

# GENESIS

*Highland Park Baptist Church*  
*Andy Rist*  
*January 5 through May 4, 2022*

## **I. Primary Purpose of the Course**

To understand the plan of God, which is to establish His rule and authority on earth as presented in the book of Genesis. God uniquely created man to exercise authority over the entire earth in order to mediate God's sovereign rule over His creation, but Adam rebelled against God's authority. God immediately established His plan to reconcile His sinful creation to Himself, and establish His righteous kingdom through the political nation of Israel.

Also, for this course, one will understand that God's ultimate goal of redemption for His creation began in the covenant relationship established with Abraham. Through chosen Abraham, Genesis presented God's plan to place His chosen people in a specific chosen land, through whom the nations of the world would be blessed.

## **II. Objectives of the Course**

1. The student will study the general context, structure, and the historical background of the book of Genesis.
2. The student will see the progressive revelation of God's plan for His creation.
3. The student will learn the major people introduced in this book and how God uses them to accomplish His plan for mankind.
4. The student will interact with all of the positions concerning the debates surrounding the creation. Also, this discussion will extend to the question of the Noahic flood.
5. The student will interact with the issues related to the fall of man and the impact of Adam's expression of sovereign independence. How did Adam's decision to eat from the forbidden tree change his relationship with God, with Eve, and with creation itself?
6. The student will study the covenant God made with Noah.
7. The student will study the covenant God made with Abraham.
8. The student will follow the life of growing obedience and faith in the life of Abraham, the declining faith seen in the life of Isaac, and the struggle with faith in the life of Jacob.
9. The student will study the later events in the book of Genesis to see how God's promise made to Abraham is eventually passed through Judah.

## **III. Class Schedule**

**Dates:** January 5, 12, 19, 26; February 2, 9, 16; March 2, 9, 16, 23

**Time:** 6:30-7:15; 7:25-8:00

**Location:** South Atrium

\* Note: Each class lecture/presentation and accompanying notes will be uploaded to the HPBC website by Friday of the same week.

## **IV. Requirement of the Course**

Read the book of Genesis.

*Genesis* is a word derived from the Septuagint (the Greek version of the Old Testament) and means “origin” or “beginning.” This is indeed a most appropriate title for this first book of the Bible, for it is in a most distinctive sense the book of beginnings. Important beginnings described are:

- (1:1-2:3) The beginning of the earth as man’s habitation
- (2:7-25) The beginning of the human race
- (3:1-8) The beginning of human sin
- (3:9-24) The beginning of redemptive revelation
- (4:1-15) The beginning of the human family
- (4:16-9:29) The beginning of civilization
- (10:1-32) The beginning of nations
- (11:1-9) The beginning of human languages
- (11:10-50:26) The beginning of the Hebrew race

(Merrill Unger, Unger’s Survey of the Bible, pgs. 118)

The key word of *Genesis* is *election*. Divine electing grace pervades the book. *Genesis* records a number of family histories in which God personally chooses individuals through whom he will work out his redemptive plan for the fallen race. Of Adam’s posterity, Cain drops out and Seth is chosen instead. Of Noah’s progeny, Shem is selected over his younger brothers, Ham and Japheth. Of Terah’s family, Abram is called over his younger brothers, Nahor and Haran. Of Abram’s sons, Ishmael is rejected and Isaac is chosen. Of Isaac’s sons, Esau is bypassed and Jacob comes into the line of blessing. Of Jacob’s sons, Judah is selected to perpetuate the line of Messiah (Ben. 49:9, 10). Underlying the divine plane of redemption in its progressive unfolding is eternal election (Eph. 1:4). (Merrill Unger, Unger’s Survey of the Bible, pgs. 119)

**Introduction.** “The book falls into two unequal parts, of which the second begins with the emergence of Abram at the junction of chapters 11 and 12. Chapters 1 to 11 describe two opposite progressions: first, God’s orderly creation, to its climax in man as a responsible and blessed being, and then the disintegrating work of sin, to its first great anticlimax in the corrupt world of the Flood, and its second in the folly of Babel.”

“With this, the general history of man gives way in chapter 12 to the germinal story of ‘Abraham and his seed’, with God’s covenant no longer a general pledge to all mankind as in chapter 9, but narrowed down to a single family through which ‘all the families of the earth’ will be blessed (12:3). Abram, landless and childless, is made to learn that the great promise, lodestar (*definition: guiding principle*) of his life must be fulfilled divinely and miraculously or not at all.” (Kidner, *Genesis*, p. 13-14)

**Author.** Jesus states in John 7:22 that “Moses” gave the regulations concerning circumcision, which are found in *Genesis* 17:9-14, not *Leviticus* 12:3. Therefore, this strongly indicates that ***Moses was the author of Genesis.***

Who wrote the Pentateuch? MOSES!

- Exod. 17:14, "Then the Lord said to Moses, 'Write this in a book . . .'"

- Exod. 24:4, "And Moses wrote down all the words of the Lord."

- Numbers 33:1-2, Moses recorded the journeys of Israel.
  - Deut. 31:9, "So Moses wrote this law and gave it to the priests".
  - I Kings 2:3, a reference to the law of Moses.
    - I Kings 6:1, We know Moses lived in the 15th century B.C.
  - II Kings 14:6, a reference to the law of Moses.
  - Ezra 6:18, a reference to the book of Moses.
  - Nehemiah 13:1, a reference to the book of Moses.
  - Daniel 9:11-13, a reference to the law of Moses.
  - Malachi 4:4, a reference to the law of Moses.
- Jesus affirms the Mosaic authorship of the Pentateuch in Matt. 8:4 & 19:7-8.  
Also, in Mark 7:10 & Luke 24:27, 44 & John 1:45.

“It is entirely plausible to expect that Moses had many sources of information available to him, both in written and oral form. In this scenario inspiration enabled him to select sources that were accurate and to weave that material together into a purposeful composition that is essentially the book of Genesis as we have it today. Whatever limited additions or revisions may have been made after the time of Moses must likewise be considered inspired. We contend, however, that the principal inspired, purposeful, and creative mind behind Genesis was Moses.” (Walton, *Genesis: NIV Application Commentary*, p. 42)

In confirmation of Walton’s conclusion John Currid adds (*Genesis*, p. 32, and he is quoting R. D. Wilson), “That the Pentateuch as it stands is historical and from the time of Moses; and that Moses was its real author though it may have been revised and edited by later redactors, the additions being just as much inspired and as true as the rest.”

Merrill also concurs with the above statements, though “there no doubt had been an unbroken oral (and perhaps written) tradition about their origins, history, and purpose, it was not until Moses gathered these traditions and integrated them into the corpus now known as the Torah that a comprehensive and authoritative synthesis emerged.” (Merrill, *A Biblical Theology of the Old Testament*, p. 8)

These references provide *internal evidence* that *Moses* wrote this book, because he adds material that is pertinent to his time period but does not belong during the age of the patriarchs.

- (6:19-7:3) Noah distinguishes between clean and unclean animals. Obviously, this teaching from the Law was not yet given to Noah.
- (12:6; 13:7) Canaanite was then in the land – This reference indicates the hostile nature of the Canaanites that was not present/evident in Abraham’s day, but sure was during Moses’ era.
- (22:6) Burnt offering – which was very important in Moses’ day (see Lev 1).
- (35:14) Drink offering – which is described in Numbers 15:5, 7. Drink offerings (which always consisted of wine) accompanied all burnt and peace offerings (see Lev 23:10-14), never with sin or trespass offerings. The drink (and meal) offering recognized the sovereignty of God and was the same as presenting one’s tithe to the Lord.
- (47:11) The Land of Rameses – Kidner (p. 15) questions if this is Rameses II who was a contemporary of Moses (but this also presupposes a late date for the exodus).

**Date.** 1446-1406 BC

The date of composition of Genesis hinges on the date of the exodus, when Moses led Israel out of Egypt. Commentators assume that Genesis was written early in the 40-year desert experience, whereas Deuteronomy was written toward the end. *When we determine the date of the exodus, then we will establish the period of time when Moses wrote this book.*

The purpose for this discussion centers on the question of Biblical authority. The **Biblical evidence** from 1 Kings 6:1 and Judges 11:26 firmly establish an early date for the exodus of Israel from the bondage of slavery in Egypt. But the **physical evidence**, especially related to the destruction of Hazor and Lachish (and Joseph's rise to power in Egypt), sways many scholars to accept the later date for the exodus. What's at stake is the historicity of Scripture and the accuracy of historical details.

*Arguments for a late date, 1290 B.C.*

- 1) The Egyptian cities Pithom and Rameses (Exodus 1:11) were being built during the reign of Pharaoh Rameses II (c. 1304-1236 B.C.).

The biblical narratives report that the enslaved Israelites were building the store or treasury cities of Pithom and Rameses (Ex. 1:11). While neither site has been positively identified, it seems fairly certain that the cities were constructed by or in honor of Rameses II (1279-1212 or 1290-1224 BC), who was a prolific builder during his long reign. So it seems logical to assume that this was the pharaoh who constructed the city of Rameses.

- 2) The civilizations of Ammon, Edom, and Moab did not exist in the 15th century.
- 3) The destruction of Lachish, Debir, and Bethel in the 13th century, as evidenced by a layer of ash.

Excavations at three key cities taken by Joshua and the invading Israelites, Lachish (Josh 10:31-32), Debir (Josh 10:38-39), and Bethel (Jud 1:23-25) reveal a level of ash marking the burning of the cities that dates to the late 13th or early 12th century.

*\* Arguments for an early date, 1446 B.C.*

- 1) 1 Kings 6:1 is the best evidence for an early date of the exodus.  
We know the fourth year of Solomon's reign was 966 B.C., therefore 480 years prior to the Temple's dedication is 1446 B.C.
- 2) Jephthah states in Judges 11:26, that Israel was in the land already 300 years. Jephthah lived c. 1100, therefore adding the 300 years, plus the 40 years of wandering, places the exodus in the middle of the 15th century.

### **Reliability of the Old Testament Text.**

The quality of the present Old Testament text is highly reliable and whatever changes that have occurred, according to the claims of various Biblical critics, do not affect the life and practice of believers today. The preservation of the Old Testament text, in light of the frail process of transmission from one generation to the next, is evidence of God's providential work

through the centuries. (VanGemen; New International Dictionary of OT Theology and Exegesis (NIDOTTE); 1:51)

Waltke (NIDOTTE 1:51-67) identifies six periods of transmission for the Old Testament text.

1. From the 10 commandments (c. 1445 (or c. 1290) to Nehemiah's library (c. 400 BC))  
There is virtually no external information related to this formative period of the OT canon.
2. From 400 BC to 150 BC (the time when scholars believe the OT canon was stabilized)  
The Biblical texts of the Dead Sea Scrolls were written in this time period, as well as the LXX (also called the Septuagint, the Greek translation of the Old Testament).
3. From 150 BC to AD 135 (Bar Kokhba's revolt begins in 132 CE and Rome re-conquers Israel in 135 CE)  
The OT canon is fixed and the "Proto-MT" (consonantal form – no vowel pointings) is established.
4. From AD 135 to AD 1000  
In the latter half of the first millennium C.E., groups of Jewish scribes known as the Masoretes, created a system of signs to ensure proper pronunciation and recitation of the biblical text.
5. From AD 1000 to AD 1500  
This is the period of the Medieval MSS to the time of the invention of the printing press (1454).
6. From AD 1500 to the modern day  
The printing of the Great Rabbinic Bible (c. 1525) became the standard Masoretic Text (MT) text until 1936, when the 3<sup>rd</sup> edition of the Biblia Hebraica (BH) was produced.

The Old Testament portion of our English Bibles is translated from the Masoretic Text (MT), and the MT agrees with the Old Testament manuscripts from the Dead Sea Scrolls and the LXX (Septuagint). Therefore, we can conclude that the translation of Genesis we use in our Bibles today is very reliable!

### ANE Myths.

For example:

- The **Atrahasis Epic** is an Akkadian epic that contains a creation myth and flood story.
- The Babylonian creation story, **Enuma Elish**, to Genesis 1.
- The **Adapa myth** (the Sumerian *Tale of Adapa* who accidentally rejected the gift of immortality) relates to Genesis 2-3.
- The **Gilgamesh Epic** – A Babylonian account of a universal flood with parallels to the flood of Noah's day.

Ross (p. 61, 62), “Much has been written during the past century about the Mesopotamian background of the early part of Genesis. It now seems clear that both the Hebrew and the Babylonian traditions are independent versions. The foundational points of contact are the creation, the frame of lists of seven or ten names, the story of the flood, Nimrod, and Babel.”

### **Higher Criticism and the Study of Genesis.**

An overview of the Documentation, or Source, (JEDP) theory. A French physician, Jean Astruc, in 1753 composed a documentary theory for the origins of the Pentateuch. Moses wrote the Pentateuch, in his opinion, but he used 2 different sources to compile his material. One source used Elohim to describe God and the other Jehovah (Yahweh).

Later, in 1877, Julius Wellhausen developed his JEDP theory initially started by Astruc. Wellhausen's work impacted Biblical studies as forcefully as Charles Darwin's work in biology. These are the sources and corresponding dates.

J	850 B.C.	From religious circles in the southern kingdom. This deals with events from creation to the entry of Israel into Canaan.
E	750 B.C.	From the northern kingdom and focuses on Joseph's life in the north. This source is not recognized by many today.
D	621 B.C.	A product from Josiah's period of reform and emphasizes the period from Joshua to Kings. This theory assumes that some unknown scribes around 700 B.C. wrote Deuteronomy to deal with problems in Judah, but the document was somehow lost until Josiah discovered it in 621 B.C. This document served as the basis for the spiritual revival that occurred during his reign.
P	450 B.C.	By priestly authors. This pertains to material from ritual and legalistic practices after Israel's exile (in various stages from Ezekiel to Ezra). This account favored Judah, because Israel did not formally exist, after the return to the land from the Babylonian exile.

This theory assumes a redactor, or editor, pulled together all the material around 500 B.C.

Wellhausen rejects Mosaic authorship of the Pentateuch and the explanation of the origin and development of the Biblical truth as found in the Bible itself, and insists that the Bible must be judged according to certain literary, historical, and philosophical criteria. In other words, all aspects of supernatural revelation are rejected.

**Purpose.** Why was this book written?

Basic Statement: God establishes the historical basis for the rest of the Pentateuch and the Bible. From this writing Israel comes to know her origins and purpose, which is primarily stated in the most important event of this book – the **Abrahamic Covenant**, where God will establish the basic agreement through which God will relate to humanity through the rest of history.

Walton (actually written by the general editor, Terry Muck, p. 44), “He covenanted with Abram and his family for them to represent God by the way they lived according to the law they

embraced. *This covenant is about revelation (what God wants for us), not salvation (what we get from God).*”

The three highlighted items below are another way to state God’s purpose for this book (and the Pentateuch):

1) **Creator.** Moses wanted Israel to see God as founder and creator of life.

Psalm 19:1, "The heavens are telling the glory of God; And their expanse is declaring the work of His hands." Not only do we recognize God as the author, but He is the one deserving of honor and praise for this work.

2) **Control.** 1) Moses wanted Israel to see God in control of and distinct from His creation.

2) Then, God wants to give his representative on earth – Adam – full control over creation to fulfill the mandate in Genesis 1:26-28. It is Adam’s responsibility to “rule”, “fill”, and “subdue” the earth.

3) **Redeemer.** This is clearly a *sub-theme* in relation to Creator and Control.

God needs to redeem mankind and restore harmony in His creation (Isaiah 11:6-9, where the wolf will live with the lamb, the cow and bear feed together, and infants play near the den of the cobra). Then man will be able to function over creation as God had originally designed for him.

\* Why was the earth created? FOR GOD, not man!! See Rev. 4:11 & Col. 1:16.  
God designed creation for His purposes, not man's.

