

WAY OF LIFE  
COMMENTARY  
SERIES



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DAVID W. CLOUD

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# Way of Life Bible Commentaries

This series is designed in a unique format to be used as verse-by-verse commentaries, as Bible teaching courses, and for expository preaching. The commentaries are thorough, serious, broad, insightful, and practical, with an emphasis on application to the Christian life and ministry. Context is honored; words are defined; figures of speech are explained; difficulties are tackled. The commentaries are backed by 50 years of intense Bible study and are packed with historical backgrounds and archaeological studies based on the author's personal research, which is reflected in books such as the *Way of Life Encyclopedia of the Bible & Christianity*, *Mastering the English Bible*, *Bible Times & Ancient Kingdoms*, and *Jews in Fighter Jets: Israel Past, Present, and Future*. The interpretation is from a literal, dispensational perspective. The basis is the King James Bible and its underlying original language texts. The King James Bible is explained and illuminated but not criticized. The church is given priority as the pillar and ground of the truth and the headquarters for world evangelism. There is no hint of modernism or influence from compromised evangelicalism. The user will find no reference to or dependence upon men such as Origen, Jerome, Augustine, C.S. Lewis, Eberhard Nestle, or Bruce Metzger.

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“David Cloud has rung the bell squarely again with the newly published commentary books on Isaiah, Jeremiah, Ezekiel and the Minor Prophets. These commentaries are chocked full of vital informative truths, Biblically sound doctrine and prophetic insights that are written in easy-to-understand language. *The Fundamentalist Digest* editor highly commends these books” (Don Jasmin).

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Sample



# Introduction to the Pentateuch

## Introductory Lessons

1. The first five books of the Bible (Genesis, Exodus, Leviticus, Numbers, Deuteronomy) are called the *Pentateuch*, which is from the Greek *pentáteuchos* meaning “five scrolls.” The Jews call them the *Torah*, meaning law or teaching.
2. The Pentateuch is called “the law of Moses” or “Moses’ law” 23 times in 12 books of Scripture (Jos. 8:31; Jg. 4:11; 1 Ki. 2:3; 2 Ki. 14:6; 2 Ch. 23:18; Ezr. 3:2; Ne. 8:1; Da. 9:11; Mal. 4:4; Lu. 2:22; Joh. 7:23; Heb. 10:28). Christ divided the Old Testament into “the law of Moses,” “the prophets,” and “the psalms” (Lu. 24:44).
3. The Pentateuch is the foundation of the Bible. It describes the creation of the world, the fall of man, and the beginning of God’s plan of redemption through Christ.
4. The Pentateuch relates the beginning of Israel’s history: the call of Abraham, the birth of Isaac, the 12 sons of Jacob, Joseph’s slavery and exaltation, Israel’s journey to Egypt, the Exodus, the crossing of the Red Sea, the year at Sinai, the wilderness wandering, the conquering of the land east of Jordan (Nu. 21:21-35), and the restatement of the law prior to Israel’s entrance into the Promised Land (Deuteronomy). Israel is God’s chosen nation by which He brings light and salvation to the nations through the Scriptures and through Christ. See De. 32:8-9; 2 Sa. 7:23; 1 Ki. 8:53; Ps. 135:4; 147:19-20.
5. The Pentateuch contains the law of Moses, which is God’s schoolmaster to lead men to Christ (Gal. 3:24). It does this by revealing man’s sin and God’s holy judgment against sin and by pointing to Christ as the only Saviour (Ro. 3:19-25).
6. The Pentateuch contains the foundation of Messianic types and prophecies. To understand the Old Testament properly, we must see Christ. “And beginning at Moses and all the prophets, he expounded unto them in all the Scriptures the things concerning himself” (Lu. 24:27). Some of the Messianic types and prophecies

in the Pentateuch are the following: the *seed of the woman* (Ge. 3:15), the *coats* (Ge. 3:21; 2 Co. 5:21); *Abel's sacrifice* (Ge. 4:4; Heb. 11:4; 12:24); *Noah's ark* (Ge. 6-9; 1 Pe. 3:18-22); the *rainbow* (Ge. 9:14-16); *Melchizedek* (Ge. 14; Heb. 7:1-3); *Isaac, the child of promise* (Ge. 17; Gal. 4:21-31); *Isaac's sacrifice on Moriah* (Ge. 22; 1 Jo. 4:14); the *ram* (Ge. 22:7-8; Joh. 1:29); *Jacob's ladder* (Ge. 28:12; Joh. 1:51); *Joseph* (Ge. 37-50), who pictures Christ in His troubles, His rejection, and His exaltation; the *Lion of Judah* (Ge. 49:9; Re. 5:5); the *Scepter of Judah* (Ge. 49:10; Isa. 9:7); *Shiloh* (Ge. 49:10; Eph. 2:14); the *Passover* (Ex. 12:1-8; Joh. 1:29; 1 Co. 5:7); the *feast of unleavened bread* (Ex. 12:15-20; 1 Co. 5:8), the *Manna* (Ex. 16; Joh. 6:31-33, 35, 57-58); the *Smitten Rock* (Ex. 17:5-6; 1 Co. 10:4); the *Day of Atonement* (Le. 16; Heb. 7:26; 10:19-22); the *Star out of Jacob* (Nu. 24:17); the *Cities of Refuge* (Nu. 35; Heb. 6:18); the *Brazen Serpent* (Nu. 21:6-9; Joh. 3:14-16).

