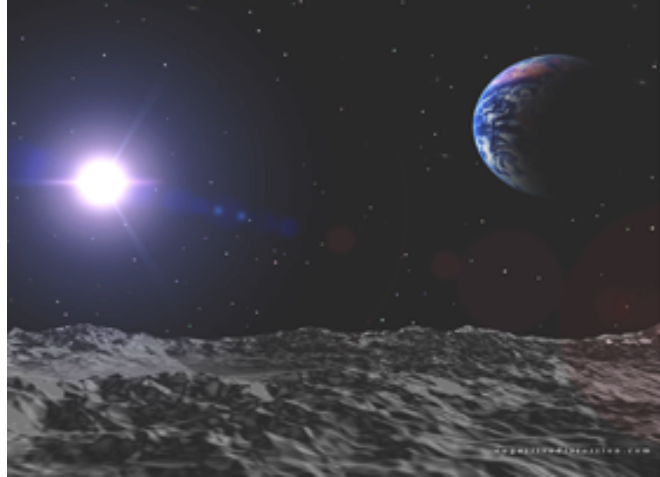


# GENESIS

## Message:

*“Genesis provides the divine revelation of the source, nature, and reason for the beginning (“origin”) of all things. It records man’s initial fall into sin, God’s necessary judgment, and promise to reestablish His sovereign rule on the earth and to overcome the invasion of evil through ‘the Seed of the woman/Abraham’— that One manifested in the New Testament as Jesus Christ.”*



## Title:

The Hebrew title of the book is derived from the initial word *tyvarb* (*beresit*), translated “in the beginning.”<sup>1</sup> The English title ***Genesis*** is a transliteration of the Greek word *Ge/nesið* (*geneseos*), probably derived from Genesis 2:4a. The English title is derived from the Latin Vulgate translation of Jerome *liber genesis*.<sup>2</sup> The Greek word *Ge/nesið* (*geneseos*) translates the Hebrew word *twdlwt* (*tol<sup>e</sup>dot*).<sup>3</sup> Scholars have noted that this Hebrew term *twdlwt* (*tol<sup>e</sup>dot*, usually rendered “account” or “generations”) is the key word in identifying the overall structure of the Book of Genesis. The term is found in 2:4; 5:1; 6:9; 10:1; 11:10, 27; 25:12, 19; 36:1, 9; 37:2). Genesis serves as a most fitting title for a book that reveals the “origins” of creation and human history.

## Authorship:

Although the Book of Genesis itself contains no definitive statement as to who wrote it, both tradition and other Scriptures unequivocally ascribe it to Moses.<sup>4</sup> Genesis is but the first book of a larger work called the *Torah* (“Law” or “instruction”) or *Pentateuch* (literally, “five-fold vessel”). The Torah introduces the first division of the traditional tripartite Hebrew arrangement of the Old Testament known as the Law, the Prophets, and

<sup>1</sup>Each book of the Pentateuch originally received its title from the first word or words in the book. The word Pentateuch is a Greek word meaning “five books.” These first five books of the Old Testament are called Torah by the Jews.

<sup>2</sup>Kenneth A. Matthews, *Genesis 1–11:26*, New American Commentary series, ed. E. Ray Clendenen, et al. vol. 1a (Nashville: Broadman, 1996), 41.

<sup>3</sup>Both of these words convey the meaning of “beginning, history of origin, descent, generation, birth, source,” (BAGD, “geneseos,” 154-55).

<sup>4</sup>For a more detailed analysis of the authorship of Genesis than can be offered here, see D. Kidner, *Genesis: An Introduction and Commentary*, 15-26; H. C. Leupold, *Exposition of Genesis*, vol. 1:5-9. The work by Oswald T. Allis, *The Five Books of Moses*, is the classic rebuttal of critical scholars’ denials of Mosaic authorship of all five books of the Pentateuch. It is worth noting that while Allis’ work has never been discredited, it has certainly been ignored by the vast majority of liberal scholars past and present.

the Writings.<sup>5</sup> The Jews never viewed the Torah as five individual works, but as one complete book composed by Moses, their great Deliverer and Lawgiver.<sup>6</sup>

Mosaic authorship of the Pentateuch is supported by the following considerations. First, internal evidence derived from the Pentateuch itself testifies that Moses was its author (see Exod 17:14; 24:4; 34:27; Lev 1:1; 4:1; 6:1, 8, 19, 24; 7:22, 28, Num 33:2; Deut 31:19); second evidence from other Old Testament books likewise testify to the Mosaic authorship of the Pentateuch (see Josh 1:7-8; 8:32, 34; 22:5; 1 Kgs 2:3; 2 Kgs 14:6; 21:8; Ezra 6:18; Dan 9:11-13; Mal 4:4); third, certain of the Intertestamental Jewish literature found in the Apocrypha and Pseudepigrapha bear similar testimony to Mosaic authorship (cf. Baruch 2:2; 2 Maccabees 7:30), and the writings of both Philo (*Life of Moses* 3:39) and Josephus (*Antiquities* 4:8:45) concur; and fourth, the New Testament writers and speakers, including Jesus and several of His Apostles, unequivocally support the Mosaic authorship of the Pentateuch. For example: Jesus attributes the Pentateuch to Moses (Matt 8:4; 19:7, 8; Mark 1:44; 7:10; 10:3, 4; Luke 5:14; 16:29, 31; John 5:45, 46; 7:22, 23); several other New Testament writers likewise support Mosaic authorship (see Acts 3:22, 13:39; Rom 10:5, 19; 1 Cor 9:9; 2 Cor 3:15). It is therefore hard not to conclude that Moses wrote all five books of the Pentateuch, in spite of no one air-tight statement to this effect by Jesus or His followers.<sup>7</sup> “The church fathers, with very few exceptions, concurred.”<sup>8</sup> Merrill states, concerning the overwhelming evidence in support of Mosaic authorship:

