

Beginning @ the Beginning

Three most important characters are : Adam, Enoch & Noah

Four most important events are Creation, the Fall, the Flood, Tower of Babel

1st human to be created, 1st Marriage, 1st man to be born, 1st man to die, 1st murder, 1st promise of the messiah, 1st illustration of human religion, 1st example of divine redemption, (Willmington's Guide to the Bible 1983)

Study Outline:

- Genesis 1 Preparation and the Occupation of the earth.
- Genesis 1:26 & 27 Beginning of Man
- Genesis 1:27-31 Beginning of the Covenants
- Genesis 2:1 & 2 Beginning of the Sabbath
- Genesis 2:20b - 25 Beginning of Marriage and family
- Genesis 3:1-6 Beginning of Temptation
- Genesis 3:7-24 Beginning of Sin
- Genesis 3:14-24 Beginning of Judgement
- Genesis 3:21 & 22 Beginning of Salvation
- Genesis 4:1-15 Beginning of Crime & its cause
- Genesis 4:16-26 Beginning of Cain's Family Line
- Genesis 6:1-8,22 Beginning over again
- Genesis 9:1-29 Beginning of a new covenant

A rule of hermeneutics states that the first time something occurs in Scripture it has particularly significant importance and should not be ignored. This is called the "law of first reference" and forms the building blocks on which later scriptures are based. (Roughly quoted from Stan King - 1998)

Study 1: Preparation and Occupation of the Earth

Three different views of creation can be separated from each other with a wide range of opinions in each approach:

Approach One: *Organic Evolution is true, while the Bible is not.*

Approach Two: *Theistic Evolution. Evolution is true, while the Bible is allegorical.*

Approach Three: *Special Creation*

“the Word of God of God is unerring and completely trustworthy when it deals with matters of history and science. However, many of the questions which trouble us in our ‘scientific’ age simply did not occur to the Biblical writers. no view is without problems. In our present state of knowledge we simply do not know with absolute certainty the method whereby God carried out special creation. That He created is clearly revealed” (Genesis - Mount Carmel Bible School - Ted McKellar)

Read Genesis 1.

1. List out what happened on each day of creation.
2. Do you think that God had a reason for the order in which he created?
3. The Bible seems to indicate a quick creation (six 24 hour days). Is this possible and why?
4. If you were God would you do anything different?
5. What theories (i.e. Gap Theory) have you encountered which try to ascribe a longer age to the world? How do you refute these? i.e. Jewish “Yom”,
6. In light of how scripture is interdependent what further collaboration do you receive from the Old & New Testaments *in relation to this beginning?*

Study 2: Beginning of Man

For man does not originate from woman, but woman from man; for indeed man was not created for the woman's sake, but woman for the man's sake. ...However, in the Lord, neither is woman independent of man, nor is man independent of woman. For as the woman originates from the man, so also man has his birth through the woman; and all things originate from God.

1 Corinthians 11: 8,9,11,12 (NASB)

Read Genesis 1:26 & 27, 2:7

1. What in these two or three verses do we learn about God?
2. What does being made in "His / Our Image" mean?
3. Some would say that this passage gives man a license to do anything he wishes to the world... what factors usually accompany any responsibility that man is given in the Bible?
4. Do you see anything unique about the "hands on" approach that God uses in man's creation as opposed to the way God created everything else? Why do you think he made man this way?
5. If man was not made this way ... how well does the rest of the Bible stand?
6. In light of how scripture is interdependent what further collaboration do you receive from the Old & New Testaments *in relation to this beginning?*

Study 3: Beginning of the Covenants

The Edenic Covenant included giving Adam the responsibility of being father of the human race, subduing the earth, having dominion over the animals, caring for the garden, and not eating from the tree of the knowledge of good and evil. (Major Bible Themes - Chafer 1926)

