

I. Genesis Part 1

a. Purpose: In this session we shall begin our look at the book of Genesis beginning with the authorship, Purpose, structure, place of this book in the Canon and also a closer look at Genesis 1-11.

b. Authorship

i. Today there are some scholars that question the authorship of this book by Moses.

ii. Reasons why Genesis is written by Moses

1. Moses was capable of authoring the book of Genesis: *“Moses was educated in all the learning of the Egyptians, and he was a man of power in words and deeds.”* (Acts 7:22)

a. This is in the context the message by Stephen before He was martyred.

b. Here God’s Word record the truth that Moses was a learned man and when one sees the depth of the book of Moses we see that someone learned wrote it and Moses has the qualification to write such a book.

2. Genesis is part of the first five books in the Bible called the Laws of Moses which are seen as from Moses.

a. Jesus saw these books that would have included Genesis as being from Moses when He called it the Laws of Moses:

“Now He said to them, ‘These are My words which I spoke to you while I was still with you, that all things which are written about Me in the Law of Moses and the Prophets and the Psalms must be fulfilled.’” (Luke 24:44)

b. *“For if you believed Moses, you would believe Me, for he wrote about Me. 47 But if you do not believe his writings, how will you believe My words?”* (John 5:46-47)

i. In **verse 41** Jesus in the context is talking about Scripture testifying about Jesus.

ii. Here in **v.46-47** we see Jesus saw Scripture includes portion that Moses wrote.

iii. If Genesis and the first five books (Pentateuch) are not from Moses, what part of the Scripture did Moses write?

iv. This verse also explains why some (not all) who question the authorship of Genesis and the first five books also have a hard time believing Jesus.

c. The Apostle and Author John believed they were from Moses: *“For the Law was given through Moses; grace and truth were realized through Jesus Christ.”* (John 1:17)

c. Purpose and Structure

i. Purpose:

1. According to Andrew Hill and John Walton: “The purpose of the book is to tell how and why Yahweh came to choose Abraham’s family and make a covenant with them.”¹
 2. It is an introduction to the living God, since the book is literally titled “In the Beginning...”
 3. It is a book on the blessing God has given: A dominating word in Genesis is “blessing” which occurs 88 times in the whole book of Genesis whether in verbal or noun form.²
- ii. Structure
1. The book of Genesis has 50 chapters consisting largely of narrative.
 2. The book of Genesis helps us to see each section within the book since each new section is introduced with the phrase “This is the account of...”³
 - a. Eleven times this phrase is used.
 - b. It appears showing the following section:
 - i. Creation to Adam’s line (**Genesis 2:4ff**)
 - ii. Adam to Noah’s line (**Genesis 5:1ff**)
 - iii. Noah’s line to Noah’s three sons (**Genesis 6:9ff**)
 - iv. Noah’s three sons to his Noah’s sons Shem (**Genesis 10:1ff**)
 - v. Shem to Terah (**Genesis 11:10ff**)
 - vi. Terah to Abraham (**Genesis 11:27ff**)
 - vii. Abraham to Ishmael (**Genesis 25:12**)
 - viii. Abraham to Issac (**Genesis 25:19**)
 - ix. Generations of Essau (**Genesis 36:1, 9**)
 - x. Generation of Issac (**Genesis 37:2**)
 3. As a big picture perspective the book can be divided into parts:
 - a. Universal and Primitive History (**Genesis 1-11**)
 - b. Unique and Patriarch History (**Genesis 12-50**)
 4. Explanation:
 - a. Universal and Primitive History (**Genesis 1-11**)
 - i. By universal we mean that it is the common history of all people who descended from Adam and Eve.
 - ii. By Primitive we mean it is history of the ancient past.
 - b. Unique and Patriarch History (**Genesis 12-50**)
 - i. By unique we mean that the history from Genesis 12 onwards is going to narrow down specifically towards Abraham and his descendants onwards.

¹ Andrew Hill and John Walton, *A Survey of the Old Testament* (Grand Rapids: Zondervan), 82.

² Walter Kaiser, *The Promise-Plan of God* (Grand Rapids: Zondervan), 35.

³ Walter Kaiser, *The Promise-Plan of God* (Grand Rapids: Zondervan), 35. Note the following information is also from this reference.

