



2024 BIBLE STUDY SERIES

THEME: "GET YOUR HOPES UP!"

JANUARY 2024 - GENESIS SERIES: NEW BEGINNINGS OVERVIEW AND BACKGROUND

Reflection Questions

1. What are the benefits of being able to start over again? Briefly explain.

2. How has an individual in your family starting over inspired you concerning the possibility for your renewal? Briefly explain.

Important Emphasis

God's expression of love in Creation Gen. 1:1

God's expression of love among Creatures Gen. 1:26 (1:20)

God's expression of love beyond Corruption Gen. 3:1

"The book of Genesis stands at the head of the canon. Its range is breathtaking. Moving from cosmos to family, from ordered world to reconciled brothers, from the seven days of the creation of the universe to the seventy descendants of Jacob entering the land of the sojourn."

Terence E. Fretheim "The New Interpreter's Commentary"

Genesis is a part of the Pentateuch. There is partial fulfillment of the promises and blessings in the first Five books of the Old Testament.

Genesis consists of short and full narratives Gen. 5:1 (short) and Noah 6:8 (long)

Why is Genesis relevant to our everyday living? Four things to consider:

Purpose- Rick Warren states if you desire to know the purpose or meaning of an invention or creation you must go back to the creator. (Gen. 2:7)

Position- Our position in creation is clear. We are to have dominion and dynamic stewardship. Gen. (1:28-31)

Partner- The Lord promotes and blesses relationship and partnership. Be fruitful and multiply takes place in the orbit or space of relationships. This does not happen in a healthy way in humanity outside of God ordained relationships. Genesis (1:22;28)

Promise- The New beginnings that God has for us are saturated with his promises. This is for His glory! Gen. 12:1 This is the fulfillment of God's commitment to creation in spite of our fallen nature.

A key term in Genesis is Toledot. This term means genealogy. Five times this is used throughout Genesis (Gen. 2:4, 5:1, 6:9; 10:1; 11:1). This assist in comparing and contrasting characters and events. This transpires through the Primeval History (Gen. 1:1-11:26), Abraham Story (Gen. 12:1-25), Jacob Story (Gen. 25:19-37:1), and the story of Jacob's family (Gen. 37:2-50:26).

As we study Genesis it is very important that we consider it's:

Structure: Formatting of the writing

Plot: Arrangement of Stories

Theology: Thoughts about the actions of God

Themes of Genesis

Creation- God created the world "it was God" Gen. 1

Sin- Sin entered the world through one man Genesis. 3:1-19 Roman 5:12

The Image of God- All human beings are created in the image of God. Gen 1:26

Additional Reflections

Divine Disappointment- This transpires when we crave those things that are lower than the height of our divine purpose. We compromise and we become complacent. Gen 3:6-9; 2 Timothy 2:4

Decisions that are Detrimental- Taking ownership concerning the choices we make. Gen 3:12-13

Development isn't Detracted – No one can undermine the Work that God desires to complete in us, through us and with us! Gen. 3:16 ; Gen.4: 8-10; Phil. 1:6

Genesis may be described as a theological history of Israel origins

God's Word- The power of the utterance or the spoken word of God in Creation. “Fresh from the word ; both have been evoked by the speech of God!” Gen. 1:3 (God Said!)

God's World- The result or the evidence of what God has spoken.

God's Witness- Those who are in relationship with God are his witnesses to the world concerning God's handy work in creation and in humanity.

God has formed the world to be his world and a special community to be his witness.

“Genesis is a process of storytelling in which there are important transactions between listener and teller. A promise that weaves in and out of the narrative.”

God created the world and there was a wholeness and Harmony!

Hebrew Toledot means what comes forth or what is generated.

Redemptive Work of God- “Even more the canonical placement makes clear that God's redemptive work does not occur in a vacuum; it occurs in a context that has been shaped in decisive ways by the life-giving, creative work of God!”

Redemption can never be understood as ex nihilo without denigrating God's gifts given to creation.

