
1. GENESIS - INTRODUCTION

"In the beginning God"

ITS SETTING AND AUTHOR

The Bible opens with a group of five books, generally styled *The Pentateuch*, from a Greek term meaning "fivefold book." The subject-matter of these books includes history (Genesis), instruction (Exodus), ritual law (Leviticus), government (Numbers), and exhortation (Deuteronomy). The authorship of these books is generally ascribed to Moses (see Exod. 24:4; 34:28; Num. 33:2; Deut. 1:1; 4:44; 33:1; Mark 12:19, 26; John 1:45, etc.), and normally this is accepted without question. However, the school of higher criticism has challenged this conclusion, claiming that the Pentateuch is mosaic rather than of Moses. It asserts that these books are a combination of various authors, and it gives them mysterious initials, such as J, or E, or P, according to words used, because the true authorship is unknown. Its conclusions are based on the use of words, the grammatical structure of phrases, and so on; as though writers invariably use the same style of language, or limit themselves to a set vocabulary throughout their writings.

These conclusions have been successfully rebutted by conservative students. They recognise only one continuous author throughout: Moses.

However, there are some problems associated with the authorship of the early books of the Bible. For example, Genesis 14:14 gives the name "Dan" to the place where Abraham pursued Chedorlaomer's forces; and yet, it is claimed, this name was not given to it until the time of the Judges (Judges 18:29).

Again, Genesis 36:31 speaks of the kings of Edom as reigning before "any king over the children of Israel"; a statement which implies a time of writing after the accession of Saul (1 Sam. 8:5). Further, the work of Moses is sometimes described in the third person, as though written by somebody other than himself. For example, we read in Exodus 11:3 and Numbers 12:3, that "Moses was very great in the land of Egypt," and "the man Moses was very meek, above all the men which were upon the face of the earth." In Exodus 16:35; Numbers 32: 34-42; Deuteronomy 2:10-12, 20-23 and 34:1-12, references are made to incidents that occurred after the death of Moses.

It has been suggested that these slight emendations have been added by a later hand to complete the record of Moses. This could be true, for the real author of the books is Yahweh, not Moses. Moses was but the hand through whom the divine revelation was made known to man, and if Yahweh required that these additions be added, He would move for it to be done.

However, it could be that Moses did write them. It is not unlikely that Abraham called the place Dan, where he poured out divine judgment on Chedorlaomer, for Dan means *judgment*, and as such the name was appropriate to both circumstances. In regard to the statement of Genesis 36:31, it must be remembered that Israel had been promised kings (Gen. 35:11), and Esau had also been promised dominion (Gen. 27:40); so that the statement was quite in accordance with Moses' knowledge and anticipations. The expressions found in Exodus 11:3 and Numbers 12:3 might well have been written by Moses, by divine inspiration, and recorded in the third person to avoid accusations of self-laudation. Similar explanations can be supplied for the other objections to the writing of Moses. He was a prophet. Yahweh had revealed unto him His intentions; and the language of prophecy is observable in the very definite expressions relating to Israel's punishment, scattering, and restoration such as is found in Deuteronomy 28:64-68; 29:20-29; 30:4-8, and elsewhere. The record of the death of Moses, and the assessment of his value, contained in Deuteronomy 34, may have been added by Joshua; but could have been written by Moses under divine inspiration.

We have met with no valid argument destroying the conclusion that the Pentateuch came from the pen of Moses; even though it may be conceded that such statements as are referred to above, were added by another hand under divine inspiration. However, as we have suggested they might well have been recorded by Moses himself.

OUTLINE OF THE BOOK

Two Pylons Bridging God's Revelation to Man

Genesis is pre-eminently the book of beginnings, laying the foundation of God's purpose with man. It reveals how God created the earth originally, how man sinned, how death was imposed, how Abraham separated himself from his people, how Jacob had twelve sons who grew into the twelve tribes of Israel.

Genesis is closely linked with Revelation: the first book with the last. Both books are like two pylons bridging the revelation of God to man; the first telling how it all began, the second revealing how it all will finish.

Genesis speaks of natural creation (ch. 1); Revelation of a spiritual creation (Rev. 3:14); in Genesis the serpent speaks; in Revelation it is restrained (Rev. 20:2). In Genesis, the curse is imposed (Gen. 3:17); in Revelation it is removed (Rev. 22:3). In Genesis, sorrow and death make their appearance (Gen. 3:16-19); in Revelation they are taken away (Rev. 21:4). In Genesis, access to the tree of life is denied (Gen. 3:24); in Revelation, access to it is opened (Rev. 2:7). In Genesis, the first paradise is closed to man (Gen. 3:23); in Revelation it is opened to him (Rev. 21:25).

And so on. The links between the two books can be increased, because in Genesis there is seen the beginnings of all that which Revelation predicts as the consummation of the divine purpose in the earth.

