

IMMERSE: BEGINNINGS

Week 1 – GENESIS – “In The Beginning GOD”

June 13, 2021

www.jewishrootsofchristianity.org

Click LESSONS link

Scroll down to IMMERSE: BEGINNINGS

Malachi 3:6 – *I am the LORD, I do not change....* The God of the OT is the God of the NT!

Genesis through Deuteronomy have been called the Torah which means instruction. These five books of Moses, as they are also known, have also been labeled the “Pentateuch” – Pentateuch means “five scrolls.”

Quick summation of the first five books re: how they flow into one another:

GENESIS

The English title for the book of GENESIS means origins. The Hebrew title for the book of Genesis is “Bereshit” – *In beginning*. The OT and the NT ascribe authorship of Genesis through Deuteronomy.

For your personal study, NOTE: ALL Scripture is INSPIRED by God. ALL Scripture (all 66 books; every word is without error!) is GOD-breathed (II Tim. 3:16) and is profitable for doctrine, for reproof, for correction, for instruction in righteousness.

God, the Holy Spirit inspired Moses, who is generally believed to have authored these five books. The OT ascribes authorship to Moses (Ex. 17:14; Num. 33:2; Josh. 8:31, 34-35; I Kin. 2:3; II Kin. 14:6; Ezra 6:18; Neh. 13:1; Dan. 9:11, 13; Mal. 4:4) as does the NT (Matt. 8:4; Mk. 12:26; Lk. 16:29; Lk. 24:27, 44; John 5:46; John 7:22; Acts 15:1; Rom. 10:19; I Cor. 9:9; II Cor. 3:15).

The creation account was written by MOSES. Was Moses present at creation? NO! Moses is not born into his Jewish family (tribe of Levi – Ex. 2:1-4) until approx. 1500 BC. Here we have proof of the inspiration of the Holy Spirit. For further Biblical support re: the divine inspiration of all the authors, check out II Peter 1:20-21; John 14:26; II Timothy 3:16.

Genesis begins with GOD!

Genesis ends with the death of Joseph, son of Jacob and Rachel, in Egypt (approx. 1804 BC). Before Joseph died...

Gen. 50:25 – tells us that ...*Joseph took an oath from the children of Israel, saying, “God will surely visit you, and you shall carry up my bones from here.* WHY? Because God had promised the physical descendants of Abraham, Isaac, and Jacob the land of Canaan. Joseph knew the children of Israel would be returning to the land. Joseph believed that God would deliver on His promises.

Gen. 50:26 - Joseph was 110 years old. His body was embalmed. To embalm means to “make spicy” – treating the dead body with spices. And, his body was placed in a coffin in Egypt. Joseph was not buried – because the people knew they would be

2

returning to the land – BECAUSE GOD HAD PROMISED. God’s promise(s) – the key in understanding the BIG PICTURE of Scripture.

EXODUS

The Hebrew title for Exodus is, “Now These Are The Names” – which are the first words in Exodus. What names? The names of those in the family of Jacob who went down to Egypt to be with Joseph due to the famine that was “over all the face of the earth” (Gen. 41:56). Gen. 46:27 - *All the persons of the house of Jacob who went to Egypt were seventy*. The children of Israel (Jacob) grew from an extended family of 70 to over 2 million in 430 years while they resided in Egypt.

God delivered the children of Israel (as well as a mixed multitude [Gentiles] Ex. 12:38) from Egypt at the first Passover. At Sinai God told Israel, *...let them make Me a sanctuary, that I may **dwell** among them* (Ex. 25:8).

God’s desire to dwell with Israel and the world is a key theme throughout the Bible!

Exodus ends with the completion of the tabernacle in the wilderness at Mt. Sinai – where He would dwell in their midst.

