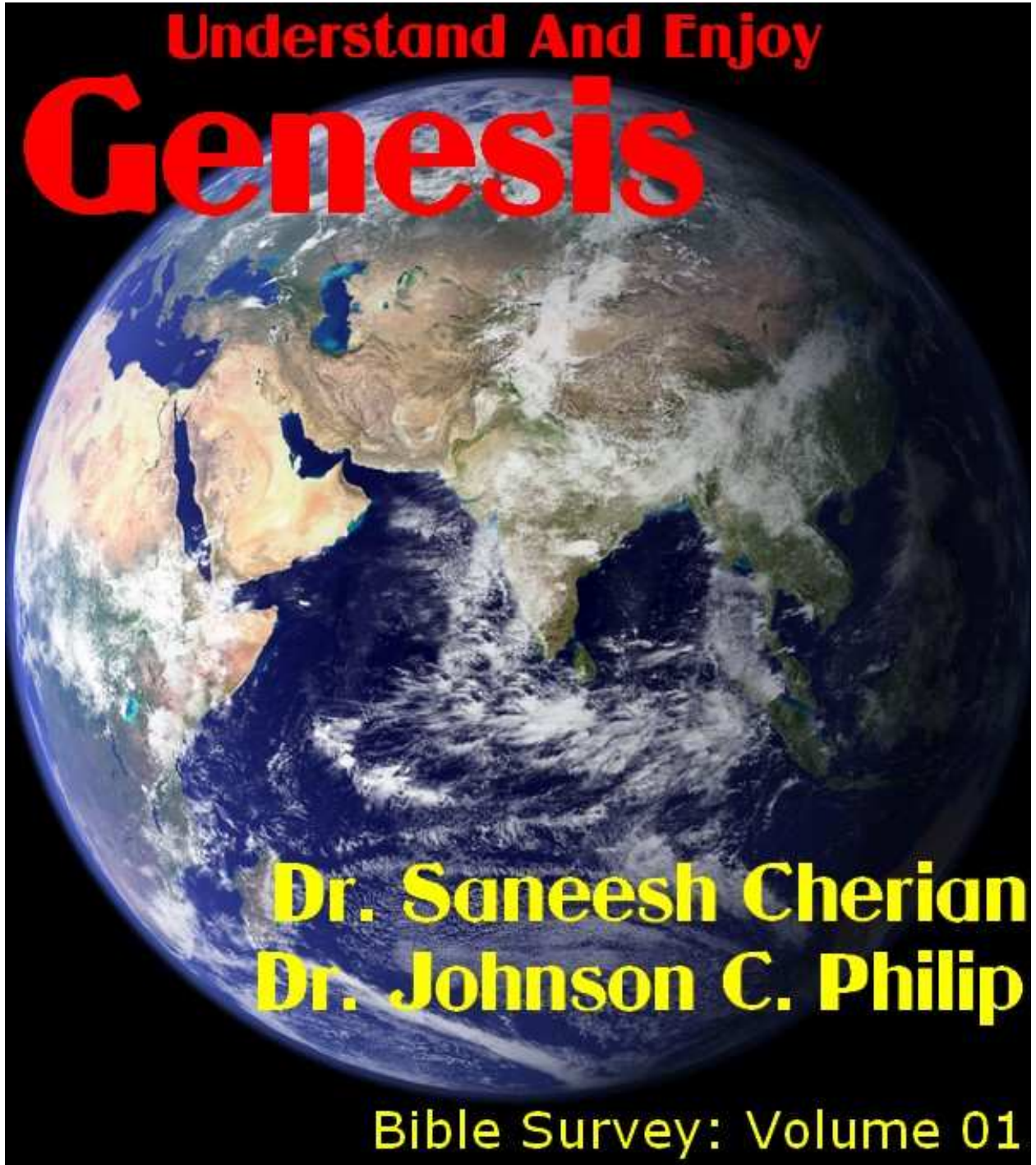


Understand And Enjoy
Genesis



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Bible Survey: Volume 01

Ideas Have Consequences. Let Us Spread The Christian WorldView!

