

GEMS

From

GENESIS



GEMS FROM GENESIS

INTRODUCTION-

The book of Genesis is worthy of deep study by anyone seeking to know God and His will, but this study will be on the principle passages that reveal truths applicable to every age. These will be tied to New Testament teaching. Genesis is called the "Book of Beginnings," but things having a beginning may also have an end. In the case of divine truth, the end will come only at the end of time. For this study, let us keep in mind what the Apostle Paul wrote in **Romans 15:4**-- "*For whatever things were written before were written for our learning, that we through the patience and comfort of the Scriptures might have hope.*"

Genesis 1:1 In the beginning God created the heavens and the earth.

- A. The phrase "in the beginning" is significant when attached to creation.
 - 1. It is used by Jesus to refer to the time of creation. **Matthew 19:4-8**
 - 2. Jesus uses it to mark the intensity of tribulation. **Mark 13:19**
 - 3. It is used by the Apostle John to speak of the pre-existence of Christ. **John 1:1-2**
 - 4. The Apostle Paul uses it to show how long the "mystery" had been hidden. **Ephesians 3:8-9**
 - 5. There are other examples.
- B. The power to create is with an almighty God.
 - 1. He made something from nothing. **Hebrews 11:3** (compare **Romans 4:17**.)
 - 2. He created all things by the power of His word. **Psalm 33:6, John 1:1-3**
- C. All things in the heavens and the earth were created by God. **Acts 14:15**
 - 1. He created the earth to be inhabited. **Isaiah 45:18**
 - 2. The intent of God is that the inhabitants be spiritually "created." **Ephesians 2:10, 4:24**

QUESTIONS:

1. Do you think that scientists realize that there was a beginning to the universe?
2. How many times does the phrase, "and God Said," appear in the first chapter of Genesis?
3. According to Genesis, chapter one, how many actions of creation are mentioned?
4. What was God's purpose in creating the earth?
5. In what manner is the "new man" created, according to Ephesians 4:24?

Genesis 1:26-27 Then God said, “Let Us make man in Our image, according to Our likeness; let them have dominion over the fish of the sea, over the birds of the air, and over the cattle, over all the earth and over every creeping thing that creeps on the earth.” So God created man in His own image; in the image of God He created him; male and female He created them.

- A. The creation of man in God’s image is confirmed throughout the Bible. **Genesis 5:1, 1 Corinthians 11:7, James 3:9** (and other places).
- B. God is a spirit, and created mankind to enable worship in the spirit. **John 4:24**
 - 1. Man’s spirit lives in his body, but is distinct from it. **James 2:26**
 - 2. Man’s spirit is eternal. **Ecclesiastes 12:7, 2 Corinthians 5:1-9**
 - 3. The man whose life-style shows that he disavows his spiritual nature is no better than animals. **2 Peter 2:9-12**
- C. Being spiritual, man is able to discern spiritual things. **1 Corinthians 2:12-15, 14:37**

A Study of the Book of Genesis – 2

INTRODUCTION – The descriptions of parts of the creation in chapter two of Genesis have led some Bible critics to claim that it was a later addition, written by someone other than Moses. They base this claim on the expansion of some details of chapter one, but scholars who are faithful to their self-imposed task of careful interpretation of the manuscripts have replied to the critics by saying that Moses merely supplied additional information to support the brief accounts of creation in chapter one.

Genesis 2:4-9

This is the account of the heavens and the earth when they were created, in the day that the Lord God made earth and heaven. [5] Now no shrub of the field was yet in the earth, and no plant of the field had yet sprouted, for the Lord God had not sent rain upon the earth; and there was no man to cultivate the ground. [6] But a mist used to rise from the earth and water the whole surface of the ground. [7] Then the Lord God formed man of dust from the ground, and breathed into his nostrils the breath of life; and man became a living being. [8] And the Lord God planted a garden toward the east, in Eden; and there He placed the man whom He had formed. [9] And out of the ground the Lord God caused to grow every tree that is pleasing to the sight and good for food; the tree of life also in the midst of the garden, and the tree of the knowledge of good and evil.

- I. Man occupies the Garden of Eden.
 - A. Verses 4 through 6 describe the condition of the earth before Day 3, when God created the trees and plants that would provide an environment for mankind
 - 1. During this time, the ground was barren, and there was no rain.
 - 2. The mist that rose from the earth was the only source of precipitation.
 - 3. It is not known how long this condition prevailed, but rain is not mentioned again until the warning given to Noah.

- a. The warning to Noah is in **Genesis 7:4**. *"For after seven more days, I will send rain on the earth forty days and forty nights; and I will blot out from the face of the land every living thing that I have made."*
 - b. This information has caused some to speculate that the rains of the flood were the first to be seen by mankind.
 - (1) Part of the evidence presented to support this view is in the language of **Hebrews 11:7** *By faith Noah, being warned by God about things not yet seen, in reverence prepared an ark...*
 - (2) This language could refer to the world-wide flood, which had not been seen, rather than the absence of rain.
4. Whatever may be the correct interpretation, the believer in the integrity of God's Word will not need to spend time in speculation of this kind.
- B. Verses 7 through 9 draw from events on the 6th day of creation—the creation of man, especially.
1. The garden prepared by God would supply the food necessary to sustain life.
 2. The garden would also contain two significant trees.
 - a. The fruit of the tree of the knowledge of good and evil served only one purpose—as a means to provide God with a test for man.
 - b. After Adam and Eve sinned, the Tree of Life was forbidden to them, but it appears again in the New Testament book of Revelation.
 - (1) **Revelation 2:7** *'He who has an ear, let him hear what the Spirit says to the churches. To him who overcomes, I will grant to eat of the tree of life, which is in the Paradise of God.'*
 - (2) **Revelation 22:14** *Blessed are those who wash their robes, that they may have the right to the tree of life, and may enter by the gates into the city.*

Genesis 2:10-14

Now a river flowed out of Eden to water the garden; and from there it divided and became four rivers. [11] The name of the first is Pishon; it flows around the whole land of Havilah, where there is gold. [12] And the gold of that land is good; the bdellium and the onyx stone are there. [13] And the name of the second river is Gihon; it flows around the whole land of Cush. [14] And the name of the third river is Tigris; it flows east of Assyria. And the fourth river is the Euphrates.

- C. The rivers from Eden.
1. These verses have been the source of much controversy among Bible students.
 - a. The description of one river dividing into four is contrary to the normal pattern of rivers on the face of the earth.
 - (1) It is much more likely that 4 tributaries can come together to form one river. There are numerous examples of this on this planet.
 - (2) The rivers in the description here seem to cover very wide areas.
 - (a) Pishon flows around the land of Havilah.
 - i) This was the post-diluvian name of a country far removed from the Tigris and Euphrates rivers.

- ii) The general location of Havilah, in the time of King Saul, is given in **1 Samuel 15:7** *So Saul defeated the Amalekites, from Havilah as you go to Shur, which is east of Egypt.*
- (b) Gihon is said to flow around the land of Cush (or, Ethiopia).
 - i) We have to remember that our text here speaks of geographic features in the ante-diluvian world.
 - ii) There are no rivers in Cush connected to the Tigris and Euphrates.
- (c) The Tigris is said to flow "east of Assyria." (On some maps of Bible times, the Tigris is shown flowing through the center of Assyria.)
- b. The Euphrates, the 4th river, joins the Tigris in our modern country of Iraq.
 - (1) This combined river flows into the Persian gulf.
 - (2) It has a different source than the Tigris.
- 2. The site of Eden and the rivers connected with it could have been anywhere on the face of the planet.
 - a. The ante-diluvian world would have a much different appearance than the post-diluvian.
 - (1) Aquatic engineers and geologists confirm the effect of running water in shaping canyons and other features of the land.
 - (2) At the height of the flood in Noah's time (see **Genesis 7:19-20**), water covered the whole surface of the earth.
 - (a) At this height, there would be strong currents in the water, with no land barriers to hinder the flow of tides.
 - (b) We still have strong currents in the oceans.
 - i) Compare **Psalms 8:8** *The birds of the heavens, and the fish of the sea, Whatever passes through the paths of the seas.*
 - ii) It is said that this verse led Matthew Fontaine Maury, an American Naval officer, and internationally acclaimed oceanographer, to the discovery and mapping of ocean currents in the mid-nineteenth century.
 - (c) As the waters receded, other abrasive forces would shape the surface of the earth, and leave it in the form we see it today.
 - b. The currents in the flood of Noah's time would have moved the ark in many directions during the year that it floated on the water,
 - (1) In view of this probability, we cannot know the point of departure, .
 - (2) We can only know the point of the ark's grounding. (**Genesis 8:4**)

Genesis 2:15-17

Then the Lord God took the man and put him into the garden of Eden to cultivate it and keep it. [16] And the Lord God commanded the man, saying, "From any tree of the garden you may eat freely; [17] but from the tree of the knowledge of good and evil you shall not eat, for in the day that you eat from it you shall surely die."

- D. Adam was placed in the Garden to "cultivate and keep" it.
 - 1. Adam did not lead a life of indolence in a land of plenty.

2. He was told to do the gardening. (God's first command to man)
3. He was forbidden the fruit of the tree of the knowledge of good and evil.
 - a. Laws are valid when they include a consequence for disobedience.
 - b. Death was the result promised to Adam, if he ate of the fruit.
 - c. This law was given later to Eve (Genesis 3)

Genesis 2:18-25

Then the Lord God said, "It is not good for the man to be alone; I will make him a helper suitable for him." [19] And out of the ground the Lord God formed every beast of the field and every bird of the sky, and brought them to the man to see what he would call them; and whatever the man called a living creature, that was its name. [20] And the man gave names to all the cattle, and to the birds of the sky, and to every beast of the field, but for Adam there was not found a helper suitable for him. [21] So the Lord God caused a deep sleep to fall upon the man, and he slept; then He took one of his ribs, and closed up the flesh at that place. [22] And the Lord God fashioned into a woman the rib which He had taken from the man, and brought her to the man. [23] And the man 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." [24] For this cause a man shall leave his father and his mother, and shall cleave to his wife; and they shall become one flesh. [25] And the man and his wife were both naked and were not ashamed.

- E. Woman was formed to give man a fitting helper.
 1. Before Eve was formed, God allowed Adam to search among the animals of the world for a helper, but none was found.
 - a. This gives us a charming narrative to lead up to the forming of woman.
 - b. Among the animals examined and named by Adam, there were male and female specimens. (This is implied from God's command to "be fruitful and multiply." **Genesis 1:22**)
 - c. It was fitting that in mankind, a female be formed to match the male.
 2. Adam was formed from dust, and Eve was formed from Adam's rib (which had been previously formed from dust.)
 - a. This "operation" sets the relationship of man and woman. **1 Corinthians 11:7-9** *For a man ought not to have his head covered, since he is the image and glory of God; but the woman is the glory of man. [8] For man does not originate from woman, but woman from man; [9] for indeed man was not created for the woman's sake, but woman for the man's sake.*
 - b. This also gives the dominant role to man over woman.
 - (1) **1 Corinthians 11:3** *But I want you to understand that Christ is the head of every man, and the man is the head of a woman, and God is the head of Christ.*
 - (2) **1 Timothy 2:11-13** *Let a woman quietly receive instruction with entire submissiveness. [12] But I do not allow a woman to teach or exercise authority over a man, but to remain quiet. [13] For it was Adam who was first created, and then Eve.*
 3. Though woman is to be submissive to man, she is also to be honored for her

- equal status with God.
- a. **1 Peter 3:7** *You husbands likewise, live with your wives in an understanding way, as with a weaker vessel, since she is a woman; and grant her honor as a fellow heir of the grace of life, so that your prayers may not be hindered.*
 - b. **1 Timothy 2:15** *But women shall be saved through the bearing of children if they continue in faith and love and sanctity with self-restraint.*
 - c. Verse 24 is used by Christ in a discussion with Pharisees over the matter of divorce. **Matthew 19:3-6** *And some Pharisees came to Him, testing Him, and saying, "Is it lawful for a man to divorce his wife for any cause at all?" [4] And He answered and said, "Have you not read, that He who created them from the beginning made them male and female, [5] and said, 'For this cause a man shall leave his father and mother, and shall cleave to his wife; and THE TWO SHALL BECOME ONE FLESH'? [6] "Consequently they are no longer two, but one flesh. What therefore God has joined together, let no man separate."*
 - d. One more thought about the relationship of man with his partner, woman. **1 Corinthians 11:12** *For as the woman originates from the man, so also the man has his birth through the woman; and all things originate from God.*
4. Verse 25 reveals the innocent and unashamed state of Adam and Eve, before they sinned. (More will be discussed on this in the next chapter.)

Genesis 3:1-7

Now the serpent was more crafty than any beast of the field which the Lord God had made. And he said to the woman, "Indeed, has God said, 'You shall not eat from any tree of the garden?'" [2] And the woman said to the serpent, "From the fruit of the trees of the garden we may eat; [3] but from the fruit of the tree which is in the middle of the garden, God has said, 'You shall not eat from it or touch it, lest you die.' " [4] And the serpent said to the woman, "You surely shall not die! [5] "For God knows that in the day you eat from it your eyes will be opened, and you will be like God, knowing good and evil." [6] 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 desirable to make one wise, she took from its fruit and ate; and she gave also to her husband with her, and he ate. [7] Then the eyes of both of them were opened, and they knew that they were naked; and they sewed fig leaves together and made themselves loin coverings.

- F. The "serpent" tempts Eve to violate God's command.
1. The "serpent" of this passage is the Devil, or Satan. **Revelation 12:9** *And the great dragon was thrown down, the serpent of old who is called the devil and Satan, who deceives the whole world; he was thrown down to the earth, and his angels were thrown down with him.*
 - a. John says that the "serpent of old...deceives the whole world."
 - b. Paul warned of this is his day. **2 Corinthians 11:3** *But I am afraid, lest as the serpent deceived Eve by his craftiness, your minds should be led astray from the simplicity and purity of devotion to Christ.*
 - c. Peter also warns us of the temptation of the Devil. **1 Peter 5:8** *Be of sober spirit, be on the alert. Your adversary, the devil, prowls about like a roaring lion,*

seeking someone to devour.

2. The Devil knew that God had forbidden Adam and Eve to eat of any trees in the garden.
 - a. He questions Eve first, but there is no indication that this choice of victim has any significance.
 - b. Eve knows the command of God, and repeats it accurately.
3. The Devil then “murders” Eve with the lie, “*You shall not die.*” (Compare what Jesus said to some former believers, in **John 8:44**. “*You are of your father the devil, and you want to do the desires of your father. He was a murderer from the beginning, and does not stand in the truth, because there is no truth in him. Whenever he speaks a lie, he speaks from his own nature; for he is a liar, and the father of lies.*”)
 - a. After the lie, the Devil tempts Eve by stating a version of the truth.(Verse 5)
 - b. As it was to Eve, this is a temptation to mankind that has the subtle appeal, “*You will be like God, knowing good and evil.*”
 - (1) A prophet warned the ruler of Tyre. **Ezekiel 28:2** *Son of man, say to the leader of Tyre, ‘Thus says the Lord God, ‘Because your heart is lifted up and you have said, ‘I am a god, I sit in the seat of gods, in the heart of the seas’; yet you are a man and not God, although you make your heart like the heart of God...’*
 - (2) Paul made a prediction about another man who would like to be God. **2 Thessalonians 2:3-4** *Let no one in any way deceive you, for it (the return of Christ) will not come unless the apostasy comes first, and the man of lawlessness is revealed, the son of destruction, [4] who opposes and exalts himself above every so-called god or object of worship, so that he takes his seat in the temple of God, displaying himself as being God.*
 - (3) Many of the Emperors of Rome desired to be worshiped as gods.
4. Eve yielded to the temptation of the serpent, but her own lusts played a part.
 - a. She considered that the fruit was “*good for food.*”
 - b. She liked the appearance of the fruit. It was a “*delight to the eyes.*”
 - c. She added these to the prospect of eating the fruit to “*make one wise.*”
 - d. All of these temptations are common to mankind. **1 John 2:16-17** *For all that is in the world, the lust of the flesh and the lust of the eyes and the boastful pride of life, is not from the Father, but is from the world. [17] And the world is passing away, and also its lusts; but the one who does the will of God abides forever.*
5. Eve “gave to her husband, and he ate.”
 - a. Adam was not deceived, when he ate of the fruit. **1 Timothy 2:14** *And it was not Adam who was deceived, but the woman being quite deceived, fell into transgression.*
 - b. This could possibly be considered a wilful sin.
 - (1) When the Law of Moses was given, it distinguished wilful sin from simple mistakes. **Numbers 15:27-28, 30-31** *‘Also if one person sins unintentionally, then he shall offer a one year old female goat for a sin*

offering. [28] 'And the priest shall make atonement before the Lord for the person who goes astray when he sins unintentionally, making atonement for him that he may be forgiven.....[30] 'But the person who does anything defiantly, whether he is native or an alien, that one is blaspheming the Lord; and that person shall be cut off from among his people. [31] 'Because he has despised the word of the Lord and has broken His commandment, that person shall be completely cut off; his guilt shall be on him.' "

(2) This passage is why another appears in the New Testament. **Hebrews 10:26-29** *For if we go on sinning willfully after receiving the knowledge of the truth, there no longer remains a sacrifice for sins, [27] but a certain terrifying expectation of judgment, and the fury of a fire which will consume the adversaries. [28] Anyone who has set aside the Law of Moses dies without mercy on the testimony of two or three witnesses. [29] How much severer punishment do you think he will deserve who has trampled under foot the Son of God, and has regarded as unclean the blood of the covenant by which he was sanctified, and has insulted the Spirit of grace?*

6. "Then the eyes of both of them were opened, and they knew that they were naked."
- a. The opening of the eyes to know good and evil carried with it the sense of shame at being naked.
 - b. The shame of nakedness is noted in other places in the Bible.
 - (1) **Genesis 9:20-23** *Then Noah began farming and planted a vineyard. [21] And he drank of the wine and became drunk, and uncovered himself inside his tent. [22] And Ham, the father of Canaan, saw the nakedness of his father, and told his two brothers outside. [23] But Shem and Japheth took a garment and laid it upon both their shoulders and walked backward and covered the nakedness of their father; and their faces were turned away, so that they did not see their father's nakedness.*
 - (2) **Revelation 3:18** *"I advise you to buy from Me....white garments, that you may clothe yourself, and that the shame of your nakedness may not be revealed..."*
 - (3) **Revelation 16:15** *"Behold, I am coming like a thief. Blessed is the one who stays awake and keeps his garments, lest he walk about naked and men see his shame."*

Genesis 3:8-13

[8] And they heard the sound of the Lord God walking in the garden in the cool of the day, and the man and his wife hid themselves from the presence of the Lord God among the trees of the garden. [9] Then the Lord God called to the man, and said to him, "Where are you?" [10] And he said, "I heard the sound of Thee in the garden, and I was afraid because I was naked; so I hid myself." [11] And He said, "Who told you that you were naked? Have you eaten from the tree of which I commanded you not to eat?" [12] And the man said, "The woman whom Thou gave to be with me, she gave me from the tree, and I ate." [13] Then the Lord God said to the woman, "What is this you have done?" And the woman said, "The serpent deceived me, and I ate."

G. Sinners tend to blame others for their sins.

1. These first sinners tried to hide from God, but this is impossible. **Psalm 139:7-10** *Where can I go from Thy Spirit? Or where can I flee from Thy presence? [8] If I ascend to heaven, Thou art there; If I make my bed in Sheol, behold, Thou art there. [9] If I take the wings of the dawn, If I dwell in the remotest part of the sea, [10] Even there Thy hand will lead me, And Thy right hand will lay hold of me.*
2. We cannot hide our sins from God. **Psalm 90:8** *Thou hast placed our iniquities before Thee, our secret sins in the light of Thy presence.*
3. Adam and Eve did not have “society” to blame for their sins.
 - a. Adam points to the woman, but the responsibility for his sin was his own. **Ezekiel 18:20** *“The person who sins will die. The son will not bear the punishment for the father’s iniquity, nor will the father bear the punishment for the son’s iniquity; the righteousness of the righteous will be upon himself, and the wickedness of the wicked will be upon himself.”*
 - b. Eve has a better plea by pointing to the Devil, who is the master deceiver. **Revelation 12:9** *And the great dragon was thrown down, the serpent of old who is called the devil and Satan, who deceives the whole world; he was thrown down to the earth, and his angels were thrown down with him.*
4. The Devil has no one to blame for his iniquity.

Genesis 3:14-19

And the Lord God said to the serpent, "Because you have done this, cursed are you more than all cattle, and more than every beast of the field; on your belly shall you go, and dust shall you eat all the days of your life; [15] and I will put enmity between you and the woman, and between your seed and her seed; He shall bruise you on the head, and you shall bruise him on the heel."

[16] To the woman He said, "I will greatly multiply your pain in childbirth, in pain you shall bring forth children; yet your desire shall be for your husband, and he shall rule over you."

[17] Then to Adam He said, "Because you have listened to the voice of your wife, and have eaten from the tree about which I commanded you, saying, 'You shall not eat from it'; cursed is the ground because of you; in toil you shall eat of it all the days of your life. [18] Both thorns and thistles it shall grow for you; and you shall eat the plants of the field; [19] By the sweat of your face you shall eat bread, till you return to the ground, because from it you were taken; for you are dust, and to dust you shall return."

H. God pronounces punishments for the disobedience of Adam, Eve, and the Devil.

1. To the Devil, who took the form of a serpent, God establishes that form as a symbol.
 - a. Any serpent, to most people, is a thing to be dreaded.
 - b. Like a serpent, the enmity toward the woman and her seed would be fulfilled in the conflict between Christ and the Devil.
 - (1) It is contrary to normal usage to speak of the “seed of woman.”

- (2) The common usage is "seed of man."
- (3) The unique thing about Jesus was that he was the "seed of woman."
 - (a) **Isaiah 7:14** *"Therefore the Lord Himself will give you a sign: Behold, a virgin will be with child and bear a son, and she will call His name Immanuel."* (Compare **Matthew 1:20-23**.)
 - (b) Paul confirms this virgin birth "seed" in **Galatians 4:4**, *But when the fulness of the time came, God sent forth His Son, born of a woman, born under the Law....*
- (4) The conflict between Jesus and the Devil fulfills this early prophecy.
 - (a) Satan's minor victories over Jesus did little damage, so could be described as bruising Him only on his heel. (Compare the Devil's little victory in **Mark 5**.)
 - i) A "legion" of demons possessed a man, and when they knew that Jesus intended to cast them out, they pleaded to be sent into a herd of swine.
 - ii) When Jesus complied, the demons made the swine drown themselves in the Sea of Galilee.
 - iii) The fearful people of the region asked Jesus to leave them.
 - (b) The major victory of Jesus over the Devil was like "bruising his head."
 - i) **Hebrews 2:14-15** *Since then the children share in flesh and blood, He Himself likewise also partook of the same, that through death He might render powerless him who had the power of death, that is, the devil; [15] and might deliver those who through fear of death were subject to slavery all their lives.*
 - ii) **1 John 3:8** *....the one who practices sin is of the devil; for the devil has sinned from the beginning. The Son of God appeared for this purpose, that He might destroy the works of the devil.*

Genesis 3:20-24

Now the man called his wife's name Eve, because she was the mother of all the living. [21] And the Lord God made garments of skin for Adam and his wife, and clothed them. [22] Then the Lord God said, "Behold, the man has become like one of Us, knowing good and evil; and now, lest he stretch out his hand, and take also from the tree of life, and eat, and live forever"-- [23] therefore the Lord God sent him out from the garden of Eden, to cultivate the ground from which he was taken. [24] So He drove the man out; and at the east of the garden of Eden He stationed the cherubim, and the flaming sword which turned every direction, to guard the way to the tree of life.

- I. God shows Adam and Eve a final mercy, then removes them from His garden.
 1. Verse 20 shows the honor that Adam gave to his wife.
 - a. Her name would be Eve, because she WAS the mother of all the living.
 - b. The Scripture here does not say that she WAS TO BE the mother of all, leading some to believe that she gave birth to Cain before leaving the

Garden.

- c. This conclusion does not fit well with the early verses in chapter 4.
2. Verse 21 says that God made skin garments for Adam and Eve.
 - a. They had clothed themselves by sewing fig leaves together. (Verse 7)
 - b. Many primitive societies today use both plants and skins for clothing.
3. God's expulsion of Adam and Eve from the garden was His way to keep them from taking fruit from the "tree of life."
 - a. Apparently, Adam and Eve had not eaten of this fruit, before eating from the tree of the knowledge of good and evil.
 - b. So that God's punishment of death could be fulfilled, they had to be removed from the Garden, and forced to cultivate and populate the land where they would dwell until their physical death.
4. The Cherubim commissioned to guard the entrance to the garden appears with a sword, a common vision of angels. (A "Cherubim" was probably one of an order of angels, distinguished from Seraphim [Isaiah 6:2].)
 - a. **Numbers 22:31** *Then the Lord opened the eyes of Balaam, and he saw the angel of the Lord standing in the way with his drawn sword in his hand; and he bowed all the way to the ground.*
 - b. **Joshua 5:13-15** *Now it came about when Joshua was by Jericho, that he lifted up his eyes and looked, and behold, a man was standing opposite him with his sword drawn in his hand, and Joshua went to him and said to him, "Are you for us or for our adversaries?" [14] And he said, "No, rather I indeed come now as captain of the host of the Lord." And Joshua fell on his face to the earth, and bowed down, and said to him, "What has my lord to say to his servant?" [15] And the captain of the Lord's host said to Joshua, "Remove your sandals from your feet, for the place where you are standing is holy." And Joshua did so.*
 - c. **1 Chronicles 21:16** *Then David lifted up his eyes and saw the angel of the Lord standing between earth and heaven, with his drawn sword in his hand stretched out over Jerusalem. Then David and the elders, covered with sackcloth, fell on their faces.*

A Study of the Book of Genesis – 3

INTRODUCTION – We are now entering a section of the book that shows the populating of the earth, along with some description of the good and evil to be found in mankind.

Genesis 4:1-2

Now the man had relations with his wife Eve, and she conceived and gave birth to Cain, and she said, "I have gotten a man child with the help of the Lord." [2] And again, she gave birth to his brother Abel. And Abel was a keeper of flocks, but Cain was a tiller of the ground.

- l. The first children.

- A. Adam and Eve obeyed the command of God to “be fruitful and multiply.”
 - 1. These two verses (4:1-2) probably cover a period of at least 20 years, perhaps longer, because they extend over the lives of Cain and Abel from birth to their adult livelihoods.
 - 2. The choice of vocations indicates a freedom to choose.
 - a. Abel, the younger of the two, chooses animal husbandry.
 - b. Cain, the elder brother, choose agriculture.
 - c. These two occupations reveal the intelligence of the earliest humans.
 - (1) According to evolutionists, the skills required in animal husbandry and farming did not appear for many eons after primitive man emerged.
 - (2) From the beginning, according to our text, these occupations were practiced, and still provide a variety of foods for mankind.
 - (3) God foresaw one of the occupations, farming, in his curse of the ground in 3:17-19.

Genesis 4:3-8

[3] So it came about in the course of time that Cain brought an offering to the Lord of the fruit of the ground. [4] And Abel, on his part also brought of the firstlings of his flock and of their fat portions. And the Lord had regard for Abel and for his offering; [5] but for Cain and for his offering He had no regard. So Cain became very angry and his countenance fell. [6] Then the Lord said to Cain, "Why are you angry? And why has your countenance fallen? [7] "If you do well, will not your countenance be lifted up? And if you do not do well, sin is crouching at the door; and its desire is for you, but you must master it." [8] And Cain told Abel his brother. And it came about when they were in the field, that Cain rose up against Abel his brother and killed him.

- B. God introduces the principle of blood sacrifice for sin.
 - 1. Cain’s decision to offer “the fruit of the ground” reflects his choice of vocation.
 - a. In the law of Moses, offerings from the “fruit of the ground” were commanded, and acceptable to God. **Deuteronomy 18:3-4** *"Now this shall be the priests’ due from the people, from those who offer a sacrifice, either an ox or a sheep, of which they shall give to the priest the shoulder and the two cheeks and the stomach. [4] You shall give him the first fruits of your grain, your new wine, and your oil, and the first shearing of your sheep."*
 - b. There was no spiritual significance to this kind of grain offering, except to provide food for the priests.
 - 2. Abel’s coincidental choice of a livelihood matched the acceptable sacrifice chosen by God.
 - a. God’s respect for Abel’s offering does not imply that God decided which type of offering would be acceptable, after they were made.
 - b. Abel’s sacrifice was a work of faith. **Hebrews 11:4** *"By faith Abel offered to God a better sacrifice than Cain, through which he obtained the testimony that he*

was righteous, God testifying about his gifts, and through faith, though he is dead, he still speaks.”

- (1) The acceptance of Abel’s sacrifice by God testifies that Abel was “righteous.” (Compare **1 John 3:7** “Little children, let no one deceive you; the one who practices righteousness is righteous, just as He is righteous...”)
 - (2) If Cain had offered an animal from the flock, in the same “faith” as his brother, he would have been accepted as righteous, also. See Vs. 7, above, and also **1 John 3:11-12**. *For this is the message which you have heard from the beginning, that we should love one another; [12] not as Cain, who was of the evil one, and slew his brother. And for what reason did he slay him? Because his deeds were evil, and his brother’s were righteous.*
 - (3) NOTE: These New Testament passages help us to draw the necessary conclusion that Abel’s sacrifice conformed to the command of God, even though the Genesis account does not say so specifically.
- c. Abel’s offering of the “firstlings of the flock, and of the fat portions” set the precedent for all the subsequent offerings for sin in the Law of Moses. **Leviticus 4:27-31** *“Now if anyone of the common people sins unintentionally in doing any of the things which the Lord has commanded not to be done, and becomes guilty, [28] if his sin, which he has committed is made known to him, then he shall bring for his offering a goat, a female without defect, for his sin which he has committed. [29] And he shall lay his hand on the head of the sin offering, and slay the sin offering at the place of the burnt offering. [30] And the priest shall take some of its blood with his finger and put it on the horns of the altar of burnt offering; and all the rest of its blood he shall pour out at the base of the altar. [31] Then he shall remove all its fat, just as the fat was removed from the sacrifice of peace offerings; and the priest shall offer it up in smoke on the altar for a sooth-ing aroma to the Lord. Thus the priest shall make atonement for him, and he shall be forgiven.”*
- d. The offering of the best of the flock, or herd, has a spiritual significance beyond the “sin offering” of the Old Covenant.
- (1) In the later Law of Moses, all sin offerings had to be blood sacrifices, in atonement for sin. **Leviticus 4:32-34** *“...if (a sinner) brings a lamb as his offering for a sin offering, he shall bring it, a female without defect. [33] ‘And he shall lay his hand on the head of the sin offering, and slay it for a sin offering in the place where they slay the burnt offering. [34] And the priest is to take some of the blood of the sin offering with his finger and put it on the horns of the altar of burnt offering; and all the rest of its blood he shall pour out at the base of the altar.”*
 - (2) This pattern of offering is fulfilled in the final “offering” of Jesus Christ.
 - (a) **Romans 8:3** *“For what the Law could not do, weak as it was through the flesh, God did: sending His own Son in the likeness of sinful flesh and as an offering for sin, He condemned sin in the flesh...”*
 - (b) **Hebrews 9:14** *“...how much more will the blood of Christ, who through the eternal Spirit offered Himself without blemish to God, cleanse your*

conscience from dead works to serve the living God?"

(c) **Hebrews 12:24** (You have come) *"...to Jesus, the mediator of a new covenant, and to the sprinkled blood, which speaks better than the blood of Abel."*

C. Cain compounded his failure to choose the right sacrifice by not heeding the rebuke of God.

1. God told Cain that his sin was seductive, and that he must "master it."
 - a. The concept of the seductiveness of sin is confirmed in other places. **Romans 7:7-8** *"What shall we say then? Is the Law sin? May it never be! On the contrary, I would not have come to know sin except through the Law; for I would not have known about coveting if the Law had not said, 'You shall not COVET.' [8] But sin, taking opportunity through the commandment, produced in me coveting of every kind; for apart from the Law sin is dead."*
 - b. We must have the will to conquer the appeal of sin. **Romans 6:12** *"Therefore do not let sin reign in your mortal body that you should obey its lusts."*
2. Cain's jealousy and anger continued, and led to the murder of his brother.
 - a. Jesus confirms the connection of hatred and murder. **Matthew 5:21-22** *"You have heard that the ancients were told, 'You shall not commit murder' and 'Whoever commits murder shall be liable to the court.' [22] But I say to you that everyone who is angry with his brother shall be guilty before the court; and whoever shall say to his brother, 'Raca,' shall be guilty before the supreme court; and whoever shall say, 'You fool,' shall be guilty enough to go into the fiery hell."*
 - b. The Apostle John also confirms this connection. **1 John 3:15** *"Everyone who hates his brother is a murderer; and you know that no murderer has eternal life abiding in him."*

Genesis 4:9-15

[9] Then the Lord said to Cain, "Where is Abel your brother?" And he said, "I do not know. Am I my brother's keeper?" [10] And He said, "What have you done? The voice of your brother's blood is crying to Me from the ground. [11] And now you are cursed from the ground, which has opened its mouth to receive your brother's blood from your hand. [12] When you cultivate the ground, it shall no longer yield its strength to you; you shall be a vagrant and a wanderer on the earth." [13] And Cain said to the Lord, "My punishment is too great to bear! [14] Behold, Thou hast driven me this day from the face of the ground; and from Thy face I shall be hidden, and I shall be a vagrant and a wanderer on the earth, and it will come about that whoever finds me will kill me." [15] So the Lord said to him, "Therefore whoever kills Cain, vengeance will be taken on him sevenfold." And the Lord appointed a sign for Cain, lest anyone finding him should slay him.

II. The consequences of the first murder.

A. God brought an indictment against Cain for his murder of Abel.

1. Cain's first response is almost defiant.
 - a. He says first that he has no knowledge of his brother's location.
 - b. God knew, however, and said that Abel's shed blood cried for vengeance. (1) **Joel 3:19-21** *"Egypt will become a waste, and Edom will become a desolate*

wilderness, because of the violence done to the sons of Judah, in whose land they have shed innocent blood. [20] But Judah will be inhabited forever, and Jerusalem for all generations. [21] And I will avenge their blood which I have not avenged, for the Lord dwells in Zion."

(2) **Revelation 6:9-10** "And when He broke the fifth seal, I saw underneath the altar the souls of those who had been slain because of the word of God, and because of the testimony which they had maintained; [10] and they cried out with a loud voice, saying, 'How long, O Lord, holy and true, wilt Thou refrain from judging and avenging our blood on those who dwell on the earth?'"

c. In both covenants, God claims the right to be the avenger.

(1) **Deuteronomy 32:35a** "Vengeance is Mine, and retribution..."

(2) **Hebrews 10:30** "For we know Him who said, 'Vengeance is Mine, I will repay.' And again, 'The Lord will judge His people.'"

2. After God's curse for the crime, and his decree of punishment, Cain was more humble and submissive.

a. He claimed that his punishment was "unbearable."

(1) God did not require capital punishment for the crime at that time, but made it a precept after the flood of Noah's time. **Genesis 9:6** "Who-ever sheds man's blood, by man his blood shall be shed, for in the image of God He made man."

(a) Before the flood, violence prevailed. **Genesis 6:11** "...the earth was corrupt in the sight of God, and the earth was filled with violence."

(b) Other murders had been committed without the execution of the murderer. (See the boast of Lamech below, in verse 23.)

(2) Cain realized that someone of his family might take vengeance.

(a) God promised to take "seven-fold" vengeance on anyone who might slay Cain.

(b) God marked Cain in a way that would deter avengers from killing him.

i) It is common today for people to say of murderers, "He has the mark of Cain."

ii) Speculation on what this mark might have been is fruitless.

b. Personal vengeance was later allowed by God under the law of Moses.

Numbers 35:26-27 "...if the manslayer shall at any time go beyond the border of his city of refuge to which he may flee, [27] and the blood avenger finds him outside the border of his city of refuge, and the blood avenger kills the manslayer, he shall not be guilty of blood..."

Genesis 4:16-22

[16] Then Cain went out from the presence of the Lord, and settled in the land of Nod, east of Eden. [17] And Cain had relations with his wife and she conceived, and gave birth to Enoch; and he built a city, and called the name of the city Enoch, after the name of his son. [18] Now to Enoch was born Irad; and Irad became the father of Mehujael; and Mehujael became the father of Methushael; and Methushael became the father of Lamech. [19] And Lamech took to himself two wives: the name of the

one was Adah, and the name of the other, Zillah. [20] And Adah gave birth to Jabal; he was the father of those who dwell in tents and have livestock. [21] And his brother's name was Jubal; he was the father of all those who play the lyre and pipe. [22] As for Zillah, she also gave birth to Tubal -cain, the forger of all implements of bronze and iron; and the sister of Tubal-cain was Naamah.

B. The beginning of genealogies.

1. The descendants of Cain are revealed down through Tubal-Cain, and his sister, Naamah. (7 generations)
2. The genealogy of the descendants of Seth will be given in Chapter 5, below.
3. There is no specific answer to the question, "Where did Cain (and those in his lineage) find wives?"
 - a. Speculation runs from the "creation" of a wife for Cain, to the skeptic's assumption that a race of men had an existence before the Adam "myth."
 - b. The most likely answer is that Cain married a sister, a niece, or a cousin.
 - (1) The genealogy in chapter 5 shows that all the descendants of Adam had both "sons and daughters," except Noah, the last in the list.
 - (2) There would be a measure of incest in these early marriages.
 - (a) Abraham married a half-sister.
 - (b) Abraham's son, Isaac, and his son, Jacob, married cousins.
 - (c) God would eventually make incest a sin in the Law of Moses.
Leviticus 18:6 "None of you shall approach to any that are near of kin to him, to uncover their nakedness: I am Jehovah."
 - (3) The first case of polygamy is in verse 19 above.
 - (a) Several Patriarchs, beginning with Abraham, had multiple wives.
 - (b) The extreme case of polygamy is that of Solomon's 700 wives.

C. In the descendants of Lamech are found those who developed intelligent skills beyond the farming of Cain and the animal husbandry of Abel.

1. Jabal was the originator of the Nomadic form of animal husbandry.
2. Jubal was the first recognized instrumental musician.
3. Tubal-Cain was the first worker in iron and bronze.

Genesis 4:23-24

[23] And Lamech said to his wives, "Adah and Zillah, listen to my voice, you wives of Lamech, give heed to my speech, for I have killed a man for wounding me; and a boy for striking me; [24] If Cain is avenged sevenfold, then Lamech seventy-sevenfold."

D. There are several "firsts" in this speech of Lamech.

1. He was apparently the first polygamist.
2. He was apparently the first multiple murderer.
3. In Cain's descendants, after 7 generations, there was still some dread of power of God to punish the evildoer.

Genesis 4:25-26

[25] And Adam had relations with his wife again; and she gave birth to a son, and named him Seth, for, she said, "God has appointed me another offspring in place of Abel; for Cain killed him." [26] And to Seth, to him also a son was born; and he called his name Enosh. Then men began to call upon the name of the Lord.

- E. Adam and Eve are comforted for Abel's death by the birth of a third son, Seth.
1. From Seth, the father of Enosh, the genealogy of chapter 5 continues.
 2. *"Then men began to call upon the name of the Lord."*
 - a. This indicates that the righteous offerings of Abel were resumed.
 - b. From this point for the next several generations, mankind is divided into the "sons of God," and the "sons of men."

(1) **Genesis 6:1-2** *Now it came about, when men began to multiply on the face of the land, and daughters were born to them, [2] that the sons of God saw that the daughters of men were beautiful; and they took wives for themselves, whomever they chose.*

(2) **Job 1:6** *Now there was a day when the sons of God came to present themselves before the Lord, and Satan also came among them.*

Genesis 5:1-5

This is the book of the generations of Adam. In the day when God created man, He made him in the likeness of God. [2] He created them male and female, and He blessed them and named them Man in the day when they were created. [3] When Adam had lived one hundred and thirty years, he became the father of a son in his own likeness, according to his image, and named him Seth. [4] Then the days of Adam after he became the father of Seth were eight hundred years, and he had other sons and daughters. [5] So all the days that Adam lived were nine hundred and thirty years, and he died.

- III. This chapter records the generations from Adam to Noah.
- A. Seth is the prime descendant of Adam in this account.
1. Adam lived 130 years before fathering Seth.
 2. Cain and Abel had been previously born to Adam and Eve, since Seth was the third son.
 3. Seth represents a righteous lineage apart from that of Cain.
 4. The extreme age of Adam, when he died, permitted a long life of "begetting" more sons and daughters.

Genesis 5:6-20

[6] And Seth lived one hundred and five years, and became the father of Enosh. [7] Then Seth lived eight hundred and seven years after he became the father of Enosh, and he had other sons and daughters. [8] So all the days of Seth were nine hundred and twelve years, and he died.

[9] And Enosh lived ninety years, and became the father of Kenan. [10] Then Enosh lived eight hundred and fifteen years after he became the father of Kenan, and he had other sons and daughters. [11] So all the days of Enosh were nine hundred and five

years, and he died.

[12] And Kenan lived seventy years, and became the father of Mahalalel. [13] Then Kenan lived eight hundred and forty years after he became the father of Mahalalel, and he had other sons and daughters. [14] So all the days of Kenan were nine hundred and ten years, and he died.

[15] And Mahalalel lived sixty-five years, and became the father of Jared. [16] Then Mahalalel lived eight hundred and thirty years after he became the father of Jared, and he had other sons and daughters. [17] So all the days of Mahalalel were eight hundred and ninety-five years, and he died.

[18] And Jared lived one hundred and sixty-two years, and became the father of Enoch. [19] Then Jared lived eight hundred years after he became the father of Enoch, and he had other sons and daughters. [20] So all the days of Jared were nine hundred and sixty-two years, and he died.

[21] And Enoch lived sixty-five years, and became the father of Methuselah. [22] Then Enoch walked with God three hundred years after he became the father of Methuselah, and he had other sons and daughters. [23] So all the days of Enoch were three hundred and sixty-five years. [24] And Enoch walked with God; and he was not, for God took him.

B. Enoch's life is distinctive, in that he did not die.

1. The text here in Genesis does not contain this information.
2. A New Testament reference confirms it. **Hebrews 11:5** *"By faith Enoch was taken up so that he should not see death; and he was not found because God took him up; for he obtained the witness that before his being taken up he was pleasing to God."*
3. Enoch is noticed in other references in the New Testament.
 - a. Luke lists him in the genealogy of Jesus. **Luke 3:37** *"...the son of Methuselah, the son of Enoch, the son of Jared, the son of Mahalaleel, the son of Cainan..."*
 - b. A previously unwritten prophecy of Enoch is revealed in **Jude 1:14-15**. *"And about these also Enoch, in the seventh generation from Adam, prophesied, saying, 'Behold, the Lord came with many thousands of His holy ones, [15] to execute judgment upon all, and to convict all the ungodly of all their ungodly deeds which they have done in an ungodly way, and of all the harsh things which ungodly sinners have spoken against Him.'"*

Genesis 5:25-32

[25] And Methuselah lived one hundred and eighty-seven years, and became the father of Lamech. [26] Then Methuselah lived seven hundred and eighty-two years after he became the father of Lamech, and he had other sons and daughters. [27] So all the days of Methuselah were nine hundred and sixty-nine years, and he died.

[28] And Lamech lived one hundred and eighty-two years, and became the father of a son. [29] Now he called his name Noah, saying, "This one shall give us rest from our work and from the toil of our hands arising from the ground which the Lord has cursed." [30] Then Lamech lived five hundred and ninety-five years after he became the father of Noah, and he had other sons and daughters. [31] So all the days of Lamech were seven hundred and seventy-seven years, and he died.

[32] And Noah was five hundred years old, and Noah became the father of Shem, Ham, and Japheth.

- C. Noah is the last of the generations listed, and lives beyond the “flood.”
 - 1. Using the numbers in the text, from Adam to the birth of Noah is 1,056 years.
 - a. Noah was 600 years old at the time of the flood. (**Genesis 7:6**)
 - b. This extends the period from Adam to the flood to 1,656 years.
 - 2. Scholars say that the numbers given are unreliable, due to the numbering system used by the writers of the Hebrew text.
 - 3. Believers can choose to rely on the numbers, since they are inspired of God.

A Study of the Book of Genesis – 4

INTRODUCTION – This section tells of the epic adventure of Noah and his family, and reveals that their salvation was conditioned on the building of an ark, and the saving of the animals with them.

Genesis 6:1-4

Now it came about, when men began to multiply on the face of the land, and daughters were born to them, [2] that the sons of God saw that the daughters of men were beautiful; and they took wives for themselves, whomever they chose. [3] Then the Lord said, "My Spirit shall not strive with man forever, because he also is flesh; nevertheless his days shall be one hundred and twenty years." [4] The Nephilim were on the earth in those days, and also afterward, when the sons of God came in to the daughters of men, and they bore children to them. Those were the mighty men who were of old, men of renown.

- I. The blending of good and bad populations creates a trend toward evil.
 - A. The “sons of God” – who were they?
 - 1. One theory is that they were angels.
 - a. This might be based on the reference to “sons of God” in **Job 1:6**. *“Now there was a day when the sons of God came to present themselves before the Lord, and Satan also came among them.”*
 - (1) Some interpreters say that these “sons of God” were angels, since Satan was among them.
 - (2) The man named Job was apparently among them, however, as one of the “sons of God.” (See **Job 1:8**)
 - b. The concept of divine beings marrying human beings can be compared to Greek mythology, where gods mated with humans to produce “demigods” and “demiurges.”
 - 2. The “sons of God” are more likely the representatives of the righteous branch of Adam’s family, descended from Seth.
 - 3. The “daughters of men” are most likely descendants of unrighteous Cain.

