

GENESIS

The book of beginnings.

**If you look for [the truth] as for silver,
and search for it as for hidden treasure...
then you will...
find the knowledge of God¹**

These are the notes that used when the small group I was leading, went through the book of Genesis together in 2012. I pray that these notes will inspire you to read the Bible and in doing so, deepen your relationship with the God of all creation and His Son Jesus our Messiah.

I have gone over the notes and tried to reference every source. If I have missed any, I apologise, I value and appreciate the wisdom that I have received from others. Please e-mail me so I can give credit and recognition to sources.

If you look, I am sure you will find some errors, if you do or have ideas that will help improve these notes, let me know so I can include your ideas. You are also welcome to e-mail me questions, comments or suggestions. I would love to hear from you,

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¹ Prov. 2:4,5

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Background.

Our Bible is divided into two sections, the Old Testament and the New Testament. These can be further divided up, the New Testament into the Gospels, the Pauline letters etc. The Old Testament, which the Jews call the **TaNaKh** can be divided in to the:

Torah or the Law - Genesis, Exodus, Leviticus, Numbers and Deuteronomy
Nevi'im, the Prophets – Joshua, Samuel, Kings, Isaiah, Jeremiah, etc
Ketuvim the Writings – Psalms, Proverbs, Job, Ruth, Chronicles etc

The Bible is really a collection of scrolls (books) that form a complete story. The Old Testament tells the story of creation and the Israelites with their anticipation of a Messiah. The New Testament describes that Messiah, Jesus, and the early church.

Who authored Genesis?

As we go through Genesis I will note that different section are indicated to have originated from different authors. For example, starting at verse 1, God is the only person who could have directed the narrative.

Jesus credits Moses with putting Genesis in writing and Jesus affirmed its accuracy, telling the Sadducees that they, greatly erred by not believing Genesis.

And as touching the dead, that they rise: have ye not read in the book of Moses, how in the bush God spake unto him, saying, I *am* the God of Abraham, and the God of Isaac, and the God of Jacob? He is not the God of the dead, but the God of the living: ye therefore do greatly err.²

And beginning at Moses and all the prophets, He (Jesus) expounded unto them in all the scriptures the things concerning himself (Jesus)...³

And he said unto them, These *are* the words which I spake unto you, while I was yet with you, that all things must be fulfilled, which were written in the law of Moses, and *in* the prophets, and *in* the psalms, concerning me. Then opened he their understanding, that they might understand the scriptures, And said unto them, Thus it is written, and thus it behoved Christ to suffer, and to rise from the dead the third day: And that repentance and remission of sins should be preached in his name among all nations, beginning at Jerusalem⁴.

Paul also believed Genesis, saying,

But this I confess unto thee, that after the way which they call heresy, so worship I the God of my fathers, believing all things which are written in the law and in the prophets⁵:

From Jesus testimony Moses is credited with transcribing it under the guidance of the Holy Spirit.

² Mark 12:26-27

³ Luke 24:27

⁴ Luke 24:41-47

⁵ Acts 24: 14

The prophecy came not in old time by the will of man but Holy Men of God spake as they were moved by the Holy Ghost⁶.

All scripture is given by inspiration of God and is profitable for doctrine, for reproof, for correction, for instruction in righteousness.⁷

Chuck Missler states that there are at least 200 quotations or allusions to Genesis in the Bible and at least 100 to the first 11 chapters. Every author in the New Testament refers to these 11 chapters. He also stated; every time I see someone reading the scripture, they take it literally.

It has also been said that every major doctrine has its origins in Genesis, and some require Genesis for a complete understanding.

- Genesis is the start of all things, where Revelation is the completion.
- Genesis describes the creation, Revelation the restoration.
- Genesis describes the entrance of sin & death Revelation describes the end of sin and death.
- In Genesis the Tree of life is guarded in Revelation there is free access to tree of life.
- In Genesis, eating the flesh from the tree of knowledge brought a curse, in Jesus, who was knowledge hung on a tree, eating his flesh brings freedom from the curse.

Genesis also describes the origin of the universe, life, mankind, marriage, evil, language, government, culture, nations and religion. There is also a doctrine called the Law of first mention: This states that the first mention of a word or concept is usually significant and lays the definition for future use within the Bible. This means that Genesis lays the foundation of our understanding of God and the entire Bible. Jesus used Genesis to interpret⁸ a law from Deuteronomy⁹. Eden is the ideal way to live and the laws are a concession due to our hard hearts.

I am reminded of an observation that I heard once. The number one determinant that can be used to identify if a full-time pastor or evangelist will remain in full time work, is how they view Genesis. Those who believed that Genesis, including creation, is truth, were far more likely to remain in full time ministry, than those who didn't. As Jesus's parable states, if you build your house in the rock, you will be able to weather storms.

Layout of the book of Genesis

There are 4 major sections;

Adam to Noah	Genesis 1:1 to 11:26
Abraham	Genesis 11:27 to 25:18
Isaac and Jacob	Genesis 25:19 to 37:1
Jacob's Sons	Genesis 37:2 to 50:26

But really the book is divided into 13 sections.

⁶ 2 Pet 1:21

⁷ 2 Tim 3:16

⁸ Matt 19

⁹ Deut 24:1

Genesis is a book where I think the chapter breaks are in the wrong place and I want to propose to you that there is a Signature at the end of each section.

towledah¹⁰ which means

“account of men and their descendants”, or

“course of history” or

“begetting or account of”

So instead of writing “Kind Regards, Keith” at the end of my letter or section, I might write, “Towledah, Keith”, or in English, “This is the record of the origins of Keith”

This gives the following sections;

1st Section: Gen 1:1 to Gen 2:4 which ends with,

This is the record of the origins of Heaven and Earth

2nd section Gen 2:7 to Gen 5:1 which ends with,

This is the book of the generations of Adam

3rd section Gen 5:3 to Gen 6:9 which ends with,

These are the generations of Noah

4th Section Gen 6:11 to Gen 10:1 which ends with,

These are the generations of the sons of Noah, Shem Ham and Japeth

...

Gen 10:32, Gen 11:10, Gen 11:27, Gen 25:12&13, Gen 25:19, Gen 36:1, Gen 36:9, Gen 37:2

We should also consider the book of Genesis as a whole.

The book of Genesis centres around one character, God, and describes His redemptive plan for mankind. Running counter to God’s grace, mercy and calling is mankind who stumble, reject and ignore God’s offers and calling. God’s calling throughout Genesis, and the rest of the Bible, is not to the worthy, but to those who will, in the end, humble themselves before the creator of the universe.

Second, I cringe at the notion that patriarchal history is essentially commendatory. The biblical truth about each of the four patriarchs is as unflattering as it is unvarnished. Abraham’s astonishing faith in obeying God’s directives to migrate to Canaan and later to sacrifice the child of promise is accompanied by a litany of episodes in which he exhibits failures ranging from cowardice, to deceitfulness, to presumption and prejudice. Isaac is portrayed more as a vacillating, gullible, even feckless husband and father than as a deserving heir and role model. Jacob is a study in contrasts. He is a shrewd, unscrupulous schemer yet paradoxically an opportunist who shows flashes of spiritual brilliance such as pledging his allegiance to the God who reveals himself to him, and humbly seeking reconciliation with the brother he defrauded. Profound hardship and injustice reshape Joseph from a brash, coddled, entitled young man to a godly, virtuous, capable and compassionate leader.¹¹

When we do this a summary could be;

¹⁰ Strong’s H8435

¹¹ [https://www.abhe.org/patriarchs/#:~:text=It%20is%20hard%20to%20miss,Joseph%20\(37%2D50\).](https://www.abhe.org/patriarchs/#:~:text=It%20is%20hard%20to%20miss,Joseph%20(37%2D50).)

God created the world and humans, as his image bearers. These humans sinned damaging the image. God washed the earth of the sinful humans keeping the least sinful, Noah, but Noah also sinned demonstrating to mankind that they could not live a holy life by themselves. God chose Abram and his family to demonstrate, an alternative, how man could be reunited with God, by faith.

Bryen describes an outline of Old Testament Theology defining three rebellions;¹²

1. The first rebellion is the result of the serpent deceiving first Eve and then Adam through Eve in order to control the Dominion Mandate given to YHWH's imagers; quick side-bar: Pss't the serpent is not a serpent but one of YHWH's Cherubs a celestial being known as '*The Nachash*' he is a watcher.
2. The second rebellion is built on the foundation of the first but a different set of celestial beings; here several of YHWH's Heavenly Host also known as son's of YHWH embody themselves and forcefully rape the wives of YHWH's imagers producing an unusual race of people known as Nephilim. They introduce war, teach supernatural magic to YHWH's imagers, and show them how to cross breed every conceivable plant, fish, bird, and animals they can. Pss't Another side-bar: they did this because YHWH used the blood of animals to cover the sin of Adam and Eve, and corrupted blood is not acceptable for atonement. The result is YHWH gets Noah to save all the uncorrupted animals, then brings a flood to destroy everything that breathes along with all plant life.
3. The third rebellion is in Genesis 11 and is known as the Tower of Babel incident. YHWH had told Noah and his seed to be fruitful and multiply; they didn't, after wandering around a while YHWH's imagers found a suitable place and decided to build a tower with a Ziggurat on top as a place of worship. Their intention was to reach up to Heaven, make a reputation for themselves and worship the lessor elohiym; YHWH scatters them across the world and changes their language. Effectively YHWH says:- OK guys you do not want anything to do with me, so I have now disinherited all you Nations, and I will keep Israel as my special called out people they will be my inheritance.

And beware lest you raise your eyes to heaven, and when you see the sun and the moon and the stars, all the host of heaven, you be drawn away and bow down to them and serve them, which YHWH your Elohiym has allotted to all the peoples under the whole heaven. But YHWH has taken you and brought you out of the iron furnace, out of Egypt, to be a people of his own inheritance, as you are this day.¹³

When the Elyon gave to the nations their inheritance, when he separated the sons of Adam, he fixed the borders of the peoples according to the number of the children of Israel. But YHWH's portion is his people, Jacob his allotted heritage.¹⁴

Psalm 82 identifies these rebel elohiym as corrupt, verses 1-2 YHWH confronts these rebel elohiym and asks them how long will they continue to judge in an unjust manner, depriving the weak of justice and not looking after the fatherless and ignoring the plight of the destitute. Then in verses 6-8 YHWH says although you are all elohiym, sons of 'Elyon you will die like men. The rest of the Old Testament identifies the continuous conflict between the rebel elohiym and YHWH and Israel against the rest of the Nations. What makes it worse is that a residue of seed from the Genesis 6 affair have mingled with the rest of the Nations meaning YHWH's chosen inheritance will always have their land contested resulting a continuous war.

¹² Bryen Gaskell

¹³ Deuteronomy 4:19-20

¹⁴ Deuteronomy 32:8-9

CHAPTER 1

1 In the beginning God created the heaven and the earth.

בְּרֵאשִׁית בָּרָא אֱלֹהִים אֶת הַשָּׁמַיִם וְאֶת הָאָרֶץ¹⁵

bə-rê-šît	bā-rā	'ē-lō-hîm;	'êṭ	haš-šā-ma-yim	wə-'êṭ	hā-'ā-reṣ.
In the beginning	created	God	-	the heaven	and	the earth.
7225	1254	430	853	8064	853	776

In the beginning God – no explanation, no justification just, God.

The purpose of the Bible is to reveal God to us, so that we can be adopted into His family. It is clear therefore that we should start with God. God preceded the creation and without God there is nothing.

Since Genesis is the book of beginnings and God has no beginning, it is natural that we start with God.

Before the mountains were brought forth, or ever thou hadst formed the earth and the world, even from everlasting to everlasting, thou art God.¹⁶

And he said unto me, It is done. I am Alpha and Omega, the beginning and the end.¹⁷

In the beginning was the Word, and the Word was with God, and the Word was God.¹⁸

The word for God here is “Elohym”. El means God and the rest means plural, but more than 2. Similar, to how we say person, couple or people. Another example is Cherub and the plural Cherubim.

Here in the first phrase, we have the trinity, God the Father, God the Son and God the Holy Spirit.

Notice the next word, **אֵת** which is not translated. Strong's concordance describes it as being used to point out the object of the phrase, but interestingly it is made up of the first and last letters of the Hebrew alphabet. As the phrase is about God and Jesus, who is God, and Jesus describes himself as the first and last letters of the alphabet¹⁹, we can be assured that Jesus is being referenced here.

For by him (Jesus) were all things created, that are in heaven, and that are in earth, visible and invisible, whether *they be* thrones, or dominions, or principalities, or powers: all things were created by him, and for him: And he is before all things, and by him all things consist.²⁰

In the beginning was the Word, and the Word was with God, and the Word was God. The same was in the beginning with God. All things were made by him; and

¹⁵ Note Hebrew is read from right to left. <https://biblehub.com/text/genesis/1-1.htm>

¹⁶ Psalm 90:2

¹⁷ Rev 21:6, see also Isa 41:4, 44:6, 48:12, Rev 1:8, 1:17, 2:8, 22:13

¹⁸ John 1:1

¹⁹ Rev 21:6, see also Isa 41:4, 44:6, 48:12, Rev 1:8, 1:17, 2:8, 22:13

²⁰ Colossians 1:16-17

without him was not any thing made that was made. In him was life; and the life was the light of men.²¹

God, who at sundry times and in divers manners spake in time past unto the fathers by the prophets, Hath in these last days spoken unto us by *his* Son, whom he hath appointed heir of all things, by whom also he made the worlds;²²

And to make all *men* see what *is* the fellowship of the mystery, which from the beginning of the world hath been hid in God, who created all things by Jesus Christ: To the intent that now unto the principalities and powers in heavenly places might be known by the church the manifold wisdom of God,²³

The actual phrase here is:

bə-rê-šît bā-rā 'ě-lō-hîm

A direct translation could be:

“At First” “Created” “The Plural God”

bə-rê-šît means the first, in place, time, order or rank (specifically a firstfruit)²⁴

bā-rā means “to create”²⁵

Some, and I used to be included here, say that “bara” means “to create from nothing”²⁶ and comparing it to “asah” which means to do or make in a broad sense. This differentiates God’s ability to create the world from nothing while man takes something and fashions it into something else. God spoke and the world was created, man takes a tree and fashions a table.

While this sounds good, when I compare passages we discover that God created (bara) and made (asah) the sun, the moon, the stars, sea creatures, trees and man, among other things. To complicate things more man was created (bara)²⁷, made (asah)²⁸ and formed (yatsar)²⁹. Therefore, I will not presume to make this differentiation anymore.

We can, with confidence note that God, being the trinity, created the Heavens and the earth in the beginning. It was not an accident or a random chance, God created the heavens and the earth.

2 And the earth was without form, and void; and darkness was upon the face of the deep. And the Spirit of God moved upon the face of the waters.

3 And God said, Let there be light: and there was light.

4 And God saw the light, that it was good: and God divided the light from the darkness.

²¹ 1John 1:1-4

²² Heb 1:1-2

²³ Eph 3:9-10

²⁴ Strong's H7218

²⁵ Strong's H1254: to create, shape, form (always with God as subject)

²⁶ As compared to asah which means “make or do”

²⁷ Gen 5:1 & 2

²⁸ Gen 6:6

²⁹ Gen 2:7

5 And God called the light Day, and the darkness he called Night. And the evening and the morning were the first day.

Here I must point out that Hebrew is not like English it can be ambiguous. Also, Genesis is laying out the foundations for our spiritual understanding and scripture, it is not attempting to be a scientific journal. This makes it hard when we read the scriptures from a western mindset. An example is the Hebrew for **“the earth was without form and void”** while this translation is the most likely, it could also be translated as the earth became without form and void. To the Hebrew mind it makes no difference, God is explaining the origin of the earth as we know it. To the western mind it can present a problem and has given rise to the gap theory.

Gap theory is an attempt to reconcile the apparent old age of the universe with the short time frame described in Genesis.³⁰

The problem with the Gap theory is that it takes this scripture out of context. Consider this verse;

For in six days the Lord made heaven and earth, the sea, and all that in them is, and rested the seventh day: wherefore the Lord blessed the sabbath day, and hallowed it.³¹

In context with the above verse there is no gap, and the translation is the correct one.

Another argument against the creation account is the definition of Day. The Hebrew word means period of time, but the usual understanding is the period of light, i.e. daytime. Here again, before, the hand of God wrote on tablets of stone that it took 6 days, and we are to rest on the seventh.

We can fashion things from raw materials, God formed the universe from nothing. While it sounds bizarre science has validated the theory. There are particles that have opposite spins and if they are put together, they disappear, giving off a photon of light. Theoretically therefore, the opposite could occur with light spontaneously creating two particles. God can create from nothing.

If you really want me to blow your view of the universe, consider the online world. There are games where you create an online character and live in an online world. This “world” is made

³⁰ There are many problems with the theory of evolution for example, there is no new creations taking place. All the changes that evolutionists point to are a deterioration as Newton's second law directs. Also, the earth would have to be orders of magnitude older than old earthers claim for evolution to occur as genetic changes happen far too slowly. There is also minimum complexity for many aspects of life and evolution cannot explain the jumps required as the intermediate steps hinder life. “For more than a century, scientists agreed multicellular animal life evolved from a single ancestor, which likely resembled cells found in modern sea sponges. But University of Queensland scientists, led by a husband-wife pair of professors, have found something quite different. “We were testing the common theory and found no support for it,”” Notice that, evolutionist admit that there was no support for the theory. <https://www.stuff.co.nz/science/113459457/breakthrough-research-rewrites-textbook-on-origins-of-animal-life>. See also <https://creation.com/bathybius-haeckelii>

With regard to the age of the universe, the age is based on the assumption that Planks constant and the speed of light are constants. There is currently evidence that neither are true, for example see https://www.researchgate.net/figure/Measurements-of-the-speed-of-light-with-the-reported-errors-from-Youden-1972-giving-as_fig2_269942745 and <https://www.livescience.com/29111-speed-of-light-not-constant.html>. Please note that the majority of scientific evidence does **imply** an old universe however this does not disprove a young universe. I take the Bibles evidence as dominant and therefore believe in a young universe.

³¹ Exodus 20:11, see also Ex 31:17; Gen 2:2-3;

up of 0's and 1's on a computer and they are created by an exterior creator (the programmers) while they allow the gamers to direct their avatar. This online world proves the existence of an intelligent creator because it is created by digitised signals (the 0's and 1s). If I put these 0s and 1s in nature they would be meaningless, likewise if I printed them out and gave them to you on paper, they would be meaningless to you. However, in a computer they have meaning proving that they were created by someone skilled at programming. It is impossible for a computer program to randomly be created nor to evolve without external intelligence.

Now back to the universe, we know that the light from the distant edges of the galaxy is Quantised, in other words it is digital. Consider your DNA, it is a digital code, even on a molecular level everything is made up of individual quarks. You cannot have 1/10th of a quark, you either have one or you don't. So logically the universe is digital creation, created by someone with a far greater intelligence than we have. Here this intelligence is termed "Elohim."

Light over comes dark, so it is with God, He overcomes evil.³² We should also note that God is working, He is creating order from disorder. Jesus did likewise, He healed the sick, He bound up the broken hearted and gave us understanding (or order) of the scriptures removing the complexities of the 613 Mizvot (rules presented later in the Torah) to give us understanding of God's order. If we allow Him, Jesus will bring order to our lives calming the storms within our hearts.

In these verses we also have the beginning of time. On earth we define time in relation to the sun. Man has defined 24 hours as the time it takes for the earth to complete one full revolution, i.e. from the time the sun returns to the same position in the sky relative to us. Therefore, there was no definition of time before the light was created. Thinking in a Hebrew way, the light represents time and God created time. This is an example of the difference in thinking. To the Hebrew mind the function is more important.

Similarly, in relation to God, Eternity is not a long period of time it is the absence of time.

An illustration might help. If we are standing on the side of a road when a parade comes past. We see the first vehicle then the next, and the next until the last one. We can describe the parade in the order that they passed, a time-based description. However, if we were in a helicopter, we would see the whole parade all the time and could describe the vehicles in any order. From a helicopter the time that they passed a person standing next to the parade would not be relevant. Likewise, the scriptures often describe events in an order that is important for the subject. A simple example is the birth order of children, in the culture the first born was the one who got the double portion and therefore was usually mentioned first. Noah's sons however are not listed in birth order Shem is listed first as it was through him Jesus was born³³.

God is like the Helicopter, He can see our entire lives from beginning to end all the time, which is why He can direct things so that,

All things work together for good to them that love the God, to them who are the called according to (his) purpose.³⁴

³² 2Cor 6:14-18; John 1

³³ Genesis 5:32; 6:10; 7:13 and 1 Chronicles 1:4. Gen 10:21 states that Japeth was older. See also 1Chr 1:28 when Isaac is listed first even though he was 14 years younger.

³⁴ Rom 8:28

So, make sure that you live your life according to His purpose so that the events in your life will also be for good.

Which brings to light and dark. Light brings clarity, openness, and honesty and so we see light as good throughout the scriptures. Darkness is the opposite allowing things to be hidden and therefore is associated with sin.

When we allow God into our lives, His light bring clarity to us, we can start to grow and improve. When my one daughter was going through a difficult time the professional advice was to give her an ultimatum, tough love was their advice. My wife said that is not God's way, God deals with us with love, grace, mercy and forgiveness. Looking back, it was God's way that succeeded in fact the more I have read on the subject the more I realise that the tough love stance does not have a great rate of success. So let God's word and creative power into your life and you will change from darkness and without form to a glorious new creation.

Which brings me to the Spirit, the work is rūah³⁵ which means breath, wind or Spirit. It could be understood that the Spirit is the breath of God. What is important from this passage is that God's spirit brings life. We can experience this first hand, when we allow God's Spirit to flow in our lives He will bring life to the situation. Just as I described above, God's Spirit moved through my wife and brought life to a very difficult time in our lives.

These verses also give the Jews the starting point for their day. **The evening and the morning were the first day³⁶**. To a Jew the day to starts at sundown, because the description of the first day starts with the evening.

6 ¶ And God said, Let there be a firmament in the midst of the waters, and let it divide the waters from the waters.

7 And God made the firmament, and divided the waters which were under the firmament from the waters which were above the firmament: and it was so.

8 And God called the firmament Heaven. And the evening and the morning were the second day.

I must say that I am not sure what is being said here. What is the firmament referring too, the word is Rāqîa'³⁷ meaning expanse or surface. Waters could also mean fluid transitory things and even violence so I think it is possible that it is referring to gravity. Chuck Missler comments on this verse and says it fits with particle physics and Plasma's. I will take his word for it.

On a side note here

He stretcheth out the north over the empty place, and hangeth the earth upon nothing.³⁸

When we understand that space, is not empty, it has properties as if it was made of matter, so perhaps this is taking about dividing the matter of space from the earth and its atmosphere.

³⁵ Strong's H7307

³⁶ Gen 1:5

³⁷ Strong's H7549

³⁸ Job 26:7

Another understanding could be the waters under the firmament being the waters that came out in the flood, referred to as the fountains of the great deep later in Genesis³⁹.

We know that the 7th day is Saturday which makes this day of creation Monday. Which explains why no one likes Mondays because it is the only day God does not declare good.

I hope that you found that funny, but a serious question is why is this the only day that was not declared good;

1. Perhaps it is because this was a day God divided. God is love and desires unity not division. Sin divided us from God, but Jesus died to breach the divide.
2. One of the commentaries said that they thought that God did not call the second day good, because He was sad. When He created the water above, He knew it was the mechanism he would need to use for destroying the Earth.
3. Another thought is that "waters" which can be a symbol for "people"⁴⁰, and God in dividing the waters here is reminded of how He will separate people in the future into heaven and hell, something God is not pleased to have to do:
"The Lord is... not desiring that any should perish, but that all should come to repentance".⁴¹

9 ¶ And God said, Let the waters under the heaven be gathered together unto one place, and let the dry land appear: and it was so.

10 And God called the dry land Earth; and the gathering together of the waters called he Seas: and God saw that it was good.

11 And God said, Let the earth bring forth grass, the herb yielding seed, and the fruit tree yielding fruit after his kind, whose seed is in itself, upon the earth: and it was so.

12 And the earth brought forth grass, and herb yielding seed after his kind, and the tree yielding fruit, whose seed was in itself, after his kind: and God saw that it was good.

13 And the evening and the morning were the third day.

Have you noticed how each section starts, "and God said". It is **by the word of God the heavens were of old, and the earth standing out of the water⁴².**

In the beginning was the Word, and the Word was with God, and the Word was God. He was in the beginning with God. All things were made through Him, and without Him nothing was made that was made. In Him was life, and the life was the light of men. And the light shines in the darkness, and the darkness did not comprehend.⁴³

In verse 2 we had the Spirit of God moving, and here we notice that the phrase "and God said" is repeated. So, we have the triune God, Elohim, God the Father⁴⁴, God the Son (Jesus)⁴⁵ and God the Holy Spirit.⁴⁶

Here we have the waters of the earth gathered so that land appears. Then God created plants with only the light He created, but no sun.⁴⁷ Notice that plants multiplied after their kind, so

³⁹ Gen 7:11

⁴⁰ Rev. 17:15 "The waters you saw... are peoples, and multitudes and nations..."

⁴¹ 2 Peter 3:9

⁴² 2Pet 3:5

⁴³ John1:1-5, referring to Jesus our Messiah.

⁴⁴ 2Cor 6:18; 1Jn 3:1; Matt 6:26; Psa 103:13

⁴⁵ Matt 3:17; 16:13-17 Luke 3:22

⁴⁶ John 15:26; Eph 4:30; Acts 13:2; Rom 8:26-27; 1Cor 12:11

⁴⁷ See also Isa 60:19-20, Rev 21:23

potatoes grew into potatoes. This does not prevent one type of potatoes fertilising a different type of potatoes but potatoes do not fertilise oranges.

It is interesting that on the third day God not only created the dry land but He also produced the plants. Likewise on the 6th day, God not only created the animals but He also created man. This double creation perhaps highlights that when the Trinity is together, there is extra creation. Another link is that on the third day God creates the seed and on the sixth God creates humans. Jesus is the promised seed⁴⁸ and a human⁴⁹.

Prophecy is pattern. This saying reminds us that the Bible is full of patterns that are used to point us to Jesus. I gave you an example above but this section has another. God divided the waters and brought forth life, here is plants. Later we will see Noah going through the waters to new life⁵⁰. In Exodus, God divided the waters and the Hebrews walked through from slavery towards the promised land⁵¹. Jesus came through the waters of baptism to His ministry⁵² and likewise we can come through the waters of Baptism to new life in Christ.

There is a saying, if you always do what you have always done, you will get what you have always got. Or, as God puts in here your seeds develop after their kind. If your life is not fulfilling or you have problems, try doing things with God and in His way, after all Gods way produces good fruit.

For I know the plans I have for you,” declares the Lord, “plans to prosper you and not to harm you, plans to give you hope and a future. Then you will call on me and come and pray to me, and I will listen to you. You will seek me and find me when you seek me with all your heart.⁵³

**14 ¶ And God said, Let there be lights in the firmament of the heaven to divide the day from the night; and let them be for signs, and for seasons, and for days, and years:
15 And let them be for lights in the firmament of the heaven to give light upon the earth: and it was so.
16 And God made two great lights; the greater light to rule the day, and the lesser light to rule the night: he made the stars also.
17 And God set them in the firmament of the heaven to give light upon the earth,
18 And to rule over the day and over the night, and to divide the light from the darkness: and God saw that it was good.
19 And the evening and the morning were the fourth day.**

The sun is easy to identify as **the greater light to rule the day** and as the stars are identified separately meaning that the moon must be the light to rule the night.⁵⁴

The Sun and Moon will be symbols of Joseph's Parents, Jacob and Rachel⁵⁵ and of clothing Israel.⁵⁶ The Sun and Moon can also represent time with the sun representing days

⁴⁸ Gen 3:15/Rom 16:20; Isa 53:10; Gal 3:16

⁴⁹ 1Tim2:5; 2John 1:7; Heb 2:17

⁵⁰ Gen 5-9

⁵¹ Ex 14:19-31

⁵² Matt 3:13-17

⁵³ Jer 29:11-13

⁵⁴ Psalm 136:9, Psalm 8:3, Jeremiah 31:35

⁵⁵ Gen 37:9

⁵⁶ Rev 12:1-7

(Sabbaths) and the moon seasons.⁵⁷ The Sun and Moon are also indicators of the signs of the end times with the darkening of the Sun and Moon or Blood moon.⁵⁸

The Sun is sometimes considered to Symbolise God; It creates life and does not need anything else to produce its life giving light.

The moon is sometimes considered to symbolise God's people; God's people do not shine but can reflect the light of God (sun). The church can move the masses like the moon moves the tides.

Stars symbolise the angels or heavenly host as it includes Cherubim and at one time, satan and his armies.⁵⁹ Though we should remember that the "Morning Star", a common name for the planet Venus, represents Jesus.⁶⁰ Venus, as a planet also reflects the sun, as Jesus reflected God's glory to us when He came 2000 years ago.

As Paul writes;

[There is] one glory of the sun, and another glory of the moon, and another glory of the stars: for [one] star differeth from [another] star in glory.⁶¹

That you have forgotten the Lord your maker, who stretched out the heavens and laid the foundations of the earth.⁶²

The stars are **for signs, and for seasons**. This can refer to the obvious winter/summer and feasts that God will detail however the stars also seem to also contain God's plan of redemption. Consider the signs of Zodiac;

⁵⁷ Lev 27:6 (one month is a translation of Strong's 2320 "New Moon), Psalm 104:19, Isa 1:14; 1Sam 20:5-34; Pro 7:20; Psa 81:3; 2Kings 4:23

⁵⁸ Joel 2:10; Isa 13:10; Mat 24:29; Luke 21:25; Rev 6:12

⁵⁹ Isa 14:12-14; Rev 12:3-4

⁶⁰ Rev 22:16; 2Pet 1:19; Rev 2:26-28

⁶¹ 1Corinthians 15:41

⁶² Isa 51:13 see also Isa 40:26; 42:5; 45:12; Jer 10:12; 51:15

<i>Zodiac Interpretations</i>		
Constellation	Picture	Interpretations
Virgo	Virgin	Virgin Mary
Libra	Scales	Sin must be paid for
Scorpius	Scorpion	Sin brings death
Sagittarius	archer	Demonism
Capricorn	Goat-fish	Earth corruption
Aquarius	Water pourer	Living water or Noah's flood
Pisces	Fish	God's remnant
Aries	Ram	Sacrifice
Taurus	Bull	Resurrection
Gemini	Twins	Christ's dual nature
Cancer	Crab	Gathering of redeemed
Leo	Lion	The King

Remember the Magi who came from the east to find the Christ child, they stated, "We have seen His star in the east, we've come to worship Him". The Christmas card interpretation of this is a magical light that hovered over Bethlehem, but it could also have been a star appearing within the constellations that they understood. Daniel had been in captivity in Babylon and it makes sense that he taught the "wise men" the true meanings and the names of the stars. God's message in the stars has since been perverted into the modern astrology.

20 And God said, Let the waters bring forth abundantly the moving creature that hath life, and fowl that may fly above the earth in the open firmament of heaven.

21 And God created great whales, and every living creature that moveth, which the waters brought forth abundantly, after their kind, and every winged fowl after his kind: and God saw that it was good.

22 And God blessed them, saying, Be fruitful, and multiply, and fill the waters in the seas, and let fowl multiply in the earth.

23 And the evening and the morning were the fifth day.

God starts his creation of animals in the waters and then flying creatures, leaving the land creatures till last. This is not in the same order as the theory of evolution.

God also filled the waters and earth. I find it amazing when a creature is discovered in the most inhospitable places, the deepest oceans even the underwater volcanic areas. We serve and incredibly creative and awesome God.

24 ¶ And God said, Let the earth bring forth the living creature after his kind, cattle, and creeping thing, and beast of the earth after his kind: and it was so.

25 And God made the beast of the earth after his kind, and cattle after their kind, and every thing that creepeth upon the earth after his kind: and God saw that it was good.

I would like you to note that creatures bring forth after their kind. This is something that has been shown to be true time after time. You can get a Labrador and a Collie to mate but you cannot get a cat and a dog to breed. This is one of the many big problems with the theory of evolution, sure we see changes within species, but I don't know of any successful inter-species changes.

Spiritually this applies to our friends too,

Do not let anyone fool you. Bad people can make those who want to live good become bad.⁶³

So spend time with people who have the Spirit of God, people who love the Bible and people love their families. By doing so you will bring forth that same goodness.

Up to this point God has created an amazing and beautiful world full of creatures but other than the angels, none of the earths creation know God. The earth has been prepared for humans who can love and know God.

26 ¶ And God said, Let us make man in our image, after our likeness: and let them have dominion over the fish of the sea, and over the fowl of the air, and over the cattle, and over all the earth, and over every creeping thing that creepeth upon the earth.

27 So God created man in his own image, in the image of God created he him; male and female created he them.

28 And God blessed them, and God said unto them, Be fruitful, and multiply, and replenish the earth, and subdue it: and have dominion over the fish of the sea, and over the fowl of the air, and over every living thing that moveth upon the earth.

We were made in the image of God. Understanding of this statement from verse 26 needs to be understood from a 4000 year old Hebrew perspective. In the modern world we are focused on appearance, saying you are the image of your uncle, implies the same hair, same colour eyes same nose. To the Hebrew mind they write about actions or function, so how you talked, what you did etc. So for a Hebrew to say that you are the image of your uncle might mean that you were both kind, good at fishing, you both like making furniture for people and eating coconuts.

An extension of this is that for the Jewish faith, embalming a dead body, preserving and cosmetically “restoring” the body by injecting it with chemicals, covering it with cosmetics, dressing it neatly, for the purpose of displaying it in a “reposing room”, or in a chapel is prohibited. The reason is that the deceased should be remembered as a living person and not as an artificial mask made presentable by cosmeticians. One should remember the person's deeds, teachings, attitudes and accomplishments and not how the deceased looked on the deathbed.

When we read the Biblical text we need to get a mental image of the function that the text is describing.⁶⁴

⁶³ 1Cor 15:33 NLV

⁶⁴ <https://www.ancient-hebrew.org/introduction.htm>

For the Lord sees not as man sees: man looks on the outward appearance, but the Lord looks on the heart.⁶⁵

Do not let your adorning be external—the braiding of hair and the putting on of gold jewelry, or the clothing you wear— but let your adorning be the hidden person of the heart with the imperishable beauty of a gentle and quiet spirit, which in God's sight is very precious.⁶⁶

So to understand how we are made in God's image we need to consider how God is described.

God is love.⁶⁷

**For the LORD your God is a merciful God⁶⁸
the compassionate and gracious God, slow to anger, abounding in love and faithfulness⁶⁹**

God is light; in him there is no darkness at all.⁷⁰

God is not a man, that he should lie⁷¹

God, .. shows no partiality and accepts no bribes.⁷²

God our Savior, who daily bears our burdens.⁷³

God, .., is faithful.⁷⁴

God works bringing peace from disorder.⁷⁵

God works to create good for others⁷⁶

Adam and Eve were made in God's image, likewise when we become born again we are again given the opportunity to **be partakers of the divine nature.⁷⁷** In fact we are told to display this image of God reflecting His glory.

Put on then, as God's chosen ones, holy and beloved, compassionate hearts, kindness, humility, meekness, and patience, bearing with one another and, if one has a complaint against another, forgiving each other; as the Lord has forgiven you, so you also must forgive. And above all these put on love, which binds everything together in perfect harmony.⁷⁸

Dear friends, let us love one another, for love comes from God. Everyone who loves has been born of God and knows God. Whoever does not love does not know God, because God is love.⁷⁹

**And hope does not disappoint us, because God has poured out his love into our hearts by the Holy Spirit, whom he has given us.⁸⁰
put on the new self, created to be like God in true righteousness and holiness.⁸¹**

⁶⁵ 1Sam 16:7b

⁶⁶ 1Pet 3:3-4

⁶⁷ 1 John 4:7-9, 16, John 3:16

⁶⁸ Deut 4:31

⁶⁹ Ex 34:6-7a, see also 2Chr 30:9, Jn 1:14

⁷⁰ 1 John 1:5

⁷¹ Num 23:19

⁷² Deut 10:17

⁷³ Psa 68:19

⁷⁴ 1Cor 1:9

⁷⁵ 1Cor 14:33

⁷⁶ Gen chapter 1

⁷⁷ 2Pet 1:4b

⁷⁸ Col 3:12-14

⁷⁹ 1 John 4:7-9, 16; 15:12

⁸⁰ Rom 5:5

⁸¹ Eph 4:24 see also 1John2:29

should adorn themselves in respectable apparel, with modesty and self-control,⁸² let your light shine before others, so that they may see your good works and give glory to your Father who is in heaven.⁸³

Another aspect of this divine image is the three roles that we should function in; Priest, Prophet and King. You will see throughout the Bible these three roles represented by people.

- The Priest, represents God to others. The priest supports and cares for others, helping us to worship God. The priest helps people walk God's ways.
- The Prophet tells people what God's ways are, in the Old Testament they had visions and words from God. In the New Testament they expounded Jesus' words, in addition to direct messages from God. We tend to think of a prophet as someone who foretells the future which is only a small portion of the prophet's role. Some of these notes can be considered prophetic, as they explain what God is saying to us.⁸⁴
- The King, leads others and looks out for them, unifying people so that we work together for the greater good. A good example is Joseph when he was second to Pharaoh in Egypt. He looked out for the people providing food for the years of famine.

Jesus is the perfect example of these three being perfectly in God's image, as He is God. King David and Moses were perhaps the best human examples.

We put on God's image by reading the bible, praying, fellowship with other believers and working for the good of others. This is a process not an instant change. If God took 6 days to construct the earth it will take me a lifetime for me to create a "new me."

An interesting observation here is the diversity of people, God is creative;

Can I recognise God's image in someone who is not like me? If I cannot, then I have made God in my image instead of allowing him to remake me in His image.⁸⁵

We have dominion over the animals. To me this passage is giving us stewardship over the animals. We are to look after animals, which includes the use of animals for clothing (wool etc) and later for food⁸⁶ but I do not think it includes killing for sport⁸⁷. For example, in my back yard I tend to the plants and ensure that the sheep are sheered, well fed and watered. When the animals are sick, I tend to their needs. This is the dominion that this passage is talking about.

God said unto them, Be fruitful, and multiply, and replenish the earth, and subdue it: and have dominion over the fish of the sea, and over the fowl of the air, and over every living thing that moveth upon the earth.

Replenish: The Hebrew word is male'⁸⁸ and it means fill, full, abundance, so the passage is not saying that there was a generation preceding this passage. Later God uses the same

⁸² 1Tim 2:9

⁸³ Matt 5:16, see also 1John2:9-11

⁸⁴ While I pray that these notes are all God's truth, I sadly know that I am far from perfect.

⁸⁵ Rabbi Jonothan Sacks, NZ Herald 26/11/15

⁸⁶ Psalm 8:6-8

⁸⁷ Gen 10:9; Nimrod was a mighty hunter and a rebel. Instead of nurturing animals he hunted them.

⁸⁸ Strong's H4390

beginning phrase, **be fruitful, and multiply upon the earth**⁸⁹ after the flood once without replenish and once with.

Notice that we have a job to do, the passage doesn't say sit on the beach drinking beer all day. God asks us to work on the earth that He had made.

We have discussed this section in terms of physically caring for the planet but as you know the Bible is a spiritual book. As Christians we are called to bear spiritual fruit by making disciples,⁹⁰ we are to replenish the earth by living godly lives so that others come to faith⁹¹. We are to subdue by loving, for love overcomes evil.⁹² When we walk in faith we will have dominion of the animals so that if we are bitten by a serpent it will not harm us.⁹³

And if you call on the Father, who without partiality judges according to **each one's work, conduct yourselves throughout the time of your stay *here* in fear;** knowing that you were not redeemed with corruptible things, *like* silver or gold, **from your aimless conduct** *received* by tradition from your fathers, but with the precious blood of Christ, as of a lamb without blemish and without spot.⁹⁴

who has saved us and called *us* with a holy calling, not according to our works, but according to His own purpose and grace which was given to us in Christ Jesus before time began,⁹⁵

29 ¶ And God said, Behold, I have given you every herb bearing seed, which is upon the face of all the earth, and every tree, in the which is the fruit of a tree yielding seed; to you it shall be for meat.

30 And to every beast of the earth, and to every fowl of the air, and to every thing that creepeth upon the earth, wherein there is life, I have given every green herb for meat: and it was so.

31 And God saw every thing that he had made, and, behold, it was very good. And the evening and the morning were the sixth day.

I mentioned the Gap theory early on and here is why I am not a great supporter of the theory. If everything was "**very good**" at the end of the 6th day, I would have to conclude that Satan fell after the 6th day which is contrary to the general teaching of the gap theory which includes death and sin before this point.

Note that all the animals including man was vegetarian at this point. It is after this point that man sinned and after the flood, God gave us meat to eat. While I have no problem with people who are vegetarian, we should not use the Bible to justify vegetarianism.⁹⁶ In the New Testament we are warned about false teachers who will forbid us from eating meat and those of weaker faith who do not eat meat. I have also read that some who are into spiritual warfare say that the protein is important for the spiritual battles. If this is true, then it would also

⁸⁹ Gen 8:17 & 9:1

⁹⁰ Matt 28:18-20; Mark 16:15; Acts 1:8; Rom 10:14-15; Matt 4:19-20; Titus 2:3

⁹¹ 1Tim 1:2; Titus 1:4; Phm 1:10; 1Cor 4:14-17; see also 1Tim 4:8, 2Tim 1:2; 2:1

⁹² Rom 12:21

⁹³ Mark 16:18, Luke 10:17-19; Acts 28:1-7 We are NOT to put God to the test Heb 3:7-12

⁹⁴ 1Pet 1:17-19

⁹⁵ 2Tim 1:9

⁹⁶ Some have also argued that we were created to only eat plants based on our teeth. If this is true then Panda bears were created for eating meat not plants as they do.

indicate that the earth at this point is without evil (Satan) as mankind does not need the extra protein for spiritual warfare. After the flood Man needs the extra protein.

So, we have a great earth, everything good and no death. It must have been paradise and it was made for man. God went to a great effort to make things great for man. God is still working to make things good for us. Remember though that good and easy are not the same, growth and improvements take effort. We just need to trust him, knowing that He works for good for us.⁹⁷

CHAPTER 2

1 Thus the heavens and the earth were finished, and all the host of them.

2 And on the seventh day God ended his work which he had made; and he rested on the seventh day from all his work which he had made.

3 And God blessed the seventh day, and sanctified it: because that in it he had rested from all his work which God created and made.

4 ¶ These are the generations of the heavens and of the earth when they were created, in the day that the LORD God made the earth and the heavens,

These verses are still part of the chapter 1 narrative, with God's concluding statement, **These are the generations of the heavens and of the earth...**

After the 6 days of creation God rested. Not because God was tired, but because He had finished creating. This reminds me of Jesus on the Cross when He cries out, it is finished.⁹⁸ Jesus completed the requirements for us to live in Him. You might have noticed that the phrase **and the evening and the morning**⁹⁹ was not used for the seventh day¹⁰⁰. Some have taken this to mean that the seventh day is not complete until Jesus declares it complete on the cross.

John starts his Gospel with "In the beginning" just as Genesis starts with "In the beginning" so we can link the two passages. Both appear to have the same poetic structure; an introduction then two groups of three¹⁰¹. The 7th in both passages is not really complete, no evening in Genesis and no noun in John.

This passage describes God completing the creation for us to live in relationship with Him. Unfortunately, as we will see humans failed and Jesus provided for us to undo the fall.

A days rest is good for us too. The fourth commandment

Remember the Sabbath day, to keep it holy. Six days you shall labor and do all your work, but the seventh day is the Sabbath of the LORD your God. In it you shall do no work: you, nor your son, nor your daughter, nor your male servant, nor your female servant, nor your cattle, nor your stranger who is within your gates. For in six days the LORD made the heavens and the earth, the sea, and all

⁹⁷ Rom 8:28

⁹⁸ John 19:30, Jesus said tetelestai

⁹⁹ Gen 1:5, 8, 13, 19, 23, 31

¹⁰⁰ Would have been between Gen 2:3 and 2:4

¹⁰¹ You can note that on day 3 and Day 6 God did two acts of creation.

that is in them, and rested the seventh day. Therefore the LORD blessed the Sabbath day and hallowed it.¹⁰²

And He (Jesus) said unto them, The sabbath was made for man, and not man for the sabbath¹⁰³

One commentator described the six days of creation as God removing the disorder of entropy from the space mass time continuum. Later, after sin entered the disorder or entropy has been increasing gradually. This also explains why all the “evolution” that we observe today is the loss of information, following the second law of thermodynamics.

If I consider Jesus after his resurrection, He clearly has abilities to move in another dimension. Perhaps we will be outside of this created space-mass-time continuum?

Here is the signature at the end of the section.

These are the generations of the heavens and of the earth

God has finished creating the Space – Mass – Time continuum. God describes what He considered important for us, He didn't describe nuclear forces that hold atoms together or why radioactive testing gives the appearance of long-time scales. God just described what we need to know.

Now we finished God's account of creation, and we are about to start looking at Adams account. As we start this section there is a natural overlap. We saw creation from God's perspective, where he saw the creation of Adam and Eve as one event. God regards men and women as equal, together forming mankind. This will be important later in the scriptures when we read God giving directions to man, since we usually need to include women as the meaning is usually “humans”.

From here we read of creation from Adam's perspective, some of it must have come from God telling Adam what happened, and the rest is from Adam's own experience. In this account Eve was a distinct creation separate, at least from Adam's perspective.

5 And every plant of the field before it was in the earth, and every herb of the field before it grew: for the LORD God had not caused it to rain upon the earth, and there was not a man to till the ground.

6 But there went up a mist from the earth, and watered the whole face of the ground.

7 And the LORD God formed man of the dust of the ground, and breathed into his nostrils the breath of life; and man became a living soul.

8 ¶ And the LORD God planted a garden eastward in Eden; and there he put the man whom he had formed.

9 And out of the ground made the LORD God to grow every tree that is pleasant to the sight, and good for food; the tree of life also in the midst of the garden, and the tree of knowledge of good and evil.

Eden¹⁰⁴ – literally Delight or pleasure. Garden of Paradise is a good translation.

¹⁰² Exodus 20:8-11

¹⁰³ Mark 2:27

¹⁰⁴ Strong's H5731

The description is similar to how one might describe a green house, and some have said that the descriptions here and of the flood detail a large volume of water vapour in the atmosphere. This would have increased the density of the air and blocked out the ultraviolet radiation. Both of these would allow for large animals, like dinosaurs and also long-life spans.

There is a similar layout here to the temple and to us¹⁰⁵.

Eden:

There are four areas described, outside, then Eden, inside Eden is the Garden and finally the Tree of Good and Evil.

There is a river that flows out bringing life meaning that the tree and the Garden must be elevated.

There is Cherubim guarding the tree of life, there.

There is Gold and Onyx on the High priest.

The Temple

The court of the Gentiles, the inner court, The Holy Place, the Holy of Holies.

The Tabernacle is on an elevated area and in the new Tabernacle there is a river flowing out of the inner court.

A tree shaped Candelabra, with Cherubim guarding the mercy seat¹⁰⁶

Gold and Onyx on the High priest

Moses takes Aaron, who has no special talents. Moses, washes Aaron, dresses Aaron, Moses does all the actions while Aaron does nothing until he is dressed. Aaron then can function in his role as a priest.

We have no special talents, Jesus washes us, dresses us in clean robes. When we have had the Holy Spirit put on us, we are empowered to perform our role of being God's witness.

Book of Exodus is a creation story, so Israel can dwell with God as Adam and Eve dwelt with God¹⁰⁷

This is a whole subject and if you want to do more study, Nancy Missler has a good teaching on it¹⁰⁸.

10 And a river went out of Eden to water the garden; and from thence it was parted, and became into four heads.

11 The name of the first is Pison: that is it which compasseth the whole land of Havilah, where there is gold;

12 And the gold of that land is good: there is bdellium and the onyx stone.

13 And the name of the second river is Gihon: the same is it that compasseth the whole land of Ethiopia.

14 And the name of the third river is Hiddekel: that is it which goeth toward the east of Assyria. And the fourth river is Euphrates.

¹⁰⁵ 1Cor 3:16

¹⁰⁶ Exodus 25:19

¹⁰⁷ I understand there is a good article "The lost world of the exodus". I haven't read it yet but have heard good things about it.

¹⁰⁸ <https://www.khouse.org/articles/1997/25/>

The first thing we need to recognise here is that the Flood in chapter 8 would have completely changed the world, so the description here only applies to the preflood world. We cannot use this description to find Eden and the modern Euphrates and Tigris rivers will not flow in the same course as those described here.

The passage describes a river flowing out from Eden and waters the garden. This river divides into 4 branches, Pison, Gihon, Hiddekel and the Euphrates. In the new Jerusalem we also see a river, this time flowing from the throne of God. The river in the new Jerusalem also waters the tree of life with twelve fruits and the leaves are for the healing of the nations.¹⁰⁹

To understand this passage we need to understand the meaning of the names;

Eden = Pleasure¹¹⁰. and this ultimate source of all delight and pleasure flow from God

Pison = Increase¹¹¹

Havilah = circle, to bring forth¹¹²

Bdellium = Fragrant gum¹¹³

Gold = Riches¹¹⁴

Good = good, appropriate¹¹⁵

Onyx = a precious stone¹¹⁶

Gihon = Bursting forth¹¹⁷

Ethiopia = Keen of Vision¹¹⁸, suggesting wisdom: Ethiopia shone like a blazing fire in the intellectual night.¹¹⁹

Hiddekel = Rapid¹²⁰

East = Forward, Front, east¹²¹

Assyria = Advance, make progress.¹²²

Euphrates = Fruitfulness¹²³

Lets put that all together

And a river went out of Eden (pleasure) to nourish those in the garden in four aspects

¹⁰⁹ Rev 22:1-3

¹¹⁰ Strong's H5731

¹¹¹ Strong's H6376, this is also the name of a son of Cush (of the lineage of Ham Gen 10:7 and of Joktan of Shem Gen 10:29)

¹¹² Strong's H2341; from 2342, to twist, whirl, dance, ...to bring forth, be born

¹¹³ Strong's H916

¹¹⁴ Strong's H2091

¹¹⁵ Strong's H2895

¹¹⁶ Strong's H7718

¹¹⁷ Strong's H1521 also a spring near Jerusalem

¹¹⁸ Strong's H3568. Ethiopia in Hebrew is Cush, the name of one of Ham's sons See also Pro 29:18

¹¹⁹ Ethiopia country of burnt faces; the area is now known as Sudan. The people were described by Herodotus as "the tallest and handsomest of men." Meaning Fiery Eye, Keen Of Vision, Appearing As Fire. From (1) the verb αἶθω (aitho), to light up or kindle, and (2) the noun οὖς (ops), eye. <https://www.abarim-publications.com/Meaning/Ethiopia.html>

¹²⁰ Strong's H2313, See also Dan 10:4 the angel met Daniel there when the angel was sent forth as soon as David started praying. This river is associated with the Tigris River

¹²¹ Strong's H6926

¹²² H804 A step in the sense of successful (from H833 to go straight, go on, make progress, advance) Second son of Shem

¹²³ Strong's H6578

1. Increase (Pison): that includes, riches that are pleasant and appropriate, also fragrance and precious stones
2. A vision (purpose) bursting forth (Gihon)
3. Progress (Hiddekel) and
4. Fruitfulness (Euphrates)

This reminds me of Jeremiah, where God states these same ideas in a different order;

For I know the plans I have for you,” declares the LORD, “plans to prosper you and not to harm you, plans to give you hope and a future.”¹²⁴

Plans – Bursting forth: Vision/purpose

Prosper: Increase

Hope: progress

Future: Fruitfulness

God positioned a garden that would nourish Adam and Eve with a purpose, progress, fruitfulness and appropriate riches. Sadly, Adam and Eve gave up God’s perfection to go their own way and the false hope that is in sin. Will I follow their example of Jesus’? What about you, who’s example will you follow?

Jesus again offers us God’s riches, when He paid the price for our sin. Let us make the most of Jesus’ provision and

Therefore we also, since we are surrounded by so great a cloud of witnesses, let us lay aside every weight, and the sin which so easily ensnares us, and let us run with endurance¹²⁵

We can do this by following the wisdom of the Bible and following the guidance of the Holy Spirit.

Our responsibility is to seek out the truth behind all of the pleasure that this world has to offer. This is done by utilizing another “garden,” the garden of the Torah. The Torah contains 53 portions, which is the numerical value of the Hebrew word gan, garden. By following the directives of the Torah, we can channel the pleasures of this world in service of G d, and reveal how they are all in truth a manifestation of the ultimate source of pleasure, G d Himself.

15 And the LORD God took the man, and put him into the garden of Eden to dress it and to keep it.

16 And the LORD God commanded the man, saying, Of every tree of the garden thou mayest freely eat:

17 But of the tree of the knowledge of good and evil, thou shalt not eat of it: for in the day that thou eatest thereof thou shalt surely die.

18 ¶ And the LORD God said, It is not good that the man should be alone; I will make him an help meet for him.

19 And out of the ground the LORD God formed every beast of the field, and every fowl of the air; and brought them unto Adam to see what he would call them: and whatsoever Adam called every living creature, that was the name thereof.

¹²⁴ Jer 29:11

¹²⁵ Heb 12:1

20 And Adam gave names to all cattle, and to the fowl of the air, and to every beast of the field; but for Adam there was not found an help meet for him.

The first thing to note here is that God gave man a job to do, even before sin entered, mankind was expected to be productive. The word translated as “dress” means to labour, work or to serve,¹²⁶ while “to keep” means to guard, to keep and protect.¹²⁷ Somehow many have come to understand blessing to mean relaxation, while real satisfaction comes from achieving something.

The meaning of blessing can be understood from its use. The first mention is in relation to being fruitful and multiply¹²⁸. In this chapter it is used for the 7th day which is a day which did not include, in the description, an end¹²⁹. The seventh day was one that kept multiplying, the curse brought death, or an end to our multiple days. So, Blessing means to multiply, as God created life, he blesses us with the ability to be partakers by “creating” children, God provides for others and fruit provides nourishment and enjoyment. The 7th day provides rest and completion, we can fulfil other peoples needs and in marriage complete another.

I encourage you to do your best at whatever you do and allow your satisfaction to flow from working, as if you were working for the Lord¹³⁰ and this will shine God’s light into¹³¹ the dark world.

Whatever you do, work heartily, as for the Lord and not for men, knowing that from the Lord you will receive the inheritance as your reward. You are serving the Lord Christ.¹³²

After God gives Adam his job, God warns Adam not to eat of the tree of knowledge of good and evil. When I first read this passage, I thought there was something wrong, after all Adam did not die as soon as he ate the fruit and the usual “they started to die” did not sit well. As I understood the scriptures, I realised that we have a translation problem here. Remember when we considered the Hebrew language they write about actions or function.¹³³ Death to the Hebrew is a separation, the most obvious is separation from the living. Even in English the saying, “you are dead to me” does not mean physical death but that we are separated, I won’t talk to you. When we sin we are separated from God. God is holy and perfect and cannot dwell with sin¹³⁴ or those who reject the perfect way. In the Garden of Eden, Adam and God walked together.¹³⁵ When we get to Moses, God states that no one can see Him and live.¹³⁶

When Jesus is asked about the woman caught in adultery¹³⁷, Jesus does not condemn her, similar to God not killing Adam and Eve after they eat. It is almost like Jesus is saying that,

¹²⁶ Strong's H5647

¹²⁷ Strong's H8104

¹²⁸ Gen 1:22, 28

¹²⁹ All the other days have an evening and morning.

¹³⁰ Luke 3:12-14; 1Cor 10:31

¹³¹ Phil 2:14-15

¹³² Colossians 3:23-24, See also Psalm 128:2, 1Cor 10:31, Pro 21:25, 1Tim 5:8

¹³³ <https://www.ancient-hebrew.org/introduction.htm>

¹³⁴ Hab 1:12-13

¹³⁵ Gen 3:8

¹³⁶ Ex 33:20

¹³⁷ John 8:4-11

while ancient cultures did execute people, the laws in Deuteronomy¹³⁸ were not originally intended for us to kill, but to separate from them. We were not to be influenced by such sins. The language used here for die due to the sin is the same language used in the law in Deuteronomy.

So, Adam and Eve were initially innocent, like a baby. Babies do not know good and evil, they just imitate their parents or siblings. When a baby bites a finger, it is not sin, just exploring their environment. The baby cannot sin and it is the responsibility of the parents to ensure that the child explores in a safe way. Adam and Eve are portrayed as morally innocent¹³⁹.

Adam and Eve were in the garden under God's guidance with only one rule, don't eat the fruit. Eating the fruit was the first act of rebellion. We can assume that decay entered the world at this point as Adam and Eve started to age leading ultimately to the death of their physical bodies, but the direct consequence was separation from God.¹⁴⁰

While Eve removed the fruit from the tree, Jesus was placed on a tree¹⁴¹ (cross), while Adam and Eve's actions caused separation Jesus' action gave opportunity for our relationship to be restored.

Your iniquities have separated you from your God; your sins have hidden His face from you.¹⁴²

There is an interesting observation in the tense here, God said, "**in the day you eat**", this wasn't an if you eat. God knew that they were going to eat the fruit as He had created them with free will. As we will see in the next chapter, God had also prepared the solution, Jesus Christ.

God as very generous¹⁴³ and knew that Adam needed someone like him. Notice that it is God who initiates the creation of Eve. Adam and God had fellowship together, walking together.¹⁴⁴ God knows our every need even before we do and I suspect that the delay in making Eve, was for Adam to realise his need. Humans can be selfish until we realise that we need each other.

God had given Adam and Eve everything to them to be happy and content with only one restriction because that one thing was not good for them.

21 And the LORD God caused a deep sleep to fall upon Adam, and he slept: and he took one of his ribs, and closed up the flesh instead thereof;

22 And the rib, which the LORD God had taken from man, made he a woman, and brought her unto the man.

23 And Adam said, This is now bone of my bones, and flesh of my flesh: she shall be called Woman, because she was taken out of Man.

¹³⁸ In this instance Deut 22:21-24 and Lev 20:10

¹³⁹ Phrase Good and Evil, used here and of children Deut 1:39

¹⁴⁰ John 15:6, Eph 2:1 see also Ezek. 18:20, Rom. 6:23

¹⁴¹ 1Pet 2:24

¹⁴² Isa 59:2

¹⁴³ James 1:5

¹⁴⁴ Gen 3:8

24 Therefore shall a man leave his father and his mother, and shall cleave unto his wife: and they shall be one flesh.

25 And they were both naked, the man and his wife, and were not ashamed.

Here we see that marriage, one man and one women, was designed by God. I want to interject here for those who are not married, while God makes it clear that it is not good for us to be alone, for some, other forms of relationships are enough and Paul makes it clear that marriage is not a requirement.¹⁴⁵

Paul also points out that this passage is prophetic, Jesus left His father and came to be joined to the church.¹⁴⁶ The fulfilment of this is the marriage of the Lamb in Revelation.¹⁴⁷

God gave Adam a wife so that Adam and Eve could be very happy as they loved each other and God.¹⁴⁸ God here also gives fantastic marriage guidance, leave the parents and join to your spouse.¹⁴⁹ And, do not be ashamed to be your real selves within the marriage.

There is also good marriage advice within the description. God took Eve from Adam's side. If God had taken Eve from Adams foot, we would know that God wanted Adam to rule over Eve, and Eve had been taken from Adam's head God would have wanted Eve to rule Eve. Since Even was taken from Adam's side this is an equal relationship. This does not mean that there are not different roles within a marriage, but one is not a servant of the other.¹⁵⁰ We are meant to complement each other building each other up.¹⁵¹ Love is not self-seeking.¹⁵²

We should also consider "rib" as it is translated here. This is the only place that "tsela'¹⁵³" is translated as rib. It is most commonly translated as "side"¹⁵⁴ and comes from a root word meaning curve.¹⁵⁵

I personally think that what is being referred to here by tsela' is a piece of DNA. This fits the context and given that Moses has no concept of cells let alone DNA is a good description for a curved side of information. God also took one ('ahat) and closed the flesh after them (tahtennah) indicating that there were many others left. We could also note that men are missing a section of DNA with a XY chromosome, while women have a full compliment with 42 XX chromosomes.

¹⁴⁵ 1Cor 7:7-9. Paul gives more detail about marriage in 1Cor 7.

¹⁴⁶ Eph 5:32

¹⁴⁷ Rev 22:17, see also Eph 5:32, Isa 54:5

¹⁴⁸ See also Eph 5:21-33, Col 3:18-19

¹⁴⁹ Matt 19:4-6, Mark 10:9

¹⁵⁰ Rom 12:10, Biblical submission is mutual, Eph 5:22-33 – wives v22, husbands in the same way v28

¹⁵¹ Ecc 4:9-12

¹⁵² 1Cor 13:5 (read entire chapter), see also Mal 2:14-15

¹⁵³ Strong's H6763

¹⁵⁴ Ex 25:12, 14

¹⁵⁵ Strong's H6760

CHAPTER 3

1 Now the serpent was more subtil than any beast of the field which the LORD God had made. And he said unto the woman, Yea, hath God said, Ye shall not eat of every tree of the garden?

2 And the woman said unto the serpent, We may eat of the fruit of the trees of the garden:

3 But of the fruit of the tree which is in the midst of the garden, God hath said, Ye shall not eat of it, neither shall ye touch it, lest ye die.

4 And the serpent said unto the woman, Ye shall not surely die:

Firstly, notice how Eve was tempted, “did God say”. I still see this approach today often being asked if Christianity really requires something. How often are believers challenged with, “does the Bible really condemn gays by saying that they cannot marry”. This question, like the one that the serpent asks Eve is worded to misrepresent God. Eve answers like she should with God’s word¹⁵⁶ however she then adds to what God had said¹⁵⁷. We know from the previous chapter that God had only said that they shouldn’t eat it¹⁵⁸ and says nothing about touching. As soon as we add to the scriptures it opens the door for doubt or lack of faith. It is important that we hold the Bible as the Holy Text it is, obeying it¹⁵⁹ and not adding nor removing from it.¹⁶⁰

Notice also that Adam is not mentioned, as discussed before, part of our role is to be king and priest¹⁶¹. Adam failed Eve by not being the priest and supporting Eve in obeying the word of God and therefore allowing the trickery of the serpent to deceive Eve¹⁶².

I find it interesting that Paul lists Adam’s transgression as bringing sin into the world, not Eve who was deceived¹⁶³ and first ate¹⁶⁴. But Paul clearly shows us that Jesus offers us life to undo the curse.

Satan is described here as a serpent, the word is *nāhās*¹⁶⁵ and I understand that the word is based on the sound of a snake, a smooth talking sound. There is also another word play with the snake being described as more cunning (*arum*) than all the beasts and then becomes more cursed (*arur*) than all the beasts, eating the dust from which mankind was made.

We now have the association and many people are afraid of snakes, but in the garden of Eden there was no fear of the animals. Satan can appear as an angel of light¹⁶⁶ as we are warned of false teachers who come in sheep clothing¹⁶⁷.

¹⁵⁶ Matt 4:1-11, Luke 4:1-13

¹⁵⁷ See also Rev 22:18; Deut 4:2; 12:32; Pro 30:5-6

¹⁵⁸ Gen 2:17

¹⁵⁹ John 8:31; 14:21-24; 15:10-15; 1John 2:3; 3:22-4; 5:3

¹⁶⁰ Rev 22:18; Deut 4:2; 12:32; Pro 30:5-6

¹⁶¹ Rev 1:6; 5:10; Ex 19:6; 1Pet 2:9; Isa 61:5-6

¹⁶² 2Cor 11:3

¹⁶³ 1Tim 2:14

¹⁶⁴ Rom 5:12-21

¹⁶⁵ Strong’s H5175 and appears 31 times in the Old Testament

¹⁶⁶ 2Cor 11:14

¹⁶⁷ Mat 7:15

This word for snake is also used in the exodus when the Lord send serpents and they bit the people¹⁶⁸. Moses, following God's direction made a brass serpent which he put on a pole¹⁶⁹ so that when they people looked at it they were healed¹⁷⁰. This symbolism is continued when John says that;

As Moses lifted up the serpent in the wilderness, even so must the Son of Man be lifted up, that whoever believes in Him should not perish, but have eternal life¹⁷¹.
Jesus who became sin for us so that we might live

Satan¹⁷² is described as being an anointed cherub, full of wisdom, and perfect in beauty.
every precious stone was thy covering, the sardius, topaz, and the diamond, the beryl, the onyx, and the jasper, the sapphire, the emerald, and the carbuncle, and gold: the workmanship of thy tabrets and of thy pipes was prepared in thee in the day that thou wast created.¹⁷³

Satan¹⁷⁴ has also been described as a dragon¹⁷⁵, the devil¹⁷⁶, which means slanderer, a liar¹⁷⁷ and the ruler of this world¹⁷⁸. The name that challenges me is Lucifer¹⁷⁹, which means bearer of light, as we are also bearers of Jesus light¹⁸⁰. Not that this should surprise me as we all should, as part of God's creation bear God's light and love. I wonder if the link is there to warn us to diligently put aside all of Satan's characteristics, like deceit, envy and slander¹⁸¹, focus on Jesus¹⁸² who will deliver us¹⁸³.

Do your best to present yourself to God as one approved, a worker who has no need to be ashamed, rightly handling the word of truth.¹⁸⁴

Satan of course did not follow the above and,

**Thine heart was lifted up because of thy beauty, thou hast corrupted thy wisdom by reason of thy brightness: I will cast thee to the ground¹⁸⁵
I will exalt my throne above the stars of God: ... I will ascend above the heights of the clouds; I will be like the most High.¹⁸⁶**

Pride corrupts and sadly, as we see in this Genesis section it harms others as the deceit spreads. We always need to realise that our sin does not only impact us but also many people around us.

¹⁶⁸ Num 21:6

¹⁶⁹ This concept of a serpent on a pole representing healing was continued until documented mistakes in the USA, resulted in two snakes on a pole, which interestingly represents trade, trickery and negotiation.

¹⁷⁰ Num 21:9

¹⁷¹ John 3:14-15

¹⁷² This name is used in Job 1:6

¹⁷³ Eze 28:13, This probably refers to colours rather than actual stones

¹⁷⁴ Job 1:6

¹⁷⁵ Rev 12:9; 20:2

¹⁷⁶ Mat 4:1, see also Rev 12:10

¹⁷⁷ John 8:44

¹⁷⁸ John 14:30, see also 2Cor 4:4

¹⁷⁹ Isa 14:12 Strong's H1966 See also 2Cor 11:14

¹⁸⁰ 2Cor 4:3-6; Eph 5:7-14

¹⁸¹ 1Pet 2:1-25, see also Heb 12:1-2

¹⁸² Col 3:1, Heb 3:1

¹⁸³ Pslam 91:14-15

¹⁸⁴ 2Tim 2:15

¹⁸⁵ Eze 28:17

¹⁸⁶ Isa 14:12-15

I heard sin described as dropping a tin of paint among our friends. It mostly splashes on us, but some also splashes on those around us. The ones closest to us get more than those who we don't know that well, but everyone gets a bit.

We can also read,

How you have fallen from heaven, O morning star, son of the dawn! You have been cast down to the earth, you who once laid low the nations!¹⁸⁷

5 For God doth know that in the day ye eat thereof, then your eyes shall be opened, and ye shall be as gods, knowing good and evil.

6 And when the woman saw that the tree was good for food, and that it was pleasant to the eyes, and a tree to be desired to make one wise, she took of the fruit thereof, and did eat, and gave also unto her husband with her; and he did eat.

7 And the eyes of them both were opened, and they knew that they were naked; and they sewed fig leaves together, and made themselves aprons.

8 And they heard the voice of the LORD God walking in the garden in the cool of the day: and Adam and his wife hid themselves from the presence of the LORD God amongst the trees of the garden.

9 And the LORD God called unto Adam, and said unto him, Where art thou?

10 And he said, I heard thy voice in the garden, and I was afraid, because I was naked; and I hid myself.

11 And he said, Who told thee that thou wast naked? Hast thou eaten of the tree, whereof I commanded thee that thou shouldest not eat?

12 And the man said, The woman whom thou gavest to be with me, she gave me of the tree, and I did eat.

13 And the LORD God said unto the woman, What is this that thou hast done? And the woman said, The serpent beguiled me, and I did eat.

Adam and Eve were the first people to agree to Apples term and conditions without reading them. 😊

In the Hebrew Bible, a generic term, *peri*, which could be absolutely any fruit, is used for the fruit hanging from the Tree of the Knowledge of Good and Evil. The Vulgate (Latin) translation of the bible used the word *malus*, which at the time could refer to any fleshy seed-bearing fruit like apples, pears, figs or peaches. As an adjective, *malus* means bad or evil so it was a clever choice.

Rabbinic commentators variously characterized it as a fig, a pomegranate, a grape, an apricot, a citron, or even wheat. Some commentators even thought of the forbidden fruit as a kind of wine, intoxicating to drink.

Michelangelo's Sistine Chapel fresco features a serpent coiled around a fig tree. But the apple began to dominate Fall artworks in Europe after the German artist Albrecht Dürer's famous 1504 engraving depicted the First Couple counterpoised beside an apple tree. It became a template for future artists such as Lucas Cranach the Elder, whose luminous Adam and Eve painting is hung with apples that glow like rubies.

¹⁸⁷ Isa 14:12, see also Luke 10:18

Malus as a noun came to mean an apple, in our own sense of the word, coming from the very common tree now known officially as the Malus pumila.¹⁸⁸

Eve's temptation was the desire of the flesh, lust of the eyes and the pride of life.¹⁸⁹ She saw, she desired and gave in. Later we will discuss the Nephelim, the "son's of God" saw the daughters of men, desired and brought death. King David, saw Bathsheba, desired and gave in¹⁹⁰, resulting in a family feud and death¹⁹¹, Samson saw Delilah, desired and many dies. Jesus saw the Cross, desired an alternative and prayed, "Not my Will but Yours be done"¹⁹². Jesus was tempted just as Eve and the rest of humanity is, but he remained perfect.

Our struggles are also against the same things. The only thing that is more powerful than these is the Holy Spirit, which we are given when we accept Jesus. The Holy Spirit gives us the ability to say no to sin, but we still need to stand. Ability is useless unless it is coupled with effort to obey. The next issue is that Eve was deceived, while Adam just disobeyed.¹⁹³ To avoid being deceived we need the Word of God to guide our minds. These two together enable us to live a Holy life, set apart for the good works that God has prepared for us.

If anyone loves me, he will obey my [word] ...He who does not love me will not obey my [word].¹⁹⁴

'As surely as I live,' says the Lord, 'Every knee will bow before me; every tongue will confess to God.' So then, each of us will give an account of himself to God.¹⁹⁵

Unfortunately, Adam and Eve did not choose to follow Gods instruction, God had told them to have dominion over the animals¹⁹⁶, but they allowed an animal to lead them, God told them not to eat the fruit of the knowledge¹⁹⁷ of good and evil, but they ate. Adam and Eve did not have any of the excuses of poor upbringing, bad friends, sinful parents and yet they still sinned.

As the web states;

Mark Twain believed humans are the only evil creatures in existence because of our sense of right and wrong. Nothing a tiger does is immoral because it has no moral sense. Our moral sense curses us with the ability to choose evil, a trait wholly unique to humanity.¹⁹⁸

Do you notice the first thing Adam and Eve did with knowledge? They hid. Firstly, they hid their shame¹⁹⁹ by coving their bodies with fig leaves hiding their bodies from each other and then they hid from God. The lure of temptation is freedom but the result is bondage and fear.

¹⁸⁸ Experts taken from <https://www.npr.org/sections/thesalt/2017/04/30/526069512/paradise-lost-how-the-apple-became-the-forbidden-fruit>

¹⁸⁹ 1John 2:16

¹⁹⁰ 2Sam 11

¹⁹¹ 2Sam 18:1-17

¹⁹² Matt 26:39; Mark 14:36; Luke 22:42

¹⁹³ 1Tim 2:14

¹⁹⁴ John 14:23,24

¹⁹⁵ Rom 14:11-12

¹⁹⁶ Gen 1 :28

¹⁹⁷ Gen 2:17

¹⁹⁸ I am not certain that the quote is correct and the closest I found, "The fact that man knows right from wrong proves his intellectual superiority to the other creatures; but the fact that he can do wrong proves his moral inferiority to any creatures that cannot." — Mark Twain, What is Man?

<https://www.goodreads.com/quotes/251345-the-fact-that-man-knows-right-from-wrong-proves-his>

¹⁹⁹ Gen 2:25

**By one man sin entered into the world, and death by sin; and so death passed upon all men, for all have sinned²⁰⁰
Just as the result of one trespass was condemnation for all men, so also the result of one act of righteousness was justification that brings life for all men.²⁰¹**

Adam the first man sinned trying to be like God²⁰², however Jesus, the last Adam, gave up His position as God, becoming man²⁰³ to give us the gift of God

The wages of sin is death, but the gift of God is eternal life ²⁰⁴

We often do we do the same, fearful that God will expose our sins or ask us to something scary. How easy it is forget that God is a loving perfect father.²⁰⁵ God only wants the best for us, sure God asks us to trust Him and push our limitations, but He has an Eden, Paradise for us.²⁰⁶

When my son got lost, I cried out for him. The pain in God's heart as the perfect Father, must have been even greater when He called out, "Adam, where are you?", knowing that sin had entered the world.

The second thing that Adam and Eve did was blame. Adam blamed Eve and Eve blamed the serpent. In my opinion blame aims for three things, to avoid guilt, to hide our sin by focusing the blame elsewhere and to make us feel superior as it was someone else's fault.²⁰⁷ How tragic that all of these are the opposite of the love that God created them with when He created Adam and Eve in His image, the image of perfect love.

Verse 8 has an interpretation, Adam heard God in the "rūah"²⁰⁸ of the day. This is the same word used for the Spirit of God moving upon the waters²⁰⁹. Perhaps the voice of the Lord was the sound of the wind in the trees. I personally think that a better translation would be the time that Adam and Eve convened with the Spirit.

14 And the LORD God said unto the serpent, Because thou hast done this, thou art cursed above all cattle, and above every beast of the field; upon thy belly shalt thou go, and dust shalt thou eat all the days of thy life:

15 And I will put enmity between thee and the woman, and between thy seed and her seed; it shall bruise thy head, and thou shalt bruise his heel.

We can't go past the messianic prophecy here. There will be enmity between the seed (singular) of the woman²¹⁰ and "It" (singular) shall bruise the serpents head and the serpent shall bruise His (singular) heel. Seed is usually considered to come from a man²¹¹ and

²⁰⁰ Romans 5:12

²⁰¹ Rom 5:18

²⁰² Gen 3:5

²⁰³ Phil 2:7; 2Cor 8:9; Heb 2:9-18 see also Psalm 22:6, Isa 53:3; Dan 9:26; Mark 9:2; Rom 15:3

²⁰⁴ Rom. 6:23a

²⁰⁵ 1 John 3:1-2; John 10:15; 14:2; Eph. 3:14; Phil. 2:11

²⁰⁶ John 14:2-3

²⁰⁷ Matt 7:35; Rom 2:1; Prov 28:13

²⁰⁸ Strong's H7307, meaning Wind, Breath, Spirit

²⁰⁹ Gen 1:2; see also Gen 6:3 my Spirit shall not always strive with man.

²¹⁰ Galatians 3:16; Rom 16:20

²¹¹ Gen 4:25; 15:13, 18; 19:32, 34; 21:13 etc

therefore seed of a woman probably refers to the virgin birth²¹². Jesus' heel was bruised when He was crucified²¹³ winning the victory²¹⁴ as a bruise to the head is fatal.

Some have vilified snakes from this passage and while snakes do fit the description it was Satan who was the spirit behind the deception who we should be cautious of. This section would also not be complete without noting that Satan is a created being, while Jesus is God, the Son of the father. They are not comparable. In the Gospels we see that a lot of Jesus' ministry is casting out demons.

The other thing to note here is that the promised seed is of a woman, we could almost say that we have a covenant here where God promises Eve that the Messiah will be her descendant, much like God promises Abraham that His seed would be a blessing to the world²¹⁵.

16 Unto the woman he said, I will greatly multiply thy sorrow and thy conception; in sorrow thou shalt bring forth children; and thy desire shall be to thy husband, and he shall rule over thee.

