



GENESIS: 1-11

Introduction
Part One

**I. WHY IS THE
STUDY OF
GENESIS
IMPORTANT?**



A. It's Foundational to Understand the Theme of Redemption.

1. It is in Genesis that the Need for Redemption Arises (The Fall).

2. It is in Genesis that we have the First Messianic Prophecy and Theme Verse (3:15). Creation, Fall, Redemption.

3. Virtually every church doctrine is found in seed form in Genesis



- B. It is Essential to Understand the Rest of Scripture.
 1. There are hundreds of allusions and quotations from 1-11 in the rest of the OT.
 2. There are over 200 quotes or allusions of Genesis in the NT.
- C. Genesis 1-11 is the most attacked portion of Scripture in the Bible.
- D. The Doctrine of Creation is the foundation of theology.

...if we get creation wrong, we can't get the gospel right. Sandlin

The confession of God the Father, the Almighty, Creator of heaven and earth... is not only the first article of our Christian faith but also the foundation and cornerstone of all knowledge and science... The doctrine of creation of all things by the Word of God is the explanation of all knowing and knowing about... H. Bavinck

The doctrine of creation is the bedrock foundation of every major doctrine of the church. Carl Henry.

...[T]he idea that God is the Creator of all things is the indispensable foundation on which the other beliefs of the Christian faith are based. It affirms what the Christian believes about the status of God in the whole realm of reality: He is the Creator of everything else. On this affirmation logically depends all that Christians say about their God, about the world they live in, and about their own history, destiny, and hope. Langdon Gilkey

E. Perhaps the main problem for the modern reader is:
How to interpret Chapters 1-11 in the light of modern
science and history.

The Stakes are High!

II. HOW DID THE BOOK GET ITS NAME?





A. From the Greek Translation made about 250

B.C Γενεσεως: meaning: *origins*.


B. The Jews commonly named books of the Bible by the first word. In this case, it is the word:

בְּרֵאשִׁית , *be-resheet*: meaning: *In the beginning*.

C. What title would we give it today?

III. WHAT ARE OUR STARTING ASSUMPTIONS?



-  A. The Bible is a revelation from God, and therefore, it must be the ultimate authority. (true, Infallible, inerrant, etc.) *God is There, and He is not Silent.* (F. Schaeffer)
- B. If God meant for the Bible to be read and understood by the average person, it must be understandable. This is known as the doctrine of **the Perspicuity of Scripture**. God expects ordinary people, by using common principles of interpretation, to be able to understand the basic message of the Bible! This does not deny the role of the Holy Spirit, or the benefit of studying the original languages and culture, etc. (II Tim 3: 15-17).
- C. The Bible is timeless and meant for all.

IV. WHO WROTE THIS BOOK?



A. First, from our starting assumptions, God is the co-author.

B. From tradition and Scripture, Moses was author, editor, and compiler.

Internal evidence:

1. The authorship of the first five books of the OT are ascribed to Moses: Ex.17:14; 24:4-7; 34:27; Num.33:2; Dt.31:9,22,24.
2. The rest of the OT ascribes it to Moses: Jos. 1:7-8; 8:32-38; Jud.3:4; I Kgs.2:3; II Kgs.14:6; 21:8; II Chron. 25:4; Ezra 6:18; Neh.8:1; 13:1; Dan. 9:11-13.

3. The NT ascribes authorship to Moses: Jn.1:17; Acts 6:14; 9:9; 13:39; 15:5; II Cor. 3:15; Heb.10:28.
4. Jesus believed that Moses wrote the first five books of the Bible: Matt. 8:4; 19:7-8; Mk. 7:10; 12:26; Lk. 24:7,44; Jn. 5:46-47; 7:19.

46 If you believed Moses, you would believe me, for he wrote about me.

47 But since you do not believe what he wrote, how are you going to believe what I say?"

C. Moses as editor, or compiler: Moses was an eyewitness to the events in Exodus, Leviticus, Numbers and Deuteronomy, but what about Genesis?

He compiled it from some source(s), and there is also evidence of him adding editorial clarification as in:
Gen. 10:9

9 The Canaanite border went from Sidon going toward Gerar as far as Gaza, and going toward Sodom, Gomorrah, Admah, and Zeboiim, as far as Lasha.

(This obviously seems like an editorial comment; it also might give a clue as to when written.)

There is also the possibility of inspired redactors



External Evidence for Mosaic Authorship

1. Ecclesiasticus c. Third century B.C.
2. Was Moses educated? Could he have written the Pentateuch?
3. There is much evidence in Exodus of the author's knowledge of Egyptian customs.

**V. WHEN WAS
GENESIS
WRITTEN?**



A. The traditional view is that Moses wrote Genesis just before they entered in the promised land cir. 1446-1406 B.C.

B. The naturalistic view

In the late 19th century it was common to apply evolution to every area of life. It was believed that religion evolved. Likewise, they believed that Genesis evolved by the combining of many ancient texts.

Philosopher Hegel believed everything is in the process of change, or what he called 'passing into opposites'. All things are developing from lower to higher degrees of perfection. Hegel's ideas greatly affected Darwin and Marx

C. The 19th Century developed rationalistic methods of explaining phenomena. Example: Freudism to explain human personality. The same approach was used for the study of the origin of ancient texts. This became known as **the documentary approach**. Here are some of the basics:

1. Moses could not write.
2. A late post exilic compiler took several different texts and combined them.
3. These 19th century scholars believed from certain vocabulary and different names for God that there were as many as 4 different texts and authors of Genesis.
 - a. The “J” text used the *Yahweh* (900-850 B.C)



- b. The “E” text because he used *Elohim* for *God*.
(750-700 B.C.)
- c. The “D” text known as *the Deuteronomist*, or the main author. 7th Century B.C. (II Kgs.22:8)
- d. The “P” text, or the priestly text. This text was supposedly during the exile in Babylon.

This view of authorship was known as **the J,E,D,P, theory,** or **the documentary hypothesis.** Its main advocate was Julius Wellhausen (1844-1918). It lacks good empirical evidence, and has been thoroughly discredited by modern scholars, most of them Evangelical. What we have to remember, two of motives or assumptions behind this theory, are evolution and naturalism. Sad thing is, that it is still taught in liberal seminaries. There is empirical evidence from archaeological discoveries which destroy this argument. The discovery of the Samaritan Pentateuch was devastating, because it pre-dated the Exile yet only had a few variants.

The concept of numerous authors, editors and redactors working on the material, and then finalizing it a thousand years or so after the time of Moses, does not give one a sense of great reliability. The acceptance of Higher Critical theories entails the adoption of a low view of the authority and credibility of the Bible. J.Currid

**VI. WHERE DID
MOSES GET HIS
INFORMATION?**



- A. P.J. Wiseman speculated that Moses had access to clay tablets containing pre-flood history.
- B. Indeed there is a tradition that Noah had on board the Ark a pre-flood history. See Gen. 5:1.
- C. There is also the possibility that this pre-flood history was passed down orally. The ancients were uncanny in their ability to do this.
- D. Moses organized his story of the beginnings with the use of a Hebrew phrase: **אלה חולדוח**: *elleh toledot*, meaning: *these are the generations of...* or, *the history of...*
- E. The theory is that each time Moses uses this Hebrew phrase it is the beginning of a new clay tablet. There are 11 of the *toledots*.