

GENESIS CLASS NOTES

Title

The English title comes from the Jerome's Latin translation (the Vulgate), *Liber Genesis*. This Latin translation comes from the LXX (the Greek translation of the OT) title, *genesis*. The LXX title is a Greek translation of the Hebrew word *tôledôt*, which means, "these are the generations of..." This is the heading of 11 (or 10) major sections following the creation account.¹ The Hebrew title of the book, as is often the case comes from the first word of the book, *b^erē'šît*, "in the beginning."²

Authorship

Genesis is the first of the five books that compose the Pentateuch (derived from the Greek *pentateuchos*, literally, "five implements").³ The authorship of Genesis is bound up with the authorship of the Pentateuch as a whole. Until the mid-eighteenth century few questioned the Mosaic authorship of Genesis.⁴ However since that time, scholarly opinion has shifted considerably, and many interpreters today reject Moses as the author of the Pentateuch and Genesis in particular. Instead, it is held that Genesis (along with the rest of the Pentateuch) is a collection of documents put together by editors and redactors.

Scholars use differences in terminology, style, theology, etc. to posit four sources for the Pentateuch. This is known as "the documentary hypothesis." While there is much internal debate among those who accept the documentary hypothesis, critical scholars generally agree that there are four sources, JEDP. J derives its name from its use of the divine name "Jehovah," and is dated to the ninth century. E derives its name from its use of "Elohim" to refer to God, and is dated to the eighth century. D is identified as "the book of the law in the Lord's temple" discovered during Josiah's reign around 622 BC. P is a "priestly document" dated to the fifth century BC. According to this theory the present form of the Pentateuch did not exist until ca. 400 BC. Critical scholars holding to this view reject Mosaic authorship of the Pentateuch, and Genesis in particular, which they generally hold to be a compilation of J and E.⁵

¹ Eugene H. Merrill, Mark F. Rooker, and Michael A. Grisanti, *The World and the Word: An Introduction to the Old Testament* (Nashville: B&H, 2011), 173.

² Ibid., 170.

³ Ibid., 163.

⁴ Ibid., 171.

⁵ Ibid., 136–37.

However, there are significant problems with the documentary hypothesis. First, there are increasingly complex reconstructions such as the introduction of even more sources (K, L, and S), which indicates the inadequacy of the view. Second, the attribution of anomalies within texts to particular sources. Finally, archaeological evidence does not support the documentary hypothesis. For example, a sixth century amulet inscribed with a text (Num 6:24–26) normally attributed to P, which scholars have dated to the fifth century.⁶

There are three primary evangelical views. A minority of scholars hold Moses to be the exclusive author. According to this view, Moses penned every word of the Pentateuch, including Deut 34.⁷ Another view holds that Moses is the substantial author of the Pentateuch (and Genesis). Although there is disagreement over the amount of non-Mosaic material is present, proponents of this view hold that Moses is the compiler and author of Genesis (and the Pentateuch). According to this view Moses used preexisting written sources, oral tradition, and direct revelation to compose Genesis (and the Pentateuch). Someone after Moses' time added portions, such as, "Dan" in Gen 14:14, the "until this day" statements (e.g., Deut 3:14), and the narrative describing Moses' death and burial. A third evangelical view is that Genesis (and the Pentateuch) is the work of a variety writers and editors. According to this view, Moses provided a formative material for the Pentateuch, but that it reached its final form centuries after his death.⁸ This view is very similar to that held by critical scholars, but does not share critical scholars anti-supernatural bias.

While the issue is very complicated, it seems best to regard Moses as the substantial author of Genesis (and the Pentateuch). Although no statements concerning authorship are present in Genesis, the Pentateuch as a whole contains statements supporting Mosaic authorship (Ex 17:14; 24:4, 7; 34:27; Num 33:1–2; Deut 31:9, 24). Gleason Archer lists seven internal reasons for maintaining Mosaic authorship,

1. Eyewitness details in the account of the Exodus which suggests an actual participant in the events, but which would be altogether beyond the ken of an author who lived centuries after the event...
2. The author of Genesis and Exodus shows a thorough acquaintance with Egypt, as one would expect of a participant in the Exodus...
3. The author of the Torah shows a consistently foreign or extra-Palestinian viewpoint so far as Canaan is concerned...
4. The atmosphere of Exodus through Numbers is unmistakably that of the desert, not of an agricultural people settled in their ancestral possessions for nearly a thousand years (as Wellhausen supposed)...
5. Particularly in the book of Genesis there are references to archaic customs which are demonstrable for the second millennium B.C., but which did not continue during the first millennium...
6. There are significant archaisms in language, as well...
7. There is a most remarkable unity of arrangement which underlies the

⁶ Charles H. Savelle, "Genesis Argument," (Unpublished Paper), 4.

⁷ E.g., W. D. Barrick, "The Authorship of Deuteronomy 34: Moses or a redactor" (paper presented at the National Evangelical Theological Society meeting, Colorado Springs, November 15, 2001).

