



**COVER THE EARTH MINISTRIES
BIBLE STUDY NOTES
SESSION 1
THE BOOKS OF THE BIBLE
OLD TESTAMENT**

INSTRUCTOR

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QUESTIONS TO ASK AS YOU BEGIN YOUR STUDY OF EACH BOOK OF THE BIBLE

1. If you're already familiar with this book, which passages are your favorite parts of it?
2. If this were the only book in the Bible you knew about or had access to, what things could you still find out about God?
3. As you scan this book, what types of Bible literature does it appear to contain? (You may want to review together the different types, such as those listed here:)
 - poetry
 - historical or biographical narrative (a record of people and events)
 - teaching or sermons
 - laws or covenant agreements
 - parables (short stories and word pictures with a moral point)
 - proverbs (short, wise sayings)
 - prophecy (statements from God about the present and future)
4. What appear to be the main divisions in this book?
5. From what you understand about this book, who wrote it (and when), and for what original audience was it written?
6. From what you see in looking over this book, what would you say the author was trying most to accomplish?
7. Which chapter in this book would you say is the key chapter, the one that best summarizes or reflects or unlocks the meaning of the entire book?
8. From what you see in looking over this book, what kinds of answers and guidelines and solutions in life do you think we can reasonably expect to find in this book?
9. What four- to six-word title would you give to this book, to best summarize its content and significance?
10. When you get to heaven, if you asked God, "Why did You include this book in the Bible?" how do you think He would answer?

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INTRODUCTORY NOTES TO THE OLD TESTAMENT

I. Name

The word "testament " means "covenant ," referring to an agreement between men or between God and men. As far as the Bible is concerned, the Old Testament is the record of the old covenant, the covenant God made with the Jews at Mt. Sinai; and the New Testament is the record of the new covenant that Christ made through His blood. From a literary standpoint, the OT begins with Genesis and ends with Malachi, while the NT begins with Matthew and ends with Revelation. However, from a doctrinal and dispensational point of view, this is not the case; for the old covenant really began in Ex 20 and was set aside at the cross (Col 2:14). The new covenant began with the death of Christ and will continue with God's people forever. In a broad sense, we might say that the OT is the record of God's dealings with His earthly people under law, and the NT is the record of God's dealings with His heavenly people (the church) under grace. The dividing line is the cross, not the blank page between Malachi and Matthew!

II. Purpose

Too many Christians avoid the OT, thinking that it has no message for them or that it is too difficult to understand. But please realize that the OT was the only Bible that Christ, the apostles, and the early church possessed. When Paul referred to "Scripture ," he was thinking of the OT books. Practically every book in the OT is quoted or referred to in the NT writings. Consider the fourfold purpose of the OT writings:

A. Foundation.

We would have no information concerning the origin of the universe, the origin of man, the beginnings of sin, the birth of the Hebrew nation, or the purposes of God for the world, were it not for the OT record. Every NT doctrine can be traced back to OT history. An understanding of the OT record is necessary if we are to interpret the NT correctly.

B. Preparation.

The OT reveals God's preparation for the coming of His Son into the world. In Genesis we see the need for a Savior and the promise that He will come through the woman, through the Jewish nation, and through the tribe of Judah. The rest of the OT amplifies these basic facts and shows how Satan tried to destroy the Jewish nation to prevent the birth of Christ. Gen 3:15 indicates that there are two "seeds" in conflict in the world, the seed of Satan and the seed of Christ, and we see this conflict from Gen 4 onward.

C. Illustration.

The OT is God's picture gallery, in which He often shows His truth in types and symbols. Each NT doctrine has an OT illustration. The Passover Lamb of Ex 12 is a picture of Christ (John 1:29; 1 Cor 5:7). The OT tabernacle illustrates the resurrection; the anointing oil pictures the Holy Spirit; etc. As you study the OT, be sure to use the light of the NT to dispel the shadows (Col 1:17), and be sure to look for the Person and work of Christ.

D. Demonstration.

The OT is a practical book, showing the failures and successes of the people of God. We see God demonstrating His power in the lives of people, but we also see what sin and unbelief will do to people. God recorded these sins and successes for our benefit (1 Cor 10:11). As we see men like Abraham, Moses, and David overcoming their problems by faith, we have encouragement and hope (Rom 15:4). The prayers of the Psalms and the practical counsels of Proverbs can help us in our daily lives if we will "trust and obey."

