

The Books of Genesis – An Overview of its Structure and Authorship.

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There is also a lot of poetry in Genesis that perhaps provides an interesting perspective into the original message, and how key parts of the record might have been committed to memory. Some of the Hebrew poetry can be seen in various specialist versions, such as The Jerusalem Bible, etc. This needs investigation, as it gives may give insight into how the key message was passed on from through the generations.

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1. Introduction.

In this short analysis we will firstly consider the basic structure of the book of Genesis and later explore questions about the authorship and timing of the book. Understanding the basic structure will assist us grasp the thematic structure of the book, which is somewhat clouded by the current chapter divisions. This is particularly helpful in the first two sections, and it will allow us to see beyond what may at first appear to be complexities in the record. This investigation will only look at the Bible’s internal evidence.

The General Theme of Genesis.

The book of Genesis is basically chronological in its layout. It covers the epoch from God’s creation to the time of Israel’s sojourn in the land of Egypt. The book is structured to show the origins of the world, of man, of God’s purpose with man and with the earth, and of God’s relationship with man. Genesis explains why the world is as it is now, full of sin and death. The record traces the original sin of Adam, and from there to the eventual apostasy of Adam’s descendants until they were all destroyed in the great flood.

At that time, God finds a faithful man in Noah, who becomes the savior of his house and the one through whom God’s purpose will prosper, because he walked with God. After the flood, Noah’s descendants repopulate the earth, but revert back to wickedness and are subsequently divided by language to avert another catastrophe and to preserve a faithful seed in the midst of this wickedness.

From this point, **God makes a choice to reveal himself to selected individuals**, who become the heads of families through whom God's ways are known. **This leads to Abraham**, who is marked out like Adam as the head of a house. He becomes a very important person in subsequent Bible history. Through Abraham and his seed are all nations to be blessed. The basis of this blessing is seen in the words, that **'he believed God, and God counted it to him for righteousness'**. This is one of the most important references in the OT. Abraham believed and obeyed, and through him God declared the basis upon which he would accept any man. That is, God will accept any person on the basis of genuine faith, which basically means 'believing God'. In Abraham's case, this meant believing the promises that God made, which had reference to the completion of God's purpose with man. These promises relate to the land, to a future descendent, to the forgiveness of sins, and to eternal life. These promises will bring a blessing to all nations, to all the earth, as all would be blessed through Abraham and through the seed of Abraham, even the Lord Jesus Christ. Again, this is an echo of God's original purpose, declared in **Gen.1:26-28**.

The faith of Abraham is the key to understanding what follows. God makes a choice, not on the basis of birth order, but on the basis of faith. The narrative then follows the lineage Abraham through his two sons, Ishmael and Isaac. Ishmael's line continues, yet he is not the promised seed. The promised seed is faithful Isaac, and the record traces his experiences. It then moves on to Isaac's sons, Esau and Jacob. Esau is shown to be a profane man, and his inheritance and lineage is traced down to the Edomites. Jacob is a man of faith and therefore the promised seed. Through him God works, eventually changing his name to Israel. The record then examines the lives of his sons, and particularly focusses on faithful Joseph, who through suffering becomes the savior of Israel. The whole record ends with all the 12 sons of Israel dying in Egypt, which includes the death of Joseph. As Hebrews says, 'these all died in faith' [It is of note in this record, that none of the heirs of Abraham and of the promises are the natural firstborn. The basis of their election, of God's choice, is their faith]

2. The General Structure of Genesis.

The Hebrew title of Genesis is taken from its opening phrase, Bereshith ("In the beginning . . ."). The English name comes from the title given to this book in the Greek Septuagint translation (LXX). The book of Genesis is clearly structured into 12 different sections, most of which commence with the term **'the generations of'**. So we read in **Gen.5:1**, **"This is the book of the generations of Adam"**, which commences a section dealing with Adam's direct descendants and their experiences, all of whom were born under the curse imposed on Adam. (NB: Some suggest that there are 10 sections, which they arrive at by combining sections which speak of the same general theme).

Genesis may have originally been comprised of books (cepher in Heb, or βιβλος in Gk). The word translated as 'book' means 'a missive, document, writing or book/scroll' as the Hebrew wording of **Gen.5:1** indicates. We can see how this term is also used in **Exod.17:14**, where God tells Moses to **"write this for a memorial in a 'book'"**, and in **Exod.24:7** **"And he took the 'book' of the covenant..."**

The book of Genesis begins with an introduction, followed by distinct sections each commencing with the phrase **'the generations of'**. In one place this phrase appears to be in the second verse of the section (**Gen.37:1-2**), which then commences the last and longest section of the book. **Each section that begins with this term has a specific theme that it focusses upon, which is generally summarized in the opening verse. The opening verse in each of the 12 sections may originally have been the title of the section or book that followed**, much as an essay or a book has a title that generally defines its subject matter.

This suggests that the original twelve books/scrolls were later compiled, then bound together to produce a singular history from Creation to the time of Joseph's death. The book of Exodus quite naturally connects to this historical background, and introduces us to Moses, the great deliverer and law giver of Israel. Moses is arguably the greatest man in the OT. The events that follow in Exodus are therefore based upon what went before, and the fulfillment of God's promise to Abraham in [Gen.15:13-14](#). Moses in the Law regularly refers to events and promises that are recorded in the book of Genesis, [Exod.6:8](#), [32:1](#), etc.

