



BAND of BROTHERS

FALL SERIES 2022 – WEEK 1

Genesis 1:1-2: Before We Begin

*In the beginning, God created the heavens and the earth.
The earth was without form and void, and darkness was over the face of the deep.
And the Spirit of God was hovering over the face of the waters.*
– Genesis 1:1-2 ESV

- **The Question of Genesis**

- Everyone has questions when it comes to Genesis
- But the answers it provides may not address the questions you have
- God had something very specific in mind when He commissioned Moses to record this book

“All the great doctrines of Christianity – sin, atonement, grace, redemption, faith, justification, salvation, and many others – are first encountered in Genesis....It is hardly surprising, therefore, that the greatest attacks on the Bible have been directed against the integrity and authenticity of Genesis.” – Dr. Henry Morris, *So Noted!: The Genesis Commentary*

“What we know about God, about creation, about ourselves, and about salvation begins in Genesis. It provides the theological pillars on which the rest of the Bible stands.” – R. Kent Hughes, *Genesis: Beginning and Blessing*

“...it contains things the most important, and at the same time the most obscure...who could explain all these momentous things, with sufficient appropriateness and success: For interpreters and commentators have confused and tangled them with such a variety, diversity, and infinity of questions...that God has reserved...the full and sound understanding of this chapter to himself alone.” – Martin Luther, *The Creation: A Commentary on the First Five Chapters of the Book of Genesis*

“We do not know whether the primitive heaven and earth were created a few thousands or many millions of years ago. We are not informed as to whether they were called into existence in a moment of time, or whether the process of their formation covered an interval of long ages...The bare fact is stated: ‘In the beginning God created,’ and nothing is added to gratify the curious.” – A. W. Pink, *Gleanings in Genesis*

- **Warning: Faith required**

- Genesis will not answer all your questions
- It will not explain every mystery or solve all the puzzles of life
- That was not its intent

“Our views about the nature of the book will determine how we interpret it.” – James Montgomery Boice, *Genesis, Vol. 1*

- It is not...
 - ...a “theological fiction”
 - ...a collection of myths and fairy tales
 - ...an extended allegory
- It is...
 - ...a divinely inspired historical record
 - ...a literal account of a literal people

- **Before we begin...**

- A case for context
 - Genesis is part of the **Pentateuch**
penta (five) *teuchos* (scrolls)
Genesis, Exodus, Leviticus, Numbers, and Deuteronomy
 - Sometimes referred to as the **Five Books of Moses**
 - Also known as the Torah (law)
 - Originally, they formed one book
 - A single unit or set
 - They were meant to be read together
 - And they were written with a single audience in mind:
The nation of Israel – the descendants of Abraham

Genesis – an explanation of their origins
Where did we come from?

Exodus – a recounting of their deliverance
Why did God choose us?

Leviticus – a prescription for their holiness
What does God expect from us?

Numbers – a description of their faithlessness
How will God respond to us?

Deuteronomy – a call to faithfulness & fruitfulness
What does God want to do with us?

- A matter of contrasts
 - o Genesis 3 – God’s people are leaving Eden

So the Lord God banished them from the Garden of Eden, and he sent Adam out to cultivate the ground from which he had been made. – Genesis 3:23 NLT

- o Deuteronomy 30 – God’s people are entering Canaan

“Now listen! Today I am giving you a choice between life and death, between prosperity and disaster. For I command you this day to love the Lord your God and to keep his commands, decrees, and regulations by walking in his ways. If you do this, you will live and multiply, and the Lord your God will bless you and the land you are about to enter and occupy.” – Deuteronomy 30:15-16 NLT

- Both groups were expected to live and multiply

*So God created man in his own image,
in the image of God he created him;
male and female he created them.*

And God blessed them. And God said to them, “Be fruitful and multiply and fill the earth...” – Genesis 1:27-28 NLT

