

# Outline of the Book of Genesis

## Overview of Genesis

The book of Genesis covers a span of approximately 2,450 years. The word “Genesis” means “origin” (Smith’s Bible Dictionary pp. 211). Genesis gives the origins of creation, sin, and death in the first three chapters. A history of mankind is examined in the book with great emphasis being placed upon future redemption through Jesus and the development of various characters. The promised seed of Genesis 3:15 is the theme of the entire book. This promised seed is mentioned again in Genesis 12:1-4; 22:18; and 49:10. This promised seed is identified as Jesus Christ (cf. Gal. 3:8, 16). Matthew records, “*And she shall bring forth a son; and thou shalt call his name Jesus; for it is he that shall save his people from their sins*” (Matt. 1:21).

## Redemption in Genesis

Genesis records sin entering into the world and the subsequent dilemma of man (cf. Gen. 3:1ff). Man died spiritually that day and was in need of reconciliation with God (Rom.5:12; I Cor. 15:21-22). God’s plan, even before the foundation of the world, was to redeem man of their sins (Eph. 1:3-4; I Pet. 1:20) and give them a chance at eternal life (Heb. 9:12). We first run into the word redemption in the book of Genesis at chapter 48:16. The apostle Paul defines the word redemption as receiving the forgiveness of one’s sins (cf. Eph. 1:7; Col. 1:14). The first hint of man having the opportunity to receive the forgiveness of sins is found at Genesis 3:15 and confirmed at Genesis 12:2-3 when God said to Abraham, “*And I will make of thee a great nation, and I will bless thee, and make thy name great; and be thou a blessing; and I will bless them that bless thee, and him that curses thee will I curse: and in thee shall all the families of the earth be blessed.*” The apostle Paul tells us that God was preaching the gospel to Abraham on this occasion (Gal. 3:8) and then explains that Jesus would be this seed promise (Gal. 3:16). Jacob, Abraham’s grandson, knew of the coming blessings offered by God through the seed of Abraham. Jacob’s dying words concerning Judah illustrated his great faith in the promises of God to forgive man of sin (cf. Gen. 49:10). There are grand themes in Genesis; however, the theme of man’s redemption is one that we must not overlook if we want to make it to heaven.

## The Development of Various Characters

The apostle Paul said, “*For whatsoever things were written aforetime were written for our learning, that through patience and through comfort of the scriptures we might have hope*” (Rom. 15:4). When Christian’s today study the lives of Noah, Abraham, Jacob etc. we are left with a sense of hope. We see real live people living in difficult days, forced to make difficult decisions, and suffering great emotional pains in this life yet remaining faithful. Genesis focuses on four primary characters; i.e., Noah, Abraham, Jacob, and Joseph.

Noah was a man that found favor in God’s eyes because he was a righteous man (Gen. 6:8-9). Noah lived in trying days when all those around him were wicked (Gen. 6:5). Noah followed God’s instructions to build an ark and was saved by water when God destroyed all the wicked by flood. Noah was not without sin yet found favor with God due to his humility and obedient life (cf. Gen. 9:20ff).

Abraham was a man that obeyed God’s commands (cf. Gen. 15:6; 18:19; 22:17-18; Acts 7:2-3) yet he too was not without sin. Abraham believed in the reality of Jehovah God and built altars to Him as he worshipped (Gen. 12:7 [Shechem]; 12:8; 13:3-4 [Bethel]; 13:18 [Hebron]). Abraham is used often in the NT as an example of one who was a recipient of God’s promises because he faithfully obeyed God’s commands (Rom. 4:3; Gal. 3:6; Heb. 11:8ff; James 2:21-26).

Jacob is revealed in the scriptures to be a spiritual minded man whereas his brother Esau was carnal minded (cf. Gen. 25:33-34; Heb. 12:16). Though spiritually minded, Jacob did sin. Jacob’s life was one filled with sorrows and vexation of spirit. His brother Esau hated him, he had to work twenty years for the love of his life (Rachel), he saw Rachel die, he was told that his beloved son Joseph had been killed by wild beast, and he had to suffer through a daughter (Dinah) being raped. When advance in years, Pharaoh of Egypt asked Jacob of his

age and the patriarch states, “*The days of the years of my pilgrimage are a hundred and thirty years: few and evil have been the days of the years of my life...*” (Gen. 47:9). Jacob, like his fathers before him, was a man of worship (Gen. 28:18; 31:45; 35:14, 20). The faith of Jacob continues to stand as an example for all who would live lives of sorrow and vexation today.

Joseph, Jacob’s beloved son from Rachel, is another example of one who lived in trying circumstances yet his faith saw him through to the end. Joseph was sold by his own brothers into Egypt, falsely accused of sexual misconduct by Potiphar’s wife, thrown into prison and forgotten. Joseph’s faith never wavered. Whatever circumstance he found himself in he continued to work hard.

## **Concluding Thoughts**

Whether one turns to Genesis to find the facts revolving around the origin of creation, to trace the beginnings of God’s plan to save man from the consequences of their sins, or to look to Godly characters to influence them to live faithfully come what may in this life; one will certainly be enriched in their study. Let us never neglect a study of Genesis or any of His word for that matter.

## **God in Genesis**

### **1. Just and Righteous:**

- a. At Genesis 2:15-16, God gives man law regarding the tree of knowledge of good and evil. Though Eden was delightful, it was not a place where man could do as he pleases in all areas of life. Why would God create such a situation where man had the opportunity to sin? The answer is found in God’s nature of justice and righteousness (cf. Jer. 9:24). Those who serve Jehovah must be as He is (Matt. 5:48; I Pet. 1:15-16; I Jn. 4:17). God desires that those who serve Him would be as He is (Rom. 12:1ff) (see study # 1; God’s Creation is Designed to Separate the Faithful from the Unfaithful).
- b. When man disobeyed God he was promptly punished because God is just (Gen. 3:14ff).
- c. God punished the disobedient in the Tower of Babel incident (Gen. 11:1ff).

### **2. Merciful:**

- a. When man failed the Lord by disobedience he was punished (banished out of Eden). Though God again illustrated His just nature in promptly judging man’s disobedience, He did not leave him without hope. God promised that the seed of woman would ultimately crush the head of Satan and end his reign of terror (Gen. 3:15).
- b. Jehovah saves Lot, his wife, and two daughters from the destruction of Sodom (Gen. 19:16).
- c. God saved Isaac from Abraham’s knife and so He saves all of humanity by providing a sacrificial lamb in His Son (cf. Gen. 22:8, 14).

### **3. Grieved:**

- a. During the days of Noah, man’s thoughts were continuously evil. The condition of man caused God to be grieved (Gen. 6:5-6).

### **4. Sovereignty:**

- a. The idea of sovereignty is the authority of choice. By God’s choice He saved Noah by the use of water and by God’s choice He saves man today by water (baptism) (I Pet. 3:20-21).
- b. God’s sovereign choice was for man to go into the whole earth and repopulate it (Gen. 9:1). Man disobeyed God by building the tower of Babel (Gen. 11:1). Man thereby challenged God’s sovereignty and God passed the judgment of confusing their language. His will is to be followed.
- c. God chose Abraham to fulfill His promise of a Savior (Gen. 12:1ff; compare with Rom. 9:14ff).

### **5. Foreknowledge:**

- a. God used the waters to save Noah and his family from His wrath against sinful men. The Lord’s foreknowledge is illustrated in that He had ever planned for water to be the saving mode for man (I Pet. 3:20-21).
- b. God’s foreknowledge of judgment is seen in His covenant made with man to never again destroy all flesh from the earth so long as it remained (cf. Gen. 8:20-21).

- c. God's foreknowledge is seen in the fulfillment of the promise to Abraham to make him a great nation (Gen. 15:12-16).
  - d. God had foreknowledge of the wickedness of the Amorites (cf. Numb. 21:21ff). It may be that Moses had in mind the whole of the Canaanites when he used the term "*Amorite*" and thus this justifies their extermination (cf. Josh. 24:15; Judg. 6:10).
  - e. God's foreknowledge of man's salvation, through a new covenant, is depicted in the allegory of Paul's in Galatians 4:21ff concerning Abraham, Sarah, Hagar, Ishmael, and Isaac.
- 6. Omniscience (all knowing):**
- a. God knew that man sinned (cf. Gen. 3:9ff).
  - b. God had foreknowledge of the purpose of water salvation (cf. Isa. 46:9-10).
- 7. Omnipresent (present everywhere):**
- 8. Omnipotent (all powerful):**
- a. God spoke and the universe came into being in six days (24 hour periods of time) (Gen. 1:6, 9, etc.).
  - b. God breathed life into man (Gen. 2:7).
  - c. God commanded and the floods came upon the whole world (Gen. 7:4).
  - d. Jehovah is termed "*God Almighty*" (*El Shaddai*) (to be strong) at Gen. 17:1 to illustrate the fact that He is powerful enough to cause Abraham at 100 and Sarah at 90 to have a child.
  - e. There is nothing too hard for God to do (Gen. 18:14 / compare with Jer. 32:17, 27).
- 9. Existing from all eternity:**
- a. The Bible begins with the eternity of God saying, "*In the beginning God...*" (Gen. 1:1).
  - b. Abraham refers to Jehovah as the "*everlasting God*" (Gen. 22:33).
- 10. God's promises (grace) are conditional (Gen. 18:19; 22:15-18; 26:4-5).**
- a. God promised the land of Canaan to Abraham's seed (Gen. 12:1). At Genesis 12:7, Moses writes, "*And Jehovah appeared unto Abram, and said, Unto thy seed will I GIVE this land:*" Though God "*gave*" the land of Canaan to Abraham's descendants it was gained through years of faithful bloody warfare (cf. Josh. 21:43ff).

### Worship in Genesis:

- Cain and Abel (Gen. 4:1ff compared to Heb. 11:4)
- Noah (Gen. 8:20)
- Abraham (Gen. 12:7, 8; 13:3-4, 18; 21:33; 22:4-8)
- Isaac (Gen. 26:24-25)
- Jacob (Gen. 46:1)

### Covenants in Genesis:

1. God makes a covenant to save man from the consequences of sin at Gen. 3:15; 6:
2. God makes a covenant with man that He would never again destroy all of mankind on the earth with a flood. The rainbow is the visual token of this agreement (9:8ff).
3. God makes a covenant with Abraham to bless him with the land of Canaan (15:18).
4. God reveals His "*everlasting covenant*" to Abraham (Gen. 17:7).
5. Abraham makes a covenant with Abimelech (Gen. 21).
6. Isaac makes a covenant with Abimelech (Gen 26:28ff).
7. Jacob makes a covenant with Laban

### The Godhead (one in purpose):

1. Genesis 1:27 the three persons in the godhead act together in creating man.
2. Genesis 11:7 the three persons in the godhead act together in confounding the language of a disobedient people.

### **The Faithful Life of Abraham (Rom. 4:3; Gal. 3:6; Heb. 11:8ff; James 2:21-26):**

1. God first calls Abraham while in Ur of the Chaldeas. Abraham obeys the command of God (Acts 7:2-3).
2. Abraham obeys God's command to leave Haran when he was 75 years old (Gen. 12:1-4).
3. Abraham builds altars to God and worships the Lord (Gen. 12:7 [Shechem]; 12:8; 13:3-4 [Bethel]; 13:18 [Hebron]).
4. Had a faith failure when he asked Sarah to lie to the Egyptians regarding her true identity out of fear for his life (exercised deception) (Gen. 12:9ff).
5. Paid tithes to Melchizedek, King and priest of Salem (Gen. 14:20).
6. Abraham and Sarah wait patiently for 10 years to receive the promise of God; i.e., a son. At Genesis 16:1ff they grow impatient and Sarah gives Abraham Hagar so that they could have a son. Again, this was a faith failure on the part of Abraham and Sarah.
7. Abraham doubts the omnipotent nature of God (Genesis 17:15-19).
8. Told to teach his posterity to obey God's laws (Gen. 18:19).
9. God's promises are contingent upon man's obedience to His laws (Gen. 18:19; 22:18; 26:3-5).

### **The Development of Jacob's Character:**

- Jacob's name means "supplant" ["to take the place of; supersede, esp. through force or plotting" (Webster's Dictionary pp. 1438)]. This name takes meaning in the manner in which Jacob craftily took Esau's birthright and deceived his father Isaac into blessing him.
- Jacob's struggle with Esau began as far back as the time when they were in the womb (Gen. 25:22).
- Through time, the spiritual and fleshly characters of Jacob and Esau come out.
- Jacob was a spiritually minded man: Jacob counted God's promises to Abraham and Isaac as worth everything whereas Esau counted God's blessings as worthless (Gen. 25:33-34; Heb. 12:16).
- Esau hated Jacob because he took his birthright by craft and deceit. Jacob flees Canaan for Padan-aram out of fear for his life.
- Jacob now becomes subject to Laban's craft and deceit for twenty years and learns the pain of one who is so treated (Gen. 31:6-7, 41). Jacob was a man of peace, never arguing with Laban, but rather taking the ill treatment with a stride and doing his work (cf. Gen. 31:6-7). When Jacob's daughter Dinah was defiled by Shechem, Jacob "*held his peace*" (Gen. 34:5).
- Jacob was a man of prayer: There is a marked change in Jacob's character after these twenty years. When Jacob was distressed and filled with fear over the coming of Esau with 400 men he prayed to God and revealed his new spirit of humility. Jacob prays saying, "*I am not worthy of the least of all the lovingkindnesses, and of all the truth, which thou hast showed unto thy servant...*" (Gen. 32:7, 10) (reminds us of Paul's statement to the Ephesians, "unto me, who am less than the least of all saints, was this grace given, to preach unto the Gentiles the unsearchable riches of Christ" (Eph. 3:8) (see study # 2; Bible Humility).
- Though Jacob made peace and humility a part of his character during the twenty years he served Laban, he still needed to learn better how to gain greater confidence in God. The Lord had appeared to Jacob on several occasions to comfort him when he was distressed. There was no doubt fear and insecurity was in the heart of Jacob when leaving his home land to go to Padan-Aram to find a wife (cf. Gen. 28:10-15). There was fear in Jacob when he finished serving Laban for 20 years and now had to face Esau (cf. Gen. 32:7). Jacob was fearful of the Hivites and Canaanites after his sons acts of debauchery (Gen. 34:30). Each of these cases demanded comfort and God was always there to do so for the patriarch. So God is with us in our times of fear and anxiety (cf. Phil. 4:13; I Pet. 5:6-7) (see study # 3; A Dependable God).
- The Lord sends a man (angel) to wrestle with Jacob at Gen. 32:24ff. (cf. Hos. 12:2-5 / man = angel). Amazingly, Jacob continued to fear even though he had earlier been blessed with a vision of God's host of angels that were with him (cf. Gen. 32:1-2). Jacob was to learn, during his wrestling match, that God's blessings cannot be wrestled away from him by physical strength, craft, or deceit but by humility of life and prayer. The angel assures Jacob of Jehovah's great power by touching his thigh and moving it out of socket.

Jacob now had no doubts regarding God's favor, power, and protection and neither did he doubt God's promises.

- Jacob restores his brethren's faith (Gen. 35:2).
- Jacob is a man of worship (Gen. 28:18; 31:45; 35:14, 20).
- Jacob sums up his life to Pharaoh by saying that his years have been few and evil (Gen. 47:8-9).

### The Development of Joseph's Character

- Joseph had a passionate hatred for sin (Gen. 37:1-4; 39:7-12) (cf. Rom. 12:9; Eph. 4:26-27).
- God was with Joseph (Gen. 39:2).
- Joseph worked hard no matter what the circumstances of life (Gen. 39:1-7, 21-23).
- Joseph feared God and desired to keep His commandments (Gen. 39:9).
- Joseph had resolve (i.e., determination) to not sin against God (Gen. 39:10-12).
- Joseph respected the sanctity of marriage (Gen. 39:9) (Heb. 13:4).
- Joseph cared for other people (Gen. 40:5-8).

### Outline of Book

#### Chapter 1

##### I. God's Work of Creation (1:1-31):

###### A. *"In the beginning God created the heavens and the earth"* (1:1).

1. The very statement in which revelation has its beginning point illustrates the fact that the heavens and earth have not existed from all eternity. Creation had a beginning point. Secondly, the verse infers that God did exist before creation for He is the creator.
2. Secondly, we are introduced to the word "*God*" (Hebrew / *Elohiym*).
  - a. Throughout the scriptures, from this point forward, the glorious being of God will be developed into a fully comprehensible subject. He is omniscience (Jer. 23:23-24), omnipotent (Gen. 18:14), and omnipresent (Jer. 23:23-24).
  - b. When the word "*God*" is used in the scriptures the meaning is not one person but three who are one in purpose. When we read "*In the beginning God...*" it is understood that the Father, Son, and Holy Spirit were present and had a part in creation (cf. Gen. 1:26; Job 26:13; Ps. 104:30; Jn. 1:1-3, 14-15, 26-30; Col. 1:13-20; Heb. 1:1-2, 10; Rev. 4:8-11) (see study # 4; The Godhead).
  - c. The purpose of God is to glorify His created beings (i.e., man) (cf. Heb. 2:10) (see study #1).
  - d. A sky, earthy land, and massive bodies of water were made at the beginning.

###### B. *"And the earth was waste and void; and darkness was upon the face of the deep: and the Spirit of God moved upon the face of the waters. And God said, Let there be light: and there was light. And God saw the light, that it was good: and God divided the light from the darkness. And God called the light Day, and the darkness he called Night. And there was evening and there was morning, one day"* (1:2-5).

1. How did God create the "*heavens and the earth*?" Simple, He did so the same way He created light, "*God said, Let there be light: and there was light.*" God simply spoke and the heavens, earth, and light came into existence on the **first day of creation** (cf. Ps. 33:6-9; 148:4-5) (see study # 5; The Nature of God).
2. Consider the fact that when the Lord created the heavens and earth that the earth was void (without form; like a vast wilderness of nothing but land, air, and water). This clearly illustrates that there was no unformed matter and various chemicals floating through nothingness in space awaiting a cosmic reaction that somehow formed life. What this tells us is

that God created from NOTHING the creation. Consider what the author of Hebrews said at 11:3, *“By faith we understand that the worlds have been framed by the word of God, so that what is seen hath not been made out of things which appear.”* God is the architect of creation and He did so with out materials (cf. Job 26:7), He simply spoke and the world came into being. He alone is creator (cf. Isa. 45:18).

3. Some do not believe that creation can be as simple as a divine being speaking a universe or cosmos into existence. February of 1999, Hill Roberts preached a series of four lessons at the annual Florida College Lectures. After the lectures, Hill Roberts passed out a CD that had an article titled, “Genesis and the Time Thing.” The article said “This Big Bang theory is now the standard explanation for how the energy and matter resulting from the beginning came to be distributed as it is today... Genesis affirms the fact of the beginning but not the process. Therefore there can be no conflict between Genesis and science as to process. However, the physical data does argue strongly for a beginning consistent with Genesis. In this, the data supporting the Big bang theory is the Bible believer’s friend and the atheists’ nemesis” (pp. 7, “Genesis and the Time Thing). What is the “Big Bang Theory?” This is a “cosmological theory holding that the universe originated billions of years ago from the violent eruption of a point source” (AHD 177). “According to the big bang theory, the universe expanded rapidly in its first microseconds. A single force existed at the beginning of the universe, and as the universe expanded and cooled, this force separated into those we know today: gravity, electromagnetism, the strong nuclear force, and the weak nuclear force. A theory called the electroweak theory now provides a unified explanation of electromagnetism and the weak nuclear force theory.”<sup>1</sup>
  4. Note that at the *“beginning”* God created the heavens and the earth and at verse two through five He tells us what else was created at the *“beginning”* (i.e., light). After the light was made, the Word of God states, *“and there was evening and there was morning, one day.”* Some believe that after the heavens and earth were created, there were billions of years that went by while the earth’s elements were evolving. During this period of evolution, the original creation stood in chaos. This theory is known as the “Gap” Theory (A gap in time between Genesis 1:1 and Genesis 1:2). The word of God knows no gap of billions of years. As we search the scriptures we find that God made the creation in six consecutive 24 hour periods known as days (cf. Ex. 20:8-11) (see study # 6; Creation).
  5. Then there are those who want to accept scientific speculation regarding the creation **and** the Bible account. Such are known as Theistic Evolutionist. The Theistic Evolutionist believes that God played a part (the prime mover) in creation and evolution.
- C. *“And God said, Let there be a firmament in the midst of the waters, and let it divide the waters from the waters. And God made the firmament, and divided the waters which were under the firmament from the waters which were above the firmament: and it was so. And God called the firmament Heaven. And there was evening and there was morning, a second day”* (1:6-8).
1. At **day two**, God simply spoke, and the waters of the firmament (expanse) were separated from the waters of the earth.
  2. Before this point, the earth (land) and expanse (sky or air) had been created and had no form. The *“form”* now takes shape as the waters that were above the earth are now separated from the waters that were on the earth. Many believe that this has to do with the formation of clouds in the sky that hold water (cf. Ps. 148:4).
- D. *“And God said, Let the waters under the heavens be gathered together unto one place, and let the dry land appear: and it was so. And God called the dry land Earth; and the gathering together of the waters called he Seas: and God saw that it was good. And God said, Let the earth put forth grass, herbs yielding seed, [and] fruit-trees bearing fruit after their kind, wherein is the seed thereof, upon the earth: and it was so. And the earth brought forth grass, herbs yielding seed after*

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*their kind, and trees bearing fruit, wherein is the seed thereof, after their kind: and God saw that it was good. And there was evening and there was morning, a third day” (1:9-13).*

1. The **third day** of creation comprised of separating the waters (ocean or seas) of the earth from land (Earth).
  2. The earth begins to take form now as God creates life in the form of grass, herbs, and trees with the capability to reproduce. At this point, the earth would have looked like it does today (without all the development).
- E. *“And God said, Let there be lights in the firmament of heaven to divide the day from the night; and let them be for signs, and for seasons, and for days and years: and let them be for lights in the firmament of heaven to give light upon the earth: and it was so. And God made the two great lights; the greater light to rule the day, and the lesser light to rule the night: he made the stars also. And God set them in the firmament of heaven to give light upon the earth, and to rule over the day and over the night, and to divide the light from the darkness: and God saw that it was good. And there was evening and there was morning, a fourth day” (1:14-19).*
1. The **fourth day** of creation was spent creating the sun, moon, and stars.
  2. Upon completion, God *“set them in the firmament of heaven to give light upon the earth.”*
- F. *“And God said, Let the waters swarm with swarms of living creatures, and let birds fly above the earth in the open firmament of heaven. And God created the great sea-monsters, and every living creature that moveth, wherewith the waters swarmed, after their kind, and every winged bird after its kind: and God saw that it was good. And God blessed them, saying, Be fruitful, and multiply, and fill the waters in the seas, and let birds multiply on the earth. And there was evening and there was morning, a fifth day” (1:20-23).*
1. On the **fifth day** God created animal life. Great and small fish were created to fill the oceans and waterways of the earth.
  2. As God created plants with the capability of reproducing through seed even so He formed the fish and birds with the power of reproduction.
- G. *“And God said, Let the earth bring forth living creatures after their kind, cattle, and creeping things, and beasts of the earth after their kind: and it was so. And God made the beasts of the earth after their kind, and the cattle after their kind, and everything that creepeth upon the ground after its kind: and God saw that it was good. And God said, Let us make man in our image, after our likeness: and let them have dominion over the fish of the sea, and over the birds of the heavens, and over the cattle, and over all the earth, and over every creeping thing that creepeth upon the earth. And God created man in his own image, in the image of God created he him; male and female created he them” (1:24-27).*
1. The **sixth day** was comprised of creating dry land animals again with the capability of reproduction.
  2. God also created man and woman. God (the Father, Son, and Holy Spirit) made man in their image; i.e., having a spirit or soul (cf. Col. 3:10).
  3. *“And God blessed them: and God said unto them, Be fruitful, and multiply, and replenish the earth, and subdue it; and have dominion over the fish of the sea, and over the birds of the heavens, and over every living thing that moveth upon the earth. And God said, Behold, I have given you every herb yielding seed, which is upon the face of all the earth, and every tree, in which is the fruit of a tree yielding seed; to you it shall be for food: and to every beast of the earth, and to every bird of the heavens, and to everything that creepeth upon the earth, wherein there is life, I have given every green herb for food: and it was so. And God saw everything that he had made, and, behold, it was very good. And there was evening and there was morning, the sixth day” (1:28-31).*
    - a. God *“blessed”* man by giving him dominion (ruler, supremacy or authority) over all animals and the earth in general.
    - b. Man was not given animal flesh to eat at first, this did not occur until after the flood (cf. Gen. 9:3).
    - c. Note that the revelation of Genesis records the fact that what God had created was *“good”* seven times (i.e., 1:4, 10, 12, 18, 21, 25, 31). The last mention here in verse 31 states that

God's creation was "*very good*." God did not create an atmosphere of evil with snares to trap man but what He made was very good. This tells us much about the workings of the world we live in. The creation had within a Devil that had the power to tempt man to sin and man was created with the ability to choose between good and evil. This arrangement is termed "*very good*." By God's sovereign choice He created a world where man had the choice to obey Him or disobey Him. This was exactly what God wanted when he created the world. Later, in heaven, faithful men and women will live for eternity and never be tempted to sin by the devil. Much application of this principle can be made in various circles of religious thought. Consider the church. God has delivered divine revelation or instructions as to the church, how men and women become members of the church, the organization of the church, the work of the church, and the worship of the church. Indeed the church is "*very good*" because its being comes from God for the salvation of man. However, just because God made the church does not preclude the fact that there will be 'bad apples' in the church. There will be members of the body of Christ that will cause divisions (cf. I Cor. 1:11), strife (I Cor. 3:1ff), and be factious (I Cor. 11:18-19). What we learn from all this is that not only the creation but the church is just as God would have it. He has made man with the ability to make choices. Those who truly love the Lord will chose to serve Him with all their being (cf. Jn. 14:21) (see study # 1; God's Creation is Designed to Separate the Faithful from the Unfaithful).

## Chapter 2

### I. God Rest from His Labors (2:1-3):

- A. "*Thus the heavens and the earth were finished, and all the host of them. And on the seventh day God ended his work which he had made; and he rested on the seventh day from all his work which he had made*" (2:1-2).
1. After God had ceased from creating, He rested.
  2. The seventh day (Sabbath) would latter come to have specific meaning founded in the creation among the believers of God.
- B. "*And God blessed the seventh day, and sanctified it: because that in it he had rested from all his work which God created and made*" (2:3).
1. As God blessed the man at Genesis 1:28 by giving him dominion over the earth even so He blesses the seventh day. Blessings in the word of God thereby take on the idea of separating one thing from another and the giving of something spectacular to another (see study # 7; Bible Blessings).
  2. The blessing and sanctification would not actually take place until Moses received the Law on Mt. Sinai; however, the Holy Spirit reveals the fact that it would happen.

### II. God plants man into Eden and gives Him Law (2:4-17):

- A. "*These are the generations of the heavens and of the earth when they were created, in the day that the LORD God made the earth and the heavens. And every plant of the field before it was in the earth, and every herb of the field before it grew: for the LORD God had not caused it to rain upon the earth, and there was not a man to till the ground. But there went up a mist from the earth, and watered the whole face of the ground*" (2:4-6).
1. The word "*generation*" (Heb. *tholedoth*) can mean history as well as family generations. The statement, "*these are the generations of the heavens and of the earth*" stand as somewhat of a title for everything that is to follow.
  2. The contents of chapter two are not an explanation of chapter one but merely the beginnings of the story of history that have a brief overview of the creation. When we read chapter two the entire creation had already been created and Moses (the author of Genesis) is giving the earth's history.
  3. At this point, the plants did exist (cf. Gen. 1:11-12); however, the ability to cultivate the plants had not yet begun due to their being no rain or man to prepare and plant the seeds.



4. Rain apparently did eventually fall in some form (a mist) over the earth.
- B. *“And the LORD God formed man of the dust of the ground, and breathed into his nostrils the breath of life; and man became a living soul”* (2:7).
1. Interestingly, the Bible tells us that man was created from the dust as opposed to having come along by the evolutionary process.
  2. The creation of man from the dust of the earth helps us to see the omnipotence of God. The breath of man is his life (cf. I Kings 17:17). So God breathed directly into the nostrils of man the breath of life. God was the creator and originator of man’s life and so as a *“living soul”* he is created in the *“image of God”* (i.e., a living soul) (see study # 5).
- C. *“And the LORD God planted a garden eastward in Eden; and there he put the man whom he had formed. And out of the ground made the LORD God to grow every tree that is pleasant to the sight, and good for food; the tree of life also in the midst of the garden, and the tree of knowledge of good and evil. And a river went out of Eden to water the garden; and from thence it was parted, and became into four heads. The name of the first is Pison: that is it which compasseth the whole land of Havilah, where there is gold; And the gold of that land is good: there is bdellium and the onyx stone. And the name of the second river is Gihon: the same is it that compasseth the whole land of Ethiopia. And the name of the third river is Hiddekel: that is it which goeth toward the east of Assyria. And the fourth river is Euphrates”* (2:8-14).
1. The name *“Eden”* = *“delight.”* God placed man in a garden of delight filled with trees that provided food.
  2. Within the garden were two specific trees named, *“the tree of life”* and *“the tree of knowledge of good and evil”* (more on the both of these trees below).
  3. The location of Eden is given. A river came out of Eden to water the trees and after leaving Eden, the river divides into four separate rivers. Two of the rivers are known and two have an unknown origin. The Euphrates and Hiddekel (Tigris; cf. Dan. 10:4) are of known location; however, the location of the Pison and Gihon are unknown.
- D. *“And the LORD God took the man, and put him into the garden of Eden to dress it and to keep it. And the LORD God commanded the man, saying, Of every tree of the garden thou mayest freely eat: But of the tree of the knowledge of good and evil, thou shalt not eat of it: for in the day that thou eatest thereof thou shalt surely die”* (2:15-17).
1. Note that man was not placed in such a garden of delight to have an eternal vacation, rest, and relaxation. Man was originally designed to be a worker. Note, *“God took the man, and put him into the garden of Eden TO DRESS IT AND TO KEEP IT”* (see study # 8; God’s Intentions for Man).
  2. Secondly, God did not place man in a place of delight and say live anyway you want to. God gave the man a law. Man was to not eat *“of the tree of the knowledge of good and evil.”* The consequences eating of the tree would be a violation of God’s command and result in spiritual death.
  3. Again, this goes back to the idea of Genesis one where we read the statement, *“it is good”* seven times. One may ask, *“why would God place such a tree in the presence of man and then prohibit him from eating it?”* The answer may be found in the nature of God (i.e., just and righteous [Jer. 9:24]) and so desires His people to be (Rom. 12:1ff). Again, if man could obtain the knowledge of good and evil by eating of the fruit of the tree why forbid it? Again, the answer is found in the divine nature of God and what He expects from His created beings. Divine law was given in the garden and as man obeyed that law he was assured that he would not die. As man kept the law he gained a better understanding of right from wrong. However, as man violated God’s commands, he found out about sin and righteousness from his own guilty experience and so died spiritually. He learned the lesson through shame as opposed to learning the lesson the way God intended man to learn (see study # 1).
  4. Remember, God placed the tree of knowledge in the garden (and gave Adam law) then called this arrangement *“very good.”* Throughout history the Lord finds those who truly love Him through such arrangements (cf. I Jn. 5:3).

### III. God Creates the Woman (2:18-25):

- A. *“And the LORD God said, It is not good that the man should be alone; I will make him an help meet for him. And out of the ground the LORD God formed every beast of the field, and every fowl of the air; and brought them unto Adam to see what he would call them: and whatsoever Adam called every living creature, that was the name thereof. And Adam gave names to all cattle, and to the fowl of the air, and to every beast of the field; but for Adam there was not found an help meet for him. And the LORD God caused a deep sleep to fall upon Adam, and he slept: and he took one of his ribs, and closed up the flesh instead thereof; And the rib, which the LORD God had taken from man, made he a woman, and brought her unto the man”* (2:18-22).
1. Genesis 1:27 states that God had made both male and female on the sixth day of creation. The sixth day was the day that Adam clearly named all the land animals. The Lord had given man dominion over the animals and by the process of giving names to the animals the man illustrates this fact.
  2. Interestingly, the woman was not formed of the dust as was Adam (cf. Gen. 2:7) but from one of Adam’s ribs. “This ordinance of God forms the root of that tender love with which the man loves the woman as himself, and by which marriage becomes a type of the fellowship of love and life, which exists between the Lord and His church (Eph. 6:32).”<sup>2</sup>
  3. Note that the Lord God saw that there was not a “*help meet*” for Adam. The woman is considered a “*help meet*” (*ezer*). The Hebrew word *ezer* is found 21 times in the OT and is usually translated “*help*” (i.e., “to give assistance to; aid” [AHD 604]). What did the man need assistance and aid doing? The man needed assistance in keeping God’s laws (Gen. 2:16), replenishing the earth through reproduction (Gen. 1:28), subduing and having dominion over animal life (Gen. 1:28), and tending the Garden of Eden (Gen. 2:15) that they may eat food (Gen. 1:29). She was to be his partner in this work (see study # 9; Bible Homes). The idea of the woman being the man’s “assistant” in the work God gave man to do indicates her submission to him (Eph. 5:25ff). The man could no more replenish the earth through reproduction alone as do all else that God gave the man to do. God’s arrangement was for there to be a man and woman working together.
- B. *“And Adam said, This is now bone of my bones, and flesh of my flesh: she shall be called Woman, because she was taken out of Man. Therefore shall a man leave his father and his mother, and shall cleave unto his wife: and they shall be one flesh. And they were both naked, the man and his wife, and were not ashamed”* (2:23-25).
1. Adam was very pleased when he awoke from his deep sleep and demonstrated his dominion over the woman by naming her as he named the animals. This is God’s arrangement (cf. Eph. 5:22ff).
  2. Moses now interjects, with divine revelation regarding the marriage relationship saying, *“Therefore shall a man leave his father and his mother, and shall cleave unto his wife: and they shall be one flesh.”* Jesus quoted this in relation to marriage in Matthew 19:4-6 so that there is no doubt Genesis 2:24 relates to the marriage relationship.
  3. How shall the two be one? Adam was apart from Eve before she was created but now they are together. They share the same work together as a partnership now. Their work is keeping God’s laws, replenishing the earth (procreation and companionship), subduing the earth, and working together in the Garden of Eden. Likewise, today man and wife are partners in the work of procreation and providing for the home.

## Chapter 3

### I. Man and Woman Fall to Sin (3:1-7):

- A. *“Now the serpent was more subtle than any beast of the field which Jehovah God had made. And he said unto the woman, Yea, hath God said, Ye shall not eat of any tree of the garden? And the woman said unto the serpent, Of the fruit of the trees of the garden we may eat: but of the fruit of*

<sup>2</sup> Keil and Delitzsch. Commentary on the Old Testament; The Pentateuch; pg. 56

*the tree which is in the midst of the garden, God hath said, Ye shall not eat of it, neither shall ye touch it, lest ye die. And the serpent said unto the woman, Ye shall not surely die: for God doth know that in the day ye eat thereof, then your eyes shall be opened, and ye shall be as God, knowing good and evil” (3:1-5).*

1. Note that the serpent was a “*beast of the field*” that God had made (so it was good). Apparently Satan took possession of the snake and caused it to speak to Eve (cf. Rev. 12:9). Note that the devil existed at the beginning of creation for the purpose of tempting man so that God would know who desired to serve him and who did not (see study # 1).
2. Keil and Delitzsch state that the Hebrew indicates the Devil speaking through the snake in a voice of surprise. His first words to Eve were, ‘Is it really the fact that God has prohibited you from eating of all the trees of the garden?’<sup>3</sup> Often times those who find our convictions to be foreign will with surprise state, “is it true that you really partake of the Lord’s Supper every first day of the week?” Said statements are designed to cause us to rethink our position and if not careful cast them off.
3. The woman replies to Satan’s question by affirming God’s law regarding not eating of the tree of the knowledge of good and evil.
4. Satan replies, “*ye shall not surely die.*” Though Jehovah God told Adam and Eve they would die Satan contradicts the Lord’s words and tells them they would not die (who ya going to believe?). For this cause the scriptures illustrate the devil as being the “*father of lies*” (Jn. 8:44). The Devil took truths (i.e., your eyes will be opened to know good and evil) and twisted the words that man and woman would doubt God’s care for them. So the devil deceived Eve by craft (cf. II Cor. 2:11, 4:2) creating doubt in her mind about God’s words of truth (Matt. 13:19) (see study # 10; The Devil). The whole event was a lie and due to Adam and Eve’s spiritual weakness, they gave in to it. Those today who would tell us that we will not spiritually die when in sin are spokesmen for the devil (see study # 11; Calvinism).
5. Note on the Snake: During the 2003 Florida College Lectures, Marty Pickup delivered a sermon titled, “The Seed of Woman” (read entire manuscript in the 2003 Florida College Lecture Book pp. 49-78). The lecture clearly advocates that the serpent in Genesis 3 is not “possibly” real. Addressing this issue in the August 2003 issue of [www.watchmanmag.com](http://www.watchmanmag.com), brothers Marc Gibson and Harry Osborn wrote, “While brother Pickup may, or may not, personally believe this interpretation that ‘the account of’ Genesis 3 ‘may be, to some degree, accommodative and symbolic,’ or that the ‘serpent motif’ is borrowed ‘imagery from the mythological culture of that day’ allowing the use of ‘such a literary device,’ please allow it to sink into your mind that he offers it to brethren today as ‘**worth considering**’ and ‘**possible.**’ When one suggests that Bible writers may have been ‘borrowing imagery from the mythological culture of that day’ and taking ‘features of well-known pagan myths’ which would later be translated from “the antique theological images of Genesis into the cosmic language that had become commonplace by the Greco-Roman period,’ he is no longer speaking as the oracles of God (1 Pet. 4:11). He may be speaking the language of modern theology or of evangelicals, **but he is not speaking as the oracles of God.**” Furthermore, Marc and Harry write, “In his manuscript, brother Pickup refers to the fact that serpents do not normally speak and that this may cause us to think it was something other than a literal serpent (p. 58). If that would suggest we should re-interpret the serpent of Genesis 3 in light of a “serpent motif,” what would it do to the talking donkey of Numbers 22? The Bible says that the donkey spoke (Num. 22:30; 2 Pet. 2:16). That faculty of speech was not, however, explained by something intrinsic to the nature of a donkey, but by the fact that God “opened the mouth of the donkey” (Num. 22:28). We dare not go to a parallel in pagan mythology to find a “donkey motif” and re-interpret the story to deny the presence of a literal donkey that talked.
  - a. What is the danger here? The danger is that if brethren question this fact in God’s word where will they stop? Creation? The Lord’s and apostle’s faith confirming miracles? Such language only cast doubt in the minds of readers as to the ability to know God’s revelation.

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<sup>3</sup> Ibid. pp. 59

Brother Marty Pickup seems to have a history of this type of work. Marc and Harry state, “Brother Pickup heightened our concern about this uncertainty when he declared at the same Florida College lecture that he could not be ‘dogmatic’ or ‘a hundred percent certain’ about the authenticity of 2 Peter and Jude. Though his personal conclusion was that ‘the weight of the evidence tips the scale in favor of the authenticity of 2 Peter and Jude,’ he admitted, ‘I can’t just be dogmatic about that, I’m not a hundred percent certain about that’ (*The Canonicity of the General Epistles*, Florida College Annual Lectures, [8 Feb. 2000]).”

- b. The next month, brother Pickup responded to Marc and Harry’s article. Regarding the snake being a literal creature brother Pickup said, “That is a reasonable way of reading the biblical text, and I believe that it may indeed be correct. But in my opinion, one needs to at least consider the possibility that ‘the serpent’ terminology of Genesis may have been intended as a metaphorical designation of Satan himself.”
  - c. No one disagrees that Satan was working through the snake. Some may think this all sounds petty yet it is little stepping stones such as brother Pickup lays that lead to an all out skeptical view of God’s word. When brethren start using terms like, “I’m not being dogmatic, but...” we ought to take caution.
- B.** *“And when the woman saw that the tree was good for food, and that it was a delight to the eyes, and that the tree was to be desired to make one wise, she took of the fruit thereof, and did eat; and she gave also unto her husband with her, and he did eat. And the eyes of them both were opened, and they knew that they were naked; and they sewed fig-leaves together, and made themselves aprons” (3:6-7).*
- 1. Eve considered within her human reasoning that the tree would be good for food (why not eat of it?). Like so many after her, man does what he believes is best rather than what God commands is best for him (cf. Jer. 7:24). So Jeremiah proclaimed in wisdom, *“O Jehovah, I know that the way of man is not in himself; it is not in man that walks to direct his steps”* (Jer. 10:23) (see study # 12; *Fleshly Wisdom and Spiritual Failures*).
  - 2. Once Eve concluded that the tree was a *“delight to the eyes”* and to be *“desired to make one wise”* she fell through lust and was *“beguiled”* (cf. I Tim. 2:14). We are told that Adam was not *“beguiled”* by Satan yet he must have been beguiled by Eve for the record states that he did eat as she.
  - 3. After eating, their eyes were enlightened and they were ashamed of their nakedness.
  - 4. Note that God had given a clear command regarding the tree of knowledge (cf. Gen. 2:16). Adam and Eve understood the command (Gen. 3:2-4). The devil cast doubt as to their understanding of God’s command and so they sinned. Here is the working of the devil today. God’s word is so very simple yet the devil complicates it to confuse and beguile the hearts of men (see study # 10).

## **II. God confronts the Sinners (3:8-13):**

- A.** *“And they heard the voice of Jehovah God walking in the garden in the cool of the day: and the man and his wife hid themselves from the presence of Jehovah God amongst the trees of the garden” (3:8).*
- 1. While in fellowship with God the man and woman would in no way hide from the Lord but rather enjoy it.
  - 2. The relationship had now changed. Adam and Eve had sinned against the Father, they were ashamed, and thereby hid themselves.
- B.** *“And Jehovah God called unto the man, and said unto him, Where art thou? And he said, I heard thy voice in the garden, and I was afraid, because I was naked; and I hid myself. And he said, Who told thee that thou wast naked? Hast thou eaten of the tree, whereof I commanded thee that thou shouldest not eat? And the man said, The woman whom thou gavest to be with me, she gave me of the tree, and I did eat. And Jehovah God said unto the woman, What is this thou hast done? And the woman said, The serpent beguiled me, and I did eat” (3:9-13).*
- 1. Not as though God did not know where Adam and Eve were, but He calls upon them that they may answer for their sin.

2. The man answers telling the Lord that he was afraid not because he broke God's commands but because he was naked. Often men today who face the consequences of their sins see more in the effects of sin rather than seeing that they have violated God's commands saying, 'Lord forgive me of my awful deeds.'
3. To awaken the fact that Adam and Eve had violated God's commands, the Lord proclaims, "*Hast thou eaten of the tree, whereof I commanded thee that thou shouldest not eat?*" Here is the real issue (consequences of sin are always to be expected; cf. Prov. 13:15; 22:5); however, to have man right with God the sinner needs to understand that he has violated a command of God (Rom. 7:7) (see study # 13; Bible Repentance).
4. Now that God points up their sin, the man and woman's response is to shift the blame. The man blamed the woman and the woman blamed the serpent. Here is a good lesson on accountability. It doesn't matter who causes one to sin, when sin occurs, the sinner is the guilty one. I can blame my wife for all my faults; however, the fact remains that I have faults (example). To blame others for your sin will never lessen the guilt in the eyes of God.

### III. God Pronounces the Punishment upon the Serpent, Woman, and Man for the Transgression (3:14-19):

- A. "*And Jehovah God said unto the serpent, Because thou hast done this, cursed art thou above all cattle, and above every beast of the field; upon thy belly shalt thou go, and dust shalt thou eat all the days of thy life: and I will put enmity between thee and the woman, and between thy seed and her seed: he shall bruise thy head, and thou shalt bruise his heel*" (3:14-15).
  1. To the literal beast of the field (i.e., the snake) God gave His punishment which was to be seen both literally (the snake would crawl around eating dust as he went through the dirt) and figuratively (Satan would be crushed under the feet of Christ).
  2. Through the woman came sin and through the woman shall come the remedy of sin (Jesus). Satan would bruise his heel (the Lord was indeed crucified) yet he was raised from the dead in a triumphal victory over sin and thereby crushing the devil's power.
- B. "*Unto the woman he said, I will greatly multiply thy pain and thy conception; in pain thou shalt bring forth children; and thy desire shall be to thy husband, and he shall rule over thee*" (3:16).
  1. Physical pain in child bearing was the punishment for the woman.
  2. Secondly, God had clearly designed the woman to be subordinate to the man and she overstepped that state when she spoke to the man in a way that gave way for his subjecting to her wishes of taking of the tree and thereby violating God's law. The Lord now clearly tells the woman that the man shall "*rule over thee.*" The apostle Paul said, "*for the man is not of the woman; but the woman of the man: for neither was the man created for the woman; but the woman for the man*" (I Cor. 11:8-9).
- C. "*And unto Adam he said, Because thou hast hearkened unto the voice of thy wife, and hast eaten of the tree, of which I commanded thee, saying, Thou shalt not eat of it: cursed is the ground for thy sake; in toil shalt thou eat of it all the days of thy life; thorns also and thistles shall it bring forth to thee; and thou shalt eat the herb of the field; in the sweat of thy face shalt thou eat bread, till thou return unto the ground; for out of it wast thou taken: for dust thou art, and unto dust shalt thou return*" (3:17-19).
  1. A two fold punishment awaited Adam for his sin. First, the ground would not yield so easily the necessities of life. Adam would have to labor in sweat to obtain his crop.
  2. Secondly, Adam was to return to the dust wherein he was formed; i.e., he would physically die. We know from subsequent NT writings that Adam not only died physically because of his sins but he died spiritually as well (i.e., he was separated from God) (Rom. 5:12; I Cor. 15:21-22).
  3. In the punishment of the serpent, woman, and man we see the both the just and merciful nature of God (cf. Jer. 9:24). God cursed only the serpent and mercifully gives man and woman hope in a future reconciliation.

### IV. Jehovah God causes Adam and Eve to Exit the Garden of Eden (3:20-24):

- A. "*And the man called his wife's name Eve; because she was the mother of all living*" (3:20).

1. As Adam took the lead in naming the female created by God “*woman*” at Genesis 2:23 even so he now names his wife, “*Eve*.” The name Eve “signifies life or life-spring.”<sup>4</sup>
2. Adam’s faith in God’s promise of woman’s seed crushing Satan is seen here in that he named her as such that indicates she will be the “*mother of all living*.”
- B. “*And Jehovah God made for Adam and for his wife coats of skins, and clothed them*” (3:21).
  1. Shame is first revealed in God’s word in relation to man’s nakedness. Likewise, immodestly dressed individuals today are in sin and ought to be ashamed.
  2. The leaves that Adam and Eve wore were not sufficient clothing. The Lord made clothes of animal skins and so animal kind was slaughtered and their hides used for clothing.
- C. “*And Jehovah God said, Behold, the man is become as one of us, to know good and evil; and now, lest he put forth his hand, and take also of the tree of life, and eat, and live for ever-- therefore Jehovah God sent him forth from the garden of Eden, to till the ground from whence he was taken. So he drove out the man; and he placed at the east of the garden of Eden the Cherubim, and the flame of a sword which turned every way, to keep the way of the tree of life*” (3:22-24).
  1. Man became like God only in the sense that he now knew the difference between good and evil.
  2. Man is expelled from the Garden of Eden never more (while on earth) to enter in and partake of the tree of life. God put “*cherubim*” to guard the tree. Cherubim are clearly some type of higher order of angel like beings. They are found around the throne of God in Ezekiel 1:22ff; 10:1 and Revelation 4:6 (see study # 14; Angels).

