

## **Have you read Genesis lately?**

Genesis: The Book of Beginnings

The complete NKJV text, with comments by

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## Introduction

I have always loved the book of Genesis, and the histories which it contains. Even before I became a Christian and became convinced of the truth of this whole book, I was fascinated by so many events within it - the creation, the fall, Cain and Abel, Noah and the Flood, the Tower of Babel, Abraham, Sodom and Gomorrah, Abraham sacrificing Isaac, Isaac and Rebekah, Jacob and Esau, Jacob and Laban, Joseph, his brothers and his dreams. These stories and more I remember being contained in a child's story bible that I used to have. I loved it and everything about it.

I became a Christian in 1977, at the age of 15. However, the church I attended did not have a lot of teaching in it. In 1978, I got a Saturday job working in a Christian bookshop. One Saturday, I picked up a new booklet written by a group of people who did not believe the theory of evolution. At the time, David Attenborough's major TV series, *Life on Earth*, was playing on the TV. The idea that some serious minded people did not believe in evolution was something that I found mind-blowing. The bookshop manager, however, was able to explain to me that he, too, did not believe in evolution. I read the booklet, then started to read other books - in particular *Evolution or Creation* by Professor Enoch. It did not take long to convince me.

The thing is that once I believed in Genesis 1, I found it was not difficult to believe in the rest of the Bible. Belief in Genesis 1 was the touchstone.

Genesis 1 - 11 are very important, because they are foundational to rest of scripture. However, it has been my contention now for quite a while that Genesis 12 is extremely important. A great deal of the New Testament's teaching on faith looks back to the life of Abraham. Yet, I contend that you cannot really understand what Abraham is doing in Genesis 12, without a prior literal belief in the events of Genesis 1 to 11. Thus Genesis

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12 becomes a bridge between the account of God's working through creation and the rest of the Bible.

My view of the importance of the early chapters of Genesis led me to write a commentary on the first eleven chapters. This is now published by *Master Books*, under the title *The Six Days of Genesis*. What I want to do with the present book is encourage as many people as possible to read the book of Genesis for themselves - the whole of it, not just the first bit. To this end, I am grateful to Thomas Nelson Inc and to Cambridge University Press Ltd for their permissions to use the complete text of Genesis, in the New King James Version and the 'old' King James Version respectively, in these sister editions. As a paperback, it should be possible to read this book, in either version, just as you might a novel. To help you, I have included brief comments along the way, in grey boxes. Remember that the grey boxes are not the inspired text! They are included only to unlock some of the more difficult sections. It should also be noted that these grey boxes are not complete; this book is not a commentary, and there are large sections of the books which are not accompanied by a comment. Nevertheless, it is important to read the text of Genesis just as it is - to enjoy it and to learn from it. May God add his blessings to you, as you read this portion of His word.

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## Chapter 1

### *The History of Creation*

1 In the beginning God created the heavens and the earth. 2 The earth was without form, and void; and darkness was on the face of the deep. And the Spirit of God was hovering over the face of the waters.

3 Then 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. 5 God called the light Day, and the darkness He called Night. So the evening and the morning were the first day.

6 Then God said, "Let there be a firmament in the midst of the waters, and let it divide the waters from the waters." 7 Thus 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. So the evening and the morning were the second day.

9 Then God said, "Let the waters under the heavens be gathered together into 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 He called Seas. And God saw that it was good.

Many people will start to read the Bible from Genesis, because it is the first book. If we made no consideration of any studies outside the Bible, we would expect Genesis to lay down the foundations for beliefs, history, and doctrine in the rest of the Bible. It is my contention that it is impossible to understand the rest of the Bible while ignoring this foundational book.

"In the beginning, God..." This powerful set of four words tells us:

- God is central to everything.
- God was before everything.
- Everything had a beginning.
- God was there before that beginning.
- God is the key subject matter of the universe.

11 Then God said, "Let the earth bring forth grass, the herb that yields seed, and the fruit tree that yields fruit according to its kind, whose seed is in itself, on the earth"; and it was so. 12 And the earth brought forth grass, the herb that yields seed according to its kind, and the tree that yields fruit, whose seed is in itself according to its kind. And God saw that it was good. 13 So the evening and the morning were the third day.

14 Then God said, "Let there be lights in the firmament of the

God set the pattern of creation in a week, for our benefit. The week is the only one of our timescales that has no astronomical basis. The day is due to the rotation of the Earth. The year is the period of the Earth's orbit. The month approximates to the orbit of the Moon. But the week has no astronomical basis. It is God's time period, and it is man's time period, created for us, because it is ideally suited to our needs. Attempts to create longer or shorter weeks have failed. But if the universe were not really created in six days, then God's reasoning on why we should keep the Sabbath holy is flawed. In fact, God set the weekly pattern of work, rest and worship at the beginning of time itself. If we say otherwise, we undermine the moral authority of the Ten Commandments. After all, if the reasoning behind one of the commandments is flawed, why not all the rest as well?

heavens to divide the day from the night; and let them be for signs and seasons, and for days and years; 15 and let them be for lights in the firmament of the heavens to give light on the earth"; and it was so. 16 Then 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 God set them in the firmament of the heavens to give light on 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 So the evening and the morning were the fourth day.

All the plants were created able to reproduce “according to its kind”. This is the first appearance of the word *kind*, and we need to understand its significance, and the reason why I keep italicising it. The Hebrew word is *min* and it is being used in a specific way in Genesis. It is to be understood scientifically in a specific way. The Biblical *kind* is not the same as the man-made classification word *species*. Species is an observable study that is in constant flux – a species being a type of plant or animal, isolated from others, incapable of interbreeding (usually) with members of other species. The development of species has long been used as a rod, with which to beat creationists. The Paper Tiger argument adopted by evolutionists is that creationists believe in the fixicity of species. We do not! Species are clearly observed to develop. The infamous Darwin’s Finches would be an example, with which creationists have no problem. You see, although the finches clearly adapt and develop, they remain at all times finches. This is not evolution

20 Then God said, “Let the waters abound with an abundance of living creatures, and let birds fly above the earth across the face of the firmament of the heavens.” 21 So God created great sea creatures and every living thing that moves, with which the waters abounded, according to their kind, and every winged bird according to its 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 birds multiply on the earth.” 23 So the evening and the morning were the fifth day.

24 Then God said, “Let the earth bring forth the living creature according to its kind: cattle and creeping thing and beast of the earth, each according to its kind”; and it was so. 25 And God

Genesis is written in the same style – as literal history. If we believe Genesis 1 to be poetic, we have to believe the accounts of Abraham, Isaac, Jacob and Joseph to be poetic, including events, which are verifiable by extra-biblical sources. Because of the stylistic unity of Genesis, if we take the account of Joseph in Egypt to be history, then we must take the account of the Creation to be history, if we are to do justice to the text and hermeneutics.

There are some Christians who want to harmonise evolution with the Bible. They are relieved to find that plants are created before animals. They are also relieved to find that marine animals are created before land animals. Unfortunately, other facts are not so convenient. Chief among these is that birds are created at the same time as sea creatures, *before* land animals. This is highly inconvenient, as birds are supposed to have evolved from land reptiles, such as dinosaurs. God's word does not fit with evolutionary theory on this point, and they cannot both be right. The position of the Christian evolutionists is thus made untenable.

made the beast of the earth according to its kind, cattle according to its kind, and everything that creeps on the earth according to its kind. And God saw that it was good.

26 Then God said, "Let Us make man in Our image, according to Our likeness; let them have dominion over the fish of the sea, over the birds of the air, and over the cattle, over all the earth and over every creeping thing that creeps on the earth." 27 So God created man in His own image; in the image of God He created him; male and female He created them. 28 Then God blessed them, and God said to them, "Be fruitful and multiply; fill the earth and subdue it; have dominion over the fish of the sea, over the birds of the air, and over every living thing that moves on the earth."

29 And God said, "See, I have given you every herb that yields seed which is on the face of all the earth, and every tree whose fruit yields seed; to you it shall be for food. 30 Also, to every beast of the earth, to every bird of the air, and to everything that

The KJV renders verse 28 as "replenish the Earth". Some have used this to imply that the Earth was being re-created, rather than created for the first time. This is the well-known Gap Theory, discussed earlier. In fact, to use this verse in this way is incorrect. There is nothing wrong with the KJV translation – it's just the English language that has changed. In the 17<sup>th</sup> century, when the KJV was translated, the word replenish did not mean to refill; it simply meant to fill.



God told us to subdue the world. He also told us to have dominion over it. This subjugation involves knowing about the world. This verse has often been called the *Cultural Mandate* or the *Dominion Mandate*. It is not stretching a point too far to say that this verse gives us license to practice science, art and technology. We need to study the world to subdue it. We need to harness its energy sources, to do useful work. And we need to exercise our own creativity. Our dominion over the world gives us the right to use the world, but also a responsibility. We do not have a *Gaia*-type link with the world. We are not to worship it. Industrialisation is not necessarily wrong, and is frequently the right exercise of our cultural mandate. But coupled with this is a responsibility for creation. As Christians – indeed, as a human race – we are to protect our environment. This is not because we see industrialisation as inherently bad, but because we have the responsibility that comes with dominion. Basically, God is saying “the world and all its animals are yours to use. Don’t mess them up.”

creeps on the earth, in which there is life, I have given every green herb for food”; and it was so. 31 Then God saw everything that He had made, and indeed it was very good. So the evening and the morning were the sixth day.

## Chapter 2

1 Thus the heavens and the earth, and all the host of them, were finished. 2 And on the seventh day God ended His work which He had done, and He rested on the seventh day from all His work which He had done. 3 Then God blessed the seventh day and sanctified it, because in it He rested from all His work which God had created and made.

4 This is the history of the heavens and the earth when they were created, in the day that the LORD God made the earth and the heavens, 5 before any plant of the field was in the earth and before any herb of the field had grown. For the LORD God had not caused it to rain on the earth, and there was no man to till the

ground; 6 but a mist went up 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 being.

### *Life in God's Garden*

8 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 the LORD God made every tree grow that is pleasant to the sight and good for food. The tree of life was also in the midst of the garden, and the tree of the knowledge of good and evil.

10 Now a river went out of Eden to water the garden, and from there it parted and became four riverheads. 11 The name of the first is Pishon; it is the one which skirts the whole land of

Those who believe that Genesis teaches long ages, rather than actual days, sometimes suggest that we are in the seventh day of rest now. God made the world over a long period of time, and now He is resting.

I find that view hard to accept. To begin with, as I have already stated, I accept the six days of creation as six literal days. Nowhere else in the Old Testament do conservative evangelical scholars worry about whether the word *yom* means day. As someone has once said, we do not spend time in our Bible studies worrying about whether Joshua marched the people around Jericho for six thousand years, or that Jonah was in the belly of the fish for three thousand years!

But there is another objection. In my view, God is not at rest today. He has intervened and does intervene in history. As we read in Psalm 121:3,4, 'He will not allow your foot to be moved; He who keeps you will not slumber. Behold, He who keeps Israel Shall neither slumber nor sleep.' I believe in the God of miracles. I believe that God actively stepped into my life, at the age of fifteen, when He saved me. And I believe that He intervened in history supremely, when God the Son, Jesus Christ, lived amongst us, died for our sins, and rose again from the dead. That is not a time of rest as I understand it.

Havilah, where there is gold. 12 And the gold of that land is good. Bdellium and the onyx stone are there. 13 The name of the second river is Gihon; it is the one which goes around the whole land of Cush. 14 The name of the third river is Hiddekel; it is the one which goes toward the east of Assyria. The fourth river is the Euphrates.

15 Then the LORD God took the man and put him in the garden of Eden to tend and keep it. 16 And the LORD God commanded the man, saying, "Of every tree of the garden you may freely eat; 17 but of the tree of the knowledge of good and evil you shall not eat, for in the day that you eat of it you shall surely die."

18 And the LORD God said, "It is not good that man should be alone; I will make him a helper comparable to him." 19 Out of the ground the LORD God formed every beast of the field and every bird of the air, and brought them to Adam to see what he would call them. And whatever Adam called each living creature, that was its name. 20 So Adam gave names to all cattle, to the birds of the air, and to every beast of the field. But for Adam there was not found a helper comparable to him.

21 And the LORD God caused a deep sleep to fall on Adam, and he slept; and He took one of his ribs, and closed up the flesh in its place. 22 Then the rib which the LORD God had taken from man He made into a woman, and He brought her to 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."

24 Therefore a man shall leave his father and mother and be joined to his wife, and they shall become one flesh.

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

On the subject of God's commandment in Genesis 2:16, it is important to note two facts:

- God gave a law that man had to keep
- God declared a sanction for law-breaking

Man is made in the image of God, but man is not God. It follows that man is to obey God, because the creature must obey the creator. In a perfect world, how is man to obey God? In order for man to obey God, God must give a law for man to obey. Logic alone demands that we accept this. If we have no law, we have no yardstick, against which to measure our obedience.

## Chapter 3

### *The Temptation and Fall of Man*

1 Now the serpent was more cunning than any beast of the field which the LORD God had made. And he said to the woman, "Has God indeed said, 'You shall not eat of every tree of the garden'?"

Dualism teaches that there is an impersonal force in the universe, divided into good and evil components. Although this idea has been around for millennia, it has gained popularity in recent decades, through the medium of the Star Wars films. Even though they are intended to be entertainment, they seem to resonate with prevailing views of Good and Evil as equal and opposite forces. I am constantly amazed at the number of those, who call themselves Christians, who do not believe in a personal devil. Make no mistake. The devil is not an impersonal force. He is a person who desires you harm, especially if you profess the name of Jesus. He speaks, even if he has disguised himself, or possessed an animal like the serpent. Quite how the serpent spoke we do not know. I am not able to be dogmatic on this subject, except to point out that the devil speaks personally.

2 And the woman said to the serpent, "We may eat 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 has said, 'You shall not eat it, nor shall you touch it, lest you die.'"

4 Then the serpent said to the woman, "You will not surely die. 5 For God knows that in the day you eat of it your eyes will be opened, and you will be like God, knowing good and evil."

6 So when the woman saw that the tree was good for food, that it was pleasant to the eyes, and a tree desirable to make one wise, she took of its fruit and ate. She also gave to her husband with her, and he ate. 7 Then the eyes of both of them were opened, and they knew that they were naked; and they sewed fig leaves together and made themselves coverings.

8 And they heard the sound 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 among the trees of the garden.

9 Then the LORD God called to Adam and said to him, "Where are you?"

10 So he said, "I heard Your voice in the garden, and I was afraid because I was naked; and I hid myself."

The first thing Satan says to Eve is "Has God indeed said?" or, in other words, "Did God really say...?" His first attack is to sow the seeds of doubt. There should have been no doubt in Eve's mind. If God has said something to us, then we had better make sure we know what it is.

Today, Satan's first attack on us is to get us to doubt God's word. So many individual Christians and churches have fallen at this first hurdle. For many people, God's word is not taken at face value. For example, too many Christians fail to accept the truth of Genesis chapters one to eleven. By their unbelief, they are laying themselves open to temptation.

There are those who believe the Bible to be true, but cannot accept the book of Genesis as scientific or historical fact. Those who misinterpret the Bible in this way are opening the floodgates for all sorts of unbiblical errors to creep in.

### 3

*Have you read **Genesis** lately? (NKJV)*

11 And He said, "Who told you that you were naked? Have you eaten from the tree of which I commanded you that you should not eat?"

12 Then the man said, "The woman whom You gave to be with me, she gave me of the tree, and I ate."

13 And the LORD God said to the woman, "What is this you have done?"

The woman said, "The serpent deceived me, and I ate."

14 So the LORD God said to the serpent:

" Because you have done this,  
You are cursed more than all cattle,  
And more than every beast of the field;  
On your belly you shall go,  
And you shall eat dust  
All the days of your life.

15 And I will put enmity  
Between you and the woman,  
And between your seed and her Seed;  
He shall bruise your head,  
And you shall bruise His heel."

In the curse of Genesis 3, God shows that the woman and the serpent will be at enmity. God is promising the Messiah, right at the beginning of time, immediately after the first sin. Then we learn more about the nature of the Messiah. He is to be the seed of the woman. Anyone with a slight knowledge of biology knows that the seed is from the man, not the woman. God is promising that at some point in history there will be a seed of a woman; that the promised Messiah will be born of a woman, and thus fully human, **but with no human father!** This is a clear promise of the Virgin Birth. Mary was a Virgin, but became with child by the Holy Spirit and gave birth to Jesus. He is the fulfilment of the promise, which God is making, in the hearing of Adam and Eve, at the beginning of things. Doesn't it show the mercy of God that He gave us the Gospel immediately after the first sin? There has always been a way of salvation.

Have you read **Genesis** lately? (NKJV)

3

16 To the woman He said:

“I will greatly multiply your sorrow and your conception;  
In pain you shall bring forth children;  
Your desire shall be for your husband,  
And he shall rule over you.”

