Women’s Bible Study

October 18, 2022

Genesis 1-11

WELCOME!

* Introductions

Review: The Pentateuch

* Pentateuch (Greek for 5 books or scrolls-Hellenized Jews of Alexandria)
* Torah (Hebrew for “law” or “instruction”-Hebrew speaking Jews)
* It’s what Jesus would have read and Jews and Muslims also hold it as Scripture.
* Written to ancient Israel as they were getting ready to enter the land of Canaan.
* Purpose:
1. To orient them to one God who created all things as compared to the nations’ many competing gods.
2. To show God’s intention in creation for relationship with Him and to reveal His character, ethical standards, and promise.
* Center Point: The law giving at Mt. Sinai which culminates in God’s glory filling the tabernacle showing God’s presence with His people, a partial restoring of what was lost in Eden.
* Author: Moses
* Sections:

-Genesis 1-11

-Genesis 12-Deuteronomy 34

* Key Verses: Genesis 12:1-3 The call and blessing of Abraham. The fulfilment of these promises constitutes the storyline of the Pentateuch. (hinge point)
* Throughout, the people often are lacking faith or are openly rebellious. Yet, God continues to pursue them making the Pentateuch a story of divine mercy towards a wayward people. (Trace God’s faithfulness through the Bible)
* The promises of the Pentateuch find their ultimate fulfillment in Jesus.

Group Study:

Break into groups and work through study guide of Genesis 1-11.

Discuss together

Teaching:

**Genesis 1: Creator**

* Genesis opens with “In the beginning…” It is a narrative, a story.
* From the outset, Genesis 1 is not just an account of creation. (Example: The earth was without form and void, waters, etc) Immediately we have to do something with the poetic nature of the account. What is the purpose of this creation story?
* What is one word to describe God? How does God introduce Himself?
* Look at Who, What, When, Where, Why, and How. Which ones does this account answer? Who and How

🡪Who: God How? He spoke (Theme: The power of God’s word)

Key points of Genesis 1:

1. God is the Creator and He spoke all things into existence.
2. He declares what is good.
3. In the creation process, there was chaos (darkness, without form, void) that was moved to order.
4. Days 1-3 God forms (light, sky, sea/land) Days 4-6 God fills (sun/moon/stars, birds/fish, animals/man)
5. Man was made in God’s image, after His likeness to have dominion. God created them created them male and female.
6. 1st command-to be fruitful and multiply. Man was created for a purpose-to extend God’s glory throughout the earth. He is told to have dominion.
7. God is generous-He gives to every animal and man food. (Theme: feasting)
8. God rested on the 7th day. The 7th day is blessed and later becomes the foundation for Sabbath and the week. (Note of marking of time-day, month, seasons, year)

🡪Thoughts on the Creation story:

* The timing of events is not the purpose for the story. The point is that God created everything through the power of His Word. This is an introduction to the author and main character of the story.
* Consider the command-be fruitful and multiply. They were not to just sit around the garden and play harps. They were to work, have dominion, create, etc. What would the earth have looked like if they were in the garden for 200 years? (Building, music, etc) God took 6 days to form the earth as a pattern for creating!
* Death is a result of the fall (See Romans 8:20-22-Creation groaning) If creation days were millions of years, we have to account for death.
* Adam and Eve were historical people. They have a genealogy and Jesus referred to the creation story. (Mark 10)

**Genesis 2: Special Creation (The Creator’s Unique Creation)**

* This is like a zooming in on a special part of creation-more detail is given about the creation of Man.
* Genesis is divided into 11 sections by “these are the generations…” Chapter 2 should start at v. 4. (Chapter divisions aren’t inspired!)
* Again, we have to do something with the poetic nature of the account-things are growing, creation is in process when God creates man.
* God is personified not as a Spirit but with a body-He forms man, breathes into his nostrils. The Lord planted a garden (theme) with water (theme). In the garden was the tree of life (theme).
* Man is put in the garden to work the garden-work came before the fall but creation worked with man and it was enjoyable, good.
* Command and consequence are given-Man may not eat of the tree of the knowledge of good and evil or he will die.
* Something is NOT good-creation is not complete. Man needs a helper. We see an intimate relationship between God and Adam as He forms and brings animals to Adam but none are sufficient. Adam has a need and God is the One who provides. (All before the fall)
* Out of man, God creates woman. Man and woman are uniquely bound together in creation and that is the foundation for their union in marriage.
* They are naked and not ashamed. There is freedom, no shame, no fear in the presence of God. (theme)