## Chapter 4

### I. Adam and Eve have two sons (4:1-15):

- A. “*And the man knew Eve his wife; and she conceived, and bare Cain, and said, I have gotten a man with the help of Jehovah. And again she bare his brother Abel. And Abel was a keeper of sheep, but Cain was a tiller of the ground. And in process of time it came to pass, that Cain brought of the fruit of the ground an offering unto Jehovah. And Abel, he also brought of the firstlings of his flock and of the fat thereof. And Jehovah had respect unto Abel and to his offering: but unto Cain and to his offering he had not respect. And Cain was very wroth, and his countenance fell. And Jehovah said unto Cain, Why art thou wroth? And why is thy countenance fallen? If thou doest well, shall it not be lifted up? And if thou doest not well, sin coucheth at the door: and unto thee shall be its desire, but do thou rule over it*” (4:1-7).
  1. Apparently Adam had already begun to work the ground and tend the sheep. Cain and Abel did the same work.
  2. The phrase, “*in process of time*” indicates “a considerable lapse of time.”<sup>5</sup> Cain and Able bring a sacrifice to God from their respective occupations. God had “*respect*” unto Abel’s sacrifice; however, He did not respect Cain’s. Consider what the author of Hebrews said about this sacrifice. “*By faith Abel offered unto God a more excellent sacrifice than Cain, through which he had witness borne to him that he was righteous, God bearing witness in respect of his gifts: and through it he being dead yet speaketh*” (11:4). The eleventh chapter of Hebrews gives a technical definition of faith: Faith is a belief that God is and that His promises are true based on the evidences of creation and revelation and proved by one’s obedient acts. The phrase, “*had witness borne to him*” (*hemarturethesan*) means ‘evidence or testimony that a thing is so.’ The evidence of Abel’s faith was his obedient act of giving the best he had to God whereas Cain apparently did not give the best he had to offer. This is why Abel’s sacrifice was accepted and Cain’s was not. Keil and Delitzsch state, “The reason is to be found rather in the fact, that Abel’s thanks came from the depth of his heart, whilst Cain merely offered his to keep on good terms with God.... The offering was intended to shadow forth the dedication of the heart to God.”<sup>6</sup> When I worship Jehovah God I must understand that He is omniscient and knows my

<sup>4</sup> Ibid. pp. 66

<sup>5</sup> Ibid. pp. 68

<sup>6</sup> Ibid. pp. 69-70

heart. I must ask myself, “do I give half hearted service to Him in worship? Do I just go through the motions?” (see study # 15; Bible Faith).

3. When Cain found out that God had no respect for his gift, his countenance fell (an indication that he was angry; cf. Job. 29:24). When the Lord saw this reaction in Cain, he exposed the sin and warned him saying, “*Why art thou wroth? And why is thy countenance fallen? If thou doest well, shall it not be lifted up?*” God was telling Cain that his looks were indicative of the evil that was in his heart. The remedy, turn the heart from sinful thoughts and the facial expressions will change to joy.
4. If one does not change the heart and facial expressions, “*sin coucheth at the door: and unto thee shall be its desire, but do thou rule over it.*”
  - a. Sin is pictured as a wild beast crouching down waiting to pounce and devour a victim (cf. I Pet. 5:8).
  - b. The Lord instructs Cain to “*rule over it*” (the urge to sin). James said, “*resist the devil and he will flee*” (James 4:7). God gives man the power to rule over his passions to sin but the choice and desire must be in the heart to do so. This desire was not in Cain (see study # 16; Dealing with Temptation).
- B. “*And Cain told Abel his brother. And it came to pass, when they were in the field, that Cain rose up against Abel his brother, and slew him*” (4:8).
  1. Though the Lord exposed his sin, gave him the solution for the potential problem, Cain rejected God’s words and murdered his brother Abel out of jealousy.
  2. The apostle John states, “*Not as Cain, who was of that wicked one, and slew his brother. And wherefore slew he him? Because his own works were evil, and his brother's righteous*” (I Jn. 3:12). Cain goes down in history as one opposed to God’s commands and so becomes representative in all those who so do (cf. Jude 11).
- C. “*And Jehovah said unto Cain, Where is Abel thy brother? And he said, I know not: am I my brother's keeper? And he said, What hast thou done? The voice of thy brother's blood crieth unto me from the ground. And now cursed art thou from the ground, which hath opened its mouth to receive thy brother's blood from thy hand; when thou tillest the ground, it shall not henceforth yield unto thee its strength; a fugitive and a wanderer shalt thou be in the earth. And Cain said unto Jehovah, My punishment is greater than I can bear. Behold, thou hast driven me out this day from the face of the ground; and from thy face shall I be hid; and I shall be a fugitive and a wanderer in the earth; and it will come to pass, that whosoever findeth me will slay me. And Jehovah said unto him, Therefore whosoever slayeth Cain, vengeance shall be taken on him sevenfold. And Jehovah appointed a sign for Cain, lest any finding him should smite him*” (4:9-15).
  1. Note the lying and defiant disposition of Cain as the Lord asks him where his brother is... “*I know not: am I my brother's keeper?*” Such a depraved response to Jehovah God illustrates a reckless view of God. Cain had no true love or respect for the Lord. Cain was of his father the devil (a murderer from the beginning) (Jn. 8:44ff).
  2. God immediately pronounces Cain’s punishment. He is to go forth as a wanderer. No longer would Cain be able to enjoy the peaceful comforts of a home.
  3. Cain was fearful that someone would demand blood for blood and kill him out of revenge of Abel’s death. Cain seems to have no remorse over his sinful deed nor does he seek God’s forgiveness. He selfishly fears the outcome of his sin in relation to his personage.
  4. Jehovah is merciful to Cain and in some unrecorded way places a mark on Cain that allows others to know that he is not to be killed.

## II. The Family of Cain (4:16-24):

- A. “*And Cain went out from the presence of Jehovah, and dwelt in the land of Nod, on the east of Eden. And Cain knew his wife; and she conceived, and bare Enoch: and he builded a city, and called the name of the city, after the name of his son, Enoch. And unto Enoch was born Irad: and Irad begat Mehujael: and Mehujael begat Methushael; and Methushael begat Lamech. And Lamech took unto him two wives: the name of the one was Adah, and the name of the other Zillah. And Adah bare Jabal: he was the father of such as dwell in tents and [have] cattle. And his brother's name was Jubal: he was the father of all such as handle the harp and pipe. And Zillah, she also bare Tubal-*

*cain, the forger of every cutting instrument of brass and iron: and the sister of Tubal-cain was Naamah” (4:16-22).*

1. Lamech, a descendant from Cain, was of a reprobate and sensual mind. He is the first man recorded to practice polygamy by taking two wives.
2. Cain’s descendents were industrious being inventors of harps, pipes, and musical instruments. Tubal-cain was one who made tools.

**B.** *“And Lamech said unto his wives: Adah and Zillah, hear my voice; Ye wives of Lamech, hearken unto my speech: For I have slain a man for wounding me, And a young man for bruising me: If Cain shall be avenged sevenfold, Truly Lamech seventy and sevenfold” (4:23-24).*

1. We have seen disobedience in Adam and Eve. We have seen the sin of murder, rebellion, and lying from Cain. We read of the polygamy of Lamech and now we see pride. Sin was operating in full force in the world.
2. Such was the disposition of the Chaldeans that God raised to power to punish His sinful people (Jer. 50:29). Such individuals put their trust in their strength. These men are not only filled with pride but pride is their god (cf. Hab. 1:11).

### **III. The Origins of a Godly Race (4:25-26):**

**A.** *“And Adam knew his wife again; and she bare a son, and called his name Seth. For, said she, God hath appointed me another seed instead of Abel; for Cain slew him. And to Seth, to him also there was born a son; and he called his name Enosh. Then began men to call upon the name of Jehovah” (4:25-26).*

1. Eve was thankful to God that He gave her another son in the place of Abel whom Cain killed.
2. Through the seed of Seth men began to *“call upon the name of Jehovah.”* The idea of “calling upon the name of God” is to invoke the name of God for spiritual help (cf. Acts 22:16) (see study # 17; Calling on the Name of the Lord).

**B.** *“While the family of Cainites, by the erection of a city, and the invention and development of worldly arts and business, were laying the foundation for the kingdom of this world; the family of the Sethites began, by united invocation of the name of God of grace, to found and to erect the kingdom of God.”<sup>7</sup>*

## **Chapter 5**

### **I. The Generations of Adam through Seth (chapter 5 all):**

**A.** *“This is the book of the generations of Adam. In the day that God created man, in the likeness of God made he him; male and female created he them, and blessed them, and called their name Adam, in the day when they were created. And Adam lived a hundred and thirty years, and begat a son in his own likeness, after his image; and called his name Seth: and the days of Adam after he begat Seth were eight hundred years: and he begat sons and daughters. And all the days that Adam lived were nine hundred and thirty years: and he died. And Seth lived a hundred and five years, and begat Enosh: and Seth lived after he begat Enosh eight hundred and seven years, and begat sons and daughters: and all the days of Seth were nine hundred and twelve years: and he died. And Enosh lived ninety years, and begat Kenan. And Enosh lived after he begat Kenan eight hundred and fifteen years, and begat sons and daughters: and all the days of Enosh were nine hundred and five years: and he died. And Kenan lived seventy years, and begat Mahalalel: and Kenan lived after he begat Mahalalel eight hundred and forty years, and begat sons and daughters: and all the days of Kenan were nine hundred and ten years: and he died. And Mahalalel lived sixty and five years, and begat Jared: And Mahalalel lived after he begat Jared eight hundred and thirty years, and begat sons and daughters: and all the days of Mahalalel were eight hundred ninety and five years: and he died. And Jared lived a hundred sixty and two years, and begat Enoch: and Jared lived after he begat Enoch eight hundred years, and begat sons and daughters: And all the*

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<sup>7</sup> Ibid. pp. 75



*days of Jared were nine hundred sixty and two years: and he died. And Enoch lived sixty and five years, and begat Methuselah: and Enoch walked with God after he begat Methuselah three hundred years, and begat sons and daughters: and all the days of Enoch were three hundred sixty and five years: and Enoch walked with God: and he was not; for God took him” (5:1-24).*

1. Due to Adam’s sin in the Garden of Eden, the Lord told him that he would die (Gen. 3:19). Adam dies at the age of 930 years old. Recall that Adam was created on the sixth day of creation. The seventh day God rested. Naturally, if the days of creation represent billions of years then how can Adam now be dead at 993 year AFTER the SIXTH day of creation? (see study # 6).
  2. Secondly, we note the fact that Enoch was one who did not have to experience death as Adam and all else (except Elijah). The record simply states that “*he was not; for God took him.*” The book of Jude 14-15 reveal that Enoch was a prophet who warned sinners of their ungodly actions. The author of Hebrews said of Enoch that, “*By faith Enoch was translated that he should not see death; and he was not found, because God translated him: for he hath had witness borne to him that before his translation he had been well-pleasing unto God:”* (Heb. 11:5). Clearly Enoch was one whose actions evidenced his belief in God and His promises.
  3. Another interesting note is that while Enoch was the seventh from Adam through Seth and was recognized as a godly man, there was also Lamech, the seventh from Adam through Cain who was a reprobate. This illustrates the two different directions the families were going in.
- B. “*And Methuselah lived a hundred eighty and seven years, and begat Lamech: and Methuselah lived after he begat Lamech seven hundred eighty and two years, and begat sons and daughters. And all the days of Methuselah were nine hundred sixty and nine years: and he died. And Lamech lived a hundred eighty and two years, and begat a son: and he called his name Noah, saying, This same shall comfort us in our work and in the toil of our hands, which cometh because of the ground which Jehovah hath cursed. And Lamech lived after he begat Noah five hundred ninety and five years, and begat sons and daughters: And all the days of Lamech were seven hundred seventy and seven years: and he died. And Noah was five hundred years old: And Noah begat Shem, Ham, and Japheth” (5:25-32).*

<b>Descendants of Adam</b>			
<b>Descendants of Adam</b>	<b>Years of Life</b>	<b>Age at Son’s Birth</b>	<b>Age of the Earth</b>
<b>Adam</b>	<b>930</b>	<b>130</b>	<b>130</b>
<b>Seth</b>	<b>807</b>	<b>105</b>	<b>435</b>
<b>Enos</b>	<b>905</b>	<b>90</b>	<b>525</b>
<b>Cainan</b>	<b>840</b>	<b>70</b>	<b>595</b>
<b>Mahalaleel</b>	<b>895</b>	<b>65</b>	<b>660</b>
<b>Jared</b>	<b>962</b>	<b>162</b>	<b>822</b>
<b>Enoch</b>	<b>365 (God took Enoch)</b>	<b>65</b>	<b>887</b>

<b>Methuselah</b>	<b>969</b>	<b>180</b>	<b>1067</b>
<b>Lamech</b>	<b>777</b>	<b>182</b>	<b>1249</b>
<b>Noah</b>	<b>950</b>	<b>500</b>	<b>1749</b>

## Chapter 6

### I. Sin's dominion engulfs the family of Seth (6:1- 8):

- A. *"And it came to pass, when men began to multiply on the face of the ground, and daughters were born unto them, that the sons of God saw the daughters of men that they were fair; and they took them wives of all that they chose"* (6:1-2).
1. There are many theories as to who the *"sons of God"* and the *"daughters of men."* Some believe that angels are under consideration in the term *"sons of God."* The context of the chapters leading up to this point clearly indicates that the spiritual lineage of Seth would represent *"sons of God"* and the degenerate side of Cain represents the *"daughters of men."* As men in general multiplied upon the earth each side of Adam (i.e., Seth's and Cain's) came in contact with each other and so their influences.
  2. The family of Seth began looking to physical beauty and found it in the family of Cain. They began to intermingle in marriage and became altogether ungodly.
- B. *"And Jehovah said, My spirit shall not strive with man for ever, for that he also is flesh: yet shall his days be a hundred and twenty years. The Nephilim were in the earth in those days, and also after that, when the sons of God came unto the daughters of men, and they bare children to them: the same were the mighty men that were of old, the men of renown"* (6:3-4).
1. The longevity of men's lives was now shortened in connection with their wicked ways.
  2. The Nephilim were giant men that lived during these days.
- C. *"And Jehovah saw that the wickedness of man was great in the earth, and that every imagination of the thoughts of his heart was only evil continually. And it repented Jehovah that he had made man on the earth, and it grieved him at his heart. And Jehovah said, I will destroy man whom I have created from the face of the ground; both man, and beast, and creeping things, and birds of the heavens; for it repenteth me that I have made them. But Noah found favor in the eyes of Jehovah"* (6:5-8).
1. Man had now come to a point of total corruption and degenerate thinking.
  2. The Lord has ever given man a free choice in life as He did with Adam and Eve. Man chose a life of the flesh (i.e., non-spiritually minded and given to lust). As Jehovah looks to His created beings and sees the choice they have made in life, *"it repented Jehovah that he had made man on the earth, and it grieved him at his heart."*
    - a. Here is an attribute of Jehovah God, He can be grieved at heart (see study # 5). This seems to be an explanatory statement to the fact that sinful men caused God to *"repent"* that He had made them. God's sorrow and grief over man's sins caused him to be sorry that He made man. The word *"repent"* = "a primitive root; properly, to sigh, i.e. breathe strongly; by implication, to be sorry, i.e. (in a favorable sense) to pity, console or (reflexively) rue; or (unfavorably) to avenge (oneself);--comfort (self), ease (one's self), repent(-er,-ing, self)" (Strong's 5162).
    - b. Though God was sorry that He had made man because they had become so wicked there was one who had not given himself over to sin. This one was Noah, a preacher of righteousness (II Pet. 2:5).

## II. Noah Commanded to Build an Ark (6:9-22):

- A. *“These are the generations of Noah. Noah was a righteous man, and perfect in his generations: Noah walked with God. And Noah begat three sons, Shem, Ham, and Japheth. And the earth was corrupt before God, and the earth was filled with violence. And God saw the earth, and, behold, it was corrupt; for all flesh had corrupted their way upon the earth. And God said unto Noah, The end of all flesh is come before me; for the earth is filled with violence through them; and, behold, I will destroy them with the earth”* (6:9-13).
1. A contrast is made between Noah and the rest of the *“earth that was filled with violence.”*
  2. Noah’s *“perfection”* is defined as being a *“righteous man”* and one who *“walked with God”* (followed God’s ordinances) (see study # 18; Bible Perfection).
  3. God communicated with Noah pronouncing the *“end of all flesh”* due to their state of *“corruption”* (see study # 19; God’s Judgment against Sinful Men).
- B. *“Make thee an ark of gopher wood; rooms shalt thou make in the ark, and shalt pitch it within and without with pitch. And this is how thou shalt make it: the length of the ark three hundred cubits, the breadth of it fifty cubits, and the height of it thirty cubits. A light shalt thou make to the ark, and to a cubit shalt thou finish it upward; and the door of the ark shalt thou set in the side thereof; with lower, second, and third stories shalt thou make it”* (6:14-16).
1. God gave specific directions as to how to build an ark that would support Noah, his family, and animals (see study # 20; Bible Authority).
  2. The ark was to be 300 cubits in length, 50 cubits in width, and 30 cubits high (450’L X 75’W X 45’H). The ark was to have a vent window, a door, and it was to be three stories high.
- C. *“And I, behold, I do bring the flood of waters upon this earth, to destroy all flesh, wherein is the breath of life, from under heaven; everything that is in the earth shall die. But I will establish my covenant with thee; and thou shalt come into the ark, thou, and thy sons, and thy wife, and thy sons’ wives with thee”* (6:17-18).
1. The Lord intended to destroy every living thing upon the face of the earth with water. There would be; however, eight souls were to be saved (i.e., Noah and his three sons [Shem, Ham, and Japheth] along with their wives). God would establish (introduce, recognize, cause to be accepted) His covenant (law or agreement). This is the first occurrence of the word *“covenant”* in the Bible. What law or agreement would God introduce or cause to be recognized and accepted through Noah? God intends for His plan to redeem man, through the sacrifice of Jesus, to be fulfilled by the seed of Noah (see study # 21; God’s Plan to Redeem Mankind). This idea is first introduced at Genesis 3:15 after Adam and Eve sinned. The word of God from that point forward unfolds God’s plan to save humanity from the consequences of spiritual death.
  2. What is the significance of the story of Noah and the flood?
    - a. First, we find that God was proving Noah’s faith. The author of Hebrews said, *“By faith Noah, being warned of God concerning things not seen as yet, moved with godly fear, prepared an ark to the saving of his house; through which he condemned the world, and became heir of the righteousness which is according to faith”* (Heb. 11:7). Note that a considerable amount of time was taken to build such an enormous vessel with the type of tools available to Noah (compare Gen. 5:32 to 7:6). Noah would be saved from the flood when he faithfully complied with God’s commands. Noah did so and thereby goes down in history as a faithful man (he believed in the reality of God and evidenced that faith by his obedience).
    - b. Secondly, we note that Noah was saved from something (cf. II Pet. 2:4-9). According to Peter, Noah was not saved from the destructive forces of the flood but rather from sinful men and their wicked influences.
    - c. Thirdly, we may ask, why did God choose a flood to separate sinful man from the righteous? The answer to this question takes into consideration the omniscience of Jehovah God. The prophet Isaiah tells us that the way we can determine the reality of Jehovah God is to see that He *“declares the end from the beginning...”* (Isa. 46:9-10). Consider I Pet. 3:20-21, *“that aforetime were disobedient, when the longsuffering of God*

*waited in the days of Noah, while the ark was a preparing, wherein few, that is, eight souls, were saved through water: which also after a true likeness doth now save you, even baptism, not the putting away of the filth of the flesh, but the interrogation of a good conscience toward God, through the resurrection of Jesus Christ.”* Noah was separated from sinful man and thereby saved by the water because he complied with God’s commands to build the ark. The foreknowledge of God chose a flood in order to save man that a proper illustration might be made today regarding our salvation through water (i.e., baptism). The flood and baptism are illustrations of the sovereignty of Jehovah God. God’s choice is to save man by water when they comply with His commands as did Noah! Again, we see attributes of God in the story of Noah (i.e., He is a sovereign and omniscient God) (We noted that God can be “*grieved*” [Gen. 6:6]) (see study # 5).

- D. *“And of every living thing of all flesh, two of every sort shalt thou bring into the ark, to keep them alive with thee; they shall be male and female. Of the birds after their kind, and of the cattle after their kind, of every creeping thing of the ground after its kind, two of every sort shall come unto thee, to keep them alive. And take thou unto thee of all food that is eaten, and gather it to thee; and it shall be for food for thee, and for them. Thus did Noah; according to all that God commanded him, so did he”* (6:19-22).
1. Jehovah God would re-establish His creation with these animals as with Noah, his sons, and their wives.
  2. Note, *“Thus did Noah; according to all that God commanded him, so did he.”* Here is a lesson on how the authority of God works. Noah was not at liberty to use something other than pitch or gofer wood. God gave the commands and Noah illustrated his faith by doing exactly what God commanded (see study # 20).

## Chapter 7

### I.

- A. *“And Jehovah said unto Noah, Come thou and all thy house into the ark; for thee have I seen righteous before me in this generation. Of every clean beast thou shalt take to thee seven and seven, the male and his female; and of the beasts that are not clean two, the male and his female: of the birds also of the heavens, seven and seven, male and female, to keep seed alive upon the face of all the earth. For yet seven days, and I will cause it to rain upon the earth forty days and forty nights; and every living thing that I have made will I destroy from off the face of the ground”* (7:1-4).
1. The time of God’s longsuffering and patience had ended for the wicked world (I Pet. 3:20-21). We learn from II Pet. 2:4ff that Noah had preached during the days before the flood but apparently it was to no avail. The wicked world was ripe for judgment as was the case of Israel and Judah revealed in the major and minor prophets. God is not desires that all would perish but His will is rather that man would be saved (II Pet. 3:9). Likewise the Lord is patient and longsuffering with man today; however, a day of judgment surely comes (Rev. 20:10ff) (see study # 19 and # 5; God’s nature is patience and longsuffering).
  2. Forty days and nights it was to rain upon the face of the earth. Noah was to now gather all animals. One male and one female of the unclean animals were to be gathered into the ark. Additionally, seven man and seven female clean animals were to be gathered into the ark. The distinction between clean and unclean animals are depicted as early as the days of Noah though we are not told here what animals represent clean and unclean.
- B. *“And Noah did according unto all that Jehovah commanded him. And Noah was six hundred years old when the flood of waters was upon the earth. And Noah went in, and his sons, and his wife, and his sons' wives with him, into the ark, because of the waters of the flood. Of clean beasts, and of beasts that are not clean, and of birds, and of everything that creepeth upon the ground, there went in two and two unto Noah into the ark, male and female, as God commanded Noah”* (7:5-9).
1. Though the building of the ark and collection of animals was an enormous job, the Word of God states again, *“and Noah did according unto all that Jehovah commanded him.”*

2. We may ask, ‘can God say that about me today.’ The Lord has given His commandments, He is longsuffering and patient, and end the end will He exclaim to me, “and John did according to all that Jehovah commanded him?” (see study “# 20).
- C. *“And it came to pass after the seven days, that the waters of the flood were upon the earth. In the six hundredth year of Noah's life, in the second month, on the seventeenth day of the month, on the same day were all the fountains of the great deep broken up, and the windows of heaven were opened. And the rain was upon the earth forty days and forty nights. In the selfsame day entered Noah, and Shem, and Ham, and Japheth, the sons of Noah, and Noah's wife, and the three wives of his sons with them, into the ark; they, and every beast after its kind, and all the cattle after their kind, and every creeping thing that creepeth upon the earth after its kind, and every bird after its kind, every bird of every sort. And they went in unto Noah into the ark, two and two of all flesh wherein is the breath of life. And they that went in, went in male and female of all flesh, as God commanded him: and Jehovah shut him in. And the flood was forty days upon the earth; and the waters increased, and bare up the ark, and it was lifted up above the earth. And the waters prevailed, and increased greatly upon the earth; and the ark went upon the face of the waters. And the waters prevailed exceedingly upon the earth; and all the high mountains that were under the whole heaven were covered. Fifteen cubits upward did the waters prevail; and the mountains were covered. And all flesh died that moved upon the earth, both birds, and cattle, and beasts, and every creeping thing that creepeth upon the earth, and every man: all in whose nostrils was the breath of the spirit of life, of all that was on the dry land, died. And every living thing was destroyed that was upon the face of the ground, both man, and cattle, and creeping things, and birds of the heavens; and they were destroyed from the earth: and Noah only was left, and they that were with him in the ark. And the waters prevailed upon the earth a hundred and fifty days” (7:10-24).*
1. As there are skeptics who deny a literal six 24 hour period of time creation so there are skeptics regarding the global flood.
  2. Hill Roberts, in an article entitled, “Genesis and the Time Thing,” writes, "Geologically, the flood of Noah was very short, a mere hiccup; although the spiritual significance would prove to be enormous. It would not be likely that such an event would leave much of any geological record, especially if it was a world flood in the sense of their view of the local world, as used in the New Testament for the spread of the gospel. The '93 floods of the upper Mississippi, though widespread in destruction, have left very little of permanence in the regional geology other than some new sediment deposits in the Mississippi delta" (pp. 33, 34). He goes on to say in another article, *“Floods, Science and Religion...”* that, "Based on study of textural (sic) analyses by men more skilled at it than I, it seems there is some textural (sic) uncertainty as to the geographic scope of that flood of the land. If the flood was limited to mankind's region, that is wholly acceptable to some conservative Old Testament textural (sic) scholars" (p. 1).
  3. Let us note the scriptures: Gen. 6:7; God would destroy all flesh upon the earth. Gen. 8:9; *“But the dove found no resting place for the sole of her foot, and she returned into the ark to him, for the waters were on the face of the whole earth.”* Again, *“Thus I establish My covenant with you: Never again shall all flesh be cut off by the waters of the flood; never again shall there be a flood to destroy the earth”* (Gen. 9:11).
  4. To deny the global flood is to deny the Word of God! The danger: What other passages of scriptures will the skeptics say, ‘this is not literal...’ The scriptures do used figurative language quite a bit but this is clearly not one of those places.

### **What Lessons do we learn from the story of Noah and the Flood?**

1. By God’s sovereign choice He separates sinful man from the righteous by faith and water. Noah was separated by faith from the sinful world he lived in by water. We separated ourselves from the sinful world today by faith and baptism for the remission of our sins (sanctified; purified from our sins).
2. God’s sovereign choices: God chose water to save Noah from the ungodly influences around him and so He chooses water to save man from the consequences of sin (cf. I Pet. 3:20-21; II Pet. 2:4-9; Acts

22:16). Likewise God chooses blood to cleanse man of sin (Heb. 9:22) (see study # 22; The Sovereignty of God).

3. We learn what being “righteous” is about. Noah is separated from the ungodly world he lived in because he was righteous and they were wicked. Clearly Noah lived by faith (cf. Gen. 6:9; Heb. 11:7).
4. We learn that God is fair. He was longsuffering and patient with the ungodly of the world while Noah was building the ark (I Pet. 3:20-21; II Pet. 3:9). We also learn from the flood itself, that God will not be ‘ever-suffering’ with sinful man. God’s judgments came upon sinful man after a period of patience in the flood incident, in the case of Israel and Judah, and so it will be when the end of all things occur (I Thess. 4:13ff) (see study # 5, 19).

## Chapter 8

### I.

- A. *“And God remembered Noah, and all the beasts, and all the cattle that were with him in the ark: and God made a wind to pass over the earth, and the waters assuaged; the fountains also of the deep and the windows of heaven were stopped, and the rain from heaven was restrained; and the waters returned from off the earth continually: and after the end of a hundred and fifty days the waters decreased. And the ark rested in the seventh month, on the seventeenth day of the month, upon the mountains of Ararat. And the waters decreased continually until the tenth month: in the tenth month, on the first day of the month, were the tops of the mountains seen”* (8:1-5).
  1. The omnipotence of God is seen in that he *“made a wind to pass over the earth”* so that the waters would decrease (evaporate) (see study # 5).
  2. The rain fell upon the earth for 40 days (cf. Gen. 7:12). One Hundred and ten days later the waters decreased (subtracting the 40 days it rained from the 150<sup>th</sup> day point mentioned above). These days correspond with the dates mentioned: the 7<sup>th</sup> month and 17<sup>th</sup> day (Gen. 8:5). Chapter 7:11 stated that it was the 600<sup>th</sup> year of Noah’s life and that it was the 2<sup>nd</sup> month 17<sup>th</sup> day (5 months latter the waters evaporate).
  3. The *“mountains of Ararat”* are located in the region of Armenia (a province; II Kings 19:37; and kingdom; Jer. 51:27). At the 1<sup>st</sup> day of the 10<sup>th</sup> month the tops of these mountains are seen (74 days later). At this point, it is has been 224 days since it began to rain.
- B. *“And it came to pass at the end of forty days, that Noah opened the window of the ark which he had made: and he sent forth a raven, and it went forth to and fro, until the waters were dried up from off the earth. And he sent forth a dove from him, to see if the waters were abated from off the face of the ground; but the dove found no rest for the sole of her foot, and she returned unto him to the ark; for the waters were on the face of the whole earth: and he put forth his hand, and took her, and brought her in unto him into the ark. And he stayed yet other seven days; and again he sent forth the dove out of the ark; and the dove came in to him at eventide; and, lo, in her mouth an olive-leaf plucked off: so Noah knew that the waters were abated from off the earth. And he stayed yet other seven days, and sent forth the dove; and she returned not again unto him any more”* (8:6-12).
  1. Forty days after the ark came to rest in the mountains of Ararat, Noah opens the window of the ark and sends a raven out that evidence of dry ground may be found (total days now are at 264). Noah may have assumed that since it took 40 days to fill the earth with water it would take 40 days to abate.
  2. First, Noah sends out a raven to go to and fro from the ark to the waters in search of dry ground.
  3. At the same time as the raven, Noah sends out, on three different occasions, the dove to determine whether or not the ground had appeared (a total of 21 days are now added to the previous total of 264 to equal 285 days).
- C. *“And it came to pass in the six hundred and first year, in the first month, the first day of the month, the waters were dried up from off the earth: and Noah removed the covering of the ark, and looked, and, behold, the face of the ground was dried. And in the second month, on the seven and twentieth day of the month, was the earth dry”* (8:13-14).

1. Genesis 7:11 states that it was the 600<sup>th</sup> year of Noah's life (2<sup>nd</sup> month, 17<sup>th</sup> day) that the flood began. The time now is the 601<sup>st</sup> year of Noah's life (2<sup>nd</sup> month, 1<sup>st</sup> day). At the 10<sup>th</sup> month, 1<sup>st</sup> day there were a total of 224 days since the flood began (cf. notes above). Ninety days latter it is the 2<sup>nd</sup> month, 1<sup>st</sup> day which equals a total of 314 days since the flood began and 26 days since Noah sent out the dove for the last time.
2. During 2<sup>nd</sup> month, 27<sup>th</sup> day, the earth was completely dry (26 more days which equal a total of 340 days).

D. *“And God spake unto Noah, saying, Go forth from the ark, thou, and thy wife, and thy sons, and thy sons' wives with thee. Bring forth with thee every living thing that is with thee of all flesh, both birds, and cattle, and every creeping thing that creepeth upon the earth; that they may breed abundantly in the earth, and be fruitful, and multiply upon the earth. And Noah went forth, and his sons, and his wife, and his sons' wives with him: every beast, every creeping thing, and every bird, whatsoever moveth upon the earth, after their families, went forth out of the ark”* (8:15-19).

1. The end of the flood and punishment of mankind had come and the command to go forth and replenish the earth is given.
2. New beginnings occur for both man and beast.

## II. Noah offers Worship to Jehovah God (8:20-22):

A. *“And Noah builded an altar unto Jehovah, and took of every clean beast, and of every clean bird, and offered burnt-offerings on the altar”* (8:20).

1. This is the second mention of worship to God (the first being that of Cain and Able). Able's sacrifice was of faith and thereby we can conclude that God commanded such worship (cf. Heb. 11:4). This is the first mention of an *“altar.”*
2. Why did Noah do this? Noah was aware of God's commands of such worship and so made such a sacrifice to apparently illustrate his gratitude for the Lord saving him and his family from the influence of wicked men through the water.

B. *“And Jehovah smelled the sweet savor; and Jehovah said in his heart, I will not again curse the ground any more for man's sake, for that the imagination of man's heart is evil from his youth; neither will I again smite any more everything living, as I have done. While the earth remaineth, seedtime and harvest, and cold and heat, and summer and winter, and day and night shall not cease”* (8:21-22).

1. The sacrifice that Noah had made was acceptable to the Lord and it pleased Him. Jesus had said, *“But the hour cometh, and now is, when the true worshippers shall worship the Father in spirit and truth: for such doth the Father seek to be his worshippers”* (Jn. 4:23). One's character is defined by truth and when the individual so worships according it is acceptable to God. Noah clearly pleased God (*“found favor in the eyes of Jehovah”*; Gen. 6:8) because he was righteous (he did as God commanded) (see study # 23; Noah).
2. As God gives man choice in life, he ultimately chooses the evil at the point of his youth (only one, Jesus, always chose the right ways; cf. Heb. 4:15). Note that the term *“youth”* is different that the term *“baby.”* Man is not created evil but so chooses as he grows into youth.
3. God makes a covenant with man because of the fact that man will always choose sin at some point in his life. So the Lord proclaims in mercy for His creation, *“neither will I again smite any more everything living, as I have done while the earth remains.”*
4. We see the foreknowledge of God once again. This was not a learning process for God but a learning process for man. God will destroy the earth again in His final judgment (cf. II Pet. 3:10ff); however, while the earth remains there will not be a destruction of man like the flood. This illustrates to us today that God's judgments will come to pass and that we will have to give account for our actions.

## Chapter 9

### I. God blesses Noah and makes a Covenant with All Flesh (9:1-17):

A. *“And God blessed Noah and his sons, and said unto them, Be fruitful, and multiply, and replenish the earth. And the fear of you and the dread of you shall be upon every beast of the earth, and upon every bird of the heavens; With all wherewith the ground teemeth, and all the fishes of the sea, into your hand are they delivered. Every moving thing that liveth shall be food for you; As the green herb have I given you all. But flesh with the life thereof, which is the blood thereof, shall ye not eat. And surely your blood, the blood of your lives, will I require; At the hand of every beast will I require it. And at the hand of man, even at the hand of every man's brother, will I require the life of man. Whoso sheddeth man's blood, by man shall his blood be shed: For in the image of God made he man. And you, be ye fruitful, and multiply; Bring forth abundantly in the earth, and multiply therein”* (9:1-7).

1. Genesis 1:26, 28 revealed man's dominance over the animal world as here; however, the dominion now consist of slaughter for food. The only prohibition given was that man was not to eat flesh with blood. Blood occupies the soul of the body and was designed for sacrifice rather than food (cf. Lev. 17:11-14).

2. All of mankind are related to each other as the sons of Adam and Even and are so termed *“brothers.”* Judicial power and civil government's beginnings are found in these verses. God had passed the judgment of death upon the sinful world by the flood. God has now promised that He will never so do again. In order to discourage man from committing heinous sins, such as murder, the Lord delivered laws. The man who kills shall be killed. *“The command does not sanction revenge, but lays the foundation for the judicial rights of the divinely appointed ‘powers that be’* (Rom. 13:1).”<sup>8</sup> (See study # 24; Bible Law).

B. *“And God spake unto Noah, and to his sons with him, saying, And I, behold, I establish my covenant with you, and with your seed after you; and with every living creature that is with you, the birds, the cattle, and every beast of the earth with you. Of all that go out of the ark, even every beast of the earth. And I will establish my covenant with you; neither shall all flesh be cut off any more by the waters of the flood; neither shall there any more be a flood to destroy the earth. And God said, This is the token of the covenant which I make between me and you and every living creature that is with you, for perpetual generations: I do set my bow in the cloud, and it shall be for a token of a covenant between me and the earth. And it shall come to pass, when I bring a cloud over the earth, that the bow shall be seen in the cloud, and I will remember my covenant, which is between me and you and every living creature of all flesh; and the waters shall no more become a flood to destroy all flesh. And the bow shall be in the cloud; and I will look upon it, that I may remember the everlasting covenant between God and every living creature of all flesh that is upon the earth. And God said unto Noah, This is the token of the covenant which I have established between me and all flesh that is upon the earth”* (9:8-17).

1. God gave a visual covenant sign to Noah and his family that was to be seen for *“perpetual generations,”* i.e., the rainbow.

2. Note that the rainbow was not only for man but for God. A covenant is an agreement between two or more individuals and carries with it the weight of law. God therefore made an agreement with man to assure them that He would never again destroy the earth and all life by a flood (see study # 25; Bible Covenants).

3. The appearance of a rainbow precludes that it had not been seen in the sky in times past. Some have concluded that up to the point of the flood it had never rained upon the earth. Note that in order for any green herb to grow (i.e., the primary source of food for man before they were given permission to eat animal flesh) there must be rain (cf. Gen. 2:5). Another consideration; however, is that God caused a mist to come up from the ground to provide water for plant life (Gen. 2:6). I find it difficult to say that *“it most certainly did not rain until the days of the*

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<sup>8</sup> Ibid. pp. 97



flood” and again, “it most certainly did rain before the flood.” There is just not enough info revealed to make a decisive decision (cf. Deut. 29:29 for the principle in this case).

## II. Noah’s Drunkenness and Cain’s Sin (9:18-29):

A. *“And the sons of Noah, that went forth from the ark, were Shem, and Ham, and Japheth: and Ham is the father of Canaan. These three were the sons of Noah: and of these was the whole earth overspread. And Noah began to be a husbandman, and planted a vineyard: and he drank of the wine, and was drunken. And he was uncovered within his tent. And Ham, the father of Canaan, saw the nakedness of his father, and told his two brethren without. And Shem and Japheth took a garment, and laid it upon both their shoulders, and went backward, and covered the nakedness of their father. And their faces were backward, and they saw not their father's nakedness”* (9:18-24).

1. Noah ignored the fiery nature of intoxicating wine and so caused drunkenness to overcome him. The response of Noah’s three sons marked the resultant race’s future.
2. Noah became drunk and uncovered himself in the shame of nakedness. The three brothers (Shem, Ham, and Japheth) reacted differently to the situation. Ham was the first to see his father in a state of sin and nakedness. Ham, rather than covering his father up and being fearful of the state of shame and sin, went to get his brethren that they too may look upon their father’s nakedness and shame.
3. Shem and Japheth did not look or gaze upon their father’s nakedness as did Ham, but rather gave respect to their father walking backwards (careful not to look upon Noah’s nakedness) and covered their father. These responses illustrate what was in the hearts of each of these individuals (cf. Matt. 7:16) (see study # 26; The Development of two different Characters / cf. Cain and Able / Jacob and Esau).

B. *“And Noah awoke from his wine, and knew what his youngest son had done unto him. And he said, Cursed be Canaan; A servant of servants shall he be unto his brethren. And he said, Blessed be Jehovah, the God of Shem; And let Canaan be his servant. God enlarge Japheth, And let him dwell in the tents of Shem; And let Canaan be his servant. And Noah lived after the flood three hundred and fifty years. And all the days of Noah were nine hundred and fifty years: And he died”* (9:25-29).

1. When Noah awoke from his drunkenness he pronounced a curse upon Ham and his descendants. Note that the curse primarily landed on Canaan (the forth son of Ham; cf. Gen. 10:6).
2. Canaan would be the father of the Canaanites who were generally subjected subdued and subservient to Israel (the descendants of Shem).
3. Noah’s life ends at 950 years of age.

## Lessons learned from Genesis 8-9

1. We learn what acceptable worship to Jehovah God is. Noah made a sacrifice on the altar, after exiting the ark, and the sacrifice reached heaven and was pleasing to the Lord because in was in accordance to His will (cf. Gen. 8:20-21; Jn. 4:23) (see study # 27; Bible Worship).
2. We find that judicial and civil governments have its roots in Genesis 9. Since the Lord promised He would never again destroy sinful man by a great flood there had to be of necessity a law to dissuade evil doers. God gave the law of death for the one who would murder his brother (Gen. 9:6). A government was not established at this point; however, we see the beginnings of civil authority to exercise said punishment (cf. Rom. 13:1ff) (see study # 24).
3. Again, we see God’s omnipotence in the statement, *“God made a wind to pass over the earth, and the waters assuaged”* (Gen. 8:1). Not only did God create the universe but He has power over its elements (consider Luke 8:25) (see study # 5).
4. Lastly, we learn that we may know what is in a man’s heart by his actions (Matt. 7:16ff). Noah found what was in the heart of Ham when his son looked upon his nakedness and shame and did nothing but tell his brothers about the matter.

## Chapter 10

### I. Descendants of Japheth (10:1-5):

A. *“Now these are the generations of the sons of Noah, namely, of Shem, Ham, and Japheth: and unto them were sons born after the flood. The sons of Japheth: Gomer, and Magog, and Madai, and Javan, and Tubal, and Meshech, and Tiras”* (10:1-2).

1. The following verses are a historical account of the genealogy that occurred after the flood destroyed all other life.
2. Seven sons of Japheth are given.

B. *“And the sons of Gomer: Ashkenaz, and Riphath, and Togarmah. And the sons of Javan: Elishah, and Tarshish, Kittim, and Dodanim. Of these were the isles of the nations divided in their lands, every one after his tongue, after their families, in their nations”* (10:3-5).

1. Gomer and Javan are singled out of Japheth’s sons probably because they stood at the head of the family (leaders in some way).
2. The Japhethites were those who dwelled in the coastlands and islands around the Mediterranean Sea.

### II. Descendants of Ham (10:6-20):

A. *“And the sons of Ham: Cush, and Mizraim, and Put, and Canaan. And the sons of Cush: Seba, and Havilah, and Sabtah, and Raamah, and Sabteca; and the sons of Raamah: Sheba, and Dedan”* (10:6-7).

1. Ham has four sons recorded. The ancestry of Ham is a bit more detailed than Japheth’s.
2. Cush’s five sons are given with Raamah and the sixth, Nimrod, is singled out.

B. *“And Cush begat Nimrod: he began to be a mighty one in the earth. He was a mighty hunter before Jehovah: wherefore it is said, Like Nimrod a mighty hunter before Jehovah. And the beginning of his kingdom was Babel, and Erech, and Accad, and Calneh, in the land of Shinar. Out of that land he went forth into Assyria, and builded Nineveh, and Rehoboth-ir, and Calah, and Resen between Nineveh and Calah (the same is the great city)”* (10:8-12).

1. Nimrod is singled out as being a *“mighty one in the earth”* (however, not according to God’s approval). The name *“Nimrod”* means *“we will revolt.”* Clearly, Nimrod was not merely a hunter of beast but of men and power.
2. Nimrod founds four cities around the region of ancient Babel (Babylon). Furthermore, Nimrod travels north to the land of Assyria and founds four more cities surrounding Nineveh. Nineveh came to be a great city in size (Jonah 3:3). Nineveh and Babylon are two of the most ancient cities of the world.

C. *“And Mizraim begat Ludim, and Anamim, and Lehabim, and Naphtuhim, and Pathrusim, and Casluhim (whence went forth the Philistines), and Caphtorim”* (10:13-14).

1. Mizraim was the second son of Ham.
2. Mizraim’s descendants are the Philistines.

D. *“And Canaan begat Sidon his first-born, and Heth, and the Jebusite, and the Amorite, and the Girgashite, and the Hivite, and the Arkite, and the Sinite, and the Arvadite, and the Zemarite, and the Hamathite: and afterward were the families of the Canaanite spread abroad”* (10:13-18).

1. Canaan is the fourth son of Ham. Note that nothing is said of Ham’s third son Put.
2. Canaan’s descendants make up the Canaanites of the region of Palestine.

E. *“And the border of the Canaanite was from Sidon, as thou goest toward Gerar, unto Gaza; as thou goest toward Sodom and Gomorrah and Admah and Zeboiim, unto Lasha. These are the sons of Ham, after their families, after their tongues, in their lands, in their nations”* (10:19-20).

### III. Descendants of Shem (10:21-32):

A. *“And unto Shem, the father of all the children of Eber, the elder brother of Japheth, to him also were children born. The sons of Shem: Elam, and Asshur, and Arpachshad, and Lud, and Aram”* (10:21-22).

1. Shem was clearly the firstborn son of Noah. Ham was the youngest (cf. Gen. 9:24) and Japheth was younger than Shem (this verse).

2. Shem has five sons. Elam (the Elamites who stretched from the Persian Gulf to the Caspian Sea. Asshur (the Assyrians).
- B. *“And the sons of Aram: Uz, and Hul, and Gether, and Mash. And Arpachshad begat Shelah; and Shelah begat Eber. And unto Eber were born two sons: The name of the one was Peleg. For in his days was the earth divided. And his brother's name was Joktan. And Joktan begat Almodad, and Sheleph, and Hazarmaveth, and Jerah, and Hadoram, and Uzal, and Diklah, and Obal, and Abimael, and Sheba, and Ophir, and Havilah, and Jobab: all these were the sons of Joktan. And their dwelling was from Mesha, as thou goest toward Sephar, the mountain of the east”* (10:23-30).
  1. The lineage of each of the sons of Shem are given.
  2. Peleg is the only one singled out, *“for in his days the earth divided.”* The earth divided in the days of Peleg in the sense that man’s languages separated them at the tower of Babel incident (cf. Gen. 11:8).
- C. *“These are the sons of Shem, after their families, after their tongues, in their lands, after their nations. These are the families of the sons of Noah, after their generations, in their nations: and of these were the nations divided in the earth after the flood”* (10:31-32).
  1. At this point in the history of humanity, the earth has been repopulated and geographically scattered.
  2. The next chapter records the reason for the scatter.

## Chapter 11

### I. The Tower of Babel (11:1-9):

- A. *“And the whole earth was of one language and of one speech. And it came to pass, as they journeyed east, that they found a plain in the land of Shinar; and they dwelt there. And they said one to another, Come, let us make brick, and burn them thoroughly. And they had brick for stone, and slime had they for mortar. And they said, Come, let us build us a city, and a tower, whose top may reach unto heaven, and let us make us a name; lest we be scattered abroad upon the face of the whole earth”* (11:1-4).
  1. Apparently the tower of Babel event occurs before the information given in chapter 10 and so we have the dispersion of the human race given with the cause afterwards.
  2. We must remember that it was God’s commandment to the human race that they scatter abroad and populate the earth. The event at Babel stands as an example of an unholy unity among God’s created people. Their purpose was to remain together (*“let us build a city, and a tower... lest we be scattered abroad upon the face of the whole earth”*). The people’s design was opposed to Jehovah’s will (note Gen. 9:1-7).
  3. The sinful people so desired their unity (*“name”*) to be established by building a tower as a memorial and reminder of their design. Pride and human reason promoted their disobedience to the Lord’s commands. The phrase *“they said”* stands in opposition to *“and God said, Be fruitful, and multiply, and replenish the earth”* (Gen. 9:1). Rather than uniting in the truths of God’s will for them they united in their opinion to remain together (see study # 12).
  4. There are various monuments in our land that are reminders of what this nation (America is about); i.e., the Statue of Liberty, The Lincoln Memorial, Mount Rushmore, and a host of others. When said monuments oppose the purpose of God, He will not tolerate it.
  5. Religious monuments may be established as well. The Dome of the Rock in Jerusalem is an example. Much of the fighting that occurs in the Middle East between Muslim nations and Israel is due to the religious significance of this memorial. While the fighting occurs in the name of God, God is clearly far from any such monument.
- B. *“And Jehovah came down to see the city and the tower, which the children of men builded. And Jehovah said, Behold, they are one people, and they have all one language; and this is what they begin to do: and now nothing will be withholden from them, which they purpose to do. Come, let us go down, and there confound their language, that they may not understand one another's speech. So Jehovah scattered them abroad from thence upon the face of all the earth: and they left*

*off building the city. Therefore was the name of it called Babel; because Jehovah did there confound the language of all the earth: and from thence did Jehovah scatter them abroad upon the face of all the earth” (11:5-9).*

1. The purpose of the tower and city was to unite the people geographically. Said purpose affronted the command of God and thereby the Lord passed a judgment upon the people. He forced them to be separated and dispersed by changing their language so that those with common languages would separate into different geographic locations.
2. To not do as God commanded was to challenge His sovereignty. To this point in our study we have seen God’s sovereignty is the following areas (see study # 22):
  - a. God made a choice to separate the righteous from the unrighteous by water (universal flood) (cf. I Pet. 3:20-21).
  - b. God’s sovereign choice was for man to go into the whole earth and repopulate it (Gen. 9:1). Man disobeyed God by building the tower of Babel (Gen. 11:1). Man thereby challenged God’s sovereignty and God passed the judgment of confusing their language. His will is to be followed and if it is not there are consequences to be met.
3. The Tower of Babel stands as an eternal monument that identifies the consequences of unauthorized designs, practices, and unions. Those who wish to contradict the Lord’s design for man will be subject to His judgments (see study # 19).
  - a. Those who do not obey God’s commandments are subject to His judgments (Adam and Eve disobeyed and were cast out of Eden and subject to death).
  - b. Those who determine to worship the Lord differently than His prescribed way stand in opposition to Him (cf. Cain and Abel).
  - c. Those who would reject God and dwell on sinful thoughts and deeds will be subject to God’s judgments (the flood during the days of Noah). Those who oppose the Lord’s design for man (unity based upon His will) are subject to God’s judgment (the Tower of Babel incident).
4. When the church today is united in truth the judgment of God is salvation. To unite on statements such as ‘let us agree to disagree,’ ‘let us find unity in our diversity of religious practices,’ ‘what is right for you may not be right for me in matters of doctrine,’ ‘let us separate the gospel from doctrine,’ ‘let us unite on core gospel facts and stop being divided over doctrine,’ etc. [II Jn. 9-11]
  - a. When man prescribes instruments of music, humming in worship service, clapping of hands, allowing women to lead prayers, wait on the Lord’s table, teach Bible classes etc. they have gone beyond the teachings of Christ.
  - b. When men determine to support institutions of the world with the church treasury they have gone beyond the teachings of Christ.
  - c. When men determine to find unity in their diversity they have gone beyond the teachings of Christ.
  - d. The lessons learned in the chapters of Genesis should be firmly fixed within our minds. To cast away God’s commandments for my own personal judgments and opinions is to heap judgment upon my head and eternal ruin. We must see that God demands our respect and obedience when it comes to His sovereign prescribed commands. God commanded that the people should go into all the earth and they rejected His command (see study # 20).
5. God has determined to have men united in truth (cf. Jn. 17; Eph. 4). The church stands as a memorial to the design of God for Christian’s unity (cf. I Tim. 3:14-15).
6. One final note: The plural pronoun “*us*” (Gen. 11:7) denotes the three persons in the godhead as did the passage in Genesis 1:26 (see study # 5).