Bible Survey Vol. 001

Understand And Enjoy Genesis

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We the authors dedicate this book to Dr. Jerry George



To record our gratefulness for his encouragement!

Bible Survey: An Introduction

Though the Bible is one single book, it is at the same time a collection of 66 different books, almost all of which differ substantially from each other both in their topic as well as in their tone. Thus it is a volume totally different from normal books that start with the introduction of a subject and then gradually progress to intermediate and advanced levels of that subject.

The Bible contains introductory, intermediate, as well as advanced subject in all its pages, and thus a bit of introduction is always helpful to the modern reader to understand the content in the best possible way. The chronology also needs a little help to understand. Though many of the biblical books are arranged in a chronological order, not all of them are placed there in the same way. While it is easy to understand the chronological progression in some books such as Genesis, the same is not true of a book like Revelation. While one can easily understand the ethical stand of a book like Proverbs, the same is not true of Ecclesiastes. While one can easily understand Ruth, the same is not true of Songs of Solomon, more so because of the cultural coloring today of such subjects.

A helping hand, in the form of a book or Bible-class, where these things are explained would help everyone. It would help them to understand the story of the Bible and the story in the Bible from cover to cover in an integrated manner. This will help the reader for the first time to relate a book like Ecclesiastes to its author and subject, removing much confusion. It would also help them to make sense out of the prophetic books and Revelation which often read like mystery stories.

Numerous Bible-students have told us that even after many years of Bible studies and exposure to expository preaching they were not able to collate and organize biblical information in a chronological manner. The problem is that of a person who studies maps of individual countries in minute detail without ever seeing a World Atlas. He simply cannot relate the information into an over-all picture. The story of the five visually handicapped men who saw an elephant is another good example for the need of an integrated picture. Thus the same people said that things changed radically for them after exposure to a single round of Bible Survey, because the Survey gave them the over-all framework that they needed to relate the history, stories, events, and other biblical data which they kept hearing in Bible classes.

For years we had wanted to pen a Bible Survey that would take advantage of the latest discoveries in Biblical lands. We also wanted to use charts and tables to make things simple because the modern student is very much at home with depiction of information in tabular form. Thanks God, the work is now in your hands.

We dedicate this work to all those who have ever wanted to know what the Bible is all about!

Genesis: An Introduction

How To Use This Guide: A tool is only good when it is used, and is only as good as efficiently it is used. This Introduction to Genesis is only a tool in your hands. It can take you where you ought to go, but it cannot go there of itself. You need to use it.

We suggest that you use this introduction to get an over-all view of the Book of Genesis. We suggest that after doing that you read Genesis in the next 12 to 15 days. Reading three chapters a day, and five on Sundays would suffice. Correlate what you read there with the chart and outlines given elsewhere in this work. This informed reading will give you a view of Genesis, and will give you a grip over the book, that no general or random reading can give you. So plan to do that today itself, and move into the Book of Genesis.

Introduction: Of all the books in the world, if one book offers the answers to key questions of human history, it is the book of Genesis. Genesis is no ordinary book, nor is it a man-made writing. Rather, God used His great and mighty servant Moses to write it down and the Jews preserved this book meticulously to hand over faithful reproductions to the church-age believers in the first century, who then preserved it faithfully till it reached each one of us in our own mother-tongues or first-languages.

Any serious study of Genesis will leave the Bible student speechless, both about human sin and depravity as well as about God's Grace. In fact the whole of Genesis can be summarized into three phrases, Divine Grace, Human Depravity, and Divine Compassion. With these in mind let us look at the Book of Genesis.

Author And Date: The Book of Genesis was written by Moses under the guidance of the Holy Spirit. In fact he authored the first five books of the Bible, the Book of Job, and also several Psalms. Information about the Mosaic authorship of Genesis and the rest of the books that he authored comes from a number of sources. The Jewish history unequivocally mentions his name as the author. The New Testament authors as well as Lord Jesus also attest to the Mosaic authorship. So much so that instead of referring to the names of the books authored by Moses, Lord Jesus and His disciples often used just the name Moses to represent the books authored by Moses. For example, in Matthew 8:4 we read "And Jesus saith unto him, See thou tell no man; but go thy way, shew thyself to the priest, and offer the gift that Moses commanded, for a testimony unto them". Here the name Moses stands for the biblical books authored by Moses (Luke 5:14; Lev 13:2; Lev 14:2).

