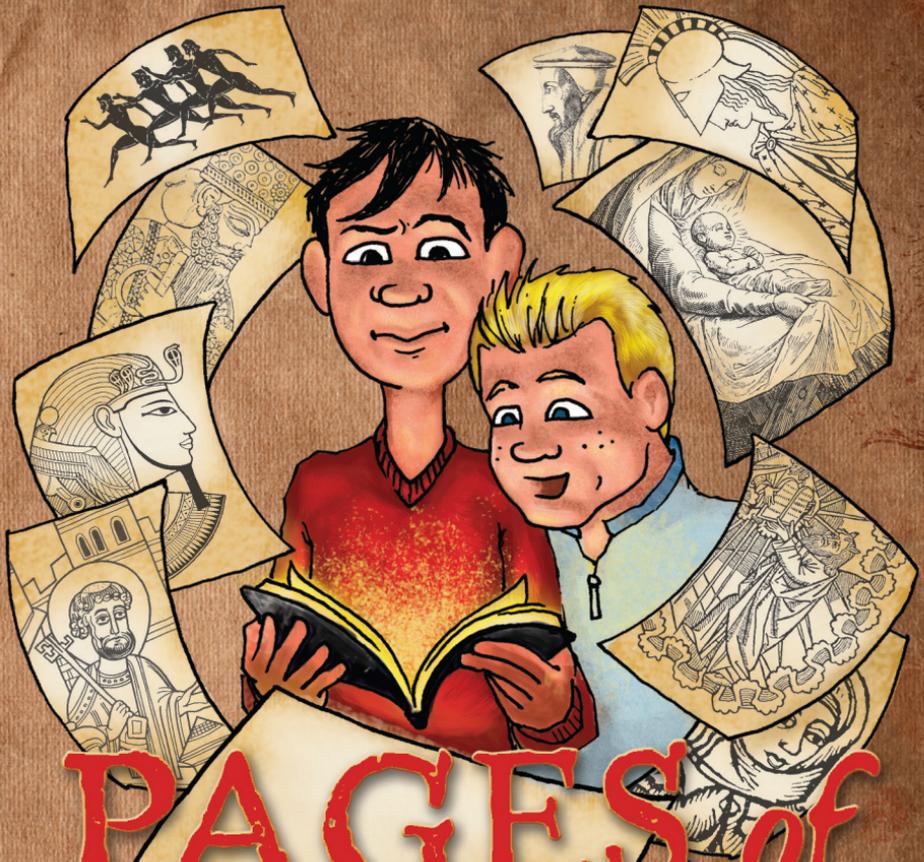


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Secrets of the Ancients

BRUCE ETTER AND
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and sharing with us his expertise
and vast knowledge of history.*

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To Julie, whose vision sparked this project
and whose passion continues to inspire it.

—Bruce Etter

To my husband, Travis, who is the inspiration
for many of the characters in this book.

—Alexia Detweiler

CHAPTER I

THE SECRET LIBRARY

CIRCA MMCLII

James was bored. What was so fascinating about a bunch of dusty books? They weren't adventures or fairy tales or even stories. Just a bunch of textbooks and "important" journals that lined the shelves at the Library of Congress.

What's the point of taking a field trip to a library? James thought. *Nobody uses books anymore. Everyone uses the Internet for research and movies for stories. There aren't even stories in books, just a bunch of dry facts and—SHZOOM!* A spitball whizzed past James's ear, so close he could hear it.

Behind him someone snickered. He turned around to see his best friend, Lance, straw in hand, stifling his laugh with his sleeve.

James shot him a you-got-me smile and slowed his pace so that Lance could catch up to him in the group.

“I am so bored,” Lance whispered. “When’s lunch?”

“Not for another hour,” James whispered back. “I can’t believe that we have to write a paper about this trip when we get back. What are we supposed to write? I almost fell asleep, so I didn’t learn anything.”

“SHH!” hissed the teacher with her finger to her lips. The boys obeyed and shuffled along to the next room.

“And this room houses our historical documentation of the known world!” came the over-enthusiastic voice from the students’ headsets. “It begins with the Big Bang . . .”