II. Shem's Descendants (11:10-26) (compare with chart on pg. 17 of this study):

<b>Descendants of Shem (First Son of Noah)</b>			
<b>Descendants of Shem</b>	<b>Years of Life</b>	<b>Age at Son's Birth</b>	<b>Age of the Earth</b>
Shem	600	100	1849
Arpachshad	438	35	1884
Shelah	433	30	1914
Eber	464	34	1948
Peleg	239	30	1978
Reu	239	32	2010
Serug	230	30	2040
Nahor	148	29	2069
Terah	205	70	2139
Abraham	175	100	2239
Isaac	180	60	2299
Jacob	~ 147	~ 54 (Joseph born)	2353
Joseph	110	37	2390
<b>Book of Genesis Ends with Death of Joseph</b>	<b>110</b>		<b>2463</b>

III. The Life of Abraham (11:27-32):

E. *“Now these are the generations of Terah. Terah begat Abram, Nahor, and Haran. And Haran begat Lot. And Haran died before his father Terah in the land of his nativity, in Ur of the Chaldees. And Abram and Nahor took them wives: The name of Abram's wife was Sarai; and the name of Nahor's wife, Milcah, the daughter of Haran, the father of Milcah, and the father of Iscah. And Sarai was barren; She had no child. And Terah took Abram his son, and Lot the son of Haran, his son's son, and Sarai his daughter-in-law, his son Abram's wife; and they went forth with them from Ur of the Chaldees, to go into the land of Canaan; and they came unto Haran, and dwelt there”* (11:27-31).

1. Here are the facts: Terah has Abraham at age 70. The earth is now 2,139 years old. Abraham's brother Haran dies in Ur of the Chaldees. Abraham marries Sarai and she remains barren (unable to have children).

2. According to Stephen's account of the life of Abraham, the patriarch is first called of God while in Ur of the Chaldees and Abraham obeys the commandment of God (cf. Acts 7:2-3).
  3. From this point on we shall map the faithful life of Abraham (cf. Rom. 3:28, 31; 4:1-5). When Abraham obeyed God he evidenced true faith (Heb. 11:8-9).
- F. *"And the days of Terah were two hundred and five years: and Terah died in Haran"* (11:32).

## Chapter 12

### I. God calls Abraham from Haran and Reveals His Purpose (i.e., Preaches the Gospel to Abraham) (12:1-8):

- A. *"Now Jehovah said unto Abram, Get thee out of thy country, and from thy kindred, and from thy father's house, unto the land that I will show thee: and I will make of thee a great nation, and I will bless thee, and make they name great; and be thou a blessing; and I will bless them that bless thee, and him that curseth thee will I curse: and in thee shall all the families of the earth be blessed. So Abram went, as Jehovah had spoken unto him; and Lot went with him: and Abram was seventy and five years old when he departed out of Haran"* (12:1-4).
1. Peter and Paul reveal that the seed of Abraham, in whom all nations would be blessed, is Jesus Christ (Acts 3:24-26; Gal. 3:8, 16). Here then in Genesis 12 we have God's promise of hope given through Eve's seed continued (cf. Gen. 3:15) (see study # 21).
  2. This is the second time God has called upon Abraham to obey His command to up and leave all his past life behind him and move into the land of Canaan.
  3. God promises four things to Abraham:
    - a. I will make thee a great nation (kings would come from Abraham).
    - b. I will bless thee and make thy name great (Abraham would receive honor among his peers).
    - c. Those who curse Abraham would themselves be cursed (they would loose out on God's promise of salvation through Abraham).
    - d. And in thee shall all nations of the earth be blessed (Gal. 3:8, 16).
  4. Abraham obeys God's command to leave Haran at the age of 75.
- B. *"And Abram took Sarai his wife, and Lot his brother's son, and all their substance that they had gathered, and the souls that they had gotten in Haran; and they went forth to go into the land of Canaan; and into the land of Canaan they came. And Abram passed through the land unto the place of Shechem, unto the oak of Moreh. And the Canaanite was then in the land. And Jehovah appeared unto Abram, and said, Unto thy seed will I give this land: and there builded he an altar unto Jehovah, who appeared unto him"* (12:5-7).
1. Abraham travels South from Haran to Shechem (At some point the procession crosses over the Euphrates River). Many believe that this is where the name "Hebrew" is applied to the descendents of Abraham because the word means to "cross over."
  2. The third act of obedience that illustrated the faith of Abraham is that he built an altar in Shechem (southwest of the Sea of Galilee).
    - a. Note that God appeared to Abraham and reiterated the land promise. Abraham responds by worshipping the Lord through building an altar unto him.
    - b. Previous acts of worship in this study have been Abel (Gen. 4:1ff; Heb. 11:4) and Noah (Gen. 8:20) (see study # 27).
- C. *"And he removed from thence unto the mountain on the east of Beth-el, and pitched his tent, having Beth-el on the west, and Ai on the east: and there he builded an altar unto Jehovah, and called upon the name of Jehovah"* (12:8).
1. Again, Abraham builds an altar for the purpose of worship at Bethel (southwest of Shechem).
  2. While in Bethel, Abraham *"calls upon the name of Jehovah."* Calling upon the name of Jehovah infers worshipping the Lord (may have been in song, prayer, or sacrifice at this time). When Paul had obeyed the gospel Annanias instructed him to *"call upon the Lord's name"* (Acts 22:16) (see study # 27).
    - a. To *"call"* upon the name of Jehovah is to "invoke" or "appeal to" (LS 292).

- b. Examples of men calling upon the name of Jehovah in worship (Ps. 3:1ff; Acts 2:21; 9:14, 21; 22:16; Rom. 10:12-13; I Cor. 1:2; II Tim. 2:22).

## II. Abraham in Egypt (12:9-20):

- A. *“And Abram journeyed, going on still toward the South. And there was a famine in the land: and Abram went down into Egypt to sojourn there; for the famine was sore in the land. And it came to pass, when he was come near to enter into Egypt, that he said unto Sarai his wife, Behold now, I know that thou art a fair woman to look upon: and it will come to pass, when the Egyptians shall see thee, that they will say, This is his wife: and they will kill me, but they will save thee alive. Say, I pray thee, thou art my sister; that it may be well with me for thy sake, and that my soul may live because of thee. And it came to pass, that, when Abram was come into Egypt, the Egyptians beheld the woman that she was very fair. And the princes of Pharaoh saw her, and praised her to Pharaoh: and the woman was taken into Pharaoh's house. And he dealt well with Abram for her sake: and he had sheep, and oxen, and he-asses, and men-servants, and maid-servants, and she-asses, and camels”* (12:9-16).
  1. A famine in the land of Canaan forced Abraham and his family south to Egypt (a place of abundant corn).
  2. Clearly Sarai was a very beautiful woman to look upon and this fact caused Abraham fear that the Egyptians may want to kill him to have Sarai for their selves. Interestingly, Sarai was 65 years old at this time (compare Gen. 17:17 with 12:4). Even at this age she retained her beauty.
  3. Abraham devises a plan with Sarai to pose as his sister. While this was a half truth (cf. Gen. 20:12), Abraham’s purpose was to deceive the Egyptians. Abraham compounds his problems by accepting Pharaoh’s gifts of sheep and cattle.
  4. Though Abraham goes down in history as a great man of faith he is also one that is not unlike us all in that he sinned from time to time.
- B. *“And Jehovah plagued Pharaoh and his house with great plagues because of Sarai, Abram's wife. And Pharaoh called Abram, and said, What is this that thou hast done unto me? Why didst thou not tell me that she was thy wife? Why saidst thou, She is my sister, so that I took her to be my wife? now therefore behold thy wife, take her, and go thy way. And Pharaoh gave men charge concerning him: and they brought him on the way, and his wife, and all that he had”* (12:17-20).
  1. Here the sin is identified in that Abraham allowed his own wife to become the wife of Pharaoh. Through cowardice he was placing his wife in a situation where adultery could be committed. Jehovah’s disapproval of Abraham’s sin is indicated in the plagues that he sent upon the house of Pharaoh for taking Sarah as his wife.
  2. Note that Pharaoh rebukes Abraham and the patriarch says nothing (there was nothing for him to say in light of his sin).
  3. To be rebuked for sin by those out of fellowship with God ought to be a true moment of shame for the Christian.

## Chapter 13

### I. Abram Leaves Egypt (13 all):

- A. *“And Abram went up out of Egypt, he, and his wife, and all that he had, and Lot with him, into the South. And Abram was very rich in cattle, in silver, and in gold. And he went on his journeys from the South even to Beth-el, unto the place where his tent had been at the beginning, between Beth-el and Ai, unto the place of the altar, which he had made there at the first: and there Abram called on the name of Jehovah”* (13:1-4).
  1. Abram and all his family leave Egypt with their wealth and travel to the southern region of Canaan (i.e., between Bethel and Ai).
  2. As in Genesis 12:8, Abraham builds an altar and worships Jehovah God (probably a sacrifice of thanksgiving for their safe return to Canaan).
- B. *“And Lot also, who went with Abram, had flocks, and herds, and tents. And the land was not able to bear them, that they might dwell together: for their substance was great, so that they could not*

*dwelt together. And there was a strife between the herdsmen of Abram's cattle and the herdsmen of Lot's cattle: and the Canaanite and the Perizzite dwelt then in the land*" (13:5-7).

1. The land was unable to sustain all the cattle of both Abraham and Lot (with the addition of the Canaanite and the Perizzite in the land too).
  2. Under crowded conditions, strife between the keepers of cattle began to occur.
- C. *"And Abram said unto Lot, Let there be no strife, I pray thee, between me and thee, and between my herdsmen and thy herdsmen; for we are brethren. Is not the whole land before thee? Separate thyself, I pray thee, from me. If thou wilt take the left hand, then I will go to the right. Or if thou take the right hand, then I will go to the left. And Lot lifted up his eyes, and beheld all the Plain of the Jordan, that it was well watered every where, before Jehovah destroyed Sodom and Gomorrah, like the garden of Jehovah, like the land of Egypt, as thou goest unto Zoar. So Lot chose him all the Plain of the Jordan; and Lot journeyed east: and they separated themselves the one from the other. Abram dwelt in the land of Canaan, and Lot dwelt in the cities of the Plain, and moved his tent as far as Sodom. Now the men of Sodom were wicked and sinners against Jehovah exceedingly"* (13:8-13).
1. Though Abraham was the apparent leader of the family he gives Lot the choice of land to take.
  2. Abraham has already proven his faith in God's promises in that he has left his country at the call of God (Acts 7), left Haran at God's request (Gen. 12:4), built altars to God and called upon Jehovah in worship (as Shechem, Bethel, and Hebron [Gen. 13:18]). The apostle Paul tells us that *"Abraham believed God and it was reckoned unto him for righteousness"* (Rom. 4:3). Abraham believed in the promises of God and was willing to leave these matters in God's hands and so gave Lot the choice.
  3. Such an event not only illustrates the faith of Abraham in God's promises but too his spirit of humility and love for his fellow man. He was willing to give Lot the better land.
- D. *"And Jehovah said unto Abram, after that Lot was separated from him, Lift up now thine eyes, and look from the place where thou art, northward and southward and eastward and westward: for all the land which thou seest, to thee will I give it, and to thy seed for ever. And I will make thy seed as the dust of the earth: So that if a man can number the dust of the earth, then may thy seed also be numbered. Arise, walk through the land in the length of it and in the breadth of it; for unto thee will I give it. And Abram moved his tent, and came and dwelt by the oaks of Mamre, which are in Hebron, and built there an altar unto Jehovah"* (13:14-18).
1. Abraham had previously built altars to worship Jehovah at Shechem and Bethel (Gen. 12:6-8) that he may show his gratitude for the Lord's promises. He offers worship at Genesis 13:4 in relation to being saved from the trials of famine and Egypt. Abraham now builds an altar in Hebron to once again give thanks to Jehovah for the blessings enumerated (i.e., make thee a great nation).
  2. Hebron is located due west of the center of the Dead Sea.
  3. A lesson on God's grace is seen here. God tells Abraham that He is "giving" all the land to thy seed forever. Though the land of Canaan was a gift to Abraham from God he and his descendants had to participate in many years of bloody warfare to receive God's gift. Here is an example of how many of God's promises (such as salvation / Eph. 2:8) are conditional (see study # 28; Bible Grace).

## Chapter 14

### I. The Siddim Valley Battle (14:1-12):

- B. *"And it came to pass in the days of Amraphel king of Shinar, Arioch king of Ellasar, Chedorlaomer king of Elam, and Tidal king of Goiim, that they made war with Bera king of Sodom, and with Birsha king of Gomorrah, Shinab king of Admah, and Shemeber king of Zeboiim, and the king of Bela (the same is Zoar). All these joined together in the vale of Siddim (the same is the Salt Sea). Twelve years they served Chedorlaomer, and in the thirteenth year they rebelled. And in the fourteenth year came Chedorlaomer, and the kings that were with him, and smote the Rephaim in*



*Ashteroth-karnaim, and the Zuzim in Ham, and the Emim in Shaveh-kiriathaim, and the Horites in their mount Seir, unto Elparan, which is by the wilderness. And they returned, and came to En-mishpat (the same is Kadesh), and smote all the country of the Amalekites, and also the Amorites, that dwelt in Hazazon-tamar” (14:1-7).*

1. The five cities of Sodom, Gomorrah, Admah, Zoar, and Zeboim had been serving and paying tribute to Chedorlaomer of Elam for twelve years. During the 13<sup>th</sup> year the five cities with their kings rebel and in the 14<sup>th</sup> year Chedorlaomer of Elam brings his armies to battle the five rebellious cities.
  2. Chedorlaomer begins by marching Northwestward to Ashteroth-Karnaim (a city due east of the Sea of Galilee. The four kings defeat the Rephaim and the Zuzim people in Ham (a cities ~ 5 miles south of Ashteroth).
  3. Leaving Ham, the four kings of the area of Elam march southward to Kiriathaim (a city due east of the Dead Sea). The Emin are in this city and are defeated. Most likely, at this point, Chedorlaomer travels around the Dead Sea and then travels Southward to attack the five rebellious cities from the South. They first come to Mount Seir and defeat the Horites and then they travel further southward to Kadesh and defeat the Amalekites and the Amorites.
  4. It is somewhat fascinating to see the amount of fighting that had to be done just to get to the five rebellious cities.
  5. The last fighting that took place with the kings of Elam before the Siddim Valley Battle was at Hazazon-tamar (a city due south of the Dead Sea and the Valley of Siddim).
- C. *“And there went out the king of Sodom, and the king of Gomorrah, and the king of Admah, and the king of Zeboim, and the king of Bela (the same is Zoar); and they set the battle in array against them in the vale of Siddim; against Chedorlaomer king of Elam, and Tidal king of Goiim, and Amraphel king of Shinar, and Arioch king of Ellasar; four kings against the five” (14:8-9).*
1. Five kings gain intelligence of the movements of the four kings of Elam and travel southward to meet them at the Valley of Siddim.
  2. The Valley of Siddim was a small area located south of the Dead Sea and north of the eastward finger of the Red Sea.
- D. *“Now the vale of Siddim was full of slime pits; and the kings of Sodom and Gomorrah fled, and they fell there, and they that remained fled to the mountain. And they took all the goods of Sodom and Gomorrah, and all their victuals, and went their way. And they took Lot, Abram's brother's son, who dwelt in Sodom, and his goods, and departed” (14:10-12).*
1. The slime pits of Siddim was a substance like calking or asphalt (the same material Noah used to seal the ark).
  2. There was not much of a battle. Apparently the five kings were routed by the kings of Elam. The soldiers raid the five cities and carry off many goods including prisoners of war (POW's). One of the POW's was Lot.
  3. See map next page.



## II. Abraham Rescues his Nephew Lot (14:13-16):

- A. *“And there came one that had escaped, and told Abram the Hebrew: now he dwelt by the oaks of Mamre, the Amorite, brother of Eshcol, and brother of Aner; and these were confederate with Abram. And when Abram heard that his brother was taken captive, he led forth his trained men, born in his house, three hundred and eighteen, and pursued as far as Dan. And he divided himself against them by night, he and his servants, and smote them, and pursued them unto Hobah, which is on the left hand of Damascus”* (14:13-15).
1. While Abraham dwelt in Mamre (Due West of Dead Sea) there is no doubt that he knew that the armies of Elam were on the move (they must have traveled right past him on their way to Kadesh / see map).
  2. An Amorite tells Abraham that Lot was captured and taken by the kings of Elam. The kings of Elam had taken their spoils as far north as Dan.
  3. Abraham gathers 318 men and pursues the kings of Elam. Abraham’s men smote the kings and their armies at night and pursued them as far as Hobah (north of Damascus).
- B. *“And he brought back all the goods, and also brought back his brother Lot, and his goods, and the women also, and the people”* (14:16).
1. No doubt Abraham was an instant hero in the eyes of the five cities that were defeated.
  2. Abraham took back all the spoils that the five kings of Elam gained over their enemies.

## III. Abraham’s Encounter with Melchizedek (14:17-24):

- A. *“And the king of Sodom went out to meet him, after his return from the slaughter of Chedorlaomer and the kings that were with him, at the vale of Shaveh (the same is the King’s Vale). And Melchizedek king of Salem brought forth bread and wine: and he was priest of God Most High. And he blessed him, and said, Blessed be Abram of God Most High, possessor of heaven and earth: and blessed be God Most High, who hath delivered thine enemies into thy hand. And he gave him a tenth of all”* (14:17-20).
1. Melchizedek goes down in history as a type of Christ (cf. Heb. 7:1ff) (i.e., king and priest).
  2. As we compare Hebrews 7 with Genesis 14 we find that Melchizedek was the following:
    - a. The king of Salem (likely Jerusalem).
    - b. A priest of God Most High (from this we find that the Lord had apparently established a priesthood, order of sacrifice, and worship before the Levitical priesthood was established).
    - c. Without parentage so as to appear to not have beginning or ending (Heb. 7:3).
    - d. He was superior to Abraham because Abraham paid tithes to him and was blessed by Melchizedek (Heb. 7:4ff).
    - e. Jesus Christ was a priest after the *“order”* of Melchizedek (antitype) (Heb. 7:11ff).

- B. *“And the king of Sodom said unto Abram, Give me the persons, and take the goods to thyself. And Abram said to the king of Sodom, I have lifted up my hand unto Jehovah, God Most High, possessor of heaven and earth, that I will not take a thread nor a shoe-latchet nor aught that is thine, lest thou shouldest say, I have made Abram rich: save only that which the young men have eaten, and the portion of the men that went with me, Aner, Eshcol, and Mamre. Let them take their portion”* (14:21-24).
1. Though Abraham received bread, wine, and a blessing from the king of Salem; he would not so much as take *“a thread nor a shoe-latchet”* that belonged to Sodom (see study # 29; Abraham).
  2. Why would Abraham say such a thing to a benevolent and thankful king? First, Abraham tells the king of Sodom that he would not want him to later claim that Abraham was rich because of what I (king of Sodom) gave him.
  3. This is somewhat of a modern day fellowship issue. Abraham knew that Sodom was a very wicked city and thereby wanted no associations with them (cf. Gen. 13:13). When one accepts funds from another, in spiritual matters, he is in fellowship with that individual (or church) (cf. Phil. 4:15) (see appendix # 30; Bible Fellowship).

## Chapter 15

### I.

- A. *“After these things the word of Jehovah came unto Abram in a vision, saying, Fear not, Abram: I am thy shield, and thy exceeding great reward”* (15:1).
1. After the Siddim Valley Battle, Abraham rescues his nephew Lot and refuses the reward money offered by the king of Sodom. The Lord now communicates with Abraham and tells him that He is *“thy exceeding great reward.”* To have Jehovah God, the heavenly Father is the greatest reward of all (see study # 31; Riches).
  2. Not only was the Lord Abraham’s reward, but He reveals to Abraham that He has been his *“shield”* (protector against the five kings of Elam).
  3. The Lord is our reward and protector against the consequences of sin if we would turn to Him in faith as did Abraham.
- B. *“And Abram said, O Lord Jehovah, what wilt thou give me, seeing I go childless, and he that shall be possessor of my house is Eliezer of Damascus? And Abram said, Behold, to me thou hast given no seed: and, lo, one born in my house is mine heir”* (15:2-3).
1. Abraham knew that the Lord had promised a great nation to come of him; however, as of yet he had seen no sign of this taking place.
  2. Eliezer was likely some sort of relative of Abraham’s and so the patriarch was reserved to handing all things over to him seeing he went childless in his old age. These verses seem to illustrate a natural wavering of faith on the part of Abraham.
- C. *“And, behold, the word of Jehovah came unto him, saying, This man shall not be thine heir; But he that shall come forth out of thine own bowels shall be thine heir. And he brought him forth abroad, and said, Look now toward heaven, and number the stars, if thou be able to number them: and he said unto him, So shall thy seed be. And he believed in Jehovah; and he reckoned it to him for righteousness”* (15:4-6).
1. Jehovah assures Abraham that he will certainly follow through with His promise and the seed would come from Abraham rather than another. Furthermore the Lord tells Abraham to look to the stars of the heavens and states that Abraham’s descendants will be similar in number.
  2. After the Lord gave Abraham these promises the scriptures state that Abraham believed God and it was this faith that was reckoned (put to his account) to him for righteousness. We are introduced to the statement that is often found in the NT (i.e. Rom. 4:5 etc.). But in which way did Abraham evidence his faith in the Lord so that God would reckon it unto him for righteousness? Consider the reaction of Abraham in the following verses that prove his faith.
- D. *“And he said unto him, I am Jehovah that brought thee out of Ur of the Chaldees, to give thee this land to inherit it. And he said, O Lord Jehovah, whereby shall I know that I shall inherit it? And he*

*said unto him, Take me a heifer three years old, and a she-goat three years old, and a ram three years old, and a turtle-dove, and a young pigeon. And he took him all these, and divided them in the midst, and laid each half over against the other: but the birds divided he not. And the birds of prey came down upon the carcasses, and Abram drove them away” (15:7-11).*

1. To confirm the fellowship and promises that God had with Abraham the Lord determines to make a covenant with him.
  2. The division and walking between the animals is apparently an ancient Chaldean custom to seal agreements (covenants) with two parties.
  3. “The division of the animals probably denoted originally the two parties to the covenant, and the passing of the latter through the pieces laid opposite to one another, their formation into one: a signification to which the other might easily have been attached as a further consequence and explanation.”<sup>9</sup>
- E. *“And when the sun was going down, a deep sleep fell upon Abram; and, lo, a horror of great darkness fell upon him. And he said unto Abram, Know of a surety that thy seed shall be sojourners in a land that is not theirs, and shall serve them; and they shall afflict them four hundred years; and also that nation, whom they shall serve, will I judge: and afterward shall they come out with great substance. But thou shalt go to thy fathers in peace; thou shalt be buried in a good old age. And in the fourth generation they shall come hither again; for the iniquity of the Amorite is not yet full” (15:12-16).*
1. Within these verses Abraham is given a brief outline of his heritage and a reason why he cannot possess the land of Canaan at this point in time.
  2. First, the Lord tells Abraham that his descendants would be servants in another land (Egypt) for four hundred years (cf. Ex. 12:40).
  3. Secondly, Jehovah declares that he will judge this nation (cf. Ex. 6:11).
  4. Thirdly, the Lord tells Abraham that his posterity in Egypt will come out with great wealth (Ex. 12:31-36).
  5. Fourthly, Abraham is promised a peaceful death (Gen. 25:7-8).
  6. After the four hundred years in bondage, the Israelites would come again to Canaan.
  7. All of this must wait; however, until the *“iniquity of the Amorite is full.”*
    - a. God had foreknowledge of the wickedness of the Amorites (cf. Numb. 21:21ff).
    - b. It may be that Moses had in mind the whole of the Canaanites when he used the term *“Amorite”* and thus this justifies their extermination (cf. Josh. 24:15; Judg. 6:10).
    - c. Note that this section illustrates the omniscience of God. He has declared the end from the beginning and thereby He is God (cf. Isa. 46:9-10).
- F. *“And it came to pass, that, when the sun went down, and it was dark, behold, a smoking furnace, and a flaming torch that passed between these pieces. In that day Jehovah made a covenant with Abram, saying, Unto thy seed have I given this land, from the river of Egypt unto the great river, the river Euphrates: the Kenite, and the Kenizzite, and the Kadmonite, and the Hittite, and the Perizzite, and the Rephaim, and the Amorite, and the Canaanite, and the Girgashite, and the Jebusite” (15:17-21).*
1. This is the second covenant that God has made with a man. Previously, God made of covenant with Noah that entailed an agreement that God would never again destroy the earth with water (Gen. 9:8) (see study # 25).
  2. The idea of passing between the pieces of a sacrifice evidenced an agreement between two parties.

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<sup>9</sup> Ibid. pp. 137

## Chapter 16

### I. Abraham takes to wife Hagar at Sarah's Request (16:1-6):

- A. *"Now Sarai, Abram's wife, bare him no children: and she had a handmaid, an Egyptian, whose name was Hagar. And Sarai said unto Abram, Behold now, Jehovah hath restrained me from bearing; go in, I pray thee, unto my handmaid; it may be that I shall obtain children by her. And Abram hearkened to the voice of Sarai. And Sarai, Abram's wife, took Hagar the Egyptian, her handmaid, after Abram had dwelt ten years in the land of Canaan, and gave her to Abram her husband to be his wife. And he went in unto Hagar, and she conceived: and when she saw that she had conceived, her mistress was despised in her eyes"* (16:1-4).
1. Ten years had passed since God had made the seed promise of Gen. 12:1ff. Abraham was now 85 years old and Sarah was 75 (cf. Gen. 17:17 compared to Gen. 12:4). Together, Abraham and Sarah was very patient for 10 years after God had made the promise.
  2. Apparently Egyptian custom allowed for men who have wives that cannot conceive to take another wife and bear children with the second. Sarah decides she is going to help the Lord in giving Abraham their handmaid Hagar to be his wife. Though it was clearly a prevailing custom of the land to so do this was clearly a violation of God's original intention for marriage (cf. Matt. 19:3ff).
  3. When Abraham had Hagar as his wife she quickly conceived of a child.
- B. *"And Sarai said unto Abram, My wrong be upon thee: I gave my handmaid into thy bosom; and when she saw that she had conceived, I was despised in her eyes: Jehovah judge between me and thee. But Abram said unto Sarai, Behold, thy maid is in thy hand; do to her that which is good in thine eyes. And Sarai dealt hardly with her, and she fled from her face"* (16:5-6).
1. What began as a human conceived idea to help God's plan to come to pass turned out to be a disaster for Abraham and Sarah.
  2. Hagar began to "*despise*" Sarah (probably out of jealousy that Sarah was Abraham's true and first wife). Sarah demands that Abraham deal with the situation (i.e., "*my wrong be upon thee*").
  3. Abraham turns the issue back to Sarah and thereby gives her authority to do as she thinks best for the situation. Sarah thereby "*dealt hardly*" with Hagar. Likely in a heartbroken and emotional state, Hagar flees from the presence of Abraham and Sarah.
  4. Instead of helping God with His purpose for Abraham and Sarah the two made a mess. Instead of having a seed that God would bless they had a child born in adultery and now gone.

### II. Jehovah Aids Hagar in the Wilderness (16:7-16):

- A. *"And the angel of Jehovah found her by a fountain of water in the wilderness, by the fountain in the way to Shur. And he said, Hagar, Sarai's handmaid, whence camest thou? and whither goest thou? And she said, I am fleeing from the face of my mistress Sarai. And the angel of Jehovah said unto her, Return to thy mistress, and submit thyself under her hands"* (16:7-9).
1. The importance of Abraham and Hagar's seed is seen in these verses. The Lord could have let Hagar go away and never would history have heard of her and her child again.
  2. Jehovah had mercy upon Hagar; however, and tells her to return to Abraham and Sarah and voluntarily put herself in subjection to the two.
- B. *"And the angel of Jehovah said unto her, I will greatly multiply thy seed, that it shall not be numbered for multitude. And the angel of Jehovah said unto her, Behold, thou art with child, and shalt bear a son; and thou shalt call his name Ishmael, because Jehovah hath heard thy affliction. And he shall be as a wild ass among men; his hand shall be against every man, and every man's hand against him; and he shall dwell over against all his brethren. And she called the name of Jehovah that spake unto her, Thou art a God that seeth: for she said, Have I even here looked after him that seeth me? Wherefore the well was called Beer-lahai-roi; behold, it is between Kadesh and Bered"* (16:10-14).
1. The name Ishmael means "God hears." God had heard how that Hagar was afflicted by Sarah and thereby had mercy upon her rather than ignoring her plight.

2. Jehovah foresees Ishmael being a “*wild ass among men.*” As a wild ass he would be one who wandered about the wilderness despising cities and domestic life (cf. Job 39:5-8).
  3. Ishmael would be a feuding man among others (he would not be one that gets along with others). Though the above two attributes are not favorable, the Lord promises that Ishmael would live independent of the other descendants of Abraham’s.
- C. “*And Hagar bare Abram a son; and Abram called the name of his son, whom Hagar bare, Ishmael. And Abram was fourscore and six years old, when Hagar bare Ishmael to Abram*” (16:15-16).
1. Hagar had Ishmael when Abraham was 86 years old (one year after Hagar and Abraham were wedded).
  2. The name of the son was Ishmael.

## Chapter 17

### I. God Establishes His Covenant with Abraham (17:1-14):

- A. “*And when Abram was ninety years old and nine, Jehovah appeared to Abram, and said unto him, I am God Almighty; walk before me, and be thou perfect. And I will make my covenant between me and thee, and will multiply thee exceedingly*” (17:1-2).
1. Abraham is now 99 years old. God had first appeared to him Ur of the Chaldees (Acts 7:2). We are not told how old Abraham was then; however, at Genesis 12:4 we are told that God appeared to Abraham telling him to leave Haran and he was at that time 75 years old. Chapter 17 reveals that God had made the covenant with Abraham (i.e., land, great nation, and seed promise through which all families of the earth would be blessed) at least 24 years earlier and still there was no sign that the promise would be fulfilled. Both Abraham and Sarah continued to grow older and from a physical standpoint the reality of the two of them having a child was improbable.
  2. With these facts before us, note that Jehovah appeared before Abraham and said unto him, “*I am God Almighty.*”
    - a. Note that the Hebrew words for “*God Almighty*” are *El Shaddai* = “God the Mighty One... to be strong” (Keil and Delitzsch 142). What is really interesting is that when the Lord was addressing Abraham in Genesis 15:7, as He communicated with him regarding the land promise, the Lord refers to Himself as “*Jehovah*” or “*Elohim*” which means “self-existent or eternal” (Strong’s 3068).
    - b. Why did Jehovah now refer to Himself as “*God Almighty*?” Clearly, the Lord did so to illustrate to Abraham that He has the power to do what is seemingly impossible (i.e., grant that Abraham and Sarah have a child in their old age). Though Abraham viewed his “*own body now as good as dead (he being about a hundred years old), and the deadness of Sarah’s womb*” (Rom. 4:19) (see study # 5).
  3. Note too that being a recipient of the benefits of God’s great power did not come with out conditions to be met. The Lord tells Abraham, “*walk before me, and be thou perfect.*” The idea of being perfect was being without blame. There would be times when Abraham was not without blame; however, he continued in faith looking forward to that day that Jesus would come into the world and forgive men of their sins (Jn. 8:56).
    - a. Consider the fact that the Lord “*gave*” Abraham promises at Gen. 12:1ff and 15:7. Though the Lord promised Abraham these things, he would only received them upon walking by faith. So the Lord saw that Abraham obeyed Him and the scriptures thereby state of Abraham, “*and he believed in Jehovah; and he reckoned it to him for righteousness*” (Gen. 15:6) (see study # 28).
    - b. The Lord has made all of mankind promises today (cf. Acts 2:38; 2:38-39; 13:23ff; Eph. 2:1-10). To receive the gift of God (His promise of salvation through the forgiveness of man’s sins) we must do as Abraham and “*walk before the Lord and be thou perfect*” (cf. Heb. 3:16-4:1, 11). Mankind can be “*perfect*” (i.e., have his or her sins forgiven) if one

would only obey God's commandments (cf. Heb. 7:18-19; 10:1ff) (see study # 32; Bible Perfection).

B. *“And Abram fell on his face: and God talked with him, saying, As for me, behold, my covenant is with thee, and thou shalt be the father of a multitude of nations. Neither shall thy name any more be called Abram, but thy name shall be Abraham; for the father of a multitude of nations have I made thee. And I will make thee exceeding fruitful, and I will make nations of thee, and kings shall come out of thee. And I will establish my covenant between me and thee and thy seed after thee throughout their generations for an everlasting covenant, to be a God unto thee and to thy seed after thee. And I will give unto thee, and to thy seed after thee, the land of thy sojournings, all the land of Canaan, for an everlasting possession; and I will be their God”* (17:3-8).

1. As a pledge to Abraham that God's promises are true, the Lord changes Abram's name to Abraham. The name “*Abraham*” means father of a multitude.
2. The Lord reiterates His promise to Abraham; i.e., he would be a father of a multitude of nations, kings would come from Abraham, and God would establish His everlasting covenant with Abraham. The “*everlasting covenant*” can be nothing else than the covenant that God told Jeremiah of (Jer. 31:31ff) and reiterated at Hebrews 8:8ff as the new covenant of Jesus Christ.

C. *“And God said unto Abraham, And as for thee, thou shalt keep my covenant, thou, and thy seed after thee throughout their generations. This is my covenant, which ye shall keep, between me and you and thy seed after thee: every male among you shall be circumcised. And ye shall be circumcised in the flesh of your foreskin; and it shall be a token of a covenant betwixt me and you. And he that is eight days old shall be circumcised among you, every male throughout your generations, he that is born in the house, or bought with money of any foreigner that is not of thy seed. He that is born in thy house, and he that is bought with thy money, must needs be circumcised: and my covenant shall be in your flesh for an everlasting covenant. And the uncircumcised male who is not circumcised in the flesh of his foreskin, that soul shall be cut off from his people; he hath broken my covenant”* (17:9-14).

1. Remember that a covenant is between two parties. The Lord agrees to give Abraham the above mentioned promises and Abraham is to “*keep my (Jehovah's) covenant.*” If Abraham's descendants want to be recipients of God's promises they too must keep the covenant agreement. We learn something very valuable about covenants in this verse. A covenant entails law to follow! Consider the following verses (Deut. 29:9; Josh. 23:16; Ps. 78:10; 103:18; 105:8; 111:9 etc.) (see study # 25).
2. Note that the individual that did not keep the covenant law of Jehovah (regarding being circumcised) was to be cut off from the people. Such a one has “*broken my covenant*” (i.e., broken the law of Jehovah).
3. Why be circumcised in the foreskin of the flesh? The scriptures reveal the fact that circumcision represents the purification of the heart (cf. Lev. 26:41; Deut. 10:16; 30:6; Jer. 4:4; 9:25; Ezek. 44:7; Rom. 2:27-29). Interestingly, it was not just the house of Abraham that was to receive circumcision but all strangers that were with them as well (cf. Gen. 17:12-13).

## II. **God Promises a son to Abraham and Sarah (17:15-19):**

A. *“And God said unto Abraham, As for Sarai thy wife, thou shalt not call her name Sarai, but Sarah shall her name be. And I will bless her, and moreover I will give thee a son of her: yea, I will bless her, and she shall be a mother of nations; kings of peoples shall be of her. Then Abraham fell upon his face, and laughed, and said in his heart, Shall a child be born unto him that is a hundred years old? And shall Sarah, that is ninety years old, bear?”* (17:15-17).

1. The Lord gives another pledge of the reality of His covenant by changing Sarai's name to Sarah.
2. Note that we learn what a true “*blessing*” is here. Sarah would be blessed when God gave her the promise of a Son. Likewise, we are blessed when we are recipients of God's promises. When I follow God's authoritative commandments through walk of life and worship I am blessed in that I have fellowship with God (the forgiveness of sins) and the hope of eternal salvation (see study # 33; Bible Blessings).

3. When Abraham heard that God's promises would be through Sarah (at that time a 90 year old woman and he 100) he fell upon his face and laughed within himself. Abraham's laughter may have been due to great surprise or it may have been due to a lack of faith. His following statements help us to see that Abraham thought that such an event was impossible even though it was "*God Almighty*" that made the statement.
- B. "*And Abraham said unto God, Oh that Ishmael might live before thee! And God said, Nay, but Sarah thy wife shall bear thee a son; and thou shalt call his name Isaac: and I will establish my covenant with him for an everlasting covenant for his seed after him*" (17:18-19).
  1. Abraham asks Jehovah to consider Ishmael and in doing so seems to lack faith in the power of God.
  2. God's sovereign choice was to have the seed promise (the everlasting covenant) to come through Abraham and Sarah.

### III. Ishmael's Future (17:20-26):

- A. "*And as for Ishmael, I have heard thee: behold, I have blessed him, and will make him fruitful, and will multiply him exceedingly; twelve princes shall he beget, and I will make him a great nation. But my covenant will I establish with Isaac, whom Sarah shall bear unto thee at this set time in the next year. And he left off talking with him, and God went up from Abraham*" (17:20-22).
  1. The Lord comforts Abraham concerning the future of Ishmael and again, makes it clear to Abraham that the seed promise and everlasting covenant would come by Isaac.
  2. With these final words, the conversation between God and Abraham ends.
- B. "*And Abraham took Ishmael his son, and all that were born in his house, and all that were bought with his money, every male among the men of Abraham's house, and circumcised the flesh of their foreskin in the selfsame day, as God had said unto him. And Abraham was ninety years old and nine, when he was circumcised in the flesh of his foreskin. And Ishmael his son was thirteen years old, when he was circumcised in the flesh of his foreskin. In the selfsame day was Abraham circumcised, and Ishmael his son. And all the men of his house, those born in the house, and those bought with money of a foreigner, were circumcised with him*" (17:23-27).
  1. Abraham adheres to the covenant laws immediately by circumcising himself, Ishmael, and all that are in his house.
  2. Abraham was 99, Sarah 89, and Ishmael 13 at this time.

### Lessons Learned from Genesis 16-17

- A. Man makes a mess of things when trying to help God with His promises (Sarah's suggestion that Abraham take Hagar... together they have Ishmael... Sarah is despised by Hagar and treated badly to the point that Hagar leaves). God has offered man the promise of eternal salvation today. If we try to help God with His new covenant (such as doing things different than his covenant) we too shall be guilty and make a mess of the Lord's plans.
- B. The omnipotence of God (Rom. 4:19; Gen. 17:1, 17; 18:14).
- C. To be a recipient of God's gracious promises today (cf. Acts 2:38; 2:38-39; 13:23ff; Eph. 2:1-10) one must "*walk before me and be thou perfect*" (Gen. 17:1; Heb. 3:16-4:1, 11; 7:18-19; 10:1ff).
- D. God's covenants with man entail law to be followed (Deut. 29:9; Josh. 23:16; Ps. 78:10; 103:18; 105:8; 111:9 etc.).
- E. Circumcision is a sign that one has heard God's laws and has put away unlawful living (cf. Lev. 26:41; Deut. 10:16; 30:6; Jer. 4:4; 9:25; Ezek. 44:7; Rom. 2:27-29).
- F. Note that we learn what a true "*blessing*" is here. Sarah would be blessed when God gave her the promise of a Son. Likewise, we are blessed when we are recipients of God's promises (Gen. 17:16; Eph. 1:3-7).



## The Faithful Life of Abraham

*“And he (Abraham) believed in Jehovah; and he reckoned it to him for righteousness (Gen. 15:6).*

Event	Abraham's Age
Abraham is called to leave Ur of the Chaldees and he obeys (Acts 7:2).	Unknown
God promises Abraham that from his seed would come a great nation and that all nations would be blessed through him. Additionally, the Lord promised Abraham the land of Canaan.	75 years old (Gen. 12:4)
Abraham called to leave Haran and he obeys (Gen. 12:4).	75 years old (Gen. 12:4)
Abraham builds altars to God and worships the Lord (Gen. 12:7 [Shechem]; 12:8; 13:3-4 [Bethel]; 13:18 [Hebron]).	Unknown
Abraham is rebuked by Pharaoh for giving his wife Sarah over in cowardice (Gen. 12:10ff).	Unknown
Paid tithes to Melchizedek, King and priest of Salem (Gen. 14:20).	Unknown
God makes a covenant with Abraham regarding His promises (Gen. 15:18).	Unknown
Takes Hagar to be his wife at the insistence of Sarah (a plea to help with God's promise)	85 years old (16:3)
Hagar has Ishmael (Gen. 16:16)	86 years old
The Lord gives Abraham the seal of the covenant (i.e., circumcision, name changed from Abram to Abraham, and Sarai's name changed to Sarah. Abraham complies with the covenant by circumcision himself, Ishmael, and all his house (cf. Gen. 17:26)	99 years old (17:1) (Sarah 89)
Abraham laughs at God's announcement to give he and Sarah a son in their old age (Gen. 17:17).	99 years old

## Chapter 18

### I. Jehovah Establishes His promise to Sarah (18:1-15):

A. *“And Jehovah appeared unto him by the oaks of Mamre, as he sat in the tent door in the heat of the day; and he lifted up his eyes and looked, and, lo, three men stood over against him: and when he saw them, he ran to meet them from the tent door, and bowed himself to the earth, and said, My lord, if now I have found favor in thy sight, pass not away, I pray thee, from thy servant: let now a little water be fetched, and wash your feet, and rest yourselves under the tree: and I will fetch a morsel of bread, and strengthen ye your heart; after that ye shall pass on: forasmuch as ye are come to your servant. And they said, So do, as thou hast said. And Abraham hastened into the tent unto Sarah, and said, Make ready quickly three measures of fine meal, knead it, and make cakes. And Abraham ran unto the herd, and fetched a calf tender and good, and gave it unto the servant; and he hastened to dress it. And he took butter, and milk, and the calf which he had dressed, and set it before them; and he stood by them under the tree, and they did eat” (18:1-8).*

1. Apparently two of these three men was Jehovah and Abraham recognized Him (cf. Gen. 18:13; 19:1). Abraham reverently bowed down to the earth in the presence of Jehovah and invited the three to stay and be refreshed.
2. Abraham exercised hospitality by having Sarah bake cakes and a servant prepare a young calf for the divine guest.

B. *“And they said unto him, Where is Sarah thy wife? And he said, Behold, in the tent. And he said, I will certainly return unto thee when the season cometh round; and, lo, Sarah thy wife shall have a son. And Sarah heard in the tent door, which was behind him. Now Abraham and Sarah were old, and well stricken in age; it had ceased to be with Sarah after the manner of women. And Sarah laughed within herself, saying, After I am waxed old shall I have pleasure, my lord being old also? And Jehovah said unto Abraham, Wherefore did Sarah laugh, saying, Shall I of a surety bear a child, who am old? Is anything too hard for Jehovah? At the set time I will return unto thee, when the season cometh round, and Sarah shall have a son. Then Sarah denied, saying, I laughed not; for she was afraid. And he said, Nay; but thou didst laugh” (18:9-15).*

1. There are two purposes to Jehovah and His angels visiting Abraham on this occasion. First, Sarah’s faith needed to be established regarding God’s promises and secondly the fate of Sodom and Gomorrah.
2. When Sarah heard the Lord promise that she and Abraham would have a child in their old age she laughed in doubt thinking she was too old. Jehovah reproves Sarah for her doubt and lie that she told in relation to denying that she laughed.
3. Note the omnipotence of God in this verse regarding Abraham and Sarah having a child in their old age. The Lord says, *“Is anything too hard for Jehovah?”* We are reminded of the prophet Jeremiah’s statement, *“Ah Lord GOD! behold, thou hast made the heaven and the earth by thy great power and stretched out arm, and there is nothing too hard for thee:”* (Jer. 32:17, 27). The point being that if God so chose to give Abraham and Sarah a child in their old age He certainly has the miraculous power to achieve it (see study #5). History reveals that Sarah accepted the reprove and bore a son in her old age by faith (cf. Heb. 11:11).

### II. God reveals the Fate of Sodom and Gomorrah to Abraham (18:16-33):

A. *“And the men rose up from thence, and looked toward Sodom: and Abraham went with them to bring them on the way. And Jehovah said, Shall I hide from Abraham that which I do; seeing that Abraham had surely become a great and mighty nation, and all the nations of the earth shall be blessed in him?” (18:16-18).*

1. Jehovah acknowledges His sovereign choice of the seed of Abraham to bless all nations. The Lord then asks the question, *“Shall I hide from Abraham that which I do?”* Jehovah considers the fact that all nations would be blessed through the seed of Abraham and it was thereby important for Abraham to understand and know what was about to take place to the wicked cities of Sodom and Gomorrah.
2. James later refers to Abraham as the *“friend of God”* (James 2:23).

- B.** *“For I have known him, to the end that he may command his children and his household after him, that they may keep the way of Jehovah, to do righteousness and justice; to the end that Jehovah may bring upon Abraham that which he hath spoken of him”* (18:19).
1. There is perhaps no stronger verse in God’s word that illustrates the desire of God for His people than here. Sodom and Gomorrah was a wicked and ungodly society that was ripe for God’s judicial punishment. Abraham was to learn the consequences of ungodly living on this occasion. Often times our denominational friends will tell us that once we are saved we are always saved and that we are not responsible for keeping any law. Said theory is from Calvinistic theology. Modern day Calvinist’s would call those who teach obedience “legalist” (see study # 11).
  2. Note that Jehovah was to produce the greatest “legalist” of this era in Abraham. The word “*for*” indicates purpose at the beginning of verse 19. God would not hide His dealing with the sinful cities of Sodom and Gomorrah because Abraham would be the beginnings of a great nation. This great nation (Israel) was to learn that God demands obedience.
  3. Furthermore, note the fact that if Abraham was to receive the promises God has given him he was to do “*righteousness and justice to the end that Jehovah may bring upon Abraham that which he hath spoken of him*” (see study # 28).
    - a. One of the greatest lessons regarding the workings of grace is learned in this verse. God had promised Abraham that he would have descendants that number as the stars in the sky (Gen. 15:5), that he would possess the land of Canaan, and that all nations of the earth would be blessed through his seed (cf. Gen. 12:2-4).
    - b. These promises were conditional. Genesis 18:19 tells us that Abraham and his descendants would receive God’s promise when they complied with God’s laws and thereby be considered just and righteous.
    - c. The apostle Paul tells us that man is justified when our faith measures up to the obedient life of Abraham (Rom. 4:12, 23, 24; 5:1-2). Abraham taught his descendants that this is what the Lord required that the promises of the forgiveness of sins may be realized (cf. Acts 13:23, 26, 32, 37-39) (see study # 29).
- C.** *“And Jehovah said, Because the cry of Sodom and Gomorrah is great, and because their sin is very grievous; I will go down now, and see whether they have done altogether according to the cry of it, which is come unto me; and if not, I will know. And the men turned from thence, and went toward Sodom: but Abraham stood yet before Jehovah”* (18:20-22).
1. Note that sin existed at this time (as we have previously discussed in relation to Adam to Noah). If sin exist so does law (cf. Rom. 4:15). The point is that God had apparently given law for man to follow and those who did not follow it were in “*sin*” (see study # 24).
  2. A similar “*cry*” is spoken of in Genesis 4:10 where the blood of Able cried out to heaven for vengeance and punishment of the evil doers.
- D.** *“And Abraham drew near, and said, Wilt thou consume the righteous with the wicked? Peradventure there are fifty righteous within the city: wilt thou consume and not spare the place for the fifty righteous that are therein? That be far from thee to do after this manner, to slay the righteous with the wicked, that so the righteous should be as the wicked; that be far from thee: shall not the Judge of all the earth do right? And Jehovah said, If I find in Sodom fifty righteous within the city, then I will spare all the place for their sake. And Abraham answered and said, Behold now, I have taken upon me to speak unto the Lord, who am but dust and ashes: peradventure there shall lack five of the fifty righteous: wilt thou destroy all the city for lack of five? And he said, I will not destroy it, if I find there forty and five. And he spake unto him yet again, and said, Peradventure there shall be forty found there. And he said, I will not do it for the forty's sake. And he said, Oh let not the Lord be angry, and I will speak: peradventure there shall thirty be found there. And he said, I will not do it, if I find thirty there. And he said, Behold now, I have taken upon me to speak unto the Lord: peradventure there shall be twenty found there. And he said, I will not destroy it for the twenty's sake. And he said, Oh let not the Lord be angry, and I will speak yet but this once: peradventure ten shall be found there. And he said, I will not destroy it for the ten's sake.*

*And Jehovah went his way, as soon as he had left off communing with Abraham: and Abraham returned unto his place” (18:23-33).*

1. Abraham knew that due to the wickedness of Sodom and Gomorrah the God of justice would reign down His wrath upon them and destroy them. Abraham illustrates a love for the lives of men as he makes a request to spare the evil cities if only there would be found 50, 45, 40, 30, 20, and 10 righteous individuals in the cities. Jehovah agrees and goes His way (see study # 29 (note Abraham’s compassion on humanity).
2. Interestingly, God would not destroy the city of Sodom if 50 righteous were found but he would if only 9 were found. Abraham’s line of thought; i.e., “*Wilt thou consume the righteous with the wicked?*” presupposes it to be God’s error if such an event occurred. History reveals; however, that the righteous are consumed with the wicked and that this is a part of warfare and God’s judgments (cf. Ezek. 21:1-4).
3. Note that Abraham refers to God as the “*judge of all the earth*” (see study # 5, 19).

