

Genesis | Part 1

Lesson 1 | Creation (Genesis 1-2)

Looking into the Text

1. After reading the text, record your own observations, questions, and thoughts below:
2. Do you see any relationship between what God created on days 1 and 4? Days 2 and 5? Days 3 and 6?
3. In what sense was God's creation "good"? What did God say was "not good"? Why?
4. What do you learn about a) God, and b) man in Genesis 1:26-27?
5. Compare chapters 1 and 2 and their respective accounts of creation. What differences do you see? Are these contradictions, or is there a way to reconcile them?
6. Describe the two most important trees and where God placed them in the garden (Gen. 2:9). Why do you think there were two important trees?
7. What do you learn about a) woman, and b) marriage in Genesis 2:18-25?

Looking into the Future

8. What does it mean that God "rested" on the 7th day? What significance would this have to the Jews (Ex. 20:8-11)? How is this significant to us today (Col. 2:16-17; Heb. 4)?
9. Where was Jesus during creation? What was his role? Consider John 1:1-5; 1 Cor. 8:6; Col. 1:15-17; Heb. 1:1-4.

Looking into the Mirror

10. Hebrews 11:3 tells us creation is a matter of faith, trusting in the unseen because of the evidence we see. Speculations about Genesis 1-2 abound. Do you struggle with any doubts about creation? What aspects of creation do we NOT know? What will you do about these doubts?

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Lesson 2 | Sin and Consequences (Genesis 3)

Looking into the Text

1. After reading the text, record your own observations, questions, and thoughts below:
2. What strategy(ies) did the serpent use to deceive Eve? Compare what God said (2:17) with what the serpent said (3:4). Was it good that Eve could become “like God” by eating the fruit (compare 3:5 and 3:17)?
3. Trace the theme of nakedness in Genesis 2-3. How does the shame of nakedness symbolize the consequences of sin? How did God remove Adam and Eve’s shame?
4. Summarize the curses God placed on the serpent (vv. 14-15).
5. Summarize the consequences of Eve’s sin (v. 16). How will Eve’s relationship with her husband be affected?
6. Summarize the consequences of Adam’s sin (vv. 17-19). How do these affect us today?
7. In what sense did Adam and Eve die the day they ate the fruit (Gen. 2:17; 3:19,22; Rom. 3:23)? Since they didn’t die physically, what does this mean?

Looking into the Future

8. Genesis 3:15 is sometimes called the *protoevangelium* (the “first gospel”). In what ways does this promise hint at a coming Savior? How does Jesus fulfill this promise?
9. Because of their sin, Adam and Eve lost all access to the tree of life (Gen. 3:22-24). Why was this so tragic? Where is the next place in the Bible where we read of the tree of life?

Looking into the Mirror

10. Temptation always involves some form of deception (Gen. 3:13; John 8:44; Rev. 12:9). For example, Satan’s lie changed the way Eve “saw” the tree (Gen. 3:6). How do you see this happening in your own life? How is Satan trying to change the way you see sin?

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Lesson 3 | Cain, Abel, and Seth (Genesis 4-5)

Looking into the Text

1. After reading the text, record your own observations, questions, and thoughts below:
2. What was Eve's reaction to Cain's and Seth's births (Gen. 4:1, 25)? What was her attitude toward God?
3. Why did God reject Cain's sacrifice but accept Abel's? Was this unfair of God? What does Abel, though dead, still say to us today (Heb. 11:4)?
4. How did Cain respond when God confronted him about his sin? How does his attitude change from verse 9 to verses 13-14? Does he ever repent?
5. Compare the consequences of Adam and Eve's sin (Gen. 3:14-19) with the consequences of Cain's sin (Gen. 4:10-16). Any similarities? Any differences?
6. Find at least 2 ways in which the curses of Genesis 3 affected mankind in Genesis 4-5.

