

## INTRODUCTION AND SUMMARY OF

# Genesis

First book of Moses and the Bible, its 50 chapters are exceeded only by Psalms (150), Isaiah (66), Jeremiah (52).

Genesis summarizes human history for more than two millennia after creation (chs. 1-11), then focuses on Abraham, Isaac, Jacob, and Joseph less than two millennia before Christ (chs. 12-50).

*Genesis* means "origins" or "beginnings." The related word *generations* divides the book into sections (2:4; 5:1; 6:9; 10:1; 11:10, 27; 25:12, 19; 36:1, 9; 37:2).

**Genesis origins**

- universe, solar system, planet Earth (1:1, 14-19)
- light, atmosphere, hydrosphere (1:2-8)
- plant and animal life (1:9-13, 20-25)
- human race (1:26-31; 2:7)
- work, agriculture (2:15; 4:2, 3, 20; 8:22)
- rest: the Sabbath (2:1-3)
- marriage, home, family (2:18-25; 4:1, 25, 26)
- sin, suffering, death (3:1—4:15)
- salvation by grace and substitute (3:15, 21; 22:1-14)
- arts and crafts (music, metallurgy, 4:21, 22)
- religion (4:26; 5:22-24; 6:8, 22)
- human government (9:6; 10:1-32)
- various languages (11:1-9)
- nation of Israel (12:1-3)

**Genesis pairs:** How many do you know?

Adam and Eve; Cain and Abel; Enoch and Methuselah; Mr. and Mrs. Noah (and their "house pets"); Shem and Japheth; Ham and Canaan; Abraham and Sarah; Hagar and Ishmael; Melchizedek and Lot; Moab and Ammon; Sodom and Gomorrah; Ishmael and Isaac; Laban and Rebekah; Jacob and Esau; Leah and Rachel; Reuben and Simeon; Levi and Judah; Zilpah and Bilhah; Joseph and Benjamin; Diana and Tamar; Er and Onan; Perez and Zerah; Potiphar and Pharaoh; butler and baker; Ephraim and Manasseh

**Supernatural c's**

- Creation: God made everything and called it good. Its high point was humanity, distinguished from all else by being made in God's likeness and by having charge over it all (chs. 1, 2).
- Catastrophe: Natural, uniform changes on earth were greatly accelerated on three occasions: flood (chs. 6-8); confusion of language at Babel (11); destruction of Sodom and Gomorrah (19).
- Covenant: God revealed Himself and initiated agreements with men, reflecting His determination to do them good and hold them accountable: Adam and Eve (1:26-31; 2:15-17); Noah (9:1-17); Abraham (chs. 15, 17), Isaac (26:2-5), Jacob (28:10-22; 32:24-30; 35:9-15).

**Sin: its effects**

- refusal to obey God: multiple curses and eventual death (ch. 3)
- anger without a cause: violence and murder (4:1ff; 6:11)
- refusal to worship God: social evil and judgment (6:1ff; 11:1ff)
- sexual lust: multiple marriages, seduction, and rape (6:2; 26:34, 35; 34:2; 39:7-12)
- dishonor of parents: divided homes (26:34, 35)
- evil thoughts: corruption (6:5-13)
- lying, deception: mistrust (12:10ff; 20:1ff; 27:1ff)

- coveting: evil influences (13:10-13)
- stealing (31:30-32)
- bowing to idols (35:4)

Another effect: shorter life-spans, from Methuselah's 969 years (5:27) to Joseph's 110 (50:26)

**Gospel beginnings**

- God creates, commands, converses, and covenants with people. Earth-visits by the Lord's angel suggest that God's unity does not negate personal differentiation (16:7ff; 18:1ff; 19:1; 22:11ff; 31:11ff; 32:24ff; 48:15, 16).
- Though evil injures all humans, a deadly wound for the Devil is promised in the proto-evangelium (3:15).
- Abraham received unmerited favor by believing God's word, the first mention of righteousness (justification) by faith (15:6).
- Like Christ: Adam was put to sleep and his side opened to obtain a bride; Noah's ark was a refuge from judgment upon the earth; Isaac was a child of God's promise and power, was offered as a sacrifice, and was rescued from death; Joseph suffered unjustly, resisted temptation to sin, was placed in a dungeon, then raised to lordship, and saved his people from death.
- Like God, Abraham fathered many nations and offered his beloved son.
- Like the Spirit, Abraham's servant went afar to seek a bride for his master's son.

**Genesis and Revelation**

- Both picture a garden paradise by a river and tree of life.
- The deceiving serpent (Gen.) is deleted from the final Eden (Rev.).
- Man's selfish tower (Babel) and city (Babylon) are stopped (Gen. 11; Rev. 18).
- What God began and called "good," He renews at the end. The curse of original sin (Gen. 3) is no more (Rev. 22:3).

**Genesis in a sentence:** Due to sin among humans made in His image, God first drove them from Eden, later destroyed most in a flood, then chose one man and his family to bless the nations with His truth.