

The Book of Genesis

Author:	Moses
Date/Location:	1450-1410 B.C. – Sinai Wilderness
Genre:	Historical Narrative
Length:	50 chapters
Key Passages:	3:15, 12:1-3, 15:1-6

Contents:

The accounts of the creation of the world (1-2), of Adam & Eve (2), the sin in the Garden of Eden (3), the flood of the world and rescue of Noah (6-8), the tower of Babel (11), the judgment of Sodom and Gomorrah (19), the lives and promise of blessed offspring and special land to Abraham, Isaac, & Jacob (12-36), and the life of Joseph as he rose from slavery to royalty in Egypt (37-50).

Theme and Purpose:

As the first book of five books known as the Law of Moses, the purpose of Genesis is to give the historical backdrop for the God's choosing of Abraham and his offspring (Israel), and so to explain why God has delivered Israel from Egypt and established a national covenant with them. It should be considered an extended "historical prologue" to the covenant with Israel.

Outline:

The book easily falls into two major sections: Creation of Adam, Creation of Israel

I. Creation of Adam (Gen. 1-11).

- A. The creation of the world and man (1-2)
- B. The corruption of man, the fall (3-5)
- C. The destruction of man, the flood (6-9)
- D. The dispersion of man, the nations (10-11)

II. Creation of Israel (12-50)

- A. Abraham (the father of faith and of the nation Israel) (12-23)
- B. Isaac (the beloved son of promise) (24-26)
- C. Jacob (scheming and chastening) (27-36)
- D. Joseph (suffering and glory) (37-50)

Help in Reading:

Take note of "Generations" or "account." A key word or phrase is "these are the generations of" or "this is the account of." It is used some 11 times to introduce the reader to the next section which gives the narrative about what happened in connection with the key events and persons of the book from the creation of the heavens and the earth to all the patriarchs of Israel.

Key Concept:

Beginnings: Genesis not only means 'beginning', but it is the book of beginnings. The book of Genesis gives us our historical point of reference, from which all subsequent revelation proceeds. In the book of Genesis all the major themes of the Bible have their origin. It is a book of many beginnings: in it we see the beginning of the universe, of man and woman, of human sin and the fall of the race, the beginning of God's promises of salvation, and the beginning of the nation Israel as the chosen people of God because of God's special purpose for them as the channel for Messiah and Savior. In Genesis we learn about Adam and Eve, about Satan the tempter, about Noah, the flood, Abraham, Isaac, Jacob, and Joseph and his brothers. But here we also have the beginning of marriage, family, work, sin, murder, capital punishment, sacrifice, races, languages, civilization, Sabbath, and the first attempt at a united nations.

Key Chapters:

Since the call of Abraham and the promises of blessing to the nations through his seed is the prominent message of Genesis, the key chapters are those relating to the Abrahamic covenant and its reiteration, 12:1-3; 15:1-21; 17:1-9.

Key People:

Adam, Eve, Noah, Abraham, Sarah, Lot, Isaac, Rebekah, Esau, Jacob, Rachel, Joseph.

Christ as Seen in Genesis:

In Prophecy: Immediately after the fall, the promise of salvation is given in the seed of the woman (3:15), but then the Messianic links are made clear throughout Genesis: the line of Seth (4:25), the offspring of Shem (9:26), the family of Abraham (12:3), the seed of Isaac (26:3), the sons of Jacob (46:3), and the tribe of Judah (49:10).

In Pattern: There are several key types that portray the Savior in Genesis.

- (1) **Adam** is a type of Christ (Rom. 5:14). As Adam is the head of the old creation, so Christ is the head of the new spiritual creation.
- (2) **Abel's** offering of a blood sacrifice points to Christ who would die for us. Abel's murder by Cain may also illustrate Christ's death.
- (3) **Melchizedek** is also a type of Christ (see Heb. 7:3).
- (4) The **Sacrifice of Isaac** as the "only son" points forward to the death of Jesus (see the language in John 3:16)
- (5) **Joseph**, who was loved dearly by his father, betrayed by his brothers, and yet became the means of their deliverance typifies Christ.

Genesis in the New Testament

The NT quotes the book of Genesis directly over 30 times and refers or alludes to the story of Genesis around 200 times. Abraham alone is mentioned 72 times in the NT. The language of Genesis 3:15 is alluded to in Romans 16:20 and Revelation 12. Genesis 15:6 is quoted in Romans 4:3, Galatians 3:6, and James 2:23.



