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BOOK STUDIES: GENESIS

1. THE FOUNDATION OF HISTORY

a. The Foundation of History

The book of Genesis is the foundation of history. It is the most important book that has ever been written. For instance, chapter ten alone tells us where languages come from. Genesis has had a greater influence in the history of our world than any other book. Morris states that `the Book of Genesis... is in reality the foundation of all true history'¹. Genesis forms the foundation of the 66 books of the Bible. Without Genesis the rest of Scripture is incomprehensible.

Genesis means origin. The first eleven chapters describe the beginning of everything:

- 1. The origin of the universe: Genesis stands alone in accounting for actual Creation.
- 2. The origin of order and complexity: It is about the Programmer and the programme.
- 3. The origin of the solar system: the earth, sun, moon, planets and stars.
- 4. The origin of the atmosphere and hydrosphere.
- 5. The origin of life: Creation out of nothing.
- 6. The origin of man: In Chapters 1-2, a highly organized and complex being.
- 7. The origin of marriage: a universal, stable institution.
- 8. The origin of evil: In Chapter 3 we see physical and moral evils.
- 9. The origin of language: In Chapter 10-11 languages and the various national languages are brought into being.
- 10. The origin of government: organized systems of government.
- 11. The origin of culture: The first musician, agriculture and education.
- 12. The origin of the nations: In Chapter 10-11.
- 13. The origin of religion: All share the consciousness that there must be meaning.
- 14. The origin of the chosen people: God's elect (Gen 12-50).

Morris says also that Genesis shows the beginning of the promise (of the Messiah).

On the basis of the above points we know that Genesis is historical, true and authoritative. Above all else Genesis is the foundation of God's revelation.

¹ Morris, H. *The Genesis Record* Baker Book House: Michigan, 1976; pg 21.

b. Who Wrote Genesis

Moses wrote Genesis being inspired by God. In 1526BC Moses was born. In 1446BC the Exodus took place. In 1406BC Moses died. Genesis was written some time during the period after the Exodus and before the death of Moses.

Liberal views describe a *documentary hypothesis* that suggests that different sources wrote Genesis, but we reject this.

Moses is the author. This was accepted by our Lord Jesus in Luke 24:27 and 44, `And beginning with Moses and the Prophets,' `...that everything written about me in the Law of Moses...'

Moses came to write Genesis through direct inspiration from God. The Holy Spirit supervised him and made it sure. Oral traditions and written patriarchal records of the past also assisted Moses as he wrote.

c. The Value of Genesis

1. God in Creation

Genesis gives us a wonderful picture of God in Creation. God is prominent and predominant. Genesis 1:1 unequivocally declares, `In the beginning, *God* created...' This displays the greatness of God. God saw, said and made. J.B. Phillips said, `Our view of God is too small.'

2. God in History

In Genesis we see the dawn of history. We have an account of the earliest years of the life and progress of the human race. We have an account of the Fall and how God sent the flood. We see how God is working in history.

3. God in Providence

God watches over man, warns man, rules man. We see the amazing plans of God e.g. how Joseph was taken from the pit to the palace. And how encouraging it is for us as Joseph says to his brothers, `God meant it (all) for good' in Genesis 50:20. God is sovereign, He is in control, He orders everything.

4. God in Redemption

In Genesis we have:

- Generation: in Genesis 1:1 onwards
- Degeneration: with the account of the Fall in Genesis 3:1 onwards, `Now the serpent...'
- Regeneration: Genesis 12:1 onwards, `Now the Lord...'

The earliest promise of Jesus in the Bible is in Genesis 3.

5. God in Human Life

From Adam to Joseph God is involved. God's guidance is evident. The fact that God is interested in `me' is clearly brought out.

d. The Message of Genesis

1. The Failure of Man at Every Point

Genesis describes how Adam and Eve listened to the serpent in the Garden of Eden and disobeyed God. The result is the spreading of the sin `epidemic'. God responds with the Flood. Even after the flood glaring sins are committed by the patriarchs. Abraham lies, Jacob is a deceiver.

2. The Continual Provision of God's Grace

Man's failure is met with God's grace time and time again. Yes, God's justice necessitated the Flood, but a remnant was saved- Noah and his family- in the Ark. The thread of the Blood is also clear as animals were slaughtered to clothe Adam and Eve, and Abel's blood cries out from the ground.

3. God Calling Out a People to Himself

This is the Doctrine of Election. We see how God handpicks the patriarchs and draws them to Himself, draws them out of the world to become a nation blessed by the Lord.

2. A DETAILED EXPOSITION OF THE CREATION OF THE WORLD

As we follow the Creation account in the first two chapters of Genesis it is evident that `the creative activity is quite clearly supernatural.²' God's work of providence is also clear: He allows all things to continue. God's providence comes out strongly too, as God directs the universe towards His goal to an end He alone has purposed. The Creation of the world truly glorifies God like nothing else apart from the Cross and Resurrection of Christ.

Louis Burkoff said, "Creation may be defined as that free act of God whereby He, according to His sovereign will and for His own glory in the beginning brought forth the whole visible and invisible universe, without the use of pre-existent material and thus gave it an existence distinct from His own yet always dependent on Him."

A. The Creation of the World Chapter One

a. The First Verse

The first verse of the Bible declares, "In the beginning God created the heavens and the earth." We immediately see God's omnipotence here. The Hebrew verb `bara' (to create) is only used to describe God's activity and means to call into existence that which had no previous existence. God brought *time*, `in the beginning'; *space*, `the heavens'; and *matter*, `the earth' into being. The universe is a continuum of these three. One cannot exist without the other. The transcendent Godhead called time, space and matter into existence.

b. The Date of Creation

Henry Morris says that the Bible will not support a date earlier then 10 000BC³. The earth was created in 4000BC. The modern mind says this is absurd. Many people have tried to tie up the biblical meaning with science. An example of this is the *Gap Theory* outlined in the Schofield Bible where it is said that between verse one and verse two were millions of years. However, this theory is invalid. The construction of the verses of the Bible don't allow it. Verse two begins with `And'- a continuation of verse one.

