

Creation, Adam/Eve, Cain/Abel, Noah

The Bible is a _____ divided into different genres – there is history, _____, and so forth. The Book of _____, where it all begins, is found in the Pentateuch or those first _____ books of the Bible. In fact, Genesis is the very _____ book in the Bible.

For many years, it was an unquestioned matter of _____ to accept that Moses was the author. However, in recent years, some scholars agree that the stories found within the book of Genesis, were passed down by word of mouth and then a redactor or _____, combined the work of approximately _____ or _____ different authors. This conversation about multiple authors has been taking place for centuries and support for this understanding about authorship is found in the creation stories of the first human beings.

Your first homework assignment for this study:

Read/reflect on the TWO different creation stories recorded in Genesis. Write down some questions for your reflection and devotion time:

The first creation story is recorded in Genesis 1:1-2:4 and the second is recorded in Genesis 2:4-25.

Why are two different creation stories and their differences NOT a reason for concern?

God's people were NOT interested in _____ or scientific _____ in the same way that we are today. These early stories pre-date _____ science. God's people made use of the _____ knowledge they understood at THAT time about the _____ world around them.

The creation story is meant to be a _____ to God's creative activity and the _____ about God's love for _____ of creation – for the entire universe – stars, sun, earth, the seas, animals of all kinds, as well as human beings.

To read the creation story with an eye _____ or _____ it being faithful to the original intent of the authors is not helpful. We are called to remember that the creation story was meant as a witness to God's creative _____ and _____ for creation – all of creation.

In the book of Genesis, there are basically two types of literature – there are stories and _____. The family is central to almost every story which follows the creation story – and so genealogies play an important role in the Bible. God's people, known as Israel, recorded their _____, often pointing out _____ and social importance. It was important to track the _____ of people – especially important characters in the Bible – and in Israel's history.

Biblical genealogies reveal is that every character is _____ or _____ to every other character. From the very beginning, the Bible, teaches us that humanity is _____ big extended family!

Like all genealogies, those recorded in the Bible give witness to the resilience and continued existence of families – of God's people - in spite of so much difficulty and dysfunctionality. This is something that should inspire us as a church *family*!

So, let's get back to that first family. Talk about _____ and _____! Adam and Eve bear children. First there is _____ and _____. Sibling rivalry leads to Cain killing Abel. (Genesis 4:1-26)

After Abel's death, scripture says, "Adam laid with his wife again, and she gave birth to a son and named him _____." (Genesis 4:25)

It is from _____ lineage, that _____ is born. (Genesis 5:1-32).

Scripture says that after many years the “Lord saw that the wickedness of humankind was great on the earth...and that the whole earth was corrupt.” (Genesis 6:5-12) God determined that the only solution was to _____ again by sending a great flood that would wipe out all of humanity except Noah and his wife and his sons and their wives. They would be saved by living inside an _____ built by Noah. In addition to his select family members, different kinds and numbers of animals are to be residents on the ark or boat as well.

In the same way that there are _____ different creation stories recorded in the Bible, there are also different numbers given for the number of animals on the ark. Genesis 6 records _____ pair (a male and a female). Genesis 7 says that it was _____ pairs of clean and _____ pair of unclean (male and female). Scholars do not find these differences to be of concern, nor should we. Scholars account for the differences as the work of multiple authors. Again, it is not scientific or historical _____ that is of import in the flood story – but rather the theological or _____ significance as it witnesses to God and God’s mighty acts in history. Again, we need to consider the intent or purpose of the original authors – which was to witness to God’s _____.

The story of the flood is a witness to God “re-creating” again – a witness to God’s efforts to cleanse creation. The flood was the day when the _____ creation died and out of the flood waters a _____ creation, a new world, was born. The story of Noah and the flood is another story about _____.

The story of creation is a new beginning for the universe – order out of chaos.

The story of Adam and Eve having children after leaving the Garden of Eden – is about a new beginning for humanity.

The story of Noah and the flood is yet another story about beginnings.

But the story of Noah ends differently – with a _____ – a promise to NEVER destroy humanity with water again. The Noahic Covenant, the _____ Covenant, was a promise that God would never destroy the world with floodwaters again.

_____ will become a prominent theme throughout scripture, from this point forward.

And then there is the theme of difficult and challenging waters. These too will be prominent themes throughout scripture. This theme of God delivering people through dangerous waters will appear in a number of places.

However, now they will serve as a passageway or means to _____ life – as a means of God revealing God’s unfailing love for human beings. Even _____ for Christians will be described as a means of making “the old creation die” and of being _____ again, _____ anew, _____ from above. (John 3:1-9)

The chronological timeline up to the story of Noah is what we call _____ history.

My prayer after our study time today is that you will consider the meaning of “beginnings.” I hope you will consider what it means for all people to be kin and to be part of one big extended family. I hope you’ll ponder the underlying message of biblical genealogies and the HOPE they provide when as God’s family we encounter difficult and dysfunction. I hope you’ll ponder God’s faithfulness and God’s MIGHTY ACT of deliverance through troubled waters. I’d be anxious to know what you learned today, what you heard that was comforting or challenging and what NEW questions were raised for you this morning.

Our God is a God of beginnings. As we continue to move through and hopefully OUT of this time of pandemic, may hear and respond affirmatively to the God of Creation – our God who forever leads us through turbulent waters and grants new beginnings.

May it be so. Amen.