4. The mixing of righteous and unrighteous people in marriage has always been a source of trouble.
 - a. Esau's marriage to some Hittite women was a worry to his parents.
Genesis 26:34-35 *"And when Esau was forty years old he married Judith the daughter of Beeri the Hittite, and Basemath the daughter of Elon the Hittite; [35] and they brought grief to Isaac and Rebekah."*
 - b. The Law of Moses forbade the marriage of Israelites to Gentiles.
Deuteronomy 7:3-4 *"Furthermore, you shall not intermarry with them; you shall not give your daughters to their sons, nor shall you take their daughters for your sons. [4] "For they will turn your sons away from following Me to serve other gods; then the anger of the Lord will be kindled against you, and He will quickly destroy you."*
 - c. The Law warned future kings against taking foreign wives. **Deuteronomy 17:17** *"Neither shall he (the king) multiply wives for himself, lest his heart turn away; nor shall he greatly increase silver and gold for himself."*
 - d. The many wives of King Solomon, and their evil influence on him, was used by Nehemiah against the Israelites, who returned from captivity and had married foreign wives. **Nehemiah 13:26-27** *"Did not Solomon king of Israel sin regarding these things? Yet among the many nations there was no king like him, and he was loved by his God, and God made him king over all Israel; nevertheless the foreign women caused even him to sin. [27] Do we then hear about you that you have committed all this great evil by acting unfaithfully against our God by marrying foreign women?"*
- B. The "mighty men of old" – Who were they?
 1. Speculation has connected them with the "Nephilim," or giants of verse 4, but the Text indicates that the Giants were in existence before the "Mighty men." (NOTE: I hold the opinion that the Nephilim may refer to the dinosaurs, and that they were destroyed in the flood, yet I acknowledge that there are very good arguments against this theory – JNC)
 2. Another supposition is that Nimrod, who was a "Mighty Hunter" (10:9), is somehow descended from them, but Nimrod had to be a descendant of one of the sons of Noah, since he lived after the flood.
 3. Speculation is fruitless, and it is a moot question as to who they were.

Genesis 6:5-12

[5] Then the Lord saw that the wickedness of man was great on the earth, and that every intent of the thoughts of his heart was only evil continually. [6] And the Lord was sorry that He had made man on the earth, and He was grieved in His heart. [7] And the Lord said, "I will blot out man whom I have created from the face of the land, from man to animals to creeping things and to birds of the sky; for I am sorry that I have made them." [8] But Noah found favor in the eyes of the Lord.

[9] These are the records of the generations of Noah. Noah was a righteous man, blameless in his time; Noah walked with God. [10] And Noah became the father of three sons: Shem, Ham, and Japheth. [11] Now the earth was corrupt in the sight of God, and the earth was filled with violence. [12] And God looked on the earth, and

behold, it was corrupt; for all flesh had corrupted their way upon the earth. [13] Then God said to Noah, "The end of all flesh has come before Me; for the earth is filled with violence because of them; and behold, I am about to destroy them with the earth.

II. The cause of the flood.

- A. The Lord "monitors" conditions on the earth, and reacts to both good and evil.
- B. God saw that sin had become widespread.
 - 1. Verse 11 adds that "the earth was corrupt," and "filled with violence."
 - 2. "All flesh had corrupted their way."
- C. God regretted that he had made man, and determined to annihilate him, and the other living creatures.
- D. The only family that was favored by God, and exempted from His plan, was that of Noah. (Compare 7:1.)
 - 1. Noah is called a "righteous man" and "blameless" in verse 9.
 - 2. In the same verse, he is said to have "walked with God." This is the same praise that was given to Enoch, the patriarch who did not die (See 5:21).
 - 3. Noah is also called "a preacher of righteousness." **2 Peter 2:5** "(God) did not spare the ancient world, but preserved Noah, a preacher of righteousness, with seven others, when He brought a flood upon the world of the ungodly..."
 - 4. While Israel remained unrepentant in captivity, and needed deliverance, Noah's benefit from his righteousness would not be transferred to them. **Ezekiel 14:14** "...even though these three men, Noah, Daniel, and Job were in its midst, by their own righteousness they could only deliver themselves," declares the Lord God.
- E. It is interesting to read in Verse 13, "I am about to destroy them WITH the earth."
 - 1. He does not say, "IN the earth."
 - 2. God's use of an extraordinary natural event accomplished His purpose.
 - 3. God has used other natural means for destroying sinners.
 - a. The return of the waters of the Red Sea destroyed the Egyptian army. **Exodus 14:28**
 - b. Fire from God killed Nadab and Abihu. **Leviticus 10:1ff**
 - c. The rebels with Korah were swallowed up in the earth. **Numbers 16:32**

Genesis 6:13-16

[14] Make for yourself an ark of gopher wood; you shall make the ark with rooms, and shall cover it inside and out with pitch. [15] And this is how you shall make it: the length of the ark three hundred cubits, its breadth fifty cubits, and its height thirty cubits. [16] You shall make a window for the ark, and finish it to a cubit from the top; and set the door of the ark in the side of it; you shall make it with lower, second, and third decks."

- III. God gives Noah the plan by which he will be saved from the destruction of the earth.
- A. The design of the Ark.

1. The term "Ark" is an indication of the shape of the vessel.
 - a. The "Ark of the Covenant" was in the shape of a hollow box.
 - b. The Ark built by Noah could have been, therefore, an enclosed vessel possibly in the shape of a modern barge.
2. The materials used in the Ark.
 - a. God specified the use of "gopher wood."
 - (1) It is not known what sort of wood this is.
 - (2) Some modern translations say "resinous wood" or "Cypress."
 - b. God called for the use of "pitch," or asphalt, inside and out, to keep it from leaking.
3. Using a traditional rule of 18 inches as equal to 1 cubit, the dimensions of the Ark would have provided about 101,000 square feet of floor space on the three "decks," and a volume of about 1,500,000 cubic feet.
4. Naval engineers have said that the size and shape of the Ark would be very seaworthy and stable, in the same proportion as a modern aircraft carrier.

Genesis 6:17-22

[17] "And behold, I, even I am bringing the flood of water upon the earth, to destroy all flesh in which is the breath of life, from under heaven; everything that is on the earth shall perish. [18] But I will establish My covenant with you; and you shall enter the ark-- you and your sons and your wife, and your sons' wives with you. [19] And of every living thing of all flesh, you shall bring two of every kind into the ark, to keep them alive with you; they shall be male and female. [20] Of the birds after their kind, and of the animals after their kind, of every creeping thing of the ground after its kind, two of every kind shall come to you to keep them alive. [21] And as for you, take for yourself some of all food which is edible, and gather it to yourself; and it shall be for food for you and for them." [22] Thus Noah did; according to all that God had commanded him, so he did.

- B. God gave Noah instructions in the use of the ark.
 1. He first reveals that His method of destruction will be by a flood.
 2. He makes a "covenant" with Noah to save him and his family.
 3. To save the animals, creeping things, and birds, Noah is to bring them into the Ark, along with food for them.
 - a. It is not known how many species and breeds were in existence in the days of Noah, but many breeds of each species have been developed since that time.
 - b. It is enough to say that the Ark was capable of transporting all the animals and birds that God intended to save, in order to "replenish" the earth.
- C. Noah obeyed every specific command of God.
 1. This commendation is given again in 7:5.
 2. Noah's faith and obedience are praised in the New Testament. **Hebrews 11:7**
"By faith Noah, being warned by God about things not yet seen, in reverence prepared an ark for the salvation of his household, by which he condemned the world, and became an heir of the righteousness which is according to faith."

Genesis 7:1-5

Then the Lord said to Noah, "Enter the ark, you and all your household; for you alone I have seen to be righteous before Me in this time. [2] You shall take with you of every clean animal by sevens, a male and his female; and of the animals that are not clean two, a male and his female; [3] also of the birds of the sky, by sevens, male and female, to keep offspring alive on the face of all the earth. [4] For after seven more days, I will send rain on the earth forty days and forty nights; and I will blot out from the face of the land every living thing that I have made." [5] And Noah did according to all that the Lord had commanded him.

IV. Final preparations for entering the Ark.

A. Noah was commanded to take with him *"every clean animal by sevens, a male and his female."*

1. Some animals were already domesticated. (See 4:2.)
 2. According to the language in the text, God had apparently given Noah the formula for distinguishing between clean and unclean animals.
 3. The Law of Moses confirmed this formula. **Deuteronomy 14:4-6** *"These are the animals which you may eat: the ox, the sheep, the goat, [5] the deer, the gazelle, the roebuck, the wild goat, the ibex, the antelope and the mountain sheep. [6] And any animal that divides the hoof and has the hoof split in two and chews the cud, among the animals, that you may eat."*
 4. Was Noah told to take seven clean animals, or seven pairs?
 - a. Some may presume that seven is one of the special numbers of Jewish tradition, and conclude that it was seven animals, but this would leave the odd animal without a mate.
 - b. The text says, "...by sevens, a male and his female," indicating seven pairs. (The special number "seven" would still apply.)
 - c. These extra animals could provide food for Noah and his family, and be available at the end of the flood for offering sacrifice to God. (See 8:20.)
- B. A pause of seven days would proceed the beginning of the rain, which would last for 40 days and nights.

Genesis 7:6-12

[6] Now Noah was six hundred years old when the flood of water came upon the earth. [7] Then Noah and his sons and his wife and his sons' wives with him entered the ark because of the water of the flood. [8] Of clean animals and animals that are not clean and birds and everything that creeps on the ground, [9] there went into the ark to Noah by twos, male and female, as God had commanded Noah. [10] And it came about after the seven days, that the water of the flood came upon the earth. [11] In the six hundredth year of Noah's life, in the second month, on the seventeenth day of the month, on the same day all the fountains of the great deep burst open, and the floodgates of the sky were opened. [12] And the rain fell upon the earth for forty days and forty nights.

- V. Moses records some specific facts about the beginning of the Flood.
 - A. The age of Noah at the beginning of the Flood was 600 years.
 - 1. More specifically, Noah was 600 years, 2 months, and 17 days old when it began to rain.
 - 2. He was said to be 500 years old, when he is first mentioned in verse 5:32.
 - 3. God had determined a one hundred twenty year span of time for mankind, after he decided to destroy them. (verse 6:3).
 - a. During this time, Noah could preach, and build the Ark.
 - b. We have no information on how long it took to build the Ark.
 - B. Noah and his family were in the Ark 7 days before the rain began.
 - 1. On day the rain began, God opened the “fountains of the great deep.”
 - a. The Men of Moses’ time would not have had the means to discover these deep fountains in the sea.
 - b. Modern explorers, with highly developed submersibles, have found these fountains, or vents of warm fresh water in the depth of the oceans.
 - 2. The rain which lasted for 40 days and nights must have been torrential.

Genesis 7:13-20

[13] On the very same day Noah and Shem and Ham and Japheth, the sons of Noah, and Noah's wife and the three wives of his sons with them, entered the ark, [14] they and every beast after its kind, and all the cattle after their kind, and every creeping thing that creeps on the earth after its kind, and every bird after its kind, all sorts of birds. [15] So they went into the ark to Noah, by twos of all flesh in which was the breath of life. [16] And those that entered, male and female of all flesh, entered as God had commanded him; and the Lord closed it behind him. [17] Then the flood came upon the earth for forty days; and the water increased and lifted up the ark, so that it rose above the earth. [18] And the water prevailed and increased greatly upon the earth; and the ark floated on the surface of the water. [19] And the water prevailed more and more upon the earth, so that all the high mountains everywhere under the heavens were covered. [20] The water prevailed fifteen cubits higher, and the mountains were covered.

- C. Moses gives a very graphic and accurate description of the progress of the flood.
 - 1. He says, “The water increased and LIFTED UP the ark.”
 - 2. Moses’ knowledge of boats would be from observing them on the Nile river, and possibly the “lifting” of boats by rising water.
- D. Moses is definite in his measurement of 15 cubits higher than the mountains.
 - 1. He was not a witness of this, so it had to be revealed to him by God.
 - 2. Some scientists say that the total volume of water on the earth is sufficient to cover all the mountains, if the polar ice caps are melted.

Genesis 7:21-24

[21] And all flesh that moved on the earth perished, birds and cattle and beasts and every swarming thing that swarms upon the earth, and all mankind; [22] of all that was on the dry land, all in whose nostrils was the breath of the spirit of life,

died. [23] Thus He blotted out every living thing that was upon the face of the land, from man to animals to creeping things and to birds of the sky, and they were blotted out from the earth; and only Noah was left, together with those that were with him in the ark. [24] And the water prevailed upon the earth one hundred and fifty days.

- E. The tragic end of all those who perished in the Flood could have been avoided.
 - 1. Noah is the example to them of the kind of person who can be saved.
 - a. He had complete trust in the Word of God.
 - b. He was obedient to God's every command.
 - 2. Noah's salvation, with his family, is also the pattern for those under the New Testament. **1 Peter 3:18-21** *"For Christ also died for sins once for all, the just for the unjust, in order that He might bring us to God, having been put to death in the flesh, but made alive in the spirit; [19] in which also He went and made proclamation to the spirits now in prison, [20] who once were disobedient, when the patience of God kept waiting in the days of Noah, during the construction of the ark, in which a few, that is, eight persons, were brought safely through the water. [21] And corresponding to that, baptism now saves you-- not the removal of dirt from the flesh, but an appeal to God for a good conscience-- through the resurrection of Jesus Christ..."*
 - 3. The destruction of the wicked in Noah's time is confirmed in the New Testament by a revelation from Jesus Christ. **Luke 17:26-27** *"And just as it happened in the days of Noah, so it shall be also in the days of the Son of Man: [27] they were eating, they were drinking, they were marrying, they were being given in marriage, until the day that Noah entered the ark, and the flood came and destroyed them all."*
- F. This passage also reveals the period in which the Flood was at its full height – 150 days.

Genesis 8:1-5

But God remembered Noah and all the beasts and all the cattle that were with him in the ark; and God caused a wind to pass over the earth, and the water subsided. [2] Also the fountains of the deep and the floodgates of the sky were closed, and the rain from the sky was restrained; [3] and the water receded steadily from the earth, and at the end of one hundred and fifty days the water decreased. [4] And in the seventh month, on the seventeenth day of the month, the ark rested upon the mountains of Ararat. [5] And the water decreased steadily until the tenth month; in the tenth month, on the first day of the month, the tops of the mountains became visible.

VI. The Flood recedes.

- A. God reverses the causes of the Flood, and the waters gradually recede.
 - 1. Verse 4 says that the Ark "rested upon the mountains of Ararat" in the 7th month, on the 17th day of the month.
 - 2. This would be 5 months after Noah entered the Ark.
 - 3. The tops of the (surrounding?) Mountains became visible on the 1st day of the 10th month (or, nearly 70 days after the Ark grounded).

Genesis 8:6-12

[6] Then it came about at the end of forty days, that Noah opened the window of the ark which he had made; [7] and he sent out a raven, and it flew here and there until the water was dried up from the earth. [8] Then he sent out a dove from him, to see if the water was abated from the face of the land; [9] but the dove found no resting place for the sole of her foot, so she returned to him into the ark; for the water was on the surface of all the earth. Then he put out his hand and took her, and brought her into the ark to himself. [10] So he waited yet another seven days; and again he sent out the dove from the ark. [11] And the dove came to him toward evening; and behold, in her beak was a freshly picked olive leaf. So Noah knew that the water was abated from the earth. [12] Then he waited yet another seven days, and sent out the dove; but she did not return to him again.

- B. Noah and family remained in the Ark until he could obtain proof that the water of the Flood had receded enough.
 - 1. The first two birds he sent out brought no helpful evidence.
 - 2. The final flight of the dove produced the evidence Noah wanted – a “freshly picked olive leaf.”
 - a. Skeptics question this information, contending that an olive tree could not have survived the Flood.
 - b. The believer accepts the story as fact, not fiction.

Genesis 8:13-19

[13] Now it came about in the six hundred and first year, in the first month, on the first of the month, the water was dried up from the earth. Then Noah removed the covering of the ark, and looked, and behold, the surface of the ground was dried up. [14] And in the second month, on the twenty-seventh day of the month, the earth was dry. [15] Then God spoke to Noah, saying, [16] "Go out of the ark, you and your wife and your sons and your sons' wives with you. [17] Bring out with you every living thing of all flesh that is with you, birds and animals and every creeping thing that creeps on the earth, that they may breed abundantly on the earth, and be fruitful and multiply on the earth." [18] So Noah went out, and his sons and his wife and his sons' wives with him. [19] Every beast, every creeping thing, and every bird, everything that moves on the earth, went out by their families from the ark.

- C. Using the time frame in verse 14, Noah and his family spent a year, or 12 lunar months, plus 10 days in the Ark.
- D. God commanded the survivors of the Flood to “breed abundantly on the earth, and be fruitful and multiply on the earth,” the same command he had given to His creation in the beginning.

Genesis 8:20-22

[20] Then Noah built an altar to the Lord, and took of every clean animal and of every clean bird and offered burnt offerings on the altar. [21] And the Lord smelled the soothing aroma; and the Lord said to Himself, "I will never again curse the

ground on account of man, for the intent of man's heart is evil from his youth; and I will never again destroy every living thing, as I have done. [22] While the earth remains, seedtime and harvest, and cold and heat, and summer and winter, and day and night shall not cease."

VII.Noah's first inclination, after departing from the Ark, is to make an offering to God.

- A. Noah offered the "clean" animals and birds he had taken with him in the Ark.
- B. God made a promise to Himself that he would "never again destroy every living thing."
 - 1. There will be a final destruction, but not by a flood. **2 Peter 3:5b-7** "...by the word of God the heavens existed long ago and the earth was formed out of water and by water, [6] through which the world at that time was destroyed, being flooded with water. [7] But the present heavens and earth by His word are being reserved for fire, kept for the day of judgment and destruction of ungodly men."
 - 2. Not only will the "ungodly" be destroyed in the last day, but heaven and earth also. **2 Peter 3:10** "But the day of the Lord will come like a thief, in which the heavens will pass away with a roar and the elements will be destroyed with intense heat, and the earth and its works will be burned up."
- C. After the Flood of Noah, God ordained that there will be times and seasons while the earth remains.

Genesis 9:1-7

And God blessed Noah and his sons and said to them, "Be fruitful and multiply, and fill the earth. [2] And the fear of you and the terror of you shall be on every beast of the earth and on every bird of the sky; with everything that creeps on the ground, and all the fish of the sea, into your hand they are given. [3] Every moving thing that is alive shall be food for you; I give all to you, as I gave the green plant. [4] Only you shall not eat flesh with its life, that is, its blood. [5] And surely I will require your lifeblood; from every beast I will require it. And from every man, from every man's brother I will require the life of man. [6] Whoever sheds man's blood, by man his blood shall be shed, for in the image of God He made man. [7] And as for you, be fruitful and multiply; populate the earth abundantly and multiply in it."

VIII.Events after the Flood.

- A. The commands by God to "multiply and fill the earth," and to have dominion over the other living things, are repeated to mankind in the cleansed earth.
- B. Additional laws of God are given to Noah and his descendants.
 - 1. They were not to eat meat that had not be drained of its blood.
 - a. God says, "I will require your lifeblood," probably meaning that this would be the punishment for violating this command.
 - b. The Law of Moses also had this prohibition. **Leviticus 17:10-11** "And any man from the house of Israel, or from the aliens who sojourn among them, who eats any blood, I will set My face against that person who eats blood, and will cut him off from among his people. [11] For the life of the flesh is in the blood, and I have given it to you on the altar to make atonement for your souls; for it is the

blood by reason of the life that makes atonement.”

- c. This basic law passed into the New Testament. **Acts 15:28-29** *“(In a letter to the Gentiles) For it seemed good to the Holy Spirit and to us to lay upon you no greater burden than these essentials: [29] that you abstain from things sacrificed to idols and from blood and from things strangled and from fornication; if you keep yourselves free from such things, you will do well.”*
2. God established the rule of capital punishment for murder in verse 6.
 - a. This rule also appears in the Law of Moses.
 - (1) **Leviticus 24:17** *“And if a man takes the life of any human being, he shall surely be put to death.”*
 - (2) **Deuteronomy 17:6-7** *“On the evidence of two witnesses or three witnesses, he who is to die shall be put to death; he shall not be put to death on the evidence of one witness. [7] The hand of the witnesses shall be first against him to put him to death, and afterward the hand of all the people. So you shall purge the evil from your midst.”*
 - b. The New Testament amends this rule.
 - (1) Christians are forbidden to avenge themselves. **Romans 12:19** *“Never take your own revenge, beloved, but leave room for the wrath of God, for it is written, ‘Vengeance is Mine, I will repay,’ says the Lord.”*
 - (2) The New Testament appoints the governing rulers as the executioners. **Romans 13:3-4** *“For rulers are not a cause of fear for good behavior, but for evil. Do you want to have no fear of authority? Do what is good, and you will have praise from the same; [4] for it is a minister of God to you for good. But if you do what is evil, be afraid; for it does not bear the sword for nothing; for it is a minister of God, an avenger who brings wrath upon the one who practices evil.”*

Genesis 9:8-17

[8] Then God spoke to Noah and to his sons with him, saying, [9] “Now behold, I Myself do establish My covenant with you, and with your descendants after you; [10] and with every living creature that is with you, the birds, the cattle, and every beast of the earth with you; of all that comes out of the ark, even every beast of the earth. [11] And I establish My covenant with you; and all flesh shall never again be cut off by the water of the flood, neither shall there again be a flood to destroy the earth.” [12] And God said, “This is the sign of the covenant which I am making between Me and you and every living creature that is with you, for all successive generations; [13] I set My bow in the cloud, and it shall be for a sign of a covenant between Me and the earth. [14] And it shall come about, when I bring a cloud over the earth, that the bow shall be seen in the cloud, [15] and I will remember My covenant, which is between Me and you and every living creature of all flesh; and never again shall the water become a flood to destroy all flesh. [16] When the bow is in the cloud, then I will look upon it, to remember the everlasting covenant between God and every living creature of all flesh that is on the earth.” [17] And God said to Noah, “This is the sign of the covenant which I have established between Me and all flesh that is on the earth.”

IX. The “covenant” with the sign of the rainbow.

- A. This covenant is with all descendants of Noah, and with all the living things that came through the flood in the Ark.
 - 1. God promised never to destroy the earth with a flood.
 - 2. God has reserved the earth for destruction by fire (as we have noted earlier in this study).
- B. This passage is further evidence, some say, that it had never rained on the earth until the Flood.
 - 1. The rainbow, as we know today, is caused by a refraction of light waves from the sun, as it passes through the raindrops at the end of a rain shower.
 - 2. If it had never rained before the Flood, this phenomenon would not have been seen by mankind.

Genesis 9:18-27

[18] Now the sons of Noah who came out of the ark were Shem and Ham and Japheth; and Ham was the father of Canaan. [19] These three were the sons of Noah; and from these the whole earth was populated.

[20] Then Noah began farming and planted a vineyard. [21] And he drank of the wine and became drunk, and uncovered himself inside his tent. [22] And Ham, the father of Canaan, saw the nakedness of his father, and told his two brothers outside. [23] But Shem and Japheth took a garment and laid it upon both their shoulders and walked backward and covered the nakedness of their father; and their faces were turned away, so that they did not see their father's nakedness. [24] When Noah awoke from his wine, he knew what his youngest son had done to him. [25] So he said, “Cursed be Canaan; a servant of servants he shall be to his brothers.” [26] He also said, “Blessed be the Lord, the God of Shem; and let Canaan be his servant. [27] May God enlarge Japheth, and let him dwell in the tents of Shem; and let Canaan be his servant.”

X. After the Flood, evil traits return.

- A. Noah’s drunkenness.
 - 1. This is the first mention in the Bible of the effect of fermented drink.
 - a. Noah may not have known what the effect would be.
 - b. If he did know, he did not show caution in the amount he drank.
 - 2. Inebriation will cause the drinker to lose his inhibitions. (See **Ephesians 5:18**.)
 - a. It was certainly known that nakedness was improper.
 - b. Noah’s nakedness within his tent did not protect him from being seen.
- B. Noah is seen by his son, Ham (the father of Canaan).
 - 1. When he saw his father’s nakedness, Ham had the opportunity to cover him, but he failed to do this.
 - 2. His motive for telling his brothers is not recorded.
 - a. He may have been amused, and wanted his brothers to share in the humor.
 - b. He may have wanted to scandalize the incident, in disrespect for his

- father.
- c. If he had been concerned for his father's indiscretion, he could have covered him.
- C. Noah's response when he becomes sober.
1. He pronounced a curse on Canaan, Ham's son, rather than on Ham himself.
 - a. Many suppositions and opinions are expressed by commentators on Noah's choice to curse Canaan.
 - b. Most of the opinions rest on the presumption that Canaan was involved in the incident, though there is no mention of this in the text.
 - c. The most likely opinion is that Canaan's character followed that of his father, Ham, and caused him to be cursed for those inherited evil traits. (Compare **Exodus 20:5b** "...I, the Lord your God, am a jealous God, visiting the iniquity of the fathers on the children, on the third and the fourth generations of those who hate Me...")
 - d. Canaan's punishment made him a servant to Shem and Japheth.
 - e. When Joshua and the Israelites conquered the promised land, they made the Canaanites "hewers of wood, and carriers of water."
 2. Noah also pronounced a blessing on Shem and Japheth.
 - a. Some commentators read verse 26, "God is blessed by the righteous life of Shem." (Other versions of the sentence can be found, also.)
 - b. Noah's statement, in verse 27, is – "May God enlarge Japheth, and let him dwell in the tents of Shem..."
 - (1) Many opinions have been written on the meaning of this language.
 - (2) The most likely opinion is that the descendants of Japheth will be more numerous than those of Shem, and they will live among the "Semites."
- D. The suppositions, guesses, and opinions about these matters are so diverse and so numerous that they tend to distract us from the moral and spiritual lessons to be learned in this very interesting ancient narrative.

Genesis 9:28

[28] And Noah lived three hundred and fifty years after the flood. [29] So all the days of Noah were nine hundred and fifty years, and he died.

XI. The death of Noah.

- A. Noah's long life can be closely compared to those of other patriarchs. (Adam – 930 years, Methuselah – 969 years, Noah – 950 years.)
- B. Bible students should note that after the Flood, the ages of the patriarchs grew shorter in the following generations.
- C. Moses is traditionally credited with writing, "*As for the days of our life, they contain seventy years, or if due to strength, eighty years, yet their pride is but labor and sorrow; for soon it is gone and we fly away.*" **Psalm 90:10**

INTRODUCTION – The descendants of Noah are listed in brief, with many of the names being important to later events and places and nations in Bible history. After this, the events after the Flood lead up to the early events in the life of Abraham.

Genesis 10:1-5

Now these are the records of the generations of Shem, Ham, and Japheth, the sons of Noah; and sons were born to them after the flood.

[2] The sons of Japheth were Gomer and Magog and Madai and Javan and Tubal and Meshech and Tiras. [3] And the sons of Gomer were Ashkenaz and Riphath and Togarmah. [4] And the sons of Javan were Elishah and Tarshish, Kittim and Dodanim. [5] From these the coastlands of the nations were separated into their lands, every one according to his language, according to their families, into their nations.

I. The descendants of Japheth.

A. One of the 7 sons was named “Magog.”

1. Magog probably founded a nation. **Ezekiel 38:2** *“Son of man, set your face toward Gog of the land of Magog, the prince of Rosh, Meshech, and Tubal, and prophesy against him...”* (This verse was written about 1000 years after the events in Genesis 10.)
2. This passage in Ezekiel contains the names of two other sons of Japheth – Meshech and Tubal.
3. In the figurative language of the book of Revelation, we find the name again. **Revelation 20:7-8** *And when the thousand years are completed, Satan will be released from his prison, [8] and will come out to deceive the nations which are in the four corners of the earth, Gog and Magog, to gather them together for the war; the number of them is like the sand of the seashore.*

B. The genealogical line of Japheth is continued through two of his other sons.

1. The sons of Gomer were Ashkenaz and Riphath and Togarmah.
 - a. The name, Ashkenaz, is found 2 other times in the Old Testament.
 - b. It refers to a nation or kingdom in **Jeremiah 51:2**. *Lift up a signal in the land, blow a trumpet among the nations! Consecrate the nations against her, summon against her the kingdoms of Ararat, Minni and Ashkenaz; appoint a marshal against her, bring up the horses like bristly locusts.*
2. The sons of Javan were Elishah and Tarshish, Kittim and Dodanim.
 - a. The son named “Tarshish” may have founded the country of that name, which is mentioned 25 times in the Old Testament.
 - (1) One prominent mention is about Solomon’s fleet of trading ships. **2 Chronicles 9:21** *For the king had ships which went to Tarshish with the servants of Hiram; once every three years the ships of Tarshish came bringing gold and silver, ivory and apes and peacocks. (No one knows for sure, but apes found their way to Gibraltar in “Tarshish.”)*
 - (2) Another interesting mention of this name is in the flight of the prophet Jonah from God. **Jonah 1:3** *But Jonah rose up to flee to Tarshish from the presence of the Lord. So he went down to Joppa, found a ship which was going*

to Tarshish, paid the fare, and went down into it to go with them to Tarshish from the presence of the Lord.

- b. The son named Kittim may have founded a region, also, and is mentioned four times in the Old Testament. One example is **Numbers 24:24**. *"But ships shall come from the coast of Kittim, and they shall afflict Asshur and shall afflict Eber; so they also shall come to destruction."*

(NOTE: Verse five tells of the spread of the nations by language, but this did not occur until the interference of God at Babel.)

Genesis 10:6-20

And the sons of Ham were Cush and Mizraim and Put and Canaan. [7] And the sons of Cush were Seba and Havilah and Sabtah and Raamah and Sabteca; and the sons of Raamah were Sheba and Dedan. [8] Now Cush became the father of Nimrod; he became a mighty one on the earth. [9] He was a mighty hunter before the Lord; therefore it is said, "Like Nimrod a mighty hunter before the Lord." [10] And the beginning of his kingdom was Babel and Erech and Accad and Calneh, in the land of Shinar. [11] From that land he went forth into Assyria, and built Nineveh and Rehoboth-Ir and Calah, [12] and Resen between Nineveh and Calah; that is the great city. [13] And Mizraim became the father of Ludim and Anamim and Lehabim and Naphtuhim [14] and Pathrusim and Casluhim (from which came the Philistines) and Caphtorim.

[15] And Canaan became the father of Sidon, his first-born, and Heth [16] and the Jebusite and the Amorite and the Girgashite [17] and the Hivite and the Arkite and the Sinite [18] and the Arvadite and the Zemarite and the Hamathite; and afterward the families of the Canaanite were spread abroad. [19] And the territory of the Canaanite extended from Sidon as you go toward Gerar, as far as Gaza; as you go toward Sodom and Gomorrah and Admah and Zeboiim, as far as Lasha. [20] These are the sons of Ham, according to their families, according to their languages, by their lands, by their nations.

II. The descendants of Ham.

A. The names of 3 of his 4 sons can also be found as place-names.

1. Cush is mentioned about 10 times, referring to a region, or the inhabitants of that region.

- a. Moses married a woman of Cush. **Numbers 12:1** *Then Miriam and Aaron spoke against Moses because of the Cushite woman whom he had married (for he had married a Cushite woman)...*
- b. Cush was the father of Nimrod, described as a "Mighty Hunter."
 - (1) Nimrod was the ruler over several lands including Babel, where God confused the languages of the builders of a great tower (See ch. 11).
 - (2) Nimrod is also credited with building several cities, including Nineveh in Assyria.
- c. Another son of Cush was Raamah, and the region that took his name was connected to the land of Sheba. **Ezekiel 27:22** *"The traders of Sheba and*

Raamah, they traded with you; they paid for your wares with the best of all kinds of spices, and with all kinds of precious stones, and gold."

2. Mizraim fathered 7 sons; one, Casluhim, became the father of the Philistines.
3. Put (spelled Phut in the KJV) is mentioned as a region 5 times. Example:
Ezekiel 30:5 *"Ethiopia, Put, Lud, all Arabia, Libya, and the people of the land that is in league will fall with them by the sword."*
4. Canaan is mentioned numerous times, referring to the region settled later by the Israelites as the "Promised Land."
Leviticus 25:38 *"I am the Lord your God, who brought you out of the land of Egypt to give you the land of Canaan and to be your God."*
 - a. One son of Canaan was named Sidon, which also designated a coastal city of Lebanon. **Matthew 15:21** *And Jesus went away from there, and withdrew into the district of Tyre and Sidon.*
 - b. Another son was named Heth, the father of the Hittites. **Genesis 23:10** *Now Ephron was sitting among the sons of Heth; and Ephron the Hittite answered Abraham in the hearing of the sons of Heth; even of all who went in at the gate of his city, saying...*
 - c. Other Canaanites were the Jebusites, the Amorites, the Girgashites, the Hivites, the Arkites, the Sinites, the Arvadites, the Zemarites, and the Hamathites.
 - (1) Some of these Canaanite peoples are mentioned in promises of God.
 - (2) **Exodus 23:23** *"For My angel will go before you and bring you in to the land of the Amorites, the Hittites, the Perizzites, the Canaanites, the Hivites and the Jebusites; and I will completely destroy them."*
 - (3) **Deuteronomy 7:1** *"When the Lord your God shall bring you into the land where you are entering to possess it, and shall clear away many nations before you, the Hittites and the Girgashites and the Amorites and the Canaanites and the Perizzites and the Hivites and the Jebusites, seven nations greater and stronger than you..."*
 - (4) The Jebusites retained control over Jerusalem, in the area occupied by the tribe of Judah, even after all of Canaan was conquered by the Israelites. **Joshua 15:63** *Now as for the Jebusites, the inhabitants of Jerusalem, the sons of Judah could not drive them out; so the Jebusites live with the sons of Judah at Jerusalem until this day.* (Many centuries later, David captured the city of Jerusalem during his reign as king, and made it his location for building the Temple. See **2 Samuel 5:6-10**, and **2 Chronicles 3:1**.)

Genesis 10: 21-32

And also to Shem, the father of all the children of Eber, and the older brother of Japheth, children were born. [22] The sons of Shem were Elam and Asshur and Arpachshad and Lud and Aram. [23] And the sons of Aram were Uz and Hul and Gether and Mash. [24] And Arpachshad became the father of Shelah; and Shelah became the father of Eber. [25] And two sons were born to Eber; the name of the one was Peleg, for in his days the earth was divided; and his brother's name was Joktan.

[26] And Joktan became the father of Almodad and Sheleph and Hazarmaveth and Jerah [27] and Hadoram and Uzal and Diklah [28] and Obal and Abimael and Sheba [29] and Ophir and Havilah and Jobab; all these were the sons of Joktan. [30] Now their settlement extended from Mesha as you go toward Sephar, the hill country of the east. [31] These are the sons of Shem, according to their families, according to their languages, by their lands, according to their nations.

[32] These are the families of the sons of Noah, according to their genealogies, by their nations; and out of these the nations were separated on the earth after the flood.

III. The descendants of Shem ("The older brother of Japheth").

- A. Shem is said to be "the father of all the children of Eber." Eber was apparently a region of that name. **Numbers 24:24** *"But ships shall come from the coast of Kittim, and they shall afflict Asshur (or Assyria) and shall afflict Eber; so they also shall come to destruction."*
- B. From Shem came the two great peoples of the Old Testament, the Israelites from Isaac, and the Ishmaelites from Ishmael (both fathered by Abraham).
- C. Shem had 5 sons, 3 of which gave their names to places.
 1. Elam. **Acts 2:8-9** *"And how is it that we each hear them in our own language to which we were born? [9] Parthians and Medes and Elamites, and residents of Mesopotamia, Judea and Cappadocia, Pontus and Asia..."*
 2. Asshur (father of the Assyrians). **Ezekiel 27:23** *"Haran, Canneh, Eden, the traders of Sheba, Asshur, and Chilmad traded with you."*
 3. Aram (Though there are other men of this name, he may have originated the Aramaic language, and fathered the Syrians). **1 Kings 19:15** *And the Lord said to him, "Go, return on your way to the wilderness of Damascus, and when you have arrived, you shall anoint Hazael king over Aram..."* (Or, Syria.)
- D. Other descendants of Shem are connected with places.
 1. Sheba. **1 Kings 10:1** *Now when the queen of Sheba heard about the fame of Solomon concerning the name of the Lord, she came to test him with difficult questions.*
 2. Ophir. **1 Kings 9:28** *And they went to Ophir, and took four hundred and twenty talents of gold from there, and brought it to King Solomon.*
 3. Havilah. **1 Samuel 15:7** *So Saul defeated the Amalekites, from Havilah as you go to Shur, which is east of Egypt.*

Genesis 11:1-9

Now the whole earth used the same language and the same words. [2] And it came about as they journeyed east, that they found a plain in the land of Shinar and settled there. [3] And they said to one another, "Come, let us make bricks and burn them thoroughly." And they used brick for stone, and they used tar for mortar. [4] And they said, "Come, let us build for ourselves a city, and a tower whose top will reach into heaven, and let us make for ourselves a name; lest we be scattered abroad over the face of the whole earth." [5] And the Lord came down to see the city and the tower which the sons of men had built. [6] And the Lord said, "Behold, they are one people, and they all have the same language. And this is what they began to do, and now nothing which they purpose to do will be impossible for them. [7] Come, let Us go

down and there confuse their language, that they may not understand one another's speech." [8] So the Lord scattered them abroad from there over the face of the whole earth; and they stopped building the city. [9] Therefore its name was called Babel, because there the Lord confused the language of the whole earth; and from there the Lord scattered them abroad over the face of the whole earth.

IV. The dividing of nations by language.

- A. The confusion caused by a sudden change in languages curtailed the building of the city and its tower by the descendants of Noah.
 - 1. People of today have a tendency to gravitate toward those of similar language.
 - 2. The opposite tendency is to separate groups, when a certain dialect evolves.
 - 3. Since the Flood, many thousands of dialects of each language have been developed, dividing people even more.
- B. God's purpose for dividing the people of Babel was founded on their growing pride in their accomplishments.
 - 1. Pride of the sort that characterized the people of Babel is not pleasing to God.
 - a. God spoke against pride in man.
 - (1) **Psalm 75:5** *"Do not lift up your horn on high, do not speak with insolent pride."*
 - (2) **1 John 2:16** *"For all that is in the world, the lust of the flesh and the lust of the eyes and the boastful pride of life, is not from the Father, but is from the world."*
 - b. God troubled a later attempt to boast of great works, in the same location.
Isaiah 13:19 *"And Babylon, the beauty of kingdoms, the glory of the Chaldeans' pride, will be as when God overthrew Sodom and Gomorrah."*
 - 2. The names Babel and Babylon come from the same Hebrew word, which is the root of our English word, "babble," meaning incomprehensible speech.

Genesis 11:10-25

These are the records of the generations of Shem. Shem was one hundred years old, and became the father of Arpachshad two years after the flood; [11] and Shem lived five hundred years after he became the father of Arpachshad, and he had other sons and daughters.

[12] And Arpachshad lived thirty-five years, and became the father of Shelah; [13] and Arpachshad lived four hundred and three years after he became the father of Shelah, and he had other sons and daughters.

[14] And Shelah lived thirty years, and became the father of Eber; [15] and Shelah lived four hundred and three years after he became the father of Eber, and he had other sons and daughters.

[16] And Eber lived thirty-four years, and became the father of Peleg; [17] and Eber lived four hundred and thirty years after he became the father of Peleg, and he had other sons and daughters.

[18] And Peleg lived thirty years, and became the father of Reu; [19] and Peleg lived two hundred and nine years after he became the father of Reu, and he had other sons

and daughters.

[20] And Reu lived thirty-two years, and became the father of Serug; [21] and Reu lived two hundred and seven years after he became the father of Serug, and he had other sons and daughters.

[22] And Serug lived thirty years, and became the father of Nahor; [23] and Serug lived two hundred years after he became the father of Nahor, and he had other sons and daughters.

[24] And Nahor lived twenty-nine years, and became the father of Terah; [25] and Nahor lived one hundred and nineteen years after he became the father of Terah, and he had other sons and daughters.

V. Gleanings from this genealogy of Shem.

A. From the birth of Shem's son, to the birth of Terah, the father of Abraham, was 220 years.

B. The ages of each generation gradually declined. (Shem-600; Arpachshad-438; Shelah-433; Eber-464; Peleg-239; Reu-239; Serug-230; Nahor-148.)

C. Two names in this list are connected with other information.

1. Eber – **Genesis 10:21** *“And also to Shem, the father of all the children of Eber, and the older brother of Japheth, children were born.”* (Eber is the 3rd generation from Shem. It is not known why Moses included this comment.)

2. Peleg – **Genesis 10:25** *“And two sons were born to Eber; the name of the one was Peleg, for in his days the earth was divided; and his brother's name was Joktan.”*

a. The name Peleg means “divided,” so he was probably born at the time when God divided the people by language.

b. This gives us a time frame from the end of the Flood to the dividing of the people.

(1) Shem had his first son 2 years after the Flood.

(2) The years of the generations from Arpachshad to Peleg were 99.

(3) Therefore the dividing of the people was about 101 years after the Flood.

(NOTE: God has given this information to us to help us understand how nations and cities and peoples were developed in the ancient world.)

Genesis 11:26-32

[26] And Terah lived seventy years, and became the father of Abram, Nahor and Haran.

[27] Now these are the records of the generations of Terah. Terah became the father of Abram, Nahor and Haran; and Haran became the father of Lot. [28] And Haran died in the presence of his father Terah in the land of his birth, in Ur of the Chaldeans. [29] And Abram and Nahor took wives for themselves. The name of Abram's wife was Sarai; and the name of Nahor's wife was Milcah, the daughter of Haran, the father of Milcah and Iscah. [30] And Sarai was barren; she had no child.

[31] And Terah took Abram his son, and Lot the son of Haran, his grandson, and Sarai his daughter-in-law, his son Abram's wife; and they went out together from Ur of the

Chaldeans in order to enter the land of Canaan; and they went as far as Haran, and settled there. [32] And the days of Terah were two hundred and five years; and Terah died in Haran.

VI. The family of Terah.

- A. Abram is listed first, before his brothers, Nahor and Haran.
 - 1. Abram's wife was first called Sarai.
 - a. Her kinship to Abram as half-sister is not mentioned until **Genesis 20:12**, when Abram said, "...*she actually is my sister, the daughter of my father, but not the daughter of my mother, and she became my wife.*"
 - b. She was said to be very beautiful, but barren.
 - 2. Nahor also married one who was near of kin; a niece, the daughter of his brother, Haran.
 - 3. Haran is said to have died before the family left Ur of the Chaldeans.
 - 4. Haran's son (Terah's grandson) was Lot, who later went with Abraham to the land of Canaan.
- B. Terah's family intended to journey to Canaan, but settled in Haran for a while (a region or city probably named after Terah's son).
 - 1. Terah died while living in Haran, at the age of 205.
 - 2. Nahor stayed in Haran, and raised a family.
 - a. His granddaughter was Rebekah.
 - b. Abram later sent his servant back there get a wife for his son, Isaac, from the family of Nahor. **Genesis 24:2-4** *And Abraham said to his servant, the oldest of his household, who had charge of all that he owned, "Please place your hand under my thigh, [3] and I will make you swear by the Lord, the God of heaven and the God of earth, that you shall not take a wife for my son from the daughters of the Canaanites, among whom I live, [4] but you shall go to my country and to my relatives, and take a wife for my son Isaac."*

Genesis 12:1-3

Now the Lord said to Abram, "Go forth from your country, and from your relatives and from your father's house, to the land which I will show you; [2] and I will make you a great nation, and I will bless you, and make your name great; and so you shall be a blessing; [3] and I will bless those who bless you, and the one who curses you I will curse. And in you all the families of the earth shall be blessed."

VII. The separation of Abram.

- A. The conditions of the separation were...
 - 1. Leave your country (Mesopotamia). **Hebrews 11:8** *By faith Abraham, when he was called, obeyed by going out to a place which he was to receive for an inheritance; and he went out, not knowing where he was going.*
 - 2. Separate from your relatives.
 - a. Abram did not obey this command, fully.
 - b. He took his nephew, Lot, and his family with him to Canaan.
 - c. God did not renew His promises to Abram, until he had separated from

Lot. Genesis 13:14-17 *And the Lord said to Abram, after Lot had separated from him, "Now lift up your eyes and look from the place where you are, northward and southward and eastward and westward; [15] for all the land which you see, I will give it to you and to your descendants forever. [16] And I will make your descendants as the dust of the earth; so that if anyone can number the dust of the earth, then your descendants can also be numbered. [17] Arise, walk about the land through its length and breadth; for I will give it to you."*

(1) At this time, Abram had no children from which descendants could come.

(2) At this time, also, he owned no land in Canaan. **Acts 7:5** *"And (God) gave (Abraham) no inheritance in it, not even a foot of ground; and yet, even when he had no child, He promised that He would give it to him as a possession, and to his offspring after him."*

Genesis 12: 4-9

[4] So Abram went forth as the Lord had spoken to him; and Lot went with him. Now Abram was seventy-five years old when he departed from Haran. [5] And Abram took Sarai his wife and Lot his nephew, and all their possessions which they had accumulated, and the persons which they had acquired in Haran, and they set out for the land of Canaan; thus they came to the land of Canaan. [6] And Abram passed through the land as far as the site of Shechem, to the oak of Moreh. Now the Canaanite was then in the land. [7] And the Lord appeared to Abram and said, "To your descendants I will give this land." So he built an altar there to the Lord who had appeared to him. [8] Then he proceeded from there to the mountain on the east of Bethel, and pitched his tent, with Bethel on the west and Ai on the east; and there he built an altar to the Lord and called upon the name of the Lord. [9] And Abram journeyed on, continuing toward the Negev.

