GENESIS
PT. 1 CHAPTERS 1-11

THE BIG PICTURE

1-11: GOD AND THE WHOLE WORLD

1-2: GOD MAKES A GOOD WORLD FOR HUMANITY

3-11: HUMAN SIN AND THE RUIN OF GOD’S WORLD

12-50: GOD AND ABRAHAM’S FAMILY

12-25: ABRAHAM

26-27: ISAAC

28-36: JACOB

37-50: JOSEPH

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Yahweh creates by bringing order and beauty out of chaos and darkness.

PARALLEL LITERARY STRUCTURES IN GENESIS 1

The literary ordering of Genesis 1 depicts God as creating ordered environments (Days 1-3) and then filling those with corresponding inhabitants (Days 4-6) and then taking up control of the world in his rest (Day 7)

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Humans are the divine image bearers.

The Hebrew word for “image” (tselem) literally means “statue” and usually refers to idols. You see the same word in Amos 5:26; Ezekiel 7:20; Numbers 33:52; 1 Samuel 6:5. An “image” is a physical representation that points to some other person or deity.

In Genesis this means that humans are commissioned as actual representatives of God’s rule over the creation (Gen 1:26-30) and to steward and guard God’s good world on his behalf (Gen 2:15).
Human selfishness and sin lead to the fracturing of the divine-human relationship and the ruin of human relationships on all levels.

All of the stories in Genesis 3-11 offer different examples that explore the various facets of human sin and its results.

**GEN 3, 4**
- Suspicion of God’s goodness, self-deception
- Quest for wisdom and goodness apart from the creator
- Jealousy, murder
- Humans establish cities which are corrupted by sin and violence

**GEN 6**
- Spiritual beings, “the Sons of God” defy God’s Good Order
- Humans become morally corrupt and ruin God’s world and each other

**GEN 11**
- Human arrogance and declaration of independence from God
- Naïve trust in technological progress
Yahweh responds to human sin in two ways: He brings justice on rebellion and offers grace by promising future blessing for His world.

Notice the narrative pattern at work in these chapters. Every story of human sin is met with immediate consequences along with a response of divine grace.
Genesis 12:1-3 is a key moment in the unfolding of the biblical story: God responds to humanity’s corruption by choosing Abraham’s family as the means of restoring divine blessing to all nations.
# Discussion Questions

1. **What does it mean for humanity to be created in the “image of God”**?
   - GEN 1:26-31

2. **Why do you suppose God created a choice for the humans by planting the tree of the knowledge of good and evil?**
   - GEN 2:15-17
   - GEN 3:1-24

3. **What happens when humans attempt to define good and evil independently of God, and how does sin manifest itself throughout the first 11 chapters of Genesis?**
   - GEN 3:6-24

4. **Why did God decide to flood the Earth?**
   - GEN 6:9-9:17

5. **What was the sinful ambition of the people at Babel, and why did God scatter the people by confusing their language?**
   - GEN 11:1-9