Both Genesis and Revelation have been subjected to attack more than any other of the books of the Bible; the former by critics who claim that the incidents it records (creation, the confusion of tongues, the flood, and other special occurrences) are impossible; the latter by those who maintain that its vision of future glory is improbable. The former is rejected on the ground that such an account is impossible to believe; the latter on the ground that it is impossible to expound!

The Parable of the Pentateuch

Every book in the Bible typifies the purpose of God in Christ in some way. Moreover, the various books of the Bible, considered in groups, set forth in sequence the same divine purpose. Thus Inspiration seems not only to have dictated the words in Scripture, but the very setting of the books.

For example, note how Genesis begins and how it ends. It begins with God viewing all that had been made, and pronouncing it "very good". It ends with the four cryptic words: "A coffin in Egypt", speaking of death in exile. In the dramatic beginning and ending of this first book of the Bible, there is expressed the early fall of man from grace. This is really the theme of the whole book.

Consider the significant two words by which the Old Testament ends: "a curse." Does not that epitomise all that is found in that Old Testament through man's failure to keep the Law? And how does the New Testament begin? Why, with an account of the birth of that one destined to remove the curse! And so the parallels and contrasts continue.

Observe now the parable of the Pentateuch (Greek — *pente*, five; and *teuchos*, book), the five books of Moses, called elsewhere the Law.

Five is the number of grace, and the books of Moses tell the progressive story of grace. This story can be considered from the viewpoint of God, or from the viewpoint of man. Actually the themes of these five books from the divine standpoint set out in order the progressive development of grace:

Genesis:	speaks of divine Authority and Power — in creating, punishing and selecting.
Exodus:	speaks of divine Mercy —in choosing and delivering.
Leviticus:	speaks of divine Holiness —in separating and sanctifying.
Numbers:	speaks of divine Goodness and Severity — in providing and judging.
Deuteronomy:	speaks of divine Faithfulness — in disciplining and delivering.

Now, consider, do they not constitute the five steps that we must take to attain unto salvation? Do we not first have to recognise Yahweh's *authority* and *power* before we can experience His *mercy* and so on? And will not *His faithfulness* ultimately be revealed at the coming of the Lord when we will learn the meaning of His *discipline* in our lives, and find *deliverance* in Christ?

Now consider the same five books from the human standpoint, and again see how they speak of five steps towards divine grace:

Genesis:	speaks of Ruin and divine Selection.
Exodus:	speaks of Deliverance.
Leviticus:	speaks of Fellowship with God.
Numbers:	speaks of divine Guidance.
Deuteronomy:	speaks of Attainment of Hope.

Again these illustrate the five steps that all must take to gain salvation. Mankind must recognize the fallen state of human nature, and the need of redemption therefrom, and so answer the divine Call, passing through the waters of baptism. They must seek true fellowship with Yahweh. They must come under His guiding influence, if, finally, they would attain unto their hope.

And because these five books spell out principles of divine Grace, there are important personal lessons to be learned from the narrative and teaching that they each reveal.

Dividing The Word

A careful consideration of the book as a whole — a telescopic view of it at a glance — reveals that it is divided into two parts:

PRIMEVAL HISTORY	Chapters 1 to 11
PATRIARCHAL HISTORY	Chapters 12 to 50

The first division records four outstanding events:

1. The Creation	divine glory in natural life.
2. The Fall	divine authority in imposing punishment.
3. The Flood	divine judgment in manifestation of goodness and severity.
4. The Confusing of Tongues	divine wisdom in enforcing God's will.

Divine glory, authority, judgment and wisdom, set forth the sum of the divine revelation.

Patriarchal history is concerned with four outstanding individuals:

1. Abraham	Representing a divine call.
2. Isaac	Representing a divine birth.
3. Jacob	Representing a divine care.
4. Joseph	Representing a divine elevation.

Notice how these four men typically set forth the four steps to salvation: first a call; then, a birth; afterward, guidance; and finally, elevation.

Genesis is full of such typical foreshadowings of the future, and of personal lessons for the student.

The Eleven Generations Of Genesis

In presenting an analysis of the book of Genesis, a serious mistake would be made if the natural division of the book were to be overlooked. That division is shown by the recurring phrase: "The generation of ..." The phrase occurs eleven times through the book, so that, with the introductory section, Genesis is divided into twelve parts. The Hebrew word translated "generations" is *toledot*, which Hebraists claim signifies "history," "story," or "account," rather than merely a

genealogy. Thus when the book refers to "the generations of the heavens and of the earth" (Gen. 2:4) it is the story, or the account, of the creation of the heavens and the earth, and what they brought forth, that is called to attention.