Looking into the Future

7. What kind of accomplishments were Cain's descendants known for (Gen. 4:17-24)? What about Seth's descendants (Gen. 4:25-26; 5:3-32)? From which of these men would the promised "Seed" come?
8. God said Abel's blood cried out to Him [for justice] (Gen. 4:10-11), but Hebrews 12:24 says Jesus' blood "speaks better than the blood of Abel." What does this mean? What does Jesus' blood cry out for?

Looking into the Mirror

9. Since Cain and Abel, mankind has been divided by how we are to worship God. What attitude in worship pleases God? Who are you more like in worship—Cain or Abel? Consider Mal. 1:7-8; 2 Sam. 24:24; John 4:23-24; Heb. 12:28-29.

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Lesson 4 | The Flood (Genesis 6-7)

Looking into the Text

1. After reading the text, record your own observations, questions, and thoughts below:
2. Some have suggested the “sons of God” were angels (6:1-2; Job 1:6; Jude 6). What do you think? Either way, does 6:1-4 describe a good or bad situation (compare 6:2 with 3:6)?
3. Describe the condition of mankind in Genesis 6. Why—and in what sense—was God “sorry that He had made man on the earth”?
4. How large was the ark? Convert the dimensions in 6:15 into modern-day measurements for comparison. What other details does God include in the ark’s design?
5. In 7:2-3, what instructions did God give Noah for the clean animals? Unclean animals? Why the difference?
6. How does the text describe the extent of the flood (7:18-24)? Is this consistent with the view that the flood was “local, not worldwide”?

Looking into the Future

7. Sin has spread and become so rampant that God decided to destroy life (Gen. 7:21-22). Looking forward in the Bible, find other times and events when God judged sin by bringing about death. What do these examples teach us about God’s character?
8. The rain fell on the earth “forty days and forty nights” (Gen. 7:4,12,17). Why is this time-period significant? Can you think of other “40s” in the Bible?

Looking into the Mirror

9. Noah was a remarkable man of faith. How did he demonstrate “reverence” (Heb. 11:7, NASB) and faith in Genesis 6-7? Why are leaders like Noah needed today? How can you imitate Noah’s faith to stand out in a sinful world?

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Lesson 5 | After the Flood (Genesis 8-9)

Looking into the Text

1. After reading the text, record your own observations, questions, and thoughts below:
2. What does it mean that God “remembered” Noah (8:1; also 9:15; 19:29; Ex. 2:24; 1 Sam. 1:19)? What does this show about God’s character?
3. How long did the flood last (7:24; 8:2-3). How long were Noah, his family, and the animals on the ark (7:11; 8:13-14)?
4. What does God teach Noah about life/blood (both animal and human) in 9:3-7?
5. Find some similarities between chapters 8-9 and the creation account in chapters 1-2. What do these parallels tell us about God’s purpose in bringing the flood on the earth?
6. Explain what Ham did to sin against his father. What curse did Noah pronounce upon him as a result (9:25; compare 4:11)? On the other hand, who did Noah bless?

Looking into the Future

7. What does the flood teach us about grace, obedience, and baptism? Consider Peter’s analogy in 1 Peter 3:18-22.
8. The first covenant God made was with Noah (6:18; 9:8-17). Is this covenant still in force today? List as many covenants as you can think of that God makes throughout the Bible.

Looking into the Mirror

9. Through the flood, God “re-created” the world and started over afresh. The New Testament continues this theme with references to Christians being a “new creation” and connects it to water baptism (2 Cor. 5:17; Eph. 4:24; 5:26; John 3:5; Rom. 6:1-4). How does the “newness” of the world after the flood illustrate the life we should live as Christians?

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Lesson 6 | Repopulating the Earth (Genesis 10-11)

Looking into the Text

1. After reading the text, record your own observations, questions, and thoughts below:
2. Do you recognize any names (of nations or empires) in the genealogies of chapter 10 that will play a significant role in later Bible history? Is there any foreshadowing here?
3. What was wrong with the people wanting to build a city and tower (Gen. 11:1-4)?
4. Why did God confuse the language of mankind? What was this unfinished tower called, and what did it symbolize?
5. Compare how long Shem's descendants live in Gen. 11:10-32 with the earlier genealogy in Genesis 5. What do you notice the in lifespans? Why? (see Gen. 6:3)
6. Genesis 1-11 records a sad cycle of human history. Looking at the "big picture" of we've seen happen so far, do you see any recurring themes? (See chart on back – we will complete this chart in class, but see the scriptures and questions to jumpstart your thinking.)

