



STUDIES 1-9
Bible Studies : Term 3 : 2019

GENESIS

‘In the beginning God ...’

As human beings we all seem to be, almost inordinately, interested in beginnings and ending. Where did you come from? Where do you go? How did this ‘thing’ come into being? How did this end? In our, just ended, series on 1 John we started out with “That which was from the beginning ...” and came to the end with the assurance that “we are in him who is true – even in his Son Jesus Christ. He is true God and eternal life” (The ending that has no ending)

In this series of studies we look to the very opening chapters of the Bible, Genesis 1-11. Here we see the literal ‘genesis’ of all things, the very beginning as God, by his word, creates, out of nothing, all that there is and places mankind, made in his image, in the midst of a perfect creation. Then we will see the marring and defacing of that work and that image as sin enters and spreads and we will marvel at the God who, all along, has a plan to bring humanity, and His creation, back to Him and to the eternal life that 1 John spoke about.

Throughout these there is much for us to learn about the world we live in, the Lord God we serve, our environment, our fellow human beings, our neighbors and ourselves.

May God grant us his grace (demonstrated throughout these chapters) so that we can ‘read, mark, learn and inwardly digest*’ what he is saying to us and so live lives in better service to Him.

Greg Holmes - July 2019

**From the Book of Common Prayer, 1662, Collect for 2nd Sunday in Advent*

GENESIS 1-11 - BEGINNINGS

THE STUDIES

Week Ending	Study	Passage	Title	Page No
Sun 28 Jul	1	<i>Genesis 1:1-2:3</i>	<i>The World</i>	6
Sun 4 Aug	2	<i>Genesis 2:4-25</i>	<i>Man</i>	7
Sun 11 Aug	3	<i>Genesis 3</i>	<i>Sin</i>	8
Sun 18 Aug	4	<i>Genesis 4</i>	<i>Murder</i>	9
Sun 25 Aug	5	<i>Genesis 5:1-6:7</i>	<i>Ongoing Sinfulness</i>	10
Sun 1 Sep	6	<i>Genesis 6:8-7:24</i>	<i>Judgement</i>	11
Sun 8 Sep	7	<i>Genesis 8</i>	<i>Rescue</i>	12
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Sun 22 Sep	9	<i>Genesis 10-11</i>	<i>Language and Division</i>	14

Helpful References:

Kidner, D. Genesis (Tyndale Old Testament Commentaries) (Leicester, IVP, 1967) (*An Oldy but a Goody*)

Reid, A. Genesis: Salvation Begins (Sydney South, Aquila, 2000) (*A newish Australian perspective- thoroughly recommended.*)

Wenham, G.J. "Genesis" in Carson, D.A., France, R.T, Motyer, J.A., Wenham, G.J. (Eds) NEW BIBLE COMMENTARY : 21st Century Edition (LEICESTER, IVP, 1994)

Longman, T(III). Genesis (The Story of God Commentary) (Grand Rapids, Zondervan, 2016).

Lennox, J.C. Seven Days that Divide the World (Grand Rapids, Zondervan, 2011)

And the Mark Dever sermon on Genesis at

<http://www.capitolhillbaptist.org/sermon/>

The outline of Genesis on the Bible Project website.

<https://thebibleproject.com/all-videos/>

GENESIS 1-11 - BEGINNINGS

Some Background Thoughts:

In many ways these chapter represent some of the most controversial chapters in the Scriptures about which Christians, many of whom hold a high view of the Bible as God's word, disagree on some (much) of the detail.

First the chapters raise the thorny issue of Bible v Science*. As far as I have been able I have kept to an agnostic point of view on these issues in the Bible Studies, focussing on the text and its meaning for its original readers and for us.

That said it is important to stress that these chapters are not a scientific textbook and only incidentally cross over into science. The passages are primarily concerned with why and who rather than what and how.

It is also very easy to let the issue of Science v Theology cloud helpful interpretation and application of the text.