Dr. Griffith-Thomas in his excellent book *Methods of Bible Study* suggests that the OT is a book of:

- (1) unfulfilled prophecies,
- (2) unexplained ceremonies, and
- (3) unsatisfied longings.

In the NT we have the fulfillment of these prophecies, the explanation of these ceremonies, and the satisfying of these longings; and, of course, all of this was accomplished through the birth, life, death, and resurrection of Jesus Christ.

III. Analysis

In each division of the Bible, you find historical events, personal experience, and prophetic expectation. The OT gives us the history of God's earthly people, Israel, as they prepared the way for Christ's birth, and the NT gives us the history of the church as

God's people live for Christ and look forward to His coming again. You may outline the main messages of the OT as follows:

Foundation — Genesis-Deuteronomy: the foundation for the rest of the Bible record.

Demonstration — Joshua-Esther: God at work in individual lives and in the nation.

Aspiration — Job-Song of Solomon: the longings of God's people for personal experience with their Lord.

Expectation — Isaiah-Malachi: prophecies of the coming Christ and the righteous kingdom of God.

IV. Principles of Study

A. Progressive revelation.

In the OT divine truths are revealed gradually, and we do not come into the full light of God's truth until we come to the NT. Therefore, beware of building doctrines on isolated OT verses, especially from Ecclesiastes and Psalms, and ignoring the clear teachings of the NT. Remember the old adage: "The New is in the Old concealed; the Old is by the New revealed." God's principles do not change, but His dispensations do.

B. Christ.

Our Lord Jesus Christ is the key to the Bible, and it is impossible to understand the OT apart from Him. As Graham Scroggie aptly puts it, "Christ is predicted in the OT, present in the Gospels, proclaimed in the Acts, possessed in the Epistles, and predominant in the Revelation." The experiences of the Jewish nation in the OT are links in the chain that leads to His birth at Bethlehem. Every type and symbol is a picture of Him. Look for Christ and the OT will become a new book to you!

C. Cross references.

Follow your OT cross references straight to the NT. The American Standard Version has one of the best systems of cross references available, and the New International Version is also very good. You may want to purchase R.A. Torrey's classic work *The Treasury of Scripture Knowledge*, a book of half-a-million cross references covering nearly every verse in the Bible. Be sure that you study each OT person, event, or doctrine in the light of the NT revelation. This will add a whole new dimension to your study.

D. Obedience.

It is not enough to study the OT and find wonderful truths about Christ and His salvation. We must learn the practical lessons and put them to work in our lives! "All Scripture... is profitable for... instruction in righteousness..." (2 Tim 3:16-17), and this includes the OT. It is wonderful to understand historical truth, doctrinal truth, and dispensational truth, but if our study fails to lead to practical truth — godly living — it is in vain.

GENESIS

A Suggested Outline of Genesis

- I. History of Humanity in General (1-11)
 - A. Creation of the heavens and earth (1-2)
 - B. Adam and his family (3-5)
 - The Fall of man (3)
 - C. Noah and his family (6-11)
 - The Flood (6-10)
 - The Babel rebellion (11)

- II. History of Israel in Particular (12-50)
 - A. Abraham — The father who gave his son (12:1-25:18)
 - B. Isaac — The son who took a bride (25:19-26:35)
 - C. Jacob — The flesh vs. the Spirit (27-36)
 - D. Joseph — The providence of God (37-50)

Introductory Notes to Genesis

I. Name

"Genesis " is from a Greek word meaning "beginning" or "generation." The word "genesis" is translated "generation" in Matt 1:1. Genesis is the book of generations, or beginnings. There are ten generations noted in the book: the heavens and earth (2:4); Adam (5:1); Noah (6:9); Shem (11:10); Terah (11:27); Ishmael (25:12); Isaac (25:19); Esau (36:1); and Jacob (37:2). As the seed-plot for the entire Bible, Genesis records for us the momentous beginning of the universe, human history, civilization, sin, salvation, sacrifice, marriage, and the family.

II. Author

It is generally agreed that Moses is the author of the first five books of the Bible, called "the Pentateuch " (from the Gk., penta, "five" and teuchos, "the case books were kept in"). Of course, Moses was not alive when the events in Genesis occurred, but the Spirit directed him in his writing (2 Peter 1:20-21). Christ believed that Moses wrote the books assigned to him (see John 5:45-47), and that is good enough authority for us.