### **Outline of Genesis (as presented in most survey courses).**

#### I. Primeval (ancient or original) History (1-11)

1. (1-2) Creation
2. (3-5) Fall
3. (6-9) Flood
4. (10-11) Nations

#### II. Patriarchal History (12-50)

1. (12-23) Abraham
2. (24-26) Isaac
3. (27-36) Jacob
4. (37-50) Joseph

### **Outline of Genesis (for this course).**

#### (1:1-11:26) Primeval (ancient or original) History

##### (1:1-2:3) *The creation of the universe by the word of God*

(1:1) A summary statement concerning creation

(1:2) Conditions at the time of creation

(1:3-31) The six days of creation

(1:3-5) Day one

(1:6-8) Day two

(1:9-13) Day three

(1:14-19) Day four

(1:20-23) Day five

- (1:24-31) Day six
- (2:1-3) The seventh day 2:1-3
- (2:4-4:26) ***This is what became of (tol<sup>e</sup>dot) the heavens and the earth***
  - (2:4-25) Creation of man and woman in the Garden of Eden
  - (3:1-7) Temptation and the Fall in the Garden of Eden
  - (3:8-24) Judgment and the removal from the Garden of Eden
  - (4:1-16) Story of Cain and Abel
  - (4:17-26) Civilization begins through ungodly Cain and god-fearing Seth
- (5:1-6:8) ***This is what became of (tol<sup>e</sup>dot) Adam***
  - (5) The tragic consequences of sin as seen in the lineage of Seth
  - (6:1-8) The great extent of wickedness on earth
- (6:9-9:29) ***This is what became of (tol<sup>e</sup>dot) Noah***
  - (6:9-22) God instructs Noah to build an ark
  - (7) The judgment of the flood
  - (8) Events after the flood, life begins on earth once again
  - (9:1-17) God's covenant with Noah
  - (9:18-29) The fall of Noah and the curse upon Canaan
- (10:1-11:9) ***This is what became of (tol<sup>e</sup>dot) Noah's sons***
  - (10) The table of nations through the descendents of Noah
    - (10:1-5) Japheth
    - (10:6-20) Ham
    - (10:21-32) Shem
  - (11:1-9) The Tower of Babel – The nations are dispersed
- (11:10-26) ***This is what became of (tol<sup>e</sup>dot) Shem***
- (11:27-50:26) Patriarchal History
  - (11:27-25:11) ***This is what became of (tol<sup>e</sup>dot) Terah***
    - (11:27-12:9) The call of Abram and his obedient response
    - (12:10-20) Abram leaves the promised land and moves to Egypt
    - (13) Abram returns to the promised land, but there is a conflict with Lot
    - (14) Battle in the promised land; Blessing from Melchizedek
    - (15) Ratification of God's covenant with Abraham
    - (16) Abraham's attempt to fulfill God's promise of a son through Hagar
    - (17) The covenant is reconfirmed – Sarah will have a son!
    - (18:1-15) The Angel of the Lord confirms that Sarah will have a son
    - (18:16-19:38) Abraham rescues Lot, God destroys Sodom and Gomorrah
    - (20) Sarah's life is endangered by Abimelech
    - (21:1-21) The covenant is fulfilled – The promised seed (Isaac) is born
    - (21:22-34) Abraham's covenant with Abimelech
    - (22:1-19) The testing and obedient response of Abraham
    - (22:20-24) The descendents of Nahor – the family background of Rebekah
    - (23) The death and burial of Sarah in the cave of Machpelah
    - (24) Isaac's marriage to Rebekah
    - (25:1-11) Abraham and Keturah; Abraham's death and burial in the cave of Machpelah
  - (25:12-18) ***This is what became of (tol<sup>e</sup>dot) Ishmael***
  - (25:19-35:29) ***This is what became of (tol<sup>e</sup>dot) Isaac***



- (25:19-26) The birth of the twins – Esau and Jacob  
 (25:27-34) Esau sells his birthright  
 (26) Rebekah’s life is endangered by Abimelech; Isaac’s oath with Abimelech  
 (27) Jacob’s deception as he steals his brother’s blessing  
 (28) Jacob leaves the promised land; God confirms that Jacob will fulfill the covenant  
 (29:1-30) Laban’s deception and Jacob’s two marriages – to Leah and Rachel  
 (29:31-30:24) The birth of Jacob’s 11 sons  
 (30:25-43) Jacob’s new agreement with Laban and God’s blessing  
 (31) Jacob flees from Laban  
 (32-33) Jacob returns to the promised land and is reunited with Esau  
 (34) The massacre at Shechem at the hands of Simeon and Levi  
 (35) The covenant renewed at Bethel; Birth of Benjamin; Deaths of Rachel & Isaac  
 (36:1-36:8) ***This is what became of (tol<sup>e</sup>dot) Esau***  
 (36:9-37:1) ***This is what became of (tol<sup>e</sup>dot) Esau, the Father of Edom***  
 (37:2-50:26) ***This is what became of (tol<sup>e</sup>dot) Jacob***  
 (37:2-36) Jacob’s love for Joseph and the brother’s hatred of Joseph  
 (38) Judah’s sin and his relationship with Tamar  
 (39) Joseph’s faithfulness in Potiphar’s house  
 (40) Joseph’s faithfulness in prison and his interpretation of dreams  
 (41) Joseph interprets Pharaoh’s dreams; God establishes him as the 2nd ruler over Egypt  
 (42) The 10 brothers of Joseph – first journey to Egypt  
 (43) The 11 brothers of Joseph – second journey to Egypt  
 (44:1-45:15) Joseph tests his brothers, then all 12 brothers are reconciled  
 (45:16-47:31) Jacob (Israel) moves his family to Egypt  
 (48) Jacob blesses the sons of Joseph – Manasseh and Ephraim  
 (49:1-28) Jacob blesses Judah and the other 10 sons  
 (49:29-50:26) The death of Jacob and the death of Joseph

### **The *tol<sup>e</sup>dot* Structure of Genesis.**

- |                |  |
|----------------|--|
| 1:1-2:3        | The creation of the universe by the word of God                                |
| 1. 2:4-4:26    | This is what became of ( <i>tol<sup>e</sup>dot</i> ) the heavens and the earth |
| 2. 5:1-6:8     | This is what became of ( <i>tol<sup>e</sup>dot</i> ) Adam                      |
| 3. 6:9-9:29    | This is what became of ( <i>tol<sup>e</sup>dot</i> ) Noah                      |
| 4. 10:1-11:9   | This is what became of ( <i>tol<sup>e</sup>dot</i> ) Noah’s sons               |
| 5. 11:10-26    | This is what became of ( <i>tol<sup>e</sup>dot</i> ) Shem                      |
| 6. 11:27-25:11 | This is what became of ( <i>tol<sup>e</sup>dot</i> ) Terah                     |
| 7. 25:12-18    | This is what became of ( <i>tol<sup>e</sup>dot</i> ) Ishmael                   |
| 8. 25:19-35:29 | This is what became of ( <i>tol<sup>e</sup>dot</i> ) Isaac                     |
| 9. 36:1-36:8   | This is what became of ( <i>tol<sup>e</sup>dot</i> ) Esau                      |
| 36:9-37:1      | This is what became of ( <i>tol<sup>e</sup>dot</i> ) Esau, the Father of Edom  |
| 10. 37:2-50:26 | This is what became of ( <i>tol<sup>e</sup>dot</i> ) Jacob                     |

### **An Explanation of the *tol<sup>e</sup>dot* Structure in Genesis.**

- This word was not simply added to the text sometime after the initial writing of Genesis, but the *tol<sup>e</sup>dot* formula serves as the backbone to this book’s structure. (Ross, p. 74)

- “The *tol<sup>e</sup>dot* heading announces the historical development from the ancestor (or beginning point) and could be translated paraphrastically ‘this is what became of \_\_\_\_\_,’ or ‘this is where it started from’ (with reference to the following subject).” (Ross, p. 72)
- “The person named after *tol<sup>e</sup>dot* is usually not the central character in the narrative but the person of origin”, (Ross, p. 73). This explains why there is no *tol<sup>e</sup>dot* of **Abraham** or **Joseph**. The stories of these two men are seen in the *tol<sup>e</sup>dot* of Terah and of Jacob.

### **An Overview of the *tol<sup>e</sup>dot* Structure in Genesis.**

#### **1:1-2:3      *The creation of the universe by the word of God***

- “The first section of the book is not headed by a *tol<sup>e</sup>dot*, and logically so. The section forms an introduction to the book. The significance of this section is that the work of creation is wrapped in divine blessing. Animal life (1:22), human life (1:28), and the seventh day (2:3) are all blessed specifically.” (Ross, p. 75-76)
- “The culmination of this creative development is that human beings and their world may enjoy the theocratic rest of God.” (Ross, p. 75-76)

#### **2:4-4:26      *This is what became of (tol<sup>e</sup>dot) the heavens and the earth***

- “This *tol<sup>e</sup>dot* section begins with a detailed account of the creation of Adam and Eve to show how ominous the fall was. The stories in chapter 4 provide the aftermath, showing how evil advanced once it entered the human family.”
- “As if in answer to the three blessing of the creation account, this section supplies a threefold cursing (of the serpent, in 3:14; of the ground, in v. 17; and of Cain, in 4:11). Man no longer serves God but the ground; no longer does he rule, but he survives.”
- “In the deteriorating life, however, there is a token of grace and a ray of hope. God places a preserving mark on Cain, and people begin to proclaim the name of the Lord.” (Ross, p. 76)

The *tol<sup>e</sup>dot* formula helps to resolve the sequence problem many critics see between Genesis 2:3 and 2:4. The critics (as well as many conservative commentators) wish to align chapter two with chapter one, but the *tol<sup>e</sup>dot* formula places chapter two with chapters three and four. As a result, the focus of writing in 1:1-2:3 is on God, whose name is mentioned 35 times in this section. The second section of Genesis (2:4-4:26) is anthropocentric (but certainly does not exclude God’s presence or influence) and focuses on the events surrounding Adam – his creation, his responsibilities in the garden, his relationship with Eve, his rebellion under God’s authority, the punishment for his sinful choices, and the consequences of his sinful behavior.

#### **5:1-6:8      *This is what became of (tol<sup>e</sup>dot) Adam***

- The dominant theme of this section is death. And the plan of God at the end of this section is not merely the death of people, but the end of all life on earth. At the end of the creation account, God saw that everything was good (1:31). But “here he (God) saw that the intent of human plans was only evil continually.” “The cause was the great hubris on the part of the human, taking all the women they wanted and living in moral abandonment.” (Ross, p. 78)

**6:9-9:29      *This is what became of (tol<sup>e</sup>dot) Noah***

- This passage is best known for judgment and the annihilation of human life on earth. But, the blessing motif, that was prevalent in the garden, returns through the obedience and faithfulness of Noah. Also, God establishes a covenant of grace in which He promises never to destroy the earth by flood ever again.
- “The human race, however, retains an experiential knowledge of evil, a fact painfully displayed in the scene of Noah’s drunkenness. The theme of nakedness is repeated with this second Adam, but with an ironic twist. Here it does not represent integrity, but indecency and susceptibility to evil. The occasion brings out the worst in Ham, and so an oracle of cursing is pronounced on whole sections of the race that follow in that depravity.” (Ross, p. 79)

**10:1-11:9      *This is what became of (tol<sup>e</sup>dot) Noah’s sons***

- “The theme of this section is confusion and dispersion. It records the final stage in God’s universal judgments on the sinful race, for this judgment holds the race in check. The sin here is once again hubris – people in pride refusing to obey the Lord and attempting to make a name for themselves by their enterprise.” (Ross, p. 80)
- But we quickly discover that there is no race of people who will faithfully walk in obedience to God, nor is there a race of people who will faithfully honor God’s creation in His design of theocratic rest. It is apparent that God will have to create a new race of people through whom He will make His covenant of blessing.

**11:10-26      *This is what became of (tol<sup>e</sup>dot) Shem***

- This account is a transition from chaos and dispersion to the development of a new race of people, through whom God will bless the world.

**11:27-25:11      *This is what became of (tol<sup>e</sup>dot) Terah***

- “While chapters 1-11 portrayed the race in rebellion to what God had intended, chapters 12-25 recount God’s development of the promised blessing through Abram.” (Ross, p. 80)
- All of the stories in this section are not random accounts simply pieced together. Each narrative, or account, is related to the promises of the land (12:10-chapter 15) and the seed (chapters 16-21) given to Abram in 12:1-3.
- Chapter 22 is an important chapter of the book because Abraham’s faith is tested, again. At the end of his extraordinary life, Abraham has learned to completely trust in God and offers his ONLY son – the fulfillment of God’s promise given to Abraham many years ago – as a sacrifice to the Lord. This act of obedience greatly pleases the Lord.
- Chapters 23-25 begins the process of transferring the promise of blessing to the next generation, to Abraham’s son Isaac.

**25:12-18      *This is what became of (tol<sup>e</sup>dot) Ishmael***

- “This section on Ishmael is important because God granted a blessing to Ishmael as the son of Abraham and Hagar. Other sons of Abraham received no such blessing.” (Ross, p. 83)

- But God’s hand of blessing will be firmly placed once again on the promised seed, Isaac, as will be emphasized in the next section.

**25:19-35:29 This is what became of (tol<sup>e</sup>dot) Isaac**

- The literary parallels between Isaac and Abraham affirm the continuity that the covenant made with Abraham will pass through Isaac to his son, Jacob. For example,
  - Isaac’s wife was barren.
  - Isaac had to face the hardships of a famine.
  - Isaac deceives a ruler in order to spare the life of his wife.
  - Isaac makes a treaty with Abimelech.

“The repetition of the motifs shows that the promises were passed on from one generation to the next.” (Ross, p. 83-84)

**36:1-36:8 This is what became of (tol<sup>e</sup>dot) Esau**

- This account helps us to compare the life of Esau with Ishmael, Isaac, and Jacob.

**36:9-37:1 This is what became of (tol<sup>e</sup>dot) Esau, the Father of Edom**

- “A further accounting of the development of Esau’s line is added because of the great significance of these Edomite, and Amalekite, and Horite chieftains.” “The notion that these kings ruled in the land before any king reigned over the Israelites (36:31) suggests that this list carries up to the monarchy.” (Ross, p. 85-86)

**37:2-50:26 This is what became of (tol<sup>e</sup>dot) Jacob**

- “The narratives relate why the tribes were in Egypt and how they were each related to the promised blessings. The family had deteriorated to the point of merging with the Canaanites. To preserve the line of blessing, God amazingly moved through the exigency (*requirement or need*) of the evil will of the brothers to bring about good through Joseph’s administration.” (Ross, p. 86)
- The structure of this section “is built on repetition to stress the sovereign work of God in bringing good out of evil”, (Ross, p. 86). For example,
  - Two dreams for the teen-aged Joseph
  - Two dreams later in prison
  - Two dreams of Pharaoh
  - Two imprisonments for Joseph
  - Two journeys of the brothers
- “These narratives also teach the covenanters how to live in bondage when they know that the promise of God belongs to them, for participation in the blessings of the covenant requires obedience.” (Ross, p. 88)

**(1:1-11:26) Primeval (ancient or original) History**

"Gen 1-11 as we read it is a commentary, often highly critical, on ideas current in the ancient world about the natural and supernatural world. Both individual stories as well as *the final completed work seem to be a polemic against many of the commonly received notions about the gods and man*. But the clear polemical thrust of Gen 1-11 must not obscure the fact that at certain points biblical and extrabiblical thought are in clear agreement. Indeed Genesis and the

ancient Near East probably have more in common with each other than either has with modern secular thought." (Thomas Constable, Genesis Expository Notes, Dallas Theological Seminary who is quoting Wenham, p. xlvii)

### **(1:1-2:3) The creation of the universe by the word of God**

Concerning the age of the earth let's consider **James Ussher's** (archbishop of Ireland in the 17th century) theory that the date of creation is 4004 B.C. Ussher simply took all the information provided in the Scriptures and added up the numbers of various genealogies (primarily Genesis 5 & 11). What Ussher did not take into account was the existence of gaps in these genealogies! For example:

Gen. 11:12 is missing Cainan (see Luke 3:35-36).

Matt. 1:8 is missing Ahaziah, Joash, and Amaziah (see I Chron 3:11-12).

In addition to the problem of gaps, there are continuous records of habitation in ancient Egypt & Mesopotamia dating to 7,000 B.C. Therefore, it is entirely consistent with Scripture to place the date of creation around 10,000 B.C., but no earlier.

### **(1:1) A summary statement concerning creation**

"There are three major views concerning the relationship of 1:1 to the rest of the creation account."

1. **A gap between verses 1 & 2.** "Verse 1 describes an original creation of the universe. God began fashioning the earth as we know it in verse 2 or verse 3. This view may or may not involve a gap in time between verses 1 and 2. Some advocates of this view believe that the original creation became chaotic as a result of divine judgment."

This view supports the **Gap Theory**, which is no longer embraced in evangelical circles.

2. **Verses 1-5 are a single literary unit with no gaps or breaks.** "Verse 1 describes part of what God did on the first day of creation (1:1-5). It is a general statement followed by specific details." (Thomas Constable, Genesis Expository Notes, Dallas Theological Seminary)

This view supports the **young earth position**.

3. **Verse 1 is just a topic statement.** "Verse 1 describes what God did on the six days of creation (1:2-31). It is a topic sentence that introduces the whole creation account that follows." (Thomas Constable, Genesis Expository Notes, Dallas Theological Seminary).

This view supports the **old earth position**. Verse one is *not* a reference to the original creation of all matter (whereas the first two views recognize verse one as the absolute origin of creation). In this view it is presupposed that God created matter (John 1:3) sometime before Genesis 1:1 and used preexisting material to fashion together all aspects of creation through the process described in the rest of Genesis one.

“Create” (Heb. *bara*) intends to communicate an absolute beginning to the universe – NIDOTT, 1:732.

“God created the universe from nothing (Latin *ex nihilo*). While the text does not state this fact per se, the reader can deduce it from the following evidence. The phrase “in the beginning” implies it as do the Hebrew word for “create” (*bara*) and the expression “formless and void.” New Testament passages also support this conclusion (e.g., John 1:3; Rom. 4:17; and Heb. 11:3).” (Thomas Constable, Genesis Expository Notes, Dallas Theological Seminary)

### **(1:2) Conditions at the time of creation**

Whereas verse 1 explains the origin of the universe, verse 2 pictures its original condition as it existed on earth *when* God created it originally. Verses 3-31 describe this original condition in more detail and explain the process of creation by which God formed what was formless and filled what was void.

#### Chaos is the result of God’s judgment on the world. Old earth position.

One view of the chaos described in verse 2: Ross (p. 75), “Genesis gives no explanation of the chaos, but we may gather from the words used and from parallel passages (Jer. 4:23) that it was a judgment on rebellion, that Satan was somehow involved, and that oppressive evil existed instead of the fullness of life.”

#### Chaos describes the original state of God’s unfinished creative work. Young earth position.

Geisler comments (Baker Encyclopedia of Christian Apologetics, p. 271) that “some scholars have noted a parallelism between the first three days (light, water, and land – all empty) and the second three days (light, water, and land – all filled with bodies).” This certainly supports the ***“form and fill” pattern*** (God formed creation on days 1-3, then filled His creation in days 4-6).

### **(1:3-31) The six days of creation**

- “Note that on the first and second days God did one work each day. He created light and the firmament.
- On the third day He did two works. He created the land and vegetation.
- Similarly on the fourth and fifth days God did one work. He created the lights’ functions on the fourth day and the birds and fish on the fifth day.
- Then on the sixth day He again did two works. He created the land animals and man.
- On the first three days He gave form to what was formless, and on the last three days He filled what was void.” (Thomas Constable, Genesis Expository Notes, Dallas Theological Seminary)

“Both vegetation and humanity, symbolizing the fertility of life, were considered pinnacles of creation in the ancient Near East. The first triad [of days] ends climactically with the creation of **vegetation**; the second, the creation of **humanity**.” (Waltke, p. 36)

### Formless

- 1 Light
- 2 Sky
- 3 Dry land & Vegetation

### Void

- 4 Two great lights (sun & moon)
- 5 Fish and fowl
- 6 Land creatures & Humankind

In this section which details the six days of creation Moses highlights God's usage of particular words and then identifies a definite pattern within each day of creation. "The key words – 'said,' separated,' 'called,' saw,' good' – as actions and thoughts of God, emphasize his omnipotent and omniscient presence in creation. The process of creation typically follows a pattern of *announcement, commandment, separation, report, naming, evaluation, and chronological framework.*" (Waltke, p. 56)

- **Announcement.** "Then God said" marks the beginning of each day and clearly indicates that God is in control. When He speaks, then the work of creation is begun and completed. Through the agency of His speech God directs, designs, and puts into place *all* aspects of creation.
- **Commandment.** The following phrase, "Let there be", demonstrates the intent of God to order the universe according to His design and plan. There is no randomness in His action, nor does the animal world have to display their strength and fitness in order to survive to the next generation. God intends all of life to be fully adapted and an integral part of creation from the moment of His directive.

