

Genesis 1–11: Theological and historical truth

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Who am I? What is my purpose on this earth? Why is everything the way that it is? These are the kinds of questions that often trouble young people as they become more independent from their parents, enter the world of college or career, and make major life decisions such as choosing a spouse, a school, a career path, or a church for themselves. They are constantly bombarded with the lies of the world, encouraging them to doubt what they have learned about their identity from their pastor and parents, telling them that their purpose in life is to do whatever makes them happy.

But if the believing young person wisely turns to Scripture for counsel, they will see that the most fundamental, true answers to all these questions can be found in the opening chapters of Genesis. The title of the book comes from the Greek translation of the Pentateuch and means “origin.” Moses was divinely inspired to record in the book of Genesis the origin of all things—the universe, time, humanity, gender, marriage, good and evil, language, culture, nations, industry, and God’s covenant people. Genesis

goes back to the beginning to give infallible instruction about who we were meant to be by revealing where man came from, why he was created, and what his relationship to God is.

Essential to the knowledge of who we are is the knowledge of who God is. We cannot truly know ourselves apart from the knowledge of God, our Creator. We can only understand our place in this world if we know God as he has revealed himself through his word and creation. From the very first verse of Scripture, it is clear that the Bible is a book primarily about God and we must read it as such. One of the first truths that we read about God is that he has no origin; he is eternal. We also see that he has the power to do whatever he wills—he is omnipotent. And all the verses and chapters and books that follow continue to slowly reveal the many different facets of God’s infinite perfections. The historical narrative describing the events of creation, the fall, the flood, and the tower of Babel in Genesis 1–11 especially highlights God’s sovereignty over everyone and everything that happens and his unwavering covenant

faithfulness to his people. These truths about God give life-changing comfort to the believing young person. Your life has purpose and meaning because God sovereignly planned it even before he created the universe. You can live your life with the confidence that God is faithful to do what he says he will do in his word.

Yet the beautiful and reassuring truth of these opening chapters of Genesis is widely disregarded by a majority of people today. It is no longer just worldly scientists who promote the theory of evolution instead of a literal interpretation of Genesis 1–11. Sadly, varying forms of evolution are now taught in many Christian colleges, seminaries, and churches as well. But any attempt to reconcile the truth of the Bible with the teaching of evolution is a denial of the unity, reliability, clarity, sufficiency, and authority of Scripture (2 Tim. 3:16). In his pamphlet about

the historicity of Genesis 1–11, Prof. Engelsma states, “Merely to allow for the possibility that Genesis 1–11 is mythical is unbelief. Seriously to pose the question about Genesis 1–11, ‘Myth or History?’ is to do exactly what Eve did when she entertained the speaking serpent’s opening question, ‘Yea, hath God said?’ (Gen. 3:1). Tolerance of doubt concerning the truth of God’s Word is a revolt against Him and apostasy from Him.”¹ As a believing child of God, you must read Genesis 1–11 as historical truth. These opening chapters of Genesis are the foundation on which both the rest of Scripture and all the basic doctrines of the Christian faith lie. The events found in these chapters are not just myths or stories or metaphors, they are history—*your* history.

¹ David J. Engelsma, *Genesis 1–11: Myth or History?* (Byron Center, MI: Byron Center Protestant Reformed Evangelism Society, 2002), 1.

Date	Read	Reflect
Nov 8	Gen. 1:1–2	How is it evident from the very first verse of the Bible that it is a book all about God? How will remembering this truth change how you read not only Genesis but also the entire Bible?
Nov 9	Gen. 1:3–25	How do you see the glory of God displayed in the creation account? Does this lead you to worship him?
Nov 10	Gen. 1:26–31	How does man reflect the glory of God in a way that is unique from the rest of creation?
Nov 11	Gen. 2:1–3	What principles from the original Sabbath that is recorded here govern the way that we observe the Sabbath today?

