

## **Old Testament Foundation 1**

### **The Pentateuch Part 1 - Genesis**

"The first five books of the Bible are called the Pentateuch and are foundational to all of Scripture and rank as one of the most important sections in God's Word. Just as a knowledge of the four gospels is essential for understanding the New Testament, so the content of the Pentateuch is crucial to the rest of the Old Testament and for that matter the whole Bible."<sup>1</sup>

The word "Pentateuch" is derived from the Greek *penta* (five) and *teuchos* (a case for carrying papyrus rolls but in later usage the scroll itself).

"The books of Genesis through Deuteronomy present a coherent picture of the origins of mankind and the birth and development of Israel as a nation. These five books are also called 'The Books of Moses,' 'The Book of the Law' and to the Jews, 'Torah.' These books are not only Law but also include God's teaching and instruction about the origin of the world and of Israel and explain how a sinful people can meet with a holy God."<sup>2</sup>

### **Genesis**

The title Genesis means "in the beginning" and is the book of beginnings. It explains the how and why things came to be. It also answers that all-important question, "Who am I?"

Chapter 1 tells how God created the earth and everything in it through his spoken word; and it was "good." On the 6<sup>th</sup> and final day of creation, "*God created man in his own image, in the image of God he created him; male and female.*" Gen. 1:27.

1. What does it mean to you that God said you are created in His image?

"The story continues in Genesis 2 & 3 by explaining what God's plan for mankind was. The creation of humans includes the living space (the garden), the means of life (the fruit of the garden), the occupation or work (cultivate and preserve), community (man and woman) and a way of communicating (language). But most importantly, they were to have a personal relationship with their creator and God. God shows that He is not only creator but that He cares for His creation. By creating mankind in His image God was giving each individual the ability to love and respond to Him. By personally breathing into them life and then providing an environment for them to grow and flourish, God showed his personal attention and care."<sup>3</sup>

2. Genesis 3:8 states that God came down and walked in the garden with Adam and Eve and talked with them. But that intimate relationship was soon broken. From Gen 2:16, 17 what one command had God given them?

3. Immediately following the details of God's creation and that it was good, we are introduced to the evil one who desires to destroy God's plan. Coming in the form of a serpent, what was Satan's scheme and the outcome? (Gen. 3:1-6)

"In Genesis chapter 1, the name used for God is the title *Elohim*, the general title for the Supreme Being - "God" in English. In Genesis 2 the name *Yahweh* is added to the title *Elohim*, "LORD God." *Yahweh* (spelled YHWH) is the personal name for God and stresses this covenant relationship to His people. Genesis 2:4 emphasizes that *Yahweh*, the true Creator God (and later the God of Israel) created humanity personally and desires only good for them."<sup>4</sup>

4. List the changes that resulted from disobeying God, called "sin." (Gen. 3:7, 10, 16-24)

### **Noahic Covenant**

The effect of Adam's sin showed up even more clearly as time went on. Adam's son Cain murdered his brother Abel (Gen. 4:3-9). By the 7<sup>th</sup> generation, in the line of Cain, the story of Lamech (recorded in Gen. 4:19-24) reveals a distortion of God's plan for marriage. Lamech brought polygamy into history. He also bragged to his wives that whereas Cain had killed his brother, Lamech had avenged himself twice!

When God created mankind in His image, man was also given a free will. God wanted mankind to desire to have a relationship with his Creator and God out of a heart of gratitude and love, not as a mere puppet. But, *"the LORD saw how great man's wickedness on the earth had become, and that every inclination of the thoughts of his heart was only evil all the time. The LORD was grieved that he had made man on the earth, and his heart was filled with pain. So the LORD said, "I will wipe mankind, whom I have created, from the face of the earth--men and animals, and creatures that move along the ground, and birds of the air--for I am grieved that I have made them."* (Gen. 6:5-7)

5. It looked hopeless for this stubborn and willful mankind, but then there was Noah. "Noah found favor in the eyes of the LORD." From Genesis 6:9, why did Noah find favor in God's eyes?

6. God was willing to “start over” with Noah. Summarize what God told him. (Gen. 6:13-21)
7. Noah did all God commanded. (In other words, Noah obeyed the Lord.) How old was Noah at the time of the flood? (Gen. 7:6)
8. Genesis 2:5 & 6 explains that the earth was being watered from below in the form of springs and dew; it had never experienced rain. Can you imagine what faith it took when God asked Noah to build an ark because water would come from the sky as well as cover the entire earth? How long did it take? (Gen. 7:12)
9. How long was Noah in the ark before the water finally receded? (Gen. 7:11 and 8:3-14)
10. When God finally said, “Come out,” what was Noah’s first action? (Gen. 8:20)
11. How did God respond to this? (Gen. 8:21, 22)
12. God was now ready to start again with Noah and his family. What commands did God give to Noah? (Gen. 9:1-7)
13. How was that different from the commands given to Adam? (Gen. 1:28, 29)

14. God then established a covenant called the Noahic Covenant. What was the covenant? (Gen. 9:11)
15. What sign did God give as a reminder of this covenant? (Gen. 9:12-13)
16. From Gen. 9:16, what type of covenant was this and who were the parties in this covenant?

