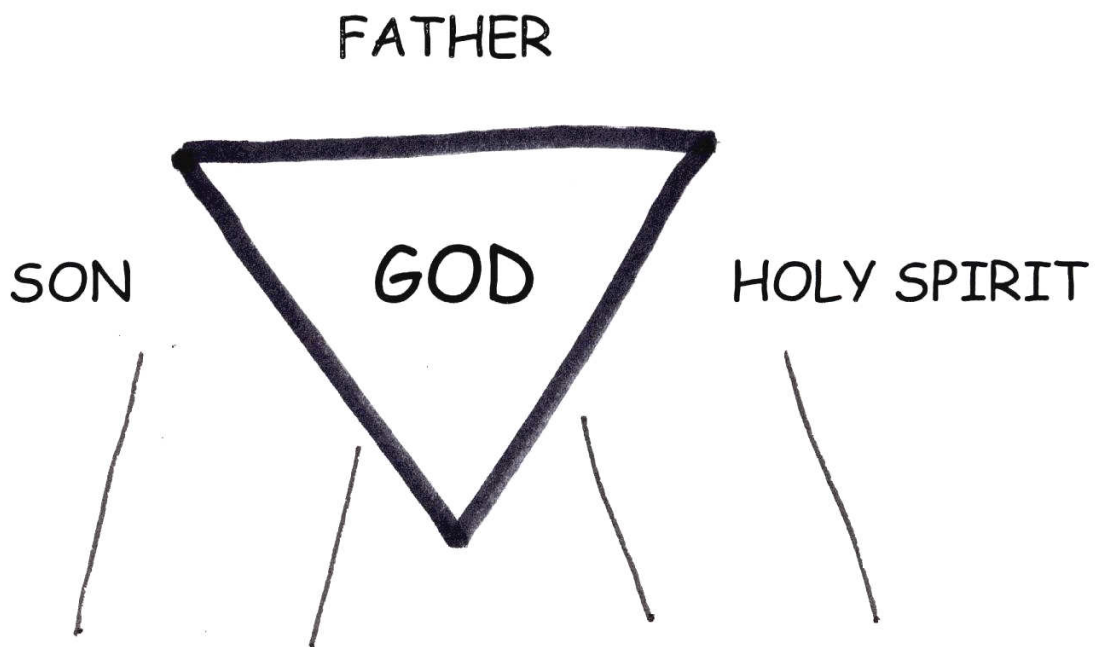


Environment Doesn't Matter, God Matters!

Part 1

The Dispensation of the Gentiles

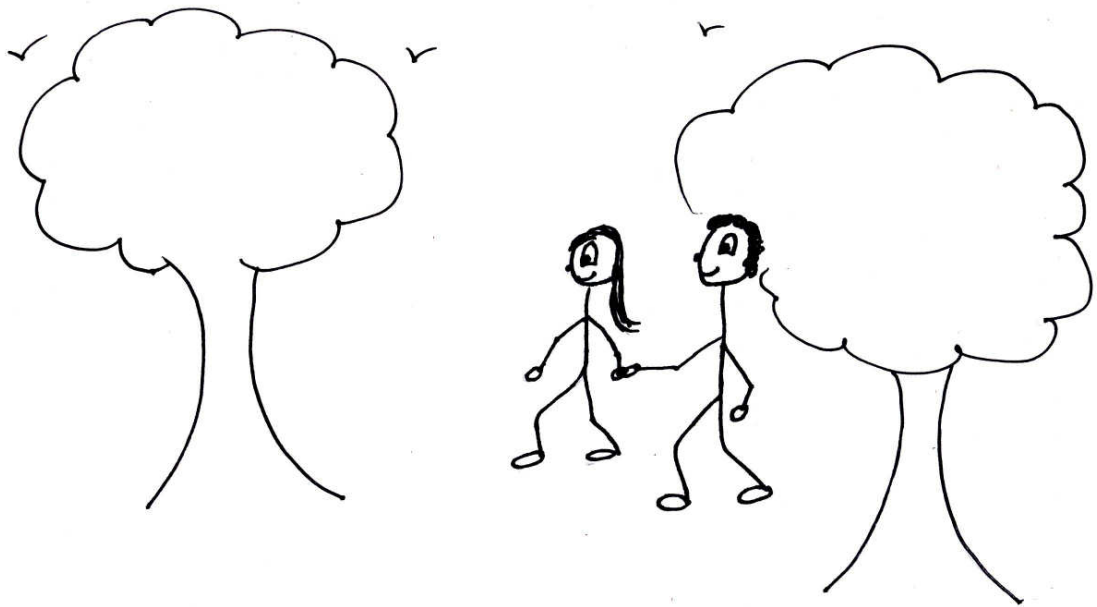
John 5:15 Apart from Me you can do nothing.



