

THE BEGINNING OF HISTORY

TEXT: GENESIS 1:1-31

INTRODUCTION:

1. The book of Genesis is a book of beginnings. In fact, the word "genesis" means "beginning" (from the Greek).
2. Genesis gives us the beginning of everything, except God who has no beginning. The Bible does not attempt to prove the existence of God (1:1). It takes this fact as self-evident.
3. Psalm 14:1 says, "The fool hath said in his heart, There is no God."
4. Genesis is a book of beginnings:
 - the beginning of the created universe (1:1)
 - the beginning of man (1:27)
 - the beginning of the sabbath (2:2, 3)
 - the beginning of marriage (2:22-24)
 - the beginning of sin (3:6; cf. 2:16, 17)
 - the beginning of sacrifices (3:21)
 - the beginning of prophecy (3:15)
 - the beginning of divine retribution (4:13)
 - the beginning of human government (9:1-6)
 - the beginning of the nations (Chap. 11)
 - the beginning of the nation Israel (12:1-3)
5. The book of Genesis has been called the seed plot of the Bible because every fundamental doctrine of Christianity is found in the book of Genesis.
6. In the first chapter of the book of Genesis, the emphasis is on God. "In the beginning God created the heaven and the earth" (1:1).
7. God is mentioned again in verses 2, 3, 4, 5, etc.
8. God is mentioned by name thirty-two times in these thirty-one verses. In addition, God is mentioned another eleven times by the use of personal pronouns (cf. 1:16 -- "He made the stars also").
9. Because this chapter is so important, the devil hates it and he has fiercely attacked it.
10. Satan has blinded the minds of unbelievers and they have been led to believe that the book of Genesis contradicts modern science. This is not true, and many scientists have said so.
11. Sir John William Dawson was a Canadian geologist and university administrator. Regarding the book of Genesis, Sir William Dawson said, "The order of that vision of the creative work with which the Bible begins its history is so closely in harmony with the results worked out by geological

investigations that the correspondences have excited marked attention, and have been justly regarded as establishing the common authorship of nature and revelation...Truth and divinity are stamped on every line of the early chapters of Genesis, alike in their archaic simplicity, and in that accuracy as to facts which enables them not only to stand unharmed amid the discoveries of modern science, but to display new beauties as we are able more and more fully to compare them with the records stored up from old in the recesses of the earth. Those who base their hopes for the future on the glorious revelations of the Bible need not be ashamed of its story of the past" (*Nature and the Bible: A Course of Lectures Delivered in New York*).

12. Robert Jastrow was an astronomer, physicist, cosmologist, a NASA scientist, and author. He said that as far as scientific information is concerned, what appears in the Bible is in harmony with what scientists are saying about the origin of the universe.
13. In one of his books he wrote, "For the scientist who has lived by his faith in the power of reason, the story ends like a bad dream. He has scaled the mountains of ignorance, he is about to conquer the highest peak; as he pulls himself over the final rock, he is greeted by a band of theologians who have been sitting there for centuries."
14. In an interview with *Christianity Today* magazine, Dr. Jastrow said "Astronomers now find they have painted themselves into a corner because they have proven, by their own methods, that the world began abruptly in an act of creation to which you can trace the seeds of every star, every planet, every living thing in this cosmos and on the earth. And they have found that all this happened as a product of forces they cannot hope to discover. That there are what I or anyone would call supernatural forces at work is now, I think, a scientifically proven fact."
15. Dr. Jastrow also spoke out against all of the so-called "global warming" nonsense (cf. II Peter 3:1-14).

I. GOD IS OUR CREATOR

1. Genesis 1:1 has been called the most important verse in the Bible, and it is definitely the foundational verse of the Bible.
2. John 3:16 may be the most popular verse but we would not understand John 3:16 without Genesis 1:1. God must be known as our Creator before he can be known as our Savior.
3. When the apostle Paul stood in the midst of Mars' hill, and preached to the men of Athens, he began his message by declaring, "God that made the world and all things therein, seeing that he is Lord of heaven and earth, dwelleth not in temples made with hands..." (Acts 17:24).

