

# THE BIG PICTURE OF GENESIS

## Genesis 1:1-2

### INTRODUCTION

- When men operate independently of God, there is nothing to distinguish them from the brute beasts of this world (2 Peter 2:12)
- They are driven by the base, animal instincts and passions of the flesh, not by sanctified reason and divine revelation
- The prevailing view of humanity today is that we are nothing more than evolved animals, and therefore we are free to live as animals
- Those who live like beasts, will die as beasts – there is no intrinsic value in their life, and so their death has no more significance than that of a slaughtered animal (Ecclesiastes 3:19)
- Psalm 8 shows the exalted position that God created and appointed man to – crowned with glory and honour, with dominion over the earthly creation
- Atheism devalues and dehumanises man, bringing him down to the level of animals
- We are all engaged in a great ideological struggle between truth and error and the primary battleground in this struggle is the book of Genesis
- If people will read, understand and believe what this book says, it will transform their lives
- Instead of functioning as mere animals, they will look to their Creator and seek to follow his will for their lives
- Satan well knows this and is relentlessly attacking the book of Genesis

- Last week we considered the vital importance of Genesis; today we will look at the big picture of Genesis, seeking to gain a general overview of the book

## I. WHO IS THE AUTHOR?

### A. God is the Author of Genesis

1. "All scripture is given by inspiration of God" (2 Timothy 3:16)
2. "For the prophecy came not in old time by the will of man: but holy men of God spake as they were moved by the Holy Ghost." (2 Peter 1:21)
3. We can absolutely trust the book of Genesis to be the inspired word of God

### B. Moses is the human writer of Genesis

1. Humanly speaking, Moses was a scholar of the highest order, trained in Pharaoh's palace, "learned in all the wisdom of the Egyptians" (Acts 7:22)
2. Within the Pentateuch, Moses is repeatedly recorded as writing God's words (Exodus 17:14; 24:3-7; 34:27; Numbers 33:1-2; Deuteronomy 31:9, 22, 24-26)
3. Other Old Testament writers attribute the Pentateuch to Moses (Judges 3:4; Joshua 1:7; 1 Kings 2:3; Ezra 6:18; Nehemiah 8:1; Daniel 9:11)
4. Christ and the New Testament writers attribute Genesis and the Pentateuch to Moses (Luke 16:29; John 1:17; Romans 10:19; 2 Corinthians 3:15)
5. The date of composition of Genesis was within Moses' lifetime (ca. 1525-1405 BC)

### C. Moses may have compiled and edited accounts recorded by the patriarchs

1. A recurring phrase in Genesis is “the generations of” which is the Hebrew word *toledoth* marking 10 divisions in the book
  - a. The generations of the heavens and the earth (2:4)
  - b. The generations of Adam (5:1)
  - c. The generations of Noah (6:9)
  - d. The generations of the sons of Noah (10:1)
  - e. The generations of Shem (11:10)
  - f. The generations of Terah (11:27)
  - g. The generations of Ishmael (25:12)
  - h. The generations of Isaac (25:19)
  - i. The generations of Esau (36:1,9)
  - j. The generations of Jacob (37:2)
  
2. When compared with other ancient historical writings, it has been suggested that these *toledoths* may be signatures of the individuals named, at the completion of their record
  
3. Later, when Moses wrote Genesis, he may have used these records to complete the book
  
4. The New Testament opens with the words, “The book of the generation of Jesus Christ, the son of David, the son of Abraham (Matthew 1:1), clearly linking it with the book of Genesis

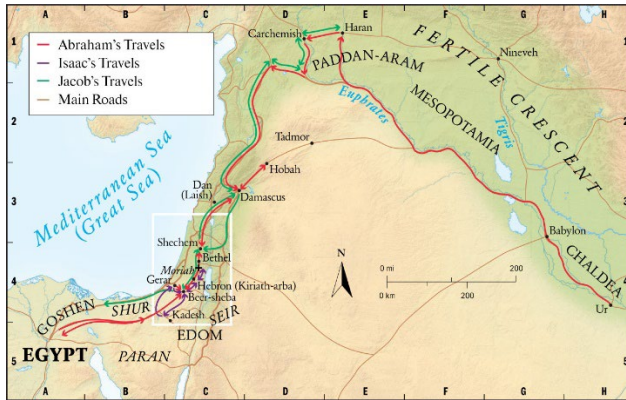
## II. WHEN IN HISTORY IS IT SET?

- A. The book of Genesis covers a span of about 2200 years, beginning with the creation in 4004 BC, and ending with the death of Joseph around 1804 BC

FOCUS	FOUR EVENTS	FOUR PEOPLE	
REFERENCE	1:1 - 3:1 - 6:1 - 10:1	12:1 - 25:19 - 27:19	37:1 - 50:26
DIVISION	Creation, Fall, Flood, Nations	Abram, Isaac, Jacob	Joseph
TOPIC	Human Race	Hebrew Race	
	HISTORICAL	BIOGRAPHICAL	
LOCATION	FERTILE CRESCENT Eden > Haran	CANAAN Haran > Canaan	EGYPT Canaan>Egypt
TIME	2000 Years 4000-2166 BC	281 Years 2166-1885 BC	81 Years 1885-1804 BC

### III. WHERE IN THE WORLD IS IT SET?

- A. The main focus of the events in Genesis is in the region known as the Fertile Crescent
1. From eastern Mesopotamia where the tower of Babel was built and from whence Abram was called across to Egypt where Joseph was sent and Israel went to sojourn



