

INTRODUCTION TO THE EXEGESIS OF GENESIS

I. Wellhausen in His Day and in His Tradition -- Wellhausen was a particularly great and influential systematizer of data. Personally, his system began with his admittedly naive initial observations and reactions regarding the Bible.

A. He wrote:

" ... In my early student days I was attracted by the stories of Saul and David, Ahab and Elijah; the discourses of Amos and Isaiah laid strong hold on me, and I read myself well into the prophetic and historical books of the Old Testament. Thanks to such aids as were accessible to me, I even considered that I understood them tolerably, but at the same time was troubled with a bad conscience, as if I were beginning with the roof instead of the foundation; for I had no thorough acquaintance with the Law, of which I was accustomed to be told that it was the basis and postulate of the whole literature. At last I took courage and made my way through Exodus, Leviticus, Numbers, and even through Knobel's Commentary to these books. But it was in vain that I looked for the light which was to be shed from this source on the historical and prophetic books. On the contrary, my enjoyment of the latter was marred by the Law; it did not bring them any nearer me, but intruded itself uneasily, like a ghost that makes a noise indeed, but is not visible and really effects nothing. Even where there were points of contact between them, differences also made themselves felt, and I found it impossible to give a candid decision in favour of the priority of the Law. Dimly I began to perceive that throughout there was between them all the difference that separates two wholly distinct worlds. Yet, so far from attaining clear conceptions, I only fell into deeper confusion, which was worse confounded by the explanations of Ewald in the second volume of his History of Israel. At last, in the course of a casual visit in Göttingen in the summer of 1867, I learned through Ritschl that Karl Heinrich Graf placed the Law later than the Prophets, and, almost without knowing his reasons for the hypothesis, I was prepared to accept it; I readily acknowledged to myself the possibility of understanding Hebrew antiquity without the book of the Torah."

(Julius Wellhausen, *Prolegomena to the History of Ancient Israel*, pp. 3-4)

B. Wellhausen's predecessors

The natural starting place for the study of the history and development of the historical critical method, its application to the OT, and its ongoing effects on the scholarly tradition at the end of the 20th century is the Pentateuch. The person most responsible for the widespread impact of the method until today is still Julius Wellhausen. However, although he did make a relatively original contribution on one major point (i.e., a late "P"), Wellhausen himself inherited a great deal from his own predecessors in the field of OT studies and actually contributed more as a synthesizer of previous research than an originator of the documentary hypothesis itself.

The documentary hypothesis as it already existed in Wellhausen's day (i.e., points *already well-established before Wellhausen, Prolegomena*, pp. 6-8):

1. The Hexateuch principle -- the Pent. and Joshua go together because the true conclusion to the patriarchal history, exodus, and wilderness wanderings is the conquest of the land.

2. Deuteronomism -- Wilhelm De Wette (1780-1849) had already "established" that Deuteronomy can be separated as an independent law book (cf. Josiah's r-eform in 2 Kgs. 23-24)

NOTE: this is a very basic starting point for dating everything else according to the "Scholarly consensus" even until today. Wellhausen assumed De Wette on this but opposed him on P (his Q), the priestly source or what had come to be known as the "Grundschrift." This is the major focus of his Prolegomena (cf. pp. 8ff).

3. The Grundschrift -- The most easily distinguished part of what remains is the "Grundschrift" isolated by means of:

a. It uses "Elohim" up to the time of Moses (afterwards "Yahweh," Ex. 6:3ff)

NOTE: this divine name criterion was already set forth by Jean Astruc (1684-1766, a French Physician), and the resulting division of sources etc. (esp. in Genesis) had already been systematized by Johann Eichhorn (1752- 1827) in the previous century.

b. The superscriptions ("generations" formula) in Genesis which show its framework had already been associated with the "Grundschrift" by Heinrich Ewald (1803-1875)

c. It has an easily recognized and distinct style -- liking for numbers and formulas, "stiff pedantic style," etc.

d. Its basis is in Leviticus and related portions of Ex. and Num. -- therefore, it focuses on tabernacle worship and closely related matters.

- e. The thread of supposedly historical narrative is normally very thin -- it is often only there to carry on the chronology or for something on which to hang the legislation. Genesis is an exception because the Q (i.e., P) source there becomes concerned with the preludes to the Mosaic covenant in the Adam, Noah, and Abraham cycles.

4. The Jahwist -- Once D and Q (i.e., P) are separated out we have left primarily the "Jehovist (Yahwist) history book." The characteristics of this source are:

- a. It is essentially narrative in character (contrast D and Q) -- "sets forth with full sympathy and enjoyment the materials handed down by tradition" (p. 7, this betrays Wellhausen's own "taste")
- b. The stories of the patriarchs best show its character. It is different from Q's (i.e., P) rendition which only treats it as prelude to Moses. Here the patriarchs are of prime importance.
- c. The only legislative portion of J is Ex. 20-23, and 34.

5. The Elohist -- Others (e.g., Hupfeld) had already proposed that there was an E ("Elohist") source which was another separate source in the non-Deuteronomic portion of the Hexateuch. It had previously been assigned partly to J and partly to Q (i.e., P). However, as far as Wellhausen was concerned (following Noldeke), E has come down to us only in extracts incorporated into J. Therefore, he refers to JE, not J and E.

6. Complexity of the Sources .- Already Wellhausen was aware of the complexity of the JE and Q sources (i.e., their own process of independent composition was complex) and of hybrid or posthumous elements alongside them in the Hexateuch (cf. Abraham Kuenen and more recently Eissfeldt's L "lay source," etc. -- good summary in Wenham, Genesis 1-15, Word Commentary Series, 1987, p. xxvii).

II. Wellhausen's Historical Critical Synthesis in *The Prolegomena to the History of Israel*.

Prolegomena pp. 8-9

1. "Now the law, whose historical position we have to determine, is the so-called 'main stock,' which, both by its contents and by its origin, is entitled to be called the Priestly Code, and will accordingly be so designated.

2. The Priestly Code preponderates over the rest of the legislation in force, as well as in bulk; in all matters of primary importance it is the normal and final authority. It was according to the model furnished by it that the Jews under Ezra ordered their sacred community, and upon it are formed our conceptions of the Mosaic theocracy, with the tabernacle at its centre, the high priest at its head, the priests and Levites as its organs, the legitimate cultus as its regular function. [Note the bodily organism terminology, cf. p. 8 above middle].

3. It is precisely this Law, so called par excellence that creates the difficulties out of which our problem rises, and it is only in connection with it that the great difference of opinion exists as to date" (underlining mine).

