

Genesis : Review and Preview

Last year we began a study into Genesis. Understanding Genesis is essential to understanding the rest of the Bible. There are 2 main ways of subdividing the book of Genesis. Academics use the Hebrew word *toledot* or the Greek word *geneseos* translated "This is the account of..." in the NIV at the end of 9 major sections that probably notate the source of preceding details.

Chapters	The account of..	Event
1:1-2:4	..the heavens and earth	Creation
2:5-5:1	..Adam	The fall
5:1-6:9	..Noah	Antediluvians
6:10-10:1	..Noah's sons	The Flood
10:1-11:10	..Shem	Babel
11:10-27	..Terah	Semites
10:28-25:9	..Isaac	Abraham
25:20-37:1	..Jacob	Isaac and Jacob
37:2-Ex1:1	..Jacob's sons	Jacob and Joseph

A second simpler outline is to divide the book into 2 sections with 4 subsections relating to the key events and people described.

Primeval History		4 outstanding events	
	1-2	Creation	God's eternal priority
	3-5	The Fall	God's moral authority
	6-9	The Flood	God's judicial severity
	10-11	The Babel Crisis	God's governmental supremacy
Patriarchal History		4 outstanding people	
	11-25	Abraham	Supernatural call
	24-27	Isaac	Supernatural birth
	27-38	Jacob	Supernatural care
	37-50	Joseph	Supernatural control

Review

Genesis is a controversial book. Even Christians, influenced by modern atheistic humanistic ideas question the validity of the book, especially the first 11 chapters. Can we really trust this ancient document that claims to be the Word of God, when so much of modern science makes claims that clearly contradict the Bible? Ultimately, it is a test of faith. Either we believe that the description of the beginning of the universe and early human history given in the Bible is true, or the opinions of men based on the changing views of science provide the real description of the earliest events of this world. Either way, it is a matter of faith. "By faith, we understand that the world was formed at God's command.." (Heb 11:3). Or by faith I believe that the current and future explanations of modern science will provide the best explanation of how life came to be. The first chapters of Genesis give an explanation of many of the things we observe in our world (evil, gender wars, 7 day week, why we wear clothes, languages, millions of fossils etc). Does secular humanism based on scientism provide equally valid explanations for these things? What we believe will make a profound difference to how we live. For if this world is a consequence of a huge explosion of nothing that self generated the complexity of everything we see, then we are a cosmic accident, with no value or purpose. Without God, there is no purpose to life.

Attempts to compromise will only produce conflict, for the 2 worldviews are ultimately opposed. An example is the 2 views of death. The Bible teaches that this world was created perfect by God, with no evil and no death. But with the fall, when the first man and woman disobeyed God, sin and death came into the world, distorting the whole creation and it's relationship with

If you are new or visiting; *a special warm welcome to you.* We trust you enjoy your time with us.

Today we will be having communion. If it is your practice to participate in this we welcome you to join with us in celebrating the Lord's Supper. If this is not your custom or if you are unsure of what to do please just pass the emblems (bread and wine) to the person next to you.

Today

- Speaker Ross Pettigrew
- **Sunday School starts today**

Next Week

Sunday

- Ross Pettigrew - Genesis

Monday

- Planning Meeting. All Saints Hall 7.30pm.
Outreach
Youth Group
Sunday School
Participation in Orientation Week

Prayer Requests

Please pray for **Murray & Ruth Salisbury**, United Kingdom, as the family will be separated for a while. Pray for Murray as he is in Chad doing a Proverbs workshop. Please pray for safety, health, energy, effective communication across several language barriers, wisdom, insight, inspired creativity skill development and fruitful outcomes for the Kingdom.

Ruth & Beth will be in Dunedin until the 5th February, attending a family wedding.

Vivienne Harland, Fiji, is home in New Zealand at present with a cracked bone in her back. Doctors say it may take some months for her back to heal.

Please pray for healing for her back and for the hostel team in Fiji as they try to manage on their own.

the creator. Humanism, based on scientism, teaches that this world evolved from nothing and that death has always been part of life. Sin is part of normal human behaviour and can be justified. There are no consequences of sin beyond death, for once you are dead, that is the end and there is no ultimate purpose in life. But God's Word gives a message of hope in the gospel with the promise of life beyond death.

Just as creation established God's eternal priority – he has always existed, before creation, the fall of man established God's moral authority. Man's sin was to desire to be like God as the determiner of right and wrong. But ultimately, it is God who is always right and the ultimate judge. In the flood, we see that God exercised that right to judge sin. There is nowhere in the world that evidence of the flood in the fossil record cannot be found. But even after such a great demonstration of God's judgement, man determined to make a name for himself at the tower of Babel and the language and racial differences became apparent with the scattering of mankind across the planet.