Looking into the Future

7. Genesis was written originally to the Israelites as they journeyed to the land of Canaan. How would Genesis 9:25 and 10:15-19 help them understand why they were to drive out the nations living there? (see Gen. 15:18-21; Ex. 3:8, 17)
8. What does "Babel" mean? This is the same word later translated "Babylon." What does "Babylon" often stand for (either metaphorically or literally) from here on in the Bible?

Looking into the Mirror

9. Are you ever driven to act out of pride, like when people wanted to build a tower to exalt themselves? Think of a time in your life when you acted just like them. How does the Tower of Babel vividly illustrate the emptiness of man's pride?

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Lesson 6 | Repopulating the Earth (Genesis 10-11)

Cycles of Man's History in Genesis 1-11

Cycle 1		Cycle 2	
Gen. 1-2		Gen. 9:1-19	
Gen. 3-5		Gen. 9:20-11:4	
Gen. 6-8		Gen. 11:5-9	

Questions to Ponder:

- What do we learn from this cycle about 1) ourselves and our condition, and 2) God and how He deals with sin?
- Can you think of any periods in later Bible history that show similar a pattern or cycle?
- Genesis 1-11 marks the end of the first section of Genesis (history of mankind). Chapter 12 begins the second (larger) half of the book (history of the nation Israel). How does this transition show what God is planning to do about this cycle?

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Lesson 7 | Abram Sojourns (Genesis 12-13)

Looking into the Text

1. After reading the text, record your own observations, questions, and thoughts below:
2. According to Acts 7:2-4, where was Abram living when God first appeared to him? How does this help us understand the chronology of Genesis 11:31-12:4?
3. What promises did God give to Abraham? How far into man's future history do they reach? How much of human population do they impact?
4. On the map provided, trace Abram's journeys from Ur, Haran, throughout Canaan, Egypt, and back to Canaan. Circle the three places where he built an altar to God.
5. Why did Abram tell Sarai to say she was his sister while they were in Egypt? Was it the truth (Gen. 20:12)? What does this indicate about Abram's faith?
6. Why did Lot choose to settle in the valley of the Jordan, near Sodom and Gomorrah? Does the fact that Lot journeyed "east" sound familiar (v. 11; also 3:24; 4:16)?

Looking into the Future

7. Twice, the text says that Abram "called upon the name of the LORD" (12:8; 13:4; see also 4:26). What does this mean? Consider how this phrase will be used later in the Bible in Joel 2:32; Acts 2:21; 22:16; Rom. 10:12-13. How do we call on God's name?
8. In these chapters, how do you see God's promises already beginning to be fulfilled?

Looking into the Mirror

9. Hebrews 11:8-10 encourages us to imitate Abram's faith. How did he show tremendous trust in God in Genesis 12-13? What gave him confidence to go wherever God told him, and live in the land of promise as a foreigner? In what ways is your faith similar? In what ways is it lacking?

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Lesson 8 | Abram Rescues Lot and Believes God (Genesis 14-15)

Looking into the Text

1. After reading the text, record your own observations, questions, and thoughts below:
2. How many kings went to battle in 14:1-12? What incited this conflict? How were Abram and his family affected by its outcome?
3. How many men did Abram take with him to rescue Lot? Who else went with him (14:13, 24)? How does Abram's victory show God's blessing on Abram?
4. Who was Melchizedek? Why did he bless Abram, and why did Abram give him a tenth of the spoils?
5. What two questions did Abram ask God about the promises in chapter 15? Do these questions reflect a lack of faith? Is he doubting God, or are these legitimate questions?
6. What did God show Abram in response to his questions? Explain how the stars (15:5) and vision of the torch passing between the cut animals (15:9-17) reaffirm God's covenant with Abram.

