

# IS GENESIS FABLE OR FACT?

## INTRODUCTION

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- The literalness of Genesis 1-11 has been a controversial topic over the last couple hundred years
- At the core of the issue is the question: How should Genesis 1-11 be interpreted?
- Is it history? Mythology? Symbolic poetry? Allegory? Parable? Prophecy? A mixture?
- The answer to this question has much bearing on how we understand Genesis
- This is critical because rightly understanding the genre of literature is foundational to arriving at the correct interpretation
- For example, if something is interpreted literally that the author intended to be understood figuratively, then that text has been misinterpreted (i.e. Jesus' statement "I am the door")
- But, if something is interpreted figuratively that the author intended to be understood literally, then that text has also been misinterpreted (i.e. Jesus' statement that he would be killed and raised on the third day)

## GENESIS IS MYTH?

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- Many have rejected a literal understanding of Genesis, seeing its early chapters as simply mythological or allegorical, not real history
- A myth is a story that never happened but it may symbolize truths
- Myths teach some spiritual lessons, but are not literally or historically true
- Genesis may *contain* spiritual truths, but it should not be taken seriously as records of real people and events
- Skeptics of the historicity of Genesis say it is like one of Christ's NT parables...a made-up story meant to convey spiritual truths
- They believe the early chapters of Genesis are simply ancient Hebrew poetry, not historical narrative (this despite the fact that the genre throughout the first 11 chapters of Genesis is no different to that used in the remainder of the book)
- They believe that Genesis 1-11 only represent certain theological truths without portraying a real event
- "[S]cholars suggest that God accommodated the Genesis account to His ancient Hebrew audience, which was supposedly steeped in pagan myths. He spoke to them in ways they could understand and so used myth as a platform to express His greatness. This would mean that the content of Genesis 1–3 refers, at least in part, to the mythical world that God used to prove His supremacy over all the earth."<sup>1</sup>
- It has resulted in the belief that...
  - God actually "created" through evolutionary processes over millions of years
  - Adam and Eve descended from a hominid population or were not even literal people at all
  - The temptation and Fall were not literal events
  - There has never been a global flood
  - The account of Noah and the ark is a story adapted from a Babylonian myth
  - There was no literal Tower of Babel or a miraculous origin of languages
- Some examples of those who claim that Genesis is mythical:

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<sup>1</sup> <https://answersingenesis.org/creationism/creation-myths/genesis-the-original-myth-buster/>

