



## **My Drift**

**Title: Bible – Book of Genesis**

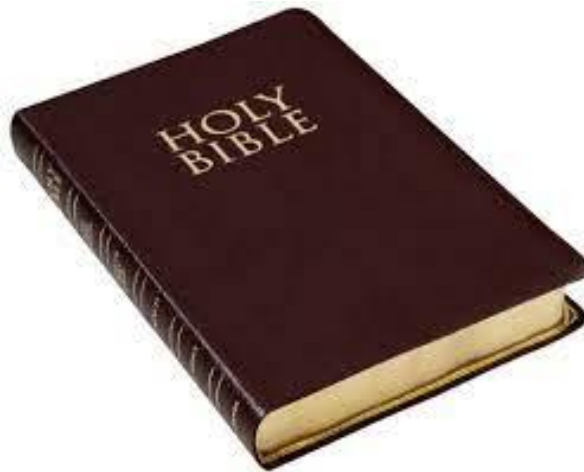
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**Date: 6 Feb 2023**

**Article Number: (413-2023-3)**

**My sister Linda and her daughter Jennifer spent the entire 2022 year studying the Bible's Old Testament. The Church of Jesus Christ of Latter-day Saints encouraged members to study at home the Bible's Old Testament as part of an online "Come Follow Me" training initiative. Linda and Jennifer wrote their favorite thoughts from each week of the Old Testament study and at the end of the year Jennifer published these on her Facebook Page for family and friends to read.**

**I found their thoughts about the Old Testament very interesting. I decided it is about time I learned a little more about the Bible. I do have a Bible. It is in the bottom drawer of my nightstand. It has been there for over 50 years and has never been opened.**



**I don't plan on spending a year studying the Old Testament, but I do plan to do some online research about the Bible starting with the Old Testament Book of Genesis and share my findings with family and friends in my articles.**

**With their permission, I will share a few of my sister and niece's thoughts where I find appropriate.**

### **Some general information about the Bible**

**The Bible is the holy scripture of the Christian religion, purporting to tell the history of the Earth from its earliest creation to the spread of Christianity in the first century A.D.**

**The Bible is the most-read book in the world. This best-selling book sees up to 100 million copies sold or donated annually. Approximately 20 million copies are sold each year in the U.S. alone.**

#### **The Bible contains:**

- 2 Testaments
- 66 books
- 783,137 words
- 3,116,480 letters
- 39 books in the Old Testament
- 27 books in the New Testament

#### **Unique**

- Unique Hebrew words: 8,674
- Unique Greek words: 5,624
- Unique English words: 12,143

#### **Chapters and Verses**

- The Bible has 1,189 chapters
- The Bible has 31,102 verses
- The Old Testament has 929 chapters
- The Old Testament has 23,145 verses
- The New Testament has 260 chapters
- The New Testament has 7,957 verses

#### **Longest and Shortest**

- Longest book: Psalms (150 chapters)
- Longest chapter: Psalm 119 (176 verses)
- Longest verse: Esther 8:9 (78 words)
- Shortest book (by number of words): 3 John
- Shortest chapter (by number of words): Psalms 117
- Shortest verse: John 11:35 (2 words: "Jesus wept")

#### **The Bible was written:**

- over a 1500 year span (from 1400 B.C to A.D. 100)
- over 40 authors from many walks of life
- on three continents (Asia, Africa, and Europe)
- in three languages (Hebrew, Aramaic [Chaldee], and Greek)

### **The Old Testament contains:**

- **17 Historical Books:**
- Genesis, Exodus, Leviticus, Number, Deuteronomy, Joshua, Judges, Ruth, 1 Samuel, 2 Samuel, 1 Kings, 2 Kings, 1 Chronicles, 2 Chronicles, Ezra, Nehemiah, Esther
- **5 Poetical Books:**
- Job, Psalms, Proverbs, Ecclesiastes, Song of Solomon
- **17 Prophetic Books:**
- Isaiah, Jeremiah, Lamentations, Ezekiel, Daniel, Hosea, Joel, Amos, Obadiah, Jonah, Micah, Nahum, Habakkuk, Zephaniah, Haggai, Zechariah, Malachi

### **The New Testament contains:**

- **4 Gospels:**
- Matthew, Mark, Luke, John
- **21 Epistles:**
- Romans, 1 Corinthians, 2 Corinthians, Galatians, Ephesians, Philippians, Colossians, 1 Thessalonians, 2 Thessalonians, 1 Timothy, 2 Timothy, Titus, Philemon, Hebrews, James, 1 Peter, 2 Peter, 1 John, 2 John, 3 John, Jude
- **The Revelation:**
- Revelation

### **Scientific Facts about the Bible**

**The Bible and, more specifically, the church have historically not always agreed with science, often leading to controversy. However, the Bible in fact supports several scientific facts that were not discovered until many centuries later.**

**The Earth Is Round** - A passage in the Bible (Isaiah 40:22) describes the world as round or sphere.

**The Earth is in Space** - The Bible reference to space is found in Job 26:7 which dates back to approximately the 6th century B.C.

**Blood is the Source of Life** - With modern science, you know that blood is needed for life. However, this was not common knowledge in biblical times. In Leviticus 17:11, it is noted that, “For the life of a creature is in the blood.”

**There is a Hydrologic Cycle** - There are two verses within the Bible that relate to the hydrologic cycle before this was an understood concept. Written in about the 8th century, Amos discusses the ocean going into other lands and bodies of water. In Amos 9:6 it says, “He calls for the waters of the sea and pours them

out over the face of the land" and "All the rivers run into the sea; yet the sea is not full; unto the place from whence the rivers come, thither they return again."

**Air has Weight** - The fact that air actually has weight is a relatively new discovery, accredited to Evangelista Torricelli in 1644. However, the Bible discussed the weight of air in Job 28:25 where it says, "When he gave to the wind its weight and apportioned the waters by measure."