17 And unto Adam he said, Because thou hast hearkened unto the voice of thy wife, and hast eaten of the tree, of which I commanded thee, saying, Thou shalt not eat of it:

cursed is the ground for thy sake; in sorrow shalt thou eat of it all the days of thy life;

18 Thorns also and thistles shall it bring forth to thee; and thou shalt eat the herb of the field;

19 In the sweat of thy face shalt thou eat bread, till thou return unto the ground; for out of it wast thou taken: for dust thou art, and unto dust shalt thou return.

20 And Adam called his wife's name Eve; because she was the mother of all living.

21 Unto Adam also and to his wife did the LORD God make coats of skins, and clothed them.

22 ¶ And the LORD God said, Behold, the man is become as one of us, to know good and evil: and now, lest he put forth his hand, and take also of the tree of life, and eat, and live for ever:

23 Therefore the LORD God sent him forth from the garden of Eden, to till the ground from whence he was taken.

24 So he drove out the man; and he placed at the east of the garden of Eden Cherubims, and a flaming sword which turned every way, to keep the way of the tree of life.

"He who does not punish evil, commands it to be done!"²¹⁶

Starting with the controversial, Eve's painful emotional toil is in conception. Some translations imply that the pain is in childbirth while the word correctly translated here is conception. This is similar to Adam's punishment; he will suffer emotional toil in his labours.

Eve's punishment is that women will suffer painful emotional relationships in their child rearing. We will see this expanded as we continue through Genesis. The pain as women are

²¹² Isa 7:14; Mat 1:23

²¹³ Isa 53:10

²¹⁴ Col 2:14-15

²¹⁵ Gen 17:7

²¹⁶ Leonardo da Vinci

infertile²¹⁷, abused to provide children²¹⁸, jealous men taking women²¹⁹, men with multiple wives to get more children²²⁰. Even the children will cause difficulties, murdering²²¹ or dividing the family²²².

God continues with, **“and thy desire shall be to thy husband, and he shall rule over thee.”** Men and Women were supposed to rule together in unity but now they miss trust each other and men dominate and abuse women.

The abuse that women have suffered in many societies, as second-class citizens was never God's intention.

Husbands, love your wives and do not be harsh with them²²³

As we have described before Eve was taken from Adam's side and we are joint heirs of the Kingdom of God, with guidance to serve each other.

There is guidance that men and women have different roles.

And I do not permit a woman to teach or to have authority over a man, but to be in silence. For Adam was formed first, then Eve. And Adam was not deceived, but the woman being deceived, fell into transgression. Nevertheless she will be saved in childbearing if they continue in faith, love, and holiness, with self-control.²²⁴

As Sarah obeyed Abraham, calling him lord, whose daughters you are if you do good and are not afraid with any terror. Husbands, likewise, dwell with them with understanding, giving honor to the wife, as to the weaker vessel, and as being heirs together of the grace of life, that your prayers may not be hindered.²²⁵

I want to emphasise here the last sentence, dwell together with understanding that your prayers may not be hindered.

Please do your own research into this controversial subject and make sure that the image of God, Love, underpins your understanding.

Eve had a one verse punishment while Adam got three verses for following his wives voice in preference to God's;

17 And unto Adam he said, Because thou hast hearkened unto the voice of thy wife, and hast eaten of the tree, of which I commanded thee, saying, Thou shalt not eat of it: cursed is the ground for thy sake; in sorrow shalt thou eat of it all the days of thy life;

18 Thorns also and thistles shall it bring forth to thee; and thou shalt eat the herb of the field;

²¹⁷ Sarah Gen 11:30, 16:5; Rebekah Gen 25:21, 30:1; Rachel 29:31; Hannah 1Sam 1:6. See also Israel Isa 54:1

²¹⁸ Abraham abusing Hagar for a son

²¹⁹ Pharaoh taking Sarah and Abimelech taking Rebekah, David having an affair etc

²²⁰ Consider Jacob who had multiple wives who did not get on together and Esau who saw his current wives did not please his parents so he took Mahalath Gen 28:6

²²¹ Cain and Abel

²²² Jacob and Esau. Absalom who killed his brother after the brother raped his sister, He then tries to take the throne from King David and rapes his father's partners in public., Solomon and Absalom

²²³ Col 3:19

²²⁴ 1Tim 2:12-15

²²⁵ 1Pet 3:6-7

19 In the sweat of thy face shalt thou eat bread, till thou return unto the ground; for out of it wast thou taken: for dust thou art, and unto dust shalt thou return.
Adam's punishment was sorrow, disappointment and sweat (hard work).

Paul noted that Eve was deceived and therefore the husband who had the role of spiritual leader²²⁶ was partially to blame for her sin too. Perhaps, Adam got one aspect from not being the leader, standing in the gap for Eve and one for his sin. In context this is a servant leadership role where the husband puts the interests of his wife above his own, just as Christ put our interests above His and died for us.²²⁷

Lastly, Adam (and Eve) they would return to dust, physical death followed the separation from God, just as a branch cut off a tree dies²²⁸. This also supports the spiritual death that they suffered because the animals were dust formed, however man also had the Spirit breathed into him. Therefore, by saying that they would return to dust pointed out that their spirit had already died. As we are descendants of Adam we too inherited his sinful heart;

Sin entered the world through one man, and death through sin, and in this way death came to all men, because all sinned.²²⁹

Here again hidden in the text is prophecy, Jesus was not born of man, for sin came through Adam and Jesus was sinless.

God now demonstrates to Adam and Eve the consequence of sin in a prophetic way.

Unto Adam also and to his wife did the LORD God make coats of skins, and clothed them.²³⁰

The only way to cover sin is by the blood of the sinless. I think that we, certainly for me, do not realise the high cost of sin. Intellectually I know that Jesus died on the cross for me, but when it comes to sin, how often we justify it as just a minor infringement. Adam and Eve got a first hand demonstration when God killed an animal that Adam had named in order to make them clothes.

In fact, the law requires that nearly everything be cleansed with blood, and without the shedding of blood there is no forgiveness.²³¹

This was prophetic as Jesus would be the sacrificial lamb whose blood would cover our sins.²³²

And so Jesus also suffered outside the city gate to make the people holy through his own blood.²³³

Lastly God blocked the way to the tree of life. Being able to live forever is great if you are in a good state, like Jesus. Adam and Eve however, are now sinful beings and living forever as a sinner would be a terrible curse. Hence God was merciful and gracious by stopping Adam and even from eating from the Tree of Life until mankind could get a new heart through Jesus.²³⁴

²²⁶ 1Tim 2:12-15

²²⁷ Eph 5:25-33

²²⁸ Rom 11:16-24; Isa 59:2

²²⁹ Rom. 5:12 See also Psa 51:5; Eph 4:18 and Eph 2:1

²³⁰ Gen 3:21

²³¹ Heb 9:22 see also Lev 17:11

²³² 1John 1:7; Col 1:20; Rev 12:11, John 1:29; Acts 20:28; Eph 1:7; Heb 9:14

²³³ Heb 13:12

²³⁴ Jer 24:7; Ez 11:9; 36:26

Do not be afraid, because I bring you good news of great joy that will be for all the people.²³⁵
For the grace of God that brings salvation has appeared to all men.²³⁶
I have betrothed you to one husband, that I may present you as a chaste virgin to Christ. But I fear, lest somehow, as the serpent deceived Eve by his craftiness, so your minds may be corrupted from the simplicity that is in Christ.²³⁷

The way back to God's paradise is through the **flaming sword which turned every way, to keep the way of the tree of life.²³⁸**

You will be visited by the Lord of hosts with thunder and with earthquake and great noise, with whirlwind and tempest, and the flame of a devouring fire²³⁹. I believe Jesus is the guarder of the entrance, "Jesus said to him, 'I am the way, and the truth, and the life. **No one comes to the Father except through me²⁴⁰**'. Jesus is the word which is a consuming fire²⁴¹ and the sword proceeds from Jesus' mouth goes a sharp sword²⁴².

We have been promised that; **when you walk through fire you shall not be burned, and the flame shall not consume you²⁴³**

To get to God we need to pass through the gate and the flaming sword;

So that the tested genuineness of your faith—more precious than gold that perishes though it is tested by fire—may be found to result in praise and glory and honor at the revelation of Jesus Christ.²⁴⁴

When we consider the sacrifice, we surrender something valuable and a hand was placed on the animal to transfer our identity, the animal then did the ultimate surrender and rises to God as a sweet aroma because it was sinless, with our identity. A symbol of us submission to Jesus and then passing through the fire to be with God.

Something to ponder, you may have noticed that the word curse is only used on the ground and Satan not for Adam and Eve. This may be because Adam and Eve, before eating of the fruit of the knowledge of good and evil, are described like children²⁴⁵. The eating of the fruit have an element of childish foolishness. When Cain kills Abel, Cain is cursed.

²³⁵ Luke 2:10

²³⁶ Titus 2:11

²³⁷ 2Cor 11:2b-3

²³⁸ Gen 3:24

²³⁹ Isa 29:6

²⁴⁰ John 14:6

²⁴¹ Heb 12:29; Jer 23:29

²⁴² Rev 19:15, 21; Rev 2:16; Heb 4:12

²⁴³ Isaiah 43:2

²⁴⁴ 1 Peter 1:7; see also Zech 13:9; 1Cor 3:11-15

²⁴⁵ Joseph is also described in similar terms when he tells his brothers his dreams.

CHAPTER 4

1 And Adam knew Eve his wife; and she conceived, and bare Cain, and said, I have gotten a man from the LORD.

2 And she again bare his brother Abel. And Abel was a keeper of sheep, but Cain was a tiller of the ground.

3 And in process of time it came to pass, that Cain brought of the fruit of the ground an offering unto the LORD.

4 And Abel, he also brought of the firstlings of his flock and of the fat thereof. And the LORD had respect unto Abel and to his offering:

5 But unto Cain and to his offering he had not respect. And Cain was very wroth, and his countenance fell.

The chapters starts with a euphemism, **Adam knew Eve his wife**²⁴⁶. Other than making the Bible suitable for children, it also shows us that sex is more than just a physical act. Adam and Eve sewed fig leaves together and hid their bodies from each other, now they are getting to know each other. The marriage bed should be a place of drawing closer to each other and mutual pleasure. Biblical Agape-love is commitment, a decision that we will care for the other person. This Agape love requires that we learn about the other person, how they like their food for example. Physical pleasure is an extension of this desire to give the other person pleasure and not the centre. Sex unites people and is intended to help the couple become one, emotionally, spiritually and physically.²⁴⁷

On a side note, there is a possibility that Cain and Abel were twins. When Leah gave birth the scripters state that she conceived and then gave birth²⁴⁸ but here only one conception is mentioned²⁴⁹.

The names are also interesting: Abel or hebel means breath²⁵⁰. Perhaps Eve was exhausted and could take a big breath after Abel was born, however it is also interesting to note that that he is gone in a breath, only 7 verses. Cain means possession²⁵¹.

Let us start with the unknown about this sacrifice, Abel and Cain bring an offering to God. There is no indication here what this looked like nor how they knew that God was pleased with Abel's offering. Somehow it was obvious that God respected Abel's offering and not Cain's.²⁵² The offerings were made by fire²⁵³ so perhaps there was a clear indication of God's presence in the fire. God also has a discussion with Cain, which we will look at in the next section, so perhaps God made his approval and disapproval felt directly in words.

We need to differentiate here between an offering and a sacrifice. A sacrifice is to atone for sins and highlights the cost of sin, which is death²⁵⁴, while pointing to Jesus who would be

²⁴⁶ Gen 4:17; 4:25; 1Sam 1:19

²⁴⁷ Gen 2:24, Eph 5:31; 1Cor 6:16-20, Heb 13:4, 1Cor 3:16, Pro 6:27-29: Oxytocin release promotes bonding, empathy, trust, gratitude, hope and altruism: see also paper by A.Mltzer, A.Makhanova, L.Hicks et al 2017 Quantifying the sexual afterglow...

²⁴⁸ Gen 29:32-33

²⁴⁹ Gen 4:1-2

²⁵⁰ Strongs H1893

²⁵¹ Strongs H7014

²⁵² Judges 6:21; Heb 11:4; 1Kings 18:38; 1Chr 21:26; 2Chr 7:1

²⁵³ Lev 1:9, 13, 17; 2:2, 9, 10, 16

²⁵⁴ Heb 9:22, 26

our sacrifice.²⁵⁵ God making Adam and Eve's clothes of animal skins is a demonstration of this sacrifice. An offering, however, can be of the first fruits²⁵⁶, grain²⁵⁷ or an animal and was an act of worship pointing to Jesus' resurrection, as first fruit.²⁵⁸

To start the discussion on God's response to the sacrifice we need to note that the English translation here may not give us the correct understanding. The word for respect is šā'â²⁵⁹ and it means to regard, to look at or gaze. The text may be saying that God focused on Abel's offering in appreciation not that he rejected Cain's. This reminds me of Jesus' parable of the workers who were all paid the same even though some had worked a short time and others a long time. Those who worked a long time complained.

Why was Cain's sacrifice rejected and Abel's accepted? How do we ensure that our offerings, our worship, our prayers are accepted? If we made a Facebook post of the offerings I am certain that the majority would state that Cain's offering was better, no animals were hurt, a basket of fruit looks much better than a bloody dead animal. But clearly God does not judge on the same basis as the news, and we need to be careful of listening to the social media. If we want God's approval, then we need to do things God's way. Faith is putting into practice what we believe and Abel offered his sacrifice by faith²⁶⁰.

As humans we tend to either follow legalism, "I will follow the Jewish law" or the other extreme of liberalism, "I will follow God in My way." The problem with both approaches is that they start with "I" and not God. True worship is putting God first. These align with the Pharisees, legalists, and the liberal Sadducees. Neither of these extremes is helpful, though it is worth noting that legalism is closer to God's aim as shown in the scriptures record of Pharisees coming to Christ²⁶¹ and not Sadducees²⁶². The Pharisees wanted to be acceptable to the people, looking good by following the law. The Sadducees wanted to be acceptable to the people by making things easy, the majority opinion. Both take the focus away from God making, man the aim. How often I do things to gain acceptance, favour or to feel good. An offering needs to be done to please God, not us. Or put another way, the children of God, love.²⁶³ Abel's offering is described as the firstling and the fat, in other words the best portions. Abel gave God the best that he could.

We see from the response of Cain after God rejects his offering, that Cain focus was not on pleasing God. Cain was looking after his interests²⁶⁴. Jude records, **Woe unto them for they have gone the way of Cain**²⁶⁵, linking the thought with the error of Balaam, who greedily sought money. Jude originally wanted to write about the common salvation, the importance of getting along with each other. The Holy Spirit made him warn us about people in the Church who will tell us not to be "fundamental" and just take the Bible as a guideline.

²⁵⁵ Rom 5:6-10; Heb 9:9-14; 10:10; John 1:29; 1Cor 5:7; Eph 5:2;

²⁵⁶ Prov 3:9; Deut 14:22; 18:4; 26:10; Ex 34:26; 22:29; 23:26;

²⁵⁷ Leviticus 2:1-16; 6:14-18; 7:9-10; 10:12-13

²⁵⁸ 1Cor 15:20

²⁵⁹ Strong's H8158

²⁶⁰ Heb 11:4

²⁶¹ Examples are Paul and Nicodemus; Phil 3:5; John 19:39-42

²⁶² This does not mean that some didn't accept Christ, just that they are not recorded within the Bible

²⁶³ 1John 3:10-12, 1John 4:7-8

²⁶⁴ The Midrash suggests that Cain did not bring the best of the harvest while Abel brought the best of the flocks.

²⁶⁵ Jude 11

And the LORD spake unto Moses that selfsame day, saying, ... And die in the mount whither thou goest up, ... Because ye trespassed against me among the children of Israel at the waters of Meribah-Kadesh, in the wilderness of Zin; because ye sanctified me not in the midst of the children of Israel. Yet thou shalt see the land before thee; but thou shalt not go thither unto the land which I give the children of Israel.²⁶⁶

Moses who gave up his position of privilege in Pharaoh's court, followed God at the risk of his life and was used for many miracles however he was not allowed to enter the promised land. Moses was not allowed to continue because he hit a rock with his staff, just as God had asked him to the previous time, rather than just spoken to the rock, as God asked this time. God is very serious about His Word and we should also be.

Going back to Cain and Abel, I need to give a bit of background because this event lays the foundation for our understanding of sin, forgiveness and sacrifice.

As we have discussed Sin fractures the relationship that mankind had with God. It is an act of vandalism on God's love and kindness. The consequence of sin is violence and evil with the death of Abel being the first example. Often, we minimise sin and the importance of following the scriptures, not seeing the consequence. Cain, despite knowing God's voice, demonstrates the outworking of sin, by killing his brother.

Despite the corruption within humans God still desires a relationship and the offerings and sacrifices provide a way for people to;

1. Put their focus on God and thank God for His blessings
2. Demonstrate that sin leads to death
3. Cover that sin/death with blood, which was symbolic of life²⁶⁷
4. Prophecy that God would Himself provide a sacrifice to end all sacrifices and restore our relationship with God²⁶⁸

God had already demonstrated the blood covering to Adam and Eve, Cain's parents, when God clothed them with animal skins. **Without the shedding of blood, there is no forgiveness of sin.**²⁶⁹ In our case, forgiveness is by Jesus' blood, Salvation is found in no one else.²⁷⁰ For Cain and Abel, they come by the "type" or as Leviticus puts it a rehearsal²⁷¹ for the future sacrifice that God will provide.

God's desire is for, **sacrifice is a humble spirit, O God; you will not reject a humble and repentant heart.**²⁷² Cain however, a farmer, brought a sacrifice that he wanted to, representing his effort of sowing, reaping and grinding to flour. God however accepts a sacrifice of the heart, an act of putting God first in worship.

By faith Abel offered God a better sacrifice than Cain did. By faith he was commended as a righteous man, when God spoke well of his [sacrifice].²⁷³

²⁶⁶ Deut 32:48-52, also Num 27:14

²⁶⁷ Atonement means to cover Strong's H3722

²⁶⁸ 1John 4:10-11

²⁶⁹ Heb 9:22

²⁷⁰ Acts 4:12

²⁷¹ Lev 23:2; these are the feasts of the Lord... Holy rehearsals (convocations H4744) 1

²⁷² Psalm 51:17 Good News Translation

²⁷³ Heb. 11:4

Faith is belief out worked. It means we accept God's word as true (belief) and apply it to our lives. The Word became flesh and dwelt among us²⁷⁴. We need the Bible (the Word of God) to be in our actions (flesh) so that God dwells in us.

God accepted Abel because he believed God's Word to Adam and Eve and therefore Abel copied God's template and offered the blood of a lamb. In addition, he offered **the fat thereof** meaning the best portion.²⁷⁵

This act was a prophecy of a Saviour, whom God promised, would die **for sins once for all, the righteous for the unrighteous, to bring [them] to God.**²⁷⁶

All the prophets testify about [this Savior] that *everyone who believes in Him receives forgiveness of sins through His Name.*²⁷⁷

6 And the LORD said unto Cain, Why art thou wroth? and why is thy countenance fallen?

7 If thou doest well, shalt thou not be accepted? and if thou doest not well, sin lieth at the door. And unto thee shall be his desire, and thou shalt rule over him.

8 And Cain talked with Abel his brother: and it came to pass, when they were in the field, that Cain rose up against Abel his brother, and slew him.

God makes it clear here that there is an obedience issue here, **if you do well you will be accepted.** Cain however wanted his own way, a religion of his own making. God does not accept offerings that elevate us or done in our way.²⁷⁸

Notice that God is offering Cain the option of being accepted, this is not a rejection but a training opportunity. It is also a trust issue, just because someone is blessed by God, does not mean we cannot be blessed. God's blessing is not limited, but He blesses in His time, not ours.

Accepted²⁷⁹ or elevated. This is not a rejection of Cain, but an acceptance of Abel. For us too, the fact that someone else has a blessing does not mean that there isn't one for us. We have to trust that God loves and cares for us, that we too will be blessed in God's time. Cain does not seem to have that faith.

Then God continues;

sin lies at the door.²⁸⁰ **And its desire is for you, but you should rule over it**²⁸¹

²⁷⁴ John 1:14

²⁷⁵ Lev 17:6

²⁷⁶ 1 Pet. 3:18

²⁷⁷ Acts 10:43

²⁷⁸ See also Luke 18:13 Parallel can be found in the prodigal son Luke 15:28

²⁷⁹ Strong's H7613

²⁸⁰ The word for sin, Strong's H2403, can mean sin offering and therefore be linked to Rev 3:20: Jesus is at the door knocking.

²⁸¹ NKJV, alternative; And if you do not do well, sin lies at the door. And its desire is for you, but you should rule over it, NIV

Cain could not let go of his own offence and therefore was open to Satan's prompting. While Cain's focus was on himself, he was offended. Jesus set the example and focused on God, in doing so God honoured Him. Rather than focus on our rights, let's focus on our obligations.

We also see this played out with the Pharisees and Sadducees being jealous of Jesus and having him killed.

9 ¶ And the LORD said unto Cain, Where is Abel thy brother? And he said, I know not: Am I my brother's keeper?

10 And he said, What hast thou done? the voice of thy brother's blood crieth unto me from the ground.

11 And now art thou cursed from the earth, which hath opened her mouth to receive thy brother's blood from thy hand;

12 When thou tillest the ground, it shall not henceforth yield unto thee her strength; a fugitive and a vagabond shalt thou be in the earth.

13 And Cain said unto the LORD, My punishment is greater than I can bear.

14 Behold, thou hast driven me out this day from the face of the earth; and from thy face shall I be hid; and I shall be a fugitive and a vagabond in the earth; and it shall come to pass, that every one that findeth me shall slay me.

15 And the LORD said unto him, Therefore whosoever slayeth Cain, vengeance shall be taken on him sevenfold. And the LORD set a mark upon Cain, lest any finding him should kill him.

16 ¶ And Cain went out from the presence of the LORD, and dwelt in the land of Nod, on the east of Eden.

Again, God asks a question, which is very similar to the one he asked Adam, a question to which God already knows the answer. Cain's words, however, have come to symbolize people's unwillingness to accept responsibility for the welfare of their fellows²⁸². Jesus made it clear that we were always intended to look after our brothers and sisters.

11 For this is the message you heard from the beginning: We should love one another. 12 Do not be like Cain, who belonged to the evil one and murdered his brother. And why did he murder him? Because his own actions were evil and his brother's were righteous. 13 Do not be surprised, my brothers and sisters, if the world hates you. 14 We know that we have passed from death to life, because we love each other. Anyone who does not love remains in death. 15 Anyone who hates a brother or sister is a murderer, and you know that no murderer has eternal life residing in him. 16 This is how we know what love is: Jesus Christ laid down his life for us. And we ought to lay down our lives for our brothers and sisters. 17 If anyone has material possessions and sees a brother or sister in need but has no pity on them, how can the love of God be in that person? 18 Dear children, let us not love with words or speech but with actions and in truth.²⁸³

If a man say, I love God, and hateth his brother, he is a liar: for he that loveth not his brother whom he hath seen, how can he love God whom he hath not seen? And he has given us this command: Anyone who loves God must also love their brother and sister.²⁸⁴

²⁸² <https://www.dictionary.com/browse/brother-s-keeper--am-i-my>

²⁸³ 1John 3:11-18

²⁸⁴ 1Jn 4:20, see also 1Tim 5:8; Ob 1:10; 1Jn 2:9-11; Matt 5:22-24

I want to touch on something that is best seen in the book of Job but is very important for us to understand. Cain sinned and therefore life was hard for him, thorns grew rather than plants. This is a very generic principle that we see from scripture, sin has a consequence.

The problem is that everyone assumes that the other side is also true, i.e. that if you are good then only good things happen. This is the argument that Job's friends used. The problem is that it is not always true, in fact there are examples of sinners having good lives.

What scriptures do promise us is that the hard times will result in good of those who love the Lord and are called according to His purpose.²⁸⁵ In Job's case he grew to a much deeper understanding through his hard times. He states, "before I heard about you but now I know you."²⁸⁶ We need to be careful that we are not like Job's friends who judged him rather than supported and loved Job. Our role as brothers and sisters is to support, love and exhort others to love God.

Here we have Cain and Abel who both suffered because of the sin of their father.²⁸⁷ God was obviously pleased with Abel but this did not change the fact that he bore his father's curse, did not have access to the Garden of Paradise, and got murdered.

What I am trying to say is that we must recognise that God did not promise us a life free from heart ache and hard work. God promised us His love and to be with us in the hard times.

Cain gets a similar punishment to Adam and Eve, he is separated from his parents and sent further from God. Death is a separation and God seems to be demonstrating what the laws should be rather than the human condition that later becomes stoning.

And Cain said unto the LORD, My punishment is greater than I can bear.

This verse almost implies that Cain is more upset about the punishment than what he did to his brother however, the word translated here as punishment really means iniquity²⁸⁸. So Cain may have been expressing sincerer remorse.

How awesome it is to know that God is so full of mercy and grace that He offers Cain His protection. It does not matter what you have done, there is nothing that can separate you from the love of God.²⁸⁹ So approach God's throne with confidence²⁹⁰ God is the perfect father, full of compassion,²⁹¹ who loves to hear your prayers.

God puts a mark on Cain which seems unnecessary while there are only 3 people on the earth however with the long life expectancy the mark will be necessary for future generations. Assuming Cain lived to a similar age to Adam²⁹² he would have seen 8 generations including Methuselah Noah's grandfather

²⁸⁵ Rom 8:28

²⁸⁶ Job 42:5

²⁸⁷ Gen. 5:3

²⁸⁸ Strong's H5771: 'avon: see Gen 15:16, 19:15; Ex 34:9

²⁸⁹ Rom 8:38-39

²⁹⁰ Heb 4:16

²⁹¹ Psa 103:13; 2Cor 6:18; 1Jn 3:1; Matt 6:26

²⁹² Pseudo-Philo a Jewish work records that Cain died when he was 730 years old

This mark that God put on Cain is not described, the Hebrew, 'owth can mean sign, mark, or token.²⁹³ The first use of this word is for signs and seasons when referring to the sun and stars.²⁹⁴ The word is apparently used in non-biblical texts for letters which aligns with Ezekiel²⁹⁵ where tav, the 22nd letter of the Hebrew alphabet, is translated as mark.²⁹⁶ Tav was originally drawn as two crossed lines, like a cross.²⁹⁷ This aligns with the demonstration of grace and mercy that the sign represents as God's protection, foretelling the grace and mercy that Christ offers us.

Cain went East. Going east represents moving away from God. Adam and Eve were sent east from the Garden²⁹⁸, they journeyed east they built the tower of Babel²⁹⁹, Lot journeyed east to Sodom³⁰⁰. Ismael went to live to the east, Abrahams sons, through his third wife are sent east³⁰¹, Esau went he splits from Jacob went east³⁰². There are seven easts, all the going away from God's presence.

17 And Cain knew his wife; and she conceived, and bare Enoch: and he builded a city, and called the name of the city, after the name of his son, Enoch.

18 And unto Enoch was born Irad: and Irad begat Mehujael: and Mehujael begat Methusael: and Methusael begat Lamech.

19 ¶ And Lamech took unto him two wives: the name of the one was Adah, and the name of the other Zillah.

20 And Adah bare Jabal: he was the father of such as dwell in tents, and of such as have cattle.

21 And his brother's name was Jubal: he was the father of all such as handle the harp and organ.

22 And Zillah, she also bare Tubal-cain, an instructor of every artificer in brass and iron: and the sister of Tubal-cain was Naamah.

Notice how God had given man wisdom so that he had great skill with many things. Here we see that they had metal tools for the construction of the Ark. It would seem that because so many died in the flood much of the knowledge died too.

Cain's wife, is understood to be his sister Awan from rabbinic sources.³⁰³

23 And Lamech said unto his wives, Adah and Zillah, Hear my voice; ye wives of Lamech, hearken unto my speech: for I have slain a man to my wounding, and a young man to my hurt.

24 If Cain shall be avenged sevenfold, truly Lamech seventy and sevenfold.

²⁹³ Strong's H226

²⁹⁴ Gen1:14

²⁹⁵ Ezekiel 9:4,6

²⁹⁶ H8420, tav,

²⁹⁷ <https://www.ancient-hebrew.org/ancient-alphabet/tav.htm>

²⁹⁸ Gen 3:24

²⁹⁹ Gen 11:2

³⁰⁰ Gen 13:11

³⁰¹ Gen 25:6

³⁰² Gen 36:6-8

³⁰³ Jubilees 4, Byron 2011; this seems to have been accepted for a long time

We have another genealogy, this time from Cain leading to another death at the hand of a person. Given that there is another genealogy in the next chapter this would appear to indicate the consequence of sin.

To start understanding Lamech we note that he is the first person recorded with more than one wife and the recorded events are not positive. We can conclude that God never intended for men to have more than one wife, which also aligns with Adam and Eve, after God made them, Male and female, God announced that it was very good.

Next we note that Lamech killed someone, again contrary to God's aim. Then we hear Lamech claiming God's grace and blessing, in what is a twisting of scripture. Yes, God was gracious to Cain, but we cannot just claim God's blessings, particularly in response to sin³⁰⁴.

This lineage is a response to Cain allowing sin, to rule over him. Cain's ancestors became more selfish (multiple wives), angry (killed someone) and twisting God's word to claim blessings. This is the last we hear of this genealogy.

**25 ¶ And Adam knew his wife again; and she bare a son, and called his name Seth: For God, said she, hath appointed me another seed instead of Abel, whom Cain slew.
26 And to Seth, to him also there was born a son; and he called his name Enos: then began men to call upon the name of the LORD.**

There is a Midrash tradition that Lamech's two wives went to Adam for his judgement about the death that Lamech brought about³⁰⁵. The Midrash continues that after judgement Lamech's wives challenge Adam about his own relationship with his wife and Seth is born thereafter.

Adam and Eve had another Son, please remember that daughters were not usually recorded. We do not know how many daughters Adam and Eve had nor the order that the girls were born in. These verses are not in chronological order, they are in the order of the concepts that we need to understand.

Next we have a verse that has had a few interpretations;

then began men to call upon the name of the LORD.³⁰⁶

As this phrase is just after a reference to another death, and we know that Adam and Eve had a relationship with God, some assume that it must mean something negative. So, it is a good time to reference two important points in understanding the Bible.

1. Use scripture to interpret scripture.
2. Any biblical doctrine requires at least two biblical authors.³⁰⁷

³⁰⁴ John 15:7 **If you abide in me, and my words abide in you, ask whatever you wish, and it will be done for you.** Killing someone, is not abiding in Christ. Also abiding in Christ means that we ask, as Jesus did for the things that God's wants to happen. For example Jesus did not claim what he wanted but prayed, **My Father, if it be possible, let this cup pass from me; nevertheless, not as I will, but as you will** Matthew 26:39. Consider Psalm 91:11-16 compared to Matt 4:5-7. See also Heb 11:35-38

³⁰⁵ <https://jwa.org/encyclopedia/article/adah-1-midrash-and-aggadah>

³⁰⁶ Gen 4:26b

³⁰⁷ Deut 19:15; John 8:17

Let us use these rules to understand this phrase. While the context of this verse could possibly take a meaning something like, they started to take the name of the lord in vain, or they started to call themselves as Lords. The phrase however occurs elsewhere; ³⁰⁸

From there [Abraham] went on toward the hills east of Bethel and pitched his tent, with Bethel on the west and Ai on the east. There he built an altar to the Yahweh and called on the name of the Yahweh.³⁰⁹

For whosoever shall call upon the name of the Lord shall be saved. How then shall they call on him in whom they have not believed? and how shall they believe in him of whom they have not heard? and how shall they hear without a preacher? And how shall they preach, except they be sent? as it is written, How beautiful are the feet of them that preach the gospel of peace, and bring glad tidings of good things!³¹⁰

Then will I purify the lips of the peoples, that all of them may call on the name of the Lord and serve him shoulder to shoulder. From beyond the rivers of Cush my worshippers, my scattered people, will bring me offerings.³¹¹

So, the other authors all use this phrase as a positive affirmation of God. Therefore, the most likely meaning is that corporate worship started then.

CHAPTER 5

1 This is the book of the generations of Adam. In the day that God created man, in the likeness of God made he him;

2 Male and female created he them; and blessed them, and called their name Adam, in the day when they were created.

These two verses are the salutations at the end of the section that Adam wrote. Verses 3 onwards are the start of the next section that Noah wrote. Adams gives a synopsis of the whole passage. God created mankind, blessed them and called them Adam.

Most scholars consider the root of the name "Adam" to be "red", "fair", "handsome". It is used to mean "man" and "mankind". We are told in Gen 1 that it is linked to the word *adamah* which means "ground" or "earth".

I think that what we have here is a reference to the word play in Hebrew particularly highlighted by the passages that we read last week.

Mankind was lifted from the ground to be fair and handsome but...

we are left with the potential to sink lower than the animals or higher than the angels.

The choice is ours, to accept Jesus as Lord and Saviour and rise to the heavens or to reject Jesus' offer and to remain separated from God.

³⁰⁸ Gen 12:8; 26:25; Joel 2:32; Psalm 116:2, 13-14; 79:5-6

³⁰⁹ Genesis 12:8

³¹⁰ Rom 10:13-15

³¹¹ Zephaniah 3:9-10

It is like many of our relationships and particularly marriage. Marriage can be the most fulfilling, satisfying and glorious relationship or it can be a bond of pain, betrayal and heartache. For us and Adam our relationship with God can lift us up higher than the angels or we can be lower than the animals – the choice is ours alone. God has opened the way, he sent His only begotten Son to open the door and it is up to us if we will spend the time with God to develop the relationship or if we will give way to earthly motivations.

3 ¶ And Adam lived an hundred and thirty years, and begat a son in his own likeness, after his image; and called his name Seth:

4 And the days of Adam after he had begotten Seth were eight hundred years: and he begat sons and daughters:

5 And all the days that Adam lived were nine hundred and thirty years: and he died.

6 And Seth lived an hundred and five years, and begat Enos:

7 And Seth lived after he begat Enos eight hundred and seven years, and begat sons and daughters:

8 And all the days of Seth were nine hundred and twelve years: and he died.

9 ¶ And Enos lived ninety years, and begat Cainan:

10 And Enos lived after he begat Cainan eight hundred and fifteen years, and begat sons and daughters:

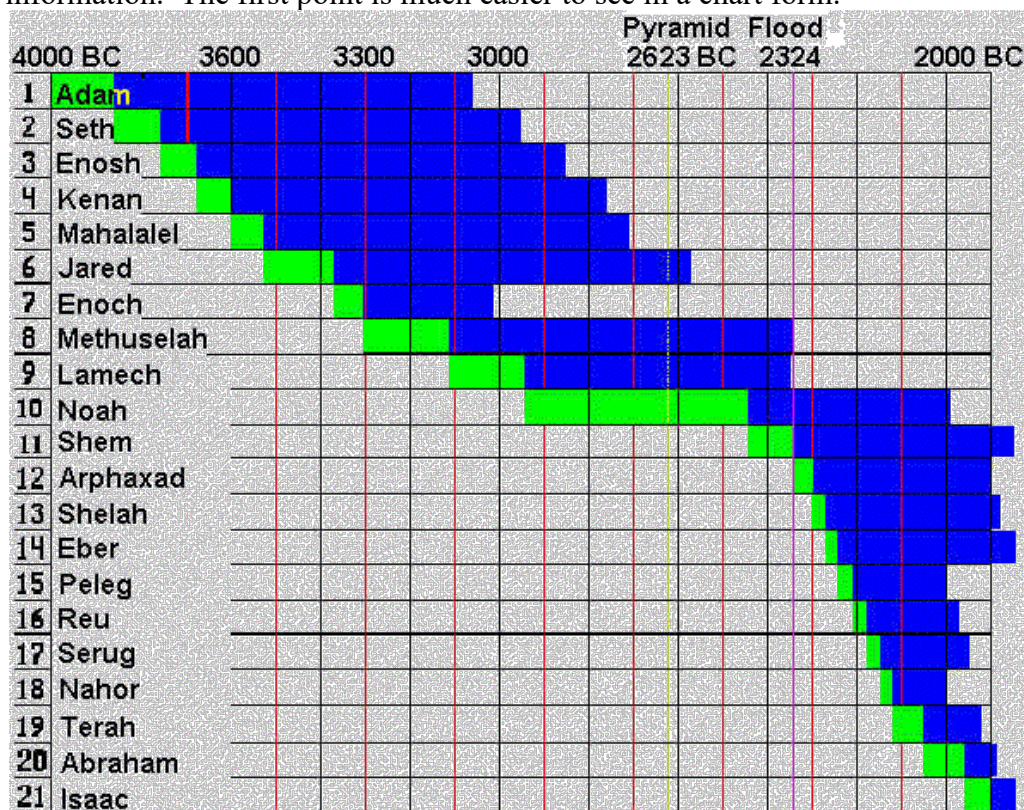
11 And all the days of Enos were nine hundred and five years: and he died.

12 ¶ And Cainan lived seventy years, and begat Mahalaleel:

13 And Cainan lived after he begat Mahalaleel eight hundred and forty years, and begat sons and daughters:

14 And all the days of Cainan were nine hundred and ten years: and he died.

I generally gloss over these genealogies but they often contain interesting and helpful information. The first point is much easier to see in a chart form.



I have not checked the start date of this chart at 4000BC. I have seen other dates, for example 4108 BC based on Jacobs birth on 2000BC, but most seem to start around 4000 BC.

The first observation is the long life, particularly before the flood. The life expectancy could be explained by ;

1. Low UV³¹²
2. Pure genetics³¹³
3. Late child birth³¹⁴

The next point is that the overlap ensured that history was accurately taught and remembered. It is hard to embellish or change the narrative if the eyewitnesses are there to talk to.

15 ¶ And Mahalaleel lived sixty and five years, and begat Jared:

16 And Mahalaleel lived after he begat Jared eight hundred and thirty years, and begat sons and daughters:

17 And all the days of Mahalaleel were eight hundred ninety and five years: and he died.

18 ¶ And Jared lived an hundred sixty and two years, and he begat Enoch:

19 And Jared lived after he begat Enoch eight hundred years, and begat sons and daughters:

20 And all the days of Jared were nine hundred sixty and two years: and he died.

21 ¶ And Enoch lived sixty and five years, and begat Methuselah:

22 And Enoch walked with God after he begat Methuselah three hundred years, and begat sons and daughters:

23 And all the days of Enoch were three hundred sixty and five years:

24 And Enoch walked with God: and he was not; for God took him.

To the Hebrew mind prophecy is pattern and here in verse 24 gives us a possible glimpse of end times as it is a type of rapture. Enos was taken by God. Other examples are Moses and Jude

25 And Methuselah lived an hundred eighty and seven years, and begat Lamech:

26 And Methuselah lived after he begat Lamech seven hundred eighty and two years, and begat sons and daughters:

27 And all the days of Methuselah were nine hundred sixty and nine years: and he died.

Methuselah is an interesting person and from the chart above we can see that he died in the year that the flood came. It is also interesting that he is the oldest person recorded in the Bible.

The name Methuselah comes from two words, *muth*, meaning "death"; and *shalach*, which means to bring, or to send forth. So the name Methuselah is a prophecy that when Methuselah dies a judgement will come and the flood came when he died. The fact that Methuselah was the oldest recorded person therefore tells us of God's great mercy³¹⁵, not being willing that anyone should die³¹⁶ but forestalling judgement as long as practical.

³¹² It is thought that there was significantly more water vapour in the atmosphere prior to the flood. This would absorb more of the UV and therefore reduce cell destruction.

³¹³ See discussion of the flood, Gen 5:9. The text implies that human genetics got contaminated.

³¹⁴ I read a paper that experimented with flies and found that if mating was delayed then life expectancy increase significantly

³¹⁵ 1Pet 3:20

³¹⁶ 2Pet 3:9

**28 ¶ And Lamech lived an hundred eighty and two years, and begat a son:
 29 And he called his name Noah, saying, This same shall comfort us concerning our work and toil of our hands, because of the ground which the LORD hath cursed.
 30 And Lamech lived after he begat Noah five hundred ninety and five years, and begat sons and daughters:
 31 And all the days of Lamech were seven hundred seventy and seven years: and he died.
 32 And Noah was five hundred years old: and Noah begat Shem, Ham, and Japheth.**

Noah starts his section off with his family history. In describing his lineage he lists amazing life spans. Lamech, was 56 years old when Adam died and as Noah's father, would have told Noah all about the garden of Eden and the fall. With such a large overlap we can be assured that the recollection of history was well preserved. It also explains why structures like Stonehenge and the pyramids could be constructed, such long lives allowed for creative construction methods that we no longer appreciate.

Noah is also described as providing comfort from the curse. Noah and his family went into the Ark and avoided the judgement that killed the rest of mankind. This again tells us of Gods mercy because we can enter into a relationship with Christ and avoid the judgement that is coming³¹⁷.

The genealogy also contains a message as described by Chuck Missler;

Adam's name means man.

Seth, Adam's son means appointed³¹⁸.

Enosh, Seth's son means mortal, frail, or miserable. It is from the root *anash*, to be incurable, used of a wound, grief, woe, sickness, or wickedness. It was in the days of Enosh that men began to defile the name of the Living God.

Kenan, Enosh's son can mean sorrow, dirge, or elegy³¹⁹.

Mahalalel, Kenan's son. Mahalal means *blessed or praise*; and El, the name for *God*. Thus, Mahalalel means the Blessed God.

Jared, Mahalalel's son means shall come down.

Enoch, Jared's son means teaching, or commencement³²⁰.

Methuselah, Enoch's son means his death will bring.

Lamech, Methuselah's son means despairing.

Noah, Lamech's son is derived from *nacham*, to bring relief or comfort³²¹.

Put together:

Hebrew	English
Adam	Man

³¹⁷ Matt 24:35-44, see also Mar 13:32-37, Lk 17:26-35; 21:34-36 and Revelation.

³¹⁸ Gen 4:25

³¹⁹ Kenan is not the same as Cainan. Balaam, looking down from the heights of Moab, uses a pun upon the name of the Kenites when he prophesies their destruction.

³²⁰ The earliest recorded prophecy was by Enoch quoted in Jude 14-15.

³²¹ Genesis 5:29

Seth	Appointed
Enosh	Mortal
Kenan	Sorrow;
Mahalalel	The Blessed God
Jared	Shall come down
Enoch	Teaching
Methuselah	His death shall bring
Lamech	The Despairing
Noah	Rest, or comfort.

Or in a sentence;

Man (is) appointed mortal sorrow; (but) the Blessed God shall come down teaching (that) His death shall bring (the) despairing rest.

CHAPTER 6

1 And it came to pass, when men began to multiply on the face of the earth, and daughters were born unto them,

2 That the sons of God saw the daughters of men that they were fair; and they took them wives of all which they chose.

3 And the LORD said, My spirit shall not always strive with man, for that he also is flesh: yet his days shall be an hundred and twenty years.

4 There were giants in the earth in those days; and also after that, when the sons of God came in unto the daughters of men, and they bare children to them, the same became mighty men which were of old, men of renown.

This passage has a number of interpretations, so we need to look at this carefully.³²² “sons of God” = “ben³²³ elohiym³²⁴” meaning part of the angelic host³²⁵ who in this case are fallen angels.

The obvious reading of the first two verses is that Angels looked at the young women, and took them, resulting in children being born³²⁶. Note how similar this is to Eve, who saw the fruit, desired it and took it³²⁷. This is supported by verse 4 where the offspring were giants³²⁸ and mighty men³²⁹.

Other passages support this understanding³³⁰ see Jude 6-8. These verses may imply that the claimed alien encounters could also be fallen angels continuing this bad behaviour. It also

³²² “sons of God” = children of Seth. While God’s covenant people can be referred to as ‘God’s sons’ (Deut 14:1, Jer 3:19) ‘son’s of God’ is not used. Also, the contrast of “son’s of God” with “man” (verses 1 & 3) and “daughter’s of men” appears to oppose the children of Seth view

³²³ Strong’s H1121

³²⁴ Strong’s H430

³²⁵ Job 1:6; 2:1; 38:7

³²⁶ Angels can engage in human activities, Gen 18:1-2; 19:1,5

³²⁷ Gen 3:6

³²⁸ Nephil Strong’s H5303 could also mean bully or tyrant

³²⁹ This is also references in Deut 1, In Deut the call is for a flood of Israel to cleanse the land.

³³⁰ Jude 6-8; 1Pet 3:19-20; 2Pet 2:4, this passage can assume to reference this event as it is referenced before Noah. Daniel 2:43 may also reference this intermingling, though it could also reference political intermingling.

implies that there could be an underlying element of truth to the Greek myths. In the New Testament, Jesus encounters a man among the tombs with superhuman strength³³¹ and the possessed called themselves Legion³³², similar war language to these mighty men. Whatever the truth is, God was not pleased. It is worth observing here that in the Old Testament, which is a physical representation of the spiritual in the New Testament, God brings a flood to destroy the sin from these encounters, in the New Testament, like with Legion, the power of God, through His word is able to divide between sin and man³³³. Paul uses similar language to the flood when he talks about crucifying the flesh. We have the same sins within us, but through Jesus we can put to death our own since and live to Christ³³⁴.

yet his days shall be an hundred and twenty years : There are two views here and perhaps both are true, the most common view is that God is reduce man's life span from 800 or so to 120 years. Some commentators have considered that preflood, there was significant water vapour in the air, increasing the density and UV protection. The flood removed that protection meaning that animals had to be smaller³³⁵ and shortening life spans.

The alternative is that in 120 years God will bring a flood and while there is not enough information on the timeline to confirm this, it does however, fit the narrative and times that we know.

5 ¶ And GOD saw that the wickedness of man was great in the earth, and that every imagination of the thoughts of his heart was only evil continually.

6 And it repented the LORD that he had made man on the earth, and it grieved him at his heart.

7 And the LORD said, I will destroy man whom I have created from the face of the earth; both man, and beast, and the creeping thing, and the fowls of the air; for it repenteth me that I have made them.

8 But Noah found grace in the eyes of the LORD.

9a These are the generations of Noah:

God saw the wickedness of man and it repented³³⁶ the Lord that He had made man. In Numbers we are told that **God is not like man that he should lie; neither the son of man that He should repent.**³³⁷ To understand this we need to understand repentance. The word for Repentance is nâham and it means to “breath strongly” (example a sigh) as in the action of regret. I have mentioned before that Hebrew is a language that focuses on actions.

To make the difference between repentance and sorry clear, some commentators describe repentance as changing ones actions to prevent a repeat³³⁸, while sorrow is just disappointment of the outcome. When I repent of a sin, I alter my actions to prevent repeating it. For example, if my sin is angry outbursts, I might develop a habit of taking a

³³¹ Mark 5:4

³³² Mark 5:1-17; Luke 8:26-39

³³³ Heb 4:11-13

³³⁴ Gal 5:19-26

³³⁵ Dinosaurs were too big

³³⁶ Strong's H5162 naham

³³⁷ Numbers 23:19

³³⁸ The Greek equivalent metaneo G3340 (repent) means to think differently

deep breath before I respond to a harsh comment. This allows me to calm down and think, reducing the likelihood that I will respond with an angry outburst.

In God's case, He does not sin and therefore what we are reading here is that God is changing His actions, showing mercy even when we do not deserve it.

And He remembered for them His covenant, and repented according to the multitude of His mercies³³⁹.

God does not repent like man, God does not sin, and he sees the beginning from the end³⁴⁰ and therefore is not surprised by new information. However, God is gracious and merciful, so God's repentance is a demonstration of mercy, and He graciously allows us to influence His actions. Isn't it incredible that our God, the creator of the universe listens to our prayers, even some unspoken ones, and acts on those prayers?

God destroying most of mankind is a disturbing proposal and this is followed by the Israelites conquest of Canaan as described in Exodus, when similar language is used to destroy the inhabitants of the land. When we consider these events as part of the entire Bible, I think they are intended to be understood as God stopping the death and destruction that was occurring. This is much like we put a Rabid dog down, the dog is sick and suffering, and spreading the disease. If the dog is put down, it prevents many other animals from contracting the disease and dying. While the dog would disagree, as it focuses on its own self, we can see the bigger picture and realise that it is an act of mercy.

This is the end of the section that Noah wrote. We are about to get into the section that Noah's sons wrote.

I will leave you with a thought I read

All I will ever need to know I learned from Noah.

1. Don't miss the boat.
2. Remember that we are all in the same boat.
3. Plan ahead. It wasn't raining when Noah built the Ark.
4. Stay fit. When you're old someone may ask you to do something really big.
5. Don't listen to critics, just get on with the job that needs to be done.
6. Build your future on high ground.
7. Speed isn't everything, the snails were on board with the cheetahs.
8. When you're stressed, float awhile.
9. Remember the Ark was built by amateurs, the Titanic by professionals.
10. No matter what the storm, when you are with God there's always a rainbow waiting.

9b Noah was a just man and perfect in his generations, and Noah walked with God.

10 And Noah begat three sons, Shem, Ham, and Japheth.

11 The earth also was corrupt before God, and the earth was filled with violence.

12 And God looked upon the earth, and, behold, it was corrupt; for all flesh had corrupted his way upon the earth.

13 And God said unto Noah, The end of all flesh is come before me; for the earth is filled with violence through them; and, behold, I will destroy them with the earth.

³³⁹ Psa 106:45. See also Ex 32:14; Jud 2:18; 2Sam 24:16; 1Chr 21:16; Jer 26:19; Amo 7:6, Jon 3:10;

³⁴⁰ Isa 42:9

Verse 9 makes an interesting statement; **Noah was a just man and perfect in his generations, and Noah walked with God.**

One possible understanding is that Noah and his lineage had not been impacted by the mixed marriages as spoken about in verse 2. In other words his genetic lineage was pure. While I am sure that Noah's generation had not been impacted, this interpretation doesn't seem to fit the context;

Noah found grace in the eyes of the LORD.

Noah was a just

Noah walked with God

Contrasted with;

wickedness of man was great in the earth

every imagination of the thoughts of his heart was only evil continually.

the earth was filled with violence

all flesh had corrupted his way upon the earth.

God looks at our hearts not our lineage or appearance³⁴¹. Noah's heart was towards God, while the rest of the earth was selfish. When I look at myself, my natural mind is to look after me, my desires, my pain; me, myself and I. However, when I allow the Holy Spirit to guide me, He outworks God's desires of love, mercy, grace, considering other people's feelings.

tamîm³⁴² translated as "perfect" means complete, whole, entire and sound, wholesome, having integrity.

dôr³⁴³ translated as "generations" means period of time, habitation, dwelling or generation-those living during a period.

So the verse means that Noah's heart was whole it included God and others (not just centred on himself), he had wholesome relationships and integrity.

Noah was not perfect as in sinless however, he was forgiven and made righteous by faith in God as outworked by his obedience to God's call.

By faith Noah, being warned of God of things not seen as yet, moved with fear, prepared an ark to the saving of his house; by the which he condemned the world, and became heir of the righteousness which is by faith.³⁴⁴

Just as God chose Noah because of his heart attitude, God looks to our hearts. We too can be complete, whole, entire, sound, wholesome and with integrity, however we need Jesus' grace and the Holy Spirit to leads us in order to achieve these qualities.³⁴⁵

Therefore you shall be perfect, just as your Father in heaven is perfect.³⁴⁶

Noah is described in contrast to the others in that period of time who were described as "corrupt" meaning rotten or putrid or utterly foul. It describes a world in the final stages of

³⁴¹ 1Sam 16:7

³⁴² Strong's H8549 The Greek equivalent, τέλειος, G5046 can be translated as mature See 1Cor 2:6, Heb 5:14

³⁴³ Strong's H1755

³⁴⁴ Heb 11:7

³⁴⁵ Gal 3:26-28

³⁴⁶ Matt 5:48

moral decomposition. Having rejected the Lord, the men and women of the world had sunk into selfishness leading to violence, hatred, abuse, murder, and dishonesty.

And as it was in the days of Noe, so shall it be also in the days of the Son of man. They did eat, they drank, they married wives, they were given in marriage, until the day that Noe entered into the ark, and the flood came, and destroyed them all.³⁴⁷

What is different between then and now?

But, beloved, remember ye the words which were spoken before of the apostles of our Lord Jesus Christ; How that they told you there should be mockers in the last time, who should walk after their own ungodly lusts.³⁴⁸

Knowing this first, that there shall come in the last days scoffers, walking after their own lusts, And saying, Where is the promise of his coming? for since the fathers fell asleep, all things continue as they were from the beginning of the creation.³⁴⁹

Personally, I cannot see great differences between the descriptions and we therefore should be prepared for Christ's return. To do that we need to see what we can learn from this passage.

Getting back to Noah.

Noah was warned of the coming judgement³⁵⁰

Noah preached to a world that was corrupt³⁵¹

Noah was to prepare a covering – an Ark³⁵², while the world enjoyed pleasures (eating drinking marriage).

Noah obeyed³⁵³

Noah became an heir of righteousness³⁵⁴ through the flood (as Baptism³⁵⁵)

The sinners suffered in the judgement without warning

Can we learn the same lessons?

The time of Gods wrath is coming³⁵⁶

We are told to preach the Gospel³⁵⁷ to the world that corrupts the truth³⁵⁸

We should prepare with acts of righteousness, Jesus has provided the covering of His blood. While the world focuses on pleasures.

We can be saved through the gathering³⁵⁹

The sinners will go through the tribulation without warning

³⁴⁷ Luke 17:26-27

³⁴⁸ Jude 1:17-18

³⁴⁹ 2 Pet 3:3-4

³⁵⁰ Heb 11:7 Gen 6:13

³⁵¹ 2Pet 2:5; Gen 6:12

³⁵² Gen 6:14

³⁵³ Gen 6:22

³⁵⁴ Heb 11:7

³⁵⁵ 1Pet 3:21

³⁵⁶ Rev 6:17; 7:14; Dan 9:24-27

³⁵⁷ Matt 10:7; Mark 16:15; Acts 10:42; 2Tim 4:2

³⁵⁸ Matt 24:5, 11

³⁵⁹ Matt 24:31; 2Thes 2:1-10.

Life of Noah

- Noah's life was one of faith as we discussed above. That faith had a huge element of endurance, Noah built a huge ark without power tools. As we go through life we will encounter difficulties and hardships³⁶⁰, let's ensure that our faith endures.³⁶¹
- Noah was a family man. Are we investing into our children. Noah's children joined him in the ark, unlike Job's, so Noah's life style must have been consistent with what he preached. Is our life at home the same as our life in church? Do we love our children in a way that they know Jesus love?

The Ark is a type of Christ

Just as Noah's life brought a rest to the earth from sin, Christ brings rest to the soul of man

The like figure whereunto even baptism doth also now save us (not the putting away of the filth of the flesh, but the answer of a good conscience toward God,) by the resurrection of Jesus Christ:³⁶²

Remember that Noah had to build the ark, we need to work out our salvation³⁶³, which takes effort.

14 ¶ Make thee an ark of gopher wood; rooms shalt thou make in the ark, and shalt pitch it within and without with pitch.

15 And this is the fashion which thou shalt make it of: The length of the ark shall be three hundred cubits, the breadth of it fifty cubits, and the height of it thirty cubits.

16 A window shalt thou make to the ark, and in a cubit shalt thou finish it above; and the door of the ark shalt thou set in the side thereof; with lower, second, and third stories shalt thou make it.

17 And, behold, I, even I, do bring a flood of waters upon the earth, to destroy all flesh, wherein is the breath of life, from under heaven; and every thing that is in the earth shall die.

The Hebrew word translated "ark" is "tēbâ"³⁶⁴ and is used 28 times, but only in reference to Noah's Ark and the basket Moses was put in as a child³⁶⁵. The Hebrew meaning is not conclusive but is probably based on the Egyptian word for chest or coffin.³⁶⁶ We should consider that to the Egyptians a coffin was a vessel that transported the dead to a new life, the afterlife.

This ties in with the symbolism that the ark represents Jesus who provides for our redemption into our new life. Noah was transported through the flood to the "baptised world" while Moses was transported to his new life as an adoptee of Pharaoh's daughter.

³⁶⁰ James 1:2-4,12

³⁶¹ Heb 10:36; Matt 24:13

³⁶² 1 Pet 3:21

³⁶³ Phil 2:12

³⁶⁴ Strong's H8392

³⁶⁵ Ex 2:3,5

³⁶⁶ Brown-Driver-Briggs Lexicon

As a contrast the Ark of the covenant³⁶⁷ means chest but with the sense of gathering³⁶⁸. This word is also used of the coffin that Joseph was put in³⁶⁹ which follows the words of Jacob who said, “**I am to be gathered unto my people: bury me with my fathers**”³⁷⁰

In verse 14 we read

Make thee an ark of gopher wood..and shalt pitch Cover/atonement **it within and without with pitch** price of life/Ransom

The two words pitch here are not the same Hebrew words, the first, kāpar means to cover, to make atonement, to make reconciliation or to cover with pitch³⁷¹. The second time pitch is used in this verse it is, Kōper, which means price of life, ransom³⁷² or pitch³⁷³

Here again is the symbolism of Jesus being our ark. It is Jesus’ blood that covers our sins³⁷⁴ and makes atonement for us, and yet we baptised into Christ whose life was a ransom for us³⁷⁵ and we can therefore be seated with Christ in the Heavenly realm³⁷⁶.

The other things for us to learn from this is that for us to stay afloat in this world we need Jesus to cover our insides, our thoughts, dreams, ambitions etc³⁷⁷ but we also need Jesus to cover our outside, our actions³⁷⁸ and the words we speak. Christianity is not a belief or something we think, Christianity requires our whole selves. If we do not act differently, in a Christlike manor, then we have missed something.³⁷⁹

What good is it, my brothers, if someone says he has faith but does not have works? Can that faith save him? If a brother or sister is poorly clothed and lacking in daily food, and one of you says to them, “Go in peace, be warmed and filled,” without giving them the things needed for the body, what good is that? So also faith by itself, if it does not have works, is dead.³⁸⁰

The description of the ark is remarkable detailed with the dimensions but not much else. We know that the Ark was not a stylish yacht nor a fast launch but really a large barge. The ration of length, width and height has been shown by engineers to be an incredible stable vessel that is almost impossible to capsize. In fact these ratios are very similar to those used by modern tankers that ferry oil around the world. As usual God’s word provides the ideal answer to a problem.

[As for] God, His way [is] perfect; the Word of the Lord [is] tried; He [is] a buckler to all them that trust in Him.³⁸¹

³⁶⁷ Ex 25:10, 14, 15, 16, 21 etc

³⁶⁸ Stong’s H727

³⁶⁹ Gen 50:26

³⁷⁰ Gen 49:29

³⁷¹ Atonement means to cover Strong’s H3722

³⁷² Job 33:24; 36:18; Ex 21:30; Pro 13:8; 6:35; 21:18; Num 35:31; Psa 49:8; Isa 43:3

³⁷³ Strong’s H3724: Brown-Driver-Briggs Lexicon

³⁷⁴ Rom 4:7

³⁷⁵ Mat 20:28; 1Tim 2:6

³⁷⁶ Eph 2:6-7

³⁷⁷ 2Pet 1:5-8

³⁷⁸ 1John 3:18; James 2:18,26; Col 3:23-24

³⁷⁹ Titus 1:16

³⁸⁰ James 2:14-17. See also James 1:23-25;

³⁸¹ 2Sam 22:31; see also Psa 18:2; 37:5; 64:10; 118:8; Pro 3:5; Phil 2:24

The size of the ark is huge, a cubit is around half a meter and so the ark could have carried at least 120,000 sheep in floor area and over 2 million sheep by mass³⁸². Scientists estimate 1.7 million species however most are insects, in addition the narrative talks about kinds which is far fewer around 25 000 kinds. An example where are wolves and dogs, back then they were probably the same genetically with the divisions occurring later with breeding. So that ark was plenty large enough for animals and food.

18 But with thee will I establish my covenant; and thou shalt come into the ark, thou, and thy sons, and thy wife, and thy sons' wives with thee.

19 And of every living thing of all flesh, two of every sort shalt thou bring into the ark, to keep them alive with thee; they shall be male and female.

20 Of fowls after their kind, and of cattle after their kind, of every creeping thing of the earth after his kind, two of every sort shall come unto thee, to keep them alive.

21 And take thou unto thee of all food that is eaten, and thou shalt gather it to thee; and it shall be for food for thee, and for them.

22 Thus did Noah; according to all that God commanded him, so did he.

It must have been a very clear call for Noah to build the ark but then Noah didn't merely know about God, he knew God. Noah walked with God³⁸³. This is a high honour since Noah, Enoch³⁸⁴ and Abraham³⁸⁵ are the only men in the Bible who are specifically said to have walked with God.

This walking with God means more than just getting to a destination, when you walk with someone you go at the same pace in the same direction, you communicate, and you look out for the other person³⁸⁶.

We were created to walk with God,³⁸⁷ using His word to guide³⁸⁸ us in going where God walks³⁸⁹ doing the good works that God wants along the way.³⁹⁰

Noah had three choices

Ignore God, do what everyone else was doing and drown.

Follow Gods way, build a huge ship by hand at great cost, and be ridiculed by his friends and neighbours.

Do a half approach and allegorise the word God had given him. Maybe building a small boat for his cats and dogs so he could go fishing.

Despite the fact that outside of faith, there was no indication that a ship was needed, despite the huge effort required and despite the comments from others, Noah **prepared an ark to the saving of his house;... and became heir of the righteousness which is by faith.**³⁹¹

³⁸² <https://www.smithsonianmag.com/science-nature/could-noahs-ark-float-theory-yes-180950385/>

³⁸³ Gen 6:9

³⁸⁴ Gen 5:22, 24

³⁸⁵ Gen 24:40

³⁸⁶ Amos 3:3

³⁸⁷ Micah 6:8; 1John 1:6-7

³⁸⁸ Psal 119:105

³⁸⁹ 1John 2:6; Deut 8:6; Rom 13:13; Gal 5:16

³⁹⁰ Eph 2:10

³⁹¹ Heb 11:7

Sometimes I look at the great men and women of the Bible and wonder how I can obtain such a faith. However, as I look at the details, I see that they also failed. They were real people with human failings³⁹², but they built their faith over time. So did Noah ever doubt? I suspect that he did just like we do sometimes. Will you and I do as **Noah did, according unto all that the LORD commanded him**³⁹³” Start by doing something small and then keep growing.

God allows us to see the hard times and Noah as a preacher of righteousness³⁹⁴ didn’t see many conversions as the flood judged them all. However, we know that God walks with us when we obey Him, and does encourages us along the way. In Noah’s case we are told that Jesus, in the spirit, preached to those who were disobedient when God waited patiently in the days of Noah.³⁹⁵ So I would surmise that even though Noah was the one doing the speaking it was Jesus’ words that were being spoken.

Like Noah society may ridicule³⁹⁶ us for proclaiming the good news of Jesus, they may laugh at us when we love the unlovable. After all,

Just as it was in the days of Noah, so also will it be in the days of the Son of Man. People were eating, drinking, marrying and being given in marriage up to the day Noah entered the ark. Then the flood came and destroyed them all³⁹⁷

We just need to stick at it trying to remain obedient in the little things.³⁹⁸ No person was ever blessed on account of his faith until that faith manifested itself in acts of obedience.³⁹⁹

And let us not be weary in well doing: for in due season we shall reap, if we faint not.⁴⁰⁰

This is the first mention of the word covenant. I think it is important as it is clearly one sided. God will make a promise to be merciful and give mankind a sign. Since then we have had a number of other covenants, with Abraham, Isaac etc and of course with us. We will look at this again in Chapter 9.

³⁹² Gen 9:20

³⁹³ Gen 7:5

³⁹⁴ 2Pet 2:5

³⁹⁵ 1Pet 3:19-20

³⁹⁶ Jude 1:17-18, 2Pet 3:3-4

³⁹⁷ Luke 17:26-27

³⁹⁸ Gal 6:9-10, 1 Corinthians 3:6 I have planted, Apollos watered; but God gave the increase. 7 So then neither is he that planteth any thing, neither he that watereth; but God that giveth the increase.

³⁹⁹ James 2:22,24

⁴⁰⁰ Gal 6:9, see also 1John 3:7,10

CHAPTER 7

- 1 And the LORD said unto Noah, Come thou and all thy house into the ark; for thee have I seen righteous before me in this generation.**
- 2 Of every clean beast thou shalt take to thee by sevens, the male and his female: and of beasts that are not clean by two, the male and his female.**
- 3 Of fowls also of the air by sevens, the male and the female; to keep seed alive upon the face of all the earth.**
- 4 For yet seven days, and I will cause it to rain upon the earth forty days and forty nights; and every living substance that I have made will I destroy from off the face of the earth.**
- 5 And Noah did according unto all that the LORD commanded him.**
- 6 And Noah was six hundred years old when the flood of waters was upon the earth.**
- 7 ¶ And Noah went in, and his sons, and his wife, and his sons' wives with him, into the ark, because of the waters of the flood.**
- 8 Of clean beasts, and of beasts that are not clean, and of fowls, and of every thing that creepeth upon the earth,**
- 9 There went in two and two unto Noah into the ark, the male and the female, as God had commanded Noah.**
- 10 And it came to pass after seven days, that the waters of the flood were upon the earth.**

I have often wondered how many of each animal Noah took on to the Ark. The traditional view is 2 of the unclean and 7 of the clean. I actually doubt this and I think that Noah took 4 of the unclean and 14 of the clean. The Hebrew is not clear and a slow reading looks to me like Naoh takes each pair as a unit, just as my wife and I are one unit⁴⁰¹. Therefore, he took 2 pairs of the clean and 7 pairs of the unclean.

That brings us to a question we cannot answer with certainty: How many animals were on the ark? We know that Noah was told to include a male and female of all the land animals. It is a mistake to jump to the conclusion that Noah had to bring two of each species on earth. Genesis 1 speaks of created “kinds” of animals, a category that clearly seems larger than the species level. Some authorities suggest that the total number of animals would have been no more than 2,000. Others suggest as many as 16,000. But suppose the number equals 50,000. Would the ark have been large enough to accommodate them?

“Remember there are really only a few very large animals, such as the dinosaur or the elephant, and these could be represented by young ones. Assuming the average animal to be about the size of a sheep and using a railroad car for comparison, we note that the average double-deck stock car can accommodate 240 sheep. Thus, three trains hauling 69 cars each would have ample space to carry the 50,000 animals, filling only 37% of the ark. This would leave an additional 361 cars or enough to make five trains of 72 cars each to carry all of the food and baggage plus Noah’s family of eight people. The Ark had plenty of space.”⁴⁰²

⁴⁰¹ Gen 2:24; Mat 19:5; Mark 10:8; Eph 5:31

⁴⁰² The quote comes from the Christian Answers website

Noah was a righteous man who had great faith in God. His faith saved his entire family. But not one word is ever said about the faith of his wife or the faith of Shem, Ham or Japheth or their wives. But they must have had some faith.

I don't know how much faith they had, but they had enough to follow the head of the family. And Noah had enough faith to inspire all of them to follow his example. That's the power of a godly leader. Noah's faith saved his entire family. He believed so deeply and obeyed so completely and walked so intimately with God that it was natural for his entire family to follow. They believed because he lived his faith and if we want others to believe in Jesus we need to live what we say. I was really inspired by a cult leader I knew, not because I liked or agreed with what he said but because he lived what he believed.

I remember a story of a guy who preached occasionally and one day he got on a bus, paid his fare dropped the change in his pocket without checking as he usually did. When He sat down the Holy Spirit prompted him to check the change. When he did, he noticed that he had been given too much change. So, when he got off the bus, he gave the extra back to the driver. The driver replied, "I know I gave you extra change, I wanted to see if you really believe what you said on Sunday."

A groom's father said something like this: "Son, some people say that success depends on money and education but that's not true. The most important part of success is character. I've done my best to set high standards and to teach you the difference between right and wrong so that you will be a man of character. Today you and Melissa are happy and very much in love, but the day will come when those feelings of excitement will begin to fade. When that happens, only character will keep you faithful. Son, if the entire world says something is wrong, and you know it is right, go ahead and do it anyway. If the world says something is right, but you know it is wrong, don't do it. Be a man of character and your wife will follow your example." That strikes me as excellent advice, not just for newlyweds but for all of us.

Noah was a godly man in an ungodly age, a bright light shining in the darkness. Because he had character and obeyed God when the world thought he was crazy, he ended up saving his own family and God blessed him.

For us to be really blessed we need to be a man of character or a woman of conviction. Stand on the Word of God and don't worry about what the world thinks. You'll save yourself, and by God's grace, you may save your family and many others besides.

11 ¶ In the six hundredth year of Noah's life, in the second month, the seventeenth day of the month, the same day were all the fountains of the great deep broken up, and the windows of heaven were opened.

12 And the rain was upon the earth forty days and forty nights.

13 In the selfsame day entered Noah, and Shem, and Ham, and Japheth, the sons of Noah, and Noah's wife, and the three wives of his sons with them, into the ark;

God gives us a time line for the flood.

Note that the waters came not just from rain but also from the ground. See that it says that it rained for forty days and forty nights, later we read that the waters rose for 40 days. It does not say that the earth was wet for 40 days as we will see later that the waters only started to go down after 150 days.

In Genesis 4 we read about Naamah (meaning pleasantness), the sister of Tubal-Cain. As the only women between Eve and Sarah, and with no reason is given for why she is mentioned there is a theory that she was Noah's wife. The theory continues that she is not mentioned by name elsewhere is because she was not the mother of Shem, Noah's principal heir, who probably dies earlier. The Phoenicians (descendants of Ham) put the descendants of Cain in their legends and scarcely mentioned the Sethites, implying that Shem had a different mother.⁴⁰³

14 They, and every beast after his kind, and all the cattle after their kind, and every creeping thing that creepeth upon the earth after his kind, and every fowl after his kind, every bird of every sort.

15 And they went in unto Noah into the ark, two and two of all flesh, wherein is the breath of life.

16 And they that went in, went in male and female of all flesh, as God had commanded him: and the LORD shut him in.

17 And the flood was forty days upon the earth; and the waters increased, and bare up the ark, and it was lift up above the earth.

18 And the waters prevailed, and were increased greatly upon the earth; and the ark went upon the face of the waters.

19 And the waters prevailed exceedingly upon the earth; and all the high hills, that were under the whole heaven, were covered.

20 Fifteen cubits upward did the waters prevail; and the mountains were covered.

21 And all flesh died that moved upon the earth, both of fowl, and of cattle, and of beast, and of every creeping thing that creepeth upon the earth, and every man:

22 All in whose nostrils was the breath of life, of all that was in the dry land, died.

23 And every living substance was destroyed which was upon the face of the ground, both man, and cattle, and the creeping things, and the fowl of the heaven; and they were destroyed from the earth: and Noah only remained alive, and they that were with him in the ark.

24 And the waters prevailed upon the earth an hundred and fifty days.

The details that we have from cave paintings, dragon legends etc show that man must have had some interaction with dinosaurs. Also, the flood legend is found in many ancient cultures⁴⁰⁴ confirming that it must have been true and the common origin of the cultures from Noah's family.

Earth filled with many people but we have three groups:

Those who perished – the ones who did not have a relationship with God.

Those who were carried through the flood by God's provision.

Those who were raptured before the flood. –Enoch - Yes only one but then only one body of Chris

⁴⁰³ Fasold

⁴⁰⁴ A count of Wiki found 64 different references. See https://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/List_of_flood_myths

Chinese characters also tell of the Flood.



Figure 3. "Boat."



Figure 4. "Flood."

Copied from Institute for Creation Research⁴⁰⁵

CHAPTER 8

1 And God remembered Noah, and every living thing, and all the cattle that was with him in the ark: and God made a wind to pass over the earth, and the waters asswaged;
2 The fountains also of the deep and the windows of heaven were stopped, and the rain from heaven was restrained;

3 And the waters returned from off the earth continually: and after the end of the hundred and fifty days the waters were abated.

4 And the ark rested in the seventh month, on the seventeenth day of the month, upon the mountains of Ararat.

5 And the waters decreased continually until the tenth month: in the tenth month, on the first day of the month, were the tops of the mountains seen.

Remembered⁴⁰⁶, This does not mean that God forgot. It can mean celebrate...

There is lots of debate about where the Ark came to rest and a number of claims that the ark has been found. The one this that seems to be consistent is that the modern Mt Ararat is not the one mentioned here.

6 ¶ And it came to pass at the end of forty days, that Noah opened the window of the ark which he had made:

7 And he sent forth a raven, which went forth to and fro, until the waters were dried up from off the earth.

8 Also he sent forth a dove from him, to see if the waters were abated from off the face of the ground;

⁴⁰⁵ <https://www.icr.org/article/genesis-chinese-pictographs/>

⁴⁰⁶ Strong's H2142, to call to mind

9 But the dove found no rest for the sole of her foot, and she returned unto him into the ark, for the waters were on the face of the whole earth: then he put forth his hand, and took her, and pulled her in unto him into the ark.

10 And he stayed yet other seven days; and again he sent forth the dove out of the ark;

11 And the dove came in to him in the evening; and, lo, in her mouth was an olive leaf pluckt off: so Noah knew that the waters were abated from off the earth.

12 And he stayed yet other seven days; and sent forth the dove; which returned not again unto him any more.

A raven feeds on carrion and therefore would have been happy to eat dead animals and rest on carcasses. A dove however wants a tree and greenery to eat. Therefore, the dove came back until the trees had budded.

13 ¶ And it came to pass in the six hundredth and first year, in the first month, the first day of the month, the waters were dried up from off the earth: and Noah removed the covering of the ark, and looked, and, behold, the face of the ground was dry.

14 And in the second month, on the seven and twentieth day of the month, was the earth dried.

15 ¶ And God spake unto Noah, saying,

16 Go forth of the ark, thou, and thy wife, and thy sons, and thy sons' wives with thee.

17 Bring forth with thee every living thing that is with thee, of all flesh, both of fowl, and of cattle, and of every creeping thing that creepeth upon the earth; that they may breed abundantly in the earth, and be fruitful, and multiply upon the earth.

18 And Noah went forth, and his sons, and his wife, and his sons' wives with him:

19 Every beast, every creeping thing, and every fowl, and whatsoever creepeth upon the earth, after their kinds, went forth out of the ark.

So Noah, his family and the animals were in the ark for 3 days more than a year.

The phrase **be fruitful and multiply upon the earth** is also used after creation⁴⁰⁷. God had made the earth for us.

20 ¶ And Noah builded an altar unto the LORD; and took of every clean beast, and of every clean fowl, and offered burnt offerings on the altar.

21 And the LORD smelled a sweet savour; and the LORD said in his heart, I will not again curse the ground any more for man's sake; for the imagination of man's heart is evil from his youth; neither will I again smite any more every thing living, as I have done.

22 While the earth remaineth, seedtime and harvest, and cold and heat, and summer and winter, and day and night shall not cease.

Man's heart is evil and so God offers to give us a new heart, a heart of flesh.⁴⁰⁸

The sacrifice means that God had already explained to Man that the consequence of sin is death. Therefore, for us to be forgiven we need a substitute, we now know that the animal

⁴⁰⁷ Gen 1:28

⁴⁰⁸ : Eze 11:19, 18:31, 36:26 see also 2Cor 3:3

sacrifice was symbolism pointing to Jesus who you be our substitute⁴⁰⁹, dying to pay the price of our sins.

Seedtime and harvest. This refence implies that prior to the flood the earth may have been a uniform tropical forest. The earth may well have shifted from its axis either causing or as a result of the flood, creating the seasons.

CHAPTER 9

1 And God blessed Noah and his sons, and said unto them, Be fruitful, and multiply, and replenish the earth.

2 And the fear of you and the dread of you shall be upon every beast of the earth, and upon every fowl of the air, upon all that moveth upon the earth, and upon all the fishes of the sea; into your hand are they delivered.

3 Every moving thing that liveth shall be meat for you; even as the green herb have I given you all things.

4 But flesh with the life thereof, which is the blood thereof, shall ye not eat.

5 And surely your blood of your lives will I require; at the hand of every beast will I require it, and at the hand of man; at the hand of every man's brother will I require the life of man.

6 Whoso sheddeth man's blood, by man shall his blood be shed: for in the image of God made he man.

7 And you, be ye fruitful, and multiply; bring forth abundantly in the earth, and multiply therein.

God told to Adam⁴¹⁰ at the beginning to fill the earth and now Noah. I don't believe this is a call to have huge families, we should have children within our means. If you cannot have children yourself then consider adopting or just supporting others. The Apostle Paul was not married but his preaching raised spiritual children⁴¹¹. Also, physical children were assumed to be within marriage.

We will find later that they did not fill the earth but stayed in one area, the plains of Shinar. There God muddled the languages and the division cause dispersion over the earth. It is interesting that in the New Testament the disciples are told to make disciples of all nations, but they also stayed until persecutions forced them to go forth⁴¹².

