

Why?
The Pentateuch



*A study on the setting
and purpose*

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Why the Pentateuch

In the beginning God created the heavens and the earth.
(Gen 1:1)

"Hear, O Israel! The LORD is our God, the LORD is one!
(Deu 6:4)

"You shall love the LORD your God with all your heart and with all your soul and with all your might.
(Deu 6:5)

'You shall not take vengeance, nor bear any grudge against the sons of your people, **but you shall love your neighbor as yourself; I am the LORD.**
(Lev 19:18)

Introduction

Prior to studying the Pentateuch and the Bible, we must first decide how we will approach this.

The Bible presents a Worldview which includes history from creation less than 8,000 years ago and describes how and why, we, and the universe are here. I have included a section on evolution and creation to offer some basic information on the subject. Based on science, logic, reason and the Scriptures, the true account of this universe, life and all that exists, is found in the Scriptures and as such, this is the approach taken here.

What is the Pentateuch?

The Pentateuch consists of the first five books of the Old Testament. It covers the time period from the Creation of the World to the end of the exodus of the Israelites from Egypt when they arrived at the East border of the promised land.

- Genesis
- Exodus
- Leviticus
- Numbers
- Deuteronomy

The Pentateuch is authored by Moses as we see that both internal and external evidence ascribes the authorship to Moses.

Then Moses came and recounted to the people all the words of the LORD and all the ordinances; and all the people answered with one voice and said, "All the words which the LORD has spoken we will do!" Moses wrote down all the words of the LORD. (Exod. 24:3-4)

Then the LORD said to Moses, "Write this in a book as a memorial and recite it to Joshua, that I will utterly blot out the memory of Amalek from under heaven." (Exod. 17:14)

So Moses wrote this law and gave it to the priests, the sons of Levi who carried the ark of the covenant of the LORD, and to all the elders of Israel. (Deut. 31:9)

It came about, when Moses finished writing the words of this law in a book until they were complete, that Moses commanded the Levites who carried the ark of the covenant of the LORD, saying, "Take this book of the law and place it beside the ark of the covenant of the LORD your God, that it may remain there as a witness against you. (Deut. 31:24-26)

"Be very firm, then, to keep and do all that is written in the book of the law of Moses, so that you may not turn aside from it to the right hand or to the left, (Jos. 23:6)

As David's time to die drew near, he charged Solomon his son, saying, "I am going the way of all the earth. Be strong, therefore, and show yourself a man. "Keep the charge of the LORD your God, to walk in His ways, to keep His statutes, His commandments, His ordinances, and His

testimonies, according to what is written in the Law of Moses, that you may succeed in all that you do and wherever you turn, (1 Ki. 2:1-3)

Then Jeshua the son of Jozadak and his brothers the priests, and Zerubbabel the son of Shealtiel and his brothers arose and built the altar of the God of Israel to offer burnt offerings on it, as it is written in the law of Moses, the man of God. (Ezr. 3:2)

"But regarding the fact that the dead rise again, have you not read in the book of Moses, in the passage about the burning bush, how God spoke to him, saying, 'I AM THE GOD OF ABRAHAM, AND THE GOD OF ISAAC, and the God of Jacob '? (Mk. 12:26)

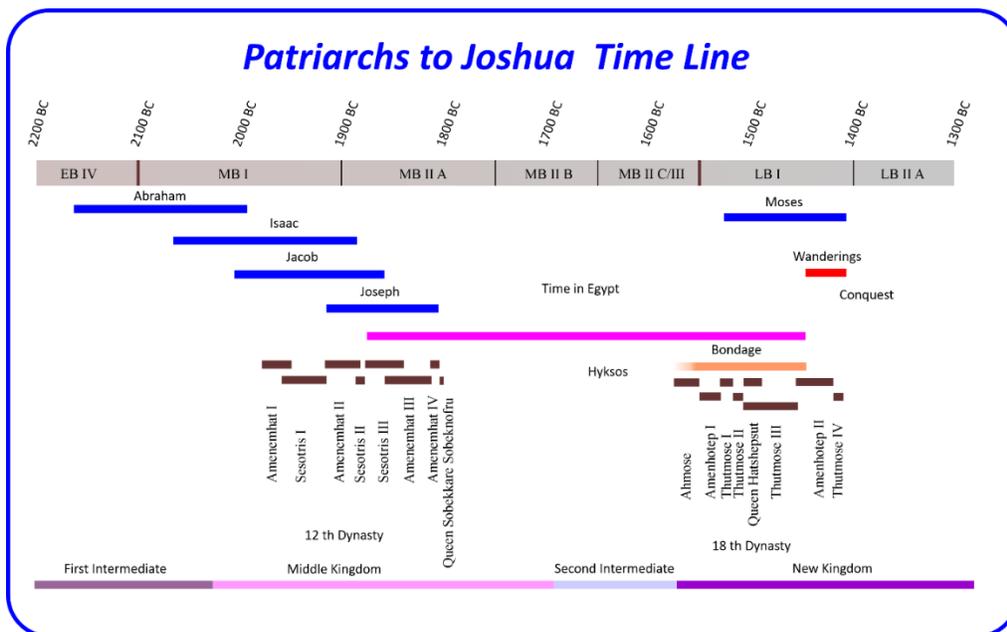
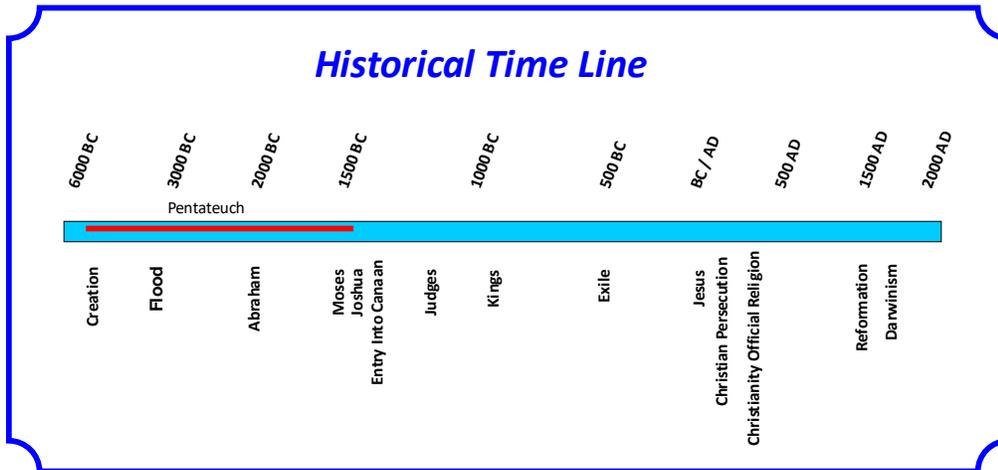
"Was it not necessary for the Christ to suffer these things and to enter into His glory?"
Then beginning with Moses and with all the prophets, He explained to them the things concerning Himself in all the Scriptures. (Lk. 24:26-27)

