

Commentary Notes - Genesis

by Walter Beuttler

Walter Beuttler's sermon on Genesis explores the foundational themes of creation, the fall, and God's covenant with humanity through the patriarchs.

Scripture: Matthew 19:4

Topics: "Creation Theology", "Redemption History"

Description

Walter Beuttler preaches on the profound significance of the Book of Genesis, highlighting its role in revealing the beginnings of God's revelation, the universe, the human race, and more. The authenticity and inspiration of Genesis are confirmed by Christ's testimony. The book is a historical account, not a fable, and Satan has attacked it due to its predictions about his doom. The sermon delves into the message of Genesis, emphasizing the creation, the fall of man, redemption, and the necessity for man to recognize his weakness and rely on God's grace.

Transcript

A. THE BOOK OF GENESIS

1. "Genesis" is an appropriate title in that it means "beginning"
2. "Beginning" is also the key word of the book, 1:1
3. Among the many beginnings which this book records, there is the beginning of:
 - (1) The revelation of God, 1:1
 - (2) The sacred scriptures, 1:1
 - (3) The material universe, 1:1; 2:3
 - (4) The human race, 1:26-31
 - (5) Human sin, 3:1-7
 - (6) The revelation of redemption, 3:21
 - (7) The human family, 4:1-15

(8) A godless civilization, 4:16; 6:7

(9) The nations of the world, 10:1-32

(10) The languages of the world, 11:1-9

(11) The Hebrew race, 11:10-50:26

4. The authenticity and inspiration of Genesis is abundantly confirmed by the testimony of Christ, e.g., Matt. 19:4-6; 24:37-39

5. The book of Genesis is not written in poetry, but in prose, not in a mythical, but in a historical style, for it records history and fact--not fable

6. Genesis is one of the two books of the Bible, (the other being Revelation), which Satan has attacked more than any other, for Genesis predicts his doom, 3:15, and Revelation seals his doom, 20:10

7. Genesis is constructed throughout in a simple, perfectly intelligible and well-sustained plan, beginning with the unfolding of the divine cosmogony and ending with the Jewish people in Egypt

8. A peculiarity of this book is that it begins with God and ends with a coffin, as if this were symbolic of the consequences of man's fall

B. THE MESSAGE OF THE BOOK

1. The fact of the existence of God prior to the creation of the cosmos

2. The origin of the cosmos by an act of creation

3. The origin of man through an act of creation and not by evolution from a prior species of existence

4. The purpose of God in the creation of man, namely fellowship and communion

5. The failure of man under every condition provided by God, namely:

(1) Amid an ideal environment (Eden)

(2) Under the rule of conscience (From the fall to the flood)

(3) Under Patriarchal rule (from Noah to Joseph)

6. Redemption by blood

7. The salvation of man by divine grace

8. The necessity of man to know by failure his own weakness and insufficiency so as to bring him to the mercy and grace of God

9. Typically, the book of Genesis speaks of the new birth of man (John 3:3-6), the new creation of ruined man (II Cor. 5:17)

PRIMEVAL HISTORY, 1:1-11:9

A. CREATION, 1:1-2:25

1. Note a remarkable fact about the first statement in the Bible, 1:1: The Bible makes no attempt to prove the existence of God; it takes it for granted as a matter of course. Only "the fool hath said in his heart, There is no God." Psa. 14:1

2. Comment on 1:2 in the light of 1:9:

(1) The earth surrounded by water was apparently in existence prior to the creation account of Genesis, so that the "beginning" of Gen. 1:1 refers to an earlier period

(2) The state of the earth as described in 1:2 could possibly be the result of a cataclysmic change brought about by a divine judgment

3. What was created on each of the six days and which natural science had its beginning here?

(1) 1:3-5? Cosmic light -- Physics

(2) 1:6-8? Clouds -- Meteorology

(3) 1:9-13? Plant life -- Botany

(4) 1:14-19? Sun, moon, and stars -- Astronomy

(5) 1:20-25? Animal life -- Zoology

(6) 1:26-31? Man -- Anthropology

4. In what general locality was the garden of Eden, 2:8-14, probably located? In lower Babylonia near the head of the Persian Gulf

5. What constituted the image of God in man, 1:26-27?

(1) Spiritual likeness of personality with:

a. Intellect, Psa. 139:1-4

b. Sensibility, Heb. 3:10

c. Will, Col. 4:12

(2) Moral likeness, i.e., "in righteousness and true holiness," Eph. 4:24

(3) Physical likeness, i.e., man's physical form is made after the spiritual form of God, Num. 12:8; Ex. 33:18-23; Rev. 5:1-7; Matt. 18:10

