

Creation & Covenant

Genesis is the first book of the Bible. As an ancient text, it still provides the best explanation of all the beauty and tragedy in our world.



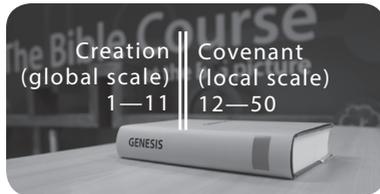
Session 2

Introducing Genesis

Genesis

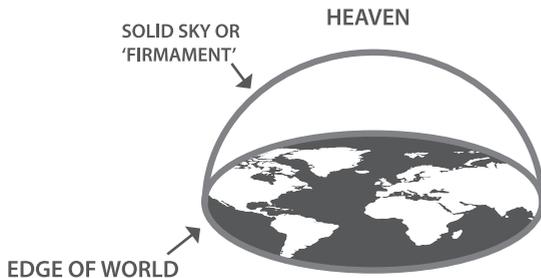
*Means
'beginnings'
or 'origins'.*

Genesis is a book of two halves



MY NOTES 

Genesis is an ancient text



THE ANCIENT WORLDVIEW



Is Genesis compatible with modern science?

Christians have been at the forefront of scientific progress



'The God of the Bible is also the God of the genome. He can be worshipped in the cathedral and in the laboratory. His creation is majestic, awesome, intricate and beautiful.'

Francis Collins
Former head of the Human Genome Project

Modern science focuses on HOW questions:

- *How old is the universe? How has life developed?*

The Bible focuses on WHY questions:

- *Why am I here? Why is there good and evil?*

Creation

In the beginning God created the heavens and the earth. Now the earth was formless and empty, darkness was over the surface of the deep ... And God said, 'Let there be light', and there was light.

Genesis 1.1–3, NIV

Days of creation

God brings form	God brings fullness
Day 1 Separation of light and darkness	Day 4 The creation of the lights to fill the day and night
Day 2 Separation of the waters to form the sky and the sea	Day 5 The creation of the birds and fish to fill the sky and sea
Day 3 Separation of the sea from the dry land and creation of plants	Day 6 The creation of the animals and humans to fill the land
Day 7 The heavens and the earth were finished and God rested	

MY NOTES 

Humanity

Human beings are the climax of creation

God said, 'Let us make man in our image, after our likeness ...' So God created man in his own image, in the image of God he created him; male and female he created them. And God ... said to them, 'Be fruitful and multiply and fill the earth and subdue it.'

Genesis 1.26–28

Ruach

A Hebrew word meaning 'breath', 'wind' or 'spirit'. In Greek the word is pneuma – the root of words like 'pneumatic'.

What does it mean to be made in the 'image of God'?

- For relationship with each other
- For a relationship with God
- To be God's representatives and co-workers

'You have made us for yourself, O Lord, and our heart is restless until it rests in you'

Saint Augustine (354–430 AD)

The Fall

The forbidden fruit

The serpent said to the woman, 'You will not surely die. For God knows that when you eat of it your eyes will be opened, and you will be like God.'

Genesis 3.4–5

Temptation and doubt

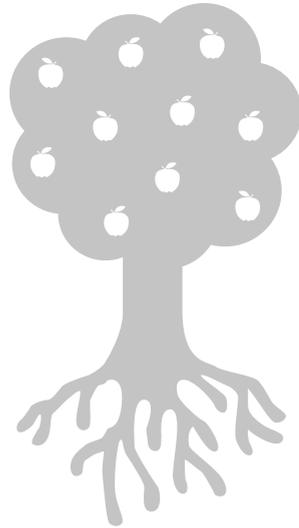
- Is God a kill-joy, keeping us from fulfilment?

Judgement and mercy

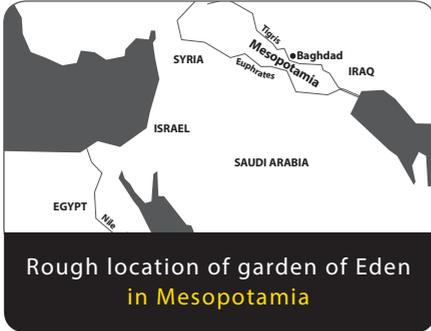
- **God is just**, so he banishes humanity from paradise
- **God is merciful**, so he promises a saviour to restore all things

The LORD God said to the serpent ... 'I will put enmity between you and the woman, and between your offspring and hers. He shall crush your head, and you will strike his heel.'

Genesis 3.14–15



The Flood



And God blessed Noah and his sons and said to them, 'Be fruitful and multiply and fill the earth.'

Genesis 9.1

Adam and Eve leave Eden

- Humanity spreads across the known world ('the cradle of civilisation')
- Humanity descends further into evil

Noah and the ark

- God sent a flood of judgement
- God saves Noah's family
- God sends a rainbow of promise
- The flood gives the world a fresh start
- Noah is like a new Adam
- See Genesis 5—10

MY NOTES 

The Tower of Babel

Babel

Means 'confusion' and resembles our word 'babble.'

Then they said, 'Come, let us build ourselves a city and a tower with its top in the heavens, and let us make a name for ourselves...'. And the LORD said, '... Let us go down and there confuse their language, so that they may not understand one another's speech.'