God is so cool the way He set up different periods of time to guide mankind. We call these periods of time, dispensations. We're going to take a look at the first dispensation, the **Dispensation of the Gentiles**. It breaks down into three periods:

- The Period of Positive Volition (Adam to the fall)
- The Period of Negative Volition (the fall to Abraham)
- The Period of the Patriarchs (Abraham to the Jews as slaves in Egypt)

In the **Dispensation of the Gentiles**, God created Adam and Ishah, (woman). They were created as perfect beings. They didn't have old sin natures! They each had a body, a soul, and a human spirit. They were placed in perfect environment, the Garden of Eden. They were both geniuses! They received direct teaching of Bible doctrine from God. They had perfect environment and positive thinking. This was called the **Period of Positive Volition**.



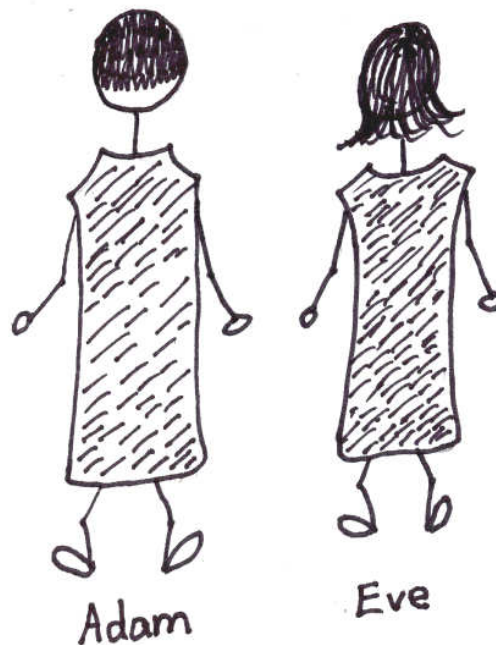
Adam and Ishah walking in the Garden

Genesis 1:27 God created man in His own image, in the image of God He created him; male and female He created them.

However, even in perfect environment mankind had problems. In the **Period of Positive Volition**, Adam and Ishah had two divine institutions* to use: volition, or free will, and marriage. They soon discovered neither perfect environment nor marriage is a source of happiness. Neither is the means to solve our desires and needs. Neither perfect environment nor marriage was designed by God to solve man's problems. Perfect environment, perfect beings, and perfect marriage were all tested in the Garden of Eden. The perfect beings used their volition and chose to be independent from God. The perfect beings and perfect marriage failed!

Environment doesn't matter; God matters!

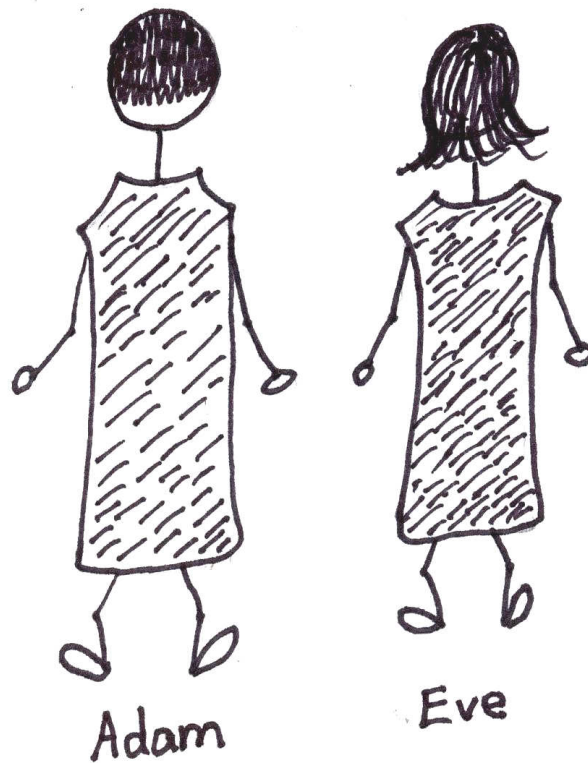
*Divine institutions are created by God for the survival and freedom of mankind. There are four divine institutions: volition, marriage, family, and nationalism.



