

A WALK THROUGH THE BIBLE

GENESIS

William D. Watley, New Seasons Press, All Rights Reserved.

Name: The name “Genesis” does not appear in the Hebrew Bible. It appears in the Septuagint or first Greek translations of the scriptures that sometimes used themes to give names to biblical books.

Date of Composition: Exact date unknown. Estimates range from 1440 BCE if Moses was writer. Now scholars believe period between 6th and 5th centuries.

Author: Traditionally ascribed to Moses. However the commonly accepted view is that there are various hands and traditions that give Genesis its present shape. Those traditions are known as J (Yahwist), E (Elohim) and P (Priestly)

Content: Genesis is the first book of the Pentateuch (first five books known as the Books of the Law). However Genesis is not as much concerned about the Law of Moses as much, as it seeks to give a *faith* account of the origins of the Hebraic religion. To accomplish this purpose Genesis traces the *faith* lineage of the Hebrew people back to the creation of the world by their God in their henotheistic worldview.

Contents of the Book of Genesis:

Chapters 1-11: The Beginning---the creation, the fall, the flood, the table of nations, the tower of Babel

Chapters 12-25: 18: The Abraham cycle---Call of Abraham, the Lot story, Sodom and Gomorrah, Birth of Ishmael, Birth of Isaac, The Abraham-Sarah-Hagar triangle, Abraham and Isaac on Mt. Moriah, the arrival of Rebecca, the death of Abraham.

Chapters 25: 19-36: 43: Jacob and Esau, Birth and Birthright, Isaac, Rebecca and Abimelech, Deception of Isaac, Jacob’s dream at Bethel, Jacob and Laban, Jacob’s children, Jacob’s departure from Laban, Reconciliation between Jacob and Esau, the Rape of Dinah, Jacob’s Return to Bethel, Esau’s Genealogy

Chapters 37-50: The Joseph Narrative: Joseph’s favor with his brothers, Joseph’s dreams, Josephs brothers hatred of Joseph and their selling him into slavery, Judah and Tamar, Joseph and Potiphar’s wife, Joseph in prison, Pharaoh’s dream and Joseph’s release, Joseph as prime minister of Egypt, Joseph and his brothers, Joseph and his reunion with his father, Joseph’s forgiveness of his brothers.

Points to Remember:

Bible is a book of *faith*

Bible establishes truth that universe is creation of God from chaos

Various traditions not single-hand in Genesis, two creation accounts.

Genesis is *faith* account of origins of Hebrew people and their *faith* and lays groundwork for the pivotal events of book of Exodus.

Understanding of Genesis is critical for understanding the whole Bible. Themes and stories of Genesis come up repeatedly throughout the scriptures.