

Teaching Messiah from the Scriptures: Genesis

Lesson 02: Introduction to Genesis; Notes on Structure and Meaning

Lesson by Andy Witt (September 2008)

In our last lesson we discussed several different legacies of interpretation that evangelicals carry with them. These presuppositions almost always shape the ways we read and understand Scripture. This lesson is going to build off of that discussion.

Key Facts about the Pentateuch

A Five-Fold Book, not Five Separate Books

One of the first matters we need to discuss when we come to the book of Genesis is its literary and textual context. We tend to speak of and look at Genesis as the first book of the Bible. It gives us the stories about the creation of the world, Noah and the ark, and about Israel's fathers, Abraham, Isaac, and Jacob. This is not how the ancient interpreters thought about the book of Genesis (c.f. Nehemiah 9-10). They thought of Genesis through Deuteronomy as a single unit, one book. For them, the Book of Moses, or the Pentateuch, was the first book of the Bible (c.f. John 5:46; Galatians 3).

This has an important implication. It means that we need to understand Genesis not as its own individual entity, but as part of a larger work of literature. The ancients were not the only ones to see it this way. More and more modern commentators are making similar observations, treating the Pentateuch as a single literary unit. Harrison has said, "The Pentateuch is a homogeneous composition in five volumes, and not an agglomeration of separate and perhaps only rather casually related works."¹ Similarly, the title of a recent evangelical commentary alludes to this distinction, "The Pentateuch as Narrative."

By seeing Genesis as the first volume (scroll) at the beginning of the Pentateuch we are able to correctly place it in its literary and textual context. The message of the book of Genesis, then, is bound up within the message of the Pentateuch.

Authorship

Though critical scholarship has completely disregarded any attempt to trace the authorship of the Pentateuch back to Moses, the view that Moses did in fact write the vast majority of the book is still a viable position.² In

¹ R. K. Harrison, *Introduction to the Old Testament*, 541.

² Though we will not address the critical view here, it has been thoroughly covered in several excellent conservative evangelical introductions: R. K. Harrison, *An Introduction to the Old Testament*; Gleason Archer, *Old Testament Survey*; Tremper Longman, *How to Read Genesis*; and T. D. Alexander, *From Paradise to the Promised Land*.

fact, it is clearly the biblical position on the matter (c.f. 2 Chron 25:4; 35:12-13; Ezra 6:18; Nehemiah 13:1; Mark 12:26; etc.). Thus, anyone committed to the inerrancy and infallibility of Scripture should believe that Moses was the principle author of the Pentateuch.

This is not to say that Moses did not use sources to write his book. It seems almost certain that he did (c.f. Numbers 21:14). Almost certainly, though, he did not use sources in the way most critical scholars look at sources. Instead, we need to think about Moses as an editor who brought together big blocks of text. This can be easily seen with the Flood narrative. In Genesis 5:1ff we have an account of the genealogy of Adam. As that genealogy comes to a close (5:32), we would expect the conclusion of the genealogy. We don't find that conclusion until 9:28-29. Thus, the huge block of narrative text (6:1-9:27) was inserted into the genealogy (5:1-32; 9:28-29). Moses carefully constructed his book, and he did this editorially.

Earlier, I was careful to say that Moses was the 'principle' author and that he wrote a 'vast majority' of the Pentateuch because it is somewhat clear that Moses was not the only author of the Pentateuch. For example, in Deuteronomy 34 we have recounted for us the death of Moses, the fact that later generations cannot locate his tomb, and that a prophet has not risen in Israel like Moses. Though Moses was a great prophet, it seems more likely that a later editor was at work finishing the book. As evangelicals, we should have no problem with this view.

In my view, Moses wrote virtually all of the Pentateuch. A later editor, most likely the prophet who ordered and put together the entire Old Testament canon, added several verses to the Pentateuch to help sow the canon together. This is where a chapter like Deuteronomy 34 fits in. Thus, we have a Pentateuch version 1.0 which was written by Moses, and a Pentateuch version 1.1, which was 'updated' by the final editor of the book.

Date and Circumstances

Having the view that the Pentateuch has two authors can pose a problem for coming up with a date for text, as well as the circumstances that surrounding the writing of the text. In our case, though, we can be fairly certain about the dating of the material.