Ecclesiastes 3:11 God has made everything meaningful for mankind in its time. He has also set the desire for eternity in their heart [right lobe, brain].

Adam and Ishah were given one rule: "but from the tree of the knowledge of good and evil you shall not eat, for in the day that you eat from it you will surely die." Genesis 2:17 Well, you know the story; they ate of the tree. Even though they had perfect environment and no old sin natures, they failed. They used their volitions to disobey God. This brought in the **Period of Negative Volition**, still a part of the **Dispensation of the Gentiles**. It went from the time of the fall of Adam and the woman, now called Eve, to Abraham.

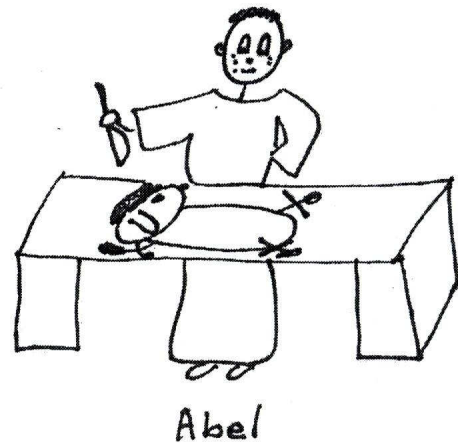
Environment doesn't matter; God matters!



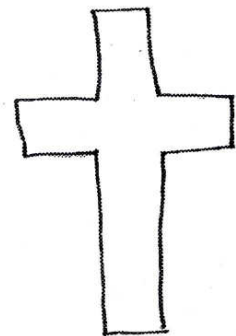
We'll look at one event in the **Period of Negative Volition**. It was something that happened between Cain and Abel, two sons of Adam and Eve. One day they were offering sacrifices to God; Cain offered some food that he had grown and Abel offered an animal. God only accepted animal sacrifices. The animal sacrifices taught about Jesus Christ going to be sacrificed for all mankind and doing all the work for salvation. The food sacrifice pointed to Cain and his works trying to please God. Cain's sacrifice was not accepted by God. Only the sacrifice that represented the work of Jesus Christ on the cross was accepted by God. Cain became angry. He was very jealous of Abel. This jealousy led him to murder Abel!



