

Genesis

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[0 : 0 0] Already recorded. Yep. So you can go ahead. All righty. My Zoom people, can you guys give me a thumbs up if you can hear me?

All right. Perfect. All right, guys. My name is Luke Batty. I'm a deacon here at church. And today we're going to be starting our five-week course on the Pentateuch, the Torah, first five books of Moses.

And as such, it's the first week, so we're doing Genesis today. So let me start off by saying that Genesis is an incredibly rich book.

It's an incredibly, I mean, it's not incredibly. It's a moderately long book. So there are a whole bunch of different ways that you can read Genesis and benefit by doing it that way.

And, of course, because of the time restraint, I don't have the ability to go through everything that I would want to go through in as much depth as I would like to. And today we're going to be focusing primarily on the themes of creation, fall, and redemption through the book of Genesis.

[1 : 1 2] But there are a variety of different ways you could do it. For instance, you could read the book of Genesis in light of the covenants, which would be a very fruitful way. Or looking through the book of Genesis to see the types of Jesus in the book, which is really great.

I'm going to try to hit some of those. But it's not going to be as universal or as deep as I would like. So with that being said, I'm trying to keep the presentation to be about 45 minutes so that we have at least 5 to 10 minutes or 10 to 15 minutes of questions.

So if I don't hit something that you want to talk about or not in as much depth as you would like, please, please, please ask questions. Okay. So let's start off.

What is the book of Genesis? Well, the book of Genesis, which means beginnings, is a book detailing the origins of the world, humanity, and the people of Israel for the purpose of giving the necessary background and context to the freed Israelites, the plan of redemption to unfold.

So that's sort of a mouthful. So it's sort of a one-sentence summary of Genesis. But we're going to go into a little bit more depth and broaden that out.

[2 : 2 8] But before we do that, why don't we talk about the context of Genesis? So first and foremost, who wrote Genesis? Well, traditionally, we understand that Moses was the primary author of the entire Pentateuch.

And we understand that Moses was writing this around the time of the entry of the people of Israel into the promised land.

So if you guys remember your basic Bible history, and if you don't, come next week. We're going to be taught the Israelites were enslaved in Egypt, and they are freed by God, and they wander in the wilderness for 40 years.

And then after that time, Moses gives the law a second time and is about to enter Israel. Moses dies at that time. So it's around this time that the book is written.

And so now that we know when it was written, we can understand to whom it was written. And the primary, I know, obviously, through providence, we are also the recipients of Genesis.

[3 : 39] It is written to us. But more immediately, it was written to that generation of Israelites who had finished the Exodus, finished their wanderings, were about to enter the promised land.

So why was it written? Why was it written? Well, if we go back to my one-sentence summary, for the purpose of giving the necessary background and context. More succinctly, we can say that Genesis was written to form the people's worldview.

Okay? Every culture, every people has a worldview. And this worldview answers the sort of the canonical or classic worldview questions.

So where did we come from? What does the good life look like? What has gone wrong? What has been done about it? Where are we now in the whole process, and where is this whole thing headed?

These are the worldview questions, and every culture has answers to these questions. And by being in this culture, whether subconsciously or consciously, we are accepting the answers to these questions from our broader society.

[4 : 50] So if you imagine that the Israelites who had been in slavery in Egypt for about 400 years, right? Am I right about that?

Okay. I thought I was right about that, but I'll just double check it. I have a fact checker over here. They have been in a very strong, very high culture of ancient Egypt, and they have their own answers to these questions.

And the Israelites are going to be living and accepting these assumptions in their own life. And so what Moses is doing in the book of Genesis and throughout the Pentateuch is he is challenging these worldview assumptions, and he's answering these worldview questions in the right way.

Okay? And so that is the primary point of Genesis, is to get the record straight. So let's talk about the structure of Genesis.

Genesis has actually a very deliberate structure. It has two major parts. Roughly chapters 1 to 11 are talking about the beginning of the entire world, and chapters 11 to 50 are talking about the beginning of the people of Israel.

[6 : 01] But in addition to these two big sections, we also have subsections, and each one of these subsections is headed by a phrase that includes the Hebrew word Toledat.

