An Outline of Genesis

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The Covenant God worked to overcome the defilement of man’s sin and rebellion by preparing a believing people who, through a ruler they would engender, would bring God’s blessing to all mankind, but the blessing remained in the distant future (Gen. 1–50).

A. Narrative: Mankind sinfully refuses loyalty to the Covenant God and defiles the earth, so that God must destroy them and begin again with a new family of faith through whom He will bless the whole earth (Gen. 1–48).

1. The Covenant God prepares a land and people for Himself, but they defile it by their sin, causing Him to destroy all mankind, and begin again with a new family under His blessing (Gen. 1–11).

The Spread of Sin in Genesis 1–11 and the Defilement of the Camp in Leviticus 11–16, (Sailhamer, p. 39).

“The order and arrangement of the Creation accounts in Genesis 1–2 exhibit the same pattern as the description of the building of the tabernacle (Ex 25–31); the tabernacle is portrayed as a return to the Garden of Eden. The instructions given to Noah for building the ark foreshadow those given to Moses for building the tabernacle. Furthermore, one can demonstrate that whole sections of laws in the Pentateuch have been grouped and arranged in patterns that parallel the narrative structure of Genesis 1–11,” (Sailhamer, p. 39).

“… the terminology of Leviticus 12 alludes to the curse involving childbirth in Genesis 3,” (Sailhamer, p. 39).

The purpose behind Genesis 1–11 may be “to portray the spread of ritual defilement in Israel’s camp as a reversal of God’s original plan of blessing. Or to view the matter from another perspective, the early narratives of Genesis, by paralleling the later rituals dealing with contamination, may be attempting to show that the first sin in the Garden was a form of ritual contamination of God’s good creation,” (Sailhamer, p. 39).

“Adding to the likelihood that this arrangement of the laws in Leviticus is intentional, the next set of laws in Leviticus 13 deals with the problem of the impurities of the ‘skin’ (ם"ח),” (Sailhamer, p. 39). For this he references “skin of the flesh” (Lev. 13) and nakedness (ם"ח) in Genesis 2–3. Man and woman were originally one flesh (ם"ח) and naked (ם"ח). “Just as the effects of the first sin were immediately displayed in the skin (‘And their eyes were opened and they knew that they were naked [ם"ח],’ Ge 3:7; cf. 9:20–23), so the writer uses the graphic horror of skin (ם"ח) diseases to depict humanity’s state of uncleanness before a holy God.

“Moreover, it is significant that in Genesis the first man and woman, once they realized their own nakedness, suffered the same consequences for their contamination as the unclean person in Leviticus 13. According to the regulations in Leviticus, if one were found to be unclean, ‘as long as he has the infection he remains unclean. He must live alone; he must live outside the camp’ (Lev 13:46). In the same way, when Adam and Eve sinned, ‘the Lord God banished him from the Garden of Eden to work the ground from which he had been taken. And he drove Adam out’ (Ge 3:23–24). They had to live ‘outside the camp,’ as it were, until their uncleanness could be removed,” (Sailhamer, pp. 39–40).
a) The Creation (Gen. 1.1–2.3) — As His first saving work for Israel, the Covenant God created the world with mankind as its ruler, to worship Him functioning as His image, blessing them and the whole earth.

In Genesis 1.1–2.4a, “He has chosen rather to concentrate on the creation and preparation of the land. If we judge from the topics selected in Genesis 1:1–2:4a, we can say that the author has only three specific subjects in his account of Creation: God, human beings, and the land. Having said that there is little mention of the creation of the rest of the universe, we should note that the creation of the sun and moon is given considerable attention…. Their creation is recounted in terms of the role they play in human affairs on the land: ‘to divide the day and night and to be signs for the seasons and for days and years’ (1:14–15),” (Sailhamer, p. 28).

(1) God created all that exists (Gen. 1.1).
(2) As His work began, the earth was a watery chaos under God’s judgment, though His Spirit was moving to change the chaos (Gen. 1.2).
(3) On the first day, God created light, sovereignly naming it and separating it from the darkness so that mankind would be able to live there (Gen. 1.3–5).
(4) On the second day, God separated the waters to form the sky by an expanse, so that both heaven and ocean are creatures of God, under His sovereign control (Gen. 1.6–8).
(5) On the third day, God, having gathered the waters together into one place to form the ocean and having caused the dry land to appear, caused vegetation to sprout from the earth to provide food for His creatures (Gen. 1.9–13).
(6) On the fourth day God, banishing the evil of total darkness, created lamps in the heavens to teach man, to mark the worship seasons and to signal the passage of time, giving light during the day and night (Gen. 1.14–19).
(7) On the fifth day, God, having created the water dwelling creatures and birds, blessed them with abundant life (Gen. 1.20–23).
(8) On the sixth day, God, having created all the land dwelling creatures and made mankind to function as the sign of His sovereignty over the earth, reflecting His plurality in unity, His rule, and His blessing in abundant life, saw that everything was perfectly suited to His purposes (Gen. 1.24–31).
   (a) On the sixth day, God created land dwelling creatures (Gen. 1.24–25).
   (b) On the same day, God created mankind to function as His image, as a plurality in unity, to bring His rule to His creation, and to bring abundant life on the earth (Gen. 1.26–30).
   (c) God, contemplating all that He had made, saw that everything was perfectly adapted to serve His purpose, declaring everything very good (Gen. 1.31).
(9) In this way, the whole creation was completed (Gen. 2.1).
(10) God completed His work by the seventh day when He contemplated all His work, thus blessing and sanctifying the seventh day when He completed His saving work for the earth (Gen. 2.2–3).

b) The Toledoth of the Heavens and the Earth (Gen. 2.4–4.26) — The Covenant God, having given the blessings of life and land to His people, must condemn the entire race for their sins, though some begin to call on His name.

(1) This is the toledoth of the heavens and the earth when the covenant God, Yahweh, created them (Gen. 2.4).
(2) Yahweh, the covenant God, formed the man from earth’s dust, giving him the earth and its fruit for food, labor, and enjoyment, absolutely restricting him from the tree of knowledge, and the woman from the man, making them a complete unity in plurality, who lived in complete vulnerability to one another, without shame (Gen. 2.5–25).

(a) Yahweh God formed mankind from the earth’s dust, to be a living being to inhabit the earth that He furnished with every kind of tree pleasing to the eye and good for food, among them the tree of life and the tree of the knowledge of good and evil1 (Gen. 2.5–9).

