

Is Genesis Reliable?

The last time I spoke here at the Bible school I spoke on The reliability of the Bible.

Today I want to discuss the reliability of Genesis. You are no doubt familiar with the organization Answers in Genesis. Answers in Genesis is a catalyst to bring reformation by reclaiming the foundations of our faith which are found in the Bible, from the very first verse.

One of the biggest challenges before us is not so much countering the teaching of evolution and millions of years in the secular culture—but dealing with this wrong teaching in the church!

How big an issue is this?

According to a Major Denomination that boasts over a billion members, and is the world's largest church :

In reality the first 11 chapters of Genesis contain no scientific statements: the author lived at a period when the very concept of modern scientific investigation had not entered the human mind.”

Interesting statement since it was Moses who penned the first five books of the Bible and wrote Genesis. According to the Bible:

Moses was educated in all the wisdom of the Egyptians and was powerful in speech and action. (Acts 7:22 NIV)

Moses lived in the times when the pyramids were being built. Scientists from around the world have tried to understand how the Egyptians erected their giant pyramids. Moses knew this. Was he scientifically illiterate?

According to the same Major Denomination paper: *Genesis is a theological work and the literary form in which the theological insights are expressed in the ancient form sometimes called myth, which presents profound realities in the form of symbolic stories.*

Are the first 11 chapters of Genesis myth?

What happens if we throw out Genesis?

We loose the concept of Marriage (*Gen 2:22 NIV*) *Then the LORD God made a woman from the rib he had taken out of the man, and he brought her to the man.*

We loose the importance of work (*Gen 2:15 NIV*) *The LORD God took the man and put him in the Garden of Eden to work it and take care of it.*

We loose the permission to eat meat: (*Gen 9:3 NIV*) *Everything that lives and moves will be food for you. Just as I gave you the green plants, I now give you everything.*

We loose the origin of wearing clothes (*Gen 3:21 NIV*) *The LORD God made garments of skin for Adam and his wife and clothed them.*

We loose the origin of Sin: (*Gen 2:16-17 NIV*) *And the LORD God commanded the man, "You are free to eat from any tree in the garden; 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."*

So if we throw out Genesis, or even just the first 11 chapters of Genesis, what becomes of sin? And if we loose the origin of sin, where is our need for a savior? Some say, isn't believing in Jesus enough? It is enough for salvation, but how do you know you need a savior?

Some believe in Progressive revelation: It gets better as it is developed. Quran is looked at in that way. Earlier passages are not as weighty as latter. But the Bible says it is all equally important:

(2 Tim 3:16 KJV) All scripture is given by inspiration of God, and is profitable for doctrine, for reproof, for correction, for instruction in righteousness:

One of the things that impresses me of the New Testament writers and even the early church fathers is their extensive use of scripture to interpret other scriptures. So let us use scripture to interpret the facts of Genesis:

Creation

Genesis says:

(Gen 1:1 NIV) In the beginning God created the heavens and the earth.

Jesus says:

(Mark 13:19 NIV) because those will be days of distress unequalled from the beginning, when God created the world, until now--and never to be equaled again.

Paul says:

(Acts 17:24 NIV) "The God who made the world and everything in it is the Lord of heaven and earth and does not live in temples built by hands.

Paul writes:

(Col 1:16 NIV) For by him all things were created: things in heaven and on earth, visible and invisible, whether thrones or powers or rulers or authorities; all things were created by him and for him.

The twenty-four elders in Revelation say

(Rev 4:11 NIV) "You are worthy, our Lord and God, to receive glory and honor and power, for you created all things, and by your will they were created and have their being."

Who Created Man?

Genesis says:

(Gen 1:27 NIV) So God created man in his own image, in the image of God he created him; male and female he created them.

Jesus says:

(Mat 19:3-4 NIV) Some Pharisees came to him to test him. They asked, "Is it lawful for a man to divorce his wife for any and every reason?" "Haven't you read," he replied, "that at the beginning the Creator 'made them male and female,' [Ge 1:27 5:2]"

Marriage

Genesis says:

(Gen 2:24 NIV) For this reason a man will leave his father and mother and be united to his wife, and they will become one flesh.

Jesus says:

(Mat 19:5-6 NIV) and said, 'For this reason a man will leave his father and mother and be united to his wife, and the two will become one flesh'? So they are no longer two, but one. Therefore what God has joined together, let man not separate."

Paul writes:

(Eph 5:31 NIV) "For this reason a man will leave his father and mother and be united to his wife, and the two will become one flesh."

Adam & Eve:

Genesis says:

(Gen 3:20 KJV) And Adam called his wife's name Eve; because she was the mother of all living.