For the Law was given through Moses; grace and truth were realized through Jesus Christ. (Jn. 1:17)

Where does it fit into history?

A note on the dates in the timelines and chronologies:

The dating of history is based on various methods of dating since absolute dating (i.e. dates such as 50 AD or 586 BC) was not used until much later. Biblical and non-Biblical chronologies, astronomy, pottery, Carbon 14, synchronisms between cultures and other methods are used to establish chronologies and dating. There have also been deliberate and accidental changes in the numbers in Genesis 5 and 11. Henry B. Smith Jr. has done a good job in reconstructing the original numbers. Regardless of which the actual numbers were, the date of creation would be between about 5600 BC and 4000 BC. This writer uses the numbers based on the reconstruction by Henry Smith of Associates for Biblical Research. (ABR)



This map has some of the descendants of Noah in their approximate locations



When Noah's family came off the ark, they came into Mesopotamia.

*And God blessed Noah and his sons and said to them, "Be fruitful and multiply, and fill the earth."
(Gen 9:1)*

While some of Noah's descendants did disperse, many did not and congregated and determined to build a tower in order to keep from being dispersed.

*They said, "Come, let us build for ourselves a city, and a tower whose top will reach into heaven, and let us make for ourselves a name, otherwise we will be scattered abroad over the face of the whole earth."
(Gen 11:4)*

God's judgement on them was the confusion of their language and the scattering of them over the whole earth. As these people dispersed, they took their skills, technologies and way of living with them.

The setting of the writing of the Pentateuch

Maps

Here we have some maps that provide the setting and show the places and peoples that are part of the history that is provided by the Pentateuch.

On this map we see the overall geography and main places that we will be dealing with. Ur of the Chaldeans, Haran, Palestine and Egypt



The time and location

Moses authored the books during the 40 years of taking the Israelites from Egypt to the plains of Moab from 1446 BC to 1406 BC. Deuteronomy and Numbers are written on the East side of the Jordan in the wilderness in the Arabah just prior to the Israelites going into Canaan under Joshua.

Worldviews

The prevalent world views at this time in history, apart from the Monotheistic belief of Abraham and his godly descendants, were:

Mesopotamia

This is the area that Abraham came from and that Noah's family, as they came off the ark, originally settled in.

- Starts with three gods in what could be called the primordial waters
- Two of the gods (Apsu and Tiamat) create a number of other gods through sexual procreation
- A battle follows in which Marduk kills Tiamat and then splits her body in half like a "shellfish" to make the sky.
- The constellations are made by Marduk by assigning gods
 - *He (Marduk) constructed stations for the great gods, fixing their astral likenesses as constellations* (from the Mesopotamian creation myth)
- Marduk then makes man (partly from a god who had contrived the uprising of Tiamat) so that they can serve the gods "that they might be at ease"
- Magic is also a part of the story as Tiamat casts spells and Marduk also holds a spell in his lips.
- Another Sumerian story has a cosmic marriage - An (Heaven) fertilize Ki (Earth)
- Divination and incantations are also a part of the religion, this can also be seen as the king of Moab (Balak) sends for Balaam, to curse the Israelites.
 - *Cuneiform texts from the important Amorite city-state of Mari document the existence of a complex guild of prophets who were expert in a variety of skills, including divination. These documents date mainly from about 1700 BC, (Eugene H. Merrill, Kingdom of Priests, 2nd ed. (Grand Rapids: Baker Academic, 2008), 107.)*
- Consider also Daniel, who was named chief of the magicians.
Then the king gave orders to call in the magicians, the conjurers, the sorcerers and the Chaldeans to tell the king his dreams (Dan. 2:2)
- The afterlife is seen as a dark place of no return where clay is their food ...
- There seem to be different fates for people in the afterlife – some better, some worse.
- There is a myriad of gods as well. An interesting note to this is found in Genesis when Jacob leaves Laban to return to the land of Canaan

Now Rachel had taken the household idols and put them in the camel's saddle, and she sat on them. (Gen. 31:34)

Then God said to Jacob, "Arise, go up to Bethel and live there, and make an altar there to God, who appeared to you when you fled from your brother Esau." So Jacob said to his household and to all who were with him, "Put away the foreign gods which are among you, and purify yourselves and change your garments; and let us arise and go up to Bethel, and I will make an altar there to God, who answered me in the day of my distress and has been with me wherever I have gone." So they gave to Jacob all the foreign gods which they had and the rings which were in their ears, and Jacob hid them under the oak which was near Shechem. (Gen. 35:1-4)

Canaan

The land that Abraham, Isaac and Jacob lived in prior to the Israelites going into Egypt.