Key points in Genesis 2:

1. Man was uniquely created by God and became a living creature by God alone.
2. God provided everything man needed for food, water, shelter in the garden. (Theme: feasting)
3. God gave man dominion to work the garden, but his dominion was limited. The knowledge of what was good and evil/right and wrong belongs to God.
4. God created Adam with a need which God supplied.
5. Marriage is bound up in the creation story-their union in marriage is a reflection of their union in creation.
6. There was no shame before God and they could fully enjoy His presence and His creation.

**Genesis 3: Rebellion against the Creator (The Creator Maligned)**

* “Now”-something is about to change
* Serpent comes on the scene (theme-the enemy) and introduces doubt about God’s word and His generosity-“Did God actually say? God knows you will be like God.” These are the same doubts the enemy uses today-he’s not very creative!
* Adam and Eve decided to determine *for themselves* what was right and wrong.
* Immediately, their eyes are opened, they see their nakedness resulting in shame, fear. They are exposed. (theme)
* Their solution is to hide from the presence of the Lord and try to cover themselves. (theme) Now the presence of the Lord is feared. There is a separation.
* They begin to blame one another and God *for the state of the world*.
* God curses the serpent that there will be enmity between offsprings. The Bible traces that enmity “sons of the devil” vs “sons of the king” for the rest of the story. One of the offspring will crush the head of the serpent. (For the rest of the story we are waiting for that offspring) (Look at Genesis 3:15-Gospel!)
* Woman will have pain in childbearing, her desire will be to rule over her husband. (Submission/roles before the fall was God’s design but now there is conflict).
* Adam is still called to work but now it’s harder. Death will come.
* Yet, Adam doesn’t die on the day he eats the fruit. There is grace given in the promised offspring and Adam sees that, calling Eve “mother of all living.” He responds to God’s promise in faith.
* Provision is made for Adam-A substitutionary death is made. (Theme) Animals are killed and used to cover Adam and Eve.
* They are cast out of the garden, removed from God’s presence, blocked from the tree of life. (Theme: Outside/wilderness)
* Tree of Life-Not just eternal life but life to the fullest. Satisfaction in all things. Adam and Eve will now search for that peace, joy, satisfaction that they have lost. And so do we. (Example of searching for something, longings) This is what the enemy stole from us in his deception. (World today)

🡪“If I find in myself desires which nothing in this world can satisfy, the only logical explanation is that I was made for another world.” CS Lewis

Key points of Chapter 3:

1. Mankind has an enemy who deceived him into doubting God.
2. Man chose to decide for himself what was right and wrong.
3. Sin brought shame and fear and separation from God’s presence.
4. Man cannot cover his own sin.
5. There will be ongoing enmity between the serpent’s offspring and the woman’s offspring.
6. One will come who will crush the serpent’s head.
7. God is generous-He provides a substitutionary death.
8. Death is required to cover sin.
9. Man has been removed from God’s presence in the garden because of his sin.

**Genesis 4: Cain and Abel (The Creator gives grace to a murderer)**

* Adam and Eve begin to be fruitful and multiply. In order for the promise to come true, they have to have offspring. They have Cain and Abel. God is shown again to be generous-Eve got the child from the Lord and likely believed he would be the one.
* Cain’s sacrifice was not accepted but Abel’s was. There is animosity between them to the point of murder. God’s word is true conflict has come between offspring of serpent and offspring of the Lord. (Read 1 John 3:12)
* Again, the Lord comes to Cain like He came to Adam and Eve. He asks Cain a question before pronouncing judgement.
* Note: Some aspect of God’s presence with them but now Cain is removed farther. God is generous and marks him so he is not killed.
* Cain marries. Who? Other siblings.
* The story mentions Lamech who now has 2 wives and has done more murder than Cain.
* Seth is born. Eve again recognizes he is from the Lord.

🡪Note about historical narratives. The author not just giving a historical record. Specific events are recorded like Cain, Abel, and Seth (and specific things are left out, like Cain’s wife) for the author’s purposes. The Bible is theological, revealing who God is and what He is doing.