17 Then to Adam He said, “Because you have heeded the voice of your wife, and have eaten from the tree of which I commanded you, saying, ‘You shall not eat of it’:

“Cursed is the ground for your sake;  
In toil you shall eat of it  
All the days of your life.

18 Both thorns and thistles it shall bring forth for you,  
And you shall eat the herb of the field.

19 In the sweat of your face you shall eat bread  
Till you return to the ground,

After Adam had named his wife Eve, we read a remarkable verse, easily overlooked. “Also for Adam and his wife the LORD God made tunics of skin, and clothed them.” Adam and Eve had tried to cover their nakedness themselves, by stitching together fig-leaves. We cannot cover our own guilt and shame, however, so they could not enter into God’s presence, but had to hide. Now we read that God made them tunics of skin. Up to this point, no animal had died. People ate only plants. But now God kills animals to make tunics. We don’t know what sort of animals God killed, but it must have been the sort of animals that give good clothing skin. Maybe it is reading too much into the passage to suggest that the animals could have been form of the lamb kind as a foreshadow of Christ being the lamb of God that would cover sins for forever. What is certain, however, is that blood was spilt in order to hide Adam and Eve’s nakedness, guilt and shame. To be able to stand in the presence of God, required the shedding of blood. “And according to the law almost all things are purified with blood, and without shedding of blood there is no remission.” (Hebrews 9:22) Once again, we have a glimpse of the gospel.

For out of it you were taken;  
For dust you are,  
And to dust you shall return.”

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

21 Also for Adam and his wife the LORD God made tunics of skin, and clothed them.

22 Then the LORD God said, “Behold, the man has become like one of Us, to know good and evil. And now, lest he put out his hand and take also of the tree of life, and eat, and live forever” —  
23 therefore the LORD God sent him out of the garden of Eden to till the ground from which he was taken. 24 So He drove out the man; and He placed cherubim at the east of the garden of Eden, and a flaming sword which turned every way, to guard the way to the tree of life.

## **Chapter 4**

### *Cain Murders Abel*

1 Now Adam knew Eve his wife, and she conceived and bore Cain, and said, “I have acquired a man from the LORD.” 2 Then she bore again, this time his brother Abel. Now Abel was a keeper of sheep, but Cain was a tiller of the ground. 3 And in the process of time it came to pass that Cain brought an offering of the fruit of the ground to the LORD. 4 Abel also brought of the firstborn of his flock and of their fat. And the LORD respected Abel and his offering, 5 but He did not respect Cain and his offering. And Cain was very angry, and his countenance fell.

6 So the LORD said to Cain, “Why are you angry? And why has your countenance fallen? 7 If you do well, will you not be accepted? And if you do not do well, sin lies at the door. And its desire is for you, but you should rule over it.”



It took me many, many years to understand the import of Genesis 4:3-7. How could God be so unfair to accept Abel's offering and not Cain's?

Abel's offering was the firstborn of his flock. In order to make this offering, he had to kill the animal. It is feasible that Abel's offering could even have been lower in value than Cain's. The notional monetary value is irrelevant. The difference is that Abel was not trying to save himself, as Cain was. The clue we have already had is in the clothing of Adam and Eve. Adam and Eve tried to cover their own guilt and shame with fig leaves. God, however, covered their nakedness by shedding blood. Abel did likewise – the firstborn lamb was sacrificed in place of Abel's sin. The NIV says that God looked with favour on Abel's sacrifice. In Hebrews 11, we read that this was a more excellent sacrifice – note that the sacrifice is not merely *better* – it is *more excellent*. It is because forgiveness is only attained by the shedding of blood that was perfectly demonstrated by the shedding of the blood of God's only begotten Son. In a word, the acceptability of Abel's offering and non-acceptability of Cain's is down to the blood. We cannot save ourselves, as Cain tried to do. Our work for God is very good and proper, but it never saves us. We are saved only by the blood of sacrifice. Today that is the perfect sacrifice of Jesus. It is only through the perfect sacrifice of Jesus that we are accepted.

8 Now 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 killed him.

9 Then the LORD said to Cain, "Where is Abel your brother?" He said, "I do not know. Am I my brother's keeper?"

10 And He said, "What have you done? The voice of your brother's blood cries out to Me from the ground. 11 So now you are cursed from the earth, which has opened its mouth to receive your brother's blood from your hand. 12 When you till the ground, it shall no longer yield its strength to you. A fugitive and a vagabond you shall be on the earth."

13 And Cain said to the LORD, "My punishment is greater than I can bear! 14 Surely You have driven me out this day from the

face of the ground; I shall be hidden from Your face; I shall be a fugitive and a vagabond on the earth, and it will happen that anyone who finds me will kill me.”

15 And the LORD said to him, “Therefore, whoever kills Cain, vengeance shall be taken on him sevenfold.” And the LORD set a mark on Cain, lest anyone finding him should kill him.

### *The Family of Cain*

16 Then Cain went out from the presence of the LORD and dwelt in the land of Nod on the east of Eden. 17 And Cain knew his wife, and she conceived and bore Enoch. And he built a city, and called the name of the city after the name of his son—Enoch.

Who was Cain’s wife? She must have been his sister.

This answer causes still more problems for some. Doesn’t the Bible say that we mustn’t marry our sisters? Doesn’t the Bible say that we mustn’t marry relatives?

Actually, we have to marry relatives. Everyone is a distant cousin of mine, because we are all descended from Adam and Eve. We are not today to marry close relatives.

Today there are lots of genetic defects around. One method of concentrating genetic defects is to marry someone who has similar genetic defects. We can be sure that close relatives have similar genetic defects to ourselves. We see the catastrophic results of such inbreeding in classic situations, such as pedigree dogs and cats, or maybe in the health problems of European Royal Families in the late 19<sup>th</sup> and early 20<sup>th</sup> Centuries. It is sensible that the Bible outlaws such liaisons.

However, such liaisons were not outlawed until the time of Moses. In the times of Genesis, no such problems existed. Thus, Jacob goes to his Uncle Laban’s house and marries his cousins Rachel and Leah (we’ll leave tackling bigamy until another time!). Abraham sends his servant to his family’s lands to get a wife for Isaac. Rebecca is a second cousin. Abraham’s wife Sarah was actually his half-sister.

There is no condemnation of such things, because there was no genetic danger.

It stands to reason, then, that there was no problem with brother and sister being married at the beginning of the world. As soon as a little science is applied to our understanding of the scriptures, we see that they make sense taken literally.

18 To Enoch was born Irad; and Irad begot Mehujael, and Mehujael begot Methushael, and Methushael begot Lamech.

19 Then Lamech took for himself two wives: the name of one was Adah, and the name of the second was Zillah. 20 And Adah bore Jabal. He was the father of those who dwell in tents and have livestock. 21 His brother's name was Jubal. He was the father of all those who play the harp and flute. 22 And as for Zillah, she also bore Tubal-Cain, an instructor of every craftsman in bronze and iron. And the sister of Tubal-Cain was Naamah.

23 Then Lamech said to his wives:

“Adah and Zillah, hear my voice;  
Wives of Lamech, listen to my speech!  
For I have killed a man for wounding me,  
Even a young man for hurting me.

24 If Cain shall be avenged sevenfold,  
Then Lamech seventy-sevenfold.”

#### *A New Son*

25 And Adam knew his wife again, and she bore a son and named him Seth, “For God has appointed another seed for me instead of Abel, whom Cain killed.” 26 And as for Seth, to him also a son was born; and he named him Enosh. Then men began to call on the name of the LORD.

## Chapter 5

### *The Family of Adam*

1 This is the book of the genealogy of Adam. In the day that God created man, He made him in the likeness of God. 2 He created them male and female, and blessed them and called

We are probably by now used to the idea that Hebrew names have a meaning. However, the meaning of the names of the ten patriarchs provides a very interesting insight into the prediluvian world.

Adam, as we have already seen, means Man.

Seth means appointed. Eve gave this name, to show her faith in the fact that God would deliver the promised Messiah through the appointed son.

Enosh means mortal. This emphasises once again that man is now mortal, because of sin.

Kenan means sorrow. The existence of sin causes sorrow. Imagine the sorrow of Adam and Eve at the death of their son, Abel. Death brings such sorrow that even Jesus was caused to weep at the tomb of his friend Lazarus.

Mahalalel means “the God who is to be praised”. We have noted earlier how all was not gloom and doom. There was a start to worship of the Lord God. Mahalalel’s name emphasises the existence of those who want to worship God in faith.

Jared means “shall come down”. This is one of the more puzzling names, until we put them all together below.

Enoch means “teaching”. It seems that Enoch was a teacher and prophet.

Methuselah means “his death shall bring”. We will see that there are two reasons for this. The first is that the Flood came the very year that Methuselah died. His death is prophetic, pointing to the way of salvation, and warning against doubt.

Lamech means “despairing”. It is perhaps significant that he died before he could see the salvation caused by the Flood. He was also a prophet, prophesying that Noah would “comfort us concerning our work and the toil of our hands, because of the ground which the LORD has cursed.” This is significant as well, because Noah means rest, or comfort.

them Mankind in the day they were created. 3 And Adam lived one hundred and thirty years, and begot a son in his own likeness, after his image, and named him Seth. 4 After he begot Seth, the days of Adam were eight hundred years; and he had sons and daughters. 5 So all the days that Adam lived were nine hundred and thirty years; and he died.

6 Seth lived one hundred and five years, and begot Enosh. 7 After he begot Enosh, Seth lived eight hundred and seven years, and had sons and daughters. 8 So all the days of Seth were nine hundred and twelve years; and he died.

9 Enosh lived ninety years, and begot Cainan. 10 After he begot Cainan, Enosh lived eight hundred and fifteen years, and had sons and daughters. 11 So all the days of Enosh were nine hundred and five years; and he died.

12 Cainan lived seventy years, and begot Mahalalel. 13 After he begot Mahalalel, Cainan lived eight hundred and forty years, and had sons and daughters. 14 So all the days of Cainan were nine hundred and ten years; and he died.

15 Mahalalel lived sixty-five years, and begot Jared. 16 After he begot Jared, Mahalalel lived eight hundred and thirty years, and had sons and daughters. 17 So all the days of Mahalalel were eight hundred and ninety-five years; and he died.

There is a passage of the Bible that contains all these names one after the other. It is 1 Chronicles 1:1-3 "Adam, Seth, Enosh, Cainan, Mahalalel, Jared, Enoch, Methuselah, Lamech, Noah". Now that we know the meanings, this passage can be read as follows:

Man is appointed mortal sorrow, but the God who is to be praised shall come down, teaching that His death shall bring the despairing rest.

This is remarkable that in the very names of the ten patriarchs from before the Flood, through whose line God was to send the Messiah, should spell out a dramatic statement of the Gospel.

18 Jared lived one hundred and sixty-two years, and begot Enoch. 19 After he begot Enoch, Jared lived eight hundred years, and had sons and daughters. 20 So all the days of Jared were nine hundred and sixty-two years; and he died.

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

25 Methuselah lived one hundred and eighty-seven years, and begot Lamech. 26 After he begot Lamech, Methuselah lived seven hundred and eighty-two years, and had sons and daughters. 27 So all the days of Methuselah were nine hundred and sixty-nine years; and he died.

28 Lamech lived one hundred and eighty-two years, and had a son. 29 And he called his name Noah, saying, "This one will comfort us concerning our work and the toil of our hands, because of the ground which the LORD has cursed." 30 After he begot Noah, Lamech lived five hundred and ninety-five years, and had sons and daughters. 31 So all the days of Lamech were seven hundred and seventy-seven years; and he died.

32 And Noah was five hundred years old, and Noah begot Shem, Ham, and Japheth.

## **Chapter 6**

### *The Wickedness and Judgment of Man*

1 Now it came to pass, when men began to multiply on the face of the earth, and daughters were born to them, 2 that the sons of God saw the daughters of men, that they were beautiful; and they took wives for themselves of all whom they chose.

3 And the LORD said, "My Spirit shall not strive with man forever, for he is indeed flesh; yet his days shall be one hundred and twenty years." 4 There were giants on the earth in those days,

and also afterward, when the sons of God came in to the daughters of men and they bore children to them. Those were the mighty men who were of old, men of renown.

5 Then the LORD saw that the wickedness of man was great in the earth, and that every intent of the thoughts of his heart was only evil continually. 6 And the LORD was sorry that He had made man on the earth, and He was grieved in His heart. 7 So the LORD said, "I will destroy man whom I have created from the face of the earth, both man and beast, creeping thing and birds of the air, for

What was it that saved Noah? It was grace, just as it is today. The Apostle Paul says "For by grace you have been saved through faith, and that not of yourselves; it is the gift of God, not of works, lest anyone should boast." (Ephesians 2:8,9) No one is saved by the good works that they do themselves. If this were a treatise on saving faith, then I could expand on this over and over. Those of you who are saved know the references: "All our righteousnesses are like filthy rags" (Isaiah 64:6). For now, suffice it to say that Noah was a man saved by the Gospel of Jesus Christ, before Jesus was born into history, before God had separated his chosen people Israel, before even the destruction of the world in the Flood.

In the Bible, the word grace is synonymous with the word favour. A favour is something done when there is no means of repayment. We hear people asking "Will you do me a favour?" If a favour is done, there is no payment. I know that I needed a favour from God. I couldn't save myself. God did me a favour. He saved me, by sending His Son Jesus Christ to die for me. Even the faith I have to believe this came from God Himself.

By faith Noah, being divinely warned of things not yet seen, moved with godly fear, prepared an ark for the saving of his household, by which he condemned the world and became heir of the righteousness which is according to faith. (Hebrews 11:7)

It was faith that enabled Noah to do what he did. It is true that he was warned by God – "his days shall be one hundred and twenty years" (v3) – but Noah had never seen a Flood. Such an event had never happened before. He built the Ark because of faith.

I am sorry that I have made them.” 8 But Noah found grace in the eyes of the LORD.

#### *Noah Pleases God*

9 This is the genealogy of Noah. Noah was a just man, perfect in his generations. Noah walked with God. 10 And Noah begot three sons: Shem, Ham, and Japheth.

11 The earth also was corrupt before God, and the earth was filled with violence. 12 So God looked upon the earth, and indeed it was corrupt; for all flesh had corrupted their way on the earth.

#### *The Ark Prepared*

13 And God said to Noah, “The end of all flesh has come before Me, for the earth is filled with violence through them; and behold, I will destroy them with the earth. 14 Make yourself an

Notice that the Ark is made with three floors, and a “window” opening at the top, which would allow circulation of air. The next supposed problem thrown at creationists is the suggestion that Noah would never have been able to fit the millions of species onto the Ark. This point is invalid. We have already discussed how the Bible speaks of *kinds* (or *baramins*) rather than *species* – a more modern word. The baraminologists are suggesting that the total number of kinds is, in fact, much less – maybe as little as 16000. Remember also that it is only kinds of land animals and birds that are necessary, plus the food and bedding they might need. Again, critics ask about dinosaurs. It is well established that the vast majority of dinosaurs were small. Maybe the really large sauropods, such as Brachiosaurus, Apatosaurus and Diplodocus were all part of the same baramin. It must also be said that it is unlikely that fully grown, adult animals would be the most appropriate animals to take. Rather young adult animals, at the beginning of the reproductive capabilities, would be the logical choice. No one would take senior citizens to repopulate the earth!



ark of gopherwood; make rooms in the ark, and cover it inside and outside with pitch. 15 And this is how you shall make it: The length of the ark shall be three hundred cubits, its width fifty cubits, and its height thirty cubits. 16 You shall make a window for the ark, and you shall finish it to a cubit from above; and set the door of the ark in its side. You shall make it with lower, second, and third decks. 17 And behold, I Myself am bringing floodwaters on the earth, to destroy from under heaven all flesh in which is the breath of life; everything that is on the earth shall die. 18 But I will establish My covenant with you; and you shall go into the ark—you, your sons, your wife, and your sons' wives with you. 19 And of every living thing of all flesh you shall bring two of every sort into the ark, to keep them alive with you; they shall be male and female. 20 Of the birds after their kind, of animals after their kind, and of every creeping thing of the earth after its kind, two of every kind will come to you to keep them alive. 21 And you shall take for yourself of all food that is eaten, and you shall gather it to yourself; and it shall be food for you and for them.”

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

## Chapter 7

### *The Great Flood*

1 Then the LORD said to Noah, “Come into the ark, you and all your household, because I have seen that you are righteous before Me in this generation. 2 You shall take with you seven each of every clean animal, a male and his female; two each of animals that are unclean, a male and his female; 3 also seven each of birds of the air, male and female, to keep the species alive on the face of all the earth. 4 For after seven more days I will cause it to rain on the earth forty days and forty nights, and I will destroy from the face of the earth all living things that I have made.” 5 And Noah did according to all that the LORD

There is a lot of repetition in this account of the Flood. Wherever there is repetition, it is usually the case that God is trying to get an important lesson home – usually He is emphasising the facts. It is this very repetition that aids us in our interpretation of these verses. Indeed, no interpretation is necessary. Even liberal scholars agree that the writer of this passage must have been trying to convey that the sequence of events was exactly as written. We need to underline these points:

- There were just eight people saved, because of the faith of Noah.
- Noah's three sons were Shem, Ham and Japheth, the ancestors of all races of people.
- On the ark were beasts, cattle, creeping things and birds. This would seem to include at least all land based vertebrates.
- Note that the animals enter two by two, each after its *kind* or *baramin*. This does not mean that two of every species was saved.
- The animals were male and female, emphasising again the importance of the two genders.
- The animals came to Noah – he did not have to collect them.

commanded him. 6 Noah was six hundred years old when the floodwaters were on the earth.