- The creator god is named EL
- Asherah is his consort (possibly the "queen of heaven" mentioned in Jeremiah)
- The queen of heaven could also be Astarte (Ashtoreth)
- There does not seem to be a real creation story that has been found
- Baal plays one of the most important roles
- Fertility is a major theme
- Sexual immorality is very prevalent
- Again, there are many gods and conflicts among the gods
- There is a belief in the afterlife to the land of Mot (god of the dead)
- Some stars and planets were also gods
- Magic and divination were a major part of the religions. Note the command against this.

"There shall not be found among you anyone who makes his son or his daughter pass through the fire, one who uses divination, one who practices witchcraft, or one who interprets omens, or a sorcerer, or one who casts a spell, or a medium, or a spiritist, or one who calls up the dead. "For whoever does these things is detestable to the LORD; and because of these detestable things the LORD your God will drive them out before you. "You shall be blameless before the LORD your God. "For those nations, which you shall dispossess, listen to those who practice witchcraft and to diviners, but as for you, the LORD your God has not allowed you to do so. (Deut. 18:10-14)

➤ Moab

- The main god of Moab was Chemosh

➤ Ammon

- The main god of the Ammonites was Milcom

➤ Midian

- The Midianites are descendants of Abraham through Keturah, his wife after Sarah died.
- Moses' father in law, Jethro, is a "priest of Midian", so being a descendant of Abraham, he would know about the LORD. He was also aware of the gods that the Midianites and others served.

So Jethro said, "Blessed be the LORD who delivered you from the hand of the Egyptians and from the hand of Pharaoh, and who delivered the people from under the hand of the

Egyptians. "Now I know that the LORD is greater than all the gods; indeed, it was proven when they dealt proudly against the people. (Exod. 18:10-11)

- When Balak, king of Moab, saw the Israelites and was afraid of them, he counseled with the elders of Midian. From this following statement, we can see that the Moabites and Midianites believed in divination and the power thereof. They sent for Balaam, who was a diviner. *So the elders of Moab and the elders of Midian departed with the fees for divination in their hand; and they came to Balaam and repeated Balak's words to him. (Num. 22:7)*

Egypt

The land that they have been living in for 430 Years

- It starts with the primordial waters
- Creation happened through a god who self-created himself (Atum). heka (magic) was also present.
- He created other gods through whom more gods came to be.
- He turned himself into the sun god Re. He is also called Atum-Re
- Re, being the sun god, every day then goes through the underworld and returns to go through the sky again. He is accompanied by other gods to help him.
- There is the concept that death represents going to the underworld. i.e. there is a continuation of the person, they do not just cease to exist. At death the heart would be judged to determine the eternal fate of the person.
- The gods all represent natural functions such as the sun, sky, earth and others
- The Egyptians have a myriad of gods which are all involved in everything having to do with life, death and nature.
- There is more than one creation story
- Magic is present and important (there is a god of magic), there are books with spells (book of the dead) and, also consider

The magicians tried with their secret arts to bring forth gnats, but they could not; so there were gnats on man and beast.¹⁹ Then the magicians said to Pharaoh, "This is the finger of God." (Exod. 8:18-19)

Likely, the best way to summarize the worldviews of the people in the ANE would be.

- Polytheism – they all believed in a multitude of gods and a hierarchy of the gods.
- The gods typically had functions related to the natural environment and its functioning. For example
 - Sun god
 - Air god
 - Rain god
 - Fertility god
 - War god
 - Underworld god
- The gods tended to be in conflict with one another and could be killed and come to life again.
- The gods had personalities similar to humans and were not perfect as our God is. In fact, many tend to have very evil personalities.

- The hierarchy would go right from the most powerful god right down to household gods.
- Each people group had their main god – for instance Chemosh was the main Moabite god.
- The stars and constellations were gods
- There are creation and flood stories
- There is an afterlife
- The kings or rulers tended to portray themselves as gods or sons of the gods.
- Magic, divination, witchcraft, consulting the dead and the like were a normal part of the lives of these people.
- When there was war between the nations, the gods of each nation were considered to be fighting as well, and the strongest one would win. It was important for them to appease the gods so that they would be blessed.

The events at the time of writing

The Israelites have been in Egypt for 430 Years. They entered Egypt when there was a famine in the land and God had put Joseph in charge of the land of Egypt, second only to Pharaoh. As time went on there was a change of rulers in Egypt and another group called the Hyksos invaded Egypt. When the Hyksos were eventually expelled, the Israelites were then put into bondage. The Hyksos were also a Semitic people, like the Israelites, and may have been part of the reason the Israelites were put into bondage. God then sent Moses to deliver the Israelites from the hand of the Egyptians and lead them into the promised land. God displayed His power in a mighty way through the plagues that He caused in Egypt. After that, He parted the waters for Israel to pass through and then drowned the Egyptian army that followed.