⁸ These three views are surveyed in Merrill, Rooker, and Grisanti, *The World and the Word*, 166–68.

entire Pentateuch and links it together into a progressive whole, even though successive stages in revelation (during Moses' writing career of four decades) result in a certain amount of overlapping and restatement.⁹

The external evidence also favors Mosaic Authorship, since the rest of the Old Testament consistently affirms Mosaic authorship (Josh 1:7–8; 8:31–32; 1 Kgs 2:3; 2 Kgs 14:6; 21:8; Ezra 6:18; Neh 13:1; Dan 9:11–13; Mal 4:4). Jesus affirms Mosaic authorship of the “Law” (Matt 19:8; Mark 7:10; 12:26; Luke 18:29–31; John 5:46–47; 7:19). Not only Jesus, but other New Testament writers affirm Mosaic authorship (Acts 3:22; Rom 10:5). Therefore, external evidence in both the Old Testament and New Testament supports Mosaic authorship of the Pentateuch. Furthermore, Moses seems to be the best candidate for authorship given his training in Egypt, his leadership of the Israelites, and his unique relationship with Yahweh.¹⁰

Date

The date of Genesis is tied to the issue of authorship. If one rejects Mosaic authorship the final composition of the Pentateuch could be as late as 400 BC. However, given the probability of Mosaic authorship, Genesis must have been written during his lifetime (ca. 1526–1406 BC). Since Moses writes about the Exodus, the date of composition for the Pentateuch must be after that event in 1446 BC.¹¹ Therefore, the composition of Genesis (and the rest of the Pentateuch) most likely took place during the forty years the Israelites wandered in the wilderness (1446–1406 BC).¹²

Original Audience

If Moses is the author, which seems likely, then the original audience were the Hebrews of the Exodus or post-Exodus generation. The Exodus generation wandered and died in the wilderness, and the post-Exodus generation entered the promised land. Either, or both, generations could have been the original audience for which Genesis was intended. Deuteronomy 1:1–8 indicates that Deuteronomy was intended for the generation that was to enter the promised land. Given the unity of the Pentateuch it seems likely that the primary original audience was the Israelite generation that was to enter the promised land.¹³

⁹ Gleason Leonard Archer, Jr., *A Survey of Old Testament Introduction*, Updated and rev. ed. (Chicago: Moody Press, 1994), 119–25.

¹⁰ Charles H. Savelle, “Genesis Argument,” 4.

¹¹ This assumes an early date for the Exodus.

¹² Charles H. Savelle, “Genesis Argument,” 4–5.

¹³ *Ibid*, 5.

Canonicity

There have never been any serious objections to the canonicity of Genesis.¹⁴ In the OT the Pentateuch was ascribed to Moses and carried authority (e.g. Josh 8:31–35).¹⁵ The NT referred to the Pentateuch as a whole as well, ascribing it to Moses and carrying authority (e.g. Luke 24:44). Despite its universal acceptance as canonical and its strategic place at the beginning of the canon Genesis did not get as much attention in post-biblical Judaism as the other books of the torah, especially Leviticus.¹⁶

Purpose

As the Israelites wandered in the desert and prepared to enter the promised land, Moses wrote Genesis. One purpose would be to explain the beginning of all things, and how the world came to be as it is now. Second, Genesis seeks to explain the destiny of God's covenant people. To do this, Genesis presents "the nature of the covenant God who created his people, the nature of God's people within creation, and the beginning of the covenant code in the revealed acts of God."¹⁷ All of this would encourage the Israelites to trust the sovereign Creator, who had established a special relationship with Israel and was powerful and trustworthy enough to fulfill His covenant commitment to her.

Contribution

The contributions of Genesis are many and far reaching. First, Genesis contributes significantly to our understanding of the origin of all things. Secondly, Genesis contributes to our understanding of how the world came to be as it is now. Genesis also contributes to our understanding of God's relationship with humanity, and Israel in particular.

Genesis also contributes significantly to NT theology. There are over 300 citations of Genesis in the New Testament.¹⁸ For Paul, Abraham serves as the paradigm of saving faith and the supreme example of justification by faith (e.g. Rom 4, Gal 3, etc.). Images, such as the tree of life in the book of revelation, and some characters and incidents are used by the NT authors (such as Peter and Jude).¹⁹ Also, Genesis contributes to NT Christology in the following ways:²⁰

¹⁴ Merrill, Rooker, and Grisanti, *The World and the Word*, 171.

¹⁵ *Ibid.*, 170.

¹⁶ Victor P. Hamilton, *The Book of Genesis: Chapters 1–17*, New International Commentary on the Old Testament, ed. R. K. Harrison and Robert L. Hubbard Jr. (Grand Rapids: Eerdmans, 1990), 72–73.

¹⁷ Allen P. Ross, *Creation and Blessing: A Guide to the Study and Exposition of Genesis* (Grand Rapids: Baker, 1988), 88.

¹⁸ According to Eberhard Nestle et al., *Greek-English New Testament*, 28th rev. ed. (Stuttgart: Deutsche Bibelgesellschaft, 1994).

¹⁹ Charles H. Savelle, "Genesis: Introduction to the Book," (Unpublished Class notes for Centerpoint Bible Institute, Fall 2005), 5.