7 So Noah, with his sons, his wife, and his sons' wives, went into the ark because of the waters of the flood. 8 Of clean animals, of animals that are unclean, of birds, and of everything that creeps on the earth, 9 two by two they went into the ark to Noah, male and female, as God had commanded Noah. 10 And it came to pass after seven days that the waters of the flood were on the earth. 11 In the six hundredth year of Noah's life, in the second month, the seventeenth day of the month, on that day all the fountains of the great deep were broken up, and the windows of heaven were opened. 12 And the rain was on the earth forty days and forty nights.

13 On the very same day Noah and Noah's sons, Shem, Ham, and Japheth, and Noah's wife and the three wives of his sons with them, entered the ark— 14 they and every beast after its kind, all cattle after their kind, every creeping thing that creeps on the

Notice also that the door of the Ark had to be closed from the outside. “The LORD shut him in”. If the door had not been shut, Noah and his family would have drowned. God made sure the door was closed.

The Ark is very much a type of Christ. Thus we can say that our salvation is from God.

earth after its kind, and every bird after its kind, every bird of every sort. 15 And they went into the ark to Noah, two by two, of all flesh in which is the breath of life. 16 So those that entered, male and female of all flesh, went in as God had commanded him; and the LORD shut him in.

17 Now the flood was on the earth forty days. The waters increased and lifted up the ark, and it rose high above the earth. 18 The waters prevailed and greatly increased on the earth, and the ark moved about on the surface of the waters. 19 And the waters prevailed exceedingly on the earth, and all the high hills under the whole heaven were covered. 20 The waters prevailed fifteen cubits upward, and the mountains were covered. 21 And all flesh died that moved on the earth: birds and cattle and beasts and every creeping thing that creeps on the earth, and every man. 22 All in whose nostrils was the breath of the spirit of life, all that was on the dry land, died. 23 So He destroyed all living things

Before the Flood, there were hills and valleys. Now there are mountains, capped with snow, and deep rift valleys. In the New King James Version, Psalm 104: 8 reads “They went up over the mountains; They went down into the valleys, To the place which You founded for them.” However, the New American Standard Version seems to be closer to the original, reading “The mountains rose; the valleys sank down To the place which You established for them.” The sense of the verse is that the Flood itself caused mountains to rise, and valleys, or perhaps ocean trenches, to sink. This helps to answer the old chestnut: where did all the water go after the Flood. The answer is that it is still here. It was just accommodated, by changes in the structure of the crust.

which were on the face of the ground: both man and cattle, creeping thing and bird of the air. They were destroyed from the earth. Only Noah and those who were with him in the ark remained alive. 24 And the waters prevailed on the earth one hundred and fifty days.

## **Chapter 8**

### *Noah's Deliverance*

1 Then God remembered Noah, and every living thing, and all the animals that were with him in the ark. And God made a wind to pass over the earth, and the waters subsided. 2 The fountains of the deep and the windows of heaven were also stopped, and the rain from heaven was restrained. 3 And the waters receded continually from the earth. At the end of the hundred and fifty days the waters decreased. 4 Then the ark rested in the seventh month, the seventeenth day of the month, on 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, the tops of the mountains were seen.

6 So it came to pass, at the end of forty days, that Noah opened the window of the ark which he had made. 7 Then he sent out a raven, which kept going to and fro until the waters had dried up from the earth. 8 He also sent out from himself a dove, to see if the waters had receded from the face of the ground. 9 But the dove found no resting place for the sole of her foot, and she returned into the ark to him, for the waters were on the face of the whole earth. So he put out his hand and took her, and drew her into the ark to himself. 10 And he waited yet another seven days, and again he sent the dove out from the ark. 11 Then the dove came to him in the evening, and behold, a freshly plucked olive leaf was in her mouth; and Noah knew that the waters had receded from the earth. 12 So he waited yet another seven days and sent out the dove, which did not return again to him anymore.

Think of the evidence of fossils themselves. Dead bodies just do not hang around for long. Evolutionists require that large dinosaur fossils, for example, took thousands of years to become entombed. Imagine a half-fossilised dinosaur. Half its dead body is already fossilised and the other half of the skeleton is sticking out into the air. This just would not happen. We know that bones rot as does flesh, though not quite as quickly. For a complete skeleton to be fossilised, it would seem that the surrounding sedimentation would have to occur very swiftly. Such a scenario is, in my mind, best explained by the swirling sediments of the Flood. As Ken Ham has frequently observed; what would we expect to find if there really had been a world-wide Flood – “Billions of dead things buried in rock layers laid down in water all over the Earth.” And that is, of course, precisely what we do find!

13 And it came to pass in the six hundred and first year, in the first month, the first day of the month, that the waters were dried up from the earth; and Noah removed the covering of the ark and looked, and indeed the surface of the ground was dry. 14 And in the second month, on the twenty-seventh day of the month, the earth was dried.

15 Then God spoke to Noah, saying, 16 “Go out of the ark, you and your wife, and your sons and your sons’ wives with you. 17 Bring out with you every living thing of all flesh that is with you: birds and cattle and every creeping thing that creeps on the earth, so that they may abound on the earth, and be fruitful and multiply on the earth.” 18 So Noah went out, and his sons and his wife and his sons’ wives with him. 19 Every animal, every creeping thing, every bird, and whatever creeps on the earth, according to their families, went out of the ark.

#### *God’s Covenant with Creation*

20 Then Noah built an altar to the LORD, and took of every clean animal and of every clean bird, and offered burnt offerings on the altar. 21 And the LORD smelled a soothing aroma. Then

the LORD said in His heart, "I will never again curse the ground for man's sake, although the imagination of man's heart is evil from his youth; nor will I again destroy every living thing as I have done.

22 "While the earth remains,  
Seedtime and harvest,  
Cold and heat,  
Winter and summer,  
And day and night  
Shall not cease."

## Chapter 9

1 So God blessed Noah and his sons, and said to them: "Be fruitful and multiply, and fill the earth. 2 And the fear of you and the dread of you shall be on every beast of the earth, on every bird of the air, on all that move on the earth, and on all the fish of the sea. They are given into your hand. 3 Every moving thing that lives shall be food for you. I have given you all things, even as the

We have already learned that Noah was a man under grace, not under law. Therefore, God's covenant with Noah, and hence with all humankind, is a covenant of grace. It is not superseded by the Abrahamic Covenant. This added a specific promise to the faithful and to God's people. Nor was it superseded by the Mosaic Covenant, which symbolised and typified the seriousness of sin, by the requirements of the law and the sacrifices.

God's covenant with Noah is therefore rightly called the covenant of common grace. The graciousness of God is revealed to the whole of humanity. God makes specific promises to the whole of humanity. He lays down patterns of righteous government, which transcend all boundaries of nationality or religion. We can even go on to say that the Noahic Covenant is not superseded by the New Covenant in the Blood of Jesus Christ – rather this is a fulfilment of God's plans and purposes from the time of the Garden, and certainly seen through the beginning of this new post-Flood world.

green herbs. 4 But you shall not eat flesh with its life, that is, its blood. 5 Surely for your lifeblood I will demand a reckoning; from the hand of every beast I will require it, and from the hand of man. From the hand of every man's brother I will require the life of man.

6 "Whoever sheds man's blood,  
By man his blood shall be shed;  
For in the image of God  
He made man.

7 And as for you, be fruitful and multiply;  
Bring forth abundantly in the earth  
And multiply in it."

8 Then God spoke to Noah and to his sons with him, saying: 9 "And as for Me, behold, I establish My covenant with you and with your descendants after you, 10 and with every living creature that is with you: the birds, the cattle, and every beast of the earth with you, of all that go out of the ark, every beast of the earth. 11 Thus I establish My covenant with you: Never again shall all flesh be cut off by the waters of the flood; never again shall there be a flood to destroy the earth."

12 And God said: "This is the sign of the covenant which I make between Me and you, and every living creature that is with you, for perpetual generations: 13 I set My rainbow in the cloud, and it shall be for the sign of the covenant between Me and the earth. 14 It shall be, when I bring a cloud over the earth, that the rainbow 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; the waters shall never again become a flood to destroy all flesh. 16 The rainbow shall be in the cloud, and I will look on it to remember the everlasting covenant between God and every living creature of all flesh that is on the earth." 17 And God said to Noah, "This is the sign of the covenant which I have established between Me and all flesh that is on the earth."

*Noah and His Sons*

18 Now the sons of Noah who went out of the ark were Shem, Ham, and Japheth. And Ham was the father of Canaan. 19 These three were the sons of Noah, and from these the whole earth was populated.

20 And Noah began to be a farmer, and he planted a vineyard. 21 Then he drank of the wine and was drunk, and became uncovered in his tent. 22 And Ham, the father of Canaan, saw the nakedness of his father, and told his two brothers outside. 23 But Shem and Japheth took a garment, laid it on both their shoulders, and went backward and covered the nakedness of their father. Their faces were turned away, and they did not see their father's nakedness.

24 So Noah awoke from his wine, and knew what his younger son had done to him. 25 Then he said:

“ Cursed be Canaan;  
A servant of servants  
He shall be to his brethren.”

Ham's actions, though reprehensible and disrespectful, did not constitute a major "cursable" offence. We have to assume that Noah was aware, prophetically or otherwise, of greater offences either already caused or soon to be caused by Canaan. That Canaan is specifically cursed also gives the lie to the theory that the curse caused blackness – Canaanites were not black.

Canaanites later in the Bible were the usurpers of the land that God had promised to Abraham. The Israelites were told completely to destroy these Canaanites, because their worship of false gods was particularly offensive to God. The failure of the Israelites completely to destroy the Canaanites was a major source of problems throughout Israel's history. Nevertheless, we can see proof that the curse applies only because of evil among individuals, not to a whole race. For example, Rahab of Jericho was a Canaanite, yet she ended up not only being spared when the Israelites attacked Jericho, but is listed as an ancestor of Jesus



26 And he said:  
“ Blessed be the LORD,  
The God of Shem,  
And may Canaan be his servant.

27 May God enlarge Japheth,  
And may he dwell in the tents of Shem;  
And may Canaan be his servant.”

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

## Chapter 10

### *Nations Descended from Noah*

1 Now this is the genealogy of the sons of Noah: Shem, Ham, and Japheth. And sons were born to them after the flood.

2 The sons of Japheth were Gomer, Magog, Madai, Javan, Tubal, Meshech, and Tiras. 3 The sons of Gomer were Ashkenaz, Riphath, and Togarmah. 4 The sons of Javan were Elishah, Tarshish, Kittim, and Dodanim. 5 From these the coastland peoples of the Gentiles were separated into their lands, everyone according to his language, according to their families, into their nations.

6 The sons of Ham were Cush, Mizraim, Put, and Canaan. 7 The sons of Cush were Seba, Havilah, Sabtah, Raamah, and Sabtechah; and the sons of Raamah were Sheba and Dedan.

8 Cush begot Nimrod; he began to be a mighty one on the earth. 9 He was a mighty hunter before the LORD; therefore it is said, “Like Nimrod the mighty hunter before the LORD.” 10 And the beginning of his kingdom was Babel, Erech, Accad, and Calneh, in the land of Shinar. 11 From that land he went to Assyria and

Cush's most famous son was Nimrod. The genealogies break off, to give something of a story about Nimrod. We will briefly analyse this, though some more detail will be retained for Genesis 11. Nimrod, we are told, became "a mighty one on the Earth". This would suggest a warrior. The fact that so many cities of his are listed, suggests that he was a military leader, setting up a military dictatorship. The phrase "mighty hunter before the LORD" is better translated as "mighty hunter *in the face of* the LORD." His actions were those of rebellion against God. As one of his main cities was Babylon, it seems appropriate to link him with the Tower of Babel incident. It should be noted that some of his cities were in Assyria. This implies that he invaded that territory. This would clearly have to be *after* the descendants of Asshur, the Assyrians, had moved into that area.

built Nineveh, Rehoboth Ir, Calah, 12 and Resen between Nineveh and Calah (that is the principal city).

13 Mizraim begot Ludim, Anamim, Lehabim, Naphtuhim, 14 Pathrusim, and Casluhim (from whom came the Philistines and Caphtorim).

15 Canaan begot Sidon his firstborn, and Heth; 16 the Jebusite, the Amorite, and the Girgashite; 17 the Hivite, the Arkite, and the Sinite; 18 the Arvadite, the Zemarite, and the Hamathite. Afterward the families of the Canaanites were dispersed. 19 And the border of the Canaanites was from Sidon as you go toward Gerar, as far as Gaza; then as you go toward Sodom, Gomorrah, Admah, and Zeboiim, as far as Lasha. 20 These were the sons of Ham, according to their families, according to their languages, in their lands and in their nations.

21 And children were born also to Shem, the father of all the children of Eber, the brother of Japheth the elder. 22 The sons of Shem were Elam, Asshur, Arphaxad, Lud, and Aram. 23 The sons of Aram were Uz, Hul, Gether, and Mash. 24 Arphaxad begot Salah, and Salah begot Eber. 25 To Eber were born two sons: the name of one was Peleg, for in his days the earth was divided; and his brother's name was Joktan. 26 Joktan begot Almodad,

*Have you read **Genesis** lately? (NKJV)*

11

Sheleph, Hazarmaveth, Jerah, 27 Hadoram, Uzal, Diklah, 28 Obal, Abimael, Sheba, 29 Ophir, Havilah, and Jobab. All these were the sons of Joktan. 30 And their dwelling place was from Mesha as you go toward Sephar, the mountain of the east. 31 These were the sons of Shem, according to their families, according to their languages, in their lands, according to their nations.

32 These were the families of the sons of Noah, according to their generations, in their nations; and from these the nations were divided on the earth after the flood.

## Chapter 11

### *The Tower of Babel*

1 Now the whole earth had one language and 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 Then they said to one another, "Come, let us make bricks and bake them thoroughly." They had brick for stone, and they had asphalt for mortar. 4 And they said, "Come, let us build ourselves a city,

It is important not to underestimate the Tower of Babel incident. This incident is not a local myth affecting a small group of people. The incident affected the entire population of the world, and, as such, was just as global in its extent as the Flood.

When I read about God's response to the people at Babel, I am reminded of Galatians 6:7. "Do not be deceived, God is not mocked; for whatever a man sows, that he will also reap." God's command was for mankind to fill the Earth. Mankind was attempting to resist that command. God was not to be thwarted, so He forced the people to scatter, by confusing their languages. If they had obeyed God, they would have had the whole world, but communications would have been so much easier. As it was, work on the Tower of Babel quickly came to a halt. One worker said to another, "Pass me the hammer, Jim!", but the other person heard "Accordez moi le marteau, Jacques!". It was obvious to all that they would not be able to work together.

## 11

*Have you read **Genesis** lately? (NKJV)*

and a tower whose top is in the heavens; let us make a name for ourselves, lest we be scattered abroad over the face of the whole earth.”

5 But the LORD came down to see the city and the tower which the sons of men had built. 6 And the LORD said, “Indeed the people are one and they all have one language, and this is what they begin to do; now nothing that they propose to do will be withheld from them. 7 Come, let Us go down and there confuse their language, that they may not understand one another’s speech.” 8 So the LORD scattered them abroad from there over the face of all the earth, and they ceased building the city. 9 Therefore its name is called Babel, because there the LORD confused the language of all the earth; and from there the LORD scattered them abroad over the face of all the earth.

### *Shem’s Descendants*

10 This is the genealogy of Shem: Shem was one hundred years old, and begot Arphaxad two years after the flood. 11 After he begot Arphaxad, Shem lived five hundred years, and begot sons and daughters.

This genealogy appears to be of incredible importance. The structure of the genealogy is similar to that of Genesis 5. We argued that the Genesis 5 genealogy cannot contain gaps, or the meaning of the names, and the repetition of the genealogies in 1 Chronicles 1 and Luke 3 would not make sense. Because this Genesis 11 genealogy is of similar format to Genesis 5, it is reasonable to suppose that this genealogy also contains no gaps. The purpose of the genealogy appears to be to connect the events of the creation, Flood and Babel, with the known real history of Abraham. Although this work concludes with Genesis 11, this should not be used as an excuse to suppose that the first section of Genesis is of more or lesser importance than chapters 12 to 50. Indeed, it is because Genesis 12 to 50 is history, and Genesis 1 to 11 reads as the same style, that we can confidently state that Genesis 1 to 11 is also history.

