

## The Evidence of God Genesis Overview

This morning I want us to look back through the book of Genesis and get a view of God and His activity in the beginning of history through His interaction with mankind. The book is a compelling record for the existence of God, a book that never argues for His existence, but assumes He does.

**Hebrews 11:6** “**But without faith it is impossible to please Him, for he that comes to God, must believe that He is (exists) and that He is a rewarder of those that diligently seek Him.**”

We see that in Genesis. We see those who by faith believed in the existence of God and sought to know Him more and then we see how God rewarded their faith.

It has been said that seven is the perfect number, the number of completion. So this morning I want to discuss seven things that are evident about God from the book of Genesis.

From the very first verse and throughout the book of Genesis we see God’s person is evident.

### I. GOD’S PERSON IS EVIDENT IN GENESIS

God is not an idea. He is not aloof nor has He abandoned the world. He is active. It is not my intent to argue for the existence of God. **Hebrews 11:6** indicates that we believe He exists by faith. **Romans 1:18-2** states that there are those who suppress the truth about God because of their wickedness. What is known about God is evident or plain to them through what has been created so that no one is without excuse. His existence is also evident in man’s heart or consciousness, a truth they deny by suppressing it.

The very first verse of the Bible does not argue for the existence of God nor does it even seek to define God. As one source indicated “**The Bible always assumes, and never argues, God’s existence. While everything else had a beginning, God does not**” and so we read in **Genesis 1:1** “**In the beginning God**”

That doesn’t mean He had a beginning, but that He

was there before the beginning of time and creation. **Psalm 90:2** “**Before the mountains were born or You brought forth the earth and the world, from everlasting to everlasting You are God.**”

God always has been and always will be. He is without beginning and end, eternal and we begin by learning His name – God.

Every one of us has a name. To distinguish us from others in our family we have been given different names unless you are George Foreman and name your five sons all George. **My Dad was named Howard after his uncle. To distinguish the two of them when they were together, they called my Dad by his middle name. When I was born and named after my Dad, they gave me the nickname Howie.**

Names can also have meaning or significance and can tell us about a person’s character. When God made Himself known in Genesis to different people it was with the intent of revealing something about Himself that He wanted them to learn about Him.

**Genesis 1** introduces us to God. In the Hebrew it is the word Elohim. It’s used over 2,500 times in the Old Testament in reference to deity. Of that number it is used over 2,300 times to speak specifically of the true God.

There are two views of its meaning. One idea is that the root speaks of fear indicating that the deity is to be revered and worshipped. Others say that the root refers to strength or great power. **Charles Ryrie in his book Basic Theology says that “the evidence seems to point to the latter derivation signifying, in the case of the true God, that He is the strong One, the mighty Leader, the supreme deity.”**

The name Elohim is used when speaking about His sovereignty over the earth in **Isaiah 54:4**; over all flesh in **Jeremiah 32:27**; over the heavens in **Nehemiah 2:4**; and that He is the “**God of gods and Lord of lords**” in **Deuteronomy 10:17**.

In **Genesis 1:1; Isaiah 45:18; Jonah 1:9** He is God the creator and from verses like **Hebrews 11:3** we come to understand that He made everything out of nothing. Jim couldn’t plant a field without seed.

in His own infinite being.”

Rich couldn't build a garage without boards and nails. Randy couldn't paint a car without paint. Elaine couldn't knit hats without yarn. But the God we are introduced to in **Genesis 1** is the Elohim, the powerful creator God who spoke and brought into existence everything in the universe. Elohim is used 35 times in **chapter 1** alone. The creator God was at work in creation creating everything. It is this God, Elohim who is at work in you.

In **Genesis 4:1** we are introduced to Yahweh or Jehovah. This is the name used by Eve, Seth in **4:26**; Noah in **9:26**; and Abraham in **12:8; 15:2, 8**. We see it translated as Lord. It was by that name that God revealed Himself to Moses at the burning bush and referred to Himself as I AM. The name was so sacred to Jews that it was not pronounced. They used the name Adonai instead. In the 6<sup>th</sup> century they omitted the vowels and used only the consonants YHWH so that the synagogue reader would know to use the name Adonai. It was then changed to the word Jehovah.

The name Yahweh emphasizes such things as His changeless existence, His abiding presence, and speaks of Him as the covenant God. That's how He came to be known by Noah, Abraham, Isaac, and Jacob. This name reveals to us that He is a personal God who desires to be in relationship with us.

In **16:13** God revealed Himself to Hagar who came to know God as El Roi when she and Ishmael were cast out by Sarah. She came to know Him as the One who sees everything.