Ex. 40:34-38 - *Then the cloud covered the tabernacle of meeting, and the glory of the LORD filled the tabernacle. ³⁵ And Moses was not able to enter the tabernacle of meeting, because the cloud rested above it, and the glory of the LORD filled the tabernacle. ³⁶ Whenever the cloud was taken up from above the tabernacle, the children of Israel would go onward in all their journeys. ³⁷ But if the cloud was not taken up, then they did not journey till the day that it was taken up. ³⁸ For the cloud of the LORD was above the tabernacle by day, and fire was over it by night, in the sight of all the house of Israel, throughout all their journeys.*

LEVITICUS

The book of Leviticus, entitled “Now He Called,” opens with the LORD calling to Moses from the tabernacle where He dwelled above the mercy seat. The tabernacle was completed and God began legislating from His throne in the Holy of Holies. God gave Moses the laws concerning the sacrifices.

NUMBERS

The most common Hebrew title for the book of Numbers is “In the Wilderness.” The book of Numbers concentrates on events that place in the second and fortieth years after the Exodus from Egypt. God commissioned Moses at the tabernacle to take a census of the males over 20 years old (excluding the Levites) in preparation for war against Israel’s enemies. The title, “In the Wilderness” represents the approx. 38+ extra years they were to wander...following NOT obeying...NOT trusting God after spying out the land of promise.

DEUTERONOMY

Deuteronomy means “These Are The Words,” which Moses spoke recalling their 40 years of journeying. Moses preached the book of Deuteronomy as a sermon from the plains of Moab, east of the Jordan River, in preparation for the entrance into the land of promise.

The five books are ONE STORY! The entire Bible is ONE STORY!

3

In the beginning God.... What a declaration! Moses states that God **IS...PERIOD!!!!** At the very outset of Scripture we’re told that God **EXISTS!!!!**

“In the beginning God....” In the Hebrew it is ...*bereshit bara Elohim*.

“Beginning” – The Hebrew word, *ray-sheet*, means first in place (space), in time, order, and rank. God is transcendent; He is above time and space. Genesis 1:1 marks the beginning of the universe. God created the universe. God is distinct from His creation. AND, God is immanent – He is near. And, God is ETERNAL!

In Scripture we see a personal God Who created man for relationship.

The Hebrew word for “God” in Gen. 1:1 is *Elohim* – the *im* is a plural ending. In the first verse in the Bible we read that God is a plurality! BUT – God is one (Deut. 6:4)!

Bara – the word for “created” is in the singular.

A plural subject, “God,” with a singular verb, “created”? That’s not grammatically correct. God is one in His plurality!

Supporting God’s plurality and moving into God’s tri-unity, let’s look at:

Gen. 1:26 - ...*let Us make man in Our image, according to Our likeness....*

Dt. 6:4 – *Hear O Israel, the LORD our God, the LORD is one.*

“One” in Hebrew is *echad* which means a composite unity not an – COMPOSITE unity NOT an absolute unity (*yachid*).

The Jewish Virtual Library states that a Jewish person is obligated to say the Shema in the morning and at night.

How many times is the ALMIGHTY mentioned?

Let’s further investigate God’s “plurality”:

Gen. 1:2 - *The earth was without form, and void; and darkness was on the face of the deep. And the Spirit of God was hovering over the face of the waters.*

The plain reading/the literal reading of the first two verses in Genesis 1 tells us that God created the heavens and the earth, and that it was formless, empty, and dark. It was unfinished and uninhabited. The rest of Genesis 1 tells us how God completed the formless and dark earth by filling it with life, beauty, and goodness. God tells us that His creation was “very good.” What God created was PERFECT – it was from GOD! The creation was complete, lacking in nothing. The creation was without sinful corruption!

AND, when God created the earth, He quite likely created the earth with the appearance of age. Adam was an adult when God created Adam. The trees in the Garden of Eden bore fruit which was ready to eat (Gen. 1:29)!

