

THROUGH THE **EYES** OF THE
ANCIENTS
THE BOOKS OF MOSES

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Contents

Foreword	11
Introduction	14
Chapter One—Tender Bonding	17
Chapter Two—A God of Detail	20
Chapter Three—A Garden of Choices	24
Chapter Four—Wisdom at What Price?	27
Chapter Five—My Brother’s Keeper	33
Chapter Six—Giants and the Unpardonable Sin	37
Chapter Seven—Righteousness Rewarded	39
Chapter Eight—A New Beginning	41
Chapter Nine—An Important Message	44
Chapter Ten—What Is in a Number?	46
Chapter Eleven—Trying to Become Gods	50
Chapter Twelve—A Call to Calamity?	53
Chapter Thirteen—From Jeopardy to Redemption	56
Chapter Fourteen—Separation	58
Chapter Fifteen—A Divine Covenant	60
Chapter Sixteen—God’s Guarantee	63
Chapter Seventeen—A Very Bad Idea	66
Chapter Eighteen—When God Appears	68
Chapter Nineteen—The High Cost of Bad Choices	71
Chapter Twenty—Repeated Error	73
Chapter Twenty-One—Beginning of Covenant Fulfillment	76
Chapter Twenty-Two—A Terrible Test of Faith	80
Chapter Twenty-Three—God Chooses a Bride	83
Chapter Twenty-Four—Abraham’s Descendants	87
Chapter Twenty-Five—A Tragic Tale of Deceit	92
Chapter Twenty-Six—A Deceiver Meets His Match	98
Chapter Twenty-Seven—Sister Struggles	101
Chapter Twenty-Eight—Blessed	104

Chapter Twenty-Nine—A Strained Separation	107
Chapter Thirty—A Night of Terror	111
Chapter Thirty-One—Seven Great Sorrows	115
Chapter Thirty-Two—Tricked Into Justice	121
Chapter Thirty-Three—Ominous Dreams	124
Chapter Thirty-Four—The Famine	128
Chapter Thirty-Five—Jacob’s Final Years	134
Chapter Thirty-Six—Jacob’s Blessings	137
Chapter Thirty-Seven—True Forgiveness	146
Chapter Thirty-Eight—A Redeemer Figure	150
Chapter Thirty-Nine—A Baby in the Bulrushes	152
Chapter Forty—Humbled for Service	156
Chapter Forty-One—Second Thoughts	162
Chapter Forty-Two—The Gospel to the Egyptians	165
Chapter Forty-Three—The Plagues—Part 1	168
Chapter Forty-Four—The Plagues—Part 2	173
Chapter Forty-Five—Blood on the Doorposts	179
Chapter Forty-Six—Crossing the Red Sea	184
Chapter Forty-Seven—A Patient God	190
Chapter Forty-Eight—Covenant at Sinai	196
Chapter Forty-Nine—The Ten Commandments—Part 1	200
Chapter Fifty—The Ten Commandments—Part 2	204
Chapter Fifty-One—The Book of the Covenant	212
Chapter Fifty-Two—The Festivals of Thanksgiving	220
Chapter Fifty-Three—Promises Fulfilled	223
Chapter Fifty-Four—The Blue Stone	226
Chapter Fifty-Five—God’s Sanctuary and Royal Palace	230
Chapter Fifty-Six—Representing the Messiah	237
Chapter Fifty-Seven—The “Miracle” of the Golden Calf	242
Chapter Fifty-Eight—Divine Covenant: Singular or Plural?	246
Chapter Fifty-Nine—The Restoration of Relationships	249
Chapter Sixty—Salvation in Unforgettable Terms—Part 1	254
Chapter Sixty-One—Salvation in Unforgettable Terms—Part 2	259
Chapter Sixty-Two—Sudden Judgment	263
Chapter Sixty-Three—God’s Incredible Economic Plan	267
Chapter Sixty-Four—God’s Amazing Love	271
Chapter Sixty-Five—God is Our Fortress and Strength	275
Chapter Sixty-Six—True Justice for the Defenseless	278
Chapter Sixty-Seven—Jealousy and Judgment	281
Chapter Sixty-Eight—Disbelief, Rebellion, and Judgment	284

