

Pentateuch 4

Review:

This story is characterized on the human side by an increase in sin to avalanche proportions. The sins of Adam and Eve, Cain, Lamech, the angel marriages, the Tower of Babel—these are stages along that way which has separated man farther and farther from God. This succession of narratives, therefore, points out a continually widening chasm between man and God. But God reacts to these outbreaks of human sin with severe judgments. The punishment of Adam and Eve was severe; severer still was Cain's. Then followed the Flood, and the final judgment was the Dispersion, the dissolution of mankind's unity. Thus at the end of the primeval history a difficult question is raised: God's future relationship to his rebellious humanity, which is now scattered in fragments. (Von Rad)

Overall Structure of Genesis (Comparison of two halves)

Genesis 12 – 50 follows broadly the outline of Gen 2-11, having three narratives separated by two genealogies.

Genesis 2- 11		Genesis 12 – 50	
2.4-4.26	Adam Narrative	11.27-25.11	Abraham Narrative
5.1-6.8	<i>Genealogy</i>	25.12-18	<i>Genealogy</i> (Ishmael)
6.9-9.29	Noah Narrative	25.19-35.29	Jacob Narrative
10.1 – 11.9	<i>Genealogy</i>	36.1-37.1	<i>Genealogy</i> (Esau)
11.10-26	Shem Narrative	37.2-50.26	Joseph/Judah Narrative

The three major narratives in Gen 12-50 (those of Abraham, Jacob, and Joseph/Judah) each (1) begin with a divine revelation of what is to follow (12.1-3; 25.22-23; 37.5-10), and (2) end with a burial in the tomb of Machpelah (25.9-10; 35.27-29; 50.13-14):¹

Abraham's call → Abraham's death and burial
Rebekah's oracle → Isaac's death and burial
Joseph's dreams → Jacob's death and burial

Link from Tower of Babel to Abraham

- I. Genesis 11:4 & Genesis 12:1
 - A. Here it is worth underscoring that Abram was called out of Ur for the sake of the nations who had been scattered from the Presence of God. It is the return from this exile, itself a reflex of humanity's expulsion from Eden, for which God covenants with Abram. Shem's genealogy and the use of the keyword 'name' bind Abram's call to the tower of Babylon episode. Abram himself was called out of exile in Ur as part of God's plan to reverse the exile of the nations (L. Michael Morales, 68.).
 - B. 2 Sam. 7
 1. Expansion of blessing

- 2. v.11-house for my name
 - 3. Draws nations to YHWH
 - C. Is. 2
 - 1. Away from presence but through the gospel all flowing back.
 - D. Pentecost- every land under heaven
 - 1. Jews and Gentiles
 - E. Rev. 21:22-24/ reversal of Gen. 11
 - 1. More died in war of nations or flood?
 - 2. Thumb on cultural tendencies because of what the gospel is doing.
 - F. Once Again Bible Story Arc is Eden Narrative
- II. Gen. 13:9
 - A. The account begins with Abram’s going up out of Egypt, one of several foretastes in his life of Israel’s later experience. The drama intensifies, however, as strife develops between his and Lot’s herdsmen, for their possessions, flocks and herds had accumulated to such an extent they could not dwell together any longer. Here, in a gesture akin to his offering up of Isaac, Abram offers up the land by giving Lot first choice of pasturage, agreeing to part ways in the opposite direction. This peace-making deference that risked losing his claim to a portion of the land of inheritance was also an act of loyal faith in YHWH’s provision. As for Lot’s choice, we read:
 - 1. Lot lifted his eyes and saw the whole valley of the Jordan, that it was well watered—before YHWH destroyed Sodom and Gomorrah—just like the garden of YHWH, as the land of Egypt when you approach Zoar. (Gen. 13:10)
 - B. A parallelism in Isaiah makes the connection between the garden of YHWH and Eden obvious:
 - 1. He [YHWH] will make her wilderness like Eden, her desert like the garden of YHWH. (Isa. 51:3)
 - C. Serving the apparent interests of his own flocks and herds, Lot chose the well-watered valley that happened to be outside Canaan, outside the promises of God—the land of preservation over the land of promise. Aside from the double reference to Sodom’s exceeding sinfulness and consequent destruction, the narrative unveils Lot’s failure by another telling phrase (13:11): ‘Then Lot chose for himself all the valley of Jordan, and Lot journeyed east.’ The immediate result of his choice—indeed, the essence of the choice itself—was further displacement to the east, away from God’s Presence. The next verse marks the contrast clearly: ‘Abram dwelt in the land of Canaan, but Lot dwelt in the cities of the valley and pitched his tent as far as Sodom.’ Given the echoes here of Cain who, driven east of Eden, founded a city, we are probably to see Lot’s eastward journey and dwelling in the cities of the valley as an (albeit unwitting) association with the line of Cain (Michael Morales 69-70).
- III. Gen. 18:10
 - A. Old Sarah is promised child Lots wife turns to salt (infertile) not well watered.
 - B. Andrew Davis: Eden Revisited
 - 1. 12- pleasure
 - 2. Word is root for Eden

- a) Well watered
 - b) Shall I have edena ; Will I have Edenic life
 - c) Reversal!!
 - d) City of man will end in judgment. Christ and build tower
3. Employing the Leitwort style that is characteristic of biblical narrative, especially in j, the narrator reminds readers that through disobedience the rich abundance of Eden gave way to the difficulties of pregnancy and childbirth. But the allusion is also one of several occasions for the punishments handed down at the end of Genesis 3 to be revised and mitigated.

IV. Gen. 18:16

- A. Angel of the Lord is linked by walking from one place to another.
- B. Chapters 18 and 19 of Genesis, wherein the same messengers announce the birth of the promised son for Abram's wife, Sarah, and the destruction of Sodom epitomized by Lot's wife, present a reversal of Genesis 13: Sarah's aged, withered womb becomes fertile even as the once well-watered Sodom is turned into an ash heap, Lot's wife into a pillar of salt. Contrary to appearances, perhaps, the good life was to be found in Canaan because that was where God's Presence—the source of life—would be found (L. Michael Morales 70).
- C. Notice pattern

