A Passage Through The Old Testament Year One, Quarter One

In The Beginning
THE BOOK OF GENESIS

A Thirteen Lesson Bible Study
by Jeff S. Smith
### Year One

#### First Quarter: “In The Beginning”
1. Creation (Genesis 1-2)
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3. Noah’s Ark (Genesis 6-10)
4. Promises to Abraham (Genesis 11-12, 15-18)
5. Sodom and Gomorrah (Genesis 13-14, 18-19)
6. Abraham, Sarah and Isaac (Genesis 20-24)
7. Jacob and Esau (Genesis 25-28, 32-33, 36)
8. Jacob and Rachel (Genesis 29-31, 34-35)
9. Joseph Sold Into Slavery (Genesis 37-38)
10. Joseph Imprisoned (Genesis 39)
11. Joseph Interprets Dreams (Genesis 40-41)
12. Providence (Genesis 42-45)
13. Reunited (Genesis 46-50)

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A PASSAGE THROUGH THE OLD TESTAMENT

Year One, First Quarter:

In The Beginning

A PASSAGE THROUGH THE OLD TESTAMENT is designed to take a Bible class all the way through the thirty-nine books of the Old Testament in two years’ time. Sacrifices were made to arrange this pace, especially in obscure passages such as some found in the Pentateuch, major prophets and wisdom literature. Topical class books can supplement the cursory study of these books at other times, however, so that no part of God’s writ is slighted.

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Lesson 1: Creation
Genesis 1-2

1. A children’s question is “Where did God stand when he created the universe?” How would you answer that (Genesis 1:1-2)?

2. List what God created on each day (1:3-31):
   - The first day:
   - The second day:
   - The third day:
   - The fourth day:
   - The fifth day:
   - The sixth day:

3. In whose image did God create man? Since God is spirit, what does this mean?

4. What instruction did God give man?

5. Was man created good or evil?

6. By what name was the seventh day later called (2:1-3)?
7. What material did God use to form man (2:4-17)? Does this harmonize with science?

8. Where did God place man? What was his job there?

9. What two prominent trees were planted there? What was God’s warning to him?

10. What deficiency did God recognize in man’s life (2:18-25)? How did he intend to fill it?

11. What task did God busy Adam with in the meanwhile?

12. What material did God use to form Adam’s companion?

13. What does Adam’s response to her appearance teach us about the marital relationship?

14. There are three instructions for marriage given in verse 24. What are they? Explain each one.
Lesson 2: Sin
Genesis 3-4

1. From which tree did God forbid Adam and Eve to eat (Genesis 3:1-7)? Why (2:17)?

2. How did the serpent attack her obedience?

3. What happened when Adam and Eve ate from the forbidden tree?

4. What does their reaction to God’s presence show about them after their sin (3:8-21)?

5. On whom did Adam blame his sin? Did God accept this explanation?

6. On whom did Eve blame her sin? Did God accept her explanation?

7. To what event does God point in punishing the devil (verse 15)?
8. What curse did God pronounce upon the woman (see also First Timothy 2:12-15)?

9. What curse did God pronounce on Adam?

10. Why did God expel them from the garden of Eden (3:22-24)?

11. Why was Cain angry (4:1-8; cf. Hebrews 11:4 and Romans 10:17)?

12. What advice did God give Cain?

13. What did Cain do instead?

14. What question did Cain reply with to God’s question (4:9-15)? What does this reveal about his character?

15. Who was Adam and Eve’s third son (4:16-26)?
Lesson 3: Noah’s Ark
Genesis 5-10

1. Which of Adam’s descendants lived the longest (Genesis 5:1-32)? Who were Noah’s three sons?

Methuselah lived the longest, 969 years. Noah begat Shem, Ham and Japheth.

2. What was angering God at this early date (6:1-8)?

The sons of God were intermarrying with the daughters of men, that is, His people were marrying the heathen.

3. Who would be spared? Why? Was this arbitrary (cf. 6:9, 7:1)? Explain.

Noah would be spared because he found grace in the eyes of the Lord as he was a righteous man. This was not an arbitrary choice, but a judgment according to works, mixed with grace to cover the inevitable sin of any man.

4. Upon whom does the writer place the blame for sin (6:9-22)? Did God create man with an inherently sinful nature, then?

The writer blames man for his own corruption. God did not make man with an inherently sinful nature.

5. What did God tell Noah to construct? How precise were God’s blueprints? How precisely did Noah follow them?

God told Noah to build an ark with very precise blueprints, which Noah followed to the letter.