Important to all of this is the nature of the creation of man and the nature of the fall. The passages from 3:6 on record the spread of sin among humankind and its pervasive influence. This brings God's judgement in speech, then his acts of judgement combined with the element of grace on each occasion except in Chapter 11 where we have to wait for Chapter 12 to begin the story of ultimate grace which in the end works itself out in Jesus death and resurrection.

Image, Rest, Salvation and Judgment on sin, seem to me to be the major themes.

From time to time I have used the word 'story' in relation to the various narratives in these chapters. This is in no way intended to infer anything about the historicity of the events it is used simply because this is the way these incidents are told.

Remember, at all times, that this is God's word revealed to us for the purpose of "... teaching, rebuking, correcting and training in righteousness, so that the servant of God may be thoroughly equipped for every good work" (2 Timothy 3:16-17). And so it applies to us right now and should effect the way we live our lives here in Kiama this day, this week, this month ...

** Possibly the thorniest of these issues is the nature of the 6 days. If you want to read more about this I can heartily recommend the John Lennox book "Seven Days That Divide the World" for a worthwhile attempt at a balanced view. For material on a literal six 24 hour days see www.creation.com or for another view the work of Hugh Ross at www.reasons.org is interesting. Also "Reading Genesis 1-2 : An Evangelical Conversation", J. Daryl Charles (Ed) (Peabody, Hendrikson, 2013) gives a number of perspectives.*

GENESIS 1-11 - BEGINNINGS

Genesis, Book Of (Selections from the New Bible Dictionary article.)

I. Outline of contents

a. Pre-history: the creation record (1:1–2:3)

b. The story of man (2:4–11:26)

His creation and Fall (2:4–3:24); his increasing numbers (4:1–6:8); the judgment of the Flood (6:9–9:29); the rise of nations (10:1–11:26).

c. The story of Abraham (11:27–23:20)

d. The story of Isaac (24:1–26:35)

e. The story of Jacob (27:1–36:43)

f. The story of Joseph (37:1–50:26)

A technical analysis may also be based on the 10 occurrences of the phrase (or its equivalent), 'These are the generations of ...' *'Generations' (Heb. *tôlêdôt*) means 'begettings' or 'genealogical records'. This phrase is used with reference to the heavens and the earth (2:4); Adam (5:1); Noah (6:9); the sons of Noah (10:1); Shem (11:10); Terah (11:27); Ishmael (25:12); Isaac (25:19); Esau (36:1); Jacob (37:2).

III. The place of Genesis in the Bible

Genesis is the Book of Beginnings, the great introduction to the drama of redemption. Gn. 1–11 may be regarded as the prologue to the drama, whose first act begins at ch. 12 with the introduction of Abraham. At the other end of the drama the book of Revelation is the epilogue.

The prologue is cast in universal terms. God made all things (ch. 1). In particular, he made man, who became a rebel and a sinner (chs. 2–3). Sin became universal (ch. 4), and being rebellion against God is always under divine judgment, exemplified in the story of the Flood (chs. 6–9). Even after God had demonstrated his displeasure by an act of judgment in the Flood, man returned to his rebellion (ch. 11). Yet always God gave evidences of grace and mercy. Adam and Eve were cast out, but not destroyed (ch. 3); Cain was driven out but 'marked' by God (ch. 4); mankind was overwhelmed by the Flood but not obliterated, for a remnant was saved (chs. 6–9); man was scattered but allowed to live on (ch. 11).

That is the prologue which paints the background for the drama which is about to develop. What was God's answer to the universal, persistent sin of man? As the drama proper opens in Gn. 12 we meet Abraham, the first stage in God's answer.

GENESIS 1-11 - BEGINNINGS

IV. Genesis and Historicity

It is extremely difficult to obtain independent evidence as to the historicity of Genesis, since many of the narratives have no parallel in non-biblical literature. This is especially difficult for Gn. 1–11, though easier for Gn. 12–50. It should always be remembered that much in the Bible is beyond scientific investigation, but notably those areas which touch on faith and personal relations. The areas on which one might ask for evidence in Genesis may be summarized as follows:

a. The creation

b. The origin of man

The Bible asserts that God made man. It does not allow that there was any other source for man's origin. It is not possible, however, to discover, from Genesis precisely how God did this. Scientifically, the origin of man is still obscure, and neither archaeology nor anthropology can give a final answer as to the time, place or means of man's origin. It is safest for the Christian to be cautious about the subject, to be content to assert with Genesis that, however it happened, God lay behind the process, and to be content to await further evidence before rushing to hasty conclusions.