3. The Different Sections of Genesis.

The word **Generations** is the Hebrew *towlēdah* (**LXX γενέσεως = Greek Genesis**), which means; 'descendants, results, proceedings, generations, genealogies, whether literally or metaphorically'. Some consider the word to portray the idea of 'tablets', as if the genesis account was originally written on different clay or stone tablets. Given that Israel came out of Egypt after dwelling there for a few hundred years, it is possible that the records may have been written on twelve Papyrus or Parchment Scrolls while they were in Egypt. We may never really know the details, nevertheless, the idea being portrayed is that this is actual history that has been later compiled into this book we now know as Genesis.

In the following list **we have itemized the 12 divisions found in Genesis**. (Some suggest that there are 10 sections, but this analysis suggests there are 12 sections. There is an anomaly in [Gen.10:32](#), which I have taken to be a summary of what is written before, and not the start of a new section).

1. **Gen.1:1-2:3. In the beginning God created the heaven and the earth.**
(**V1 introduces the section, and the record then goes on to detail God's creative work, over 6 days in which he forms the world we know and fills it with life.** All God's work is declared 'very good'. This lays the foundations in preparation for what is to follow in God's purpose with man and the earth [Gen.1:26-28](#), which is God's central purpose in creation. In [Gen.2:1-3](#) God's miraculous work is finished, and God ceases from his work)
2. **Gen.2:4-4:26. These are the generations of the heavens and of the earth** when they were created, in the day that the LORD God made the earth and the heavens,
(**The record now looks specifically at the man and his experiences.** God provided all for him, established him in a garden, gave him a wife, yet he chose the way of sin and rebellion, which undermined God's purpose. Sin then began to rule in man, and Cain is typical of man's rebellion, yet the section ends with hope in the line of Seth)
3. **Gen.5:1-6:8. This is the book of the generations of Adam.** In the day that God created man, in the likeness of God made he him;
(**The record now specifically focusses on the generations of Adam, i.e. Adam's children,** following the line of the 'sons of God' who were faithful in an evil world, right down to Noah. However, evil and violence filled the earth through the sons of men. Seth's line mixed with Cain's line. The wickedness was great. God determined to destroy all, yet Noah found grace)

4. **Gen.6:9-9:29. These are the generations of Noah:** Noah was a just man *and* perfect in his generations, *and* Noah walked with God.
(Noah and his family are marked out as faithful, and through them God works to save his creation from the evil that was everywhere. Noah builds an ark, and is saved by water. His family and the animals in the ark with him repopulate the earth, yet even after all this, evil follows them in the sinful actions of Ham-Canaan)
5. **Gen.10:1-11:9. Now these are the generations of the sons of Noah,** Shem, Ham, and Japheth: and unto them were sons born after the flood.
(From Noah's 3 sons the earth is repopulated. The 70 descendants of Noah lay the foundation for the nations that would follow. Nimrod rises up as a great man, and rules a kingdom of men in violence and brutality, in complete rebellion against God. At Babel, man's rebellion is complete. When he is united his evil drives him to go his own way. God divides the nations so they cannot be united in evil, and thus creates a space for his people)
6. **Gen.11:10-26. These are the generations of Shem:** Shem *was* an hundred years old, and begat Arphaxad two years after the flood:
(The lineage of Shem to Abram is given. His line seems to be one of faithfulness, and this leads down to Terah, the father of Abram).
7. **Gen.11:27-25:11. Now these are the generations of Terah: Terah begat Abram,** Nahor, and Haran; and Haran begat Lot.
(The history of the family of Terah, which leads to Abram. This section follows Abram's life right down to Abraham's death. Isaac is his heir. God makes promises to Abraham, based upon his faith. The promises point forward to the completion of God's purpose with man and the earth. There may also be some structural echoes here. In Genesis, we observe that Adam had 3 notable sons, Noah also had 3 notable sons, and now Terah is shown to have 3 notable sons. In Genesis there are also 10 generation from Adam to Noah, and there are also 10 generations from Noah to Abraham. This indicates that some patterning may exist in the genealogical layout)
8. **Gen.25:12-18. Now these are the generations of Ishmael, Abraham's son,** whom Hagar the Egyptian, Sarah's handmaid, bare unto Abraham:
(The history of Ismael, Abraham's son. He was not the heir of the promise, yet he was blessed nevertheless)
9. **Gen.25:19-35:29. And these are the generations of Isaac, Abraham's son:** Abraham begat Isaac:
(The history of Isaac and the enmity between Jacob & Esau is shown. Jacob flees his brother's wrath, and is blessed in the house of Laban with 12 sons, through whom comes the 12 tribes of Israel. The section ends with the death of Isaac.