² Davis J. *Paradise to Prison: Studies in Genesis* Baker Book House: Michigan, 1982; pg 60.

³ Morris, H. *Lecture Notes*.

c. The Second Verse

"And 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."

Through the use of the word `And', we see that each action was based on a previous action. This verse highlights that God was going to bring form to and inhabit the unformed, uninhabited earth. Only the cosmos had initially been created: time, space and matter. The deep was not formed or energised. God was going to energize what He had created. We then have movement: the Spirit of God moved into the situation.

B. The Six Days of Creation

1. The First Day (v1-5)

"And God said..."(v 3). This is the first record of God speaking in the Bible. Davis says, "The third verse begins with the simple clause, "and God said, "which is pregnant with significant implications. It immediately suggests divine plan and purpose."⁴ The first thing God said was, "Let there be light". The Godhead worked together in Creation: The Father is the Source of all things, the Spirit is the Energizer of all things, and the Word is the Revealer of all things.

Then God separated the light from darkness. God carefully defined his terms naming the Day and the Night. The formula, "And there was evening, and there was morning"(v5) is used at the conclusion of each of the six days displaying the duration of each day. It was a cyclical light and dark arrangement: the earth was rotating on its axis. The length of such days was a normal solar day.

2. The Second Day (v6-8)

God's creative power is seen as he then separates the waters above the earth from those below the earth and creates the sky. The world was covered by this canopy. There was no rain but a vapour above the earth and waters. God separated the sea and sky.

3. The Third Day (v9-13)

God named the dry ground land, and the gathered waters He called seas. Here is the third act of division. The dry ground appears. Rocks and minerals are formed and fertile soil. Thereafter, the land produced vegetation. The plants were fully grown, giving an appearance of age, and bore seeds. Herbs and grasses and trees bearing fruit were generated. The universe was a functional entity from the beginning. Implanted in each organism was the seed programmed to continue its propagation.

4. The Fourth Day (v14-19)

On the fourth day God created the sun, moon, stars and planets. The chief purpose of the light was to brighten the darkness. God set them in the right place.

5. The Fifth Day (v20-23)

"And God said"(v20): Creation is always by the Word. Living creatures and fish in the sea, and the great sea creatures, including the dinosaurs; as well as birds in the sky were formed. This was life for the first time. God called it "good"- just as He did on every day of His Creation.

6. The Sixth Day (v24-25)

God then created the rest of the animal kingdom: cattle, creeping things and the beasts of the earth. There was no struggle for existence among the animals. There was no evolution, each was made according to its own kind. Then, the pinnacle of God's Creation came into being: man, made in the image of God. Man had a moral conscience and the capacity for abstract thought, to enjoy beauty and emotion and to worship. The Trinity was at work here, "Let us..." God said of this being, "it was *very* good".

God took Adam and Eve and put them in the garden. Then God pronounced a blessing and gave them clear instructions to be fruitful, to multiply, to replenish the earth and to have dominion over the animals and plants. Adam and Eve only had to look after the world and enjoy it.

Creation was now complete in every part. There was perfect harmony and it was very good. There was no disease, pollution or physical floods. There was no disorder.

C. The Creation of Man: Chapter Two

1. The Sabbath for Man (v1-3)

God had now completed His work. He surveyed it and pronounced it very good. Six times He said it was good, now it was complete and all was perfectly formed in perfect harmony. Everything was perfect, beautiful, complete. God had finished, so now He rested on the seventh day. He is refreshed. The work of redemption would start, but God blessed the seventh day, made it holy and rested. Sunday is the Lord's Day. He has instituted this as an example so that we too would rest and worship, or we would battle in daily life. This is also a picture of the finished work of Jesus on the cross where when we repent and believe we enter into His rest (as explained to us in Hebrews 4). Voltaire said, "Destroy Sunday" if you want to destroy Christianity. In many ways this is a big issue in the Christian's life today.

2. The Formation of Man (v4-7)

In v4-7 we have a more detailed account of the formation and energizing of Adam and Eve.

1 Corinthians 15:45a&47a says, "Thus it is written, "The first man Adam became a living being... the first man was from the earth, a man of dust..."

God breathed into Adam's nostrils the breath of life. God energised the man He had made. He was a fully developed man at the peak of his life. And God energised him. Life could only come from the living God, an independent, living being.

3. The Home For Man (v8-14)

God planted a garden in the East called Eden. The whole world was placed under Adam's dominion, *but* there were certain prohibitions. It was a very special garden and was made for Adam. Eden means delight. The garden was planted eastwards and was a beautiful home.

The Tree of Life was in the centre of the garden. If one ate from it, one would live forever. It would halt the aging process. This tree will be in the New Jerusalem and is a literal tree. The Tree of the Knowledge of Good and Evil was also in the Garden of Eden. If one ate of it one would surely die.

There were also four rivers providing abundance: the Pishon, the Gihon, the Tigris and the Euphrates. Later in the Flood this was all destroyed.

4. The Service of Man (v15)

The man was to work the garden, and take care of it. Adam was to keep it. This would involve careful and loving stewardship. Adam was to keep it beautiful and orderly. Adam was put in charge, man had dominion.

5. The Probation of Man (v16-19)

There was an abundance of provision for Adam and Eve. However, there was one restraint: they MUST NOT eat from the Tree of the Knowledge of Good and Evil. True love is based on trust. Love presupposes gladly following the Lord, but there was a restriction- man must listen, or surely die.

6. The Authority of Man (v18-20)

Man needed a help suitable for him. He was a magnificent creation, but Adam was not complete. It was not good for man to be alone. Adam personally inspected all the animals. He got to know and became familiar with their attributes because he had rule over the animals. Adam gave them each names. Morris says, "God must have directed them to come to Adam."⁵ Each animal had its mate, but none was found for Adam.

7. The Companion of Man (v21-25)

Through a marvellous surgical operation Eve was created, and this beautiful lady was presented to Adam. She was incredible. Adam said, "this now is bone of my bone, and flesh of my flesh". This is the first human institution- marriage was established by God. God made Eve from Adam. Eve was not taken from Adam's head (superiority), or from his feet (inferiority), but from his side (equality and companionship).

