

Genesis: “How Did We Get Here?” Series Map – Spring 2021

TBC – Pastor Matt Crawford

Week 1 – Sunday, April 18 – Intro to book and Genesis 1:1 – “In the Beginning, God”

Themes: God alone is our Creator; life itself comes from him; the Bible lays down a theological gauntlet in those four words

Week 2 – Sunday, April 25 – Genesis 1:1-2:14 – “It Was Very Good Indeed”

Themes: Big picture of Creation (except for creation of man)

Week 3 – Sunday, May 2 – Genesis 1:26-31; 2:4-9, 15-25 – “Created in God’s Image”

Themes: Mankind is special because of the image of God on him

Week 4 – Sunday, May 9 – Genesis 3 – “First Gospel”

Themes: Man’s fall; God’s plan from the beginning to save; his grace and mercy shown right away; focus on 3:15 and 3:21; walk straight through instead of reading whole thing at the beginning; connect hope through Eve giving birth to Mother’s Day

Week 5 – Sunday, May 16 – Genesis 4 – “Two Paths”

Themes: Depth and spread of sin through broken relationships and murder; first human death; God’s mercy even in the midst of those circumstances; people calling on the Name of the LORD in v. 26; cf. to Psalm 1 and show the first example of the Bible showing us that we must choose one of two ways

Week 6 – Sunday, May 23 [Lord’s Supper] – Genesis 5-7 – “Judgment and Rescue”

Themes: the generations after Adam and their inclination toward sin; the way in which both Enoch and Noah stood out; increasing wickedness on the earth and God’s plan to start over with Noah’s family (also point out that every generation isn’t getting worse, though we often think that – cf. Matthew 24:37-39); his grace in rescuing Noah and giving humanity a new start; maybe pull in something from Hamilton’s *God’s Glory in Salvation through Judgment*; will skip and summarize some portions of the text so that I’m not reading three whole chapters; probably walk straight through instead of reading the whole thing at the beginning

Sunday, May 30 – Pastor Emeritus preaching [Matt out of town]

Week 7 – Sunday, June 6 – Genesis 8-9 – “God Remembered Noah”

Themes: God’s grace in restoring the earth and repopulating the human race and the animals; Post-Flood and its results; God’s promise with the rainbow (and the truth about that symbol); value and symbolism of human blood (points to Jesus’ sacrifice); Noah’s own drunken failure and the failure of the ark → it didn’t solve the problem of the human heart; we needed someone to come change us from the inside out! [Might need to address the stupid interpretation of the curse of Ham throughout history.]

Week 8 – Sunday, June 13 – Genesis 10-11:26 – “The Folly of Seeking a Name for Ourselves”

Will summarize genealogies in chapters 10-11 – use Gerald Bray’s notes on genealogies in the Bible from *God is Love*.

Themes: Early notes on kingdoms found later in Scripture; the disobedience and folly of Babel – not spreading out as God said, and pridefully seeking a name for themselves (we should use our teamwork and combined efforts to honor HIM! That’s why he made us and gave us the Cultural Mandate); application: our technology should not trump biblical ethics; God’s sovereignty and power over mankind; we can’t build a stairway to Heaven – Heaven had to come down to us in the Person of Jesus

Week 9 – Sunday, June 20 [Lord’s Supper] – Genesis 11:27-12:8 – “All Peoples Will be Blessed through You”

Themes: God’s choosing of Abraham and calling him out from an idolatrous family (cross reference to Joshua 24:14-15); walk through the promises of 12:1-3, culminating in the last one, which points to Jesus; in choosing Abraham the Hebrew, God was choosing people from all nations (cross reference to Cornelius’s salvation in Acts 10); talk about gift of the Promised Land, as well; MIGHT connect hope through Abraham as the father of all who walk in faith (Romans 4:11-12) to Father’s Day

Week 10 – Sunday, June 27 – Genesis 12:9-20; 20:1-18; 26:1-11 – “Lies of the Patriarchs”

Will need to summarize some of these accounts.

Themes: Abraham and Isaac not trusting God and lying about their wives (might link to Hebrews 11 and show God’s kind description of the overall pattern of their lives, despite these moments); God’s mercy, patience, and grace on them in spite of this; the Lord choosing to bless and use them in spite of their sin (just like he has with us!)

Week 11 – Sunday, July 4 – Genesis 13:1-18; 21:22-34; 23:1-20; 26:12-33 – “Faith of the Patriarchs”

Will need to summarize some of these accounts.

