

ten Bible,” this lively Aramaic retelling of MT Genesis is undoubtedly one of the finest exegetical treasures from the caves around Qumran. Written by a highly educated, creative Jewish exegete (or exegetes), the *Genesis Apocryphon* must have functioned communally as a rich fusion of the MT Genesis story and other, affiliated traditions and interpretations, all the while addressing specific concerns of the author(s). Drawing all of these disparate threads into one account, it surely gave the MT Genesis renewed relevance and interest for Jews of the Second Temple period.

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Daniel Machiela

Genesis Rabbah

→ Bereshit Rabbah (BerR)

Genesis, Book of

- I. Hebrew Bible/Old Testament
- II. New Testament
- III. Judaism
- IV. Christianity
- V. Islam
- VI. Literature
- VII. Visual Arts
- VIII. Music
- IX. Film

I. Hebrew Bible/Old Testament

The book of Genesis (Heb. *bərēšīt*, “in the beginning”) has received abundant Jewish, Christian, Muslim, and philosophical commentaries and has

inspired thousands of artists. It is probably the best-known book of the Bible. The book of Genesis shares with many religions important motifs such as an account of the creation of the universe and the origins of humanity. Genesis also explores major anthropological and theological themes like the autonomy of humankind in regard to the gods, the origin of evil, the development of human civilization, the relation to foreigners, and the interplay of God and Israel’s ancestors. The book can easily be divided into two parts: Genesis 1–11 relates all kinds of “origins,” from the creation of the world to the origins of different human languages. Genesis 12–50 tells the story of the ancestors of Israel and their neighbors: Abraham and Sarah, Isaac and Rebekah, Jacob, Rachel and Leah, and Joseph and all their families. The book receives its overall structure through a system of genealogical titles, starting with: “these are the toledot (generations) of...”: Genesis 2:4; 5:1 (“the book of the generations”); 6:9; 10:1; 11:10; 11:27; 25:12; 25:19; 36:1, 9; 37:2. Because of these titles that divide the book into ten sections, scholars have postulated that there was an older toledot-scroll that had been incorporated into the book of Genesis (von Rad). It is also possible, however, that this structure is due to late redactors who wanted to emphasize that Genesis is about the genealogical origins of the world and of Israel.

The Genesis story about origins opens with two creation accounts. In the first one, the focus is on the creation of the various elements of the universe. The last in the series to be created are the humans, “male” and “female” (Gen 1:26). Creation takes place in six days. On the seventh day, God (*’ēlohîm*) rests from the work of creation and thereby legitimates the institution of the Sabbath (Gen 2:1–3; see Exod 20:8–11). Genesis 1–3 contains two creation stories side by side. The first creation story of Gen 1:1–2:3 presupposes knowledge of Mesopotamian traditions and was probably written shortly after the Babylonian exile by a group of priests (P). This account insists on God’s sovereignty, who creates primarily by speaking a word of command. The creation is an ideal one (it is considered to be “very good” in 1:31) in which all creatures are vegetarians. The man and the woman are created in the “image of God” (1:27), which may be understood as a democratization of ANE royal ideology according to which the king alone is considered to be in the image of the god as a representative of the god. In Gen 1, humankind represents God in regard to all other parts of creation. The second creation account, in which God appears as YHWH *’ēlohîm*, is focused on the creation of man and woman and their transgression of the divine commandment (Gen 2:4–3:24). It starts with the creation of one human being (Adam), whose task is to work in YHWH’s garden called Eden (“delightfulness”).

After the animals are created as Adam's companions, God creates the woman out of a rib taken from Adam. The first human couple are tempted by a serpent (a creature made by God), transgress the divine commandment, and eat from the tree of the knowledge of good and evil. The following divine curses explain why humans are mortal and why there is hostility between humans and animals. The story of Cain and Abel (Gen 4) is an explanation of the origin of violence. Cain kills his brother because he cannot control his frustration, which arises because of YHWH's preference for Abel's sacrifice. This story sets the stage for the story of the flood, which starts with a comment about the violence that had spread all over the world (6: 11–13). In the biblical account of the flood in Gen 6–9, two versions are combined, a Priestly (P) account and perhaps an older one that is often qualified as "Yahwist" (J). The biblical story of the flood has many parallels with flood accounts from Mesopotamia, especially with the story of Atra-Hasis in which creation and flood are also told in one story. Contrary to the ANE parallels in which two different gods play two separate roles in the story, the monotheistic perspective of the biblical account assigns both roles to YHWH alone. YHWH is the one who decides to exterminate the world, and at the same time, YHWH informs Noah of the coming deluge so that the can build the ark and save himself and his family. The new relation between God and humankind after the flood is characterized by Noah's offering of an animal sacrifice to YHWH. From now on, humans are allowed to eat (clean) animals, but there remains a taboo on humans consuming animal blood. The three sons of Noah and their wives become the ancestors of post-diluvian humanity (Gen 10), including all the people living in the world as it was known in the 1st millennium BCE (from Greece to Mesopotamia, Egypt and other parts of Africa). Contrary to ch. 10, the story of the tower of Babel in Gen 11, explains the diversity of languages as the result of a divine intervention. YHWH is afraid that the humans who are still united by building a huge city could become "like *'lōhīm*." Therefore, YHWH confuses their languages so that they can no longer understand each other.

The transition between the narratives about the origins of humankind (Gen 1–11) and the ancestors of Israel (Gen 12–50) is marked by a genealogy in Gen 11 leading from Shem to Terah, the father of Abraham.

The patriarchs Abraham, Isaac, Jacob appear as father, son, and grandson. Joseph is presented as one of the twelve sons of Jacob. It is probable that originally Abraham, Isaac and Jacob were ancestors who were not genealogically related to one another. Abraham is located in Mamre-Hebron, Isaac is in Beersheba, and Jacob is an ancestor from the north

(Shechem). Their traditions were combined at the earliest in the 7th century BCE after the fall of Samaria in 722 BCE, when the Israelite traditions arrived in the south (Blum). According to recent scholarship, most stories about Abraham were likely written down in the 6th and 7th centuries BCE (Köckert). The main theme of the Abraham story is the barrenness of his wife Sarah and the divine promise of a descendant. In Gen 16, Ishmael, ancestor of the Arabian tribes, becomes Abraham's first son, because of his union with Sarah's maidservant Hagar. The promise of a son reappears in Gen 18 as a gift for Abraham's hospitality towards YHWH appearing in the form of three travelers. This story is linked to the famous narrative about the destruction of the wicked city of Sodom. In the conclusion of the story, Abraham's nephew Lot sleeps with his two daughters whose offspring become the ancestors of the Moabites and the Ammonites. The birth of the promised son Isaac (Gen 21) is immediately followed by the famous story of the Aqedah (the binding of Isaac) in which God asks Abraham to offer his son as a burnt offering to God. Abraham obeys, but the angel of YHWH stops the sacrifice. Instead of his son, Abraham offers a ram (Gen 22). Within the larger Abraham cycle, this story is certainly the most interpreted and most debated narrative from ancient to modern times. After the death of Sarah, Abraham takes another wife Keturah (the name meaning "incense") with whom he has an important offspring of sons representing Arabian tribes who dwell along the Incense Road (Gen 25). In the Priestly account of YHWH's covenant with Abraham (Gen 17), the ritual of circumcision that applies also to Ishmael and his offspring is explained as sign of this covenant. In insisting on the links between Abraham and Ishmael, the Priestly writer depicts Abraham as an "ecumenical ancestor" (de Pury).

The book of Genesis does not contain many stories about Isaac. Genesis 26 is a variant of the stories in Gen 12: 10–20 and Gen 20, in which Abraham presents his wife to a foreign ruler as his sister. Isaac is more important as the father of Jacob and his twin brother Esau (the ancestor of the Edomites). The Jacob narratives contain two different parts: Jacob's conflict and reconciliation with his brother Esau (Gen 27; 32–35) and his sojourn in his uncle Laban's place in Harran (Gen 29–31) where he becomes the husband of Leah and Rachel and the father of eleven sons. According to Gen 35: 18, the twelfth and last son Benjamin is born in the land of Israel. The link between the Jacob-Esau cycle and the Jacob-Laban cycle is made in Gen 28. There, Jacob becomes the founder of the sanctuary of Bethel as he flees from his brother Esau in Canaan and travels to his uncle Laban in Mesopotamia. The story of Jacob's later separation from Laban the Aramean is probably the oldest of the Jacob

traditions and may stem from the end of the 2nd millennium BCE. Originally Jacob may have been the ancestor of a group called the “sons of Jacob.” After the founding of the kingdom of Israel, Jacob came to be recognized as the ancestor of this kingdom. It is then that the story of Jacob’s wrestling match with the mysterious divine being in Gen 32:23–32 was added. In this story, Jacob’s name is changed to “Israel” because he fought with God (El). The stories about this wrestling with God and reconciliation with Esau (the ancestor of the Edomites) stem perhaps from a time when the Jacob traditions were already taken over into southern Judah, the neighbor of the Edomites. In its present form, the Jacob story presents the ancestor as a trickster (Jacob deceives his father and his brother to obtain the status of the firstborn) who is confronted by another trickster (Laban tricks Jacob into marrying his elder daughter Leah first and then serving him seven more years in order also to marry Rachel). In the end, however, Jacob also outsmarts Laban. Jacob’s final confrontation with his brother Esau in Gen 33 initially appears threatening for Jacob but ends up in reconciliation between the two enemy brothers. The move from threat to peace between Jacob and Esau is a mirror of Jacob’s encounter with God in Gen 32 as the story moves from wrestling and conflict to blessing (Gen 32:29; 33:10–11).

Genesis 37–50 contain the story of Joseph. He is no longer presented as an independent ancestor of his own people, but he is presented in the present text as one of Jacob’s sons. The style differs from the other ancestral narratives. The story that can be labeled a “novella” recounts the descent of Joseph to Egypt as the result of being sold as a slave by his brothers. In Egypt he achieves an astonishing career and becomes second-in-command next to Pharaoh. Joseph saves his brothers and father from famine and uses different strategies (in which Benjamin the youngest son appears as a new Joseph) in order to make his brothers understand that they have acted badly with him. The story ends with a reconciliation between Joseph and his brothers and the descent of the father Jacob and his sons to Egypt, where a very generous Pharaoh invites them to settle. There is much evidence that the Joseph story is not older than the 6th century BCE (Redford). It is probably a “Diaspora novella” (Römer), which legitimates the Jews living in Egypt in Persian or early Hellenistic times by showing that one can live in and integrate into the culture of a foreign land (Joseph receives an Egyptian name and marries the daughter of an Egyptian priest).

According to the traditional Documentary Hypothesis, which is still accepted by many scholars, the formation of the book of Genesis, like all narrative texts of the Pentateuch, should be explained by the compilation of the Yahwist (J), Elohist (E) and

Priestly (P) documents. These originally separate literary traditions contained parallel accounts about the origins of the world and about the ancestors of Israel, and then they were subsequently combined in several stages by different redactors. This view, however, has been challenged by a number of recent scholars who insist on the distinctive nature of the material in Genesis as compared to Exodus-Numbers. These scholars argue that the literary link between Genesis and the following books of Exodus-Numbers was created at a later stage in the formation of the Pentateuch by the Priestly (P) tradition (Schmid). In the book of Genesis, it is indeed possible that P is the first to combine the cycle of origins and the ancestral narratives through the genealogy in Gen 11:11–32 (Crüsemann). The ancestral narratives first arose independently of one another. The Jacob traditions are likely the oldest, arose separately, and then were later joined together into a cohesive Jacob cycle of traditions (Blum; Carr). The latest addition to the book of Genesis may be the Joseph novella, which originated in the Persian period. In any case, the book of Genesis is much more universal in scope and open to positive relationships among the nations as compared to the Moses-Exodus story that follows. This observation confirms the special status of Genesis and accounts for its popularity and fame in the history of biblical reception and interpretation.

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Thomas Römer

II. New Testament

About thirty verses of Genesis are explicitly quoted in the NT, with at least twice that number of significant allusions. The majority focus on the promises made to Abraham in Gen 12; 15; 17–18 and, in particular, his response of faith in Gen 15:6 (Rom 4:3, 9, 22; Gal 3:6; Jas 2:23). Also important are the Isaac and Ishmael chapters (Gen 21–22), which are used to illustrate God's elective choices (Rom 9:6–9; Gal 4:21–31) and the depth of Abraham's faith in being willing to sacrifice his son Isaac (Heb 11:17–19; Jas 2:20–24). The creation stories are used to support the importance of marriage (Matt 19:4–6; Mark 10:6–9; 1 Cor 6:16; Eph 5:31) while God "resting" on the seventh day (Gen 2:2) becomes a sign that there is a future "rest" for the people of God (Heb 4:4–11). Adam's creation from dust suggests to Paul a future existence that is imperishable (1 Cor 15:48–49), while the effects of Adam's sin on the human race are used to explain how Christ's obedience brings salvation to the human race (Rom 5:18). Interestingly, when the author of 1 Timothy wants to make a point about gender roles, he can say that "Adam was not deceived, but the woman was deceived" (1 Tim 2:14) – one of the reasons why some scholars doubt that Paul was the author of the Pastoral Epistles. Other characters from Genesis referred to in the NT include Enoch (Heb 11:5; Jud 1:14), Noah (Matt 24:37; Heb 11:7; 1 Pet 3:20; 2 Pet 2:5), Melchizedek (Heb 7:1–17), Jacob (John 4:5; Heb 11:21) and Judah (Matt 1:3; Heb 7:14; Rev 5:5).

1. Adam. Matthew's genealogy begins with Abraham but Luke goes back to "Adam, son of God" (Luke 3:38). Most scholars think this is part of a strategy to include Gentiles, just as Luke 3:6 extends the quotation of Isa 40:3 (Matt 3:3; Mark 1:3; John 1:23) to v. 5 ("and all flesh shall see the salvation of God"). In 1 Cor 15, Paul explains the nature of the resurrection body by drawing on the Adam story. Genesis 2:7 calls Adam "a living being" but Paul says that Christ is a "life-giving Spirit" (1 Cor 15:45). Adam is a "man of dust" but Christ is "from heaven." Paul then draws on Gen 1 to argue that just as each species (as we would say) has a body/form appropriate to its environment, so there will be a body/form appropriate for life after death. If this sounds close to the gnostic view that flesh and spirit are antithetical, he draws back from that by speaking of a "spiritual body" (σῶμα πνευματικόν): "It is sown a physical body, it is raised a spiritual body. If there is a physical body, there is also a spiritual body" (1 Cor 15:44).