This needs to be a lesson to us. If God tells us to do something and we ignore Him we should not be surprised if trouble comes our way to force us to do what God asks. I was talking to my kids the other day about someone who lied to their teacher and got away with it for a time. I told them that as Christians we are unlikely to get away with lying. God holds us to a higher standard, and he loves us too much to allow us to get away with sin. A little sin will lead to a

⁴⁰⁹ Matt 8:17; 1Pet 2:23-25; Mark 10:45; Rom 5:6; 1Thes 5:10; Isa 53:4-6; Lev 1:4 See also Gen 22:13; 1Kings 20:42

⁴¹⁰ Gen 1:28, see also Gen 8:17

⁴¹¹ 1Cor 4:15-17; 1Tim 1:2

⁴¹² Acts 12:24

bigger and bigger sin if not stopped and God is more concerned about our salvation in the long term than a short-term embarrassment.

And the fear of you and the dread of you shall be upon every beast of the earth, upon every fowl of the air, and upon all that moveth upon the earth, and upon all the fish of the sea; and into your hand are they delivered.

Animals avoid humans in general and humans have hunted just about every species.

Now prior to the flood, man was a vegetarian. God said unto Adam, "All of the green herbs are yours"⁴¹³. But now after the flood, God has also given man meat in his diet. Verse 3 reads,

Every moving thing that liveth shall be meat for you; even as the green herb have I given you all things.

So here all meat and plants can be eaten, but later when the law is given Moses is told that he cannot eat the unclean animals and then in the New Testament all meat can be eaten. I think that the unclean prohibition came as diseases developed in what became the unclean animals. Now that the diseases are controlled, we no longer require that prohibition.

In addition, the requirements kept them apart as a witness to encourage other nations to come to God. Now we are called to be a peculiar people in love also to encourage others to come to God. Let us be good witnesses and effective in proclaiming the goodness of God.

God also declares that man should not eat blood. This is later included in the law when God spoke to Moses. Interestingly enough, one of the only parts of the law that was commended to the Gentile church that they keep themselves from things that were strangled, from blood and fornication⁴¹⁴.

I see three reasons for God telling us to stay away from Blood, a spiritual one, a health one and respect for life. Health wise there are a lot of diseases that are transmitted through blood. Spiritually because blood is the price that has to be paid for sin, God wants us to look forward to Jesus who shed His blood for our sins. Also, we should respect life.

Just a note that needs to be said here that to me it does not prohibit blood transfusions. One of the common cults teach that you cannot have blood transfusions and many people die because they refuse on religious reasons. I think that this is a tragic misunderstanding of scripture.

For as we go on, God said

Surely your blood of your lives will I require; at the hand of every beast will I require it, and at the hand of man; at the hand of every man's brother will I require life of man. Whoso sheddeth man's blood, by man shall his blood be shed: for in the image of God made he him⁴¹⁵.

⁴¹³ Gen 1:29

⁴¹⁴ Acts 15

⁴¹⁵ Gen 9:5-6

The context implies premeditated murder not what we call manslaughter or accidental death.

So here at the beginning now of a new civilization, God is establishing capital punishment. If a man sheds another man's blood, by man shall his blood be shed. This is the beginning of human government. And it is the basic foundation upon which human government was to be established.

But like it or not, agree with it or not, capital punishment was instituted by God as the basis of human government. Now the way that man has kept the law certainly is not just. But it doesn't take away from the fact that this is the basic foundation and principle of human government.

God has passed on to man the authority to discipline and rule man. To the Jews this was understood to be the sceptre. Gen 49:10 gives a prophecy that the sceptre shall not pass from Judah until the Messiah comes. When the Romans removed the authority to administer the death penalty the Sanhedrin went around Jerusalem in sack cloth and ashes because they thought that the Scriptures had been broken. How sad that we do not take the scripture as seriously as the Sanhedrin did in those days.

The commandment is for man to bring forth abundantly, to multiply in the earth. And it is interesting that those who complain loudly against capital punishment are often the same ones who endorse abortion. That doesn't make sense. It's just the opposite of what God said.

Post flood

1. Chaos increased : shorter lives
2. Man is responsible for government
3. Meat to be eaten
4. Animals Fear man
5. Rain local floods climate

Pre flood and end times

1. Chaos low : lives long
2. Jesus on throne
3. Vegetarian : wolf lies with lamb (Isa 65:25)
4. Little child leads wolf (Isa 11:6)
5. No need of sun – therefore no change in climate.

8 ¶ And God spake unto Noah, and to his sons with him, saying,

9 And I, behold, I establish my covenant with you, and with your seed after you;

10 And with every living creature that is with you, of the fowl, of the cattle, and of every beast of the earth with you; from all that go out of the ark, to every beast of the earth.

11 And I will establish my covenant with you; neither shall all flesh be cut off any more by the waters of a flood; neither shall there any more be a flood to destroy the earth.

12 And God said, This is the token of the covenant which I make between me and you and every living creature that is with you, for perpetual generations:

13 I do set my bow in the cloud, and it shall be for a token of a covenant between me and the earth.

14 And it shall come to pass, 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 the waters shall no more become a flood to destroy all flesh.
16 And the bow shall be in the cloud; and I will look upon it, that I may remember the everlasting covenant between God and every living creature of all flesh that is upon the earth.
17 And God said unto Noah, This is the token of the covenant, which I have established between me and all flesh that is upon the earth.
18 ¶ And the sons of Noah, that went forth of the ark, were Shem, and Ham, and Japheth: and Ham is the father of Canaan.
19 These are the three sons of Noah: and of them was the whole earth overspread.

God initiates a covenant⁴¹⁶ with Noah, his sons and his descendants, which includes us as we all are descended from Noah.

I used to think that I was the initiator and God was the responder,
 I was always trying to do things so that God would respond to me.
 I used to fast, in hopes that God would respond to my self-denial.
 I was taught that God blesses those who praise Him, so I would praise the Lord, in hopes of being blessed.
 I thought that somehow I could force God to respond to my wishes if I was faithful in my giving and devotions.
 I was seeking to earn God's favour.

What an eye opener to discover the grace of God and to realize His infinite love that causes Him to want to bless me. When this took place, I found myself responding to God. No longer praising God to receive a blessing but praising God because He had already given me His blessings. No longer serving God out of a sense of duty but as Paul said, "The love of Christ constrains me."

The difference between works and fruit. Works are my effort to get God to respond to me. Fruit is my response to the goodness and grace of God towards me

God creates a covenant with all people i.e. Jews and Gentiles. Later God establishes a covenant with Abraham, that he would be the one through whom the Messiah would come and therefore Abraham could be considered the first Jew.

This covenant is not conditional on man. God says, **"I establish My covenant with you."** He makes the agreement and seals it, in this case with a rainbow. I can image that every time it rained Noah and his children remembered the flood with fear and so God gives them a sign of reassurance. Isn't God amazing, reaching us where we are, weaknesses and all. In Revelation we see a rainbow around God's throne.

Here is a righteous, Holy God proving assurance to a sinful man. The Almighty God the creator of mankind makes a covenant with His creation, agreeing never to have a global flood again. As a side note this does not exclude local floods as we know from experience.

There is a phrase here that seems out of place, **Ham is the father of Canaan.** There are several thoughts about why Canaan is mentioned here but it is certainly linked to the curse that follows. We will look at that in the next passage.

⁴¹⁶ Webster's Dictionary defines covenant as a formal, solemn and binding, agreement.

**20 And Noah began to be an husbandman, and he planted a vineyard:
21 And he drank of the wine, and was drunken; and he was uncovered within his tent.
22 And Ham, the father of Canaan, saw the nakedness of his father, and told his two brethren without.
23 And Shem and Japheth took a garment, and laid it upon both their shoulders, and went backward, and covered the nakedness of their father; and their faces were backward, and they saw not their father's nakedness.
24 And Noah awoke from his wine, and knew what his younger son had done unto him.
25 And he said, Cursed be Canaan; a servant of servants shall he be unto his brethren.
26 And he said, Blessed be the LORD God of Shem; and Canaan shall be his servant.
27 God shall enlarge Japheth, and he shall dwell in the tents of Shem; and Canaan shall be his servant.**

Noah planted a vineyard, to cultivate the ground was an important part of life and here Noah is doing some of what mankind was called to do. The grapes were an important fruit, which could be dried and stored, providing raisins, sultanas and currants from different grape varieties. These are rich in fibre, potassium and antioxidants. Grape juice was also boiled to leave a syrup that could be stored and mixed with water later.

Grape juice left out will ferment and this provides a risk. Think about Noah, he has lost all his friends, His sport buddies etc. I bet he also was critical of himself, what if he tried harder to persuade his neighbour to believe. It must have been hard on Noah to remember all the people he grew up with, knowing that his preaching was unsuccessful in saving their lives. How will we feel in the kingdom knowing that most of the people we knew had not believed?

Whatever the cause, Noah got drunk and was lying uncovered in his tent. Drunkenness seems for so many, to be a small concern, what is wrong with a little party. The impact on health is one side but the other is the potential for serious harm. In Noah's case it creates an opening for sin in his son. It is written that the sins of the fathers are visited upon the children⁴¹⁷. We can also remember that a state of drunkenness leads to another act of incest in Genesis. This was when Lot's daughters deliberately got their father drunk to have children from him⁴¹⁸.

I stated that we can see Jesus on every page so where do we see Jesus here?

Adam ate the fruit which exposed his nakedness, and this resulted in a curse.

Noah drank the fruit of the vine which resulted in him exposing his nakedness and resulted in a curse on his descendants.

Jesus took upon Himself the fruit of our sin, was therefore naked on the cross braking the curse on mankind.

At first glance this passage seems to be a huge over reaction to a minor event. We have a man seeing another naked, something that happens in sports changing rooms every day. So there seems to be more going on here than just seeing His father in a state of undress. The word "saw the nakedness of his father" is a little more intense in the Hebrew and from what I have read it is not clear exactly what it means however the phrase is used later;

⁴¹⁷ Exodus 20:5; Ex 34:7; Num 14:18; Deut 5:9

⁴¹⁸ Genesis 19:30-35

And the man that lieth with his father's wife hath uncovered his father's nakedness.⁴¹⁹

This leads some support to the commentators who have put together the fact that Canaan was “cursed”, not Ham who committed the act, and theorised that Ham slept with his father's wife and Canaan was the result of this incest.

Scott Hahn states, '*Ham was trying to usurp his father's authority by sleeping with his mother. Perhaps that's why he told his brothers what he'd done, rather than keeping it a secret. This reflects a pattern found elsewhere in the Old Testament, especially where sons resent fathers for showing favor to siblings. For example, Jacob's son Reuben sought to undermine his (Jacob's) favored half-brother Joseph by taking his father's concubine - for which he received a paternal curse (see Gen 29:32; 35:22; 49:3-4). Likewise, Absalom resented the plans of his father, King David, to give the throne to one of his younger half-brothers, Solomon. In response, Absalom drove King David out of Jerusalem and then slept with his father's concubines - right in public - to signify his seizure of royal power...*'⁴²⁰

Professor F. L. Griffith has pointed out that the Egyptian god Akhmim or Menu may have been identified with Ham. He regards the characteristics of Menu as being in accord with the shamelessness of Ham⁴²¹ including his black skin. This Egyptian fertility god is linked to having a son with his own mother Isis.

What ever happened it is clear from the context that he was in rebellion against his father and went out and told his two brothers in such a way as to bring a reproach and disrespect upon his father Noah. Shem and Japheth were horrified at Noah's careless nakedness, Ham however, exploited the situation.

I think that two lessons that we need to take from this instance are;

1. Any sexual activity outside of marriage is sin and
2. Respect is important. While we might think it kind of cute that they walked in backwards I think that Shen and Japheth demonstrated great respect for their father and also for a desire to live a Holy life. So often we think that we can walk close to sin and avoid it while God's desire is that we stay far away from sin.

Sin is like a magnet if you stay far away the appeal is relatively weak however as you get closer, the greater the appeal. One can argue that this is a case with pornography which is very addictive. On the same theme, affairs are often caused by gradually getting close to someone of the opposite sex. Each step was a little bit closer and “acceptable” certainly to the world. Then there comes a point when the sin has not yet been committed but the ability to say no is extremely hard.

⁴¹⁹ Lev 20:11

⁴²⁰ Scott Hahn, A Father Who Keeps His Promises, p 87-88, 1998, See also Bergsma, J. S.; Hahn, S. W. (2005). "Noah's Nakedness and the Curse on Canaan (Genesis 9:20–27)".

⁴²¹ Genesis 9:20

We need to agree together to put barriers in place to protect ourselves from all and any sin. As Paul tells the Corinthians, Flee from Idolatry⁴²² and in a similar vein James tells us to Submit yourselves therefore to God, resist the devil, and he will flee from you⁴²³.

The message for us here is that sexual sin has wide ranging consequences. Ham, “saw his father’s nakedness” and Canaan is cursed. Later Canaan became the father of the Canaanites who apparently inherited the sexual morals of their grandfather, with a liking for incest and other forms of sexual perversion. Moses warned the Israelites not to adopt the sexual behaviour and practises of the Canaanites⁴²⁴. Today there is no nation of Canaan.

Another example is the incest of Lot's daughters with their father that led to the peoples of Edom, Moab and Ammon⁴²⁵ and these people too proved to be continual enemies of Israel.

The other side of this is the blessing for caring for others. Japheth's blessing is that he would be 'enlarged' - the descendants of Japheth are indeed very numerous and would not only include many 'western-types' but another branch of Japheth will be found among such races as the Chinese, Japanese and Indonesians; a *very* populous people.

Shem’s blessing is a little harder. “**Blessed be the LORD God of Shem**” is an odd thing to say when Noah knew there was one and only one God so the next verse may hold the clue;

God shall enlarge Japheth, and he shall dwell in the tents of Shem.

Given that the Hebrew then, did not have punctuation perhaps the comma should have been a full-stop (period) after Japheth. The sentence would then be “God will dwell in the tents of Shem” which God did as He dwelt in the tent Moses constructed and called the tabernacle.

28 ¶ And Noah lived after the flood three hundred and fifty years.

29 And all the days of Noah were nine hundred and fifty years: and he died.

Noah died shortly before Abraham was born and Seth was alive for 75 years with Abraham. No wonder Abraham understood God and the truth of creation. Faith comes by hearing the word of God⁴²⁶.

CHAPTER 10

1 Now these are the generations of the sons of Noah, Shem, Ham, and Japheth: and unto them were sons born after the flood.

2 The sons of Japheth; Gomer, and Magog, and Madai, and Javan, and Tubal, and Meshech, and Tiras.

3 And the sons of Gomer; Ashkenaz, and Riphath, and Togarmah.

4 And the sons of Javan; Elishah, and Tarshish, Kittim, and Dodanim.

⁴²² 1Cor 10:14

⁴²³ James 4:7

⁴²⁴ Leviticus 18:6-18 and Exodus 23:23-24. See also Gen 14 and Josh 9:27 when they were enslaved.

⁴²⁵ Genesis 19:36-38

⁴²⁶ Rom 10:17; see also Luke 8:18 and Mark 4:24

5 By these were the isles of the Gentiles divided in their lands; every one after his tongue, after their families, in their nations.
6 ¶ And the sons of Ham; Cush, and Mizraim, and Phut, and Canaan.
7 And the sons of Cush; Seba, and Havilah, and Sabtah, and Raamah, and Sabtecha: and the sons of Raamah; Sheba, and Dedan.
8 And Cush begat Nimrod: he began to be a mighty one in the earth.
9 He was a mighty hunter before the LORD: wherefore it is said, Even as Nimrod the 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.

Another list of names....⁴²⁷

The purpose of this list is to understand the nations and this chapter is often referred to as the table of nations. Before we start, we need to realise something about the ancient culture. Places were described by the families or descendants that lived there. This helps us because people call places by names that change over time. I went on holiday to a country called South West Africa and friends lived in Rhodesia, you will not find either of these countries on a current map because they have had their names changed. Another example is Sankt-Peterburg which became Petrograd in 1914, in 1924 it changed to Leningrad and in 1991 became Saint Petersburg. Later it was often referred to as Petersburg and now it is sometimes referred to as The Northern Capital. Place names are often lost to History, like Mt Ararat discussed earlier, but if we refer to areas where people settled we can have some confidence of the geographical location. A biblical example is when Jesus went to Sychar which was also known as “the plot of ground that Jacob gave to Joseph”⁴²⁸. If we are to understand the battle when Gog and Magog are joined together⁴²⁹, we can use this list to see the approximate area’s that the Bible refers to.

Starting in the order they are listed;

Shem, which means Name⁴³⁰. I assume with the meaning of “He will carry the (family) Name.” This possible meaning is supported by the order that Noah’s sons are listed when they are listed together⁴³¹ as the order that the biblical authors list the children is usually in order of importance⁴³². Shem may have been the middle son of the three⁴³³ probably born when Noah was 503⁴³⁴. As Abraham and Jesus came from Shem’s lineage, he is the most important for the Biblical message.

Other possible meaning for Shem is or dusky or dark

⁴²⁷ Decedents of Noah are also listed in 1Chr 1:5-27

⁴²⁸ John 4:5-6

⁴²⁹ Rev 20:8, see also Eze 38 and 39

⁴³⁰ a parallel to the Assy-Babylonian usage, in which "son," "name" (sumu) are synonyms (W. A. Inscriptions, V, plural 23, 11,29-32abc).

⁴³¹ Genesis 9:18; 10:1, etc

⁴³² Consider 1Chr 1:28 , Gen 5:3 and 1Chr 1:1

⁴³³ Gen 9:24 and Gen 10:21

⁴³⁴ Gen 5:32 gives Noah fathering at 500 years old and Gen 11:20 shows that Shen was 98 when the flood ended, Gen 7:6, 11 gives Noah’s age as 600 at the start of the flood so Shem was not the eldest. The meaning of Onkelos translated as elder in Gen 10:21 is usually translated as great, as in large, though it can mean older. See Gen 1:16 two “great” lights and the “greater” to rule the day; Gen 1:21 “Great” whales; Gen 4:13 my punishment is “greater” which is why some commentaries rely on order of naming to age the brothers.

Ham, the youngest of Noah's sons, probably means "black". In Hebrew and Arabic, the word chamam means "to be hot" and "to be black," Black being the colour wood goes when it has been hot (burnt).

I do want to mention here that there was an unfounded interpretation of the scripture that was held by many people for a long time that the curse was that Canaan became black, and thus that the black people were a subservient race. This was held for example some churches in South Africa and by the Mormons until recently—a black man could not become a priest in the Mormon Church.

This is a very unscriptural view. There's no basis for that at all. God has created all of us equal. And the colour of my skin has nothing to do with the character and the condition of my heart. We are all brothers or sisters and in Christ Jesus "there is neither Jew nor Greek, Barbarian, Scythian, bond or free: but Christ is all, and in all"⁴³⁵.

Japheth means "Fair" though it could mean "enlarge" as the root could come from "wide"

From a genetic perspective it seems that Noah had the genetic material for all peoples and his sons may have been names after their skin tones, I suppose an easy way to remember their names.

Peter states that 8 people were saved on the ark, Noah, his three sons and their respective wives.⁴³⁶

Japheth descendants are listed first with 7 sons of Japheth and then 7 grandsons

The immediate descendants

Passage name	Historic Nationality	Modern Equivalent
Gomer	Armenians Sumerians	Celtic
Magog	Lydians	Scythians, Slavs, Russians, Bulgarians, Bohemians, Poles, Slovaks, Croatians
Madai	Medes	Indians & Iranic: Medes, Persians, Afghans, Kurds
Javan	Greeks	Greece, Romans, French, Italians, Spanish, Portuguese
Tubal	Tibarenians	South of Black Sea
Mesech	Moschians	Russia, Moscow
Tiras	Tiras	Thracians, Teutons, Germans, Scandinavian, Anglo-Saxon, Jutes

Grand children

The sons of Gomer (Ashkenaz, Riphath and Togarmah) were all settled in the West Asian tract;

The sons of Javan (Elisah, Tarshish, Kittim and Dodanim or Rodanim) occupied the Mediterranean coast and the adjacent islands, including England.

⁴³⁵ Colossians 3:11

⁴³⁶ 1Pet 3:20

Ham's descendants

Israel also came into Egypt; and Jacob sojourned in the land of Ham.⁴³⁷

Ham's sons Name	Modern day country
Cush	Sudan, Ethiopia
Mitsrayim	Egypt
Phut	Libya
Canaan	Israel, Palestine, Lebanon, Western Jordan and Western Syria (Hivites, Jebusites, Arvadites, Girgashites, Amorites, Arkites, Sinites, Hittites, Sidonians, Perizzites, Zemarites)

In the end times it seems that Cush's descendants, Ethiopia plays a part giving a gift to Israel. Some believe that the Ark of the covenant is in Ethiopia.

Grand children;

sons of Cush;

Seba, Havilah, Sabtah, Raamah, Sabtecha & Nimrod

sons of Raamah; Sheba, and Dedan.

We stopped the section here to consider Nimrod. The translation here may be word correct but the meaning is not always correct.

The name Nimrod means "we will rebel" and he rebelled against God and His authority. He ruled around Assyria⁴³⁸ (Mesopotamia, Iraq)

There have been two views about the term a mighty hunter before the Lord. The first view is that he killed giant beasts. A dragon slayer if you will. Instead of nurturing the animals as Adam had been asked⁴³⁹, he was perhaps a trophy hunter.

An alternative view is that he hunted humans, not as a cannibal but as a dictator. The Jerusalem Targum says;

He was powerful in hunting and in wickedness before the Lord, for he was a hunter of the sons of men, and he said to them, "Depart from the judgement of the Lord, and adhere to the judgement of Nimrod!" Therefore, it is said: "As Nimrod the strong one, strong in hunting, and in wickedness before the Lord."

There is teaching around that Nimrod married Semiramis. When Nimrod, died Semiramis claimed that he became the sun god, and she conceived a son, claimed to be immaculate conception, naming him Tammuz but stating that he was Nimrod resurrected. She called herself the queen of heaven and was worshipped.

The story continues that they began to celebrate his resurrection by colouring eggs and having great festivities in the springtime of the year. The worship of Semiramis, queen of heaven with child in her arms and the sun behind her being Nimrod. It is claimed that this is the start of the pagan trinity.

⁴³⁷ Psalm 105:23, see also Psalm 106:22; 78:51

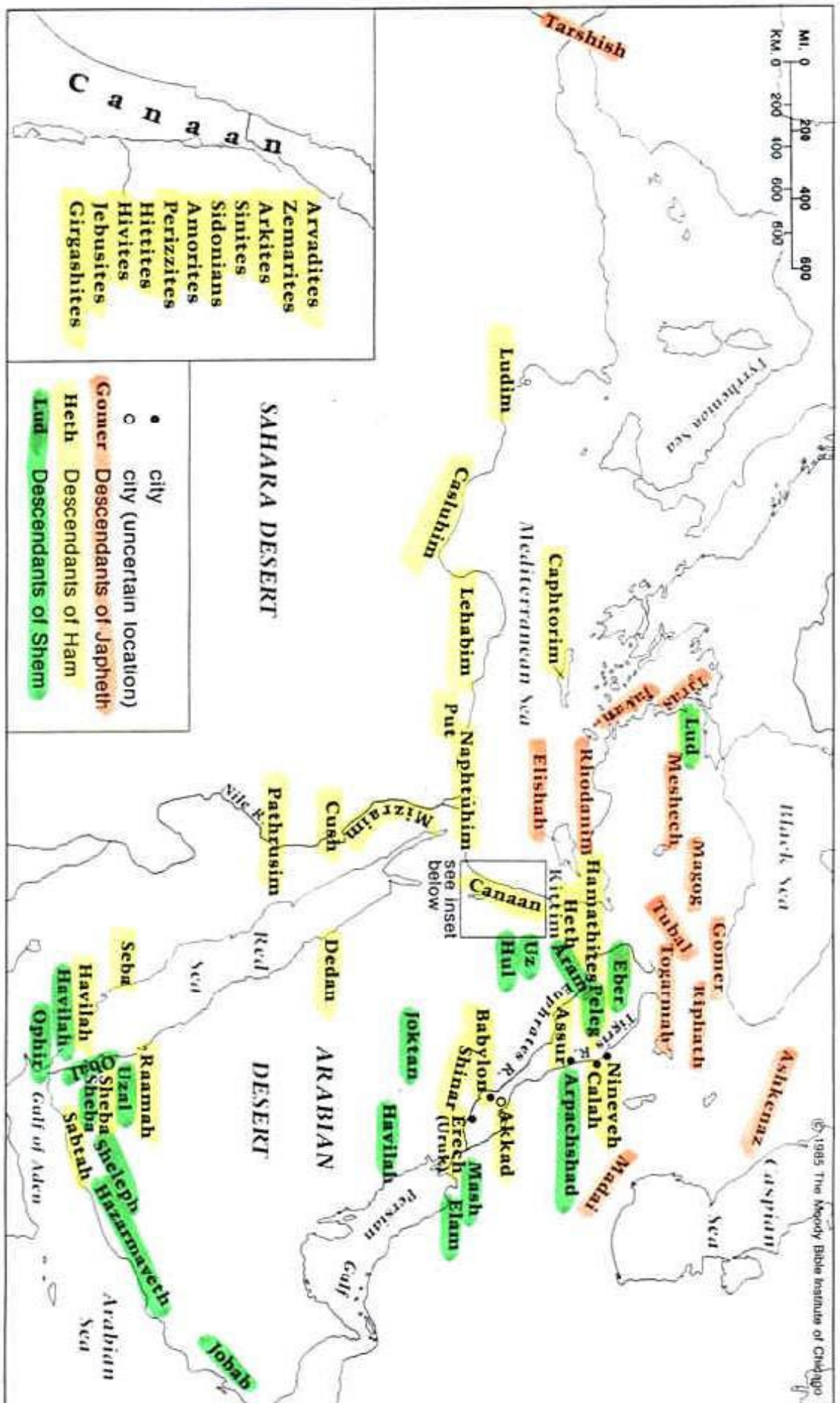
⁴³⁸ Micah 5:6

⁴³⁹ Gen 1:26

I mention it here for two reasons, firstly I would have assumed that if this really was the start of a significant anti-truth movement that the Bible might have a bit more to say. The lack of even a mention of Semiramis makes me think that the truth has been embellished. However, like many stories there may be some truth and Ezekiel⁴⁴⁰ expresses his "dismay" at an abomination of women weeping for Tammuz, a Mesopotamian god. A few verses further on the prophet sees a fourth vision in the inner court of the Temple, men with their backs toward the temple worshipping the sun. We also know that the Babylonian religious system that is referenced in the Bible as mystery Babylon⁴⁴¹.

⁴⁴⁰ Ezekiel 8:14-17

⁴⁴¹ See also Rev 17:5



**11 Out of that land went forth Asshur, and builded Nineveh, and the city Rehoboth, and Calah,
12 And Resen between Nineveh and Calah: the same is a great city.
13 And Mizraim begat Ludim, and Anamim, and Lehabim, and Naphtuhim,
14 And Pathrusim, and Casluhim, (out of whom came Philistim,) and Caphtorim.**

Verse 11 starts with Asshur leaving Babylon to build Nineveh on the upper Tigris North of Babylon. While Nineveh also became a rebellious city which Jonah preached too. Both Jonah and Noah are both prophetic⁴⁴². The fact that Asshur moved may mean that he tried to remain true to the God that Noah preached. If so, this gives more context to God sending Jonah to Nineveh, after all God is merciful to generations of those who love Him. Our faithfulness can bring God's blessing on our Children⁴⁴³.

**15 ¶ And Canaan begat Sidon his firstborn, and Heth,
16 And the Jebusite, and the Amorite, and the Girgasite,
17 And the Hivite, and the Arkite, and the Sinite,
18 And the Arvadite, and the Zemarite, and the Hamathite: and afterward were the families of the Canaanites spread abroad.
19 And the border of the Canaanites was from Sidon, as thou comest to Gerar, unto Gaza; as thou goest, unto Sodom, and Gomorrah, and Admah, and Zeboim, even unto Lasha.
20 These are the sons of Ham, after their families, after their tongues, in their countries, and in their nations.**

The Jebusites who inhabited the area around Jerusalem

The Sinites moved east to China and the Chinese are still called Sino people, for example the Sino-Japanese war.

We will now consider the family line of Shem. This list is longer than the others because this is the line that leads to Jesus, via Abraham and David.

**21 ¶ Unto Shem also, the father of all the children of Eber, the brother of Japheth the elder, even to him were children born.
22 The children of Shem; Elam, and Asshur, and Arphaxad, and Lud, and Aram.
23 And the children of Aram; Uz, and Hul, and Gether, and Mash.
24 And Arphaxad begat Salah; and Salah begat Eber.
25 And unto Eber were born two sons: the name of one was Peleg; for in his days was the earth divided; and his brother's name was Joktan.
26 And Joktan begat 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 And their dwelling was from Mesha, as thou goest unto Sephar a mount of the east.
31 These are the sons of Shem, after their families, after their tongues, in their lands, after their nations.**

⁴⁴² See also 1Pet 18-22

⁴⁴³ Isa 44:3; Pro 20:7; 1Cor 7:14

32 These are the families of the sons of Noah, after their generations, in their nations: and by these were the nations divided in the earth after the flood.

Askenaz: Germany

Riphat: Europe

Togarmah: Armenians, Turkey

Scythians: Russians

Shem's sons Name	Modern day country
Elam	Arabia
Asshur	Assyria
Lud	Lydians
Aram	Aramaic, Armenia, Mesopotamia, Syria
Arphaxad	From which Abraham descended

It is from Eber that we get the name Ibriy or the Hebrew, Abraham's family.

Jobab, could be Job after whom the book of Job was written.

Some have said that when it says that in the days of Peleg the earth was divided it refers to continental drift. I personally think that like verse 5, verse 20 and 31 it refers to the dividing of the people up into the earth. God had asked Noah to fill the earth but God had to muddle their languages to force them to be obedient. Much like the Jesus asking the disciples to go to all the earth and it took persecution and the death of Stephen for the disciples to go. Let us obey God freely rather than waiting for trouble to come our way.

Noah's prophetic blessing, on awakening from his wine, may be regarded as having been fulfilled in his descendants, who occupied Syria (Aramaic), Palestine (Canaan), Chaldea (Arpachshad), Assyria (Asshur), part of Persia (Elam), and Arabia (Joktan). In the first three of these, as well as in Elam, Canaanites had settled (if not in the other districts mentioned), but Shemites ruled, at some time or other, over the Canaanites, and Canaan thus became "his servant"⁴⁴⁴.

In this chapter, 70 names are listed. This is significant because there were 70 families that went to Egypt⁴⁴⁵, if you divide Psalms into the 5 books, as they were originally, you have the Bible with 70 books, Daniel described 70 weeks upon Israel. There were 70 members of the Jewish Sanhedrian, 70 scholars translated the Septuagint which Jesus quotes from, Moses wrote that man's life would be limited to 70 years and Moses went with 70 elders to meet with God⁴⁴⁶. The Babylon captivity was 70 years and the Romans destroyed the temple 70 years after Herod attempt to kill Jesus as a baby. We are told to forgive 70 times seven times.⁴⁴⁷

⁴⁴⁴ <https://www.internationalstandardbible.com/S/shem.html>. Genesis 9:25,26

⁴⁴⁵ Gen 46:27

⁴⁴⁶ Ex 24:1-9

⁴⁴⁷ Chuck Missler

CHAPTER 11

1 And the whole earth was of one language, and of one speech.

2 And it came to pass, as they journeyed from the east, that they found a plain in the land of Shinar; and they dwelt there.

3 And they said one to another, Go to, let us make brick, and burn them throughly. And they had brick for stone, and slime had they for mortar.

4 And they said, Go to, let us build us a city and a tower, whose top may reach unto heaven; and let us make us a name, lest we be scattered abroad upon the face of the whole earth.

Simplest item first, in verse 2 we notice that they journeyed from the east. This would imply that the Ark settled east of Babylon. This is different from where most people are looking for the Ark on Mount Ararat North, in Turkey. If the Ark is found, I expect it to be found east of Babylon in Iran. This travel direction makes sense too as they would have been traveling towards the higher rainfall area and therefore the more fertile area⁴⁴⁸.

From this passage we know that Noah's descendants travelled west till they found a fertile valley, here they named the two rivers they found after the rivers in Eden. The Tigrus and Euphrates, with Nineva on the Tigrus and Babylon on the Euphrates.

The whole earth was of one language. Here is one thing that evolutionists agree with. While there is much discussion of how long it took, most agree that it started with one people group with one language. Yet this is also a problem for evolutionists as it is hard to explain why humans are the only ones with language. A further confirmation that the Bible is accurate is that modern languages are simpler than the ancient ones. An example of Greek, before you could translate, "He Loved" into Greek you would need to identify which of the 8 words for love applies⁴⁴⁹. We would then need to understand all the issues with translating "He". For us to understand God's love we have the whole Bible, a love letter from God to us, and **God has spoken to us by His son.**⁴⁵⁰

Isaac Mozeson, author of "The Word: The Dictionary that reveals the Hebrew roots of the English Language" is convinced of this. He writes, "Percentage-wise and vocabulary-wise, English is more obviously a dialect of Hebrew than of Latin, Greek or French.

More impressive than the Hebrew motto of Yale College is the title of Harvard College's first dissertation: Hebrew Is the Mother Tongue. When Noah Webster's

⁴⁴⁸ <https://www.geocurrents.info/environmental-geography/dhofar-the-other-arabia/attachment/middle-east-rainfall-map>

⁴⁴⁹ ἔρως (érōs), passion, lust, physical love or sexual desire. The Bible uses eros for "marital love" because sex was intended for Marriage.

φιλία (philía), affectionate love.

ἀγάπη (agápē) unconditional, sacrificial love, willing to do anything for another, without expecting anything in return. Agape is often defined as "Christian love." agape is the word used to describe the love that God the Father and Jesus has for humanity.

στοργή (storgé) familial love.

μανία (manía) obsessive love.

ludus or ἐρωτοτροπία "game" or "play," which covers things like flirting, seduction, and casual sex.

πράγμα (prágma) is practical love. Pragma is love based on duty, obligation, or logic.

φιλαυτία (philautía), self-esteem (good) or hubris (bad)

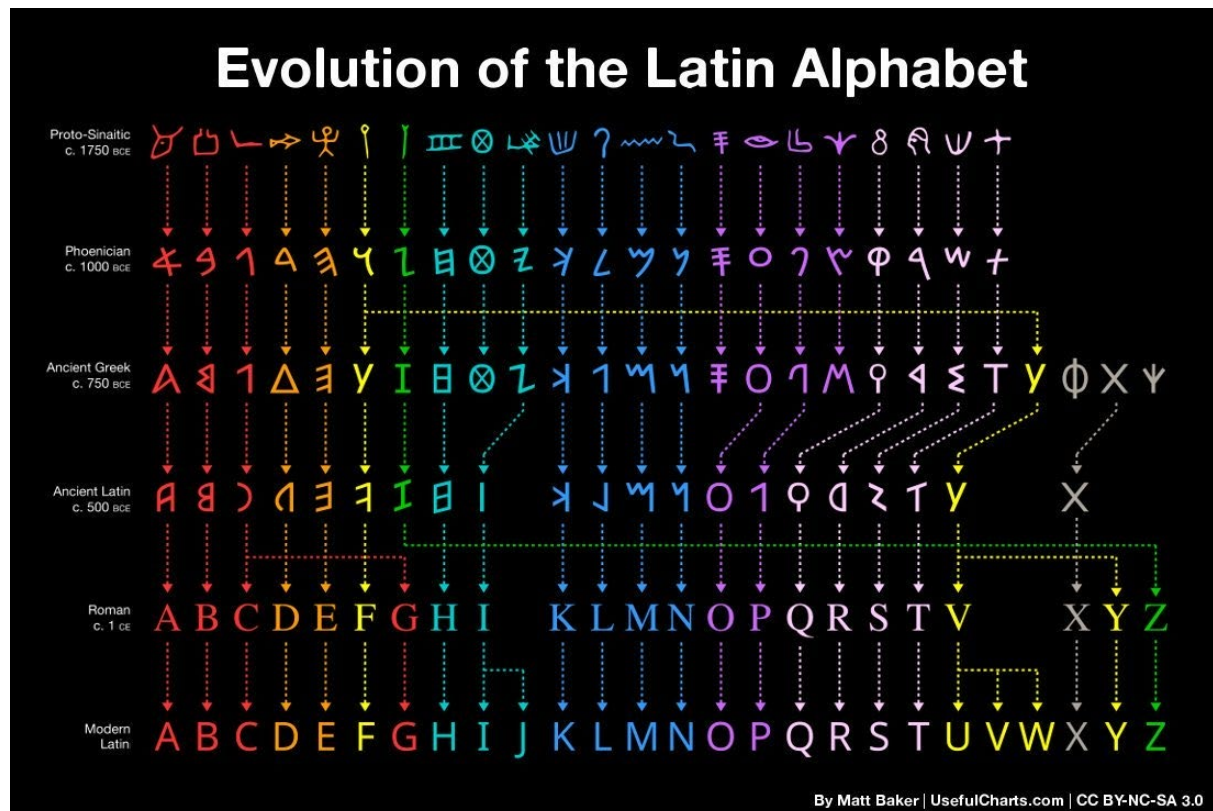
From <https://www.dictionary.com/e/greek-words-for-love/>

⁴⁵⁰ Heb 1:2

original dictionary traced many English words beyond German, French, Latin and Greek to their “Shemitic” origin, no one raised an eyebrow. Every learned person knew that Hebrew was the Mother Tongue.

The Oxford English Dictionary is so troubled by a biblical source for BABBLE (Babel), that it warns readers that “no direct connection with Babel can be traced” and declares the term to be of “unknown origin.””

We have also noted previously that the genealogy were Hebrew names that have Hebrew meanings. So, it is most likely that Hebrew was the original language⁴⁵¹.



We need to put aside the old opinion of a tower that man built to try and reach God. That opinion was based on the idea that ancient man was superstitious and without much understanding. Yes it would have been a tall tower possibly to be a land mark and also to proclaim the strength of the people⁴⁵², like cities today try and built the tallest tower. Let us consider the text;

Verse 1 : The Aramaic says, “Now the entire earth was of one language and uniform words.” The Jewish commentary that I was reading interprets this as meaning that they came together, nation together with nation, with one complaint against the Sole One of the world.

Go To⁴⁵³ : is an expression of preparation, meaning that they prepare themselves and join for work, or for counsel

⁴⁵¹ It is also possible though far less likely that the names were translated, like the American Indian names, “running bear”.

⁴⁵² Deut 1:28

⁴⁵³ Verse 3

Verse 4 wording states that “ and a tower with the heavens in the top.” It is thought that this means that the star charts were in the top. This is also supported by the last phrase, **lest we be scattered abroad upon the face of the whole earth.**

Most commentators believe that the tower was also an astrological observation tower, perhaps like Stonehenge. One of the things that is interesting is that the ancient cultures had an amazing understanding of the heavens. Stonehenge it seems could predict every solar eclipse for 300 years⁴⁵⁴ and the Romans had a very complex clockwork mechanism that tracked the heavenly bodies⁴⁵⁵ in detail that has only just been understood.

*And beware lest you raise your eyes to heaven, and when you see the sun and the moon and the stars, all the host of heaven, you be drawn away and bow down to them and serve them, which YHWH your Elohiym has allotted to all the peoples under the whole heaven. But YHWH has taken you and brought you out of the iron furnace, out of Egypt, to be a people of his own inheritance, as you are this day.*⁴⁵⁶

I believe that initially God had given man the stars as signs⁴⁵⁷ with names that described the Gospel, this is described as the Mazzeroth. We know this now, in its desecrated humanistic version, as the zodiac. Perhaps this tower was man’s first attempt to replace God’s redemption plan with a humanistic version. For example, God promised a virgin birth so Tammar faked a virgin birth to replace God’s saviour. God intended the stars to tell us about the spiritual seasons and proclaim Christ’s coming. Instead, we now have astrology and stargazers who claim that the stars govern their lives, essentially worshipping the stars. God speaks out heavily against those who worship the stars.

Zodiac Interpretations		
Constellation	Picture	Interpretations
Virgo	Virgin	Virgin Mary
Libra	Scales	Sin must be paid for
Scorpius	Scorpion	Sin brings death
Sagittarius	archer	Demonism
Capricorn	Goat-fish	Earth corruption
Aquarius	Water pourer	Living water or Noah's flood
Pisces	Fish	God's remnant
Aries	Ram	Sacrifice
Taurus	Bull	Resurrection
Gemini	Twins	Christ's dual nature

⁴⁵⁴ <https://blog.stonehenge-stone-circle.co.uk/2017/01/04/stonehenge-eclipse-predictor/> see also Singapore University's Department of Mathematics has a web page: PREDICTING ECLIPSES WITH THE STONEHENGE

⁴⁵⁵ https://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/Antikythera_mechanism

⁴⁵⁶ Deuteronomy 4:19-20

⁴⁵⁷ Gen 1:14, see also description there and in commentary on Matthew's Gospel.

Cancer	Crab	Gathering of redeemed
Leo	Lion	The King

It is amazing how we can see God in everything if we look past the humanistic distortions. As Romans states man is without excuse because creation proclaims the truth⁴⁵⁸.



I found this photo and it reminded me of the Exodus when the spies came back from spying out the land carrying a bunch of grapes on a pole between them⁴⁵⁹. Another “unbelievable Bible statement proved to be possible. (Yes there is some perspective here making the bunch look even bigger but it is still too big for one person to carry.)

We can also see the rebellion from God in the last phrase, Noah had been told to fill the earth, these people did not want to spread out and built the tower to prevent God’s call. My guess is that the language implies that they knew God’s call and that God would spread them out and the tower is a deliberate attempt to counter God’s intension for them to spread out, **lest we be scattered.**

For us we should remember that God’s call may seem hard but when we get there it is not grievous. On the other hand, as we will see the consequence of going against God’s wishes is far worse. In this case they only needed to expand but by trying to block God’s call their language was muddled so they could no longer fellowship at all.

Some of the commentators believe that Nimrod had gathered an army and controled the relatives around him. What ever happened there does seem to be a bit of jealousy of the Hamites towards the Shemites. Verse 4 states, '*let us make us a name*' is intriguing since the Hebrew for 'name' here is actually 'Shem'. It would seem that this passage is implying Nimrod also wanted *his people* to become great and famous! So this city and tower were constructed in opposition to the family line which God was using!

Nimrod was using this structure to teach a separation from God. No longer did anyone have to deal with God directly. One only needs to let Nimrod do it for you at the top of his tower. Magic, astrology, numerology, augury, etc. all had their beginning here. As a way for people to tell the future without God.

⁴⁵⁸ Rom 1:20

⁴⁵⁹ Num 13:23

Isn't this a familiar, you don't need to go God, I will go for you. Don't worry about reading the Bible, come and listen to a Sunday sermon and I will explain what you need to know. Come to "me" for prayer/healing and I will talk to God for you. We keep being told that someone else can do it for us, Jesus tells us to come to him as He is the only one, there is no other name by which we can be saved.

I do not believe that Nimrod believed that he could physically reach God, this seems to me to be a pride issue. It is pride that is the root of evil and how easy it ensnares us. I can say that I often try to make a name for myself. There is nothing wrong with wanting to do ones best but when it is at the expense of someone else, it is pride showing itself.

We commented on Nimrod last week, he was later worshiped as Marduk. Marduk's image is on many of the bricks in the Babylon that Saddam Hussein was building. One of the articles that I read stated that Saddam put his writing on new bricks that he was using to repair Babylon. Note also that they were technologically advanced, they did not live in caves or rock houses but they made good bricks. In fact, the bricks that Saddam was making are, apparently, starting to break up while old ones are still strong.

5 And the LORD came down to see the city and the tower, which the children of men builded.

6 And the LORD said, Behold, the people is one, and they have all one language; and this they begin to do: and now nothing will be restrained from them, which they have imagined to do.

7 Go to, let us go down, and there confound their language, that they may not understand one another's speech.

8 So the LORD scattered them abroad from thence upon the face of all the earth: and they left off to build the city.

9 Therefore is the name of it called Babel; because the LORD did there confound the language of all the earth: and from thence did the LORD scatter them abroad upon the face of all the earth.

We're describing the activities of God in human terms Of course God is omnipresent and He was watching the whole time.

[This is] in the Midrash of Rabbi Tanchuma.

And the Lord descended to see: He did not need to do this, except to teach, not to condemn a defendant, until they see [the case] and understand [it].

the sons of man: But the sons of whom else [could they have been]? The sons of donkeys and camels? Rather, [this refers to] the sons of the first man, who was ungrateful. These, too, were ungrateful in rebelling against the One Who lavished goodness upon them, and saved them from the Flood⁴⁶⁰.

This passage is also full of contrasts.

- They said, "**Come, let us build,**" and God countering with, "**Come, let us descend.**" Another reference to the trinity. This is the root of most religions; they work to reach God. Christianity is the opposite, God did the work in order to reach us.

⁴⁶⁰ Gen. Rabbah 38:9

- Humans joined to oppose God⁴⁶¹, God scattered and they then opposed each other. This is what Solomon said, “The dread of a wicked man-that will befall him.”⁴⁶²
- They localised God with a sacred tower⁴⁶³, God in omnipresent.
- They wanted to remain united against God, but all of man’s attempts end in babel, confusion.
- Humans joined to make an everlasting name for themselves and the Mishnah teaches that the phrase “scattered them” means that they have no share in the world to come⁴⁶⁴.
- were scattered
- Rather than finding peace with God, there is a striving within with fears and superstitions.
- God confused the languages to reduce evil planning, but after Jesus’ resurrection He gave the gift of tongues to allow the gospel to go out to all nations, races and languages⁴⁶⁵.

To equate Christianity with anything other than life in Christ is wrong. Jesus did the opposite of what man did here, Jesus reached forth and touched people. And as many as he touched were made whole.⁴⁶⁶

In 539BC Babylon fell without battle, Saddam Hussain, who saw himself as a modern reincarnation of Nebuchadnezzar started rebuilding Babylon in the 1980’s, yet it is prophesied to be uninhabited⁴⁶⁷. From what I can tell no one lives there as prophesied though it is a tourist destination.

The expression, **Nothing that they propose to do will be withheld from them** is challenging, what was God expecting them to do. Perhaps if Nimrod could have conquered the entire population, he could have killed all the God fearing people. This then asks, which sins were worse, those of the Generation of the Flood or those of this generation of the Tower of Babel. In the Flood they did not stretch forth their hands against God, whereas this generation did, to wage war against Him. So why did the flood drown the those but here they were not killed just scattered.

There are two views, the first is that these people were working together and therefore behaved with love and friendship among themselves. Therefore, the lesson of this comparison is that discord is hateful, and that peace is great.

The other alternative that I hold to is that the flood was to destroy the genetic damage done by the fallen angels. The lesson would then be that God is long suffering towards man and desires that none should perish. He demonstrates this by teaching them and giving them another chance.

⁴⁶¹ Verse 4 lest we be scattered

⁴⁶² Prov. 10:24

⁴⁶³ . Other examples are the Woman at the well, John 4:12, Establishing of sacred places/objects

⁴⁶⁴ Mishnah Sanh. 107b

⁴⁶⁵ Acts 2:4

⁴⁶⁶ Matt 14:36, Mark 6:56

⁴⁶⁷ Isa 13:19-22, Jeremiah 50, 51

Many commentators state that the root of all false religion starts here in Babylon, the Mother of Harlots and abomination of the earth⁴⁶⁸.

The summary could be, do not to try and make a name for ourselves but rather put ourselves in a place where God touches us.

10 ¶ These are the generations of Shem:

Shem was an hundred years old, and begat Arphaxad two years after the flood:

11 And Shem lived after he begat Arphaxad five hundred years, and begat sons and daughters.

12 And Arphaxad lived five and thirty years, and begat Salah:

13 And Arphaxad lived after he begat Salah four hundred and three years, and begat sons and daughters.

14 And Salah lived thirty years, and begat Eber:

15 And Salah lived after he begat Eber four hundred and three years, and begat sons and daughters.

16 And Eber lived four and thirty years, and begat Peleg:

17 And Eber lived after he begat Peleg four hundred and thirty years, and begat sons and daughters.

18 And Peleg lived thirty years, and begat Reu:

19 And Peleg lived after he begat Reu two hundred and nine years, and begat sons and daughters.

20 And Reu lived two and thirty years, and begat Serug:

21 And Reu lived after he begat Serug two hundred and seven years, and begat sons and daughters.

22 And Serug lived thirty years, and begat Nahor:

23 And Serug lived after he begat Nahor two hundred years, and begat sons and daughters.

24 And Nahor lived nine and twenty years, and begat Terah:

25 And Nahor lived after he begat Terah an hundred and nineteen years, and begat sons and daughters.

26 And Terah lived seventy years, and begat Abram, Nahor, and Haran.

27 ¶ Now these are the generations of Terah: Terah begat Abram, Nahor, and Haran; and Haran begat Lot.

28 And Haran died before his father Terah in the land of his nativity, in Ur of the Chaldees.

29 And Abram and Nahor took them wives: the name of Abram's wife was Sarai; and the name of Nahor's wife, Milcah, the daughter of Haran, the father of Milcah, and the father of Iscah.

30 But Sarai was barren; she had no child.

31 And Terah took Abram his son, and Lot the son of Haran his son's son, and Sarai his daughter in law, his son Abram's wife; and they went forth with them from Ur of the Chaldees, to go into the land of Canaan; and they came unto Haran, and dwelt there.

32 And the days of Terah were two hundred and five years: and Terah died in Haran.

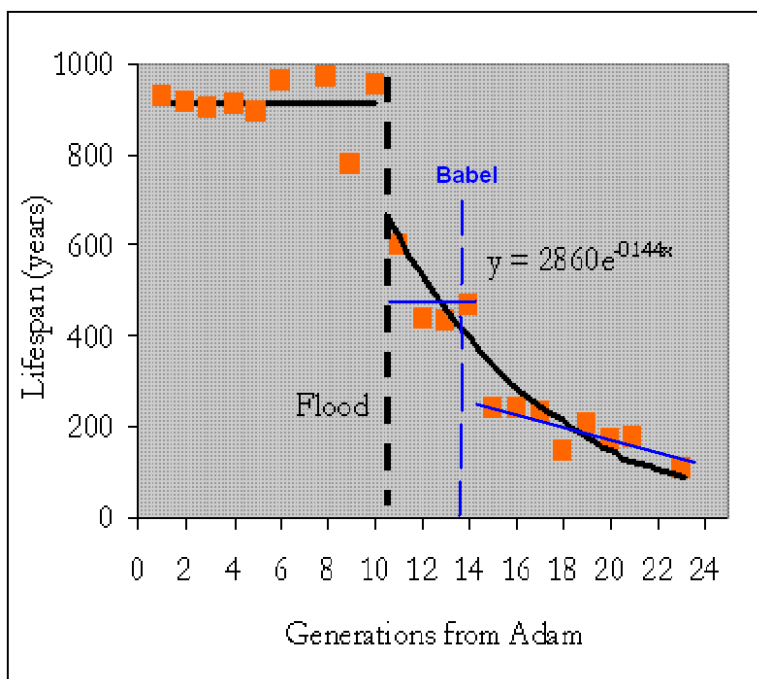
As we described earlier, Genesis is a collection of accounts and here we have the end of Terah's account, up to verse 27, with the start of Abrahams history.

⁴⁶⁸ Rev 17:5

Here we get another genealogy but this time it only gives us detail on Abram's family line from Shem. Terah may have had other sons as the ones listed here are all linked to the lineage that leads to the Messiah, Jesus who will be born. Abram is referenced directly, but Haran is indirectly linked as his two children join his brothers family when he dies. Abram adopts Lot while Nahor marries Haran's daughter Milcah, who would give birth to Rebekah's. Rebekah would marry Isaac Abram's son.

We can also use this section to calculate that while the flood was around 2350 BC and at this point in history we are 101 years later. With estimated births, there could have been 9000 people on the earth when the tower was built and at the time of Abraham there could have been as many as 300 Million.

We can also see an interesting change in the life expectancies. During the flood there was a major decline in life expectancy, and here there is also a drop in life expectancy after the tower was built.



Here we meet Abram. Abram is described as the Father of the faithful⁴⁶⁹ and Friend of God⁴⁷⁰, being mentioned 74 times in New Testament and is venerated in all three major religions: Christianity, Judaism and Islam.

Terah has three children and as we have discussed previously the Bible often lists the children in order of importance and not always age. Therefore, we cannot be certain who was the

⁴⁶⁹ Heb 11:8

⁴⁷⁰ James 2:23, the Disciples also were described as friends of God in Jn 15:15 and this title seems to be associated with Prophetic Privilege

eldest, Abram, Nahor or Haran⁴⁷¹. Abram marries Sarai, his half sister⁴⁷², while Nahor marries his niece. This seems wrong to us but given the limited number of people on the earth and the pure genetics it was not an issue for them. It is an example of the importance of reading the Bible in context rather than assuming current culture.

Terah then takes Abram, Sarai and Lot away from the false religious system at Ur of the Chaldees and heads towards Canaan. Jewish tradition states that King Nimrod of Ur tried to have young Abraham burned alive for refusing to worship local gods.⁴⁷³ I do not know what happened to Nahor, perhaps he got too interested in false religion or perhaps he died. Terah then dies still in Haran, about 600 miles⁴⁷⁴ from Ur of the Chaldeans. Haran like Ur was also known for its worship of the moon god⁴⁷⁵ so perhaps like Lot's wife, Terah initially agreed to go to Canaan but then could not let go of the moon worship.

To understand more of this we need to go to the New Testament where Stephen fills in some gaps. The New Testament tells us that Abram was called from Ur to Canaan⁴⁷⁶. We also learn that Terah started the journey from Ur but then stayed in Haran so perhaps Terah heard God's call or perhaps he recognised Abram's call or perhaps Terah saw the truth and now he had to get away from sin. Abram continued on to Canaan without his father who is described as dying in Haran.

There are two possibilities here, either;

The description here is of a spiritual death, where Terah didn't want to leave the comfortable lifestyle in the fertile valley, much like Lot's wife did not want to leave Sodom⁴⁷⁷.

The alternative is that Abram hesitated in following God's call and rather than leave Terah as God had asked, he waited until Terah died.

Either way we see that these are real people, like us they made mistakes. Despite their mistakes and human frailties God still loved them and walked with them. This theme of not being perfect will be repeated, but God remained faithful to Abram. It is an encouragement to me knowing that God's love is greater than my failings.

The New Testament writers give Abraham as an example of faith not because he was perfect, but because after starting like us he grew in faith. God is not focused on your past. God is thinking about your potential and what you can become. Abraham grew in faith till he had such a great friendship with God that he is called the father of those who believe.

Trust in the Lord with all your heart, lean not on your understanding ... and He will direct your path⁴⁷⁸.

⁴⁷¹ Putting together the times, Terah had his first child at 70, Abram was 75 when he left Haran, but Abram left Haran after Terah died. Therefore either Abram was not the eldest, but born 60 years after the eldest or the reference to Terah dying in Haran is a spiritual death similar to Matt 8:21-22

⁴⁷² Gen 20:12

⁴⁷³ <https://factsanddetails.com/world/cat55/3sub1/item1393.html>

⁴⁷⁴ <https://factsanddetails.com/world/cat55/3sub1/item1393.html>

⁴⁷⁵ [https://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/Sin_\(mythology\)](https://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/Sin_(mythology))

⁴⁷⁶ Acts 7:2

⁴⁷⁷ Gen 19:26

⁴⁷⁸ Prov 3:5-6

CHAPTER 12

1 Now the LORD had said unto Abram, Get thee out of thy country, and from thy kindred, and from thy father's house, unto a land that I will shew thee:

2 And I will make of thee a great nation, and I will bless thee, and make thy name great; and thou shalt be a blessing:

3 And I will bless them that bless thee, and curse him that curseth thee: and in thee shall all families of the earth be blessed.

4 So Abram departed, as the LORD had spoken unto him; and Lot went with him: and Abram was seventy and five years old when he departed out of Haran.

5 And Abram took Sarai his wife, and Lot his brother's son, and all their substance that they had gathered, and the souls that they had gotten in Haran; and they went forth to go into the land of Canaan; and into the land of Canaan they came.

The Promises;

- I will make you a great Nation. Abram became the father of Israel and ultimately Christians as the father of our faith.
- I will make your name great. Abram who became Abraham is venerated in all three major religions, Christianity, Judaism and Islam.
- In you will all the families of earth be blessed. The only way that I can think of for this promise to be fulfilled is for the Yahshua ha Mashiach, Jesus the Messiah to be born from Abram's descendants.

The next promise is also interesting, it has been said that this promise can still be witnessed. When Britain was one of the world's superpowers they promised the land of Israel as a Jewish home land in 1917 but did not fulfil the promise till 1947, during that time Britain lost significant influence in the world. Hitler and Germany did their best to exterminate the Jews and ultimately lost the war and collapsed economically. The USA has until recently been very supportive of Israel and remained a superpower with great wealth. The USA's support of Israel has declined significantly in recent years and so has their domination. I mention this because God's promises are eternal, we can trust them because God is faithful.

God called Abraham leave his family and move to what is now called Israel, west of Ur of the Chaldeans. Now Abraham did not do exactly what God asked him but he did take a step of faith.

And he said, Men, brethren, and fathers, hearken; The God of glory appeared unto our father Abraham, when he was in Mesopotamia, before he dwelt in Charran, (Haran) And said unto him, Get thee out of thy country, and from thy kindred, and come into the land which I shall shew thee. Then came he out of the land of the Chaldaeans, and dwelt in Charran: and from thence, when his father was dead, he removed him into this land, wherein ye now dwell. And he gave him none inheritance in it, no, not so much as to set his foot on: yet he promised that he would give it to him for a possession, and to his seed after him, when as yet he had no child.⁴⁷⁹

As we saw in the previous chapter, Abram moved upriver with his father, the easy way to get to Canaan. Haran may have been where Abram's bother, Haran lived, as we discussed a couple of weeks back places were generally named after people. Therefore, this move may have been to support Haran's family after his death rather than obedience to God's call. We

⁴⁷⁹ Acts 7:2-5

could say this was a small step, but the point is that Abram started to move. God can work with us when we start to move. We could say that Abram started out well, leaving Ur but then got stuck in Haran. Sometimes we get stuck on the way when God calls, this hesitation does not stop God's call, like Abram, you too can get back on track to God's plans for you.

One way to explain this is in learning to ride a bike. You will never learn by looking at the bicycle. You need to get on and start with a soft place in case you fall. It is the same with faith, we learn when we step out.

God told Lynn and I to move and so we took a small step, we put a conditional offer in on the place we felt called to and put our house on the market. For us it was not a huge step, but we stepped out as far as we could. Since then, we have seen some amazing miracles supporting the call and our faith has grown so that we could take bigger and bigger steps. We have not moved in yet, but Lynn and I have faith that God will complete the work He has begun.

Abram started with a small step. First, he moved a little way upriver with his father. Then he moved further on his own because his faith was stronger. All through Abraham's life I see this growth taking place, small steps to start with and then bigger and bigger ones as he learnt to see God at work.

I want you to notice something here. Abram was given a command and a promise. The promise was unconditional. God promised to make Abram great, and God did, even though Abram did not really do what he was told, Abram waited until his father was dead rather than leave his father as he was told too. So many of God's promises to us are unconditional even though we fear that God cannot bless us because we are sinful.

Consider a doctor who goes on a mission trip to a village to heal the sick. The Doctor is delighted when people come for healing. Some come with stab wounds from fighting, some with rotting teeth from too much sugar, others with septic cuts because they did not clean them. The doctor does not refuse to heal the sinners, he enjoys the opportunity to bring relief and healing. Of course, the doctor hopes that his healing will reduce the fighting and that his advice will reduce further sickness, but his work does not require perfect patients. The doctors joy comes from being able to help. How much more does our perfect Father, God, long to heal you and me. God calls us while we are still sinners, He loves us while we do stupid things, and he delights when we come to Him as we are.

The Story of Abraham is filled with bad choices, it is the story of a struggle between flesh and Spirit. However more importantly it is the story of a faithful, ever-loving God who looked after Abram despite his weakness and poor choices. You too have the same perfect Father and His ever-loving son Jesus to care for and be with you.

Read the passage again and notice the four times that God says, "I will."

I will... I will... I will... I will, God's ability equals His willingness. Abraham didn't ask for a new country, to be a great nation, to have a great name, etc. This was God's idea. Abraham didn't dream all of this up by his great tough-mindedness or clever meditation. God had plans to give Abram prosperity, hope and a future⁴⁸⁰. God has plans for you too, will you also accept God's offer for your future?

⁴⁸⁰ Jer 29:11

Accepting God's call would not have been easy for Abram. Leaving his family, his father's house, was a break in tradition, they stayed together for protection. Here, God is asking him to pick up everything and move. God is not telling him exactly where he should go. Abraham didn't say "that's nuts!" he followed the Word of the Lord, when he was 75 years old and left Haran. Abraham took action on the promises of God. The delay, like our sin, was blotted out⁴⁸¹.

An interesting aspect of these promises is how they are the opposite of earthly wisdom. In those days people stayed close to family because family helped provide the opportunity to have children, financial stability and reputation or Fame. God promises all of these things to Abram, essentially saying obey me and

**Delight yourself also in the Lord,
And He shall give you the desires of your heart.**⁴⁸²

Verse 5 states that Abram took Sarai and Lot, implying that Abram demonstrated Love by adopting his nephew Lot, when his brother, Lot's father had died earlier.

6 ¶ And Abram passed through the land unto the place of Sichem, unto the plain of Moreh. And the Canaanite was then in the land.

7 And the LORD appeared unto Abram, and said, Unto thy seed will I give this land: and there builded he an altar unto the LORD, who appeared unto him.

8 And he removed from thence unto a mountain on the east of Beth-el, and pitched his tent, having Beth-el on the west, and Hai on the east: and there he builded an altar unto the LORD, and called upon the name of the LORD.

9 And Abram journeyed, going on still toward the south.

10 ¶ And there was a famine in the land: and Abram went down into Egypt to sojourn there; for the famine was grievous in the land.

11 And it came to pass, when he was come near to enter into Egypt, that he said unto Sarai his wife, Behold now, I know that thou art a fair woman to look upon:

12 Therefore it shall come to pass, when the Egyptians shall see thee, that they shall say, This is his wife: and they will kill me, but they will save thee alive.

13 Say, I pray thee, thou art my sister: that it may be well with me for thy sake; and my soul shall live because of thee.

To start this passage, we have Abram moving about the land. The people moved about to keep their flocks fed. God appears to Abram and promises to give him the land. After building an altar Abram heads up to a high place with great views between Bethel and Hai where Abram builds another altar. I can almost sense Abram's confidence going up the mountain to survey the land that God is giving him, building an altar in his triumph. Then the famine comes. God's call is sure but so are the challenges.

This place that Abram built the altar is close to Jerusalem and some believe that it was the same place that he returns to sacrifice his son and also the place where the second Temple was

⁴⁸¹ Heb 11:8

⁴⁸² Psalm 37:4

constructed. As an aside many believe that the dome of the rock is not built on this spot but close to it.

Abram goes to Egypt, not specifically contrary to God's call but certainly not God's intention. Then on the way, Abram realises that going to Egypt is risky and he deceives the Egyptians.

Isn't this just like us, we are faithful and good Christians until trouble comes, then we compromise. Not too long into the compromise we start to sin. Hence why we are regularly reminded to pursue righteousness. If we are always focused on faith, love and peace we will not compromise.⁴⁸³

No temptation has overtaken you that is not common to man. God is faithful, and he will not let you be tempted beyond your ability, but with the temptation he will also provide the way of escape, that you may be able to endure it.⁴⁸⁴

It is possible that the famine in the land was intended to challenge Abram, whether he would trust God or lose faith. We too will face challenges in our walk with God, we grow when things are difficult not when life is easy⁴⁸⁵.

Have you noticed how the organised church tends to teach people to be like the Pharisees. Congregants are taught to pray, read the Bible, pay tithes and have fellowship. These are all things that the pharisees do well. But the one thing that sets Christ and Christians apart is Love. Perhaps we should spend more time teaching people to care for others, to support the needy and to Love out neighbours. Put another way let us teach people to, **bind up the broken hearted to heal the sick and to set the captives free.**⁴⁸⁶

Abram asked Sarai to lie as he was afraid. Abram had already been given a promise by God that his sons would inherit the land of Canaan and that God would curse those who Cursed Abram. As Abram was childless at this point, God in fact promising to keep Abram alive, as Abram was afraid. What about Sarai, while it was technically true that Sarai was Abram's sister she was being asked to go contrary to God's law by deceiving. In addition, this action had a high chance that Sarai would be taken and essentially raped. Sarai followed Abram's request and obeyed him.

To me this is an amazing contrast, Abram's fear and Sarai's faith. Sarai trusted that God would protect her as she demonstrated Love, Faith and set Abram free from his fear.

For after this manner in the old time the holy women also, who trusted in God, adorned themselves, being in subjection unto their own husbands: Even as Sara obeyed Abraham, calling him lord: whose daughters ye are, as long as ye do well, and are not afraid with any amazement.⁴⁸⁷

While the church often focuses on Abraham, I think this passage makes it clear that Sarai's faith, Love and obedience to God's way empowered Abram. Abram succeeded because Sarai supported him and demonstrated Faith. As the passage above shows God values both partners and the success of the family depended on both partners, two are stronger than one. So don't assume that because men are preached from the pulpit that God does not value women.

⁴⁸³ James 4:7; 1Tim 1:7; Phil 4:8; 2Tim 2:22; 1Cor 6:11, 18; 1Tim 6:11-12

⁴⁸⁴ 1Cor 10:13

⁴⁸⁵ Pirkei d'Rabbi Eliezer , ch. 26

⁴⁸⁶ Isa 61:1; Luke 4:18, see also Matt 11:5

⁴⁸⁷ 1Pet 3:5-6

Do I have the faith to follow Sarai's lead, risking all to Love my family, demonstrate Faith in a faithful God and set them free from their fears? To be honest I think I am more like Abram than Sarai and I need to grow my faith by being obedient in small steps and loving as Jesus loved us.

14 ¶ And it came to pass, that, when Abram was come into Egypt, the Egyptians beheld the woman that she was very fair.

15 The princes also of Pharaoh saw her, and commended her before Pharaoh: and the woman was taken into Pharaoh's house.

16 And he entreated Abram well for her sake: and he had sheep, and oxen, and he asses, and menservants, and maidservants, and she asses, and camels.

17 And the LORD plagued Pharaoh and his house with great plagues because of Sarai Abram's wife.

18 And Pharaoh called Abram, and said, What is this that thou hast done unto me? why didst thou not tell me that she was thy wife?

19 Why saidst thou, She is my sister? so I might have taken her to me to wife: now therefore behold thy wife, take her, and go thy way.

20 And Pharaoh commanded his men concerning him: and they sent him away, and his wife, and all that he had.

There is a view that a better translation of verse 17 is **And the LORD plagued Pharaoh and his house with great plagues because of Sarai's words.**⁴⁸⁸

This would make sense of the narrative, how else would Pharaoh understand what is happening and why would Pharaoh not just kill Abram as Abram predicted, particularly now that Pharaoh had been lied too. It makes sense that Sarai is prophesying to Pharaoh, you are holding me captive, so this punishment is coming upon you. Just as God promised to Abram and Sarai, I will bless those who bless you (Abram's family) and curse those who curse you.

Pharaoh is justifiably angry and fearful. He throws Abram out of Egypt and warns his men. Sadly, we will see that Abram does not learn much from this experience and repeats it with Abimelech in the next chapter.

When the famine came Abram followed the earthly way, go where there is still water, while God wanted him to follow the spiritual way and trust in Him (God). However, God is still gracious, understanding of human weakness and merciful. God still looks after Abram proving that He has the power to protect.

This section is also prophetic; Abram went to Egypt rather than trusting God. The Egyptians suffer plagues before God's people leave. This pattern is repeated with Joseph going to Egypt due to his brother's sin and then Moses leads the Israelites out after the plagues. The Jesus goes to Egypt due to King Herod's sin, but Jesus takes our sin upon himself coming back to the promise land.

⁴⁸⁸ Tan. Lech Lecha 5

CHAPTER 13

1 And Abram went up out of Egypt, he, and his wife, and all that he had, and Lot with him, into the south.

2 And Abram was very rich in cattle, in silver, and in gold.

3 And he went on his journeys from the south even to Beth-el, unto the place where his tent had been at the beginning, between Beth-el and Hai;

4 Unto the place of the altar, which he had made there at the first: and there Abram called on the name of the LORD.

5 ¶ And Lot also, which went with Abram, had flocks, and herds, and tents.

6 And the land was not able to bear them, that they might dwell together: for their substance was great, so that they could not dwell together.

7 And there was a strife between the herdmen of Abram's cattle and the herdmen of Lot's cattle: and the Canaanite and the Perizzite dwelled then in the land.

8 And Abram said unto Lot, Let there be no strife, I pray thee, between me and thee, and between my herdmen and thy herdmen; for we be brethren.

9 Is not the whole land before thee? separate thyself, I pray thee, from me: if thou wilt take the left hand, then I will go to the right; or if thou depart to the right hand, then I will go to the left.

10 And Lot lifted up his eyes, and beheld all the plain of Jordan, that it was well watered every where, before the LORD destroyed Sodom and Gomorrah, even as the garden of the LORD, like the land of Egypt, as thou comest unto Zoar.

11 Then Lot chose him all the plain of Jordan; and Lot journeyed east: and they separated themselves the one from the other.

12 Abram dwelled in the land of Canaan, and Lot dwelled in the cities of the plain, and pitched his tent toward Sodom.

13 But the men of Sodom were wicked and sinners before the LORD exceedingly.

14 ¶ And the LORD said unto Abram, after that Lot was separated from him, Lift up now thine eyes, and look from the place where thou art northward, and southward, and eastward, and westward:

15 For all the land which thou seest, to thee will I give it, and to thy seed for ever.

16 And I will make thy seed as the dust of the earth: so that if a man can number the dust of the earth, then shall thy seed also be numbered.

17 Arise, walk through the land in the length of it and in the breadth of it; for I will give it unto thee.

18 Then Abram removed his tent, and came and dwelt in the plain of Mamre, which is in Hebron, and built there an altar unto the LORD.

Yet again we see Abram demonstrating God's desire, let there be no strife⁴⁸⁹ and then Abram lets Lot choose. We have seen on multiple occasions children expecting blessings or trying to take the blessing. Examples include Cain, unhappy that Abel's offering was preferred, Ham seeing his father nakedness⁴⁹⁰, Essau and Jacob etc. To me the root is a lack of trust that God has enough for us and the desire to have that bless immediately rather than in God's time. Abraham was not perfect but here he demonstrates faith that God will provide for him and lets Lot take the best of the land. I think that we often forget that Abram's faith was very action based, he loved others, he cared for people, and he demonstrated faith with alters and worship.

⁴⁸⁹ Gen 13:8

⁴⁹⁰ Gen 9:22

Lot puts his interest first and chooses the fertile plane over the hilly country. Lot is thinking about wealth and increasing his substance. We then read;

But the men of Sodom were wicked and sinners before the LORD exceedingly.

God is linking the love of money with wickedness⁴⁹¹. If we are to remain faithful and obtain the blessings of God we need to give the way of the sinful a wide path.

Blessed is the man

Who walks not in the counsel of the [a]ungodly,

Nor stands in the path of sinners,

Nor sits in the seat of the scornful;

But his delight is in the law of the Lord,

And in His law he meditates day and night.⁴⁹²

Abram seems content with whatever God gives him and God responds to Abram, perhaps because of his selfless love, and reaffirms that God will give the land to Abrams descendants. God also tells Abram to keep moving.⁴⁹³

CHAPTER 14

1 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 these made war with Bera king of Sodom, and with Birsha king of Gomorrah, Shinab king of Admah, and Shemeber king of Zeboiim, and the king of Bela, which is Zoar.

3 All these were joined together in the vale of Siddim, which is the salt sea.

4 Twelve years they served Chedorlaomer, and in the thirteenth year they rebelled.

5 And in the fourteenth year came Chedorlaomer, and the kings that were with him, and smote the Rephaims in Ashteroth Karnaim, and the Zuzims in Ham, and the Emims in Shaveh Kiriathaim,

6 And the Horites in their mount Seir, unto El-paran, which is by the wilderness.

7 And they returned, and came to En-mishpat, which is Kadesh, and smote all the country of the Amalekites, and also the Amorites, that dwelt in Hazezon-tamar.

8 And there went out the king of Sodom, and the king of Gomorrah, and the king of Admah, and the king of Zeboiim, and the king of Bela (the same is Zoar;) and they joined battle with them in the vale of Siddim;

9 With Chedorlaomer the king of Elam, and with Tidal king of nations, and Amraphel king of Shinar, and Arioch king of Ellasar; four kings with five.

10 And the vale of Siddim was full of slimepits; and the kings of Sodom and Gomorrah fled, and fell there; and they that remained fled to the mountain.

11 And they took all the goods of Sodom and Gomorrah, and all their victuals, and went their way.

12 And they took Lot, Abram's brother's son, who dwelt in Sodom, and his goods, and departed.

⁴⁹¹ 1Tim 6:10

⁴⁹² Psalm 1:1-2

⁴⁹³ Gen 13:17

This chapter starts with the conflicts of man. One king gets rich by taking tribute from others, demonstrating power, control and money. The ones paying the taxes rebel, resulting in war, the nations raging⁴⁹⁴. The desires of the flesh, pride, dominance and taking wealth end with conflict and death. We also note that the kings are powerful and defeat the cities of Sodom and Gomorrah, plundering everything in the Cities.

Amraphel, the King of Babylon⁴⁹⁵: His name means Slayer of Darkness⁴⁹⁶
Arioch, the king of a town east of Ur and his name Lion like⁴⁹⁷
Chedorlaomer who's name means handful of sheaves⁴⁹⁸
Tidal who's name means great son⁴⁹⁹

The meaning of these names could be summarised as "Arrogance"

Bera means son of evil⁵⁰⁰
Birsha means with iniquity or in wickedness⁵⁰¹
Shinab means speldour of the father⁵⁰²
Shemeber means Lofty flight⁵⁰³
Bela means destruction⁵⁰⁴

While these names describe the opposite of good.

13 And there came one that had escaped, and told Abram the Hebrew; for he dwelt in the plain of Mamre the Amorite, brother of Eshcol, and brother of Aner: and these were confederate with Abram.

14 And when Abram heard that his brother was taken captive, he armed his trained servants, born in his own house, three hundred and eighteen, and pursued them unto Dan.

15 And he divided himself against them, he and his servants, by night, and smote them, and pursued them unto Hobah, which is on the left hand of Damascus.

16 And he brought back all the goods, and also brought again his brother Lot, and his goods, and the women also, and the people.

Abram has been told by God to move into this new land with the promise that God would bless Abram⁵⁰⁵. First there was a famine so bad that Abram headed out of the land to Egypt⁵⁰⁶ then there was an argument between Lot and Abram so bad they had to separate with Lot going to the fertile area⁵⁰⁷. Now a raiding party attacked and took Lot, Abram's nephew off as a captive. How many of us would have questioned God's promise or got frustrated that

⁴⁹⁴ Psalm 2

⁴⁹⁵ Shinar means country of two rivers (H8152) and was the name of Babylon

⁴⁹⁶ Strong's H569

⁴⁹⁷ Strong's H746

⁴⁹⁸ Strong's H3540

⁴⁹⁹ Strong's H8413

⁵⁰⁰ Strong H1298

⁵⁰¹ Strong's H1306

⁵⁰² Strong's H8134

⁵⁰³ Strong's H8038

⁵⁰⁴ Strong's H1106

⁵⁰⁵ Gen 12:1

⁵⁰⁶ Gen 12:10

⁵⁰⁷ Gen 13:7-11

God was not loving us? Let us be honest we are used to getting what we want and so events like these cause us to question God's blessings.

I think that these events, like the kings destruction of the area and taking Lot off as the spoils of war was a physical demonstration of what often happens in the spiritual. We grow in the difficult times and they are part of Gods plan for us. Consider the early church and the murder of Stephen⁵⁰⁸, it was the time that the church grew and impacted the world⁵⁰⁹. We like Abram, need to work through the hard times to claim the promises.

Like us Abram had three choices, He could doubt the blessing of God, he could sit back and say it was God's will, or he could see the circumstances as an opportunity to grow his faith and take back what was stolen. This is also the first instance where God's promise of blessing those who bless the Family of Abram and cursing those who curse Abram.

Abraham did the last, doing what must have looked stupid to those around him. He armed his servants and attacked four kings and their entire armies. Now Abraham did not go out against a small raiding party. These four kings had just defeated all the cities in the area and defeated the five kings of the area. We are talking about one family taking on 4 trained armies. This was also not a short fight in the park, Damascus was 100 miles north so this would have been at least a weeks trip.