It is impossible to overcome such testimony, especially in the case of our Lord, for it must be held that He either did not know that Moses did not [in fact] write the Pentateuch, which is a reflection upon His Divine omniscience, or that He ‘accommodated Himself to the ignorance of the people of His time,’ which is an assault upon His integrity. In all accuracy we can aver that the man who denies Mosaic authorship of the Pentateuch denies to Christ *ipso facto* the Divine attributes. [The evidence in support of Mosaic authorship] . . . was shared by the Jews themselves, the Apostles, and universal church tradition.<sup>9</sup>

### *The Critical View of Authorship*

Unfortunately, not everyone accepts the traditional view of Mosaic authorship. The authorship of the Pentateuch has been the subject of great controversy among professing Christians ever since Benedict Spinoza (1632-1677) first introduced “higher criticism” of the Bible in the seventeenth century. Spinoza advanced the theory that Ezra wrote the Pentateuch utilizing several documents and oral traditions, long after the time of Moses.

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<sup>5</sup>The earliest division of the Hebrew canon was probably a two-fold arrangement: the Law (the first five books of Moses), and the Prophets (Matt. 5:17-18). A three-fold division appears to have developed later: the Law, the Prophets, and the Writings (Luke 24:44).

<sup>6</sup>See John Sailhamer, *The Pentateuch As Narrative* (Grand Rapids: Zondervan, 1992), 1-2; Matthews, *Genesis 1–11:26*, 42.

<sup>7</sup>By this it is meant that even though Jesus did not specifically say that Moses wrote Genesis, in His day the Jews regarded the Pentateuch (Torah) as a whole unit. They recognized Moses as the author of all five books. Consequently they would have understood what Jesus said about any of the five books of Moses as an endorsement of the Mosaic authorship of the whole Pentateuch—the “five-fold collection.”

<sup>8</sup>John J. Davis, *Paradise to Prison: Studies in Genesis*, 25.

<sup>9</sup>Eugene H. Merrill, *An Historical Survey of the Old Testament*, 18.

Following Spinoza's death, Jean Astruc (1684-1766) continued Spinoza's work and in 1853 advanced the theory that the Pentateuch was the work of an unknown redactor who skillfully compiled the writings of four or more editors. Astruc's view became known as the "Documentary Hypothesis." This view underwent a series of scholarly developments for the next 124 years until Julius Wellhausen (1844-1918) restated and refined the documentary approach forcefully and meticulously in 1877.

Wellhausen divided the Pentateuch into four literary sources, represented by the letters J, E, D, and P. He purportedly identified these four documents by tracing the divine names of God, such as Elohim (E) and Yahweh (J), through the books comprising the Pentateuch, and by tracing certain variations in phraseology and word choice. The four documents are the J document, which uses the name *Yahweh* (Jehovah) for God in its material, included most of the books of Genesis, Exodus, and Numbers. This document is said to have been written in the Southern Kingdom about 850 B.C. and is characterized by epic style, patriarchal faith, and anthropomorphism. The E document, which uses the name *Elohim* for God in its material, included much of the books of Genesis, Exodus, and Numbers. This document is assumed to have been written in the Northern Kingdom about 750 B.C. and is characterized by its emphasis on Jacob and the northern tribes like Ephraim, Manasseh, and Reuben, as well as the northern sanctuaries of Bethel and Shechem. The D document, named for the Deuteronomistic school responsible for reworking the material found in Deuteronomy and the books of Joshua through Kings, includes all of Deuteronomy. This work was supposedly written around 621 B.C. (many scholars propose that Hilkiah composed the work as part of Josiah's reforms) and is characterized by a distinctive sermonic style and covenant-legal vocabulary. The P document, named for the priestly emphasis in its material, included much of the books of Exodus and Numbers and all of Leviticus. This document was supposedly written around 550 B.C. and is characterized by its emphasis on liturgical and ritualistic texts, genealogical tables, laws, and prescriptions.

While multiple authorship<sup>10</sup> or the use of existing documents should pose no great difficulty to the doctrine of the Bible's inspiration and inerrancy, the Documentary Hypothesis stands condemned on two counts. First, it is based upon the conjecture of scholars who are supposedly better informed than the author(s) of old; and secondly, it has placed most of the emphasis upon the isolation of fragments and their authors rather than upon the interpretation of the text itself.<sup>11</sup> Critical scholars are more concerned about an alleged redactor, than the actual Redeemer.

