

Week 2

Questions to keep in mind while reading.

Read Chapter 2 of *TIOT*, pages 35-66.

The writing is well-organized, and I encourage you to note the points made under the subheadings.

Questions to keep in mind while reading (and note that the focus question for your group will appear on your forum page):

- “The Genesis text remains an important paradigm regarding the way in which to integrate theological and scientific knowledge in a common search for truth about the world.” (*TIOT*, p37) If someone asks you if you believe in scientific views about the origin of the universe or in creationism, how do you respond? (*focus for Exodus Group*)
- The biblical narratives “do purport to tell a story of the past..., yet, they are not historical in any modern sense.” (*TIOT*, p40) Explain what this means.
- “The creation is presented as basically in place, but still in the process of becoming. In view of this reality, appeals to the ‘orders of creation’ or natural law (on, say, ethical issues) must be handled with considerable care.” (*TIOT*, p47) Give an example where natural law must be used with caution.
- Read the concluding paragraph of chapter 2 of *TIOT* on p65. What do you find to be the most remarkable statement made there? (*focus for Leviticus Group*)

Read Genesis 12-50.

- Why did God choose Abram?
- In Genesis 12.2 God promises to make Abram’s “name great.” (Compare Gen 11.4.) Watch for this theme throughout Genesis.
- Is the case of Abram and Sarai in Egypt (12.10-20) an argument for saying that the means justifies the end? What exactly was the end towards which Abram was aiming?
- Reading through the stories about Abraham and Sarah, be aware of your attitude toward them. Do you like them? Are they good people? Are they always faithful?
- Genesis 22 is a critical chapter in both Jewish and Christian traditions. Note the textual exercise to dig more deeply into this important chapter.
- In Genesis 22, why did Abraham obey God’s command? (*focus for Genesis Group*)
- In Genesis 22, what is Isaac’s role in the drama? (BTW, how old was Isaac when this happened?) (*focus for Joshua Group*)
- In Genesis 22, how could God ask such a thing of Abraham, even if it was only a “test”? (*focus for Numbers Group*)
- In Genesis 22, what about Sarah in all of this?
- Gen 26: Where have we heard a story like this before?
- As you read through the Jacob cycle of stories, be aware of what you think of Jacob.
- Chapter 37 begins the Joseph cycle. Be aware of what you think of Joseph.
- Chapter 38 was one of the two chapters in the Bible that was not to be read in the Jewish cycle of reading Scripture. Why would such a story as this be preserved in the Bible?
- How does 50.15-21 serve as a fitting conclusion to the book of Genesis? (*focus for Deuteronomy Group*)