(b) The garden Yahweh planted was bounded by four rivers, and included the fine gold of Havilah for man’s aesthetic development (Gen. 2.10–14).

(c) The covenant God placed mankind in the garden of Eden to cultivate and keep it, commanding him to eat the fruit of the trees freely, but to promising death if he should eat the fruit of the tree of knowledge (Gen. 2.15–17). The verbs translated “cultivate” (db") and “keep” (rmv) are the primary words Moses will use in the rest of the Pentateuch for Israel’s worship. Man’s work, therefore, from the creation, was to be the worship he offered to Yahweh. Thus, when man worked in the garden, or anywhere on the earth, he was fulfilling his task as God’s image, ruling the earth, worshipping God. For when he worked, he acted like God, ruling with His sovereignty, perfectly serving the creation as God did, helping it to become all that Yahweh intended the earth, and the animals, to be.

(d) Since the man by himself could not fulfill his role as God’s image, as the man began to recognize as he subjected the animals to his rule, the covenant God made a completer for him, one that corresponded to his nature, taken from his own body, to become one with him, his wife (Gen. 2.18–24).

(e) The man and the woman were completely vulnerable to one another and to God, with no shame between them (Gen. 2.25).

(3) Beginning with Adam and Eve’s unbelieving sin in the garden, God imposed punishment on the race, which became increasingly violent after Cain’s breach of family, as his descendants sought to fill their God-forsakenness with civilization, though God promised to crush the serpent through the woman’s offspring, through the line of Seth and Enosh, in whose days men began to call upon the name of Yahweh (Gen. 3.1–4.26).

(a) When the humans sinned, trying to grasp godlikeness, the covenant God condemned the blame shifting people to travail, the woman in childbirth and subservience to her husband, and the man to travail in work and finally death, and cursed the serpent to be crushed by the woman’s seed (Gen. 3.1–24).

i) The humans, enticed by the crafty serpent to seek self advancement to godlikeness, ate the fruit of the tree of knowledge, but achieved only

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1Whatever God called something is what it was (cp. t/v/ h/yh w/ h/yh h/yh”. Thus, when He named the tree, it was named such because it was such. Therefore, it was not simply bad for man because God said it was bad. It was bad for man because of its nature. By nature, the knowledge of good and evil is what only God should have. It is necessary to God’s being; but for man, it is detrimental since such knowledge can only degrade human life. It cannot enhance life.
death to each other as they became conscious of their vulnerability and hid from one another (Gen. 3.1–7).

(a) Yahweh God formed the serpent to aid mankind in its moral development (Gen. 3.1a).

The serpent is described as “crafty” (ราֶ), a characteristic which in Proverbs 1 is a desirable trait, a trait especially needed by the “simple.” It is the trait of knowing how to get things done. Thus, Yahweh made the serpent crafty. The word crafty is also important in 3.1 because of a word play with 2.25, for the man and woman were naked (ברעע), that is, vulnerable to exploitation. Yahweh intended the serpent’s craftiness to aid the humans to grow intellectually and morally, as the book of Proverbs intends to aid the simple, those who are easily seduced, to gain in craftiness, which therefore is both an intellectual and a moral trait. Therefore, the serpent’s craftiness is not something, yet, to be feared. Only in the serpent’s lie (vv. 4–5) does it become clear that there is something sinister in his craftiness. Since whatever is capable of great good can also be turned to great evil, the serpent’s future great evil is a sign of the great good it might have accomplished for mankind.

(b) The serpent posed to the woman a question of God’s goodness in restricting the food He allowed mankind to eat (Gen. 3.1b).

(c) The woman failed to recognize the essential goodness of God and rationality of His commandment, thinking only of His bare permission, His mere gift, His unreasoning commandment, His stinginess, and His threat, leaving herself open (ברעע) (Gen. 3.2–3).

(d) The serpent openly denied God’s word, claiming that He withheld from mankind the chief means of their development, the fruit of the tree of knowledge, so that they might become like God (Gen. 3.4–5).

(e) The woman, now believing the serpent’s word and not God’s, ate the fruit to achieve godlikeness, giving some to the man (Gen. 3.6).

(f) Once they disobeyed God, they became conscious of their vulnerability to each other, trying to hide from each other with fig leaves (Gen. 3.7).

ii) The covenant God, after seeking confession from the blame shifting humans, pronounced judgment on them and the serpent, though promising that the woman’s seed would crush the serpent’s head (Gen. 3.8–19).

(a) When the covenant God sought to elicit from them confession of their sin, each tried to shift blame to another, refusing to take responsibility for their sin (Gen. 3.8–13).

(b) The covenant God condemned the serpent to be crushed by the seed of the woman, the woman to travail in childbirth and domination by her husband, and the man to travail in gaining bread and ultimate death (Gen. 3.14–19).

iii) Responding to the man’s faith in God’s promise of a seed, the covenant God provided them with skin coverings to clothe them (Gen. 3.20–21).
iv) Yahweh further banished mankind, who had sinfully become as God, from the garden to prevent them from eating from the tree of life and living forever in their condemned condition (Gen. 3.22–24).

(b) After the Cain’s breach of family by murder, the covenant God cursed him to be a wanderer in the earth, though protected from blood vengeance, and his family became increasingly violent and sought to fill their God-forsakenness with civilization (Gen. 4.1–26).
   i) The second generation of humans spawned Cain’s murder of his brother, breach of family loyalty, because religious envy (Gen. 4.1–8).
   ii) The covenant God forced the murderer to acknowledge his act, driving him from the ground, making him a wanderer in the earth, though protecting him from blood vengeance (Gen. 4.9–15).
   iii) Cain’s family grew steadily in its violence to the time of Lamech, who avenged himself 77 times on a man who wronged him, and sought to fill the emptiness of God-forsakenness by civilization (Gen. 4.16–24).

(c) Then Adam sired another son, whom Eve named Seth, another seed, who also had a son, Enosh, in whose days men began to call upon the name of Yahweh (Gen. 4.25–26).

c) The Toledoth of Adam (Gen. 5.1–6.8) — Mankind languishes under the threat of death, and they face total annihilation for their pollution of the earth, though they may escape these threats by walking with God in the blessing passed from Adam to Noah.

