

# Book of Beginnings

Genesis 1:1-50:26

By Phil Kayser at Dominion Covenant Church on 2019-01-13

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If there were only three books that I would have time to translate for a brand new tribe that we were seeking to reach with the Gospel, it would probably be Genesis, John, and Ruth - in that order. Of course, the choice of books would depend upon the problems that any given culture had, but Genesis would always head the list of books that I would translate.

And there are many reasons why Genesis is so important. First of all, you can teach most New Testament doctrines directly from the book of Genesis. And there are many essays that have demonstrated that. It's in rudimentary form, but there is an adequate theology God, of angels, of mankind, sin, salvation, and believe it or not, the foundational doctrines of the church are there too. Russell Grig shows how even the rudiments of eschatology are in Genesis. So it is not as if you would be deprived of doctrine if you started with that book. You are not losing a lot. And you could still reference the doctrines of other books even before they got translated.

Second, Genesis provides the absolutely necessary background information that the New Testament assumes you already know. It's not going to repeat all of the background material for lazy people. It assumes you are familiar with the Old Testament. If you chop off the the book of Genesis, the New Testament leaves huge holes that don't make sense to postmodern man.

Coral Ridge Ministries discovered this a few years ago. If you have ever been through the Evangelism Explosion course, you know that they leave an enormous amount of background material unstated. And in the early years it didn't matter - they had phenomenal success because in southern Florida the bulk of the population were retirees who still had a basic Christian worldview that was still present in the culture and they understood basic Biblical concepts. Even though they weren't Christians, they understood the Christian concepts of God, Jesus, ten commandments, sin, justice, etc.

But several years ago when they took this same method of evangelism to the beach to engage the surfer crowd, it was like they were talking a foreign language. Even the first question that EE always asks made no sense to the postmodern generation. The first question is, "Do you know for certain that if you were to die today you would have eternal life?" They ran across so many people who were puzzled by the question that they had to rethink the program. Most of the youth didn't think you could know anything for sure

and weren't bothered by that lack of certainty. Some thought of eternal life as reincarnation. Some people confused heaven with Karma. Some were materialistic and thought they had no soul, so they weren't quite sure what the person was getting at. They assumed that they would just cease to exist. And most who even said they believed in God had a concept of a god that was completely foreign to the Bible. So the beach ministry completely revamped their beach evangelism course with clear teaching on creation, God, law, sin, eternity, heaven, hell, and other doctrines. This is why Dr. Krabbendam's method of evangelism starts with Genesis 1 and moves forward.

So Genesis is important first, because every doctrine is there in at least seed form. Second, it provides the absolutely necessary background to understanding the Gospel. In his book, *The Gospel in Genesis*, Dr. Martin Lloyd-Jones said, "I have no gospel unless this is history,"<sup>1</sup> and the "this" is referring to Genesis. You may think that is exaggeration, but you will have to read his book to see why he states that.

The third reason to start with Genesis is that it starts with stories that immediately connect with non-discursive reasoners of all ages. Now, the Bible doesn't stay there. It matures people's thinking. Some modern missionaries try to make permanent the oral learning concept, but as the Bible progresses from Genesis to Revelation you get more and more of the analytical and discursive kind of reasoning that transformed the oral-learning pagan west into Western civilization. But with pagans you often need to start with stories. And Genesis and Ruth have captivating stories that illustrate creation, fall, redemption, and restoration.

But there is one more reason why Genesis is critical as the first book for new believers. It sets in place the worldview and presuppositions that are needed to transform culture. For example, the binary male and female, Adam and Eve paradigm that God created is a needed corrective to the LGBTQ+ stuff that has become entrenched in our culture. Jarrod sent me a news article on Thursday showing that the United Kingdom has just introduced new education guidelines that call for a "period positive approach" to menstruation and which teaches that boys and girls (indeed all genders) can have periods. It's insanity. But Genesis 1-2 confronts that head on.

But it is not just culture that needs a heavy infusion of Genesis in their curriculum. Apparently pastors do too. Their contextualization of the Gospel is blurring the lines between Christianity and pagan culture. And this started

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1 Martyn Lloyd-Jones, *The Gospel in Genesis*, (Wheaton: Crossway Books, 2009), p. 80.

long ago at Fuller Theological Seminary where missionaries were brainwashed into never changing culture. Many missionaries don't even bother to change polygamy, female circumcision, socialism, etc. And their views of translation are horrible. The new Passion Translation is an example of a horrible translation. Rather than redeeming language and introducing new words and concepts, they mandate that the Bible only use words found in the culture. In fact, one of the more recent controversies is a movement that doesn't make converted muslims call themselves Christians. They are fulfilled Muslims who still pray towards Mecca and still retain their muslim culture. It's sad.