6. How many went into the ark (7:1-12; First Peter 3:20)? Why did not many more people enter the ark (Second Peter 2:5)?

Only eight people were saved (four couples). The others could not be saved because they were unrighteous and did not heed Noah’s preaching.
7. What happened to all those caught outside the ark when the floodwaters increased (7:13-24)? How does Peter use this as an illustration of water baptism (First Peter 3:20-21)?

Every one of them lost the breath of life and died. Outside of the ark of water baptism, there is as much salvation as those folks outside Noah’s ark received.

8. With God’s experience with man’s sin, why did he want Noah to repopulate the earth (8:1-19)?

Yes, he commanded them to “be fruitful and multiply.”

9. How does the writer describe Noah’s worship to God’s senses (8:20-22)? Why do you think he chose that particular phrase?

It was a soothing aroma, denoting that God was relieved to learn that man could still learn to worship and submit, though his head was cursed with evil thoughts and temptations.

10. What sign did God give Noah to show that he would never flood the whole earth again (9:1-19)? Does it still hold this significance?

God gave the rainbow, which still proves God’s promise not to destroy the earth by flood again?

11. What will become of the earth (Second Peter 3:8-13)?

No, God will destroy it by fire after the righteous have been suitably removed to a new heavens and earth in the skies.

12. What was the difference between Ham’s handling of this situation and that of Shem and Japheth (9:20-29)? What was Noah’s sin in the matter?

Ham derided and embarrassed his father unnecessarily by gossiping about his exposure. He would have been fine had he seen and not told. Noah was responsible as well for allowing himself to lose vigilance to an intoxicant.

13. What were the three divisions of mankind after Noah’s time (10:1-32)?
Lesson 4: Promises to Abraham
Genesis 11-12, 15-18:15

1. What did the people propose to build (Genesis 11:1-9)? Why did God prevent them?

2. How was Lot related to Abraham (11:10-31)? What caused Sarah social stigma?

3. What three things did God tell Abraham to leave behind (12:1-9)?
   a. [his country]
   b. [his family]
   c. [his father's house]

4. Why was this a test of Abraham’s faith? Why is moving away from home a test of a person’s faith today?

5. Each of the first three verses of this chapter contain one promise to Abraham. What are they?
   a. verse one:
   b. verse two:
   c. verse three:

6. Where did the famine lead Abraham (12:10-20)? What was his fear there? What did he do about it?
7. How did Pharaoh react to the news that Sarah was Abraham’s wife?

8. How did God teach Abraham about the future nation of Israel (15:1-6)? Did Abraham believe this lesson?

9. What era of Hebrew history was foretold by God as Abraham falls asleep (15:7-21)?

10. How did Abraham and Sarah conspire to take matters into their own hands (16:1-15)? What caused them to do this?

11. How old was Abraham when God renewed his covenant with him (17:1-14)? What did God command as a physical part of this covenant? Is this somehow binding upon Christians today (Galatians 5:6, 6:15)?

12. What were the names of Abraham’s sons (17:15-27)? Of the mothers?

13. How did Sarah react to the news that she would still bear a child in her old age (18:1-15)? Despite this, what did the Hebrew writer say about her (11:11-12)?
Lesson 5: Sodom and Gomorrah
Genesis 13-14, 18:16-33, 19

1. Where did Abraham go first after leaving Egypt (Genesis 13:1-18)? Following his error with Pharaoh and Sarah, why would this be an important place to go?

Abraham went to Bethel, where he had first made an altar to worship Jehovah. In this memorable place, he could renew his commitment to God. When we find ourselves separated from the Lord, we must know to return to where we strayed.

2. Why was there strife between Lot’s and Abraham’s herdsmen?

There was not enough land to support everyone and everything in such proximity.

3. Why did Lot choose the plain of the Jordan and pitch his tent toward Sodom? Was it wise?

Lot chose the more fertile and lucrative appearing plot of land without considering what the spiritual consequences might be of living in a land of wicked and sinful men.

4. What became of Lot in his newly chosen homeland (14:1-16)? Why wasn’t Abraham bitter that his nephew had taken advantage of his offer to choose first?

Lot was taken captive when war broke out in his homeland among the kings. Abraham was not bitter for he had given Lot the right to choose and decided to save his nephew.

5. A mysterious person appears in Genesis 14:17-24. Melchizedek will also figure prominently in the New Testament high priesthood of Jesus Christ. Who was this Melchizedek (cf. Hebrews 7:1-4)?