²⁰ The following list is taken from Charles H. Savelle, "Genesis: Introduction to the Book," 5.

1. The *protoevangelium* (lit. “the first gospel,” 3:15) that points to the ultimate seed, Christ (Gal 4:4).
2. The “seed” of the Abrahamic covenant (12:3) is fulfilled ultimately in Christ (Acts 3:25; Gal 3:7–9).
3. Jacob’s prophetic blessing of a “lion” from Judah (49:9-10) is fulfilled in Christ (Rev 5:5).
4. Adam is a type of the second Adam Christ (Rom 5:12; 1 Cor 15:21-22).
5. The priestly order of Melchizedek (Gen 14:18-20) is the priestly order of Christ (Heb 5–7).
6. Other characters in Genesis provide potential types of Christ: Abel (who provides the more excellent sacrifice,” Heb 11:4), Isaac, and Joseph.

Literary Features and Structure

The majority of Genesis is composed of prose narrative, which includes, prayers, speeches, and other types of indirect discourse. There are also genealogies (Gen 5, 10, 11, etc.), poetry (24:60; 49), and prophetic statements (15:12–16; 49:8–12).²¹ The author of Genesis also makes use of a number of chiasmic structures (e.g. 6:9–9:19).²²

At the broadest level Genesis can be divided into two large sections. The first section is the account of primeval history (chaps. 1–11). The second section is the account of patriarchal history (chaps. 12–50).²³

The major structural marker in Genesis is the word *tôledôt*, which means, “these are the generations of...” This is the heading of 11 (or 10) major sections following the creation account.²⁴ This structural marker has informed the following outline to a significant extent.

Message

The message of Genesis is, “A special relationship between humanity and the sovereign Creator of all things is initiated and sustained through the Creator’s gracious choice and blessing even with the introduction of sin and death, and individuals access this relationship through faith.”

Basic Outline

- I. The Primeval Account (1:1–11:26).
 - A. God sovereignly created the cosmos (1:1–2:25)
 - B. The Fall (3:1–24)

²¹ Merrill, Rooker, and Grisanti, *The World and the Word*, 172–73.

²² Charles H. Savelle, “Genesis Argument,” 8–9.

²³ Merrill, Rooker, and Grisanti, *The World and the Word*, 173.

²⁴ *Ibid.*, 173.

- C. Account of Adam and Eve (4:1–5:32)
 - D. Account of the flood (6:1–9:29)
 - E. Account of the Nations (10:1–11:26)
- II. The Patriarchal Account (11:27–50:26).
- A. Account of Abraham (11:27–25:11)
 - B. Ishmael (25:12–18)
 - C. Account of Isaac (25:19–26:35)
 - D. Account of Jacob (27:1–37:1)
 - E. Esau (36:1–37:1)
 - F. Account of Joseph (37:2–50:26)

Exposition

- I. A relationship between humanity and the sovereign Creator of all things begins with creation and is maintained after the fall, which introduces sin and death into creation, by the Creator’s continual care for creation and His preservation of those who have a special relationship with Him through faith (1:1–11:26).**
- A. The creation of the cosmos began with God’s care and was accomplished by God’s sovereign word in six creative days and a seventh day of rest with special emphasis on the creation of humanity as male and female in God’s image (1:1–2:25).
 - 1. The forming and filling of creation by the sovereign word of God in six creative days and a seventh day of rest is detailed in a first account of creation (1:1–2:3).
 - a. The creation of the universe was the work of God which began with his care over its initial chaotic condition (1:1–2).
 - i. The creation of the universe was the work of God (1:1).
 - ii. The initial chaotic condition of creation is under the care of God’s Spirit which ensures its future development (1:2).
 - b. The forming and filling of the formless and empty creation is accomplished by the sovereign word of God in six creative days (1:3–31).
 - i. The formation of light and the separation of light and darkness, which God names “night and day,” is accomplished by God’s sovereign word (1:3–5).
 - ii. The formation of an expanse by separating the waters above from the waters below, which God names “sky,” is accomplished by God’s sovereign word (1:6–8).

- iii. The formation of dry ground by gathering the waters below into one place, which God names “land,” and the creation of vegetation is accomplished by God’s sovereign word (1:9–13).
- iv. The filling of the sky with luminaries is accomplished by God’s sovereign word (1:14–19).
- v. The filling of the waters and sky by the creation of sea creatures and birds, whom God blesses, is accomplished by God’s sovereign word (1:20–23).
- vi. The filling of the dry land by the creation of animals and mankind, whom God blesses, is accomplished by God’s sovereign word (1:24–31).
 - a) The filling of the earth with animals is accomplished by God’s sovereign word (1:24–25).
 - b) The creation of humanity, male and female, in the image of God to rule over creation is sovereignly accomplished by God (1:26–27).
 - c) The blessing and mandate to humanity to rule over creation is given by the Sovereign Creator (1:28–30).
 - d) The sovereign Creator’s evaluation of His creation is that it is “very good” (1:31).
- c. The blessing and setting apart of the seventh day takes place because the sovereign Creator rested after completing His creative acts (2:1–3).
 - i. The creation of the cosmos is summarized (2:1).
 - ii. The blessing and setting apart of the seventh day is done because the sovereign Creator had completed his creative acts and rested (2:2–3).
- 2. The creation of the cosmos is revisited with special emphasis on the creation of humanity as male and female in a second account of creation (2:4–25).
 - a. The creation of the cosmos is reiterated with specific reference to the creation of the first (male) human (2:4–7).
 - b. A garden is prepared by God for man’s inhabitation (2:8–14).