Thankfully, there are more and more translators who are recognizing that you will introduce enormous misunderstandings into the text of Scripture if you do not challenge presuppositions, cultural definitions of words, worldview ideas, and even language right from the onset. And yes, the demonic even affects language, so that language must be redeemed. And the book of Genesis has played a huge role in redefining how a culture should think about these kinds of issues. Genesis helps to redefine our views of family, patriarchy, aesthetics, better treatment of women, child-rearing, economics, and hundreds of other areas.

And let me give you one story to illustrate this. Don and Carol Richardson were missionaries to the Sawi tribe of Irian Jaya, a province on the western end of the island of New Guinea. But Sawi concepts of God, virtues, vices, the universe, and other things were so twisted, that their interpretation of the New Testament stories and texts was totally skewed. For example, they loved the story of Jesus' crucifixion. They believed that Judas was the hero of the story and cheered and applauded Judas for giving Jesus the kiss of betrayal. It really frustrated the Richardsons. Don couldn't understand why they were cheering at that part of the story. But for the Sawi, treachery was man's highest virtue and their heroes were those who had been the most successful in befriending victims and then betraying them. They thought of this as the best betrayal story ever. Well, the story of Joseph and his brothers completely changed their view of betrayal.

And missionary after missionary has discovered that without the book of Genesis, the Gospels don't have a context. Without Leviticus, Hebrews makes no sense. And even within Genesis, if you preach on Genesis 12 before chapter 11, it doesn't make as much sense since chapter 12 is answering the problems of chapter 11. We should start where God starts - with Genesis.

## **I. Key verse - Genesis 1:1 gives revolutionary concepts in many cultures**

And I want to start with the very first verse, because this is by far the most important verse in Genesis. We are going to give a key verse for every book of the Bible, and this is the one for Genesis. Many bibles will give you Genesis 3:15 or 12:3 as the key verse to the whole book, but I believe Genesis 1:1 is the most important verse.

“In the beginning God created the heavens and the earth.” We are so used to those words that we don’t realize how revolutionary they are in most cultures, and how revolutionary they are fast becoming in our own culture. But let me show you how this verse gives you seven presuppositions that are critical for changing culture.

### ***A. It opposes atheism by stating an absolute beginning to everything except for God***

The first one is the most obvious. It is that God is not an atheist. This verse opposes atheism by boldly stating that there was a beginning to everything except for God. The Hebrew is quite clear that God existed before there was a beginning to anything and that everything else had a beginning. One scholar worded it this way to try to get across the concept: “In any beginning to have been begun, God was already there.” He was before time and He has no beginning. All things came into existence through Him. And interestingly, it does not seek to prove God. God exists and He has revealed Himself to man. So Moses uses the apologetics of presuppositionalism in opposing atheism.

### ***B. It opposes evolutionism***

Secondly, even without digging into the rest of the chapter, the first verse rules out evolutionary thought. How does it do that? Well, contrary to modern evolutionary theory, it says that there was a beginning to space, time, matter, and energy. Those things are not eternal. But if you reject the eternal God, you have to posit something eternal (in other words, something that had no beginning) to replace God with. It is an inescapable conclusion if there is no God. And Romans 1 captures the essence of what is wrong with evolutionary theory - it worships and serves the creation rather than God. It deifies the creation. Creation is eternal in the modern mind because evolutionary thought teaches that there is no beginning to space, time, matter, and energy. Even the Big Bang theory does not have any beginning to those four things. In contrast, this verse shows that only God is self-

existent. Nothing else is self-existent.

### ***C. It opposes polytheism***

And the Hebrew verb in this sentence is in the singular, meaning that this God is one being. Polytheism means a belief in many gods, but verse 1 indicates that there was only one God who existed from eternity. As Deuteronomy 6:4 says, “Hear, O Israel: The LORD our God, the LORD is one!”

### ***D. It opposes unitarianism***

But that verse also destroys unitarianism. “God” (אֱלֹהִים) is a plural noun followed by a singular verb showing plurality within the singular Godhead. And in verse 26 God talks to Himself not in the singular, but in the plural, saying, “Let Us make man in Our image, according to Our likeness.” Father, Son, and Holy Spirit are talking to each other - three Persons in one singular Godhead. John begins His Gospel by saying, “In the beginning was the Word. And the Word was with God, and the Word was God.” This thus stands in contrast to radical Unitarian religions such as Islam or modern Judaism. Jews at the time of Christ were Trinitarian and continued to be so for a time, but now they are Unitarian. We have nothing in common with their view of God.

### ***E. It opposes materialism***

Fifth, for God to have created everything when nothing was there, this verse implies the doctrine known as creation ex nihilo, or creation of all things out of nothing. This is a punch in the face to materialism. Material did not come from material. Throughout this chapter the immaterial God speaks and it happens. Modern scientists believe that material is all that exists. This verse contrasts the immaterial God with the material universe. Later we will see God created the immaterial angels and the immaterial soul of man. You have a science falsely so-called if your system excludes by definition the immaterial. Genesis shows that they are grossly distorting reality.

### ***F. It opposes pantheism***

This verse also opposes pantheism in that the Creator is clearly different from what He created. God is not part of what He created. New Ageism blurs those Creator/creature distinctions as does the Emergent Church.