Moses authored this book around 1500 BC during his 40-year sojourn with Israel from Egypt to Canaan. These years gave him ample time to examine the meticulous and massive written records that Jews and their forefathers used to keep from the time of Adam. The Jews zealously guarded these documents from their ancestors, and they gave ample reference material to Moses to verify genealogy and other records. In addition, during these 40 years, Moses had access to a vast amount of good quality leather and papyrus for his voluminous writing and copying activities. Since he was trained in the topmost Egyptian schools in science, technology, and languages, he was the best person in his generation to be chosen by God to pen down six books and several Psalms that form the earliest writings in the Bible.

Purpose: The name Genesis means "beginnings" and the main purpose of the Book of Genesis is to introduce to mankind the history of Creation, Fall, Promise of Salvation, God's preservation of a family and then a race of people to carry on the message of redemption. The same family and race was also to become the people from whom the Messiah was to be born.

Overview: Genesis is a very long book of 50 chapters. Thus, while there is a central thread that connects the whole book into one story, that single story is, at the same time, made up of numerous historical events that might at times not look meaningful or connected in any way. However, a careful analysis of the 50 chapters will bring out the links clearly.

In fact, a book like Genesis can be viewed and analyzed from more than one angle, and each angle will show a thread running through it. The book tells of how God created the Universe, the earth, plants, animals, and mankind. It then goes on to tell how man disobeyed God and became a sinner. From there it tells of how God promised salvation by grace through faith, and promised a Saviour who would open the way. The Saviour was to be born as a human from the race of Adam. However, Satan's treacherous activities, coupled with human sin, kept on manipulating humans so as to keep disobeying God. There was also an attempt to corrupt the Adamic line so that the promised Messiah could not be born into the Adamic family. However, in spite of human sin, God kept showing his compassion so as to fulfill His promise. We see this repeatedly in Genesis.

A study of the chart given below will make things more clear:

Analysis Of The Book Of Genesis

Who	The Human Race				The Family Of Abraham			
What	Creation	Fall	Flood	Birth Of Nations	Abraham	ISAAC	Jacob	Joseph
Reference	Ch 1-2	Ch 3-5	Ch 6-9	Ch 10-11	Ch 12-25:18	Ch 25:19-26	Ch 27-36	Ch 37-50
Emphasis	Events Are Prominent				Persons Are Prominent			
Topic	Historical				Biographical			
	The Human Race				The Hebrew Race			
Location	The Fertile Crescent [Eden-Haran]				Canaan [Haran-Canaan]		Egypt Canaan -Egypt	
How Long	Over 2000 Years c 4000 BC - c 2166 BC				281 Years c 2166 BC - 1885 BC		81 Years 1885 BC - 1804 BC	
Lesson	God Provides, Purges, Protects				God Prospers, Preserves, Promotes			

Chart Compiled By Dr. Johnson C. Philip, Dr. Saneesh Cherian 2004, 2010
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If we look at the historical narrative alone, we will see the Book of Genesis divided into eight sections, with the human race and events being prominent in the first four, and the family of Abraham and individuals (Patriarchs) dominating the last four sections. The human race is the major player in the first section, but the focus moves to the Family of Abraham in the second, because it is from that family that God's chosen people, as well as the Messiah, were to emerge.

The first part, which is mostly historical, tells of the human race from the Garden of Eden to Haran, the Fertile Crescent region. This part covers a history of over 2000 years from around 4000 BC to 2166 BC, a rapid overview in 11 chapters. Starting from Adam and his fall up to the fall during the days of Noah, and then the rebellion at Babel, we notice how God makes provisions, how He purges and disciplines sin, and how He protects a faithful remnant in the midst of all this.