VIII. Abram, the Nomad shepherd.

- A. At the age of 75, Abram separated from his kin in Haran, except for the family of Lot, and came into Canaan.
 - 1. The first site mentioned in Canaan is Shechem (30 miles north of Jerusalem).
 - 2. Abram's next location was between Bethel and Ai, a few miles further south.
 - a. The city of Bethel did not exist by that name at that time.
 - b. It was so named by Jacob, Abram's grandson. **Genesis 28:19** *And he called the name of that place Bethel; however, previously the name of the city had been Luz.*
 - 3. After this, Abram moved several miles southward into the Negev desert.
- B. Abram erected an altar of sacrifice in each place where he lived.

Genesis 12:10-20

[10] Now there was a famine in the land; so Abram went down to Egypt to sojourn there, for the famine was severe in the land. [11] And it came about when he came near to Egypt, that he said to Sarai his wife, "See now, I know that you are a beautiful woman; [12] and it will come about when the Egyptians see you, that they will say,

'This is his wife'; and they will kill me, but they will let you live. [13] "Please say that you are my sister so that it may go well with me because of you, and that I may live on account of you." [14] And it came about when Abram came into Egypt, the Egyptians saw that the woman was very beautiful. [15] And Pharaoh's officials saw her and praised her to Pharaoh; and the woman was taken into Pharaoh's house. [16] Therefore he treated Abram well for her sake; and gave him sheep and oxen and donkeys and male and female servants and female donkeys and camels. [17] But the Lord struck Pharaoh and his house with great plagues because of Sarai, Abram's wife. [18] Then Pharaoh called Abram and said, "What is this you have done to me? Why did you not tell me that she was your wife? [19] "Why did you say, 'She is my sister,' so that I took her for my wife? Now then, here is your wife, take her and go." [20] And Pharaoh commanded his men concerning him; and they escorted him away, with his wife and all that belonged to him.

IX. Abram's experience in Egypt.

- A. Egypt seldom had famines, because of the great river Nile.
 - 1. The delta of the Nile was an ideal place to escape the ravages of a famine.
 - 2. The Nile was a constant source of water for irrigating crops.
- B. Abram went into Egypt in fear.
 - 1. God had promised to make a great nation from Abram's descendants, and to curse those who dared to curse him. **Genesis 12:1-3**
 - 2. He did not fully trust this promise, so he persuaded his wife to say that she was his sister, in order to escape the possible threat of death.
- C. Pharaoh admired the beauty of Sarai, and, like many Oriental potentates, tried to claim her for one of his wives, after giving Abram many animals and slaves.
 - 1. God intervened by sending plagues on Pharaoh's household, and it must be inferred that He apparently let him know the cause of the plagues.
 - 2. Learning that Sarai was Abram's wife, Pharaoh rebuked Abram for his lie.
 - 3. Abram was expelled from the land of Egypt, without any fine or punishment, indicating that Pharaoh was in fear of the consequences of such action.
 - 4. Abram did not soon learn to trust God's promises, because a similar event happened much later in **Genesis 20**.

Genesis 13:1-4

So Abram went up from Egypt to the Negev, he and his wife and all that belonged to him; and Lot with him. [2] Now Abram was very rich in livestock, in silver and in gold. [3] And he went on his journeys from the Negev as far as Bethel, to the place where his tent had been at the beginning, between Bethel and Ai, [4] to the place of the altar, which he had made there formerly; and there Abram called on the name of the Lord.

X. Abram returns to Canaan.

- A. Verse 1 contains an example of the application of the rule of "necessary inference" in determining truth.
 - 1. No mention is made of Lot going into Egypt with Abram and Sarai in the

- previous chapter (12).
- 2. Verse one of this chapter says that Lot came up from Egypt with Abram.
- 3. Therefore, the "necessary conclusion" is that Lot went INTO Egypt.
- B. Verse 2 is the first mention of the riches of Abram, unless a measure of his wealth can be surmised from hints in 12:5 (another clue is in 13:5-6, below).
- C. Verses 3 and 4 tell of Abram's return to a place between Bethel and Ai.
 - 1. The Altar he built there is mentioned first in 12:8.
 - 2. Another altar was erected later in the same area by Jacob, Abram's grandson.

Genesis 13:5-13

[5] Now Lot, who went with Abram, also had flocks and herds and tents. [6] And the land could not sustain them while dwelling together; for their possessions were so great that they were not able to remain together. [7] And there was strife between the herdsmen of Abram's livestock and the herdsmen of Lot's livestock. Now the Canaanite and the Perizzite were dwelling then in the land. [8] Then Abram said to Lot, "Please let there be no strife between you and me, nor between my herdsmen and your herdsmen, for we are brothers. [9] Is not the whole land before you? Please separate from me: if to the left, then I will go to the right; or if to the right, then I will go to the left." [10] And Lot lifted up his eyes and saw all the valley of the Jordan, that it was well watered everywhere-- this was before the Lord destroyed Sodom and Gomorrah-- like the garden of the Lord, like the land of Egypt as you go to Zoar. [11] So Lot chose for himself all the valley of the Jordan; and Lot journeyed eastward. Thus they separated from each other. [12] Abram settled in the land of Canaan, while Lot settled in the cities of the valley, and moved his tents as far as Sodom. [13] Now the men of Sodom were wicked exceedingly and sinners against the Lord.

XI. The separation of Abram from Lot.

- A. God had commanded Abram to separate himself from his kinsmen in 12:1.
 - 1. This command was not obeyed.
 - 2. The departure of Lot finally fulfilled this command.
- B. The choice of land made by Lot put him in contact with very wicked people.
 - 1. The consequences of this choice will be seen in Chapters 14, 18 and 19.
 - 2. Lot made his choice on the basis of the prospect of prosperity; a poor reason.
 - a. Lot would lose family and property.
 - b. Abram would grow even more rich.

Genesis 13:14-18

[14] And the Lord said to Abram, after Lot had separated from him, "Now lift up your eyes and look from the place where you are, northward and southward and eastward and westward; [15] for all the land which you see, I will give it to you and to your descendants forever. [16] And I will make your descendants as the dust of the earth; so that if anyone can number the dust of the earth, then your descendants can also be numbered. [17] Arise, walk about the land through its length and breadth; for I will give it to you." [18] Then Abram moved his tent and came and dwelt by the oaks of Mamre, which are in Hebron, and there he built an altar to the Lord.

XII. The renewal of the “Land Promise.”

A. Abram had been promised a possession in Canaan in **12:7**.

1. He did not live to see the fulfillment of this promise.
2. He put more hope on an eternal possession, than on an earthly one. **Hebrews 11:8-10** *By faith Abraham, when he was called, obeyed by going out to a place which he was to receive for an inheritance; and he went out, not knowing where he was going. [9] By faith he lived as an alien in the land of promise, as in a foreign land, dwelling in tents with Isaac and Jacob, fellow heirs of the same promise; [10] for he was looking for the city which has foundations, whose architect and builder is God.*
3. This attitude was found in many of the Old Testament Patriarchs. **Hebrews 11:13-16** *All these died in faith, without receiving the promises, but having seen them and having welcomed them from a distance, and having confessed that they were strangers and exiles on the earth. [14] For those who say such things make it clear that they are seeking a country of their own. [15] And indeed if they had been thinking of that country from which they went out, they would have had opportunity to return. [16] But as it is, they desire a better country, that is a heavenly one. Therefore God is not ashamed to be called their God; for He has prepared a city for them.*

B. Again, God makes his promise to award the land to the descendants of a man who had no children, and a barren wife. (Compare 12:2.)

A Study of Genesis – 6

Genesis 14:1-4

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 nations, [2] that they made war with Bera king of Sodom, Birsha king of Gomorrah, Shinab king of Admah, Shemeber king of Zeboiim, and the king of Bela (that is, Zoar). [3] All these joined together in the Valley of Siddim (that is, the Salt Sea). [4] Twelve years they served Chedorlaomer, and in the thirteenth year they rebelled.

- I. A confederation of Eastern kings subdues the cities of the Jordan Valley.
 - A. The invading kings came from some of the areas we have located, Shinar, and Elam. (See section 5 of this study.)
 1. The phrase “Tidal king of nations,” in verse 1, is translated in other versions, “Tidal king of goyim.”
 2. The Hebrew word “goyim” is the plural of “goy,” meaning “nation,” or, gentile.
 3. The word “Tidal” is capitalized, indicating a person, but there is an adjective, “tidal,” which in English refers to ocean tides (example, “tidal-wave”).
 4. The probable meaning of the phrase in our text (NKJV) is correct, that Tidal

- was a king over several nations. (He is called one of four kings in vs. 9.)
- B. Besides Sodom and Gomorrah, other cities of the valley are named – Admah, Zeboiim, and Bela (or, Zoar, a small city that later offered temporary refuge to Lot and his daughters. **Genesis 19:16-22, 30**)
 - C. The Jordan Valley was subject to the invading kings for 12 years, before rebelling in the 13th year.

Genesis 14:5-12

[5] In the fourteenth year Chedorlaomer and the kings that were with him came and attacked the Rephaim in Ashteroth Karnaim, the Zuzim in Ham, the Emim in Shaveh Kiriathaim, [6] and the Horites in their mountain of Seir, as far as El Paran, which is by the wilderness. [7] Then they turned back and came to En Mishpat (that is, Kadesh), and attacked all the country of the Amalekites, and also the Amorites who dwelt in Hazezon Tamar. [8] And the king of Sodom, the king of Gomorrah, the king of Admah, the king of Zeboiim, and the king of Bela (that is, Zoar) went out and joined together in battle in the Valley of Siddim [9] against Chedorlaomer king of Elam, Tidal king of nations, Amraphel king of Shinar, and Arioch king of Ellasar-- four kings against five. [10] Now the Valley of Siddim was full of asphalt pits; and the kings of Sodom and Gomorrah fled; some fell there, and the remainder fled to the mountains. [11] Then they took all the goods of Sodom and Gomorrah, and all their provisions, and went their way. [12] They also took Lot, Abram's brother's son who dwelt in Sodom, and his goods, and departed.

- II. The defeat of the rebellious valley cities.
 - A. The four Eastern kings first ravaged an area west of the Jordan Valley, vs. 5-7.
 - B. The five kings of the Jordan Valley cities have another battle with the invading kings in the Valley of Siddim, near the location of the Salt Sea (Dead Sea).
 - 1. Moses mentions the fact that the Valley of Siddim had many asphalt pits.
 - 2. He does not reveal the reason for inserting this fact, but simply says that those who survive the defeat of the five kings fled to the mountains (probably the hills west of the Valley), leaving some dead behind.
 - C. Then the four invading kings plundered the cities of the plain, and took Lot with them among the captured people.

Genesis 14:13-17

[13] Then one who had escaped came and told Abram the Hebrew, for he dwelt by the terebinth trees of Mamre the Amorite, brother of Eshcol and brother of Aner; and they were allies with Abram. [14] Now when Abram heard that his brother was taken captive, he armed his three hundred and eighteen trained servants who were born in his own house, and went in pursuit as far as Dan. [15] He divided his forces against them by night, and he and his servants attacked them and pursued them as far as Hobah, which is north of Damascus. [16] So he brought back all the goods, and also brought back his brother Lot and his goods, as well as the women and the people.

[17] And the king of Sodom went out to meet him at the Valley of Shaveh (that is, the King's Valley), after his return from the defeat of Chedorlaomer and the kings

who were with him.

III. Abram defeats the four kings, and rescues the family of Lot.

- A. A captive who escaped informs Abram “the Hebrew” of the capture of Lot (who was a nephew, but called Abram’s “brother” in vs. 14. The word commonly referred to people who were kindred, whether close or distant.)
 - 1. This is the first time in the Bible that anyone is called a “Hebrew.”
 - 2. This word is a derivative of the name Eber, which we have seen in **Genesis 10:21** refers to descendants of Shem.
- B. Verse 13 also tells us that Abram had allies among the Canaanites.
 - 1. With his allies, which are not numbered, and his 318 “trained servants born in his house,” Abram pursued the four kings as far as the northern city later named Dan.
 - 2. He attacked by night from divided locations, and defeated them.
 - 3. He then pursues them to “Hobah...north of Damascus.”
- C. He rescues all the captives, including Lot.
- D. The king of Sodom, who had apparently escaped the previous battle with the four kings, came out to meet Abram and company on their return.

Genesis 14:18-20

[18] Then Melchizedek king of Salem brought out bread and wine; he was the priest of God Most High. [19] And he blessed him and said: “Blessed be Abram of God Most High, possessor of heaven and earth; [20] and blessed be God Most High, Who has delivered your enemies into your hand.” And he gave him a tithe of all.

IV. Melchizedek, king of Salem and priest of God, meets and blesses Abram.

- A. These three verses provide all the information about this man.
- B. He is said to be a priest of a certain “order” by the prophet, David, in **Psalm 110:4** *The Lord has sworn and will not relent, “You are a priest forever according to the order of Melchizedek.”*
 - 1. This Psalm is a prophecy of the priesthood of Christ.
 - 2. Verse 1 of this Psalm is applied by the apostle Peter to Jesus as the Christ in **Acts 2:34-36**. *For David did not ascend into the heavens, but he says himself: “The Lord said to my Lord, sit at My right hand, [35] till I make Your enemies Your footstool.” [36] Therefore let all the house of Israel know assuredly that God has made this Jesus, whom you crucified, both Lord and Christ.*
- C. The writer of the New Testament book, Hebrews, uses the Genesis account, and the prophecy of Psalms to build a case for the priesthood of Jesus.
 - 1. He first mentions the prophecy of **Psalm 110:4** in **Hebrews 5:6**.
 - 2. He then makes application of the prophecy to Jesus in **Hebrews 5:8-10**. *...though He was a Son, yet He learned obedience by the things which He suffered. [9] And having been perfected, He became the author of eternal salvation to all who obey Him, [10] called by God as High Priest “according to the order of Melchizedek.”*
 - 3. He does not mention the connection again, until the end of chapter six.

- Hebrews 6:19-20** *This hope we have as an anchor of the soul, both sure and steadfast, and which enters the Presence behind the veil, [20] where the forerunner has entered for us, even Jesus, having become High Priest forever according to the order of Melchizedek.*
4. In the first part of chapter 7, the writer “fills in the blanks” on the biography of Melchizedek. **Hebrews 7:1-3** *For this Melchizedek, king of Salem, priest of the Most High God, who met Abraham returning from the slaughter of the kings and blessed him, [2] to whom also Abraham gave a tenth part of all, first being translated “king of righteousness,” and then also king of Salem, meaning “king of peace,” [3] without father, without mother, without genealogy, having neither beginning of days nor end of life, but made like the Son of God, remains a priest continually.*
- He translates the name as “king of righteousness.”
 - His residence was Salem (probably an early name for Jerusalem), where the Jebusites dwelt. The word means “peace.” (So, “King of peace.”)
 - His role as a priest shows that there were such spokesmen for God in the world before the establishment of the priesthood under the Law of Moses.
 - Another such priest is seen in **Exodus 3:1a**. *Now Moses was tending the flock of Jethro his father-in-law, the priest of Midian....*
 - Midian, the ancestor of Jethro, was descended from Abraham by his third wife, Keturah. **Genesis 25:1-2** *Abraham again took a wife, and her name was Keturah. [2] And she bore him Zimran, Jokshan, Medan, Midian, Ishbak, and Shuah.*
 - The writer of Hebrews says in verse 3 that Melchizedek was “without father, without mother, without genealogy, having neither beginning of days nor end of life.”
 - This does not mean that Melchizedek had no ancestors, or beginning and end, but only makes his point on the scarcity of information about him in Genesis.
 - The same can be said, in a spiritual way, of Jesus, an eternal being, who could hold his priesthood continually, in a figurative resemblance to Melchizedek. **Hebrews 7:23-25** *Also there were many priests, because they were prevented by death from continuing. [24] But He, because He continues forever, has an unchangeable priesthood. [25] Therefore He is also able to save to the uttermost those who come to God through Him, since He always lives to make intercession for them.*
5. In the next part of chapter 7, the writer of Hebrews shows the greatness of Melchizedek’s order of priesthood over the Levitical order of the Law of Moses. **Hebrews 7:4-10** *Now consider how great this man was, to whom even the patriarch Abraham gave a tenth of the spoils. [5] And indeed those who are of the sons of Levi, who receive the priesthood, have a commandment to receive tithes from the people according to the law, that is, from their brethren, though they have come from the loins of Abraham; [6] but he whose genealogy is not derived from them received tithes from Abraham and blessed him who had the promises. [7] Now beyond all contradiction the lesser is blessed by the better. [8] Here mortal men receive tithes, but there he receives them, of whom it is witnessed that he lives. [9] Even Levi, who*

- receives tithes, paid tithes through Abraham, so to speak, [10] for he was still in the loins of his father when Melchizedek met him.
- a. The Levites were entitled under the Law of Moses to collect the tithe (a 10th of all produce) from the other tribes of Israel, but were required to make their own offering to God from that income, or a “tithe of the tithe.” **Numbers 18:26** *“Speak thus to the Levites, and say to them: ‘When you take from the children of Israel the tithes which I have given you from them as your inheritance, then you shall offer up a heave offering of it to the Lord, a tenth of the tithe.’”*
 - b. The Hebrew writer argues that since Melchizedek blessed Abram, and received a tithe, it proved that he was greater than Abram.
 - c. He adds to his argument by saying that since Levi was still in the loins of his father (or, great-grandfather), Abram, when he paid tithes, suggesting that the Levites had also paid the tithe to Melchizedek, the greater priest.
 - (1) This is a way of mentioning the fact of genetic inheritance.
 - (2) In our time, we can trace ancestors by an analysis of our DNA.
6. In the next part of chapter 7, the writer of Hebrews shows how to know when Jesus became “a priest after the order of Melchizedek.” **Hebrews 7:11-14** *Therefore, if perfection were through the Levitical priesthood (for under it the people received the law), what further need was there that another priest should rise according to the order of Melchizedek, and not be called according to the order of Aaron? [12] For the priesthood being changed, of necessity there is also a change of the law. [13] For He of whom these things are spoken belongs to another tribe, from which no man has officiated at the altar. [14] For it is evident that our Lord arose from Judah, of which tribe Moses spoke nothing concerning priesthood.*
- a. The Levitical priesthood is shown to be “imperfect,” because of the need for surrendering the position to a priest of another order.
 - b. To bring about this change, there had to be a “change of the Law (of Moses),” because under it, only descendants of Aaron, of the tribe of Levi, could be priests.
 - c. Jesus, being of the tribe of Judah, was therefore prevented from being a priest of the new order, until the Law of Moses was taken away.
7. Jesus is now the “High Priest of our confession” --New Testament Christianity. **Hebrews 3:1-3** *Therefore, holy brethren, partakers of the heavenly calling, consider the Apostle and High Priest of our confession, Christ Jesus, [2] who was faithful to Him who appointed Him, as Moses also was faithful in all His house. [3] For this One has been counted worthy of more glory than Moses, inasmuch as He who built the house has more honor than the house.*
- a. Jesus is called an Apostle in verse 1, since he was someone “sent” from God. **1 John 4:14** *And we have seen and testify that the Father has sent the Son as Savior of the world.*
 - b. Barnabas is called an apostle, because he was sent out by the church at Antioch.
 - (1) **Acts 14:14** *But when the apostles Barnabas and Paul heard this, they tore their clothes and ran in among the multitude, crying out...*

(2) **Acts 13:2-3** *As they ministered to the Lord and fasted, the Holy Spirit said, "Now separate to Me Barnabas and Saul for the work to which I have called them." [3] Then, having fasted and prayed, and laid hands on them, they sent them away.*

Genesis 14:21-24

[21] Now the king of Sodom said to Abram, "Give me the persons, and take the goods for yourself." [22] But Abram said to the king of Sodom, "I have raised my hand to the Lord, God Most High, the Possessor of heaven and earth, [23] that I will take nothing, from a thread to a sandal strap, and that I will not take anything that is yours, lest you should say, 'I have made Abram rich'-- [24] except only what the young men have eaten, and the portion of the men who went with me: Aner, Eshcol, and Mamre; let them take their portion."

- V. Abram settles with the king of Sodom on the distribution of the spoils.
- A. Abram had already given a tenth of the spoils of his victory over the four kings.
 - B. Apparently, the king of Sodom was satisfied with the return of the people, because he offered Abram all of the rest of the spoils.
 - 1. Abram would take nothing for himself, in order to keep the king from claiming that he had made Abram rich. (He was already very rich. **Genesis 13:2**)
 - 2. He did claim that portion which fed his soldiers in the campaign.
 - 3. He allowed his allies to claim a portion of the spoils.
 - C. Similar cases of this sort of selfless service can be seen in the examples of Gideon (**Judges 8:22-24**), and Samuel (**1 Samuel 12:2-5**).

Genesis 15:1-6

After these things the word of the Lord came to Abram in a vision, saying, "Do not be afraid, Abram. I am your shield, your exceedingly great reward." [2] But Abram said, "Lord God, what will You give me, seeing I go childless, and the heir of my house is Eliezer of Damascus?" [3] Then Abram said, "Look, You have given me no offspring; indeed one born in my house is my heir!" [4] And behold, the word of the Lord came to him, saying, "This one shall not be your heir, but one who will come from your own body shall be your heir." [5] Then He brought him outside and said, "Look now toward heaven, and count the stars if you are able to number them." And He said to him, "So shall your descendants be." [6] And he believed in the Lord, and He accounted it to him for righteousness.

- VI. God assures Abram that he will have no need to be afraid.
- A. God promised to be his "shield," and his "great reward."
 - 1. The concept of protection by a shield is common in the Bible.
 - a. **2 Samuel 22:31** *As for God, His way is perfect; the word of the Lord is proven; He is a shield to all who trust in Him.*
 - b. **Psalms 7:10** *My defense is of God, Who saves the upright in heart.*
 - c. **Ephesians 6:16** *...above all, taking the shield of faith with which you will be able to quench all the fiery darts of the wicked one.*

2. Apparently, Abram did not fully trust this promise, because he was still afraid to introduce Sarah as his wife in **Genesis 20**.
- B. Abram probably thought that the promise of “reward” from God would serve no purpose, if he had no heir, except a servant born in his house.
- C. God answered Abram by promising that descendants would be as numerous as the stars he could see in heaven.
- D. To Abram’s eternal credit, he believed this promise, and the Lord “accounted it to him for righteousness.”
 1. This faith had yet to be tested, but we will see this in **Genesis 22**.
 2. The Apostle Paul uses this passage to show that this faith of Abram preceded the covenant of circumcision (**Genesis 17:9-27**), and the giving of the Law to Moses (beginning in **Exodus 20**).
 - a. Paul first shows that faith is above works (of the Law). **Romans 4:1-16**
What then shall we say that Abraham our father has found according to the flesh? [2] For if Abraham was justified by works, he has something to boast about, but not before God. [3] For what does the Scripture say? “Abraham believed God, and it was accounted to him for righteousness.” [4] Now to him who works, the wages are not counted as grace but as debt. [5] But to him who does not work but believes on Him who justifies the ungodly, his faith is accounted for righteousness, [6] just as David also describes the blessedness of the man to whom God imputes righteousness apart from works: [7] “Blessed are those whose lawless deeds are forgiven, and whose sins are covered; [8] blessed is the man to whom the Lord shall not impute sin.”
 - b. He then shows that the accounting of righteousness to Abraham preceded his circumcision. **Romans 4:9-12** *Does this blessedness then come upon the circumcised only, or upon the uncircumcised also? For we say that faith was accounted to Abraham for righteousness. [10] How then was it accounted? While he was circumcised, or uncircumcised? Not while circumcised, but while uncircumcised. [11] And he received the sign of circumcision, a seal of the righteousness of the faith which he had while still uncircumcised, that he might be the father of all those who believe, though they are uncircumcised, that righteousness might be imputed to them also, [12] and the father of circumcision to those who not only are of the circumcision, but who also walk in the steps of the faith which our father Abraham had while still uncircumcised.*
 - c. Paul finishes his argument by showing that the faith of Abraham preceded also the giving of the Law to Moses. **Romans 4:13-16** *For the promise that he would be the heir of the world was not to Abraham or to his seed through the law, but through the righteousness of faith. [14] For if those who are of the law are heirs, faith is made void and the promise made of no effect, [15] because the law brings about wrath; for where there is no law there is no transgression. [16] Therefore it is of faith that it might be according to grace, so that the promise might be sure to all the seed, not only to those who are of the law, but also to those who are of the faith of Abraham, who is the father of us all...*

Genesis 15: 7-16

Then He said to him, "I am the Lord, who brought you out of Ur of the Chaldeans, to give you this land to inherit it." [8] And he said, "Lord God, how shall I know that I will inherit it?" [9] So He said to him, "Bring Me a three-year-old heifer, a three-year-old female goat, a three-year-old ram, a turtledove, and a young pigeon." [10] Then he brought all these to Him and cut them in two, down the middle, and placed each piece opposite the other; but he did not cut the birds in two. [11] And when the vultures came down on the carcasses, Abram drove them away.

[12] Now when the sun was going down, a deep sleep fell upon Abram; and behold, horror and great darkness fell upon him. [13] Then He said to Abram: "Know certainly that your descendants will be strangers in a land that is not theirs, and will serve them, and they will afflict them four hundred years. [14] And also the nation whom they serve I will judge; afterward they shall come out with great possessions. [15] Now as for you, you shall go to your fathers in peace; you shall be buried at a good old age. [16] But in the fourth generation they shall return here, for the iniquity of the Amorites is not yet complete."

[17] And it came to pass, when the sun went down and it was dark, that behold, there appeared a smoking oven and a burning torch that passed between those pieces. [18] On the same day the Lord made a covenant with Abram, saying: "To your descendants I have given this land, from the river of Egypt to the great river, the River Euphrates-- [19] the Kenites, the Kenezites, the Kadmonites, [20] the Hittites, the Perizzites, the Rephaim, [21] the Amorites, the Canaanites, the Girgashites, and the Jebusites."

VII. Abram receives more promises and an assurance of the future.

A. Abraham asks for assurance that his descendants would inherit Canaan.

1. This is not doubt, but an appeal for a sign.
2. Others have asked God for signs of the same sort.
 - a. Mary, the mother of Jesus. **Luke 1:30-35** *Then the angel said to her, "Do not be afraid, Mary, for you have found favor with God. [31] And behold, you will conceive in your womb and bring forth a Son, and shall call His name Jesus. [32] He will be great, and will be called the Son of the Highest; and the Lord God will give Him the throne of His father David. [33] And He will reign over the house of Jacob forever, and of His kingdom there will be no end." [34] Then Mary said to the angel, "How can this be, since I do not know a man?" [35] And the angel answered and said to her, "The Holy Spirit will come upon you, and the power of the Highest will overshadow you; therefore, also, that Holy One who is to be born will be called the Son of God..." (The sign to Mary would be her pregnancy in her virginity.)*
 - b. Hezekiah, King of Judah, was told that he would live 15 more years after his illness. **2 Kings 20:8-11** *And Hezekiah said to Isaiah, "What is the sign that the Lord will heal me, and that I shall go up to the house of the Lord the third day?" [9] Then Isaiah said, "This is the sign to you from the Lord, that the Lord will do the thing which He has spoken: shall the shadow go forward ten degrees or go backward ten degrees?" [10] And Hezekiah answered, "It is an easy thing for*

the shadow to go down ten degrees; no, but let the shadow go backward ten degrees.” [11] So Isaiah the prophet cried out to the Lord, and He brought the shadow ten degrees backward, by which it had gone down on the sundial of Ahaz.

B. God commands him to prepare some sacrifices.

1. Abram falls into a trance, and hears a message from God, telling him that his descendants will be in another land, and part of the time in servitude.

2. God reveals a time-frame for these events – 400 years.

a. This number is repeated in the New Testament. **Acts 7:6** *But God spoke in this way: that his descendants would dwell in a foreign land, and that they would bring them into bondage and oppress them four hundred years.*

b. Other accounts are more specific.

(1) **Exodus 12:40-41** *Now the sojourn of the children of Israel who lived in Egypt was four hundred and thirty years. [41] And it came to pass at the end of the four hundred and thirty years--on that very same day--it came to pass that all the armies of the Lord went out from the land of Egypt.*

(2) **Galatians 3:16-17** *Now to Abraham and his Seed were the promises made. He does not say, "And to seeds," as of many, but as of one, "And to your Seed," who is Christ. [17] And this I say, that the law, which was four hundred and thirty years later, cannot annul the covenant that was confirmed before by God in Christ, that it should make the promise of no effect.*

c. There is no contradiction in these numbers, since one is given in “round numbers,” and the other is closer to the real time.

3. Abram is told that he will die, peacefully, and is assured that in the “fourth generation” his descendants would return to Canaan.

a. To reconcile these numbers, a generation in God’s calculation would be 100 years.

b. To Abram, this would not be a surprise, since he was 100 years old before Isaac was born.

C. The “land promise” would not be seen by Abram, but he trusted that the promise was true. Hebrews 11:8-10, 13-16 *By faith Abraham obeyed when he was called to go out to the place which he would receive as an inheritance. And he went out, not knowing where he was going. [9] By faith he dwelt in the land of promise as in a foreign country, dwelling in tents with Isaac and Jacob, the heirs with him of the same promise; [10] for he waited for the city which has foundations, whose builder and maker is God.....[13] These all died in faith, not having received the promises, but having seen them afar off were assured of them, embraced them and confessed that they were strangers and pilgrims on the earth. [14] For those who say such things declare plainly that they seek a homeland. [15] And truly if they had called to mind that country from which they had come out, they would have had opportunity to return. [16] But now they desire a better, that is, a heavenly country. Therefore God is not ashamed to be called their God, for He has prepared a city for them.*

A Study of Genesis – 7

Genesis 16:1-6

Now Sarai, Abram's wife, had borne him no children. And she had an Egyptian maidservant whose name was Hagar. [2] So Sarai said to Abram, "See now, the Lord has restrained me from bearing children. Please, go in to my maid; perhaps I shall obtain children by her." And Abram heeded the voice of Sarai. [3] Then Sarai, Abram's wife, took Hagar her maid, the Egyptian, and gave her to her husband Abram to be his wife, after Abram had dwelt ten years in the land of Canaan. [4] So he went in to Hagar, and she conceived. And when she saw that she had conceived, her mistress became despised in her eyes. [5] Then Sarai said to Abram, "My wrong be upon you! I gave my maid into your embrace; and when she saw that she had conceived, I became despised in her eyes. The Lord judge between you and me." [6] So Abram said to Sarai, "Indeed your maid is in your hand; do to her as you please." And when Sarai dealt harshly with her, she fled from her presence.

- I. Sarai offered a solution to her barrenness.
 - A. Abram's faith in God's promise to provide him heirs was not matched by Sarai.
 1. Sarai had an Egyptian slave girl, named Hagar (probably obtained among the gifts of Pharaoh, **Genesis 12:16**).
 2. Sarai offered her to Abram as a "concubine" wife.
 3. She intended to claim the child born to Hagar as her own.
 - B. Hagar's conception proved the faith of Abraham, but caused trouble with Sarai.
 1. When Hagar conceived, she despised Sarai for being barren.
 2. Sarai resented the pride of Hagar, but accused Abram for his part in the conception.
 3. Abram reminded Sarai that Hagar was still her slave.
 - a. She treated Hagar harshly enough to cause her to flee the camp.
 - b. Hagar was not a bond slave, but a chattel slave.
 - c. Later, under the Law of Moses, there would be no punishment of a master who beat a chattel slave (who survived the beating). **Exodus 21:20-21** "And if a man beats his male or female servant with a rod, so that he dies under his hand, he shall surely be punished. [21] Notwithstanding, if he remains alive a day or two, he shall not be punished; for he is his property." (Read the context for other restrictions on masters of slaves.)

Genesis 16:7-16

[7] Now the Angel of the Lord found her by a spring of water in the wilderness, by the spring on the way to Shur. [8] And He said, "Hagar, Sarai's maid, where have you come from, and where are you going?" She said, "I am fleeing from the presence of my mistress Sarai." [9] The Angel of the Lord said to her, "Return to your mistress, and submit yourself under her hand." [10] Then the Angel of the Lord said to her, "I will multiply your descendants exceedingly, so that they shall not be counted for multitude." [11] And the Angel of the Lord said to her: "Behold, you are with child, and you shall bear a son. You shall call his name Ishmael, because the Lord has heard

your affliction. [12] He shall be a wild man; his hand shall be against every man, and every man's hand against him. And he shall dwell in the presence of all his brethren."

[13] Then she called the name of the Lord who spoke to her, You-Are-the-God-Who-Sees; for she said, "Have I also here seen Him who sees me?" [14] Therefore the well was called Beer Lahai Roi; observe, it is between Kadesh and Bered.

[15] So Hagar bore Abram a son; and Abram named his son, whom Hagar bore, Ishmael. [16] Abram was eighty-six years old when Hagar bore Ishmael to Abram.

II. God sends Hagar back to serve Sarai, but blesses her.

A. The return of foreign runaway slaves was not required by the Law of Moses.

Deuteronomy 23:15-16 *"You shall not give back to his master the slave who has escaped from his master to you. [16] He may dwell with you in your midst, in the place which he chooses within one of your gates, where it seems best to him; you shall not oppress him."*

1. This passage evidently refers to a slave who escaped from the Canaanites, or from one of the nations surrounding Israel.
2. The Apostle Paul returned a slave to his master, because both master and slave were Christians, and were expected to be brothers. **Philemon 10-16** *"I appeal to you for my son Onesimus, whom I have begotten while in my chains, [11] who once was unprofitable to you, but now is profitable to you and to me. [12] I am sending him back. You therefore receive him, that is, my own heart, [13] whom I wished to keep with me, that on your behalf he might minister to me in my chains for the gospel. [14] But without your consent I wanted to do nothing, that your good deed might not be by compulsion, as it were, but voluntary. [15] For perhaps he departed for a while for this purpose, that you might receive him forever, [16] no longer as a slave but more than a slave--a beloved brother, especially to me but how much more to you, both in the flesh and in the Lord."*

B. God revealed to Hagar the nature of the son to be born to her.

1. God named the child, before it was born. (Other Bible men who were named before birth include Abraham's son, Isaac, John the baptizer, and Jesus.)
2. He would be a "wild man; his hand shall be against every man, and every man's hand against him." (The descendants of Ishmael are the Arabs, and this is still their nature.)
3. Other blessings of Ishmael are written in **Genesis 17:20**, and **25:16**.

Genesis 17:1-14

When Abram was ninety-nine years old, the Lord appeared to Abram and said to him, "I am Almighty God; walk before Me and be blameless. [2] And I will make My covenant between Me and you, and will multiply you exceedingly." [3] Then Abram fell on his face, and God talked with him, saying: [4] "As for Me, behold, My covenant is with you, and you shall be a father of many nations. [5] No longer shall your name be called Abram, but your name shall be Abraham; for I have made you a father of many nations. [6] I will make you exceedingly fruitful; and I will make nations of you, and kings shall come from you. [7] And I will establish My covenant

between Me and you and your descendants after you in their generations, for an everlasting covenant, to be God to you and your descendants after you. [8] Also I give to you and your descendants after you the land in which you are a stranger, all the land of Canaan, as an everlasting possession; and I will be their God."

[9] And God said to Abraham: "As for you, you shall keep My covenant, you and your descendants after you throughout their generations. [10] This is My covenant which you shall keep, between Me and you and your descendants after you: Every male child among you shall be circumcised; [11] and you shall be circumcised in the flesh of your foreskins, and it shall be a sign of the covenant between Me and you. [12] He who is eight days old among you shall be circumcised, every male child in your generations, he who is born in your house or bought with money from any foreigner who is not your descendant. [13] He who is born in your house and he who is bought with your money must be circumcised, and My covenant shall be in your flesh for an everlasting covenant. [14] And the uncircumcised male child, who is not circumcised in the flesh of his foreskin, that person shall be cut off from his people; he has broken My covenant."

III. The Covenant of Circumcision.

- A. Thirteen years after the birth of Ishmael, and before the covenant of circumcision is practiced, God changes the name of Abram to Abraham ("exalted father").
 - 1. He would be the "father of many nations." (Israel, Arabia, Midian, and later, Edom [from Esau], and others.)
 - 2. He was promised, also, that Kings should descend from him. (It would be nearly 1000 years before there was a King in Israel.)
- B. All the males in Abraham's household were to be circumcised, including slaves.
 - 1. God required that newborn males should be circumcised on the 8th day.
 - 2. This requirement is also found in the Law of Moses. **Leviticus 12:1-3** *Then the Lord spoke to Moses, saying, [2] "Speak to the children of Israel, saying: 'If a woman has conceived, and borne a male child, then she shall be unclean seven days; as in the days of her customary impurity she shall be unclean. [3] And on the eighth day the flesh of his foreskin shall be circumcised.*
 - 3. Some doctors have supported this requirement by presenting evidence that a male child's resistance to infection is highest on the 8th day after birth.

Genesis 17:15-22

[15] Then God said to Abraham, "As for Sarai your wife, you shall not call her name Sarai, but Sarah shall be her name. [16] And I will bless her and also give you a son by her; then I will bless her, and she shall be a mother of nations; kings of peoples shall be from her." [17] Then Abraham fell on his face and laughed, and said in his heart, "Shall a child be born to a man who is one hundred years old? And shall Sarah, who is ninety years old, bear a child?" [18] And Abraham said to God, "Oh, that Ishmael might live before You!" [19] Then God said: "No, Sarah your wife shall bear you a son, and you shall call his name Isaac; I will establish My covenant with him for an everlasting covenant, and with his descendants after him. [20] And as for Ishmael, I have heard you. Behold, I have blessed him, and will make him fruitful,

and will multiply him exceedingly. He shall beget twelve princes, and I will make him a great nation. [21] But My covenant I will establish with Isaac, whom Sarah shall bear to you at this set time next year." [22] Then He finished talking with him, and God went up from Abraham.

IV. God promised to give Abraham a son by Sarah.

- A. God changed the name of Sarai to Sarah ("princess").
 - 1. Sarah would be the "mother of nations," but not as many as Abraham.
 - 2. Israel and Edom would be descended from her, but not Midian or Arabia.
- B. Abraham had questions about God's promise to give him a son by Sarah.
 - 1. The birth of Ishmael had proved his natural ability to have a son, but Sarah was still barren through a lack of belief, and was approaching the age of 90.
 - 2. Abraham asked God to consider Ishmael as the one through whom he could fulfil His promises.
 - 3. God rejected Ishmael, but blessed him in a special way.
 - a. God's reason for rejecting Ishmael is probably based on the fact that the first time He promised Abraham a son (**Genesis 15:1-4**) was before he married Hagar (**Genesis 16:3**).
 - b. This first promise would imply that the son would be born to Sarah, who was his only wife at the time of the promise.
 - c. The descendants of Ishmael would include 12 princes over a great nation. (These princes are named in **Genesis 25:12-16**.)
- C. God emphasized in verses 19 and 21 that the covenant of circumcision given to Abraham would continue through his son Isaac.

Genesis 17:23-27

[23] So Abraham took Ishmael his son, all who were born in his house and all who were bought with his money, every male among the men of Abraham's house, and circumcised the flesh of their foreskins that very same day, as God had said to him. [24] Abraham was ninety-nine years old when he was circumcised in the flesh of his foreskin. [25] And Ishmael his son was thirteen years old when he was circumcised in the flesh of his foreskin. [26] That very same day Abraham was circumcised, and his son Ishmael; [27] and all the men of his house, born in the house or bought with money from a foreigner, were circumcised with him.

V. The rite of circumcision was established in Abraham's household.

- A. Circumcision was to be the mark of division between the descendants of Abraham, and the Gentiles. **Ephesians 2:11-12** *Therefore remember that you, once Gentiles in the flesh--who are called Uncircumcision by what is called the Circumcision made in the flesh by hands-- [12] that at that time you were without Christ, being aliens from the commonwealth of Israel and strangers from the covenants of promise, having no hope and without God in the world.*
 - 1. This distinction actually began with the circumcision of Isaac on the 8th day after his birth. **Genesis 21:4**
 - 2. Later generations sometimes neglected this practice. **Joshua 5:2-5** *At that time*

the Lord said to Joshua, "Make flint knives for yourself, and circumcise the sons of Israel again the second time." [3] So Joshua made flint knives for himself, and circumcised the sons of Israel at the hill of the foreskins. [4] And this is the reason why Joshua circumcised them: All the people who came out of Egypt who were males, all the men of war, had died in the wilderness on the way, after they had come out of Egypt. [5] For all the people who came out had been circumcised, but all the people born in the wilderness, on the way as they came out of Egypt, had not been circumcised.

B. In both the Old and New Testaments, God required that His people to be marked by a "circumcision of the heart."

1. **Deuteronomy 30:6** *"And the Lord your God will circumcise your heart and the heart of your descendants, to love the Lord your God with all your heart and with all your soul, that you may live."*
2. **Jeremiah 4:4** *"Circumcise yourselves to the Lord, and take away the foreskins of your hearts, you men of Judah and inhabitants of Jerusalem, lest My fury come forth like fire, and burn so that no one can quench it, because of the evil of your doings."*
3. **Romans 2:25-29** *"For circumcision is indeed profitable if you keep the law; but if you are a breaker of the law, your circumcision has become uncircum-cision. [26] Therefore, if an uncircumcised man keeps the righteous requirements of the law, will not his uncircumcision be counted as circumcision? [27] And will not the physically uncircumcised, if he fulfills the law, judge you who, even with your written code and circumcision, are a transgressor of the law? [28] For he is not a Jew who is one outwardly, nor is circumcision that which is outward in the flesh; [29] but he is a Jew who is one inwardly; and circum-cision is that of the heart, in the Spirit, not in the letter; whose praise is not from men but from God."*

Genesis 18:1-15

Then the Lord appeared to him by the terebinth trees of Mamre, as he was sitting in the tent door in the heat of the day. [2] So he lifted his eyes and looked, and behold, three men were standing by him; and when he saw them, he ran from the tent door to meet them, and bowed himself to the ground, [3] and said, "My Lord, if I have now found favor in Your sight, do not pass on by Your servant. [4] Please let a little water be brought, and wash your feet, and rest yourselves under the tree. [5] And I will bring a morsel of bread, that you may refresh your hearts. After that you may pass by, inasmuch as you have come to your servant." They said, "Do as you have said." [6] So Abraham hurried into the tent to Sarah and said, "Quickly, make ready three measures of fine meal; knead it and make cakes." [7] And Abraham ran to the herd, took a tender and good calf, gave it to a young man, and he hastened to prepare it. [8] So he took butter and milk and the calf which he had prepared, and set it before them; and he stood by them under the tree as they ate.

[9] Then they said to him, "Where is Sarah your wife?" So he said, "Here, in the tent." [10] And He said, "I will certainly return to you according to the time of life, and behold, Sarah your wife shall have a son." (Sarah was listening in the tent door which was behind him.) [11] Now Abraham and Sarah were old, well advanced in

age; and Sarah had passed the age of childbearing. [12] Therefore Sarah laughed within herself, saying, "After I have grown old, shall I have pleasure, my lord being old also?" [13] And the Lord said to Abraham, "Why did Sarah laugh, saying, 'Shall I surely bear a child, since I am old?' [14] Is anything too hard for the Lord? At the appointed time I will return to you, according to the time of life, and Sarah shall have a son." [15] But Sarah denied it, saying, "I did not laugh," for she was afraid. And He said, "No, but you did laugh!"

VI. God confirmed the promise that Sarah would have a son by Abraham.

A. The hospitality of Abraham to the three visitors is an example for Christians.

Hebrews 13:2 *"Do not forget to entertain strangers, for by so doing some have unwittingly entertained angels."*

B. Sarah's unbelief changed to belief.

1. God had previously promised Abraham a male heir in one year (See **17:21**).
2. Sarah's laughter was an indication of her lack of faith at that moment.
3. In her statement in verse 21, Sarah called Abraham her "lord." (This is noted in the New Testament by Paul. **1 Peter 3:5-6** *"...In former times, the holy women who trusted in God also adorned themselves, being submissive to their own husbands, [6] as Sarah obeyed Abraham, calling him lord, whose daughters you are if you do good and are not afraid with any terror."*)
4. The censure of Sarah by the visitor apparently convinced her that the promise would come true, because she did have a child. **Hebrews 11:11** *"By faith Sarah herself also received strength to conceive seed, and she bore a child when she was past the age, because she judged Him faithful who had promised."*

Genesis 18:16-33

[16] Then the men rose from there and looked toward Sodom, and Abraham went with them to send them on the way. [17] And the Lord said, "Shall I hide from Abraham what I am doing, [18] since Abraham shall surely become a great and mighty nation, and all the nations of the earth shall be blessed in him? [19] For I have known him, in order that he may command his children and his household after him, that they keep the way of the Lord, to do righteousness and justice, that the Lord may bring to Abraham what He has spoken to him." [20] And the Lord said, "Because the outcry against Sodom and Gomorrah is great, and because their sin is very grave, [21] I will go down now and see whether they have done altogether according to the outcry against it that has come to Me; and if not, I will know."