## Chapter 19

### I. The two angels of Jehovah visit Sodom and find it in a state of wickedness and ripe for Destruction (19:1-22).

A. “*And the two angels came to Sodom at even; and Lot sat in the gate of Sodom: and Lot saw them, and rose up to meet them; and he bowed himself with his face to the earth; and he said, Behold now, my lords, turn aside, I pray you, into your servant's house, and tarry all night, and wash your feet, and ye shall rise up early, and go on your way. And they said, Nay; but we will abide in the street all night. And he urged them greatly; and they turned in unto him, and entered into his house; and he made them a feast, and did bake unleavened bread, and they did eat. But before they lay down, the men of the city, even the men of Sodom, compassed the house round, both young and old, all the people from every quarter; and they called unto Lot, and said unto him, Where are the men that came in to thee this night? Bring them out unto us, that we may know them” (19:1-5).*

1. It is not clear whether or not Lot recognized the men as angels; however, he invites them to stay in his home out of a hospitable spirit. Lot prepares food for them and then prepares to go to sleep.
2. Apparently word went round the city that Lot had strangers in his home. The young and old men of the city surround Lot’s house and demand that the strangers come out so that they may “*know them.*” The same Hebrew words are found in Leviticus 18:22ff and its Greek equivalent in Romans 1:27. The men of Sodom wanted to have homosexual relations with the two angels of God.

B. “*And Lot went out unto them to the door, and shut the door after him. And he said, I pray you, my brethren, do not so wickedly. Behold now, I have two daughters that have not known man; let me, I pray you, bring them out unto you, and do ye to them as is good in your eyes: only unto these men do nothing, forasmuch as they are come under the shadow of my roof. And they said, Stand back. And they said, This one fellow came in to sojourn, and he will needs be a judge: now will we deal worse with thee, than with them. And they pressed sore upon the man, even Lot, and drew near to break the door. But the men put forth their hand, and brought Lot into the house to them, and shut to the door. And they smote the men that were at the door of the house with blindness, both small and great, so that they wearied themselves to find the door” (19:6-11).*

1. There are a multitude of explanations regarding why Lot would be willing to give up his daughters in this situation and none really make sense (i.e., Lot knew that the people of Sodom were homosexuals and would not really desire his daughters, Lot chose the lesser of two evils, Lot chose to be a hospitable host over keeping the purity of his daughters... and so on). Why would a father be willing to give up his own daughters to an angry sexually aroused crowd of men if there were not something extremely important to protect? It seems to me that it is clear that Lot knew that these two men were angels and so he made the offer out of faith.

2. When Lot suggested these things to the men they became enraged saying that Lot puts himself as a judge over the people (apparently Lot had tried to judge matters in the past and the people did not like this).
  3. The angels, seeing the dire situation for Lot, brought him back into the house and stuck the angry mob blind.
- C. *“And the men said unto Lot, Hast thou here any besides? son-in-law, and thy sons, and thy daughters, and whomsoever thou hast in the city, bring them out of the place: for we will destroy this place, because the cry of them is waxed great before Jehovah: and Jehovah hath sent us to destroy it. And Lot went out, and spake unto his sons-in-law, who married his daughters, and said, Up, get you out of this place; for Jehovah will destroy the city. But he seemed unto his sons-in-law as one that mocked”* (19:12-14).
1. The two angels made a determination that there were not more than 10 righteous in the city and thereby it was devoted to destruction for its wickedness. The angels give Lot the liberty to take with him all that would listen out of the city.
  2. Lot’s son-in-laws received the warning of Lot and mocked at him as though he were crazy. It is hard to place these verses with the preceding seeing that Lot’s daughters had not known a man yet here it states that they were married. Keil and Delitzsch explain that the verse is more properly to be read, “sons-in-law who were about to take his daughters” (cf. commentary on Genesis pp. 149).
- D. *“And when the morning arose, then the angels hastened Lot, saying, Arise, take thy wife, and thy two daughters that are here, lest thou be consumed in the iniquity of the city. But he lingered; and the men laid hold upon his hand, and upon the hand of his wife, and upon the hand of his two daughters, Jehovah being merciful unto him; and they brought him forth, and set him without the city”* (19:15-16).
1. The time came for Sodom to be destroyed for its wickedness. The angels urge Lot to quickly remove himself and his family; however, Lot tarried (possibly due to difficulties separating himself from his home and belongings).
  2. The mercy of Jehovah is seen in His willingness to save Lot from the sinful city’s doom (for more on God’s mercy see Gen. 3:15) (see study # 5).
- E. *“And it came to pass, when they had brought them forth abroad, that he said, Escape for thy life; look not behind thee, neither stay thou in all the Plain; escape to the mountain, lest thou be consumed. And Lot said unto them, Oh, not so, my lord: behold now, thy servant hath found favor in thy sight, and thou hast magnified thy lovingkindness, which thou hast showed unto me in saving my life; and I cannot escape to the mountain, lest evil overtake me, and I die: behold now, this city is near to flee unto, and it is a little one. Oh let me escape thither (is it not a little one?), and my soul shall live. And he said unto him, See, I have accepted thee concerning this thing also, that I will not overthrow the city of which thou hast spoken. Haste thee, escape thither; for I cannot do anything till thou be come thither. Therefore the name of the city was called Zoar”* (19:17-22).
1. Lot and his family were commanded to not look back so as they could continue to flee with haste.
  2. Lot, recognizing that the angels were representatives of Jehovah, reasoned with them on account of God’s mercy to allow them to retreat to a small city (Zoar).

## II. The Destruction of Sodom (19:23-):

- A. *“The sun was risen upon the earth when Lot came unto Zoar. Then Jehovah rained upon Sodom and upon Gomorrah brimstone and fire from Jehovah out of heaven; and he overthrew those cities, and all the Plain, and all the inhabitants of the cities, and that which grew upon the ground. But his wife looked back from behind him, and she became a pillar of salt”* (19:23-26).
1. There is no reason to assume some sort of lightning storm but rather there must have been a literal raining of fire upon the ungodly cities of the valley of Siddim (see study # 19).
  2. God had commanded Lot and his family not to look back; however, Lot’s wife does so and is instantly turned to a pillar of salt for her disobedience (see study # 20).
- B. *“And Abraham gat up early in the morning to the place where he had stood before Jehovah: and he looked toward Sodom and Gomorrah, and toward all the land of the Plain, and beheld, and, lo, the*

*smoke of the land went up as the smoke of a furnace. And it came to pass, when God destroyed the cities of the Plain, that God remembered Abraham, and sent Lot out of the midst of the overthrow, when he overthrew the cities in which Lot dwelt. And Lot went up out of Zoar, and dwelt in the mountain, and his two daughters with him; for he feared to dwell in Zoar: and he dwelt in a cave, he and his two daughters” (19:27-30).*

1. Abraham noticed the smoke coming from the plains where he had previously talked with Jehovah. Upon arrival at the same point that he was speaking to Jehovah he saw the destruction.
  2. No doubt the inhabitants of Zoar were wicked too and Lot was fearful that God’s judgment would fall upon them as well. Lot moves his small family out to the mountains and caves.
- C. *“And the first-born said unto the younger, Our father is old, and there is not a man in the earth to come in unto us after the manner of all the earth: come, let us make our father drink wine, and we will lie with him, that we may preserve seed of our father. And they made their father drink wine that night: and the first-born went in, and lay with her father; and he knew not when she lay down, nor when she arose. And it came to pass on the morrow, that the first-born said unto the younger, Behold, I lay yesternight with my father: let us make him drink wine this night also; and go thou in, and lie with him, that we may preserve seed of our father. And they made their father drink wine that night also: and the younger arose, and lay with him; and he knew not when she lay down, nor when she arose. Thus were both the daughters of Lot with child by their father. And the first-born bare a son, and called his name Moab: the same is the father of the Moabites unto this day. And the younger, she also bare a son, and called his name Ben-ammi: the same is the father of the children of Ammon unto this day” (19:31-38).*
1. Apparently the daughters of Lot were just as evil as the inhabitants of Sodom and Gomorrah. They committed a lewd sexual sin with their father (incest) so that they may preserve seed.
  2. To achieve their deed, they caused Lot to be drunk to the point that he was not aware of his sin with his daughters.
  3. The daughters illustrate their sinful state by naming the children Moab and Ben-ammi (Ammon) which means “of our father,” “by their father.” There was no shame within the two women.
  4. History reveals the animosity between Moab and Ammon against Israel.

### **Lessons learned from Genesis 18-19**

1. The development of Sarah’s faith (Heb. 11:11). Sarah was to learn of the omnipotence of Jehovah (Gen. 18:14).
2. The importance of Abraham in the lives of faithful children of God today (Gen. 18:18; James 2:23; Rom. 4:12).
3. We learn that in order to receive God’s promises we must meet His conditions (Gen. 18:19).
4. We learn that law existed during the days of Abraham and that men were responsible to follow that law (cf. Gen. 18:20 compared to Romans 4:15).
5. We learn that there are consequences to ungodly living. Sodom and Gomorrah go down in history as those who transgressed Jehovah’s laws to the point of being destroyed (cf. II Pet. 2:6; Jude 1:7).

### **Chapter 20**

#### **I. Abraham’s weakness revealed at Gerar (20:1-18):**

- A. *“And Abraham journeyed from thence toward the land of the South, and dwelt between Kadesh and Shur. And he sojourned in Gerar. And Abraham said of Sarah his wife, She is my sister. And Abimelech king of Gerar sent, and took Sarah. But God came to Abimelech in a dream of the night, and said to him, Behold, thou art but a dead man, because of the woman whom thou hast taken. For*

*she is a man's wife. Now Abimelech had not come near her. And he said, Lord, wilt thou slay even a righteous nation? Said he not himself unto me, She is my sister? And she, even she herself said, He is my brother. In the integrity of my heart and the innocency of my hands have I done this. And God said unto him in the dream, Yea, I know that in the integrity of thy heart thou has done this, and I also withheld thee from sinning against me. Therefore suffered I thee not to touch her. Now therefore restore the man's wife. For he is a prophet, and he shall pray for thee, and thou shalt live. And if thou restore her not, know thou that thou shalt surely die, thou, and all that are thine” (20:1-7).*

1. We learn more of Abraham here as the Lord identifies him as a “*prophet*” (see study # 29). Abraham left Hebron after the destruction of Sodom and Gomorrah possibly to seek for better pasture. He finds himself at Gerar in the land of the Philistines (“*between Kadesh and Shur*”).
  2. Both Abraham and Sarah lie about Sarah’s identity on this occasion and the Philistine King, Abimelech, takes her to be his wife. Sarah is 90 years old at this point and it is unlikely that the Philistine King was struck with her beauty as was the Egyptian Pharaoh of Genesis 12:9ff. Why he took Sarah we are not told; however, there was some sort of obvious interest in her because the king intended to go in to her yet was hindered by the Lord.
  3. Jehovah appears to Abimelech in a dream and explains to him that Sarah is Abraham’s wife and that if he does not return her to Abraham the Lord would have him killed. Furthermore, Jehovah explains to Abimelech that Abraham is a prophet and is able to pray and tell him all that he needs to hear that he may live. Apparently Abraham was to tell Abimelech the gospel message of God’s promise to bless all nations through the seed of Abraham with the forgiveness of sins (cf. Gal. 12:1ff; Gal. 3:8, 16).
  4. Note two important points here. First, moral laws existed that all were familiar with (i.e., adultery equals sin). The moral law is certainly God’s laws. When man violates God’s laws he sins. Secondly, Note that God is the God of all peoples (not only the God of Abraham) (see study # 5, 24).
- B.** *“And Abimelech rose early in the morning, and called all his servants, and told all these things in their ear. And the men were sore afraid. Then Abimelech called Abraham, and said unto him, What hast thou done unto us? And wherein have I sinned against thee, that thou hast brought on me and on my kingdom a great sin? Thou hast done deeds unto me that ought not to be done. And Abimelech said unto Abraham, What sawest thou, that thou hast done this thing? And Abraham said, Because I thought, Surely the fear of God is not in this place. And they will slay me for my wife's sake. And moreover she is indeed my sister, the daughter of my father, but not the daughter of my mother; and she became my wife: and it came to pass, when God caused me to wander from my father's house, that I said unto her, This is thy kindness which thou shalt show unto me. At every place whither we shall come, say of me, He is my brother” (20:8-13).*
1. Once again Abraham is shamed by a sinner for his immoral conduct (cf. Gen. 12). This time Abraham is shamed in the public hearing (see study # 29). Abimelech is angry with Abraham and wants to know why the prophet would do such a thing and bring the king into sin.
  2. Abraham gives a pathetic answer to the king’s request which amount to weak excuses for his lie. First, Abraham said that he supposed that the Philistines did not fear God and so he was afraid. Secondly, Abraham explains that he is simply acting upon uniformity of an agreement that he had made with Sarah from the very beginning of their travels. The agreement between Abraham and Sarah was that she would pretend to be his sister when they were in danger.
  3. It is in times like these that we see a part of Abraham’s character that disappoints us. We would like to think of ourselves as being willing to lay down our lives for our wives if the case ever arose. Abraham put his wife in harms way for the sake of his own safety.
- C.** *“And Abimelech took sheep and oxen, and men-servants and women-servants, and gave them unto Abraham, and restored him Sarah his wife. And Abimelech said, Behold, my land is before thee. Dwell where it pleaseth thee. And unto Sarah he said, Behold, I have given thy brother a thousand pieces of silver. Behold, it is for thee a covering of the eyes to all that are with thee. And in respect of all thou art righted. And Abraham prayed unto God. And God healed Abimelech, and his wife,*

*and his maid-servants. And they bare children. For Jehovah had fast closed up all the wombs of the house of Abimelech, because of Sarah, Abraham's wife” (20:14-18).*

1. Abimelech gave a thousand pieces of silver as a payment of expiation (“*a covering of the eyes to all that are with thee*”). When Abimelech did this, Abraham prayed on his behalf to Jehovah and the Lord restored the wombs of all the women in the king’s house.
2. Abraham was to learn on this occasion that not even kings of nations can thwart God’s plans to bless all nations through the seed of Abraham. At the same time, Abraham has responded to a situation with weakness as so many of us do from time to time.

<b>The Faithful Life of Abraham (study # 29)</b>	
<i>“And he (Abraham) believed in Jehovah; and he reckoned it to him for righteousness (Gen. 15:6).</i>	
<b>Event</b>	<b>Abraham’s Age</b>
Abraham is called to leave Ur of the Chaldees and he obeys (Acts 7:2).	Unknown
God promises Abraham that from his seed would come a great nation and that all nations would be blessed through him. Additionally, the Lord promised Abraham the land of Canaan.	75 years old (Gen. 12:4)
Abraham called to leave Haran and he obeys (Gen. 12:4).	75 years old (Gen. 12:4)
Abraham builds altars to God and worships the Lord (Gen. 12:7 [Shechem]; 12:8; 13:3-4 [Bethel]; 13:18 [Hebron]).	Unknown
Abraham is rebuked by Pharaoh for giving his wife Sarah over in cowardice (Gen. 12:10ff).	Unknown
Paid tithes to Melchizedek, King and priest of Salem (Gen. 14:20).	Unknown
God makes a covenant with Abraham regarding His promises (Gen. 15:18).	Unknown
Takes Hagar to be his wife at the insistence of Sarah (a plea to help with God’s promise)	85 years old (16:3)
Hagar has Ishmael (Gen. 16:16)	86 years old
The Lord gives Abraham the seal of the covenant (i.e., circumcision, name changed from Abram to Abraham, and Sarai’s name changed to Sarah. Abraham complies with the covenant by circumcision himself, Ishmael, and all his house (cf. Gen. 17:26)	99 years old (17:1) (Sarah 89)



Abraham laughs at God's announcement to give he and Sarah a son in their old age (Gen. 17:17).	99 years old
Abraham understands that being a recipient of God's promises was contingent upon his obedience (Gen. 18:19; 22:18 {Abraham 100 + years old }).	99 years old
Once again Abraham is rebuked by a sinner for giving his wife away (Gen. 20:9).	
Abraham obeys God and circumcises Isaac (G 21:4)	100 years old

## Chapter 21

### I. Sarah gives birth to Isaac as the Lord had promised she would (21:1-21):

- A. *“And Jehovah visited Sarah as he had said, and Jehovah did unto Sarah as he had spoken. And Sarah conceived, and bare Abraham a son in his old age, at the set time of which God had spoken to him. And Abraham called the name of his son that was born unto him, whom Sarah bare to him, Isaac. And Abraham circumcised his son Isaac when he was eight days old, as God had commanded him. And Abraham was a hundred years old, when his son Isaac was born unto him. And Sarah said, God hath made me to laugh. Every one that heareth will laugh with me. And she said, Who would have said unto Abraham, that Sarah should give children suck? For I have borne him a son in his old age”* (21:1-7).
1. The Lord had now given the promise to Sarah as she complied by faith with His ordinances (cf. Gen. 17:6; 18:14; Heb. 11:11) (see study # 28).
  2. Abraham was 100 years old when Isaac was born. Abraham continues the Genesis 15:6 formula by obeying God's commands of Gen. 17:9ff and circumcises Isaac when he was 8 days old.
  3. Sarah's laugh was now a sound of joy.
- B. *“And the child grew, and was weaned. And Abraham made a great feast on the day that Isaac was weaned. And Sarah saw the son of Hagar the Egyptian, whom she had borne unto Abraham, mocking”* (21:8-9).
1. A feast was made for the weaning of Isaac.
  2. Sarah witnessed Ishmael mocking (laughing at in a way of ridiculing or making fun of way).
  3. The apostle Paul makes an allusion to this incident at Gal. 4:28ff.
- C. *“Wherefore she said unto Abraham, Cast out this handmaid and her son. For the son of this handmaid shall not be heir with my son, even with Isaac. And the thing was very grievous in Abraham's sight on account of his son. And God said unto Abraham, Let it not be grievous in thy sight because of the lad, and because of thy handmaid. In all that Sarah saith unto thee, hearken unto her voice. For in Isaac shall thy seed be called. And also of the son of the handmaid will I make a nation, because he is thy seed”* (21:10-13).
1. The Lord tells Abraham to comply with Sarah's request and Abraham obeys the voice of Jehovah though it was not easy for him. Abraham loved Ishmael because the boy was flesh of Abraham.
  2. The Lord eases Abraham's decision by reminding him of the promise made in regards to Ishmael (cf. 17:20).
- D. *“And Abraham rose up early in the morning, and took bread and a bottle of water, and gave it unto Hagar, putting it on her shoulder, and [gave her] the child, and sent her away. And she departed, and wandered in the wilderness of Beer-sheba. And the water in the bottle was spent, and she cast the child under one of the shrubs. And she went, and sat her down over against him a good way off, as it were a bowshot. For she said, Let me not look upon the death of the child. And she sat over against him, and lifted up her voice, and wept”* (21:14-16).

1. Ishmael must have been around 15 to 16 years old due to the fact that he was 14 before Isaac was born (cf. Gen. 16:16).
  2. Hagar could not bear to watch Ishmael die and so she placed him in the shade of a shrub and walked away to weep.
- E. *“And God heard the voice of the lad. And the angel of God called to Hagar out of heaven, and said unto her, What aileth thee, Hagar? Fear not. For God hath heard the voice of the lad where he is. Arise, lift up the lad, and hold him in thy hand. For I will make him a great nation. And God opened her eyes, and she saw a well of water. And she went, and filled the bottle with water, and gave the lad drink. And God was with the lad, and he grew. And he dwelt in the wilderness, and became, as he grew up, an archer. And he dwelt in the wilderness of Paran. And his mother took him a wife out of the land of Egypt”* (21:17-21).
1. Apparently Ishmael cried unto the Lord for help.
  2. The Lord miraculously saves Hagar and Ishmael.

## II. **Abraham and Abimelech make a Covenant (21:22-33):**

- A. *“And it came to pass at that time, that Abimelech and Phicol the captain of his host spake unto Abraham, saying, God is with thee in all that thou doest. Now therefore swear unto me here by God that thou wilt not deal falsely with me, nor with my son, nor with my son's son. But according to the kindness that I have done unto thee, thou shalt do unto me, and to the land wherein thou hast sojourned. And Abraham said, I will swear”* (21:22-24).
1. Abimelech had experienced the power of Jehovah in that the Lord had previously closed up the wombs of the women that belonged to the king of Philistia.
  2. Abimelech apparently wanted to secure his safety by making a covenant with Abraham.
- B. *“And Abraham reproveth Abimelech because of the well of water, which Abimelech's servants had violently taken away. And Abimelech said, I know not who hath done this thing. Neither didst thou tell me, neither yet heard I of it, but to-day. And Abraham took sheep and oxen, and gave them unto Abimelech. And they two made a covenant. And Abraham set seven ewe lambs of the flock by themselves. And Abimelech said unto Abraham, What mean these seven ewe lambs which thou hast set by themselves? And he said, These seven ewe lambs shalt thou take of my hand, that it may be a witness unto me, that I have digged this well. Wherefore he called that place Beer-sheba. Because there they sware both of them. So they made a covenant at Beer-sheba. And Abimelech rose up, and Phicol the captain of his host, and they returned into the land of the Philistines”* (21:25-32).
1. Abraham would not agree to any covenant with Abimelech until the dispute over a well was settled.
  2. The moment Abimelech took the lambs for his property from Abraham signified that the well belonged to Abraham.
- C. *“And Abraham planted a tamarisk tree in Beer-sheba, and called there on the name of Jehovah, the Everlasting God. And Abraham sojourned in the land of the Philistines many days”* (21:33-34).
1. The tamarisk tree is a longed lived tree and is thereby significant in its relationship to the “*Everlasting God*.” God had made promises to Abraham that had eternity in view and so Abraham acknowledges this fact by planting the tree and worshipping God.
  2. Abraham calls upon the name of Jehovah in a form of worship as he did at Genesis 12:7.

## Chapter 22

### I. **God “proves” Abraham’s faith (22:1-24):**

- A. *“And it came to pass after these things, that God did prove Abraham, and said unto him, Abraham. And he said, Here am I. And he said, Take now thy son, thine only son, whom thou lovest, even Isaac, and get thee into the land of Moriah. And offer him there for a burnt-offering upon one of the mountains which I will tell thee of. And Abraham rose early in the morning, and saddled his ass, and took two of his young men with him, and Isaac his son. And he clave the wood for the burnt-offering, and rose up, and went unto the place of which God had told him”* (22:1-3)
1. The Lord put Abraham to the test to see whether or not he would obey Him in all things.

- a. We must remember that Abraham's justification (being reckoned as righteous) was dependant upon his obedience to God's commands (Gen. 18:19; 22:18; Jn. 8:39). There was a danger that Abraham may place Isaac before the Lord in his affection and so the Lord proves the patriarch (see study #29).
  - b. The Lord thereby put Abraham to the test to see whether he would be faithful even in such an extreme case. No doubt the trial must have taken Abraham by surprise because he now had the promised son, he was aged, and had already been put to the test a number of times (i.e., obeyed God's command to leave Ur and Haran). The lesson for us to learn is that we are never too old, we never face all of our trials of life, and previous suffering will not exempt us from being proved by God (see study # 34; God Proves His People).
  - c. Note finally that the trial helped solidify Abraham's faith in Jehovah God (cf. James 1:2-3; 2:19-24).
2. The Lord knew that Abraham loved Isaac. Abraham had waited 25 years to have this son of promise (cf. Gen. 12:1ff). Sarah waited just as long. Both Abraham and Sarah were well past the child bearing age and they knew that when Isaac was born that it was a miracle (cf. Rom. 4:18-20).
  3. The "*land of Moriah*" would be within Jerusalem.
- B. *"On the third day Abraham lifted up his eyes, and saw the place afar off. And Abraham said unto his young men, Abide ye here with the ass, and I and the lad will go yonder; and we will worship, and come again to you. And Abraham took the wood of the burnt-offering, and laid it upon Isaac his son. And he took in his hand the fire and the knife. And they went both of them together. And Isaac spake unto Abraham his father, and said, My father. And he said, Here am I, my son. And he said, Behold, the fire and the wood. But where is the lamb for a burnt-offering? And Abraham said, God will provide himself the lamb for a burnt-offering, my son. So they went both of them together"* (22:4-8).
1. Three days travel took Abraham, Isaac, and the men accompanying them to the mountains of Moriah.
  2. Abraham gazes at the mountain and said unto the young men that had accompanied them, *"abide ye here with the ass, and I and the lad will go yonder; and we will worship, and come again unto you."*
    - a. Note that Abraham and Isaac were to worship Jehovah in the form of making a sacrifice upon an altar. Isaac was apparently well familiar with this form of worship. Abraham had previously worshipped God by calling upon His name and making sacrifices upon altars (cf. Gen. 12:7, 8; 13:3-4, 18; 21:33) (see study # 27).
    - b. *"Accounting that god was able to raise him (Isaac) up, even from the dead"* (Heb. 11:19), Abraham tells the young men that both he AND Isaac would return to them. Abraham has clearly made up his mind to go through with this command that God had given him.
  3. The question that Isaac asks his father was, in my estimation, a further part of Abraham's trial. When the beloved Isaac asks the question it would certainly pain the strongest of those with faith. The unwavering faith of Abraham is seen in his response to his beloved Isaac, *"God will provide himself the lamb for a burnt-offering, my son."*
- C. *"And they came to the place which God had told him of. And Abraham built the altar there, and laid the wood in order, and bound Isaac his son, and laid him on the altar, upon the wood. And Abraham stretched forth his hand, and took the knife to slay his son. And the angel of Jehovah called unto him out of heaven, and said, Abraham, Abraham. And he said, Here I am. And he said, Lay not thy hand upon the lad, neither do thou anything unto him. For now I know that thou fearest God, seeing thou hast not withheld thy son, thine only son, from me"* (22:9-12).
1. There is no information regarding Isaac's reaction when he discovered that he would be the sacrifice. Some believe that in Isaac there is a type of Christ in that He was led to the slaughter without a word (Isa. 53).
  2. Abraham binds Isaac with rope to the altar and prepares to kill his beloved son. As Abraham raises the knife to slay Isaac, a voice from heaven speaks with a sense of urgency telling the patriarch not to harm the boy.

3. Abraham's purpose was to slay Isaac and the omniscient God of heaven knew that Abraham had figuratively already slain Isaac in his mind. This was good enough for the Lord and so restrained Abraham from going to the end of the awful trial. The Lord said, "*for know I know that thou fearest God, seeing thou hast not withheld thy son, thine only son, from me.*"
  4. The "*fear*" of God is here defined as perfect obedience to God's will. If Abraham would not have gone through with the trial then his disobedience would have been recognized as a lack of fear of Jehovah God. Solomon said, "*The fear of Jehovah is the beginning of knowledge; But the foolish despise wisdom and instruction*" (Prov. 1:7). It was a lack of fear for Jehovah God that caused Judah to sin against the Lord (cf. Jer. 5:22-24; 44:10). A true respect and faith in Jehovah God will move the faithful to follow His commandments (cf. Rom. 12:1-2)! Fear and faith are two of a kind in acceptable service to the Lord. Abraham had selflessly obeyed God's command in this intense trial and so displayed the obedient character of Jesus. When the Lord stared death in the face He said to the heavenly Father, "*My Father, if it be possible, let this cup pass away from me: nevertheless, not as I will, but as thou wilt*" (Matt. 26:39) (see study # 35; Fear God and Keep His Commandments).
- D. "*And Abraham lifted up his eyes, and looked, and behold, behind him a ram caught in the thicket by his horns. And Abraham went and took the ram, and offered him up for a burnt-offering in the stead of his son. And Abraham called the name of that place Jehovah-jireh. As it is said to this day, In the mount of Jehovah it shall be provided*" (22:13-14).
1. As Abraham told Isaac in 22:8 that God would provide a sacrifice even so it came to pass. God did provide a sacrifice so that Isaac would not have to die on the altar. Likewise, Jehovah God has now provided a lamb for sacrifice that we all as sinners do not have to die (cf. Jn. 1:29).
  2. Previously, Abraham had referred to Jehovah God as the "*everlasting God*" (Gen. 22:33) and now as the God that will "*provide*" (cf. I Jn. 2:2) (see study # 5).
- E. "*And the angel of Jehovah called unto Abraham a second time out of heaven, and said, By myself have I sworn, saith Jehovah, because thou hast done this thing, and hast not withheld thy son, thine only son, that in blessing I will bless thee, and in multiplying I will multiply thy seed as the stars of the heavens, and as the sand which is upon the seashore. And thy seed shall possess the gate of his enemies. And in thy seed shall all the nations of the earth be blessed. Because thou hast obeyed my voice*" (22:15-18).
1. If Genesis 18:19 was not enough to convince our faith only friends of the necessity of obedience to be a recipient of God's promises then surely these verses will (see study # 28).
  2. Jehovah reiterates the promises that He had initially made to Abraham at Genesis 12 and again in 15 due to the fact that the promise remained in tact. Abraham's faithful obedience caused the Lord to reiterate the promise to Abraham by the formula, "*Because thou hast obeyed my voice.*"
  3. Jehovah swears by His own name that surely the blessing He has promised Abraham would be his due to his obedience (cf. Heb. 6:13ff) (see study # 28).
  4. That which was dearest to Abraham in this life, Isaac his only son of promise, was not placed before Jehovah God and His commandments. God was the zenith of Abraham's interest because he knew that eternity was far more important than any earthly object.
  5. Abraham goes from deceiving Abimelech and handing over his wife in cowardice to perfect obedience to God will (Gen. chapters 21-22). These events illustrate the fact that though our faith in Jehovah will not waiver, our doing those things we know to be right will due to weakness of the flesh (cf. Rom. 7). The mark of a true disciple of Christ is the ability to rebound from sin (repenting of it and asking the Lord's forgiveness in humble submission).
- F. "*So Abraham returned unto his young men, and they rose up and went together to Beer-sheba. And Abraham dwelt at Beer-sheba. And it came to pass after these things, that it was told Abraham, saying, Behold, Milcah, she also hath borne children unto thy brother Nahor. Uz his first-born, and Buz his brother, and Kemuel the father of Aram. And Chesed, and Hazo, and Pildash, and Jidlaph, and Bethuel. And Bethuel begat Rebekah. These eight did Milcah bear to Nahor, Abraham's brother. And his concubine, whose name was Reumah, she also bare Tebah, and Gaham, and Tahash, and Maacah*" (22:19-24).

1. Abraham's brother Nahor had 12 sons like Jacob and Ishmael.
2. Consider Genesis 11:29

## Chapter 23

### I. Sarah Dies at the age of 127 and is buried in Hebron (23:1-20):

- A. *“And the life of Sarah was a hundred and seven and twenty years. These were the years of the life of Sarah. And Sarah died in Kiriath-arba (the same is Hebron), in the land of Canaan. And Abraham came to mourn for Sarah, and to weep for her”* (23:1-2).
1. Sarah is the only woman in the Bible that has her age mentioned. She died 37 years after the birth of Isaac.
  2. She died and was buried in the land that God had promised Abraham.
- B. *“And Abraham rose up from before his dead, and spake unto the children of Heth, saying, I am a stranger and a sojourner with you. Give me a possession of a burying-place with you, that I may bury my dead out of my sight. And the children of Heth answered Abraham, saying unto him, Hear us, my lord. Thou art a prince of God among us. In the choice of our sepulchres bury thy dead. None of us shall withhold from thee his sepulchre, but that thou mayest bury thy dead. And Abraham rose up, and bowed himself to the people of the land, even to the children of Heth. And he communed with them, saying, If it be your mind that I should bury my dead out of my sight, hear me, and entreat for me to Ephron the son of Zohar, that he may give me the cave of Machpelah, which he hath, which is in the end of his field. For the full price let him give it to me in the midst of you for a possession of a burying-place. Now Ephron was sitting in the midst of the children of Heth. And Ephron the Hittite answered Abraham in the audience of the children of Heth, even of all that went in at the gate of his city, saying, Nay, my lord, hear me. The field give I thee, and the cave that is therein, I give it thee. In the presence of the children of my people give I it thee. Bury thy dead. And Abraham bowed himself down before the people of the land. And he spake unto Ephron in the audience of the people of the land, saying, But if thou wilt, I pray thee, hear me. I will give the price of the field. Take it of me, and I will bury my dead there. And Ephron answered Abraham, saying unto him, My lord, hearken unto me. A piece of land worth four hundred shekels of silver, what is that betwixt me and thee? Bury therefore thy dead. And Abraham hearkened unto Ephron. And Abraham weighed to Ephron the silver which he had named in the audience of the children of Heth, four hundred shekels of silver, current [money] with the merchant”* (23:3-16).
1. It is apparent from the conversation recorded in these verses that the children of Heth had a great deal of respect for Abraham.
  2. Abraham's desire is to bury Sarah in the cave of Machpelah belonging to Ephron the Hittite. Ephron offers to give the cave to Abraham; however, Abraham is determined to pay the Hittite for the cave and so does.
- C. *“So the field of Ephron, which was in Machpelah, which was before Mamre, the field, and the cave which was therein, and all the trees that were in the field, that were in all the border thereof round about, were made sure unto Abraham for a possession in the presence of the children of Heth, before all that went in at the gate of his city. And after this, Abraham buried Sarah his wife in the cave of the field of Machpelah before Mamre (the same is Hebron), in the land of Canaan. And the field, and the cave that is therein, were made sure unto Abraham for a possession of a burying-place by the children of Heth”* (23:17-20).
1. These verses indicate that the sell of the land was official and complete.
  2. The cave in the field of Machpelah would eventually be the burial place of Abraham, Isaac, Rebekah, Jacob, and Leah.

## Chapter 24

### I. Isaac's Marriage to Rebekah (24:1-

- A. *“And Abraham was old, and well stricken in age. And Jehovah had blessed Abraham in all things. And Abraham said unto his servant, the elder of his house, that ruled over all that he had, Put, I pray thee, thy hand under my thigh. And I will make thee swear by Jehovah, the God of heaven and the God of the earth, that thou wilt not take a wife for my son of the daughters of the Canaanites, among whom I dwell. But thou shalt go unto my country, and to my kindred, and take a wife for my son Isaac”* (24:1-4).
1. Abraham was probably around 140 years old (cf. Gen. 25:20).
  2. It may very well be Eliezer that makes the vow to find Isaac a wife from Abraham's home land.
  3. Why not find a wife among the Canaanites where Abraham lived? It is probable that Abraham examined the lustful and idolatrous existence of the Canaanites and so rejected them. Intermarriage with the Canaanites is not made unlawful until Ex. 34:16 and reiterated at Deuteronomy 7:3.
- B. *“And the servant said unto him, Peradventure the woman will not be willing to follow me unto this land. Must I needs bring thy son again unto the land from whence thou camest? And Abraham said unto him, Beware thou that thou bring not my son thither again. Jehovah, the God of heaven, who took me from my father's house, and from the land of my nativity, and who spake unto me, and who sware unto me, saying, Unto thy seed will I give this land. He will send his angel before thee, and thou shalt take a wife for my son from thence. And if the woman be not willing to follow thee, then thou shalt be clear from this my oath. Only thou shalt not bring my son thither again. And the servant put his hand under the thigh of Abraham his master, and sware to him concerning this matter”* (24:5-9).
1. Abraham's servant seems to realize the seriousness of his tasks due to the questions he asks.
  2. The servant is not to bring Isaac to the land of the Chaldeans under any circumstances.
- C. *“And the servant took ten camels, of the camels of his master, and departed, having all goodly things of his master's in his hand. And he arose, and went to Mesopotamia, unto the city of Nahor. And he made the camels to kneel down without the city by the well of water at the time of evening, the time that women go out to draw water. And he said, O Jehovah, the God of my master Abraham, send me, I pray thee, good speed this day, and show kindness unto my master Abraham. Behold, I am standing by the fountain of water. And the daughters of the men of the city are coming out to draw water. And let it come to pass, that the damsel to whom I shall say, Let down thy pitcher, I pray thee, that I may drink. And she shall say, Drink, and I will give thy camels drink also. Let the same be she that thou hast appointed for thy servant Isaac. And thereby shall I know that thou hast showed kindness unto my master. And it came to pass, before he had done speaking, that, behold, Rebekah came out, who was born to Bethuel the son of Milcah, the wife of Nahor, Abraham's brother, with her pitcher upon her shoulder. And the damsel was very fair to look upon, a virgin, neither had any man known her. And she went down to the fountain, and filled her pitcher, and came up. And the servant ran to meet her, and said, Give me to drink, I pray thee, a little water from thy pitcher. And she said, Drink, my lord. And she hastened, and let down her pitcher upon her hand, and gave him drink. And when she had done giving him drink, she said, I will draw for thy camels also, until they have done drinking. And she hastened, and emptied her pitcher into the trough, and ran again unto the well to draw, and drew for all his camels. And the man looked stedfastly on her, holding his peace, to know whether Jehovah had made his journey prosperous or not. And it came to pass, as the camels had done drinking, that the man took a golden ring of half a shekel weight, and two bracelets for her hands of ten shekels weight of gold, and said, Whose daughter art thou? Tell me, I pray thee. Is there room in thy father's house for us to lodge in? And she said unto him, I am the daughter of Bethuel the son of Milcah, whom she bare unto Nahor. She said moreover unto him, We have both straw and provender enough, and room to lodge in. And the man bowed his head, and worshipped Jehovah. And he said, Blessed be Jehovah, the God of my master Abraham, who hath not forsaken his lovingkindness and his truth toward my master. As for me,*

*Jehovah hath led me in the way to the house of my master's brethren. And the damsel ran, and told her mother's house according to these words" (24:10-28).*

1. Abraham's servant travels to Mesopotamia and prays to God concerning the great tasks Abraham has given him to accomplish. The woman who comes to the well and gives him and his camels drink will be the one that God has chosen for Isaac.
  2. Rebekah, the daughter of Bethuel (Nahor and Milcah's son), comes to the well and does all that the servant had prayed so that he knew she was the one Jehovah had intended for Isaac. The servant gives Rebekah gold and asks to lodge at her father's house.
- D. *"And Rebekah had a brother, and his name was Laban: and Laban ran out unto the man, unto the fountain. And it came to pass, when he saw the ring, and the bracelets upon his sister's hands, and when he heard the words of Rebekah his sister, saying, Thus spake the man unto me. That he came unto the man. And, behold, he was standing by the camels at the fountain. And he said, Come in, thou blessed of Jehovah. Wherefore standest thou without? For I have prepared the house, and room for the camels. And the man came into the house, and he ungirded the camels. And he gave straw and provender for the camels, and water to wash his feet and the feet of the men that were with him. And there was set food before him to eat. But he said, I will not eat, until I have told mine errand. And he said, Speak on" (24:29-33).*
1. Laban, Rebekah's brother, was informed of the stranger's faith in Jehovah and so refers to him as *"thou blessed of Jehovah."*
  2. Rebekah's family is hospitable to Abraham's servant.
- E. *"And he said, I am Abraham's servant. And Jehovah hath blessed my master greatly. And he is become great. And he hath given him flocks and herds, and silver and gold, and men-servants and maid-servants, and camels and asses. And Sarah my master's wife bare a son to my master when she was old. And unto him hath he given all that he hath. And my master made me swear, saying, Thou shalt not take a wife for my son of the daughters of the Canaanites, in whose land I dwell. But thou shalt go unto my father's house, and to my kindred, and take a wife for my son. And I said unto my master, Peradventure the woman will not follow me. And he said unto me, Jehovah, before whom I walk, will send his angel with thee, and prosper thy way. And thou shalt take a wife for my son of my kindred, and of my father's house. Then shalt thou be clear from my oath, when thou comest to my kindred. And if they give her not to thee, thou shalt be clear from my oath. And I came this day unto the fountain, and said, O Jehovah, the God of my master Abraham, if now thou do prosper my way which I go. Behold, I am standing by the fountain of water. And let it come to pass, that the maiden that cometh forth to draw, to whom I shall say, Give me, I pray thee, a little water from thy pitcher to drink. And she shall say to me, Both drink thou, and I will also draw for thy camels. Let the same be the woman whom Jehovah hath appointed for my master's son. And before I had done speaking in my heart, behold, Rebekah came forth with her pitcher on her shoulder. And she went down unto the fountain, and drew. And I said unto her, Let me drink, I pray thee. And she made haste, and let down her pitcher from her shoulder, and said, Drink, and I will give thy camels drink also. So I drank, and she made the camels drink also. And I asked her, and said, Whose daughter art thou? And she said, The daughter of Bethuel, Nahor's son, whom Milcah bare unto him. And I put the ring upon her nose, and the bracelets upon her hands. And I bowed my head, and worshipped Jehovah, and blessed Jehovah, the God of my master Abraham, who had led me in the right way to take my master's brother's daughter for his son. And now if ye will deal kindly and truly with my master, tell me. And if not, tell me. That I may turn to the right hand, or to the left" (24:34-49).*
1. Abraham's servant rehearses all that has transpired to this point to Rebekah's family.
  2. The servant now asks Bethuel if he has found favor in his request for Rebekah.
  3. What is really interesting is the quickness in which the servant's prayer was answered (before he was even finished Rebekah came to the well).
- F. *"Then Laban and Bethuel answered and said, The thing proceedeth from Jehovah. We cannot speak unto thee bad or good. Behold, Rebekah is before thee, take her, and go, and let her be thy master's son's wife, as Jehovah hath spoken. And it came to pass, that, when Abraham's servant heard their words, he bowed himself down to the earth unto Jehovah. And the servant brought forth jewels of*

*silver, and jewels of gold, and raiment, and gave them to Rebekah. He gave also to her brother and to her mother precious things” (24:50-53).*

1. When Bethuel heard all that Abraham’s servant had to say regarding Abraham’s request for a wife, both he and Laban concluded that the event “*proceeds from Jehovah*” and therefore they could not say no.
  2. Abraham’s servant immediately bows down and gives Jehovah thanks for the answer and gives both Rebekah and her family many costly jewels.
- G. *“And they did eat and drink, he and the men that were with him, and tarried all night. And they rose up in the morning, and he said, Send me away unto my master. And her brother and her mother said, Let the damsel abide with us a few days, at the least ten. After that she shall go. And he said unto them, Hinder me not, seeing Jehovah hath prospered my way. Send me away that I may go to my master. And they said, We will call the damsel, and inquire at her mouth. And they called Rebekah, and said unto her, Wilt thou go with this man? And she said, I will go. And they sent away Rebekah their sister, and her nurse, and Abraham's servant, and his men. And they blessed Rebekah, and said unto her, Our sister, be thou the mother of thousands of ten thousands, and let thy seed possess the gate of those that hate them. And Rebekah arose, and her damsels, and they rode upon the camels, and followed the man. And the servant took Rebekah, and went his way” (24:54-61).*
1. The next day, Abraham’s servant request that they leave immediately to get back to Abraham. Rebekah’s mother and brother Laban request that she be able to remain another ten days to spend time with her family. Abraham’s servant rejects the request and asks if they could leave now. They call Rebekah and let her make the decision. Rebekah agrees to leave now.
  2. The family blesses Rebekah with words that indicate their knowledge of the importance of the marriage between her and Isaac in relation to God’s promises.
- H. *“And Isaac came from the way of Beer-lahai-roi. For he dwelt in the land of the South. And Isaac went out to meditate in the field at the eventide. And he lifted up his eyes, and saw, and, behold, there were camels coming. And Rebekah lifted up her eyes, and when she saw Isaac, she alighted from the camel. And she said unto the servant, What man is this that walketh in the field to meet us? And the servant said, It is my master. And she took her veil, and covered herself. And the servant told Isaac all the things that he had done. And Isaac brought her into his mother Sarah's tent, and took Rebekah, and she became his wife. And he loved her. And Isaac was comforted after his mother's death” (24:62-67).*
1. While Isaac was meditating in the field the caravan came.
  2. Isaac and Rebekah meet and are married.

## Chapter 25

- I. **Abraham’s Marriage to Keturah and his Death (25:1-11):**
- A. *“And Abraham took another wife, and her name was Keturah. And she bare him Zimran, and Jokshan, and Medan, and Midian, and Ishbak, and Shuah. And Jokshan begat Sheba, and Dedan. And the sons of Dedan were Asshurim, and Letushim, and Leummim. And the sons of Midian: Ephah, and Epher, and Hanoch, and Abida, and Eldaah. All these were the children of Keturah” (25:1-4).*
1. It is generally assumed that Abraham took Keturah as a wife after the death of Sarah. There are difficulties with this assumption in that Abraham was very old at this point and it has already been noted that he and Sarah were too old to have a child before they had Isaac.
  2. It may be that Abraham had not only Sarah as wife but Keturah too (at the same time). Not only did Abraham have these two wives but he had Hagar and concubines.
- B. *“And Abraham gave all that he had unto Isaac. But unto the sons of the concubines, that Abraham had, Abraham gave gifts. And he sent them away from Isaac his son, while he yet lived, eastward, unto the east country. And these are the days of the years of Abraham's life which he lived, a hundred threescore and fifteen years. And Abraham gave up the ghost, and died in a good old age,*



*an old man, and full of years, and was gathered to his people. And Isaac and Ishmael his sons buried him in the cave of Machpelah, in the field of Ephron the son of Zohar the Hittite, which is before Mamre. The field which Abraham purchased of the children of Heth. There was Abraham buried, and Sarah his wife. And it came to pass after the death of Abraham, that God blessed Isaac his son. And Isaac dwelt by Beer-lahai-roi” (25:5-11).*

1. Abraham lived to be 175 years old. The scriptures tell us that he was “*gathered to his people*” at death. This phrase seems to indicate a reunion of sorts in the hades world of those who die.
2. Isaac and Ishmael bury Abraham in the same cave that Sarah was buried.
3. Note that all that Abraham owned was inherited by Isaac (the son of promise).

## II. Ishmael’s History (25:12-18):

A. *“Now these are the generations of Ishmael, Abraham’s son, whom Hagar the Egyptian, Sarah’s handmaid, bare unto Abraham” (25:12).*

1. One of the purposes of listing the descendants of Ishmael is to prove that God kept His promise to make a great nation of him (cf. Gen. 16:10ff; 17:20).
2. Hagar was given to Abraham by Sarah to bear a son and help the Lord with His promises.

B. *“And these are the names of the sons of Ishmael, by their names, according to their generations: the first-born of Ishmael, Nebaioth, and Kedar, and Adbeel, and Mibsam, and Mishma, and Dumah, and Massa, Hadad, and Tema, Jetur, Naphish, and Kedemah. These are the sons of Ishmael, and these are their names, by their villages, and by their encampments. Twelve princes according to their nations. And these are the years of the life of Ishmael, a hundred and thirty and seven years. And he gave up the ghost and died, and was gathered unto his people. And they dwelt from Havilah unto Shur that is before Egypt, as thou goest toward Assyria. He abode over against all his brethren” (25:13-18).*

1. Ishmael had 12 sons.
2. Ishmael lives to be 137 years old.

## III. History of Isaac (25:19-34):

A. *“And these are the generations of Isaac, Abraham’s son. Abraham begat Isaac. And Isaac was forty years old when he took Rebekah, the daughter of Bethuel the Syrian of Paddan-aram, the sister of Laban the Syrian, to be his wife. And Isaac entreated Jehovah for his wife, because she was barren. And Jehovah was entreated of him, and Rebekah his wife conceived. And the children struggled together within her. And she said, If it be so, wherefore do I live? And she went to inquire of Jehovah. And Jehovah said unto her, Two nations are in thy womb, And two peoples shall be separated from thy bowels. And the one people shall be stronger than the other people. And the elder shall serve the younger. And when her days to be delivered were fulfilled, behold, there were twins in her womb. And the first came forth red, all over like a hairy garment. And they called his name Esau. And after that came forth his brother, and his hand had hold on Esau’s heel. And his name was called Jacob. And Isaac was threescore years old when she bare them” (25:19-26).*

1. Isaac was 40 when he was married to Rebekah and that would make Abraham 140 at their marriage.
2. Isaac and Rebekah share the same fate as Abraham and Sarah regarding not being able to have children together. Isaac prays to God regarding the matter and the Lord blesses the womb of Rebekah with twins.
3. Rebekah experiences wrestling of the two children in her womb and is concerned that something terrible would happen. She prays to God and the Lord explains to her that the two children will be representatives of two nations (the Edomites and Israelites).
4. When the two boys were born the younger grabbed the heel of the first born and they struggled with each other as Rebekah gave birth. The first born was named Esau (name meaning red and hairy). The second born was named Jacob (Heb. heel holder). Isaac was now 60 years old.