A. "Yahwist" (he includes E here, see above) -- JE -- Prolegomena p. 9 "With regard to Thovistic document, all are happily agreed that, substantially at all events, in language, horizon, and other features, it dates from the golden age of Hebrew literature, to which the finest parts of Judges, Samuel, and Kings, and the oldest extant prophetic writings also belong, -- the period of the kings and prophets which preceded the dissolution of the two Israelite kingdoms by the Assyrians."

B. "Deuteronomist" -- D -- Prolegomena p. 9 "About the origin of Deuteronomy there is still less dispute; in all circles where appreciation of scientific results can be looked for at all, it is recognized that it was composed in the same age as that in which it was discovered, and that it was made the rule of Josiah's reformation, which took place about a generation before the destruction of Jerusalem by the Chaldeans."

C. "Priestly Code" -- P -- Prolegomena p. 9-10

1. "It is only in the case of the Priestly Code that opinions differ widely; for it tries hard to imitate the costume of the Mosaic period, and with whatever success, to disguise its own.

2. This is not nearly so much the case with Deuteronomy, which, in fact, allows the real situation (that of the period during which, Samaria having been destroyed, only the kingdom of Judah continued to subsist) to reveal itself very plainly through that which is assumed (xii. 8, xix. 8).

3. And the Jehovist does not even pretend to being a Mosaic law of any kind; it aims at being a simple book of history; the distance between the present and the past spoken of is not concealed in the very least. It is here that all the remarks are found which attracted the attention of Abenezra and afterwards of Spinoza, such as
 - a. Gen. xii. 6 ('And the Canaanite was then in the land'),
 - b. Gen. xxxvi. 31 ('These are the kings who reigned in Edom before the children of Israel had a king'),
 - c. Num. xii. 6, 7, Deut. xxxiv. 10 ('There arose not a prophet since in Israel like unto Moses').

4. The Priestly Code, on the other hand, guards itself against all reference to later times and settled life in Canaan, which both in the Jehovistic Book of the Covenant (Exod. xxi.-xxiii.) and in Deuteronomy are the express basis of the legislation: it keeps itself carefully and strictly within the limits of the situation in the wilderness, for which in all seriousness it seeks to give the law.
 - a. It has actually been successful, with its movable tabernacle, its wandering camp, and other archaic details, in so concealing the true date of its composition

 - b. that its many serious inconsistencies with what we know, from other sources, of Hebrew antiquity previous to the exile, are only taken as proving that it lies far beyond all known history, and on account of its enormous antiquity can hardly be brought into any connection with it.

 - c. It is the Priestly Code, then, that presents us with our problem."

NOTE: It is, in fact, the comparison of the Priestly Code (narrative and law) with the other "layers" of the Pentateuch and with the historical books that provided the line of argument for Wellhausen's *Prolegomena*.

III. Full Development of the Source Critical Consensus

Wellhausen did not fully develop his views of the distribution of sources in his *Prolegomena* -- that was done by subsequent generations of scholars since then. It is developed and displayed most helpfully in S. R. Driver, *An Introduction to the Literature of the OT* (ninth edition; T. & T. Clark, 1913). For a more recent summary see Moshe Weinfeld, "Pentateuch," *Encyclopedia Judaica* (vol. 13, ed. Cecil Roth; Jerusalem: Keter Pub. Hs. Ltd., 1971) 231-61. He provides quite a clear delineation of the actual data and explanation of the rationale for this historical critical approach to the Pentateuch. We can illustrate this from the Genesis and Exodus charts in the appropriate articles in *Encyclopedia Judaica* (see over, the next two pages).

IV. The Historical Critical Method in the 20th Century

As for Wellhausen, the effect of the intellectual environment of the 20th century upon Biblical and Theological studies has been quite significant, although the impact of 19th century "Source" criticism has not been eliminated, to say the least. There have been shifts in the historical critical method, but in the form of a cumulative building up of methods and conclusions (i.e., previous approaches are not usually eliminated but, rather, one builds upon the other).

The major shifts have been:

A. Form Criticism -- (see esp. Hermann Gunkel and Hugo Gressman) the focus is generally upon individual small units and the oral stage of composition and transmission

NOTE: this yields even more fragmentary results than the Wellhausen theory.

1. JEDP is granted, but the focus is upon going back before the "Sources" themselves were composed; that is, the oral pre-history (some would include written fragments as well).
2. The impact of the "History of Religions" approach to the study of religion (see above) was the felt fully here in some very legitimate ways

NOTE: Gunkel was not a Pan-Babylonian scholar (cf. Friedrich Delitzsch and the discussion Herbert B. Huffinon, "Babel und Bibel: The Encounter Between Babylon and the Bible," Backgrounds for the Bible red. M. P. O'Connor and D. N. Freedman; Eisenbrauns, 1987] 125-36) but he did use the ANE sources extensively to try to get back to the day in which the traditions arose.

B. Tradition Criticism -- (see esp. Albrecht Alt, Martin Noth, and Gerhard Von Rad) the focus is generally on oral and written (creative) transmission on the way to the final text

1. Continuity with Wellhausen and Gunkel
 - a. Alt/Noth/V on Rad (Germany)
 - b. Albright School (USA)
2. The distinction from JEDP is that we see things in terms of units of tradition (e.g., Gen. 1-11, 12-25, etc.) growing by accretion, rather than continuous literary compositions that run throughout the Pentateuch

C. The current broad "higher critical scholarly consensus" concerning the Pentateuch

The general view of the evolution of the Pentateuchal narratives in scholarship today (quotes from the summary of current opinion in Jeffrey H. Tigay, "The Evolution of the Pentateuchal Narratives in the Light of the Evolution of the Gilgamesh Epic," Empirical Models for Biblical Criticism [ed. J. H. Tigay; Philadelphia: Univ. of Penn. Press, 1985] 22-27)

1. "The original literary units underlying the Pentateuch were single narratives about the early Hebrew tribes and their leaders" (p. 22)

2. "In the course of time, some of them were gathered together into cycles dealing with various individuals (e.g., Abraham, Jacob) or other common subjects (e.g., the Egyptian bondage, the exodus, the conquest);" (p. 22)

3. "the cycles were later linked together into lengthier narrative series (e.g., the patriarchal period)," (pp. 22-23)

4. "later still, these series were linked into comprehensive historical epics (e.g., the history of Israel from the patriarchs through the death of Moses or the conquest, or later)." (p. 23)

5. "Apparently from one such epic (Noth's "G," for "gemeinsame Grundlage," "the common base" of the attested sources) there branched off separate versions which in the subsequent course of transmission developed their own unique characteristics (at least J and E and, in some views, P). By this stage the narrative was in prose. . . . By this time, certain older written documents had also been incorporated into the narratives, such as the Book of the Covenant (Exod. 21-23) and quotations from 'the Book of the Wars of Yahweh' (Num. 21:14). Other traditions about early Israelite history were omitted from these written sources. Some disappeared forever, while others survived, either orally or in other written forms, for centuries and in some cases were picked up in post biblical literature." (p. 23)
 - a. Scholars are divided as to whether this G was already written or not and, even if it was, that did not necessarily bring oral transmission to a halt.

