

GENESIS

**ORIGIN** STORY

Reading Plan

# ABOUT THIS READING PLAN

Each week's questions will take you on a journey to study one passage of the book of Genesis over the course of five days. These questions are designed to equip you in good Inductive Bible study methods, learning to **observe** the passage through the lens of the original audience, **interpret** the passage through the lens of Christ's full plan of redemption, and to **apply** the passage through the lens of a 21st Century follower of Jesus. Here are some key skills you will develop:

1. **Observation Skills** – You will learn how to isolate individual scenes or “periscopes” and look for repetition of themes and words, using a Bible dictionary to gain understanding. You will practice finding the plot or the “narrative arc” of the passage.
2. **Interpretation Skills** – You will learn how to use the features you observed to discover the author's intent. You will also learn how to use the whole context of the book and cross-references in the Bible to check and deepen meaning and understanding.
3. **Application Skills** – Learn how to create faithful and specific applications that are in line with the author's original intent for writing.

We urge you to make the most of this study, devoting yourself to daily reading and prayerful study. Each time you sit down with God's word, you can follow this pattern:

- **Pray** – Ask God to give you understanding and to transform you through his word.
- **Read** – Read slowly and carefully. Use the daily study questions to continually add to your understanding.
- **Pray** – Ask God to impress what you have read upon your heart. Pray for the opportunity to share it with someone else, and pray for others in our church as they seek to walk in this truth with you.

Finally, we hope you will take advantage of all the resources available at [www.oakhillfellowship.com/genesis](http://www.oakhillfellowship.com/genesis). Find free online tools like Bible dictionaries, encyclopedias and Greek lexicons on [biblestudytools.com](http://biblestudytools.com).

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# INTRODUCTION

Who are we? Why are we here? What direction is this world going? These are essential questions for every human being.

In comic books and superhero movies, a character's origin story plays an important role in understanding their place in the universe. In these stories, we learn the key events that shaped them, the failures for which they try to atone, and the formation of key relationships that either help them or antagonize them.

Similarly, we find value in learning one another's stories. When getting to know someone, we often ask questions about where they grew up, who their family was, and what events brought them to where they are today. Our origin stories matter.

The truth is, all humanity shares the same origin story, and the Bible records it so that we can know who we are by understanding where we came from and, most importantly, the God who created us. We cannot understand our story without knowing this story.

The book of Genesis was written by Moses for the nation of Israel as they came out of Egypt so that they would know who they were, where they came from, and the God who created them. As a people, they had spent 400 years in slavery in a land full of false stories about both deities and humanity. They needed to learn about their forefathers, the land to which they were returning, and most importantly, the God of Abraham, Isaac, and Jacob. They needed to learn about this LORD who is both transcendent and near, holy and relational.

Genesis was Israel's story, and Genesis is our story. Genesis is the story of all humanity, especially those who are Abraham's offspring through faith in Christ (see Gal. 3:29). Join us in this study and discover God's answer to the most important questions in life.

***Series Vision: To know who we are by knowing where we came from and the God who created us.***

**Series Goals:**

**1. Proclaim Jesus** – To cherish the image of God, marred through sin, but embodied, redeemed, and restored in Christ.

**2. Equip Servants** – To clarify our calling as image-bearers to represent God through filling, subduing, working, and keeping.

**3. Send Witnesses** – To cultivate our desire to spread the glory of God through the whole earth by multiplying disciples who are being renewed in the image of God.

The Reading Plan is designed to help you grow in good Bible study skills, studying each section using an inductive method over the course of a week. Following that study, you will listen to a sermon on the same passage in our weekly Celebration Service. Finally, we hope you will discuss your application with others in your Gospel Community.

# WEEK 1

## READ: GENESIS 1:1

### DAY 1 READING

Prayerfully read through the passage twice (preferably in two translations), asking God to grow your knowledge of and love for Jesus through your study this week. Note differences between the translations and how they enhance your understanding.

### DAY 2 OBSERVATION

Answer the questions,

**Who:**

**What:**

**When:**

**Where:**

### **DAY 3 INTERPRETATION**

If God created the heavens and the earth, what does that tell us about his nature?

### **DAY 4 INTERPRETATION**

The first words of a book tell us a lot about what will unfold in the rest of the story. What hint does this verse give us about the content of the rest of Genesis? About the content of the rest of the Bible?

### **DAY 5 APPLICATION**

Read Rom. 11:33-36. What should your response be to the God who created everything?

# WEEK 2

## READ GENESIS 1:2-13

### DAY 1 READING

Prayerfully read through the passage twice (preferably in two translations), asking God to grow your knowledge of and love for Jesus through your study this week. Note differences between the translations and how they enhance your understanding.

