

GENESIS



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Welcome to the book of Genesis!

To begin your study of Genesis, meditate on the book's content represented in the overview chart below. What are the four major events of chapters 1-11? How do each of these events reflect the theme *origins of the human race*? In chapters 11-50 we encounter the *origins of the chosen race*. Notice the theme phrase at the bottom of the overview chart: "*and in you all the families of the earth shall be blessed!*" What does this phrase mean to you? It will be an important aspect of our study in Genesis. Also notice the Scriptures listed within the overview chart. Take this opportunity to consider each one, relating the theme words to the appropriate Scripture. What have you learned so far about Genesis?

GENESIS	Origins
HUMAN RACE	CHOSEN RACE
Creation...1:1,2	Abraham...12:1,8
Fall...3:6-8	Isaac...22:7,8
Flood...6:8;9:16	Jacob...25:23
Tower...11:6,9	Joseph...46:3,4
1-11	11-20 21-26 27-36 37-50

"In you all the families of the earth shall be blessed." 12:3

The book of Genesis gives us a wealth of insight into the character of God and nature of man. Two key verses are prominent. For chapters 1-11 we have chosen 1:26 reflecting the emphasis on the **origin** of the human race, and for chapters 12-50 we have chosen 12:2 which states the **covenant** God made with Abraham, father of the chosen race.

Genesis opens by explaining the foundation that the eternal God "is" and the book assumes no other need to substantiate His existence. It closes with a promise of deliverance from the bondage in Egypt (50:24). Genesis begins with the faith principle (Hebrews 11:2, 6).

Open your heart as you read!

God's sovereignty is revealed in Genesis. The outcome of man depends completely on the grace of God. He has chosen to select a people through Christ's blood despite the universal death that sin has required. God is the initiator of all that is good, man is the responder to all He has decreed. Compare the theories of evolution to the plausibility of Intelligent Design as you read!

KEY BACKGROUND on the book of Genesis

AUTHOR

Genesis does not state who; tradition and other Scriptures assume it. We must keep in mind that Genesis is a part of the Pentateuch, the first five books of Law. As a unit, Moses is said to have composed it (Exodus 17:14; 24:4; 34:27) and other Old Testament books bear witness to this fact (Joshua 1:7, 8; 8:31; 1 Kings 2:3; 2 Kings 14:6). New Testament writers also make this clear (Acts 3:22; 13:39; 15:1,5,21; Romans 10:5, 19; 1 Corinthians 9:9; 2 Corinthians 3:15). Most convincing is the testimony of Christ (John 5:46-47).

Moses was not present through all of the events of Genesis by any means, but he was the one God chose to record the data. Moses was well qualified for the task (Acts 7:22). We are indebted to Moses for the only authoritative account of man's beginning. Many philosophies and theories come and go, but the Word of God has never been disproved. It is standing the test of time!

DATE

Sometime during the wilderness wanderings is probable. Moses is said to have been born in 1520 B.C. and lived 120 years. From 1 Kings 6:1 and Judges 11:26, we place the date of the Exodus at 1445 B.C. This allows time for the compiling of the remainder of the Pentateuch during the "wanderings" of the children of Israel (Numbers).

HISTORY

The book relates how Israel was selected from among the nations of the world to become God's chosen people. This explains why the author devoted 38 chapters to the chosen race, (covering a mere 350 years), but only 11 chapters to the human race, even though this section covers over 3,000 years. God's sovereign selection of His people (12:2) must be seen as the primary purpose of the book of Genesis.

Following the custom of designating a book by its opening word or words the Jews called this Bere'shith or "in the beginning" because it describes the beginnings of the universe, life, mankind, Sabbath, marriage, family, work, childhood, sin, pain, death, murder, sacrifice, races, languages, agriculture, city life, nations, government, the chosen people and salvation.

Why Study the book of Genesis?

1. After reading and studying this book, you will see more clearly that Genesis is indeed a book of beginnings. This study of God's Word can encourage you to make a new beginning with God as you learn what it means to truly walk with Him, day by day and year by year.
2. To answer crucial questions about man's origin, man's plight, man's nature, etc.
3. To gain a correct foundation and reference base for our study of the other 65 books of God's Word.
4. To address our need to view the Lord God in His sovereignty and to see the awesome magnificence of His creating and ruling power as He glorifies Himself.



Genesis Chapter Chart

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As you read each of the segments of Genesis you will find the following questions provoking as you seek to discern spiritual truth for your own life. Look specifically for God's initiative in Genesis!