Read Genesis 1:27 - 31, 2:16,17

1. What Covenant (agreement) do we see established here?
2. Covenants are fascinating studies in Scripture and are often researched based upon whether they are Conditional Covenants ["do this and I will do this"] or Non Conditional Covenants ["I will do this"]. What other Covenants do we see between God and man in the Word of God and which ones are conditional?
3. It has often been pointed out that man's need to work predates man's fall. In paradise do you think man viewed his assignment from God as work? What has changed our view?
4. If, as we discussed in our last study, man is meant to be accountable in light of his authority (dominion over all creatures) what kind of report card assessment would you give man on his progress thus far?
5. From reading passages related to Christ's future establishment of His kingdom on the earth (such as Is 11:6-8) can we get any sense of the pre-sin relationship between man and the rest of creation.
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Study 4: Beginning of the Sabbath

And be it observed, that this is the true character of a Sabbath. This is the only Sabbath which God ever celebrated, so far as the inspired record instructs us.. After this we read of God's commanding man to keep the Sabbath, and man utterly failing to do so; but we never read again the words, "God rested"; on the contrary, the word is, "My Father worketh hitherto, and I work." (John 5:17). The Sabbath in the strict and proper sense of the term, could only be celebrated when there really was nothing to be done. It could only be celebrated amid an undefiled creation - a creation on which no spot of sin could be discerned. God can have no rest where there is sin. (C.H.M. - Notes on Genesis - 1880)

Read Genesis 2:1 & 2

1. What is the importance of the Sabbath from God's eyes?
2. Was God tired? If not, what principle was God trying to teach [*teach, not-command*].
3. When was man first *commanded* to keep the Sabbath and why did God have to command man to keep something beneficial for his well being? Do you or anyone you know keep a day of rest? If so, how?
4. As believers living in these days [not under Jewish Law] do you think we are still bound to try to keep something which was in place before the Mosaic law came into being? How was the Sabbath viewed by the Jews in the time of Moses to the time of the Pharisees?
5. What [if anything] do you think would be accomplished in the world if everyone followed the principle that God has demonstrated here?
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Study 5: The Beginning of Marriage & Family

As the first community to which a person is attached and the first authority under which a person learns to live, the family established society's most basic values. (Charles Colson)

Apart from religious influence, the family is the most important unit of society. (Billy Graham)

Read Genesis 2:20b - 25

1. What do you think that God was thinking when he designed marriage and why is marriage still important today?
2. Why would God make such a big deal of marriage; He talks about this union as much as scripture talks of some of the days of creation; and why did He want Adam & Eve to be together in a recognized relationship when they could have just lived together [especially in a world when they were the only man & woman]?
3. At what point of their married lives do you think that Adam & Eve would have had their most solid relationship? Why?
4. Professionals tell us that we learn from behaviors modeled by our parents, how would you see Adam & Eve as parents and how did they raise two vastly different sons?
5. Marriage is often mocked in our society. What is the position it should be held in (see Heb 13:4) and how can this be accomplished? *(Please note that since 1920 the divorce rate in the US has increased by over 1420%)*
6. In light of how scripture is interdependent what further collaboration do you receive from the Old & New Testaments *in relation to this beginning?*

Study 6: Beginning of Temptation

*It was just as true back then as it is now: God may test us, but he never tempts us. James 1:13 tells us that God does not "tempt anyone". Testing and tempting may be distinguished from each other in two ways. **First**, the subject of testing is always God [ultimately], while the subject of tempting is always Satan [ultimately]. It is Satan who tempts; God never tempts anyone. **Second**, the objects or purposes of testing and temptation differ from each other. The object of temptation is the fall of the person being tempted. When Satan tempts us he hopes that we will fall into sin. But that is not true of testing. The purpose of tempting is to make us worse, while the purpose of testing is to make us better. Look for example at Deuteronomy 8:2 "God led you all the way in the desert these forty years, to humble you and to test you in order to know what was in your heart, whether or not you would keep his commands." ... That is why God tests us - so that in the end it might go well with us. [How it All Began - Ronald Youngblood 1978]*