Cain

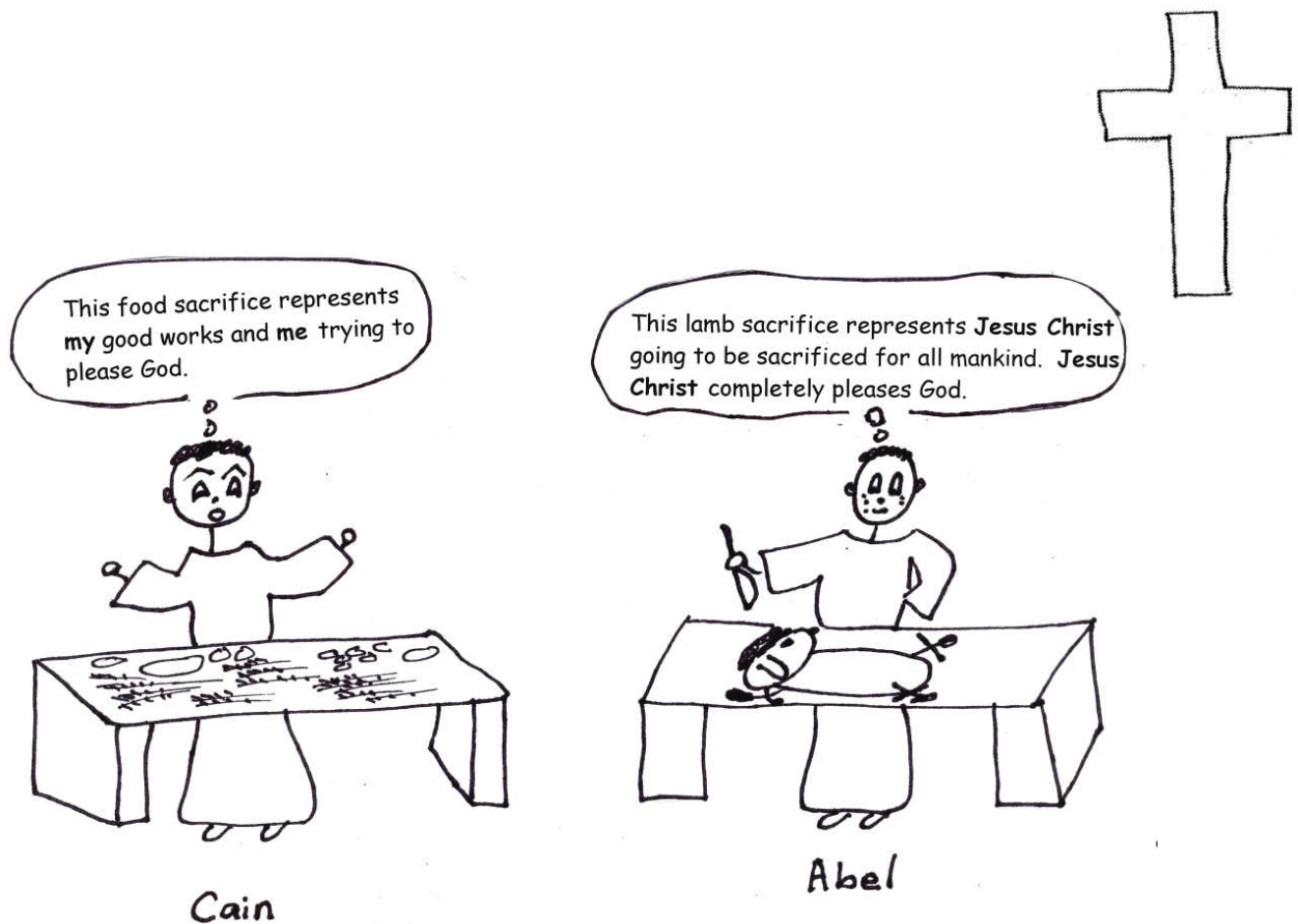


Abel



Genesis 4:3-5 So it came about in the course of time that Cain brought an offering to the Lord of the fruit of the ground [man's works]. Abel, on his part also brought of the firstlings of his flock and of their fat portions. And the Lord had regard for Abel and for his offering; but for Cain and for his offering He had no regard. So Cain became very angry and his countenance [the expression of his face] fell.

Cain was the type of person who thinks he can do human good to please God. No way!! He is an example of the self-righteous, jealous, petty type of person who thinks more highly of himself than he should think! He let the cosmic system, Satan's way of thinking, drag him down. Cain turned out to be a murderer and loser in life. He turned away from God's thinking. Abel turned out to be a winner and a visible hero! He followed God's thinking! **Environment didn't matter to Abel; God mattered!**