 - b. Most critics think J and E were written (contra Rendtorff, see below).

 - c. At this time, when the old narratives were gathered together, they were:

- organized by itineraries and genealogies, etc.
- cemented together and given harmony by the theme of divine promise to the patriarchs (land, progeny, protection -- cf. Gen 12:1-3).
- the was promise probably a part of some of the old traditions; but many of the cycles originally had nothing to do with this promise.
- each original narrative also retain its original theme as a sub theme, e.g., Abraham's loyalty based on rewards moves to loyalty when the reward is threatened, etc.

6. "After developing independently for a time, the two main offshoots of G (J and E) were ultimately joined into a single running narrative, one serving as the basis of the composite, with selections from the other supplementing it. By the time they were to be joined, the texts of these versions had become largely fixed, and the redactor did not have, or at least did not take, much freedom to revise them. . . . The editor who joined the passages added his own connective and transitional phrases and often achieved fine artistic effects simply by skillful arrangement of the material." (p. 24)

7. "Later yet, two other elements were added to this complex. One was a body of priestly material (P), which most scholars think had already coalesced into another version of the early history, combined with cultic and legal rules; according to this view, P was spliced into the combined JE much as the latter were joined. Others think that the priestly material was not a fully developed source document, but rather a redactional strand produced by a priestly writer or school which edited JE and supplemented it with extensive priestly lore." (pp. 24-25)

8. "The fourth element, D, was placed near the end of the account of the desert period. The relative order in which P and D were composed and added to JE is debated. Most scholars have considered P the latest element on both counts, while a minority view regards P as roughly contemporary with D or earlier and thinks that P and D were joined to JE simultaneously." (p. 25)

MAJOR POINTS:

"The above summary of views concerning the evolution of the Pentateuch is far from encompassing the complete range of opinion on the question. . . . As O. Eissfeldt observed at the end of his lengthy survey of the variety of critical theories, 'The important point is indeed, in the last analysis, not this or that individual dissection of the material, but the total outlook.' " (p. 26)

As far as **historicity** is concerned, take note of this remark: "The bearing of such a process on the historicity of the Pentateuch is beyond the bounds set for the present study. It is clear that this process provides ample opportunity for distortion. . . . But it is of interest to note that many historians agree that, despite the complex process through which the Pentateuchal narratives passed, the present form of the narratives has preserved some historical memories" (pp. 25-26).

v. Recent Modifications and Rejections of the Standard Higher Critical Consensus from within the historical critical method

Anthony F. Campbell and Mark A. O'Brien, *Sources of the Pentateuch: Texts, Introductions, Annotations* (Minneapolis: Fortress Press, 1993) pp. 1-20 (esp. pp. 10-20) write (p. 10) "The classical form of the source hypothesis has come under challenge recently from a number of quarters. Each challenge has generated lively debate, but so far no new consensus has emerged that could claim to have decisively replaced the classical formulation *the more radical modifications lead to the dissolution of the sources as they have been traditionally understood.* There is also an intriguing link with the past in that the recent challenges recall, in their own way, the earlier debates *between source hypothesis, supplementary hypothesis, and fragmentary hypothesis*" (see A and B below; emphasis mine). For the latter, see Campbell and O'Brien p. 17:

Source hypothesis -- "parallel independent sources" (see above)

Supplementary hypothesis -- "one base source that was supplemented by discrete additions"

Fragmentary hypothesis -- "discrete fragments or traditions that were combined by a process of redaction"

A. New "Supplementary" Hypotheses

1. Redefining P as a redaction rather than a source. This is really a new form of the supplementary hypothesis (Campbell and O'Brien p. 10):

See Frank Moore Cross, *Canaanite Myth and Hebrew Epic: Essays in the History of the Religion of Israel* (Cambridge: Harvard Univ. Press, 1973) 293-325.

2. Rejection of an early date for J. Several scholars (most importantly Schmid and Van Seters) have recently developed strong arguments in favor of this view (Campbell and O'Brien pp. 10-12).

See esp. John Van Seters, *Prologue to History: The Yahwist as Historian in Genesis* (Louisville, Kentucky: Westminster/John Knox Press, 1992). Van Seters has been prolific and is presently a major figure in the scholarly study of the Pentateuch. He sees successive stages in the growth of the tradition and focuses especially on the significance of the Yahwist (cf. von Rad).

- a. "This Yahwist made additions to the existing material where appropriate and incorporated a number of larger episodic units." He also rearranged the stories in order to transform them. "The Yahwistic stage of growth reveals considerable powers of conceptualization and literary skill."

- b. On the importance of the Yahwist he agreed with von Rad, but he "holds that the work of the Yahwist resembles that of the Greek historian Herodotus, a factor that lends support to his proposal of a late [exilic] date for the Yahwist." For example, regarding Abraham: "The evidence reveals that the portrait of Abraham was in reality an artificial reconstruction of first-millennium Israelites." Thus, he makes J a prologue for the Deuteronomistic History (cf. Rose above) but dates it post-D (contra Schmid and Rose who would make J basically deuteronomistic-deuteronomistic).
- c. "Because it was composed as a prologue to DtrH, the Yahwist never existed as an independent source." This J is, therefore, "supplementary" to D.

B. New "Fragmentary" Hypothesis

This is really a replacement of the source hypothesis by a hypothesis of tradition and redaction history (Campbell and O'Brien, pp. 12-13).

tradition history -- tracing the history of traditions within the biblical text.

redaction history -- tracing the successive stages of literary composition that pieced those traditions together.

The most important figure here today is Rolf Rendtorff, *The Problem of the Process of Transmission in the Pentateuch* (JSOTSuppl. 89; Sheffield: ISOT, 1990) and idem, *The Old Testament: An Introduction* (transl. by John Bowden; Philadelphia: Fortress Press, 1986). His approach echoes the old "fragmentary hypothesis." According to Rendtorff:

1. Begin with Gunkel's small units and trace their development into larger complexes of tradition. As von Rad and Noth have shown, "the analysis of the composition of the Pentateuch should proceed from the smallest identifiable units to the larger complexes of tradition, such as the ancestors (Genesis 12-50) and exodus (Exodus 1-15), and thence to the present text."
2. Against von Rad, Noth, and the source hypothesis itself, "the earliest literary links between these complexes of tradition are deuteronomistic."
3. Against the former consensus - Rendtorff sees tradition and source criticism in Pentateuchal research as *incompatible*, contra von Rad and Noth.