There are other names by which God reveals Himself in Genesis.  
El Shaddai – God Almighty (**17:1; 28:3; 35:11**)  
From this name we understand Him to be the Omnipotent or the all-powerful God. **A.W. Tozer** writes “Since He has at His command all the power in the universe, the Lord God omnipotent can do anything as easily as anything else. All His acts are done without effort. He expends no energy that must be replenished. His self-sufficiency makes it unnecessary for Him to look outside of Himself for a renewal of strength. All the power required to do all that He wills to do lies in undiminished fullness

He has the power to create as we see in **Genesis 1** and the power to destroy as we see in **Genesis 7**. His power protected Jacob and accomplished His will by bringing Joseph to power to save the Israelites from famine. He told Sarah that nothing was impossible with Him.

He is seen as the omniscient God in **6:5** when He saw and knew the wickedness of mankind as well as when Hagar fled from Sarah (**16:13**)

And if He is all-knowing then it stands to reason that He is the all-seeing or the omnipresent God. Throughout Genesis God tells individuals that He will be with them.

To Abraham the Lord said “**Do not be afraid, I am your shield**” (**15:1**).

To Isaac God told him to stay in the land and He would be with him (**26:3, 24, 28**).

God told Jacob that He would be with him (**28:12, 13, 16-17; 32:1-2**).

We also read that the Lord was with Joseph (**39:2-3, 21, 23**).

I hope one of the important lessons we have learned from Genesis is that God is always present with us. In these examples, He has proven Himself faithful when it comes to the promise of His presence no matter what we experience. At the first sign of trouble, God does not turn and run because it's too hard for Him to handle or He didn't see that one coming. My friends, God is with you!

Other names in Genesis include:

El Elyon – the Most High God (**14:19**)

El Olam – the everlasting God (**21:33**)

Jehovah Jireh – the Lord will provide (**22:14**)

God has revealed Himself in many ways through His names, names which I hope you have come to believe and experience for yourself. He doesn't want us just to know Him by what we read, but to know Him by how we experience Him in life.

**By what names have you come to know God? Have you experienced His omniscience, His omnipotence, His omnipresence or His provision?**

Kent Hughes gives us something to ponder when he writes “Your belief about God defines you. Your belief about God shapes the way you live. Right now, your belief about God is controlling your life.”

Genesis is all about God and how He interacts with His creation for His purpose. God had given Adam and Eve everything they could ever need and yet they came to believe that God couldn't be trusted, that He didn't really love them.

Every person in Genesis had either a direct or indirect encounter with God and what they believed about Him shaped their lives. Let me just toss out some names. Think about how their belief about God shaped them.

Cain/Abel/Seth

Lamech/Enoch/Noah

Abraham/Sarah

Melchizedek

Isaac

Jacob/Esau

Joseph

How you live tells other people what you believe about God. **What do they see about the God you say you know?**

J.I. Packer makes an even more profound statement than the importance of how or what I know about God when he states, “What is of greater importance than I know God, but that He knows me.”

Hagar wasn't looking for God when she ran away from Sarah, but God knew her and sought her. Jacob wasn't looking for God when he was running away from Esau, but God knew him and sought him. Twenty years later, on his return trip God sought Jacob out again and gave him a limp to remind him of His presence and promise.

In the Count of Monte Christo, cast away in the prison Château d'If, Edmond is isolated and forgotten. Six years after his imprisonment he met a priest who had spent many years trying to tunnel his way to freedom. In a conversation, Edmond tells Abbe' Faria that he has forgotten about God. The priest tells him that God has never forgotten about him.

If you are listening, if you are watching God will reveal Himself in different ways through different experiences. **How have you come to know Him?**

God's person is evident in Genesis.

God's power is evident in Genesis.

## II. GOD'S POWER IS EVIDENT IN GENESIS

God's omnipotence refers both to His power and His sovereignty. That simply means that God will do anything and everything according to His holy will and His rule will never be usurped. God won't do anything that is contrary to His nature.

**Genesis 18:14** asks a rhetorical question: “**Is there anything too hard for the Lord?**”

**Jeremiah 32:17** states it this way: “**Nothing is too hard for the Lord?**”

Paul writes that “**God is able to do far more abundantly above what we could ask or think**” (**Ephesians 3:20**).

So when we come to the very first verse of the Bible the power of God is on display. “**In the beginning God created the heavens and the earth.**” If He made it, He controls it or rules it. In the verses that follow we see God's power on display when He created everything out of nothing by just His spoken word: “**God said**” and it happened just as He said it would. It could not be improved.

The entire Bible is a display of God's power to perform the miraculous through raising the dead, defeating entire armies, causing the sea to part or the ground to open. What we call a miracle, God calls possible because nothing is too hard for Him. It was not a difficult task to speak and create the worlds. The Hebrew word for create used in the verb form is only used of divine activity. It is never used about man creating something because with man it is impossible.

It was nothing for God to speak and bring into existence the heavens and the earth.