"Therefore" (v24)/ *For this reason* appears both in the gospels as well as the epistles. A man will leave, cleave and there will be unity (they would become one). The institution is for one man, and one wife. Wherever this is broken there are big problems- for instance with polygamy. One man, one wife, for life.

The first marriage was then consummated. Adam and Eve complemented each other physically, mentally and spiritually. They were unashamed. There was no embarrassment, shame, moral guilt or sin. It was a perfect relationship. A handsome man, put together with a beautiful woman in a fantastic garden- the picture was perfect.

⁵ Morris, H. *Lecture Notes*.

3. A DETAILED EXPOSITION OF THE FALL OF MAN

Adam and Eve are now tested under the most favourable circumstances...they yield... to the temptation and fail... the test."⁶ Chapter three of Genesis is the most tragic chapter in the whole Bible. It is the inspired account of how sin and evil came into the world. This chapter is the pivot of the rest of the Bible. It is a very important chapter.

1. Temptation and Disobedience (v1-7)

1. The Source of the Temptation

The serpent was one whose colour was bright and beautiful. Its movements were graceful. It was cleverer than any of the other animals. It was a subtle, attractive, deceptive creature.

Revelation 12: 9 and 20:2 describe Satan as "that ancient serpent".

Isaiah 14 tells us of the fall of Lucifer, highlighting his pride, "You said in your heart... I will ascend above the heights of the clouds; I will make myself like the Most High" (v13a &14).

Ezekiel 28:17 confirms this: "Your heart was proud because of your beauty; you corrupted your wisdom for the sake of your splendour".

Satan exalted himself wanting to be like God. He was therefore cast into the pit, "And he said to them, "I saw Satan fall like lightning from heaven" Luke 10:18.

Matthew 25:41 gives us more clarity about where Satan fell, "into the eternal fire prepared for the devil and his angels."

Lucifer took possession of the serpent, just as demons took possession of pigs in Luke 8:33.

2. Its subtlety

a. Excites her curiosity by speaking to her

The Serpent caught Eve when she was alone. He came to the weaker vessel and aroused her curiosity.

b. Raises a suspicion of God by his question

Satan asked, "Did God actually say...?" (v1) It was a disturbing and flattering question. He was asking for Eve's opinion. He caused her to:

⁶ Mears, H. What the Bible is All About Regal Books: California, 1980; pg 21.

- i. doubt God's goodness
- ii. doubt God's righteousness
- iii. doubt God's holiness.

The Serpent injected a threefold doubt of God in the woman.

c. Injects woman with unbelief

He insights the woman to unbelief. The suspicion planted in Eve leads to unbelief.

d. Leads her to disobedience

Eve took the fruit and she ate. Satan *distorted* the Word of God that led Adam and Eve to *doubt* and that led to *disobedience*.

3. Its success

Eve took and ate. Satan succeeds in deceiving Eve, "and Adam was not deceived, but the woman was deceived and became a transgressor" 1 Timothy 2:14.

Eve looks at the tree and saw that

- i. it was good for food (appealed to the physical appetite)
- ii. pleasant to the eyes (appealed to the emotions)
- iii. desired to make her wise (appealed to the mind).

1 John 2:16 puts it this way: "For all that is in the world- the desires of the flesh and the desires of the eyes and pride in possessions- is not from the Father but is from the world."

Jesus' temptations followed the same pattern:

- i. Satan tempted Jesus to turn the stones into bread (physical appetite)
- ii. He wanted Jesus to worship him (emotions)
- iii. He tried to fill Jesus with pride (mind).

Eve gave the fruit also to Adam, and he ate. After this they were filled with shame and guilt. Satan promised wisdom and that they would become like God, but they had shame and guilt. We now inherit sin from Adam. 1 Corinthians 15:22a says, "For as in Adam all die..."

2. Confrontation (v8-13)

God then confronts Adam and Eve. The couple blamed everyone but themselves. The Bible constantly reinforces the need for personal responsibility. However, Adam blamed Eve and Eve blamed the Serpent. They don't acknowledge their individual, personal guilt.

3. Sentence (v14-19)

Thereafter, God curses all three of those involved in the sin in the same chronological order that they were committed.

1. On Satan

The first was the curse on Satan. The serpent was cursed above all other animals. The serpent was the instrument Satan used for the Fall. God judges Satan. He describes how the serpent will now be lower than the other creatures "on your belly... and dust you shall eat..."(v14).

We also have, most importantly and wonderfully, the first promise of Jesus in the Bible in v15. The *proto evangelion* : the first great promise. God even brings hope where there is cursing. There would be enmity between Satan and the seed of the woman, but the seed of the woman would ultimately produce the Saviour. Jesus would crush Satan's head, and he would bruise His heel. This began an ongoing battle.

2. On the woman

The woman's function of reproduction would be marred. Eve, and all after her, would bear children in pain and suffering. Eve would long to rule over Adam but he would rebel against that and rule over her. There would be a tussle between the two.

3. On Adam

The curses towards Adam were work related and fatally and tragically- death.

All these curses make us long for the Coming of Christ!

4. Paradise Lost (v20-24)

The magnificent Garden of Eden had been put into Adam's care, but he was now expelled from it. Cherubim were put at the gates to prevent the couple's re-entry into the paradise.

To replace their fig leaves God gave them skins. He selected two sheep and there was the shedding of blood before their eyes. They understood that it was the shedding of blood that would offer atonement for the sin that they had committed. God provided.

The Fall produced:

- i. Spiritual Death
- ii. Social Death Adam and Eve argued between each other
- iii. Psychological Death there was guilt and shame
- iv. Ecological Death there were thorns and thistles

The only hope was the gospel. The promise of Jesus was vital.

4. A DETAILED ACCOUNT OF GENESIS 6-11

a. THE DAYS OF NOAH (Genesis 6)

The sin disease which began with Eve (who was tempted to doubt the Word of God) began to show itself in the ugly character of Cain and led to maturity in the civilization from Cain to Lamech. There was wickedness and violence throughout the earth.

Matthew 24:37 says, "As were the days of Noah, so will be the coming of the Son of Man."