(1) Mankind languishes under the threat of death, though they may escape it by walking with God in the blessing passed from Adam to Noah (Gen. 5.1–31).
   a) After God created Adam male and female to be His likeness, Adam fathered a son, Seth, and other children, in his own likeness, and died at nine hundred thirty years, though passing the blessing on (Gen. 5.1–5).
   b) Seth fathered Enosh and other children, and died at nine hundred twelve years, though passing the blessing on (Gen. 5.6–8).
   c) Enosh fathered Kenan and other children, and died at nine hundred five years, though passing the blessing on (Gen. 5.9–11).
   d) Kenan fathered Mahalalel and other children, and died at nine hundred ten years, though passing the blessing on (Gen. 5.12–14).
   e) Mahalalel fathered Jared and other children, and died at eight hundred ninety-five years, though passing the blessing on (Gen. 5.15–17).
   f) Jared fathered Enoch and other children, and died at nine hundred sixty-two years, though passing the blessing on (Gen. 5.18–20).
   g) Enoch fathered Methuselah and other children, but did not die, being translated by God since he walked with God, and passed the blessing on (Gen. 5.21–24).
   h) Methuselah fathered Lamech and other children, and died at nine hundred sixty-nine years, though passing the blessing on (Gen. 5.25–27).
   i) Lamech fathered Noah, in whom he hoped to see the blessing of rest, and other children, and died at seven hundred seventy-seven years, though passing the blessing on (Gen. 5.28–31).
In Noah’s days, Yahweh determined to destroy the earth and all its inhabitants because of mankind’s great sinfulness, though He preserved Noah who found grace in His eyes (Gen. 5.32–6.8).

(a) Noah was five hundred years old when he fathered Shem, Ham, and Japheth (Gen. 5.32).

(b) As mankind began to multiply on the earth in fulfillment of the blessing, Yahweh determined not always to strive with man who mingled what God had intended to remain distinct, thus threatening the blessing (Gen. 6.1–4).

(c) Then Yahweh, seeing the great multiplication of man’s wickedness, determined in His grief over the corruption of His creation, to destroy all flesh (Gen. 6.5–7).

(d) But Noah found grace in Yahweh’s eyes (Gen. 5.8)

d) The Toledoth of Noah (Gen. 6.9–9.29) — Noah, who walked with God, escaped the purifying wrath of God to become the new head of mankind, worshipping in the day of salvation in the gift of covenant under God’s blessing, though sin was still at work. [The commandments are for deliverance, not for merit!]

(1) Noah, the righteous man who walked with God, bore three sons, Shem, Ham, and Japheth (Gen. 6.9–10).

(2) But the earth was very corrupt, filled with violence, as God inspected it (Gen. 6.11–12).

(3) God told Noah of His plan for a life destroying flood and of His plan to deliver Noah and his family with a remnant of animal life through an ark Noah should build, and Noah did all that God had commanded him (Gen. 6.13–22).

(a) God told Noah of His plan for a life destroying flood and of His plan to deliver Noah and his family with a remnant of animal life through an ark that Noah should prepare (Gen. 6.13–21).

(i) God warned Noah that He was about to destroy the violence filled earth (Gen. 6.13).

(ii) To deliver him, God told Noah to make an ark, and how to make it (Gen. 6.14–16).

(iii) God repeated that He would bring a flood upon the earth to destroy all flesh under heaven (Gen. 4.17).

(iv) But God promised to make a covenant with Noah and his family who would enter the ark (Gen. 6.18).

(v) God told Noah to bring two of every kind of animal into the ark to preserve life through the flood, and to bring food for his family and the animals (Gen. 6.19–21).

(b) Noah did all that God had commanded him to do (Gen. 6.22).

(4) Yahweh commanded Noah to enter the ark with his family since he was righteous before God, commanding him to bring seven of all clean animals with him for sacrifice (Gen. 7.1–5).

(5) After bringing a year long flood in which all flesh died, Yahweh delivered Noah, his family, and the animals with them in the ark (Gen. 7.6–8.19).

(a) When Noah was 600, he and his family entered the ark with the animals, including the sacrificial animals, as God had commanded Noah (Gen. 7.6–9).
Seven days later, the flood began as the fountains of the deep burst open, and the floodgates of the skies poured rain on the earth for forty days and nights (Gen. 7.10–12).

Yahweh delivered Noah and those with him in the ark while destroying all flesh on the earth with a flood that rose on the earth for one hundred fifty days covering even all the high mountains of the earth (Gen. 7.13–24).

(i) Noah, his family, the seven of sacrificial animals, and the pairs of all other animals all entered the ark on the same day, as God had commanded Noah, and Yahweh closed up the ark behind them (Gen. 7.13–16).

(ii) After their entry, Yahweh brought a flood that kept rising even over all the high mountains of the earth, bearing the ark and its passengers in safety (Gen. 7.17–20).

(iii) Thus Yahweh blotted out all flesh died on the earth, everything on the dry land, leaving only Noah and his passengers alive (Gen. 7.21–23).

(iv) The water rose on the earth for one hundred fifty days (Gen. 7.24).

God, having determined to deliver Noah and those with him on the ark, caused the water to dry up, so that Noah and all surviving flesh could leave the ark to fulfill the creation blessing (Gen. 8.1–19).

(i) God, having determined to deliver Noah and all those with him on the ark, caused the flood water to recede, leaving the ark on Mt. Ararat (Gen. 8.1–5).

(ii) At the end of forty days, Noah sent out a raven and a dove to see if the water had receded far enough, but the dove returned, indicating that he must wait still longer (Gen. 8.6–12).

(iii) One year later, when the water had dried up, Noah removed the ark’s covering and waited for the end of the second month (Gen. 8.13–14).

(iv) Noah and all with him, at God’s command, left the ark to fulfill the creation blessing, to fill the earth multiply and be fruitful (Gen. 8.15–19).

God renewed the creation blessing to worshiping Noah granting an everlasting covenant to all flesh promising not to destroy the whole earth by a flood ever again (Gen. 8.20–9.17).

(i) Noah worshiped Yahweh with abundant burnt offerings (Gen. 8.20).

(ii) In response to Noah’s pleasing worship, Yahweh determined never to destroy the earth by flood again, but to preserve the normal course of nature (Gen. 8.21–22).

(iii) God renewed the creation blessing to mankind, granting them also to eat animal flesh (Gen. 9.1–3).