Themes: Contrast with last week and show the connection to our own lives – saved, but on a road of sanctification, gradually becoming like Jesus (cf. to 1 John 1:9 and other NT verses); Abraham and Isaac’s faithful interactions with their neighbors; their actions toward making peace and sacrificing financially for the sake of harmony were acts of FAITH in God’s provision; the Lord blessed these actions

Week 12 – Sunday, July 11 – Genesis 14 – “God’s Rescue and Abraham’s Response”

Themes: The Lord’s kindness to Lot through Abraham (despite Lot’s association with Sodom); God’s miraculous victory through Abraham and his allies; Abraham’s trust in the Lord rather than the king of Sodom and his wealth; Melchizedek and the way he points to Jesus (must cross reference to Psalm 110 and Hebrews passages on Melchizedek)

Week 13 – Sunday, July 18 [Lord’s Supper] – Genesis 15 – “Justified by Faith”

Themes: God’s faithfulness to his promise in his time; Abraham justified by faith, as well (as are ALL Old Testament saints); major cross reference to Romans 4; explain covenant at end of chapter and God’s sovereign, initiating, and accomplishing grace in it

Sunday, July 25 – Youth Pastor preaching [Matt out of town]

Week 14 – Sunday, August 1 – Genesis 16; 21:8-21; 25:12-18 – “Man’s Unfaithfulness, God’s Faithfulness”

Themes: Abram and Sarai’s lack of faith in God’s promise and poor decision (and the results of this that we still see in the world today!); talk about infertility and how we talk about people having kids (share our own experiences in the church); God’s kindness and keeping of his promises to Hagar and Ishmael; God’s provision in contrast with how Abram and Sarai treated Hagar and Ishmael

Week 15 – Sunday, August 8 – Genesis 17 – “The Sign of the Covenant”

Themes: God’s authority to rename Abram and Sarai; his continued faithfulness to his promises (trust his timing and plan!); circumcision’s meaning – connect to the New Testament (cf. Colossians 2:11-12); Isaac as the son of promise (God’s sovereign grace to choose this)

Week 16 – Sunday, August 15 – Genesis 18:16-19:38 – “Mercy Amidst Judgment”

Themes: God’s kindness to receive Abraham’s bold prayer (we should pray like this!) – cf. to Abraham being called the “friend” of God in Isaiah 41:8; God’s mercy toward Sodom (though they didn’t reach the standard Abraham prayed for); sin of

homosexuality; God's exceeding mercy toward Lot and his family (but don't miss the warning of Lot's wife; don't turn away from God and back to sin!); God's holiness and justice; sad results of Lot's vacillating and lack of commitment to the Lord

Week 17 – Sunday, August 22 [Lord's Supper] – Genesis 18:1-15, 21:1-7; 25:1-11 – “God Has Made Me Laugh”

Themes: Sarah's lack of faith, but ultimate trust in the Lord (cf. to Hebrews 11); God's faithfulness despite her moments of wavering; God's power over the human body and the process of childbearing (if he can create the universe and the normal process of reproduction, he can cause an old woman – or even a virgin – to give birth!); NOTHING is impossible for the Lord; God keeps his promises; show end of Abraham's life and the reward of his faith in the Lord

Week 18 – Sunday, August 29 – Genesis 22; 25:1-11 – “God Provides the Sacrifice”

Intro with *The Jesus Storybook Bible's* version of this story: “The Present”

Themes: Abraham AND Isaac's faith – link to Hebrews 11:17-19; God's provision of the ram to die in Isaac's place; show the connections to Jesus and how much this story points to how God would provide redemption for us; repeated promise that all nations would be blessed through Abraham, but NOW it is linked to his obedience! (connection between faith AND obedience)

Week 19 – Sunday, September 5 – Genesis 24 – “Matchmaker”

Themes: Abraham's integrity before God about his son's wife (you should choose wisely, too!); Rebekah's kindness and selflessness; God's guidance of Abraham's servant; God's provision of a bride for Isaac – which is also linked to his promises to Abraham and to us

Sunday, September 12 – Dr. Hayes Wicker guest preaching [Matt will be here]

Week 20 – Sunday, September 19 [Lord's Supper] – Genesis 25:19-34 – “Birthright”

Themes: In the face of infertility, Isaac didn't try what Abraham had with Hagar – he prayed instead; God's kindness in answering that prayer and opening Rebekah's womb; his sovereignty in giving them kids and in choosing one – the younger – to be the son of promise; Esau's worldliness, materialism, and instant gratification (cf. to Philippians 3:19 and Hebrews 12:15-17); contrast Esau's *now* mentality with Isaac's faith and trust in the Lord earlier in the chapter. [May need to show God's sovereignty AND human responsibility through the earlier prophecy being fulfilled, but THROUGH their actions.]

Week 21 – Sunday, September 26 – Genesis 26:34-27:46 – “The God of Jacob and Other Deceivers”

Themes: Rebekah and Jacob’s lack of faith, yet God’s sovereignty; Isaac and Esau’s attempt to circumvent a previous promise (birthright), yet God’s justice; your sin will find you out (and there WILL be consequences!); deception in the family of the patriarchs (a prevalent theme); God’s kindness and grace to still bless and use Jacob (whose name means “deceiver”), just like his kindness and grace to us! → that’s the connection to the gospel here

Week 22 – Sunday, October 3 – Genesis 28; 32:24-32; 35:1-15 – “The House of God”

Themes: God’s kindness and promise-keeping to Jacob; the Lord’s *initiation* and establishment of this relationship with Jacob; God makes a way for the relationship; Jacob’s response of giving; the closeness of their relationship as seen through Jacob’s wrestling with the Lord; the Lord’s authority in renaming Jacob; the Lord’s keeping of his promises through 20 years or so (verify that); Jacob’s dwelling with the Lord (Bethel means “house of God”) and how our lives can become dwelling places for the Lord (1 Corinthians 6 – temple of the Holy Spirit)

Week 23 – Sunday, October 10 – Genesis 29:1-30; 30:25-31:55 – “Deception in the Family”

May need to summarize some of this long passage, especially chapters 30-31.