*Have you read **Genesis** lately? (NKJV)*

11

12 Arphaxad lived thirty-five years, and begot Salah. 13 After he begot Salah, Arphaxad lived four hundred and three years, and begot sons and daughters.

14 Salah lived thirty years, and begot Eber. 15 After he begot Eber, Salah lived four hundred and three years, and begot sons and daughters.

16 Eber lived thirty-four years, and begot Peleg. 17 After he begot Peleg, Eber lived four hundred and thirty years, and begot sons and daughters.

18 Peleg lived thirty years, and begot Reu. 19 After he begot Reu, Peleg lived two hundred and nine years, and begot sons and daughters.

20 Reu lived thirty-two years, and begot Serug. 21 After he begot Serug, Reu lived two hundred and seven years, and begot sons and daughters.

22 Serug lived thirty years, and begot Nahor. 23 After he begot Nahor, Serug lived two hundred years, and begot sons and daughters.

24 Nahor lived twenty-nine years, and begot Terah. 25 After he begot Terah, Nahor lived one hundred and nineteen years, and begot sons and daughters.

26 Now Terah lived seventy years, and begot Abram, Nahor, and Haran.

#### *Terah's Descendants*

27 This is the genealogy of Terah: Terah begot Abram, Nahor, and Haran. Haran begot Lot. 28 And Haran died before his father Terah in his native land, in Ur of the Chaldeans. 29 Then Abram and Nahor took 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 his son Abram and his grandson Lot, the son of Haran, and his daughter-in-law Sarai, his son Abram's wife,

and they went out with them from Ur of the Chaldeans to go to the land of Canaan; and they came to Haran and dwelt there. 32 So the days of Terah were two hundred and five years, and Terah died in Haran.

## Chapter 12

### *Promises to Abram*

1 Now the LORD had said to Abram:

“Get out of your country,  
From your family  
And from your father’s house,

The New Testament looks back to Abraham as an example of faith. Many evangelical Christians teach a thoroughly sound position on this – but they neglect to mention that we cannot understand the life of Abraham without a belief in the literal history of Genesis 1 – 11. Abraham was born into a situation of paganism, in the aftermath of the evil events of the Tower of Babel incident. When he was called by God, people were no longer used to hearing God’s voice. So Abraham’s link to the past was through the lineage of his (pagan) father, Terah. Believing the first eleven chapters of Genesis as history helps us to understand several important facts about Abraham. i. It was acceptable in those early generations for him to marry his half-sister, Sarah, because the genetic load was not yet great enough for God’s later sanction on such marriages, at the time of Moses. ii. Abraham’s (and Sarah’s) longevity can be understood, in the context of the gradually decreasing longevities of the patriarchs after the Flood. iii. Abraham and Sarah were therefore still well into child-bearing age at the time of Abraham’s calling, which gives all the more poignancy to the statement that Sarah was barren. Without these insights, certain aspects of Abraham’s life become difficult to imagine, or else take on an air of unreality. With an acceptance of Genesis 1-11, we can see more clearly the historicity of the account of Abraham, and therefore its truth as a historical narrative.

To a land that I will show you.

2 I will make you a great nation;  
I will bless you  
And make your name great;  
And you shall be a blessing.

3 I will bless those who bless you,  
And I will curse him who curses you;  
And in you all the families of the earth shall be blessed.”

4 So Abram departed as the LORD had spoken to him, and Lot went with him. And Abram was seventy-five years old when he departed from Haran. 5 Then Abram took Sarai his wife and Lot his brother’s son, and all their possessions that they had gathered, and the people whom they had acquired in Haran, and they departed to go to the land of Canaan. So they came to the land of Canaan. 6 Abram passed through the land to the place of Shechem, as far as the terebinth tree of Moreh. And the Canaanites were then in the land.

7 Then the LORD appeared to Abram and said, “To your descendants I will give this land.” And there he built an altar to the LORD, who had appeared to him. 8 And he moved from there to the mountain east of Bethel, and he pitched his tent with Bethel on the west and Ai on the east; there he built an altar to the LORD and called on the name of the LORD. 9 So Abram journeyed, going on still toward the South.

#### *Abram in Egypt*

10 Now there was a famine in the land, and Abram went down to Egypt to dwell there, for the famine was severe in the land. 11 And it came to pass, when he was close to entering Egypt, that he said to Sarai his wife, “Indeed I know that you are a woman of beautiful countenance. 12 Therefore it will happen, when the Egyptians see you, that they will say, ‘This is his wife’; and they

Abraham's witness was severely damaged by this episode in Egypt. Notice what consequences came from his foolish lies. i. He had been told to dwell in the new land that he had been sent to. God did not tell him to live there only while the going was good. His actions illustrated a lack of faith and commitment. ii. The Egyptians were later to become a problem to the Hebrews. Maybe some of their antipathy started with Abraham's lies. iii. There was later to be a problem, because of Abraham having a son with Hagar. Hagar was Egyptian. Where did they acquire her? She would seem to have come as one of the female servants mentioned in 12:16. Think of how much better things would have been, had Abraham demonstrated more faithfulness.

will kill me, but they will let you live. 13 Please say you are my sister, that it may be well with me for your sake, and that I may live because of you."

14 So it was, when Abram came into Egypt, that the Egyptians saw the woman, that she was very beautiful. 15 The princes of Pharaoh also saw her and commended her to Pharaoh. And the woman was taken to Pharaoh's house. 16 He treated Abram well for her sake. He had sheep, oxen, male donkeys, male and female servants, female donkeys, and camels.

17 But 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 you have done to me? Why did you

In returning to what he was supposed to do, it is significant that Abraham returned "to the place where his tent had been at the beginning." It is often the case that, as part of getting back on track with God, we need to return to the place or situation where we last knew His presence.

This action helped Abraham to deal more faithfully in the problem he had with Lot. He should not have brought Lot with him, because God had told him to leave his family. But at least he was now prepared to leave things in God's hands, by giving Lot a choice of direction, instead of once more trying to manipulate the situation.



not tell me that she was your wife? 19 Why did you say, 'She is my sister'? I might have taken her as my wife. Now therefore, here is your wife; take her and go your way." 20 So Pharaoh commanded his men concerning him; and they sent him away, with his wife and all that he had.

## Chapter 13

### *Abram Inherits Canaan*

1 Then Abram went up from Egypt, he and his wife and all that he had, and Lot with him, to the South. 2 Abram was very rich in livestock, in silver, and in gold. 3 And he went on his journey from the South as far as Bethel, to the place where his tent had been at the beginning, between Bethel and Ai, 4 to the place of the altar which he had made there at first. And there Abram called on the name of the LORD.

5 Lot also, who went with Abram, had flocks and herds and tents. 6 Now the land was not able to support them, that they might dwell together, for their possessions were so great that they could not dwell together. 7 And there was strife between the herdsmen of Abram's livestock and the herdsmen of Lot's livestock. The Canaanites and the Perizzites then dwelt in the land.

The chickens are coming home to roost! Some of the mistakes that Abraham has made in the past are now coming back to haunt him. Abraham was not supposed to bring any relatives with him - he was supposed to leave his family. However, he brought his nephew Lot with him. Now Lot was to cause problems for Abraham.

Abraham dealt with this new problem in a much more mature way than his faithlessness in Egypt. He leaves answers in the hands of God, rather than trying to sort it out himself. He had the confidence to allow Lot to choose for himself where he would live.

Notice that Lot's decision making was poor. He chose what seemed best to his eyes. There was no attempt by Lot to ask for advice, or to seek God's guidance.

## 14

*Have you read **Genesis** lately? (NKJV)*

8 So Abram said to Lot, "Please let there be no strife between you and me, and between my herdsmen and your herdsmen; for we are brethren. 9 Is not the whole land before you? Please separate from me. If you take the left, then I will go to the right; or, if you go to the right, then I will go to the left."

10 And Lot lifted his eyes and saw all the plain of Jordan, that it was well watered everywhere (before the LORD destroyed Sodom and Gomorrah) like the garden of the LORD, like the land of Egypt as you go toward Zoar. 11 Then Lot chose for himself all the plain of Jordan, and Lot journeyed east. And they separated from each other. 12 Abram dwelt in the land of Canaan, and Lot dwelt in the cities of the plain and pitched his tent even as far as Sodom. 13 But the men of Sodom were exceedingly wicked and sinful against the LORD.

14 And the LORD said to Abram, after Lot had separated from him: "Lift your eyes now and look from the place where you are—northward, southward, eastward, and westward; 15 for all the land which you see I give to you and your descendants forever. 16 And I will make your descendants as the dust of the earth; so that if a man could number the dust of the earth, then your descendants also could be numbered. 17 Arise, walk in the land through its length and its width, for I give it to you."

18 Then Abram moved his tent, and went and dwelt by the terebinth trees of Mamre, which are in Hebron, and built an altar there to the LORD.

## Chapter 14

### *Lot's Captivity and Rescue*

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 they made war with Bera king of Sodom, Birsha king of Gomorrah, Shinab king of Admah, Shemeber king of Zeboiim, and the king of Bela (that is, Zoar). 3 All these joined

Having been concentrating on Abraham's little world, we are suddenly made aware of Abraham's connections with the world outside. The first named enemy king was Amraphel, king of Shinar. Shinar is the region where Babel had been built. It is possible that this war was a last-ditch attempt, by kings following the example of their predecessor, Nimrod, to unite the people under a new military rule, and prevent their scattering over the Earth. The attempt was in vain. Abraham's actions turned out to be blessed by God, even though he was aiding yet another evil king, the king of Sodom.

together in the Valley of Siddim (that is, the Salt Sea). 4 Twelve years they served Chedorlaomer, and in the thirteenth year they rebelled.

5 In the fourteenth year Chedorlaomer and the kings that were with him came and attacked the Rephaim in Ashteroth Karnaim, the Zuzim in Ham, the Emim in Shaveh Kiriathaim, 6 and the Horites in their mountain of Seir, as far as El Paran, which is by the wilderness. 7 Then they turned back and came to En Mishpat (that is, Kadesh), and attacked all the country of the Amalekites, and also the Amorites who dwelt in Hazezon Tamar.

8 And the king of Sodom, the king of Gomorrah, the king of Admah, the king of Zeboiim, and the king of Bela (that is, Zoar) went out and joined together in battle in the Valley of Siddim 9 against Chedorlaomer king of Elam, Tidal king of nations, Amraphel king of Shinar, and Arioch king of Ellasar—four kings against five. 10 Now the Valley of Siddim was full of asphalt pits; and the kings of Sodom and Gomorrah fled; some fell there, and the remainder fled to the mountains. 11 Then they took all the goods of Sodom and Gomorrah, and all their provisions, and went their way. 12 They also took Lot, Abram's brother's son who dwelt in Sodom, and his goods, and departed.

13 Then one who had escaped came and told Abram the Hebrew, for he dwelt by the terebinth trees of Mamre the Amorite, brother of Eshcol and brother of Aner; and they were allies with Abram. 14 Now when Abram heard that his brother

The contrast between Abraham's dealings with Bera, King of Sodom, and Melchizedek, King of Salem, is very instructive. Although Abraham's actions have been of benefit to Bera, Abraham will not be associated with the wicked king. He will not take any possessions from Bera, because he does not want, at a later date, to be accused of having benefited from evil.

On the other hand, Abraham recognises Melchizedek as a man of God. Despite the story of the Bible focusing on Abraham, this event indicates that there were worshippers of the Lord elsewhere in the world at that time. Much speculation has been made on who Melchizedek is. I don't think there is a mystery. He is simply a follower of God. He combines the offices of both priest and king - something that would not be possible under the Mosaic law - and therefore a combination not seen again, until its fulfilment in the person of Jesus Christ. In a sense, therefore, Abraham's paying of respect to Melchizedek is like a paying of respects to the Saviour Himself. That is why Abraham gives him his tithe.

was taken captive, he armed his three hundred and eighteen trained servants who were born in his own house, and went in pursuit as far as Dan. 15 He divided his forces against them by night, and he and his servants attacked them and pursued them as far as Hobah, which is north of Damascus. 16 So he brought back all the goods, and also brought back his brother Lot and his goods, as well as the women and the people.

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

#### *Abram and Melchizedek*

18 Then Melchizedek king of Salem brought out bread and wine; he was the priest of God Most High. 19 And he blessed him and said:

*Have you read **Genesis** lately? (NKJV)*

15

“ Blessed be Abram of God Most High,  
Possessor of heaven and earth;

20 And blessed be God Most High,  
Who has delivered your enemies into your hand.”

And he gave him a tithe of all.

21 Now the king of Sodom said to Abram, “Give me the persons, and take the goods for yourself.”

22 But Abram said to the king of Sodom, “I have raised my hand to the LORD, God Most High, the Possessor of heaven and earth, 23 that I will take nothing, from a thread to a sandal strap, and that I will not take anything that is yours, lest you should say, ‘I have made Abram rich’— 24 except only what the young men have eaten, and the portion of the men who went with me: Aner, Eshcol, and Mamre; let them take their portion.”

## **Chapter 15**

### *God’s Covenant with Abram*

1 After these things the word of the LORD came to Abram in a vision, saying, “Do not be afraid, Abram. I am your shield, your exceedingly great reward.”

2 But Abram said, “Lord GOD, what will You give me, seeing I go childless, and the heir of my house is Eliezer of Damascus?” 3 Then Abram said, “Look, You have given me no offspring; indeed one born in my house is my heir!”

4 And behold, the word of the LORD came to him, saying, “This one shall not be your heir, but one who will come from your own body shall be your heir.” 5 Then He brought him outside and said, “Look now toward heaven, and count the stars if you are able to number them.” And He said to him, “So shall your descendants be.”

This amazing covenant that God makes with Abraham is a type of His covenant with us, through Jesus. In those days, covenants were not made by signing a piece of paper. They were made by sacrificing a range of animals to the gods of the two participants in the covenant. Walking in and out between the animal pieces was supposed to invoke the witness of the deities concerned, therefore enforcing adherence to the covenant. The idea was that breaking the covenant would incur the wrath of the covenant-breaker's god.

In this case, however, Abraham is unable to take part. Therefore, the covenant is made solely by the one true God Himself! Our salvation does not depend on our work, or our ability to keep a covenant. For us, it is an unconditional event, sealed only by our faith in the One who has "signed" the covenant with His own blood.

6 And he believed in the LORD, and He accounted it to him for righteousness.

7 Then He said to him, "I am the LORD, who brought you out of Ur of the Chaldeans, to give you this land to inherit it."

8 And he said, "Lord GOD, how shall I know that I will inherit it?"

9 So He said to him, "Bring Me a three-year-old heifer, a three-year-old female goat, a three-year-old ram, a turtledove, and a young pigeon." 10 Then he brought all these to Him and cut them in two, down the middle, and placed each piece opposite the other; but he did not cut the birds in two. 11 And when the vultures came down on the carcasses, Abram drove them away.

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

But in the fourth generation they shall return here, for the iniquity of the Amorites is not yet complete.”

17 And it came to pass, when the sun went down and it was dark, that behold, there appeared a smoking oven and a burning torch that passed between those pieces. 18 On the same day the LORD made a covenant with Abram, saying:

“To your descendants I have given this land, from the river of Egypt to the great river, the River Euphrates— 19 the Kenites, the Kenezites, the Kadmonites, 20 the Hittites, the Perizzites, the Rephaim, 21 the Amorites, the Canaanites, the Girgashites, and the Jebusites.”

## Chapter 16

### *Hagar and Ishmael*

1 Now Sarai, Abram’s wife, had borne him no children. And she had an Egyptian maidservant whose name was Hagar. 2 So Sarai said to Abram, “See now, the LORD has restrained me from bearing children. Please, go in to my maid; perhaps I shall obtain children by her.” And Abram heeded the voice of Sarai. 3 Then Sarai, Abram’s wife, took Hagar her maid, the Egyptian, and gave her to her husband Abram to be his wife, after Abram had dwelt ten years in the land of Canaan. 4 So he went in to Hagar, and she

The whole sorry episode of Abraham and Sarah should never have happened. Notice that Hagar was “an Egyptian maidservant”. How did Abraham acquire her? She must have joined the party, when Abraham was thrown out of Egypt, after his unsuccessful and unfaithful sojourn there, during the famine.

One positive aspect of the story, however, is the illustration of just how faithful God is. He gives a promise to Ishmael, to “multiply your descendants” - a promise which would later be forgotten by Hagar.

conceived. And when she saw that she had conceived, her mistress became despised in her eyes.

5 Then Sarai said to Abram, "My wrong be upon you! I gave my maid into your embrace; and when she saw that she had conceived, I became despised in her eyes. The LORD judge between you and me."

6 So Abram said to Sarai, "Indeed your maid is in your hand; do to her as you please." And when Sarai dealt harshly with her, she fled from her presence.

7 Now the Angel of the LORD found her by a spring of water in the wilderness, by the spring on the way to Shur. 8 And He said, "Hagar, Sarai's maid, where have you come from, and where are you going?"