Key Terms

Author
Audience
Beginnings
Blessings
Context
Covenant
Creation
Date Written
Death

Dominion
Fall
Family Lineage
Foundational
Generations
Genesis
God
Holy Spirit
Patriarchy

Promises
Purpose for Writing
Redemption
Restoration
Revelation
Sin
The Word
Torah
Vulgate

Outline

I. Overview and Background (Genesis 1:1)

- A. Authorship
- B. Date Written
- C. Audience/Addressees
- D. Purpose for Writing
- E. Main Message
- F. Main Themes
- G. Life Application

II. Creation – New Beginnings (1:1 – 2:4; John 1:1-3, 14)

- A. The Heavens and the Earth
- B. Humankind
- C. The Fall
- D. Life Application

III. Relationships (2:4 – 5:32)

- A. Husbands and Wives
- B. Parents and Children
- C. Sibling Rivalry
- D. Hope of Redemption and Restoration
- E. Life Application

IV. Generations - Lineages

- A. Adam and Eve
- B. Noah
- C. Abram/Abraham and Sarai/Sarah (12:1 25:7-11)
- D. Isaac and Ishmael (25:12-23)

E. Jacob and Esau	(25:24-27:46)
F. Jacob and his sons	(28:1 – 37:1)
G. Joseph	(37:2 – 50:26)
H. Life Application	

Introduction

The book of Genesis is the beginning of the [Christian] Bible. It is **foundational** and necessary for understanding the larger biblical canon, both Old and New Testaments. Within the Hebrew Bible, Genesis belongs to the **Torah** (“teaching, instruction”). It is the start of a textual unit that runs through Deuteronomy and traces “history” from creation to Israel’s arrival on the outskirts of the already inhabited promised land.

The name of the book derives from the Greek translation in Gen 2:4a: “This is the book of the **generations/origins** (*geneseōs*) of heaven and earth.” This is an appropriate title, as Genesis contains many genealogies. The **Septuagint** picks this up as the name of the book. The **Vulgate** gave it a **transliterated** form of the same word, and it has come to identify the book.

Within Jewish tradition, the book [Genesis] takes its title from its first word, (*bereshit*). This is traditionally translated as “**in the beginning**.” Genesis is thus a book of **origins** and **beginnings**—of the entire created order, but also of sin, God’s relationship with humanity, blessing and obedience, and conflict and disobedience.¹

**Authorship

Questions concerning the authorship and date of composition of Genesis are tied closely to those of the origins of the Pentateuch as a whole. Early Jewish and Christian tradition regard Genesis as the first of the books of Moses, although literary and historical factors suggest a long and complex process of composition.²

As the first book of the Jewish Bible [also called **Torah** (instruction) and **The Law**] and the Christian Bible, Genesis is also the first book of the Pentateuch (the first five books of both the Jewish Bible and the Christian Bible). The Mosaic origin of the Pentateuch is supported by the concurring voices of Jewish and Christian tradition, as well as by internal evidence. Moses himself affirmed the existence of a written record of the Israelites' important transactions. The repeated

¹ Anderson, John E. 2016. “*Genesis, Book of.*” In *The Lexham Bible Dictionary*, edited by John D. Barry, David Bomar, Derek R. Brown, Rachel Klippenstein, Douglas Mangum, Carrie Sinclair Wolcott, Lazarus Wentz, Elliot Ritzema, and Wendy Widder. Bellingham, WA: Lexham Press.

² Myers, Allen C. 1987. In *The Eerdmans Bible Dictionary*, 409. Grand Rapids, MI: Eerdmans.

assertions of Moses, testimonies in later historical books, references in the works of the prophets, and the testimony of Jesus and the Apostles all provide significant evidence for the authorship of Moses. (**Exodus 17:14; 24:3-4; 34:27; Luke 24:27; John 5:46**)

There is stronger and more varied evidence for the Mosaic authorship of the Pentateuch than for the authorship of any Greek or Roman classics. While there may be some later additions and revisions, the Pentateuch is considered substantially the genuine work of Moses.³

The five books of Moses (Genesis, Exodus, Leviticus, Numbers, Deuteronomy) recount Israelite history from the people's beginnings until Moses' death, when the Israelites are poised on the border of the promised land. The books also give laws for living in the land under Israel's king, the Lord.