- Many liberal theologians have taken this view:
  - Rudolph Bultmann called the Bible stories in Genesis 1-11 “myths”
  - Hermann Gunkel called Genesis 1-11 “legend” and opened his commentary on Genesis with the words “Are the narratives of Genesis history or legend? For the modern historian this is no longer an open question.”
  - Karl Barth called it “saga”
- Many within more conservative circles have also adopted the view that Genesis 1-11 is myth:
  - Calvin College and Seminary
    - Howard VanTill published the book *The Fourth Day: What the Bible and the Heavens are Telling Us about the Creation* in 1986 promoting the view that these chapters are mythical
    - In 1990 another book, *Portraits of Creation: Biblical and Scientific Perspectives on the World's Formation* edited by Howard Van Till, Robert Snow, John Stek, and Davis Young, claimed that Genesis 1 draws on pagan, Egyptian myths and is, therefore, a non-historical account of creation
    - In 1995, Davis Young rejected the historicity of the account of the flood in Genesis 6-9 with the publication of his book *The Biblical Flood: A Case Study of the Church's Response to Extrabiblical Evidence*
  - Other evangelical authors
    - In 1990, the book *The Genesis Debate: Persistent Questions about Creation and the Flood* edited by Ronald Youngblood was published which scoffed at the idea that the human race descended from two parents
    - Bruce Waltke stated in an article ("The First Seven Days: What is the Creation Account Trying to Tell Us?" *Christianity Today*, April 12, 1988) that we must not read Genesis 1:1-2:3 as historical
  - Biologos
    - Their mission: BioLogos invites the church and the world to see the harmony between science and biblical faith as we present an evolutionary understanding of God’s creation.
    - “Man from dust, woman from rib. A talking snake. Two mysterious trees. A massive flood. Confusion of languages. What do we make of these stories? Did it all really happen as described by the early chapters of Genesis? Is Genesis giving us accurate history? Any account of past events can be considered history. Genesis recounts past events—such as God’s creation of the world and human beings—so in this sense, Genesis is history. However, Genesis is theological history and uses figurative language in some of its descriptions. The author of Genesis is not interested in telling us how God created (in material terms) or how long it took. We believe Genesis is a true account that, like other ancient narratives, uses vivid imagery to describe past events. It is silent on the scientific questions we might wish it to answer. A close reading of the text provides clues that indicate where a plain sense meaning is not intended. For example, in Genesis 1, there are three evenings and mornings with no sun, moon, and stars, so these are not regular days as we understand them (though they function that way in the text; they are literary days). Or consider Genesis 2:7, when God forms Adam from dust and breathes into his nostrils. This language must be somewhat figurative, because we know from other passages in the Bible that God is Spirit with neither hands nor lungs.”<sup>2</sup>
    - “Narratives—ancient or modern—are rarely bare chronicles of events as they happened...Ancient authors were more interested in the meaning of events rather than the details of the events. In that sense these narratives are not like most modern historical narratives. **If we were to try to reduce their recorded event to a series of propositional truth claims, we would miss the entire point of their narrative.** When ancient narratives are interpretations of the past, they are generally not written simply to *describe* the past. Rather, they serve the *present*. Their work may be based on real events and real people, but their narratives do not explore ‘what really happened’ in the style modern readers tend to expect. Rather, ancient narratives address the world of the narrator’s time, shedding light on that world and providing a perspective for the hearers to embrace. It is this perspective on the world, not the details used to reconstruct the events of the past, that the narrator wishes to convey to his audience.”<sup>3</sup>

<sup>2</sup> <https://biologos.org/common-questions/is-genesis-real-history>

<sup>3</sup> Ibid.

- “Let’s apply this approach to one of the most famous stories in Genesis: the story of Noah and the Flood, found in Genesis 6–9. The Genesis Flood story is likely based on a set of even more ancient stories about an actual catastrophic regional flood event in the ancient Near East. These older legends were part of the cultural backdrop in which Genesis was written. **The inspired author is re-casting these older stories using ancient literary conventions, in order to teach about the seriousness of sin and the merciful love of God for his creation.** The story, based on a past flood event, is told using hyperbolic language to serve these theological points. Like all of Genesis, the Flood story is part of God’s revelation to humankind. It informed Israel’s understanding of God’s relationship to creation and to Israel as his chosen people. This is a revelation of God to the people of Israel, not a revelation about the bare facts of science or natural history. In trying to reconstruct the details of ‘what really happened,’ many have missed the theological point of the story.”<sup>4</sup>

## GENESIS IS FACT

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- Throughout the ages, believers who have held to authority and sufficiency of the Word have strongly held to a literal understanding of Genesis
- The literalness of Genesis is intimated in God’s description of how he spoke to Moses as opposed to other prophets

**Numbers 12:6-8** ~ He said, “Hear now My words: If there is a prophet among you, I, the LORD, shall make Myself known to him in a vision. I shall speak with him in a dream. 7 Not so, with My servant Moses, He is faithful in all My household; 8 With him I speak mouth to mouth, **Even openly, and not in dark sayings.** And he beholds the form of the LORD. Why then were you not afraid To speak against My servant, against Moses?”

