequently, those who emerge from the ark now inhabit ground which has been cleansed from the pollution caused by unrighteous behaviour. Yet, although

the earth has been recreated, the same is not true of human nature, for, as God comments, 'every inclination of his (man's) heart is evil from childhood' (8:21). Nevertheless, God promises that he will never again 'curse the ground because of man' (8:21) by sending another flood.[8] This is subsequently confirmed in the covenant outlined in 9:8–17.

Prior to the flood the shedding of innocent blood polluted the ground, decreasing significantly its fertility. In 9:1–7 God issues certain instructions which are intended to prevent the earth from being contaminated in the future. These focus on the 'lifeblood' of both animal and humans which must be treated with due respect.

NOAH, A MAN OF THE SOIL

The episode following the account of the flood begins by describing Noah as a 'man of the soil (ground)' (9:20) and focuses briefly on his ability to cultivate a vineyard which produces an abundant crop. This part of the story is clearly intended to highlight the dramatic change which has occurred as a result of the flood. Whereas the ground's fertility was severely limited before the flood, now it produces abundantly. In this we see the fulfilment of Lamech's comments regarding Noah in 5:29.

THE TABLE OF NATIONS

The Table of Nations in chapter 10 outlines where the descendants of Noah gradually settle.[9] Of particular note are the details concerning Canaan and his sons; 10:15–18 provides a detailed list of the various people descended from Canaan, and 10:19 describes the borders of Canaan. These details are significant in the light of later developments in Genesis, when Abraham is promised by God possession of the land of Canaan (cf. 15:18–21).

THE TOWER OF BABEL

The incident involving the tower of Babel centres on humanity's desire to dwell together in one place and through co-operation to make a name for themselves (11:4). However, God views with displeasure their activities, especially their desire to build a city with a tower that reaches to the heavens. Consequently, he prevents them from continuing their building by 'confusing their language' and 'scattering them over the face of the whole earth' (11:9). Humanity is thus exiled by the LORD and hindered from establishing a community which might challenge his authority over the earth.

THE ABRAHAM NARRATIVE

As we have previously noted, the Abraham narrative marks an important turning point in the book of Genesis. This is certainly true as regards the subject of land. Whereas the early chapters of Genesis are dominated by accounts of human disobedience resulting in exile, one of the main themes of the story of Abraham is God's gift of land to Abraham and his descendants.

Several factors are significant regarding God's promise of the land of Canaan to Abraham. First, it is conditional upon Abraham's obedience to God. At the very outset Abraham must obey the LORD's call to leave his own land and go to a new land (12:1). Implicit in this divine command, and in the associated promise that God will make Abraham 'into a great nation' (12:2), is the idea that God will give Abraham a new land. The identity of this land is soon revealed as Canaan (12:5–7), and, in spite of the fact that it is already occupied by the Canaanites (12:6), the LORD confirms that Abraham's descendants will possess it. Later, in the account of the separation of Abraham and Lot, the promise of land is stated in more detail (cf. 13:14–17). These initial promises, however, are given added weight by the covenant which God makes with Abraham in 15:7–21.[10] This covenant is linked to Abraham being credited as righteous on account of his faith. Thus whereas the early chapters of Genesis focus on the loss of land as a result of disobedience, Abraham is portrayed as gaining the land due to obedience and trust in God.

Second, God informs Abraham that his descendants will only occupy the land of Canaan after a period of over four hundred years (15:13–14). The announcement of this delay has important implications for the rest the Pentateuch. Although Genesis records that Abraham and Isaac live within the borders of Canaan, the concluding chapters describe how Jacob and his family leave Canaan to dwell in Egypt. The remaining books of the Pentateuch focus on the future exodus of the Israelites from Egypt and various developments which occur prior to their taking possession of the promised land.

Third, although Abraham is divinely promised the land of Canaan, the land is already occupied by various peoples. This naturally raises the question, how can God give to Abraham land that is already owned by others? The author of Genesis, however, answers this question indirectly by indicating that the inhabitants of Canaan are unworthy occupants of the land. We first encounter this idea prior to the Abraham narrative itself in 9:20–29. Here attention is drawn to the unrighteous

behaviour of Ham and the resulting curse upon his son Canaan. Implicit in this is the idea that the descendants of Canaan will behave like their forefather Ham. The identify of these descendants is provided in 10:15–18, along with details of the land occupied by them (10:19).

> Canaan was the father of Sidon his firstborn, and of the Hittites, Jebusites, Amorites, Girgashites, Hivites, Arkites, Sinites, Arvadites, Zemarites and Hamathites. Later the Canaanite clans scattered and the borders of Canaan reached from Sidon towards Gerar as far as Gaza, and then towards Sodom, Gomorrah, Admah, and Zeboiim, as far as Lasha (10:15–19).