The first date of the text is sometime after the nation of Israel left Mount Sinai and sometime before Moses had died. This date is around 1500ish B.C., and roughly parallels the Wilderness Wanderings of the Israelites. This version of the text (1.0) was written by Moses to the second-generation of Israelites as they were about to enter the land under the leadership of Joshua.

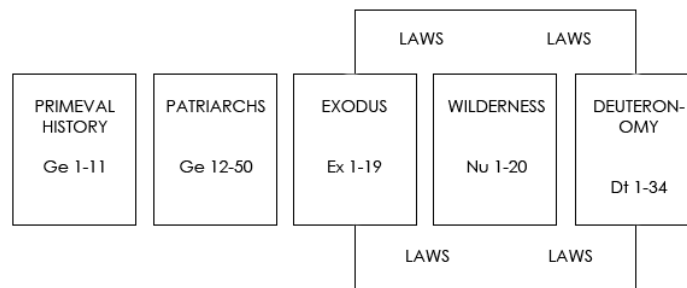
The second date of the text is clearly sometime far after Moses had lived, but cannot be much after the time of Ezra and Nehemiah. This date is around 500-400ish B.C., and roughly parallels the Post-Exilic

community. This version of the text (1.1) was most likely edited by the prophet who organized and structured the Old Testament canon (maybe Ezra himself). From what we can gather by looking at the additional material (c.f. Deut 34:10-12 as compared with Malachi 4, and Joshua 1:1-8 as compared with Psalm 1), this prophet was largely concerned with a continued hope in the coming messianic king/prophet. For him, the principle concerns for the reader were to anticipate the Messiah while living a wise life corresponding to the Instruction of Moses.

Genres of Literature in the Pentateuch

Within the Pentateuch we find various kinds of literature that are used for several different purposes. The kinds of literature used are historical narrative, poetry, genealogy, and law code. Each have a major interpretative influence on the study of the Pentateuch, and to neglect how Moses might have used these would lead one astray.

For instance, it has been observed that the law codes which begin in Exodus 20 and continue through Numbers 10 interrupt a consistent narrative sequence.³



Sailhamer comments, “When the book reaches the giving of the covenant at Sinai (Ex 20), the narrative virtually disappears amid the wealth of legal material. From that point on, the narrative survives only a trace of a sequence of events leading from Sinai to the plains of Moab. The center of the Pentateuch is dominated by the collections of laws, and the writer does not return to the series of narrated events for the rest of the book.”⁴ The law codes, then, seem to weigh down on the narrative structure of the Pentateuch.

The other genres of literature are also used strategically throughout the rest of the book. Here we will comment on the different functions of historical narrative in the text. Poetry and genealogy have crucial roles to play as well, but comment on them will come later.

³ John Sailhamer, *The Pentateuch as Narrative* (Grand Rapids: Zondervan, 1992), 33.

⁴ *Ibid.*, 33.

Narrative functions in three main ways in the Pentateuch.⁵ First, it functions as repetition. This means that one narrative will be virtually repeated (semantically and conceptually) later on in the text, often utilizing different characters and setting. One example of this is the Garden scene of the Fall of Adam and Eve. In the Garden, Adam and Eve eat from the fruit of the tree, see that they are naked, cover their nakedness, and are then cursed. A few chapters later, in Genesis 9, Noah and his family experience a similar scenario. Noah plants a garden, drinks from the fruit of the tree (wine), becomes drunk and lays down naked in tent. Ham uncovers Noah's nakedness, while Shem and Japheth cover it. The scene ends with the cursing of Ham and the blessing of Shem. The conceptual and semantic links between Genesis 3 and 9 are striking, and the two texts should be seen as repetition. When repetition happens in the Bible we learn about the kinds of events that consistently appear in the world of the Bible. The more we recognize the repetition of events in the Bible, the better we will understand our own world.

A second function of narrative is contemporization. This happens when the events of the past are worded to conform with the time of writing. This is not an anachronistic recounting of events, but a purposeful link between the events of the past and the things of the present. Often, this occurs to either compare or contrast the past with the present. For example, in Genesis 14 Abraham is at war with several nations. The actions he takes while preparing for war, and while at war, conform closely to the regulations for war given in Deuteronomy 20.