- God spoke to Moses “openly” and “not in dark sayings”
- Such terminology strongly suggests that Genesis does not contain mysterious, hard-to-understand meanings
- Rather, it should be read as straightforward history
- This reality is corroborated when we look at how the other biblical authors and Jesus interpreted Genesis<sup>5</sup>

### How the OT Authors Understood Genesis

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- Although few OT authors refer to Genesis, when they do, they treat it as literal history

#### 1 Chronicles 1

- 1 Chronicles 1-8 contain genealogies which extend all the way back to Adam
- 1 Chronicles 1 has no missing or added names in the genealogical links from Adam to Abraham, compared to Genesis 5 and Genesis 11

Genesis 5, 10, 11	1 Chronicles 1
5:3, 6 ~ When Adam had lived one hundred and thirty years, he became the father of a son in his own likeness, according to his image, and named him Seth...6 Seth lived one hundred and five years, and became the father of Enosh.	1:1 ~ Adam, Seth, Enosh
5:9, 12, 15 ~ Enosh lived ninety years, and became the father of Kenan...12 Kenan lived seventy years, and became the father of Mahalalel...15 Mahalalel lived sixty-five years, and became the father of Jared.	1:2 ~ Kenan, Mahalalel, Jared
5:18, 21, 25 ~ Jared lived one hundred and sixty-two years, and became the father of Enoch...21 Enoch lived sixty-five	1:3 ~ Enoch, Methuselah, Lamech

<sup>4</sup> Ibid.

<sup>5</sup> <https://answersingenesis.org/genesis/did-bible-authors-believe-in-a-literal-genesis/>

years, and became the father of Methuselah...25 Methuselah lived one hundred and eighty-seven years, and became the father of Lamech.	
5:28, 29, 32 ~ Lamech lived one hundred and eighty-two years, and became the father of a son...29 Now he called his name Noah, saying, "This one will give us rest from our work and from the toil of our hands arising from the ground which the LORD has cursed"...32 Noah was five hundred years old, and Noah became the father of Shem, Ham, and Japheth.	1:4 ~ Noah, Shem, Ham and Japheth
10:2-4 ~ The sons of Japheth were Gomer and Magog and Madai and Javan and Tubal and Meshech and Tiras. 3 The sons of Gomer were Ashkenaz and Riphath and Togarmah. 4 The sons of Javan were Elishah and Tarshish, Kittim and Dodanim.	1:5-7 ~ The sons of Japheth were Gomer, Magog, Madai, Javan, Tubal, Meshech and Tiras. 6 The sons of Gomer were Ashkenaz, Diphath, and Togarmah. 7 The sons of Javan were Elishah, Tarshish, Kittim and Rodanim.
10:6-8 ~ The sons of Ham were Cush and Mizraim and Put and Canaan. 7 The sons of Cush were Seba and Havilah and Sabtah and Raamah and Sabteca; and the sons of Raamah were Sheba and Dedan. 8 Now Cush became the father of Nimrod; he became a mighty one on the earth.	1:8-10 ~ The sons of Ham were Cush, Mizraim, Put, and Canaan. 9 The sons of Cush were Seba, Havilah, Sabta, Raama and Sabteca; and the sons of Raamah were Sheba and Dedan. 10 Cush became the father of Nimrod; he began to be a mighty one in the earth.
10:22-29 ~ The sons of Shem were Elam and Asshur and Arpachshad and Lud and Aram. 23 The sons of Aram were Uz and Hul and Gether and Mash. 24 Arpachshad became the father of Shelah; and Shelah became the father of Eber. 25 Two sons were born to Eber; the name of the one was Peleg, for in his days the earth was divided; and his brother's name was Joktan. 26 Joktan became the father of Almodad and Sheleph and Hazarmaveth and Jerah 27 and Hadoram and Uzal and Diklah 28 and Obal and Abimael and Sheba 29 and Ophir and Havilah and Jobab; all these were the sons of Joktan.	1:17-23 ~ The sons of Shem were Elam, Asshur, Arpachshad, Lud, Aram, Uz, Hul, Gether and Meshech. 18 Arpachshad became the father of Shelah and Shelah became the father of Eber. 19 Two sons were born to Eber, the name of the one was Peleg, for in his days the earth was divided, and his brother's name was Joktan. 20 Joktan became the father of Almodad, Sheleph, Hazarmaveth, Jerah, 21 Hadoram, Uzal, Diklah, 22 Ebal, Abimael, Sheba, 23 Ophir, Havilah and Jobab; all these were the sons of Joktan.

