



ROUTE 66

“Genesis: The Beginning”

Genesis 12 & 15

January 8, 2012 A.M. Service

The Beginning

- His Character – God & God Alone
- His Covenant – He Makes Them

God Displays His Character & Covenant Through the World He Has Created (*Chapters 1-11*)

- ✓ God’s Holiness and Judgment Against Sin
- ✓ God’s Mercy – The Scarlet Thread
 - The Promised Messiah – *Genesis 3:15*
 - The Ark – *Genesis 6-9*
- ✓ God’s Sovereignty
- ✓ Our Response: Obedience and Faith

God Displays His Character & Covenant Through His Special People (*Chapters 12-50*)

- ✓ God’s Holiness and Judgment Against Sin
- ✓ God’s Mercy – The Scarlet Thread
 - The Saving of Lot & His Family
 - The Call to Sacrifice Isaac – *Genesis 22*
- ✓ God’s Sovereignty
- ✓ Our Response: Obedience and Faith
 - He Hears
 - He Believes
 - He Obeys

The Ending

- His Character – God & God Alone
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The Here and Now

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- ✓ Be willing to share what you learn with others that you come in contact with – don’t just get the Word in you, but also get it out of you!!
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ROUTE 66

“Genesis: The Beginning”

Genesis 12 & 15

January 8, 2012 AM Service

We now begin this journey officially after we gave a broad outline of the Bible – a big picture if you will. Remember our Goal for this year – we all want to Learn the Word, Love the Word and then Live the Word. I do hope that you dig deep, that you Read the Word, that you ask questions and seek answers, that you seek out the Lord like never before but my prayer is that you don't get so bogged down into details and questions that we forget the most important part – applying the Bible to our everyday lives – allowing the Lord to change us and that we take action on what we learn. We will talk more about that tonight in our PM Service.

The Beginning

The beginning is critical – it is the foundation upon which everything is built and here it is no different where we see thousand of years of history unfold right before our very eyes – some goes at breakneck pace and others slow down into years at a time.

▪ **His Character – God & God Alone**

He is self-existent – He was before the world was ever created – He has always been and will always be. God is not dependent on anyone or anything. He is the one who made us. He doesn't need or money or our stuff. All we have is His anyway. We find the Bible doesn't spend time talking about God's self-existence before Creation. We just know He has always been and will always be and that is the background for everything else we read here.

▪ **His Covenant – He Makes Them**

The main story of this book and every other book in Scripture is God. The secondary part of the story is God's relationship to man and we see the beginning of God's covenant with mankind – and this covenant weaves all the way through Scripture. Cleve has outlined those covenants in your Scripture Background Guide. Notice it is God who makes the covenant and not man. God is the initiator.

God Displays His Character & Covenant Through the World He Has Created (*Chapters 1-11*)

In these chapters we see God's Creation of the earth and all of mankind and the two main characters are Adam & Noah and God's relationship with them as well as the rest of mankind. There are 4 themes that emerge from the book of Genesis that will truly lay the foundation for the rest of Scripture. This is crucial for we have to know that God created the earth, that it was no accident and that we are accountable for our actions to Him.

✓ **God's Holiness and Judgment Against Sin**

We read of the first account – where God clearly tells them the boundaries, but yet gives them a choice to obey or not. Eve chooses to disobey and Adam follows suit defaulting on his responsibility to protect and lead his wife. As a result, they were banished from the Garden and now would have to suffer the consequences of living in a fallen world. We see that picture going full steam ahead in the days of Noah. Evil had reached a horrible point and God's answer is to wipe mankind off the face of the earth with His wrath. We must see the great good in Creation but also be very aware of our sin and the sin around us and be ready to confess and repent of that sin when we do fall. God's promises are clear that He will judge both the living and the dead.

✓ **God's Mercy – The Scarlet Thread**

But God... being rich in His mercy! God gives hope. Yes, sin brought God's judgment but it also came with a promise that it would change. You can't just speak of God's holiness and perfection and not speak of God's mercy. Oh how grateful we should be today for God's mercy – it means we don't get what we deserve! We deserve death!

We see that mercy in this way - We see that clearly demonstrated it one what one author calls the scarlet thread – the blood of the cross – Jesus – is all throughout the Old Testament all pointing to Him and the hope that it would bring! As you read through – be looking for it.

- *The Promised Messiah – [Genesis 3:15](#)*
- *The Ark – [Genesis 6-9](#)* The early church presented Noah's ark as a symbol of Christ – in fact some of the earliest drawings of Christ are representations of an ark affixed to a cross – showing Christ is our ark! He is the vessel of mercy that helps us ride safely through the flood of God's judgment.

✓ **God's Sovereignty**

God is always in control – even if it appears to us then or even now that

the world is out of control, our lives seem out of control – God is always sovereign – in control and in charge of all things. There is no doubt we wrestle with our responsibility and God’s sovereignty but make no mistake – God is on His throne – and some might bristle at that, but I find great comfort and rest knowing that He has it handled! I don’t need or have to worry about it – He will work all out – even for my good and yours!

