

# GENESIS

## Outline of Contents

TO know God's Word, you have to begin at the beginning, the book of Genesis. The universe, the human race, marriage, sin—Genesis records the beginning of these and more. God's dealings with Adam, Noah, Abraham, Isaac, Jacob and Joseph make crystal clear that God loves and leads his people—even though they still sin. As you read Genesis, remember: From the beginning God has always wanted his people to return his love by obeying him. He still wants the same from you.

The universe, the earth and man (1:1–2:25)  
Man's fall and the results of sin (3:1–5:32)  
The story of Noah (6:1–9:29)  
The scattering of the human race (10:1–11:32)  
The life of Abraham (12:1–25:18)  
Isaac and his family (25:19–26:35)  
Jacob and his sons (27:1–37:1)  
The life of Joseph (37:2–50:26)

### *The Beginning*

**1** In the beginning God created the heavens and the earth. <sup>2</sup>Now the earth was<sup>a</sup> formless and empty, darkness was over the surface of the deep, and the Spirit of God was hovering over the waters.

<sup>3</sup>And God said, "Let there be light," and there was light. <sup>4</sup>God saw that the light was good, and he separated the light from the darkness. <sup>5</sup>God called the

light "day," and the darkness he called "night." And there was evening, and there was morning—the first day.

<sup>6</sup>And God said, "Let there be an expanse between the waters to separate water from water." <sup>7</sup>So God made the expanse and separated the water under the expanse from the water above it. And it was so. <sup>8</sup>God called the expanse "sky." And there was evening, and there was morning—the second day.

<sup>9</sup>And God said, "Let the water under the sky

<sup>a2</sup> Or possibly *became*

# WAS THERE A BEGINNING IN THE BEGINNING?

In science class, Alene is being exposed to the latest theories about the origin of the universe.

“Students, some scientists believe the big bang theory that the cosmos suddenly exploded into existence by chance about 15 billion years ago. Others think the universe has always existed. Those are probably the two best theories.”

## Look It Up

Without chemical details, mentions of atomic theory, descriptions of pulsars or precise dates, the Bible asserts: “In the beginning God created the heavens and the earth” (Genesis 1:1).

Someone has suggested that the reason for this lack of technical information is that the Bible wasn’t written as a science textbook. It’s primarily a revelation from God about how we can know him.

So while it doesn’t answer every little question about origins, the Bible does answer the big one: The universe is not the product of blind chance, and it hasn’t always existed. It was specially created by God.

## Think It Through

Follow this reasoning:

- Anything that comes into existence must have a cause. (The scientific principle of causality.)
- The universe came into existence.

(The second law of thermodynamics, or the fact that the universe is running out of energy and moving toward disorder, plus the rapid expansion of the universe and the discovery of a universal radiation “echo” all suggest an initial point of beginning. Noted scientists agree with this conclusion.)

- Therefore, the universe must have a cause.

## Work It Out

Is the debate over origins important? Most definitely. Is it hard to comprehend? You bet.

All the more reason to pray: “Father, I probably will never understand all the technical arguments on the subject of origins. But at least give me a good general grasp of the main issues so that I can stand against the attacks on my faith that are sure to come. Amen.”

## Nail It Down

Read the story of beginnings in Genesis 1.

Turn to pages 529, 621, 1188 and 1348 for other readings on origins.  
Turn to page 5 for Tuesday’s reading.

Topic

**ORIGINS**

be gathered to one place, and let dry ground appear.” And it was so. <sup>10</sup>God called the dry ground “land,” and the gathered waters he called “seas.” And God saw that it was good.

<sup>11</sup>Then God said, “Let the land produce vegetation: seed-bearing plants and trees on the land that bear fruit with seed in it, according to their various kinds.” And it was so. <sup>12</sup>The land produced vegetation: plants bearing seed according to their kinds and trees bearing fruit with seed in it according to their kinds. And God saw that it was good. <sup>13</sup>And there was evening, and there was morning—the third day.

<sup>14</sup>And God said, “Let there be lights in the expanse of the sky to separate the day from the night, and let them serve as signs to mark seasons and days and years. <sup>15</sup>and let them be lights in the expanse of the sky to give light on the earth.” And it was so. <sup>16</sup>God made two great lights—the greater light to govern the day and the lesser light to govern the night. He also made the stars. <sup>17</sup>God set them in the expanse of the sky to give light on the earth, <sup>18</sup>to govern the day and the night, and to separate light from darkness. And God saw that it was good. <sup>19</sup>And there was evening, and there was morning—the fourth day.

<sup>20</sup>And God said, “Let the water teem with living creatures, and let birds fly above the earth across the expanse of the sky.”