1. The Sons of God and the Daughters of Men (v1-4)

Morally and spiritually the world was sinking into sin. There was materialism, ungodliness, and the world was turned away from God.

There are three suggestions as to who the sons of God and the daughters of men were:

- i. The sons of God *could* refer to the Sethites and the daughters of men to the Cainites: believers and unbelievers.
- ii. The sons of God could be the kings and nobles, and the daughters of men the commoners.
- iii. The more plausible suggestion is that the sons of God refers to the angels and especially the fallen angels.

Giants were born and this ushered in a time of tremendous violence. Evil spirits took control of mothers and fathers, and they became demon possessed. Nephilim were born. It was a plot of Satan. It was so serious that God said, "My Spirit will not contend with man forever". They resisted the Spirit's witness. (Later, the spies who went to spy on the land of Canaan would see nephilim, Numbers 13:33.)

2. Sin Full Grown

The magnitude and extent of this evil time is then developed further.

"The LORD saw that the wickedness of man was great in the earth, and that every intention of the thoughts of his heart was only evil continually. And the LORD was sorry that he had made man on the earth, and it grieved him to his heart."(v5-6)

The Lord's heart was full of pain. There was anarchy and terror across the world. The world was totally, completely, utterly evil all the time.

3. One Man in Step with God (v9-12)

But Noah found grace, favour in the eyes of God. Noah was righteous, blameless, and he walked with God. The earth was corrupt, but Noah stood separate from the pervasive evil of the day.

- 1. His position: Noah found grace in the eyes of the Lord.
- 2. His attitude: Noah was a righteous man.
- 3. His character: He was blameless.
- 4. His testimony: He stood out among the people of his time.
- 5. His fellowship: Noah walked with God.
- 6. His conduct: Noah's life was marked by obedience, "Noah did this"(v22). He did everything.
- 7. His thoroughness: Noah did everything just as God commanded him.

Noah was a spiritual giant.

4. The Ark Commissioned

The size of the Ark would be 140 m (480ft) long, 23m wide and 13,5m high. It was a gigantic box of massive proportions. It was stable and almost impossible to capsize. The Ark had 3 storeys and 3 decks and a number of rooms. Noah was told what type of wood to use and how to make it waterproof. There was to be a window and one door.

The Ark is a wonderful type of our Lord Jesus Christ. We are safe, and saved in Him. It was necessary for the Ark to be built because everything was going to perish. There was going to be a worldwide flood that would destroy all except that which was in the Ark.

b. THE FLOOD (GENESIS 7-8)

1. At the Flood

God had spoken clearly to Noah. He had clear instructions about the Ark and clear instructions about the animals. God assured Noah that the flood would come on schedule. Then, after a century of silence God spoke again.

120 years have now passed and the Ark is now ready. Noah has preached to the people who watched in scorn as he built. God instructed Noah that 7 of every clean animal and 2 of every unclean animal was to go into the Ark. Noah was 600 years old at this point. Then there were only 7 days of grace left. God was going to destroy the world.

In v11 we see that the waters came from above: there was a vast vapourish canopy, with a greenhouse effect, surrounding the earth. Rain came down. Waters also came from below- from the ground in a floodlike nature.

Man was now to be judged, and the Lord shut Noah in. He and his family were all in a safe place. All other men, women and children drowned. The waters rose and all that weren't in the Ark died, perished and were wiped out. Waters flooded the earth for 150 days.

- The depth of the flood was great: the tops of the mountains were covered
- The duration of the flood was 5 months, and there were 7 more months before Noah came out of the Ark- a total of 371 days
- The geology of the Flood: the waters came from the fountains of the deep
- The size of the Ark: there was 95700 sq ft of deck space
- The need for the Ark was to save some
- We have the testimony of Peter in 2Peter 3:5-6, "For they deliberately overlooked this fact, that the earth was formed out of water and through water by the word of God, and that by means of these the world that then existed was deluged with water and perished."
- The real purpose of the flood was to destroy the rampant wickedness that had spread like a cancer across the earth.

2. After the Flood

1. The Lord's Actions (v1-5)

But God remembered Noah. The Flood continued for 150 days. After this God

- a. Caused a wind to come over the earth
- b. Stopped the fountains of the deep (the waters below)
- c. Closed the windows of heaven (the waters above)

The waters began returning and receding.

2. The Servant's Attitude (v6-14)

After 40 days (the 285th day) Noah sent out a dove. He waited 29 days further. Noah was patient and trusted God.

The whole world had to now start again. It was a yearlong flood. The oceans were now much more extensive and the land areas less extensive. The vapour blanket had disappeared and strong temperature variations would begin to be experienced. There were mountains. Wind, storms, rain and snow were all possible now.

3. The Lord's Command (v15-17)

"Then God said to Noah, "Go out..." (v15-16a) After about 371 days Noah was given the go ahead to leave the Ark. He, his family and the animals slowly began to move out onto the land. The environment was so different after the Flood that there were many animals who found it difficult to adjust- e.g. the dinosaurs.

4. The Servant's Attitude (v18-19)

Noah built an altar to the Lord. He was very grateful that God had kept him and all with him safe in the Ark. He is stunned into fear but he must come and thank God through sacrifice.

5. The Servant's Consecration (v20)

Noah gave burnt offerings to the Lord. This is the first instance, the first mention of altars in the Bible. Noah is grateful for God's help in building the Ark before the Flood. He also gives thanks for God's preservation of all in the Ark during the Flood, and he prays for grace as he now goes out into the new world after the Flood.

6. The Lord's Revelation (v21-22)

God declared to Noah that He would "never again curse the ground because of man" (v21).

God saw the heart of Noah and He was pleased.

Conclusion

1. Days of Sin

The wickedness on the earth led to the Flood. There was horrendous sin. The ways of God had been totally abandoned.

2. Days of Sorrow

Noah preached to the people for 120 years but he had not a single convert. And then after the Flood there was the new world and everything had gone.