Melchizedek was the king of Salem, a believer and priest of the one true God. He was a priest, but not a Levite, for his priesthood preceded the Mosaic law. He was the king of righteousness, without any apparent genealogy or successor to his office. Only Jesus filled the office of priest in the order of Melchizedek.
6. Why was God considering action against Sodom and Gomorrah (18:16-32)? According to Jude 7, why?

7. How did Abraham react when God revealed this plan to him? How many righteous did God need to see to stay His hand?

8. What one word described Lot’s offers to the two angels who came to visit (19:1-8; First Peter 4:9, Hebrews 13:2)?

9. What did the men of Sodom have on their minds? What shocking counteroffer did Lot make them? Why?

10. What did the Sodomites think of Lot (19:9-14)? How did he feel about living among them (Second Peter 2:7)?

11. What warning did angels give Lot? How did his sons-in-law respond?

12. Why didn’t Lot immediately rush out of the city (19:15-29)? What could have kept him?

13. What did Lot’s daughters do to him (19:30-38)?
Lesson 6: Abraham and Sarah Bear Isaac
Genesis 20-24

1. On whom had Abraham and Sarah used this ploy once before (Genesis 20:1-13)?

2. In both cases, who does the rebuking: the man of God or the heathen?

3. Did Abraham’s story have a kernel of truth to it? Does God permit half-truths, then?

4. Abraham’s lie showed a weakness in his faith in God and His promises. Occasionally, our faith falters in the face of danger and we resort to sin to protect us. How should we respond instead, according to First Peter 3:13-17?

5. Was Sarah rebuked by Abimelech also (20:14-18)? Did she deserve rebuke, though a submissive wife and not the author of the lie? Explain.

6. Despite all of Abraham and Sarah’s attempts to help God to deliver on his promise in their time and way, God came through as he saw fit (21:1-7). What was the child’s name?
7. Why was Abraham reluctant to heed Sarah’s wish to dismiss Hagar and Ishmael (21:8-21)?

Abraham loved his son, if not his concubine and understood that divine law prohibited him from sending them away like this.

8. Paul uses this event and its characters in a New Testament analogy on the two major covenants between mankind and God (Galatians 4:21-31). What are the implications of this analogy: Are we under the law of Moses at all now? What has become of the law of Moses, including the Ten Commandments (Ephesians 2:15)?

We are no longer under the law of Moses, at all, having been set free to serve Christ under the law of liberty. The law of Moses was fulfilled and taken out of effect when Jesus died upon the cross and instituted the new covenant.

9. What did God command Abraham to do (22:1-14)? How did the man react?

God told Abraham to sacrifice Isaac in fire. Abraham arose early in the morning to comply.

10. How did the wood for the offering get to the place for the sacrifice? How does this foreshadow Christ’s suffering (John 19:17)?

Isaac carried the wood on his own back. Jesus carried his own cross.

11. If Abraham had disobeyed this command, would God have delivered his promises anyway (22:15-24)? Were God’s promises to Abraham conditional upon a “working faith”?

God would only deliver his promises if Abraham met the conditions of working faith.


13. What was the name of Isaac’s bride (24:1-66)?
Lesson 7: Jacob and Esau
Genesis 25-28, 32-33, 36

1. Why did Rebekah think something was amiss with the children in her womb (Genesis 25:19-28)?

2. What was God’s explanation for the ruckus?

3. Describe the differences between each son.

4. Isaac proves “like father, like son.” What mistake of Abraham’s does he repeat (26:1-11)?

5. What does “Rehoboth” mean (26:12-35). What lesson might this give?


7. In what two ways had Jacob now supplanted Esau (27:30-40)?
8. What did Esau plan to do in vengeance (27:41-46)? What was making Rebekah weary (26:34-35)? What advice did she give her favorite son?

9. Did he obey her (28:1-9)?

10. What was the significance of “Jacob’s Ladder” (28:10-22)?

11. How did Jacob react to the news that his brother was coming (32:1-12)? Did he have anything to fear in reality?

12. How did Jacob attempt to appease his brother (32:13-21)?

13. How was Jacob’s name changed (32:22-32)? With whom did he wrestle (see also Hosea 12:3-4)?

14. How did Esau react to the sight of his brother and his family (33:1-20)? Did he take Israel’s gift?

15. What was the name of the nation that descended from Esau (36:1-43)?
Lesson 8: Jacob and Rachel
Genesis 29-31, 34-35

1. What woman did Jacob see upon heading east (Genesis 29:1-20)? What was her occupation?

2. What kindness did Jacob show Rachel? What information did he divulge to her?

3. In those days, many wives were nothing more than possessions. Did Jacob have genuine feelings for Rachel or merely see her as a thing?

