

GENESIS

The Book of Beginnings

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Lesson 1: Introduction to Genesis

A. IN THIS SERIES YOU WILL LEARN...

- 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

- 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 <u>first prophecy</u> 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 <u>introduces two elements</u> previously unknown in the Garden of Eden, elements that are the basis of Christianity—the <u>curse on mankind because of</u> <u>Adam's sin</u> and <u>God's provision for a Savior from sin</u> 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

- 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."
- 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.

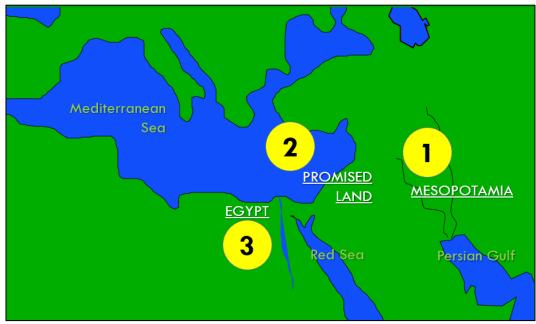
D. AUTHOR AND DATE

- 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

- 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

- 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

- 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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