A third function of narrative is foreshadowing. This is different than repetition in that the events of the past look forward in anticipation of fulfillment of something in the future. In repetition the purpose is to give the reader a clue at how the world functions which they are a part of. In foreshadowing, an event of the past is given in order to paint a picture of the prophetic future. Foreshadowed events are normative for the world, repeated events are. An example of this use of narrative is the Joseph narrative cast into a prophetic framework using the poetry in Genesis 49. A descendant of Judah, not Joseph, is in the light of the prophetic searchlight. The narrative leading up to Genesis 49, however, would make it seem like the promises would be fulfilled through Joseph's line. Instead, the life of the future seed of Judah will look much like the life of Joseph. The past is the harbinger of the future.

The Purpose(s) of the Pentateuch

Knowing that Genesis is the introduction, per se, to the Pentateuch helps us to see that the purpose of Genesis is bound up within the purpose of the Pentateuch. We have already discussed that Moses was the primary

⁵ This discussion is largely based on the observations of Sailhamer, "Genesis," in *The Complete Literary Guide to the Bible*, eds. Leland Ryken and Tremper Longman III (Grand Rapids: Zondervan).

author of the Pentateuch, and that his audience is the second generation of national Israel about to enter into the land promised to Abraham, Isaac, and Jacob. We have also noted that the laws given at Sinai form an important part of the book, interrupting the narrative sequence. These laws, then, are the central concept of the text, and we have to understand Genesis in light of them.

This leads us to an interesting question, Why does the Torah begin with narrative? Why not begin with the list of laws given at Sinai? Why does Moses begin his text in the way he does? These kinds of questions will help us see how Genesis fits in. Moses, though, has several other main purposes in the Torah, and we will do well to pay attention to them.

THEME 1: The Prophetic Future

Jesus was clear that the Pentateuch was concerned with him (John 5:46). In his mind, then, one of Moses' main attention was to write about the Messiah. This happens primarily using the means of giving narrative meaning: repetition, contemporization, and foreshadowing. Obviously, foreshadowing will be the most used to paint the picture of the future. Poetry and genealogy also play a very important role in showing us who the Messiah was going to be. As we study Genesis more we will begin to see how Jesus interpreted the Pentateuch in a consistent, messianic way, which aligned well with the structure and composition of the text.

THEME 2: The Revelation of the nature and purposes of YHWH

A second theme, which is also a consistent theme in most other books of the Bible, is the revelation of God's nature and purposes in the world. Genesis plays a huge role in giving us such knowledge. It is the beginning of knowing who God is and what He is about. How we view creation and covenant is largely based on the content of Genesis. No doubt Exodus, Leviticus, Numbers, and Deuteronomy inform our concepts of these, but Genesis serves as the foundation to all of them.

THEME 3: To Make Commentary concerning the Sinai Covenant

The final theme we will make note of here is that the Pentateuch serves to make commentary on the Sinai covenant. It is crucial to understand that it is not *giving us the Sinai covenant*, but is giving us *an interpretation of the Sinai covenant*. This is clear from Deuteronomy 1:5, where we are told that Moses undertook to 'make plain' (that is, explain) *this teaching*. The teaching referred to was the Sinai covenant. Moses was not giving the covenant to this new generation, but an interpretation of the covenant. Again, this is a crucial distinction.

When we look at the Pentateuch in this way we see that the Sinai covenant relates directly back to God's desire to bless all mankind (Ge 12:1-3). It was designed to fulfill the Abrahamic covenant. In other words,

Yhwh planned on bringing about this blessing through the children of Abraham using the Sinai covenant. This did not happen, however. Instead, the Sinai covenant failed. Even while God was still giving the laws of the covenant to Moses on Mount Sinai, the children of Israel were building and worshipping the Golden Calf. Sinai failed, then, not because it was a bad covenant, but because the people refused to trust God and obey his commands (c.f. Hebrews 8). Moses message in the Pentateuch, however, was that God's promise of blessing would still succeed, since there was a day coming when God would circumcise their hearts (Deut 30; Jer 31; Ezek 36). Moses did have a great hope for this new covenant in the generations to come, even though he foresaw that the people would continue in the ways of their fathers. They would be exiled, and only after being oppressed under foreign nations would the Messiah come and their hearts be circumcised.