Genesis 11.4, 6–7

- The Tower of Babel – inspired by a ziggurat, an ancient terraced structure built for protection and pagan worship
- God has to go down, even to see this 'great tower'
- Humanity fragments into competing groups – the origin of racism, wars and multiple languages



The call of Abraham

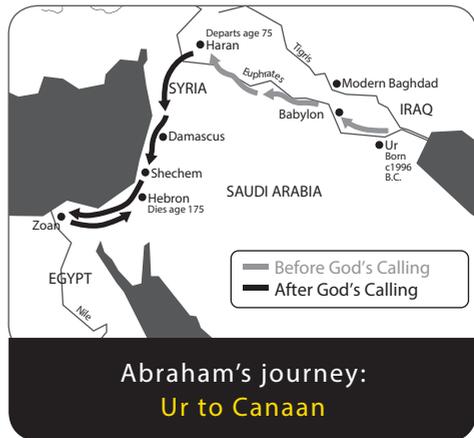
Now the LORD said to Abram, 'Go from your country and your kindred and your father's house to the land that I will show you. And I will make of you a great nation, and I will bless you and make your name great, so that you will be a blessing.'

Genesis 12.1–2

God's promises to Abraham

- **Great nation:** Abraham means 'Father of many'
- **Promised land:** Canaan, modern-day Israel, the Holy Land
- **Global blessing:** all families on earth will be blessed

MY NOTES 



Covenant

A formal agreement between two parties. The Bible is structured by the two covenants or testaments – Old and New.

The covenant with Abraham

ADAM/NOAH
CREATION

ABRAHAM
FAITH

MOSES
LAW

DAVID
KINGDOM

JESUS
GRACE

Genesis 15

- **Seal:** Formal relationship between two parties
- **Sacrifice:** The blood-path ceremony
- **Sign:** Outward mark of being in covenant relationship

In the same way also he took the cup, after supper, saying, 'This cup is the new covenant in my blood. Do this, as often as you drink it, in remembrance of me.'

1 Corinthians 11.25

Abraham's family

Abraham and Hagar – Ishmael (Genesis 16)

Abraham is significant in world religions – Judaism, Christianity and Islam.

Abraham and Sarah – Isaac (Genesis 21)

- Isaac means 'laughter'
- Isaac was the promised child

Abraham – Isaac – Jesus

- In Genesis 22, Abraham nearly sacrificed Isaac on Mount Moriah
- But a substitute ram was offered instead
- Near that spot, also known as Golgotha, Jesus was crucified

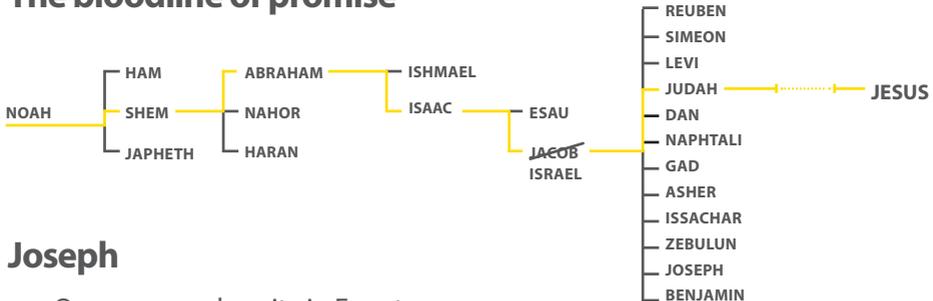
God so loved the world that he gave his one and only Son, that whoever believes in him shall not perish but have eternal life.

John 3.16, NIV



Abraham's family tree

The bloodline of promise



Joseph

- Overcomes adversity in Egypt
- Becomes a saviour figure in a global crisis

When the famine had spread over all the land, Joseph opened all the storehouses and sold to the Egyptians. Moreover, all the earth came to Egypt to Joseph to buy grain, because the famine was severe.

Genesis 41.56–57

Judah

- Screws up and gets things wrong (Genesis 38)
- But Judah became the chosen tribe from which the Messiah would come

*The God of the Bible
is into recycling.*





Personal Reflection

Suggested: 10 minutes

Take a moment to reflect on this verse:

If anyone is in Christ, he is a new creation. The old has passed away; behold, the new has come.

2 Corinthians 5.17

Write down something from this verse or the session that has inspired you ...

Write down something that has challenged you ...

Why not share your reflections with others and pray to finish.

Daily Bible Readings: Week 2

Read each passage through carefully. Then consider:

WHAT? *What did this passage mean in its context?*

NOW WHAT? *Now what does this passage mean for my life today?*

- Write down a key verse or phrase that stands out.
- Pray it through, asking God to help you live in this truth.

Day 1 Exodus 1.1–22 and Exodus 2.1–10

Egypt and slavery – God’s people in trouble

Day 2 Exodus 2.11–25 and Exodus 3.1–15

Wilderness, the bush and the name – the call of Moses

Day 3 Exodus 12.1–50

Final plague, Passover and exodus – the way of freedom

Day 4 Exodus 19.1–25

Mountain and covenant – God meets his people

Day 5 Exodus 20.1–21

Commandments and lightning – God lays down the law

Day 6 Numbers 13.1–33 and Numbers 14.1–9

Grapes, giants, decisions – brink of the Promised Land