7. The Pentateuch contains the foundation of Messianic genealogy. It traces Christ's genealogy from Adam to Judah as follows: Adam to Noah (Ge. 5:3-32); Shem to Abraham (Ge. 11:10-26); Isaac to Jacob (whose name was changed to *Israel*) (Ge. 25:19-26); to Judah (one of Jacob's 12 sons) (Ge. 49:8-10).

## The Bible's Theme

There are various ways of describing the Bible's overall theme. It is man's history from the first creation to the new creation; it is God's plan of salvation; it is the gospel of Jesus Christ; it is law and grace; it is the conflict of the ages; it is creation, fall, and restoration, etc.

We want to isolate the following three major themes:

The Bible's main theme is **God** (Ge. 1:1).

- The Bible is a revelation of God; it is God's Word to mankind; we cannot know God without a revelation, and the Bible is that revelation. God is the Creator and Center of life. "For of him, and through him, and to him, are all things; to whom be glory for ever. Amen" (Ro. 11:36).



The Bible's main theme is **Jesus Christ**.

- He is the full revelation of God. See Lu. 24:44-45, "And he said unto them, These *are* the words which I spake unto you, while I was yet with you, that all things must be fulfilled, which were written in the law of Moses, and *in* the prophets, and *in* the psalms, concerning me. Then opened he their understanding, that they might understand the Scriptures." See also Lu. 24:27, ("And beginning at Moses and all the prophets, he expounded unto them in all the Scriptures the things concerning himself"); Joh. 5:39 ("the scriptures ... testify of me"); 1 Pe. 1:10-11 (the Spirit of Christ in the prophets testified of the sufferings of Christ and the glory that should follow); Re. 19:10 ("the testimony of Jesus is the spirit of prophecy"). "Christ is the key to Scripture. ... The different books are but God's chapters in which He arranges and illustrates some one or more aspects of Christ" (Andrew Jukes, *The Law of the Offerings*, 1847).

- God summarizes the theme of the Bible in three words in Col. 3:11, "**Christ is all**" (*Xristos o pas*). These three simple words encompass all of the Bible's teaching. "Christ is all" means that Christ is Creator, life, sustainer, truth, light, salvation, wisdom, righteousness. He is God, Lord, King, Head, Alpha and Omega, the beginning and the end. He has a name that is above every name. He is the Bread of Life, the Water of Life, the Light of the World, the Door, the Good Shepherd, the resurrection and the life, the way, the truth, and the life. In Him we live, and move, and have our being.

- In brief, the Bible can be outlined as follows: *The Old Testament*—Christ will come. *The Gospels*—Christ is here. *The Book of Acts*—Christ has come. *The Epistles*—Christ came for these reasons. *The Book of Revelation*—Christ is coming again.

The Bible's main theme is **God's plan of the ages** (Eph. 1:7-12).

- See also Psalm 74:12, "For God is my King of old, working salvation in the midst of the earth."

- God's eternal plan is **founded on the blood of Christ** ("through his blood," Eph. 1:7). God can have no saving relationship with sinners apart from Christ's blood. Christ is the lamb slain from the foundation of the world (Re. 13:8). Christ's death and resurrection is the central event of human history.

- God's eternal plan is an **abounding of all wisdom and prudence** (Eph. 1:8). This wisdom is found in the Bible. It is "abounding." It is "all wisdom." God's one Book contains more wisdom and prudence

than all of the other books that have ever been written. It is infallible in character and infinite in depth. It produces “prudence,” which is good judgment, the ability to govern one’s own life wisely, practical wisdom. Wisdom is right thinking and prudence is right action. The wisdom of God’s eternal plan revealed in Ephesians 1-3 produces the prudent living of Ephesians 4-6.

- God’s eternal plan is the **“purpose of him who worketh all things after the counsel of his own will”** (Eph. 1:11). God is sovereign over His creation and over human history. “... he changeth the times and the seasons: he removeth kings, and setteth up kings” (Da. 2:21). “But our God *is* in the heavens: he hath done whatsoever he hath pleased” (Ps. 115:3). “For the LORD of hosts hath purposed, and who shall disannul *it*? and his hand *is* stretched out, and who shall turn it back?” (Isa. 14:27). When God has determined something, there is no power in heaven or earth, now or ever, that can hinder it. God’s will can only be resisted when and as He allows, as when He gives men and angels a will that can be exercised within certain boundaries. But when God has ordained that something be done, it will be done. All creatures operate within the boundaries of God’s will and they can do nothing beyond those boundaries. “And hath made of one blood all nations of men for to dwell on all the face of the earth, and hath determined the times before appointed, and the bounds of their habitation; That they should seek the Lord, if haply they might feel after him, and find him, though he be not far from every one of us” (Ac. 17:26-27). That man can reject God and resist God’s will *within these boundaries* is clear throughout Scripture. God has incorporated man’s will and man’s actions within His eternal plan and has ultimate control over all things so that His eternal plan will be fulfilled.