Moses also contrasts himself and the people of Israel with Abraham throughout the Pentateuch. He uses the word for belief and unbelief to show us that the Law could not produce faith; rather, those under the Law lacked faith. The teaching of the Pentateuch, then, was that righteousness is accounted to men by means of faith, not works of the Law. Faith fulfills the law (Gen 15:6; 26:5), justifies the sinner, and brings about the blessing of God.

How does Genesis fit into this picture?

It is clear that Genesis plays a huge role in what we have just discussed. If at the heart of the Pentateuch is a contrast between Moses and Abraham, then the Abrahamic narratives have great significance to the meaning of the book. One part of Genesis we do not normally think about, however, is the role of family for the present and the future. The following quotes help show this:

Even the casual reader must observe that the book of Genesis differs greatly in its style and content from the three middle books. In the main, it recounts the history of a family and does not yet speak of the nation Israel. Yet it is also evident that the patriarchal material has not just been accidentally attached to the story which follows, but is integrally connected. Indeed, the patriarchal stories have been consistently edited in such a way as to point to the future...the continuing thread which ties together the material is the promise of a posterity and a land.⁶ (Childs, 130)

Here, Childs has observed that the historical narratives are not only prophetic, but are not yet speaking about Israel. Israel is not in view until the second chapter of Exodus.

A second quote is also helpful, "The great scenes of Genesis not occur on the battlefield but in the family. Its heroes are not international figures but domestic ones."⁷ We should pay close attention to the use of family in the narratives.

⁶ Brevard Childs, *Introduction to the Old Testament as Scripture*, 130.

⁷ John Sailhamer, "Genesis", in *A Complete Literary Guide* (ed., Ryken and Longman), 109.

Several themes are also developed in Genesis that have important bearing on the rest of the Bible. We have alluded to or spoken of most of them before, but they are: the Land (commentary begins in Gen 1:2, is furthered in 2:10-14, 15:18-21), the Seed (begins in 3:15 and continues through genealogies), Covenant (which begins in Gen. 9 with Noah and is continued through Abraham to Jacob), Exile (concept begins with the expulsion of Adam and Eve to the east out of Eden, continues with Cain, Babel, and with Egypt in the patriarchal narratives), and also the theme of blessing (which begins in 1:28 and continues in 9:1, 26; 12:1-3; 48:15).

The Structure and Strategies of Genesis

Within the book of Genesis there seem to be two compositional strategies at work: 1) *toledot* formulae ('these are the generations of...'), and 2) a literary pattern of narrative, poetry, and epilogue. The first helps to split the book up into its smaller parts, while the second helps to give meaning to the various parts. Scholars have also been prone to talk about Genesis as made up of two main sections: 1) the Primeval History (Gen. 1-11), and 2) the Patriarchal Narratives (Gen. 12-50). Splitting the book of Genesis at the end of chapter eleven works well, and the division into two main parts seems justified.

Toledot Breakdown⁸

The Hebrew phrase *ella toledot* is usually translated into English as something like, "These are the generations of..." In all, there are eleven *toledot*'s in the book of Genesis: 2.4a; 5.1; 6.9; 10.1; 11.10; 11.27; 25.12; 25.19; 36.1, 9; and 37.2.

Within the book of Genesis these genealogies have a major significance. I have not always thought that about them. As a young believer I always skipped over the genealogies, thinking that they had no real importance in the text. I would later only read them thinking that God was not just the God who created the universe, but was also a personal, relational God who cared deeply about each and every person. Though that may certainly be the case, that is certainly not the intention of the genealogies, at least in Genesis. In Genesis, they have several functions.

The first function is to introduce major narratives in the text. This happens with the genealogies in 2.4 (the heavens and the earth); 6.9 (Noah); 11.27 (Abraham); 25.19 (Jacob); and 37.2 (the sons of Jacob). These genealogies serve to highlight the important figures in this early part of world and Israelite history. Essentially, these genealogies are short and sweet. For instance, Genesis 2:4 reads, "These are the generations of the

⁸ For this section I have mainly used two resources that I have found helpful in looking at the genealogies in Genesis: T. D. Alexander, *From Paradise to the Promised Land* (Grand Rapids: Baker, 2002); and Brevard Childs, *An Introduction to the Old Testament as Scripture* (Philadelphia: Fortress, 1979).

heavens and of the earth, when they were created.” Genesis 6:9 reads, “These are the generations of Noah. Noah was a man of righteousness, blameless he was in his age. With God Noah walked.” The remaining genealogies of this function are all similar. They are brief statements meant, it seems, to introduce historical narrative.