- This demonstrates that the author of 1 Chronicles took the genealogies literally and historically

### ***Psalm 29:10***

**Psalm 29:10** ~ The LORD sat as King at the flood; Yes, the LORD sits as King forever.

- The only way the statement "the Lord sat as King at the flood" is true is if it was an historical event

### ***Psalm 33:6-9***

**Psalm 33:6-9** ~ By the word of the LORD the heavens were made, And by the breath of His mouth all their host. 7 He gathers the waters of the sea together as a heap; He lays up the deeps in storehouses. 8 Let all the earth fear the LORD; Let all the inhabitants of the world stand in awe of Him. 9 For He spoke, and it was done; He commanded, and it stood fast.

- The Psalmist states that creation came into existence by "the breath of His mouth" and by the fact that "He spoke" and "He commanded"
- Numerous times in Genesis 1, God said, "Let there be..."
- The Psalmist understood Genesis to be literal history

### ***Psalm 104***

**Psalm 104:5, 19** ~ He established the earth upon its foundations, So that it will not totter forever and ever...19 He made the moon for the seasons; The sun knows the place of its setting.

- The Psalmist understood the establishment of the earth’s foundations and the creation of the sun and moon to be literal events

**Psalm 104:6-9** ~ You covered it with the deep as with a garment; The waters were standing above the mountains. 7 At Your rebuke they fled, At the sound of Your thunder they hurried away. 8 The mountains rose; the valleys sank down To the place which You established for them. 9 You set a boundary that they may not pass over, So that they will not return to cover the earth.

- The Psalmist gave additional information about how the waters receded from the surface of the earth after the flood, which could only be true if the flood event in Genesis was literal history

### ***Isaiah 54:9***

**Isaiah 54:9** ~ For this is like the days of Noah to Me, When I swore that the waters of Noah Would not flood the earth again; So I have sworn that I will not be angry with you Nor will I rebuke you.

- This promise to Israel only has meaning because of the historicity of the worldwide flood

### ***Ezekiel 14:13-20***

**Ezekiel 14:13-20** ~ “Son of man, if a country sins against Me by committing unfaithfulness, and I stretch out My hand against it, destroy its supply of bread, send famine against it and cut off from it both man and beast, 14 even **though these three men, Noah, Daniel and Job** were in its midst, by their own righteousness they could only deliver themselves,” declares the Lord GOD. 15 “If I were to cause wild beasts to pass through the land and they depopulated it, and it became desolate so that no one would pass through it because of the beasts, 16 though **these three men** were in its midst, as I live,” declares the Lord GOD, “they could not deliver either their sons or their daughters. They alone would be delivered, but the country would be desolate. 17 “Or if I should bring a sword on that country and say, ‘Let the sword pass through the country and cut off man and beast from it,’ 18 even though **these three men** were in its midst, as I live,” declares the Lord GOD, “they could not deliver either their sons or their daughters, but they alone would be delivered. 19 “Or if I should send a plague against that country and pour out My wrath in blood on it to cut off man and beast from it, 20 even though **Noah, Daniel and Job** were in its midst, as I live,” declares the Lord GOD, “they could not deliver either their son or their daughter. They would deliver only themselves by their righteousness.”