### ***G. It opposes naturalism***

Sixth, it opposes naturalism. Naturalism is the theory that says that scientific

laws can account for all phenomenon, whereas this passage speaks of the supernatural God supernaturally producing things in miraculous ways on every day without natural processes. For example, He made an Adam and Eve totally mature on one day without taking twenty years to get them to their prime. God made fruit trees with ripe fruit on them in one day, rather than having them grow up and produce fruit over years. That is a miracle. That is supernaturalism. Supernaturalism is written all over this chapter and calls naturalism to repentance - including, by the way, the naturalistic presuppositions of most of the alternatives to six day creationism. And verse 1 is the first description of supernaturalism at work.

### ***H. It opposes humanism***

And finally, this verse opposes humanism, which believes that man is the measure of all things and that all things must pass the scrutiny of man's mind in order to be true. But in this verse God doesn't even bother to prove His existence to man. Why? Because man's mind is not the determiner of truth - God's mind is. In this chapter, God's mind is the originator and interpreter of all things.

In this morning's short sermon I can't give the implications of each of those radical attacks on rebellious thought, but if those seven false views are not annihilated at the beginning, evangelism can easily be scuttled by Satan.

## **II. The theme of Genesis - beginnings. An introduction to the revolutionary presuppositions in the rest of the book**

So if verse 1 is the key verse, what is one word that can summarize the entire book? The word "Genesis" means beginnings, which I believe is the best summary that this book can have. And that is the first word in the Hebrew as well - reshit (ראשית) or "beginning." Bereshit is "in the beginning." So if you want a one word summary for this book, it would be the word "beginnings."

The beginnings of everything in this universe are shown in this book. I've already pointed out that every doctrine is found in seed form in this book. The laws of Exodus and Deuteronomy are at least found in seed form in this book. Every virtue and every sin is illustrated. If I ever preach through Genesis, I will have a hay day with this book. I love it. But I will just give you some samples today. We will start with chapter 1.

Chapter 1, verse 1 shows the beginning of space, time, matter, and energy.

The rest of the chapter shows the beginning of stars and our own planetary system. It was the beginning of water, land, plant and animal life, and of course, the beginning of mankind.

But that's where most commentaries end. If you read really good ones (and I'll tell you about a couple in a bit), you will see that embedded in Genesis 1 are the foundations for philosophy, language, stewardship, dominion, division of labor, specialization, and as Gary North demonstrates in his economic commentary on Genesis, all of the foundations of economics are there in seed form. Is value subjective or objective? That has always been a debate. But it is both according to Scripture. God declares things good, not good, and very good in this chapter. God gives objective value by His evaluation and expects man's subjective values to more and more conform to His. So, later in this book if God thinks Rachael was more beautiful than Leah, then human beauty is not simply in the eye of the beholder. There is an objective standard for beauty. Now our appreciation for what God calls beautiful in humans, makeup, art, music, and other things might need to be sanctified. Why? Because of the fall. We don't always agree with God's evaluation. But that's our problem, right? Not God's problem. If God calls the gold good and valuable and a basis for commerce (which He does in this book), it has value even if man doesn't recognize it. Some of you think that gold has no value because a majority of Americans think it has no value, but there is an intrinsic value to gold that humans do eventually recognize.

Chapter 2 shows the beginnings of teaching and modeling, language, marriage and family, specialization, science, ethics, authority, service, and stewardship. When I was in linguistics class I realize that there was a lot in chapters 1, 2, and 11 that help to frame a Christian philosophy of linguistics.

By the way, Michael Elliott has edited an old book we found that gives a super easy way to memorize the central topic for every chapter of the Bible. I won't be going through every chapter of Genesis this morning, but for memorizing the central concepts of every chapter of the Bible, that is a fantastic book. The book has an acrostic sentence for each book. The sentence for Genesis is, "In the beginning God created the heaven and the earth and man." That's very easy to remember. And each letter of that sentence begins a summary statement for each chapter. The summary statement for chapter 2 is Newlyweds in the garden. It's a worthwhile book to pick up for your children.

But as you read through the entire book, you will see that each chapter ushers in something new. There are so many firsts in the book.

I won't give the summary phrase for every chapter, but chapter 3 is summarized in the book by the phrase, "Temptation and man's fall." And that is a good summary since chapter 3 shows Satan (the first fallen creature) tempting Eve to join in his rebellion against God, and it shows Adam following her lead and willfully sinning against God's order. And the result of this first interaction of humans with demons was catastrophic. Adam deliberately broke covenant with God, which covenant was symbolized by two sacramental trees - one of which was off limits and one of which was to be eaten as an act of faith.