10. **Gen.36:1-8. Now these are the generations of Esau**, who *is* Edom.
(**Esau's personal history**, his 3 wives and his move away from the promised land down to Mt Seir. He moved from the presence of his brother as he had no faith in the promises)
11. **Gen.36:9-43. And these are the generations of Esau the father of the Edomites** in mount Seir:
(**The history of the family of Esau, who are the Edomites**. Esau had married into the family of the Horites, via Aholibamah Gen.36:2,24. He later destroyed and replaced the Horites, and his sons ended up possessing their land Deut.2:5,12,22 as Dukes and Kings. They sought a life away from the promised land and became the Edomites.)
12. **Gen.37:1-50:26. These are the generations of Jacob**. Joseph, *being* seventeen years old, was feeding the flock with his brethren;
(**The history of Jacob's sons, who ended up in Egypt**. The history is complex and full of failure, yet it has shining examples of wonderful faith in men like Joseph, and the record also shows the power of repentance in men like Judah. It ends with Joseph in a coffin waiting for the fulfilment of the promise in Exodus Gen.50:26. This lays the foundation for the Exodus)

4. All Scripture is Given by Inspiration of God.

The biblical teaching about the inspiration of Scripture does not require us to conclude that all the books of the Bible were written by God dictating to the human authors. Dictation was certainly one important means employed, as we read in the prophetic books (e.g., the prophet says, "**The Word of the Lord came to me saying**" **Jer.2:1**, or of the Law in **Exod.24:4, 34:1, 27**). However, at least some of the Bible comes from the eyewitness experiences of the authors (e.g. **Num.33:2, 2 Peter 1:16**) or sometimes it seems as though parts were the result of the research and study by the author (e.g., **Dan.9:1-2, Luke 1:1-4**).

Just as believers today can quote truthful statements from non-believing sources without thereby endorsing their wrong ideas, so the Biblical authors could quote non-believers or non-biblical sources without introducing false statements into their divine writings (e.g., **Joshua 10:13, 2 Samuel 1:18, Acts 17:28, Titus 1:12**). In like manner we sometimes have in the speeches of men a faithful record of what they said without endorsing what is being said as being truthful. Some examples are; Rabshakeh's speech in **Isaiah.36:12-20**, the various speeches by Job and his friends in the book of Job, and Tertullus' accusation against Paul in **Acts.24:2-9**, etc.

This does not mean that those who were selected to compile the scriptural record wrote what they liked or that the scriptures are a compilation of the thoughts and wisdom of men. Peter sums up the situation when he says, that "**Holy men of God spoke as they were moved by the Holy Spirit**" (**2.Pet.1:19-20**).

Furthermore, we are quite clearly told that **the scriptures** (Greek for writings) were given by **the inspiration of God** (which literally means God breathed, for breath carries speech) as a result of the Holy Spirit's guidance (**2.Tim.3:15-17**). **All of this means that the words we have are the product of divine revelation - guidance and particularly superintendence, and within the record we have a clear revelation in the words of God.** This concept is as

applicable to the book of Genesis as it is to any of the other books in the Bible. We know this by the way Genesis is quoted and referred to as a foundational source of revelation in many other parts of the Bible, both OT and NT.

Examples of this are found in the echoes of repeated ideas found in various places in the OT, such as; [Exod.20:11, 31:17](#), [Lev.17:11,14](#), [Deut.4:32, 32:8](#), [1.Chron.1:1-4](#), [Job.38:9](#), [Psalm.8:6, 19:1-6, 33:6,9, 104:2, 6-7, 136:5-9, 148:1-6](#), [Prov.8:27-30](#), [Isaiah.45:12, 54:9](#), [Jer.31:35](#).

Examples are also found in the NT writings, much of whose theology is based upon the early Genesis model; [Matt.19:5](#), [Mark.10:6-8](#), [Rom.4:3, 9, 17](#), [Rom.5:12](#), [Rom.9:7, 9, 12](#), [1.Cor.6:16, 15:45](#), [Gal.3:6, 8](#), [Eph.5:31](#), [Heb.4:4, 6:13-14, 11:12, 18](#). Much fuller lists are found in the Addendum to this essay.

The Chain of Custody. Lastly, as we read and become more familiar with the Bible it becomes clear that the words of previous generations are often used and endorsed by those who came after. We find an example of this [Jer.26:17-19](#), where the writings of Micah were quoted about 120 years or so after they were written. We also find an example of this in [Dan.9:1-2](#) where Daniel is writing in the first person, and is quoting Jeremiah who lived and wrote about 50-70 years before this time. Again, we find an example of this in [Joshua.1:7-8](#), where Joshua is told to observe Moses' teachings, meditate on 'the book of the Law' and to 'do according all that is written therein'. See also the following list which refers to the writings of Moses; [Joshua 8:32–34](#); [Judges 3:4](#); [1 Kings 2:3](#); [2 Kings 14:6; 21:8](#); [2 Chronicles 25:4](#); [Ezra 6:18](#); [Nehemiah 8:1; 13:1](#); [Daniel 9:11–13](#).

This style of communication is woven through the fabric of scripture, with many examples that show the beliefs of the people and their endorsement of what was written before – which is similar to how we validate evidence by chain of custody. By the time we come to the NT, it is evident that the body of the OT is now complete, and numerous references are drawn from it. There is no hesitation or doubt expressed by any of the NT writers. The words of various parts of Genesis and numerous other OT books are extensively quoted, and assumed to be genuine and to give a true and accurate representation of what was recorded and spoken of in the past. See the following examples. Jesus frequently spoke of Moses' writings or the Law of Moses, e.g. [Matthew 8:4; 19:7–8](#); [Mark 7:10; 12:26](#); [Luke 16:31, 24:27, 44](#); [John 5:46–47; 7:19](#). Other New Testament speakers/writers said the same thing, e.g. [John 1:17](#); [Acts 6:14; 13:39; 15:5](#); [1 Corinthians 9:9](#); [2 Corinthians 3:15](#); [Hebrews 10:28](#).

