

# Genesis – Overview and Highlights

**You are encouraged to use and mark your own Bible!**

Comments in red: Engelbrecht, E. A. (2009). *The Lutheran Study Bible*. St. Louis, MO: Concordia Publishing House.

[www.BLC7500.com](http://www.BLC7500.com)

**Writer:** Moses the prophet

**Date:** Written 1446–1406 BC

**Purpose:** To trace the passing of the promise of God’s Savior from generation to generation, to all Israel and to all nations.

**Luther on Genesis:** 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.... (AE 35:237)

We assert that Moses spoke in the literal sense, not allegorically or figuratively [about the creation], i.e., that the world, with all its creatures, was created within six days, as the words read.... (AE 1:5)

The line of descent was traced from Adam, through many patriarchs, down to Noah, and from there down to Abraham. During this time the church suffered great damage, for ungodliness had increased to such an extent that even the descendants of the saints were carried away into error. Therefore, it was necessary for Moses to point out how in this great peril God accomplished the rebirth of the church, lest it collapse entirely, and true religion be utterly blotted out.

This account deserves our attention as an extraordinary example of mercy. It should encourage and persuade us that God will

preserve the church also in our own time when everything is threatening religion with destruction. Despite the great importance of their content the preceding accounts are very brief [chs 1–11]. In these which follow, however, the Holy Spirit will speak at greater length and will discuss everything in greater detail.... (AE 2:245)

## Challenges for Readers:

*Dating in Chapters 1–11.* The events described before the time of Abraham (2166 BC) cannot be dated. Well-intentioned efforts to date the creation of the world, the flood, and other historical events by adding up the years recorded in chs 5 and 11 have failed to appreciate the character of Israelite genealogies, which do not necessarily provide complete information from generation to generation.... Moses describes what may be called a “young” earth, but little can be said beyond this. [*That paragraph is the opinion of the those who wrote TLSB notes, but I disagree (RLG).*]

*Salvation History.* ...Special emphasis is placed throughout on God’s promise of creating, delivering, and sustaining a good people through faith in His redemption. In this way, Genesis constantly points to the appearing of Christ, the Savior, who will bless all nations.

*Notes in TLSB.* The notes for Genesis are written from the perspective that Moses accurately described the events of creation based on God’s revelations to him. The scientific method of “observe, analyze, and report” is a helpful but limited tool for understanding the world. Scientists should certainly exercise sound reason in investigating God’s world. But spiritual matters and the events of creation are beyond the scope of modern scientific observation and investigation (whether by creationists or evolutionists).

The notes in *TLSE* make no attempt to reconcile Moses' teaching with modern theories, which are constantly changing and can never be proven satisfactorily. Instead, the notes emphasize that faith in God, which He creates and sustains in us by His Word, remains the most relevant way to approach the issues of life and its origin.

**Blessings for Readers:** Genesis lays the foundation for all the events and doctrines of Holy Scripture. Studying its characters and events will prepare you for a much broader understanding of God's ways with humankind. Throughout Genesis, Moses emphasizes that these records apply not simply to Israel but to

all nations and families of the earth. See in the patriarchs' weaknesses, struggles, and joys a mirror of families today. The Lord, through promise and faith, makes all the difference for the patriarchs, and He will likewise bless and lead you.

**Outline:** Genesis is the [introduction] for the central story of the exodus in the Books of Moses.... Only the genealogy of Israel is carried forward through Genesis to Ex 1:1–5.

- I. The Book of the Ancients (1:1–11:26)
- II. The Book of the Patriarchs (11:27–37:1)
- III. The Book of Joseph (37:2–50:26)

## Chapters 1-11

### 1. Chapters 1-2:

- a. The six 24-hour days.
- b. The creation was mature – trees with fruit, starlight reaching the earth, the animals and people were grown.
- c. God made kinds – fish, birds, livestock, crawling things, animals of the earth.
- d. The people and animals were vegetarians (29-30).
- e. Some details of what God did in chapter 1.
- f. God's warning to Adam (16-17).
- g. The first wedding (22).

### 2. Chapter 3:

- a. The fall into sin (1-6).
- b. The first promise of the Savior (15).
- c. The first sacrifice (21).
- d. Barring Adam and Eve from the tree of life (22-23).

### 3. Chapter 4:

- a. The offerings of Cain and Abel; why was one accepted and one rejected?
- b. Lamech, first man with two wives (19).

c. Seth was given to replace Abel (25).

d. "...people began to call upon the name of the LORD" (26).

**4. Chapter 5:** The descendants of Adam through Noah.

### 5. Chapters 6-8:

- a. "...the wickedness of mankind" (6:5).
- b. God's decision to destroy humanity (6:13).
- c. It was a worldwide flood (7:19).
- d. The seasons will continue until the end of time (8:22).

### 6. Chapter 9:

- a. Animals can now be eaten (3).
- b. Capital punishment (6).

### 7. Chapter 10:

- a. The descendants of Noah.
- b. First mention of nations (5).
- c. The earth was divided (25).

### 8. Chapter 11:

- a. Dividing the people through the giving of many languages, at least 78.
- b. The descendants of Shem through Abram.

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## Chapters 12-#####

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