From this point on, there are numerous instances of the Israelites refusing to trust God and obey Him. God provides for them over and over again, protects them and provides food and water for them in the wilderness. The people appear to have numerous issues in relating to one another. Consider

It came about the next day that Moses sat to judge the people, and the people stood about Moses from the morning until the evening.(Exo 18:13)

God's provision and protection

Some examples here:

- Three days after the crossing of the Red Sea, the people grumbled because of the bitter water at Marah (Exo 15:22). God made the water sweet so that the people could drink it.
- One and a half months into the journey, God started to provide manna for the people and continued to do so the whole time that they were wandering in the wilderness.
- In Exodus 17:6, God, through Moses, provides water again.
- In Numbers 20:11, God, through Moses, provides water again
- In Numbers 21:3, God delivered up the Canaanites that had come against Israel.

Israel's character

A few examples showing the character of the Israelites

- Right after the crossing of the Red Sea we read the following

- *When Israel saw the great power which the LORD had used against the Egyptians, the people feared the LORD, and they believed in the LORD and in His servant Moses. (Exo 14:31)*
- Three days later, at Marah, they were not able to drink the water because it was bitter, so they grumbled at Moses. God made the water sweet for them.
- After one and a half months, they grumbled against Moses and Aaron regarding food. At this time, God provided the Mana for them and gave instructions for gathering it. During the week, they were to gather only as much as was required for that day and not keep any for the next day. On the sixth day, they were to gather enough for two days and not gather on the Sabbath. The people disobeyed both of these instructions.
- When they were traveling, the Amalekites attacked the stragglers at the rear. We see here that the stronger, armed men did not look after those who were weaker and not able to keep up.
- Exodus and Leviticus record many laws regarding the worship of God, relating to one another as well as the ceremonial laws. The obvious conclusion from all that we read is that the Israelites were not worshipping God alone and were not treating each other in a loving way.
- In the third month after leaving Egypt, they came to the wilderness of Sinai and camped in front of the mountain. (Exodus 19) The people said "All that the Lord has spoken we will do". God gives them the Ten Commandments and other laws.
- After this, Moses goes up the mountain again for 40 days and receives more instructions. While Moses is on the Mountain, the people come to Aaron and ask him to make a god for them, which he does (the golden calf).
- *Now the people became like those who complain of adversity in the hearing of the LORD; and when the LORD heard it, His anger was kindled, and the fire of the LORD burned among them and consumed some of the outskirts of the camp. (Num 11:1)*
- *The rabble who were among them had greedy desires; and also the sons of Israel wept again and said, "Who will give us meat to eat? (Num 11:4)*
- After they had sent out the spies and heard their report, the people rebelled against the command of God and wanted to return to Egypt. Since they refused to trust God and enter the land, God pronounced a judgement of 40 years in the wilderness upon them. Then the people changed their mind and wanted to go into the land, but were told not to and that they would be defeated if they tried. They went ahead anyway, and were defeated.
- In numbers 16, we read about the rebellion of Korah along with a number of others as they rose against Moses and Aaron. God judged all these as well.
- *While Israel remained at Shittim, the people began to play the harlot with the daughters of Moab. For they invited the people to the sacrifices of their gods, and the people ate and bowed down to their gods. So Israel joined themselves to Baal of Peor, and the LORD was angry against Israel. (Num 25:1-3)*

Why was it written?

'You shall not do what is done in the land of Egypt where you lived, nor are you to do what is done in the land of Canaan where I am bringing you; you shall not walk in their statutes. (Lev. 18:3)

Setting the record straight about history and providing a correct worldview

When Moses led the Israelites out of Egypt, the worldviews of the peoples around them had various creation and flood accounts along with a host of gods. They lived in a very pluralistic society, much as we do today. They were also corrupt in their worship of God and their relationships with one another. Deuteronomy 18:9-14 list some of these detestable practices. Moses needed to set the record straight about these things, thus he started right from creation by explaining how the one true God created the universe and mankind. He continues by providing the relevant genealogies, chronologies and the stories that connect them right back to creation. In a sense, this is a polemic against all the false accounts of history and other timeframes that the other nations had. It is important that the true account of the creation of the world and history be established so that the instructions and commands are authoritative. The record that is provided in the Pentateuch, as well as the rest of the Scriptures, provides us with the information that we need to know the true history of all of creation and use it to counter the false worldviews that we encounter all the time.

Moses also introduces us to Satan and the propensity of mankind to do evil. The reason for death, disease and suffering is provided by the account of Adam and Eve disobeying the command of God. He continues on to bring them up to date in terms of everything that has happened that is pertinent to the Israelites and the world in general. We learn that people had become so evil that He sent a worldwide flood to destroy all of mankind, the land animals and the birds. Only Noah was found to be righteous and was saved with his family and the animals that were with him on the ark. After the flood, the people did not obey the command to *"Be fruitful and multiply, and fill the earth."* Instead *"They said, 'Come, let us build for ourselves a city, and a tower whose top will reach into heaven, and let us make for ourselves a name, otherwise we will be scattered abroad over the face of the whole earth.'" (Gen 11:4).* In response, God confused their languages and dispersed them.

Moses provides the genealogies from Adam to the sons of Israel, complete with the ages of each so that the time of creation can be calculated to provide the true account of history. Abraham was born in 2166 BC and was called by God to go to the land of Canaan.

The LORD appeared to Abram and said, "To your descendants I will give this land." So he built an altar there to the LORD who had appeared to him. (Gen 12:7)

Moses also provides the background information for the Israelites being in Egypt in Genesis chapter 37 to 50. One of the things that really stands out is that there are very few people that seek after God and are called righteous. The ones that stand out are Enoch, Noah (the only one found righteous in his time), Abraham, Isaac, Jacob and Joseph.