Looking into the Future

7. Melchizedek appears in only three verses in the Old Testament (Gen. 14:18-19; Ps. 110:4), yet his name is used 9 times in Hebrews. Read Heb. 7:1-10 and explain how the account of Abram rescuing Lot (and its aftermath) relates to Jesus.
8. What details did God give Abram about the future of his descendants in Genesis 15:13-16)? When would these events be fulfilled?

Looking into the Mirror

9. Genesis 15:6 is quoted in at least three places in the New Testament to show how Abram's faith is a model for our own. Considering Romans 4:3, Galatians 3:6, and James 2:23 (and their contexts), how do we imitate Abram's faith in God's promises today?

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Lesson 9 | Abram and Hagar (Genesis 16-17)

Looking into the Text

1. After reading the text, record your own observations, questions, and thoughts below:
2. Who suggested Abram have a son with Hagar? What motivated this idea, and what was wrong with the reasoning? Did they consult the Lord first?
3. What problem(s) arose as a result of Abram's relationship with Hagar, both in this section and later (see Gen. 21:8-21)?
4. Names are significant in Genesis 17. Why does God change Abram (17:5) and Sarai's (17:15-16) names? What does Isaac's name mean?
5. How did Abraham respond when God said Sarah would bear the promised son? Why? What did Abraham mean about Ishmael in 17:18?
6. In what sense was circumcision a "sign of the covenant" between God and Abraham (17:9-14)? Why was it important for Abraham to walk with God, be blameless and obedient to God (17:1; 18:19)?
7. Two descriptive names for Yahweh God appear in this section: "A-God-Who-Sees" (16:13, Hebrew *Elroi*) and "God-Almighty" (17:1, Hebrew *El-Shaddai*). Why are these names important in context of the covenant God is reiterating with Abraham?

Looking into the Future

8. The theme of circumcision will appear throughout the rest of the Bible. What does this rite represent in passages like Deut. 10:16; Jer. 4:3-4; Acts 7:51? In what way is baptism our "circumcision" into Christ (Col. 2:11-13)?

Looking into the Mirror

9. God revealed information gradually to Abraham about the promised son. Trace the stages of what God said about this son in Gen. 12-17 and the "dead ends" Abraham and Sarah took. What lessons do you learn from their journey of learning to trust God's will?

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Lesson 10 | Isaac Promised, Sodom Destroyed (Genesis 18-19)

Looking into the Text

1. After reading the text, record your own observations, questions, and thoughts below:
2. Who were the three men mentioned in 18:2? (see Gen. 18:1; 19:1; possibly Heb. 13:2)
3. Hospitality was a particularly important virtue in Ancient Near East culture. To what lengths did Abraham (18:1-8) and Lot (19:1-3) go to show hospitality to these men?
4. What message did the men bring Abraham and Sarah? How does Sarah's reaction (18:12-15) compare with Abraham's reaction in the previous chapter?
5. Why did God reveal to Abraham what He was planning to do to Sodom and Gomorrah? What does their conversation in 18:16-33 show about the relationship Abraham had with God?
6. For what sin(s) were Sodom and Gomorrah destroyed? How do you know?
7. Explain how the Moabite and Ammonite nations began and how they would be related to the Israelites. How does 19: 30-38 show us the pervasive influence of sin on Lot's family?

Looking into the Future

8. What kind of relationship would the Israelites have with the Moabites later in history? Consider Numbers 22-25. What Moabite woman would be Jesus' ancestor?

Looking into the Mirror

9. 2 Peter 2:7-8 says Lot was "righteous" and deeply "tormented" by the lawlessness which surrounded him. At the same time, Lot chose to move to Sodom (Gen. 13) and even hesitated to leave (Gen. 19:15-16). How do we reconcile these two perspectives on Lot's character? What do you learn from this? Do you see yourself in Lot?