[\* Note: "*Fiat*" (which is the Latin word for "Let there be") creation is another expression for the six-day, literal creation view.]

- **Separation.** Each day brings greater definition to creation. The order of creation that develops from the continuing process of separation (day and night, heaven and earth, land from water, fish, birds and mammals) through the course of the week displaces the chaos seen in the beginning in verse 2.
- **Report.** "God saw", "God separated", "God called", "God made", "God placed", "God created", "God blessed" are reaffirming statements that follow the initial "Then God said" announcement, which confirms God's divine control and expression of His sovereign will in this process.

Waltke astutely makes the observation that the Biblical creation story stands in direct contrast to the ANE accounts of creation, where the creative process is the result of battles amongst the gods. In Genesis, God is completely in control and He struggles with no one to achieve His creative purposes. All of His actions are unprovoked and He works freely, under the influence of no one, to bring the world into being.

- **Naming.** Each aspect of the process is identified and given a name. Whether it is "day", "night", "heaven", "seas", etc. God exercises His dominion and displays His right to rule by giving a name to all the elements of creation.

In the Old Testament, as well as in the ANE, the act of naming indicates one's sovereignty and right to rule (i.e. Gen 41:45; 2 Kings 24:17; Dan 1:7). In this chapter the process of naming or blessing follows an act of creation seven times.

- **Evaluation.** Each day Moses records that the work of that day "was good" (except in day two), and day six concludes with the emphatic "very good" to indicate the perfect state of completeness of the world.

- ***Chronological framework.*** Waltke states “the week becomes the basic unit of time: six days of work and one of rest. The careful use of numbers throughout the account attests to God’s logical and timely shaping of creation.”

**(1:3-5) Day one**

God created the sun, moon, and stars on the first day and assigned them their specific functions on the fourth day (cf. vv. 14-18). This is consistent with God’s plan of progressive revelation, where God progressively reveals His plan for creation through the course of the creation week.

**(1:6-8) Day two**

God names the expanse “heaven” (v. 8) and from this point forward, everything above the earth (from man’s perspective) is separate from those things on earth.

A longer discussion on the nature of the expanse is given in 2:5-6.

**(1:9-13) Day three**

(1:10) Moses uses the expression “good” for the first time in day one (v.4) in reference to the light He created. Now for the second time Moses says that His work is “good” which indicates that the dry land is in the desired state and ready for the habitation of plants, animal life, and human life.

(1:12) The ***young earth proponents*** will argue that ““kind” (Heb. *min*) is not a biologically exact term. It indicates that God created several different families of plants as separate acts of creation (cf. vv. 21, 24-25; 6:20; 7:14; Lev. 11:14-29; Deut. 14:13-18). All plants, therefore, did not evolve from one.” (Thomas Constable, Genesis Expository Notes, Dallas Theological Seminary)

Based on the words used by Moses “after their kind”, the ***progressive creationists*** will contend that plants (v. 12) and animals (vs. 21, 24, 25) evolved within their species (this is called the process of microevolution). According to this theory Moses provided firm biblical evidence supporting an old earth.

**(1:14-19) Day four**

“The writer's perspective throughout is geocentric (the earth is the center) rather than heliocentric (the sun is the center). He used phenomenological language (of appearance) that is very common in the Old Testament. Even modern scientific textbooks use such language without fear of being criticized as unscientific when they refer to sunrise, sunset, etc. Probably God created light on the first day (v. 3), but then on the fourth day the sun, moon, and stars appeared distinctly for the first time.” (Thomas Constable, Genesis Expository Notes, Dallas Theological Seminary)

***Does distant starlight prove that the universe is old?*** The immense size of the universe is completely acceptable to the young earth advocates. Based on the repeatable tests of (observational) science, measurements prove that the universe is large, which means that galaxies and starlight is very far away. But how do young



earth creationists explain starlight that is apparently billions of years away from us? These are a few of the arguments:

- Some young earth proponents try to reconcile the distant starlight by stating that God creating light beams in Genesis 1 “in-transit”, meaning already on their way to earth. But this means that the events that caused these light beams previous to 10,000 B.C. never really happened, and that means God made the events behind these light beams simply as illusions – this seems to be inconsistent with God’s character (according to old earth advocates).
- “Creationists have proposed several solutions to the problem of how light from stars that are millions of light years away could get to Adam if the universe was only days old.” Probably “the best explanation is the appearance of age. As God created humans, plants, and animals fully formed, so He created the light from distant stars already visible on the earth.” (Thomas Constable, Genesis Expository Notes, Dallas Theological Seminary)

### **(1:20-23) Day five**

““Great sea monsters” (Heb. *tauninim*, v. 21) were large fish, whales, squid, and all large creatures living in the water. The pagans worshipped these, but they were under God’s authority. The Old Testament writers adopted pagan imagery, but not pagan theology.”

“Note that Moses wrote that God created both marine animals and birds on the same day. **Evolution** claims that birds evolved from reptiles and that this process took millions of years.”

(Thomas Constable, Genesis Expository Notes, Dallas Theological Seminary)

### **(1:24-31) Day six**

*Nephesh*. ““Creature” (Heb. *nephesh*) is usually translated “soul” (e.g., 2:7). This Hebrew word and the English “soul” imply conscious life, in contrast to plants that have unconscious life. So in the sense of having conscious life, animals as well as people have souls.” (Thomas Constable, Genesis Expository Notes, Dallas Theological Seminary)

**What happened to the dinosaurs?** Conservative Bible interpreters generally believe they existed but became extinct before the Flood or probably after it.

“Before the Flood, dinosaurs and man lived together on our planet. Extinction of the great marine reptiles, along with the majority of all other types of sea creatures, would have been caused by the violent upheavals of the Flood, many being buried and preserved as fossils.” (Thomas Constable, Genesis Expository Notes, Dallas Theological Seminary who is quoting Ken Ham, Andrew Snelling, and Carl Wieland, *The Answers Book*, pp. 10)

(1:26-27) "'Us" is probably a plural of self-deliberation (cf. 11:7; Ps. 2:3), though possibly God was addressing His heavenly court (cf. Isa. 6:8). This word involves "in germ" the doctrine of the Trinity. However, we should not use it as a formal proof of the Trinity since this reference by itself does not prove that one God exists in three persons." (Thomas Constable, Genesis Expository Notes, Dallas Theological Seminary)

***Image and Likeness.*** "'Image" and "likeness" are essentially synonymous terms (see Genesis 5:2). Both indicate personality, moral, and spiritual qualities that God and man share (i.e., self-consciousness, God-consciousness, freedom, responsibility, speech, moral discernment, etc.) These distinguish humans from the animals. Some writers have called the image of God man's "spiritual personality." In another sense man *is* the image of God (e.g., he rules and creates [procreates] as God does thus reflecting God). The Fall marred but did not obliterate the image of God in man." (Thomas Constable, Genesis Expository Notes, Dallas Theological Seminary)

(1:28) "God's blessing enables humanity to fulfill its twofold destiny: to procreate in spite of death and to rule in spite of enemies. "Blessing" denotes all that fosters human fertility and assists in achieving dominion." (Thomas Constable, Genesis Expository Notes, Dallas Theological Seminary)

***Man as king of the earth.*** "'Subdue" and "rule," the second aspect of this mandate, imply a degree of sovereignty and control that God delegated to man over nature. This constitutes God's "Magna Charta" for all true scientific and material progress. God commanded Adam and Eve to acquire knowledge so they could master their material environment, to bring all its elements into the service of the human race." (Thomas Constable, Genesis Expository Notes, Dallas Theological Seminary)

(1:29-31) "God gave man authority and responsibility to regulate nature and to advance civilization. Nature was to serve man, not vice versa. This does not give man the right to abuse nature, however. Neither does it justify giving animals and plants the "rights" of human beings." (Thomas Constable, Genesis Expository Notes, Dallas Theological Seminary)

(1:31) At the end of day six, "it was **very good**". This is solid reasoning to argue that God did not create evil. [Note: This verse undermines support for the Gap theory that states the earth is in a cursed condition in Gen. 1:2 – this cannot be logically correct.]

### **(2:1-3) The seventh day 2:1-3**

"Note that God did not command Adam to abstain from work on the Sabbath; this came later with the Mosaic Law. However, Scripture does teach the importance of periodic rest (cf. Exod. 20:8-10; 23:10-12; Lev. 25:2, 4; Deut. 15:1-18; Heb. 4:1-11; et al.). Part of bearing the likeness of God involves resting as He did after completing His work." (Thomas Constable, Genesis Expository Notes, Dallas Theological Seminary)

**Is it biblically accurate to support the view that our universe is millions and billions of years old?**

Al Mohler, the president of Southern Seminary, presents four great challenges to the traditional reading of Genesis (that God created the earth in six, literal 24-hour days) that have developed over the last 200 years. These four challenges argue for an old earth and dismiss the presuppositions that support a young earth:

1. Geological Record. The geological record reveals that fossils and strata around the globe prove that the earth is much, much older than what the traditional, biblical account presents of early earth history.
2. Charles Darwin. The emergence of Darwin's theory of origins by means of **natural selection**, which has since become the bedrock for evolutionary theory across the sciences, presented a direct challenge to the traditional interpretation of Genesis.
3. ANE (Ancient Near East) Documents
  - Enuma Elish – is a **Babylonian creation myth** that was probably written before Moses and has many similarities to the Genesis one account. Perhaps this was written between the 18<sup>th</sup>-16<sup>th</sup> century BC, possibly as late as the 12<sup>th</sup> century BC. (Wiki)
  - Epic of Gilgamesh – was possibly written in the 3<sup>rd</sup> millennium BC, it is a **Babylonian account of a universal flood** with parallels to the flood of Noah's day. (Wiki)
4. Biblical Criticism. Higher criticism played a significant role in challenging the authenticity, accuracy, and the authority of the Genesis account of origins and earth history. Primarily, the Documentary Hypothesis (or JEDP theory) promoted by Julius Wellhausen questioned the authorship of the Old Testament books, which led these scholars to view the books of Moses and other writers as merely human documents.

There are four viewpoints concerning the creation of man that we will discuss in this course:

- Naturalistic Evolution
  - “Evolutionists believe that man develop from lower organisms through a series of changes brought about by purely natural processes, that this line of development can be traced from simple, presumably one-cell, living things, through more complex organisms, and finally through organisms which today would be classified as anthropoid apes, to man. ***Man's closest relatives are believed to be the anthropoid apes because of the great number of similarities between apes and humans.*** While it is true that there are many similarities and that the similarities between man and the anthropoids are greater than those between man and other animals, it is also true that

there are many differences between man and the anthropoids (apes). Some quite significant.” (Elwell, p. 681)

**Darwin’s Work:** Darwin, in The Origin of Species (1859), defines the evolutionary process in this way:

- Life began through a process called **spontaneous generation** (also called abiogenesis), when a single-cell came to life – *randomly by chance* – from non-living material about 3.5 billion years ago.
- Evolution hypothesizes that the development of these single cells comes through a series of **mutations** from simpler life forms to the more complex living systems we see today.
- Variation of species results because (some) offspring are stronger and superior to their parents. Therefore, the process of **natural selection**, or the survival of the fittest, is continuously working, which means the strongest and fittest of the species survive. Also, natural selection preserves and develops the changes made by mutations.
- Species develop and grow because new qualities of species are constantly appearing and being passed on to future generations. New species come into existence – over the passage of significant time – because of these new qualities.

*To summarize, the basic concepts that define the process of evolution (as developed by Darwin) are **spontaneous generation, mutations, natural selection, time, and chance**.*

*[\* Note: The **Big Bang Theory**, which was not part of Darwin’s original theory, was initially developed by Edwin Hubble (1889-1953). This theory states that the universe began, by chance, as a result of a massive explosion between 5 and 15 billion years ago. According to this theory, this event marks the beginning of the universe (which superseded the theory of spontaneous generation). After the Big Bang, then followed the evolutionary process as described by Darwin: mutations, natural selection, etc.]*

***Presuppositions of Evolution:***

- In general, evolutionists accept the age of the universe to be **13.5 billion years old**; the age of the earth to be **4.5 billion years old**; animals (larger than microscopic size) came to life 542 million years ago; dinosaurs became extinct 65 million years ago.

- Theistic Evolution

Theistic evolutionists are not accepted by either humanistic (naturalistic evolutionists) or creationists. They are not scientific enough to convince the evolutionists, or they do not fully embrace God's sovereign abilities and His miraculous deeds in the creation process, so therefore they are rejected by theists.

Theistic evolutionists harmonize the findings of science with the creation account of Genesis 1 and 2 in this way:

- They believe that ***God is the first cause***, the initiator of the creation process (unlike the naturalistic evolutionist, who contends that life came into existence by chance and spontaneous generation).
- They believe that ***God supervised the process of macroevolution*** (the process of forming new taxonomic groups (or species) over geological time).
- They believe that man (as well as plants and animals) evolved from lower forms, and that man is a product of macroevolution (in other words, man is NOT a product of God's creative action!).

“God created a human soul, and infused it into one of the higher primates, transforming this creature into the first human. Thus, while God specially created the spiritual nature of Adam, man's physical nature is a product of the process of evolution” (Erickson, p. 481).

Problems with theistic evolution:

1. Interpretation of Genesis 1:1-2:4. The theistic evolutionist must allegorically, or poetically, understand the 6-day creation process recorded by Moses.
  2. Interpretation of Genesis 2:7. The theistic evolutionist assumes that Adam came into existence from a nonhuman ancestor, but Moses records in Genesis 2:7 that man came into existence from inorganic material (i.e. dust of the earth).
  3. If Adam is not a historical person, as the theistic evolutionists teach, then the analogy between Christ and Adam in Romans 5:12-21 cannot be accepted.
- Progressive Creation  
(sometimes called the ***Day-Age Theory*** or Uniformitarian Geology). The Day-Age view of creationism believes that each day of Genesis 1 is not an ordinary 24-hour period, but each day is a much longer timespan (millions to billions of years) representing a geological age.

[***Uniformitarian Geology*** states that dating methods are based on a uniform rate of decay of all elements. Young earth proponents argue that the flood and/or the disappearance of a vapor canopy could significantly alter the rate of decay.]

Where the theistic evolutionists tend to lean more towards the theory of evolution, the progressive creationists lean more toward the Biblical account of creation – but still try to reconcile the origins of man (and the universe) with the teachings of science. ***Progressive creationists accept microevolution*** (“intra-kinde” development, or the diversification within a biological species), ***but reject macroevolution*** (“inter-kinde” evolution, or the changes that occur from ape to man). The progressive creationists are truer to the Biblical text of Genesis 1 and 2 than the theistic evolutionists.

[\* *Note: Theistic evolutionists accept both microevolution and macroevolution. Literal creationists reject both microevolution and macroevolution*].

1. Biblically, the progressive creationists cite these main texts that reject the theory of a literal six-day creation. According to these verses, a Biblical day is not a 24-hour period, but a geological age.
  - **Genesis 2:4**, “. . . in the day that the Lord God made earth and heaven”. Here, Moses uses the term “day” (yom) which he used frequently in Genesis 1 to describe the entire creation process.  

*[Note: Literal creationists respond by saying that Moses used an idiom in this verse to say “in the day that” or “at the time when” God created . . .].*
  - **Genesis 26:18**, “Then Isaac dug again the wells of water which had been dug in the days of his father Abraham”.
  - **Job 20:28**, “. . . in the day of His anger”, a reference to a time when God will express His wrath.
  - **Psalms 90:2**, “For a thousand years in Your sight are like yesterday when it passes by . . .”
  - **2 Peter 3:8**, “. . . that with the Lord one day is like a thousand years, and a thousand years like one day.”
  
2. Furthermore, the progressive creationists contend that the *sun was not created until the fourth day*. The logical conclusion is that the first three days described in Genesis 1 were an indefinite length of time (and not 24-hour solar days).
  
3. In addition, progressive creationists believe that both the *physical and spiritual aspect of man is a special act of creation* (this is an obvious difference from the theistic evolutionist position, which states that the physical body is a product of macroevolution but the soul is created by God).  

But, when animals and man were created on the sixth day, Genesis 2 describes this account and appears to take a long time to complete the process. Look at all of the events that occurred on day six:
  
4. Finally, the progressive creationist contends that this current geological age is not complete, because the process of microevolution continues on and the world is still developing. So, the Biblical record of Gen. 2:1-3, (that the heavens and the earth were completed and God rested on the seventh day), must be understood in a future sense, when the seventh geological age will commence at the arrival of the New Jerusalem (the new heavens and the new earth) in Rev. 21:1-8 (cf. John 5:17; Heb 4:1-11).

Problems with progressive creationism:

1. Exodus 20:10-11 strongly affirms that a day (Hebrew, *yom*) is a 24-hour period, which undermines the concept of a day being a geological age.

2. The theory of progressive creationism accepts physical death of the species, and of mankind, ***before the Fall*** (remember, death is a consequence of sin and the Fall of Adam).

- Literal Creation

**Revelation 4:11** concisely summarizes the position of the creationists, who properly worship God as the Creator. This is in direct contrast to the evolutionists, who exalt man as the center and ultimate authority of the universe. The apostle John writes, “Worthy are You, our Lord and our God, to receive glory and honor and power; for **You created all things**, and ***because of Your will they existed, and were created.***”

1. This view on the origin of mankind ***completely rejects any aspect of evolution***. Literal creationists, in general, believe the earth to be only 10,000 years old – not millions and millions of years old as the evolutionists, theistic evolutionists, progressive creationists, and gap theorists all assume.
2. Also, the literal reading of Genesis and a young earth view was understood throughout most of church history (only in the last 200 years has the literal interpretation and young earth view been significantly challenged). Also, **“the normal conclusion one would most likely draw from the terminology in the text (e.g., evening, morning, day, night, etc.) is that God created the world in six 24-hour days. This view is most consistent with the principles of literal, historical, and grammatical interpretation.** The fact that the number of days corresponds to the number of weekdays also favors this view” (Constable notes).

Literal creationists believe that:

- “The sovereign, infinite, triune God of Scripture has always existed, exists now, and always will exist independently from any finite creation” (Frederic Howe, “Walvoord: A Tribute”, p. 146). “God produced the world and everything in it, not by the use of any indirect means or biological mechanisms, but by direct action and contact.”