## Old Testament

### Genesis

Genesis, Hebrew Bereshit ("In the Beginning"), the first book of the Bible. Its name derives from the opening words: "In the beginning...." Genesis narrates the primeval history of the world (chapters 1–11) and the patriarchal history of the Israelite people (chapters 12–50). The primeval history includes the familiar stories of the Creation, the Garden of Eden, Cain and Abel, Noah and the Flood, and the Tower of Babel.

*Naturally, reading the beginning of any book would help you understand the rest. However, Genesis proves to be a more important beginning to a story than any other beginning you have ever read. You desperately need to read it. It's the beginning of God's story, but it is also the beginning of your story.*

Well, my Bible is now on my desk and I'm reading it as I research and write this article.

### How it all started (Genesis 1:1-2)





The earth was formless  
and empty, and darkness  
covered the deep waters.  
And the Spirit of God  
was hovering over the  
surface of the waters.

- Genesis 1:2 NLT -

## Six days of creation (Genesis 1:3-31)

### Day 1: Light



“Then God said, ‘Let there be light’; and there was light. And God saw the light, that it was good; and God divided the light from the darkness. God called the light Day, and the darkness He called Night. So, the evening and the morning were the first day” (Genesis 1:3-5).



## **Day 2: Firmament**



**“Then God said, ‘Let there be a firmament in the midst of the waters, and let it divide the waters from the waters.’ Thus, God made the firmament, and divided the waters which were under the firmament from the waters which were above the firmament; and it was so. And God called the firmament Heaven. So, the evening and the morning were the second day” (Genesis 1:6-8).**

**In biblical cosmology, the firmament is the vast solid dome created by God during his creation of the world to divide the primal sea into upper and lower portions so that the dry land could appear.**

## **Day 3: Earth, Sea. and Vegetation**



**“Then God said, ‘Let the waters under the heavens be gathered together into one place, and let the dry land appear’; and it was so. And God called the dry land Earth, and the gathering together of the waters He called Seas. And God saw that it was good” (Genesis 1:9-10).**

**“Then God said, ‘Let the earth bring forth grass, the herb that yields seed, and the fruit tree that yields fruit according to its kind, whose seed is in itself, on the earth’; and it was so. And the earth brought forth grass, the herb that yields seed according to its kind, and the tree that yields fruit, whose seed is in itself according to its kind. And God saw that it was good. So, the evening and the morning were the third day” (Genesis 1:11-13).**

#### **Day 4: Sun, Moon, and Stars**



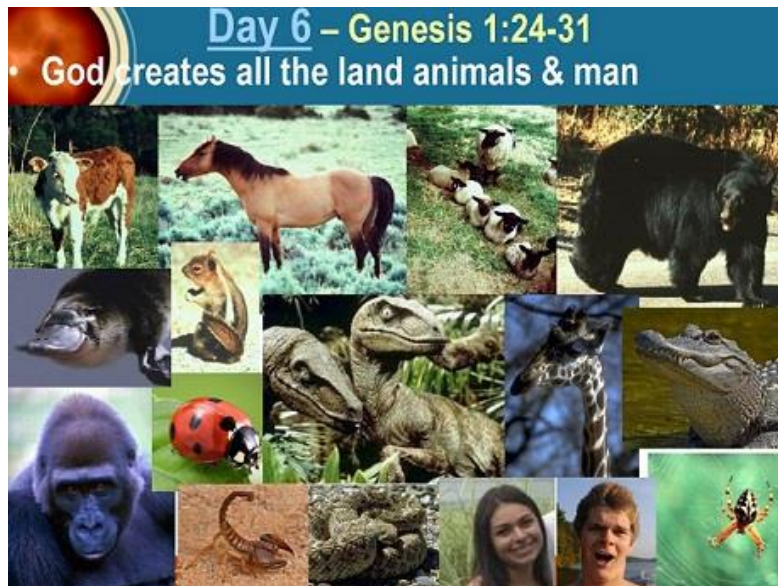
**“Then God said, ‘Let there be lights in the firmament of the heavens to divide the day from the night; and let them be for signs and seasons, and for days and years; and let them be for lights in the firmament of the heavens to give light on the earth’; and it was so. Then God made two great lights: the greater light to rule the day, and the lesser light to rule the night. He made the stars also. God set them in the firmament of the heavens to give light on the earth, and to rule over the day and over the night, and to divide the light from the darkness. And God saw that it was good. So, the evening and the morning were the fourth day” (Genesis 1:14-19).**

## Day 5: Birds and Sea Creatures



“Then God said, ‘Let the waters abound with an abundance of living creatures, and let birds fly above the earth across the face of the firmament of the heavens.’ So, God created great sea creatures and every living thing that moves, with which the waters abounded, according to their kind, and every winged bird according to its kind. And God saw that it was good. And God blessed them, saying, ‘Be fruitful and multiply, and fill the waters in the seas, and let birds multiply on the earth.’ So, the evening and the morning were the fifth day” (Genesis 1:20-23).