I don't think I'm saying that right, but that's how it's spelled. So Toledat means generations. So anytime you're reading through Genesis and you read the word generations, your ears should prick and you should think, okay, I think we're starting a new section of Genesis.

And if you look through it after the introduction, which is about chapters 1 to chapters 2, verse 3, we have 10 or 11, depending on the count, Toledats in Genesis with five in the first part and five in the second part.

And so what we can learn just by understanding what the structure of Genesis is, is that Genesis is one complete unified whole. It's trying to tell one complete story.

It's meant to be read all together, okay? It's telling a story that is supposed to be the foundation for the Pentateuch, for the sweep of the Torah.

[7 : 07] And so by understanding the structure, we can understand that there's something all together we're supposed to be getting out of this book. So let's move into the overview of Genesis.

So the first thing we get is the beginning of the world. So why don't we read probably the most sublime opening to anything ever written ever.

I don't think I'm being, I'm over-exaggerating. So here we go. Genesis 1-1. It should be on page one of your Bible. Here's what it says.

In the beginning, God created the heavens and the earth. The earth was without form and void and darkness was over the face of the deep.

And the spirit of God was hovering over the face of the waters. So what can we learn from this? Well, there's a few things we can learn just from this, those first two verses.

[8 : 15] This is transformational. When we compare these to other creation accounts, it's transformational because unlike many other creation accounts, we have the beginning of everything.

We have the creation of the heavens and the earth, which is supposed to be a totality. This is supposed to be everything that exists. In the beginning, God created the heavens and the earth. We have one actor and the creation of everything else.

If we compare this to other creation accounts, we oftentimes get a assumption of an infinite universe or an eternal universe in which you have these primordial forces that the gods, who often themselves have beginnings, are born in, they, they, they wrestle these primordial forces to force order onto chaos.

But that's not what we see in Genesis. What we see in Genesis is God alone creating everything. And so already we're, we're starting to see a challenge to the prevailing views of their culture.

So we're going to get more into that in a second, but let me continue on with the overview. We have after the creation of everything, we get the creation of the earth.

[9 : 38] So we kind of zoom in to the earth and we have the formation of the earth as a habitation for man. Not surprisingly, next we have, we zoom in even further and we get the creation of man himself.

Man as the pinnacle of God's creation. So at this point, I want to point your attention to sort of the big theme that I'm going to be emphasizing as we go through Genesis, which is, well, let me say something else first.

There are a whole bunch of different ways that you can characterize the Christian worldview, the biblical worldview, the narrative of the Bible. You can summarize it in a variety of different ways.

One of the ways, and one of the most popular ways is four words. We have creation. We have fall. We have redemption and restoration.

Creation, fall, redemption, restoration. And so if we look at that paradigm of understanding the biblical narrative, we can understand why Genesis is so foundational.

[10 : 44] It's because in Genesis, we get the creation. In Genesis, we get the fall account. And in Genesis, we get the beginning of redemption history.

So three of the big four are being addressed in Genesis, at least in part. And so moving from the creation of man, we have the creation of the universe, creation of the earth, creation of man.

Everything is good. And then sin enters the world. We have the beginning of sin, which is the fall, capital T, capital F, the fall of man being tempted by Satan.

We're going to go into that a little bit more in a second. But within that fall, almost immediately, we see the start of redemption history.

And so when we look at the very big picture of Genesis or of the entire Bible, we have creation, fall, and then redemption history for the rest of the Bible. Culminating, as we know, in light of where we are in redemption history in the person of Jesus Christ.

[11 : 49] But going back to the narrative, we also have smaller cycles of creation, fall, and redemption. We have sub-stories that also carry this theme.

And you can see this in the sense that after Adam and Eve are sent out of the garden, we have the start, a new start for human beings.

But that doesn't start very well. Humanity declines pretty precipitously from there to the point where God decides to start over with human beings by judging them with the flood and starting over with Noah.

So in that sense, we have a new start, a restoration in the person of Noah and his family. Noah and his family, then this new creation is then also subject to their own fall in the Tower of Babel, which is then setting up this dispersion following the Tower of Babel leads to the setting in which we get the call of Abraham.

Abraham or Abram, or Abram, or technically. We get the call of Abram, starting off our second part of Genesis. We have the call of Abraham, and we follow the story of Abraham's family.