B. *“And the boys grew. And Esau was a skilful hunter, a man of the field. And Jacob was a quiet man, dwelling in tents. Now Isaac loved Esau, because he did eat of his venison. And Rebekah loved Jacob” (25:27-28).*

1. The disposition of Jacob and Esau were like night and day. One was an outdoorsman and the other an ‘in-doorsman.’

2. Isaac's favorite son was Esau because of his hunting skills and Rebekah's favorite was Jacob due to his quiet nature and being one who remained around her and the tents.
- C. *"And Jacob boiled pottage. And Esau came in from the field, and he was faint. And Esau said to Jacob, Feed me, I pray thee, with that same red pottage. For I am faint. Therefore was his name called Edom. And Jacob said, Sell me first thy birthright. And Esau said, Behold, I am about to die. And what profit shall the birthright do to me? And Jacob said, Swear to me first. And he swore unto him. And he sold his birthright unto Jacob. And Jacob gave Esau bread and pottage of lentils. And he did eat and drink, and rose up, and went his way. So Esau despised his birthright"* (25:29-34).
1. Not only was there a difference in outward interest between Esau and Jacob but there was too a difference in spiritual interest (see study # 26). The author of Hebrews refers to Esau as a "*profane*" person for his choice on this occasion.
  2. Hebrews 12:16-17 states, *"lest there be any fornication, or profane person, as Esau, who for one mess of meat sold his own birthright. For ye know that even when he afterward desired to inherit the blessing, he was rejected; for he found no place for a change of mind in his father, though he sought is diligently with tears."*
    - a. In the context of the dangers of allowing God's chastening to cause you bitterness (defilement) rather than use it as it is intended; i.e., instruction, the author of Hebrews brings in an example. Esau "*despised*" (to regard as trivial or worthless) his birthright and thereby goes down in history as a "*profane*" individual (Gen. 25:34).
    - b. Esau was apparently both a "*fornicator*" (sexually immoral person) and a "*profane*" person. The word "*profane*" = "permitted to human use; impure" (LS 149). "Accessible to everyone; irreligious" (AG 138). "Open and accessible to all; hence, profane, not religious, not connected with religion; unholy; a despiser, scorner" (Moulton 68).
    - c. Let us examine Esau for a moment and learn a valuable lesson:
      - C1. Esau was one of two twins (the other Jacob) being born to Isaac and Rebekah (Gen. 25:24ff).
      - C2. Esau grew to be a man and accomplished hunter and a favored son of Isaac (Gen. 25:28).
      - C3. Esau had been out hunting and came up empty handed and hungry. Jacob, Esau's twin brother, had been cooking some red stew and offered it to Esau in exchange for his birthright. Esau responds saying, *"Behold, I am about to die: and what profit shall the birthright do to me? And Jacob said, Swear to me first; and he swore unto him: and he sold his birthright unto Jacob. And Jacob gave Esau bread and pottage of lentils; and he did eat and drink and rose up, and went his way: so Esau despised his birthright"* (Gen. 25:32-34).
        1. The son of a family that rightfully had the "*birthright*" was the firstborn son of the father. "Such a person ultimately became the head of the family, the line being continued through him. As firstborn he inherited a double portion of the paternal estate."<sup>10</sup>
        2. The significance in the case of Esau "*despising*" (counting as worthless) his birthright is huge. "Esau's birthright did not involve only headship of the family and great property rights as it did in the case of the first-born in Oriental lands and as it still does in royal families of our own time; it involved the inheritance of 'the blessing,' i.e., the Abrahamic blessing, the bloodline of the Messiah. What Esau threw away for one meal was the ancestralship of the Messiah and the prerogatives which went with this."<sup>11</sup> (cf. Gen. 27:4, 27-29; 28:4). Esau's sin was that he treated the grand eternal blessings of God as worthless in that he traded it for a common meal. He further illustrates his profane state of mind by committing fornication and marrying Canaanite women (cf. Gen. 26:34-35) even though he had been instructed not to do so (Gen.

<sup>10</sup> R. K. H. The International Standard Bible Encyclopedia; Vol. 1, pp. 515-516.

<sup>11</sup> Lenski, R. C. H. Commentary on the New Testament; Hebrews and James, pp. 448

24:1-4). Esau was not spiritually minded. As the word “*profane*” suggests (i.e., ‘accessible to everyone) Esau allowed access into his heart of sinful women and deeds. Esau threw away the blessings of God for the things of this world. How do you and I view God’s wonderful spiritual blessings of eternal life?

- d. What lesson is there to learn from Esau in the context of Hebrews chapter 12? Note that the Hebrews were being afflicted for their faith (Heb. 10:32ff). The author of Hebrews seeks to encourage them to remain faithful by looking to others who went on before them living a life of faith though they too experienced trying times (Heb. 11). Chapter 12 calls upon the Hebrews to be cheered on to victory in life by the faithful men and women of chapter 11. The author then explains to the Hebrews that their current afflictions are the “*chastening of the Lord*” and that they are not to get discouraged but rather learn from the experience. What were they to learn? They were to learn love, patience, and gain doctrinal growth due to giving defense of their faith. So the Lord states, “*My son, regard not lightly the chastening of the Lord, Nor faint when thou art reprov’d of him; For whom the Lord loveth he chasteneth*” (Heb. 12:5-6). Clearly Esau was beloved of Jehovah God. The Lord thereby “*chastened*” Esau with the empty handed hunt of Genesis 25:29ff. Esau proved himself “*profane*” when he “*fainted*” (cf. Gen. 25:30) from his trial and thereby placed his birthright on an equal plain as a common meal. This tells us that it is during the trials of life that God sees what our true character is and what is in our heart. The trial made manifest Esau’s profane state of mind. The Lesson is therefore, Love the Lord, know that he offers true perfection, and cling to this hope with all your might no matter what comes upon you in life. Make your faith in God real! (Note the difference in the outcome of God proving Esau and that of Abraham) (see study # 34).
- e. A second important note is that once Esau made up his mind to “*despise*” his birthright he could not go back and change what took place. Isaac gave the blessing to Jacob and so what was done was done. Esau pleaded with Isaac to reverse the blessing; however, it was too late (cf. Gen. 27:30-38). We may repent of a sinful action; however, we will always have to live with the consequences of that action. When a man or woman commit fornication and have a child in an unmarried state, one or both may repent; however, the child remains. When one murders another, he may repent and be accepted by God, yet he will serve jail time and in some cases the death penalty (cf. Prov. 1:31; 13:15) (see study # 36; The Consequences of Sin).
- f. The name of Edom goes down in history as a name that others associate with wicked behavior (cf. Isa. 34:8ff; Jer. 49:7) and one that the Lord hated (Rom. 9:10-13).

## Genesis 26

### I. A Famine in Canaan (26:1-11):

- A. “*And there was a famine in the land, besides the first famine that was in the days of Abraham. And Isaac went unto Abimelech king of the Philistines, unto Gerar. And Jehovah appeared unto him, and said, Go not down into Egypt. Dwell in the land which I shall tell thee of. Sojourn in this land, and I will be with thee, and will bless thee. For unto thee, and unto thy seed, I will give all these lands, and I will establish the oath which I sware unto Abraham thy father. And I will multiply thy seed as the stars of heaven, and will give unto thy seed all these lands. And in thy seed shall all the nations of the earth be blessed. Because that Abraham obeyed my voice, and kept my charge, my commandments, my statutes, and my laws. And Isaac dwelt in Gerar*” (26:1-6).
  1. There was a famine in Canaan during the life of Abraham that forced him and Sarah down into Egypt (cf. Gen. 12:9ff).
  2. Apparently Isaac and his family were on the road to Egypt when the Lord appeared to him and commanded him not to go into Egypt.
  3. If Isaac would obey the voice of God, as did Abraham, he would be a recipient of the promises God had given to his father (cf. Gen. 12:1ff):

- a. God would be with him.
  - b. God would multiply Isaac's seed as the stars of the heaven.
  - c. God would give Isaac the land of promise (Canaan).
  - d. Through Isaac's seed would all nations be blessed.
4. Note that Jehovah clearly reveals the method of receiving His promised blessings. God's promises to Abraham were given by "*oath*" (Gen. 22:16) with the condition that Abraham obey His commands. Abraham did obey and thereby God reckoned his faithful obedience unto him for righteousness (cf. Gen. 15:6; 18:19; 22:18) (see study # 28; 36).
5. As Abraham obeyed so Isaac did as well (he remained in Gerar as God commanded).
6. Lastly, note that God's promise to Abraham was "*established*" in Isaac and God's promise to Isaac would be established in his seed.
- B.** *"And the men of the place asked him of his wife. And he said, She is my sister. For he feared to say, My wife. Lest, said he, the men of the place should kill me for Rebekah. Because she was fair to look upon. And it came to pass, when he had been there a long time, that Abimelech king of the Philistines looked out at a window, and saw, and, behold, Isaac was sporting with Rebekah his wife. And Abimelech called Isaac, and said, Behold, of a surety she is thy wife. And how saidst thou, She is my sister? And Isaac said unto him, Because I said, Lest I die because of her. And Abimelech said, What is this thou hast done unto us? One of the people might easily have lain with thy wife, and thou wouldest have brought guiltiness upon us. And Abimelech charged all the people, saying, He that toucheth this man or his wife shall surely be put to death"* (26:7-11).
- 1. Instead of going down into Egypt, Isaac and his family remain in the land of the Philistines.
  - 2. While in Gerar, Isaac had told the men of the place that Rebekah was his sister due to her beauty and his fear of being put to death over her. Abraham had made this same mistake on two different occasions; i.e., once in Egypt (Gen. 12:10ff) and once in Gerar (Gen. 20:9). On both of these occasions Abraham was rebuked by a sinner.
  - 3. Isaac now shares in his father's cowardice. Abimelech (not necessarily the same Abimelech that rebuked Abraham in Gen. 20. The name Abimelech was a popular name for Philistine Kings (as Pharaoh was for the Egyptian rulers). Abimelech witnesses Isaac and Rebekah "*sporting*" with each other and determines that they must be man and wife. The King approaches Isaac and rebukes Isaac for his error and cowardice. The king of Gerar said it best, "*One of the people might easily have lain with thy wife...*"
  - 4. It is difficult for us to imagine a man placing his own wife in the hands of a stranger with the possibility of her being sexually defiled. Yet the scriptures tell us that both Abraham and Isaac did this due to "*fear*." Fear is a powerful tool of the devil (not of God) (cf. II Tim. 1:7) (see study # 37; Fear).
    - a. Some fear persecution of being made fun of or being made an outcast and so do not preach the gospel to those who need to hear it.
    - b. Some fear their wives and so will not rule their homes in such a way that she would submit to him and God directs.
    - c. Some fear commitment and so never obey the gospel of Jesus Christ.
    - d. The only fear that God advocates is fear of Him and the consequences of sin (Prov. 1:7).

## **II. God blesses Isaac with Material Wealth (26:12-22):**

- A.** *"And Isaac sowed in that land, and found in the same year a hundredfold. And Jehovah blessed him. And the man waxed great, and grew more and more until he became very great. And he had possessions of flocks, and possessions of herds, and a great household. And the Philistines envied him"* (26:12-14).
- 1. Isaac seemed to have the "Midas touch." Every thing he touched turned to gold because God had richly blessed him.
  - 2. Isaac's blessedness was so recognized that the Philistines are said to have "*envied him*."
- B.** *"Now all the wells which his father's servants had digged in the days of Abraham his father, the Philistines had stopped, and filled with earth. And Abimelech said unto Isaac, Go from us. For thou art much mightier than we. And Isaac departed thence, and encamped in the valley of Gerar, and dwelt there. And Isaac digged again the wells of water, which they had digged in the days of*

*Abraham his father. For the Philistines had stopped them after the death of Abraham. And he called their names after the names by which his father had called them. And Isaac's servants digged in the valley, and found there a well of springing water. And the herdsmen of Gerar strove with Isaac's herdsmen, saying, The water is ours. And he called the name of the well Esek, because they contended with him. And they digged another well, and they strove for that also. And he called the name of it Sitnah. And he removed from thence, and digged another well. And for that they strove not. And he called the name of it Rehoboth. And he said, For now Jehovah hath made room for us, and we shall be fruitful in the land” (26:15-22).*

1. The envy of the Philistines against Isaac comes out in their contending over wells that Isaac’s men dug.
2. The peaceful character of Isaac is depicted in that he moves each time a quarrel takes place rather than fighting.

### **III. Isaac worships Jehovah and makes a covenant with Abimelech (26:23-35):**

**A.** *“And he went up from thence to Beer-sheba. And Jehovah appeared unto him the same night, and said, I am the God of Abraham thy father. Fear not, for I am with thee, and will bless thee, and multiply thy seed for my servant Abraham's sake. And he builded an altar there, and called upon the name of Jehovah, and pitched his tent there. And there Isaac's servants digged a well” (26:23-25).*

1. Jehovah renews the promises of Abraham through Isaac in the night time (I will bless thee and multiply thy seed).
2. Isaac follows in the steps of Abraham his father and other faithful men who have gone on before him in that he worships Jehovah (cf. Gen. 12:7, 8; 13:3-4, 18; 21:33; 22:4-8).

**B.** *“Then Abimelech went to him from Gerar, and Ahuzzath his friend, and Phicol the captain of his host. And Isaac said unto them, Wherefore are ye come unto me, seeing ye hate me, and have sent me away from you? And they said, We saw plainly that Jehovah was with thee. And we said, Let there now be an oath betwixt us, even betwixt us and thee, and let us make a covenant with thee, that thou wilt do us no hurt, as we have not touched thee, and as we have done unto thee nothing but good, and have sent thee away in peace. Thou art now the blessed of Jehovah. And he made them a feast, and they did eat and drink. And they rose up betimes in the morning, and swore one to another. And Isaac sent them away, and they departed from him in peace” (26:26-31).*

1. Abraham had previously made a covenant with Abimelech at Genesis 21:32.
2. Abimelech, king of Philistia, recognized the power that Isaac had obtained and was fearful that there would be a conflict between his nation and Isaac’s people. The very idea that a king of a nation would seek to make a peace covenant with a man who sojourns through the land indicates the numerical strength that Isaac had obtained.
3. Again, the peaceful character of Isaac comes out in that even though he knew the king of Philistia “*hated*” him he was willing to make a peace covenant with them. Isaac is even hospitable to the Philistines in that he made them a feast.

**C.** *“And it came to pass the same day, that Isaac's servants came, and told him concerning the well which they had digged, and said unto him, We have found water. And he called it Shibah. Therefore the name of the city is Beer-sheba unto this day. And when Esau was forty years old he took to wife Judith the daughter of Beeri the Hittite, and Basemath the daughter of Elon the Hittite. And they were a grief of mind unto Isaac and to Rebekah” (26:32-35).*

1. The Hittites were a tribe within the borders of Canaan. Abraham in no way wanted Isaac to marry any of the Canaanite women most likely because of their idolatrous practices (cf. Gen. 24:1-3). Esau ignores the warnings of his parents (Isaac and Rebekah) and that of his Grandparent (Abraham).
2. The marriage of Esau to Canaanite women illustrated further the non spiritual mind he possessed. The scriptures state that Esau was profane because he committed fornication (likely during the days before his 40<sup>th</sup> birthday [when Isaac was 100; cf. Gen. 25:26]) and despised his birthright (cf. Heb. 12:16).

3. The act of marriage with two Canaanite women caused Isaac and Rebekah grief for they knew the dangers involved in such a union. Again, at this point there is no prohibition against such a marriage; however, it was obviously looked down on.

## Chapter 27

### I. Isaac's Blessing (27:1-46):

- A. *"And it came to pass, that when Isaac was old, and his eyes were dim, so that he could not see, he called Esau his elder son, and said unto him, My son. And he said unto him, Here am I. And he said, Behold now, I am old, I know not the day of my death. Now therefore take, I pray thee, thy weapons, thy quiver and thy bow, and go out to the field, and take me venison. And make me savory food, such as I love, and bring it to me, that I may eat. That my soul may bless thee before I die"* (27:1-4).
  1. Keil and Delitzsch calculate Isaac's age to be 137 years old (cf. footnotes at pg. 175-176 of commentary on Genesis). Isaac's death would not come for another 43 years (Gen. 35:28); however, he appeared already be "old."
  2. Though the Lord had revealed that Esau would serve Jacob to Rebekah at Genesis 25:23, Isaac goes against the Lord's choice by attempting to give Esau the family blessing (see notes at chapter 25 above on the family blessing).
  3. Isaac requests a savory meal of venison to eat and to give Esau the blessing.
- B. *"And Rebekah heard when Isaac spake to Esau his son. And Esau went to the field to hunt for venison, and to bring it. And Rebekah spake unto Jacob her son, saying, Behold, I heard thy father speak unto Esau thy brother, saying, Bring me venison, and make me savory food, that I may eat, and bless thee before Jehovah before my death. Now therefore, my son, obey my voice according to that which I command thee. Go now to the flock, and fetch me from thence two good kids of the goats. And I will make them savory food for thy father, such as he loveth. And thou shalt bring it to thy father, that he may eat, so that he may bless thee before his death. And Jacob said to Rebekah his mother, Behold, Esau my brother is a hairy man, and I am a smooth man. My father peradventure will feel me, and I shall seem to him as a deceiver. And I shall bring a curse upon me, and not a blessing. And his mother said unto him, Upon me be thy curse, my son. Only obey my voice, and go fetch me them. And he went, and fetched, and brought them to his mother. And his mother made savory food, such as his father loved. And Rebekah took the goodly garments of Esau her elder son, which were with her in the house, and put them upon Jacob her younger son. And she put the skins of the kids of the goats upon his hands, and upon the smooth of his neck. And she gave the savory food and the bread, which she had prepared, into the hand of her son Jacob"* (27:5-17).
  1. The blessing under consideration was of utmost importance. The blessing would not only include great physical blessings but the passing down of the promises that God had promised Abraham at Genesis 12:1ff (cf. 26:1-6).
  2. Rebekah knew by faith that it was Jacob who the Lord had intended to receive this promise and so took it upon herself to do whatever possible to see that Jacob got that which the Lord intended for him to have, the blessings of Abraham. So convinced was Rebekah that God's will was for Jacob to have the blessing that she even tells Jacob that if there is a curse involved in this action that she would take the curse herself. Rebekah then goes down in history as a woman of great faith.
  3. Rebekah makes stew and puts hairy garments upon her son Jacob to deceive Isaac into thinking that Esau had come in from the hunt.
- C. *"And he came unto his father, and said, My father. And he said, Here am I. Who art thou, my son? And Jacob said unto his father, I am Esau thy first-born; I have done according as thou badest me: arise, I pray thee, sit and eat of my venison, that thy soul may bless me. And Isaac said unto his son, How is it that thou hast found it so quickly, my son? And he said, Because Jehovah thy God sent me good speed. And Isaac said unto Jacob, Come near, I pray thee, that I may feel thee, my*

*son, whether thou be my very son Esau or not. And Jacob went near unto Isaac his father. And he felt him, and said, The voice is Jacob's voice, but the hands are the hands of Esau. And he discerned him not, because his hands were hairy, as his brother Esau's hands. So he blessed him” (27:18-23).*

1. Isaac is surprised that Esau (Jacob) is back from the hunt so soon. He seems to be suspicious of Jacob’s presence.
  2. Jacob came near unto Isaac to let his father feel his hands to see whether they are hairy or not.
- D.** *“And he said, Art thou my very son Esau? And he said, I am. And he said, Bring it near to me, and I will eat of my son's venison, that my soul may bless thee. And he brought it near to him, and he did eat. And he brought him wine, and he drank. And his father Isaac said unto him, Come near now, and kiss me, my son. And he came near, and kissed him. And he smelled the smell of his raiment, and blessed him, and said, See, the smell of my son is as the smell of a field which Jehovah hath blessed. And God give thee of the dew of heaven, And of the fatness of the earth, And plenty of grain and new wine. Let peoples serve thee, And nations bow down to thee. Be lord over thy brethren, And let thy mother's sons bow down to thee. Cursed be every one that curseth thee, And blessed be every one that blesseth thee” (27:24-29).*
1. Isaac continues to be suspicious of who is claiming to be Esau before him. As Jacob draws near to his father, Isaac smells him and determines that it is Esau.
  2. Isaac then gives the blessings to Jacob because he considers him to be Esau.
- E.** *“And it came to pass, as soon as Isaac had made an end of blessing Jacob, and Jacob was yet scarce gone out from the presence of Isaac his father, that Esau his brother came in from his hunting. And he also made savory food, and brought it unto his father. And he said unto his father, Let my father arise, and eat of his son's venison, that thy soul may bless me. And Isaac his father said unto him, Who art thou? And he said, I am thy son, thy first-born, Esau. And Isaac trembled very exceedingly, and said, Who then is he that hath taken venison, and brought it me, and I have eaten of all before thou camest, and have blessed him? Yea, and he shall be blessed. When Esau heard the words of his father, he cried with an exceeding great and bitter cry, and said unto his father, Bless me, even me also, O my father. And he said, Thy brother came with guile, and hath taken away thy blessing. And he said, Is not he rightly name Jacob? for he hath supplanted me these two time. He took away my birthright. And, behold, now he hath taken away my blessing. And he said, Hast thou not reserved a blessing for me? And Isaac answered and said unto Esau, Behold, I have made him thy lord, and all his brethren have I given to him for servants. And with grain and new wine have I sustained him. And what then shall I do for thee, my son? And Esau said unto his father, Hast thou but one blessing, my father? Bless me, even me also, O my father. And Esau lifted up his voice, and wept. And Isaac his father answered and said unto him, Behold, of the fatness of the earth shall be thy dwelling, And of the dew of heaven from above. And by thy sword shalt thou live, and thou shalt serve thy brother. And it shall come to pass, when thou shalt break loose, That thou shalt shake his yoke from off thy neck. And Esau hated Jacob because of the blessing wherewith his father blessed him. And Esau said in his heart, The days of mourning for my father are at hand. Then will I slay my brother Jacob” (27:30-41).*
1. Consider the comments from Hebrews 12 at the notes on Genesis 25:29ff above.
  2. Isaac tells Esau that the blessing is now Jacob’s and there is no reversing it. Esau’s response is anger and he intends to murder his brother Jacob.
- F.** *“And the words of Esau her elder son were told to Rebekah. And she sent and called Jacob her younger son, and said unto him, Behold, thy brother Esau, as touching thee, doth comfort himself, purposing to kill thee. Now therefore, my son, obey my voice. And arise, flee thou to Laban my brother to Haran. And tarry with him a few days, until thy brother's fury turn away. Until thy brother's anger turn away from thee, and he forget that which thou hast done to him. Then I will send, and fetch thee from thence. Why should I be bereaved of you both in one day? And Rebekah said to Isaac, I am weary of my life because of the daughters of Heth. If Jacob take a wife of the daughters of Heth, such as these, of the daughters of the land, what good shall my life do me?” (27:42-46).*

1. Rebekah delivers words of wise advice to Jacob. She tells him to leave the area until Esau's rage had settled and calmed.
2. As Jacob obeyed his mother in relation to deceiving Isaac, even so now he obeys her and prepares to go to Mesopotamia.

## Chapter 28

### I. Isaac blesses Jacob and sends him to Paddan-aram to find a wife (28:1-22):

- A. *“And Isaac called Jacob, and blessed him, and charged him, and said unto him, Thou shalt not take a wife of the daughters of Canaan. Arise, go to Paddan-aram, to the house of Bethuel thy mother's father. And take thee a wife from thence of the daughters of Laban thy mother's brother. And God Almighty bless thee, and make thee fruitful, and multiply thee, that thou mayest be a company of peoples. And give thee the blessing of Abraham, to thee, and to thy seed with thee. That thou mayest inherit the land of thy sojournings, which God gave unto Abraham. And Isaac sent away Jacob. And he went to Paddan-aram unto Laban, son of Bethuel the Syrian, the brother of Rebekah, Jacob's and Esau's mother”* (28:1-5).
  1. Abraham had originally advised against marrying the Canaanite women at Genesis 24:1ff. When Esau married a Canaanite woman it grieved Isaac and Rebekah (Gen. 26:34-35).
  2. Jacob is now of age and Isaac sends him to their homeland of Mesopotamia (the area of Paddan-aram) to find a wife.
  3. Before leaving, Isaac further blesses Jacob with the *“blessing of Abraham”* :
    - a. To be a great nation.
    - b. The land of Canaan.
    - c. All nations would be blessed through his seed.
- B. *“Now Esau saw that Isaac had blessed Jacob and sent him away to Paddan-aram, to take him a wife from thence. And that as he blessed him he gave him a charge, saying, Thou shalt not take a wife of the daughters of Canaan. And that Jacob obeyed his father and his mother, and was gone to Paddan-aram. And Esau saw that the daughters of Canaan pleased not Isaac his father. And Esau went unto Ishmael, and took, besides the wives that he had, Mahalath the daughter of Ishmael Abraham's son, the sister of Nebaioth, to be his wife”* (28:6-9).
  1. Esau has proved that he has no spiritual interest by despising his birthright (Gen. 25:34) and taking Canaanite women to be his wives (Gen. 26:34-35). He adds a third proof of his non spiritual mind by going to the household of Ishmael (Isaac's half brother) and finding a wife.
  2. While it was Esau's intention to gain the approval of his parents he discarded the fact that Ishmael had been “cast out” among the promised seed of Abraham (cf. Gen. 21:10-12; Gal. 4:30) (see study # 26).
- C. *“And Jacob went out from Beer-sheba, and went toward Haran. And he lighted upon a certain place, and tarried there all night, because the sun was set. And he took one of the stones of the place, and put it under his head, and lay down in that place to sleep. And he dreamed. And behold, a ladder set up on the earth, and the top of it reached to heaven. And behold, the angels of God ascending and descending on it. And, behold, Jehovah stood above it, and said, I am Jehovah, the God of Abraham thy father, and the God of Isaac. The land whereon thou liest, to thee will I give it, and to thy seed. And thy seed shall be as the dust of the earth, and thou shalt spread abroad to the west, and to the east, and to the north, and to the south. And in thee and in thy seed shall all the families of the earth be blessed. And, behold, I am with thee, and will keep thee, whithersoever thou goest, and will bring thee again into this land. For I will not leave thee, until I have done that which I have spoken to thee of”* (28:10-15).
  1. Jesus makes the same statement at John 1:51 after Nathanael made the good confession saying, *“Rabbi, thou art the Son of God; thou art the King of Israel.”* Jesus responds by saying that Nathanael would see *“the heaven opened, and the angels of God ascending and descending*



*upon the Son of man.*” “The statement is obviously figurative and is a reference to the opening of heaven by Christ to men against whom it was closed by sin.”<sup>12</sup>

2. “The ladder was a visible symbol of the real and uninterrupted fellowship between God in heaven and His people upon earth.”<sup>13</sup> It seems that we find the beginnings of what it means to receive the forgiveness of sins and fellowship with God (see study # 30).
  3. Interestingly, Jehovah delivers this dream to Jacob before assuring him of the promises of Abraham that Isaac had just transferred to him. The blessings of Abraham had everything to do with the forgiveness of man’s sins (cf. Gal. 3:8, 21).
- D. *“And Jacob awakened out of his sleep, and he said, Surely Jehovah is in this place. And I knew it not. And he was afraid, and said, How dreadful is this place! This is none other than the house of God, and this is the gate of heaven. And Jacob rose up early in the morning, and took the stone that he had put under his head, and set it up for a pillar, and poured oil upon the top of it. And he called the name of that place Beth-el. But the name of the city was Luz at the first. And Jacob vowed a vow, saying, If God will be with me, and will keep me in this way that I go, and will give me bread to eat, and raiment to put on, so that I come again to my father's house in peace, and Jehovah will be my God, then this stone, which I have set up for a pillar, shall be God's house. And of all that thou shalt give me I will surely give the tenth unto thee”* (28:16-22).
1. Jacob most certainly understood the omnipresence of God; however, in this far away place from home his mind was made to be in awe over the vision. Jehovah’s words have now assured Jacob of not only the fact that he was indeed the recipient of the blessings of Abraham but also that God would be with him all of his journeys to protect him.
  2. Jacob then makes a vow the Jehovah that if indeed He would remain with him then a tenth of all that Jacob owned would be given to the Lord.
  3. It is generally assumed that Jacob honored this vow when returning from Haran to Bethel where he built an altar to God and worshipped Him (cf. Gen. 35:7).

### Lessons learned from Genesis 28

1. The promises given to Abraham (of interest to us; the seed promise) was transferred to Jacob by Isaac.
2. Further separation of Esau (the origin of the Edomites) from Jacob (the spiritual one). Esau despised his birthright (counted it as worthless), married Canaanite women even at the disapproval of Abraham and Isaac and now marries a woman of Ishmael (the family that was cast out by Abraham and Sarah because they had no part in the promise of God).
3. Jacob dreamed of a time when fellowship between man and God would exist through the forgiveness of sins (Jesus tells Nathanel of this before He goes to the cross at John 1:51).
4. As we study Genesis, we find many events taking place that seem to “pre-shape” the Mosaic Law delivered at Sinai (ex. Jacob giving a tenth of his goods to God).

## Chapter 29

### I. Jacob meets Rachel (29:1-35):

- A. *“Then Jacob went on his journey, and came to the land of the children of the east. And he looked, and behold, a well in the field, and, lo, three flocks of sheep lying there by it. For out of that well they watered the flocks. And the stone upon the well's mouth was great. And thither were all the flocks gathered. And they rolled the stone from the well's mouth, and watered the sheep, and put the stone again upon the well's mouth in its place. And Jacob said unto them, My brethren, whence are ye? And they said, Of Haran are we”* (29:1-4).

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<sup>12</sup> Woods, G. N. Commentary on Book of John; pp. 47-48.

<sup>13</sup> Keil and Delitzsch pp. 180

1. Upon arrival in the area of Haran, Jacob comes to a well where shepherds were waiting for all flocks to arrive that they may water them.
  2. Jacob asks of their origin and they respond that they are from Haran.
- B.** *“And he said unto them, Know ye Laban the son of Nahor? And they said, We know him. And he said unto them, Is it well with him? And they said, It is well. And, behold, Rachel his daughter cometh with the sheep. And he said, Lo, it is yet high day, neither is it time that the cattle should be gathered together. Water ye the sheep, and go and feed them. And they said, We cannot, until all the flocks be gathered together, and they roll the stone from the well's mouth. Then we water the sheep. While he was yet speaking with them, Rachel came with her father's sheep. For she kept them. And it came to pass, when Jacob saw Rachel the daughter of Laban his mother's brother, and the sheep of Laban his mother's brother, that Jacob went near, and rolled the stone from the well's mouth, and watered the flock of Laban his mother's brother. And Jacob kissed Rachel, and lifted up his voice, and wept. And Jacob told Rachel that he was her father's brother, and that he was Rebekah's son. And she ran and told her father. And it came to pass, when Laban heard the tidings of Jacob his sister's son, that he ran to meet him, and embraced him, and kissed him, and brought him to his house. And he told Laban all these things. And Laban said to him, Surely thou art my bone and my flesh. And he abode with him the space of a month”* (29:4-15).
1. After asking of the welfare of Laban, Jacob is introduced to Rachel (Laban's daughter). Jacob is elated that he has found the family that Isaac commanded him to go to.
  2. There must have been a flood of emotions that ran through Laban as he heard of the arrival of Jacob (his sister Rebekah's son). No scriptures tell us that over the past sixty or so years that Rebekah was able to visit home.
- C.** *“And Laban said unto Jacob, Because thou art my brother, shouldest thou therefore serve me for nought? Tell me, what shall thy wages be? And Laban had two daughters. The name of the elder was Leah, and the name of the younger was Rachel. And Leah's eyes were tender. But Rachel was beautiful and well favored. And Jacob loved Rachel. And he said, I will serve thee seven years for Rachel thy younger daughter. And Laban said, It is better that I give her to thee, than that I should give her to another man. Abide with me. And Jacob served seven years for Rachel. And they seemed unto him but a few days, for the love he had to her”* (29:16-20).
1. Some believe that Laban's selfishness comes out here in that he treats Jacob like a hired servant by offering him wages.
  2. Apparently Jacob had good shepherd skills and had been working for Laban.
- D.** *“And Jacob said unto Laban, Give me my wife, for my days are fulfilled, that I may go in unto her. And Laban gathered together all the men of the place, and made a feast. And it came to pass in the evening, that he took Leah his daughter, and brought her to him. And he went in unto her. And Laban gave Zilpah his handmaid unto his daughter Leah for a handmaid. And it came to pass in the morning that, behold, it was Leah. And he said to Laban, What is this thou hast done unto me? Did not I serve with thee for Rachel? Wherefore then hast thou beguiled me? And Laban said, It is not so done in our place, to give the younger before the first-born. Fulfil the week of this one, and we will give thee the other also for the service which thou shalt serve with me yet seven other years. And Jacob did so, and fulfilled her week. And he gave him Rachel his daughter to wife. And Laban gave to Rachel his daughter Bilhah his handmaid to be her handmaid. And he went in also unto Rachel, and he loved also Rachel more than Leah, and served with him yet seven other years”* (29:21-30).
1. Certainly if the custom that Laban alludes to as excuse for deceiving Jacob were true he should have been upfront with Jacob and told him.
  2. Upon agreement with Laban to serve seven more years Jacob took Rachel to be his wife after the days of the marriage feast were over.
- E.** *“And Jehovah saw that Leah was hated, and he opened her womb. But Rachel was barren. And Leah conceived, and bare a son, and she called his name Reuben. For she said, Because Jehovah hath looked upon my affliction. For now my husband will love me. And she conceived again, and bare a son: and said, Because Jehovah hath heard that I am hated, he hath therefore given me this [son] also. And she called his name Simeon. And she conceived again, and bare a son. And said,*

*Now this time will my husband be joined unto me, because I have borne him three sons. Therefore was his name called Levi. And she conceived again, and bare a son. And she said, This time will I praise Jehovah. Therefore she called his name Judah. And she left off bearing” (29:31-35).*

1. Jacob sinned by not loving his first wife Leah, even though he never intended to marry her nonetheless they were married. The consequences of this sin were that Leah was able to have children and Rachel did not.
2. Leah had Reuben, Simeon, Levi, and Judah.

### **Lessons learned from chapter 29**

1. Sin has its consequences

## **Chapter 30**

### **I. Rachel and Leah compete for children with Jacob (30:1-24):**

- A.** *“And when Rachel saw that she bare Jacob no children, Rachel envied her sister; and she said unto Jacob, Give me children, or else I die. And Jacob's anger was kindled against Rachel: and he said, Am I in God's stead, who hath withheld from thee the fruit of the womb? And she said, Behold, my maid Bilhah, go in unto her; that she may bear upon my knees, and I also may obtain children by her. And she gave him Bilhah her handmaid to wife: and Jacob went in unto her. And Bilhah conceived, and bare Jacob a son. And Rachel said, God hath judged me, and hath also heard my voice, and hath given me a son: therefore called she his name Dan. And Bilhah Rachel's handmaid conceived again, and bare Jacob a second son. And Rachel said, With mighty wrestlings have I wrestled with my sister, and have prevailed: and she called his name Naphtali” (30:1-8).*
1. We are not told of the time that elapses; however, it could not be more than seven years due to the agreement of seven additional years of service for Rachel mentioned in chapter 29.
  2. Rachel and Jacob seem to display a different disposition toward not having children than did Jacob's parents Rebekah and Isaac. When Rebekah was barren Isaac prayed unto the Lord as did Rebekah (cf. Gen. 25:19ff).
  3. Note that Jacob's “anger was kindled against Rachel.” At times, the husband and wife will be angry with each other as they live together (see study # 9).
  4. Rachel's jealousy of her sister had blinded her of her spiritual duties of prayer and happiness over a sister having a child. The problem, of course, is compounded by the polygamous relationship that existed between Jacob, Leah, and Rachel. What this illustrates is that often one sin leads to others. When one continues in such a state, they are deluded as to their sinful actions. Rachel displays this deluded state of mind first by giving her handmaid Bilhah to Jacob to have children with and secondly in the name of her first child; i.e., Dan (judge). Rachel had concluded that God had judged that she needed a son and so gave her one. This was not the case as it was not the case when Sarah gave Hagar to Abraham and produced Ishmael (who was not of promise because he was born like any other would be born as opposed to being a divinely appointed birth such as was the case with Isaac).
  5. A second son, Naphtali (wrestling), was born to Bilhah and again Rachel's mistake was in believing that she had been vindicated by her actions.
  6. Rachel's sin was extreme jealousy and promoting further polygamous acts on the part of her husband Jacob. Jesus had taught that from the beginning of creation it was God's intention for there to be one man for one woman for life (cf. Matt. 19:4ff). Furthermore she served as a poor example to her sister Leah who follows in her steps.
- B.** *“When Leah saw that she had left off bearing, she took Zilpah her handmaid, and gave her to Jacob to wife. And Zilpah Leah's handmaid bare Jacob a son. And Leah said, Fortunate! and she called his name Gad. And Zilpah Leah's handmaid bare Jacob a second son. And Leah said, Happy am I! For the daughters will call me happy: and she called his name Asher” (30:9-13).*

1. The wicked influence of Rachel is immediately emulated by Leah in that she too gives Jacob her handmaid, Zilpah, to have more children with in the spirit of competition.
  2. The names of Leah's next two sons through her handmaid indicate once more a spirit of competition with her sister; i.e., Gad (fortunate) and Asher (happy). Leah considered herself fortunate and happy that she had more children with Jacob than her sister. The entire event reeks with selfishness on the part of Rachel and Leah.
- C. *“And Reuben went in the days of wheat harvest, and found mandrakes in the field, and brought them unto his mother Leah. Then Rachel said to Leah, Give me, I pray thee, of thy son's mandrakes. And she said unto her, Is it a small matter that thou hast taken away my husband? And wouldest thou take away my son's mandrakes also? And Rachel said, Therefore he shall lie with thee to-night for thy son's mandrakes. And Jacob came from the field in the evening, and Leah went out to meet him, and said, Thou must come in unto me; for I have surely hired thee with my son's mandrakes. And he lay with her that night. And God hearkened unto Leah, and she conceived, and bare Jacob a fifth son. And Leah said, God hath given me my hire, because I gave my handmaid to my husband: and she called his name Issachar. And Leah conceived again, and bare a sixth son to Jacob. And Leah said, God hath endowed me with a good dowry; now will my husband dwell with me, because I have borne him six sons: and she called his name Zebulun. And afterwards she bare a daughter, and called her name Dinah. And God remembered Rachel, and God hearkened to her, and opened her womb. And she conceived, and bare a son: and said, God hath taken away my reproach: and she called his name Joseph, saying, Jehovah add to me another son”* (30:14-24).
1. Reuben could not have been more than around 5 years old. He had found mandrakes (a supposed fertility root that removed sterility) and brought them to his mother Leah.
  2. Apparently both Rachel and Leah fell prey to such superstitions. Rachel demanded that Leah give her the mandrakes and Leah refuses. A deal is reached between the two sisters. Rachel bargains time with Jacob for the mandrakes. Leah agrees and that night lies with Jacob (without the use of the mandrakes) and she conceives bearing Issachar. Afterwards, Leah again bears Jacob a son by the name of Zebulun. Meanwhile Rachel (who took the mandrakes) remained barren.
  3. Eventually God does open up the womb of Rachel but not before teaching her that God is to be depended upon in all matters of life. Rachel names the boy Joseph.

### III. **Jacob serves Laban one last time (30:25-43):**

- A. *“And it came to pass, when Rachel had borne Joseph, that Jacob said unto Laban, Send me away, that I may go unto mine own place, and to my country. Give me my wives and my children for whom I have served thee, and let me go: for thou knowest my service wherewith I have served thee”* (30:25-26).
1. Fourteen years had passed at this point.
  2. Jacob had four wives, eleven sons, and one daughter.
- B. *“And Laban said unto him, If now I have found favor in thine eyes, tarry: for I have divined that Jehovah hath blessed me for thy sake. And he said, Appoint me thy wages, and I will give it. And he said unto him, Thou knowest how I have served thee, and how thy cattle have fared with me. For it was little which thou hadst before I came, and it hath increased unto a multitude; and Jehovah hath blessed thee whithersoever I turned: and now when shall I provide for mine own house also? And he said, What shall I give thee? And Jacob said, Thou shalt not give me aught: if thou wilt do this thing for me, I will again feed thy flock and keep it. I will pass through all thy flock to-day, removing from thence every speckled and spotted one, and every black one among the sheep, and the spotted and speckled among the goats: and [of such] shall be my hire. So shall my righteousness answer for me hereafter, when thou shalt come concerning my hire that is before thee: every one that is not speckled and spotted among the goats, and black among the sheep, that [if found] with me, shall be counted stolen. And Laban said, Behold, I would it might be according to thy word. And he removed that day the he-goats that were ringstreaked and spotted, and all the she-goats that were speckled and spotted, every one that had white in it, and all the black ones among the sheep, and gave them into the hand of his sons; and he set three days' journey betwixt himself and Jacob: and Jacob fed the rest of Laban's flocks. And Jacob took him rods of fresh*

*poplar, and of the almond and of the plane-tree. And peeled white streaks in them, and made the white appear which was in the rods. And he set the rods which he had peeled over against the flocks in the gutters in the watering-troughs where the flocks came to drink; and they conceived when they came to drink. And the flocks conceived before the rods, and the flocks brought forth ringstreaked, speckled, and spotted. And Jacob separated the lambs, and set the faces of the flocks toward the ringstreaked and all the black in the flock of Laban: and he put his own droves apart, and put them not unto Laban's flock. And it came to pass, whensoever the stronger of the flock did conceive, that Jacob laid the rods before the eyes of the flock in the gutters, that they might conceive among the rods; but when the flock were feeble, he put them not in: so the feebler were Laban's, and the stronger Jacob's. And the man increased exceedingly, and had large flocks, and maid-servants and men-servants, and camels and asses” (30:27-43).*

1. Jacob agrees to serve Laban one last time under the condition that his wages is to receive all spotted and speckled offspring of Laban’s flocks. Laban agrees and then turns around and separates all spotted and speckled sheep and goat from his flocks to reduce the chances of Jacob gaining more flocks.
2. Jacob relies upon an old fable that if cattle look upon certain patterns before giving birth their offspring will resemble that pattern. Jacob thereby placed poplar sticks that he had stripped bark off so that they would appear stripped in front of the cattle that were to conceive. Jacob also breeds the stronger together to produce a more superior animal. All in all it was not the poplar sticks but Jehovah’s providence that gained Jacob the greater and stronger flocks.

### Lessons learned from chapter 30

1. The fruit of jealousy.
2. God’s providence

## Chapter 31

### I. Jacob prepares to leave Padanharan and Laban’s wicked control (31:1-21):

- A. *“And he heard the words of Laban's sons, saying, Jacob hath taken away all that was our father's; and of that which was our father's hath he gotten all this glory. And Jacob beheld the countenance of Laban, and, behold, it was not toward him as beforetime. And Jehovah said unto Jacob, Return unto the land of thy fathers, and to thy kindred; and I will be with thee” (31:1-3).*
  1. Jacob had now served Laban for 20 years (cf. 31:41).
  2. While Jacob understood that Jehovah was with him in all that he did and caused him to prosper, Laban’s sons saw the events as wickedness on the part of Jacob. So often men and women view the positive accomplishments of others in a pessimistic jealous light.
  3. The Lord now commands that Jacob return to Canaan.
- B. *“And Jacob sent and called Rachel and Leah to the field unto his flock, and said unto them, I see your father's countenance, that it is not toward me as beforetime; but the God of my father hath been with me. And ye know that with all my power I have served your father. And your father hath deceived me, and changed my wages ten times; but God suffered him not to hurt me” (31:4-7).*
  1. Jacob now clearly attributes all his success to Jehovah God (giving God glory).
  2. Secondly, Jacob tells his wives what they already knew (i.e., their husband had faithfully served Laban for many years to obtain the both of them as wives and to receive the cattle he obtained).
  3. Laban was deceptive in all his dealings with Jacob. While Jacob made agreements and contracts, Laban changed the terms along the way to suit his benefit (such as replacing Leah with Rachel in a deceptive move).
- C. *“If he said thus, The speckled shall be thy wages; then all the flock bare speckled: and if he said thus, The ringstreaked shall be thy wages; then bare all the flock ringstreaked. Thus God hath taken away the cattle of your father, and given them to me. And it came to pass at the time that the*

*flock conceive, that I lifted up mine eyes, and saw in a dream, and, behold, the he-goats which leaped upon the flock were ringstreaked, speckled, and grizzled. And the angel of God said unto me in the dream, Jacob: and I said, Here am I. And he said, Lift up now thine eyes, and see, all the he-goats which leap upon the flock are ringstreaked, speckled, and grizzled: for I have seen all that Laban doeth unto thee. I am the God of Beth-el, where thou anointedst a pillar, where thou vowedst a vow unto me: now arise, get thee out from this land, and return unto the land of thy nativity” (31:8-13).*

1. Jacob reveals to his wives all that the omniscient God had told him. The Lord tells Jacob that He “*seen all that Laban doeth unto thee.*” Apparently as the speckled and spotted cattle began to multiply, Laban changed the terms of his agreement with Jacob. Each time Laban changed the agreement, Jehovah blessed Jacob with more cattle.

2. Jacob now tells his wives that Jehovah has commanded that they leave Laban and return to Canaan.

D. “*And Rachel and Leah answered and said unto him, Is there yet any portion or inheritance for us in our father's house? Are we not accounted by him as foreigners? For he hath sold us, and hath also quite devoured our money. For all the riches which God hath taken away from our father, that is ours and our children's: now then, whatsoever God hath said unto thee, do” (31:14-16).*

1. The two sisters who had been so competitive with each other over Jacob now act in unity at the agreement to leave their father’s oppressive rule.

2. Rachel and Leah held Laban accountable for his having treated them as property to sell. Rather than giving his daughters to Jacob that he may wed them in a normal way, Laban caused Jacob to work 14 years for them.

E. “*Then Jacob rose up, and set his sons and his wives upon the camels; and he carried away all his cattle, and all his substance which he had gathered, the cattle of his getting, which he had gathered in Paddan-aram, to go to Isaac his father unto the land of Canaan. Now Laban was gone to shear his sheep: and Rachel stole the teraphim that were her father's. And Jacob stole away unawares to Laban the Syrian, in that he told him not that he fled. So he fled with all that he had; and he rose up, and passed over the River, and set his face toward the mountain of Gilead” (31:17-21).*

1. The time of shearing sheep afforded Jacob and his family a time to escape from Laban. Together they leave crossing over the Euphrates River.

2. Before leaving, Rachel steals the “*teraphim*” that belonged to her father Laban.

a. This is the first time in the Bible that images are discussed in connection with worship.

b. The teraphim is mentioned in Ezekiel 21:26 as Nebuchadnezzar consulted it for fortune.

c. The teraphim apparently had some sort of body form with a head (cf. I Sam. 19:13).

d. The scriptures denounce the use of teraphim as idolatry (I Sam. 15:23).

e. Apparently Laban was in the practice of consulting the teraphim for fortune of some sort. The word of God condemns all such unauthorized practices today as “*will worship*” (cf. Col. 2:23). Such conduct did not depict the disposition of Noah, Abraham, Isaac, and Jacob (see study # 38; Idolatry).

## II. **Jacob’s flight to Canaan (31:22-43):**

A. “*And it was told Laban on the third day that Jacob was fled. And he took his brethren with him, and pursued after him seven days' journey; and he overtook him in the mountain of Gilead. And God came to Laban the Syrian in a dream of the night, and said unto him, Take heed to thyself that thou speak not to Jacob either good or bad. And Laban came up with Jacob. Now Jacob had pitched his tent in the mountain: and Laban with his brethren encamped in the mountain of Gilead. And Laban said to Jacob, What hast thou done, that thou hast stolen away unawares to me, and carried away my daughters as captives of the sword? Wherefore didst thou flee secretly, and steal away from me, and didst not tell me, that I might have sent thee away with mirth and with songs, with tabret and with harp; and didst not suffer me to kiss my sons and my daughters? now hast thou done foolishly. It is in the power of my hand to do you hurt: but the God of your father spake unto me yesternight, saying, Take heed to thyself that thou speak not to Jacob either good or bad” (31:22-29).*

1. Three days after Jacob and his family leave Laban gains intelligence of his family’s departure. Laban gathers a band of men to overtake Jacob.