### DAY 2 OBSERVATION

Begin to fill in the following chart:

Day	What was created? (God Forms)	Day	What was created? (God Fills)
1		4	
2		5	
3		6	
Day 7—God Rests			



### **DAY 3 OBSERVATION/INTERPRETATION**

What repeated words, phrases, or patterns do you see between each day? Do you notice any breaks in the pattern? Why might this pattern exist or be broken?

### **DAY 4 INTERPRETATION**

What does it tell us about God's character that the earth began as formless but increasingly was put in order? Why does that matter?

### **DAY 5 APPLICATION**

On the fourth day the Lord created time markers that would govern the days of his creation, making a fundamental distinction between us and God. Do you embrace or resist being a time-bound creature?

# WEEK 3

## READ GENESIS 1:14-25

### DAY 1 READING

Prayerfully read through the passage twice (preferably in two translations), asking God to grow your knowledge of and love for him through your study this week. Note differences between the translations and how they enhance your understanding.

### DAY 2 OBSERVATION

Complete the chart you started last week (continue to v. 31 in the chart). What do you notice about the relationship between the first and fourth days, the second and fifth days, and the third and sixth days? Why do you think this pattern might exist?

## **DAY 3 OBSERVATION/INTERPRETATION**

What repeated words, phrases, or patterns do you see between each day (picked up from last week's study)? Do you notice any other breaks in the pattern? Why might this pattern exist or be broken?

## **DAY 4 INTERPRETATION**

Notice the repeated words, "according to their kinds." What would have been significant about this phrase to a people coming out of Egypt? What is significant about this phrase in our culture today?

## **DAY 5 APPLICATION**

Unlike the creation accounts of the surrounding nations, God is uncreated and remains separate from his creation. How does this fact affect your view of God and his place in your life?

# WEEK 4

## READ GENESIS 1:26-31

### DAY 1 READING

Prayerfully read through the passage twice (preferably in two translations), asking God to grow your knowledge of and love for him through your study this week. Note differences between the translations and how they enhance your understanding.

### DAY 2 OBSERVATION

How is the creation of humanity described differently than the other events of creation? (Pay special attention to the phrase, "according to their kind" that is replaced with "after our likeness" in the creation of humanity).

### **DAY 3 INTERPRETATION**

Look at the poetry of v. 27. What is emphasized in each of the three lines and how do they differ from one another? What does it teach us that male and female are distinguished in the third line of poetry?

### **DAY 4 INTERPRETATION**

What does it mean for humanity to be created in God's image? What is the relationship between "having dominion" and being "created in the image of God"? What is this "dominion," and what is it not?

### **DAY 5 APPLICATION**

As a man or woman created in the image of God, you have been given responsibility to have dominion over the earth - to fill and subdue, to work and to keep. What does that responsibility look like in your job, family, church, community, etc.?

# WEEK 5

## READ GENESIS 2:1-17

### DAY 1 READING

Prayerfully read through the passage twice (preferably in two translations), asking God to grow your knowledge of and love for Jesus through your study this week. Note differences between the translations and how they enhance your understanding.

### DAY 2 OBSERVATION

How does the seventh day differ from all the others in creation? Read Exodus 31:12-17. What does God's pattern in creation teach us about his purpose for creation?

### DAY 3 INTERPRETATION

Two trees are singled out in the Garden. What are we told about them and why? Read also Rev. 22:1-21. What similarities do you notice between the Garden in the first few chapters of the Bible and this description of the New Jerusalem in the New Heavens and New Earth in the last chapter of the Bible?

## **DAY 4 INTERPRETATION**

Just as Adam was “to work and keep” the garden sanctuary of Eden (Gen. 2:15), so the priests were to keep “all the furnishings of the tent of meeting . . . as they minister at the tabernacle” (Num. 3:8). What does this teach us about Adam’s role? [Footnote 1]

## **DAY 5 APPLICATION**

How does this section of scripture shape the way we view work and rest? What is the purpose of work? What is the purpose of rest? What changes do you need to make to your patterns of work and rest to line up with God’s plan?

# WEEK 6

## READ GENESIS 2:18-25

### DAY 1 READING

Prayerfully read through the passage twice (preferably in two translations), asking God to grow your knowledge of and love for him through your study this week. Note differences between the translations and how they enhance your understanding.

### DAY 2 OBSERVATION

List and define words that describe the relationship between man and woman. What do you notice about this relationship?