[13 : 13] Then we get Abraham's son and Abraham's grandson. And then we, Abraham's grandson's family. And then we end with the start of their sojourn in Egypt.

So that is the big sweep. Now, obviously, we're going to go into a little bit more detail. So why don't we start talking about creation itself?

So as I mentioned earlier, we have in the beginning, God created the heavens and the earth. Now, let me continue on.

We're starting verse 2 again. The earth was without form and void, and darkness was over the face of the deep. And the Spirit of God was hovering over the face of the waters.

And God said, let there be light, and there was light. And God saw the light was good. And God separated the light from the darkness. God called the light day, and the darkness he called night.

[14 : 19] And there was evening, and there was morning the first day. So again, if we put this into the context in which it was written, this is transformational.

It's revolutionary. So we already talked about how the beginning of everything out of nothing was transformational. But now we're going to talk about the method of creation and how that is transformation.

So as you can see from the first day of creation, we get creation out of harmony, creation in peace.

We have creation as a special act of God for no other reason than he decides to do it for his own glory. This is a huge contrast to other creation accounts, both medieval, all the way back to antiquity.

If we think about the creation account of most other cultures, we get a creation account out of conflict. There is conflict. There is conflict. There is violence. And this is what results in creation.

[15 : 29] If we think about the Norse creation account, we have an eternal universe in which the gods sort of find this primordial giant that they then sort of kill.

And then they take the giant and they use the giant's body to populate the world. Like they take his teeth and they throw them in the sky and that becomes a stars and his skull becomes the earth or something.

It's very interesting. But this is very different than what we get in Genesis. Additionally, and you have other ancient Near Eastern creation accounts. You have conflict is what produces creation.

You have Ra every day as the sun god who enters at nighttime, enters into the realm of chaos to fight the serpent of chaos.

And who knows, maybe tomorrow there won't be a day. Oh, no, Ra came back. It's okay. Order is maintained because Ra is back in the sunrise. So conflict or just the fighting of these forces is what creates the world.

[16 : 33] But this is totally different from what we get in Genesis. In Genesis, what we get is creation in harmony and peace. There is no conflict. In fact, most scholars are sort of confused by the fact that there is no conflict.

But that's a feature of the Genesis account. God says, let there be light, and the world responds obediently. And there was light.

And this gives us a totally different way of looking at the world that we live in.

So let me go through. I give you guys a table to go through sort of the structure of the six days of creation. As you can see, we have sort of two columns.

We have the forming days and the filling days. And we'll explain that in a second. So basically, what happens is God is forming a space by separation.

[17 : 32] And then on a subsequent day, he fills that space. So let's talk about this. So day one, we already read that. God separates light from dark.

He forms light by separating it from the darkness. On day two, God forms the sky by separating it from the waters that are around it.

And on day three, he separates land from water, forming dry land. Now, on day three, there's a little special creation, a little subsequent creation.

You see that on day three, after he forms the dry land, we get the creation of vegetation. Each trees, every good plant, according to their kinds, sprouting.

I love that word, sprouting. It's a great word. So on day one, light and dark. Day two, we have the waters in the sky. And so on day four, what do we have?

[18 : 35] We have the creation of the luminaries. So now we have created the space for light and dark. Now we're going to fill that space with the lights. Now keep in mind, there is a Hebrew word for sun and moon, but we don't get sun and moon in the creation account.

We get the greater light and the lesser light. And then we also get the stars. But that's something interesting. I'll come back to that in a second. So we have separated light from dark and we fill that with the luminaries.

Now let's read something about the luminaries. God said, let there be lights in the expanse of the heavens to separate the day from the night and let them be for signs and for seasons and for days and years.

So we have the lights being created for a purpose. The purpose is to be signs and for seasons.

Keep that in mind as we move on. Day five, we have created on day two, we created the waters and the sky. And now we're going to fill the waters in the sky with fish and birds.

[19 : 40] Again, I love Genesis. I love the first chapter. It is such a beautiful, beautiful thing. And God said that the waters swarm with swarms of living creatures.

What an evocative way of describing that. There is no swarms of birds. I think that's because it's sort of freaky if you think about it.