(iv) God withheld animal blood as the means of demonstrating submission to Himself, requiring the death of anyone who would shed human blood since murder is high treason (Gen. 9.4–6).

(v) God reiterated the blessing of fruitful multiplication of humanity on the earth (Gen. 9.7).

(vi) God declared His covenant with all living things not to destroy the earth again by a flood (Gen. 9.8–11).

(vii) God gave the rainbow as the covenant sign to remind Himself that He would not again make war with the earth by a flood (Gen. 8.12–17).
The whole earth was populated by the descendants of Noah’s sons, Shem, Ham, and Japheth (Gen. 9.18–19).

Since Ham, the father of Canaan broke loyalty with his father, Noah, who lived 950 years, cursed his son Canaan, but blessed Shem and Japheth for keeping loyalty in the family (Gen. 9.20–29).

(a) When Noah became drunk, Ham, the father of Canaan, broke loyalty with his father, but Shem and Japheth maintained loyalty (Gen. 9.20–23).

(b) Noah cursed Ham’s youngest son Canaan, but blessed Shem and Japheth (Gen. 9.24–27).

(c) Noah lived 350 years after the flood, for a total of 950 years before he died (Gen. 9.28–29).

e) The Toledoth of Shem, Ham, and Japheth (Gen. 10.1–11.9) — The human race, some cursed and some blessed, divided and spread through the earth only because God in His merciful wrath sundered the race by confusing their languages.

(1) The account of the dispersion of the human race over the earth shows where the blessed people settled and where the people of the curse (the Canaanites) settled after the flood (Gen. 10.1–32).

(a) This is the account of how the human race developed from Noah’s sons (Gen. 10.1).

(b) The sons of Japheth were the peoples who spread into the maritime territories of the earth (Gen. 10.2–5).

i) The sons of Japheth were Gomer, Magog, Madai, Javan, Tubal, Meshech, and Tiras (Gen. 10.2).

ii) The sons of Gomer were Ashkenaz, Riphat, and Togarmah (Gen. 10.3).

iii) The sons of Javan were Elishah, Tarshish, the Kittim and the Rodanim, from whom the maritime peoples spread to fill their territories (Gen. 10.4–5).

c) The sons of Ham were Cush, Mizraim, Put, and Canaan (the peoples under God’s curse) from whom the lands of Arabia, including the Assyrians, Africa, and Canaan were settled (Gen. 10.6–20).

i) The sons of Ham were Cush, Mizraim, Put and Canaan (Gen. 10.6).

ii) The sons of Cush included peoples of the Arabian peninsula, including the great hunter and empire founder, Nimrod (Gen. 10.7–12).

1) The sons of Cush were Seba, Havilah, Sabtah, Raamah (the father of Sheba and Dedan), and Sabteca (Gen. 10.7).

2) Cush was the father of Nimrod, a mighty hunter and founder of the Assyrian nation, centered in Shinar at Babylon and three other cities, and Nineveh (Gen. 10.8–12).

iii) Mizraim was the father of the Ludites, Anamites, Lehabites, Naphtuhites, Pathrusites, Casluhites (the forebears of the Philistines) and the Caphtorites (Gen. 10.13–14).

iv) The Canaanite clans descended from Ham and scattered through the land later known as Canaan (Gen. 10.15–19).

1) Canaan was the father of Sidon, the Hittites, Jebusites, Amorites, Girgashites, Hivites, Arkites, Sinites, Arvadites, Zemarites, and Hamathites (Gen. 10.15–18a).
(2) Afterward the Canaanites dispersed to fill the land from Sidon to Gaza, to the cities of the plain (Gen. 10.18b–19).

v) These are the sons of Ham by their clans and languages, in their territories and nations (Gen. 10.20).

(d) The sons of Shem included the descendants of Aram and Arphaxad, the father of all the sons of Eber (the line through which the blessing flowed), who lived in the eastern hill country (Gen. 10.21–31).

i) Sons, including all the sons of Eber, were also born to Shem, whose older brother was Japheth, (Gen. 10.21).

ii) The other sons of Shem were Elam, Asshur, Arphaxad, Lud, and Aram (Gen. 10.22).

iii) The sons of Aram were Uz, Hul, Gether, and Meshech (Gen. 10.23).

iv) Arphaxad was the father of the line that led to Joktan and his descendants through Eber, people who lived in the eastern hill country (Gen. 10.24–30).

(1) Arphaxad was the father of Shelah who fathered Eber (Gen. 10.24).

(2) Eber had two sons, Peleg, because the earth was divided in his days, and Joktan (Gen. 10.25).

(3) Joktan was the father of Almodad, Sheleph, Hazarmaveth, Jerah, Hadoram, Uzal, Diklah, Obal, Abimael, Sheba, Ophir, Havilah, and Jobab who lived in the eastern hill country (Gen. 10.26–30).

v) These are the sons of Shem by their clans and languages, in their territories and nations (Gen. 10.31).

(e) These are the clans of Noah’s sons from whom the nations spread out over the earth after the flood in obedience to God’s command to Noah (Gen. 10.32).

(2) When men rebelliously determined to build a city to prevent their scattering over the earth, in judgment Yahweh confused their languages to prevent them uniting in their sin and to guarantee their scattering over the whole earth (Gen. 11.1–9).

(a) When all humanity spoke a common language after the flood, men settled in the land of Shinar (Gen. 11.1–2).

(b) They rebelliously determined to build a city to prevent their scattering over the earth (Gen. 11.3–4).

(c) Yahweh, however, determined to confuse their language as a judgment to prevent them from greater rebellion in their union in sin (Gen. 11.5–7).

(d) Thus Yahweh scattered them over the whole earth by confusing their languages, so that the name of the city became “Confusion” (Gen. 11.8–9).

f) The Toledoth of Shem (Gen. 11.10–26) — God’s blessing on Shem passed through the generations to Terah and his sons, Abram, Nahor, and Haran.

(1) This is the Toledoth of Shem (Gen. 11.10a).

(2) Shem, at 100, fathered Arphaxad two years after the flood, along with other sons and daughters, and lived to be 500 years old (Gen. 11.10b–11).

(3) Arphaxad, at 35, fathered Shelah, with other sons and daughters, and lived to be 403 years old (Gen. 11.12–13).