4. How did Laban deceive Jacob (29:21-30)? How many years did Rachel end up costing Jacob?

5. Name Leah’s four sons, born in Genesis 29:31-35. Why wasn’t childbearing enough to save her marriage to Jacob?

6. Name the sons born to Rachel’s maid, Bilhah (30:1-24). Name the sons born to Leah’s maid, Zilpah. Name the other children that Leah bore. Name Rachel’s son.

7. What wages did Jacob now ask of Laban (30:25-36)?
8. How did Jacob become prosperous (30:37-43)?

He bred his animals to be strong and left Laban the weak.

9. Why did Jacob decide now to leave Laban’s house (31:1-21)?

God had protected him and made him rich at Laban’s expense, in return for his deception. It was now time to return to his own land to keep the scheme of God intact.

10. Why did Laban not harm Jacob when he caught him (31:22-55)?

God warned Laban not to harm Jacob.

11. What was Rachel’s crime? What was her deception when nearly caught? How might her larceny damage Israel in the years to come?

Rachel stole her father’s household idols and complained of menstruation when nearly apprehended. She managed to bring the poison into Israel and give them a pattern for idolatry.

12. Who violated Dinah (34:1-24)? Did Jacob immediately lose control when he found out?

A heathen named Shechem raped Dinah, but Jacob held his temper.

13. Why didn’t the men of the city fight when Simeon and Levi arrived to exact vengeance and plunder them (34:25-31)?

They were in pain from being circumcised.

14. What did Jacob hide under the terebinth tree by Shechem (35:1-15)?

He hid his children’s idols and earrings, symbols of infidelity toward Jehovah.

15. What child did Rachel bear last (35:16-29)? Why was her joy curtailed?

Rachel bore Benjamin, but died in the process.
Lesson 9: Joseph Sold Into Slavery
Genesis 37-38

1. Would Jacob’s family always be strangers in Canaan (Genesis 37:1-11)?

2. What word might one use to apply to Joseph’s actions here? Is this the kind of thing to make one popular with others? What else made Joseph’s brothers dislike him?

3. What was the implication of Joseph’s dreams? How did Joseph’s brothers feel about him following these two dreams?

4. Why were the brothers worried when Joseph came (37:12-24)? How did Reuben temper their plans to kill Joseph?

5. What was significant about the coat that they took from Joseph?

6. How was Reuben’s benevolent plan upset (37:25-36)?
7. Where did Joseph end up?

In Egypt, in service to a man named Potiphar, an officer of Pharaoh and captain of the guard.

8. Did the brothers tell their father a lie? Did they deceive him?

While they did not tell a lie, they clearly deceived him.

9. With Joseph gone, Judah began to wander into sin (38:1-10). His children were born to a heathen woman. Why did Er and Onan die?

Er died because of his wickedness in God's sight. Onan died because he did not fulfill his family's duty by giving his dead brother an heir by Er's wife.

10. After Onan's death, what command did Judah give Tamar (38:11-23)? Did he keep this promise?

He told her to wait until his young son, Shelah, grew up to give her an heir. He did not keep his word and Tamar took matters into her own hands.

11. How did Tamar take matters into her own hands? How did Tamar prove to be very cunning in this event?

She masqueraded as a harlot and persuaded an unwitting Judah to fornicate with her. She asked for his signet, cord and staff so that she could later prove he was the father of their children from this fornication.

12. In what way does Judah prove to be hypocritical when he learns Tamar was with child from harlotry (38:24-30)?

He was guilty of using a harlot, but condemned her to be burned.

13. How does he react to the news that he was the father of her children?

He resigns himself to responsibility because he did not keep his word.

14. What were the names of their twins?

Perez and Zerah.
Lesson 10: Joseph Imprisoned
Genesis 39

1. Who was Joseph’s owner (Genesis 39:1-6)? How had he become enslaved?

2. What was ironic about the situation, considering that it was Ishmaelites who sold Joseph?

3. No doubt, Joseph thought his condition hopeless, but who was with him, ensuring the progress of God’s scheme of redemption?


5. How can Joseph’s example affect relationships with employers today?

6. What was the request of Potiphar’s wife to Joseph (39:7-18)? How did Joseph refuse her?
7. When we commit an offense against a person, how was God affected?

8. How persistent was Potiphar’s wife in her requests?

9. What happened one day when none of the other men was present? Her lust refused, how did she now treat the object of her desire?

10. Often, we cannot help being in situation in which temptation attacks us every day. How can we consistently refuse its allure, as Joseph did?