It may be concluded with a reasonable amount of certainty that the Book of Genesis was written and compiled by Moses in the wilderness of Sinai at some time during Israel's forty years of wilderness wanderings. Furthermore, Moses was eminently qualified to produce this work (Acts 7:22). Moses, under the guidance of the Holy Spirit (2 Pet 1:21),

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<sup>10</sup>As we have in Psalms or Proverbs, for example.

<sup>11</sup>"With the study of Genesis on its own terms, that is, as a living whole, not a body to be dissected, the impression becomes inescapable that its characters are people of flesh and blood, its events actual, and the book itself a unity. If this is right, the mechanics of composition are matters of small importance, since the parts of this whole are not competing for credence as rival traditions, and the author of the book does not draw attention, as do the writers of Kings and Chronicles, to the sources of his information" (Merrill, *An Historical Survey of the Old Testament*, 22).

probably used oral traditions and written records of earlier history in the composition of his work in order to write about events (Genesis) that antedated his own life.<sup>12</sup>

### Recipients:

Although the recipients are not named, if one accepts Mosaic authorship, as most evangelicals do, then the book was written initially either for the Israelites who were part of the group that left Egypt and hoped to enter the Promised Land from Kadesh-Barnea or, if written later in Moses' life, the Second Generation Israelites who were looking forward to entering the Promised Land from the Plains of Moab. For either group, the book would have encouraged the Israelites to trust in their faithful, omnipotent God.

But this initial group of Israelites were not the exclusive group for whom the material of Genesis and the rest of the Pentateuch was written. It is clear that various teachings in Genesis were to be the basis of how mankind and specifically his people were to think of themselves, of sin, and of their relationship to Almighty God. It remains relevant information for all people, and without Genesis much teaching in later revelation, including the New Testament, would be unclear or unintelligible.

### Date of Writing:

If one accepts Mosaic authorship the date of composition of Genesis (and the other four books of the Pentateuch) must be within Moses' lifetime (c. 1526-1406 B.C.), and specifically during the time of the wilderness wanderings (1446-1406 B.C.). For those who accept a later dating of the Exodus (e.g., 1220-1180 B.C.) then Genesis would be written during this period (for more information of the dating of the exodus, see Exodus: Date). Assuming Mosaic authorship, the Pentateuch was likely written toward the end of Moses' life (e.g. Deut 31:9).<sup>13</sup> In addition, if one accepts the earlier date of 1446 B.C. for the Exodus, the compilation and completion of the Pentateuch can be dated to some time prior to the death of Moses in 1406 B.C. The Pentateuch was likely written in the desert of Moab, just east of Jericho across the Jordan (cf. Deut 1:1 and 31:9).

### Historical Background:

The events recorded in Genesis stretch historically from Creation (c. 10,000 B.C.) to Joseph's death (c. 1915–1805 B.C.).<sup>14</sup> The *Prepatriarchal History* covered by Genesis 1–11 covers this initial time period from the creation of the world to the death of Joseph in 1805 B.C. This vast period of time embraces more than the affairs of any single nation. Indeed, throughout this extended period of time God dealt with men on a universal basis

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<sup>12</sup>On Moses' usage of "archival" and "oral" sources see Norman L. Geisler, *A Popular Survey of the Old Testament*, 37-38; Matthews, *Genesis 1–11:26*, 63-85; John H. Sailhamer, "Genesis," in *Expositor's Bible Commentary*, 4-14; B. K. Waltke, "Oral Tradition," in *A Tribute to Gleason Archer*, 17-34.

<sup>13</sup>See Leupold, 1:8; contra Leupold, Geisler presents three reasons why he believes that "Moses compiled Genesis during the first forty years of his life (before 1487)" (*Survey of the Old Testament*, 38).

<sup>14</sup>The complete story of God's people in the Old Testament covers a period of many thousands of years (c. 10,000–420 B.C.). The first genuine evidence of village occupation in the ancient Near East is from the so-called Neolithic Age (c. 8000–4500 B.C.), centered in the Fertile Crescent of Mesopotamia (Merrill, *Historical Survey of the Old Testament*, 29, 38).

making Himself known indiscriminately to individuals and nations alike.<sup>15</sup>

Many contemporary Christians who embrace the statements of scientists, and understand Scripture in the light of the scientists' evolutionary hypothesis, believe the earth to be millions or even billions of years old. Likewise, they believe that the human race evolved over hundreds of thousands of years for the same reason. Most evangelical Christians who accept the scriptural account of creation recorded in Genesis 1–2, believe the creation of the universe and mankind to have taken place between 15,000 to 6,000 years ago. They base this primarily on the genealogical records supplied in Scripture (Gen 5; 10; 11; et al.), which may be understood to be either “open” (i.e., not complete) or “closed” (i.e., complete) or very close to complete.