- The fact that these men are mentioned by God to Ezekiel demonstrates that God viewed them as historical individuals
- This corroborates the Genesis account as historically accurate since, if Noah was not a real person, God would be made out to be a liar

## **How the NT Authors Understood Genesis**

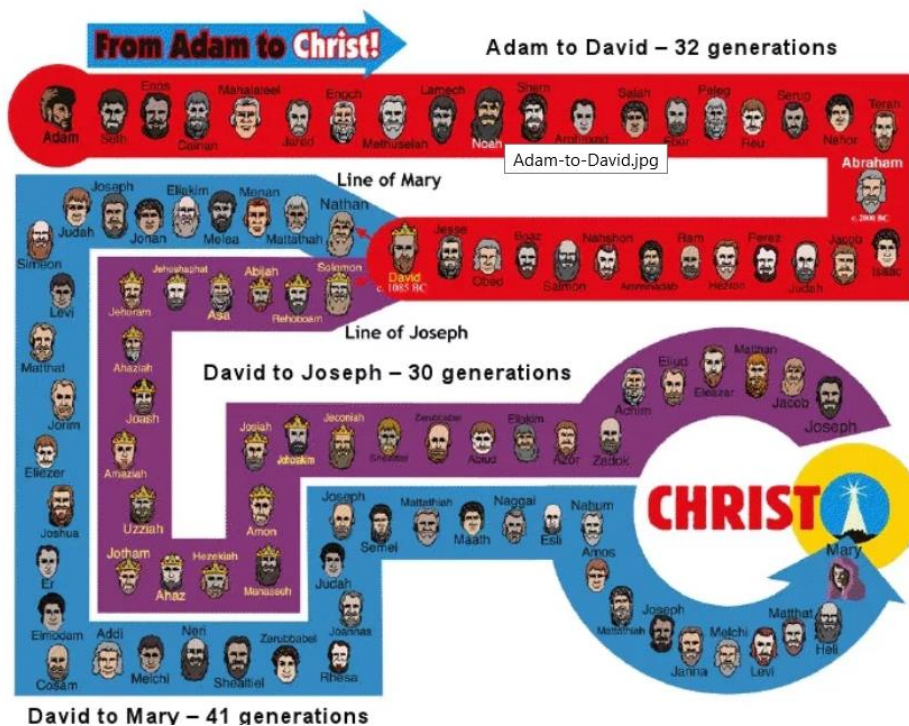
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- The NT argues convincingly for the historicity of Genesis 1-11
  - There are at least 100 quotations or direct references to Genesis 1-11 in the NT
  - Every chapter of Genesis 1-11 is alluded to in the NT
  - Every one of the New Testament authors refers somewhere in his writings to Genesis 1-11
- In not one of these NT references to Genesis is there the slightest evidence that the writers regarded the events as mythical or allegorical

### ***Jesus’ Genealogies***

- Matthew’s genealogy moves forward, starting with Abraham (who is mentioned at the end of Genesis 11), showing that Jesus’ royal line came through Joseph
- Luke’s genealogy moves backward starting with Mary (“the son of Joseph, the son of Eli” means Joseph became the son of Eli by marrying Mary) and moving back to Adam, showing Jesus’s physical descent from David

- Luke's genealogy perfectly matches the genealogy from Adam to Abraham in Genesis 5, 10, 11 and 1 Chronicles 1



- These genealogies must represent actual historical individuals because, if that wasn't the case, then we would be forced to conclude that Jesus was also not a historical individual and therefore not our Savior

### *The Writings of Paul*

- The many theological arguments of Paul rely heavily on a literal understanding of Genesis
- The Gospel that Paul so boldly proclaimed is built on the fact that sin entered into the world through the first man, Adam, and that salvation came to us through the second man, Christ

**Romans 5:12-19** ~ Therefore, just as through one man sin entered into the world, and death through sin, and so death spread to all men, because all sinned—13 for until the Law sin was in the world, but sin is not imputed when there is no law. 14 Nevertheless death reigned from Adam until Moses, even over those who had not sinned in the likeness of the offense of Adam, who is a type of Him who was to come. 15 But the free gift is not like the transgression. For if by the transgression of the one the many died, much more did the grace of God and the gift by the grace of the one Man, Jesus Christ, abound to the many. 16 The gift is not like that which came through the one who sinned; for on the one hand the judgment arose from one transgression resulting in condemnation, but on the other hand the free gift arose from many transgressions resulting in justification. 17 For if by the transgression of the one, death reigned through the one, much more those who receive the abundance of grace and of the gift of righteousness will reign in life through the One, Jesus Christ. 18 So then as through one transgression there resulted condemnation to all men, even so through one act of righteousness there resulted justification of life to all men. 19 For as through the one man's disobedience the many were made sinners, even so through the obedience of the One the many will be made righteous.