### **DAY 3 INTERPRETATION**

Note the difference in the way the woman is created that is distinct from the creation of the man and every other creature in chapter 1. What hints in the passage suggest why God created the woman this way?

### **DAY 4 INTERPRETATION**

How are man and woman described in v. 25? How does this foreshadow what is to come? (See 3:7, 3:21, etc.)

### **DAY 5 APPLICATION**

Man was created with a need for close relationship marked by vulnerability and purity. How are you pursuing this God-given design in your relationships?

**READ GENESIS 3:1-13****DAY 1 READING**

Prayerfully read through the passage twice (preferably in two translations), asking God to grow your knowledge and love for Jesus through your study this week. Note differences between the translations and how they enhance your understanding.

**DAY 2 OBSERVATION**

Compare and contrast God's instructions in Gen. 2:16-17 to the recollection of those instructions in 3:1-5. How do the similarities and differences relate to what happens next in the story?

### **DAY 3 INTERPRETATION**

In Gen. 1-2, God gave man and woman dominion over the beasts, and he created man to be the servant leader of his wife, while she is to be a helper fit for him. How do the events of 3:1-13 subvert this order?

### **DAY 4 INTERPRETATION**

Why was this event such a big deal?

### **DAY 5 APPLICATION**

How have you seen similar deceptions of the enemy play out in your own life?

**READ GENESIS 3:14-24****DAY 1 READING**

Prayerfully read through the passage twice (preferably in two translations), asking God to grow your knowledge of and love for him through your study this week. Note differences between the translations and how they enhance your understanding.

**DAY 2 OBSERVATION**

Summarize the curse against the serpent, woman, and man. What do you notice? How do they relate to humanity's original purpose to "fill and subdue," and "work and keep" described in chapter 2?

**DAY 3 INTERPRETATION**

Look at the curse carefully: what relationships are broken because of sin? Why does sin break relationships?

## **DAY 4 INTERPRETATION**

This curse is not merely a passive consequence, but an active judgment. What ways is this evident in the passage? What does this tell us about God's character? In what ways do you also see God's mercy and grace in the midst of his judgment?

## **DAY 5 APPLICATION**

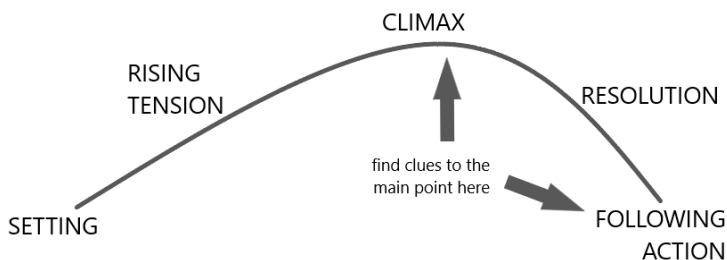
How have you personally experienced these effects of the curse in your own life? How have you responded to them? How have you seen God's mercy and grace clothing you and protecting you in the midst of a fallen world?

## READ GENESIS 4:1-16

## DAY 1 READING

Prayerfully read through the passage twice (preferably in two translations), asking God to grow your knowledge of and love for him through your study this week. Note differences between the translations and how they enhance your understanding.

## DAY 2 OBSERVATION



Identify the following parts of the plot: setting, rising tension, climax, resolution, following action. (See appendix 1)

- Setting
- Rising tension
- Climax
- Resolution

What does this suggest about the main point of this narrative?

## **DAY 3 OBSERVATION**

How is sin described in 4:7? What is God's charge to Cain about how to deal with it?

## **DAY 4 INTERPRETATION**

In 4:10-26, what is the Lord's primary concern, what is Cain's primary concern, and how does the Lord respond to Cain's primary concern? What does this interaction teach us about the nature of sin and God's justice?

## **DAY 5 APPLICATION**

Is there any sin "crouching at the door" of your heart? Take it to the Lord and seek his righteousness through the sacrifice of Christ.

# WEEK 10

## READ GENESIS 4:17-26

### DAY 1 READING

Prayerfully read through the passage twice (preferably in two translations), asking God to grow your knowledge of and love for him through your study this week. Note differences between the translations and how they enhance your understanding.

### DAY 2 OBSERVATION

How do Cain's descendants relate to their sin?

### DAY 3 OBSERVATION

What historic innovations do you notice described throughout this section? Why do you think the Lord includes this piece of history in this section?



## **DAY 4 INTERPRETATION**

What do Eve's words in 4:25-26 suggest about her perspectives on Cain, Abel, Seth, and the Lord?

## **DAY 5 APPLICATION**

Have you ever mistaken innovation and productivity for progress? How and why? What would real progress look like in your life?

