

The Primeval History

RESOURCES

STUDY GUIDES BY SECTION



THE PRIMEVAL HISTORY
STUDY GUIDE 1.1
Lesson 1: A Perfect World (Genesis 1:1-2:3)
Section 1: Overview

OUTLINE FOR TAKING NOTES

Introduction

I. Overview

A. Inspiration

1. Reliability
2. Design

B. Background

1. Availability
2. Interaction

C. Purpose

REVIEW QUESTIONS

1. What is Dr. Pratt's position regarding the inspiration of the Bible?
2. What does Dr. Pratt say about Moses' selection and arrangement of the historical events as he wrote Genesis?
3. Were there other accounts of the origins of the world that would have been available for Moses to read during his youth in Egypt?
4. Describe the basic content of the following ancient documents:
 - The "Enuma Elish"
 - The "Gilgamesh Epic"
 - The "Atrahasis Epic"
5. How did Moses make use of ancient myths as he wrote Genesis?

6. Describe Moses' purpose in writing Genesis, according to Dr. Pratt.

QUESTIONS FOR APPLICATION AND REFLECTION

1. In contrast to the other creation stories in Moses' day, God's spoken word alone brought order and restrained the chaos. Does this fact affect your attitude toward His written Word? How?
2. Moses' primeval history was intended to validate Israel's exodus and conquest by showing that they were in accordance with the order God had established in the early history of the world. What parallel can you see in your own spiritual life with the history of the exodus and the conquest of Canaan?
3. What can you learn from the history of the creation that might help you accept more easily God's plan?
4. Does the fact that Moses made use of the ancient mythical documents affect your confidence in the inspiration of the Bible? Explain.

THE PRIMEVAL HISTORY
STUDY GUIDE 1.2
Lesson 1: A Perfect World (Genesis 1:1-2:3)
Section 1: Literary Structure

OUTLINE FOR TAKING NOTES

II. Literary Structure

- A. Dark Chaotic World: Genesis 1:1-2
- B. Ideal World: Genesis 2:1-3
- C. Six Days of Ordering: Genesis 1:3-31

REVIEW QUESTIONS

1. Explain some of the different interpretations of the creation story. Which ones does Dr. Pratt say are acceptable in Evangelical circles? What is Dr. Pratt's personal view?
2. What is the basic meaning of the phrase "formless and empty" in Genesis 1:2?
3. How does Dr. Pratt divide Genesis 1:1-2:3? Write his descriptive titles for each section.
4. Write the description of what God made on each of the six days of creation.
5. How does Dr. Pratt describe days 1, 2, and 3 of the creation?
6. How does Dr. Pratt describe days 4, 5 and 6 of the creation?
7. What phrase is repeated in Genesis chapter one, verses 4, 10, 12, 18, 21, and 25?

QUESTIONS FOR APPLICATION AND REFLECTION

1. What is your own personal interpretation of the creation story? Defend your view.
2. What can we learn about God from the way He carried out the creation process?
3. In what ways would you like to become more like God as you see His characteristics manifested in the creation account?

THE PRIMEVAL HISTORY
STUDY GUIDE 1.3
Lesson 1: A Perfect World (Genesis 1:1-2:3)
Section 3: Original Meaning

OUTLINE FOR TAKING NOTES

III. Original Meaning

A. Dark Chaotic World

B. Ideal World

C. Six Days of Ordering

1. Deliverance from Egypt
2. Possession of Canaan

REVIEW QUESTIONS

1. Explain the parallels between Deuteronomy 32:10-12 and Genesis 1:2.
2. According to Dr. Pratt, what was the purpose of Moses in writing Genesis 1:2?
3. Explain the parallels between Deuteronomy 12:11 and Genesis 2:1-3.
4. According to Dr. Pratt, what was the purpose of Moses in writing Genesis 2:1-3?
5. Explain the parallels between the events of the creation and the plagues in Egypt.
6. Explain a special event that occurred as Israel was leaving Egypt, that has a parallel in the creation account.
7. What are some of the blessings of Israel in Canaan that have parallels in the creation account?

QUESTIONS FOR APPLICATION AND REFLECTION

1. The Israelites failed to recognize God's blessings in the Promised Land; instead they thought Egypt was pretty good. Have you ever questioned God's plan for your life in a similar way? Give an example. How does the biblical story of the Israelites help you accept God's plan?
2. In what ways have you seen God's special power in your life, reminding you of His power in creation and His power in delivering Israel from Egypt and settling them in the Promised Land?
3. How would you like to experience more of God's power in your life?