**1 Corinthians 15:21-22, 45-47** ~ For since by a man came death, by a man also came the resurrection of the dead. 22 For as in Adam all die, so also in Christ all will be made alive...45 So also it is written, "The first MAN, Adam, BECAME A LIVING SOUL." The last Adam became a life-giving spirit. 46 However, the spiritual is not first, but the natural; then the spiritual. 47 The first man is from the earth, earthy; the second man is from heaven.

- Paul's entire argument of how sin came into the world and how our sin problem is solved hinges entirely upon a historical Adam
- If there were no historical Adam, then, according to Paul's teaching, there could be no second Adam who brings salvation
- Paul also taught the literalness of Genesis by affirming that Adam was created first and Eve was made from Adam and for Adam

**1 Corinthians 11:8-9** ~ For man does not originate from woman, but woman from man; 9 for indeed man was not created for the woman's sake, but woman for the man's sake.

- Furthermore, Paul affirmed that there was a real serpent who tempted a real Eve

**2 Corinthians 11:3** ~ But I am afraid that, as the serpent deceived Eve by his craftiness, your minds will be led astray from the simplicity and purity of devotion to Christ.

**1 Timothy 2:13-14** ~ For it was Adam who was first created, and then Eve. 14 And it was not Adam who was deceived, but the woman being deceived, fell into transgression.

- The undeniable conclusion from Paul's writings is that he relied heavily on Genesis as it was plainly written

### *The Writings of Peter*

- The words of Peter clearly demonstrate a trust in the historicity of Genesis as written

**1 Peter 3:20** ~ who once were disobedient, when the patience of God kept waiting in the days of Noah, during the construction of the ark, in which a few, that is, eight persons, were brought safely through the water.

- Some things that Peter clearly affirmed about the literalness of Genesis:
  - Noah was a literal person
  - There was a literal ark
  - Eight people survived the flood as taught in Genesis 6-8

**2 Peter 2:4-9** ~ For if God did not spare angels when they sinned, but cast them into hell and committed them to pits of darkness, reserved for judgment; 5 and did not spare the ancient world, but preserved Noah, a preacher of righteousness, with seven others, when He brought a flood upon the world of the ungodly; 6 and if He condemned the cities of Sodom and Gomorrah to destruction by reducing them to ashes, having made them an example to those who would live ungodly lives thereafter; 7 and if He rescued righteous Lot, oppressed by the sensual conduct of unprincipled men 8 (for by what he saw and heard that righteous man, while living among them, felt his righteous soul tormented day after day by their lawless deeds), 9 then the Lord knows how to rescue the godly from temptation, and to keep the unrighteous under punishment for the day of judgment,

- Some things that Peter clearly affirmed about the literalness of Genesis:
  - There were angels who sinned (likely reference to Genesis 6)
  - There was a universal flood
  - Noah was a literal person
  - Eight people survived the flood
  - Noah and the Flood were just as historical as the judgment of Sodom and Gomorrah (Gen 19)

**2 Peter 3:3-7** ~ Know this first of all, that in the last days mockers will come with their mocking, following after their own lusts, 4 and saying, "Where is the promise of His coming? For ever since the fathers fell asleep, all continues just as it was from the beginning of creation." 5 For when they maintain this, it escapes their notice that by the word of God the heavens existed long ago and the earth was formed out of water and by water, 6 through which the world at that time was destroyed, being flooded with

water. 7 But by His word the present heavens and earth are being reserved for fire, kept for the day of judgment and destruction of ungodly men.