<sup>21</sup>So God created the great creatures of the sea and every living and moving thing with which the water teems, according to their kinds, and every winged bird according to its kind. And God saw that it was good. <sup>22</sup>God blessed them and said, “Be fruitful and increase in number and fill the water in the seas, and let the birds increase on the earth.”

<sup>23</sup>And there was evening, and there was morning—the fifth day.

<sup>24</sup>And God said, “Let the land produce living creatures according to their kinds: livestock, creatures that move along the ground, and wild animals, each according to its kind.” And it was so. <sup>25</sup>God made the wild animals according to their kinds, the livestock according to their kinds, and all the creatures that move along the ground according to

their kinds. And God saw that it was good.

<sup>26</sup>Then God said, “Let us make man in our image, in our likeness, and let them rule over the fish of the sea and the birds of the air, over the livestock, over all the earth,<sup>a</sup> and over all the creatures that move along the ground.”

<sup>27</sup>So God created man in his own image, in the image of God he created him; male and female he created them.

<sup>28</sup>God blessed them and said to them, “Be fruitful and increase in number; fill the earth and subdue it. Rule over the fish of the sea and the birds of the air and over every living creature that moves on the ground.”

<sup>29</sup>Then God said, “I give you every seed-bearing plant on the face of the whole earth and every tree that has fruit with seed in it. They will be yours for food. <sup>30</sup>And to all the beasts of the earth and all the birds of the air and all the creatures that move on the ground—everything that has the breath of life in it—I give every green plant for food.” And it was so.

<sup>31</sup>God saw all that he had made, and it was very good. And there was evening, and there was morning—the sixth day.

**2** Thus the heavens and the earth were completed in all their vast array.

<sup>2</sup>By the seventh day God had finished the work he had been doing; so on the seventh day he rested<sup>b</sup> from all his work.

<sup>3</sup>And God blessed the seventh day and made it holy, because on it he rested from all the work of creating that he had done.

### *Adam and Eve*

<sup>4</sup>This is the account of the heavens and the earth when they were created.

When the LORD God made the earth and the heavens—<sup>5</sup>and no shrub of the field had yet appeared on the earth<sup>c</sup> and no plant of the field had yet sprung up, for the LORD God had not sent rain on the earth<sup>c</sup> and there was no man to work the ground, <sup>6</sup>but streams<sup>d</sup> came up from the earth and watered the whole surface of the ground—<sup>7</sup>the LORD God formed the man<sup>e</sup> from the

<sup>a</sup>26 Hebrew; Syriac *all the wild animals*    <sup>b</sup>2 Or *ceased*; also in verse 3    <sup>c</sup>5 Or *land*; also in verse 6

<sup>d</sup>6 Or *mist*    <sup>e</sup>7 The Hebrew for *man* (*adam*) sounds like and may be related to the Hebrew for *ground* (*adamah*); it is also the name *Adam* (see Gen. 2:20).

dust of the ground and breathed into his nostrils the breath of life, and the man became a living being.

<sup>8</sup>Now the LORD God had planted a garden in the east, in Eden; and there he put the man he had formed. <sup>9</sup>And the LORD God made all kinds of trees grow out of the ground—trees that were pleasing to the eye and good for food. In the middle of the garden were the tree of life and the tree of the knowledge of good and evil.

<sup>10</sup>A river watering the garden flowed from Eden; from there it was separated into four headwaters. <sup>11</sup>The name of the first is the Pishon; it winds through the entire land of Havilah, where there is gold. <sup>12</sup>(The gold of that land is good; aromatic resin<sup>a</sup> and onyx are also there.) <sup>13</sup>The name of the second river is the Gihon; it winds through the entire land of Cush.<sup>b</sup> <sup>14</sup>The name of the third river is the Tigris; it runs along the east side of Asshur. And the fourth river is the Euphrates.

<sup>15</sup>The LORD God took the man and put him in the Garden of Eden to work it and take care of it. <sup>16</sup>And the LORD God commanded the man, “You are free to eat from any tree in the garden; <sup>17</sup>but you must not eat from the tree of the knowledge of good and evil, for when you eat of it you will surely die.”

<sup>18</sup>The LORD God said, “It is not good for the man to be alone. I will make a helper suitable for him.”

<sup>19</sup>Now the LORD God had formed out of the ground all the beasts of the field and all the birds of the air. He brought them to the man to see what he would name them; and whatever the man called each living creature, that was its name. <sup>20</sup>So the man gave names to all the livestock, the birds of the air and all the beasts of the field.