11. Compare Joseph’s reaction to the temptation of Potiphar’s wife with David’s behavior concerning Uriah’s wife, Bathsheba.

12. How well did Potiphar know his wife (39:19-23)?

13. What benefit did God give the prisoner? Did Joseph’s progress in Potiphar’s house continue in the prison?
Lesson 11: *Joseph Interprets Dreams*  
Genesis 40-41

1. Who were Joseph’s new cellmates (Genesis 40:1-23)? Why were they in?

2. What made these two sad?

3. What was the interpretation of the butler’s dream? Be very brief in your answer.

4. What did Joseph ask of the butler in return for this interpretation?

5. What was the interpretation of the baker’s dream? Be very brief.

6. How did Pharaoh celebrate his birthday?

7. How did the butler show his gratitude to Joseph?

8. How long separated the butler’s release and Pharaoh’s dreams (41:1-13)?

9. Why was Pharaoh’s spirit troubled and not comforted by his magicians?
10. How does the butler help both Pharaoh and Joseph?

11. To whom did Joseph give the credit for his ability to interpret dreams (41:14-24)?

12. What was the interpretation of Pharaoh’s dreams (41:25-36)?

13. What tax rate did Joseph suggest to Pharaoh to ward off the effects of the famine?

14. Whom did Pharaoh appoint to oversee the saving plan (41:37-45)?

15. How many times has God’s guidance led Joseph to a high rank in Egypt?

16. What did Joseph name his two sons (41:46-57)?

17. Why did all roads suddenly lead to Egypt?
Lesson 12: Providence
Genesis 42-45

1. None of the people yet understood about God’s providence, but the historian made it clear (Genesis 42:1-24). How had God provided for Israel in Joseph’s enslavement?

2. Did Joseph’s ten brothers recognize the governor as their brother? Why didn’t Joseph identify himself?

3. How had Joseph’s own dreams now come true?

4. What test did Joseph inflict upon his brothers? How did Joseph get a measure of revenge on his brothers for enslaving him?

5. What did Joseph do that confounded his brothers (42:25-38)?

6. What offer did Reuben make? What do we know about his character?

7. The family seems resigned to giving up Simeon, but why are they ultimately compelled to go back to Egypt (43:1-14)?
8. Why did the brothers think Joseph invited them (43:15-25)?

9. To whom did the steward attribute the return of their wealth?

10. What happened to Joseph when he saw Benjamin (43:26-34)? Why was Joseph particularly fond of Benjamin?

11. What extra “gift” did Joseph command be given to Benjamin (44:1-17)?

12. Why were the other sons so unwilling to leave Benjamin and go home? Had they matured since selling Joseph more than two decades earlier?

13. What offer does Judah make (44:18-34)? Why?

14. Whose idea was it to sell Joseph as a slave? How much did the brothers care for their father’s feelings back then?

15. What explanation did Joseph give for his brothers’ treachery (45:1-15)?

16. What was Pharaoh’s invitation (45:16-28)? Did Jacob consent to it?
Lesson 13: Reunited
Genesis 46-50

1. What promise did God make in Jacob’s dream about Egypt (Genesis 46:1-7)?

2. Because shepherding was considered an abomination to the Egyptians, Joseph had to handle his family’s occupation carefully in Pharaoh’s realm (46:8-33). Did he counsel them to lie about their occupation?

3. Were the brothers truthful with Pharaoh (47:1-12)? What could have happened had they lied and been discovered later?

4. How did Joseph save Egyptian in the ensuing years (47:13-31)?

5. Jacob knew something of blessings being switched from older son to younger (48:1-22). How does he apportion his blessings upon Joseph’s sons?

6. Reuben was the first son of Israel (49:1-4). Would the royal and Messianic line issue from him or a younger brother?

7. What was the character flaw of Simeon and Levi (49:5-7)?

8. What was in store for Judah’s offspring (49:8-12)?


11. Jacob has little to say to these three sons, but it was positive (49:19-21). What was their future?
   - Gad:
   - Asher:
   - Naphtali:

12. To what trait of Joseph’s life does Jacob pay tribute in opening this blessing (49:22-26)?

13. Jacob saw the Benjaminites as like ravenous wolves (49:27-28). How was King Saul, a descendant of Benjamin, like a wolf?

14. What wish does Jacob renew (49:29-33)?

15. How did his sons carry through with their promise (50:1-14)?

16. How does Joseph see his brothers’ behavior and future (50:15-21)?

17. What was Joseph’s wish (50:22-26)? Was it fulfilled (Joshua 24:32)?