

FIRST BAPTIST CHURCH, 9-25-11 PM NOTES
"GENESIS" (PART ONE)
GENESIS 1:1-11
#2 in Series, "The Glory of God in the Old Testament"

The "beginnings" in Genesis: The beginning of the heavens and earth (1:1-25), the beginning of the human race (1:26-2:25), the beginning of sin on the earth (3:1-7), the beginning of prophesy—the prophesy of redemption (3:15), the beginning of family life (4:1-15), the beginning of civilization (4:16 - 9:29), the beginning of nations or people groups (Chapters 10-11), and the beginning of God's chosen people (Chapters 12-50).

Luke 24:27 (NKJV) "And beginning at Moses and all the Prophets, He expounded to them in all the Scriptures the things concerning Himself."

I. The History of the Human Race (Chapters 1-11)

A. The Creation (Chapters 1-2)

Genesis 1:1 (NKJV) "In the beginning God created the heavens and the earth."

Genesis 1:31 (NKJV) "Then God saw everything that He had made, and indeed *it was* very good. So the evening and the morning were the sixth day."

Genesis 1:26 (NKJV) "Then God said, 'Let Us make man in Our image, according to Our likeness; let them have dominion over the fish of the sea, over the birds of the air, and over the cattle, over all the earth and over every creeping thing that creeps on the earth.'"

John 4:24a (NKJV) "God *is* Spirit..."

Man was made in the image of God in at least three areas:

- The ability to create (using raw materials that God created *ex nihilo*—out of nothing)
- The ability to communicate
- The ability to evaluate

B. The Fall (Chapters 3-5)

Genesis 2:16-17 (NKJV) "16 And the Lord God commanded the man, saying, 'Of every tree of the garden you may freely eat; 17 but of the tree of the knowledge of good and evil you shall not eat, for in the day that you eat of it you shall surely die.'"

Genesis 3:4-6 (NKJV) “⁴Then the serpent said to the woman, ‘You will not surely die. ⁵For God knows that in the day you eat of it your eyes will be opened, and you will be like God, knowing good and evil.’ ⁶So when the woman saw that the tree was good for food, that it was pleasant to the eyes, and a tree desirable to make *one* wise, she took of its fruit and ate. She also gave to her husband with her, and he ate.”

Genesis 3:8 (NKJV) “And they heard the sound of the Lord God walking in the garden in the cool of the day, and Adam and his wife hid themselves from the presence of the Lord God among the trees of the garden.”

Genesis 5:3 (NKJV) “And Adam lived one hundred and thirty years, and begot a *son* in his own likeness, **after his image**, and named him Seth.”

Romans 5:12 (NKJV) “Therefore, just as through one man sin entered the world, and death through sin, and thus death spread to all men, because all sinned.”

Ephesians 2:1 (NKJV) “And you *He made alive*, who were dead in trespasses and sins.”

C. The Flood (Chapters 6-9)

Genesis 6:5-6 (NKJV) “⁵Then the Lord saw that the wickedness of man was great in the earth, and *that* every intent of the thoughts of his heart was only evil continually. ⁶And the Lord was sorry that He had made man on the earth, and He was grieved in His heart.”

Genesis 6:7 (NKJV) “So the Lord said, ‘I will destroy man whom I have created from the face of the earth, both man and beast, creeping thing and birds of the air, for I am sorry that I have made them.’”

Genesis 6:8 (NKJV) “But Noah found grace in the eyes of the Lord.”

D. The Tower of Babel (Chapters 10-11)

Genesis 11:4 (NKJV) “And they said, ‘Come, let us build ourselves a city, and a tower whose top *is* in the heavens; let us make a name for ourselves, lest we be scattered abroad over the face of the whole earth.’”

