



T H E O R I G I N S O F O U R O R I G I N S

A topical Bible Study from the book of Genesis for Adults by Don Hooton

S T U D Y O U T L I N E

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[Genesis 1:1-2:1ff]
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[Genesis 42:1-45:28]

FORGIVENESS – could you?

LESSON 13 – (GENESIS 42:1-45:28)

INTRODUCTION:

The Genesis story describes humanity with all of its weaknesses and foibles. Likewise, there are still people who manifest the godly spirit in the human soul that reaches beyond every dispensation and displays Godly character. Joseph is just one of the many. And especially is his character to manifest grace and forgiveness a model. Perhaps the story of Joseph was more than a historical anomaly to explain the nation of Israel in Egyptian bondage. He serves as a shadow of the greatness of the Messiah.

FACT QUESTIONS:

1. Did Joseph trust the message of his 10 brothers (42:9-17)?
2. To what did the 10 brothers connect their misfortune with Egypt's minister of grain (42:21-24)?
3. What questions did Joseph apparently ask on their first meeting (43:7)?
4. When Joseph saw them the second time, what did he do first (43:16)? Why?
5. Who does Joseph attribute the repayment of their grain money to the 10 (43:23)?
6. What was Joseph's reaction when he saw Benjamin (43:30)? Why?
7. What did Joseph do to the brothers on the second return trip (44:1-2)? Why?
8. For what did Judah appeal to those one "equal to Pharaoh" and why (44:18-34)?
9. To what did Joseph attribute his presence in Egypt (45:7-8)?

THOUGHT QUESTIONS:

10. Trace the life of Joseph again and surmise what would have been the "average man's" response to the situations described. And then evaluate yourself and like me, wonder, would I have?

PROMISES – IF GOD SAYS IT, YOU BETTER BELIEVE

LESSON 12 – (GENESIS 8:20-9:17; 15:1-6; 50:22-26)

INTRODUCTION:

It is Paul in Galatians that emphasizes the role of God's promise in the whole story of redemption. That the "promise" came before the Law of Moses was critical to the argument Paul made (3:16-19). And because of God's integrity the promise could be believed.

FACT QUESTIONS:

1. What did God promise Himself and Noah and his sons (8:21; 9:11)?
2. Why should man believe it (9:15-17)?
3. What did God promise Abram (15:4-5)?
4. Why should Abram believe it (15:5,7,17)?
5. What was Joseph sure of (50:24-25)?

THOUGHT QUESTIONS:

6. What is the reason we promise anything?
7. How can anyone believe any promise we make?
8. When is it difficult, if ever, to believe the promises of God?

ORIGINS – WHAT IT MEANS

LESSON 1 – GENESIS 1:1FF-2:1FF

INTRODUCTION:

The Genesis is a book about beginnings. Written by Moses for Israel, it traces the nations beginning to the beginning of humanity. It makes clear for Israel the answer to human origin: God. And for us, just like Israel, the answer of origins has significant implications (c.f. Deuteronomy 4:32-40). We must take it to heart.

FACT QUESTIONS:

1. What does Genesis 1:1 say?
2. How does Moses describe the days of creation in Genesis 1:5,8,13, 19,23,31?
3. With what nature were humans created (1:26-27)?
4. What instructions did God specifically give to Adam (2:15-17)?
5. What was Eve made for Adam (2:18-20)?

THOUGHT QUESTIONS

6. What does Genesis 1:1 not say?
7. Why does Moses describe the Creator as LORD GOD?
8. How is Moses' description of all humanity an equalizing truth (1:27; c.f., Acts 17:24-27)?
9. How could you harmonize Ecclesiastes 12:13 with Genesis 1-2?

FORBIDDEN FRUIT: SEEDS OF DECEIT & DESTRUCTION

LESSON 2 – GENESIS 3:1FF

INTRODUCTION:

The Genesis records the beginning of human sin. Moses' account reads as real and literal as the rest of the book and there is no reason to believe Satan disguised as a serpent was not the same. The events describe his real tactics then and his tactics today. Genesis demonstrates that sin is not just serious, it's deadly. Learn the tactic. Resist the tempter. Enjoy the pleasure of righteousness or the pleasure of forgiveness in Christ. But take it to heart.