THE PRIMEVAL HISTORY
STUDY GUIDE 1.4
Lesson 1: A Perfect World (Genesis 1:1-2:3)
Section 1: Modern Application

OUTLINE FOR TAKING NOTES

IV. Modern Application (43:32)

A. Inauguration (46:56)

B. Continuation (51:52)

C. Consummation (54:46)

Summary (59:09)

REVIEW QUESTIONS

1. Explain how the NT writers related the creation story to the inauguration of the Kingdom. Write down the verses that Dr. Pratt mentions.
2. Explain how the NT writers related the creation story to the continuation of the Kingdom. Write down the verses that Dr. Pratt mentions.
3. Explain how the NT writers related the creation story to the consummation of the Kingdom. Write down the verses that Dr. Pratt mentions.

QUESTIONS FOR APPLICATION AND REFLECTION

1. When Paul says in 2 Corinthians 5:17 that believers are a new creation, he indicates that they have become a part of a new realm, a new world. How does this change your attitude toward this temporal world we live in?
2. Why do you think eternal life is described as a "Sabbath rest"? Do you think this means that there will be no work of any kind in the eternal state?
3. Dr. Pratt mentions that Christians often disconnect their eternal hope from the creation. In other words we assume we will spend eternity in a purely spiritual world of heaven. Is this the way you tend to think of eternal life? However, the NT teaches that our eternal destiny will be in the new heavens and new earth. How does the NT teaching that we will live in a re-created universe affect your view of the world we live in today? How does it make you feel about eternal life?
4. What is the most significant insight you have learned from the study of this lesson? Explain what it means to you.
5. The biblical view of God as creator, separate from His creation, but lovingly taking care of it, is an essential doctrine of Christianity, in obvious contrast with the views of many other philosophers and

religions. For example, many believe in some form of monism, that all is one. This can lead to some serious practical problems, as we can see in the following examples:

A. Heraclitus

The early Greek philosopher, Heraclitus (535-475 B.C.), believed that all the world is one, and that everything is constantly changing. He said the following:

All things are one.

You cannot step twice in the same river, for fresh waters are ever flowing in upon you.

This led him to deny the difference between good and evil. He said,

Good and evil are the same.

["Heraclitus of Ephesus," <http://www.classicpersuasion.org/pw/heraclitus/herpate.htm> (Sept. 19, 2013). See also Herbert Granger, "Heraclitus of Ephesus," *Encyclopedia of Philosophy*, ed. Borchert, vol. 4, s.v.]

What is your opinion? How would it affect your life if you believed this?

B. Hegel

More than two thousand years after Heraclitus, Georg W.F. Hegel (1770–1831 A.D.) proposed that all is one dynamic Spirit. Everything, even truth and religious thought, is in a process of constant development, like a plant. He called it the "dialectic."

[See Colin Brown, *Philosophy and the Christian Faith* (Downers Grove, IL: InterVarsity Press, 1969), p. 105, and Frank Thilly and Ledger Wood, *A History of Philosophy* (New York: Henry Holt and Co., 1959), pp. 478–84.]

What is your opinion? How would this make you feel?

C. Stephen Hawking

Other examples of monism come from eastern religions, and from atheistic versions of the theory of evolution.

While some believe that everything has always existed, others such as the famous physicist, Stephen Hawking, have believed that there was a spontaneous beginning. He proposed that we don't need God to explain the universe; given the existence of gravity, the universe can create itself from nothing.

[Richard Allen Greene, "Stephen Hawking: God didn't create universe." <http://www.cnn.com/2010/WORLD/europe/09/02/hawking.god.universe/index.html>]

What is your response to Stephen Hawking?

D. Cabanis

The belief that everything is just physical matter has led some to disconcerting conclusions.

For example, one philosopher named Cabanis asserts:

The brain secretes thoughts in the same way that the liver secretes bile.

[Quoted by James Sire in *The Universe Next Door* (Downers Grove, IL: InterVarsity Press, 1997), p. 98.]

How would this make you feel?

E. J. B. S. Haldane

Haldane points out the self-contradiction of materialism:

If my mental processes are determined wholly by the motions of atoms in my brain, I have no reason to suppose that my beliefs are true . . . and hence I have no reason for supposing my brain to be composed of atoms.

[J. B. S. Haldane, *Possible Worlds and Other Essays* (London: Chatto & Windus, 1937), quoted by C. S. Lewis in *Miracles* (Grand Rapids: Zondervan, 1968), p. 22.]

What do you think? Do you agree with Haldane's criticism of materialism?

What difference does it make to you personally to know that God created everything, but that He is separate from the creation, taking care of it?