It is clear that Abram was wealthy and powerful, but for one family to fight the kings and their armies was brave or desperate. Sometimes I wonder if Abram prayed and God said go, but I mostly think that Abram acted out of Love for Lot and therefore God also acted on Abram's behalf. God is love and we often find God in the midst of love. I am sure that we will see God more often if we all loved more.

God came through when Abram stepped out in faith and Abram return victoriously. Imagine how much bigger Abraham's faith was now. This demonstration of God helping the weaker to defend the faithful is repeated many times in the scriptures, another example is Gideon. When we step out in faith, our faith is built up, but we will need to work for it in prayer.

I think that we have move Christianity from a belief to actions. Faith is a belief in action. If I believe a chair will hold my weight, I sit on it. If I believe that God is love then I will love others, if I believe that God loves me then I put others first. What do you believe that results in your actions? To answer this question, you have to sometimes think about your actions and consider why you do them.

17 ¶ And the king of Sodom went out to meet him after his return from the slaughter of Chedorlaomer, and of the kings that were with him, at the valley of Shaveh, which is the king's dale.

18 And Melchizedek king of Salem brought forth bread and wine: and he was the priest of the most high God.

19 And he blessed him, and said, Blessed be Abram of the most high God, possessor of heaven and earth:

⁵⁰⁸ Acts 6 and 7

⁵⁰⁹ Acts 17:6; 24:5

20 And blessed be the most high God, which hath delivered thine enemies into thy hand. And he gave him tithes of all.

21 And the king of Sodom said unto Abram, Give me the persons, and take the goods to thyself.

22 And Abram said to the king of Sodom, I have lift up mine hand unto the LORD, the most high God, the possessor of heaven and earth,

23 That I will not take from a thread even to a shoelatchet, and that I will not take any thing that is thine, lest thou shouldest say, I have made Abram rich:

24 Save only that which the young men have eaten, and the portion of the men which went with me, Aner, Eshcol, and Mamre; let them take their portion.

Clearly the king of Sodom had fled and he meets Abram outside of Jerusalem⁵¹⁰, as Abram returns.

Here we see two kings demonstrating two approaches.

The king of Sodom, starts with “**Give me**”

Melchizedek starts with giving, here is a feast of **bread and wine**

Melchizedek king of Salem is King of righteousness and king of peace⁵¹¹ a priest of God. He, other than Christ, is the only King and priest. Melchizedek gives to the tired and hungry people who had just returned from a battle and a 200 mile trek. He blesses Abram (the first person to bless Abram) with physical nourishment and a spiritual blessing.

The king of Sodom asks for the people back. Abram refuses to keep anything for himself but does give those who risked their lives to help, a portion. Abram wants to be a witness to the goodness of God and the blessings that come from obeying God. Keeping the goods would enable the people to say that Abram was rich by taking from the people. We need to be generous to those around us, demonstrating the generosity of God. We are God’s witnesses, so ensure that your witness is accurate, demonstrating the mercy, kindness and generosity of God.

This is another prophetic pattern repeated by David rescuing his family⁵¹². Ultimately Jesus will come and rescue mankind⁵¹³, traveling from heaven to earth to take back what was stolen⁵¹⁴ when Adam sinned. Jesus also does not take from us, though he does ask us to be generous with our goods.

These few verses about Melchizedek seem so minor but Paul writes a large section⁵¹⁵ on this encounter. Some commentators consider Melchizedek to be a preincarnation of Jesus, who is our high priest, however, as Jesus is described as coming as a priest “like”⁵¹⁶ Melchizedek⁵¹⁷ I think it is unlikely.

⁵¹⁰ Valley of Shaveh is one of the valleys around Jerusalem and Salem is the shortened name of Jerusalem

⁵¹¹ Heb 7:2

⁵¹² 1Sam 30:1-31

⁵¹³ 2Tim 4:18; Psalm 138:7; Je 1:8

⁵¹⁴ John 10:10

⁵¹⁵ Heb 5:6 through 7

⁵¹⁶ Strong's Greek 871: to copy; to produce a facsimile, to be made like, cause a model to pass off into an image.

⁵¹⁷ Psalm 110:4

Paul's commentary on these verses tells us a lot about how to understand scripture. Firstly Paul describes Melchizedek as **Without father, without mother, without descent, having neither beginning of days, not end of life.**⁵¹⁸ I don't think Paul is saying that Melchizedek was not human, but Paul notes that scripture gives no mention of lineage. To the culture into which the Bible was written, Prophecy is pattern. For Melchizedek to be a prophecy about Jesus, our High priest, the pattern must match. Jesus was born of the Holy Spirit and so had no earthly Father. We will see another example later when Abraham sends his servant to find a bride for Isaac⁵¹⁹, the servant being in the pattern of the Holy Spirit.

Paul goes on to describe how the greater blesses the lessor, therefore from a scriptural perspective Melchizedek is greater⁵²⁰ than Abram, even though physically those kings had lost the battle against the kings that Abram defeated. Paul also discusses tithes, pointing out that scripturally the Levites and Jewish priests paid tithes to Melchizedek as they were "in" Abram and Abram paid tithes to Melchizedek⁵²¹.

The significance to us is that the Levitical priesthood and the Jewish Laws come after Abram and are inferior to the Melchizedek priesthood. We have the privilege of knowing Jesus and so we follow Jesus as our high priest, who came in similitude of the Melchizedek priesthood. Melchizedek even presents the bread and wine which we know represents Jesus' body and blood of the new testament⁵²². This is a priesthood of faith and love, demonstrated in good works, as opposed to the Jewish law and works based salvation.

CHAPTER 15

1 After these things the word of the LORD came unto Abram in a vision, saying, Fear not, Abram: I am thy shield, and thy exceeding great reward.

2 And Abram said, Lord GOD, what wilt thou give me, seeing I go childless, and the steward of my house is this Eliezer of Damascus?

3 And Abram said, Behold, to me thou hast given no seed: and, lo, one born in my house is mine heir.

4 And, behold, the word of the LORD came unto him, saying, This shall not be thine heir; but he that shall come forth out of thine own bowels shall be thine heir.

5 And he brought him forth abroad, and said, Look now toward heaven, and tell the stars, if thou be able to number them: and he said unto him, So shall thy seed be.

6 And he believed in the LORD; and he counted it to him for righteousness.

This section starts with God saying that He is Abram's shield and great reward. This could perhaps be considered an unnecessary statement as God has already demonstrated this by helping Abram defeat the kings⁵²³, after which Abram does not take any spoil, knowing that God will provide for him. Our spiritual learning is like this, we need both the practice and the words for it to really become part of us. It is written that Jesus learnt obedience through suffering⁵²⁴. If Jesus need to live the lessons how much more do we?

⁵¹⁸ Heb 7:3

⁵¹⁹ Gen 24:2-4

⁵²⁰ Heb 7:7

⁵²¹ Heb 7:4-10

⁵²² Matt 26:26-28; Mark 14:22-26; Luke 22:14-23; 1Cor 11:23-26

⁵²³ Gen 14:20

⁵²⁴ Heb 5:8

Notice that Abram discusses things with God. We are not lowly servants but family⁵²⁵.

Henceforth I call you not servants; for the servant knoweth not what his lord doeth: but I have called you friends; for all things that I have heard of my Father I have made known unto you.⁵²⁶

The Word of the Lord came to Abram and Abram believed God and it was counted to him for righteousness.⁵²⁷

Paul states that Faith comes by hearing and hearing the word of God⁵²⁸.

And the response to Paul's statement, did they not hear? Of course, they did.⁵²⁹

I believe that this is the main weakness in the Western Church. The Word of the Lord has come to us in the form of the Bible but many are not prepared to read it, believe it or apply it. How can we expect the blessings of God if we only hear the easy messages from the pulpit, while we are not prepared to believe the rest of what God has told us?

It frustrates me incredibly when well respected people say they do not believe sections of the Bible. Think about creation, Noah's Ark, tongues and the roles of men and women. What about future prophecies, most people are happy to believe the prophecies about Jesus coming to earth to save us. So why do the future prophecies create such a problem? If the historical prophecies came true literally, logic tells us that the future ones will also come true. God has not changed and can see our future just as easily as our past.

The reality is that many would rather believe the humanistic religion of the media in preference to the Word of the Lord and don't want to give up their comfortable lives to apply the scriptures.

If I wrote my wife a letter and she ignored sections as just stories and retranslated sections to change what it says, how would that make me feel? If we want God's blessings, then we need to follow what he tells us. The Bible is God's love letter to us.

Abraham believed the Word of the Lord and it allowed him to build his life. The Bible is the rock upon which we must build our lives. If we take this rock and break it up into little pieces, so we can ignore sections, we no longer have a rock, but we have little pieces - sand. Jesus told us that people who build their houses on sand will suffer collapse when the storms of life come.⁵³⁰ However, those who build their lives on the rock of the word will survive the storms.

God works with those who believe His word. God works with those who step out in faith. What about the Jews who had all the writings and many other prophecies that pointed to Jesus? Jesus rebuked them for not believing Words and knowing the time⁵³¹.

⁵²⁵ Ex 33:11; 2Chr 20:7; Isa 41:8

⁵²⁶ John 15:15; Read context John 15:13-15; see also James 2:23

⁵²⁷ See also Gal 3:6; Rom 4:1-3

⁵²⁸ Rom 10:17 – see also Gal 3:2-5; Phil 1:5

⁵²⁹ Rom 10:18

⁵³⁰ Matt 7:24-27

⁵³¹ Luke 19:44

Samuel writes, because you have rejected the word of the LORD, he has also rejected you⁵³²

The Word of the Lord has come to you and me, let us believe it so that like Abram we may inherit the blessings. Like Abraham we are not expected to be perfect overnight, but God does want us to step out to the extent that our faith will allow.

7 And he said unto him, I am the LORD that brought thee out of Ur of the Chaldees, to give thee this land to inherit it.

8 And he said, Lord GOD, whereby shall I know that I shall inherit it?

9 And he said unto him, Take me an heifer of three years old, and a she goat of three years old, and a ram of three years old, and a turtledove, and a young pigeon.

10 And he took unto him all these, and divided them in the midst, and laid each piece one against another: but the birds divided he not.

11 And when the fowls came down upon the carcasses, Abram drove them away.

12 And when the sun was going down, a deep sleep fell upon Abram; and, lo, an horror of great darkness fell upon him.

13 And he said unto Abram, Know of a surety that thy seed shall be a stranger in a land that is not their's, and shall serve them; and they shall afflict them four hundred years;

14 And also that nation, whom they shall serve, will I judge: and afterward shall they come out with great substance.

15 And thou shalt go to thy fathers in peace; thou shalt be buried in a good old age.

16 But in the fourth generation they shall come hither again: for the iniquity of the Amorites is not yet full.

17 And it came to pass, that, when the sun went down, and it was dark, behold a smoking furnace, and a burning lamp that passed between those pieces.

18 In the same day the LORD made a covenant with Abram, saying, Unto thy seed have I given this land, from the river of Egypt unto the great river, the river Euphrates:

19 The Kenites, and the Kenizzites, and the Kadmonites,

20 And the Hittites, and the Perizzites, and the Rephaims,

21 And the Amorites, and the Canaanites, and the Girgashites, and the Jebusites.

Abram asks God about his inheritance and God starts by reminding Abram of where he came from. It is so easy to forget all that God does for us, sometimes we need to reflect of how far God has already brought us. A diary or notebook is a great way for us to record the great things that God does for us. Reading it in times of doubt and questioning can be very powerful.

I have been told that in those days a serious covenant, like an agreement between two kings, was done similar to how this passage describes it. This event would have been more meaningful to Abram than it is to us. The sacrificial animals were cut down the middle placed on stakes and the two, who were making the covenant, would walk between the sacrificed animals saying that it should be done to them if they broke the agreement⁵³³.

Abram prepares the animals and places them on the stakes, he then waits, driving the birds that come to eat away. Eventually Abram falls asleep, and he experiences horror. It is not clear from the text, but I think that the horror Abram felt was the realisation of the cost of this covenant, knowing that as a sinner, the covenant would be broken, and he would need to pay

⁵³² 1Sa 15:23

⁵³³ Jer 34:18-19

the price. After the sun went down, the smoking furnace, and the burning lamp walk between the pieces.

We have references to a smouldering lamp⁵³⁴, which represents us, ones who only have a little oil, the Holy Spirit, but are trying to shine Jesus' light, who is the light of the world⁵³⁵. This would imply that the burning lamp is Jesus, who is the light we reflect or are ignited by⁵³⁶. The Smoking oven is hard to detail but I believe it represents God the Father⁵³⁷. A smoking oven is one that is ready to cook nourishment.

God the Father and God the Son walks between the animals symbolised by the smoking furnace, and the burning lamp. God signed the covenant with himself and so He would need to pay the price when man sinned. It is the Son of God who would be placed on a stake⁵³⁸ and cut⁵³⁹.

God then tells Abram what will occur. The 400 years of bondage of the Hebrews in Egypt⁵⁴⁰ is prophesied along with the return to the land.

In the fulfilment of this prophecy that God gives Abram we see God, in a pillar of fire and smoke leading the people between the "cut water"⁵⁴¹. God is again symbolised as smoke and fire. Jesus I would suggest is represented by the people He would die to save as part of this covenant. In this passage the animals are cut in to representing death, while in the Exodus God and the people walk between the water, which is a giver of life, that has been parted.

We must also highlight here that Abram has already been declared righteous by believing⁵⁴² not by obedience to the covenant⁵⁴³.

Abram asks God what the sign will be that he will inherit the land⁵⁴⁴ and God gives Abram a sign. Similarly Hezekiah⁵⁴⁵ also gets a sign. While in other places this request for a sign is seen in a negative light, Samson⁵⁴⁶ and Zecharias⁵⁴⁷.

Deep Sleep this term appears in other places⁵⁴⁸.

⁵³⁴ Isa 42:1-4; Matt 12:20

⁵³⁵ John 8:12

⁵³⁶ Luke 12:49; Acts 10:38 (also Isa 61:1) shows the Holy Spirit is the Anointing Oil that would allow us to burn bright. In 1Cor 3:15 we see the options, burn our own works or allow the Holy Spirit to power Jesus' flame. See also 1John 2:20, 27

⁵³⁷ Ex 19:18; Isa 31:9; Psa 21:9

⁵³⁸ Matt 27:35: Crucified, (Strong's G4717, stauroō), in Greek means stake

⁵³⁹ John 19:24

⁵⁴⁰ Ex 6:6; Acts 7:17

⁵⁴¹ Ex 14

⁵⁴² Gen 15:6

⁵⁴³ See also Rom 4:10-24

⁵⁴⁴ Gen 15:8

⁵⁴⁵ 2Kings 20:8

⁵⁴⁶ Judges 6:17-24, 36-40

⁵⁴⁷ Luke 1:18,34

⁵⁴⁸ Tardema see Also Gen 2:21; Job 4:13; 33:15; Isa 29:10

CHAPTER 16

1 Now Sarai Abram's wife bare him no children: and she had an handmaid, an Egyptian, whose name was Hagar.

2 And Sarai said unto Abram, Behold now, the LORD hath restrained me from bearing: I pray thee, go in unto my maid; it may be that I may obtain children by her. And Abram hearkened to the voice of Sarai.

3 And Sarai Abram's wife took Hagar her maid the Egyptian, after Abram had dwelt ten years in the land of Canaan, and gave her to her husband Abram to be his wife.

Now while this is very foreign to us it was the custom in those days and we will see it again with Jacob and many others. Children were important, they were your lineage and your provision when you were too old to work. So, Sarai did the common thing and organised the continuation of the family line before Abram was too old.

God promised Abram a child⁵⁴⁹ and in the male dominated society that it was in those days, Sarai may have thought this did not include her. We will read a while,

Now Abraham and Sarah were old and well stricken in age; and it ceased to be with Sarah after the manner of women.⁵⁵⁰

In other words Sarai had passed Menopause and could no longer, in the natural, bear children⁵⁵¹.

It is possible from Sarai's words that she thought that she was the problem and why should Abram lose out on God's promise because of her failings. However, we know that a married couple is one unit⁵⁵² and therefore God's promise applied to the couple, Sarai and Abram. This, like Adam not helping Eve resist eating the fruit from the forbidden tree⁵⁵³, is an example of knowing the scriptures but mankind trying to get the blessings in our way not following them. God's, it is rebellion.

God intended for Abram's family to be an image of God to the nations. The laws should show the world how God's ways are the best ways. Here Abram follows the cultural way, harming the example of the unity of marriage⁵⁵⁴.

I was listening to a teaching on the Death of Discernment by Ron Matsen⁵⁵⁵. In it he gives an example of either waiting on the river of living water from the Lord or digging a water cistern. At first, both waterers taste the same but the living water from the Lord comes when God sees fit and therefore sometimes we will be thirsty. The Cistern water is man's provision and can be planned however, gradually the cistern water goes stale. If that is all you drink you will not notice it, but after a while the bugs will have grown enough to make those who drink it sick.

⁵⁴⁹ Gen 15:4

⁵⁵⁰ Gen 18:11

⁵⁵¹ Rom 4:19

⁵⁵² Gen 2:24; Matt 19:5-6; Eph 5:31; MRK 10:8

⁵⁵³ See discussion on Gen 3:1-4

⁵⁵⁴ Heb 13:4

⁵⁵⁵ Book by Ron Matsen published: March 2012

This act by Abram and Sarai is man's provision, not the living water of God. As a result we have had major conflict in the middle east ever since. Man's way brings about death and destruction, God's way brings unity and love⁵⁵⁶.

4 ¶ And he went in unto Hagar, and she conceived: and when she saw that she had conceived, her mistress was despised in her eyes.

5 And Sarai said unto Abram, My wrong be upon thee: I have given my maid into thy bosom; and when she saw that she had conceived, I was despised in her eyes: the LORD judge between me and thee.

6 But Abram said unto Sarai, Behold, thy maid is in thy hand; do to her as it pleaseth thee. And when Sarai dealt hardly with her, she fled from her face.

Bible scholars emphasise the first mention of things in the Bible as it is usually important. Here we have two instances of **hearkening to the voice of their wives**⁵⁵⁷, leading to problems.

I have to state upfront that I am not certain what God is saying to us. What I think is being said is that we men need to stand up and lead our families. In both instances the context implies that the men did not believe that what the wives were asking was the correct thing to do but obeyed their wives anyway. The attempt to keep the peace with their wives resulted in issues within the marriage. In Genesis we have the man blaming his wife and now we have the wife blaming the man. Neither approach helps.

I do not believe that this passage is telling us to ignore our wives' thoughts or desires, in fact I think that the implication is that in general Abram listened to Sarai, they worked as a team. God tells us to honour our wives⁵⁵⁸. But God holds Abram accountable and expects him to be the priest of the family and lead spiritually. Paul and Peter, both tell us that the Man is the spiritual head of the family. Men we must therefore stand on God's promises and not compromise God's truth. Nowhere in the passage is Hagar consulted, Sarai gave her to Abraham using her as a surrogate mother and then took the child as hers. Abram must have known this was not God's way.

We can only surmise why Hagar despised Sarai however, when we consider that the culture viewed children as a blessing from God and we will see that the Lord closes the Womb as a curse⁵⁵⁹. So, while Abram and Sarai where childless Hagar could well have viewed Abram as being the problem after all she had seen Abram lying to the Egyptians about Sarah being his sister. Now however, since she fell pregnant the problem must lie with Sarai, a perception that must imply that God is angry with Sarai. We know that the foolishness of God is greater than the wisdom of man and since Sarai is used as an example of a Godly woman in the New Testament⁵⁶⁰, we can be confident that while this may well be on Hagar's mind, the logic is wrong.

The more likely aspect as mentioned before is that in the culture Hagar's child becomes Sarai's. Hagar was a slave and the text implied that she was forced into being a surrogate

⁵⁵⁶ Gal 4:21-31

⁵⁵⁷ Gen 3:17

⁵⁵⁸ 1Pet 3:7

⁵⁵⁹ Gen 20:17

⁵⁶⁰ 1Pet 3:5-6; Heb 11:11

mother. It is probably that Hagar did not want to give up her child to what she may consider as a woman cursed by God.

Hagar's attitude results in Sarai mistreating Hagar so much that she flees. It appears that she is attempting to flee back to Egypt and hence she flees into the desert.

7 ¶ And the angel of the LORD found her by a fountain of water in the wilderness, by the fountain in the way to Shur.

8 And he said, Hagar, Sarai's maid, whence camest thou? and whither wilt thou go? And she said, I flee from the face of my mistress Sarai.

9 And the angel of the LORD said unto her, Return to thy mistress, and submit thyself under her hands.

10 And the angel of the LORD said unto her, I will multiply thy seed exceedingly, that it shall not be numbered for multitude.

11 And the angel of the LORD said unto her, Behold, thou art with child, and shalt bear a son, and shalt call his name Ishmael; because the LORD hath heard thy affliction.

12 And he will be a wild man; his hand will be against every man, and every man's hand against him; and he shall dwell in the presence of all his brethren.

13 And she called the name of the LORD that spake unto her, Thou God seest me: for she said, Have I also here looked after him that seeth me?

14 Wherefore the well was called Beer-lahai-roi; behold, it is between Kadesh and Bered.

15 ¶ And Hagar bare Abram a son: and Abram called his son's name, which Hagar bare, Ishmael.

16 And Abram was fourscore and six years old, when Hagar bare Ishmael to Abram.

The Lord heard the affliction, this is a truth, God hears our afflictions, God even helps, if we choose His way, even when we caused the problem. In this case Hagar despised her mistress causing the problem.

The angel asks the same question of us, where have we come from and where are we going? I would encourage you to ask yourself the same question. Some of us have come from humble homes and are becoming slaves to our bank balance, some from difficult relationships and we are dominated by the need to be in control. What is your past and how is it affecting you? Hagar called her son **Ishmael; because the LORD hath heard thy affliction**⁵⁶¹. God hears your affliction and desires to touch and support you. Will you let him?

In this case, the angel tells Hagar to return, deal with Sarah's despising and God will bless her and multiply her descendants. God not just saw Hagar's struggles but gave her good advice and a promise. God will reach you, where you are at too. God's word is full of timely and valuable advice with promises to give you a future and a hope.

Beer-lahai-roi means "well of the living One seeing me"⁵⁶²

The scriptures contrast the results of the flesh with the fruit of the Spirit. Here is one example, when we through our own striving achieve something, often the result is despising,

⁵⁶¹ Ishmael means God will hear; Strong's H3458

⁵⁶² Strong's H883

division and hardship. The descendants of Ishmael have been against every man and everyman against them.⁵⁶³

You should also note that while the culture permitted and perhaps even encouraged men to have multiple partners, this was not and is not God's way⁵⁶⁴. In addition, as we see here multiple partners often results in problems. This section on Abram, Sarai and Hagar is a good example showing that God's intention is for a man to have one wife even though that was contrary to the culture during Abram's life.

Abram, like all humans, has flaws, makes bad decisions and is sinful. The scriptures present humans as real people so that we can relate. The scriptures do not always state which actions are bad and which are good, it is up to us to see the consequence of going our way rather than God's way.

CHAPTER 17

1 And when Abram was ninety years old and nine, the LORD appeared to Abram, and said unto him, I am the Almighty God; walk before me, and be thou perfect.

2 And I will make my covenant between me and thee, and will multiply thee exceedingly.

3 And Abram fell on his face: and God talked with him, saying,

4 As for me, behold, my covenant is with thee, and thou shalt be a father of many nations.

5 Neither shall thy name any more be called Abram, but thy name shall be Abraham; for a father of many nations have I made thee.

6 And I will make thee exceeding fruitful, and I will make nations of thee, and kings shall come out of thee.

7 And I will establish my covenant between me and thee and thy seed after thee in their generations for an everlasting covenant, to be a God unto thee, and to thy seed after thee.

8 And I will give unto thee, and to thy seed after thee, the land wherein thou art a stranger, all the land of Canaan, for an everlasting possession; and I will be their God.

Take a moment to think about Abraham, at this point he is almost a 100 years old. We have read 5 chapters which only detail a few discussions between God and Abraham. God can speak to you daily through the scriptures but I don't expect conversations like this are regular events.

For Abraham, children, particularly sons provide your retirement fund, your protection as you get older and your old age home, no one else would look after you. As such children, particularly sons, were considered a blessing from God and if you didn't have children,

⁵⁶³ Anti-Jewish sentiment remains overwhelming in predominantly Muslim countries... Many in the West see Muslims as fanatical, violent, and as lacking tolerance. Meanwhile, Muslims in the Middle East and Asia generally see Westerners as selfish, immoral and greedy – as well as violent and fanatical. <https://www.pewresearch.org/global/2006/06/22/the-great-divide-how-westerners-and-muslims-view-each-other/>

⁵⁶⁴ 1Tim 3:2, 12; Titus 1:6, note also references when wife is singular Gen 2:24; Mal 2:15; Mat 19:5, 29; Eph 5:31

people often considered this as a curse from God⁵⁶⁵. Abraham and Sarai must have experienced rejection and unkind words. I don't know why God waited 100 years to give Abraham a son, but I do know that in our society we don't want to wait. As Christians we need to realise that God does not see things like we do. God is patient and kind⁵⁶⁶, not hasty and impatient like we are.

Everlasting covenant: The land belongs to Abram's seed with no requirement on Abram⁵⁶⁷. The only land Abraham owned was the burial plot where Sarah and then he was buried. His descendants did leave the land but in God's book they still own it. God also took them off the land for the Sabbath years that they did not give him⁵⁶⁸, but it is still theirs⁵⁶⁹.

For when God made a promise to Abraham, because He could swear by no one greater, He swore by Himself, saying, "Surely blessing I will bless you, and multiplying I will multiply you." And so, after he had patiently endured, he obtained the promise. For men indeed swear by the greater, and an oath for confirmation is for them an end of all dispute. Thus God, determining to show more abundantly to the heirs of promise the immutability of His counsel, confirmed it by an oath, that by two immutable things, in which it is impossible for God to lie,⁵⁷⁰

Abram means "exalted Father" or "Father is high"⁵⁷¹ so Terah was anticipating that Abram would be a great father.

Abraham means "Father of a multitude"⁵⁷².

God was emphasising His promise to Abraham that he would have many descendants, not just physical but we are also adopted into Christ by faith⁵⁷³.

Sarai means "Princess"⁵⁷⁴

Sarah means "Noble woman"⁵⁷⁵

God changed other peoples names too⁵⁷⁶, including Jacob who became Israel⁵⁷⁷ and Simon who became Peter⁵⁷⁸. We too will get a new name as John wrote⁵⁷⁹.

⁵⁶⁵ If this is you start by reading Isa 56:3-5 and Luke 23:39. These two links are worth a read too: https://www.chabad.org/library/article_cdo/aid/518805/jewish/Am-I-Cursed-Because-I-Dont-have-Children.htm <https://www.biblicalarchaeology.org/daily/biblical-topics/bible-interpretation/what-does-the-bible-say-about-infertility/> Examples are referenced in Genesis include the Egyptians when Abraham goes there and the Abimelech.

⁵⁶⁶ 1 Corinthians 13:4-8

⁵⁶⁷ Gal 3:18

⁵⁶⁸ Lev 26:27-35; 2Chr 36:20-21

⁵⁶⁹ Seed of Faith, see Rom 4:16, Gal 3:7

⁵⁷⁰ Heb 6:13-18a see also Gen 48:4; Ex 32:13; Deut 1:10; Neh 9:23

⁵⁷¹ Strong's H87

⁵⁷² Strong's H85

⁵⁷³ Rom 4:13-14; Gal 3:26-29, Through Abraham all the nations of the world are blessed: Gen 22:18

⁵⁷⁴ Strong's H8297

⁵⁷⁵ Strong's H8283

⁵⁷⁶ Saul is a Hebrew name, Paul the equivalent Roman name so Paul, just had two names. Acts 13:9

⁵⁷⁷ Gen 32:28

⁵⁷⁸ Luke 6:14; Matt 16:18-19

⁵⁷⁹ Revelation 3:12

אַבְרָם

Avram

אַבְרָהָם

Avraham

Notice the addition;

Modern Hebrew		
Letter	Name	Sound
ה	Hey	h

Hey means breath, look, reveal and revelation (revealing something by seeing). Therefore, the letter hey is a picture of the Ruach HaKodesh/ Holy Spirit. The spirit is thought of as the breath of the mouth.

Then YHVH, God, formed a person from the dust of the ground and breathed into his nostrils the breath of life, so that he became a living being.⁵⁸⁰

The very first person to have his name changed by YHVH was Avram אַבְרָם. His name was changed to Avraham אַבְרָהָם. YHVH inserted the letter hey ה into Avram. When YHVH breathes into someone's life, he changes their name by adding a 'hey' (Spirit).

I encourage you to read more about the hey in Hebrew [here](#).⁵⁸¹

9 ¶ And God said unto Abraham, Thou shalt keep my covenant therefore, thou, and thy seed after thee in their generations.

10 This is my covenant, which ye shall keep, between me and you and thy seed after thee; Every man child among you shall be circumcised.

11 And ye shall circumcise the flesh of your foreskin; and it shall be a token of the covenant betwixt me and you.

12 And he that is eight days old shall be circumcised among you, every man child in your generations, he that is born in the house, or bought with money of any stranger, which is not of thy seed.

13 He that is born in thy house, and he that is bought with thy money, must needs be circumcised: and my covenant shall be in your flesh for an everlasting covenant.

14 And the uncircumcised man child whose flesh of his foreskin is not circumcised, that soul shall be cut off from his people; he hath broken my covenant.

⁵⁸⁰ Genesis 2:7

⁵⁸¹ <https://ephrainintheland.wordpress.com/2018/01/04/hey-%D7%94-the-breath-of-yhvh/>

Abraham was called to keep God's covenant, as we are. I don't think that the entirety of the covenant was circumcision however the cutting away of the flesh is picked up by the New Testament scholars as symbolic for us as we cut away the flesh and be perfect⁵⁸² before God.

8th Day – apparently the level of vitamin K at birth is low and starts to develop on the third day peaking on the eighth day at 110% before declining to normal levels. How did Abraham know that the 8th day is the best day? This is yet another proof that God speaks to us and while he can ask painful things of us it is always in our best interest.

Circumcision is symbolic of cutting away of the flesh to pursue the things of God. It is the cutting away of earthly pleasure to focus on the spiritual. Every time a Jewish male has sex he is reminded of the covenant and God's promise to Abraham's seed⁵⁸³. Hopefully this encourages the Jewish male to consider what he is doing with his seed.

For me as a gentile I am not called to physical circumcision⁵⁸⁴ however I am called to remove the foreskin of my heart⁵⁸⁵. Symbolically the male has had the fleshly covering cut away and likewise we need to remove the desires of the flesh to live in Christ.

He (Abraham) received the sign of circumcision as a seal of the righteousness that he had by faith while he was still uncircumcised. The purpose was to make him the father of all who believe without being circumcised, so that righteousness would be counted to them as well,⁵⁸⁶

15 ¶ And God said unto Abraham, As for Sarai thy wife, thou shalt not call her name Sarai, but Sarah shall her name be.

16 And I will bless her, and give thee a son also of her: yea, I will bless her, and she shall be a mother of nations; kings of people shall be of her.

17 Then Abraham fell upon his face, and laughed, and said in his heart, Shall a child be born unto him that is an hundred years old? and shall Sarah, that is ninety years old, bear?

What about Sarai and women were they included in the covenant? Just like Abram, Sarai had her name changed to Sarah with the addition of a Hey. Her name changed from meaning "contentious" to "Princess". Also, while circumcision is male specifically. Consider Stephen's account of this passage, "**and he gave him the covenant of circumcision and thus he begat Isaac**"⁵⁸⁷ or Paul's summary, Abraham had two sons... **he of the bondwoman was born after the flesh; but he of the freewoman by promise.**⁵⁸⁸ Clearly Sarah was part of the covenant. Put in another way, both Sarah and Abraham bled and had pain as part of this covenant. Abraham's was performed by man and Sarah's when she gave birth, both linked to reproduction. To me this symbolises Jesus, who bled and suffered for us to be born again by

⁵⁸² Matt 5:48; 1Pet 1:15-16; Lev 11:44; 19:2; 20:7 Also Amos 3:3

⁵⁸³ Acts 7:8

⁵⁸⁴ Acts 15:1-41

⁵⁸⁵ Deut 10:16; Rom 2:28-29; Jer 4:4; Col 2:10-11

⁵⁸⁶ Romans 4:11 See also Eph 2:11

⁵⁸⁷ Acts 7:8

⁵⁸⁸ Gal 3:22-23

the Spirit into his family. Remember **man shall cleave unto his wife: and they shall be one flesh.**⁵⁸⁹

Abraham laughed, Sarah has a similar response in the next chapter⁵⁹⁰. Jesus' response to Abraham implies a joyous laugh. It also appears from Abraham's response that it was not insulting.

The fourth chapter of Romans lists the four keys to Abraham's faith as:

- 1) Not considering the human limitations.
- 2) Not staggering at the promises of God.
- 3) Giving glory and thanks to God for what He will do.
- 4) Knowing that God can fulfil His promises.

18 And Abraham said unto God, O that Ishmael might live before thee!

19 And God said, Sarah thy wife shall bear thee a son indeed; and thou shalt call his name Isaac: and I will establish my covenant with him for an everlasting covenant, and with his seed after him.

20 And as for Ishmael, I have heard thee: Behold, I have blessed him, and will make him fruitful, and will multiply him exceedingly; twelve princes shall he beget, and I will make him a great nation.

21 But my covenant will I establish with Isaac, which Sarah shall bear unto thee at this set time in the next year.

22 And he left off talking with him, and God went up from Abraham.

Abraham appeals to God for Ishmael and God responds, **I have heard thee: Behold, I have blessed him, and will make him fruitful, and will multiply him exceedingly; twelve princes shall he beget, and I will make him a great nation.**

God invites us to be a participant in His divine plan. Jesus says, **ask, and it shall be given you.**⁵⁹¹ We will see this negotiating with God again next chapter and I think God is reminding us that in a relationship the two parties listen to each other and support each other. Our God, is not a distant God that requires us to act like robots, God is a present God who wants to adopt us into His family so that we can call out Father⁵⁹².

23 ¶ And Abraham took Ishmael his son, and all that were born in his house, and all that were bought with his money, every male among the men of Abraham's house; and circumcised the flesh of their foreskin in the selfsame day, as God had said unto him.

24 And Abraham was ninety years old and nine, 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 In the selfsame day was Abraham circumcised, and Ishmael his son.

27 And all the men of his house, born in the house, and bought with money of the stranger, were circumcised with him.

⁵⁸⁹ Gen 2:24

⁵⁹⁰ Gen 18:12

⁵⁹¹ Matt 7:7-11; Luke 11:9; Mark 11:24; John 14:13,14; 15:7,16; 16:23-24; Matt 21:22; Psalm 10:17; Jer 29:12,13

⁵⁹² Rom 8:15; Eph 1:5; 2:19; Heb 2:10

How did the other men take this command from God, repeated by Abraham? We know that Abraham had more than 300 trained men⁵⁹³ so Abraham's relationship with God must have been visible and believable for Abraham to get the more than 300 men and boys to be circumcised in one day. In today's society we cannot get people to agree to things that are good for them.

I suspect that Abraham's relationship with God had guided most of the people with Abraham to have a relationship with God themselves. It was probably the combination of their own faith in God and their knowledge that Abraham spoke God's words that gave them the courage to be circumcised. So how is your relationship with God, is it visible and authentic in a way that others will follow you?

Note also the trust that Abraham had in God's protection. The reason for having 300 trained men is that raiders and other issues required Abraham to have protection. For a week or so while the men recovered there was no protection and very little work done. Abraham had to trust God for his defence – I am your shield and great reward.

CHAPTER 18

1 And the LORD appeared unto him in the plains of Mamre: and he sat in the tent door in the heat of the day;

2 And he lift up his eyes and looked, and, lo, three men stood by him: and when he saw them, he ran to meet them from the tent door, and bowed himself toward the ground,

3 And said, My Lord, if now I have found favour in thy sight, pass not away, I pray thee, from thy servant:

4 Let a little water, I pray you, be fetched, and wash your feet, and rest yourselves under the tree:

5 And I will fetch a morsel of bread, and comfort ye your hearts; after that ye shall pass on: for therefore are ye come to your servant. And they said, So do, as thou hast said.

6 And Abraham hastened into the tent unto Sarah, and said, Make ready quickly three measures of fine meal, knead it, and make cakes upon the hearth.

7 And Abraham ran unto the herd, and fetcht a calf tender and good, and gave it unto a young man; and he hasted to dress it.

8 And he took butter, and milk, and the calf which he had dressed, and set it before them; and he stood by them under the tree, and they did eat.

The term LORD is Y'hōvâ⁵⁹⁴, considered to be the name of GOD. Since Jesus stated that "No man has seen the Father at any time" and Jesus went on to say that that He has manifested God the Father⁵⁹⁵. That would therefore imply that this is Jesus appearing as a man, a preincarnate manifestation of Jesus.

⁵⁹³ Gen 14:14

⁵⁹⁴ Strong's H3067, "the existing one"

⁵⁹⁵ Jn 1:18

Abraham's response is Adon⁵⁹⁶, Lord Master. Since Abraham must have been the most powerful family in this area⁵⁹⁷ calling the visitor Lord must have been an indication that Abraham recognised Jesus as His God. Abraham had spent enough time in prayer to have a relationship and to recognise Jesus. This also explains the huge and time-consuming effort that Abraham went to, to cook a meal immediately for them.

Abraham does what we should all do, he welcomes the strangers⁵⁹⁸ but notice the effort that he went to, fetching and preparing a calf would take me at least 4 hours. Even if we assume they are very quick this took a long time.

One thing that is hard for modern Jewish believers is how come Abraham presented the Lord with a meal that is not kosher. I bring this up because the modern Christian church also has "rules" that are based on scripture but not precisely biblical.

The Biblical statement is;

You should not boil a kid in its mother's milk⁵⁹⁹

Note that this passage does not detail that Abraham had boiled the kid in milk, just that he served milk with a kid.

The meaning does not seem that complex, but has been expanded greatly by the Rabbinic tradition. The context is a lengthy discussion of things that Israelites may or may not eat - *kashrut* - which is presented in broad, general, terms: you shall not eat anything abhorrent, you may eat anything with cloven hooves and that chews the cud etc. Then there is presented this very specific law: This specific statement is the foundation of the entire *halakhic* prohibition against mixing dairy and meat foods.

So let's look first at what the Torah text might really mean, and then try and figure out how the Rabbinic Sages understood it.

Often it is maintained that the laws of Kashrut are maintain for health or hygienic reasons. But, as **Maimonides** and others clearly point out, Jews do not keep kosher for health reasons (if that was the case, then modern refrigeration and cooking technics would invalidate most of these laws) but rather we keep kosher because God has asked it of us. The dietary laws, as presented in Torah, are considered to be *Chukim*, mitzvot whose purpose is not clear to humans (as opposed to *Mishpatim*, whose meaning is clear and self-evident).

But we can speculate, as many have done. Since God makes it clear in the Torah that we are to avoid the practises of the idolatrous peoples and maintain ourselves as a distinct nation, many assume that the Chukim, and particularly the laws of

⁵⁹⁶ Strong's H113

⁵⁹⁷ Gen 21:22-23. The King of the area, Ahimelech, came and asked Abraham to make a covenant with him.

⁵⁹⁸ Heb 13:2

⁵⁹⁹ Deuteronomy 14:21; Exodus 23:19; 34:26

Kashrut, exist to counteract certain idolatrous rituals. Apparently it was a common pagan sacrificial practise to offer a foetal or new born goat boiled in the milk of its mother, and this was considered an abomination for the Israelites. While this sacrificial practice may have ceased, the item is still on the menu today. On a Mediterranean cooking web site, I came across a recipe from Syria/Lebanon called "Lamb Cooked In Its Mother's Milk."

Other reasons were also suggested for this prohibition. [Ibn Ezra](#) connects the law against boiling a kid in its mother's milk with the Torah's injunction against slaughtering a cow and her offspring on the same day (Leviticus 22:28) and the edict not to take a mother bird from the nest along with her eggs (Deuteronomy 22:6-7). For Ibn Ezra, it was clear that all three of these mitzvot draw their inspiration from a single idea: to kill a mother and its offspring at the same time reflects a lack of sensitivity to life that is inexcusable.

But how then did the Rabbis get from "not boiling a kid in its mother's milk" to "no mixing dairy with meat"? Well, this is a classic case of "fence around the Torah," the halakhic device by which mitzvot, as recorded in the Torah, are expanded, sometimes to a great extent, to help Jews avoid inadvertently breaking a law. Basically, the rabbis were concerned about the possibility of confusion. Milk all looks the same, no matter what the source, and most red meat looks similar. How can you ever be sure that the milk you are using to boil the kid did not come from its mother? You can't. So, we avoid mixing all milk and meat. And if we develop too much of a taste for other kinds of meat, especially lamb, cooked in milk or served with dairy, then how can we be sure we will draw the line when it comes to kid cooked in its mothers milk? By extending the law against boiling a kid in its mother's milk to a law prohibiting all meat with dairy, the rabbis sought to avoid accidents that might result in a transgression against God's law, and help us develop disciplines that will prevent sin. The Rabbis started with a specific law, but, in the spirit of that law, they developed it into an entire way of life.

YOU SHALL NOT BOIL A KID IN ITS MOTHER'S MILK

[T]he goat . . . generously and steadfastly provides man with the single most perfect food he possesses: milk. It is the only food which by reason of its proper composition of fat, carbohydrate, and protein can by itself sustain the human body. How ungrateful and callous we would be to take the child of an animal to whom we so indebted and cook it in its very milk which nourishes and is given to us so freely.

To my mind, the significance of *You shall not boil a kid in its mother's milk* is the strict distinction to be made between blood and milk. The Torah repeatedly prohibits the eating of blood. The key in the process of kashering is the removal of any sign of life. The animal is deprived of life in an anything but a natural manner. In a single cut by a sharper-than-razor knife the main arteries are severed rending the animal unconscious and permitting the blood to be drained from the body. The meat then undergoes further processing. The meat is soaked and salted and rinsed to remove any evidence that this was a living being. When the process is finished, it is truly "dead meat." Milk, on the other hand, is the symbol of life, sustenance and growth. As the previously cited Zohar noted: "Hashem is like the mother who gives milk to the children of Israel to give them life." The dietary laws can be viewed as the first rung on

the ladder of holiness. The introduction to the dietary laws in Deuteronomy 24:3 is preceded by the statement, *You shall not eat any abomination*. The milk and meat prohibition is preceded by the statement *for you are a people consecrated to the Lord*.

Verse 8, Abraham stood by them under the tree. Tree's often feature when there is a heavenly encounter. The tree of knowledge of good and Evil⁶⁰⁰, Moses and the Burning bush⁶⁰¹, Hagar, after she put Ishmael under a bush⁶⁰², Noah who used trees to build an ark⁶⁰³, Nathaniel who was under a tree when Jesus saw him⁶⁰⁴, Jesus hung on a tree⁶⁰⁵ and the Tree of life in Revelation⁶⁰⁶.

**9 ¶ And they said unto him, Where is Sarah thy wife? And he said, Behold, in the tent.
10 And he said, I will certainly return unto thee according to the time of life; and, lo, Sarah thy wife shall have a son. And Sarah heard it in the tent door, which was behind him.**

11 Now Abraham and Sarah were old and well stricken in age; and it ceased to be with Sarah after the manner of women.

12 Therefore Sarah laughed within herself, saying, After I am waxed old shall I have pleasure, my lord being old also?

13 And the LORD said unto Abraham, Wherefore did Sarah laugh, saying, Shall I of a surety bear a child, which am old?

14 Is any thing too hard for the LORD? At the time appointed I will return unto thee, according to the time of life, and Sarah shall have a son.

15 Then Sarah denied, saying, I laughed not; for she was afraid. And he said, Nay; but thou didst laugh.

Sarah laughed and was then afraid. We have also seen Abraham laugh⁶⁰⁷ in the previous chapter.

Do you notice the question, “is anything too hard for the Lord.”

Something I think we should ask ourselves. Next time we are wondering about something we should ask if anything is too hard for the LORD. After all it is not a question of can He do it, just will it be good for us?

Did an evening on Ros Hashanna then had Church camp which we looked at Yom Kipur – both notes are “Feast of Trumpets.docx”

16 ¶ And the men rose up from thence, and looked toward Sodom: and Abraham went with them to bring them on the way.

17 And the LORD said, Shall I hide from Abraham that thing which I do;

18 Seeing that Abraham shall surely become a great and mighty nation, and all the nations of the earth shall be blessed in him?

⁶⁰⁰ Gen 2:9, 17

⁶⁰¹ Exodus 3:2

⁶⁰² Gen 21:15

⁶⁰³ Gen 7

⁶⁰⁴ John 1:48-50

⁶⁰⁵ Acts 5:30; 10:39; 13:29; Gal 3:13; 1Pet 2:24

⁶⁰⁶ Rev 2:7; 22:2, 14

⁶⁰⁷ Gen 17:17

19 For I know him, that he will command his children and his household after him, and they shall keep the way of the LORD, to do justice and judgment; that the LORD may bring upon Abraham that which he hath spoken of him.

20 And the LORD said, Because the cry of Sodom and Gomorrah is great, and because their sin is very grievous;

21 I will go down now, and see whether they have done altogether according to the cry of it, which is come unto me; and if not, I will know.

22 And the men turned their faces from thence, and went toward Sodom: but Abraham stood yet before the LORD.

Abraham

There is another important point from Abraham's life and I want to read from Gen 18:17-19.

And the LORD said, Shall I hide from Abraham what I am about to do; Seeing that Abraham will become a great and mighty nation, and all the nations of the earth will be blessed in him? **For I know him, that he will command his children** and his household after him, and they will keep the way of the LORD, to do justice and judgment;

Why is this important?

so that the LORD will bring about for Abraham what he has promised him.

We must teach our children and those close to us the ways of G_d, **so that** G_d will bring upon us what He promised.

Why do we not see many miracles, I think it is because we do not believe the scriptures and we do not teach them to our children. Sure we believe and teach the sand – you know the warm fuzzie bits – God loves us and love your neighbour, but we ignore the hard bits like Revelations, Genesis and some of Paul's writings.

While we were trying to sell our house we had not had any real interest, the auction was over so there were no advertisements and things were looking rather down. Sitting at dinner I suggested that the children also pray for the house to sell so we as a whole family prayed. That evening we had a phone call that someone was interested and wanted to have a look the next day. What a great witness to our children that God answers prayer. What a great way to get them involved with God and God's plans.

The first time I prayed with the children was for a parking place, my son was very small and asleep in the back yet I needed to go to the bank. So, needing to park right outside the bank machine, I got the children to pray for a parking space. The words had barely been spoken when a car pulled out from the perfect parking spot. I do not think that God was interested in my laziness, but He was passionately interested in my children's faith.

God commands us to teach our children about Him and His way.

Now Abraham was also promised a son and after a wait of 13 years nothing had happened. If you have ever known a women who struggled to conceive you will begin to have an understanding of what life must have been like for Abraham and

Sarah. Those must have been terrible years especially since the culture saw children as a demonstration of G_d's goodness.

How often does it seem that G_d has abandoned us. Sarah clearly thought that G_d expected them to do something in order for them to receive the promise so she gives her maid to Abraham in order to get a child. The result has been fighting ever since. Arabs and Jews killing each other. In the end Abraham and Sarah had to wait 30 years for G_d's promise to come true, that is a long time to wait. Yet when the son did come G_d not only gave them a son but a miracle as well because Sarah was past childbearing age at 99.

There is a saying that G_d only delivers at 11:59pm. We live in a society that wants everything now. Instant food, instant finance. Yet like Sarah, we often bring ourselves trouble by trying to rush G_d.

G_d is never in a rush, He knows the perfect time has all the time in the world.

And hast made us unto our God kings and priests: and we shall reign on the earth⁶⁰⁸.

So since we are called to be kings and priests I want you to consider what God says here.

Shall I hide that thing which I do, seeing that he shall become great.

The revelation of Jesus Christ, which God gave him to show his servants what must soon take place⁶⁰⁹.

God has revealed to us what will happen because we have become His children, this also gives us a better understanding of Jesus explanation for using parables, **Unto you it is given to know the mysteries of the kingdom of God: but to others in parables; that seeing they might not see, and hearing they might not understand.**⁶¹⁰

We need the Holy Spirit to understand the scriptures.

But the point that I am getting to is that this implies that we can take the next verse and put your name in it. Let me try;

“For I know Brent, that he will command his children and his household, and they shall keep the way of the LORD, to do justice and judgment; that the LORD may bring upon Brent that which He hath spoken of him.”

“For I know Trudi, that she will tell her children to keep the way of the LORD, to do justice and judgment; that the LORD may bring upon Trudi that which He hath spoken of her.”

“For I know Grant, that he will command his children, and they shall keep the way of the LORD, to do justice and judgment; that the LORD may bring upon Grant that which He hath spoken of him.”

A fathers job is to command his children and his household after him, and they shall keep the way of the LORD, to do justice and judgment.

⁶⁰⁸ Rev 5:10

⁶⁰⁹ Rev 1:1, See also Amos 3:7

⁶¹⁰ Luke 8:10

It also brings out the important point that Faith is acting on the scriptures, we know people by their fruit. It is no good us just talking about Justice, Love, unity, forgiveness encouragement, we must do them.

God tells His friend that he is going down to Sodom to see.

Why did these Heavenly beings need to go to Sodom, God is all knowing?

I have often puzzled about why God says that He is waiting until their iniquity was full and I think that this is similar. The principle that I think God is portraying here is that He wants everyone to have every opportunity to turn from their wrong and accept the forgiveness and life that Jesus is offering. Therefore, God is demonstrating that He judges fairly, and based on knowledge. His desire is that not one should perish, it is God's grace to go and make sure that there is no chance that they will turn from their wicked ways⁶¹¹, which God would prefer⁶¹².

Woe unto you that desire the Day of the Lord The day of the Lord is darkness and not light⁶¹³.

There is a little poem, four things that God does not know and the second is;
God does not know a sinner He does not love!

It is interesting that God seems to give His friends knowledge of the future. Here God tells Abraham of the future, later in the Bible Abraham is described as a friend of God⁶¹⁴. God also spoke to Moses as a friend⁶¹⁵ and Moses was often linked to being given prophetic revelation. We too can be friends of God:

I no longer call you servants, because a servant does not know his master's business. Instead, I have called you friends, for everything that I learned from my Father I have made known to you.⁶¹⁶

The point here is that friends have obligations,
The Lord confides in those who fear Him⁶¹⁷

It seems that we have to be servants before we can be friends.
You are my friends if you do what I command you.⁶¹⁸

23 ¶ And Abraham drew near, and said, Wilt thou also destroy the righteous with the wicked?

24 Peradventure there be fifty righteous within the city: wilt thou also destroy and not spare the place for the fifty righteous that are therein?

25 That be far from thee to do after this manner, to slay the righteous with the wicked: and that the righteous should be as the wicked, that be far from thee: Shall not the Judge of all the earth do right?

⁶¹¹ 2Chr 7:14

⁶¹² Ezek 33:11

⁶¹³ Amos 5:18

⁶¹⁴ James 2:23; 2Chr 20:7; Isa 41:8

⁶¹⁵ Exodus 33:11, and possibly Deut 34:10. David is also a possibility here see Acts 13:22

⁶¹⁶ John 15:15, that this is to the disciples excluding Judas who left in John 13:30

⁶¹⁷ Psa 25:14

⁶¹⁸ John 15:14

26 And the LORD said, If I find in Sodom fifty righteous within the city, then I will spare all the place for their sakes.

27 And Abraham answered and said, Behold now, I have taken upon me to speak unto the Lord, which am but dust and ashes:

28 Peradventure there shall lack five of the fifty righteous: wilt thou destroy all the city for lack of five? And he said, If I find there forty and five, I will not destroy it.

29 And he spake unto him yet again, and said, Peradventure there shall be forty found there. And he said, I will not do it for forty's sake.

30 And he said unto him, Oh let not the Lord be angry, and I will speak: Peradventure there shall thirty be found there. And he said, I will not do it, if I find thirty there.

31 And he said, Behold now, I have taken upon me to speak unto the Lord: Peradventure there shall be twenty found there. And he said, I will not destroy it for twenty's sake.

32 And he said, Oh let not the Lord be angry, and I will speak yet but this once: Peradventure ten shall be found there. And he said, I will not destroy it for ten's sake.

33 And the LORD went his way, as soon as he had left communing with Abraham: and Abraham returned unto his place.

Abraham's discussion with God follows many people's questions. Why is there evil in this world and why does God not ensure that right is done. This is a complex question but, in this instance, there is a specific difference that is important for the end time predictions.

In most of the evil in this world, the root cause is human beings. Murders are caused not by God but humans, so there are really two aspects to the question of pain and suffering. The first issue is why does God allow human induced suffering and the only thing I will say here is that God gives us free will. Free will means that humans are free to do good or bad and therefore if God stopped all suffering, then we would not have free will but would be puppets.

The other issue is discussed in this passage, if God destroys the wicked, then we would all be destroyed as we were all born with a sin nature. Also, those acting righteously at the time would be caught up in the destruction and Abraham asks God, will God destroy the wicked with the righteous? Abraham's argument is that of course God will not. From God's answer Abraham's assumption is correct.

One reason that we struggle with today's issues is that we misunderstand what defines a righteous person.

If we think about the worst sinner, perhaps Jack the Ripper or other mass murderer. Now think about the best person, perhaps Mother Teresa. I think that we would all agree that we are somewhere in between, we are not the best and we are not the worst. Now here comes the problem, on this scale between Jack the Ripper and Mother Teresa, where do we define a righteousness person. Is it in the middle, if you are better than average you get to heaven. Is that the average today or 100 years ago?

We could put the Jewish law up as the benchmark. Let us take just a tiny portion of the law – the Ten Commandments.

1. You shall have no other Gods before me. We all have placed things above God at times. Pride, I will do this so that I look good. Money, I will not do what I know is right so I can get something I want etc.

2. Honour your father and Mother. Have we ever done anything that our parents would be embarrassed or cross about. If we are honest, we will all admit that we have not been perfect.
3. You shall not bear false witness. Ever told a lie? Even omitting to say something so that the other person makes a false assumption contradicts this commandment.

The reality is that we regard ourselves as righteous, better than average, because we do good to overcome the bad. But I think we all know that it does not work that way.

Will it work to tell the judge that we should get off a speeding ticket because we stopped at the stop street and let the old lady go first at the parking lot. If we break the law, we are guilty⁶¹⁹, sure the punishment might change based on other factors, but we are still guilty.

So here is the reality on our scale. We are all guilty because the standard is perfection, God said be Holy because I am holy⁶²⁰. You would not be happy sharing a flat with a mass murderer and nor would you marry someone with morals that widely differ from yours. What about God, He is perfect and Holy, so if we want to share heaven with Him, we need to be perfect, or at least forgiven.

Since no one is perfect God has provided a way for us to be forgiven, Jesus will pay our fine. The only problem is the penalty is death, so Jesus paid by taking our place on the cross.⁶²¹

Being a Christian does not make me perfect, it makes me forgiven and therefore it changes my intentions. My morals have got better and continue to improve so that my desire is for heaven, not my old life. I gradually learn to put God first, putting aside my own will and trust God who has my best interests.

So how does this apply to our passage, the discussion is that God will not pour out His wrath on those who have been forgiven, in this case Lot. In Revelation we are told about the pouring out of God's wrath⁶²² and in the case of Revelation it is the final generation. Applying this passage to the tribulation, God will remove us from the earth before he pours out his wrath on those left on the earth, as he did for Lot.

Please note that this does not mean that Christians will have an easy comfortable life without problems. Quite the opposite, genuine followers of Jesus will have persecution and suffering from the world, just not God's wrath. The rapture is not an escape from earthly suffering but is a removal from prior to God's wrath⁶²³. Other biblical examples of being removed before God's wrath is poured out, are Enoch⁶²⁴ and Elijah⁶²⁵.

⁶¹⁹ James 2:10: The law is not a set of individual principles but a revelation of God's will. Therefore, breaking one commandment demonstrates that we consider our will above God's, selfishness not love is being demonstrated 1John 2:4. If we love Jesus, we will keep his commandments: John 14:15, 1John 5:3.

⁶²⁰ Matt 5:48; 1Pet 1:15-16; Lev 11:44; 19:2; 20:7 Also Amos 3:3

⁶²¹ In Exodus the people from bitter water and the Tree (wood) was cast into the water and made them sweet. This is a reference to the tree in Eden that gives life and also the Cross (wood) on which Jesus took our bitterness and gave us life.

⁶²² Rev 6:16, 17

⁶²³ 1Thes 4:15-17

⁶²⁴ Gen 5:21-24; Heb 11:5

⁶²⁵ 2Kings 2:11

Another very important principle is demonstrated here. Abraham intercedes for the righteous, including Lot. Verse 29 of the next chapter implies that it was Abrahams intercession that saved Lot, we need to pray for others too.

It is possible that Abraham thought that in each of the 5 cities and there must be 10 righteous in each but then argues down to 10 which he might have considered to be been Lot his wife, 2 unmarried daughters, two married sons and two married daughters. All numbers are unknown as passages use plurals and when it talks about daughters as wives, were his daughters engaged? Some preachers ask, what would have happened if Abraham had asked about 4 or one.

The point is, even though we may feel like a minority we can still have great influence for good. We only need 10 righteous.

Sodom is given as an example of God's judgement that will occur. I also want to state that I do not believe that this judgement is a simply a judgement of homosexuality. There is far more going on, and to condemn homosexuality as the evillest of sin is erroneous. It seems to me that homosexuality can be the result⁶²⁶ of going down the wrong path in life. My opinion is that the judgement is on Sodom's attitude that they can do whatever they want with the visitors, without any consideration for the visitors' feelings.

CHAPTER 19

1 And there came two angels to Sodom at even; and Lot sat in the gate of Sodom: and Lot seeing them rose up to meet them; and he bowed himself with his face toward the ground;

2 And he said, Behold now, my lords, turn in, I pray you, into your servant's house, and tarry all night, and wash your feet, and ye shall rise up early, and go on your ways. And they said, Nay; but we will abide in the street all night.

3 And he pressed upon them greatly; and they turned in unto him, and entered into his house; and he made them a feast, and did bake unleavened bread, and they did eat.

Lot left Abraham and pitched his tent towards Sodom, then he dwelt in Sodom and now he is in a position of authority in Sodom. Lot is sitting in the gate, a place of the elders, those who decided who came in and went out.⁶²⁷ Even though Lot was unhappy about the sin around him⁶²⁸, he still integrated and living within the community.

Note how Lot pressed upon them greatly. Did Lot recognise them as heavenly beings or did Lot know what happened to people who stay in the square?

Noticed he made them a feast and baked unleavened bread – bread without sin. This is the first mention of unleavened bread.

4 ¶ But before they lay down, the men of the city, even the men of Sodom, compassed the house round, both old and young, all the people from every quarter:

⁶²⁶ Rom 1:26-27

⁶²⁷ Job 29:7, 12-17; Gen 23:18

⁶²⁸ 2Pet 2:7-8

5 And they called unto Lot, and said unto him, Where are the men which came in to thee this night? bring them out unto us, that we may know them.

6 And Lot went out at the door unto them, and shut the door after him,

7 And said, I pray you, brethren, do not so wickedly.

8 Behold now, I have two daughters which have not known man; let me, I pray you, bring them out unto you, and do ye to them as is good in your eyes: only unto these men do nothing; for therefore came they under the shadow of my roof.

9 And they said, Stand back. And they said again, This one fellow came in to sojourn, and he will needs be a judge: now will we deal worse with thee, than with them. And they pressed sore upon the man, even Lot, and came near to break the door.

10 But the men put forth their hand, and pulled Lot into the house to them, and shut to the door.

11 And they smote the men that were at the door of the house with blindness, both small and great: so that they wearied themselves to find the door.

All the people from every quarter; This is not one or two people but a significant percentage of the city.

Know them; This is commonly used in the scripture for sexual relations⁶²⁹.

How could he offer his daughters? I cannot comprehend Lots actions. There have been arguments about the culture requiring him to protect his guests and that women were not valued, but I cannot believe that these were significant enough to make him offer His daughters.

With regard to women not being valued I think that that it was a gradual progression away from God's intentions and so at this stage in history I would have thought that people who loved God still valued their wives and Children.

I do not think that anyone can really explain what Lot was thinking however a couple of points that might help us put it into context.

- Perhaps these daughters were engaged and so Lot was hoping that the betrothed husbands might have stopped the crowds.
- Lot had great courage by going outside but now he might be fearing for the life of himself and his entire family, so it might have been a desperate attempt to save some lives.
- Maybe Lot knowing what they intended, was trying to calm the crowd by offering them something confident that they would not accept.
- Perhaps Lot knew that these were Heavenly beings and so he felt the need to do all he could for God.

Verse 9 could imply that Lot had disagreed with things in the past.

James and others imply that the desires of these men of Sodom was a result of their path away from God. James tells us that the filthy dreamers, defile the flesh, despise dominions and speak evil of dignitaries.

⁶²⁹ Gen 4:1, 17, 25; 38:26

It is also an interesting parallel to the Nephilim prior to the flood. In that passage we had angels taking human women and here the human men want to take the angels⁶³⁰.

**12 ¶ And the men said unto Lot, Hast thou here any besides? son in law, and thy sons, and thy daughters, and whatsoever thou hast in the city, bring them out of this place:
13 For we will destroy this place, because the cry of them is waxen great before the face of the LORD; and the LORD hath sent us to destroy it.
14 And Lot went out, and spake unto his sons in law, which married his daughters, and said, Up, get you out of this place; for the LORD will destroy this city. But he seemed as one that mocked unto his sons in law.**

God has seen all he needs to and tells Lot to get out. Lot goes to his sons-in-law, and they will not listen. It is possible that these are engaged to the daughters living in his house as engagement was regarded as married. Remember Mary and Joseph, Joseph was going to divorce Mary when he found out that she was pregnant with Jesus⁶³¹.

Why did Lot not go to his sons?

Sin had blinded eyes of them lest they come to see the glory of the Lord.

What doth it profit, my brethren, though a man say he hath faith, and have not works? can faith save him?⁶³²

Yea, a man may say, Thou hast faith, and I have works: shew me thy faith without thy works, and I will shew thee my faith by my works.⁶³³

For by grace are ye saved through faith; and that not of yourselves: it is the gift of God: Not of works, lest any man should boast.⁶³⁴

Step back a moment and consider what has happened, Lot and these people were captured by the kings when they stopped paying tax⁶³⁵. Abraham then rescues them with miraculous help. Melchisedek blesses Abraham as the Lord of the Most high God. Lot may not have been effective but he was still described as righteous. So, these people had seen God move but they have chosen not to follow God and are following their own ways.

**15 ¶ And when the morning arose, then the angels hastened Lot, saying, Arise, take thy wife, and thy two daughters, which are here; lest thou be consumed in the iniquity of the city.
16 And while he lingered, the men laid hold upon his hand, and upon the hand of his wife, and upon the hand of his two daughters; the LORD being merciful unto him: and they brought him forth, and set him without the city.**

Why did Lot linger? If an angel showed up and told me God was going to destroy this place I would be leaving immediately. Was he still caught up with the worldly desires, was it his

⁶³⁰ Gen 6:2-4

⁶³¹ Mat 1:19

⁶³² James 2:14

⁶³³ James 2:18

⁶³⁴ Ephesians 2:8,9

⁶³⁵ Gen 14:1-11

wife delaying him or was he wishing he could get through to his sons? The Lord was merciful, even though he lingered the angels dragged him out.

17 ¶ And it came to pass, when they had brought them forth abroad, that he said, Escape for thy life; look not behind thee, neither stay thou in all the plain; escape to the mountain, lest thou be consumed.

18 And Lot said unto them, Oh, not so, my Lord:

19 Behold now, thy servant hath found grace in thy sight, and thou hast magnified thy mercy, which thou hast shewed unto me in saving my life; and I cannot escape to the mountain, lest some evil take me, and I die:

20 Behold now, this city is near to flee unto, and it is a little one: Oh, let me escape thither, (is it not a little one?) and my soul shall live.

21 And he said unto him, See, I have accepted thee concerning this thing also, that I will not overthrow this city, for the which thou hast spoken.

22 Haste thee, escape thither; for I cannot do any thing till thou be come thither. Therefore the name of the city was called Zoar.

23 ¶ The sun was risen upon the earth when Lot entered into Zoar.

Lot is still struggling to let go of his way of life. So, it is for us, it is hard to cast of the burden of sin that so easily besets us. Lot had seen the power that these Angels had, they were clearly from God but he still argues with them. How hard it is for us to leave sin, particularly sexual sin.

We are told to flee sexual sin, not just avoid it⁶³⁶. A similar thing applies to all sin, stay as far away as practical.

Therefore, since we are surrounded by such a great cloud of witnesses, let us throw off everything that hinders and the sin that so easily entangles, and let us run with perseverance the race marked out for us.⁶³⁷

The company that we keep will have a great influence on our course in life. We need to keep company with the cloud of witnesses. We need to fellowship with Christians and be encouraged and exhorted by them otherwise we will be ensnared by the world's values. I am not supporting the idea that we lock ourselves away in a monastery, we also need to be salt and light. Jesus interacted with the world, he spoke to and with the lost, but he also went aside with His disciples.

I want you to note here how God spared Zoar for Lot's sake. What a great influence we, as a minority can make in Spiritual things.

24 Then the LORD rained upon Sodom and upon Gomorrah brimstone and fire from the LORD out of heaven;

25 And he overthrew those cities, and all the plain, and all the inhabitants of the cities, and that which grew upon the ground.

26 ¶ But his wife looked back from behind him, and she became a pillar of salt.

⁶³⁶ 1Cor 6:18

⁶³⁷ Heb 12:1

The low altitude of the dead sea is due to the tectonic plates moving apart and so the area is earthquake prone. This lends itself to scientific study with its long history of earthquakes. Some of the findings include evidence of two towns that had a catastrophic collapse and burning⁶³⁸. In the southern area bitumen has been found with reference to a trade in bitumen. An earthquake could have resulted in gas and bitumen being expelled and if this had started to burn would result in a description similar to the description here. The **slimepits** that the kings of the area fell in⁶³⁹ could well have described the extraction of this bitumen. There is also a paper published on a town called ha-kikkar that a University of California study concludes was destroyed by an airburst meteor similar to the one in Russia in 1908⁶⁴⁰. The conclusion was that such an explosion matches the description of the destruction of Sodom and would have salted the earth making the previously arable land uninhabitable.

No matter which version is correct, there is evidence that the biblical record is an historical one.

Jesus spoke of those who got into heaven but lost everything when tested by fire⁶⁴¹. Here we have Lot, as an example of that, his mission field, including his wife, that he was called to be an example to, was destroyed by fire, while he himself was saved. Had he, worked out his salvation⁶⁴², focusing on God and demonstrating Grace, Mercy and Love, he might have saved his sons and wife.

Lot had the wrong focus in the beginning, he moved to the plain for greed⁶⁴³, then closer to Sodom, a city of selfishness and pleasure. Then he made a slightly bigger compromise, he moved into Sodom. He had been rescued once already from the consequence of city greed,⁶⁴⁴ but he returned to in Sodom.

Here we see the result of Lot's choices, his wife and sons died in sin and he has lost everything. If you had told Lot the result of his choices I am sure he would have made different ones but he looked to the short term pleasure not the long term way of God. The Bible tells us the best way to live and we ignore it to our peril. Are my and your choices worth it, have we got our focus on Jesus and His way?

The definition of sanctification is: to set apart, make holy, to purify or to be set free from sin.

How long will you love what is worthless and aim at deception? But know that the Lord has set apart the godly man for Himself...⁶⁴⁵

⁶³⁸ Austin. S. 2010. Greatest Earthquakes of the Bible. Acts & Facts. 39 (10): 12-15

⁶³⁹ Gen 14:10

⁶⁴⁰ Timesofisrael.com/meteor-destroyed-ancient-city-likely-inspired-bible-tale-of-sodom-study-finds/amp/

⁶⁴¹ 1 Corinthians 3:11-15

⁶⁴² Phil 2:12-13

⁶⁴³ Gen 13:9-11; Lot should have let his uncle, Abraham, go to the more fertile area

⁶⁴⁴ Gen 14

⁶⁴⁵ Psalm 4:2-3

Let us consider what the sin of Sodom was. It is common for people to say it was homosexuality and I think that this simplification is more about making us feel better than reality. Clearly there was homosexuality but since all the men⁶⁴⁶ came to humiliate and take from the angles this is not just the homosexual population. I think this was a symptom or obvious demonstration of the underlying sin.

Jesus considered this passage to be a warning for us, of the days ahead.

Likewise also as it was in the the days of Lot; they did eat, they drank, they bought, they sold, they planted, they builded; but the same day that Lot went out of Sodom it rained fire and brimstone from heaven, and destroyed them all.

Even thus shall it be int eh day when the Son of man is revealed⁶⁴⁷.

We need to get a better understanding of what God is saying to us here, so we can avoid the same error.

Whosoever shall not receive you, it shall be more tolerable for Sodom in the day of Judgement.⁶⁴⁸

In the above quote, Jesus is saying that it will be worse for the city's that do not accept the disciples teaching and demonstration of the Kingdom than for Sodom.

“Now this was the sin of your sister Sodom: She and her daughters were arrogant, overfed and unconcerned; they did not help the poor and needy. They were haughty and did detestable things before me. Therefore I did away with them as you have seen.

Bear your disgrace, for you have furnished some justification for your sisters. Because your sins were more vile than theirs, they appear more righteous than you. So then, be ashamed and bear your disgrace, for you have made your sisters appear righteous.⁶⁴⁹

Here God tells us that the sin was their arrogant, selfish and lack of consideration of others. Also, Israel, which did not permit homosexuality, made Sodom appear more righteous. Earlier in the same passage, Ezekiel, says that she despised her husband and children,⁶⁵⁰ which is the ultimate in lack of love.

When I consider the changes in society that I have noticed, selfishness and lack of compassion are very clear to me. These are the opposite of the love that God, demonstrated and gave to us.

Whosoever shall seek to save his life shall lose it; and whosoever shall lose his life shall preserve it.⁶⁵¹

Even within the church we see the decay.

Hear the word of the LORD, you rulers of Sodom; listen to the instruction of our God, you people of Gomorrah!

⁶⁴⁶ Gen 19:4

⁶⁴⁷ Luke 17:28-30

⁶⁴⁸ Matthew 10:15, see also Matt 11:23-24 and Luke 10:12

⁶⁴⁹ Ezekiel 16:49-50, 52; see also Jer 23:14

⁶⁵⁰ Eze 16:45

⁶⁵¹ Luke 17:33

“The multitude of your sacrifices— what are they to me?” says the LORD. “I have more than enough of burnt offerings, of rams and the fat of fattened animals; I have no pleasure in the blood of bulls and lambs and goats. When you come to appear before me, who has asked this of you, this trampling of my courts? Stop bringing meaningless offerings! Your incense is detestable to me. New Moons, Sabbaths and convocations— I cannot bear your worthless assemblies. Your New Moon feasts and your appointed festivals I hate with all my being. They have become a burden to me; I am weary of bearing them. When you spread out your hands in prayer, I hide my eyes from you; even when you offer many prayers, I am not listening. Your hands are full of blood!

Wash and make yourselves clean. Take your evil deeds out of my sight; stop doing wrong. Learn to do right; seek justice. Defend the oppressed. Take up the cause of the fatherless; plead the case of the widow.

“Come now, let us settle the matter,” says the LORD. “Though your sins are like scarlet, they shall be as white as snow; though they are red as crimson, they shall be like wool. If you are willing and obedient, you will eat the good things of the land;⁶⁵²

Even within the church we see the decay, religious practices brings no pleasure to God, because they do not include the action of caring for others⁶⁵³. How often I see the over emphasis on the hierarchy of the leaders, the insistence on wrong being punished and the rejection of those who are ‘unfit’⁶⁵⁴. We still see the Pharisaical spirit deciding who is righteous and creating the division of them and us⁶⁵⁵. Jesus demonstrated God’s way where we are all brothers and sisters, demonstrating forgiveness and grace.

But ye, beloved, building up yourselves on your most holy faith, praying int eh Holy Ghost, keep yourselves in the love of God, looking for the mercy of our Lord Jesus Christ unto eternal life. And of some have compassion, making a difference: and other save with fear, pulling them out of the fire; hating even the garments spotted by the flesh.⁶⁵⁶

27 ¶ And Abraham gat up early in the morning to the place where he stood before the LORD:

28 And he looked toward Sodom and Gomorrah, and toward all the land of the plain, and beheld, and, lo, the smoke of the country went up as 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 the which Lot dwelt.

Sodom was about 18 miles from where we think Abraham was living.⁶⁵⁷

⁶⁵² Isa 1:10-19

⁶⁵³ See also Isa 3:9

⁶⁵⁴ Often done in a religious way, you cannot be ont eh worship team until you have done this, you have to make a public confession etc

⁶⁵⁵ Jude 1:17-19

⁶⁵⁶ Jude 1:20-23

⁶⁵⁷ Deut 29:23, Jud 1:7

This verse implies that God's efforts to remove Lot as he lingered was because of his relationship to Abraham. It shows that as we seek and honour God he looks after our family and friends.

I know that as I was praying for someone I really had the impression that if I had spent less time on me and more on God my prayers would have accomplished more. I need to run the race not just for me but also my family.

30 ¶ And Lot went up out of Zoar, and dwelt in the mountain, and his two daughters with him; for he feared to dwell in Zoar: and he dwelt in a cave, he and his two daughters.

31 And the firstborn said unto the younger, Our father is old, and there is not a man in the earth to come in unto us after the manner of all the earth:

32 Come, let us make our father drink wine, and we will lie with him, that we may preserve seed of our father.

33 And they made their father drink wine that night: and the firstborn went in, and lay with her father; and he perceived not when she lay down, nor when she arose.

34 And it came to pass on the morrow, that the firstborn said unto the younger, Behold, I lay yesternight with my father: let us make him drink wine this night also; and go thou in, and lie with him, that we may preserve seed of our father.

35 And they made their father drink wine that night also: and the younger arose, and lay with him; and he perceived not when she lay down, nor when she arose.

36 Thus were both the daughters of Lot with child by their father.

37 And the firstborn bare a son, and called his name Moab: the same is the father of the Moabites unto this day.

38 And the younger, she also bare a son, and called his name Ben-ammi: the same is the father of the children of Ammon unto this day.

Why didn't Lot go back to his uncle? Lot went from having great wealth, so that the land could not support him and Abram together, to living alone, with his daughters, in a cave. The sexual sin which he lived among in Sodom, contaminated him and his daughters, resulting in incest. Lot may have been troubled by the sin and kept his salvation but his toleration resulted in his daughters suffering from the same sin. We need to be careful that our toleration of sin does not result in our children suffering.

Be not deceived God is not mocked: what soever a man soweth, that shall he also reap. ⁶⁵⁸

Note also how the daughters believed Satan's lie, "There are no men." We are much more receptive to Satan and deaf to the Holy Spirit when we are in sin. They had just been in Zoar among people, so I have to think Lot's daughters were referred to Godly men, but just 18 miles away was Abraham with at least 318 trained men.

Consider the Sea of Galilee vs the Dead sea.

Abraham is like the Sea of Galilee, which has a river flowing out of it. Abraham gave Lot the best land. Abraham gave back the spoils of war to the king. Abraham gave a tithe to Melchizedek. Abraham was a giver, he gave to others.

⁶⁵⁸ Gal 6:7

Lot was like the Dead Sea which has a river and streams entering it but it has no discharge. Lot got the same living water that Abraham got, he got the same blessing, however Lot did not give, he kept. Lot chose the best land when he separated from Abraham. The Dead Sea likewise keeps the water that it gets without giving out and it is a sea that is dead with nothing living in it.

We too need to give of the blessings that God gives us or we too will become dead.

CHAPTER 20

1 And Abraham journeyed from thence toward the south country, and dwelled between Kadesh and Shur, and sojourned in Gerar.

2 And 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, Behold, thou art but a dead man, for the woman which thou hast taken; for she is a man's wife.

4 But Abimelech had not come near her: and he said, Lord, wilt thou slay also a righteous nation?

5 Said he not unto me, She is my sister? and she, even she herself said, He is my brother: in the integrity of my heart and innocency of my hands have I done this.

6 And God said unto him in a dream, Yea, I know that thou didst this in the integrity of thy heart; for I also withheld thee from sinning against me: therefore suffered I thee not to touch her.