Read Genesis 3:1 - 6

1. In regard to this beginning, compare the temptation of the Lord Jesus.... what did Jesus do that was different than Eve? What mistake will we sometimes make when we are tempted?
2. Why is man, not woman, held accountable for this sin? (See Romans 5:12)
3. Is being tempted wrong? How are we tempted and is it always a fast process?
4. Sometimes we are tempted not directly from Satan's voice but from the suggestions of our acquaintances. What would be some Biblical injunctions on keeping this kind of company?
5. When Satan tempts one of God's children he will often start by making the believer question (or rationalize, or add on to) the Word of God. If you were preparing for this kind of onslaught how would you protect yourself? If we were wearing spiritual armour what kind of armour would it be?
6. In light of how scripture is interdependent what further collaboration do you receive from the Old & New Testaments *in relation to this beginning?*

Study 7: Beginning of Sin

Adam introduced Death (Gen 2:17), Nakedness (Gen 3:17), Curse (Gen 3:14), Sorrow (Gen 3:17), Thorns (Gen 3:18), Sweat (Gen 3:19), Sword (Gen 3:24)

Jesus (the 2nd Adam) **dealt** with Death (Heb 2:9), Nakedness (Jn 19:23), Curse (Gal 3:13), Sorrow (Isa 53:3), Thorns (Jn 19:5), Sweat (Lk 22:44), Sword (Jn 19:34)

(Willmington's Guide to the Bible 1983)

And just as they did not see fit to acknowledge God any longer, God gave them over to a depraved mind to do those things which are not proper and, although they know the ordinance of God, that those who practice such things are worthy of death, they not only do the same, but also give hearty approval to those who practice them. [Romans 1:28 & 32]

Read Genesis 3:7-24, Romans 5:12-19

1. What are the by products of temptation when it is yielded to? At its root, some people would say that sin is really rebellion and disobedience against God; would you agree with this or is sin something more or less than this?
2. What biblical concepts are present in God slaying an animal to cover a man & woman?
3. What do we learn about the first Adam's sin and it's consequences for the world? Is there such a thing as lesser sin & greater sins in God's eyes? Ultimately what is the result of any sin man commits?
4. Why do you think Adam blamed the woman & the woman blamed the serpent for their sin? Do we do this? If so, in what ways? What does sin do to our relationships?
5. Satan has the demonic ability of taking things that are not necessarily evil in and of themselves and twisting them for his own diabolical purposes [*How it All Began - Ronald Youngblood, 1978*]. Can you think of other scriptures where this is the case? How about in our society?.
6. In light of how scripture is interdependent what further collaboration do you receive from the Old & New Testaments *in relation to this beginning?*

Study 8: Beginning of Judgement

The fivefold Judgement upon sin

Upon Man: Wearisome toil

Upon Woman: Suffering in childbirth, Subordination to man

Upon Nature: Thorns & thistles, Aimlessness

Upon the Serpent: To crawl upon its belly

Upon Satan: To suffer a fatal head wound (Willmington's Guide to the Bible 1983)

"God had ordered that man should get what previously he had not, and that was, a conscience, a knowledge of good and evil. This man evidently could not have had before." (C.H.M. - Notes on Genesis - 1880)

Read Genesis 3:14 - 24

1. Discuss the curse which the man received, which the woman received, and which the serpent received. What are the implications of each curse and do you still see evidence of this curse in our technological & prosperous age?
2. What can we see as the consequence of this original sin [Romans 5:12]? How did this curse not apply to the Lord Jesus Christ? Some would say that through the shed blood of our atoning sacrifice we can enjoy a Edenic relationship with God today... do you think that this is possible? Why or why not?
3. Do Adam & Eve enjoy any relationship with God after they have received this curse? What is God's response to sin?
4. Does Satan deliver on his promises or did he just swindle Eve without fulfilling any of the items which he listed in Gen 3:4 & 5. Does Satan still use the same approach in his temptation of us today?
5. What do we know about future judgements. Does God save all judgement for the future or does He judge man's sin immediately (like he did here)?
6. In light of how scripture is interdependent what further collaboration do you receive from the Old & New Testaments *in relation to this beginning?*