**READ GENESIS 5:1-32**

**DAY 1 READING**

Prayerfully read through the passage twice (preferably in two translations), asking God to grow your knowledge of and love for him through your study this week. Note differences between the translations and how they enhance your understanding.

**DAY 2 OBSERVATION**

What words or phrases are repeated throughout this genealogy? What breaks do you find in the repetition? What message do these breaks convey?

### **DAY 3 INTERPRETATION**

Consider 5:21-24 alongside Gen. 3:8-13. In what ways was Enoch different from Adam and the rest of Adam's race?

### **DAY 4 INTERPRETATION**

Consider 5:1-3 alongside Gen. 1:26-27. What do we learn about the image and likeness of God in the midst of this chapter about being born, living, and dying?

### **DAY 5 APPLICATION**

Read Rom. 5:12-6:4, with a special focus on 6:4. Like Enoch, you are called to walk with God as you are restored in his image and likeness through Christ. What does this daily walk with God look like for you?

**READ GENESIS 6:1-7:24****DAY 1 READING**

Prayerfully read through the passage twice (preferably in two translations), asking God to grow your knowledge and love for him through your study this week. Note differences between the translations and how they enhance your understanding.

**DAY 2 OBSERVATION**

Compare the direction of Genesis 1 from unordered watery mass to “very good” ordered creation with the direction of Gen. 6-7 from exceedingly corrupt to unordered watery mass. In what ways is the flood an undoing of God’s original creation?

### **DAY 3 INTERPRETATION**

Look carefully at 6:8-9. Why were Noah and his family chosen? What is not said about why Noah was chosen? How does this description of Noah relate to the description of Enoch in 5:21-24 and Adam in 3:8-13?

### **DAY 4 INTERPRETATION**

What was the purpose of the flood? What was the purpose of the ark? Why were God's instructions so specific?

### **DAY 5 APPLICATION**

Read Matthew 24:36-39. In what ways does the flood and the rescue of Noah foreshadow Christ and the future judgment? How does this relate to your own salvation in Christ?

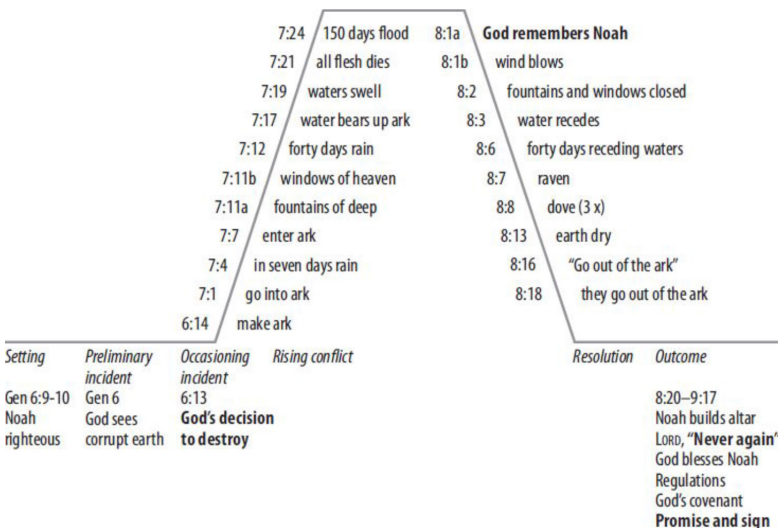
READ GENESIS 8:1-19

DAY 1 READING

Prayerfully read through the passage twice (preferably in two translations), asking God to grow your knowledge and love for him through your study this week. Note differences between the translations and how they enhance your understanding.

DAY 2 OBSERVATION

Examine the following plot analysis by Sidney Geidanus. What do you notice about the parallelism, and what does this suggest is the main point of the whole flood narrative?



### **DAY 3 OBSERVATION**

Genesis 8:1 says, “God remembered Noah.” Using an online Bible, search the word “remember” and note the many times this word is used in relationship to God. What does it mean that God “remembered” Noah and the beasts of the earth?

### **DAY 4 INTERPRETATION**

Compare the rescue of Noah's family through the flood to the rescue of God's people through the Exodus (see Ex. 2:24, 14:1-31, esp. v. 21). How might it encourage Israel to see these parallels as they heard these stories in the wilderness?

### **DAY 5 APPLICATION**

Read Romans 6:23. How does the flood narrative illustrate both parts of this verse? How does this affect the way you view both sin and salvation?

## READ GENESIS 8:20-9:29

## DAY 1 READING

Prayerfully read through the passage twice (preferably in two translations), asking God to grow your knowledge and love for him through your study this week. Note differences between the translations and how they enhance your understanding.