Date Written

The Book of Genesis does not state precisely when it was written, and theologians and bible scholars continue to debate this issue. However, some scholars believe the date of authorship is likely between 1440 and 1400 B.C., between the time Moses led the Israelites out of Egypt and his death.

Audience

Since the events recounted in Genesis took place long before Moses' birth, he obviously served as the compiler of earlier traditions that had been passed down. He set out to preserve the history of God's dealings with **Israel's patriarchs** as a foundation for explaining the covenant that God had recently made with the **people of Israel** at Mount Sinai.

Moses also passed the written law (the Pentateuch) on to **Joshua** who made a copy to be read to the Israelites (**Joshua 8:30-35; 23:6**). The law was preserved and passed down to the **Israelite kings**—David, Solomon, Josiah, Jehoshaphat, and Joash, Amaziah, and Hezekiah who obeyed it.

Purpose of the Book of Genesis

The purpose of the Book of Genesis was for God to lay the groundwork for the rest of Scripture, and His revelation of Himself to man. Genesis begins with God's **creation** of the world and its most blessed occupants, the human male and female.

³ Jamieson, Robert, A. R. Fausset, and David Brown. 1997. *Commentary Critical and Explanatory on the Whole Bible*. Vol. 1. Oak Harbor, WA: Logos Research Systems, Inc.

From this climax, the story follows man's plunge into **rebellion** and its consequences—shame, death, murder, ruthlessness, tyranny, idolatry, and war.

Two low points mark this account of primeval [ancient] history (chapters 1-11): **the Flood** that wipes out an unsalvageable generation and the scattering of the nations who try to build the **Tower of Babel**. Each time, man seems bound for irredeemable corruption, yet God prevents disaster with merciful judgment.

After Babel, the story narrows to follow one family—Abraham's—through **four** generations (chapters 12-50). Through this family, God plans to offer salvation from the consequences of the Fall to the whole human race. God calls Abraham from Mesopotamia to Canaan and promises that his descendants will own that land. In the twists of life, God teaches Abraham, his son, his grandson, and his great-grandsons to **trust** their Lord's promises and **obey** His plans.

By the close of Genesis, God has led seventy members of the chosen family into Egypt but has trained them to pin their hopes on a return to Canaan four hundred years in the future. The stage is set for God's greater acts of **salvation** and **self-revelation** in the Exodus, which itself will be only a shadow of mightier things to come.

Checking for Understanding

1. What collection of books is Genesis a part of in the Jewish and Christian Bibles?

2. Who is the author of the Book of Genesis?

3. Who is included in the original audience of the Book of Genesis?

4. What were two low points in the history of man's relationship with God as recorded in Chapters 1-11 of Genesis?

Main Message

The first eleven chapters of Genesis serve as an _____ to the rest of the Bible. It emphasizes God's creative power, beauty, loving mercy, and salvation, while also addressing his judgment upon those who disobey and disrupt the _____ of creation.

The enduring relevance of Genesis offers insights into the greatness and tragic flaws of human beings. Despite being written thousands of years ago, Genesis conveys a timely message of _____ for the modern world, emphasizing our responsibility as participants in God's creation and the need to confront the potential for global catastrophe, similar to Noah's situation.

Main Themes

Creation, The Fall of Humanity, Covenant, Family and Lineage, Patriarchy, Blessing and Promise, Redemption and Restoration

Over the next three weeks, we will study the key elements of creation, family relationships and the impact of the chosen generations' behavior on the Christian world today.

Check For Understanding

5. The main message of the Book of Genesis is that it serves as what to the rest of the Bible?

6. What is the timely message that the Book of Genesis convey to us today?

7. What are the main themes of the Book of Genesis?

Life Application:

As we continue this Genesis Bible Study Series, think about how you can better understand and apply the principles communicated by God to His people over 2,000 years ago to your life situations today?

Get Your Hopes Up!