In the references below, there are listed the places where this phrase is used; and it will be noted that the twelve parts into which this divides Genesis, again illustrate a spiritual development. Thus:

1. Creation — Introduction.

A foundation laid Gen. 1:1-2:3

2. The Generations of the heavens and the earth (Gen. 2:4). The manifestation of Law, Sin and Death, and the promise of Redemption Gen. 2:4-4:26

3. The Book of the Generations of Adam (Gen. 5:1).

The development of the human race Gen. 5:1-6:8

4. The Generations of Noah, a just man (Gen. 6:9).

The Flood; the judgment of the old world, and the preservation of a remnant Gen. 6:9-9:29

5. The Generations of the sons of Noah (Gen. 10:1).

The development of nations Gen. 10:1-11:9

6. The Generations of Shem (Gen. 11:10).

The separation of a people for the Name Gen. 11:10-26

7. The Generations of Terah (Gen. 11:27).

The calling out of a family Gen. 11:27-25:11

8. The Generations of Ishmael (Gen. 25:12).

The separation of the natural from the spiritual Gen. 25:12-18

9. The Generations of Isaac (Gen. 25:19).

The development of the Seed of Promise Gen. 25:19-35:29

10. The Generations of Esau (Gen. 36:1).

The development of the Seed of the Man of Sin Gen. 36: 1-8

11. The Generations of the Sons of Esau (Gen. 36:9).

The development of the Seed of the Serpent Gen. 36:9-43

12. The Generations of Jacob (Gen. 37:2).

The development of Israel Gen. 37:1-50:26

Again, a careful consideration of these divisions will reveal that they typify the development of the purpose of God, from creation to the Israel of the future. Nations are developed, a people is separated for the Name, then a family is called from out of the people, the segregation of the spiritual from the natural within that family takes place, and so on. This is the way in which the purpose of God has worked out throughout the ages: so that the historical narrative of Genesis comprises a typical foreshadowing of the future.

It is interesting to learn that the phrase "the generations of ..." occurs three times in Scripture, outside of Genesis, making fourteen in all, or two sevens. There are "the generations of Aaron and Moses" (Num. 3:1); the "generations of Pharez" (Ruth 4:18); and "the book of the generation of Jesus Christ" (Matt. 1:1). In each case, the phrase introduces a noteworthy member of the human race, and a further step forward in Yahweh's great plan of redemption.

The last use of the phrase is significant. The "book of the generation of Jesus Christ" is a fitting contrast to "the book of the generations of Adam" (the only two places where "a book" is referred to in this context). The former relates to the Book of Life; the latter to the Book of Death. We are all written in the "Book of the generations of Adam" by virtue of our physical birth; but we will only be written in "the Book of the generation of Jesus Christ" if we experience that spiritual birth to which the Lord made reference when speaking to Nicodemus.

Summary

Genesis is from a Greek word meaning "generation," and is the name given in the Septuagint translation of the Bible, to the opening book. In Hebrew, the title is *bereshith*, signifying "in the beginning" (Gen. 1:1).

The book begins with the origin of the heavens and earth, and traces the genealogy of God's people from the earliest times, or "the beginning" of the creation. It is divided into the genealogies of the heavens and the earth (chs. 2-4); Adam (5:1); Noah (6:9); Sons of Noah (10:1); Shem (11:10); Terah (11:27); Ishmael (25:12); Isaac (25:19); Esau

(36:1); Sons of Esau (36:9); and Jacob (37:2). It records the creation of Adam and Eve, the story of the Fall, the Flood, and the confusing of tongues. The writer then confines his narrative to the righteous in their generation, until the formation of the family of God's chosen people.

Adam, Noah, Abraham, Isaac and Jacob mark the five great stages of progress, with Joseph dominating the story of Jacob. There is a decided unity in the whole, revealing that we have in Genesis an inspired sacred history, and not a collection of old-world stories and folklore such as is sometimes claimed. Some references to Genesis in the New Testament are: Matt. 5:48; 19:4-5; 23:35; Mark 10:6-8; Luke 11:51; 17:26, 28, 32; Acts 7:2-16; Rom. 4:3; 17-18; 9:7, 9, 12; 1 Cor. 6:16; 15:45; Gal. 3:6, 8; 4:30; Eph. 5:31; 1 Tim. 2:13-14; Heb. 4:4; 6:14; 11:3-32; 13:2; James 2:3; 1 Pet. 3:6, 20; 2 Pet. 2:6; 1 John 3:12; Jude 11, 14.

This list is by no means complete, and a most valuable exercise would be to complete it by reading the New Testament with that in mind.

Analysis

THE TELESCOPIC VIEW

It will be found most helpful to have a telescopic, as well as a microscopic, view of the books of the Bible. The former provides a general outline of a book, enabling the basic message presented therein to be considered in perspective; the latter gives proper meaning to its words, phrases, and verses. The former will give the background and true context; the latter will fill in the depth and detail.

Therefore, we will first attempt a general analysis, and then, on that background, a more detailed exposition.