4. John Phillips, in his commentary on the book of Genesis, tells an interesting story about a young newspaper reporter named Harold Fortescue.
5. On his first day on the job, his assignment was to cover a local social function. He went to the event and then submitted a two dozen page report to his editor. The editor did not even glance at it, but handed it right back with the words, "Cut it in half."
6. Crestfallen, Fortescue complied. Again the editor handed it back with the dry comment, "Cut it in half again."
7. Grumbling under his breath the youthful reporter did as he was told. When he handed in the finished article the editor handed it back once more. "Now reduce it to a single page," he said.
8. The discouraged reporter attempted to protest, but his boss cut him off. "Young man," he said, "you have evidently overlooked the fact that when the Creator of the universe gives His account of Creation, He does so in ten words -- "In the beginning God created the heaven and the earth."
9. Cosmogony is the branch of science that deals with the origin of the universe. The best place to start studying is here in Genesis 1.
10. Genesis 1:1 refutes atheism -- "In the beginning God..."
11. Genesis 1:1 refutes polytheism -- "In the beginning God (not "gods.").
12. Genesis 1:1 refutes Unitarianism. The Hebrew word for God is *Elohiym*, which is a plural word, but the verb conjoined to it, *bara'*, is singular, indicating that God is One, but the plural noun indicates the mystery of the Trinity (cf. 1:26).
13. Genesis 1:1 refutes pantheism. If God created the heaven and the earth, then God must be separate from His creation.
14. Pantheists do not believe in a personal God. God is all and all is god. In pantheism, there is no distinction between the creature and the creator. But the Bible refutes this paganistic error.
15. Pantheism is very popular today. Films as *Star Wars*, *Avatar*, and *The Lion King* promote pantheism. Oprah Winfrey promotes pantheism.
16. The "New Age Movement" is pantheistic, etc.
17. Genesis 1:1 refutes evolution. Henry Morris said, "Genesis 1:1 is unique in all literature, science, and philosophy. Every other system of cosmogony, whether in ancient religious myths or modern scientific models, starts with eternal matter or energy in some form, from which other entities were supposedly gradually derived by some process. Only the Book of Genesis even attempts to account for the ultimate origin of matter, space, and time; and it does so uniquely in terms of special creation" (*The Genesis Record*).
18. In Revelation 4:10, 11, we read that "the four and twenty elders fall down before him that sat on the throne, and worship him that liveth for ever and

ever, and cast their crowns before the throne, saying, Thou art worthy, O Lord, to receive glory and honour and power: for thou hast created all things, and for thy pleasure they are and were created"

19. Creationism is taught throughout Scripture, from the beginning of the book of Genesis till the end of the book of Revelation.
20. The statement, "And God said," is found ten times in Genesis 1 (cf. 1:3, 6, 9, 11, 14, 20, 24, 26, 28, 29). These are God's first recorded commandments.
21. Second Corinthians 4:6 says, "For God, who commanded the light to shine out of darkness, hath shined in our hearts, to give the light of the knowledge of the glory of God in the face of Jesus Christ" (cf. Gen. 1:3-5).
22. "God divided the light from the darkness" (1:4), and God is still dividing the light from darkness. Ephesians 5:11 says, "And have no fellowship with the unfruitful works of darkness, but rather reprove them."
23. John 3:19 says, "Men loved darkness rather than light, because their deeds were evil." God wants us to separate from darkness.
24. That is why He established the church. The Holy Spirit leads us out of darkness, and He guides us as we walk in the light.
25. God raised the clouds and divided the waters below from the waters above (1:6). This is something to think about: it has been estimated that the amount of vapor continually suspended in the air above us is 54 trillion, 460 billion tons.
26. Water is 773 times the weight of air. The supply of water above the earth is maintained by evaporation -- the constant lifting of water from the earth into the atmosphere by the power of the sun (John Phillips, *Exploring Genesis*).
27. How can a man understand this and not believe in God?

II. GOD CALLED THE DRY LAND EARTH (1:6-10).

1. After God raised the clouds, He raised the continents. There are seven continents on our planet, surrounded by five oceans.
2. The seven continents of the world are North America, South America, Antarctica, Europe, Asia, Africa, and Australia.
3. Genesis 1:9 says that on the second day of creation, God said, "Let the waters under the heaven be gathered together unto one place, and let the dry land appear: and it was so."
4. God put everything in place. It did not happen by a "big bang" or a "continental drift" (Genesis 1:9, 10).
5. You have probably heard the expression, "trying to stop the tide." It goes back to a famous story in the life of King Canute.