Paul extends his Adam-Christ comparison in Rom 5:12–21, where Adam is said to be a "type of the one who was to come" (Rom 5:14). This is surprising since one would have expected Paul to say that Christ was the very opposite of Adam. Indeed, most of the exposition that follows says just

that. Adam disobeyed God but Christ was obedient. Adam brought death to humanity but Christ brought grace. Adam brought condemnation to all people but Christ brought justification and life. The "typology" is not that Adam and Christ are alike in what they did or in the consequences that followed. They are alike in that they are both representative figures: their actions affect those who identify with them and hence one is either "in Adam" or "in Christ." Some scholars have also suggested that the Adam story lies behind texts such as Rom 1:23 ("exchanged the glory of the immortal God for images resembling a mortal human being or birds or four-footed animals or reptiles") and Rom 7:9–10 ("I was once alive apart from the law, but when the commandment came, sin revived and I died, and the very commandment that promised life proved to be death to me").

2. Abraham. In the Gospels, Matthew traces Jesus' genealogy back to Abraham (Matt 1:2, 17) and faithful Jews are called "sons" or "daughters" of Abraham (Luke 13:16; 19:9). The promises made to him are remembered in the songs of Mary (Luke 1:55) and Zechariah (Luke 1:73) and he will be there to meet the faithful when they die (Luke 16:22). There is a summary of his accomplishments in Acts 7:2–8 and Heb 11:8–19, particularly his trust that God would lead him to a new homeland and give him a son, despite the fact that his wife Sarah was barren. Indeed, his faith that God could bring life from Sarah's "dead" womb is a parallel to Christian faith, which is founded on the belief that God raised Jesus from the dead (Heb 11:19), a point Paul also made (Rom 4:17–21).

Abraham's willingness to sacrifice his son is called a "test" in Heb 11:17, not only as a matter of sorrow but also because Isaac was the promised heir. James also refers to this incident as evidence that a "person is justified by works and not by faith alone" (Jas 2:24). This was problematic during the Reformation, where Paul's doctrine of "justification by faith" was central, but many scholars today think it can be adequately explained by their different circumstances. James was concerned about the hypocrisy of those who professed faith but showed little concern for the needs of the poor. His rhetorical purpose was to show that such faith is not true faith at all. Paul's concern was that some Jewish Christians were insisting that Gentile Christians must be circumcised in order to join the people of God (Acts 15:1). Genesis 17:12–13 calls circumcision an "everlasting" sign of the covenant and even applies it to foreigners living in their midst. From the perspective of these Jewish Christians, how could the repentance and faith of these Gentiles be genuine if they cared so little about God's commandments? Paul saw it differently. He believed that the promises made to Abraham were universal ("all the families of the earth shall be blessed," Gen

12:3) and that the laws that followed (including circumcision) had a particular role in salvation history (Gal 3:17). Paul therefore argues that since we are living in the time of fulfilment and God is bringing Gentiles to faith, such “identity markers” (Dunn: 334–89) should be set aside.

3. Abraham’s Two Sons and Election. If, as Paul holds, Gentiles can be included in the people of God without needing to be circumcised, then God appears to be contradicting God’s own commandments. Can such a God be trusted? This is the topic of Rom 9–11, where Paul begins by noting that Ishmael was also a son of Abraham but was not part of the promised line. He deduces from this that it is not biological descent that defines the people of God but God’s call or election. This is even clearer if we move to the next generation, Paul says, for Rebecca’s sons (Jacob and Esau) were twins. This demonstrates that God’s call is not based on achievement or even character “so that God’s purpose of election might continue” (Rom 9:11). In his letter to the Galatians, his use of Isaac and Ishmael is particularly daring. The two sons are an allegory (Gal 4:24) of two types of people: those who are free and those who are slaves. Since he thinks the demand for circumcision is a form of enslavement, he suggests that the Jewish Christians insisting on circumcision are children of the slave woman, even though they think of themselves as descendants of Sarah. In contrast, it is Christians like Paul himself and his Gentile converts who are free and are therefore truly the children of Sarah (Gal 4:31).

4. Miscellaneous. Noah is mentioned eight times in the NT. In Matt 24:37–39 (par. Luke 17:26–27), the coming of the Son of Man is likened to Noah and the flood, where people were oblivious of the cataclysm that was about to engulf them. Noah’s faith is extolled in Heb 11:7 and 2 Pet 2:5, but a text that has perplexed many commentators is 1 Pet 3:19–20, where Christ is said to have made a “proclamation to the spirits in prison, who in former times did not obey, when God waited patiently in the days of Noah.” Are these “spirits in prison” those who were killed in the flood, and if so, are they being offered a second chance or is their judgement being confirmed? A view held by many today is that the author is drawing on traditions found in texts such as *1 En.* that the “spirits in prison” are not dead people but “fallen angels” (Rev 12:9), who according to Gen 6:1–4, had sex with women and produced a race of giants (see Dalton; Horrell).

The mysterious figure of Melchizedek, “priest of God Most High” (Gen 14:18), seems an unlikely model for Christ’s priesthood but that is what is argued in Heb 7. Aided by Ps 110:4 (“You are a priest forever according to the order of Melchizedek”), the author makes the following points: (1) Abraham’s gifts to Melchizedek were the equivalent of paying tithes; (2) Levi paid tithes to Melchizedek

because Levi was in a sense “in the loins of his ancestor” at the time; (3) Scripture therefore knows of two priesthoods; hence (4) Jesus belongs to the priesthood of Melchizedek since he was manifestly not of the tribe of Levi. As strange as this argument may seem, one of the DSS (11QMelch) gives Melchizedek a role in the final judgement, showing that such speculations were “in the air.”

Revelation makes much use of Genesis. In Rev 5:5, Jesus is called the “Lion of the tribe of Judah,” a reference to Jacob’s words to his sons in Gen 49. Here, Judah is called a “lion’s whelp” and the promise is made that the “scepter shall not depart from Judah, nor the ruler’s staff from between his feet, until tribute comes to him; and the obedience of the peoples is his” (Gen 49:10). Jesus is this messianic victor, but his victory is by death and resurrection. In Rev 12, the dragon who sought to kill Jesus and now persecutes his followers is identified as the “ancient serpent, who is called the Devil and Satan, the deceiver of the whole world” (Rev 12:9). The book goes on to narrate the final destruction of the dragon/serpent in the lake of fire and the establishment of the New Jerusalem, where there will be no more death (Rev 21:4) and no more curse (Rev 22:3). There is a river that runs through the city and the “tree of life with its twelve kinds of fruit, producing its fruit each month; and the leaves of the tree are for the healing of the nations” (Rev 22:2). John’s vision is not only of a “paradise restored” but of a “paradise transformed.”

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Steve Moyise

III. Judaism

■ Second Temple and Hellenistic Judaism ■ Rabbinic Judaism ■ Medieval Judaism ■ Medieval Judaism: Mysticism ■ Modern Judaism ■ Jewish Liturgy

A. Second Temple and Hellenistic Judaism

The book of Genesis is a work of major importance in the Second Temple period. As one of the five books of Moses, it was copied, reworked and paraphrased, and interpreted in numerous ways. Its importance may be gauged from the fact that it was found in nineteen copies among the DSS (Crawford 2012: 353). In what follows we will examine the use

of Genesis in the following major authors and/or works: LXX Genesis, *Enoch* and *Aramaic Levi*, *Jubilees*, the *Genesis Apocryphon*, Philo, the *Liber Antiquitatum Biblicarum*, and Josephus.

1. LXX Genesis. Genesis was translated into Greek in Egypt, mostly likely in Alexandria, in the mid-3rd century BCE. In translation parlance it uses formal rather than dynamic equivalences, often constructing neologisms for Hebrew terms that lack a clear Greek counterpart. The LXX Genesis was used by Philo, Josephus, and the early Christian church as a main source of scripture.

2. *Enoch* and *Aramaic Levi*. These works are parabiblical texts, written in Aramaic, from no later than the late 3rd century BCE. Their composers used Genesis extensively.

First Enoch in its Ethiopic form consists of five booklets: the *Book of the Watchers* (chs. 1–36), the *Book of Parables* (chs. 37–71), the *Astronomical Book* (chs. 72–82), the *Dream Visions* (chs. 83–90), and the *Epistle of Enoch* (chs. 91–105, with an appendix on the birth of Noah). Four of these five, with the exception of the *Parables*, were found at Qumran in their original Aramaic. A sixth booklet, the *Book of Giants*, was discovered at Qumran.

Enoch uses two Genesis passages as a starting point for its extensive paraphrase on the life and visions of Enoch. Genesis 5:21–24 gives the biography of the antediluvian patriarch. Enoch differs from the other ancestors in two key ways: he only lives to be 365, the length in days of the solar year, and he does not die, but “walks with God,” who “takes” him. These anomalies allow the author to place Enoch in the heavenly realm, the privileged recipient of esoteric divine revelations that are passed on to his descendants; they also furnish the basis for extensive astronomical lore and the validation of a 365-day lunisolar calendar.

The second passage, Gen 6:1–4, is the story in which the “sons of God” (angels) mate with human women and produce giant offspring. In *Enoch* these angels are the Watchers, and they and their offspring become the chief cause of sin and suffering among human beings. The theology of *Enoch* was a major influence in Second Temple Judaism, seen especially in *Jubilees*, the *Genesis Apocryphon*, and the DSS.

The *Aramaic Levi Document* is based on the life of the patriarch Levi in Genesis. In *Genesis Levi* is not portrayed as particularly righteous (cf. Gen 49:5–7), and his role as the ancestor of the priestly tribe is never mentioned. The *Document* remedies these deficiencies by portraying Levi as a morally upright individual who receives the priesthood through his ancestors Noah and Abraham.

3. *Jubilees*. *Jubilees* is a narrative work written in Hebrew in the mid-2nd century BCE, purporting to be part of God’s revelation to Moses on Mt. Sinai. It is based on Genesis and Exod 1–16, maintaining their

narrative sequence, but altering events and character portrayals in keeping with its theology. It overlays the entire Genesis narrative with a precise chronological scheme in which time is measured in “weeks of years” (seven years equals one week), seven of which make up a “jubilee” of forty-nine years. This chronology solves several chronological problems in Genesis, especially in chs. 5, 7 and 11.

Further, *Jubilees* retrojects into the patriarchal period cultic laws and laws regarding sexual conduct and intermarriage. Thus Noah is the first to celebrate the Festival of Weeks (*Jub.* 6:20), Abraham celebrates Tabernacles (*Jub.* 16:20–31), and Jacob keeps the Day of Atonement (*Jub.* 34:18–19).

While the patriarchs in Genesis, particularly Jacob and his sons, are not always portrayed as particularly righteous (cf. e.g., Gen 27:18–29; 34:25–31; 38:1–26), in *Jubilees* the ancestors are uniformly upright. Thus, e.g., *Jubilees* praises the conduct of Simeon and Levi for rescuing their sister Dinah from sexual relations with Gentiles, thus preserving Israel’s genealogical integrity (*Jub.* 30:15–16). Indeed, Levi earns the priesthood for his meritorious conduct in this episode (*Jub.* 30:18–21).

4. *Genesis Apocryphon*. The *Genesis Apocryphon* was discovered in one fragmentary manuscript in Cave 1, Qumran. The scroll is written in Aramaic, and its paleographic date lies between 25 BCE and 50 CE (Crawford 2012: 358). While opinions differ as to its date of composition, it appears to use both Enoch and *Jubilees* as sources, so must date after those two compositions (Crawford 2008: 106).

The *Apocryphon* retells selected stories from Genesis. It falls into two parts. The first, cols. 0–17, relates incidents concerning Noah, while the second part, cols. 19–22, concerns Abraham. The styles of the two sections are different enough to suggest different authors for each.

Section One commences with the fallen state of the world before the birth of Noah, and his miraculous appearance at birth (Gen 5–6). Noah’s looks are unusual enough to cause his father Lamech to doubt his parentage; despite a spirited defense from his wife Bitenosh, Lamech goes to his grandfather Enoch for reassurance. There follows a first person narrative by Noah, loosely based on Gen 6–9, in which Noah receives dream visions, gives a brief account of the flood, and divides the earth between his three sons. Noah is portrayed as a righteous prophet, closely associated with God’s plans.

The second part, concerning Abraham, retells Gen 12–15, beginning with Abraham’s sojourn in Egypt. This section’s outstanding characteristic is the description of Sarah’s beauty, which causes Pharaoh to abduct her into his harem (col. 20, lines 2–8). This description, which is highly poetic, follows a trend in Second Temple literature towards greater, almost prurient, interest in female beauty (cf. Judith, LXX Esther, Susanna). The *Apocryphon*

breaks off in the midst of its narration of Gen 15; the ending is not extant.

5. Philo. Sterling calls Genesis “the most significant book” for the Alexandrian Jewish philosopher, who wrote forty-three treatises on Genesis in his three commentary series (Sterling: 427). According to another set of calculations, Philo cites or alludes to Genesis 4,303 times in his writings, more than double that of any other book (Sterling: 437). For Philo, Genesis is not only the beginning of Scripture, but contains in it all that is necessary to understand Scripture.

The *Questions and Answers on Genesis and Exodus*, only partially extant in Armenian and Latin, contains four books on Genesis. The Armenian version contains a running commentary on Gen 2:4–28:9. The *Allegorical Commentary* includes a running commentary (with some omissions) on Gen 2:1–18:2, as well as some interpretations of later passages. The *Exposition on the Law*, Philo’s masterwork, covers the entire Pentateuch, beginning with Gen 1. Philo devoted five of its fifteen treatises to Genesis.