5. The Book of Genesis – Compiled from Ancient Scrolls?

It is perfectly reasonable to think that Moses may have written or compiled the basic structure of Genesis from pre-existing, well-preserved oral tradition or, more likely, from written documents handed down from the time of the patriarchs. The structure of the sections in Genesis suggests that this may have been the case. It is likely that Moses was working with written documents because the record of [Genesis 5:1](#) reads, "[this is the book of the generations of Adam](#)", where "book" is a translation of the normal Hebrew word meaning a written document.

This does not mean that the final assembly of Genesis, as we have it today, was completed in the days of Moses. Like the Law itself, it may be that Moses gathered and collated the twelve 'books' of Genesis together, but a later scribe compiled them and added some qualifying/helpful remarks, which are clearly evident in the text, as we shall

see. All of this was under the spirit's guidance. There are certain indicators in the book that suggests that it was bound in its final format sometime after Moses had passed away. This is also true for Exodus-Deuteronomy.

6. Who Wrote or Compiled Genesis?

The question of who wrote or compiled the book of Genesis is an interesting one. There is no definitive answer here, but there are hints in the text that may help us understand the matter. It also prompts other questions, such as; why is there no authorship mark or name given? If God was in control of the compilation process, as we commonly believe (as [2.Tim.3:15-17](#) & [2.Pet.1:19-21](#) implies), then why not add the author or compiler's name to the record? We clearly see the compiler's mark in some other scriptures, such as; [2.Pet.1:1](#), [Rev.1:1-10](#), [Gal.1:1-2](#), [Ezek.1:1-3](#), [Jer.1:1-3](#), and yet here in Genesis it is not given. We see this in other books as well, such as the NT book of Hebrews. Perhaps the lack of the author's name suggests that the sections of Genesis had many authors over a vast period of time.

The Genesis record starts with the creation account in Chapter one, right through until the death of Joseph in Egypt ([Genesis.50:22-26](#)). It finishes with Israel in Egypt, which nicely dovetails in with the opening ideas in the book of Exodus, where we read in [Exod.1:6](#) "And Joseph died, and all his brethren, and all that generation". Then later in [Exod.1:7-8](#) of the increase in numbers of the Israelites in Egypt, and then the ominous words, "Now there arose up a new king over Egypt, which knew not Joseph".

It was at this juncture that Moses was born, and some detail is given surrounding the events of his birth, and how he came to be brought up in the house of Pharaoh, the very one who sought to destroy Israel.

From this layout, it would be reasonable to conclude that Genesis was compiled (not written) well after the time of Joseph's death, and from the way the account seamlessly connects with Exodus, that **it was compiled to compliment the Exodus account by providing the necessary historical details for future generations**. The similarity of genealogical & chronological detail and the emphasis upon the same historical figures is significant. Added to this is the detail of God's relationship with the patriarchs and the promises that he made to them which all support this idea. We should also note that the books of [Exodus](#), [Leviticus](#), [Numbers](#) and [Deuteronomy](#) themselves do not contain the name of the final compiler attached, in the same way that many of the Prophets or the NT letters do. However, all of these books assert at least once that Moses wrote things contained in them.

This dovetailing of accounts suggests that a common compiler was used to assemble Genesis as well as the four books that came after it. That is, that Moses largely collated and edited the Genesis record as well as writing the Law, just as traditional Jewish thinking suggests. In the table below (Addendum 1) we can see that it is clear that the words we now have in these later four books (of the Law) are clearly attributed to Moses' authorship by other writers in the Bible.

However, the actual compilation of the writings (books or scrolls) must have been by another person sometime after the events, as the words of **Deut.34:7-12** imply. This is clearly the case, as the following words show, **Deut.34:10** “**And there arose not a prophet since in Israel like unto Moses, whom the LORD knew face to face**”. This must have been written after Moses’ death.

From this consideration, it is suggested that Moses left extensive records that included both a compiled history of the world up until his time, as well as a more complete record of the historical experiences of Israel while he was leading them under God’s direction. We know that Moses was instructed on many occasions to write what was being said to him by God.

It is probable that a later compiler gathered up the 12 books of Genesis and the writings of Moses, and collated them into the general format that we now have for the benefit of later generations. We have a hint of this in **Rom.4:23**, “**Now it was not written for his sake alone, that it was imputed to him; But for us also, to whom it shall be imputed, if we believe on him that raised up Jesus our Lord from the dead.**” In this place Paul is saying that the record of God’s acceptance of Abraham has been recorded for us too, who have come much later.

This compilation could have been in the days of Joshua, Samuel, David, Hezekiah or even completed in the days of Daniel or Ezra. However, the initial compilation would appear to be at the earlier end of this range, as we read of men reading the words of the Law from the very earliest of times. For example, we have Joshua and the people reading part of Law (**Joshua.8:34**), we have King David consulting with the details of the law concerning carrying the Ark after Uzzah’s death (**1.Chron.15:11-15**), and we have Josiah referring to what ‘**is written in the book of this covenant**’ regarding the keeping of the Passover (**2.Kings.23:21**), etc.