She said, "I am fleeing from the presence of my mistress Sarai."

9 The Angel of the LORD said to her, "Return to your mistress, and submit yourself under her hand." 10 Then the Angel of the LORD said to her, "I will multiply your descendants exceedingly, so that they shall not be counted for multitude." 11 And the Angel of the LORD said to her:

" Behold, you are with child,  
And you shall bear a son.  
You shall call his name Ishmael,  
Because the LORD has heard your affliction.

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

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



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

## **Chapter 17**

### *The Sign of the Covenant*

1 When Abram was ninety-nine years old, the LORD appeared to Abram and said to him, "I am Almighty God; walk before Me and be blameless. 2 And I will make My covenant between Me and you, and will multiply you exceedingly." 3 Then Abram fell on his face, and God talked with him, saying: 4 "As for Me, behold, My covenant is with you, and you shall be a father of many nations. 5 No longer shall your name be called Abram, but your name shall be Abraham; for I have made you a father of many nations. 6 I will make you exceedingly fruitful; and I will make nations of you, and kings shall come from you. 7 And I will establish My covenant between Me and you and your descendants after you in their generations, for an everlasting covenant, to be God to you and your descendants after you. 8 Also I give to you and your descendants after you the land in which you are a stranger, all the land of Canaan, as an everlasting possession; and I will be their God."

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

be circumcised, and My covenant shall be in your flesh for an everlasting covenant. 14 And the uncircumcised male child, who is not circumcised in the flesh of his foreskin, that person shall be cut off from his people; he has broken My covenant.”

15 Then God said to Abraham, “As for Sarai your wife, you shall not call her name Sarai, but Sarah shall be her name. 16 And I will bless her and also give you a son by her; then I will bless her, and she shall be a mother of nations; kings of peoples shall be from her.”

17 Then Abraham fell on his face and laughed, and said in his heart, “Shall a child be born to a man who is one hundred years old? And shall Sarah, who is ninety years old, bear a child?” 18 And Abraham said to God, “Oh, that Ishmael might live before You!”

19 Then God said: “No, Sarah your wife shall bear you a son, and you shall call his name Isaac; I will establish My covenant with him for an everlasting covenant, and with his descendants after him. 20 And as for Ishmael, I have heard you. Behold, I have blessed him, and will make him fruitful, and will multiply him exceedingly. He shall beget twelve princes, and I will make him a great nation. 21 But My covenant I will establish with Isaac, whom Sarah shall bear to you at this set time next year.” 22 Then He finished talking with him, and God went up from Abraham.

23 So Abraham took Ishmael his son, all who were born in his house and all who were bought with his money, every male

In a comment on chapter 12, we noted that, at that time, Sarah was well within child bearing age. That is no longer the case. Abraham is now 99; so Sarah is 89. This is the equivalent of about 49 years by today’s ages. It is likely, therefore, that Sarah’s age is beginning to make Abraham doubt whether God can keep his promise. So, even now, Abraham appeals on behalf of Ishmael (v18).

God, however, keeps His promises. It could be that God kept Abraham and Sarah waiting so long, so that childbearing would be humanly impossible, in order to demonstrate His power.

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

## Chapter 18

### *The Son of Promise*

1 Then the LORD appeared to him by the terebinth trees of Mamre, as he was sitting in the tent door in the heat of the day. 2 So he lifted his eyes and looked, and behold, three men were standing by him; and when he saw them, he ran from the tent door to meet them, and bowed himself to the ground, 3 and said, "My Lord, if I have now found favor in Your sight, do not pass on by Your servant. 4 Please let a little water be brought, and wash your feet, and rest yourselves under the tree. 5 And I will bring a morsel of bread, that you may refresh your hearts. After that you may pass by, inasmuch as you have come to your servant."

They said, "Do as you have said."

6 So Abraham hurried into the tent to Sarah and said, "Quickly, make ready three measures of fine meal; knead it and make cakes." 7 And Abraham ran to the herd, took a tender and good calf, gave it to a young man, and he hastened to prepare it. 8 So he took butter and milk and the calf which he had prepared, and

Abraham began his time in Canaan by worshipping God at the terebinth trees of Mamre. Now, at this critical point in his life, the LORD appears to Abraham by the same trees, in order to deliver a more personalised version of the promise.

set it before them; and he stood by them under the tree as they ate.

9 Then they said to him, "Where is Sarah your wife?"

So he said, "Here, in the tent."

10 And He said, "I will certainly return to you according to the time of life, and behold, Sarah your wife shall have a son."

(Sarah was listening in the tent door which was behind him.)

11 Now Abraham and Sarah were old, well advanced in age; and Sarah had passed the age of childbearing. 12 Therefore Sarah laughed within herself, saying, "After I have grown old, shall I have pleasure, my lord being old also?"

13 And the LORD said to Abraham, "Why did Sarah laugh, saying, 'Shall I surely bear a child, since I am old?' 14 Is anything too hard for the LORD? At the appointed time I will return to you, according to the time of life, and Sarah shall have a son."

15 But Sarah denied it, saying, "I did not laugh," for she was afraid.

And He said, "No, but you did laugh!"

#### *Abraham Intercedes for Sodom*

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

Abraham's remarkable prayer is an exercise in trying to understand the mind of God. It is not up to Abraham to chastise God, and his questioning - "Far be it from You... To slay the righteous with the wicked" - is not to be understood in that way. Instead, Abraham is working out the limits of God's wrath. It is interesting that Abraham finishes by asking for Sodom to be spared if only ten righteous people could be found. In the end, there weren't ten righteous in the city - just one; Lot.

22 Then the men turned away from there and went toward Sodom, but Abraham still stood before the LORD. 23 And Abraham came near and said, "Would You also destroy the righteous with the wicked? 24 Suppose there were fifty righteous within the city; would You also destroy the place and not spare it for the fifty righteous that were in it? 25 Far be it from You to do such a thing as this, to slay the righteous with the wicked, so that the righteous should be as the wicked; far be it from You! Shall not the Judge of all the earth do right?"

26 So the LORD said, "If I find in Sodom fifty righteous within the city, then I will spare all the place for their sakes."

27 Then Abraham answered and said, "Indeed now, I who am but dust and ashes have taken it upon myself to speak to the Lord: 28 Suppose there were five less than the fifty righteous; would You destroy all of the city for lack of five?"

So He said, "If I find there forty-five, I will not destroy it."

29 And he spoke to Him yet again and said, "Suppose there should be forty found there?"

So He said, "I will not do it for the sake of forty."

30 Then he said, "Let not the Lord be angry, and I will speak: Suppose thirty should be found there?"

So He said, "I will not do it if I find thirty there."

31 And he said, "Indeed now, I have taken it upon myself to speak to the Lord: Suppose twenty should be found there?"

So He said, "I will not destroy it for the sake of twenty."

32 Then he said, "Let not the Lord be angry, and I will speak but once more: Suppose ten should be found there?"

And He said, "I will not destroy it for the sake of ten." 33 So the LORD went His way as soon as He had finished speaking with Abraham; and Abraham returned to his place.

## Chapter 19

### *Sodom's Depravity*

1 Now the two angels came to Sodom in the evening, and Lot was sitting in the gate of Sodom. When Lot saw them, he rose to

The Bible is clear that Sodom is a place of sin. There were, no doubt, a number of sins that made this city, and its neighbour, Gomorrah, so notorious. We cannot, however, shy away from the fact that the principle sin is their sexual aberration. Henry Morris, in his commentary, *The Genesis Record*, says: "The intent of an occasional degenerate to commit homosexual rape is disgusting enough, even though sodomy is increasingly being accepted and promoted in our present day; but here we have a case in which all "the men of the city..." surrounded Lot's house with the intention to commit this crime against his guests.

Another noteworthy feature, however, is the gradual degeneration of Lot himself. The New Testament describes Lot as a "righteous man", and we will discuss this label later. However, note the change in Lot's choices. In Genesis 13:12, Lot merely "pitched his tent, even as far as Sodom". In Genesis 14:12, however, we read that he "dwelt in Sodom". His acceptance of the evil of Sodom was increasing, despite his notional "righteousness". In the current chapter, he is found "in the gate of Sodom"; a position only accorded to someone of leadership. Lot has therefore thrown his lot (no pun intended) into the affairs of this evil place. And his answer to the danger of homosexual rape is to offer his virgin daughters up for the men to rape, instead of his guests. Does Lot really see this a sort of lesser crime? What sort of father would make such an offer? Maybe his lack of parental care was partly responsible for the later unpleasant events of Genesis 19:30-38.

meet them, and he bowed himself with his face toward the ground. 2 And he said, "Here now, my lords, please turn in to your servant's house and spend the night, and wash your feet; then you may rise early and go on your way."

And they said, "No, but we will spend the night in the open square."

3 But he insisted strongly; so they turned in to him and entered his house. Then he made them a feast, and baked unleavened bread, and they ate.

4 Now before they lay down, the men of the city, the men of Sodom, both old and young, all the people from every quarter, surrounded the house. 5 And they called to Lot and said to him, "Where are the men who came to you tonight? Bring them out to us that we may know them carnally."

6 So Lot went out to them through the doorway, shut the door behind him, 7 and said, "Please, my brethren, do not do so wickedly! 8 See now, I have two daughters who have not known a man; please, let me bring them out to you, and you may do to them as you wish; only do nothing to these men, since this is the reason they have come under the shadow of my roof."

9 And they said, "Stand back!" Then they said, "This one came in to stay here, and he keeps acting as a judge; now we will deal worse with you than with them." So they pressed hard against the man Lot, and came near to break down the door. 10 But the men reached out their hands and pulled Lot into the house with them, and shut the door. 11 And they struck the men who were at the doorway of the house with blindness, both small and great, so that they became weary trying to find the door.

*Sodom and Gomorrah Destroyed*

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

As far as we know, Abraham never had any evidence of the answer to his prayers. He had no knowledge that Lot had been saved. He merely knew that Sodom and Gomorrah had been destroyed, and that, therefore, fewer than ten righteous people had been found. This fact underlines Abraham's faithfulness.

place, because the outcry against them has grown great before the face of the LORD, and the LORD has sent us to destroy it."

14 So Lot went out and spoke to his sons-in-law, who had married his daughters, and said, "Get up, get out of this place; for the LORD will destroy this city!" But to his sons-in-law he seemed to be joking.

15 When the morning dawned, the angels urged Lot to hurry, saying, "Arise, take your wife and your two daughters who are here, lest you be consumed in the punishment of the city." 16 And while he lingered, the men took hold of his hand, his wife's hand, and the hands of his two daughters, the LORD being merciful to him, and they brought him out and set him outside the city. 17 So it came to pass, when they had brought them outside, that he said, "Escape for your life! Do not look behind you nor stay anywhere in the plain. Escape to the mountains, lest you be destroyed."

18 Then Lot said to them, "Please, no, my lords! 19 Indeed now, your servant has found favor in your sight, and you have increased your mercy which you have shown me by saving my life; but I cannot escape to the mountains, lest some evil overtake me and I die. 20 See now, this city is near enough to flee to, and it is a little one; please let me escape there (is it not a little one?) and my soul shall live."

21 And he said to him, "See, I have favored you concerning this thing also, in that I will not overthrow this city for which you have spoken. 22 Hurry, escape there. For I cannot do anything until you arrive there."

Therefore the name of the city was called Zoar.



In 2 Peter 2:8, we read: “for that righteous man (Lot), dwelling among them, tormented his righteous soul from day to day by seeing and hearing their lawless deeds”. This comment is not a commendation of Lot. If he truly belonged to the Lord, as this comment suggests, then he should have acted on the torment of his soul. Instead, he accepted things as they were, and this ultimately led to his unwitting relationships with his own daughters. These problems were a direct consequence of the poor decisions that he took earlier in his life. Such disobedience has consequences, even for the “righteous”.

23 The sun had risen upon the earth when Lot entered Zoar.  
24 Then the LORD rained brimstone and fire on Sodom and Gomorrah, from the LORD out of the heavens. 25 So He overthrew those cities, all the plain, all the inhabitants of the cities, and what grew on the ground.

26 But his wife looked back behind him, and she became a pillar of salt.

27 And Abraham went early in the morning to the place where he had stood before the LORD. 28 Then he looked toward Sodom and Gomorrah, and toward all the land of the plain; and he saw, and behold, the smoke of the land which went up like the smoke of a furnace. 29 And it came to pass, when God destroyed the cities of the plain, that God remembered Abraham, and sent Lot out of the midst of the overthrow, when He overthrew the cities in which Lot had dwelt.

#### *The Descendants of Lot*

30 Then Lot went up out of Zoar and dwelt in the mountains, and his two daughters were with him; for he was afraid to dwell in Zoar. And he and his two daughters dwelt in a cave. 31 Now the firstborn said to the younger, “Our father is old, and there is no man on the earth to come in to us as is the custom of all the earth. 32 Come, let us make our father drink wine, and we will lie with him, that we may preserve the lineage of our father.” 33 So

they made their father drink wine that night. And the firstborn went in and lay with her father, and he did not know when she lay down or when she arose.

34 It happened on the next day that the firstborn said to the younger, "Indeed I lay with my father last night; let us make him drink wine tonight also, and you go in and lie with him, that we may preserve the lineage of our father." 35 Then they made their father drink wine that night also. And the younger arose and lay with him, and he did not know when she lay down or when she arose.

36 Thus both the daughters of Lot were with child by their father. 37 The firstborn bore a son and called his name Moab; he is the father of the Moabites to this day. 38 And the younger, she also bore a son and called his name Ben-Ammi; he is the father of the people of Ammon to this day.

## Chapter 20

### *Abraham and Abimelech*

1 And Abraham journeyed from there to the South, and dwelt between Kadesh and Shur, and stayed in Gerar. 2 Now Abraham

It is so hard to understand why the events of Genesis 20 happened. Abraham is committing almost the same error as he committed in Egypt, by not acknowledging Sarah as his wife. Once again, she gets taken into a king's harem. But think of the risks. Abraham and Sarah have had the promise of a son repeated to them, and now know that the birth is imminent - within a year. Therefore, Sarah could possibly already be pregnant. The whole course of God's promise could be put at risk (humanly speaking) by their foolish actions. But of course God's promise cannot be thwarted - and that is probably why God closed up the wombs of all the women in Abimelech's household. We are reminded, yet again, of the weaknesses even of people of faith. Once again, no one is saved by this incident, and, once again, believers suffer the humiliation of rebuke by unbelievers.

said of Sarah his wife, "She is my sister." And Abimelech king of Gerar sent and took Sarah.

3 But God came to Abimelech in a dream by night, and said to him, "Indeed you are a dead man because of the woman whom you have taken, for she is a man's wife."

4 But Abimelech had not come near her; and he said, "Lord, will You slay a righteous nation also? 5 Did he not say to me, 'She is my sister'? And she, even she herself said, 'He is my brother.' In the integrity of my heart and innocence of my hands I have done this."

6 And God said to him in a dream, "Yes, I know that you did this in the integrity of your heart. For I also withheld you from sinning against Me; therefore I did not let you touch her. 7 Now therefore, restore the man's wife; for he is a prophet, and he will pray for you and you shall live. But if you do not restore her, know that you shall surely die, you and all who are yours."

8 So Abimelech rose early in the morning, called all his servants, and told all these things in their hearing; and the men were very much afraid. 9 And Abimelech called Abraham and said to him, "What have you done to us? How have I offended you, that you have brought on me and on my kingdom a great sin? You have done deeds to me that ought not to be done." 10 Then Abimelech said to Abraham, "What did you have in view, that you have done this thing?"

11 And Abraham said, "Because I thought, surely the fear of God is not in this place; and they will kill me on account of my wife. 12 But indeed she is truly my sister. She is the daughter of my father, but not the daughter of my mother; and she became my wife. 13 And it came to pass, when God caused me to wander from my father's house, that I said to her, 'This is your kindness that you should do for me: in every place, wherever we go, say of me, "He is my brother."'"

14 Then Abimelech took sheep, oxen, and male and female servants, and gave them to Abraham; and he restored Sarah his wife to him. 15 And Abimelech said, "See, my land is before you;

The actual birth of Isaac is relatively uneventful. However, we are reminded of God's faithfulness; "The LORD visited Sarah as **He had said**, and the LORD did for Sarah as **He had spoken**".

dwelt where it pleases you." 16 Then to Sarah he said, "Behold, I have given your brother a thousand pieces of silver; indeed this vindicates you before all who are with you and before everybody." Thus she was rebuked.

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

## **Chapter 21**

### *Isaac Is Born*

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

### *Hagar and Ishmael Depart*

8 So the child grew and was weaned. And Abraham made a great feast on the same day that Isaac was weaned.

God's faithfulness is further illustrate, as he promises to look after Hagar and Ishmael. The difference between the position of Ishmael and Isaac is used by the apostle Paul as an allegory about the difference between being under the law and under the promise (Galatians 4:21-31). It is not that God would not protect Ishmael - He would. It is that God's promises were to be fulfilled through Isaac, as He had previously said.