Within the Abraham story itself various passages draw attention to the unrighteous nature of the descendants of Ham. In 13:13 the narrator comments, 'Now the men of Sodom were wicked and were sinning greatly against the LORD.' This negative view of the Canaanite inhabitants of Sodom is reflected in Abraham's attitude towards the king of Sodom (14:21–24), especially when compared with his reaction to Melchizedek king of Salem (14:18–20). In the light of these passages the later account of the destruction of Sodom and Gomorrah in ch. 19 is hardly surprising; indeed it is anticipated in 13:10. God's comment in 18:20–21 about the sin of Sodom and Gomorrah is confirmed by the events surrounding the visit of the two angels in ch. 19. Significantly, the sexual nature of the sin of the men of Sodom is reminiscent of the unrighteous action of their ancestor Ham. Another reference to the sin of Ham's descendants comes in 15:16. Here God indicates that Abraham's descendants will return to the land of Canaan in the fourth generation, 'for the sin of the Amorites has not yet reached its full measure'. Since the early chapters of Genesis have established the idea that unrighteous behaviour results in exile from the land, there can be little doubt that the present inhabitants of Canaan will be dispossessed due to their sin. The later conquest of the land by the Israelites is thus understood as an act of divine judgement upon those already living there.

Fourth, although Abraham is divinely promised that his descendants will take possession of the land of Canaan only several centuries later, by allowing Abraham to buy the cave of Machpelah in Ephron's field the Hittites of Hebron acknowledged Abraham's right to be an inhabitant of Canaan (Gen 23:1–20). Moreover, because the land was bought for the purpose of being a burial place this guaranteed Abraham's descendants a permanent right of ownership. Thus, although the divine promise of the land would only be fulfilled in the future, Abraham witnessed the beginning of the process.

THE JACOB STORY

The story of Jacob revolves around his temporary exile in the region of Paddan Aram caused by the deception of his father and the taking of his brother's blessing. Significantly, in spite of his deceitful behaviour Jacob receives various assurances regarding the land of Canaan. The first comes from his father in 28:4. Although Isaac encourages Jacob to leave Canaan in order to find a wife, he prays that God Almighty will bless him:

> May he give you and your descendants the blessing given to Abraham, so that you may take possession of the land where you now live as an alien, the land God gave to Abraham (28:4).

Next, just as Jacob is about to depart from Canaan God reassures him regarding the land through a dream at Bethel.

> I am the LORD, the God of your father Abraham and the God of Isaac. I will give you and your descendants the land on which you are lying. Your descendants will be like the dust of the earth, and you will spread out to the west and to the east, to the north and to the south. All peoples on earth will be blessed through you and your offspring. I am with you and will watch over you wherever you go, and I will bring you back to this land. I will not leave you until I have done what I have promised you (28:13–15).

Thus, although Jacob must flee from Canaan on account of Esau, the narrative anticipates his future return. Much later the divine promise of land is again repeated to Jacob (35:11–12).

The turning point in Jacob's exile in Paddan Aram comes when the LORD says to him, 'Go back to the land of your fathers and to your relatives, and I will be with you' (31:3). With this assurance Jacob prepares to return to Canaan. Significantly, whereas he had arrived in Paddan Aram alone he leaves with a large family and numerous possessions. In spite of all that the LORD has done for him in Paddan Aram Jacob is still very conscious of the reason for his exile there. Consequently, on returning to the borders of Canaan he makes preparations for his encounter with Esau (32:1–21). Interestingly, just as Jacob experienced the LORD's presence when he left Canaan (28:10–22), so once again he has a dramatic meeting with the LORD as he is about to re-enter the land (32:22–32). By locating these theophanies on the border of Canaan, the narrative draws attention to the importance of the land.

The reconciliation between Jacob and Esau not only brings to an end the conflict which had separated them for years (33:1–16) but also results in Jacob settling in the land of Canaan (33:17–20). Esau, however, eventually settles outside Canaan in the land of Seir (33:16; 36:6–8). Remarkably, this parting of the

brothers echoes the earlier separation of Abraham and Lot; Jacob and Esau agree to dwell in different regions because the land is not able to support all of their livestock (36:7–8; cf. 13:5–18). As a result only Jacob is left dwelling in the land of Canaan.

THE JOSEPH STORY

The final quarter of Genesis revolves around the character of Joseph and tells of his role in bringing the descendants of Abraham out of Canaan and into Egypt. Given God's comments to Abraham that 'your descendants will be strangers in a country not their own, and they will be enslaved and ill-treated four hundred years' (15:13), the Joseph story provides an essential link between the Abraham and Jacob narratives and the later account of the exodus from Egypt. The overall plot of the Pentateuch requires a transition from Canaan to Egypt.