Other hints in the texts quite clearly show Moses’ authorship of the early records, and of the hand of an early compiler of his words. We can read of Moses’ authorship spoken of in **Deut.1:1** “**These be the words which Moses spake unto all Israel on this side of Jordan in the wilderness**”, which shows both Moses’ authorship and a later compilers hand. Late in this record when we read Moses’ words, we hear him speaking in the first person, for example, **Deut.2:1** “**Then we turned, and took our journey**”, and again in **Deut.3:1** “**Then we turned, and went up.**”, both of these references show that the author of these words was speaking about his firsthand experience with the things recorded, yet, as the reference in **Deut.1:1** clearly shows, these words were compiled by someone who came later.

7. Internal Evidence on timing – “Unto this day.”

The regular use of the phrase “**Unto this day**” in these early scriptures also supports the idea of a later compiler being involved, who has added in qualifying and clarifying information. Consider how this phrase is used in these references. Notice particularly the underlined references, which may help us identify a date for the compilation of these records. We will expand on these underlined references shortly; **Gen.19:37,38, 26:33, 32:32, 35:20, 47:26**, and then **Josh.4:9, 5:9, 6:25, 7:26, 8:28-29, 9:27, 14:14, 15:63, 16:10** and again **Judges.1:21, 1:26, 6:24, 10:4, 15:19, 18:12, 19:30** ...

This phrase also suggests the possibility of a similarity of style between the books of Genesis, Joshua and perhaps Judges. This may indicate that a common compiler was responsible for the final layout of (at least) these books?

The following references supply a time anchor –

Josh.6:25 “And Joshua saved Rahab the harlot alive, and her father’s household, and all that she had; and she dwelleth in Israel even unto this day,..”. This suggests that the record of Joshua was compiled while Rahab was still alive, and from the way the words are recorded it is clear that a third party other than Joshua recorded it, that is, someone who was alive at the same time as Rahab. The other possibility is that the record is saying that her descendants dwelt in Israel to this day.

Josh.15:63 “As for the Jebusites the inhabitants of Jerusalem, the children of Judah could not drive them out: but the Jebusites dwell with the children of Judah at Jerusalem unto this day”. (See also **Judges.1:21**). We know from later scriptures that this situation only continued until the time of David, for we are told that David drove the Jebusites out of Jerusalem when he established his capital there (**2.Sam.5:6-9**). This would clearly suggest that the Joshua record was compiled shortly after Joshua’s time, but certainly before David took Jerusalem, approximately 400 hundred years later. The compiler could have been one of the early priests or scribes, or even Samuel the Prophet, who anointed David as king but died before he became king. This would put the compilation at well before 1,000 BC, which is approximately when David reigned.

There are a number of other scriptural references that suggest timing of Genesis’ compilation.

Place names and other things – in Genesis and in Joshua.

Some of the place names in the book of Genesis were not given to the areas identified until after Moses’ time. The following is a clear example of this. This clearly shows the hand of a later compiler.

Gen 14:14 And when Abram heard that his brother Lot was taken captive, he armed his trained servants, born in his own house, and along with his local allies he led these three hundred and eighteen men, “... and pursued them unto Dan”.

The location of the tribe of Dan is a fascinating question, as a large portion of the tribe moved from its original portion which was located on the fertile coastline of the promised land (**Josh.19:40-48**). The sordid story of **Judges.18** records this movement as they conquered Leshem=Laish, to the north of Galilee. This was evidently the area that Abraham led his small band of men to conquer the invading armies and rescue Lot and his house.

The timing of ‘Dan’s’ move was shortly after Joshua’s time, as the (compromised) priest mentioned in **Judges.17:7-18:6**, and in **18:18-20** is none other than **Moses’ grandson** (**Jud.18:30** Hebrew. Manasseh = Moses). **This would put the movement of Dan as not long after the record of Joshua**. Again, the way **Josh.19:47** mentions this event (“... Dan went up to fight against Leshem, and took it ... and called Leshem, Dan, after the name of Dan their father”) also lends support to the idea that **Genesis and Joshua may have had the same compiler**. The events in the following chapter of Judges, i.e. **Judges 19-20**, are also early and out of chronological order, as the high priest mentioned in the record is ‘**Phinehas, the son of Eleazar, the son of Aaron**’ (**Judges.20:28**, cf. **Num.25:7,11**).

Gen.11:31, 15:7 tells us that Abraham was called from “**Ur of the Chaldees**”. Although the city of “**Ur**” is well known as an ancient Sumerian city, we know from history that the Chaldeans only began to have an influence in this region of lower Mesopotamia sometime well after the 11th century BC. This is about 900 years after Abraham. We read of them in **Dan.1:4, 2:2** etc, as the later Babylonian-Chaldean empire. Therefore, the term “**of the Chaldees**” was probably inserted into the text later as a location identifier much later, as the original location of the city of Ur had lost its regional importance and was soon to disappear, about 500BC. We find these sort of annotations inserted into the text upon occasion, some examples can be seen in **Gen.14:2, 3, 7, 8, 17**. This of course does not mean that the record was written at a very late time, but more likely testifies to annotations and clarifiers being added to assist the reader to understand difficult terms and locations that may have fallen out of later use. We see this sort addition being made in a number of places, upon occasion. For example, we have the annotation in **Prov.25:1**.