Origins of the Human Race

Read Chapters 1-11

Chapter 1	Key Verse _____	Chapter Title _____
Chapter 2	Key Verse _____	Chapter Title _____
Chapter 3	Key Verse _____	Chapter Title _____
Chapter 4	Key Verse _____	Chapter Title _____
Chapter 5	Key Verse _____	Chapter Title _____
Chapter 6	Key Verse _____	Chapter Title _____
Chapter 7	Key Verse _____	Chapter Title _____
Chapter 8	Key Verse _____	Chapter Title _____
Chapter 9	Key Verse _____	Chapter Title _____
Chapter 10	Key Verse _____	Chapter Title _____
Chapter 11	Key Verse _____	Chapter Title _____

KEY QUESTIONS

1. How did man differ from the rest of God's creation?
2. On whom does the responsibility for the fall of mankind rest, Adam or Eve?
3. What is 3:20-24 trying to teach us?
4. What specifically was the cause of the universal flood?
5. Why didn't God desire for man to continue to speak one language?
6. What do we learn about the nature of God from these chapters? The nature of man?
7. Where do you feel you stand on the relationship between evolution and intelligent design?

What about today?

1. To what degree do you accept the Bible as literally and historically true?
2. How do we evidence the effects of the curse after the fall in our lives?
3. How does man reveal a continued desire to build towers (present-day examples)?
What does it teach you about expectations in living a life pleasing to God?

*We all are sons of Adam and as a result, partake in the sin of Adam (Romans 5:12).
How is this evidenced by your nature in your daily activities?*

Life of Abraham

Read Chapters 12-20

Chapter	Title	Key Verse
12		
13		
14		
15		
16		
17		
18		
19		
20		

KEY QUESTIONS:

1. What would you choose as the three or four major events of Abraham's life and why do you consider them prominent?
2. How do you think Abraham felt during each event?
3. Compare the promise to Abraham (12:1-3) with 1 Samuel 7:8-17 and Jeremiah 31:27-34. How are they similar? In what ways do they differ?
4. Why would you call Abraham a man of faith?

What about today?

1. What would you describe from your own life with God that would make you a man or woman of faith?
2. What can you specifically do to grow in your life of faith by looking at Abraham's example?
3. Read Hebrews 11:8-22 for further meditation on the subject of faith!

Notes on Abraham and experiencing a living faith:

Life of Isaac

Read Chapters 21-26

Chapter	Title	Key Verse
21		
22		
23		
24		
25		
26		

KEY QUESTIONS:

1. What would you choose as the three or four major events of Isaac's life and why would you consider them prominent?
2. How do you think Isaac felt during each event?
3. Where have you seen 26:3-5 before?
4. 25:23 describes the beginning of a struggle that will last hundreds of years. What is that struggle? (Note 27:36, 41).

What about today?

1. Read Romans 9. What is God's perspective on the twins? Relate this to the key phrase we have chosen for this book.
2. Also read Galatians 4:21-31. What is taught in this passage about the choice of God?
3. Just as God provided a sacrifice (Yahweh-Jireh) in 22:13-14, He has provided the "satisfaction" for our sin through His Son - the Lord Jesus (Hebrews 9:11-14).

What made Abraham's offering of Isaac acceptable and what do you think qualifies as an acceptable sacrifice today?

Notes on Isaac and the subject of "promise:"

Life of Jacob

Read Chapters 27-31

Chapter	Title	Key Verse
27		
28		
29		
30		
31		

KEY QUESTIONS:

1. How would you summarize Jacob's character in a few words?
2. What insights do we gain from Hebrews 12:14-17 concerning Jacob and Esau?
3. How is Jacob's dream connected with the original covenant with Abraham (Genesis 12)?
4. What does the dream (28) and wrestling (32) reveal about Jacob's growth in his knowledge of God?
5. How do we see God's sovereignty in Jacob's life? Through Laban's life?

What about today?

1. Compare your spiritual life with that of Jacob. What similarities and/or differences are evident to you?
2. Again read Hebrews 12:14-17. In what way does this exhortation reveal any needs in your own life as a follower of Christ?

Notes on Jacob and principles of spiritual growth and struggle:

Chapter	Title	Key Verse
32		
33		
34		
35		
36		

KEY QUESTIONS:

1. Briefly trace Jacob's (Israel) and Esau's (Edom) conflict through the years: Numbers 20:14-20; 1 Samuel 14:47; 1 Kings 11:14-25; 2 Chronicles 20:22; 21:8; and Obadiah. (Herod the Great in the days of Christ was an Edomite!)
2. Read Obadiah to observe how God deals with Esau (Edom). Do these actions seem fair?
3. What did the renewed covenant at Bethel involve (35)?
4. Why was Jacob named Israel?

