

**The Book of Genesis**  
**Introduction**  
**08/07/2019 Wednesday PM**

**Vital Statistics**

- **Purpose:** The purpose of Genesis to record God's creation of the world and his desire to have a people set apart to worship him. It contains the origins of everything, including sin and death, and how people came from the original human pair.
- **Original Audience:** The People of Israel
- **Where Written:** In the wilderness during Israel's wanderings, somewhere in the Sinai peninsula.
- **Setting:** What is known today as the Middle East.
- **Date Written:** 1450-1410BC
- **Author/Editor:** Moses

**The Name 'Genesis'**

- The name goes back to the 3<sup>rd</sup> century before Christ, when the Hebrew Bible was translated into Greek.
- This was called the Septuagint or LXX and it was completed in 132BC..
- They chose the name Greek word "Genesis" which means origins.
- In 383 St. Jerome began translating the Bible into Latin and he kept the transliteration Genesis.
- Jerome's Bible was called the Latin Vulgate and it was completed in 404.
- Greek translators also related the title to the Greek word *geneseos* which is translated "generations".
- The Hebrew word for "generations" in the Bible is *towlēdah* or *toldot*.
- The Hebrews traditionally named a book after the first word it in, which in the case of Genesis is *re'shiyth* which means "in the beginning."
- This is appropriate because Genesis is a book that explains the origins of time, space, matter, the earth and really the entire universe, including life, man, and sin, death, and redemption.

**Moses: Author of the Pentateuch**

- The first five books of the Bible – Genesis, Exodus, Leviticus, Numbers, and Deuteronomy – are known as the Torah, Law, or Pentateuch.
- These books have long been ascribed to Moses and indeed there is much internal evidence from the books that point to Moses being the author. (**Exodus 17:14; 24:4-7; 34:27; Numbers 33:2; Deuteronomy 31:9, 22, 24.**)
- To support this, other Old Testament books affirm that Moses was the author. (**Joshua 1:7-8; 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.**)
- The New Testament also affirms Moses' authorship. (**John 1:17; Acts 6:14; 13:39; 15:5; 1 Corinthians 9:9; 2 Corinthians 3:15; Hebrews 10:28**)
- Last but certainly not least, Jesus himself cited Moses as the author. (**Matthew 8:4; 19:7-8; Mark 7:10; 12:26; Luke 24:27, 44; John 7:19.**)
- It is quite clear that Moses is the author of the Pentateuch, which Genesis is a part of.

**Moses As Editor of Genesis**

- While Genesis is in fact a part of the Torah, it is a special case.
- Moses was an eyewitness to the events of Exodus to Deuteronomy, however the events of Genesis occurred long before his time.
- Moses isn't actually named as author in the book, and the best explanation is that he was the *editor* of Genesis.

