



GENESIS

MARCH 2017

Read on your own or with others,
which ever you prefer.

This leaflet is just a brief overview of the 'big picture' of this book. If you have been reading the Bible for some time you will be aware there is much more to it than you'll find here.

If you are new to reading the Bible don't worry too much if there are details you do not quite get at the moment - focus on the 'big picture'.

INTRODUCTION

The word Genesis simply means 'beginnings' and that is what this book is about. It is a book about the beginning of the world, the beginning of human sin and the beginning of the working out of God's big rescue plan.

The book of Genesis answers many of the big questions that we ask about life. It tells us where we came from; we were created by God. It tells us what is wrong with the world; sin and disobedience to God. It tells us of the judgment for sin; death.

However, the best thing is it tells us of the grace of God who, though faced with our disobedience, promised to deal with sin through Jesus Christ (Genesis 3:15).

OUTLINE

CHAPTERS 1 AND 2: CREATION

Genesis begins with God creating the universe and everything in it. This creating activity takes 6 days and climaxes in the creation of the first people, Adam & Eve, who were made in the image of God.

Chapter 2 shows the special relationship between people and God and sets the scene for the catastrophe that will occur in chapter 3.

CHAPTERS 3 TO 5: DE-CREATION (SIN AND ITS EFFECTS)

These chapters are some of the saddest in the whole Bible. Adam and Eve are living in a perfect world and it is all ruined by a single act of rebellion against God.

The Devil, in the form of a snake, talks to Eve and tempts her to doubt what God has said and she disobeys the Lord. Adam also joins her in sinning against God. This act brings God's judgment and has a massive impact on their relationship with God, with each other and the order of the whole universe.

In chapters 4 & 5 we see the obvious effects of Adam & Eve's sin. Chapter 4 is filled with fighting and murder and chapter 5 with the reality of death.

CHAPTERS 6 TO 11: A NEW BEGINNING

In chapter 6 the world has reached rock bottom. In just a few generations sin has saturated the lives of people and God decides to wipe everything

from his world (Genesis 6:5-7). Yet, he doesn't destroy everyone. Noah is a follower of God and the Lord saves him and his family, as well as at least 2 of every animal, by getting Noah to build an ark.

The ark is very important because it is a picture of Jesus. Just as Noah and his family were saved from judgment by getting in the ark, the Bible teaches us that we can be saved from the judgment to come by trusting in Jesus who died for our sin.

A new start, but the same story. A few generations later the world is once again filled with sin. This time God acts by scattering people across the world and causing them to speak different languages.

CHAPTERS 12 TO 50: A SPECIAL FAMILY

After whisking through several generations at break neck pace Genesis now slows down to focus on four generations belonging to the family of a man called Abraham. Abraham is called by God to follow him. Of particular note in these chapters is:

- (Ch 12-25) God's promise to Abraham to make him into a great nation and to bless all the nations through him (Genesis 12:1-3). This promise helps us to understand much of the Old Testament and the promise is finally fulfilled in Jesus.
- God's gift of a son to Abraham (Genesis 21:1-7). God later asks Abraham to sacrifice Isaac as a sign of his faith and love (Genesis 22:1-19). Just as he raises the knife God stops him and provides a ram to be sacrificed instead. In time God would sacrifice his own son Jesus to save Abraham, Isaac and all who would their trust in him.
- (Ch 26-36) God's lesson to Jacob. The next big character in the book of Genesis is Jacob, Abraham's grandson. Before he is born God promises to bless Jacob (Genesis 25:23), but instead of trusting God he tries to scheme his way through life. Eventually, he receives God's blessing after a night of wrestling with the Lord.
- (Ch 37-50) God provides a saviour. The last big character in this book is Joseph. He is hated by his brothers and sold into slavery in Egypt. Yet, God has a plan to use him to save his people from impending doom. Joseph is an early pointer to Jesus who would come later to save God's people from sin and the judgment to come.

ASKING THE QUESTIONS THE BIBLE WANTS YOU TO ASK

What does this book teach you about Jesus? (Luke 24:45-47)

What does this book teach you about yourself? (James 1:23 & 2 Tim 3:16-17)

How were you encouraged? (2 Tim 3:16-17)

How were you corrected? (Romans 15:4)

What difference do the truths of this book make in your life (Matthew 7:24-27)