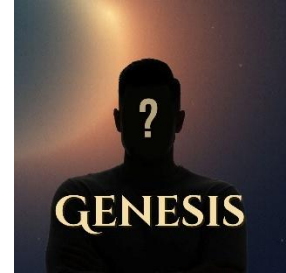


Genesis

Harvest Community Church
2025

This fall we'll begin a look at the foundational bedrock of the entire Bible: the book of Genesis. This book not only starts the Bible, it also sets the course for everything that follows. So, familiarity with Genesis helps us make sense of everything else in the Bible.



A Complete Set

Genesis doesn't stand alone; in fact, the first five books of the Bible were written by Moses as a complete set. Scholars refer to this collection as *The Pentateuch*, which means "five-part book." Together, this 5-volume set forms the foundation of the Bible. The first volume, Genesis, serves as an introduction: it describes God, humanity, and the world, and introduces the Bible's redemptive message which culminates in the ministry of Jesus.

How is Genesis organized?

We'll cover the first 11 chapters of Genesis this fall. These chapters have a clear **shape**: three narrative units connected by two genealogies:

Narrative: Adam, sin, curse, & hope (chapters 1-4)

Genealogy: connecting Adam to Noah (chapter 5)

Narrative: Noah, flood, renewed covenant (chapters 6 – 9:17)

Genealogy: Table of nations (chapter 9:18 – 10:32)

Narrative: Tower of Babel, curse of languages (chapter 11:1-10)

This structure is built around a single **critical question** which emerges from the first narrative: in chapter 3 sin has entered God's good world and wrecked it, making its corrupting presence felt everywhere. In verse 15 God declares that he will send a savior who will ultimately defeat sin's influence and undo its curse. This savior is identified only as a descendent of Eve, which leads us to the central question of not only Genesis, but of the entire Bible: **who will this savior be??** The structure of Genesis traces the generations in pursuit of the one who will bring God's salvation promise to fruition once and for all.

Genesis: where Biblical themes get their start

The Bible's storyline unfolds by developing several interrelated themes, most of which get introduced in these early chapters of Genesis. Knowing how to spot these themes will help us read Genesis – and the rest of the Bible – better.

Major Biblical themes introduced in Genesis include:

- **God:** the unique creator of everything, to whom we are accountable
- **Kingdom/king:** the world under God's righteous ruler
- **Temple/priests:** the place where God's presence dwells and can be approached

- **Covenant:** a solemn commitment that structures the relationship between God & man.
- **Rest (Sabbath):** deep joy in the presence of God and his works
- **Marriage:** an illustration of God's relationship with his people
- **Blessing vs. Curse**
- The **promise of a human redeemer** who will defeat sin and reverse the Curse
- **Conflict:** between the descendants of the woman & the descendants of the serpent
- **Atonement:** sin causes guilt & shame which must be covered

These themes get picked up and further developed as you read the Bible, and they all reach their climax in the life, death, and resurrection of Jesus.

What's the main message of Genesis?

With all this important thematic material, it can be easy to forget that Genesis is a single, coherent narrative that propels the Bible's message forward and addresses humanity's most basic needs. It's God's record of humanity's good creation, fall from blessing, and God's promise to what we corrupted for our good and for his glory.

We can summarize Genesis' message like this:

*A good world marred by human sin, God promised he will mend.
A seed of hope,
Preserved through time,
To make us new again.*

Additional Resources for Genesis

The *Harvest Community Church Podcast* will have several Genesis-related episodes, starting with Episode 43 (harvestcc.org/podcast)

From Egypt to Eden, book by Alex Duke (see Harvest Books in the Atrium)

Covenant and God's Purpose for the World, book by Thomas Schreiner (see Harvest Books in the Atrium)

Genesis Sermon Texts

October 26 1:1-2:3
November 2 2:4-25
November 9 3:1-24
November 16 4:1-26

November 23 5:1 – 6:8
November 30 6:9 – 7:24
December 7 8:1 – 9:17
December 14 9:18 – 11:9