[22] Then the men turned away from there and went toward Sodom, but Abraham still stood before the Lord. [23] And Abraham came near and said, "Would You also destroy the righteous with the wicked? [24] Suppose there were fifty righteous within the city; would You also destroy the place and not spare it for the fifty righteous that were in it? [25] Far be it from You to do such a thing as this, to slay the righteous with the wicked, so that the righteous should be as the wicked; far be it from You! Shall not the Judge of all the earth do right?" [26] So the Lord said, "If I find in Sodom fifty righteous within the city, then I will spare all the place for their sakes." [27] Then Abraham answered and said, "Indeed now, I who am but dust and ashes have taken it

upon myself to speak to the Lord: [28] Suppose there were five less than the fifty righteous; would You destroy all of the city for lack of five?" So He said, "If I find there forty-five, I will not destroy it." [29] And he spoke to Him yet again and said, "Suppose there should be forty found there?" So He said, "I will not do it for the sake of forty." [30] Then he said, "Let not the Lord be angry, and I will speak: Suppose thirty should be found there?" So He said, "I will not do it if I find thirty there." [31] And he said, "Indeed now, I have taken it upon myself to speak to the Lord: Suppose twenty should be found there?" So He said, "I will not destroy it for the sake of twenty." [32] Then he said, "Let not the Lord be angry, and I will speak but once more: Suppose ten should be found there?" And He said, "I will not destroy it for the sake of ten." [33] So the Lord went His way as soon as He had finished speaking with Abraham; and Abraham returned to his place.

VII. God revealed to Abraham His plan to judge Sodom and Gomorrah.

- A. In this story of the three visitors to Abraham, we gradually learn that one of them was the Lord in human form, while the others were angels that went to Sodom.
 - 1. The "Lord" complimented Abraham for his role in teaching his descendants to "keep the way of the Lord, (and) to do righteousness and justice." **Verse 17**
 - 2. The Lord then revealed His intention to examine the morality of the cities.
 - a. The language used here could cause some to doubt the omniscience of God, since he says, *"I will go down now and see whether they have done altogether according to the outcry against it that has come to Me; and if not, I will know."* **Verse 21**
 - b. The angels who later visited Lot tell him that the destruction of the cities was predetermined by God. **Genesis 19:13** *"For we will destroy this place, because the outcry against them has grown great before the face of the Lord, and the Lord has sent us to destroy it."*
- B. Abraham bargained with God regarding the destruction of the cities.
 - 1. He believed that the Lord would not destroy the righteous with the wicked.
 - 2. He started his bargaining with a number (50) that could be considered low, in relation to the greater number of the people living in the cities.
 - 3. As he bargained from 50 to 45 to 40 to 30 to 20, and finally to 10, Abraham became increasingly humble, respectful, and apologetic to God.
 - 4. God did not get angry, because he already knew that 10 righteous people would not be found in the cities. (Only 4 were found in the city of Sodom.)

Genesis 19:1-11

Now the two angels came to Sodom in the evening, and Lot was sitting in the gate of Sodom. When Lot saw them, he rose to meet them, and he bowed himself with his face toward the ground. [2] And he said, "Here now, my lords, please turn in to your servant's house and spend the night, and wash your feet; then you may rise early and go on your way." And they said, "No, but we will spend the night in the open square." [3] But he insisted strongly; so they turned in to him and entered his house. Then he made them a feast, and baked unleavened bread, and they ate.

[4] Now before they lay down, the men of the city, the men of Sodom, both old and

young, all the people from every quarter, surrounded the house. [5] And they called to Lot and said to him, "Where are the men who came to you tonight? Bring them out to us that we may know them carnally." [6] So Lot went out to them through the doorway, shut the door behind him, [7] and said, "Please, my brethren, do not do so wickedly! [8] See now, I have two daughters who have not known a man; please, let me bring them out to you, and you may do to them as you wish; only do nothing to these men, since this is the reason they have come under the shadow of my roof." [9] And they said, "Stand back!" Then they said, "This one came in to stay here, and he keeps acting as a judge; now we will deal worse with you than with them." So they pressed hard against the man Lot, and came near to break down the door. [10] But the men reached out their hands and pulled Lot into the house with them, and shut the door. [11] And they struck the men who were at the doorway of the house with blindness, both small and great, so that they became weary trying to find the door.

VIII. The Angels came to Sodom on their mission.

- A. Lot, like Abraham, was hospitable, and insisted that they come into his house.
- B. When the men of Sodom sought to "know them carnally," Lot refused.
 - 1. Lot's reason for insisting that the angels come into his house was apparently to protect them from being approached with this demand.
 - 2. His offer of his two virgin daughters to the homosexuals was probably based on the knowledge that homosexual desire does not usually involve women.
 - 3. When the Sodomites tried to take Lot's visitors by force, they were blinded.
 - a. This device was used by a prophet to protect himself. **2 Kings 6:8-19**
 - b. It was also used by the Apostle Paul to silence a sorcerer. **Acts 13:2-12**
- C. The chief sin of Sodom and Gomorrah was homosexuality.
 - 1. Lot called the act "wicked," so it was considered a sin before Moses' Law.
 - 2. This sin was later forbidden in the Law of Moses.
 - a. **Leviticus 18:22** "You shall not lie with a male as with a woman. It is an abomination."
 - b. **Leviticus 20:13** "If a man lies with a male as he lies with a woman, both of them have committed an abomination. They shall surely be put to death. Their blood shall be upon them."
 - 3. It is also condemned under the New Testament.
 - a. **Romans 1:26-27** "For this reason God gave them up to vile passions. For even their women exchanged the natural use for what is against nature. [27] Likewise also the men, leaving the natural use of the woman, burned in their lust for one another, men with men committing what is shameful, and receiving in themselves the penalty of their error which was due."
 - b. **1 Corinthians 6:9** "Do you not know that the unrighteous will not inherit the kingdom of God? Do not be deceived. Neither fornicators, nor idolaters, nor adulterers, nor homosexuals, nor sodomites..."

Genesis 19:12-26

[12] Then the men said to Lot, "Have you anyone else here? Son-in-law, your sons, your daughters, and whomever you have in the city--take them out of this place! [13]

For we will destroy this place, because the outcry against them has grown great before the face of the Lord, and the Lord has sent us to destroy it." [14] So Lot went out and spoke to his sons-in-law, who had married his daughters, and said, "Get up, get out of this place; for the Lord will destroy this city!" But to his sons-in-law he seemed to be joking.

[15] When the morning dawned, the angels urged Lot to hurry, saying, "Arise, take your wife and your two daughters who are here, lest you be consumed in the punishment of the city." [16] And while he lingered, the men took hold of his hand, his wife's hand, and the hands of his two daughters, the Lord being merciful to him, and they brought him out and set him outside the city. [17] So it came to pass, when they had brought them outside, that he said, "Escape for your life! Do not look behind you nor stay anywhere in the plain. Escape to the mountains, lest you be destroyed." [18] Then Lot said to them, "Please, no, my lords! [19] Indeed now, your servant has found favor in your sight, and you have increased your mercy which you have shown me by saving my life; but I cannot escape to the mountains, lest some evil overtake me and I die. [20] See now, this city is near enough to flee to, and it is a little one; please let me escape there (is it not a little one?) and my soul shall live." [21] And he said to him, "See, I have favored you concerning this thing also, in that I will not overthrow this city for which you have spoken. [22] Hurry, escape there. For I cannot do anything until you arrive there." Therefore the name of the city was called Zoar.

[23] The sun had risen upon the earth when Lot entered Zoar. [24] Then the Lord rained brimstone and fire on Sodom and Gomorrah, from the Lord out of the heavens. [25] So He overthrew those cities, all the plain, all the inhabitants of the cities, and what grew on the ground. [26] But his wife looked back behind him, and she became a pillar of salt.

IX. The escape of Lot and family from Sodom.

A. The angels gave Lot time to try to persuade his other daughters and sons-in-law to escape with them, but he was unsuccessful.

1. His willingness to allow his daughters to marry sinful men of the city shows that he had not been very concerned about the possible evil influence of such marriages. **1 Corinthians 15:33** *"Do not be deceived: 'Evil company corrupts good habits.'"*
2. His sons-in-law treated his warning like many do today.
 - a. When King Hezekiah attempted to restore the celebration of Passover, his messengers were scorned. **2 Chronicles 30:1-10**
 - b. Israel's scorn for the warnings of God brought His wrath. **2 Chronicles 36:16** *"But they mocked the messengers of God, despised His words, and scoffed at His prophets, until the wrath of the Lord arose against His people, till there was no remedy."*
 - c. The men of Athens scorned the message of Paul. **Acts 17:32** *And when they heard of the resurrection of the dead, some mocked, while others said, "We will hear you again on this matter."*

B. Lot's family was reluctant to leave the city.

1. They "lingered," and had to be pulled by the hand out of the city. **Verse 16**
2. They were told not to look back, but flee into the mountains surrounding the valley. **Verse 17**
 - a. Lot was afraid of possible danger in the mountains.
 - b. He persuaded the angels to let them go to the small city of Zoar.
 - c. Lot's wife turned into a pillar of salt, when she disobeyed the charge of the angels, and looked back at the city where her other children lived.

Genesis 19:27-29

[27] And Abraham went early in the morning to the place where he had stood before the Lord. [28] Then he looked toward Sodom and Gomorrah, and toward all the land of the plain; and he saw, and behold, the smoke of the land which went up like the smoke of a furnace.

[29] 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 had dwelt.

- X. Abraham saw the destruction of the cities, and was given credit for saving Lot.
- A. Abraham realized that the Lord did not find the 10 righteous souls in Sodom.
 - B. **Verse 29** reveals that God saved Lot as a favor to Abraham.
 1. God saved the joint armies of Judah and Israel, as a favor to Jehoshaphat, King of Judah. **2 Kings 3:4-17** (especially, **Verse 14**)
 2. At other times, the presence of the righteous will not be enough to save. **Jeremiah 15:1** Then the Lord said to me, "Even if Moses and Samuel stood before Me, My mind would not be favorable toward this people. Cast them out of My sight, and let them go forth."
 3. Today, Christians may be credited for "preserving" the world. **Matthew 5:13** *"You are the salt of the earth; but if the salt loses its flavor, how shall it be seasoned? It is then good for nothing but to be thrown out and trampled underfoot by men."*

Genesis 19:30-38

[30] Then Lot went up out of Zoar and dwelt in the mountains, and his two daughters were with him; for he was afraid to dwell in Zoar. And he and his two daughters dwelt in a cave. [31] Now the firstborn said to the younger, "Our father is old, and there is no man on the earth to come in to us as is the custom of all the earth. [32] Come, let us make our father drink wine, and we will lie with him, that we may preserve the lineage of our father." [33] So they made their father drink wine that night. And the firstborn went in and lay with her father, and he did not know when she lay down or when she arose. [34] It happened on the next day that the firstborn said to the younger, "Indeed I lay with my father last night; let us make him drink wine tonight also, and you go in and lie with him, that we may preserve the lineage of our father." [35] Then they made their father drink wine that night also. And the younger arose and lay with him, and he did not know when she lay down or when she arose.

[36] Thus both the daughters of Lot were with child by their father. [37] The

firstborn bore a son and called his name Moab; he is the father of the Moabites to this day. [38] And the younger, she also bore a son and called his name Ben- Ammi; he is the father of the people of Ammon to this day.

XI. The sad ending for Lot.

A. Lot and his daughters leave Zoar.

1. They go into the mountains to live in a cave.
2. Lot had expressed fear of going to the mountains, when the angels told him to do it. **Verse 17**
3. He was also afraid to stay in Zoar, and went to the mountains he had feared.

B. Lot's daughters conceive children by their father.

1. The older daughter supposed that there was no man left for them to marry, after the widespread destruction of the cities of the valley.
2. She persuaded her sister to follow her example, so that they could have children by their father to carry on his lineage.
3. The children that were conceived, Moab and Ben-ammi, were the founders of the nations of Moab and Ammon.
 - a. When they began the conquest of Canaan, the children of Israel had trouble from these nations, though they were related by blood.
 - (1) Moab troubled Israel. **Numbers 21-26, Joshua 24, Judges 3**, etc.
 - (2) Ammon's oppressions are mentioned in **Deuteronomy 2, Judges 3, 10-11**, etc. (NOTE: It is interesting to note that the capital city of the modern country of Jordan is called Amman.)
 - b. The Israelites were sometimes persuaded to worship the Idols of Moab and Ammon. **1 Kings 11:33** "...they have forsaken Me, and worshiped Ashtoreth the goddess of the Sidonians, Chemosh the god of the Moabites, and Milcom the god of the people of Ammon, and have not walked in My ways to do what is right in My eyes and keep My statutes and My judgments, as did his father David."

C. The sins of Lot and his daughters have always been forbidden by God.

1. Intoxication.

- a. Lot became drunk with wine.
 - (1) He may have justified his action by the fact that he had lost his wife and all his other children, in the destruction of the cities of the plain.
 - (2) One passage suggests this use of wine. **Proverbs 31:6** *Give strong drink to him who is perishing, and wine to those who are bitter of heart.*
- b. Intoxication is forbidden in both the Old and New Testaments.
 - (1) **Leviticus 10:9** (To priests) *"Do not drink wine or intoxicating drink, you, nor your sons with you, when you go into the tabernacle of meeting, lest you die. It shall be a statute forever throughout your generations..."*
 - (2) **Isaiah 28:7** *"But they also have erred through wine, and through intoxicating drink are out of the way; the priest and the prophet have erred through intoxicating drink, they are swallowed up by wine, they are out of the way through intoxicating drink; they err in vision, they stumble in judgment."*
 - (3) **Romans 13:13** *"Let us walk properly, as in the day, not in revelry and*

drunkenness, not in lewdness and lust, not in strife and envy."

2. Incest.
 - a. As we have seen, earlier in this study, Abraham was married to a half-sister, but this was forbidden later in the Law of Moses.
 - b. Father/ daughter incest was also forbidden in the Law of Moses, along with other forms of illicit sex. **Leviticus 18:6** *"None of you shall approach any-one who is near of kin to him, to uncover his nakedness: I am the Lord."* (See also, **Leviticus 18:7-18, 20:11-21; Deuteronomy 22:30, 27:20-23.**)
3. Even though Lot made many mistakes, in contrast to the people of Sodom, he was a righteous man. **2 Peter 2:6-8** *"(God turned)...the cities of Sodom and Gomorrah into ashes, condemned them to destruction, making them an example to those who afterward would live ungodly; [7] and delivered righteous Lot, who was oppressed by the filthy conduct of the wicked [8] (for that righteous man, dwelling among them, tormented his righteous soul from day to day by seeing and hearing their lawless deeds)."*

A Study of Genesis – 8

Genesis 20:1-18

And Abraham journeyed from there to the South, and dwelt between Kadesh and Shur, and stayed in Gerar. [2] Now Abraham said of Sarah his wife, "She is my sister." And Abimelech king of Gerar sent and took Sarah. [3] But God came to Abimelech in a dream by night, and said to him, "Indeed you are a dead man because of the woman whom you have taken, for she is a man's wife." [4] But Abimelech had not come near her; and he said, "Lord, will You slay a righteous nation also? [5] Did he not say to me, 'She is my sister'? And she, even she her-self said, 'He is my brother.' In the integrity of my heart and innocence of my hands I have done this." [6] And God said to him in a dream, "Yes, I know that you did this in the integrity of your heart. For I also withheld you from sinning against Me; therefore I did not let you touch her. [7] Now therefore, restore the man's wife; for he is a prophet, and he will pray for you and you shall live. But if you do not restore her know that you shall surely die, you and all who are yours."

[8] So Abimelech rose early in the morning, called all his servants, and told all these things in their hearing; and the men were very much afraid. [9] And Abimelech called Abraham and said to him, "What have you done to us? How have I offended you, that you have brought on me and on my kingdom a great sin? You have done deeds to me that ought not to be done." [10] Then Abimelech said to Abraham, "What did you have in view, that you have done this thing?" [11] And Abraham said, "Because I thought, surely the fear of God is not in this place; and they will kill me on account of my wife. [12] But indeed she is truly my sister. She is the daughter of my father, but not the daughter of my mother; and she became my wife. [13] And it came to pass, when God caused me to wander from my father's house, that I said to her, 'This is your kindness that you should do for me: in every place, wherever we go,

say of me, He is my brother.' ”

[14] Then Abimelech took sheep, oxen, and male and female servants, and gave them to Abraham; and he restored Sarah his wife to him. [15] And Abim-elech said, “See, my land is before you; dwell where it pleases you.” [16] Then to Sarah he said, “Behold, I have given your brother a thousand pieces of silver; indeed this vindicates you before all who are with you and before everybody.” Thus she was rebuked.

[17] So Abraham prayed to God; and God healed Abimelech, his wife, and his female servants. Then they bore children; [18] for the Lord had closed up all the wombs of the house of Abimelech because of Sarah, Abraham's wife.

I. Abraham's trust in God's protection is still not perfect.

A. This incident should be compared to a previous one in **Genesis 12:10-20**.

1. There are similarities in the two events.

a. In both incidents, Abraham withheld the whole truth about his relationship to Sarah.

(1) Before these incidents, only two deceptions are recorded in Genesis.

(a) That of the Devil in the Garden of Eden. **Genesis 3:13** “*And the Lord God said to the woman, ‘What is this you have done?’ The woman said, ‘The serpent deceived me, and I ate.’*” (The truth of this is confirmed by Paul in **1 Timothy 2:14** “*And Adam was not deceived, but the woman being deceived, fell into transgression.*”

(b) And that of Cain, when he was asked about his brother. **Genesis 4:9** “*Then the Lord said to Cain, ‘Where is Abel your brother?’ He said, ‘I do not know. Am I my brother's keeper?’*”

(2) The devil is the father of lies, according to Jesus. **John 8:44** “*You are of your father the devil, and the desires of your father you want to do. He was a murderer from the beginning, and does not stand in the truth, because there is no truth in him. When he speaks a lie, he speaks from his own resources, for he is a liar and the father of it.*”

b. In both incidents, the nations were punished by God.

(1) Egypt received plagues. **12:17**

(2) Abimelech's nation was under threat of destruction. **20:4** (Also, God closed the wombs of the women in Abimelech's household. **20:17-18**)

c. In both incidents, the rulers heaped gifts on Abraham.

d. In both incidents, Abraham is not rebuked or punished for his deception.

(1) Since there is no written or expressed prohibition against lying in the Genesis record of the Patriarchal Age, to the time of Abraham, there would possibly be no punishment. **Romans 4:15** “*...the law brings about wrath; for where there is no law there is no transgression.*”

(2) However, both rulers were angry because of Abraham's deception, which indicates that lying was not approved in the two cultures.

(3) It would not be wise to assume from this narrative that we, as children of God under the New Covenant, can avoid the consequences of lying, as Abraham seemingly did. **Revelation 21:7-8** “*He who overcomes shall inherit all things, and I will be his God and he shall be My son. [8] But the*

cowardly, unbelieving, abominable, murderers, sexually immoral, sorcerers, idolaters, and all liars shall have their part in the lake which burns with fire and brimstone, which is the second death."

2. There are also details in the two events that are different.
 - a. Each ruler discovered the true identity of Sarah in different ways.
 - (1) Pharaoh seems to have learned it in some natural way. **12:18-19**
 - (2) Abimelech was made aware of it directly by the revelation of God. **20:3**
 - b. Abraham explained the reason for his deception to Abimelech, but not to Pharaoh.
 - c. Abimelech is told by God to ask Abraham (described as a "prophet") to pray for him, and the prayer was answered by God. (Pharaoh was given no similar instruction.)
- B. There is a good lesson to be drawn from God's dealings with Abimelech.
 1. When God rebuked Abimelech for seizing Sarah, the king pleaded his innocence. (Compare similar pleas in **2 Kings 20:1-5** and **Nehemiah 13:14**.)
 - a. God acknowledged his innocence, and said this was His reason for preventing sin. (Compare the context of **1 Samuel 25:26**.)
 - b. Abimelech must have had a good relationship with God, if he received this direct message from Him, and was able to converse with Him.
 2. Abimelech indirectly accused Abraham of returning evil for good. **20:9**
 - a. This sort of attitude is shown to be wrong in all the Bible historical ages.
 - (1) **Proverbs 17:13** *"Whoever rewards evil for good, evil will not depart from his house."*
 - (2) **Romans 12:21** *"Do not be overcome by evil, but overcome evil with good."*
 - b. Even though Abraham suffered no consequences from Abimelech's rebuke, the king appears to be more righteous than Abraham.
 - (1) Abraham made no restitution to Abimelech, because of his sin.
 - (2) Instead, Abimelech gave Abraham cattle and servants, plus 1000 pieces of silver, to vindicate (and reprove) Sarah. **20:14-16**

Genesis 21:1-21

And the Lord visited Sarah as He had said, and the Lord did for Sarah as He had spoken. [2] For Sarah conceived and bore Abraham a son in his old age, at the set time of which God had spoken to him. [3] And Abraham called the name of his son who was born to him--whom Sarah bore to him--Isaac. [4] Then Abraham circumcised his son Isaac when he was eight days old, as God had commanded him. [5] Now Abraham was one hundred years old when his son Isaac was born to him. [6] And Sarah said, "God has made me laugh, and all who hear will laugh with me." [7] She also said, "Who would have said to Abraham that Sarah would nurse children? For I have borne him a son in his old age."

[8] So the child grew and was weaned. And Abraham made a great feast on the same day that Isaac was weaned. [9] And Sarah saw the son of Hagar the Egyptian, whom she had borne to Abraham, scoffing. [10] Therefore she said to Abraham, "Cast out this bondwoman and her son; for the son of this bondwoman shall not be heir with my son, namely with Isaac." [11] And the matter was very displeasing in

Abraham's sight because of his son. [12] But God said to Abraham, "Do not let it be displeasing in your sight because of the lad or because of your bondwoman.

Whatever Sarah has said to you, listen to her voice; for in Isaac your seed shall be called. [13] Yet I will also make a nation of the son of the bondwoman, because he is your seed." [14] So Abraham rose early in the morning, and took bread and a skin of water; and putting it on her shoulder, he gave it and the boy to Hagar, and sent her away. Then she departed and wandered in the Wilderness of Beersheba.

[15] And the water in the skin was used up, and she placed the boy under one of the shrubs. [16] Then she went and sat down across from him at a distance of about a bowshot; for she said to herself, "Let me not see the death of the boy." So she sat opposite him, and lifted her voice and wept. [17] And God heard the voice of the lad. Then the angel of God called to Hagar out of heaven, and said to her, "What ails you, Hagar? Fear not, for God has heard the voice of the lad where he is. [18] Arise, lift up the lad and hold him with your hand, for I will make him a great nation." [19] Then God opened her eyes, and she saw a well of water. And she went and filled the skin with water, and gave the lad a drink. [20] So God was with the lad; and he grew and dwelt in the wilderness, and became an archer. [21] He dwelt in the Wilderness of Paran; and his mother took a wife for him from the land of Egypt.

II. The birth of Isaac causes a rift between Sarah and Hagar.

A. Sarah resented the scoffing of Hagar's son, Ishmael, during the feast held in honor of the weaning of Isaac.

1. Sarah asked Abraham to send Hagar and her son away.

2. Abraham was reluctant, until God approved the action, and reminded Abraham that his legitimate heir was to be Isaac.

B. The Apostle Paul used this incident in an allegory. **Galatians 4:21-31**

C. Paul also used this incident in the same allegorical sense in **Romans 9:6-8**. *"But it is not that the word of God has taken no effect. For they are not all Israel who are of Israel, [7] nor are they all children because they are the seed of Abraham; but, 'In Isaac your seed shall be called.' [8] That is, those who are the children of the flesh, these are not the children of God; but the children of the promise are counted as the seed."*

Genesis 21:22-34

[22] And it came to pass at that time that Abimelech and Phichol, the commander of his army, spoke to Abraham, saying, "God is with you in all that you do. [23] Now therefore, swear to me by God that you will not deal falsely with me, with my offspring, or with my posterity; but that according to the kindness that I have done to you, you will do to me and to the land in which you have dwelt." [24] And Abraham said, "I will swear."

[25] Then Abraham rebuked Abimelech because of a well of water which Abimelech's servants had seized. [26] And Abimelech said, "I do not know who has done this thing; you did not tell me, nor had I heard of it until today." [27] So Abraham took sheep and oxen and gave them to Abimelech, and the two of them made a covenant. [28] And Abraham set seven ewe lambs of the flock by them-selves. [29] Then Abimelech asked Abraham, "What is the meaning of these seven ewe

lambs which you have set by themselves?" [30] And he said, "You will take these seven ewe lambs from my hand, that they may be my witness that I have dug this well." [31] Therefore he called that place Beersheba, because the two of them swore an oath there. [32] Thus they made a covenant at Beersheba. So Abimelech rose with Phichol, the commander of his army, and they returned to the land of the Philistines. [33] Then Abraham planted a tamarisk tree in Beer-sheba, and there called on the name of the Lord, the Everlasting God. [34] And Abraham stayed in the land of the Philistines many days.

III. Abraham's continued peaceful relationship with Abimelech.

A. They swore an oath of mutual good will. **Verses 22-24**

B. Abraham seized an opportunity from this to settle a dispute over the ownership of a well. **Verses 25-33**

NOTE: There is some geographical information in these verses regarding the area ruled at that time by the Philistines. It is said to include the area where Abraham was living, around Beersheba. Other place names given here are Kadesh, Shur, and Gerar. Some maps indicate that the immediate region of Beersheba was surrounded by Philistine territory, indicating that this is the reason for the treaty between Abraham and Abimelech. The Philistines did not control this area a thousand years later, during the reign of King David over Israel. Philistia was then only a narrow area on the coast of the Mediterranean Sea.

Genesis 22:1-19

Now it came to pass after these things that God tested Abraham, and said to him, "Abraham!" And he said, "Here I am." [2] Then He said, "Take now your son, your only son Isaac, whom you love, and go to the land of Moriah, and offer him there as a burnt offering on one of the mountains of which I shall tell you."

[3] So Abraham rose early in the morning and saddled his donkey, and took two of his young men with him, and Isaac his son; and he split the wood for the burnt offering, and arose and went to the place of which God had told him. [4] Then on the third day Abraham lifted his eyes and saw the place afar off. [5] And Abraham said to his young men, "Stay here with the donkey; the lad and I will go yonder and worship, and we will come back to you." [6] So Abraham took the wood of the burnt offering and laid it on Isaac his son; and he took the fire in his hand, and a knife, and the two of them went together. [7] But Isaac spoke to Abraham his father and said, "My father!" And he said, "Here I am, my son." Then he said, "Look, the fire and the wood, but where is the lamb for a burnt offering?" [8] And Abraham said, "My son, God will provide for Himself the lamb for a burnt offering." So the two of them went together.

[9] Then they came to the place of which God had told him. And Abraham built an altar there and placed the wood in order; and he bound Isaac his son and laid him on the altar, upon the wood. [10] And Abraham stretched out his hand and took the knife to slay his son. [11] But the Angel of the Lord called to him from heaven and said, "Abraham, Abraham!" So he said, "Here I am." [12] And He said, "Do not lay your hand on the lad, or do anything to him; for now I know that you fear God, since

you have not withheld your son, your only son, from Me.” [13] Then Abraham lifted his eyes and looked, and there behind him was a ram caught in a thicket by its horns. So Abraham went and took the ram, and offered it up for a burnt offering instead of his son. [14] And Abraham called the name of the place, The-Lord-Will-Provide (or, in Hebrew, “Jehovah-jireh”); as it is said to this day, “In the Mount of The Lord it shall be provided.”

[15] Then the Angel of the Lord called to Abraham a second time out of heaven, [16] and said: “By Myself I have sworn, says the Lord, because you have done this thing, and have not withheld your son, your only son-- [17] blessing I will bless you, and multiplying I will multiply your descendants as the stars of the heaven and as the sand which is on the seashore; and your descendants shall possess the gate of their enemies. [18] In your seed all the nations of the earth shall be blessed, because you have obeyed My voice.” [19] So Abraham returned to his young men, and they rose and went together to Beersheba; and Abraham dwelt at Beersheba.

IV. The supreme test of Abraham’s faith.

A. Abraham’s trust in God grew to the point that he did not hesitate to obey the command of God to sacrifice Isaac.

1. This act of trust confirmed the faith that the childless Abraham had, many years before, when God promised that he would have many descendants.

Genesis 15:5-6 “Then He brought him outside and said, ‘Look now toward heaven, and count the stars if you are able to number them.’ And He said to him, ‘So shall your descendants be.’ [6] And he believed in the Lord, and He accounted it to him for righteousness.”

a. In the choice between Ishmael and Isaac, God chose Isaac as the heir to continue the lineage of Abraham. **Genesis 21:12** “God said to Abraham, ‘Do not let it be displeasing in your sight because of the lad (Ishmael) or because of your bondwoman (Hagar). Whatever Sarah has said to you, listen to her voice; for in Isaac your seed shall be called.’ ”

b. God’s promise was trusted, completely. **Hebrews 11:17-19** “By faith Abraham, when he was tested, offered up Isaac, and he who had received the promises offered up his only begotten son, [18] of whom it was said, ‘In Isaac your seed shall be called,’ [19] concluding that God was able to raise him up, even from the dead, from which he also received him in a figurative sense.”

c. Abraham’s faith was perfected by works. **James 2:21-24** “Was not Abraham our father justified by works when he offered Isaac his son on the altar? [22] Do you see that faith was working together with his works, and by works faith was made perfect? [23] And the Scripture was fulfilled which says, ‘Abraham believed God, and it was accounted to him for righteousness.’ And he was called the friend of God. [24] You see then that a man is justified by works, and not by faith only.”

2. God assured Abraham that His promises would be fulfilled, by swearing an oath on Himself.

a. God swore on himself as the highest form of an oath. **Hebrews 6:13-14** “For when God made a promise to Abraham, because He could swear by no one greater, He swore by Himself, [14] saying, ‘Surely blessing I will bless you, and

multiplying I will multiply you.’ ”

- b. This oath is mentioned in two other places.

(1) **Psalm 105:8-9** *“He remembers His covenant forever, the word which He commanded, for a thousand generations, [9] the covenant which He made with Abraham, and His oath to Isaac...”*

(2) **Luke 1:72-73** *“To perform the mercy promised to our fathers and to remember His holy covenant, [73] the oath which He swore to our father Abraham...”*

- B. The faith of Abraham is our model.

1. We must follow his “steps.” **Romans 4:11b-12** *“...(Abraham is the) father of all those who believe, though they are uncircumcised, that righteousness might be imputed to them also, [12] and the father of circumcision to those who not only are of the circumcision, but who also walk in the steps of the faith which our father Abraham had while still uncircumcised.”*
2. By faith, we can become “sons of Abraham.” **Galatians 3:7-9** *“Therefore know that only those who are of faith are sons of Abraham. [8] And the Scripture, foreseeing that God would justify the Gentiles by faith, preached the gospel to Abraham beforehand, saying, ‘In you all the nations shall be blessed.’ [9] So then those who are of faith are blessed with believing Abraham.”*
3. Our inheritance, or salvation in Christ, is based on faith, in the pattern of Abraham. **Romans 4:16** *“Therefore it is of faith that it might be according to grace, so that the promise might be sure to all the seed, not only to those who are of the law, but also to those who are of the faith of Abraham, who is the father of us all”*

Genesis 22:20-24

[20] Now it came to pass after these things that it was told Abraham, saying, “Indeed Milcah also has borne children to your brother Nahor: [21] Huz his firstborn, Buz his brother, Kemuel the father of Aram, [22] Chesed, Hazo, Pildash, Jidlaph, and Bethuel.” [23] And Bethuel begot Rebekah. These eight Milcah bore to Nahor, Abraham's brother. [24] His concubine, whose name was Reumah, also bore Tebah, Gaham, Thahash, and Maachah.

- V. The genealogy of Abraham’s brother, Nahor.

- A. Nahor had remained in Haran of Mesopotamia, after Abraham left with Lot, his nephew, to go to Canaan. See **24:10**, and **29:4-5**
- B. The key generation in this list is in the first part of **Verse 23**, which tells of the birth of Rebekah, who would later become the wife of Isaac, her 2nd cousin.

Genesis 23:1-20

Sarah lived one hundred and twenty-seven years; these were the years of the life of Sarah. [2] So Sarah died in Kirjath Arba (that is, Hebron) in the land of Canaan, and Abraham came to mourn for Sarah and to weep for her. [3] Then Abraham stood up from before his dead, and spoke to the sons of Heth, saying, [4] “I am a foreigner and a visitor among you. Give me property for a burial place among you, that I may bury my dead out of my sight.” [5] And the sons of Heth answered Abraham, saying to him, [6] “Hear us, my lord: You are a mighty prince among us; bury your dead in the

choicest of our burial places. None of us will withhold from you his burial place, that you may bury your dead." [7] Then Abraham stood up and bowed himself to the people of the land, the sons of Heth. [8] And he spoke with them, saying, "If it is your wish that I bury my dead out of my sight, hear me, and meet with Ephron the son of Zohar for me, [9] that he may give me the cave of Machpelah which he has, which is at the end of his field. Let him give it to me at the full price, as property for a burial place among you." [10] Now Ephron dwelt among the sons of Heth; and Ephron the Hittite answered Abraham in the presence of the sons of Heth, all who entered at the gate of his city, saying, [11] "No, my lord, hear me: I give you the field and the cave that is in it; I give it to you in the presence of the sons of my people. I give it to you. Bury your dead!" [12] Then Abraham bowed himself down before the people of the land; [13] and he spoke to Ephron in the hearing of the people of the land, saying, "If you will give it, please hear me. I will give you money for the field; take it from me and I will bury my dead there." [14] And Ephron answered Abraham, saying to him, [15] "My lord, listen to me; the land is worth four hundred shekels of silver. What is that between you and me? So bury your dead." [16] And Abraham listened to Ephron; and Abraham weighed out the silver for Ephron which he had named in the hearing of the sons of Heth, four hundred shekels of silver, currency of the merchants.

[17] So the field of Ephron which was in Machpelah, which was before Mamre, the field and the cave which was in it, and all the trees that were in the field, which were within all the surrounding borders, were deeded [18] to Abraham as a possession in the presence of the sons of Heth, before all who went in at the gate of his city. [19] And after this, Abraham buried Sarah his wife in the cave of the field of Machpelah, before Mamre (that is, Hebron) in the land of Canaan. [20] So the field and the cave that is in it were deeded to Abraham by the sons of Heth as property for a burial place.

VI. The death and burial of Sarah.

- A. Sarah lived 37 years after the birth of her son, Isaac. (She was 90 at his birth.)
- B. The rest of the chapter illustrates the manner in which negotiations were held for the purchase of land, among the Hittites.
- C. The cave of Machpelah, and the field surrounding it, was the only "real estate" that Abraham owned in the land of Canaan.
 - 1. Sarah was buried in the cave. **23:19**
 - 2. Abraham was also buried there. **25:7-10**
 - 3. *Other descendants of Abraham were buried there (Isaac, Rebekah, Leah, and Jacob). 49:29-32, 50:13*

A Study of Genesis – 9

Genesis 24:1-9

Now Abraham was old, advanced in age; and the Lord had blessed Abraham in every way. [2] And Abraham said to his servant, the oldest of his household, who had charge of all that he owned, "Please place your hand under my thigh, [3] and I will

make you swear by the Lord, the God of heaven and the God of earth, that you shall not take a wife for my son from the daughters of the Canaanites, among whom I live, [4] but you shall go to my country and to my relatives, and take a wife for my son Isaac." [5] And the servant said to him, "Suppose the woman will not be willing to follow me to this land; should I take your son back to the land from where you came?" [6] Then Abraham said to him, "Beware lest you take my son back there! [7] The Lord, the God of heaven, who took me from my father's house and from the land of my birth, and who spoke to me, and who swore to me, saying, 'To your descendants I will give this land,' He will send His angel before you, and you will take a wife for my son from there. [8] But if the woman is not willing to follow you, then you will be free from this my oath; only do not take my son back there." [9] So the servant placed his hand under the thigh of Abraham his master, and swore to him concerning this matter.

- I. Abraham's steward is given the commission to seek a wife for Isaac.
 - A. He is charged to reject the "daughters of the Canaanites."
 - B. The Canaanites were idolaters, and not fit to provide a wife for one who was a worshiper of the only true God.
 1. There are some examples of descendants of Abraham taking Canaanite brides. See **Genesis 36:2, 38:1-2, 12**
 2. Hundreds of years later, the Law of Moses forbade marriage of Israelites to Canaanites. **Deuteronomy 7:1-3**
 - C. The Steward is sent to Abraham's former country and relatives (See **vs. 10**)
 1. He is told that he cannot take Isaac back there.
 2. Abraham's great-grandson, Jacob, did go back there to obtain his wives.
 - a. Jacob's conflict with Esau drove him to this decision.
 - b. After this, no other descendant of Abraham sought a wife in that way.

Genesis 24:10-14

[10] Then the servant took ten camels from the camels of his master, and set out with a variety of good things of his master's in his hand; and he arose, and went to Mesopotamia, to the city of Nahor. [11] And he made the camels kneel down outside the city by the well of water at evening time, the time when women go out to draw water. [12] And he said, "O Lord, the God of my master Abraham, please grant me success today, and show lovingkindness to my master Abraham. [13] Behold, I am standing by the spring, and the daughters of the men of the city are coming out to draw water; [14] now may it be that the girl to whom I say, 'Please let down your jar so that I may drink,' and who answers, 'Drink, and I will water your camels also';-- may she be the one whom Thou hast appointed for Thy servant Isaac; and by this I shall know that Thou hast shown lovingkindness to my master."

- II. Abraham's servant places his mission in the hands of God.
 - A. He prays to God for success.
 1. He addresses God as "the God of my master Abraham."
 - a. God used this same manner in identifying himself to Moses. **Exodus 3:6**

He said also, "I am the God of your father, the God of Abraham, the God of Isaac, and the God of Jacob." Then Moses hid his face, for he was afraid to look at God.

- b. The Children of Israel were often called upon by the prophets to obey the "God of your fathers."
2. The servant asks for the providential intervention of God in helping him find the right girl for Isaac.
 - a. Three things are asked of God – a drink granted to him – the girl's offer to water the camels – and that the girl be the one chosen by God.
 - b. Gideon, one of the Judges of Israel, asked for specific things in a sign from God. Read **Judges 6:17-37**.
- B. Many of the people around Jesus asked for signs from Him.
 1. They would not accept signs, even when given. **John 12:37-40** *But though He had performed so many signs before them, yet they were not believing in Him; [38] that the word of Isaiah the prophet might be fulfilled, which he spoke, "Lord, who has believed our report? And to whom has the arm of the Lord been revealed?" [39] For this cause they could not believe, for Isaiah said again, [40] "He has blinded their eyes, and He HARDENED THEIR HEART; lest they see with their eyes, and perceive with their heart, and BE CONVERTED, AND I heal them."*
 2. This attitude hindered the Jews from believing. **1 Corinthians 1:22-24** *For indeed Jews ask for signs, and Greeks search for wisdom; [23] but we preach Christ crucified, to Jews a stumbling block, and to Gentiles foolishness, [24] but to those who are the called, both Jews and Greeks, Christ the power of God and the wisdom of God.*

Genesis 24:15-27

[15] And it came about before he had finished speaking, that behold, Rebekah who was born to Bethuel the son of Milcah, the wife of Abraham's brother Nahor, came out with her jar on her shoulder. [16] And the girl was very beautiful, a virgin, and no man had had relations with her; and she went down to the spring and filled her jar, and came up. [17] Then the servant ran to meet her, and said, "Please let me drink a little water from your jar." [18] And she said, "Drink, my lord"; and she quickly lowered her jar to her hand, and gave him a drink. [19] Now when she had finished giving him a drink, she said, "I will draw also for your camels until they have finished drinking." [20] So she quickly emptied her jar into the trough, and ran back to the well to draw, and she drew for all his camels. [21] Meanwhile, the man was gazing at her in silence, to know whether the Lord had made his journey successful or not. [22] Then it came about, when the camels had finished drinking, that the man took a gold ring weighing a half-shekel and two bracelets for her wrists weighing ten shekels in gold, [23] and said, "Whose daughter are you? Please tell me, is there room for us to lodge in your father's house?" [24] And she said to him, "I am the daughter of Bethuel, the son of Milcah, whom she bore to Nahor." [25] Again she said to him, "We have plenty of both straw and feed, and room to lodge in." [26] Then the man bowed low and worshiped the Lord. [27] And he said, "Blessed be the Lord, the God of my master Abraham, who has not forsaken His lovingkindness and His truth toward my master; as for me, the Lord has guided me in the way to the house of my master's brothers."

III. God answers the prayer of the servant.

- A. All three of his conditions for a sign are granted by God.
- B. The steward does not neglect to give thanks to God for the prompt fulfillment of his prayer.
 1. We should also consistently thank God for His blessings.
 - a. **Philippians 4:6** *Be anxious for nothing, but in everything by prayer and supplication with thanksgiving let your requests be made known to God.*
 - b. **1 Thessalonians 5:18** *in everything give thanks; for this is God's will for you in Christ Jesus.*
 2. Some people fail to do this. **Romans 1:20-21** *For since the creation of the world His invisible attributes, His eternal power and divine nature, have been clearly seen, being understood through what has been made, so that they are without excuse. [21] For even though they knew God, they did not honor Him as God, or give thanks; but they became futile in their speculations, and their foolish heart was darkened.*

Genesis 24:28-49

[28] Then the girl ran and told her mother's household about these things. [29] Now Rebekah had a brother whose name was Laban; and Laban ran outside to the man at the spring. [30] And it came about that when he saw the ring, and the bracelets on his sister's wrists, and when he heard the words of Rebekah his sister, saying, "This is what the man said to me," he went to the man; and behold, he was standing by the camels at the spring. [31] And he said, "Come in, blessed of the Lord! Why do you stand outside since I have prepared the house, and a place for the camels?" [32] So the man entered the house. Then Laban unloaded the camels, and he gave straw and feed to the camels, and water to wash his feet and the feet of the men who were with him. [33] But when food was set before him to eat, he said, "I will not eat until I have told my business." And he said, "Speak on." [34] So he said, "I am Abraham's servant. [35] And the Lord has greatly blessed my master, so that he has become rich; and He has given him flocks and herds, and silver and gold, and servants and maids, and camels and donkeys. [36] Now Sarah my master's wife bore a son to my master in her old age; and he has given him all that he has. [37] And my master made me swear, saying, 'You shall not take a wife for my son from the daughters of the Canaanites, in whose land I live; [38] but you shall go to my father's house, and to my relatives, and take a wife for my son.' [39] And I said to my master, 'Suppose the woman does not follow me.' [40] And he said to me, 'The Lord, before whom I have walked, will send His angel with you to make your journey successful, and you will take a wife for my son from my relatives, and from my father's house; [41] then you will be free from my oath, when you come to my relatives; and if they do not give her to you, you will be free from my oath.' [42] So I came today to the spring, and said, 'O Lord, the God of my master Abraham, if now Thou wilt make my journey on which I go successful; [43] behold, I am standing by the spring, and may it be that the maiden who comes out to draw, and to whom I say, "Please let me drink a little water from your jar"; [44] and she will say to me, "You drink, and I will draw for your camels also"; let her be the woman whom the Lord has appointed for my master's son.' [45] Before I had

finished speaking in my heart, behold, Rebekah came out with her jar on her shoulder, and went down to the spring and drew; and I said to her, 'Please let me drink.' [46] And she quickly lowered her jar from her shoulder, and said, 'Drink, and I will water your camels also'; so I drank, and she watered the camels also. [47] Then I asked her, and said, 'Whose daughter are you?' And she said, 'The daughter of Bethuel, Nahor's son, whom Milcah bore to him'; and I put the ring on her nose, and the bracelets on her wrists. [48] And I bowed low and worshiped the Lord, and blessed the Lord, the God of my master Abraham, who had guided me in the right way to take the daughter of my master's kinsman for his son. [49] So now if you are going to deal kindly and truly with my master, tell me; and if not, let me know, that I may turn to the right hand or the left."

IV. The relatives of Abraham receive his servant.

- A. He is brought to the house of Laban, Rebekah's brother, and shown hospitality.
- B. When he is offered food, the servant refuses it, until after he has related his mission. (Compare **1 Samuel 16:10-11** *Thus Jesse made seven of his sons pass before Samuel. But Samuel said to Jesse, "The Lord has not chosen these."* [11] *And Samuel said to Jesse, "Are these all the children?" And he said, "There remains yet the youngest, and behold, he is tending the sheep." Then Samuel said to Jesse, "Send and bring him; for we will not sit down until he comes here."*)
- C. After he has revealed his mission, he asks for an immediate decision.

Genesis 24:50-60

[50] Then Laban and Bethuel answered and said, "The matter comes from the Lord; so we cannot speak to you bad or good. [51] Behold, Rebekah is before you, take her and go, and let her be the wife of your master's son, as the Lord has spoken." [52] And it came about when Abraham's servant heard their words, that he bowed himself to the ground before the Lord. [53] And the servant brought out articles of silver and articles of gold, and garments, and gave them to Rebekah; he also gave precious things to her brother and to her mother. [54] Then he and the men who were with him ate and drank and spent the night. When they arose in the morning, he said, "Send me away to my master." [55] But her brother and her mother said, "Let the girl stay with us a few days, say ten; afterward she may go." [56] And he said to them, "Do not delay me, since the Lord has prospered my way. Send me away that I may go to my master." [57] And they said, "We will call the girl and consult her wishes." [58] Then they called Rebekah and said to her, "Will you go with this man?" And she said, "I will go." [59] Thus they sent away their sister Rebekah and her nurse with Abraham's servant and his men. [60] And they blessed Rebekah and said to her,

"May you, our sister,
Become thousands of ten thousands,
And may your descendants possess
The gate of those who hate them."