III. Purpose

As you read Genesis, you cannot help but note that the first eleven chapters are general and without extensive detail; while the rest of the book, starting with chapter 12, gives the lives

of four men in great detail: Abraham, Isaac, Jacob, and Joseph. As you will note in our suggested outline of Genesis, the first section (1-11) deals with humankind in general and explains the origin of man and sin, while the last section (12-50) deals with Israel in particular. This suggests that the purpose of the book is to explain the beginnings of man and his sin and Israel and God's plan of salvation. In fact, one of the key themes in Genesis is divine election.

We begin with "the heavens and the earth," but then God chooses to deal with the earth, not the heavens; the theme from then on is God's program on earth. Having chosen the earth, God now bypasses the angels (fallen angels included) and elects to deal with man. From Adam's many sons, God chooses Seth (4:25). Of Seth's many descendants (Gen 5), God chooses Noah (6:8), and from Noah's family, He chooses Shem (11:10), Terah (11:27), and finally Abraham (12:1). Abraham has many children, but Isaac is the chosen seed (21:12). Isaac has two sons, Jacob and Esau, and God chooses Jacob to be the recipient of His blessing.

All of this reveals God's gracious divine election. Not one of those people chosen deserved the honor; as is true for all believers, their election resulted fully from God's grace. Along with the electing grace of God, Genesis illustrates the wonderful power and providence of God. Men would disobey and doubt Him, yet He would rule and overrule to accomplish His purposes. Had His program failed in Genesis, there could have been no Messiah born in Bethlehem centuries later.

IV. Genesis and Revelation

The beginnings recorded in Genesis have their fulfillment in Revelation . God created the heaven and the earth (Gen 1:1) and will one day create a new heaven and new earth (Rev 21:1). Satan first attacked man (Gen 3) yet will be defeated in his last attack (Rev 20:7-10). God made darkness and light (Gen 1:5), but one day there will no longer be night (Rev 21:23; 22:5). There will be no more sea (Gen 1:10; Rev 21:1), and the curse will be lifted from creation (Gen 3:14-17; Rev 22:3). God drove man out of the garden (Gen 3:24), but God's people will be welcomed into the heavenly paradise (Rev 22:1 ff), and the tree of life will be restored to man (Rev 22:14). Babylon will be destroyed (Gen 10:8-10; Rev 17:1-19:21) and the promised judgment of Satan fulfilled (Gen 3:15; Rev 20:10).

V. Christ in Genesis

According to Luke 24:27,44-45 Christ is found in "all the Scriptures." Following are but a few of the references to Christ in Genesis.

1. The creative Word — Gen 1:3; John 1:1-5; 2 Cor 4:3-7
2. The Last Adam — Rom 5; 1 Cor 15:45
3. The Seed of the woman — Gen 3:15; Gal 3:19; 4:4

4. Abel — Gen 4; Heb 11:4; 12:24
5. Noah and the flood — Gen 6-10; 1 Peter 3:18-22
6. Melchizedek — Gen 14; Heb 7:1-10:39
7. Isaac, the child of promise — Gen 17; Gal 4:21-31 (Isaac pictures Christ in his miraculous birth, his willingness to die, his "resurrection" [Heb 11:19], and his taking of a bride. Of course, Jesus actually died and arose from the dead. In Isaac, these events were only symbolic.)
8. The Lamb — Gen 22:7-8; John 1:29
9. Jacob's ladder — Gen 28:12 ff; John 1:51
10. Joseph — Gen 37-50 (Rejected by His brothers; beloved of the Father; made to suffer unjustly; exalted to reign. Joseph's brothers did not recognize him the first time they saw him, but they did recognize him the second time. So with Israel is their recognition of their Messiah.)

