

Nutshell: **Genesis**, the first book in the Bible, tells us where we came from (*our origin*) and who we are (*our nature*), two of life's three big questions. It lays the foundation for answering the third question, "What can we do about it?" (*our remedy*), since our nature is to contradict God. The remedy resides in a promised Redeemer (Gen 3:15), who came 4,000 years later). He is Jesus of Nazareth.

Our origin and nature also evoke the quest of a fourth fundamental question, "Where are we going?" (*our future*), which is suggested by several Genesis events, particularly the Flood, where those who continue to contradict God are *judged*, while those who come to agree with God (Noah) are *rescued*.

I. **Genesis** as Part of the Bible

- A. Genesis is the first of 49 books (original Hebrew count of 22) or 66 books (English Bible, following the Septuagint) of the Bible.
 - 1. This Bible (meaning "book") is a *collection* of books which are "breathed out" by God, 2 Tim 3:16.
 - 2. Genesis is the first of five books of Moses, referred to in Biblical terms as the Law (Heb., *Torah*), and in extra-Biblical terms as the Pentateuch ("5-vessels/books").
- B. Genesis is the most *referred-to* (not quoted) book in the *Bible* (including the OT).
 - 1. Every time Exodus-through-Revelation references Abraham, for instance, it is a recollection of Genesis.
 - 2. We usually think in terms of OT books most *quoted* in the NT. In one list, Genesis comes right after Psalms.

Kid-speak: What's the book of the Bible we're studying now? Genesis.

II. **Genesis** as Part of the **Old Testament**

- A. In Genesis, God makes a covenant with Abraham, then Isaac, and then Jacob.
- B. The Old Testament follows the story of Jacob's 12 sons as the 12 tribes of Israel.
 - 1. They become a *nation* under Moses.
 - 2. They become a *kingdom* under David.
 - 3. They are divided into *two kingdoms* under Rehoboam.
 - a. One at a time, these two kingdoms are conquered and deported by foreign powers.
 - b. The southern kingdom, Judah, then returns from their captivity in Babylon.

4. As the Old Testament closes, they have rebuilt Jerusalem and the Temple, and God is still directing them towards repentance.

Kid-speak: How do we find Genesis in the Bible? It's the very first book!

III. **Genesis** as Part of the **Law/ Torah**

- A. The first five books of the Old Testament are called the Law.
- B. The Law was given through Moses, who doesn't appear until Exodus.
- C. Genesis ends with the introduction of the 12 tribes of Israel, the starting point for the nation Moses would lead:
 1. who became slaves in Egypt in Exodus;
 2. were led to freedom by God's servant, Moses, in Exodus;
 3. rebelled against Moses for 40 years in the wilderness, Exodus-Deuteronomy;
 4. were given the Law in Exodus, Leviticus, Numbers, and Deuteronomy, meanwhile logging their trek through the wilderness;
 5. and were prepared to enter the Promised Land by the end of Deuteronomy.

IV. **Genesis** as a **Book**

- A. The name of the book
 1. Our name "Genesis" means "beginning," from the Gk. Septuagint, translated from Hebrew before Christ.
 2. The Hebrew name for the book: *Bereshiyt*, "In the beginning," or "At the head," named after the first word (including its preposition).
- B. The author of the book
 1. Moses, as Christ indicated, Lk 24:44.
 2. Though Moses' own death was doubtless recorded by the next author, presumably Joshua.

Kid-speak: Who wrote Genesis? Moses.

- C. The nature of the book
 1. Genesis is a story. It is simply a narrative account: this happened, then this happened, etc. It is a story of God's dealings with people.
 2. In the telling of the story, the theological basis for the whole Bible is laid out!

V. **Theology** in **Genesis**

- A. Creation
 1. How can we know where we came from if God doesn't tell us? Gen 1:1

2. *Ever-changing* ‘scientific’ theories on where we came from reaffirm our need of God’s own firsthand, unchanging testimony on the matter.
 - a. Of course, if Genesis is true, its claims will be corroborated by physical evidence *to the extent that we can work backwards from the present*.
 - b. If you don’t believe Genesis is sufficiently corroborated by pertinent, rightly-interpreted physical data, how can you believe Jesus, who believed Genesis?

Kid-speak: What are the very first words in Genesis? “In the beginning, God created the heavens and the earth.”