6. Point out the implications of man's relationship to God as to his freedom of choice, 2:16-17: Man was sovereign under a Sovereign, free to choose, but within the limitations imposed by God

7. Note the two alternatives of man when he was placed on a probationary status; 2:16-17:

(1) He could perpetuate his happiness if he continued to live in union with God

(2) He could terminate that happiness if he chose to go beyond the limits of his freedom

B. THE FALL OF MAN, 3:1-13

1. Account for the ability of the serpent to speak and reason, 3:1-5: Satan possessed the serpent in order to make of him an instrument to accomplish his nefarious purpose

2. Note the serpent's methodical attack on man's citadel, namely his will, 3:1-5:

(1) He brings into question the veracity of God so as to cause man to doubt God's word

(2) When man entertains this doubt, Satan proceeds with a denial of the veracity of God to cause man to reject the word of God

(3) Then he seeks to give this denial a rational basis by casting an aspersion on God in order to convince man of the truthfulness of Satan's own words

(4) Finally Satan's subtle deception is directed to man's selfinterest inducing him to act in violation of God's commandment, bringing about his own ruin and thereby achieve Satan's purpose

3. In summary, what does Satan seek to accomplish by his method in 3:1-5?

(1) To destroy man's faith in God's integrity

(2) To provoke man to assert his own authority

(3) To separate man from God and so seal his doom

4. To what does Satan direct his appeal in 3:6? (Note also I John 2:16)

(1) To the lust of the flesh ("good for food")

(2) To the lust of the eyes ("pleasant to the eyes")

(3) To the pride of life ("to make one wise")

5. Analyze man's act in giving the consent of his will to cross the boundary set for him by God in the limitation of his action:

(1) Man took action independent of God by the assertion of his own will

(2) In so doing he dethroned God and enthroned himself, thus reproducing Satan's own fall, Isa. 14:12-15

(3) In his attempt to grasp knowledge outside of God's limitation, man lost the knowledge of fellowship with God and instead gained an experimental knowledge of a sinful state

6. What important revelation is given in 3:8-11? The revelation of the personality of God in which:

(1) God manifested his presence in a manner perceivable by the human senses

(2) "They heard the voice ("sound," Hebrew) of the Lord God walking," 3:8

(3) God was considerate of the comfort of man by visiting him "in the cool of the day," 3:8

(4) God called in a manner perceivable by the human ear, 3:9

(5) The incident reveals God's desire for fellowship with man and therefore the fact that God possesses a social nature which desires and seeks companionship

7. Suggest the REAL reason why "Adam and his wife hid themselves from the presence of the Lord," 3:8: Because of a consciousness of guilt 8. What is indicated by "the presence of the Lord?" That Adam and Eve expected a manifestation of the divine presence in his customary manner

9. Why did God call to Adam, 3:9?

(1) Because it was evident from Adam's absence that something was wrong

(2) Not because God was ignorant of Adam's hiding place, but to bring him to the realization of his responsibility for the broken fellowship

10. Comment on Adam's reply in 3:10:

(1) He heard the voice, "sound," (Hebrew), of the approaching God and hid in fear instead of welcoming God with pleasure

(2) He attributed his fear to the wrong cause in his effort to hide his guilt under a transparent excuse

11. Analyze Adam's reply in 3:12 to God's query in 3:11: His reply reveals the degenerating effects of sin in that:

(1) He places the blame on the gift and the Giver

(2) He speaks of Eve as "the woman," in cold and unfeeling terms

(3) After his attempt to shift responsibility for his action, he makes only a reluctant admission of guilt with no sign of remorse

12. Comment on 3:13:

(1) Without taking notice of Adam's excuse, God queries Eve, who, like Adam, shifts responsibility by blaming the serpent for her action

(2) Eve's confession of guilt, like Adam's, was elicited under duress and made without even an appearance of contrition

C. THE EFFECT OF THE FALL, 3:14-24

1. How did the fall of man affect:

(1) The serpent, 3:14? The serpent had to crawl henceforth on its belly and eat its food mingled with the dust of the earth

(2) Satan, 3:15? The hostility which was commenced here between the tempter and the woman was to continue between their respective descendents, the godly and the ungodly, until Satan's power is destroyed through the woman's seed, (Christ), who will be wounded