***No Use of Preexisting Matter.***

“In each case, or at each stage, God did not employ previously existing material.” “Specifically, God made man in his entirety by a unique, direct creative act; man did not come from any previously existing organism.” (Erickson, p. 479)

***No Evidence of Microevolution.***

“New species did not arise as modifications of existing species, but they were fresh starts, so to speak, specially created by God. Each species was totally distinct from the others.” (Erickson, p. 479)

- God created the world, and mankind, in six literal days. Biblical and scientific support for this argument is as follows:
  1. ***Biblical.*** Exodus 20:9-11 (and Exodus 31:17) is a reference to the Jewish work week, which strongly indicates that God worked in six literal days in Genesis 1.
  2. ***Biblical.*** The Hebrew term for “day”, *yom*, when accompanied by a number always indicates a 24-hour period in Old Testament grammar.

3. **Biblical.** The phrase “evening and there was morning” strongly indicates a 24-hour period. The normal usage for this frequently used expression (variations of the phrase “evening and morning” are used 100 times in the Old Testament) refers to a literal, 24-hour day.
4. **Scientific.** Life cannot exist without light.
5. **Scientific.** Plants and animals are dependent on one another, because plants produce oxygen and take in carbon dioxide while animals emit carbon dioxide and breath in oxygen.

**(2:4-4:26) This is what became of (tol'dot) the heavens and the earth**

The focus of this section is upon Adam. Moses describes the actual creation processes of both Adam (2:7) and Eve (2:21-24), then God entrusts Adam with work responsibility in the garden of Eden (2:15-17). But Adam fails the one test placed before him, and he takes from the tree of the knowledge of good and evil (chapter 3). Adam’s relationship with God is broken and humanity suffers the devastating consequences. The impact of sin begins to unfold in Adam’s progeny, specifically through the lineage of Cain. But God’s hand of blessing will return to mankind through Adam’s third son, Seth. It is Seth’s lineage that begins to call upon the Lord (4:26).

**(2:4-25) Creation of man and woman in the Garden of Eden**

Note the following contrasts between the accounts of man's creation.

	<b>1:1—2:3</b>	<b>2:4-25</b>
<b>Name of God</b>	Elohim (Strong One)	Yahweh (Covenant-keeping One)
<b>Purpose</b>	Facts of Creation	Relationships within Creation
<b>Emphasis</b>	The world	Humanity

(2:5-6) “The absence of "rain" and the presence of the "mist" have led some writers to postulate a "canopy theory.” According to this theory, a canopy of water vapor that watered the earth covered the earth initially. It reduced the destructive rays of the sun so that antediluvian man lived much longer, and it distributed heat more evenly over the surface of this planet. Such a water canopy covers Venus. This canopy supposedly broke up when God sent the Flood (7:11).” (Thomas Constable, Genesis Expository Notes, Dallas Theological Seminary)

Concerning the “**canopy theory**” (developed by Whitcomb and Morris in the early 1960s and strongly supported by Dillow in the 1980s), which many commentators have accepted due to the absence of rain (5) and the perpetual mist that covered the earth (6). *The canopy theory states that this cover of water vapor protected the earth from the harmful rays of the sun and allowed man to live for many, many years. According to this theory, the canopy fell at the time of the flood.* Constable holds to this theory (Jan 1995). (From my OT 1 notes)



(2:7) ““Formed" (Heb. *yasar*) means to shape or mold and implies that God deliberately did this with tender loving care. It describes the work of an artist (cf. Job 10:8-9).” (Thomas Constable, Genesis Expository Notes, Dallas Theological Seminary)

“The "breath of life" (Heb. *nesama*) was God's breath that gave Adam life, spiritual understanding (Job 32:8), and a functioning conscience (Prov. 20:27). Adam's life came from God's breath. His uniqueness consisted in his having been made in God's image. God's breath may be a synonym for His word (cf. Ps. 33:6). Man, therefore, is a combination of dust and Divinity.” (Thomas Constable, Genesis Expository Notes, Dallas Theological Seminary)

(2:8-15) “The trees in the garden were beautiful and edible, an orchard for man to enjoy (v. 9). The tree of life appears to have been a means whereby God sustained Adam and Eve's lives. Again God's desire to bless man comes through. The knowledge of good and evil (vv. 9, 17) probably refers to man's ability to decide for himself what is best for him and what is not (i.e., wisdom). "Good" and "evil" may be a merism for the things that protect and destroy life.” (Thomas Constable, Genesis Expository Notes, Dallas Theological Seminary)

(2:16-17) “God gave Adam great freedom of choice. He only forbade one of all the trees. God's command also implies that He alone knows what is good and not good for man. Adam would die because of disobedience, not because of the fruit of the tree.” (Thomas Constable, Genesis Expository Notes, Dallas Theological Seminary)

(2:17) The concept of testing for obedience is presented in this passage and reiterated throughout Scripture (Deut 30:11-20; Judg 2:21-3:4; Jam 1:2-4). God allowed Adam and Eve great freedom and complete access to Him in the garden. They could eat of any tree, except one. God tested the obedience of Adam and Eve, to see if they would remain faithful, because without faith it is impossible to please Him (Heb 11:6).

(2:18-25) “Adam's creation was not complete because he lacked a "helper" who corresponded to him. This deficiency led God to pronounce Adam's condition "not good.” This follows the pattern of the triune God's own existence in which He is surrounded by His heavenly court. Man should normally live in community even as God does.” (Thomas Constable, Genesis Expository Notes, Dallas Theological Seminary)

(2:18, 20) “The term "helper" does not mean a servant. Jesus Christ used the same word (the Greek equivalent) to describe the Holy Spirit who would help believers following the Lord's ascension (John 14:16, 26; 15:26; 16:7). It means one who supports us in our task of doing the will of God (cf. Deut. 33:7; Ps. 33:20; 115:9-11; 146:5; Hos. 13:9). It is

not a demeaning term since Scripture often uses it to describe God Himself (e.g., Ps. 33:20; 70:5; 115:9).” (Thomas Constable, Genesis Expository Notes, Dallas Theological Seminary)

(2:19-20) “The text does not mean that Adam named every individual animal. He apparently gave names to the different kinds God brought before him. This exercise demonstrated Adam's authority over the animals and the dissimilarity between humans and animals. He *became aware of his own need for a companion as he named the animals.*” (Thomas Constable, Genesis Expository Notes, Dallas Theological Seminary)

**The name “Adam”** comes from the Hebrew term “ground” (adamah), which highlights the origins of “the man” made in 2:7 from the dust of the ground.

(2:23) “**The word "woman" (Heb. ishah)** sounds similar to the Hebrew word translated "man" (ish). This similarity reflects the close union between the two and that the woman was taken out of the man. Moses named Adam by his relation to the ground, but Adam named himself in relation to his wife.” (Thomas Constable, Genesis Expository Notes, Dallas Theological Seminary)

(2:24) “In marriage a man's priorities change. Before they were primarily to his parents, but now they are primarily to his wife. Moses was probably correcting cultures that gave parental bonds priority over marital bonds. Marriage also involves physical consummation that unites two individuals as "one flesh." This is a strong argument for monogamy. "One flesh" is not the same as marriage (1 Cor. 6:16). For a marriage to exist there must also be a commitment to "leave" parents and "cleave" to one's spouse from then on (cf. Matt. 19:5; et al.). The bond of marriage (spouse) also takes priority over the bond of procreation (children).” (Thomas Constable, Genesis Expository Notes, Dallas Theological Seminary)

Several concluding thoughts concerning the institution of marriage.

1. **ONE** woman complements and completes man!!
2. God created Adam first, and He created Eve for Adam. This is a hierarchical relationship (1 Cor 11:8-9; 1 Tim 2:13), but man is dependent and incomplete without the woman.

(2:25) “The naked condition of Adam and Eve does not just describe their unclothed physical appearance. It also refers to the physical and psychological oneness and transparency that existed in their relationship. Physically they were naked; they shared their bodies with each other openly. Psychologically they were not ashamed; they hid nothing from each other. They were at ease with one another without any fear of exploitation for evil. Transparency should increase with trust, commitment, and friendship. It involves communicating what we know, think, feel, and are with the person or persons we choose. We should not be transparent with everyone, however, only with

people who commit themselves to us. A transparent person is an open and vulnerable person.” (Thomas Constable, Genesis Expository Notes, Dallas Theological Seminary)

“This is a hinge (janus) verse. It looks backward into chapter 2 and forward into chapter 3. *The similarity of the Hebrew words for naked ('arom) and "crafty" (3:1, 'arum)* points to a word play. This word for nakedness means unclothed whereas the one in 3:7 ('erom) and elsewhere describes those under God's judgment (cf. Deut. 28:48; Ezek. 16:39; 23:29).” (Thomas Constable, Genesis Expository Notes, Dallas Theological Seminary)

**Summary:** Two prominent themes in the first two chapters are the **land** and God's **blessing**. Through the creation process God separates the land from the sky and sea, then He prepares the earth for man to cultivate it (2:5, 15), to subdue and to rule over it (1:28). This process is good and it is complete, and God uniquely blesses (1:22 – Day five; 1:28 – Day six; 2:3 – Day seven) His perfect world.

These themes of land and blessing are seen again in chapter three, but the focus changes. Man's harmonious union with the earth is taken away because of Adam's disobedience, and man is removed from the land (the garden of Eden) where God intended him to live. Blessing is now replaced by curses (3:14, 17; 4:11) and the relationship between God, man, and nature is now characterized by disharmony.

But chapter 12 will again address these two primary themes of early Genesis, where God will promise Abraham a land that will belong to his descendants. A great nation will directly descend from Abraham whom God will uniquely bless, and this nation will be a blessing upon the world.

### **(3:1-7) Temptation and the Fall in the Garden of Eden**

Note the contrast between innocence in 2:25, both were naked, and the presence of craftiness in 3:1.

(3:1) Was this a literal snake, as verse one (“beast of the field”) and fourteen indicate? Or was this literally Satan, who was simply described as a snake (Rev 12:9; 20:2)?

Probably this personality that confronted Eve was Satan who possessed and controlled a literal snake.

#### ***The Character of Satan in Verse One.***

Satan's first stop in his temptation of Eve was to plant a seed of **doubt** in her mind concerning God's ways.

(3:2-3) **Eve's Response.** Eve was vulnerable to Satan's suggestion (verse 1) because she distorted the word of God in her response.

Eve believes that God is not good, that God is not personal, that God is oppressive, and she does not believe in God's commands.

(3:4-5) **Satan's Second Step in His Temptation of Eve.** "The second step in Satan's temptation was to deny God's Word.

(3:5) Once Eve is deceived then Satan tempts her with the prospect of BEING LIKE GOD.

In verse 6 she fully buys into the deception (1 Tim. 2:14).

(3:6-8) **The Fall.**

The Entrance of Sin Into the World:

1. From a hermeneutical perspective, these verses are the pivot of the entire Bible. After the completion of creation, *the most important event in world history is the entrance of sin into the world.*

2. Where does evil come from? Genesis does not tell us!! Genesis does not explain the origins of evil.

But, Moses does describe how sin entered into the world.

(3:6) "Having succumbed to temptation Eve disobeyed God's will. Whereas the serpent initiated the first two steps (vs. 1, 4-5), he let Eve's natural desires (her flesh) carry her into his trap." (Thomas Constable, Genesis Expository Notes, Dallas Theological Seminary)

(3:7-8) "The separation that sin produces in man's relationship with God stands out clearly in these verses. Their new knowledge that the serpent promised would make them as God actually taught them that they were no longer even like each other."

"They were ashamed of their nakedness and sewed fig leaves together to hide their differences from each other (v. 7)." (Thomas Constable, Genesis Expository Notes, Dallas Theological Seminary)

**Consequence of Sin: Death.** As a result of Adam's sin, mankind experienced three kinds of death. In the Bible, death means separation. For example:

- Physical (*Rom 5:12-13*) – separation of the body and soul.
- Spiritual (*Eph 2:1-3*) – separation of man and God.
- Eternal (*Rev 20:11-15*) – permanent separation of man and God.

**Did Eve Sin or Was She Deceived?**

The Apostle Paul wrote that Eve was deceived (1 Tim. 2:14).

**Who Committed The First Sin, Adam Or Eve?**

The Scriptures always refer to Adam as the one through whom sin entered into the world (Rom 5:12, 14; 1 Cor 15:22).

Summary: We see the loss of innocence and the presence of guilt (the knowledge of their condition comes from eating of the tree of the knowledge of good & evil). Out of necessity Adam & Eve must cover themselves from each other and from God (3:10). Their covering shows the nature of broken relationships between each other and God. Adam stated his intent to be self-made and his desire to control (manipulate) his own life INDEPENDENT of God. But his desire for freedom resulted in bondage to another authority, sin (Rom 6:17).

### **(3:8-24) Judgment and the removal from the Garden of Eden**

From 1:1-3:7, the only aspects of God's character that have been revealed concern His sovereignty, His ability to create, and desire to personally be involved with His creation (as seen in His name, *Yahweh*, from 2:4f).

But, from 3:8-24 (end of the chapter), two new attributes of God's character are revealed:

- **God as Judge**. He first interrogated the offenders to obtain a confession, then announced new conditions for life.
- **God as Redeemer**. God immediately displays His desire to redeem fallen humanity. Genesis 3:15 is the first reference to Christ; Genesis 3:21, God provides both physical and spiritual protection through the shedding of blood, to provide animal skin clothing.

**(3:8-13) Consequences of the Fall**. The text records several immediate effects of the Fall on Adam and Eve.

1. (3:8, 10) They felt guilt and shame before God.
2. (3:7) They felt guilt and shame before one another.
3. (3:12, 13) They refused to take personal responsibility for their sin.

### **(3:14-21) God's Judgment – The Effects of the Fall**

“As the result of man's disobedience to God, the creation suffered a curse and began to deteriorate. Having been thrice blessed by God (1:22, 28; 2:3) the creation now experienced a triple curse (3:14, 17; 4:11).” (Thomas Constable, *Genesis Expository Notes*, Dallas Theological Seminary)

**Judgment on the Serpent (14)**. The serpent is simply judged. He is never questioned or given a chance to explain his actions.

"Curses are uttered against the serpent (3:14) and the ground (3:17), but **not against the man and woman, implying that the blessing has not been utterly lost**.

### **Judgment on Satan (15)**

“*Most interpreters* have recognized this verse as the first biblical promise of the provision of salvation (the *protoevangelium* or "first gospel"). The rest of the book, in fact the whole Old Testament, proceeds to point ahead to that seed”, who is

the person of Christ dying on the cross for our sins. (Thomas Constable, Genesis Expository Notes, Dallas Theological Seminary)

**Judgment on the Woman (16).** The woman's pain in childbirth was equivalent to man's hard labor (toil) on earth. Both would suffer in their respective roles.

The woman will desire to dominate the relationship with her husband. After the Fall, the husband no longer rules easily; he must fight for his headship.

". . . the woman's desire for the man and his rule over her are not the punishment but the conditions in which the woman will suffer punishment . . ." (Thomas Constable, Genesis Expository Notes, Dallas Theological Seminary who is quoting Irving Busenitz, "Woman's Desire for Man: Genesis 3:16 Reconsidered," *Grace Theological Journal* 7:2 (Fall 1986):203, 206-8.)

**Judgment on the Man (17-19).** His judgment was twofold.

- First, his task of working the earth became much more difficult (17-18).
- Second, he would experience physical death (3:19). He was created from the dust (2:7) and he would now return to the dust.

"In drawing a contrast between the condition of the land before and after the Fall, the author shows that the present condition of the land was not the way it was intended to be. Rather, the state of the land was the result of human rebellion. In so doing, *the author has paved the way for a central motif in the structure of biblical eschatology, the hope of a 'new heaven and a new earth'* (cf. Isa 65:17: [*sic*] Ro 8:22-24; Rev 21:1)." (Thomas Constable, Genesis Expository Notes, Dallas Theological Seminary who is quoting Sailhamer, *The Pentateuch . . .*, p. 109)

**God's Provision for Adam and Eve (20-21).**

(3:21) God provides animal skins and implies the necessity of blood sacrifice to restore fellowship with God (see Heb. 9:22). Also, it can be implied from this action that ***God does not intend for mankind to live their entire existence on earth in his fallen state!!***

"Note that before God sent them out into a new environment He provided them with clothing that was adequate for their needs (cf. Rom. 3:21-26). ***Their own provision (v. 7) was not adequate.*** He did for them what they could not do for themselves." (Thomas Constable, Genesis Expository Notes, Dallas Theological Seminary)

(3:22-24) **God's Judgment on Adam and Eve – Removal From the Garden**

(3:23) Adam and Eve are permanently removed from the garden and they must work the ground in order to live. Moses reiterates, that Adam must work and cultivate the ground "from which he was taken" (cf. 2:7; 3:19).

(3:24) Cherubim guard the tree of life.

***In Rev. 22:2 (the eternal state), John refers to the tree of life (in other words, believers will probably be able to eat from the tree).***

Summary of this Chapter: "No matter how hard people try to do away with male dominion, agonizing labor, painful childbearing, and death, these evils will continue because sin is present. They are the fruits of sin." (Thomas Constable, Genesis Expository Notes, Dallas Theological Seminary who is quoting Ross, "Genesis," p. 33)

***God's Sovereignty and Human Free Will.*** "The chapter simply does not support the concept that one finds fulfillment and bliss in liberating oneself from subordination to God's word, his permissions and his denials. ***Man is not suddenly metamorphosed from a puppet to a free and independent thinker. In fact, he never was an automaton.*** If man had lacked the ability to choose, the prohibition from God not to eat of the fruit of the tree of knowledge of good and evil would have been superfluous. One is not told to abstain from something unless he has the capacity not to abstain." (Thomas Constable, Genesis Expository Notes, Dallas Theological Seminary who is quoting Victor P. Hamilton, *The Book of Genesis: Chapters 1-17*, pp. 211)

In essence, Genesis 3 introduces the two doctrines of freedom of the will and God's sovereignty. These two seemingly contradictory doctrines co-exist in this chapter and appear through the rest of Scripture.

- Some final thoughts by Augustine on evil:

1. Evil does not exist in its own right, but only as a corruption of something good.
2. God's purpose is to bring some great good out of evil (Gen 50:20; Rom 8:28); otherwise, He would not bother to sustain evil beings.

\*\* The problem of evil – defending God's character in light of the existence of evil in our world – is famously presented by **Alvin Plantinga** in his free will defense.

- The first part of his defense accounts for moral evil as the result of free human action.
- The second part of his defense argues for the logical possibility of "a mighty nonhuman spirit" such as Satan who is responsible for so-called 'natural evils', including earthquakes, tidal waves, and virulent diseases.