c. The Flood

There is no final evidence here either as to the time, the extent or the cause. There were certainly extensive floods in the area from which the Patriarchs came, and the ancient Sumerians had a detailed account of a great flood in the ancient world. There are no serious reasons, however, for accepting the suggestion of Sir Leonard Woolley that the flood at Ur, which left a deep deposit of silt revealed by his excavation, was in fact the result of the Bible Flood.

V. Genesis and Theology

It cannot be emphasized too strongly that the primary value of Genesis, as indeed of all Scripture, is theological. It is possible to devote a great deal of time and energy to all kinds of incidental details and to miss the great theological issues. For example, the story of the Flood speaks of sin, judgment, redemption, new life. To be occupied with details about the size of the ark, and with problems of feeding or of the disposal of refuse, is to be concerned with side-issues. While God's revelation was largely in historical events, and while history is of tremendous significance for the biblical revelation, it is the theological significance of events that is finally important. Where corroborative evidence of the Genesis narratives is lacking, the theological significance may still be discerned.

J.S. Wright

GENESIS 1-11 - BEGINNINGS

Study 1: GENESIS 1:1-2:3

Beginnings: The World

A Reading Guide:

Day 1	Day 2	Day 3	Day 4	Day 5
Gen. 1:1-13	Gen. 1:14-25	Gen. 1:26-2:3	John 1:1-3	Psalm 19

Listen to the Story.

Read Genesis 1:1-2:3

Explain the Story.

1. Who or what is there at the beginning of this passage (v1)? At the end (2:2-3)?
2. How does God make things?
3. In what order is creation presented? This chart from Andrew Reid's commentary may help.

v1	
<u>Realms/Form</u>	<u>Inhabitants/ Use</u>
Day 1:	Day 4:
Day 2:	Day 5:
Day 3:	Day 6:
Day 7:	

Explore the Story.

1. Note where the word 'create' is used in the passage. What does this tell you?
2. What is the pinnacle of creation in this account?
3. Look at John 1:1-3 and Colossians 1:15. What do these verses tell us about Jesus and Creation?
4. What is the 'end' of creation (2:2)?

Live the Story.

1. What does it mean to be created in the image of God?
2. So how should we view our role in the creation and in relation to other men and women?

For Next Week: Genesis 2:4-25.

GENESIS 1-11 - BEGINNINGS

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Study 2: GENESIS 2:4-25

Beginnings: Man

A Reading Guide:

Day 1	Day 2	Day 3	Day 4	Day 5
Genesis 2:4-9	Genesis 2:10-17	Genesis 2:18-25	Psalms 8	Revelation 21:1-14

Listen to the Story.

Read Genesis 2:4-25

Explain the Story.

1. Note 2:4. Why is this story being told again? What is the point?
2. How was man made? Where was he placed?
3. What was the one rule in the Garden?
4. What problem was Adam perceived to have had? What was the process used to solve it and what was the solution?

Explore the Story.

1. What was Adam placed in the garden to do?
2. What specific trees are mentioned? Why?
3. What point is the last verse (2:25) making?
4. Look at Revelation 21 and 22. What links and parallels can you see to Genesis 1 and 2?

Live the Story.

1. Genesis 2:23 has been called 'the first ever love poem'. What does it say about human relationships?
2. In Genesis 2 we see the relationships between God and Man, Man and Man and Man and the creation at their perfect best. Discuss?

For Next Week: Genesis 3.

GENESIS 1-11 - BEGINNINGS

GENESIS 1-11 - BEGINNINGS

Study 3: GENESIS 3

Beginnings: Sin

A Reading Guide:

Day 1	Day 2	Day 3	Day 4	Day 5
Genesis 3:1-7	Genesis 3:8-15	Genesis 3:16-24	Romans 5:12-19	1 Corinthians 15:29-22; 42-49

Listen to the Story.