## Day 6: Land Animals and Humans



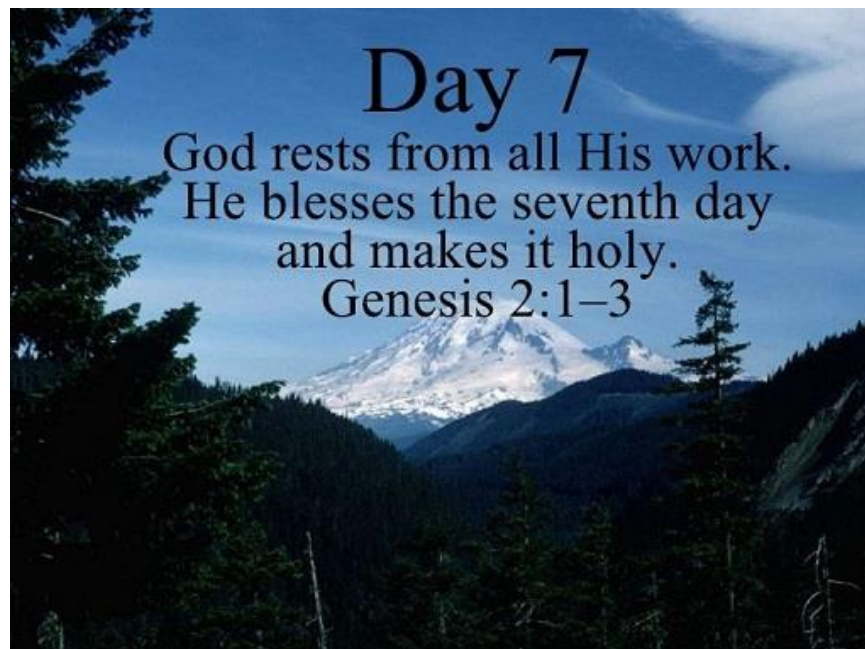


**“Then God said, ‘Let the earth bring forth the living creature according to its kind: cattle and creeping thing and beast of the earth, each according to its kind’; and it was so. And God made the beast of the earth according to its kind, cattle according to its kind, and everything that creeps on the earth according to its kind. And God saw that it was good.”**

**“Then God said, ‘Let Us make man in Our image, according to Our likeness; let them have dominion over the fish of the sea, over the birds of the air, and over the cattle, over all the earth and over every creeping thing that creeps on the earth.’ So, God created man in His own image; in the image of God He created him; male and female He created them. Then God blessed them, and God said to them, ‘Be fruitful and multiply; fill the earth and subdue it; have dominion over the fish of the sea, over the birds of the air, and over every living thing that moves on the earth.’”**

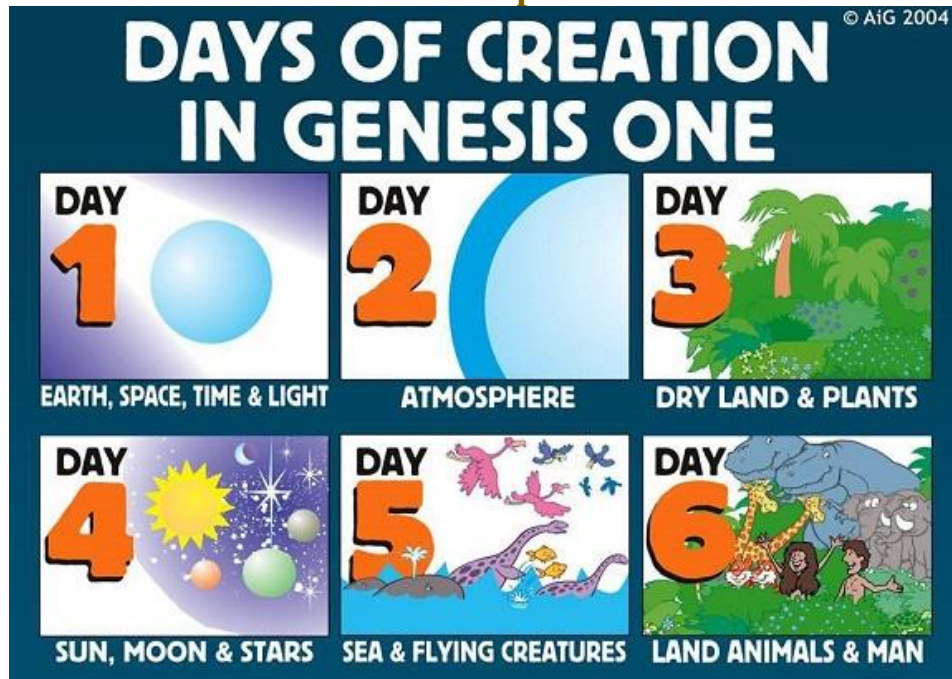
**“And God said, ‘See, I have given you every herb that yields seed which is on the face of all the earth, and every tree whose fruit yields seed; to you it shall be for food. Also, to every beast of the earth, to every bird of the air, and to everything that creeps on the earth, in which there is life, I have given every green herb for food’; and it was so. Then God saw everything that He had made, and indeed it was very good. So, the evening and the morning were the sixth day” (Genesis 1:24-31).**

### **Day 7: The Sabbath**



“Thus, the heavens and the earth, and all the host of them, were finished. And on the seventh day God ended His work which He had done, and He rested on the seventh day from all His work which He had done. Then God blessed the seventh day and sanctified it, because in it He rested from all His work which God had created and made” (Genesis 2:1-3).

### Recap



### Thoughts

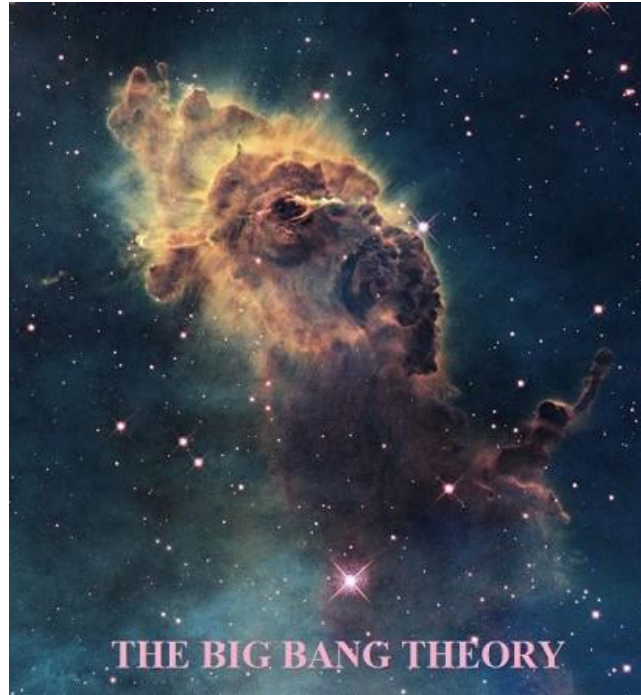
“One thing the creation story teaches us is that God can make something magnificent out of something unorganized. That’s helpful to remember when life seems chaotic. Heavenly Father and Jesus Christ are Creators, and Their creative work with us is not finished. They can make light shine in dark moments in our lives. They can form solid ground in the midst of life’s stormy seas. They can command the elements, and if we obey Their word like the elements did, They can transform us into the beautiful creations we were meant to be. That’s part of what it means to be created in God’s image, after His likeness. We have the potential to become like Him: exalted, glorified, celestial beings.”