One wonders why at the end of chapter 11 that God did not give up. Nearly 2000 years of human history had shown the extent of the rebellion against God, but through it all, God had a plan, formulated even before creation. No event had been unexpected. Plan A was still on track. And now, a few hundred years after the flood and tower of Babel, the restoration and reconciliation part of the plan was to happen when God chose a man.

Preview

There have been many occasions in human history where God "took a risk" in human terms, to hang everything in the future on one person. This point was one of them. That man, immersed in an increasingly godless and pagan society was called by God to form a nation, based only on promises, few of which he ever saw fulfilled. He gives a glimpse for all subsequent humanity to see what God is looking for. It is not the human values of beauty, brain or brawn, but simple trust that what God promises, He will fulfil. Abraham demonstrates that God's choice is sovereign and by grace alone, but our response is based on faith and obedience. Subsequent generations in the rest of Genesis reinforce these values. Isaac as a second generation of the promise does not stand as tall as his father, and Jacob, in the third generation was a cheat and deceiver, but valued the promise above his older brother and despite his crooked dealings, shows the importance of grace and faith. And Joseph, one of his 12 sons gives another perspective of the sovereignty of God in events that seem beyond our control. While this early history focuses on 4 people, it ultimately demonstrates that human history is His (God's) story.

Lessons for today

1. Can I really believe the truth of the Bible when it is in conflict with the current views of our secular, humanist society? How many times have events in God's word been ridiculed, only to be found later on that the Bible was right after all? How many times have current scientific understanding been shown by later research to be wrong? Ultimately, who can I trust? God's revealed Word that never changes or man's current and changing opinion?
2. How big is your God? Does the sovereignty of God extend from the overall plan for human history to the individual events of my personal life that will all glorify him? Or am I just a pawn in a huge cosmic chess match between powers that are beyond my understanding? Genesis reveals that God is concerned with small details of our lives and introduces the concept of grace.
3. Never doubt the patience of God. All through human history, God's longsuffering and delay has been taken as evidence for his non-existence. But as this book tells us, God's sovereign plan is being worked out, even in the bad things that will eventually bring him glory.

JIM MUIR - evangelist, ventriloquist and country-gospel singer from Queensland, Australia who will be with us at Caversham Community Church on the evening of Sunday, February 10th at 8.00pm. He will be accompanied by his wife, LYN.

Jim's silky smooth voice would be enjoyed by a mid to older audience, that is unless you are a real country-gospel fan. His material will be mainly gospel and he can be expected to make reference to the gospel as he introduces songs.

Ever since I have known him, Jim has used his music to introduce the gospel message in a non-confrontive way. He has served for many years in Ambassadors for Christ and briefly in OAC. It would be an ideal opportunity to invite friends to a relaxing and enjoying evening of good music that may well lay a platform for ongoing contact.

Jim has had a significant involvement in the Country-Gospel scene in Australia for 25 years releasing eight recordings, appearing in festivals, judging talent quests, etc. He has also had significant involvement overseas, including Nashville (USA).

His latest CD "Welcome to my world" will be available for sale at \$20.00 but there is also a CD/DVD set for \$25.00. The DVD is of a live concert at a Queensland Baptist Church in 2007.

Jim is in the twilight of his 'faith' ministry. We are suggesting a gold coin donation towards a ministry gift that will be passed on.

NOTICES

1. The Friday morning Women's Bible Study will start for the new year on Friday Feb 8th, 10:15am at Vicki Halford's home, 42 Main Road, Fairfield. We will be finishing "Pursuit of Holiness" and shortly will begin our new study "Attitudes of a transformed heart". All women and their preschoolers are welcome. Questions? ring Bethney Stewart 476 7888.
2. Bulletins etc
 - Creation Ministries prayer news and brochure promoting a Creation Super Camp 5 - 9th January 2009
 - Rhema Broadcasting Group 'Frequency' newsletter and 'Word for Today' bible commentary and readings
 - Letgter and flier advertising the coming of Jim Muir, performing at Caversham Community Church, Sunday February 10th at 8.00pm see notice board
4. There is a need for private board for a quiet 18-yr old Malaysian student from a Christian family. He will be starting at Otago University in mid-February. Please contact John Hannah if anyone has something available.

Small Groups

Tuesday

- Ladies Home Group - see Laura Hannah 473-7954
- Mornington Home Group - see Jonathan Gauntlett 453-4195
- Central Home Group - see Steve Clark 479-2070
- Brockville Home Group - see Geoffrey Stewart 476-7888

Thursday

- Pine Hill Home Group - see John Hannah 473-7954
- JCF Home Group - see Gideon Chang 488-2118

Friday

- Friday morning Home Group - see Bethney Stewart 476-7888

Prayer Groups

Thursday

- All Saints main church building from 5:15pm

Sunday

- All Saints Hall from 8:30am