NOTE: Campbell and O'Brien (pp. 14-19): "Pentateuchal study is in considerable turmoil as a result of the diachronic analyses of Cross, Schmid, V an Seters, and Rendtorff, on the one hand, and then current advocacy of a synchronic analysis of the text, on the other hand" (see just below).

C. New Literary approaches

1. Replacement of the Source approach with a literary approach to the Bible (Campbell and O'Brien pp. 13-15).
 - a. "Attention has been drawn to the way repetition and reduplication function as integral parts of the Old Testament storytelling to recapitulate key elements of a story at strategic points or to produce a desired literary effect, such as creating tension by momentarily slowing the pace of a story. Because source criticism was rooted in the observation of such repetitions, one outcome of this literary analysis has been to claim that much of the foundation for source criticism was baseless" (p. 14).
 - b. "This radical shift of emphasis may be characterized as a movement from a diachronic (historical) reading of the text to a synchronic (ahistorical) reading."
 - c. One of the authors who has applied this most fully to the Pentateuch is R. N. Whybray, who "believes that the new insights into Israelite literature have rendered the traditional source hypothesis obsolete." E. W. Nicholson ("The Pentateuch in Recent Research: A Time for Caution," *VTSupp143* (1991) 16 summarizes Whybray's proposal as follows:

"the Pentateuch in substantially its present form is the work of a single author of the exilic period who may have intended it as a *supplement* in the form of a prologue to the Deuteronomistic history. This author had at his disposal a mass of materials which, adopting what Whybray refers to as 'the canons of the historiography of his time' [i.e., the Greek historiographic tradition??], he 'radically reworked ... probably with substantial additions of his own invention.'" (emphasis mine)

NOTE: The "source" hypothesis has also been called the "literary" hypothesis. The "new literary" approach is a completely different kind of approach to the text and one must not confuse the two.
2. The new literary approaches threaten to replace the diachronic approach altogether (against even the above modifications and rejections of the Wellhausen/Noth synthesis).
3. Newer Literary Criticisms - In even more recent developments in the field, the "new literary criticism" has turned into a multitude of newer literary criticisms. See the very helpful summary and very good bibliography in David J. A. Clines and Cheryl Exum, "The New Literary Criticism," *The New Literary Criticism and the Hebrew Bible* (ed. J. Cheryl Exum and D. J. A. Clines; Sheffield: Sheffield Academic Press, 1993) 11-25.

VI. Problems in the Criteria of the Documentary Hypothesis

For one of the most clear and compelling recent articulations of the criteria of the Documentary Hypothesis along with a full translation of the Pentateuch coded with different colors and print styles according to the sources see Richard Elliot Friedman, *The Bible with Sources Revealed: A New View in the Five Books of Moses* (New York: HarperCollins, 2003).

For a good recent critique of this approach (and some of the others cited above) see T. D. Alexander, *From Paradise to the Promised Land: An Introduction to the Pentateuch*, second edition (Grand Rapids: Baker Book House, 2002), 3-94.

A. Divine names - often treated as the primary criterion, but:

1. "Yahweh" is a personal name whereas "Elohim" is a common noun, and most if not all of the shifts from one name to the other can be explained on this basis -see, e.g., Genesis 3:1b-5 in the midst of Genesis 3, where the serpent only uses *Elohim* (God) not *Yahweh Elohim* (LORD God), as opposed to the narrator

2. The flood story is the parade example in favor of the Documentary Hypothesis, but following this approach yields:

a. Incompleteness in the two separate stories

-e.g., the Yahwist (1) story (Genesis 7:1) would have no building of the ark, but assumes the previous building of the ark in P (6:9b-22)

b. The need to break up coherent discourse units

-e.g., Genesis 7:6-17 is a single grammatical unit with chiasmus and epic repetition, but the Documentary approach normally breaks it up into vv. 11, 12, 16b, 17b as J and vv. 11, 13-16a, 17a as P. (NOTE: Friedman simplifies this: vv. 7 and 16b-17 are J

and vv. 8-16a are P)

NOTE: see the literature cited Alexander p. 23 n. 45 for an extensive debate between Gordon Wenham and J. A. Emerton in the pages of the journal *Vetus Testamentum* regarding unity of the flood narrative.

B. Doublets and Triplets - this is most often treated as another primary criterion, although Friedman does not consider it so.

1. The three "wife-sister" stories are:

Genesis 12:10-20 - J story of Abraham in Egypt

Genesis 20 - E story of Abraham in Gerar Genesis

26:6-11 - J story of Isaac in Gerar

2. Problems with the Documentary approach

a. Genesis 20:2 assumes an understanding of 12:11-15

b. Genesis 20: 11-13 suggests there were probably even many more occasions on which this wife-sister deception was used by Abraham (and Isaac)

VII. The overall (indigenous) structure and unity of the book of Genesis is based upon the recurrence of the expression "these are the generations (*toledot*) of ..." See now Richard E. Averbeck, "Factors in Reading the Patriarchal Narratives: Literary, Historical, and Theological Dimensions," in *Giving the Sense: Understanding and Using Old Testament Historical Texts* (Essays in Honor of Eugene H. Merrill), ed. David M. Howard, Jr. and Michael A. Grisanti (Grand Rapids: Kregel, 2003), 115-137.

A. Occurrences of the (*toledot*) "generations" or "stories" or "accounts" formula:

Genesis 2:4 - "This is the account of (lit. "These are the *generations* of) the heavens and the earth when they were created." - NARRATIVE #1

Genesis 5:1 - "This is the written account of (lit. "This is the *book* of the generations of) Adam's line." - *GENEALOGY* -linear *

GenLs 6:9 ~ "This is the account of Noah." ~ NARRATIVE #2

Gen~SIS 10:1- "This is the account of Shem, Ham and Japheth, Noah's sons, who themselves had sons after the flood." - *GENEALOGY* - segmented*

GenLis 11:9 - "This is the account of Shem." - *GENEALOGY* -linear *

Gen sis 11:27 - "This is the account of Terah." - NARRATIVE #3

Gene is 25:12 - "This is the account of Abraham's son Ishmael, whom Sarah's maidservant, Hagar the Egyptian, bore to Abraham." - *GENEALOGY*segmented*

GeneliS 25:19 - "This is the account of Abraham's son Isaac," - NARRATIVE #4

GeneliS 36:1 - "This is the account of Esau (that is, Edom)." - *GENEALOGY*segmented*

GeneL 36:9 - "This is the account of Esau the father of the Edomites in the hill country of Seir." - *GENEALOGY* - segmented*

GenJis 37:2 - "This is the account of Jacob," NARRATIVE #5

B. Sometimes it is followed by a genealogy

See Robert R. Wilson, *Genealogy and History in the Biblical World* (New Haven: Yale Univ. Press, 1977).

