

“Is Genesis History?”

This article is from the “Among Friends” section of the Church of God Big Sandy’s website (churchofgodbigsandy.com). It was posted for the weekend of Jan. 14, 2023.

By Dave Havir

BIG SANDY, Texas—At our Bible study on Wednesday night, I began a series about the book of Genesis. The title of part 1 was “Is Genesis History?”

At the beginning of the Bible study, I made the statement that I decided that I should begin the series about the book of Genesis by addressing the “elephant in the room.”

So I posed two questions.

- Are the Biblical accounts of the early part of the Book of Genesis (chapters 1-11) real events?
- Or are they merely religious stories to inspire people?

(For the record, I believe that Genesis contains historical events.)

Churches drifted

To show a little history about how the perspective of many religious people has changed through the years, I quoted from an article by (Ph.D.) Andrew A. Snelling titled “Genesis: Real, Reliable, Historical” that was posted at icr.org (Institute of Creation Research).

“The first eleven chapters of the Bible have been relegated by many to the category of myths, not real history. These are said to contain spiritual truth, but they cannot be taken seriously as records of real people and events . . .

“An alarming number of Christian leaders and teachers instead believe that God ‘created’ through evolutionary processes over millions of years, that Adam and Eve descended from hominid population, and that there has never been a global flood—suggesting that the account of Noah and the Ark is a story adapted from a Babylonian myth.

“Mainstream Christian orthodoxy regarded the opening chapters of Genesis as just as real and reliable as the rest of the Bible until 150-200 years ago. So what happened?

“This downgrading of the early chapters of Genesis has coincided with the rise of uniformitarian philosophy as the cornerstone of modern geology and of evolution as the core of modern biology. Christians have been ignorant of the process that has gradually changed their whole approach to the Bible.

"Consequently, Christian churches throughout the world reject the early chapters of Genesis as history—resulting in all manner of compromise intended to force geological ages and organic evolution into the Scriptures."

Some believe in evolution

For the purpose of the Bible study, I wanted to acknowledge four categories of people. You will notice that people in the first two categories both believe in evolution.

- Many people believe in evolution—with little or no regard for the Bible.
- Some people believe in evolution—but believe that Genesis 1-11 is wonderful stories.

People in these two categories do not generally comprise the audience listening to my Bible study last Wednesday night or reading this article today.

Two versions of creation

But I have religious friends who fall into the next two categories. You will notice that people in the next two categories both believe in God's creation.

- Some people believe in creation with God creating over a period of time—in what is sometimes called an "Old Earth" scenario.
- Some people believe in creation with God creating quickly—in what is sometimes called a "New Earth" scenario.

I think it is healthy when people who have those views politely share their differences of opinion with each other. Such discussions can be interesting, edifying and loving.

And please remember this—friends who support these perspectives both believe that Genesis is history.

YouTube presentation

During the Bible study, I played a portion of a YouTube presentation titled *Is Genesis History?* It was produced on March 26, 2020, and moderated by Dr. Del Tackett (creator of The Truth Project).

Because the length of the video is one hour and 44 minutes, we watched only a portion of the beginning.

I encouraged the audience in the hall and the audience online to watch the rest of the video.