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#2 in Series, “The Glory of God in the Old Testament”

The word “Genesis” means beginning, origin, or starting. In Genesis, we see the beginning of everything but God. Think a moment about some specific things we see that begin in Genesis: The beginning of the heavens and earth (1:1-25), the beginning of the human race (1:26-2:25), The beginning of sin on the earth (3:1-7), the beginning of prophesy – the prophesy of redemption (3:15), the beginning of family life (4:1-15), the beginning of civilization (4:16 - 9:29), The beginning of nations or people groups (chapters 10-11), the beginning of God’s chosen people (chapters 12-50). If you are wrong in Genesis, everything else in the Bible is affected. There is an old saying, “If you destroy the acorn, you destroy an oak”. In a sense, Genesis is the acorn and we must correctly grasp what it teaches. Because Genesis is so important, you would expect that the enemy of our souls would attack Genesis. He does; He attacks it with a vengeance! It is in Genesis that he is exposed as the enemy of God and the deceiver of the human race. An example of how the enemy seeks to get us off track is by refusing to accept Adam and Eve as literal people. If they were not literal people, the whole argument of Romans 5 & 6 of how we were in Adam when he sinned is destroyed. We must get Genesis right!

Let’s talk for a moment about the human author of Genesis. Without a doubt it was Moses. The reason we can be sure is that Jesus affirmed that it was Moses who wrote this book. **Luke 24:27 (NKJV)** “And beginning at Moses [the common name the first five books of the Bible] and all the Prophets, He expounded to them in all the Scriptures the things concerning Himself.” **Luke 24:44 (NKJV)** “Then He said to them, ‘These *are* the words which I spoke to you while I was still with you, that all things must be fulfilled which were written in the Law of Moses and *the* Prophets and *the* Psalms concerning Me.’” **John 5:46 (NKJV)** “For if you believed Moses, you would believe Me; for he wrote about Me.” Obviously Moses wasn’t an eye witness when God created the world, when sin came into the world, or when God called Abraham. How did Moses write about events that took place before he was ever born? In short, it was revealed to him by God! Perhaps there was oral traditions passed down or written accounts that he had access to (there was writing even in Abraham’s time). Whatever means God used, He revealed these things to Moses and Jesus accepted Moses as the author of not only Genesis, but also the first five books of the Bible called the Pentateuch (In Greek, *pente* = five and *teuchos* = books).

In each book of the Bible we see the glory of God on display. That is why I entitled this study, “The Glory of God in the Old Testament”. Last week we defined the glory of God as the sum of His attributes and character. In each book of the Old Testament, we have aspects of His glory revealed. In Genesis 1-11 we see very clearly the glory of God. First we see that God is self-existent. To say that God is self-existent is to say that no one made Him. When all things that were made that are made, He was already in existence. Because He is self-existent, He is dependent on no one or no thing. Second, God is Holy. He is set apart from His creation. There is evermore a difference between the Creator and the creation. He is holy which means to be set apart. Third, we see God’s glory in His judgment of sin. We see that judgment of God and even the wrath of God displayed in the curse put upon the ground, the animal world and on Adam and all his decedents. We see the judgment of God on display in the flood that destroyed all of mankind with the exception of Noah, his wife, his three sons, and their wives. Fourth, we see the mercy of God. Even when God pronounced the curse on Adam and Eve, He followed with a promise of a redeemer who would come from the seed of the woman (Genesis 3:15). We see His mercy in saving Noah and his family. It was not that Noah or his family deserved saving. We will see that Noah found grace in the eyes of the Lord and that grace was given because of the mercy of God. There are certainly more manifestations of the glory of God in Genesis than these, but I want to share a few each week so that you will get in the habit of looking for the display of the glory of God as you read the Old Testament.

We are going to divide the book of Genesis into two sections – The history of the human race in Genesis 1-11 [today] and the history of the chosen people in chapters 12-50 [in the next message].

I. The History of the Human Race (Chapters 1-11)

There is so much crammed into these 11 chapters that it almost makes my head swim! In just eleven chapters we have the creation of the human race (Chapters 1-2), the corruption of the human race (Chapters 3-5), the destruction of the human race (Chapters 6-9), and the dispersion of the human race (Chapters 10-11). There is some heavy stuff in the first eleven chapters of Genesis! We will see four key events.