3. Days of Salvation

The wonder of it all is that Jesus is our Ark- He is our Saviour. All found in Him are saved.

c. THE NEW WORLD (CHAPTER 9)

The Flood has taken place spreading across the world and all were destroyed. Noah was the second head of the human race. There was a new start and a new hope. Sin had been punished, grace has been working.

1. The Elements of the New Commencement (v1-7)

Then God blessed Noah.

1. The Divine Blessing (v1)

God blessed Noah and his sons. In Ch 1:28 God had blessed Adam and Eve. Now He uses the same blessing, "Be fruitful and multiply and fill the earth" in blessing Noah and his sons. Noah is the new progenitor of the human race.

2. The Divine Promise (v2)

Noah is promised the fear and dread of him on all the earth. In this way God is assuring Noah of his protection and his power.

3. The Divine Provision(v3)

Next we see God's wonderful provision. God assures Noah of food and sustenance. Animals are here, for the first time, authorized for use as food- perhaps animal protein was now needed by man.

4. The Divine Prohibition (v4)

However, Noah was not to eat the blood of an animal. Here God shows Noah the sacredness of life. In Leviticus 3:17 this was made law by the Lord, "It shall be a statute forever, throughout your generations, in all your dwelling places, that you eat neither fat nor blood." The blood signified atonement. It was through the shedding of blood that forgiveness was obtained. Noah was not to eat the blood.

5. The Divine Warnings (v5-6)

Only man has been made in the image of God, therefore God said there would be an accounting for every man's life. A penalty, life for life: justice. This was in essence a formal system of human government that was being put in place, especially in the case of murder- not for vengeance, but justice.

Romans 13:4 says, "for he is God's servant to do you good. But if you do wrong, be afraid, for he does not bear the sword in vain. For he is the servant of God, an avenger who carries out God's wrath on the wrongdoer."

Acts 25:11 says, "If then I am a wrongdoer and have committed anything for which I deserve to die, I do not seek to escape death. But if there is nothing to their charges against me, no one can give me up to them. I appeal to Caesar."

These verses are examples of human government in action. Capital punishment is important for standards of right and wrong to be maintained and upheld. There must be justice.

6. Divine Expectations (v7)

God expected Noah and his sons to be fruitful, to increase in number and to multiply.

2. The Establishment of a New Covenant (v8-17)

The rainbow was the sign of the covenant.

1. The Source of the Covenant(v9)

The source was `l', God, not Noah. The Author of the covenant was God. The covenant was from God. He initiated it and made sure that it was carried through. We are saved because of God. We didn't contribute anything to our salvation (except sin). God took the initiative. God said, `Noah, we're starting again'.

- 2. The Scope (v10): The covenant was with every living creature. It was extended widely across the earth.
- 3. The Purpose (v11): The purpose was to give assurance that never again would human life be cut off or destroyed by a flood.
- 4. The Sign (v12-13): The sign was a rainbow. It had a specific spiritual meaning and was a symbol of spiritual truth.
- 5. The Message (v14-15): God said that He would remember His covenant. There was the assurance of God's faithfulness. In spite of man's failures God would carry out His covenant.

6. The Duration (v12, 16): "never again", the covenant would be effective for all generations. It was everlasting.

This covenant meant that God did not ask for obedience in return. The amazing nature of covenant is that it is unconditional.

 The Guarantee (v17): God's Word and His character would guarantee this covenant. He is a faithful God Who will fulfil His promises. For example in salvation, He will never let us go. We can have confidence in a wonderful God, not in ourselves. He is a God of grace.

It was a brand new beginning. It was glorious.

3. Noah's Fall

1. The Sons (v18-19)

The Bible says that all nations come from Noah. The sons, Shem, Ham and Japheth were the heads of the divisions of the human race.

2. The Sins (v20-21)

Noah drank wine and became drunk- after all of God's grace and mercy. Richard Youngblood points out the devastating effects of drunkenness. The potentially devastating effects of wine include, in this instance, immodesty.

3. The Shame (v22)

Noah doesn't realize what is happening because he is drunk. Ham was depraved. He commits the sin of omission in not hiding his father's nakedness. He also committed the sin of commission: he called attention to the circumstances and endeavoured to get his brothers to share in the sin.

4. The Sorrow (v23-24)

Shem and Japheth acted in purity. Sorrow must have filled Noah. There must have been guilt and remorse.

5. The Retribution (v23)

Noah cursed Canaan, one of Ham's sons.

6. The Reward (v26-27)

Noah blessed Shem and promised him supremacy. Shem was promised a great blessing.

7. Noah's Death

After 950 years of life, Noah died.

Conclusion

Two main lessons stick with us from this account.

- 1. The Faithfulness of God: God preserved Noah and his sons through the Flood, they came out of the Ark alive, and God put a rainbow in the sky to express His everlasting covenant.
- 2. The Depravity of Man: God has been so good to Noah, but no sooner is he out of the Ark then he sins. This reminds us that we are weak, frail and prone to wander.

d. GOD AND THE NATIONS (GENESIS 10-11)

Chapter 10 of Genesis describes the nations that were descended from Noah. F.B. Meyer says, "Few realize the treasured that lie in this heap of names." It is a remarkably accurate, historical chapter. Chapter 10 is unparalleled in its antiquity and its accuracy. Dr William Albright said of the chapter that it, "stands absolutely alone in ancient literature." It is a history of the nations and where the different nations stem from. John Phillips says, "The table of nations is the oldest attempt to explain, in tabulated form, the geographic distribution of the human race."⁷

1. Diffusion of the Nations

Noah has come out of the Ark and then we have a written account of the generations that come from Noah.

1. Family of Japheth (v2-5)

In general the descendants of Japheth formed the Indo European peoples.

- Some of Japheth's sons are:
- a. Gomer
- b. Magog- these people lived near the Black Sea and in Russia and China
- c. Madai-was the ancestor of the Medes and the Persians. These later migrated to India to become the progenitors of the Indian people
- d. Javan- was the original form of Ionia (Greeks)
- e. Tiras- was the descendant of the Arustans in Italy
- Gomer had sons too:
- a. Ashkenaz- these people settled in Germany, Denmark and the Northern Islands
- b. Riphath- Josephus says these people were identified as the Carpathians
- c. Togarmah- from whom the Armenians come
- The sons of Javan included:
- a. Tarshish (where Jonah was from); Tartesos in Spain and Catharge in North Africa.
- b. Kittim- people living in Cyprus and Macedonia
- c. Dodanim- is the founder of Island of Rhodes
- 2. The Family of Ham (v6-20)

Ham lay the foundation for the countries from North Africa downwards into Arabia. Ethiopia was far greater than it is today.