THE PRIMEVAL HISTORY
STUDY GUIDE 2.1
Lesson 2: Paradise Lost & Found (Gen. 2:4–3:24)
Section 1: Literary Structure

OUTLINE FOR TAKING NOTES

Introduction

I. Literary Structure

A. Overview

1. In Garden
2. Condition Enhanced
3. Condition Cursed
4. Out of Garden

B. Symmetry (6:29)

1. Beginning and Ending
2. Middle Portions

REVIEW QUESTIONS

1. Indicate the way Dr. Pratt divides Genesis 2:4-3:24 and give the titles. Explain the main content of each section.
2. Explain the contrasts between the first and last of the four sections (Genesis 2.4-17 / Genesis 3.22-24).
3. Explain the contrasts between the two middle portions of this passage (Genesis 2.18-25 / Genesis 3.1-21).

QUESTIONS FOR APPLICATION AND REFLECTION

1. What can we learn about temptation from Genesis 2:4-3:24?
2. How do you see yourself struggling with the same temptations that Adam and Eve faced? What can you learn from the Genesis account to help resist temptation?
3. What can we learn about the effects of the Fall and sin from Genesis 2:4-3:24? Mention all the different relations that were affected.
4. What are some of the most destructive manifestations of the consequences of the Fall in our contemporary world? Give examples.

THE PRIMEVAL HISTORY
STUDY GUIDE 2.2
Lesson 2: Paradise Lost & Found (Gen. 2:4–3:24)
Section 2: Original Meaning

OUTLINE FOR TAKING NOTES

II. Original Meaning

A. Garden

1. Identity
2. Holiness

B. Loyalty

1. In Eden
2. In Canaan

C. Consequences

1. Death
2. Pain
3. Exclusion

REVIEW QUESTIONS

1. According to Dr. Pratt, where was Eden? Explain why he comes to that conclusion, and explain other common views.
2. What does "Edin" mean in Babylonian language?
3. What does "Eden" mean in Hebrew?
4. Explain the parallels between Eden and the Tabernacle.
5. Explain the parallels between what God expected of Adam and Eve in Eden and what God expected of Israel in Canaan.
6. What were the consequences of disloyalty to God, both in Eden and in Israel?

QUESTIONS FOR APPLICATION AND REFLECTION

1. How does the parallel between Eden and the Promised Land of Canaan help you understand the meaning of the biblical history of Israel? How does that history reflect the gospel? What does it teach us about the Christian life?

2. How do you see the consequences of disloyalty to God manifested in modern society? How do you see the grace of God working to minimize these consequences? Give examples.

THE PRIMEVAL HISTORY
STUDY GUIDE 2.3
Lesson 2: Paradise Lost & Found (Gen. 2:4–3:24)
Section 3: Modern Application

OUTLINE FOR TAKING NOTES

III. Modern Application

A. Inauguration

1. Paul
2. Matthew

B. Continuation

1. Paul
2. James

C. Consummation

1. Romans
2. Revelation

Summary

REVIEW QUESTIONS

1. Explain the parallel that Paul makes between Adam and Christ in Romans 5.
2. Explain the parallels between the temptation of Christ in the wilderness and the temptation of Israel in the wilderness.
3. How does Paul use the example of Eve to exhort Christians in 2 Corinthians 11:3?
4. Explain the parallels between James 1:12-15 and the story of Eden.
5. Explain the parallels between Romans 16:20 and Genesis 3:15.
6. Explain the parallels between the Garden of Eden and the eternal paradise, according to Revelation 2:7 and 22:1-2.
7. How does Dr. Pratt express Moses' intention in relating the story of the disobedience of Adam in the Garden of Eden?

QUESTIONS FOR APPLICATION AND REFLECTION

1. What can you learn about how we should interpret the Old Testament from the way the New Testament refers to the story of Eden and the Fall?
2. How would you explain the gospel using only one passage, the story of Eden?
3. Albert Camus, the famous existentialist philosopher, made friends with the pastor of the American Church in Paris, Howard Mumma. The pastor later wrote a book about the fascinating dialogues they had. Once Camus explained the reason he felt disillusioned with life:

The silence of the universe has led me to conclude that the world is without meaning. This silence betokens the evils of war, of poverty, and of the suffering of the innocent. I have been immersed in this suffering and poverty since the rise of Fascism and Hitler's Nazism. So, what do you do? For me, the only response was to commit suicide, intellectual or physical suicide, to embrace Nihilism and go on surviving in a world without meaning. ... While I always trusted the universe and humanity in the abstract, my experience made me begin to lose faith in its meaning in practice. Something is dreadfully wrong. I am a disillusioned and exhausted man. I have lost faith, lost hope, ever since the rise of Hitler. Is it any wonder that, at my age, I am looking for something to believe in? To lose one's life is only a little thing. But to lose the meaning of life, to see our reasoning disappear, is unbearable. It is impossible to live a life without meaning.