B. The nature of man

1. Our uniqueness, being made in God’s image, after His likeness.
 - a. Image is a matter of *representation*. We were put here to be God’s representatives/ ambassadors/ executors on earth.
 - b. Likeness has to do with *similarity*. God has a soul (Ps 11:5) and personality. That’s the mold for our own.
 - c. **But** this image and likeness, originally oriented towards God, would become oriented towards Satan when we signed on with his rebellion against God.
 - ♦ d. Now God’s image must be **re**-created in us through Christ, Col 3:10.
2. Man’s evil nature
 - a. “In the day you eat of it, you will deathly die,” Gen 2:17. Death = **separation**. We were *separated from God*, who is goodness, light, and life. We are now naturally devoid of these.
 - b. We are consumed by self-seeking. Gen 6:5, “every imagination of the thoughts of his heart were only evil all the day long.”
 - c. Despite being made in God’s image, we had the capacity to oppose Him, which we did and do. Now we willingly love sin and darkness, Jn 3:19.
 - d. Our hearts are now the ‘tops’ in crookedness, and are, in themselves, incurable, Jer 17:9.

Kid-speak: If God doesn’t help us, how bad are all people? Bad, bad, bad!

★ C. THE PLAN OF REDEMPTION

1. No sooner had we fallen, than God was promising a coming Human to defeat the Serpent (Satan, Rev 12:9), Gen 3:15.
2. He began to work out that plan immediately, picturing sacrificial covering for sin in preference to man’s self-made covering, Gen 3:7, 21.

3. Based on Christ's coming sacrifice, God began to convert men into worshipers of the true God, the first clear example of which is Abel, Gen 4:4.
4. Before long, God would choose one man (Abraham) and his descendants to be the family through whom the Redeemer could come into the world, Gen 12:2-3.
5. Rom 5:12-14 presents Adam and Christ as the two representative men under whom all other men stand.
 - a. The doctrine of *justification by faith* rests on mankind's *ability to be represented*, Rom 5:15-21.
 - * b. Adam represented us all as sinners. Christ represents His people in His righteousness.
6. Christ fulfills the only Priest-King of the OT, Melchizedek, Gen 14; Heb 7

Kid-speak: Just because we're people, we love to sin like Adam. Adam gave us that. What does Jesus give us if we believe in Him? Goodness. He makes it like *His own* goodness is *ours!*

D. Justification by Faith

1. This great doctrine is founded squarely in Genesis! Gen 15:6.
2. Paul expounds it as the heartbeat of the Gospel, quoting Gen 15:6 in two ways:
 - a. Both as Christ's righteousness ACCOUNTED TO US *apart from our efforts*, Rom 4:1-17 (4:3).
 - b. And as our secondary justification (being declared righteous), being seen in our transformed deeds, Rom 4:18-25 (4:22).
3. This secondary way accords with James' quotation of Gen 15:6, Jms 2:23-24.

Kid-speak: What does God use to give us Jesus' goodness? Faith. That means we *believe* in Jesus. Do you believe in Him?

E. Marriage as the foundation of human society, Gen 2:24.

F. Family as the setting for raising God-worshipers, Gen 18:19; Mal 2:15.

G. God's judgment on sin

1. The Flood, Gen 6 - 8.
2. A picture of God's final judgment, 2 Pet 3:5-7

H. God's restraining of evil

1. Limiting man from fulfilling his anti-God purposes at Babel, Gen 11.
2. Holding off mankind's unity until the Antichrist, Rev 13. He won't last long.

I. Genesis, the *beginning*, mirrors/ parallels the *ending*, Revelation, in several important ways- some by continuation, but most by contrast. The following is just the first three chapters of Genesis compared to the last three chapters of Revelation. (Morris)

<u>Genesis</u>	<u>Revelation</u>
1. Night, 1:4	No night, 21:25
2. Sea, 1:10	No more sea, 21:1
3. Sun and moon, 1:16	No more sun or moon, 21:23
4. River, 2:10	River, 22:1
5. Gold, 2:12	Gold, 21:21
6. Tree of Life, 2:10	Tree of Life, 22:2
7. God fellowshiping, 3:8	God fellowshiping, 21:3
8. Cursed ground, 3:17	No more curse, 22:3
9. Returning to dust, 3:19	No more death, 21:4
10. Satan, 3:15	Satan cast into Fiery Lake, 20:10
11. Banished from the Garden, 3:23	Free entry, 22:14
12. Forbidden the Tree of Life, 3:24	Access to the Tree of Life, 22:14

Kid-speak: In Genesis, death starts happening. Everyone dies. But what happens in the last book of the Bible, Revelation? For those who trust Jesus, no more dying!

VI. The **Message** of Genesis

Here are three outlines of Genesis, each adding to the previous one, laying out the book's flow and suggesting the message arising from it.