⁷ Phillips, J. *Exploring Genesis* Moody Press: Chicago, 1980; pg 96.

- The sons of Ham include:
- a. Cush- the people of Ethiopia and all those who migrated southwards into Arabia
- b. Egypt (Misraem)- these were the Egyptians. Psalm 105:23 says, "Then Israel came to Egypt; Jacob sojourned in the land of Ham."
- c. Put-Libya and west of Egypt
- d. Canaan- was Ham's youngest son. The sons of Canaan gave rise to all the Canaanite tribes. He fathered Sidon who brought the Phoenicians into being.
- The sons of Cush included:
- a. Seba- these people migrated across the Red Sea and gave rise to the Sudan
- b. Havilah, c. Sabtah &d. Sabteca relate to Arabia in general

e.Nimrod- the people from this man settled in the Tigris Euphrates valley. Nimrod became a great tyrant, strong and violent. He was a man of great ability and energy. He was the leader of the people who built the Tower of Babel. Iraq and Iran stem from him. He built Nineveh, Rehoboth and Calah.

- From Egypt (Misraem) come the people who live in the different parts of Africa. The Pathrusites dwelt in Upper Egypt, migrated to Crete and lived on the eastern shores of the Mediterranean. They became known as the Philistines.
- 3. The Family of Shem

Shem was the father of:

- a. Eber the Hebrew people. Abraham was descended from Eber. He was one of the children of Eber.
- b. Elam- from whom the Elamites come. Abram rescued Lot from Chedorlaomar the king of Elam in Genesis 14. We also have the Persian Empire coming from Elam.
- c. Asshur- the Assyrians
- d. Lud- the Ludians and people of Asia Minor
- e. Importantly, Arpachshad was in the line of the Promised Seed, our Lord Jesus.

SUMMARY

- From Shem came 26 family units. From Ham came 30. From Japheth came 14. Each were a family with its own region, therefore a nation. There is a total of 70 nations listed in this original table of nations.
- 2. All nations are of one blood. All stem from Noah.
- 3. Each nation had one great need- for the Messiah to come.

2. The Confusion of Tongues (Chapter 11)

This was an event of almost equal importance as the Flood. This chapter is crucial. Its effects were worldwide. There was massive judgment by God that had a massive impact.

There is little doubt that Satan has been actively working behind the scenes. Since the prophesy in Genesis 3 Ham's character and tribe had turned further and further away from God. Nimrod became leader. He turned his back on God and established a religion of pantheism (God in everything), polytheism (many gods) and idolatry (the worshipping of idols).

God's wrath was decisive- as we shall see. Romans 1:18 says, "For the wrath of God is revealed from heaven against all ungodliness and unrighteousness of men, who by their unrighteousness suppress the truth."

1. What Man Did (v1-4)

There was one world, one language, one common language. Morris says that it was "probable it was a semitic language, probably Hebrew". The people migrated eastwards and southwards and settled in Shinar. They built a city- it reminded them of their home. They tried to reproduce the Garden of Eden so they named the rivers there the Tigris and the Euphrates.

Nimrod then appeared on the scene. He gave the people two choices:

- 1. To listen to God who said populate all the earth and establish governments, or
- 2. To establish a centralized society, providing its own resources that was self sufficient and capable of ruling the world.

Nimrod chose the second option. He encouraged people to build for themselves. It was a self sufficient society under his brilliant leadership while disregarding God. They decided to build a tower with the impression of reaching up to God. They wanted to do this on their own without help from God, under the guise of spirituality.

What was emerging was a complex situation of human religion. The people did not want to listen to God and instead said `we' are going to do it. Morris says, "We find now the beginning of an entire complex of human religion".

Pawson says, "Nimrod (King of Babylon, or Babel) built that tower... to express his own power and grandeur... The Tower of Babel offended God very profoundly."⁸

⁸ Pawson, D. *Unlocking the Bible* Collins: London, 2007; pg 75.

2. What God Did (v5-9)

Man creating his own empire was not the intention of God. God had ideals for the world. It was not how God had intended it to be. God had to come down in judgment, as He had done in the Flood. God calls a counsel, "Let us..". The Godhead met and decided to confound the language of the world.

God scattered the people. He introduced confusion so that the people began to separate because they didn't understand each other.

The population began to grow. The industrious, more intelligent tribes went to favourable areas whereas the weaker, less ambitious people were pushed further away. This caused the formation of cultures. Morris says, "As each family moved away from the Tower of Bable they developed their own culture and distinct... characteristics." Skin colour, height, temperament etc were all associated with particular tribes and nations. There were different population groups and languages.

3. The First Semitic Genealogy (v10-26)

One line was going to produce the Messiah.

We see the generations of Shem and then the line of Abraham. This is very important. The Lord created, Adam and Eve fell, there was the Flood, all were destroyed except Noah. We then have the Tower of Babel, God's judgment and He then calls one man Abram.

There are four key events in the first eleven chapters of the Bible:

- a. Ch 1-2: Creation: In 6 days God created the heavens and the earth
- b. Ch 3: The Fall: Satan tempted Eve to disobey
- c. Ch 6-8: The Flood: Only Noah was spared
- d. Ch 11: Babel: and Nimrod's influence.

5. A SUMMARY OF CHAPTERS 11-50

The rest of Genesis gives us a detailed account of the lives of 3 patriarchs: Abraham, (Isaac), Jacob and Joseph and God's dealings with them.