I mean, we think swarms of birds. I think of birds like Alfred Hitchcock, but anyways, we have swarms of fish and we get the creation of birds. We filled the waters. We filled the skies. Now on day six, we're going to fill the land with every land creature, everything that walks on the earth.

That includes bugs and beasts. And we have livestock. So we're separating these, the land creatures in human terms. We have the livestock, the domesticated animals, and we have the swarming things, which is, you know, bugs and mice and stuff like that.

And then the beasts of the field, which are sort of like the wild animals. And just like on day three, we have a parenthetical special creation. On day six, we have a special creation.

[20 : 46] And this is a very special creation. This is the pinnacle, both literarily in the book and also in reality, in creation, the pinnacle of God's creation.

So God created man. This is chapter one, verse 27. So God created man in his own image. In the image of God, he created him male and female.

He created them. A three-part repeat of the creation of man in his image. God blessed them. And God said to them, be fruitful, multiply, and fill the earth, and subdue it.

And have dominion over the fish of the sea, and over the birds of the heavens, and over every living thing that moves on the earth. So God creates human beings in his image and now gives them dominion over the other animals, the other living things in creation.

So he gives them a mission to subdue it and to have dominion. And after day six, God finishes his creation.

[21 : 56] We read in chapter two, verse one, Thus the heavens and the earth were finished, and all the host of them. And on the seventh day, God finished his work that he had done, and he rested on the seventh day from all his work that he had done.

So God blessed the seventh day and made it holy, because on it, God rested from all his work that he had done in creation. So on day seven, we have the Sabbath, the day of rest.

So let's look at the creation account as a whole. Why do we have, why is God describing his work of creation in six days and a day of rest?

Well, to an agrarian Israelite who's about to enter the promised land, this is very, this is going to be really recognizable. This is their daily life. This is how they live. They work for six days, and they rest on the seventh day.

So God is being described as an artisan, as an artist, throughout the six days. He is creating the world. He progressively finishes his work, and on the day he's done, he rests.

[22 : 59] And that is why we, in our way, we work for six days, and we rest on the seventh day. That's why we have a Sabbath. And so we finish creation. So when we look at the creation account, what is the purpose of the creation account?

Like I said earlier, when I talk about Genesis in general, we are forming a worldview. So the creation account is the contrast for the people of Israel to their surrounding neighbors.

It's a contrast against the prevailing views of the ancient Near Eastern cultures. So for instance, God is the sole creator. God made the world in harmony, and the creation is good.

God made the world for us, for human beings. He made human beings in his image and gave them dominion, and he gave us the sun and the moon as marks for seasons and for times.

This is for us, so we can understand what's going on. Obviously, for us to glorify God. So in a greater sense, he made it for himself. And we can contrast that.

[24 : 10] There are no other gods in the pictures in this account. It doesn't say there isn't any other gods in this account, but they're not there. God calls the sun and the moon the greater light and the lesser light.

Because the majority of the surrounding cultures, they worship the sun and they worship the moon. These were gods. But in Genesis, they don't even get their names.

They are so much less than God, they are not even named. They are just the greater light and the lesser light. They are subservient to God. So we compare that account with the account of the surrounding cultures.

But this also applies to us. We have our own prevailing view in our culture. One could say it is scientific materialism. And so we read the Genesis account, and we also are challenged.

Our assumptions are challenged. Creation is good. Creation is not random. Creation has a purpose. We, as human beings, are unique, and we are infinitely valuable.

[25 : 14] These are ways that this creation account that we read right now challenges our own assumptions. And it's always going to challenge our assumptions because the majority culture is always going to have its own way to tweak the truth.

And so we need to read the account and take its message as well. And so how do we see, how is Jesus central to this aspect of creation? Well, if we go to the next most sublime, maybe the only contender for most sublime part of the Bible, we have John 1.1.

We read, in the beginning was the Word. And the Word was with God, and the Word was God. He was in the beginning with God. All things were made through him, and without him was not anything made that was made.

And later on, we find out that this Word is the person Jesus Christ. So already, we're in the first chapter of the Bible, and we've already met Jesus as the Word through whom all things were created.

So, unfortunately, God's good creation is not pristine for long.

[26 : 28] As we know, in chapter 3, we have Satan being tempted. And Satan is tempting them to break the one rule that God has given them. And if you read in chapter 2, verse 17, or yeah, let's see, the end of verse 18.