James rolled his eyes. He knew the Big Bang wasn’t the way the world began. It was by God’s hand that the earth was made *ex nihilo*, “out of nothing.” But nobody seemed to understand that. None of the history books talked about God, and none of the science books, either. James was a rare human being. He was a Christian, and according to the rest of the world, crazy.

See, what happened just 75 years ago was what unbelievers call “The Cleansing.” The government completely erased God from all educational books and historical documents. At the time, James’s great-grandparents along with a handful of other Christians protested and fasted and petitioned. They did everything they could to prevent the government from erasing God from history. But

the mighty government prevailed and deemed Christians “lunatics.” After this eviction of Christianity, the few Christians who remained kept their faith secret; they called themselves Believers.

James had always gone to school with nonbelievers and even befriended them. But at home, his parents taught him the Truth. The Truth was God, and He exists in all facets of life: past, present, and future. He was often bullied for his belief, but his best friend, Lance, stood by him even though Lance himself was an unbeliever.

And so James struggled every day with the fact that Lance was not a Believer. He was a good friend. Some might say he was a good person, but James knew that wasn't enough, so he'd sneak God into conversation every chance he got.

“What was that for?” whispered Lance, referring to the eye rolling.

“Well, you know the Big Bang Theory is just a bunch of baloney. God is the Creator of all things. Not some explosion,” he replied with disgust.

“Ugh, Jim, I don't see any written evidence of that—nowhere on any website or textbook does it mention God. You're my best friend, but sometimes you're really dumb.”

James wasn't offended. His parents had warned him that being a Believer was going to be hard. Dumb was not the worst thing he'd been called, and he knew deep down that one day God would change Lance's heart.

“And further down the hall, you will find all sorts of documen-

tation from the colonial period . . .”

“Dude!” Lance hissed. “Let’s go this way.” He was pointing down a corridor to a door marked “Private.”

James knew he should stay with the group, but there was still an hour until lunch and he didn’t think he could take another minute of such dry, godless fiction. Plus, who knows, they might find more excitement by branching out on their own. *This field trip may have just turned around for the better*, he thought as he crept down the hall behind Lance.

When he reached the door, Lance already had his hand on the ancient knob. He turned it and gently pushed—locked! He rammèd the door a few times with his shoulder before James smacked his arm.

“Dude, it’s locked! That means we’re not supposed to go in there,”



James hissed. Out of the corner of his eye, James saw something scurry across the hall.

“What was that?” His body stiffened. He hated old buildings. There were always critters and cobwebs. It felt filthy. Lance on the other hand was curious. He crouched down to scour the floor. He crawled along the baseboard, carefully placing his hands on the dusty floor, sliding his knees left and right like a cross country skier. The boys heard sniffing, then a soft, high-pitched squeak. Lance jumped to his feet as a mouse made a beeline for the corner beside the door. The furry guy was scurrying full speed at the baseboard! *That little guy is gonna kill himself!* thought James. *Obviously, mice are not made in God’s image . . .*

The mouse was just inches away from the wall, still going full speed. The boys held their breath. They liked smashing and crashing things as all boys do, but not this poor little mouse. It looked like the mouse was all but done for, and then, all of a sudden, it disappeared through the wall. The boys exchanged glances.

“What just happened?” asked Lance.

“I don’t know,” James replied crouching down to get a closer look at the corner where the mouse seemed to have plowed through the wall just seconds ago. He jabbed at the wall with his pointer finger. It wiggled a little then pushed through like a revolving door.

“Genius!” James said. Lance didn’t know if he was referring to

the mouse or the secret compartment.

“What’s inside, man? Stick your hand in there.”

“I’m not sticking my hand in there. A mouse just went in there! There could be, like, baby mice or dead bugs or something,” James said as Lance, without hesitation, reached his hand into the hole. He wriggled his fingers a little to shimmy his hand in deeper. The boys heard a sound like metal scraping against a hard surface.

“Shoot! I almost had it!” Lance almost yelled.

James gave him another whack. “Quiet! Someone might hear us!” he hissed back. “You almost had what?”

“I don’t know, it felt cold, like metal. Hey, maybe it’s gold!”

James chuckled as if to brush aside Lance’s foolish musing, but secretly he hoped that it was gold.