Themes: God’s care for Jacob through his journey and bringing him to family; Jacob and Laban’s deceptions and wrangling; the Lord’s care and promise-keeping for Jacob again, despite his deception; even through Jacob’s foolishness with wives (talk about polygamy and how people misunderstand the Bible’s view of it – if haven’t already done that with Abraham), God used his actions to build the nation of Israel, through whom Jesus would come

Week 24 – Sunday, October 17 – Genesis 29:31-30:24; 35:16-26 – “Sisterly Struggles”

Themes: Leah and Rachel’s struggle for Jacob’s attention and love (again, proof that the Bible does not endorse polygamy); God’s kindness to both women, especially Leah since she was rejected by Jacob, but now is honored among Israel (cf. Ruth 4:11); God alone can satisfy and fulfill our hearts, not even our children or spouses (maybe cf. to Ecclesiastes) – Rachel even names one of her sons with a name that expresses his discontentment with him

Week 25 – Sunday, October 24 [Lord’s Supper] – Genesis 32:1-23; 33:1-20; 35:27-29 [also point to the descendants of Esau in Genesis 36 without going through that chapter] – “Brothers Reconciled”

Themes: God’s protection of Jacob and blessing of both he and Esau (keeping his promises to all the patriarchs); Jacob’s shrewdness in praying but also sending gifts; the beauty of brotherly reconciliation – but also Jacob’s old deceptive habit rearing its head; last time we see them together (Isaac’s burial – his unexpectedly long life a sign of God’s blessing again); just reference descendants of Esau quickly

Sunday, October 31 – Associate Pastor preaching [Matt preaching out of town]

Week 26 – Sunday, November 7 – Genesis 34 – “Violation and Violence”

Themes: Wickedness of Shechem’s actions; Simeon and Levi’s unjust, violent, and murderous response; God’s kindness to protect Jacob and his family from reprisals; might link to the tribes of Levi and Simeon and their future among the nation of Israel

Week 27 – Sunday, November 14 – Genesis 38 – “Hypocrisy” [might need to warn parents of young kids before this one]

Themes: Judah’s friends affecting his character (this will grow – point to that coming in the Joseph narrative); wickedness and selfishness of Judah’s sons and then Judah himself; hypocrisy of calling for Tamar’s death; without justifying Tamar’s prostitution, talk about how we should care for women, especially widows (cf. Acts 6 and other passages); God’s sovereignty again in blessing Perez, who was technically the younger son – a consistent theme in Genesis; link to Ruth 4:11-22 and show how influential the house of Perez became – including being part of the lineage of Jesus

Sunday, November 21 – Thanksgiving Message

Week 28 – Sunday, November 28 – Genesis 37, 39-41 – “Joseph, Part 1: Injustice” [might need to warn parents of young kids before this one]

Have to summarize some sections.

Themes: God’s kindness in rescuing Joseph’s life; God’s sovereignty in choosing Joseph to be over his older brothers (as in Jacob’s case), but also Joseph’s immaturity in his sharing of the dream (he will grow through his trials); Joseph’s integrity even amidst false accusations; God’s blessing on Joseph: “the LORD was with him” repeated; God’s omniscience and gracious revelation of the future through the dreams; the Lord’s provision prior to the famine; Joseph’s faith in the Lord through all of his trials and then through his leadership of Egypt; God keeping his promises to Abraham and us through preserving the family of the patriarchs

Week 29 – Sunday, December 5 – Genesis 42-46 – “Joseph, Part 2: Awkward Family Reunion”

Must summarize some sections here.

Themes: God sending Joseph into slavery in order to rescue his family; the emotional weight we cause when we hurt each other; Joseph’s example of forgiveness and grace

Week 30 – Sunday, December 12 – Genesis 47-50 – “Joseph, Part 3: You Planned Evil; God Planned it for Good”

Must summarize some sections here.

Themes: Jacob’s prophetic blessings (and even curses) on his sons; again, God’s sovereignty in choosing Ephraim over Manasseh; Jacob and Joseph’s faith in God’s promises in insisting that they not be buried in Egypt; God using Joseph’s brothers’ evil intent for good in his plan; explain how Joseph is a type of Christ → end the series on a strong gospel note here and connect to the arrival of Jesus that we celebrate at Christmas

[Leads into two Christmas messages – December 19 and December 26.]