Sorry. Chapter, verse 16. I have bad eyes. And the Lord God commanded the man, saying, You may surely eat of every tree of the garden, but of the tree of the knowledge of good and evil you shall not eat, for in the day that you eat of it you shall surely die.

God gives them everything they need, and he gives them one prohibition. Don't eat from the tree of the knowledge of good and evil. Do we know what the tree of the knowledge of good and evil is?

Do we know what the tree of life is? No. We're not really told. This is the Old Testament. And the pattern of the Old Testament is showing over telling.

We're going to be shown the truth, and then we're going to be shown events, and we, as the audience, respond in the correct way. So, after God creates man in his image, in chapter 2, we get the first tuladat.

[27 : 42] In verse 4, these are the generations. We hear generations. Oh, this is a new section. We have a zoom in on day 6, creation of man, the presentation of Adam's bride.

But Satan comes to tempt Adam and Eve to disobey God. And so what is the nature of the fall that is that follows? The fall was a rebellion of men from God to be gods.

They wanted to be gods themselves. They wanted to be in charge. They wanted to idolize themselves. And because they can't be gods, they are perpetually, and we, as their descendants, are perpetually trying to fill that space with idols.

We are rebelling against God and trying to replace God with something of our own making. It's idolatry. What is it that's affected? It's affected everything. It's affected our relationship to God.

It's affected our relationship to each other. It's affected our relationship to creation. And it's affected our relationship to ourselves. And more importantly, it's created four major roadblocks between us and God.

[28 : 57] We have, one, incurred God's wrath. We have, two, incurred an unpayable debt. Three, we have been now made bondage to Satan.

And four, we are spiritually dead, which is what God said would happen if we aid from the knowledge of, the tree of the knowledge of good and evil.

So, God justly curses the serpent, and humanity is judged for the rebellion, and that is the end. It's the end of the book.

The Bible's over. We close the book, and it's over. But no, it's not. Obviously, we know. It's just the beginning. So, what do we read in chapter 3, verses 14 through 15?

This is immediately after the fall. Immediately after human beings have rebelled against God, what do we read? The Lord God said to the serpent, Because you have done this, cursed are you above all livestock and above all beasts of the field.

[30 : 00] On your belly you shall go, and dust you shall eat all the days of your life. 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.

This is one of the most famous verses in all of Genesis. This is the start of redemption history. God promises a rescuer who will come, a seed of woman, who will destroy Satan and restore creation.

And this prophecy then morphs over time. It develops over time into the prophecy of the Messiah. We know who the Messiah is, don't we?

Jesus is that Messiah. How has Jesus seen in these passages? Jesus is the new Adam, as Paul says. Jesus is the new Adam who does what he's supposed to do, which is obey God and destroy evil.

And how has Jesus addressed the fall that we have talked about? Through the cross, Jesus has satisfied the wrath of God. He's paid our unpayable debt.

[31 : 10] He's freed us from our bondage, and he's brought us back to spiritual life. And so if we look at the flow of Genesis in the big worldview of the entire Bible, we can see here the foundations of why Jesus had to come to pay our debts.

So, but that hasn't happened yet. We are just starting. God doesn't let a minute go by before giving them a glimmer of hope, the start of redemption history.

And in response to their sin, God banishes Adam and Eve from the garden. He set us a really cool angel with like a flaming sword at the entrance so that they can't sneak back in.

And they have kids. They have a son, Cain, and a son, Abel. I'm sure you've never heard of them before. And Cain is jealous of his brother, Abel, because Abel is obedient to God.

And he then, because of that, gains favor from God. So Cain murders his brother, Abel, and tries to hide him from God in the ground. That obviously doesn't work. And Cain is banished.

[32 : 16] In response to that, God provides a new son, a new son of promise to Adam and Eve, their son, Seth.

And so how does Seth fit into redemption history? Well, Seth's descendant is Noah, who, as we will see going on, is the vehicle for redemption for humanity in this next section.

Cain's descendants, they descend further into violence and perversion and evil to the point where God says in chapter 6, verse 8, every intention of the thoughts of their heart was only evil continuously.