We take the book of Genesis, in its simplest outline, thus:

GENESIS: THE BOOK OF BEGINNINGS

1 — PRIMEVAL HISTORY — Chapters 1-11. Four Outstanding Events:

- (1) — THE CREATION: Divine Glory in Natural Creation Ch. 1:1-2:3
- (2) — THE FALL: Divine Authority in Imposing Punishment Ch. 2:4-5:32
- (3) — THE FLOOD: Divine Judgment Manifesting Goodness and Severity Ch. 6:1-9:28
- (4) — THE CONFUSION OF TONGUES: Divine Wisdom in Enforcing the Divine Purpose Ch. 10:1-11:26

2 — PATRIARCHAL HISTORY — Chapters 11:27-50:26 Four Outstanding Individuals:

(1) — ABRAHAM: Divine Call	Ch. 11:27-25:10
(2) — ISAAC: Divine Birth	Ch. 25:11-27:46
(3) — JACOB: Divine Care	Ch. 28:1-35:29
(4) — JOSEPH: Divine elevation	Ch. 37:1-50:26

In addition to the analysis above which builds the book around four outstanding events, and four outstanding individuals, there is the division of the book into twelve parts as follows:

GENESIS: THE BOOK OF GENEALOGIES

1. Introduction Ch. 1:1-2:3
2. The Generations of Heaven and Earth (Law, Sin, Death and the promise of Redemption) Ch. 2:4-26
3. The Book of the Generations of Adam (The development of the human race) Ch. 5:1-6:8
4. The Generations of Noah, a just man (The judgment of the old world, and preservation of a remnant) Ch. 6:9-9:29
5. The Generations of the sons of Noah (The development of nations) Ch. 10:1-11:9
6. The Generations of Shem (The separation of a people for the Name) Ch. 11:10-26
7. The Generations of Terah (The calling out of a family) Ch. 11:27-25:11
8. The Generations of Ishmael (The separation of the natural from the spiritual) Ch. 25:12-18
9. The Generations of Isaac (The development of the Seed of Promise) Ch. 25:19-35:29
10. The Generations of Esau (The development of the Man of Sin) Ch. 36:1-8
11. The Generations of the sons of Esau (The development of the Seed of the Serpent) Ch. 36:9-43

12. The Generations of Jacob (The development of Israel) Ch. 37:1-50:26

On the framework of the two analyses outlined above, we provide a more detailed outline of the whole book in which we combine both:

GENESIS: THE BOOK OF BEGINNINGS

SECTION ONE: PRIMEVAL HISTORY — Chapters 1-11

1. THE CREATION: Divine Glory In Natural Creation — Ch. 1:1-2:3 (*Introduction to the Eleven Generations*)

The earth at the beginning	Ch. 1:1-2
The work of the first six days	vv. 3-25
The creation of man and God's covenant	vv. 26-28
Summary of Creation — all "very good"	vv. 29-31
The seventh day rest	Ch. 2:1-3

2. THE FALL: Divine Authority In Imposing Punishment — Ch. 2:4-5:31 *The Generations of Heaven and Earth* (Law, Sin, Death and the Promise of Redemption) — Ch. 2:4-4:26(a) — **Man Under Law**

Man before the Fall	vv. 4-7
The Garden established in Eden	vv. 8-14
Man brought under Law	vv. 15-17
The first marriage	vv. 18-25

(b) — The Fall And Hope Of Redemption

Temptation and sin	Ch. 3:1-7
Investigation of the cause	vv. 8-13
Judgment, punishment, and hope	vv. 14-19
The purpose of redemption typified	vv. 20-24
The worship of Cain and Abel	Ch. 4:1-4
The first murder	vv. 5-8
Punishment of Cain	vv. 9-12
Protection of Cain	vv. 13-15
Development of the line of Cain	vv. 16-24
Appointment of Seth in place of Abel	vv. 25-26

The Book Of The Generations Of Adam

(The development of the human race: sin and death triumphant — Ch. 5:1-6:8)

Man mortal and destined to the grave vv. 1-32

3. THE FLOOD: Divine Judgment Manifesting Goodness & Severity — Ch. 6:1-9:28 The Antediluvian Apostasy Ch. 6:1-8

The Generations Of Noah A Just Man (The judgment of the world and the preservation of a remnant — Ch. 6:9-9:29)(a)
— **A Generation Perishes By Flood — Ch. 6:9-9:17.**

Noah and his family vv. 9-10

Noah's contemporaries	vv. 11-13
Noah commanded to build an Ark	vv. 14-22
A Remnant of the earth to be saved	Ch. 7:1-9
Noah's log of the Flood	vv. 10-24
The Flood recedes	Ch. 8:1-5
The message of the birds	vv. 6-12
A cleansed world	vv. 13-19
The divine promise	vv. 20-22
The new order	Ch. 9:1-7