Genesis 12:6 “**At that time the Canaanites were in the land**” – this reference clearly indicates that this section of Genesis was at least added to (redacted) at the time of Moses or later still, for the perspective is from the future. That is, that Israel now inhabited the land and not the Canaanites.

Gen.50:10-11. At the burying of Jacob, “**And they came to the threshingfloor of Atad, which is beyond Jordan, and there they mourned with a great and very sore lamentation: and he made a mourning for his father seven days. And when the inhabitants of the land, the Canaanites, saw the mourning in the floor of Atad, they said, This is a grievous mourning to the Egyptians: **wherefore the name of it was called Abelmizraim, which is beyond Jordan**.” The term “beyond Jordan” is used to describe the land promised to Abraham that was reached by crossing the Jordan River. This record is clearly written from the perspective of someone outside the land, which is how Moses used it in **Deut.3:20, 25** while he was east of the Jordan. This suggests that the authorship of this verse was in or before the days of Moses. Later, after the land was taken, the term “beyond Jordan” was used the other way, to describe those on the east of the river (**Josh.9:10, 13:8, 18:7, Judges.5:17, Isaiah.9:1, Matt.4:15**).**

Gen.36:31 “**And these are the kings that reigned in the land of Edom, before there reigned any king over the children of Israel.**” This chapter is a commentary on the house of Edom, tracing the various rulers and kings that came from him. It is repeated in **1.Chron.1:43**. The comment in **v31** implies that this record was compiled after kings had reigned in Israel.

The Rivers mentioned in Genesis 2.

Gen.2:10-14 speaks of the 4 rivers that came out of the garden and provides some interesting geographical information about where they traversed. In order, the account mentions -

- 1) **The Pison**, and identifies where it traversed,
- 2) **The Gihon**, and also identifies the land it traverses,
- 3) **The Hiddekel** (Tigris), provides less information about this river,
- 4) **The Euphrates**, the record provides no information on where it traversed.

Reading between the lines, this suggests that the immediate audience that this was written for would have been unfamiliar with the first two rivers (they may no longer have existed). Therefore, much detail is given to describe what lands they originally traversed. Later Israelites would have been at least partially familiar with the third river

(the Tigris), so some information is given. However, they would have been very familiar with the Euphrates River, therefore no details of where it traversed were needed. We find that the Euphrates river is spoken of with great familiarity in both the promises to Abraham, in Moses' words to Israel, and in the opening words of Joshua [Gen.15:18](#), [Deut.1:7](#), [11:24](#), [Josh.1:4](#).

The mention of the rivers indicates that these records were clearly written after the flood and probably sometime before the time of David. Some of the detail also shows the hand of a later compiler.

The Name of God.

[Exod.3:15](#) "And God said moreover unto Moses, Thus shalt thou say unto the children of Israel, **The LORD** (Yahweh) **God of your fathers**, the God of Abraham, the God of Isaac, and the God of Jacob, hath sent me unto you: **this is my name for ever, and this is my memorial unto all generations**".

[Exod.6:2-3](#). "And God (Elohiym) spake unto Moses, and said unto him, **I am the LORD** (Yahweh): **And I appeared unto Abraham, unto Isaac, and unto Jacob, by the name of God Almighty** (El shaddai), **but by my name JEHOVAH** (Yahweh) **was I not known to them**".

The scriptures listed above tell us that God was not known by the name of Yahweh, to Abraham, Isaac and Jacob. In fact, the name of God was not known until after the revelation in [Exod.3:15](#), where God reveals it to Moses at the burning bush, for communication to Israel. Yet when we read the Genesis account we have the record of God's name being used 11 times in [Gen.2:4-22](#), as well as extensively all throughout the rest of Genesis. This also includes the days of Abraham, Isaac and Jacob. The most logical thing to conclude from this is that the name of God was inserted into the record after the revelation of the name in the days of Moses. This would be the most satisfactory way to understand this matter. This would further confirm that the record was edited or redacted in the days of Moses and afterwards.

8. Conclusion.

From this brief analysis we can see that the book of Genesis that we currently have is really a composition of 12 thematically distinct records. Each of these records have a distinct theme which is basically introduced in the opening words to each section. The book of Genesis, in its current format, was probably written or recited prior to the time of Moses, but collated by Moses and most probably compiled into something like its current format sometime after Joshua, maybe even up until the time of Samuel the Prophet. This conclusion does not preclude the possibility that redactions were made up to the time of Ezra the scribe, who also may have made had some editorial influence over the final text. We also know that in many ancient cultures, much historical information was committed to memory rather than written down. This verbal history was passed down, generation to generation, in a way that we in our modern world can hardly get our minds around. However, by the time of Moses it appears that most of what he said and did was written.

We know that the book of Genesis is considered authentic history and a true record of past events in the rest of the Bible because many OT and NT writers regularly refer to and base their teachings upon the authenticity of the record. The book is a work of inspiration, and in accord with the general ideas we detailed earlier in Chapter 4.