- The creation mandate was still in place
- The Pentateuch was written for the people of God
- Genesis was intended to teach them about...
 - **Theology** (the doctrine of God)
 - **Anthropology** (the doctrine of man)
 - **Hamartiology** (the doctrine of sin)
 - **Soteriology** (the doctrine of salvation)
- They were still discovering their own identity and that of God
- Israel’s history
 - Their forefather, Abraham was a pagan from Mesopotamia
 - God had called him to go to Canaan
 - They found themselves surrounded by pagans
 - They ended up relocating to Egypt
 - They ended up enslaved and idolatrous
 - Then God delivered them
 - And over time, God revealed Himself to them

“I am the Lord, and I will bring you out from under the burdens of the Egyptians, and I will deliver you from slavery to them, and I will redeem you with an outstretched arm and with great acts of judgment. I will take you to be my people,

*and I will be your God, and **you shall know that I am the Lord your God**, who has brought you out from under the burdens of the Egyptians.” – Exodus 6:6-7 ESV*

“...it is essential to ask why the new nation of Israel needed to have this material and to have it written as it is...the portrayal of God as the Creator and Sustainer of all life has great bearing on the fact that God was now creating Israel as a new nation among the nations. The God who created Israel as his own people is the sovereign God who created the universe and all that is in it.

“This creation narrative traces how God transformed the chaos into the cosmos, turned darkness into light, and altered that which was unprofitable to that which was good, holy, and worth blessing. This direction in the passage parallels the direction of the message of the Pentateuch as a whole, in which God redeems Israel from the darkness and chaos of Egypt and leads them on toward blessing and rest.” – Alan P. Ross, *Creation & Blessing*

- **The question of authorship**

- Who wrote Genesis?
 - The book of Genesis doesn't tell us
 - But up until the 17th-C., the answer was Moses

“For almost eighteen hundred years hardly anyone questioned the unity of Genesis, whether the writers were rabbinical scholars of Judaism or the ecclesiastical scholars of Christendom. Thus a Maimonides within Judaism, an Augustine within Catholicism, and a Calvin within Protestantism shared no disagreement on the point of Genesis' origin and composition...For all of them Genesis was a unified work, and more specifically, the work of Moses.” – Victor P. Hamilton, *The Book of Genesis: Chapter 1-17*

- Why would they believe that?
 - Because the Pentateuch supports it

Then the Lord said to Moses, “Write this as a memorial in a book and recite it in the ears of Joshua...” – Exodus 17:14 ESV

And Moses wrote down all the words of the Lord. – Exodus 24:4 ESV

Moses wrote down their starting places, stage by stage, by command of the Lord. – Numbers 33:2 ESV

- Moses was divinely inspired

When Moses had finished writing the words of this law (Torah) in a book to the very end, Moses commanded the Levites who carried the ark of the covenant of the Lord, “Take this Book of the Law and put it by the side of the ark of the

covenant of the Lord your God, that it may be there for a witness against you.” – Deuteronomy 31:24-26 ESV

All Scripture is breathed out by God and profitable for teaching, for reproof, for correction, and for training in righteousness... – 2 Timothy 3:16 ESV

- Jesus believed Moses to be the author

*And **beginning with Moses** and all the Prophets, he interpreted to them in all the Scriptures the things concerning himself. – Luke 24:27 ESV*

*Then he said to them, “These are my words that I spoke to you while I was still with you, that everything written about me **in the Law (Torah) of Moses** and the Prophets and the Psalms must be fulfilled.” Then he opened their minds to understand the Scriptures... – Luke 24:44-45 ESV*

- Our approach to Genesis
 - Moses wrote it under the inspiration of the Spirit
 - It was written with the people of Israel in mind
 - It was a record of their history as a nation
 - It provided a realistic portrait of their God
 - It was intended to promote their faith in God

“The Pentateuch has Moses as its implied author and the generation who followed him out of Egypt as its implied audience. This means we read the books best when we read as if they record the words of Moses to Israel. A good reader will try to put himself in the sandals of the implied reader.” – C. John Collins, *Genesis 1-4: A Linguistic, Literary, and Theological Commentary*

- **A brief beginning**

In the beginning, God created the heavens and the earth. The earth was without form and void, and darkness was over the face of the deep. And the Spirit of God was hovering over the face of the waters. – Genesis 1:1-2 ESV