7 Now therefore restore the man his wife; for he is a prophet, and he shall pray for thee, and thou shalt live: and if thou restore her not, know thou that thou shalt surely die, thou, and all that are thine.

8 Therefore Abimelech rose early in the morning, and called all his servants, and told all these things in their ears: and the men were sore afraid.

Abraham lies again, this time to Abimelech, which Abraham's son also does⁶⁵⁹. Perhaps Abraham thought that since he was "the brother," people would come to negotiate the bride price with him and would have a chance to deny them without being killed. No matter what the reason Abraham deceived Abimelech. Even though Sarah was in her nineties, she was beautiful enough to be taken by the King of Gerar.

How did God speak to the Abimelech? Abraham regarded him as an unbeliever as he states in vs 11 surely the fear of God is not in this place? God seems to talk more directly with those of weaker faith and God talks to Abimelech in a dream with enough conviction that Abimelech has a conversation with God. Notice how God tells Abimelech that he prevented him from sinning since He knew that Abimelech had acted in integrity⁶⁶⁰. God values integrity, he desires that we do our best and when we try, God helps out. With every temptation He provides a way out.⁶⁶¹

⁶⁵⁹ Gen 26:1-33

⁶⁶⁰ Gen 20:6

⁶⁶¹ 1Cor 10:13

God also emphasises the relationship He has with Abraham, Abraham will pray for you (Abimelech) and you will live⁶⁶². Abraham is described as a prophet, the word is Nabi, which means to bubble forth or a spokesperson⁶⁶³.

The other thing to observe here is Abimelech pleading for his people, with similar words to the ones used by Abraham when he prayed for Lot, the righteous would not be destroyed with the wicked.

It has been pointed out that this passage is parallel to the Genesis story; Sarah is like the fruit. Abimelech is like Adam, he is presented with something that is pleasant to the eyes and desirable. Abraham is like the serpent, who lies, implying that the desirable is permitted. In this case Abimelech does not sin unlike Adam. Had Abimelech sinned the result would have been death⁶⁶⁴ just as it was for Adam. We cannot be prideful because we have the truth, Adam had the truth and sinned, Abimelech did not have the truth but did not sin.

God says that Abimelech will live after Abraham has prayed for him. God works through prayer. God is wanting us to partner with Him in prayer to save the lost. This must have been a nation that at least understood God because if our prime minister, John Key, announced that people would die if we did not stop adultery he would be laughed out of office.

Note how God withheld Abimelech from sinning against God even though he had taken Sarah from Abraham. Realise also that this must have taken place over a long time, Vs 17 and 18 tell us that God had closed up the wombs. It takes a long time to notice that the ladies are not getting pregnant.

Arsenokoitais (1 Corinthians 6:9-10 and 1 Timothy 1:9-10)

Paul R. Johnson wrote:

"The Greek compound term arseno-koitais literally means 'the male who has many beds'. The word arsen means 'male', the adjective o means 'the', and the term koitais is defined as 'many beds'. Thus, the entire phrase means a male with multiple bed-partners; a promiscuous man. Everywhere that the word koitais is used in the plural in the Bible denotes promiscuity. However, when the same word is used in the singular form, the Bible gives approval because the singular denotes monogamy."

9 Then Abimelech called Abraham, and said unto him, What hast thou done unto us? and what have I offended thee, that thou hast brought on me and on my kingdom a great sin? thou hast done deeds unto me that ought not to be done.

10 And Abimelech said unto Abraham, What sawest thou, that thou hast done this thing?

11 And Abraham said, Because I thought, Surely the fear of God is not in this place; and they will slay me for my wife's sake.

12 And yet indeed she is my sister; she is the daughter of my father, but not the daughter of my mother; and she became my wife.

⁶⁶² Gen 20:7

⁶⁶³ Strong's 5030 See example of Aaron as spokesperson Ex 7:1 and Saul 1Sam 10:5-12

⁶⁶⁴ Verse 7

13 And it came to pass, when God caused me to wander from my father's house, that I said unto her, This is thy kindness which thou shalt shew unto me; at every place whither we shall come, say of me, He is my brother.

14 And Abimelech took sheep, and oxen, and menservants, and womenservants, and gave them unto Abraham, and restored him Sarah his wife.

15 And Abimelech said, Behold, my land is before thee: dwell where it pleaseth thee.

16 And unto Sarah he said, Behold, I have given thy brother a thousand pieces of silver: behold, he is to thee a covering of the eyes, unto all that are with thee, and with all other: thus she was reproved.

17 ¶ So Abraham prayed unto God: and God healed Abimelech, and his wife, and his maidservants; and they bare children.

18 For the LORD had fast closed up all the wombs of the house of Abimelech, because of Sarah Abraham's wife.

Abraham had been chosen by God, yet he sinned against Abimelech. God is demonstrating that in the natural, we cannot be sinless, we need a new heart. More than that God is also showing that He is a merciful God. We too can be part of the chosen ones, even though we sin.

Abraham states that the fear of God is not in this place, yet Abraham is the one that lied and risked Abimelech's life. Abimelech on the other had acts generously and with mercy, giving Abraham gifts. Humans are quick to judge and discriminate yet we are all descendants of Adam and Noah and must have humility⁶⁶⁵. This passage reminds me of Jesus parable of the good Samaritan,⁶⁶⁶ the heart of God has always been that we would show mercy and grace to others.

Repay no one evil for evil, but give thought to do what is honorable in the sight of all. If possible, so far as it depends on you, live peaceably with all. Beloved, never avenge yourselves, but leave it to the wrath of God, for it is written, "Vengeance is mine, I will repay, says the Lord." To the contrary, "if your enemy is hungry, feed him; if he is thirsty, give him something to drink,"⁶⁶⁷

"Covering of the eyes?" vs 16 means to allay the suspicions of others, proof that you have not done wrong.

Reproved – really means restored not told off.

Abraham had been called and blessed, those you bless will be blessed, yet here Abraham brings a curse on Abimelech and risked Abimelech's life. I believe that the Old Testament is a physical example of what happens in the Spiritual. So how often have we risked the spiritual lives of those around us. We need to act with integrity

Marrying a half-sister was permitted in those days (see discussion on Cain's wife) although it was prohibited later⁶⁶⁸.

⁶⁶⁵ Rom 12:3

⁶⁶⁶ Luke 10:25-37; Matt 22:34-40; Mark 12:28-34

⁶⁶⁷ Romans 12:17-21 ESV

⁶⁶⁸ Lev 18:9

CHAPTER 21

1 And the LORD visited Sarah as he had said, and the LORD did unto Sarah as he had spoken.

2 For Sarah conceived, and bare 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 that was born unto him, whom Sarah bare to him, Isaac.

4 And Abraham circumcised his son Isaac being eight days old, as God had commanded him.

5 And Abraham was an hundred years old, when his son Isaac was born unto him.

6 ¶ And Sarah said, God hath made me to laugh, so that all that hear will laugh with me.

7 And she said, Who would have said unto Abraham, that Sarah should have given children suck? for I have born him a son in his old age.

8 And the child grew, and was weaned: and Abraham made a great feast the same day that Isaac was weaned.

9 ¶ And Sarah saw the son of Hagar the Egyptian, which she had born unto Abraham, mocking.

10 Wherefore she said unto Abraham, Cast out this bondwoman and her son: for the son of this bondwoman shall not be heir with my son, even with Isaac.

11 And the thing was very grievous in Abraham's sight because of his son.

Have you noticed how easily the scriptures state, **“and the Lord visited Sarah as He had said.”** How often do we read Acts and expect a miracle every day. The reality is that 100 years have passed in the last 10 chapters. Abraham and Sarah waited 25 years for the promised heir, Isaac. In fact, this is 10 years after God renewed his promise for an heir. I am embarrassed to say that I sometimes lose confidence after praying for a few weeks.

Wait on the Lord: be of good courage, and he shall strengthen thine heart: wait, I say, on the Lord.⁶⁶⁹

This was certainly a miracle, Sarah being 99 years old and Abraham older. We have become addicted to instant things, instant food, microwaves, cell phones to get hold of people immediately, google on our phones for instant information. One of the reasons we find it difficult to slow down is that we have not become convinced of the need for things to occur “in the fullness of time.”⁶⁷⁰

Weaning was a time for celebration as infants often died, so when a child was old enough to eat solid food, it was a milestone to celebrate knowing that the highest risk time had passed. Weaning was usually between 2 and 3 years old though Rabies says anywhere between 18 months and 5 years.

Isaac means laugh or he laughs and both Abraham and Sarah had laughed⁶⁷¹ at the prospect that they would have a child. God changed Sarah's laughter of unbelief into the laughter of Joy, and everyone would rejoice with her. We will see later Ishmael laughing at Isaac

⁶⁶⁹ Psalm 27:14

⁶⁷¹ Gen 17:17 and 18:12

Ishmael was 14 when Isaac was born⁶⁷² so, Ishmael is around 16/17 years old here. Ishmael – the flesh – laughed at the new promise – the faith. This is also symbolic of our lives. Our flesh will mock our faith and we need to drive out the flesh.

It is interesting that Abraham call Isaac “he laughs⁶⁷³”, and here is Ishmael laughing⁶⁷⁴ which is the root of Isaac’s name and yet the response is to cast Ishmael and Hagar out.

Sarah and Abraham mistreated Hagar for a child, now that child, Hagars son mistreats Sarah’s son. Sarah gets Abraham to cast out Hagar the Egyptian⁶⁷⁵ and later Abraham’s descendants will be mistreated by the Egyptians for 400 years. Our sins will be outworked in our children⁶⁷⁶.

The reason Sarah gives for sending Hagar and Ishmael away, or freed from their slavery, is to protect Isaac’s inheritance. The culture was that the eldest son got a double portion of the estate when the father died. So, with two sons, Abrahams flocks would be divided 2/3rd to Ishmael and 1/3rd to Isaac. If Abraham set Hagar the slave free, with her son, then the entire inheritance would be given to Isaac. This is repeated later after Sarah dies and Abraham has other children⁶⁷⁷. From the context we can also see that Sarah does not like Ishmael’s laughing at her son.

Abraham is asked by Sarah to give up his first-born son, Ishmael, and it grieved Abraham. Later we will see Abraham being asked by God to give up his other son, Isaac.

12 ¶ And God said unto Abraham, Let it not be grievous in thy sight because of the lad, and because of thy bondwoman; in all that Sarah hath said unto thee, hearken unto her voice; for in Isaac shall thy seed be called.

13 And also of the son of the bondwoman will I make a nation, because he is thy seed.

14 And Abraham rose up early in the morning, and took bread, and a bottle of water, and gave it unto Hagar, putting it on her shoulder, and the child, and sent her away: and she departed, and wandered in the wilderness of Beer-sheba.

Abraham must have gone to God in prayer and interceded for Ishmael. Abraham also seems to have learnt from the previous request of Sarah⁶⁷⁸ and this time he took it to God. Notice that God says hearken to Sarah. Many have taken Paul’s guidance about women being silent⁶⁷⁹ out of context. God expects husbands to listen to their wives. We may have different roles, but God wants us to partner with our wives.

Bread and water refers to all sorts of food provisions and it was apparently common for chiefs to send out their sons to fend for themselves at 16 -17 years old. For example many New Zealanders went deer stalking at that age. It gives teenage boys time to understand themselves and mature.

⁶⁷² Gen 16:16; 21:5

⁶⁷³ Yishāq Strongs H3327

⁶⁷⁴ Sāhaq Strongs H6710

⁶⁷⁵ Gen 21:9

⁶⁷⁶ Exodus 20:5-6, Deut 5:9-1; Jer 32:17-18

⁶⁷⁷ Gen 25:6

⁶⁷⁹ 1Tim 2:12

Gal 4 and 5 When Christ the promised seed was come the old was done away with. We are adopted in the Spirit and the flesh and the Spirit do not harmonise. We must get rid of the flesh and the law and live in the spirit.

**15 And the water was spent in the bottle, and she cast the child under one of the shrubs.
16 And she went, and sat her down over against him a good way off, as it were a bowshot: for she said, Let me not see the death of the child. And she sat over against him, and lift up her voice, and wept.
17 And God heard the voice of the lad; and the angel of God called to Hagar out of heaven, and said unto her, What aileth thee, Hagar? fear not; for God hath heard the voice of the lad where he is.
18 Arise, lift up the lad, and hold him in thine hand; for I will make him a great nation.
19 And God opened her eyes, and she saw a well of water; and she went, and filled the bottle with water, and gave the lad drink.
20 And God was with the lad; and he grew, and dwelt in the wilderness, and became an archer.**

Hagar is in a desert and places Ishmael under a bush⁶⁸⁰, this is the only other time that this word appears is in Genesis 2 when we have a desolate land when God waters the land and creates life. Here too the word of the Lord comes and Hagar sees water that saves their lives.

This passage reminds me of Nathanael who Jesus saw under the fig tree⁶⁸¹ but can be linked to the many times that trees / wood is associated with God listening to mankind. Abraham and the Angels heading to Sodom is another example. I think that God is pointing us to the cross when Jesus will be hung on a tree⁶⁸². The first Adam took the fruit of a tree while we should wait under God's shadow for the Holy Spirit to bring us the fruit of salvation and communion with God.

We can also link this to Abraham's offering of Isaac. Here God intervenes after hearing the son under a bush and later Isaac's life is swapped for a ram caught in a bush (or thicket). Another parallels is that Abraham abuses an Egyptian for a child, the Israelites will be abused in Egypt⁶⁸³ and then try to kill the Israelite children⁶⁸⁴. God later commands the Israelites not to abuse immigrants⁶⁸⁵.

Notice that God heard the voice of the lad⁶⁸⁶. What was he praying? Let not my sin cause my mother's death? Maybe this is why he was so exhausted; Ishmael was at least 14 and probably between 15 and 17 years old at this stage. He may have been trying to carry the load for his mother as he recognised his sin in mocking.

⁶⁸⁰ Strong's Hebrew 7880: Gen 2:5

⁶⁸¹ John 1:48-50

⁶⁸² Acts 5.30; 10.39; 13.29

⁶⁸³ Prophecy's in Gen 15 eventuates in Exodus 1:14

⁶⁸⁴ Exodus 1:16

⁶⁸⁵ Exodus 23:9

⁶⁸⁶ Verse 17

God is gracious. If we take a judgemental view Ishmael sinned therefore, he can die in the wilderness. God did not see things that way, God saw a hurting child and mother. Jesus tells us that people will know we are Christians by our love.

21 And he dwelt in the wilderness of Paran: and his mother took him a wife out of the land of Egypt.

22 ¶ And it came to pass at that time, that Abimelech and Phichol the chief captain of his host spake unto Abraham, saying, God is with thee in all that thou doest:

23 Now therefore swear unto me here by God that thou wilt not deal falsely with me, nor with my son, nor with my son's son: but according to the kindness that I have done unto thee, thou shalt do unto me, and to the land wherein thou hast sojourned.

24 And Abraham said, I will swear.

25 And Abraham reprov'd Abimelech because of a well of water, which Abimelech's servants had violently taken away.

26 And Abimelech said, I wot not who hath done this thing: neither didst thou tell me, neither yet heard I of it, but to day.

27 And Abraham took sheep and oxen, and gave them unto Abimelech; and both of them made a covenant.

28 And Abraham set seven ewe lambs of the flock by themselves.

29 And Abimelech said unto Abraham, What mean these seven ewe lambs which thou hast set by themselves?

30 And he said, For these seven ewe lambs shalt thou take of my hand, that they may be a witness unto me, that I have digged this well.

31 Wherefore he called that place Beer-sheba; because there they sware both of them.

32 Thus they made a covenant at Beer-sheba: then Abimelech rose up, and Phichol the chief captain of his host, and they returned into the land of the Philistines.

33 ¶ And Abraham planted a grove in Beer-sheba, and called there on the name of the LORD, the everlasting God.

34 And Abraham sojourn'd in the Philistines' land many days.

Abimelech sees that God is with Abraham and wants a covenant. Despite Abraham's sin, Abraham succeeds in demonstrating that God is a loving and gracious God who blesses those who carry God's image. This is what we are called to do, carry the image⁶⁸⁷ of God so that all around us will know that God is a gracious loving God.

It was Abimelech who had been good to Abraham previously and given him gifts and been kind. Now Abimelech is asking Abraham to do the same to him.

We have just read the division between two mothers and their sons and here at the same place Abraham does the opposite and creates peace between the chosen family and the nations. This is a costly peace as Abraham gives Abimelech sheep and oxen. Abraham then plants trees, just as God did during creation.

God offers us peace, a costly peace as it cost the life of God's son Jesus, and God will then plant the Holy Spirit within our hearts so we can be a new creation in Christ.

⁶⁸⁷ God's image is ; Love, Mercy, Grace etc See discussion on Gen 1:26-28

Later we will see Abraham's son, Isaac, repeating Abrahams lie, by lying to Abimelech, saying that Rebekah is his sister.⁶⁸⁸

Wells indicated ownership of the land and were a source of life in the arid area. Abraham is asking for his place in the land and Abimelech agrees to ensure there is space for Abraham. Abraham then buys the well that he had already dug, a generous offer. The 7 lambs would interbreed therefore in time all of Abimelech's flocks could be linked to the covenant which would be remembered.

CHAPTER 22

1 And it came to pass after these things, that God did tempt Abraham, and said unto him, Abraham: and he said, Behold, here I am.

2 And he said, Take now thy son, thine only son Isaac, whom thou lovest, and get thee into the land of Moriah; and offer him there for a burnt offering upon one of the mountains which I will tell thee of.

This has for a long time been one of those passages that I really look at and asked "WHY". We have it emphasised that the pagan practice of child sacrifice is completely opposite of the love that we have with God. God even tells the Israelites not to follow the pagan practice of sacrificing their children⁶⁸⁹.

Let us reconsider this passage in context.

Abraham and Sarah, like Adam and Eve, tried to rush the blessing on their terms by abusing Hagar to get a son. Abraham then had to give up the son when Sarah banished them⁶⁹⁰. Abraham is now being asked to give up his other son.

When God told Abraham that Sarah was going to have a child he pleaded for Ishmael.⁶⁹¹

God told Abraham that he was going to destroy Sodom and Gomorrah. Abraham immediately pleaded with God⁶⁹².

Sarah told Abraham to cast out his other child, Ishmael. This drove Abraham to plead with God.

Here God asks Abraham to sacrifice his son and I think that God is wanting Abraham to stand in the gap and plead for his son as Moses would do for the people⁶⁹³. God's preference was for Abraham to pray and negotiate like he did with Sodom. Abraham could have prayed like Jesus did;

O my Lord if it be possible, let this cup pass from my: nevertheless not as I will, but as thou⁶⁹⁴.

Abraham forgot that God is not like the Canaanite God's who wanted absolute obedience without questioning. The true God, our God allows us to be adopted into His family so that

⁶⁸⁸ Gen 26

⁶⁸⁹ Deut 12:31 also 2 Kings 21:2-6, Eze 16:20-21, 2Kings 17:17-18

⁶⁹⁰ Gen 21:9-14

⁶⁹¹ Gen 17:18

⁶⁹² Gen 18:23-33

⁶⁹³ Ex 33:13-17; Num 12:13; Num 14:13-20

⁶⁹⁴ Matt 26:39

we can be His children and call Him Father⁶⁹⁵. This God of ours wants us to seek Him in prayer and to intercede on behalf of others.

Ask and it shall be given to you; seek and you will find; knock and it will be opened.⁶⁹⁶

The prayer of a righteous person is powerful and effective.⁶⁹⁷

Isaac interceded on behalf of Rebekah⁶⁹⁸ and Moses interceded for the Israelites⁶⁹⁹ and likewise we should intercede on behalf of others.⁷⁰⁰

So next time you see someone struggling, when you see something that does not seem to align with the character of God, perhaps it is a call for you to engage God on their behalf. Will you stand in the gap for them?

I looked for someone among them who would build up the wall and stand before me in the gap on behalf of the land so I would not have to destroy it, but I found no one.⁷⁰¹

Abraham had been given the example after Abimelech had taken Sarah (because Abraham lied about her being his sister) God had said that Abraham would pray for Abimelech and he would live⁷⁰².

We have been called to be a holy nation, of Kings and priests⁷⁰³. A priest is someone to represents God to others and also who represents the people to God. We are called not just to tell others about God but also to plead before God for other people. Jesus was an example for us as He did not just pay the price of our sins, He also became our advocate before the Father⁷⁰⁴.

This can be hard as God does not always answer our prayers in the way we want them answered. So we can become disillusioned and disappointment, just remember that it took 13 years for Abraham to get the son he prayed for. Do not loose heart⁷⁰⁵, just keep pressing into Jesus.

Perhaps the most remembered verse of the Bible is;

For God so loved the world, that He gave His only begotten Son, that whosoever believeth in him should not perish but have everlasting life.⁷⁰⁶

And this passage in Genesis is a prophecy for us that God himself, will sacrifice His Son Jesus, on our behalf to pay for our sins, on the same mountain⁷⁰⁷. John uses God's sacrifice as an example of God's love and here in Genesis is the first time the word Love is used. This is important as it sets the definition for biblical love, the love of a father for his son⁷⁰⁸.

⁶⁹⁵ Rom 8:15; Gal 4:6-7; Eph 1:5; 2:19; Heb 2:10; John 1:12; See also Deut 7:6-8

⁶⁹⁶ Mat 7:7 also Mat 7:11; Mat 21:22; Psalm 10:17; 50:15; 145:18, 19; James 5:15; Jer 29:12; Mark 11:24; Luke 11:9-13; Luke 18:1; John 14:13-14; 15:7,16; 16:23-24; 1John 3:22; 1John 5:14-15

⁶⁹⁷ James 5:16

⁶⁹⁸ Gen 25:21

⁶⁹⁹ Ex 33:13-17; Num 12:13; Num 14:13-20

⁷⁰⁰ 1Tim 2:1-3; Eph 6:18; 1Sam 12:23; Acts 7:60

⁷⁰¹ Ezekiel 22:30 (NIV)

⁷⁰² Gen 20:7

⁷⁰³ 1Pet 2:9; Exodus 19:5-6: Treasure in verse 5 is a term used in special treaty term for those in a special relationship; Isa 61:6; 66:21; Rev 1:6; 5:10

⁷⁰⁴ 1John 2:1

⁷⁰⁵ 2Cor 4:16

⁷⁰⁶ John 3:16

⁷⁰⁷ 2Ch 3:1. "Then Solomon began to build the house of the Lord at Jerusalem in Mt. Moriah."

⁷⁰⁸ Note John 15:13 Greater love has no man than this, that a man lay down his life for his friends

In verse 8 below it states that God will provide himself a lamb. The Hebrew word Raw-aw is translated “will provide” here but is also translated as appear, become visible, experience, presents (himself). So verse 8 could be translated as, “God will provide Himself as a lamb?” Which God did when He presented Jesus as the Lamb of God⁷⁰⁹ who takes away the sins of the world.

Another link to our salvation is that God tells Abraham – **thy son, thine only son**. But Abraham had two sons.

Ishmael the son of the flesh and

Isaac the son of the promise⁷¹⁰.

God does not value works of the flesh, dead works⁷¹¹ as Paul describes them. God is focused on our Spiritual health, it is our spirits that will dwell for eternity. We so often focus on the things we do rather than following the spirit. We need to put to death the flesh so that we can live in the spirit.

There is another point that **Chuck Smith** points out, in Abraham’s journey there were seven times that God met with Abraham and at each meeting Abraham had fellowship in an aspect of God. I suspect that this fellowship applies to all the biblical greats, David, Paul, Daniel etc. I think that to some extent, this applies to us and our journey in faith. This chapter starts with “After these things.” What things? I want to suggest it is referring to the previous times of fellowship with God. The fellowship of suffering follows the fellowship in other things.

First appearance: fellowship with God in the discontent **with the worldly society** ([Gen 12:1](#)). Called to leave the Ur of the Chaldees. God did not like the actions of the Chaldees.

Gen 12:1 ¶ Now the LORD had said unto Abram, Get thee out of thy country, and from thy kindred, and from thy father's house, unto a land that I will shew thee: :2 And I will make of thee a great nation, and I will bless thee, and make thy name great; and thou shalt be a blessing:

2Cor 6:17 – 18 We must come out from among them, be separate and we will be sons and daughters of God.

Second appearance: fellowship **with the plans and methods of God** ([Genesis 13:14-18](#)).

Next appearing was when God promised him the land, where God's divine purposes were to be fulfilled. "He entered, pitched his tent, built an altar. Fellowship with the plan of God.

Gen 13:14 ¶ And the LORD said unto Abram, after that Lot was separated from him, Lift up now thine eyes, and look from the place where thou art northward, and southward, and eastward, and westward: :15 For all the land which thou seest, to thee will I give it, and to thy seed for ever. :16 And I will make thy seed as the dust of the earth: so that if a man can number the dust of the earth, [then] shall thy seed also be numbered. :17 Arise, walk through the land in the length of it and in the breadth of it; for I will give it unto thee. :18 Then Abram removed [his] tent, and came and dwelt in the plain of Mamre, which [is] in Hebron, and built there an altar unto the LORD.

Third appearance: **fellowship with the patience of God** ([Genesis 15](#)).

Later God appeared and promised Abraham a son.

⁷⁰⁹ John 1:36

⁷¹⁰ Gal 4:28-31

⁷¹¹ Heb 6:1

Gen 15:1 ¶ After these things the word of the LORD came unto Abram in a vision, saying, Fear not, Abram: I [am] thy shield, [and] thy exceeding great reward. :2 And Abram said, Lord GOD, what wilt thou give me, seeing I go childless, and the steward of my house [is] this Eliezer of Damascus? :3 And Abram said, Behold, to me thou hast given no seed: and, lo, one born in my house is mine heir. :4 And, behold, the word of the LORD [came] unto him, saying, This shall not be thine heir; but he that shall come forth out of thine own bowels shall be thine heir. :5 And he brought him forth abroad, and said, Look now toward heaven, and tell the stars, if thou be able to number them: and he said unto him, So shall thy seed be.

Fourth appearance: **fellowship of the hope of God** (Genesis 15:12-21).

The strange night vision horror of darkness, the lamp moving between the pieces of the sacrifice, meaning dark days for his progeny but deliverance.

Gen 15:12 ¶ And when the sun was going down, a deep sleep fell upon Abram; and, lo, an horror of great darkness fell upon him. :13 And he said unto Abram, Know of a surety that thy seed shall be a stranger in a land [that is] not theirs, and shall serve them; and they shall afflict them four hundred years; :14 And also that nation, whom they shall serve, will I judge: and afterward shall they come out with great substance. :15 And thou shalt go to thy fathers in peace; thou shalt be buried in a good old age. :16 But in the fourth generation they shall come hither again: for the iniquity of the Amorites [is] not yet full. :17 ¶ And it came to pass, that, when the sun went down, and it was dark, behold a smoking furnace, and a burning lamp that passed between those pieces. :18 In the same day the LORD made a covenant with Abram, saying, Unto thy seed have I given this land, from the river of Egypt unto the great river, the river Euphrates: :19 The Kenites, and the Kenizzites, and the Kadmonites, :20 And the Hittites, and the Perizzites, and the Rephaims, :21 And the Amorites, and the Canaanites, and the Girgashites, and the Jebusites.

Fifth appearance: **fellowship of the sufficiency of God** (Genesis 17).

God revealed as El Shaddai "God all sufficient." See also Rom 4 being fully persuaded that what God had promised He was able to perform."

Gen 17:5 Neither shall thy name any more be called Abram, but thy name shall be Abraham; for a father of many nations have I made thee. :6 And I will make thee exceeding fruitful, and I will make nations of thee, and kings shall come out of thee. :7 And I will establish my covenant between me and thee and thy seed after thee in their generations for an everlasting covenant, to be a God unto thee, and to thy seed after thee. :8 And I will give unto thee, and to thy seed after thee, the land wherein thou art a stranger, all the land of Canaan, for an everlasting possession; and I will be their God. :19 And God said, Sarah thy wife shall bear thee a son indeed; and thou shalt call his name Isaac: and I will establish my covenant with him for an everlasting covenant, [and] with his seed after him.

Sixth appearance: **fellowship with the justice of God** (Genesis 18: 23-33).

Gen 18:23 And Abraham drew near, and said, Wilt thou also destroy the righteous with the wicked?

Seventh appearance: **fellowship of His suffering** (Genesis 22).

The central verse of the N.T. "For God so loved..."

Gen 22:1 ¶ And it came to pass after these things, that God did tempt Abraham, and said unto him, Abraham: and he said, Behold, [here] I [am]. :2 And he said, Take now thy son, thine only [son] Isaac, whom thou lovest, and get thee into the land of Moriah; and offer him there for a burnt offering upon one of the mountains which I will tell thee of.

Paul talks in Philippians of his desire to know Christ, not only in the Power of His resurrection, but in the fellowship of His sufferings.

3 And Abraham rose up early in the morning, and saddled his ass, and took two of his young men with him, and Isaac his son, and clave the wood for the burnt offering, and rose up, and went unto the place of which God had told him.

4 Then on the third day Abraham lifted up his eyes, and saw the place afar off.

5 And Abraham said unto his young men, Abide ye here with the ass; and I and the lad will go yonder and worship, and come again to you.

6 And Abraham took the wood of the burnt offering, and laid it upon Isaac his son; and he took the fire in his hand, and a knife; and they went both of them together.

7 And Isaac spake unto Abraham his father, and said, My father: and he said, Here am I, my son. And he said, Behold the fire and the wood: but where is the lamb for a burnt offering?

8 And Abraham said, My son, God will provide himself a lamb for a burnt offering: so they went both of them together.

Isaac was not a child at this time and was probably in his late 20's. This means that Isaac submitted himself to Abraham, a type of sacrifice, as the animal gives the ultimate submission to death. This is the opposite of Adam and Eve who went after their own desires contrary to God's will. Jesus, as perfect, also submitted himself to the Father.

Abraham immediately acts and leaves the next morning. The third day they arrive. Isaac was "dead" to Abraham for 3 days.

I do not believe that Abraham was lying when he states that they will come back again, Abraham had been promised that in Isaac's seed the everlasting covenant would be established⁷¹². Abraham's trust that God had a plan must have been very strong and he may have believed that Isaac would rise again after the sacrifice.

The sacrifice means that God had already explained to Man that the consequence of sin is death. Therefore, for us to be forgiven we need a substitute, we now know that the animal sacrifice was symbolism pointing to Jesus who you be our substitute⁷¹³, dying to pay the price of our sins.

9 And they came to the place which God had told him of; and Abraham built an altar there, and laid the wood in order, and bound Isaac his son, and laid him on the altar upon the wood.

10 And Abraham stretched forth his hand, and took the knife to slay his son.

11 And the angel of the LORD called unto him out of heaven, and said, Abraham, Abraham: and he said, Here am I.

12 And he said, Lay not thine hand upon the lad, neither do thou any thing unto him: for now I know that thou fearest God, seeing thou hast not withheld thy son, thine only son from me.

⁷¹² Gen 17:19, 21; 21:12

⁷¹³ Matt 8:17; 1Pet 2:23-25; Mark 10:45; Rom 5:6; 1Thes 5:10; Isa 53:4-6; Lev 1:4 See also Gen 22:13; 1Kings 20:42

13 And Abraham lifted up his eyes, and looked, and behold behind him a ram caught in a thicket by his horns: and Abraham went and took the ram, and offered him up for a burnt offering in the stead of his son.

14 And Abraham called the name of that place Jehovah-jireh: as it is said to this day, In the mount of the LORD it shall be seen.

15 ¶ And the angel of the LORD called unto Abraham out of heaven the second time,

16 And said, By myself have I sworn, saith the LORD, for because thou hast done this thing, and hast not withheld thy son, thine only son:

17 That in blessing I will bless thee, and in multiplying I will multiply thy seed as the stars of the heaven, and as the sand which is upon the sea shore; and thy seed shall possess the gate of his enemies;

18 And in thy seed shall all the nations of the earth be blessed; because thou hast obeyed my voice.

19 So Abraham returned unto his young men, and they rose up and went together to Beer-sheba; and Abraham dwelt at Beer-sheba.

Creation	Abraham
Adam told not to eat of the tree ⁷¹⁴	Abraham took the “eater” ⁷¹⁵ (knife) with the wood/tree ⁷¹⁶
Adam did not follow God's guidance	Abraham did what God asked
Adam tried to take the knowledge by eating the fruit	God's knowledge of Abraham as he acted
God sacrificed an animal so Adam and Eve could be clothed	Abraham offered a sacrifice
God cursed Adam	God blessed Abraham

Abraham	Hagar
Prepared to sacrifice his son Isaac	Her son driven out, to death
Ram was provided, caught in a thicket (wood)	Placed her son under a bush
Called Mountain where God sees	Hagar called the God who sees
Abraham lifted his eyes and saw	Hagar Lifted her eyes and saw
God blesses Abraham and his seed	God blessed Ismael saying he will be a great nation

now I know that thou fearest God⁷¹⁷. As we discussed earlier, Abraham fears God but I don't think this action was God's desired response, I believe that God wanted Abraham to interceded on behalf of Isaac. However, God as the perfect Father, still finds something positive to encourage Abraham with, now I know you **fearest God**.

⁷¹⁴ Tree Strong's H6086 ēs

⁷¹⁵ Strong's H3979 something to eat with

⁷¹⁶ Tree Strong's H6086 ēs

⁷¹⁷ Verse 12

Paul noted that the promise was unto Abrahams seed, singular, not seeds plural, meaning that Christ is the seed referred to in this passage⁷¹⁸. As mentioned previously, Jesus was sacrificed on the same hill thousands of years later bringing a blessing to us, opening the way for us to join God's family. All we need to do is accept the sacrifice that Jesus made and life for Him. Paul also continued that the promises were made before the law, highlighting that our salvation is not dependent on us following the Old Testament Laws of Moses⁷¹⁹.

Genesis and Abraham	God and Jesus the Christ
Father was prepared to sacrificed his son	Father sacrificed his son
Isaac was "dead" to Abraham for 3 days	Resurrected after 3 days
Isaac had to carry the wood for the sacrifice	Christ had to carry the wood of the cross
Place was on mount Moriah – the site of Jerusalem	Calvary is located right on the crest of Mount Moriah.
Isaac was about 30 and therefore must have willingly submitted to will of his father.	Jesus said, I come not to do my own will but the will of Him who sent Me." And "Nevertheless not what I will, but thy will.."
Miraculous birth: Sarah was past the time of women.	Virgin birth
Ram was provided, caught in a thicket (wood)	Jesus was the Lamb of God who was nailed to a tree (wood)
Isaac not mentioned till he gets his bride.	Jesus leaves till he comes to get His bride

Abraham called the name of the place Yahovah, yirah declaring "In the mount of the Lord it shall be seen." As you put together the two statements of Abraham you find something quite remarkable. "God will provide Himself a lamb for a burnt offering, on the mount of the Lord it shall be seen."

Yehovah-yireh means "God sees, God provides".

20 ¶ And it came to pass after these things, that it was told Abraham, saying, Behold, Milcah, she hath also born children unto thy brother Nahor;

21 Huz his firstborn, and Buz his brother, and Kemuel the father of Aram,

22 And Chesed, and Hazo, and Pildash, and Jidlaph, and Bethuel.

23 And Bethuel begat Rebekah: these eight Milcah did bear to Nahor, Abraham's brother.

24 And his concubine, whose name was Reumah, she bare also Tebah, and Gaham, and Thahash, and Maachah.

Communication between Abraham and his relatives was not very frequent as Nahor had a few children before Abraham hears. As we will see later Nahor is important as his granddaughter is Rebekah.

⁷¹⁸ Gal 3:16

⁷¹⁹ Gal 3:17, see also James 2:21 and Heb 11:8-17

CHAPTER 23

1 And Sarah was an hundred and seven and twenty years old: these were the years of the life of Sarah.

2 And Sarah died in Kirjath-arba; the same is Hebron in the land of Canaan: and Abraham came to mourn for Sarah, and to weep for her.

3 ¶ And Abraham stood up from before his dead, and spake unto the sons of Heth, saying,

4 I am a stranger and a sojourner with you: give me a possession of a burying place with you, that I may bury my dead out of my sight.

5 And the children of Heth answered Abraham, saying unto him,

6 Hear us, my lord: thou art a mighty prince among us: in the choice of our sepulchres bury thy dead; none of us shall withhold from thee his sepulchre, but that thou mayest bury thy dead.

7 And Abraham stood up, and bowed himself to the people of the land, even to the children of Heth.

8 And he communed with them, saying, If it be your mind that I should bury my dead out of my sight; hear me, and intreat for me to Ephron the son of Zohar,

9 That he may give me the cave of Machpelah, which he hath, which is in the end of his field; for as much money as it is worth he shall give it me for a possession of a burying place amongst you.

10 And Ephron dwelt among the children of Heth: and Ephron the Hittite answered Abraham in the audience of the children of Heth, even of all that went in at the gate of his city, saying,

11 Nay, my lord, hear me: the field give I thee, and the cave that is therein, I give it thee; in the presence of the sons of my people give I it thee: bury thy dead.

12 And Abraham bowed down himself before the people of the land.

13 And he spake unto Ephron in the audience of the people of the land, saying, But if thou wilt give it, I pray thee, hear me: I will give thee money for the field; take it of me, and I will bury my dead there.

14 And Ephron answered Abraham, saying unto him,

15 My lord, hearken unto me: the land is worth four hundred shekels of silver; what is that betwixt me and thee? bury therefore thy dead.

16 And Abraham hearkened unto Ephron; and Abraham weighed to Ephron the silver, which he had named in the audience of the sons of Heth, four hundred shekels of silver, current money with the merchant.

17 ¶ And the field of Ephron, which was in Machpelah, which was before Mamre, the field, and the cave which was therein, and all the trees that were in the field, that were in all the borders round about, were made sure

18 Unto Abraham for a possession in the presence of the children of Heth, before all that 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: the same is Hebron in the land of Canaan.

20 And the field, and the cave that is therein, were made sure unto Abraham for a possession of a buryingplace by the sons of Heth.

This passage has a few firsts, Sarah, as far as I can remember, is the only woman in the Old Testament whose full age is given, the burial of Sarah is the first burial, and we also have the first commercial transaction recorded in the Bible.

I think that this is significant as Sarah is regarded as righteous because she was submissive to Abraham⁷²⁰. Not that this submission was one sided, Abraham listened to Sarah and one time when Abraham was not happy about what Sarah wanted, God said that he should listen to Sarah. As Peter writes;

ye husbands dwell with them according to knowledge, giving honour unto the wife,...,and as being heirs together of the grace of life;⁷²¹

I would like you to notice how polite this interaction is. It seems that the offer to give and the agreeing of the price was the way things were done. A great trusting society that people would do the right thing. Abraham buys a portion of the land that God has promised to give him. If you follow the Old Testament carefully you may note that this same piece of land is repurchased. Abrahams interaction with the Canaanites was a positive one.

This purchase of a place of death is also symbolic of the future, that we can go too the future Eden and live with God. The cave of Machpelah is also a word play as it is very similar to the phrase, "naked couple" reminding us of Adam and even in their innocence⁷²². It is a place of trees, reminding me of the tree of knowledge,⁷²³ that Adam ate from bring death, but also the tree of Life⁷²⁴ that we will get to eat of. The tree can also symbolise the death that Jesus suffered on the cross, and the life that we can inherit by Jesus' death.

Some History;

The Cave of the Patriarchs or the Cave of Machpelah (Hebrew: מערת המכפלה, Me'arat ha-Machpela (help·info), trans. "cave of the double tombs"), is known by Muslims as the Sanctuary of Abraham or Ibrahimi Mosque (Arabic: الحرم الإبراهيمي, Al-Haram Al-Ibrahimi (help·info)).

The cave and adjoining field were purchased by Abraham and Abraham, Isaac, Jacob, Sarah, Rebecca, and Leah, considered the Patriarchs and Matriarchs of the Jewish and Arab people, are all believed to be buried there. The only matriarch missing is Rachel, who is believed to be buried near Bethlehem where she died in childbirth. The Hebrew name possibly refers to the physical layout of the original two chambers while according to the Book of Genesis 50:5, Jacob "dugged" further in to make a third chamber for Leah and himself.

If you follow Middle east politics you will note that the Arabs claim ownership of Israel and people like Aminadab claim that the Jews never owned anything, yet here and the Temple are both well documented purchases.

⁷²⁰ 1Pet 3:6

⁷²¹ 1Pet 3:7

⁷²² Gen 2:25

⁷²³ Gen 2:17

⁷²⁴ Gen 3:24

CHAPTER 24

1 And Abraham was old, and well stricken in age: and the LORD had blessed Abraham in all things.

2 And Abraham said unto his eldest servant of his house, that ruled over all that he had, Put, I pray thee, thy hand under my thigh:

3 And I will make thee swear by the LORD, the God of heaven, and the God of the earth, that thou shalt not take a wife unto my son of the daughters of the Canaanites, among whom I dwell:

4 But thou shalt go unto my country, and to my kindred, and take a wife unto my son Isaac.

5 And the servant said unto him, Peradventure the woman will not be willing to follow me unto this land: must I needs bring thy son again unto the land from whence thou camest?

6 And Abraham said unto him, Beware thou that thou bring not my son thither again.

Be ye not unequally yoked together with unbelievers: for what fellowship hath righteousness with unrighteousness? and what communion hath light with darkness?⁷²⁵

Since I believe that the Old Testament is an actual Historical account but also a physical example of the spiritual, this long chapter must be significant for us. In it the Father sends an unnamed servant to fetch a bride for his son. This is a prophetic passage tellin us of the Holy Spirit that the Father will send to fetch a bride for Jesus.

Starting with the unnamed servant, whom we can assume was Eliezer of Damascus⁷²⁶ but to follow the type he is not named here. In this passage the servant is only described as Abrahams servant. Likewise, the Holy Spirit does not elevate himself but directs all praise to Jesus⁷²⁷. Eliezer had almost certainly plaid a significant role in the war to rescue Lot and was in charge of all of Abrahams goods⁷²⁸, even though they all belonged to the son⁷²⁹.

In verse 5 we see that while the Holy Spirit issues the invitation, if we will not follow then the Holy Spirit is not responsible.⁷³⁰ We are responsible for our own salvation.

When the Helper comes, whom I will send to you from the Father, *that is the Spirit of truth who proceeds from the Father, He will testify about Me, and you will testify also, because you have been with Me from the beginning*⁷³¹.

Abraham was confident in the Lords promises and therefore wanted a wife from his native land, some 450 miles away.

⁷²⁵ 2Cor 6:14

⁷²⁶ Gen 15:2

⁷²⁷ John 16:13

⁷²⁸ Verse 10 below

⁷²⁹ See verse 36 below

⁷³⁰ See also verse 8 below

⁷³¹ John 15:26-27

7 ¶ The LORD God of heaven, which took me from my father's house, and from the land of my kindred, and which spake unto me, and that sware unto me, saying, Unto thy seed will I give this land; he shall send his angel before thee, and thou shalt take a wife unto my son from thence.

8 And if the woman will not be willing to follow thee, then thou shalt be clear from this my oath: only bring not my son thither again.

9 And the servant put his hand under the thigh of Abraham his master, and sware to him concerning that matter.

10 ¶ And the servant took ten camels of the camels of his master, and departed; for all the goods of his master were in his hand: and he arose, and went to Mesopotamia, unto the city of Nahor.

11 And he made his camels to kneel down without the city by a well of water at the time of the evening, even the time that women go out to draw water.

12 And he said, O LORD God of my master Abraham, I pray thee, send me good speed this day, and shew kindness unto my master Abraham.

13 Behold, I stand here by the well of water; and the daughters of the men of the city come out to draw water:

14 And let it come to pass, that the damsel to whom I shall say, Let down thy pitcher, I pray thee, that I may drink; and she shall say, Drink, and I will give thy camels drink also: let the same be she that thou hast appointed for thy servant Isaac; and thereby shall I know that thou hast shewed kindness unto my master.

The servant was confident that God interacts in the affairs of man. This is a theme that you can see throughout the scriptures yet, we in our modern view feel that God seldom directs the physical. We often fail to give God the credit when things work out unexpectedly. Conversely, I often complain when things fail, however when I stand back and think about it, I usually see God's hand with better things in store or my own sin causing the problem.

So, the servant asks for specific leading, he is looking for a generous woman, who if willing to make an effort for a stranger. Note that his request to give the camels water to drink was a big ask, 10 thirsty camels drink huge quantities and that would be quite an effort to draw water for.

Likewise, the Holy Spirit looks for those who act out a love for others. Jesus said those who love me will obey my commandments⁷³². What did Jesus command? Love thy neighbour as thou self. The good Samaritan was an example who helped a stranger and then paid for his care. Rebekah, as we will see, will help a stranger, not just with something to drink but also to water his camels.

Rebekah was a generous woman who was not afraid to put in extra effort. I think that we can learn two things from this,

1. To God, real beauty is not how you look, but how you act.
2. God is looking for Christians who are prepared to play an active part as part of His body. Demonstrating faith by works⁷³³.

⁷³² John 14:15, 23 See also Psalm 18:44

⁷³³ James 2:18

15 ¶ And it came to pass, before he had done speaking, that, behold, Rebekah came out, who was born to Bethuel, son of Milcah, the wife of Nahor, Abraham's brother, with her pitcher upon her shoulder.

16 And the damsel was very fair to look upon, a virgin, neither had any man known her: and she went down to the well, and filled her pitcher, and came up.

17 And the servant ran to meet her, and said, Let me, I pray thee, drink a little water of thy pitcher.

18 And she said, Drink, my lord: and she hasted, and let down her pitcher upon her hand, and gave him drink.

19 And when she had done giving him drink, she said, I will draw water for thy camels also, until they have done drinking.

20 And she hasted, and emptied her pitcher into the trough, and ran again unto the well to draw water, and drew for all his camels.

21 And the man wondering at her held his peace, to wit whether the LORD had made his journey prosperous or not.

22 And it came to pass, as the camels had done drinking, that the man took a golden earring of half a shekel weight, and two bracelets for her hands of ten shekels weight of gold;

23 And said, Whose daughter art thou? tell me, I pray thee: is there room in thy father's house for us to lodge in?

24 And she said unto him, I am the daughter of Bethuel the son of Milcah, which she bare unto Nahor.

25 She said moreover unto him, We have both straw and provender enough, and room to lodge in.

26 And the man bowed down his head, and worshipped the LORD.

27 And he said, Blessed be the LORD God of my master Abraham, who hath not left destitute my master of his mercy and his truth: I being in the way, the LORD led me to the house of my master's brethren.

28 And the damsel ran, and told them of her mother's house these things.

Note virgin could be interpreted young women and it was assumed that any young women was a virgin hence the inter changeability of these words.

The servant ran to Rebekah and initiated the conversation, the Holy Spirit runs to us and initiates the call, our responsibility is to respond.

Again following the type notice what the bride to be was given by the Holy Spirit, an earring to adorn the hearing or allow us to hear God's will and a bracelet to adorn the actions or to guide our work for God's glory.

To be accurate the word for earring⁷³⁴, could also be used for nose ring⁷³⁵ (God breathed life into Adam) and some translations simply translate it as ring⁷³⁶.

29 ¶ And Rebekah had a brother, and his name was Laban: and Laban ran out unto the man, unto the well.

⁷³⁴ Strong's H5141 Heh-zem, has an uncertain meaning being translated as ring, nose ring earring and jewel.

⁷³⁵ NIV; NKJV

⁷³⁶ ESV; New Living; Berean std; NASB; Amplified Christian Standard bible

30 And it came to pass, when he saw the earring and bracelets upon his sister's hands, and when he heard the words of Rebekah his sister, saying, Thus spake the man unto me; that he came unto the man; and, behold, he stood by the camels at the well.

31 And he said, Come in, thou blessed of the LORD; wherefore standest thou without? for I have prepared the house, and room for the camels.

Later we will see Laban more and we can infer that Laban was not as charitably minded as Rebekah. So, the expensive gifts probably increased his invitation.

32 ¶ And the man came into the house: and he ungirded his camels, and gave straw and provender for the camels, and water to wash his feet, and the men's feet that were with him.

33 And there was set meat before him to eat: but he said, I will not eat, until I have told mine errand. And he said, Speak on.

34 And he said, I am Abraham's servant.

35 And the LORD hath blessed my master greatly; and he is become great: and he hath given him flocks, and herds, and silver, and gold, and menservants, and maidservants, and camels, and asses.

36 And Sarah my master's wife bare a son to my master when she was old: and unto him hath he given all that he hath.

37 And my master made me swear, saying, Thou shalt not take a wife to my son of the daughters of the Canaanites, in whose land I dwell:

38 But thou shalt go unto my father's house, and to my kindred, and take a wife unto my son.

39 And I said unto my master, Peradventure the woman will not follow me.

40 And he said unto me, The LORD, before whom I walk, will send his angel with thee, and prosper thy way; and thou shalt take a wife for my son of my kindred, and of my father's house:

41 Then shalt thou be clear from this my oath, when thou comest to my kindred; and if they give not thee one, thou shalt be clear from my oath.

42 And I came this day unto the well, and said, O LORD God of my master Abraham, if now thou do prosper my way which I go:

43 Behold, I stand by the well of water; and it shall come to pass, that when the virgin cometh forth to draw water, and I say to her, Give me, I pray thee, a little water of thy pitcher to drink;

44 And she say to me, Both drink thou, and I will also draw for thy camels: let the same be the woman whom the LORD hath appointed out for my master's son.

45 And before I had done speaking in mine heart, behold, Rebekah came forth with her pitcher on her shoulder; and she went down unto the well, and drew water: and I said unto her, Let me drink, I pray thee.

46 And she made haste, and let down her pitcher from her shoulder, and said, Drink, and I will give thy camels drink also: so I drank, and she made the camels drink also.

47 And I asked her, and said, Whose daughter art thou? And she said, The daughter of Bethuel, Nahor's son, whom Milcah bare unto him: and I put the earring upon her face, and the bracelets upon her hands.

48 And I bowed down my head, and worshipped the LORD, and blessed the LORD God of my master Abraham, which had led me in the right way to take my master's brother's daughter unto his son.

49 And now if ye will deal kindly and truly with my master, tell me: and if not, tell me; that I may turn to the right hand, or to the left.

50 Then Laban and Bethuel answered and said, The thing proceedeth from the LORD: we cannot speak unto thee bad or good.

51 Behold, Rebekah is before thee, take her, and go, and let her be thy master's son's wife, as the LORD hath spoken.

52 And it came to pass, that, when Abraham's servant heard their words, he worshipped the LORD, bowing himself to the earth.

53 And the servant brought forth jewels of silver, and jewels of gold, and raiment, and gave them to Rebekah: he gave also to her brother and to her mother precious things.

Biblically we are used to the father negotiating and giving his daughter in marriage, but here we see Rebekah's brother negotiating the contract. This may have been a local custom, as we saw a similar thought when Abraham called Sarah his sister, so that the people would negotiate with him, rather than kill him.

It is not clear from this passage if the gifts included a bride price. Not a subject for this passage but I do want to make it clear that my understanding of the biblical Bride Price, is that it was intended as a protection for the bride, not a purchase price⁷³⁷. This is referenced when Leah and Rachel complain that their father had spent their inheritance⁷³⁸, which should have been kept in case Jacob divorced them.

In this passage gifts were also given to Rebekah. As a prophetic passage we can associate this with the price Jesus paid to purchase us from our sinful state⁷³⁹ and the gifts of the Holy Spirit that we are given. The servant gives gifts to Rebekah and "fruit" to those around her. We are given gifts by the Holy Spirit so that we can give fruit to those around us⁷⁴⁰, so we can reach unity in the faith and in the knowledge of the Son of God⁷⁴¹.

54 And they did eat and drink, he and the men that were with him, and tarried all night; and they rose up in the morning, and he said, Send me away unto my master.

55 And her brother and her mother said, Let the damsel abide with us a few days, at the least ten; after that she shall go.

56 And he said unto them, Hinder me not, seeing the LORD hath prospered my way; send me away that I may go to my master.

57 And they said, We will call the damsel, and enquire at her mouth.

58 And they called Rebekah, and said unto her, Wilt thou go with this man? And she said, I will go.

59 And they sent away Rebekah their sister, and her nurse, and Abraham's servant, and his men.

60 And they blessed Rebekah, and said unto her, Thou art our sister, be thou the mother of thousands of millions, and let thy seed possess the gate of those which hate them.

61 ¶ And Rebekah arose, and her damsels, and they rode upon the camels, and followed the man: and the servant took Rebekah, and went his way.

62 And Isaac came from the way of the well Lahai-roi; for he dwelt in the south country.

63 And Isaac went out to meditate in the field at the eventide: and he lifted up his eyes, and saw, and, behold, the camels were coming.

64 And Rebekah lifted up her eyes, and when she saw Isaac, she lighted off the camel.

⁷³⁷ Ex 22:16-17; Deut 22:28-29; Gen 29 (Jacob worked for 7 years)

⁷³⁸ Gen 31:14-15

⁷³⁹ 1Pet 1:18-19; 1Cor 6:19-20

⁷⁴⁰ Gal 5:22-23; 1Cor 12:8-10; 2Pet 1:3 See also Eph 4:7-13; Isa 11:2-3

⁷⁴¹ Eph 4:7-13

65 For she had said unto the servant, What man is this that walketh in the field to meet us? And the servant had said, It is my master: therefore she took a vail, and covered herself.

66 And the servant told Isaac all things that he had done.

67 And Isaac brought her into his mother Sarah's tent, and took Rebekah, and she became his wife; and he loved her: and Isaac was comforted after his mother's death.

Spare a thought here for Rebekah, she knows nothing of Isaac nor the land and culture that she is going to, but she agrees to go, leaving behind all the familiar. We know little of Jesus culture before we read the Bible, and then the Holy Spirit comes to call us, are we willing to go? Jesus compares the union of husband and wife to that of Christ and the church⁷⁴² and this is a physical example for us to consider as a spiritual lesson.

Wherefore, my brethren, ye also are become dead to the law by the body of Christ; that ye should be married to another, even to him who is raised from the dead, that we should bring forth fruit unto God⁷⁴³

"For I am jealous over you with godly jealousy: for I have espoused you to one husband, that I may present you as a chaste virgin to Christ. But I fear, lest by any means, as the serpent beguiled Eve through his subtlety, so your minds should be corrupted from the simplicity that is in Christ.⁷⁴⁴

Lahai-roi, or Beerlahairoi is where God told Hagar about her son Ishmael and now where Isaac dwelt. The well was named Beer-lahai-roi (which means "well of the Living One seeing me"⁷⁴⁵). The well is west of Kadesh on the way to Bered⁷⁴⁶.

CHAPTER 25

1 Then again Abraham took a wife, and her name was Keturah.

2 And she bare him Zimran, and Jokshan, and Medan, and Midian, and Ishbak, and Shuah.

3 And Jokshan begat Sheba, and Dedan. And the sons of Dedan were Asshurim, and Letushim, and Leummim.

4 And the sons of Midian; Ephah, and Epher, and Hanoch, and Abida, and Eldaah. All these were the children of Keturah.

5 ¶ And Abraham gave all that he had unto Isaac.

6 But unto the sons of the concubines, which Abraham had, Abraham gave gifts, and sent them away from Isaac his son, while he yet lived, eastward, unto the east country.

7 And these are the days of the years of Abraham's life which he lived, an hundred threescore and fifteen years.

8 Then Abraham gave up the ghost, and died in a good old age, an old man, and full of years; and was gathered to his people.

⁷⁴² Eph 5:22-23, see also Mark 2:19

⁷⁴³ Rom 7

⁷⁴⁴ 2Cor 11:2-3

⁷⁴⁵ Strong's H883

⁷⁴⁶ Gen 16:14 – See also Gen 25:11

**9 And his sons Isaac and Ishmael buried him in the cave of Machpelah, in the field of Ephron the son of Zohar the Hittite, which is before Mamre;
10 The field which Abraham purchased of the sons of Heth: there was Abraham buried, and Sarah his wife.**

Abraham has buried Sarah, Isaac has got married and so Abraham is probably lonely now. He remarries and has other children. To ensure that Isaac gets all the inheritance he sends all the other children away. While this is obviously historically accurate, it does not mean that God approves of sending the other children away with very little.

We will encounter some of these children in other passages for example Medan and Dedan.

Note that Ishmael was still around so this implies that he was sent away to go “bush” but is still connected with the family. I also note that the other sons are not mentioned in the burial.

Abraham tidies up his estate before his death and makes his wishes clear minimising any chance of family division after his death. We need to make a will and ensure that our obligations are met. He also puts his money where God is and sends away the others.

11 ¶ And it came to pass after the death of Abraham, that God blessed his son Isaac; and Isaac dwelt by the well Lahai-roi.

12 ¶ Now these are the generations of Ishmael, Abraham's son, whom Hagar the Egyptian, Sarah's handmaid, bare unto Abraham:

13 And these are the names of the sons of Ishmael, by their names, according to their generations: the firstborn of Ishmael, Nebajoth; and Kedar, and Adbeel, and Mibsam,

14 And Mishma, and Dumah, and Massa,

15 Hadar, and Tema, Jetur, Naphish, and Kedemah:

16 These are the sons of Ishmael, and these are their names, by their towns, and by their castles; twelve princes according to their nations.

17 And these are the years of the life of Ishmael, an hundred and thirty and seven years: and he gave up the ghost and died; and was gathered unto his people.

18 And they dwelt from Havilah unto Shur, that is before Egypt, as thou goest toward Assyria: and he died in the presence of all his brethren.

And Mishma, and Dumah, and Massa⁷⁴⁷, Translating these names we have :

Hear, Keep silence and bear

Or as James puts it; **Be swift to hear, slow to speak, slow to wrath**⁷⁴⁸.

Note how Ishmaels descendants lived in castles – as prophesised they were a warring people. But they were still blessed because of Abraham. So if we want the best for our children we will put God first and serve God.

19 ¶ And these are the generations of Isaac, Abraham's son: Abraham begat Isaac:

20 And Isaac was forty years old when he took Rebekah to wife, the daughter of Bethuel the Syrian of Padan-aram, the sister to Laban the Syrian.

21 And Isaac intreated the LORD for his wife, because she was barren: and the LORD was intreated of him, and Rebekah his wife conceived.

⁷⁴⁷ Verse 14

⁷⁴⁸ James 1:19

22 And the children struggled together within her; and she said, If it be so, why am I thus? And she went to enquire of the LORD.

23 And the LORD said unto her, Two nations are in thy womb, and two manner of people shall be separated from thy bowels; and the one people shall be stronger than the other people; and the elder shall serve the younger.

24 ¶ And when her days to be delivered were fulfilled, behold, there were twins in her womb.

25 And the first came out red, all over like an hairy garment; and they called his name Esau.

26 And after that came his brother out, and his hand took hold on Esau's heel; and his name was called Jacob: and Isaac was threescore years old when she bare them.

27 And the boys grew: and Esau was a cunning hunter, a man of the field; and Jacob was a plain man, dwelling in tents.

Prayer works, both Isaac and Rebekah prayed and were answered. But in the passage where Isaac “intreated⁷⁴⁹” the Lord the word could well be “prayed with”. Isaac prayed with Rebekah and God worked with them.

Firstly, this reminds us that where two or three are gathered, there God is⁷⁵⁰. God’s family is not about a building or “church services”, God’s family is about believers gathering together and caring for each other. Secondly this understanding shows us that it is not about one special person getting favours from God. Isaac and Rebekah worked together with God to fulfil God’s prophetic plan.

We also see that Isaac seems to have learnt from his father’s mistake and gone to God in prayer for children rather than trying to find an earthly solution. This was still not an instant answer, Isaac prayed for 20 years, we need to pray and faint not⁷⁵¹. In the end God answered with more than Isaac and Rebekah asked, they got twins.

Esau means hairy⁷⁵², he was also called Edom, meaning red⁷⁵³. The Edomite, or Idumean tribes came from Esau, from where Herod the great, who killed the children in Bethlehem⁷⁵⁴ and his son King Herod, descended

Jacob means heel holder or supplanter⁷⁵⁵. Jacob was also described as being plain, but the meaning here is complete, wholesome with integrity⁷⁵⁶.

The prophecy that the elder will serve the younger is a common theme in the Old Testament and did not follow the culture at the time. I think it is a reminder to us that Adam the first man brought death, while Jesus, the second Adam brings life⁷⁵⁷. Jesus first coming was not well received, He was crucified, while His second coming will be in power.

28 And Isaac loved Esau, because he did eat of his venison: but Rebekah loved Jacob.

⁷⁴⁹ Strong's H6279: Pray, entreat, supplicate

⁷⁵⁰ Matt 18:20

⁷⁵¹ Lk 18:1

⁷⁵² Strong's H6215

⁷⁵³ Strong's H123

⁷⁵⁴ Matt 2:16

⁷⁵⁵ Strong's H3290

⁷⁵⁶ Strong's H8535. Job was described with the same word, translated perfect: Job 1:1, 8, 2:3, or in Proverbs 29:10 Upright

⁷⁵⁷ 1Cor 15:45-49, 21-22; Rom 5:12-19

29 And Jacob sod pottage: and Esau came from the field, and he was faint:
30 And Esau said to Jacob, Feed me, I pray thee, with that same red pottage; for I am faint: therefore was his name called Edom.
31 And Jacob said, Sell me this day thy birthright.
32 And Esau said, Behold, I am at the point to die: and what profit shall this birthright do to me?
33 And Jacob said, Swear to me this day; and he sware unto him: and he sold his birthright unto Jacob.
34 Then Jacob gave Esau bread and pottage of lentiles; and he did eat and drink, and rose up, and went his way: thus Esau despised his birthright.

I see two major problems here, firstly Isaac and Rebekah are not unified, I am not saying that married couples must agree on everything in fact one of the reasons why I think Lynn and I are good together is because we are different, but we must put the family first and work together. We will see later Rebekah and Jacob manipulating Isaac. This is an area that I personally think is generally harder for us men which is why men are told to Love their wives and not exasperate their children, women generally do this naturally while men are easily distracted with providing and other callings. We need to work on putting the family first. In this instance God had already stated that Esau would serve Jacob, but Isaac remained focused on the first born.

The beginning of many a family problem starts with favouritism. Later we will see Esau wanting to kill Jacob. We as parents need to be really careful about favouritism. I can tell you that while I love all my kids the same it does not always come across that way. It is easy to spend time with my son because he likes doing the things I like doing. While my one daughter likes to read which means I do not spend as much time as I should with her. My major regret with my children is that I did lots of things for them and not enough with them, I provided the best that I could but I think they needed time more than some of the provisions.

Was Esau really close to death? I doubt it. We can read between the lines of this account and gain some understanding of Jacob and Esau's personalities. It would seem that Esau was interested in quick gratification. Later when Jacob leaves to get a wife, Esau "takes a wife from Ishmael's family, a quick earthly solution similar to Abraham taking Hagar to provide a child.

Esau took two wives of the daughters of Heth. They were worshipers of false gods, and their idolatry was a bitter grief to Isaac and Rebekah. Esau had violated one of the conditions of the covenant, which forbade intermarriage between the chosen people and the heathen; The author of Hebrews describes Esau's act as a Godless Act / unfaithfulness⁷⁵⁸.

Jacob on the other hand appears to look more to the future and prepared to put the effort in to get what he wants. We read of him communing with God something that takes time, Seek and keep seeking and you will find me.... Though he was quite a manipulator. We see here him manipulating the birth right from Esau, though it appears that Esau was not interested in it.

Esau did not really care about his birth right, for he went on his-way after eating the lentils; but to Jacob the birth right was something to be desired.

⁷⁵⁸ Heb 12:16

What is our focus? The here and now, with quick solutions, like Esau or the future with patience, like Jacob?

CHAPTER 26

1 And there was a famine in the land, beside the first famine that was in the days of Abraham. And Isaac went unto Abimelech king of the Philistines unto Gerar.

2 And the LORD appeared unto him, and said, Go not down into Egypt; dwell in the land which I shall tell thee of:

3 Sojourn in this land, and I will be with thee, and will bless thee; for unto thee, and unto thy seed, I will give all these countries, and I will perform the oath which I swore unto Abraham thy father;

4 And I will make thy seed to multiply as the stars of heaven, and will give unto thy seed all these countries; and in thy seed shall all the nations of the earth be blessed;

5 Because that Abraham obeyed my voice, and kept my charge, my commandments, my statutes, and my laws.

What happens when we have a promise, we get a problem. It seems that Isaac did the right thing he went to prayer, how often do I try and find a solution in my own strength? In prayer God confirms the promise that He gave to Abraham, not because of Isaac's faith, but because of Abraham's faithfulness. I think God is giving us two truths here, Isaac was not acting in the image of God, (Isaac was showing favouritism of his sons and not the one God had said would lead⁷⁵⁹ and rather than trust God Isaac had gone to Ahimelech). Secondly God want to remind us that our faithfulness gives blessings to our children, the blessings are long lasting.

Isaac was told to stay in the land of promise, it is easy for us to see the problem and go to the easy path but that is not where God is at, we need to remain where God is for us to find the blessing. We also need to know where God is for us. God works with each of us as individuals and so we cannot just follow other people, nor should we compel others to follow us. We all need to seek a personal relationship with Jesus but within the fellowship of the saints.

There was a famine in Jacob's days, and God bade him *go down into Egypt* (ch. 46:3, 4), a famine in *Isaac's* days, and God bade him *not to go down*, a famine in Abraham's days, and God *left him to his liberty*, directing him neither way.

This variety in the divine procedure (considering that Egypt was always a place of trial and exercise to God's people) some ground upon the different characters of these three patriarchs. Abraham was a man of very high attainments, and intimate communion with God; and to him all places and conditions were alike. Isaac was a very good man, but not cut out for hardship; therefore he is forbidden to go to Egypt. Jacob was inured to difficulties, strong and patient; and therefore he must go down into Egypt, that *the trial of his faith might be to praise, and honour, and glory*. Thus God proportions his people's trials to their strength.

⁷⁵⁹ Verse 23

6 ¶ And Isaac dwelt in Gerar:

7 And the men of the place asked him of his wife; and he said, She is my sister: for he feared to say, She is my wife; lest, said he, the men of the place should kill me for Rebekah; because she was fair to look upon.

8 And it came to pass, when he had been there a long time, that Abimelech king of the Philistines looked out at a window, and saw, and, behold, Isaac was sporting with Rebekah his wife.

9 And Abimelech called Isaac, and said, Behold, of a surety she is thy wife: and how saidst thou, She is my sister? And Isaac said unto him, Because I said, Lest I die for her.

10 And Abimelech said, What is this thou hast done unto us? one of the people might lightly have lien with thy wife, and thou shouldest have brought guiltiness upon us.

11 And Abimelech charged all his people, saying, He that toucheth this man or his wife shall surely be put to death.

Isaac was imitating his father though Isaac wasn't born when Abraham deceived pharaoh⁷⁶⁰ and Abimelech⁷⁶¹. Isaac directly lied to Abimelech while Abraham deceived Abimelech with a lie that was technically true. Abraham does not seem to have repented of this sin and therefore his son suffers from it as well, but to a greater extent. We need to repent, or our children will suffer from our sins but to a greater extent, we must keep short accounts with God.

Isaac seems to be militarily very strong⁷⁶² and in a few verses we will see Abimelech asking Isaac for a treaty because he is so strong. I therefore wonder if Isaac really was justified in his fear of being killed for Rebekah.

Note these two great men of God, Abraham and Isaac, sinned, this should give us confidence. Even though we are weak God is gracious, there is always space for our repentance and restoration.

12 Then Isaac sowed in that land, and received in the same year an hundredfold: and the LORD blessed him.

13 And the man waxed great, and went forward, and grew until he became very great:

14 For he had possession of flocks, and possession of herds, and great store of servants: and the Philistines envied him.

15 For all the wells which his father's servants had digged in the days of Abraham his father, the Philistines had stopped them, and filled them with earth.

16 And Abimelech said unto Isaac, Go from us; for thou art much mightier than we.

17 ¶ And Isaac departed thence, and pitched his tent in the valley of Gerar, and dwelt there.

18 And Isaac digged again the wells of water, which they had digged in the days of Abraham his father; for the Philistines had stopped them after the death of Abraham: and he called their names after the names by which his father had called them.

19 And Isaac's servants digged in the valley, and found there a well of springing water.

20 And the herdmen of Gerar did strive with Isaac's herdmen, saying, The water is our's: and he called the name of the well Esek; because they strove with him.

21 And they digged another well, and strove for that also: and he called the name of it Sitnah.

⁷⁶⁰ Gen 12:17

⁷⁶¹ Gen 20:1-16

⁷⁶² Verse 16

22 And he removed from thence, and digged another well; and for that they strove not: and he called the name of it Rehoboth; and he said, For now the LORD hath made room for us, and we shall be fruitful in the land.

Esek means Strife

Sitnah means contention

Rehoboth means roominess (there is room for us)

There is a famine in the land, but God blesses Isaac, perhaps because he stayed in the land as commanded. A 100 fold increase is miraculous even for a good farmer in good weather. God can bless us despite the circumstances if we trust Him and walk with Him.

In the days of famine they (the upright) shall be satisfied.⁷⁶³

Jesus related the 100 fold increase is related to giving up things for God⁷⁶⁴ while we also get a 100 fold fruit increase in the parable of the seed on good ground⁷⁶⁵.

If we are going to spiritualise this we can also note that Isaac built on the foundation that his father laid. He cleared out the cobwebs that had blocked the flow of living water and called them by the names that his father had named them.

I see in the church two errors that often occur;

- we keep the traditions of our fathers that no longer flow living refreshing water and instead of clearing out the blockages we redefine the well as a place to visit or gather at.
- Or we ignore the wisdom of the past and instead of unblocking the wells, we dig new ones further away that with brackish water instead of clean water.

We must follow the Spirit and look for living water but as we do so, make use of the wisdom the great people of faith left for us. We can build on their foundation.

But what happens as we build our faith and life in Christ ? We get opposition and people try to stop the flow of the spirit⁷⁶⁶.

We see here the envy of the Philistines, and how they filled in the wells. If you remember in chapter 21 Abraham had issues with the wells and made a covenant with them. But envy drives people to do stupid things. Why fill in wells so no one can use them.

But notice that Isaac does the gracious thing, even though he was very powerful and he re-digs the wells, when the people cause trouble he does not overpower them, nor fill the wells back in. Isaac moves on until he can be at peace with those around him. How Christ like, and unlike the world. The world tells us to fight for what is yours – My Rights, I deserve it. Jesus however teaches us to trust in Him. Jesus does the same thing with us when we strive with Him, he leaves that part of us and moves to another.

As far as possible be at peace⁷⁶⁷

⁷⁶³ Psa 37:19; see also Isa 65:13

⁷⁶⁴ Mark 10:29-30; Mat 19:29

⁷⁶⁵ Luke 8:4-8; Matt 13:1-9

⁷⁶⁶ John 15:20

⁷⁶⁷ Rom 12:18

23 And he went up from thence to Beer-sheba.
 24 And the LORD appeared unto him the same night, and said, I am the God of Abraham thy father: fear not, for I am with thee, and will bless thee, and multiply thy seed for my servant Abraham's sake.
 25 And he builded an altar there, and called upon the name of the LORD, and pitched his tent there: and there Isaac's servants digged a well.
 26 ¶ Then Abimelech went to him from Gerar, and Ahuzzath one of his friends, and Phichol the chief captain of his army.
 27 And Isaac said unto them, Wherefore come ye to me, seeing ye hate me, and have sent me away from you?
 28 And they said, We saw certainly that the LORD was with thee: and we said, Let there be now an oath betwixt us, even betwixt us and thee, and let us make a covenant with thee;
 29 That thou wilt do us no hurt, as we have not touched thee, and as we have done unto thee nothing but good, and have sent thee away in peace: thou art now the blessed of the LORD.
 30 And he made them a feast, and they did eat and drink.
 31 And they rose up betimes in the morning, and sware one to another: and Isaac sent them away, and they departed from him in peace.
 32 And it came to pass the same day, that Isaac's servants came, and told him concerning the well which they had digged, and said unto him, We have found water.
 33 And he called it Shebah: therefore the name of the city is Beer-sheba unto this day.

God appears and after introducing Himself He says, “**fear not**”. I think we as a society have lost our recognition that God is all powerful. In the scriptures we often see Angels and God saying fear not to comfort people when they appear⁷⁶⁸.

When I saw him, I fell at his feet as though dead. But he laid his right hand on me, saying, 'Fear not, I am the first and the last...'⁷⁶⁹

When we get to know God, we realise we do not need to fear when we live with God's presence⁷⁷⁰, but spiritual beings are far more powerful than experience on earth.

for God gave us a spirit not of fear but of power and love and self-control.⁷⁷¹

God goes on to say that He is blessing Isaac because of Abraham. Our faithfulness brings a blessing on our children.

Note how God appears after we have demonstrated faith. Faith is belief in action. Isaac demonstrated grace by not fighting back when the herdsman argued over the wells that Jacob dug, clearly Isaac had the military strength to defeat those arguing over the well. Then here we see Isaac building an altar. Isaac's beliefs were visible to all, not hidden, he lived a lifestyle consistent with his beliefs.

God appeared to Isaac and then the rulers of those who stole came and confirmed that he was blessed and he found water. Blessing often comes after trials.

⁷⁶⁸ Dan 10:8-19; Luke 1:11-13; 2:1-12; Mat 28:1-10; Ex 20:20 also Gen 20:11 references the fear of God

⁷⁶⁹ Rev 1:17

⁷⁷⁰ Deut 31:6; Ps 23:4; 27:1; 34:4-5; Isa 41:10-13; 43:1; Lk 12:32;

⁷⁷¹ 2Tim 1:7 see also 1John 4:18

When a man's ways please the Lord he makes even his enemies to be at peace with him⁷⁷².

But notice that Isaac is not a door mat he questions why Abimelech has come. We need to be cautious sometimes and not allow ourselves to be continuously wounded. We must stand on our guard with those who have acted unfairly.

Note that while they have a different view of events, Isaac states that Abimelech's people hate him, while Abimelech states that they sent him away in peace. The truth is probably in the middle and we need to let go of our hurts, to find the middle ground and peace. Isaac did not insist on returning the wells and perhaps that is why God blessed him with another well. Beer-sheba – The well of the oath. Or well of Shebah means "seventh".

**34 ¶ And Esau was forty years old when he took to wife Judith the daughter of Beeri the Hittite, and Bashemath the daughter of Elon the Hittite:
35 Which were a grief of mind unto Isaac and to Rebekah.**

We have already seen Esau sell his birth right for some food and here he takes two wives. In Hebrews he is describes as a fornicator⁷⁷³, which could be referring to him taking two wives but more likely because he is marrying into the Canaanites who were cursed⁷⁷⁴.

Good parents want the best for their children and it grieves us when children make decisions that we know will hurt them in the long term. It grieves me that my daughter is a bit blasé about driving cars, not that she is a bad driver, she just gets distracted easily. Yesterday she was distracted and had an accident.

Isaac and Rebekah know the blessing of God that comes from following His way and so they are grieved, knowing that Esau will be led away from God.

9 December 2012

CHAPTER 27

1 And it came to pass, that when Isaac was old, and his eyes were dim, so that he could not see, he called Esau his eldest son, and said unto him, My son: and he said unto him, Behold, here am I.

2 And he said, Behold now, I am old, I know not the day of my death:

3 Now therefore take, I pray thee, thy weapons, thy quiver and thy bow, and go out to the field, and take me some venison;

4 And make me savoury meat, such as I love, and bring it to me, that I may eat; that my soul may bless thee before I die.

5 And Rebekah heard when Isaac spake to Esau his son. And Esau went to the field to hunt for venison, and to bring it.

Isaac knows that he does not have long to live and so he wants to make his will, and to declare Esau his heir. The first thing that I noticed is that Isaac is in the flesh, he is offering a

⁷⁷² Prov. 16:7

⁷⁷³ Heb 12:16

⁷⁷⁴ Gen 9:25

blessing on the basis of food, just as Essau sold his right to the blessing for a meal. How often do I do things on the basis of pleasure rather than following spiritual principles.

I am not certain if these family blessings are prophetic or spiritual gifts. Clearly some of the blessings in the scripture are prophetic and I therefore think that they are the fathers telling the children what God has been telling them about the future. The blessing is therefore allowing the father to be a channel for God to tell the child what will occur. Therefore, Isaac's attempt to use pleasure, in this case food, to influence the blessing is not right.

You will of course remember that Esau had sold his birth right, which includes the blessing, and this had been prophesied before their birth by saying that the younger would serve the younger. Isaac is however intending to do bless against God's wishes. One thing that the scriptures show over and over again is that when God's plans do not seem to be going right man has two options, leave it to God or try to help God out.

Abraham had been promised a son and he and Sarah "helped out" with Hagar and there has been trouble in the Middle East ever since. Here we are about to read of Rebekah "helping" out and consequently Jacob having to flee.