- c. The placement of man in the garden by God is for the purpose of tending the garden comes with a warning not to eat from a specific tree (2:15–17).
 - d. God's creation of woman from the rib of the man as a compatible companion to him culminates in the institution of marriage (2:18–25).
- B. The fall of humanity results from Adam and Eve's failure to resist the temptation of the serpent, results in adverse effects on creation and humanity, and ushers in an aftermath of judgment, mercy, and hope (3:1–24).
1. The fall of humanity results from Adam and Eve's failure to resist the temptation of the serpent and results in shame concerning their nakedness (3:1–7).
 - a. The temptation of Eve to eat of the forbidden tree is perpetrated by the serpent (3:1–5).
 - b. Humanity falls when Eve believes the serpent and eats from the forbidden tree and Adam follows her in eating from the tree (3:6).
 - c. The results of Adam and Eve's fall is the knowledge of their nakedness and attempt to cover it up (3:7).
 2. The response of Adam and Eve to God's confrontation concerning their sin is to blame others (3:8–13).
 - a. The response of Adam to God's confrontation concerning Adam's sin is to blame Eve and God (3:8–12).
 - b. The response of Eve to God's confrontation concerning her sin is to blame the serpent for deceiving her (3:13).
 3. The consequences for each participant in the fall result in adverse effects on creation, female humanity, and male humanity, but God graciously maintains his relationship with humanity (3:14–19).
 - a. The consequences for the serpent's involvement in the fall is God's curse and the ultimate defeat of the serpent (3:14–15).
 - b. The consequences for Eve's involvement in the fall is pain in child-bearing and a strained relationship with man, both of which affect all womankind (3:16).

- c. The consequences for Adam's involvement in the fall is pain in cultivating the ground as a result of the cursing of the ground by God and death, both of which affect all of creation and mankind in particular (3:17–19).
 4. The aftermath of the fall contains elements of hope, mercy, and judgment (3:20–24).
 - a. The naming of the woman "Eve" by Adam signifies hope (3:20).
 - b. The construction of animal skin garments for Adam and Eve by God is a sign of His grace and continued relationship with humanity (3:21).
 - c. The expulsion of Adam and Eve from the garden by God is an act of judgment and mercy (3:22–24).
- C. The account of Adam and Eve and their offspring shows that the fall has deeply affected humanity but that the sovereign Creator continues to judge and care for humanity, and that the creator will preserve a godly line (4:1–5:32).
 1. The account of Adam and Eve's offspring shows that the human race will continue and that though there is a struggle as a result of the fall God both judges and extends gracious care – ultimately preserving a godly line (4:1–26).
 - a. The births of Cain and Abel show that the human race will continue despite the fall (4:1–2).
 - b. The contrasting responses of the Lord to Cain and Abel's offering results in Cain's anger (4:3–7).
 - c. Cain's murder of his brother Abel results in judgment from the Lord, yet the Lord is still gracious to him (4:8–15).
 - d. The genealogy of ungodly Cain culminates in ungodly Lamech (4:16–24).
 - e. The birth of Seth, which replaces godly Abel and culminates in a godly people, is a result of God's continued sovereign care (4:25–26).
 2. The genealogy of Adam and Eve, who were both made in the image of God, through the godly line of Seth culminates in Noah (5:1–32).
- D. The judgment on the whole world because of man's extreme wickedness is only avoided by Noah and his family because of Noah's special relationship with the Creator, who subsequently blesses Noah and commands him to populate the earth which God promises in a covenant never to destroy again by means of a flood (6:1–9:29).

1. The sin of the sons of God and the daughters of men provide the basis for the forthcoming judgment (6:1–4).
2. God’s intention to destroy all of creation is a result of mankind’s extreme and constant wickedness but one man receives God’s favor (6:5–8).
3. The preservation of God’s creation, especially humankind, is the result of the Creator’s gracious provision of salvation through obedient Noah, with whom God has a special relationship (6:9–22).
 - a. God’s gracious selection of Noah to be saved from the flood is based on Noah’s relationship with God and is juxtaposed against mankind’s wickedness (6:9–12).
 - b. The coming judgment and means of escape through the building of an ark to be filled with animals is announced to Noah, and God announces He will make a covenant with Noah (6:13–21).
 - c. Noah’s obedience to the sovereign Creator is complete (6:22).
4. The judgment on the unrighteous and the salvation of righteous Noah and his family is carried out by the sovereign Creator by means of a flood (7:1–24).
 - a. The instructions to Noah concerning entering the ark with the animals are given by God to preserve His creation through the coming judgment, and the instructions are followed by Noah (7:1–5).
 - b. Noah, his family, and the animals enter the ark in obedience to God in order to escape the flood (7:6–9).
 - c. The flood covers the whole earth after the Lord shuts Noah, his family, and the animals in the ark (7:10–20).
 - d. The destruction of all life on earth by God’s judgment through the flood is contrasted with the salvation of Noah and those with him in the ark (7:21–23).
 - e. The length of the flood is 150 days (7:24).
5. The end of the flood occurs because of God’s care for the inhabitants of the ark, and it is followed by acceptable worship of the Creator by Noah and a promise from God never to judge the earth the same way again. (8:1–22).
 - a. The abating of the flood waters is carried out by God because of His care for Noah and those on the ark (8:1–5).
 - b. The end of the flood is confirmed by the sending out of birds by Noah (8:6–12).