The second function of the genealogies is to list the descendants of Adam who belong to the central family line. There are two genealogies that function in this way: 5.1ff (traces the line from Adam to Noah), and 11.10ff (trace the line from Shem to Terah). These genealogies ultimately serve to trace an unbroken line from Adam to Jacob, providing the framework for the historical narratives. Both of these narratives are structured in the same way, following the same format in listing each descendant. An example should suffice: “These are the generations of Shem. Shem was 100 years old when he begot Arpachshad, two years after the Flood. After he begot Arpachshad, Shem lived 500 years and begot sons and daughters” (Gen. 11:10-11).

The third function of the genealogies is to give details concerning the families and nations associated with minor participants in the story. These genealogies are located at 10.1 (traces the offspring of the sons of Noah and the nations which come from them), 25.12 (traces the descendants of Ishmael), and 36.1, 9 (traces the descendants of Esau, as well as the geographical setting of his descendants). Childs has commented that the descendants in these lists “remain tangential to the one chosen line which is pursued by means of narratives and vertical genealogies.”⁹ The form of the genealogy for this function looks much different than the preceding two functions.

Interestingly enough, Moses employed a different form of genealogy for the second and third functions, to help in distinguishing between them. There are vertical (or, linear) genealogical lists, which perform the second function, and horizontal (or segmented) genealogical lists, which perform the third function. The vertical lists, then, are used in 5.1 and 11.10 to trace the descendants of Adam through Jacob. The horizontal lists are used in 10.1; 25.12; and 36.1, 9 to give details concerning minor participants.

It is in this way that the genealogies in Genesis have the role of splitting up the book into its several parts. The following diagram will show how it does that:

The Toledot Breakdown in Genesis		
<u>Reference</u>	<u>Toledot Name</u>	<u>Function</u>
2.4	The heavens and the earth	Narrative; provides <i>inclusio</i> for 1.1-2.4a; narrative about creation
5.1	Adam	Vertical - links Adam to Noah
6.9	Noah	Narrative – Noah and the Flood
10.1	Sons of Noah	Horizontal – details of Noah’s sons
11.10	Shem	Vertical – links Shem to Terah
11.27	Terah	Narrative – narrative of Abraham

⁹ Childs, *Introduction*, 146.

25.12	Ishmael	Horizontal – details of Ishmael
25.19	Isaac	Narrative – narrative of Jacob
36.1 (9)	Esau	Horizontal lists – details of Esau
37.2	Jacob	Narrative – narrative of Jacob’s sons

Pattern: Narrative, Poetry, Epilogue

The second pattern used by Moses in the Pentateuch is a sequence of kinds of literature: narrative, poetry, and epilogue. This pattern dominates the early chapters of Genesis (1-11), but afterwards is less apparent, only appearing in huge blocks of text (Gen 12-50; Exodus 1-15; etc.). It functions to aid the reader in interpretation, limiting the range of meaning a particular passage may have. It does this by using the kinds of literature in a very particular way. We have already talked about how the literature, particularly narrative, is used for repetition, contemporization, and foreshadowing (anticipation), and now, we are able to see the powerful impact the poetic sections of Genesis and the Pentateuch. So what should the reader pay attention to?

In narratives, the reader should be particular aware of repetition, contemporization, and foreshadowing. In Genesis, narratives are usually stories that recount the past, but are recounted in such a way to speak about the future. We have to bear in mind that Moses was a prophet, and by writing the Pentateuch for us, we can consider him a *writing* prophet. We should think of him as taking the words and works of God and sowing them together to form a larger work for the future generations of Israel.

Poetry functions in a different way than narrative. Fokkelman has commentated that “the short poems in Genesis...create moments of reflection. . . .They summarize what is relevant; they condense the chief idea and lift it above the incidental.”¹⁰ They almost act as pauses in the narrative, reflecting back on what has just happened in the narrative plot line, and pulling out what was important either to the narrator or to the main character in a given section of the text. Sailhamer, who was the first to notice this pattern, has commented this about the poetry:

The strategy consists simply of the attachment of a number of small poetic texts to the conclusion of each block of narration. In attaching these poems to the narratives, they are cast as the final ‘discourse’ or ‘last words’ of the central characters of the narrative. The content of the poem expresses the character’s own reflection on the events recounted in the narrative. By means of the poems, the central characters are allowed to make programmatic statements about key events in the narratives. The poems...thematize what the author intends the reader to draw from the narratives. By means of these poems, the reader’s own assessment of the narratives is closely monitored by the author and limited to a narrow range of meaning.”¹¹

¹⁰ J. P. Fokkelman, “Genesis”, in Robert Alter and Frank Kermode, eds., *The Literary Guide to the Bible* (Cambridge, MA: Harvard University Press, DATE), 44.