“Aha!” Lance said as he grabbed the metal object. Just as he was sliding his hand out from the hole, he brushed against something furry. He freaked out and ripped his hand from the wall, scraping his knuckles along the edges of the hole. The key he had grabbed hold of went tumbling across the floor, making a high-pitched, rattling echo through the hall.

“It’s gotta be the key to the door!” James said, surprised at their luck. Almost instantaneously they heard voices and footsteps coming toward them down the hall. The boys looked at each other. James dove for the key, jabbed it into the keyhole and jiggled the handle. It wasn’t opening! Then Lance rammed his shoulder into

the door. It opened with just enough time for James to gently close the door behind them before two security guards walked past.

Both boys slumped to the ground, sweating and out of breath. After a few seconds, they gathered their bearings and, for the first time, looked around the room.

It was a circular library with shelves of books stretching upwards as far as the eye could see. Ladders stood on each level fastened to tracks that spanned the bookshelves. Half an inch of dust lay on the tops of the shelves, but the marble floor looked as though it had just been washed.

Glancing at the nearest shelf, James pulled a book from it. *The Westminster Confession of Faith*. He pulled another. *Foxe's Book of Martyrs*. These were books he had only heard of from his parents or had secretly read excerpts of from banned copies! He skimmed the entire row with growing enthusiasm. They were all Christian books! He looked at another row . . . C.S. Lewis, St. Augustine . . . then rows upon rows of Bibles. He had never seen a complete volume before! It was translated into every language he could imagine, even some he had never heard of!

He looked back at Lance to see his reaction. Lance looked lost.

"Dude, these books are old," was his first comment. James felt defeated. Of course Lance wouldn't be excited. He had never heard of these authors or these books. For all he knew, they had stumbled upon a room of really old, dusty books that had no significance in

modern society.

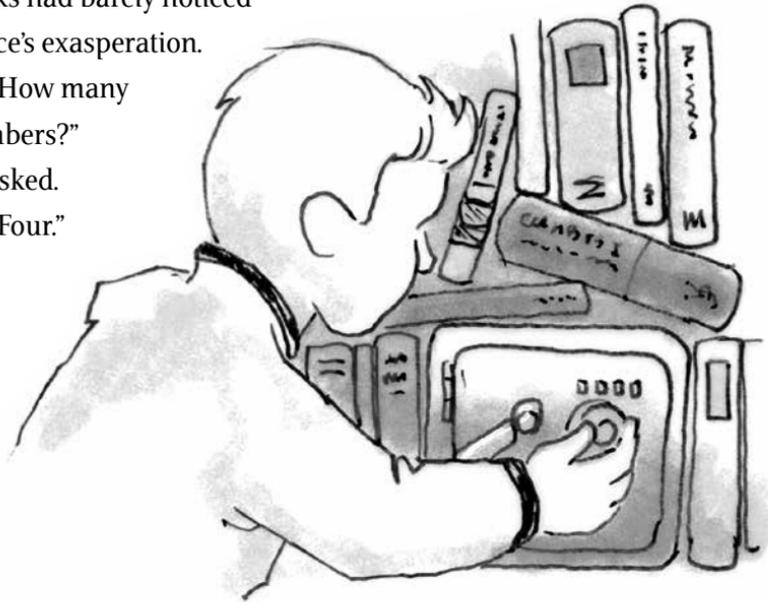
Then Lance's eyes lit up. James followed Lance's gaze to a small safe on the very bottom shelf. It was almost completely hidden by books, and Lance might have missed it had he not been looking for something other than books.

"Jackpot!" said Lance, as he made his way across the room and crouched down. He fiddled with the lock for several minutes before he gave up. James laughed to himself at the absurdity of Lance thinking he could crack a safe.

"I can't open it!" Lance roared and kicked the safe. James, who had been so enthralled in the shelves upon shelves of Christian books had barely noticed Lance's exasperation.

"How many numbers?" he asked.

"Four."



“Try 7-7-7-7.”

Lance spun the lock around four times to the number seven. On the last spin, he went slightly beyond the number and the lock clicked open. He turned to James with a confused, yet amazed look.

“It’s the final day of ‘The Cleansing,’ July 7, 2077. Every Christian knows that.” James felt like a small victory had been won.