Philo understands Genesis to have two major sections: creation and all that pertains to it, and the lives of the ancestors. He reads Genesis allegorically, as having to do with the soul; it explains how to cultivate virtue and progress towards an experience of the divine. Thus Abraham’s migration from Haran to Canaan illustrates his progress towards virtue (Sterling: 440). In the biographical sections of the *Exposition*, the *Lives*, he treats the ancestors as representing types of virtue. For example, Enoch represents repentance, while Noah represents perfection.

6. Liber Antiquitatem Biblicarum (L.A.B.). Pseudo-Philo’s *Liber Antiquitatem Biblicarum*, a Jewish work which survives only in Latin, dates to the 1st century CE (Burnette-Bletsch: 447). Although the main focus of the book is the Exodus and Judges traditions, chs. 1–8 do offer a sequential retelling of Genesis. The emphasis is on genealogical material and census lists rather than narrative. Later chapters of *L.A.B.* also make reference to Genesis through quotations and allusions. An emphasis on God’s redemptive activity through chosen ancestors can be discerned. Seth and his descendant Noah, one of God’s agents of redemption, are given prominence. In the survival of Noah’s family, and thus the human race, divine mercy is emphasized over divine justice (Burnette-Bletsch: 459).

Abram is also depicted as an agent of God’s redemption in response to humanity’s sinfulness. He receives more attention than any other ancestor as a result. In exegetical material found only in *L.A.B.*, the Tower of Babel narrative in Gen 11 and Abram’s call in Gen 12 are connected when Abram’s life is threatened for refusing to participate in building the Tower. He is condemned to be burned in the brick kiln, but is rescued by God (*L.A.B.* 6). The rest

of Gen 12–50 is treated in a very compressed fashion in *L.A.B.* 8.

7. Josephus. Josephus, the 1st-century CE Jewish historian, retells Genesis in his *Jewish Antiquities* 1.27–2.200. As is well known, Josephus used a variety of sources and techniques in his work, his main source being the book of Genesis itself. All but one of Genesis’ fifty chapters has a content parallel in the *Antiquities* (Begg: 303). Josephus probably utilized several text forms of Genesis, in Hebrew, Greek, and Aramaic (Feldman: 23–31).

While Josephus follows his narrative line fairly faithfully, he amplifies and rearranges his source, often filling in the Genesis narrative with moral lessons and speculations on motivations and/or emotional states, while providing speeches for specific characters. He also omits “unedifying” episodes, the most prominent being the story of the patriarch Judah’s sexual encounter with his daughter-in-law Tamar (Gen 38). He likewise omits many anthropomorphic references to God, e.g., God’s walking in the garden in Gen 2:8. Josephus’ goal is an “improved” version of Genesis that will appeal to his Roman audience, and put the Jewish tradition in the best possible light.

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Sidnie White Crawford

B. Rabbinic Judaism

According to the rabbis, the legal instruction of the HB begins only with Exod 12:1 “This month shall mark for you the beginning of months” (see *TanB Bereshit* 11; Rashi on Gen 1:1). For this reason, no work of halakhic midrash for the biblical book of Genesis exists, in contrast to the other pentateuchal books, for which there are midrashim such as the *Mekhiltot* on Exodus, *Sifra* on Leviticus and *Sifrei* on Numbers and Deuteronomy, which contain primarily collections of tannaitic legal traditions.

The rabbis elaborated on all parts of the received text of Genesis, including the creation, Adam and Eve, the expulsion from the garden, Cain and

Abel, Noah and the flood, the tower of Babel, Abraham and Isaac, Jacob and Esau, and the story of Joseph. The story of the binding of Isaac (Heb. *‘aqedah*) related in Gen 22 seems to have been particularly meaningful to the rabbis. This narrative and the preceding story of the birth of Isaac were chosen as the pentateuchal readings for the two days of Rosh Hashanah (the New Year). The *Aqedah* is also incorporated into the daily morning liturgy. The various sibling rivalries recorded in Genesis received considerable rabbinic attention. For example, the conflict between Jacob and Esau was seen as symbolic of the conflict between the Jewish people and Rome (both pagan and Christian).

The earliest collection of midrashic material on Genesis that has been preserved is *Bereshit Rabbah* (on the *Rabbah* midrashim see Bregman 1997), which includes tannaïtic and amoraic traditions, and seems to have been redacted in Palestine in the 5th century CE (Stemberger). The *Tanḥuma-Yelammedenu* midrashim (see Bregman 2003) include a great deal of additional material on the biblical book of Genesis, most of which was redacted later. These works include *Tanḥuma* (the so-called “standard” or “printed” version, first printed in Constantinople in 1520/22 and frequently reissued), *Tanḥuma Buber* (ed. S. Buber; Vilna 1885) and many fragmentary versions and quotations, only some of which have been published (see Bregman 2003: ch. 2). *Aggadat Bereshit* (ca. 10th cent.) is a somewhat unique midrashic work, containing twenty-eight chapters on Genesis, each containing three distinct components: (1) a composite homily on a triennial lection from Genesis, followed by (2) a composite homily on a prophetic reading (perhaps a related *haftarah*), followed by (3) a composite homily on a psalm. This work may have adapted midrashic material from *Tanḥuma Buber* (Teugels; Stemberger: 311–12). *Bereshit Rabbati*, published from a unique manuscript by Chanoch Albeck (Jerusalem 1940) is thought to be an abridged version of a midrashic work on Genesis by Moses Ha-Darshan who lived in Narbonne, France in the first half of the 11th century. Unlike midrashic works from the classical rabbinic period, *Bereshit Rabbati* makes extensive use of traditions found in second temple literature.

Important modern collections of midrashic material on Genesis include M. Kasher’s *Torah Sheleimah*, an anthology of rabbinic comments on the Pentateuch, arranged verse by verse, and Ginzberg’s *Legends of the Jews*, a retelling of biblical history, based on rabbinic sources.

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Marc Bregman

C. Medieval Judaism

The book of Genesis is one of the most commented upon books in the history of Jewish biblical exegesis. This is not only due to the grand introduction it provides to the Bible, but also due to its fascinating narratives about the origin of the universe and humankind, Israel’s patriarchs and matriarchs and their family history. Over the centuries, these narratives entered the hearts of the Jewish people who regularly heard them in the synagogue as part of the yearly Torah reading cycle, and informed the thoughts of sages and students who were fully engaged in the life of Torah study. Aside from the development of the commentary genre as a whole (see “Commentaries (Genre)”; “Interpretation, History of”) the medieval period of Jewish biblical exegesis is distinguished from the ancient period by the growing attention interpreters paid to emotions, personality traits, the psychology of the biblical characters, and the social reality of the stories. This is especially evident in the case of Genesis, whose terse narratives, such as the *Aqedah* (The Binding of Isaac, Gen 22) and longer cycles (such as the “novella” of Joseph and his brothers, Gen 37–50) are masterpieces of world literature. Jewish exegetes composed a considerable number of commentaries on Genesis during the medieval period. Current scholarship differentiates between the works produced in the Islamic world (the entire Near East, North Africa, and Muslim Spain) and those produced in the Christian realm (Byzantium, the Rhineland, Northern Spain, and Provence). There is also an inner-Jewish social/theological division between Rabbanite and Karaitic commentators. While in the Islamic realm the latter were particularly dominant, their coreligionists in the Christian realm were often satisfied with adaptive translations of the Arabic commentaries, especially those of Yefet ben ‘Eli (10th cent.). The Rabbanites, on the other hand, were particularly productive in the Christian realm (Spain and Northern France), while they appear to have composed less under Islam.

1. The Islamic Realm. A. Rabbanite Commentaries. One of the most influential commentators in the Islamic realm was Saadia Gaon (882–942), who composed an Arabic translation of the Pentateuch (known as the *Tafsīr*, or *al-Tafsīr al-Basīf*). This translation contained interpretive elements that followed (inter alia) the Aramaic Targum Onqelos, especially with regard to anthropomorphisms. Saadia generally attempted to harmonize the literal sense

of the text of the Torah with the principles of rational speculation on the one hand and rabbinic tradition on the other. He also wrote a systematic “long” commentary on the Pentateuch in Arabic (designated *Sharḥ* or *al-Tafsīr al-Kabīr*). In certain manuscripts it appears immediately after his translation and in other manuscripts it appears on its own and seems to have circulated separately from his translation. Surviving portions of his long commentary on Genesis were edited and published by Zucker (1984) and Qafīḥ (1984). The Genesis translation forms part of the edition of the *Tafsīr* published by Derenbourg (1893).

Another important Genesis commentary is that of the last gaon of the Sura Academy, and Saadia’s pupil, Samuel ben Hophni (d. 1013). Samuel takes a rationalistic approach to the text and includes extensive excursuses on a variety of topics, which go far beyond the explication of the text and for which he was criticized by later exegetes. For example, his comment on Gen 41:49 (“So Joseph stored up grain in such abundance— like the sand of the sea”) includes a lengthy discourse on hoarding, and he appends to his commentary on the death of Jacob (Gen 47:29) a long discussion of the laws of death and burial.

One of the ten manuscripts containing portions of this commentary (on Gen 41–50) was edited in part by Harkavy (1879) and subsequently in its entirety by Israelsohn (1886). Another fragment was included by Zucker in his edition of Saadia’s commentary on Genesis (1984: Appendix 3). Most of this commentary was published by Greenbaum (1979).

Tanḥum ben Joseph ha-Yerushalmi (d. 1291), another important Rabbanite commentator who was active in Jerusalem and Egypt also composed an Arabic commentary on Genesis as part of his extensive commentary on the Bible known as *Kitāb al-ʿIjāz wa-ʿl-bayān* (The Book of Simplification and Elucidation). Only one manuscript containing the Genesis commentary has been preserved (in the Firkovich Collection) and remains unpublished (NLR, MS Evr.-Arab. I.4538).

B. Karaite Commentaries. Karaite commentaries were usually composed in a tripartite format, including (1) a citation (i.e., incipit) from the Hebrew verse or cluster of verses; (2) an Arabic translation; and (3) a lengthier Arabic commentary. One of the many hermeneutical innovations of the Karaites was the linkage between form/structure and meaning/content in the linguistic and literary interpretation of the biblical text and the introduction of the concept of an author-redactor (*mudawwīn*) of the biblical books (including Genesis).

Only two short passages (Gen 2:9–17; 6:5–6) from a Hebrew commentary on Genesis attributed to the 9th-century Karaite Benjamin al-Nahāwandī have survived in a single Oxford MS (BL, MS Heb.

d. 64). Daniel ben Moses al-Qūmisī (9th cent.), another central figure in early Karaite history, composed Hebrew commentaries on the books of the Pentateuch, but only tiny fragments of his Genesis commentary have so far been identified (Ginzberg 1928–29 [Gen 1:28–2:2]; Mann 1924–25 [Gen 2:18; 15:3–11; 46:8–48:2]).

In the 10th century the Karaites had switched to Arabic as their main medium of exegetical expression. Yaʿqūb al-Qirqisānī (10th cent.), the towering Karaite polymath who lived in Baghdad, composed an extensive commentary on the narrative portions of the Torah, entitled *Kitāb al-Riyād wa-ʿl-ḥadāʾiq* (The Book of Parks and Gardens), prefaced by an introduction in which he enumerates thirty-seven hermeneutical propositions (*funūn*), which latter was partially published by Hirschfeld (1918). His commentary on Genesis (*Tafsīr Bereshit*) was either part of this work, or a separate composition. It reflects the author’s strong inclination towards philosophical and theological reflection (for a sample, see Chiesa).

Jerusalem Karaite Yefet ben Eli’s (d. ca. 1000) extensive exegetical oeuvre is marked by a definite inclination towards rational, linguistic-contextual and literary-structural analysis of the biblical text, though he was not averse to citing midrashic interpretations which did not conflict with his hermeneutical agenda (Frank 2007). He considered the book of Genesis, with its complex narrative structure and unique exposition of information about past events – including the occasional deliberate chronological disruption – to be the ideal form of scriptural composition, i.e., its literary form was carefully and painstakingly shaped so as to convey its meanings and intentions in the best possible way (Goldstein 2010; Polliack 2012b; Zawanowska 2012). Among the most original of Yefet’s exegetical contributions was his development of the concept of the biblical author-redactor or compiler-editor (*mudawwīn*), which served him as a tool for studying internal textual phenomena and the external historical context of the creation of particular biblical books. In his commentary on Genesis, Yefet incorporated knowledge from various fields of study, such as grammar, lexicography, rhetoric, history, geography, philosophy, and even what we today define as culture and psychology. Yefet’s portrays biblical characters – both male and female – with great psychological insight as dynamically changing and multifaceted individuals (Zawanowska 2008). Portions of Yefet’s Genesis commentary have been edited and published by Butbul and Stroumsa (2000 [Gen 1:1–5]) and Zawanowska (2012 [Gen 11:10–25:18]).

Other 10th-century Jerusalem Karaites who produced commentaries on Genesis include Sahl ben Matsliāḥ (three manuscripts; MSS SP NLR Evr.-Arab. I 3307, 3308, 4760, and possibly also 4633)

and Salmon ben Jeroham (one manuscript of eight poorly preserved folios: MS SP NLR Evr.-Arab. I 157). The few surviving portions of Sahl's commentary on Genesis reflect the work of a concise and less sophisticated exegete than Yefet. He does not attempt to provide his reader with a comprehensive, evaluative overview of existing interpretations, nor does he elaborate on the literary structure of this book, though he also cites selected opinions of other exegetes and uses the same exegetical terminology as Yefet and other Karaites of the time. Yūsuf ibn Nūh's commentary on the Torah (including Genesis) has survived in Abu 'l-Faraj Hārūn's abridged adaptation, known as the *Talkhīṣ*, and has been preserved in several manuscripts. Its main focus is lexical-grammatical, though it also bears testimony to the authors' acquaintance with Islamic rationalist religious thought (Goldstein 2011). The *Talkhīṣ*, similar to Yefet's work, reflects a developed literary consciousness, as when its authors discuss the role of the biblical *mudawwīn* or analyze the overall literary structure of the book of Genesis.