2. The distance from Padan-aram to Gilead was a little over 300 miles. It took Laban and his men seven days to overcome Jacob.
  3. The night before Laban goes out to speak with Jacob, the Lord appears to him in a dream and warns him not to do anything harmful to Jacob.
- B.** *“And now, though thou wouldest needs be gone, because thou sore longedst after thy father's house, yet wherefore hast thou stolen my gods?”* (31:30).
1. Jacob is totally unaware of Rachel’s theft of the teraphim.
  2. If there was any doubt as to what the teraphim was used by Laban before this verse it has now been clearly revealed. Laban worshipped the teraphim as a god (see study # 38).
- C.** *“And Jacob answered and said to Laban, Because I was afraid: for I said, Lest thou shouldest take thy daughters from me by force. With whomsoever thou findest thy gods, he shall not live: before our brethren discern thou what is thine with me, and take it to thee. For Jacob knew not that Rachel had stolen them. And Laban went into Jacob's tent, and into Leah's tent, and into the tent of the two maid-servants; but he found them not. And he went out of Leah's tent, and entered into Rachel's tent. Now Rachel had taken the teraphim, and put them in the camel's saddle, and sat upon them. And Laban felt about all the tent, but found them not. And she said to her father, Let not my lord be angry that I cannot rise up before thee; for the manner of women is upon me. And he searched, but found not the teraphim”* (31:31-35).
1. Jacob pronounces the sentence of death upon the individual that had stolen the teraphim. So detested was another god (that is no god) in the eyes of Jacob that he made such a vow without having knowledge of who it was that stole it. To him, it was a matter of faith and he thereby showed no partiality (see study # 39; Jacob’s Zeal).
  2. Rachel refuses to be moved from the camel’s saddle because there she had stolen and placed the teraphim. She lies to her father by saying that it is her time of menstrual cycle and was therefore unclean.
- D.** *“And Jacob was wroth, and chode with Laban: and Jacob answered and said to Laban, What is my trespass? What is my sin, that thou hast hotly pursued after me? Whereas thou hast felt about all my stuff, what hast thou found of all thy household stuff? Set it here before my brethren and thy brethren, that they may judge betwixt us two. These twenty years have I been with thee; thy ewes and thy she-goats have not cast their young, and the rams of thy flocks have I not eaten. That which was torn of beasts I brought not unto thee; I bare the loss of it; of my hand didst thou require it, whether stolen by day or stolen by night. Thus I was; in the day the drought consumed me, and the frost by night; and my sleep fled from mine eyes. These twenty years have I been in thy house; I served thee fourteen years for thy two daughters, and six years for thy flock: and thou hast changed my wages ten times. Except the God of my father, the God of Abraham, and the Fear of Isaac, had been with me, surely now hadst thou sent me away empty. God hath seen mine affliction and the labor of my hands, and rebuked thee yesternight. And Laban answered and said unto Jacob, The daughters are my daughters, and the children are my children, and the flocks are my flocks, and all that thou seest is mine: and what can I do this day unto these my daughters, or unto their children whom they have borne?”* (31:36-43).
1. Jacob pointedly confronts Laban with his wicked and unjust character to the face. He leaves Laban with no excuse for his past and present behavior. Jacob had served Laban for 20 years of his life faithfully and justly. Laban changed the terms of their agreements continuously and Jacob, though irritated, allowed him to cheat him. The Lord said on the Sermon on the Mount that man should turn the other cheek and be prepared to go the extra mile with one who would so push you (cf. Matt. 5:38-42). Jacob had turned the other cheek and gone the extra mile for 20 years! Jacob’s character was like that of his father Isaac’s; i.e., peaceful.
  2. Laban has no excuse and is now prepared to enter into one last covenant with Jacob.

### **III. Jacob and Laban’s final covenant (31:44-55):**

- A.** *“And now come, let us make a covenant, I and thou; and let it be for a witness between me and thee. And Jacob took a stone, and set it up for a pillar. And Jacob said unto his brethren, Gather stones; and they took stones, and made a heap: and they did eat there by the heap. And Laban called it Jegar-saha-dutha: but Jacob called it Galeed. And Laban said, This heap is witness between me*

*and thee this day. Therefore was the name of it called Galeed: and Mizpah, for he said, Jehovah watch between me and thee, when we are absent one from another. If thou shalt afflict my daughters, and if thou shalt take wives besides my daughters, no man is with us; see, God is witness betwixt me and thee” (31:44-50).*

1. Jacob and Laban enter into a covenant agreement with one another. Laban called the agreement “*Jegar-saha-dutha*” meaning heap of testimony in the Chaldean language. Jacob called the covenant place “*Galeed*” being interpreted heap of testimony as well yet in the Aramaic language.
  2. The agreement had to do first of all with Jacob’s future treatment of his wives (Laban’s two daughters).
- B.** *“And Laban said to Jacob, Behold this heap, and behold the pillar, which I have set betwixt me and thee. This heap be witness, and the pillar be witness, that I will not pass over this heap to thee, and that thou shalt not pass over this heap and this pillar unto me, for harm. The God of Abraham, and the God of Nahor, the God of their father, judge betwixt us. And Jacob sware by the Fear of his father Isaac. And Jacob offered a sacrifice in the mountain, and called his brethren to eat bread: and they did eat bread, and tarried all night in the mountain. And early in the morning Laban rose up, and kissed his sons and his daughters, and blessed them: and Laban departed and returned unto his place” (31:51-55).*
1. The second aspect of the covenant between Jacob and Laban was the issue of Jacob harming Laban. The agreement was that Jacob would do no harm to Laban for his ill treatment of him. Jacob agrees.
  2. Jacob seals the covenant with Laban by making a sacrifice to Jehovah God. Interestingly, once again Laban makes all the stipulations of the covenant.

### **Lessons learned from chapter 31:**

1. Laban’s wicked character.
2. Jacob’s peaceful character.
3. Idolatry and Jacob’s disposition toward such.

## **Chapter 32**

### **I. Jacob’s fear of Esau and prayer to God (32:1-23):**

- A.** *“And Jacob went on his way, and the angels of God met him. And Jacob said when he saw them, This is God’s host: and he called the name of that place Mahanaim” (32:1-2).*
1. It seems most likely that Jacob is blessed with this heavenly vision of “*God’s host*” (army) of angels to assure him that the Lord is with him as he approaches Esau.
  2. The name “*Mahanaim*” means “a multitudinous host.”
- B.** *“And Jacob sent messengers before him to Esau his brother unto the land of Seir, the field of Edom. And he commanded them, saying, Thus shall ye say unto my lord Esau: Thus saith thy servant Jacob, I have sojourned with Laban, and stayed until now: and I have oxen, and asses, and flocks, and men-servants, and maid-servants: and I have sent to tell my lord, that I may find favor in thy sight” (32:3-5).*
1. It had been 20 years since Jacob had last seen his twin brother Esau. One of the reasons Jacob left Canaan was due to threats on his life by Esau. Jacob had in effect stole Esau’s birthright and Esau did not take this to lightly.
  2. We note that Jacob refers to Esau as his “*lord*.” This most likely was used as a customary greeting of great respect and one that was intended to ease any tension that may still rest with Esau toward Jacob. Secondly, Jacob wants Esau to know that he does not intend to come to Canaan demanding livestock and goods as part of his inheritance because he had amassed a great deal for himself over the past twenty years.



C. *“And the messengers returned to Jacob, saying, We came to thy brother Esau, and moreover he cometh to meet thee, and four hundred men with him. Then Jacob was greatly afraid and was distressed: and he divided the people that were with him, and the flocks, and the herds, and the camels, into two companies; and he said, If Esau come to the one company, and smite it, then the company which is left shall escape. And Jacob said, O God of my father Abraham, and God of my father Isaac, O Jehovah, who saidst unto me, Return unto thy country, and to thy kindred, and I will do thee good: I am not worthy of the least of all the lovingkindnesses, and of all the truth, which thou hast showed unto thy servant; for with my staff I passed over this Jordan; and now I am become two companies. Deliver me, I pray thee, from the hand of my brother, from the hand of Esau: for I fear him, lest he come and smite me, the mother with the children. And thou saidst, I will surely do thee good, and make thy seed as the sand of the sea, which cannot be numbered for multitude. And he lodged there that night, and took of that which he had with him a present for Esau his brother: two hundred she-goats and twenty he-goats, two hundred ewes and twenty rams, thirty milch camels and their colts, forty cows and ten bulls, twenty she-asses and ten foals. And he delivered them into the hand of his servants, every drove by itself, and said unto his servants, Pass over before me, and put a space betwixt drove and drove” (32:6-16).*

1. When Jacob hears the report of Esau coming toward him with 400 men he was *“greatly afraid and distressed.”* Not having seen his brother Esau for twenty years he feared the worse. Esau was coming to slay Jacob and his family.

2. Jacob responds to the news of Esau’s advancement in three ways:

a. First, Jacob was afraid (like most of us would respond in various situations in life... fear strikes within the heart).

b. Secondly, Jacob formulated a plan. He would divide his company up into two sections so that if Esau destroyed one at least the other would escape.

c. Thirdly, Jacob prayed to God. Jacob addresses Jehovah God, he contemplates God’s promise to be with him throughout his journey in light of the current perceived danger, and he contemplates his unworthiness of such care and mercy (Apparently Jacob had matured much while in service to Laban. His character was not only one of peace but now we see the humble side of Jacob). Jacob contemplates how that God had greatly blessed him as he began his trek to Padan-aram with nothing but his staff and he now has an abundance of flocks and so makes a request for safety.

d. Lastly, Jacob reminds God of His promises that were made at Bethel (28:13-15) and Haran (31:3). We may think it odd that at such a time of dire straights Jacob would remind the omniscient God of His promises; however, as we look to the Scriptures we find that this is exactly what God desires of us (consider Isaiah 43:25-26) (see study # 40; Prayer).

D. *“And he commanded the foremost, saying, When Esau my brother meeteth thee, and asketh thee, saying, Whose art thou? and whither goest thou? and whose are these before thee? then thou shalt say They are thy servant Jacob’s; it is a present sent unto my lord Esau: and, behold, he also is behind us. And he commanded also the second, and the third, and all that followed the droves, saying, On this manner shall ye speak unto Esau, when ye find him; and ye shall say, Moreover, behold, thy servant Jacob is behind us. For he said, I will appease him with the present that goeth before me, and afterward I will see his face; peradventure he will accept me. So the present passed over before him: and he himself lodged that night in the company. And he rose up that night, and took his two wives, and his two handmaids, and his eleven children, and passed over the ford of the Jabbok. And he took them, and sent them over the stream, and sent over that which he had” (32:17-23).*

1. A great present was prepared for Esau with hopes of appeasing his anger.

2. After instructing his servants to deliver the presents to Esau, Jacob separates his family from the main caravan.

## II. **Jacob wrestles with an angel (32:24-32):**

A. *“And Jacob was left alone; and there wrestled a man with him until the breaking of the day” (32:24).*

1. The prophet Hosea gives us insight to this event in Jacob's life. The "*man*" who Jacob wrestled with was an angel (cf. Hosea 12:2-6).
  2. The wrestling was a true literal occurrence. Jacob was to learn from this incident that one cannot wrestle God's blessings from Him as he did with Esau's birthright through craft and deceit.
- B. *"And when he saw that he prevailed not against him, he touched the hollow of his thigh; and the hollow of Jacob's thigh was strained, as he wrestled with him. And he said, Let me go, for the day breaketh. And he said, I will not let thee go, except thou bless me. And he said unto him, What is thy name? And he said, Jacob. And he said, Thy name shall be called no more Jacob, but Israel: for thou hast striven with God and with men, and hast prevailed"* (32:25-28).
1. While Jacob and the angel wrestled in what seemed to be a dead lock of equal strength, the angel suddenly dislocates Jacob's hip with one touch of the finger. Jacob surely now understood that it was by sheer mercy that the angel struggled with him. The angel, on the other hand, now recognized the intense desire of Jacob to have God's promises given to him at Bethel become a reality (in thy seed all nations shall be blessed).
  2. In recognition of Jacob's intense desire to be blessed of Jehovah God the angel changes Jacob's name from Jacob (supplanter) to Israel (He who strives with God).
  3. This entire incident in Jacob's life seems to define who he is. Even when Jacob and Esau were in their mother's (Rebekah) womb Jacob strove with Esau (cf. Gen. 25:22-26). We have examined the characters of these two men throughout this study (see study # 1). Jacob is spiritual where as Esau cared for the things of this world. Jacob had an intense desire to be the recipient of God's spiritual eternal blessings whereas Esau "*despised*" his birthright and even sold it for a pot of stew (counted as worthless) (cf. Gen. 25:33-34). Because of this crafty dealing with Esau and latter the deceit exercised against his own father in tricking Isaac into believing he (Jacob) was Esau so that Isaac would give him the blessings of Abraham, he had to go into hiding for 20 years. During these twenty years Jacob learned some valuable lessons about craft and deception at the hands of Laban. Laban deceived Jacob by replacing Rachael with Leah (his older daughter) and with craft he caused Jacob to labor in Padan-aram for twenty years. Now, Jacob tries to physically wrestle away God's blessings from the angel this night. Why was Jacob not satisfied with Jehovah's appearance to him at Bethel and Haran? Could it be that Jacob felt the sting of his own craft and deceit against Esau after experiencing the twenty years of craft and deceit of Laban. Esau was on his way with 400 men... where would craft and deceit get him now? Though Jacob was a spiritually minded man he needed to learn that such ungodly character is not what will assure the blessings of Jehovah God. God answers Jacob's prayers by illustrating his great power (touching his hip and dislocating it) and then blessing him with a new name that illustrated to Jacob that truly the power of God was with him and there was no need to doubt. Should we all not learn the same lessons in life?
- C. *"And Jacob asked him, and said, Tell me, I pray thee, thy name. And he said, Wherefore is it that thou dost ask after my name? And he blessed him there. And Jacob called the name of the place Peniel: for, said he, I have seen God face to face, and my life is preserved. And the sun rose upon him as he passed over Peniel, and he limped upon his thigh. Therefore the children of Israel eat not the sinew of the hip which is upon the hollow of the thigh, unto this day: because he touched the hollow of Jacob's thigh in the sinew of the hip"* (32:29-32).
1. It was not for Jacob to know the name of the angel (that was immaterial to the lesson at hand for Jacob).
  2. Out of great respect for Jehovah God, Jacob named the place of wrestling "Peniel" because he had seen Jehovah to the face and had survived.
  3. The admittance of Jacob of being mercifully "*preserved*" indicates Jacob's belief in the omnipotence of the Lord.

### Lessons learned from chapter 32

- The development of Jacob's character.

- There is a marked change in Jacob's character after these twenty years. When Jacob was distressed and filled with fear over the coming of Esau with 400 men he prayed to God and revealed his new spirit of humility. Jacob prays saying, "*I am not worthy of the least of all the lovingkindnesses, and of all the truth, which thou hast showed unto thy servant...*" (Gen. 32:7, 10).
- Though Jacob made peace and humility a part of his character during the twenty years he served Laban, he still needed to learn better how to gain God's favor.
- The Lord sends a man (angel) to wrestle with Jacob at Gen. 32:24ff. Hosea tells us that the man was an angel (cf. Hos. 12:2-5). Amazingly, Jacob continued to fear even though he had earlier been blessed with a vision of God's host of angels that were with him (cf. Gen. 32:1-2). Jacob was to learn, during his wrestling match, that God's blessings cannot be wrestled away from him by physical strength, craft, or deceit but by humility of life and prayer. The angel assures Jacob of Jehovah's great power by touching his thigh and moving it out of socket. Jacob now had no doubts regarding God's favor and protection and neither did he doubt God's promises (see study # 39).

## Chapter 33

### I. Jacob and Esau meet in a happy reunion (33 all):

- A. "*And Jacob lifted up his eyes, and looked, and, behold, Esau was coming, and with him four hundred men. And he divided the children unto Leah, and unto Rachel, and unto the two handmaids. And he put the handmaids and their children foremost, and Leah and her children after, and Rachel and Joseph hindermost. And he himself passed over before them, and bowed himself to the ground seven times, until he came near to his brother. And Esau ran to meet him, and embraced him, and fell on his neck, and kissed him: and they wept. And he lifted up his eyes, and saw the women and the children; and said, Who are these with thee? And he said, The children whom God hath graciously given thy servant. Then the handmaids came near, they and their children, and they bowed themselves. And Leah also and her children came near, and bowed themselves: and after came Joseph near and Rachel, and they bowed themselves. And he said, What meanest thou by all this company which I met? And he said, To find favor in the sight of my lord. And Esau said, I have enough, my brother; let that which thou hast be thine. And Jacob said, Nay, I pray thee, if now I have found favor in thy sight, then receive my present at my hand; forasmuch as I have seen thy face, as one seeth the face of God, and thou wast pleased with me. Take, I pray thee, my gift that is brought to thee; because God hath dealt graciously with me, and because I have enough. And he urged him, and he took it*" (33:1-11).
1. Interestingly, Jacob arranges his wives and children in an order of importance to him and in the order in which he would be willing to lose them in battle.
  2. Esau comes out to meet Jacob and the two embrace with hugs and kisses. Jacob's fear is now relieved and God has answered his prayers.
  3. Esau is surprised to see all Jacob's wives and children. They spend time getting reacquainted.
  4. Esau does not want Jacob's gift; however, Jacob pleads with him to take it and so Esau does.
- B. "*And he said, Let us take our journey, and let us go, and I will go before thee. And he said unto him, My lord knoweth that the children are tender, and that the flocks and herds with me have their young: and if they overdrive them one day, all the flocks will die. Let my lord, I pray thee, pass over before his servant: and I will lead on gently, according to the pace of the cattle that are before me and according to the pace of the children, until I come unto my lord unto Seir. And Esau said, Let me now leave with thee some of the folk that are with me. And he said, What needeth it? let me find favor in the sight of my lord. So Esau returned that day on his way unto Seir*" (33:12-16).
1. Esau offers to accompany Jacob on his journey; however, Jacob tells him that his cattle and children were in no shape to move quickly.
  2. Esau agrees and returns to Seir in Edom.
- C. "*And Jacob journeyed to Succoth, and built him a house, and made booths for his cattle: therefore the name of the place is called Succoth. And Jacob came in peace to the city of Shechem, which is in the land of Canaan, when he came from Paddan-aram; and encamped before the city. And he*

*bought the parcel of ground, where he had spread his tent, at the hand of the children of Hamor, Shechem's father, for a hundred pieces of money. And he erected there an altar, and called it El-elohe-israel*" (33:17-20).

1. Jacob now comes to rest in the land that God had promised his fathers and him; i.e., Canaan.
2. The final peace of Jacob's character (for this part of his life) comes out here in that he erected an altar and worshipped God.

## Chapter 34

### I. Shechem defiles Dinah the daughter of Jacob and Leah (34 all):

A. *"And Dinah the daughter of Leah, whom she bare unto Jacob, went out to see the daughters of the land. And Shechem the son of Hamor the Hivite, the prince of the land, saw her; And he took her, and lay with her, and humbled her. And his soul clave unto Dinah the daughter of Jacob, and he loved the damsel, and spake kindly unto the damsel. And Shechem spake unto his father Hamor, saying, Get me this damsel to wife. Now Jacob heard that he had defiled Dinah his daughter; and his sons were with his cattle in the field: and Jacob held his peace until they came. And Hamor the father of Shechem went out unto Jacob to commune with him. And the sons of Jacob came in from the field when they heard it: and the men were grieved, and they were very wroth, because he had wrought folly in Israel in lying with Jacob's daughter; which thing ought not to be done. And Hamor communed with them, saying, The soul of my son Shechem longeth for your daughter: I pray you, give her unto him to wife. And make ye marriages with us; give your daughters unto us, and take our daughters unto you. And ye shall dwell with us: and the land shall be before you; dwell and trade ye therein, and get you possessions therein. And Shechem said unto her father and unto her brethren, Let me find favor in your eyes, and what ye shall say unto me I will give. Ask me never so much dowry and gift, and I will give according as ye shall say unto me: but give me the damsel to wife"* (34:1-12).

1. The going out on the part of Dinah to "*see the daughters of the land*" was very costly. Dinah was "*humbled*" by Shechem "*the prince of the land.*" The word "*humbled*" and the fact that the Word of God states that Shechem had "*wrote folly in Israel in lying with Jacob's daughter; which thing ought not to be done*" indicates that Dinah was seduced against her original will. The wrong was not only in the sex act alone but the fact that Shechem and Dinah were not married. The sin of fornication is clear.
  2. Shechem and his father Hamor come out to Jacob and his sons to request Dinah's hand in marriage. While these men were bartering with Jacob, Dinah remained in Shechem's house (24:26). We are not told specifically; however, it seems that Dinah was detained against her own will.
  3. Note that the name "*Israel*" is used for the first time here as indicating all of Jacob's descendents.
  4. Jacob's sons are greatly angered by the events that have unfolded concerning Dinah. We can imagine that the words of Hamor were scarcely heard through their anger. Hamor suggest that the daughters of the Hivites (Canaanite women) be taken to Jacob's sons and Jacob's daughters be taken by the Hivites for wives.
    - a. We have already noted the rejection of the Canaanites by Abraham (cf. Gen. 24:3).
    - b. Isaac and Rebekah were grieved at the marriage of Esau to Canaanite women (Gen. 26:34-35).
    - c. Isaac commanded Jacob not to take a wife from the Canaanites (Gen. 28:1).
    - d. Now a Canaanite is suggesting to Jacob that he forget the admonition of his grandfather Abraham and father Isaac because Shechem has committed fornication and fallen in love with Jacob's daughter Dinah.
- B. *"And the sons of Jacob answered Shechem and Hamor his father with guile, and spake, because he had defiled Dinah their sister, and said unto them, We cannot do this thing, to give our sister to one that is uncircumcised; for that were a reproach unto us. Only on this condition will we consent*

*unto you: if ye will be as we are, that every male of you be circumcised; then will we give our daughters unto you, and we will take your daughters to us, and we will dwell with you, and we will become one people. But if ye will not hearken unto us, to be circumcised; then will we take our daughter, and we will be gone” (34:13-17).*

1. Apparently the decision as to Dinah being given to Shechem rest primarily with the brothers. They gave Shechem hope in the request to be circumcised; however, they never intended to give Dinah to him.
  2. An agreement is made between the sons of Jacob and the Hivite men (i.e., if the Hivites are circumcised then the two families would intermarry and become one people).
- C. *“And their words pleased Hamor, and Shechem Hamor's son. And the young man deferred not to do the thing, because he had delight in Jacob's daughter: and he was honored above all the house of his father. And Hamor and Shechem his son came unto the gate of their city, and communed with the men of their city, saying, These men are peaceable with us; therefore let them dwell in the land, and trade therein; for, behold, the land is large enough for them; let us take their daughters to us for wives, and let us give them our daughters. Only on this condition will the men consent unto us to dwell with us, to become one people, if every male among us be circumcised, as they are circumcised. Shall not their cattle and their substance and all their beasts be ours? only let us consent unto them, and they will dwell with us. And unto Hamor and unto Shechem his son hearkened all that went out of the gate of his city; and every male was circumcised, all that went out of the gate of his city” (34:18-24).*
1. Hamor and Shechem knew exactly the right formula for having the Hivite men circumcised. Hamor and Shechem went to the men and revealed the riches of Jacob saying *“shall not their cattle and their substance and all their beasts be ours?”*
  2. When the Hivite men heard these things they agreed and were circumcised.
- D. *“And it came to pass on the third day, when they were sore, that two of the sons of Jacob, Simeon and Levi, Dinah's brethren, took each man his sword, and came upon the city unawares, and slew all the males. And they slew Hamor and Shechem his son with the edge of the sword, and took Dinah out of Shechem's house, and went forth. The sons of Jacob came upon the slain, and plundered the city, because they had defiled their sister. They took their flocks and their herds and their asses, and that which was in the city, and that which was in the field; and all their wealth, and all their little ones and their wives, took they captive and made a prey, even all that was in the house. And Jacob said to Simeon and Levi, Ye have troubled me, to make me odious to the inhabitants of the land, among the Canaanites and the Perizzites: and, I being few in number, they will gather themselves together against me and smite me; and I shall be destroyed, I and my house. And they said, Should he deal with our sister as with a harlot?” (34:25-31).*
1. These verses help us understand that Jacob (and apparently others of his sons) did not have knowledge of the planned slaughter of the Hivites.
  2. We recall that Jacob, like his father Isaac, was a man of peace (cf. his dealings with Laban). Jacob reproves his sons for ruining the peace that Israel had with the surrounding peoples. Israel had not become *“odious”* (stinky) to the peoples of the land.
  3. Simeon and Levi seek to justify their sinful vengeance by reminding Jacob of Shechem’s sin against Dinah.

#### **Lessons learned:**

- Dinah pays a high price due to her curiosity. Many daughters would do well to learn that being curious of the ways of wicked men can only lead to disaster (cf. James 4:4) (see study # 9).
- Jacob *“held his peace”* when first hearing of the crime against his daughter (34:5). No doubt Jacob was just as grieved as his sons when he had heard that Dinah had been humbled (cf. Gen. 34:7). Not only were Jacob’s sons grieved but they were angry too (Gen. 34:7). What hardship and heartaches await each family is truly unknown. People’s responses, in times such as these, indicate our true character. Though Jacob was no doubt saddened he seeks no revenge. Jacob’s sons; however, prove themselves no better than Shechem when they take vengeance into their own hand (Gal. 5:19-20). They murder,

rob, and kidnap the Hivite people because of one man's sins. Let us learn to leave vengeance into the hands of Jehovah God (He will be the judge of man's sinful actions) (Rom. 12:19; Heb. 10:30-31). It has been said that two wrongs do not make a right... Certainly the vengeance of Jacob's sons did nothing to bring back the virginity of their sister (see study # 19).

- Purity in worship: God rejects the defiled heart that comes before Him in worship (cf. Isa. 1:10ff; Jer. 6:20; Ezek. 6:14). The true worshipper of God will worship in spirit and truth (Jn. 4:23) having cleansed his ways (cf. Gal. 3:20) (see study # 27).

## Chapter 35

### I. Jacob cleanses Israel and worships Jehovah at Bethel (35:1-7):

A. *“And God said unto Jacob, Arise, go up to Beth-el, and dwell there: and make there an altar unto God, who appeared unto thee when thou fleddest from the face of Esau thy brother. Then Jacob said unto his household, and to all that were with him, Put away the foreign gods that are among you, and purify yourselves, and change your garments: and let us arise, and go up to Beth-el; and I will make there an altar unto God, who answered me in the day of my distress, and was with me in the way which I went. And they gave unto Jacob all the foreign gods which were in their hand, and the rings which were in their ears; and Jacob hid them under the oak which was by Shechem”* (35:1-4).

1. Bethel was the place where Jacob had dreamed of the ladder with angels ascending and descending into heaven. Jacob had vowed to build an altar to Jehovah God and the time now had come. God tells Jacob and his family to go to Bethel, build an altar, and worship. Before they could worship God; however, they needed to be cleansed of their sins.
2. Apparently the Hivite women and children brought their idols with them when they were captured. The Canaanites that surrounded the family of Jacob probably influenced many of Jacob's family. Rachael may very well have continued to keep her teraphim mentioned in Genesis 31:19.
3. To “*cleanse*” themselves (i.e., separate themselves from wrong deeds) Jacob instructs Israel to put away the foreign gods and put on clean new garments (see study # 41; The Nature of Sin).
4. Israel would illustrate a heart that purposed to serve God alone with such acts of purification. God's people are to cleanse their way and worship the Lord in truth as well (cf. Jn. 4:24). Our worship to Jehovah God is unacceptable if we come before the Lord with a heart that rejects God's commandments (cf. Isa. 1:10-17; Jer. 6:20; Ezek. 23:38-39) (see study # 27). God's people are to purpose to serve Him and thereby crucify the flesh with its desires (cf. Gal. 3:20; 6:14).

B. *“And they journeyed: and a terror of God was upon the cities that were round about them, and they did not pursue after the sons of Jacob. So Jacob came to Luz, which is in the land of Canaan (the same is Beth-el), he and all the people that were with him. And he built there an altar, and called the place El-beth-el; because there God was revealed unto him, when he fled from the face of his brother”* (35:5-7).

1. On a multitude of occasions, Jacob received comfort from God in the form of visions. God appeared to him in a dream in Bethel assuring him that He would be with Jacob through his journeys (28:12ff), God's host (army) of angels appear to Jacob when he was traveling back to Canaan after serving Laban 20 years (Gen. 32:1), and God appeared to Jacob again in the form of an angel that wrestled with him giving the patriarch a greater understanding of the power of God so that he would fear no enemies (Gen. 32:24ff). At points in Jacob's life when he felt fearful and threatened God let him know that He was there for him (see study # 39). Even now, after his sons had slew the Hivites with the edge of the sword and Jacob is fearful of what the surrounding peoples would do to him and his family, God appears to him. Apparently a miraculous event occurred by the power of God so that the Canaanites who may have planned on revenge were turned away. The scriptures state “*and a terror of God was upon the cities there were round about them, and they did not pursue after the sons of Jacob.*”

2. God loves and cares for us today. During times of great anxiety we can read God's word and know that He is with us and will comfort us in all our distresses (cf. I Pet. 5:6-7). God was reminding Jacob that He will be with him and we should know that God is always with us. As the body needs fluids and food so the soul needs the comfort of knowing that God cares.

## II. God appears to Jacob and reaffirms His promises (35:8-20):

- A. *“And Deborah Rebekah's nurse died, and she was buried below Beth-el under the oak: and the name of it was called Allon-bacuth. And God appeared unto Jacob again, when he came from Paddan-aram, and blessed him. And God said unto him, Thy name is Jacob: thy name shall not be called any more Jacob, but Israel shall be thy name: and he called his name Israel. And God said unto him, I am God Almighty: be fruitful and multiply; a nation and a company of nations shall be of thee, and kings shall come out of thy loins; and the land which I gave unto Abraham and Isaac, to thee I will give it, and to thy seed after thee will I give the land. And God went up from him in the place where he spake with him. And Jacob set up a pillar in the place where he spake with him, a pillar of stone: and he poured out a drink-offering thereon, and poured oil thereon. And Jacob called the name of the place where God spake with him, Beth-el”* (35:8-15).
  1. Once *“again,”* the Lord appears to Jacob to confirm His promises originally made to Abraham and then to Isaac. The confirmation of God's promises is referred to as a *“blessing”* as was the case when Sarah was recognized as being blessed when she had Isaac through God's promises (see study # 7).
  2. God commands Jacob to multiply and become a great nation. The Lord too reiterates the land promise to Jacob. The Lord does not reiterate the seed promise to Jacob; however, it seems to be inferred in the renaming of Jacob to Israel (an event that indicates the spiritual care of Jacob; cf. 32:25-28).
  3. Interestingly, Jacob once again sets up a pillar of stone in the place where he speaks to God as a memorial and there (for the first time mentioned) offers a drink and oil offering upon the altar. Throughout this study of Genesis we have found many events that correspond to the Mosaic Law in both worship and daily practices. At this point, no written law (such as Mosaic or Law of Christ) exists. The practice of setting up pillars seems to be a favorite mode of worship for Jacob:
    - a. Jacob set up a pillar at Bethel (Gen. 28:18).
    - b. At Galeed (Gen. 31:45).
    - c. Again at Bethel (35:14).
    - d. Again near Bethlehem where Rachel is buried (Gen. 35:20).
- B. *“And they journeyed from Beth-el; and there was still some distance to come to Ephrath: and Rachel travailed, and she had hard labor. And it came to pass, when she was in hard labor, that the midwife said unto her, Fear not; for now thou shalt have another son. And it came to pass, as her soul was departing (for she died), that she called his name Ben-oni: but his father called him Benjamin. And Rachel died, and was buried in the way to Ephrath (the same is Beth-lehem). And Jacob set up a pillar upon her grave: the same is the Pillar of Rachel's grave unto this day* (35:16-20).
  1. Jacob and his family was on their way to see Isaac his father (cf. Gen. 35:27).
  2. Jacob's 12<sup>th</sup> son is Benjamin (Son of my right hand) {Rachel had named the son Ben-oni (son of my sorrows) yet Jacob changed the boys name to Benjamin.

## III. Reuben's sin of incest and Isaac's death (35:21-29):

- A. *“And Israel journeyed, and spread his tent beyond the tower of Eder. And it came to pass, while Israel dwelt in that land, that Reuben went and lay with Bilhah his father's concubine: and Israel heard of it”* (35:21-22).
  1. Bilhah was Rachel's handmaid (Jacob's wife) through whom Dan and Naphtali were born. Reuben had sexual relations with his brother's mother (his stepmother and father's wife).
  2. There were clearly inner problems within the household of Jacob that manifest themselves in incidents such as this and the previous murdering of his sons toward the Hivites (see study # 9).
- B. *“Now the sons of Jacob were twelve: The sons of Leah: Reuben, Jacob's first-born, and Simeon, and Levi, and Judah, and Issachar, and Zebulun; the sons of Rachel: Joseph and Benjamin; and the*

*sons of Bilhah, Rachel's handmaid: Dan and Naphtali; and the sons of Zilpah, Leah's handmaid: Gad and Asher: these are the sons of Jacob, that were born to him in Paddan-aram. And Jacob came unto Isaac his father to Mamre, to Kiriath-arba (the same is Hebron), where Abraham and Isaac sojourned. And the days of Isaac were a hundred and fourscore years. And Isaac gave up the ghost, and died, and was gathered unto his people, old and full of days: and Esau and Jacob his sons buried him” (35:23-29).*

### Lessons Learned:

- The comfort of knowing that God is with us and cares about our troubles. God appears to Jacob as He had at Bethel when he saw the angels ascending and descending upon a ladder from earth to heaven (Gen. 28:12ff), as when he saw the host of angels when fearful of his encounter with Esau (Gen. 32:1), and his encounter with the angel in a wrestling match at Gen. 32:24ff. The Lord had appeared to Jacob all these times to comfort him in his time of distress. God speaks to us today through His word (Heb. 1:1) and thereby comforts us (I Pet. 5:6-7).

## Chapter 36

### I. The Generations of Esau (36 all):

- A. *“Now these are the generations of Esau (the same is Edom). Esau took his wives of the daughters of Canaan: Adah the daughter of Elon the Hittite, and Oholibamah the daughter of Anah, the daughter of Zibeon the Hivite, and Basemath Ishmael's daughter, sister of Nebaioth” (36:1-3).*
1. Esau is the twin brother of Jacob who has displayed a lack of spiritual consideration in his life. The New Testament (NT) refers to Esau as a “*profane*” individual (cf. Heb. 12:16) who despised (counted as worthless) his birthright and sold it to Jacob (Gen. 25:33-34). Esau’s name is made synonymous with Edom here due to his geographic relocation from Canaan to Edom. Edom goes down in history as being synonymous with men of a wicked spirit (cf. Isa. 34:8ff; Jer. 49:7).
  2. Two of Esau’s wives were Canaanite women even though Abraham (Gen. 24:3) and Isaac (Gen. 26:34-35) disapproved of said marriages. The third wife is Basemath (daughter of Ishmael).
- B. *“And Adah bare to Esau Eliphaz; and Basemath bare Reuel; and Oholibamah bare Jeush, and Jalam, and Korah: these are the sons of Esau, that were born unto him in the land of Canaan. And Esau took his wives, and his sons, and his daughters, and all the souls of his house, and his cattle, and all his beasts, and all his possessions, which he had gather in the land of Canaan; and went into a land away from his brother Jacob. For their substance was too great for them to dwell together; and the land of their sojournings could not bear them because of their cattle. And Esau dwelt in mount Seir: Esau is Edom” (36:4-8).*
1. Jacob had attained the blessings of Abraham and Isaac (albeit by deception and craft) and so Esau appears to have voluntarily left the land.
  2. Note that Esau has great substance and has become a great nation unto himself as God had promised him through Isaac (Gen. 27:39ff).
- C. *“And these are the generations of Esau the father of the Edomites in mount Seir: these are the names of Esau's sons: Eliphaz the son of Adah the wife of Esau, Reuel the son of Basemath the wife of Esau. And the sons of Eliphaz were Teman, Omar, Zepho, and Gatam, and Kenaz. And Timna was concubine to Eliphaz Esau's son; and she bare to Eliphaz Amalek: these are the sons of Adah, Esau's wife. And these are the sons of Reuel: Nahath, and Zerah, Shammah, and Mizzah: these were the sons of Basemath, Esau's wife. And these were the sons of Oholibamah the daughter of Anah, the daughter of Zibeon, Esau's wife: and she bare to Esau Jeush, and Jalam, and Korah” (36:9-14) (an account of the descendants of Esau).*



- D. *“These are the chiefs of the sons of Esau: the sons of Eliphaz the first-born of Esau: chief Teman, chief Omar, chief Zepho, chief Kenaz, chief Korah, chief Gatam, chief Amalek: these are the chiefs that came of Eliphaz in the land of Edom; these are the sons of Adah. And these are the sons of Reuel, Esau's son: chief Nahath, chief Zerah, chief Shammah, chief Mizzah: these are the chiefs that came of Reuel in the land of Edom; these are the sons of Basemath, Esau's wife. And these are the sons of Oholibamah, Esau's wife: chief Jeush, chief Jalam, chief Korah: these are the chiefs that came of Oholibamah the daughter of Anah, Esau's wife. These are the sons of Esau, and these are their chiefs: the same is Edom”* (36:15-19) (names of the chiefs or princes [leaders] among the Edomites).
- E. *“These are the sons of Seir the Horite, the inhabitants of the land: Lotan and Shobal and Zibeon and Anah, and Dishon and Ezer and Dishan: these are the chiefs that came of the Horites, the children of Seir in the land of Edom. And the children of Lotan were Hori and Heman. And Lotan's sister was Timna. And these are the children of Shobal: Alvan and Manahath and Ebal, Shepho and Onam. And these are the children of Zibeon: Aiah and Anah; this is Anah who found the hot springs in the wilderness, as he fed the asses of Zibeon his father. And these are the children of Anah: Dishon and Oholibamah the daughter of Anah. And these are the children of Dishon: Hemdan and Eshban and Ithran and Cheran. These are the children of Ezer: Bilhan and Zaavan and Akan. These are the children of Dishan: Uz and Aran. These are the chiefs that came of the Horites: chief Lotan, chief Shobal, chief Zibeon, chief Anah, chief Dishon, chief Ezer, chief Dishan: these are the chiefs that came of the Horites, according to their chiefs in the land of Seir”* (36:20-30).
1. The inference from these verses is that the land of Edom was already occupied when Esau came into it by the Horites (descendants from a man named Seir).
  2. Seir had seven sons that reigned as princes (these people were cave dwellers as the name Horite expresses).
- F. *“And these are the kings that reigned in the land of Edom, before there reigned any king over the children of Israel. And Bela the son of Beor reigned in Edom; and the name of his city was Dinhabah. And Bela died, and Jobab the son of Zerah of Bozrah reigned in his stead. And Jobab died, and Husham of the land of the Temanites reigned in his stead. And Husham died, and Hadad the son of Bedad, who smote Midian in the field of Moab, reigned in his stead: and the name of his city was Avith. And Hadad died, and Samlah of Masrekah reigned in his stead. And Samlah died, and Shaul of Rehoboth by the River reigned in his stead. And Shaul died, and Baal-hanan the son of Achbor reigned in his stead. And Baal-hanan the son of Achbor died, and Hadar reigned in his stead: and the name of his city was Pau; and his wife's name was Mehetabel, the daughter of Matred, the daughter of Me-zahab. And these are the names of the chiefs that came of Esau, according to their families, after their places, by their names: chief Timna, chief Alvah, chief Jetheth, chief Oholibamah, chief Elah, chief Pinon, chief Kenaz, chief Teman, chief Mibzar, chief Magdiel, chief Iram: these are the chiefs of Edom, according to their habitations in the land of their possession. This is Esau, the father of the Edomites”* (36:31-43).
1. So the scriptures give attestation to the fact that *“Esau, (is) the father of the Edomites”* of Edom.
  2. This series of verses examines the kings of Edom (interestingly, the scriptures reveal that the Edomites had kings far before Israel did).

### Lessons learned from chapter 36

- Not much is said regarding the posterity of Esau (Jacob's twin brother) in relation to the information given of Jacob and his descendants (i.e., Gen. 37-50). The reason is simple, Jacob's lineage takes us to Jesus (cf. Matt. 1:1ff).

## Chapter 37

### I. Joseph and his coat of many Colors (37:1-36):

A. *“And Jacob dwelt in the land of his father's sojournings, in the land of Canaan. These are the generations of Jacob. Joseph, being seventeen years old, was feeding the flock with his brethren; and he was a lad with the sons of Bilhah, and with the sons of Zilpah, his father's wives: and Joseph brought the evil report of them unto their father. Now Israel loved Joseph more than all his children, because he was the son of his old age: and he made him a coat of many colors. And his brethren saw that their father loved him more than all his brethren; and they hated him, and could not speak peaceably unto him”* (37:1-4).

1. The beginning of a description of Jacob's descendants involves Joseph (Jacob's son born to him by Rachel).
2. Joseph had apparently witnessed or heard his brothers doing some evil and reports their deed to Jacob. There are three parts about Joseph that caused his brothers to hate him:
  - a. Joseph told Jacob all the wickedness that he saw in his brothers (he exposed them).
  - b. Secondly, Joseph was the favorite son of Jacob and so was given a royal coat to wear.
  - c. Thirdly, Joseph had dreams that indicated not only his brothers but his parents as well would eventually bow down to him.
  - d. Jacob's favoring Joseph over the others did not help the situation; however, it may have been that Jacob could see that his sons resembled the disposition of Esau and Joseph was more likened unto him (i.e., spiritually minded) (see study # 9, 26, 42).
3. Lastly, let us note that the sons of Jacob were not innocent nor justified in their hatred. Jacob's sons have already proved themselves to be wicked in the previous chapters.
  - a. When Dinah was defiled by Shechem the Hivite, Jacob's sons deceptively dealt with the Hivites by telling them if they would be circumcised they would join together as one people (cf. Gen. 35 all). When the Hivites agreed and did so, Jacob's sons came upon them while they were weakened and murdered all males, stole their substance, and kidnapped all the women.
  - b. On another occasion, Reuben proved himself to be profane in that he took one of his father's wives (Bilhah, Rachel's handmaid who bore Jacob Dan and Naphtali) and had sex with her (cf. Gen. 35:22).
  - c. Now, Jacob's sons continue to participate in some form of wickedness so that Joseph exposes them. The brothers are so filled with hatred toward Joseph that they cannot even speak to him *“peaceably”* (ask him how he is doing or even say hello to him).

B. *“And Joseph dreamed a dream, and he told it to his brethren: and they hated him yet the more. And he said unto them, Hear, I pray you, this dream which I have dreamed: for, behold, we were binding sheaves in the field, and, lo, my sheaf arose, and also stood upright; and, behold, your sheaves came round about, and made obeisance to my sheaf. And his brethren said to him, Shalt thou indeed reign over us? Or shalt thou indeed have dominion over us? And they hated him yet the more for his dreams, and for his words. And he dreamed yet another dream, and told it to his brethren, and said, Behold, I have dreamed yet a dream: and, behold, the sun and the moon and eleven stars made obeisance to me. And he told it to his father, and to his brethren; and his father rebuked him, and said unto him, What is this dream that thou hast dreamed? Shall I and thy mother and thy brethren indeed come to bow down ourselves to thee to the earth? And his brethren envied him; but his father kept the saying in mind”* (37:5-11).

1. Joseph decides to reveal his dreams to his brothers probably not realizing just how depraved they really were. Feeling no danger he tells them of his dream that they rightly interpreted as not only them (the eleven) but Jacob and Rachel (even though dead) bowing down to him in subjection as well. Later in Egypt these dreams would be fulfilled; however, at the moment the brothers take offence to the dream and *“envy”* him because of it.
2. Another part of Jacob's character is seen here. Jacob was not only a spiritual and peaceable man but he was wise. When he heard Joseph's dreams he was taken aside by the thought that

even he would bow down to Joseph; however, he kept the dream within knowing that there had to be something to it.

- C. *“And his brethren went to feed their father's flock in Shechem. And Israel said unto Joseph, Are not thy brethren feeding the flock in Shechem? Come, and I will send thee unto them. And he said to him, Here am I. And he said to him, Go now, see whether it is well with thy brethren, and well with the flock; and bring me word again. So he sent him out of the vale of Hebron, and he came to Shechem. And a certain man found him, and, behold, he was wandering in the field: and the man asked him, saying, What seekest thou? And he said, I am seeking my brethren: tell me, I pray thee, where they are feeding [the flock]. And the man said, They are departed hence; for I heard them say, Let us go to Dothan. And Joseph went after his brethren, and found them in Dothan”* (37:12-17).
1. Apparently not only did Joseph underestimate the depraved state of Jacob's other ten sons (Benjamin at this time would have been around one year old) but so did Jacob. Jacob seems to have sent his beloved Joseph out alone to report about the welfare of his sons.
  2. Joseph finds them in Dothan.
- D. *“And they saw him afar off, and before he came near unto them, they conspired against him to slay him. And they said one to another, Behold, this dreamer cometh. Come now therefore, and let us slay him, and cast him into one of the pits, and we will say, And evil beast hath devoured him: and we shall see what will become of his dreams. And Reuben heard it, and delivered him out of their hand, and said, Let us not take his life. And Reuben said unto them, Shed no blood; cast him into this pit that is in the wilderness, but lay no hand upon him: that he might deliver him out of their hand, to restore him to his father. And it came to pass, when Joseph was come unto his brethren, that they stripped Joseph of his coat, the coat of many colors that was on him; and they took him, and cast him into the pit: and the pit was empty, there was no water in it”* (37:18-24).
1. Upon finding his brothers, to his horror, Joseph now experiences the true level of depravity in their character. Like the time they together planned to do the Hivites harm even so they now murderously plot against their own flesh and blood brother.
  2. Reuben (the same depraved one that had sex with his father's wife Bilhah) suggests that they not kill Joseph but throw him into an empty pit (Reuben's plan was to later retrieve Joseph and return him to Jacob).
  3. The nine other brothers agree and so strip Joseph of the coat Jacob made him and threw him in a pit.
- E. *“And they sat down to eat bread: and they lifted up their eyes and looked, and, behold, a caravan of Ishmaelites was coming from Gilead, with their camels bearing spicery and balm and myrrh, going to carry it down to Egypt. And Judah said unto his brethren, What profit is it if we slay our brother and conceal his blood? Come, and let us sell him to the Ishmaelites, and let not our hand be upon him; for he is our brother, our flesh. And his brethren hearkened unto him. And there passed by Midianites, merchantmen; and they drew and lifted up Joseph out of the pit, and sold Joseph to the Ishmaelites for twenty pieces of silver. And they brought Joseph into Egypt. And Reuben returned unto the pit; and, behold, Joseph was not in the pit; and he rent his clothes. And he returned unto his brethren, and said, The child is not; and I, whither shall I go? And they took Joseph's coat, and killed a he-goat, and dipped the coat in the blood; and they sent the coat of many colors, and they brought it to their father, and said, This have we found: know now whether it is thy son's coat or not”* (37:25-32).
1. The text does not inform us of Reuben's separation for a time but apparently he was not present when Judah suggests to the brethren that they sell him to the Ishmaelite caravan headed to Egypt.
  2. Obviously the brothers were on to Reuben's plan to save Joseph and so clearly plotted once again to murder Joseph while Reuben was away. Judah could not stand the thought of murdering his brother so he suggests the sell. All agree and so Joseph is sold for 20 pieces of silver.
  3. These were hard days in the life of Joseph. The family that should have loved him and protected him treated him as a useless animal of derision and sold him.

4. When Reuben comes to the pit (no doubt to rescue Joseph) he does not find him. Horrified, he exclaims (to paraphrase) “what shall I tell Jacob, our father, when he finds out that Joseph has died?” The brothers have another plan. They would kill a he-goat and dip Joseph’s coat in the blood. The coat will be brought to Jacob so that their father would think that a wild beast killed his beloved son.
- F. *“And he knew it, and said, It is my son's coat: an evil beast hath devoured him; Joseph is without doubt torn in pieces. And Jacob rent his garments, and put sackcloth upon his loins, and mourned for his son many days. And all his sons and all his daughters rose up to comfort him; but he refused to be comforted; and he said, For I will go down to Sheol to my son mourning. And his father wept for him. And the Midianites sold him into Egypt unto Potiphar, an officer of Pharaoh's, the captain of the guard” (37:33-36).*
1. Jacob recognized the coat at once and concluded that a wild beast must have ripped him to shreds and devoured him.
  2. Jacob then tares his cloths and deeply mourns the death of his beloved Joseph. No amount of comfort could be extended to him on this occasion. He had lost his son and was deeply saddened. Many today loose loved ones and seem to long for attention from others and wail before television cameras but not so with Jacob. He would “*go down to Sheol* (the realm of the dead) *to my son mourning.*”
  3. Once in Egypt, Joseph is sold to a man named Potiphar, an officer of Pharaoh and captain of the guard.

