

Preface

During college, some of the students often traveled over spring break to participate in a student program known as *SPOTS* (*Special Projects Other Than Summer*). One particular student I knew once went to Myrtle Beach to participate in a *SPOTS* project. While returning to where they were staying from doing clown ministry on the beach, she and some others passed the construction site of a new hotel going up on the main beach front (a perpetual activity in Myrtle Beach!). As they stopped to watch, one of the construction workers began talking to them. They inquired as to exactly what the workers were doing with the equipment present. The worker proceeded to describe how they were laying the foundation, and he continued to describe how important the foundation was, especially on a beach front due to the problem of erosion. “Unless the foundation is solid,” he said, “the rest of the building doesn’t stand a chance.”

What a profound spiritual truth that construction worker shared, probably without even realizing it. Unless the foundation of our faith is solid, the building of our life stands little chance in today’s culture. The first eleven chapters of Genesis provides a solid foundation for the life of the child of God. It has been attacked, ridiculed, scoffed at, and mocked. It has been made into mythology and allegory. Even worse, it has been outright doubted, even by many within the church. But those who hold to a high view of Scripture realize the vital importance of these eleven chapters. Those who understand the principles of spiritual warfare realize the reason behind the attacks on this precious section of Holy writ. Do away with these foundational chapters and the rest of the building will soon come crashing down as well. Indeed secular humanism has been very successful in chipping away at this foundation of the Christian faith. The results have been devastating as the statistics of modern culture tell the sad story. Such a situation exists only because of an impotent church, made such because she has allowed her foundation to be eroded.

This study of these first eleven chapters of Genesis seeks to shore up that foundation for the child of God. The study is conducted with the presupposition that the events recorded in these chapters are literal and historical. We learn that the world was created in six twenty-four hour periods and that God rested on the seventh day; that Adam and Eve were real people who lived upon this earth in a paradise called Eden; that prior to their sin their was no death (thus ruling out the possibility of millions of years of history presupposed by evolutionary thought); that sin spread bringing condemnation upon man, culminating in a worldwide deluge; that life began again after the Flood and all humanity can trace their lineage to one man, Noah. The words of these eleven chapters can be trusted to mean what they say.

Numerous resources have been employed in the development of this study, most notable of which is the commentary *Exploring Genesis* (Moody Press, Chicago: 1980), by John Phillips. Those who have read Phillips’ works know his insistence upon a high view of Scripture and recognize him as a masterful expositor of the Word of God and outliner par excellence. Many of the outlines in this study are borrowed from Phillips, while others are adaptations of his outlines.

The Word of God is sure. Before you trust anything else, you can trust what God says, especially in these first eleven chapters of Genesis. May your faith be strengthened as you delve into this portion of the Word.