Well, man's fall into sin instantly resulted in spiritual separation between mankind and God. They immediately ran from God and tried to hide from His face. They then came under God's curse and judgment. But it not only affects them spiritually, but Genesis 3-4 shows that the fall affected them physically, mentally, emotionally, volitionally, religiously, psychologically, motivationally, teleologically (that means their sense of purpose and goals), deontologically (that means their sense of right and wrong), socially, individually, environmentally, generationally, and even cosmically. An entire book could be written on Genesis 3 and the implications of the fall to science, politics, education, and so many other areas.

But there are many other subjects addressed by chapter 3 as well. Back in 2001 I preached five sermons from Genesis 3 showing how Satan used all the high pressure sales techniques (26 in all) that are used by those wanting to sell you a time share property. And it also gives hints at how to resist those techniques. Those techniques are not just used by Satan for materialism; they are used to lure you into every kind of sin. And the reason I remind you of those sermons is to show that we should not rush over a chapter like that in a cursory way. God has hidden so much stuff in every chapter.

I love the way that Cornelius Van Til uses Genesis 1-3 to illustrate various parts of his apologetics courses. He is brilliant in showing how so many principles in his apologetics methods are at work in chapter 3. Bahnsen has a marvelous Kindle book on this topic as well, titled, [The Apologetic Implications of Self-Deception](#)

These are the kinds of things that you see chapter by chapter that shape our thinking and help us to interpret the rest of the Bible. And this morning I will not be able to do justice to how this book as the presuppositional foundation for the rest of the Bible. I'm just giving you some sample ideas for your further study. You can read overviews of the book's history from many,

many sources. That's easy to show the history of the book. But I'm wanting us to see that there are lots of other cool things hidden in the history.

Let me just mention three other implications of the fall. The cosmic aspect of the curse was thorns and thistles and death. The whole creation became subject to futility, entered the bondage of corruption, and began to groan under the curse. We saw in our Revelation series that even the planets and stars show signs of the curse. But God holds back some of the curse in this book as well. For example, Genesis 8 guarantees that God will not totally destroy planet earth again during history. Genesis 8:22 says that there will always be seedtime and harvest, cold and heat, winter and summer, day and night, and he guarantees that these "shall not cease" (Gen. 8:22). Now that is a radical presupposition for eschatology. And it also helps you to not be taken in by the Global Warming hysteria that fears a catastrophic end to those things if we don't let the government become omnipotent.

Generationally, the curse was passed on to their descendants. God's grace pulled many of Seth's descendants out of sin and bondage and passed on the faith through his descendants, but Cain's descendants persisted in rebellion. So we see covenant succession of rebellion throughout this book and covenant succession of God's kingdom within Christian families. But then in chapter 6 Christians (the descendants of Set) began marrying unbelievers - perhaps thinking that they could win them to the faith by love. But the opposite happened. You don't want to marry an unbeliever. Apart from God's grace, that could easily result in starting a long line of covenant succession of unbelief.

Environmentally, the ground itself was cursed and the Second Law of Thermodynamics began to work against them rather than for them.

And if you want books that draw out many presuppositions and foundational truths that you won't get in your normal commentaries, let me recommend three books to you right now.

- Gary North's book, *The Dominion Covenant*,<sup>2</sup> is perhaps the finest volume of all of his economic commentaries on the Bible. It draws out principles that you won't get in any other commentary. It is fabulous. Gary North, *The Dominion Covenant*.
- Jonathan Sarfati's commentary, *The Genesis Account*,<sup>3</sup> is perhaps the finest uncompromising treatment of Genesis 1-11 out there. He only covered the first eleven chapters, but he really did a superb job.

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2 Gary North, [The Dominion Covenant](#)f285085e-ec0c-47f2-8244-3ade52367d90 (Tyler, TX: Institute for Christian Economics, 1982)

3 Jonathan D. Sarfati, [The Genesis Account: A theological historical, and scientific commentary on Genesis 1-11](#)f285085e-ec0c-47f2-8244-3ade52367d90 (Powder Springs, GA: Creation Book Publishers, 2015)

- Henry Morris, while a dispensationalist and not always accurate, has done an exceedingly good job on his commentary on the whole book of Genesis.<sup>4</sup> It is called *The Genesis Record*.

They don't get everything right, but what I like about those three books is they point the way (at least in an introductory fashion) to how Genesis can be applied to all of life. Genesis is a foundational book. As the two pictures in your outline shows, Satan moves unbelievers to attack our foundations in Genesis. If he can succeed there, he will have castrated Christianity. And he has done so in our generation. Christians aren't as smart. Rather than attacking the foundations of unbelievers, we focus on the fruit and never get anywhere. The church needs to realize that this is a presuppositional war.

And I wish I had time to go through all of the chapters and show similar principles throughout this book related to psychology, marriage, relational problems, how this book is a rebuke to the United Nations, and many other foundational truths. I've probably cut more out of this sermon than I have retained, but if I succeed in at least giving a feel for the foundational nature of this book, I will be satisfied.

### **III. Christ in Genesis**

But I want to spend some time in every book of the Bible on the subject of Christology, or the doctrine of Christ.