### Lessons Learned

- Both Joseph and his father Jacob underestimated the wicked character of the other brothers. Never underestimate nor be deceived by evil men (cf. Lk. 21:8; I Cor. 6:9; 15:33; Gal. 6:7).
- Envy leads to hatred. Solomon wrote, “*wrath is cruel, and anger is outrageous; but who is able to stand before envy?*” (Prov. 27:4) (cf. Rom. 1:28ff; Gal. 5:21) (see study # 43).
- The patriarchs were not all good! When Shechem defiled Dinah at Genesis 34, her brothers respond with vengeance. The sons of Jacob murdered, robbed, and kidnapped the Hivite people. Genesis 35:22 records Reuben’s sin of profanity in that he had sex with his father’s wife Bilhah. Genesis 37:2 records an undisclosed wickedness that was being conducted by the ten brothers. Chapter 37 also reveals their jealousy and hatred. Genesis 38 reveals Judah’s sin marrying a Canaanite woman and then committing fornication after she died. Genesis 46:10 reveals that Simeon had married a Canaanitish woman (see study # 26).

### Chapter 38

#### I. The sins of Judah and his wicked Family (38:1-30):

- A. *“And it came to pass at that time, that Judah went down from his brethren, and turned in to a certain Adullamite, whose name was Hirah” (38:1).*
1. The development of Joseph’s character is temporarily interrupted to illustrate the further sinfulness of Judah. It seems most likely that this event transpires after the sell of Joseph into Egypt. It may be that this section is interjected to illustrate the fact that God’s people were overly tempted to marry the Canaanites and therefore Jehovah needed to move them. By His providence, God allows Joseph to be sold into Egypt so that latter the whole family would join him and be put into the crucible of persecution and slavery to purify their souls.
  2. It may be that after the sell of Joseph, Judah was filled with sorrow and separated himself from his brethren.
- B. *“And Judah saw there a daughter of a certain Canaanite whose name was Shua. And he took her, and went in unto her” (38:2).*
1. Judah falls into the same sin as Esau in that he defiantly marries a Canaanite woman.

2. Judah is defiant to his father Jacob, grandfather Isaac, and great grandfather Abraham's admonition to not marry the Canaanites (cf. Gen. 24:1-3; 26:34-35).
- C. *"And she conceived, and bare a son; and he called his name Er. And she conceived again, and bare a son; and she called his name Onan. And she yet again bare a son, and called his name Shelah: and he was at Chezib, when she bare him. And Judah took a wife for Er his first-born, and her name was Tamar. And Er, Judah's first-born, was wicked in the sight of Jehovah. And Jehovah slew him. And Judah said unto Onan, Go in unto thy brother's wife, and perform the duty of a husband's brother unto her, and raise up seed to thy brother. And Onan knew that the seed would not be his; and it came to pass, when he went in unto his brother's wife, that he spilled it on the ground, lest he should give seed to his brother. And the thing which he did was evil in the sight of Jehovah: and he slew him also"* (38:3-10).
1. Judah has three sons by the Canaanite woman; i.e., Er, Onan, and Shelah. The circle of wickedness continues with the family of Judah. Er *"was wicked in the sight of Jehovah."* The word of God does not explain Er's wicked behavior yet many believe it to be sexual in nature (i.e., sodomy / a sin that would not allow procreation and thereby an act of defiance against Jehovah's plan to redeem man through the seed of Abraham). Jehovah killed Er for his wickedness.
  2. Onan was a wicked man as well. Judah calls upon Onan to perform his marriage obligation to the spouse of a deceased brother (cf. Deut. 25:5-6) (here is another incident that pre-dates the Mosaic Law). Onan had sexual intercourse with Tamar yet spilled his seed upon the ground lest he raise seed to his brother. This selfish act on the part of Onan brought the sentence of death by Jehovah just as it did to Er.
  3. Two issues are to be taken note of here. First, there was apparently a law in place among the Jews regarding raising up seed to a deceased relative. Secondly, God's anger is magnified because Judah's seed was to be the one through whom the seed promise was to continue (cf. Gen. 49:9-10).
- D. *"Then said Judah to Tamar his daughter-in-law, Remain a widow in thy father's house, till Shelah my son be grown up; for he said, Lest he also die, like his brethren. And Tamar went and dwelt in her father's house. And in process of time Shua's daughter, the wife of Judah, died; and Judah was comforted, and went up unto his sheep-shearers to Timnah, he and his friend Hirah the Adullamite. And it was told Tamar, saying, Behold, thy father-in-law goeth up to Timnah to shear his sheep. And she put off from her the garments of her widowhood, and covered herself with her veil, and wrapped herself, and sat in the gate of Enaim, which is by the way to Timnah; for she saw that Shelah was grown up, and she was not given unto him to wife. When Judah saw her, he thought her to be a harlot; for she had covered her face. And he turned unto her by the way, and said, Come, I pray thee, let me come in unto thee: for he knew not that she was his daughter-in-law. And she said, What wilt thou give me, that thou mayest come in unto me? And he said, I will send thee a kid of the goats from the flock. And she said, Wilt thou give me a pledge, till thou send it? And he said, What pledge shall I give thee? And she said, Thy signet and thy cord, and thy staff that is in thy hand. And he gave them to her, and came in unto her, and she conceived by him"* (38:11-18).
1. Judah had only one son left (Shelah). Judah promises Tamar Shelah; however, at present the boy was young. Tamar agrees and goes to live with her father as a widow. Through the process of time, Shelah becomes a man and Judah makes no effort to give him to Tamar for a husband. Tamar decides to take matters into her own hand.
  2. Judah's wife died and he went to his friend Hirah for comfort. We are not told the space of time between the death of Judah's wife and this incident; however, it does not appear to be long. Judah illustrates a shameless spirit in that he approaches a harlot (one he perceives to be a harlot; i.e., Tamar) and asks to have sexual relations with her. Tamar agrees to the deed yet demands a price to be paid. Judah tells her that he will give her a kid of the flock and foolishly gives her his signet ring and staff. Tamar agrees, Judah goes into her, and Tamar conceives.
- E. *"And she arose, and went away, and put off her veil from her, and put on the garments of her widowhood. And Judah sent the kid of the goats by the hand of his friend the Adullamite, to receive the pledge from the woman's hand: but he found her not. Then he asked the men of her place,*

*saying, Where is the prostitute, that was at Enaim by the wayside? And they said, There hath been no prostitute here. And he returned to Judah, and said, I have not found her; and also the men of the place said, There hath been no prostitute here. And Judah said, Let her take it to her, lest we be put to shame: behold, I sent this kid, and thou hast not found her” (38:19-23).*

1. Still, without shame of his sin, Judah asks his friend Hirah to deliver the promised kid to the prostitute. Unable to find her the two leave off the search in fear that others will look shamefully upon them.
  2. The text now tells us that Judah was worried about what God thought about his disgraceful sin of fornication but he was very concerned about what other men would think.
- F. *“And it came to pass about three months after, that it was told Judah, saying, Tamar thy daughter-in-law hath played the harlot; and moreover, behold, she is with child by whoredom. And Judah said, Bring her forth, and let her be burnt. When she was brought forth, she sent to her father-in-law, saying, By the man, whose these are, am I with child: and she said, Discern, I pray thee, whose are these, the signet, and the cords, and the staff. And Judah acknowledged them, and said, She is more righteous than I; forasmuch as I gave her not to Shelah my son. And he knew her again no more” (38:24-26).*
1. So very often we are all blind to our own sin yet have no problem pointing out the sins of others. We lack humility and mercy. We have at times a self righteous attitude that elevates self and demotes all others. Jesus told those Jews at the Sermon on the Mount, *“And why beholdest thou the mote that is in thy brother's eye, but considerest not the beam that is in thine own eye?”* (Matt. 7:3-5) (see study # 44; Identifying Sin in our Lives).
  2. Judah was exposed in the sight of his household and had no recourse but to admit that he was the true sinner.
- G. *“And it came to pass in the time of her travail, that, behold, twins were in her womb. And it came to pass, when she travailed, that one put out a hand: and the midwife took and bound upon his hand a scarlet thread, saying, This came out first. And it came to pass, as he drew back his hand, that, behold, his brother came out: and she said, Wherefore hast thou made a breach for thyself? Therefore his name was called Perez. And afterward came out his brother, that had the scarlet thread upon his hand: and his name was called Zerah” (38:27-30).*

### Lessons Learned from Genesis chapter 38

- It is not the intention of the Holy Spirit to paint a picture of perfect people in the lineage of Christ. We cannot; therefore, excuse away their sins. Judah’s sins are recorded without any attempts to hide his folly.
- Judah was one who sinned (i.e., Judah marries a Canaanite woman even though he understood the error thereof [cf. Gen. 24:1ff; 26:34ff], he broke promises by telling Tamar that she would be given to Shelah as a wife yet he did not follow through with this vow, Judah commits adultery (in his mind fornication) with a harlot [Tamar], and Judah’s sin is public knowledge as he involves his friend Hiram to pay for the harlotry [such an act illustrates his lack of shame for sin; cf. Ps. 51:17; Isa. 3:9; Zeph. 3:5). Often times it is not until our sins are made known that we repent. When my sin is a secret I may not see the need, through pride, to repent and asks God to forgive me (see study # 45; Sin). Even so, Judah is exposed by Tamar and he therefore appears to be sorry and repenting. We learn that fornication is sinful no matter who does the deed (cf. I Cor. 6:13ff).
- Some are so hard hearted that even when their sins are exposed they turn from Jehovah (Ezek. 3:7).

## Chapter 39

### I. Joseph in Egypt (39:1- 12):

- A. *“And Joseph was brought down to Egypt; and Potiphar, an officer of Pharaoh's, the captain of the guard, an Egyptian, bought him of the hand of the Ishmaelites, that had brought him down thither. And Jehovah was with Joseph, and he was a prosperous man; and he was in the house of his master the Egyptian. And his master saw that Jehovah was with him, and that Jehovah made all that he did to prosper in his hand. And Joseph found favor in his sight, and he ministered unto him: and he made him overseer over his house, and all that he had he put into his hand. And it came to pass from the time that he made him overseer in his house, and over all that he had, that Jehovah blessed the Egyptian's house for Joseph's sake; and the blessing of Jehovah was upon all that he had, in the house and in the field. And he left all that he had in Joseph's hand; and he knew not aught that was with him, save the bread which he did eat. And Joseph was comely, and well-favored”* (39:1-6).
1. God's people now come in contact with Egypt. The historical account of the life of Joseph is now continued. To this point, we have found Joseph's character to be more noble than his brothers (cf. 37:1-4) i.e., he was a godly man.
  2. More of Joseph's character is now revealed. After being sold by his own brethren to an Ishmaelite caravan he was once again sold as a common slave to Potiphar in Egypt. It would have been very easy for Joseph to feel self pity, despondency, and inactive life yet Joseph worked very hard.
  3. Joseph's good attitude paid off. Potiphar trusted Joseph with all that he had.
- B. *“And it came to pass after these things, that his master's wife cast her eyes upon Joseph; and she said, Lie with me. But he refused, and said unto his master's wife, Behold, my master knoweth not what is with me in the house, and he hath put all that he hath into my hand: he is not greater in this house than I; neither hath he kept back anything from me but thee, because thou art his wife: how then can I do this great wickedness, and sin against God?”* (39:7-9).
1. We have seen that Joseph abhorred sin (Gen. 37:1-4), refused to let the heartaches of life cause self pity and inactivity in his life because he knew that *“Jehovah was with him”*, and now we find that he feared the Lord (see study # 42).
  2. When tempted to sin Joseph intelligibly considered three issues rather than going blindly into sin:
    - a. Potiphar was his master and he had been entrusted with all that he had. How could he violate this trust and maintain his integrity in the house of his master?
    - b. Joseph considered the purity of marriage and said, *“Thou art his wife.”* Potiphar's wife belonged to him alone. The author of Hebrews tells us, *“Let marriage be had in honor among all, and let the bed be undefiled: for fornicators and adulterers God will judge”* (Heb. 13:4).
    - c. To commit adultery would be to *“sin against God.”* Joseph was not willing to loose his trust that Potiphar had in him, he was not willing to take another's wife, and he was not willing to ignore God's laws for pleasure (see study # 45).
- C. *“And it came to pass, as she spake to Joseph day by day, that he hearkened not unto her, to lie by her, or to be with her. And it came to pass about this time, that he went into the house to do his work; and there was none of the men of the house there within. And she caught him by his garment, saying, Lie with me: and he left his garment in her hand, and fled, and got him out”* (39:10-12).
1. The temptation to commit adultery was presented to Joseph *“day by day”* yet his resolve to not sin against the Lord is found in the statement *“he hearkened not unto her, to lie by her, or to be with her.”* Joseph would not entertain the thought of sin for a moment. He did not so much as listen to her much less lie by her or be with her. Joseph would not put himself in a situation to sin. Many young would do well to gain the lesson from Joseph. Don't even toy with the idea.
  2. When Potiphar's wife made more aggressive advances Joseph, *“got him out.”* Paul told the Corinthians to *“flee fornication”* (I Cor. 6:). Joseph thereby stands as an ever present example

of one who was successful when tempted to gratify fleshly lusts (it can be done) (see study # 45).

## II. The False Accusation (39:13-23):

- A. *“And it came to pass, when she saw that he had left his garment in her hand, and was fled forth, that she called unto the men of her house, and spake unto them, saying, See, he hath brought in a Hebrew unto us to mock us: he came in unto me to lie with me, and I cried with a loud voice: and it came to pass, when he heard that I lifted up my voice and cried, that he left his garment by me, and fled, and got him out. And she laid up his garment by her, until his master came home”* (39:13-16).
1. Potiphar’s wife’s passion soon turned to hatred once she was unable to get what she was lusting after.
  2. The wife lies about Joseph’s character (i.e., his resolve to faithfully serve Potiphar, to trust and obey Jehovah and to respect the sanctity of marriage). She states that Joseph tried to force himself upon her when it was her that did so to him.
- B. *“And she spake unto him according to these words, saying, The Hebrew servant, whom thou hast brought unto us, came in unto me to mock me: and it came to pass, as I lifted up my voice and cried, that he left his garment by me, and fled out. And it came to pass, when his master heard the words of his wife, which she spake unto him, saying, After this manner did thy servant to me; that his wrath was kindled. And Joseph's master took him, and put him into the prison, the place where the king's prisoners were bound: and he was there in the prison”* (39:17-20).
1. When Potiphar returned home his wife reiterated the lies that she may justify her sinful actions.
  2. Potiphar responds by sending Joseph to prison.
- C. *“But Jehovah was with Joseph, and showed kindness unto him, and gave him favor in the sight of the keeper of the prison. And the keeper of the prison committed to Joseph's hand all the prisoners that were in the prison; and whatsoever they did there, he was the doer of it. The keeper of the prison looked not to anything that was under his hand, because Jehovah was with him; and that which he did, Jehovah made it prosper”* (39:21-23).
1. Once again we see the golden character of Joseph. He could have complained and said woe is me; however, he again made the best of the situation knowing that the Lord was with him.
  2. While in prison, Joseph’s hard work, trustworthiness, and faith did not go unnoticed. The superintendent of the jail put all other prisoners under the care of Joseph.

## Lessons Learned from Chapter 39

- The scriptures tell us that “Jehovah was with Joseph” (Gen. 39:2). Potiphar (Gen. 39:3) and the Keeper of the prison (Gen. 39:23) saw that God was with Joseph. Joseph’s faith in God and his understanding of God’s favor upon him caused him to keep his chin up in some of the most difficult days of his life. We too can see that God’s gracious favor of salvation is with us and that we can make it through the hardest of times in life (cf. Phil. 4:11-13).
- The development of Joseph’s Character:
  - Joseph had a passionate hatred for sin (Gen. 37:1-4) (cf. Rom. 12:9; Eph. 4:26-27).
  - Joseph worked hard no matter what the circumstances of life (Gen. 39:1-7, 21-23).
  - Joseph feared God and desired to keep His commandments (Gen. 39:9).
  - Joseph had resolve (i.e., determination) to not sin against God (Gen. 39:10-12).
  - Joseph respected the sanctity of marriage (Gen. 39:9) (Heb. 13:4).
  - See study # 42



## Chapter 40

### I. Joseph interprets the dreams of the butler and baker while in prison (40:1-23):

- A. *“And it came to pass after these things, that the butler of the king of Egypt and his baker offended their lord the king of Egypt. And Pharaoh was wroth against his two officers, against the chief of the butlers, and against the chief of the bakers. And he put them in ward in the house of the captain of the guard, into the prison, the place where Joseph was bound. And the captain of the guard charged Joseph with them, and he ministered unto them: and they continued a season in ward”* (40:1-4).
1. One day, while in prison, Joseph is given to two officers of the king’s court to be their servants. The two had in some way offended or sinned against the king of Egypt and were put in prison. Some believe they tried to poison the king; however, the text does not tell us the reasons of their offence.
  2. One of the men was the king’s chief baker and the other the king’s chief butler (i.e., the cup bearer to the king as was Nehemiah [Neh. 1:11]).
- B. *“And they dreamed a dream both of them, each man his dream, in one night, each man according to the interpretation of his dream, the butler and the baker of the king of Egypt, who were bound in the prison. And Joseph came in unto them in the morning, and saw them, and, behold, they were sad. And he asked Pharaoh's officers that were with him in ward in his master's house, saying, Wherefore look ye so sad to-day? And they said unto him, We have dreamed a dream, and there is none that can interpret it. And Joseph said unto them, Do not interpretations belong to God? tell it me, I pray you”* (40:5-8).
1. More of Joseph’s character is revealed here. First, note that Joseph is concerned about others. He asks, *“why look ye so sad today?”* (see study # 42).
  2. Secondly, note the faith of Joseph in Jehovah God when he said, *“Do not interpretations belong to God? Tell it me, I pray you.”* Apparently Joseph understood his ability to interpret dreams as a prophet and so tells the men to speak to him.
- C. *“And the chief butler told his dream to Joseph, and said to him, In my dream, behold, a vine was before me; and in the vine were three branches: and it was as though it budded, and its blossoms shot forth; and the clusters thereof brought forth ripe grapes: and Pharaoh's cup was in my hand; and I took the grapes, and pressed them into Pharaoh's cup, and I gave the cup into Pharaoh's hand. And Joseph said unto him, This is the interpretation of it: the three branches are three days; within yet three days shall Pharaoh lift up thy head, and restore thee unto thine office: and thou shalt give Pharaoh's cup into his hand, after the former manner when thou wast his butler. But have me in thy remembrance when it shall be well with thee, and show kindness, I pray thee, unto me, and make mention of me unto Pharaoh, and bring me out of this house: for indeed I was stolen away out of the land of the Hebrews: and here also have I done nothing that they should put me into the dungeon”* (40:9-15).
1. The butler dreamed of three vines that blossomed and brought forth grapes that he squeezed into the cup of the king. Joseph tells the butler that the three vines represent three days. Three days he would be released from prison and restored to his former office as chief butler to the king.
  2. Joseph now makes a request to the butler regarding his prison status. Joseph was kidnapped out of Canaan and brought to Egypt. He explains to the butler that he did nothing to deserve prison time. Joseph asks the butler to remember his cause before the king that he may be released from prison.
- D. *“When the chief baker saw that the interpretation was good, he said unto Joseph, I also was in my dream, and, behold, three baskets of white bread were on my head: and in the uppermost basket there was of all manner of baked food for Pharaoh; and the birds did eat them out of the basket upon my head. And Joseph answered and said, This is the interpretation thereof: the three baskets are three days; within yet three days shall Pharaoh lift up thy head from off thee, and shall hang thee on a tree; and the birds shall eat thy flesh from off thee”* (40:16-19).

1. The baker now tells Joseph his dream and common sense tells us that the meaning is not as well as the butler's. Joseph tells the baker that the three baskets represent three days. After three days the baker would be beheaded and the birds would eat the flesh off of his bones.
  2. No response by the butler is recorded; however, he must have been terrified at the thought. When the interpretation of the dreams occurred both butler and baker must have realized that Joseph spoke of divine moving.
- E. *“And it came to pass the third day, which was Pharaoh's birthday, that he made a feast unto all his servants: and he lifted up the head of the chief butler and the head of the chief baker among his servants. And he restored the chief butler unto his butlership again; and he gave the cup into Pharaoh's hand: but he hanged the chief baker: as Joseph had interpreted to them. Yet did not the chief butler remember Joseph, but forgot him”* (40:20-23).
1. Joseph's interpretation came to pass and thereby indeed it was God who revealed these secrets to him (Isa. 46:9-10).
  2. The sad ending to the chapter is found in the words, *“Yet did not the chief butler remember Joseph, but forgot him.”* One could but only empathize with Joseph at the heartache he must have felt after telling the interpretation of the dreams, it coming to pass, and then being forgotten. He may have felt hopeless at this state yet through a character sketch of Joseph we are confident that he pressed on.
  3. We may learn that not all men will render good for good. Some are so self absorbed that the only thing they think about is what benefits them. You or I may only be one of those benefits at certain times and we can thereby expect to receive no rewards for good deeds. Our motivation is not to receive rewards (even though Joseph did nothing wrong here because he was innocent) but rather the betterment of others. So Joseph remains in prison.
  4. While it may seem that chapter 40 is merely another page out of Joseph's life, we must see that it has far reaching implications. Not only do we learn more of the caring and godly character of Joseph, but we see God's progression of providence. Slowly but surely Joseph is to be introduced to Pharaoh for the purpose of moving all Israel out of Canaan. The ungodly influences of the land had already negatively affected the sons of Jacob. God would have them come to Egypt to prove them.

### Lessons Learned from Genesis 40

- Joseph's compassionate character (Gen. 40:7) (like Jesus [Matt. 9:36] and as we should be [Eph. 4:32]).
- Joseph was a man of faith (Gen. 40:8) as we are to be (Heb. 11:6).
- Not all live by the golden rule of Luke 6:31 (cf. Gen. 40:23).

## Chapter 41

### I. Joseph is remembered and interprets Pharaoh's Dream (41:1-45):

- A. *“And it came to pass at the end of two full years, that Pharaoh dreamed: and, behold, he stood by the river. And, behold, there came up out of the river seven kine, well-favored and fat-fleshed; and they fed in the reed-grass. And, behold, seven other kine came up after them out of the river, ill-favored and lean-fleshed, and stood by the other kine upon the brink of the river. And the ill-favored and lean-fleshed kine did eat up the seven well-favored and fat kine. So Pharaoh awoke”* (41:1-4).
1. Two years after the butler had been released from prison, Pharaoh has a dream. Two years have passed with Joseph remaining in prison doing his daily chores as an inmate. This helps us to see that sometimes our hardships may continue for a lengthy space of time; however, as we continue to serve God with all our hearts we will eventually see better days.
  2. Pharaoh now has a dream (this is the third time dreams have been associated with the life of Joseph). Pharaoh dreamed of seven healthy cows out of the Nile River. Pharaoh then dreamed

- of seven cows that were bad in appearance (they were starved, skinny, and unhealthy looking). The seven unhealthy cows ate the seven fat cows and then Pharaoh woke from his sleep.
- B. *“And he slept and dreamed a second time: and, behold, seven ears of grain came up upon one stalk, rank and good. And, behold, seven ears, thin and blasted with the east wind, sprung up after them. And the thin ears swallowed up the seven rank and full ears. And Pharaoh awoke, and, behold, it was a dream”* (41:5-6).
1. Pharaoh has a second dream. Pharaoh dreamed of seven ears of corn came up upon one corn stalk in a very healthy state. Then seven ugly ears of corn grew on the plant and the ugly ears ate the good ears of corn.
  2. Pharaoh awakes from his dream and is somewhat perplexed.
- C. *“And it came to pass in the morning that his spirit was troubled; and he sent and called for all the magicians of Egypt, and all the wise men thereof: and Pharaoh told them his dream; but there was none that could interpret them unto Pharaoh. Then spake the chief butler unto Pharaoh, saying, I do remember my faults this day: Pharaoh was wroth with his servants, and put me in ward in the house of the captain of the guard, me and the chief baker: and we dreamed a dream in one night, I and he; we dreamed each man according to the interpretation of his dream. And there was with us there a young man, a Hebrew, servant to the captain of the guard; and we told him, and he interpreted to us our dreams; to each man according to his dream he did interpret. And it came to pass, as he interpreted to us, so it was; me he restored unto mine office, and him he hanged”* (41:7-13).
1. Pharaoh asks his magicians and wise men to interpret the dream; however, none could do so (this reminds us of Daniel interpreting Nebuchadnezzar’s dream at Daniel 2).
  2. The king’s butler then remembered Joseph not out of a concern for Joseph but rather as a means to secure his place in the king’s court. If it was Joseph that he was concerned about then why wait two years to say something. The butler is a self serving individual who cares nothing about others who are in pain.
- D. *“Then Pharaoh sent and called Joseph, and they brought him hastily out of the dungeon: and he shaved himself, and changed his raiment, and came in unto Pharaoh. And Pharaoh said unto Joseph, I have dreamed a dream, and there is none that can interpret it: and I have heard say of thee, that when thou hearest a dream thou canst interpret it. And Joseph answered Pharaoh, saying, It is not in me: God will give Pharaoh an answer of peace”* (41:14-16).
1. Pharaoh calls for Joseph to come tell him of his dream. Joseph cleans himself up by shaving and changing cloths which was an indication of his respect for positions of authority.
  2. Note that Joseph wants no credit or glory for his good deeds. So many today do good deeds only to be seen of men (like the Pharisees ; cf. Matt. 6:5; 23:5; Jn. 12:41-43). Joseph again illustrates his golden character by giving God all glory saying, *“it is not in me: God will give Pharaoh an answer of peace.”*
  3. We are not told of the events that took place in that Egyptian prison for two years; however, it apparently had no ill effect on Joseph’s will to serve God. God was no doubt Joseph’s hope during those two years.
- E. *“And Pharaoh spake unto Joseph, In my dream, behold, I stood upon the brink of the river: and, behold, there came up out of the river seven kine, fat-fleshed and well-favored: and they fed in the reed-grass: and, behold, seven other kine came up after them, poor and very ill-favored and lean-fleshed, such as I never saw in all the land of Egypt for badness: and the lean and ill-favored kine did eat up the first seven fat kine: and when they had eaten them up, it could not be known that they had eaten them; but they were still ill-favored, as at the beginning. So I awoke. And I saw in my dream, and, behold, seven ears came up upon one stalk, full and good: and, behold, seven ears, withered, thin, [and] blasted with the east wind, sprung up after them: and the thin ears swallowed up the seven good ears: and I told it unto the magicians; but there was none that could declare it to me. And Joseph said unto Pharaoh, The dream of Pharaoh is one: what God is about to do he hath declared unto Pharaoh. The seven good kine are seven years; and the seven good ears are seven years: the dream is one. And the seven lean and ill-favored kine that came up after them are seven years, and also the seven empty ears blasted with the east wind; they shall be seven years of famine.*

*That is the thing which I spake unto Pharaoh: what God is about to do he hath showed unto Pharaoh. Behold, there come seven years of great plenty throughout all the land of Egypt: and there shall arise after them seven years of famine; and all the plenty shall be forgotten in the land of Egypt; and the famine shall consume the land; and the plenty shall not be known in the land by reason of that famine which followeth; for it shall be very grievous. And for that the dream was doubled unto Pharaoh, it is because the thing is established by God, and God will shortly bring it to pass” (41:17-32).*

1. Pharaoh reiterates the entire dream to Joseph as asks him the meaning thereof.
  2. Joseph tells Pharaoh that the two dreams are really one. There will be seven years of plenty followed by seven years of famine.
- F. *“Now therefore let Pharaoh look out a man discreet and wise, and set him over the land of Egypt. Let Pharaoh do this, and let him appoint overseers over the land, and take up the fifth part of the land of Egypt in the seven plenteous years. And let them gather all the food of these good years that come, and lay up grain under the hand of Pharaoh for food in the cities, and let them keep it. And the food shall be for a store to the land against the seven years of famine, which shall be in the land of Egypt; that the land perish not through the famine” (41:33-36).*
1. Joseph makes a suggestion to Pharaoh. Pharaoh ought to appoint a man to oversee a collection of 1/5<sup>th</sup> of grain collected during the seven plenteous years to serve as a store for the seven years of famine.
  2. The plan is very pleasing to Pharaoh and the natural selection of said job should fall upon Joseph (the Hebrew abductee, supposed rapist, and jail bird).
- G. *“And the thing was good in the eyes of Pharaoh, and in the eyes of all his servants. And Pharaoh said unto his servants, Can we find such a one as this, a man in whom the spirit of God is? And Pharaoh said unto Joseph, Forasmuch as God hath showed thee all of this, there is none so discreet and wise as thou: thou shalt be over my house, and according unto thy word shall all my people be ruled: only in the throne will I be greater than thou. And Pharaoh said unto Joseph, See, I have set thee over all the land of Egypt. And Pharaoh took off his signet ring from his hand, and put it upon Joseph's hand, and arrayed him in vestures of fine linen, and put a gold chain about his neck; and he made him to ride in the second chariot which he had; and they cried before him, Bow the knee: and he set him over all the land of Egypt. And Pharaoh said unto Joseph, I am Pharaoh, and without thee shall no man lift up his hand or his foot in all the land of Egypt. And Pharaoh called Joseph's name Zaphenath-paneah; and he gave him to wife Asenath, the daughter of Poti-phaera priest of On. And Joseph went out over the land of Egypt” (41:37-45).*
1. Joseph is taken from the rags of prison to the riches of ruling Egypt in a matter of moments. The only greater than Joseph in Egypt would be Pharaoh. Joseph's name was changed and he was given an Egyptian wife.
  2. We begin seeing from this point that wealth and popularity have a way of corrupting an individual. Joseph is not immune from such.

## II. Joseph rules in Egypt (41:46-57):

- A. *“And Joseph was thirty years old when he stood before Pharaoh king of Egypt. And Joseph went out from the presence of Pharaoh, and went throughout all the land of Egypt. And in the seven plenteous years the earth brought forth by handfuls. And he gathered up all the food of the seven years which were in the land of Egypt, and laid up the food in the cities: the food of the field, which was round about every city, laid he up in the same. And Joseph laid up grain as the sand of the sea, very much, until he left off numbering; for it was without number” (41:46-49).*
1. It appears that the work ethic that Joseph has already illustrated in his life continues. He immediately goes out from the presents of Pharaoh and gets to work (we should do no less; cf. Eph. 4:28; II Thess. 3:10-12) (see study # 46; A Bible Work Ethic).
  2. Joseph's hard work paid off during the seven years of plenty. He collected enough grain to not only support Egypt during the famine but other countries as well (cf. verse 57 below).
  3. It seems that somewhere during these days Joseph could have sent a message back to Canaan to let his beloved father know of his wellbeing. Joseph was now thirty at the beginning of the grain service, he spent three years in prison and ten years serving Potiphar (Gen. 40:4; 41:1).

- B. *“And unto Joseph were born two sons before the year of famine came, whom Asenath, the daughter of Potiphera priest of On, bare unto him. And Joseph called the name of the first-born Manasseh: For, said he, God hath made me forget all my toil, and all my father's house. And the name of the second called he Ephraim: For God hath made me fruitful in the land of my affliction. And the seven years of plenty, that was in the land of Egypt, came to an end. And the seven years of famine began to come, according as Joseph had said: and there was famine in all lands; but in all the land of Egypt there was bread. And when all the land of Egypt was famished, the people cried to Pharaoh for bread: and Pharaoh said unto all the Egyptians, Go unto Joseph; what he saith to you, do. And the famine was over all the face of the earth: and Joseph opened all the store-houses, and sold unto the Egyptians; and the famine was sore in the land of Egypt. And all countries came into Egypt to Joseph to buy grain, because the famine was sore in all the earth”* (41:50-57).
1. If it were not for the intervention on the part of God all of Egypt may have fallen.
  2. The famine was wide spread.
  3. Joseph had done his job well. God had not only blessed him with wisdom and prosperity, but with two sons as well.

### Lessons learned from chapter 41

- Learn that sometimes hardships last for a long time. Joseph was in prison for at least three years before being remembered (Gen. 40:4; 41:1) (cf. James 1:3) (see study # 47; Affliction).
- Joseph was a man who respected authority (Gen. 41:14).
- Joseph gave God all glory in life rather than receiving it out of selfish ambition (Gen. 41:15-16) [cf. Matt. 6:5; 23:5; Jn. 12:41-43].
- Joseph’s lengthy trial (i.e., at least three years) did not cause him bitterness (cf. Gen. 41:15-16; Eph. 4:31-32).
- Joseph had a great work ethic. It would have been easy for such a one to suffer from a bad case of despondency; however, Joseph new his responsibilities and did not let the down side of life keep him from doing those things that were necessary (Gen. 41:46; cf. Eph. 4:28; II Thess. 3:10-12).

## Chapter 42

### I. Jacob sends his ten sons to Egypt to buy Grain (42:1-24):

- A. *“Now Jacob saw that there was grain in Egypt, and Jacob said unto his sons, Why do ye look one upon another? And he said, Behold, I have heard that there is grain in Egypt: get you down thither, and buy for us from thence; that we may live, and not die. And Joseph's ten brethren went down to buy grain from Egypt. But Benjamin, Joseph's brother, Jacob sent not with his brethren; for he said, Lest Peradventure harm befall him”* (42:1-4).
1. The famine had reached *“all the earth”* (cf. Gen. 41:56-57).
  2. Jacob and his family had apparently run out of food and grain. A state of emergency is realized and so the patriarch sends his ten sons to Egypt to buy food. Jacob does not allow Benjamin (the younger brother of Joseph) to travel lest *“harm befall him.”* Jacob’s love had always been for Rachel and this love carried over to her two sons (Joseph and Benjamin). Joseph had already been lost, as far as Jacob’s knowledge goes, and he didn’t want to loose his other beloved son.
- B. *“And the sons of Israel came to buy among those that came: for the famine was in the land of Canaan. And Joseph was the governor over the land; he it was that sold to all the people of the land. And Joseph's brethren came, and bowed down themselves to him with their faces to the earth. And Joseph saw his brethren, and he knew them, but made himself strange unto them, and spake roughly with them; and he said unto them. Whence come ye? And they said, From the land of Canaan to buy food. And Joseph knew his brethren, but they knew not him. And Joseph remembered the dreams which he dreamed of them, and said unto them, Ye are spies; to see the*

*nakedness of the land ye are come. And they said unto him, Nay, my lord, but to buy food are thy servants come. We are all one man's sons; we are true men, thy servants are no spies. And he said unto them, Nay, but to see the nakedness of the land ye are come” (42:5-12).*

1. It had been approximately 20 years since Joseph had been sold into Egypt. No doubt the position of ruler, his clothing, the different language he spoke, the tone of anger and distrust must have played a part in the brothers not recognizing Joseph. Joseph; however, recognized his brethren immediately. A flood of emotions must have come over him at their sight.
  2. The brothers bow themselves down to Joseph and he is reminded of his earlier childhood dreams that he had and revealed to not only his father but to his brethren as well (i.e., a source of their hatred for him) (cf. Gen. 37:5ff).
  3. Joseph questions the brothers as to why they are here and charges them with being spies. The brothers answer in fear.
- C. *“And they said, We thy servants are twelve brethren, the sons of one man in the land of Canaan; and, behold, the youngest is this day with our father, and one is not. And Joseph said unto them, That is it that I spake unto you, saying, Ye are spies: hereby ye shall be proved: by the life of Pharaoh ye shall not go forth hence, except your youngest brother come hither. Send one of you, and let him fetch your brother, and ye shall be bound, that your words may be proved, whether there be truth in you: or else by the life of Pharaoh surely ye are spies” (42:13-16).*
1. The brothers have told Joseph a false thing; i.e., that he was dead. Their lies may have given rise to suspicion on the part of Joseph regarding the true welfare of Benjamin (his younger brother).
  2. Joseph continues to speak rough to the brothers and tells them that a test will be applied to them to see whether or not they are lying. If they are found to be liars, his suspicion of their being spies will be true. The test involved Benjamin. If indeed the brothers had a younger brother named Benjamin then they would not be counted as spies. Joseph tells them to send one back to bring Benjamin to Egypt.
- D. *“And he put them all together into ward three days. And Joseph said unto them the third day, This do, and live: for I fear God: if ye be true men, let one of your brethren be bound in your prison-house; but go ye, carry grain for the famine of your houses: and bring your youngest brother unto me; so shall your words be verified, and ye shall not die. And they did so. And they said one to another, We are verily guilty concerning our brother, in that we saw the distress of his soul, when he besought us, and we would not hear; therefore is this distress come upon us. And Reuben answered them, saying, Spake I not unto you, saying, Do not sin against the child; and ye would not hear? Therefore also, behold, his blood is required. And they knew not that Joseph understood them; for there was an interpreter between them. And he turned himself about from them, and wept; and he returned to them, and spake to them, and took Simeon from among them, and bound him before their eyes” (42:17-24).*
1. Interestingly, Joseph had the brothers imprisoned for three days as a possible symbol of his three year imprisonment.
  2. At the end of three days, Joseph comes to the prison and makes another proposal to the ten brothers. Rather than having one return and the nine remain in prison, they were to leave one behind and nine may leave to retrieve Benjamin.
  3. The rough language and being in prison conjured up in their mind the day in which they did their evil deed to Joseph even while he pleaded with them not to do so. When Joseph heard these words it was more than he could bear and he turned away from them and wept.
  4. Apparently the brothers could not decide on who to leave so Joseph took Simeon and tied him in bonds before their eyes (possibly to cause them to remember their brother in prison and return).
  5. Joseph’s command that the brothers take grain to their families illustrates a character trait of mercy and compassion on his part. Though he was caught up in the moment of seeing his brethren and worrying about the welfare of Benjamin he nonetheless cared for the physical well being of his family in Canaan.

## II. Nine brothers sent back to Canaan to retrieve Benjamin (42:25-38):

- A. *“Then Joseph commanded to fill their vessels with grain, and to restore every man's money into his sack, and to give them provisions for the way: and thus was it done unto them. And they laded their asses with their grain, and departed thence. And as one of them opened his sack to give his ass provender in the lodging-place, he espied his money; and, behold, it was in the mouth of his sack. And he said unto his brethren, My money is restored; and, lo, it is even in my sack: and their heart failed them, and they turned trembling one to another, saying, What is this that God hath done unto us?”* (42:25-28).
1. Joseph had the brother’s donkeys loaded with grain and in the pocket of one he restored the money that was used to buy the grain.
  2. When the brothers stop to camp that night one finds the money in his belongings and is terrified to the point of his heart feeling like it leaped into his throat. When the other brethren heard of this they too greatly feared.
  3. To have the money that was to be used to buy the corn was a feared sign that the brothers were trying to steal from Egypt.
- B. *“And they came unto Jacob their father unto the land of Canaan, and told him all that had befallen them, saying, The man, the lord of the land, spake roughly with us, and took us for spies of the country. And we said unto him, We are true men; and we are no spies: we are twelve brethren, sons of our father; one is not, and the youngest is this day with our father in the land of Canaan. And the man, the lord of the land, said unto us, Hereby shall I know that ye are true men: leave one of your brethren with me, and take grain for the famine of your houses, and go your way; and bring your youngest brother unto me: then shall I know that ye are no spies, but that ye are true men: so will I deliver you your brother, and ye shall traffic in the land. And it came to pass as they emptied their sacks, that, behold, every man's bundle of money was in his sack: and when they and their father saw their bundles of money, they were afraid. And Jacob their father said unto them, Me have ye bereaved of my children: Joseph is not, and Simeon is not, and ye will take Benjamin away: all these things are against me. And Reuben spake unto his father, saying, Slay my two sons, if I bring him not to thee: deliver him into my hand, and I will bring him to thee again. And he said, My son shall not go down with you; for his brother is dead, and he only is left: if harm befall him by the way in which ye go, then will ye bring down my gray hairs with sorrow to Sheol”* (42:29-38).
1. The nine brothers reach Canaan and recall to their father Jacob all that happened in Egypt.
  2. When all the brothers began to empty their sacks that all the money they each brought had been restored to them. Again, all feared the event.
  3. Reuben stands in the forefront of his brothers and guarantees the return of both Benjamin and Simeon if Jacob would allow this to take place. Jacob’s response is no. Jacob may be suspecting some mischief on the part of the nine brothers for he has lost Joseph and Simeon in their care. Jacob seems to concede the loss of Simeon rather than entertain the possibility that Benjamin would be lost. Jacob could not emotionally handle the loss of another beloved son.

### Lessons learned from Genesis 42

- We learn about the omniscience of God (cf. Gen. 42:6, 9 compared with Gen. 37:5ff).
- Joseph’s ill treatment of his brothers by speaking roughly, questing them, accusing them of being spies, imprisoning them, and proving them caused them to remember their sin of ill treatment to their brother Joseph twenty years earlier. The brothers exclaim, *“we are guilty”*... *“his blood is required.”* Apparently no repentance (change of heart out of remorse) had transpired in their mind. The ill effects of life often cause us to recall our sin and so God chastens us (cf. Heb. 12) (see study # 44).
- By the providence of God the family of Jacob comes to Egypt to grow into the great nation promised to Abraham in Genesis 12:1ff. Jacob’s response indicates not only his ignorance of God’s providential care but his inability to realize that with God all will be well if we continue with him (consider Rom. 8:28). Sometimes we ignorantly think that the sorrows we face are more than we can bear and we do nothing but feel sorry for ourselves rather than letting the trial produce a godly character within (cf. Jam. 1:2ff).
- Lastly, we learn of the compassionate character of Joseph (cf. Gen. 42:17-24).

## Chapter 43

### I. Jacob concedes Benjamin's presence in Egypt (43:1-34):

- A. *“And the famine was sore in the land. And it came to pass, when they had eaten up the grain which they had brought out of Egypt, their father said unto them, Go again, buy us a little food. And Judah spake unto him, saying, The man did solemnly protest unto us, saying, Ye shall not see my face, except your brother be with you. If thou wilt send our brother with us, we will go down and buy thee food: but if thou wilt not send him, we will not go down; for the man said unto us, Ye shall not see my face, except your brother be with you. And Israel said, Wherefore dealt ye so ill with me, as to tell the man whether ye had yet a brother? And they said, The man asked straitly concerning ourselves, and concerning our kindred, saying, Is your father yet alive? have ye another brother? And we told him according to the tenor of these words: could we in any wise know that he would say, Bring your brother down?”* (43:1-7).
1. We are not told how much time had elapsed since the brothers had come back from Egypt. Jacob seems to have forgotten Simeon in the Egyptian prison and appears to be concerned only with the fact that the grain has now been exhausted.
  2. Note the tone of frustration in the voice of Jacob. He wants to know why his sons had to say anything about the existence of Benjamin. We are given a picture of a day in the life of these men as they converse about this most disturbing circumstance they are in. Again, Jacob seems to be ignorant of God's providential care and His molding His people through various life events.
- B. *“And Judah said unto Israel his father, Send the lad with me, and we will arise and go; that we may live, and not die, both we, and thou, and also our little ones. I will be surety for him; of my hand shalt thou require him: if I bring him not unto thee, and set him before thee, then let me bear the blame for ever: for except we had lingered, surely we had now returned a second time. And their father Israel said unto them, If it be so now, do this: take of the choice fruits of the land in your vessels, and carry down the man a present, a little balm, and a little honey, spicery and myrrh, nuts, and almonds; and take double money in your hand; and the money that was returned in the mouth of your sacks carry again in your hand; peradventure it was an oversight: take also your brother, and arise, go again unto the man: and God Almighty give you mercy before the man, that he may release unto you your other brother and Benjamin. And if I be bereaved of my children, I am bereaved”* (43:8-14).
1. Judah now speaks as somewhat of a spokesman for the brethren. He proclaims to his father Jacob that he will bear the responsibility for the death of Benjamin if he does not return with him.
  2. The fact that there are nuts and fruits in Canaan does not militate against the fact that there is a current famine that is affecting the whole earth. It may be that the harvest of fruits and nuts was minimal at most and so such a gift would be very precious to the Egyptians.
  3. Not only did Jacob suggest a nut and fruit gift but he too tells his sons to take double money to pay for their grain (corn). The last and most precious thing that Jacob could send was his son Benjamin exclaiming that if it be God's will that he is made sorrowful than so be it. These words help us to see the desperate state of famine the land was experiencing.
- C. *“And the men took that present, and they took double money in their hand, and Benjamin; and rose up, and went down to Egypt, and stood before Joseph. And when Joseph saw Benjamin with them, he said to the steward of his house, Bring the men into the house, and slay, and make ready; for the men shall dine with me at noon. And the man did as Joseph bade; and the man brought the men to Joseph's house. And the men were afraid, because they were brought to Joseph's house; and they said, Because of the money that was returned in our sacks at the first time are we brought in; that he may seek occasion against us, and fall upon us, and take us for bondmen, and our asses. And they came near to the steward of Joseph's house, and they spake unto him at the door of the house, and said, Oh, my lord, we came indeed down at the first time to buy food: and it came to pass, when we came to the lodging-place, that we opened our sacks, and, behold, every man's money was in the mouth of his sack, our money in full weight: and we have brought it again in our hand. And other*



*money have we brought down in our hand to buy food: we know not who put our money in our sacks” (43:15-22).*

1. Once Joseph sees Benjamin with them his fears are turned to joy and he makes ready a feast for the brothers.
  2. The brothers; however, are suspicious and think that they are only invited to the governor’s house to be punished for taking grain without paying for it. The brother’s thereby confess that their money had been returned to them yet they had no knowledge of how this occurred.
- D. *“And he said, Peace be to you, fear not: your God, and the God of your father, hath given you treasure in your sacks: I had your money. And he brought Simeon out unto them. And the man brought the men into Joseph's house, and gave them water, and they washed their feet. And he gave their asses provender. And they made ready the present against Joseph's coming at noon: for they heard that they should eat bread there. And when Joseph came home, they brought him the present which was in their hand into the house, and bowed down themselves to him to the earth. And he asked them of their welfare, and said, Is your father well, the old man of whom ye spake? Is he yet alive? And they said, Thy servant our father is well, he is yet alive. And they bowed the head, and made obeisance. And he lifted up his eyes, and saw Benjamin his brother, his mother's son, and said, Is this your youngest brother, of whom ye spake unto me? And he said, God be gracious unto thee, my son. And Joseph made haste; for his heart yearned over his brother: and he sought where to weep; and he entered into his chamber, and wept there. And he washed his face, and came out; and he refrained himself, and said, Set on bread” (43:23-31).*
1. Joseph comes home from a day of laboring about the business of distributing the grain of Egypt. Joseph’s brothers take this opportunity to deliver their gifts from the land of Canaan.
  2. Joseph has two questions. First, he asks about the welfare of Jacob and the brothers tell him he is well. Secondly, Joseph asks if the young man with them is Benjamin and the brothers answer in the affirmative.
  3. Joseph is overcome by emotions (like when he had heard the brothers talking about their ill treatment of him at Gen. 42:24) and retreats to a quiet place to cry. Apparently the crying is very hard. Joseph has to wash his face and try to regroup before coming in the company of his brothers to eat.
- E. *“And they set on for him by himself, and for them by themselves, and for the Egyptians, that did eat with him, by themselves: because the Egyptians might not eat bread with the Hebrews; for that is an abomination unto the Egyptians. And they sat before him, the first-born according to his birthright, and the youngest according to his youth: and the men marvelled one with another. And he took and sent messes unto them from before him: but Benjamin's mess was five times so much as any of theirs. And they drank, and were merry with him” (43:32-34).*
1. Joseph eats apart from his brothers so as to keep the Egyptian custom of not being polluted by those who ate the cow (the sacred animal of Egypt).
  2. Joseph has his servants bring the brothers their food and Benjamin is given five times as much as the other brothers.

### **Lessons Learned from Genesis 43**

- While Jacob seems to be ignorant of God’s providential intention to bring all Israel to Egypt to fulfill His promise to make them a great nation Joseph is not (cf. Gen. 45:5; 50:20). Every move seems to be calculated so as to get his people to Egypt.
- Although Jacob seems to be ignorant of God’s plan, he nonetheless puts his trust in the Lord and sends Benjamin to Egypt (cf. Gen. 43:14).
- Joseph displays his ability to be emotionally affected again at the sight of family members long not seen.