9 And Sarah saw the son of Hagar the Egyptian, whom she had borne to Abraham, scoffing. 10 Therefore she said to Abraham, "Cast out this bondwoman and her son; for the son of this bondwoman shall not be heir with my son, namely with Isaac." 11 And the matter was very displeasing in Abraham's sight because of his son.

12 But God said to Abraham, "Do not let it be displeasing in your sight because of the lad or because of your bondwoman. Whatever Sarah has said to you, listen to her voice; for in Isaac your seed shall be called. 13 Yet I will also make a nation of the son of the bondwoman, because he is your seed."

14 So Abraham rose early in the morning, and took bread and a skin of water; and putting it on her shoulder, he gave it and the boy to Hagar, and sent her away. Then she departed and wandered in the Wilderness of Beersheba. 15 And the water in the skin was used up, and she placed the boy under one of the shrubs. 16 Then she went and sat down across from him at a distance of about a bowshot; for she said to herself, "Let me not see the death of the boy." So she sat opposite him, and lifted her voice and wept.

17 And God heard the voice of the lad. Then the angel of God called to Hagar out of heaven, and said to her, "What ails you, Hagar? Fear not, for God has heard the voice of the lad where he is. 18 Arise, lift up the lad and hold him with your hand, for I will make him a great nation."

19 Then God opened her eyes, and she saw a well of water. And she went and filled the skin with water, and gave the lad a drink. 20 So God was with the lad; and he grew and dwelt in the

wilderness, and became an archer. 21 He dwelt in the Wilderness of Paran; and his mother took a wife for him from the land of Egypt.

*A Covenant with Abimelech*

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

24 And Abraham said, "I will swear."

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

Once more, Abraham calls on the name of the LORD. He has, by God's grace, been able to negotiate successfully with Abimelech - the king involved by the previous faithless act by Abraham and Sarah. Following that negotiation, Abraham recognises the hand of God on his life, and calls on the name of "Jehovah El-Olam". This is one of the famous "Jehovah" names of God. Although the word Jehovah is an incorrect transliteration of the Tetragrammaton YHWH - rendered LORD in English - these names of God have traditionally been prefaced by the term Jehovah. Jehovah El-Olam means "the LORD is the Everlasting God". Although the English translation given in both KJV and NKJV is correct, the use of the Jehovah phrases tends to emphasise the importance of these names, by the fact that the attribute of God quoted - in this case, "the Everlasting God" - is actually part of the name used here, and not just an adjective, as it appears in English.

29 Then Abimelech asked Abraham, "What is the meaning of these seven ewe lambs which you have set by themselves?"

30 And he said, "You will take these seven ewe lambs from my hand, that they may be my witness that I have dug this well." 31 Therefore he called that place Beersheba, because the two of them swore an oath there.

32 Thus they made a covenant at Beersheba. So Abimelech rose with Phichol, the commander of his army, and they returned to the land of the Philistines. 33 Then Abraham planted a tamarisk tree in Beersheba, and there called on the name of the LORD, the Everlasting God. 34 And Abraham stayed in the land of the Philistines many days.

## **Chapter 22**

### *Abraham's Faith Confirmed*

1 Now it came to pass after these things that God tested Abraham, and said to him, "Abraham!"

And he said, "Here I am."

2 Then He said, "Take now your son, your only son Isaac, whom you love, and go to the land of Moriah, and offer him there as a burnt offering on one of the mountains of which I shall tell you."

3 So Abraham rose early in the morning and saddled his donkey, and took two of his young men with him, and Isaac his son; and he split the wood for the burnt offering, and arose and went to the place of which God had told him. 4 Then on the third day Abraham lifted his eyes and saw the place afar off. 5 And Abraham said to his young men, "Stay here with the donkey; the lad and I will go yonder and worship, and we will come back to you."

6 So Abraham took the wood of the burnt offering and laid it on Isaac his son; and he took the fire in his hand, and a knife, and

the two of them went together. 7 But Isaac spoke to Abraham his father and said, "My father!"

And he said, "Here I am, my son."

Then he said, "Look, the fire and the wood, but where is the lamb for a burnt offering?"

8 And Abraham said, "My son, God will provide for Himself the lamb for a burnt offering." So the two of them went together.

9 Then they came to the place of which God had told him. And Abraham built an altar there and placed the wood in order; and he bound Isaac his son and laid him on the altar, upon the wood.

There is so much we can write about this remarkable event in Genesis 22. These boxes can only contain a small comment. The event gives Abraham and Isaac - and therefore also us - a unique insight into the sacrifice of Jesus Christ on the cross. Imagine the heartache of Abraham as he prepared to sacrifice Isaac, and compare this to what God the Father would experience as His Son was to die for our sins. Imagine also Abraham's faithfulness. Hebrews 11 tells us that Abraham had figured that God was able to raise the dead. This is the only conclusion possible, if Abraham continued to trust that God's blessings would come through Isaac, the very son who he was now about to kill. Abraham figured this out, even though he had never seen anyone rise from the dead, and it is not a miracle that had occurred in history before this point. Note also Isaac's faithfulness. He was presumably not a child by these events. He even helped his father prepare the offering, and submitted willingly to it. Perhaps he had also reasoned that God could raise him from the dead. Isaac's actions are also typical of the crucifixion event, speaking to us of the faithfulness and obedience of Jesus, God the Son, as He prepared to die on the cross. It is surely also significant that the Angel of the LORD appeared to Abraham to bring a halt to the sacrifice. The phrase "Angel of the LORD" usually indicates a pre-incarnate appearance of Jesus. And to replace Isaac on the altar, a ram was provided - again, significant of the nature of the actual sacrifice of Jesus to take away our sins. Finally, another Jehovah name of God is given at this point. God is named as "Jehovah Jireh" - "The LORD will provide".



10 And Abraham stretched out his hand and took the knife to slay his son.

11 But the Angel of the LORD called to him from heaven and said, "Abraham, Abraham!"

So he said, "Here I am."

12 And He said, "Do not lay your hand on the lad, or do anything to him; for now I know that you fear God, since you have not withheld your son, your only son, from Me."

13 Then Abraham lifted his eyes and looked, and there behind him was a ram caught in a thicket by its horns. So Abraham went and took the ram, and offered it up for a burnt offering instead of his son. 14 And Abraham called the name of the place, The-LORD-Will-Provide; as it is said to this day, "In the Mount of the LORD it shall be provided."

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

#### *The Family of Nahor*

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

## Chapter 23

### *Sarah's Death and Burial*

1 Sarah lived one hundred and twenty-seven years; these were the years of the life of Sarah. 2 So Sarah died in Kirjath Arba (that is, Hebron) in the land of Canaan, and Abraham came to mourn for Sarah and to weep for her.

3 Then Abraham stood up from before his dead, and spoke to the sons of Heth, saying, 4 "I am a foreigner and a visitor among you. Give me property for a burial place among you, that I may bury my dead out of my sight."

5 And the sons of Heth answered Abraham, saying to him, 6 "Hear us, my lord: You are a mighty prince among us; bury your dead in the choicest of our burial places. None of us will withhold from you his burial place, that you may bury your dead."

7 Then Abraham stood up and bowed himself to the people of the land, the sons of Heth. 8 And he spoke with them, saying, "If it is your wish that I bury my dead out of my sight, hear me, and meet with Ephron the son of Zohar for me, 9 that he may give me the cave of Machpelah which he has, which is at the end of his field. Let him give it to me at the full price, as property for a burial place among you."

10 Now Ephron dwelt among the sons of Heth; and Ephron the Hittite answered Abraham in the presence of the sons of Heth, all who entered at the gate of his city, saying, 11 "No, my lord, hear

In the midst of these arrangements, Abraham takes possession of the only land in Canaan that would ever legally belong to him - Sarah's tomb. His refusal to take a gift is probably for similar reasons as those in Genesis 14 - so that there could be no question of any of the nations of that area being able to claim that their actions had contributed in some way to God's blessings. God alone will take the glory.

me: I give you the field and the cave that is in it; I give it to you in the presence of the sons of my people. I give it to you. Bury your dead!”

12 Then Abraham bowed himself down before the people of the land; 13 and he spoke to Ephron in the hearing of the people of the land, saying, “If you will give it, please hear me. I will give you money for the field; take it from me and I will bury my dead there.”

14 And Ephron answered Abraham, saying to him, 15 “My lord, listen to me; the land is worth four hundred shekels of silver. What is that between you and me? So bury your dead.” 16 And Abraham listened to Ephron; and Abraham weighed out the silver for Ephron which he had named in the hearing of the sons of Heth, four hundred shekels of silver, currency of the merchants.

17 So the field of Ephron which was in Machpelah, which was before Mamre, the field and the cave which was in it, and all the trees that were in the field, which were within all the surrounding borders, were deeded 18 to Abraham as a possession in the presence of the sons of Heth, before all who went in at the gate of his city.

19 And after this, Abraham buried Sarah his wife in the cave of the field of Machpelah, before Mamre (that is, Hebron) in the land of Canaan. 20 So the field and the cave that is in it were deeded to Abraham by the sons of Heth as property for a burial place.

## **Chapter 24**

### *A Bride for Isaac*

1 Now Abraham was old, well advanced in age; and the LORD had blessed Abraham in all things. 2 So Abraham said to the oldest servant of his house, who ruled over all that he had, “Please, put your hand under my thigh, 3 and I will make you swear by the LORD, the God of heaven and the God of the earth,

Probably no other marriage in the Bible is as important as this one, because of Isaac's status as a type of Christ. Therefore many aspects of this marriage can be seen as ideal, and as a model, by which to judge other arrangements. It should be noted that Isaac did not have other wives. Many of the other characters of the Old Testament had multiple wives, and even Abraham had fallen in this regard. The importance of the marriage of Isaac and Rebekah helps to underline that God's purpose is for us to have monogamous marriages.

Perhaps it is not pressing the typical nature of these events too far to suggest the following:

1. The search for the marriage partner was initiated by Abraham. Our marriage choices are to be guided by God.
2. The girl had to be from Abraham's own people, and pure. Our marriage partners are also to be from God's own people - Christians are to marry Christians. The purity in marriage is also to be observed.
3. The girl had to be willing to come to Isaac. It is interesting that this arranged marriage was not a forced marriage.
4. There were temptations trying to prevent Rebekah from leaving her family to travel to Isaac in the company of Abraham's servant. Yet she was single-minded in her obedience to God.

that you will not take a wife for my son from the daughters of the Canaanites, among whom I dwell; 4 but you shall go to my country and to my family, and take a wife for my son Isaac."

5 And the servant said to him, "Perhaps the woman will not be willing to follow me to this land. Must I take your son back to the land from which you came?"

6 But Abraham said to him, "Beware that you do not take my son back there. 7 The LORD God of heaven, who took me from my father's house and from the land of my family, and who spoke to me and swore to me, saying, 'To your descendants I give this land,' He will send His angel before you, and you shall take a wife for my son from there. 8 And if the woman is not willing to follow you, then you will be released from this oath; only do not take my son

back there.” 9 So the servant put his hand under the thigh of Abraham his master, and swore to him concerning this matter.

10 Then the servant took ten of his master’s camels and departed, for all his master’s goods were in his hand. And he arose and went to Mesopotamia, to the city of Nahor. 11 And he made his camels kneel down outside the city by a well of water at evening time, the time when women go out to draw water. 12 Then he said, “O LORD God of my master Abraham, please give me success this day, and show kindness to my master Abraham. 13 Behold, here I stand by the well of water, and the daughters of the men of the city are coming out to draw water. 14 Now let it be that the young woman to whom I say, ‘Please let down your pitcher that I may drink,’ and she says, ‘Drink, and I will also give your camels a drink’—let her be the one You have appointed for Your servant Isaac. And by this I will know that You have shown kindness to my master.”

15 And it happened, before he had finished speaking, that behold, Rebekah, who was born to Bethuel, son of Milcah, the wife of Nahor, Abraham’s brother, came out with her pitcher on her shoulder. 16 Now the young woman was very beautiful to behold, a virgin; no man had known her. And she went down to the well, filled her pitcher, and came up. 17 And the servant ran to meet her and said, “Please let me drink a little water from your pitcher.”

18 So she said, “Drink, my lord.” Then she quickly let her pitcher down to her hand, and gave him a drink. 19 And when she had finished giving him a drink, she said, “I will draw water for your camels also, until they have finished drinking.” 20 Then she quickly emptied her pitcher into the trough, ran back to the well to draw water, and drew for all his camels. 21 And the man, wondering at her, remained silent so as to know whether the LORD had made his journey prosperous or not.

22 So it was, when the camels had finished drinking, that the man took a golden nose ring weighing half a shekel, and two bracelets for her wrists weighing ten shekels of gold, 23 and said,

“Whose daughter are you? Tell me, please, is there room in your father’s house for us to lodge?”

24 So she said to him, “I am the daughter of Bethuel, Milcah’s son, whom she bore to Nahor.” 25 Moreover she said to him, “We have both straw and feed enough, and room to lodge.”

26 Then the man bowed down his head and worshiped the LORD. 27 And he said, “Blessed be the LORD God of my master Abraham, who has not forsaken His mercy and His truth toward my master. As for me, being on the way, the LORD led me to the house of my master’s brethren.” 28 So the young woman ran and told her mother’s household these things.

29 Now Rebekah had a brother whose name was Laban, and Laban ran out to the man by the well. 30 So it came to pass, when he saw the nose ring, and the bracelets on his sister’s wrists, and when he heard the words of his sister Rebekah, saying, “Thus the man spoke to me,” that he went to the man. And there he stood by the camels at the well. 31 And he said, “Come in, O blessed of the LORD! Why do you stand outside? For I have prepared the house, and a place for the camels.”

32 Then the man came to the house. And he unloaded the camels, and provided straw and feed for the camels, and water to wash his feet and the feet of the men who were with him. 33 Food was set before him to eat, but he said, “I will not eat until I have told about my errand.”

And he said, “Speak on.”

34 So he said, “I am Abraham’s servant. 35 The LORD has blessed my master greatly, and he has become great; and He has given him flocks and herds, silver and gold, male and female servants, and camels and donkeys. 36 And Sarah my master’s wife bore a son to my master when she was old; and to him he has given all that he has. 37 Now my master made me swear, saying, ‘You shall not take a wife for my son from the daughters of the Canaanites, in whose land I dwell; 38 but you shall go to my father’s house and to my family, and take a wife for my son.’ 39 And I said to my master, ‘Perhaps the woman will not follow me.’

40 But he said to me, 'The LORD, before whom I walk, will send His angel with you and prosper your way; and you shall take a wife for my son from my family and from my father's house. 41 You will be clear from this oath when you arrive among my family; for if they will not give her to you, then you will be released from my oath.'

42 "And this day I came to the well and said, 'O LORD God of my master Abraham, if You will now prosper the way in which I go, 43 behold, I stand by the well of water; and it shall come to pass that when the virgin comes out to draw water, and I say to her, "Please give me a little water from your pitcher to drink," 44 and she says to me, "Drink, and I will draw for your camels also,"—let her be the woman whom the LORD has appointed for my master's son.'

45 "But before I had finished speaking in my heart, there was Rebekah, coming out with her pitcher on her shoulder; and she went down to the well and drew water. And I said to her, 'Please let me drink.' 46 And she made haste and let her pitcher down from her shoulder, and said, 'Drink, and I will give your camels a drink also.' So I drank, and she gave the camels a drink also. 47 Then I asked her, and said, 'Whose daughter are you?' And she said, 'The daughter of Bethuel, Nahor's son, whom Milcah bore to him.' So I put the nose ring on her nose and the bracelets on her wrists. 48 And I bowed my head and worshiped the LORD, and blessed the LORD God of my master Abraham, who had led me in the way of truth to take the daughter of my master's brother for his son. 49 Now if you 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 comes from the LORD; we cannot speak to you either bad or good. 51 Here is Rebekah before you; take her and go, and let her be your master's son's wife, as the LORD has spoken."

52 And it came to pass, when Abraham's servant heard their words, that he worshiped the LORD, bowing himself to the earth.

53 Then the servant brought out jewelry of silver, jewelry of gold, and clothing, and gave them to Rebekah. He also gave precious things to her brother and to her mother.

54 And he and the men who were with him ate and drank and stayed all night. Then they arose in the morning, and he said, "Send me away to my master."

55 But her brother and her mother said, "Let the young woman stay with us a few days, at least ten; after that she may go."

56 And he said to them, "Do not hinder me, since the LORD has prospered my way; send me away so that I may go to my master."

57 So they said, "We will call the young woman and ask her personally." 58 Then they called Rebekah and said to her, "Will you go with this man?"

And she said, "I will go."

59 So they sent away Rebekah their sister and her nurse, and Abraham's servant and his men. 60 And they blessed Rebekah and said to her:

"Our sister, may you become  
The mother of thousands of ten thousands;  
And may your descendants possess  
The gates of those who hate them."