And there is not a more comprehensive way of saying that they are bad in every possible way. That is the way. So what's God's solution? Well, God's solution is justice and mercy.

We read in chapter 6, verse 7, I will blot out man whom I have created from the face of the land, for I am sorry that I have made them. Directly after, but Noah found favor in the eyes of the Lord.

[33 : 27] So if we have justice, God is not going to allow his creation to be destroyed. He is not going to allow this evil to go unpunished. He cleanses the world through the flood, but he also provides an avenue for redemption for humanity in the person of Noah and his family.

Noah is the recipient of God's mercy. God saves Noah and his family and cleanses the world. Noah is the new Adam.

If this isn't clear to you, let's read chapter 9, verse 1. And God blessed Noah and his sons and said to them, be fruitful and multiply and fill the earth.

It's the exact same command that God gave Adam in the beginning. Noah is a new Adam. And later in the Bible, we see that Noah is not only the new Adam, but he's a picture of the Christian's life.

In 1 Peter 3, 21 through 22, we see that Noah's ark is seen as a type of our baptism. In the same way that Noah enters the ark and is submerged in water in the death of humanity, he comes out of the water in new life, in the restoration of creation.

[34 : 41] We, in our baptism, enter the water to signify our connection with the death of Christ, and we leave the water in new life in Christ.

So Noah is a new start, a new creation, you might say. But Noah's family have their own fault. Noah's family descends into the same idolatry, and they repeat the sins of Adam and Eve.

They build the Tower of Babel. They try to manipulate God. They want to make themselves able to control God. They want to be gods. So how does God show justice and mercy in response to this?

He confuses their languages and disperses them across the world. It's both justice and mercy. For one, justice, he's confusing the languages.

He's causing division. But at the same time, in mercy, he's actually sort of forcing them to do what he commanded them to do, which is to multiply and fill the earth. And out of this dispersion, we get the call of Abram.

[35 : 48] Abram is one of those people who descended from those dispersed from Babylon. Abraham is called from his pagan existence to start the holy nation of Israel.

And what is God's covenant with Abraham? He says, I will make you a great nation. Through blessing you, all of the families of the world will be blessed.

So throughout this book, we've been seeing this theme of creation, fall, redemption. And here, out of the fall of Noah's family in Babel, we see the start of redemption history in the formation of a holy people, Israel, to bring that redemption that we see in chapter three into the world.

They are going to be a blessing to the nations. Abraham has a son, Isaac, a child of promise.

Isaac also has a couple sons, Jacob and Esau. Jacob has many sons. And many sons had Father Jacob.

- [36 : 53] He has a favorite son, Joseph. Joseph, because of this favoritism and because he's sort of a flaunty kid, gets in trouble with his brothers.
- He's persecuted. He's sold into slavery in Egypt. His life further deteriorates by hitting rock bottom, almost literally, in a pit prison in Egypt.
- But from this pit, God raises him to be the second most important man in all of Egypt. From despair, from his fall, we see redemption.
- So even in the life of Joseph himself, we see creation, fall, redemption. But where else do we see this pattern in redemption history? Where people are attempting to persecute someone, but in reality, something else is going on.
- Well, we see this all the time, but most powerfully, we see this in Jesus. Religious leaders of Jesus' day had him crucified out of spite.
- [37 : 59] Romans killed him out of fear. But that was exactly God's plan of redemption. And so we, in light of redemption history, can say, possibly with more feeling, we can end with Joseph's famous line in the end of Genesis, where the Israelites start their sojourn in Egypt, that what you meant for evil, God meant for good.
- And we can see that in Genesis, we are starting that process by which human beings are rebelling against God. We are trying to harm him.
- We are trying to make ourselves God. But in our rebellion, God has mercy and provides redemption. And oftentimes, it's our very attempts to attack God that he uses to redeem us.
- Okay. With that, I will end. Does it feel like you went a million miles an hour? Because it felt like that to me. I passed the first time.
- I mean, you guys can, I'm going to open up for questions in a second. But I just want to say that first time I tried this talk out on my wife, I spent about a half hour on creation.
- [39 : 23] And then like 30 minutes on the first question. So there's a lot more I would like to say about these things. But for the benefit of time, unless you guys want to be here for three weeks, I would love that.
- But we're going to end there just as the basic sweep of Genesis. Does anybody have any questions? Maybe something you want me to talk about in more detail? Or there's a part I didn't talk about, which was like most of the book that you want me to comment on?
- Also, for you Zoom people, I see the chat. So if you want to have a question, you can just throw that into the chat. I will try my best to answer it.
- Yeah. During the time that you just wrote the book, you kind of talked about how they saw creation as chaos. What was, I guess, their story?
- Yeah. So it actually depends on the group. There are a variety of creation accounts that we have from the ancient Near East. They all have actually a very basic structure that is similar to Genesis in the sense that they have sort of a creation.
- [40 : 38] They have sort of the creation of man. They have a flood narrative. And then the start of what they would call the king lists. So, for instance, in the Babylonian creation account, you have sort of the waters of chaos that the Babylonian gods come to.
- And they sort of fight their way into making creation for man. But man, there's a lot of work to be done on earth.
- And they're really tired. And they don't want to do that. So what they do is they create man to do their work for them. So they can finally take a break. But unfortunately, men are really loud.

