

GENESIS A SURVEY

I. INTRODUCTION

1. Anyone who can believe Genesis will have no trouble believing the whole Bible.
2. The Book of Genesis is the book of origins. (More on this later)
3. The scope of the book is “From Bereshith (Hebrew word “beginning”) to Shiloh, Gen.1:1; 49:10.
4. The main divisions of the book are marked by the phrases:
 - a. “In the beginning God...” (Gen.1:1).
 - b. “Now the serpent...” (Gen.3:1).
 - c. “Now the Lord had said...” (Gen.12:1).
5. The book revolves around three significant ideas:
 - a. Generation – Gen.1 & 2. The story of the beginning of things. *p.1a.
 - b. Degeneration – Gen.3 – 11. The story of how evil entered the human history and its early movements.
 - c. Regeneration – Gen.12 – 52. The story of God calling a man, the beginning of a nation and preparation for the coming of the Messiah, the Christ.
6. The book can also be remembered around the lives of six men in God’s plan for human redemption and the part they played in it.
 - a. Adam, Gen.1-5. b. Noah, Gen.6-11. c. Abraham, Gen.12:12-25.
 - d. Isaac, Gen.26,27. e. Jacob, Gen.27-36. f. Joseph, Gen.37-50.
 - g. With prophetic reference to a seventh in whom all is consummated, the Christ, Gen.3:15 (Gal.4:4); Gen.49:10.
7. But now let’s consider some specific verses and truths from Genesis and then the men as they are introduced to us.

II. DISCUSSION

A. GENESIS 1:1. The beginning.

1. This verse carries us back to the beginning of everything. (Of course God preceded this beginning; for he is eternal).
2. This verse states the five fundamental facts of science.
 - a. Time – “In the beginning...”
 - b. Force – “...God...”
 - c. Action – “...created...”
 - d. Space – “...the heavens...”
 - e. Matter – “...and the earth.”
3. “It assumes the existence of God; for it is He who in the beginning created. It assumes His eternity; for He is before all things; and as nothing comes from nothing, He himself must have always been. It implies His omnipotence; for He created the universe of things. It implies His absolute freedom; for He begins a new course of action. It implies His infinite wisdom;

for a cosmos, an order of matter and mind, can only come from a being of absolute intelligence. It implies His essential goodness; for the Sole, Eternal, Almighty, All-wise, and All-sufficient Being has no reason, no motive, and no capacity for evil. It presumes Him to be beyond all limit of time and place; and He is before all time and place.” (Murphy)

4. “This simple sentence (Gen.1:1) denies atheism (disbelief in the existence of a God); for it assumes the being of God. It denies polytheism (the doctrine of a plurality of gods), and, among its various forms, the doctrine of two eternal principles, the one good and the other evil; for it confesses the one Eternal Creator. It denies materialism (the doctrine that all spiritual phenomena are the result of organized matter; devotion to material interests); for it asserts the creation of matter. It denies pantheism (the doctrine that the universe in its totality is God; i.e., God is not separate and distinct from the universe); for it assumes the existence of God before all things and apart from them, as well as their creator. It denies fatalism (the doctrine that all things happen by irresistible necessity overruling all things); for it involves the freedom of the Eternal Being.” (Murphy, with slight modification in explaining or defining the terms)
5. This verse affirms that something has always existed. Something never comes from nothing. But something does exist, therefore something has always existed. Genesis declares “God,” the Eternal One. The One who was, is, will ever Be.
6. God created.
 - a. There are three words used in the first two chapters regarding the beginning of things.
 - (1) Bara (Created).
 - (a) To create something from nothing.
 - (b) It is used only three times in the first chapter, 1:1,21,27.
 - (2) Asah (to make). Form pre-existing material, as a man takes lumber to make a desk, Gen.1:7,31; 2:18.
 - (3) Yatsar (Form). Form out of pre-existing material, Gen.2:7,19.
7. The days of Gen.1 were 24 hour periods of time, not long geological ages, 1:31; Cf. Exo.20:8-11
 - a. Objections to long periods:
 - (1) It is not necessary.
 - (2) Every time the term day has a definite number before it, it refers to a 24 hour period of time
 - (3) Botany (the science which treats of plants) came into existence on the 3rd day, but the sun was not made until the 4th day. Thus

we are asked to believe it lived without the sun for millions of years.