#### **A. *The creator of all things (Gen. 1-2 with John 1:1-3; Col. 1:15-18)***

Contrary to what some people think, God the Son was not absent in Genesis one. While the Father planned and willed the creation, and the Holy Spirit was energizing the world in chapter 1:2, God the Son was clearly at work in this creation. And the early Jews before the time of Jesus recognized a Trinity here. Throughout this book, when God is visibly present, it is usually God the Son, the preincarnate Christ. I've already quoted John 1, which says that there is nothing in this universe that was not created by Christ.

Colossians 1:15-18 says much the same. Speaking of Jesus, Paul says, ...in whom we have redemption through His blood, the forgiveness of sins. He is the image of the invisible God, the firstborn over all creation. For by Him [by who? By Jesus] all things were created that are in heaven and that are on earth, visible and invisible, whether thrones or dominions or principalities or powers. All things were created through Him and for Him. And He is before all things, and in Him all things consist. And He is the head of the body, the church, who is the beginning, the firstborn from the dead, that in all things He may have the preeminence.

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<sup>4</sup> Henry M. Morris, *The Genesis Record: A Scientific and Devotional Commentary on the Book of Beginnings* (Grand Rapids: Baker Book House, 1987)

Many are nervous about saying that Jesus is the Creator and Sustainer of all things, but that is exactly what Paul says. Granted, it was the Person of Jesus before He had a human nature. It was God the Son. But it was the same Person. And if Scripture itself speaks of the Person of Jesus being present in Genesis 1, it is not an anachronism.

### ***B. Our Sabbath rest (Gen. 2:2-3)***

And I don't have the time to develop it, but Jesus was intended to be mankind's Sabbath rest even before the Fall happened. Chapter 2:2-3. "God blessed the seventh day and sanctified it, because in it He rested from all His work which God had created and made." That Sabbath was a symbol of Christ. And Genesis 3 indicates that God's Shekinah glory presence came walking in the Garden on the Day of His Presence (which is the literal Hebrew - the Day of His Presence, which would be the Sabbath) to meet with Adam and Eve. Meredith Kline shows how the text indicates that this was to be their customary meeting on the Sabbath with God the Son. Of course, it ended up being a meeting of Judgment rather than blessing and rest. But Jesus was Adam and Eve's Sabbath rest before the Fall, and He continues to be our Sabbath rest after the Fall. Obviously after the Fall the only way we could find rest was through the Incarnation, life, death, and resurrection of Christ. But it is only in Christ that we can find fulfillment and satisfaction.

### ***C. The source of life for man - the tree of life (Gen. 2:9; 3:24)***

Many have pointed out that the sacramental tree of life was also a symbol of Jesus. It symbolized the fact that Christ is the only source of life for man - before the fall and after the fall. So the moment the Fall happened, they were banished from the tree of life in Genesis 3:24. You can't have the sacrament of Christ if you have abandoned Christ. But God reverses that. Revelation 2:7 and 22:2,14 all show Jesus as having restored mankind not only to the paradise that was lost, but to the tree of life that was lost. The sacrament we partake of functions in the same way in putting our trust in Jesus as the source of life. He is the tree of life.

### ***D. The covenant LORD (Yehowah) (throughout Genesis)***

Jesus is also the covenant LORD. Anytime you see the word LORD in all capital letters in the New King James, you know it is the covenant name, Yehowah. And the first time this covenant name is used is in Genesis 2:4 where God gives covenant instructions to Adam. There is controversy on whether Genesis 1-2 really is a covenant since the word 'covenant' is not

used here. But later Scriptures speak of Genesis 1-2 as being a covenant, and secondly, the covenant name Yehowah makes it clear that it was a covenant.

### ***E. The one who pursues sinners (Gen. 3:17-19)***

After man's rebellion in chapter 3, God pursues Adam and Eve. They run, and God pursues. This is Calvinism in a nutshell. Romans 3:11 says, "There is none who understands; there is none who seeks after God." That was certainly true of them. If it had not been for God's sovereign grace pursuing them, they would not be saved. And since this was a theophany, I believe it was God the Son. So Christ is the pursuer of sinners.

### ***F. Seed of the woman who saves men (Gen. 3:15)***

But I want to park for a couple minutes on Genesis 3:15. This is often called the first Gospel. And many people think this is the first reference to Christ in Genesis. While I disagree, it is indeed the first clear presentation of the Gospel. This clearly portrays Christ as a man, yet unlike other men, mightier than the devil. But there is more. Beginning to read at verse 14:

Gen. 3:14 So the LORD God said to the serpent: "Because you have done this, You are cursed more than all cattle, And more than every beast of the field; On your belly you shall go, And you shall eat dust All the days of your life. 15 And I will put enmity Between you and the woman, And between your seed and her Seed; He shall bruise your head, And you shall bruise His heel."

This gives us five clues about the Christ.