Due to the extensive nature of time covered and issues involved, the historical background of the Book of Genesis will be limited primarily to a study of the Patriarchal Period (about 2100-1805 B.C.). At this time, Mesopotamia was governed by a series of city-states that controlled specific localized regions. These city-states included Isin, Larsa, Lagash, Mari, Assur, and Babylon. Abram journeyed from Ur in Mesopotamia to the land of Canaan, but was delayed 18 years by living in Haran until the death of his father (Gen. 11:31-32; 12:1-5). Canaan, like Mesopotamia, was dominated by city-states such as Hazor, Jerusalem, and Shechem. Little is known of Canaan during this period except that it was relatively rural with the city-states not nearly as densely populated as those of Mesopotamia. It seems that Abram and Lot had plenty of land from which to choose their place of residence (Gen 13:8ff.).

### **Theological Purpose:**

The Book of Genesis was written primarily to provide Israel with the theological and historical basis for her existence as God's Covenant People. Merrill writes that “these people, who from earliest times were known as the Hebrews, and progressively as Israelites and Jews, constitute the human theme of the Book of Genesis [and what's more, the entire Old Testament].”<sup>16</sup>

Genesis, *the book of beginnings*, consists of two great parts. The first part (1–11) records God's creation of the universe, man's fall which was precipitated by the deception of the serpent/Satan, and God's initiation of immediate judgment and gracious promise (Gen 3:15) and provision (Gen 3:21) to reestablish His rule on earth over evil through “the **Seed of the woman**,” which He would accomplish through the godly descendants of Adam who would eventually lead to Abraham. The second part of Genesis (12–50) relates how Israel was selected from among the pagan nations of the world through God's sovereign and gracious choice of Abram (Abraham), whom He chose to be an instrument of redemption and blessing to mankind.<sup>17</sup> God elected Abraham from out of all the dispersed nations of humanity and made a unilateral and eternal covenant promising him Land (Canaan), **Seed** (posterity), and Blessing (for obedience) forever (Gen 12 and 15). The promises contained in the Abrahamic Covenant serve as the foundation for all of God's subsequent promises and covenants in the Bible. Genesis is not merely a beginning,

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<sup>15</sup>Merrill feels that a knowledge of the historical background in which the original revelation of God took place is nearly indispensable to its proper understanding (ibid., 38). See his excellent development on the historical background of this initial period (ibid., 38-41).

<sup>16</sup>Ibid., 28. J. Vernon McGee states that “the book of Genesis is the record of the ‘family tree’ of the Jews. It is the genealogy of heaven, earth, and man” (*Briefing the Bible*, 6).

<sup>17</sup>Leupold, *Genesis*, 1:9; Derek Kidner, *Genesis*, Tyndale Old Testament Commentaries, 13-14.

it provides the foundation for the rest of the Bible narrative. Abraham becomes the great “Father of faith” (Gen 15:6). Through him, God provides redemption for fallen mankind, to all who come to God by faith in *Abraham’s Seed*—that One manifested in the New Testament as *Jesus Christ*.

**Outline:**<sup>18</sup>

The literary structure of Genesis is very clear. The book consists of *two great parts* (1–11) and (12–50), each again divided into five sections. Following an initial \* Introduction (1:1–2:3) each of these sections is clearly marked by the phrase the “account of” or “generations of” (*tol’dot* in Hebrew). In each case, the phrase “the account of” introduces a new section of the book. A literary outline of Genesis based on this structure is as follows.<sup>19</sup>

**First Division: Primeval (or Prepatriarchal) History 1–11**

- \* Introduction of God and His Creation of the Cosmos 1:1–2:3
- I. The Account of the Heavens and the Earth 2:4–4:26
- II. The Account of Adam 5:1–6:8
- III. The Account of Noah 6:9–9:29
- IV. The Account of the Sons of Noah 10:1–11:9
- V. The Account of Shem 11:10–26

**Second Division: Patriarchal History 12–50**

- I. The Account of [Terah] Abraham 11:27–25:11
- II. The Account of Ishmael 25:12–18
- III. The Account of Isaac 25:19–35:29
- IV. The Account of Esau 36:1–43
- V. The Account of Jacob (*Joseph’s Story*) 37:1–50:26

**FIRST DIVISION: PRIMEVAL (OR PREPATRIARCHAL) HISTORY 1:1–11:26**

- \* **Introduction of God and His Creation of the Cosmos 1:1–2:3**  
(*The Fact of Creation —Six days of Creation Summarized*)

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<sup>18</sup>Nearly all commentators of Genesis agree that the book falls logically into two sections: chapters 1–11 and 12–50. The first eleven chapters successively show man’s original creation and relationship with God, then his fall and consequent need of redemption, and God’s gracious provision for man’s sin. Adam’s sin leads to the ever widening ruin of man who rejects God and as a result comes under universal judgment of the Flood, and subsequent dispersion at Babel. Chapters 12–50 describe God’s program of man’s redemption through His election and blessing of Abram (Abraham).