(3) The woman, 3:16? The woman was to have intensified pain at childbirth and relegated to a subordinate position with her desires yielded to her husband's

(4) The man, 3:17-19?

a. God cursed the ground upon which man was dependent for his subsistence so that he was compelled to procure his bread by sweat and hard labour

b. Not only the man, but all mankind had in consequence of his transgression forfeited the privilege of immunity from death and must now return to the soil from which he was taken

2. Point out the significance of 3:21: This constitutes the first sacrifice for sin and ushers in the beginning of God's work of redemption, typifying Christ who was made unto us a divinely provided garment of righteousness, II Cor. 5:21

3. Wherein was man's expulsion from the garden in 3:22-24 an act of the grace of God? In that man was prevented from eating of the tree of life and consequently live in his sinful state forever without the possibility of redemption

4. Suggest the implications of the fact that the Cherubims kept the way of the tree of life, 3:24: Man could no longer partake of immortality until his sin was expiated through partaking of another Tree of Life, namely Christ, John 11:25-26

D. ADAM AND HIS POSTERITY, 4:1-5:32

1. Point out the fundamental characteristic of:

(1) Cain's offering, 4:2-3 - He brought a bloodless offering based on mere self-effort and implying a rejection of the need of an atonement for sin

(2) Abel's offering, 4:2-5 - He brought a blood offering based on revelation and the recognition of the need of an atonement for sin

2. Against whom was Cain's resentment in 4:5-6 directed?

(1) Against God for rejecting his offering

(2) Against Abel for God's acceptance of his offering

3. What light does 4:7 shed on Cain's worship?

(1) That Cain knew about God's requirement of a blood sacrifice, a revelation given to his parents when God clothed them with animal skins

(2) That Cain too would be accepted if he would bring a right offering in the right spirit

(3) That there was still time and opportunity to bring an acceptable offering

(4) If Cain chose not to avail himself of this opportunity, then sin will be aroused like a crouching beast to lay hold of him

(5) If Cain does choose to bring an acceptable offering, then he shall be the master of sin and not come under its dominion

4. What is evident from 4:8? That sin, like a furious beast, lay hold of Cain's passions as a consequence of his failure to avail himself of the divine opportunity and provision

5. Comment on 4:8 in the light of I John 3:12: That Abel was killed because Cain's works were evil and those of Abel righteous

6. The following passages show what?

(1) 4:9? The sinful efforts of sinful man to hide his sin only add to his guilt

(2) 4:10? The futility of man to hide his guilt from an omniscient God

7. Observe the consequences of Cain's sin from:

(1) 4:11 - Man himself now comes under the curse along with the earth and the serpent

(2) 4:12 - He was sentenced to "moving and wandering," by being "banished and homeless," driven on by the torture of an accusing conscience and burdened with an overwhelming sense of divine retribution

(3) 4:14 - Not only was Cain banished from the land of Eden, but also from abiding in the divine presence and the enjoyment of divine favour

(4) 4:14-15 - His life was to be lived, not in the serenity and confidence of an unbroken fellowship with God, but in fearful apprehension and haunting insecurity

(5) 4:16 - Alienation from the presence of God is the ultimate consequence of unexpiated sin

8. Point out the reasoning in 4:23-24: If Cain was protected by God after he slew an unoffending man then how much more would Lamech be protected after slaying in self defense

9. How many years cover the chronology of 5:1-32? One thousand five hundred and fifty-six

10. What is unique about Enoch, 5:21-24? He walked with God and was translated without seeing death, (Heb. 11:5)

E. NOAH AND HIS POSTERITY, 6:1-11:9

1. Comment on:

(1) 6:1-2 - The preponderant view seems to be that "the sons of God" were the descendents of Seth, (Gen. 4:25), and that this verse records the end of separation of the godly line of Seth from the godless line of Cain

(2) 6:3 - The Spirit of God shall not always contend with the sinful man to influence him into the ways of God's righteousness

(3) 6:4-7 - The marriages between "the sons of God" and the "daughters of men" resulted in a generation of utter depravity completely at variance with man's creation in the image of God, so that God in sorrow of heart decrees the destruction of his own work

2. Concerning the story of the flood in 6:9-8:19, what may be observed from:

- (1) 6:9; 7:1? That Noah was spared because he was just, righteous, and walked with God
- (2) 6:11-13? That mankind was destroyed because of flagrant violation of the laws of God
- (3) 8:1? That God does not forget his own in their loneliness, even during long periods of silence
- (4) 8:20-22? God's deep appreciation of man's sincere worship