FACT QUESTIONS:

1. What tempts Eve (3:1)?
2. What was Satan's deception (3:4)?
3. What made Eve offer it to Adam (3:6)?
4. What curse(s) were placed on Satan (3:14-15)?
5. What curse(s) were placed on Adam and Eve (3:16-19)?

THOUGHT QUESTIONS

6. Why does Satan first tempt Eve? (Note that Adam's act is called transgression and Eve's is called deception where she "fell into transgression", cf. Romans 5:12-15; 1Timothy 2:14).
7. Why does Adam and Eve blame others?
8. Why does God send the first family out of the garden (3:22-23)?

PURITY

LESSON 11 – (GENESIS 38:1-39:1FF)

INTRODUCTION:

Adultery. If you think this couldn't happen to you, think again. "Therefore let anyone who thinks that he stands take heed lest he fall." (1 Corinthians 10:12) "Let not your heart turn aside to her ways; do not stray into her paths, for many a victim has she laid low, and all her slain are a mighty throng." (Proverbs 7:25-26) This could happen to anyone. We know what the problems are: children out of wedlock, fatherless children, teenage mothers, abortion, sexual diseases, workplace affairs, divorce, broken hearts, shattered lives... What is at the root of all of this? It is selfishness. Like everything else in this study, sin always begins with selfish choices. We put our selfish desires ahead of others. We put what we feel we need ahead of God. Joseph is an outstanding example of sexual purity. It would have been easy for him to allow his circumstances to justify sin, but he selflessly put his master and his God ahead of his own desires.

FACT QUESTIONS:

1. Where was Joseph brought? How would this present temptation to him? How old was Joseph (37:2)?
2. Why was Joseph successful? What does that say about him? What was Joseph responsible for? How would that present temptation to him?
3. Was Joseph handsome? Why do you think Potiphar's wife might have been attracted to Joseph? How often did she come to Joseph? What was Joseph's response?
4. How did Joseph respond when she grabbed his garment? Why do you think she lied about Joseph?
5. How was Joseph's selfless decision rewarded? How is the end of this chapter similar to the beginning of the chapter?

THOUGHT QUESTIONS:

6. What made Joseph so strong? So selfless? So faithful?
7. What is then the key to purity?

ENVY

LESSON 10 – (GENESIS 29-31)

INTRODUCTION:

Two sisters sharing one husband. What else needs to be said? It doesn't take a marriage expert to see that would not work. Compound this with the fact that Jacob really didn't want Leah (the older sister) to begin with, AND the fact that Leah had children left and right while Rachel (the younger sister) remained childless for several years, AND the fact that one sister, Rachel (the younger), was naturally more beautiful than the other sister, Leah (the older), and it becomes really difficult for us to judge Rachel or Leah too harshly for their actions. (Though our opinion of Jacob is getting worse and worse with each lesson.) Jacob apparently didn't learn any lessons from his volatile marriage and ended up playing favorites with his children as well. Yet another disaster. The behavior of the older brothers toward Joseph was inexcusable (you can't just sell your brother as a slave, no matter what he has done), and yet it is understandable. Parents need to understand how difficult they make life for their children through preferential treatment (and we ALL do this from time to time). We sin against our children by showing favoritism and they take it out on each other. Why is that? What is the nature of envy? What is the relationship between envy and pride? How do we feed this sinful attitude? And, more importantly, how can we starve it out?

FACT QUESTIONS:

1. How did Jacob acquire Leah as wife?
2. Who did Jacob favor?
3. What is the contrast drawn between Leah and Rachel's appearance?
4. What is the contrast drawn between Leah and Rachel's relationship with Jacob?
5. What caused the women to be jealous?

