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"Genesis: Truth or Myth?"



1. Can We Trust the Bible From the Beginning?

- a. Is Genesis meant to be taken literally? The flood? Adam & Eve? Talking snake?
 - i. Genesis = "Beginnings", "Origin", "Birth"

2. A Defense of Genesis 1-11: You can trust Genesis and understand it in its historical and grammatical context because 1) Jesus did, 2) the Bible builds on it as being true, and 3) science gives evidence towards - among other things - a world-wide flood.

3. Start by Defining Terms

- a. **Figurative language:** "It is raining cats and dogs." Words and phrases that don't mean exactly what the words say. They are to be understood in a non-ordinary or non-factual sense.
- b. **Literal language:** Words and phrases that mean exactly what the words say. They are to be understood in an ordinary or factual sense.
- c. **Symbolic language:** When an object or action symbolizes a concept or idea.

Genesis 9:13 (NIV) "I have set my rainbow in the clouds, and it will be the sign of the covenant between me and the earth."

4. What positions do people take on the book of Genesis?

- a. Genesis is...
 - i. Uninteresting: "Not worth my time." // "I don't care."
 - ii. Interesting but not factual: Ancient Near Eastern Literature
 - iii. Partially true but partially legend, myth, or error.
 - iv. True but not literal: Meant to be understood symbolically.
 - v. True and to be understood in its historical and grammatical context.
 1. Take it literally unless there is a good reason to do otherwise.
- b. Reasons: 1) science, 2) naturalism, 3) volitional (conclusions)

5. What is at stake is authority: Does Gen. 1-11 have authority in our world?

- a. Almost every doctrine in scripture finds its foundation in Gen. 1-11.
 - i. Nature of God, Sin and Death and Suffering, Salvation and Grace
- b. Most challenges we face in 2026 find the seed of their answer in Gen 1 - 11:
 - i. Sanctity of Life, Marriage, Gender, Race

6. Why can you trust Genesis 1-11?

- a. **Because Jesus and other Biblical writers took Genesis literally.**
 - i. Jesus believes in a literal Noah and flood.

Luke 17:26-27 (ESV) "Just as it was in the days of Noah, so will it be in the days of the Son of Man. 27 They were eating and drinking and marrying and being given in marriage, until the day when Noah entered the ark, and the flood came and destroyed them all."

- ii. Peter believes in a literal creation and flood.

2 Peter 3:4-6 (NIV) "They will say, 'Where is this 'coming' he promised? Ever since our ancestors died, everything goes on as it has since the beginning of creation.'⁵ But they deliberately forget that long ago by God's word the heavens came into being and the earth was formed out of water and by water. ⁶ By these waters also the world of that time was deluged and destroyed."

- iii. Luke - a historian - believes in a literal Adam.

Luke 3:23: 38 (ESV) “Jesus, when he began his ministry, was about thirty years of age, being the son (as was supposed) of Joseph, the son of Heli . . . 38 the son of Enos, the son of Seth, the son of Adam, the son of God.”

- iv. Other texts: Acts 17:24–27, 2 Peter 3:5–6, Luke 11:50–51
- b. Because the Bible builds on it as being true**
- i. According to the whole Bible, death is a result of sin.

Romans 5:12 (NIV) “Therefore, just as sin entered the world through one man, and death through sin, and in this way death came to all people, because all sinned—”

- ii. According to Jesus, marriage finds its foundation in Genesis.

Mark 10:6–8 (NIV) (Jesus quotes from Genesis 1:27 and 2:24) “But at the beginning of creation God ‘made them male and female.’ 7 ‘For this reason a man will leave his father and mother and be united to his wife, 8 and the two will become one flesh.’ So they are no longer two, but one flesh.”

- iii. According Paul, complementarianism is founded in Genesis.

1 Timothy 2:12-14 (NIV) “I do not permit a woman to teach or to assume authority over a man; she must be quiet. 13 For Adam was formed first, then Eve. 14 And Adam was not the one deceived; it was the woman who was deceived and became a sinner.”

c. Because science gives evidence towards a world-wide flood.

- i. If a world-wide flood happened, what would you expect to find?
 1. **Evidence 1:** Fossils of sea creatures high above sea level due to the ocean waters having flooded over the continents.
 2. **Evidence 2:** Graveyards all over the world of marine creatures mixed with land creatures.
 3. **Evidence 3:** A plausible method that geology as we study it could happen in thousands and not millions of years.
 - a. Ex: 1980 Mt. St. Helens

7. Does Gen. 1-11 have authority in your world?

- a. Where would you need to start for Genesis to have authority in your world?
 - i. You would have to read it. **Challenge: Read Genesis 1-11.**
- b. Then what?
 - i. Understand what you read in its historical and grammatical context.
- c. Found your views about 1) God, 2) Men and women, 3) Sanctity of life, 4) Marriage, 5) Gender, 6) Race, 7) Sin, 8) Suffering, 9) Grace, and 10) Salvation, from your reading of Genesis 1-11.

Small Group Discussion Questions:

Ice Breaker: When do people use the word “literally” incorrectly? For example: “I’m literally starving”, “I literally died laughing.”

1. Why is Genesis such an important book of the Bible?
2. What doctrines have their foundations in Genesis? Try to think of 10.
3. Do you believe the stories in Genesis to be true?
4. What can we learn from how Jesus and other Biblical writers use Genesis? Read Luke 17:26–27, 2 Peter 3:4-6, Luke 3:23; 38, Mark 10:6–8, 1 Timothy 2:12-14
5. How does Genesis speak into the topics of 1) God, 2) salvation 3) sanctity of life, 4) marriage, 5) gender, 6) race, and 7) sin.
6. Does Gen. 1-11 have authority in your world?