It was nothing for God to destroy the world with a global flood and yet spare those sheltered in the ark. It was nothing for God to provide a ram in a thicket for Abraham to offer in substitution for Isaac.

The power of God is limitless and that means His

power is limitless in fulfilling His will. The promise of the Messiah given to Adam and Eve at their expulsion from the garden came with the power to fulfill that promise in His time.

When Abel was murdered, the sovereignty of God had the power to see to it that a new godly line would emerge through Seth.

When the wickedness of mankind made it necessary for God to judge the world, His sovereignty spared the godly line through righteous Noah.

The power and sovereignty of God made it possible for an old couple past the years of bearing children to have a son through whom the promise of the Messiah would come.

The power and sovereignty of God protected Jacob but also allowed bad things to happen to Joseph in order to bring about good.

**How has the power of God been evident in your life? Do you find the events of your life, even if you don't understand why God is allowing them, to be the choreograph of His sovereign plan to bring about good?**

God's power is evident in the book of Genesis.

God's presence is evident in the book of Genesis.

### III. GOD'S PRESENCE IS EVIDENT IN GENESIS

We mentioned this when speaking about the person of God, but I can't emphasize enough that throughout the book of Genesis we have seen the promise of His presence.

Something struck me when I was rereading **chapter 4**. It was like a hard slap across the head. **Genesis 4:16**

**"So Cain went out from the Lord's presence."**

Let's back up and remember what happened. Cain and Abel both came to offer a sacrifice to the Lord. Abel brought the best of his flocks. **Verse 4** describes it as the fat portions and the firstborn. **Proverbs 3:9-10** says to honor the Lord with your substance and with the first fruits of all your increase. That's what Abel did. He brought the best he had.

Cain, on the other hand, brought some of his crops. **Verse 3** says he brought some of the fruits. It's like he went to the cupboard and just grabbed whatever was non the shelf. There was no care in the selection of what he brought. It boils down to a matter of the heart. Abel's heart was right with God and Cain's was not, that's why the one was accepted and the other wasn't. Cain wasn't happy that his offering was rejected by God. **Verse 5** says he was angry and while he may have been angry with Abel he was really angry with God.

God then had a conversation with Cain and asked why he was so angry and troubled. Then God told him that if he did what was right, if his heart was right, he would be accepted. But then added that sin was crouching at the door. Sin was standing there waiting to be let in. Sin wanted to take control of his emotions and actions, but God said he must master it. Instead of controlling his anger, he let his anger control him and lured his brother out into a field where he killed him.

A bit further in the chapter God had another conversation with Cain about where Abel was. Because of the murder God put a curse on Cain and that's when we read those words **"so Cain went out from the Lord's presence."** That's when it struck me. When I choose to sin, I choose to leave God's presence. God was present with Cain, but Cain chose to leave God. He tried to get Cain to change his heart attitude because he was on the verge of a decision that would sever them due to sin but sadly he chose the later and left God's presence.

**Is sin keeping us from enjoying God's presence?**

Let's look at another example.

**Genesis 28:16**

Jacob was running away from brother Esau. He stopped for the night after an exhausting trek trying to put as much distance between them and he came to Luz. He renamed it Bethel after this event. In the middle of the night he had a dream about a ladder standing between heaven and earth with angels coming and going and God standing at the top of the ladder. Jacob woke up and exclaimed that God

was in that place and he didn't even realize it.

Folks, I hope you realize that where you go, God is there.

I hope you understand that God will never leave you or forsake you, that He is always present.

We have seen at different times throughout our study of Genesis that God said there wasn't anything to be afraid of because He was with them.

**Now if God is all powerful, can anything happen to us that God doesn't want to have happen?**

Let's take Him at His Word because His Word is true and **John 17:17** says His Word is truth.

God was with Enoch and one day God took him.

God was with Noah in the building of the ark when many probably scoffed at what he was doing and the judgment he warned was coming. God was with Noah and his family for a year on the ark.

God was with Abraham.

God was with Isaac.

God was with Jacob.

God was with Joseph.

When he was in Potiphar's house, we read in **39:2** that the Lord was with him.

When he was in prison, we read in **39:21** that even there the Lord was with him.

**Friends, do you find yourself in some place where you need a reminder that God is present with you? Have you ever noticed that some small children when they are in an unfamiliar place will always hide behind mom or dad? Why is that?** It's because their presence provides protection. Their parent becomes a refuge. That's God. He is our Rock and Refuge a shelter from the storms of life. Always remember that He is present and because He is, there is nothing to fear.

*The Lord's our Rock; in Him we hide,  
A shelter in the time of storm;  
Secure whatever ill betide,  
A shelter in the time of storm.*

CCLI1292471

The presence of God is evident in Genesis.  
And so is the provision of God evident in Genesis.