Paul says:

(1 Tim 2:13-14 NIV) For Adam was formed first, then Eve. And Adam was not the one deceived; it was the woman who was deceived and became a sinner.

Eve & the Serpent

Genesis says:

(Gen 3:13 NIV) Then the LORD God said to the woman, "What is this you have done?" The woman said, "The serpent deceived me, and I ate."

Paul says:

(2 Cor 11:3 NIV) But I am afraid that just as Eve was deceived by the serpent's cunning, your minds may somehow be led astray from your sincere and pure devotion to Christ.

Cain & Abel

Genesis says:

(Gen 4:2-4 NIV) Later she gave birth to his brother Abel. Now Abel kept flocks, and Cain worked the soil. In the course of time Cain brought some of the fruits of the soil as an offering to the LORD. But Abel brought fat portions from some of the firstborn of his flock. The LORD looked with favor on Abel and his offering,

Jesus says:

(Mat 23:35 NIV) And so upon you will come all the righteous blood that has been shed on earth, from the blood of righteous Abel to the blood of Zechariah son of Berekiah, whom you murdered between the temple and the altar.

The Writer of Hebrews says:

(Heb 11:4 NIV) By faith Abel offered God a better sacrifice than Cain did. By faith he was commended as a righteous man, when God spoke well of his offerings. And by faith he still speaks, even though he is dead.

Enoch

Genesis says:

(Gen 5:24 NIV) Enoch walked with God; then he was no more, because God took him away.

Luke writes:

(Luke 3:37 NIV) the son of Methuselah, the son of Enoch, the son of Jared, the son of Mahalalel, the son of Kenan,

The Writer of Hebrews says:

(Heb 11:5 NIV) By faith Enoch was taken from this life, so that he did not experience death; he could not be found, because God had taken him away. For before he was taken, he was commended as one who pleased God.

Jude writes:

(Jude 1:14 NIV) Enoch, the seventh from Adam, prophesied about these men: "See, the Lord is coming with thousands upon thousands of his holy ones

Noah & the Flood

Genesis says:

(Gen 7:5-7 NIV) And Noah did all that the LORD commanded him. Noah was six hundred years old when the floodwaters came on the earth. And Noah and his sons and his wife and his sons' wives entered the ark to escape the waters of the flood.

Jesus says:

(Mat 24:37-38 NIV) As it was in the days of Noah, so it will be at the coming of the Son of Man. For in the days before the flood, people were eating and drinking, marrying and giving in marriage, up to the day Noah entered the ark;

The Writer of Hebrews says:

(Heb 11:7 NIV) By faith Noah, when warned about things not yet seen, in holy fear built an ark to save his family. By his faith he condemned the world and became heir of the righteousness that comes by faith.

Peter writes:

(2 Pet 2:5 NIV) if he did not spare the ancient world when he brought the flood on its ungodly people, but protected Noah, a preacher of righteousness, and seven others;

How Many Days of creation?

Genesis says:

(Gen 2:2 NIV) By the seventh day God had finished the work he had been doing; so on the seventh day he rested from all his work.

The Lord God says:

(Exo 20:11 NIV) For in six days the LORD made the heavens and the earth, the sea, and all that is in them, but he rested on the seventh day. Therefore the LORD blessed the Sabbath day and made it holy.

Why is six literal days so important?

Charles Templeton left the faith because he could not reconcile the God of love with nature that was “red in tooth and claw”

But the answers are in Genesis:

God made everything good

(Gen 1:25 NIV) 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.

Animals originally ate plants

(Gen 1:30 NIV) 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.

Death came through Sin

(Rom 5:12 NIV) Therefore, just as sin entered the world through one man, and death through sin, and in this way death came to all men, because all sinned--

The Earth was cursed because of man's sin

(Gen 3:17 NIV) To Adam he said, "Because you listened to your wife and ate from the tree about which I commanded you, 'You must not eat of it,' "Cursed is the ground because of you; through painful toil you will eat of it all the days of your life.

All creation feels the effects of sin

(Rom 8:20-22 NIV) For the creation was subjected to frustration, not by its own choice, but by the will of the one who subjected it, in hope that the creation itself will be liberated from its bondage to decay and brought into the glorious freedom of the children of God. We know that the whole creation has been groaning as in the pains of childbirth right up to the present time.

Conclusion

Genesis, means "the origin" or "coming into being" of something. It is not a literary allegory to help primitive man understand spiritual truths. It is a historical record of things that actually took place. To think other wise puts the whole Bible and even our concept of salvation in Jesus Christ at risk.