

Genesis 1-11 Introduction

“Many people read the Old Testament as though it portrayed the “bad old days” before Jesus. But that’s not an accurate picture. Actually, the first three chapters of Genesis link to the last book of the Bible, Revelation. They are like brackets of perfection around the sadness of life marred by sin, death, suffering, and hatred. In Genesis, we learn that life didn’t start out that way. In Revelation we find out it won’t end that way either. But the Old and New Testaments take place between those brackets. Through Abraham, through Moses, ultimately in Jesus, God is hard at work to make things right.” (NRSV Student Bible)

As you read, pay attention to the ways in which God speaks (into nothingness, calls to Adam and Eve, to Cain, to Noah, etc.), and what the response is. That God sees the goodness in all of creation is not just a statement of fact, it is a statement of intention. God intends creation to live into its goodness as the Creator’s creation. Genesis 1-11 introduces God’s intention, creation’s resistance, and begins to answer the questions posed throughout the Bible: In what ways will the world respond to God’s intentions? and How will God respond to the world’s resistance? Despite this ongoing question throughout the scriptures, one thing is clear, God will never abandon the world or God’s intentions for all of creation. That was good news to the Jews in exile, to the persecuted early churches, and remains good news for us today as we see sin and brokenness all around us and long for goodness and mercy to rule on earth, as in heaven.