### IV. WHAT IS ITS CONTENT?

- A. The title
1. The word Genesis is a transliteration from the same Greek word which means “beginning”, “origin”, “source”
  2. The Hebrew title (Bereishit) is comes from the opening word (“in the beginning”)
  3. Genesis therefore is the book of beginnings, showing the origination of everything that exists, apart from God who is eternal
- B. Genesis is the first book of the Pentateuch
1. The word “Pentateuch” is from Greek meaning “five volume book”

2. The New Testament describes the five books of the Pentateuch as “the law” (Luke 24:44)
3. Hence, along with the following four books, Genesis forms part of God’s law
  - a. Genesis - Ruin through sin
  - b. Exodus - Redemption through the blood
  - c. Leviticus - Fellowship on the ground of the atonement
  - d. Numbers - Guidance and chastisement
  - e. Deuteronomy – Destination

### C. Outline of Genesis

#### **I. PRIMEVAL HISTORY (1:1-11:9)**

##### A. The Creation (1:1-2:25)

1. Creation of the world (1:1-2:3)
2. Creation of man (2:4-25)

##### B. The fall (3:1-5:32)

1. The fall of man (3:1-24)
2. After the fall - conflicting family lines (4:1-5:32)

##### C. The judgment of the flood (6:1-9-29)

##### D. The judgment of the tower of Babel (10:1-11:9)

#### **II. PATRIARCHAL HISTORY (11:10-25:18)**

##### A. The life of Abraham (11:10:-25:18)

1. Introduction of Abram (11:10-32)
2. The covenant of God with Abram (12:1-25:18)

##### B. The Life of Isaac (25:19-26:35)

1. The Family of Isaac (25:19-34)

2. The Failure of Isaac (26:1-33)
3. The Failure of Esau (26:34-35)

C. The Life of Jacob (27:1-36:43)

1. Jacob Gains Esau's Blessing (27:1-28:9)
2. Jacob's Life at Haran (28:10-31:55)
3. Jacob's Return (32:1-33:20)
4. Jacob's Residence in Canaan (34:1-35:29)
5. The History of Esau (36:1-43)

D. The Life of Joseph (37:1-50:26)

1. The Corruption of Joseph's Family (37:1-38:30)
2. The Exaltation of Joseph (39:1-41:57)
3. The Salvation of Jacob's Family (42:1-50:26)

D. Genesis and Revelation compared

1. Genesis and Revelation serve as two book ends that hold the Bible together

<b>GENESIS</b>	<b>REVELATION</b>
Heaven and earth created (1:1)	New heaven and earth created (21:1)
Sun created (1:16)	No need of the sun (21:23)
Night established (1:5)	No night (21:25; 22:5)
Seas created (1:10)	No more sea (21:1)
The curse pronounced (3:14-17)	No more curse (22:3)
Satan's doom pronounced	Satan's doom executed
Sorrow and pain begin (3:17)	No more sorrow and pain (21:4)
Death enters the world (3:19)	No more death (21:4)
Man banished from tree of life (3:24)	Man restored to the tree of life (22:14)

**V. HOW SHALL WE INTERPRET?**

A. There many false interpretations of Genesis

1. These perversions of Scripture seek to accommodate evolutionary theory with the Bible
2. Historically, Christians have understood Genesis to be a literal account of the creation of the universe, in seven literal days

3. It was not until the rise of uniformitarianism and evolutionary theory in the nineteenth century that people began to question the Genesis account
  4. Hence, the new interpretations of Genesis were not driven by diligent study of the text, but rather by the pressure of infidel academics, and an attempt to conform the Scripture to their godless opinions
  5. These liberal theologians have devised theories such as the “day-age theory” and the “gap theory”, or allegorise the text in order to deny what it plainly teaches
  6. The consequences of such errors strike to the very heart of the Gospel – to claim that death was present before sin is to contradict the origin of sin and death and confuse the means and purpose of Christ’s atonement
- B. We must interpret Genesis according to the literal, grammatical-historical hermeneutic
1. Christ and all the writers of Scripture interpreted Genesis in this way
    - a. The genealogy of Luke’s Gospel follows the lineage of Christ directly to Adam, showing these were real people, not poetic allegories (Luke 3:23-38)
    - b. Christ clearly declared “he which made them at the beginning made them male and female” (Matthew 19:4-5) – showing that Adam and Eve were created, not evolved, and that they were made at the beginning, that is at the same time the world was formed, not after long periods of time
    - c. Christ taught that the events recorded in Genesis such as the global flood and the destruction of Sodom and Gomorrah were literal events (Luke 17:26-29)
    - d. Paul taught of a literal Adam (Romans 5:12-21)

- e. Peter taught of a literal Noah and a literal global flood (1 Peter 3:20; 2 Peter 3:6)
- f. Jude taught of a literal Sodom and Gomorrah (Jude 6), a literal Cain (Jude 11) and a literal Enoch (Jude 14-15)

## CONCLUSION

1. What is the simple message of Genesis?
2. *God made all things for the glory of his name and the good of his people*
3. What relevance does Genesis have for my life today?
4. It shows me my creation by Christ
5. It shows me my corruption of sin
6. It shows me my salvation in Christ
  - ✓ The promised Seed of the woman
  - ✓ The ark of salvation
  - ✓ The substitutionary sacrifice
7. It shows me my calling in Christ
  - ✓ Like Abel, I must stand for righteousness, though it may cost me my life
  - ✓ Like Noah, I must trust God, obey God and boldly preach his righteousness, though all the world be against me
  - ✓ Like Abraham I must forsake my dearest idols to follow God by faith
  - ✓ Like Joseph, I must resist sin, and suffer patiently for righteousness' sake, trusting God to fulfil his good, acceptable and perfect will