**Moses' Sources**

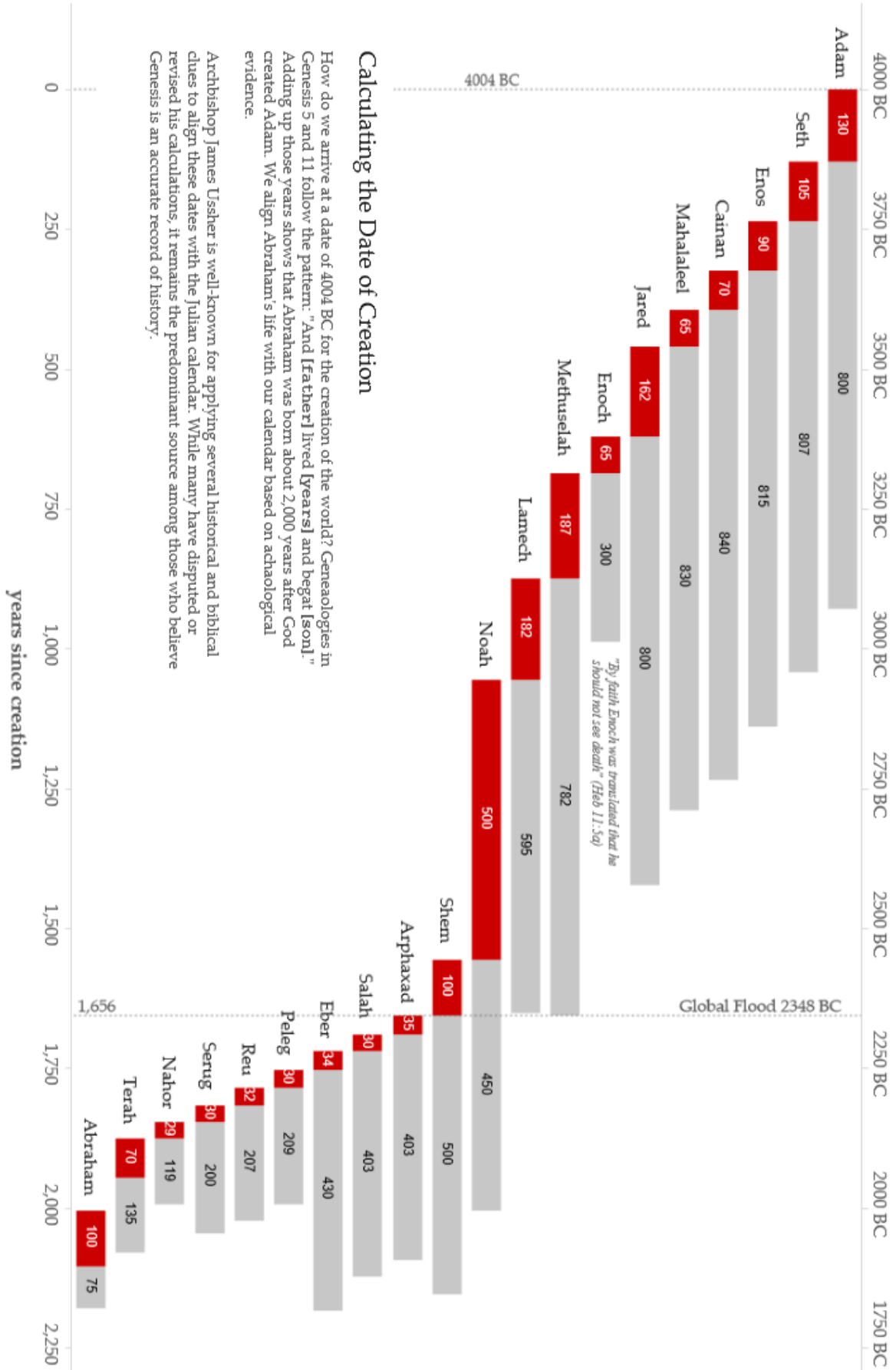
- Since Moses was not an eyewitness to the events in Genesis, where did he get his information?
- He used sources, under the infallible guidance of the Holy Spirit.
- These sources originated from oral traditions, and when you study the genealogy in the Bible, you can quickly see how the oral traditions passed through very few hands because of the long lifespans. **See handout.**
- These sources were 11 family documents headed by *toledots*. Again, this is the Hebrew word for generations.

