

# THE STUDY OF GENESIS

There is little in the book of Genesis that will not amply repay your attentive study.

The initial stories which treat of the Creation and pre-patriarchal periods deserve special attention because of the authority which they claim and have been accorded by readers of the Bible. It is clearly important that we have a firm and clear attitude to the controversies which have raged about these texts, as the basic principles we have been trying to instil are here very easy to understand. The writing is wonderfully clear and dramatic, and the depth of these scriptures is a lesson in the profundity of the scriptural heritage as a whole.

The Patriarchal stories are equally influential, and furnish us with insight into the way in which the Bible uses individual life-stories to evoke the great themes of Israel's experience of God. Everything said about Abraham here will have significance in the New Testament.

The extended story of the sons of Jacob/Israel which forms the end of the book is one of the great treasures of all ancient writing. It is clear that each of the Patriarchs have their own traditions, preserved in their own sanctuaries (for Abraham, Mamre, near Hebron, and Beersheba; for Isaac Gerar and Beersheba, both in the south; for Jacob Bethel and Shechem in the northern hills, then Mahanaim, and Penuel in Transjordan).)

## **An Essay**

Read as carefully as you can about the story of Noah and the Ark.

Find out where this story comes from, its history. Can you identify the function of the story within the book of Genesis? Place the details of the story in context within the traditions of the Bible. What themes do you find here that reflect the important themes of the Pentateuch as a whole?

The relationship between these writings and the book of Exodus is of interest to us.