The promise of the Messiah and the land of Canaan was a great trust, first committed to Abraham, inclusive and typical of spiritual and eternal blessings; this, by divine direction, he transmitted to Isaac. Isaac, being now old, and not knowing, or not understanding, or not duly considering, the divine oracle concerning his two sons, that the elder should serve the younger, resolves to entail all the honour and power that were wrapped up in the promise upon Esau his eldest son. In this he was governed more by natural affection, and the common method of settlements, than he ought to have been.

We are very apt to take our measures rather from our own reason than from divine revelation, and thereby often miss our way; we think the wise and learned, the mighty and noble, should inherit the promise; but God sees not as man sees.⁷⁷⁵

This despite the fact that Esau married to two women who gave his parent grief, Isaac, like wise parents, keep the relationship with their children even if they disapprove of their choices. We also see here that Isaac, like Abraham his father, prepares for his death, with a verbal will. Isaac in fact lived another 40 years after this.

I also find it interesting that even though polygamy seems to be common during this time period, when we look at the patriarchs they follow what I believe is God's intention, one man and one women.

Note that it is Isaac's soul that will bless Esau, the blessing is not mere words. Some think that the blessing is prophecy while others think it is influence but whatever it is the Godly man blesses from God's spirit. Jacob also recognised the power in blessings and curses and he fears a curse⁷⁷⁶.

6 ¶ And Rebekah spake unto Jacob her son, saying, Behold, I heard thy father speak unto Esau thy brother, saying,

⁷⁷⁵ See 1 Sa. 16:6, 7

⁷⁷⁶ Verse 12 from this chapter 27 of Genesis

7 Bring me venison, and make me savoury meat, that I may eat, and bless thee before the LORD before my death.

8 Now therefore, my son, obey my voice according to that which I command thee.

9 Go now to the flock, and fetch me from thence two good kids of the goats; and I will make them savoury meat for thy father, such as he loveth:

10 And thou shalt bring it to thy father, that he may eat, and that he may bless thee before his death.

11 And Jacob said to Rebekah his mother, Behold, Esau my brother is a hairy man, and I am a smooth man:

12 My father peradventure will feel me, and I shall seem to him as a deceiver; and I shall bring a curse upon me, and not a blessing.

13 And his mother said unto him, Upon me be thy curse, my son: only obey my voice, and go fetch me them.

14 And he went, and fetched, and brought them to his mother: and his mother made savoury meat, such as his father loved.

15 And Rebekah took goodly raiment of her eldest son Esau, which were with her in the house, and put them upon Jacob her younger son:

16 And she put the skins of the kids of the goats upon his hands, and upon the smooth of his neck:

17 And she gave the savoury meat and the bread, which she had prepared, into the hand of her son Jacob.

I have often wondered how God viewed Rebekah, Perhaps, she was trying to prevent her husband Isaac, from going against God and give the blessing to Esau or maybe she just wants the blessing for her favourite child. God is not pleased with deception, nor does God support the end justifying the means. Rebekah is teaching Jacob deceit and I think that Laban deception of Jacob later is God's way of showing Jacob the wrong. We can also note the damage to the family as Jacob flees for several decades. To me the scriptures imply that Rebekah does receive the curse that she said could come on her, she does not see Jacob again after she sends him away and we don't hear of her again.

Esau had sold his birth right⁷⁷⁷ and taken wives of the daughters of Heth⁷⁷⁸, worshipers of false gods and contrary to the covenant. Despite being a bitter grief to Rebekah, Isaac still wanted to bless Esau with the birth right.

God will achieve His purpose despite human wrong and this should give us confidence that despite the sin and evil in the world, God's will and purpose will be accomplished⁷⁷⁹. We don't need to lie and scheme like Rebekah and Jacob did, because the result is hurt and pain.

Jacob dresses up as a goat in its skin to mimic his brother. The goats in Jesus Parable were separated and went to outer darkness⁷⁸⁰. Do we dress up like others, buying things to be like them or acting as they do. God made you to be you and he has something special for you. As God had already promised a blessing to Jacob, Jacob just needed to trust God.

In a like manor, we can now get the blessings of our heaven father by dressing up in Jesus cloak of His righteousness. Like Rebekah, He takes the curse due to us, upon Himself.

⁷⁷⁷ Gen 25:33

⁷⁷⁸ Gen 28:9 and 27:46

⁷⁷⁹ Job 12:16

⁷⁸⁰ Matt 25:31-46

Isaac is not innocent in this sad event. God has said before the children were even born that the elder would serve the younger⁷⁸¹, yet Isaac blesses who he thought was the elder with being lord over his brother⁷⁸². It appears that Isaac was influenced by food as we are told Isaac loved Esau because of his venison⁷⁸³. As Solomon states, put a knife to your throat, if you are given to appetite, as meat can be deceitful (summary mine)⁷⁸⁴.

18 ¶ And he came unto his father, and said, My father: and he said, Here am I; who art thou, my son?

19 And Jacob said unto his father, I am Esau thy firstborn; I have done according as thou badest me: arise, I pray thee, sit and eat of my venison, that thy soul may bless me.

20 And Isaac said unto his son, How is it that thou hast found it so quickly, my son? And he said, Because the LORD thy God brought it to me.

21 And Isaac said unto Jacob, Come near, I pray thee, that I may feel thee, my son, whether thou be my very son Esau or not.

22 And Jacob went near unto Isaac his father; and he felt him, and said, The voice is Jacob's voice, but the hands are the hands of Esau.

23 And he discerned him not, because his hands were hairy, as his brother Esau's hands: so he blessed him.

24 And he said, Art thou my very son Esau? And he said, I am.

25 And he said, Bring it near to me, and I will eat of my son's venison, that my soul may bless thee. And he brought it near to him, and he did eat: and he brought him wine, and he drank.

26 And his father Isaac said unto him, Come near now, and kiss me, my son.

27 And he came near, and kissed him: and he smelled the smell of his raiment, and blessed him, and said, See, the smell of my son is as the smell of a field which the LORD hath blessed:

28 Therefore God give thee of the dew of heaven, and the fatness of the earth, and plenty of corn and wine:

29 Let people serve thee, and nations bow down to thee: be lord over thy brethren, and let thy mother's sons bow down to thee: cursed be every one that curseth thee, and blessed be he that blesseth thee.

Consider how Isaac gave Jacob his blessing.

- He embraced him, in token of a particular affection to him.
- He praised him.
- He prayed for him

These are things that we should all do for our children all the time.

Three things Jacob is here blessed with⁷⁸⁵

- Fruitfulness. Since a successful harvest required rain, the dew of heaven is a way of saying successful crops. Note that this is really meaning that your labours would be effective.
- Domionn, particularly dominion over his brothers, including Esau

⁷⁸¹ Gen 25:23

⁷⁸² Gen 27:29

⁷⁸³ Gen 25:28

⁷⁸⁴ Prov 23:2-3

⁷⁸⁵ The blessing is repeated by Balak in different words Numbers 24:17-19

- What is often considered to be the Abrahamic blessing⁷⁸⁶, "Cursed be every one that curseth thee and blessed be he that blesseth thee.

Clearly Isaac was not intending to bless Jacob however we later read that

By faith Isaac blessed Jacob and Esau concerning things to come.⁷⁸⁷

This passage also reminds me of

And from the days of John the Baptist until now the kingdom of heaven suffers violence, and the violent take it by force.⁷⁸⁸

30 ¶ And it came to pass, as soon as Isaac had made an end of blessing Jacob, and Jacob was yet scarce gone out from the presence of Isaac his father, that Esau his brother came in from his hunting.

31 And he also had made savoury meat, and brought it unto his father, and said unto his father, Let my father arise, and eat of his son's venison, that thy soul may bless me.

32 And Isaac his father said unto him, Who art thou? And he said, I am thy son, thy firstborn Esau.

33 And Isaac trembled very exceedingly, and said, Who? where is he that hath taken venison, and brought it me, and I have eaten of all before thou camest, and have blessed him? yea, and he shall be blessed.

34 And when Esau heard the words of his father, he cried with a great and exceeding bitter cry, and said unto his father, Bless me, even me also, O my father.

35 And he said, Thy brother came with subtilty, and hath taken away thy blessing.

36 And he said, Is not he rightly named Jacob? for he hath supplanted me these two times: he took away my birthright; and, behold, now he hath taken away my blessing. And he said, Hast thou not reserved a blessing for me?

37 And Isaac answered and said unto Esau, Behold, I have made him thy lord, and all his brethren have I given to him for servants; and with corn and wine have I sustained him: and what shall I do now unto thee, my son?

38 And Esau said unto his father, Hast thou but one blessing, my father? bless me, even me also, O my father. And Esau lifted up his voice, and wept.

39 And Isaac his father answered and said unto him, Behold, thy dwelling shall be the fatness of the earth, and of the dew of heaven from above;

40 And by thy sword shalt thou live, and shalt serve thy brother; and it shall come to pass when thou shalt have the dominion, that thou shalt break his yoke from off thy neck.

Why did Isaac feel that he could only give one blessing? God had blessed Ishmael⁷⁸⁹ with a multitude and Isaac with 12 tribes. I feel that this is part of the human failing, we don't need to be first to be blessed. Also, if someone else is blessed, it doesn't mean that we cannot be blessed. Conversely, we really should be blessing as many people as we can.

Even though Esau had sold his birth right he still wanted the blessing. Many people want to receive God's goodness, but not many people want to lead the life that is pleasing to God.

⁷⁸⁶ Gen 28:4, 12:3

⁷⁸⁷ Heb 11:20

⁷⁸⁸ Matt 11:12

⁷⁸⁹ Gen 16:10

Narrow is the road that leads to God⁷⁹⁰. Essau is described as a profane person who sold the birth right but then sought it with tears because he did not repent⁷⁹¹. Essau certainly prepared the venison as his father had asked, a task that would have taken me most of a day, and he cried with a great and bitter cry⁷⁹² however he saw no problem with taking multiple wives that hurt his parents⁷⁹³. Repentance means to turn around, and Essau seemed to be more interested in getting what he wants immediately rather than living a righteous life.

“Not everyone who says to Me, ‘Lord, Lord,’ shall enter the kingdom of heaven, but he who does the will of My Father in heaven. Many will say to Me in that day, ‘Lord, Lord, have we not prophesied in Your name, cast out demons in Your name, and done many wonders in Your name?’ And then I will declare to them, ‘I never knew you; depart from Me, you who practice lawlessness!’”⁷⁹⁴

Essau was also blessed with the dew of heaven, provision. However, Essau was to live by the sword and then break free from Jacob’s dominion. In the rest of the scriptures we see that Israel did rule over the Edomites for many years and they did break free⁷⁹⁵, but the Israelites were never not oppressed by the Edomites. However, Herod, the last known Edomite⁷⁹⁶ tried to kill Jesus, killing all the children in Bethlehem⁷⁹⁷.

And he shall be blessed⁷⁹⁸ The writer to the Hebrews later records that the blessing was by faith of things to come⁷⁹⁹, so it would seem that Isaac knew the words he had blessed Jacob with were from God.

41 ¶ And Esau hated Jacob because of the blessing wherewith his father blessed him: and Esau said in his heart, The days of mourning for my father are at hand; then will I slay my brother Jacob.

42 And these words of Esau her elder son were told to Rebekah: and she sent and called Jacob her younger son, and said unto him, Behold, thy brother Esau, as touching thee, doth comfort himself, purposing to kill thee.

43 Now therefore, my son, obey my voice; and arise, flee thou to Laban my brother to Haran;

44 And tarry with him a few days, until thy brother's fury turn away;

45 Until thy brother's anger turn away from thee, and he forget that which thou hast done to him: then I will send, and fetch thee from thence: why should I be deprived also of you both in one day?

46 And Rebekah said to Isaac, I am weary of my life because of the daughters of Heth: if Jacob take a wife of the daughters of Heth, such as these which are of the daughters of the land, what good shall my life do me?

⁷⁹⁰ Matt 7:13-14

⁷⁹¹ Heb 12:16-17

⁷⁹² Gen 27:34

⁷⁹³ Gen 26:34-35

⁷⁹⁴ Matt 7:21-23

⁷⁹⁵ 2Kings 8:20-22

⁷⁹⁶ Gen 36:9; amazingbibletimeline.com/blog/herod-the-great-an-edomite-rules-palestine

⁷⁹⁷ Matt 2:13, 16

⁷⁹⁸ Verse 33

⁷⁹⁹ Heb 11:20

Esau is going the way of Cain, he did not get what he wanted, even though he had sold the birthright, so rather than repent of selling his birthright, he plans to kill his brother. Perhaps he was thinking that by killing his brother before he has children his offspring will inherit the blessing.

Essau, who for one morsel of meat sold his birthright. For ye know how that afterward, when he would have inherited the blessing, he was rejected: He found no place of repentance, though he sought it carefully with tears⁸⁰⁰

Too many people live for the “now”, with no consideration of the future. Like Esau they cry, **Let us eat and drink; for tomorrow we die**⁸⁰¹.

How does this apply to us. Well Jesus is described as the first born of creation (this by the way is not a description of His time of birth but of His status as the heir of all the world.) However, we try to usurp His position in our lives. I am amazed at how often I try to be lord of my life and manipulate events to get what I want rather than allow Jesus to be the Lord and direct me where he wants. Jesus wants to be the preeminent one, He wants total Lordship.

You might have noticed that God is often selecting not the first born but one of low status⁸⁰². Jesus continues this by welcoming the poor, the outcasts etc. We should note that while the lineage of Jesus goes through one line, God’s blessing is not limited but is to the humble. We regularly see the first born being prideful or jealous of others when God blesses the other, eg Cain and Abel, when God tells Cain, if you do right won’t you also be exalted⁸⁰³.

CHAPTER 28

1 And Isaac called Jacob, and blessed him, and charged him, and said unto him, Thou shalt not take a wife of the daughters of Canaan.

2 Arise, go to Padan-aram, to the house of Bethuel thy mother's father; and take thee a wife from thence of the daughters of Laban thy mother's brother.

3 And God Almighty bless thee, and make thee fruitful, and multiply thee, that thou mayest be a multitude of people;

4 And give thee the blessing of Abraham, to thee, and to thy seed with thee; that thou mayest inherit the land wherein thou art a stranger, which God gave unto Abraham.

5 And Isaac sent away Jacob: and he went to Padan-aram unto Laban, son of Bethuel the Syrian, the brother of Rebekah, Jacob's and Esau's mother.

So Rebekah is protecting her son by sending him away until Esau’s anger has passed. I am intrigued that despite Isaac’s intention to give the blessing to Esau and that it was “stolen” by Jacob, Isaac recognises that it is God’s intention to give the land to Jacob and he here affirms that the blessing given and expands upon it. May “the blessing of Abraham be given to you and your seed.”

⁸⁰⁰ Heb 12:16-17

⁸⁰¹ 1 Corinthians 15:32

⁸⁰² Heavenly rulers vs Humans, Cain and Abel etc

⁸⁰³ Gen 4:7

I commented last week that Rebekah encourage Jacob to lie to Isaac and we hear no more from Rebekah until her funeral, also it appears that she did not again see Jacob. There is a consequence to sin, even if we are forgiven.

Note also that Isaac “picks” Jacobs wife by telling him which family to go to. Previously we saw that Isaac’s wife was picked for him. There is a belief among many bible scholars that we should let God choose our partner and I certainly think there is at least some truth in this, however this another subject.

**6 ¶ When Esau saw that Isaac had blessed Jacob, and sent him away to Padan-aram, to take him a wife from thence; and that as he blessed him he gave him a charge, saying, Thou shalt not take a wife of the daughters of Canaan;
7 And that Jacob obeyed his father and his mother, and was gone to Padan-aram;
8 And Esau seeing that the daughters of Canaan pleased not Isaac his father;
9 Then went Esau unto Ishmael, and took unto the wives which he had Mahalath the daughter of Ishmael Abraham's son, the sister of Nebajoth, to be his wife.**

I would like to say that this was daft of Esau. How is taking another wife going to help, but how often do we act on a similar motivation. Sometimes we need to make the best of where we are rather than trying to add to a previous error. An example is when we have tried to do a work for God and it is later shown that it was not of God. Two common errors are to keep pushing it to the expense of all logic or the other is never to try again.

If I was Isaac, my preference would have been for Esau to make the most of the two wives he already had without adding a third. I believe that the scriptures talk about mixed marriages from the perspective of their beliefs, (though some passages imply about gene problems). So Esau would have been better to focus on making sure that his wives believed on the true God rather than adding, particularly since I believe Gods intention is for one wife, though he allows multiple wives..

**10 ¶ And Jacob went out from Beer-sheba, and went toward Haran.
11 And he lighted upon a certain place, and tarried there all night, because the sun was set; and he took of the stones of that place, and put them for his pillows, and lay down in that place to sleep.
12 And he dreamed, and behold a ladder set up on the earth, and the top of it reached to heaven: and behold the angels of God ascending and descending on it.
13 And, behold, the LORD stood above it, and said, I am the LORD God of Abraham thy father, and the God of Isaac: the land whereon thou liest, to thee will I give it, and to thy seed;
14 And thy seed shall be as the dust of the earth, and thou shalt spread abroad to the west, and to the east, and to the north, and to the south: and in thee and in thy seed shall all the families of the earth be blessed.
15 And, behold, I am with thee, and will keep thee in all places whither thou goest, and will bring thee again into this land; for I will not leave thee, until I have done that which I have spoken to thee of.**

Consider how Jacob must have felt, he is running from his brother who wants to kill him. Bethel is a long way away, so he must have been trying to get as far away as possible on the first day. He has lied to his father and stolen the birth right. I wonder

if the implication given by the stones for pillows was that Jacob was punishing himself because of what he had done wrong. If I may guess, here is Jacob in a place of repentance and humility before God and God confirms the blessing of Abraham on Jacob and in doing so is confirming the blessing that Isaac gave Jacob.

Notice that there is a great gap between Man and God, but God, in His great mercy, creates a pathway so that we can commune with God. Jesus, by dying on the cross, taking our sin, bridged the gap so that we could return to a relationship with God.

God blesses the humble but resists the proud. If we want the blessing of God we need to humble ourselves. I think we often forget what a Holy God we serve. As Colin spoke about, we have a view of a friend but what of the perfect, Holy God who cannot come into the presence of sin. Therefore, if we are to come into his presence we must come with humble hearts and in repentance so that the Blood of Jesus may cover us.

I suspect that this is an important moment for Jacob, not only because God spoke to him but also because as Jacob was a liar, God is confirming the blessing that was stolen.

Is it not amazing how God reaches down to us as sinners and if God can bless Jacob a scheming liar he can and will bless us if we will just reach out to Him in repentance and through Jesus.

16 ¶ And Jacob awaked out of his sleep, and he said, Surely the LORD is in this place; and I knew it not.

17 And he was afraid, and said, How dreadful is this place! this is none other but the house of God, and this is the gate of heaven.

18 And Jacob rose up early in the morning, and took the stone that he had put for his pillows, and set it up for a pillar, and poured oil upon the top of it.

19 And he called the name of that place Beth-el: but the name of that city was called Luz at the first.

20 And Jacob vowed a vow, saying, If God will be with me, and will keep me in this way that I go, and will give me bread to eat, and raiment to put on,

21 So that I come again to my father's house in peace; then shall the LORD be my God:

22 And this stone, which I have set for a pillar, shall be God's house: and of all that thou shalt give me I will surely give the tenth unto thee.

I want you to note Jacobs response to being in the presence of God: Fear⁸⁰⁴. Throughout the Bible we see; **The fear of the Lord is the beginning of Wisdom.**⁸⁰⁵

I am amazed at how often people leave churches because they were not getting anything out of it. We have made Christianity all about us, My ticket to heaven, my health, my friends etc. We forget that it is Jesus who has done so much for us and calls us to be living sacrifices. He wants us to labour in His vineyard, to proclaim His good news and to be His hands and feet to love others.

⁸⁰⁴ See also Matt 1:20; Acts 19:17; 1Pet 3:15; Gen 15:1; 26:24

⁸⁰⁵ Psalm 111:10 & Prov 1:7; 9:10 also Joshua 24:14; 1Sam 11:7; 12:14; 2Kings 17:28,39; 2Chr 19:7,9; Neh 1:11; Psa 22:23, 25:14; 33:18 etc

But sanctify the Lord God in your hearts: and be ready always to give an answer to every man that asketh you a reason of the hope that is in you with meekness and fear:⁸⁰⁶

Notice that Jacob's vow is not a fear of the Lord but a bargain; if you keep me Lord, then you can be my Lord. It is a good thing that we serve a gracious God, because I don't think a harsh god would accept such an ultimatum.

Bethel⁸⁰⁷, meaning house of God was close to Jerusalem. Abraham camped near here early when he arrived in Canaan⁸⁰⁸ and again when he returned from Egypt⁸⁰⁹.

CHAPTER 29

1 Then Jacob went on his journey, and came into the land of the people of the east.

2 And he looked, and behold a well in the field, and, lo, there were three flocks of sheep lying by it; for out of that well they watered the flocks: and a great stone was upon the well's mouth.

3 And thither were all the flocks gathered: and they rolled the stone from the well's mouth, and watered the sheep, and put the stone again upon the well's mouth in his place.

4 And Jacob said unto them, My brethren, whence be ye? And they said, Of Haran are we.

5 And he said unto them, Know ye Laban the son of Nahor? And they said, We know him.

6 And he said unto them, Is he well? And they said, He is well: and, behold, Rachel his daughter cometh with the sheep.

7 And he said, Lo, it is yet high day, neither is it time that the cattle should be gathered together: water ye the sheep, and go and feed them.

8 And they said, We cannot, until all the flocks be gathered together, and till they roll the stone from the well's mouth; then we water the sheep.

Jacob's first interaction is polite and inviting.

Did you see how similar this account is with the account of the servant getting Isaac's bride⁸¹⁰. The Jews say that "coincidence" is not a kosher word. God directs the lives of those who love Him. Sure, there are troubles and hardship but never underestimate how much God influences our lives.

9 ¶ And while he yet spake with them, Rachel came with her father's sheep: for she kept them.

10 And it came to pass, when Jacob saw Rachel the daughter of Laban his mother's brother, and the sheep of Laban his mother's brother, that Jacob went near, and rolled the stone from the well's mouth, and watered the flock of Laban his mother's brother.

11 And Jacob kissed Rachel, and lifted up his voice, and wept.

⁸⁰⁶ 1Pet 3:15; see also Deut 6:2; 8:6; 10:12; 17:19; 28:58

⁸⁰⁷ Strong's H1008: modern town of Beitin

⁸⁰⁸ Gen 12:8

⁸⁰⁹ Gen 13:3

⁸¹⁰ Gen 24:13-16

12 And Jacob told Rachel that he was her father's brother, and that he was Rebekah's son: and she ran and told her father.

13 And it came to pass, when Laban heard the tidings of Jacob his sister's son, that he ran to meet him, and embraced him, and kissed him, and brought him to his house. And he told Laban all these things.

14 And Laban said to him, Surely thou art my bone and my flesh. And he abode with him the space of a month.

There is a Jewish tradition that Jacob was robbed by one of Esau's servants and poor and broke he cried for joy realising that he would be accepted in his poor state. We will also read later that he arrived with only his staff⁸¹¹.

This would also account for Jacob working for his bride rather than paying with Gold as was done for his mother. An alternative is that Jacob wanted to stay longer, so his brothers anger subsided, in this case it was expected that you would partake of the work like the family members.

Notice Laban's hospitality he put him up for a month.

15 ¶ And Laban said unto Jacob, Because thou art my brother, shouldest thou therefore serve me for nought? tell me, what shall thy wages be?

16 And Laban had two daughters: the name of the elder was Leah, and the name of the younger was Rachel.

17 Leah was tender eyed; but Rachel was beautiful and well favoured.

18 And Jacob loved Rachel; and said, I will serve thee seven years for Rachel thy younger daughter.

19 And Laban said, It is better that I give her to thee, than that I should give her to another man: abide with me.

20 And Jacob served seven years for Rachel; and they seemed unto him but a few days, for the love he had to her.

Jacob is invited to stay with his relatives, and here Laban asks how much he should pay Jacob for his labour. Clearly Jacob has not been sitting around eating Laban's food without doing anything. Jacob was productive to the point that Laban felt that he needed to pay Jacob.

The expectation of the scriptures is that Christians will be a blessing wherever they go. We should help out and make a positive contribution to everyone around us. Jacob's attitude must have been, "how can I help" and I hope that mine is the same.

Leah's two daughters are contrasted here, one is beautiful to look at⁸¹² and the other tender and possibly clever⁸¹³. Tender eyed meant soft, fainthearted or weak⁸¹⁴. Not necessarily in a negative sense, Abraham selected a tender calf to present to the angles⁸¹⁵.

Jacob's choice was the pretty one or the clever one, and he chose the pretty one. Like many humans we too often judge on what the eyes see and we will see later that it wasn't the best

⁸¹¹ Gen 32:10

⁸¹² H3303 and H4758

⁸¹³ H5869 can mean showing mental qualities

⁸¹⁴ Weak see Deut 20:8; Gen 33:13; 2Sam 3:39

⁸¹⁵ Gen 18:7.

choice. We need to be more sensitive to the prompting of the Holy Spirit. Another example was the selection of King Saul.

21 ¶ And Jacob said unto Laban, Give me my wife, for my days are fulfilled, that I may go in unto her.

22 And Laban gathered together all the men of the place, and made a feast.

23 And it came to pass in the evening, that he took Leah his daughter, and brought her to him; and he went in unto her.

24 And Laban gave unto his daughter Leah Zilpah his maid for an handmaid.

25 And it came to pass, that in the morning, behold, it was Leah: and he said to Laban, What is this thou hast done unto me? did not I serve with thee for Rachel? wherefore then hast thou beguiled me?

26 And Laban said, It must not be so done in our country, to give the younger before the firstborn.

27 Fulfil her week, and we will give thee this also for the service which thou shalt serve with me yet seven other years.

28 And Jacob did so, and fulfilled her week: and he gave him Rachel his daughter to wife also.

29 And Laban gave to Rachel his daughter Bilhah his handmaid to be her maid.

30 And he went in also unto Rachel, and he loved also Rachel more than Leah, and served with him yet seven other years.

First comment must be how much wine to Jacob drink so that he did not recognise Leah. The Jewish wedding ceremony was a party of celebration but consuming too much alcohol often leads to problems⁸¹⁶.

It is the one who spends long hours in the taverns, trying out new drinks. Don't gaze at the wine, seeing how red it is, how it sparkles in the cup, how smoothly it goes down. For in the end it bites like a poisonous snake; it stings like a viper.⁸¹⁷

Laban deceives Jacob by switching daughters after dark. Jacob was deceived just as he deceived to get Esau's blessing⁸¹⁸.

Be not deceived; God is not mocked: for whatsoever a man soweth, that shall he also reap⁸¹⁹.

As we read these passages remember Genesis is an account of mankind and how even God's chosen ones are fallen human beings. In Genesis, God seldom gives us a direct statement about He regards man's actions. God gave mankind free will, and we see God's opinions in the consequences and are expected to understand God's view from the context. For example, we saw the first man with two wives in a lineage of the sinful⁸²⁰.

We can see Genesis as an account of how God interacts with man. From Noah and Abraham who were good men and mostly acted with integrity and kindness, though they made some terrible decisions⁸²¹, for example the abuse of Hagar and then casting her out into the desert, lying to Abimelech and in Egypt. Here we have Jacob who was always trying to take what

⁸¹⁶ Noah – Gen 9:20-25; Lot – Gen 19:35-36

⁸¹⁷ Proverbs 23:30-35 New Living Translation (NLT)

⁸¹⁸ Gen 27

⁸¹⁹ Gal 6:7

⁸²⁰ Gen 4:23-24

⁸²¹ Noah got Drunk and exposed Gen 9:20-21

was not his, even from birth⁸²². My understanding of passages like this is God teaching Jacob, showing him the consequences of his actions, not as punishment but to call him into a life of righteousness. I believe that God does the same to us, he demonstrates unlimited kindness and mercy, not to give us an easy life here on earth, but to call us to righteousness so that we can inherit heaven with Christ⁸²³.

31 ¶ And when the LORD saw that Leah was hated, he opened her womb: but Rachel was barren.

32 And Leah conceived, and bare a son, and she called his name Reuben: for she said, Surely the LORD hath looked upon my affliction; now therefore my husband will love me.

33 And she conceived again, and bare a son; and said, Because the LORD hath heard that I was hated, he hath therefore given me this son also: and she called his name Simeon.

34 And she conceived again, and bare a son; and said, Now this time will my husband be joined unto me, because I have born him three sons: therefore was his name called Levi.

35 And she conceived again, and bare a son: and she said, Now will I praise the LORD: therefore she called his name Judah; and left bearing.

My daughter was asking me the other day if girls have to be door mats or should they stand up for their rights. God does not want us to be door mats but God's way to stand up for your rights is not the same as the world's way.

For we wrestle not against flesh and blood, but against principalities, against powers, against the rulers of the darkness of this world, against spiritual wickedness in high places.⁸²⁴

Here is an example that is repeated all over the scriptures. If you act to the best of your ability, in the way God wants you to act, God will be your defender. At the end of the day, I would far rather God pleaded my cause than I did.

Leah wasn't loved by her husband. God gave Jacob, like us, free will, so He did not make Jacob love Leah, but He gave her the next biggest desire that she had, children. As Leah continued to act in a Godly way, Jacob came around and loved her. In my experience, God's blessings usually take time, we need patience for answered prayers.

Delight yourself in the LORD, and he will give you the desires of your heart. Commit your way to the LORD; trust in him, and he will act. He will bring forth your righteousness as the light, and your justice as the noonday.⁸²⁵

How often I stand up for my rights and push God aside as I fight for me. How foolish it is to think that I can do a better job than God at getting my rights.

Trust in the Lord with all your heart, in all your ways acknowledge Him and he will direct your paths.⁸²⁶

⁸²² Gen 25:26

⁸²³ 1Cor 6:9-11, Luke 22:28-29; Acts 20:32; Eph 1:18; Mat 25:34; James 2:5

⁸²⁴ Eph 6:12

⁸²⁵ Psalm 37:4-6. See also Psalm 18:2-3; 91:1-2; Leviticus 19:18, 1 Thessalonians 5:15, Proverbs 24:29, Matthew 26:52-54, Romans 12:17-21 1Peter 3:9

⁸²⁶ Pro 3:4-5

To acknowledge God in all your ways means to live as if He is on your side and will act on our behalf.

When He (Jesus) was reviled, he did not revile in return; when he suffered, he did not threaten, but continued entrusting himself to him who judges justly.⁸²⁷

CHAPTER 30

1 And when Rachel saw that she bare Jacob no children, Rachel envied her sister; and said unto Jacob, Give me children, or else I die.

2 And Jacob's anger was kindled against Rachel: and he said, Am I in God's stead, who hath withheld from thee the fruit of the womb?

3 And she said, Behold my maid Bilhah, go in unto her; and she shall bear upon my knees, that I may also have children by her.

4 And she gave him Bilhah her handmaid to wife: and Jacob went in unto her.

5 And Bilhah conceived, and bare Jacob a son.

6 And Rachel said, God hath judged me, and hath also heard my voice, and hath given me a son: therefore called she his name Dan.

7 And Bilhah Rachel's maid conceived again, and bare Jacob a second son.

8 And Rachel said, With great wrestlings have I wrestled with my sister, and I have prevailed: and she called his name Naphtali.

9 When Leah saw that she had left bearing, she took Zilpah her maid, and gave her Jacob to wife.

10 And Zilpah Leah's maid bare Jacob a son.

11 And Leah said, A troop cometh: and she called his name Gad.

12 And Zilpah Leah's maid bare Jacob a second son.

13 And Leah said, Happy am I, for the daughters will call me blessed: and she called his name Asher.

The first thing I notice about this passage is how Bilhah and Zilpah's feelings were ignored. The two sisters were so jealous of the other that they partook of abusing their maids. What a toxic family Jacob had,

And when Rachel saw that she bare Jacob no children, Rachel envied her sister; and said unto Jacob, Give me children, or else I die. And Jacob's anger was kindled against Rachel: and he said, Am I in God's stead, who hath withheld from thee the fruit of the womb?⁸²⁸

At this point we should also look to Jacob's attitude to his two wives. Rachel was the pretty one, the one Jacob lusted towards, ignoring Leah who complains that Rachel has taken her husband⁸²⁹. In verse 16 we read that Leah hired Jacob for the night, having to negotiate for Jacob's affection. Leah clearly strove for Jacob's love, also she says in verse 32 now my husband will love me. Rachel however believed in idols and superstitions⁸³⁰.

⁸²⁷ 1Pet 2:23

⁸²⁸ Gen 30:1-2

⁸²⁹ Gen 30:15

⁸³⁰ Rachel believed the mandrakes could heal her barrenness Gen 30:16 and stole her father's gods Gen 31:34.

In marriage there is a little of Leah and a bit of Racheal in all of us. The first impression and desire of newlyweds covers up the parts and actions that are not good, potentially just as Jacob did not recognise Leah on their first night. As time goes on, it is not beauty that keeps a marriage secure but commitment, love, grace and forgiveness.

In the end Jacob asks to be buried with Leah not Rachel. Before Jacob gets to this point there is lots of conflict in the marriage.⁸³¹

The point is we can live with our eyes, which will result in conflict, or we can live in God's way, where there will be love. We can either look at the not perfect parts of our spouse, like Leah's eyes, or we can love them and choose to focus on the positives. If you want a happy marriage, focus on the good in your spouse and live a life of grace, love, and forgiveness.

Leah's sons;

Reuben means "see, a son"⁸³²

Simeon means "heard"⁸³³

Levi means "joined"⁸³⁴

Judah means "celebrated"⁸³⁵

Bilhah, Rachel's maid

Dan means "judging"⁸³⁶

Naphtali means "wrestling"⁸³⁷

Born to Zilpah, Leah's maid

Gad means "a troop"⁸³⁸

Asher means "happy"⁸³⁹

Leah's later sons

Issachar means "will bring a reward"⁸⁴⁰

Zebulun means "habitation"⁸⁴¹

Rachel's sons

Joseph means "adding"⁸⁴²

Benjamin means "son of right hand"⁸⁴³

14 ¶ And Reuben went in the days of wheat harvest, and found mandrakes in the field, and brought them unto his mother Leah. Then Rachel said to Leah, Give me, I pray thee, of thy son's mandrakes.

⁸³¹ Thanks to Sandy Adams for identifying this. Genesis 29: Sandy Adams

⁸³² Strong's H7205

⁸³³ Strong's H8095

⁸³⁴ Strong's H3878

⁸³⁵ Strong's H3063

⁸³⁶ Strong's H1835

⁸³⁷ Strong's H5321

⁸³⁸ Strong's H1410

⁸³⁹ Strong's H836

⁸⁴⁰ Strong's H3485

⁸⁴¹ Strong's H2074

⁸⁴² Strong's H3130

⁸⁴³ Strong's H1144

15 And she said unto her, Is it a small matter that thou hast taken my husband? and wouldest thou take away my son's mandrakes also? And Rachel said, Therefore he shall lie with thee to night for thy son's mandrakes.

16 And Jacob came out of the field in the evening, and Leah went out to meet him, and said, Thou must come in unto me; for surely I have hired thee with my son's mandrakes. And he lay with her that night.

17 And God hearkened unto Leah, and she conceived, and bare Jacob the fifth son.

18 And Leah said, God hath given me my hire, because I have given my maiden to my husband: and she called his name Issachar.

19 And Leah conceived again, and bare Jacob the sixth son.

The mandrake is a Mediterranean plant with blue flowers in the winter and yellow, plum-like fruit in the summer. It has been desired in many cultures because of a belief that it is an aphrodisiac and promotes fertility. These qualities, coupled with the fact it was only rarely found in Paddan-aram⁸⁴⁴ where they lived.⁸⁴⁵

Leah's son recognises that the plant is valuable, and Rachel trades a night with Jacob for the superstition that the plant will cure her inability to conceive. This is a good example of the Old Testament not stating if something is good or bad, but the outcome revealing God's view.

Firstly, we read that **God hearkened unto Leah, and she conceived.** Clearly it is only God who can make the barren give birth⁸⁴⁶ and by doing the opposite of what the Mandrakes were superstitiously supposed to do, God is telling us that superstitions is really a form of idolatry, believing in a magical power rather than God, and is wrong.

But refuse profane and old wives' fables, and exercise thyself rather unto godliness.⁸⁴⁷

Unfortunately, superstitions remain part of the lives of many Christians, from not walking under ladders to praying the same prayer every day to guarantee a result. We need to trust in our relationship with God and not in a "rule book" or special actions.

See to it that no one takes you captive through hollow and deceptive philosophy, which depends on human tradition and the basic principles of this world rather than on Christ. For in Christ all the fullness of the Deity lives in bodily form, and you have been given fullness in Christ, who is the head over every power and authority⁸⁴⁸.

20 And Leah said, God hath endued me with a good dowry; now will my husband dwell with me, because I have born him six sons: and she called his name Zebulun.

21 And afterwards she bare a daughter, and called her name Dinah.

⁸⁴⁴ Gen 28:5

⁸⁴⁵ From <https://www.ligonier.org/learn/devotionals/reubens-mandrakes>. Also, Wikipedia: <https://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/Mandrake#:~:text=In%20the%20past%2C%20mandrake%20was,killing%20anyone%20who%20heard%20it>.

⁸⁴⁶ Psalm 113:9

⁸⁴⁷ 1Tim 4:7: See also Col 2:8-10, 18-23; Gal 4:8-11; Deut 4:19; Isa 2:6; 1Tim 1:3-4

⁸⁴⁸ Colossians 2:8-10

The reference to a daughter here does not mean that Dinah is the first daughter born. Dinah is important to the story later.

**22 ¶ And God remembered Rachel, and God hearkened to her, and opened her womb.
23 And she conceived, and bare a son; and said, God hath taken away my reproach:
24 And she called his name Joseph; and said, The LORD shall add to me another son.**

God is not cruel to Rachel, she also bares a son. Jesus takes away our reproach and adds⁸⁴⁹ us to the family of God.

**25 ¶ And it came to pass, when Rachel had born Joseph, that Jacob said unto Laban, Send me away, that I may go unto mine own place, and to my country.
26 Give me my wives and my children, for whom I have served thee, and let me go: for thou knowest my service which I have done thee.
27 And Laban said unto him, I pray thee, if I have found favour in thine eyes, tarry: for I have learned by experience that the LORD hath blessed me for thy sake.
28 And he said, Appoint me thy wages, and I will give it.
29 And he said unto him, Thou knowest how I have served thee, and how thy cattle was with me.
30 For it was little which thou hadst before I came, and it is now increased unto a multitude; and the LORD hath blessed thee since my coming: and now when shall I provide for mine own house also?
31 And he said, What shall I give thee? And Jacob said, Thou shalt not give me any thing: if thou wilt do this thing for me, I will again feed and keep thy flock:
32 I will pass through all thy flock to day, removing from thence all the speckled and spotted cattle, and all the brown cattle among the sheep, and the spotted and speckled among the goats: and of such shall be my hire.
33 So shall my righteousness answer for me in time to come, when it shall come for my hire before thy face: every one that is not speckled and spotted among the goats, and brown among the sheep, that shall be counted stolen with me.
34 And Laban said, Behold, I would it might be according to thy word.
35 And he removed that day the he goats that were ringstraked and spotted, and all the she goats that were speckled and spotted, and every one that had some white in it, and all the brown among the sheep, and gave them into the hand of his sons.
36 And he set three days' journey betwixt himself and Jacob: and Jacob fed the rest of Laban's flocks.**

Laban sees that Jacob is blessed by God and wants to get more from Jacob. I suspect that Jacob is not expecting to get his portion of Isaac's inheritance. When they agree to wages of speckled and spotted animals Laban takes the already speckled and spotted animals away. Laban is still trying to swindle Jacob, probably hoping that he has removed the genes so all the animals born will be solid colours.

What I observe in this world is the people who try to get as much as they can, tend to get a lot of possessions but not great happiness. Later we will see that his daughters felt that they had been sold and were happy to move away⁸⁵⁰. What a tragedy.

⁸⁴⁹ Joseph means "let him add" or "adding" Strong's H3130

⁸⁵⁰ Gen 31:15

We will see this today, as we follow Jesus and are blessed, those around us will want to get some of the blessing but often by deceit. Jesus was blessed and the religious leaders were jealous and murdered him.

37 ¶ And Jacob took him rods of green poplar, and of the hazel and chesnut tree; and pilled white strakes in them, and made the white appear which was in the rods.

38 And he set the rods which he had pilled before the flocks in the gutters in the watering troughs when the flocks came to drink, that they should conceive when they came to drink.

39 And the flocks conceived before the rods, and brought forth cattle ringstraked, speckled, and spotted.

40 And Jacob did separate the lambs, and set the faces of the flocks toward the ringstraked, and all the brown in the flock of Laban; and he put his own flocks by themselves, and put them not unto Laban's cattle.

41 And it came to pass, whensoever the stronger cattle did conceive, that Jacob laid the rods before the eyes of the cattle in the gutters, that they might conceive among the rods.

42 But when the cattle were feeble, he put them not in: so the feebler were Laban's, and the stronger Jacob's.

43 And the man increased exceedingly, and had much cattle, and maidservants, and menservants, and camels, and asses.

Jacob is trying to swindle Laban by causing the offspring of the stronger animals to be marked, while the weaker animals will be Laban's.

CHAPTER 31

1 And he heard the words of Laban's sons, saying, Jacob hath taken away all that was our father's; and of that which was our father's hath he gotten all this glory.

2 And Jacob beheld the countenance of Laban, and, behold, it was not toward him as before.

3 And the LORD said unto Jacob, Return unto the land of thy fathers, and to thy kindred; and I will be with thee.

So who has had problems in life, who as had people not happy with them? I think we can all relate to a time when things were not great for us. Here we have Jacob hearing people talking behind his back, blaming him for their loss. What can we learn from this passage?

If we trust in the Lord with all our heart, in all our ways acknowledge God then God shall direct our paths⁸⁵¹.

Jacob had been trying to provide for his family, a Godly call⁸⁵², however he done this by trying to cheat Laban.

I think that there are two things that we can apply in our lives.

1. Jacob did what he could to make the cattle breed mottled offspring. While I do not believe that what he did made any difference, he was in affect he was trying to cheat Laban.
2. I suspect that Jacob was not praying to hear God's guidance, he was scheming his own provision.

Why is it that we wait until problems before we talk to God? This passage implies to me that when Jacob realised things were not going so well, he started to pray and God said go home.

The reason I bring this up is because often we have problems in life because God wants to talk to us but are not listening. God allows a problem to come into our lives which makes us pray and cause us to start to listen.

So, if we do not want additional problems, let us keep praying. However, this is not a solution to a trouble-free life, Jesus said we would have trouble in this world⁸⁵³, as there are many reasons for problems, and we need problems to help us grow. There are, however, some problems that we could avoid by listening more, prayer should be listening as much as talking.

Having said that one question that often comes up is, how do we hear what God is saying. I have found it very unusual for God to use an audible voice. So how does God talk.

The three basic principles of God's guidance are illustrated in this chapter:

- 1) Desire - God placed the desire to return home in Jacob's heart.
- 2) Uncomfortable circumstances - the situation at Laban's house was getting unbearable.

⁸⁵¹ Pro 3:4-6

⁸⁵² 1Tim 5:8

⁸⁵³ John 16:33; Matt 10:21-25; Acts 14:22; Phil 1:29. Consider also the list of those of whom the world was not worthy in Heb 11:35-38 also Paul 1Cor 4:11-13; 2Cor 11:23-28

3) Direct word, for us the Bible - the Lord told Jacob to return to his home.

**4 And Jacob sent and called Rachel and Leah to the field unto his flock,
5 And said unto them, I see your father's countenance, that it is not toward me as before; but the God of my father hath been with me.
6 And ye know that with all my power I have served your father.
7 And your father hath deceived me, and changed my wages ten times; but God suffered him not to hurt me.
8 If he said thus, The speckled shall be thy wages; then all the cattle bare speckled: and if he said thus, The ringstraked shall be thy hire; then bare all the cattle ringstraked.
9 Thus God hath taken away the cattle of your father, and given them to me.
10 And it came to pass at the time that the cattle conceived, that I lifted up mine eyes, and saw in a dream, and, behold, the rams which leaped upon the cattle were ringstraked, speckled, and grisled.
11 And the angel of God spake unto me in a dream, saying, Jacob: And I said, Here am I.
12 And he said, Lift up now thine eyes, and see, all the rams which leap upon the cattle are ringstraked, speckled, and grisled: for I have seen all that Laban doeth unto thee.
13 I am the God of Beth-el, where thou anointedst the pillar, and where thou vowedst a vow unto me: now arise, get thee out from this land, and return unto the land of thy kindred.
14 And Rachel and Leah answered and said unto him, Is there yet any portion or inheritance for us in our father's house?
15 Are we not counted of him strangers? for he hath sold us, and hath quite devoured also our money.
16 For all the riches which God hath taken from our father, that is our's, and our children's: now then, whatsoever God hath said unto thee, do.**

A family conference. Some state that the Bible encourages women to be door mats but this is not what I see, in context women are joint heirs⁸⁵⁴ of the promises. Here Jacob brings the issue to his wives, and they have a discussion, finding a solution together. In the discussion we hear something interesting, Laban had changed Jacobs wages 10 times. As I said last time God steps in when we trust him and do not take things into our own hands. So as Jacob states, God intervenes and Jacob leaves with what God considered fair.

We do need to note that as in many cases justice was not immediate. Jacob worked 7 years for Racheal and did not get her, so he worked another 7 years. He had to work twice as much for the originally agreed price. Then over the next 6 years, we have Jacob's wages changed 10 times. Jacob was cheated for many years. God does not work in our time but his.

**17 ¶ Then Jacob rose up, and set his sons and his wives upon camels;
18 And he carried away all his cattle, and all his goods which he had gotten, the cattle of his getting, which he had gotten in Padan-aram, for to go to Isaac his father in the land of Canaan.
19 And Laban went to shear his sheep: and Rachel had stolen the images that were her father's.**

⁸⁵⁴ Gal 3:28; 1Cor 7:14; Eph 4:4,15,16; Rom 10:12-13; Col 3:11; Rom 8:17; Gal 4:7; Eph 3:6; Titus 3:7

20 And Jacob stole away unawares to Laban the Syrian, in that he told him not that he fled.

21 So he fled with all that he had; and he rose up, and passed over the river, and set his face toward the mount Gilead.

22 And it was told Laban on the third day that Jacob was fled.

23 And he took his brethren with him, and pursued after him seven days' journey; and they overtook him in the mount Gilead.

24 And God came to Laban the Syrian in a dream by night, and said unto him, Take heed that thou speak not to Jacob either good or bad.

Jacob flees again and this time Rachel his wife steals the idols that her father worshiped. Laban catches up with what I can only assume is armed men⁸⁵⁵. I must assume that Laban did not intend good, so Jacob was right to flee.

Here again we see God intervening and telling Laban not to do good or bad to Jacob. We will see shortly that Laban was happy to imply that he would have provided a party if they had just told Him they were going, despite the fact that he has rushed after Jacob with a force that could harm Jacob.

25 ¶ Then Laban overtook Jacob. Now Jacob had pitched his tent in the mount: and Laban with his brethren pitched in the mount of Gilead.

26 And Laban said to Jacob, What hast thou done, that thou hast stolen away unawares to me, and carried away my daughters, as captives taken with the sword?

27 Wherefore didst thou flee away secretly, and steal away from me; and didst not tell me, that I might have sent thee away with mirth, and with songs, with tabret, and with harp?

28 And hast not suffered me to kiss my sons and my daughters? thou hast now done foolishly in so doing.

29 It is in the power of my hand to do you hurt: but the God of your father spake unto me yesternight, saying, Take thou heed that thou speak not to Jacob either good or bad.

30 And now, though thou wouldest needs be gone, because thou sore longedst after thy father's house, yet wherefore hast thou stolen my gods?

31 And Jacob answered and said to Laban, Because I was afraid: for I said, Peradventure thou wouldest take by force thy daughters from me.

32 With whomsoever thou findest thy gods, let him not live: before our brethren discern thou what is thine with me, and take it to thee. For Jacob knew not that Rachel had stolen them.

33 And Laban went into Jacob's tent, and into Leah's tent, and into the two maidservants' tents; but he found them not. Then went he out of Leah's tent, and entered into Rachel's tent.

34 Now Rachel had taken the images, and put them in the camel's furniture, and sat upon them. And Laban searched all the tent, but found them not.

35 And she said to her father, Let it not displease my lord that I cannot rise up before thee; for the custom of women is upon me. And he searched, but found not the images.

I can relate a bit to Laban here, he still loves his daughters and grandchildren though he clearly does not know how to show it, his daughters feel like they were sold and like strangers

⁸⁵⁵ Gen 31:29

to their father⁸⁵⁶. I do think this is one of the great tragedies of modern society, children feeling lost and without a secure sense of belonging. Even within the church we tend to value those that fit in and agree with the majority view, while rejecting those that question and don't fit in. I love my children dearly but in the business of life and desire to push my children to be better, one of my children does not always feel loved and valued.

Jesus modelled the image of the perfect father, he loved in a way that made people feel valued and important no matter what they had done. I think of the woman at the well, who society looked down on, but left excited to proclaim Jesus's love even though it would require bringing up the past that she was ashamed of. We need to value all

In society there is a great emphasis on diversity at the moment, companies proclaim that they have equal opportunities no matter what your orientation/beliefs are. How do we as a church do, do we love the one who holds the Bible literally together with the one who sees it as an allegory. What of the person with tattoos, or past drug use, relationship problems. The point is Jesus welcomed us while we were sinners⁸⁵⁷ and those that had much to be forgiven love much⁸⁵⁸. Let us strive to welcome and encourage all, especially those that are different to us.

stolen my gods⁸⁵⁹, miniature idols small enough for their owners to keep in their homes or to carry with them when travelling. These household gods were probably carved images of deities that were considered to bring people good luck, protection during childbirth and could be used for divination. Rachel by stealing the image, may have been hoping to prevent Laban from using them to divine where they were fleeing too or for protection during childbirth⁸⁶⁰. Like the mandrakes that Rachel believed could remove her barrenness, yet had the opposite effect of Leah getting pregnant, Rachel dies with her next child described⁸⁶¹, Benjamin.

The stealing of the idol shows again⁸⁶² that Laban and Rachel are not following YHWH⁸⁶³ but follow the religion of the area. King David escaped from Saul when his wife used an idol to pretend that David was in Bed⁸⁶⁴ showing that idol's are a risk to us all⁸⁶⁵. We don't usually have carved images that we worship, but we have cars or other possessions that we worship as an image of our wealth, or stories we tell as images of our status in society. What ever you spend you money and time on, could be an idol to you.

See also Appendix 4 for alternative views of these idols.

Without knowing who had taken the idol, Jacob says, **With whomsoever thou findest thy gods, let him not live.** I would never dream of saying this, Jacob had you children, what if one of them had been playing with them and then taken them, or in this case his favoured wife had stolen them. Rachel does dies a in childbirth in a few chapters, was it because of Jacobs words? Power of life and death are in our words⁸⁶⁶, when Abraham proclaimed a

⁸⁵⁶ Gen 31:15

⁸⁵⁷ Rom 5:8; Luke 15:1-2; 1Tim 1:15;

⁸⁵⁸ Luke 7:47

⁸⁵⁹ Gen 31:19 – Images, Strong's H8655 teraphim.

⁸⁶⁰ Childbirth often resulted in the mother dying, which Rachel does with her next child, Gen 35:18

⁸⁶¹ Gen 35:18

⁸⁶² Rachel held to the belief that Mandrakes could heal her barrenness Gen 30:15

⁸⁶³ Gen 35:2-4; Zech 10:2; Isa 44:9-11; Ex 20:4-6; Deut 5:8-10, 7:25-26; 2Ki 23:24

⁸⁶⁴ 1Sam 19

⁸⁶⁵ Samuel condemns Saul's idols in 1Sam 15:23 see also 2 Kings 23:24

⁸⁶⁶ Pro 18:21

blessing his words came true, and we need to be careful with our words, because in God they have power.

Interestingly Rachel says that she could not get up while sitting on the idols because she is menstruating, something that would make the idols unclean.

36 ¶ And Jacob was wroth, and chode with Laban: and Jacob answered and said to Laban, What is my trespass? what is my sin, that thou hast so hotly pursued after me? 37 Whereas thou hast searched all my stuff, what hast thou found of all thy household stuff? set it here before my brethren and thy brethren, that they may judge betwixt us both.

38 This twenty years have I been with thee; thy ewes and thy she goats have not cast their young, and the rams of thy flock have I not eaten.

39 That which was torn of beasts I brought not unto thee; I bare the loss of it; of my hand didst thou require it, whether stolen by day, or stolen by night.

40 Thus I was; in the day the drought consumed me, and the frost by night; and my sleep departed from mine eyes.

41 Thus have I been twenty years in thy house; I served thee fourteen years for thy two daughters, and six years for thy cattle: and thou hast changed my wages ten times.

42 Except the God of my father, the God of Abraham, and the fear of Isaac, had been with me, surely thou hadst sent me away now empty. God hath seen mine affliction and the labour of my hands, and rebuked thee yesternight.

Jacob has had enough he is frustrated by being taken for a ride and cheated. Now he feels justified, Laban has nothing to show for his search and Jacob proclaims his view that God rebuked Laban.

We know that God did not rebuke Laban, nor did He justify Jacob. Both were scheming and cheating each other, no wonder they were frustrated. The sad part is that their behaviour was continued through their children. Rachel lied to her father about stealing his gods, Jacob's children lied about selling Joseph in to slavery and Tamar deceived Judah.

How sad it is that our weaknesses are picked up and continued in our children⁸⁶⁷. It is important that we do our best to flee from sin⁸⁶⁸.

But we do get an incite here about God, reputations are important to Him. Jacob worked hard and righted wrongs in terms of his labour, if it was stolen, he restored⁸⁶⁹. In some ways Jacob lived a life that God was not ashamed of (excluding his scheming.) If we want more of God, then we need to live a life that God is happy to be associated with. I am not talking about salvation, that is a free gift⁸⁷⁰, but what do you do with that Gift. We make God welcome to act in our lives, at least in part by clean living. Proverbs is full of statements about the value of a good reputation.

We also need to remember that God's ways are not our ways. So often God wants us to put Him first and do things His way, so that He can show up. If we get the credit for our actions, then there is no need for God to do miracles.

⁸⁶⁷ Ex 20:5; 34:7; Num 14:18; Deut 5:9; Isa 14:21

⁸⁶⁸ 1Cor 6:18

⁸⁶⁹ Gen 31:38, 39

⁸⁷⁰ Rom 5:15-19

I met a patched biker who had been to jail for drug dealing. There he found Jesus and went around telling people about Jesus. He was not perfect, but God moved with him and his testimony was powerful because he did his best to display outwardly, the change that God had brought about inwardly.

43 ¶ And Laban answered and said unto Jacob, These daughters are my daughters, and these children are my children, and these cattle are my cattle, and all that thou seest is mine: and what can I do this day unto these my daughters, or unto their children which they have born?

44 Now therefore come thou, let us make a covenant, I and thou; and let it be for a witness between me and thee.

45 And Jacob took a stone, and set it up for a pillar.

46 And Jacob said unto his brethren, Gather stones; and they took stones, and made an heap: and they did eat there upon the heap.

47 And Laban called it Jegarsahadutha: but Jacob called it Galeed.

48 And Laban said, This heap is a witness between me and thee this day. Therefore was the name of it called Galeed;

49 And Mizpah; for he said, The LORD watch between me and thee, when we are absent one from another.

50 If thou shalt afflict my daughters, or if thou shalt take other wives beside my daughters, no man is with us; see, God is witness betwixt me and thee.

51 And Laban said to Jacob, Behold this heap, and behold this pillar, which I have cast betwixt me and thee;

52 This heap be witness, and this pillar be witness, that I will not pass over this heap to thee, and that thou shalt not pass over this heap and this pillar unto me, for harm.

53 The God of Abraham, and the God of Nahor, the God of their father, judge betwixt us. And Jacob swore by the fear of his father Isaac.

54 Then Jacob offered sacrifice upon the mount, and called his brethren to eat bread: and they did eat bread, and tarried all night in the mount.

55 And early in the morning Laban rose up, and kissed his sons and his daughters, and blessed them: and Laban departed, and returned unto his place.

Note that Jesus was our sacrifice and He calls us to share the bread with Him. As always the scriptures point to Jesus.

Note also how the sacrifice focused on Jacob and Laban but all partook. We are part of a body, called the Body of Christ. We need each other for support, encouragement, exhortation and we need to support, encourage and exhort others. Christianity is not an individual religion.

Jegarsahadutha⁸⁷¹ and Galeed⁸⁷² both mean witness, but in context it was because Laban and Jacob did not trust each other.

⁸⁷¹ Strong's H3206 to gather testimony

⁸⁷² Strong's H1567 heap of testimony

CHAPTER 32

1 And Jacob went on his way, and the angels of God met him.

2 And when Jacob saw them, he said, This is God's host: and he called the name of that place Mahanaim.

3 And Jacob sent messengers before him to Esau his brother unto the land of Seir, the country of Edom.

4 And he commanded them, saying, Thus shall ye speak unto my lord Esau; Thy servant Jacob saith thus, I have sojourned with Laban, and stayed there until now:

5 And I have oxen, and asses, flocks, and menservants, and womenservants: and I have sent to tell my lord, that I may find grace in thy sight.

6 ¶ And the messengers returned to Jacob, saying, We came to thy brother Esau, and also he cometh to meet thee, and four hundred men with him.

7 Then Jacob was greatly afraid and distressed: and he divided the people that was with him, and the flocks, and herds, and the camels, into two bands;

8 And said, If Esau come to the one company, and smite it, then the other company which is left shall escape.

Jacob is fearing for his life and the lives of his family. Jacob has just set up a pillar saying that he will not go back and now he faces his brother coming with 400 probably armed men. Despite hearing from God saying that he should return,⁸⁷³ Jacob is afraid and tried to restore the relationship with gifts.

9 ¶ And Jacob said, O God of my father Abraham, and God of my father Isaac, the LORD which saidst unto me, Return unto thy country, and to thy kindred, and I will deal well with thee:

10 I am not worthy of the least of all the mercies, and of all the truth, which thou hast shewed unto thy servant; for with my staff I passed over this Jordan; and now I am become two bands.

11 Deliver me, I pray thee, from the hand of my brother, from the hand of Esau: for I fear him, lest he will come and smite me, and the mother with the children.

12 And thou saidst, I will surely do thee good, and make thy seed as the sand of the sea, which cannot be numbered for multitude.

He we have a model Prayer with many elements similar to the Lord's Prayer:

Jacob's Prayer	The Lord's Prayer ⁸⁷⁴	
O God of my father Abraham, and God of my father Isaac, the LORD	Our Father which art in heaven	Who do we pray to, this is not a force, this is a personal God who spoke to Jacob. Jacob based his prayer on a relationship. We also need a relationship with God to base out prayers on.
I am not worthy of the least of all the mercies,	Hallowed be they name	Jacob recognises that he does not have a right to God's mercy, he is asking on the basis of God grace and

⁸⁷³ Gen 31:13

⁸⁷⁴ Matt 6:9; Luke 11:12

		mercy. We too recognise that even God's name is greater than us.
Deliver me, I pray	Deliver us from evil	His request. Notice how small a section this is compared with the rest of the prayer.
thou saidst, I will surely do thee good	Give us this day our daily bread	Reference to God's word. In other words the prayer is in God's will.

There is no Praise in this prayer and I think that there should be in an ideal prayer.

Have we thought about praying without a request. Lord just saying hi? We don't only talk to friends to ask for things, we talk just to develop the relationship. However, better to pray out of fear than not to pray at all.

Prayer is powerful when based on a relationship and within God's will.

If you abide in Me, and My words abide in you, you will ask what you desire, and it shall be done for you.⁸⁷⁵

The challenge for us is to understand God's will and not take scriptures out of context to fit with what we want. God wants me to be prosperous and therefore he wants me to get that promotion- is probably based on our greed and pride that really God's will, and I am saying this from personal experience.

Sometimes reading the Bible to look into God's will, will often bring more clarity of what we should do or accept. I also find that often when I am open to God's word that I realise that half of what I am praying about is my problem and I need to change.

Jacob prays.

1. He reminds God that God told him to return to his family and country, and God would do well with him.
3. The last time he crossed this Jordan 20 years ago, all he had was the walking stick.
4. Now he has such an abundance of cattle, sheep, goats, servants and children, that he has to divide them into two companies to travel.
5. He confesses his fear of his brother Esau. He is fearful that Esau will even kill his wives and children.

14 April 2013

13 ¶ And he lodged there that same night; and took of that which came to his hand a present for Esau his brother;

14 Two hundred she goats, and twenty he goats, two hundred ewes, and twenty rams,

15 Thirty milch camels with their colts, forty kine, and ten bulls, twenty she asses, and ten foals.

16 And he delivered them into the hand of his servants, every drove by themselves; and said unto his servants, Pass over before me, and put a space betwixt drove and drove.

⁸⁷⁵ John 15:7

17 And he commanded the foremost, saying, When Esau my brother meeteth thee, and asketh thee, saying, Whose art thou? and whither goest thou? and whose are these before thee?

18 Then thou shalt say, They be thy servant Jacob's; it is a present sent unto my lord Esau: and, behold, also he is behind us.

19 And so commanded he the second, and the third, and all that followed the droves, saying, On this manner shall ye speak unto Esau, when ye find him.

20 And say ye moreover, Behold, thy servant Jacob is behind us. For he said, I will appease him with the present that goeth before me, and afterward I will see his face; peradventure he will accept of me.

21 So went the present over before him: and himself lodged that night in the company.

22 And he rose up that night, and took his two wives, and his two womenservants, and his eleven sons, and passed over the ford Jabbok.

23 And he took them, and sent them over the brook, and sent over that he had.

To understand the next two sections, we need to remind ourselves of where Jacob is at; Jacob is a very cunning and clever man. He is extremely self-reliant and always taking advantage of others. He will not stop at lying or cheating to get the advantage in each situation. Twice now, the trouble has got too bad, and he has fled to avoid a conflict, once from his brother⁸⁷⁶ and now from Laban⁸⁷⁷.

Jacob has heard the blessing from God, and seen that God has been with him, promising him land children and to bring him back to Canaan⁸⁷⁸. Jacob however has not shown much trust in God but rather worked to get the promises through his own actions⁸⁷⁹.

He has just fled from Laban and made a covenant not to return⁸⁸⁰ so he has to go on to Esau in fear⁸⁸¹ because Esau, who was planning to kill him⁸⁸² is on his way to meet him with 400 men.

Jacob tries to appease his brother's fury with gifts before they meet. He sends out his servants before him with gifts and carefully plans that they meet Esau one at a time with intervals between. Hopefully by the time Esau gets to Jacob his anger will have abated.

Now as a last resort, he wives and children into two companies. It seems that the idea being is that if Esau begins to kill the one company, the other can flee from him.

Jacob is left alone on one side of the river while everyone else is on the other giving him the best chance to escape in case he has to run for his life.

⁸⁷⁶ Gen 27:43

⁸⁷⁷ Gen 31:27

⁸⁷⁸ Gen 28:13-15; Gen 30:27, 30; Gen 31:3-13

⁸⁷⁹ Compare Jacob remembering the promise in Gen 31:10-12 to Jacob's actions in Gen 30:37-39, Also Gen 25:23, 31, 27:18-23

⁸⁸⁰ Gen 31:52,53

⁸⁸¹ Gen 32:7, 11

⁸⁸² Gen 27:41

24 ¶ And Jacob was left alone; and there wrestled a man with him until the breaking of the day.

25 And when he saw that he prevailed not against him, he touched the hollow of his thigh; and the hollow of Jacob's thigh was out of joint, as he wrestled with him.

26 And he said, Let me go, for the day breaketh. And he said, I will not let thee go, except thou bless me.

27 And he said unto him, What is thy name? And he said, Jacob.

28 And he said, Thy name shall be called no more Jacob, but Israel: for as a prince hast thou power with God and with men, and hast prevailed.

29 And Jacob asked him, and said, Tell me, I pray thee, thy name. And he said, Wherefore is it that thou dost ask after my name? And he blessed him there.

30 And Jacob called the name of the place Peniel: for I have seen God face to face, and my life is preserved.

31 And as he passed over Penuel the sun rose upon him, and he halted upon his thigh.

32 Therefore the children of Israel eat not of the sinew which shrank, which is upon the hollow of the thigh, unto this day: because he touched the hollow of Jacob's thigh in the sinew that shrank.

I do not like the way this passage is translated because it does not really make sense at first reading. Firstly, we have a man with heavenly powers, was this an angel or an Old Testament appearance of Jesus. It could have been a prophet but that does not really fit with the rest of the passage. I think that the best fit, is that it was Jesus. Jacob tells us in verse 30, “I have seen God face to face, which supports this view. But do not be distracted as the message for us is the same if this is an angel.

Now we get to the hard part, how can Jacob fight with a heavenly being and win. Think of the other passages where angels appear, in most the people they meet fall down in fear⁸⁸³, in one passage an angel killed 185 thousand Asirians⁸⁸⁴. So how can Jacob fight with a spiritual⁸⁸⁵ being and make demands.

The word wrestle means to float away or to be-dust, perhaps to get dusty⁸⁸⁶ and only occurs here⁸⁸⁷. The idea of wrestling comes from the context of struggling and wrestling would result in the two people getting dusty. I want to suggest that if we “wrestled in prayer” we would also get dusty. After all we often read of people falling prostrate in prayer.⁸⁸⁸

Then Joshua tore his clothes and fell to the earth on his face before the ark of the Lord until the evening, both he and the elders of Israel; and they put dust on their heads.⁸⁸⁹

⁸⁸³ Dan 8:17; Luke 24:5; Josh 5:14; Jud 13:20; 1Chr 21:16; Eze 1:28

⁸⁸⁴ Isa 37:36

⁸⁸⁵ Jesus was also a powerful spiritual being before He become born of a Woman. Phil 2:7

⁸⁸⁶ Strong's H79 Niphal

⁸⁸⁷ Gen 32, 24 and 25

⁸⁸⁸ Gen 17:3; Matt 26:39; Lev 9:24; 1King 18:39; Eze 1:28, 9:8; Num 20:6, 22:31; Rev 7:11; Luke 5:12

⁸⁸⁹ Joshua 7:6

Jesus is of course the best example for us, consider these two verses;

And He (Jesus) went a little beyond them, and fell on His face and prayed, saying, “My Father, if it is possible, let this cup pass from Me; yet not as I will, but as You will.”⁸⁹⁰

And being in an agony He (Jesus) prayed more earnestly: and His sweat was as it were great drops of blood falling down to the ground.⁸⁹¹

I think this example of Jesus could easily be described as wrestling in prayer, of course Jesus was not wrestling with God, as Jesus was always submissive to God’s will, but within himself.

However, we should all be very nervous of considering an understanding that is not the direct meaning without support from other passages. If we take words and verses out of context, it is easy to make the scriptures say whatever we want them to and hence the rise of false doctrines. So let us consider the prophets description of this interaction of Jacobs:

The LORD hath also a controversy with Judah, and will punish Jacob according to his ways; according to his doings will he recompense him. He took his brother by the heel in the womb, and by his strength he had power with God: Yea, he had power over the angel, and prevailed:⁸⁹²

The word for Angel here is messenger so it could be Jesus, an Angel or even a prophet. Up to this point the passages follow but then the second half of verse 4 continues

he wept, and made supplication unto him: he found him [in] Bethel, and there he spake with us; Even the LORD God of hosts; the LORD [is] his memorial. Therefore turn thou to thy God: keep mercy and judgment, and wait on thy God continually. [He is] a merchant, the balances of deceit [are] in his hand: he loveth to oppress.⁸⁹³

Hosea tells us that this interaction was with Jacob in tears and making supplication.

In Ester the word for Supplication is used where Mordecai asked Esther to go to the king and ask for their lives⁸⁹⁴. So, the Supplication is not a demanding but asking from a position of weakness. This follows some other uses where it is used in the sense of graciousness. The one in power giving from a kind heart.

So my understanding of this passage is that Jacob is wrestling in prayer, humbling himself and begging for the mercy from an awesome God via his messenger the angel. Jacob however does not make a quick prayer, he is asking, asking and asking⁸⁹⁵ without letting up until he is blessed.

Like Jacob we should seek God earnestly

He rewards those who earnestly seek him.⁸⁹⁶

⁸⁹⁰ Matt 26:39

⁸⁹¹ Luke 22:44

⁸⁹² Hosea 12:2-4a

⁸⁹³ Hsa 12:4b-7

⁸⁹⁴ Esther 4:8

⁸⁹⁵ Luke 11:9-13, The word here for ask, seek and knock are active continuous words, with the meaning that we should keep asking, knocking and seeking.

⁸⁹⁶ Heb 11:6

Going back to Jacob here is in a situation that he cannot control, his past has caught up with him and he is stuck between his uncle or his brother. His cheating made Esau angry enough to want to kill him and his manipulation of his uncles' animals breeding has made his father in law threaten him. He does what he can by splitting up his family so he can run away if required. Even this is a long shot, so he prays, probably out of desperation.

Jacob wrestles with God and gets what he wants. It reminds me of Jesus words, up till now the kingdom of heaven suffers violence and the violent take it⁸⁹⁷. We need to be passionate with God. I do not think that we have power with God, in that we are stronger, but I do think that passionate pleas will get more because God is looking for partners. In James it says that if we lack wisdom, we can ask⁸⁹⁸ so there is almost a guarantee from God that he will answer. We have power to get an answer, if we ask appropriately, ask and you will receive⁸⁹⁹.

Think of, Knock and it will be opened, seek and you will find. We are not being asked to sweep the room with a glance but to be active participants. The Greek is knock and keep on knocking, seek, and keep on seeking.

Jacob cries out I will not let you go, I will keep praying until you bless me. This reminds me of Daniel when he prayed, he started praying and after 21 days the angel brings him the answer saying that he had been hindered getting to Daniel. What would have happened if Daniel had stopped praying after 20 days would Daniel have missed out on his answer?

The first lesson that we need to take from this is have passion with God and keep praying. A quick bless me Lord while you are eating will have far less effect than a passionate plea in a sustained prayer time.

God's blessing requires humility and repentance. Sometimes we hold on to our skills, abilities, and pride so much that God needs to bring us to our knees before we can be blessed.

The Angel asked for Jacob's name and Jacob replies with, I am a cheating thief because that is what his name means "heel holder or Supplanter." I think that Jacob is repenting of his past with humility and his cry for blessing is out of desperation. But with tears, **"Please do not go without blessing me."**

Jacob had sent his family first, so that he could still run away, but the Angel made him a cripple. Now Jacob had no option and was forced to trust God and His promises. Jacob had struggled against God in the past, but now he would go on trusting God and the Jesus/Angel changed his name to Israel – Struggles with God Isra-el.

"Your name will no longer be called rotten thief, but ruled by God, for as a prince you have power with God and with man, and have prevailed."

Jacob can no longer struggle and fight against God, he must surrender. His life is no longer to be governed by his cleverness; he will now be governed by God. The crippling of Jacob by God was the means by which God was able to bring him into a totally new relationship with himself.

⁸⁹⁷ Matt 11:12

⁸⁹⁸ James 1:5-6

⁸⁹⁹ Mat 7:7-8

Sometimes I look at the people in the Bible and wonder why God can love a cheater, but God looks to the future and sees what we can become. I don't think that God blessed Jacob prior to this because of what he did, but because of what he would become.

Jacob has been transformed, he no longer works to get what he wants, he trusts in and is ruled by God. We will see that he is not perfect, he still makes mistakes. It is useful to note in the text when he is called Jacob, because he is following his own fleshly desires, compared to when he trusts in God and he is called him Israel – ruled by God.

Please remember that Jacob prayed and believed prior to this incident, he believed in God but it had not transformed him. However, when he surrendered to God he became Israel. These events occur in just about all of the Biblical greats. David when Saul tried to kill him, Joseph in Jail, Saul who was challenged by Jesus and became Paul⁹⁰⁰ etc.

God crippled Jacob in order to crown him with His glory. When Jacob surrendered, God's power could begin to be manifested to him.

What would God call you today, would he call you Israel – called by God or will he call you by your experience.

⁹⁰⁰ Acts 9:4

CHAPTER 33

1 And Jacob lifted up his eyes, and looked, and, behold, Esau came, and with him four hundred men. And he divided the children unto Leah, and unto Rachel, and unto the two handmaids.

2 And he put the handmaids and their children foremost, and Leah and her children after, and Rachel and Joseph hindermost.

3 And he passed over before them, and bowed himself to the ground seven times, until he came near to his brother.

4 And Esau ran to meet him, and embraced him, and fell on his neck, and kissed him: and they wept.

5 And he lifted up his eyes, and saw the women and the children; and said, Who are those with thee? And he said, The children which God hath graciously given thy servant.

6 Then the handmaidens came near, they and their children, and they bowed themselves.

7 And Leah also with her children came near, and bowed themselves: and after came Joseph near and Rachel, and they bowed themselves.

8 And he said, What meanest thou by all this drove which I met? And he said, These are to find grace in the sight of my lord.

9 And Esau said, I have enough, my brother; keep that thou hast unto thyself.

10 And Jacob said, Nay, I pray thee, if now I have found grace in thy sight, then receive my present at my hand: for therefore I have seen thy face, as though I had seen the face of God, and thou wast pleased with me.

11 Take, I pray thee, my blessing that is brought to thee; because God hath dealt graciously with me, and because I have enough. And he urged him, and he took it.

12 And he said, Let us take our journey, and let us go, and I will go before thee.

13 And he said unto him, My lord knoweth that the children are tender, and the flocks and herds with young are with me: and if men should overdrive them one day, all the flock will die.

14 Let my lord, I pray thee, pass over before his servant: and I will lead on softly, according as the cattle that goeth before me and the children be able to endure, until I come unto my lord unto Seir.

15 And Esau said, Let me now leave with thee some of the folk that are with me. And he said, What needeth it? let me find grace in the sight of my lord.

16 ¶ So Esau returned that day on his way unto Seir.

17 And Jacob journeyed to Succoth, and built him an house, and made booths for his cattle: therefore the name of the place is called Succoth.

18 ¶ And Jacob came to Shalem, a city of Shechem, which is in the land of Canaan, when he came from Padan-aram; and pitched his tent before the city.

19 And he bought a parcel of a field, where he had spread his tent, at the hand of the children of Hamor, Shechem's father, for an hundred pieces of money.

20 And he erected there an altar, and called it El-elohe-Israel.

Jacob/Israel's prayer was answered, and the reunion was a good one. Esau welcomed Jacob as a brother and offers to walk with Jacob. Unfortunately, Jacob declines the offer and tells Esau that he will follow only to go the other way. Hence, we see in verse 18 that it is Jacob not Israel going to Shechem.

God had told Israel (God governed) to go back to the land of his father, but Jacob (thief and supplanter) has instead gone to Shechem, where we will see trouble awaits.

Elelohe-Israel means "God, the God of Israel".

CHAPTER 34

1 And Dinah the daughter of Leah, which she bare unto Jacob, went out to see the daughters of the land.

2 And when Shechem the son of Hamor the Hivite, prince of the country, saw her, he took her, and lay with her, and defiled her.

3 And his soul clave unto Dinah the daughter of Jacob, and he loved the damsel, and spake kindly unto the damsel.

4 And Shechem spake unto his father Hamor, saying, Get me this damsel to wife.

5 And Jacob heard that he had defiled Dinah his daughter: now his sons were with his cattle in the field: and Jacob held his peace until they were come.

So Jacob did not do what God had asked him nor what He told Esau he would do and trouble comes. I heard a bible teacher say that while you are in God's will, you carry God's protection, when you are not in His will, you lose your protection. While this is only partially correct, we see here that our decisions affect others not just ourselves.

Dinah has been raped by the people in the area that Jacob moved too and we will see the response.

6 ¶ And Hamor the father of Shechem went out unto Jacob to commune with him.

7 And the sons of Jacob came out of the field when they heard it: and the men were grieved, and they were very wroth, because he had wrought folly in Israel in lying with Jacob's daughter; which thing ought not to be done.

8 And Hamor communed with them, saying, The soul of my son Shechem longeth for your daughter: I pray you give her him to wife.

9 And make ye marriages with us, and give your daughters unto us, and take our daughters unto you.

10 And ye shall dwell with us: and the land shall be before you; dwell and trade ye therein, and get you possessions therein.

11 And Shechem said unto her father and unto her brethren, Let me find grace in your eyes, and what ye shall say unto me I will give.