[Howard Mumma, *Albert Camus and the Minister* (Brewster, Massachusetts: Paraclete Press, 2000), pp. 13-14.]

What are the things that Camus is struggling with?

How would you answer Camus? How would use the biblical account of the Fall to help him deal with suffering?

THE PRIMEVAL HISTORY
STUDY GUIDE 3.1
Lesson 3: A World of Violence (Gen. 4:1–6:8)
Section 1: Literary Structure

OUTLINE FOR TAKING NOTES

Introduction

I. Literary Structure

A. Early Violence and Hope

1. Narratives
2. Genealogies

B. Later Violence and Hope

1. Sons of God
2. Nephilim
3. Afterword

REVIEW QUESTIONS

1. Explain Dr. Pratt's analysis of the structure of Genesis 4:1-6:8. What kinds of literature are parallel to each other?
2. Explain the narrative of Cain and Abel. Why did Cain kill Abel?
3. Explain the differences in the families of Cain and Seth.
4. What are the different interpretations of the "sons of God" and the "daughters of men" in Genesis 6:1-3? What is Dr. Pratt's view?
5. What does Genesis 6:2 mean when it says that the sons of God married any of the daughters of men that they chose?
6. What are the different interpretations of the "Nephilim" in Genesis 6:4? What is Dr. Pratt's view?
7. What phrase in Genesis 6.8 gives hope for deliverance from the violence and evil of this period of time?

QUESTIONS FOR APPLICATION AND REFLECTION

1. What can we learn from the story of Cain and Abel? Why do you think Cain developed a bad attitude toward Abel? What would you have said to him to help improve his attitude?
2. What do you think caused the differences to develop between the lineages of Cain and Seth?
3. In what ways does our world today seem similar to the world in the time of Genesis 6? If you had been a prophet in the time of Genesis 6, what message would you have preached in public? If you were a prophet in the public plazas today, what message would you preach?

THE PRIMEVAL HISTORY
STUDY GUIDE 3.2
Lesson 3: A World of Violence (Gen. 4:1–6:8)
Section 2: Original Meaning

OUTLINE FOR TAKING NOTES

II. Original Meaning

A. Connections

1. Early Violence and Hope
2. Later Violence and Hope

B. Implications

REVIEW QUESTIONS

1. Moses shaped Genesis 4-5 so that Israel would compare Cain's family with the Egyptians. Mention the five parallel associations that Dr. Pratt highlights.
2. According to Dr. Pratt, why did God reject Cain's offering and prefer Abel's offering?
3. What name of God was used at the time of Seth, but came to prominence in the time of Moses?
4. Mention the six characteristics found both in the genealogy of Cain's family and in the description of the Egyptians.
5. How does the Bible describe each of the following sons of Lamech? Jabal, Jubal, and Tubal-Cain.
6. Describe the lineage of the Israelites. Were they descendants of Cain or Seth? They were descendants of which son of Noah?
7. Was having many children was a sign of God's blessing in the time of Moses?
8. Who was Methuselah?
9. Where did the Israelites encounter Nephilim?
10. What parallel was Moses making between his role in the life of Israel and the role of Noah in Genesis 5 and 6?

QUESTIONS FOR APPLICATION AND REFLECTION

1. What can we learn from the difference between Cain's offering and Abel's offering? How can you make better offerings to God in your life?

2. Can you think of two groups in our world today that manifest differences similar to the differences between the family of Cain and the family of Seth?

3. Can you identify any "Nephilim" in your life? What are they? How can you overcome fear of them and gain victory over them?

THE PRIMEVAL HISTORY
STUDY GUIDE 3.3
Lesson 3: A World of Violence (Gen. 4:1–6:8)
Section 3: Modern Application

OUTLINE FOR TAKING NOTES

III. Modern Application

A. Inauguration

1. Violence
2. Deliverance

B. Continuation

1. Continuing Violence
2. Continuing Faith

C. Consummation

1. End of Violence
2. Final Deliverance

Summary

REVIEW QUESTIONS

1. How does the New Testament compare the suffering of Christ with the violence in Genesis 4:1-6:8? Mention specific passages.
2. How does the New Testament use examples from Genesis 4:1-6:8 to prepare Christ's followers to endure suffering? Mention specific passages.
3. How does the New Testament promise the end of violence and final deliverance? Mention specific passages.