- God’s eternal plan is **“that in the dispensation of the fullness of times he might gather together in one all things in Christ, both which are in heaven, and which are on earth; even in him”** (Eph. 1:10). Everything will be **“one in Christ.”** He is the center of God’s eternal plan. God intends to glorify Christ, His beloved Son. *He will be the Head of all things.* “And he is the head of the body, the church: who is the beginning, the firstborn from the dead; that in all *things* he might have the preeminence. For it pleased *the Father* that in him should all fulness dwell” (Col. 1:18-19). *All things will bow to Jesus Christ as Lord* “For to this end Christ both died, and rose, and revived, that he might be Lord both of the dead and living” (Ro. 14:9); “That at the name of Jesus every knee should bow, of things in

heaven, and things in earth, and things under the earth” (Php. 2:10). *All things will be rooted out of Christ’s kingdom that are not submitted to Him.* The old creation is under God’s judgment and will be destroyed. Everything “in Adam” will be judged. Only that which is “in Christ” will endure into the new heaven and new earth. Christ is the last Adam (1 Co. 15:45). He is the Man that God had His eye on when He made the first Adam, knowing the first Adam would sin. Christ is the perfect man, the man who loves God with all His being. After the Great White Throne judgment, the first creation will be destroyed as described in 2 Peter 3:12-13, “Looking for and hasting unto the coming of the day of God, wherein the heavens being on fire shall be dissolved, and the elements shall melt with fervent heat? Nevertheless we, according to his promise, look for new heavens and a new earth, wherein dwelleth righteousness.”

- God’s eternal plan encompasses ***“all things ... both which are in heaven, and which are on earth.”*** Presently, Christ is seated at the right hand of God in heaven, and His will is done there, but the earth is in rebellion against Christ’s rule. Christ taught His people to pray, “Thy kingdom come. Thy will be done in earth, as it is in heaven” (Mt. 6:10). For 2,000 years, the redeemed have prayed that prayer, and it *will* be answered in God’s time. Nothing can stop it. We must understand that a thousand years is as one day to the Lord (2 Pe. 3:8).

- God’s eternal plan is fulfilled in ***“dispensations.”*** The fundamental principles of a dispensational understanding of God’s plan of the ages are clearly taught in Scripture and were a part of the “faith once delivered unto the saints.” “Dispensationalism” was not invented in modern times. We aren’t referring to Darby dispensationalism or Scofield dispensationalism as a theological system, but to the teaching of the Bible about God’s eternal plan worked out in dispensations. *Some of the fundamentals of biblical dispensationalism* are a literal interpretation of prophecy, the clear distinction between the church and Israel, the church as a mystery that was not revealed in the Old Testament, the literal fulfillment of Israel’s covenants after the church age, a church age beginning at Pentecost and ending with the Rapture before Daniel’s 70th week, the imminent Rapture, and a literal future Antichrist and Great Tribulation. ***“DISPENSATION”*** is *oikonomia*, meaning “manager of a household,” referring to the divine government of the universe. It is God’s administration of history. ***“TIMES”*** (Eph. 1:10) refers to a period of time during which God is working out His plan. The Bible also uses the word ***“AGE”*** to refer to dispensations. (1) There are “other ages,” referring to ages past (Eph.

3:5). (2) There are “ages to come” (Eph. 2:7). The main Greek word translated “ages” is *aion*. The term “forever and forever” in Scripture is literally “into ages of ages,” referring to an eternal succession of ages. Christ will reign forever and ever (*eis tous aionas ton aionon*) (Re. 11:15). The devil will be tormented forever and ever (*eis aionas aionon*) (Re. 20:10). The saints will serve God forever and ever (*eis tous aionas ton aionon*) (Re. 22:5).

- God’s plan of the ages is the key to understanding the Bible. The ages are recorded in Scripture: creation (Ge. 1-2), the fall (Ge. 3), man before the flood (Ge. 4-5), the global flood (Ge. 6-9), the tower of Babel and the spread of the nations (Ge. 10-11), the call of Abraham (Ge. 12-24), Israel’s patriarchs (Ge. 25-32), Israel in Egypt (Ex 1-2), Israel’s exodus from Egypt (Ex. 3-18), the giving of the law (Ex. 19-40; Leviticus), Israel’s 40 year wandering (Numbers-Deuteronomy), Israel in the Promised Land (Joshua), Israel under the Judges, Israel’s kingdom (1 Samuel - 2 Chronicles), Israel’s judgment by Assyria, Babylon, and Rome (the times of the Gentiles), Christ’s first coming, the church age, the day of the Lord, the conversion of Israel, Christ’s return, the millennial kingdom, the final revolt and judgment of the devil (Re. 20), the Great White Throne judgment (Re. 20), and the new heaven and new earth (Re. 21-22) (the fulness of times).

- God’s plan of the ages is the key to understanding man’s history. In history we can see what man is doing, but in the Bible we can see what God is doing.