- c. The drying up of the flood waters is complete and the cover of the ark is removed by Noah (8:13–14).
 - d. The command to Noah to leave the ark along with all its inhabitants is issued by the sovereign creator and obeyed by Noah (8:15–19).
 - e. The sacrifices of Noah are accepted by the Lord and the sovereign Creator promises never to judge the world in the same way, despite the fact that humanity's hearts remain evil (8:20–22).
6. The conclusion of God's judgment on the earth by the flood is marked by the sovereign Creator's blessing and mandate to Noah, which renews that given to Adam, and the Noahic covenant, which is signified by the rainbow (9:1–29).
- a. God's blessing of Noah and His mandate to populate the earth is a renewal and expansion of the blessing and mandate given to Adam (9:1–7).
 - b. The Noahic covenant is God's promise to Noah, his descendants, and all of creation never to flood the entire earth again and is signified by the rainbow (9:8–17).
 - c. The blessing of Shem and Japheth and the cursing of Ham are a result of their contrasting responses to Noah's sin of drunkenness (9:18–27).
 - d. The years of Noah's life and his death form the epilogue of the flood narrative (9:28–29).
- E. The confusion of humanity's language and dispersion over the earth is the Lord's response to humanity's pride and attempt to avoid spreading over the earth after the earth was repopulated following the flood (10:1–11:26).
1. The genealogies of Noah's sons show that the earth was populated after the flood by the increasing of Shem, Ham, and Japheth's descendants (10:1–32).
- a. The introduction to the genealogies of Shem, Ham, and Japheth states Noah sons populated the earth after the flood (10:1).
 - b. The descendants of Japheth increase and form the coastland peoples with distinct locations and languages (10:2–5).
 - c. The descendants of Ham increase and include the first mighty man and the dispersed clans of the Canaanites, all with distinct locations and languages (10:6–20).
 - d. The descendants of Shem increase and spread with distinct locations and languages (10:21–31).

- e. The descendants of Noah populated the earth after the flood (10:32).
2. The confusion of humanity's language and dispersion over the earth is the Lord's response to humanity's intention to make a name for themselves and avoid spreading over the earth by building a city and a tower (11:1–9).
 - a. The earth's population had one language and the people migrated to Shinar (11:1–2).
 - b. The intention of the people was to make a name for themselves and avoid being dispersed throughout the earth (11:3–4).
 - c. The Lord's response to the people's intention was to confuse their language in order to force the people to abandon their building project and to disperse (11:5–7).
 - d. The confusion of language results in the people abandoning the building of city and tower and their dispersion over the earth (11:8–9).
 3. The genealogy of Shem culminates with Terah's sons Abram, Nahor, and Haran, thus connecting Abram to Adam through Shem, Noah, Enosh, and Seth (11:10–26).

II. The Patriarchal Account: A relationship between the sovereign Creator and humanity is maintained and channeled through the redemptive covenantal relationship with the Patriarchs, and this relationship is accessed by individuals through faith (11:27–50:26).

- A. The account of Abram/Abraham unfolds God's special relationship with Abram/Abraham and the covenantal purposes of Yahweh (11:27–25:11).
 1. The genealogy of Terah introduces Abram and Sarai and reports their migration from Ur to Haran (11:27–32).
 2. The Lord's call of Abram includes the Lord's promises to bless Abram, to provide descendants for Abram, to make a name for Abram, and that Abram would be a blessing (12:1–3).
 3. Abram's obedience to travel from Haran to Canaan shows Abram's faith and the Lord promises to give Abram's offspring the land of Canaan (12:4–9).
 4. Abram's fear motivated lie while sojourning in Egypt leads to his wife being taken into Pharaoh's harem and jeopardizes the promise, but God intervenes (12:10–20).
 - a. Abram's sojourn in Egypt results from a famine in Canaan (12:10).

