

Outline of Genesis

Following is our overview and outline of Genesis, the first book in the Old Testament.

The book of Genesis is the first of the Pentateuch, the five books of the law. The book is about beginnings, beginning with the creation and ending with the Israelite nation. The book covers a period of at least 2,200 years, possibly many more, depending on one's interpretation of dates. The book divides itself according to a recurring phrase: "These are the generations . . ." Interesting, although both Abraham and Joseph are main characters in the book, they both fit within a section under their fathers' names, Terah and Jacob. The plot of the book is to begin broad and to narrow down. The branches that lose relevance are considered and then discarded as the book narrows to the Israelites. Here are the divisions:

- Introduction (1:1-2:3)
- The Generations of the Heavens and the Earth (2:4-4:26)
- The Generations of Adam (5:1-6:8)
- The Generations of Noah (6:9-9:29)
- The Generations of the Sons of Noah (10:1-11:9)
- The Generations of Shem (11:10-26)
- The Generations of Terah (11:27-25:11)
- The Generations of Ishmael (25:12-18)
- The Generations of Isaac (25:19-35:29)
- The Generations of Esau (36:1-8)
- The Generations of the Edomites (36:9-43)
- The Generations of Jacob (37:1-50:26)

The book is quoted at least 42 times in the New Testament, twice in Matthew 19 (see also Mark 10) by Christ in relation to marriage. A great many other allusions to the book are found in the New Testament, including Christ's references to Sodom and Gomorrah, to Noah and the flood, to Abraham, etc.

The book is foundational to Christian beliefs. In the book is the first prophesy of the coming Messiah (Genesis 3:15). At this point, the Messiah is not seen as a savior for the Jewish people (they are not yet in view) but as a victor over the enemy of mankind, Satan.

The book contains many pictures of Christ. Adam, Noah, Abraham, Isaac, Jacob, Joseph; these all portray different aspects of the coming Christ. To fail to see Christ in Genesis is to miss the real story of the book. It would be like reading *A Modest Proposal* and failing to see Swift's point.

Even Scripture compares Christ to Adam. Who can help but see Christ in the story of Noah who bridges the gap between the world that was and the world that came after? Who can miss Christ in Abraham as he journeyed from his home to a strange land to walk and follow God? Who can miss Christ in Isaac, as he is

taken up for a sacrifice as the only begotten and loved son of his father? Who can miss Christ in Jacob, the one who worked to obtain his wives and whose desire drove him on? Who can miss Christ in Joseph, the one despised by his brothers? The progenitor found in Adam, the righteousness found in Noah, the faith found in Abraham, the obedience found in Isaac, the desire found in Jacob, the purity found in Joseph; these all, being positive characteristics, are prophetic of Christ.

Read and enjoy. Listen and learn. Understand and practice. The words of this book are more than the story line of the first creation. They are the divine model, and in places the sinful antitheses, for the new creation, which begins with us (James 1:18; 2 Corinthians 5:17). John 1 parallels Genesis 1 to drive this point home to our hearts.