¹¹ John Sailhamer, “A Wisdom Composition of the Pentateuch”, 108.

These poetic sections, then, have a huge hermeneutical role in deriving the meaning of a given section of the text. Sailhamer has also noticed that outside Genesis 1-11, within the larger compositional patterns in the text, the poetic sections help to show us that the Messiah was the major figure in Moses prophetic vision of the future. The poetic sections focus on the last days and the coming King who will crush the head of God's enemies (Gen. 3), bring blessing to the nations (Gen. 12), and would rise up out of the tribe of Judah, rule over an everlasting kingdom, whom all the nations will serve, and whom the sons of Israel will bow down (Gen. 49). Such visions of the prophetic future were not scattered around the Old Testament as little fragments to be found here and there, but were strategically arranged, often found in the narrative, poetry, and epilogue pattern.

The epilogues are the final portion of this pattern. Again, Sailhamer notes that "each poem is followed by an appropriate epilogue. The role of the epilogue is to return the narrative to the *status quo in medias res*."¹² The epilogues, then, are the bridge between the narratives. In the epilogues you will find a whole wealth of information. Often the epilogues are where you will find the opinion of the author about the narrative.

In summary, a good way to think about the pattern (narrative, poetry, epilogue) is that the author will say it historically in the narrative, meditate on it in the poetry, and then give a lesson about it in the epilogue.

What is Genesis about?

Having come to the end of this lesson, we are only left with one more topic, the meaning of the book of Genesis. We have been able to see that Moses was a masterful literary craftsman. He weaved together historical narratives, poetry, genealogies, and codes of law intelligently and purposefully to teach Israel about their history, their future, their God, and their covenant. We have also seen that Genesis is not the first book of the Bible, but is *part of* the first book of the Bible, the Pentateuch. Its themes and message are not independent from Exodus, Leviticus, Numbers, and Deuteronomy, but are largely concerned with the content and direction of those 'books' as well.

Having broken down the structure and composition of Genesis, we are ready to briefly comment on its meaning. What is Genesis about? Essentially, Genesis is about two matters: Creation and Covenant. These two themes are not developed independent from one another in Genesis, but are generally correspond to the two main sections of Genesis (1-11, 12-50).

On the one hand, Genesis 1-11 testifies primarily to the priority of creation. Importantly, creation was not for the nation of Israel alone, but was for all the families of the earth. Though there are many other themes

¹² Ibid., 108.

begun in this early part of Genesis (i.e., blessing, cursing, worship, obedience, rest, land, etc.), creation seems to be the overarching priority. Brevard Childs sums up this lesson well:

The canonical role of Gen. 1-11 testifies to the priority of creation. The divine relation to the world stems from God's initial creative purpose for the universe, not for Israel alone. Yet Israel's redemptive role in the reconciliation of the nations was purposed from the beginning and subsumed within the eschatological framework of the book.¹³

For him, Genesis is largely focused on the eschatological future, and this begins with knowing God as the creator of the universe. Later Scripture utilizes this important theme dually with the theme of salvation: since God created the universe with an eye toward mankind, then surely God can bring salvation into the world for mankind.