61 Then Rebekah and her maids arose, and they rode on the camels and followed the man. So the servant took Rebekah and departed.

62 Now Isaac came from the way of Beer Lahai Roi, for he dwelt in the South. 63 And Isaac went out to meditate in the field in the evening; and he lifted his eyes and looked, and there, the camels were coming. 64 Then Rebekah lifted her eyes, and when she saw Isaac she dismounted from her camel; 65 for she had said to the servant, "Who is this man walking in the field to meet us?"

The servant said, "It is my master." So she took a veil and covered herself.



66 And the servant told Isaac all the things that he had done.  
67 Then Isaac brought her into his mother Sarah's tent; and he took Rebekah and she became his wife, and he loved her. So Isaac was comforted after his mother's death.

## Chapter 25

### *Abraham and Keturah*

1 Abraham again took a wife, and her name was Keturah. 2 And she bore him Zimran, Jokshan, Medan, Midian, Ishbak, and Shuah. 3 Jokshan begot Sheba and Dedan. And the sons of Dedan were Asshurim, Letushim, and Leummim. 4 And the sons of Midian were Ephah, Epher, Hanoch, Abidah, and Eldaah. All these were the children of Keturah.

5 And Abraham gave all that he had to Isaac. 6 But Abraham gave gifts to the sons of the concubines which Abraham had; and while he was still living he sent them eastward, away from Isaac his son, to the country of the east.

### *Abraham's Death and Burial*

7 This is the sum of the years of Abraham's life which he lived: one hundred and seventy-five years. 8 Then Abraham breathed his last and died in a good old age, an old man and full of years,

What does it mean to say that Abraham was "gathered to his people"? His ancestors lived nowhere near where he was now buried. His people must have been his spiritual people, as in Genesis 12:5, who were probably converts acquired through Abraham's ministry in Haran. This would explain some New Testament references. i. The reference to the place for faithfully departed spirits as "Abraham's bosom" (Luke 16:22) and ii. Jesus' assertion that "God is able to raise up children to Abraham from these stones." (Matthew 3:9) - the latter passage emphasising that it is people of faith who are the true children of Abraham, rather than those who merely claim genetic descent.

and was gathered to his people. 9 And his sons Isaac and Ishmael buried him in the cave of Machpelah, which is before Mamre, in the field of Ephron the son of Zohar the Hittite, 10 the field which Abraham purchased from the sons of Heth. There Abraham was buried, and Sarah his wife. 11 And it came to pass, after the death of Abraham, that God blessed his son Isaac. And Isaac dwelt at Beer Lahai Roi.

*The Families of Ishmael and Isaac*

12 Now this is the genealogy of Ishmael, Abraham's son, whom Hagar the Egyptian, Sarah's maidservant, bore to Abraham. 13 And these were the names of the sons of Ishmael, by their names, according to their generations: The firstborn of Ishmael, Nebajoth; then Kedar, Adbeel, Mibsam, 14 Mishma, Dumah, Massa, 15 Hadar, Tema, Jetur, Naphish, and Kedemah. 16 These were the sons of Ishmael and these were their names, by their towns and their settlements, twelve princes according to their nations. 17 These were the years of the life of Ishmael: one hundred and thirty-seven years; and he breathed his last and died, and was gathered to his people. 18 (They dwelt from Havilah as far as Shur, which is east of Egypt as you go toward Assyria.) He died in the presence of all his brethren.

19 This is the genealogy of Isaac, Abraham's son. Abraham begot Isaac. 20 Isaac was forty years old when he took Rebekah as wife, the daughter of Bethuel the Syrian of Padan Aram, the sister of Laban the Syrian. 21 Now Isaac pleaded with the LORD for his wife, because she was barren; and the LORD granted his plea, and Rebekah his wife conceived. 22 But the children struggled together within her; and she said, "If all is well, why am I like this?" So she went to inquire of the LORD.

23 And the LORD said to her:

"Two nations are in your womb,  
Two peoples shall be separated from your body;

One people shall be stronger than the other,  
And the older shall serve the younger.”

24 So when her days were fulfilled for her to give birth, indeed there were twins in her womb. 25 And the first came out red. He was like a hairy garment all over; so they called his name Esau. 26 Afterward his brother came out, and his hand took hold of Esau’s heel; so his name was called Jacob. Isaac was sixty years old when

Parents shouldn’t have favourites, right? So this story is often portrayed as the dangers inherent in favouritism. Both parents should have loved both children equally, right?

Wrong. In this case, there was a clear distinction, prophesied to Rebekah before their birth. Her love of Jacob has been misunderstood. It was not the fond prejudicial love of a doting mother. It was an obedient love, based on God’s word. It was not because Jacob was loveable - he wasn’t. Romans 9:13, in an abridgment of Malachi 1:2-3, reports that God says “Jacob I have loved, but Esau I have hated.”

she bore them.

27 So the boys grew. And Esau was a skillful hunter, a man of the field; but Jacob was a mild man, dwelling in tents. 28 And Isaac loved Esau because he ate of his game, but Rebekah loved Jacob.

#### *Esau Sells His Birthright*

29 Now Jacob cooked a stew; and Esau came in from the field, and he was weary. 30 And Esau said to Jacob, “Please feed me with that same red stew, for I am weary.” Therefore his name was called Edom.

31 But Jacob said, “Sell me your birthright as of this day.”

32 And Esau said, “Look, I am about to die; so what is this birthright to me?”

33 Then Jacob said, “Swear to me as of this day.”

So he swore to him, and sold his birthright to Jacob. 34 And Jacob gave Esau bread and stew of lentils; then he ate and drank, arose, and went his way. Thus Esau despised his birthright.

## Chapter 26

### *Isaac and Abimelech*

1 There was a famine in the land, besides the first famine that was in the days of Abraham. And Isaac went to Abimelech king of the Philistines, in Gerar.

2 Then the LORD appeared to him and said: “Do not go down to Egypt; live in the land of which I shall tell you. 3 Dwell in this land, and I will be with you and bless you; for to you and your descendants I give all these lands, and I will perform the oath

A number of notable things happen in this chapter. God repeats the covenant that He had made with Abraham, this time making it with Isaac. This fits with the New Testament concept of God being “the God of Abraham, Isaac and Jacob”. It is interesting that the covenant is made here “because *Abraham* obeyed My voice”. Could God’s comment here be a sort of backhanded rebuke to Isaac for not similarly obeying God?

This renewal of the covenant is followed by an incredible error by Isaac, repeating the errors Abraham made in Egypt and with a previous Abimelech (this Abimelech must be a different one from the one Abraham encountered. Possibly Abimelech is a title for the king of the Philistines rather than a name). Although both of Abraham’s errors occurred before Isaac’s birth, he must have heard about them. In fact, Isaac’s deception is worse. Abraham’s comment that Sarah was his sister was a half-truth - she was his half-sister. Isaac’s statement that Rebekah was his sister was a lie - she was a distant cousin, but that does not count as a sister.

It is amazing that Abimelech did not throw Isaac and Rebekah out of his lands, once their deception was known. Instead, he gave them complete protection, threatening the death penalty for anyone who would harm them. Thus God achieves His plan of protecting the precious messianic line, despite the foolishness of His people.

which I swore to Abraham your father. 4 And I will make your descendants multiply as the stars of heaven; I will give to your descendants all these lands; and in your seed all the nations of the earth shall be blessed; 5 because Abraham obeyed My voice and kept My charge, My commandments, My statutes, and My laws.”

6 So Isaac dwelt in Gerar. 7 And the men of the place asked about his wife. And he said, “She is my sister”; for he was afraid to say, “She is my wife,” because he thought, “lest the men of the place kill me for Rebekah, because she is beautiful to behold.” 8 Now it came to pass, when he had been there a long time, that Abimelech king of the Philistines looked through a window, and saw, and there was Isaac, showing endearment to Rebekah his wife. 9 Then Abimelech called Isaac and said, “Quite obviously she is your wife; so how could you say, ‘She is my sister’?”

Isaac said to him, “Because I said, ‘Lest I die on account of her.’”

10 And Abimelech said, “What is this you have done to us? One of the people might soon have lain with your wife, and you would have brought guilt on us.” 11 So Abimelech charged all his people, saying, “He who touches this man or his wife shall surely be put to death.”

12 Then Isaac sowed in that land, and reaped in the same year a hundredfold; and the LORD blessed him. 13 The man began to prosper, and continued prospering until he became very prosperous; 14 for he had possessions of flocks and possessions of herds and a great number of servants. So the Philistines envied him. 15 Now the Philistines had stopped up all the wells which his father’s servants had dug in the days of Abraham his father, and they had filled them with earth. 16 And Abimelech said to Isaac, “Go away from us, for you are much mightier than we.”

17 Then Isaac departed from there and pitched his tent in the Valley of Gerar, and dwelt there. 18 And Isaac dug again the wells of water which they had dug in the days of Abraham his father, for the Philistines had stopped them up after the death of

Abraham. He called them by the names which his father had called them.

19 Also Isaac's servants dug in the valley, and found a well of running water there. 20 But the herdsmen of Gerar quarreled with Isaac's herdsmen, saying, "The water is ours." So he called the name of the well Esek, because they quarreled with him. 21 Then they dug another well, and they quarreled over that one also. So he called its name Sitnah. 22 And he moved from there and dug another well, and they did not quarrel over it. So he called its name Rehoboth, because he said, "For now the LORD has made room for us, and we shall be fruitful in the land."

23 Then he went up from there to Beersheba. 24 And the LORD appeared to him the same night and said, "I am the God of your father Abraham; do not fear, for I am with you. I will bless you and multiply your descendants for My servant Abraham's sake." 25 So he built an altar there and called on the name of the LORD, and he pitched his tent there; and there Isaac's servants dug a well.

26 Then Abimelech came to him from Gerar with Ahuzzath, one of his friends, and Phichol the commander of his army. 27 And Isaac said to them, "Why have you come to me, since you hate me and have sent me away from you?"

28 But they said, "We have certainly seen that the LORD is with you. So we said, 'Let there now be an oath between us, between you and us; and let us make a covenant with you, 29 that you will do us no harm, since we have not touched you, and since we have done nothing to you but good and have sent you away in peace. You are now the blessed of the LORD.'"

30 So he made them a feast, and they ate and drank. 31 Then they arose early in the morning and swore an oath with one another; and Isaac sent them away, and they departed from him in peace.

32 It came to pass the same day that Isaac's servants came and told him about the well which they had dug, and said to him, "We

have found water.” 33 So he called it Shebah. Therefore the name of the city is Beersheba to this day.

34 When Esau was forty years old, he took as wives Judith the daughter of Beeri the Hittite, and Basemath the daughter of Elon the Hittite. 35 And they were a grief of mind to Isaac and Rebekah.

## **Chapter 27**

### *Isaac Blesses Jacob*

1 Now it came to pass, when Isaac was old and his eyes were so dim that he could not see, that he called Esau his older son and said to him, “My son.”

And he answered him, “Here I am.”

2 Then he said, “Behold now, I am old. I do not know the day of my death. 3 Now therefore, please take your weapons, your quiver and your bow, and go out to the field and hunt game for me. 4 And make me savory food, such as I love, and bring it to me that I may eat, that my soul may bless you before I die.”

5 Now Rebekah was listening when Isaac spoke to Esau his son. And Esau went to the field to hunt game and to bring it. 6 So Rebekah spoke to Jacob her son, saying, “Indeed I heard your father speak to Esau your brother, saying, 7 ‘Bring me game and make savory food for me, that I may eat it and bless you in the presence of the LORD before my death.’ 8 Now therefore, my son, obey my voice according to what I command you. 9 Go now to the flock and bring me from there two choice kids of the goats, and I will make savory food from them for your father, such as he loves. 10 Then you shall take it to your father, that he may eat it, and that he may bless you before his death.”

11 And Jacob said to Rebekah his mother, “Look, Esau my brother is a hairy man, and I am a smooth-skinned man. 12 Perhaps my father will feel me, and I shall seem to be a deceiver to him; and I shall bring a curse on myself and not a blessing.”

As in Genesis 25, this account is often misrepresented. Isaac is being “tricked” into blessing Jacob instead of Esau. Yet that is not the whole story. Jacob is the one who should receive the blessing. This was prophesied beforehand to Rebekah, and reiterated by Esau’s despising his birthright. So, Isaac had no right to do anything but bless Jacob, yet he was determined to give his blessing to Esau. Maybe Rebekah and Jacob were not good in that they used deception. Nevertheless, they were closer to the will of God than Isaac.

13 But his mother said to him, “Let your curse be on me, my son; only obey my voice, and go, get them for me.” 14 And he went and got them and brought them to his mother, and his mother made savory food, such as his father loved. 15 Then Rebekah took the choice clothes of her elder son Esau, which were with her in the house, and put them on Jacob her younger son. 16 And she put the skins of the kids of the goats on his hands and on the smooth part of his neck. 17 Then she gave the savory food and the bread, which she had prepared, into the hand of her son Jacob.

18 So he went to his father and said, “My father.”

And he said, “Here I am. Who are you, my son?”

19 Jacob said to his father, “I am Esau your firstborn; I have done just as you told me; please arise, sit and eat of my game, that your soul may bless me.”

20 But Isaac said to his son, “How is it that you have found it so quickly, my son?”

And he said, “Because the LORD your God brought it to me.”

21 Isaac said to Jacob, “Please come near, that I may feel you, my son, whether you are really my son Esau or not.” 22 So Jacob went near to 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 did not recognize him, because his hands were hairy like his brother Esau’s hands; so he blessed him.

24 Then he said, “Are you really my son Esau?”

He said, “I am.”



25 He said, "Bring it near to me, and I will eat of my son's game, so that my soul may bless you." So he brought it near to him, and he ate; and he brought him wine, and he drank. 26 Then his father Isaac said to him, "Come near now and kiss me, my son." 27 And he came near and kissed him; and he smelled the smell of his clothing, and blessed him and said:

" Surely, the smell of my son  
Is like the smell of a field  
Which the LORD has blessed.

28 Therefore may God give you  
Of the dew of heaven,  
Of the fatness of the earth,  
And plenty of grain and wine.

29 Let peoples serve you,  
And nations bow down to you.  
Be master over your brethren,  
And let your mother's sons bow down to you.  
Cursed be everyone who curses you,  
And blessed be those who bless you!"

*Esau's Lost Hope*

30 Now it happened, as soon as Isaac had finished blessing Jacob, and Jacob had scarcely gone out from the presence of Isaac his father, that Esau his brother came in from his hunting. 31 He also had made savory food, and brought it to his father, and said to his father, "Let my father arise and eat of his son's game, that your soul may bless me."

32 And his father Isaac said to him, "Who are you?"  
So he said, "I am your son, your firstborn, Esau."

33 Then Isaac trembled exceedingly, and said, "Who? Where is the one who hunted game and brought it to me? I ate all of it

before you came, and I have blessed him—and indeed he shall be blessed.”

34 When Esau heard the words of his father, he cried with an exceedingly great and bitter cry, and said to his father, “Bless me—me also, O my father!”

35 But he said, “Your brother came with deceit and has taken away your blessing.”

36 And Esau said, “Is he not rightly named Jacob? For he has supplanted me these two times. He took away my birthright, and now look, he has taken away my blessing!” And he said, “Have you not reserved a blessing for me?”

37 Then Isaac answered and said to Esau, “Indeed I have made him your master, and all his brethren I have given to him as servants; with grain and wine I have sustained him. What shall I do now for you, my son?”

38 And Esau said to his father, “Have you only one blessing, my father? Bless me—me also, O my father!” And Esau lifted up his voice and wept.

39 Then Isaac his father answered and said to him:

“ Behold, your dwelling shall be of the fatness of the earth,  
And of the dew of heaven from above.

40 By your sword you shall live,  
And you shall serve your brother;  
And it shall come to pass, when you become restless,  
That you shall break his yoke from your neck.”

#### *Jacob Escapes from Esau*

41 So Esau hated Jacob because of the blessing with which his father blessed him, and Esau said in his heart, “The days of mourning for my father are at hand; then I will kill my brother Jacob.”

As the child of promise, it was important that Jacob should get a wife as suitable as his own mother had been to Isaac. There was a problem with the local women - no doubt because they were idolators. Esau took two such wives, which were described as a "source of grief" to his parents.

In Isaac's case, Abraham refused to send him with the servant who was to choose the wife. Isaac shows less faithfulness, as usual; so he sends Jacob off to his family's lands - a move which would also keep him safe from his brother.

42 And the words of Esau her older son were told to Rebekah. So she sent and called Jacob her younger son, and said to him, "Surely your brother Esau comforts himself concerning you by intending to kill you. 43 Now therefore, my son, obey my voice: arise, flee to my brother Laban in Haran. 44 And stay with him a few days, until your brother's fury turns away, 45 until your brother's anger turns away from you, and he forgets what you have done to him; then I will send and bring you from there. Why should I be bereaved 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 takes a wife of the daughters of Heth, like these who are the daughters of the land, what good will my life be to me?"