## Chapter 44

### I. Joseph sets up his Brothers (44 all):

- A. *“And he commanded the steward of his house, saying, Fill the men's sacks with food, as much as they can carry, and put every man's money in his sack's mouth. And put my cup, the silver cup, in the sack's mouth of the youngest, and his grain money. And he did according to the word that Joseph had spoken. As soon as the morning was light, the men were sent away, they and their asses. And when they were gone out of the city, and were not yet far off, Joseph said unto his steward, Up, follow after the men; and when thou dost overtake them, say unto them, Wherefore have ye rewarded evil for good? Is not this that in which my lord drinketh, and whereby he indeed divineth? Ye have done evil in so doing”* (44:1-5).
1. Though let free, the brothers were far from ending their saga in Egypt. Joseph secretly had his servants put not only their grain money but also his divining cup was placed in the sack of Benjamin as a set up.
  2. The PPC (Pulpit Commentary) remarks of the diving cup as follows: “Small pieces of gold or silver, together with precious stones, marked with strange figures and signs, were thrown into the vessel; after which certain incantations were pronounced, and the evil demon was invoked; the latter was then supposed to give the answer either by intelligible words, or by pointing to some of the characters on the precious stones, or in some other more mysterious manner.”<sup>14</sup>
  3. I do not personally believe that Joseph used the cup religiously; however, he was given it and now strategically used it to continue the incognito position to his brothers.
- B. *“And he overtook them, and he spake unto them these words. And they said unto him, Wherefore speaketh my lord such words as these? Far be it from thy servants that they should do such a thing. Behold, the money, which we found in our sacks' mouths, we brought again unto thee out of the land of Canaan: how then should we steal out of thy lord's house silver or gold? With whomsoever of thy servants it be found, let him die, and we also will be my lord's bondmen. And he said, Now also let it be according unto your words: he with whom it is found shall be my bondman; and ye shall be blameless. Then they hasted, and took down every man his sack to the ground, and opened every man his sack. And he searched, and began at the eldest, and left off at the youngest: and the cup was found in Benjamin's sack. Then they rent their clothes, and laded every man his ass, and returned to the city”* (44:6-13).
1. The brothers must have been feeling pretty good at this point. All is well and they were returning home not only with food but also with Simeon and Benjamin.
  2. Sometimes when things seem too good to be true they turn out not to be true. The brothers had yet to repent of their sin and Joseph was not finished with them.
  3. We can feel the pain in the voice of the brothers when the accusing words of Joseph's servant states that they have stolen the governors divining cup. The pain is heightened when the cup is found with Benjamin.
- C. *“And Judah and his brethren came to Joseph's house; and he was yet there: and they fell before him on the ground. And Joseph said unto them, What deed is this that ye have done? Know ye not that such a man as I can indeed divine? And Judah said, What shall we say unto my lord? what shall we speak? Or how shall we clear ourselves? God hath found out the iniquity of thy servants: behold, we are my lord's bondmen, both we, and he also in whose hand the cup is found. And he said, Far be it from me that I should do so: the man in whose hand the cup is found, he shall be my bondman; but as for you, get you up in peace unto your father. Then Judah came near unto him, and said, Oh, my lord, let thy servant, I pray thee, speak a word in my lord's ears, and let not thine anger burn against thy servant; for thou art even as Pharaoh. My lord asked his servants, saying, Have ye a father, or a brother? And we said unto my lord, We have a father, an old man, and a child of his old age, a little one; and his brother is dead, and he alone is left of his mother; and his father loveth him. And thou saidst unto thy servants, Bring him down unto me, that I may set mine eyes upon him. And we said unto my lord, The lad cannot leave his father: for if he should leave*

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<sup>14</sup> T. Whitelaw. The Pulpit Commentary, Vol. 1, pp. 489.

*his father, his father would die. And thou saidst unto thy servants, Except your youngest brother come down with you, ye shall see my face no more. And it came to pass when we came up unto thy servant my father, we told him the words of my lord. And our father said, Go again, buy us a little food. And we said, We cannot go down: if our youngest brother be with us, then will we go down: for we may not see the man's face, expect our youngest brother be with us. And thy servant my father said unto us, Ye know that my wife bare me two sons: and the one went out from me, and I said, Surely he is torn in pieces; and I have not seen him since: and if ye take this one also from me, and harm befall him, ye will bring down my gray hairs with sorrow to Sheol. Now therefore when I come to thy servant my father, and the lad is not with us; seeing that his life is bound up in the lad's life; it will come to pass, when he seeth that the lad is not with us, that he will die: and thy servants will bring down the gray hairs of thy servant our father with sorrow to Sheol. For thy servant became surety for the lad unto my father, saying, If I bring him not unto thee, then shall I bear the blame to my father for ever. Now therefore, let thy servant, I pray thee, abide instead of the lad a bondman to my lord; and let the lad go up with his brethren. For how shall I go up to my father, if the lad be not with me? Lest I see the evil that shall come on my father” (44:14-34).*

1. The eleven brothers fall down before Joseph and beg his forgiveness. Joseph’s reply is that he had treated them kindly and stealing from him was no good way of repaying such good treatment.
2. Though the brothers had done this deed, Joseph would be fare and keep only Benjamin (the supposed thief).
3. Judah comes to the forefront again and tells Joseph all that had transpired when they had returned from Egypt the first time. He tells Joseph that Jacob will die in sorrow if Benjamin is not returned to him.
4. Judah’s character seems to be going through a metamorphosis. He asks Joseph if he can replace Benjamin as a servant so that Jacob will not die in sorrow.

### Lessons Learned from Genesis 44

- There seems to be two grand issues under discussion. First, Joseph’s actions are calculated to cause his brethren to feel guilt and thereby repent of their sin against him when they sold him into Egypt. Secondly, Joseph is clearly aware of the fact that God desires all of Israel to move out of Canaan and into Egypt.
- The thrust of these chapters has moved from the development of Joseph’s character to the character of the sinful brothers. God proves their character by the intense trial they are experiencing in Egypt by the hand of their incognito brother Joseph (see Deut. 8:2). “Things, in themselves of small account, test the character and motives of the life, as floating straws show the current; and this all the more because their spiritual bearing is not apparent.”<sup>15</sup>
- The grand lesson for us to learn today is that though we are accosted with trials in this life we can overcome “*by the blood of the Lamb*” (cf. Rev. 12:11). The seven churches of Asia were tried with false teachers and persecution yet they were promised that if they overcame they would receive a crown of life (Rev. 2:10).
- Through all of the ill treatment on the part of Joseph to his brethren they are moved to humility and Judah proclaims on behalf of all, “*God hath found out the iniquity of thy servants*” (Gen. 44:16). Some times it takes a slap in the face to get one to come out of their sin of despondency (cf. I Cor. 4:21).

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<sup>15</sup> Ibid. pp. 492

## Chapter 45

### I. Joseph reveals his identity to his Brethren (45:1-28):

A. *“Then Joseph could not refrain himself before all them that stood before him; and he cried, Cause every man to go out from me. And there stood no man with him, while Joseph made himself known unto his brethren. And he wept aloud: and the Egyptians heard, and the house of Pharaoh heard. And Joseph said unto his brethren, I am Joseph; doth my father yet live? And his brethren could not answer him; for they were troubled at his presence. And Joseph said unto his brethren, Come near to me, I pray you. And they came near. And he said, I am Joseph your brother, whom ye sold into Egypt. And now be not grieved, nor angry with yourselves, that ye sold me hither: for God did send me before you to preserve life. For these two years hath the famine been in the land: and there are yet five years, in which there shall be neither plowing nor harvest. And God sent me before you to preserve you a remnant in the earth, and to save you alive by a great deliverance. So now it was not you that sent me hither, but God: and he hath made me a father to Pharaoh, and lord of all his house, and ruler over all the land of Egypt”* (45:1-8).

1. Joseph was at his emotional wits end and could bear the charade no longer. He reveals his identity to his brothers and asks of his father’s welfare.
2. Note that Joseph knew exactly what God was doing with him in Egypt. Joseph proclaims, *“God did send me before you to preserve life.”* Note that God did not cause Joseph’s brother’s to do wickedly, they did this of their own accord (cf. Gen. 50:20). God simply used the wicked characters of Joseph’s brothers to accomplish His will (God used Pharaoh of Egypt [Rom. 9:17] ; God used the Assyrian Army [Isa. 10:5], and God used the Babylonians in the same way [Jer. 51:20]) (see study # 48; God hardens the hearts of Sinful Men).
3. The sovereignty of God is depicted in his use of Jacob’s sons to cause all Israel to move into Egypt that they might grow into the mighty nation God intended without the influence of the wicked Canaanites.

B. *“Haste ye, and go up to my father, and say unto him, Thus saith thy son Joseph, God hath made me lord of all Egypt: come down unto me, tarry not; and thou shalt dwell in the land of Goshen, and thou shalt be near unto me, thou, and thy children, and thy children’s children, and thy flocks, and thy herds, and all that thou hast: and there will I nourish thee; for there are yet five years of famine; lest thou come to poverty, thou, and thy household, and all that thou hast. And, behold, your eyes see, and the eyes of my brother Benjamin, that it is my mouth that speaketh unto you. And ye shall tell my father of all my glory in Egypt, and of all that ye have seen: and ye shall haste and bring down my father hither. And he fell upon his brother Benjamin’s neck, and wept; and Benjamin wept upon his neck. And he kissed all his brethren, and wept upon them: and after that his brethren talked with him”* (45:9-15).

1. God had brought Joseph to Egypt to preserve the seed of Abraham against starvation and spiritual degradation.
2. The brothers are in utter amazement and shock. They must have felt the load of their sin crash heavier now than at any point in their past. Here stands Joseph, the one we sold as a piece of property into Egypt. Their guilt over the years has all come to a head and the source of their sins stands directly in front of them giving them comfort and advice.

C. *“And the report thereof was heard in Pharaoh’s house, saying, Joseph’s brethren are come: and it pleased Pharaoh well, and his servants. And Pharaoh said unto Joseph, Say unto thy brethren, This do ye: lade your beasts, and go, get you unto the land of Canaan; and take your father and your households, and come unto me: and I will give you the good of the land of Egypt, and ye shall eat the fat of the land. Now thou art commanded, this do ye: take you wagons out of the land of Egypt for your little ones, and for your wives, and bring your father, and come. Also regard not your stuff; for the good of all the land of Egypt is yours”* (45:16-20).

1. Pharaoh of Egypt is excited about the news of Joseph’s family and greatly blesses them with land and sustenance.
2. Pharaoh also supplied the moving equipment and cost to move Joseph’s family to Egypt.

- D. *“And the sons of Israel did so: and Joseph gave them wagons, according to the commandment of Pharaoh, and gave them provision for the way. To all of them he gave each man changes of raiment; but to Benjamin he gave three hundred pieces of silver, and five changes of raiment. And to his father he sent after this manner: ten asses laden with the good things of Egypt, and ten she-asses laden with grain and bread and provision for his father by the way. So he sent his brethren away, and they departed: and he said unto them, See that ye fall not out by the way. And they went up out of Egypt, and came into the land of Canaan unto Jacob their father. And they told him, saying, Joseph is yet alive, and he is ruler over all the land of Egypt. And his heart fainted, for he believed them not. And they told him all the words of Joseph, which he had said unto them: and when he saw the wagons which Joseph had sent to carry him, the spirit of Jacob their father revived: and Israel said, It is enough; Joseph my son is yet alive: I will go and see him before I die”* (45:21-28).
1. We are not told as to whether Jacob’s sons tell the old patriarch all that had transpired with Joseph (as to their involvement in his being sold into Egypt).
  2. Jacob is overwhelmed with joy and seeks to place his eyes on his beloved Joseph once more before he dies.

### Lessons Learned from Genesis chapter 45

- The **sovereignty** of God (He alone is in control of His creation). God uses the sinful character of men to accomplish His will (45:5; cf. God’s use of Pharaoh of Egypt [Rom. 9:17]; God’s use the Assyrian Army [Isa. 10:5], and God’s use of the Babylonians [Jer. 51:20], and Judas [John 17:12-13]) (see study # 48). God did not cause Joseph’s brother’s to do wickedly, they did this of their own accord (cf. Gen. 50:20).
- It was God’s will that the people of Israel be saved (preserved) from the great famine (Gen. 45:5), to save them from the evil influence of Canaan, and to fulfill His promise to make Israel a great nation (Gen. 12:1ff).

## Chapter 46

### I. Jacob travels to Egypt (46:1-27):

- A. *“And Israel took his journey with all that he had, and came to Beer-sheba, and offered sacrifices unto the God of his father Isaac. And God spake unto Israel in the visions of the night, and said, Jacob, Jacob. And he said, Here am I. And he said, I am God, the God of thy father: fear not to go down into Egypt; for I will there make of thee a great nation: I will go down with thee into Egypt; and I will also surely bring thee up again: and Joseph shall put his hand upon thine eyes”* (46:1-4).
1. Jacob was a man of great faith and a worshipper of God. Other faithful men before him worshipped as well (see study # 27):
    - a. Abel (Gen. 4:1ff compared to Heb. 11:4).
    - b. Noah (Gen. 8:20).
    - c. Abraham (Gen. 12:7, 8; 13:3-4, 18; 21:33; 22:4-8).
    - d. Isaac (Gen. 26:24-25).
    - e. Jacob (Gen. 46:1)
  2. God speaks directly to Jacob and tells him not to fear to go down to Egypt. There is good reason for Jacob to fear taking his family into Egypt. Not only did Abraham have troubles there (Gen. 12:14ff) but Isaac had previously been forbidden to go there (cf. Gen. 26:2). Additionally, God had warned Abraham of his family traveling to a foreign land and dwelling there for 400 years as servants (cf. Gen. 15:13).
  3. Furthermore, God tells Jacob that it will be in Egypt that His promise of Israel becoming a great nation will occur (cf. Gen. 12:1ff; 28:14; 35:11).

- B. *“And Jacob rose up from Beer-sheba: and the sons of Israel carried Jacob their father, and their little ones, and their wives, in the wagons which Pharaoh had sent to carry him. And they took their cattle, and their goods, which they had gotten in the land of Canaan, and came into Egypt, Jacob, and all his seed with him: his sons, and his sons' sons with him, his daughters, and his sons's daughters, and all his seed brought he with him into Egypt”* (46:5-7).
1. Pharaoh of Egypt provided transportation for all of Israel.
  2. Israel brought not only his family but everything he owned to Egypt.
- C. *“And these are the names of the children of Israel, who came into Egypt, Jacob and his sons: Reuben, Jacob's first-born. And the sons of Reuben: Hanoch, and Pallu, and Hezron, and Carmi. And the sons of Simeon: Jemuel, and Jamin, and Ohad, and Jachin, and Zohar, and Shaul the son of a Canaanitish woman. And the sons of Levi: Gershon, Kohath, and Merari. And the sons of Judah: Er, and Onan, and Shelah, and Perez, and Zerah; but Er and Onan died in the land of Canaan. And the sons of Perez were Hezron and Hamul. And the sons of Issachar: Tola, and Puvah, and Iob, and Shimron. And the sons of Zebulun: Sered, and Elon, and Jahleel. These are the sons of Leah, whom she bare unto Jacob in Paddan-aram, with his daughter Dinah: all the souls of his sons and his daughters were thirty and three”* (46:8-15).
1. Simeon apparently married a Canaanite woman as did Judah.
  2. The sons Jacob had with Leah and their families numbered 33.
- D. *“And the sons of Gad: Ziphion, and Haggi, Shuni, and Ezbon, Eri, and Arodi, and Areli. And the sons of Asher: Imnah, and Ishvah, and Ishvi, and Beriah, and Serah their sister; and the sons of Beriah: Heber, and Malchiel. These are the sons of Zilpah, whom Laban gave to Leah his daughter; and these she bare unto Jacob, even sixteen souls”* (46:17-18).
1. Jacob's sons and daughters by Zilpah numbered sixteen souls.
- E. *“The sons of Rachel Jacob's wife: Joseph and Benjamin. And unto Joseph in the land of Egypt were born Manasseh and Ephraim, whom Asenath, the daughter of Poti-phaera priest of On, bare unto him. And the sons of Benjamin: Bela, and Becher, and Ashbel, Gera, and Naaman, Ehi, and Rosh, Muppim, and Huppim, and Ard. These are the sons of Rachel, who were born to Jacob: all the souls were fourteen”* (46:19-22).
1. Jacob's family from his beloved Rachel numbered fourteen.
- F. *“And the sons of Dan: Hushim. And the sons of Naphtali: Jahzeel, and Guni, and Jezer, and Shillem. These are the sons of Bilhah, whom Laban gave unto Rachel his daughter, and these she bare unto Jacob: all the souls were seven”* (46:23-25).
1. Jacob's sons by Bilhah numbered seven souls.
- G. *“All the souls that came with Jacob into Egypt, that came out of his loins, besides Jacob's sons' wives, all the souls were threescore and six; and the sons of Joseph, who were born to him in Egypt, were two souls: all the souls of the house of Jacob, that came into Egypt, were threescore and ten”* (46:26-27).
1. At Acts 7:14 Stephen mentions 75 while Moses records 70 coming into Egypt with Jacob.
  2. When one adds up all the numbers from verses 15, 18, 22, and 25 the number equates to 70 (as stated at verse 27. How can we account for the different numbers? Some believe that Stephen was including the five grandchildren of Joseph in this number.

## II. **The reunion of Jacob and Joseph (46:28-34):**

- A. *“And he sent Judah before him unto Joseph, to show the way before him unto Goshen; and they came into the land of Goshen. And Joseph made ready his chariot, and went up to meet Israel his father, to Goshen; and he presented himself unto him, and fell on his neck, and wept on his neck a good while. And Israel said unto Joseph, Now let me die, since I have seen thy face, that thou art yet alive”* (46:28-30).
1. Jacob and Joseph have an emotional meeting (not having seen his father for over 20 years).
  2. Jacob now feels that all is well after seeing Joseph's face again and so he is now ready to die in peace.
- B. *“And Joseph said unto his brethren, and unto his father's house, I will go up, and tell Pharaoh, and will say unto him, My brethren, and my father's house, who were in the land of Canaan, are come unto me; and the men are shepherds, for they have been keepers of cattle; and they have brought*

*their flocks, and their herds, and all that they have. And it shall come to pass, when Pharaoh shall call you, and shall say, What is your occupation? that ye shall say, Thy servants have been keepers of cattle from our youth even until now, both we, and our fathers: that ye may dwell in the land of Goshen; for every shepherd is an abomination unto the Egyptians” (46:31-34).*

1. It is likely that when Pharaoh heard the occupation of the Israelites that he was repulsed by it and had no problem giving them the land of Goshen at a distance from other Egyptians.
2. The Egyptians were known to worship cattle and considered all who slaughtered them unclean and an abomination.

### Lessons Learned from Genesis 46

- Jacob was a worshipper of God as his forefathers (Abel [Gen. 4:1ff compared to Heb. 11:4], Noah [Gen. 8:20], Abraham [Gen. 12:7, 8; 13:3-4, 18; 21:33; 22:4-8], Isaac [Gen. 26:24-25], Jacob [Gen. 46:1]).
- God does not forget His promises (from Gen. 12:1ff to present). God intends to make Israel a great nation in Egypt (Gen. 46:3).
- We learn more of the evil influences of Canaan in that Simeon had taken a wife from them as did Judah (cf. Gen. 38:2; 46:10).

## Chapter 47

### I. Jacob meets Pharaoh of Egypt (47:1-13):

A. *“Then Joseph went in and told Pharaoh, and said, My father and my brethren, and their flocks, and their herds, and all that they have, are come out of the land of Canaan; and, behold, they are in the land of Goshen. And from among his brethren he took five men, and presented them unto Pharaoh. And Pharaoh said unto his brethren, What is your occupation? And they said unto Pharaoh, Thy servants are shepherds, both we, and our fathers. And they said unto Pharaoh, To sojourn in the land are we come; for there is no pasture for thy servants' flocks; for the famine is sore in the land of Canaan: now therefore, we pray thee, let thy servants dwell in the land of Goshen. And Pharaoh spake unto Joseph, saying, Thy father and thy brethren are come unto thee: the land of Egypt is before thee; in the best of the land make thy father and thy brethren to dwell; in the land of Goshen let them dwell: and if thou knowest any able men among them, then make them rulers over my cattle” (47:1-6).*

1. Joseph knew that Pharaoh would ask their occupation and he did (cf. Gen. 46:33).
2. When Pharaoh hears that they are keepers of cattle he gives them the good land of Goshen which was very lush with vegetation and good grazing land.
3. The fact that Pharaoh had cattle indicates that either these were ‘sacred’ animals or not all Egyptians shared in the worship of cattle and so used them for food.

B. *“And Joseph brought in Jacob his father, and set him before Pharaoh: and Jacob blessed Pharaoh. And Pharaoh said unto Jacob, How many are the days of the years of thy life? And Jacob said unto Pharaoh, The days of the years of my pilgrimage are a hundred and thirty years: few and evil have been the days of the years of my life, and they have not attained unto the days of the years of the life of my fathers in the days of their pilgrimage. And Jacob blessed Pharaoh, and went out from the presence of Pharaoh” (47:7-10).*

1. Jacob blesses Pharaoh likely for his kindness in giving food and a place of dwelling in Egypt.
2. Pharaoh then asks Jacob of his age and Jacob replies that he is 130. Jacob states that his years are not near the 175 years of Abraham or the 180 years of Isaac but that these years of his life have been filled with heartache and sorrow. One can only imagine what Jacob thought:
  - a. The twenty or so years of mourning over the supposed death of Joseph.
  - b. The 20 years he served Laban for Rachael, Leah, and cattle were no doubt hard days.
  - c. The earlier struggles with Esau over Isaac’s birthright were days filled with anxiety.

C. *“And Joseph placed his father and his brethren, and gave them a possession in the land of Egypt, in the best of the land, in the land of Rameses, as Pharaoh had commanded. And Joseph nourished his father, and his brethren, and all his father's household, with bread, according to their families. And there was no bread in all the land; for the famine was very sore, so that the land of Egypt and the land of Canaan fainted by reason of the famine”* (47:11-13).

1. Joseph directs his family to the land of Goshen within the district of Rameses.
2. Though the famine was terrible, the Israelites were well taken care of.

## II. **The Famine Continues (47:14-26):**

A. *“And Joseph gathered up all the money that was found in the land of Egypt, and in the land of Canaan, for the grain which they bought: and Joseph brought the money into Pharaoh's house. And when the money was all spent in the land of Egypt, and in the land of Canaan, all the Egyptians came unto Joseph, and said, Give us bread: for why should we die in thy presence? for our money faileth. And Joseph said, Give your cattle; and I will give you for your cattle, if money fail. And they brought their cattle unto Joseph; and Joseph gave them bread in exchange for the horses, and for the flocks, and for the herds, and for the asses: and he fed them with bread in exchange for all their cattle for that year”* (47:14-17).

1. The famine had gone on for over five years and the people of Egypt and Canaan ran out of money as they bought more and more grain from Joseph.
2. When their money failed, Joseph recommended the trading of their horses and flocks for the grain. Joseph turned over all proceeds from grain sells to Pharaoh and indeed Egypt was very wealthy.

B. *“And when that year was ended, they came unto him the second year, and said unto him, We will not hide from my lord, how that our money is all spent; and the herds of cattle are my lord's; there is nought left in the sight of my lord, but our bodies, and our lands: wherefore should we die before thine eyes, both we and our land? Buy us and our land for bread, and we and our land will be servants unto Pharaoh: and give us seed, that we may live, and not die, and that the land be not desolate. So Joseph bought all the land of Egypt for Pharaoh; for the Egyptians sold every man his field, because the famine was sore upon them: and the land became Pharaoh's”* (47:18-20).

1. After the people's money ran out they traded their flocks and horses for grain.
2. When the people's flocks and horses were all spent they sold their selves as slaves and their land for grain.
3. Pharaoh now owned all of Egypt.

C. *“And as for the people, he removed them to the cities from one end of the border of Egypt even to the other end thereof. Only the land of the priests bought he not: for the priests had a portion from Pharaoh, and did eat their portion which Pharaoh gave them; wherefore they sold not their land. Then Joseph said unto the people, Behold, I have bought you this day and your land for Pharaoh: lo, here is seed for you, and ye shall sow the land. And it shall come to pass at the ingatherings, that ye shall give a fifth unto Pharaoh, and four parts shall be your own, for seed of the field, and for your food, and for them of your households, and for food for your little ones. And they said, Thou hast saved our lives: let us find favor in the sight of my lord, and we will be Pharaoh's servants. And Joseph made it a statute concerning the land of Egypt unto this day, that Pharaoh should have the fifth; only the land of the priests alone became not Pharaoh's”* (47:21-26).

1. The people's money, cattle, horses, land, and even personage now belonged to Pharaoh.
2. Joseph instructs them that in such a state they are to sow seed in the land of Pharaoh and return a fifth of all harvest to Pharaoh as a tax.
3. The people respond favorably knowing that through Joseph's prudence they have all been saved from the awful famine.

## III. **Jacob (Israel) dwells in Egypt for 17 Years (47:27-31):**

A. *“And Israel dwelt in the land of Egypt, in the land of Goshen; and they gat them possessions therein, and were fruitful, and multiplied exceedingly. And Jacob lived in the land of Egypt seventeen years: so the days of Jacob, the years of his life, were a hundred forty and seven years”* (47:27-28).



1. The word “*exceedingly*” indicates the rapid rate in which the Israelites began to multiply and come to be a great nation that God had promised over a period of 17 years.
  2. Jacob is now 147 years old.
- B. “*And the time drew near that Israel must die: and he called his son Joseph, and said unto him, If now I have found favor in thy sight, put, I pray thee, thy hand under my thigh, and deal kindly and truly with me: bury me not, I pray thee, in Egypt; but when I sleep with my fathers, thou shalt carry me out of Egypt, and bury me in their burying-place. And he said, I will do as thou hast said. And he said, Swear unto me: and he sware unto him. And Israel bowed himself upon the bed's head*” (47:29-31).
1. Near the time of Jacob’s death he calls for his beloved son Joseph and makes him swear to him that he will not leave his bones in Egypt but rather bury him in Canaan with his fathers.
  2. Joseph agrees.

### Lessons Learned from Genesis 47:

- The grand lesson of chapter 47 seems to revolve around Jacob’s answer to Pharaoh’s question regarding his age. The Narrative of Genesis has shifted its thrust from developing the character of Joseph beginning at chapter 37 to revealing the sins of Judah in chapter 38. Chapter 39 brings us back to Joseph and chapters 42-44 shift back to the development of Joseph’s ten brother’s character. Now, at chapter 47, the shift is away from the ten brothers and Joseph and back to Jacob.
- Jacob answers Pharaoh by saying, “*The days of the years of my pilgrimage are a hundred and thirty years: few and evil have been the days of the years of my life, and they have not attained unto the days of the years of the life of my fathers in the days of their pilgrimage*” (Gen. 47:9) (see study # 39).
  - First, consider that Jacob’s life was a pilgrimage (i.e., filled with sojourning). Jacob had traveled from his home in Beersheba (fleeing from Esau and looking for a wife) to Padan-aram. After 20 years of service to Laban he travels back to the land of Canaan and there sojourns. Jacob did not put his “roots” down in any one place on this earth because his true hope rest in an eternal heavenly home (Heb. 11:13-16). God’s people look not only to what this present world offers but rather to the eternal home (cf. Lk. 12:13-21). Jacob was one who lived his life not to attain worldly renown but rather to receive the crown of life (cf. I Cor. 9:24ff).
  - Secondly, Jacob realized that the days of his life were few in relation to those who had gone on before him and eternity. James tells us of the shortness of life (James 4:13-15) so thereby what manner of man ought we to be (II Pet. 3:8-13).
  - Thirdly, Jacob viewed his days as evil (filled with sorrow). Jacob’s life was filled with suffering and sorrow. Jacob had **trouble** with Esau over his birthright, **sorrow** over the loss of his beloved wife Rachel and latter his son Joseph, and **vexation** of spirit when dealing with Laban for 20 years. Interestingly, Paul said, “*through many tribulations we must enter into the kingdom of God*” (Acts 14:22). Throughout the scriptures we find that it is through great sorrows of life that man often turns inward to God. Our sorrows can cause us to be more and more dependant upon God. But again, the sorrow of our own failures drives us to repentance (II Cor. 7:8ff). I find it interesting that Jesus told Peter that he would deny him three times during His trial (cf. Matt. 26:75; Jn. 13:38). Peter’s rock solid faith in Christ would be found weak on this occasion. Though Peter denied that such a thing would happen Jesus told him it would. Not only Peter but all the disciples would disappoint Jesus through faith failures (cf. Jn. 16:30-33). The fact of the matter is that we all disappoint not only God but ourselves when we sin. Jesus tells us this will happen before it does (cf. I Jn. 1:9-10). It during our weak moments that we realize how strong (Jesus never one time sinned) is (cf II Cor. 12:7-10). We need Christ grace (i.e., the forgiveness of our sins) (Eph. 1:9). We cannot make it through this life’s sorrows, trouble, and vexation without Him but with Him we can do all things (Phil. 4:13). So the apostle Paul viewed his existence as a “*wretched man*,” however, there was hope for such a weak one through Christ (cf. Rom. 7:7-25). At times Jacob disappointed God and experienced sorrows but through it all he knew that God was with him. We

too can make it through this life of sorrows, pain, trouble, and vexation with the help of Jesus. We can do it because we know that there are better things awaiting the faithful (Rev. 2:10).

## Chapter 48

### I. **Jacob's Interview with Joseph, Ephraim, and Manasseh (48:1-22):**

- A. *“And it came to pass after these things, that one said to Joseph, Behold, thy father is sick: and he took with him his two sons, Manasseh and Ephraim. And one told Jacob, and said, Behold, thy son Joseph cometh unto thee: and Israel strengthened himself, and sat upon the bed. And Jacob said unto Joseph, God Almighty appeared unto me at Luz in the land of Canaan, and blessed me, and said unto me, Behold, I will make thee fruitful, and multiply thee, and I will make of thee a company of peoples, and will give this land to thy seed after thee for an everlasting possession. And now thy two sons, who were born unto thee in the land of Egypt before I came unto thee into Egypt, are mine; Ephraim and Manasseh, even as Reuben and Simeon, shall be mine. And thy issue, that thou begettest after them, shall be thine; they shall be called after the name of their brethren in their inheritance” (48:1-6).*
1. Joseph was told that his father Jacob was sick and near death. Joseph brings his two sons, Manasseh and Ephraim, to speak with Jacob.
  2. Jacob tells Joseph that he would reckon Manasseh and Ephraim as his own sons in relation to dividing up the land of Canaan. Any children and grandchildren Joseph had in addition to Manasseh and Ephraim would operate under the banner of Manasseh and Ephraim in the land of Canaan.
- B. *“And as for me, when I came from Paddan, Rachel died by me in the land of Canaan in the way, when there was still some distance to come unto Ephrath: and I buried her there in the way to Ephrath (the same is Beth-lehem). And Israel beheld Joseph's sons, and said, Who are these? And Joseph said unto his father, They are my sons, whom God hath given me here. And he said, Bring them, I pray thee, unto me, and I will bless them. Now the eyes of Israel were dim for age, so that he could not see. And he brought them near unto him; and he kissed them, and embraced them. And Israel said unto Joseph, I had not thought to see thy face: and, lo, God hath let me see thy seed also. And Joseph brought them out from between his knees; and he bowed himself with his face to the earth. And Joseph took them both, Ephraim in his right hand toward Israel's left hand, and Manasseh in his left hand toward Israel's right hand, and brought them near unto him. And Israel stretched out his right hand, and laid it upon Ephraim's head, who was the younger, and his left hand upon Manasseh's head, guiding his hands wittingly; for Manasseh was the first-born. And he blessed Joseph, and said, The God before whom my fathers Abraham and Isaac did walk, the God who hath fed me all my life long unto this day, the angel who hath redeemed me from all evil, bless the lads; and let my name be named on them, and the name of my fathers Abraham and Isaac; and let them grow into a multitude in the midst of the earth” (48:7-16).*
1. Jacob considered himself greatly blessed of God in that he not only was able to see Joseph again but Joseph's seed (i.e., Manasseh and Ephraim). Jacob kisses and embraces the boys in a parental loving manner. Jacob desires to bless the boys. Joseph prepares his sons for the blessings by lining them up so that Jacob would place his right hand over Manasseh (the older son) and his left over Ephraim (the younger son). To Joseph's surprise, Jacob crosses his hands and places his right hand over the head of Ephraim and his left over Manasseh's head.
  2. Jacob refers to God as the *“angel who hath redeemed me from all evil.”* No doubt Jacob had in mind the Jehovah angel of Genesis 32:24ff that he wrestled with and learned that God's blessings were to be sought through humility and prayer rather than by taking them by force (see study # 39). God's great blessing for man is the forgiveness of sins. Jacob seems to have complete knowledge of this wonderful blessing that would ultimately come through Jesus Christ. For the first time in God's Word we run across the word *“redeem”* (see study # 21). Jacob recognized the future redemptive work of Christ in relation to his and the world's sins. The Hebrew word for *“redeem”* is *gaal* which is defined as “release by the payment of a

price.”<sup>16</sup> Jesus said that Abraham saw His day and looked forward to it (Jn. 8:56). It seems very clear that early on, in God’s word, mankind understood their dilemma of sin and God’s promise to forgive them through the future Messiah. The apostle Peter said, “*Concerning which salvation the prophets sought and searched diligently, who prophesied of the grace that should come unto you:*” (I Pet. 1:10). Through Christ not only the Old Testament and New Testament men and women found solace through the forgiveness of sins but we too (cf. Gal. 3:13).

- C. “*And when Joseph saw that his father laid his right hand upon the head of Ephraim, it displeased him: and he held up his father's hand, to remove it from Ephraim's head unto Manasseh's head. And Joseph said unto his father, Not so, my father; for this is the first-born; put thy right hand upon his head. And his father refused, and said, I know it, my son, I know it. He also shall become a people, and he also shall be great: howbeit his younger brother shall be greater than he, and his seed shall become a multitude of nations. And he blessed them that day, saying, In thee will Israel bless, saying, God make thee as Ephraim and as Manasseh: and he set Ephraim before Manasseh*” (48:17-20).
1. When Joseph sees that Jacob’s hands are crossed he protest yet Jacob tells him that this is the divine appointment for Ephraim and Manasseh.
  2. Ephraim was divinely appointed to be greater than Manasseh and so history reveals this to be the case (cf. Judges 4:5; 5:14 – Ephraim was second only to Judah in name and influence).
- D. “*And Israel said unto Joseph, Behold, I die: but God will be with you, and bring you again unto the land of your fathers. Moreover I have given to thee one portion above thy brethren, which I took out of the hand of the Amorite with my sword and with my bow*” (48:21-22).
1. The time of Israel’s death had come.
  2. Joseph has been doubly blessed in his two sons (one blessing of land above all other brothers).

## Lessons from Genesis 48

- Jacob recognizes God’s rich blessings in his life (Gen. 48:10-11).
- Jacob understands the redeeming power of God toward sinful man (Gen. 48:16)
  - Redemption = “to release by the payment of a price.”
  - That which Jacob was redeemed from was the consequences of all his evil deeds (Gen. 48:16).
  - This is further proof that the fathers of our faith fully understand the future redeeming work of Jesus (cf. Jn. 8:56 ; I Pet. 1:10).
  - Jacob found solace of soul in God’s future redemption and so we too find solace in our present redemption through the blood of Christ (Eph. 1:3-7; Gal. 3:13-14).

## Chapter 49

### II. Jacob tells his sons what shall take place in the “*latter days*” (49:1-27):

- A. “*And Jacob called unto his sons, and said: gather yourselves together, that I may tell you that which shall befall you in the latter days. Assemble yourselves, and hear, ye sons of Jacob; And hearken unto Israel your father*” (49:1-2).
1. After Jacob’s meeting with Joseph, Ephraim, and Manasseh the patriarch calls together all of his sons to tell them what shall come to pass in the “*latter days*.”
  2. The revelation that Jacob was to pronounce was of great importance and he so desired all of his sons to be present.
- B. “*Reuben, thou art my first-born, my might, and the beginning of my strength; The pre-eminence of dignity, and the pre-eminence of power. Boiling over as water, thou shalt not have the pre-eminence; Because thou wentest up to thy father's bed; Then defiledst thou it: he went up to my couch*” (49:3-4).

<sup>16</sup> J. Murray. The International Standard Bible Encyclopedia; vol. 4, pp. 61-62.

1. The preeminence among all the brothers belonged to Reuben due to his being the first born of Jacob; however, he forfeited this right with his sin.
  2. Reuben had laid with Rachel's handmaid Bilhah (Jacob's wife) (Gen. 35:22).
- C. *"Simeon and Levi are brethren; Weapons of violence are their swords. O my soul, come not thou into their council; Unto their assembly, my glory, be not thou united; For in their anger they slew a man, And in their self-will they hocked an ox. Cursed be their anger, for it was fierce; And their wrath, for it was cruel: I will divide them in Jacob, And scatter them in Israel"* (49:5-7).
1. Simeon and Levi were not only from the same parentage but they were brothers in crime. When Dinah, Jacob's daughter, was humbled by Shechem the brothers raided, murdered, and kidnapped the Shechemites (cf. Gen. 34:25ff). Jacob refers to their actions as "*cruel*."
  2. Jacob pronounces a curse upon the two brothers for their wickedness. Later, Simeon is completely absorbed by the tribe of Judah (Josh. 19:1ff) and Levi is never given an inheritance of land but rather a few scattered cities (cf. Josh. 21:1, 40).
- D. *"Judah, thee shall thy brethren praise: Thy hand shall be on the neck of thine enemies; Thy father's sons shall bow down before thee. Judah is a lion's whelp; From the prey, my son, thou art gone up: He stooped down, he couched as a lion, And as a lioness; who shall rouse him up? The scepter shall not depart from Judah, Nor the ruler's staff from between his feet, Until Shiloh come: And unto him shall the obedience of the peoples be. Binding his foal unto the vine, And his ass's colt unto the choice vine; He hath washed his garments in wine, And his vesture in the blood of grapes: His eyes shall be red with wine, And his teeth white with milk"* (49:8-12).
1. Jacob reserves his greatest blessing to Judah (have the preeminence among his brethren). All Israel would praise Judah and he would have future success against his enemies.
  2. Not only was Judah to experience preeminence but great power. Jacob compares Judah to a "*lion's whelp*."
  3. Preeminence, power, and lastly great authority belonged to Judah. Jacob states that the "*scepter*" of sovereignty and authority will not depart from Judah "*until Shiloh come*."
    - a. The name "*Shiloh*" = "A title of the Messiah (Gen. 49:10)."<sup>17</sup> The author of Hebrews states, "*For it is evident that our Lord hath sprung out of Judah...*" (Heb. 7:14). The genealogies of Matthew 1:1ff illustrate the lineage of Christ through Judah (cf. Matt. 1:2-3). The importance of Jacob's announcement was that he made a prophetic proclamation of who the promised Messiah would come (see study # 21).
    - b. Jacob prophetically tells us of the preeminence, power, and authority of the coming Messiah that would be from Judah. Jesus was preeminent (cf. Col. 1:18), powerful (i.e., able to forgive mankind of their sins; Mk. 2:10; Jn. 17:2), and one of authority (Matt. 28:18ff).
  4. All nations would give account to Shiloh as the preeminent, powerful, and authoritative one from God.
  5. Judah will be blessed with fertility of land and great prosperity.
- E. *"Zebulun shall dwell at the haven of the sea; And he shall be for a haven of ships; And his border shall be upon Sidon"* (49:13).
1. Interestingly, this prophecy actually came to pass for Asher rather than Zebulun.
  2. Zebulun did not border the Mediterranean or the Sea of Galilee but was rather located between Asher and Naphtali (cf. Joshua 13-21).
- F. *"Issachar is a strong ass, Couching down between the sheepfolds: And he saw a resting-place that it was good, And the land that it was pleasant; And he bowed his shoulder to bear, And became a servant under taskwork"* (49:14-15).
1. Issachar's inheritance in Canaan was small and located due south of Zebulun.
  2. Issachar seemed only interested in gaining wages through agriculture rather than warring with the Canaanites and helping his brethren. He couched in his land as a lazy ass content to be left alone.

<sup>17</sup> Unger, M. F. The New Unger's Bible Dictionary, pp. 1182

- G. *“Dan shall judge his people, As one of the tribes of Israel. Dan shall be a serpent in the way, An adder in the path, That biteth the horse’s heels, So that his rider falleth backward”* (49:16-17).
1. Dan’s inheritance in Canaan would border the Mediterranean Sea to the south and west of Ephraim.
  2. Though Dan would experience independence the people were like snakes in the way.
- H. *“I have waited for thy salvation, O Jehovah”* (49:18).
1. After mentioning the snake like spirit of deception that belonged to Dan, Jacob erupts with a statement of great faith.
  2. The blessing of all nations through the seed of Abraham, Isaac, and Jacob was a reality to the patriarch.
- I. *“Gad, a troop shall press upon him; But he shall press upon their heel”* (49:19).
1. Gad’s inheritance lie to the east of the Jordan River.
  2. Gad was to be vexed by various attacks of troops yet prevail.
- J. *“Out of the Asher his bread shall be fat, And he shall yield royal dainties”* (49:20).
1. Asher would occupy a fertile soil in Canaan.
  2. The inheritance of Asher would lie due west of Naphtali and bordered the Mediterranean Sea.
- K. *“Naphtali is a hind let loose: He giveth goodly words”* (49:21).
1. The inheritance of Naphtali was a large plot of land primarily to the North West of the Sea of Galilee.
  2. Naphtali is compared to a gazelle as to their free movements in war.
- L. *“Joseph is a fruitful bough, A fruitful bough by a fountain; His branches run over the wall. The archers have sorely grieved him, And shot at him, and persecute him: But his bow abode in strength, And the arms of his hands were made strong, By the hands of the Mighty One of Jacob, (From thence is the shepherd, the stone of Israel), Even by the God of thy father, who shall help thee, And by the Almighty, who shall bless thee, With blessings of heaven above, Blessings of the deep that coucheth beneath, Blessings of the breasts, and of the womb. The blessings of thy father Have prevailed above the blessings of my progenitors Unto the utmost bound of the everlasting hills: They shall be on the head of Joseph, And on the crown of the head of him that was separate from his brethren”* (49:22-26).
1. Many words, in comparison to the other sons, are reserved for Joseph who is represented by Ephraim and Manasseh. Joseph was the favored and well beloved son of Jacob being the firstborn of his beloved Rachel.
  2. By far the lands of Joseph (i.e., Ephraim and Manasseh) far exceed the other tribes in land mass.
  3. Jacob reveals to him that this land will be fruitful; however, not without problems from enemies.
  4. Though the enemies bow and arrow would vex Joseph he shall nonetheless prevail against them. God’s blessings and help would be with Joseph and others would look to him as the rock of Israel for influence and strength.
- M. *“Benjamin is a wolf that raveneth: In the morning she shall devour the prey, And at even he shall divide the spoil”* (49:27).
1. Benjamin, the second son born to Jacob through his beloved wife Rachel. The tribe of Benjamin was to inherit the small portion of land just north west of the Dead Sea.
  2. The people of Benjamin were powerful warlike people and so the comparison to a ravening wolf devouring prey.
- II. Jacob’s Burial Instructions and his death (49:28-33):**
- A. *“All these are the twelve tribes of Israel: and this is it that their father spake unto them and blessed them; every one according to his blessing he blessed them. And he charged them, and said unto them, I am to be gathered unto my people: bury me with my fathers in the cave that is in the field of Ephron the Hittite, in the cave that is in the field of Machpelah, which is before Mamre, in the land of Canaan, which Abraham bought with the field from Ephron the Hittite for a possession of a burying-place”* (49:28-30).

1. After delivering the blessings to his sons through prophecy, Jacob instructs his sons to carry him back to Canaan and bury him in the cave of Machpelah that Abraham had purchased from the Hittite.
  2. Machpelah was the burial place of Jacob's ancestors.
- B. *"there they buried Abraham and Sarah his wife; there they buried Isaac and Rebekah his wife; and there I buried Leah: the field and the cave that is therein, which was purchased from the children of Heth. And when Jacob made an end of charging his sons, he gathered up his feet into the bed, and yielded up the ghost, and was gathered unto his people"* (49:31-33).
1. Jacob dies at the approximate age of 147.
  2. Jacob finishes his prophetic speech to his sons and thereby completes his life.

### Lessons Learned from Genesis 49

- The greatest blessings of Jacob to his sons was reserved for Judah (i.e., the promised seed to come through Judah [cf. Heb. 7:14]).
- Attributes of Judah and Shiloh:
  - Judah is a lion's whelp (symbol of power)
  - The scepter of God shall not depart from Judah (symbol of authority)
  - Shiloh (a title for the Messiah; i.e., peace):
    - All peoples shall be obedient to Shiloh
    - Great blessings with Judah and Shiloh

## Chapter 50

### I. Jacob buried in Canaan (50:1-14):

- A. *"And Joseph fell upon his father's face, and wept upon him, and kissed him. And Joseph commanded his servants the physicians to embalm his father: and the physicians embalmed Israel. And forty days were fulfilled for him; for so are fulfilled the days of embalming: and the Egyptians wept for him three-score and ten days"* (50:1-3).
1. Joseph appears to be the first, if not only, among his brethren to fall upon their father in sadness and weeping to kiss him one final time while his fleshly body was in their presents.
  2. Joseph's servants embalm Jacob taking 40 days (possibly mummification) and then all Egypt mourned with the Israelites for 70 days.
- B. *"And when the days of weeping for him were past, Joseph spake unto the house of Pharaoh, saying, If now I have found favor in your eyes, speak, I pray you, in the ears of Pharaoh, saying, My father made me swear, saying, Lo, I die: in my grave which I have digged for me in the land of Canaan, there shalt thou bury me. Now therefore let me go up, I pray thee, and bury my father, and I will come again. And Pharaoh said, Go up, and bury thy father, according as he made thee swear. And Joseph went up to bury his father; and with him went up all the servants of Pharaoh, the elders of his house, and all the elders of the land of Egypt, and all the house of Joseph, and his brethren, and his father's house: only their little ones, and their flocks, and their herds, they left in the land of Goshen. And there went up with him both chariots and horsemen: and it was a very great company"* (50:4-9).
1. The burial procession must have been a great sight to see.
  2. The presents of Egyptian nobles and equipment illustrates the great respect that the Egyptians had for Joseph and his family.
- C. *"And they came to the threshing-floor of Atad, which is beyond the Jordan, and there they lamented with a very great and sore lamentation: and he made a mourning for his father seven days. And when the inhabitants of the land, the Canaanites, saw the mourning in the floor of Atad, they said, This is a grievous mourning to the Egyptians: wherefore the name of it was called Abel-mizraim, which is beyond the Jordan. And his sons did unto him according as he commanded them: for his sons carried him into the land of Canaan, and buried him in the cave of the field of Machpelah,*

*which Abraham bought with the field, for a possession of a burying-place, of Ephron the Hittite, before Mamre. And Joseph returned into Egypt, he, and his brethren, and all that went up with him to bury his father, after he had buried his father” (50:10-14).*

1. When the inhabitants of Canaan saw the great lamenting by the Egyptians they perceived that a very important person had died and cause them great sorrow.
2. Notice that it was not only Joseph involved in burying Jacob but his brothers too.

## **II. The Final Days of Joseph (50:15-26):**

**A.** *“And when Joseph’s brethren saw that their father was dead, they said, It may be that Joseph will hate us, and will fully requite us all the evil which we did unto him. And they sent a message unto Joseph, saying, Thy father did command before he died, saying, So shall ye say unto Joseph, Forgive, I pray thee now, the transgression of thy brethren, and their sin, for that they did unto thee evil. And now, we pray thee, forgive the transgression of the servants of the God of thy father. And Joseph wept when they spake unto him. And his brethren also went and fell down before his face; and they said, Behold, we are thy servants. And Joseph said unto them, Fear not: for am I in the place of God? And as for you, ye meant evil against me; but God meant it for good, to bring to pass, as it is this day, to save much people alive. Now therefore fear ye not: I will nourish you, and your little ones. And he comforted them, and spake kindly unto them” (50:15-21).*

1. Fear came over Joseph’s brethren after the passing of Jacob due to their having sold him into Egypt and causing great pain in his life. The brothers thought that Joseph would now seek revenge.
2. Joseph assures his brothers that all is well with them and that he has forgiven them.

**B.** *“And Joseph dwelt in Egypt, he, and his father’s house: and Joseph lived a hundred and ten years. And Joseph saw Ephraim’s children of the third generation: the children also of Machir the son of Manasseh were born upon Joseph’s knees. And Joseph said unto his brethren, I die; but God will surely visit you, and bring you up out of this land unto the land which he sware to Abraham, to Isaac, and to Jacob. And Joseph took an oath of the children of Israel, saying, God will surely visit you, and ye shall carry up my bones from hence. So Joseph died, being a hundred and ten years old: and they embalmed him, and he was put in a coffin in Egypt” (50:22-26).*

1. The final words of Joseph illustrate his great faith in the promises of God.
2. Note that the days of Joseph’s life were 110. We can roughly calculate a time frame of the book of Genesis covering approximately 2,450 years (cf. charts in this study).

## **Lessons Learned from Genesis 50**

- Joseph’s great love for his earthly father Jacob (50:1).
- Joseph’s great love for his earthly brothers (50:21).
- God’s providential care for His people (50:20).