- The **firstfruits of God’s eternal plan is the church** (Eph. 1:11-12). When Christ was rejected by Israel, He revealed His intent to create the church (Mt. 16:18; Joh. 1:11-12). James says, “Of his own will begat he us with the word of truth, that we should be a kind of firstfruits of his creatures” (Jas. 1:18). Church age believers have the firstfruits of the Spirit (Ro. 8:23) which will be poured out upon all flesh in the millennial kingdom (Joe. 2:28). The church is a body of believers composed of Jews and Gentiles (Eph. 3:6). They are taken out of the nations to be “a people for his name” (Ac. 15:14). They are those who hear and believe the gospel (Mr. 16:15-16). *The church’s purpose is to manifest God’s glory by showing the exceeding riches of his grace* (Eph. 2:5-7). The church is a special display or exhibit of God’s grace. It is composed of sinners who were dead in trespasses and sins, slaves of the devil, by nature the children of wrath, without Christ, being aliens from the commonwealth of Israel, and strangers from the covenants of promise, having no hope, and without God in the

world (Eph. 2:1-3, 12). What great grace God has shown to these people, that they might be freely forgiven, cleansed, regenerated, justified, sanctified, adopted, made a royal priesthood and joint-heirs with Christ! In future ages there will be no rebels and no need of salvation. The church will testify of God's grace. Think of the testimony of a believer in dark Nepal, who can say, "I was a Hindu dwelling in complete spiritual darkness, dead in trespasses and sins, a slave of the devil. I knew nothing about God, the Bible, Jesus Christ, or salvation. I worshipped foolish idols. But God loved me and sent the gospel to me and enlightened me by His Spirit and was patient with me and drew me to Christ. Now I am a son of God, a joint-heir of Jesus Christ, and I rule and reign with Him forever!" What a testimony of God's amazing grace! *When we preach the gospel, we are preaching the unsearchable riches of Christ* (Eph. 3:4-8).

- As the firstfruits of God's plan that all things be one in Christ, the churches are to submit to the Headship of Christ. He must be the one and only Lord. His Word must be obeyed and not human tradition. His will must prevail and not the will of man. The church must have a regenerate membership, because only the redeemed can be one in Christ. This is a true New Testament church.

- God's eternal plan encompasses redeemed, glorified Israel. God created Israel as a major part of His eternal plan. It is through Israel that God gave the law, the Scriptures, and Christ. Israel is presently under God's judgment and the modern state of Israel is spiritually blind, but God's covenants with Israel are eternal. When God completes the building of the church by bringing in the fullness of the Gentiles from among the nations, He will fulfill His promises to Israel. "And so all Israel shall be saved: as it is written, 'There shall come out of Sion the Deliverer, and shall turn away ungodliness from Jacob: For this is my covenant unto them, when I shall take away their sins'" (Ro. 11:26-27). Redeemed, converted, glorified Israel will dwell in the New Jerusalem. The names of the 12 tribes will be inscribed on the city gates (Re. 21:12).

- God's eternal plan should be the passion of every redeemed saint. "Who hath saved us, and called us with an holy calling, not according to our works, but according to his own purpose and grace, which was given us in Christ Jesus before the world began" (2 Ti. 1:9). God's plan is being fulfilled today by Christ's Great Commission to preach the gospel to every soul in every nation (Mr. 16:15; Ac. 1:8), to baptize believers and to teach them to observe all things whatsoever Christ has taught us (Mt. 28:19-20). This is the job of every believer.

Every one is an ambassador of Christ in this great, eternal business (2 Co. 5:20). Every one is to have on his gospel shoes ("your feet shod with the preparation of the gospel of peace," Eph. 6:15).

- You can be a part of God's eternal plan by trusting Jesus Christ as Lord and Saviour (Eph. 1:12-14)!

## Timeline of the Pentateuch

We are largely using the chronology of Floyd Nolen Jones whose dates align closely with those published by James Ussher in the 17th-century masterpiece *The Annals of the World*. For those interested in learning more about Dr. Jones' research, we recommend *The Chronology of the Old Testament* (Master Books, 2005). These dates may not be exact in every case, but they are nearly correct, because the Bible provides explicit chronological information.

4004	Creation
4003	Cain's birth
3875	Cain slays Abel
3874	Seth's birth
3074	Adam's death
2962	Seth's death
2948	Noah's birth
2348	The Flood
2250	Akkadian Empire (2250-2100)
2242	Tower of Babel
2100	Egypt Old and Middle Kingdoms (2100-1750)
2100	Ur Dynasty (2100-2000)
2100	Maya Civilization in Central America
2100	Indus Civilization (2100-1300)
2000	Xia Dynasty in China (2000-1600)
2000	Greek Civilization (2000-500)
1998	Noah's death (Noah lived for 350 years after the Flood, Gen. 9:28)
1996	Abraham's birth
1921	Abraham departs Haran (beginning of 430 year sojourn of Ex. 12:40 and Gal. 3:17)
1897	Destruction of Sodom and Gomorrah
1896	Isaac's birth
1863	Abraham takes Isaac to Mt. Moriah

1860	Sarah's death
1856	Marriage of Isaac and Rebecca
1846	Shem's death
1836	Jacob and Esau's birth
1821	Abraham's death (Ge. 25:7)
1792	Hammurabi's Code (Hammurabi ruled Babylon c. 1792-1750 BC)
1759	Jacob's marriage to Leah and Rachel
1750	Hammurabi's death
1739	Jacob's departure from Laban
1728	Joseph sold into slavery
1716	Isaac's death
1715	Joseph made second ruler of Egypt
1706	Jacob goes down into Egypt
1689	Jacob's death
1650	Job's trial
1635	Joseph's death and end of the book of Genesis
1571	Moses' birth and beginning of the book of Exodus
1491	Israel's Exodus from Egypt (Ex. 12)
1451	Israel enters Canaan (Jos. 1)

### **Length of Time between Major Events**

Creation to the Flood (Genesis 1-9) about 1650 years

Flood to Abraham (Genesis 10-11) about 350 years

Abraham to the end of Genesis (Genesis 12-50) about 230 years

Birth of Moses to the Exodus (Exodus 1-13) 80 years

## **The Divine Inspiration of the Pentateuch**

### **The teaching of Jesus Christ about the Pentateuch**

Jesus Christ is the final authority for those who know Him as the Son of God. Every teaching is measured against Christ's teaching. It is that simple. Christ taught much about the Old Testament Scripture. Not once did He cast even the slightest question upon its divine inspiration and authority. This settles the matter. No one has the wisdom and authority to dispute with Jesus Christ.

