



Genesis

I. The Main Idea of Genesis

God created a perfect world where man could experience his blessings and presence.

God's world was broken by man's sin and rebellion, and instead became a place where man experienced God's curses.

But God initiated a plan through Abraham and his descendants to restore blessings to the nations.

II. Outline of Genesis

Genesis 1-11 Primeval History

Genesis 1-2

Creation and the Garden of Eden

Genesis 3

Fall, Sin, Death, & Hope

Genesis 4-11

Adam to Noah's Descendants

Genesis 12-50 Patriarchal History

Genesis 12-23

Abraham

Genesis 24-26

Isaac

Genesis 27-36

Jacob

Genesis 37-50

Joseph and Judah

III. Interpretive Keys to Genesis

- Genres:
 - Historical Narrative
 - The author of Genesis intends to communicate historical events, and uses a narrative form (stories with plot, characters, and settings) instead of poetry or some other genre.
 - It doesn't tell us everything we may want to know about history, but what it does tell us is a truthful account of the past. How do we know?
 - There are several answers to that question, including the fact that archaeology and extra-biblical inscriptions and writings affirm the historical accuracy of the OT. Examples of this will be provided throughout the semester.

- For now, consider the following statement by Kevin DeYoung about Jesus' view of the historical accuracy of the OT:

"In the Gospels we see Jesus reference Abel, Noah, Abraham, Sodom and Gomorrah, Isaac and Jacob, manna in the wilderness, Moses as the lawgiver, David and Solomon, the Queen of Sheba, Elijah and Elisha, the widow of Zarephath, Naaman, Zechariah, and even Jonah, never questioning a single event, a single miracle, or a single historical claim. Jesus clearly believed in the historicity of biblical history."¹

- Genealogies:
 - The book is tied together by genealogies, making connections between the main characters (Adam, Noah, Abraham, etc.) and driving home the point that all people originated from a common source: God Himself (Gen 5:1-2; cf. Luke 3:38).
- Structure:
 - On a literary level, Genesis is organized into sections. Each section starts with "These are the generations of ..." (Gen 2:4; 5:1; 6:9; 10:1; 11:10, 27; 25:12, 19; 36:1; 37:2). These are internal markers telling us when we are starting a new section of the book.
 - The story shifts in chapter 12.
 - Chapters 1-11 focus on how God had to curse the world.
 - Chapters 12-50 focus on how God chooses to bless the world through one particular family.

IV. Key Passages of Genesis

Genesis 1:1 "In the beginning, God created the heavens and the earth."

- v. 1 "In the beginning, God created the heavens and the earth."
 - God has always existed.
 - God created everything.
- v. 2 "Now the earth was without form and void ..."
 - God's initial act (v. 1) was the beginning.
 - But the universe was still formless and empty.
 - So God would form the formless and fill the empty.
- *Forming:* vv. 3-13 "And God said, 'Let there be light,' and there was light ..."
 - God separated:

¹ Kevin DeYoung, *Taking God at His Word: Why the Bible Is Knowable, Necessary, and Enough, and What That Means for You and Me* (Wheaton, IL: Crossway, 2014), 104.

- Day 1: Light from darkness
- Day 2; the water above from the water below
- Day 3: the water below from dry ground
- *Filling: vv. 14-31* "And God said, 'Let there be lights in the expanse ...'"
 - God filled:
 - Day 4: the expanse of heavens with bodies of light (sun, moon, & stars)
 - Day 5: the seas with sea creatures; the sky with flying creatures
 - Day 6: the land with animals and humans

The Formless is Formed	The Empty is Filled
Day 1: Light	Day 4: Sun and Moon
Day 2: Sky and Seas	Day 5: Birds and Sea Creatures
Day 3: Dry Land/Vegetation	Day 6: Land Animals and Humans

The Creation of Humans: God's Image Bearers and Rulers

- Gen. 1:26-27 Created to Bear the Image of God: to be God's representatives on earth, and reflect his character. (We should do what God would do if He were in our shoes.)
- Gen. 1:26, 28 Created to rule on God's behalf.
- Gen. 1:27 Created male & female: both men & women bear God's image & authority. Men & women are equal before God.
- Gen. 2:7 Adam's creation is unique: body not formed by God speaking (e.g. the animals). God "formed" it and "breathed into his nostrils the breath of life."
- Gen. 2:21-22 Eve's creation is unique: body not formed by God speaking (e.g. the animals). God made Eve from Adam's rib.
- Gen. 2:18-20 God created Adam & Eve to have different roles in marriage (cf. Eph. 5:22-33):
 - Husbands: selfless, sacrificial leaders (like Christ serves & leads)
 - Wives: submissive helpers (like Christ submits to the Father)