1. Vertical (or "linear") genealogies -- they simply link the name with ancestor.

5:1-32 -- Adam to Noah

11: 10-26 -- .Shem to Terah

2. Horizontal (or "segmented") genealogies -- they have varied functions, one of the main ones being to trace the affiliation of tribes to show relationships based on some original physical connections.

10:1-32 -- Japheth (vv. 2-5), Ham (vv. 6-20), Shem (vv. 21-31)

25: 12-18 -- Ishmael

36: 1-43 -- Esau

C. Sometimes it is followed by a narrative account - this results in the isolation of five major blocks of narrative material in the book of Genesis

1. 2:4 (2:4b-4:26) - Creation and Degeneration of Man and Society

2. 6:9 (6:9b-9:29) - Destruction of Man and Society

3. 11 :27 (11 :27b-25:11) - Abraham and Isaac

4. 25:19 (25:19b-35:29) - Isaac and Jacob

5. 37:2 (37:2b-50:26) - Jacob and Joseph/Judah

D. In spite of this native structure, the book of Genesis is often studied in two main sections - the break being made at one of the "generations" points in chapter 11

1. The primeval narratives 1: 1-11 :9 (or 11 :26)

2. The patriarchal narratives 11:10 (or 11:27) - 50:26

E. Genesis 1-11 in Biblical Theology and History - the purpose of Genesis 1-11 in biblical history and theology is to provide a basic understanding of human experience in this world. These chapters begin with the "shape" of man's world (Gen. 1:1-2:3), and then develop the nature of man's "depravity" and "situation" within the world. According to the "generations formula" observed above, the primeval accounts in Genesis 2:4-11:9 divide into four major sections, and Genesis 11: 10 opens up onto the patriarchal period and all that follows:

1. 2:4 (2:4b-4:26) Creation and Degeneration of Man and Society (see "generations" in 2:4 and 5:1)

- 2.5:1 (5:1b-6:8) Man's developing depravity (see "generations" in 5:1 and 6:9)
 - a. (5:1-32) Genealogy from Adam to Noah and

 - b. (6:1-8) Sons of God and Daughters of Men

- 3.6:9 (6:9b-9:29) God's Remedy - the Destruction of Man and Society (see "generations" in 6:9 and 10:1)

4. 10:1 (10:1b-11:9) Man's developing depravity (see "generations" in 10:1 and 11:10)
 - a. (10:1-32) Genealogy of Japheth, Ham, and Shem

 - b. (11:1-9) Tower of Babel

5. Gen 11:10-Rev 22 God's Remedy - the Redemption of Man and Society (see "generations" in 11: 10 and following)

F. The Genealogies and Biblical Chronology in Genesis 5 and 11

1. Arguments for absolute chronology in the Gen 5 and 11: 10-26 genealogies (see Nathan M. Meyer and Alice Hoover, *Longevity Chart: Adam to Joseph*, BMH, 1977).
 - a. The mathematically exact character of the genealogies in Gen. 5 and 11 argues for this.
 - b. If we see gaps, then the years given cannot be accurate and there must be errors in the text.
 - c. According to this exact chronology (dating Abram's birth at 2166 BC):
 - 1- Abraham died 35 years before Shem,
 - 2- Creation was in 4113 BC,
 - 3- The flood was in 2457 BC,
 - 4- Etc.

2. Arguments against absolute chronology in the Gen. 5 and 11: 10-26 genealogies (see John Whitcomb's *Chart of the Period from the Creation to Abraham*; idem, *The Genesis Flood*, pp. 474-489; and John J. Davis, *Paradise to Prison*, pp. 28-32):
 - a. The numbers are not totaled in Gen 11; contrast Gen. 5.
 - b. The Bible itself indicates gaps -- cf. Lk. 3:36 and Gen. 11 :12-15 (i.e., Cainan is not in Gen. in the Hebrew text; but see the LXX).

NOTE: with Cainan the genealogies of Gen. 5 and 11 each have 10 patriarchs and 3 important sons belonging to the last (5:32 and 11 :26); compare the schematization of the genealogy of Jesus in Matt. 1 (i.e., 14 generation pattern and Matt. 1:8 skips 3 generations between Joram and Uzziah, etc.; therefore, strict chronology is certainly not the issue there).
 - c. Etc.

VIII. Mosaic Authorship of Genesis

- A. There is good reason to say that the picture of Moses presented in the Torah is consistent with what we know of 2000-1800 or so in Egyptian culture and history. See the arguments for this articulated and explained in full by the eminent Egyptologist Kenneth A. Kitchen, "The Patriarchal Age: Myth of History?" *Biblical Archaeology Review* 21:2 (March/April, 1995) 48-57, 88-95 and now in his new book *On the Reliability of the Old Testament* (Grand Rapids: Eerdmans, 2003), esp. the summaries of his arguments on pp. 295-99 and 489-90.
- B. It is important to note that the biblical text nowhere explicitly indicates who wrote Genesis in particular, although there are numerous references to Moses writing portions of the Torah (e.g., Exodus 17:14; 24:4; 34:27; Numbers 33:1-2; Deuteronomy 31:9, 11; cf. also the references back from Joshua 1:8; 8:31-32; 1 Kings 2:3; 2 Kings 14:6; 21:8; Ezra 6:18; Nehemiah 13:1; Daniel 9:11-13; Malachi 4:4).
- C. Moreover, we need to keep in mind the obvious fact that the Torah does **not** present Moses as an eyewitness to any of the times, people, and events of Genesis.
- D. This means that Moses would have most likely used some source materials for the writing of Genesis.
1. Genealogical history is especially suited to clan/tribal culture and historical remembrance. Tribal history in such cultures is characteristically received tradition, not invented. We have significant anthropological data for this, even from a recent study of Jordanian Bedouin tribal genealogical history.
 2. This fits the canonical shape of the material in the book of Genesis (see the "generations" formula material outlined above).
 3. Moses wrote using this material.
 4. He wrote from a priestly perspective - he was a Levite and, according to the Torah, functioned as the first priest of Israel (i.e., he ordained Aaron and the Aaronites)
 5. Points c and d above correspond largely to the material in "J" and "P" respectively.
 6. Non-conservative historical critical scholars sense and articulate in various ways two points of the historical critical consensus that still survive today - a distinction between J and P, and the lateness of P as compared to J.