1. Abraham

Pawson says, "God began creation with one man and he began redemption with one man."⁹ Adam was the first man, and through Abraham God began to prepare the way for Jesus.

a. Abram's Call and God's Promise

Abram was called to leave his family and go to a land that God would show him. Hebrews 11: 8 describes Abraham as a man of faith: "By faith Abraham obeyed when he was called to go out... And he went out, not knowing where he was going." God made three promises to Abram saying that He would bless him, make his name great and that he would be a blessing. Abram acted promptly, though partially initially. He travelled to Haran and then 5 years later on to Shechem and the oak of Moreh.

b. The Lie and Lot

Abram went down into Egypt and lied about Sarai saying she was his sister. Abram and Lot then go up to Ai where they quarrel. They separate at this point. Lot goes to Sodom where he pitches tents and becomes an elder. 5 kings war against another 4 kings. Lot is then taken captive by Chedorlaomar king of Elam and Abram rescues him. The king of Sodom offers Abram a reward but he rejects this. Melchizedek, a type of Christ, then meets Abram bringing out bread and wine and blesses him.

c. God's Covenant but Human Reasoning

God then appears to Abram saying "Fear not" and that He was his shield. However Abram responds with faithlessness highlighting the fact that he doesn't have a son. God assures him promising his offspring would be like the stars. Abram then believes God. Abram still seeks the confirmation of his faith so God told him to prepare a heifer, goat, dove and pigeon. They were cut in half and placed in two lines. God caused a smoking fire pot and a flaming torch to pass through the pieces. God was sealing his agreement with Abram. Abram and Sarai then made their own plans, not waiting for God. Abram caused Hagar, Sarai's Egyptian servant, to become pregnant. Hagar had a son who was named Ishmael. This false step caused sorrow as Sarai became jealous and dealt harshly with Hagar.

⁹ Pawson, pg85.

d. The Covenant Reaffirmed and the Promise of Isaac

God made Abram wait for 13 years before He spoke to him again. Abram was forgiven, and given a new name: Abraham meaning "father of a multitude of nations". God graciously confirms his covenant with Abraham saying he would be fruitful. God is the Maker of the covenant, and Abraham the beneficiary. The sign of this covenant would be circumcision. Then God gave Abraham a more detailed promise-that he would have a son and call his name Isaac. Immediately, Abraham circumcised all the men in his house- his faith demonstrated absolute obedience.

e. Abraham: a friend of God and Lot in depravity

After this, the Lord appeared to Abraham at Mamre and came to him as a guest. The three men offered assurance of the promise God had given Abraham. He reveals to Abraham that He wants to destroy Sodom. Abraham then, from his privileged position begins to intercede earnestly, urgently and persistently for Sodom. God once again offers Abraham encouragement.

By contrast, we see Lot visited by angels, in Sodom, a place of awful depravity, a place of homosexuality. Lot even offers his daughters to the men in complete disregard of morality. Lot had compromised his faith and he lost credibility with his sons-in-law. However, remembering Abraham's plea God delivers Lot from the coming judgment as sulphur and fire are rained down on Sodom and Gomorrah. Chapter 19 concludes with Lot in unutterable shame as his daughters commit incest with him.

f. A Deplorable Sin and a Faithful God

Abraham journeyed to Gerar but once again called Sarah his sister. Abimelech, king of Gerar sent for Sarah and almost took her but the Lord intervened and warned Abimelech in a dream. Abimelech rebukes Abraham and Abraham gives his excuse. Then Abimelech graciously offers Abraham land. God then mercifully kept his covenant with Abraham and Sarah conceived and gave birth to Isaac. Unfortunately Ishmael mocked Isaac, but God was with Abraham giving him perfect strength.

Here we have an overlapping of Abraham's story and his son Isaac's.

g. Isaac and Abraham's faith tested at Mt Moriah

Then God tested Abraham and asked him to sacrifice his only son, whom he loved. Abraham does not question, argue or doubt. He shows incredible faith, submission, promptness and perseverance for 3 days he pressed on wanting to show God his loyalty. At the point of sacrifice God intervenes and provides a ram in the thicket. Abraham triumphs- obtaining the approval of God and learns that God is Jehovah Jireh. Abraham's testimony was that the Lord was lord of his life.

Abraham was further tested as Sarah died. We have the first record of a man's tears as Abraham mourns. He negotiates with the Hittites to obtain a burial place for Sarah. Abraham shows duty, faith and love as she is buried in the field of Machpelah in Hebron.

h. Abraham's Last Days and Isaac and Rebekah

Abraham makes good use of his last days instructing his servant what he requires in a wife for Isaac. He shows persistent faithfulness to the divine will as he desires his son's wife's culture to be compatible in the Lord. He also shows deep insight into the divine purpose as he desires that she be brought back home. Abraham is absolutely certain of Divine favour knowing that God is sovereign and will make the correct choice.

The servant's journey was one of intelligent obedience. He also showed zealous interest as did everything with specific prayer. As he watched God's plan unfold, the servant showed patience, wisdom and reverence. He told Laban's family, "God has led me to your daughter" (Ch 24:48). Laban recognizes that this is from the Lord and tells the servant to take Rebekah.

Abraham enjoyed physical and mental strength to the end. He marries another wife Kuturah and leaves all in his will to Isaac. He died at age 175.

2. Jacob

Jacob's life is testimony to the fact that God works in undeserving people. Mears says, "Jacob... despite his many faults, valued God's covenant blessing."¹⁰ Jacob is unattractive, repulsive but becomes conscious of God's grace at work. Jacob is Isaac's son and Abraham's grandson. He is the twin of Esau though they were both different in appearance and pursuits.

a. The birthright

Jacob knew the importance of the birthright and blessing from his father Isaac. He was cool and calculating and made a bargain with Esau- the older son- by which he exchanged the birthright for food.

¹⁰ Mears, pg 29.

We break and return to **Isaac** at this point.

