

Episode: Genesis & Job Series No. 01

Narrator: Paul

Primary Scriptures: Genesis 1-5

Story Summary: The beginning of everything

Location: Garden of Eden and nearby

Time: Beginning Creation of Everything

Suggested Memory Scriptures: 1:1-2, 1:3, 1:26-27; 2:2-3, 2:7, 2:18, 2:21-22; 3:1; 4:6; 5:1-2

The first five chapters of *Genesis* are truly amazing. They describe the beginning of everything, the creation of everything. Matter, light, mankind, civilization...everything.

Hebrews 11:6 gives an important clue to these chapters: "And without faith it is impossible to please God, because anyone who comes to him must believe that he exists and that he rewards those who earnestly seek him."¹ Combined with Genesis 1, believers understand that God exists now and existed before there was anything. When God so chose, he created everything. This is a central tenet of the Bible: God created everything.

The creation of mankind is described in Genesis 1:26-31, 2:7, 2:21-25, and 5:1-2. Each of those passages lead to a host of interesting questions, but Genesis 2:7 may be the most intriguing and might help lead to better understanding of the other passages. What is the "breath of life?" Does that mean God took an inanimate body and caused it to start breathing? Or that God took a body without a spirit and gave it spiritual life? Does it make humans be in the image of God?

Genesis 3 gives the account of Adam and Eve in the Garden of Eden. Among other important topics, this chapter opens the door for an understanding of the nature of sin and the consequences of sinning. Many people believe the serpent in the story is Satan, which leads to another group of topics and questions.

Genesis 4 relates the story of Cain and Abel. One of the important aspects of this story is learning that people have the capability to resist sin and overcome it. On the other hand, resisting sin is not easy. The word picture in the story is that sin is like a devouring, wild animal lurking nearby, waiting to destroy.

Genesis 5 gives the family line from Adam to Noah. The account is detailed as to how long certain people lived, and when their sons were born. The understandings about these accounts also vary significantly. Some take the genealogies to be complete and literal, while others take them to be figurative and/or incomplete.

With the possible exception of *Revelation*, the first five chapters of Genesis are some of the most challenging verses to interpret in the Bible.

¹ Hebrews 11:6 NIV

Discussion Questions:

1. Based on Genesis 1:1-2, what is the difference between God and the Spirit of God? Is the Spirit of God the same as the Holy Spirit as revealed in the New Testament?
2. Do you interpret Genesis 1:1 to mean that no physical thing existed before God created the heavens and the earth? Why or why not?
3. Based on Genesis 1:27, what does it mean that humans are created in God's image?
4. Based on Genesis 2:7, what does the "breath of life" mean?
5. According to the wording, Genesis 2:24 follows from Genesis 2:23. Why does it follow? Does Genesis 2:24 give you any hints as to who wrote down Genesis or when it was written down?
6. Genesis 3:1 introduces the serpent in the Garden of Eden. Do you think the serpent is Satan? Why or why not?
7. Do you think Genesis 3:15 is a prophecy concerning Satan and Jesus?
8. Genesis 4:5 relates that God did not look with favor on Cain's offering. Why do you suppose God held this view?
9. Genesis 4:26 says that people began to call on the name of the Lord. What does that mean?

Application Questions:

1. Have you ever gotten sidetracked by trying to make the latest scientific theory fit the account of creation in the Bible? What is the purpose of the creation account in the Bible?
2. Concerning their eating of the forbidden fruit, Genesis 3:12-14 tells that Adam blamed Eve, and Eve blamed the serpent. Can you name a time when you knowingly sinned and then tried to blame it on somebody else? How did your results compare with Adam's?
3. In Genesis 3:5, the serpent tempted Eve by indicating that if she ate the forbidden fruit, she would be like God and know good and evil. What forbidden things do you do because you want to?

Application Questions for Teens:

1. If science was to "prove" that all humans came from one mother, would that impact your understanding of the Bible story of Adam and Eve?
2. In Genesis 3:5, the serpent tempted Eve by indicating that if she ate the forbidden fruit, she would be like God and know good and evil. What forbidden things do you do because you want to?
3. Genesis 4:8 says that Cain killed Abel. Why did he do that? Have you ever let envy or jealousy rule over your good judgement?
4. Words like "mankind" are falling out of favor culturally and are being replaced with language that is considered more inclusive. How do you feel about that based on Genesis 5:2?