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## The Book of the Beginning

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**G**enesis is about Jesus. Jesus made us. Jesus keeps us alive. Jesus also is our Savior. Moses wrote the book of Genesis. Thousands of years after Moses, John shows us Jesus as the One who made us, too: “The Word (Christ [Jesus]) was in the beginning. The Word was with God. The Word was God. He was with God in the beginning. He made all things. Nothing was made without Him making it. Life began by Him. His Life was the Light for men” (John 1:1–4, NLV).

So, John tells us that Jesus made everything. Jesus made all the planets and stars. Jesus made our cells and our DNA, which are the “building blocks” of life. Jesus made all these things. Jesus holds everything He made together, too. The book of Genesis is the first story in the Bible. This story shows us that Jesus made this earth and saves us from sin. Genesis is the only book on earth that shows us why we are here.

The word “Genesis” comes from a Greek word that means “beginning.” This Greek word comes from the Hebrew word “**bere’shit**,” which means “in the beginning.” These three words are the first in the book of Genesis and the whole Bible! The whole Bible comes from the spiritual truths in Genesis. The other Bible writers use more quotes from Genesis than from any other book in the Bible.

Genesis is important because it helps us understand who we are as humans. We need this knowledge more today than any other group of Christians in history. Most people now believe that humans are mistakes or “accidents.” They believe that life on earth started by chance. But Genesis shows us that these ideas are wrong. Genesis teaches us that God made us to look the same as Himself. God also made us to be the same as Himself in many ways, too. Then God put the first humans in a beautiful garden on a perfect earth. Genesis also explains how sin happened. We learn why life on this earth is no longer perfect. We learn why humans are not perfect anymore. Genesis also gives us comfort. God promises to send us a Savior. This promise gives us hope in a life that offers us nothing but suffering and death.

The book of Genesis tells us many stories of miracles. We read about how God made the skies and the earth. We also read about the first rainbow. Genesis teaches

us about the Flood and Sodom and Gomorrah. We see God everywhere in the stories of Genesis. That is why we feel love for God when we read these stories. The book of Genesis also has beautiful love stories. We enjoy the famous story about Jacob and Rachel. Or how about Isaac and Rebekah? These stories touch our hearts. We also read stories about hate (Jacob and Esau) or about babies being born (Isaac, Jacob, and the 12 sons of Jacob). We read stories about death (Sarah, Rachel, Jacob, and Joseph). We also read sad stories about killing (Cain, Simeon, and Levi). There are stories about forgiveness (Esau and Jacob, Joseph and his brothers). Genesis also teaches us about good and evil (Cain, the Tower of Babel). We also learn about faith (Abraham, Jacob). Most of all, we feel hope in the story about God's promise to save us. We see this hope in the promise that God will step on the head of the snake and destroy it forever. We also see this same hope in the story about the Promised Land.

***The book of Genesis has beautiful love stories.***

During this quarter, we will read and study the book of Genesis. We also will enjoy its beautiful stories. They will teach us to live more closely with the Lord God of Abraham, Isaac, and Jacob.

We also will see that the people in the book of Genesis take many trips. They travel from Eden to Babel, from the Promised Land to Egypt. The book ends with the hope that the children of Israel have of traveling back to the Promised Land. The hope of Israel helps us remember our own hope in the real Promised Land. This land is the new heaven and the new earth. As we read the stories in Genesis, we will see that they are in many ways our stories, too.

Jacques B. Doukhan, DHL, ThD, is now retired. He used to teach Hebrew and Old Testament studies at Andrews University.