<u>Outline 1:</u>	<u>Chapter</u>
I. Creation	1-2
II. Fall	3
III. Judgment	6-8
IV. Renewed creation	9
V. A <u>Touchstone</u> Covenant	12
A. <u>ABRAHAM</u>	12-25
B. Covenant renewed: Isaac	25-27
C. Covenant renewed covenant: JACOB	27-36
VI. A new nation: Jacob's 12 Sons	37-38
VII. Blessing to the nations: JOSEPH	39-50

<u>Outline 2, Expanded:</u>	<u>Chapter</u>
I. Creation	
A. Comprehensive account	1
B. The land and man	2
II. Fall	
A. Spiritual death	3
B. Promise of a human Redeemer	3:15
C. Mankind's <i>two spiritual families</i> exemplified	4-5
III. Judgment: a Type of the Final Judgment	
A. The Flood	6-8
B. Noah's family saved	6-8
IV. Renewed creation	
A. Covenant with men and animals	9:1-17
B. <i>Two Spiritual families</i> again	9:18-29
1. Canaan cursed	
2. Shem blessed	
V. A <u>Touchstone</u> Covenant	
A. <u>ABRAHAM</u> ("those who bless you...")	12-25
B. Renewed covenant: Isaac	25-27
C. Renewed covenant: JACOB	27-36
VI. A new nation: Jacob's 12 Sons	37-38
A. Through whom the covenant would continue	
B. Jacob's prophesies of the 12	49
VII. Blessing to the nations: JOSEPH	39-50
A. A type of Messiah, prophesied	37:5-10
B. Sold	37:28
C. Deliverer	45:7

Kid-speak: Genesis is just one long story. Who's the last person in the story of Genesis? Joseph.

<u>Outline 3, with Spiritual Splits:</u>	<u>Chapter</u>
I. Creation	
A. Comprehensive account	1
B. The land and man	2
II. Fall	
A. Spiritual death	3
B. Promise of a human Redeemer	3:15
1. The Split in its essence: Covering by sacrifice	3:21
2. Vs. Self-covering	3:7
C. Mankind's two spiritual families exemplified	4-5
1. Split 1 : Abel	
2. from Cain	
III. Judgment: a Type of the Final Judgment	
A. The Flood	6-8
B. Noah's family saved	6-8
1. Split 2 : Noah's family	
2. from the rest of the world	
IV. Renewed creation	
A. Covenant with men and animals	9:1-17
B. Two Spiritual families again	9:18-29
1. Split 3 : Shem	9:26
2. from Canaan	9:25
3. A preserving split : Man	11
<i>from unification > destruction (Shinar/ Babel); Means: division of languages</i>	
V. A <u>Touchstone</u> Covenant	
One man becomes the centerpiece of mankind:	
Everyone either blessed or cursed <u>through</u> him	
A. <u>ABRAHAM</u>	12-25
1. Split 4 : Abram	12:1
2. from his land and family	
B. Covenant renewed: Isaac	25-27
1. Split 5 : Isaac	21:12
2. from Ishmael	
C. Covenant renewed: JACOB	27-36

- 1. **Split 6:** Jacob 25:23
- 2. from Esau

Kid-speak: Genesis keeps showing us people who trusted God, like Jacob, and people who didn't, like Jacob's brother, Esau. Why does it show us that? So we'll see how to be like all the people who trusted him.

- VI. A new nation: Jacob's 12 Sons 37-38
 - A. Through whom the covenant would continue
 - B. Jacob's prophesies of the 12 49
 - ☞ 1. Judah exalted 49:10
 - 2. Through whom, Christ Heb 7:14
- VII. Blessing to the nations: Joseph 39-50
 - A. A type of Messiah, *prophesied* 37:5-10
 - 1. **Split 7:** Joseph
 - 2. from his brothers 42:21; 50:17
 - 3. The first **Split** from which **redemption** is worked 50:20
 - B. *Betrayed* 37:28
 - C. *Deliverer* 45:7

VII. **Takeaways** from a **Genesis** Overview

- A. *We* are the rebels against God described in the book. That's who we're seeing when we look honestly inside ourselves.
 - 1. We therefore need the Savior promised in the book.
 - 2. As the converts in Genesis looked *forward* to a coming Savior, so we look *back* on a Savior who has come.
- B. God watches out for His rescued ones today, just as He watched out for all His people throughout Genesis.
 - 1. But God doesn't magically keep us from sinning. Our hearts must be inclined towards Him, like Enoch, Gen 5:24. We'll be tempted, just as he was.
 - 2. We have the ability to walk blameless (not sinless) before God; otherwise, He wouldn't command it, Gen 17:1; Philip 2:15.

Wrap-up: **Genesis** lays our *theological* foundation. It provides us the materials for an accurate *philosophy* of all things. It puts us in the story of men and women who were confronted with who they were and therefore their need to trust God. We *walk* with them. We learn who God is with them.

I greatly anticipate this journey with you.