12 Ask me never so much dowry and gift, and I will give according as ye shall say unto me: but give me the damsel to wife.

Ideally there would be more repentance but as the culture considered women as objects to be bought and sold, in my opinion Shechem after his sin, is making, what is for that culture, a fair proposal, I want her ask whatever you want and I will pay it.

This passage also to me tells us again, that God and his people are to value women.

I think that we have another sin emerging here and it is one that is rife in New Zealand, where is Dinah's father, Israel. As Dinah's father, surely he should be standing up and looking after his daughter.

13 And the sons of Jacob answered Shechem and Hamor his father deceitfully, and said, because he had defiled Dinah their sister:

14 And they said unto them, We cannot do this thing, to give our sister to one that is uncircumcised; for that were a reproach unto us:

15 But in this will we consent unto you: If ye will be as we be, that every male of you be circumcised;

16 Then will we give our daughters unto you, and we will take your daughters to us, and we will dwell with you, and we will become one people.

17 But if ye will not hearken unto us, to be circumcised; then will we take our daughter, and we will be gone.

18 And their words pleased Hamor, and Shechem Hamor's son.

19 And the young man deferred not to do the thing, because he had delight in Jacob's daughter: and he was more honourable than all the house of his father.

Is this last verse not alarming? This rapist is “more honourable than all the house of his father.”

We have to recognise the depravity that Satan guides people too. I look at the way people drive and act. I was at the supermarket about a month ago and someone had “parked” in the middle of the road awaiting someone. What I found amazing was that even though other cars had to wait and go around them, and there were plenty of car parks right next to them, they didn’t care about others and parked in the way. Satan blinds people to how their actions affect others.

Look at how society is declining, it is a gradual decline because people have lost the constant truth. If you think that what is described here is not applicable today, just read the news. I read a news article the other day, A girl was raped by 6 men in Australia and they will not be brought to trial because that was acceptable in their culture. In America it was acceptable for Bill Clinton to have an affair and then lie about it.

I am sure you can find similar examples. We have to allow God’s truth to guide us and then to walk in that light⁹⁰¹ of truth, allowing that light to shine out from us⁹⁰² because that is the only way we can slow society’s decay⁹⁰³. The world will not appreciate you for demonstrating truth⁹⁰⁴, but we are called to be the light of the world⁹⁰⁵.

20 ¶ And Hamor and Shechem his son came unto the gate of their city, and communed with the men of their city, saying,

21 These men are peaceable with us; therefore let them dwell in the land, and trade therein; for the land, behold, it is large enough for them; let us take their daughters to us for wives, and let us give them our daughters.

22 Only herein will the men consent unto us for to dwell with us, to be one people, if every male among us be circumcised, as they are circumcised.

23 Shall not their cattle and their substance and every beast of their's be our's? only let us consent unto them, and they will dwell with us.

24 And unto Hamor and unto Shechem his son hearkened all that went out of the gate of his city; and every male was circumcised, all that went out of the gate of his city.

Consider how Hamor and Shechem approached their people, we will be richer. The desire for wealth was a high priority for these people.

⁹⁰¹ John 8:12, Psa 18:28

⁹⁰² Matt 5:16; Acts 13:47-48; Luke 11:33-36; 2Cor 4:6, 1The 5:5

⁹⁰³ Acts 26:17-18; Isa 9:2

⁹⁰⁴ John 3:19-21

⁹⁰⁵ Matt 5:14

25 ¶ And it came to pass on the third day, when they were sore, that two of the sons of Jacob, Simeon and Levi, Dinah's brethren, took each man his sword, and came upon the city boldly, and slew all the males.

26 And they slew Hamor and Shechem his son with the edge of the sword, and took Dinah out of Shechem's house, and went out.

27 The sons of Jacob came upon the slain, and spoiled the city, because they had defiled their sister.

28 They took their sheep, and their oxen, and their asses, and that which was in the city, and that which was in the field,

29 And all their wealth, and all their little ones, and their wives took they captive, and spoiled even all that was in the house.

30 And Jacob said to Simeon and Levi, Ye have troubled me to make me to stink among the inhabitants of the land, among the Canaanites and the Perizzites: and I being few in number, they shall gather themselves together against me, and slay me; and I shall be destroyed, I and my house.

31 And they said, Should he deal with our sister as with an harlot?

Jacob's sons were deceitful and took their revenge on the entire city. Jacob's response was not great either, he did not complain about the injustice of lying and then murdering an entire city but rather that the remaining inhabitants may come for revenge. Jacob remembers this event in his blessing of his sons⁹⁰⁶ and they lost part of the land given to them many years later.

⁹⁰⁶ Gen 49:5-7

CHAPTER 35

1 And God said unto Jacob, Arise, go up to Beth-el, and dwell there: and make there an altar unto God, that appeared unto thee when thou fleddest from the face of Esau thy brother.

2 Then Jacob said unto his household, and to all that were with him, Put away the strange gods that are among you, and be clean, and change your garments:

3 And let us arise, and go up to Beth-el; and I will make there an altar unto God, who answered me in the day of my distress, and was with me in the way which I went.

4 And they gave unto Jacob all the strange gods which were in their hand, and all their earrings which were in their ears; and Jacob hid them under the oak which was by Shechem.

5 And they journeyed: and the terror of God was upon the cities that were round about them, and they did not pursue after the sons of Jacob.

Last week I spoke about how God protected those that followed His will and here Jacob obeys God and we read in verse 5 that the “terror of God was upon the cities” that they did not pursue after the sons of Jacob.

Remember that Bethel was where God had asked Jacob to go to when he returned to the land from Laban⁹⁰⁷ but he ignored God then and went to Shechem⁹⁰⁸.

6 ¶ So Jacob came to Luz, which is in the land of Canaan, that is, Beth-el, he and all the people that were with him.

7 And he built there an altar, and called the place El-beth-el: because there God appeared unto him, when he fled from the face of his brother.

8 But Deborah Rebekah's nurse died, and she was buried beneath Beth-el under an oak: and the name of it was called Allon-bachuth.

9 ¶ And God appeared unto Jacob again, when he came out of Padan-aram, and blessed him.

10 And God said unto him, Thy name is Jacob: thy name shall not be called any more Jacob, but Israel shall be thy name: and he called his name Israel.

11 And God said unto him, I am God Almighty: be fruitful and multiply; a nation and a company of nations shall be of thee, and kings shall come out of thy loins;

12 And the land which I gave Abraham and Isaac, to thee I will give it, and to thy seed after thee will I give the land.

13 And God went up from him in the place where he talked with him.

14 And Jacob set up a pillar in the place where he talked with him, even a pillar of stone: and he poured a drink offering thereon, and he poured oil thereon.

15 And Jacob called the name of the place where God spake with him, Beth-el.

Notice what Jacob has to do in order to receive the land, Nothing. Jacob did not agree or renew any commitments, But God reaffirmed the commitment to bless Jacob, with descendants, kings and the land.

El-bethel means "the God of Bethel"⁹⁰⁹. Bethel means "the house of God".

⁹⁰⁷ Gen 32:9; Gen 31:3, 13

⁹⁰⁸ Gen 33:17-18

⁹⁰⁹ Strong's H1008

Allonbacuth means "the oak of weeping"⁹¹⁰.

16 ¶ And they journeyed from Beth-el; and there was but a little way to come to Ephrath: and Rachel travailed, and she had hard labour.

17 And it came to pass, when she was in hard labour, that the midwife said unto her, Fear not; thou shalt have this son also.

18 And it came to pass, as her soul was in departing, (for she died) that she called his name Ben-oni: but his father called him Benjamin.

19 And Rachel died, and was buried in the way to Ephrath, which is Beth-lehem.

20 And Jacob set a pillar upon her grave: that is the pillar of Rachel's grave unto this day.

21 ¶ And Israel journeyed, and spread his tent beyond the tower of Edar.

22 And it came to pass, when Israel dwelt in that land, that Reuben went and lay with Bilhah his father's concubine: and Israel heard it. Now the sons of Jacob were twelve:

23 The sons of Leah; Reuben, Jacob's firstborn, and Simeon, and Levi, and Judah, and Issachar, and Zebulun:

24 The sons of Rachel; Joseph, and Benjamin:

25 And the sons of Bilhah, Rachel's handmaid; Dan, and Naphtali:

26 And the sons of Zilpah, Leah's handmaid; Gad, and Asher: these are the sons of Jacob, which were born to him in Padan-aram.

27 ¶ And Jacob came unto Isaac his father unto Mamre, unto the city of Arbah, which is Hebron, where Abraham and Isaac sojourned.

28 And the days of Isaac were an hundred and fourscore years.

29 And Isaac gave up the ghost, and died, and was gathered unto his people, being old and full of days: and his sons Esau and Jacob buried him.

Rachel dies in labour after stealing the idol from her father that the people of the day thought could protect them during childbirth⁹¹¹. After being challenged by Laban, Jacob of the person who stole it, **"let him not live"**⁹¹² not realising that it was Rachel.

I think that Christians are more likely to get the consequence of wrong, not as punishment, but as God wants to teach us. We need to surrender our lives and become living sacrifices⁹¹³, to help us I think God sometimes lets us suffer a small portion of the consequence of our errors.

Rebekah calls the child Benoni which means son of my sorrow⁹¹⁴. Jacob names him Benjamin, means son of the right hand⁹¹⁵.

Jacob sets up a pillar to mark Rachel's grave and we are reminded that this is a historical record, when it states that the pillar was there for people to see it. Rachel is also a marker for the attempt on Jesus' life, **"A voice is heard in Ramah, mourning and great weeping, Rachel weeping for her children and refusing to be comforted, because they are no more."**⁹¹⁶

⁹¹⁰ Strong's H439

⁹¹¹ See notes on Gen 31:25-35

⁹¹² Gen 31:32

⁹¹³ Rom 12:1

⁹¹⁴ Strong's H1126

⁹¹⁵ Strong's H1144

⁹¹⁶ Jer 31:15; also Mat 2:18

Verse 22 here just briefly mentions that Reuben went and lay with Bilhah and then moves on. We will see later that when Israel announces the blessings that this is a big deal⁹¹⁷ and yet here it is only mentioned almost in passing. I suspect that firstly it is only mentioned because Israel does nothing about it.

I did some research and it seems that Reuben may have been trying to take over the family leadership. When David's son Absalom was trying to take over the country, he slept with his fathers concubines⁹¹⁸ as a demonstration that he thought he was now in charge.

CHAPTER 36

1 Now these are the generations of Esau, who is Edom.

2 Esau took his wives of the daughters of Canaan; Adah the daughter of Elon the Hittite, and Aholibamah the daughter of Anah the daughter of Zibeon the Hivite;

3 And Bashemath Ishmael's daughter, sister of Nebajoth.

4 And Adah bare to Esau Eliphaz; and Bashemath bare Reuel;

5 And Aholibamah bare Jeush, and Jaalam, and Korah: these are the sons of Esau, which were born unto him in the land of Canaan.

6 And Esau took his wives, and his sons, and his daughters, and all the persons of his house, and his cattle, and all his beasts, and all his substance, which he had got in the land of Canaan; and went into the country from the face of his brother Jacob.

7 For their riches were more than that they might dwell together; and the land wherein they were strangers could not bear them because of their cattle.

8 Thus dwelt Esau in mount Seir: Esau is Edom.

The Edomites is the nation that came from Essau , like the Israelites came from Jacob. Rebekah was promised that two nations⁹¹⁹ and here we see the fulfilment of that promise. We also see the birth right going to Jacob as Essau moves away, implying that Jacob did get the double portion.

Later in the scriptures we will see the fighting between these two nations.

You may recognise some of these names for example the Hittites and the Hivites. These were the enemies of Israel in later years. The Edomites refused to allow Israel to pass through their land when they left Egypt⁹²⁰ and later Saul⁹²¹ and David⁹²² defeated them⁹²³. But the biggest complaint in the scriptures about the Edomites come from the prophets because they plundered Jerusalem and helped slaughter the Judeans⁹²⁴. It is understood that this is one reason that Herod was so unpopular, because he was an Edomite.

⁹¹⁷ Gen 49:4

⁹¹⁸ 2Sam 16:21-22

⁹¹⁹ Gen 25:23

⁹²⁰ Numbers 20:21

⁹²¹ 1Sam 14:47-48

⁹²² 2Sam 8:13-14

⁹²³ Numb 24:18-19; Isa11:14

⁹²⁴ Eze 25: 12-14; Jer 49:7-39; Joel 3:19; Amos 1:11-15

9 ¶ And these are the generations of Esau the father of the Edomites in mount Seir:
10 These are the names of Esau's sons; Eliphaz the son of Adah the wife of Esau, Reuel the son of Bashemath the wife of Esau.
11 And the sons of Eliphaz were Teman, Omar, Zepho, and Gatam, and Kenaz.
12 And Timna was concubine to Eliphaz Esau's son; and she bare to Eliphaz Amalek: these were the sons of Adah Esau's wife.
13 And these are the sons of Reuel; Nahath, and Zerah, Shammah, and Mizzah: these were the sons of Bashemath Esau's wife.
14 ¶ And these were the sons of Aholibamah, the daughter of Anah the daughter of Zibeon, Esau's wife: and she bare to Esau Jeush, and Jaalam, and Korah.
15 ¶ These were dukes of the sons of Esau: the sons of Eliphaz the firstborn son of Esau; duke Teman, duke Omar, duke Zepho, duke Kenaz,
16 Duke Korah, duke Gatam, and duke Amalek: these are the dukes that came of Eliphaz in the land of Edom; these were the sons of Adah.
17 ¶ And these are the sons of Reuel Esau's son; duke Nahath, duke Zerah, duke Shammah, duke Mizzah: these are the dukes that came of Reuel in the land of Edom; these are the sons of Bashemath Esau's wife.
18 ¶ And these are the sons of Aholibamah Esau's wife; duke Jeush, duke Jaalam, duke Korah: these were the dukes that came of Aholibamah the daughter of Anah, Esau's wife.
19 These are the sons of Esau, who is Edom, and these are their dukes.
20 ¶ These are the sons of Seir the Horite, who inhabited the land; Lotan, and Shobal, and Zibeon, and Anah,
21 And Dishon, and Ezer, and Dishan: these are the dukes of the Horites, the children of Seir in the land of Edom.
22 And the children of Lotan were Hori and Hemam; and Lotan's sister was Timna.
23 And the children of Shobal were these; Alvan, and Manahath, and Ebal, Shepho, and Onam.
24 And these are the children of Zibeon; both Ajah, and Anah: this was that Anah that found the mules in the wilderness, as he fed the asses of Zibeon his father.
25 And the children of Anah were these; Dishon, and Aholibamah the daughter of Anah.
26 And these are the children of Dishon; Hemdan, and Eshban, and Ithran, and Cheran.
27 The children of Ezer are these; Bilhan, and Zaavan, and Akan.
28 The children of Dishan are these; Uz, and Aran.
29 These are the dukes that came of the Horites; duke Lotan, duke Shobal, duke Zibeon, duke Anah,
30 Duke Dishon, duke Ezer, duke Dishan: these are the dukes that came of Hori, among their dukes in the land of Seir.

Note how important ancestry was, after all God's promises had been made to Abraham and Isaac, therefore you had to keep a good record to prove that you were in line for that inheritance.

Duke means chief, governor or lead, but comes from a word meaning friend⁹²⁵. Probably they were military commanders, dukes or captains that had soldiers under them; for Esau and his family lived by the sword⁹²⁶. We may suppose those dukes had numerous families of

⁹²⁵ Strong's H441; see Gen 36:31 and also Jer 13:21-Captains; Zec 9:7, 12:5-Governor

⁹²⁶ Ge 27:40

children and servants. God promised that nations would come from Esau and here we have a list of the leaders of these nations.

Eliphaz was the name of one of Job's comforters; As Job's friend was a Temanite I suspect that this is a grandson of Job's friend.

We also have the decedents of the Hitites which implies to me that the Edomites intermarried and corrupted themselves in their ways.

For us to receive our inheritance we need to prove our lineage by wearing our wedding garments⁹²⁷ at the marriage supper. We can be adopted into the family of God and who our earthly parents are does not impact our inheritance in heaven. However, we must also be careful of corrupting ourselves by the ways of the world.

31 ¶ And these are the kings that reigned in the land of Edom, before there reigned any king over the children of Israel.

32 And Bela the son of Beor reigned in Edom: and the name of his city was Dinhabah.

33 And Bela died, and Jobab the son of Zerah of Bozrah reigned in his stead.

34 And Jobab died, and Husham of the land of Temani reigned in his stead.

35 And Husham died, and Hadad the son of Bedad, who smote Midian in the field of Moab, reigned in his stead: and the name of his city was Avith.

36 And Hadad died, and Samlah of Masrekah reigned in his stead.

37 And Samlah died, and Saul of Rehoboth by the river reigned in his stead.

38 And Saul died, and Baal-hanan the son of Achbor reigned in his stead.

39 And Baal-hanan the son of Achbor died, and Hadar reigned in his stead: and the name of his city was Pau; and his wife's name was Mehetabel, the daughter of Matred, the daughter of Mezahab.

40 And these are the names of the dukes that came of Esau, according to their families, after their places, by their names; duke Timnah, duke Alvah, duke Jetheth,

41 Duke Aholibamah, duke Elah, duke Pinon,

42 Duke Kenaz, duke Teman, duke Mibzar,

43 Duke Magdiel, duke Iram: these be the dukes of Edom, according to their habitations in the land of their possession: he is Esau the father of the Edomites.

There are some lessons for us in this passage; firstly the children of Esau became kings before any kings in Israel. Like Adam and Eve who strove to get knowledge quicker than God was giving

⁹²⁷ Matt 22:9-14; Rev 19:7-9

it to them, these people strove to get status and power. Often we see the people of the world getting power and status quicker than people of faith, Jacobs sons were shepherds⁹²⁸, while Essau's were dukes. But the gifts that we get in God's will and time are enduring and lead to life. This is also guidance that we should not be quick to claim titles or status, after all be are not rules and servants of each other⁹²⁹, but brothers and sisters in Christ⁹³⁰.

Which is the second observation here, we only read of reigning and death, there is very little of a positive, enduring legacy. The strivings and status of the world do not bring happiness nor lasting happiness.

Lasty and linked to the above is that we have recorded the generations that lived by faith all the way through to Jesus, with only brief summaries of those who did not follow faith in God. For us to set our children up for success we need to obtain a good report through faith⁹³¹.

CHAPTER 37

For this next section we might get more out of it if we consider how it aligns as a prophecy of Christ before reading it. We all know the story of Joseph, the one who was betrayed by his brothers, spoken of as dead, yet rose to power saving his people.

Nowhere in scripture is Joseph said to be a type of Christ. Adam⁹³² and David⁹³³ are explicitly said to be, but Joseph is not. Not that this means there is no scriptural support for Joseph being a prophetic type of Christ. After all the scriptures dedicate 13 Chapters to Joseph, so he must point us towards Jesus.

For example, consider the name given to Joseph by Pharaoh⁹³⁴, in Hebrew it meant 'Revealer of secrets' and in Egyptian it meant 'Salvation' or 'Saviour of the world'. When the Samaritan woman met Jesus the Christ she proclaimed, **Come, see a man who told me all things I had ever done: is not he the Christ**⁹³⁵. She proclaimed the Messiah as the 'Revealer of secrets'. After spending two days with the Samaritans, the men proclaim, "We have heard him ourselves, and we know that this is indeed the Saviour of the world"⁹³⁶.

Although he is a very full type of Christ, as with every type, it falls short.

He did not die at the hands of his brothers - there was no water in the pit.

He could not be the sin bearer.

He primed his relatives to say that they were "men of cattle" rather than admit to being shepherds, as the latter were greatly despised by the Egyptians. Was that guile?

⁹²⁸ Gen 47:3

⁹²⁹ Matt 23:8-12; Luke 22:25-26; Gal 3:26-28; James 2:1-4

⁹³⁰ Acts 2:44-45; 2 Cor 8:13-15

⁹³¹ Heb 11:2, 39

⁹³² 1Cor 15:45

⁹³³ Isa 55:1-9; Isa 11:1,14; Daniel 4:3,34

⁹³⁴ Genesis 41:45, meaning from Gesenius' Hebrew-Chaldee Lexicon

⁹³⁵ John 4:29

⁹³⁶ John 4:43

When five were presented to Pharaoh, they said they were shepherds and there were no repercussions. Only Christ was the perfect servant.

But here are some prophetic similarities.

Similarities	Joseph	Jesus
Joseph & Jesus were first-born.	Genesis 30:22-24 (of Rachel)	Matthew 1:25 (of Mary)
Joseph & Jesus were shepherds.	Genesis 37:2	Matthew 2:26, 26:31 John 10:11
Joseph & Jesus were the most loved of their fathers.	Genesis 37:3	Matthew 3:17, 12:18
Joseph & Jesus were prophesied to be rulers.	Genesis 37:5-11	Daniel 7:13-14 Micah 4:7,5:2 Psalm 2:1-12
Joseph & Jesus showed their brethren that they were chosen to be rulers,	Gen 37:3	Zech. 9:9
Joseph's and Jesus' brothers were jealous of them, and did not believe them.	Genesis 37:4-5, 11	John 7:3-5, 15:18-19
Joseph was sent by his father to his brothers. Jesus was sent by His Father to Israel.	Genesis 37:13,18-20	Matthew 21:37-38, Mark 12:6-7, Luke 20:13-15, John 5:23
Jesus went to an Israel that had two religious doctrines without life, Sadducees and Pharisees. Joseph went to two wells, without water.	Gen 37:17	Matt 3:7
Joseph was apparently put to death, and Jesus was put to death, by their own people.	Genesis 37:18-28	Acts 2:22-23
Reuben wanted to rescue Joseph. Pilate wanted to rescue Jesus. Both gave in to the majority	Genesis 37:21-22	Matthew 27:24
Joseph was sold as a slave (for 20 pieces of silver). Jesus was betrayed for the price of a slave (30 pieces). ⁹³⁷	Genesis 37:26-28	Matthew 26:15, Exodus 21:32, Zechariah 11:12-13
Both went to Egypt.	Genesis 37:28	Matthew 2:13-15
Both were made slaves.	Genesis 39:1	Philippians 2:7
Both were falsely accused.	Genesis 39:11-20	Matthew 26:59-61
Joseph was betrayed by Judah and Jesus by Judas. very similar names	Gen 37:26	John 13:21-27
Joseph was 'stripped of his coat', likewise the soldiers took the seamless garment of Jesus.	Gen 37:23	John 19:23
Joseph's and Jesus coat is dipped in blood	Gen 37:31	Rev 19:13
Given new robes	Gen 41:42	Gen 19:16
God, Yahweh was with them both.	Genesis 39:3,21,23 Acts 7:9	Acts 10:38 Luke 2:52 John 1:1-2, 3:2
When falsely accused they were silent. In Joseph's case there is nothing recorded.		Isa 53:7; Mark 14:53-65

⁹³⁷ Accounts for inflation: I found that 20 pcs of silver in Joseph's day was equal to 30 pcs 2200 years later, 50% inflation

Both were with two others condemned to die, one of which was pardoned and given life.	Genesis 40:1-3,20-22	Luke 23:32,39-43
Bread and wine: Baker (broken) Jesus body was broken and killed for us. Wine Steward was redeemed like us.	Gen 40	1Cor 11:23-29; Luke 22:17-38
God's Spirit indwelt them both.	Genesis 41:38	Luke 4:1 Acts 10:38
They both taught the wise	Gen 41:33-48	Ps 105:22, Ecc 4:13 and ...
The king of Egypt exalted Joseph ruler over all to bring all under the king's rule. Jesus is exalted to bring all under God's rule.	Genesis 41:40-44	Acts 2:32-33 1 Corinthians 15:27-28
All knees bowed to Joseph. All knees will bow to Jesus.	Genesis 41:43	Philippians 2:10
Both were given a name meaning Saviour.	Genesis 41:45 (Saviour of the World); Gen 47:25	Matthew 1:21 (Yahweh is Salvation), Acts 13:23
Both were given a gentile bride by the King.	Genesis 41:45	2 Corinthians 11:2
Troubled times come during their rule. 7 years of "tribulation".	Genesis 41:54-55	Mark 13:8 Jeremiah 30:7
The king of Egypt appointed Joseph to be the sole source of life for all. God appointed Jesus to be our sole source of eternal life.	Genesis 41:55-57	Acts 4:12 1 John 5:11-12
Joseph's brothers did not recognize him. Jesus' own people didn't either.	Genesis 42:8	John 1:10
Trouble for Joseph's brothers. Trouble for Israel ("Jacob's trouble").	Genesis 42:21-22,36	Isaiah 40:1-2 Jeremiah 30:7
Joseph was finally revealed to his brothers. Jesus to finally be revealed to Israel.	Genesis 45:3	Zechariah 12:10 Matthew 24:30-31 Revelation 1:7
The evil Joseph's brothers intended; God meant for good to save them. The same is true of the evil Jesus' own people intended to him...	Genesis 45:5-8 Genesis 50:20	Acts 3:12-18
...therefore, they are forgiven.	Genesis 45:5,10-15	Luke 23:34
Joseph sends wagons to get his Family to be with him for care and protection, a foreshadow of the rapture where the redeemed will be taken to safety.	Gen 45:9-21	1The 4:15-17
Joseph's brothers shared Pharaoh's favour because of Joseph, not themselves. We share God's favour because of Jesus, not because we are worthy.	Genesis 45:16-20	Ephesians 2:4-8 Philippians 4:19
Both of them sat in judgement. Joseph over his brethren and Jesus over His brethren (Israel)	Gen 41:41; Gen 42:6-17	John 5:22-23; Acts 10:42; 2Cor 5:10; 2Tim 4:1
Both are to bring all under rule of the King.	Genesis 47:19-20	Ephesians 1:10-12
Joseph's sons (Manasseh and Ephriam) come through his gentile wife and are given full status as children of the father. Gentiles who believe are considered full members of God's people.	Genesis 48:5,9	Hebrews 2:13; Isaiah 8:18; Acts 28:28

While only Jesus was truly sinless, Joseph is one of the few people significantly written about in the Bible of which no sins are mentioned.	(silent)	1 Peter 2:22
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1 And Jacob dwelt in the land wherein his father was a stranger, in the land of Canaan.

2 These are the generations of Jacob. Joseph, being seventeen years old, was feeding the flock with his brethren; and the lad was with the sons of Bilhah, and with the sons of Zilpah, his father's wives: and Joseph brought unto his father their evil report.

3 Now Israel loved Joseph more than all his children, because he was the son of his old age: and he made him a coat of many colours.

4 And when his brethren saw that their father loved him more than all his brethren, they hated him, and could not speak peaceably unto him.

Verse one and 2a are probably the sign off of the previous section with this section being recorded by someone else. In it we saw the history and events of Jacob together with his descendants, firstly Jacob and last week Esau. We are now going to follow Joseph.

The first thing that we learn about Joseph is that he brought his father an evil report, hardly a good start, though we do not know the details. Nobody like a tattler however the scriptures do tell us never to lie, so if Joseph's father had asked him about his brothers he was right to tell his father. Also, if someone sins against us we are to talk to them first and only if they will not repent, then we are to take them to the elders⁹³⁸.

The reason that this is worth mentioning is that since Joseph is a type we do not hear of any sin in Joseph. This is not to imply that he is perfect but just to keep with the type.

The next thing we learn is favouritism from Israel. We have mentioned previously that the scriptures use the name Jacob when Jacob/Israel is acting in his own interests and Israel when he is acting as a follower of God. We will and have already seen favouritism causes problems in the family, so we should expect Jacob to be used, but the scriptures use Israel, why?

I think that this is what the Jewish scribes call a Remiz, a hint of something deeper. I believe that we are being pointed to the prophetic that Joseph is pointing to Jesus.

The Son brings the father word of the children on the earth

The Father loves the son more than others

The Father has made the son a robe of righteousness and a wedding robe.

When the earth dwellers saw the father's love for the son, they hated him.

However, before we go too far with the specifics of Joseph we need to consider what the big picture is. Joseph is a type of Christ, in other words God was trying to prepare the Israelites for their messiah by giving them an example so that their history would not just point to Jesus but also to help them recognise the Messiah when he came.

⁹³⁸ Mat 18:15; Luke 17:3-4

5 ¶ And Joseph dreamed a dream, and he told it his brethren: and they hated him yet the more.

6 And he said unto them, Hear, I pray you, this dream which I have dreamed:

7 For, behold, we were binding sheaves in the field, and, lo, my sheaf arose, and also stood upright; and, behold, your sheaves stood round about, and made obeisance to my sheaf.

8 And his brethren said to him, Shalt thou indeed reign over us? or shalt thou indeed have dominion over us? And they hated him yet the more for his dreams, and for his words.

9 ¶ And he dreamed yet another dream, and told it his brethren, and said, Behold, I have dreamed a dream more; and, behold, the sun and the moon and the eleven stars made obeisance to me.

10 And he told it to his father, and to his brethren: and his father rebuked him, and said unto him, What is this dream that thou hast dreamed? Shall I and thy mother and thy brethren indeed come to bow down ourselves to thee to the earth?

11 And his brethren envied him; but his father observed the saying.

Here is another demonstration of the completeness and consistency of scripture, we read in the last book of the Bible,

And there appeared a great wonder in heaven; a woman clothed with the sun, and the moon under her feet, and upon her head a crown of twelve stars:⁹³⁹

and here is the understanding of that passage – your father and mother. Not only the Bible consistent in truth but also in its use of imagery.

One of the themes of Genesis is the envy when God favours someone else. Cain was jealous of Abel's offering and killed him, Sarah was concerned about Essau and sent him away, Jacob was jealous of Essau's birth right and stole it, Essau was angry when Jacob got the blessing even though he had sold it and wanted to kill him, Rachel was jealous when Leah had children. Here Joseph's brothers do the same.

Jesus encourages us to be different;

Let this mind be in you, which was also in Christ Jesus: Who, being in the form of God, thought it not robbery to be equal with God: But made himself of no reputation, and took upon him the form of a servant, and was made in the likeness of men:⁹⁴⁰

12 ¶ And his brethren went to feed their father's flock in Shechem.

13 And Israel said unto Joseph, Do not thy brethren feed the flock in Shechem? come, and I will send thee unto them. And he said to him, Here am I.

14 And he said to him, Go, I pray thee, see whether it be well with thy brethren, and well with the flocks; and bring me word again. So he sent him out of the vale of Hebron, and he came to Shechem.

15 ¶ And a certain man found him, and, behold, he was wandering in the field: and the man asked him, saying, What seekest thou?

16 And he said, I seek my brethren: tell me, I pray thee, where they feed their flocks.

17 And the man said, They are departed hence; for I heard them say, Let us go to Dothan. And Joseph went after his brethren, and found them in Dothan.

⁹³⁹ Rev 12:1

⁹⁴⁰ Philippians 2:5-7

18 And when they saw him afar off, even before he came near unto them, they conspired against him to slay him.

19 And they said one to another, Behold, this dreamer cometh.

20 Come now therefore, and let us slay him, and cast him into some pit, and we will say, Some evil beast hath devoured him: and we shall see what will become of his dreams.

21 And Reuben heard it, and he delivered him out of their hands; and said, Let us not kill him.

22 And Reuben said unto them, Shed no blood, but cast him into this pit that is in the wilderness, and lay no hand upon him; that he might rid him out of their hands, to deliver him to his father again.

Shechem is in Central Israel, it was the first city that Abram came to and the one that Jacob returned to and built an altar to God the God of Israel⁹⁴¹. It is also the place the Moses listed the blessings and curses that Israel could choose⁹⁴². It means “two wells” and a well is where we find water for life. It speaks of a place of two doctrines but since the well had no water it, the doctrines here have no life. Note that Jesus came to a people of two doctrines with no life – the Pharisees and the Sadducees. It is also worth noting that from the legalistic group of Pharisees scripture records those that came to faith, but scripture does not record any of the “modern” or those with an allegorical view – the Sadducees – coming to faith.

Can you imagine how it would be to have 10 older brothers that all hated you? 2. The taunting and teasing that must have gone on. B. His brothers hated him enough to kill him.

Notice that not all the brothers were with him. Josephs eldest brother, Reuben, speaks out and saves Josephs life. Only intending to do something is fruitless, we must act against wrong. Unless we speak out we are guilty of the sin of the many.

23 ¶ And it came to pass, when Joseph was come unto his brethren, that they stript Joseph out of his coat, his coat of many colours that was on him;

24 And they took him, and cast him into a pit: and the pit was empty, there was no water in it.

25 And they sat down to eat bread: and they lifted up their eyes and looked, and, behold, a company of Ishmeelites came from Gilead with their camels bearing spicery and balm and myrrh, going to carry it down to Egypt.

26 And Judah said unto his brethren, What profit is it if we slay our brother, and conceal his blood?

27 Come, and let us sell him to the Ishmeelites, and let not our hand be upon him; for he is our brother and our flesh. And his brethren were content.

28 Then there passed by Midianites merchantmen; and they drew and lifted up Joseph out of the pit, and sold Joseph to the Ishmeelites for twenty pieces of silver: and they brought Joseph into Egypt.

Joseph was, in his mind, elevated to ruling, with the sun and moon bowing to him, and now he is sent out into a field, now cast into a pit, and then down in Egypt. Eventually to jail in Egypt, the lowest of the low. Cain’s parents were cast out of the Garden and then Cain was went out from the land where the Lord was present⁹⁴³.

⁹⁴¹ Gen 33:17-26

⁹⁴² Deuteronomy 28

⁹⁴³ Gen 4:16

Joseph is sold to descendants of their great uncle.

Take a moment here to consider this account in context;

Abraham had abused an Egyptian and then sent her out into the dessert with very little, here one of Abraham's line is exiled into Egypt with nothing.

Be not deceived; God is not mocked: for whatsoever a man soweth, that he also reap⁹⁴⁴.

Sometimes we look at others who sin and think why they get away with it, but God's timing is not ours.

We also have two accounts here of human trafficking, sadly this horrendous practice is still occurring today. These accounts tell us of the human condition, the result of sin entering the world and why we need the Holy Spirit to transform us into back into the Image of God⁹⁴⁵, the condition that humanity was in when God created Adam and Eve.

The brothers striped Joseph threw him in to a pit and then ate bread. This reminds me of creation, when Adam and Eve ate the fruit and realised that they were naked. And brought death into the world – the pit being a symbol of death⁹⁴⁶.

But it should also point us to Jesus who reversed the curse. He broke the bread and ate with His disciples, he was then stripped of His robes and killed⁹⁴⁷.

I was curious as to why the difference in the pieces of silver 20 vrs. 30. I found that 20 pcs of silver in Joseph's day was equal to 30 pcs 2200 years later, 50% inflation; makes God's type perfect!!

29 ¶ And Reuben returned unto the pit; and, behold, Joseph was not in the pit; and he rent his clothes.

30 And he returned unto his brethren, and said, The child is not; and I, whither shall I go?

31 And they took Joseph's coat, and killed a kid of the goats, and dipped the coat in the blood;

32 And they sent the coat of many colours, and they brought it to their father; and said, This have we found: know now whether it be thy son's coat or no.

33 And he knew it, and said, It is my son's coat; an evil beast hath devoured him; Joseph is without doubt rent in pieces.

34 And Jacob rent his clothes, and put sackcloth upon his loins, and mourned for his son many days.

35 And all his sons and all his daughters rose up to comfort him; but he refused to be comforted; and he said, For I will go down into the grave unto my son mourning. Thus his father wept for him.

36 And the Midianites sold him into Egypt unto Potiphar, an officer of Pharaoh's, and captain of the guard.

Jacob had dressed up in Essau's clothes to deceive his father⁹⁴⁸ and here he is deceived by his sons and a coat.

⁹⁴⁴ Gal 6:7

⁹⁴⁵ Gen 1:26-27, 5:1-2, 9:6; 1Cor 11:7; James 3:9

⁹⁴⁶ Verse 35; Job 33:22; Isa 14:15; Psalm 30:9, 143:7Eze 28:8; 32:18, 29

⁹⁴⁷ Rom 10:7

⁹⁴⁸ Genesis 27:15-24

Jacob's description of going down to the pit is linked to exile from the land, exile from the garden and here going down to Egypt. Joseph who is prophetic for Christ, has "died" and his loved ones will die because he is "dead" but in the end alive as Joseph lives.

CHAPTER 38

1 And it came to pass at that time, that Judah went down from his brethren, and turned in to a certain Adullamite, whose name was Hirah.

2 And Judah saw there a daughter of a certain Canaanite, whose name was Shuah; and he took her, and went in unto her.

3 And she conceived, and bare a son; and he called his name Er.

4 And she conceived again, and bare a son; and she called his name Onan.

5 And she yet again conceived, and bare a son; and called his name Shelah: and he was at Chezib, when she bare him.

We have a whole chapter on Judah here and since the scriptures are inspired by the Holy Spirit we must ask why and what is the Spirit trying to say to us.

Judah has just persuaded the brothers to sell Joseph⁹⁴⁹ and now he gets married. This section is a statement of Judah's heart, it is not filled with life but selfishness with no reference to Shuah's happiness. The scriptures here use the same language as they did for Eve, Eve, saw the fruit was good in her eyes and took the fruit⁹⁵⁰, Judah took Shuah. This, taking what is good in our eyes⁹⁵¹, is the opposite of God's plan for us⁹⁵².

Judah left his family and culture and to Hirah who did not follow God. Perhaps it was Hirah's influence that continued Judah's slide away from God⁹⁵³. We need Godly friends to encourage us to love and faith⁹⁵⁴. We earlier read about Lot, who also left the Godly influence of his uncle and lived in Sodom, while he was saved it was at great cost to his family. We will see a similar consequence here.

It is really sad seeing the number of teenagers who leave the church and I think part of the issue is that we do not teach the entire Gospel. We tend to focus on the nice parts, Health, Wealth and Happiness, while in reality Jesus told us we would have trouble⁹⁵⁵, be hated⁹⁵⁶ and potentially sickness⁹⁵⁷. Without the complete gospel, when people build their lives on the rock

⁹⁴⁹ Gen 37:26

⁹⁵⁰ Gen 3:6

⁹⁵¹ Gen 6:22-23; Luke 11:34; 1Jn 2:16; Pro 16:2, 25;

⁹⁵² We cannot serve our own desires and follow God Matt 6:24

⁹⁵³ 1Cor 15:33; Prov 13:20; 1Cor 5:11; Prov 2:12-19; Pro 14:7; Psalm 1:1-4; Mat 24:12; Rom 16:7; 2Cor 6:14-15

⁹⁵⁴ Heb 10:24-25; Rom 14:19; 1Thes 5:11

⁹⁵⁵ 1Pet 4:12-14; 2Tim 3:12; Matt 5:11

⁹⁵⁶ Matt 10:22; Matt 5:10-12; John 15:18-25; Luke 6:22; 1John 3:13

⁹⁵⁷ Gal 4:13; 2Cor 12:7-10

of Jesus, they are surprised when the storms come⁹⁵⁸, and their faith is weakened. We need to set our sites on eternity and proclaim the whole counsel of God⁹⁵⁹.

So can we get some hints as to what happened; Israel, or Jacob as he might be called in this instant, was grieving the loss of His favourite son and I suspect that he was either overly protective of his remaining sons, resulting in Judah leaving for freedom, or he abandoned them in his grief. In my understanding either response results in the type of actions that we see here in Judah.

6 And Judah took a wife for Er his firstborn, whose name was Tamar.

7 And Er, Judah's firstborn, was wicked in the sight of the LORD; and the LORD slew him.

8 And Judah said unto Onan, Go in unto thy brother's wife, and marry her, and raise up seed to thy brother.

9 And Onan knew that the seed should not be his; and it came to pass, when he went in unto his brother's wife, that he spilled it on the ground, lest that he should give seed to his brother.

10 And the thing which he did displeased the LORD: wherefore he slew him also.

11 Then said Judah to Tamar his daughter in law, Remain a widow at thy father's house, till Shelah my son be grown: for he said, Lest peradventure he die also, as his brethren did. And Tamar went and dwelt in her father's house.

Er was sufficiently sinful for God to kill him and Judah does what was correct in that culture, in fact the role of raising seed to your brother became part of the Law later⁹⁶⁰. In that culture it was important for each family to have an heir to look after the land, old parents, sisters and other family members.

Onan was hypocritical. He makes everyone think that he is doing the right thing but in secret he does the opposite. In some ways he is acting like Judah, taking Tamar for the pleasure, but not being prepared to give her an heir. I think that if we are honest, we all suffered from hypocrisy sometimes. It is hard to make our actions match our words. How often we say yes today but no tomorrow⁹⁶¹. Let us all strive to people of integrity.

God's view of this is clearly demonstrated, **God slew him**. While God's grace is abundant today, we should be mindful of how much our actions can hurt our Jesus our Lord and others.

12 ¶ And in process of time the daughter of Shuah Judah's wife died; and Judah was comforted, and went up unto his sheepshearers to Timnath, he and his friend Hirah the Adullamite.

13 And it was told Tamar, saying, Behold thy father in law goeth up to Timnath to shear his sheep.

14 And she put her widow's garments off from her, and covered her with a vail, and wrapped herself, and sat in an open place, which is by the way to Timnath; for she saw that Shelah was grown, and she was not given unto him to wife.

15 When Judah saw her, he thought her to be an harlot; because she had covered her face.

⁹⁵⁸ Matt 7:24-27

⁹⁵⁹ Acts 20:27

⁹⁶⁰ Deut 25:5-10; Mark 12:19; Ruth 4:5, (Ruth 1:11-13)

⁹⁶¹ Matt 5:37

16 And he turned unto her by the way, and said, Go to, I pray thee, let me come in unto thee; (for he knew not that she was his daughter in law.) And she said, What wilt thou give me, that thou mayest come in unto me?

17 And he said, I will send thee a kid from the flock. And she said, Wilt thou give me a pledge, till thou send it?

18 And he said, What pledge shall I give thee? And she said, Thy signet, and thy bracelets, and thy staff that is in thine hand. And he gave it her, and came in unto her, and she conceived by him.

19 And she arose, and went away, and laid by her vail from her, and put on the garments of her widowhood.

20 And Judah sent the kid by the hand of his friend the Adullamite, to receive his pledge from the woman's hand: but he found her not.

21 Then he asked the men of that place, saying, Where is the harlot, that was openly by the way side? And they said, There was no harlot in this place.

22 And he returned to Judah, and said, I cannot find her; and also the men of the place said, that there was no harlot in this place.

23 And Judah said, Let her take it to her, lest we be shamed: behold, I sent this kid, and thou hast not found her.

24 ¶ And it came to pass about three months after, that it was told Judah, saying, Tamar thy daughter in law hath played the harlot; and also, behold, she is with child by whoredom. And Judah said, Bring her forth, and let her be burnt.

25 When she was brought forth, she sent to her father in law, saying, By the man, whose these are, am I with child: and she said, Discern, I pray thee, whose are these, the signet, and bracelets, and staff.

26 And Judah acknowledged them, and said, She hath been more righteous than I; because that I gave her not to Shelah my son. And he knew her again no more.

27 ¶ And it came to pass in the time of her travail, that, behold, twins were in her womb.

28 And it came to pass, when she travailed, that the one put out his hand: and the midwife took and bound upon his hand a scarlet thread, saying, This came out first.

29 And it came to pass, as he drew back his hand, that, behold, his brother came out: and she said, How hast thou broken forth? this breach be upon thee: therefore his name was called Pharez.

30 And afterward came out his brother, that had the scarlet thread upon his hand: and his name was called Zarah.

So Judah has lost two son's while in relationship with Tamar, as is so often the case when we are not within God's will, Judah blames someone else. From the text we know that the sin is within Judah's family, but Judah does not want to risk Shelah and abandons Tamar to remain a widower⁹⁶².

What is worse, when he sees sin in Tamar, who he abandoned, wants her to be burnt.

Therefore you are inexcusable, O man, whoever you are who judge, for in whatever you judge another you condemn yourself; for you who judge practice the same things.⁹⁶³

We need to be people of Grace, As Jesus prayed, forgive us our sins as we forgive those who sin against us⁹⁶⁴.

⁹⁶² Gen 38:14

⁹⁶³ Rom 2:1

⁹⁶⁴ Matt 6:14-15; Luke 6:37; Mark 11:25; See also Eph 4:32; Col 3:13

Up to this point the account has been a terrible indictment of Judah's character, selfish, concerned about his own reputation⁹⁶⁵ and judgemental of others. It is interesting that the Jews of Jesus day made the claim that they were not born from fornication and yet many of them were descendants of this incident of fornication⁹⁶⁶. What of Tamar?

Tamar was widowed by the sins of Judah's sons and then, by deceit, achieved children from Judah. Fortunately, Tamar was wise and ensured that she had something to witness that she had not gone outside of the family.

Behold, I send you forth as sheep in the midst of wolves: be ye therefore wise as serpents, and harmless as doves.⁹⁶⁷

It is interesting to note that Tamar, Pharez and Zarah are all mentioned in Jesus' genealogy⁹⁶⁸, with Pharez being the lineage that Jesus chose. Pharez is also referenced as a blessed person in Ruth⁹⁶⁹. Tamar was one of only four women mentioned in Jesus Genealogy.

Tamar is an example to us, that God does not want us to just sit back and expect God's blessing, we are to go out and labour in the world, subduing it to the will of God⁹⁷⁰.

This incident may be the initiator for Judah's transformation⁹⁷¹ as Judah **She hath been more righteous than I**⁹⁷². Judah will later be referenced that the Lord sprang out of Judah⁹⁷³ as an example of God's grace and ability to see the potential in us rather than looking at our past sins.

⁹⁶⁵ Gen 38:23

⁹⁶⁶ John 8:41

⁹⁶⁷ Matt 10:16

⁹⁶⁸ Matt 1:3; Ruth 4:17-22

⁹⁶⁹ Ruth 4:12

⁹⁷⁰ Gen 1:26, 28, 2:15

⁹⁷¹ Gen 49:8; Gen 43:3; Gen 44:16-34

⁹⁷² Gen 38:26

⁹⁷³ Heb 7:14

CHAPTER 39

1 And Joseph was brought down to Egypt; and Potiphar, an officer of Pharaoh, captain of the guard, an Egyptian, bought him of the hands of the Ishmeelites, which had brought him down thither.

2 And the LORD was with Joseph, and he was a prosperous man; and he was in the house of his master the Egyptian.

3 And his master saw that the LORD was with him, and that the LORD made all that he did to prosper in his hand.

4 And Joseph found grace in his sight, and he served him: and he made him overseer over his house, and all that he had he put into his hand.

5 And it came to pass from the time that he had made him overseer in his house, and over all that he had, that the LORD blessed the Egyptian's house for Joseph's sake; and the blessing of the LORD was upon all that he had in the house, and in the field.

6 And he left all that he had in Joseph's hand; and he knew not ought he had, save the bread which he did eat. And Joseph was a goodly person, and well favoured.

Potiphar⁹⁷⁴, who's name means belonging to the sun or devoted to the son noticed that the Lord was with Joseph. This means that Joseph was clearly openly displaying his love of God, despite the fact that Potiphar was from a son worshiping background.

The Hebrew word officer meant eunuch⁹⁷⁵ which later became a title because it was common practice to make the highest offices in the royal courts eunuchs⁹⁷⁶, so it is not clear if he was a eunuch or not. It would appear that he was the leader of the royal guard, a big deal in those days and probably means that he was a hard man.

Joseph who had been taken to a different culture as a slave which would have made it hard to succeed. I have worked in different countries and as an outsider you have to work harder to be recognised and as a slave even more so. Despite Joseph's right to inherit some of his father's significant inheritance, he has put aside resentment and worked hard. It reminds me of Jesus' parable where the one who has two talents works and makes two more and the one that had 10 talents makes 10 more, while the one with none buries the talent and is thrown out⁹⁷⁷. Joseph has lost everything that was due to him and now started again with nothing, so he must have gone above and beyond with a cheerful disposition to demonstrate God's blessing.

Since Potiphar was an officer of Pharaoh, Joseph would have seen and been able to learn some of the workings of the government, an understanding that he would need later.

We also need to note here the time scales, it seems that Joseph served Potiphar for about 11 years⁹⁷⁸, which is a long time to be in a dead-end job. I admire Joseph's loyalty to God's

⁹⁷⁴ Strong's H6318

⁹⁷⁵ Strong's H5631

⁹⁷⁶ <http://www.enduringword.com/commentaries/0139.htm>

⁹⁷⁷ Matt 25:14-30

⁹⁷⁸ Joseph was 17 when his brothers sold him Gen 37:2 and was 30 when he stood before Pharaoh Gen 41:46 and he was in prison at least 2 years Gen 41:1.

plan. Joseph clearly trusted God to guide him to things better than material wealth and believed in a loving God, despite his circumstances. Sadly, I cannot be counted with Joseph in this area.

I often use the example of a sailing boat as a type of our lives. If the boat is us and the Holy Spirit is at the rudder, nothing positive happens unless we put the effort in to progress our spiritual lives, as the rudder is useless unless the boat is moving. When we do start to move, in any direction, the Holy Spirit can guide and steer us to good winds. If we sit back passively or focus on ourselves and polish the boat so we look good, the sails flap about doing damage. We may look good for a short while, but we get nowhere.

7 ¶ And it came to pass after these things, that his master's wife cast her eyes upon Joseph; and she said, Lie with me.

8 But he refused, and said unto his master's wife, Behold, my master wotteth not what is with me in the house, and he hath committed all that he hath to my hand;

9 There is none greater in this house than I; neither hath he kept back any thing from me but thee, because thou art his wife: how then can I do this great wickedness, and sin against God?

10 And it came to pass, as she spake to Joseph day by day, that he hearkened not unto her, to lie by her, or to be with her.

11 And it came to pass about this time, that Joseph went into the house to do his business; and there was none of the men of the house there within.

12 And she caught him by his garment, saying, Lie with me: and he left his garment in her hand, and fled, and got him out.

13 And it came to pass, when she saw that he had left his garment in her hand, and was fled forth,

14 That she called unto the men of her house, and spake unto them, saying, See, he hath brought in an Hebrew unto us to mock us; he came in unto me to lie with me, and I cried with a loud voice:

15 And it came to pass, when he heard that I lifted up my voice and cried, that he left his garment with me, and fled, and got him out.

16 And she laid up his garment by her, until his lord came home.

17 And she spake unto him according to these words, saying, The Hebrew servant, which thou hast brought unto us, came in unto me to mock me:

18 And it came to pass, as I lifted up my voice and cried, that he left his garment with me, and fled out.

19 And it came to pass, when his master heard the words of his wife, which she spake unto him, saying, After this manner did thy servant to me; that his wrath was kindled.

20 And Joseph's master took him, and put him into the prison, a place where the king's prisoners were bound: and he was there in the prison.

Potipher's wife may have been Zuleika – from extra biblical sources.

Now then, my sons, listen to me; pay attention to what I say.

Do not let your heart turn to her (adulterous women) ways or stray into her paths.

Many are the victims she has brought down; her slain are a mighty throng.

Her house is a highway to the grave, leading down to the chambers of death.⁹⁷⁹

⁹⁷⁹ Prov 7:24-27

Joseph calls what Potiphar's wife wants sin, it could have been easy for him as a slave to justify that he was only doing what the leadership wanted, but he called it by its real name, sin.

But there is no temptation that has overtaken us except what is common among men⁹⁸⁰

Joseph has been a servant for around 10 years (he was in Egypt about 13 years before he met Pharaoh and was in jail 2 years after the butler was released.) he has become the head servant of the house and Potiphar's wife lusts after him, she is in the position of Eve, seeing what is good in her eyes and trying to take⁹⁸¹. Physical desire is a passion that has the potential for great harm and Joseph does the right thing, he protects himself. It would seem from this passage that he avoids Potiphar's wife unless there are others around. Wisdom is putting in barriers to protect ourselves. In modern terms that might be a NETNANNY or simply as Joseph does, make sure that you are never alone with someone of the opposite gender. These may seem like quaint things to do, unnecessary things but they have protected many people when the temptation is strong.

Sin often begins with the eyes – He is handsome⁹⁸² and she desires. The she catches him in an opportune moment and Joseph does what we are told to do, he flees⁹⁸³. How many people have suffered because they lingered close to sin.

Potiphar's wife sees that she will never get Joseph and she falsely accuses Joseph. How easy it is for sinful love to turn to sinful hate⁹⁸⁴. How often bitterness and frustration drive people to increase their sin. Joseph is thrown in prison, which on the surface makes it appear that Potiphar believed his wife.

There is another possibility that Joseph is a scape goat and an attempt by Potiphar to safe face. Potiphar has been told a story by his wife of an attempt at unlawful sex. This story has already been told to the men of the house and so he must do something. Joseph was a slave so it would have been nothing for Potiphar to kill him. Potiphar would have even required a reason to kill him⁹⁸⁵. Putting Joseph in jail implies that while Potiphar needed to do something, knowing Joseph was innocent, Potiphar still used Joseph as a scape goat and put him in jail, but spared his life.

When accused it appears that Joseph is silent, as a slave he would have no rights anyway but this also fits the type, even as Jesus was silent before his accusers.⁹⁸⁶

Yet again Joseph has had his coat torn from him⁹⁸⁷ and yet again he is suffering for the sins of others, both Potiphar's wife and Potiphar for jailing an innocent person. So much for the prosperity doctrine, Josephs response was just how we should respond with Joseph saying, how can I do this great wickedness against God. Now he is an ex-servant in jail, the lowest of

⁹⁸⁰ 1 Corinthians 10:13

⁹⁸¹ Gen 3:6

⁹⁸² David (1 Samuel 16:12) and Absalom (2 Samuel 14:25).

⁹⁸³ 1Cor 6:16-20; Tim 2:22

⁹⁸⁴ See also 2 Sam 13 Amnon and Tamar

⁹⁸⁵ The chief baker only offended Pharaoh Gen 40:1 for him to get the death penalty Gen 40:22

⁹⁸⁶ Matt 27:13-14; Isa 53:7

⁹⁸⁷ Gen 37:23

the low, and God has allowed the sins of others to send Joseph to this “pit”. He has no rights, no opportunities, and the appearance of no future. Paul was similarly imprisoned⁹⁸⁸.

This is where character is demonstrated.

21 ¶ But the LORD was with Joseph, and shewed him mercy, and gave him favour in the sight of the keeper of the prison.

22 And the keeper of the prison committed to Joseph's hand all the prisoners that were in the prison; and whatsoever they did there, he was the doer of it.

23 The keeper of the prison looked not to any thing that was under his hand; because the LORD was with him, and that which he did, the LORD made it to prosper.

Now think for a moment about how you would feel about God’s blessings, Joseph has gone from the favoured son to a servant and now a prisoner. I do not really know, but I suspect that many prisoners died in jail, human rights were not even considered back then. The food was probably mouldy bread and stale water that others did not want. Sanitation would be at a minimum and there was no legal recourse.

What do we read, **but the Lord was with Joseph**, really??? If you had been sold as a slave because your brothers were jealous, then done everything right honouring your master only to be falsely accused and jailed with no hope of release would you have said, God is with me? To everyone else I think that Tui would have an advert, Yea Right. But this love of God was evident to others, just as Laban was blessed because of Jacob⁹⁸⁹, Potiphar was blessed because of Joseph⁹⁹⁰ and now the Jailer is blessed because of Joseph⁹⁹¹. Let us remain faithful so that others can also be blessed.

We all need to ask ourselves **“Is this the God we want to serve?”** This God that we serve, got most of the disciples killed in a painful way and thousands have been murdered or fed to the lions since. We are promised trouble⁹⁹² and when it comes can we say, God is with us.

Beloved, think it not strange concerning the fiery trial which is to try you, as though some strange thing happened unto you: But rejoice, inasmuch as ye are partakers of Christ's sufferings; that, when his glory shall be revealed, ye may be glad also with exceeding joy⁹⁹³

Joseph is a type of Christ. Jesus took the form of a servant⁹⁹⁴ and was obedient even in suffering for our sins, yet he too cried out to His Father, not my will but yours⁹⁹⁵.

How often have we heard the prosperity doctrine, if you are good you will be rich and if you are poor then you must be doing something wrong. I have wondered sometimes when everything seems to go wrong am I in Gods will or not. Here we know God was with

⁹⁸⁸ Acts 16:16-40; Acts 24; Phil 1:12-14

⁹⁸⁹ Gen 30:27

⁹⁹⁰ Gen 39:5

⁹⁹¹ Gen 39:23

⁹⁹² 1Pet 4:12-14; 2Tim 3:12; Matt 5:11

⁹⁹³ 1Pet 4:12-13

⁹⁹⁴ Philippians 2:7

⁹⁹⁵ Luke 22:42

Joseph⁹⁹⁶ yet he has lost everything. Joseph remains faithful even in the middle of his pain and terrible circumstances and he find favour in the jailor.

Seest thou a man diligent in his business? he shall stand before kings; he shall not stand before mean men.⁹⁹⁷

CHAPTER 40

1 And it came to pass after these things, that the butler of the king of Egypt and his baker had offended their lord the king of Egypt.

2 And Pharaoh was wroth against two of his officers, against the chief of the butlers, and against the chief of the bakers.

3 And he put them in ward in the house of the captain of the guard, into the prison, the place where Joseph was bound.

4 And the captain of the guard charged Joseph with them, and he served them: and they continued a season in ward.

The captain of drink and the captain of bake offended Pharaoh and so he puts them in prison. Notice there is no serious charge. Are we not fortunate to serve an every loving and gracious God, who's promises endure.

The grass withers, the flower fades, but the word of our God will stand forever.
⁹⁹⁸ **And this word is the good news that was preached to you.**⁹⁹⁹

5 ¶ And they dreamed a dream both of them, each man his dream in one night, each man according to the interpretation of his dream, the butler and the baker of the king of Egypt, which were bound in the prison.

6 And Joseph came in unto them in the morning, and looked upon them, and, behold, they were sad.

7 And he asked Pharaoh's officers that were with him in the ward of his lord's house, saying, Wherefore look ye so sadly to day?

8 And they said unto him, We have dreamed a dream, and there is no interpreter of it. And Joseph said unto them, Do not interpretations belong to God? tell me them, I pray you.

9 And the chief butler told his dream to Joseph, and said to him, In my dream, behold, a vine was before me;

10 And in the vine were three branches: and it was as though it budded, and her blossoms shot forth; and the clusters thereof brought forth ripe grapes:

11 And Pharaoh's cup was in my hand: and I took the grapes, and pressed them into Pharaoh's cup, and I gave the cup into Pharaoh's hand.

12 And Joseph said unto him, This is the interpretation of it: The three branches are three days:

13 Yet within three days shall Pharaoh lift up thine head, and restore thee unto thy place: and thou shalt deliver Pharaoh's cup into his hand, after the former manner when thou wast his butler.

⁹⁹⁶ Psalm 101:6

⁹⁹⁷ Pro 22:29

⁹⁹⁸ Isa 40:8 see also Matt 24:35; Matt 5:18

⁹⁹⁹ 1Pet 1:25 see also Phil 1:6; Psa 119

14 But think on me when it shall be well with thee, and shew kindness, I pray thee, unto me, and make mention of me unto Pharaoh, and bring me out of this house:
 15 For indeed I was stolen away out of the land of the Hebrews: and here also have I done nothing that they should put me into the dungeon.
 16 When the chief baker saw that the interpretation was good, he said unto Joseph, I also was in my dream, and, behold, I had three white baskets on my head:
 17 And in the uppermost basket there was of all manner of bakemeats for Pharaoh; and the birds did eat them out of the basket upon my head.
 18 And Joseph answered and said, This is the interpretation thereof: The three baskets are three days:
 19 Yet within three days shall Pharaoh lift up thy head from off thee, and shall hang thee on a tree; and the birds shall eat thy flesh from off thee.
 20 ¶ And it came to pass the third day, which was Pharaoh's birthday, that he made a feast unto all his servants: and he lifted up the head of the chief butler and of the chief baker among his servants.
 21 And he restored the chief butler unto his butlership again; and he gave the cup into Pharaoh's hand:
 22 But he hanged the chief baker: as Joseph had interpreted to them.
 23 Yet did not the chief butler remember Joseph, but forgot him.

Dungeon or pit¹⁰⁰⁰

For Joseph's case to be pleaded before Pharaoh he needs to meet the butler and notice what gives Joseph that opportunity. Firstly, Joseph was working¹⁰⁰¹, and he cared for people. Even though the Butler and Baker were prisoners under Joseph, Joseph is described as serving¹⁰⁰². This is the Christian way of leadership demonstrated by Christ himself rather than the western, "*I'm the Boss do as you are told.*" Joseph also notices that they are sad and seeks to help¹⁰⁰³ telling them of God¹⁰⁰⁴. For the lost there is no comforter¹⁰⁰⁵, but we have the Holy Spirit¹⁰⁰⁶ and this demonstration of the Grace of God, so that others will also follow Jesus, is what we are called to.

Praise be to the God and Father of our Lord Jesus Christ, the Father of compassion and the God of all comfort, who comforts us in all our troubles, so that we can comfort those in any trouble with the comfort we ourselves receive from God.¹⁰⁰⁷

To be Christ-like and receive God's blessing we need to work, be compassionate and caring.

¹⁰⁰⁰ Strong's H953

¹⁰⁰¹ Gen 39:22

¹⁰⁰² Gen 40:4

¹⁰⁰³ Gen 40:6-7

¹⁰⁰⁴ Gen 40:8 see also Isa 46:10

¹⁰⁰⁵ Ecc 4:1

¹⁰⁰⁶ John 16:7; John 14:18; Psa 94:19; Matt 5:4

¹⁰⁰⁷ 2Cor 1:3-4

We have two dreams here, the Butler¹⁰⁰⁸ and Baker, Joseph had two dreams too¹⁰⁰⁹ and later Pharaoh will also have two dreams. The doubling represents the certainty that it will happen¹⁰¹⁰.

In the last days, God says, I will pour out my Spirit on all people; your sons and daughters will prophesy, your young men will see visions, your old men will dream dreams.¹⁰¹¹

But the dreams are at God timing, Joseph could not foretell how he could get out of the pit. Joseph also doesn't blame the people who wronged him, he just appeals to be released¹⁰¹².

We have another similarity to Jesus in that the Baker had his head removed due to Pharaoh's birthday¹⁰¹³ just as John the Baptist had his head removed from Herod's Birthday¹⁰¹⁴. The three days that they were in the pit¹⁰¹⁵ also mimic the three days Jesus was in the grave¹⁰¹⁶. There were two prisoners condemned with Joseph as there were two thieves condemned with Jesus¹⁰¹⁷. Joseph asked the butler to remember him¹⁰¹⁸, as the thief asked Jesus to remember him¹⁰¹⁹.

After the butler is released, he acts just like we do¹⁰²⁰, when things are good we focus on ourselves and forget about God.

¹⁰⁰⁸ Meaning, Captain of Drink

¹⁰⁰⁹ Gen 37:5-9

¹⁰¹⁰ Gen 41:32

¹⁰¹¹ Acts 2:17; Joel 2:28

¹⁰¹² Gen 40:15

¹⁰¹³ Gen 40:19-20. Note his head was removed and then the body was hung up as a warning to others

¹⁰¹⁴ Mark 6:21, 27; Matt 14:10; Luke 9:9

¹⁰¹⁵ Gen 40:13,19

¹⁰¹⁶ Mark 9:31; ; Luke 9:22; 1Cor 15:4; Matt 12:38-40; Jonah 1:17; John 2:19-21

¹⁰¹⁷ Luke 23:33; Matt 27:38

¹⁰¹⁸ Gen 40:14

¹⁰¹⁹ Luke 23:42

¹⁰²⁰ Amos 6:6

CHAPTER 41

1 And it came to pass at the end of two full years, that Pharaoh dreamed: and, behold, he stood by the river.

2 And, behold, there came up out of the river seven well favoured kine and fatfleshed; and they fed in a meadow.

3 And, behold, seven other kine came up after them out of the river, ill favoured and leanfleshed; and stood by the other kine upon the brink of the river.

4 And the ill favoured and leanfleshed kine did eat up the seven well favoured and fat kine. So Pharaoh awoke.

5 And he slept and dreamed the second time: and, behold, seven ears of corn came up upon one stalk, rank and good.

6 And, behold, seven thin ears and blasted with the east wind sprung up after them.

7 And the seven thin ears devoured the seven rank and full ears. And Pharaoh awoke, and, behold, it was a dream.

8 And it came to pass in the morning that his spirit was troubled; and he sent and called for all the magicians of Egypt, and all the wise men thereof: and Pharaoh told them his dream; but there was none that could interpret them unto Pharaoh.

9 ¶ Then spake the chief butler unto Pharaoh, saying, I do remember my faults this day:

10 Pharaoh was wroth with his servants, and put me in ward in the captain of the guard's house, both me and the chief baker:

11 And we dreamed a dream in one night, I and he; we dreamed each man according to the interpretation of his dream.

12 And there was there with us a young man, an Hebrew, servant to the captain of the guard; and we told him, and he interpreted to us our dreams; to each man according to his dream he did interpret.

13 And it came to pass, as he interpreted to us, so it was; me he restored unto mine office, and him he hanged.

The Butler remembered his faults: From the context it seems that he had agreed to plead Joseph's case before Pharaoh.

It must have been normal for the magicians to interpret dreams as Pharaoh summons these magicians, probably similar to today's diet guru's who can "cure anything." So see how God works, at least two years before God had a butler and a baker thrown in jail and then he gave them dreams so that Joseph would be called before Pharaoh. The God we serve is not only amazing in His understanding of events years and years apart, but He does guide and cause events for our good. However, he does not work in our time frame, we are a society that wants instant answers to our prayers and quick solutions. God determines the times and seasons¹⁰²¹.

14 ¶ Then Pharaoh sent and called Joseph, and they brought him hastily out of the dungeon: and he shaved himself, and changed his raiment, and came in unto Pharaoh.

¹⁰²¹ Daniel 2:21; Acts 17:26-27

15 And Pharaoh said unto Joseph, I have dreamed a dream, and there is none that can interpret it: and I have heard say of thee, that thou canst understand a dream to interpret it.

16 And Joseph answered Pharaoh, saying, It is not in me: God shall give Pharaoh an answer of peace.

17 And Pharaoh said unto Joseph, In my dream, behold, I stood upon the bank of the river:

18 And, behold, there came up out of the river seven kine, fatfleshed and well favoured; and they fed in a meadow:

19 And, behold, seven other kine came up after them, poor and very ill favoured and leanfleshed, such as I never saw in all the land of Egypt for badness:

20 And the lean and the ill favoured kine did eat up the first seven fat kine:

21 And when they had eaten them up, it could not be known that they had eaten them; but they were still ill favoured, as at the beginning. So I awoke.

22 And I saw in my dream, and, behold, seven ears came up in one stalk, full and good:

23 And, behold, seven ears, withered, thin, and blasted with the east wind, sprung up after them:

24 And the thin ears devoured the seven good ears: and I told this unto the magicians; but there was none that could declare it to me.

Joseph honours Pharaoh by cleaning himself up, it seems that the shaving on the beard may also have demonstrated humility as Pharaoh had a beard as a symbol of power¹⁰²². Joseph “then” puts God first, I can do nothing, but God can. Change of clothes can symbolise a change of destiny.

Note that Joseph does not ask for freedom or anything else he just tells Pharaoh that God will reveal the dream. I find it amazing that Joseph does not say God **could** reveal the dream. Joseph has not even heard the dream but is so confident that God will reveal the dream to him that states clearly that God will reveal it.

One of the issues that the Egyptian magicians was that the cow was considered sacred, and their god Hathor was often depicted as a cow, symbolising her maternal (as mother of the earthly representatives – Pharaoh) and celestial aspects¹⁰²³. They also worship gods of corn, Besa, Neptra and Tepu-yn¹⁰²⁴. As such the dreams and their interpretation challenged the notion that these gods had power.

In the interpretations the gods are so hungry they eat their own, while Joseph tells Pharaoh how God can enable humans to overcome the famine.

There is another likeness of Joseph to Jesus that starts in this section;

Pharaoh sent and called for Joseph¹⁰²⁵, Jesus was called to the marriage¹⁰²⁶.

¹⁰²² <https://www.denverartmuseum.org/en/edu/lesson/creating-first-hand-detailed-description#:~:text=In%20ancient%20Egypt%2C%20the%20beard,status%20as%20a%20living%20god.>

¹⁰²³ <https://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/Hathor>

¹⁰²⁴ <https://www.sacred-texts.com/egy/ael/ael16.htm>

¹⁰²⁵ Gen 41:14

¹⁰²⁶ John 2:2

And when all the land of Egypt was famished, the people cried to Pharaoh for bread¹⁰²⁷: The mother of Jesus saith unto Him, **They have no wine.**¹⁰²⁸ Pharaoh said unto all the Egyptians, Go unto Joseph, What he says to you, do.¹⁰²⁹ Jesus' mother saith unto the servants, "Whatsoever he saith unto you, do it."¹⁰³⁰

25 And Joseph said unto Pharaoh, The dream of Pharaoh is one: God hath shewed Pharaoh what he is about to do.

26 The seven good kine are seven years; and the seven good ears are seven years: the dream is one.

27 And the seven thin and ill favoured kine that came up after them are seven years; and the seven empty ears blasted with the east wind shall be seven years of famine.

28 This is the thing which I have spoken unto Pharaoh: What God is about to do he sheweth unto Pharaoh.

29 Behold, there come seven years of great plenty throughout all the land of Egypt:

30 And there shall arise after them seven years of famine; and all the plenty shall be forgotten in the land of Egypt; and the famine shall consume the land;

31 And the plenty shall not be known in the land by reason of that famine following; for it shall be very grievous.

32 And for that the dream was doubled unto Pharaoh twice; it is because the thing is established by God, and God will shortly bring it to pass.

As we said before the Butler¹⁰³¹, the Baker, Joseph and Pharaoh had two dreams¹⁰³² and the doubling means it is assured.

Thus God, determining to show more abundantly to the heirs of promise the immutability of His counsel, confirmed it by an oath, that by two immutable things, in which it is impossible for God to lie, we might have strong consolation, who have fled for refuge to lay hold of the hope set before us¹⁰³³.

God made two great lights, one to rule the day and the other to rule the night¹⁰³⁴, he gave us two emblems of bread and wine for remembrance of Jesus¹⁰³⁵. So we can be certain of God's power over creation and His love for us.

Notice that there is no mention of rain as Egypt relied on the flooding of the Nile. It was a river of life like the rivers in Eden. The Spirit, through Joseph brings life, which Pharaoh will recognise. We should also bring the Spirit like a river, to bring life to those around us. In Egypt if the Nile's water level dropped there would be drought.

Studies in 'ice cores' found in Mount Kilimanjaro in Tanzania - the mountain which supplies the Nile with its water - have revealed that a drought did take place around 3600 years ago - around the time the Bible sets Joseph's story.¹⁰³⁶

¹⁰²⁷ Gen 41:55

¹⁰²⁸ John 2:3

¹⁰²⁹ Gen 41:55

¹⁰³⁰ John 2:5

¹⁰³¹ Meaning, Captain of Drink

¹⁰³² Gen 37:5-9

¹⁰³³ Heb 6:17-18

¹⁰³⁴ Gen 1:16

¹⁰³⁵ 1Cor 11:24-25

¹⁰³⁶

<https://www.bbc.co.uk/religion/religions/judaism/history/joseph.shtml#:~:text=However%20some%20new%20scientific%20evidence,the%20Bible%20sets%20Joseph%27s%20story.>

33 Now therefore let Pharaoh look out a man discreet and wise, and set him over the land of Egypt.

34 Let Pharaoh do this, and let him appoint officers over the land, and take up the fifth part of the land of Egypt in the seven plenteous years.

35 And let them gather all the food of those good years that come, and lay up corn under the hand of Pharaoh, and let them keep food in the cities.

36 And that food shall be for store to the land against the seven years of famine, which shall be in the land of Egypt; that the land perish not through the famine.

Joseph could have stopped after interpreting the dream, but he seems to have the intention of trying to save Egypt. He tells Pharaoh what should happen without any mention of wanting a part in it. I suspect that he was just hoping to be set free to go home.

It is amazing how much can be accomplished when we don't try to get the credit.

37 ¶ And the thing was good in the eyes of Pharaoh, and in the eyes of all his servants.

38 And Pharaoh said unto his servants, Can we find such a one as this is, a man in whom the Spirit of God is?

39 And Pharaoh said unto Joseph, Forasmuch as God hath shewed thee all this, there is none so discreet and wise as thou art:

40 Thou shalt be over my house, and according unto thy word shall all my people be ruled: only in the throne will I be greater than thou.

41 And Pharaoh said unto Joseph, See, I have set thee over all the land of Egypt.

42 And Pharaoh took off his ring from his hand, and put it upon Joseph's hand, and arrayed him in vestures of fine linen, and put a gold chain about his neck;

43 And he made him to ride in the second chariot which he had; and they cried before him, Bow the knee: and he made him ruler over all the land of Egypt.

44 And Pharaoh said unto Joseph, I am Pharaoh, and without thee shall no man lift up his hand or foot in all the land of Egypt.

45 And Pharaoh called Joseph's name Zaphnath-paaneah; and he gave him to wife Asenath the daughter of Poti-pherah priest of On. And Joseph went out over all the land of Egypt.

Moreover he called for a famine upon the land: he brake the whole staff of bread.

He sent a man before them, even Joseph, who was sold for a servant:

Whose feet they hurt with fetters: he was laid in iron:

Until the time that his word came: the word of the Lord tried him.

The king sent and loosed him; even the ruler of the people, and let him go free.

He made him lord of his house, and ruler of all his substance:

To bind his princes at his pleasure; and teach his senators wisdom¹⁰³⁷.

Pharaoh recognized that the Spirit of God was in Joseph, do we allow God to shine through us so that others see Him, or do we just look like nice people? This phrase the Spirit of God, is only mentioned previously when the **Spirit of God moved over the face of the waters¹⁰³⁸**.

¹⁰³⁷ Psalm 105:16-22

¹⁰³⁸ Gen 1:2

Zaphnath-paaneah means ‘Revealer of secrets’ and in Egyptian it meant ‘Salvation’ or ‘Saviour of the world’¹⁰³⁹.

Consider here how trials, difficulties and humans had tried to take from Joseph, He was sold by his brothers for jealousy, imprisoned by Potiphar because of lies, forgotten by the butler and abandoned by his family, but God through his grace, mercy and wisdom uses this suffering to bring about positives for Joseph. We too need to trust that God will bring about our good, without trying to fix things in human ways.

The account is also the opposite of Adam and Eve, who were ruling but got Wisdom by human path (taking the fruit) and then got a promise. Joseph was given a promise (his dreams), got wisdom from the Spirit and then ruled. By doing things God’s way Joseph got to rule, while Adam and Eve, who did things the human way, got exiled.

Joseph is restored, to me it implies that the servants welcomed him. He was welcomed to the family, as opposed to being sold by his family. He gets fine vestures to replace the two coats ripped from him.

This account is similar to Daniel, who was thrown into a pit¹⁰⁴⁰ by the people he saved¹⁰⁴¹ but rose to rule a foreign land because of the Spirit of God¹⁰⁴². Another example is Esther and Mordecai, who suffered and were expected to die but then rose to lead.

All the above are pointing to Jesus so let us compare this account to Jesus. I know we have looked at some of these earlier.

Joseph was rejected,
Joseph “died”, certainly as far as his father knew, by his brothers sins.
Joseph spoke to the prisoners
Joseph was seen again but this time in power
Joseph was second only to the ruler
Joseph’s brethren bowed down to him
Joseph saved his brethren
Joseph’s brethren went to dwell with him.

Jesus was rejected by the people he came to save,
Jesus died for our sins
Jesus spoke to the imprisoned spirits¹⁰⁴³
Jesus was seen again but this time in power¹⁰⁴⁴
Jesus was second only to the ruler
Jesus’s brethren bowed down to him
Jesus saved his brethren
Jesus’s brethren went to dwell with him¹⁰⁴⁵.

¹⁰³⁹ Strong’s H6847: From Gesenius’ Hebrew-Chaldee Lexicon

¹⁰⁴⁰ Daniel 6:13-16

¹⁰⁴¹ Daniel 2:24

¹⁰⁴² Daniel 6:3

¹⁰⁴³ 1Pet 3:19-20; 4:6; Acts 2:27-31

¹⁰⁴⁴ Matt 24:30; Rev 19:19, 21

¹⁰⁴⁵ John 14:3

We can be welcomed into God's family, we can get Christ's Robes of Righteousness.

Better is a poor and a wise child than an old and foolish king, who will no more be admonished. For out of prison he cometh to reign; whereas also he that is born in his kingdom becometh poor¹⁰⁴⁶.

46 ¶ And Joseph was thirty years old when he stood before Pharaoh king of Egypt. And Joseph went out from the presence of Pharaoh, and went throughout all the land of Egypt.