- Some things that Peter clearly affirmed about the literalness of Genesis:
  - Scoffers will deny the Second Coming of Christ because they deny the supernatural creation and Noah’s Flood (v. 5)...they reject the account of creation and the global flood as real history
  - Scoffers do this because they reason on the false philosophical assumption of uniformitarianism (“all continues just as it was from the beginning” ~ v. 4)
  - The concept of “uniformitarian naturalism” was popularized by Charles Lyell in the 1830s who taught that “the present is the key to the past”
  - Thus, he believed that we can extrapolate geological processes shaping the earth today back in time to explain how earth’s rock features were formed
  - But Peter affirms that literalness of supernatural creation and the Flood (vv. 5-6)
- “Peter points out that by appealing to a time-invariance of natural processes, these latter-day skeptics will proceed willfully to deny God’s supernatural work of creation and judgment during the global Flood. The very scenario that Peter described has indeed unfolded in a vivid manner during the last 200 years. The Enlightenment maxim of the uniformity of natural causes has taken hold and has come to dominate the outlook today in intellectual and academic circles throughout the world. The claim that earth’s history extends back billions of years is a direct and logical consequence of this philosophical approach.”<sup>6</sup>

### *The Teachings of Christ*

- Far from believing Genesis is unbelievable mythology, Jesus frequently affirmed the historical accuracy of the book and its events
- Jesus clearly taught that Adam and Eve were the first married couple

**Matthew 19:3-6** ~ Some Pharisees came to Jesus, testing Him and asking, “Is it lawful for a man to divorce his wife for any reason at all?” 4 And He answered and said, “Have you not read that He who created them from the beginning MADE THEM MALE AND FEMALE, 5 and said, ‘FOR THIS REASON A MAN SHALL LEAVE HIS FATHER AND MOTHER AND BE JOINED TO HIS WIFE, AND THE TWO SHALL BECOME ONE FLESH’? 6 “So they are no longer two, but one flesh. What therefore God has joined together, let no man separate.”

- Notice that Jesus said “have you not read” referring to the historical accuracy of Genesis 1:27 and Genesis 2:24 both of which He then quoted
- Notice also that Jesus clearly believed that Adam and Eve were in existence around the same time that God created everything else (“from the beginning” – v. 4; see also Mark 10:6 below)
- Jesus does not allow for millions or billions of years between when the first parts of creation came into existence and the existence of Adam and Eve
- Man was created male and female “from the beginning of the creation,” not after millions of years
- This shows that Jesus is a young-earth creationist

**Mark 10:3-9** ~ And He answered and said to them, “What did Moses command you?” 4 They said, “Moses permitted a man TO WRITE A CERTIFICATE OF DIVORCE AND SEND her AWAY.” 5 But Jesus said to them, “Because of your hardness of heart he wrote you this commandment. 6 “But from the beginning of creation, God MADE THEM MALE AND FEMALE. 7 “FOR THIS REASON A MAN SHALL LEAVE HIS FATHER AND MOTHER, 8 AND THE TWO SHALL BECOME ONE FLESH; so they are no longer two, but one flesh. 9 “What therefore God has joined together, let no man separate.”

<sup>6</sup> <https://www.logosresearchassociates.org/the-importance-of-genesis-cont>



- Jesus also clearly taught that Abel was the first prophet who was martyred

**Luke 11:50-51** ~ so that the blood of all the prophets, shed since the foundation of the world, may be charged against this generation, 51 from the blood of Abel to the blood of Zechariah, who was killed between the altar and the house of God; yes, I tell you, it shall be charged against this generation.'

- Jesus also believed in a literal Noah and a literal flood

**Matthew 24:38-39** ~ For as in those days before the flood they were eating and drinking, marrying and giving in marriage, until the day that Noah entered the ark, 39 and they did not understand until the flood came and took them all away; so will the coming of the Son of Man be.

