



OLD TESTAMENT • LAW

Genesis

Beginnings, covenant, and the faithfulness of God

AUTHORSHIP · Traditionally Moses; the book itself is anonymous

DATE & CONTEXT · Traditional setting: second millennium BC; composition debated

The big picture

Genesis opens with God creating a good world. Humanity bears God's image and receives a vocation to care for creation. The garden story then introduces a rupture: people distrust God's word, take what is forbidden, and discover shame and estrangement. Yet judgment does not exhaust the story. God continues to clothe, address, and pursue a fractured humanity.

As violence spreads, the stories of Cain, Noah, and Babel show the consequences of sin reaching beyond a single household. The flood brings judgment and a covenant with living creatures. Babel exposes the ambition to secure a name apart from God. These opening chapters ask enduring questions about identity, responsibility, and the misuse of power.

God calls Abraham with a promise of land, descendants, and blessing that will reach all families of the earth. Abraham, Sarah, Isaac, Rebekah, Jacob, and their households live inside that promise with real faith and serious failures. God's faithfulness does not make their choices harmless; it keeps the story moving through them.

Joseph's brothers sell him into slavery, but his path through suffering eventually places him in a position to preserve life during famine. Reconciliation comes through truth, testing, and costly mercy. Genesis closes in Egypt with the promise still unfinished. The God of beginnings is also the God whose faithfulness extends beyond what one generation can see.

Follow the story

Ch. 1-11 — Creation, rupture, and the nations

Ch. 12-25 — Abraham and the promise

Ch. 26-36 — Isaac, Jacob, and a growing family

Ch. 37-50 — Joseph, reconciliation, and preservation

Words to carry

"In the beginning God created the heaven and the earth."

Genesis 1:1 · KJV



“And I will make of thee a great nation, and I will bless thee, and make thy name great; and thou shalt be a blessing:”

Genesis 12:2 · KJV

“But as for you, ye thought evil against me; but God meant it unto good”

Genesis 50:20 · KJV · excerpt

Live it

01 Notice one part of creation and thank God for it, without rushing past it.

02 Name a situation you cannot control and take the next honest, faithful step.

03 Choose one act of reconciliation without pretending that harm does not matter.

Pause & reflect

Where am I being invited to trust God’s promise before I can see the outcome?

Original SELAH37 introduction. Read the text in context; historical dates and attributions are approximate.

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