### **Abrahamic Covenant**

God's plan, however, had not changed. He still desired to have a personal relationship with mankind and so with Abraham (originally named Abram), God put into motion His plan that could restore that broken relationship. It is this story, beginning with Abraham, that we are following in the Bible. It is this story that makes history into His story ... God's story of redemption (meaning to buy back or purchase).

17. When God chose Abram, what information was Abram given? (Gen. 12:1)
18. From Genesis 12:2 & 3, what was the 7-fold promise God gave to Abram?
19. What was Abram's response to God? (Gen. 12:4,5)
20. Abram received God's promise when he was 75 years of age. Then, when he arrived in Canaan, God promised to give to him all the land he could see as an inheritance. What was Abram's reaction to God's promise? (Gen. 15:2-3)

## 21. How did God answer Him? (Gen. 15:1, 4 &amp; 5)

The next verse, Genesis 15:6 is key to understanding the relationship between God and Abram, "*Abram believed the LORD, and He credited it to him as righteousness.*" God was looking for a heart turned toward Him and Abram was that one. At this point, God made a covenant (or contract) with Abram. The covenant ceremony is recorded in Genesis 15:7-21.

"At age 99, God appeared to Abram once again. Abram and Sarai were now past the age for children. God revealed Himself this time to Abram by a new name, *El Shaddai*, meaning "Almighty God," thus stressing His omnipotence. God had already made His covenant with Abram; He was now ready to put it into force."<sup>5</sup>

## 22. Describe what took place in Genesis 17:1-4

## 23. What change was made at this time? (Gen. 17: 5)

## 24. What additional information did God give Abraham? (Gen. 17:6-8)

## 25. What was the sign of this covenant (called the Abrahamic Covenant)? (Gen. 17:11-13)

## 26. How did God fulfill the first part of His promise? (Gen. 21:1-7)

## 27. Abraham's faith in God was soon tested. What did God ask him to do? (Gen. 22:1-10)

28. How did it end? (Gen. 22:11-14)

29. Abraham passed the test and God was ready to move His plan forward. But first God took this moment to affirm Abraham and to reveal His purpose and His plan. What was it? (Gen. 22:15-18)

God's plan was now firmly in place. The covenant God made with Abraham was unconditional, not based upon Abraham's ability to obey but upon God's ability to do what He said He would do. God's plan of redemption would be carried out.

As the story continues we find out very quickly that it was in God's wisdom that the covenant wasn't based upon man's ability to keep his part. Each of Abraham's descendants failed to fully obey God. But it was through Abraham and his descendants that God built the nation of Israel. Abraham, Isaac and Jacob (known as The Patriarchs) each would play a crucial role in God's developing that promised nation.

It was during the days of Abraham's grandson Jacob that we come to the next turning point in God's plan. Jacob was not the kind of man one would expect to be God's chosen vessel. Through trickery and deceit Jacob "stole" his twin brother Esau's right as firstborn. This resulted in his fleeing from his home in Beersheba, Canaan, to his uncle Laban in Haran, Paddan Aram.

Laban turned out to be as deceitful as Jacob, and Jacob was tricked into marrying Laban's older daughter Leah when he was in love and thought he was marrying the younger Rachel. Jacob remained with Laban for 14 years while he worked to pay off the bride price. During that time his family grew to two primary wives (Rachel & Leah), two secondary wives sometimes referred to as concubines (the handmaiden of Rachel named Bilhah and the handmaiden of Leah named Zilpah), and a family that consisted of 11 sons (one more would be born later) and at least one daughter. It was Jacob's twelve sons who became the patriarchs of the 12 tribes of Israel.

30. When Jacob finally left Laban to return home, the thought of meeting his brother Esau again was terrifying. The Lord tested Jacob the night before he entered Canaan with an all-night wrestling match. When morning finally arrived what happened? (Gen. 32:26-30)

31. The significance of giving of a name or a name change was symbolic. The one named is viewed as under the authority of the one who gave the name. Jacob was under the authority of Yahweh and the covenant was renewed through him. What was the sign Jacob was given to help him remember this eventful night? (Gen. 32:25, 31 & 32)

### Bibliography

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5. Henry M. Morris, *The Genesis Record* (Baker Book House, 1976), Pg. 332.