Read Genesis 3:1-24

Explain the Story.

1. Like in the movies list the cast of this chapter in order of appearance?
2. What is the character of the speech of the Serpent, the Woman, and her Husband?
3. Where did God find them? What does this tell you about their relationship to Him?
4. In general what is the character of God's 'speech'?

Explore the Story.

1. Note below the consequences for the Serpent, Adam, Eve, and the environment.

Serpent	Adam	Eve	Environment

2. Note verses 15, 21 and 20. What does this show us of the character of God?
3. Read Romans 5:12-19 and 1 Corinthians 15:29-22; 42-49. What does God do to undo the consequences of sin?

Live the Story.

1. Reflect on the nature of Sin. Do you take sin seriously enough?
2. What is your big temptation?

For Next Week: Genesis 4.

GENESIS 1-11 - BEGINNINGS

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Study 4: GENESIS 4

Beginnings: Murder

A Reading Guide:

Day 1	Day 2	Day 3	Day 4	Day 5
Genesis 4:1-8	Genesis 4:9-16	Genesis 4:17-26	1 John 3:11-15	Exodus 3:11-15

Listen to the Story.

Read Genesis 4:1-26

Explain the Story.

1. What now happens with Adam and Eve outside the Garden?
2. What happens between Abel and Cain?
3. What is Cain's punishment? What protection is he afforded?
4. What are we told about Cain's family?

Explore the Story.

1. Why is Abel's sacrifice accepted and Cain's not?
2. What is the reason for Cain's sin?
3. What is the LORD's role in this entire chapter?
4. One writer on these chapters speaks of the "Spread of Sin, Spread of Grace". What evidence do you see of this in this chapter?
5. What is the last sentence all about?

Live the Story.

1. Note Philippians 4:18. As Christians what are acceptable 'sacrifices'(offerings)?
2. Jealousy, arrogance and envy are persistent taskmasters. What should we do about them in our lives?

For Next Week: Genesis 5:1-6:7.

GENESIS 1-11 - BEGINNINGS

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Study 5: GENESIS 5:1-6:7

Beginnings: Ongoing Sinfulness

A Reading Guide:

Day 1	Day 2	Day 3	Day 4	Day 5
Genesis 5:1-20	Genesis 5:21-32	Genesis 6:1-7(8)	Hebrews 11:1-6	Romans 1:18-32

Listen to the Story.

Read Genesis 5:1-6:7

Explain the Story.

- 1. What does 5:1-2 have to tell us? Why the review?**
- 2. Note the account of Enoch 5:18-24. What is different about it? Why?**
- 3. What do you make of 6:1-4?**
- 4. How does 6:5-7 relate to chapter 3? What does God decide to do about it?**

Explore the Story.

- 1. When you come to the genealogies in the Bible what do you do? Giving it a bit more thought, what do they tell us?**
- 2. Some of these people live a long (long) time. What does that indicate?**
- 3. God made, sustains and loves humankind. What is His attitude to sin?**
- 4. Have a sneak peek at 6:8.**

Live the Story.

- 1. How do you process this sort of material? What does it tell you of God's work in your life and in the world?**
- 2. Read 6:5 again. Is this a description of our times? What should we do about it?(Note Romans 1:18-32)**

For Next Week: Genesis 6:8-7:24.

GENESIS 1-11 - BEGINNINGS

GENESIS 1-11 - BEGINNINGS

Study 6: GENESIS 6:8-7:24

Beginnings: Judgement

A Reading Guide:

Day 1	Day 2	Day 3	Day 4	Day 5
Genesis 6:8-22	Genesis 7:1-12	Genesis 7:13-24	Hebrews 11:1-7	2 Peter 2:4-9

Listen to the Story.

Read Genesis 6:8-7:24

Explain the Story.

1. Read 6:5-8. What difference does one man make?
2. How is he described in 6:9-10?
3. What instructions is Noah given?
4. Who (what) is Noah to take with him?
5. What happens 7:17-24?

Explore the Story.