(4) Shelah, at 30, fathered Eber with other sons and daughters, and lived to be 403 years old (Gen. 11.14–15).
(5) Eber, at 34, fathered Peleg with other sons and daughters, and lived to be 430 years old (Gen. 11.16–17).
(6) Peleg, at 30, fathered Reu, with other sons and daughters, and lived to be 209 years old (Gen. 11.18–19).
(7) Reu, at 32, fathered Serug, with other sons and daughters, and lived to be 207 years old (Gen. 11.20–21).
(8) Serug, at 30, fathered Nahor, with other sons and daughters, and lived to be 200 years old (Gen. 11.22–23).
(9) Nahor, at 29, fathered Terah, with other sons and daughters, and lived to be 119 years old (Gen. 11.24–25).
(10) Terah, after he was 70, fathered Abram, Nahor, and Haran (Gen. 11.26).

2. The Covenant God begins again to bring blessing to the whole earth through a new believing man and family who will live in covenant loyalty to Himself (Gen. 12–48).
   a) The Toledoth of Terah (Gen. 11.27–25.11) — Abraham, the man of faith, receives God’s covenant promises and models for his heirs covenant loyalty to God in the face of threats to the fulfillment of the promises.
      Three locations, Shechem, Bethel, and the Negev, are important from the perspective of the period during which the Pentateuch was written, just prior to the Conquest. “We know from the book of Joshua that Israel took the land in three campaigns: one central (at Bethel), one southern (in the Negev), and one northern (at Shechem). Thus, if we read the account from the point of view of the first readers, we see that Abraham was claiming each of these three areas by moving into the land and establishing a place of worship there” (Sailhamer, p. 4).

(1) Prelude to covenant: Abram lives in radical loyalty to God, beginning to act as God’s image in Canaan even in the face of threats to the fulfillment of God’s promises to bless all the earth (Gen. 11.27–14.24).
   a) Exposition: The blessed family of Shem includes Abram and his barren wife Sarai who move from Ur of the Chaldees to Haran on the way to Canaan (Gen. 11.27–32).
   b) Inciting Moment: The Covenant God promises blessing to Abram who abandons all that makes life secure to pursue the promise of God (Gen. 12.1–9).
   c) Complication: Abram, in radical faith, pursues the blessing through threats to the promise to receive the promise renewed from God (Gen. 12.10–13.18).
      i) Abram faces threats to his faith tested in Canaan and Egypt, but the Covenant God protects him and brings him back to the land (Gen. 12.10–20).

The role of Lot: “It can hardly be accidental that Genesis 12:10–20, which forms the frontispiece to the Lot narratives, is virtually duplicated, as a kind of inclusio, in Genesis 20, which comes after the last narrative dealing with Lot. This is especially noticeable in light of the fact that chapter 20 is both chronologically and geographically out of place in its present narrative context. The positioning of the Lot narratives between these two remarkably similar narratives about Abraham is apparently a reflection of a narrative strategy. Of special interest is that in Genesis 12:10–13:4 Lot occupies the same position


as that of the ‘mixed multitude’ (Ex 12:38) in the narrative of Genesis 41–Exodus 12. In other words the author apparently wants to draw the reader's attention to the identification of Lot with the ‘mixed multitude.’ It is as if Lot is seen in these narratives as a prefiguration of the ‘mixed multitude’ that comes out of Egypt with the Israelites.

“Along the same line it is significant that the last narrative dealing with Lot shows us that Lot is the father of the Moabites and the Ammonites (Ge 19:36–38), the very group that is prohibited from taking part in the congregational worship (Dt 23:4–5). Thus, as Lot is finally excluded from the assembly of Abraham, the reader is reminded that there is to be no ‘mixed multitude’ in the Israelite assembly.

“The question that naturally arises is whether the original or early readers of the book appreciated such a typological reading of these narratives. Fortunately, in this case we have a clear witness to the fact that they did. In Nehemiah 13:1–3 the problem of marriage to foreign wives was handled by an appeal to Deuteronomy 23:4–5, where the Ammonites and Moabites were restricted from the worship assembly. The author of the book of Nehemiah then remarks that when the people heard this, they separated out from them ‘all of the mixed multitude’ (Ne 13:3). Since this is the only other occurrence of the term mixed multitude in the Hebrew Bible and since the use of this term in Exodus 12:38 has no association with the Moabites and Ammonites, the association between the ‘mixed multitude’ and the Moabites and Ammonites could only have come from an association of the ‘mixed multitude’ with Lot and his two daughters,” (Sailhamer, p. 38).

ii) Abram, blessed by God, faces the threat of scarcity responding in the generosity born of faith and receives the renewed promise of God (Gen. 13.1–18).

(d) **Climax:** Abram, beginning to act in radical loyalty as the image of God, protects God’s land and its people from His enemies (Gen. 14.1–16).

(e) **Resolution:** Abram, the man of radical loyalty, receives God’s blessing through His high priest and in his radical loyalty refuses all blessing but what comes from Yahweh, God most high, creator of heaven and earth (Gen. 14.17–24).

(2) **Life in the covenant:** Abraham, in growing faith, demonstrates covenant loyalty for his heirs and brings God’s blessing to all in his relation (Gen. 15–22).

(a) The Covenant God leads fearful Abraham to understand and trust His promises, especially of descendants, by giving him a covenant with a covenant sign to mark those who may share in covenant fulfillment (15.1–18.15).

i) The Covenant God grants believing Abram a covenant to calm his fears over offspring to inherit the promises (Gen. 15).

ii) Fearful Abram seeks to aid God’s promises by fathering a son through Hagar, causing division in the family, but finding that God even protects and blesses this son (Gen. 16).

iii) The Covenant God grants faithful Abraham promises of a son by Sarah and innumerable and royal offspring, calling him to live faithfully in
covenant, especially giving him the sign of circumcision to mark those who may share in covenant fulfillment (Gen. 17).

iv) The Covenant God renews His promise of a son through unbelieving Sarah within one year (Gen. 18.1–15).

