

(Genesis) Introduction

by J. Vernon McGee

J. Vernon McGee provides an overview of Genesis, emphasizing its foundational role in Scripture and the importance of understanding its key themes and characters.

Duration: 7:31

Scripture: Genesis 1:1-2, Genesis 2:7, Genesis 3:6, Genesis 3:15, Genesis 4:8, Genesis 6:13-14, Genesis 11:1-9

Topics: "Biblical Study", "Genesis Introduction"

Description

In this sermon, the speaker emphasizes the importance of studying the Bible as a whole, rather than just focusing on specific parts. They compare studying the Bible to using a telescope and a microscope, suggesting that both perspectives are necessary for a comprehensive understanding. The speaker then introduces the book of Genesis and provides a bird's eye view of its content. They also quote a passage from a book by Robinson, highlighting the abundance of books about the Bible and the need for devotion to God.

Transcript

Now, friends, as we come today to the book of Genesis, I want to spend some time in just giving us what might be called a bird's-eye view of Genesis, but a view that will cover the total spectrum of the book. And in order to do that, there are some very important things that we'd like to say about it. When you read the book of Genesis, there are certain things that you should know, because the book of Genesis is actually germane to the entire Scripture.

The fact of the matter is that Genesis is a book that states many things for the first time. You're going to have many things that are mentioned here for the first time. You also will find certain things that occur very frequently.

For instance, these are the generations of, and that's an important expression, because actually the book of Genesis gives the families, and that is all important because you and I are a member of the human family that begins here. And then there are a number of very interesting characters that are portrayed for us. Someone has called this a book of biographies.

There's Abraham, and Isaac, and Jacob, and Joseph, and Pharaoh, and the twelve sons of old Jacob. Besides Joseph, of course, with him you have the twelve. Then you find that God continually is blessing Abraham, Isaac, Jacob, and Joseph.

And you find that those that are associated with him are blessed. Lot was blessed. Bimelech, and Potiphar, and the butler, and Pharaoh, all blessed.

And then you find the mention of the covenant in this book. And you find the frequent appearances of the Lord here to the patriarchs, especially to Abraham. And then you find the altar becomes very prominent in this book.

You see jealousy in the home. And also Egypt comes before us here in this book as it does nowhere else, actually. And you find that there is the judgments upon sin that are mentioned here.

And then the leadings of providence. And as we study the book here, we need to keep in mind something that Browning wrote years ago in a grammarian's funeral. He said, image the whole, then execute the parts.

Fancy the fabric. Quite ere you build, ere steel strike, fire from quartz, ere mortar dab brick. In other words, get the total picture of this book.

And I formally, as a teacher of Bible, would tell the students that there are two ways of studying the Bible. One is with a telescope, and the other is with a microscope. And first, you need to get the telescope and get off and see all of it.

And if you do that, why, you will find that this wonderful book is divided into two major divisions. And I'd call your particular attention to that. These major divisions are very important.

And before I develop that, I'd like today to give you a quotation from a great man of the past, Robinson, the great preacher of England, in his book, *The Personal Life of the Clergy*. And the chapter I'm quoting from is devotion to our Lord. And this is something I wish that I could write indelibly in the minds and hearts of God's people today.

Will you listen to it very carefully? We live in the age of books. They pour out from us, from the press, in an ever-increasing multitude. And we're always reading manuals, textbooks, articles, books of devotion, books of criticism, books about the Bible, books about the Gospels, are devoured with avidity.

But what amount of time and labor do we give to the consideration of the Gospels themselves? We are constantly tempted to imagine that we get good more quickly by reading some modern statement of truth, which we find comparatively easy to appropriate, because it's presented to us in a shape and from a standpoint with which our education, or it may be partly association, has made us familiar. But the good that we acquire readily is not that which enters most deeply into our being and becomes an abiding possession. It would be well if we could realize, quite simply, that nothing worth the having is to be gained without the winning.

The great truths of nature are not offered to us in such a form as to make it easy to grasp them. The treasures of grace must be sought with all the skill and energy which are characteristic of the man who is searching for goodly pearls. Now, I love that statement because it reveals to us as we begin this study of the Word of God that this is not just entertainment and we're not promoting.

We are actually, friends, trying to teach you the Word of God. We're not dealing with sensationalism. Of course, the Bible, to me, is a sensational book, and we'll deal with many things that are sensational, but you are going to find that in the Word of God that we are just dealing with it, and that's all.

But we believe that it'll speak to our hearts in a way that no other book will speak to us. And as we suggested a moment ago in the book of Genesis, you have the beginnings of many things, creation, man, woman, sin, Sabbath, marriage, family, labor, civilization, culture, murder, sacrifice, races, languages, tongues, and redemption, and cities. We're having a great urban problem today.

Well, we could learn a great deal by going back here to Genesis and see the beginning of the cities.

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