- Narrative Structure of Genesis 2

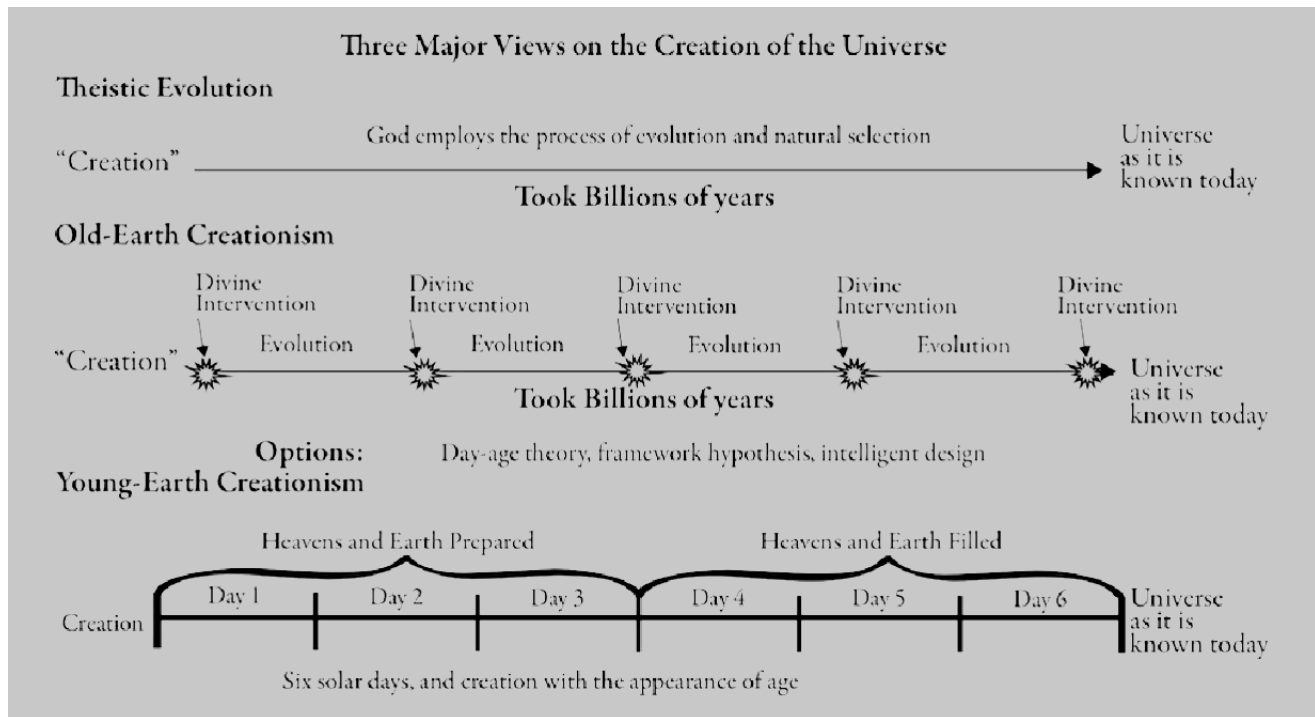
- Conflict:

- Resolution:

- Theme:

Intro: _____

How should we interpret the creation accounts?



Eugene H. Merrill, Mark Rooker, and Michael A. Grisanti, *The World and the Word: An Introduction to the Old Testament* (Nashville: B&H Publishing, 2011), 179.

View #1: Theistic Evolution

Teachings:

- Genesis 1 is not a literal account of how the world was created, but teaches us that God was involved in the process. Humans should look to science to understand how things developed.
- The universe is billions of years old.
- God controlled natural selection and evolution, and used them as the means by which he created the various animals and the human race.
- Thus, Genesis 1 is compatible with the teachings of mainstream science.

View #2: Old-Earth Creationism (Progressive Creationism)

Teachings:

- Genesis 1 is an accurate account of how the world was created, but the word "day" does not refer to a 24-hour period. "Day" should be understood as a literary device that refers to a long period of time.
- The universe is billions of years old.

- God took more of an active role in creation by stepping into primeval history at various points and moving the process to the next stage. God created new species of plants and animals at these points of divine intervention. Macroevolution (one species coming from another) did not happen.
- Between the points of divine intervention, microevolution was allowed to run its course (changes within a species).
- Thus, Genesis 1 is compatible with the teachings of mainstream science.