(b) The peoples of Canaan begin to experience the working of God in bringing His kingdom to the earth in their relationships with Abraham and the people of the covenant (Gen. 18.16–21.34).

i) The Covenant God executes the curse against Canaanite wickedness in Sodom and Gomorra, delivering only Lot for the sake of Abraham (Gen. 18.16–19.29).

ii) Believing, but weak, Lot fathers nations, as Abraham does, but through breach of family, nations who themselves will breach family loyalty (Gen. 19.30–38).

iii) The Covenant God protects the promise from Abraham’s habitual unbelief, even controlling the actions of the Philistine king Abimelech (Gen. 20).

iv) The man of covenant loyalty receives the blessing of a promised son and loyally separates the passed over line of Ishmael from the blessed son Isaac (Gen. 21.1–21).

v) The people of the land seek to ally themselves with the man who has the blessing to gain the protection by Abraham’s covenant loyalty (Gen. 21.22–34).

(c) The Covenant God again renews the promises to Abraham who has proven his radical covenant loyalty to God in facing the most stringent of the threats to the promise, God’s command to sacrifice Isaac (Gen. 22).

(3) Epilogue: Abraham, now wanting the blessing only by the hand of the Covenant God, humbly prepares for the future of the family, tying them to the land of Canaan as their home (Gen. 23.1–25.11).

(a) Abraham humbly purchases a burial place for Sarah and himself from the Canaanites establishing Canaan as the family’s true home (Gen. 23).

(b) Abraham prepares for the family’s future in God’s blessing by acquiring a proper wife for Isaac, keeping Isaac in Canaan as the family’s true home (Gen. 24).

(c) Abraham, at his death, sent all his sons but Isaac away from Canaan, thus establishing it as the family’s true home (Gen. 25.1–11).

b) The Toledoth of Ishmael (Gen. 25.12–18) — Ishmael, under God’s blessing (cp. 21.13), becomes a nation with twelve tribes, fulfilling further God’s promise that he would live in defiance of all his relatives (cp. 16.12).

c) The Toledoth of Isaac (Gen. 25.19–35.29) — The Covenant God fulfills the Abrahamic promises to Isaac and unbelieving, fearful, faithful Jacob, making a large family for Jacob secure in Canaan.

(1) The Covenant God repeats and fulfills His promises to Abraham’s heirs, Isaac, Jacob, and Esau, even though they do not trust Him in full maturity, and Isaac, in contrast to Abraham, fails to lead his sons to respect God’s gift of the blessing (Gen. 25.19–26.33).

(a) For Isaac the Covenant God miraculously provides twin offspring choosing the younger, Jacob, to receive the blessing (Gen. 25.19–26).
(b) Jacob, in unbelieving faith in the covenant promises, seeks to grasp God's promise by buying the birthright from Esau who despised his birthright (Gen. 25.27–34).

Note that the blessing (ברכה) and the birthright (ברכה) while not identical are connected by onomatopoeia.

c) The Covenant God called Isaac to the land of Canaan, renewing the Abrahamic promises to bless him and make him a blessing to all the earth because of Abraham's obedience, though Isaac endangered the family by following the bad example of Abraham at Gerar (Gen. 26.1–11).

d) Isaac trusted the Covenant God constantly to protect him against his Philistine enemies who tried to destroy him by taking away his water (Gen. 26.12–33; cp. 22.8)

2) The Covenant God fulfills His plan of blessing the younger son of Isaac with the Abrahamic promises even through the unbelief and disobedience of the family, finally accomplishing His work and reconciling Isaac's sons (Gen. 26.34–35.15).

(a) The Covenant God accomplishes His purpose for the covenant family in spite of and through their sin, to assure a numberless progeny to the line of Abraham, Isaac, and Jacob (Gen. 26.34–28.9).

i) Marrying Canaanite wives brings grief to the family of the covenant (Gen. 26.34–35).

ii) Jacob's sin fulfills the plan of God to bless Jacob, but requires the discipline of flight to protect himself from his wronged brother, but also to find a proper wife (Gen. 27.1–28.7)

For the structure of the passage, consider the following diagram from Allen P. Ross, *Creation and Blessing: A Guide to the Study and Exposition of the Book of Genesis*, p. 474).

A  Isaac and the son of the brkh/bkrh (= Esau) (27.1–5)

B  Rebekah sends Jacob on the stage (27.6–17)

C  Jacob appears before Isaac and receives blessing (27.18–29)

C'  Esau appears before Isaac and receives antiblessing (27.30–40)

B'  Rebekah sends Jacob from the stage (27.41–45)

A'  Isaac and the son of brkh/bkrh (= Jacob!) (27.46–28.5)

(1) Scene 1 Isaac offers to bless Esau, scheming against God (Gen. 27.1–4)

(2) Scene 2 Jacob and Rebecca scheme to get the blessing for Jacob against Isaac and Esau (Gen. 27.6–17).

(3) Scene 3 Jacob cheats Isaac and Esau (Gen. 27.18–29).

(4) Scene 4 Esau and Isaac realize that Jacob has thwarted their scheme (Gen. 27.30–40).

(5) Scene 5 Rebecca schemes to protect Jacob from his wronged brother by sending him to Haran and loses Jacob forever (Gen. 27.41–45).

(6) Scene 6 Isaac [Rebecca] sends Jacob from Canaan to find a wife in Haran [to escape his wronged brother's wrath] (Gen. 27.46–28.7).
iii) Esau, realizing his error with his parents, remarried in to the line of Ishmael (Gen. 28.8–9)

(b) The Covenant God works in spite of Jacob’s unbelieving faith to fulfill His promises to Jacob and restore him to the land of Canaan (Gen. 28.10–35.15).

   i) The Covenant God legitimately grants the Abrahamic blessing to Jacob, who in response vows to worship Yahweh at Bethel giving a tithe tribute offering (Gen. 28.10–22).

   ii) The Covenant God works in spite of Jacob’s unbelieving faith to discipline him for his breach of family loyalty and to fulfill His promises of safety, wealth, and a large family (Gen. 29.1–30.43).

      (1) The Covenant God uses scheming Laban to discipline Jacob for his breach of family loyalty (Gen. 29.1–30).

      (2) The Covenant God uses the disloyal sisters, wives of Jacob, to fulfill His promise to Jacob of a large family (Gen. 29.31–30.24).

         (a) The Covenant God grants believing Leah four sons, while withholding the blessing from Rachel for Leah’s sake (29.31–35).

         (b) The Covenant God blesses Jacob with two sons through Bilhah, when Rachel attempted to circumvent His discipline in her life, competing against her sister (30.1–8).

         (c) The Covenant God blesses Jacob with two sons through Zilpah as Leah responded to Rachel’s competitive spirit (30.9–13).