Lance turned back to the safe and slowly opened it. It was empty except for a moleskin notebook on the bottom. His shoulder’s sunk, as if he had been expecting gold, jewels, and magical potions.

“What is it?” James jumped down from the ladder he had climbed.

“Just a stupid notebook.”

“Well, it’s gotta be important if someone felt the need to lock it up.” He grabbed the notebook and started paging through. All the pages were blank, but the inside front cover had something scribbled on it:

*And you shall know the truth,
and the truth shall make you free.*

Lance read the Scripture passage aloud. Just as the last words left his lips, the ground began to shake. It trembled so violently

that the boys could no longer keep their balance. The vibration of the shelves caused the books to fall to the ground, dust flying from their covers like puffs of smoke.

The boys held tightly onto one another. Lance was still grasping the notebook for dear life. Then out of nowhere, as if premeditated, two heavy books dropped directly onto the boys heads, and the room went black.

CHAPTER II

THE BIRD OF THE GARDEN

CREATION TO BABEL

The boys awoke after what seemed like days, but who could really tell? What really woke them was a soft light from the sun. At first James thought he was lying in a hospital under bright lights. But after his eyes adjusted, he could tell they were far from a hospital. Maybe even far from modern civilization.

They were lying in lush grass, surrounded by fruit trees loaded with fruit so ripe, it weighed down the branches. There were brightly colored flowers he had never seen before and a stream running through the grass so clear, it was cerulean. The whole garden felt magical. So magical, in fact, he wondered if it could be . . . but no, it's impossible! He glanced to the center of the

garden where a fruit tree stood tall, burdened with a fruit that looked juicier than the rest. *It must be! The Garden of Eden.*

Lance, totally accepting of anything out of the ordinary, jumped to his feet and began climbing a tree nearby.

“This is great!” he cried, disregarding the obvious impossibility of it all.

“He doesn’t know where he is, does he?” came a gentle voice from the bushes.

James put his guard up. “Who said that?”

As if to answer his question, a snow white dove flew out of the bush and landed on a branch in front of him. “This is the Garden of Eden,” said the bird.

“No way!” said Lance, once he heard the dove speak. He walked over and stuck his hand out to the dove.

“Dude, stop!” said James, slapping his hand away.

“I assume you are in search of the Truth,” said the bird. “You want to know how you got here.”

“Well honestly, yeah, but I mean, this is cool,” said Lance. “I think it has something to do with that notebook.”

“I do not mean how you came to this place,” said the dove. “I mean how you came into existence.”

“Oh no, I know. The Big Bang. I want to know how we got to this garden.” James rolled his eyes. He understood.

“The Bible tells us that God made everything in the universe in

six days, and then He rested on the seventh day,” he recalled.

“Correct,” said the bird. James motioned for Lance to sit, as ridiculous as he felt listening to a dove tell him the story of Creation, he knew Lance had to hear this. The dove continued:

“Imagine what it was like before God made anything. There was God, the Trinity—the Father, the Son and the Holy Spirit—and nothing else. And God began by setting apart day and night (first day), heaven and earth (second day), and the seas and the land (third day). The great creative Maker of all things shaped everything we see out of absolutely nothing.

The next three days God made the sun, moon, and stars (fourth day); sky and sea creatures (fifth day) and finally, for the big finale,



land creatures and man (sixth day).”

James was surprised to see Lance listening so intently. Or maybe he was just fascinated by a talking bird. The dove went on:

“But there was something different about the last creation, man. He was made as a special creation of God, in the very image of God Himself. After all of this glorious work, God rested on the seventh day, setting an example for us that we should do the same—work for six days and rest on the seventh.”

“Ha! Tell my mom that,” interrupted Lance. “Sunday is chore day.” He made a disgusted face, but looked to the dove for more information.

“After each day of making everything, God surveyed His creation and made a very special observation—”

“God saw that it was good,” interrupted James. He remembered his parents reading from the book of Genesis at bedtime when he was little.

“Correct! So you know the true Creation story, then? Why don’t you continue?” the dove encouraged James.