THOUGHT QUESTIONS:

6. What causes jealousy?
7. What is the difference between jealousy and envy?

SELFISHNESS—THE LESSON OF CAIN

LESSON 3 – GENESIS 4:1FF

INTRODUCTION:

Who is more likely to kill you? Someone you know or someone you don't? What all of this evidence, both in the Bible and in our own experience, reveals is that violence is usually personal. That is to say that the people who hurt us the most (either in their words or in their actions) are normally the ones to whom we are closest. And, conversely, the ones we hurt the most are the ones who are closest to us. The same can be said about selfishness in general. Selfishness expresses itself in a lot of different ways: pride, envy, drunkenness, lying, theft, sexual promiscuity, gossip, slander, etc. We all do selfish things like these, do we not? So, in this lesson we will look at selfishness both in the home and in other family type relationships (like in the church). What causes it? Why is it such a problem? And, most importantly, what can we do to control it?

FACT QUESTIONS:

1. What were the occupations of Cain and Abel (4:3)?
2. What was the Lord's response to each of their sacrifices (4:4)?
3. What was Cain's response to the Lord's regard for Abel (4:6)?
4. What does it mean that "his face fell" (4:6)?
5. How did Cain cope with his anger (4:8-9)?
6. What curse(s) were placed on Cain (3:11-16)?

THOUGHT QUESTIONS

7. How did sin "crouch at the door" of Cain's heart? How does it "crouch" at ours?

OBEDIENCE – WHEN FAITH IS ALONE

LESSON 4 – GENESIS 6:5-8:19

INTRODUCTION:

The Genesis records the Divine punishment of human sin and the Divine salvation offered to people of faith. But take it to heart, Noah shows that faith, even when it is alone, can respond in obedience to the will of God.

FACT QUESTIONS:

1. What did Noah do (6:22; 7:5)?
2. What animals were saved (7:8-9)?
3. How long did God send rain? How long did the ark float (7:17,24)? How long was Noah's family in the ark (7:11; 8:14)?
4. What did Noah send out from the window of the ark (8:7,8,10)?
5. What was Noah surrounded by (6:5)?

THOUGHT QUESTIONS:

6. Was Noah saved by God's promise, by his obedience or both? Explain.
7. What makes Noah's obedience in building the ark for a flood so extra-ordinary?
8. What applications can you find about obeying God?

SACRIFICE—THE BEGINNING OF THE STORY

LESSON 9 – (GENESIS 21-22)

INTRODUCTION:

God hated human sacrifice. The biblical historians present it as the ultimate expression of rebellion and apostasy. It is called an abominable act (2 Chronicles 28:3), and is given as the chief cause of captivity (2 Kings 17:17). Why is God telling Abraham to offer his son Isaac as a sacrifice? Nowhere in the book of Genesis will we find a story that illustrates selflessness more than this one right here. Nothing in this world is more important to us than our children. We would live and die for them. We would stand between them and someone coming at them with a knife. We would never raise the knife ourselves. Yet that's exactly what this great man of faith did. Abraham was completely selfless when he offered his son Isaac.

FACT QUESTIONS:

1. How old were Abram and Sarah when Isaac was born?
2. Why did Abraham circumcise Isaac (21:4)?
3. Why did Sarai want Ishmael removed (21:10)?
4. What did Abraham feel in the crisis (21:11)? Why?
5. What did Isaac do when Abraham wanted to travel for three days to worship God?

THOUGHT QUESTIONS:

6. How did Abram act unselfishly in this sacrifice? How did he act in faith?
7. Is there any significance do you think that Abraham and Isaac "walked on together" (22:8)?

A PARENT'S LOVE

LESSON 8 – (GENESIS 16-17)

INTRODUCTION:

Genesis shows the fundamentals of living in God's good earth. It also shows the family relationships of marriage and parenthood. If marriage requires a careful choice, parenting is just as important. The first best thing parents can do for their children, I've always heard, is love each other. Genesis teaches the primacy of the marriage relationship (c.f. Genesis 2:24). But we see the challenges parenting presents in Genesis.