- First, the "I will" shows that salvation is initiated by God and achieved by God. It's not man's will, but God's will that counts. So the Gospel is a Gospel of sovereign grace.
- Second, "The seed" shows that Christ will be related to mankind.
- Third, the odd language, "The seed of the woman" shows that though descended from Adam and Eve, Christ would come into existence in a different way than all other humans. All other humans received both physical DNA and a human soul from both parents. This was not true of Christ. He was the seed of the woman (and from the woman alone), and thus Jesus did not inherit a sin nature through a soul from a human father. I hold to Traducianism. Jesus was connected to humanity through a woman alone. Any DNA connection to humanity came from Eve. His soul also was made from Eve since there was no human father. So even though this is cryptic, from hindsight we know that it was precise. It was a veiled reference to His virgin birth.
- Fourth, salvation would be achieved by the Messiah through His own personal suffering because the text says that the enemy "shall bruise His heel." Bruised heels are painful.
- Yet the Christ would destroy Satan in the process - "He shall bruise your head."

It's a marvelous prophecy of Jesus and the Gospel of sovereign grace.

### **G. Kinsman redeemer (Gen. 3:15; 48:16)**

There is only one reference to a Kinsman Redeemer in Genesis, which is the Hebrew word *gaol* or *gaal*. The book of Ruth is full of references to that. But the word *gaol* is used in Genesis 48:6 where Jacob refers to God as the Messenger who has redeemed me from all evil. And the fascinating thing about the word for “redeemed” is that it shows that this Messenger of God (the preincarnate Jesus, who is the Word of God) was somehow being said to be related to Jacob. How could that be? As Kidner points out in his commentary, “the word redeemed expresses the protection and reclamation which a man’s *gō’ēl* or kinsman provided in times of trouble.”<sup>5</sup> So that is yet another passage that shows that the Christ is both Yehowah God and a Kinsman or relative to Jacob. God the Son would in some way descend from Jacob - obviously only as to His humanity. But He is a kinsman. Of course, that was hinted at in Genesis 3:15 already.

### **H. The sacrifice for sins (Gen. 3:21 with 8:20; 12:7; 13:4,18; 26:25; 31:54; 33:20; 35:1,3 46:1)**

Many Scriptures typify the fact that this Kinsman Redeemer would give His life for His people. The sacrifices that God instituted throughout the book of Genesis, and which I have listed in your outline, foreshadow the sacrifice of Jesus for our sins. How aware were they of the significance of these things? I believe they were quite aware. Jesus said, “Your father Abraham rejoiced to see My day, and he saw it and was glad” (John 8:56).

### **I. Our ark of salvation (Gen. 6-8)**

I won’t take the time to develop it, but I believe the ark that Noah built was a type of Christ and the body of Christ. Only in Christ can there be salvation from judgment.

### **J. Our King/Priest (Gen. 14:18-24 with Ps. 110:4; Heb. 5:1-11; 6:20; 7:1-28)**

In Genesis 14 the pre-incarnate Christ either literally appears as a human priest (a kind of theophany) or it was a godly priest that has no listed genealogy so as to typify Jesus. Either way, Psalm 110 and Hebrews 5-7 use Melchizedek to point to Jesus. Melchizedek was a king as well as being a priest. Jesus was king and priest. Melchizedek was the king of Salem, which means the king of peace, even as Jesus is the prince of peace.

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<sup>5</sup> Derek Kidner, *Genesis: An Introduction and Commentary*, vol. 1, Tyndale Old Testament Commentaries (Downers Grove, IL: InterVarsity Press, 1967), 225.

**K. Our substitute bearing our curse (Gen. 15:1-21 with Jer. 34:18-20; 22:1-19)**

But I will spend about five minutes describing the amazing picture of Jesus in Genesis 15, which I consider to be the second most important passage in the book of Genesis. Please turn there. Genesis 15, and we will begin reading at verse 9.

Gen. 15:1 After these things the word of the LORD came to Abram in a vision, saying, “Do not be afraid, Abram. I am your shield, your exceedingly great reward.”

Gen. 15:2 But Abram said, “Lord GOD, what will You give me, seeing I go childless, and the heir of my house is Eliezer of Damascus?” 3 Then Abram said, “Look, You have given me no offspring; indeed one born in my house is my heir!”

Gen. 15:4 And behold, the word of the LORD came to him, saying, “This one shall not be your heir, but one who will come from your own body shall be your heir.” 5 Then He brought him outside and said, “Look now toward heaven, and count the stars if you are able to number them.” And He said to him, “So shall your descendants be.”

And it is hard for me to not stop and comment on these covenant verses, because they are incredible, but reading on.

Gen. 15:6 And he believed in the LORD, and He accounted it to him for righteousness.

Gen. 15:7 Then He said to him, “I am the LORD, who brought you out of Ur of the Chaldeans, to give you this land to inherit it.”

Gen. 15:8 And he said, “Lord GOD, how shall I know that I will inherit it?”

Gen. 15:9 So He said to him, “Bring Me a three-year-old heifer, a three-year-old female goat, a three-year-old ram, a turtledove, and a young pigeon.” 10 Then he brought all these to Him and cut them in two, down the middle, and placed each piece opposite the other; but he did not cut the birds in two.