47 And in the seven plentiful years the earth brought forth by handfuls.

48 And he gathered up all the food of the seven years, which were in the land of Egypt, and laid up the food in the cities: the food of the field, which was round about every city, laid he up in the same.

49 And Joseph gathered corn as the sand of the sea, very much, until he left numbering; for it was without number.

50 And unto Joseph were born two sons before the years of famine came, which Asenath the daughter of Poti-pherah priest of On bare unto him.

51 And Joseph called the name of the firstborn Manasseh: For God, said he, hath made me forget all my toil, and all my father's house.

52 And the name of the second called he Ephraim: For God hath caused me to be fruitful in the land of my affliction.

53 ¶ And the seven years of plentifulness, that was in the land of Egypt, were ended.

54 And the seven years of dearth began to come, according as Joseph had said: and the dearth was in all lands; but in all the land of Egypt there was bread.

55 And when all the land of Egypt was famished, the people cried to Pharaoh for bread: and Pharaoh said unto all the Egyptians, Go unto Joseph; what he saith to you, do.

56 And the famine was over all the face of the earth: And Joseph opened all the storehouses, and sold unto the Egyptians; and the famine waxed sore in the land of Egypt.

57 And all countries came into Egypt to Joseph for to buy corn; because that the famine was so sore in all lands.

Marrying a priest's daughter was an honour.

Manasseh means causing to forget¹⁰⁴⁷.

Ephraim means double fruit¹⁰⁴⁸.

On means Strength and was the name of a city bordering Goshen¹⁰⁴⁹.

Joseph may have been Imhotep – I have not checked¹⁰⁵⁰. I found this table which was an interesting link between archaeology and Biblical history, again I have taken this at face value and not done any checking.

¹⁰⁴⁶ Ecc 4:13-14

¹⁰⁴⁷ Strong's H4519

¹⁰⁴⁸ Strong's H669

¹⁰⁴⁹ Strong's H204

¹⁰⁵⁰ <https://josephandisraelinegypt.wordpress.com/tag/grain-silo/>

Joseph	Imhotep
Second in command under Pharoah	Second in command under Pharoah Djoser
Lived to be 110 years of age	Lived to be 110 years of age
Great architect and builder	Great architect and builder
Stored up corn during 7 yrs of plenty	Stored up corn during 7 yrs of plenty
Saw seven years of famine - fed people	Saw seven years of famine - fed people
Interpreter of dreams	Interpreter of dreams
Built pyramids & palaces	Built the Step Pyramid & palaces
Zaphnath-paaneah- Over physicians	Was a physician
Instituted a income tax of one fifth	Instituted a income tax of one fifth
Married into the Priesthood of On	Married into the Priesthood of On
Knowledge of astrology	Knowledge of astrology
Became an educated man	A poet and educated medical writer
Overseer of public works	Overseer of public works
Legendary history	Legendary history
Was one of twelve siblings	Was one of twelve siblings)
Source: Betty Matteson Rhodes	

CHAPTER 42

1 Now when Jacob saw that there was corn in Egypt, Jacob said unto his sons, Why do ye look one upon another?

2 And he said, Behold, I have heard that there is corn in Egypt: get you down thither, and buy for us from thence; that we may live, and not die.

3 ¶ And Joseph's ten brethren went down to buy corn in Egypt.

4 But Benjamin, Joseph's brother, Jacob sent not with his brethren; for he said, Lest peradventure mischief befall him.

5 And the sons of Israel came to buy corn among those that came: for the famine was in the land of Canaan.

6 And Joseph was the governor over the land, and he it was that sold to all the people of the land: and Joseph's brethren came, and bowed down themselves before him with their faces to the earth.

7 And Joseph saw his brethren, and he knew them, but made himself strange unto them, and spake roughly unto them; and he said unto them, Whence come ye? And they said, From the land of Canaan to buy food.

8 And Joseph knew his brethren, but they knew not him.

9 And Joseph remembered the dreams which he dreamed of them, and said unto them, Ye are spies; to see the nakedness of the land ye are come.

10 And they said unto him, Nay, my lord, but to buy food are thy servants come.

11 We are all one man's sons; we are true men, thy servants are no spies.

12 And he said unto them, Nay, but to see the nakedness of the land ye are come.

13 And they said, Thy servants are twelve brethren, the sons of one man in the land of Canaan; and, behold, the youngest is this day with our father, and one is not.

14 And Joseph said unto them, That is it that I spake unto you, saying, Ye are spies:

15 Hereby ye shall be proved: By the life of Pharaoh ye shall not go forth hence, except your youngest brother come hither.

16 Send one of you, and let him fetch your brother, and ye shall be kept in prison, that your words may be proved, whether there be any truth in you: or else by the life of Pharaoh surely ye are spies.

17 And he put them all together into ward three days.

18 And Joseph said unto them the third day, This do, and live; for I fear God:

19 If ye be true men, let one of your brethren be bound in the house of your prison: go ye, carry corn for the famine of your houses:

20 But bring your youngest brother unto me; so shall your words be verified, and ye shall not die. And they did so.

21 ¶ And they said one to another, We are verily guilty concerning our brother, in that we saw the anguish of his soul, when he besought us, and we would not hear; therefore is this distress come upon us.

22 And Reuben answered them, saying, Spake I not unto you, saying, Do not sin against the child; and ye would not hear? therefore, behold, also his blood is required.

Notice that the drought affected the righteous and the unrighteous. This is like the storm that hit the men who built their houses on the sand and rock¹⁰⁵¹. Storms and storm damage impact everyone, the rain falls on the righteous and unrighteous¹⁰⁵².

¹⁰⁵¹ Matt 7:24-27

¹⁰⁵² Matt 5:45

All four of the patriarchs, Abraham, Isaac, Jacob and Joseph have experienced drought. Abram went to Egypt to avoid the drought¹⁰⁵³, Isaac went to Abimelech¹⁰⁵⁴, Jacob stayed with his father-in-law Laban¹⁰⁵⁵ and now the drought in Egypt with Joseph, though Jacob is also suffering.

Joseph's brethren came, and bowed down themselves before him with their faces to the earth¹⁰⁵⁶, just as Joseph dreamed that they would¹⁰⁵⁷.

Consider how this is a likeness of Jesus;

The sons also of them that afflicted thee shall come bending unto thee; and all they that despised thee shall bow themselves down at the soles of thy feet; and they shall call thee; The city of the Lord, The Zion of the Holy One of Israel. Whereas thou has been forsaken and hated, so that no man went through thee, I will make thee an eternal excellency, a joy of many generations. Thou shalt also suck the milk of the Gentiles, and shalt suck the breast of kings: and thou shalt know that I the Lord am thy Saviour and thy Redeemer, the mighty One of Jacob.¹⁰⁵⁸

I do wonder why Joseph did not try and contact his family, with his position of power he could easily have sent a messenger to his father but perhaps knowing that his brothers hated him enough to kill him has made him cautious. He talks roughly to them as a ruler would rather than the gentle response of a brother.

Joseph is replaying what his brothers did to him, putting them in prison. But Joseph again proclaims who his trust is in, **live; for I fear God¹⁰⁵⁹**. Do we fear God enough to put aside bitterness, resentment and revenge? Was it Joseph's statement of his faith in God that caused the brothers to realise their sin? The brothers seem to have their eyes opened seeing the similarities and have realised that sin has consequences.

We need to remember that when we live a life in Christ, his light shines from us¹⁰⁶⁰ and some will glorify our father in heaven and others will see their sin and persecute you, just as they did to Jesus, for the same reason¹⁰⁶¹.

Here Joseph hears that Reuben stood up for him.

23 And they knew not that Joseph understood them; for he spake unto them by an interpreter.

24 And he turned himself about from them, and wept; and returned to them again, and communed with them, and took from them Simeon, and bound him before their eyes.

25 ¶ Then Joseph commanded to fill their sacks with corn, and to restore every man's money into his sack, and to give them provision for the way: and thus did he unto them.

26 And they laded their asses with the corn, and departed thence.

¹⁰⁵³ Gen 12:10

¹⁰⁵⁴ Gen 26:1

¹⁰⁵⁵ Gen 31:40

¹⁰⁵⁶ Gen 42:6

¹⁰⁵⁷ Gen 37:7-8

¹⁰⁵⁸ Isa 60:14-16

¹⁰⁵⁹ Gen 42:18

¹⁰⁶⁰ Matt 5:14-16, Dan12:4; 2Cor 4:6, 1Pet 2:9

¹⁰⁶¹ John 15:20

27 And as one of them opened his sack to give his ass provender in the inn, he espied his money; for, behold, it was in his sack's mouth.

28 And he said unto his brethren, My money is restored; and, lo, it is even in my sack: and their heart failed them, and they were afraid, saying one to another, What is this that God hath done unto us?

29 ¶ And they came unto Jacob their father unto the land of Canaan, and told him all that befell unto them; saying,

30 The man, who is the lord of the land, spake roughly to us, and took us for spies of the country.

31 And we said unto him, We are true men; we are no spies:

32 We be twelve brethren, sons of our father; one is not, and the youngest is this day with our father in the land of Canaan.

33 And the man, the lord of the country, said unto us, Hereby shall I know that ye are true men; leave one of your brethren here with me, and take food for the famine of your households, and be gone:

34 And bring your youngest brother unto me: then shall I know that ye are no spies, but that ye are true men: so will I deliver you your brother, and ye shall traffick in the land.

35 ¶ And it came to pass as they emptied their sacks, that, behold, every man's bundle of money was in his sack: and when both they and their father saw the bundles of money, they were afraid.

36 And Jacob their father said unto them, Me have ye bereaved of my children: Joseph is not, and Simeon is not, and ye will take Benjamin away: all these things are against me.

37 And Reuben spake unto his father, saying, Slay my two sons, if I bring him not to thee: deliver him into my hand, and I will bring him to thee again.

38 And he said, My son shall not go down with you; for his brother is dead, and he is left alone: if mischief befall him by the way in the which ye go, then shall ye bring down my gray hairs with sorrow to the grave.

Joseph has given his brothers an option, to do what he did to him, take the money and tell their father that Simeon died. This time the brothers are honest and present the money to their father.

Jacob is asked to “give up” his second son, just as Abraham was asked to give up Isaac¹⁰⁶². Note that he is called Jacob, the heel, and while Reuben offers to be guarantor for Benjamin, Jacob would rather leave Simeon in Jail, than risk Benjamin. Where is the trusting in God and belief in the promises that he has been given.

¹⁰⁶² second son after Ishmael

CHAPTER 43

1 And the famine was sore in the land.

2 And it came to pass, when they had eaten up the corn which they had brought out of Egypt, their father said unto them, Go again, buy us a little food.

3 And Judah spake unto him, saying, The man did solemnly protest unto us, saying, Ye shall not see my face, except your brother be with you.

4 If thou wilt send our brother with us, we will go down and buy thee food:

5 But if thou wilt not send him, we will not go down: for the man said unto us, Ye shall not see my face, except your brother be with you.

6 And Israel said, Wherefore dealt ye so ill with me, as to tell the man whether ye had yet a brother?

7 And they said, The man asked us straitly of our state, and of our kindred, saying, Is your father yet alive? have ye another brother? and we told him according to the tenor of these words: could we certainly know that he would say, Bring your brother down?

8 And Judah said unto Israel his father, Send the lad with me, and we will arise and go; that we may live, and not die, both we, and thou, and also our little ones.

9 I will be surety for him; of my hand shalt thou require him: if I bring him not unto thee, and set him before thee, then let me bear the blame for ever:

10 For except we had lingered, surely now we had returned this second time.

11 And their father Israel said unto them, If it must be so now, do this; take of the best fruits in the land in your vessels, and carry down the man a present, a little balm, and a little honey, spices, and myrrh, nuts, and almonds:

12 And take double money in your hand; and the money that was brought again in the mouth of your sacks, carry it again in your hand; peradventure it was an oversight:

13 Take also your brother, and arise, go again unto the man:

14 And God Almighty give you mercy before the man, that he may send away your other brother, and Benjamin. If I be bereaved of my children, I am bereaved.

15 And the men took that present, and they took double money in their hand, and Benjamin; and rose up, and went down to Egypt, and stood before Joseph.

Prophecy to the Jewish mind, is pattern, you might notice that here we again have a father being asked to offer up his beloved son like Abraham being asked to offer Isaac¹⁰⁶³. Here we get a bit more detail of the prophecy that these two accounts are portraying. The Father, Isaac in this case, is being asked to offer up his son so that all the brothers can be saved. To save the children the offered son must be present to see the rulers face. The prophecy that they are portraying is that God, our Father, will need to offer up His son Jesus, to save us. And for us to enter into God's presence as sinners, we need Jesus to be our advocate¹⁰⁶⁴.

The brothers seem to have realised that sin is not worth the consequence and are changed. Reuben offered Jacob the life of his two sons, Perhaps, he still felt guilty about not stopping his brothers from selling Joseph but the offer was not accepted. Perhaps Jacob does not want to take a life even if Benjamin does not come back, or perhaps it was too soon after they got the corn and were hoping the famine would end before having to go again.

Judah steps in, having had his heart changed and offers himself. If we are to find favour with God we cannot offer him a sacrifice, He wants us. It was Judah's idea to sell Joseph¹⁰⁶⁵,

¹⁰⁶³ Gen 22:1-2

¹⁰⁶⁴ 1John 2:1

¹⁰⁶⁵ Gen 37:26-27

however he has repented (turned his actions around) of betraying his brothers and here is offering to be surety for Benjamin. While Jacob is being forced to trust God, he can no longer negotiate or scheme for what he wants. Here we see his name Israel being used, he is again trusting God. Whether we trust God from necessity or faith, trusting is what we need to do.

Also, we cannot be saved remotely, Benjamin needed to go to Egypt to be saved, we need to Go to Christ to be saved. It does not matter if our parents, brothers and sisters are saved, while it might help us understand, we need to go to Christ individually to be saved.

16 And when Joseph saw Benjamin with them, he said to the ruler of his house, Bring these men home, and slay, and make ready; for these men shall dine with me at noon.

17 And the man did as Joseph bade; and the man brought the men into Joseph's house.

18 And the men were afraid, because they were brought into Joseph's house; and they said, Because of the money that was returned in our sacks at the first time are we brought in; that he may seek occasion against us, and fall upon us, and take us for bondmen, and our asses.

19 And they came near to the steward of Joseph's house, and they communed with him at the door of the house,

20 And said, O sir, we came indeed down at the first time to buy food:

21 And it came to pass, when we came to the inn, that we opened our sacks, and, behold, every man's money was in the mouth of his sack, our money in full weight: and we have brought it again in our hand.

22 And other money have we brought down in our hands to buy food: we cannot tell who put our money in our sacks.

23 And he said, Peace be to you, fear not: your God, and the God of your father, hath given you treasure in your sacks: I had your money. And he brought Simeon out unto them.

24 And the man brought the men into Joseph's house, and gave them water, and they washed their feet; and he gave their asses provender.

25 And they made ready the present against Joseph came at noon: for they heard that they should eat bread there.

How often we fear the worst and we worry ourselves into illness when we are to trust the Lord, He is our strong tower, Our fortress and he has plans to prosper us.

Josephs faith has changed the people who work with him, the steward says **Peace be to you, fear not: your God, and the God of your father, hath given you treasure in your sacks.**

If we are truly Christ like others will be influenced¹⁰⁶⁶.

26 ¶ And when Joseph came home, they brought him the present which was in their hand into the house, and bowed themselves to him to the earth.

27 And he asked them of their welfare, and said, Is your father well, the old man of whom ye spake? Is he yet alive?

28 And they answered, Thy servant our father is in good health, he is yet alive. And they bowed down their heads, and made obeisance.

¹⁰⁶⁶ Acts 11:19-26

29 And he lifted up his eyes, and saw his brother Benjamin, his mother's son, and said, Is this your younger brother, of whom ye spake unto me? And he said, God be gracious unto thee, my son.

30 And Joseph made haste; for his bowels did yearn upon his brother: and he sought where to weep; and he entered into his chamber, and wept there.

31 And he washed his face, and went out, and refrained himself, and said, Set on bread.

32 And they set on for him by himself, and for them by themselves, and for the Egyptians, which did eat with him, by themselves: because the Egyptians might not eat bread with the Hebrews; for that is an abomination unto the Egyptians.

33 And they sat before him, the firstborn according to his birthright, and the youngest according to his youth: and the men marvelled one at another.

34 And he took and sent messes unto them from before him: but Benjamin's mess was five times so much as any of their's. And they drank, and were merry with him.

Joseph had his brothers seated around the table according to age, from the eldest to the youngest. They were amazed, and who wouldn't be, how could the ruler of an ancient land know their ages when no one had told him.

Joseph goes further, he gives Benjamin 5 times as much food¹⁰⁶⁷ as he gives to the others. It is not clear why Joseph did this, but I suspect that he is setting up a test for his brothers by making them jealous of Benjamin, just as they were jealous of Joseph so many years before.

CHAPTER 44

1 And he commanded the steward of his house, saying, Fill the men's sacks with food, as much as they can carry, and put every man's money in his sack's mouth.

2 And put my cup, the silver cup, in the sack's mouth of the youngest, and his corn money. And he did according to the word that Joseph had spoken.

3 As soon as the morning was light, the men were sent away, they and their asses.

4 And when they were gone out of the city, and not yet far off, Joseph said unto his steward, Up, follow after the men; and when thou dost overtake them, say unto them, Wherefore have ye rewarded evil for good?

5 Is not this it in which my lord drinketh, and whereby indeed he divineth? ye have done evil in so doing.

6 ¶ And he overtook them, and he spake unto them these same words.

7 And they said unto him, Wherefore saith my lord these words? God forbid that thy servants should do according to this thing:

8 Behold, the money, which we found in our sacks' mouths, we brought again unto thee out of the land of Canaan: how then should we steal out of thy lord's house silver or gold?

9 With whomsoever of thy servants it be found, both let him die, and we also will be my lord's bondmen.

10 And he said, Now also let it be according unto your words: he with whom it is found shall be my servant; and ye shall be blameless.

11 Then they speedily took down every man his sack to the ground, and opened every man his sack.

¹⁰⁶⁷ v.34 "Mess" means "portion of food"

12 And he searched, and began at the eldest, and left at the youngest: and the cup was found in Benjamin's sack.

13 Then they rent their clothes, and laded every man his ass, and returned to the city.

Previously Joseph's brothers had sold him as they were jealous of the favouritism from their father. Joseph has setup a test, he gave Benjamin 5 times what he gave them and now he is giving them the opportunity to take their food and abandon Benjamin.

14 ¶ And Judah and his brethren came to Joseph's house; for he was yet there: and they fell before him on the ground.

15 And Joseph said unto them, What deed is this that ye have done? wot ye not that such a man as I can certainly divine?

16 And Judah said, What shall we say unto my lord? what shall we speak? or how shall we clear ourselves? God hath found out the iniquity of thy servants: behold, we are my lord's servants, both we, and he also with whom the cup is found.

17 And he said, God forbid that I should do so: but the man in whose hand the cup is found, he shall be my servant; and as for you, get you up in peace unto your father.

18 ¶ Then Judah came near unto him, and said, Oh my lord, let thy servant, I pray thee, speak a word in my lord's ears, and let not thine anger burn against thy servant: for thou art even as Pharaoh.

19 My lord asked his servants, saying, Have ye a father, or a brother?

20 And we said unto my lord, We have a father, an old man, and a child of his old age, a little one; and his brother is dead, and he alone is left of his mother, and his father loveth him.

21 And thou saidst unto thy servants, Bring him down unto me, that I may set mine eyes upon him.

22 And we said unto my lord, The lad cannot leave his father: for if he should leave his father, his father would die.

23 And thou saidst unto thy servants, Except your youngest brother come down with you, ye shall see my face no more.

24 And it came to pass when we came up unto thy servant my father, we told him the words of my lord.

25 And our father said, Go again, and buy us a little food.

26 And we said, We cannot go down: if our youngest brother be with us, then will we go down: for we may not see the man's face, except our youngest brother be with us.

27 And thy servant my father said unto us, Ye know that my wife bare me two sons:

28 And the one went out from me, and I said, Surely he is torn in pieces; and I saw him not since:

29 And if ye take this also from me, and mischief befall him, ye shall bring down my gray hairs with sorrow to the grave.

30 Now therefore when I come to thy servant my father, and the lad be not with us; seeing that his life is bound up in the lad's life;

31 It shall come to pass, when he seeth that the lad is not with us, that he will die: and thy servants shall bring down the gray hairs of thy servant our father with sorrow to the grave.

32 For thy servant became surety for the lad unto my father, saying, If I bring him not unto thee, then I shall bear the blame to my father for ever.

33 Now therefore, I pray thee, let thy servant abide instead of the lad a bondman to my lord; and let the lad go up with his brethren.

34 For how shall I go up to my father, and the lad be not with me? lest peradventure I see the evil that shall come on my father.

Joseph pretended that he had powers of divination that could tell him when people were trying to steal

Joseph has done to his brothers what they did to him, previously cast Simeon into a pit and gave them money. Then the brothers told their father the truth. This time Joseph made them jealous by giving Benjamin 5 times as much¹⁰⁶⁸ and again giving them their money back. They have the opportunity to do again what they did to Joseph, take the money and abandon their brother.

The snake (same Hebrew word as divining) cup provides testing to reveal the truth. Judah, who instigated selling Joseph years before¹⁰⁶⁹, has changed enough, not only to be willing to take Benjamin's place as a servant in Egypt, but also to accept the false charges saying **God hath found out the iniquity of thy servants**¹⁰⁷⁰.

They have changed from doing what is good in their eyes, short term pleasure, to putting the needs of their father ahead of their own desires. We too need to change from my desires, to Heavenly father how can we please you.

Here they are looking to the good of the family. I think that it is a lesson for us as part of the Body of Christ. If we want God's church to prosper, we need to put aside our selfish desires and look for the best for the Body.

CHAPTER 45

1 Then Joseph could not refrain himself before all them that stood by him; and he cried, Cause every man to go out from me. And there stood no man with him, while Joseph made himself known unto his brethren.

2 And he wept aloud: and the Egyptians and the house of Pharaoh heard.

3 And Joseph said unto his brethren, I am Joseph; doth my father yet live? And his brethren could not answer him; for they were troubled at his presence.

4 And Joseph said unto his brethren, Come near to me, I pray you. And they came near. And he said, I am Joseph your brother, whom ye sold into Egypt.

5 Now therefore be not grieved, nor angry with yourselves, that ye sold me hither: for God did send me before you to preserve life.

6 For these two years hath the famine been in the land: and yet there are five years, in the which there shall neither be sowing nor harvest.

7 And God sent me before you to preserve you a posterity in the earth, and to save your lives by a great deliverance.

8 So now it was not you that sent me hither, but God: and he hath made me a father to Pharaoh, and lord of all his house, and a ruler throughout all the land of Egypt.

¹⁰⁶⁸ Gen 43:34

¹⁰⁶⁹ Gen 37:26

¹⁰⁷⁰ Gen 44:16

Troubled in verse 3 mean terrified.

Joseph's response to his brothers is amazing, he saw the big picture and placed his hope in God. I think that there are two things that come from this in terms of our salvation.

1. Joseph forgives his brothers, he has seen the change from selfish to looking after their father and he tells them not to be angry with themselves. Think about it he suffered for 12 years as a slave and in prison, he is still separated from his father as governor for at least 8 years, I would be happy for them to feel a little guilty. God's grace is so much bigger than I can imagine. So you and I should not feel guilty, we just need to look to the future. That is the Holy Spirit working through Joseph. When we step aside from ruling our lives, God shines forth and people will glorify God.
2. It is also interesting to me that he saw the job that God had for him to do. I think that one of the reasons that the western church is in a poor shape is that too few people see that God has called us for good works¹⁰⁷¹. We have grabbed hold of the "Salvation is a free gift" but ignored the saved for good works.

We were created to work, when Adam and Eve were created they were told to look after the garden and the animals¹⁰⁷².

But Jesus answered them, "My Father has been working until now, and I have been working."¹⁰⁷³

Jesus also said to the churches, **"I know your works,"** and **"Do the first works."** **"As for your works, the last are more than the first."** **"... and keeps My works until the end."** **"For I have not found your works perfect before God."¹⁰⁷⁴** So works are an important part of being a Christian.

I have a trailer that was rescued from the rubbish dump – it was saved but, unless it works with me, giving me service, it will merely be left to rust. Saved from the rubbish dump in order to rust is not really saved. We too need to realise that the important thing is not that we were saved from sin, but that we were saved for a relationship and good works¹⁰⁷⁵. Often people who give up smoking start eating badly, or drinking. They may have been "saved" from smoking but unless they are saved for something, they will not really change only the focus of the addiction changes.

I think that too many people see church as a place to get friends and support, but not a place to give. The Bible is clear that we are a body, and a body does not work if only a small part works and the rest of the body does nothing. I have always enjoyed the saying, "those who give 50% are poor judges of distance." Perhaps this is why some think that you can be a Christian without fellowship. It is like suggesting a hand can survive without an arm.

9 Haste ye, and go up to my father, and say unto him, Thus saith thy son Joseph, God hath made me lord of all Egypt: come down unto me, tarry not:

10 And thou shalt dwell in the land of Goshen, and thou shalt be near unto me, thou, and thy children, and thy children's children, and thy flocks, and thy herds, and all that thou hast:

¹⁰⁷¹ Eph 2:10

¹⁰⁷² Gen 1:26,28

¹⁰⁷³ Jhn 5:17

¹⁰⁷⁴ Snippets from Rev 2 and 3: See also 1John 2:17 and Matt 7:21-23

¹⁰⁷⁵ Eph 2:10

11 And there will I nourish thee; for yet there are five years of famine; lest thou, and thy household, and all that thou hast, come to poverty.

12 And, behold, your eyes see, and the eyes of my brother Benjamin, that it is my mouth that speaketh unto you.

13 And ye shall tell my father of all my glory in Egypt, and of all that ye have seen; and ye shall haste and bring down my father hither.

14 And he fell upon his brother Benjamin's neck, and wept; and Benjamin wept upon his neck.

15 Moreover he kissed all his brethren, and wept upon them: and after that his brethren talked with him.

Goshen, starts and ends with the same Hebrew letters as Garden, the Hebrews are going to stay in a fruitful place like the garden of Eden.

The son (Joseph in this instance but prophetically Jesus) was betrayed by his brothers. The son went down to a foreign land, suffered, went to prison¹⁰⁷⁶ but rose to be ruler and then drew those who call him family to himself¹⁰⁷⁷. Together we/they will live in a garden prepared as paradise.

16 ¶ And the fame thereof was heard in Pharaoh's house, saying, Joseph's brethren are come: and it pleased Pharaoh well, and his servants.

17 And Pharaoh said unto Joseph, Say unto thy brethren, This do ye; lade your beasts, and go, get you unto the land of Canaan;

18 And take your father and your households, and come unto me: and I will give you the good of the land of Egypt, and ye shall eat the fat of the land.

19 Now thou art commanded, this do ye; take you wagons out of the land of Egypt for your little ones, and for your wives, and bring your father, and come.

20 Also regard not your stuff; for the good of all the land of Egypt is your's.

21 And the children of Israel did so: and Joseph gave them wagons, according to the commandment of Pharaoh, and gave them provision for the way.

22 To all of them he gave each man changes of raiment; but to Benjamin he gave three hundred pieces of silver, and five changes of raiment.

23 And to his father he sent after this manner; ten asses laden with the good things of Egypt, and ten she asses laden with corn and bread and meat for his father by the way.

24 So he sent his brethren away, and they departed: and he said unto them, See that ye fall not out by the way.

25 ¶ And they went up out of Egypt, and came into the land of Canaan unto Jacob their father,

26 And told him, saying, Joseph is yet alive, and he is governor over all the land of Egypt. And Jacob's heart fainted, for he believed them not.

27 And they told him all the words of Joseph, which he had said unto them: and when he saw the wagons which Joseph had sent to carry him, the spirit of Jacob their father revived:

28 And Israel said, It is enough; Joseph my son is yet alive: I will go and see him before I die.

¹⁰⁷⁶ 1Pet 3:19

¹⁰⁷⁷ John 14:3

How often I want God to remove my pain now, I want the promises now. If God had been quick to answer Joseph's prayers to rescue him, 22 years or so earlier, he would not have been a ruler in Egypt and been able to save his entire family.

CHAPTER 46

1 And Israel took his journey with all that he had, and came to Beer-sheba, and offered sacrifices unto the God of his father Isaac.

2 And God spake unto Israel in the visions of the night, and said, Jacob, Jacob. And he said, Here am I.

3 And he said, I am God, the God of thy father: fear not to go down into Egypt; for I will there make of thee a great nation:

4 I will go down with thee into Egypt; and I will also surely bring thee up again: and Joseph shall put his hand upon thine eyes.

5 And Jacob rose up from Beer-sheba: and the sons of Israel carried Jacob their father, and their little ones, and their wives, in the wagons which Pharaoh had sent to carry him.

6 And they took their cattle, and their goods, which they had gotten in the land of Canaan, and came into Egypt, Jacob, and all his seed with him:

7 His sons, and his sons' sons with him, his daughters, and his sons' daughters, and all his seed brought he with him into Egypt.

I think that this is a significant moment for us. Jacob had been told to settle in Canaan and it would appear that Jacob is hesitant to go to Egypt, perhaps because he wanted to stay where God placed him. God then gives him a vision to say that he should not fear to go.

8 ¶ And these are the names of the children of Israel, which came into Egypt, Jacob and his sons: Reuben, Jacob's firstborn.

9 And the sons of Reuben; Hanoch, and Phallu, and Hezron, and Carmi.

10 ¶ And the sons of Simeon; Jemuel, and Jamin, and Ohad, and Jachin, and Zohar, and Shaul the son of a Canaanitish woman.

11 ¶ And the sons of Levi; Gershon, Kohath, and Merari.

12 ¶ And the sons of Judah; Er, and Onan, and Shelah, and Pharez, and Zerah: but Er and Onan died in the land of Canaan. And the sons of Pharez were Hezron and Hamul.

13 ¶ And the sons of Issachar; Tola, and Phuvah, and Job, and Shimron.

14 ¶ And the sons of Zebulun; Sered, and Elon, and Jahleel.

15 These be the sons of Leah, which she bare unto Jacob in Padan-aram, with his daughter Dinah: all the souls of his sons and his daughters were thirty and three.

32 Children + Leah

16 ¶ And the sons of Gad; Ziphion, and Haggi, Shuni, and Ezbon, Eri, and Arodi, and Areli.

17 ¶ And the sons of Asher; Jimnah, and Ishuah, and Isui, and Beriah, and Serah their sister: and the sons of Beriah; Heber, and Malchiel.

18 These are the sons of Zilpah, whom Laban gave to Leah his daughter, and these she bare unto Jacob, even sixteen souls.

16 children, note how the concubine Zilpah was excluded.

19 The sons of Rachel Jacob's wife; Joseph, and Benjamin.

20 ¶ And unto Joseph in the land of Egypt were born Manasseh and Ephraim, which Asenath the daughter of Poti-pherah priest of On bare unto him.

21 ¶ And the sons of Benjamin were Belah, and Becher, and Ashbel, Gera, and Naaman, Ehi, and Rosh, Muppim, and Huppim, and Ard.

22 These are the sons of Rachel, which were born to Jacob: all the souls were fourteen.

13 children (including Josephs sons) and Rachel

23 ¶ And the sons of Dan; Hushim.

24 ¶ And the sons of Naphtali; Jahzeel, and Guni, and Jezer, and Shillem.

25 These are the sons of Bilhah, which Laban gave unto Rachel his daughter, and she bare these unto Jacob: all the souls were seven.

7 children, again excluding Bilhah

26 All the souls that came with Jacob into Egypt, which came out of his loins, besides Jacob's sons' wives, all the souls were threescore and six;

Sixty six¹⁰⁷⁸ is the number of Children mentioned. If we add up the sub totals above we get 68 as it includes Jacobs wives, Leah and Rachel.

The number 6 is often used on man, when we add God, we get 7 the perfect number. 66 is 6 duplicated or perhaps pride.

27 And the sons of Joseph, which were born him in Egypt, were two souls: all the souls of the house of Jacob, which came into Egypt, were threescore and ten.

Now we have 70 which is the 66 mentioned above plus Jacob, Joseph and his two children which Jacob adopted for the purpose of inheritance.

28 ¶ And he sent Judah before him unto Joseph, to direct his face unto Goshen; and they came into the land of Goshen.

29 And Joseph made ready his chariot, and went up to meet Israel his father, to Goshen, and presented himself unto him; and he fell on his neck, and wept on his neck a good while.

30 And Israel said unto Joseph, Now let me die, since I have seen thy face, because thou art yet alive.

31 And Joseph said unto his brethren, and unto his father's house, I will go up, and shew Pharaoh, and say unto him, My brethren, and my father's house, which were in the land of Canaan, are come unto me;

32 And the men are shepherds, for their trade hath been to feed cattle; and they have brought their flocks, and their herds, and all that they have.

¹⁰⁷⁸ A score is twenty, so three score is 60.

33 And it shall come to pass, when Pharaoh shall call you, and shall say, What is your occupation?

34 That ye shall say, Thy servants' trade hath been about cattle from our youth even until now, both we, and also our fathers: that ye may dwell in the land of Goshen; for every shepherd is an abomination unto the Egyptians.

All the souls of the house of Jacob which came to Egypt were 70. Other passages have slightly different numbers and it is one of the points that some people use to try and discredit the accuracy of the scriptures. I have not looked at this again but every time I do I see that in the details there is a reason for the differences, for example in verse 26 and 27 above it is providing different information.

I have wondered why Dinah is mentioned as the only women. It would be really surprising for Jacob to only have one daughter. One explanation is that she lived in her father's house and never married after the incident with Schechem. Daughters left and cleaved to their husbands and therefore the rest of Jacobs draughters are not referenced here.

Shaul the son of a Canaanitish woman – Some Jewish traditions hold that the Simeon married Dinah and Shaul was her son. She was known as a Caanitish women because she tried to be like them and hence why she was where Shechem son of Hamor saw and desired her.

There are other Jewish traditions that she was the mother of Asenath (Joseph's wife) and that she married Job. Personally, I suspect that she remained unmarried in Jacobs house.

Joseph is also being wise here and maintaining the identity of Israel by keeping them separate. Joseph is also possibly also trying imply that they are gentle people to avoid the Egyptian's fearing that they would try to seize power, a fear that was realised with the next Pharaoh¹⁰⁷⁹. He is also ensuring that they get fertile land to keep their means of income rather than getting jobs and therefore being unable to leave.

Shepherds being abomination¹⁰⁸⁰ to the Egyptians is probably intended to mean that the Egyptians considered foreign shepherds as idolatry, since the Egyptians held some animals as symbolic of Gods and the Israelites would not treat their animals as Gods.

Cattle is the translation of miquneh¹⁰⁸¹ and means livestock, flock or heard, not specifically what we would call cattle today.

CHAPTER 47

1 Then Joseph came and told Pharaoh, and said, My father and my brethren, and their flocks, and their herds, and all that they have, are come out of the land of Canaan; and, behold, they are in the land of Goshen.

2 And he took some of his brethren, even five men, and presented them unto Pharaoh.

3 And Pharaoh said unto his brethren, What is your occupation? And they said unto Pharaoh, Thy servants are shepherds, both we, and also our fathers.

¹⁰⁷⁹ Ex 1:8,9

¹⁰⁸⁰ Strong's H8441, Something disgusting especially an idol.

¹⁰⁸¹ Strong's H4735, See also Gen 47:16, 17

4 They said moreover unto Pharaoh, For to sojourn in the land are we come; for thy servants have no pasture for their flocks; for the famine is sore in the land of Canaan: now therefore, we pray thee, let thy servants dwell in the land of Goshen.

5 And Pharaoh spake unto Joseph, saying, Thy father and thy brethren are come unto thee:

6 The land of Egypt is before thee; in the best of the land make thy father and brethren to dwell; in the land of Goshen let them dwell: and if thou knowest any men of activity among them, then make them rulers over my cattle.

7 And Joseph brought in Jacob his father, and set him before Pharaoh: and Jacob blessed Pharaoh.

8 And Pharaoh said unto Jacob, How old art thou?

9 And Jacob said unto Pharaoh, The days of the years of my pilgrimage are an hundred and thirty years: few and evil have the days of the years of my life been, and have not attained unto the days of the years of the life of my fathers in the days of their pilgrimage.

10 And Jacob blessed Pharaoh, and went out from before Pharaoh.

11 ¶ And Joseph placed his father and his brethren, and gave them a possession in the land of Egypt, in the best of the land, in the land of Rameses, as Pharaoh had commanded.

12 And Joseph nourished his father, and his brethren, and all his father's household, with bread, according to their families.

Joseph creates what reminds us of Eden, a land of nourishment. It was fertile area next to a branch of the Nile and Joseph encourages his brothers to continue as shepherds separate from the Egyptians.

Goshen¹⁰⁸²

13 ¶ And there was no bread in all the land; for the famine was very sore, so that the land of Egypt and all the land of Canaan fainted by reason of the famine.

14 And Joseph gathered up all the money that was found in the land of Egypt, and in the land of Canaan, for the corn which they bought: and Joseph brought the money into Pharaoh's house.

15 And when money failed in the land of Egypt, and in the land of Canaan, all the Egyptians came unto Joseph, and said, Give us bread: for why should we die in thy presence? for the money faileth.

16 And Joseph said, Give your cattle; and I will give you for your cattle, if money fail.

17 And they brought their cattle unto Joseph: and Joseph gave them bread in exchange for horses, and for the flocks, and for the cattle of the herds, and for the asses: and he fed them with bread for all their cattle for that year.

18 When that year was ended, they came unto him the second year, and said unto him, We will not hide it from my lord, how that our money is spent; my lord also hath our herds of cattle; there is not ought left in the sight of my lord, but our bodies, and our lands:

19 Wherefore shall we die before thine eyes, both we and our land? buy us and our land for bread, and we and our land will be servants unto Pharaoh: and give us seed, that we may live, and not die, that the land be not desolate.

¹⁰⁸² Strong's H1657 Eden H5731

20 And Joseph bought all the land of Egypt for Pharaoh; for the Egyptians sold every man his field, because the famine prevailed over them: so the land became Pharaoh's.

21 And as for the people, he removed them to cities from one end of the borders of Egypt even to the other end thereof.

22 Only the land of the priests bought he not; for the priests had a portion assigned them of Pharaoh, and did eat their portion which Pharaoh gave them: wherefore they sold not their lands.

23 Then Joseph said unto the people, Behold, I have bought you this day and your land for Pharaoh: lo, here is seed for you, and ye shall sow the land.

24 And it shall come to pass in the increase, that ye shall give the fifth part unto Pharaoh, and four parts shall be your own, for seed of the field, and for your food, and for them of your households, and for food for your little ones.

25 And they said, Thou hast saved our lives: let us find grace in the sight of my lord, and we will be Pharaoh's servants.

26 And Joseph made it a law over the land of Egypt unto this day, that Pharaoh should have the fifth part; except the land of the priests only, which became not Pharaoh's.

27 ¶ And Israel dwelt in the land of Egypt, in the country of Goshen; and they had possessions therein, and grew, and multiplied exceedingly.

28 And Jacob lived in the land of Egypt seventeen years: so the whole age of Jacob was an hundred forty and seven years.

29 And the time drew nigh that Israel must die: and he called his son Joseph, and said unto him, If now I have found grace in thy sight, put, I pray thee, thy hand under my thigh, and deal kindly and truly with me; bury me not, I pray thee, in Egypt:

30 But I will lie with my fathers, and thou shalt carry me out of Egypt, and bury me in their buryingplace. And he said, I will do as thou hast said.

31 And he said, Swear unto me. And he sware unto him. And Israel bowed himself upon the bed's head.

There is evidence of the arrival of the Israelites in Egypt at the tomb at Beni Hassan around 1700BC¹⁰⁸³. It shows the sematic people arriving with multi-coloured clothes their flocks and herds. It also talks about Joseph son of Jacob rising to power. Nine seals have been found bearing the name Jacob on a Pharaoh's authority.

Economics: Joseph bought all the land. I read an article on the collapse of the Egyptian domination at that time in a financial magazine. They were looking at the history of the area and trying to see if the financial models at the time contributed to the collapse of the dominant society, which was Egypt. The authors put forward three possible influencers, the first is that Joseph changed the society from a free market to Socialism when He bought all the land and people. The second was the "plundering" when Israel left in the exodus and the last was the focus by the later Pharaoh's on massive burial chambers now called Pyramids. It is possibly that the 20% tax was what enable the pyramids to be constructed?

What ever the cause, Joseph forced the Egyptians into servitude to Pharaoh and as a result weakened the strength of Egypt as the main military power at the time.

¹⁰⁸³ <https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=XObk07uabLI>

CHAPTER 48

1 And it came to pass after these things, that one told Joseph, Behold, thy father is sick: and he took with him his two sons, Manasseh and Ephraim.

2 And one told Jacob, and said, Behold, thy son Joseph cometh unto thee: and Israel strengthened himself, and sat upon the bed.

3 And Jacob said unto Joseph, God Almighty appeared unto me at Luz in the land of Canaan, and blessed me,

4 And said unto me, Behold, I will make thee fruitful, and multiply thee, and I will make of thee a multitude of people; and will give this land to thy seed after thee for an everlasting possession.

5 ¶ And now thy two sons, Ephraim and Manasseh, which were born unto thee in the land of Egypt before I came unto thee into Egypt, are mine; as Reuben and Simeon, they shall be mine.

6 And thy issue, which thou begetteth after them, shall be thine, and shall be called after the name of their brethren in their inheritance.

7 And as for me, when I came from Padan, Rachel died by me in the land of Canaan in the way, when yet there was but a little way to come unto Ephrath: and I buried her there in the way of Ephrath; the same is Beth-lehem.

8 And Israel beheld Joseph's sons, and said, Who are these?

9 And Joseph said unto his father, They are my sons, whom God hath given me in this place. And he said, Bring them, I pray thee, unto me, and I will bless them.

10 Now the eyes of Israel were dim for age, so that he could not see. And he brought them near unto him; and he kissed them, and embraced them.

11 And Israel said unto Joseph, I had not thought to see thy face: and, lo, God hath shewed me also thy seed.

12 And Joseph brought them out from between his knees, and he bowed himself with his face to the earth.

13 And Joseph took them both, Ephraim in his right hand toward Israel's left hand, and Manasseh in his left hand toward Israel's right hand, and brought them near unto him.

14 And Israel stretched out his right hand, and laid it upon Ephraim's head, who was the younger, and his left hand upon Manasseh's head, guiding his hands wittingly; for Manasseh was the firstborn.

Again we see the second born receiving the greater blessing.

15 ¶ And he blessed Joseph, and said, God, before whom my fathers Abraham and Isaac did walk, the God which fed me all my life long unto this day,

16 The Angel which redeemed me from all evil, bless the lads; and let my name be named on them, and the name of my fathers Abraham and Isaac; and let them grow into a multitude in the midst of the earth.

17 And when Joseph saw that his father laid his right hand upon the head of Ephraim, it displeased him: and he held up his father's hand, to remove it from Ephraim's head unto Manasseh's head.

18 And Joseph said unto his father, Not so, my father: for this is the firstborn; put thy right hand upon his head.

19 And his father refused, and said, I know it, my son, I know it: he also shall become a people, and he also shall be great: but truly his younger brother shall be greater than he, and his seed shall become a multitude of nations.

20 And he blessed them that day, saying, In thee shall Israel bless, saying, God make thee as Ephraim and as Manasseh: and he set Ephraim before Manasseh.

21 And Israel said unto Joseph, Behold, I die: but God shall be with you, and bring you again unto the land of your fathers.

22 Moreover I have given to thee one portion above thy brethren, which I took out of the hand of the Amorite with my sword and with my bow.

Jacob adds Joseph's two sons to his inheritance, so they each get a portion rather than getting half of Joseph's inheritance, this results in 13 tribes. When the twelve tribes of Israel are listed, there is often a variation of which twelve tribes, Levi is often omitted with Ephraim and Manasseh listed separately. Other times Joseph is listed with Ephraim and Manasseh considered to be included as they came from Joseph.

This is significant for us as they were born to a gentile but were adopted as Abraham's Children. Likewise, us gentiles, can be adopted into God's family¹⁰⁸⁴ through faith.

CHAPTER 49¹⁰⁸⁵

1 And Jacob called unto his sons, and said, Gather yourselves together, that I may tell you that which shall befall you in the last days.

2 Gather yourselves together, and hear, ye sons of Jacob; and hearken unto Israel your father.

3 ¶ Reuben, thou art my firstborn, my might, and the beginning of my strength, the excellency of dignity, and the excellency of power:

4 Unstable as water, thou shalt not excel; because thou wentest up to thy father's bed; then defiledst thou it: he went up to my couch.

5 ¶ Simeon and Levi are brethren; instruments of cruelty are in their habitations.

6 O my soul, come not thou into their secret; unto their assembly, mine honour, be not thou united: for in their anger they slew a man, and in their selfwill they digged down a wall.

7 Cursed be their anger, for it was fierce; and their wrath, for it was cruel: I will divide them in Jacob, and scatter them in Israel.

8 ¶ Judah, thou art he whom thy brethren shall praise: thy hand shall be in the neck of thine enemies; thy father's children shall bow down before thee.

9 Judah is a lion's whelp: from the prey, my son, thou art gone up: he stooped down, he couched as a lion, and as an old lion; who shall rouse him up?

10 The sceptre shall not depart from Judah, nor a lawgiver from between his feet, until Shiloh come; and unto him shall the gathering of the people be.

11 Binding his foal unto the vine, and his ass's colt unto the choice vine; he washed his garments in wine, and his clothes in the blood of grapes:

12 His eyes shall be red with wine, and his teeth white with milk.

13 ¶ Zebulun shall dwell at the haven of the sea; and he shall be for an haven of ships; and his border shall be unto Zidon.

14 ¶ Issachar is a strong ass couching down between two burdens:

15 And he saw that rest was good, and the land that it was pleasant; and bowed his shoulder to bear, and became a servant unto tribute.

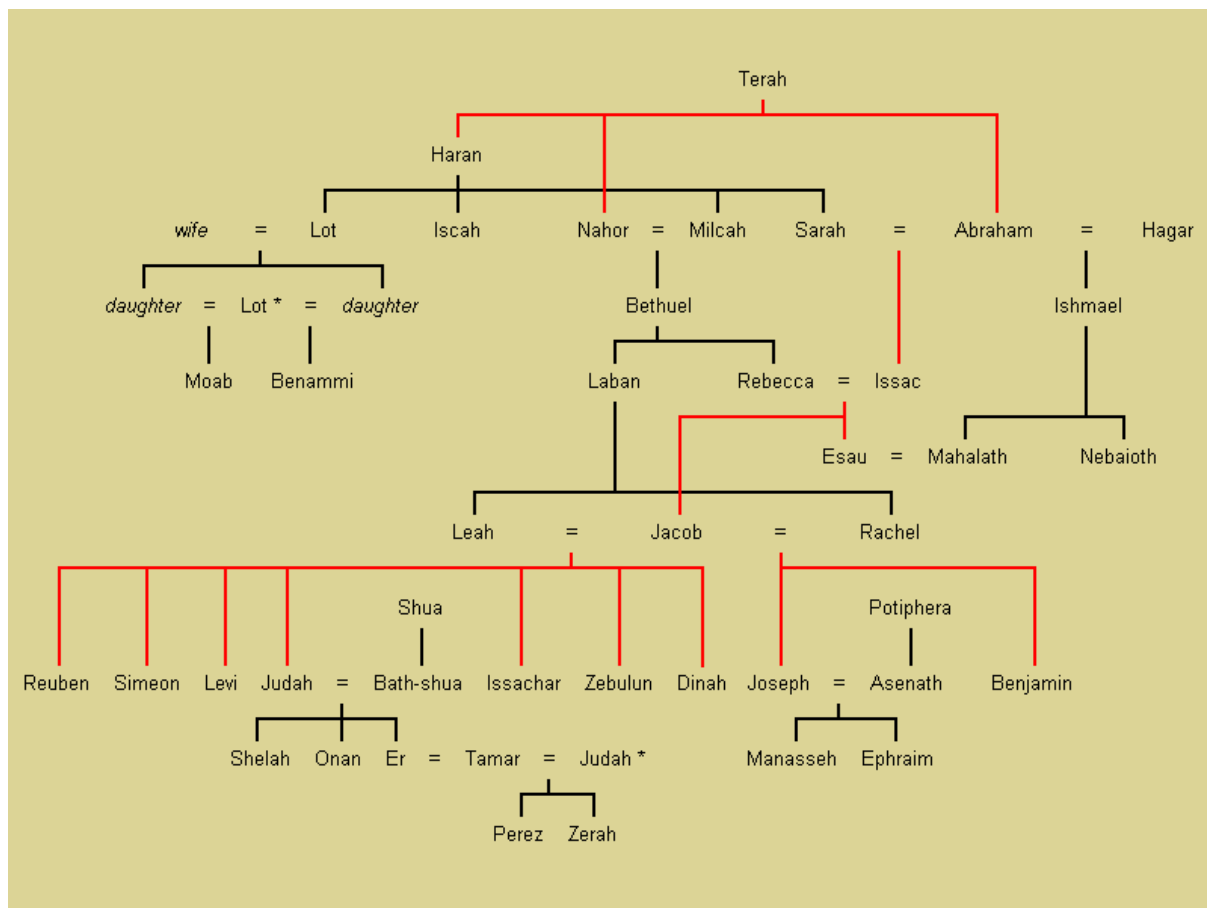
16 ¶ Dan shall judge his people, as one of the tribes of Israel.

¹⁰⁸⁴ Gal 3:6-9; Rom 4:16; Rom 9:6-7

¹⁰⁸⁵ 7th July 2013

17 Dan shall be a serpent by the way, an adder in the path, that biteth the horse heels, so that his rider shall fall backward.
 18 I have waited for thy salvation, O LORD.
 19 ¶ Gad, a troop shall overcome him: but he shall overcome at the last.
 20 ¶ Out of Asher his bread shall be fat, and he shall yield royal dainties.
 21 ¶ Naphtali is a hind let loose: he giveth goodly words.
 22 ¶ Joseph is a fruitful bough, even a fruitful bough by a well; whose branches run over the wall:
 23 The archers have sorely grieved him, and shot at him, and hated him:
 24 But his bow abode in strength, and the arms of his hands were made strong by the hands of the mighty God of Jacob; (from thence is the shepherd, the stone of Israel:)
 25 Even by the God of thy father, who shall help thee; and by the Almighty, who shall bless thee with blessings of heaven above, blessings of the deep that lieth under, blessings of the breasts, and of the womb:
 26 The blessings of thy father have prevailed above the blessings of my progenitors unto the utmost bound of the everlasting hills: they shall be on the head of Joseph, and on the crown of the head of him that was separate from his brethren.
 27 ¶ Benjamin shall ravin as a wolf: in the morning he shall devour the prey, and at night he shall divide the spoil.
 28 ¶ All these are the twelve tribes of Israel: and this is it that their father spake unto them, and blessed them; every one according to his blessing he blessed them.
 29 And he charged them, and said unto them, I am to be gathered unto my people: bury me with my fathers in the cave that is in the field of Ephron the Hittite,
 30 In the cave that is in the field of Machpelah, which is before Mamre, in the land of Canaan, which Abraham bought with the field of Ephron the Hittite for a possession of a buryingplace.
 31 There they buried Abraham and Sarah his wife; there they buried Isaac and Rebekah his wife; and there I buried Leah.
 32 The purchase of the field and of the cave that is therein was from the children of Heth.
 33 And when Jacob had made an end of commanding his sons, he gathered up his feet into the bed, and yielded up the ghost, and was gathered unto his people.

Jacob wants to be buried in the cave in Machpelah, the place of the naked couple. A place of hope reminding us of Eden.



I have sometimes wondered why the blessings like this one seem so powerful. Firstly, there must be great faith that God will speak through them¹⁰⁸⁶. Secondly, I think that by experience they learnt to recognise God's prompting¹⁰⁸⁷, on Jacobs death bed he was weak which allowed God's wisdom to flow. As Paul states, God's strength is made perfect in my weakness¹⁰⁸⁸.

These blessings are repeated slightly differently by Moses over the tribes that comes from the brothers¹⁰⁸⁹.

Reuben follows his lusts rather than doing what is right: Reuben was the first born and as such in that culture he would usually be the one that they all looked up to, being the leader of his brothers. Unfortunately, Reuben tried to take leadership by having sex with his fathers concubine¹⁰⁹⁰. He loses the rights of the first born but still has the privileges as a son. His terrible sin did not remove the fact that he was part of the family. Reuben did try and protect Joseph¹⁰⁹¹, indicating that he may have repented of his sin, but repentance free's us spiritually but does not remove the physical consequence¹⁰⁹².

But it seems that he lost his authority immediately and this is just the confirmation, Note that no Prophet, Prince or judge came from Reuben.

¹⁰⁸⁶ Heb 11:21

¹⁰⁸⁷ John 6:45; Psa 119:7; Isa 50:4; Note also Heb 5:8 learnt obedience through suffering

¹⁰⁸⁸ 2Cor 12:8-10

¹⁰⁸⁹ Deut 33

¹⁰⁹⁰ Gen 35:22

¹⁰⁹¹ Gen 42:22

¹⁰⁹² See also Deut. 33:6

Simeon and Levi are brethren; instruments of cruelty are in their habitations¹⁰⁹³. They killed all the city of Hamor and Shechem after their sister was raped. Jacob curses their anger, he does not curse them. Summerly God loves us, even though we are sinners but God hates the sin.

Tribe of Levi - Moses, Aaron, and they were scattered throughout Israel as priests.

Moses excludes Simeon in his blessing of the twelve tribes, instead including Manasseh and Ephraim.

Judah takes the lead in many battles and the royal lineage from David is Judah.

In around 4AD when Jesus was about 7 years old, Rome removed the right of the Sanhedrin (the Jewish ruling council) to administer the death penalty. I have heard it preached that the Rabis then tore their clothes and went around the city wailing that the scriptures had been broken. They did not realise that Shiloh, the Messiah had already come.

The sceptre shall not depart from Judah, nor a lawgiver from between his feet, until Shiloh come; and unto him shall the gathering of the people be.

Binding his foal unto the vine, and his ass's colt unto the choice vine; he washed his garments in wine, and his clothes in the blood of grapes:¹⁰⁹⁴

Tribe of Judah - King David, King Solomon, many other kings; Lord Jesus, the Messiah

Zebulun was given the Northern coastal area by Moses a few hundred years later.

The Judges came from Dan's tribe, including Samson

Tribe of Benjamin - King Saul, Paul the apostle [a.k.a. Saul of Tarsus]

CHAPTER 50

1 And Joseph fell upon his father's face, and wept upon him, and kissed him.

2 And Joseph commanded his servants the physicians to embalm his father: and the physicians embalmed Israel.

3 And forty days were fulfilled for him; for so are fulfilled the days of those which are embalmed: and the Egyptians mourned for him threescore and ten days.

Joseph embalming Israel is controversial for Jews as modern Jewish law forbids embalming, unless the body has to be transported a long way, which applies here. **for dust you are and unto dust shall you return**¹⁰⁹⁵ while embalming hinders this return. There is a contrast between the Egyptian aim of preserving the body for the eternal life and the Biblical few that it is the soul that is eternal and the mortal body is merely a temporary dwelling¹⁰⁹⁶.

In the Mishnah it states that Joseph dies before his brothers because he sinned by embalming his father¹⁰⁹⁷.

¹⁰⁹³ Gen 34:25

¹⁰⁹⁴ Gen 49:10-11

¹⁰⁹⁵ Gen 3:19; Ecc 12:7

¹⁰⁹⁶ 1Cor 15:52-54; see also 1Pet 1:23-24

¹⁰⁹⁷ Rabbi Judah Hanasi (135-219 C.E.)

4 And when the days of his mourning were past, Joseph spake unto the house of Pharaoh, saying, If now I have found grace in your eyes, speak, I pray you, in the ears of Pharaoh, saying,

5 My father made me swear, saying, Lo, I die: in my grave which I have digged for me in the land of Canaan, there shalt thou bury me. Now therefore let me go up, I pray thee, and bury my father, and I will come again.

6 And Pharaoh said, Go up, and bury thy father, according as he made thee swear.

7 ¶ And Joseph went up to bury his father: and with him went up all the servants of Pharaoh, the elders of his house, and all the elders of the land of Egypt,

8 And all the house of Joseph, and his brethren, and his father's house: only their little ones, and their flocks, and their herds, they left in the land of Goshen.

9 And there went up with him both chariots and horsemen: and it was a very great company.

10 And they came to the threshingfloor of Atad, which is beyond Jordan, and there they mourned with a great and very sore lamentation: and he made a mourning for his father seven days.

11 And when the inhabitants of the land, the Canaanites, saw the mourning in the floor of Atad, they said, This is a grievous mourning to the Egyptians: wherefore the name of it was called Abel-mizraim, which is beyond Jordan.

12 And his sons did unto him according as he commanded them:

13 For his sons carried him into the land of Canaan, and buried him in the cave of the field of Machpelah, which Abraham bought with the field for a possession of a burying place of Ephron the Hittite, before Mamre.

14 ¶ And Joseph returned into Egypt, he, and his brethren, and all that went up with him to bury his father, after he had buried his father.

Abelmizraim¹⁰⁹⁸ means "the mourning of the Egyptians".

15 ¶ And when Joseph's brethren saw that their father was dead, they said, Joseph will peradventure hate us, and will certainly requite us all the evil which we did unto him.

16 And they sent a messenger unto Joseph, saying, Thy father did command before he died, saying,

17 So shall ye say unto Joseph, Forgive, I pray thee now, the trespass of thy brethren, and their sin; for they did unto thee evil: and now, we pray thee, forgive the trespass of the servants of the God of thy father. And Joseph wept when they spake unto him.

18 And his brethren also went and fell down before his face; and they said, Behold, we be thy servants.

19 And Joseph said unto them, Fear not: for am I in the place of God?

20 But as for you, ye thought evil against me; but God meant it unto good, to bring to pass, as it is this day, to save much people alive.

21 Now therefore fear ye not: I will nourish you, and your little ones. And he comforted them, and spake kindly unto them.

22 ¶ And Joseph dwelt in Egypt, he, and his father's house: and Joseph lived an hundred and ten years.

23 And Joseph saw Ephraim's children of the third generation: the children also of Machir the son of Manasseh were brought up upon Joseph's knees.

¹⁰⁹⁸ Strong's H67

24 And Joseph said unto his brethren, I die: and God will surely visit you, and bring you out of this land unto the land which he sware to Abraham, to Isaac, and to Jacob.

25 And Joseph took an oath of the children of Israel, saying, God will surely visit you, and ye shall carry up my bones from hence.

26 So Joseph died, being an hundred and ten years old: and they embalmed him, and he was put in a coffin in Egypt.

Fear not: for am I in the place of God?

It is not man's place to judge and retaliate for wrong, that is God's role¹⁰⁹⁹. We cannot see the heart attitude of others and are therefore unlikely to judge justly. We respond from our own hurt and that is not right. God is our shield and defender, no weapon that is formed against us shall prosper.

If it be possible, as much as lies in you, live peaceably with all men. Dearly beloved, avenge not yourselves, but rather give place to wrath: for it is written, Vengeance is mine; I will repay, said the Lord.¹¹⁰⁰

By faith Joseph, when his end was near, spoke about the exodus of the Israelites and gave instructions about his bones.¹¹⁰¹

¹⁰⁹⁹ Romans 12:17 Do not repay anyone evil for evil. Be careful to do what is right in the eyes of everyone.

¹¹⁰⁰ Rom 12:18-19, Also Lev 19:18 do not seek revenge or bear a grudge. Deut 32:35 It is mine to avenge; I will repay and Prov24:29

¹¹⁰¹ Hebrews 11:22

Appendix 1: Tribes of Israel

Reuben Born to Leah

Meaning of name First born Gen 35:23; Gen 29:32; Num 1:21
Jacob's blessings. Gen 48-49 Unstable emotions. (as water.)
Moses' blessings. Deut 33 Will survive in large numbers

Simeon Born to Leah

Meaning of name Hear-son Gen 29:33, Num 1:23
Jacob's blessings. Gen 48-49 Cruel, anger, self willed along with Levi
Moses omitted Simeon in his blessing, see also; Eze 48:24-25, but that tribe did not loose their identity: 1 Chronicles 4:24-38; Rev 7

Levi Born to Leah

Meaning of name Attached Gen 29:34; Num 1:48-50
Jacob's blessings. Gen 48-49 Cruel, anger, self willed along with Simeon G49:5-7
Moses' blessings. Deut 33:8-11 Teachers of the Word of God. Will serve in the Temple of YHVH. Work of their hands is blessed.

Judah Born to Leah

Meaning of name Praise Gen 29:35; Num 1:27
Jacob's blessings. Gen 48:8-10 Kings, the lion, law giver, Messiah will come from him.
Moses' blessings. Deut 33:7 Powerful leaders of the nation.

Dan Born to Bilhah

Meaning of name Judge Gen 30:6; Num 1:39
Jacob's blessings. Gen 49:16-17 Judge the tribes, Snake
Moses' blessings. Deut 33:22 Dan had great energy and strength and leaped from its southern settlement to establish a colony in the north.
Dan is not included in Rev 7, however there is a gate named after Dan Ezekiel 48:2,32

Naphtali Born to Bilhah

Meaning of name Wrestle Gen 30:8, Num 1:43
Jacob's blessings. Gen 49:21 Uses eloquent words. Deer.
Moses' blessings. Deut 33:23 Full blessing of the Lord. Lives in Galilee, Yeshua's headquarters.

Gad Born to Zilpah

Meaning of name Fortune Gen 30:11; Num 1:25
Jacob's blessings. Gen 49:19 Fighters. Defenders
Moses' blessings. Deut 33:20-21 He chooses the best of the land, but, like a lion, helped his brothers conquer their land.

Asher Born to Zilpah

Meaning of name Happy Gen 30:13; Num 1:41
Jacob's blessings. Gen 49:20 Rich. Provides goods for the Royalty
Moses' blessings. Deut 33:24-25 Oil. Rich & strong.

Issachar Born to Leah

Meaning of name He will bring reward. Man of wages. Gen 30:18; Num 1:29

Jacob's blessings. Gen 49:14-15 Industrious, hard working, donkey.

Moses' blessings. Deut 33:18-19 To call the people to righteousness given together with Zebulun. Treasures from the sea and sand.

Zebulun Born to Leah

Meaning of name To Reside. Gen 30:20; Num 1:31

Jacob's blessings. Gen 49:13 Navigation, sailors, ocean, ships

Moses' blessings. Deut 33:18-19 To call the people to righteousness given together with Issachar. Treasures from the sea and sand.

Joseph Born to Rachel

Meaning of name To Add. Gen 30:24

Jacob's blessings. Gen 48:22-26 Persecuted by the world &, protected by YHVH. The elect of his brothers.

Moses' blessings. Deut 33:13-17 Agricultural blessings. Blessings of crown, or leadership of his brothers.

Manasseh, Son of Joseph, adopted by Abraham

Meaning of name Making forgetful Gen 41:51; Num 1:35

Jacob's blessings. Gen 48:19-20 Shall become great, a people.

Moses' blessings. Deut 33:17 Together with Ephraim will enjoy material prosperity & military might. But Ephraim's will be greater.

Ephraim, Son of Joseph, adopted by Abraham

Meaning of name Fruitfulness Gen 41:52; Num 1:33

Jacob's blessings. Gen 48:18-20 Inherits birthright & Abraham's blessings.

Father of multitude of nations. Gen 48:18-20

Moses' blessings. Deut 33:17 Together with Manasseh, Ephraim will enjoy material prosperity & military might. But Ephraim's will be greater.

Benjamin Born to Rachel

Meaning of name Son of my right hand, Gen 35:16-20; Num 1:37

Jacob's blessings. Gen 49:27 Wolf. War like nature of small tribe.

Moses' blessings. Deut 33:12 Security & sheltered by YHVH.

Appendix 2: Embalming Remains

Embalming and Viewing the Remains

The Jewish tradition is that the deceased should not be displayed after death, unless for identification. The person should be remembered for who they were, their accomplishments, how they helped others and the example they were, not an image all dressed up in makeup. In addition the draining of the blood and other organs, like for an autopsy is considered to be humiliation of the deceased. The permitted exception is when it is required, for example when transporting Jacob's body to the cave of Machpelah¹¹⁰²

Also, Jewish tradition does not support the gathering before the burial to comfort the family. The Talmud says;

Rabbi Shimon ben (son of) Elazar said, do not appease your fellow at the time of his anger, do not console him at the time his dead lies before him, do not ask him [to regret his oath] at the time of his oath, and do not attempt to see him at the time of his downfall.¹¹⁰³

¹¹⁰² Gen 50:2-13

¹¹⁰³ Pirkei Avos 4:23 <https://torah.org/learning/pirkei-avos-chapter4-23/>

Appendix 3: Creationist contributions to science

by Don Batten <https://creation.com/creationist-scientist-contributions>

Skeptics sometimes demand a list of creationist scientists who have contributed to science. We can make a powerful five-fold response to this challenge:

1. Creationists founded modern science

Francis Bacon (1561–1626), the classical scientific method; Gerardus Mercator (1512–1594), cartography, inventor of the Mercator map projection; Galileo Galilei (1564–1642), physics, astronomy; Johann Kepler (1571–1630), astronomy; Blaise Pascal (1623–1662), probability, hydrostatics, the barometer; Robert Boyle (1627–1691), chemistry, gas dynamics; John Ray (1627–1705), natural history; Nicolaus Steno, founder of stratigraphy (geology); Isaac Newton (1642–1727), dynamics, gravitation law, law of cooling, reflecting telescope, spectrum of light, co-inventor of calculus; Gottfried Wilhelm Leibnitz (1646–1716), mathematics, co-inventor of calculus; John Flamsteed (1646–1719), Greenwich Observatory Founder; Carolus Linnaeus (1707–1778), taxonomy, biological classification system; John Dalton (1766–1844), atomic theory, gas law. There are many others.¹

2. Creationist presuppositions provide the philosophical backbone to science

A fresh appreciation of the Bible's literal history in Genesis, including the Fall of Adam, played a vital role in the development of the scientific method

Here are six presuppositions that undergird modern science that come from biblical Christianity:²

- i. There is such a thing as *objective truth*.
- ii. The universe is *real*, because God created the heavens and the earth (Genesis 1).
- iii. The universe is *orderly*, because God is a God of order, not of confusion-(1 Corinthians 14:33).
- iv. Knowledge about the physical world will be discovered by *investigating* and *experimenting*, rather than relying merely on thought (as the ancient Greeks did).
- v. Man *can and should investigate* the world, because God gave us *dominion* over His creation (Genesis 1:28).
- vi. Man can *initiate* thoughts and actions; they are not merely the results of deterministic laws of brain chemistry.

A fresh appreciation of the Bible's literal history in Genesis, including the Fall of Adam, played a vital role in the development of the scientific method, the foundation of modern science. Peter Harrison, Andreas Idreos Professor of Science and Religion at the University of Oxford, said,

“Had it not been for the rise of the literal interpretation of the Bible and the subsequent appropriation of biblical narratives by early modern scientists, modern science may not have arisen at all. In sum, the Bible and its literal interpretation have played a vital role in the development of Western science.”³

3. Evolution has not contributed to scientific progress

The skeptics' demand implies that evolutionary thinking has contributed significantly to scientific progress, but high profile scientists have made it clear that this is not so. Dr Marc

Kirschner, founding chair of the Department of Systems Biology at Harvard Medical School stated:

“In fact, over the last 100 years, almost all of biology has proceeded independent of evolution, except evolutionary biology itself. Molecular biology, biochemistry, physiology, have not taken evolution into account at all.”⁴

Of course, as an evolutionist, Kirschner hopes that one day it will be different.

In similar vein, the anti-creationist Larry Witham wrote:

“Surprisingly, however, the most notable aspect of natural scientists in assembly is how little they focus on evolution. Its day-to-day irrelevance is a great ‘paradox’ in biology, according to a *BioEssays* special issue on evolution in 2000. ‘While the great majority of biologists would probably agree with Theodosius Dobzhansky’s dictum that “Nothing in biology makes sense except in the light of evolution”, most can conduct their work quite happily without particular reference to evolutionary ideas’, the editor wrote. ‘Evolution would appear to be the indispensable unifying idea and, at the same time, a highly superfluous one.’”⁵

Witham also expressed the hope that things might change in the future.

After surveying the spectrum of advances in the biological sciences, American Association for the Advancement of Science (AAAS) member and Emeritus Professor Philip Skell wrote,

“Darwinian evolution—whatever its other virtues—does not provide a fruitful heuristic in experimental biology.”⁶

4. Evolution has been detrimental to scientific progress

Due to the dead ends that evolutionary thinking has generated, wasting human and financial resources, evolution has been detrimental to scientific progress. There are many examples, like the fruitless search for the millions of non-existent transitional fossils⁷ that Darwinists predicted would be found.

I hate to think of the number of doctoral students who have laboured away for three or four years scratching around in the dust fruitlessly looking for transitional forms. And then there were the fallacious notions of vestigial organs and ‘junk DNA’, both hindering the search for the functions of these—but there is much more.

There is also a sorry history of scientific fraud arising from evolutionism. Most have heard of Piltdown man and Haeckel’s embryo diagrams and perhaps his imaginary *Monera*¹¹⁰⁴. However, there are many others, including the Midwife Toad, *Archaeoraptor*, and hundreds of papers on behavioural ecology by Anders Møller, just to mention a few.⁸

5. Creationist achievements stand tall

How many of today’s evolution-minded scientists have contributed *something of note* to science; 1 in 500? How many openly creationist scientists are there in the world? There are undoubtedly many thousands, but we have the names of less than 500.⁹ So just two from our list with a recognized significant contribution would have creationist scientists ‘punching above their weight’ compared to the evolutionists.

Here are some modern era creationist scientists of note (alphabetical order):

- Professor Dr Bernard Brandstater—pioneer in anesthetics. Amongst many other achievements, he pioneered assisted breathing for premature babies with prolonged

¹¹⁰⁴ <https://creation.com/bathybius-haeckelii>

intubation and developed an improved catheter for epidural anesthesia, both adopted around the world.¹⁰

- Prof. Stuart Burgess—a world expert in biomimetics (imitating design in nature). He is Professor of Engineering Design, Department of Mechanical Engineering, University of Bristol (UK) and leads the Design Engineering Research Group at the university. Dr Burgess is the author of over 40 papers published in science journals, and another 50 conference proceedings. He has also registered 7 patents and has received various awards, the Wessex Institute Scientific Medal being the most recent.¹¹
- Professor Dr Ben Carson—pioneer paediatric neurosurgeon. He was long-term director of pediatric neurosurgery at the Johns Hopkins Medical Institutions. He was the first surgeon to successfully separate conjoined twins joined at the head and also pioneered surgery to cure epilepsy in young children, and much else. He has been awarded 51 honorary doctorates, including from Yale and Columbia universities in recognition of his outstanding achievements. He is a member of the Alpha Honor Medical Society, the Horatio Alger Society of Distinguished Americans, and sits on numerous business and education boards. In 2001, CNN and *Time* magazine named Ben Carson as one of the nation's 20 foremost physicians and scientists. In that same year, the Library of Congress selected him as one of 89 'Living Legends'. In February 2008, President Bush awarded Carson the Ford's Theater Lincoln Medal and the Presidential Medal of Freedom, the USA's highest civilian honours.
- Dr Raymond Damadian—largely responsible for developing medical imaging using magnetic resonance (MRI). He has been honoured with the United States' National Medal of Technology, the Lincoln-Edison Medal, and induction into the National Inventors Hall of Fame alongside Thomas Edison, Alexander Graham Bell and the Wright brothers. In 2001 the Lemelson-MIT program bestowed its lifetime achievement award on Dr Damadian as "the man who invented the MRI scanner". It is commonly recognized that he was discriminated against in not at least sharing a Nobel Prize for his work (two others shared the award), although Damadian was the discoverer that diseased tissue would have a different signal from healthy.¹²
- Dr John Hartnett—developed the world's most precise atomic clocks, which are used in research and industry around the globe. He is an Australian Research Council (ARC) Discovery Outstanding Researcher Award (DORA) fellow at the University of Adelaide, where he is an Associate Professor. In his relatively short career, he has published more than 200 papers in scientific journals, book chapters, and conference proceedings.¹³
- Dr Raymond Jones—solved the major problem of the indigestibility of *Leucaena* (a tropical legume) for grazing cattle in Australia, among other achievements. This research has contributed hundreds of millions of dollars to the Australian beef industry. He was honoured with the CSIRO Gold Medal for Research Excellence, and the Urrbrae Award.¹⁴
- Dr Felix Konotey-Ahulu—many pioneering contributions, especially in sickle cell disease management. He is Kwegyir Aggrey Distinguished Professor of Human Genetics, University of Cape Coast, Ghana, and Consultant Physician Genetic Counsellor in Sickle Cell and Other Haemoglobinopathies, Phoenix Hospital Group, London, UK. Ironically, sickle cell disease is often incorrectly held up as a 'proof of evolution' in science textbooks. Dr Konotey-Ahulu has received many awards in recognition of his work.¹⁵

- Dr John Sanford—has been granted over 30 patents arising from his research in plant breeding and genetics. His most significant scientific contributions involve three inventions, the biolistic (‘gene gun’) process, pathogen-derived resistance, and genetic immunization. A large fraction of the transgenic crops (in terms of both numbers and area planted) grown in the world today were genetically engineered using the gene gun technology developed by John and his collaborators. Dr Sanford was honoured with the Distinguished Inventor Award by the Central New York Patent Law Association in 1990 and 1995.¹⁶
- Dr Wally (Siang Hwa) Tow—groundbreaking research in ‘molar pregnancy’, a poverty-related disease. He was invited to lecture in some fourteen top Obstetrics-Gynaecology departments in America in 1962–3, including leading universities such as Harvard, Johns Hopkins, Columbia, New York, UCLA, Cornell, and Stanford. He was awarded the William Blair Bell Lectureship by the RCOG in recognition of the importance of this work. He served as Professor and Chairman of the Department of Obstetrics and Gynaecology, National University of Singapore.¹⁷

It is clear that creationists have made and continue to make substantial contributions to science. We might not even have had modern science as we know it without creationists!

Appendix 4: Household gods; Gen 31

Household gods Gen 31¹¹⁰⁵.

In the discussion of Gen 31 I considered the household gods to be carved images of deities that were considered to bring people good luck, protection during child birth and could be used for divination. Rachel by stealing the image, may have been hoping to prevent Laban from using them to divine where they were fleeing too.

There are some alternative views on these objects.

The Jewish Virtual Library says in reference to the Nuzi tablets:

Rachel's theft of her father Laban's household gods (Genesis 31:19) may be explained by the idea that possession of household gods could be part of a legal title to the paternal estate.

And in the case of a married daughter, it gave her husband the claim to her father's property (C.H. Gordon, *Revue Biblique*, p. 35f). Because Laban now had sons of his own who alone had the right to their father's god's, Rachel's theft was a serious offense.

According to Targum Pseudo-Jonathan;

Teraphim were made from the heads of slaughtered first born male adult humans, shaved, salted, spiced, During the excavation of Jericho by Kathleen Kenyon, evidence of the use of human skulls as cult objects was uncovered, lending credence to the Rabbinical conjecture.[9] The implied size and the fact that Michal could pretend that one was David, has led to the Rabbinical conjecture that they were heads, possibly mummified human heads[7]

Another view is that there were gold or silver intended as savings;

Thus, when one became wealthy, and desired to safeguard money, which was irregular chunks of metal, from thieves even of their own household, it was expedient to take them to the metal caster and have them molded into an object which could easily be identified. Thus these "god" often represented the results of a lifetime of labor to the owner.

The precious metals were the money of that day. Now, in Laban's case, He was both greedy and dishonest, as can be seen from his treatment of Jacob. His household gods most probably contained the majority of his old age pension, as well as the inheritance to be passed to his sons.

Although it was customary to provide his daughters with a dowry, he did not do so. Rachel perhaps took it upon herself to steal the dowry which she thought rightfully hers.

Jacob recognized that the thief was worthy of death. Not because the 'gods' were in any way special except for their monetary value.

¹¹⁰⁵ Gen 31:19 – Images, Strong's H8655 teraphim.

It is so today with ones life savings, is it not? Too often money is more highly thought of than any mere works. People will do all they can to preserve their wealth, since it is often the most precious thing in their lives. Yes, many worship money as their god. It is as the Word says: the love of money is the root of all evil. Likewise, The more things change, the more they are the same.