



Provided by the Church of the Lutheran Confession - Board of Missions

Old Testament Survey
Lesson 3 – From Adam to Abraham
(Genesis 1-11)

GENESIS

The word “genesis” means origin or beginning. It gives the history of the beginning of the world, the beginning of sin, the beginning of the Promise, the beginning of God's chosen people of Israel.

Genesis is the first of the five books of Moses. These five books are sometimes called the Pentateuch or the Torah, or simply the Law. Moses wrote these five books as one of the holy men of God who spoke “as they were moved by the Holy Spirit” (2 Peter 1:21).

Jesus said plainly that Moses wrote these five books that attributed to him; He said to His opponents: **“If you believed Moses, you would believe Me; for he wrote about Me. But if you do not believe his writings, how will you believe My words?”** (John 5:46-47). This is important, for one of the modern theories about the Pentateuch is that it was written by many different authors who lived at a much later time than Moses.

After an introduction, Genesis is divided into ten sections, which are called *toledoth* (תולדות) in the Hebrew language. In the New King James Version, this word is translated as “**history**” (Genesis 2:4; Genesis 37:2) and “**genealogy**” (Genesis 5:1; Genesis 6:9; Genesis 10:1; Genesis 11:10; Genesis 11:27; Genesis 25:12; Genesis 25:19; Genesis 36:1). These ten sections are unequal in length, and they devote much more space to those persons who carry on the line of the Messiah. These are the ten sections in order:

The history of the heavens and the earth (1:1-4:26) – including the account of the fall into sin and the first promise

The genealogy of Adam (5:1-6:8) – including the ancestors of the Messiah from Adam to Noah

The genealogy of Noah (6:9-9:29) – including the account of the great universal flood

The genealogy of the sons of Noah (10:1-11:9) – including the table of nations and the Tower of Babel

The genealogy of Shem (11:10-26) – listing the Messianic line from Shem to Terah

The genealogy of Terah (11:27-25:11) – including the activities and promises associated with Abraham, father of believers

The genealogy of Ishmael (25:12-25:18) – briefly summarizing Abraham's descendants through his son Ishmael

The genealogy of Isaac (25:19-35:28) – including the early lives of his sons Jacob and Esau, and the promise to Jacob

The genealogy of Esau (36:1-43) – listing the descendants of Esau called the Edomites

The history of Jacob (37:1-50:26) – centering especially on Jacob's sons Joseph and Judah

Notice that the first five sections deal with the history of the entire world. The last five sections, however, deal exclusively with Abraham and his descendants, especially the ancestors of the Messiah.

This section deals in particular with the three great patriarchs Abraham, Isaac, and Jacob (Israel). We hear very little in the Old Testament about the descendants of Ham or Japheth or even the descendants of Shem outside of the children of Israel (Jacob). Notice that the twelve sons of Jacob make up the twelve tribes of the children of Israel (the Israelites); their history is given to us in the rest of the Old Testament books. Notice especially that even though Jacob favored Joseph and called Joseph's two sons (Manasseh and Ephraim) his own sons, it was to his son Judah that the promise of the Messiah was given. It is from Judah that the name Jew is derived and refers particularly to the descendants of Jacob through Judah, although the other tribes are represented as well among the Jews we know in the New Testament. The apostle Paul, for example, was from the tribe of Benjamin, and Anna, the woman who rejoiced at Jesus' birth (Luke 2:36), was from the tribe of Asher.

We have no reliable written records of this early history besides the book of Genesis. This history was transmitted orally from father to son through the course of many years. But God later chose Moses to write down and give us the true and authentic account of creation and the events that followed. God spoke to Moses face to face, and we can be sure that God gave Moses the words he wrote to give us the only absolutely trustworthy account of creation, the fall into sin, the first promise, the universal flood, and the lives of the great patriarchs. The New Testament shows us clearly that Jesus and His apostles accepted Genesis as the very Word of God.

Among many so-called Christians today it is common to consider Genesis, especially the first eleven chapters, as a myth or a legend, rather than as factual history. But there is no Biblical support for such a view, and we must reject such ideas as part of Satan's attempt to create doubts in the minds of believers, just as he created doubt in the mind of Eve. Satan lies through these so-called Bible experts, just as he lied to Adam and Eve. May God preserve us from being fooled by these lies.

As we read Genesis, let us rejoice in God's promise of the woman's Seed (Jesus), in the Descendant from Abraham, Isaac, and Jacob in whom all nations are blessed, namely, Jesus, the Christ, the Messiah, **"the Lion of the tribe of Judah"** (Revelation 5:5).

Read and study the first eleven chapters of Genesis along with the notes below. Some verses are followed by a blank. Find the verse or verses and fill in the blank with the correct reference. If you have any questions about what you have read, please ask them.

Genesis 1 – The Creation of the World

Day No. 1: the creation of unorganized matter and light (vv. 1-5)

Notice: God created everything out of nothing by His Word (Hebrews 11:3).

Day No. 2: the creation of the firmament or sky, the division of waters (vv. 6-8)

Day No. 3: the creation of dry land and plant life (vv. 9-13)

Day No. 4: the creation of the heavenly bodies (vv. 14-19)

Day No. 5: the creation of fish and birds (vv. 20-23)

Day No. 6: the creation of land animals (vv. 24-25)

the creation of man and woman in God's image (vv. 26-31)

Notice: God created everything that now is, including ourselves, in these six days.

Notice: These are six ordinary, 24-hour days (see Exodus 20:11).

The Bible Almanac: "The Biblical account makes it impossible for us to accept the modern theory that human life evolved over millions of years."