View #3: Young-Earth Creationism

Teachings:

- Genesis 1 is read as a straight-forward, literal, sequential narrative.
 - There is no indication given in the text that Genesis 1 should be interpreted differently than Genesis 2-50.
 - Other passages of scripture support this interpretation (Exod 20:9-11; 31:15-17; Mark 10:6; 13:19-20; Luke 11:50-51; Rom 1:20; 5:12; 8:19-23; Heb 9:25-26)
- Evening and morning equals one 24-hour day.
- The earth was created in six days (Sunday–Friday).
- The earth is young (less than 10,000 years old).
 - Genealogical lists in Gen. 5 & 11 give us data for estimating the age of the earth.
- God made the universe with apparent age.
- Genesis 1 provides an overview of the whole process. Genesis 2 provides more details on the creation of humans. The chapters are complimentary, not contradictory.

Genesis vs. Secular-Humanist Evolution

However, all of the above views agree that Genesis 1 & 2 clearly contradict the secular, humanistic, Theory of Evolution. Here are some key points on which all Christians should agree:

- Creation was an active work of God, not a product of time + chance.
- The existence of various species is a result of God creating plants and animals “according to their kinds,” not one species evolving into another through merely natural means.
- Mankind is a distinct creation (“image of God”) with a divine mandate to rule over God’s creation, not just another species that evolved by chance.
- All of mankind is descended from one set of parents who actually existed in history: Adam and Eve.
 - Existence of Adam and Eve affirmed outside of Genesis: 1 Chron 1:1; Hos 6:7; Luke 3:38; Rom 5:14; 1 Cor 15:21-22, 45-49; 2 Cor 11:3; 1 Tim 2:13-14; Jude 14.
 - Existence of the whole human race from one man: Acts 17:26; 1 Cor 15:21-22, 45-49.

Genesis 3:6 "So when the woman saw that the tree was good for food, and that it was a delight to the eyes, and that the tree was to be desired to make one wise, she took of its fruit and ate, and she also gave some to her husband who was with her, and he ate."

- The Tree of the Knowledge of Good and Evil
 - Was intentionally placed in the garden by God to give Adam & Eve a choice.
 - Why?
 - God desired an intimate relationship with a group of people. By giving them a choice, they could choose to remain in that intimate relationship.
 - Choosing to love someone develops a deeper intimacy than being forced to love them.
- Satan's Words:
 - "Did God actually say 'You shall not eat of any tree in the garden'?"
 - Twisted God's words.
 - "You will not surely die."
 - Contradicted God's words.
 - "For God knows that when you eat of it your eyes will be opened, and you will be like God, knowing good and evil."
 - Slandered God's character.
 - Enticed Eve to sin by promising something good as a result.

Characteristics of Temptation

- Eve's Temptation (Gen. 3:6):
 - Physical: "the tree was good for food"
 - Visual: "it was a delight to the eyes"
 - Pride: "the tree was desired to make one wise"
- Jesus' Temptation (Matt. 4:1-11):
 - Physical: "command these stones to become loaves of bread."
 - Visual: "showed him all the kingdoms of the world ... 'All these I will give you.'"
 - Pride: "throw yourself down ... his angels ... will bear you up."
- John's Summary (1 John 2:16):
"For all that is in the world"
 - Physical: "the desires of the flesh"
 - Visual: "the desires of the eyes"

2 Corinthians 2:11

"in order that Satan might not outwit us. For we are not unaware of his schemes."

- Pride: “and pride of life”
“is not from the Father but is from the world.”

God's Response

- The Serpent's Curse:
 - Physical change in the animal.
 - Prophecy of Satan's future defeat: The Seed who suffers but conquers.
 - For the fulfillment, see Roman 16:20; Hebrews 2:14; Revelation 12:9; 20:2, 10.
- The Woman's Curse:
 - Pain in childbirth.
 - Strife in marital relationship (cf. Gen. 4:7).
- The Man's Curse:
 - Ground is cursed: work becomes difficult.
 - Future return to dust: death.
- Grace for the Man & Woman
 - Promise of future Deliverer (Jesus) who will crush the head of the serpent (Satan).
 - Making clothing for them from animal skins. (Note: required death of animals.)
 - Death delayed. Allowed God's plan of redemption through Eve's Seed to begin.

Genesis 6:17 “For behold, I will bring a flood of waters upon the earth to destroy all flesh in which is the breath of life under heaven. Everything that is on the earth shall die.”

Genesis 6-9 -- Did God *Really* Flood the Entire World?