This cutting apart of the animal was an important part of the covenant ceremonies. In Jeremiah 34 you will see a description of Israel making covenant with God. A calf is cut in half and Israel marches between the parts of the animal. They were saying by that symbolism, “If I break this covenant, may I be killed and cut apart as this calf is.” That’s why making a covenant is literally called cutting a covenant. Israel was declaring that they deserved to die, but they rejoiced that this calf symbolized a future substitute – Jesus, who would die in their place. Every covenant involved some reference to blood. Anyway, continuing at verse 11.

11 And when the vultures came down on the carcasses, Abram drove them away.>

Gen. 15:12 Now when the sun was going down, a deep sleep fell upon Abram; and behold, horror and great darkness fell upon him. 13 Then He said to Abram: “Know certainly that your descendants will be strangers in a land that is not theirs, and will serve them, and they will afflict them four hundred years. 14 And also the nation whom they serve I will judge; afterward they shall come out with great possessions. 15 Now as for you, you shall go to your fathers in peace; you shall be buried at a good old age. 16 But in the fourth generation they shall return here, for the iniquity of the Amorites is not yet complete.”>

Gen. 15:17 And it came to pass, when the sun went down and it was dark, that behold,

there appeared a smoking oven and a burning torch that passed between those pieces. Here was a theophany of God Himself (and I believe it was God the Son) passing between the pieces. This is huge. Instead of Abraham passing between the pieces of the animals (which would have been normal), God passed between the pieces of the animals, in effect saying, "If this covenant is broken, may I be cut off from the land of the living." So this represents the death and suffering of Jesus who obtained our happiness and joy. It was Jesus in His preincarnate form who passed between those pieces. His body was broken and His blood was shed because we broke the covenant. He was a substitute for all who put their faith in Jesus.

And God goes on to finish the covenant in the remaining verses.

Well, there is a little problem with that passage. Abraham did not inherit the land before he died. God had guaranteed with His own life that He would. And saints who read Genesis would have known that Abraham would have to inherit it after his resurrection - which is exactly what Hebrews 11 says. So there is a hint here of an afterlife for Abraham. Still future to us, Abraham will inherit the renewed earth. And there are some other hints of heaven and the afterlife in Genesis. By the way, this passage is a great proof against Full Preterism. Abraham never inherits the earth on their theology, which means that God will have broken His promise. In Full Preterism it is impossible for Abraham to inherit the earth because there is no future time in their eschatology when all the saints come to live on the earth. So it is a great passage to disprove Full Preterism.

#### ***L. The "I AM" (Gen. 15:1,7; 17:1)***

#### ***M. The substitute who is raised from the dead (Gen. 22 with Heb. 11:19)***

Some might question whether Isaac is a type of Christ in Genesis 22, but it seems like Hebrews 11:19 treats him as a figure of Jesus.

#### ***N. The God of the afterlife (Gen. 26:24 with Matt. 22:32)***

And if we skip the I AM passages that also point to Christ, we come to the point that says that Christ is the God of the afterlife. Genesis 26:24 says that God appeared to Isaac and said, "I am the God of your father Abraham; do not fear, for I am with you. I will bless you and multiply your descendants for My servant Abraham's sake." Jesus quotes a collage of this and Exodus 3:6,15 to prove that Abraham was alive after his death. Jesus said, "God is not the God of the dead, but of the living." So if God was still the God of

Abraham after Abraham died, Abraham must have been alive after he was dead. This verse shows that Christ is the God of the afterlife.

### ***O. Our sanctifier (35:1-15)***

And in chapter 35:1-15 we see that He is our sanctifier who cleanses us of our idols and sins and makes us more and more conformed to His image. So that is an incredibly fast overview of the Christology of this book.

## **IV. Structure of the book - the word “toledot” (generations or what proceeds from)**

As far as the structure of the book of Genesis, I will only be able to barely introduce you to it. There are beautiful substructures, including chiasms, within the major sections of this book. But almost all conservative scholars recognize that the book as a whole is structured around ten uses of the Hebrew word “toledot.” And I have circled them in green in my Bible. The first occurrence is translated “history” in 2:4. The next one is translated “genealogy” in 5:1. So you can see that there are more ways to translate it than one. But if you look at your outlines, the first verse in every section has the word Toledo’s. Toledot can mean generations, genealogy, or what proceeds from, or history of. But it is pretty common knowledge that the ten toledot’s structure the book.

### ***A. Prologue - creation, not toledot (1:1-2:3)***

The only section that isn’t preceded by a toledot statement is the prologue. And that is because there was nothing in creation to produce creation. Everything in 1:1-2:3 was simply created by God out of nothing, so the word toledot would not be appropriate. But from that point on, the text is punctuated by toledot statements. And the back and forth literary pattern that scholars have seen is narrative, genealogy, narrative, genealogy, narrative, genealogy, back and forth to the end. It is an N-G-N-G, N-G-N-G-N pattern.