Another Karaite scholar active during the 10th century, David ben Abraham al-Fāsī, is best known for his monumental Hebrew-Arabic Dictionary of the Bible, *Kitāb Jāmi' al-alfāz* (edited by Skoss 1936–45), which contains many lexicographical, grammatical, and exegetical comments pertaining to Genesis.

The 11th-century Karaite interpreters of Jerusalem also produced Arabic translations and commentaries on Genesis that have been preserved in a considerable number of manuscripts, including those by Yeshu'ah ben Judah (of a clearly philosophical and linguistic-contextual character) and 'Alī ben Sulaymān. The latter's commentary on Genesis was edited by Skoss (1928).

2. The Christian Realm. A. The Northern-French School. In the mid-11th and 12th centuries there emerged in northern France a school of literal Jewish interpretation, sometimes known as the *peshat* school of exegetes. The towering, pioneering figure of this school was Rashi (Solomon ben Isaac; 1040–1105). His commentary on the Bible, and especially the Torah became a standard work among the communities of the Christian realm, circulating for hundreds of years in hundreds of manuscripts and finally becoming the first Jewish text to be set in print (Reggio di Calabria, 1475). The commentary was highly successful and popular because of its ability to mediate between the midrashic tradition and the new methods and sensibilities of the *peshat* school.

The success of Rashi's commentary on Genesis is also partly due to its clear and concise Hebrew, and its focus on small thematic units of a verse or a few verses rather than larger and more complex literary units. Rashi's anti-Christian polemic in defense of Judaism may also have influenced its popu-

larity: he extols the land and people of Israel and consistently refrains from criticizing the patriarchs and matriarchs. The purpose of the story of creation, for example, is to inform the nations of God's control over the universe and his decision to give the land of Israel to the people of Israel (Gen 1:1); in another instance its purpose is to pave the way for the giving of the Torah to Israel (1:31). God's covenant with Israel is eternal (15:10); Esau and his moral defects (often derived from midrashic sources) symbolize Christianity (25:11, 33:16, 36:2, 48:22; 49:5; see Touitou 1990).

Rashi's grandson, Rashbam (1080–1158) explains Genesis as part of the wider structure of the Pentateuch: whereas its legal parts are the most important, and were dictated to Moses by God, the book of Genesis and other narrative parts of the Torah were meant to serve and illustrate these parts. The story of creation, for instance, is intended to justify the keeping of the Sabbath, whose legal stipulations appear only later on in the Torah (comm. on Gen 1:1). Moreover, as stated by him six times throughout his commentary on the book, Genesis was not dictated by God to Moses but written by Moses himself (comm. on Gen 1:1; 1:27; 19:37; 36:24; 37:2). Scholars have explained the secondary status assigned by Rashbam to the narratives of Genesis, as opposed to the legal sections of the Pentateuch, as part of his anti-Christian polemic in defense of Judaism's praxis of the commandments.

Joseph Bekhor Shor was among the students of Rashbam and his brother Rabbi Tam (both grandchildren of Rashi). Yet unlike his predecessors in the northern French school, Bekhor Shor was inclined to bridge both literal and non-literal interpretations in his commentary on Genesis. His attention to biblical style, the psychology of the characters, and socio-historical elements in the narratives are particularly evident. He also refers at least twice to the hand of an "editor" (*ba'al ha-sefer*) (comm. on Gen 32:21; 35:20). His commentary on the Pentateuch has survived in one single manuscript (Munich, SB Cod. Heb. 52), edited by Jellinek et al. (1856–1927), Gad (1956), Nevo (1994), and most recently by M. Cohen.

B. The Spanish School. Abraham ibn Ezra's (ca. 1089–1064) Torah commentary deals mainly with linguistic matters. Its style is often dry and succinct. In some instances he polemicalizes with the midrashic tradition through cryptic comments. A famous example is his comment on the anachronistic sentence in Gen 12:5 ("and the Canaanites were then in the land"), which he infers was added by an editor/compiler after the book's composition. Ibn Ezra wrote two commentaries on Genesis, one long, one short. Only the first fourteen chapters of the long commentary have survived. In this commentary he separated the grammatical comments from the content matter of his exegesis and included

philosophical and scientific comments. It was edited by Friedländer (1877) with an appended commentary by one of Ibn Ezra's pupils to Gen 48–50. Recently both commentaries on Genesis have appeared in the annotated critical edition by Weiser (1976). The short commentary on Genesis was also included by Cohen in Bar-Ilan's "Haketer" Rabbinic Bible.

The great Spanish exegete, Moses ben Naḥman, (Naḥmanides; 1194–1274), also produced an important commentary on the Torah. It tends to combine the insights of the Northern French and Spanish schools and often reacts to the commentaries of Rashi and Ibn Ezra. Theological matters are addressed in detail, which accounts for the commentary's length. One of the exegetical principles applied by Naḥmanides in his exegesis of Genesis is *ma'aseh avot siman la-banim* (the deeds of the fathers are a sign for the children), whereby the events in the lives of Israel's forefathers are perceived as predictive of what will befall future generations (Funkenstein). Thus, for instance, Isaac's digging of the wells (Gen 26) is interpreted as an allusion to the building of the first and second temples, in a sense similar to the Christian principle of prefiguration, or typology.

C. The Provençal School. The Qimḥi family emigrated from Spain to Provence in the middle of the 12th century. The family father, Joseph Qimḥi, served as a conduit for the transmission of the Judeo-Arabic grammatical and exegetical traditions which informed the *peshat* school in Muslim Spain to the Jewish communities in Christian Spain and Provence that were unversed in Arabic. Joseph Qimḥi introduced literal/contextual interpretation into a society that held rabbinic midrash in high esteem. He wrote a commentary on the Torah that was printed by J. Gad in his book *Ḥamishah me'orot ha-gedolim* (The Five Great Luminaries), which includes Genesis (1952). David Qimḥi (Radaq; 1160–1235) is the most famous member of the Qimḥi family. In his erudite and detailed commentary on the Torah he tends towards *peshat* exegesis, including grammatical, lexical, and syntactic observations, yet also incorporates midrashic traditions when these lend themselves to a more compelling thematic perspective. Unlike Rashi he does not incorporate or adapt midrash into his writing but refers to and cites directly from the midrashic sources themselves. His psychological and literary insights are most apparent in his commentary on Genesis, in which he emphasizes the moral dilemmas and issues raised by the narratives. This style of exegesis, which also characterizes several of the commentators who preceded him, mainly Rashi and Ibn Ezra, may reflect, in part, Qimḥi's experience as a Torah teacher of young children. His commentary on Genesis is extant in only a few manuscripts. It is included in Cohen's "Haketer" edition of the

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D. Medieval Judaism: Mysticism

Given its focus on cosmogony and primeval events, culminating in the patriarchal history and national origins of Israel, the book of Genesis was inevitably appropriated as the central matrix within and from which the essential tenets and major themes of medieval Jewish mysticism were derived and developed. A significant amount of space is thus devoted to mystical exposition of the text of Genesis in such foundational works of medieval kabbalah as the *Sefer Yetzirah* (though the work itself has been dated

to the rabbinic period), *Sefer ha-Bahir* (apparently compiled in the 12th cent.), and the most influential kabbalistic work by far, *Sefer ha-Zohar* (including the *Tiqunei ha-Zohar* and *Zohar hadash*), the majority of which was written by the school of the 13th-century Spanish mystic Moses de Leon.

Among the central themes in Genesis that figure prominently in the zoharic corpus are:

1. **Creation (Gen 1–2).** This is presented as a process of “emanation” centered in the ten *sefirot* that represent the various attributes of the otherwise absolutely transcendent God (the *Ein-Sof*). In a vein reminiscent of Platonism, the various constituent features of creation, collectively designated as the “lower world,” are portrayed as material versions of the divine *sefirot* (per Tishby: 1:277: “the divine master-copy of nondivine existence”), collectively designated as the “world above.” Thus, for example, the six days of creation represent the lower seven *sefirot* from *Hesed* to *Malkhut*; the elements of fire, water, air, and earth represent *Gevurah*, *Hesed*, *Tiferet*, and *Malkhut*; the sun and the moon represent *Tiferet* and *Malkhut*; etc. How this process of emanation squares with the traditional view of creation *ex nihilo* (which is expressly advocated in *Zohar hadash* 17b) is not clearly addressed in the zoharic corpus (see further “Creation and Cosmogony V.C: Medieval Judaism”).

2. **The Garden of Eden (Gen 3).** In two places collectively known as the *Hekhalot* (“palaces” or “halls”) section of the *Zohar* (1:38a–45b; 2:244b–262b), the celestial garden of Eden, as symbolized by the earthly one, is discussed at length. As part of the continuum of *Hekhalot* literature centered on Ezekiel’s vision of the Chariot (*ma’aseh merkavah*; see Ezek 1) – already a recondite topic in the rabbinic period (see *mHag* 2:1) – the celestial garden is depicted as the existential goal of humanity. It is the soul’s ultimate desire, following devotion in prayer or death, to ascend through the seven halls (*hekhalot*) of the celestial garden so as to apprehend the grand mystery of the Chariot (i.e., the Throne of Glory), which is identified with the *Shekhinah*, the female aspect of God (also identified with the *sefirah Malkhut*), upon which “rides” the male aspect of God (the divine man in the chariot of Ezekiel’s vision). In the overlapping imagery of this section, the four creatures of Ezekiel’s vision are equated with the four angels Michael, Gabriel, Uriel, and Raphael, who are in turn equated with the four rivers issuing from Eden (Gen 2:10), which symbolize the emanative process expressed in the lower (i.e., material) world.

3. **The Patriarchs (Gen 12–50).** The three patriarchs figure in various polysemic ways throughout the zoharic corpus. In particular, based on their personality traits and circumstances, they are symbolically associated with the first three of the lower *sefirot*: Abraham is *Hesed* (love), since he epitomizes

love, both as expressed and received (cf. Gen 24 : 12; Mic 7 : 20); Isaac is *Gevurah* (strength), which latter is equated with the “Fear” (*paḥad*) of Isaac in Gen 31 : 42; and Jacob is *Tiferet* (beauty), since he represents the “completion/perfection” (per Gen 25 : 27: “Jacob was a complete/perfect man [*ish tam*]”) of Abraham/*Hesed* and Isaac/*Gevurah*. (As to the remaining sefirotic-patriarchal symbolism: Moses is *Netsah* [eternity], Aaron is *Hod* [distinction], Joseph is *Yesod* [foundation], and David is *Malkhut* [kingship].)

In addition to the above-cited pseudepigraphical works, important contributions to the kabbalistic exegesis of Genesis were made by the personalized commentaries (in every instance as part of larger Torah commentaries) of Nahmanides (d. 1270), whose work, which appeared just before the Zohar, pioneered the application of kabbalah in the biblical commentary genre; Abraham Abulafia (d. after 1291); Menaḥem Recanati (d. ca. 1310); Bahya ben Asher (d. 1340), and Moses Alsheikh (d. ca. late 16th cent.).

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E. Modern Judaism

Building upon the contributions of earlier interpretation, modern Jewish scholarship on the book of Genesis incorporates new approaches and newly discovered sources drawn, inter alia, from science, archaeology, comparative literature, and the academic study of the Bible (Sarna: 1989). Three areas that have sparked particular interest among modern Jewish interpreters of Genesis are history, authorship, and literary technique. Modern approaches to these issues present a marked contrast to pre-modern exegesis.

1. Genesis and History. Traditional Jewish interpretation assumes, for the most part, the literal truth of the book of Genesis. Modern scholarship challenges a literal reading of the primeval history – chapters 1 : 1–11 : 27, extending from the creation of the world through the birth of Abram’s father – on the basis of advances in science and archaeology as well as the study of ancient Near Eastern mythology.

Even prior to the modern period, medieval Jewish authors such as Maimonides articulated the possibility of a symbolic reading of the stories of creation (Maimonides, *Guide* 2.25; 2.30). With the wide acceptance of the theory of evolution in the scientific community after Darwin, some traditionalist

Jewish thinkers have continued to take the creation narratives literally, but others have taken the chapters as figurative and didactic (Shuchat), while still others have tried to read scientific cosmologies into the biblical text (Aviezer; Schroeder). There remains a segment of the Orthodox community that rejects the theory of evolution on religious grounds and accepts a literal reading of primeval history (Slifkin).

The discoveries of a number of Mesopotamian mythologies that exhibit textual parallels with the early Genesis narratives have presented to modern thinkers what might be the greatest challenge to the historicity of those narratives. For example, the creation account in Gen 1–2 : 3 bears similarities to the Babylonian creation epic, *Enuma Elish*, and the story of Adam and Eve’s sin in the Garden of Eden (Gen 2 : 25–3 : 24) shows affinities with the Epic of Gilgamesh. The story of Noah exhibits a close parallel to the Mesopotamian flood story Atrahasis (Levenson).

Scholars such as Umberto Cassuto and later Nahum Sarna recognized the cultural continuity between ancient Israel and the wider ancient Near East and asserted that the primeval stories in Genesis are a polemic against the mechanistic worldview of pagan mythology. The purpose of these narratives is not to provide scientific accounts of the origin and nature of the physical world in the modern sense, but rather to convey statements of faith about the nature of God and humanity and to ensure its readers that there is divine purpose behind creation that works itself out in the human scene (Sarna; Cassuto 1941, 1953).