Key points of Genesis 4:

1. Sacrifices to God were established immediately with Cain and Abel.
2. There is an acceptable and a non-acceptable sacrifice.
3. God comes to people when they are in rebellion and sin to warn them and reveal who He is.
4. God is generous, protecting Cain and allowing him to live.
5. Sin is magnified after the fall-Cain’s descendent has multiple wives and murders.

**Genesis 5: Death Reigns (The Creator’s words are true)**

* “This is the generation….” New division
* Man and woman were made in God’s image but now Adam has sons in his likeness-sinful.
* Adam did die as did everyone after him.
* There is a long list of genealogy to Noah. His name means-“this one shall bring us relief.” They were still looking for the offspring to come.

Key points of Genesis 5:

1. Generations after Adam-live, multiply and die. The reality of the curse is seen.
2. The story is tracing a line-Adam-Seth-Noah

**Genesis 6-9: The Flood: Sin is Judged (The Creator grieves for His creation)**

* Man has filled up the full measure of his sin and the time for judgment comes.
* Sons of God/Daughters of Men. There are many interpretations and we not going to solve it here Demonic? Passages to consider (2 Peter, Jude) Godly offspring intermarrying?
* In God’s judgment, there is one who finds favor. He is described differently-righteous, blameless, he walked with God. We see the generosity of God and faithfulness to His promises. He preserves a remnant.
* “These are the generations of Noah..” New division
* Noah is provided with what he needs to flee the wrath to come. He must believe God and act on that belief. (Noah is not saved by his works. Noah is saved because he believes and trusts in God’s provision for his salvation.
* A subset of creation exists on the ark-animal, people, food. (There is blessing, feasting and protection in submission to God)
* The only place of salvation is in the ark.
* God remembered Noah and acts. (Theme-God remembering His covenant)

40 days-spies in Canaan, 40 years wandering, Jesus-40 days in wilderness

* After the flood, Noah sacrifices to the Lord. The Lord commits not to strike down every living creature again.
* The purpose of man is repeated in the command-Be fruitful and multiply. They were to spread God’s glory throughout the earth.
* God is generous-He gives them everything for food.
* Life is in the blood-there will be a requirement for shedding the blood of man. Why? Because man is made in God’s image.
* God establishes a covenant-*Hesed* or covenant faithfulness with His creation. That theme will carry though the rest of Scripture.
* Sin still abound. Noah gets drunk and something occurs between Noah and Ham. There is still nakedness which is shameful. Mankind still tries to cover their nakedness. Noah is still a sinner and not the offspring.

Key points of Genesis 6-9:

1. Sin eventually reaches its peak and there is judgement.
2. God provided the way of salvation but Noah had to believe and act.
3. God establishes a covenant to not destroy all the earth again.
4. Life is in the blood and there will be a requirement for shedding man’s blood because he bears the image of God.
5. Mankind is still sinful, literally naked before God.
6. Noah is not the one to bring them rest. He dies.

**Genesis 10: The Generations of Noah (The Creator rebuilds creation)**

* “These are the generations”-New Division
* The author is tracing the genealogies from Noah🡪Shem-Ham-Japeth
* This is the first mention of *kingdom* of Babel/land of Shinar. (Foreshadowing)
* This is the first mention of *nations*. From Noah, nations spread across the earth.

Key points of Genesis 10:

1. This is tracing the generations from Noah and the nations that come from him.
2. Mankind does multiply after the flood. Do they fill the earth?

**Genesis 11: The Tower of Babel (The Creator is rejected by man)**

* The mention of the Plain of Shinar returns. People migrate there to make their own kingdom, their own name. (Our Father, hallowed by THY name)
* Man is in rebellion. The Lord again comes to man.
* Because this is only the beginning of what man will do in his rebellion, in His generosity, God scatters them over the face of the earth.
* Man refused to spread God’s glory so He dispersed them.
* Babel-the Lord confused their language, birth of the nations. Man is separated from God and now one another.
* “These are the generations of Shem”-New division
* The text traces the genealogy of Shem to Abram (Shem-becomes line of promise (Anti-Shemites)
* “These are the generations of Terah”-New division
* The text is narrowing in on one key family-Abram.
* Genesis 11 closes with order in creation back to chaos and disorder. People are scattered on the earth but in sin and separated from God and one another.