- A. The Preexistence of God, and Summary Statement on Creation 1:1
- III. “In the beginning”—Hebrew: *bereshit* (Hebrew title of Genesis = *beginnings*)
- IV. “God”—Hebrew: *Elohim* (plural of Majesty)
- V. “Created”—Hebrew: *bara* (only used of God’s creative activity)
- VI. “Ex Nihilo”—Latin: *from nothing*
- VII. The “*eretz*”—Hebrew: *land/earth*

### **Five Views Of Creation<sup>20</sup>**

#### **Atheistic Evolution**

Everything in the universe has come into existence and has evolved into its present form as a result of natural processes unaided by any supernatural agency.

#### **Theistic Evolution**

Everything in the universe has come into existence and has evolved into its present form as a result of natural processes guided by the God of the Bible.

#### **Progressive Creation**

God created the world directly and deliberately, without leaving anything to chance, but He did it over long periods of time referred to as *geological ages*.

#### **Six Day Creationism**

Genesis 1 describes one creative process that took place in six consecutive 24 hour periods of time (literal days) not more than 6,000 to 15,000 years ago.

#### **Gap Theory**

Between Genesis 1:1 and 1:2 there was a long, indeterminate period, in which some locate the destruction of an original world and the unfolding of the geological ages. *This view could be combined with the previous three views.*

- B. The Conditions at the Time of Creation 1:2
  - 1. The initial condition of the earth—“it was formless and void”
  - 2. The involvement of the Spirit of God—

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<sup>19</sup>The outline presented here has been adapted from Alfred Edersheim, *Bible History: Old Testament*, New Modern Edition (Peabody, MA: Hendrickson, 1995), 9.

3. The involvement of the Son of God, Jesus Christ (Col 1:16)—

C. The Six Days of Creation 1:3-31 “Length of Day”—Major Views:

<i><b>Fundamental Literary Pattern in Genesis 1</b></i>	
1. Announcement	“And God said”
2. Command	“Let there be/let it be gathered/let it bring forth”
3. Report	“And it was so”
4. Evaluation	“And God saw that it was good”
5. Temporal Framework	“And there was evening and there was morning—the # day”

<i><b>Horizontal Literary Arrangement in Genesis 1:3-2:3</b></i>	
<b>#1 light</b>	<b>#4 luminaries</b>
<b>#2 sky/separation of the waters</b>	<b>#5 fish/birds</b>
<b>#3 land/vegetation</b>	<b>#6 animals/man</b>
<b>#7 Sabbath</b>	

D. The Seventh Day (**Sabbath Rest**) 2:1-3

**I. The Account of the Heavens and the Earth 2:4–4:26**

A. The Creation of Man and Woman 2:4-25

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<sup>20</sup>See James M. Boice, *Genesis*, 1:37-68.



1. The creation of man 2:4-7
  2. The care for man 2:8-17
- B. The Temptation and Fall of Man 3:1-7
1. The temptation of Eve by the serpent (Satan) 3:1-5
  2. The tragic fall of man (Adam) into sin 3:6-7
- C. The Judgments (Justice and Mercy) After the Fall 3:8-24
1. The three-fold judgment of God 3:14-19
  2. The gracious provisions of God **3:15, 21-24**
    - a. The promise of God: ***the Protevangelium 3:15***
    - b. The provision of a “***covering***” for man’s sin **3:21**
    - c. The protection of man: removal from the Garden of Eden 3:22-24
- D. The Effect of the Fall on Adam’s Sons (Cain and Abel) 4:1-16
1. The births and offerings of Cain and Abel 4:1-5
  2. The advance of sin in Cain’s murder of Abel<sup>21</sup> 4:6-8
  3. The judgment of God on Cain 4:9-15
- E. The Spread of Civilization (both ungodly and Godly) 4:17-26
1. The advance of ungodliness from Cain to Lamech 4:17-24
  2. The advance of Godliness through Seth and Enosh 4:25-26
- II. The Account of Adam 5:1–6:8**
- A. The Genealogy of Adam through Seth Down to Noah 5:1-32

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<sup>21</sup>The terrible consequences of Adam and Eve’s sin is traced through Cain’s murder of Abel. These two early descendants of Adam and Eve represent the two classes of humanity: Abel represents righteousness and faith, whereas Cain represents sin and unbelief.

B. The Increase of Wickedness on the Earth 6:1-8

1. The corruption of the human race 6:1-4 (*Identity of the "Sons of God"*)<sup>22</sup>

2. The consequent judgment of God 6:5-7

**III. The Account of Noah 6:9–9:29**

III. The Call of Noah, and Preparation for a Universal Flood 6:9–8:22

**Facts Concerning the Ark**

Physical Dimensions: 350 cubits X 50 cubits X 30 cubits; comprised of 3 decks or levels

The following is taken from the *Ryrie Study Bible* (on Genesis 6:15):

Although we do not know the exact length of a cubit at this time, later it was about 18 inches (see note on 2 Chr 32:30), making the ark 450 feet long, 75 feet broad, and 45 feet high, with a displacement of about 20,000 tons and gross tonnage of about 14,000 tons. Its carrying capacity equaled that of 522 standard railroad stock cars (each of which can hold 240 sheep). Only 188 cars would be required to hold 45,000 sheep-sized animals, leaving three trains of 104 cars each for food, Noah's family, and "range" for the animals. Today it is estimated that there are 17,600 species of animals, making 45,000 a likely approximation of the number Noah might have taken into the ark.