God

The first thing that Moses establishes is that God, in the beginning spoke all things into being. We are introduced to the Spirit of God in verse two of the first chapter of Genesis. In Deuteronomy, Moses proclaims *"Hear, O Israel! The LORD is our God, the LORD is one! (Deut. 6:4)* and also, *I am He, And there is no god besides Me (Deut. 32:39).* In the account of the burning bush, we are introduced to the third member of what we call the Trinity. In the Old Testament, Jesus is usually called the Angel of the Lord.

The angel of the LORD appeared to him in a blazing fire from the midst of a bush; (Exod. 3:2)

When the LORD saw that he turned aside to look, God called to him from the midst of the bush and said, "Moses, Moses!" (Exod. 3:4)

He said also, "I am the God of your father, the God of Abraham, the God of Isaac, and the God of Jacob." Then Moses hid his face, for he was afraid to look at God. (Exod. 3:6)

There are other occurrences of "the Angel of the LORD" where it also equates the Angel of the LORD with God (YAHWEH).

The important thing to take from this is that there is only one God that exists in 3 persons. All the other gods of the nations are not actually gods. The belief in other gods and going after them was the downfall of Israel many times.

"They made Him jealous with strange gods; With abominations they provoked Him to anger. "They sacrificed to demons who were not God, To gods whom they have not known, New gods who came lately, Whom your fathers did not dread. "You neglected the Rock who begot you, And forgot the God who gave you birth. (Deu 32:16-18)

Moses records story after story of the Israelites rebelling against God and His commands. Just think of the time when Moses is on the mountain receiving the commandments and instructions for the construction of the tabernacle. As he is receiving these, the Israelites make the golden calf and say that *"This is your god, O Israel, who brought you up from the land of Egypt." (Exod. 32:4)*

Creation

Moses gives the sequence and timing of all that God created. It is quite clear that the days that are recorded by Moses are literal days, in fact in Genesis 1:5, he defines the word day as a 24-hour day on the first day and then uses it that way for the other days. Everything that God created is called good. At this point, God states that he has given plants to both mankind and animals for food. God planted a garden in Eden and placed the man there. The creation account here is markedly different from the other creation accounts in the Ancient Near East (ANE).

❖ Day 1

In the beginning God created the heavens and the earth. The earth was formless and void, and darkness was over the surface of the deep, and the Spirit of God was moving over the surface of the waters. Then God said, "Let there be light"; and there was light. God saw that the light was good; and God separated the light from the darkness. God called the light day, and the darkness He called night. And there was evening and there was morning, one day. (Gen 1:1-5)

On day 1, the universe is created, light was created and separated from darkness and the word "day" is defined as a 24-hour period (one rotation of the earth). At this point, there is only water on the surface of the earth.

❖ Day 2

Then God said, "Let there be an expanse in the midst of the waters, and let it separate the waters from the waters." God made the expanse, and separated the waters which were below the expanse from the waters which were above the expanse; and it was so. God called the expanse heaven. And there was evening and there was morning, a second day. (Gen 1:6-8)

On day 2, the waters are separated into those above and below.

❖ Day 3

Then God said, "Let the waters below the heavens be gathered into one place, and let the dry land appear"; and it was so. God called the dry land earth, and the gathering of the waters He called seas; and God saw that it was good. Then God said, "Let the earth sprout vegetation, plants yielding seed, and fruit trees on the earth bearing fruit after their kind with seed in them"; and it was so. The earth brought forth vegetation, plants yielding seed after their kind, and trees bearing fruit with seed in them, after their kind; and God saw that it was good. There was evening and there was morning, a third day. (Gen 1:9-13)

On day 3, the land comes up and vegetation is created.

❖ Day 4

Then God said, "Let there be lights in the expanse of the heavens to separate the day from the night, and let them be for signs and for seasons and for days and years; and let them be for lights in the expanse of the heavens to give light on the earth"; and it was so. God made the two great lights, the greater light to govern the day, and the lesser light to govern the night; He made the stars also. God placed them in the expanse of the heavens to give light on the earth, and to govern the day and the night, and to separate the light from the darkness; and God saw that it was good. There was evening and there was morning, a fourth day. (Gen 1:14-19)

On day 4, the sun, moon and stars are made.

❖ Day 5

Then God said, "Let the waters teem with swarms of living creatures, and let birds fly above the earth in the open expanse of the heavens." God created the great sea monsters and every living creature that moves, with which the waters swarmed after their kind, and every winged bird after its kind; and God saw that it was good. God blessed them, saying, "Be fruitful and multiply, and fill the waters in the seas, and let birds multiply on the earth." There was evening and there was morning, a fifth day. (Gen 1:20-23)

On day 5, all the sea creatures and birds were created.

❖ Day 6

Then God said, "Let the earth bring forth living creatures after their kind: cattle and creeping things and beasts of the earth after their kind"; and it was so. God made the beasts of the earth after their kind, and the cattle after their kind, and everything that creeps on the ground after its kind; and God saw that it was good. Then God said, "Let Us make man in Our image, according to Our likeness; and let them rule over the fish of the sea and over the birds of the sky and over the cattle and over all the earth, and over every creeping thing that creeps on the earth." God created man in His own image, in the image of God He created him; male and female He created them. God blessed them; and God said to them, "Be fruitful and multiply, and fill the earth, and subdue it; and rule over the fish of the sea and over the birds of the sky and over every living thing that moves on the earth." Then God said, "Behold, I have given you every plant yielding seed that is on the surface of all the earth, and every tree which has fruit yielding seed; it shall be food for you; and to every beast of the earth and to every bird of the sky and to every thing that

moves on the earth which has life, I have given every green plant for food"; and it was so. God saw all that He had made, and behold, it was very good. And there was evening and there was morning, the sixth day. (Gen 1:24-31)

On day 6, all the land animals were created and then God created man. At this point in time, all the animals and mankind were to eat only plants.