“Well,” he began timidly, “our first parents were called Adam and Eve. They lived here, in the Garden of Eden. God was good to them, but had only one restriction: ‘You may eat of every tree in the garden except one, the tree of the knowledge of good and evil.’ God told them very clearly that if they ate of that

one tree, they would surely die.” James glanced over at the tree in the center of the Garden and looked to the dove for confirmation.

“That tree, there,” he pointed. Lance looked interested, but he kept his mouth shut and let James continue.

“In the form of a serpent, Satan, the Devil, came to Eve one day and caused her to doubt that what God had said was true. Instead of believing God and trusting in His good plan, Eve ate of the fruit of that tree, and she also gave some of the fruit to Adam.”

“Idiots,” came Lance’s accusatory voice. “They only had *one* rule, and they broke it. What is it with these people?”

The dove ignored his rhetorical question. “God brought about the consequences of the sin of our first parents. Adam and Eve were kicked out of paradise, the world was cursed and all of mankind was brought into a state of sinfulness as a result. “

“So you’re telling me that because two people—who don’t even know me—made a mistake, now I have to suffer the consequences? Like, I could be living here forever if it wasn’t for them?” Lance was miffed. The Garden was beautiful and the feeling he got from being there was somehow nostalgic and peaceful.

“Oh, the story isn’t over,” said the dove. “It is only beginning...” The bird continued:

“Even in the midst of punishing mankind, God makes a glorious promise—a promise of redemption. As He is laying out the punishment of the serpent, He says that He will send a Seed of the woman, that is, Eve, and that this Seed will crush the head of the serpent.”

“In other words,” James explained, “one day a descendant of Adam and Eve would come and reverse the horrible effects of this Fall into sin. The Seed he is referring to is Jesus Christ. You know, of Christianity.”

“Oh, I get it,” said Lance. “You’re trying to make me believe the same bogus stuff you do.”

“Well, helping you believe the Truth has always been a goal of mine, yes,” said James, “but do you actually think I’d create some sort of portal that allows us to travel to the beginning of time, and then train a dove to talk and teach him to recite the story of Creation? I’m flattered, Lance, but, really?”

Lance huffed and folded his arms across his chest. The bird continued with the story of Cain and Abel.

“Adam went on to live for a whopping 930 years,” (Lance rolled his eyes at this) “and during these years Adam and Eve had several children, two of whom were called Cain and Abel. Cain grew up to become a farmer and Abel, a shepherd.

“One day the two were worshiping God by giving offerings of their labors to Him in the form of sacrifices. God was pleased

with the offering of Abel, but He rejected Cain's. As a result, Cain became angry and killed his brother. Once again, God was gracious to Cain. He could have taken his life for this unthinkable deed, but instead He allowed Cain to live. He was, however, forced to leave and live as a wanderer for the rest of his life."

"Stinks," muttered Lance.

"What did you say?" asked the dove.

"I said, it *stinks*."

"What stinks, that Abel was murdered by the hand of his own brother or that Cain was allowed to live but asked to leave?"

"Good point." There was silence as the boys thought about the story a little longer. James had heard the story several times before, but to actually be in the Garden made him realize how great God's love must have been.

"Where are they now?" James said abruptly.

"Who? Adam and Eve? Oh, they're long gone. They were banished from the Garden, remember?" replied the dove. Lance let out a sigh.

"If you don't believe the story, look in your notebook."

James had been holding onto it the whole time. He barely even noticed his knuckles were turning white. He opened the notebook to the first page. What used to be a creamy white page now had something written on it:

CREATION MYTHS

Chinese An egg containing the opposing forces of yin and yang separated with the heavy parts forming the earth and the lighter parts forming the sky. The goddess Nuwa made men out of mud from the Yellow River.

Greek Gaia created Uranus, the sky, to cover herself. They sired monsters and the Titans, who were later defeated by their children—the gods Zeus, Poseidon, Hades, Hera, Hermes, Apollo, etc.



Aztec The earth mother Coatlicue gave birth to the moon and to the stars. Later she gave birth to the god of the sun.

Egypt In the waters of Nu, Atum willed himself into being. Then he created a hill and spat out a son, Shu, god of the air, and vomited up a daughter, Tefnut, goddess of moisture. Shu and Tefnut generated the earth and the sky. Humans sprang up from the earth where the tears of Atum fell.