-the average size of a sheep has been chosen to take into account the largest animals (elephants, giraffes) and also the smallest (mice, insects). Many of the smaller could have lived among the larger without conflicts.

-the animals probably existed peacefully with each other before the Flood and would not need to have been separated.

-it may be that God brought some of the younger and smaller members of each species into the ark.

-it is also possible that God caused the animals to go into a deep sleep or hibernation state.

B. The Covenant with Noah: Humanities New Beginning 9:1-19

C. The Curse on Canaan and Blessing on Shem 9:20-27

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<sup>22</sup>Refer to the Chart at the end of these notes on Genesis. The chart is taken from Stephen Bramer, "Genesis" (unpublished class notes OT Hist. I, Dallas Theological Seminary, 2000).

D. The Culmination of the Days of Noah 9:28-29

**IV. The Account of the Sons of Noah 10:1–11:9**

A. The Genealogies of Japheth, Ham and Shem (through Joktan) 10:1-32

*The Table of Nations:*

IV. The Dispersion at the Tower of Babel 11:1-9

Wenham points out that the *Babel Narrative* is presented in a brilliant literary chiasm that presents an introduction, five brief scenes, and a conclusion.<sup>23</sup>

- Introduction:* “The whole earth used the same language” 11:1
- Scene 1:* The description of mankind 11:2
- Scene 2:* The defiance of mankind: plan to build a city and tower 11:3-4
- Scene 3:* The divine inspection by the Lord 11:5
- Scene 4:* The divine plan to confuse man’s language 11:6-7
- Scene 5:* The divine scattering of man: building stopped 11:8
- Conclusion:* “The Lord confused the language of the whole earth” 11:9

- A The whole earth had one language (v. 1)
- B there (v. 2)
- C each other (v. 3)
- D Come let us make bricks (v. 3)
- E let us build for ourselves (v. 4)
- F a city and a tower (v. 4)
- G the Lord came down . . . (v. 5)**
- F<sup>1</sup> the city and the tower (v. 5)
- E<sup>1</sup> which man had built (v. 5)
- D<sup>1</sup> come let us mix up (v. 7)
- C<sup>1</sup> each other’s language (v. 7)
- B<sup>1</sup> from there (v. 8)
- A<sup>1</sup> the language of the whole earth (v. 9)

**V. The Account of Shem 11:10-26**

*The Genealogy of Shem (through Peleg) to Terah (and son Abram [Abraham])*

- A. As the charts below show, God uses Abraham and his family to **Model** how to secure a **Name** from God. It is not through rebellious self-effort as Cain and the people of Babel had tried to do.

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- B. The righteous line of Abraham (**Seed of Promise**) comes from Adam—Seth—**Shem** (which means **Name** given by the grace of God)—to Father Abraham. *The line of Abraham then extends to King David, and his greater Son, the LORD, Jesus Christ!*

**Genesis 11**—People trying to make a **Name** for themselves = failure  
**CONTRAST—SHEM MEANS “NAME”**  
**Genesis 12**—God calls Abram and promises to give him an everlasting **Name**

Genesis 10	Genesis 11	Genesis 12
Genealogy of Name <b>Shem</b>	People seek a Name <b>Shem</b> for themselves	<i>God gives Abram an everlasting Name</i> <b>Shem</b> “ <b>Abrahamic Covenant</b> ”

**SECOND DIVISION—PATRIARCHAL NARRATIVES 11:27–50:26**

**I. The Account of Terah [Abram] 11:27–25:11**

A. The Genealogy from Terah to Abram 11:27-32

It has been suggested by Kenneth A. Mathews that the context of the Abraham cycle is arranged as a chiasm, with Yahweh’s Covenant with Abraham serving as the focal point of the story.<sup>24</sup> Observe this marvelous chiasm on the following page:

A Genealogy of Terah (11:27-32)

B Start of Abraham’s Spiritual Odyssey (12:1-9)

C Sarai [divinely protected] in foreign palace; ordeal ends in peace and success; Abram and Lot part company (12:10–13:18)

D Abraham comes to the rescue of Sodom and Lot (14:1-24)

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<sup>23</sup>Gordon J. Wenham, *Genesis 1–15* (Waco: Word, 1987), 234. “The tower of Babel narrative presents a short but brilliant example of Hebrew story telling which includes word play, chiasmus, paronomasia, and alliteration as just a few of the literary devices used to unify and accentuate the message of this tale” (ibid., 234).

<sup>24</sup>“Preaching Historical Narratives,” in *Reclaiming the Prophetic Mantle: Preaching the Old Testament Faithfully*, ed. George L. Klein (Nashville: Broadman, 1992), 30; with credit being given for the chiasm to G. Rendsburg, *The Redaction of Genesis* (Winona Lake, IN: Eisenbrauns, 1986), 27-52. For a similar chiasm see David A. Dorsey, “Genesis,” in *The Literary Structure of the Old Testament* (Grand Rapids: Baker, 1999), 56.