Study 9: Beginning of Salvation

"We have here, in figure, the great doctrine of divine righteousness set forth. The robe which God provided was an effectual covering, because He provided it: just as the apron was an ineffectual covering, because man had provided it. Moreover, God's coat was founded upon blood-shedding; Adam's apron was not. So also now, God's righteousness is set forth in the cross; man's righteousness is set forth in the works - the sin stained works - of his own hands. When Adam stood clothed in the coat of skin he could not say he was naked, nor had he any occasion to hide himself" (C.H.M. - Notes on Genesis - 1880)

Read Genesis 3:21 - 22

1. In this passage we are shown the second symbol illustrated in the Bible. What do you think is the first symbol? What is the purpose of Biblical & non - Biblical symbols to ordinary people?
2. Why do you think that man could not engineer a suitable covering for himself (given man's God given desire to make things and man's desire for technological solutions for his own depravity)?
3. Speculate on whether Christians are further away from God today or closer to him than Adam & Eve were at this point? How about non-Christians?
4. Describe the significance of the covering which God chose for man. Why this material? Why not cotton or wool?
5. Adam & Eve make no request of God for pardon from sin (that we can read about). Rather they just acknowledge their sin. Follow through scripture the development of the need for confession and forgiveness. Do you see this need in our interpersonal relationships as well?
6. In light of how scripture is interdependent what further collaboration do you receive from the Old & New Testaments *in relation to this beginning?*

Study 10: Beginning of Crime & its Cause

“And first, in what we may term the Age of Freedom, during the lapse of which He left Adam and his descendants almost entirely to their own devices. Marriage had indeed been instituted:... and they were commanded to toil for their bread by tilling the earth. But beyond this God would neither Himself issue laws nor suffer men to do so....every man should go in his own way, and do that which was right in his own eyes..... Modern philosophers are urging for an repetition of the experiment; but the history of old proves the fallacy of their views. For the wickedness of man became great.” (Earth’s Earliest Ages - G.H. Pember - (No Date))

Read Genesis 4:1 - 15

1. What is the cause of wickedness and crime? In this passage we are introduced to Satan for the second time. What do we learn about Satan from this passage? Does this increase our knowledge (in relation to our first exposure to him) about how he operates?
2. It has been said that God has chosen four methods to bring Human Beings into the world what do you think they are? What is the meaning of Cain & Abel’s names? Do you think that they are appropriate? What do you think that Eve was thinking in naming her sons?
3. What was different about the sacrifices? What do we learn about sacrifices from other scriptures? Is the shedding of blood necessary judging from most scriptures and why? How does God view offerings (I Sam.15:22) What is his primary requirements? What kind of offerings can we give to God?
4. Verse 7 indicates that Cain had options related to his choice. What were they?
5. Review how Cain is now cursed. Was God too easy on him? How can you justify God’s response in relation to latter scriptures?
6. In light of how scripture is interdependent what further collaboration do you receive from the Old & New Testaments *in relation to this beginning?*

Study 11: Beginning of Cain's Family Line

"Henceforth we find a twofold development in the human race; the Sethites and the banished Cainites remain separated for a while, and represent the Church and the World. The Cainites, with the restlessness of men alienated from God, were ever striving to make the land of their exile a pleasant land; to reproduce Paradise artificially, instead of longing for the real Garden of Delight; were ceaselessly trying by every means to palliate the curse, instead of patiently following God's directions for getting rid of it altogether. Cain himself, who had been condemned to wander, was the first to build a city, which he called Enoch, after the name of his son; the first to attempt to settle comfortably upon the blasted earth."

(Earth's Earliest Ages - G.H. Pember - (No Date))