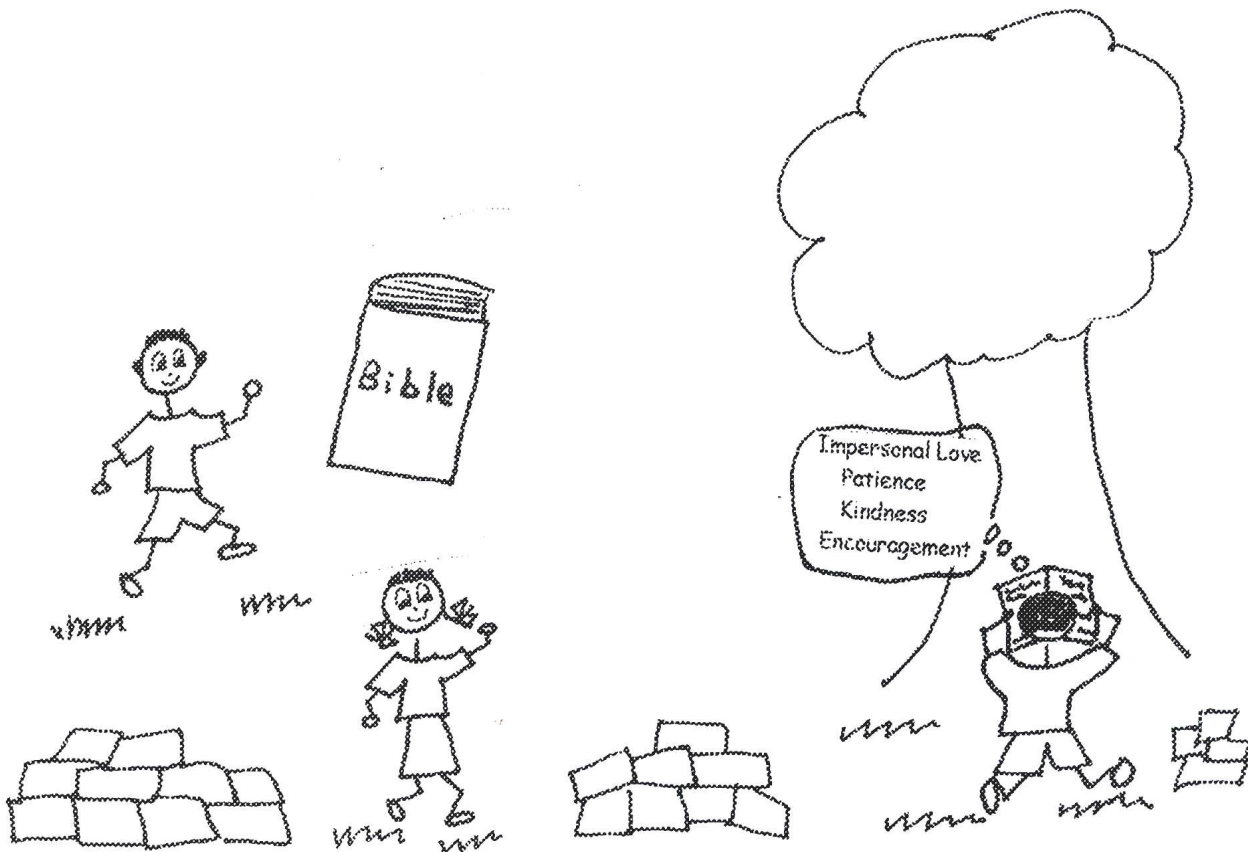


Luke 3:22b "You are My beloved Son, in You I am well-pleased.

Genesis 4:8 Now Cain said to his brother Abel, "Let's go out to the field." And while they were in the field, Cain attacked his brother Abel and killed [murdered] him.

This negative thinking and reacting can happen to any of us who don't use Bible doctrine, divine viewpoint. Without God and His thinking, we are sick from our heads to our toes! Rotten! Not fun to be around! God's thinking teaches us to have impersonal love for all. This kind of love depends on the thinking we have in our souls, not on how the other person behaves. We have the greatest power ever to help us have and use this thinking; we have God's power! God can do anything. So, He can certainly help us to be kind, thoughtful and sensitive to others, even if they aren't nice! Virtue love will unravel, undo, the cosmic system! Picture the cosmic system coming apart because of people using impersonal love!

Environment doesn't matter; God matters!



1 John 3:11-12 For this is the message [the announcement] which you have heard from the first, that we should love [impersonal love] one another, and not be like Cain who took his nature and got his motivation from the evil one [Satan] and slew his brother.

Now we'll move on to the **Period of the Patriarchs**. A patriarch is a man who is respected as a leader, father, or founder of a tribe or family. Abraham, Isaac, and Jacob were patriarchs. Abraham was the father of the Jewish race and its first leader. Isaac and Jacob were also leaders of the Jewish race. Isaac was Abraham's son and Jacob was Isaac's son. The Period of the Patriarchs goes from Abraham to the Jews as slaves in Egypt. One of the important events of this time was when God made a covenant or sworn contract with Abraham. God promised him land, many descendants, and other blessings. These promises pass on to Abraham's descendants who are believers. For God to break His covenant or contract with Abraham in any way and not keep His promises to the Jews would make God a liar. He cannot lie! God is truth!