The covenant with all flesh	vv. 8-17
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(b) — Sin In The Flesh Survives — Ch. 9:18-29

The sin of Ham	vv. 18-27
The death of Noah	vv. 28-29

4. THE CONFUSION OF TONGUES:

Divine Wisdom In Enforcing The Divine Purpose — Ch. 10:1-11:26

The Generations Of The Sons of Noah (The development of nations) — Ch. 10:1-11:9 Descendants of Japheth Ch. 10:1-5

Descendants of Ham (Nimrod the first Empire Builder)	vv. 6-20
Descendants of Shem	vv. 21-32
Babel and the scattering of the people	Ch. 11:1-9

The Generations of Shem (The calling out of a people for the Name) — Ch. 11:10-26 Descendants to Abram vv. 10-26

SECTION TWO: PATRIARCHAL HISTORY — Chapters 11:27-50:26 Four Outstanding Individuals

1: THE LIFE AND TIMES OF ABRAHAM — Divine Call — Ch. 11:27-25:10 *The Generations of Terah* (The calling out of a family) — Ch. 11:27-25:11.(a) — **Abraham as Stranger and Pilgrim — Ch. 11:27-13:18**

Descendants of Terah	vv. 27-30
First call at Ur	vv. 31-32
Second call at Haran	Ch. 12:1-3
Abram and Lot enter Canaan	vv. 4-5
The promise confirmed in the land	vv. 6-9
Abram in Egypt	vv. 10-20
Lot leaves Abram	Ch. 13:1-13
Abram is promised the land forever	vv. 14-18

(b) — Armageddon Foreshadowed — Ch. 14:1-24.

Invasion by a northern confederacy	Ch. 14:1-7
Lot taken captive	vv. 8-12
Abram rescues Lot	vv. 13-16
Melchizedek blesses Abram	vv. 17-20
The spoil shared by Abram's followers	vv. 21-24

(c) — Birth of Ishmael: The Seed of the Flesh — Ch. 15:1-16:16.

Abram promised a multitudinous seed	Ch. 15:1-6
Abram promised his descendants will enter the land	vv. 7-16
The boundaries of the promised land defined	vv. 17-21
Abram marries Hagar	Ch. 16:1-3
Hagar despises Sarai	vv. 4-6
Hagar in banishment finds help of God	vv. 7-14
Hagar restored gives birth to Ishmael	vv. 15-16

(d) — Promise of Isaac: The Seed of the Covenant — Ch. 17:1-18:15.

Abram's name changed to Abraham	Ch. 17:1-8
Circumcision appointed as the Covenant token	vv. 9-14
Sarai's name changed to Sarah	vv. 15-16
Birth of Isaac promised	vv. 17-22
Abraham circumcises the men of his household	vv. 23-27
Abraham entertains angels unawares	Ch. 18:1-8

Sarah's unbelief at the promise of a son vv. 9-15

(e) — The Last Terrible Night of Sodom — Ch. 18:16-19:38.

Abraham warned of impending judgment of Sodom	vv. 16-21
Abraham pleads for the righteous of Sodom	vv. 22-23
Angelic visitation at even	Ch. 19:1-3
Extreme wickedness as night draws on	vv. 4-11
Fear in the night	vv. 12-14
Escape in the dawn	vv. 15-22
Destruction in the morning	vv. 23-29
Incestuous conception of Moab and Ammon	vv. 30-38

(f) — Abraham Intercedes For Gentiles — Ch. 20:1-18.

Abimelech takes Sarah into his house	Ch. 20:1-2
Abimelech is warned by God not to touch Sarah	vv. 3-8
Abimelech's self-justification	vv. 9-13
Abimelech's gift to Abraham	vv. 14-16
Abimelech's restitution	vv. 17-18

(g) — Birth of Isaac — Ch. 21:1-34.

Sarah's joy at the birth of Isaac	Ch. 21:1-7
The weaning of Isaac and mocking of Ishmael	vv. 8-9
Sarah's anger at the mocking of Ishmael	vv. 10-11
Ishmael banished but protected by God	vv. 12-13
Ishmael's desperate distress	vv. 14-16
Ishmael saved by God	vv. 17-21
Abraham and Isaac oppressed by Philistines	vv. 22-26
Reconciliation at the Well of the Covenant	vv. 27-32
Abraham at Beersheba	vv. 33-34

(h) — Offering of Isaac — Ch. 22:1-19

Abraham tried by God	Ch. 22:1-5
Isaac a willing sacrifice	vv. 6-8
Faith triumphant	vv. 9-14
The Promises confirmed	vv. 15-19

(i) — Death and burial of Sarah — Ch. 22:20-23:20.