- In the beginning...
 - Prior to time, space, and matter
 - Before the beginning of time itself
 - God alone is pre-existent

Before the mountains were born, before you gave birth to the earth and the world, from beginning to end, you are God. – Psalm 90:2 NLT

Your throne is established from of old; you are from everlasting. – Psalm 93:2 ESV

- God created the heavens and the earth

- *ělohîm bārā'* – Elohim created, shaped, formed
- The same God that created Israel as a nation created the entire universe
- A direct attack on **polytheism** and **pantheism**
- God made it all

By faith we understand that the entire universe was formed at God's command, that what we now see did not come from anything that can be seen. – Hebrews 11:3 NLT

The LORD merely spoke, and the heavens were created. He breathed the word, and all the stars were born. – Psalm 33:6 NLT

For when he spoke, the world began! It appeared at his command. – Psalm 33:9 NLT

- The earth was without form and void
 - Suddenly the focus becomes **geocentric**
 - The text is emphasizing the importance of earth
 - God is preparing to create a place for mankind

“without form and void” – tohu wabohu – disordered and empty

- It was a work in progress
- It was **uninhabitable** and **uninhabited**
- It was **not yet ready** for man
- God was operating from a plan
- He was creating a place for His people

- darkness was over the face of the deep
hōšek – darkness, obscurity, no light

- The darkness was about to be invaded by the light of God's glory
- The scene is set for something great to happen

*Arise, shine, for your light has come,
and the glory of the Lord has risen upon you.*

*For behold, darkness shall cover the earth,
and thick darkness the peoples;*

but the Lord will arise upon you,

and his glory will be seen upon you. – Isaiah 60:1-2 ESV

He has rescued us from the dominion of darkness and brought us into the kingdom of His beloved Son... – Colossians 1:13 BSB

In the beginning was the Word, and the Word was with God, and the Word was God. He was in the beginning with God. All things were made through him, and without him was not any thing made that was made. In him was life, and the life was the light of

men. The light shines in the darkness, and the darkness has not overcome it. – John 1:1-14 NLT

- **Discussion questions**

Discuss the kinds of questions that come to mind when you think about Genesis?

Why is it important to read Genesis through the eyes of the Israelites? How could this help answer or alter our questions?

Read 1 Peter 2:9, then discuss how it relates to Genesis 1:1-2. And how does it apply to the people of Israel and to us?



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FALL SERIES 2022 – WEEK 2 HOMEWORK

WEEK 2 – Genesis 1:3-25: Off to a Good Start

This lesson will begin our official study of the creation by focusing on the first six days of creation. The primary emphasis will be on the purpose behind the creation. Everything God made was intended to prepare the earth/Eden for man. Humanity was not just another part of the creation process but was intended to be the pinnacle or high point. Everything God made was good and perfectly planned for man's benefit and enjoyment.

- Read Genesis 1:1-25. Write down any thoughts that jump out at you from these verses.

- Now read pages 5-20 of Ken's Devotionary™ on Genesis.

- Look back at verses 1-2. How do they set up what happens in verses 3-5?

Why do you think Moses opens his book with an emphasis on darkness and light? What do you think he was trying to convey to his readers?

Take a few minutes to reflect on the following passages from the book of Exodus, then write down how these stories would have reminded the Israelites of the difference between light and darkness.

Exodus 10:21-29

Exodus 11:4-9 and Exodus 12:29-30

Now look closely at Genesis 1:14-19. How could God have created light before He created the sun? Consider the following passages before you answer.

John 1:1-4

John 8:12

John 9:5

John 12:46

Revelation 21:23

- Read verses 3-13. In these verses God appears to be “forming” the earth. Verse 2 states that it was initially “without form and void.” In what ways does God spend the first 3 days “forming” the earth?

- Now read verse 14-25. According to these verses, the second set of three days were used by God to “fill” the earth. What kinds of things does He fill it with?

How would each of these things be important if God was preparing the earth for the most important part of His creation: Man?

What is the importance of God declaring all that He made as “good?” In what ways had the Israelites experienced the “bad” side of creation during their 400 years of captivity in Egypt?