And the gods can't get any rest. So they end up just like, okay, this is worse than us doing all the work. So they try to kill all the human beings with a flood. But some of the gods in the council are like, I kind of like these guys.

So they save one of them. So you can see that there's sort of a basic similarity in the structure. But the thrust is completely different.

[41 : 45] The message is completely different that you get from these different creation accounts. And it varies. So I'm talking specifically there. That's sort of a basic outline of some of the Assyrian and Babylonian creation accounts.

But if we look at different ones, like I was saying, there are Norse creation accounts that look way crazy different. But yeah, there's a lot of crazy stuff that's going on.

I suggest you look into it. It's pretty well. Any other questions? My brother, who's viewing this from California right now, has asked, is there a reason to believe that these other cultures heard the real account?

It's difficult to tell. From what we understand, we're not sure what the relationship is between these accounts.

Some scholars think that the Genesis account is a correction of earlier...

[43 : 13] The creation account, the Genesis account is a correction of earlier accounts they had heard. So that would be familiar with the people. Other scholars believe that the Genesis account was an earlier one and that these other ones are perversions of it.

It's not really clear from the data which one... Who heard what? I think given, though, the nature of the Israelites' place in society in comparison to these other societies, my guess is that these other cultures probably would not have heard the Israelite version of the story.

If we think about Egypt as a pretty stable ancient kingdom and you compare it to Israelites who were a wandering tribe, I don't think that the Israelites' story was getting out.

It could have been. I'm not sure about that. He also asks, do Reformed Baptists hold to the covenant of works slash covenant of grace distinction for the time before the fall?

Oof. I don't know. I don't think... I don't know if there's like a... I don't know, Greg. I think... I don't know that there is a hard line... Hard question to speak for everybody about...

[44 : 35] Yeah, exactly. I was going to say, I don't think all Reformed Baptists would agree. I think... I mean, I think everybody can see that, again, this is a question based on the covenantal way of looking at Genesis, which is a really fruitful way of reading the book.

If we look at the covenant, you could call it a covenant between God and Adam. Adam, was that a covenant of grace or was that a covenant of works? I think there can be an argument made on either side.

One, you could say that God made a covenant with Abraham... I mean, with Adam, and the penalty of breaking that covenant was death, and he had grace on Adam and did not give them instantaneous death on them breaking the covenant.

So you could say that's a covenant of grace in that way. But another way of saying is that when God says that you will surely die, that he's speaking always about spiritual death, that was instantaneous.

So, yeah. I would say, as a one-way point to that, it's good to speak. Any kind of darkness doesn't have the grace. Yeah. Because given... That's kind of the point of Genesis.

[45 : 48] Right. Right? Why should God be able to first convince? Right. Which is great. Yeah. So even the distinction between covenant, it's important, of course, to be the most of the covenant is all grace.

Yeah. No, I agree with you. I agree with you. What you're saying is, in a sense, all covenants are a covenant of grace because God is not required to give a covenant at all.

Right. So any giving of a covenant is out of grace and mercy. I think the only distinction that comes in is when you start trying to think about whether covenants are conditional or unconditional.

I think that's different than asking whether it's a covenant of works and a covenant of grace. But I think there are differences between covenants. But I think we can also...