1. Christ taught that the Old Testament is perfect to the letter. "Think not that I am come to destroy the law, or the prophets: I am not come to destroy, but to fulfil. For verily I say unto you, Till



# Genesis

## Genesis Introduction

### Genesis' Author

The author of the Pentateuch is Moses, who is mentioned 843 times in the Bible.

The Lord Jesus Christ quoted from every part of the Pentateuch and attributed it to Moses: Genesis (Mt. 19:4-6; 24:37-39 citing Ge. 2:23-24; 6:5-8); Exodus (Mr. 12:26 citing Ex. 3:6); Leviticus (Mt. 8:4 citing Le. 14:1-32); Numbers (Joh. 3:14-15 citing Nu. 21:8, 9 and Joh. 6:31-32 citing Nu. 11:6-9); Deuteronomy (Mr. 10:4-5 citing De. 24:1). If Moses did not write the Pentateuch, the credibility of Christ and the New Testament is destroyed.

Adam Clarke observes, "Every believer in Divine revelation finds himself amply justified in taking for granted that the Pentateuch is the work of Moses. For more than 3,000 years this has been the invariable opinion of those who were best qualified to form a correct judgment on this subject. [Israel], from its most remote antiquity, has ascribed the work to no other hand; and the Christian Church, from its foundation, has attributed it to the Jewish lawgiver alone. The most respectable heathens have concurred in this testimony, and Jesus Christ and his apostles have completed the evidence, and have put the question beyond the possibility of being doubted by those who profess to believe the Divine authenticity of the New Testament. As to those who, in opposition to all these proofs, obstinately persist in their unbelief, they are worthy of little regard, as argument is lost on their unprincipled prejudices, and demonstration on their minds, because ever wilfully closed against the light. When they have proved that Moses is not the author of this work, the advocates of Divine revelation will reconsider the grounds of their faith."

### Genesis' Purpose

***Genesis is the book of beginnings.*** "Genesis" means beginning, origins. This was the title of the book in Greek. The Hebrew name is

*bereshith*, which is its first word in Hebrew and is translated “in the beginning.” Genesis is the only accurate book of origins in existence. It describes the beginning of the world (Ge. 1:1-25), of man (Ge. 1:26-30), of sin, of judgment, of redemption, and of Israel. In Genesis, we find the first blessing (Ge. 1:28), divine law (Ge. 2:16-17), marriage (Ge. 2:21-24), lie (Ge. 3:4), sin (Ge. 3:6), divine curse (Ge. 3:14-19), Messianic prophecy (Ge. 3:15), pain of childbirth (Ge. 3:16), labor (Ge. 3:17), thistles (Ge. 3:18), sweat (Ge. 3:19), clothes (Ge. 3:21), cherubims (Ge. 3:24), baby (Ge. 4:1), religious offering (Ge. 4:3-4), animal sacrifice (Ge. 4:4), murder (Ge. 4:8), death (Ge. 4:8), farmer (Ge. 4:2), shepherd (Ge. 4:2), city (Ge. 4:17), polygamy (Ge. 4:19), cattle herd (Ge. 4:20), music (Ge. 4:21), metal works (Ge. 4:22), Messianic genealogy (Ge. 5), boat (Ge. 6:14), rain (Ge. 7:12), altar (Ge. 8:20), eating of meat (Ge. 9:3), capital punishment (Ge. 9:6), divine covenant (Ge. 9:9), rainbow (Ge. 9:12-17), case of drunkenness (Ge. 9:21), world unity movement (Ge. 10:10), languages (Ge. 11:6-9), king (Ge. 14:1), war (Ge. 14:1-2), priest (Ge. 14:18), tithing (Ge. 14:20), justification by faith (Ge. 15:6), animosity between the Arabs and the Jews (Ge. 16), meeting between angels and men (Ge. 18:1-3), intercessory prayer (Ge. 18:23-32), homosexuality (Ge. 19:4-5), incest (Ge. 19:30-38), answered prayer (Ge. 20:17), twins (Ge. 25:24), dream (Ge. 28:12), slavery (Ge. 37:28), prison (Ge. 39:20), famine (Ge. 41:27), and coffin (Ge. 50:26).

***Genesis is the key to understanding the world that we live in.*** It answers the big questions of life. Is there a God? Who or what is He? How did the universe come to be? How did life originate? What is man? What are animals and why do they differ from man? What is the purpose of the sun, moon, and stars? How many sexes are there? What is man's purpose? What is marriage? What is wrong with man? Why is life filled with pain and trouble? What is death and why does man die? Why is the earth covered with fossils? Why is it difficult to live godly in this world?

