



Getting started with Genesis

Genesis is the book of beginnings, not least because it's the first book in our Bible. The word Genesis literally means "origins."

The book of Genesis records two major beginnings or origins:

- The Origins of the human race (Genesis 1-11)
- The Origins of the people of God (Genesis 12-50)

The origins of the human race:

Genesis chapters 1 to 11 record for us the creation of the world, including the human race. We are introduced to God as creator and sustainer of all things. In Genesis chapters 1&2 we read of the peaceful and blessed relationship between God and his creation. We read especially of His perfect relationship with Adam and Eve. However in Genesis chapter 3, Adam and Eve rebel against God, led astray by Satan. As a result creation, Adam and Eve, and Satan are all cursed by God. Adam and Eve are banished from the garden and death enters the world. Chapter 4-11 record the relentless spread and the deserved consequences of judgment, not least in the dramatic story of Noah (Genesis 6-10). Throughout these early chapters however the love and patience of God are always evident. Look out for this as you read!

These chapters are key to help us address some of the big questions in life. Who are we? Where do we come from? Why is the world in the mess it's in today?

The origins of the people of God:

Despite the relentless spread of evil and rebellion against God, Genesis chapter 12 onwards tells the story of how God, in his loving kindness, was at work to restore creation and humanity to right relationship with himself. It records the beginning of the gospel story that weaves its way through the whole Bible and finds its fulfilment in Jesus. God picks one man Abraham (Gen 12) through whom he will bring the help needed to all peoples of the earth. The story of Genesis then gives special attention to Abraham's family. God's badly needed help for humanity was going to come through this one family. Genesis traces the story from Abraham to Isaac (Gen 12-23), from Isaac to Jacob (Gen 24-36), and then on to his twelve sons (36-50). As we come to the end of the story of Genesis, one part of the family is given a special place. It is Jacob's son Judah (Genesis 49:10).

It's important to remember that Genesis is story and like all stories there is a story-line to follow. Here are some of the story lines to look out for as you read...

The **BIG** story line

The major story line is all about God. It is about the way God is at work as creator and saviour, to intervene in the mess of sin, and bring about restoration to a broken humanity. God is working out His great plan through one man Abraham and his family. This is a family that ultimately leads to Jesus. There are some big characters in the book of Genesis but none as big as God. He is the hero of the book!

SMALLER story lines

There are other story lines to look out for as you read...

- SIN → Judgment → Grace

This is a repeated pattern that occurs throughout the book. Watch out for this repetition as you read the stories.

- How did they end up in Egypt?

The next book of the Bible, which contains the famous story of Moses and God's rescue from Egypt, is explained by the unfolding story of Jacob and his sons in Genesis 37-50. However from Abraham onwards there are hints of this storyline unfolding.

- God's choice

God does not choose any of this family because of their own performance. It is always because of His grace. Lots of parts of the story of Genesis make this very clear, not least that some of the men God chooses to use are not very nice characters and live messy sinful lives.

Where is Jesus and the gospel in Genesis?

The New Testament helps us to see that Jesus is hinted at all over the book of Genesis. I think you will enjoy making the connections as you read.

Here are a few to get you going:

- Jesus is the creator (Colossians 1)
- Jesus is the one who will crush Satan's head (e.g. Gen 3:15, 1 John 3:8)
- Jesus is the seed of Abraham who will bring blessing to the world (e.g. Gal 3:16)
- Jesus is the descendant of Judah who will rule as king forever.
- Jesus is the one who saves us from judgement (Noah & the Ark)
- Jesus is the Saviour of the world (e.g. Gen 41:57)



Here are some questions the Bible wants you to ask of itself. Use these to help you as you read your way through this month's book: (please don't feel like you have to fill in every question in loads of detail. These are a guide to help you learn from what you are reading.)

- What did you learn about Jesus and what it means to trust him? (Luke 24:45-47)
- What did you learn about yourself? (James 1:23 & 2 Tim 3:16-17)
- How were you corrected or rebuked or equipped for every good work? (2 Tim 3:16-17)
- What did you learn from the book that will help you keep going as a follower of Jesus? (Romans 15:4)
- What did you learn that will help you serve and build up the church? (Eph 4:11-16)
- What have you learnt that helps you love the Lord your God with all your heart & with all your soul & with all your mind? (Matt 22:37-40)
- What has helped you love your neighbour as yourself? (Matt 22:37-40)

My Notes On Genesis:



g r o w
g r o u p

RBT Grow Group is on Tuesday 25th April

Bring along some things from your reading of
Genesis to share with others.