And below the chart, in small script was written:

And behold, I Myself am bringing floodwaters on the earth, to destroy from under heaven all flesh in which is the breath of life.

Before he could close the book, a strong wind blew, causing branches and other debris to fly through the air. James saw Lance run for cover, then trip over a fallen branch. He was motionless. Before James could make it over to his friend, he felt something hit him on the back of the head. He saw the dove fly away, and everything went black.

• • •

The wind was howling fiercely when they came to. Lance wished he could go back to the Garden where the sun was warm and inviting. He imagined climbing trees all day, picking fruit that tasted like candy and swimming in the streams.

James knew where they were almost immediately. It was pouring rain, windy and—he stood up and leaned over the ledge—*yep*, he confirmed, *we're on the Ark*. James was not nearly as scared as Lance was, because he knew how the story went. But he was scared enough, because he still didn't know at what point in the story they had landed.

The boys clung to each other as they tried to find shelter, even though their clothes were already drenched.

“This is the story of Noah and the Ark!” James had to yell over the bellowing wind.

“What’s an ark?” Lance yelled back.

“It’s the boat we’re on right now,” James said patting a wooden beam. Lance’s eyes widened. “We’re on a boat!?”

“Don’t worry. God told Noah to build a boat that was 450 feet long, 75 feet wide and 45 feet high. That’s like one and a half football fields.” Lance didn’t look convinced, so James tried again. “You could put six regular-sized cars end to end sideways across the deck. It’s taller than a three-story building! This thing is hefty.”

“Geez, that musta taken forever to build.”

“One hundred and twenty years, actually.”

“Okay, now I know you’re making things up.”

“No, I’m serious; it’s in the Bible. What’s even more amazing is that Noah built this thing before there was any sign of a flood. Noah’s neighbors must have mocked him for building a huge boat on dry land.”

“Well, that’s just stupid,” Lance said critically. “So what happened? Did everyone die?”

“No, no, no. God didn’t intend to wipe out mankind completely. Even though, as the Bible tells us, mankind had become more and more sinful.”

“Then what?”

“In His goodness, God brought judgment to man but allowed

Noah's family to survive." And as if on cue, the clouds broke open and a burst of sunlight broke through. The rain slowed down, the wind turned to a breeze, and in the distance James could make out a rainbow. A small black dot flew across the rainbow—the dove! As the dot came closer, it grew and began to take shape. It was barely 20 feet away and James reached out his arm to let the bird settle on it.

"You again!" Lance looked bewildered. It was the same talking dove, this time carrying an olive branch in its beak.

"I'm sure you've heard the story of Noah and the great flood," the bird said, without skipping a beat.

"Yeah, the *story*," Lance mocked. "This story sounds an awful lot like the *Epic of Gilgamesh*." He remembered reading the book for History class. Gilgamesh was the powerful and lustful king of the ancient Babylonian city of Uruk, who tried to obtain eternal life by seeking out a man who had survived the Great Flood. "Is that the flood we're in?" Lance thought aloud. "Is this the flood where Utnapishtim survives and attains eternal life?"

"No, no, no," said the dove. "Noah is the one who survived the flood. Besides, Utnapishtim plays games with Gilgamesh, and he never obtains eternal life in the end. It is a gripping story, but it's really about where pagan man ends up in his search for eternal life apart from the true God. Take a look in your notebook: the comparison is there."

THE GENESIS FLOOD

Mankind was hopelessly sinful and wicked.

God decided to send a worldwide flood that lasted forty days (some water comes from out of the earth).

There is one righteous man: Noah.

Noah is ordered directly from God to build a three-story rectangular wooden Ark, sealed with pitch, containing many compartments, a single door, and at least one window.

The Ark was built and occupied by Noah, a few other humans (his family), and representatives of all the land animals.

A great rain covered the land with water and the Ark eventually came to rest on Mt. Ararat.

Noah sent out a raven and two doves to find if any dry land was in the vicinity. The first two birds returned to the Ark. The third bird found dry land because it did not return. Noah left the Ark and offered up an animal as a sacrifice.

God vowed never to flood the earth again.

THE GILGAMESH FLOOD

Mankind is too numerous and noisy.

