

Bethel Bible-Presbyterian Church  
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**DHW  
BIBLE STUDY CLASS**

**BOOK OF GENESIS**

**LESSON 1**

**Genesis 1 & 2**

***INTRODUCTION***

The only inspired and infallible collection of books in the world is the sixty-six books of **Holy Scriptures**, from the first book of Genesis in the Old Testament to the last book of Revelation in the New Testament. The **Author** of these sixty-six books is *the living and true God*. But those who wrote these books were men. There were no less than forty *holy men of God* spake as they were moved by the *Holy Spirit* as the Scriptures testify (2 Peter 1:21): *For the prophecy came not in old time by the will of man: but holy men of God spake as they were moved by the Holy Ghost.*<sup>1</sup>

**Moses the Writer**

The book of Genesis and four other books—Exodus, Leviticus, Numbers and Deuteronomy—are known as the *Torah* (Heb. *hrwt*).

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<sup>1</sup> Compare Hebrews 1:1 God, who at sundry times and in divers manners spake in time past unto the fathers by the prophets

These five books were written by Moses (Exodus 24:4, Numbers 33:2, Deuteronomy 5:22; 31:9). The *Torah*, comprising five books, is one of three parts of the Hebrew Old Testament. The other two parts are: the **Prophets** (Heb. *nabi'im*)<sup>2</sup> and the **Writings** (Heb. *ketobim*).<sup>3</sup> The order of the thirty-nine books in the Hebrew version is slightly different from the English version. The reason is because the English version is based on the *Septuagint*.<sup>4</sup> The name “Genesis,” which means “creation” or “generation” is taken from the Septuagint (LXX). But the Hebrew title of the book of Genesis is *b<sup>e</sup>reshit* which is the first word of the first sentence of the book, and it means “In the beginning”.

**Genesis is Foundational**

Genesis is foundational to all the teachings of the Bible. Any denial or rejection of its authority and authenticity, infallibility and inerrancy undermines all the other teachings and doctrines of the Bible. The existence of God, the origin of the universe and life forms and man on earth, the beginnings of race, language and nations, the introduction of capital punishment for murder, and the meaning of life and

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<sup>2</sup> The books are: Joshua, Judges, 1&2 Samuel, 1&2 Kings, Isaiah, Jeremiah, Ezekiel, Hosea, Joel, Amos, Obadiah, Jonah, Micah, Nahum, Habakkuk, Zephaniah, Haggai, Zechariah, Malachi.

<sup>3</sup> The books are: Psalms, Job, Proverbs, Ruth, Song of Solomon, Ecclesiastes, Lamentation, Esther, Daniel, Ezra, Nehemiah, 1&2 Chronicles.

<sup>4</sup> The *Septuagint* sometimes represented by the Roman numerals “LXX” because seventy scholars translated the Hebrew text of the Old Testament into Greek in order to meet the need of the Jews in Alexandria who could not read Hebrew.

death are revealed in the book of Genesis.

The following outline helps in our study of the book:

1. The One True and Living God is the Creator of All Things (1:1-31)
2. God Makes a Covenant with Adam in the Garden of Eden (2:1-17)
3. God Makes Woman and Gives Her to Man (2:18-25)

### **STUDY THE WORD**

#### **The One True and Living God is the Creator of All Things**

The truth that there is *one living and true God* is never disputed in the Bible. The opening verse of Genesis, *In the beginning God created the heaven and the earth*, Moses, by inspiration of the Holy Spirit, categorically declares there is God. And God is not a “force” or “an energy” as some today are propagating. God is not inanimate Mother Nature which many still use freely to explain for the existence of things in the world.

There is only one *living and true God*, and there is no one else beside Him (Deuteronomy 4:35). God disclosed to Moses His name: “*I AM that I AM*” (*hyha rva hyha eh’yeh asher eh’yeh*, see Exodus 3:14). This statement can only mean one thing that God is self-existent. He is the First Cause without a cause. Before there was anything, He IS. He has neither beginning nor ending. He is from everlasting to everlasting.

Moreover, God is not the God whom many people are quick to acknowledge by saying, “Oh, yes, I believe in the existence of a God.” But the only *living and true God* is the God who revealed Himself to Abraham, Isaac and Jacob (Exodus 3:6). God revealed that He is a Person. He has all the faculties which man has, because as man’s Creator, He *created man in his image, in the image of God created he him; male and female created he them.* (Genesis 1:26, 27) That explains the man has intelligence, emotion, a will, and a moral sense of right and wrong, and an inner spiritual sense that there is God whom he ought to fear. The difference between the creature and the Creator, however, is infinitely immeasurable, as a drop of water to an ocean. God has said (Isaiah 55:8-9): *For my thoughts are not your thoughts, neither are your ways my ways, saith the LORD. For as the heavens are higher than the earth, so are my ways higher than your ways, and my thoughts than your thoughts.*

Some of the attributes of God are shown in Genesis chapter 1 and 2.<sup>5</sup> God has the **power** to create things out of nothing. God reveals that nothing is impossible with Him (Mark 10:27). God is **good** for He created everything good. On the sixth day at the end of His creative works He saw His works and *behold, it was very good* (Genesis 1:31). God is not only good, God is

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<sup>5</sup> Chapter 2 is not an alternative account of Creation. Whereas chapter 1 focuses on the sequence and chronology of creation as a whole, chapter 2 focuses on the creation of man and woman and the covenant God made with the first created man.

also wise. Observe the order of Creation. The supportive things were created first before the others which need those supports. There is no doubt that God is intelligent, wise and practical.