Abraham's relations in Haran	vv. 20-24
Age and death of Sarah	Ch. 23:1-2
Purchase of a burying place	vv. 3-18
Burial of Sarah	vv. 19-20

(j) — A Wife for Isaac — Ch. 24:1-67.

The commission	Ch. 24:1-6
Faith in divine guidance	vv. 7-9
Prayer for success	vv. 10-14
Rebekah's beauty of appearance and character	vv. 15-16
Her response to the request	vv. 17-21
Her reward	vv. 22-25
Thanks to God for His blessing	vv. 26-27
Rebekah's relations impressed	vv. 28-31
Eliezer proclaims his mission	vv. 32-49

Rebekah bought with a price	vv. 50-53
Eliezer's anxiety to return	vv. 54-56
Rebekah's pilgrimage to the land	vv. 57-61
Her meeting with Isaac	vv. 62-65
The marriage	vv. 66-67

(k) — The Death of Abraham — Ch. 25:1-11.

His family by Keturah	Ch. 25:1-4
His preference for Isaac	vv. 5-6
His death and burial	vv. 7-10

2. THE LIFE AND TIMES OF ISAAC: Divine Birth — Chapters 25:11-27:46.

Isaac blessed of God Ch. 25:11

The Generations of Ishmael:

The separation of the natural from the spiritual seed — Ch. 25:12-18.

Ishmael's descendants, inheritance and death vv. 12-18

The Generations of Isaac: The development of the seed of promise — Ch. 25:19-35:29.(a) — **Jacob Secures the Blessing — Ch. 25:19-27:46.**

The prophecy and birth of Esau and Jacob	vv. 19-24
The characteristics of Esau and Jacob	vv. 25-27
Disharmony in the home	vv. 28
Esau sells his birthright	vv. 29-34
Isaac's troubles in the land	Ch. 26:1-5
Isaac's deceit regarding his wife	vv. 6-11
Isaac's prosperity	vv. 12-16
Isaac oppressed by Philistines	vv. 17-22
Isaac encouraged by the vision at Beersheba	vv. 23-25
The Philistines submit to Isaac	vv. 26-31
The establishment of the Well of the Covenant	vv. 32-33
Esau's marriages grieve his parents	vv. 34-35
Isaac prepares to bless his firstborn	Ch. 27:1-4
Rebekah's counter-plan	vv. 5-10
Jacob's deception	vv. 11-25
The blessing bestowed	vv. 26-29
The deception discovered	vv. 30-33
Esau's complaint and reward	vv. 34-40
Rebekah urges Jacob to flee from Esau's hatred	vv. 41-46

3. THE LIFE AND TIMES OF JACOB: Divine Care — Chapters 28:1-36:43. *The Generations of Isaac*

(b) — Jacob's Family Life in Haran — Ch. 28:1-30:43.

Isaac sends Jacob to Padan-aram	Ch. 28:1-5
Esau marries a daughter of Ishmael	vv. 6-9
Jacob's vision at Bethel	vv. 10-15
Jacob's response and vow	vv. 16-22
Jacob at the Well of Haran	Ch. 29:1-8
Jacob meets Rachel and Laban	vv. 9-14
Jacob serves Laban for Rachel	vv. 15-20
Jacob deceived into marrying Leah	vv. 21-25
Jacob again serves Laban for Rachel	vv. 26-30
Birth of Reuben, Simeon, Levi, Judah (Leah)	vv. 31-35

Birth of Dan, Naphtali (Bilhah — Rachel's maid)	Ch. 30:1-8
Birth of Gad, Asher (Zilpah — Leah's maid)	vv. 9-13
Birth of Issachar, Zebulun, Dinah (Leah)	vv. 14-21
Birth of Joseph (Rachel)	vv. 22-24
Jacob bargains for Laban's flocks	vv. 25-36
Jacob's increasing prosperity	vv. 37-43

(c) — Jacob's Return To The Land Of Promise — Ch. 31:1-33:20.

Jacob plans to leave Laban secretly	Ch. 31:1-18
Rachel steals her father's images	vv. 19-21
Laban's pursuit	vv. 22-24
Laban rebukes Jacob but fails to find the images	vv. 25-35
Jacob reproaches Laban for his harshness	vv. 36-42
The covenant between Jacob and Laban	vv. 43-55
Jacob's vision at Mahanaim	Ch. 32:1-2
Jacob's message to Esau	vv. 3-5
Jacob's fear of Esau	vv. 6-8
Jacob's prayer for help	vv. 9-12
Jacob's precautions	vv. 13-23
Jacob's contest with the angel	vv. 24-32
Jacob and Esau reconciled	Ch. 33:1-11
Jacob's distrust of Esau	vv. 12-16
Jacob's altar at Shechem	vv. 17-20