A. The Creation (Chapters 1-2)

Henry Ward Beecher was the well known Pastor of the Plymouth Congregational Church in Brooklyn from 1847-1887. He had a really strange friendship with the attorney Robert Ingersoll who was a well known agnostic and a sharp tongued critic of the Bible. Ingersoll was visiting Henry Ward Beecher one day and was sharing about a “wonderful” book that he was reading by a man named Charles Darwin. Ingersoll told Beecher that Darwin explained how everything came into being without God. Beecher asked, “Well where did human beings come from according to your Mr. Darwin?” Ingersoll said, “From apes”. Beecher said, “Ah and where did the apes come from?” Ingersoll answered, “Lower animals and the lower animals arose from still lower forms, and on and on, until you go all the way down the chain of life to the one celled creatures that first formed in the seas”. Beecher said, “And where did the seas come from, and the world itself, and the sun and the moon and the stars?” Ingersoll said, “They just happened. We don’t need some mythical deity to explain such things”. Later that evening, Beecher took Ingersoll into his library and showed him some books he had just purchased. Ingersoll’s attention was captivated by a unique globe on Beecher’s desk that depicted the stars and the constellations of the night sky. Ingersoll wanted one for himself. He said to Beecher, “This is a wonderful globe. Who made it?” Beecher with a wry smile said, “Why nobody made it. It just happened”. The book of Genesis is not so much concerned with HOW everything happened as it is WHO made it happen.

Perhaps the most controversial verse in the Bible is **Genesis 1:1 (NKJV)** “In the beginning God created the heavens and the earth.” When we get this verse right, most everything else falls into place. Just the first five words of this verse correct a multitude of errors. “In the beginning God created” corrects atheism with its doctrine of “no God”. These five words correct polytheism that says there are many gods. It corrects evolution with its concept that all things that exist are the result of random chance mutations that move animals up from the simple to the complex. “In the beginning God created” refutes pantheism which makes creation god. These five words refute materialism which asserts the eternality of matter and thus denies creation. We know from the Scriptures that not only did God create; He created *ex nihilo* – out of nothing. The means of creation was the sound of God’s voice. He spoke the universe into existence.

In the first three days of creation, God formed three different environments out of what was formless. He formed light (1:3-5), waters and sky (1:6-8), and ground and vegetation (1:9-13). In the last three days, He created that which filled what was empty. For the light, there was sun, moon, and stars (1:14-19). He created fish and birds for the water and sky (1:20-23). He then created animals and humans for the ground and vegetation (1:24-30). After these 6 days God rested (1:31). The Hebrew word for rested is “Shabat” that we get “Sabbath” from. He ceased creating not because He was tired, but because He was finished. Look at His assessment of His work. **Genesis 1:31 (NKJV)** “Then God saw everything that He had made, and indeed *it was* very good. So the evening and the morning were the sixth day.” In chapter 2 more of the details are filled in about creation. I want us to focus on the creation of man.

In verse 26, there was a conference within the Godhead. **Genesis 1:26 (NKJV)** “Then God said, ‘Let Us make man in Our image, according to Our likeness; let them have dominion over the fish of the sea, over the birds of the air, and over the cattle, over all the earth and over every creeping thing that creeps on the earth.’” It is interesting to study what it means that we are made in His image. We know that the image of God is not the body. **John 4:24a (NKJV)** “God *is* Spirit...” What is unique about man as compared to the animals has to do with his spirit. Our spirit is that part of man that enables him to know and have fellowship with God. Animals do not have that capacity. What is “godlike” about our spirit? I surely don’t profess to know the complete answer to that question, but I do know three things that God

demonstrates about Himself in Genesis that He has given man the ability to do. Understand that our ability in these things compared to His ability is like a flashlight compared to the sun, but we do have a likeness to God in at least three areas. **First**, God has the ability to **create**. A part of being in the image of God is the ability to create. Certainly we cannot create in the same sense that God can create. As we saw earlier, God and only God can create *ex nihilo* – out of nothing. No man can create a planet, an elephant, or a cell. But there is a likeness in that only man can use rational thought to take raw materials and create beautiful paintings, songs, buildings, books, poetry, and even computers. Animals can put together certain things such as a bird building a nest, but this is instinct that God put within them. Man can uniquely arrange materials God created into a unique finished product. **Second**, God **communicates**. A part of being in His image is the ability to communicate. Certainly animals can communicate on a lower level, but this is from instinct that God put within them. Man can communicate in sharing thoughts, ideas and plans that no animal can come close to. **Third**, God **evaluates**. He pronounces some things as good and some things as not good. Man has a moral sense that enables him to evaluate and determine that some things are good and some things are not good. This moral sense is one of the evidences of God. All mankind has a sense of moral “oughtness” that animals do not have. Being in the image of God means that we can participate in thinking, reasoning, learning, deciding, building relationships, and discerning right and wrong. I am sure that is not nearly all being in the image of God means, but that is certainly some of what it means. The primary and desired result of being in His image is that we might have a growing love relationship with God, our creator.