But for Adam<sup>c</sup> no suitable helper was found. <sup>21</sup>So the LORD God caused the man to fall into a deep sleep; and while he was sleeping, he took one of the man’s ribs<sup>d</sup> and closed up the place with flesh. <sup>22</sup>Then the LORD God made a woman from the rib<sup>e</sup> he had taken out of the man, and he brought her to the man.

<sup>23</sup>The man said,

“This is now bone of my bones  
and flesh of my flesh;  
she shall be called ‘woman,’<sup>f</sup>  
for she was taken out of man.”

<sup>24</sup>For this reason a man will leave his father

and mother and be united to his wife, and they will become one flesh.

<sup>25</sup>The man and his wife were both naked, and they felt no shame.

### *The Fall of Man*

**3** Now the serpent was more crafty than any of the wild animals the LORD God had made. He said to the woman, “Did God really say, ‘You must not eat from any tree in the garden?’”

<sup>2</sup>The woman said to the serpent, “We may eat fruit from the trees in the garden, <sup>3</sup>but God did say, ‘You must not eat fruit from the tree that is in the middle of the garden, and you must not touch it, or you will die.’”

<sup>4</sup>“You will not surely die,” the serpent said to the woman. <sup>5</sup>“For God knows that when you eat of it your eyes will be opened, and you will be like God, knowing good and evil.”

<sup>6</sup>When the woman saw that the fruit of the tree was good for food and pleasing to the eye, and also desirable for gaining wisdom, she took some and ate it. She also gave some to her husband, who was with her, and he ate it. <sup>7</sup>Then the eyes of both of them were opened, and they realized they were naked; so they sewed fig leaves together and made coverings for themselves.

<sup>8</sup>Then the man and his wife heard the sound of the LORD God as he was walking in the garden in the cool of the day, and they hid from the LORD God among the trees of the garden. <sup>9</sup>But the LORD God called to the man, “Where are you?”

<sup>10</sup>He answered, “I heard you in the garden, and I was afraid because I was naked; so I hid.”

<sup>11</sup>And he said, “Who told you that you were naked? Have you eaten from the tree that I commanded you not to eat from?”

<sup>12</sup>The man said, “The woman you put here with me—she gave me some fruit from the tree, and I ate it.”

<sup>13</sup>Then the LORD God said to the woman, “What is this you have done?”

The woman said, “The serpent deceived me, and I ate.”

<sup>14</sup>So the LORD God said to the serpent, “Because you have done this,

“Cursed are you above all the livestock  
and all the wild animals!  
You will crawl on your belly  
and you will eat dust

<sup>a</sup>12 Or good; pearls    <sup>b</sup>13 Possibly southeast Mesopotamia    <sup>c</sup>20 Or the man    <sup>d</sup>21 Or took part of the man’s side    <sup>e</sup>22 Or part    <sup>f</sup>23 The Hebrew for woman sounds like the Hebrew for man.

**R**on is about to begin his last year at Murphy High. He's a starter on the football team. He has a bunch of friends—even a girlfriend. On top of everything, he's a Christian. But believe it or not, Ron still feels lonely sometimes:

"I don't know . . . it's hard to explain. I mean, I can find people to do stuff with, but nobody is willing to take the time to listen to what I think. Nobody really understands me. I guess you could say I just don't feel very important."

## Look It Up

Loneliness is something all people feel some of the time, and some people feel all of the time. Even some prominent Bible characters wrestled with that awful dilemma of feeling cut off and isolated.

King David:

Because of all my enemies,  
I am the utter contempt of my neighbors;  
I am a dread to my friends—  
those who see me on the street flee from me.  
I am forgotten by them as though I were dead;  
I have become like broken pottery  
(Psalm 31:11–12).

Job: Job 19:13–14.

The apostle Paul: "At my first defense, no one came to my support, but everyone deserted me" (2 Timothy 4:16).

## Think It Through

Let's correct a common misconception: It isn't just homeless people or society's outcasts who feel the sting of loneliness. Albert Einstein reportedly once told a friend, "It is strange to be known so universally and yet be so lonely." And despite being one of the richest men in America, Howard Hughes spent the last 20 years of his life in almost total seclusion.

## Work It Out

You live in a world filled with lonely people (you may even be one yourself). If you're lonely, here's a prayer you can pray right now:

"Father in heaven, I need you right now. Give me insight as I read your Word. Fill my loneliness with your life. Then use me to bring comfort to other people who face lives of 'solitary confinement.' "

## Nail It Down

Read and think about the implications of Genesis 2:18.

Turn to pages 816, 1047 and 1222 for other readings on loneliness.  
Turn to page 6 for Wednesday's reading.

Topic

**LONELINESS**