

In The Beginning: Session 01 – Introduction (Genesis 1:1)

Welcome

- Fellowship Time 7:00 – 7:30 pm, wrap up by 8:30 pm
- Get audio files and notes at: <http://www.htchurch.com/genesis>

Class Goals

- a mixture of devotional material and teaching. “...*God from the beginning chose you for salvation through **sanctification by the Spirit and belief in the truth...***” (2 Thessalonians 2:13 NKJV)
- Be challenged by the lives of the people in the stories: the things that happened to people in the Old Testament were *examples, for our admonition...*

Why study the Book of Genesis?

We need the whole Bible, the whole *counsel of God*. Why Genesis in particular?

1. Genesis tells us what happened in the beginning.
2. Genesis gives us the framework for understanding the major themes in the Bible.
3. Genesis shows us the beginnings of God's dealings with the human race.
 - a. How does God relate to individuals?
 - b. ...to different nations?
 - c. ...to people or nations with whom He forms a special relationship?

The Structure of Genesis

A large book with 50 chapters, but there are really only **five stories** in the book:

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| 1. The story of Creation; | 4. The story of the origin of the nations; |
| 2. The story of the Fall; | 5. The history of the patriarchs. |
| 3. The story of the Flood; | |

The *patriarchs*: the fathers of the Israelite (Jewish) people.

A little more detail still gives us only eight stories:

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|----------------|------------|
| 1. Creation | 5. Abraham |
| 2. The Fall | 6. Isaac |
| 3. The Flood | 7. Jacob |
| 4. The Nations | 8. Joseph |

Examining Genesis 1

The very first line in the Bible: *In the beginning, God created the heavens and the earth.*

- Nothing is wasted and nothing is by accident in the Word of God.
- We believe that the Bible was inspired by the Holy Spirit. Holy men of old did not write under their own inspiration, but they wrote as they were carried along by the Spirit of God.
- The first five books of the Bible were all written by the Prophet Moses: Genesis, Exodus, Leviticus, Numbers, and Deuteronomy.
- These books are called the Pentateuch, or the Torah, which means the Law.

More about the Book:

- Traditional dating for Genesis: around the year 1400 B.C.
- After Moses' death, some compiled by Joshua.
- God revealed things to Moses supernaturally.
- All of the Bible is *breathed by God*. It is a living thing, so to speak.
- We are presented with a Creator God who has made us and to whom we are answerable. We are obligated to serve this God because He made us.

In The Beginning

The Hebrew name for the Book of Genesis is *B'reshith*, which is Hebrew for *in the beginning*. We call it *Genesis* because *genesis* is a Greek word which means *the origin*.

- *In the beginning* means that there **was** a beginning.
- God made everything *ex nihilo*, which is a Latin phrase meaning out of nothing.
- Moses says *in the beginning God*. He does not have a beginning.

Lord, You have been our dwelling place in all generations. Before the mountains were brought forth, or ever You had formed the earth and the world, even from everlasting to everlasting, You are God. (Psalms 90:1-2 NKJV)

God has always been satisfied and sufficient within Himself, never knowing need and never diminishing in any way. The Blessed Persons of the Trinity always existed in perfect love with each other, for God is love, the Father, the Son, and the Holy Spirit.

“In the beginning was the Word, and the Word was with God, and the Word was God. The same was in the beginning with God. All things were made by him; and without him was not any thing made that was made.” (John 1:3 KJV)

“Thou art worthy, O Lord, to receive glory and honor and power: for thou hast created all things, and for thy pleasure they are and were created.” (Revelation 4:11 KJV)

Who is this God?

This Creator, is a spirit, existing eternally in three Persons having the Divine nature.

- In Genesis 1:1, the word we translate as “God” is the name *Elohim*. Elohim is the plural of the word *Eloah*, which means God. Elohim can mean God, it can mean gods, and sometimes it will even mean judges or angels.
- Later on in Genesis we will begin to see the compound names of God. Often, God is referred to simply as El, which means He is *the mighty one*. So we see God referring to Himself in Genesis as *El Shaddhai*, God Almighty.
- Where do we see the power of Elohim on display? We first see it in His power to create. Everything was made by Him, and by His power:

By the word of the LORD were the heavens made; and all the host of them by the breath of his mouth. He gathers the waters of the sea together as an heap: he lays up the depth in storehouses. Let all the earth fear the LORD: let all the inhabitants of the world stand in awe of him. For he spoke, and it was done; he commanded, and it stood fast. (Psalm 33:6-9)

The Lord Jesus Christ *upholds all things by the word of His power.* (Hebrews 1:3)

Our first duty as created beings is to honor and serve Him with our obedience and love.
