

GENESIS: SUMMARY AND INTRODUCTION

Genesis 1:1

INTRODUCTION

Richard Dawkins, *River Out of Eden: A Darwinian View of Life* – “there is at bottom no purpose, no evil, no good, nothing but blind pitiless indifference. We are machines for propagating DNA, it is every living objects sole reason for being.”

Lawrence Krauss, professor of physics and director of the Origins program at Arizona State University, in an online interview – “Every atom in your body came from a star that exploded. And, the atoms in your left hand probably came from a different star than your right hand. It really is the most poetic thing I know about physics: You are all stardust. You couldn't be here if stars hadn't exploded, because the elements—the carbon, nitrogen, oxygen, iron, all the things that matter for evolution and for life—weren't created at the beginning of time. They were created in the nuclear furnaces of stars, and the only way for them to get into your body is if those stars were kind enough to explode.”

In another online interview, Krauss calls teaching biblical creation a form of “child abuse.”

How important do you think it is to take a stand on the days of creation and the age of the earth? How one understands the origin of life has massive implications. What is our responsibility with the Word?

“Our churches are filled with Christians who are idling in intellectual neutral. As Christians, their minds are going to waste.”

—William Lane Craig

“God is no fonder of intellectual slackers than of any other slackers.”

—C. S. Lewis

God gave pastors and teachers to the church to equip the saints and build up of the body of Christ. These influential leaders care for God's people by instructing, exhorting, comforting and leading them in the application of the truths of God's Word.

Due to the influence of evolutionary thinking in the western world, most pastors today no longer exhort their congregations correctly when it comes to understanding Genesis chapters 1–11 as literal history.

Even many pastors who believe in the authority of Scripture refuse to take a stand on the days of creation and the age of the earth.

For example, John Piper – “The earth is billions of years old if it wants to be—whatever science says it is, it is—but man is young, and he was good and he sinned.”

- The Word of God clearly teaches that God created in six literal days about 6,000 years ago.
- Scripture forbids to add to or take away from Scripture.
- The idea of an old earth is based understanding the fossil record to have been laid down over millions of years.
- The fossil record is filled with death, disease, suffering, bloodshed, violence, and extinction.
- The Bible clearly teaches God made the world very good without death of any kind in it. Death came as a consequence of Adam's sin – both human and animal, physical and spiritual. **Romans 5:12**

Creation is the foundation of everything that follows. The account of the Fall in **Gen 3** triggers the whole history of redemption that concerns the rest of the Old and New Testament.

The account of the Fall records not only God's judgment but also the promised rescue from this punishment of sin.

Gen 3:14–15 - called the 'protoevangelium' - the first gospel

Rom 16:20 – “**the God of peace will soon crush Satan under your feet.**”

- Paul's closing words of encouragement to the Christians in Rome

The creation account is particularly echoed in **Revelation 21–22** with the “**new earth and new heavens.**”

The unfolding of God's eternal purpose and plan:

Gen 1–2	Man Created
Gen 3–Rev 20	Man Sins
Rev 21–22	Man Restored

Proposition: Introduction and Overview of the Book of Genesis

- Who?
- What?
- When?
- How?
- Why?

So That: We get Genesis right - in humility. How you hold Genesis is how you will hold everything:

→ God, Man, Sin, Judgment, Salvation,

→ Marriage, Divorce, The Male and Female Roles & Distinction,

→ All the disciplines of systematic theology: Bibliology, Theology, Anthropology, Christology, Pneumatology, Soteriology, Hamartiology, Ecclesiology, Eschatology,

→ Covenants, Election, and End Times

→ Work, Dinosaurs, Environmentalism, Racism, Homosexuality, Abortion, and War.....

....and the list goes on and on. Our view of everything begins in Genesis.

Illustration – It has been said that children are like wet cement - whatever falls on them makes an impression. Our job as parents is to ensure the right impressions are made. When the wrong ones are there, get rid of them. Smooth them out and leave no sign they were there. In the same way, when we approach this worldview, we want to make sure we have the right impressions that are driven from the Word of God and not capitulated to the wisdom of the world.

I. WHAT? What is this book called?

Point – the first five books of the Bible are called:

- **Torah** => means “direction,” “instruction,” “law”
- also called the **Pentateuch** => “5 scrolls”
=> 5 vol. book → we will look at the 1st volume - the Book of Genesis

The book of Moses in its entirety in scripture is called:

- “The Law”
- “The Book of the Law”
- “The Law of the Lord”
- “The Law of God”
- “The Book of the Law of God”

In English, we call the first book Genesis.