#### **IV. GOD'S PROVISION IS EVIDENT IN GENESIS**

God's provision is evident in the very first chapter as He tells Adam that every seed-bearing plant and every tree with the exception of the tree of the knowledge of good and evil were available for food. God was providing for their needs.

God provided for Noah and his family on the ark both with enough to feed them and all the animals aboard as well as protection from the flood.

God provided a son for Abraham to carry on the covenant promise.

God provided for Abraham a ram to sacrifice.

God provided protection as Abraham and 300 servants chased after the kings who captured Lot.

God provided protection for Joseph as a slave, as a prisoner, and as a governor. He provided wisdom to assess and amass all that would be needed to sustain a nation during seven years of devastating famine.

But all that pales in comparison to the provision God made in the promise of a coming Messiah.

#### **Genesis 3:15**

God commanded Adam not to eat of the tree in the center of the Garden. If that command was not kept, death would be the result. Both physical and spiritual death would occur. Mankind would forever be doomed to be separated from God because of sin. **Romans 3:23** tells us that we have all sinned.

**Romans 6:23** says the consequence for sin is death. But the promise God made to Adam and Eve was that a redeemer would come, One that would take away the sting of death. **Romans 6:23** says that the gift of God is eternal life through Jesus Christ. He is the remedy for the curse of death. He is the One promised in **Genesis 3:15**.

God then gave them a picture of what was required to be forgiven for sin. A sacrifice needed to be made. They had tried to make their own covering of fig leaves to try and hide their sin depicted in their nakedness, but God showed them that their own attempts to cover sin were inadequate. It could only be done by God's provision. He took two animals, many scholars believe they were sheep, and killed them and gave them coverings from the skins.

Shed blood through death was required to atone sin. **I Peter 1:19** says it's not by tradition or our own efforts we are redeemed but only through the precious blood of Christ. The prophetic thread runs through the Old Testament pointing to Jesus who came to seek and save the lost. No one is exempt. All are doomed. Only Christ can provide the remedy for sin so that all who call on the name of the Lord will be saved.

That is the greatest provision of God in Genesis. That promise was passed on to Abraham in **Genesis 12:3** that through him all the nations would be blessed. At the end of his life Jacob blessed Judah with the prophetic word that the Messiah would come through his family lineage (**49:10-12**). We receive this provision of grace by faith.

**Ephesians 2:8-9**

**Have you received the provision of God for salvation through the Messiah, Jesus Christ?**

It's evident in Genesis that God has made provision for us, but if we don't accept His provision there is punishment.

## **V. GOD'S PUNISHMENT IS EVIDENT IN GENESIS**

God told Adam that if they disobeyed His command by eating the forbidden fruit, the punishment would be death. It wouldn't happen immediately. We see in Genesis that in time physical death occurred. But they did die spiritually right away. They were separated from God because of their sin. He was excommunicated from the garden, separated from God's presence. It was not only a punishment but also for protection. If he had eaten from the tree of life, there would have been no way for man to be redeemed/saved. He would have been forever lost in sin without hope of eternal life.

Cain was punished for the murder of his brother. The world was punished because the **"Lord saw how great man's wickedness on the earth had become, and that every inclination of the thoughts of his heart was only evil all the time."** (6:5)

The people of Babel were punished for not obeying God's command to go out and populate the world. God dispersed them throughout the world by confusing them with differing languages. The people of Sodom and Gomorrah were punished for their blatant wickedness. It is evident in Genesis that God in His holiness must punish sin. But what is also evident in Genesis is the clarity of God's purpose.

## **VI. GOD'S PURPOSE IS EVIDENT IN GENESIS**

I think Joseph stated the purpose of God best: **"You intended to harm me, but God intended it for good to accomplish what is now being done, the saving of many lives."** (50:20)

It's my personal belief that this is more than just a temporal saving of lives thinking of just the Egyptians and the small Israelite community. I think it's beyond the saving of a powerful nation that would emerge 400 years later. I think it also speaks in a spiritual sense that through them, through Judah would come the Messiah. Through Him many would be saved. God's purpose is to provide eternal life to all who will call on the name of the Lord. He isn't willing that any should perish but that all should come to repentance (**II Peter 3:9**). God's purpose was to provide a Savior who would come to seek and save the lost. That is evident in Genesis.

There is one more evident in Genesis. It's His promise.

## **VII. GOD'S PROMISE IS EVIDENT IN GENESIS**

This promise is twofold. I see the promise of land given to Israel in Canaan and I see the promise of life, eternal life given through the Messiah.

We read in **Genesis 1** that God was in the beginning and what we read about Him in this book, the evidence of Him, we take by faith because it is only by His grace that He interacts with us at all.

**What will you do with the evidence of God?**