EXODUS

A Suggested Outline of Exodus

- I. Redemption — God's Power (1-17)
 - A. The slavery of sin (1-4)
 - B. The stubbornness of Pharaoh (5-11)
 - C. The salvation of God (12-17)
 1. Passover — Christ the slain Lamb (12-13)
 2. Crossing the sea — resurrection (14-15)
 3. Manna — Christ the Bread of Life (16)
 4. Smitten rock — the Spirit (17:1-7)
 5. Amalek — flesh vs. the Spirit (17:8-16)
- II. Righteousness — God's Holiness (18-24)
 - A. The nation prepared (18-19)
 - B. The law revealed (20-23)
 1. The commandments (Godward) (20)
 2. The judgments (manward) (21-23)
 - C. The covenant ratified (24)
- III. Restoration — God's Grace (25-40)
 - A. The tabernacle described (25-31)
 - B. The tabernacle needed — Israel sins (32-34)
 - C. The tabernacle constructed (35-40)

Introductory Notes to Exodus

I. Name

In the Greek language, exodus means "the way out." (See Heb 11:22, "departing.") This book describes Israel's bondage in Egypt and the wonderful deliverance (or "way out") that God gave them. One of the key words in Exodus is redemption, since "to redeem" means "to set free." The book presents many pictures of our salvation through Christ. The word exodus is used in two places in the NT: Luke 9:31 ("decease"), where Christ's redeeming work on the cross is the theme; and 2 Peter 1:15, where "decease" means a believer's "death." In other words, there are three exodus experiences in the Bible — Israel's deliverance from Egypt; Christ's deliverance of the sinner through the cross; and the believer's deliverance from the bondage of this world at death.

II. Author

There is no reason to doubt that Moses wrote this book. The unity of the book (see outline) suggests that there was one author, and the eyewitness accounts indicate that the author was present at those events. Christ affirmed the Mosaic authorship of the book (John 7:19: 5:46-47).

III. Purpose

Genesis is the book of beginnings; Exodus is the book of redemption. It records the deliverance of Israel from Egypt and presents the basic historical facts about the origins of the Hebrew nation and its religious ceremonies. These accounts are also pictures of Christ and the redemption He purchased at the cross. There are many types and symbols of Christ and the believer in Exodus, especially in the tabernacle furnishings and ceremonies. Exodus also records the giving of the Law. It would be impossible to understand much NT doctrine apart from an understanding of the events and symbols in Exodus.

IV. Types

There are several basic types in Exodus: (1) Egypt is a type of the world system, opposing God's people and trying to keep them in bondage. (2) Pharaoh is a type of Satan, "the god of this world," who demands worship, defies God, and thinks to enslave God's people. (3) Israel is a type of the church — delivered from the bondage of the world, led on a pilgrim journey, and protected by God. (4) Moses is a type of Christ, God's Prophet. (5) The crossing of the Red Sea is a picture of the resurrection, which delivers the believer from this present evil world. (6) The manna pictures Christ the Bread of Life (John 6). (7) The smitten rock is a type of the smitten Christ, through whose death the Holy Spirit is given. (8) Amalek is a picture of the flesh, opposing the believer in the pilgrim journey. The key type in Exodus is Passover, picturing the

death of Christ, the application of His blood for our safety, and the appropriation of His life (feeding on the lamb) for our daily strength.

V. Moses and Christ

Here we could list many comparisons and one major contrast between the two, since Moses is a wonderful picture of Jesus Christ. In his offices, Moses was a prophet (Acts 3:22); a priest (Ps 99:6; Heb 7:24); a servant (Ps 105:26; Matt 12:18); a shepherd (Ex 3:1; John 10:11-14); a mediator (Ex 33:8-9; 1 Tim 2:5); and a deliverer (Acts 7:35; 1 Thess 1:10). In his character, he was meek (Num 12:3; Matt 11:29), faithful (Heb 3:12), obedient, and mighty in word and deed (Acts 7:22; Mark 6:2). In his history, Moses was a son in Egypt and was in danger of being killed (Matt 2:14 ff), but was providentially cared for by God. He chose to suffer with the Jews rather than reign in Egypt (Heb 11:24-26; Phil 2:1-11). Moses was rejected by his brothers the first time, but received the second time; and, while rejected, he gained a Gentile bride (picturing Christ and the church). Moses condemned Egypt, and Christ condemned the world. Moses delivered God's people through the blood, as did Christ on the cross (Luke 9:31). Moses led the people, fed the people, and carried their burdens. The contrast, of course, is that Moses did not take Israel into the Promised Land; Joshua had to do that. "The law was given by Moses, but grace and truth came by Jesus Christ (John 1:17).

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