Chapter Sixty-Nine—Swallowed Alive	287
Chapter Seventy—A Bronze Snake Lifted Up	292
Chapter Seventy-One—An Unexpected Outcome	295
Chapter Seventy-Two—Balaam’s “Success”	301
Chapter Seventy-Three—A Type of Christ	305
Epilogue	309

CHAPTER ONE

Tender Bonding

Based on Genesis 1 and 2

As we look at Scriptures through the eyes of the ancients, we discover they think from the general to the specific. Their narrative builds, detail upon detail. We see that the Creation story begins with the broad picture, or first level of detail: “In the beginning God created the heavens and the earth” (Genesis 1:1). This verse tells us all that really matters: God is the Creator. He created everything. A second level of detail begins with Genesis 1:2. God creates the world in six days, using the first three to create environments and the next three to populate each of them. However, beginning with the last part of Genesis 2:4, we see the third, and most important, level of detail given is man, who is the most important part of Creation.

The first thing we notice is how *personal* God becomes for man. Instead of referring to the Creator as God, or *Elohim* in Hebrew, the Bible suddenly starts calling Him the Lord God, *Yahweh Elohim*. Why this change? Because the author of Genesis is stressing the personal interest God takes in mankind. *Elohim* is the God of power, but *Yahweh* is the God of relationship.*

Watch as He takes the dust of the earth in His hands and tenderly shapes it into a man’s form: “And the LORD God formed man of the dust of the ground” (Genesis 2:7). The word “formed” in Hebrew is *yatsar*, “to form, to fashion, as a potter.” This is definitely a hands-on Creator! But it gets better.

* It should be noted that God is never referred to by using personal names. Instead, the Bible uses titles that identify Him. This comes from the Hebrew thinking that whoever knew your name had control over you. A father would give his son a name, therefore having control over him. In the case of Jesus Christ, Jesus is his human name, and Christ is His title. However, notice that He identifies Himself as “I am,” the same title by which God identified Himself to Moses at the burning bush in Exodus 3. Jesus said of Himself, “I am the bread of life” (John 6:35); “I am the vine” (John 15:5); “I am the light of the world” (John 8:12), and “I say to you, before Abraham was, I AM” (John 8:58).

Now we see God tenderly breathing life into Adam's nostrils, then hovering closely to see his expression as he opens his eyes! Studies have shown the significant bonding that takes place between a newborn and its mother. In fact, babies under one month of age have a fixed focal length in their eyes of around eight inches—the approximate distance of a baby's face from its mother's while breastfeeding. When Adam opens his eyes for the first time and looks into the face of his Creator, an incredible bond is formed between the two!

The timing of this event is also significant. Adam is created on the sixth day, but he spends his first full day of life with his Creator on the first Sabbath. Imagine the intimate relationship the Lord God enjoys as He spends the Sabbath hours with His newborn—without a single distraction.

When Adam is created, he receives the distinction of being the Lord God's son—the firstborn son! He begins the line of sons on this earth. He is made in the image and likeness of God with the responsibility to spiritually reveal the knowledge and character of God to his offspring.

Poetry and song

The Genesis account contains another example of the Creator's personal concern for Adam. As God brings him each living creature to be named, it becomes distressingly clear that each one has a companion—but Adam does not. God's solution is to put him into a deep sleep (the first anesthesia), remove one of his ribs, and tenderly fashion a woman.

The Hebrew word for rib is *tesla*, and literally means “side.” This suggests the connotation of equality and companionship. This word is frequently used in the construction of the sanctuary and Solomon's temple. The Hebrew verb in Genesis 2:22, “He made into a woman” is *banah*, a verb that is also often used with the sanctuary, and Solomon's temple. It is derived from the same verbal root as “house” and “family.” Imagine the joy and bonding Adam feels when he awakens, and the first person he sees is his beautiful wife Eve! In ecstasy, he breaks into poetry, exclaiming,

“This is now bone of my bones
And flesh of my flesh;
She shall be called Woman,
Because she was taken out of Man” (Genesis 2:23).

