

Lesson 5:

Content of Genesis

Genesis is the book of origins, not just of the world and its people, but of God's chosen people, the nation of Israel. By the time Genesis closes, Israel is in Egypt. This sets the stage for the book of Exodus where we will read about God's miraculous deliverance of His people, and the giving of the Law to Moses.

Genesis Outline

- 1-2 Creation overview and creation of man
- 3-5 Man's fall into sin and its consequences
- 6-11 Noah, the flood, and the origin of nations and languages
- 12-28 Abram / Abraham, Isaac, and Jacob
- 29-38 Jacob / Israel and his twelve sons
- 39-50 Joseph and Israel in Egypt

A more detailed break down of the contents of Genesis follows.

Genesis 1-2 Creation overview and creation of man

- 1 Overview of all creation in six literal days.
- 2 More detailed information on the creation of man and woman and the institution of the marriage relationship.

God is holding man accountable for maintaining his innocence.

Genesis 3-5 Man's fall into sin and its consequences

- 3 Eve is deceived into disobeying God, Adam knowingly disobeys.
- 4 The first murder is recorded when Cain kills Abel.
- 5 Genealogy that narrows the people of God down to the line of Noah.

Man failed to maintain his innocence.

God begins holding man accountable for maintaining a good conscience.

Genesis 6-11 Noah, the flood, and the origin of nations and languages

6-9 God chooses to judge the wickedness of the world with a worldwide flood.

Man fails to maintain a good conscience.

God begins holding man accountable for governing mankind righteously.

THE SIZE OF NOAH'S ARK (from: <http://www.biblestudy.org/basicart/sizeark.html>)

A cubit is the distance between an adult's elbow and tip of the finger, generally 18-inches. ... This means that the ark would have been 450 feet long, 75 feet wide and 45 feet high if the 18 inch cubit was used. ...

The displacement tonnage of the ark ... would be more than **22,000 tons**. ... The ark's total volume would have been **1,518,000 cubic feet**. This would equal the capacity of **569 modern railroad stock cars** ... This would make a train more than 5 ½ miles long. The floor space for the ark would be over **101,000 square feet**. This would be more floor space than 21 standard college basketball courts. ...

The ark was built on a 1:6 ratio (50 cubits: 300 cubits). The science of naval architecture reveals that the most stable ratio for an ocean going vessel is 1:6. ... It is estimated that the ark could easily have survived even the largest of ocean waves. ... The design of the ark would have made it almost impossible to turn over.

Was Noah's Ark big enough to hold all the animals?

How many and what type of animals would the ark have to carry? ... Since there are millions of species of animals there would have been millions of animals on the ark! Is this true?

The word species and the biblical word "kind" are often used interchangeably. This is incorrect since they are not synonymous. The biblical word "kind" denotes an organism that reproduces others like itself. The species concept is much narrower than this; therefore many species can be included in a single biblical "kind." The word kind is probably closer to the modern taxonomic unit of *genus*, and in some cases the larger taxonomic unit, *family*.

The Canidae (canine) family includes about 14 genera of dog like animals. These include the coyote, dog, wolf, jackal, etc. The ark did not have to contain the hundreds of species of canines that make up this group. In reality, these were all represented by a few "kind." These "kind" would then produce all the animals that make up the Canidae family. ...

... Only air breathing, land dwelling animals would have to be placed aboard the ark (Genesis 7:22).

The following animals could have survived outside the ark (Whitcomb 1998, p.68): ... fish; ... echinoderms including star fish and sea urchins; ... mollusks such as mussels, clams and oysters; ... coelenterates like corals and sea anemones, jelly fish and hydroids; ... sponges; ... protozoan, the microscopic single-celled creatures.

Noah would not have to be concerned with the aquatic mammals ... reptiles ... arthropods ... crustaceans ... insects ... worms and nematodes ...

In reality only a small percentage of the animals would have to be taken on board the ark. The vast majority of the animals that inhabit the earth either live in water and/or do not have "the breath of life."

How many animals did Noah's Ark carry?

Many writers on the subject of Noah's ark have different estimates for the amount of animals that the ark would have to carry. Doctors Morris and Whitcomb in their book, *The Genesis Flood*, estimate that approximately **35,000** animals were placed on board the ark. In another book written on the subject, *Noah's Ark - A Feasibility Study*, John Woodmorappe states that only about **2,000** animals would have to be on the ark. Being rather conservative he continues his study with the assumption that **16,000** animals could easily be cared for on the ark.