❖ Day 7

Thus the heavens and the earth were completed, and all their hosts. By the seventh day God completed His work which He had done, and He rested on the seventh day from all His work which He had done. Then God blessed the seventh day and sanctified it, because in it He rested from all His work which God had created and made.

(Gen 2:1-3)

On day 7, God has completed all the work that He has done in creating everything. The seventh day is blessed and sanctified.

We can see that there is no place to insert long ages. In verse 1:5, a day is defined as a 24-hour day. In verses 2:1-3, it explicitly states that by the seventh day, God had completed all the creation work. This is very explicit in stating that all of the creating was done in the first 6 days. Also, consider the following verses

Then God spoke all these words, saying, (Exo 20:1)

"For in six days the LORD made the heavens and the earth, the sea and all that is in them, and rested on the seventh day; therefore the LORD blessed the sabbath day and made it holy.

(Exo 20:11)

God Himself says that he created everything in 6 days and relates it to the sabbath being the 7th day.

Jesus, among other things also stated

"But from the beginning of creation, God MADE THEM MALE AND FEMALE. (Mar 10:6)

Jesus therefore affirmed that mankind was created at the beginning of creation, not eons later.

Another thing to remember is that our normal laws of physics did not apply during the creation week as God was creating everything. The whole act of creating did not follow our physical laws since creation itself violates the laws of physics. The most likely scenario is that as each creation event was completed, the laws pertaining to that creation started to apply.

Mankind

The creation and purpose of mankind is also quite different from the other ANE accounts. Man is made in the image of God whereas the rest of the animal kingdom was not. It is also noteworthy here to state that none of the animals were suitable as a companion or helper for Adam. This is where marriage starts and it is quite important to note that "they will become one flesh". This is the basis for the sexual laws that will come later.

The Fall

In chapter three of Genesis we are introduced to Satan and the deception of Eve. There are some very important points to note here.

- Satan is very crafty, he asks *"Indeed, has God said, 'You shall not eat from any tree of the garden '?" (Gen. 3:1)* When Eve replies to this she actually adds to the commandment. *"From*

the fruit of the trees of the garden we may eat; but from the fruit of the tree which is in the middle of the garden, God has said, 'You shall not eat from it or touch it, or you will die.'" (Gen. 3:2-3) The clincher comes next as he says "For God knows that in the day you eat from it your eyes will be opened, and you will be like God, knowing good and evil." (Gen. 3:5) Eve then gives of the fruit to Adam who was with her!

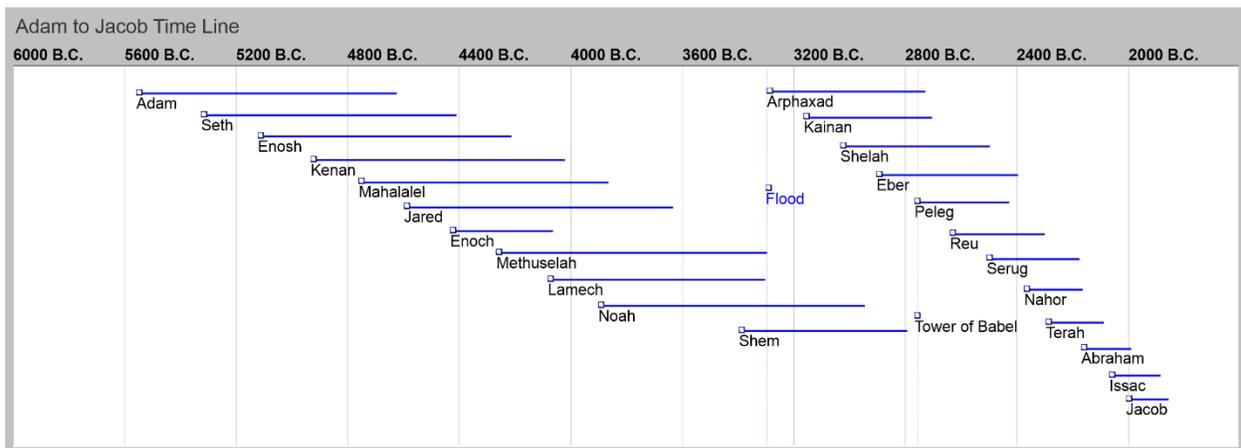
- It certainly appears that Adam did not fulfil his duty in standing for what God had commanded him. When God confronts him, he blames Eve, who then in turn points to the serpent.
- A very interesting point in the curse on Eve is that her “desire” will be for her husband and he will rule over her. Now, when you first look at this, what is so bad about her “desire” being for her husband? Well, looking at the rest of the statement, Adam is to rule over her. So, in the context, it appears that “desire” means to master or control, so the curse is that the woman wants to master or control her husband. This is confirmed in the statement by God when he is talking to Cain *“sin is crouching at the door; and its desire is for you, but you must master it.” (Gen. 4:7) The thing that we really see set up here is the struggle between sin and obedience to God.*

The Chronologies

There are two main chronologies (Gen 5 & Gen 11) that are provided to present the direct lineage from the first man, Adam, to Abraham. These lists are provided in the form:

When the father was xxx years old, he became the father of xxx and he lived another xxx years and all his days were xxx years.