And the Spirit of God was hovering over the face of the waters. “Hovering” – the verb in the Hebrew speaks to a vibrant moving. The Hebrew word for “Spirit” is often translated as “wind” or “breath” in the Old Testament which speaks of life. *For thus says the LORD, Who created the heavens, Who is God, Who formed the earth and made it, Who has established it, Who did not create it in vain, Who formed it to be inhabited:* (Isa. 45:18)

Scripture describes a similar “hovering” of the Holy Spirit at the miraculous conception of Jesus: *And the angel answered and said to [Mary], ‘The Holy Spirit will come upon you, and the power of the Highest will overshadow you; therefore, also, that Holy One who is to be born will be called the Son of God.* (Luke 1:35)

4

Gen. 1:3 - *Then God said, ‘Let there be light’; and there was light.* God spoke through His WORD and He created!

Jesus is the Word – John 1:1-3 – *In the beginning was the Word, and the Word was with God, and the Word was God. He was in the beginning with God. ³ All things were made through Him, and without Him nothing was made that was made.*

And there was LIGHT - John 1:4-5, 9 - *⁴ In Him was life, and the life was the light of men. ⁵ And the light shines in the darkness, and the darkness did not comprehend it... ⁹ That was the true Light which gives light to every man coming into the world.*

John 8:12 - Jesus told His people, the Jewish people – *I AM the light of the world.* And many of them knew what Jesus meant because the creation account had been taught – passed down from generation to generation.

We are introduced to the Trinity in the first three verses of the Bible!

God’s plurality is a tri-unity – the Trinity!

The Trinity - three Persons within the one Divine essence. The whole, entire, undivided essence of our ONE God belongs equally to each of the three Persons!

God is a God of love. Love is one of His attributes – characteristics. Only what God has chosen to reveal of Himself can be known.

CONSIDER: Because God is our tri-une God, God is indeed a God of love. GOD has known LOVE from eternity past within the Godhead – Father, Son, and Holy Spirit – relationship within the Godhead. Let that sink in!

And, God created man to have a relationship with Him. Man was created in an unfallen state, in innocence. And, God gave man dominion over the earth – to rule over the earth – to nurture and serve the earth. Man was to function as God’s representative on earth!

Gen. 1:26-28 - *Then God said, ‘Let Us make man in Our image, according to Our likeness; let them have dominion over the fish of the sea, over the birds of the air, and over the cattle, over all the earth and over every creeping thing that creeps on the earth.’*

²⁷ So God created man in His own image; in the image of God He created him; male and female He created them. ²⁸ Then God blessed them, and God said to them, ‘Be fruitful and multiply; fill the earth and subdue it; have dominion over the fish of the sea, over the birds of the air, and over every living thing that moves on the earth.’

Man is created in God's own image. Man has intellect, a will/volition, and emotions. Man is the capstone. In construction terminology, the capstone is the high point of a building. Man is the crowning work of God's creation. Man alone reflects what God is like and can represent God in this creative order (Psa.8:6). We must know that GOD IS ALWAYS KING OF THE UNIVERSE.

This was God's plan and it **IS** God's plan because God's plan can NEVER be thwarted. God's plan never "WAS." This is a Biblical principle that we need to comprehend as we continue to read Scripture! God's plan is always Plan A. God never said, "Oh no, that didn't work. Let me now implement Plan B, or C or J or Z!!!"

AND, we need to grasp that God declared that this physical paradise that He created – ALL of it - was very good (Gen. 1:31). It was excellent, not second rate. Physical is NOT bad/evil. Take note of that because it is part of God's plan – a HUGE part – as we move forward into eternity future!

5

Gen. 2:8-9, 16-17 - The LORD God planted a garden eastward in Eden, and there He put the man whom He had formed. ⁹ And out of the ground the LORD God made every tree grow that is pleasant to the sight and good for food. The tree of life was also in the midst of the garden, and the tree of the knowledge of good and evil. ... And the LORD God commanded the man, saying, 'Of every tree of the garden you may freely eat; ¹⁷ 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.'