1. Just to revise: What is the problem with the world?
Note 6:5-7, 11-12,13.
2. Note the significant word in v18. Why is this important?
3. What is the element of grace we see here?
4. Who is 'left' (7:23)? What is God doing?

Live the Story.

1. Note 6:22. Compare this with 6:8-9; Hebrews 11:7 and 1 Peter 2:5. What sort of example to us is Noah?
2. How are we saved? What does the story of Noah have to say about the nature of our salvation?

For Next Week: Genesis 8:1-22.

GENESIS 1-11 - BEGINNINGS

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Study 7: GENESIS 8:1-22

Beginnings: Rescue

A Reading Guide:

Day 1	Day 2	Day 3	Day 4	Day 5
Genesis 8:1-12	Genesis 8:13-19	Genesis 8:20-22	Luke 17:22-37	1 Peter 3:18-22

Listen to the Story.

Read Genesis 8:1-22

Explain the Story.

1. Read v1-2. What now happens?
2. Read v5-14. What does Noah do now?
3. Read v15-19. What purpose is mentioned for leaving the ark? What does this remind you of?
4. Read 20-22? What are Noah's first action and the LORD's promise?

Explore the Story.

1. What does it mean that God 'remembered' Noah?
Note also Exodus 2:24.
2. Why the multiple flights of the dove?
3. What echoes of the creation story can you see in this passage?
4. Who is the main 'actor' in this passage?

Live the Story.

1. 'The LORD is the God of new beginnings.' Is this statement true? Can you think of other biblical situations where this is true?
2. What does this passage have to say to us when we find ourselves in trying circumstances?

For Next Week: Genesis 9:1-27.

GENESIS 1-11 - BEGINNINGS

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Study 8: GENESIS 9:1-27

Beginnings: Covenant

A Reading Guide:

Day 1	Day 2	Day 3	Day 4	Day 5
Genesis 9:1-7	Genesis 9:8-17	Genesis 9:18-28	Hebrews 11:1-7	Romans 3:9-24

Listen to the Story.

Read Genesis 9:1-27

Explain the Story.

1. Read v1-17. Broadly what is happening here?
2. In these verses what is reminiscent of the creation stories and what new elements are there?
3. What happens in v18-26? Of what is this reminiscent?
4. Who were the sinners here? What were the results of this episode?

Explore the Story.

1. What are the elements of the covenant made in 9:8-17?
2. Much is made of the rainbow (v12-17). Why?
3. Why the change in 9:2-3? How are the matters in 9:4-6 related to it?
4. Note 8:21b and 6:5,12-13. Why then does 9:18-26 'surprise' us?

Live the Story.

1. What do you think when you see a rainbow? Does it call these promises to mind?
2. Read Hebrews 11:1-7. What is Noah's example of faith? How do we follow it?

For Next Week: Genesis 10:1-11:32.

GENESIS 1-11 - BEGINNINGS

GENESIS 1-11 - BEGINNINGS

Study 9: GENESIS 10:1-11:32

Beginnings: Language and Division

A Reading Guide:

Day 1	Day 2	Day 3	Day 4	Day 5
Genesis 10:1-32	Genesis 11:1-9	Genesis 11:10-32	Acts 2:1-15	Zephaniah 3:9-20

Listen to the Story.

Read Genesis 10:1-11:32

Explain the Story.

1. Read chapter 10. What overall impression do you think this gives?
2. Where have men gathered in 11:1-4 and what do they plan to do?
3. What is God's reaction to their plans? What is the result of his actions?
4. What is the significance of 11:27-32?

Explore the Story.

1. Why is the plan of 11:3-4 a problem for God?
2. Note Acts 2:1-15 ... How does this relate to the Babel story?
3. Tremper Longman III says the repeated pattern in Genesis 1-11 is Sin – Speech– Grace– Judgment. Can you discern this in each of the episodes so far?
4. What overall impression does Genesis 1-11 leave you with?

Live the Story.

1. What have you learned about God from these studies?
2. What have you learned about living for Christ in these studies?

Over the next little while read Genesis 1-11 through again.

GENESIS 1-11 - BEGINNINGS