



# GENESIS

## The Book of Beginnings

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### Lesson 1: Introduction to Genesis

#### A. IN THIS SERIES YOU WILL LEARN...

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1. Why God created the universe.
2. How to recognize Satan's tactics.
3. How and why God responded to man's fall into sin.
4. What it means to have genuine faith.
5. What the Mosaic Law is and how it may be applied to us today.
6. How we can know Jesus better from the life of Joseph.

#### B. THREE BIG REASONS TO STUDY GENESIS

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1. It teaches us about our origins.
  - Man does not have to theorize or hypothesize about his origins when he studies the book of Genesis. Read Hebrews 11:3. "By faith we understand that the universe was created by the word of God, so that what is seen was not made out of things that are visible." (Heb. 11:3 ESV)
  - In Chapters 1 and 2 of Genesis, we see that the universe, the Earth, all animal and plant life, and mankind were created according to a logical plan.
  - It did not all happen by chance.
  - Contrary to what most atheists believe, matter did not always exist.
2. It teaches us how to better understand the New Testament.
  - Much of the New Testament relies upon the history that is revealed in the Old Testament, including the book of Genesis.
  - For example: Without a study of Genesis, we would not understand the faith of Abel, Enoch, Noah, Abraham, Sarah, Isaac, Jacob, Joseph, and Moses as discussed in Hebrews 11.
  - Without a study of Genesis, we would not understand the contrast between Adam and Christ, as discussed by Paul in Romans 5:12ff.

- We would not fully understand the need for a perfect sacrifice for man's sins.
3. It teaches us about the beginning of God's plan to redeem man.
- After Adam and Eve's sin, God begins to reveal His plan to send a Redeemer to save mankind from sin.
  - Genesis 3:14-15 is the first prophecy concerning the coming of Christ (often referred to as the proto-evangelium)
  - Gen. 3:14-15 "I will put enmity between you and the woman, and between your offspring and hers; he will crush your head, and you will strike his heel." This is known as the protoevangelium—the first gospel.
  - The verse introduces two elements previously unknown in the Garden of Eden, elements that are the basis of Christianity—the curse on mankind because of Adam's sin and God's provision for a Savior from sin who would take the curse upon Himself.
  - This is the beginning of the "golden thread" that is woven throughout the rest of the Bible.

## **C. THE TITLE MEANS SOMETHING**

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1. Genesis means "beginnings," or "origins."
- The Hebrew title (*bereshith*) translated "in the beginning" is derived from the ancient Near Eastern practice of naming a book by its first words.
  - The English title comes from the Greek translation (Septuagint, LXX) meaning "origins" or "birth."
2. Genesis is a book of beginnings. In it God takes you back to the very beginning and tells all about:
- the beginning of the universe in a perfect world.
  - the beginning of people
  - the beginning of sin and suffering
  - the beginning of nations
  - the beginning of rebellion against God
  - the beginning of God's plan to rescue people from sin and enable them to live in harmony with him.

## **D. AUTHOR AND DATE**

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1. Author: Moses (guided by the Holy Spirit).
2. Date Written: 1450-1410 B.C.

3. Written to: The people of Israel.
4. Purpose: To record God's creation and his desire to have people set apart to worship him.

## **E. BACKGROUND AND SETTING**

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1. The initial setting for Genesis is eternity past (date unknown).
2. God, by willful act and divine Word, then spoke all creation into existence, furnished it, and finally breathed life into a lump of dirt which he fashioned into his image to become Adam.
3. God made mankind the crowning point of his creation, i.e. his companions who would enjoy fellowship with him and bring him glory.
4. Genesis took place in three distinct, sequential geographic settings: Mesopotamia, Canaan, and Egypt.



- Chapters 1-11: Mesopotamia. [The location of the Garden of Eden is unknown. Some think it was north of Babel (city of Babylon), where the Euphrates and Tigris rivers are closest to each other]
- Chapters 12-36: Canaan/Promised Land
- Chapters 37-50: Egypt

## **F. THE EIGHT MAIN SUBJECTS IN GENESIS**

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1. Creation (Genesis 1-2)
  - How and why did God create?

2. The Choice (Genesis 3-5)

- How did sin originate and what were its immediate impacts?

3. The World Flood (Genesis 6-8)

- Was God too cruel?

4. The New Beginning (Genesis 9-11)

- Noah: Obeying God under very extreme conditions.

5. Abraham (Genesis 12-25)

- Abraham: How God plans to bring a solution to man's sinful dilemma.

6. Isaac (Genesis 24-26)

- Isaac: Amazing faith demonstrated through offering personal sacrifice.

7. Jacob (Genesis 25-36)

- Jacob: How God originated and protected a special nation.

8. Joseph and Judah (Genesis 37-50)

- Joseph: A foreshadowing of Jesus through his life experiences.
- Judah: tracing the line of the Redeemer

## **G. DISCUSSION QUESTIONS**

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1. Why do you think many people view the book of Genesis as a collection of myths?
2. Why do some people focus only on how God created instead of why God created?
3. Why is it difficult for some people to comprehend how God created everything simply by speaking?
4. What differences can an understanding of the beginning of the universe have on your life?

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