Would man obey? God created man for relationship out of His great love. God didn't program man to return His love. Man was created in the image of God – intellect, WILL, and emotions. Man was created with a will – freedom to choose...freedom to obey or disobey – freedom to love God!

Gen. 3:8 - God and man enjoyed communion. God dwelled with man. God walked with Adam and Eve (Gen. 3:8). Adam and Eve lived in the presence of God. God, Who is above time and space (transcendent), is present (immanent) in a unique way in His creation – walking in the garden. God is Spirit (John 4:24 – *God is Spirit and those who worship Him must worship Him in spirit (from the heart) and in truth.*

God manifested Himself in visible form, or so it seems.

And, God told Adam and Eve that they could eat of every tree BUT NOT the fruit from the tree of the knowledge of good and evil.

Moving forward, let's remember that God's plan can NEVER be thwarted! In Genesis 1 & 2 we read of a perfect creation with unfallen man as God's representative on earth, ruling over and nurturing God's creation. And then in chapter 4 of Genesis we find

jealousy and murder; in the following chapters in the book of Genesis mankind goes from bad to worse. WHAT HAPPENED? Genesis 3 answers this question.

Gen. 3:1 - *Now the serpent was more cunning than any beast of the field which the LORD God had made. And he said to the woman, “Has God indeed said, ‘You shall not eat of every tree of the garden’?”* A serpent suddenly appears in the Garden of God - uninvited! The serpent is said to be one of God’s creatures, therefore, we must take this creature literally. This creation of God is a serpent...a snake. (Keep in mind, if we’ve never read the Bible, we do not know the identity of the serpent at this point)

We will call this creature “the serpent” as that’s what this entity is called in the text. And, “the serpent” is adversarial. The serpent was made/created by God. The serpent speaks. We really don’t know if this was common. Scripture tells us that the serpent was “more cunning than any beast of the field.” Something is noticeably different about this “beast.” The serpent recognizes God.

Has God indeed said, ‘You shall not eat of every tree of the garden’? The serpent is essentially saying to Eve, “Surely God could not have said this, could He?” The serpent wants to cause doubt in Eve’s mind. He wants to deceive.

According to Genesis 1, all of creation came into existence in response to the Word of God. God created through His Word. The key words of chapter one are, “God said...” When the serpent approached Eve, the Word of God is precisely what Satan first questioned/attacked!

Has God indeed said, ‘You shall not eat of every tree of the garden’?

6

The serpent was creating doubts in Eve’s mind regarding the goodness of God.

Gen. 3:5 - *For God knows that in the day you eat of it your eyes will be opened, and you will be like God, knowing good and evil.* The serpent is insinuating that Adam and Eve were incomplete without the knowledge of evil. And the serpent is suggesting that through eating of the forbidden fruit, she would enter into a new and higher level of existence. She would become like God. At that moment, she snatched the fruit and ate it.

Gen. 3:6 - *She also gave to her husband with her, and he ate.*

Immediately there was separation from God. Adam and Eve hid from God. God’s original plan was ruined by sin. Sin is rebellion against God! Sin is falling short of the glory of God. Falling short of perfection. God’s original plan was RUINED!! Ruined??? NO – NEVER!!!! Does man have dominion now? No. Is man representing God as he serves and nurtures the earth? NO! Dominion was taken from man by the adversary. Will dominion be restored to man? YES (Dan. 7:13-14, 27).

God original plan REMAINS His plan. God’s will can never be thwarted. What we see in creation IS God’s plan of REDEMPTION... and it will take place/be fulfilled when Jesus physically returns to establish His Kingdom.

Regarding judgment, God FIRST speaks out against the serpent.

Gen. 3:14 - *So the LORD God said to the serpent: Because you have done this, you are cursed more than all cattle, and more than every beast of the field; on your belly you shall go, and you shall eat dust all the days of your life.* The serpent was demoted from an upright position, perhaps, to that of crawling on his belly and eating dust.