         (d) The Covenant God blesses Jacob with two more sons and a daughter through Leah, so that Rachel tries to buy her husband’s services (30.14–21).

         (e) The Covenant God blesses now believing Rachel with a son for Jacob, taking away her reproach in the family (30.22–24).

      (3) The Covenant God uses believing Jacob’s unbelieving schemes to enrich Jacob (Gen. 30.25–43).

   iii) The Covenant God protects unbelieving Jacob against his enemies thus fulfilling His promise to restore him to Canaan safely with a large family (Gen. 31.17–33.20).

      (1) The Covenant God protects Jacob bringing him and his family back to the land and providing him security against any enemies he had made outside of Canaan (Gen. 31.17–33.17).

         (a) The Covenant God calls Jacob to return to the land of Canaan (Gen. 31.1–16).

         (b) Jacob, unable to trust God to protect him from Laban, deceitfully flees from Haran (Gen. 31.17–21).

         (c) The Covenant God protects Jacob from Laban, even guarding Rachel from her husband’s curse [because He had not yet done all He intended to do in giving Jacob twelve sons] (Gen. 31.22–42).

         (d) The Covenant God provides Jacob protection from his enemies in Haran as he returns to the land of Canaan, in fulfillment of His covenant promise (Gen. 31.43–55).
(2) The Covenant God protects unbelieving Jacob from Esau by changing Esau’s attitude to Jacob, causing Jacob to worship Him as the God of Covenant (32.1–33.20).

(a) Jacob tries to buy his way into the land of Canaan from Esau, not believing that the Covenant God will protect him from his brother’s wrath (Gen. 32.1–21).

(b) The Covenant God attacks Jacob, teaching him that only He will give Jacob life and security in the land of Canaan (Gen. 32.22–32).

(c) The Covenant God has prepared Esau to joyfully receive his brother, though Jacob is still anxious and deceitful about the reunion (Gen. 33.1–17).

(d) Epilogue: Jacob returned to Canaan, purchased land at Shechem, demonstrating his faith in God, finally, worshipping God who fulfilled His promises to him (Gen. 33.18–20).

(3) Jacob, in fear of the Canaanites, refuses to approve his sons’ destruction of the Canaanites who did what is disgraceful in Israel (Gen. 34).

iv) Under protection from the Covenant God against the Canaanites, Jacob worships God Almighty at Bethel in fulfillment of his vow, receiving a renewal of the Abrahamic promises (Gen. 35.1–15)

(3) Epilogue to Isaac's Toledoth: The Covenant God completes His promises to Jacob, while preparing for the next generation and Joseph’s leadership (Gen. 35.16–29).

(a) The Covenant God completes the family of Jacob with the birth of Benjamin, while beginning to conclude the story of Jacob through the death of Rachel (35.16–20).

(b) Reuben’s incest disqualifies him for leadership in the family (Gen. 35.21–22; cp. 49.3–4).

(c) The Covenant God has completed His promise to Jacob by giving him twelve sons (Gen. 35.23–27).

(d) Isaac dies under the blessing of God that is further seen in the reconciliation between Esau and Jacob (Gen. 35.28–29).

d) The Toledoth of Esau, that is, Edom (Gen. 36.1–37.1) — The God of Abraham fulfills His promise to Abraham to bless Esau (21.13) by making him a great royal people allied with kings, having separated Esau from Jacob of Canaan.

(1) The genealogy of Esau: Esau has become a great people (Gen. 20.1–19).

(2) The genealogy of Seir the Horite whose granddaughter Esau had married (Gen. 20.20–30).

(3) The pre-Israelite kings of Edom (Gen. 20.31–39).

(4) The chiefs of the family of Esau (Gen. 20.40–43).

(5) But Jacob lived in the land where his father had sojourned, in the land of Canaan (Gen. 37.1).

c) The Toledoth of Jacob (Gen. 37.2–50.26) — The Covenant God brings blessing to the nations through believing Joseph as He exalts him to rule over Egypt and his family, but also anticipating the fulfillment of the rest of God’s promises in Canaan.
(1) **Exposition:** Joseph, at seventeen, is his father’s favorite son, and his choice to manage the family (Gen. 37.2–3).

(2) **Major Inciting Moment:** Joseph’s family rejects his divinely given dreams indicating that he will rule the family (Gen. 37.4–11).

(3) **Major Complication:** Yahweh fulfills the dreams He gave Joseph, even through enslavement and imprisonment, causing him to be a blessing to the nations as he rules over Egypt (Gen. 37.12–47.26).

(a) **First Sub-plot:** Yahweh is with His believing servant Joseph in all his troubles causing all he did to prosper, elevating him to rule as vizier of Egypt, and thus frustrating his brothers’ plans to thwart the will of God by killing him through slavery (Gen. 37.12–41.57). **Test:** Can God accomplish His plan to exalt Joseph over the family in the face of the brothers’ sin, Joseph’s slavery, the lies told about him, and his unjust imprisonment? Is God worthy of Joseph’s trust? Will he trust God in spite of all his sufferings?

i) **Inciting Moment:** Joseph’s brothers treacherously sell him into slavery bringing their father a life of mourning (37.12–36).

Parenthesis: The people of Israel, illustrated by Judah, are beginning to live like Canaanites as they intermarry with them and live among them; therefore they need to go to Egypt (Gen. 38).

ii) **Complication:** In the great trials of Joseph’s life, slavery and unjust imprisonment, Yahweh caused all that Joseph, His faithful servant, did to prosper (Gen. 39.1–40.23).

(1) Yahweh caused Joseph, and his Egyptian master, to prosper by His presence, exalting Joseph over Potiphar’s house, even though his faithfulness exposed him to the lies of Potiphar’s wife (Gen. 39.1–18).

(2) Even during unjust imprisonment, Yahweh’s presence gave Joseph success, enabling him to interpret the dreams of the Pharaoh’s butler and baker (Gen. 39.19–40.23).

iii) **Climax:** Yahweh uses Joseph to interpret Pharaoh’s dreams informing him of coming famine in order to exalt Joseph over the land of Egypt (Gen. 41.1–45).

iv) **Resolution:** Joseph, trusting in God, brought life and blessing to the families of the earth during the great seven year famine (Gen. 41.46–57).

