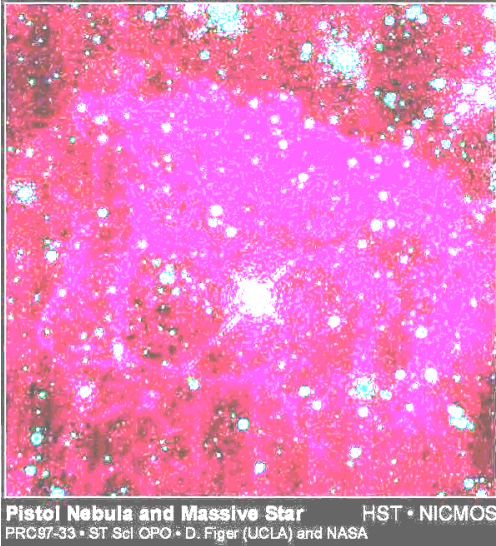


Bible Study - Genesis

Overview

Genesis is the first book in the bible. The word comes from the Hebrew meaning “in the beginning”.



Principle divisions of this book

The Book of Genesis is divided as follows:

- I: The Primeval History (Gen 1:1-11, 26)
- II: The Patriarch Abraham (Gen 11:27-25, 18)
- III: The Patriarchs Isaac and Jacob (Gen 25:19-36, 43)
- IV: Joseph and His Brothers (Gen 37:1-50:26)

Who wrote this book and when?

Moses is generally attributed as being the author but think of him as the scribe who actually compiled the 4 different authors who contributed to it. They are the Yahwist, Elohist, Priestly and Deuteronomic authors we discussed in Bible Basics. You see this clearly in the two different stories about creation in the Chapters 1 and 2 of Genesis.

Most scholars put the date as being written somewhere between 1420 BC and 1120 BC.

Literary form

Genesis is actually compressed of several literary forms including narratives, history and

genealogies - as the period of time is quite long – from creation to the Jewish patriarchs.

A dominant form for Genesis is “sagas” or stories. A saga is a story that has some basis of fact but becomes expanded or modified.

What is the primary theme of this book?

Genesis contains many religious teachings of basic importance such as the preexistence of God and moral values. Of course the major theme is in the beginnings of everything and the emergence of God within His people.

The primary purpose of Genesis was to give the Jewish people a sense of God. God reveals to Abraham His mission for them as His chosen people and that they would be granted the land of Canaan.

God created man and woman as an image of Him such that they could exercise dominion over all of creation providing the theme of God’s blessings and human dominion under the reign of God.

In Genesis we see a great many events of history over a vast period of time including such major ones as:

- Creation and the fall of man
- Deliverance from sin through the grace of God and the great flood. Estimates of the flood date it between 13000 BC and 3000 BC. Note the genealogies in Chapters 5 and 10.
- Confusion of languages at Babel
- The introduction of Abraham with offspring as numerous as the stars and his eventual journey to Canaan – the promised land
- The destruction of Sodom and Gomorrah
- The birth of Isaac and the future for Israel
- Deliverance through Joseph and migration to Egypt