IMMEDIATELY after man sinned, God IMMEDIATELY promised the solution for sin through the One Who would come – the Seed of the woman! Humanity had brought the problem into the world and humanity was going to be the solution to the problem.

Gen. 3:15 - *And I will put enmity between you and the woman, And between your seed and her Seed; He shall bruise your head, And you shall bruise His heel.*

God speaks to the power behind the serpent who, as Lucifer, exercised his will against God. And so, God tells the adversary...

Gen. 3:15 - *And **I will** put enmity between you and the woman, and between your seed and her Seed; He shall bruise your head, and you shall bruise His heel.*

Lucifer - now Satan – adversary, accuser – Satan - the DEFEATED foe!!!!

Gen. 3:15 – God put ENMITY/a BLOOD FEUD between Satan and mankind (“between you and the woman”). And thus we have SPIRITUAL WARFARE! This battle unfolds and looks forward to a specific “Seed of the woman” Whom we are introduced to in Gen. 3:15 as “He” – the One – the Promised One – the One Who would be born supernaturally of the seed of woman (w/o aid from man; a woman doesn’t have a seed) – Who is God - Who would come sometime in the future to resolve the problem of sin! Within the judgment of God on the earth and on man, we have a glorious promise and the plan of the outworking of that promise begins. From Gen. 3:15 we have the UNFOLDING of the PROMISE-PLAN and from Gen. 3:15 the battle rages!

7

In the midst of the context of SIN, IMMEDIATELY God provides THE resolution for sin. In the midst of judgment there is a promise. This is the first promise we see in Scripture about an individual Who appears to be the resolution for sin. Gen. 3:15 has been called *protoevangelium* which means the “first gospel”. “Gospel” is good news!

What is the good news from God? Against the backdrop of sin and judgment, God promised hope in the provision of “the” resolution of sin.

Regarding God's plan, we need to know that God CREATED – He revealed Himself. Man responded in rebellion. Man sinned against God!

In the Bible there are four words which summarize God's PLAN OF REDEMPTION for the world:

CREATION FALL REDEMPTION RESTORATION

Following the FALL, God promised REDEMPTION and RESTORATION.

How was God to bring about REDEMPTION? Through the REDEEMER. Who is...JESUS. The PROMISE-PLAN of God – His plan of redemption on earth unfolds from the third chapter of Genesis through to the end of Revelation! The PROMISE-PLAN of God forms one continuous message placed into Israel's history! And, consider that God's mercy, grace love, holiness, justice, faithfulness, immutability.... (God does not change) are brilliantly displayed against the backdrop of sin!

The first Messianic prophecy clearly teaches us that the Messiah would SUFFER. The first Messianic prophecy doesn't tell us He would first come as a conquering King. He would SUFFER. He would be one of us – He would be human. BUT the first Messianic prophecy also suggests that this would be a supernatural birth (virgin birth) because a woman does not have a seed.

Genesis 3 goes on to tell us of God's judgment on the woman and on the man and the curse on the earth. Man was separated from God. Physical and spiritual death began.

Gen. 3:7 - *Then the eyes of both of them were opened, and they knew that*

they were naked; and they sewed fig leaves together and made themselves coverings

Gen. 3:21 - *the LORD God made tunics of skin and clothed them.* In lieu of the fig leaves they crafted for themselves. The first physical death should have been the man and his wife...but it was an animal. WHY? What message was being declared?

- Someone sins – there must be death (Rom. 6:23).
- Substitutionary death – an innocent animal taking the place of one who sins.
- Blood was shed.

If we do not believe and accept by faith the first three chapters in Genesis, the remainder of the Bible becomes a puzzle that cannot be pieced together!

Genesis is the clue and key to what God is planning and what God has revealed throughout Scripture:

- God restoring His original plan is the foundation of Scripture.
- Everything that was lost must be restored...and even enhanced!