9. Addendum 1 - References to Moses being the author of the Law.

<u>Exodus 17:14</u>	Then the Lord said to Moses, "Write this for a memorial in the book and recount it in the hearing of Joshua, that I will utterly blot out the remembrance of Amalek from under heaven."
<u>Numbers 33:2</u>	Now Moses wrote down the starting points of their journeys at the command of the Lord. And these are their journeys according to their starting points:
<u>Joshua 1:7-8</u>	Only be strong and very courageous, that you may observe to do according to all the law which Moses My servant commanded you; do not turn from it to the right hand or to the left, that you may prosper wherever you go. This Book of the Law shall not depart from your mouth, but you shall meditate in it day and night, that you may observe to do according to all that is written in it. For then you will make your way prosperous, and then you will have good success.
<u>Joshua 8:31</u>	As Moses the servant of the Lord had commanded the children of Israel, as it is written in the Book of the Law of Moses: "an altar of whole stones over which no man has wielded an iron tool." And they offered on it burnt offerings to the Lord, and sacrificed peace offerings. (see <u>Exodus 20:24-25</u>)
<u>Joshua 23:6</u>	Therefore be very courageous to keep and to do all that is written in the Book of the Law of Moses, lest you turn aside from it to the right hand or to the left.
<u>1 Kings 2:3</u>	And keep the charge of the Lord your God: to walk in His ways, to keep His statutes, His commandments, His judgments, and His testimonies, as it is written in the Law of Moses, that you may prosper in all that you do and wherever you turn.
<u>2 Kings 14:6</u>	But the children of the murderers he did not execute, according to what is written in the Book of the Law of Moses, in which the Lord commanded, saying, "Fathers shall not be put to death for their children, nor shall children be put to death for their fathers; but a person shall be put to death for his own sin." (see <u>Deuteronomy 24:16</u>)
<u>Ezra 6:18</u>	They assigned the priests to their divisions and the Levites to their divisions, over the service of God in Jerusalem, as it is written in the Book of Moses. (This is taught in the books of Exodus and Leviticus.)
<u>Nehemiah 13:1</u>	On that day they read from the Book of Moses in the hearing of the people, and in it was found written that no Ammonite or Moabite should ever come into the assembly of God. (see <u>Deuteronomy 23:3-5</u>)

<u>Daniel 9:11</u>	Yes, all Israel has transgressed Your law, and has departed so as not to obey Your voice; therefore the curse and the oath written in the Law of Moses the servant of God have been poured out on us, because we have sinned against Him.
<u>Malachi 4:4</u>	Remember the Law of Moses, My servant, which I commanded him in Horeb for all Israel, with the statutes and judgments.
New Testament References to Moses' Authorship of the Law.	
<u>Matthew 8:4</u>	And Jesus said to him, "See that you tell no one; but go your way, show yourself to the priest, and offer the gift that Moses commanded , as a testimony to them." (see Leviticus 14:1-32)
<u>Mark 12:26</u>	But concerning the dead, that they rise, have you not read in the book of Moses , in the burning bush passage, how God spoke to him, saying, "I am the God of Abraham, the God of Isaac, and the God of Jacob"? (see Exodus 3:6)
<u>Luke 16:29</u>	Abraham said to him, " They have Moses and the prophets; let them hear them."
<u>Luke 24:27</u>	And beginning at Moses and all the Prophets, He expounded to them in all the Scriptures the things concerning Himself.
<u>Luke 24:44</u>	Then He said to them, "These are the words which I spoke to you while I was still with you, that all things must be fulfilled which were written in the Law of Moses and the Prophets and the Psalms concerning Me."
<u>John 5:46</u>	For if you believed Moses, you would believe Me; for he wrote about Me.
<u>John 7:22</u>	Moses therefore gave you circumcision (not that it is from Moses, but from the fathers), and you circumcise a man on the Sabbath.
<u>Acts 3:22</u>	For Moses truly said to the fathers, 'The Lord your God will raise up for you a Prophet like me from your brethren. Him you shall hear in all things, whatever He says to you. (see Deuteronomy 18:15)
<u>Romans 10:5</u>	For Moses writes about the righteousness which is of the law, "The man who does those things shall live by them." (see Leviticus 18:1-5)
<u>Romans 10:19</u>	But I say, did Israel not know? First Moses says: "I will provoke you to jealousy by those who are not a nation, I will move you to anger by a foolish nation." (see Deuteronomy 32:21)

10. Addendum 2 - Other Books Mentioned in the Bible.

The Bible mentions about 12 other books/scrolls that existed, which were also considered authentic records, and can perhaps even be considered as source documents from which some of the OT historical compilations were made into the format we now have.