Isaac lives the longest of the patriarchs. God is faithful to him just as He was to Abraham displaying His providence as He promises to Isaac that He would be with him and bless him. However, Isaac makes the same mistake as his father, also saying that Rebekah was his sister when in Abimelech's territory. However, God's grace is evident as in that same year Isaac sowed and reaped a hundredfold. Isaac proceeded to reopen many of the wells that his father Abraham had dug. Then Abimelech exchanges oaths with Isaac: it is clear that Isaac has divine favour.

b. Isaac blesses Jacob

Isaac desires to bless Esau- his oldest son. He tells Esau to kill some game and prepare him some stew and return to him. Rebekah has a counterplot and prepares stew and readies Jacob in Esau's place. Jacob lies to his father saying, "The Lord has blessed me" (v20). He is a deceiver. He steals Esau's blessing. As a result of Esau's defeat there is great animosity between the brothers and Jacob is sent away.

c. Jacob's Dream

Jacob begins his journey to Haran. He dreams one night of a ladder between heaven and earth with angels ascending and descending upon it. The Lord stands above it. There follows a revelation to Jacob of God's divine presence, His divine protection, His preservation and promise. Jacob responded with awe and set up a memorial calling the place Bethel. This was the place of Jacob's `conversion'.

d. Jacob marries Leah and Rachel

Jacob sees God's providence as he continues travelling and meets Rachel and then goes to Laban- her father's house. Jacob faithfully serves Laban for 7 years as `wages' for Rachel, but Laban deceives Jacob and gives him Leah instead. Jacob thus experiences the providence and the justice of God. Jacob then works for a further 7 years for Rachel. The nation of Israel is birthed in Jacob's household as Leah bears Reuben, Simeon, Levi and Judah; Bilhah bears Dan and Naphtali; Zilpah bears Gad and Asher; and Leah bears Isaachar, Zebulun and Dinah. Finally, God gave Rachel Joseph, and would later give her Benjamin.

e. Jacob's Return Home

Jacob flees from Laban who has shown Jacob his selfishness and his greed. Laban pursues him but Jacob will not turn back. Jacob then fearfully readies himself to

meet Esau. Jacob prayed, revealing his dependence on God now, however he resorts immediately to schemes and plans. Jacob wrestles with God. Jesus was knocking all self-centredness out of Jacob. Though Jacob's hip is dislocated Peniel becomes a big turning point for Jacob. He is a new man, a monument of the grace and mercy of God.

f. The Causes, Results and Cure of His Decline

Jacob's decline involves a number of steps backward. Firstly, he doesn't trust God, but rather is driven by the fear of man as he prepares to meet Esau. Secondly, Jacob chooses not to travel with Esau to Seir despite his warmth and generosity and instead goes to Succoth. Thirdly, Jacob builds a place for himself and settles at Succoth. Jacob still does not trust God but buys land in Shechem.

Dinah, Jacob's daughter, is raped. Jacob's sons deceitfully pretend to make a circumcision agreement with Shechem but in a treacherous action violently kill every male. Jacob displays pride being concerned for his reputation as opposed to God's reputation. God ultimately calls Jacob to go back to Bethel. There God renews the promise He made to Abraham. Jacob sets up a pillar there as a memorial. We see in Jacob's life a lesson of God's restoring grace.

3. Joseph

Joseph's life is a tapestry of God's providence. Alternating cycles of adversity and prosperity in his life serve to strengthen him and equip him for God's plan ahead.

a. His Early Life

Joseph had an overindulgent father who loved him more than the other brothers. He had authority and privileges- a coat he wore- above his brothers and this caused jealousy. Joseph dreamt of sheaves in a field bowing down to him and then the sun, moon and stars also bowing down to him. This further provoked jealousy in the brothers. Jacob sends Joseph to his brothers who are in the fields. He obediently and respectfully goes. "We see a teenage lad who not only had some well-grounded convictions concerning integrity and morality and practical godliness, but also a young man with the courage of his convictions." ¹¹Joseph's brothers decided to leave him in a pit to die, however Judah suggests that Joseph is sold to passing Midianite traders. They took Joseph to Egypt. The brothers take his coat dipped in blood to Jacob. Jacob is overwhelmed with grief.

¹¹ Phillips, J. pg294.

b. Joseph's trials

Joseph was to go through 13 years of bitter trials, but God was with him. He was sold to Potiphar and there learnt the Egyptian language and culture. Unfortunately, Potiphar's wife accused Joseph of immorality and he was thrown into prison. Joseph was put in charge unquestionably. He was loyal to God under all circumstances. While in prison, he interprets the cupbearer and the baker's dreams. One would be released, one would be killed. This happened just as Joseph had said. However, he is forgotten and remains 2 more years in prison. But God was going to exalt Joseph. The king had a dream and needed an interpreter. The cupbearer remembered Joseph. He tells Pharoah Egypt must be ready for 7 years of prosperity, but then 7 years of famine. Pharoah chooses Joseph as the man who will be in charge of preparing Egypt. He places Joseph as second-in-command.

c. His Life's Work

Joseph had become Prime Minister because of his impeccable character. He immediately set to work collecting an overabundance of grain. He had two sons: Manassah and Ephraim. We see God's providence exemplified. The famine then reaches Canaan and Jacob sends the brothers to Egypt for food. There is the awakening of conscience as Joseph puts his brothers through various tests. The Lord through divine discipline causes Benjamin- Joseph's youngest brother- to be brought to him. On the reception of the brothers this time Joseph cannot contain his emotion any longer and weeps revealing his identity to his brothers. He says, "God sent me before you to preserve life" (Ch45:5). Joseph took the initiative and forgave his brothers. There follows a wonderful reconciliation as Jacob comes to Egypt and is reunited with his son.

d. His Later Years

A new home is found for the family in Goshen with the veto of Pharoah. Jacob then meets Pharoah in a notable interview and blesses him. Joseph is a wise ruler in all his decisions wielding a mighty influence on the land. The people's money ran out so Joseph told them to exchange their livestock and then the people gave up their lands for food during the famine. So Pharoah had everything. Jacob asks Joseph, in his old age, to bury him in the Promised Land. Jacob rallies his strength on his deathbed and blesses his sons. Joseph buried his father in Canaan. After this the brothers were fearful, but they underestimated Joseph's genuine affection. Joseph reassured them of his forgiveness saying, "Do not fear, for am I in the place of God?" (Ch50:19). Joseph shows great faith as he remains in Egypt and says to his brothers before he dies, "God will... bring you up out of this land to the land that he swore to Abraham, to Isaac, and to Jacob".

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