Man is not a highly developed animal. Mankind alone is in the image of God and can create out of the raw materials God created; Mankind alone can communicate with rational, creative, communication of feelings, ideas, and plans. Mankind alone can evaluate and discern right from wrong. Ah, but something is now warped in all three of these areas. Something has happened that man creates means of destroying one another, hurting one another. Man communicates wicked things like pornography and racism. Man’s ability to evaluate is often warped and even when he knows what is good he chooses that which is not good. Something happened between the first two chapters of Genesis and today. What happened? That brings us to the second event in Genesis 1-11 – the corruption of man.

B. The Fall (Chapters 3-5)

If Genesis three is removed from the Bible, nothing makes sense. After chapter three, that image of God is still in man, but it is warped and twisted. Let’s do a quick survey of what happened in Genesis three. For the first time in Genesis we are introduced to a personal being who has as his goal to destroy the love relationship between God and man. This being is later introduced to us in more detail. We learn that he was a high ranking angel whose name meant “light bearer”. He was not content in being close to God; he desired to dethrone God and be god himself. At some point before the world was created, this created angel led a rebellion against God and was defeated and is called in other places the devil (slanderer), or Satan (the adversary). In Genesis three, this fallen created being takes the form of probably the most beautiful of all created animals, the serpent. The snake we know of is the result of a curse put on this animal that God created. This beautiful creature caught the woman alone and tempted her to disobey the one prohibition that God had given to the man and the woman. God said in **Genesis 2:16-17 (NKJV)** ¹⁶ "Of every tree of the garden you may freely eat; ¹⁷ but of the tree of the knowledge of good and evil you shall not eat, for in the day that you eat of it you shall surely die." Satan had a very effective plan to deceive the woman. He started by getting her to doubt the goodness of God. He made her believe that God was withholding something beneficial from her. With the enticement to be her own God, the woman disobeyed God and then she got her husband to disobey God. **Genesis 3:4-6 (NKJV)** ⁴ "Then the serpent said to the woman, 'You will not surely die. ⁵ For God knows that in the day you eat of it your eyes will be opened, and you will be like God, knowing good and evil.' ⁶ So when the woman saw that the tree *was* good for food, that it *was* pleasant to the eyes, and a tree desirable to make *one* wise, she took of its fruit and ate. She also gave to her husband with her, and he ate." This is where it all started. Every sickness, every “natural disaster”, every war, every fight, every murder, every scam, every divorce, every case of child abuse, everything evil can be traced back to sin coming into the world. Every time you pass a

hospital, a soldier, a policeman with a gun, a prison, a drug rehab facility, or a graveyard, you can say that sin coming into the world made that necessary. That is not all. The worst thing that happened is that man's spirit immediately died to God. There was now a separation between man and God so that a relationship was now impossible. We see that in how Adam and Eve responded to God's presence. **Genesis 3:8 (NKJV)** "And they heard the sound of the Lord God walking in the garden in the cool of the day, and Adam and his wife hid themselves from the presence of the Lord God among the trees of the garden." These two human beings created to run into God's presence and enjoy Him, now were ashamed and ran not to Him but into the bushes to hide from Him. It gets even worse, a power called sin had moved into Adam when he sinned and thus his tendency was from that time on toward sin. It gets even worse. The consequences of Adam's sin were passed on to his offspring. **Genesis 5:3 (NKJV)** "And Adam lived one hundred and thirty years, and begot *a son* in his own likeness, after his image, and named him Seth." In his own likeness meant with a spirit dead toward God, a nature that desires to be our own god, and a power called sin that pulls constantly away from obedience toward disobedience. We see these consequences of the fall into sin in the New Testament. **Romans 5:12 (NKJV)** "Therefore, just as through one man [Adam] sin entered the world, and death through sin, and thus death spread to all men, because all sinned" [in Adam]. We were in Adam when he disobeyed God. We read in **Ephesians 2:1 (NKJV)** "And you *He made alive*, who were dead in trespasses and sins". Every descendent of Adam is born with a spirit dead to God, a nature that desires to be our own god, and a power called sin dwelling in them. That brings us to the third event in Genesis 1-11.