What about today?

1. From studying Esau we see a vivid illustration of the principle of iniquity visiting *generations* to come (Deuteronomy 5:9,10). What are the implications for raising children today? Also note Matthew 10:24,25.
2. Jacob spent his life learning about God through his faith. Jot down a brief description of how you view your faith at the present time in relationship to the life of Jacob.

Notes on Jacob and principles of changing over time:

Life of Joseph

Read Chapters 37-44

Chapter	Title	Key Verse
37		
38		
39		
40		
41		
42		
43		
44		

KEY QUESTIONS:

1. More than any character in Genesis, Joseph portrays a 'type' of the Lord Jesus Christ. Make a list of the specific similarities to Christ's life that you recognize in this section (note circumstances and character traits).
2. What would you choose as the three or four major events of Joseph's experiences?
3. What do you perceive Joseph's feelings were during these events?
4. How is God's sovereignty revealed in the life of Joseph?

What about today?

1. Joseph knew how to deal with immorality (39). What can you learn from Joseph's example?
2. Reread 41:16. What do we learn about Joseph's character from this verse? What are the implications for you as a servant of Christ?

Notes on Joseph and principles of God's sovereign care:

Life of Joseph

Read Chapters 45-50

Chapter	Title	Key Verse
45		
46		
47		
48		
49		
50		

KEY QUESTIONS:

1. What do we learn about Jacob's latter days?
2. Why was it necessary to go down into Egypt?
3. Particularly note Israel's (Jacob) dying prophecy about his sons (49:1-33). This represents the twelve tribes of Israel that will play a part in the conquest and settlement of the land recorded in Joshua. From which of these twelve tribes did Jesus come?

What about today?

1. What does 45:5 reveal about Joseph's heart? What lesson does it give us as we consider our own growth?
2. Note God's confirmation in 46:3,4. What does this reveal about the slavery to come? Our slavery to sin?
3. What does 48:15-22 reveal about God's sovereign choice?
4. Familiarize yourself with Jacob's blessing of the twelve tribes. A basic understanding now will help you in future study!

God's sovereign choice is apparent in the book of Genesis!

1 Peter 2:1-10 talks about the sovereign choice of God. Also read Romans 8:26-39 and Romans 9.

God has a plan. Pray a prayer of worship and thanks to your great God who has known you from the foundations of the world (Ephesians 1:1-23)!

GENESIS FAMILY ORIGINS

Here we provide a study of these six patriarch's family origins throughout the Scriptures. Use it to do a topical study as you seek to learn more about God and men!

What do you learn about God's supreme control and care as you consider each patriarch?

ADAM

REPRESENTATIVE OF FALLEN HUMANITY

Genesis 2:19-23; 3:8,9,17,20,21; 4:1,25; 5:1-5; 1 Chronicles 1:1; Job 31:33; Luke 3:38; Romans 5:14; 1 Corinthians 15:22,45; 1 Timothy 1:13,14.

NOAH

EXAMPLE OF ONE WHO RECEIVED GRACE AND DELIVERANCE

Genesis 5:29; 6:8-22; 7:1-24; 8:1-20;9:1-29; 1 Chronicles 1:1; Isaiah 54:9; Ezekiel 14:14,20; Hebrews 11:7; 1 Peter 3:20; 11 Peter 2:5

ABRAHAM

FATHER OF THOSE BOUGHT BACK THROUGH FAITH

Genesis 11:26-31; 12:1-18; 13:4,14; 14:19; 15:1-18; 16:15,16; 17:5-7; 18:19; 22:1-20; 25:8; Exodus 2:24; 6:8; Leviticus 26:42; Numbers 32:11; Psalm 105:6; Isaiah 29:22; Ezekiel 33:24; Luke 1:55; 3:8; 19:9; John 8:58; Romans 4:1-3,9,10-13,16; Galatians 3:6-9, 16-18; Hebrews 6:13; James 2:21-23.

ISAAC

SON OF PROMISE

Genesis 17:19-21; 21:4, 12; 25:5; 26:12,27; 28; 35:28,29; Exodus 3:6; Leviticus 26:42; Joshua 24:3,4; Psalm 105:9; Romans 9:7-10; Galatians 4:27-29; Hebrews 11:9,17,18,20; James 2:21.