Poetry and song are used in the Bible to signify something of great importance. In Exodus 15, after God delivers the Hebrews from certain

annihilation at the Red Sea (all written in narrative form), Moses breaks into song—which is really poetry set to music.

Songs and poetry are special ways of remembering important events for generations to come, so therefore, anything in poetic form is *very important* in the Hebrew mind, since it contains the high points of the story.

Through the details of Creation, God provides a self-revelation to the Hebrews by showing He is a God of love in the way He creates their forefathers, provides for their needs, and fashions a lovely home for them.

CHAPTER TWO

A God of Detail

Based on Genesis 1 and 2

The only way we can know God for sure is to look at how He reveals Himself in story form throughout the Bible. While God reveals Himself in person to Adam and Eve, all those details have been largely lost by the time of Moses. Now God longs to reveal Himself to mankind, again.

The intended audience for the Creation story in Genesis is the Hebrews, who have just come out of hundreds of years of Egyptian captivity. They have largely lost sight of their history and the God of their ancestors, and now worship the false gods of their masters, instead. There are over two thousand Egyptian gods—the sun is a god, a tree is a god, a bull is a god—even a scarab or dung beetle is a god! The pagan thought is that the gods created man as an afterthought, to be slaves that carry out their wishes. They must even feed them!

Men spend their time trying to appease their gods, and are in constant fear of them. They give supreme worship to whichever god seems to be the most powerful—the god that might do something for them in exchange for their devotion. Their gods are all vulnerable to a stronger god that might come along, so the people follow the most powerful one they can find. Sadly, this is a diabolical distortion of the character of God.

Although the Lord tries to reveal Himself through His loving actions, He must first show them His power, because of their pagan beliefs. The Hebrew word for God in the Creation story is *Elohim*—emphasizing His power. He is not creation itself. He works *outside* of creation; He *controls* creation; He has the *power* to create.

Through His Creation, He reveals Himself as a God whose greatest interest is to provide for all man's needs. His character and actions are completely different from the Egyptian gods.

Environments

So let's start with God's manifestation of His power. The writer, who most conservative scholars believe is Moses, gives us the chaotic state of affairs in the beginning. Genesis 1 says there is deep water and darkness, and the earth is formless and empty; but now God begins to create order out of chaos. As His Spirit hovers over the waters and this empty mass, suddenly He speaks—and there is light! God calls the light “day,” and the darkness “night;” and since light is necessary for nearly all living things, we understand why He creates it first.

On the second day, God creates the firmament, which in Hebrew means “expanse;” for us the word is derived from the Latin *firmamentum*, meaning “to support, prop, or stay.” This giant air pocket suspends the waters above from the waters below.

On the third day, God gathers the waters below into the seas, and calls the dry land “earth.” In this act, He creates an environment for all the creatures of the air and seas. He also provides the environment and food that His land creatures will need by creating grass and seed-bearing fruit.

Filling the environments

On the next three days, the Creator fills these environments. The first day's environment is filled on the fourth day by the sun, moon, and stars. Right here many scientists have problems with the Bible, because they try to apply logic, or Greek thinking, to this event. “How can there be light without the sun, moon, and stars?” they ask. The explanation is simple: The light in the first day is the light of God's presence. This is the same light that clothes Adam and Eve before they sin.

The sun and the moon of the fourth day are not given their usual names to prevent people from making them into individual gods. Instead, they are called “luminaries,” created for the purpose of dividing day from night and marking off signs, seasons, days, and years. The word, “luminaries,” is the same word that is used in the sanctuary for lamps. The sun and moon are lamps to illuminate the world, just as the lamps illuminate the sanctuary. Likewise, the Hebrew words for “signs” and “seasons” are the same words used in the sanctuary to mark off rituals and time for assemblies and yearly feasts. This indicates a close connection between Creation and the sanctuary.

On the fifth day, He fills the second environment by creating birds for the firmament, and sea creatures for the seas. Then, on the sixth day, He creates the animals that inhabit the dry land, culminating with His crowning act—the creation of man. This act is so important that a divine