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Dissertation on the Elohim

The Hebrew name for God in Genesis 1 is *Elohim*. It occurs frequently throughout the Scriptures. In *Phanerosis*, Brother Thomas states: "The plural of this word (i.e. *Eloahh*) is *Elohim*, and occurs in the Old Testament about 2470 times. In the first and second chapters of Genesis, it is rendered in the English version by the word 'God'; but in Chapter 3:5, it is translated 'gods'. In 23:6 it is rendered 'mighty', but very incorrectly. In chapter 30:8, it is rendered 'great'. In 31:30, 32; 35:2,4; and many other places, idols are termed *elohim*, not because they were really anything of power, but were so esteemed by the idolator who styled them so. In Exodus 21:6; 22:8-9; it is rendered 'judges'. In 1 Sam. 2:25, it is 'judge'. In 1 Kings 11:5, it is translated 'goddess'. In Jonah 3:3, it is rendered 'exceeding'; and in Mal. 2:15, it is rendered 'godly'." (*Phanerosis* p. 51,52).

In *Elpis Israel* (p. 181-183), the following points are made: "The principles of universal grammar require in general that a '*verb agree with its nominative in number and person*'; as, the spirit moves, the waters roar. Here *the spirit* is of the singular number, and third person; and so is the verb *moves*; hence they agree in number and person; 'the waters' is of the third person plural, and so is 'roar'; hence they also agree. But in the first chapter of Genesis, this rule appears to be disregarded by the spirit, under whose guidance Moses wrote. In the first verse it reads, *Berayshith bara Elohim*; i.e., in the beginning Elohim created. In this sentence *bara* is the verb in the third person singular, and *Elohim* a noun in the third person plural; so that they do not agree according to the rule. For an agreement to ensure, either the noun should be *Eloah*, or *El*, in the singular, or it should remain as it is in the plural, and the verb should be changed to *barau*: as *baran ELOHIM (they)* created. But it does not stand thus: it reads literally (the) Elohim (he) created.

"Speaking of Elohim, Dr. Wilson says, 'That this noun, which is not unintentionally here joined with the singular verb *bara*, is nevertheless really plural, appears not merely from its termination *im*, but by its being frequently joined with adjectives, pronouns, and verbs in the plural. *Vayyomer Elohim nashah adam betzalmainu*, i.e., Elohim said, 'Let us make man in *our* image'."

Mr. Parkhurst, in his lexicon under the word *alah*, cites many passages where Elohim is associated with other plurals. Upon close examination there will be found no good reason to question the conclusion, that Elohim is a noun plural, and signifies 'gods'.

"A first principle with me in all reasonings upon this subject is, that 'There is one God and Father of all, who is above all, and through all, and in all' His spiritual family. Another axiom is, that 'He is the blessed and only Potentate, the King of kings, and Lord of lords; who only hath immortality, dwelling in *the light which no man can approach unto*; WHOM NO MAN HATH SEEN, *nor can see*' (1 Tim. 6:15; 1:17). And again, "God is spirit" (John 4:24); and He is "incorruptible" (Rom. 1:23). THE INCORRUPTIBLE SPIRIT DWELLING IN LIGHT is the scriptural revelation of the undefinable essence of the self-existent Eternal One, who is from everlasting to everlasting, God. What His essence consists in, He has not revealed; He has made known to us His name, or character, which is enough for men to know; but to say that, because He is a spirit, He is therefore 'immaterial', is to speak arrant nonsense; for immateriality is nothingness; a quality, if we may so speak, alien to the universe of God.

"'No man,' says Jesus, 'hath seen God *at any time*'; but Adam, Abraham, Jacob and Moses, saw the Elohim and their Lord; therefore Elohim does not necessarily mean the Everlasting Father Himself.

"Elohim is a name bestowed on *angels* and *orders of men*. It is written, 'Worship him, all ye Elohim' (Psalm 97:7). This is quoted by Paul in the first chapter of Hebrews, as a command of the Everlasting Father to the angels, that they should do homage to the Lord Jesus as His Son, when He shall introduce him into the world again at the opening of the Future Age. It is also written concerning him, 'Thou hast made him a little lower than the Elohim' (Psalm 8:5). Paul applies this to Jesus saying, 'We see Jesus, who was made a little lower than the angels' (Heb. 2:9). He continued inferior to them a little upwards of thirty years, from the birth of the flesh to his resurrection; when he was exalted far above them in rank and dignity, even to the 'right hand of power', which is enthroned in light, where dwells the Majesty in the heavens."

From the above we conclude that when the term Elohim is used in regard to the angels, the word signifies "mighty ones" through whom Deity manifested Himself.

According to Dr. Strong, the word is derived from a root *uwl* meaning "to twist" (as being rolled together), hence to be strong. This definition suggests that Elohim is both plural and singular: plural as signifying a multiplicity of beings; and singular as relating to a company of such united together as one.

Davidson, in his *Analytical Hebrew and Chaldee Lexicon* aligns it with the Arabic, *Allah*, derived from the root *alaha*, "to reverence, adore, worship, fear."