8. A thousand years ago King Canute ruled Denmark, England, Norway and parts of Sweden. Because he was a wise king and a great king, his subjects wished to worship him.
9. But King Canute refused their worship, and to teach them a lesson he had them carry his throne to the seashore and set it down. King Canute then commanded the incoming tide to halt and not wet his feet and robes.
10. But the tides would not obey King Canute. They continued to rise as usual and soon he was wet. The historian Henry of Huntington said the water dashed over his feet and legs "without respect to his royal person. Then the king leapt backwards, saying: 'Let all men know how empty and worthless is the power of kings, for there is none worthy of the name, but He whom heaven, earth, and sea obey by eternal laws'" (*The Chronicle*, Henry of Huntingdon).
11. Unlike King Canute, when God commanded the water, the water obeyed, because God created the water.
12. Genesis 1:2 says, "the Spirit of God moved upon the face of the waters."
13. And Jesus Christ is God. After He rebuked the winds and the sea, there was a great calm. "But the men marvelled, saying, What manner of man is this, that even the winds and the sea obey him!" (Mark 8:27).

III. EVERYTHING GOD MADE WAS VERY GOOD (1:31).

1. Six times we read these words: "And God saw that it was good" (1:4, 10, 12, 18, 21, 25).
2. And then we get to the end of the chapter: "And God saw every thing that he had made, and, behold, it was very good."
3. When God created planet earth, He created the plants and the animals with the appearance of age. And when God created Adam and Eve they were adults, not babies.
4. Man was made in the image and likeness of God (1:26, 27).
5. Genesis 5:1 says, "This is the book of the generations of Adam. In the day that God created man, in the likeness of God made he him."
6. Genesis 9:6 says, "Whoso sheddeth man's blood, by man shall his blood be shed: for in the image of God made he man."
7. James 3:9 says men "are made after the similitude of God."
8. That image and likeness has been marred by sin, but nevertheless it is still there.
9. Man was not made in the image and likeness of beasts, though man can be quite beastly in his behaviour. Popular entertainers like Miley Cyrus and Bruce Jenner are beastly because they have given themselves over to the devil.

10. Earlier I pointed out that the book of Genesis refutes atheism, polytheism, pantheism, and evolution. Furthermore, the book of Genesis refutes materialism. Materialism is the doctrine that nothing exists except physical matter and its movements and modifications.
11. But the Bible says man was created in the image of God, and God is a Spirit. Man has a will, a conscience, an intellect, and emotions. Man's body is not mentioned until Genesis 2:7, so when the Bible says man was created in the image of God, it is not talking about man's body.
12. Unlike animals, man can pray, and worship God, and read and write. Man has the ability to know the mind of God and do the will of God.
13. John Phillips said, "Man stands alone. *Physically*, he alone of all the creatures on the globe, walks upright; *mentally*, he alone has the ability to communicate in a sophisticated manner; *spiritually*, he alone has the capacity to know the mind and will of God" (*Exploring Genesis*).

CONCLUSION:

1. People (even some Christians) often question the early chapters of Genesis. The doctrine of evolution is an attack on the book of Genesis. Both cannot be right.
2. Evolutionists do not believe in a literal Adam and Eve.
3. By the way, God started the human race with Adam and Eve. There were no homosexuals in the Garden of Eden. Homosexuals do not appear until Genesis 13:13, where we read, "But the men of Sodom were wicked and sinners before the LORD exceedingly."
4. The devil launched a critical attack upon the Word of God. One cannot cut Genesis 1 from the Bible without destroying the authority of the entire Bible.
5. For example, referring to Adam and Eve, the Lord Jesus said, "Have ye not read, that he which made them at the beginning made them male and female?" (Matthew 19:4).
6. Romans 5:12 says, "Wherefore, as by one man sin entered into the world, and death by sin; and so death passed upon all men, for that all have sinned."
7. Romans 5:14 says "death reigned from Adam to Moses."
8. First Corinthians 15:45 says, "And so it is written, The first man Adam was made a living soul."
9. First Timothy 2:13 says, "For Adam was first formed, then Eve."
14. John Phillips said, "God sums the whole human race up in Adam and traces all the sin and sorrow in the world back to him. If there were no Adam, then the Bible is false, Roman 5 is built on myth and we have no salvation. If there were no Adam, Jesus was mistaken (Matthew 19:4-6), in which case He was not the Son of God, the Bible is based on a myth and we have no

salvation. God begins with Adam and declares that the human race sprang from him" (*Exploring Genesis*).

10. But Jesus was not mistaken, and the Bible is the inerrant Word of God.

11. Jesus did die on the cross for our sins, and heaven and hell are real, not myths.