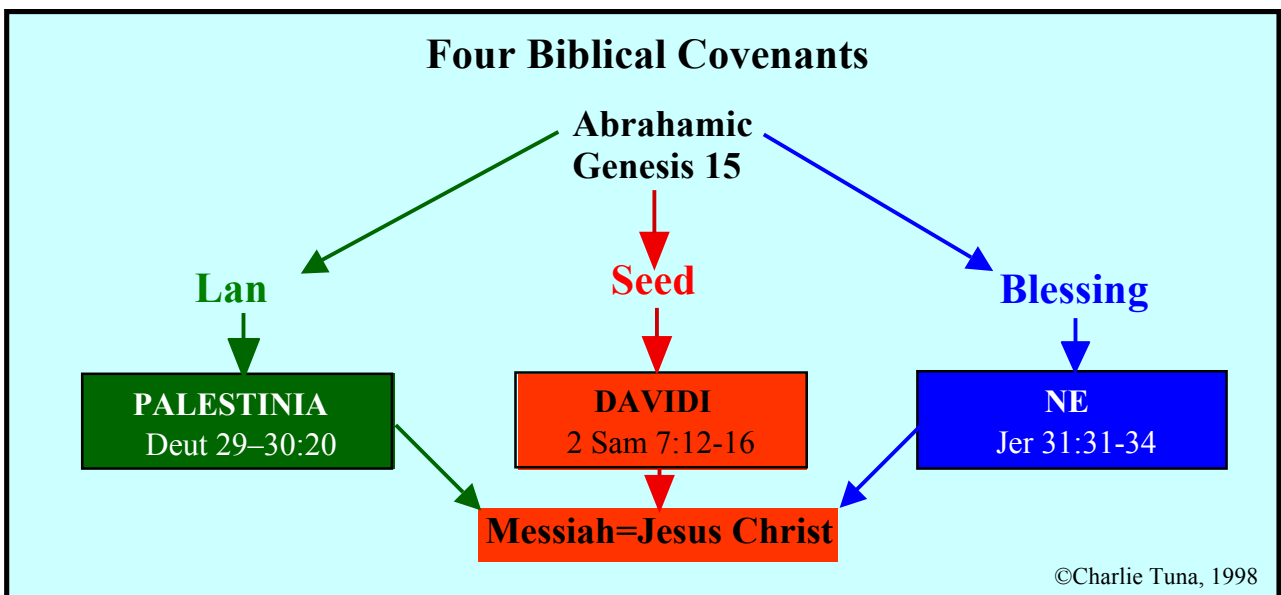
- E **Covenant with Abraham**; Annunciation of Ishmael (15:1–16:16)
  - E' **Covenant with Abraham**; Annunciation of Isaac (17:1–18:15)
  - D' Abraham comes to the rescue of Sodom and Lot (18:16–19:38)
  - C' Sarah [divinely protected] in foreign palace; ordeal ends in peace and success; Abraham and Ishmael part company (20:1-19)
  - B' Climax of Abraham's Spiritual Odyssey (22:1-19)
  - A' Geneology of Nahor (22:20-24)
- B. The Call of, and Promise to Abram 12:1-9

1. God's *call of Abram* 12:1 (*from Ur of the Chaldeans*, see 11:30 and Acts 7:3)
2. God's *promise to Abram* 12:2-3, 7 (cf. Gen 15)

**Note:** The **unconditional covenant that God made with Abraham in Genesis 15** incorporates eight elements<sup>25</sup> which were part of the *initial promise made here in Genesis 12*. These eight elements include the promise of the following:

- 1) making of Abraham into a great nation [great number of progeny] (12:2a)
- 2) blessing of Abraham [wealth] (12:2b)
- 3) making Abraham's name great [popularity] (12:2c)
- 4) you will be a blessing [others will gain wealth because of Abraham] (12:2d)
- 5) bless those who bless you (12:3a)
- 6) curse those who curse you (12:3b)
- 7) all peoples on earth will be blessed through you [deliverance, spiritually] (12:3c)
- 8) a grant of land<sup>26</sup> (12:7; 15:9-21)

These are what God promised to do for and through His chosen *Seed*. All eight of these can be seen to be developed and fulfilled (at least in kind though not in extent) in Genesis 12–50. The Abrahamic Covenant results in three (3) additional covenants, **all of which culminate in the Person of Messiah, the LORD Jesus Christ!**



- C. Abram's Sojourn in Egypt 12:10-20
- D. Abram's Separation from Lot 13:1-18
- E. Abram's Military Rescue of Lot (Melechizedek) 14:1-24
- F. Reaffirmation and Ratification of the Abrahamic Covenant 15:1-21
- G. Birth of Ishmael 16:1-16
- H. Sign of the Abrahamic Covenant—Circumcision 17:1-27
- I. Yahweh (Jesus Christ) Visits Abraham 18:1-15
- J. Abraham's Intercession for the Righteous in Sodom and Gomorrah 18:16-33
- K. Sodom and Gomorrah Destroyed 19:1-29
- L. The Origin of the Moabites and Ammonites: Lot's Incest with His Daughters 19:30-38
- M. Abraham and Abimelech at Gerar (Philistine Territory) 20:1-18
- N. The Birth of Isaac: the Promised *Seed* 21:1-7
- O. Hagar and Ishmael Sent Away 21:8-21