Many philosophers accept that Plantinga successfully solves the logical problem of evil, as he appears to have shown that God and evil are logically compatible.

#### **(4:1-16) Story of Cain and Abel**

“God had warned Adam and Eve about sin. Even so, Cain murdered his brother, the beginning of sibling rivalry, because God accepted Abel's offering but not his own. He denied responsibility for his sin and objected to the severity of God's punishment. God graciously provided protection for Cain in response to his complaint. Chapter 3 gives the cause and chapter 4 the effect.” (Thomas Constable, Genesis Expository Notes, Dallas Theological Seminary)

(4:7) This is the third of three curses (see 3:14, serpent; 3:17, ground) in this section (2:4-4:26). This curse is personally placed upon an individual, proof that the effects of sin and wickedness were becoming worse upon God's creation.

(4:13-15) God's grace is evident in punishment through the preservation of Cain's life.

(4:16) At the end of this section that Cain leaves the presence of God and settles in the land of Nod, east of Eden. Notice, that Adam and Eve also leave the presence of God and move east of the garden of Eden (3:24). The writer wishes to compare the two events, but he highlights the development of sin in this first section of chapter 4. The effects of sin that originated in chapter 3 now result in greater separation and isolation from God.

Summary: Cain was to rule in Adam's place when he died. But Cain's attitude was never right. His offering was rejected because worship is an attitude and Cain's wrong attitude, he did not honor or worship God properly. Cain allowed sin to work in his life (v. 7) and as a result, note the 5 consequences of sin through his life and into his lineage:

(i.) (8) The result is murder.

(ii.) (9) The impact of sin continues to build: Cain denies wrongdoing.

(iii.-v.) are seen in the next section.

**(4:17-26) Civilization begins through ungodly Cain and god-fearing Seth**

(17) Further demonstration of Cain's rebellion: He is to wander (12), yet (iii.) he builds a city. Also, one cannot subdue the earth living in one place (1:28).

(18-24) Lamech, a direct descendent of Cain, continues to show the sinful pattern of his forefather:

(iv.) (19) Lamech takes two wives, bigamy.

(v.) (23) Lamech's pride and boastful attitude in his taking of a life.

(4:25) Seth is born to physically replace Abel & spiritually replace Cain.

(4:26) In Cain's family there is rebellion to the things of God. Through Seth's lineage, "men began to call upon the name of the Lord".

Through Cain in chapter 4, the emphasis is on culture and the focus on mankind. There is no mention of culture through Seth in chapter 5, his family focuses on the Lord.

- A summary of Genesis 2:4-4:26

	<u>Before the Fall</u>	<u>After the Fall</u>
<i>Relation to God</i>	Unity, Perfect, Open	Fear, Separation
<i>Relation to creation</i>	Harmony, Authority	Struggle, Toil
<i>Relation to mate</i>	Shameless	Shameful
<i>Inner attitude</i>	Peace, Confidence	Uncertainty
<i>Spiritual Condition</i>	Freedom	Doubt, Bondage



**(5:1-6:8) This is what became of (to<sup>l</sup>dot) Adam**

**(5) The tragic consequences of sin as seen in the lineage of Seth**

“Genesis begins the process of identifying the seed that will rule the earth (Gen. 1:26-28) and crush the Serpent (3:15).” “The section of Genesis [5:1-6:8] traces that lineage from Adam to Noah, even as the matching ten-generation genealogy of Genesis 11:10-26 traces it from Shem to Abraham. (Waltke, p. 109)

(5:1-20) Note the four details given in the genealogy of Seth:

- 1) Name
- 2) Age @ birth of first son
- 3) Length of remaining life
- 4) Age @ death

“There are at least three purposes for the inclusion of this genealogy, which contains 10 paragraphs (vv. 1-5, 6-8, 9-11, 12-14, 15-17, 18-20, 21-24, 25-27, 28-31, and 32).”

1. It shows the development of the human race from Adam to Noah and bridges the gap in time between these two major individuals.
2. “It demonstrates the veracity of God's word when He said that people would die as a result of sin (cf. 2:17). Note the recurrence of the phrase "and he died" (vv. 5, 8, 11, 14, 17, 20, 27, and 31).”
- 3.

(5:21-32) Enoch is a ray of hope that shows the curse not to be final. Also, Enoch is the father of Methuselah (who lives longer than anyone else @ 969).

The judgment of the flood occurs immediately after the passing of the final righteous man on earth, Methuselah. Lamech, father of Noah and son of Methuselah, dies 5 years before the flood.

Methuselah becomes the father of Lamech (5:25)	187
Lamech becomes the father of Noah (5:28-29)	182
Noah's age at the time of the flood (7:6)	<u>600</u>
<b>Age of Methuselah at his death (5:27)</b>	<b>969</b>

**(6:1-8) The great extent of wickedness on earth**

(6:1-7) This period of time agrees with the description of lust, greed, and sinfulness found in Genesis 4!

(6:2) Who are the "sons of God" in verse 2? There are 3 views:

- 1) **Dynastic rulers from the lineage of Cain**. The Cainite princes take many wives for themselves to propagate a new race. Perhaps these dynastic rulers are demonically controlled.

Support for this view: Ancient Near Eastern literature often called kings “sons of gods”. Also, this story is similar to other Babylonian antediluvian (post-flood) stories.

Problem with this view: The kingship of Cain's lineage is **not** expressed in this passage.

2) **Godly men of Seth join the ungodly women of Cain.** There is a marriage union of the holy to the unholy.

Support for this view: The Old Testament sometimes refers to the godly as the sons of God (e.g., Exod. 4:22).

Problem with this view: "Sons of God" is **not** a term used for believers in the Old Testament.

3) **Fallen Angels.** The cohabitation of the angels with humans.

Problem with this view: Angels do not marry (Matt 22:30)

Support for this view: "Sons of god" in the OT refers to angels (Job 1:6; 2:1; 38:7) and the New Testament refers to the angelic sin of Genesis 6 in 2 Peter 2:4; Jude 6.

(6:4) Apparently the Nephilim were on the earth BEFORE the marriages in 6:2.

(6:8) **Noah.** He found favor in God's eyes. Contrast to v. 7 where God will "blot out" all mankind because of sin.

### **(6:9-9:29) This is what became of (*tol'dot*) Noah**

Noah's *tol'dot* not only focuses on God's attribute of holiness through the judgment of sin, but prepares us to look forward to the new world after the flood. God's great desire is to bless His people, not continuously curse them, and the establishment of a perpetual line of blessing through one of Noah's sons, Shem, will be the dominant theme of Genesis from 11:27-50:26.

Two thoughts are apparent in this structure. When the rising waters approach their apex, the author shifts the reader's attention away from the physical calamity of the flood and focuses on Noah – the righteous, obedient one who has found favor with God. Then, the waters begin to recede and the process of restoration (drying of the earth) begins, which will allow Noah to begin a new race of people.

**I.** God resolves to destroy the corrupt race (6:11-13).

**II.** Noah builds an ark according to God's instructions (6:14-22).

**III.** The Lord commands the remnant to enter the ark (7:1-9).

**IV.** The flood begins (7:10-16).

**V.** The flood prevails 150 days and the water covers the mountains (7:17-24).

- VI. God remembers Noah (8:1a).
- V.' The flood recedes 150 days, and the mountains are visible (8:1b-5).
- IV.' The earth dries (8:6-14).
- III.' God commands the remnant to leave the ark (8:15-19).
- II.' Noah builds an altar (8:20).
- I.' The Lord resolves not to destroy humankind (8:21-22).

(Ross, p. 191; Waltke, p. 125, uses a similar variation of this same chiasmic structure.)

**(6:9-22) God instructs Noah to build an ark**

The Lord destroyed the corrupt, violent human race and submerged its world, but He used righteous Noah to preserve life and establish a new world after the Flood.

(6:9) **Noah:** He is righteous, blameless, and walking with God.

(6:18) Building the ark (v. 14f) is a test of faithfulness on the part of Noah and God honors **Noah's** faithfulness.

The construction project took about 100 years (see 5:32 & 7:11), at any time Noah could have quit the process. But, Noah obeys the Lord (6:22; 7:5,9,16)!

**The ark:**

Seaworthiness: The American battleship U.S.S. Oregon was built in the same proportion as the ark and was considered a very seaworthy ship.

Design: Also, the ark was built in such a way as not to capsize. The ark was approximately 1,400 cubic feet in capacity. This is equivalent to 522 livestock railroad cars. Each railroad car can transport 240 sheep (the size of an average animal on the earth). This amounts to a total of 125,280 animals.

“The ark was about 450 feet long (1 1/2 American football fields), 75 feet wide (7 parking spaces), and 45 feet high (a four-story building). It had three decks and over 100,000 square feet of deck space. There were over 1 million cubic feet of space in it. This is the capacity of approximately 800 railroad boxcars. It had a capacity of almost 14,000 gross tons. The ark probably looked more like a rectangular box than a ship. After all, its purpose was to stay afloat, not travel from one destination to another. This design uses space very efficiently. The ark would have been very stable in the water. Modern ocean-going tankers and aircraft carriers have a similar scale of dimensions. The wood out of which Noah made it is unknown. The Hebrew word occurs only here in the Old Testament.” (Thomas Constable, Genesis Expository Notes, Dallas Theological Seminary)

(6:17-21) “This is the first occurrence of the word "covenant" (Heb. *berith*) in the Old Testament (v. 18).

The Noahic covenant is made in the form of a suzerainty treaty, where the superior (God) bestows favor upon his lower subject. This covenant is parallel to the Abrahamic and

Davidic covenants in that they are eternal promises given by God to individuals and their offspring.

**(7) The judgment of the flood**

(7:1) Only **Noah** found favor with the Lord.

(7:2-3, 8-9, 14-16) The ordering of animals is mentioned three times. Clean animals (probably according to Lev 11) were taken by sevens. Unclean animals were taken by two, male and female.

(7:11) Flood begins when Noah is 600 years old.

(7:19) Extent of the flood.

\* Evidence for a **partial flood**:

Many geologists embrace this view because they question the validity of the Biblical text. In other words, these geologists cannot accept the position of a universal flood because the ark came to rest within 500 miles of its starting point. Also, these geologists believe that to flood our globe would require 8 times the amount of water presently on the earth's surface.

\* Evidence for a **universal flood**:

- 1) Because of the extent of wickedness upon the earth, God tells Noah He must destroy all flesh (man and animals) that exist on the face of the earth (6:5-7, 11-13).
- 2) In 6:17-21 & 7:18-24, the text emphasizes the totality of the flood over "the face of the land".
- 3) The need for an ark (6:14) and the great size of the ark (6:15-16). An ark of this size would not be necessary for a local/limited flood.
- 4) In 9:11 & 15, the text indicates a universal flood.
- 5) Jesus indicates in Matt. 24:37-39 that the flood was universal.
- 6) Also 2 Peter 2:5; 3:6 offers evidence for a universal flood.

(7:11) Advocates for a **universal flood** believe that the waters which flooded the earth came from two sources.

First, the floodgates of the sky refer to a canopy (Gen. 1:6-7; 2:6) that divided the waters in the sky from the waters on earth.

Second, the release of water from the fountains of the great deep (Psalm 104:5-9) that contributed to the collection of water that flooded the earth.

(7:23) Every living thing on the face of the earth died!

(7:24) Water remained on the earth for 150 days (including the 40 days & nights of rain), then God “remembered Noah and all the beasts and all the cattle that were with him in the ark”.

### **(8) Events after the flood, life begins on earth once again**

(8:1) This verse/event is the central concept and focus of Genesis 6-8 (see reference to Ross’ discussion above).

(8:1-5) The ark rests on *Mt. Ararat* 224 days after Noah had entered the ark (7:7, 11).

“Modern *Mt. Ararat* lies on the border between Turkey and Armenia near the center of the ancient world. From this general region Noah's descendants spread out over the earth.” (Thomas Constable, Genesis Expository Notes, Dallas Theological Seminary)

(8:6-7) After another 40 days Noah sends out a raven (a scavenger), that apparently does not return (he probably found food).

(8:13-19) All the occupants leave the ark because the ground is now dry.

\* GQ: How long was Noah in the ark? **371 days!** (see 7:11 & 8:14).

(8:20-22) This is the first mention of an altar in Scripture.

### **(9:1-17) God’s covenant with Noah**

(9:1, 7) These verses are similar to Genesis 1:26-28.

(9:2-5) But the relationship between man and nature has changed. The disharmony between man and nature becomes even greater, because of fear and terror (v. 2) that has replaced the peace and harmony that previously existed between man and animals.

“At this new beginning of the human family, God again commanded Noah and his sons to fill the earth with their descendants (v. 1; cf. 1:28; 9:7). As with Adam, He also gave them dominion over the animals and permission to eat food with only one prohibition (cf. 1:26, 28-29; 2:16-17).” **“God did, however, prohibit the eating of animal blood to instill respect for the sacredness of life, since blood is a symbol of life** (cf. Lev. 3:17; 7:2-27; 19:26; Deut. 12:1-24; 1 Sam. 14:32-34).” (Thomas Constable, Genesis Expository Notes, Dallas Theological Seminary)

It is difficult to say if God only allowed man to eat plants (Gen 1:29; 9:3) before the Noahic flood. But Genesis 9:3 is definitive, that God now permits man to eat animals and exercise the power of life and death over the animal kingdom, which is a greater demonstration of his authority over the animal world.

(9:6-7) “God not only reasserted the cultural mandate to reproduce and modified the food law, but He also reasserted the sanctity of human life (cf. ch. 4). The reason for capital punishment (v. 6) is that God made man in His own image.

[\* *Note: Other Scriptural support for capital punishment (9:6): Exod. 21:12-14; Lev. 24:17; Matt. 26:52; Rom. 13:4.*]

- (9:8-17) In the **Noahic Covenant**, God promised never to flood the earth again (v. 11). “This covenant would remain for "all successive generations" (v. 12). People have no responsibility to guarantee the perpetuity of this covenant; God will do all that He promised (v. 9).

The covenant God makes with Noah is unconditional, universal and everlasting.

### **(9:18-29) The fall of Noah and the curse upon Canaan**

The earth is repopulated by **Shem, Ham, & Japheth** (vs. 18-19; cf. 5:32).

The blessing of Shem (9:26) begins the introduction of blessing through the lineage of Abraham in following chapters.

The sin of Ham (9:22), seeing his father's nakedness while Noah was drunk and expressing delight about his father's condition to his brothers, results in a curse upon Canaan (9:25), the son of Ham. The text does not describe how Canaan was directly involved in this act of disgrace toward Noah, but we know Canaan (not Ham) is punished. The lineage of Canaan will challenge the Israelites during the days of Moses and Joshua.

***The fall of Noah.*** “Evidently Noah became so drunk that he took off all his clothes and then passed out naked in his tent. There is no indication that Ham disrobed his father or committed some homosexual act. Noah's shame was not that he drank wine but that he drank to excess and thereby lost self-control that resulted in immodesty (cf. Eph. 5:18).

***The sin of Ham.*** “Ham's gazing on Noah's nakedness represents an early step in the abandonment of the moral code after the Flood. Ham dishonored Noah not by seeing him naked but by his outspoken delight in his father's condition (cf. Gen. 19:26; Exod. 33:20; Judg. 13:22; 1 Sam. 6:19).” (Thomas Constable, Genesis Expository Notes, Dallas Theological Seminary)

Nakedness in the Old Testament was from the beginning a thing of shame for fallen man (i.e. Gen 3:7, Adam and Eve in the garden). The state of nakedness was both undignified and vulnerable. To see someone uncovered was to bring dishonor and to gain advantage for potential exploitation.

***The curse upon Canaan.*** “This oracle, the first time Moses recorded a person uttering a curse, is a prophecy announcing divine judgment on Canaan's descendants for *their* sin

that had its seed in Ham's act. Noah as a prophet announced the future of this grandson's descendants (cf. Gen. 49; Deut. 33; et al.).” (Thomas Constable, Genesis Expository Notes, Dallas Theological Seminary)

There is no basis for the popular notion that this oracle doomed the Hamites, who were mainly Africans, to a position of inferiority or slavery among the other peoples of the world. **Canaan and his branch of the family** are the subject of this prophecy, **not Ham** and all his descendants.

(9:29) Noah dies @ 950 years of age.

### **(10:1-11:9) This is what became of (*tol'dot*) Noah's sons**

“This fourth *toledot* section (10:1-11:9) brings the inspired record of primeval events to a climax and provides a transition to the patriarchal narratives. All the nations of the world in their various lands with their different languages descended from Shem, Ham, and Japheth. Of special interest to the original Israelite readers were the Canaanites and the other ancient Near Eastern powers.” (Thomas Constable, Genesis Expository Notes, Dallas Theological Seminary)

### **(10) The table of nations through the descendents of Noah**

This section is thematically arranged by Moses, because chronologically chapter 10 follows 11:1-9. The people begin to fulfill the mandate of 9:1, "fill the earth", as a result of judgment (11:1-9). Chapter 10 is a horizontal genealogy showing the political, geographical and ethnic developments of the earth in the early stages of the postdiluvian world.

This genealogy in chapter 10 differs from the accounts in Genesis 5 & 11, which emphasizes ancestry. Chapter 5 introduces us to Noah and chapter 11 leads us to Abraham.

The table of nations in Genesis 10 is a 'horizontal' genealogy rather than a 'vertical' one (those in chaps. 5 and 11 are vertical). Its purpose is not primarily to trace ancestry; instead it shows political, geographical, and ethnic affiliations among tribes for various reasons, most notable being holy war against the Canaanites.

### **(10:1-5) Japheth**

“Japheth's descendants (vv. 2-5) settled north, east, and west of Ararat.

### **(10:6-20) Ham**

Notice that the lineage of Ham includes Nimrod (vs. 8-11, builder of Nineveh and kingdom of Babel), Canaan (v. 15), and his sons (v. 16, Jebusite, Amorite, Girgashite).

### **(10:21-32) Shem**

“Shem's posterity (vv. 21-31) settled to the northeast and southeast of the Canaanites. This branch of the human family is also important in the Genesis record of Israel's





(11:7) “The confusion of language probably involved more than just the introduction of new words. Some scholars believe that this judgment also involved the implantation of ethnic and racial distinctions in humankind.

(11:9) ““Babel” means “confusion” in Hebrew, and “the gate of gods” in Babylonian.”

### **(11:10-26) This is what became of (*tol'dot*) Shem**

Out of the chaotic situation of Babel (cf. 1:2), God brings order and purpose to his creation. This vertical (ancestral) genealogy of Shem introduces **Abraham** & Haran, father of **Lot**, and God’s plan of blessing will be revealed through His unconditional and eternal promise to Abraham.