***Genesis is the key to human history.*** Genesis doesn't tell us everything about man's early history, but it tells us everything God wants us to know (De. 29:29). The book of Genesis was not written to satisfy man's every curiosity about the origin of the world and to

answer every question that we might have on this subject; it was written to prepare the foundation for the gospel of Jesus Christ. While only two chapters of Genesis are devoted to the creation of the world, 39 are devoted to the lives of Abraham, Isaac, and Jacob.

***Genesis lays the foundation for understanding the gospel.*** For people who are not familiar with the teaching of Genesis, it is necessary to begin here in order to explain the gospel.

- *Genesis prepares the way for the gospel by revealing God.* It is impossible to understand the gospel unless you understand that there is a Creator God who owns man and has the right to rule him, that God is the holy lawgiver who judges sin, and that He is compassionate and desires to save sinners. We learn these foundational truths about God in Genesis.

- *Genesis prepares the way for the gospel by describing man's fall and thus explaining why man needs to be saved (Ge. 3).*

- *Genesis prepares the way for the gospel by giving the first prophecies about the Messiah, the Saviour.* Genesis contains the first Messianic prophecies and traces the beginning of His genealogy, beginning with Abraham, Isaac, and Jacob (Mt. 1:1-17).

- *Genesis prepares the way for the gospel by giving the first revelation about the blood atonement and Christ as the Lamb of God.* This starts with God's clothing Adam and Eve in coats of skins and continues with Abel's sacrifice and the other sacrifices in Genesis.

- *Genesis prepares the way for the gospel by describing the origin of the nation Israel,* through which the gospel came. Jesus said salvation is of the Jews (Joh. 4:22). Through Israel, God gave the world the Scriptures (Ro. 3:1-2) and the Saviour (Ro. 9:4-5).

***Genesis is the foundation for the rest of the Bible.*** It is impossible to understand the Bible apart from Genesis. It introduces the Bible's theme, foundational events, and main characters. "The major themes of Scripture may be compared to great rivers, ever deepening and broadening as they flow; and it is true to say that all these rivers have their rise in the watershed of Genesis. Or, to use an equally appropriate figure, as the massive trunk and wide spreading branches of the oak are in the acorn, so, by implication and anticipation, all Scripture is in Genesis. Here we have in germ all that is later developed. It has been truly said that 'the roots of all subse-

quent revelation are planted deep in Genesis, and whoever would truly comprehend that revelation must begin here” (J. Sidlow Baxter, *Explore the Book*).

***Genesis points to the last days and helps us understand Bible prophecy.*** Christ used the flood of Noah and the destruction of Sodom to describe the last days (Lu. 17:26-33).

***Genesis contains biographies that are examples for believers today*** (1 Co. 10:11). The Bible is a self-contained book. It has sound doctrine, and it has the most perfect illustrations of the doctrine. Genesis brings New Testament doctrine to life in its character studies. Doctrinal truths such as Romans 8:28 are vividly illustrated in the lives of the patriarchs (i.e., Joseph being sold into slavery and imprisoned in preparation to being exalted in Egypt to preserve Israel during the famine, Ge. 45:4-5).

### **Genesis and Science**

Genesis is scientifically accurate though it is one of the world's most ancient books. (See the free eBook *The Bible's Proof* for examples of the Bible's scientific accuracy, [www.wayoflife.org](http://www.wayoflife.org).)

### **Genesis and the New Testament**

Genesis is quoted about 60 times in 17 books in the New Testament. In Luke 17:26-32, for example, Jesus mentions Noah, the ark, the flood, Lot, the destruction of Sodom by fire, and Lot's wife.

### **Genesis and Christ**

Jesus taught that every part of the Old Testament pointed to Him (Lu. 24:27, 44-45).

The following are some of the ways that Christ is revealed in Genesis:

- *The creative Word* (Ge. 1:3; Jn. 1:1-5; 2 Co. 4:3-7)
- *Adam* (Ro. 5:14; 1 Co 15:45). As the first Adam was the firstborn and head of the first creation, the last Adam is the firstborn and head of the new creation.
- *The Seed of the woman* (Ge. 3:15; Gal. 3:19; 4:4; Heb. 2:9-14). God promised that a man would come who would be injured by Satan but who would destroy Satan ultimately. Jesus Christ was bruised on the

cross, yet it proved to be only a heel wound because He rose from the dead. But through Christ's death, Satan's destruction is guaranteed (Heb. 2:14). The fact that Jesus would be the seed of a woman instead of a man foretold His virgin birth.

- *The coats* (Ge. 3:21; 2 Co. 5:21). God's free and gracious clothing of Adam and Eve signify Christ as the sinner's justification. The believer is clothed in Christ's righteousness.

- *Abel's sacrifice* (Ge. 4:4; Heb. 11:4; 12:24). Christ is the one true Sacrifice acceptable to God.

- *Noah's ark* (Ge. 6-9; 1 Pe. 3:18-22). Christ is the Ark of God to save sinners from the wrath to come.

- *The rainbow* (Ge. 9:14-16). The rainbow points to Christ as God's covenant for the salvation of the world.

- *Melchizedek* (Ge. 14; Heb. 7:1-3). Christ is a priest after the order of Melchizedek, having no beginning and no end.

- *Isaac*, the child of promise (Ge. 17; Gal. 4:21-31). Isaac pictures Christ in His miraculous birth, His willingness to die, His "resurrection" (Heb. 11:19), and His taking of a bride.