Read Genesis 4:16 - 26

1. What strikes you about Cain's Family Line? Would we boast of such powerful and gifted individuals if they were in our family tree?
2. Some liberal scholars have questioned aspects of this passage such as "he built a city (for who?)" just as they question the possibility of someone trying to kill Cain in our last study (who else was around to kill him?). How can these scriptures be right and where do all these other people come from?
3. Names can be interesting studies in scripture. What do we learn from the names of Cain & his descendants. *Cain = Possession, land of Nod = Wandering or Unrest, Enoch = Initiated or dedicated, Irad = Runner or Wild Ass, Mehujael = smitten by God, Methushael = man of God, Lamech = the strikerdown or the wild man. Jabal = A stream or wanderer, Jubal = Jubilee or Music, sound, Tubal-Cain = unknown (Easton's Bible Dictionary)*
4. If it's true that in mans natural state (like Cain's state) the only satisfaction he can gain is here on earth, what should the believer be seeking (Heb 11:13-16)
5. If you were performing a personality profile on Lamech; what do you learn of him? What would you say is Lamech's view on personal accountability and a future judgement
6. In light of how scripture is interdependent what further collaboration do you receive from the Old & New Testaments *in relation to this beginning?*

Study 12: Beginning over again

... mankind before the Flood had sunk to such depths of moral and spiritual degradation that God had no alternative but to punish them. Having passed the point of no return, they were ripe for divine judgement. When God is grieved by man's sin, his heart is filled with pain because He loves us. But the grief that man's sin brings to God's heart also has its darker side - in cases like the one described here, it issues in divine judgement. Though God loves the sinner, He judges his sin. [How it All Began - Ronald Youngblood 1978]

Read Genesis 6:1-8,22

1. Who do you think the sons of God were? (Note that this has been a debate for years) In other passages we read that God looks at (or considers) the condition of the individual's spiritual heart. What are the problems with basing our view of beauty solely on physical attributes? (Refer to 1 Peter 3:3-5, 1 Samuel 16:7)
2. Why do you think that God decides to shorten man's life expectancy. Did this action happen immediately? What does God think of people who knowingly walk away from the truth (Ezekiel 18:21-28)
3. In this period we see an ancient prototype of our own period today. Consider the preoccupation we have with our physical appetites, the speedy advance of technology, our materialism, corruption, violence, illicit sexual activity and our population growth. Is our outcome necessarily similar to the ancient world's fate?
4. Consider how much spiritual light the ancient world had. If these people had repented and turned from their wicked ways (2 Chron: 7:14) is it possible that God would have halted his plan to destroy the pre-flood world (see also 2 Pet 3:9, Jer.18 7:10 & Jonah's account)?
5. How can it be said that God was grieved that he had created man? When we knowingly walk away from God's ways, how does the Holy Spirit of God feel? What does it take to restore a proper relationship with our Father?
6. In light of how scripture is interdependent what further collaboration do you receive from the Old & New Testaments *in relation to this beginning?*

Study 13: Beginning of a New Covenant

*"A covenant is an agreement that stresses relationship, and **with** and **between** are the prepositions of relationship in the Noahic covenant, the first leading logically and inevitably to the second. God establishes His covenant "with" His creatures and it is then defined as a covenant "between" Him and them - a covenant that he binds Himself to honor." [How it All Began - Ronald Youngblood 1978]*

Read Genesis 9:1-29

1. How important is a blessing? Why have we moved away from blessing our children or our acquaintances? List some observations which you can make about the contents of this blessing? What has been added or removed from the Adamic era blessing (Gen 1:28-30)?
2. At this point no distinction seems to be made regarding "clean" vs. "unclean" animals being used for food. From what we know of Noah do you believe he understood the difference?
3. As a sign of this covenant a rainbow is given. Can you see any signs in other covenants?
4. Noah never seems to cast a backward glance at the ark. Instead he goes forward and the ark is never seen or heard of again. Man has a tendency to let a symbol become an object of veneration. (*Superstition makes everything of the ordinance; infidelity, profanity and mysticism make nothing of it; faith uses it according to divine appointment. C.H.M.*) Can you think of any biblical and extra biblical examples where this has been so? Speculate on how people may react if the ark were ever discovered?
5. In Scripture we read that a man is blessed whose sins are forgiven (Ps 32:2). Noah sins in becoming drunk and yet God seems to overlook this sin (see Hebrews 11:7, I Peter 3:20, II Peter 2:25) and regards him as a righteous man. How can God do this for Noah? How does God do this for us?
6. In light of how scripture is interdependent what further collaboration do you receive from the Old & New Testaments *in relation to this beginning?*