7. I would argue that the same data can be explained as reflecting the difference of perspective between Moses as the later writer of Genesis (i.e., P) and the patriarchal traditions that were passed down to him in oral and/or written form (i.e., J).
8. However, some of what is often seen as P is not always from the hand of Moses.
- a. For example, the genealogies belong with the stories from the start.
 - b. The *tord* framework of the book of Genesis may have come from Moses as a way of shaping the entire book, but in light of the anthropological data described and applied above, it is hard to imagine such stories being passed down without the genealogical lineage being part of it.
9. Moses, however, was the one responsible for the "generations" formula structure of the Book of Genesis.
- a. He even extended it back beyond its natural application to the patriarchal narratives to Genesis 2:4a, where it is used metaphorically.
 - b. This, in turn, sets Genesis 1:1-2:3 off from the literary framework in an interesting way, which reflects the distinctiveness of the Genesis 1:2-2:3 creation account as it relates to the Genesis 2:4-26 account.
10. The following chart is an attempt to capture the relationship between the Mosaic and non-Mosaic approaches to Genesis in graphic form:

<p><u>Non-Mosaic</u> Compositional Perspective</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> a. 9th century "I" document (= "Yahwist") 8th century "E" document (= "Elohists") = Wellhausen's JE See also: 1- Van Seters exilic J 2- Rendtorff/Blum early post-exilic adherent to D <ul style="list-style-type: none"> b. 6th - 5th cent. "P" document (= "Priestly source") = Wellhausen's P See also: 1- Van Seters post-exilic P reworking of exilic J 2- Rendtorff/Blum early post-exilic PI reworking of post-exilic adherent to D 	<p><u>Mosaic</u> Compositional Perspective</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> a. Moses <i>receives patriarchal traditions</i> - oral &/or written, genealogies plus narratives b. Moses writes as the <i>leader of the nation</i> and a <i>Levite/priest</i> -e.g., the <i>tordot</i> formulas
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IX. Genesis 1 and Science

See the helpful overview of the various approaches that evangelicals take to this discussion in Nigel M. de S. Cameron, "Talking Points: Genesis and Evolution," *Themelios* 7:3 (April, 1982) 28-31. Another level of discussion is well-presented in Bruce K. Waltke, "The Literary Genre of Genesis, Chapter One," *Crux* 27:4 (December, 1991) 2-10. For a recent wellwritten critique of the scientific debate and the way it is being carried on see Del Ratzsch, *The Battle of Beginnings: Why Neither Side Is Winning the Creation-Evolution Debate*. Downers Grove, Illinois: InterVarsity Press, 1996.

A. The Scientific Issues: Creation versus Evolutionary, and in between

1. This is a hot topic, at least in some circles.
2. We need to take the fact that God can and does override nature seriously (see even the change of water to wine in John 2). He is not bound and does not bind himself to natural processes.

B. The Biblical Issues:

1. There are some strong textual reasons for taking the days to be literal days in Genesis 1 (e.g., the standard evening and morning formula in Gen 1, Exod 20: 11, etc.).
2. There are also some indications that the account may have been shaped according to a familiar pattern in order to make it more understandable to the ancient Israelites of Moses' day.
 - a. The 6/7 pattern in OT, e.g., Exod 24:16; Prov 6:16, sections in Exod 25-31 tabernacle instructions, etc.
 - b. Genesis 1 :1-2:3 stands outside of the "generations" formula pattern of the book (see above), so perhaps it should be treated differently from the rest of the book.
 - a prologue to Genesis 1-11, as Genesis 1-11 is to the whole Bible
 - c. Problems with reading Genesis 1 literally - e.g., light on day one before the sun (moon and stars) on day 4, etc.

C. Literal or Literary? - it comes down to this, did God intend the ancient Israelites (and us) to read this as a "literal" account of His creation of the universe, or as a "literary" account?

1. Of course, these are not mutually exclusive, since the Bible is a literary account in any case. Compare, for example, the various ways the gospel writers tell the story of Jesus according to their particular distinctive theological concerns.
2. Did the 6/7 pattern in Genesis 1 derive from the literary world of ancient Israel, or did Genesis 1 create the pattern in the first place?

D. Refocusing - since Genesis 1 was written long before the creation versus evolution debate arose, perhaps we need to focus on some other issues that it treats directly:

1. Who is God?
2. What is the nature and structure of the universe that God created?
3. How do we relate to both?
4. Etc.

E. Selected Bibliography

Henri Blocher, *In the Beginning: The Opening chapters of Genesis*, transl. by D.G. Preston (IV Press, 1984), esp. 15-59, who refers extensively to Meredith G. Kline, "Because it had not rained," *Westminster Theological Journal* 20 (1957-58): 146-157, from which the "lit. framework approach" seems to have originated.

Kenneth A. Mathews, *Genesis 1-11:26*, The New American Commentary (Broadman & Holman, 1996), 63-111, esp. 81-85, 101-111. A very fine recent analysis. The best that I know of in a commentary on Genesis.

Del Ratzsch, *The Battle of Beginnings: Why Neither Side Is Winning the Creation Evolution Debate* (IV Press, 1996). The best work right now on the scientific debate.

Ronald Youngblood, *The Book of Genesis: An Introductory Commentary*, Second Edition (Baker, 1991), 21-49.

Ronald Youngblood, ed., *The Genesis Debate: Persistent Questions About Creation and the Flood* (Baker, 1990). The best compendium on different views regarding pivotal issues in the Bible and Science debate.

x. Genesis 1-3 and Ancient Near Eastern (ANE) creation accounts

Archaeological and biblical studies in general, not to mention the recent discoveries at Ebla in particular, show that the ANE world from Mesopotamia through the Levant to Egypt was a "connected" world in the very ancient past, even long before Abraham.

A. Sources for the study -- the major ones are:

- * ANET - James B. Pritchard (ed.), *Ancient Near Eastern Texts Relating to the Old Testament*, 3rd ed. (Princeton Univ. Press, 1969).

RANE - Bill Arnold and Bryan Beyer, (eds.), *Readings from the Ancient Near East: Primary Sources for Old Testament Study* (Grand Rapids: Baker, 2002).

Walter Beyerlin (ed.), *Near Eastern Religious Texts Relating to the Old Testament* (Philadelphia: The Westminster Press, 1978).

- * COS - William W. Hallo and K. Lawson Younger, *The Context of Scripture*, vol. 1 (Leiden: Brill, 1997); vol. 2 (2000); vol. 3 (2002).