V. Rebekah decides to go with Abraham's servant and become Isaac's wife.

- A. Rebekah's kin recognize the hand of God in matter, and give consent.

1. The servant again praises God.
 2. The family of Rebekah asks for a 10-day delay before the return trip.
- B. The servant does not want to delay even for one day, and asks that the family allow Rebekah to return with him immediately. (Compare Peter's prompt response to the call of Cornelius. **Acts 10:17-33**)
1. The family calls Rebekah, and permits her to make her own decision.
 2. She agrees to go with the servant on the next day following his arrival.
 3. She was accompanied by her nurse (Vs. 59), and her maids (Vs. 61, below).

Genesis 14:61-67

[61] Then Rebekah arose with her maids, and they mounted the camels and followed the man. So the servant took Rebekah and departed. [62] Now Isaac had come from going to Beerlahairoi; for he was living in the Negev. [63] And Isaac went out to meditate in the field toward evening; and he lifted up his eyes and looked, and behold, camels were coming. [64] And Rebekah lifted up her eyes, and when she saw Isaac she dismounted from the camel. [65] And she said to the servant, "Who is that man walking in the field to meet us?" And the servant said, "He is my master." Then she took her veil and covered herself. [66] And the servant told Isaac all the things that he had done. [67] Then Isaac brought her into his mother Sarah's tent, and he took Rebekah, and she became his wife; and he loved her; thus Isaac was comforted after his mother's death.

VI. Rebekah travels a distance of about 300 miles to come to Isaac.

- A. Isaac meets them by chance, as he was walking in the field to meditate.
NOTE: Rebekah veiled herself when meeting Isaac, but different cultures had other rules about the use of the veil. Some years later, Tamar, the daughter-in-law of Judah, used a veil to disguise herself as a prostitute (**Genesis 38:13-15**). In the New Testament, the custom mentioned by Paul in **1 Corinthians 11:13** shows that the veil was imposed as a sign of subjection (apparently in Greek or Roman society).
- B. Isaac receives the report of the servant, and takes Rebekah to be his wife. (NOTE: There is no ceremony of marriage recorded here, but one is suggested in **Genesis 29:20-28**.)

Genesis 25:1-6

Now Abraham took another wife, whose name was Keturah. [2] She bore to him Zimran and Jokshan and Medan and Midian and Ishbak and Shuah. [3] Jokshan became the father of Sheba and Dedan. And the sons of Dedan were Asshurim and Letushim and Leummim. [4] The sons of Midian were Ephah and Epher and Hanoch and Abida and Eldaah. All these were the sons of Keturah. [5] Now Abraham gave all that he had to Isaac; [6] but to the sons of his concubines, Abraham gave gifts while he was still living, and sent them away from his son Isaac eastward, to the land of the east.

VII. Abraham's descendants from his third wife, Keturah.

- A. Of the six sons, only Midian seems to have a well-known place in Bible history.
 - 1. Jethro, the "priest of Midian." gave one of his daughters as wife to Moses.
Exodus 2:16-21
 - 2. The Midianites were sometimes hostile to Israel. (See **Judges 6 and 7.**)
- B. Another well-known name is Sheba, a grandson of Abraham. (See **1 Kings 10.**)
- C. Keturah was apparently a concubine-wife, since Isaac was made the sole heir of Abraham.
 - 1. The sons of Abraham's concubines only received gifts.
 - 2. They were then sent away "to the land of the east."

Genesis 25:7-11

[7] These are all the years of Abraham's life that he lived, one hundred and seventy-five years. [8] Abraham breathed his last and died in a ripe old age, an old man and satisfied with life; and he was gathered to his people. [9] Then his sons Isaac and Ishmael buried him in the cave of Machpelah, in the field of Ephron the son of Zohar the Hittite, facing Mamre, [10] the field which Abraham purchased from the sons of Heth; there Abraham was buried with Sarah his wife. [11] It came about after the death of Abraham, that God blessed his son Isaac; and Isaac lived by Beerlahairoi.

VIII. Abraham dies, and is buried by his sons, Isaac and Ishmael.

- A. He is buried in the cave of Machpelah, the only he had purchased.
- B. God blessed Isaac, as the promised heir of Abraham.

Genesis 25:12-18

[12] Now these are the records of the generations of Ishmael, Abraham's son, whom Hagar the Egyptian, Sarah's maid, bore to Abraham; [13] and these are the names of the sons of Ishmael, by their names, in the order of their birth: Nebaioth, the firstborn of Ishmael, and Kedar and Adbeel and Mibsam [14] and Mishma and Dumah and Massa, [15] Hadad and Tema, Jetur, Naphish and Kedemah. [16] These are the sons of Ishmael and these are their names, by their villages, and by their camps; twelve princes according to their tribes. [17] These are the years of the life of Ishmael, one hundred and thirty-seven years; and he breathed his last and died, and was gathered to his people. [18] They settled from Havilah to Shur which is east of Egypt as one goes toward Assyria; he settled in defiance of all his relatives.

IX. Ishmael's descendants.

- A. The 12 sons of Ishmael become princes, and fulfill the prophecy of **Genesis 17:20** "*As for Ishmael, I have heard you; behold, I will bless him, and will make him fruitful and will multiply him exceedingly. He shall become the father of twelve princes, and I will make him a great nation.*"
- B. Verse 18 shows the fulfillment of **Genesis 16:12** "*He will be a wild donkey of a man, his hand will be against everyone, and everyone's hand will be against him; and he will live to the east of all his brothers.*"

Genesis 25:19-26

[19] Now these are the records of the generations of Isaac, Abraham's son: Abraham became the father of Isaac; [20] and Isaac was forty years old when he took Rebekah, the daughter of Bethuel the Aramean of Paddan-aram, the sister of Laban the Aramean, to be his wife. [21] Isaac prayed to the Lord on behalf of his wife, because she was barren; and the Lord answered him and Rebekah his wife conceived. [22] But the children struggled together within her; and she said, "If it is so, why then am I this way?" So she went to inquire of the Lord. [23] The Lord said to her,

"Two nations are in your womb;
And two peoples will be separated from your body;
And one people shall be stronger than the other;
And the older shall serve the younger."

[24] When her days to be delivered were fulfilled, behold, there were twins in her womb. [25] Now the first came forth red, all over like a hairy garment; and they named him Esau. [26] Afterward his brother came forth with his hand holding on to Esau's heel, so his name was called Jacob (or, "Supplanter"—see Genesis 27:36, and Hosea 12:3); and Isaac was sixty years old when she gave birth to them.

- X. This genealogical history sets a precedent that can be exploited by other writers.
- A. We can learn how long Rebekah was barren by noting Isaac's age at his marriage (40, **Vs. 20**), and when the twins were born (60, **Vs. 26**).
 - B. The prophet, Malachi, uses verse 23 to develop an argument against the unfaithfulness of Israel. **Malachi 1:2-5** *"I have loved you," says the Lord. But you say, "How have You loved us?" "Was not Esau Jacob's brother?" declares the Lord. "Yet I have loved Jacob; [3] but I have hated Esau, and I have made his mountains a desolation and appointed his inheritance for the jackals of the wilder-ness." [4] Though Edom says, "We have been beaten down, but we will return and build up the ruins"; thus says the Lord of hosts, "They may build, but I will tear down; and men will call them the wicked territory, and the people toward whom the Lord is indignant forever." [5] Your eyes will see this and you will say, "The Lord be magnified beyond the border of Israel!"*
 - C. The Apostle Paul uses the same verse, and a reference to Malachi, to make an argument favoring God's right to choose a course that is unlike the choices preferred by men. **Romans 9:6-13** *But it is not as though the word of God has failed. For they are not all Israel who are descended from Israel; [7] nor are they all children because they are Abraham's descendants, but: "through Isaac your descendants will be named." [8] That is, it is not the children of the flesh who are children of God, but the children of the promise are regarded as descendants. [9] For this is the word of promise: "At this time I will come, and Sarah shall have a son." [10] And not only this, but there was Rebekah also, when she had conceived twins by one man, our father Isaac; [11] for though the twins were not yet born and had not done anything good or bad, so that God's purpose according to His choice would stand, not because of works but because of Him who calls, [12] it was said to her, "The older will serve the younger." [13] Just as it is written, "Jacob I loved, but Esau I hated."*

Genesis 25:27-34

[27] When the boys grew up, Esau became a skillful hunter, a man of the field, but Jacob was a peaceful man, living in tents. [28] Now Isaac loved Esau, because he had a taste for game, but Rebekah loved Jacob. [29] When Jacob had cooked stew, Esau came in from the field and he was famished; [30] and Esau said to Jacob, "Please let me have a swallow of that red stuff there, for I am famished." Therefore his name was called Edom (or, Red). [31] But Jacob said, "First sell me your birthright." [32] Esau said, "Behold, I am about to die; so of what use then is the birthright to me?" [33] And Jacob said, "First swear to me"; so he swore to him, and sold his birthright to Jacob. [34] Then Jacob gave Esau bread and lentil stew; and he ate and drank, and rose and went on his way. Thus Esau despised his birthright.

XI. Esau sells his birthright to Jacob.

- A. Jacob took advantage of Esau's hunger to buy his birthright.
 1. Custom, and later, Law provided that the firstborn child was the chief heir.
 2. The Law of Moses prescribed a double portion of the inheritance for the one who was born first. **Deuteronomy 21:15-17** *"If a man has two wives, the one loved and the other unloved, and both the loved and the unloved have borne him sons, if the firstborn son belongs to the unloved, [16] then it shall be in the day he wills what he has to his sons, he cannot make the son of the loved the firstborn before the son of the unloved, who is the firstborn. [17] "But he shall acknowledge the firstborn, the son of the unloved, by giving him a double portion of all that he has, for he is the beginning of his strength; to him belongs the right of the firstborn."*
 3. There were some exceptions to this rule in the Age of the Patriarchs, before the Law was given through Moses. **1 Chronicles 5:1-2** *Now the sons of Reuben the firstborn of Israel (for he was the firstborn, but because he defiled his father's bed, his birthright was given to the sons of Joseph the son of Israel; so that he is not enrolled in the genealogy according to the birthright. [2] Though Judah prevailed over his brothers, and from him came the leader, yet the birthright belonged to Joseph)...*
- B. The writer of Hebrews makes an argument from this event. **Hebrews 12:15-17** *See to it that no one comes short of the grace of God; that no root of bitterness springing up causes trouble, and by it many be defiled; [16] that there be no immoral or godless person like Esau, who sold his own birthright for a single meal. [17] For you know that even afterwards, when he desired to inherit the blessing, he was rejected, for he found no place for repentance, though he sought for it with tears.*
- C. *From this time, we will see that Esau becomes an outcast by his own actions.*

A STUDY OF GENESIS – 10

Genesis 26:1-5

Now there was a famine in the land, besides the previous famine that had occurred in the days of Abraham. So Isaac went to Gerar, to Abimelech king of the Philistines. [2] The Lord appeared to him and said, "Do not go down to Egypt; stay in the land of which I shall tell you. [3] Sojourn in this land and I will be with you and bless you,

for to you and to your descendants I will give all these lands, and I will establish the oath which I swore to your father Abraham. [4] I will multiply your descendants as the stars of heaven, and will give your descendants all these lands; and by your descendants all the nations of the earth shall be blessed; [5] because Abraham obeyed Me and kept My charge, My commandments, My statutes and My laws."

- I. Isaac receives a blessing that is almost identical to the one given his father.
 - A. The "Land Promise" in verse 3 was the same. **Genesis 12:7**
 - B. In verse 4, the number of descendants ("as the stars of heaven") was the same, **Genesis 22:17**
 - C. The blessing of "all the nations of the earth" was the same. **Genesis 22:18**

NOTE: The New American Standard Bible, which provides our text for this part of our study, says that the nations would be blessed by Isaac's "descendants." In a marginal note, however, the translators acknowledge that the word is literally, "seed." We have already commented on Paul's interpretation of this promise, as it was made to Abraham, that the "seed" God intended was singular, not plural, and that it referred to Jesus Christ. See **Galatians 3:16**. If the word "seed" is interpreted as plural, it would imply that the nations would be blessed by all the descendants of Isaac -- from Esau, the ancestor of the Edomites, as well as Jacob, the ancestor of the Israelites.

- D. Verse 5 reveals that in the early days of the "Patriarchs," there were "commandments, statutes and laws."
 1. Abraham had been charged by God to teach these things to his descendants. **Genesis 18:19** *"For I have chosen him, so that he may command his children and his household after him to keep the way of the Lord by doing righteousness and justice, so that the Lord may bring upon Abraham what He has spoken about him."*
 2. There could be no sin without law. **Romans 5:13** *"...for until the Law (of Moses) sin was in the world, but sin is not imputed when there is no law."*

Genesis 26:6-11

[6] So Isaac lived in Gerar. [7] When the men of the place asked about his wife, he said, "She is my sister," for he was afraid to say, "my wife," thinking, "the men of the place might kill me on account of Rebekah, for she is beautiful." [8] It came about, when he had been there a long time, that Abimelech king of the Philistines looked out through a window, and saw, and behold, Isaac was caressing his wife Rebekah. [9] Then Abimelech called Isaac and said, "Behold, certainly she is your wife! How then did you say, 'She is my sister'?" And Isaac said to him, "Because I said, 'I might die on account of her.'" [10] Abimelech said, "What is this you have done to us? One of the people might easily have lain with your wife, and you would have brought guilt upon us." [11] So Abimelech charged all the people, saying, "He who touches this man or his wife shall surely be put to death."

- II. Isaac foolishly followed his father's example.
 - A. While living among the Philistines, his fear that they would kill him to take his wife caused him to say that she was his "sister."
 - B. The King's discovery of the truth moved him to rebuke Isaac.

1. He saw Isaac “caressing” Rebekah in a way that indicated she was his wife.
2. He recognized that guilt could come from sexual intercourse with another man’s wife.
3. He issued a charge to the people pronouncing a death sentence to anyone who “touched” (or harmed) Isaac or Rebekah.

NOTE: The close similarity of this incident to the two examples involving Abraham and Sarah has caused many Bible critics to claim that it proves the human invention of the stories, instead of divine inspiration. Both women in the stories must have been unusually beautiful. The Philistine king involved in the stories had the same name, and could have been the same man, or successive kings wearing the same name. One noticeable difference is that in the earlier event, the sin is only implied, but the latter one specified the nature of the sin that might have occurred. Isaac had less justification for calling his cousin-wife a “sister” than Abraham had in calling a half sister-wife, “sister.”

Genesis 26:12-22

[12] Now Isaac sowed in that land and reaped in the same year a hundredfold. And the Lord blessed him, [13] and the man became rich, and continued to grow richer until he became very wealthy; [14] for he had possessions of flocks and herds and a great household, so that the Philistines envied him. [15] Now all the wells which his father's servants had dug in the days of Abraham his father, the Philistines stopped up by filling them with earth. [16] Then Abimelech said to Isaac, "Go away from us, for you are too powerful for us." [17] And Isaac departed from there and camped in the valley of Gerar, and settled there.

[18] Then Isaac dug again the wells of water which had been dug in the days of his father Abraham, for the Philistines had stopped them up after the death of Abraham; and he gave them the same names which his father had given them. [19] But when Isaac's servants dug in the valley and found there a well of flowing water, [20] the herdsmen of Gerar quarreled with the herdsmen of Isaac, saying, "The water is ours!" So he named the well Esek, because they contended with him. [21] Then they dug another well, and they quarreled over it too, so he named it Sitnah. [22] He moved away from there and dug another well, and they did not quarrel over it; so he named it Rehoboth, for he said, "At last the Lord has made room for us, and we will be fruitful in the land."

III. Isaac has some legal disputes with the Philistines.

- A.** He had moved among the Philistines, because of a famine. **26:1**
- B.** When he became a farmer, as well as a herdsman, he became rich. **26:12-14**
 1. He was envied by the Philistines.
 2. They asked him to leave. **26:16**
- C.** The language in this section can be confusing.
 1. Isaac went to Gerar, among the Philistines. **26:1**
 2. He lived in Gerar. **26:6**
 3. He left, and settled in the Valley of Gerar. **26:17**
 4. Gerar was apparently a region around a valley, in which Isaac moved to find pasture for his flocks and herds.

- D. His disputes were with the people of Gerar.
 - 1. The Philistines had filled in the wells dug by Abraham. **26:15**
 - 2. Isaac re-dug two wells that had been filled in, but in disputes with the people of Gerar over ownership, he abandoned them. **26:19-21**
 - 3. The third well was not disputed, and Isaac retained it. **26:22**

Genesis 26:23-25

[23] Then he went up from there to Beersheba. [24] The Lord appeared to him the same night and said,

**"I am the God of your father Abraham;
Do not fear, for I am with you.
I will bless you, and multiply your descendants,
For the sake of My servant Abraham."**

[25] So he built an altar there and called upon the name of the Lord, and pitched his tent there; and there Isaac's servants dug a well.

IV. Isaac receives a blessing similar to that given to his father.

- A. This blessing comes to Isaac, after he had moved from Gerar to Beersheba.
- B. God clearly shows that this is a continuation of the blessing given to Abraham.
- C. This move to Beersheba removes Isaac from direct contact with the Philistines, in the same way that Abraham was separated.

Genesis 26:26-33

[26] Then Abimelech came to him from Gerar with his adviser Ahuzzath and Phicol the commander of his army. [27] Isaac said to them, "Why have you come to me, since you hate me and have sent me away from you?" [28] They said, "We see plainly that the Lord has been with you; so we said, 'Let there now be an oath between us, even between you and us, and let us make a covenant with you, [29] that you will do us no harm, just as we have not touched you and have done to you nothing but good and have sent you away in peace. You are now the blessed of the Lord.' " [30] Then he made them a feast, and they ate and drank. [31] In the morning they arose early and exchanged oaths; then Isaac sent them away and they departed from him in peace. [32] Now it came about on the same day, that Isaac's servants came in and told him about the well which they had dug, and said to him, "We have found water." [33] So he called it Shibah; therefore the name of the city is Beersheba to this day.

V. The Philistines make a treaty with Isaac, as they did with Abraham in **21:22-32**.

- A. It was a "non-aggression treaty" identical to that former treaty.
- B. This was probably a confirmation of the former treaty, since there was no "consideration" (or, token gift) to bind the parties – only oaths (**Verse 31**).
- C. Beersheba had been given its name by Abraham at the time of the first treaty.

21:22-32

- 1. Isaac did not name Beersheba, but he apparently confirmed the name by calling his well "Shibah," because of its location.
- 2. This city and area is mentioned in many other places in the Bible, and stands

as a point of reference to the land of Israel (the phrase, "From Dan to Beersheba" is found in **Judges 20:1**, and **2 Samuel 24:2,15**, to describe the length of the land of Israel. Dan is an extreme northern city and Beersheba is an extreme southern city.)

Genesis 26:34-35

[34] When Esau was forty years old he married Judith the daughter of Beeri the Hittite, and Basemath the daughter of Elon the Hittite; [35] and they brought grief to Isaac and Rebekah.

VI. The beginning of troubles in the family of Isaac.

- A. Esau apparently married two Hittite women without parental approval.
 - 1. Abraham had forbidden his servant to find a wife for Isaac among the Canaanites.
 - 2. The prejudice against the Canaanites continued with Isaac and Rebekah.
- B. This event caused the parents to chose a different course for Jacob.

Genesis 27:1-17

Now it came about, when Isaac was old and his eyes were too dim to see, that he called his older son Esau and said to him, "My son." And he said to him, "Here I am." [2] Isaac said, "Behold now, I am old and I do not know the day of my death. [3] Now then, please take your gear, your quiver and your bow, and go out to the field and hunt game for me; [4] and prepare a savory dish for me such as I love, and bring it to me that I may eat, so that my soul may bless you before I die."

[5] Rebekah was listening while Isaac spoke to his son Esau. So when Esau went to the field to hunt for game to bring home, [6] Rebekah said to her son Jacob, "Behold, I heard your father speak to your brother Esau, saying, [7] 'Bring me some game and prepare a savory dish for me, that I may eat, and bless you in the presence of the Lord before my death.' [8] Now therefore, my son, listen to me as I command you. [9] Go now to the flock and bring me two choice young goats from there, that I may prepare them as a savory dish for your father, such as he loves. [10] Then you shall bring it to your father, that he may eat, so that he may bless you before his death." [11] Jacob answered his mother Rebekah, "Behold, Esau my brother is a hairy man and I am a smooth man. [12] Perhaps my father will feel me, then I will be as a deceiver in his sight, and I will bring upon myself a curse and not a blessing." [13] But his mother said to him, "Your curse be on me, my son; only obey my voice, and go, get them for me." [14] So he went and got them, and brought them to his mother; and his mother made savory food such as his father loved. [15] Then Rebekah took the best garments of Esau her elder son, which were with her in the house, and put them on Jacob her younger son. [16] And she put the skins of the young goats on his hands and on the smooth part of his neck. [17] She also gave the savory food and the bread, which she had made, to her son Jacob.

VII. Rebekah aids Jacob to obtain the blessing that Isaac had offered to Esau.

- A. Jacob had obtained the birthright of Esau, easily. **25:29-34**

1. Isaac may not have known of this event, or...
 2. He may not have approved of it.
 3. Jacob believed that he had obtained Esau's birthright, legitimately, but...
 4. He was unsure of his claim enough to submit to his mother's instruction.
 5. His greatest mistake was in not trusting the promises of God.
- B. Rebekah eased Jacob's doubt about the success of the scheme by being willing to transfer any curse to herself that might arise from it.
- C. Rebekah and Jacob took advantage of Isaac's failing sight to deceive him.
1. Jacob did not need to deceive his father, because God had preordained him to rule over his brother. **25:21-23**
 2. He was willing to deceive his father for several possible reasons.
 - a. To please his mother's wishes.
 - b. To assure himself that there would be no obstacle to obtaining the blessing.
 - c. To avoid the need for claiming the inheritance after it had been granted to his brother (a matter that Isaac might possibly consider irrevocable).

Genesis 27:18-29

[18] Then he came to his father and said, "My father." And he said, "Here I am. Who are you, my son?" [19] Jacob said to his father, "I am Esau your firstborn; I have done as you told me. Get up, please, sit and eat of my game, that you may bless me." [20] Isaac said to his son, "How is it that you have it so quickly, my son?" And he said, "Because the Lord your God caused it to happen to me." [21] Then Isaac said to Jacob, "Please come close, that I may feel you, my son, whether you are really my son Esau or not." [22] So Jacob came close to Isaac his father, and he felt him and said, "The voice is the voice of Jacob, but the hands are the hands of Esau." [23] He did not recognize him, because his hands were hairy like his brother Esau's hands; so he blessed him. [24] And he said, "Are you really my son Esau?" And he said, "I am." [25] So he said, "Bring it to me, and I will eat of my son's game, that I may bless you." And he brought it to him, and he ate; he also brought him wine and he drank. [26] Then his father Isaac said to him, "Please come close and kiss me, my son." [27] So he came close and kissed him; and when he smelled the smell of his garments, he blessed him and said,

**"See, the smell of my son
Is like the smell of a field which the Lord has blessed;
[28] Now may God give you of the dew of heaven,
And of the fatness of the earth,
And an abundance of grain and new wine;
[29] May peoples serve you,
And nations bow down to you;
Be master of your brothers,
And may your mother's sons bow down to you.
Cursed be those who curse you,
And blessed be those who bless you."**

VIII. Isaac is suspicious of Jacob's approach.

- A. The voice was different, but the clothing and the hairy hands convinced him that it was Esau, and not Jacob.
- B. The blessing held several promises.
 1. Wealth. **Verses 27-28**
 2. Mastery of other peoples, nations, and kinsmen.
 3. The language of the last part of **Verse 29** is similar to the promise God made to Abraham. **12:3** (Balaam, the greedy prophet, used the same phrases when he was forced by God to bless the nation of Israel. **Numbers 24:9**)

Genesis 27:30-40

[30] Now it came about, as soon as Isaac had finished blessing Jacob, and Jacob had hardly gone out from the presence of Isaac his father, that Esau his brother came in from his hunting. [31] Then he also made savory food, and brought it to his father; and he said to his father, "Let my father arise and eat of his son's game, that you may bless me." [32] Isaac his father said to him, "Who are you?" And he said, "I am your son, your firstborn, Esau." [33] Then Isaac trembled violently, and said, "Who was he then that hunted game and brought it to me, so that I ate of all of it before you came, and blessed him? Yes, and he shall be blessed." [34] When Esau heard the words of his father, he cried out with an exceedingly great and bitter cry, and said to his father, "Bless me, even me also, O my father!" [35] And he said, "Your brother came deceitfully and has taken away your blessing." [36] Then he said, "Is he not rightly named Jacob, for he has supplanted me these two times? He took away my birthright, and behold, now he has taken away my blessing." And he said, "Have you not reserved a blessing for me?" [37] But Isaac replied to Esau, "Behold, I have made him your master, and all his relatives I have given to him as servants; and with grain and new wine I have sustained him. Now as for you then, what can I do, my son?" [38] Esau said to his father, "Do you have only one blessing, my father? Bless me, even me also, O my father." So Esau lifted his voice and wept.

[39] Then Isaac his father answered and said to him,
"Behold, away from the fertility of the earth shall be your dwelling,
And away from the dew of heaven from above.

[40] By your sword you shall live,
And your brother you shall serve;
But it shall come about when you become restless,
That you will break his yoke from your neck."

IX. Esau's profane behavior in selling his birthright has robbed him of the blessing.

- A. When Esau expected to receive the blessing, he found that his father, Isaac, was not willing to change or alter what he had done. Compare **Hebrews 12:15-17**.
"See to it that no one comes short of the grace of God; that no root of bitterness springing up causes trouble, and by it many be defiled; [16] that there be no immoral or godless person like Esau, who sold his own birthright for a single meal. [17] For you know that even afterwards, when he desired to inherit the blessing, he was rejected, for he found no place for repentance, though he sought for it with tears."

- B. Esau's statement in **Verse 36** is not justified.
 - 1. Jacob did not "take away" anything from Esau.
 - 2. Esau surrendered his right to the blessing of the firstborn son, when he foolishly exchanged his birthright for a bowl of soup.
- C. The only relief that Esau could expect is seen in Verse 40.
 - 1. The prophecy that the "elder (Esau) shall serve the younger (Jacob)," given at the time of their birth as fraternal twins, would continue for a while.
 - 2. Then, at some future time, Esau would be able take Jacob's "yoke" from his neck.

Genesis 27:41-45

[41] So Esau bore a grudge against Jacob because of the blessing with which his father had blessed him; and Esau said to himself, "The days of mourning for my father are near; then I will kill my brother Jacob." [42] Now when the words of her elder son Esau were reported to Rebekah, she sent and called her younger son Jacob, and said to him, "Behold your brother Esau is consoling himself concerning you by planning to kill you. [43] Now therefore, my son, obey my voice, and arise, flee to Haran, to my brother Laban! [44] Stay with him a few days, until your brother's fury subsides, [45] until your brother's anger against you subsides and he forgets what you did to him. Then I will send and get you from there. Why should I be bereaved of you both in one day?"

- X. Rebekah conceives a plan to send Jacob away from Esau's wrath.
 - A. Having overheard the death threats of Esau, Rebekah decides to send Jacob to her brother Laban, in the city of Haran, for a "short" period ("a few days").
 - B. Her question in the last part of Verse 45 suggests that the quarrel between her sons might end in the death of both, or death for one and exile for the other.

Genesis 27:46-28:5

[46] Rebekah said to Isaac, "I am tired of living because of the daughters of Heth; if Jacob takes a wife from the daughters of Heth, like these, from the daughters of the land, what good will my life be to me?"

[28:1] So Isaac called Jacob and blessed him and charged him, and said to him, "You shall not take a wife from the daughters of Canaan. [2] Arise, go to Paddan-aram, to the house of Bethuel your mother's father; and from there take to yourself a wife from the daughters of Laban your mother's brother. [3] May God Almighty bless you and make you fruitful and multiply you, that you may become a company of peoples. [4] May He also give you the blessing of Abraham, to you and to your descendants with you, that you may possess the land of your sojourning, which God gave to Abraham." [5] Then Isaac sent Jacob away, and he went to Paddan-aram to Laban, son of Bethuel the Aramean, the brother of Rebekah, the mother of Jacob and Esau.

- XI. Rebekah persuades Isaac to join her in her plan.
 - A. Rebekah complains to Isaac regarding the Canaanite (Hittite) wives of Esau. See

26:34-35.

- B. Isaac responds by agreeing with her plan to send Jacob to her brother in Padan-Aram (in the upper valley of the Euphrates River).
- C. The blessing given to Jacob in **Verses 3-4** are prophetic.
 - 1. Jacob becomes a “company of peoples” by fathering the patriarchs of the 12 tribes of Israel.
 - 2. When these tribes become a nation, they possess Canaan after departing from Egypt.

Genesis 28:6-9

[6] Now Esau saw that Isaac had blessed Jacob and sent him away to Paddan- aram to take to himself a wife from there, and that when he blessed him he charged him, saying, "You shall not take a wife from the daughters of Canaan," [7] and that Jacob had obeyed his father and his mother and had gone to Paddan- aram. [8] So Esau saw that the daughters of Canaan displeased his father Isaac; [9] and Esau went to Ishmael, and married, besides the wives that he had, Maha-lath the daughter of Ishmael, Abraham's son, the sister of Nebaioth.

XII. Esau seeks to please his parents, by marrying someone in close kinship.

- A. He realizes that he has displeased his parents by marrying Canaanite women.
- B. His solution is to marry a daughter of Ishmael, who was a close cousin (as any of the daughters of Laban would be to Jacob).
- C. There is no record of his parent’s response to this marriage, positive or negative.

NOTE: The lists of Esau’s wives in **26:34, 28:8, and 36:2-3, 9-14** have created a controversy over the accuracy of the Old Testament Text. Several conjectures have attempted to reconcile the names of the women, the names of their fathers, and the tribes of Canaan from which they come (Hittite, or Hivite). A woman named Basemath is said to be the daughter of Elon the Hittite, or the daughter of Ishmael, who was NOT a Hittite. The conservative comments in the Pulpit Commentary say that this is not a problem, since people in genealogical lists often bore the same names. There is, no doubt, a logical explanation for this alleged discrepancy, but it will never be made known in the biblical literature we have, today.

Genesis 28:10-22

[10] Then Jacob departed from Beersheba and went toward Haran. [11] He came to a certain place and spent the night there, because the sun had set; and he took one of the stones of the place and put it under his head, and lay down in that place. [12] He had a dream, and behold, a ladder was set on the earth with its top reaching to heaven; and behold, the angels of God were ascending and descending on it. [13] And behold, the Lord stood above it and said, "I am the Lord, the God of your father Abraham and the God of Isaac; the land on which you lie, I will give it to you and to your descendants. [14] Your descendants will also be like the dust of the earth, and you will spread out to the west and to the east and to the north and to the south; and in you and in your descendants shall all the families of the earth be blessed. [15]

Behold, I am with you and will keep you wherever you go, and will bring you back to this land; for I will not leave you until I have done what I have promised you." [16] Then Jacob awoke from his sleep and said, "Surely the Lord is in this place, and I did not know it." [17] He was afraid and said, "How awesome is this place! This is none other than the house of God, and this is the gate of heaven."

[18] So Jacob rose early in the morning, and took the stone that he had put under his head and set it up as a pillar and poured oil on its top. [19] He called the name of that place Bethel; however, previously the name of the city had been Luz. [20] Then Jacob made a vow, saying, "If God will be with me and will keep me on this journey that I take, and will give me food to eat and garments to wear, [21] and I return to my father's house in safety, then the Lord will be my God. [22] This stone, which I have set up as a pillar, will be God's house, and of all that You give me I will surely give a tenth to You."

XIII. Jacob received the same promises given before to Abraham and Isaac.

A. This event happens at a place named Bethel by Jacob, which means, "House of God" (See Verse 17).

B. *His vow, and the pledge of giving God a "tenth," raises the question, "To whom would he pay the tithe?" (Abraham gave his tithe to Melchizedek, the priest and king of Salem. 14:17-20)*

A STUDY OF GENESIS – 11

Genesis 29:1-12

Then Jacob went on his journey and came to the land of the people of the east. [2] As he looked, he saw a well in the field, and behold, three flocks of sheep lying beside it, for out of that well the flocks were watered. The stone on the well's mouth was large, [3] and when all the flocks were gathered there, the shepherds would roll the stone from the mouth of the well and water the sheep, and put the stone back in its place over the mouth of the well.

[4] Jacob said to them, "My brothers, where do you come from?" They said, "We are from Haran." [5] He said to them, "Do you know Laban the son of Nahor?" They said, "We know him." [6] He said to them, "Is it well with him?" They said, "It is well; and see, Rachel his daughter is coming with the sheep!" [7] He said, "Behold, it is still high day; it is not time for the livestock to be gathered together. Water the sheep and go, pasture them." [8] But they said, "We cannot until all the flocks are gathered together and the stone is rolled from the mouth of the well; then we water the sheep."

[9] While he was still speaking with them, Rachel came with her father's sheep, for she was a shepherdess. [10] Now as soon as Jacob saw Rachel the daughter of Laban his mother's brother, and the sheep of Laban his mother's brother, Jacob came near and rolled the stone from the well's mouth and watered the flock of Laban his mother's brother. [11] Then Jacob kissed Rachel and wept aloud. [12] And Jacob told Rachel that he was her father's kinsman, and that he was Rebekah's son, and she ran and told her father. [13] As soon as Laban heard the news about Jacob, his sister's son, he ran to meet him and embraced him and kissed him and brought him to his

house. Jacob told Laban all these things, [14] and Laban said to him, "Surely you are my bone and my flesh!" And he stayed with him a month.

- I. Jacob's arrival among the "people of the east."
 - A. Haran is northeast of Canaan, and this region may have been where Abraham sent the sons of his concubines (25:6).
 - B. It was apparently the custom of the region to gather everyone's flock of sheep, before the well was opened, but as soon as Rachel arrived, Jacob opened the well and watered her sheep. (Moses had a similar experience, **Exodus 2:16-19**.)
 - C. After performing this task, Jacob revealed his identity to Rachel.
 - D. He stayed with Laban a month. (Rebekah wanted him stay "a few days" [27:44], but Isaac's advice was that he stay long enough to take a wife [28:2].)
 - E. To win a wife of Laban's daughters, Jacob would have to work for the privilege.

Genesis 29:15-30

[15] Then Laban said to Jacob, "Because you are my kinsman, should you therefore serve me for nothing? Tell me, what shall your wages be?" [16] Now Laban had two daughters. The name of the older was Leah, and the name of the younger was Rachel. [17] Leah's eyes were weak, but Rachel was beautiful in form and appearance. [18] Jacob loved Rachel. And he said, "I will serve you seven years for your younger daughter Rachel." [19] Laban said, "It is better that I give her to you than that I should give her to any other man; stay with me." [20] So Jacob served seven years for Rachel, and they seemed to him but a few days because of the love he had for her.

[21] Then Jacob said to Laban, "Give me my wife that I may go in to her, for my time is completed." [22] So Laban gathered together all the people of the place and made a feast. [23] But in the evening he took his daughter Leah and brought her to Jacob, and he went in to her. [24] (Laban gave his female servant Zilpah to his daughter Leah to be her servant.) [25] And in the morning, behold, it was Leah! And Jacob said to Laban, "What is this you have done to me? Did I not serve with you for Rachel? Why then have you deceived me?" [26] Laban said, "It is not so done in our country, to give the younger before the firstborn. [27] Complete the week of this one, and we will give you the other also in return for serving me another seven years." [28] Jacob did so, and completed her week. Then Laban gave him his daughter Rachel to be his wife. [29] (Laban gave his female servant Bilhah to his daughter Rachel to be her servant.) [30] So Jacob went in to Rachel also, and he loved Rachel more than Leah, and served Laban for another seven years.

- II. Laban deceived Jacob.
 - A. Jacob was allowed to set his own wages, and offered to work for Laban seven years for Laban's younger daughter, Rachel. (Compare **Hosea 12:12**.)
 - B. After a feast, Laban brought Leah to Jacob, instead of Rachel.
 1. Leah was probably veiled, after the custom shown by Rebekah (24:65).
 2. Her identity was not discovered, because the union also happened at night.
 - C. Jacob was angry, because he had not been told of the custom to marry the older daughter before the younger.

- D. Laban agreed to give Rachel to Jacob, if he would work another seven years.
- E. The slave girls given to Leah and Rachel also had a future part in the growth of Jacob's family, and the development of the nation of Israel.

Genesis 29:31-35

[31] When the Lord saw that Leah was hated, he opened her womb, but Rachel was barren. [32] And Leah conceived and bore a son, and she called his name Reuben, for she said, "Because the Lord has looked upon my affliction; for now my husband will love me." [33] She conceived again and bore a son, and said, "Because the Lord has heard that I am hated, he has given me this son also." And she called his name Simeon. [34] Again she conceived and bore a son, and said, "Now this time my husband will be attached to me, because I have borne him three sons." Therefore his name was called Levi. [35] And she conceived again and bore a son, and said, "This time I will praise the Lord." Therefore she called his name Judah. Then she ceased bearing.

III. Leah bore Jacob's first four sons.

- A. God compensated Leah, and let Rachel be barren (30:2), because Jacob showed partiality toward Rachel.
 - 1. Leah was given the distinction of bearing the firstborn son, Reuben.
 - 2. Simeon's descendants became a minor tribe of Israel, which was absorbed into the tribe of Judah, after the settlement of Canaan about 500 years later.
 - 3. The third and fourth sons, Levi and Judah, would provide future priests and kings among their descendants.
 - 4. The meanings of the names of the four sons are hinted by Leah.
 - a. Reuben – meaning "See, a son."
 - b. Simeon – probable meaning, "The Lord has heard." (See Vs. 33)
 - c. Levi – meaning "attached." (See Vs. 34)
 - d. Judah – the name in Hebrew sounds like the word, "praise." (See Vs. 35)
- B. Leah presumed that her childbearing would win the love of Jacob, but he would show his partiality for Rachel and her sons throughout his life.

Genesis 30:1-8

When Rachel saw that she bore Jacob no children, she envied her sister. She said to Jacob, "Give me children, or I shall die!" [2] Jacob's anger was kindled against Rachel, and he said, "Am I in the place of God, who has withheld from you the fruit of the womb?" [3] Then she said, "Here is my servant Bilhah; go in to her, so that she may give birth on my behalf, that even I may have children through her." [4] So she gave him her servant Bilhah as a wife, and Jacob went in to her. [5] And Bilhah conceived and bore Jacob a son. [6] Then Rachel said, "God has judged me, and has also heard my voice and given me a son." Therefore she called his name Dan. [7] Rachel's servant Bilhah conceived again and bore Jacob a second son. [8] Then Rachel said, "With mighty wrestlings I have wrestled with my sister and have prevailed." So she called his name Naphtali.

IV. The beginning of strife in the family of Jacob.

- A. Rachel envied her fertile sister, and pleaded with Jacob to give her children.
 - 1. Jacob could not help her, as long as God had closed her womb.
 - 2. Her alternative was to give her servant, Bilhah, to Jacob as a wife. (Sarah tried this same course, in **16:1-4**.)
 - 3. Bilhah bore two sons to Jacob.
 - 4. Rachel, as the freeborn wife, claimed the right to name the sons.
 - a. Dan – meaning “judged.” (See Vs. 6)
 - b. Naphtali – sounds like the Hebrew word for “wrestling.” (See Vs. 8)

Genesis 30:9-13

[9] When Leah saw that she had ceased bearing children, she took her servant Zilpah and gave her to Jacob as a wife. [10] Then Leah's servant Zilpah bore Jacob a son. [11] And Leah said, "Good fortune has come!" so she called his name Gad. [12] Leah's servant Zilpah bore Jacob a second son. [13] And Leah said, "Happy am I! For women have called me happy." So she called his name Asher.

V. Leah responded to Rachel’s tactic by giving her own servant girl, Zilpah, to Jacob.

- A. Zilpah bore two sons, also.
- B. Leah named the sons born to her maid, as Rachel did with hers.
 - 1. Gad – meaning “fortune.” (See Vs. 11)
 - 2. Asher – meaning “happy.” (See Vs. 13)
- C. Jacob now has eight sons by three wives.

Genesis 30:14-21

[14] In the days of wheat harvest Reuben went and found mandrakes in the field and brought them to his mother Leah. Then Rachel said to Leah, "Please give me some of your son's mandrakes." [15] But she said to her, "Is it a small matter that you have taken away my husband? Would you take away my son's mandrakes also?" Rachel said, "Then he may lie with you tonight in exchange for your son's mandrakes." [16] When Jacob came from the field in the evening, Leah went out to meet him and said, "You must come in to me, for I have hired you with my son's mandrakes." So he lay with her that night. [17] And God listened to Leah, and she conceived and bore Jacob a fifth son. [18] Leah said, "God has given me my wages because I gave my servant to my husband." So she called his name Issachar.

[19] And Leah conceived again, and she bore Jacob a sixth son. [20] Then Leah said, "God has endowed me with a good endowment; now my husband will honor me, because I have borne him six sons." So she called his name Zebulun. [21] Afterward she bore a daughter and called her name Dinah.

VI. Rachel made a bargain with Leah that brought an unintentional result.

- A. The mandrakes found by Reuben created another incident between the rivals.
 - 1. Rachel asked for some of the mandrakes, possibly motivated by the ancient supposition that they could be used to overcome barrenness.
 - 2. Leah’s caustic response indicates that Jacob may have ceased to have marital

- relations with her.
3. Rachel was willing to allow Leah to be visited by Jacob, in order to have some of the mandrakes.
- B. The plan had an undesired effect for Rachel, because Leah bore two more sons for Jacob, making a total of six.
1. Issachar – sounds like the Hebrew word for “wages.” (See Vs. 18)
 2. Zebulun – sounds like the Hebrew word for “honor.” (See Vs. 20)
- C. Leah’s daughter, Dinah, was destined to be involved in a sad future event.

Genesis 30:22-24

[22] Then God remembered Rachel, and God listened to her and opened her womb. [23] She conceived and bore a son and said, "God has taken away my reproach." [24] And she called his name Joseph, saying, "May the Lord add to me another son!"

VII. God intervened again, and took away Rachel’s barrenness.

- A. God had intervened in the beginning to favor Leah, because of Jacob’s partiality.
- B. Rachel apparently prayed for an end of her reproach, and God “listened to her.”
 1. Isaac prayed for his wife, Rebekah. **Genesis 25:21**
 2. Leah had apparently prayed for herself. See **Vs. 17** above.
 3. Hannah prayed for herself. **1 Samuel 1:20**
- C. Rachel named her son Joseph, which means, “May He add,” and sounds like the Hebrew word for “taken away (my reproach).”
- D. Jacob now had eleven sons and one daughter by his four wives.

NOTE: If these births had been successive, as these previous verses seem to suggest, they would have to cover all the time between Jacob’s agreement to work the second period of 7 years for Rachel, plus the 6 years to the time of his desire to return to Canaan (**31:1-3**). However, in **30:25**, below, we see that Joseph had been born before Jacob made his agreement to work for the blemished animals of Laban’s flocks and herds. This would compress the time needed for all the births. The *Pulpit Commentary* (Vol. 1, p. 370) shows how the births of all the 11 sons could occur in the 7 years of Jacob’s indenture to gain Rachel. It says, “*The six sons of Leah might be born in the seven years, allowing one year’s cessation from pregnancy, vis., the fifth; Bilhah’s in the third and fourth years; Zilpah’s in the beginning of the sixth and seventh; and Rachel’s toward the end of the seventh, leaving Dinah (Leah’s daughter) to be born later.*”

Genesis 30:25-36

[25] As soon as Rachel had borne Joseph, Jacob said to Laban, "Send me away, that I may go to my own home and country. [26] Give me my wives and my children for whom I have served you, that I may go, for you know the service that I have given you." [27] But Laban said to him, "If I have found favor in your sight, I have learned by divination that the Lord has blessed me because of you. [28] Name your wages, and I will give it." [29] Jacob said to him, "You yourself know how I have served you, and how your livestock has fared with me. [30] For you had little before I came, and it has increased abundantly, and the Lord has blessed you wherever I turned. But now when shall I provide for my own household also?" [31] He said, "What shall I give

you?" Jacob said, "You shall not give me anything. If you will do this for me, I will again pasture your flock and keep it: [32] let me pass through all your flock today, removing from it every speckled and spotted sheep and every black lamb, and the spotted and speckled among the goats, and they shall be my wages. [33] So my honesty will answer for me later, when you come to look into my wages with you. Every one that is not speckled and spotted among the goats and black among the lambs, if found with me, shall be counted stolen." [34] Laban said, "Good! Let it be as you have said." [35] But that day Laban removed the male goats that were striped and spotted, and all the female goats that were speckled and spotted, every one that had white on it, and every lamb that was black, and put them in charge of his sons. [36] And he set a distance of three days' journey between himself and Jacob, and Jacob pastured the rest of Laban's flock.