. Hebrews 6:13-15 For when God made the promise to Abraham, since He could swear by no one greater, He swore by Himself, saying, "I will surely bless you, and I will surely multiply you." And thus, having patiently waited, he [Abraham] obtained the promise.



Abraham

Besides promising in this covenant or contract to bless Abraham and give him many descendants, God promised unconditionally to "make [Abraham] a great nation." Unconditionally means it depended only on God's character or nature for it to happen; it didn't depend on Abraham's nature. Abraham believed God. At age 75, he obeyed God's instructions to leave his home and go to the land which God said He would show him. When Abraham was 99, God made him the first Jew and the father of the Jewish race through the act of circumcision. God was getting ready to form a Jewish nation. God prepared to form a particular nation, Israel, by forming a new race of people,

the Jews. God's purpose for setting up the nation of Israel was to constrain evil in the world and to create a model form of establishment principles. These principles were for the protection of human life, freedom, privacy, and property within a nation's own borders. Israel was to be an example of establishment principles of the divine institutions*.

*Divine institutions:

Volition: The right to be dependent upon God, or to act independently of Him.

Marriage: Basic organization in any national entity, one man, one woman.

Family: The institution set up to raise and train children as far as respect for authority, for the rights of others, for the privacy of others, to respect common law, to respect the property of others, plus many other principles.

Nationalism: Concern for or attachment to a particular nation's interests or culture.



Abraham

Abraham's obedience to God showed his confidence in God's promises. God let Abraham's believing son, Isaac, know that His covenant or contract with Abraham was true for him also. God also told Abraham's grandson, Jacob, that the covenant was true for him. When the Jewish race started, it was spiritual. It came from Abraham, Isaac, and Jacob. Each of these men was a believer in the Messiah, the Lord Jesus Christ. God's unconditional covenant with Abraham, Isaac, and Jacob is a

covenant that will go on forever! The covenant that was given to Abraham, Isaac, and Jacob passed on to the twelve sons of Jacob; it was a contract between God and Jewish believers. Armies tried to destroy the Jews and the Jews did not always follow God's commands. However, no matter how many armies tried to destroy the Jews, and how many times the Jews went against God's commands, God always kept His word. Negative volition and satanic influence could not stop the plan of God! The time of the Patriarchs ended with man's failure, the Jews as slaves in Egypt. But God did deliver them!

Environment doesn't matter; God matters!



Isaac



Jacob

Genesis 28:13-15 And behold, the Lord stood above it and said, "I am the Lord, the God of your father Abraham and the God of Isaac; the land on which you [Jacob] lie, I will give it to you and to your descendants. Your descendants will also be like the dust of the earth, and you will spread out to the west and to the east and to the north and to the south; and in you and in your descendants shall all the families of the earth be blessed. Behold, I am with you and will keep you wherever you go, and will bring you back to this land; for I will not leave you until I have done what I have promised you."

Points to Remember

- 1 The Dispensation of the Gentiles breaks down into three periods:
 - The Period of Positive Volition (Adam to the fall, ends with man's failure)
 - The Period of Negative Volition (the fall to Abraham, ends with man's failure)
 - The Period of the Patriarchs (Abraham to the Jews as slaves in Egypt, ends with man's failure)
- 2 In the Period of Positive Volition, Adam and Ishah were created perfect beings in a perfect environment.
- 3 Adam and Ishah sinned. This brought in the Period of Negative Volition. Ishah's name was changed to Eve.
- 4 Cain killed Abel.
- 5 Cain let the cosmic system Satan's way of thinking, drag him down.
- 6 Abel followed God's thinking.
- 7 God's thinking teaches us to have impersonal love for all.
- 8 In the Period of the Patriarchs, God made a covenant or contract with Abraham.
- 9 Abraham believed God would keep His promises, His covenant.
- 10 God set up divine institutions: Volition, Marriage, Family, and Nationalism.
- 11 God's unconditional covenant with Abraham, Isaac, and Jacob is a covenant that will go on forever!