- b. Sarai is taken into Pharaoh's harem as a result of Abram's fear motivated lie (12:11–16).
 - c. The Lord plagues Pharaoh's house because of Sarai (12:17).
 - d. The plagues on Pharaoh's house lead Pharaoh to discover that Sarai is Abrams wife, and Pharaoh rebukes Abram and expels him from his country (12:18–20).
5. Abram's return to Canaan and separation from Lot results in the reaffirmation of the Lord's promises to Abram (13:1–18).
- a. Abram and his family return to Bethel and he worships God, but the increase of Abram and Lot's wealth results in strife (13:1–7).
 - b. Abram's proposal that Lot take his choice of land shows generosity (13:8–9).
 - c. Lot's choice of land based on its beauty and fertility results in his settlement among the wicked and Abram's settlement in Canaan (13:10–13).
 - d. The Lord's promise of innumerable descendants and a land for them to inhabit is reiterated and Abram builds an altar in Hebron (13:14–18).
6. Abram rescues Lot from the kings of the east (14:1–24).
- a. The battle between of the five Dead Sea kings and the four kings of the east results from the Dead Sea kings' rebellion (14:1–4).
 - b. The retaliation of the four kings of the east results in the defeat of the five Dead Sea kings after the kings of the east had swept through the region (14:5–10).
 - c. Lot is taken captive when the kings of the east plunder Sodom and Gomorrah (14:11–12).
 - d. The rescue of Lot is led by Abram and includes Lot's family and possessions (14:13–16).
 - e. Abram is blessed by Melchizedek, pays Melchizedek tithes, and refuses to accept tribute for his rescue of the people (14:17–24).
7. Yahweh ratifies His covenant with Abram/Abraham (15:1–21).²⁵

²⁵ From this point forward the outline follows; Charles H. Savelle, "Genesis Argument," 13–17. However, I do not change Abram's name to Abraham until 17:1–8.

- a. Yahweh comforts Abram by reiterating His promise that he will have innumerable descendants (15:1–6).
 - b. Yahweh commands Abram to prepare animals for the covenant ritual (15:7–11).
 - c. Yahweh prophesies concerning the future of Abram’s descendants (15:12–16).
 - d. Yahweh ratifies His covenant with Abram and reiterates and clarifies the land promise (15:17–21).
8. The birth of Ishmael by Hagar, Sarai’s maid (16:1–16).
- a. Sarai initiates a plan to procure a son through Hagar (16:1–4).
 - b. Sarai experiences conflict with Hagar after Hagar becomes pregnant (16:5–6).
 - c. Sarai expels Hagar but Yahweh intercedes (16:7–14).
 - d. Ishmael is born and named (16:15–16).
9. Yahweh renews His covenant by renaming Abram and Sarai and instituting the sign of circumcision (17:1–27).
- a. The reiteration of the covenant and renaming of Abram to Abraham (17:1–8).
 - b. The requirement of circumcision (17:9–14).
 - c. The renaming of Sarai to Sarah emphasizes her role (17:15–21).
 - d. The response of Abraham (17:22–27).
10. Yahweh visits Abraham and proclaiming good news for Sarah and bad news for Sodom (18:1–33).
- a. Abraham receives three heavenly Visitors (18:1–8).
 - b. Abraham is told the Sarah will have son in a year (18:9–15).
 - c. Abraham is told that Sodom and Gomorrah are facing divine judgment (18:16–21).

- d. Abraham intercedes for the cities by negotiating with Yahweh (18:22–33).

11. Yahweh destroys Sodom and Gomorrah but Lot is spared (19:1–38).

- a. Lot receives the angelic visitors (19:1–11).
- b. The partial rescue of Lot and his family (19:12–17).
- c. The request of Lot to go to Zoar (19:18–22).
- d. The destruction of Sodom and Gomorrah and Abraham remembered (19:23–29).
- e. Lot's drunken incest (19:30–38).

12. Yahweh protects Sarah from Abraham and Abimelech (20:1–18).

- a. The threat to Sarah and the Seed (20:1–2).
- b. The intervention of Yahweh (20:3–7).
- c. Abimelech confronts Abraham (20:8–13).
- d. The return of Sarah and restitution of Abimelech (20:14–16).
- e. The recovery of Abimelech and his household (20:17–18).

13. The birth of Isaac and the banishment of Hagar and Ishmael (21:1–21).

14. Abraham's treaty with Abimelech (21:22–34).

15. God tells Abraham to sacrifice Isaac (22:1–19).

- a. The command to sacrifice Isaac (22:1–2).
- b. Abraham's obedient response (22:3–8).
- c. Abraham prepares to sacrifice Isaac (22:9–10).
- d. Abraham is stopped from sacrificing Isaac (22:11–13).
- e. Abraham names the place and the covenant promises are reaffirmed (22:14–19).

16. The genealogy of Nahor, Abraham's brother (22:20–24).

17. Sarah dies and is buried in the cave at Machpelah (23:1–20).
 - a. The death of Sarah (23:1–2).
 - b. The purchase of the cave at Machpelah (23:3–16).
 - c. The cave is deeded to Abraham and Sarah is buried (23:17–20).
 18. Abraham procures a wife for Isaac (24:1–67).
 - a. Abraham sends his servant to procure a wife for Isaac (24:1–9).
 - b. Abraham’s servant prays to Yahweh (24:10–14).
 - c. The arrival of Rebekah is the answer to the servant’s prayer (24:15–28).
 - d. Abraham’s servant goes to Rebekah’s home and explains his mission (24:29–49).
 - e. Agreement is reached for Rebekah to marry Isaac (24:50–60).
 - f. The servant brings Rebekah to Isaac and the marriage is consummated (24:61–67).
 19. Abraham marries Keturah and has more sons (25:1–6).
 20. Abraham dies and is buried at the cave at Machpelah (25:7–11).
- B. The genealogy of non–elect Ishmael provides a contrast to the elect Isaac (25:12– 18).
- C. The account of Isaac (with Jacob) continues God’s special relationship to Abraham and the covenantal purposes of Yahweh (25:19–26:35).
1. Esau and Jacob are born (25:19–26).
 2. Esau and Jacob pursue different interests (25:27–28).
 3. Esau “sells” his birthright to Jacob (25:29–34).
 4. The stories of Isaac and Abimelech (26:1–33).
 - a. Yahweh appears to Isaac in the midst of a famine (26:1–5).
 - b. Isaac sojourns in Gerar and repeats the mistake of his father (26:6–11).