FACT QUESTIONS:

1. Why did Sarai give Hagar, her handmaid, to Abram (16:2)?
2. Why did Sarai feel after the birth of Ishmael (16:5)?
3. How old was Abram at Hagar's pregnancy (16:16)?
4. Why did Abraham circumcise Ishmael at thirteen (17:24-25)?
5. What promise did God send Abraham (17:15)?

THOUGHT QUESTIONS:

6. What relationship is primary in a family? Spouse/Spouse or Parent/Child?
7. Is there any significance do you think that Abraham "fell on his face" (17:3)?

TRUST – WHEN FAITH CANNOT SEE

LESSON 5 – GENESIS 11:29-13:4; 15:1-21; 22:1-19

INTRODUCTION:

Not only does Moses illustrate faith in Noah's obedience, he uses Abraham, the father of Israel, to illustrate trust where the emphasis seems to rest on not seeing the goal of faith as we walk by faith. Abraham's life of model faith demonstrates how faith must believe God when it cannot see – the fulfillment of promise or even the logic of the action (i.e. trying to have children with Sarah).

FACT QUESTIONS:

1. How old was Abram when he departed from Haran (12:4)?
2. What did Abram do at Bethel and Ai (12:8; 13:4)?
3. What evidence did God offer to Abram to believe he would have an heir (15:5)?
4. What did God ask Abraham to do at a mount in Moriah (22:2)?
5. What did Abraham tell his son regarding the sacrifice (22:8)?

THOUGHT QUESTIONS:

6. What was it that God offered to Abraham to believe he would have a child by Sarah?
7. How does this relate to how faith comes today?

HUMAN ARROGANCE – AGAINST GOD

LESSON 6 – GENESIS 11:1FF

INTRODUCTION:

Moses concludes the lineage of the sons of Noah (9:1; 10:1) to expand the connection of all humanity. Then he will emphasize the descendants of Shem (11:10) the sons of Abraham. The multiplication of humanity is caused by the creative blessing of God (8:15ff; 9:1,7). But the multiplication of culture through diverse languages is the result of sin in the human family, maybe no more than 100 years after the flood (Keil). Humanity would have naturally divided by clans (10:1ff), but cultures divided by the different languages from the confusion caused by human sin. Only at Pentecost in 30 AD would God again demonstrate His sovereignty to no longer divide but unite all people under His Christ.

FACT QUESTIONS:

1. What did the whole earth speak before God intervened (11:1)?
2. What did they want to build (11:4)?
3. Why did they want to build (11:4)?
4. What did God observe about the consequences of their actions (11:6)
5. What did the LORD God do (11:7)?
6. Why was the city called Babel (11:9)?

THOUGHT QUESTIONS:

7. How does this relate to people living today? Is it a sin to build a tower? Is it a sin to move to “the big city?”

MARRIAGE – CHOOSE CAREFULLY

LESSON 7 – GENESIS 2:20-24; 26:34-35; 28:1-9

INTRODUCTION:

In tracing the Jew’s human origin to God, it is natural for Moses to show the beginning of the cosmos, sin and diverse clans and cultures. In so doing, it is not surprising that Moses traced the universal practice of marriage to God. The covenant of marriage began in the Garden with the first human couple and became the normative pattern for all, including Jews, as to what God’s will was for marriage. Further, Moses shows the practice of some in choosing their mate as a process requiring significant purpose. So if you marry, choose carefully.

FACT QUESTIONS:

1. Why was a woman made for Adam (2:20)?
2. For what cause do men leave their father and mother (2:24)?
3. What are man and woman to become (2:24, c.f. Matthew 19:1-9)?
4. Who did Esau marry (26:34-35; 28:8-9)? Why?
5. Who did Jacob marry (29:11, 18, 20, 28)? Why?

THOUGHT QUESTIONS:

6. Why is marriage a life long covenant?
7. Why is adultery a legitimate cause for divorce (c.f. Matthew 19:9)?