

Lecture 6

Looking Back at Genesis

Aetiology: The study of the causes.

In Genesis **Etiologies** serve to explain origins .

Genesis is FULL of Etiologies!

To Recap some of them:

Genesis 1-3 describes the arrival of Humans, and the creation of our world. It describes the beginning of consciousness.

The Tower of Babel teaches us how different languages were introduced to the world, and how working outside the will of God causes confusion.

We learn the origin of marriage and the development of social culture: "and that is why a man leaves his parents and cleaves to a woman..."

We learn why snakes crawl and smell with their tongues.

We learn why people lived in the desert, and
why women have a painful childbirth, and
why life is a struggle.

The aetiologies in Genesis are short and simple. They make a point, and tell you what the point is!

The Name of God:

The Hebrews had four common Names for God.
El, Elohim, Eloah and Yahweh

The Names El Elohim and Eloah have prehistoric roots meaning ("to be strong") or possibly ("to be above all"),

Eloah and *Elohim*, could be translated: "He who is the object of fear and reverence," or "He with whom one in fear may refuge".

In time each word came to denote **The GOD of Israel.**

The Prefix EL is often followed by another word which describes God

Some Examples of the names of “El”
EL, ELOAH: God "mighty, strong, deliverer" (Genesis 7:1; Isaiah 9:6) –

EL -OHIM: God “Creator, Mighty and Strong” (Genesis 17:7; Jeremiah 31:33) – The “one” who has all power and speaks the world into existence. This is plural form, which Christians often interpret as the telling of the Doctrine of the Holy Trinity. (Genesis 1:1).

EL SHADDAI: “God Almighty,” “The God of plenty and sufficiency” (Genesis 49:24; Psalm 132:2,5) – Speaks to God’s ultimate power over all.
Genesis 17:1-2 Abraham is introduced to El Shaddi :

"When Abram was ninety-nine years old, the LORD appeared to Abram and said to him, "I am El Shaddai; walk before Me and be blameless. And I will make My covenant between Me and you, and will multiply you exceedingly

EL ELYON: “God Most High” (Deuteronomy 26:19) He has absolute right to lordship.

EL ROI: "God of Seeing" (Genesis 16:13) Hagar, alone and in fear in the wilderness because of Sarah meets the Angel of the Lord and realises that God saw her in distress and was with her.

EL-OLAM: "Everlasting God" (Psalm 90:1-3) – God’s nature is without beginning or end, above all time and creator of all. “From everlasting to everlasting, You are God.”

EL-GIBHOR: “Mighty God” The one who Delivers and Saves (Isaiah 9:6) – ⁶ For to us a child is born, to us a son is given, and the government will be on his shoulders.

And he will be called
Wonderful Counselor, Mighty God,
Everlasting Father, Prince of Peace.

Yahweh

When we use the word Yahweh, it is the english translation of the hebrew word:



YHWH

Hebrew people would say ADONAI: “Lord” in place of YHWH because the Holy name was too sacred to be spoken. In the Old Testament, YHWH is more often used in God’s covenant dealings with His people.

As with the prefix EL, words added to Yahweh describe God

Some Examples:

YAHWEH-JIREH: "The Lord will Provide" (Genesis 22:14) – Abraham when God provided the ram to be sacrificed in place of Isaac.

YAHWEH-RAPHA: "The Lord Who Heals" (Exodus 15:26) – “I am Yahweh who heals you” b in body and soul. I am he who forgives.

YAHWEH-M'KADDESH: "The Lord Who Blesses and Makes you Holy" (Leviticus 20:8; Ezekiel 37:28) – God makes it clear that He alone, and not the law, could cleanse His people and make them holy.

YAHWEH-SHALOM: "He is Our Peace" (Judges 6:24) – By Gideon at an altar when the Angel of the Lord assured him he would not die because he saw him.

YAHWEH-ELOHIM: "LORD God" (Genesis 2:4; Psalm 59:5) – Combination of God’s unique name YHWH and the generic “Lord,” signifying that He is the God above all Gods

YAHWEH-TSIDKENU: "The Lord Our Righteousness" (Jeremiah 33:16)

YAHWEH-ROHI: "The Lord Our Shepherd" (Psalm 23:1) –

YAHWEH-SABAOTH: "The Lord of Hosts" (Isaiah 1:24; Psalm 46:7) authority of God over all Creation who is able to accomplish what he decides to do.

Abraham and the Patriarchs

The stories of “**Beginnings**” we find in the first 11 chapters of Genesis change to longer, detailed accounts of Abraham, Isaac, Jacob and Joseph.

Abraham was born before Israel existed, after Noah's Flood, and represents the first call of God upon a human to be known as the founder of the story of Salvation's History.

Genesis takes us from the story of international chaos in the Tower of Babel – where people are scattered through the world – to a story of one who is told he will be used by God to bless many nations.

Abraham was a distant descendant of Noah's son Shem. He lived as a tent dweller, and after his father's death settled in the vicinity of Canaan. The bible calls him a “sojourner” in the land. In other words, he lived there, but resisted adopting the habits and traditions of the local culture. It was there that God promised him that all the land would belong to him and his descendants. Abraham became the father of two sons, Ishmael, (Hagar) who became the father of the people of the desert and Isaac born when Abraham was 100, and Sarah was 90. *Abraham's family tree gets larger after Sarah's death when he remarries and keeps several concubines.*

The Sacrifice of Isaac

At night God speaks to Abraham and demands that the child through whom the promise would be kept be sacrificed. Some interesting points here:

- . The Scripture tells us clearly that Abraham was being tested.
- . He was not told he was being tested!
- . Abraham had abandoned Ishmael and was now being told to give up his son.
- . He demonstrates pure obedience, which is identified as faith.
- . Abraham is intent on completing the task
- . An Angel stops him
- . God provides a sacrifice as a substitute for Isaac

This story provides a historical transition from ancient common sacrificial customs. We learn that inner integrity and faithfulness mean much to God.

The Covenant Is Sealed.