The format of the presentation is such that the obvious intent is to provide for an absolute lineage and dating from Adam to Abraham. Again, this is necessary for the authority of the Scriptures. There is no place where gaps or eons of time can be inserted. Moses and the Israelites would have understood the creation account as being a literal six days and the time from creation to Abraham in terms of the number of years as shown here.



The Worldwide Flood

Now the earth was corrupt in the sight of God, and the earth was filled with violence. God looked on the earth, and behold, it was corrupt; for all flesh had corrupted their way upon the earth. Then God said to Noah, "The end of all flesh has come before Me; for the earth is filled with violence because of them; and behold, I am about to destroy them with the earth. "Make for yourself an ark of gopher wood; you shall make the ark with rooms, and shall cover it inside and out with pitch. (Gen 6:11-14)

Mankind had become so evil that it appears that the only way forward was to start over with one righteous person. Noah had been preaching to the people, but obviously, he was ignored.

and did not spare the ancient world, but preserved Noah, a preacher of righteousness, with seven others, when He brought a flood upon the world of the ungodly; (2Pe 2:5)

This was a world wide flood and all but Noah, his family and the animals with them on the ark were saved. This cannot be interpreted as a local flood in any way.

The water prevailed more and more upon the earth, so that all the high mountains everywhere under the heavens were covered. The water prevailed fifteen cubits higher, and the mountains were covered. All flesh that moved on the earth perished, birds and cattle and beasts and every swarming thing that swarms upon the earth, and all mankind; of all that was on the dry land, all in whose nostrils was the breath of the spirit of life, died. Thus He blotted out every living thing that was upon the face of the land, from man to animals to creeping things and to birds of the sky, and they were blotted out from the earth; and only Noah was left, together with those that were with him in the ark. (Gen 7:19-23)

... when the patience of God kept waiting in the days of Noah, during the construction of the ark, in which a few, that is, eight persons, were brought safely through the water. (1Pe 3:20)

Family and National History

The second part of Genesis from chapter 12 to chapter 50 provides the family history starting with the call of Abraham. We are provided with an outline of Abraham's life, God's covenant with Abraham in chapter 15 and the promise of a descendant through Sarah, his wife. Moses continues with the Life of Isaac and then moves on to his sons Esau and Jacob. The record of the 12 tribes that are descended from Jacob, who is renamed Israel is next. After this we have the record of Joseph being sold into slavery in Egypt and rising to be second only to Pharaoh. Israel and his family move to Egypt because of the famine in Canaan and are provided the land of Goshen to live in. During this time in Egypt, they become a numerous people and are oppressed after the Hyksos invaders are expelled by the native Egyptians. This sets the stage for the exodus and brings the people up to date on their history.

Consequences of nations rebelling against God

"There shall not be found among you anyone who makes his son or his daughter pass through the fire, one who uses divination, one who practices witchcraft, or one who interprets omens, or a sorcerer, or one who casts a spell, or a medium, or a spiritist, or one who calls up the dead.

"For whoever does these things is detestable to the LORD; and because of these detestable things the LORD your God will drive them out before you. "You shall be blameless before the LORD your God. "For those nations, which you shall dispossess, listen to those who practice

*witchcraft and to diviners, but as for you, the LORD your God has not allowed you to do so.
(Deut. 18:10-14)*

God is patient with those who disobey Him, but there is a limit to how long He will wait prior to bringing judgement. Note that God gave a one-hundred-and-twenty-year period of warning and grace to the people in the time of Noah.

Then the LORD said, "My Spirit shall not strive with man forever, because he also is flesh; nevertheless his days shall be one hundred and twenty years." (Gen 6:3)

As God is speaking to Abraham and telling him about the future of his descendants, He says

"Then in the fourth generation they will return here, for the iniquity of the Amorite is not yet complete." (Gen 15:16)

Now the men of Sodom were wicked exceedingly and sinners against the LORD. (Gen 13:13)

When the angels who had been sent to destroy Sodom and Gomorrah were speaking to Lot they said:

for we are about to destroy this place, because their outcry has become so great before the LORD that the LORD has sent us to destroy it." (Gen 19:13)

About Israel he writes

*"They made Him jealous with strange gods; With abominations they provoked Him to anger.
"They sacrificed to demons who were not God, To gods whom they have not known, New gods who came lately, Whom your fathers did not dread. "You neglected the Rock who begot you, And forgot the God who gave you birth. (Deu 32:16-18)*

Thus, we see that God will judge nations and people that will not obey Him. God is loving, kind and patient. He is also a just God and will only put up with evil and disobedience for so long.

Blessings and Curses for obedience or disobedience

In Deuteronomy 28, we have the whole chapter devoted to blessings for obedience and curses for disobedience. It is really worthwhile to read this whole chapter. A quick paraphrase is:

If the people will diligently obey the Lord their God, they will be richly blessed.

If the people do not observe the commandments and statutes of the Lord, they will be cursed and will not prosper or succeed. They will be defeated before their enemies, there will be sickness and disease. They will be attacked, besieged and carried away and scattered among all peoples.

