Introduction to the Old Testament

Spring 2014

A People Created (Genesis 1-11; Job)

# **Genesis**

# **Place in the Canon:**

# **Setting:**

In the beginning, God created the heavens and the earth. (Genesis 1:1)

And God blessed them. And God said to them, "Be fruitful and multiply and fill the earth and subdue it, and have dominion over the fish of the sea and over the birds of the heavens and over every living thing that moves on the earth." And God said, "Behold, I have given you every plant yielding seed that is on the face of all the earth, and every tree with seed in its fruit. You shall have them for food. And to every beast of the earth and to every bird of the heavens and to everything that creeps on the earth, everything that has the breath of life, I have given every green plant for food." And it was so. And God saw everything that he had made, and behold, it was very good. And there was evening and there was morning, the sixth day.

(Genesis 1:28-31)

In the beginning, God created the heavens and the earth. (Genesis 1:1)

# **Characters:**

# **Plot:**

The question to be answered: How is the chasm between God and man to be bridged?

“The fallenness of humanity leaves every individual with specific needs only God can address.” (Encountering the Old Testament, p. 67)

The LORD saw that the wickedness of man was great in the earth, and that every intention of the thoughts of his heart was only evil continually. (Genesis 6:5)

In the beginning, God created the heavens and the earth. (Genesis 1:1)

# **Selected Themes:**

The Sovereignty and \_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_ of God (He is the One who creates and reigns)

The Purpose of \_\_\_\_\_\_ – to glorify (image) God, and take care of what He has created

The \_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_ \_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_ of mankind

God \_\_\_\_\_\_\_ in history

God \_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_ man for the purpose of redemption

# **Ties to the New Testament:**

The beginning and the end are very similar.

# **Job**

# **Place in the canon:**

Note: we are studying the OT in chronological order. The Bible, as we have it today, orders the books more categorically (History, Wisdom, Prophets). In that order, Job belongs to the Wisdom section. The book of Job is, in fact, an excellent example of Wisdom literature.

# **Setting:**

The time of the \_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_ (Abraham, Isaac and Jacob).

The land of Uz.

# **Characters:**

God, Job, Satan, Eliphaz the Temanite, Bildad the Shuhite, Zophar the Naamathite, Elihu son of Barachel

# **Plot:**

If Job is \_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_, then why does he \_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_?

Job begins with a narrative introduction which contains a conversation between God and Satan and of which Job and his friends are NEVER made aware. This is followed by a sequence of speeches in which Job and his friends philosophize about why all of these things have happened to Job. Much of their musing is that Job must have done something wrong to deserve the punishment of God. Job, however, continually insists that he is just. Finally, God speaks directly to Job. He doesn’t give a reason for what has happened, but does give a clear presentation of the proper perspective – He is the Creator, we are mere creatures. He knows the beginning from the end, and all of his ways are just.

“The book as a whole illustrates that a full understanding of God’s reasons for events is not a prerequisite for faithfulness amid terrible suffering.” (ESV Study Bible, pg. 870)

# **Some themes from Job:**

The \_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_ of the problem

The \_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_ of human philosophy/theology to understand God apart from revelation

The transcendence (Where were you?) and imminence (accessibility) of God

We don’t always have the whole picture, \_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_ God anyway

God is not obligated to explain himself fully to his creation

Where do we find comfort? Is it in material blessings? In fellowship with friends? In being right? No, in God alone.

“The major reality of the book is the inscrutable mystery of innocent suffering. God ordains that His children walk in sorrow and pain, sometimes because of sin (cf. Num. 12:10-12), sometimes for chastening (cf. Heb. 12:5-12), sometimes for strengthening (cf. 2 Cor. 12:7-10; 1 Pet. 5:10), and sometimes to give opportunity to reveal His comfort and grace (2 Cor. 1:3-7). But there are times when the compelling issue in the suffering of the saints is unknowable because it is for heavenly purpose that those on earth can’t discern (cf. Exod. 4:11; John 9:1-3).” (The MacArthur Bible Handbook, pg. 146)

# **Ties to the New Testament:**