- Jesus taught that Lot and his wife were historical people

**Luke 17:28-32** ~ "It was the same as happened in the days of Lot: they were eating, they were drinking, they were buying, they were selling, they were planting, they were building; 29 but on the day that Lot went out from Sodom it rained fire and brimstone from heaven and destroyed them all. 30 "It will be just the same on the day that the Son of Man is revealed. 31 "On that day, the one who is on the housetop and whose goods are in the house must not go down to take them out; and likewise the one who is in the field must not turn back. 32 "Remember Lot's wife.

- Jesus clearly believed in the literal existence and destruction of Sodom and Gomorrah

**Matthew 10:15** ~ Truly I say to you, it will be more tolerable for the land of Sodom and Gomorrah in the day of judgment than for that city.

- These examples prove that Jesus did not allegorize the book of Genesis but took it as straightforward history, believing that the events actually happened just as they were written
- Additionally, this is all consistent with Jesus' frequent exhortations to believe in what Moses wrote in a straightforward way

**John 5:45-47** ~ "Do not think that I will accuse you before the Father; the one who accuses you is Moses, in whom you have set your hope. 46 "For if you believed Moses, you would believe Me, for he wrote about Me. 47 "But if you do not believe his writings, how will you believe My words?"

**Luke 24:25-27, 44-45** ~ And He said to them, "O foolish men and slow of heart to believe in all that the prophets have spoken! 26 "Was it not necessary for the Christ to suffer these things and to enter into His glory?" 27 Then beginning with Moses and with all the prophets, He explained to them the things concerning Himself in all the Scriptures. 44 Now He said to them, "These are My words which I spoke to you while I was still with you, that all things which are written about Me in the Law of Moses and the Prophets and the Psalms must be fulfilled." 45 Then He opened their minds to understand the Scriptures,

## CONCLUSION

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- God has spoken very plainly on these matters such that Genesis 1-11 should be understood as straightforward narrative history
- "We should take Genesis 1–11 as straightforward, accurate, literal history because Jesus, the Apostles, and all the other biblical writers did so. There is absolutely no biblical basis for taking these chapters as any kind of non-literal, figurative genre of literature. That should be reason enough for us to interpret Genesis 1–11 in the same literal way."<sup>7</sup>

<sup>7</sup> <https://answersingenesis.org/genesis/did-bible-authors-believe-in-a-literal-genesis/>

- Furthermore, “the starting point for Christianity is not Matthew 1:1, but Genesis 1:1. Tamper with the book of Genesis and you undermine the very foundation of Christianity. You cannot treat Genesis 1 as fable or a mere poetic saga without severe implications to the rest of Scripture. The creation account is where God starts His account of history. It is impossible to alter the beginning without impacting the rest of the story – not to mention the ending. If Genesis 1 is not accurate, then there’s no way to be certain that the rest of the Scripture tells the truth. If the starting point is wrong, then the Bible itself is built on a foundation of falsehood.”<sup>8</sup>
- “In other words, if you reject the creation account in Genesis, you have no basis for believing the Bible at all. If you doubt or explain away the Bible’s account of the six days of creation, where do you put the reins on your skepticism? Do you start with Genesis 3, which explains the origin of sin, and believe everything from chapter 3 on? Or maybe you don’t sign on until sometime after chapter 6, because the Flood is invariably questioned by scientists, too. Or perhaps you find the Tower of Babel too hard to reconcile with the linguists’ theories about how languages originated and evolved. So maybe you start taking the Bible as literal history beginning with the life of Abraham. But when you get to Moses’ plagues against Egypt, will you deny those, too? What about the miracles of the New Testament? Is there any reason to regard *any* of the supernatural events of biblical history as anything other than poetic symbolism?”<sup>9</sup>
- The very character of God requires the first eleven chapters of Genesis to be a trustworthy record!
- Thus, there are only two options: either believe that Genesis 1-11 is literal history (at no loss to science) or reject it as myths and fables (at great loss)
- There is no logically defensible middle ground

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<sup>8</sup> John MacArthur, *The Battle for the Beginning*, 44.

<sup>9</sup> Ibid.