### Discussion

There are two primary theories on how the Universe and Earth were created:

#1 The Bible - God created the heavens and the earth.

#2 The Big Bang Theory



**The Big Bang theory is a physical theory that describes how the universe was created and expanded from an initial state of high density and temperature. This theory is believed by many scientists and people who don't believe in the Bible and/or God. Or maybe both views are correct. Maybe God used the big bang to create the universe?**

***Regardless, I think a divine power was required in order to create the universe. So, I'm siding with God. It seems like the most logical explanation to me. How can a big atmospheric explosion create all the wonderful things we have here on earth?***

### **The Garden of Eden**

**The first mention of the garden of Eden is in Genesis 2:8: "And the Lord God planted a garden eastward toward Eden, and there he put the man he had formed." It is interesting to note that Adam was in the garden of Eden by himself, and then God later made woman (Genesis 2:18).**

**God created the first man Adam and then created the first woman, Eve. God put Adam and Eve in the Garden of Eden to care for and nurture the land. He told Adam and Eve that they could eat from any fruit from the trees except for the tree of good and evil. God warned them that if they ate from the tree, they would die.**



### **The Garden of Eden**

**One day Satan came disguised as a snake and spoke to Eve, convincing her to eat the fruit from the tree of good and evil. Eve told the serpent that God said they should not eat it and they would die if they did, but Satan tempted Eve to eat saying that she would become like God if she did. Eve believed the lie and took a bite of the fruit. She then gave some to Adam for him to eat. Adam and Eve, now knowing that they had sinned, immediately felt ashamed and tried to hide from God.**

**In Genesis 3, Adam and Eve were seduced by the serpent into eating the forbidden fruit, and they were expelled from the garden to prevent them from eating of the tree of life, and thus living forever.**

**The fall of man, the fall of Adam, or simply the Fall, is a term used in Christianity to describe the transition of the first man and woman from a state of innocent obedience to God to a state of guilty disobedience. The doctrine of the Fall comes from a biblical interpretation of Genesis, chapters 1–3. At first, Adam and Eve lived with God in the Garden of Eden, but the serpent tempted them into eating the fruit from the tree of knowledge of good and evil, which God had forbidden. After doing so, they became ashamed of their nakedness and God expelled them from the Garden to prevent them from eating from the tree of life and becoming immortal.**

**In mainstream Christianity, the doctrine of the Fall is closely related to that of original sin or ancestral sin. They believe that the Fall brought sin into the world, corrupting the entire natural world, including human nature, causing all humans to be born into original sin, a state from which they cannot attain eternal life without the grace of God.**



**The narrative of the Garden of Eden and the fall of humankind constitute a mythological tradition shared by all the Abrahamic religions, with a presentation more or less symbolic of Judeo-Christian morals and religious beliefs, which had an overwhelming impact on human sexuality, gender roles, and sex differences both in the Western and Islamic civilizations. Unlike Christianity, the other major Abrahamic religions, Judaism and Islam, do not have a concept of "original sin", and instead have developed varying other interpretations of the Eden narrative.**

### **Thoughts**

**“Remember that the Fall was made possible because an Infinite Creator, in the primeval day, made the earth and man and all forms of life in such a state that they could fall. This Fall involved a change of status. All things were so created that they could fall or change, and thus was introduced the type and kind of existence needed to put into operation all of the terms and conditions of the Father’s eternal Plan of Salvation. The coming Fall would take Adam and Eve downward and forward and onward. Death and procreation had yet to enter the world. That death and opportunity for procreation would be Adam’s gift to man, and the gift of God would be eternal life through Jesus Christ, our Lord. But be it remembered, the Atonement came because of the Fall. Christ paid the ransom for Adam’s transgression. If there had been no Fall, there would have been no Atonement with its consequent immortality and eternal life. Thus, just as surely as salvation comes because of the Atonement, so also salvation comes because of the Fall.”**

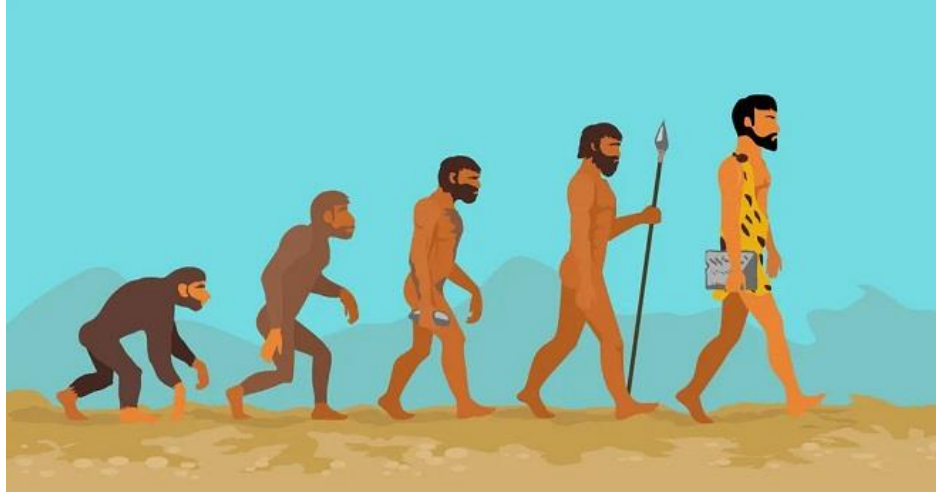
### **Discussion**

**Did humanity start from Adam and Eve?**

**According to the Bible (Genesis 2:7), this is how humanity began: "The Lord God formed man of the dust of the ground and breathed into his nostrils the breath of life; and man became a living soul." God then called the man Adam, and later created Eve from Adam's rib.**