- Some critics of the Bible claim that Genesis 6-9 describes a devastating local flood that affected only one region. However, the text makes it clear in various ways that this was a worldwide flood:
 - God intended to exterminate all mankind and every animal, with the exception of those in the ark. (Gen. 6:7, 13, 17; 7:4)
 - Gen. 7:19-20 explicitly states that the waters were higher than all the mountains on earth: “all the high mountains under the whole heaven were covered ... covering them fifteen cubits deep.”
 - Gen. 7:21-22 states that God accomplished what He set out to do: every living creature left on the earth died. This would only have been the case if there was no dry ground left that they could use as a refuge.

Genesis 8:20-9:17 -- The Noahic Covenant

- Parties: Made between God and every living thing on earth (9:8-10): “all flesh” (9:16-17).
- Type of Covenant: Unconditional
- Time Period: “the everlasting covenant” (9:16).
- Sign of Covenant: the rainbow (9:12-16).
- Promises: “never again shall all flesh be cut off by the waters of the flood, and never again shall there be a flood to destroy the earth” (9:11).

Genesis 15:6 “He believed the Lord, and he counted it to him as righteousness.”

Genesis 15:1-6. Paul uses this text as support for his teaching that we are saved by grace through faith: Romans 4:18-25.

How was someone saved in Old Testament times?

- People were saved in Old Testament times the same way they are saved in New Testament times: “By grace through faith, not of works” (Eph. 2:8), but obedient works naturally followed (Jam. 2:14-26).
- God makes it clear in the Old Testament that empty works will get you nowhere (Isa. 1:11-15, 29:13). God’s forgiveness was granted to those who had faith accompanied by works (Gen. 15:6; Lev. 4:20, 26, 31, 35; 5:10, 13, 16, 18; 6:7, 19:22; cf. 1 John 1:9).

Genesis 15 & 17 -- The Abrahamic Covenant

- Parties: Made between God and Abraham (15:18; 17:2, 7) and Abraham’s descendants (17:7)
- Type of Covenant:
 - Unconditional? – Only God passes through the pieces of animals in covenant ceremony (15:17)
 - Conditional? – Based on obedience (17:1-2, 9-10, 14)
- Time Period: “throughout their generations for an everlasting covenant” (17:7; cf. 17:13).
- Sign of Covenant: Circumcision (17:11).
- Promises:
 - “Everlasting possession” of the Land of Canaan (15:7, 16, 18-20; 17:8)
 - Become “a father of a multitude of nations” (17:4-6), including royal descendants (17:6)
 - To be God to Abraham & his descendants (17:7-8)
 - The first of the key phrases of God’s ultimate goal: “I will be their God.”

Note: there is some debate about whether these chapters are describing is one covenant or two covenants.

IV. Messianic Elements within Genesis

Direct Prophecies:

- Genesis 3:15 "I will put enmity between you and the woman, and between your offspring and her offspring; he shall bruise your head, and you shall bruise his heel."
- Genesis 49:10 "The scepter shall not depart from Judah, nor the ruler's staff from between his feet, until tribute comes to him; and to him shall be the obedience of the peoples."

Foreshadowing Events:

- **Definition:** an event or series of events that plays a role in the original story within the OT, but in hindsight takes on greater significance when viewed in the light of Jesus' life, death, & resurrection. The OT story presents a pattern of events that matches a pattern of events in the life of Jesus.
- **Noah & the Ark** (Gen. 6-9): foreshadows God offering a way of salvation to deliver us from his judgment.
- **Abraham's (Almost) Sacrifice of Isaac** (Gen. 22): foreshadows God the Father sacrificing God the Son.

Types of Christ:

- **Definition:** a person or object in the OT that acts or functions in a way similar to how Jesus will later act or function.
- **Adam:** Paul calls Adam a "type" of Jesus and compares the work of the "First Adam" (the Adam in Genesis) with the work of the "Second Adam" (Jesus).
 - Romans 5:12-19; 1 Corinthians 15:20-22, 45.
- **Melchizedek:** Jesus is our high priest, not through the Levitical Priesthood of the Mosaic Law, but as a priest according to the order of Melchizedek which was even better.
 - Psalm 110:4; Hebrews 6:20-7:28
- **Joseph:** There are numerous parallels between the lives of Jesus and Joseph ...
 - Betrayed by his people.
 - Left his father's presence to save the world.
 - Sold for pieces of silver.
 - Resisted temptation.
 - Suffered unjustly.
 - Gave God the glory for his supernatural abilities (Gen. 41:16; John 8:28).
 - Saved the world from death.
 - Forgave the sin of his brothers.