We have an example of this in words such as; [Prov.25:1](#) “These are also proverbs of Solomon, which the men of Hezekiah copied out”

Reference	Book Mentioned
Num.21:14	The book of the Wars of the Lord
Josh.10:13, 2.Sam.1:18	The book of Jasher
1.Kg.11:41	Acts of Solomon
1.Kg.15:7,23; 14:15,28	Book of the Chronicles of the Kings of Judah
1.Chron.29:29	The History of Samuel the Seer
1.Chron.29:29	The History of Nathan the Prophet
1.Chron.29:29	The History of Gad the Seer
2.Chron.9:29	The book of Nathan the Prophet
2.Chron.9:29	The Prophecy of Ahijah
2.Chron.9:29	The Vision of Iddo the Seer
2.Chron.12:15	The Histories of Shemaiah the Prophet and of Iddo the Seer – concerning genealogies.
2.Chron.13:22	The story of the prophet Iddo
2.Chron.30:34	Book of Jehu ... in the book of the kings of Israel
2.Chron.33:18	The Acts of the Kings of Israel
2.Chron.33:19	The sayings of the Seers
Jude.14-15	<p>Is Jude quoting the Book of Enoch 2:1, or are they both quoting the same fragment and source. We note that the book of ‘Enoch’ has some odd theology in it, which does not match the ideas or the genre of the OT. We also note that when Jude refers to Enoch, he does NOT say “... it is written.” It is therefore a valid question to ask if Jude is referring to the book of Enoch, or to some other record or verbal history.</p> <p>We have an example of verbal history being referred to in 2.Tim.3:8, which mentions “Jannes and Jambres” – the names of the Egyptian magicians who withstood Moses, who are not named in the Bible but in Jewish tradition. However, there may be other reason to quote these names.</p> <p>Likewise, we see a similar idea in Heb.12:21 which quotes Moses, yet nowhere is Moses recorded as saying these words – the closest we have is Deut.9:19 & Exod.19:16. Also, in Acts.20:35 Paul quotes the words of Christ, yet we have no such quotation in the currently known Gospel accounts.</p>

11. Addendum 2 – Early Genesis referred to in the NT.

Early Genesis References found in the NT

As the following table shows, the NT writers regularly referred to the early Genesis record. Some may reason that these references are only being used to refer to a known story-line, which is then being utilized as an allegory demonstrating a desired teaching principle, in the same way that Jesus often used parables.

Although we agree that references such as *Rom 5:14*, *Eph 5:31-32* and others are used as teaching principles, this does NOT negate the fact that key parts of the rationale employed by the NT writers **depend** upon the early Genesis account being understood as describing real people and real events.

For example, consider the nature of the rationale used in - *1 Tim 2:14*, *1 Cor 11:7-9*, *Matt 19:4-6*, *Rom 5:12-21*.

	Genesis Quote	NT Quote	Subject
1	Gen 1:1	Matt 19:4-6	Jesus makes reference to ‘the beginning’
2	Gen 1:1	Mark 10:6-9	Jesus makes reference to ‘the beginning’
3	Gen.1:1	John 8:44	Jesus makes reference to ‘the beginning’
4	Gen.1:1	John 1:1	John makes reference to ‘the beginning’
5	Gen.1:1	2 Pet 3:4	Peter refers to ‘the beginning’ of the creation
6	Gen.1:1	Heb 1:10	The writer refers to ‘the beginning’ of the creation
7	Gen.1:1	Acts 15:18	James refers to ‘the beginning’ of the world
8	Gen 5:1-32	Luke 3:22-38	Jesus’ genealogy connects him to Adam
9	Gen 1-5	Rom 5:14	Adam was a figure of Christ
10	Gen 2:7	1 Cor 15:45	Adam was made a living soul
11	Gen 2:7	1 Cor 15:47	Adam was made of the earth
12	Gen 1:26-28	1 Cor 11:7	Man made in the image and glory of God
13	Gen 2:7	1 Tim 2:13	Adam was first formed
14	Gen 2:22-23	1 Tim 2:13	Eve was formed after Adam
15	Gen 2:21-23	1 Cor 11:8	Woman was made out of the man
16	Gen 2:20	1 Cor 11:9	Woman was made for the man
17	Gen 2:24	Eph 5:31-32	The first marriage was a symbol of what was to come
18	Gen 2:24	1 Cor 6:16-20	Reference is made to the union of the first couple
19	Gen 1:27	Matt 19:4-6	God made them male and female
20	Gen 1:27	Mark 10:6-9	God made them male and female
21	Gen 2:24	Matt 19:4-6	God joined them together as one
22	Gen 2:24	Mark 10:6-9	God joined them together as one
23	Gen 2:2	Heb 4:4, 10	The seventh / Sabbath day, God rested
24	Gen 3:1-6, 13	2 Cor 11:3	Eve was deceived by the serpent
25	Gen 3:13	1 Tim 2:14	The woman was deceived
26	Gen 3:12	1 Tim 2:14	Adam was not deceived
27	Gen 3	Rom 5:12-21	By one man sin came into the world & death by sin

28	Gen 3:14-19	Rom 8:20-24	God subjected the creation to vanity ... in hope
29	Gen 2:17, 3:17-19	1 Cor 15:21-22	We are all in Adam through whom we all die
30	Gen 1-5, Deut 32:8	Acts 17:26	All nations are made of one blood
31	Gen 4:2-10	Matt 23:35	Jesus refers to the blood of righteous Abel
32	Gen 4:8-10	Luke 11:51	Jesus refers to the blood of Abel
33	Gen 4:8	1 John 3:12	Cain slew his brother
34	Gen 4:3-7	Heb 11:4	Abel's sacrifice was more acceptable than Cain's
35	Gen 4:10	Heb 12:24	Abel's blood cried out for vengeance
36	Gen 4:3-15	Jude 1:11	Some have gone in the way of Cain