- c. Isaac is blessed by Yahweh (26:12–17).
 - d. Isaac quarrels with the Philistines (26:18–22).
 - e. Yahweh renews His covenant with Isaac (26:23–25).
 - f. The treaty between Isaac and Abimelech (26:26–33).
5. Esau grieves his parents by marrying Hittite wives (26:34–35).
- D. The account of Jacob (with Isaac) continues God’s special relationship to Abraham and the covenantal purposes of Yahweh (27:1–37:1).
1. Isaac blesses Jacob and Esau (27:1–45).
 - a. Jacob deceives his father and receives Esau’s blessing (27:1–29).
 - b. Isaac gives Esau a less significant blessing (27:30–40).
 - c. Esau makes plans to kill Jacob (27:41–45).
 2. Jacob is sent to Laban to find a wife and get him away from Esau (27:46– 28:5).
 3. Esau tries to please his parents by marrying a daughter of Ishmael (28:6– 9).
 4. Yahweh reveals Himself to Jacob at Bethel and reaffirms the Abrahamic promises (28:10–22).
 5. Jacob meets Rachel (29:1–14).
 6. Jacob works for Laban’s daughters Leah and Rachel (29:15–30).
 7. Yahweh blesses Jacob and his family grows (29:31—30:24).
 - a. Leah has four sons (29:31–35).
 - b. Bilhah (Rachel’s maid) has two sons (30:1–8).
 - c. Zilpah (Leah’s maid) has two sons (30:9–13).
 - d. Leah has two more sons and a daughter (30:14–21).
 - e. Rachel has one son, Joseph (30:22–24).
 8. Yahweh blesses Jacob and his flocks grow (30:25–43).

9. Jacob leaves Paddan–Aram (31:1–55).
 - a. Jacob secretly flees from Laban (31:1–21).
 - b. Laban pursues Jacob, but Yahweh warns him (31:22–24).
 - c. Laban catches and confronts Jacob (31:25–42).
 - d. Jacob and Laban make a covenant (31:43–55).
10. Jacob makes plans to appease Esau (32:1–21).
11. Jacob sends his family on and has a divine encounter (32:22–32).
12. Jacob has a conciliatory meeting with his Esau (33:1–17).
13. Jacob comes to Shechem in Canaan (33:18–20).
14. Dinah is raped and her brothers retaliate (34:1–31).
 - a. The rape of Dinah (34:1–5).
 - b. The response (34:6–24).
 - c. The retaliation (34:25–29).
 - d. The rebuke of Jacob (34:30–31).
15. Jacob journeys to Bethel (35:1–15).
 - a. Jacob commanded to return to Bethel (35:1).
 - b. Jacob makes spiritual preparation to return to Bethel (35:2–4).
 - c. Jacob is divinely protected in returning to Bethel (35:5–8).
 - d. Yahweh renews His covenant with Jacob (35:9–15).
16. Rachel dies giving birth to Benjamin and is buried (35:16–20).
17. Reuben sleeps with Bilhah (35:21–22).
18. Jacob’s twelve sons are listed (35:23–26).
19. Isaac dies and is buried (35:27–29).

E. The genealogy of non–elect Esau provides a contrast to the elect Jacob (36:1– 37:1).

1. The family of Esau (36:1–14).
2. The chiefs of the sons of Esau (36:15–19).
3. The sons of Seir the Horite (36:20–30).
4. The kings of Edom (36:31–39).
5. The chiefs of Esau (36:40–43).
6. Summary statement of the genealogy of Esau (37:1).

F. The account of Joseph (with Jacob) continues God’s special relationship to Abraham and the covenantal purposes of Yahweh (37:2–50:26).

1. Joseph is identified as the favored and ill–fated son (37:2–36).
 - a. Joseph is the favored son (37:2–4).
 - b. Joseph is the ill–fated son (37:5–36).
2. Interlude: Judah sins and Tamar’s sons (38:1–30).
 - a. Judah and his family intermarry with Canaanite women (38:1–11).
 - b. Judah sins against his daughter–in–law Tamar (38:12–23).
 - c. Judah confesses his sin and Tamar’s “righteousness” (38:24–26).
 - d. Tamar gives birth to twins: Perez and Zerah (38:27–30).
3. Joseph experiences suffering and success in Egypt (39:1–40:23).
 - a. Joseph becomes a slave of Potiphar and experiences initial success (39:1–6).
 - b. Joseph resists the advances of Potiphar’s wife and is falsely charged with rape (39:7–18).
 - c. Joseph is thrown into prison but experiences success (39:19–23).
 - d. Joseph successfully interprets some prisoners’ dreams but is not remembered (40:1–23).
4. Joseph rises to prominence in Egypt (41:1–57).