Vocabulary



1. **Dispensation:** a period of time; God has a special and different plan for the people who live in each different dispensation.

In the **Dispensation** of the Gentiles, God created Adam and Ishah.

2. **Environment:** the conditions that surround someone.

Adam and Ishah had perfect **environment**.

3. **Human Spirit:** the immaterial (doesn't have body or form) part of man designed by God. It is imputed to the believer by means of the baptism of the Holy Spirit at the moment of salvation. It is given to convert, to store, and to utilize spiritual facts.

Adam and Ishah were each created with a body, soul, and a **human spirit**.

4. **Soul:** the soul is made up of self-consciousness, mentality, volition, emotion, and conscience or norms and standards.

Adam and Ishah were each created with a body, **soul**, and human spirit.

5. **Institution:** an organization created to promote or further a cause.

Adam and Ishah had two divine **institutions**, volition and marriage.

6. **Descendants:** an individual descended from another; a child, grandchild, etc.

God promised to bless Abraham and to give him many **descendants**.

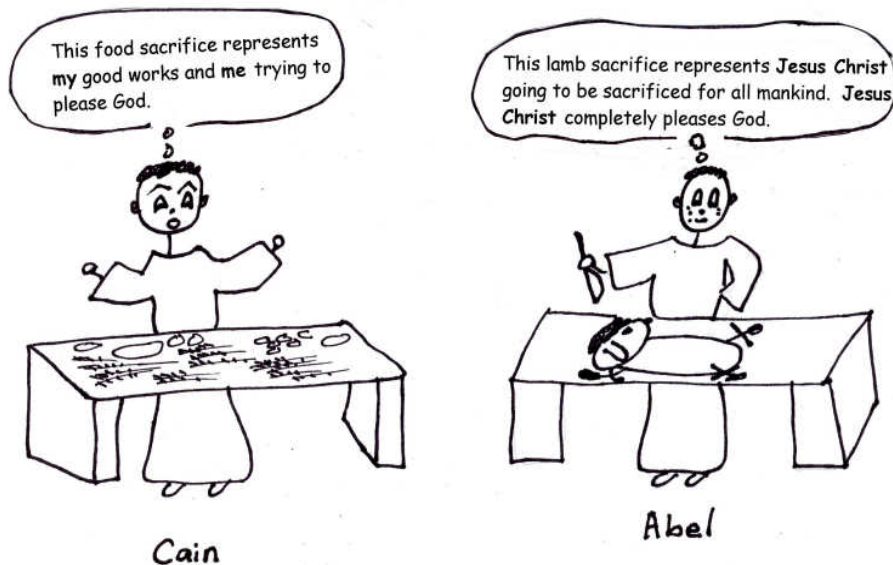
7. **Constrain:** to keep from spreading.

God's purpose for setting up the nation of Israel was to **constrain** evil in the world and to create a model form of establishment principles.



Questions for Discussion

1. The Dispensation of the Gentiles is broken down into three periods. What are they?
2. How could you describe the first period, the second period, and the third period?
3. What were the differences between Cain's and Abel's sacrifices to God?
4. Why did Cain kill Abel?
5. How would you explain Cain's attitude in life? How would you explain Abel's attitude in life?
6. What does God's thinking teach us to have and how can it help us?
7. What did God do for Abraham? How did this help the Jews?
8. God gave us four divine institutions. What are they and what are their purposes?
9. Why could Abraham and the Jews completely trust God to give them what He had promised? Why can we completely trust God's promises to us?