### ***B. Generations of heaven and earth (2:4-4:26)***

Chapter 2:4 says, “This is the toledot of the heavens and the earth when they were created, in the day that the Lord God made the earth and the heavens.” And that should end with a period. This is not a second creation account, but instead presupposes the creation events earlier. It goes back to day 6. So having affirmed that God created the heavens and the earth on day one, God now affirms that the earth begets something. There was a purpose for that day one creation - the crowning purpose was man. James Jordan says, ... man is presented as one of the “begettings” of heaven and earth, the product of earthy

dust and heavenly Breath. God creates from nothing; heaven and earth and human beings are fruitful by begetting.<sup>6</sup>

So the first toledot section focuses on Adam.

### **C. Generations of Adam (5:1-6:8)**

The next toledot section, 5:1-6:8 is the toledot of Adam, so the focus is not on Adam, but on the children Adam begot. Toledot is always what that person or thing produces. It is what flows from him.

### **D. Generations of Noah (6:9-9:29)**

What did Noah produce in the next section? It's not purely a history of Noah, since the history of Noah began in the previous section. Rather this speaks to what Noah produced or the significance of his history. His main toledot features were Ark, a renewed creation, a renewed covenant, and his children. And the word "toledot" can cover all of that.

### **E. Generations of the sons of Noah (10:1-11:9)**

The next section deals with the sons of Noah and the nations that flowed from those sons - seventy nations in all. And I'm going to have to skip over the rest of the toledots because we don't have time.

[DELETE: And the number seventy later in Scripture becomes a symbol for all the nations. So, for example, Some were faithful to God and some had descendants who apostatized and sought the demonic pursuit of a United Nations that could not be stopped. The tower of Babel story is a rebuke to all statist attempts to have a one world government (such as the League of Nations or the United Nations), but it is also a rebuke to all empire building (such as the former Soviet Union). Well, God stopped it with dividing the nations into many languages.

This division of languages has been an amazingly fantastic check and balance in God's economy of nations. No matter what the leaders may do at the United Nations, citizens still tend to prefer their own languages, customs, foods, and traditions to the ones being imposed by tyrants. Even though the Soviet Union imposed one language upon its empire, it was an unstable empire because people prefer their own language. And during a time of sin and apostasy, we need to appreciate the checks and balances found by division among the nations. It slows down sin.

Pentecost shows that apart from grace there can be no true and permanent unity. But of course Acts 2 shows a unity in the church, not unity in the state.]

### **F. Generations of Shem (11:10-26)**

Shem is singled out in chapter 11:10-26 for his own toledot because of the importance of his descendants in the Biblical history.

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6 <https://thepolisinstitute.com/article/toledoth-and-the-structure-of-genesis>

## **G. Generations of Terah (11:27-25:11)**

Terah's toledot goes way beyond his own life. Chapter 11:27 says, "This is the toledot of Terah..." Terah dies in verse 32, but what came from him continues to be discussed all the way up to chapter 25:11.

## **H. Generations of Ishmael (25:12-18)**

The toledot of Ishmael explains the non-stop fighting and hatred in the middle east between Arab nations and also between Arab nations and Israel. It's a fascinating section.

## **I. Generations of Isaac (25:19-35:29)**

Then come the generations of Isaac, Esau, and Jacob.

## **J. Generations of Esau (36:1-37:1)**

## **K. Generations of Jacob (37:2-50:26)**

James Jordan summarizes the significance of this toledoth structure in these words. He says,

> In the end, the import of the pattern of the toledoths can best be summarized this way: All nations generate people, but the story of the world is borne by the people of God. Or, more abstractly: Everyone generates things, but the people of God are the ones who generate history, who generate events.[^7]

## **V. Two other central purposes in Genesis**

I will end by mentioning two other central purposes of Genesis.

### **A. It introduces God's people and the line of the coming Messiah**

Most people recognize that this book introduces the reader to the people of God and to the line of the coming Messiah. And the literary techniques of doing so are beautiful.

### **B. It illustrates God's sovereignty**

But there is another central purpose that is shown in the Joseph story, the creation story, and really, throughout this book. And that is the sovereignty of God. It is a unifying theme that you find throughout these chapters. I think the Joseph story so brilliantly displays God's sovereign providence. But Genesis demonstrates God's sovereignty over creation, history, conception (wow! you see that a lot.), the boundaries of nations, and so many other things.

And a central message is His sovereignty over people's salvation. God's unconditional election can be seen in God choosing Abel over Cain, and a similar sovereign choice of Seth, Noah, Abraham, Jacob versus Esau. These were all chosen for no cause in them. It was an election based purely on God's sovereign good pleasure. This means that God gets all the glory for our salvation. It also means that we are totally secure in our salvation. We can glory in the God of Genesis.

There are a lot of other cool things in this amazing book. Hopefully I have whetted your appetite for your own study. Let's pray.