“Most scholars regard “Eber” (v. 14) as the individual from whom the Jews received the name “Hebrew.” Adam, Noah, and Abram all fathered three named sons linking them as saviors of humanity. In Abram’s case these sons (descendants) were Isaac, Jacob, and Joseph.” (Thomas Constable, Genesis Expository Notes, Dallas Theological Seminary)

### **(11:27-50:26) Patriarchal History**

Ross, p. 81-82

12:10-Chapter 15 Events related to the promise of land

- 12:10-20 Famine in Canaan, travel to Egypt
- Chapter 13 Controversy over the land as Lot receives the better portion of land
- Chapter 14 Battle of the kings over the land; Blessing from Melchizedek
- Chapter 15 Ratification of the covenant; Prophecy of bondage outside of the promised land; Boundaries of the promised land established

Chapters 16-21 Events related to the promised seed

- Chapter 16 Abraham’s attempt to fulfill God’s promise of a son through Hagar
- Chapter 17 The covenant is reconfirmed – Sarah will have a son!
- Chap. 18-19 The Angel of the Lord confirms that Sarah will have a son; Rescue of Lot – The birth of Moab and Ammon, who will oppose the lineage of the promised seed
- Chapter 20 Sarah’s life is endangered by Abimelech
- Chapter 21 The covenant is fulfilled – The promised seed (Isaac) is born

Chapter 22 The testing and obedient response of Abraham

Chap. 23-25 Transference of the promise of blessing to the next generation, to Abraham’s son Isaac.

**(11:27-25:11) This is what became of (toʿdot) Terah**

“Some notable changes take place in the second part of Genesis. Instead of the genealogies being prominent and the stories secondary, as in chapters 1-11, the reverse becomes true now. God retreats farther into the background of the events recorded than was the case earlier, and there is corresponding emphasis on the personalities of the patriarchs. The promises to the patriarchs form the central theme of this section, especially those concerning descendants, land, and divine blessing. There also seems to be increasing depth in the moral awareness of the patriarchs as generation follows generation from Abram to Joseph.”  
(Thomas Constable, Genesis Expository Notes, Dallas Theological Seminary)

“God progressively revealed more information about each of these promises.

1. He gave more information about the land promise in 13:15, 17; 15:7-8, 18; 17:8; 24:7; 26:3-4 (plural "lands"); 28:4, 13; 35:12; 48:4; and 50:24.
2. Repetition of the seed promise occurs in 13:15-16; 15:5; 17:2, 5-10, 13, 16, 19-20; 18:18; 21:12; 22:17-18; 26:3-4, 24; 28:13-14; 32:12; 35:11-12; 46:3; and 48:4 and 16.
3. The promise of universal blessing recurs in 18:18; 22:18 9 (to Abraham); 26:4 (to Isaac); and 28:14 (to Jacob).”

(Thomas Constable, Genesis Expository Notes, Dallas Theological Seminary)

**(11:27-12:9) The call of Abram and his obedient response**

The geographical movements of the Genesis story are significant. Chapters 12-36 take place in Palestine, the land of promise. But the preceding (1-11) and concluding chapters (37-50) take place in regions of the Near Eastern world that will be in conflict with the nation of blessing – Babylon and Egypt.

There is a further contrast between chapters 1-11 and 12-50, as God judges the world repeatedly during the period of primeval history, the patriarchs will be the instruments through whom God will redeem the world.

(11:30) Between verses 30 & 31 God extends His call to Abram (12:1-3), while he is still in Ur. Also, this is the first mention of Sarai's barrenness and represents an immediate challenge to the fulfillment of God's promise in 12:2.

Acts 7:2-4 and Nehemiah 9:7 confirms that God revealed Himself to Abram in Ur.

(11:31) **The city of Ur.** Ur, the city of Abram where he was raised, in the land of Sumer was perhaps the greatest commercial center of the known world. The Sumerian people enjoyed great prosperity and power during the third dynasty of the kings of Ur (around 2060-1950); Abram was born approximately in 2166 B.C.

(Thomas Constable, Genesis Expository Notes, Dallas Theological Seminary)

**The city of Haran.** The Scriptures record the departure of Abram from Haran (Genesis 12:4) during his journey to the land of promise. Although he ultimately left Haran, the story of Genesis frequently returned to the region of Haran. Abraham sent his servant to Aram-naharaim to find a wife for Isaac (Gen 24:2-10). Then, Isaac told Jacob to flee to his uncle in Haran so that his brother Esau would not kill him, for Jacob had stolen his

brother's birthright (Gen 27:43). Furthermore, while Jacob was in Haran he married his cousins Leah and Rachel (Gen 29:1-30).

(Thomas Constable, Genesis Expository Notes, Dallas Theological Seminary)

(11:31, 32) Moses describes the movements of Abram and his family, that they left Ur in order to travel to the land of Canaan, and had arrived in Haran and settled there. Terah, the father of Abram, died in Haran. Some commentators conjecture, that the placement of these verses provide a sharp contrast between the judgment at Babel (11:1-9) and the promise given to Abram in 12:1-3. In the midst of His judgment upon the world, God intentionally gives hope to the world as He blesses Abraham, who will be a blessing to the whole world.

(12:1-3) This is **the central passage of the book**, because it ties the rebellion and degeneration of man (seen in Genesis 1-11) to God's gift of salvation made known to the patriarchs of Genesis 12-50. God brings man into a state of blessing, although he deserved judgment (Genesis 3-11). To summarize, **it is the Creator of the universe, who revealed Himself and chose to redeem mankind** – remember mankind was NOT deserving of this grace.

\* This section fits chronologically between 11:30 & 31. God's covenant, or promise, with Abraham has three provisions:

**LAND** (12:1). God promises this particular land to Abram's family. The boundaries are defined in 15:18 and Joshua 1:4 (yet both references probably refer to the millennial reign). Another listing of borders is found in Deut. 34:2, 3 (and Num. 34:1-12). This refers to the Israel in the days of Joshua through Solomon.

This promise is **literal**, see 13:14-16.

The Palestinian contract (Deut 30:1-10) given to Moses further explains the promise made to Abram. The nation of Israel will return to the land in repentance and faith, and **this promise will be fulfilled in the millennium**.

**SEED** (12:2). Follow the lineage of Christ in Matthew 1. Note **the barrenness of Sarai in 11:30**. The nation of Israel does begin with Abram, along with the origins of other nations.

This promise is **eternal**, see 13:15.

The Davidic contract given to King David (2 Sam 7:12-16) further explains the promise given to Abram.

**BLESSING** (12:3). **This promise is ultimately fulfilled through Christ**, see Gal. 3:8. This promise is **unconditional**, see 15:9-18. Only God makes Himself responsible to this covenant.

The New contract given to Jeremiah (Jer 31:31-34) further explains the promise given to Abram. "This covenant provides the basis by which God will bless Israel in the future – Israel will enjoy forgiveness of sins through the meritorious death of Christ. The unconditional nature of this covenant is once more seen in the 'I will' statements of v. 33-34." (Enns, p. 390)

***Covenant Theology** (also called Replacement theology) teaches that God has abandoned the promises made to the Jewish people and replaced them with NT Christians, who are now His chosen people on earth.*

*Also, within Covenant theology the two sacraments serve as bridges, or links, between the OT and NT. For example, the Lord's Supper is simply a replacement of the Jewish Passover since both events symbolize God's act of salvation of His chosen people.*

*Concerning baptism, this sacrament is the visible sign of entrance into the New Covenant and replaces the Abrahamic rite of circumcision that symbolizes the cleansing of sin.*

(12:4) "Since Lot voluntarily chose to accompany Abram, he probably believed the promises as well (cf. Ruth). Abram's call had been to separate from his pagan relatives, so he was not disobedient by allowing Lot to accompany him." (Thomas Constable, Genesis Expository Notes, Dallas Theological Seminary)

(12:5-6) Abram's first settlement was in Shechem. Other towns on the main travel route south of Shechem are Bethel, Hebron, and Gerar.

(12:8) "Abram proceeded south and encamped between Bethel and Ai (probably et Tell) just north of Salem (Jerusalem). Again he built an altar to worship Yahweh and called on His name in worship." (Thomas Constable, Genesis Expository Notes, Dallas Theological Seminary)

**(12:10-20) Abram leaves the promised land and moves to Egypt**

"The second crisis Abram faced arose because of a famine in Canaan. Abram chose to sojourn in the Nile Valley until it was past. In this incident Abram tried to pass Sarai off as his sister because he feared for his life. By doing so, he jeopardized his blessing since he lost his wife temporarily to Pharaoh. However, Yahweh intervened to deliver Abram and Sarai from Egypt." (Thomas Constable, Genesis Expository Notes, Dallas Theological Seminary)

**(13) Abram returns to the promised land, but there is a conflict with Lot**

(13:11-13) "Lot, however, chose neither of these options, north or south. Instead he decided to move east into the valley of the Jordan (v. 11). Earlier we read that Adam, Eve, and Cain traveled east after they sinned (3:24; 4:16) and that the people of Babel went east and rebelled against God (11:2). Thus Lot's move east makes us a bit uneasy (cf. 12:3). The place Lot chose to settle was on the eastern frontier of the Promised Land (v. 11)." (Thomas Constable, Genesis Expository Notes, Dallas Theological Seminary)

"Lot's choice seems to have been influenced to some extent by a desire to ally with the native inhabitants (cf. 13:7, 12; 19:1-26) as well as by the natural fruitfulness of the Jordan Valley (v. 10)." (Thomas Constable, Genesis Expository Notes, Dallas Theological Seminary)

(13:14-17) “Abram "lifted up his eyes" also (v. 14), but he saw the whole land as far as he could see in every direction. God repeated His promise to give him and his descendants all the land he saw. This promise was more specific than God's previous promises regarding the seed and the land (12:2, 7).

#### **(14) Battle in the promised land; Blessing from Melchizedek**

As Abram returns from his battle against Chedorlaomer and the kings who were with him, Abram meets the King of Salem. Melchizedek, whose story is recorded in Hebrews 7:1-10, blesses Abram and Abram gives back to the king a tenth of all his victory spoils. Melchizedek is a type of Christ because of his priesthood, his unknown beginning, and his title as king of righteousness and peace.

Melchizedek is God's representative, the only man Abram recognizes as spiritually superior to him. Melchizedek, a priest (this is the first reference to a priest in the Scriptures) blesses Abram with food fit for royalty in that day, bread and wine (v. 18), which is a reward for Abram's faithfulness.

#### **(15) Ratification of God's covenant with Abraham**

“From chapters 12 through 14 issues involving God's promise to Abram concerning land have predominated. However from chapter 15 on tensions arising from the promise of descendants become central in the narrative.” (Thomas Constable, Genesis Expository Notes, Dallas Theological Seminary)

(15:1-3) It has been 10 years since God gave Abram his promise of blessing, and Abram fully believes that God will honor His promise. But, Abram decides that he will "help" God accomplish the task of becoming the father of many future descendants. He presents his chief servant, **Eliezer of Damascus**, as the heir of his household, since God has not given him a son.

(15:4) “Abram assumed that since he was old and childless and since Lot had not returned to him, the heir God had promised him would be his chief servant, Eliezer.” “God assured Abram that the descendants He had promised would come through a "natural-born son," not an adopted heir (cf. 12:7; 13:15-16).” (Thomas Constable, Genesis Expository Notes, Dallas Theological Seminary)

(15:12-21) Abram is only a spectator to the confirmation of this covenant. Note what is going to happen as a result of this commitment by God:

- Abram's descendants will be enslaved for 400 years. But the nation will be released & she will receive many possessions from Egypt.
- Israel's oppressor, Egypt, will be judged for her actions.
- Abram will live a long life, he dies at age 175.
- God gives the physical boundaries to the land that Israel (18-21) will possess.

(15:6) “God justified Abram (i.e., declared him righteous) because of his faith, evidently when he left Ur. Abram's normal response to God's words to him was to believe them. Abram had trusted the person of God previously, but he evidently had not realized that

God would give him an heir from his own body (v. 4). Now he accepted this promise of God also (cf. Rom. 4:3; Gal. 3:6; James 2:23).” (Boice, Genesis, 2:98)

“In the middle of this chapter occurs what is perhaps the most important verse in the entire Bible: Genesis 15:6. ***In it, the doctrine of justification by faith is set forth for the first time.*** This is the first verse in the Bible explicitly to speak of (1) 'faith,' (2) 'righteousness,' and (3) 'justification.'” (Thomas Constable, Genesis Expository Notes, Dallas Theological Seminary)

- The period of 1875 (Jacob’s move to Egypt) -1446  
The 430-year sojourn in Egypt (Exod. 12:40-41; Gal. 3:17)
- The period of 1845-1446  
The 400 years of bondage in Egypt (Gen. 15:13, 16; Acts 7:6)
- The period of 1845-1395  
The "about" 450 years of bondage, wandering, & conquest (Acts 13:19-20)

(15:18) “This was the formal "cutting" of the Abrahamic Covenant. God now formalized His earlier promises (12:1-3, 7) into a suzerainty treaty, similar to a royal land grant, since Abram now understood and believed what God had promised. God as king bound Himself to do something for His servant Abram. The fulfillment of the covenant did not depend on Abram's obedience. It rested entirely on God's faithfulness.” (Thomas Constable, Genesis Expository Notes, Dallas Theological Seminary)

“The Abrahamic Covenant is basic to the premillennial system of theology. This covenant has not yet been fulfilled as God promised it would be. Since God is faithful we believe He will fulfill these promises in the future. Consequently there must be a future for Israel as a nation (cf. Rom. 11). Amillennialists interpret this covenant in a less literal way. The crucial issue is interpretation. If God fulfilled the seed and blessings promises literally, should we not expect that He will also fulfill the land promises literally?” (Thomas Constable, Genesis Expository Notes, Dallas Theological Seminary)

### **(16) Abraham’s attempt to fulfill God’s promise of a son through Hagar**

“Sarai and Abram tried to obtain the heir God had promised them by resorting to a culturally acceptable custom of their day even though it involved a failure to trust God. This fleshly act created serious complications for Abram and his household that included Hagar fleeing into the wilderness. Nevertheless God proved faithful to His promises and responded to Hagar's cries for help. He provided for her needs and promised her many descendants through Ishmael since he was Abram's son.” (Thomas Constable, Genesis Expository Notes, Dallas Theological Seminary)

“The Lord named Ishmael (v. 11), whose name means "God hears," and Hagar named the Lord (v. 13) "the One who sees." These two names constitute a major revelation of God: He hears and He sees.” (Thomas Constable, Genesis Expository Notes, Dallas Theological Seminary)

**(17) The covenant is reconfirmed – Sarah will have a son!**

"This chapter is a watershed in the Abraham story. The promises to him have been unfolded bit by bit, gradually building up and becoming more detailed and precise, until here they are repeated and filled out in a glorious crescendo in a long and elaborate divine speech. From this point in Genesis, divine speeches become rarer and little new content is added to the promises, but the fulfillment of these promises becomes more visible." (Wenham, p. 16)

(17:1) 14 years after Ishmael's birth (24 years after coming to Canaan), God appears again to Abram. The 14 years of silence is probably a time of discipline for Abram after his disobedience with Hagar.

(17:5 & 15) Name changes for Abram and Sarai indicate fulfillment of the Abrahamic Covenant, in that they will have a multitude of descendants.

Abram: This name means "exalted father", referring to his royal lineage.

Abraham: This name means "father of a great number".

Sarai: This name means "my princess".

Sarah: This name means "princess", she will be the mother of nations.

"The references to the "covenant" in this chapter have caused some confusion. The Abrahamic Covenant (ch. 15) is in view (vv. 4, 7, 11, 19, 21) but also the outward sign of that covenant that was the covenant of circumcision (vv. 2, 9, 10, 13, 14). Thus Moses used the word "covenant" with two different references here. Whereas the **Abrahamic Covenant** was unconditional, the **covenant of circumcision** depended on Abram's obedience (vv. 1-2). God would bless Abram as Abram obeyed God by circumcising his household. This blessing would be in the form of multiplying Abram's descendants "exceedingly," even more than God had already promised." (Thomas Constable, Genesis Expository Notes, Dallas Theological Seminary)

God has not commanded circumcision of the flesh for Christians. Some Christians in the reformed traditions of Protestantism regard baptism as what God requires of us today in place of circumcision. They practice infant baptism believing that this rite brings the infant into the "covenant community" (i.e., the church) and under God's care in a special sense.

(17:15-21) God tells Abraham the details as to how he will become a father. Sarah, at age 90, will have a son named Isaac the following year. **Abraham makes another mistake and laughs at the provision of God.**

**(18:1-15) The Angel of the Lord confirms that Sarah will have a son**

(18:1f) This account in Genesis records another theophany, where the Lord Himself appears. Yahweh is accompanied by 2 angels (19:1).

"The "three men" were "the LORD" (the Angel of Yahweh, vv. 13, 17, 20, 33) and the "two angels" (19:1; 18:22) who later visited Lot. If Abraham had previously met the Angel of the Lord it seems likely that he would have recognized Him at once (cf. 17:1,

22). If he had not, Abraham became aware of who this Angel was during this interview (cf. v. 25).” (Thomas Constable, Genesis Expository Notes, Dallas Theological Seminary)

**(18:16-19:38) Abraham rescues Lot, God destroys Sodom and Gomorrah**

Abraham sees the judging hand of God through the life of his nephew, Lot.

Lot is a righteous man (2 Peter 2:7-8) living in an unrighteous city. Lot is hospitable and generous (19:2-3), but the city of Sodom controlled Lot and his family. Sodom would have destroyed Lot, if God did not destroy Sodom.

(18:22-33) “This is the first time in Scripture that a man initiated a conversation with God. He prayed for the people of Sodom, not just Lot. Abraham's intercession raises several questions in the minds of thoughtful Bible students. Did Abraham succeed in his intercession since God destroyed Sodom and Gomorrah?