- *Isaac's sacrifice on Moriah* (Ge. 22; 1 Jo. 4:14). Isaac signifies Christ's freewill offering of Himself to the Father in Jerusalem for the salvation of the world.

- *The ram* (Ge. 22:7-8; Joh. 1:29). Christ is the Lamb of God that taketh away the sin of the world.

- *Jacob's ladder* (Ge. 28:12; Joh. 1:51). Christ is the Ladder to heaven, the one mediator between God and men (1 Ti. 2:5).

- *Joseph* (Ge. 37-50). Joseph pictures Christ in His troubles, His rejection, and His exaltation. He was rejected by His brothers, beloved of the Father, tempted yet without sin, made to suffer unjustly, and exalted to reign. Joseph's brothers did not recognize him the first time they saw him, but they did recognize him the second time, and so it will be with the Jewish nation. As Joseph's exaltation was prophesied in his dreams, so Christ's coming is prophesied in Scripture.

- *The lion of Judah* (Ge. 49:9; Re. 5:5). By His great power, Christ saves all who trust in Him and will destroy the usurpers and bring in God's eternal kingdom.

- *Shiloh* (Ge. 49:10; Eph. 2:14). “Shiloh” means peace, and Christ is our peace. He has made peace between God and man and He will bring eternal peace at His coming.

## Genesis and Revelation

Genesis shows the beginning; Revelation, the end.

Genesis is the foundation of the Bible; Revelation, the capstone.

Genesis describes the creation of the first heaven and earth; Revelation, the new heaven and new earth.

Genesis shows man’s dominion broken; Revelation, man’s dominion restored.

Genesis shows the tree of life forbidden; Revelation, the tree of life permitted (Re. 22:14).

Genesis shows the fall of the first man; Revelation, the exaltation of the second Man.

Genesis shows the triumph of the serpent; Revelation, the triumph of the Lamb.

Genesis shows the serpent victorious; Revelation, the serpent destroyed.

Genesis describes the curse pronounced; Revelation, the curse removed (Re. 22:3).

Genesis shows God’s fellowship with man interrupted; Revelation, God’s fellowship with man restored (Re. 21:3).

Genesis describes the beginning of pain and sorrow and death; Revelation, the end (Re. 21:4).

Genesis shows the beginning of Babylon; Revelation, the end (Re. 17-18).

Genesis shows the creation of night; Revelation, the time when there shall be no night (Re. 22:5).

Genesis shows the creation of the sea; Revelation, the time when there shall be no sea (Re. 21:1).

Genesis shows paradise lost; Revelation, paradise regained.

## Genesis’ Simplicity

*Genesis is written in simple words and largely in narrative format, but it contains an infinity of teaching.* Even though the early books of the Bible are among the oldest writings in existence, they are relatively simple to understand, even for modern men in cultures far removed from those times. Consider Genesis 1. The subject matter is the loftiest conceivable, but the language is simplicity it-

self. Most of the words are single or double syllables. For the most part, they are ordinary, commonplace, everyday words. At its basic level, Genesis 1 is understandable to a child. This demonstrates the divine inspiration of the Bible. Only God can describe such complex things in such a sublime, uncomplicated manner. This reminds us that God wrote the Bible for mankind in general. Though infinite in depth, its main teachings can be understood by common people.

### Genesis' Historicity

Genesis is true and literal history. The accounts are not mythical like those of pagan religions.

The account of creation is literal.

- The six days of creation were evening and morning days, thus referring to normal 24-hour days (Ge. 1:5, 8, 13, 19, 23, 31).
- The six days of creation are the same type of days as the sabbath (Ex. 20:8-11).
- When the word "day" is prefaced with a numerical adjective in the Bible, it always refers to a normal day -- "first day" (Ge. 1:5), "second day" (Ge. 1:8), "third day" (Ge. 1:13), "fourth day" (Ge. 1:19), "fifth day" (Ge. 1:23), "sixth day" (Ge. 1:31), "seventh day" (Ge. 2:3). "Although the Hebrew word for 'day' (*yom*) is used nearly two thousand times in the Old Testament, only in rare cases can it refer to a time period longer than twenty-four hours, and then only if the context demands it (e.g., 'day of the Lord'). However, when a numerical adjective is attached to the word 'day' (200 known cases in the OT) its meaning is always restricted to twenty-four hours" (John Whitcomb, *The Early Earth*, p. 28)
- The "days" of creation are linked to "years" in Ge. 1:14. "Since the word 'days' in Genesis 1:14 is linked with the word 'years,' it is quite obvious that our well-known units of time are being referred to, their duration being determined not by cultural or subjective circumstances, but by the fixed movements of the earth in reference to the sun. Otherwise the term 'years' would be meaningless" (Whitcomb)
- The rest of the Bible speaks of Adam and Eve as real people. Adam and Eve are mentioned 34 times in the Bible. They are mentioned in at least four books of the Old Testament (Ge. 2-5; De. 32:8; 1 Ch. 1:1;



and Job 31:33) and in eight books of the New (Mt. 19:4-6; Mr. 10:6-8; Lu. 3:38; Ro. 5:12, 14; 1 Co. 15:22, 45; 2 Co 11:3; 1 Ti. 2:13-14; and Jude 1:14). No one who believes that the Bible is the infallible Word of God can doubt the historicity of the account of Adam and Eve.

