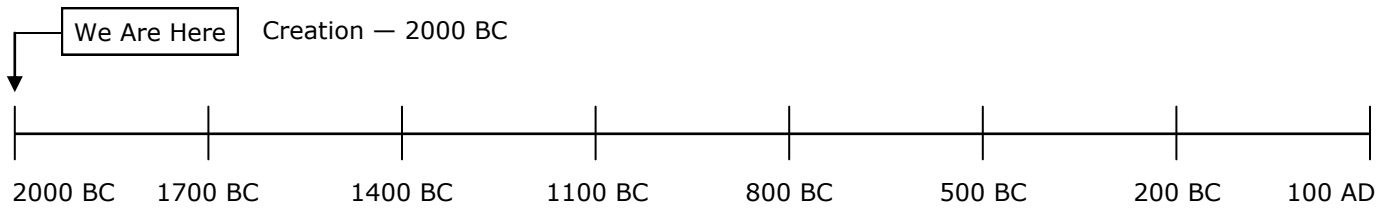


From the Beginning

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Week 1: January 1-7 — *Genesis 1-24*

2% Complete — 358 Days to Go



Helpful Resources

Weights and Measures (p.41), From Adam to Noah (p.43), Nations of Noah (p.45) Noah's Ark (p.77) Tower of Babel (p.79), Abraham's Family Tree (p.47), Twelve Sons of Israel (p.49) Map of Ancient Near East (p.95), Map of Ancient Near East with Modern Borders (p.97) Map of Land of Canaan (p.99), Article: Creation Is Crucial (p.129)

Making Sense of It All

- The Big Picture

We have in *Genesis* the origin of the universe, of man and woman, of sin and suffering, and of impending judgment. We also have the revelation of God's means to redeem mankind through one of Abraham's descendants (*12:1-3; 22:18*). It is obvious that, from the beginning, God had a redemptive plan that included sending a Savior someday — the Promised Seed (*3:15*). Thus, portrayed in *Genesis* and throughout the Old Testament is man's search for that Seed. Who would He be, when would He arrive, and what would He do to reconcile fallen man with a holy God? Several clues (called prophecies) and foreshadowing pictures (called types) of this person's identity and ministry are found in the book of *Genesis*.

- Pictures of Christ

1. **God's Original Intent** (*1:26, 27*) was that man be made in His image. He was created in God's image with Adam and was recreated in God's image through Christ (*Romans 8:29*).
2. **The First Sacrifice** (*3:21*), the concept that blood had to be shed to cover sin. God made it clear from the beginning that sin required death.
3. **The Tree of Life** (*3:22-24*) later became flesh and dwelt among us (*Rev. 2:7*). It is interesting that the Tree of Life died on a tree so that we might have life!
4. **Noah and the Ark** (*6, 7*) saved men from physical death; Christ saves men from spiritual death. See the "Ark of Noah" visual for more information.
5. **Melchizedek** (*14:17-20*) was an Old Testament appearance of Jesus. It will be through his order that He will have His priestly lineage and supersede all others (*Heb. 7:15-17*).
6. **Abraham's Covenant** (*15:9-18*) featured another appearance of Christ — the torch and oven. Abraham never walked through the blood, but God did (or rather Jesus), and, thus, made a covenant with Himself to keep the promises that He made to Abraham.
7. **Isaac** (*22:1-18*), Abraham's only son (by Sarah) was to be sacrificed. He was obedient and carried the wood up the hill, as Christ did. Though God sent a ram in place of Isaac, He would send the Lamb in our place, to forge a new covenant in His flesh.

- Prophetic Passages
 1. **The First Gospel** (3:15) gives us the plot for the rest of time (*John 8:44; Romans 16:20*). From the beginning, God had it all mapped out, the story of history, its main characters, the plan of redemption, even the ending. Let the search for the Seed begin!
 2. **Noah's Prophecy** (9:25-27) foretells of the relationship between future nations.
 3. **Prophecy of Abraham** (12:1-3;17:1-8) foretells of the nation of Israel and its Messiah.
 4. **Prophecy of Ishmael** (16:11,12; 21:9-21) foretells of the enmity between Jews and Arabs. Much of the struggle and unrest between these two nations finds its roots in this simple story. The fact is that they will always be at odds until the return of Jesus.

- Personal Application
 1. **God Is Good:** Seven times in *Genesis 1*, the word "good" is used to describe creation, which reflects the nature and actions of the Creator. To be good implies "completeness." Not only is God complete or perfect in His actions, but He is also complete or perfect in His moral character, meaning that He is uncorrupted, pure, holy, or free from error. God is good; He is only capable of good. Therefore, all that He is and does is good.
 2. **God Is Judge:** It does not take long when reading the Bible to learn that God is the Judge of heaven and earth. From the beginning, He passes judgment on Adam, Eve, the serpent, Cain, the wicked people of Noah's day, Nimrod and the builders of Babel, and the inhabitants of Sodom and Gomorrah. As part of God's creation, we are accountable to the Creator for our deeds; and, a good Judge will not let the guilty go unpunished.
 3. **God Has a Plan:** It is clear to see that, from the beginning, God had a plan for mankind. The Fall did not derail it but rather unveiled it. He knew it all from the start, the plot twists and turns, the choices that the characters would make, and yet He manages to tell His story the way He wants it to unfold. Since it is so clear that God is in control of history, how confident should we be that He is control of our lives?
 4. **God Is Faithful:** Another principle established from the beginning is the fact that God is true to His word. Since He is uncorrupted, then He cannot lie. Whatever He says, He will do; and when He makes a promise or covenant, He will see it through to its completion. His faithfulness is evident in the promises that He made to Adam, Noah, and Abraham.

The Bottom Line

From the *beginning*, God had a *plan* to restore fallen man.

Questions to Consider

1. What instruction, encouragement, or insight did you gain from your reading this week?
2. How are we to explain the goodness of God in light of the wickedness of our world?
3. How does God's justice intersect with His goodness, His patience, and His love?
4. If God has a plan, then He is purposeful. So then, what are His purposes?
5. How have you witnessed God's faithfulness? Which of His promises mean most to you?