- You can see this throughout Genesis, and it is usually translated “these are the generations of...”
  - These breaking points represent the different sources that Moses used to compile Genesis.
  - The *toledots* tell us what followed from the named person.
  - There is also a repeated historical pattern of moving from blessings to curses. The *toledots* are as follows:
- 0.Precursor (not a toledot): Genesis 1:1-2:3.** The creation of the entire universe in six days. There is no *toledot*, because God has just begun creation.
- 1.Toledot of the heavens and earth, Genesis 2:4-4:26.** This explains ‘What followed from creation’, and in particular the fall from perfection into sin, and the curse on the cosmos.
  - 2.Toledot of Adam, Genesis 5:1-6:8.** ‘What followed from Adam.’ This section continues the further fall of man into utter wickedness. We see the two main lines of descendants: Cain’s line and Seth’s line. This *toledot* starts with a blessing in 5:1-2 but ends in God’s intention to blot out mankind in 6:7.
  - 3.Toledot of Noah, Genesis 6:9-29.** ‘What followed from Noah.’ Here we have God’s curse on the wicked earth in the Flood, but the blessing of saving Noah’s family on the Ark. Then the reverse: the righteous Noah becomes drunk, while leads to the curse of Canaan.
  - 4.Toledot of Noah’s three sons, Genesis 10-11:9.** ‘What followed from Shem, Japheth, and Ham.’ Here we have the descendants of the patriarchs founding nations. This accounts starts with the blessing of the population expansion, and ends with the curse of the confusion of languages at Babel “in the days of Peleg” (10:25). This confusion was the cause of the previously mentioned dispersion into nations.
  - 5.Toledot of Shem, Genesis 11:10-26.** ‘The expansion of what became of Shem.’ From the previous curse, God singles out one lineage for blessing-the lineage that would lead to Abraham and finally to Christ.
  - 6.Toledot of Terah, Genesis 11:27-25:11.** ‘What followed from Terah’ i.e. Abraham. Even the line of Shem largely degenerated into idolatry, including Terah. But God chose Abraham from this line. Mankind would be blessed by him, his descendants, and most importantly by his seed, the Messiah. This long section covers the life of Abraham and the Abrahamic Covenant.
  - 7.Toledot of Ishmael, Genesis 25:12-18.** ‘What followed from Ishmael.’ This tells us of the descendants of the non-seed line of Abraham, to finish discussion of these and concentrate on the Seed line.
  - 8.Toledot of Isaac, Genesis 25:19-35:29.** ‘What followed from Isaac,’ the Seed son, and in particular, his Seed son, Jacob. Here we see Jacob fight for the blessing that God had promised him. Jacob is called a perfect or blameless man (Genesis 25:27)- the same word *tam* used to describe Noah in Genesis 6:9 and Job in Job 1:1. Jacob has been unfairly treated by biblical translations that call him a “plain” or “quiet” man.
  - 9.Toledot of Esau, Genesis 36:1-8.** ‘What followed from Esau’. Again, this dismisses the lines of a non-seed line by an account of his three wives and five sons.
  - 10. Toledot of Esau, Genesis 36:9-37:1.** A second one of Esau, but this time as “the father of the Edomites”. Here we see the ancestry of three non-seed nations: Edomites, Horites, and Amalekites. These were historic enemies of Israel, and ruled the land before the Israelite kings. By contrast, Jacob had to leave the land to begin Israel’s sojourn into Egypt
  - 11. Toledot of Jacob, Genesis 37:2-50:26.** ‘What followed from Jacob’ i.e. the 12 tribes of Israel and especially Joseph. This ends with Jacob’s descendants still out of the land of Egypt.

## Genre of Literature

- Genesis is a book of history. Although there has been debate in recent years about the type of literature of Genesis, it has throughout history been overwhelmingly treated as real history.
- The New Testament treats Genesis as historical narrative, even chapters 1-11.
- At least 25 New Testament passages refer directly to the early chapters of Genesis, and they are always treated as real history.
  - Genesis 1 and 2 were cited by Jesus in response to a question about divorce (Matthew 19:4–6; Mark 10:6–9).
  - Paul referenced Genesis 2–3 in Romans 5:12–19; 1 Corinthians 15:20–22, 45–47; 2 Corinthians 11:3; and 1 Timothy 2:13–14.
  - The death of Abel recorded in Genesis 4 is mentioned by Jesus in Luke 11:51.
  - The Flood (Genesis 6–9) is confirmed as historical by Jesus (Matthew 24:37–39) and Peter (2 Peter 2:4–9, 3:6), and in Luke 17:26–29, Jesus mentioned the Flood in the same context as he did the account of Lot and Sodom (Genesis 19).
  - Finally, in Luke’s genealogy of Christ, he includes 20 names found in the genealogies of Genesis 5 and 11 (Luke 3:34–38).

## Genesis Timeline from Adam to Abraham



### Calculating the Date of Creation

How do we arrive at a date of 4004 BC for the creation of the world? Genealogies in Genesis 5 and 11 follow the pattern: "And [father] lived [years] and begat [son]." Adding up those years shows that Abraham was born about 2,000 years after God created Adam. We align Abraham's life with our calendar based on archaeological evidence.

Archbishop James Ussher is well-known for applying several historical and biblical clues to align these dates with the Julian calendar. While many have disputed or revised his calculations, it remains the predominant source among those who believe Genesis is an accurate record of history.