Several features of the Joseph story invite further comments as regards the topic of land. First, it is interesting to observe that it is a famine in Canaan that brings the brothers of Joseph back into contact with him in Egypt. Throughout Genesis famines are associated with God's curse upon the earth; they reflect the absence of divine blessing and highlight the lack of harmony which ought to exist between human beings and the ground. Significantly, but for the preparations made by Joseph, the effects of this famine would have been much more terrible.

Second, given Jacob's own experience of having been exiled from Canaan in Paddan Aram it is not surprising that he is somewhat reluctant to leave Canaan again. He goes only when the LORD intervenes and commands him to do so:

> Do not be afraid to go down to Egypt, for I will make you into a great nation there. I will go down to Egypt with you, and I will surely bring you back again. And Joseph's own hand will close your eyes (46:3–4).

Jacob's reluctance to go to Egypt should be viewed against other episodes in Genesis. Earlier during a famine in Canaan Abraham had gone down to Egypt (12:10–20). However, his experience there had placed in jeopardy the fulfilment of the divine promises. Later, when another famine occurred in the land of Canaan, Isaac was specifically commanded by God not to go down into Egypt (26:1–2). In the light of these events Jacob may have felt strongly inclined to remain in Canaan.

Third, although the movement in the Joseph story is from Canaan to Egypt, there are various indications that this was not to be a permanent move. This is reflected, for example, in

God's words to Jacob: 'I will surely bring you back again' (46:4). The Israelite's attachment to Canaan is also reflected in the events surrounding the death of Jacob. After his death, Jacob's embalmed body is transported back to Canaan to be buried in the cave at Machpelah alongside the bodies of Abraham and Isaac (49:29–50:14). Later, Joseph makes a similar request that his bones should be carried up from Egypt to Canaan (50:24–25). Significantly, Joseph does not expect this to happen immediately after his death, as with his father, but thinks in terms of this being done when God comes to the aid of the Israelites (cf. Exod 13:19). Thus, although Genesis ends with the account of Joseph's death, there is an expectation of things yet to come; the Israelites shall one day return to the promised land.

CONCLUSION

Genesis emphasises throughout the close relationship which human beings have with the ground. The basis for this interdependence is explained in the account of creation where the first man, Adam (*'ādām*), is created from the dust of the ground (*'ădāmâ*). Unfortunately, although God initially blesses the relationship between humanity and the earth, the disobedience of Adam and Eve in the Garden of Eden leads to a dramatic reversal of this situation. Moreover, Adam and Eve are exiled from Eden ending the intimate relationship which they enjoyed there with the LORD. Later, through the promises given to Abraham, the restoration of divine blessing becomes a possibility. This, however, will only be fully achieved when all the families of the ground are blessed. In the meantime Abraham is assured that, as part of the process by which the nations shall be blessed, his descendants will possess the land of Canaan. For them Canaan will resemble in part the Garden of Eden; there the people will enjoy a special communion with God surrounded by all the signs of God's blessing upon the land.

NEW TESTAMENT CONNECTIONS

The NT develops the concept of land in ways that are both similar and dissimilar to those found in Genesis. In order to appreciate the reason for this it is important to note that in Genesis the theme of land comes in two different contexts. Firstly, it is used in the context of humanity as a whole. All human beings must daily confront the reality that nature is under God's curse due to humanity's disobedience of him from

Adam and Eve onwards. The New Testament makes clear that nature, like all believers, awaits redemption from the bondage of decay (Rom 8:19–25). For Paul, the reconciliation of all things to God is achieved by Jesus Christ 'through his blood, shed on the cross' (Col 1:20; cf. 2 Cor 5:17–21; Eph 1:7–10). Significantly, Paul views Christ not only as the one responsible for the restoration of harmony within the cosmos, but as the creator of all things in the first instance (Col 1:15–17; cf. 1 Cor 8:6).

The climax of the re-creation process is the appearance of a new heaven and a new earth where God and human beings live together in harmony (Rev 21:1). Although this is portrayed in Rev 21:1–22:5 in terms of 'the Holy City, the new Jerusalem, coming down out of heaven from God' (Rev 21:2), it is also viewed as a return to Eden. Various factors suggest this, the most significant being the reference to the 'tree of life' (Rev 22:2; cf. Gen 2:9; 3:22,24) and the comment that 'no longer will there be any curse' (Rev 22:3).

For the author of Hebrews the goal of God's redemptive activity for humanity is expressed in terms of rest (Heb 4:1–11). Two related ideas are developed. First, this rest resembles that which God enjoyed following the creation of the heavens and the earth (Gen 2:2–3) and which humanity lost as a result of the disruption of creation following the disobedience of Adam and Eve. Second, the ancient Israelites due to their disobedience failed to obtain such rest when they took possession of the land of Canaan. However, the opportunity to enter into God's rest still exists for those who believe the gospel.

