

Introduction

Authorship: Acts 7 reminds us that Moses was an informed Egyptian, raised in royalty. All the tools needed to effectively write this record were his. Then, as Exodus 3 tells us, Moses spends his 2nd set of 40 years with another leader—Jethro, sometimes called a priest.

Luke 16:26-31 tells us that Abraham believed there were two divisions in the Old Testament: “Moses and the prophets.” Other than Luke 24 where we have a third division called the Psalms, but in any case, Moses is mentioned first.

As it applies to authorship, it seems like John 1 makes the best case because, at the end of the chapter, Philip tells Nathaniel that Moses wrote about Jesus. When Jesus sees Him he makes a very clear reference to Himself from Genesis 28. If that was Jesus confirming what Philip said for Nathaniel’s sake, then Jesus is telling us that Moses wrote Genesis 28...and by extension, all of Genesis.

Then, there are Gospel references such as Matthew 19:7 where both the Pharisees and Jesus say that Deuteronomy 24:1 was written by Moses. These books came together in “the law” reference and therefore proofs of authorship for Deuteronomy are likewise proofs for authorship of Genesis. Mark 12:18-26 calls these five books (specifically Exodus and Deuteronomy—books 2 and 5) “The Book of Moses.” Therefore, to establish the authorship of any is to establish the authorship of all.

Furthermore, Genesis 1:27 and Genesis 2:24 are ascribed to God as the author in Matthew 19:5. We have, therefore, two authors to Genesis: God and Moses (if Jesus is correct).

Then, Philip told us that Moses wrote the Law as well (John 1:45) and Jesus made a reference in John 1:51 to an episode in Genesis 28 and contextually, it seems, confirms to the reader that Moses wrote the law, particularly Genesis.

Even though somebody may disagree with us on authorship, they probably know why. Here’s a sampling:

1. Genesis 12:6 tells us that at least part of Genesis was written when the “Canaanite was [not] in the land.” Well, Moses was dead by that time. So it looks like somebody added to Genesis.¹
2. Genesis 14:14 tells us that there was a place called “Dan.”² It is probable that since Moses never saw this come to fruition from the tribes themselves in Canaan, that Moses did not write this. Again, he was dead by this time.³
3. There are also times when repetitions take place which are quite unnatural if it were written as a singular unit (Genesis 33:18; 35:9-15).

¹Genesis 13:7 & 36:31 are also examples of this kind of thing.

²See Joshua 14:15.

³A town in Genesis referred to with a name it did not have when the occurrence being recorded actually happened also takes place in 34:7.

Yet, if somebody “generally writes” the body of literature, they get the credit for authorship.

Date: If Solomon’s temple was dedicated in 966 B.C.; If it was 480 years after the Exodus (1 Kings 6:1); If the plagues took no more than a year and began around 1447 B.C., then Genesis was not written until after 1447 B.C.

How do we know this?

Moses wrote Genesis (see preceding section).

Moses used the name *Jehovah* all through Genesis.

Moses did not know that was God’s name until Exodus 6:1-3 which was before the plagues and after his return to Egypt which places us in a date after 1447 B.C.

Place of Writing: Basically any time after Kadesh-Barnea found listed in Numbers 33. I say that because of the sin of the spies which took place there in Numbers 14. I say “the spies” because there are certain things Moses had to glean from their journeys (Genesis 35:20).