

Genesis - cont.

Fifth, note the use of Genesis in the New Testament. All the New Testament books reference Genesis except three. Only seven of the fifty chapters in Genesis are not referenced in the New Testament. Each chapter of Genesis 1-11 is referenced in the New Testament and there are 200 specific references to Genesis in the New Testament. If Genesis is not accepted as literal and historical, then neither can the New Testament be accepted as well.

In summary, the book of Genesis is to be taken as literal and historical because of the writing style of Moses, Genesis' relation to the rest of the Bible, it was accepted as literal by Jesus, it was accepted as literal by the Apostles, and the use of Genesis in the New Testament.

In the Beginning...

Genesis 1:1 reads: "In the beginning..." Genesis is the foundation of the whole Bible. If it falls, the entire Bible falls. Let us not be "*fools and slow of heart to believe all that the prophets have spoken*" (Luke 24:25-27). Let us accept all Scripture, even Genesis, as the inspired Word God (2 Timothy 3:16-17). - *Chris Reeves*

- Word of the Week -

"Gravity" (Gr. *σεμνότης*) is a word that means serious, reverential, respectful, or dignified. A Christian is to live a life that is serious in serving the Lord (1 Timothy 2:2; 3:4; Titus 2:7). Yes, there is a time to laugh, but one's life in general is to be characterized with seriousness, not frivolity. Let's go out this week and take seriously our service to Jesus and others.

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For though we walk in the flesh, we do not war according to the flesh, for the weapons of our warfare are not of the flesh, but divinely powerful for the destruction of fortresses.
- 2 Corinthians 10:3-4 -

Is Genesis Historical or Mythological?

Why This Study?

Why ask whether Genesis is historical or mythological? Many liberal theologians (including some church members) do not accept parts of the Old Testament as a reliable record of historical fact. In many seminaries today, young people are taught that Genesis is a mythological book. Believe it or not, Genesis is even taught this way in some church buildings.

Because of this, Christians must be certain of their faith in the Bible and Christians must be able to tell others about the reliability of the Bible. Does it really matter how we view Genesis as long as we believe in Jesus? Yes!

Regarding Genesis, many question the following...

- the six, literal days of creation
- the origin of man
- the creation of woman from Adam
- the Deceiver (Satan) as a literal serpent
- the size of the ark and its contents
- the world-wide flood of Noah
- the tower of Babel

How will we respond to this?

Why Do So Many Reject Genesis?

Many “scholars” and others reject Genesis as historical because they believe they have found similarities between Genesis and mythological literature, like the Babylonian *Enuma Elish*. Others have found allegorical interpretations of Genesis among early Christians, or they have a rationalistic refusal to believe in miracles. The destructive work of 19th Century higher criticism to “demythologize” the text of Genesis is also a factor. And, evolutionary presuppositions concerning origin and the age of the earth have caused some to doubt the message of Genesis.

Why Genesis Is Literal and Historical

I would argue for the historical nature of Genesis from the following points of evidence. First, the writing style of Moses is not mythical, allegorical, or poetic. Moses uses “like” (13:10; 25:25) or “as” (3:22) very few times in the book. Note that the same type historical narrative in Genesis 1-11 is also found in Genesis 12-50. Is the whole book mythological, really? God lets us know what we are reading by the context (Lk. 8:4ff; Gal. 4:21ff; Rev. 1:1ff).

Second, the relation of Genesis to the rest of the Bible story demonstrates its literal, historical reliability. Genesis speaks

of the origin, fall, and redemption of mankind (Gen. 1:1-3:15). Redemption through Jesus Christ is the central theme of the whole Bible (Gen. 5; 12:2; Mt. 1:1ff; Lk. 3:23ff). Also, the Bible opens and closes the same way – with the tree of life (Genesis 2-3; Rev. 2:7; 22:2). If Genesis is not true, Jesus is not necessary.

Third, Genesis was accepted as literal and historical by Jesus. He believed that God ordained marriage (Matthew 19:4-6; Genesis 2:18-24), he believed in Abel (Matthew 23:35; Genesis 4), he believed in the flood (Matthew 24:37-39; Genesis 6-7), and he believed in the Devil (John 8:44; Genesis 3:1-4). Jesus made important moral and doctrinal arguments based upon the historical nature of Genesis.

Fourth, Genesis was accepted as literal and historical by the Apostles. Paul (Romans 5:12-14; 1 Corinthians 11:8-9,12; 14:34; 15:22,45,47; 2 Corinthians 11:3; 1 Timothy 2:13-14), Peter (1 Peter 3:20; 2 Peter 2:5; 3:3-7), John (1 John 3:12; Revelation 2; 12; 22), and Jude (Jude 11,14), all referenced persons and events in the book of Genesis. The Apostles made important moral and doctrinal arguments based upon the historical nature of Genesis. - cont.