JACOB

SON OF SOVEREIGN CHOICE

Genesis 25:26,27; 27; 28:10-22; 29:20; 35:22-29; 49; Exodus 2:24; Leviticus 26:42; Psalm 105:6; John 4:12; Acts 7:11-15; Romans 9:10-13; Hebrews 11:21

JOSEPH

SON OF SOVEREIGN CIRCUMSTANCES

Genesis 30:24,25; 37:39-50; (Key verses - 45:4-8); Exodus 1:6; Psalm 105:16-22; Acts 7:8-18; Hebrews 11:22; Revelation 7:8.

Summarize in your own words a central lesson you learn from each patriarch:



Read 1 Corinthians 8:6 as you begin.

Sovereignty defined:

- 1) Supreme excellence or an example of it;
- 2) Supreme power, freedom from external control, or; autonomous controlling influence.

When speaking of the sovereignty of God we might say that He exercises complete control that transcends the whims and transitory circumstances of men.

Here are some passages that reflect the supreme influence of the Master of Mankind!

- 1 Chronicles 29:11 Supreme in ownership!
- Revelation 4:11 Supreme over all that is created!
- Psalms 103:19 Supreme as Ruler!
- Romans 11:33-36 Supreme in effective will!
- Philippians 2:13 Supreme over human will!
- 1 John 5:14 Supreme in effective prayer!

Here are some of Scripture's guidelines for our response to the Supreme Authority of the Lord God! Record what you feel should be our response in light of each passage:

- Romans 8:35-39 _____
- Philippians 4:4-7 _____
- Romans 12:1,2 _____
- Deuteronomy 33:26-27 (Also note Luke 22:31) _____
- John 1:13 (Also note John 6:37,44,65) _____

Here are some crucial considerations in light of God's sovereignty over the affairs of men:

- 1. What part does man have in finding salvation?
- 2. What reason does a Christian have for being anxious?
- 3. What right does mankind have in asserting *ownership* over our possessions?
- 4. How do you assert yourself as supreme when it comes to the choices and events of your life?
- 5. Have you learned what it means to rest in God's sovereign authority?
- 6. Do you find your security in His ultimate control?
- 7. Do you feel you are being humbled before God?

(continued)

GOD'S SOVEREIGNTY (Continued)

A closing thought for your meditation.

"If Christ is not valued above all, He is not valued at all."

Read 2 Corinthians 10:5,6

What do these verses teach us about our response to God's sovereignty?

God has chosen us to be a people for His own possession, zealous for good deeds. Many have debated the extent of God's sovereignty in relationship to Man's responsibility. A study of the words "choose" and "elect" can help give us food for thought as we wrestle with this incredible concept - as eternity meets humanity!

1. **Choose:** Bachar (Baw-Khar') used in the Old Testament

Select, acceptable, appoint, choose (choice), excellent, to join.

Deuteronomy 7:7; 12:1-4; 14:23-25; 16:1-16; 4:36-40; Joshua 24:1-28;
1 Samuel 2:27-36; 42:1; 45:4-7; 65:9,22; 1 Kings 8:16; 2 Chronicles 6:5;
Nehemiah 9:6-8; Psalm 47; 65:4; 33:6-12; Ezekiel 20:1-32.

2. **Elect:** Eklektos (Ek-Lek-Tos') used in the New Testament

Matthew 24:24,31; Mark 13:22,27; Luke 18:7; Romans 8:33; Colossians
3:12-17; 1 Timothy 5:21; Titus 1:1; 1 Peter 1:2; 2:6; 2 John 1:13; Romans
9:11; 11:5,7,28; 1 John 1:4; 2 Peter 1:10; Matthew 24:22; Mark 13:20;
2 John 2:10; John 15:16; Acts 20:28.

What have you learned about God's sovereignty?

4 GENESIS ATTRIBUTES

The following study considers the attributes of God as they are revealed in Genesis. An attribute is similar to a character quality in that it is inseparably a part of God.

It is difficult to find examples in Scripture of one attribute of God where another is not also revealed.

A ALL KNOWING

He Promises Concern.....
Genesis 15:5, 16:10-12; 18:10-24 and 21:1,2; 25:23.

T TOTALLY HOLY

He Commands His Children to be Holy...
Genesis 3:8-10 (consider 2:25); 17:1; 18:19

T TOTALLY PRESENT

Joseph.....He is there no matter what the circumstances...
Skim Through Genesis 37-50 in the N.I.V. (also the attached study on sovereignty)

R RIGHTEOUSLY TRUE AND JUST

Sodom and Gomorrah.....His standards and His resolve are as constant as Himself...
Genesis 18:22-33.