VIII. Jacob made another deal with Laban.

- A. He asked to be sent home.
 1. At this time, he had no livestock.
 2. However, he would have been the prime heir to his father's wealth. **26:12-14**
- B. Laban claimed to have learned "by divination" that he was blessed by Jacob.
 1. Divination was one of the occult arts condemned later by God. **Deuteronomy 18:10** *"There shall not be found among you anyone who makes his son or his daughter pass through the fire, one who uses divination, one who practices witchcraft, or one who interprets omens, or a sorcerer..."*
 2. This occult practice indicated that the relatives of Abraham, Isaac, and Jacob in the region of Haran had drifted into forms of idolatry. (They had served other gods besides Jehovah. **31:19**)
- C. Jacob agreed to work longer for all the blemished animals in the flock.
 1. No specified period of labor was set.
 2. The agreement guaranteed that Jacob had not "stolen" the animals.
 3. Jacob had security by being separated from Laban by a three days journey.

Genesis 30:37-43

[37] Then Jacob took fresh sticks of poplar and almond and plane trees, and peeled white streaks in them, exposing the white of the sticks. [38] He set the sticks that he had peeled in front of the flocks in the troughs, that is, the watering places, where the flocks came to drink. And since they bred when they came to drink, [39] the flocks bred in front of the sticks and so the flocks brought forth striped, speckled, and spotted. [40] And Jacob separated the lambs and set the faces of the flocks toward the striped and all the black in the flock of Laban. He put his own droves apart and did not put them with Laban's flock. [41] Whenever the stronger of the flock were breeding, Jacob would lay the sticks in the troughs before the eyes of the flock, that they might breed among the sticks, [42] but for the feebler of the flock he would not lay them there. So the feebler would be Laban's, and the stronger Jacob's. [43] Thus the man increased greatly and had large flocks, female servants and male servants, and camels and donkeys.

- IX. Jacob used a device in the hope of increasing the number of blemished animals.
- A. This passage seems to indicate that Jacob relied solely on his actions to help him gain an increase in his flocks.
 - 1. Jacob later attributed his increase of wealth to the help of God. **31:5-13**
 - 2. This is consistent with the promises of God to Jacob at Bethel. **28:13-15**
 - B. Jacob's growing wealth is also seen in the gaining of many servants, and pack animals.

Genesis 31:1-16

[1] Now Jacob heard that the sons of Laban were saying, "Jacob has taken all that was our father's, and from what was our father's he has gained all this wealth." [2] And Jacob saw that Laban did not regard him with favor as before. [3] Then the Lord said to Jacob, "Return to the land of your fathers and to your kindred, and I will be with you."

[4] So Jacob sent and called Rachel and Leah into the field where his flock was [5] and said to them, "I see that your father does not regard me with favor as he did before. But the God of my father has been with me. [6] You know that I have served your father with all my strength, [7] yet your father has cheated me and changed my wages ten times. But God did not permit him to harm me. [8] If he said, 'The spotted shall be your wages,' then all the flock bore spotted; and if he said, 'The striped shall be your wages,' then all the flock bore striped. [9] Thus God has taken away the livestock of your father and given them to me. [10] In the breeding season of the flock I lifted up my eyes and saw in a dream that the goats that mated with the flock were striped, spotted, and mottled. [11] Then the angel of God said to me in the dream, 'Jacob,' and I said, 'Here I am!' [12] And he said, 'Lift up your eyes and see, all the goats that mate with the flock are striped, spotted, and mottled, for I have seen all that Laban is doing to you. [13] I am the God of Bethel, where you anointed a pillar and made a vow to me. Now arise, go out from this land and return to the land of your kindred.' " [14] Then Rachel and Leah answered and said to him, "Is there any portion or inheritance left to us in our father's house? [15] Are we not regarded by him as foreigners? For he has sold us, and he has indeed devoured our money. [16] All the wealth that God has taken away from our father belongs to us and to our children. Now then, whatever God has said to you, do."

- X. Jacob decided to return home.
- A. He saw that his success had caused Laban's family to become hostile.
 - B. He conferred with his wives Leah and Rachel (minus the slave-wives, Bilhah and Zilpah) about his plan to return to the land of his father.
 - 1. He recited a dream he had, in which God blessed him, and told him to return to his own land.
 - 2. The wives were loyal, and conceded that Jacob was wise in his decision, and just, also.

Genesis 31:17-24

[17] So Jacob arose and set his sons and his wives on camels. [18] He drove away all

his livestock, all his property that he had gained, the livestock in his possession that he had acquired in Paddan-aram, to go to the land of Canaan to his father Isaac. [19] Laban had gone to shear his sheep, and Rachel stole her father's household gods. [20] And Jacob tricked Laban the Aramean, by not telling him that he intended to flee. [21] He fled with all that he had and arose and crossed the Euphrates, and set his face toward the hill country of Gilead.

[22] When it was told Laban on the third day that Jacob had fled, [23] he took his kinsmen with him and pursued him for seven days and followed close after him into the hill country of Gilead. [24] But God came to Laban the Aramean in a dream by night and said to him, "Be careful not to say anything to Jacob, either good or bad."

XI. Jacob escaped into Canaan.

- A. He traveled from Paddan-aram to the hill country of Gilead.
 - 1. **Verse 18** seems to indicate that he sent all the livestock ahead of the household, since the flocks would travel slower on the way to Canaan.
 - 2. He crossed the Euphrates River (about 60 miles south of Haran), indicating that he had dwelt north of it.
 - 3. The "hill country of Gilead" was not the region where his father lived, but was on the east side of the Jordan river.
- B. Laban mounted a pursuit after three days, and it took him seven days to catch up with Jacob.
 - 1. Jacob's household would probably travel more slowly, due to the inclusion of small children, and much baggage.
 - 2. Laban would not be hindered in his travel by this situation.
 - 3. The 7-day pursuit is consistent with the pace that can be set by camel riders without this hindrance (the distance was about 300 miles, which would have required stages of about 40 miles a day).
- C. Laban received another sign of God's help for Jacob.
 - 1. He was warned in a dream not to say anything to Jacob, either good or bad.
 - 2. He did not completely obey this command of God. (See the next passage.)

Genesis 31:25-35

[25] And Laban overtook Jacob. Now Jacob had pitched his tent in the hill country, and Laban with his kinsmen pitched tents in the hill country of Gilead. [26] And Laban said to Jacob, "What have you done, that you have tricked me and driven away my daughters like captives of the sword? [27] Why did you flee secretly and trick me, and did not tell me, so that I might have sent you away with mirth and songs, with tambourine and lyre? [28] And why did you not permit me to kiss my sons and my daughters farewell? Now you have done foolishly. [29] It is in my power to do you harm. But the God of your father spoke to me last night, saying, 'Be careful not to say anything to Jacob, either good or bad.' [30] And now you have gone away because you longed greatly for your father's house, but why did you steal my gods?" [31] Jacob answered and said to Laban, "Because I was afraid, for I thought that you would take your daughters from me by force. [32] Anyone with whom you find your gods shall not live. In the presence of our kinsmen point out what I have that is

yours, and take it." Now Jacob did not know that Rachel had stolen them.

[33] So Laban went into Jacob's tent and into Leah's tent and into the tent of the two female servants, but he did not find them. And he went out of Leah's tent and entered Rachel's. [34] Now Rachel had taken the household gods and put them in the camel's saddle and sat on them. Laban felt all about the tent, but did not find them. [35] And she said to her father, "Let not my lord be angry that I cannot rise before you, for the way of women is upon me." So he searched but did not find the household gods.

XII. The confrontation of Laban and Jacob.

A. Laban complained that Jacob had tricked him.

1. Laban had also tricked Jacob, by giving him Leah first, instead of Rachel.
2. Deceivers can be deceived. **2 Timothy 3:13** *"But evil men and impostors will proceed from bad to worse, deceiving and being deceived."*

B. Laban charged that his "gods" had been stolen.

1. He nearly failed to respect the injunction of God against any harm to Jacob.
2. He, like many other idolaters, mixed the worship of God with that of idols.
 - a. Aaron attempted this, when he made the Golden Calf. **Exodus 32:3-5** *"And all the people brake off the golden rings which were in their ears, and brought them unto Aaron. [4] And he received it at their hand, and fashioned it with a graving tool, and made it a molten calf: and they said, 'These are thy gods, O Israel, which brought thee up out of the land of Egypt.' [5] And when Aaron saw this, he built an altar before it; and Aaron made proclamation, and said, 'Tomorrow shall be a feast to Jehovah.'"*
 - b. God accused Israel of this practice. **Ezekiel 23:37-39** *"...With their idols they have committed adultery, and they have even offered up to them for food the children whom they had borne to me. [38] Moreover, this they have done to me: they have defiled my sanctuary on the same day and profaned my Sabbaths. [39] For when they had slaughtered their children in sacrifice to their idols, on the same day they came into my sanctuary to profane it. And behold, this is what they did in my house."*
 - c. Through the prophets, God condemned this practice. **Ezekiel 14:1-4** *"Then came certain of the elders of Israel unto me, and sat before me. [2] And the word of Jehovah came unto me, saying, [3] 'Son of man, these men have taken their idols into their heart, and put the stumbling block of their iniquity before their face: should I be inquired of at all by them? [4] Therefore speak unto them, and say unto them, Thus says the Lord Jehovah: Every man of the house of Israel that takes his idols into his heart, and puts the stumbling block of his iniquity before his face, and comes to the prophet; I Jehovah will answer him therein according to the multitude of his idols...'"*

C. Jacob's answer to Laban about the theft was conciliatory.

1. He did not know that his "favorite" wife, Rachel, had stolen the false gods.
 - a. He declared his willingness to put to death anyone who was guilty.
 - b. This portion of the story is very similar to one about King Saul, and his son. **1 Samuel 14:24-45**
 - (1) Saul had made his soldiers swear an oath that they would not eat until

the battle against the Philistines was won.

- (2) Jonathan, his heroic son, had not heard of the vow.
- (3) While chasing the Philistines, some of the soldiers discovered a beehive full of honey, but would not eat from it.
- (4) When Jonathan arrived, and was told of his father's oath, he quickly pronounced it as foolish, and ate some of the honey.
- (5) This encouraged the soldiers to forage for food.
- (6) Saul discovered this breach of the oath, and said that the one who is guilty of causing the people to violate their oath would be executed.
- (7) When Jonathan was discovered by lot to be the culprit, Saul said he must die, but the people intervened to save him.

2. Rachel deceived her father, to prevent him from finding his gods.

Genesis 31:36-42

[36] Then Jacob became angry and berated Laban. Jacob said to Laban, "What is my offense? What is my sin, that you have hotly pursued me? [37] For you have felt through all my goods; what have you found of all your household goods? Set it here before my kinsmen and your kinsmen, that they may decide between us two. [38] These twenty years I have been with you. Your ewes and your female goats have not miscarried, and I have not eaten the rams of your flocks. [39] What was torn by wild beasts I did not bring to you. I bore the loss of it myself. From my hand you required it, whether stolen by day or stolen by night. [40] There I was: by day the heat consumed me, and the cold by night, and my sleep fled from my eyes. [41] These twenty years I have been in your house. I served you fourteen years for your two daughters, and six years for your flock, and you have changed my wages ten times. [42] If the God of my father, the God of Abraham and the Fear of Isaac, had not been on my side, surely now you would have sent me away empty-handed. God saw my affliction and the labor of my hands and rebuked you last night."

XIII. Jacob was patient during the search, but angrily answered Laban's accusations, after nothing was found.

- A. He listed the services he had rendered to Laban, and called on him to acknowledge that he had been honest in his service.
- B.** He repeated the claim that Laban had changed his wages 10 times. See **Vs. 7.**
- C. He claimed the protection and approval of God for his actions.
 1. Instead of saying, in **Verse 42**, the "God of Isaac," Jacob refers to the "Fear of Isaac."
 2. This is a figure of speech called Metonymy, the substituting of an attribute for a name, or something characteristic of that which is named.
 3. Therefore the "Fear of Isaac" is an expression of reverence for God, who inspired it in him.

Genesis 31:43-55

[43] Then Laban answered and said to Jacob, "The daughters are my daughters, the children are my children, the flocks are my flocks, and all that you see is mine. But

what can I do this day for these my daughters or for their children whom they have borne? [44] Come now, let us make a covenant, you and I. And let it be a witness between you and me." [45] So Jacob took a stone and set it up as a pillar. [46] And Jacob said to his kinsmen, "Gather stones." And they took stones and made a heap, and they ate there by the heap. [47] Laban called it Jegar-sahadutha, but Jacob called it Galeed. [48] Laban said, "This heap is a witness between you and me today." Therefore he named it Galeed, [49] and Mizpah, for he said, "The Lord watch between you and me, when we are out of one another's sight. [50] If you oppress my daughters, or if you take wives besides my daughters, although no one is with us, see, God is witness between you and me."

[51] Then Laban said to Jacob, "See this heap and the pillar, which I have set between you and me. [52] This heap is a witness, and the pillar is a witness, that I will not pass over this heap to you, and you will not pass over this heap and this pillar to me, to do harm. [53] The God of Abraham and the God of Nahor, the God of their father, judge between us." So Jacob swore by the Fear of his father Isaac, [54] and Jacob offered a sacrifice in the hill country and called his kinsmen to eat bread. They ate bread and spent the night in the hill country.

[55] Early in the morning Laban arose and kissed his grandchildren and his daughters and blessed them. Then Laban departed and returned home.

- IV. The tension between Jacob and Laban was eased by a treaty.
- A. Laban began to see that there was a breach between himself and Jacob that could not be repaired.
 - 1. He attempted to claim his daughters, grandchildren, and the flocks as his own.
 - 2. He realized that there was little he could do to for them, as an inheritance.
 - B. He proposed a covenant between himself, and Jacob.
 - 1. Jacob raised a pillar, and suggested that Laban make a heap of stones.
 - 2. Three names were given to the monument.
 - a. Jegar-sahadutha, meaning, "heap of testimony."
 - b. Galeed, meaning, "heap of witness."
 - c. Mizpah, meaning, "watch tower."
 - C. The terms of the treaty were evidence that there was to be a permanent peace.
 - 1. Laban seemed to be concerned that in the distant separation between them, he would not learn of any abuse, or degrading of his daughters by Jacob.
 - 2. He called God as a witness between them.
 - 3. The second term of the treaty was a pledge to keep peace between them.
 - D. Laban says, "The God of Abraham and the God of Nahor, (and) the God of their father," judge between us."
 - 1. The Pulpit Commentary says that the verb "judge" is plural, perhaps indicating that Laban thought that each of the men named served a separate God.
 - a. This is a possibility, confirming the gradual descent of the family of Nahor to the level of worshipping multiple gods.
 - b. This may be the reason that no future contact is made between the part of

the family in Mesopotamia, and the other in Canaan.

2. One other explanation is that Laban considered the one God to have a direct relationship with the three individual Patriarchs, to carry out his purposes.
- E. Jacob's oath was by the "Fear of his father Isaac." (See comments on Verse 42.)
 1. Jacob offered a sacrifice to God.
 2. Both parties ate the bread, apparently to seal the covenant.
- F. Laban's departure the next day marks the historical end of all contacts between the two families.

Genesis 32:1-8

[1] Jacob went on his way, and the angels of God met him. [2] And when Jacob saw them he said, "This is God's camp!" So he called the name of that place Mahanaim.

[3] And Jacob sent messengers before him to Esau his brother in the land of Seir, the country of Edom, [4] instructing them, "Thus you shall say to my lord Esau: Thus says your servant Jacob, 'I have sojourned with Laban and stayed until now. [5] I have oxen, donkeys, flocks, male servants, and female servants. I have sent to tell my lord, in order that I may find favor in your sight.' "

[6] And the messengers returned to Jacob, saying, "We came to your brother Esau, and he is coming to meet you, and there are four hundred men with him." [7] Then Jacob was greatly afraid and distressed. He divided the people who were with him, and the flocks and herds and camels, into two camps, [8] thinking, "If Esau comes to the one camp and attacks it, then the camp that is left will escape."

- XV. Jacob turned from his dealings with Laban to make contact with his Esau.
- A. **Verses 1-2** highlight the importance of Mahanaim in future events.
 1. After King Saul was dead in a battle with the Philistines, his army captain, Abner, took Ishbosheth, Saul's son, to Mahanaim, and set him up as king over Israel, in the place of his father. **2 Samuel 2:8ff**
 2. David fled to Mahanaim during the revolt of his son, Absalom. **2 Samuel 17:24ff**
 3. Both of these events had a military application, since the area of Mahanaim put the barrier of the Jordan river between the occupants, and their enemies.
 - B. Jacob sent conciliatory messages to Esau.
 1. He tells his men to refer to him as a "servant" to Esau.
 2. When the messengers return, they say that Esau was coming with 400 men.
 3. Jacob presumed that Esau intended to attack him, and began to devise a plan to defend his family.

Genesis 32:9-12

[9] And Jacob said, "O God of my father Abraham and God of my father Isaac, O Lord who said to me, 'Return to your country and to your kindred, that I may do you good,' [10] I am not worthy of the least of all the deeds of steadfast love and all the faithfulness that you have shown to your servant, for with only my staff I crossed this Jordan, and now I have become two camps. [11] Please deliver me from the hand of my brother, from the hand of Esau, for I fear him, that he may come and attack me,

the mothers with the children. [12] But you said, 'I will surely do you good, and make your offspring as the sand of the sea, which cannot be numbered for multitude.' "

XVI. Jacob prayed for the protection of God.

- A. **Verse 10** shows that he knew he was not worthy of God's help, but having received it, he had prospered.
- B. He called on God to fulfill the promise of help He had made, paraphrasing the blessing God made in **28:13-15**, and other places.

Genesis 32:13-21

[13] So he stayed there that night, and from what he had with him he took a present for his brother Esau, [14] two hundred female goats and twenty male goats, two hundred ewes and twenty rams, [15] thirty milking camels and their calves, forty cows and ten bulls, twenty female donkeys and ten male donkeys. [16] These he handed over to his servants, every drove by itself, and said to his servants, "Pass on ahead of me and put a space between drove and drove." [17] He instructed the first, "When Esau my brother meets you and asks you, 'To whom do you belong? Where are you going? And whose are these ahead of you?' [18] then you shall say, 'They belong to your servant Jacob. They are a present sent to my lord Esau. And moreover, he is behind us.' " [19] He likewise instructed the second and the third and all who followed the droves, "You shall say the same thing to Esau when you find him, [20] and you shall say, 'Moreover, your servant Jacob is behind us.' " For he thought, "I may appease him with the present that goes ahead of me, and afterward I shall see his face. Perhaps he will accept me." [21] So the present passed on ahead of him, and he himself stayed that night in the camp.

XVII. Jacob sent a gift to Esau, in an attempt to appease him.

- A. The gift numbered 580 animals.
 - 1. The animals included goats, sheep, camels, cattle, and donkeys.
 - 2. They were divided into several "droves."
- B. Jacob gave the drovers instructions on what to say, when they met Esau.

Genesis 32:22-32

[22] The same night he arose and took his two wives, his two female servants, and his eleven children, and crossed the ford of the Jabbok. [23] He took them and sent them across the stream, and everything else that he had. [24] And Jacob was left alone. And a man wrestled with him until the breaking of the day. [25] When the man saw that he did not prevail against Jacob, he touched his hip socket, and Jacob's hip was put out of joint as he wrestled with him. [26] Then he said, "Let me go, for the day has broken." But Jacob said, "I will not let you go unless you bless me." [27] And he said to him, "What is your name?" And he said, "Jacob." [28] Then he said, "Your name shall no longer be called Jacob, but Israel, for you have striven with God and with men, and have prevailed." [29] Then Jacob asked him, "Please tell me your name." But he said, "Why is it that you ask my name?" And there he blessed him. [30] So Jacob called the name of the place Peniel, saying, "For I have seen God face to

face, and yet my life has been delivered." [31] The sun rose upon him as he passed Penuel, limping because of his hip. [32] Therefore to this day the people of Israel do not eat the sinew of the thigh that is on the hip socket, because he touched the socket of Jacob's hip on the sinew of the thigh.

XVIII. Jacob wrestled with an angel, and received a blessing from him.

A. The text says that Jacob wrestled with a man.

1. Jacob realized that his opponent was a messenger from God. (**Verse 30**)
2. The prophet Hosea called Jacob's wrestling opponent an angel. **Hosea 12:4a**
"Yes, he wrestled with the angel and prevailed..."

B. Jacob was allowed to prevail over the angel, and received a change of name.

1. The new name, Israel, has the meaning of "one who has striven with God."
2. The angel refused to tell Jacob his name. (The same response came, when the father of Samson, Manoah, asked for the angel's name. **Judges 13:17-18** *And Manoah said to the angel of the Lord, "What is your name, so that when your words come to pass, we may honor you?" [18] But the angel of the Lord said to him, "Why do you ask my name, seeing it is wonderful?"*)

a. The worshiping of angels by men is condemned in the New Testament.

Colossians 2:18 *"Let no one keep defrauding you of your prize by delighting in self-abasement and the worship of the angels, taking his stand on visions he has seen, inflated without cause by his fleshly mind..."*

b. Angels resisted attempts by men to worship them. **Revelation 22:8-9** *And I, John, am the one who heard and saw these things. And when I heard and saw, I fell down to worship at the feet of the angel who showed me these things. [9] And he said to me, "Do not do that; I am a fellow servant of yours and of your brethren the prophets and of those who heed the words of this book; worship God."*

3. The only angels named in the Bible are...

a. Michael – **Daniel 12:1, Jude 9, Revelation 12:7**

b. Gabriel – **Daniel 9:21, Luke 1:19,26**

c. Some readers of the King James Version of the Bible have accepted the traditional claim that the name "Lucifer," found in **Isaiah 14:12**, refers to a fallen angel. However, modern scholars have shown that the Hebrew word in the reference should be translated, "Star of the morning."

NOTE: *The place-name Peniel (Verse 30) is reckoned by Bible geographers to refer to the same place as Penuel (Verse 31). Gideon visited this place (Judges 8:8-9, 17).*

A STUDY OF GENESIS – 12

Genesis 33:1-20

And Jacob lifted up his eyes and looked, and behold, Esau was coming, and four hundred men with him. So he divided the children among Leah and Rachel and the two female servants. [2] And he put the servants with their children in front, then Leah with her children, and Rachel and Joseph last of all. [3] He himself went on before them, bowing himself to the ground seven times, until he came near to his brother.

[4] But Esau ran to meet him and embraced him and fell on his neck and kissed him, and they wept. [5] And when Esau lifted up his eyes and saw the women and children, he said, "Who are these with you?" Jacob said, "The children whom God has graciously given your servant." [6] Then the servants drew near, they and their children, and bowed down. [7] Leah likewise and her children drew near and bowed down. And last Joseph and Rachel drew near, and they bowed down. [8] Esau said, "What do you mean by all this company that I met?" Jacob answered, "To find favor in the sight of my lord." [9] But Esau said, "I have enough, my brother; keep what you have for yourself." [10] Jacob said, "No, please, if I have found favor in your sight, then accept my present from my hand. For I have seen your face, which is like seeing the face of God, and you have accepted me. [11] Please accept my blessing that is brought to you, because God has dealt graciously with me, and because I have enough." Thus he urged him, and he took it.

- I. Jacob took precautions against a possible attack on his household by Esau.
 - A. He saw Esau coming with his 400 men, and divided his family into groups.
 1. His servant-wives and their children were placed at the front.
 - a. This is an indication of the lower rank of these wives and their children.
 - b. It is also an example of the unwise preferences held by Jacob.
 2. Leah and her children were placed second.
 3. Lastly, Rachel, his favorite wife, and Joseph, his favorite son, were placed in the rear.
 - B. Jacob was surprised by the response of Esau.
 1. Jacob approached Esau with bows of respect.
 2. Esau welcomed Jacob with embraces, kisses, and tears.
 - a. Esau asked Jacob to identify the members of his family.
 - b. He also asked for a clarification of the herds and flocks he had met, before seeing Jacob. (See 32:13-21 on page 111.)
 - (1) Jacob explained that they were to "find favor" with Esau.
 - (2) Esau did not want to accept the gift, claiming that he had enough property to satisfy him.
 - (3) Jacob insisted that Esau take the gift, and he accepted it.
 - (4) Jacob's generous gift was probably only a small portion of the wealth he had accumulated in Paddan-Aram.

Genesis 33:12-17

[12] Then Esau said, "Let us journey on our way, and I will go ahead of you." [13] But Jacob said to him, "My lord knows that the children are frail, and that the nursing flocks and herds are a care to me. If they are driven hard for one day, all the flocks will die. [14] Let my lord pass on ahead of his servant, and I will lead on slowly, at the pace of the livestock that are ahead of me and at the pace of the children, until I come to my lord in Seir."

[15] So Esau said, "Let me leave with you some of the people who are with me." But he said, "What need is there? Let me find favor in the sight of my lord." [16] So Esau returned that day on his way to Seir. [17] But Jacob journeyed to Succoth, and built himself a house and made booths for his livestock. Therefore the name of the place is

called Succoth.

- II. Jacob contrived to remain separate from Esau, temporarily.
 - A. Esau offered to accompany Jacob, and his family, as they journeyed south.
 - 1. Seir, the possession of Esau, was approximately 100 miles to the south, and the area near Hebron, where their father Isaac lived, was nearer.
 - 2. Jacob urged Esau to precede him, and promised to come to Seir at a slower pace, in order to spare the children and the herds.
 - 3. Esau even offered to leave some of his men with Jacob to help, but he said that there was no need.
 - B. After their separation, Jacob changed his travel plans.
 - 1. He turned east, and settled for a while in Succoth, close to the Jordan River, about half-way between the Dead Sea, and the Sea of Galilee.
 - 2. He built a house there, indicating the amount of time he would stay there.
 - 3. This shows that Jacob may not have been sincere in his promise to come to Esau in Seir.

Genesis 33:18-20

[18] And Jacob came safely to the city of Shechem, which is in the land of Canaan, on his way from Paddan-aram, and he camped before the city. [19] And from the sons of Hamor, Shechem's father, he bought for a hundred pieces of money the piece of land on which he had pitched his tent. [20] There he erected an altar and called it El-Elohe-Israel.

- III. Jacob crossed the Jordan River into Canaan.
 - A. He came to Shechem, and bought some property to use for his dwelling.
 - 1. This is only the second transaction for property recorded in Genesis, following the purchase of the Cave of Machpelah by Abraham (**Chapter 23**).
 - 2. Jacob apparently planned to stay near Shechem for a while.
 - B. In the pattern of his ancestors, Jacob built an altar there to worship God.

Genesis 34:1-12

Now Dinah the daughter of Leah, whom she had borne to Jacob, went out to see the women of the land. [2] And when Shechem the son of Hamor the Hivite, the prince of the land, saw her, he seized her and lay with her and humiliated her. [3] And his soul was drawn to Dinah the daughter of Jacob. He loved the young woman and spoke tenderly to her. [4] So Shechem spoke to his father Hamor, saying, "Get me this girl for my wife."

[5] Now Jacob heard that he had defiled his daughter Dinah. But his sons were with his livestock in the field, so Jacob held his peace until they came. [6] And Hamor the father of Shechem went out to Jacob to speak with him. [7] The sons of Jacob had come in from the field as soon as they heard of it, and the men were indignant and very angry, because he had done an outrageous thing in Israel by lying with Jacob's daughter, for such a thing must not be done.

[8] But Hamor spoke with them, saying, "The soul of my son Shechem longs for

your daughter. Please give her to him to be his wife. [9] Make marriages with us. Give your daughters to us, and take our daughters for yourselves. [10] You shall dwell with us, and the land shall be open to you. Dwell and trade in it, and get property in it." [11] Shechem also said to her father and to her brothers, "Let me find favor in your eyes, and whatever you say to me I will give. [12] Ask me for as great a bride price and gift as you will, and I will give whatever you say to me. Only give me the young woman to be my wife."

IV. Strife was generated between Jacob's company and the people of Shechem.

- A. Shechem, a prince of the land around the city of Shechem, took Dinah and raped her.
 - 1. His lust turned to love for Dinah, however, and he asked Hamor, his father, to negotiate a marriage for him with her.
 - 2. Hamor approached Jacob about the matter.
- B. The sons of Jacob became very angry, when they heard of the violation of their sister.
- C. Hamor and Shechem offered to do anything the sons required, in order for Dinah to be wed to the prince.
 - 1. They offered an attractive alliance with Jacob.
 - 2. Shechem promised to pay any price named, in order to have Dinah.
 - 3. This open-ended offer would prove to be fatal to the men of Shechem.

Genesis 34:13-24

[13] The sons of Jacob answered Shechem and his father Hamor deceitfully, because he had defiled their sister Dinah. [14] They said to them, "We cannot do this thing, to give our sister to one who is uncircumcised, for that would be a disgrace to us. [15] Only on this condition will we agree with you—that you will become as we are by every male among you being circumcised. [16] Then we will give our daughters to you, and we will take your daughters to ourselves, and we will dwell with you and become one people. [17] But if you will not listen to us and be circumcised, then we will take our daughter, and we will be gone."

[18] Their words pleased Hamor and Hamor's son Shechem. [19] And the young man did not delay to do the thing, because he delighted in Jacob's daughter. Now he was the most honored of all his father's house. [20] So Hamor and his son Shechem came to the gate of their city and spoke to the men of their city, saying, [21] "These men are at peace with us; let them dwell in the land and trade in it, for behold, the land is large enough for them. Let us take their daughters as wives, and let us give them our daughters. [22] Only on this condition will the men agree to dwell with us to become one people—when every male among us is circumcised as they are circumcised. [23] Will not their livestock, their property and all their beasts be ours? Only let us agree with them, and they will dwell with us." [24] And all who went out of the gate of his city listened to Hamor and his son Shechem, and every male was circumcised, all who went out of the gate of his city.

V. The sons of Jacob devised a deceitful plan.

- A. As heirs of the covenant of circumcision, which God made with Abraham and his descendants, they exploited this distinction to disable the men of Shechem.
 - 1. They asked that every male of the city should be circumcised.
 - 2. Hamor and his son persuaded the men of the city to accept the plan.
 - a. One motivation was the forming of an alliance with Jacob's people.
 - b. This was enhanced by the suggestion that Jacob's possessions could eventually become the property of the men of the city.
- B. The Shechemites agreed to the plan, and all were circumcised.

Genesis 34:25-31

[25] On the third day, when they were sore, two of the sons of Jacob, Simeon and Levi, Dinah's brothers, took their swords and came against the city while it felt secure and killed all the males. [26] They killed Hamor and his son Shechem with the sword and took Dinah out of Shechem's house and went away. [27] The sons of Jacob came upon the slain and plundered the city, because they had defiled their sister. [28] They took their flocks and their herds, their donkeys, and whatever was in the city and in the field. [29] All their wealth, all their little ones and their wives, all that was in the houses, they captured and plundered.

[30] Then Jacob said to Simeon and Levi, "You have brought trouble on me by making me stink to the inhabitants of the land, the Canaanites and the Perizzites. My numbers are few, and if they gather themselves against me and attack me, I shall be destroyed, both I and my household." [31] But they said, "Should he treat our sister like a prostitute?"

VI. The sons of Jacob reversed the plot of the Shechemites.

- A. While the men of Shechem were recovering from being circumcised, Simeon and Levi led an attack on the city, and killed all the males.
 - 1. They killed Hamor and Shechem, and took Dinah from Shechem's house.
 - 2. One of the consequences of their violence was the decision of Jacob to censure them many years later, at the time when he blessed his other sons. **Genesis 49:5-7** *"Simeon and Levi are brothers; weapons of violence are their swords. [6] Let my soul come not into their council; O my glory, be not joined to their company. For in their anger they killed men, and in their willfulness they hamstrung oxen. [7] Cursed be their anger, for it is fierce, and their wrath, for it is cruel! I will divide them in Jacob and scatter them in Israel."*
 - a. Priests and Levites were involved in other acts of punishment.
 - b. Levites executed the punishment of the Israelites who were found to be worshiping the Golden Calf. **Exodus 32:25-29** *"And when Moses saw that the people had broken loose (for Aaron had let them break loose, to the derision of their enemies), [26] then Moses stood in the gate of the camp and said, 'Who is on the Lord's side? Come to me.' And all the sons of Levi gathered around him. [27] And he said to them, 'Thus says the Lord God of Israel, 'Put your sword on your side each of you, and go to and fro from gate to gate throughout the camp, and each of you kill his brother and his companion and his neighbor.'" [28] And the sons of Levi did according to the word of Moses. And that day about three*

thousand men of the people fell. [29] And Moses said, 'Today you have been ordained for the service of the Lord, each one at the cost of his son and of his brother, so that he might bestow a blessing upon you this day.'"

- c. Forty years later, Phinehas, one of the priests, stopped a plague by killing an Israelite who had yielded to the temptations of Baal-Peor. **Numbers 25:6-13** *"And behold, one of the people of Israel came and brought a Midianite woman to his family, in the sight of Moses and in the sight of the whole congregation of the people of Israel, while they were weeping in the entrance of the tent of meeting. [7] When Phinehas the son of Eleazar, son of Aaron the priest, saw it, he rose and left the congregation and took a spear in his hand [8] and went after the man of Israel into the chamber and pierced both of them, the man of Israel and the woman through her belly. Thus the plague on the people of Israel was stopped. [9] Nevertheless, those who died by the plague were twenty-four thousand. [10] And the Lord said to Moses, [11] 'Phinehas the son of Eleazar, son of Aaron the priest, has turned back my wrath from the people of Israel, in that he was jealous with my jealousy among them, so that I did not consume the people of Israel in my jealousy. [12] Therefore say, 'Behold, I give to him my covenant of peace, [13] and it shall be to him and to his descendants after him the covenant of a perpetual priesthood, because he was jealous for his God and made atonement for the people of Israel.'*"

(1) Phinehas' deed is celebrated in **Psalms 106:28-31** *"Then (Israel) yoked themselves to the Baal of Peor, and ate sacrifices offered to the dead; [29] they provoked the Lord to anger with their deeds, and a plague broke out among them. [30] Then Phinehas stood up and intervened, and the plague was stayed. [31] And that was counted to him as righteousness from generation to generation forever."*

(2) Compare Phinehas' reward to Abraham's. **Genesis 15:1-6**

- d. When Israel was numbered, to determine the number of men who could go to war, the Levites were excluded. **Numbers 1:44-50**
3. After Simeon and Levi killed the men of Shechem, the rest of the sons of Jacob plundered the city of its wealth, its animals, and the surviving wives and children (perhaps to be enslaved).
- B. Jacob feared the consequences of his son's actions.
1. This is another instance of Jacob's incomplete trust in the promises of God.
 - a. God had promised to be with Jacob, and take care of him. **28:13-15**
 - b. Jacob did not need to fear, and his fear was not realized.
 2. The Sons justified their vengeance by saying that they could not allow anyone to treat their sister as a "prostitute." (NOTE: The Hebrew word here is ZANAH, which does not mean "prostitute," exclusively. It is a more general reference to any woman who commits fornication, a "harlot," which could include prostitution, but refers also all other types of fornication.)

Genesis 35:1-8

God said to Jacob, "Arise, go up to Bethel and dwell there. Make an altar there to the God who appeared to you when you fled from your brother Esau." [2] So Jacob

said to his household and to all who were with him, "Put away the foreign gods that are among you and purify yourselves and change your garments. [3] Then let us arise and go up to Bethel, so that I may make there an altar to the God who answers me in the day of my distress and has been with me wherever I have gone." [4] So they gave to Jacob all the foreign gods that they had, and the rings that were in their ears. Jacob hid them under the terebinth tree that was near Shechem.

[5] And as they journeyed, a terror from God fell upon the cities that were around them, so that they did not pursue the sons of Jacob. [6] And Jacob came to Luz (that is, Bethel), which is in the land of Canaan, he and all the people who were with him, [7] and there he built an altar and called the place El-bethel, because there God had revealed himself to him when he fled from his brother. [8] And Deborah, Rebekah's nurse, died, and she was buried under an oak below Bethel. So he called its name Allon-bacuth.

VII. God commanded Jacob to "go up" to Bethel.

- A. Jacob was gradually moving nearer to his father, Isaac.
 - 1. Bethel is about 20 air miles south of Shechem, but at a higher altitude.
 - 2. The name Bethel had not become its permanent name.
- B. God had instructed Jacob to build an altar there.
 - 1. He had built an altar at Succoth. 33:16
 - 2. He had also built one at Shechem. 33:20
- C. To prepare Jacob's household to worship Him, God commanded them to put away the foreign gods they had, and to purify themselves.
 - 1. The family and servants of his household gave Jacob their gods, and the rings of gold from their ears.
 - 2. Jacob buried this treasure, but the text tells us where.
- D. A "terror from God" prevented any attack on Jacob's caravan.
 - 1. Jacob had been fearful of the people of Canaan, after his sons had killed the men of Shechem, and pillaged the city. 34:30
 - 2. His fears were needless, since God had him under His protection.

Genesis 35:9-15

[9] God appeared to Jacob again, when he came from Paddan-aram, and blessed him. [10] And God said to him, "Your name is Jacob; no longer shall your name be called Jacob, but Israel shall be your name." So he called his name Israel. [11] And God said to him, "I am God Almighty: be fruitful and multiply. A nation and a company of nations shall come from you, and kings shall come from your own body. [12] The land that I gave to Abraham and Isaac I will give to you, and I will give the land to your offspring after you." [13] Then God went up from him in the place where he had spoken with him. [14] And Jacob set up a pillar in the place where he had spoken with him, a pillar of stone. He poured out a drink offering on it and poured oil on it. [15] So Jacob called the name of the place where God had spoken with him Bethel.

VIII. God repeated his promises to Jacob at Bethel.

- A. God reminded Jacob of his new name, Israel.
 - 1. God had originally given him this new name through the angel whom Jacob wrestled. **32:28**
 - 2. God renewed the promises that he had spoken at Bethel the first time.
 - a. He was promised many descendants. See **28:14**
 - b. He was told that his descendants would occupy the land of Canaan. See **28:13**
- B. Jacob had named the place, Bethel, when he was journeying to Paddan-aram.
 - 1. It was the place where he saw the ladder used by the angels. **28:12**
 - 2. He had raised a pillar at that time, also. **28:18**

Genesis 35:16-22a

[16] Then they journeyed from Bethel. When they were still some distance from Ephrath, Rachel went into labor, and she had hard labor. [17] And when her labor was at its hardest, the midwife said to her, "Do not fear, for you have another son." [18] And as her soul was departing (for she was dying), she called his name Ben-oni; but his father called him Benjamin. [19] So Rachel died, and she was buried on the way to Ephrath (that is, Bethlehem), [20] and Jacob set up a pillar over her tomb. It is the pillar of Rachel's tomb, which is there to this day. [21] Israel journeyed on and pitched his tent beyond the tower of Eder. [22] While Israel lived in that land, Reuben went and lay with Bilhah his father's concubine. And Israel heard of it.

IX. The journey continued southward.

- A. Rachel delivered her second son, Benjamin, before they came to Bethlehem.
 - 1. She had hard labor, and died in childbirth.
 - 2. She was buried along the road to Bethlehem. (**NOTE:** The text says that the burial place was marked by a pillar, and was still known at the time of the writing of Genesis by Moses. Moses had never been in that area to see it, so far as we know. He must have heard from others [or the Holy Spirit] about it.)
 - 3. Rachel's choice of names was "Ben-oni," meaning "son of my sorrow," but Jacob changed the name to "Benjamin," meaning "Son of the right hand."
- B. Jacob continued his journey south toward Hebron. (**NOTE:** The text mentions a "tower of Eder," but this place is not identified in our geography of Palestine.)
- C. About this time, Reuben, Jacob's firstborn son, seduced Bilhah, his father's slave-wife.
 - 1. Israel "heard of it," but did not punish Reuben at that time.
 - 2. Reuben's punishment was announced just before his father's death.
 - a. **Genesis 49:1-4** *"Then Jacob called his sons and said, 'Gather yourselves together, that I may tell you what shall happen to you in days to come. [2] Assemble and listen, O sons of Jacob, listen to Israel your father. [3] Reuben, you are my firstborn, my might, and the first fruits of my strength, preeminent in dignity and preeminent in power. [4] Unstable as water, you shall not have preeminence, because you went up to your father's bed; then you defiled it—he went up to my couch!'"*
 - b. **1 Chronicles 5:1-2** *"The sons of Reuben the firstborn of Israel (for he was the*

firstborn, but because he defiled his father's couch, his birthright was given to the sons of Joseph the son of Israel, so that he could not be enrolled as the oldest son; [2] though Judah became strong among his brothers and a chief came from him, yet the birthright belonged to Joseph)..."

Genesis 35:22b-26

Now the sons of Jacob were twelve. [23] The sons of Leah: Reuben (Jacob's firstborn), Simeon, Levi, Judah, Issachar, and Zebulun. [24] The sons of Rachel: Joseph and Benjamin. [25] The sons of Bilhah, Rachel's servant: Dan and Naphtali. [26] The sons of Zilpah, Leah's servant: Gad and Asher. These were the sons of Jacob who were born to him in Paddan-aram.

X. A list of the sons of Jacob.

- A. Each wife's sons are listed according to age.
 - 1. The sons of the free wives are listed first.
 - 2. Then the sons of the slave-wives are listed.
- B. Verse 26 says that "*These were the sons...born to him in Paddan-aram,*" but Benjamin was born in Canaan, near Bethlehem. (He may have been conceived before they left Paddan-aram.)

Genesis 35:27-29

[27] And Jacob came to his father Isaac at Mamre, or Kiriath-arba (that is, Hebron), where Abraham and Isaac had sojourned. [28] Now the days of Isaac were 180 years. [29] And Isaac breathed his last, and he died and was gathered to his people, old and full of days. And his sons Esau and Jacob buried him.

XI. Jacob finally came to his father, Isaac.

- A. Isaac was still living in the area previously occupied by Abraham, near Hebron.
- B. Since Isaac lived to be 180 years old, it is possible that Jacob and his family were with him for several years before he died.
- C. Jacob and Esau buried Isaac, before they parted again. (See 36:6-7, below.)

Genesis 36:1-43

These are the generations of Esau (that is, Edom). [2] Esau took his wives from the Canaanites: Adah the daughter of Elon the Hittite, Oholibamah the daughter of Anah the daughter of Zibeon the Hivite, [3] and Basemath, Ishmael's daughter, the sister of Nebaioth. [4] And Adah bore to Esau, Eliphaz; Basemath bore Reuel; [5] and Oholibamah bore Jeush, Jalam, and Korah. These are the sons of Esau who were born to him in the land of Canaan.

[6] Then Esau took his wives, his sons, his daughters, and all the members of his household, his livestock, all his beasts, and all his property that he had acquired in the land of Canaan. He went into a land away from his brother Jacob. [7] For their possessions were too great for them to dwell together. The land of their sojourning could not support them because of their livestock. [8] So Esau settled in the hill country of Seir. (Esau is Edom.)

[9] These are the generations of Esau the father of the Edomites in the hill country of Seir. [10] 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. [11] The sons of Eliphaz were Teman, Omar, Zepho, Gatam, and Kenaz. [12] (Timna was a concubine of Eliphaz, Esau's son; she bore Amalek to Eliphaz.) These are the sons of Adah, Esau's wife. [13] These are the sons of Reuel: Nahath, Zerah, Sham-mah, and Mizzah. These are the sons of Basemath, Esau's wife. [14] These are the sons of Oholibamah the daughter of Anah the daughter of Zibeon, Esau's wife: she bore to Esau Jeush, Jalam, and Korah.

[15] These are the chiefs of the sons of Esau. The sons of Eliphaz the firstborn of Esau: the chiefs Teman, Omar, Zepho, Kenaz, [16] Korah, Gatam, and Amalek; these are the chiefs of Eliphaz in the land of Edom; these are the sons of Adah. [17] These are the sons of Reuel, Esau's son: the chiefs Nahath, Zerah, Shammah, and Mizzah; these are the chiefs of Reuel in the land of Edom; these are the sons of Basemath, Esau's wife. [18] These are the sons of Ohol-ibamah, Esau's wife: the chiefs Jeush, Jalam, and Korah; these are the chiefs born of Ohol-ibamah the daughter of Anah, Esau's wife. [19] These are the sons of Esau (that is, Edom), and these are their chiefs.

[20] These are the sons of Seir the Horite, the inhabitants of the land: Lotan, Shobal, Zibeon, Anah, [21] Dishon, Ezer, and Dishan; these are the chiefs of the Horites, the sons of Seir in the land of Edom. [22] The sons of Lotan were Hori and Hemam; and Lotan's sister was Timna. [23] These are the sons of Shobal: Alvan, Manahath, Ebal, Shepho, and Onam. [24] These are the sons of Zibeon: Aiah and Anah; he is the Anah who found the hot springs in the wilderness, as he pastured the donkeys of Zibeon his father. [25] These are the children of Anah: Dishon and Oholibamah the daughter of Anah. [26] These are the sons of Dishon: Hemdan, Eshban, Ithran, and Cheran. [27] These are the sons of Ezer: Bilhan, Zaavan, and Akan. [28] These are the sons of Dishan: Uz and Aran. [29] These are the chiefs of the Horites: the chiefs Lotan, Shobal, Zibeon, Anah, [30] Dishon, Ezer, and Dishan; these are the chiefs of the Horites, chief by chief in the land of Seir.

[31] These are the kings who reigned in the land of Edom, before any king reigned over the Israelites. [32] Bela the son of Beor reigned in Edom, the name of his city being Dinhabah. [33] Bela died, and Jobab the son of Zerah of Bozrah reigned in his place. [34] Jobab died, and Husham of the land of the Temanites reigned in his place. [35] Husham died, and Hadad the son of Bedad, who defeated Midian in the country of Moab, reigned in his place, the name of his city being Avith. [36] Hadad died, and Samlah of Masrekah reigned in his place. [37] Samlah died, and Shaul of Rehoboth on the Euphrates reigned in his place. [38] Shaul died, and Baal-hanan the son of Achbor reigned in his place. [39] Baal-hanan the son of Achbor died, and Hadar reigned in his place, the name of his city being Pau; his wife's name was Mehetabel, the daughter of Matred, daughter of Mezahab.