Genesis 2 – More Information on the Creation of Man

Day No. 7: the day of rest, the Sabbath (vv. 1-3)

The creation of Adam out of the dust of the ground (vv. 4-7)

Notice: God created man in a different way from the animals.

The Garden of Eden and the two special trees (vv. 8-17)

“In the day that you eat of it (the tree of the knowledge of good and evil) you shall surely die”

(v. ___)

The creation of Eve out of Adam's rib (vv. 18-25)

Notice: This is God's institution of marriage for one man, one woman.

Genesis 3 – The Fall of Man, God's Punishment, and the Promise

Satan's successful temptation of Eve and Adam's disobedience (vv. 1-6)

Notice: This was Satan speaking. See Jn. 8:44, Rom. 16:20, 2 Cor. 11:3, Rev. 12:9.

Notice: The only other animal who spoke in Scripture is Balaam's donkey (see Num. 22:28).

Notice: Satan's method is to get Eve to distrust the goodness of God.

God's investigation and man's excuses (vv. 7-13)

God's judgment on Eve and Adam and Satan (vv. 14-24)

Notice: God's judgment on Satan is really the first Gospel Promise to fallen man.

Study especially Genesis 3:15. Whose head and whose heel are meant?

Genesis 4 – The Story of Cain and Abel and Seth

Cain kills his brother Abel and is punished (vv. 1-15).

For the difference between the offerings of Cain and Abel see Hebrews 11:14.

Cain's descendants become famous people:

city-builders, tent-dwellers, cattle-raisers, musicians, metal workers (vv. 16-24).

Seth takes Abel's place (vv. 25-26).

The Bible Almanac: “Eve thought that her firstborn son, Cain, was the one who would destroy Satan and deliver them from the curse of sin and death.”

According to the Hebrew, Eve's words in Genesis 4:1 could be translated: **“I have acquired a man, the LORD.”**

Genesis 5 – The Ten Generations from Adam to Noah

1 Adam, 2 Seth, 7 Enoch, 8 Methuselah (969 years), 10 Noah

Notice: Man lived long in those days in order to transmit the Gospel Promise.

Notice: Enoch was taken directly to heaven without dying as a Promise to all.

The Bible Almanac: “The length of Methuselah's life would put his death in the year of the Flood.”

He probably died shortly before the Flood.

Genesis 6 – The Days before the Great Flood

Man's increasing wickedness (vv. 1-5)

Notice: This was caused chiefly by intermarriage between Sethites and Cainites.

“Every intent of the thoughts of his heart was only evil continually” (v. ___)

God's threat of a universal Flood and His promise to Noah and his family to preserve them in the ark (vv. 6-22)

Genesis 7 – The Story of the Universal Flood

Note: the flood was not local, as maintained by some, but covered the whole earth.

40 days of great rain, 150 days of prevailing waters

“All flesh died that moved on the earth” (v. ____)

Note: The Flood explains many things in nature that are otherwise without explanation: canyons, rock formations, fossils, etc. If scientists accepted the Flood, they would greatly advance in their understanding of this world.

Note: If a cubit equals 46 cm (18 inches), the measurement of the Ark would be 140 x 23 x 14 meters (450 x 75 x 45 feet); it would be able to carry 40,000 to 50,000 tons – as much as over 500 standard railroad stock cars.

Based on the figures given in the Bible, the Flood occurred before 2600 BC.

The Bible Almanac: “The ark was large enough to hold all the varieties of animals that exist today.”

The Bible Almanac: “We get a total of 1,656 years from the time of Adam to the Flood.”

The Bible Almanac: “The Bible portrays a relatively young earth, in contrast to the millions of years assumed in modern thought.”

Genesis 8 – The End of the Flood and God's Covenant with Noah

Yet **“the imagination of man's heart is evil from his youth”** (v. ____)

Genesis 9 – God Blesses Noah – The Rainbow – Ham's Sin – The Curse on Canaan

God blesses Noah (vv. 1-7).

God makes His rainbow promise to Noah and all creation (vv. 8-17).

“The waters shall never again become a flood to destroy all flesh” (v. ____)

Notice: It will be fire, not water, that destroys the world next time. See 2 Peter 3.

Ham's sin leads to Noah's prophecy concerning Shem, Ham, and Japheth (18-29).

Notice: The curse is not on Ham, but on Ham's son, Canaan. Just as Ham brought shame to his father Noah, so Canaan shall bring shame on his father Ham.

Genesis 10 – The Table of Nations

Shem was the son who carried on the promise of the Savior. Abraham came from the descendants of Shem.

Genesis 11 – The Tower of Babel and the Eleven Generations from Noah to Abraham

God confuses men's languages at Babel in order to scatter them (vv. 1-9).

The 11 generations from Noah to Abraham (or 12 according to Luke 3) (vv. 10-27)

1 Noah, 2 Shem, 3 Arphaxad, (4 Cainan), 5 Salah, 6 Eber, 7 Peleg (Tower of Babel?), 8 Reu, 9 Serug, 10 Nahor, 11 Terah, 12 Abram (later called Abraham)

Notice: The age of men has now greatly decreased.

Abram's family (vv. 28-32)

Questions

1. What evidence is there that the book of Genesis was written by Moses?
2. Why can we be sure that the days of Genesis 1 are ordinary days?
3. List differences between the Bible account of creation and the theories of evolution.
4. Why was Abel's sacrifice accepted and Cain's sacrifice was not accepted?
5. What does Cain's murder of Abel demonstrate about the human race?
6. What was true about man's heart both before and after the Flood?
7. What is God's promise to the world connect to the rainbow?
8. What can we learn from the table (list) of nations in Genesis 10?
9. What was sinful about the building of the Tower of Babel?