2. Genesis and Source Criticism. From Second Temple and rabbinic times through the modern period, the consensus among traditional interpreters has been that the book of Genesis is part of a Divine revelation to Moses. Historical-critical scholarship, however, identifies three main sources, denoted as J, E, and P, which are woven together in the book of Genesis (Levenson), a highly influential conclusion which, in one form or another, remains dominant in the academic study of the Bible. Some modern Jewish scholars in the late 19th and early 20th centuries, such as S. D. Luzzatto, U. Cassuto and D. Z. Hoffmann, engaged this “Higher Criticism” on its own terms, attempting to demonstrate that its assumptions and conclusions were unconvincing and incorrect (Luzzatto; Cassuto 1961; Hoffmann). In a novel approach, M. Breuer (1921–2007), acknowledged the divisions of the Pentateuch posited by source-criticism but argued that they are reflective of the technique of the divine author who chose to impart the Torah from multiple perspectives (Breuer). Finally, scholars of the literary school (see below) note that placing parallel accounts, like the two creation stories, in sequence in a larger narrative is a literary technique common in the ancient

Near East and rabbinic midrash (Levenson). This technique is used in order to provide different kinds of information on the same subject matter, in this case, the origin of the world and the human condition. In this vein, some traditional readers who maintain a belief in the unitary authorship of Genesis view the two creation stories as complementary rather than contradictory (Soloveitchik). Similarly, some scholars who posit the existence of multiple literary sources nevertheless maintain that these sources were purposefully combined into a unified account by a redactor (Alter 1981).

3. Genesis and the Literary Approach. Modern Jewish interpreters have focused much attention on the literary aspects of the book of Genesis, recognizing devices such as wordplay, repetition, patterning, allusion, and parallelism (Fokkelman; Fishbane; Alter; Sternberg; Berlin). Recognizing that the drawing of analogies and contrasts in narrative in the service of theological teaching was a trademark of rabbinic midrash, a number of scholars synthesize modern literary study with classical midrashic traditions (Sarna 1989; Keel).

Literary analysis has enlightened readers on themes that include sin and punishment, family dynamics, leadership and succession, and personal transformation. For example, sin and punishment has emerged as a sustained theme in the Jacob and Joseph stories: Jacob, who deceives his brother Esau by taking his blessing from Isaac (Gen 27:35), appears to undergo a series of deceptions by Laban (Gen 29:25) and by his own sons Simeon and Levi (Gen 34:13) to atone for his deceitful conduct (Frankel; Berger). Filial rivalry and qualities of leadership are explored, inter alia, in the stories of Isaac's blessing (Gen 27) and Judah and Tamar (Gen 38). The twins born of Tamar's encounter with Judah recall Jacob and Esau and the chain of paired brothers struggling over the right of the firstborn (Steinmetz; Alter 2004). Finally, key scenes in the Joseph narrative are linked by themes of recognition, disguise, and clothing metaphors, which provide a symbolic framework for the transformations that occur in the lives of Joseph and other major characters and for the fulfillment of God's design in the human realm (Sternberg).

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F. Jewish Liturgy

The book of Genesis contains many blessings, and many of these have ended up in the Jewish liturgy. Isaac's blessing to Jacob (meant for Esau) (Gen 27:28–29), as well as Isaac's second blessing to Jacob (28: 3–4) and Jacob's blessing to Joseph (49: 25–26) form part of the liturgy for the conclusion of the Sabbath, along with a whole string of blessings from different parts of the HB. Jacob's blessing of his grandchildren Ephraim and Manasseh (48: 16) is part of the liturgy recited before retiring (*Qeri'at shema' 'al ha-mitah*). The prophecy he made concerning the boys, "By you Israel will invoke blessings, saying, 'God make you like Ephraim and like Manasseh,'" (48: 20) has indeed come true, as this is the standard blessing given by parents to their male offspring, at the Friday night table and on other occasions.

The Sabbath is a reminder of the creation of the world, which according to Gen 1 took place in seven days. The concluding passage, on the Sabbath (2: 1–3) appears several times in the Sabbath liturgy, including the *qiddush*, or sanctification prayer which ushers in the Friday night meal. Indeed, creation is a frequent theme in Jewish liturgy: one of the morning blessings blesses God, "who spreads out the earth upon the water"; and the daily blessings before the Shema, morning and evening, praise God for the creation of light and darkness, day and night, and the sun and the moon.

The liturgy for the High Holidays also contains several passages from the book of Genesis. The

flood story is the first item on the list of remembrances, cases in which God remembered humankind or Israel with kindness and mercy. God remembered Noah and the people and animals on the ark and caused the waters to subside (8:1). The Aqedah or binding of Isaac (Gen 22), included in the daily morning liturgy, is also frequently recalled in the High Holiday liturgy, for the merit that it brings the people; the entire story is read from the Torah on the second day of Rosh Hashanah. The Aqedah theme was a popular one for payyotanim (religious poets) who composed poems called *'aqedot*, recited by some rites on Rosh Hashanah, elaborating on the story in a variety of ways (Elizur: 41–52).

Finally, the Karaites recite during their Sabbath morning service piyyutim composed by medieval Karaite poets (e.g., Aaron b. Joseph and Judah Gibbor), summarizing each Torah portion. Rabbanite payyotanim as well, composed piyyutim on themes from the weekly Torah portions. A sampling can be found in Elizur (19–94).

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IV. Christianity

- Greek and Latin Patristics and Orthodox Churches
- Medieval Times and Reformation Era ■ Modern Europe and America

A. Greek and Latin Patristics and Orthodox Churches

The book of Genesis is – along with the Psalms – the book from the OT that Christians in antiquity most often cited and commented upon. Several Christian commentators follow Philo of Alexandria (*Opif.* 1.1–2) in identifying Moses as its inspired author (e.g., Basil of Caesarea, *Hexameron* 1; John Chrysostom, *Hom. Gen.* 2; Ambrose of Milan, *Hex.* 1.2.5). In general, Philo's interpretation of Genesis had a great impact on Christian writers (e.g., on Origen and Ambrose). But Christian readings of Genesis interact also with contemporary Jewish interpretations (e.g., Origen [see Tzvetkova-Glaser] and Jerome [see Hayward]).

Most Christian exegetes do not refer to the Hebrew text. They use Greek (LXX, sometimes compared to the texts of Aquila, Symmachus, or Theodotion [Hexapla]), Latin, or Syriac translations. Some interpretations and discussions arise only from these translations (see Alexandre). Jerome based his commentary on the Hebrew text (*Qu. hebr. Gen.*). In the process of this work, he started his own major translation project. His Vulgate became the reference text for later Latin commentators on Genesis, whereas Augustine still used earlier Latin versions (*Vetus Latina*).

The Christian reception of Genesis begins already in the NT. But much Christian exegesis was fueled by pagan assaults on the Christian Scriptures, with reference mainly to Genesis (e.g., Celsus; see Cook: 55–112), as well as by theological debates starting in the 2nd century. Many so-called gnostic writings dealing with cosmology and anthropology are, in essence, a *relecture* of Gen 1–6 (e.g., NHC II,1; III,1; IV,1; II,3; II,4; II,5; II,6; V,5; XI,2). Other educated Christians of the 2nd century read Gen 1 in the light of contemporary philosophy (Hermogenes) or severely criticize the images of God in Gen 2–3, 12–48. Authors like Hippolytus (see Eusebius, *Hist. Eccl.* 6.22.1), Theophilus of Antioch (*Autol.* 2.12–18), Irenaeus, or Tertullian, in turn, interpret Genesis with the aim to refute these readings (see Armstrong; Holsinger-Friesen). In the 3rd century, Origen, with his commentary on Gen 1–5, argues against gnostic interpretations. At the end of the 4th century, Augustine repeatedly comments on Genesis as part of his intellectual campaign against the Manichaeans. He thereby uses both an allegorical as well as a literal reading of Genesis (*Gen. Man.* on Gen 1–3; *Gen. imp.* on Gen 1:1–26).

Patristic exegesis of Genesis focuses in particular on the account of creation in Gen 1 (Hexaemeron), as well as on the connection between the creation of the world and humanity and the fall (Gen 1–3). The narrative succession of Gen 1–3, which modern scholarship regards as a product of literary redactions, gives rise to a number of difficulties. Some ancient readers try to solve them through allegorical interpretation (Origen, *Hom. Gen.* 1; but see John Chrysostom, *Hom. Gen.* 12.5; Theodoret, *Quaest. in Gen.* 22). The narrative of Gen 1–3 is assigned a pedagogical function: it reveals the original, the actual, and the future state of humankind. Some writers regard paradise as an image of the human soul (Ambrose, *Parad.*; Augustine, *Gen. Man.* 2; but see his non-allegorical interpretation in *Gen. litt.* 8). Besides his historical explanation of Gen 3 in his commentary on Genesis, even Ephrem gives a metaphorical interpretation of paradise in his hymns. The fratricide, the flood, and the tower of Babel are interpreted as narratives which give an insight into the *conditio humana* and into God's actions with regard to human kind (e.g., Ambrose, *Cain; Noe*). In *Civ.* 11–16, Augustine reads Gen 1–48 as the history of the two *civitates*.

The Christian interest in the patriarchal narratives is part of its Jewish heritage (cf. the Jewish-Christian *T. 12 Patr.*). Although Gen 12–48 can be read as a historical narrative (Eusebius of Emesa, *Quaest. in Gen.*; Theodoret, *Quaest. in Gen.*; Ephrem, *Comm. Gen.*; but cf. Origen's discussion in *Princ.* 4.2.2–3, 12), Christian writers are interested mainly in the typological and moral meaning of the lives of the patriarchs.

In the wake of Philo, Origen reads the account from Adam to Joseph's death as an analysis of the

soul and its properties (*Comm. Gen.* frg. D 2 Metzler) and regards it as an exhortation to spiritual progress (*Hom. Gen.* 3–16; cf. Didymus, *In Genesim*). Ambrose's treatises on the patriarchs stand in the same tradition (e.g., *Abr.* 2). In contrast, authors of the so-called Antiochene School argue against allegorical interpretations of the patriarchal narratives (e.g., Theodoret, *Quaest. in Gen.* 75.2). In refuting pagan or Manichaean critics (see Cook; Augustine, *Conf.* 3.7.12–13; *Faust.* 22), many exegetes present the patriarchs and their wives as *exempla* of a Christian life (Ambrose, *Abr.* 1; *Isaac; Jac.; Jos.*; cf. Augustine's discussion in *Doctr. chr.* 3.18.26–3.22.32). Moreover, the patriarchs or episodes from their lives, refer typologically to Christ (see Melito of Sardes, *Pascha* 57–60; 69; Isaac as type: Origen, *Hom. Gen.* 8.1,6; Caesarius of Arles, *Sermon* 84.3; Gen 22 containing a type of Christ's two natures: Theodoret; *Quaest. in Gen.* 74; Gen 28:10–17 [Jacob's dream]; Justin, *Dial.* 86.2 f.; Augustine, *Civ.* 16.38; Caesarius of Arles, *Sermo* 87.2–6; Joseph as type: John Chrysostom, *Hom. Gen.* 61.10; Caesarius of Arles, *Sermo* 89.2). The history of the patriarchs refers also to the history of salvation (Irenaeus, *Haer.* 4.21.3; Ambrose, *Jos.* 9.46–14.83), or to the opposition between church and synagogue (Theodoret, *Quaest. in Gen.* 91). It contains references to the Trinity (Gen 18:1–8; Hilary, *Trin.* 4.27; Ambrose, *Exc.* 2.17; Caesarius of Arles, *Sermo* 83), or to God the Father and Son (Gen 22: Gregory of Nyssa, *Deit.*; Caesarius of Arles, *Sermo* 84.2). The patriarchs and their wives stand for the relation between Christ and the human soul or between Christ and his church (Origen, *Hom. Gen.* 10.2,5; Caesarius of Arles, *Sermon* 85). Jacob's blessings (Gen 49) receive special attention: They are interpreted as prophecies of Christ and salvation history (Hippolytus, *Ben. Is. Jac.*; Ambrose, *Patr.*; Rufinus, *Ben. patr.*; Ephrem, *Comm. Comm.* 43; a limited christological interpretation in Eusebius of Emesa's *Quaest. in Gen.*).

Many ancient Christian commentaries on Genesis are lost (e.g., the 2nd cent. Greek commentaries; the first Latin commentary by Victorinus of Pettau; Theodore of Mopsuestia's influential commentary). But fragments are preserved in later chain-commentaries (see Petit). Origen's exegesis (*Comm. Gen.* [fragments collected by Metzler]; *Hom. Gen.*) has influenced – directly or indirectly – the entire Eastern and Western tradition. Further (originally) Greek exegetical works on Genesis include: Eusebius of Emesa, *Quaest. in Gen.*; Didymus the Blind, *In Gen.*; John Chrysostom, *Serm. Gen.*, *Hom. Gen.*; Theodoret of Cyrus, *Quaest. in Gen.* Procopius of Gaza collects and synthesizes Greek traditions (*Comm. Gen.*). Ephrem's works on Genesis (*Gen. comm.*; Hymns on Paradise) are important for the Syriac tradition. The works of Ambrose, Augustine's interpretation of Genesis (in addition to the commentaries see *Conf.* 11–13; *Civ.* 11–16; *Serm.* 1–5), and Jerome's *Qu. hebr.*

Gen. have shaped the Western tradition (Bede, *In Gen.* 1; Cassiodorus, *Institutiones* 1; see O'Loughlin). The allegorical commentary and the typologies of the patriarchs by Isidore of Sevilla (*Quaest. de veteri et novo Testamento; De ortu et obitu patriarcharum*) summarize earlier interpretations. They were widespread in the 7th–9th centuries in the West.

A summarizing study on the reception history of Genesis in Christian antiquity remains a desideratum. The *Biblia Patristica* provides a helpful tool. Louth's modern chain-commentary offers a selection of patristic comments on Genesis. Similarly, von Erffa provides insights into the iconology of Genesis.

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Charlotte Köckert

B. Medieval Times and Reformation Era

The book of Genesis was one of the most studied in the Middle Ages. Attracting commentaries by a great number of the Greek and Latin fathers, it was glossed regularly in early vernacular writings. Interest in it was both historical and theological, and the profusion of memorable narratives it contains doubtless added to the attraction. The early parts provided universally accepted knowledge of the creation of the world and the very beginnings of history with Adam and Eve, the division of races through the three sons of Noah after the great flood, and the origins of the different nations with the separation of languages after Babel. The stories of Abraham and his descendants filled in the next stages of human history. In theological terms, the first part of Genesis provided an explanation for the origin of sin and for humanity's exile into the world, but also the reason for the later redemption,

which in typological terms was seen to be prefigured in many events later in the book. Commentaries and other writings both expand the biblical narrative with literal additions, and interpret it as foreshadowing events in the Gospels.