✓ **Our Response: Obedience and Faith**

Adam and Eve failed to believe as did Cain. Noah believed and by God’s grace stood out from among people. [See Matthew 24:37-39](#). Noah was obedient, did what the Lord called him to do – He was a righteous man – was he perfect? – No way. He sinned too. But he was different, not better than other people. He responded to God’s Word. See Hebrews 11:7. God used Noah to save the world. And by the way, we need more Noah’s today – seems to me our world is worse than Noah’s and God is calling out people to be His followers, and not His fans – to clearly stand out from the crowd – to have faith and believe and to be obedient and follow Him in everything!

God Displays His Character & Covenant Through His Special People
(Chapters 12-50)

We now zoom in closer and God’s relationship with not just mankind as a whole, but the we see God’ chooses a special people for Himself to redeem out of the world for His own glory. We see Abraham, Isaac, Jacob and Joseph as the main characters. God reveals more of Himself to us. We see the most important one being Abraham and was our reading this morning and God’s calling of a special people through whom He would bless the rest of the world – through the coming of the Messiah.

✓ **God’s Holiness and Judgment Against Sin**

We again see God’s holiness as Abraham appeals to God’s holiness and Jacob confesses his unworthiness and forbids idolatry and the most vivid example is that of Sodom and Gmorrah where God completely destroys these wicked cities completely. We see it displayed through God’s external judgments but His call was also for internal holiness and God’s call for them to remain distinct from the surrounding pagan nations around them. God forbids them to marry the Canaanites. Why?

Because He knew that these foreigners would lead them away from the worship of the one true God and compromise their faith by adding others gods to their lives. By the way, that same call to holiness still exists today in every area of our lives and it is no easier now than it was then, yet that is our call. In our marriages, in our relationships, in our thoughts, actions and deeds, we are called to be His holy people! How are you doing in this area?

✓ **God's Mercy – The Scarlet Thread**

Yet again even in God's commitment to holiness does not eliminate His mercy. We see it clearly in 2 distinct ways.

- *The Saving of Lot & His Family* [Genesis 19](#)
- *The Call to Sacrifice Isaac* – [Genesis 22](#)

We see that they would be special only by trusting in Him. We see that it is the Lord and the Lord alone who swears to the covenant with Abraham – it did not depend upon Abraham and the beautiful picture of God's provision of the Lamb – which would lead to the Lamb of God which would take away the sins of the entire world!

Still true today that we called to be His special people – and that in and of ourselves we can nothing – we can't save ourselves much less life this Christian life! God will do that in us if we will allow Him too! I pray that if you have not allowed Him to save you from your sins and yourself – that You would ask Him to do just that today!

✓ **God's Sovereignty**

We see God's sovereignty even clearer and in more specific ways. God chooses certain people through which the covenant would come and not necessarily the way the world said it should – even working through the deception of Jacob and even more so in the life of Joseph – God was at work and we can clearly look back and see it in his life but sometimes it is hard to see it in our own! As you read it in a few weeks, watch for God's incredible hand and how He was working out His perfect plan. Joseph understood and believed God's plan as he tells his brothers even though you meant it for evil, God meant it for good.

If know Christ, then we of all people should trust Him, walk with Him, worship Him in reverence and awe and be His people every day our lives. If you don't know Him – remember, you may temporarily ignore

Him, but you can never permanently ignore Him! Great news though – you can know Him today!

✓ **Our Response: Obedience and Faith**

We see this response so clearly in Abraham and one the NT writers refer to in Romans 4 and Galatians 3 and Hebrews 11. His response is the same, even when he blows it and tries to take matters into his own hand (see God's mercy). The call to get up and move, the call to believe that God would give him a son, call to circumcise his son, and sacrifice his only son. Look at the progression each time

- **He Hears** He had to be able to hear – so many of us are too busy to hear, too busy to stop and read, too much crammed into our lives to hear God's voice speak – or do we even care that He is speaking? I pray that we learn to listen this year!
- **He Believes** How could He do that? [Hebrews 11:17-19](#) Notice though, this faith and belief wasn't just some intellectual ascent, yes I get it, I believe – but it went much further to showing that he truly had faith and believe in God.
- **He Obeys** Even though it may not have made sense, didn't have all the answers, didn't know where he was going or necessarily what the end result would be, He simply obeyed. The call is the same for us too today! To trust and obey for there is no other way, to be happy in Jesus, but to trust and obey.

The Ending

▪ **His Character – God & God Alone**

God is in control – doing the impossible, choosing the weak and not the strong, doing things His way, the right way and not the world's way. Even more so through Sarah and Rebekah, and Rachel – all barren – could not bare a son – two of which were in the line of the promise that would ultimately yield the Messiah. Do you think God was up to something? God wanted to make it clear that the promise was not up to Abraham or his descendants, it had nothing to do with them, but only HIM!!

▪ **His Covenant – He Keeps Them**

God was true to His Word and still is today. Aren't you glad you it doesn't depend on you but on our amazing Creator!

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