CANE - Jack M. Sasson, *Civilizations of the Ancient Near East*, 4 vols. (New York: Charles Scribner's Sons, 1995).

- * John H. Walton, *Ancient Israelite Literature in its Cultural Context: A Survey of Parallels Between Biblical and Ancient Near Eastern Texts* (Zondervan, 1989).

- * John H. Walton, *Ancient Near Eastern thought and the Old Testament: Introducing the conceptual world of the Hebrew Bible* (Grand Rapids: Baker, 2006).

NOTE: there are also many other treatments of these ANE texts and their relationship to the O'T in various publications, scholarly as well as relatively popular.

B. Methodology in comparing the Bible and the ANE -- How do we as conservative evangelicals handle this connectedness in the ancient world? There are several methodological principles involved:

1. We have nothing to fear from facing real data about the ANE world. The Bible can handle it and, in fact, calls upon us to realize that it was written in a *real* world into which it, in turn, spoke. E. g., "the goring ox" on one level and the "Baal epic" on another.

2. On the other hand, the ANE peoples within and across their cultures were not uniform in their beliefs and patterns of behavior. To speak of "Mesopotamian thinking" or "Egyptian theology" would be like speaking of "European" or "American thinking/theology" today. Peoples within Meso. were often quite distinct from one another in their views of the world and way of life etc. E. g., the various pantheon arrangements in Sumer, yet with Nippur as central theology.

3. The main point of departure is to think of the Bible and the ANE world in terms of "common cultural foundations." Primarily, we are not dealing here with "borrowing" (contra the *Babel und Bibel* controversy stimulated by Friedrich Delitzsch at the beginning of this century). Instead, God and the writers of the O'T recognized and used the world of the ancient Israelites as background for communicating what God's plan is in this world. The Bible is both in its world and against its world (e.g., compare the ANE creation accounts with the Bible in terms of how they are like the O'T [comparison], how they are different from the O'T [contrast], and how the two are mixed together).

POINT: we must guard against either imposing the ANE world on the Bible or isolating the Bible from the ANE world.

C. ANE **Creation Stories and the Bible** - There are numerous creation stories in the ANE: what we might call cosmogonies or cosmologies. Several common elements stand out:

1. The watery abyss as the starting point of creation stories -- see Gen. 1: 1- 3 (the structure there in Hebrew suggests, at least to many, that v. 1 is a title verse and v. 2 describes the initial preexisting situation or circumstances into which God spoke the first creative word in v. 3). NOTE: the biblical account is quite similar to other ANE creation stories in this regard.

Compare with this: (1) The (Babylonian) Creation Epic (Enuma Elish) ANET pp. 60-61 tablet 1 lines 1-8,2; cf. COS 1.391), (2) Beyerlin's discussion of Egyptian creation stories pp. 3-4, and (3) those Egyptian accounts in ANET p. 6 and the related notes pointing to pp. 4-8 accounts from different places in Egypt (cf. COS 1.5-31).

2. They require that theogonies (creation of the gods) be developed before cosmogonies. NOTE: the biblical account stands in stark contrast to this element of the ANE stories. In fact, Genesis 1 is polemical against the ANE in this regard.

Compare: (1) Enuma Elish, ANET pp. 61-62 tablet 1 lines 9-104 (cf. p. 63 tablet 2 lines 1-10 and p. 64 lines 92-109; see also COS 1.391-392) and (2) the Egyptian accounts pp. 5a lines 55ff and 5b middle; p. 6b middle; etc (cf. COS 1.5-31). Cosmogony is sometimes found as part of the theogony as in some of the accounts above, but sometimes also as separate (for the later see Enuma Elish, ANET pp. 67-68 and 501-2 tablet 4 line 105 through tablet 5 line 66; cf. COS 1.398-399).

3. The creation of man as another step in the creative process. NOTE: in this case there is both similarity and contrast between the Bible and the ANE. There is indeed creation of man sometimes in ways similar to the Bible (i.e., out of clay etc.), but there are also stories that are very dissimilar from the Bible.

Compare: (1) Enuma Elish, ANET p. 68 lines 1-40 (COS 1.391) and (2) the Egyptian accounts in ANET pp. 6b n. 11 and the references there (cf. COS 1.5-31).

SUPPLEMENT:
Genesis 1:1-3

The four major ways of handling the grammar and content of Genesis 1:1-3 have been summarized well in Gordon J. Wenham, Genesis 1-15, in *Word Biblical Commentary*; ed. by David A. Hubbard et al. (Waco, Texas: Word Books, Publisher, 1987), pp. 11 ff:

I. Traditional view -- v. 1 is taken as an independent clause describing the first act of creation (i.e., *creatio ex nihilo* "creation out of nothing" -- the creation of original matter) and vv.2ff describe subsequent phases in God's creative activity.

A. This is the traditional view adopted by Wenham and in several versions (see e.g., KJV "In the beginning God created the heaven and the earth. "). It is based on the presumed theological need for an absolute initial creation of matter to be found in the Bible, and a certain kind of interpretation of such verses as Hebrews 11:3 as it applies to Genesis 1: 1.

B. Some have considered v. 2 to be a new start of creation in one way or another. For example, since early in this century "gap theorist" have translated "and the earth *became* formless and void." Thus, there was a previous creation that became corrupt. All the geological ages would fit into the gap. More recently, one scholar has suggested that Genesis 1: 1 was an original creation, perhaps many eons ago. Genesis 1:2ff was the creation of the land of Israel (cf. Genesis 15:18; John Sailhamer, *Genesis Unbound*, 1996).

C. Those who question this approach do so on the basis of either Hebrew syntax (see views II and III below) or Hebrew literary practice (cf. 6:9 in relation to 2:4a and its implications for 1:1) combined with ancient Near Eastern background considerations (see view IV below).

II. Temporal clause view #1 -- v. 1 is a temporal clause subordinate to the main clause in v. 2 which, in turn, describes the background circumstances of the creative activity which begins in v. 3 (see e.g., NAB "In the beginning, when God created the heavens and the earth, the earth was a formless wasteland, and darkness covered the abyss, while a mighty wind swept - over the waters. Then God said ... " -- cf. also NEB etc. and note how "spirit/wind of God" is handled in verse two; see also the *Tanakh* translation cited under view III below).

A. This view is supported by the lack of an article on the first word in Hebrew ("In beginning" *bere'shit*, not "In the beginning" *bare'shit* in the Massoretic text). Although it is strange to have a construct noun before the verb (it is followed by *bara'* "he created"), the same construction does indeed occur elsewhere (see Hosea 1:2 in Hebrew). Since "beginning" is by nature a temporal word and the preposition *be* "in" is often used to begin temporal clauses, it is therefore natural to see this as a subordinate temporal clause.