In the second part, we see the history of 281 years from Haran to Canaan and then the history of 81 years from Canaan to Egypt. At the start of this section, God chooses Abraham and calls him out. Though he and his wife passed through much anxiety over their childlessness and though they tried their own human shortcut, God eventually provided Isaac as the son of promise to the family. Isaac's son, Esau thought the oldest son would inherit the blessings, but he despised his birthright and the promise went to Jacob the younger son. Jacob's sons were a mixed lot, and some of them forgot their call and committed grave sins. Thus the birthright went from the eldest son, Reuben to Judah.

What is more, God used their sinful attitude and scheming calculations to send Joseph as captive to Egypt, and then used that to protect Jacob's family, the family through which the Messiah was to come into the world. Genesis ends with the death of Joseph in Egypt.

God's provision in Creation, Eden, Noah's Ark, the selection and blessing of Abraham, Isaac, Jacob, and his sons is visible throughout Genesis. At the same time, the promptness of people to sin immediately after enjoying God's grace is also visible in Adam, Noah's generation, Babel, Abraham, Isaac, Jacob, and his children. Satan exploited these developments for his own agenda, but each time God took the situation in control and solved the problem out of compassion. We see divine provision, human failure, and divine compassion throughout Genesis.

God's Person And Work In Genesis: While every book the Bible reveals information about God's person and work, the Book of Genesis is suited in a special manner to reveal these things. For example, we can divide the 50 chapters of history in the following manner:

- An all-wise (omniscient) and all-powerful (omnipotent) God: Ch. 1, 2
- God who is love and compassion: Ch. 3, 4
- God who is holy and just: Ch. 6-9
- God of Sovereignty: Ch. 10,11
- God of Salvation: Ch. 12-25
- God of Faithfulness: Ch. 25, 26
- God of Grace: Ch. 27-36
- God of Providence: Ch. 37-50

Chapter Headings: Repeated scanning of chapter-headings or chapter-topics can be a great help in keeping the over-all picture of the way history unfolds through individual events. Here is one way of looking at it:

1. Creation
2. Creation Details
3. The Fall of Man
4. Cain Murders Abel
5. Genealogies
6. The Flood
7. The Flood
8. The Flood
9. The Rainbow & Capital Punishment
10. Genealogies
11. The Tower of Babel
12. The Call of Abraham
13. The Cowboy Conflict
14. The Kidnapping of Lot
15. Abraham Believed God
16. Ishmael is born
17. Abram becomes Abraham
18. Abraham prays for Sodom
19. Sodom is destroyed
20. Abraham lies about Sarah at Gerar
21. The Birth of Isaac
22. The Offering of Isaac
23. The Death of Sarah
24. The Bride for Isaac
25. The Death of Abraham
26. Abrahamic Covenant Confirmed to Isaac
27. Esau sells his Birthright
28. Abrahamic Covenant Confirmed to Jacob
29. Jacob Marries Leah & Rachel
30. Jacob's Cattle multiply
31. Jacob Leaves Laban
32. Jacob Becomes Israel
33. Jacob's Reunion with Esau
34. The Distress of Dinah
35. Rachel Dies, Isaac Dies
36. The Generations of Esau
37. Joseph's Dream and slavery
38. The Shame of Judah
39. Joseph in Potiphar's house
40. Joseph interprets the Butler-Baker Dreams
41. Joseph is made Minister of Agriculture
42. Joseph's 10 Brothers visit Egypt to buy corn
43. Joseph's 11 Brothers visit Egypt to buy corn
44. Benjamin and stolen silver cup

45. Joseph reveals his identity
46. Jacob and family move to Egypt
47. Joseph sells corn for Pharaoh
48. Joseph gets Double Portion via his sons
49. Jacob's assessment of, and prediction about, his Sons
50. Jacob and Joseph pass away

Summary: Genesis is the key to the human and spiritual history of mankind. It tells of God's creation, man's deliberate rebellion, God's compassion. It tells us why we are what we are, and how we behave as a result. It is also the story of how God in His compassion chose a people and a nation to be His ambassadors. None can remain spiritually lethargic after he studies the Book of Genesis in a systematic manner.

Pass The Blessing! Do Not Keep It To Yourself!

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