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Lesson 11 | Isaac is Born (Genesis 20-21)

Looking into the Text

1. After reading the text, record your own observations, questions, and thoughts below:
2. How did Abraham deceive Abimelech, the king of Gerar? Why do you think Abraham repeated the same sin he committed earlier in Egypt (see Gen. 12:10-20)?
3. Does God treat Abimelech justly in Gen. 20:3-7? What does this say about the character of God?
4. How old was Abraham when Isaac was born? Sarah? What does the timing of Isaac's birth say about God's faithfulness as well as Abraham's trust in God (Rom. 4:18-22; Heb. 11:11-12)?
5. What did Ishmael do that provoked Sarah's anger against him and Hagar? About how old was Ishmael at this point (Gen. 16:16; 21:8)?
6. What did God promise would become of Ishmael and his descendants? Why did God protect and bless him?
7. Describe Abraham's relationship with Abimelech in 21:22-34. How does he deal honestly with Abimelech now, unlike before, even though this is a strained relationship?

Looking into the Future

8. The fact that God used an infertile woman to bear the promised son is important. Trace the theme of barren women bearing children by God's blessing in the Bible. Why do you think this theme plays such a large role in the biblical story, especially in Jesus' lineage?

Looking into the Mirror

9. Surprisingly, Abraham continued to struggle with trusting God's promise when his life seemed (so he thought) to be endangered (Gen. 20:11). His faith faltered because of fear. Can you relate? What are some ways you are tempted to doubt God's care because of fear?

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Lesson 12 | Abraham Offers Isaac (Genesis 22-23)

Looking into the Text

1. After reading the text, record your own observations, questions, and thoughts below:
2. Given that God does not tempt people to sin (James 1:13), in what sense did God “test” Abraham (Gen. 22:1-2)? What part of Abraham’s character/faith was God testing?
3. What does Abraham’s immediate obedience show about his faith? According to Hebrews 11:17-19, what did Abraham believe God was able to do?
4. What did God mean by “now I know that you fear God...” (22:12)? Did God not know about Abraham’s faith before?
5. Why is it significant that God attaches an oath to his promises in 22:16-18? (see Heb. 6:13-18)
6. What did Abraham name the place where God spoke to him?
7. For how much money did Abraham purchase the cave at Machpelah? Who else (other than Sarah) would be buried there?

Looking into the Future

8. Do you see any parallels between Abraham’s giving of Isaac and God sacrificing Jesus his Son?

Looking into the Mirror

9. James 2:21-24 comments that Abraham’s faith was “completed” through his actions. What does this mean? In what ways does your faith need “completing?”
10. What does God expect you to be willing to give up in order to follow him in Matthew 10:37-39? How does Abraham’s faith encourage you to follow Jesus, no matter the cost?

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Lesson 13 | A Bride for Isaac (Genesis 24-25:11)

Looking into the Text

1. After reading the text, record your own observations, questions, and thoughts below:
2. How were marriage customs different in the time of Abraham than they are in 21st century America? Are these differences a difficulty in understanding this text?
3. Why did Abraham insist that Isaac 1) not take a wife from the Canaanites but from his relatives (24:3-4), and 2) not return to their homeland (24:6-8)?
4. Why was Abraham so confident that God would provide a wife for Isaac from his homeland (24:7)?
5. Who was Rebekah? How was she related to Isaac? (24:15)
6. How did Abraham's servant exhibit faith in God in chapter 24?
7. Name Abraham's other sons (25:1-6). How did he distinguish Isaac as the promised son who would carry on the blessing?

Looking into the Future

8. Why do you think God directly orchestrated Isaac's marriage to Rebekah? What marriage in later Bible history would be similarly arranged by God's providence?

Looking into the Mirror

9. What lessons do you learn from the way Abraham's servant prayed, and how he responded when God answered his prayer? (see Matt. 17:20; 21:21-22; 1 John 5:14-15) Is this story a guarantee that God will always answer our prayers the way He did here?