Genesis: in the Hebrew Canon – *bereshith* – from the word that is translated as “beginning”– English Canon –called this book Genesis – which means “origins”

Genesis is foundational to all of the Bible

Genesis is the outline: God, Man, Sin, Judgment, Redemption, Atonement, Justification (by faith alone)

- God fills in the details in the next 65 books

Genesis helps Israel understand the plan God has for them. God is precise. Isaiah, Jeremiah, *et al*, nail Israel to the wall and say this is how you have failed and sinned exactly.

Sin is not an innocent mistake. It is deliberate rebellion against God.

Leviticus 25: 1-5 - sabbatical year (7th year) - this is not the time to swing in the hammock. What did God want Israel to do during this time?

Deut 31:9–13 → main part of sabbatical year - one year out of seven - to study Torah so they would learn to fear and obey the Lord - through their hearts that God would bless them - so they would not just be receptacles of learning but so that they would be channels of blessing - to all

the nations of the world.

In Genesis, God is revealed as the Creator, Redeemer, Sanctifier, Justifier, Judge, Glorifier, and Teacher.

- He is longsuffering, righteous, faithful, wrathful, and hates sin.
- He is forgiving, revealing, and knowable.
- God accomplishes His will through and in spite of man.

II. WHO? WHEN? Who wrote it? When was it written?

Point – Genesis was not written in a time of atheism.

- The issue was not if God exists, but to get to know the true God.
- Genesis reveals the true God.

Written by: Moses between 1445–1405 B.C. – **Deut 31:24** – “**And it came about, when Moses finished writing the words of this law in a book until they were complete,**”

2 Chron 30:16 – “**they stood at their stations after their custom, according to the law of Moses the man of God;**”

2 Chron 35:12 – “**they removed the burnt offerings that they might give them to the sections of the fathers' households of the lay people to present to the LORD, as it is written in the book of Moses.**”

Throughout the OT and the NT, this book is called “The Book of Moses,” “The Law of Moses,” “The Book of the Law of Moses”

What was the setting when this book was written?

- Plains of Moab above Dead Sea and Jordan River
- Promise to Abraham 700–800 years earlier
- 400 years of captivity in a foreign land
- Exodus – miracles, plagues, Passover
- 40 years of wanderings – manna, clothes not wearing out, fire, cloud, judgment, etc.
 - God fed a million people in the barren wilderness for 40 years
 - wilderness in scripture was not like a forest (common presupposition) but it was desolate, it is dust and shale
- second generation out of the Exodus - no one over the age of 60 were there at that point to enter the Promised Land (except Caleb and Joshua)

New Testament affirmation of Moses as author of Genesis:

Philip:

John 1:45 – “**Philip found Nathanael and said to him, “We have found Him of whom Moses in the Law and also the Prophets wrote, Jesus of Nazareth, the son of Joseph.”**”

Jesus:

John 5:46–47 – “**For if you believed Moses, you would believe Me; for he wrote of Me. But**

if you do not believe his writings, how will you believe My words?"

When Jesus appeared after His resurrection, **Luke 24:27** – “**And beginning with Moses and with all the prophets, He explained to them the things concerning Himself in all the Scriptures.**”

Paul:

Acts 28:23 – “**when they had set a day for him, they came to him at his lodging in large numbers; and he was explaining to them by solemnly testifying about the kingdom of God, and trying to persuade them concerning Jesus, from both the Law of Moses and from the Prophets, from morning until evening.**”

The New Testament contains at least two hundred direct quotations or allusions to events described in Genesis, more than any other book in the Old Testament.

As we go through Genesis chapters 1-11, we will be taking a historical and literal walk through God’s opening foundational word of hope to man.

Historical Literal - 24 hours “**Day**”

Historical Literal **Global Flood** – if a Christian takes an old earth view, that equals a denial of global flood. The liberal, and even the compromising evangelical says the flood was a local flood. Oh really??

→ Turn to: **Gen 7** – *kal* - 21 times God uses this Hebrew word (which in English means "all" or "every")

- God makes it abundantly clear that the flood was global.

WHAT? WHO? WHEN?....

