

1. THE BOOK OF GENESIS

1. Genesis is the first book of the Bible in general, and is the first part of a five-book collection known as The Torah or The Law of Moses.
2. The author is Moses, and the date of writing is shortly after the exodus of Israel from Egypt (1445BC). So we have a solid date of composition as between 1445-1405BC. Moses is confirmed as the author by internal evidences in both Old and New Testaments (see Exodus 17:14; Numbers 33:2; Joshua 8:31; 1 Kings 2:3; 2 Kings 14:6; Ezra 6:18; Nehemiah 13:1; Daniel 9:11-13; Malachi 4:4; Matthew 8:4; Mark 12:26; Luke 16:29; 24:27,44; John 5:46; 7:22; Acts 15:1; Romans 10:19; 1 Corinthians 9:9; 2 Corinthians 3:15).

3. Key Chapters

- Creation chapters – 1, 2
- Covenant Chapters – 12, 15, 18

4. Key Verses

- “In the beginning, God created the heavens and the earth.” (1:1 NIV)
- “I will make you (Abraham) into a great nation and I will bless you. I will make your name great, and you will be a blessing. I will bless those who bless you, and whoever curses you I will curse; and all people on earth will be blessed because of you.” (12:2,3 NIV)
- (To the serpent) – “And I will put enmity between you and the woman, and between your offspring and hers; he will crush your head, and you will strike his heel.” (3:15 NIV). This passage is known as the *Protoevangelium* or the first mention of the Gospel. A messiah is coming who will destroy the works of the serpent (1 John 3:8).

5. Key people in the story of Genesis

- Adam and Eve – the progenitors of mankind

- Noah – the builder of the Ark
- Abraham and Sarah – the parents of all Israel
- Isaac and Jacob – the sons of Abraham and Sarah. Along with Abraham, they are the three men who are called *The Patriarchs* (that is, the Fathers of Israel).
- The Serpent – this is our introduction to Satan. It appears that the fallen angel somehow possessed or used the serpent for his nefarious purposes.
- Almighty God – The Book of Genesis begins its narrative with the assumption that God exists. There is no battle to prove His existence; no discussion of His character. He is the God of the Universe who rules and is revealed here as the Creator. “He that would come to God must first believe that He exists, and that He is a rewarder of those who diligently seek Him.” (Hebrews 11:6)

6. Key places in Genesis

- The Garden of Eden – located generally in the Mesopotamian Valley.
- The region known as the Middle East – it is the scene of the Patriarch’s wanderings.
- Mount Ararat is probably located in what is now known as Turkey. This was the resting place of Noah’s Ark.
- Babel is described as being on the Plains of Shinar. It is the scene of a great idolatrous tower, and becomes the origin of a world system described in Revelation as the seat of evil on planet earth (Revelation 18).
- Egypt, a great economic, political, and military power in the western region of the Middle East.

7. Key themes in Genesis

- **ORIGINS:** As the name indicates, Genesis is the story of *beginnings*. Early on we see the divine establishment of the human race, as well as the great institutions of marriage and

family and civil government. The earliest seed of corporate religion is also traced to Genesis. The origin of Israel is described beginning with chapter 12.

- **SIN:** We also see in Genesis 3 the introduction of sin upon the earth, and the resultant curse upon mankind specifically and throughout all creation generally.
- **REDEMPTION:** Sacrifices are introduced in Eden, and have become a way of life in the earliest chapters. There is also the first hint of a coming Messiah who would be the Ultimate Sacrifice.

8. The Contents of Genesis

- Genesis is divided into two parts:
 - The *pre-history* of chapters 1-11
 - The *era of the Patriarchs* in chapters 12-50
 - It should be noted that the precise dates of chapters 1-6 cannot be determined. Noted Bible scholar James Ussher (1581-1656), Archbishop in the Church of Ireland, made an effort to date the Bible based largely on the genealogical records of Genesis. Using the Julian calendar, he concluded the earth was created late Sunday afternoon, October 23, 4004BC. Some held his view as completely orthodox, but many scholars believe he drew his conclusions based on incomplete and misunderstood data. It is not until the time of Abraham that we begin to date the events of the Bible with confidence.
- Outline:
 - Creation of the heavens and the earth (1:1-2:3)
 - The story of Adam and Eve (2:4-5:32)
 - Noah and the Great Flood (6:1-11:32)
 - The life of Abraham (12:1-25:18)
 - The life of Isaac (25:19-28:9)

- The life of Jacob and the story of his 12 sons (28:10-36:43)
- The story of Joseph and Israel's move to Egypt (37:1-50:26)

9. Key Concepts in Genesis

- **A pro-life worldview**

- If humanity is the chance result of evolution, then we are no different from the plants and animals with which we share the planet. But if we are the special objects of God's creation, then human life is of inestimable value. Abortion, euthanasia, murder, human trafficking, slavery, or anything that cheapens human life becomes a profound moral evil.

- **The nature of Israel**

- God promised Abraham three blessings. He would possess a great land (15:18), become a great nation (13:16), and be the ancestor of Messiah, the Savior of the mankind and a blessing to all the world (12:2; see 3:15).