The gods decide to send a worldwide flood that lasts six days.

There is one righteous man: Ut-Napishtim.

Ut-Napishtim is ordered by the gods in a dream to build a six-story square wooden ark, sealed with pitch, containing many compartments, a single door, and at least one window.

The ark is built and occupied by Ut-Napishtim, a few other humans (a pilot and some skilled workmen), and representatives of all the land animals.

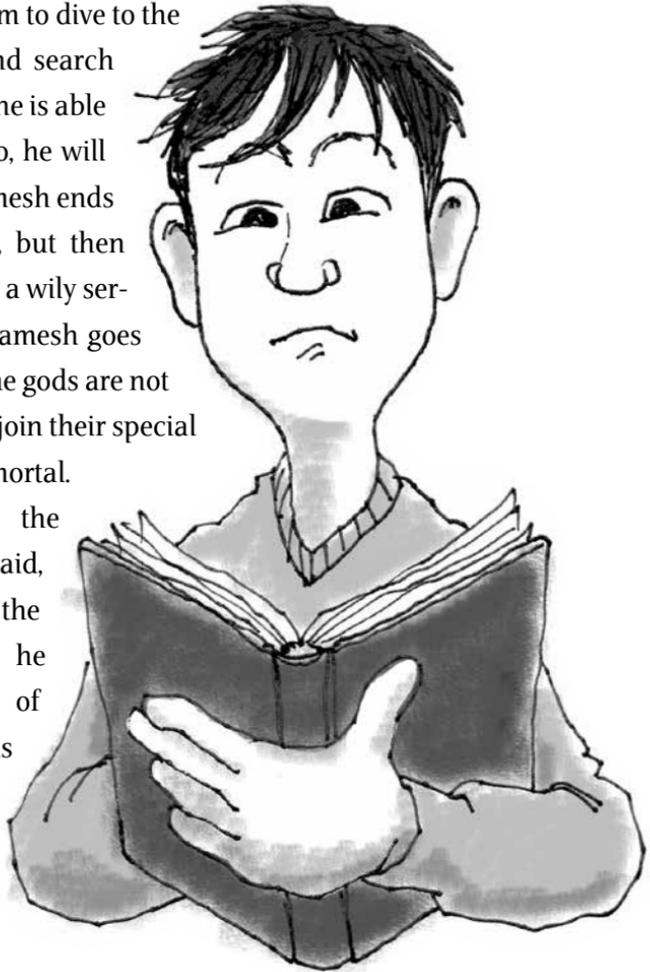
A great rain covers the land with water and the ark eventually comes to rest on Mt. Nisir.

Ut-Napishtim sends out a dove, swallow and raven to find if any dry land is in the vicinity. The first two birds return to the ark. The third bird finds dry land because it does not return. Ut-Napishtim leaves the ark and offers up an animal as a sacrifice.

The gods vow never to flood the earth again.

James paged through the notebook to find the chart. The stories were freakishly similar. He had always known that, but the *Epic of Gilgamesh* was sort of comical. For example, in the end when Utnapishtim is giving Gilgamesh tests to pass in order to obtain eternal life, he tells him to dive to the bottom of the sea and search out a special plant. If he is able to get the plant, bingo, he will get eternal life. Gilgamesh ends up getting the plant, but then has it swiped away by a wily serpent. In the end, Gilgamesh goes home realizing that the gods are not going to allow him to join their special club and become immortal.

James showed the chart to Lance and said, “Check this out: in the *Epic of Gilgamesh*, he dives to the bottom of the ocean to get this special plant that is supposed to give him eternal life, but



a serpent steals it from him, and he doesn't live forever. Then, in the story of the Garden of Eden, a serpent entices man to sin, causing him to be expelled from the Garden and to lose access to the Tree of Life, a special plant, in effect 'stealing' eternal life from man. Isn't it obvious that *Gilgamesh* is the same story, just distorted?"

"Or maybe Noah's story is the distorted one . . ." Lance said.

"The story of the Ark is a fascinating one," the dove continued, "because it is a picture of that salvation that would come in Christ. The entire world was destroyed in a flood, but Noah and his family were preserved in the Ark. Remember that promise of a Seed who would come and redeem man?"