I IMMUTABLE (UNCHANGABLE)

Genesis 22:15-18 (Isaiah 46:3-4; Malachi 3:6).

B BENEVOLENT

Hagar and Ishmael (even though Ishmael was the *son of the flesh*, not the *son of the promise*)

B

Genesis 16:10,11; 21:13-20; Isaiah 49:14-16a; (also note His covenant with creation
Genesis 8:21; 9:8-17).

U UNBOUND

U

The only way God is 'bound' is that He will perform what He has spoken!
Genesis 17:18 'I will establish my covenant between Me and you.'
Numbers 23:19; 1 Samuel 15:29 (unchanging); Isaiah 25:1; in the words of Jesus
(Matthew 5:17-18; Matthew 24:35; Mark 13:31).

T

T TOTALLY POWERFUL

Genesis 15:13-21 His power transcends even the unbelievable!
Example: The ability (or inability) to bear children -- Genesis 16:2, 25:21; 29:31-35; 30:2,17,22.

E

E ETERNAL

'In the beginning...God!' - Genesis 1:1; Revelation 1:8; 22:13 -- All knowing -- knows past, present, and future. Eternal...is past, present, and future. Compare these two.

S

S SOVEREIGN

Joseph; Rebekah
Genesis 24:12-15 N.I.V.

SUMMARY

Consider the list of attributes as they compare to these references:

Isaiah 43:1-3; 10-13; 44:6-8; 45:21-24a; 46:8-10,116.

We must continually consider, behold, and worship the God of Heaven as He has revealed Himself to us! We worship Him in Spirit and Truth!

GENESIS OVERVIEW (5 minutes)

Where do we come from? Does God exist? Why are things the way that they are? Where are we going? Genesis provides clear answers into these and many other questions about the origins of life, the destiny and condition of mankind, and how we find significance in our lives!

The book of Genesis is the oldest book in the bible. Moses was given the privilege of recording what was given to Him by oral tradition or story, as well as revelation from the Holy Spirit. Think about it - if there is a God - and He wanted to communicate with mankind in a way that would be relevant in any century, among any race, in any part of the world - what could be better than story?

In fact, after 30 years of thinking about this - I can't think of a better way - can you?!

Genesis tells us the story of the Origins of the human race in chapters 1-11, and then the Origins of the chosen race in chapters 12-50. In chapters 1-11 there are four major events: The Creation - The Fall - The Flood - and The building of the tower to heaven. From these four events we learn a wealth of insights about God, mankind, and how we relate to one another in the arena of faith and redemption.

One thing that is quite apparent about God's nature is that He delights in rescuing people, situations - and even creation itself. It is in this plan of rescue that God receives the ultimate glory - something that a God of this magnitude truly deserves from those He has created!

In the creation we see several things. First - supernatural power and a sense of wonder. To imagine a Being who has always existed in infinite expanse is mind-blowing in and of itself - but to visualize Him moving His hand to create universes, an inhabitable wonder like earth, and then the complex and wonderful creatures that populate the earth - is truly astonishing. Next, light was separated from darkness before the sun, moon, and stars were created. This means that the reality of light and darkness are every bit as real as anything you can reach out and touch right now. The sense of wonder that comes from contemplating God is part of the fuel that feeds a man or woman's faith - and our hope for significance beyond a mere 80 or 90 years.

The fall of mankind answers questions about evil in the world, the harsh environment in which we live, and the need for blood to be shed to "buy back" our lost souls. The flood not only explains much about the fossil record and theories of evolution and origins, it displays God's disposition on judgment and grace - and how the two exist hand in hand throughout the entire movement of mankind's history. In the tower we see mankind's fallen propensity to disobey God and to enthrone ourselves in God's place.

In God's plan He would bring a Messiah or deliverer into the world. He killed animals and used their skins to cover Adam and Eve's nakedness - now He will choose to kill His Son to buy back the souls of men. This Deliverer will come into the world through the Chosen Race - the Hebrew nation made from one man - Abraham. This part of the story shows us how foundations are laid to rescue the earth, and how faith is built in the lives of Abraham, Isaac, Jacob, and Joseph -- and how the human roots of Jesus of Nazareth are planted in the earth.

This is a brief sketch of the usefulness of the book of Genesis in understanding where we come from and where we are going. Genesis - origins of the human race/four events: creation-fall-flood-tower. Chosen race/four persons: Abraham, Isaac, Jacob, and Joseph. Welcome to the book of Genesis!