(b) **Second Sub-plot:** Joseph tests his brothers over their loyalty to Rachel’s sons, finding that they have learned loyalty, and brings them to Egypt in fulfillment of God’s plan to protect and bless the family of Jacob and through them, the whole world (42.1–47.12).

i) **Inciting Moment:** Joseph’s brothers unwittingly bow to Joseph as they come seeking food during the famine, thus fulfilling, in part, Joseph’s dreams (Gen. 42.1–7). **Test:** Will Joseph be able to associate his brothers with himself before the Egyptians? Have they learned family loyalty? Do they still practice treachery against their father and the sons of Rachel?

ii) **Complication:** Joseph tests his brothers over loyalty to the sons of Rachel with three increasingly difficult tests (Gen. 42.8–44.34).

(1) Joseph sends his brothers home, testing them over family loyalty (Gen. 42.8–38).
(a) Joseph, remembering his dreams, prepares to test his brothers by pretending to suspect them of spying and imprisoning them for three days (Gen. 42.8–17).

(b) **First Test:** He then tests them over family loyalty by imprisoning Simeon and refusing to see them again unless they would bring his brother Benjamin with them (Gen. 42.18–24).

(c) He makes their return more difficult by restoring their silver in their grain bags, requiring them to confess to wrong-doing or else be faithful to Simeon (Gen. 42.25–28).

(d) Having discovered their money, Reuben offered himself as surety for Benjamin to his distressed father so that they could return for food, but Jacob refused (Gen. 42.29–38).

(2) Joseph’s brothers go to Egypt with Benjamin, tested over their loyalty to the preferred son of Rachel (Gen. 43.1–44.34).

(a) Judah, who has learned family loyalty, guarantees Benjamin’s life with his own, so that Jacob allows the brothers to return to Egypt with rich gifts (Gen. 43.1–15).

(b) **Second Test:** Joseph tests the eleven brothers during a meal at his house over their family loyalty, especially when a son of Rachel is honored above the rest (Gen. 43.16–34).

(c) **Third Test:** Joseph further tests the brothers over family loyalty by threatening their lives by the apparent wrong-doing of the son of Rachel (Gen. 44.1–17).

(d) Judah, who has learned family loyalty well, offers himself to Joseph in place of his brother Benjamin, no longer willing to see his father’s grief (Gen. 44.18–34).

iii) **Climax:** Joseph, showing that God has achieved His purpose of saving the family, reveals himself to his brothers who return at his instruction to bring Jacob to Egypt (Gen. 45).

(1) Joseph reveals himself to his brothers with great mercy reminding them that all the events of his life have accomplished God’s purpose to save their lives (Gen. 45.1–15).

(2) Pharaoh’s rejoices with Joseph and promises the brothers the finest of Egypt when they should move from Canaan (Gen. 45.16–20).

(3) The brothers return, with Benjamin honored among them, to bring their father and their families to Egypt (Gen. 45.21–28).

iv) **Resolution:** Jacob moves to Egypt and is received by Pharaoh (Gen. 46.1–47.12).

(1) The Covenant God appears to Jacob reassuring him that the move to Egypt is His plan to make Jacob a great nation (Gen. 46.1–7).

(2) God’s promises are already coming to fruition, since Jacob has already become a numerous company of people, with seventy people who come to live in Egypt in his family (Gen. 46.8–27).

(3) Joseph and Jacob meet with bittersweet joy (Gen. 46.28–30).

(4) Joseph prepares his family to meet the Pharaoh (Gen. 46.31–34).
(5) The Pharaoh welcomes Joseph’s family to Egypt, hoping that some of them will be as capable as Joseph, granting them land in Goshen, and receiving Jacob’s blessing (Gen. 47.1–12).

(4) **Major Resolution:** Joseph rules over his family and all Egypt bringing great wealth and blessing to Pharaoh (Gen. 47.13–26).

(5) **Major Epilogue:** Israel lives under God’s blessing, anticipating their return to Canaan, first to bury Jacob, and later to inherit the land, as believing Jacob promises believing Joseph the birthright in the inheritance (47.27–48.22).
   (a) Israel lives under God’s blessing multiplying fruitfully in Egypt, yet looking always to Canaan as their home, as Jacob made Joseph swear to bury him there (Gen. 47.27–31).
   (b) Jacob, after repeating the Abrahamic promises, took Joseph’s two sons as his own, giving the younger the blessing and Joseph, in them, the birthright (Gen. 48).
      i) Jacob reiterates the Abrahamic promises, taking Joseph’s two sons as his own, reckoning Joseph’s later sons to their brothers’ tribes (Gen. 48.1–7).
      ii) Jacob passes the blessing to the younger of Joseph’s sons and giving the birthright, in his descendants, to Joseph (Gen. 48.8–22).

**B. Poetry:** Believing Jacob summarizes the Covenant God’s eschatological blessing for the people of the covenant in the centuries to come, and especially the ruler through whom blessing will be accomplished (Gen. 49).

“The poetic discourse of chapter 49 plays a key role in the overall strategy of the patriarchal narratives as well as the strategy of the book as whole … Jacob’s last words to his sons have become the occasion for a final statement of the book’s major theme: God’s plan to restore the lost blessing through the seed of Abraham. The key to the writer’s understanding of Jacob’s last words lies in the narrative framework that surrounds them. In verse 1 we are explicitly told that Jacob was speaking about those things that will happen ‘in the last days.’ The same expression occurs in the Pentateuch as poetic discourses, the oracles of Balaam (Nu 24:14–24) and the last words of Moses (Dt 31:29). On all three occasions the subject matter introduced by the phrase ‘in the last days’ is that of God’s future deliverance of his chosen people. At the center of that deliverance stands a king (Ge 49:10; Nu 24:7; Dt 33:5). In Genesis 49 that king is connected with the house of Judah.

“At the close of Jacob’s discourse (49:28), the writer goes to great lengths to connect Jacob’s words in this chapter to the theme of ‘the blessing’ that has been a central concern of the book since chapter 1 (1:28). He does this by repeating the word blessing three times in the short span of this one verse:… By framing Jacob’s last words between verses 1 and 28, the writer shows where his interests lie. Jacob’s words look to the future (‘in the last days’) and draw on the past (God’s blessing of humankind). It is within that context that we are to read and understand Jacob’s works in this chapter” (Sailhamer, p. 233).

**C. Epilogue:** The blessing of the Covenant God awaits its completion, until Israel goes up from Egypt to the land of blessing (Gen. 50).