Key Points of Genesis 11:

1. Even after the flood, man refuses to follow God’s command or fulfill God’s purpose.
2. Mankind stands together in opposition to God.
3. Man is dispersed, scattered and separated from one another in the formation of language resulting in the birth of nations. (Genesis 10 traces those nations)
4. God continues in covenant faithfulness to not destroy man in his rebellion or allow him to remain united against God.
5. Mankind has not spread God’s glory and creative power but has only brought creation back to a point of chaos and disorder.
6. The text is building to a hinge point of the book (and the Pentateuch/OT) in the calling of Abraham out of the chaos.

Summary:

1. Genesis 1-11 are foundational chapters in all the Bible. They introduce us to the main character of the story-God the Creator.
2. In these chapters, God’s design, intention, and purpose are seen in His creation and plan for man.
3. In these chapters, we learn why the world is the way it is. Mankind’s rebellion and sin has resulted in disorder and chaos.
4. God is generous-to Adam and Eve, to Cain, to Noah, to mankind at the tower of Babel.
5. When man rebels, God comes to man to reveal man’s sin and to reveal who God is.
6. God is faithful to His covenant promises.

Application/Discussion:

1. This story, everything is about God. This is HIS story. Our lives are not about us or our story. How does this affect our thoughts, motives, and actions daily?
2. We have been designed by God, with intention, for a purpose. We are to be fruitful and multiply (not just meaning to have kids) and spread His glory on the earth. Do we see that as our purpose every day? How does knowing our purpose direct our decisions on how we spend our time?
3. When we look at the world, do we blame God? (Why won’t He act?) We need to put the blame for all the wrongs in the world on man and the disorder and chaos that our sin has brought to the world. God is our rescuer from the mess we have created. What should be our response when we see the brokenness of this world?
4. Do we recognize God’s kindness, His generosity to mankind? As the story goes forward, God is always kind, always generous, always faithful to His covenant promises. He is good. Do we trust Him? Or do we busy ourselves trying to build our own kingdoms? Consider your own life. Where do you need to believe God is good and respond by trusting Him?

Any other thoughts/comments/takeaways?

Conclusion: (A summary of the magnitude of sin as the creation rebels against its Creator)

The Creator and author of the story is introduced. He creates all things by the power of His word. Everything He makes is good in its design, intention, and purpose. He uniquely creates man to bear His image, have dominion under His rule, and spread His glory across the earth. But His creation doubts both His word and His character and they reject His rule. Yet, the Creator is gracious and provides a substitutionary death on their behalf before they are cast out of the garden and lose access to the tree of life. Man continues in his rebellion with the first child in Adam’s likeness murdering his brother. Yet the Creator is generous and comes to Cain providing protection. But all the Creator said would happen does and death reigns in dominion over man. The sin of man is magnified so much that judgement must come but the Creator is grieved for His creation. In His judgment, He provides a way of salvation for Noah. The Creator knows man’s heart so He makes a covenant to never strike all the earth again. He rebuilds creation giving the command to again bring His glory to the earth. But rather than obey their Creator and fulfill their purpose, mankind joins together in rebellion against Him in an attempt to build their own kingdom and make their own name. The Creator does what they refuse to do and disperses them so they cannot remain united in rebellion. The Creator’s ordered creation has moved to disorder and chaos because of man’s sin and His creation is separated from Him and from each other. Yet God will continue in his covenant faithfulness to His creation….Genesis 12-50.

🡪The purpose of Genesis 1-11 is not to gain intellectual knowledge about God, history, the story, etc. It is meant to cause us to worship! In the midst of man’s rebellion, God has remained faithful and generous to mankind. He is worthy of worship!

Homework:

* Read Genesis 12-50 (Listening to it is great!)
* Work through the study guide as you read.
* Consider getting additional resources to help in your study time.
* Next Study: Tuesday, November 15

Sources Used:

ESV Study Bible

Logos

Hill, Andrew E & John Walton. *A Survey of the Old Testament.* Grand Rapids: 2009.

The Bible Project: The Torah Series

Cedarville University: Dr. Miller Old Testament Literature Course