C. The Flood (Chapters 6-9)

We have seen the creation of man and the corruption of man. Now we see the destruction of man. After Genesis three, things went quickly downhill. In chapter four, one of Adam's sons, Cain, kills another of Adam's sons, Abel. Forbidden marriages took place and evil ruled. We see a summary in **Genesis 6:5-6 (NKJV)** "⁵ Then the Lord saw that the wickedness of man *was* great in the earth, and *that* every intent of the thoughts of his heart *was* only evil continually. ⁶ And the Lord was sorry that He had made man on the earth, and He was grieved in His heart." It is at this point that we clearly see the glory of God in the exercise of His wrath against unrepented of sin. **Genesis 6:7 (NKJV)** "So the Lord said, 'I will destroy man whom I have created from the face of the earth, both man and beast, creeping thing and birds of the air, for I am sorry that I have made them.'"

As soon as we see God's glorious wrath, we see His glorious mercy and grace. The very next verse says, **Genesis 6:8 (NKJV)** "But Noah found grace in the eyes of the Lord." God's mercy is manifested as He gave unmerited favor to Noah and his family. God gave Noah specific instructions on the building of an ark. It was more like a floating box than it was a modern day ship. It was made to float, not to navigate. In the ark, God saved Noah and His family. With the sons of Noah, God repopulated the earth.

There are several objections to a literal flood, but every one of them can be answered. There was enough room for two of every species on the ark when you remember that God sent just two of every kind, not the thousands of varieties of each of those kinds that we have today. Within their genetic make-up was the capacity for all the variety we have today. The water it would take to flood the whole earth would not be possible now, but there is indication that there was a canopy of water around the earth in the atmosphere that came down on the earth. That could explain the amount of water. Another objection is often stated this way: "This cannot be taken as literal because almost every ancient civilization had a flood story." Think about that for a moment. If every people group on earth came from these three sons of Noah and they were scattered after the Tower of Babel incident, this would seem to me to be evidence for a real flood!

Let's look briefly at the final event in the history of the human race in Genesis 1-11.

D. The Tower of Babel (Chapters 10-11)

The events of Genesis 10-11 take place probably about 300 years after the flood. After the flood, God told Noah's descendents to scatter and have children and repopulate the earth. Instead, the descendents of Noah's sons stayed together and became active in false worship. They built a city and a tower. The city was their rebellion against God's command to disperse and the tower was a rebellion against God's

supremacy. **Genesis 11:4** says (NKJV) “And they said, ‘Come, let us build ourselves a city, and a tower whose top *is* in the heavens; let us make a name for ourselves, lest we be scattered abroad over the face of the whole earth.’” This tower had to do with astrology. The last part of verse 4 can be, “whose top with the heavens”. At the top was planned a depiction of the zodiac and drawings of the constellations. It indicates that they rebelled against God and trusted in the alignment of the planets instead of God. God judged these descendents of Noah by confusing their language and thus taking away their ability to clearly communicate. The result was the division of the race into people groups speaking different languages around each of Noah’s three sons. By combining historical and biblical sources, the descendents of Shem settled in the Middle East and are known as the Shemites or the Semitic peoples. The descendents of Ham settled in Egypt, Ethiopia, and Canaan. The descendents of Japheth are believed to have settled in Russia and Europe. We can’t be dogmatic about this, but it makes sense that they dispersed with those of common language. Over generations of intermarriage certain physical distinctions became dominant and we have the different nations or people groups we have today. After chapter 11 the focus is one the descendents of Shem from which came the Jews.

CONCLUSION

The first 11 chapters of Genesis tell us why things are as they are – the nations, the sin, the strife, the rebellion against God. Chapters 12-50 show us God’s merciful response that results in the New Testament of the coming of the Redeemer who is called the second Adam and restores in those who come to Him the image of God that was warped and tainted by sin. The second Adam restores that ability to have a love relationship with the father that the first Adam lost. (3854)