Genesis 12-50, on the other hand, testifies to the faithfulness of God to His promises. Like the priority of creation, the focus on faithfulness was directed not only to the people of Israel in the time of Joshua, but also look to the eschatological future of Israel and the nations. In this way, we find out that Israel was not chosen by God for their own sake, but in order to bring the blessing of God to all the families of the earth. Rolf Rendtorff has offered the following comments about these chapters that is rather helpful:

The promise to Abraham, and through him to all the families of the earth, which stands at the centre of these verses, points forward to the future history of Israel and humanity. At the same time, in the present context, it also has the function of pointing backwards: the curses of primal history (3.14-19; cf. 8.21) are countered and contrasted with the promise of blessing."¹⁴

The importance of the patriarchal narratives is both backward- and forward-looking. Looking back, it provides an answer to the problems of mankind and locates the future hope for blessing from within one family (Abraham). In Abraham all the families of the earth will be blessed. As the narratives unfold, we often find the promises of God in trouble, on the brink of failure. In the end, we are reminded of God's sovereign providence over His creation, and that He is a God who will not allow His promises to fail. He is faithful and true. Again, though other themes are continued in this section of Genesis (i.e., blessing, land, seed, faith), the focus and priority of Moses seems to be fixed on the faithfulness of God to His promises.

¹³ Brevard Childs, *An Introduction to the Old Testament as Scripture* (Philadelphia: Fortress, 1979), 155.

¹⁴ Rolf Rendtorff, *The Old Testament: An Introduction* (Philadelphia: Fortress, 198-), 134.

The Structure of the Book of Genesis

PART ONE (Genesis 1.1-11.26): Primeval History									
The Land Gen 1.1-2.4a <i>toledot</i> (2.4a) NARR (1.1-2.6) PTRY (1.27-28) EPLG (1.29-2.4a)	The Blessing Gen 2.4b-24 NARR (2.4b-22) PTRY (2.23) EPLG (2.24)	The Exile Gen 2.25-3.24 NARR (2.25-3.13) PTRY (3.14-19) EPLG (3.20-24)	Life in Exile Gen 4.1-26 NARR (4.1-22) PTRY (4.23-24) EPLG (4.25-26)	The Story of Noah (5.1-9.29)			The Table of Nations <i>toledot</i> (10.1) list Gen 10.1-32	The Rise and Fall of Babel Gen 11.1-9	The Genealogy of Shem <i>toledot</i> (11.10) list Gen 11.10-26
				Adam's Sons <i>toledot</i> (5.1) Gen 5.1-6.8 LIST (5.1-28) PTRY (5.29) EPLG (5.30-6.8)	The Flood <i>toledot</i> (6.9) Gen 6.9-9.17 NARR (6.9-8.21) PTRY (8.22) EPLG (9.1-17)	The Sons of Noah Gen 9.18-29 NARR (9.18-24) PTRY (9.25-27) EPLG (9.28-29)			

THE BEGINNING בראשית (1.1)

Genesis looks beyond the exile in Egypt to the distant future

THE LAST DAYS באחרית הימים (49.1)

PART TWO (Genesis 11.27-50.26): Patriarchal History (Narrative – 11.27-48.22; Poetry – 49.1-28; Epilogue – 49.29-50.26)					
Toledot of Terah (narrative of Abraham) Gen 11.27-25.11 Call of Abram (12.1-9) Abe in Egypt (12.10-13.4) Lot Narratives (13.5-19.38) Abimelech (20.1-18) Abe and Isaac (21.1-25.11)	Toledot of Ishmael (genealogical list) Genesis 25.12-18 - Ishmael's lineage is found within the Isaac story (v11) - note that Ishmael never appears in Gen, but his descendants have an role to play (28.9, 36.3, 37.27-29, 39.1) - no mention of blessing given in 17.20	Toledot of Isaac (narrative of Jacob) Genesis 25.19-35.29 Jacob and Esau (25.19-34) Abimelech (26.1-35) Stolen Blessing (ch 27) Jacob's Flights (chs 28-31) Angels/Esau (chs 32-33.17) Shechem (33.18-34.31) Bethel (35.1-15) Rachel's Death (35.16-20) Sons of Jacob (35.21-26) Death of Isaac (35.27-29)	Toledots of Esau (genealogical list) Genesis 36.1-43 <u>Toledot 1 (36.1-8)</u> - Journey to Seir; away from land of promise - revisits Abraham and Lot (ch 14) <u>Toledot 2 (36.9-43)</u> - In Seir	Toledot of Jacob (narrative of Jacob's sons) Genesis 37.1-50.14 Joseph (37,39-48) Judah (38) ---- Narrative (37.1-48.14) Poetry (48.15-16,20) Epilogue (48.21-22) ---- Blessing (49.1-28) Casts Joseph narrative prophetically to Judah	Joseph Narrative Genesis 50.15-26 Forgiveness (15-21) Joseph's Summary (22-26)