**Is there any biblical evidence of the existence of human-like beings before Adam and Eve? No. A close investigation of the Bible shows that it does not allow for the possibility for pre-Adamic humanity.**

**Scientific evidence suggests that the first humans emerged in Africa around two million years ago, long before the modern humans known as Homo sapiens appeared on the same continent.**



### **Human Evolution According to Charles Darwin**

Ever since Charles Darwin proposed his theory of evolution, Christians have struggled to locate Adam and Eve within an evolutionary past. According to the traditional reading of the first chapters of Genesis, God created Adam and Eve directly and all human beings descended from that first couple. Yet many Christians have discarded this belief on the basis of evolutionary science, which holds that human beings, having descended from animals, first appeared on earth as a population rather than a single, divinely created pair.

So, there seems to be a conflict between evolution vs. Bible's explanation of human origins. Agree? What do you think happened?

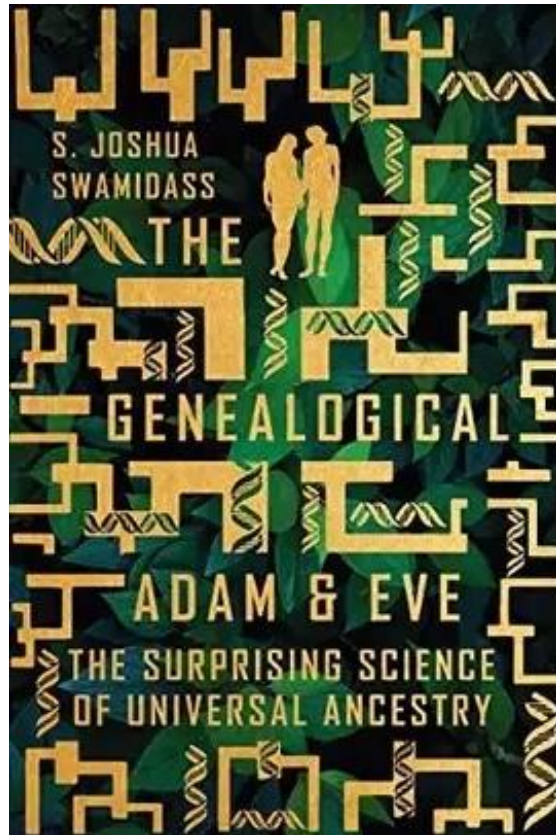
*Well, I don't believe humans evolved from Apes or Monkeys or any other animal or fish. However, I do believe in evolution – just not Darwin's theory of evolution for us humans.*

I found several websites on Google that show science and the Bible might not be so incompatible after all. Here is one of them:

<https://www.foxnews.com/faith-values/christians-point-to-breakthroughs-in-genetics-to-show-adam-and-eve-are-not-incompatible-with-evolution>

I will try to summarize the content of this new breakthrough. It is a little hard to understand but here are the main points:

**Title: Christians point to genetics breakthroughs to show Adam and Eve are not incompatible with evolution.**



### **The Surprising Science of Universal Ancestry**

**Modern genetics only captures a small sliver of the story of human ancestry. While your parents are both 100 percent your parents, you only get roughly 50 percent of your DNA from each of them, and only about 25 percent of your DNA from your grandparents. As you go farther back, you have more genealogical ancestors who each contribute less and less to your DNA.**

**While universal genetic ancestors are rare, universal genealogical ancestors are surprisingly common. Each individual has four grandparents, eight great-grandparents, and so on, but population size in past generations tends to get smaller, so overlap is inevitable. This means that by 1 A.D., every person on Earth could be descended from Adam and Eve.**

**In Genesis, it is believed Adam and Eve to be (1) ancestors of us all, and (2) miraculously created (by God) without parents of their own. In contrast, evolution teaches that (3) we share common ancestors with apes, and (4) we arise from a large population, not a single couple. This conflict of fact only seemed solvable by revising foundational Christian theological beliefs, or by rejecting evolution.**

**But now, clearing up some big scientific understandings, we know that all four of these things can be true at the same time. Even if Adam and Eve lived as recently as just 6,000 years ago, they would be the genealogical ancestors of everyone across the globe by AD 1. They could even have been created de novo, from the dust and a rib. Of course, at the same time, we could also descend from people outside the Garden, others whom God created by a providentially governed process of evolution.**

***Do you understand all that? Me either.***

### **Cain and Abel Story (Book of Genesis: Chapter 4)**



**Cain and Abel were the first and second sons of Adam and Eve after God expelled them from the Garden of Eden. While Cain was a farmer, Abel was a skilled shepherd who took care of the family's animals. One day Cain and Abel made sacrifices to the Lord to worship and thank Him. Cain brought some of the produce from the land while Abel brought the firstborn of his sheep. God showed favor upon Abel's sacrifice because it was an offering that came from the best Abel had to give. This made Cain very angry and jealous. Cain lured his brother Abel into the fields and killed him with a rock. The Lord called to Cain asking what happened and after Cain lies about killing his brother, God punishes Cain. You cannot lie to God because He knows everything. God cursed Cain for his crime and told him that his crops would fail as punishment. He would become a fugitive, on the run, and a vagabond, a beggar. Cain cannot bear such a punishment, and fears that anyone who sees him and learns what he did will seek to kill him.**



**So, God set a mark upon him – the so-called ‘mark of Cain’ – which ensured that if anyone did take vengeance into their own hands and kill him, they would have God’s vengeance delivered upon them seven times worse.**

