



## **WOW: Word Of the Week**

### **Promise (a one-word summary of Genesis)**

**August 2020**

Today's devotional is the first of what will eventually be a set of 66 devotionals. The challenge -- summarize the message of a book of the Bible in a single word! Identify a word that reflects the principal message — a key word under which all else can be organized.

The challenge requires thinking about an entire Bible book. Here is Genesis summarized in four "acts."

→Act 1, Gen. 1-11—Creation, the entry of sin and the fall, and more sin stories (Cain and Abel, the flood, Noah's sin, Babel)

→Act 2, Gen. 12-25—God's promise and covenant with Abraham, and more sin stories (Abraham's lie in Egypt, Lot, Sodom, Lot's daughters, Abraham's lie to Abimelech, Isaac's lie...you get the idea!)

→Act 3, Gen. 26-38—Isaac and Jacob (don't overlook the sin stories)

→Act 4, Gen. 39-50, 37—Joseph in Egypt, the displacement of the children of Israel to Egypt

Another easy summary has only eight points.

Four Major Events (Gen. 1-11)—Creation, Fall, Flood, Babel

Four Major Persons (Gen. 12-50)—Abraham, Isaac, Jacob, Joseph

Thinking about the first summary above, the word "sin" seems to provide a significant theme. Once sin enters the human experience, everything goes downhill! But since my goal is to point to words of encouragement and guidance for all of life – I want to a positive "Word Of the Week."

Reading Genesis through a New Testament lens, we already know that God's solution of the problem of sin will come through the Seed of Abraham, Jesus Christ, the fulfillment of God's promise.

Takeaway! If we get nothing else out of Genesis, we must get this! God promises to fix what has gone wrong with human creation. And make no doubt about it – something had gone badly wrong.

Given this context, God's promise takes on greater meaning! God's promise is essential, foundational, still valid today. Our God is a creating, blessing, promising God.

Another takeaway! God's promise to Abraham and his family will direct the storyline, not only of the book of Genesis, but of the Old Testament. Restoring the God-humanity relationship that was broken in the Garden of Eden by the entrance of sin will require a history-marking life-changing event!

The promise made to Abraham is incredible: innumerable blessings on innumerable people, and curses on those who oppose God's purpose, plan, and people.

For today, we find confidence and security in this fact – the God who is revealing himself in history and through his written Word is a God of promises, a faithful God who can and will keep his promises. He will not, cannot, fail. Because God is God.

Coming up! The rest of the story.