

Question for discussion

1. There are in essence two “creation” stories (1:1-2:3; 2:4ff). Quickly make observations about each story, comparing and contrasting each account. Try to come up with your best guess as to why God told us the story twice. Come up with two “take aways” (life lessons) from your observations.

2. Genesis 3:1-7 gives us the temptation narrative. As you discuss the particulars of this story make observations about the nature of temptation. Is there any pattern(s) that you see? Create a lesson or some talking points about the nature of temptation as found in Genesis 3.

3. The flood narrative provides a lot of fodder for discussion both theologically and practically (Genesis 6-8). Discuss some of the issues given below:
 - a. without getting bogged down on “who the Nephilim” were (6:4) talk about the sinfulness of mankind and God losing his patience. What does it mean that God was “sorry”(ESV) or “grieved” (6:7)? Is God changing his mind?

 - b. Talk about 6:8, go over all the words carefully. (By the way, “favor” (ESV/NIV) is the word for grace... cool, huh?)

 - c. “Then the Lord shut him in” (7:16)! A biblical theme, behind closed doors God brings his judgment. (cf. Gen. 19:10; Ex. 12:23; Josh 2:19; Mt. 25:10-13).

 - d. Present to us the biblical story of the flood like we’ve never heart it before ☺

4. Read over the narrative of the Tower of Babel (11:1-9). Make general observations of the story; its flow, peculiar things, etc. What is the main problem? Why does language play such a large part of the story? What is troubling the Lord? Compare this “rebellion” with the original sin of Adam and Eve (3:1-6). How does this judgment get reversed at Pentecost (Acts 2)? Comment. Present to us your conclusions of this story with one clear “take away” (life lesson).

5. The sacrifice of Isaac is one of the most moving narratives in the Book of Genesis (22:1-19). Give it a read and try to feel it for all the emotions it carries. Verse 1 says, “God tested Abraham.” What’s that all about? It’s not uncommon, you know (Ex 20:20; Deut 8:2; 2 Chron 32:31). What happens in verses 13 and 14? How is God’s provision of a ram a foreshadowing of His provision of Christ for us (cf. Mark 10:45; Rom 8:32)? Make some parallels.

Teach us this story, bringing in both the testing by God and provision; both the theology and the emotion.

6. The story of Joseph is as multi-colored as his coat (see Andrew Lloyd Weber). Someone in the group briefly summarize the highpoints of the story (dream, sold by brothers, Egyptian slave, Egyptian big shot). Now together read Genesis 50:15-21. Discuss the nature of this encounter between brothers (the emotions, fears, expectations, etc.). Hone in on verses 19-31, especially 20. What is he in essence saying? Notice how this notion of God’s providence has already shown in Joseph’s life and lips. Compare Genesis 50:20 with Romans 8:28. Present to us, using Joseph’s words and story a “lesson” on God’s sovereign rule over human lives and history, how he is carrying out his good purposes. Apply it to our lives today.