## DAY 2 OBSERVATION

Compare God's covenant with Noah in Gen. 9:1-17 with the original covenant with Adam and Eve in Gen. 1:28-31, the curse on Adam in Gen. 3:17-19, and the reiteration of the covenant in 5:1-5. What similarities and differences do you see?

GEN. 9:1-17	
GEN. 1:28-31	
GEN. 3:17-19	
GEN. 5:1-5	



## **DAY 3 INTERPRETATION**

“Continue to consider the comparisons you made on day 2. What do you believe Moses is emphasizing by these repetitions?”

## **DAY 4 INTERPRETATION**

In this passage we encounter both blessing and cursing. How could such a sin-natured family be the recipients of such a covenant? How could this be the same Noah as we read about in Gen. 6:9-12?

## **DAY 5 APPLICATION**

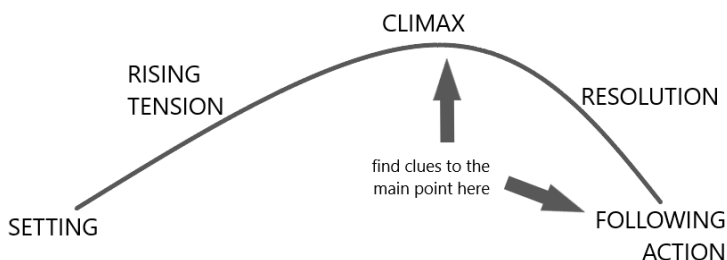
Ham dishonors his father while Shem and Japheth honor him, and God holds Ham's descendants accountable. What does this teach us about how God views these family relationships, and how does that affect the way you view your own parents and/or children?

## READ GENESIS 10:1-11:9

## DAY 1 READING

Prayerfully read through the passage twice (preferably in two translations), asking God to grow your knowledge and love for him through your study this week. Note differences between the translations and how they enhance your understanding.

## DAY 2 OBSERVATION



Identify the following parts of the plot: setting, rising tension, climax, resolution, following action. (See appendix 1)

- Setting
- Rising tension
- Climax
- Resolution

What does this suggest about the main point of this narrative?

## **DAY 3 INTERPRETATION**

Note the repetition of the word “nations” in this passage. What does this hint about the meaning of the passage?

## **DAY 4 INTERPRETATION**

Consider the narrative in 11:1-9 in light of the creation mandate in Gen. 1:28-31, the rejection from the Garden in 3:22-24, and the false sense of progress in Gen. 4:17-26. How does this help us understand God’s concern in this passage and the consequence he imposes?

## **DAY 5 APPLICATION**

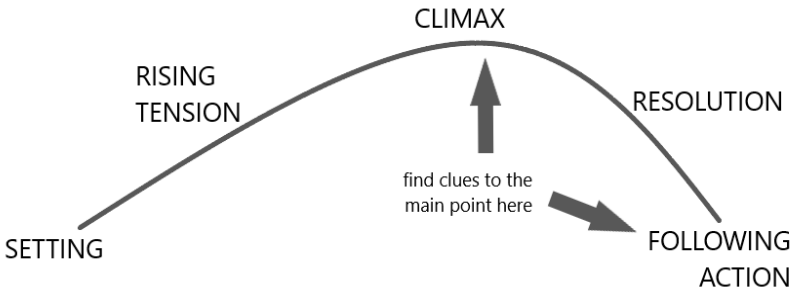
How do the sin patterns of Gen. 11:1-9 show up in our world today? Do you see any of these patterns in your own life?



# APPENDIX 1

## THE NARRATIVE ANALYSIS

Many people like truth to be spelled out for them. Other people are greatly helped by hearing truth delivered in story form. Thankfully, God has revealed himself in both ways in his word. In order to interpret a story, you need to be able to observe how a plot works together.



In this reading plan, you will often be asked to identify the following parts of a plot:

**Setting** - What is the place, people, environment, etc. Look for descriptions that give more information than you might think you need and see how they relate to the theme of the story later.4

**Rising Tension** - What is the main conflict or problem to be resolved.

**Climax** - What is the “breaking point” of the tension or “the point of no return.” This is where you will most often find the main point of the text.

**Resolution** - How does the rising tension get resolved?

**Following Action** - What information moves us on to the next scene? Is there any summary of teaching or added facts placed after the main events of the story?

Identify each plot section with verse numbers and brief a brief summary. Then go back and see how it all works together.

When studying narrative, it is also helpful to identify the characters and the way they interact (dialogue, non-verbal responses when described, etc.).





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