There is a focus upon specific stories: the creation of the world (augmented by the fall and confinement in hell of Lucifer and the rebel angels, which is not part of the biblical book; sometimes Lucifer is the devil, and is identified with Satan, sometimes the latter is his lieutenant); the fall of Adam and Eve; the murder of Abel by Cain; Lamech; Enoch assumed into heaven; the flood and the later tales of Noah and his children; Babel; Sodom and Gomorrah; Lot and his daughters; and the family of Abraham, especially the sacrifice of Isaac, Jacob and the birthright, and finally the story of Joseph, especially his betrayal and the would-be seduction by Potiphar's wife. These are developed and augmented in Greek and Latin commentaries and in other writings, and literal expansions from such commentaries, or from Josephus' *Jewish Antiquities*, from the *Biblical Antiquities* ascribed to Philo, or from biblical apocrypha from the early *Jubilees* to the widely-known *Life of Adam and Eve* or the later legends of the Holy Rood. Biblical expansions make their way from these and later learned sources (such as the *Hist. scholastica* of Peter Comestor) into all kinds of vernacular writings. They are often developed and inventively expanded, giving rise to what might be called a popular version of Genesis, for an audience unaware that the additions are not part of the biblical narrative. Vernacular world chronicles (such as the Irish *Lebor Gabála Éirenn*, the English *Cursor mundi* or Jans Enikel's German *Weltchronik*) typically begin with the creation, the fall (sometimes adding the apocryphal attempts by Adam and Eve to regain paradise), and the story of Noah, while the Babel narrative often occasions nationalistic comments on the origins of specific peoples and the identity of the original world language. Comparable, too, are large-scale verse Bibles such as those of Herman de Valenciennes or Macé de la Charité in French, or poems devoted to the single book itself, such as the Old and Middle English and early German Genesis-poems. Medieval European drama, especially the great drama cycles in Cornish, English, French, Italian, and German, also treat Genesis very fully. The text of the biblical book itself has ambiguities and apparent contradictions which give rise to persistent problems, such as the precise nature and numbers of beasts entering the ark, or confusions between the Sethite and Cainite succession, especially with regard to the two Lamechs. The creative children of the Cainite Lamech are sometimes vilified, but are sometimes transferred to his Sethite namesake.

Chronicles regularly take the events of the book as part of the first age of humanity, which contin-

ues (usually) down to Abraham. Literal additions as such include details of the creation of Adam as a microcosm of the world (made from eight parts, and named from the four cardinal points in Greek); and he is created (and buried) in various specific places; he was tempted with an unbiblical apple; and from his grave grows the tree of the Cross. Cain and Abel marry Calmana and Delbora (usually), and the instrument of murder varies; Lamech is blind and kills Cain by accident with an arrow, and there is much variety in descriptions of the so-called mark of Cain; Nimrod is the builder of Babel. An enormous amount of consideration down to the Renaissance and beyond is given to the precise dimensions and layout of the ark (from which the devil has to be removed, and which sometimes carries the body of Adam), to say nothing of speculation on the name of Noah's wife and those of his sons. Noah's drunkenness and the discovery of wine is also much elaborated. After the flood, the descendants of Japheth occupy Europe, Shem's Asia, while Ham, who mocked his father, is taken as the progenitor of the (therefore subservient) African peoples.

Both literature and art reflect the interest in the typological interpretation of the Genesis stories. The fall is of course set against the redemption in the context of the divine economy of history. Abel is seen as a type for the slain Christ, and less obviously the ark is also seen as a type of Christ, the opening of its side prefiguring the opening of Christ's side at the crucifixion. Much attention is paid, notably in the drama, to the potential sacrifice of Isaac, who is a type of Christ both in carrying the wood for his holocaust, and for his intended sacrifice as such; thus Christ carries the cross, and the crucifixion fulfils the sacrifice that God did not require in the event with Abraham. Joseph, finally, prefigures Christ directly in various ways: being sold by his brothers (the amount is sometimes adjusted to match the selling of Christ by Judas); being placed in the well as Christ was placed in the tomb, while Reuben later finds it empty, prefiguring the Maries. This kind of typological patterning in iconography, as found for example in the later medieval *Biblia Pauperum* tradition, would place one of these Genesis prefigurations, seen as being from the period before the giving of the law (*ante legem*), and a post-Mosaic biblical episode (*sub lege*) on either side of their *sub gratia* antitype. Thus the mocking of Noah by Ham, and that of the prophet Elisha by the children in 2 Kgs 2: 23 both prefigure the mocking of Christ.

In his lectures on Genesis in 1535–36, Martin Luther presented a primarily grammatical and detailed historical interpretation of the Hebrew text, rejecting much earlier exegesis, especially allegorization (except where he felt it was intended). He also dismissed fanciful literal accretions (such as those on the dimensions of Babel) and etymologies,

although he and later John Calvin did maintain elements such as the role of the devil in Gen 3, which they justified from elsewhere in the Bible. Luther included doctrinal elements of his own, however, arguing against saintly intercession in the context of Abraham's obedience (Gen 12:4). Calvin's 1563 commentary insists even more firmly upon the authority of Scripture alone, though he too accepts the miraculous, such as the transformation of Lot's wife, while wondering whether it affected her soul. In Reformation drama the events of Genesis are still placed regularly in conjunction with the gospel story. For example the Swiss Jacob Ruf, while retaining several non-scriptural elements in his Genesis-play, uses the wicked generation destroyed in the flood to represent a decadent Roman curia.

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Brian Murdoch

C. Modern Europe and America

In the early modern period, the book of Genesis became a touchstone for attempts to negotiate the relationship of Christian theology to new cultural, philosophical, and historical developments. As a foundational text, Genesis came under scrutiny in the mid-17th century with respect to two issues: chronology and Mosaic authorship. In the medieval and early modern periods the importance of chronology as an exegetical pursuit was reinforced by figures like Venerable Bede, Joseph Scaliger, and Bishop James Ussher. Humanist scholars outside the Protestant and Catholic mainstreams, though, reinterpreted the historical significance of Genesis. Scholars such as Hugo Grotius read Genesis criti-

cally, alongside classical sources. Influenced by ethnographic studies from travelers and explorers in the New World, Isaac La Peyrère argued influentially in his 1655 *Præ-Adamitæ* that Adam was the first Jew, not the first human being, and that the primeval history should therefore not be read along traditional lines, as universal history.

In reevaluating the nature and scope of Genesis, La Peyrère claimed that Moses did not write all of Genesis. His contemporary, Thomas Hobbes, also doubted full Mosaic authorship. Hobbes' view may be found in chapter thirty-three of the *Leviathan*, where he makes Moses the author of pentateuchal laws but not of narrative, thus recasting him as a legislator in the Israelite commonwealth. Like Hobbes, Baruch Spinoza used critical analysis to recover a philosophically plausible portrait of Moses. Citing the "a-Mosaic" passages (e.g., Gen 12:6; 22:14; Deut 3:11; 31:9) that had been noted for centuries, Spinoza argued that the Hebrew Scriptures were compiled by Ezra the scribe after the exile. In this way, he pressed the demands of an exegetical method designed to detach the theological authority of the Bible from its historically contingent form.

Christian reception of Genesis in the late 17th and early 18th centuries may be seen, to a great degree, as a reaction to the radical programs of figures like Spinoza. Seeking alternatives to the traditional view of Genesis, many interpreters pursued lines of inquiry designed to steer a course between radical skepticism and confessional credulity. One strategy for doing so was philological: to provide a critical account of its editorial history, integrate it into a broader account of textual development, and recover the book, finally, as a kind of ancient Israelite chronicle. Richard Simon and Jean Astruc are influential examples of this approach. Another strategy was to vindicate the importance of Genesis in historical-aesthetic terms, as the literary remains of an ancient Hebrew civilization. Johann David Michaelis and Robert Lowth understood biblical compositions in this way, but Johann Gottfried von Herder is the best example in this period of a fresh attempt to understand Genesis as the poetic reflex of a distinctive ancient Israelite religious consciousness.

The book of Genesis figured importantly in scholarly attempts to forge from source criticism, form criticism, and the comparative study of ancient religions a comprehensive history of Israelite religion. Julius Wellhausen portrayed this history as a movement from primitive Yahwism to the institutional, ritualistic Judaism of the Priestly writer. Hermann Gunkel also turned to Genesis to analyze the rise and development of Israelite religion. Attuned to the oral pre-history of Genesis, he saw the book as a repository of folk stories that were appropriated from older mythological traditions and

shaped into a kind of national religious charter. Gerhard von Rad synthesized earlier critical work in his influential Genesis commentary, using a holistic, tradition-historical approach to embed Genesis within a Hexateuchal framework (Genesis to Joshua).

Genesis was also an important source for philosophers and theologians. Immanuel Kant explained evil in terms of human freedom to choose among competing maxims. Like Kant, Georg Wilhelm Friedrich Hegel and Friedrich D. E. Schleiermacher emphasized the importance of human subjectivity in understanding the nature of morality. Schleiermacher rejected the doctrine of a universal Fall, understanding sin to result from the subjugation of an individual's God-consciousness. For Hegel, the sin of Adam and Eve represented a necessary step in the maturation of the human spirit, the dissolution of an original unity that yielded a self free to choose between good and evil.

The Darwinian controversies of the late 19th and early 20th centuries prompted efforts to coordinate Christian understandings of origins with scientific developments. Once again, Genesis became a touchstone for perennial questions regarding hermeneutics, the nature of biblical inspiration, the relation of revelation to human knowledge – much as it was in the early modern period. In recent decades, though, debates over the scientific veracity of Genesis have receded to the margins of mainstream theological discourse. Contemporary scholarship on Genesis may be described as methodologically pluralistic, including historical-critical analysis, literary criticism, and a resurgence of “theological interpretation” in dialogue with patristic and classical Christian sources.

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V. Islam

As a source of stories about the prophets and the early history of creation, Genesis exerts a strong influence on Islamic thought and literature, though

not all the personalities of Genesis have an important place in Islamic literature, and the stories are often adapted to suit their new religious milieu (cf. Lassner: 88–119; Bakhos).

The Muslim reception of Genesis is complicated for a number of reasons. Firstly, although translations of Genesis into Arabic can be found from the 8th/9th century (Griffith: 97–126), in a Muslim context the book was not known as a whole, and there are a number of narratives in Genesis that receive little attention. Secondly, the stories and themes of Genesis are developed in distinctive ways in the various genres of Arabic literature. Thirdly, Islam also received biblical texts indirectly through channels such as Targumim, midrashim, and pseudepigrapha (cf. Newby; Wasserstrom).

Some of the stories and figures in Genesis receive detailed attention in the Qurʾān (cf. Tottoli; Firestone): the disobedience of Adam (Gen 2:4–3:24; S 2:30–39; 7:11–25), Cain and Abel (Gen 4; S 5:27–32), Noah (Gen 6–9; S 21:76–93; 71), the Abraham cycle (Gen 11:27–25:11; S 14; 21:51–75), and the Joseph cycle (Gen 37–50; S 12). However, other episodes, such as the tower of Babel (Gen 9–10) and stories relating to Isaac, Rebecca, and Jacob (Gen 25:19–35:22), are not prominent. They may receive mentions in later Muslim sources, though they are usually addressed far less expansively than the sections of Genesis in which the more popular prophets appear (cf. al-Thaʿlabī: 170–73).

Non-qurʾānic literature offers closer engagements with Genesis material than the Qurʾān itself, often to fill lacunae found in the qurʾānic versions of the stories. For example, while the Qurʾān makes no reference to the sacrifices offered by Cain and Abel in Genesis (S 5:28), these are added in later sources (al-Ṭabarī: 6.186–99; al-Thaʿlabī: 58–85). Exegetes also appear to have utilized biblical material to modify qurʾānic positions: while blame for the act of disobedience in the garden is laid squarely on Adam in the Qurʾān, later authors cite biblical material to shift the blame onto Eve/Ḥawwa (Kister: 143–52).

The Qurʾān often develops ideas and beliefs found in Genesis in its own way, reflecting its original revelatory context in pagan Arabia by portraying common prophetic figures as vehicles of anti-polytheist polemic (cf. S 5:28–29; 71:2–4). Differences between the stories of Genesis and Muslim versions also result from the influence on Islam from post-biblical Jewish and Christian developments of the Genesis narratives. For example, the qurʾānic version of the Joseph story includes many events not found in the Bible, though present in Jewish traditions (see Kugel: 28–65).

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Stephen Burge

VI. Literature

Genesis has spawned numerous literary retellings of its individual stories and characters. These range from the Eden incident in Gen 2–3 (e.g., the Jewish pseudepigraphical work *Life of Adam and Eve*, ca. 1st cent.) to the flood in Gen 6–9 (e.g., Michael Drayton’s poem *Noah’s Flood*, 1630), to the binding of Isaac in Gen 22 (e.g., Søren Kierkegaard’s philosophical musings in *Fear and Trembling*, 1843), to Jacob’s ladder in Gen 28 (e.g., Saint John Climacus’ spiritual teachings, *Ladder of Paradise*, ca. 600), to the rape of Dinah in Gen 34 (e.g., Anita Diamant’s novel *The Red Tent*, 1997), to the Joseph novella spanning Gen 37–50 (e.g., Thomas Mann’s novel *Joseph and His Brothers*, 1948).

More often, it is a particular theme from Genesis – such as creation – that has been received in postbiblical literature. Its connotations of creativity, fecundity, and primordially have appealed especially to poets. For instance, Nicanor Parra’s poem “Genesis” (ET in Curzon: 32) opens with:

in the beginning God created slums
and garbage dumps (lines 1–2)

and describes a world in which there are

vast contingents of flies
in contention over the commonwealth’s shit.
(lines 12–13)

This creator is a twisted God, one who finds such filth “gorgeous” (4). Eva Tóth’s “Genesis” (1992) takes the theme of creation in a different direction, speaking intimately, even lovingly, to the creator: “Your hands create my body / your mouth breathes life in me” (1–2). The persona can only conclude, “Alone I do not exist” (8). D.H. Lawrence, in the poem “The Work of Creation” (1933), likens “the mystery of creation” (1) to an artist’s own creativity: “a strange ache” (5) provokes them both. The world begins when God’s “urge takes shape in the flesh, and lo! it is creation!” (10–11).