**Cain left the field and went to live in ‘the land of Nod’, which was ‘on the east of Eden’ (Genesis 4:16). ‘Nod’ is from the Hebrew meaning ‘wander’, symbolizing the fact that Cain had now become a wanderer or nomad.**

**At some point Cain got married, and his wife conceived a son, Enoch. He built a city and named it Enoch, after his son. The rest of Genesis chapter 4 details the descendants of Cain**

**What is the main points of the story of Cain and Abel?**

**While filled with tragedy, the story of Cain and Abel teaches us a valuable lesson about living with sincerity. Through their example, we learn how not just our actions, but our attitudes matter to God – and how devastating sin’s consequences can be.**

### **Noah and the Flood (Genesis 6:1-11:32)**

**God looked down on the human race and saw wickedness, violence, and evil everywhere (Genesis 6:5). He decided to destroy all living things on the earth, except for Noah, who had ‘found grace in the eyes of the LORD’ (Genesis 6:8).**



With very specific instructions, God told Noah to build an ark for him and his family in preparation for a catastrophic flood that would destroy every living thing on earth. God also instructed Noah to bring into the ark two of all living creatures, both male and female, and seven pairs of all the clean animals, along with every kind of food to be stored for the animals and his family while on the ark. Noah obeyed everything God commanded him to do.



After Noah and his family had entered the ark, rain fell for a period of forty days and nights. The waters flooded the earth for a hundred and fifty days, and every living thing was destroyed. As the waters receded, the ark came to rest on the mountains of Ararat. Noah and his family continued to wait for almost eight more months while the surface of the earth dried out.

Finally, after an entire year, God invited Noah to come out of the ark. Immediately, Noah built an altar and offered burnt sacrifices with some of the clean animals to give thanks to God for deliverance. God was pleased with the offerings and promised never again to destroy all the living creatures as he had just done.

Later God established a covenant with Noah: "Never again will there be a flood to destroy the earth." As a sign of this everlasting covenant, God set a rainbow in the sky.

*Then God said to Noah and to his sons with him: "I now establish my covenant with you and with your descendants after you and with every living creature that was with you—the birds, the livestock and all the wild animals, all those that came out of the ark with you—every living creature on earth. I establish my covenant with you: Never again will all life be destroyed by the waters of a flood; never again will there be a flood to destroy the earth." Genesis 9:8-11*

Scripture tells us Noah was a farmer (Genesis 9:20). He was already 500 years old when he fathered three sons: Shem, Ham, and Japheth. Noah lived 350 years after the flood and died at 950 years old.

### **Major Themes and Life Lessons**

*The two major themes in the story of Noah and the flood are God's judgment of sin and his good news of deliverance and salvation to those who trust in him.*

God's purpose in the flood was not to destroy people but to destroy wickedness and sin. Before God decided to wipe the people from the face of the earth, he first warned Noah, making a covenant to save Noah and his family. The whole time Noah and his family labored to build the ark (120 years). Noah also preached a message of repentance. With the coming judgment, God provided plenty of time and a way of escape for those who would look to him in faith. But the wicked generation ignored Noah's message.

*Noah's story serves as an example of righteous living and enduring faith in the face of completely immoral and faithless times.*

It's important to note that sin was not wiped out by the flood. Noah was described in the Bible as "righteous" and "blameless," but he was not sinless. We know that after the flood, Noah drank wine and became drunk (Genesis 9:21). However, Noah did not behave as the other wicked people of his day, but rather, walked with God.

*The story of the Flood symbolizes God's punishment of sin among mankind. He decides to destroy all of man except for Noah and his family, because Noah alone among men had lived a life free from sin and evil. Noah and his descendants thus mark the beginning of a new relationship between God and man, with the rainbow symbolizing God's promise not to flood again. This 'covenant' paves the way for the New Testament and Jesus Christ.*

### **Tower of Babel**

The story of the Tower of Babel is explained in chapter 11 of Genesis in just a few verses. This is a summary of the Biblical account of the Tower of Babel.

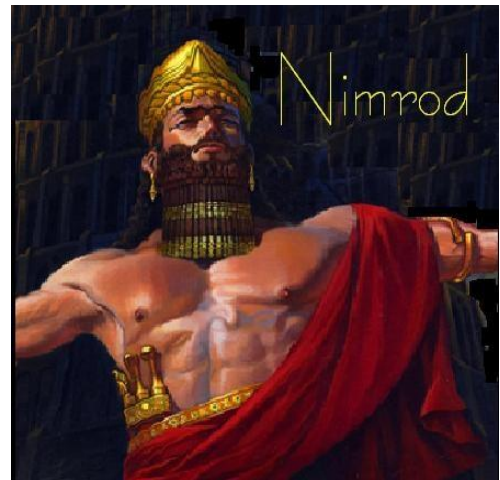
The descendants of Noah lived in the area of Mesopotamia in Babylon. They settled in a land named Shinar. The population was growing, and they all spoke one language. The people decided to build a tall, proud symbol of how great they had made their nation. The Babylonians wanted a tower that would "reach to the heavens" so they could be like God and would not need Him. They began to construct a great ziggurat.





**Tower of Babel**

**As Nimrod (King in the land of Shinar) began his reign, he and his followers had one overriding goal for their new territory; they wanted to ensure the security of their community by building a prestigious landmark to make a name for themselves. “Then they said, ‘Come, let us build ourselves a city, with a tower that reaches to the heavens, so that we may make a name for ourselves; otherwise, we will be scattered over the face of the whole earth” (Genesis 11:4).**



**The structure—a tower made from man-made building materials—would be a symbol of their power and self-sufficiency, and some historians believe that Nimrod had an additional motive for wanting to build the tower of Babel. Nimrod said he would be revenged on God if he should have a mind to drown the world again; for that he would build a tower too high for the waters to be able to reach and that he would avenge himself on God for destroying their forefathers.**

**God did not like the pride and arrogance in the hearts of the people. God caused the people to suddenly speak different languages so they could not communicate and work together to build the tower. This caused the people to scatter across the land. The tower was named The Tower of Babel because the word Babel means confusion.**



**In what was the sin that condemned the Tower of Babel?**

In their attempt to maintain unity and create a name for themselves, God's people rebelled against God's sovereign authority and embraced their own self-sufficiency. They felt they didn't need God to rule over them—they could rule themselves and reach the heavens on their own terms, with their own hands, by their own means.