Parkhurst derives it from the Hebrew root *alah*, "he swore, or bound himself with an oath". This, again, suggests a number united together as one.

The word occurs some 2,470 times, and is related to *El*, might, power; but being plural (indicated by the additional *im*), it signifies "mighty ones".

It is a word applied to the angels who are *mighty ones*, being strengthened by Yahweh to become such.

It is used of men (Exod. 7:1; 15:11; 1 Sam. 28:13-14; Psa. 45:6-7; 82:1,6; 97:7,9; 136:2 — cp. John 10:33-35); translated "judges" (Exod. 21:6; 22:8-9; 1 Sam. 2:25); "gods" (Gen. 3:5; Exod. 32:8,23,31; Deut. 10:17); "angels" (Psa. 8:5; cp. Judges 13:21-22) etc. Therefore its use, in regard to the Lord, does not support Trinitarian teaching; for though Jesus was called "God" (John 20:28), so also was Moses (Exod. 7:1). The Lord himself went to pains to explain the significance of the term, pointing out the fact that the Old Testament Scriptures applied it to men (John 10: 33-35).

Though *Elohim* is in the plural, and signifies "mighty ones," it is most frequently used with a verb in the singular number, as in Gen. 1:1. This suggests that the Elohim, though constituting a great number of immortal beings, are being motivated by a single power, "the spirit of God" (Gen. 1:2). The Elohim, therefore, comprise a great company united as one, and obeying in unison the motivating power of the great Increate. The Psalmist declared: "Yahweh hath prepared His throne in the heavens; and His kingdom ruleth over all. Bless Yahweh, ye His angels, that excel in strength, that do His commandments, hearkening unto the voice of His word. Bless ye Yahweh, all ye His hosts; ye ministers of His, that do His pleasure. Bless Yahweh, all His works in all places of His dominion" (Psalm 103:19-22).

Yahweh is spirit (John 4:24), and His angels are spirit beings (Psalm 104:4; Heb. 1:7). They are "His family in heaven" (Eph. 3:15), being emanations of Him, and doing His will through His all-pervading spirit (Gen. 1:2). Thus they act as a unit, though being innumerable in number.

In some instances, however, *Elohim* is used with a plural verb (Gen. 1:26; 3:22; 11:7; Isa. 6:8 — according to Parkhurst also in Gen. 20:13; 31:7,53; 35:7; Deut. 4:7; Josh. 24:19; 2 Sam. 7:23; Jer. 10:10; 23:36). The use of both singular and plural verbs in relation to this plural noun indicates that though the Elohim are many, and united as one, they also are capable of independent decision and action.

Nevertheless, the power they exercise, and the glory they manifest, both stem from one: even Yahweh. See Job 38:7.

LESSON FOR US.

Many scholarly men have tried to disprove the authenticity of Genesis. This is a vain attempt, just as is evolution to try to shun responsibility to an all powerful, all knowing, everywhere present God.

We should not only read Genesis at its literal face value but also look for the use of type, symbol, metaphor, allegory, parable, prophecy, and so on. Frequently the narrative of Scripture has a typical meaning as well as its literal significance; and this is pre-eminently the case with Genesis.

Genesis comprises the seed-plot from whence the rest of the Bible sprang forth. Everything described in the other books had its beginning in this book before us. The most complex subjects are found here in their embryo stage. The Atonement is seen shadowed forth in its early chapters; Armageddon is typed in the invasion of Chedorlaomer (ch. 14); future developments of history, and of God's dealings with men and nations, are set forth in the form of allegory (Galatians 4:24-31); the basic teaching of the Gospel is laid down therein. In fact, it is safe to say, that it is impossible to properly understand the purpose of God without some comprehension of the book of Genesis.

You begin understanding any book by beginning at the front cover and working your way through to the back. The same applies with the Bible. Our understanding begins by reading Genesis, and will be full grown when we completely understand all the books right through to the book of Revelation.

The Old Testament was mainly written in Hebrew, and often it is useful to identify what the original word is in order to fully understand a passage. It is not common for a student to understand Hebrew, so tools such as a concordance or lexicon are invaluable. However a serious bible student will try to master a little of the language.

REFERENCE LIBRARY

Genesis Expositor - HP Mansfield

Elpis Israel - John Thomas

Lexicon - Parkhurst

Concordance - Strong

PARAGRAPH QUESTIONS:

1. What does the word *Pentateuch* mean?
2. Who wrote Genesis?
3. Who wrote about the death of Moses?
4. What is the spiritual significance of the number five in scripture?
5. What is the last phrase of Genesis?

ESSAY QUESTIONS

1. Outline the main sections of Genesis
2. Why is Genesis described as a seedbed?
3. Explain the biblical use of the Hebrew word Elohim