With such fundamental themes, the book of Genesis has also found a happy home in the genre

of science fiction. It is here that we find H. Beam Piper’s short story “Genesis” (1951), which struggles with the future of the human race; Poul Anderson’s novel *Genesis* (2000), which tackles the fusion of humans and machines and the issue of Artificial Intelligence; and Paul Chafe’s novel *Genesis* (2007), which recounts one man’s journey to save humanity by building a space-colony ship (aptly called the “Ark project”). Science cannot help but capture the attention of those reimagining the biblical text: after all, Genesis includes the origins of the entire cosmos, not just the creation of humankind. *The Einstein Enigma* by Jose Rodrigues Dos Santos (2010), for instance, gives readers an adventure story that fuses religion and science (represented by a lost manuscript of Einstein’s called *The God Formula*).

Other themes prominent in Genesis can also be found throughout world literature, even if the Bible is not explicitly mentioned. The idea of a “fall” is reiterated in the novel *Perelandra* (1943) by C.S. Lewis, where it is explored in the context of a new garden of Eden on the planet Venus; William Golding’s *Lord of the Flies* (1954) is a novel about a group of British boys stuck on a deserted island and the disaster that ensues when they try to govern themselves. Philosophical novels in the tradition of Genesis include Albert Camus’ *La chute* (1956, *The Fall*), which records the confessions of lawyer Jean-Baptiste Clamence; and Daniel Quinn’s *Ishmael* (1992), another philosophical novel about ethical and environmental sustainability. Good and evil appear prominently in literature as different as Christopher Marlowe’s play *The Tragical History of the Life and Death of Doctor Faustus* (1604); Joseph Conrad’s novella *Heart of Darkness* (1902); the short stories of Flannery O’Connor, such as “A Good Man is Hard to Find” (1948); and the sixteen Christian-dispensationalist *Left Behind* books by Tim LaHaye and Jerry B. Jenkins (1995–2007). Land, and the vicissitudes associated with inhabiting it, often appears in literature, like Willa Cather’s *My Ántonia* (1918), John Steinbeck’s *The Grapes of Wrath* (1939), and Cormac McCarthy’s *Blood Meridian or the Evening Redness in the West* (1985), all of which are concerned with the American West and prairie lands. The notion of election or “chosenness” can be found in the fantasy epic of J.R.R. Tolkien’s trilogy *Lord of the Rings* (1954–55) and Frodo’s journey to destroy the ring; the science fiction of *Ender’s Game* (1985) by Orson Scott Card, where young Ender is chosen and trained to save the world from aliens; and the seven fantasy novels following the life of wizard *Harry Potter* (1997–2007) by J.K. Rowling.

It is less common to find literature that directly engages the entire first book of the Bible, due to the tremendous time span it covers – from the beginning of the whole universe to the election of Israel – as well as the multitude of characters, stories,

and genres it includes. Nevertheless, some works have tried to tackle the book writ large.

Geoffrey Chaucer's *The Canterbury Tales* (ca. 1380s–90s) – a collection of stories, mostly in verse – includes myriad references to several of the Genesis stories throughout individual tales. For instance, both the “Nun’s Priest’s Tale” and the “Merchant’s Tale” allude to the garden of Eden and Adam and Eve from Gen 2–3. The flood narrative of Gen 6–9 undergirds much of the “Miller’s Tale,” wherein Alison, the young wife of John the carpenter, and Nicholas, one of her husband’s renters, plan a sexual tryst by convincing John that a flood is coming:

now a Monday next, at quarter nyght
Shal falle a reyn, and that so wilde and wood
That half so greet was nevere Noes flood.
(3516–518)

Centuries later, Walter Wangerin, Jr. offers select, streamlined accounts from Genesis in his *The Book of God: The Bible as a Novel* (1996). He devotes his first section to “The Ancestors,” which covers the lives of Abraham, Rebekah, Jacob, and Joseph. Other characters and stories from Genesis, like Adam and Eve eating the forbidden fruit from the tree of knowledge, find their way into other sections, such as “Ezra.”

The comic book *The Book of Genesis* (2009), written and illustrated by cartoonist Robert Crumb, contains within its pages a modern literary representation of Genesis, in addition to its visual adaptations. Indeed, its front cover advertises that the illustrations depict “All 50 Chapters.” It purports to be a faithful, literal translation of Genesis, though it draws on a variety of sources (from the KJV to Robert Alter), and often creatively reinterprets, through its exaggerated images, many of the biblical moments. Because of its explicit renderings of some of the Bible’s more demure moments (e.g., Adam and Eve are shown fully naked in the garden), it has garnered controversial attention.

Finally, “Genesis,” by A. L. Kennedy, appears in the anthology *Killing the Buddha* (2004), which *The New York Observer* called “a super-charged hip-hop makeover” of the Bible. Kennedy’s piece is a mix of autobiography, exegesis, and philosophical musings – about origins, family, and faith. She writes:

In the beginning, it’s simple, all very clear – you are and then know that you are and that’s enough. But not for long. Eventually, you need an explanation. (7)

She remarks that we all “need a cover story, an alibi, the consolations of a family tree” (8), that “we needed to come from somewhere” (11). It is human nature, according to Kennedy, to seek out our origins, to desire a genealogy. The first biblical book can help. Indeed, “Genesis knows our nature – yours and mine – the one it implies God gave us” (15).

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VII. Visual Arts

Late antique Jewish art preserves images from the book of Genesis. Scenes survive among the wall murals of the synagogue at Dura Europos (ca. 245) and, in the late antique floor mosaic of the 6th-century Beth Alpha synagogue in Israel (Gen 22:16–17), stylized figures of Abraham and Isaac are depicted at an abbreviated altar, their names inscribed in Hebrew (see fig. 21). The lamb that replaces Isaac as a sacrifice is in the center of the composition.

Medieval illuminated Haggadot often include scenes from Genesis at the beginning of the manuscript, as shown in the cycle from the *Golden Haggadah* (ca. 1320, Add. MS 2721, British Library, London). The most complete cycle of Genesis in illuminated manuscripts beginning with the creation of the world is found in the late 14th-century *Sara-*



Fig. 21 “Abraham and Isaac” (6th cent. CE)

jevo Haggadah (Bosnian National Museum, Sarajevo), where the Creator is represented as the hand of God or as rays that indicate the Divine presence.

Christian manuscripts from late antiquity that illustrate the book of Genesis likely relied on now-lost Jewish illuminated examples, though without definitive evidence, the relationship between Jewish precedents and Christian Genesis cycles remains a matter of debate (Jensen:70). Two early manuscripts survive with rich, unabridged illuminations depicting the entire book of Genesis. The Cotton Genesis, a 4th or 5th-century manuscript (London, British Library, MS Cotton Otho B VI), that may have been produced in Alexandria, was mostly destroyed by fire in 1731, but originally had over 300 illuminations incorporated within columns of text executed in a late antique style. The Vienna Genesis, from the first half of the 6th century (Vienna, Österreichische Nationalbibliothek, Cod. theol. gr. 31), has only twenty-four of its original ninety-six folios, each illuminated at the bottom of the page with illustrations of the text. It was likely created in Syria.

Scholars generally agree that illuminated manuscripts served as models for the development of monumental cycles based on the book of Genesis (Kessler: 455). However, it is possible that biblical illumination was created in response to Christians who desired to see familiar imagery known from monumental scenes also depicted alongside their texts (Lowden 2007).

In late antique Christian churches, supercessionist theology asserted the replacement of the old Jewish Law by the new, Christian church. Scenes from Genesis in Christian monumental HB/OT cycles affirmed that Christian stories rested on the foundation of Jewish texts, but, with the addition of NT scenes of revelation, usually decorating the east walls and the apse, emphasized the transferal of the contexts of HB/OT stories to the greater history of Christ’s Incarnation and eventual second coming. Such is the case in the mid 5th-century Church of Santa Maria Maggiore in Rome, where an extensive cycle of Genesis scenes dedicated to the lives of Abraham, Isaac, and Jacob lines the left wall of the nave, whereas the triumphal arch (originally the apsidal arch) and apse are dedicated to the infancy cycle of Jesus and the revelation of the incarnation (the apse was extended and its image replaced in the later Middle Ages, but likely held a mosaic of the Virgin Mary as the Mother of God, with Jesus). Images from the HB/OT are stylistically differentiated in Santa Maria Maggiore. While the scenes on the arch are depicted in a hieratical mode, those from the HB/OT are depicted in epic mode, which was more suitable for multi-figural scenes (Kitzinger: 66–75).

Genesis scenes were also placed in such a way as to elucidate the meaning of Christian liturgy, placing importance on certain narratives as precedents for NT events, or as types that do not merely foreshadow NT history, but also reveal the perfect symmetry of God’s eschatological plan. At Santa Maria Maggiore, the order of Genesis scenes was slightly changed so as to place the sacrifice of Melchizedek and the scene of the hospitality of Abraham – both of which were considered HB/OT types for the Eucharist – next to the apsidal arch, closest to the altar. Similar are the sanctuary mosaics of the 6th-century church of San Vitale in Ravenna, where a lunette mosaic of the Genesis figures of Abel and Melchizedek are shown standing at an altar offering their sacrifices, while the opposite lunette depicts images of the hospitality of Abraham and the sacrifice of Isaac. Because of their proximity to the altar, these mosaics function as HB/OT types for Jesus’ ultimate sacrifice, which also made the old covenant with God no longer necessary. The eschatological Christ as ruler and judge is depicted in the apse mosaic, thus visualizing the entirety of Christian history in terms of the pre- (or proto-) Christian texts, the NT, and God’s final revelation.

Around the year 1000, the inclusion of Genesis scenes – especially of the creation and fall – in church art placed more emphasis on their role as humankind’s state before the incarnation made reunification with God possible. Portals and church doors, being a liminal zone between earthly and sacred realms, were key symbolic locations for iconographic programs that juxtaposed the creation

story with scenes from the life and passion of Jesus. The doors from St. Michael in Hildesheim, 1015, made for Bishop Bernward, provide an example, with scenes from the creation through the murder of Abel on the left door and the annunciation through the “Noli me tangere” scene with the resurrected Christ and Mary Magdalene on the right door. By depicting the fall from the garden of Eden and the path back to paradise through Christ’s church, the doors tell the story of original sin and ultimate redemption.

The book of Genesis continued to have eschatological importance throughout the Middle Ages and into the Renaissance. The redemption and the salvation of humankind was often conveyed by the juxtaposition of select Genesis scenes with the Last Judgment. Michelangelo’s ceiling for the Sistine Chapel (1508-1512), e.g., has scenes from Genesis that narrate the creation and fall of humankind, and the story of Noah, while on the altar wall of the chapel Christ as a judge at the center is surrounded by the myriad figures and events of the Last Judgment.

Joseph’s (son of Jacob) dramatic life (Gen 37–48) often provided subject matter for early Christian and medieval art, such as can be seen in several scenes represented in relief on the ivory-clad throne of the Bishop Maximian (ca. 547, Archiepiscopal Museum, Ravenna), and in monumental frescos in the church of the Holy Trinity in the Monastery of Sopoćani, Serbia, from the 13th century. Events from Joseph’s life were linked typologically with the life of Jesus. Joseph being cast into and retrieved from the well was considered as a prefiguration of the death and resurrection of Jesus; Joseph supervising food storage in anticipation of famine prefigured Jesus’ miraculous feeding of the multitude and referred to the Eucharist; Joseph’s saving Israel from starvation anticipated Jesus’ salvation of humankind from their sins. Stories from Joseph’s life were especially popular during the Counter Reformation, when larger cycles depicting the book of Genesis were replaced with paintings concentrating on single scenes from Genesis with moralizing messages. The moral aspects of Joseph’s life is reflected in numerous paintings from the 17th century depicting Joseph and Potiphar’s Wife, visualizing the dangers of seduction and temptation, as well as false accusation and punishment.

As the ultimate source of the description of the creation of the first humans and their relationships to one another and to God, the book of Genesis continues to inspire contemporary artists. Recent interest has focused on the relationship between genders, seduction, temptation, or new modes of living. This can be seen in Richard Hamilton’s collage of 1956, *Just What Is It That Makes Today’s Homes So Different, So Appealing?* (Kunsthalle, Tübingen) showing a modern image of Adam and Eve in an

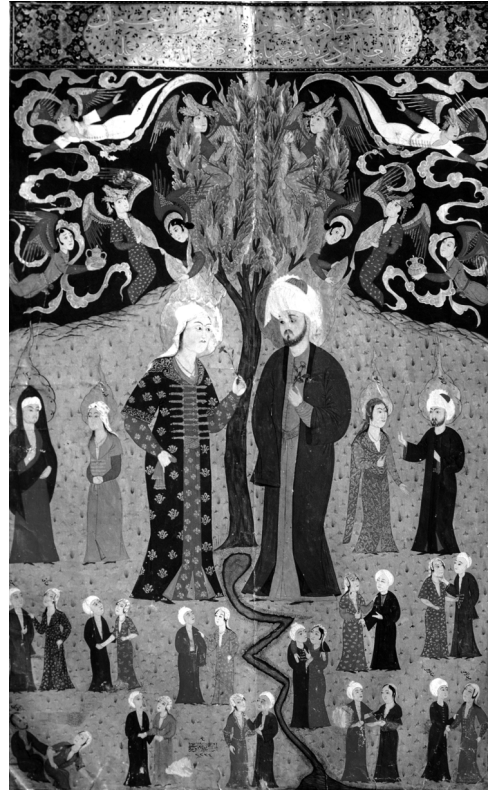


Fig. 22 “Adam and Eve with thirteen pairs of twins” (1583)

apartment filled with products of mass consumption, creating a world of consumer paradise as opposed to the biblical Eden.