QUESTIONS FOR APPLICATION AND REFLECTION

1. Can you give examples of how you have suffered for Christ's sake?
2. What New Testament promises are especially encouraging to you as you consider your present suffering?
3. What teachings have been especially helpful for you in this whole lesson?

4. Read Genesis 4:1-12.

What were Cain's problems, according to the text?

What do you think was the underlying cause of Cain's anger?

When God asked Cain where Abel was, what do you think Cain meant by saying, "Am I my brother's keeper?"

THE PRIMEVAL HISTORY
STUDY GUIDE 4.1
Lesson 4: The Right Direction (Gen. 6:9–11:9)
Section 1: Literary Structure

OUTLINE FOR TAKING NOTES

Introduction

I. Literary Structure

A. Flood of Deliverance

1. Initial Covenant
2. Enduring Covenant
3. Escape from Water
4. Exit to Dry Land
5. Divine Remembrance

B. New Order

1. Sons of Noah
2. Defeat of Babel

REVIEW QUESTIONS

1. Explain how Dr. Pratt divides Genesis 6:9-11:9 and name the divisions.
2. Why did God choose to destroy the human race with the flood?
3. What two covenants did God make with Noah? What was the sign of the second covenant?
4. Explain why Ham's son Canaan was cursed by Noah.
5. Explain the areas populated by the descendants of each of Noah's sons.
6. Why did God punish the people for building the tower of Babel?
7. How did God punish them?

QUESTIONS FOR APPLICATION AND REFLECTION

1. What practical lessons can we learn from the story of the flood? In what ways is Noah an example for us? In what ways does the story teach us about Christ and salvation?
2. What practical lessons can we learn from the story of the tower of Babel? What was their fundamental problem? How do we sometimes commit the same sins?

THE PRIMEVAL HISTORY
STUDY GUIDE 4.2
Lesson 4: The Right Direction (Gen. 6:9–11:9)
Section 2: Original Meaning

OUTLINE FOR TAKING NOTES

II. Original Meaning

A. Flood of Deliverance

1. Connections
2. Implications

B. Noah's Sons

1. Canaan
2. Conflict
3. Implications

C. Defeat of Babel

1. City
2. Victory
3. Implications

REVIEW QUESTIONS

1. Explain the parallels that Dr. Pratt mentions between Noah and Moses.
2. Explain the curse that Noah pronounced against Canaan. What did this imply for Israel at the time of Moses?
3. What did being "scattered" mean in terms of military battles?
4. Explain how Moses plays with the sounds of words to revile the ancient city of Babel.
5. Explain how the report of the spies as related in Deuteronomy 1:28 uses terminology from the story of the tower of Babel in Genesis 11.

QUESTIONS FOR APPLICATION AND REFLECTION

1. Do you think God still curses people like He cursed Canaan? Defend your answer.
2. What you say to someone who believes that people of darker skin color are living under a curse because they are descendants of Canaan?
3. In what ways do people still try to become independent of God, like those who were building the tower of Babel? What are the consequences? Give an example.

THE PRIMEVAL HISTORY
STUDY GUIDE 4.3
Lesson 4: The Right Direction (Gen. 6:9–11:9)
Section 3: Modern Application

OUTLINE FOR TAKING NOTES

III. Modern Application

A. Inauguration

1. Covenant
2. Victory

B. Continuation

1. Baptism
2. Spiritual Warfare

C. Consummation

1. Final Cataclysm
2. Final Battle

Summary

REVIEW QUESTIONS

1. Explain the parallels between the New Testament teaching about Christ's first coming and the Genesis account of the flood.
2. Explain how the following passages make reference to the stories of Genesis 6:9-11:9: Luke 22:20, 1 Peter 3:20-22, Ephesians 6:11-13, 2 Peter 3:3-7, and Revelation 19:11-16.
3. Explain Dr. Pratt's interpretation of the importance of baptism according to 1 Peter 3:20-22.

QUESTIONS FOR APPLICATION AND REFLECTION

1. What does the sacrament of baptism mean to you?
2. In what ways have you faced spiritual warfare? How does the teaching of this lesson help you face it?
3. What is the most important teaching for you out of this lesson?
4. Optional: In order to help you feel the devious power of temptation, we offer a video link you may want to watch.

We cannot guarantee that this link will always be available, and we are not responsible for the legal rights of the video, nor for the ads that may appear. We simply link to the site where we have found it.

"Trapping Chair": <https://vimeo.com/1472159>

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