Dispensation of the Gentiles

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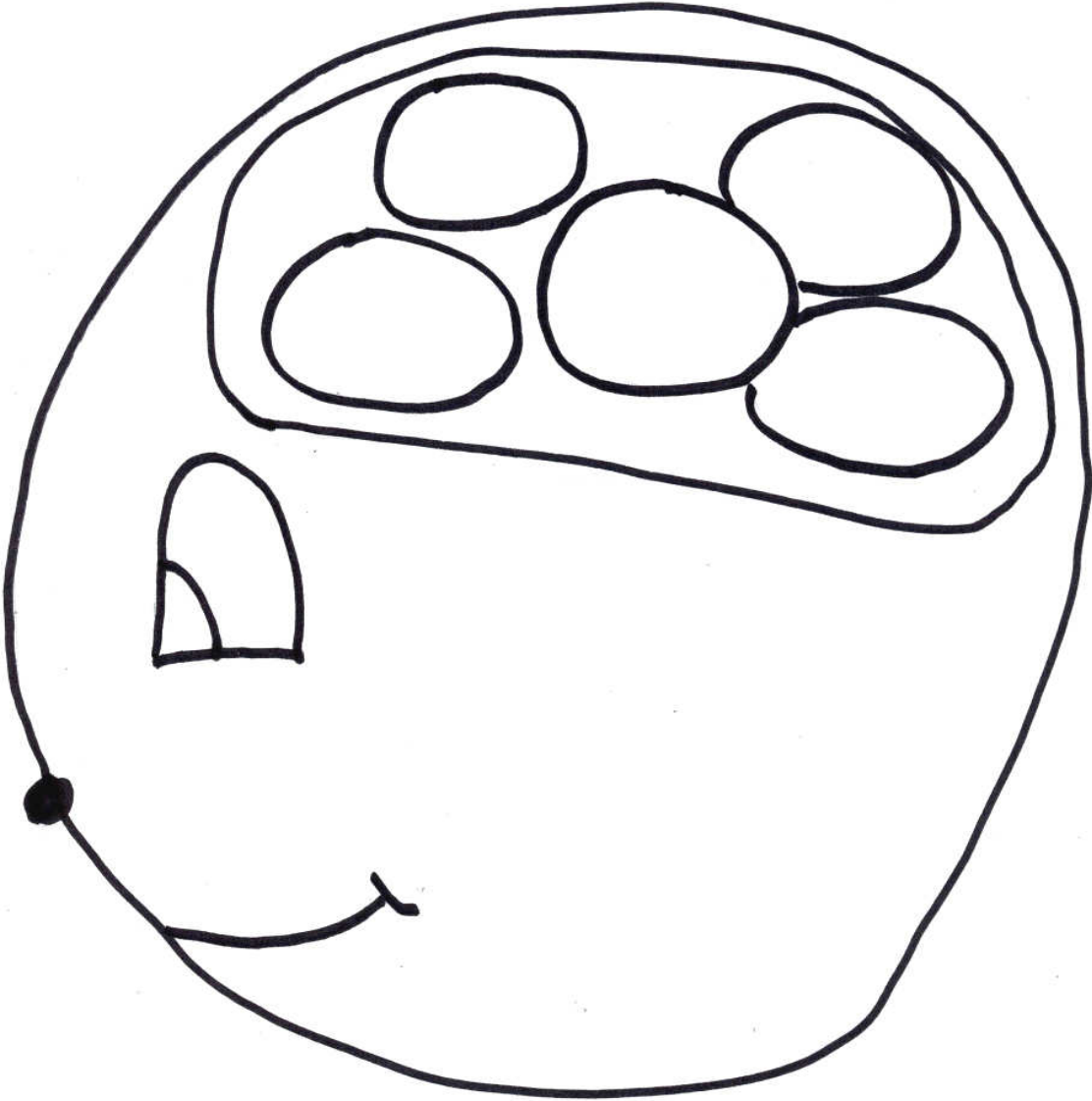
ABEL
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ABRAHAM
CONSTRAIN
DISPENSATION
INSTITUTION
ISRAEL
PATRIARCHS
VOLITION

ADAM
COVENANT
ENVIRONMENT
ISAAC
JACOB
PROMISE



Put the five parts of the soul in the circles in the brain.
Look at page 11 if you need help.



Environment Doesn't Matter! God Matters!

Part 1

The Dispensation of the Gentiles

References: Robert McLaughlin Bible Ministries

www.gbible.org

Lessons: 6-25-08, 6-27-08, 7-9-08

Tree of Life, 7-13-08

Terms Used By Robert R. McLaughlin Bible Ministries

The Plan of God, R.B. Thieme, Jr.