

Remnant Life Church

September 29, 2019

Genesis:

In the Beginning

Gen 1:1-2

- We will start this journey through the Bible at the beginning (!)
 - The word “Genesis” means beginnings
 - It is the first of the 5 books that comprise the Pentateuch

One of the most familiar, most loved stories, most challenging accounts in the Bible

- Creation; Adam and Eve; the serpent; Cain and Abel; 900+ old
 - Noah, Ark, Flood; Tower of Babel; Abraham and Sarah 100 and 90 year old parents
 - Sodom & Gomorrah; Lot’s wife pillar of salt; Abraham tested to sacrifice his son Isaac
 - Isaac and Rebekah; Esau and Jacob; the dream of Jacob’s ladder
 - Jacob marrying Leah before getting Rachel; Jacob wrestles with God renamed Israel
 - Joseph’s dreams; sold into slavery; Potipher and his wife; interpreting dreams while in prison and for Pharaoh
 - 2nd in command of Egypt; reunited with his brothers; family comes to Egypt; setting the stage for Moses and the Exodus
 - All of these accounts in the first book of the Bible
- All of these stories, as well as the others, can be placed in one of two categories
 - The first are those that happened on a global or even cosmic scale
 - These are in the creation account as well as the flood
 - The second are those that occurred in a limited sphere of time and location
 - Seen in the family matters of ancient life beginning with Abraham and his descendants culminating with the 12 grandsons of Abraham, the sons of Jacob, who would comprise the 12 tribes of Israel
 - It accomplishes this in a three-part structure
 1. The primeval history (Chaps 1-11)
 2. The Patriarchal narratives (Chaps 12-36)
 3. The Joseph story (Chaps 37-50)
- Who wrote the book of Genesis?
 - As it is the first book of the Pentateuch, earliest traditions ascribe the authorship to Moses
 - However, the book does not directly identify an author
 - There are places in the later books that do point directly to Moses’ authorship (Ex 17:14; 20:1)
 - But it is not clear in Genesis
 - There is certainly enough evidence from both within and without the book that there were likely multiple historical accounts and stories that were assembled into a single work

- This would explain the somewhat disjointed style and lack of uniformity in the flow of the accounts that a single author would most likely employ (like you see in the records of the Kings of Israel beginning with Saul, David, and Solomon)
- Moses was undoubtedly involved in what was written or perhaps the creation of a cohesive account from man sources
- What was the purpose of the book?
 - First, the purpose of a single book must be tied into the purpose of the five total books
 - The Pentateuch as a whole is given to Israel as written proof of the sovereignty of God, the history of the people, their relationship to each other, and how the people are to live in this brand new people-nation
 - The second purpose is to begin the narrative that Jesus is coming to bring forgiveness for our sins and restore our relationship to the Father – it all points to Jesus!
 - Example of the OT pointing to the NT
 - Consider the account of Abraham’s travels to both Egypt and Gerar - a city in the Philistine territory west of the Dead Sea in south-central Israel - both driven because of famine (**Gen 12:10**)
 - Isaac his son also traveled to Gerar due to a region-wide famine (**Gen 26:1**)
 - The 12 sons (or tribes) of Israel went to Egypt driven by a famine (**Gen 47:22**)
 - Then see that Joseph and Mary were also forced to Egypt, not because of a famine but because of Herod’s edict that the first-born should die - just as Pharaoh did at the time of Moses’ birth – (**Matt 2:13**)
 - There is a miraculous unity to the Scriptures that begins with the book of Genesis

Genesis begins with the greatest beginning – the creation of the universe

- If any of you have done any comparative reading or just investigated the topic of creation theories you know there are many camps who say that Genesis is a rehashing of older creation stories
 - These are known collectively as Near Eastern Creation Accounts
 - Egyptian
 - Mesopotamia (Sumerians, Babylonians, and Assyrians)
 - Most significant of these was the *Enuma Elish*
 - Marduk their chief or creator God
 - Most closely associated with King Nebuchadnezzar
 - Ancient language and culture scientists look to these accounts as the foundation of the Genesis creation account
- The differences are stark and very pronounced
 - In all of the ancient near eastern stories the universe was created out of chaos or conflict between rival gods

- In Genesis God brought order to chaos and the void of nothingness
- In the near eastern accounts the gods are in a place with no origin to how they or it came to be
- In Genesis God is presented as pre-existing and it is He and He alone who creates the cosmos of the universe
- The creation and purpose of man, however, is at the heart of the differences
 - In the text of the Enuma Elish, man is created by mixing clay with the blood of a demon god out of necessity
 - In the Scripture it is the union of dust and the breath of God and is an intentional, loving act
 - In the other texts man was created for the purpose of manual labor when the lesser gods were slaughtered in the original conflict
 - God created man to fellowship, love, and commune with Himself
 - But it was man who changed that divine desire through sin