### **CREATIONISM**

The origin of life and things on earth is simply and clearly stated here. God created (Heb. *bara*) all things *ex nihilo* (Greek, out of nothing). The plain text declares that God spoke, and things and life appeared. This should not be strange or absurd. Just because it is not possible with man that does not prove that it is impossible with God. Why do men think that it is strange for the Almighty God to be able to create anything out of nothing, just by speaking it? God has revealed to us that He is God and that nothing is impossible with Him (Mark 10:27).

Man tries to explain the origin of life with the *theory of evolution*, which was postulated by Darwin and has been widely accepted by many today. The theory of evolution views that all living things evolved first from non-living matter (no explanation how that matter came into existence in the first place) which through an unspecified period of time became a living cell and this one living cell eventually through millions of years evolved in stages through the various forms of life and ultimately became man.

This theory of evolution is even more incredibly absurd. How can an inanimate object left to itself one day suddenly become a living cell? Then this one tiny cell by itself without any

intelligent agent evolves itself into all the more complex forms of life which eventually become man, whose constitution is so wonderful and amazing? And all these just happen without any intelligent agent?

The origin of life on earth is more rationally and credibly explained by the process of creation by fiat of the Almighty and All-wise God than by the gradual mindless process of evolution. Man's daily experience teaches him that behind every design, there is a designer; in every matter, there is a maker; in every casualty, there is a cause.

There is yet another explanation, which combines the views of creationism and the theory of evolution. This view is known as *theistic evolution*. The theory is held by some Christians. Simply put, this theory supports that God created all things but allowed the process of evolution to take its course in the formation of all life forms. There is no shred of textual or scientific evidence to support this view. The biblical text clearly states that God spoke and all things came into being. The duration of each day is specifically given in the text as *and the evening and the morning were the first day*, and so on (Genesis 1:5, 8, 13, 19, 23, 31).<sup>6</sup> In six days God created the heavens and the earth and all therein. On the seventh day God rested from His work of creation (Genesis 2:2).

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<sup>6</sup> In the light of Exodus 20:9-11, the Divine commentary is that the "day" is a 24-hour day. The creation day if it is not a 24-hour day, would hardly serve as a pattern for man's six literal work days and rest day on the seventh.

The biblical text has no problem with scientific facts but has problem with scientific theories. If evolutionism is a fact, then there must be countless inter-stages or phases of life forms on earth. But the bare truth is that there is none! There were attempts with exhibits of some fragments of bones to prove the “missing link” between animal and man. But all these attempts have not been conclusively convincing nor will they ever be because God created everything in its adult form each *after his kind* (Genesis 1:11, 12, 21, 24, 25). If God wanted it the way man thought it to be, He would have clearly stated it. God knows what He is doing and what He is writing. Man must humble himself and accept the plain sense of what God has written in Scriptures. The grammatical and literal import of the text bares solidly to creationism and not to any other “ism”.

### **God Makes a Covenant with Adam**

There is a recurring phrase in the book of Genesis, that is, *these are the generations of* (2:4).<sup>7</sup> The phrase simply means “the history of.” Some scholars use the phrase to outline the divisions of the book.

The key word for “covenant” in the Bible is in Hebrew *tyrb* (Heb. *b<sup>e</sup>rit*) and Greek, *diathkh* (*diatheke*). A covenant is a pact, treaty, alliance, contract, or agreement between two parties of equal or unequal authority. There are many covenants mentioned in Scriptures.<sup>8</sup>

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<sup>7</sup> The other occurrences are: 5:1; 6:9; 10:1; 11:10; 11:27; 25:12; 36:1; & 37:2.

The covenant is a central unifying theme in Scriptures.

Genesis chapter 1 first mentions God made a covenant with Adam and Eve (Genesis 1:28): *And God blessed them, and God said unto them, Be fruitful, and multiply, and replenish the earth, and subdue it: and have dominion over the fish of the sea, and over the fowl of the air, and over every living thing that moveth upon the earth* This is the covenant of works, which God made with Adam and Eve. It was further extended in chapter 2 (verses 16, 17): *And the LORD God commanded the man, saying, Of every tree of the garden thou mayest freely eat: But of the tree of the knowledge of good and evil, thou shalt not eat of it: for in the day that thou eatest thereof thou shalt surely die.* Although the word “covenant” is not mentioned, nevertheless the terms and conditions were there. God commanded Adam and Eve to have *dominion over* or *subdue* the whole earth and to *multiply and replenish* it. In addition, God laid a conditional clause. This conditional clause that God gave them was to test their love and obedience towards Him. God gave Adam the freewill, which Eve also enjoyed as she was part of him, to love and obey Him or not. All things would remain as God had purposed and planned, if only they had obeyed Him. If they broke that condition, the penalty was death. This covenant is known as the “Covenant of

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<sup>8</sup> The important ones are Noahic covenant, Genesis 9:8-17, Abrahamic covenant, Genesis 15 & 17:7, Mosaic covenant, Deuteronomy 5:2ff., and the Davidic covenant, 2 Samuel 7.