The second context in which land is used in an important way in Genesis has to do with the establishment of Abraham's descendants as a nation in the land of Canaan. Significantly, with the introduction of a new covenant embracing all nations it is hardly surprising that the NT plays down the importance of Israel as a nation. Israel's role in God's purposes has now dramatically changed and, as a consequence, it is no longer important that Israel should possess the land of Canaan. Whereas the Sinai Covenant centred on one nation, the New Covenant is international in its scope. Thus, although the promise of land to Abraham in Genesis is generally stated in terms of the land of Canaan (Gen 12:7; 13:14–17; 15:18–21; 17:8), there are indications that for the nations to be blessed, Abraham's 'seed' would exercise authority over the entire earth (49:10; cf. 22:17; Ps 2:8; Micah 5:2–5). In the light of this movement from one nation, Israel, to all nations, it is hardly surprising that there is a similar shift from thinking in terms of one land to the whole world. This, for example, is reflected in Paul's treatment of the fifth commandment, to honour your father and mother, in Eph 6:2–3. Whereas in the original context of Exod 19:12 and Deut 5:16 the commandment includes the promise of long life as regards possession of the land of Canaan, in Ephesians Paul expands this to include the whole earth.

NOTES

1. An interesting example of this comes in the Abraham narrative. The expression 'all peoples on earth' (lit. 'families of the ground') in Gen 12:3 is later replaced by the expression 'all nations on earth' (18:18; 22:18). No essential difference in meaning is meant. However, in 12:3 the emphasis is upon the oneness of all human beings in that they have a common origin, the dust of the ground. The expression in 18:18 and 22:18 highlights the idea that the earth consists of different nations. The switch from the former expression to the latter may be due to the fact that the fulfilment of the divine promise that the nations will be blessed is linked to the creation of Israel as a nation.
2. These parallels are set out by G.J. Wenham in his article, 'Sanctuary Symbolism in the Garden of Eden Story', *Proceedings of the World Congress of Jewish Studies* 9 (1986) 19–25.
3. *'ābad* (*'āvad*) 'to serve', 'to till'; *šāmar* (*shāmar*) 'to keep', 'to observe'.
4. There are about one hundred references to gold and seven to onyx in the Exodus account of the building of the tabernacle.
5. See chapter 9.
6. Although the name Noah is probably linked etymologically to the Hebrew verb *nûaḥ* (*nûakh*) meaning 'to rest', it also sounds like the Hebrew verb *niḥām* (*nikham*) 'to comfort'.
7. According to G.V. Smith, the flood narrative echoes the initial account of creation in the following ways:

> When Genesis 1 and 2 are compared with 8 and 9, one begins to perceive the extent to which the author uses repeated phrases and ideas to build the structural relationships within the units. The following relationships are found: (a) Since man could not live on the earth when it was covered with water in chaps. 1 and 8, a subsiding of the water and separation of the land from the water took place, allowing the dry land to appear (1:9–10; 8:1–13); (b) 'birds and animals and every creeping thing that creeps on the earth' are brought forth to 'swarm upon the earth' in 1:20–21,24–25 and 8:17–19; (c) God establishes the days and seasons in 1:14–18 and 8:22; (d) God's blessing rests upon the animals as he commands them to 'be fruitful and multiply on the earth' in both 1:22 and 8:17; (e) man is brought forth and he receives the blessing of God: 'Be fruitful and multiply and fill the earth' in 1:28 and 9:1,7; (f) Man is given dominion over the animal kingdom in 1:28 and 9:2; (g) God provides food for man in 1:29–30 and 9:3 (this latter regulation makes a direct reference back to the previous passage when it includes the statement, 'As I have

given the green plant'); and (h) in 9:6 the writer quotes from 1:26–27 concerning the image of God in man. The author repeatedly emphasises the fact that the world is beginning again with a fresh start. But Noah does not return to the paradise of Adam, for the significant difference is that 'the intent of man's heart is evil' (Gen 8:21) ('Structure and Purpose in Genesis 1–11,' *JETS* 20 [1977] 310–311).

8. As we shall note in chapter 4, this refers to the flood.

9. Because it indicates that the descendants of Noah were divided into different clan and nations, each with it own language, the material in chapter 10 ought to come after the account of the tower of Babel (11:1–9); 10:25 probably alludes to the creation of different nations, speaking different languages. The writer of Genesis may have felt it inappropriate to place the Table of Nations between 11:1–9 and 11:10–26, since this would bring into immediate proximity two quite different types of genealogy, both concerning the descendants of Shem.

10. Although further references to the land occur in the Abraham narrative (e.g. 17:8; 22:17), the covenant in chapter 15 marks a climax.