

GENESIS – INTRODUCTION

The first five Books of the Bible are called THE PENTATEUCH, a Greek word denoting a “five-scroll” book (PENTE-five +TEICHOS-scroll). Exodus, Leviticus, Numbers, and Deuteronomy follow Genesis, the first of the Books in this division of the Old Testament. The Books are known by the Jews as the TORAH (“to throw,” or “point out” by throwing out the hand, giving “direction”), or the Books of LAW (cf. Luke 24:44).

I. THE TITLE OF “GENESIS”

- A. The title comes from the Septuagint (LXX), the Greek translation of the Old Testament occurring around 285 B.C.
 - 1. The Jews name the Old Testament Books by the first “word” of the Book- “in the beginning...”, therefore the Book of Beginnings.
 - 2. The Greeks name the Books of the Old Testament by the “subject” – Book of Origins.
- B. The Greek word, “Genesis” means: “source, origin” (Thayer, p. 113).
 - 1. Vine defines the word as “it denotes an origin, a lineage, or birth” (vol. 3, page 144).
 - 2. The phrase “generation” occurs ten times (2:4; 5:1; 6:9; 10:1; 11:10; 11:27; 25:12,19; 36:1; 37:2).

II. THE BOOK OF ORIGINS OR BEGINNINGS

- A. “In the beginning...God” – there is no beginning for God. In the beginning, God already is, just like the Word (John 1:1).
 - 1. God is eternal (without beginning, or end) (Deut. 33:27).
 - 2. God is “from everlasting even to everlasting” (I Chron.16:36, Psm. 90:2).
- B. That which has “beginning” in the Book of Genesis:
 - 1. The universe (1:1)
 - 2. Man (1:26, 27; 2:7)
 - 3. Marriage – the family (2:18-24)
 - 4. Sin (2:16, 17; 3:6; 4:8)
 - 5. Punishment for sin (3:22-24)
 - 6. Man’s redemption foretold – the first promise of the Messiah (3:15).
 - 7. Sacrifices (4:1-15)
 - 8. Cities (4:17)
 - 9. Nations (Chapters 10-11)
 - 10. The Hebrew nations (12:1-3)

III. OUTSTANDING EVENTS AND PERSONS IN THE BOOK

- A. Four outstanding events (Chapters 1-11)
 - 1. The Creation (Chapters 1-2)
 - 2. The Fall – Sin (Chapter 3)
 - 3. The Flood (Chapters 6-9)
 - 4. Babel (Chapter 11)

- B. Four outstanding persons (Chapters 12-50).
 - 1. Abraham (12:1-25:18)
 - 2. Isaac (25:19 – 26:35)
 - 3. Jacob (27:1- 36:43)
 - 4. Joseph (37:1-50:26)

IV. FEATURES OF THE BOOK

- A. Periods of time covered in Book:
 - 1. *Antediluvian* (created to the flood)
 - 2. *Postdiluvian* (the flood to the call of Abraham)
 - 3. *Patriarchal* (from the call of Abraham to going down into Egypt).
 - a. Reverenced in the New Testament (Heb. 7:4, Acts 7:8,9)
 - b. Functions of the Patriarch:
 - (1). Family PRIEST – erected altars and offered sacrifices for the family (Gen. 12:7; 13:18; 26:25; 33:20; 35:1-7; etc.).
 - (2). Family PROPHET – God makes known His will through the prophet (26:2-5; Heb. 1:1)
 - (3). Family PROTECTOR or MILITARY CHIEFTAIN (14:14 ff.)
- B. Promises in the Book:
 - 1. Victory over the Devil and sin through the seed of woman (3:15).
 - 2. Threefold promise to Abraham (12:1-3).
 - a. **A GREAT NATION** (12:1-3)
Fulfilled: Exodus 19:5,6; Deut. 4:7-8
 - b. Descendants inherit the **LAND OF CANAAN**.
Fulfilled: Joshua 21:43, 45; 23:14
 - c. All **NATIONS OF THE EARTH BE BLESSED** through Abraham's seed.
Fulfilled: in Jesus Christ Gal. 3:8, 14, 16, 19
- C. Days of Creation
 - 1. Hebrew word "YOM" occurs denoting a period of time longer than 24-hours (Gen. 2:4).
 - a. Some wanting to accommodate the Bible with modern "science" and believing in a universe and earth 3.5 – 4.5 billion of years old, see days of creation longer than a 24-hour day.
 - b. Gen. 2:4- context pointing to the entire period of creation.
 - 2. Evidence that "days" of creation were ordinary days as we know it.
 - a. "evening and morning" describe days as we know it (Gen. 1:5, 8, 13, 19, 23,;31).
 - b. "Yom" connected with the definite number (first, second, third, etc.), always denotes a days as we know it (Gen. 7:11; 34:25; 40:18-20).

- c. How old was Adam, actually? The “days” Adam lived were 912 “years.”
- d. Other Scriptures indicate “a day” is the length of a full “work-day” (Exodus 20:11). Jesus refers to the creation of man as taking place “in the beginning” (Mark 10:6). This could not be so if the “days” are ages, or millions of years old, for man would have been created closer to the present time than the beginning.

V. OUTLINE OF GENESIS

- A. The Beginning (1:1-2:3)
 - 1. The six days work of creation (1:1-31)
 - 2. God rests, and blesses and hallows the seventh day (2:1-3).
- B. Generations of the Heavens and the Earth (2:4-4:26)
 - 1. Man and woman in the garden (2:4-25)
 - 2. The fall of man in sin (3:1-24)
 - 3. Story of Cain and Abel (4:1-15)
 - 4. Lineage of Cain, and birth of Seth (4:16-26)
- C. Generations of Adam – Seth (5:1-6:8)
- D. Generations of Noah (6:9-9:29)
 - 1. Building of Ark (6:9-22)
 - 2. The Flood (7:1-8:14)
 - 3. God’s covenant with Noah (8:15 – 10:17)
 - 4. Destinies of Noah’s sons (9:18-29)
- E. Generations of the sons of Noah (10:1-11:9)
 - 1. Table of the nations (10:1-32)
 - 2. Confusion of tongues as “Babel” (11:1-9)
- F. Generations of Shem (11:10-26)
- G. Generations of Terah (11:27-25:11)
 - 1. Migration of Terah’s family (11:27-32)
 - 2. The calling and history of Abraham (12:1-25:11)
- H. Generations of Ishmael (25:12-18)
- I. Generations of Isaac (25:19-35:29)
 - 1. Birth and early history of Isaac’s sons (25:19-34)
 - 2. Days of Isaac (26:1-35)
 - 3. Blessing of Jacob by Isaac (27:1-46)
 - 4. Fortunes of Isaac heirs (28:1-35:6)
 - 5. Death of Isaac (35:27-29)
- J. Generations of Esau (36:1-37:1)
- K. Generations of Jacob (37:2-50:26)
 - 1. Wickedness of Jacob’s sons (37:2-38:30)
 - 2. Fortunes of Joseph in Egypt (39:1-41:57)
 - 3. Famine in land of Canaan (42:1-45:28)
 - 4. Death of Jacob to Egypt (46:1-47:10)

5. Settlement of Jacob and family in Egypt (47:11-26)
6. Last days of Jacob in Egypt (47:27-49:32)
7. Death of Jacob in Egypt (49:33- 50:14)
8. Fear of Joseph's brethren – death of Joseph (50:22-26)