Works.” It was a covenant God made with Adam and his descendants, Adam representing his posterity.

### **God Makes Woman and Gives Her to Man**

In chapter 1, the substance from which man was made was not mentioned. But in chapter 2, it is given that God *formed man of the dust of the ground* (2:7). The word dust means dirt or clay.<sup>9</sup> The word “formed” (Heb. *yitsar*) means to form like a potter moulds the clay. So man is special, being the apex of God’s creation by his act of moulding him from the dirt or clay and then giving him life and *man became a living soul*.<sup>10</sup> This verse indicates for the first time the dual composition of man—body and soul, the material and immaterial part of man. God then took a rib from Adam and *made her a woman, and brought her to the man*. The word “made” (*hnb, banah*) means “to build” or to fashion. Commenting on the way woman was made; some bible scholars remark that “she was not made out of his head to surpass him or from his feet to be trampled on, but from his side to be

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<sup>9</sup> A *Reader’s Digest* article in November 1982 described a fascinating discovery by the researchers at NASA’s Ames Research Center which confirmed the Bible’s account that every single element found in the human body exists within the soil.

<sup>10</sup> Dust cannot be a symbol for animal life, as some neo-evangelicals would like to postulate. Dust or dirt or clay is the inanimate, inorganic material, which is called soil. John Davis further comments that even after God had formed a human body from it, it was inanimate and lifeless, requiring God to breathe life into it.

equal to him, and near his heart to be dear to him.”<sup>11</sup>

Calvin commented that God taking a rib from Adam was a deliberate design to indicate that Adam and Eve *should be more closely joined together by this bond*.<sup>12</sup>

The institution of marriage is set by God the Creator. God brought or gave away the woman to the man. It is the will of God, right from the beginning of time that marriage is intended to be permanent. Marriage is between a man and a woman, not otherwise. It is also one man one woman. The union forms the basic family unit in which the man is the head and the woman his *help meet* (2:20).

### **PRACTICAL VALUE**

The Bible is the only book in the world which reveals that God created the heavens and the earth and all therein by *fiat*.<sup>13</sup> This is God’s special revelation to man so that we might know Him. God is the one and true living God before the existence of the heavens and the earth and all therein. Since God has revealed to us that He is infinitely all-powerful and wise, and that He is our Creator or Maker, we should worship and obey Him in order to glorify Him. This is the duty of every man and woman. To do otherwise is to rebel against Him. This

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<sup>11</sup> James M. Gray, *Christian Workers’ Commentary*, 14.

<sup>12</sup> Calvin, *Calvin’s Commentaries Vol 1*, 134.

<sup>13</sup> Latin, the word means: a formal and solemn command.

leads us to an important truth and that is man shall not live for himself. He lives for His Creator. We all belong to Him, whether we believe in His existence or not. After our death, we will stand before Him, and He will judge us. This will happen in His appointed time.

We also learn that God who created the heavens and the earth has put certain laws in His creation so that the universe and planet earth including His creatures can function rationally and predictably. God saw that everything that He had made was very good (1:31). Just imagine if Adam had planted, and then there was no sunlight, and no water when his plants needed them, how could he *be fruitful, and multiply, and replenish the earth, and subdue it, and have dominion over the fish of the sea, and over the fowl of the air, and over every living thing that moveth of the earth?* God had put laws, which we call natural laws, so that man could act by faith, and get result. How awesome is God! The laws of nature express the immeasurable wisdom and mercy of God. Man in all his endeavours be it science, medicine, art, agriculture or economics can improve and progress.

In the beginning, man lived in perfect harmony with God. How wonderful it was then! We should live in perfect harmony with God, our Creator. We ought to love and obey in order to please and glorify Him. Are we loving and obeying Him? We should not be caught up with our work that we forget to sanctify or set apart one day in a week to worship God with others. God rested from His work of creation on the seventh day and blessed

it that His creatures might learn too to worship and bless Him. If we expect God to bless us, is it not our duty to bless Him first?

God has created a woman out of man to be his *help meet*. Man can only help man; and woman in a very special way. None of the animals can meet the need of man. Since God created woman out of man, there is no reason for each of them to feel superior or inferior to one another. They are complementary. They should be together in close relationship in all that they do. These are some of the practical lessons we learn. **GOD BLESS!**