3. What does God guarantee in 9:1-17? That there will be no repetition of the destruction of the human race by water and the preservation of the orderly constitution and course of nature

4. Specifically, what is provided in:

- (1) 9:1? The replenishing of the earth by man
- (2) 9:2? Since the original lordship of man over the animals has been disturbed by sin, they are now restrained by the principle of fear
- (3) 9:3? The use of animal food by man
- (4) 9:5-6? The institution of capital punishment

PATRIARCHAL HISTORY, 11:10-50:26

F. ABRAHAM, 11:31-25:11

1. Concerning Abraham, what takes place in:

- (1) 12:1-3? He is called out of his country and from among his kindred
- (2) 11:31-32; 12:4-13:4? Abraham leaves his country but not his kindred
- (3) 13:5-13? God compels a choice of separation
- (4) 14:14-18? With a complete separation made, God makes a covenant with Abraham

2. Who was Melchizedek, 14:17-24? Probably a Canaanitish prince to whom Abraham paid tithes

3. What does God do in 15:1-21? He reveals himself to Abraham and makes a covenant with him

4. Suggest the significance of Ishmael's birth, 16:1-16; 17:20-27: As the product of Abraham's scheming, Ishmael becomes a type of the flesh, man's own way and effort to procure the fulfillment of God's promises

5. What, concerning Abraham, does God do in:

- (1) 17:1? He reveals himself as "the God of the breast," the nourisher of his people
- (2) 17:2-19? He covenants with him to become the progenitor of many nations through Isaac, the child of promise

(3) 18:1-33? God appears to him and shares with him the things upon his heart

6. Comment on Lot from 19:1-29: Lot, a type of the worldly believer is saved, yet so as by fire, (I Cor. 3:15)

7. Comment on:

(1) 21:1-21- Isaac, type of the spiritual believer and persecuted by the children of the flesh, becomes the heir of God's promise, (Gal. 4:21-31)

(2) 22:1-24 - God puts Abraham to the severest test of obedience and reveals himself as "the Lord will provide"

(3) 23:1-20 - The burial of Sarah shows Abraham to be a man of high principles

(4) 24:1-67 - The choice of a bride for Isaac is a brilliant example of the power of divine providence in the guiding of men's destinies

(5) 25:1-11 - The prosperous state of Abraham at the time of his death evidences the faithfulness of God toward an obedient man

G. ABRAHAM'S POSTERITY, 25:12-50:26

1. Comment on:

(1) Esau, 25:27-34 - He is a type of those believers who despise their spiritual birthright and sell it for material advantages and the gratification of their own desires

(2) Isaac, 26:1-35 - He is a type of the children of promise:

a. Tested, but obedient, 26:1-6

b. Envied, but persistent, 26:12-22

c. Hated, but blessed, 26:24-31

2. Point out the crises of Jacob in 27:1-35:15 which changed him from a "supplanter" (schemer) to a prince with God as seen in:

(1) 28:10-22 - His meeting with, and revelation of, God on the way to Haran

(2) 29:1-31:10 - Jacob's years of frustration during which he had opportunity to apply the revelation received on his way to Haran

(3) 32:1-32 - His meeting God "face to face" in the confession of his name

(4) 34:1-35:7 - His return to Bethel under the compulsion of divine providence

3. Why was the reaffirmation of God's promise and Jacob's new name in 35:9-15 necessary? Because Jacob's spiritual life had declined during the interval between the former interview with God and the present

4. What may be observed in 35:7? Jacob now recognized "the God of the house of God," (El-Bethel), not merely "the house of God," (Bethel)
 5. Comment on the life of Joseph, 37:2-50:26: He was a boy trained by God in the school of adversity to become Egypt's prime minister
 6. Observe the circumstances of God's school of preparation for his God-appointed task from:
 - (1) 37:4, 5 - Rejected before accepted, 50:18
 - (2) 37:11 - Envied before honored, 41:43
 - (3) 37:23 - Stripped before clothed, 41:42
 - (4) 37:24 - Cast down before exalted, 41:43
 - (5) 37:28 - A slave before becoming master, 41:44
 - (6) 39:20 - Imprisoned before ruling, 41:41-42
 - (7) 40:23 - Forgotten before well known, 41:57
 7. Comment on 50:15-21 in the light of 37:5-11: This is a remarkable demonstration of the irresistible power and infinite wisdom of divine providence exercised in the circumstances of His elect
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