(4) Adam was created on the 6th day, lived through the 7th day, into the 8th day.

(a) He must have been mighty old if every day represents millions of years.

(b) Furthermore, Mt.19:4 and Mk.10:6 place his creation at “the beginning”.

B. GEN.1:26,27; 2:18-25 INTRODUCE US TO THE BEGINNING OF MAN AND WOMAN AND OF MARRIAGE OF MALE AND FEMALE.

1. Remember man was created at “the beginning,” Mt.19:4; Mk.10:6.
2. Man was created in the image of God, 1:26.
3. Man was given dominion over all of God’s creation, 1:28.
4. Man was placed in the garden of Eden with **one** prohibition, Gen.2:15-17.
5. Man was given a mate – the beginning of marriage, 2:18-25.

C. ADAM IS REINTRODUCED TO US WITH THE BEGINNING OF SIN ON THE EARTH, GEN.3:1-6.

1. The tempter was the devil, 3:1. Cf. Jno.8:44.
2. The avenues of temptation were (and still are)
 - a. Lust of the eyes, lust of the flesh, and pride of life. Cf. 1Jno.2:15,16.
3. The consequences of sin:
 - a. Driven from the garden; separation from God and the tree of life.
 - b. Serpent to crawl upon his belly.
 - c. Women to have pain in child bearing.
 - d. Ground cursed.
 - e. Man to earn his living by the sweat of his brow. Gen.3:19.

D. THE FIRST HINT OF REDMPTION, GEN.3:15.

1. The seed of woman was to bruise the head of the serpent.
2. Jesus Christ was made of a woman when the fullness of time came, Gal.4:4.
3. Jesus was born of a virgin – the seed of woman, not of man, Mt.1:23.
4. See Rom.16:20; Heb.2:14; 1Jno.3:8.

E. NOAH IS INTRODUCED, GEN.6.

1. Man became exceedingly wicked on the earth, Gen.6:5.
2. God determined to destroy the whole human race on the earth, but Noah found grace in God’s eyes, Gen.6:8-14. How did he find it?
3. Noah did all that God commanded him to do, Gen.6:22; Cf. Heb.11:7.

F. ABRAHAM IS INTRODUCED IN GEN.12:1-3; 13:14-16; 15:5,18; 17:19; 22:15-18. There are four elements in God’s marvelous promise to Abraham.

1. A nation for carrying out the promise: “I will make of thee a great nation,” 12:2.

2. The land promise for habitation of the chosen people: “Unto thy seed have I given this land,” 15:18.
3. A God to bless: “I will bless thee,” 22:17.
4. The “seed” promise – a coming Savior for all nations: “And in thy seed shall all nations of the earth be blessed,” Gen.12:3; 22:18; Cf. Gal.3:16.

G. IN GEN.26:1-5 THE PROMISE IS REPEATED TO ISAAC.

H. IN GEN.28:1-4,13-15 THE PROMISE IS REPEATED TO JACOB.

1. When Jacob was ready to leave home, Isaac repeated God’s promise to him.
2. Later God appeared to Jacob at Bethel and repeated the promise, 35:9-12.

I. GEN.37-50 INTRODUCES US TO JOSEPH.

1. Joseph is sold into Egypt and rises to power, Chs.37-40.
2. After interpreting Pharaoh’s dreams, Joseph is placed in a position to help his people.
3. After Joseph reveals himself to his brothers who had sold him into slavery, he assures them that God has used their evil deed for good, Gen.45:4-9; 50:14-21. (Thus we learn something of God’s providence)
4. Jacob, in blessing his sons, mentions the coming of Shiloh, Gen.49:10, a reference to the Messiah.

III. CONCLUSION

1. So the book of beginnings ends with two important truths:
 - a. Great faith that God would bring them into the land he had promised, Gen.50:24,25.
 - b. A coffin in Egypt, Gen.50:26.
2. We close by calling to memory the *purpose line* of the Bible: “The glory of God and the salvation of man through Jesus Christ our Lord,” and how the book of Genesis connects with this purpose line in three different ways:
 - a. It reaches backward to Revelation and makes known the origin of the universe, of men and of sin.
 - b. It unfolds the development of the Messianic nation.
 - c. It looks into the future and foretells the coming of the “promised seed”, the Messiah, the Savior – Shiloh.