III. **HOW?** How is it structured? What is the outline?

Point – Genesis is divided into ten sections marked by the Hebrew word translated as “**generations**”

- “**generations**” - Hebrew: *toledoth*
- the English transliteration of the Hebrew word. It comes from the root meaning “to bear” or “to give birth.”

Introduction/Creation	1:1–2:3
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Heavens and Earth	2:4 –4:26
Adam	5:1 –6:8
Noah	6:9 –9:27
Sons of Noah	10:1 –11:9
Shem	11:10 –26
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Terah (Abram)	11:27 –25:11

Ishmael	25:12–18
Isaac	25:19–35:29
Esau	36:1–37:1
Jacob (Joseph and 12 sons)	37:2–50:14

Conclusion/Epilogue 50:15–26 (God’s Good Work 50:20)

The first eleven chapters in Genesis, the foundation of all foundations, takes us from Creation to Abraham. More than one third of history is covered in these eleven chapters!

1–11 Primeval History (Original or First) - four events

Application: – NOT “Prehistoric” – evolutionary, we have the history

12–50 Patriarchal History (Abraham to Joseph) - four men

Location – Antediluvian World (**1–8**), Mesopotamia (**9–11**), Promised Land (**12–36**),
Egypt (**37–50**)

Time Period - from Creation (4000 B.C.) to the death of Joseph (1805 B. C.)

The only correct record of creation and primeval history is **Genesis 1–11**. Its importance cannot be over-estimated.

WHAT? WHO? WHEN? HOW?....

IV. WHY? Why was it written? Themes?

God is: Creator and Sovereign

A. Creator

Gen 1:1; 2:1–4; 3:1; 5:1; 6:7; 14:19; Deut 32:6

What binds Torah together? God as Creator - **Gen 1:1 ↔ Deut 32:6**

God as Creator permeates Scripture:

Psa 100:1–3 – “*A Psalm for Thanksgiving. Shout joyfully to the LORD, all the earth. Serve the LORD with gladness; Come before Him with joyful singing. Know that the LORD Himself is God; It is He who has made us, and not we ourselves; We are His people and the sheep of His pasture.*”

Isa 45:18 – “For thus says the LORD, who created the heavens (He is the God who formed the earth and made it, He established it and did not create it a waste place, But formed it to be inhabited), “I am the LORD, and there is none else.”

Job 38:4 – “Where were you when I laid the foundation of the earth? Tell Me, if you have understanding,”

Rev 4:11 – “Worthy are you, our Lord and God, to receive glory and honor and power, for you created all things, and by your will they existed and were created.”

God as Creator is of primary importance in → **Evangelism**

- **creator/creature distinction**-we have forgotten our **creaturehood**
- of central importance in our evangelism is to direct a creature worshipper to being a Creator-worshipper → **Rom 1:18–23**

God as Creator is of primary importance in → **Discipleship**

Gen 5:24 – Enoch walked with God -also Noah and Abraham

→ Discipleship!! The way, the path. The Gospel according to Mark → Discipleship Manual – how to become a disciple, how to make disciples

Genesis tells us that God is **Faithful** – “Remember”

Gen 8:1 → even after His global judgment on all the earth, God remembered Noah

Gen 19:29 → even after the destruction of Sodom and Gomorrah, God remembered Abraham

Gen 30:22 → God remembered Rachel

Exod 2:24 → after the 400 years of captivity in Egypt, God remembered His promise to Abraham

→ Because God remembers His Covenant, His Promise

CONCLUSION

1. God gave His Word to be communicated *entirely* as He gave it. The whole counsel of God is to be preached (**Matt 28:20; Acts 5:20, 20:27**).

2. God gave His Word to be communicated *exactly* as He gave it. It is to be given out precisely as it was delivered without the message being altered.

Illustration: The Anvil of God's Word

“Last eve I paused beside the blacksmith’s door,
And heard the anvil ring the vesper chime;
Then looking in, I saw upon the floor,
Old hammers, worn with beating years of time.

“‘How many anvils have you had,’ said I,
‘To wear and batter all these hammers so?’
‘Just one,’ said he, and then with twinkling eye,
‘The anvil wears the hammers out, you know.’

“And so, I thought, the Anvil of God’s Word
For ages skeptic blows have beat upon;
Yet, though the noise of falling blows was heard,
The Anvil is unharmed, the hammers gone.”