We also know at least that the covenant with Abraham was pretty much all one-sided in the person of God.

[46 : 45] God puts Abraham to sleep. This is something I didn't talk about. When God calls Abraham, he makes a covenant with Abraham. Abraham's like, hey, God, how am I supposed to be... How am I supposed to know this is really all going to happen?

God's like, okay, let's make a covenant in the style that they would do in ancient Near Eastern times. They get a bunch of animals and they cut them down the middle and they separate them.

And they're supposed to together, both members of the covenant are supposed to walk through the animals together as a sign of their agreement. But Abraham is put into a deep sleep.

And God is the only one who walks through the animals. We see a lantern, I think, right? Yeah, a lantern walking through the animals.

This is a sign to Abraham that you literally almost have nothing to do. I'm going to be doing everything. And if you read the rest of Genesis and you read through Exodus and the Pentateuch in general, you will see that the covenant of Abraham, which underlies the covenant of Moses, is central to the entire Old Testament.

[47 : 51] And God's promise, you can see this all throughout the prophets, God's promise to do, to bless Israel and make them a nation. And through them, bless the entire world, is chalk through the entire thing and God doing all that by himself.

I mean, I guess you could say that circumcision is sort of a condition of that. But anyways.

The reason why they would walk through the pieces of the animals is they were basically saying, if I break my promise to you, may I become like these. Yeah. Like, it's like a very stark, like signing of something in blood.

You know, it's that kind of. Yeah. So when God goes through the pieces by himself, God's basically saying, I promise to fulfill this covenant. I mean, you can even see it as like, I promise to fulfill this covenant even if I have to, even if I have to die to accomplish it.

Right. You know, which, of course, is what Christ would end up doing on the cross. Exactly. But it's basically saying, like, the fulfillment of this is not ultimately going to depend on your obedience or whatever.

[49 : 00] Like, ultimately, I'm going to fulfill this promise. Right. Exactly. I mean, and thank God for that, right? I mean, if there was any, like, anytime there's ever a condition, it is always broken.

You'll read that in the Bible. So I have one last question before we break. And the question is, do you think that there's biblical evidence to believe that God intended to have Adam slash his family one day eat from the tree of knowledge of good and evil, but was not yet the time for it?

So there's a variety of views on what the tree of life and the tree of knowledge of good and evil were for. There is one view that says that the tree of knowledge of good and evil was always supposed to be untouched or not eaten.

It was never supposed to be eaten from. This was for God alone. This is a symbol of God's authority here in the garden. It's a sign of our submission to God to not eat it.

Another view says that God intended for the human beings eventually to eat from the knowledge of good and evil. Because elsewhere in the Bible, the knowledge of good and evil is used sometimes as a positive, as a positive attributes.

[50 : 19] So they'll say it's almost like discernment. So they'll say, oh, that person, they know that they have the knowledge of good and evil. So they have their discerning mind. So another view would say that the point of the tree of the knowledge of good and evil was a temporary prohibition that God was going to first let Adam and Eve grow in their spiritual and moral maturity before they then eat and gain that further level of development.

I think that's also a compelling argument. I believe that was C.S. Lewis's view. I think, I mean, there's another view that says that the tree of knowledge of good and evil was a representation of God's role in determining morality, God's nature for the person who determines what is good and what is evil.

And by eating from the tree, we as human beings are trying to usurp that role and decide for ourselves what is good and what is evil. So do I think there's biblical evidence for that, for one of those views?

Yeah, I think there's biblical evidence for all those views, which is why there's no, there's not 100% consensus. I tend myself to lean towards more the maturity view of things, but I'm not really like 100%.

Like this is the view. I just think it could make sense. So, yeah, with that, why don't we close in prayer?

[51 : 58] Bow your heads with me. Father God, we thank you for this day. We thank you so much for the world that you have created. We thank you that it is good.

We thank you that you have given us worth. We thank you that you've given us a mission. Above all, Lord, we thank you for the redemption that we find in Jesus Christ.

We thank you for everything that he has done for us. And we ask that today we would do everything to glorify you. And that we would love each other in the way that you have loved us.

In Jesus' name, amen. Amen. Amen. Amen. Amen. Amen. Amen.