God's justice and His grace could not allow this treachery to continue. "So, the Lord scattered them from there over all the earth, and they stopped building the city. That is why it was called Babel—because there the Lord confused the language of the whole world. From there the Lord scattered them over the face of the whole earth" (Genesis 11:8-9)

*This story is a powerful reminder of how important it is to obey God's Word and not think we can build a successful but godless life on our own!*

### **The Patriarchal History of the Israelite People (Genesis Chapters 12–50)**

#### **Summary**

Genesis 12-50 explains how God worked to save the world through one unlikely family.



### **God's Promise to Abraham**

**Genesis 1-11** talks about God and the world, and the way that humans continually disappointed God and break his heart. However, hope begins to be restored in **Genesis 12**, where God makes his promise to Abraham. God calls Abraham to go to the land of Canaan, which would be his, and promises to make Abraham's line into a great nation, which will later be called, "Israel."

### **Abraham**

This is important because when Babylon wanted to make a name for themselves, God humbled them, but instead gave a name to a "no-name" guy like Abraham. Not only that, but God's blessing of Abraham echoes the blessings he gave humanity in the beginning that they wasted. This leaves us with the question, "Why Abraham?" We find out in **Genesis 22:18**. Here, God tells Abraham that in him, all the families of the earth would be blessed. Again, we see God driving the message that his plan is to rescue and bless his rebellious world through Abraham's family.



**Abraham and Family**

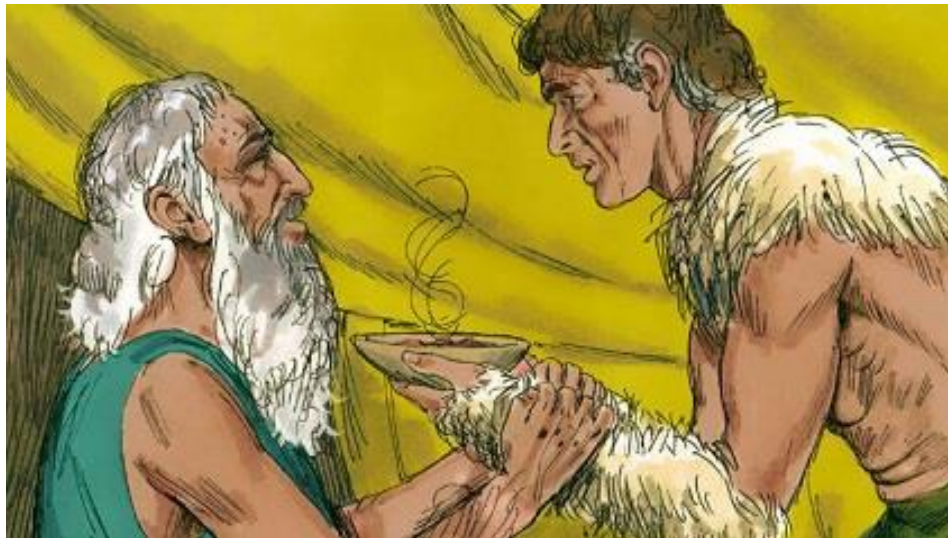
Abraham's wife Sarah was well beyond her child bearing years, and thought giving Hagar (her handmaiden) to Abraham as a wife to bear him a child was the only way the promise could be fulfilled. So, Abraham's firstborn son, through Hagar, Ishmael, became the progenitor of the Ishmaelites, generally taken to be the Arabs.

**Sarah was childless until she was 90 years old. God promised Abraham that she would be “a mother of nations” (Genesis 17:16) and that she would conceive and bear a son, but Sarah did not believe. Isaac, born to Sarah and Abraham in their old age, was the fulfillment of God's promise to them.**

**In chapters 15 and 17, God reaffirms his promise to Abraham when he tells him to look up at the night stars, and that all of the stars in the sky added up to the number of descendants that would come from Abraham, and that is exactly what happened.**

### **Isaac and Jacob**

**We are then introduced to Isaac and Jacob in chapters 25-36. Jacob steals Esau’s birthright and blessing by deceiving their father. He goes on to take four wives, though he really only loves Rachel, and he is not humbled until his uncle, Laban, cheats him out of years of his life. Chapter 32 shows Jacob literally wrestling with God, as he has been humbled, but still believes that he deserves blessings. God honors Jacob’s determination and renames him “Israel” which means “wrestles with God.”**



**Isaac Blesses Jacob**

### **Joseph**

**Jacob had many sons, but Joseph is his clear favorite. His other sons are jealous, and they sell him into slavery, which eventually lands him in jail. However, Pharaoh likes Joseph, and he makes him second in command, which allows Joseph to save all of Egypt from famine, including his family.**





**Joseph Old Testament Hero**

**Genesis 50:20 You planned this for evil, but God planned it for good, to save many lives.** This verse summarizes not only Joseph's story but all of mankind's story so far. Then we go back to the poem about the snake that got stepped on and the one human that would destroy evil altogether. We learn more about this mysterious person when Jacob gives his final blessing to Judah, which is that he would have a king in his bloodline that would command obedience from the nations and restore God's blessing to the world. This is to force you to read on about how God fulfills that promise, but we know that the fulfillment comes in the form of Jesus, the Messiah.