- ii. By Patriarch we mean the term typically used to refer to the father of Israel beginning with Abraham and His line of descendants before Moses.
- d. Place of this book in the Canon:
 - i. “Genesis provided the theological and historical foundation for the Exodus and the covenant at Sinai.”⁴
 - ii. It also is the foundation for the rest of the theology in the Bible and the Gospel.
- e. Closer Look: The major events in **Genesis 1-11**
 - i. Four major events:
 1. The Formation of the World (**Genesis 1-2**)
 2. The Fall (**Genesis 3**)
 3. The Flood (**Genesis 6-9**)
 4. The Failure of Babel (**Genesis 11**)
 - ii. Observations:
 1. With the exception of the first major event the last three events are the record of humanity’s failures.
 2. Yet in all four events we see God’s blessings or God’s promise of continual blessings.
 3. There is a rhythm in the narrative: God’s blessing→human failure→God’s punishment→Yet God’s promise of blessing as we shall see below.
 - iii. The Formation of the World (**Genesis 1-2**)
 1. During the account of the creation of the world, God said twice in **Genesis 1:22, 28** that God blessed humanity that God created.⁵
 2. Note how specifically the passages identified being fruitful and multiplying as an outflow of God’s blessings.
 3. Another way we see God’s creation of the world was a blessing is the amount of times **Genesis 1** tells us that what God created was “good” (v.3, 10, 12, 18, 21, 25, 31).
 - iv. The Fall (**Genesis 3**)
 1. Recall previously God’s blessing of creation and also the dominion mandate seen in the formation of the world.
 2. Knowing God’s blessing makes it all the more tragic the next major event being human failure: The eating of the forbidden fruit in **Genesis 3:1-6**.
 3. Certainly there are words and actions from God concerning the consequences of sin found in **Genesis 3:14-24**.
 4. Yet there’s still God’s promise of blessing: The seed
 - a. God’s words of promise of blessing is rooted in **Genesis 3:15**: “*And I will put enmity Between you and the woman, And between your seed and her seed; He shall bruise you on the head, And you shall bruise him on the heel.*”

⁴ Allen Ross, “Genesis” in *Bible Knowledge Commentary* (Colorado Springs, Colorado: Victor), 15.

⁵ Walter Kaiser, *The Promise-Plan of God* (Grand Rapids: Zondervan), 40.

- b. Here there is a hope of a woman's seed who will bruise Satan.
 - c. We have covered more about this hope why this is the Messiah elsewhere in other messages; I encourage you to listen to them on Sermon Audio: Marriage and Redemption.
- v. The Flood (**Genesis 6-9**)
 1. Recall previously God's blessing of creation and also the dominion mandate.

Genesis 5:2 situated after the Fall but before the event of the flood echoes **Genesis 1:22** and **Genesis 1:28** by reaffirming God's blessings to His people: *"He created them male and female, and He blessed them and named them Man in the day when they were created."*
 2. Human failure: Great wickedness
 - a. **Genesis 6:5**: *"Then the Lord saw that the wickedness of man was great on the earth, and that every intent of the thoughts of his heart was only evil continually."*
 - b. **Genesis 6:11**: *"Now the earth was corrupt in the sight of God, and the earth was filled with violence."*
 - i. The word for violence means extreme violence.
 - ii. We can see example of that kind of violence in the bragging of violence in **Genesis 4:23-24**.
 3. Certainly there are words and actions from God concerning the consequences of sin which is what the flood was all about.
 4. God's promise of blessing: God would "dwell" in Shem's line
 - a. **Genesis 9:26-27**: *"He also said, "Blessed be the Lord, The God of Shem; And let Canaan be [m]his servant. 27 "May God enlarge Japheth, And let him dwell in the tents of Shem; And let Canaan be [n]his servant. ""*
 - b. In **verse 27** it is God that is the subject of *"dwell in the tents of Shem."*
 - c. The verb *"dwell"* is also the same kind of verb later used to described God's glory dwelling in the tabernacle.⁶
 - d. Don't miss **verse 26** about God being God of Shem too.
- vi. The Failure of Babel (**Genesis 11**)
 1. Recall previously God's blessing of creation and also the dominion mandate.

Genesis 9:1 situated after the Flood but before the event of the failure of Babel echoes **Genesis 1:22** and **Genesis 1:28** by reaffirming God's blessings to His people: *"And God blessed Noah and his sons and said to them, "Be fruitful and multiply, and fill the earth."*
 2. Human failure: Building of Tower to Reach God

⁶ Walter Kaiser, *The Promise-Plan of God* (Grand Rapids: Zondervan), 35. Note the following information is also from this reference.

3. God's promise of blessing: The seed that will bless the nations in
Genesis 12:3

f. Implications

- i. Do you see the goodness of God in creation?
- ii. Do you worship and thank God for His blessings even though we are ill-deserving?
- iii. Do you trust that God is faithful with His promise even though we can't understand the situation we are going through at the moment?