"Jesus Christ," James chimed in.

"Right, just as all who were on the Ark were saved from the deadly flood waters, all those who cling to Christ are saved from the spiritual death that comes as a result of sin. After the flood, God made a promise to Noah and sealed it with the rainbow that He would never destroy the world by water again." The bird looked to the rainbow that had now grown even bigger and brighter.

"So there isn't a pot of gold at the end of a rainbow?" Lance looked inquisitive. Both James and the dove stifled a laugh.

"Not exactly," replied the dove, "but God's promise is more valuable than gold, more valuable than anything on this earth!"

"Well, that had better be true for Noah's sake. If God destroyed the world, then all Noah had left was whatever was on the boat . . ."

“Yes, Noah had to start all over. He had three sons, along with their wives, who were on the Ark with him. These eight individuals began to populate the earth all over again. And once again we see the goodness of God in that He allowed man to marry and have children to fill the earth.

“During this time in history everybody spoke the same language. Nobody knows exactly what that language was, but all spoke the same and so everyone was able to understand everyone else.

“Men became quite proud, and to express their pride in their own accomplishments, they began to construct a tremendous building that would reach into the heavens.”

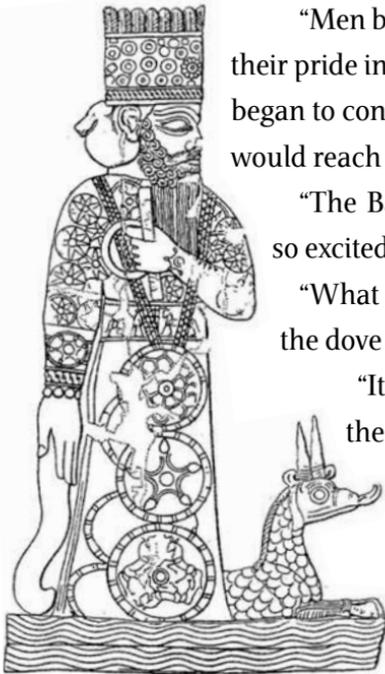
“The Babylonian Temple!” yelled Lance, so excited that he actually knew something.

“What do you know about this temple?” the dove asked.

“It’s the famous temple dedicated to the Babylonian god, Marduk. It was called a *ziggurat*, and this one was 300 feet high.”

“Could be,” said the dove, “But what the Tower of Babel was is not as important as why

we tell the story. God looked



The Babylonian god Marduk with his pet dragon

down on what was going on and saw the wicked intentions of man's heart. As a result, God changed everyone's language. No longer did all men speak the same language. God confused their languages, and they were not able to understand one another. As a result, man scattered all over the earth."

"Well, I don't remember learning that part in school," said Lance.

"Our culture doesn't seek the Truth, so our teachers don't teach it," James explained to the dove. "You'll have to bear with him."

"But you know the Truth! I am impressed with your knowledge." James was pleased but tried not to let pride get the best of him. Instead, he said, "It is interesting that God confused languages here and scattered everyone because of man's pride, but in Acts 2 God brings people together, causing them all to speak the same language, thus reversing the curse of Babel."

Lance was learning what happened in some of the earliest times known to man. God was continuing to work out His grand plan of the salvation of man after the sin in the Garden.

"But that's not what I learned in history class," Lance argued.

"What you learned in history class is only a small part of the world's history," James said. "I've been trying to tell you this since I met you. Keep listening."

"James is right," said the dove, "but I've told you all I can here. You'll need go to another time to learn more."

"Do we get to choose?" asked Lance.

History is not something Jesus merely entered. It is not something He merely conquered. It is instead, all of it, from east to west, from beginning to end, His story. *Pages of History* does magnificently what the best books usually do but poorly: tells us about Jesus by showing us His world.

R.C. SPROUL, JR.

TEACHING FELLOW, LIGONIER MINISTRIES

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History is first and foremost, *His Story*. Alas, these days it is rarely told as a Story, and even less as His. That is why I am so enthusiastic about this project. *Pages of History* is faithful both to our rich Christian story-telling tradition and to our providential God whose stories these are in the first place.

GEORGE GRANT

FOUNDER, NEW COLLEGE FRANKLIN