[40] These are the names of the chiefs of Esau, according to their clans and their dwelling places, by their names: the chiefs Timna, Alvah, Jetheth, [41] Oholibamah, Elah, Pinon, [42] Kenaz, Teman, Mibzar, [43] Magdiel, and Iram; these are the chiefs of Edom (that is, Esau, the father of Edom), according to their dwelling places in the land of their possession.

XII. Esau's descendants.

- A. The final separation of Esau from his brother, Jacob, is written in **Verses 6-8**.
- B. The Ishmaelites had kings long before there was a king in Israel. **Verse 31-39**
- C. The nation descended from Ishmael was Edom, and they lived in the high country of Seir.

Genesis 37:1-11

Jacob lived in the land of his father's sojournings, in the land of Canaan.

[2] These are the generations of Jacob.

Joseph, being seventeen years old, was pasturing the flock with his brothers. He was a boy with the sons of Bilhah and Zilpah, his father's wives. And Joseph brought a bad report of them to their father. [3] Now Israel loved Joseph more than any other of his sons, because he was the son of his old age. And he made him a robe of many colors. [4] But when his brothers saw that their father loved him more than all his brothers, they hated him and could not speak peacefully to him.

[5] Now Joseph had a dream, and when he told it to his brothers they hated him even more. [6] He said to them, "Hear this dream that I have dreamed: [7] Behold, we were binding sheaves in the field, and behold, my sheaf arose and stood upright. And behold, your sheaves gathered around it and bowed down to my sheaf." [8] His brothers said to him, "Are you indeed to reign over us? Or are you indeed to rule over us?" So they hated him even more for his dreams and for his words.

[9] Then he dreamed another dream and told it to his brothers and said, "Behold, I have dreamed another dream. Behold, the sun, the moon, and eleven stars were bowing down to me." [10] But when he told it to his father and to his brothers, his father rebuked him and said to him, "What is this dream that you have dreamed? Shall I and your mother and your brothers indeed come to bow ourselves to the ground before you?" [11] And his brothers were jealous of him, but his father kept the saying in mind.

XIII. Joseph, the favorite son, became an outcast.

- A. Events caused a rift between Joseph and his elder brothers.
 - 1. They probably resented the evil report of Joseph against the sons of Bilhah and Zilpah.
 - 2. Jacob's transparent partiality toward Joseph, shown by the gift of an elegant coat, only added to their resentment.
- B. Joseph aroused more resentment by telling about his two prophetic dreams.
 - 1. The first dream was quickly interpreted by the brothers, who resented the implication that they would someday see Joseph ruling over them.
 - 2. The second dream even brought a rebuke from Jacob against Joseph.
 - 3. At least one dream was literally fulfilled.
 - a. The brothers who had resented Joseph's dreams bowed before him in Egypt.

(1) Genesis 42:6 "Now Joseph was governor over the land. He was the one who sold to all the people of the land. And Joseph's brothers came and bowed themselves before him with their faces to the ground."

- (2) **Genesis 43:28** *"They said, 'Your servant our father is well; he is still alive.' And they bowed their heads and prostrated themselves."*
- (3) There is no record of Jacob bowing to his son, Joseph, but he lived in Egypt under Joseph's rule, until he died.

Genesis 37:12-24

[12] Now his brothers went to pasture their father's flock near Shechem. [13] And Israel said to Joseph, "Are not your brothers pasturing the flock at Shechem? Come, I will send you to them." And he said to him, "Here I am." [14] So he said to him, "Go now, see if it is well with your brothers and with the flock, and bring me word." So he sent him from the Valley of Hebron, and he came to Shechem. [15] And a man found him wandering in the fields. And the man asked him, "What are you seeking?" [16] "I am seeking my brothers," he said. "Tell me, please, where they are pasturing the flock." [17] And the man said, "They have gone away, for I heard them say, 'Let us go to Dothan.'" So Joseph went after his brothers and found them at Dothan.

[18] They saw him from afar, and before he came near to them they conspired against him to kill him. [19] They said to one another, "Here comes this dreamer. [20] Come now, let us kill him and throw him into one of the pits. Then we will say that a fierce animal has devoured him, and we will see what will become of his dreams." [21] But when Reuben heard it, he rescued him out of their hands, saying, "Let us not take his life." [22] And Reuben said to them, "Shed no blood; cast him into this pit here in the wilderness, but do not lay a hand on him"— that he might rescue him out of their hand to restore him to his father. [23] So when Joseph came to his brothers, they stripped him of his robe, the robe of many colors that he wore. [24] And they took him and cast him into a pit. The pit was empty; there was no water in it.

- IV. Joseph's brothers have an opportunity to form plots against him.
- A. Jacob assumed that his sons were at Shechem, and sent Joseph there.
 1. Joseph did not find his brothers at Shechem.
 2. He was told that they had moved on to Dothan, a few miles north of Shechem.
 - B. When the brothers saw Joseph coming, they plotted to kill him, and blame the death on a wild animal.
 1. Reuben prevented this plot, intending to rescue Joseph from them.
 2. It is a possibility that Reuben hoped to be restored to the favor of his father, and cover the sin of incest he had committed. (See 35:22.)
 - C. The brothers take Joseph's robe, and throw him into an empty pit.

Genesis 37:25-28

[25] Then they sat down to eat. And looking up they saw a caravan of Ishmaelites coming from Gilead, with their camels bearing gum, balm, and myrrh, on their way to carry it down to Egypt. [26] Then Judah said to his brothers, "What profit is it if we kill our brother and conceal his blood? [27] Come, let us sell him to the Ishmaelites, and let not our hand be upon him, for he is our brother, our own flesh." And his brothers listened to him. [28] Then Midianite traders passed by. And they drew

Joseph up and lifted him out of the pit, and sold him to the Ishmaelites for twenty shekels of silver. They took Joseph to Egypt.

- XV. The brothers, minus Reuben, found an opportunity to be rid of Joseph.
- A. Ishmaelite traders, headed for Egypt, came from Gilead, east across the Jordan.
 - B. The brothers adopted Judah's plan to sell Joseph to the traders.
 - 1. They received 20 shekels of silver (2 shekels for each brother).
 - 2. In these verses, Ishmaelites and Midianites are mention interchangeably.
 - a. Ishmael was the son of Abraham by his slave-wife, Hagar. **Genesis 16:15**
 - b. Midian was the son of Abraham by his last wife, Keturah. **Genesis 25:1-4**

Genesis 37:29-36

[29] When Reuben returned to the pit and saw that Joseph was not in the pit, he tore his clothes [30] and returned to his brothers and said, "The boy is gone, and I, where shall I go?"

[31] Then they took Joseph's robe and slaughtered a goat and dipped the robe in the blood. [32] And they sent the robe of many colors and brought it to their father and said, "This we have found; please identify whether it is your son's robe or not." [33] And he identified it and said, "It is my son's robe. A fierce animal has devoured him. Joseph is without doubt torn to pieces." [34] Then Jacob tore his garments and put sackcloth on his loins and mourned for his son many days. [35] All his sons and all his daughters rose up to comfort him, but he refused to be comforted and said, "No, I shall go down to Sheol to my son, mourning." Thus his father wept for him. [36] Meanwhile the Midianites had sold him in Egypt to Potiphar, an officer of Pharaoh, the captain of the guard.

- XVI. Reuben's rescue plan fails.
- A. When Reuben discovered that Joseph was gone from the pit, he tore his clothes.
 - 1. He knew that he would not be able to restore him to his father.
 - 2. He also knew that he could not win his father's favor for the deed.
 - B. The brothers cover their crime by a deception.
 - 1. They soiled Joseph's coat with animal blood.
 - 2. When they presented the coat to Jacob, claiming that they had found it, Jacob assumes that an animal has killed Joseph, and starts to mourn for Joseph.
 - a. He cannot be comforted, at the beginning.
 - b. He predicts that he will go to his grave still mourning. (This did not happen.)
 - c. He apparently never discovered the crime of his sons.
 - C. Joseph was sold in Egypt to Potiphar, the captain of Pharaoh's guards.

A STUDY OF GENESIS – 13

Genesis 38:1-5

It happened at that time that Judah went down from his brothers and turned aside to a certain Adullamite, whose name was Hirah. [2] There Judah saw the daughter of

a certain Canaanite whose name was Shua. He took her and went in to her, [3] and she conceived and bore a son, and he called his name Er. [4] She conceived again and bore a son, and she called his name Onan. [5] Yet again she bore a son, and she called his name Shelah. Judah was in Chezib when she bore him.

- I. Judah separated from his brothers.
 - A. He found a friend, whose name was Hirah, from the city of Adullam (a city about 15 miles southwest of Jerusalem).
 - B. Judah married a Canaanite woman, the daughter of a man named Shua.
 1. Shua's unnamed daughter gave Judah three sons, Er, Onan, and Shelah.
 2. The last son was born while Judah was in Chezib (a few miles southwest of Adullam).

Genesis 38:6-11

[6] And Judah took a wife for Er his firstborn, and her name was Tamar. [7] But Er, Judah's firstborn, was wicked in the sight of the Lord, and the Lord put him to death. [8] Then Judah said to Onan, "Go in to your brother's wife and perform the duty of a brother-in-law to her, and raise up offspring for your brother." [9] But Onan knew that the offspring would not be his. So whenever he went in to his brother's wife he would waste the semen on the ground, so as not to give offspring to his brother. [10] And what he did was wicked in the sight of the Lord, and he put him to death also. [11] Then Judah said to Tamar his daughter-in-law, "Remain a widow in your father's house, till Shelah my son grows up"—for he feared that he would die, like his brothers. So Tamar went and remained in her father's house.

- II. Tamar was married to Judah's sons.
 - A. Her first marriage to Er was ended by God.
 1. Er was put to death by God, because of his sinfulness (possibly from his Canaanite heritage).
 2. The marriage produced no children.
 - B. She was then married to Onan.
 1. The purpose of this marriage was to produce children who would be counted as the children of the dead husband, Er.
 - a. This custom was later made a part of the Law of Moses. **Deuteronomy 25:5** "If brothers dwell together, and one of them dies and has no son, the wife of the dead man shall not be married outside the family to a stranger. Her husband's brother shall go in to her and take her as his wife and perform the duty of a husband's brother to her."
 - b. This law served the purpose of maintaining family rights of inheritance. **Deuteronomy 25:6** "And the first son whom she bears shall succeed to the name of his dead brother, that his name may not be blotted out of Israel."
 - (1) This law was applied in the case of Ruth. **Ruth 2:6-13**
 - (2) Both Tamar and Ruth are mentioned in the male genealogy of Christ. **Matthew 1:3-5** (NOTE: A third woman was also mentioned: Rahab.)
 2. Onan did not want to do his duty, and devised an evil way to keep children

- from being conceived.
 - a. God put him to death for this sin.
 - b. Tamar remained childless.
- C. The third son of Judah, Shelah, was judged to be too young to marry.
 - 1. Judah told Tamar to wait until he was old enough to marry.
 - 2. He delayed the marriage, because he was afraid that Shelah might also die.
 - 3. She returned to her father's house.

Genesis 38:12-19

[12] In course of time the wife of Judah, Shua's daughter, died. When Judah was comforted, he went up to Timnah to his sheepshearers, he and his friend Hirah the Adullamite. [13] And when Tamar was told, "Your father-in-law is going up to Timnah to shear his sheep," [14] she took off her widow's garments and covered herself with a veil, wrapping herself up, and sat at the entrance to Enaim, which is on the road to Timnah. For she saw that Shelah was grown up, and she had not been given to him in marriage. [15] When Judah saw her, he thought she was a prostitute, for she had covered her face. [16] He turned to her at the road-side and said, "Come, let me come in to you," for he did not know that she was his daughter-in-law. She said, "What will you give me, that you may come in to me?" [17] He answered, "I will send you a young goat from the flock." And she said, "If you give me a pledge, until you send it—" [18] He said, "What pledge shall I give you?" She replied, "Your signet and your cord and your staff that is in your hand." So he gave them to her and went in to her, and she conceived by him. [19] Then she arose and went away, and taking off her veil she put on the garments of her widowhood.

- III. Tamar devised a way to have a child.
 - A. After his wife's death, Judah went to Timnah (about 5 miles northeast of Adullam) to shear his sheep.
 - 1. Tamar was told of this trip, and went to the place.
 - 2. She disguised herself as a cult prostitute (probably of a Canaanite Idol).
 - B. Judah was attracted to her, and offered to buy her service.
 - 1. Payment was promised by Judah.
 - 2. Tamar asked for a pledge, a guarantee that the payment would be made, and received his seal, cord and staff.
 - C. Tamar conceived, and left for her home, taking with her the pledge items.

Genesis 38:20-26

[20] When Judah sent the young goat by his friend the Adullamite to take back the pledge from the woman's hand, he did not find her. [21] And he asked the men of the place, "Where is the cult prostitute who was at Enaim at the road-side?" And they said, "No cult prostitute has been here." [22] So he returned to Judah and said, "I have not found her. Also, the men of the place said, 'No cult prostitute has been here.' "**[23] And Judah replied, "Let her keep the things as her own, or we shall be laughed at. You see, I sent this young goat, and you did not find her."**

[24] About three months later Judah was told, "Tamar your daughter-in-law has

been immoral. Moreover, she is pregnant by immorality." And Judah said, "Bring her out, and let her be burned." [25] As she was being brought out, she sent word to her father-in-law, "By the man to whom these belong, I am pregnant." And she said, "Please identify whose these are, the signet and the cord and the staff." [26] Then Judah identified them and said, "She is more righteous than I, since I did not give her to my son Shelah." And he did not know her again.

IV. The deception of Judah by Tamar almost had a tragic end.

- A. Judah attempted to redeem his pledge, but did not find Tamar.
 - 1. His reaction shows that he was embarrassed by this (Vs. 23).
 - 2. He decided not to continue the search.
- B. After three months, Tamar was accused of conceiving by secret fornication.
 - 1. Judah condemned her to death.
 - 2. She saved herself by producing the seal, cord and staff Judah had pledged.
 - 3. Judah admitted his fault, since he did not give her to his third son, Shelah.
- C. He honored Tamar, apparently, by making her a platonic wife.

Genesis 38:27-30

[27] When the time of her labor came, there were twins in her womb. [28] And when she was in labor, one put out a hand, and the midwife took and tied a scarlet thread on his hand, saying, "This one came out first." [29] But as he drew back his hand, behold, his brother came out. And she said, "What a breach you have made for yourself!" Therefore his name was called Perez. [30] Afterward his brother came out with the scarlet thread on his hand, and his name was called Zerah.

V. Tamar gave birth to twins, one of whom was listed as an ancestor of Jesus.

- A. His name was called Perez (meaning "a breach").
- B. His twin was called Zerah.

NOTE: It seems odd to the reader of the Bible that this story about Tamar should appear in the middle of the saga of Joseph in Egypt. The same is true of the story of Ruth, which relates only a minor incident in the history of the tribe of Judah. The Israelite scribes that preserved these two narratives for posterity probably had no clue as to their importance to the continuation of Judah's descendants down through David to Jesus Christ. The appearance of these narratives in the preserved text of the Old Testament is a testimony to the divine authorship of the Bible, because they support the legitimate claims of Jesus as the Christ. See **Matthew 1:1-6**.

Genesis 39:1-6a

Now Joseph had been brought down to Egypt, and Potiphar, an officer of Pharaoh, the captain of the guard, an Egyptian, had bought him from the Ishmaelites who had brought him down there. [2] The Lord was with Joseph, and he became a successful man, and he was in the house of his Egyptian master. [3] His master saw that the Lord was with him and that the Lord caused all that he did to succeed in his hands. [4] So Joseph found favor in his sight and attended him, and he made him overseer of his

house and put him in charge of all that he had. [5] From the time that he made him overseer in his house and over all that he had the Lord blessed the Egyptian's house for Joseph's sake; the blessing of the Lord was on all that he had, in house and field. [6] So he left all that he had in Joseph's charge, and because of him he had no concern about anything but the food he ate.

VI. Joseph succeeded in winning his Egyptian master's confidence.

- A. God helped Joseph to become the overseer of Potiphar's household.
- B. Potiphar trusted Joseph to the point that he had no concern about his honesty.
- C. He prospered, as a result of Joseph's overseer-ship.

Genesis 39:6b-18

Now Joseph was handsome in form and appearance. [7] And after a time his master's wife cast her eyes on Joseph and said, "Lie with me." [8] But he refused and said to his master's wife, "Behold, because of me my master has no concern about anything in the house, and he has put everything that he has in my charge. [9] He is not greater in this house than I am, nor has he kept back anything from me except yourself, because you are his wife. How then can I do this great wickedness and sin against God?" [10] And as she spoke to Joseph day after day, he would not listen to her, to lie beside her or to be with her.

[11] But one day, when he went into the house to do his work and none of the men of the house was there in the house, [12] she caught him by his garment, saying, "Lie with me." But he left his garment in her hand and fled and got out of the house. [13] And as soon as she saw that he had left his garment in her hand and had fled out of the house, [14] she called to the men of her household and said to them, "See, he has brought among us a Hebrew to laugh at us. He came in to me to lie with me, and I cried out with a loud voice. [15] And as soon as he heard that I lifted up my voice and cried out, he left his garment beside me and fled and got out of the house." [16] Then she laid up his garment by her until his master came home, [17] and she told him the same story, saying, "The Hebrew servant, whom you have brought among us, came in to me to laugh at me. [18] But as soon as I lifted up my voice and cried, he left his garment beside me and fled out of the house."

VII. Potiphar's wife tried to seduce Joseph, but failed.

- A. Joseph's sense of loyalty would not allow him to betray Potiphar's trust in him.
- B. Joseph also resisted the temptations of Potiphar's wife, because it would be a sin against God.
 - 1. This is another example of the revulsion of people of that age against adultery.
 - a. The Pharaoh of Egypt resisted this temptation. **12:10-20**
 - b. The Philistine king, Abimelech, also resisted, after being warned by God. **20:1-18**
 - 2. There should be the same sense of revulsion in us, today.
 - a. **1 Thessalonians 4:2-8** "For you know what instructions we gave you through the Lord Jesus. [3] For this is the will of God, your sanctification: that you

abstain from sexual immorality; [4] that each one of you know how to control his own body in holiness and honor, [5] not in the passion of lust like the Gentiles who do not know God; [6] that no one transgress and wrong his brother in this matter, because the Lord is an avenger in all these things, as we told you beforehand and solemnly warned you. [7] For God has not called us for impurity, but in holiness. [8] Therefore whoever disregards this, disregards not man but God, who gives his Holy Spirit to you."

b. 1 Corinthians 6:18 *"Flee from sexual immorality. Every other sin a person commits is outside the body, but the sexually immoral person sins against his own body."*

C. Potiphar's wife slandered Joseph, after he continued to resist her temptations.

1. She claimed that he attempted to take her by force.
2. She offered Joseph's garment as proof of the truth of her story.

Genesis 39:19-23

[19] As soon as his master heard the words that his wife spoke to him, "This is the way your servant treated me," his anger was kindled. [20] And Joseph's master took him and put him into the prison, the place where the king's prisoners were confined, and he was there in prison. [21] But the Lord was with Joseph and showed him steadfast love and gave him favor in the sight of the keeper of the prison. [22] And the keeper of the prison put Joseph in charge of all the prisoners who were in the prison. Whatever was done there, he was the one who did it. [23] The keeper of the prison paid no attention to anything that was in Joseph's charge, because the Lord was with him. And whatever he did, the Lord made it succeed.

VIII. Potiphar believed his wife's claim, and put Joseph in the King's prison.

- A. Joseph did not let this setback discourage him.
- B. He served so well in prison that the keeper of the prison put him in charge of the prisoners, and again the Lord helped Joseph in his desire to succeed.

Genesis 40:1-23

Some time after this, the cupbearer of the king of Egypt and his baker committed an offense against their lord the king of Egypt. [2] And Pharaoh was angry with his two officers, the chief cupbearer and the chief baker, [3] and he put them in custody in the house of the captain of the guard, in the prison where Joseph was confined. [4] The captain of the guard appointed Joseph to be with them, and he attended them. They continued for some time in custody.

[5] And one night they both dreamed—the cupbearer and the baker of the king of Egypt, who were confined in the prison—each his own dream, and each dream with its own interpretation. [6] When Joseph came to them in the morning, he saw that they were troubled. [7] So he asked Pharaoh's officers who were with him in custody in his master's house, "Why are your faces downcast today?" [8] They said to him, "We have had dreams, and there is no one to interpret them." And Joseph said to them, "Do not interpretations belong to God? Please tell them to me."

[9] So the chief cupbearer told his dream to Joseph and said to him, "In my dream there was a vine before me, [10] and on the vine there were three branches. As soon

as it budded, its blossoms shot forth, and the clusters ripened into grapes. [11] Pharaoh's cup was in my hand, and I took the grapes and pressed them into Pharaoh's cup and placed the cup in Pharaoh's hand." [12] Then Joseph said to him, "This is its interpretation: the three branches are three days. [13] In three days Pharaoh will lift up your head and restore you to your office, and you shall place Pharaoh's cup in his hand as formerly, when you were his cupbearer. [14] Only remember me, when it is well with you, and please do me the kindness to mention me to Pharaoh, and so get me out of this house. [15] For I was indeed stolen out of the land of the Hebrews, and here also I have done nothing that they should put me into the pit."

[16] When the chief baker saw that the interpretation was favorable, he said to Joseph, "I also had a dream: there were three cake baskets on my head, [17] and in the uppermost basket there were all sorts of baked food for Pharaoh, but the birds were eating it out of the basket on my head." [18] And Joseph answered and said, "This is its interpretation: the three baskets are three days. [19] In three days Pharaoh will lift up your head—from you!—and hang you on a tree. And the birds will eat the flesh from you."

[20] On the third day, which was Pharaoh's birthday, he made a feast for all his servants and lifted up the head of the chief cupbearer and the head of the chief baker among his servants. [21] He restored the chief cupbearer to his position, and he placed the cup in Pharaoh's hand. [22] But he hanged the chief baker, as Joseph had interpreted to them. [23] Yet the chief cupbearer did not remember Joseph, but forgot him.

IX. Joseph received providential help toward his release.

- A. The royal cupbearer and the baker offended Pharaoh, and were put in the prison where Joseph was also confined.
- B. After a time, they both had dreams.
 1. They wanted someone to interpret the dreams for them.
 2. Joseph told them that interpretations of dreams belonged to God.
 - a. The prophet Daniel also said the same thing. **Daniel 2:26-28** *"The king said to Daniel, whose name was Belteshazzar, 'Are you able to make known to me the dream that I have seen and its interpretation?' [27] Daniel answered the king and said, 'No wise men, enchanters, magicians, or astrologers can show to the king the mystery that the king has asked, [28] but there is a God in heaven who reveals mysteries, and he has made known to King Nebuchadnezzar what will be in the latter days...'"*
 - b. There was a way to test whether a dream was being properly interpreted. **Deuteronomy 13:1-3** *"If a prophet or a dreamer of dreams arises among you and gives you a sign or a wonder, [2] and the sign or wonder that he tells you comes to pass, and if he says, 'Let us go after other gods,' which you have not known, 'and let us serve them,' [3] you shall not listen to the words of that prophet or that dreamer of dreams. For the Lord your God is testing you, to know whether you love the Lord your God with all your heart and with all your soul."*
- C. The similar dreams had opposite interpretations, causing the cupbearer of

Pharaoh to be restored to his service, and the baker to be executed.

- D. The cupbearer did not remember the service Joseph had given him, even though Joseph had appealed for his help (**Verses 14-15**).

Genesis 41:1-8

After two whole years, Pharaoh dreamed that he was standing by the Nile, [2] and behold, there came up out of the Nile seven cows attractive and plump, and they fed in the reed grass. [3] And behold, seven other cows, ugly and thin, came up out of the Nile after them, and stood by the other cows on the bank of the Nile. [4] And the ugly, thin cows ate up the seven attractive, plump cows. And Pharaoh awoke. [5] And he fell asleep and dreamed a second time. And behold, seven ears of grain, plump and good, were growing on one stalk. [6] And behold, after them sprouted seven ears, thin and blighted by the east wind. [7] And the thin ears swallowed up the seven plump, full ears. And Pharaoh awoke, and behold, it was a dream. [8] So in the morning his spirit was troubled, and he sent and called for all the magicians of Egypt and all its wise men. Pharaoh told them his dreams, but there was none who could interpret them to Pharaoh.

X. God's providence was still at work for Joseph.

A. Pharaoh had similar dreams.

1. In both dreams, the repeated number 7 was significant.
2. In both dreams, incredible actions occurred (lean cows eating fat ones, and blighted ears of grain "eating" the good ears).

B. Among his magicians and wise men, Pharaoh did not find an interpreter.

Genesis 41: 9-32

[9] Then the chief cupbearer said to Pharaoh, "I remember my offenses today. [10] When Pharaoh was angry with his servants and put me and the chief baker in custody in the house of the captain of the guard, [11] we dreamed on the same night, he and I, each having a dream with its own interpretation. [12] A young Hebrew was there with us, a servant of the captain of the guard. When we told him, he interpreted our dreams to us, giving an interpretation to each man according to his dream. [13] And as he interpreted to us, so it came about. I was restored to my office, and the baker was hanged."

[14] Then Pharaoh sent and called Joseph, and they quickly brought him out of the pit. And when he had shaved himself and changed his clothes, he came in before Pharaoh. [15] And Pharaoh said to Joseph, "I have had a dream, and there is no one who can interpret it. I have heard it said of you that when you hear a dream you can interpret it." [16] Joseph answered Pharaoh, "It is not in me; God will give Pharaoh a favorable answer." [17] Then Pharaoh said to Joseph, "Behold, in my dream I was standing on the banks of the Nile. [18] Seven cows, plump and attractive, came up out of the Nile and fed in the reed grass. [19] Seven other cows came up after them, poor and very ugly and thin, such as I had never seen in all the land of Egypt. [20] And the thin, ugly cows ate up the first seven plump cows, [21] but when they had eaten them no one would have known that they had eaten them, for they were still as

ugly as at the beginning. Then I awoke. [22] I also saw in my dream seven ears growing on one stalk, full and good. [23] Seven ears, withered, thin, and blighted by the east wind, sprouted after them, [24] and the thin ears swallowed up the seven good ears. And I told it to the magicians, but there was no one who could explain it to me."

[25] Then Joseph said to Pharaoh, "The dreams of Pharaoh are one; God has revealed to Pharaoh what he is about to do. [26] The seven good cows are seven years, and the seven good ears are seven years; the dreams are one. [27] The seven lean and ugly cows that came up after them are seven years, and the seven empty ears blighted by the east wind are also seven years of famine. [28] It is as I told Pharaoh; God has shown to Pharaoh what he is about to do. [29] There will come seven years of great plenty throughout all the land of Egypt, [30] but after them there will arise seven years of famine, and all the plenty will be forgotten in the land of Egypt. The famine will consume the land, [31] and the plenty will be unknown in the land by reason of the famine that will follow, for it will be very severe. [32] And the doubling of Pharaoh's dream means that the thing is fixed by God, and God will shortly bring it about."

XI. Joseph was called to interpret Pharaoh's dreams.

- A. The cupbearer belatedly remembered the service of Joseph two years before.
- B. Joseph was taken from the prison, and made presentable to appear in the court.
 1. He shaved, before going before the King.
 2. Egyptian custom proclaimed that the clean-shaven Pharaoh would wear a false beard, as a sign of office.
 - a. "Pharaoh would wear a false beard made from goat's hair and secured by a cord. The beard; considered to be a divine attribute of the gods, would be worn during festivals and public appearances, and would identify the king with Osiris." (Egyptology Online)
 - b. "Hatshepsut, was the daughter of Thutmose I (also known as Tuthmosis) and Queen Ahmose Nefertari. Hatshepsut (1473-1458 BC) was married to her half brother Thutmose II, perhaps in order to strengthen his claim to the throne, and they had a daughter together called Neferure. Hatshepsut commissioned official portraits of her daughter wearing the false beard and side lock of youth. Some scholars speculate that this is evidence that Hatshepsut was priming Neferure for a future on the throne." (Ibid.)
- C. Joseph was provided an interpretation of Pharaoh's dreams by God.
 1. Joseph said that the two dreams had the same meaning.
 2. In Verse 32, Joseph told Pharaoh that the doubling of his dreams meant that the fulfillment of these dreams was certain. (NOTE: Remember: Joseph also had a double set of dreams about ruling over his brethren. **Genesis 37:5-11**)

Genesis 41:33-36

[33] Now therefore let Pharaoh select a discerning and wise man, and set him over the land of Egypt. [34] Let Pharaoh proceed to appoint overseers over the land and take one-fifth of the produce of the land of Egypt during the seven plentiful years.

[35] And let them gather all the food of these good years that are coming and store up grain under the authority of Pharaoh for food in the cities, and let them keep it. [36] That food shall be a reserve for the land against the seven years of famine that are to occur in the land of Egypt, so that the land may not perish through the famine."

[37] This proposal pleased Pharaoh and all his servants. [38] And Pharaoh said to his servants, "Can we find a man like this, in whom is the Spirit of God?" [39] Then Pharaoh said to Joseph, "Since God has shown you all this, there is none so discerning and wise as you are. [40] You shall be over my house, and all my people shall order themselves as you command. Only as regards the throne will I be greater than you." [41] And Pharaoh said to Joseph, "See, I have set you over all the land of Egypt." [42] Then Pharaoh took his signet ring from his hand and put it on Joseph's hand, and clothed him in garments of fine linen and put a gold chain about his neck. [43] And he made him ride in his second chariot. And they called out before him, "Bow the knee!" Thus he set him over all the land of Egypt. [44] Moreover, Pharaoh said to Joseph, "I am Pharaoh, and without your consent no one shall lift up hand or foot in all the land of Egypt." [45] And Pharaoh called Joseph's name Zaphenath-paneah. And he gave him in marriage Asenath, the daughter of Potiphera priest of On. So Joseph went out over the land of Egypt.

XII. The interpretation of Joseph causes Pharaoh to take action.

- A. Joseph offered free advice on preparation for the coming years of famine.
 - 1. In the seven years of plenty, there would be a 20% confiscation of all crops.
 - 2. This reserve would be used to supplement meager harvests during the famine.
- B. Pharaoh was so pleased with this advice that he made Joseph the governor of all Egypt, with powers almost equal to his own.
- C. Pharaoh changed Joseph's name to Zaphenath-paneah, which probably means, "Savior of the world" (Pulpit Commentary).
- D. He also gave Joseph a wife, who would be the mother of two tribes of Israel.

Genesis 41:46-57

[46] Joseph was thirty years old when he entered the service of Pharaoh king of Egypt. And Joseph went out from the presence of Pharaoh and went through all the land of Egypt. [47] During the seven plentiful years the earth produced abundantly, [48] and he gathered up all the food of these seven years, which occurred in the land of Egypt, and put the food in the cities. He put in every city the food from the fields around it. [49] And Joseph stored up grain in great abundance, like the sand of the sea, until he ceased to measure it, for it could not be measured.

[50] Before the year of famine came, two sons were born to Joseph. Asenath, the daughter of Potiphera priest of On, bore them to him. [51] Joseph called the name of the firstborn Manasseh. "For," he said, "God has made me forget all my hardship and all my father's house." [52] The name of the second he called Ephraim, "For God has made me fruitful in the land of my affliction."

[53] The seven years of plenty that occurred in the land of Egypt came to an end, [54] and the seven years of famine began to come, as Joseph had said. There was

famine in all lands, but in all the land of Egypt there was bread. [55] When all the land of Egypt was famished, the people cried to Pharaoh for bread. Pharaoh said to all the Egyptians, "Go to Joseph. What he says to you, do."

[56] So when the famine had spread over all the land, Joseph opened all the storehouses and sold to the Egyptians, for the famine was severe in the land of Egypt. [57] Moreover, all the earth came to Egypt to Joseph to buy grain, because the famine was severe over all the earth.

XIII. Joseph's plan was successful.

- A. The seven years of plenty were so fruitful that the grain became immeasurable.**
- B. During the seven years of plenty, two sons were born to Joseph and Asenath.**
 - 1. The firstborn was named Manasseh, meaning "causing to forget."**
 - 2. The younger son was named Ephraim, possibly meaning "doubly fruitful."**
- C. When the famine came, the Egyptians appealed to Pharaoh for food.**
 - 1. Joseph "sold" the stored grain, rather than giving it away.**
 - 2. There was enough food in storage to sell also to buyers from other nations.**

GENESIS – 14

Genesis 42:1-5

Now Jacob saw that there was grain in Egypt, and Jacob said to his sons, "Why are you staring at one another?" [2] He said, "Behold, I have heard that there is grain in Egypt; go down there and buy some for us from that place, so that we may live and not die." [3] Then ten brothers of Joseph went down to buy grain from Egypt. [4] But Jacob did not send Joseph's brother Benjamin with his brothers, for he said, "I am afraid that harm may befall him." [5] So the sons of Israel came to buy grain among those who were coming, for the famine was in the land of Canaan also.

- I. Jacob (Israel) sent his sons to buy grain in Egypt.**
 - A. The famine was widespread.**
 - 1. It was felt over all the (inhabited) earth, including Canaan, according to 41:57.**
 - 2. It was severe enough, that Jacob thought they might die.**
 - B. Jacob would not send Benjamin with his ten brothers.**
 - 1. He had great fear that he would come to some harm.**
 - 2. This is another example of the partiality that began with Jacob's preference of Rachel, and continued through her son, Joseph.**

Genesis 42:6-17

[6] Now Joseph was the ruler over the land; he was the one who sold to all the people of the land. And Joseph's brothers came and bowed down to him with their faces to the ground. [7] When Joseph saw his brothers he recognized them, but he disguised himself to them and spoke to them harshly. And he said to them, "Where have you come from?" And they said, "From the land of Canaan, to buy food."

[8] But Joseph had recognized his brothers, although they did not recognize him. [9]

Joseph remembered the dreams which he had about them, and said to them, "You are spies; you have come to look at the undefended parts of our land." [10] Then they said to him, "No, my lord, but your servants have come to buy food. [11] We are all sons of one man; we are honest men, your servants are not spies." [12] Yet he said to them, "No, but you have come to look at the undefended parts of our land!" [13] But they said, "Your servants are twelve brothers in all, the sons of one man in the land of Canaan; and behold, the youngest is with our father today, and one is no longer alive." [14] Joseph said to them, "It is as I said to you, you are spies; [15] by this you will be tested: by the life of Pharaoh, you shall not go from this place unless your youngest brother comes here! [16] Send one of you that he may get your brother, while you remain confined, that your words may be tested, whether there is truth in you. But if not, by the life of Pharaoh, surely you are spies." [17] So he put them all together in prison for three days.

- II. Joseph recognized his brothers, and began to test their integrity.
 - A. Joseph was not recognized, so he used this situation to appear cruel.
 - 1. Not knowing who he was, the brothers "bowed down to him, with their faces to the ground," fulfilling the dreams that Joseph had in his youth. 37:5-11
 - 2. He "spoke harshly to them," (but through a translator. 42:23).
 - 3. He accused them of being spies, but they denied the charge.
 - B. The brothers revealed that they have a younger brother at home.
 - 1. Joseph uses this to propose a test of their sincerity.
 - 2. One brother is to be sent to bring the youngest, while the others are kept in prison.
 - 3. They are all put in prison for three days.

Genesis 42:18-28

[18] Now Joseph said to them on the third day, "Do this and live, for I fear God: [19] if you are honest men, let one of your brothers be confined in your prison; but as for the rest of you, go, carry grain for the famine of your households, [20] and bring your youngest brother to me, so your words may be verified, and you will not die." And they did so. [21] Then they said to one another, "Truly we are guilty concerning our brother, because we saw the distress of his soul when he pleaded with us, yet we would not listen; therefore this distress has come upon us." [22] Reuben answered them, saying, "Did I not tell you, 'Do not sin against the boy'; and you would not listen? Now comes the reckoning for his blood." [23] They did not know, however, that Joseph understood, for there was an interpreter between them. [24] He turned away from them and wept. But when he returned to them and spoke to them, he took Simeon from them and bound him before their eyes. [25] Then Joseph gave orders to fill their bags with grain and to restore every man's money in his sack, and to give them provisions for the journey. And thus it was done for them.

[26] So they loaded their donkeys with their grain and departed from there. [27] As one of them opened his sack to give his donkey fodder at the lodging place, he saw his money; and behold, it was in the mouth of his sack. [28] Then he said to his

brothers, "My money has been returned, and behold, it is even in my sack." And their hearts sank, and they turned trembling to one another, saying, "What is this that God has done to us?"

- III. Joseph changed his plan, and discovered the effect of his pose as a tyrant.
 - A. Instead of sending only one brother to bring Benjamin, and keeping the rest, he decided to send all but one brother.
 - 1. He told them that he had made the change, because he "feared God."
 - a. The Egyptians were not worshipers of the true God.
 - b. This admission on Joseph's part did not cause the brothers to wonder about Joseph's identity.
 - 2. This new plan enabled Joseph to provide grain for the whole household of his father.
 - B. Joseph overheard his brothers, when they supposed that their situation was a punishment for what they had done to him.
 - 1. The brothers expressed regret for refusing to listen to Joseph's pleas.
 - 2. Reuben tried to justify himself by accusing the others.
 - C. The brothers were more afraid, later, when one of them discovered that Joseph had returned his money, in a sack of grain.

Genesis 42:29-38

[29] When they came to their father Jacob in the land of Canaan, they told him all that had happened to them, saying, [30] "The man, the lord of the land, spoke harshly with us, and took us for spies of the country. [31] But we said to him, 'We are honest men; we are not spies. [32] We are twelve brothers, sons of our father; one is no longer alive, and the youngest is with our father today in the land of Canaan.' [33] The man, the lord of the land, said to us, 'By this I will know that you are honest men: leave one of your brothers with me and take grain for the famine of your households, and go. [34] But bring your youngest brother to me that I may know that you are not spies, but honest men. I will give your brother to you, and you may trade in the land.' "

[35] Now it came about as they were emptying 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 dismayed. [36] Their father Jacob said to them, "You have bereaved me of my children: Joseph is no more, and Simeon is no more, and you would take Benjamin; all these things are against me." [37] Then Reuben spoke to his father, saying, "You may put my two sons to death if I do not bring him back to you; put him in my care, and I will return him to you." [38] But Jacob said, "My son shall not go down with you; for his brother is dead, and he alone is left. If harm should befall him on the journey you are taking, then you will bring my gray hair down to Sheol in sorrow."

- IV. Jacob received the report of their trip to Egypt, but rejected the plan to take Benjamin back to Egypt.
 - A. The nine returning brothers reported all that had happened to them.

- B. They discovered that all their sacks of grain contained the money they had carried to Egypt, and were made even more afraid.
- C. Jacob refused to allow Benjamin to be taken to Egypt.
 - 1. While speaking of the cause for his refusal, Jacob was generous enough to include the loss of Simeon with that of Joseph.
 - 2. Jacob refused Reuben's offer to allow him to kill his two sons, if he did not bring Benjamin back safely.
 - 3. Jacob still thought that Joseph was dead (Vs. 38), and did not want his favorite son, Benjamin, to suffer the same fate.

Genesis 43:1-10

Now the famine was severe in the land. [2] So it came about when they had finished eating the grain which they had brought from Egypt, that their father said to them, "Go back, buy us a little food." [3] Judah spoke to him, however, saying, "The man solemnly warned us, 'You shall not see my face unless your brother is with you.' [4] If you send our brother with us, we will go down and buy you food. [5] But if you do not send him, we will not go down; for the man said to us, 'You will not see my face unless your brother is with you.' " [6] Then Israel said, "Why did you treat me so badly by telling the man whether you still had another brother?" [7] But they said, "The man questioned particularly about us and our relatives, saying, 'Is your father still alive? Have you another brother?' So we answered his questions. Could we possibly know that he would say, 'Bring your brother down?'" [8] Judah said to his father Israel, "Send the lad with me and we will arise and go, that we may live and not die, we as well as you and our little ones. [9] I myself will be surety for him; you may hold me responsible for him. If I do not bring him back to you and set him before you, then let me bear the blame before you forever. [10] For if we had not delayed, surely by now we could have returned twice."

- V. The brothers refused to return to Egypt without Benjamin.
 - A. The severity of the famine forced Jacob to send to Egypt for more food.
 - 1. His sons reminded him that they were under orders to bring Benjamin.
 - 2. Joseph had warned them that no deal for food could be made, unless this order was obeyed.
 - B. Jacob said his sons had treated him badly by revealing the existence of another brother.
 - 1. His sons defended their actions by saying that they were closely questioned. (This is not confirmed in the account of **42:9-13**.)
 - 2. Judah offered to be the guarantor for Benjamin's safe return.
 - 3. Judah also said that the delay in making this decision had prevented them from making two more trips.

Genesis 43:11-15

[11] Then their father Israel said to them, "If it must be so, then do this: take some of the best products of the land in your bags, and carry down to the man as a present, a little balm and a little honey, aromatic gum and myrrh, pistachio nuts and almonds.

[12] Take double the money in your hand, and take back in your hand the money that was returned in the mouth of your sacks; perhaps it was a mistake. [13] Take your brother also, and arise, return to the man; [14] and may God Almighty grant you compassion in the sight of the man, so that he will release to you your other brother and Benjamin. And as for me, if I am bereaved of my children, I am bereaved." [15] So the men took this present, and they took double the money in their hand, and Benjamin; then they arose and went down to Egypt and stood before Joseph.

VI. Jacob finally accepted the need to send Benjamin with his brothers to Egypt.

- A. In order to give assurance to the governor of Egypt, Jacob also sent the best of the products of the land as a gift.
- B. They were also to take back double payment for the grain to show their honesty.

Genesis 43:16-25

[16] When Joseph saw Benjamin with them, he said to his house steward, "Bring the men into the house, and slay an animal and make ready; for the men are to dine with me at noon." [17] So the man did as Joseph said, and brought the men to Joseph's house. [18] Now the men were afraid, because they were brought to Joseph's house; and they said, "It is because of the money that was returned in our sacks the first time that we are being brought in, that he may seek occasion against us and fall upon us, and take us for slaves with our donkeys." [19] So they came near to Joseph's house steward, and spoke to him at the entrance of the house, [20] and said, "Oh, my lord, we indeed came down the first time to buy food, [21] and it came about when we came to the lodging place, that we opened our sacks, and behold, each man's money was in the mouth of his sack, our money in full. So we have brought it back in our hand. [22] We have also brought down other money in our hand to buy food; we do not know who put our money in our sacks." [23] He said, "Be at ease, do not be afraid. Your God and the God of your father has given you treasure in your sacks; I had your money." Then he brought Simeon out to them. [24] Then the man brought the men into Joseph's house and gave them water, and they washed their feet; and he gave their donkeys fodder. [25] So they prepared the present for Joseph's coming at noon; for they had heard that they were to eat a meal there.

VII. The brothers were invited to dine with Joseph.

- A. When Joseph saw that Benjamin was with them, he told his steward to invite the brothers to dine in his house.
- B. The brothers were fearful about this change in Joseph's attitude toward them.
 - 1. They first supposed that they would be held accountable for the money that was returned to them on the first trip.
 - 2. They also thought that Joseph would make all of them slaves.
 - 3. They decided to bring up the subject of the returned money to the steward.
 - 4. The steward put them at ease by attributing the return of the money to God.
 - a. This should have been another clue to the brothers that they were dealing with someone who knew their God.
 - b. They do not seem to recognize the significance of the clue.

- C. The brothers prepared to dine with Joseph, and give him their present.

Genesis 43:26-34

[26] When Joseph came home, they brought into the house to him the present which was in their hand and bowed to the ground before him. [27] Then he asked them about their welfare, and said, "Is your old father well, of whom you spoke? Is he still alive?" [28] They said, "Your servant our father is well; he is still alive." They bowed down in homage. [29] As he lifted his eyes and saw his brother Benjamin, his mother's son, he said, "Is this your youngest brother, of whom you spoke to me?" And he said, "May God be gracious to you, my son." [30] Joseph hurried out for he was deeply stirred over his brother, and he sought a place to weep; and he entered his chamber and wept there. [31] Then he washed his face and came out; and he controlled himself and said, "Serve the meal." [32] So they served him by himself, and them by themselves, and the Egyptians who ate with him by themselves, because the Egyptians could not eat bread with the Hebrews, for that is loathsome to the Egyptians. [33] Now they were seated before him, the firstborn according to his birthright and the youngest according to his youth, and the men looked at one another in astonishment. [34] He took portions to them from his own table, but Benjamin's portion was five times as much as any of theirs. So they feasted and drank freely with him.

VIII. The dinner at Joseph's house.

- A. Again, the brothers bowed to Joseph, after offering their gifts.
- B. Joseph asked about the welfare of their father.
- C. He then asked if Benjamin was the youngest brother they had mentioned to him.
 - 1. Again, Joseph used a reference to God in blessing Benjamin.
 - 2. He was overcome with emotion at seeing his brother, and left the room.
- D. He returned to dine with them.
 - 1. He sat apart from them, because Egyptians would not eat with Hebrews.
 - 2. He seated them in the order of their birth, which astonished them. (NOTE: there was only about 7-8 years difference in the age of all the brothers, and their appearance would not have distinguished the eldest to the youngest.)
 - 3. He took portions of food to them from his table, but gave Benjamin five times as much as he gave the others.
 - 4. The brothers supposed that he meant them no harm, and were at ease.