P. Abimelech's Non-aggression Treaty with Abraham 21:22-34

Q. Abraham is Tested Through the Sacrifice of Isaac 22:1-19

R. The Descendants of Nahor (including Rebekah) 22:20-24

S. The Death of Sarah and the Purchase of Her Tomb 23:1-20

T. The Choice of a Bride (Rebekah) for Isaac 24:1-67

1. The story of how Abraham sought a wife for Isaac is a beautiful story of prayer, provision, and faith in God.
2. The result of this union is not so beautiful, as each parent favored one of the two boys resulting in the tragic division of their household (Gen 25:19–27:46).

U. The Death of Abraham 25:1-11

## **II. The Account of Ishmael 25:12-18**

## **III. The Account of Isaac 25:19–35:29**

A. Isaac's Twin Sons (Jacob and Esau) 25:19-26

1. Esau—
2. Jacob—

B. Esau Barter's Away His Birthright to Jacob 25:27-34

C. Isaac and Abimelech at Gerar (Philistine Territory) 26:1-33

D. Jacob's (Rachel's) Deception in Obtaining His Father's Blessing 26:34–28:9

1. Deception with *Goats blood* (see **Gen 37:31-34**; cf., **Gal 6:7-8**)

2. Tragic consequences:
  - a. For Rachel—
  - b. For Jacob—
- E. Jacob's Dream at Bethel 28:10-22
- F. Jacob's Marriages and Laban's Deception 29:1-30
- G. Jacob Begets Children (*12 Tribes of Israel*) 29:31–30:24  
(Refer to the chart below)

<i>The Twelve Tribes of Israel</i>	
<b>1. From Leah 29:31-35</b>	
(1) Reuben 29:31-32	
(2) Simeon 29:33	
(3) Levi 29:34	
(4) Judah 29:35	
	<b>2. From Rachel's maid Bilah 30:1-8</b>
	(5) Dan 30:1-6
	(6) Naphtali 30:7-8
<b>3. From Leah's maid Zilpah 30:9-13</b>	
(7) Gad 30:9-11	
(8) Asher 30:12-13	
<b>4. From Leah 30:14-21</b>	
(9) Issachar 30:14-18	
(10) Zebulun 30:19-20	
* Dinah 30:21	
	<b>5. From Rachel 30:22-24; 35:16-18</b>
	(11) Joseph 30:22-24
	(12) Benjamin 35:16-18

- H. Jacob's Increase Causes Conflict with Laban 30:25-43
- I. Jacob Flees from Haran and Laban Pursues 31:1-55
- J. Jacob's Preparations to Appease Esau 32:1-21
- K. Jacob Wrestles with God (Jesus Christ) at the Jabbok 32:22-32



L. Jacob Meets Esau and Returns to Canaan 33:1-20

M. The Rape of Dinah by Shechem and Revenge by Simeon and Levi 34:1-31

N. Jacob's Return to Bethel 35:1-15

O. The Death of Rachel (Birth of Benjamin), Sin of Reuben, and Death of Isaac 35:16-29

#### **IV. The Account of Esau 36:1-37:1**

#### **V. The Account of Jacob (Joseph's Story) 37:2–50:26**

A. Joseph Favored by His Father, and Chosen by God as Leader 37:2-11

**\* Refer to the Chart at the end of these notes on Genesis**

1. Joseph, Jacob's pride and joy—

2. Joseph's dreams—

3. Joseph's brothers' hatred—

B. Joseph Sold into Slavery by His Brothers 37:12-36

C. Judah and Tamar (Birth of Perez [**the Chosen Seed**] and Zerah) 38:1-30

D. Joseph, from Potiphar's House (and Wife) to Prison 39:1-23

E. The Prisoner's Dreams and Joseph's Interpretations 40:1-23

F. Pharaoh's Dreams and Joseph's Interpretation 41:1-32

G. Joseph Promoted to Second Ruler in Egypt 41:33-57

H. Joseph's Brothers' First Journey to Egypt 42:1-38

I. Joseph's Brothers' Second Journey to Egypt 43:1-44:34

J. Joseph's Shocking Revelation & Reconciliation with His Brothers 45:1-15

K. Israel's (Jacob's) Relocation to Egypt 45:16-46:30

L. Joseph's Care and Leadership for His Family and for Pharaoh 46:31-47:27

M. Jacob's Faith in the Abrahamic Covenant 47:28-31

N. Jacob 'Adopts' and Blesses Joseph's Sons Manasseh and Ephraim 48:1-22

O. Jacob Blesses His Sons 49:1-28

\* The preeminence of the Tribe of Judah:

P. Deaths of Jacob and Joseph, but a Promise of a Land Yet to be Fulfilled 49:29-50:26