(19:1f) “The men of Sodom wanted to have homosexual relations with Lot's visitors (v. 5). The Mosaic Law later regarded all homosexual behavior as a capital offense (Lev. 18:22; 20:13; cf. Rom. 1:26-27). Their lack of hospitality contrasts with Abraham's hospitality (18:1-8) and reflects their respective moral states.” (Thomas Constable, Genesis Expository Notes, Dallas Theological Seminary)

(19:29) God spared Lot, because of Abraham, in spite of the actions of Lot and his family:

- 1) (19:12-22) The two angels tell Lot and his family to leave Sodom. Lot's future sons-in-law stay anyway.
- 2) Lot hesitates to leave Sodom, so the angels must take him by the hand out of the city.
- 3) Lot does not listen to the angels. He bargains with them to go to a small town instead of the mountains, the angels agree.
- 4) (19:23-26) Lot's wife looks back and turns into a pillar of salt.
- 5) (19:34-38) Lot's daughters cannot see God's provisionary capability so their own father bears them children (Moabites & Ammonites). Lot's wife and daughters are too deeply influenced by the city and customs of Sodom.

As in the Flood story, the writer focused the reader's attention on the response of individuals to the judgment rather than on the destruction itself. Here those individuals are Lot's wife and Abraham.

“Moses evidently included the account of Lot's incest (vv. 30-38) for at least two purposes.

1. It gives the origin of the Moabite and Ammonite nations that played major roles as inveterate enemies in the history of Israel. The legacy of Moab and Ammon was destined to provide the worst carnal seduction in the history of Israel (that of Baal-Peor,



Nu. 25) and the cruelest religious perversion (that of Molech, Lv. 18:21)." (Kidner, p.136)

2. It illustrates the degrading effect that living in Sodom had on Lot's daughters.

### **(20) Sarah's life is endangered by Abimelech**

In the midst of disobedience, God still upholds Abraham and calls him a prophet (v. 7). In 17:21 God has announced that Abraham will father a son through his wife, Sarah, in a year. After the events of the previous two chapters Abraham takes his flocks and family to Gerar in the Negev, which is in the southern region of Canaan. But Sarah is once again taken into the harem of another sovereign, this time Abimelech. If Sarah does give birth in a year as God has promised, then the promise of chapter 12 to Abraham is in danger, because Abimelech and not Abraham would be considered to be the father. Yet, God once again intervenes and restores Sarah to Abraham, and again demonstrates His sovereign control over the affairs of all men.

"Fear for his safety evidently led Abraham to act as he did even though his experience with Pharaoh in Egypt had been unsuccessful. Even the repeated promises of God did not drive fear of potential danger from Abraham's heart. God used a pagan king to rebuke the righteous prophet, who had boldly pleaded for Sodom, when Abraham's faith failed." (Thomas Constable, Genesis Expository Notes, Dallas Theological Seminary)

### **(21:1-21) The covenant is fulfilled – The promised seed (Isaac) is born**

Abraham laughed (17:17) and Sarah laughed (18:12) at the thought of a child in their elderly years. Isaac's name means, "he laughs".

"God proved faithful to His promise by providing Isaac. Abraham and Sarah responded with obedience and praise. Ishmael, however, became a threat to Abraham's heir and, consequently, his father sent him away into the wilderness where God continued to provide for him and his mother." (Thomas Constable, Genesis Expository Notes, Dallas Theological Seminary)

"Abraham's obedience in naming his son "Isaac" (17:19) and circumcising him on the eighth day (17:12) was an expression of worship. Isaac's name ("laughter") was appropriate for two reasons.

1. Isaac would be a source of joy to his parents as the fulfillment of God's promised seed.
2. Both Abraham and Sarah had laughed in amazement and unbelief respectively when told that God had chosen to bless them by giving them a son so late in life (17:17; 18:12)."

(Thomas Constable, Genesis Expository Notes, Dallas Theological Seminary)

The concluding description of **Ishmael's** experiences (vv. 14-21) provides information essential to understanding and appreciating later references to him and his descendants in the text. ***Ishmael became the father of 12 sons*** (25:13-16) as Jacob did. From his sons came the Arab nations that have ever since been the chief antagonists of the Israelites."

(The term "Arab" (someone from Arabia) came into use for the first time in the ninth century B.C. according to Wenham, *Genesis 16-50*, p. 156.)

Abraham's natural (Ishmael) and supernatural (Isaac) seed both experience God's testing and blessing. Hagar and Ishmael's trek in chapter 21 has many parallels to Abraham and Isaac's journey in chapter 22. For example,

- Journey into the unknown at the Lord's command.
- Provision for the journey.
- The child comes to the point of death.
- God's messenger intervenes.
- Promise of a future blessing.

(Waltke, p. 292)

### **(21:22-34) Abraham's covenant with Abimelech**

Abimelech sees the hand of God in the life of Abraham and desires a covenant with him. This was established at Beersheba.

"God's blessing of Abraham resulted in his material prosperity. In response to Abimelech's initiative Abraham agreed to make a covenant of peaceful coexistence. This treaty enabled Abraham to serve and worship God freely in the Promised Land."

(Thomas Constable, *Genesis Expository Notes*, Dallas Theological Seminary)

### **(22:1-19) The testing and obedient response of Abraham**

Once Ishmael is removed from the family, Abraham is asked to sacrifice his only son. God expected Abraham to be independent of his family in 12:1, that's the reason for the division of Lot and Abraham in chapter 13. Now Abraham is separated again from all other family members (ex: Ishmael) and God puts him to the test.

In v. 5, Abraham believes God will restore his son. Note the different expressions of obedience displayed by Abraham:

- (22:3) Immediate Obedience. Abraham arose early to go to Mt. Moriah.
- (22:4) Sustained Obedience. Abraham traveled three days (from Beersheba north, about 50 miles).
- (22:6-8) Contagious Obedience. Isaac trusted his father and ultimately God with his life.
- (22:11&15) The angel of the Jehovah stops Abraham from sacrificing Isaac.
- (22:17-18) After the test God reaffirms the covenant (land, seed, blessing) with Abraham. Also, God reaffirmed the covenant with Abraham after his disobedience (after his trip to Egypt and union with Hagar).

"God called on Abraham to make *four great sacrifices*: his country and kindred, Lot, Ishmael, and Isaac. Each sacrifice involved something naturally dear to Abraham, but each resulted in greater blessings from God."

"This incident also demonstrates the strong confidence that Abraham had in God at this time. He believed God was even able to raise Isaac from the dead (Heb. 11:19). This is why he was willing to slay him." (Thomas Constable, *Genesis Expository Notes*, Dallas Theological Seminary)

“The land of Moriah was the mountainous country around Jerusalem. It stood about 45 miles north of Beersheba. On these mountains God later appeared to David who built an altar to the Lord (2 Sam. 24:16-25). Here also Solomon built his temple (2 Chron. 3:1) and Jesus Christ died. A mountain was a suitable place for Abraham to meet God (cf. v. 14).” (Thomas Constable, Genesis Expository Notes, Dallas Theological Seminary)

“For the first and last time in Genesis, the Lord swore an oath in His own name guaranteeing His promise (v. 16; cf. Heb. 6:13-14). God thus reinforced, reemphasized, and extended the promise that He had given formerly (12:1-3) because Abraham trusted and obeyed Him (vv. 17-18).” (Thomas Constable, Genesis Expository Notes, Dallas Theological Seminary)

“Abraham's "seed" (v. 18) refers not only to Isaac but also to Messiah (cf. Gal. 3:16).”

#### **THE FOUR SEEDS OF ABRAHAM IN SCRIPTURE**

- NATURAL SEED All physical descendants of Abraham  
Genesis 12:1-3, 7; et al.
- NATURAL-SPIRITUAL SEED Believing physical descendants of Abraham  
Romans 9:6, 8; Galatians 6:16
- SPIRITUAL SEED Believing non-physical descendants of Abraham  
Galatians 3:6-9, 29
- ULTIMATE SEED Jesus Christ  
Galatians 3:16

#### **(22:20-24) The descendants of Nahor – the family background of Rebekah**

“The testing of Abraham's faith was complete with the sacrifice of Isaac. The Author therefore brought the history of his life to a close and began to set the scene for related events in Isaac's life.” “This section signals a change in the direction of the narrative. It moves from Abraham to the next generation and its connections with the East. The record of Nahor's 12 sons prepares the way for the story of Isaac's marriage. It also shows that Rebekah ("heifer," or "soft, supple") was the daughter of Bethuel's wife Milcah (v. 23), not the daughter of Bethuel's concubine (v. 24). Isaac's marriage was very important because Isaac was the heir of the promises (ch. 24).” (Thomas Constable, Genesis Expository Notes, Dallas Theological Seminary)

#### **(23) The death and burial of Sarah in the cave of Machpelah**

Sarah lived to the age of 127 and she was buried in the cave of Machpelah, Hebron (Kiriath-arba).

“Abraham's purchase of a burial site in the Promised Land demonstrated his intention to remain in Canaan rather than going back to his native homeland. Since he was a sojourner in Canaan his friends probably expected him to bury Sarah back in their home area, namely, Mesopotamia.” (Thomas Constable, Genesis Expository Notes, Dallas Theological Seminary)

(23:1) “Sarah is the only woman whose age at death the Scriptures record (v. 1). This fact illustrates her importance. Isaac was 37 years old when his mother died. Abraham died at the age of 175 (25:8), 38 years after Sarah.”

(23:3-16) “Why did Ephron want to sell Abraham the entire plot of ground in which the cave lay rather than just the cave as Abraham requested (vv. 8-11)?

(23:17-20) “Abraham's purchase of the cave of Machpelah (lit. double cave, or split cave) indicates his continuing faith in God's promise to give the land of Canaan to him and his descendants.

“Isaac and Jacob as well as Abraham used this burial site. Abraham, Sarah, Isaac, Rebekah, Jacob, and Leah were all buried here. Rachel's tomb was near Bethlehem.”  
(Thomas Constable, Genesis Expository Notes, Dallas Theological Seminary)

#### THE DESCENDANTS OF ABRAHAM

Noah --- Shem - - - Eber - - - Peleg - - - Abram > Hagar, Sarai, Keturah.

- Hagar > Ishmael and the 12 tribes in 25:12-18.
- Sarah > Isaac, Jacob and the 12 tribes Genesis 29-49.
- Keturah > Midian (and others) and the 16 tribes in 25:2-5.

Concerning the oppressors/enemies of Israel, here is a brief history of their lineages:

- Arab nations – From the 12 sons of Ishmael (see my notes in chapter 21)
- Moabites and Ammonites – Through Haran (Abraham's brother) and Lot came Moab and Ammon
- Amalekites – Through Issac, Esau, and Eliphaz came Amalek
- Edomites – Through Issac, Esau, and several other sons came the Edomites
- Midianites – Through Abraham came Midian

#### **(24) Isaac's marriage to Rebekah**

(24:2) The servant is most likely Eliezer (15:2) who will travel 500 miles back to Mesopotamia.

Note the response of faith by Isaac and Rebekah. Isaac does not travel with Eliezer to find a wife. Rebekah leaves her family immediately to live in a land she has never seen in order to marry a man she has never met.

In 22:23, Rebekah is introduced through the lineage of Abraham's other brother, Nahor. This is the first marriage after the covenant between God and Abraham. So, to keep the Abrahamic seed pure, Isaac's wife cannot be a Canaanite.

God expected Abraham to be dependent on God, not dependent on his family. So, must Rebekah display strong faith in God's provision as she leaves her family for Canaan.

“The length of this story and the amount of detail included suggests that this incident played an important part in the fulfillment of the Author's purpose. The details show how

God provided a wife and seed-bearer for Isaac and thus remained faithful to His promises to Abraham. God's working providentially through the natural course of events to accomplish His purposes clarifies His ways with humankind.” (Thomas Constable, Genesis Expository Notes, Dallas Theological Seminary)

**(25:1-11) Abraham and Keturah; Abraham’s death and burial in the cave of Machpelah**

Abraham married a second woman, Keturah, and his lineage through her included: Midian (and others) and the 16 tribes in 25:2-5. Abraham dies at age 175 and is buried with Sarah at the cave of Machpelah in Hebron.

“Keturah (lit. enveloped in fragrant smoke) may have been a concubine like Hagar (v. 6; 1 Chron. 1:32). It is not possible to prove that Abraham married Keturah and that she bore him six sons after Sarah's death, though this was probably the case. He may have married her earlier in his life while Sarah was alive.” (Thomas Constable, Genesis Expository Notes, Dallas Theological Seminary)

(25:6) Before Abraham died, he made sure that God's covenantal blessing would be Isaac's by sending his other sons away. After he died, God confirmed his decision by blessing Isaac.

“Isaac would have been 75 years old and Jacob 15 when Abraham died (v. 7; cf. 21:5; 25:26). Abraham lived 100 years in the Promised Land (cf. 12:4). “(Thomas Constable, Genesis Expository Notes, Dallas Theological Seminary)

**(25:12-18) This is what became of (*tol<sup>e</sup>dot*) Ishmael**

The lineage of Ishmael's 12 tribes through Abraham and Hagar.

"The last four *toledot* sections of the Book of Genesis follow a definite pattern: the lines in each generation that are not chosen lines are traced before the narrative returns to the chosen line." (Ross, p. 429)

“These verses show that God fulfilled His promises regarding Ishmael (16:10-12; 17:20). *Ishmael, like Nahor and Jacob, fathered 12 sons*. Moses drew his personal history to a conclusion before he moved on to concentrate on his brother Isaac.” (Thomas Constable, Genesis Expository Notes, Dallas Theological Seminary)

**(25:19-35:29) This is what became of (*tol<sup>e</sup>dot*) Isaac**

“Moses set up the whole Jacob narrative in a chiastic structure that emphasizes the fulfillment of the promise of the seed and the seed's prosperity.” (Thomas Constable, Genesis Expository Notes, Dallas Theological Seminary)

**I.** Oracle sought; Rebekah struggles in childbirth; *bekorah* birthright; birth; themes of strife, deception, fertility (25:19-34).

**II.** Interlude: strife; deception; *berakah* blessing; covenant with foreigner (26).

**III.** Deception; *berakah* stolen; fear of Esau; flight from land (27:1-28:9).

- IV. Encounter (<*paga*' ) with the divine at sacred site near border; *berakah* (28:10-22).
  - V. Internal cycle opens: arrival; Laban at border; deception; wages; Rachel barren; Leah fertile (29:1-30:21).
    - VI. Rachel fertile; Jacob increases the herds (30:22-43).
  - V.' Internal cycle closes: departure; Laban at border; deception; wages (31).
- IV.' Encounters (<*paga*' ) with divine beings at sacred sites near border; *berakah* (32).
- III.' Deception planned; fear of Esau; *berakah* gift returned; return to land (33).
- II.' Interlude: strife; deception; covenant with foreigner (34).
- I.' Oracle fulfilled; Rachel struggles in childbirth; *berakah*; death resolutions (35:1-22)." (Waltke, p. 352)

### **(25:19-26) The birth of the twins – Esau and Jacob**

(25:21) Isaac waits 20 years for children because Rebekah was also barren.

(25:23) The conflict between Edom and Israel begins in the womb of Rebekah.

Also, God states that the older shall serve the younger, which is a recurring theme in this book (i.e. Ishmael serves Isaac, Esau serves Jacob, Reuben serves Joseph, and Manasseh serves Ephraim (48:14, 20))

***Importance of the birthright:*** The eldest received the blessing of the father, a double portion of the estate inheritance, and was considered to be the leader of the siblings. *A birthright can be removed by bartering or misconduct*, for example Reuben by Jacob (35:22).

***The contrast between the two brothers.*** Affirmed in Hebrews 12:16, **Esau** had no faith in God and he was removed from the channel of God's blessing. In 26:34, Esau married a Canaanite and brought grief to his parents. Later, Esau married a daughter of Ishmael (28:8-9).

On the other hand, **Jacob** is a liar and there is no act of faith required in order to obtain the blessing. Jacob's very name means "heel catcher" or "trickster"; see 25:26 & 27:36.

Note the acts of deception Jacob initiated or is associated with: 27:12, 35; 29:25; 31:7, 20, 26, 27; 37:31-35

### **(25:27-34) Esau sells his birthright**

(25:27-28) "Abraham died when the twins were 15 (25:7), so they grew up knowing their grandfather and undoubtedly hearing his stories of God's promises to their family. Esau became a nomadic hunter, but Jacob remained in his tents." (Thomas Constable, Genesis Expository Notes, Dallas Theological Seminary)

“There are two important instances of first-born sons relinquishing the rights of primogeniture in Genesis: Esau and Reuben. Esau considered his birthright of so little value that he sold all his rights as first-born to Jacob to realize an immediate physical gratification. Reuben forfeited his birthright through sexual promiscuity (Gen. 35:22; 49:3-4).

### **(26) Rebekah’s life is endangered by Abimelech; Issac’s oath with Abimelech**

(26:1) Once again there is a famine in the land.

(26:3-5) God directs Isaac to remain in southern Canaan – in the area of Gerar, ruled by Abimelech king of the Philistines – and not travel to Egypt. Then, God reaffirms His covenant with Abraham to the chosen successor, Isaac.

But this reaffirmation by God does not prevent Isaac from taking matters into his own hands in order to protect his wife and he explains to Abimelech, that Rebekah is his sister (26:7-11).

Like his father Abraham (12:13 Pharaoh; 20:3 Abimelech), like son.

(26:5) “Verse 5 sounds like Abraham kept the commands, statutes, and laws of the Mosaic Covenant before they were in existence. It seems to contradict 15:6 that says God justified Abraham because of his faith.” (Thomas Constable, Genesis Expository Notes, Dallas Theological Seminary)

“Ultimately, we should attempt to find the meaning of this verse in the larger strategy and purpose of the Pentateuch. Did the author of the Pentateuch intend to depict Abraham as a model of faith or as a model of obedience to the law?”

(26:24) God reaffirms the covenant with Isaac again, in spite of Isaac's disobedience.

“The figure of even a great man may be dwarfed by comparison with that of a distinguished father or of a famous son. Thus the character of Isaac is overshadowed by the majesty of Abraham and the dramatic interest of Jacob. There was a third factor which diminished the importance of Isaac; he was the husband of a clever and masterful wife. No matter how exciting the scene in which he may appear, he is always assigned to a minor part. At least, by contrast with these other actors, his role in life was prosaic, uneventful, obscure.” (Charles R. Erdman, *The Book of Genesis*, p. 86)

### **(27) Jacob’s deception as he steals his brother’s blessing**

“Reacting to Isaac's disobedient plan to bless Esau, Jacob and Rebekah stole the blessing by deception. Esau became so angry with Jacob over his trickery that Jacob had to flee for his life.