### **Thoughts**

Because of the covenant God made with him, Abraham has been called 'the father of the faithful' and the 'friend of God.' Millions today honor him as their direct ancestor, and others have been adopted into his family through conversion to the Gospel of Jesus Christ. Yet Abraham himself came from a troubled family—his father, who had abandoned the true worship of God, tried to have Abraham sacrificed to false gods. Despite this, Abraham's desire was "to be a greater follower of righteousness," and the account of his life shows that God honored his desire. Abraham's life stands as a testimony that no matter what a person's family history has been, the future can be filled with hope.

Joseph Smith said, "You will have all kinds of trials to pass through. And it is quite as necessary for you to be tried as it was for Abraham and other men of God... God will feel after you, and He will take hold of you and wrench your



**very heartstrings and if you cannot stand it, you will not be fit for an inheritance in the Celestial kingdom of God.”**

**Abraham and Sarah are our ultimate examples of sacrificial love, sacrificial service, and sacrificial selflessness. They are paragons of faith.**

**Isaac did not become an Abraham or a Jacob. He did not reach the heights of Abraham, called the “father of the faithful.” Nor was he as impressive as his son, Israel, “father of the ten tribes.” Yet Isaac is loved and revered. He worshipped God, cared for his home, and pursued his work. He is remembered simply as a “man of peace.” The eloquent simplicity of his life and his unique ability to lend importance to the common place made him great. Altar, tent, and well: his worship, his home, and his work. These basic things of life signified his relationship to God, his family, and his fellow men. Every person on earth is touched by these three same roles to fill. How little things have changed since Isaac’s day—the things that really matter. There is the same God of Abraham, Isaac and Jacob, the same family roles to fill, the same need to work. Altar, tent, and well: these things are essential. Placed in proper perspective by God’s revealed word, they provide at once our greatest challenge and achievement.**

**Holy men need holy women to stand by their sides. Rebekah was prepared and worthy to make and keep sacred covenants and to become a covenant wife of Isaac. She did not have to wait and prepare herself. Rebekah responded to Abraham’s servant who came in search of a wife for Isaac. Her answer was simple and direct, “I will go.”**

**Sometimes it escapes our observation, that silently and unobserved by those who live and act, life pursues its course, ‘til in the end, all things seem to work together for the glory of God and for good to them that love God, that are the called according to His purpose. All parties in Joseph’s story were allowed, in the free exercise of their own choice, to follow their course, ignorant that all the while they were only contributing their share towards the fulfillment of God’s purpose. And in this lies the mystery of divine providence, that it always worketh wonders, yet without seeming to work at all. In this story we see the steady, guiding hand of God who never forgets His people and their destiny.**

**Joseph was able to stay faithful regardless of his circumstances. Pres. Russell M. Nelson taught that “Saints can be happy under every circumstance. We can feel joy even while having a bad day, a bad week, or even a bad year! ...The joy we feel has little to do with the circumstances of our lives and everything to do**

with the focus of our lives. When the focus of our lives is on God's plan of salvation...and Jesus Christ and His gospel, we can feel joy regardless of what is happening – or not happening—in our lives.”

Joseph's reliance was upon the Lord. His trust was in the Lord, and his allegiance ran to the Lord. I believe this is the great lesson of Joseph—to do the right thing because you love the Lord. If you do anything in righteousness for any other reason than you love the Lord, you are on very shaky ground. And somewhere your reasons for acting in righteousness will not be strong enough to see you through.” (Genesis 42-50)

God's story can be summarized through four concepts: Creation, the Fall, Redemption, and Restoration. As in any story, the identity and characteristics of those involved matter: God, humans, and the rest of creation. Our individual lives matter for eternity when our personal stories fit into God's story.

### Genesis Themes

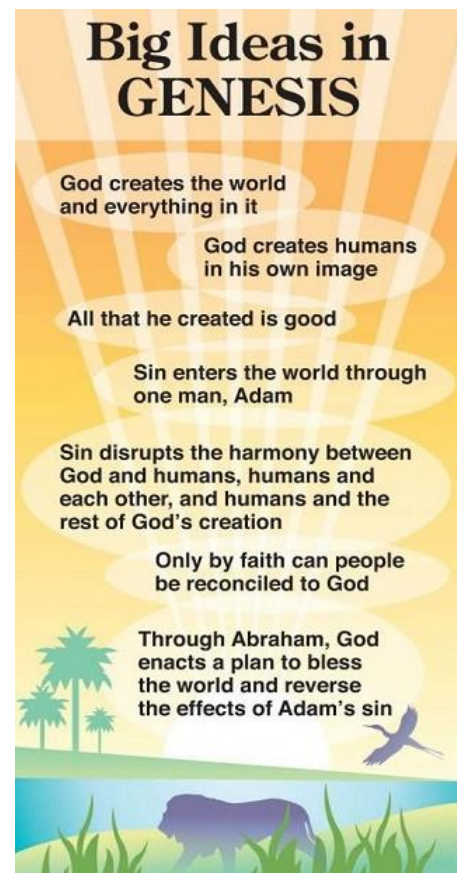
- ❖ God, Humanity, and Creation. The Book of Genesis is the first book of the Bible, the sacred text of Judaism and Christianity.
- ❖ Mistrust, Disobedience, and Death.
- ❖ Covenants and Faith in God's Promises.
- ❖ The Role of Women.

The theme of Genesis is creation, sin, and re-creation. God made the world very good, but first cursed it and then destroyed it in the flood because of man's disobedience. The new world after the flood was also spoiled by human sin.

### What are the main lessons in the book of Genesis?

The book of Genesis brings us back to the beginning, where the foundation of life itself is explained. We learn how we were created, about the origins of sin and its fallout, and how to best relate to God--through obedience and trust.

Don't lose faith!



### **Comments**

**Well, I have read the Book of Genesis and I will probably never fully understand it. I found some of it very interesting and some of it very confusing. It generated a lot of thought and research which usually generated more confusion and thought. I can see why even Bible experts cannot understand and/or agree on everything in the Bible.**

**Only 65 more books to go.**

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