Recording the regulations of God for the present and future generations

Virtually all Biblical principles, truths and laws have their basis in the first five books of the Bible. A large portion of the Books from Exodus to Deuteronomy is devoted to God's laws and regulations for the people. God starts to do this as soon as they have come to Marah, the first stop after leaving Egypt. (Exodus 15:25). In Exodus 18, Moses is judging between people and making God's statutes and laws known to the people. In the third month after leaving Egypt, God gives the 10 commandments and numerous other laws, many of them applying to the relationships between people. The laws can be broken into three categories. Those that relate to commands that pertaining to God, those that relate to

inter-personal relationships and the covenant laws. The first two are still quite relevant to us. While it would be impractical to list all the laws here, the commands can be summed up as follows:

"You shall love the LORD your God with all your heart and with all your soul and with all your might. (Deu 6:5)

... but you shall love your neighbor as yourself; I am the LORD. (Lev 19:18)

Jesus reaffirmed this when He said:

Jesus answered, "The foremost is, 'HEAR, O ISRAEL! THE LORD OUR GOD IS ONE LORD; AND YOU SHALL LOVE THE LORD YOUR GOD WITH ALL YOUR HEART, AND WITH ALL YOUR SOUL, AND WITH ALL YOUR MIND, AND WITH ALL YOUR STRENGTH.' "The second is this, 'YOU SHALL LOVE YOUR NEIGHBOR AS YOURSELF.' There is no other commandment greater than these." (Mar 12:29-31)

Provide a record of the Israelites and all people

Genesis to Deuteronomy was also written to provide the people of Israel and all nations a true account of God, creation, history and His requirements. God desires to have fellowship with us, so He provides the directions for us to follow so that we may have that fellowship. He also records the blessings for obedience and the consequences of disobedience. Ultimately, God desires for everyone to come to Him, but those who reject Him will face eternal damnation because they choose not to accept God's way of salvation.

Summary

The Pentateuch was written to provide a true account of God, creation and the history of mankind. It was written to be historically accurate to attest to the authority of Scripture and the identity of the one and only true God of the creation. God reveals His love and His requirements for people. There are blessings for obedience and curses and damnation for disobedience and rebellion.

Evolution or Creation?

In today's world, the main false worldview is the Big Bang, evolutionary hypothesis. While there are other false religions as well, the evolutionary theory has infiltrated most in actual practice, so we still need to present the true worldview, just as Moses did when he wrote the Pentateuch.

1. The first view is that the Bible is the inspired Word of God authored by people who were involved in the process. This also means that we accept the creation account and the genealogies in a literal manner as is intended by the author. Jesus accepted the whole Old Testament as Scripture. He cited it frequently and used it in his teaching. One really important thing to keep in mind is that the "Israelite religion" did not evolve and was not made up by the writers. It seems that many of the scholars suggest that we need to look at how the Israelite religion came to be and how it "evolved". I would suggest that we need to look at it in terms of what is actually true according to God. Consider what the apostle John wrote about Jesus

In the beginning was the Word, and the Word was with God, and the Word was God. He was in the beginning with God. All things came into being through Him, and apart from Him nothing came into being that has come into being. (Jn. 1:1-3)

The Scriptures did not "evolve", they are the true Word of God throughout from start to finish. By looking at all the Scriptures we can then understand the Pentateuch even more clearly.

But know this first of all, that no prophecy of Scripture is a matter of one's own interpretation, for no prophecy was ever made by an act of human will, but men moved by the Holy Spirit spoke from God. (2 Pet. 1:20-21)

All Scripture is inspired by God and profitable for teaching, for reproof, for correction, for training in righteousness; (2Ti 3:16)

2. The second is that evolution is true and the Bible must be evaluated on the basis of science, archeology, ancient literature and other religions. This approach would also include Theistic Evolution. It would appear that the main driving force behind this approach is the drive to get away from being accountable to the creator. Science has been re-interpreted to mean that only "natural" causes and processes are scientific and everything else is just something that is made up in people's mind – essentially fairy tales. So, how "scientific" is the evolutionary hypothesis?
 - The law of the conservation of mass and energy does not allow for either to be created or destroyed, only to be changed. This means that the universe could not have come from nothing. (This also extends to another theory called the "Multiverse" which basically has an infinite number of universes being continually created. You still need to have the energy and mass created outside of our physical laws). The multiverse is also something that cannot be scientifically observed or tested; therefore, it is not scientific.
 - The law of Thermodynamics states that energy will always flow from the hotter to the cooler (unless there is an outside force that is reversing the flow). This means that the universe could not have existed eternally, since all of its usable energy would be gone and everything would be in an equilibrium.
 - Scientists have never been able to create life from non-life. The best they have been able to do is to make some amino acids. The problem with that is that there were an

approximately equal number of left and right-handed ones. All living things have only left-handed ones and only after death does it change to an approximately equal number of left and right-handed ones. So, all they have been able to do is to make death, not life. Not only that, but the atmospheric conditions required, among other things, do not appear to have been present on the early earth.

- The law of information states that “information always comes from information”. Matter can never produce information, it can only store and use it. You can have a loss of information as it is being transmitted, but you can never add new information.
- The “Cambrian explosion” reveals that in the very lowest layers of the fossil record, we find complete, complex and varied creatures without evidence of slow and gradual evolution.
- If everything was the result of random, accidental processes, there should be no laws of physics or anything else, since there would be no order. In light of this, we could not even do science without a creator that has established order in the universe and laws that we can discover and utilize.
- With evolution, there is no basis for morality, since everything is just random chemical reactions.
- We can see here that if only “natural” scientific processes were available, the universe would not exist. Life would not exist. Information, such as that contained in the DNA for example, would not exist and thus no life would exist. While there are many other things that confirm Biblical creation, it is quite obvious that the evolutionary hypothesis is not viable from a scientific standpoint. It just cannot work. By definition, science can never prove anything about the past since it is gone and you cannot repeat experiments to test the hypothesis.

Some good websites for more detailed information on the creation/evolution debate are:

<https://answersingenesis.org/>

<https://biblearchaeology.org/>

<https://creation.com/>

<https://www.creationastronomy.com/>

<https://isgenesishistory.com/>

<https://biblicalscienceinstitute.com/>

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Maps

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