Let's be conservative and use the figure of 40,000 animals. This allows for extra animals to represent those that have gone extinct and those animals that have not been properly cataloged. This figure of **40,000** animals is 5,000 more than largest previously mentioned numbers. Based on our present understanding of the number of animals this figure should satisfy even the most skeptical.

Animal Space Calculations

Most animals are not very large. The average size of all animals, is the size of a sheep, some say a small rodent. One railroad stock car can carry about 240 sheep. This would mean that all 40,000 animals could fit in 167 railroad cars. The ark's total capacity was 569 stock cars. *The 40,000 animals would require less than 30% of the ark's space.* In other words all the animals could fit on one of the ark's three decks. This would leave the other 70% of the ark's space for Noah's family, food, supplies, and baggage.

... The following calculations show the amount of the ark space that would be required to carry the stated number of animals, based on the average size of a sheep.

$$40,000 \text{ animals} \times 11.125 \text{ ft}^3 = 445,000 \text{ ft}^3 = 29\% \text{ of the Ark's capacity}$$

Summary

... All the scientific evidence shows that the ark could easily have contained all of the animals that were used to repopulate the earth after the flood.

References

Whitcomb, John C., Morris, Henry M. 1998. *The Genesis Flood, the Biblical Record and its Scientific Implications.* Presbyterian and reformed Publishing Co. Phillipsburg, NJ.

Woodmorappe, John. 1996. *Noah's Ark - A Feasibility Study,* Institute for Creation Research. Santee, CA

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(Genesis 6-11 Noah, the flood, and the origin of nations and languages - *continued*)

- 10-11 A genealogy traces the descendants of Noah as they spread throughout the world. The division of the world into language groups. A final genealogy narrows the people of God down to the Abram.

Genesis 12-28 Abram/Abraham, Isaac, and Jacob

- 12 Abram is called by God to leave the idolatrous city of Ur and travel to a land the Lord will show him.
Man failed to govern himself righteously.
God begins holding man accountable for believing and living by His promises.
- 13-14 Abram meets Melchizedek, the king of Salem, who may very well have been the pre-incarnate Son of God (cf. Hebrews 7:1-4, 15-17).
- 15 Abram *"believed in the Lord; and He counted it to him for righteousness"* (Genesis 15:6). This is the beginning of a clear principle / truth found in scripture: man is justified by God through faith - believing / trusting what God has said.
- 16 Following the culture of their time, Abram had a son by Sarai's handmaid, named Ishmael. God rejects Ishmael as Abram's heir, but promises to bless him anyway.

- 17 The Lord changes Abram's name to Abraham, promises to give Abraham a son, even though he is 99 years old, gives Abraham (and his descendants) the sign of circumcision - an outward sign of an inward relationship with God (cf. Romans 2:28-29; Colossians 2:11).
- 18-19 The Lord reaffirms his promise to give Abraham a son, warns him about the coming destruction of Sodom (where Lot and his family are). Sodom is found to be very wicked, and the Lord destroys it but spares Lot and his immediate family.
- 20-22 The Lord's testing of Abraham's faith by asking him to sacrifice Isaac - an excellent picture of "substitutionary sacrifice".
- 23-25 The birth of Jacob and Esau (Isaac's sons), and Esau's sale of his birthright to Jacob.
- 26-28 Establishment of Jacob as the heir of Isaac through which God will keep His promises to Abraham.

Genesis 29-38 Jacob/Israel and his twelve sons

- 29-30 Jacob takes four wives (two sisters and their handmaids) and has twelve sons and at least one daughter by them.
- 31-33 Jacob "wrestles" with God who then changes his name to "Israel" which means "a prince of God".
- 34-35 Stories of Jacob's daughter and sons, and the death of his father, Isaac.
- 36 Another genealogy is presented that disposes of the line of Esau before continuing with Jacob's/Israel's sons.
- 37 Joseph, is sold into slavery.
- 38 A parenthetical story regarding Jacob's son, Judah.
- 39-40 Joseph in slavery in Egypt.
- 41 Joseph interprets the Pharaoh's dreams regarding a coming famine and how to prepare for it. Pharaoh promotes Joseph to second in the kingdom.
- 42-47 God uses the famine to get Jacob/Israel and his sons into Egypt, reuniting Joseph with his family.
- 48-50 Jacob's blessings on his sons and final words, his death and burial in Canaan. "Israel" continues to live in Egypt (for the next several hundred years).