

Introduction to Genesis

“In the Beginning”

“Genesis”:

- Transliteration of the Greek word γένεσις, meaning “the origin or beginning of something.”¹
- “In the beginning...”
 - The beginning of everything (except God Himself)
 - Creation
 - Humanity
 - Sin and death
 - God’s plan of redemption (Gen. 3:15)
 - God’s people

Author: Moses (divine inspiration)

- Moses is the author of the Pentateuch (first five books of the Bible)
- Primary sources were either written or handed down orally.
- Luther’s German Bible titled as “The First Book of Moses”
- Moses was the undisputed author until Higher Criticism (18th-19th century)
- Jesus recognizes Moses as the author.²

Date: c. 1446 BC 1406 BC

- God first instructed Moses to write after Israel escaped from slavery in Egypt and fled into the Sinai Peninsula through the parted Red Sea (Exodus 17:14; cf. Numbers 33:2).
- The exodus occurred c. 1446 BC; then Israel wandered in the desert for 40 years before finally entering the Promised Land c. 1406 BC.
- Moses died just before Israel entered the Promised Land (Deut. 34:1–7).

Basic Outline of Genesis 1:11:

- Creation (Gen. 1-2)
- The Fall (Gen. 3-4)
- The Flood (Gen 6-9)
- The Tower of Babel (11)

¹ Hebrew: בְּרֵאשִׁית (bereshith)

² Matthew 8:4; 19:7-8; 23:2; Mark 1:44; 7:10; 10:3-4; 12:26; Luke 5:14; 16:29, 31; 20:37; John 3:14; 5:45’ 6:32; 7:19; 7:22-23

Martin Luther on Genesis:

“We come first to the books of Moses. In his first book [Genesis] Moses teaches how all creatures were created, and (as the chief cause for his writing) whence sin and death came, namely by Adam's fall, through the devil's wickedness. But immediately thereafter, before the coming of the law of Moses, he teaches whence help is to come for the driving out of sin and death, namely, not by the law or men's own works (since there was no law as yet), but by "the seed of the woman," Christ, promised to Adam and Abraham, in order that throughout the Scriptures from the beginning faith may be praised above all works and laws and merits. Genesis therefore, is made up almost entirely of illustrations of faith and unbelief, and of the fruits that faith and unbelief bear. It is an exceedingly evangelical book.” (LW 35:237)

“[W]e assert that Moses spoke in the literal sense, not allegorically or figuratively, i.e., that the world, with all its creatures, was created within six days as the words read. If we do not comprehend the reason for this, let us remain pupils and the job of teacher to the Holy Spirit.” (LW 1:5)

What is Apologetics?

- Law
- Cannot create faith
- Removes obstacles
- Shows that our faith is not unreasonable.
- Where do we start?