Genesis 44:1-13

Then he commanded his house steward, saying, "Fill the men's sacks with food, as much as they can carry, and put each man's money in the mouth of his sack. [2] Put my cup, the silver cup, in the mouth of the sack of the youngest, and his money for the grain." And he did as Joseph had told him. [3] As soon as it was light, the men were sent away, they with their donkeys. [4] They had just gone out of the city, and were not far off, when Joseph said to his house steward, "Up, follow the men; and when you overtake them, say to them, 'Why have you repaid evil for good? [5] Is not this the one from which my lord drinks and which he indeed uses for divination?"

You have done wrong in doing this.' "

[6] So he overtook them and spoke these words to them. [7] They said to him, "Why does my lord speak such words as these? Far be it from your servants to do such a thing. [8] Behold, the money which we found in the mouth of our sacks we have brought back to you from the land of Canaan. How then could we steal silver or gold from your lord's house? [9] With whomever of your servants it is found, let him die, and we also will be my lord's slaves." [10] So he said, "Now let it also be according to your words; he with whom it is found shall be my slave, and the rest of you shall be innocent." [11] Then they hurried, each man lowered his sack to the ground, and each man opened his sack. [12] He searched, beginning with the oldest and ending with the youngest, and the cup was found in Benjamin's sack. [13] Then they tore their clothes, and when each man loaded his donkey, they returned to the city.

IX. Joseph tested the sincerity of his brothers by playing an incriminating trick on them.

- A. He commanded his servant to put back the payment money in their sacks again, and put his cup in the sack of Benjamin.**
- B. The servant charged the brothers with stealing Joseph's cup.**
 - 1. The value of the cup was represented as a means for "divination."**
 - 2. This would be a convincing ruse, because the Egyptians practiced divination.**
- C. When the search was made, from the sack of the oldest to that of the youngest, the cup was found in Benjamin's sack.**
- D. They tore their clothes in despair at this turn of events.**

Genesis 44:14-34

[14] When Judah and his brothers came to Joseph's house, he was still there, and they fell to the ground before him. [15] Joseph said to them, "What is this deed that you have done? Do you not know that such a man as I can indeed practice divination?" [16] So Judah said, "What can we say to my lord? What can we speak? And how can we justify ourselves? God has found out the iniquity of your servants; behold, we are my lord's slaves, both we and the one in whose possession the cup has been found." [17] But he said, "Far be it from me to do this. The man in whose possession the cup has been found, he shall be my slave; but as for you, go up in peace to your father."

[18] Then Judah approached him, and said, "Oh my lord, may your servant please speak a word in my lord's ears, and do not be angry with your servant; for you are equal to Pharaoh. [19] My lord asked his servants, saying, 'Have you a father or a brother?' [20] We said to my lord, 'We have an old father and a little child of his old age. Now his brother is dead, so he alone is left of his mother, and his father loves him.' [21] Then you said to your servants, 'Bring him down to me that I may set my eyes on him.' [22] But we said to my lord, 'The lad cannot leave his father, for if he should leave his father, his father would die.' [23] You said to your servants, however, 'Unless your youngest brother comes down with you, you will not see my face again.' [24] Thus it came about when we went up to your servant my father, we told him the words of my lord. [25] Our father said, 'Go back, buy us a little food.' [26] But we said, 'We cannot go down. If our youngest brother is with us, then we will go

down; for we cannot see the man's face unless our youngest brother is with us.' [27] Your servant my father said to us, 'You know that my wife bore me two sons; [28] and the one went out from me, and I said, "Surely he is torn in pieces," and I have not seen him since. [29] If you take this one also from me, and harm befalls him, you will bring my gray hair down to Sheol in sorrow.' [30] Now, therefore, when I come to your servant my father, and the lad is not with us, since his life is bound up in the lad's life, [31] when he sees that the lad is not with us, he will die. Thus your servants will bring the gray hair of your servant our father down to Sheol in sorrow. [32] For your servant became surety for the lad to my father, saying, 'If I do not bring him back to you, then let me bear the blame before my father forever.' [33] Now, therefore, please let your servant remain instead of the lad a slave to my lord, and let the lad go up with his brothers. [34] For how shall I go up to my father if the lad is not with me—for fear that I see the evil that would overtake my father?"

- X. Joseph's trick brought out an honest defense.
- A. On their return to Joseph's house, the brothers all bowed down to him again.
 - B. To cover his trick, Joseph claimed the ability to practice divination.
 - 1. Divination was a practice similar to fortune-telling.
 - 2. It was condemned in the Law of Moses.
 - a. **Leviticus 19:26** *"You shall not eat anything with the blood, nor practice divination or soothsaying."*
 - b. **Deuteronomy 18:10** *"There shall not be found among you anyone who makes his son or his daughter pass through the fire, one who uses divination, one who practices witchcraft, or one who interprets omens, or a sorcerer..."*
 - C. The brothers interpreted this trouble to be a punishment from God for their sins.
 - D. Joseph sentenced Benjamin to be made his slave, but the others could leave.
 - 1. He knew that this tactic would reveal their true nature.
 - 2. This final test was successful.
 - E. Judah was the spokesman for their defense.
 - 1. He is very respectful to Joseph, since he was "equal to Pharaoh."
 - a. It is wise to be respectful to those in authority. **Proverbs 16:14** *"The fury of a king is like messengers of death, but a wise man will appease it."*
 - b. The Apostle Paul showed this kind of respect. **Acts 26:2-3** *"In regard to all the things of which I am accused by the Jews, I consider myself fortunate, King Agrippa, that I am about to make my defense before you today; [3] especially because you are an expert in all customs and questions among the Jews; therefore I beg you to listen to me patiently."*
 - 2. Judah related what had passed between the brothers and their father.
 - a. He explained that their father was unwilling to send Benjamin, because he was a favorite son, the only son left of his favorite wife.
 - b. Because of this, their father would likely die, if they did not return to their father with Benjamin.
 - 3. **Judah honored his promise to his father (43:8-9) by offering to be a substitute for Benjamin, if he was threatened with slavery.**

GENESIS – 15

Genesis 45:1-15

Then Joseph could not control himself before all those who stood by him, and he cried, "Have everyone go out from me." So there was no man with him when Joseph made himself known to his brothers. [2] He wept so loudly that the Egyptians heard it, and the household of Pharaoh heard of it. [3] Then Joseph said to his brothers, "I am Joseph! Is my father still alive?" But his brothers could not answer him, for they were dismayed at his presence.

[4] Then Joseph said to his brothers, "Please come closer to me." And they came closer. And he said, "I am your brother Joseph, whom you sold into Egypt. [5] Now do not be grieved or angry with yourselves, because you sold me here, for God sent me before you to preserve life. [6] For the famine has been in the land these two years, and there are still five years in which there will be neither plowing nor harvesting. [7] God sent me before you to preserve for you a remnant in the earth, and to keep you alive by a great deliverance. [8] Now, therefore, it was not you who sent me here, but God; and He has made me a father to Pharaoh and lord of all his household and ruler over all the land of Egypt. [9] Hurry and go up to my father, and say to him, Thus says your son Joseph, 'God has made me lord of all Egypt; come down to me, do not delay. [10] You shall live in the land of Goshen, and you shall be near me, you and your children and your children's children and your flocks and your herds and all that you have. [11] There I will also provide for you, for there are still five years of famine to come, and you and your household and all that you have would be impoverished.' [12] Behold, your eyes see, and the eyes of my brother Benjamin see, that it is my mouth which is speaking to you. [13] Now you must tell my father of all my splendor in Egypt, and all that you have seen; and you must hurry and bring my father down here." [14] Then he fell on his brother Benjamin's neck and wept, and Benjamin wept on his neck. [15] He kissed all his brothers and wept on them, and afterward his brothers talked with him.

- I. Joseph finally identified himself to his brothers.
 - A. At his first announcement, the brothers were shocked, and dismayed. (Vs. 3)
 - B. Joseph attributed his good fortune to God.
 1. He said that God had sent him to Egypt "to preserve life." (Vs. 5)
 2. He also said that God intended to "preserve you a remnant," and to do it by a "great deliverance." (Vs. 7)
 3. Joseph revealed that there would be 5 more years of famine.
 - C. The brothers could confirm to their father that Joseph's power was extensive, and that he could do all that he promised.
 1. They would be given the "land of Goshen" (presumed to be in the fertile delta of the Nile River).
 2. They would be near to Joseph, so that he could do them good.
 - D. Joseph commissioned his brothers to go and bring their father to Egypt.
 - E. Joseph then began to weep, first with Benjamin, and then with all the brothers.

- F. After these assurances, the brothers felt that they could talk freely with Joseph.
- G. These events were mentioned in the New Testament as a part of the defense used by Stephen, in **Acts 7:9-14**. *"The patriarchs became jealous of Joseph and sold him into Egypt. Yet God was with him, [10] and rescued him from all his afflictions, and granted him favor and wisdom in the sight of Pharaoh, king of Egypt, and he made him governor over Egypt and all his household. [11] Now a famine came over all Egypt and Canaan, and great affliction with it, and our fathers could find no food. [12] But when Jacob heard that there was grain in Egypt, he sent our fathers there the first time. [13] On the second visit Joseph made himself known to his brothers, and Joseph's family was disclosed to Pharaoh. [14] Then Joseph sent word and invited Jacob his father and all his relatives to come to him, seventy-five persons in all."*

Genesis 45:16-28

[16] Now when the news was heard in Pharaoh's house that Joseph's brothers had come, it pleased Pharaoh and his servants. [17] Then Pharaoh said to Joseph, "Say to your brothers, 'Do this: load your beasts and go to the land of Canaan, [18] and take your father and your households and come to me, and I will give you the best of the land of Egypt and you will eat the fat of the land.' [19] Now you are ordered, 'Do this: take wagons from the land of Egypt for your little ones and for your wives, and bring your father and come. [20] Do not concern yourselves with your goods, for the best of all the land of Egypt is yours.' "

[21] Then the sons of Israel did so; and Joseph gave them wagons according to the command of Pharaoh, and gave them provisions for the journey. [22] To each of them he gave changes of garments, but to Benjamin he gave three hundred pieces of silver and five changes of garments. [23] To his father he sent as follows: ten donkeys loaded with the best things of Egypt, and ten female donkeys loaded with grain and bread and sustenance for his father on the journey.

[24] So he sent his brothers away, and as they departed, he said to them, "Do not quarrel on the journey." [25] Then they went up from Egypt, and came to the land of Canaan to their father Jacob. [26] They told him, saying, "Joseph is still alive, and indeed he is ruler over all the land of Egypt." But he was stunned, for he did not believe them. [27] When they told him all the words of Joseph that he had spoken to them, and when he saw the wagons that Joseph had sent to carry him, the spirit of their father Jacob revived. [28] Then Israel said, "It is enough; my son Joseph is still alive. I will go and see him before I die."

- II. Joseph provided for the journey of his father's household.
 - A. Pharaoh initiated the plan by providing wagons for the move from Canaan.
 - B. Joseph sent gifts for his father and his household.
 - C. At first, Jacob disbelieved the announcement of the brothers that Joseph was alive, but later he rejoiced, knowing that he would see him before he died.

Genesis 46:1-7

So Israel set out with all that he had, and came to Beersheba, and offered sacrifices to the God of his father Isaac. [2] God spoke to Israel in visions of the night and said, "Jacob, Jacob." And he said, "Here I am." [3] He said, "I am God, the God of your

father; do not be afraid to go down to Egypt, for I will make you a great nation there. [4] I will go down with you to Egypt, and I will also surely bring you up again; and Joseph will close your eyes."

[5] Then Jacob arose from Beersheba; and the sons of Israel carried their father Jacob and their little ones and their wives in the wagons which Pharaoh had sent to carry him. [6] They took their livestock and their property, which they had acquired in the land of Canaan, and came to Egypt, Jacob and all his descendants with him: [7] his sons and his grandsons with him, his daughters and his granddaughters, and all his descendants he brought with him to Egypt.

III. Jacob journeyed to Egypt.

A. He worshiped at Beersheba, and received a message from God by night visions.

1. God told Jacob not to be afraid to go down into Egypt.
2. God also confirmed the promise that had been made to Abraham. **15:13-14**
3. Stephen also made mention of this in his defense. **Acts 7:6-7** *"But God spoke to this effect, that his (Abraham's) descendants would be aliens in a foreign land, and that they would be enslaved and mistreated for four hundred years. [7] 'And whatever nation to which they will be in bondage I Myself will judge,' said God, 'and after that they will come out and serve Me in this place.'"*

Genesis 46:8-27

[8] Now these are the names of the sons of Israel, Jacob and his sons, who went to Egypt: Reuben, Jacob's firstborn. [9] The sons of Reuben: Hanoch and Pallu and Hezron and Carmi. [10] The sons of Simeon: Jemuel and Jamin and Ohad and Jachin and Zohar and Shaul the son of a Canaanite woman. [11] The sons of Levi: Gershon, Kohath, and Merari. [12] 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. [13] The sons of Issachar: Tola and Puvvah and Iob and Shimron. [14] The sons of Zebulun: Sered and Elon and Jahleel. [15] These are the sons of Leah, whom she bore to Jacob in Paddan-aram, with his daughter Dinah; all his sons and his daughters numbered thirty-three. [16] The sons of Gad: Ziphion and Haggi, Shuni and Ezbon, Eri and Arodi and Areli. [17] The sons of Asher: Imnah and Ishvah and Ishvi and Beriah and their sister Serah. And the sons of Beriah: Heber and Malchiel. [18] These are the sons of Zilpah, whom Laban gave to his daughter Leah; and she bore to Jacob these sixteen persons. [19] The sons of Jacob's wife Rachel: Joseph and Benja-min. [20] Now to Joseph in the land of Egypt were born Manasseh and Ephraim, whom Asenath, the daughter of Potiphera, priest of On, bore to him. [21] The sons of Benjamin: Bela and Becher and Ashbel, Gera and Naaman, Ehi and Rosh, Muppim and Huppim and Ard. [22] These are the sons of Rachel, who were born to Jacob; there were fourteen persons in all. [23] The sons of Dan: Hushim. [24] The sons of Naphtali: Jahzeel and Guni and Jezer and Shillem. [25] These are the sons of Bilhah, whom Laban gave to his daughter Rachel, and she bore these to Jacob; there were seven persons in all. [26] All the persons belonging to Jacob, who came to Egypt, his direct descendants, not including the wives of Jacob's sons, were sixty-six persons in all, [27] and the sons of Joseph, who were born to him in Egypt were two;

all the persons of the house of Jacob, who came to Egypt, were seventy.

IV. In this passage, the descendants of Jacob who went to Egypt are named.

A. There are some individuals named, who will father important future families.

1. The sons of Levi are Gershon, Kohath, and Merari
2. Their families would provide the three companies of Levites who would have assignments regarding the service of the Tabernacle. **Numbers 3:5-4:49**

B. From each family of the four wives, the number of people is recorded.

1. Verse 15 – descendants from Leah, 33 persons.
2. Verse 18 – descendants from Zilpah, 16 persons.
3. Verse 22 – descendants from Rachel, 14 persons.
4. Verse 25 – descendants from Bilhah, 7 persons.
5. Total = 70 who went into Egypt, including Joseph's family.

NOTE: Stephen gives the number as 75 (**Acts 7:14**). This apparent discrepancy is based on the use of separate sources. The Septuagint "translation" gives the total number of persons as 75. The Pulpit Commentary says, "...confusion in these different numbers, sixty-six, seventy, seventy-five, will disappear if it is observed that the first takes no account of Jacob, Joseph, Manasseh, and Ephraim (*and others, vs. 26*), while they are probably included in the second computation, and that Stephen simply adds to the seventy of ver. 27 the five grandsons of Joseph who are mentioned in the Septuagint version, from which he quoted..."

Genesis 46:28-34

[28] Now he sent Judah before him to Joseph, to point out the way before him to Goshen; and they came into the land of Goshen. [29] Joseph prepared his chariot and went up to Goshen to meet his father Israel; as soon as he appeared before him, he fell on his neck and wept on his neck a long time. [30] Then Israel said to Joseph, "Now let me die, since I have seen your face, that you are still alive." [31] Joseph said to his brothers and to his father's household, "I will go up and tell Pharaoh, and will say to him, 'My brothers and my father's household, who were in the land of Canaan, have come to me; [32] and the men are shepherds, for they have been keepers of livestock; and they have brought their flocks and their herds and all that they have.' [33] When Pharaoh calls you and says, 'What is your occupation?' [34] you shall say, 'Your servants have been keepers of livestock from our youth even until now, both we and our fathers,' that you may live in the land of Goshen; for every shepherd is loathsome to the Egyptians."

V. Joseph directed his father to Goshen, and met him there.

A. Jacob was content to die, since he had seen Joseph alive.

B. Joseph gave his brothers some instructions to follow when they met Pharaoh.

1. Joseph said that he would tell Pharaoh that his brothers were shepherds.
2. He also told the brothers that they should admit to being shepherds.
3. Yet, Moses records here that shepherds were an "abomination," or loathsome to the Egyptians.
 - a. One explanation of this rests on the assertion that the Pharaoh of Joseph's

time was not an Egyptian, but one of the “shepherd kings” that had dominated Egypt for a while.

- b. These “shepherd kings” were from a people known as the Hyksos.
 - (1) The Hyksos were expelled from Egypt about 1560 BC, in time for a “new Pharaoh” to arise, “who did not know Joseph.” **Exodus 1:8**
 - (2) Some Egyptologists, and even some theologians, dispute the idea that the Hyksos reigned in Egypt at the time of Joseph, but much of what we know of Egyptian history is confused, and subject to much debate. (See the article on this at www.freemaninstitute.com/Gallery/Joseph)

Genesis 47:1-12

Then Joseph went in and told Pharaoh, and said, "My father and my brothers and their flocks and their herds and all that they have, have come out of the land of Canaan; and behold, they are in the land of Goshen." [2] He took five men from among his brothers and presented them to Pharaoh. [3] Then Pharaoh said to his brothers, "What is your occupation?" So they said to Pharaoh, "Your servants are shepherds, both we and our fathers." [4] They said to Pharaoh, "We have come to sojourn in the land, for there is no pasture for your servants' flocks, for the famine is severe in the land of Canaan. Now, therefore, please let your servants live in the land of Goshen." [5] Then Pharaoh said to Joseph, "Your father and your brothers have come to you. [6] The land of Egypt is at your disposal; settle your father and your brothers in the best of the land, let them live in the land of Goshen; and if you know any capable men among them, then put them in charge of my livestock."

[7] Then Joseph brought his father Jacob and presented him to Pharaoh; and Jacob blessed Pharaoh. [8] Pharaoh said to Jacob, "How many years have you lived?" [9] So Jacob said to Pharaoh, "The years of my sojourning are one hundred and thirty; few and unpleasant have been the years of my life, nor have they attained the years that my fathers lived during the days of their sojourning." [10] And Jacob blessed Pharaoh, and went out from his presence. [11] So Joseph settled his father and his brothers and gave them a possession in the land of Egypt, in the best of the land, in the land of Rameses, as Pharaoh had ordered. [12] Joseph provided his father and his brothers and all his father's household with food, according to their little ones.

VI. Joseph Introduced his family to Pharaoh.

- A. He chose five brothers to be introduced to the king, and told them to admit that they were shepherds.
 - 1. Pharaoh told Joseph to settle his family in Goshen.
 - 2. He also suggested that Joseph's family could provide herdsmen for his cattle.
- B. Jacob was introduced to Pharaoh.
 - 1. Pharaoh questioned him regarding his age, and learned that Jacob was 130. (Later, we learn how much longer he lived. **Genesis 47:28** “*Jacob lived in the land of Egypt seventeen years; so the length of Jacob's life was one hundred and forty-seven years.*”)
 - 2. Jacob blessed Pharaoh. (When Melchizedek blessed Abraham, it is said in **Hebrews 7:7**, “*But without any dispute the lesser is blessed by the greater.*”)

Genesis 47:13-26

[13] Now there was no food in all the land, because the famine was very severe, so that the land of Egypt and the land of Canaan languished because of the famine. [14] Joseph gathered 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. [15] When the money was all spent in the land of Egypt and in the land of Canaan, all the Egyptians came to Joseph and said, "Give us food, for why should we die in your presence? For our money is gone." [16] Then Joseph said, "Give up your livestock, and I will give you food for your livestock, since your money is gone." [17] So they brought their livestock to Joseph, and Joseph gave them food in exchange for the horses and the flocks and the herds and the donkeys; and he fed them with food in exchange for all their livestock that year. [18] When that year was ended, they came to him the next year and said to him, "We will not hide from my lord that our money is all spent, and the cattle are my lord's. There is nothing left for my lord except our bodies and our lands. [19] Why should we die before your eyes, both we and our land? Buy us and our land for food, and we and our land will be slaves to Pharaoh. So give us seed, that we may live and not die, and that the land may not be desolate." [20] So Joseph bought all the land of Egypt for Pharaoh, for every Egyptian sold his field, because the famine was severe upon them. Thus the land became Pharaoh's. [21] As for the people, he removed them to the cities from one end of Egypt's border to the other. [22] Only the land of the priests he did not buy, for the priests had an allotment from Pharaoh, and they lived off the allotment which Pharaoh gave them. Therefore, they did not sell their land. [23] Then Joseph said to the people, "Behold, I have today bought you and your land for Pharaoh; now, here is seed for you, and you may sow the land. [24] At the harvest you shall give a fifth to Pharaoh, and four-fifths shall be your own for seed of the field and for your food and for those of your households and as food for your little ones." [25] So they said, "You have saved our lives! Let us find favor in the sight of my lord, and we will be Pharaoh's slaves." [26] Joseph made it a statute concerning the land of Egypt valid to this day, that Pharaoh should have the fifth; only the land of the priests did not become Pharaoh's.

VII. Joseph raised Pharaoh's power to that of a supreme autocratic ruler.

- A. He gathered all the available money by selling the grain held in storage.
- B. When the people needed food again, Joseph allowed them to pay with cattle.
- C. When all the money and cattle had been gathered for Pharaoh, Joseph accepted land in payment.
 - 1. He removed the people from the land, and placed them in the cities. (Vs. 21)
 - 2. Grain gathered during the years of plenty was stored in the cities. 42:47-48
- D. Joseph exempted the priests of the Egyptian religion from his measures.
 - 1. They received an allotment from Pharaoh, and did not have to sell their land.
 - 2. Under the Law of Moses, the priests of Israel received the "tithe," and certain portions of the sacrificial animals and food offerings.
 - a. **Numbers 18:21,24** *"To the sons of Levi, behold, I have given all the tithe in Israel*

for an inheritance, in return for their service which they perform, the service of the tent of meeting....[24] For the tithe of the sons of Israel, which they offer as an offering to the Lord, I have given to the Levites for an inheritance; therefore I have said concerning them, 'They shall have no inheritance among the sons of Israel.'"

- b. Leviticus 7:32-34** *"You shall give the right thigh to the priest as a contribution from the sacrifices of your peace offerings. [33] The one among the sons of Aaron who offers the blood of the peace offerings and the fat, the right thigh shall be his as his portion. [34] For I have taken the breast of the wave offering and the thigh of the contribution from the sons of Israel from the sacrifices of their peace offerings, and have given them to Aaron the priest and to his sons as their due forever from the sons of Israel."*
- c. Leviticus 2:1-3** *"Now when anyone presents a grain offering as an offering to the Lord, his offering shall be of fine flour, and he shall pour oil on it and put frankincense on it. [2] He shall then bring it to Aaron's sons the priests; and shall take from it his handful of its fine flour and of its oil with all of its frankincense. And the priest shall offer it up in smoke as its memorial portion on the altar, an offering by fire of a soothing aroma to the Lord. [3] The remainder of the grain offering belongs to Aaron and his sons: a thing most holy, of the offerings to the Lord by fire."*
- 3. All the other Egyptians became virtual tenant-farmers to Pharaoh, and were taxed 20% of their produce.**

 - a.** This was the same amount of the tax proposed by Joseph for storing up the grain in the 7 years of plenty. **(41:33-36)**
 - b.** The portion given by the tenant-farmers to Pharaoh provided a commodity which he could perhaps sell to other nations, and support his household.

Genesis 47:27-48:22

[27] Now Israel lived in the land of Egypt, in Goshen, and they acquired property in it and were fruitful and became very numerous. [28] Jacob lived in the land of Egypt seventeen years; so the length of Jacob's life was one hundred and forty-seven years.

[29] When the time for Israel to die drew near, he called his son Joseph and said to him, "Please, if I have found favor in your sight, place now your hand under my thigh and deal with me in kindness and faithfulness. Please do not bury me in Egypt, [30] but when I lie down with my fathers, you shall carry me out of Egypt and bury me in their burial place." And he said, "I will do as you have said." [31] He said, "Swear to me." So he swore to him. Then Israel bowed in worship at the head of the bed.

VIII. Jacob made Joseph swear that when he died, he would not be buried in Egypt.

- A.** The manner of taking this oath is similar to that used by Abraham. **24:2-9**
- B.** Jacob was satisfied, after Joseph accepted the oath, and worshiped God.

Genesis 48:1-7

Now it came about after these things that Joseph was told, "Behold, your father is

sick." So he took his two sons Manasseh and Ephraim with him. [2] When it was told to Jacob, "Behold, your son Joseph has come to you," Israel collected his strength and sat up in the bed. [3] Then Jacob said to Joseph, "God Almighty appeared to me at Luz in the land of Canaan and blessed me, [4] and He said to me, 'Behold, I will make you fruitful and numerous, and I will make you a company of peoples, and will give this land to your descendants after you for an everlasting possession.' [5] Now your two sons, who were born to you in the land of Egypt before I came to you in Egypt, are mine; Ephraim and Manasseh shall be mine, as Reuben and Simeon are. [6] But your offspring that have been born after them shall be yours; they shall be called by the names of their brothers in their inheritance. [7] Now as for me, when I came from Paddan, Rachel died, to my sorrow, in the land of Canaan on the journey, when there was still some distance to go to Ephrath; and I buried her there on the way to Ephrath (that is, Bethlehem)."

IX. Jacob became ill, and was visited by Joseph and his two sons.

A. Jacob told Joseph of God's promise to develop a "company of peoples" from his descendants, and give them the land of Canaan.

1. He received this word from God through his father Isaac. **28:3-4**

2. These promises were first given to Abraham. **17:1-8**

B. Jacob settled Joseph's inheritance on his two sons.

1. Ephraim and Manasseh were to be raised to the level of Jacob's other sons.

2. Sons born to Joseph after this would be "called by the names of their brothers in their inheritance." (Vs. 6)

3. In the occupation of Canaan, Ephraim and Manasseh were given two portions of the land. **Joshua 17:14-18**

NOTE: An interesting sidelight of this arrangement is seen in **Revelation 7:4-8**, where the numbering of the tribes of Israel that made up the 144,000 included Joseph and Manasseh, but not Ephraim. (The numbering also includes Levi, but not Dan.)

Genesis 48:8-22

[8] When Israel saw Joseph's sons, he said, "Who are these?" [9] Joseph said to his father, "They are my sons, whom God has given me here." So he said, "Bring them to me, please, that I may bless them." [10] Now the eyes of Israel were so dim from age that he could not see. Then Joseph brought them close to him, and he kissed them and embraced them. [11] Israel said to Joseph, "I never expected to see your face, and behold, God has let me see your children as well." [12] Then Joseph took them (*or, made them come out*) from his knees, and bowed with his face to the ground. [13] Joseph took them both, Ephraim with his right hand toward Israel's left, and Manasseh with his left hand toward Israel's right, and brought them close to him. [14] But Israel stretched out his right hand and laid it on the head of Ephraim, who was the younger, and his left hand on Manasseh's head, crossing his hands, although Manasseh was the firstborn. [15] He blessed Joseph, and said,

"The God before whom my fathers Abraham and Isaac walked,
The God who has been my shepherd all my life to this day,

[16] The angel who has redeemed me from all evil, bless the lads;
And may my name live on in them,
And the names of my fathers Abraham and Isaac;
And may they grow into a multitude in the midst of the earth."

[17] When Joseph saw that his father laid his right hand on Ephraim's head, it displeased him; and he grasped his father's hand to remove it from Ephraim's head to Manasseh's head. [18] Joseph said to his father, "Not so, my father, for this one is the firstborn. Place your right hand on his head." [19] But his father refused and said, "I know, my son, I know; he also will become a people and he also will be great. However, his younger brother shall be greater than he, and his descendants shall become a multitude of nations." [20] He blessed them that day, saying,

"By you Israel will pronounce blessing, saying,
'May God make you like Ephraim and Manasseh!' "

Thus he put Ephraim before Manasseh. [21] Then Israel said to Joseph, "Behold, I am about to die, but God will be with you, and bring you back to the land of your fathers. [22] I give you one portion more than your brothers, which I took from the hand of the Amorite with my sword and my bow."

X. Jacob prophesied regarding Joseph's sons.

- A. Jacob's eyesight was bad, so Joseph had to identify his two sons to his father.
 1. Verse 12 reads, "took them from his knees," in the NASB.
 - a. This indicates that they were small boys sitting on his knees.
 - b. These two sons of Joseph were probably in their early 20's at that time.
 2. The alternate reading, "made them come out from his knees," is better.
- B. To help his father bless the young men, Joseph pushed his firstborn, Manasseh, toward Jacob's right hand, and Ephraim toward Jacob's left hand.
 1. As they approached, Jacob crossed his hands to bless them.
 2. Joseph tried to correct this, but his father refused, and said that the younger son would be the greater.
 3. The subsequent history of Ephraim and Manasseh indicates that Jacob's prophecy came true.
 - a. There are examples in which the name "Ephraim" was used to indicate all of the northern tribes of Israel. **Isaiah 7:8-9, 17; Hosea 5:3**
 - b. The tribe of Ephraim was very haughty and proud, probably as a result of their forefather being exalted above his brother, Manasseh.
 - (1) They were haughty toward Gideon. **Judges 7:24-8:3**
 - (2) Jephthah punished their arrogance. **Judges 12:1-6**
- C. Joseph received a double portion of inheritance from his father.
 1. He received it in the names of his two sons.
 2. He had been given two portions by being awarded the birthright of Reuben, who was previously the "firstborn." **1 Chronicles 5:1** "...(*Reuben*) was the firstborn, but because he defiled his father's bed, his birthright was given to the sons

- of Joseph the son of Israel; so that he is not enrolled in the genealogy according to the birthright..."
3. This custom became part of the Law of Moses. **Deuteronomy 21:17** *"But he shall acknowledge the firstborn, the son of the unloved, by giving him a double portion of all that he has, for he is the beginning of his strength; to him belongs the right of the firstborn."*
- D. Verse 22 quotes Jacob (Israel) as saying about the land of Canaan that he "took it from the hand of the Amorite with his sword and his bow."
1. He uses the past tense to imply that he had already conquered the land.
 2. This conquest would not happen, until Joshua did so many years later.
 3. This language is based on firm belief in the promise made to Abraham, and his "offspring," that the land of Canaan would one day belong to them.
 4. God often spoke in the past tense of things in the future.
 - a. **Joshua 6:2** *"The Lord said to Joshua, 'See, I have given Jericho into your hand, with its king and the valiant warriors.'" (Jericho was not destroyed, until verse 20.)*
 - b. **Romans 4:16-17** *"...(Salvation) is by faith, in order that it may be in accordance with grace, so that the promise will be guaranteed to all the descendants, not only to those who are of the Law, but also to those who are of the faith of Abraham, who is the father of us all, [17] (as it is written, 'A father of many nations have I made you') in the presence of Him whom he believed, even God, who gives life to the dead and calls into being that which does not exist." (The ASV says that God "calls the things that are not, as though they were.")*

GENESIS – 16

Genesis 49:1-7

Then Jacob summoned his sons and said, "Assemble yourselves that I may tell you what will befall you in the days to come. [2] Gather together and hear, O sons of Jacob; and listen to Israel your father."

[3] "Reuben, you are my firstborn;
My might and the beginning of my strength,
Preeminent in dignity and preeminent in power.

[4] Uncontrolled as water, you shall not have preeminence,
Because you went up to your father's bed;
Then you defiled it—he went up to my couch.

[5] Simeon and Levi are brothers;
Their swords are implements of violence.

[6] Let my soul not enter into their council;
Let not my glory be united with their assembly;
Because in their anger they slew men,

**And in their self-will they lamed oxen.
[7] Cursed be their anger, for it is fierce;
And their wrath, for it is cruel.
I will disperse them in Jacob,
And scatter them in Israel."**

- I. After blessing Joseph's sons, Jacob called his other sons to reveal their destinies.
 - A. Jacob was either a prophet, or he was predicting the destinies of the tribes that evolved from his sons on the basis of his observation of their characters.
 1. Most of the predictions were fulfilled many generations later, indicating that Jacob had the gift of prophecy from the Lord.
 2. Some of the predictions did not reveal the final destinies of the various tribes.
 - B. Reuben was the first to hear his father's judgment.
 1. He lost his privilege and dignity as the firstborn, because he seduced his father's concubine, Bilhah. **35:22** (Joseph received Reuben's blessing.)
 2. This sin was cited in the list of curses in Moses' Law. **Deuteronomy 27:20**.
 - C. Simeon and Levi were marked as violent men by Jacob. (Verse 5)
 1. This judgment was based on their slaughter of the men of Shechem, avenging the defilement of their sister, Dinah. **34:25-30**
 2. There were other episodes of violence by the descendants of these two men.
 - a. Caleb, a leader of the tribe of Simeon, rejected the help of Joshua's forces, when, at the age of 85, he seized the area around Hebron in the conquest of Canaan. **Joshua 14:6-12, 15:13-15**
 - b. Moses called on the Levites to execute those Israelites that had turned to idolatry in the worship of the Golden Calf. **Exodus 32:25-28**
 - D. Over four centuries later, the Levites would be chosen for the non-violent service of the Tabernacle.
 1. Those Levites who were not priests were appointed by God to transport and erect the Tabernacle, when it was moved from from place to place.
 2. The priesthood was taken from the tribe of Levi, through the lineage of Aaron, and his sons.
 3. When the men of war were numbered from all the other tribes, the Levites were excluded. **Numbers 1:47-53**
 4. A later generation of priests were rebuked for not appreciating the privileges of their office. **Malachi 2:1-9**
 - E. In verse 7, Jacob said of Simeon and Levi, "*I will disperse them in Jacob, and scatter them in Israel.*"
 1. In the years after the conquest of Canaan, the tribe of Simeon seems to have been absorbed, or "dispersed" into the tribe of Judah.
 2. The tribe of Levi was "scattered" by being settled in the cities and villages throughout all the tribes of Israel. **Joshua 21:41**

Genesis 49:8-12

**[8] "Judah, your brothers shall praise you;
Your hand shall be on the neck of your enemies;**

**Your father's sons shall bow down to you.
[9] Judah is a lion's whelp;
From the prey, my son, you have gone up.
He couches, he lies down as a lion,
And as a lion, who dares rouse him up?
[10] The scepter shall not depart from Judah,
Nor the ruler's staff from between his feet,
Until Shiloh comes,
And to him shall be the obedience of the peoples.
[11] He ties his foal to the vine,
And his donkey's colt to the choice vine;
He washes his garments in wine,
And his robes in the blood of grapes.
[12] His eyes are dull from wine,
And his teeth white from milk."**

- II. The destiny of Judah was to be glorious, as predicted by Jacob.
- A. Verses 8 and 10 speak of the future dominant role that the descendants of Judah would enjoy.
1. Verse 8 shows the prestige of Judah, which required respectful bows.
 - a. This was fulfilled, when David was selected from the tribe of Judah to be the king of Israel, displacing Saul, of the tribe of Benjamin.
 - b. Verse 10 shows that the tribe of Judah would retain the power to rule over Israel "until Shiloh comes."
 - (1) David's dynasty continued through 19 kings, until the Israelites were taken away into captivity in Babylon.
 - (2) On their return from captivity, no descendant of David was made king, fulfilling the prophecy of **Jeremiah 22:24-30**.
 - (3) When Jesus, the "son of David," was born, the angel promised that He would be the heir of the "throne of David." **Luke 1:31-33**
- NOTE: The phrase, "until Shiloh comes," in Verse 10, has at least two interpretations. Since the word means "peace," it is sometimes applied to Jesus, described as the "Lord of Peace" (**2 Thessalonians 3:16**), or it possibly refers to the "peace of Christ" which should dwell in our hearts (**Colossians 3:15**).
- B. Verse 9 uses the imagery of a lion to describe Judah.
1. A king's rule is compare to a lion. **Proverbs 19:12, 20:2**
 2. Jesus is called "the lion that is from the tribe of Judah." **Revelation 5:1-5**.
- C. Verses 11 and 12 use figurative language to describe the distinctions of royalty. (Compare the robe to the one described in **Revelation 19:11-13**.)

Genesis 49:13-21

**[13] "Zebulun will dwell at the seashore;
And he shall be a haven for ships,
And his flank shall be toward Sidon.**

[14] Issachar is a strong donkey,
Lying down between the sheepfolds.
[15] When he saw that a resting place was good
And that the land was pleasant,
He bowed his shoulder to bear burdens,
And became a slave at forced labor.

[16] Dan shall judge his people,
As one of the tribes of Israel.

[17] Dan shall be a serpent in the way,
A horned snake in the path,
That bites the horse's heels,
So that his rider falls backward.

[18] For Your salvation I wait, O Lord.

[19] As for Gad, raiders shall raid him,
But he will raid at their heels.

[20] As for Asher, his food shall be rich,
And he will yield royal dainties.

[21] Naphtali is a doe let loose,
He gives beautiful words."

III. Jacob gave only brief blessings to these sons.

- A. The tribe of Zebulun fulfilled Jacob's prediction by being settled by Joshua in the land of Canaan near the only natural harbor on the coast of the Mediterranean Sea (where Mt. Carmel juts into the sea – what is now the Bay of Haifa).
- B. The tribe of Issachar is seldom mentioned in the history of Israel, but the prediction of Jacob describes them as a people satisfied to do menial tasks.
- C. The tribe of Dan has a history of being difficult to deal with.
 - 1. Samson was of the tribe of Dan. **Judges 13:2-24**
 - 2. When they desired to secure a different area in which to live, the Danites used coercion and war to obtain it. (They also became idolaters.) **Judges 18**
- D. The tribe of Gad was settled on the east side of Jordan, which made them vulnerable to raids.
- E. The tribe of Asher was settled in the fertile valley of Jezreel, and prospered. (There was a remnant of the tribe of Asher in the person of the prophetess Anna, in the time of Jesus' infancy. **Luke 2:36ff**)
- F. The prophecy regarding Naphtali resists interpretation, since it is devoid of details.

Genesis 49:22-27

[22] "Joseph is a fruitful bough,

**A fruitful bough by a spring;
Its branches run over a wall.
[23] The archers bitterly attacked him,
And shot at him and harassed him;
[24] But his bow remained firm,
And his arms were agile,
From the hands of the Mighty One of Jacob
(From there is the Shepherd, the Stone of Israel),
[25] From the God of your father who helps you,
And by the Almighty who blesses you
With blessings of heaven above,
Blessings of the deep that lies beneath,
Blessings of the breasts and of the womb.
[26] The blessings of your father
Have surpassed the blessings of my ancestors
Up to the utmost bound of the everlasting hills;
May they be on the head of Joseph,
And on the crown of the head of the one distinguished among his brothers.**

**[27] Benjamin is a ravenous wolf;
In the morning he devours the prey,
And in the evening he divides the spoil."**

IV. The final blessings of Jacob were on his two favorite sons.

- A. The blessing on Joseph and his descendants reflects the recognition of his great accomplishments.
 - 1. The first part describes the rise of Joseph in warlike figures, even though war had nothing to do with it.
 - 2. Jacob attributes these accomplishments to the help of almighty God.
 - 3. His "crown" would not be as king over Israel (Judah had that honor), but would cause him to be "distinguished among his brothers."
- B. The predictions about Benjamin show a future of violence.
 - 1. The first king of Israel was Saul, of the tribe of Benjamin.
 - 2. Benjamites were involved in many battles, and skirmishes.
 - 3. A remnant of the tribe of Benjamin is found in the person of Paul the apostle.
Philippians 3:4-6

Genesis 49:28-33

[28] All these are the twelve tribes of Israel, and this is what their father said to them when he blessed them. He blessed them, every one with the blessing appropriate to him. [29] Then he charged them and said to them, "I am about to be gathered to my people; bury me with my fathers in the cave that is in the field of Ephron the Hittite, [30] in the cave that is in the field of Machpelah, which is before Mamre, in the land of Canaan, which Abraham bought along with the field from Ephron the Hittite for a burial site. [31] "There they buried Abraham and his wife

Sarah, there they buried Isaac and his wife Rebekah, and there I buried Leah— [32] the field and the cave that is in it, purchased from the sons of Heth." [33] When Jacob finished charging his sons, he drew his feet into the bed and breathed his last, and was gathered to his people.

V. Just before he died, Jacob gave instructions about the place of his burial.

Genesis 50:1-14

Then Joseph fell on his father's face, and wept over him and kissed him. [2] Joseph commanded his servants the physicians to embalm his father. So the physicians embalmed Israel. [3] Now forty days were required for it, for such is the period required for embalming. And the Egyptians wept for him seventy days.

[4] When the days of mourning for him were past, Joseph spoke to the household of Pharaoh, saying, "If now I have found favor in your sight, please speak to Pharaoh, saying, [5] 'My father made me swear, saying, "Behold, I am about to die; in my grave which I dug for myself in the land of Canaan, there you shall bury me." Now therefore, please let me go up and bury my father; then I will return.' " [6] Pharaoh said, "Go up and bury your father, as he made you swear."

[7] So Joseph went up to bury his father, and with him went up all the servants of Pharaoh, the elders of his household and all the elders of the land of Egypt, [8] and all the household of Joseph and his brothers and his father's household; they left only their little ones and their flocks and their herds in the land of Goshen. [9] There also went up with him both chariots and horsemen; and it was a very great company. [10] When they came to the threshing floor of Atad, which is beyond the Jordan, they lamented there with a very great and sorrowful lamentation; and he observed seven days mourning for his father. [11] Now when the inhabitants of the land, the Canaanites, saw the mourning at the threshing floor of Atad, they said, "This is a grievous mourning for the Egyptians." Therefore it was named Abel-mizraim, which is beyond the Jordan.

[12] Thus his sons did for him as he had charged them; [13] for his sons carried him to the land of Canaan and buried him in the cave of the field of Machpelah before Mamre, which Abraham had bought along with the field for a burial site from Ephron the Hittite. [14] After he had buried his father, Joseph returned to Egypt, he and his brothers, and all who had gone up with him to bury his father.

VI. With the approval of Pharaoh, Joseph, and the other sons of Jacob, went to Canaan to bury their father.

- A. Jacob was embalmed in the manner of the Egyptians.
- B. The size and prestige of the funeral procession prompted comments from the Canaanites.

Genesis 50:15-21

[15] When Joseph's brothers saw that their father was dead, they said, "What if Joseph bears a grudge against us and pays us back in full for all the wrong which we did to him!" [16] So they sent a message to Joseph, saying, "Your father charged

before he died, saying, [17] 'Thus you shall say to Joseph, "Please forgive, I beg you, the transgression of your brothers and their sin, for they did you wrong." ' And now, please forgive the transgression of the servants of the God of your father." And Joseph wept when they spoke to him. [18] Then his brothers also came and fell down before him and said, "Behold, we are your servants." [19] But Joseph said to them, "Do not be afraid, for am I in God's place? [20] As for you, you meant evil against me, but God meant it for good in order to bring about this present result, to preserve many people alive. [21] So therefore, do not be afraid; I will provide for you and your little ones." So he comforted them and spoke kindly to them.

VII. After the death of their father, the sons of Jacob began to fear that Joseph would take vengeance on them.

- A. Their appeal for forgiveness caused Joseph to weep.
- B. He assured them that he had forgiven them already, and that the whole episode was a means for God to preserve Israel for the future.

Genesis 50:22-26

[22] Now Joseph stayed in Egypt, he and his father's household, and Joseph lived one hundred and ten years. [23] Joseph saw the third generation of Ephraim's sons; also the sons of Machir, the son of Manasseh, were born on Joseph's knees. [24] Joseph said to his brothers, "I am about to die, but God will surely take care of you and bring you up from this land to the land which He promised on oath to Abraham, to Isaac and to Jacob." [25] Then Joseph made the sons of Israel swear, saying, "God will surely take care of you, and you shall carry my bones up from here." [26] So Joseph died at the age of one hundred and ten years; and he was embalmed and placed in a coffin in Egypt.

VIII. The death of Joseph.

- A. Joseph had confidence in the promise made to Abraham that Israel would one day leave the land of Egypt to occupy the land of Canaan.
- B. He made his brothers swear that his remains would be carried to Canaan, when the time came for them to leave.
- C. This was fulfilled in **Exodus 13:19**.

Summary–

This study of the book of Genesis reveals the purposes of God, the most important of which are the promises made to Abraham. As Christians, we benefit from the promise that all nations would be blessed in the "seed" of Abraham, which is Christ. As a "genesis" account, or a record of beginnings, we learn of the many firsts in the history of mankind, and their ultimate destiny. It is a record that should be read again and again, "For whatever was written in earlier times was written for our instruction, so that through perseverance and the encouragement of the Scriptures we might have hope." **Romans 15:4**