Genesis

Sitz in leben

First book of the Bible, yet part of a larger work, incomplete on its own, perhaps incomprehensible without the whole.

Prelude to Exodus
Foundation of the Pentateuch (Five books of Moses)
Source from which the Torah springs
The Proto-euangelion

Author and Date

- Moses is the primary Author although he clearly had assistance from source material and his contemporaries (Ex: someone added the portions concerning his death.)
- There are two plausible dates for the time of Moses and the writing of Genesis
- 1400 BC or 1200 BC (Personally, I find the earlier date more plausible, so for this class we will assume a date of 1500-1400 BC for the life of Moses and the writing of the Pentateuch.)

The Scheme of Genesis

Genesis can be rather neatly divided into three distinct Sections

Primeval History (Chapters 1-11)

Eden / The Flood / Tower of Babel and the post-diluvian world

Patriarchal History

Abraham / Isaac / Jacob and his twelve sons

Descent into Egypt

Joseph

Diving into the Text

Verse 1

In the beginning, God created the heavens and the earth.

This verse will determine how we understand the rest of the Bible. It's that important. Here are several key points to take from this verse.

1. **"Beginning" here is not a temporal beginning, but a substantive beginning, as a source or a font.**
Why this view matters:

This is not a statement of science about how God created, but a statement of truth about why God created.

Genesis is not a science journal calling us to look backward and find the how's of creation, it is a teleological book, calling us to look forward and find the purpose for which God made all things.

That ultimate purpose is the Incarnation of Jesus Christ.
See John 1:1-14, 1 Cor. 8:6, Col 1:13-16, 1 Peter 1:20

2. **God created "ex nihilo"** which means "out of nothing". He did not fashion a world out of preexisting matter or energy, rather he created matter and energy out of which he fashioned all things.
See 2 Maccabees 7:28 and Psalm 19