- a. Pharaoh has a puzzling dream (41:1–8).
 - b. Joseph is finally remembered (42:9–13).
 - c. Joseph interprets Pharaoh’s dreams (41:14–36).
 - d. Joseph appointed by Pharaoh to be a ruler in Egypt (41:37–57).
5. Joseph is reunited with his brothers (42:1–45:28).
- a. Joseph’s brothers are sent to Egypt to buy grain (42:1–5).
 - b. Joseph recognizes his brothers but keeps his identity secret (42:6–7).
 - c. Joseph tests his brothers by charging them with spying (42:8–17).
 - d. All the brothers except Simeon are permitted to return home (42:18–38).
 - e. Joseph’s brothers make a second trip to Egypt accompanied with Benjamin (43:1–15).
 - f. Joseph meets Benjamin (43:16–34).
 - g. Joseph tests his brothers a second time (44:1–17).
 - h. Judah intercedes for Benjamin (44:18–34).
 - i. Joseph reveals his identity to his brothers and they are reconciled (45:1–15).
 - j. The brothers are sent home in order to bring the rest of the family back to Egypt (45:16–28).
6. Jacob and his family leave for Egypt and Jacob and Joseph are reunited in Goshen (46:1–30).
- a. Jacob and his family worship God at Beersheba (46:1).
 - b. God affirms the sojourn in Egypt (46:2–4).
 - c. Jacob and his family leave for Egypt (46:5–7).
 - d. The genealogy of Jacob (46:8–27).

- e. Jacob and his family arrive in Egypt where he and Joseph are reunited in Goshen (46:28–30).
7. Jacob and his family settle in Goshen (46:31–47:12).
 8. Joseph establishes a famine program (47:13–26).
 9. Joseph promises to bury Jacob in Canaan (47:27–31).
 10. Jacob's acts in his final days (48:1–49:33).
 - a. Jacob blesses and adopts Joseph's two sons (48:1–22).
 - b. Jacob blesses his own sons (49:1–28).
 - c. Jacob dies after charging his sons to bury him in Canaan (49:29–33).
 11. Joseph buries Jacob in Canaan (50:1–14).
 12. Joseph affirms his relationship with his brothers (50:15–21).
 13. Joseph dies after arranging his final burial in Canaan (50:22–26).

Select Bibliography

- Archer, Gleason Leonard Jr. *A Survey of Old Testament Introduction*. Updated and rev. ed. Chicago: Moody Press, 1994.
- Cassuto, Umberto. *A Commentary on the Book of Genesis*. 1st English ed. Jerusalem,: Magnes Press Hebrew University, 1961.
- Davis, John James. *Paradise to Prison: Studies in Genesis*. Grand Rapids: Baker Book House, 1975.
- Hamilton, Victor P. *The Book of Genesis: Chapters 1–17*. New International Commentary on the Old Testament, ed. R. K. Harrison and Robert L. Hubbard Jr. Grand Rapids: Eerdmans, 1990.
- Hamilton, Victor P. *The Book of Genesis: Chapters 18–50*. New International Commentary on the Old Testament, ed. R. K. Harrison and Robert L. Hubbard Jr. Grand Rapids: Eerdmans, 1995.
- Hartley, John E. *Genesis*. New International Biblical Commentary, ed. Robert L. Hubbard Jr. and Robert K. Johnson, vol. 1. Peabody, MA.: Hendrickson, 2000.
- Merrill, Eugene H., Mark F. Rooker and Michael A. Grisanti. *The World and the Word: An Introduction to the Old Testament*. Nashville: B&H Academic, 2011.
- Rad, Gerhard von. *Genesis: A Commentary*. Rev. ed. Old Testament Library, ed. G. Ernest Wright. Philadelphia: Westminster Press, 1972.
- Ross, Allen P. *Creation and Blessing: A Guide to the Study and Exposition of the Book of Genesis*. Grand Rapids: Baker, 1987.
- Skinner, John. *A Critical and Exegetical Commentary on Genesis*. 2d ed. International Critical Commentary, ed. Alfred Plummer Samuel Rolles Driver, Charles Augustus Briggs. Edinburgh: T. & T. Clark, 1930.
- Waltke, Bruce K., and Cathi J. Fredricks. *Genesis: A Commentary*. Grand Rapids: Zondervan, 2001.
- Walton, John H. *Genesis*. NIV Application Commentary, ed. Terry Muck. Grand Rapids: Zondervan, 2001.
- Wenham, Gordon J. *Genesis 1–15*. Word Biblical Commentary, ed. David A. Hubbard and Glenn W. Barker, vol. 1. Waco, TX: Word Books, 1987.
- Wenham, Gordon J. *Genesis 16–50*. Word Biblical Commentary, ed. David A. Hubbard and Glenn W. Barker. Dallas, TX: Word Books, 1994.