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Nov 12	Gen. 2:4-17	How does the fact that work existed before man sinned affect your view of the work that you are called to do on this earth?
Nov 13	Gen. 2:18-25	How does Paul's teaching on marriage in Ephesians 5:22-33 echo God's design for marriage that is revealed at the creation of the first woman?
Nov 14	Gen. 3:1-6	How did Satan make sin look attractive when he came to tempt Eve? How does he make sin attractive to you?
Nov 15	Gen. 3:7-13	How did Adam and Eve's sin affect their relationship with God? How does your sin affect your relationship with God?
Nov 16	Gen. 3:14-24	What were the consequences of the fall for all those involved? How do we still experience these consequences today?
Nov 17	Gen. 3:14-24	As you read these verses again, where do you see glimmers of the hope that we have in Christ shining through?
Nov 18	Gen. 4:1-7	Why did God reject Cain's sacrifice but accept Abel's sacrifice? (See also Heb. 11:4.) What can you learn from this?
Nov 19	Gen. 4:8-16	How did Cain's response to God show the hardness of his heart? What is a godly response to being confronted with our own sin?
Nov 20	Gen. 4:17-24	How do you see Cain's unrepentant sin being carried even further by his descendants? What can you learn about the nature of sin from this?
Nov 21	Gen. 4:25-26	What two rays of hope for God's people do we read of in these verses? How do we receive a better fulfillment of these things in Christ?
Nov 22	Gen. 5	What does it mean that Enoch "walked with God" (v. 24)? (See also Heb. 11:5-6.) Who else in Scripture is said to have walked with God as well (Gen. 6:9)? What can you learn from the example of these two godly men?
Nov 23	Gen. 6:1-4	How does this passage highlight the danger of marrying someone who is ungodly? What implications does this have for your dating life?
Nov 24	Gen. 6:5-8	Keeping in mind God's immutability (1 Sam. 15:29; Mal. 3:6), what is the meaning of verse 6?
Nov 25	Gen. 6:9-22	What can you learn about living faithfully in the midst of this wicked world from the life of Noah?

Nov 26	Gen. 7:1-16	Why is Noah included in Hebrews 11:7 as one of the great examples of faith? How did he exemplify the truth of Hebrews 11:1 by building and entering the ark?
Nov 27	Gen. 7:17-24	What do the powerful details of the flood that are recorded here teach you about the nature of God's judgment? What is your response to this?
Nov 28	Gen. 8:1-5	How does reading about God's faithfulness to Noah through the flood give you comfort for tumultuous times in your own life?
Nov 29	Gen. 8:6-19	What does the dove symbolize in these verses? How does the symbolism of a dove in Matthew 3:16-17 compare to its use in this passage?
Nov 30	Gen. 8:20-22	How is Noah's sacrifice after he exits the ark a picture of Christ's sacrifice for his people on the cross?
Dec 1	Gen. 9:1-7	How are God's words to Noah here similar to his words to Adam in Genesis 1:26-31? How are they different because of the presence of sin in the world?
Dec 2	Gen. 9:8-17	What is the beautiful promise of God symbolized by the rainbow? How has the wicked world today perverted the symbol of a rainbow to stand for rebellion against God?
Dec 3	Gen. 9:18-29	How does the juxtaposition of God's covenant promise in the previous verses and Noah's fall into sin here make clear that salvation must be all of grace?
Dec 4	Gen. 10	Do you recognize any of the names of the nations that will come from the descendants of Ham/Canaan? How would these nations experience God's wrath later in Old Testament history?
Dec 5	Gen. 11:1-5	How is the superiority of God's greatness over even man's greatest accomplishments emphasized in this passage?
Dec 6	Gen. 11:6-9	How did God restrain sin for a time by creating many different languages at Babel? Do you think that the world will ever all speak one language again? (See 2 Thess. 2:5-8.)
Dec 7	Gen. 11:10-26	How does reading through the genealogy of Shem remind you of God's personal, covenant care for his people? (See also Luke 3:34-36.)