B. In addition, this and the following views have the advantage of beginning the creative activity of God with verse three, which would have been the normal place for a creation story to begin in the ANE (i.e., the creative word is spoken or creative acts are performed into an already existing empty and unformed watery mass -- see e.g., James B.

Pritchard, *Ancient Near Eastern Texts Relating to the Old Testament*, 3rd ed. with supplement, Princeton Univ. Press, 1969, pp. 4a notes 6-8, 5a notes 11-14, 6b notes 5-8, and 8a note² for the Egyptian creation myths; see further ANET pp. 60-61 for the well-known Babylonian creation epic, *Enuma Elish*, which begins with a temporal clause [*enuma elish*= "when on high"] and an empty watery chaos). These references to the ANE material are not meant to suggest that the biblical story is, in general, like them. The stories are very different in many ways, but they do start from the same basic point if this view of Gen. 1:1-3 is accepted. One wonders if the ancient Israelites would have entertained the question of where "original matter" came from and, therefore, whether God would have been concerned to address that issue.

III. Temporal clause view #2 -- v. 1 is a temporal clause subordinate to the main clause in v. 3, while v. 2 is a parenthetical comment about the condition of the earth before the creative activity begins in v. 3 (see e.g., *Tanakh: A New Translation of the Holy Scriptures according to the Traditional Hebrew Text*, Philadelphia, The Jewish Publication Society, 1985, "When God began to create heaven and earth -- the earth being unformed and void, with darkness over the surface of the deep and a wind from God sweeping over the water -- God said, ...").

A. This approach is supported by essentially the same grammatical and cultural observations as the second view (see above). The difference is that the grammatical features are manipulated in a different way so that v. 2 is seen as an interruption of the narrative rather than a continuation.

B. Moreover, in both of these views the grammar in 1:1-3 is precisely parallel to that in 2:4b-7 (Note: 2:4a is often attached to 1:1-2:3 rather than 2:4b by those who handle 1:1-3 in this way). Essentially, both pericopes begin with a temporal subordinate clause (1:1 "When God created ..." and 2:4b "When the Lord God made ..."), followed by a parenthetical or continuing circumstantial description of the conditions (1:2 and 2:5-6), which prevailed when the Lord began his creative activity (1:3 the first day, and 2:7 the sixth day). Gen. 2 is an expansion of the sixth day from the perspective of man's experiential circumstances within the created world so that the creation of man is put first in the garden story, contrasting it with the sixth day narrative in chapter 1.

IV. Title verse view -- v. 1 is a main clause (i.e., a title) summarizing all the creative events in chapter 1. The narrative, in this case, begins with v. 2, which describes the scene that existed before the first creative activity took place in v. 3 (see e.g., *NIV Study Bible* translation and explanatory footnote on v. 1 "In the beginning God created the heavens and the earth. Now the earth was formless and empty, darkness was over the surface of the deep, and the Spirit of God was hovering over the waters. And God said, ...").

A. Culturally, this approach assumes the same formless and empty watery mass as the starting point of creation (see the explanation and references given under view II above; that is, the original creation of matter is not contemplated here according to this view). Grammatically, strictly speaking, this view should assume the re-pointing of the first word so that it has the article and reads "In the beginning" (see the discussion of this under view 2

above). This is similar to the traditional interpretation of v. 1 (see view 1 above), except that the disjunctive *waw* beginning plus the verb 'to be' in v. 2 (see "Now the earth was ... " in *NN*) indicates that the narrative does not simply continue from v. 1 into v. 2 which is, incidentally, in my opinion, the most difficult part of the Hebrew grammar for the traditional interpretation to deal with. The first standard past tense narrative form is found in v. 3, "And (or 'Then', see NASB) God said, ... "

B. This grammar of vv. 2ff is found elsewhere often in Hebrew narrative. See, for example, 3:1ff ("Now [disjunctive *waw* plus the verb 'to be'] the serpent was more crafty than any beast of the field which the Lord God had made, **and he said** [same form as in 1:31 ... ") and 16:1ff ("Now [disjunctive *waw* Sarai, Abram's wife had borne him no children, and she had an Egyptian maid whose name was Hagar, **and Sarai said to Abram** [same essential form of the same verb as 1:3 and 3:1b], ... "), etc.

C. In this case, 2:4a (lit. "These are the generations of the heavens and the earth when they were created") should likewise be taken as a title for 2:4ff. This fits with the way the same formulaic "generations" expression is used in the rest of the book (see e.g., 5:1 where the MT pointing suggests the NASB translation, wherein the remainder of the verse is separate from the formulaic title; see also 6:9, etc.), and establishes a parallel between 1:1 and 2:4a, both of which should be considered formulaic titles for the sections at the head of which they stand. It should also be observed that, in 2:4ff, the first standard past tense narrative form occurs in 2:7, "And (or 'Then', see NASB) the Lord God formed ... (cf. the remark on 1:3 above).

D. This approach to 1:1-3 and 2:4-7 sees an overall similarity between the manner in which each of these two narratives begins; that is, a title (1: 1 and 2:4a), followed by a circumstantial (1 :2) or a temporal plus circumstantial (2:4b-6) introduction, followed by the beginning of the narrative action (1:3 and 2:7). The difference between this view and the previous two is that, according to the previous views 1: 1 is temporal whereas, according to this view, it is a title parallel with the title or subsection indicator found in 2:4a.

This, in turn, may help to solve the long-standing problem with the "generations" formula in 2:4a, which, at first glance, seems to form the conclusion to 1 :1-2:3 because the terminology and means of expression used is similar to that in 1: 1-2:3 and dissimilar from that in 2:4bff. On the other hand, all other such formulas in the book seem to stand at the head of the sections which they title, *not* at the end as a conclusion (see 5:1 "of Adam," 6:9 "of Noah, " 10:1 "of Shem, Ham, and Japheth," 11:10 "of Shem," 27 "of Terah," 25:12 "of Ishmael," 19 "of Isaac," 36:1 "of Esau," 37:2 "of Jacob").

Recently, one scholar has argued that Genesis 1: 1-3 and 2:5-7 describe the same basic conditions at the beginning of creation, but in different terms from a different point of view. Both begin with a temporal description (1 :1,2:4), a formless and barren setting (1 :2,2:5-6), and the first creative event (1 :3,2:7). The movement is from *erets* "earth" (Gen 1 :1-2:3) to *adamah* "land" (Gen 2:4-7) to *gan* "garden" (Gen 2:8ff). See David Tsumura, *The Earth and the Waters in Genesis land* 2, 1989.