Two reports of Esau's marriages (26:34-35 and 28:6-9) frame the major account (27:1-28:5) providing a prologue and epilogue. Esau's marriages are significant because Rebekah used them to persuade Isaac to send Jacob away to get a wife (27:46) and because they were the reason Isaac did so (28:1).” (Thomas Constable, Genesis Expository Notes, Dallas Theological Seminary)

“This great story teaches that when God's people know His will they should not resort to deceptive, manipulative schemes to attain spiritual success but must pursue God's will righteously. Every member of Isaac's family behaved in a self-centered and unprincipled manner, yet God graciously overcame their sins. This reminds us that His mercy is the ultimate ground of salvation.” (Thomas Constable, Genesis Expository Notes, Dallas Theological Seminary)

**(28) Jacob leaves the promised land; God confirms that his covenant with Abraham will be fulfilled though Jacob**

(28:1-4) The covenant is confirmed with Jacob through Isaac before his journey. Now Jacob is forbidden to marry a Canaanite. The Abrahamic seed must be pure.

"The two most significant events in the life of Jacob were nocturnal theophanies. The first was this dream at Bethel when he was fleeing from the land of Canaan, which ironically was his by virtue of the blessing. The other was his fight at Peniel when he was attempting to return to the land. Each divine encounter was a life-changing event." (Ross, "Jacob's Visions: The Founding of Bethel"). Bethel receives more mention in the Old Testament than any other city but Jerusalem. This indicates its importance in biblical history.

(28:10-17) During Jacob's journey to Mesopotamia, God speaks to Jacob in a dream and reaffirms the covenant to Jacob. He is in **Bethel** (the covenant is reaffirmed at Bethel in 35:1-15).

"The ladder was a visible symbol of the real and uninterrupted fellowship between God in heaven and His people upon earth. The angels upon it carry up the wants of men to God, and bring down the assistance and protection of God to men." (Keil and Delitzsch, 1:281-2)

“This was God's first revelation to Jacob, and it came in a dream (cf. John 1:51). Other passages contain promises of the land (12:7; 13:14-16; 15:18; 17:8; 24:7), but this one (vv. 13-14) is closest in terminology to the one in chapter 13, another Bethel setting.” (Thomas Constable, Genesis Expository Notes, Dallas Theological Seminary)

**(29:1-30) Laban's deception and Jacob's two marriages – to Leah and Rachel**

The long account of Jacob's relationship with Laban (chs. 29-31) is the centerpiece of the Jacob story (chs. 25-35). It is a story within a story, and it too has a chiasmic structure. At its center is the account of the birth of Jacob's sons, the forefathers of the tribes of Israel (29:31-35).

(29:21-30) “Jacob had pretended to be his older brother, and now Leah pretended to be her younger sister. Leah deceived Jacob as Jacob had deceived Isaac. Perhaps Jacob's eating and drinking at the feast had clouded his mind (v. 22). The darkness of his tent at night may have made it hard for him to see, too. Furthermore, in that culture a bride customarily entered her husband's presence veiled.” (Thomas Constable, Genesis Expository Notes, Dallas Theological Seminary)



### **(29:31-30:24) The birth of Jacob's 11 sons**

Jacob's sons through Leah, Leah's handmaid Zilpah, Rachel, and Rachel's handmaid Bilhah. Each child is named for a specific reason:

1. Reuben (Leah), "The Lord has seen my affliction, now my husband will love me".
2. Simeon (Leah), "The Lord has heard I am unloved, He has given me this son".
3. Levi (Leah), "Surely my husband should love me, because I gave him 3 sons".
4. Judah (Leah), "This time I will praise the Lord". Leah thinks of God, not herself.
5. Dan (Bilhah), "Rachel's vindication (for not bearing children for Jacob)".
6. Naphtali (Bilhah), "Rachel prevails".
7. Gad (Zilpah), "Leah's fortunate". Through her handmaid Leah gives more children to Jacob.
8. Asher (Zilpah), "Happy am I".
9. Issachar (Leah), "God gave my wages". Leah bought Jacob for the evening from Rachel with mandrakes.
10. Zebulun (Leah), "God gave me a gift".
- Dinah (Leah)
11. Joseph (Rachel), "God has taken away my reproach".
12. In 35:18, Benjamin (Rachel), "son of my right hand". This name is given by Jacob and means *son of honor* or *son of good fortune*.

“This record of Jacob's children, the center of the Jacob story structurally, is important for at least three reasons.

1. It shows God's faithfulness in providing descendants as He had promised. "Now the account centers on the fulfillment of Yahweh's promise to be with Jacob and to bless him."
2. It gives the origins and circumstances surrounding the births of the tribal heads of Israel. "The *theme* of the Pentateuch is not difficult to discern. It is the story of the birth and adolescence of a nation."
3. It explains much of the tribal rivalry that follows in Israel's history. "Especially during the time period of the divided kingdom, recorded in 1 Kings 12 – 2 Kings 17.

(Thomas Constable, Genesis Expository Notes, Dallas Theological Seminary)

“The section culminates with **the birth of Joseph** (30:24), which was the cue for Jacob to return home (30:25).” (Thomas Constable, Genesis Expository Notes, Dallas Theological Seminary)

(30:1-8) “Rachel's reactions to her barrenness were anger and despair, and Jacob's responses were anger and defensiveness. Both Sarah and Rachel resorted to a custom acceptable in their culture, though contrary to God's will, to secure an heir for their husbands (cf. 16:1-2).”

“Isaac prayed that God would open Rebekah's womb and waited (25:21). Rachel and Jacob followed the example of Sarah and Abraham.” (Thomas Constable, Genesis Expository Notes, Dallas Theological Seminary)

(30:9-13) "The terms *wife* and *concubine* are used more loosely in the patriarchal period. Three women in the patriarchal period are called both *wife* and *concubine*: Hagar (Gen. 16:3; 25:6 indirectly), Keturah (25:1; cf. 25:6; 1 Chron. 1:32), and Bilhah (Gen. 30:4; 35:22). Each of these concubines is an auxiliary wife to the patriarch, not a slave, but subordinate to the wife who is her mistress. After the patriarchal period, the term *wife* is never used as a synonym for *concubine*. Zilpah, though never called a concubine (cf. 30:9), has the same social position as Bilhah (cf. 37:2)." (Waltke, p. 411)

(30:22-24) God eventually granted Rachel a son, Joseph. He was born at the end of Jacob's fourteenth year in Laban's service.

“The jealousy, bickering, superstition, and weak faith demonstrated by Jacob and his wives stand out in this section. God's gift of children was gracious; He gave them in spite of, rather than because of, the behavior of the parents. Rachel acknowledged this finally (vv. 23-24) as did Jacob.” (Thomas Constable, Genesis Expository Notes, Dallas Theological Seminary)

### **(30:25-43) Jacob's new agreement with Laban and God's blessing**

Jacob wants to return home, yet Laban wants him to stay. Laban's wealth is increasing due to the presence of Jacob. So, Jacob works out a deal to increase his herd. But he is still the Jacob of old and mates the stronger animals for himself, while giving the weaker animals to Laban. (Perhaps he is still angry over his marriage to Leah?).

### **(31) Jacob flees from Laban**

“God had been faithful in blessing Jacob as He had promised Abraham and Isaac. Moses recorded the testimony to that fact in this section. Jacob acknowledged that God was responsible for his prosperity. God's goodness and His command to return to the Promised Land (v. 3), as well as Laban's growing hostility (v. 5), motivated Jacob to leave Paddan-aram.” (Thomas Constable, Genesis Expository Notes, Dallas Theological Seminary)

(31:1-16) "The true character of Laban is clearly seen from the fact that his daughters entirely sided with Jacob against their own father . . . . They too had experienced their father's selfishness and greed, and were ready to approve of their husband's project and to go with him." (Thomas, W. H. Griffith. *Genesis*)

(31:11-13) It is the Angel of Jehovah who directed Jacob to leave Laban and return to Canaan, after Jacob spent 20 years with Laban (v. 41).

(31:17-21) "Rachel's theft of her father's idols [teraphim] . . . reflects the Hurrian custom of keeping household gods . . . . Nevertheless, the real significance of what she did, and

perhaps the reason for the theft, lies in the fact that according to the Nuzi tablets he who possessed the household gods was the legitimate heir." (West, Stuart A. "The Nuzi Tablets.")

(31:22-42) "God revealed Himself to people other than the patriarchs in these days (v. 29; cf. Abimelech in 20:3)." (Thomas Constable, Genesis Expository Notes, Dallas Theological Seminary)

"Jacob and Rachel are again two of a kind. This time both almost bring ruin on the family by their risk taking: she by her rash theft, he by his rash vow ([v. 32] cf. his sons' rash vow in 44:6-12)." (Waltke, p. 430)

(31:43-55) "Jacob and Laban made a parity covenant, set up a stone pillar (Heb. *misbah*, standing stone) to mark the spot, and ate a meal together as part of the rite involved in establishing a covenant (vv. 44-48)."

"Galeed ("witness heap," v. 47) is the name from which Gilead came. Gilead became a common name for this mountainous area east of the Jordan River between the Sea of Galilee (Cinnereth, Hebrew for "lyre" denoting the shape of the lake) and the Dead (Salt) Sea (cf. vv. 21, 23, 25)." (Thomas Constable, Genesis Expository Notes, Dallas Theological Seminary)

### **(32-33) Jacob returns to the promised land and is reunited with Esau**

In humility Jacob must return to his homeland and face Esau, the man who wanted Jacob dead. Jacob fears that the covenant of blessing, first given to his grandfather Abraham, is in jeopardy (v. 11). But God pursues Jacob and begins to physically wrestle with him, and the end result of this encounter is a blessing of protection from his brother, Esau.

(32:3-12) "Jacob's reaction to Esau's apparently hostile advance against him was to try to protect himself (vv. 7-8). This was Jacob's standard response to trouble. Yet this time he knew it would not be enough. So, he called on God for help (vv. 9-12)." (Thomas Constable, Genesis Expository Notes, Dallas Theological Seminary)

"Jacob's prayer (his first recorded prayer and the only extended prayer in Genesis) reflects his deeply felt need for God's help and his own humility (vv. 9-12). He reminded God of His past dealings with his forefathers and with himself (v. 9). He confessed his personal unworthiness and lack of any claim upon God's favor (v. 10). By calling himself "Thy servant" he became ready to serve others. He requested divine deliverance and acknowledged his own fear (v. 11). Finally he claimed God's promise of a continuing line of descendants (v. 12). This is an excellent model prayer." (Thomas Constable, Genesis Expository Notes, Dallas Theological Seminary)

(32:13-21) Though he hoped for God's help, Jacob did not fail to do all he could to appease his brother (vv. 13-15). His magnanimous gifts aimed diplomatically to pacify his offended brother. Jacob's ability to give Esau 580 animals proves that God had made him enormously wealthy.

"It was when Jacob was alone, having done everything he could to secure his own safety, that God came to him (v. 24). An unidentified man assaulted Jacob, and he had to

fight for his life. The "man" was the Angel of the Lord (vv. 28-30). Note that God took the initiative in wrestling with Jacob, not vice versa. God was bringing Jacob to the end of himself." (Thomas Constable, Genesis Expository Notes, Dallas Theological Seminary)

(33:1-17) Jacob was ready to sacrifice part of his family expecting Esau to attack him, and he approached his brother as though Esau was his lord. In contrast, Esau welcomed Jacob magnanimously, reluctantly received his gift, and offered to host him in Seir.

(33:18-20) Jacob then crossed the Jordan River and moved his family into the land of Canaan. He chose Shechem ("peaceful") as his home. By purchasing land there he showed that he regarded Canaan as his permanent home and the home of his seed. The Israelites eventually buried Joseph at Shechem (Josh. 24:32). Shechem was only a mile or two from the Sychar of Jesus' day (cf. John 4:5, 12).

"God had granted Jacob's request by bringing him safely back into the Promised Land (cf. 28:20-21). As he had vowed, Jacob worshipped the God of his father as his God. He called Yahweh "El-Elohe-Israel" meaning, "The mighty God is the God of Israel." Jacob used his own new name, Israel (32:29). He built an altar, Jacob's first, to worship God as Abraham had done at Shechem when he had first entered Canaan (12:6-7). The altar would have served the double purpose of providing a table for Jacob's sacrifice and serving as a memorial for Jacob's descendants in the years to come." (Thomas Constable, Genesis Expository Notes, Dallas Theological Seminary)

#### **(34) The massacre at Shechem at the hands of Simeon and Levi**

Shechem, the son of Hamor the Hivite, rapes Dinah (Leah's daughter). Jacob attempts to reconcile the situation by convincing all the men of Shechem to be circumcised (which places them under the blessing and protection the Abrahamic covenant). But, Simeon and Levi, the second and third oldest, take matters into their own hands do not accept their father's handling of this difficult situation. While Shechem, Hamor, and all the males of the city were in pain, Simeon and Levi killed them to avenge their sister's mistreatment.

**The problem:** The family of Jacob was disgraced, but the men of Shechem were under the protection of the covenant.

"Once again, as in the birth of his sons (29:31-30:24), Jacob's household is dysfunctional because of his passivity. His sons are rash and unbridled, and he is passive. No one in this story escapes censure." (Waltke, *Genesis*, p. 458)

"The story is a tangled skein of good and evil, as are all the patriarchal narratives." (Ross, "Genesis," p. 83)

Dinah must have been a teenager at this time (Keil and Delitzsch (1:311) believe around the age of 15).

“The significance of this chapter is fourfold at least.

1. It explains why Jacob passed over Simeon and Levi for the special blessing.
2. It shows the importance of keeping the chosen seed separate from the Canaanites.
3. It gives a reason for the sanctification of Jacob's household that follows (35:2-4).
4. It demonstrates the sovereign control of God. “The writer's purpose is not to approve these human plans and schemes but to show how God, in his sovereign grace, could still achieve his purpose through them.”

(Thomas Constable, Genesis Expository Notes, Dallas Theological Seminary)

### **(35) The covenant renewed at Bethel; The birth of Benjamin, the deaths of Rachel and Isaac**

(35:1) God directs Jacob to the place of reaffirmation in chapter 28 (when Jacob left the Negev for Mesopotamia and stopped at Bethel, where he had the dream of angels ascending and descending on a ladder.).

“After God reminded Jacob of his commitment to Him (28:20-22), the patriarch returned to Bethel to worship Yahweh. There the Lord reconfirmed the promises to him and completed his family by the birth of Benjamin. However, Jacob also experienced three deaths (Deborah, Rachel, and Isaac) and rebellion against himself by Reuben.”

(Thomas Constable, Genesis Expository Notes, Dallas Theological Seminary)

(35:2-3) Jacob shows spiritual growth and maturity. He puts away the household idols and builds an altar to the Lord.

(35:11-12) Covenant is again reaffirmed with Jacob.

“The importance of God's words to Jacob in vv. 11-12 cannot be overemphasized.

1. First, God's words 'be fruitful and increase in number' recalled clearly the primeval blessing of Creation (1:28) and hence showed God to be still 'at work' in bringing about the blessing to all mankind through Jacob.
2. Second, for the first time since 17:16 ('kings of peoples will come from her'), the mention is made of royalty ('kings,' v. 11) in the promised line.
3. Third, the promise of the land, first given to Abraham and then to Isaac, was renewed here with Jacob (v. 12). Thus within these brief words several major themes of the book have come together. The primeval blessing of mankind was renewed through the promise of a royal offspring and the gift of the land.”

(Thomas, W. H. Griffith. *Genesis*)

(35:16-29) Benjamin, the 12<sup>th</sup> and final son, is born, but Rachel dies giving birth and she is buried in Bethlehem. Then, Isaac dies and he is buried at Hebron.

Then in v. 22 **Reuben**, the oldest, lays with Rachel's maid Bilhah. Is he trying to make a claim against **Jacob's** authority?

“**Reuben** may have wanted to prevent Rachel's maid from succeeding Rachel as his father's favorite wife. He probably resented the fact that Jacob did not honor his mother. Reuben's act constituted a claim against (a challenge to) his father as well as being an immoral act (cf. Deut. 22:30; 2 Sam. 16:21-22; 1 Kings 2:13-25). In the ancient Near East a man who wanted to assert his superiority over another man might do so by having

sexual relations with that man's wife or concubine (cf. 2 Sam. 16:21-22). Ancient Near Easterners regarded this act of physical domination as an evidence of personal superiority." (Thomas Constable, Genesis Expository Notes, Dallas Theological Seminary)

(35:22b-27) Jacob had left Beersheba with only a staff in his hand. Now he returned with 12 sons, a large household, and much livestock. The most important aspect of God's blessing was his 12 sons, grouped here with their four mothers, through whom God would fulfill His promises to the patriarchs.

(35:28-29) "With the record of Jacob entering into his father's inheritance the history of Isaac's life concludes. He was buried in the cave of Machpelah near Hebron (49:29-31). Isaac lived for 12 years after Jacob's relocation to Hebron, however. He shared Jacob's grief over the apparent death of Joseph, but died shortly before Joseph's promotion in Egypt." (Thomas Constable, Genesis Expository Notes, Dallas Theological Seminary)

### **(36:1-36:8) This is what became of (*tol'dot*) Esau**

This chapter identifies the lineage of Esau. He purposely married Canaanite women (v. 2) and Ishmael's daughter (v. 3).

Moses included this relatively short, segmented genealogy (*toledot*) in the sacred record to show God's faithfulness in multiplying Abraham's seed as He had promised. He also did so to provide connections with the descendants of Esau referred to later in the history of Israel. Among his descendants were the Edomites (v. 8) and the Amalekites (v. 12). Lot, Ishmael, and Esau all walked out of the line of promise.

### **(36:9-37:1) This is what became of (*tol'dot*) Esau, the Father of Edom**

"The Kenizzites (vv. 11, 15) later affiliated with the tribe of Judah. The Amalekites separated from the other Edomites and became an independent people early in their history (v. 12). A group of them settled in what later became southern Judah as far as Kadesh Barnea and the border of Egypt (14:7; Num. 13:29; 14:43, 45). Another branch of the tribe settled in the hill country of Ephraim that was in central Canaan (Judg. 12:15). The largest group of Amalekites lived in Arabia to the southeast of Canaan and Edom. They united on occasion with their neighbors, the Midianites (Judg. 6:3; 7:12) and the Ammonites (Judg. 3:13). Saul defeated the Amalekites (1 Sam. 14:48; 15:2) as David did (1 Sam. 27:8; 30:1; 2 Sam 8:12). Some Simeonites finally exterminated them during Hezekiah's reign (1 Chron. 4:42-43)." (Thomas Constable, Genesis Expository Notes, Dallas Theological Seminary)