Finally, the book of Genesis has featured in various aspects of Islamic art. Visual narratives associated with Adam and Eve, Cain and Abel, Noah, and Abraham, are frequently illustrated in copies of the *Qisas al-Anbiya (Stories of the Prophets; Klar: 338–50)*. Similarly, the richly illustrated 16th century manuscript, the *Zubdat-al Tawarikh (Cream of Histories)* dedicated to Sultan Murad III in 1583 and now housed in the Museum of Turkish and Islamic Arts, Istanbul, depicts the history of prophets starting with a representation of Adam and Eve and their thirteen children (see fig. 22). Then follow the stories of Noah and of Joseph, which were widely illustrated in the Islamic world.

The most popular prophet from the Qur’an is Abraham, who is often depicted in Islamic art. Abraham’s aborted sacrifice of his son was especially popular, as shown in a miniature from the above-mentioned *Zubdat-al Tawarikh* manuscript. The archetypal stories of Yusuf (Joseph) with his brothers and Yusuf and Zulaikha (Potiphar’s wife)

have been sources of inspiration for many Islamic artists, as shown in a Persian miniature by Behzād, (1488, National Library, Cairo). The story of Cain and Abel was another popular motif for Islamic artists. Though their names are not mentioned in the Qurʾān, the story of Cain and Abel is essentially the same as the one in book of Genesis. A 16th century miniature from Manuscript H1703, (Topkapi Sarayi Muzesi, Istanbul) shows Cain about to bring a large rock down upon on the head of the sleeping Abel.

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VIII. Music

Texts and narratives from the book of Genesis have been set to music or appropriated into musical works in all kinds of genres throughout music history up to modern times: from the narrative of the creation of the world in six days at the beginning of the book (Gen 1), famously represented musically in Joseph Haydn's oratorio *The Creation* (1798; see "Creation [Oratorio]") – which partly refers to the story of Adam and Eve – to the Joseph narratives (Gen 37–50), notably appropriated by George Frideric Handel in his oratorio *Joseph and His Brethren* (1743; Smither: 2:280–84). Altogether, these as well as many other prominent narratives from Genesis have been referred to in liturgical music (including hymns) in various languages, dramatized in oratorios and operas, and referred to in vast amounts of compositions in other musical genres, in devotional Jewish or Christian contexts as well as in secularized practices of classical art music or

popular music including different kinds of folk music. In the *Encyclopedia of the Bible and its Reception*, the musical reception of each individual narrative and each individual biblical figure or topic is dealt with in the relevant music articles under the relevant main lemmas, to the extent that such a musical reception has been studied.

However, very little of all of this vast amount of music seems to respond to the literary entity of the book of Genesis as such. Rather, the music seems to treat the individual narrative in its own right as a separate narrative entity or to respond in a similar way to the individual biblical figure or topic. Thus, one might argue that the musical reception of the actual book of Genesis, as a book, is not very substantial.

Indeed, it only seems possible to point to one substantial musical piece written specifically to respond to the book of Genesis, and even this piece does so by way of a musical suite (for narrator, chorus and orchestra) based on a selection of narratives from the book of Genesis. This composition, *Genesis Suite* (1945), a collaborative work, was composed at the initiative of the American composer Nat Shilkret (1889–1982) who in the first place set out to compose musical responses to the main stories of the Bible. Because of the vastness of that project Mario Castelnuovo-Tedesco was drawn into it and later also Ernst Toch, Alexandre Tasman, Darius Milhaud, Igor Stravinsky, and finally Arnold Schoenberg. Béla Bartók, Paul Hindemith, and Sergey Prokofiev were invited but did not participate. Each composer wrote his own part so that the composite, substantial, piece consisted of seven movements:

1. Prelude (Schoenberg)
2. Creation (Gen 1:1–12, 14–31; 2:1–3; Shilkret)
3. Adam and Eve (Gen 2:5–10, 15–25; 3:1–19; Tansman)
4. Cain and Abel (Gen 4:1–16; Milhaud)
5. Noah's Ark (first part: Gen 6:5–20, 7:1–4; second part: 7:11, 18–19, 21–24; 8:1–13; Castelnuovo-Tedesco)
6. The Covenant (Gen: 9:1–17; Toch)
7. Babel (Gen 11:1–9; Stravinsky)

The complete work thus composed by the seven composers, who were all Jewish except Stravinsky, was premiered on 18 November 1945 in Los Angeles (Wetsby).

The title *Genesis* is met with in many compositions but will upon closer inspection very often turn out to refer to the creation narratives of the book of Genesis, rather than to the book, such as for instance Charles Wuorinen's *Genesis* (1989; Carucci and Karchin).

Genesis was also the name of a UK rock band founded in 1967; it does not seem clear, however, to what extent a biblical connotation was intended (*Encyclopedia of Popular Music*). Interestingly, when

searching the web now, another, currently active, rock band, Book of Genesis, can be found. There is no comment to the seemingly biblical reference to be found on the homepage of the band. Instead, along the way, references to the aforementioned band Genesis are found (*Book of Genesis homepage*).

Works: ■ *Genesis Suite*, a musical collaboration for narrator, chorus and orchestra by Arnold Schönberg, Nathaniel Shilkret, Alexandre Tansman, Darius Milhaud, Mario Castelnuovo-Tedesco, Ernst Toch, and Igor Stravinsky (Los Angeles 1945).

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IX. Film

The first book of the Bible, Genesis, contains fifty chapters, spanning from the beginning of the cosmos to the birth of the nation of Israel. Fictional films have sought to depict many of its more popular stories, including Adam and Eve (e.g., *The Last Eve*, dir. Young Man Kang, 2005); the serpent and the forbidden fruit (e.g., *Ovoce stromu rajských jíme*, dir. Vera Chytilová, 1969, *Fruit of Paradise*); Cain and Abel (e.g., *Cain at Abel*, dir. Lino Brocka, 1982); Noah's ark and the flood (e.g., *Noah*, dir. Darren Aronofsky, 2014); the tower of Babel (e.g., *Babel*, dir. Alejandro González Iñárritu, 2006); Jacob's feud with his brother Esau (e.g., *La Genèse*, dir. Cheick Oumar Sissoko, 1999); Jacob and the ladder (e.g., *Jacob's Ladder*, dir. Adrian Lyne, 1990); and Joseph and his coat of many colors (e.g., *Joseph: King of Dreams*, dir. Rob Leduca/R.C. Ramirez, 2000). Because of the number of characters and plots it contains, however, the book of Genesis is rarely treated in large part or as a whole in fictional, narrative films.

One ambitious, and expensive, exception, however, is John Huston's *The Bible: In the Beginning...* (1966). Although the producer originally aimed for a more comprehensive scope, the movie only portrays Gen 1–22. The film's flood section is one of the more striking, all the more so because it is Huston himself who plays Noah. As with the rest of the film, for the rendition of the flood saga decisions had to be made about some of the more thorny aspects of the biblical text; for instance, the movie chooses to follow the better known, and visually quaint, "two-by-two" account of Noah's ark (Gen 6: 13–22) rather than the "seven pairs" version (Gen

7: 1–4). Once the animals are on board, the movie treats viewers to scenes of animals situated in creatively designed pens and Noah's family feeding, playing with, and attending to them. Squawks, bleats, and roars fill the air. Although the portrayal of the relationship between the humans and the animals is humorous and light-hearted, the film also addresses what the biblical text does not – the fact that the rest of the world perishes in a worldwide flood. The movie's soundtrack includes the unsettling wail of drowning creatures, so audible that Noah's wife comments on it in horror. After the floodwaters recede, however, the buoyancy returns and Noah is seen waving at the animals as they disembark.

Year One (dir. Harold Ramis, 2009) is a more recent film that draws on the bulk of Genesis for source material. It is a comedy that follows Zed and Oh, prehistoric hunter-gatherers who, after being exiled from their village, undertake a journey during which they interact with biblical objects (e.g., a tree of knowledge complete with serpent), places (e.g., Sodom), and storylines (e.g., the Aqedah) drawn from Genesis. While Huston's film engages with the biblical text seriously – using lavish sets, special effects, and an Academy-Award nominated original music score – *Year One* draws on the Bible solely for laughs, using sexual and scatological humor especially. It includes jokes about the garden of Eden – wherein Zed becomes an Eve who eats the forbidden fruit, causing havoc in his village and forcing him to flee; Cain and Abel – whose murder is turned into a drawn-out, incompetent bludgeoning; Abraham and Isaac – whose circumcision is the brunt of many penis jokes; and Sodom and Gomorrah – a destination of illicit intrigue. The movie is not about Genesis, per se, rather the book is used as a vehicle for the protagonists' adventure and for the (often uncomfortable) laughter that results when sacred stories are mixed with crass comedy. *Year One* seems to have missed the mark, however, as the film garnered mostly negative reviews from critics and viewers alike. More recently, Gen 1–21 provided the storyline of the first hour of the 10-hour History channel series *The Bible* (prod. Mark Burnett/Roma Downey, 2013). The series begins with Noah onboard the ark telling his terrified family a condensed version of Gen 1–5 while viewers are treated to a montage of images depicting creation, fall, and the first murder. More screen time is devoted to the story of Abraham with special emphasis on his relationship to Lot and the Akedah.

Film genres besides the fictional narrative style – such as the PBS documentary mini-series Bill Moyers' *Genesis: A Living Conversation* (dir. Catherine Tatge, 1996) – have also been explicitly interested in the book of Genesis. General themes from the book of Genesis can also be found throughout global cinema: for instance, cosmic origins in *The*

Tree of Life (dir. Terrence Malick, 2011); creation in *Blade Runner* (dir. Ridley Scott, 1982); good and evil in *A Clockwork Orange* (dir. Stanley Kubrick, 1971); and paradise in *Pleasantville* (dir. Gary Ross, 1998).

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See also → Abraham; → Adam and Eve, Story of; → Aqedah; → Babel, Tower of; → Cain and Abel, Story of; → Cosmos and Cosmology; → Creation and Cosmogony; → Eden, Garden of; → Flood, The; → Isaac (Patriarch); → Jacob (Patriarch); → Joseph (Son of Jacob); → Melchizedek; → Noah; → Noah's Ark

Geneva Bible

Although a number of Bibles in French, Italian, and Latin were produced in Geneva in the last years of John Calvin's life and later under the aegis of his successor, Theodore Beza (1519–1605), the name "Geneva Bible" applies first and foremost to the English version produced in the city in 1560 by a number of English religious refugees who found shelter in Geneva during the reign of the Catholic Mary Tudor (1553–58). The group responsible for the Geneva Bible was composed of Myles Coverdale, William Cole, William Whittingham, Anthony Gilby, Christopher Goodman, Thomas Sampson, Laurence Humphrey, and John Knox. The undertaking was financed mainly by John Bodley, a rich Exeter merchant of Calvinist convictions who escaped from England and settled with his family in Geneva in 1557. He was also responsible for installing two English printers, William Williams and Roland Hall, in the city. Given its interest in vernacular Bible production for Protestant use and the presence (from 1559 onwards) of Theodore Beza, the finest Protestant NT scholar of the time, "Calvin's city" was the ideal place for a new version of the English Bible in line with Calvinist scholarship and with the evangelizing aims of the Genevan church, which wanted to propagate its version of Protestantism via scriptural translations and, in this way, to assure itself a wide-ranging and lasting influence. The English translators relied on the Great Bible as their basic OT text. The work on the OT was supervised by Anthony Gilby, the best Hebrew scholar in the group. The revisers also had recourse to the Latin OTs of Leo Jud (1544), Santes Pagnini (1527), and Robert Estienne (1556/57), which was based in a large measure on Pagnini. For the NT they relied on the 1537 "Matthew's Bible" (William Tyndale's English version), so called after the pseudonym taken by the printer John Rogers. The work on the NT was carried out mainly by Wil-

liam Whittingham (ca. 1524–1579). He and his helpers had access to the Greek NT of Erasmus and the new annotated Latin version of Theodore Beza appended to Estienne's OT of 1556/57. Whittingham's NT appeared prior to the entire Geneva Bible and prior to Beza's Greek-Latin NT and was printed by Conrad Badius in Geneva in 1557. The source of its financing remains unclear. In 1560 it was revised and appended to the collective OT so that it became a part of the Geneva Bible.

By 1565 Beza had produced a Greek-Latin NT with more extensive textual and doctrinal annotations. This version aimed to provide a Calvinist response to the Greek and Latin versions of Erasmus. An octavo edition containing Beza's Latin version alone, with abridged annotations of Beza and Joachim Camerarius, was printed in London in 1574 by the French refugee printer Thomas Vautrollier. However, its editor was not Vautrollier but Pierre L'Oiseleur de Villiers, another French refugee who had been entrusted with the task by Beza. This version in turn was translated in 1576 into English by Lawrence Tomson (1539–1608) and was eventually incorporated into the Geneva Bible in 1586, where it replaced Whittingham's revised NT. The latter was printed in England for the first time in 1575, and the complete Geneva Bible in 1576. The Geneva Bible achieved instant success not only as a Bible to be read in churches but also as a Bible for personal use. In all, it went through about 160 editions until 1644. The King James Version of 1611 had some problems displacing it, while relying on it and on Beza's Greek-Latin NT for some of its readings, studiously replacing others, and eschewing all annotations. This did not stop some editions of the King James Version from being published with the Geneva Bible annotations even as late as 1715. The Geneva Bible was also the first Bible published in Scotland (1579), where a law was passed requiring every household of sufficient means to purchase a copy. From 1599 onwards, some editions replaced the earlier annotations on the book of Revelation, drawn mainly from the commentaries of John Bale and Heinrich Bullinger, with the notes of François du Jon (Junius, 1545–1602), less focussed on the figure of the Pope as the Antichrist, its predominant interest being the defense of the apostolic origins and the canonicity of revelation. Indeed, all the annotations which are an important part of the Geneva Bible were Calvinist and Puritan in character and, as such, apt to engender religious controversy. They were therefore disliked by the ruling pro-government Protestants of the Church of England, as well as by King James I, hence his commissioning of the new translation in order to replace it. The Geneva Bible had already motivated responses such as the production of the more conservative Bishops' Bible under Elizabeth I and the later anti-Calvinist Rheims-Douai edition by the