- To deny the historicity of Adam is to deny Jesus Christ. He referred to Adam and Eve as historic (Mr. 10:6-8). His genealogy is traced from Adam (Lu. 3:23-38). Further, the New Testament makes direct comparisons between Christ and Adam (Ro. 5:17; 1 Co. 15:22-45).

- If the Bible's account of creation is not literal, the fall of man is not literal, and Jesus Christ and salvation make no sense.

The people and events of Genesis are spoken of in the New Testament as historical.

- Genesis is quoted about 60 times in the New Testament. Adam is mentioned 9 times. Jesus' genealogy is traced back to Adam (Lu. 3:38).

- As we have seen, Jesus Himself mentions Adam and Eve (Mt. 19:4-6), Abel (Mt. 23:35; Lu. 11:50-51), Noah, Lot, Lot's wife (Lu. 17:26-32), Abraham, Isaac, and Jacob (Mt. 8:11).

- The New Testament tells us that the serpent of Genesis 3 is the devil (Re. 12:9; 20:2). The Bible always treats the devil as a real historical person.

- There is nothing in the Genesis record to indicate that it is to be interpreted non-literally. When the Bible uses symbolism, it identifies it as such and gives the key for interpreting it. We see this in Revelation, for example. In chapter 17 John describes a woman sitting on a beast, and he plainly tells us that this is a mystery and he gives the interpretation of the symbolic language in the passage itself (vv. 7-18). Genesis, though, is written as history. Ge. 5:5 says that Adam lived 930 years and then died. If Adam were merely an allegory for mankind in general, what happened to mankind after Adam died?

The account of the global flood is literal.

- In the study on Genesis 6-9, we will see the dramatic difference between the Bible's account and the pagan flood myths.

### **Genesis' Divine Inspiration**

Genesis is called Scripture.

- In Romans 4:3 Paul quotes Genesis 15:6 and calls it Scripture.

- In Galatians 4:30 Paul quotes Genesis 21:10 and calls it Scripture.
- Christ called the law of Moses "Scripture" (Lu. 24:44-45).
- In 2 Timothy 3:16 we are told that all Scripture is given by inspiration of God.

Genesis is called the Word of God.

- Genesis 2:2 is quoted as the Word of God in Hebrews 4:4.
- Genesis 12:7 is quoted as the Word of God in Galatians 3:16.

For more on the divine inspiration of the Pentateuch and the Old Testament, see the "Introduction to the Pentateuch."

## Genesis and Geography

We cannot emphasize enough the importance of being a student of Bible geography. We recommend the *New Moody Bible Atlas* (available in eBook from MoodyPublishers.com), the *Rose Then & Now Bible Atlas*, and *The Satellite Atlas*.

## Genesis Outline

There is a natural division of Genesis under the phrase "the generations of" as follows:

- The generations of the heavens and the earth (Ge. 2:4)
- The generations of Adam (Ge. 5:1)
- The generations of Noah (Ge. 6:9)
- The generations of the sons of Noah (Ge. 10:1)
- The generations of Shem (Ge. 11:10)
- The generations of Terah (Ge. 11:27)
- The generations of Ishmael (Ge. 25:12)
- The generations of Isaac (Ge. 25:19)
- The generations of Esau (Ge. 36:1)
- The generations of Jacob (Ge. 37:2)

We are going to use the following outline of Genesis:

- Creation (Ge. 1-2)
- The Fall (Ge. 3)
- Cain and Abel (Ge. 4)
- The Messianic Line (Ge. 5)
- The Flood (Ge. 6-9)
- The Sons of Noah (Ge. 10)

- Babel (Ge. 11:1-9)
- Israel's Beginning (Ge. 11:10 - 50:26)

## Genesis 1 Introduction

To fulfill His eternal plan that all things will be one in Christ (Eph. 1:10), God made the first creation as the physical environment in which to prepare for the new creation. He made Adam, the first man, to prepare the way for Christ, the Second Man and the Last Adam (1 Co. 15:45, 47). He made the first heaven and earth to prepare for the new heaven and earth (Re. 21:1).

The creation happened about 6,000 years ago, in 4000 BC. It is impossible to reconcile evolution and the Bible. One or the other is wrong.

### What existed before creation?

The Triune God existed (Ps. 90:2). The Son was with the Father (Joh. 1:1). The Holy Spirit was present with the Father and Son (Heb. 9:14). The Son dwelt in the bosom of the Father (Joh. 1:18). This speaks of the Son being in the center of the Father's love and affection. Compare John 17:24 and Proverbs 8:30. The Son dwelt in glory with the Father (Joh. 17:5). The Son was going forth (Mic. 5:2). We don't know what He was doing, but He was doing something! "Going forth" is the Hebrew (*mosaah*), which *can* mean origin or beginning, but we know that it cannot be so translated in Micah 5, since this is a prophecy of the eternal Messiah and the word "everlasting" (Hebrew *min*) is added. Context always determines the meaning of a word.

Angels existed ("Where wast thou when I laid the foundations of the earth? ... When the morning stars sang together, and all the sons of God shouted for joy," Job 38:4-7).

The Scripture was settled in heaven ("For ever, O LORD, thy word is settled in heaven," Ps. 119:89).

The New Testament revelation was known by God ("the mystery, which was kept secret since the world began," Ro. 16:25-26).