## Chapter 28

1 Then Isaac called Jacob and blessed him, and charged him, and said to him: "You shall not take a wife from the daughters of Canaan. 2 Arise, go to Padan Aram, to the house of Bethuel your mother's father; and take yourself a wife from there of the daughters of Laban your mother's brother.

3 "May God Almighty bless you,  
And make you fruitful and multiply you,  
That you may be an assembly of peoples;

4 And give you the blessing of Abraham,  
To you and your descendants with you,  
That you may inherit the land  
In which you are a stranger,  
Which God gave to Abraham.”

5 So Isaac sent Jacob away, and he went to Padan Aram, to Laban the son of Bethuel the Syrian, the brother of Rebekah, the mother of Jacob and Esau.

#### *Esau Marries Mahalath*

6 Esau saw that Isaac had blessed Jacob and sent him away to Padan Aram to take himself a wife from there, and that as he blessed him he gave him a charge, saying, “You shall not take a wife from the daughters of Canaan,” 7 and that Jacob had obeyed his father and his mother and had gone to Padan Aram. 8 Also Esau saw that the daughters of Canaan did not please his father Isaac. 9 So Esau went to Ishmael and took Mahalath the daughter of Ishmael, Abraham’s son, the sister of Nebajoth, to be his wife in addition to the wives he had.

#### *Jacob’s Vow at Bethel*

10 Now Jacob went out from Beersheba and went toward Haran. 11 So he came to a certain place and stayed there all night, because the sun had set. And he took one of the stones of that place and put it at his head, and he lay down in that place to sleep. 12 Then he dreamed, and behold, a ladder was set up on the

Once more, God repeats the covenant promise - this time to Jacob. Jacob has a remarkable vision of God and angels. The staircase seems to represent that link between God and people that was to come through Jacob’s most famous descendent.

earth, and its top reached to heaven; and there the angels of God were ascending and descending on it.

13 And behold, the LORD stood above it and said: "I am the LORD God of Abraham your father and the God of Isaac; the land on which you lie I will give to you and your descendants. 14 Also your descendants shall be as the dust of the earth; you shall spread abroad to the west and the east, to the north and the south; and in you and in your seed all the families of the earth shall be blessed. 15 Behold, I am with you and will keep you wherever you go, and will bring you back to this land; for I will not leave you until I have done what I have spoken to you."

16 Then Jacob awoke from his sleep and said, "Surely the LORD is in this place, and I did not know it." 17 And he was afraid and said, "How awesome is this place! This is none other than the house of God, and this is the gate of heaven!"

18 Then Jacob rose early in the morning, and took the stone that he had put at his head, set it up as a pillar, and poured oil on top of it. 19 And he called the name of that place Bethel; but the name of that city had been Luz previously. 20 Then Jacob made a vow, saying, "If God will be with me, and keep me in this way that I am going, and give me bread to eat and clothing to put on, 21 so that I come back to my father's house in peace, then the LORD shall be my God. 22 And this stone which I have set as a pillar shall be God's house, and of all that You give me I will surely give a tenth to You."

## **Chapter 29**

### *Jacob Meets Rachel*

1 So Jacob went on his journey and came to the land of the people of the East. 2 And he looked, and saw a well in the field; and behold, there were three flocks of sheep lying by it; for out of that well they watered the flocks. A large stone was on the well's mouth. 3 Now all the flocks would be gathered there; and they

Henry Morris makes the following points about Jacob's age as he goes off in search of a wife.  
"He was probably close to seventy-five years old when he left home, so that he was almost ninety-five when he came back. In terms of normal aging and life spans today, these figures could be cut almost in half to correspond to equivalent situations in our own time. Even so, he was still well along in years to be leaving home for the first time and to be looking for a wife."

would roll the stone from the well's mouth, water the sheep, and put the stone back in its place on the well's mouth.

4 And Jacob said to them, "My brethren, where are you from?"  
And they said, "We are from Haran."

5 Then he said to them, "Do you know Laban the son of Nahor?"

And they said, "We know him."

6 So he said to them, "Is he well?"

And they said, "He is well. And look, his daughter Rachel is coming with the sheep."

7 Then he said, "Look, it is still high day; it is not time for the cattle to be gathered together. Water the sheep, and go and feed them."

8 But they said, "We cannot until all the flocks are gathered together, and they have rolled the stone from the well's mouth; then we water the sheep."

9 Now while he was still speaking with them, Rachel came with her father's sheep, for she was a shepherdess. 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 Then Jacob kissed Rachel, and lifted up his voice and wept. 12 And Jacob told Rachel that he was her father's relative and that he was Rebekah's son. So she ran and told her father.

There are some who have used these famous biblical polygamous marriages to justify their own divergence from monogamy. This is to misunderstand why the Bible gives us such history. The Bible paints the picture warts and all.

Jacob's polygamy is not approved by the Bible. The Bible merely reports it, because it actually happened - not because it was right. With this in mind, we can see that a combination of mistakes brought about this unfortunate event. The deception played by Laban (and, to some extent, by Leah) is reminiscent of the deception played on Isaac by Jacob and his mother, Rebekah. Laban was at fault for carrying out the deception - and Leah and perhaps Rachel complicit in the deception. Once the deception was revealed, Jacob was at fault for not insisting on monogamy with Rachel. He should not have accepted Laban's sinful suggestion that he have two wives. And, after that, Jacob should not additionally have accepted the two maidservants of the sisters, Bilhah and Zilpah, as concubines. Yet, God can bring good from any situation, and he used this polygamous mess to bring about the twelve tribes of Israel.

13 Then it came to pass, when Laban heard the report about Jacob his sister's son, that he ran to meet him, and embraced him and kissed him, and brought him to his house. So he told Laban all these things. 14 And Laban said to him, "Surely you are my bone and my flesh." And he stayed with him for a month.

#### *Jacob Marries Leah and Rachel*

15 Then Laban said to Jacob, "Because you are my relative, should you therefore serve me for nothing? Tell me, what should your wages be?" 16 Now Laban had two daughters: the name of the elder was Leah, and the name of the younger was Rachel. 17 Leah's eyes were delicate, but Rachel was beautiful of form and appearance.

18 Now Jacob loved Rachel; so he said, "I will serve you seven years for Rachel your younger daughter."

19 And Laban said, "It is better that I give her to you than that I should give her to another man. Stay with me." 20 So Jacob served seven years for Rachel, and they seemed only a few days to him because of the love he had for her.

21 Then Jacob said to Laban, "Give me my wife, for my days are fulfilled, that I may go in to her." 22 And Laban gathered together all the men of the place and made a feast. 23 Now it came to pass in the evening, that he took Leah his daughter and brought her to Jacob; and he went in to her. 24 And Laban gave his maid Zilpah to his daughter Leah as a maid. 25 So it came to pass in the morning, that behold, it was Leah. And he said to Laban, "What is this you have done to me? Was it not for Rachel that I served you? Why then have you deceived me?"

26 And Laban said, "It must not be done so in our country, to give the younger before the firstborn. 27 Fulfill her week, and we will give you this one also for the service which you will serve with me still another seven years."

28 Then Jacob did so and fulfilled her week. So he gave him his daughter Rachel as wife also. 29 And Laban gave his maid Bilhah to his daughter Rachel as a maid. 30 Then Jacob also went in to Rachel, and he also loved Rachel more than Leah. And he served with Laban still another seven years.

### *The Children of Jacob*

31 When the LORD saw that Leah was unloved, He opened her womb; but Rachel was barren. 32 So Leah conceived and bore a son, and she called his name Reuben; for she said, "The LORD has surely looked on my affliction. Now therefore, my husband will love me." 33 Then she conceived again and bore a son, and said, "Because the LORD has heard that I am unloved, He has therefore given me this son also." And she called his name Simeon. 34 She conceived again and bore a son, and said, "Now this time my husband will become attached to me, because I have borne him three sons." Therefore his name was called Levi. 35 And she



conceived again and bore a son, and said, "Now I will praise the LORD." Therefore she called his name Judah. Then she stopped bearing.

## Chapter 30

1 Now when Rachel saw that she bore Jacob no children, Rachel envied her sister, and said to Jacob, "Give me children, or else I die!"

2 And Jacob's anger was aroused against Rachel, and he said, "Am I in the place of God, who has withheld from you the fruit of the womb?"

3 So she said, "Here is my maid Bilhah; go in to her, and she will bear a child on my knees, that I also may have children by her." 4 Then she gave him Bilhah her maid as wife, and Jacob went in to her. 5 And Bilhah conceived and bore Jacob a son. 6 Then Rachel said, "God has judged my case; and He has also heard my voice and given me a son." Therefore she called his name Dan. 7 And Rachel's maid Bilhah conceived again and bore Jacob a second son. 8 Then Rachel said, "With great wrestlings I have wrestled with my sister, and indeed I have prevailed." So she called his name Naphtali.

9 When Leah saw that she had stopped bearing, she took Zilpah her maid and gave her to Jacob as wife. 10 And Leah's maid Zilpah bore Jacob a son. 11 Then Leah said, "A troop comes!" So she called his name Gad. 12 And Leah's maid Zilpah bore Jacob a second son. 13 Then Leah said, "I am happy, for the daughters will call me blessed." So she called his name Asher.

14 Now Reuben went in the days of wheat harvest and found mandrakes in the field, and brought them to his mother Leah. Then Rachel said to Leah, "Please give me some of your son's mandrakes."

15 But she said to her, "Is it a small matter that you have taken away my husband? Would you take away my son's mandrakes also?"

Of all Abraham's sons, only one - Isaac - was included in God's promise. Of Isaac's two sons, it was only Jacob - and not Esau - who was to partake of the promise. But, in Jacob's case all of his sons were to be partakers of the promises of God.

And Rachel said, "Therefore he will lie with you tonight for your son's mandrakes."

16 When Jacob came out of the field in the evening, Leah went out to meet him and said, "You must come in to me, for I have surely hired you with my son's mandrakes." And he lay with her that night.

17 And God listened to Leah, and she conceived and bore Jacob a fifth son. 18 Leah said, "God has given me my wages, because I have given my maid to my husband." So she called his name Issachar. 19 Then Leah conceived again and bore Jacob a sixth son. 20 And Leah said, "God has endowed me with a good endowment; now my husband will dwell with me, because I have borne him six sons." So she called his name Zebulun. 21 Afterward she bore a daughter, and called her name Dinah.

22 Then God remembered Rachel, and God listened to her and opened her womb. 23 And she conceived and bore a son, and said, "God has taken away my reproach." 24 So she called his name Joseph, and said, "The LORD shall add to me another son."

#### *Jacob's Agreement with Laban*

25 And it came to pass, when Rachel had borne Joseph, that Jacob said to Laban, "Send me away, that I may go to my own place and to my country. 26 Give me my wives and my children for whom I have served you, and let me go; for you know my service which I have done for you."

27 And Laban said to him, "Please stay, if I have found favor in your eyes, for I have learned by experience that the LORD has

blessed me for your sake." 28 Then he said, "Name me your wages, and I will give it."

29 So Jacob said to him, "You know how I have served you and how your livestock has been with me. 30 For what you had before I came was little, and it has increased to a great amount; the LORD has blessed you since my coming. And now, when shall I also provide for my own house?"

31 So he said, "What shall I give you?"

And Jacob said, "You shall not give me anything. If you will do this thing for me, I will again feed and keep your flocks: 32 Let me pass through all your flock today, removing from there all the speckled and spotted sheep, and all the brown ones among the lambs, and the spotted and speckled among the goats; and these shall be my wages. 33 So my righteousness will answer for me in time to come, when the subject of my wages comes before you: every one that is not speckled and spotted among the goats, and brown among the lambs, will be considered stolen, if it is with me."

34 And Laban said, "Oh, that it were according to your word!" 35 So he removed that day the male goats that were speckled and spotted, all the female goats that were speckled and spotted, every one that had some white in it, and all the brown ones among the lambs, and gave them into the hand of his sons. 36 Then he put three days' journey between himself and Jacob, and Jacob fed the rest of Laban's flocks.

37 Now Jacob took for himself rods of green poplar and of the almond and chestnut trees, peeled white strips in them, and exposed the white which was in the rods. 38 And the rods which he had peeled, he set before the flocks in the gutters, in the watering troughs where the flocks came to drink, so that they should conceive when they came to drink. 39 So the flocks conceived before the rods, and the flocks brought forth streaked, speckled, and spotted. 40 Then Jacob separated the lambs, and made the flocks face toward the streaked and all the brown in the

flock of Laban; but he put his own flocks by themselves and did not put them with Laban's flock.

41 And it came to pass, whenever the stronger livestock conceived, that Jacob placed the rods before the eyes of the livestock in the gutters, that they might conceive among the rods. 42 But when the flocks were feeble, he did not put them in; so the feebler were Laban's and the stronger Jacob's. 43 Thus the man became exceedingly prosperous, and had large flocks, female and male servants, and camels and donkeys.

## **Chapter 31**

### *Jacob Flees from Laban*

1 Now Jacob heard the words of Laban's sons, saying, "Jacob has taken away all that was our father's, and from what was our father's he has acquired all this wealth." 2 And Jacob saw the countenance of Laban, and indeed it was not favorable toward him as before. 3 Then the LORD said to Jacob, "Return to the land of your fathers and to your family, and I will be with you."

4 So Jacob sent and called Rachel and Leah to the field, to his flock, 5 and said to them, "I see your father's countenance, that it is not favorable toward me as before; but the God of my father has been with me. 6 And you know that with all my might I have served your father. 7 Yet your father has deceived me and changed my wages ten times, but God did not allow him to hurt me. 8 If he said thus: 'The speckled shall be your wages,' then all the flocks bore speckled. And if he said thus: 'The streaked shall be your wages,' then all the flocks bore streaked. 9 So God has taken away the livestock of your father and given them to me.

10 "And it happened, at the time when the flocks conceived, that I lifted my eyes and saw in a dream, and behold, the rams which leaped upon the flocks were streaked, speckled, and gray-spotted. 11 Then the Angel of God spoke to me in a dream, saying, 'Jacob.' And I said, 'Here I am.' 12 And He said, 'Lift your eyes now

and see, all the rams which leap on the flocks are streaked, speckled, and gray-spotted; for I have seen all that Laban is doing to you. 13 I am the God of Bethel, where you anointed the pillar and where you made a vow to Me. Now arise, get out of this land, and return to the land of your family.”

14 Then Rachel and Leah answered and said to him, “Is there still any portion or inheritance for us in our father’s house? 15 Are we not considered strangers by him? For he has sold us, and also completely consumed our money. 16 For all these riches which God has taken from our father are really ours and our children’s; now then, whatever God has said to you, do it.”

17 Then Jacob rose and set his sons and his wives on camels. 18 And he carried away all his livestock and all his possessions which he had gained, his acquired livestock which he had gained in Padan Aram, to go to his father Isaac in the land of Canaan. 19 Now Laban had gone to shear his sheep, and Rachel had stolen the household idols that were her father’s. 20 And Jacob stole away, unknown to Laban the Syrian, in that he did not tell him that he intended to flee. 21 So he fled with all that he had. He arose and crossed the river, and headed toward the mountains of Gilead.

#### *Laban Pursues Jacob*

22 And Laban was told on the third day that Jacob had fled. 23 Then he took his brethren with him and pursued him for seven days’ journey, and he overtook him in the mountains of Gilead. 24

In verse 19, we read that Rachel had stolen her father’s household idols. Although Rachel, and indeed Laban, knew about the LORD, and were nominal worshippers of Him, they were also idolators. This episode suggests that even Rachel’s family life with Jacob had not converted her to true worship of the LORD. This is the case today, with many who seem outwardly converted, but in fact have not rejected the ways of the world. Such people might seem converted, but they are not. Jesus told us that we cannot serve two masters.

## 31

*Have you read **Genesis** lately? (NKJV)*

But God had come to Laban the Syrian in a dream by night, and said to him, "Be careful that you speak to Jacob neither good nor bad."

25 So Laban overtook Jacob. Now Jacob had pitched his tent in the mountains, and Laban with his brethren pitched in the mountains of Gilead.

26 And Laban said to Jacob: "What have you done, that you have stolen away unknown to me, and carried away my daughters like captives taken with the sword? 27 Why did you flee away secretly, and steal away from me, and not tell me; for I might have sent you away with joy and songs, with timbrel and harp? 28 And you did not allow me to kiss my sons and my daughters. Now you have done foolishly in so doing. 29 It is in my power to do you harm, but the God of your father spoke to me last night, saying, 'Be careful that you speak to Jacob neither good nor bad.' 30 And now you have surely gone because you greatly long for your father's house, but why did you steal my gods?"

31 Then Jacob answered and said to Laban, "Because I was afraid, for I said, 'Perhaps you would take your daughters from me by force.' 32 With whomever you find your gods, do not let him live. In the presence of our brethren, identify what I have of yours and take it with you." For Jacob did not know that Rachel had stolen them.

33 And Laban went into Jacob's tent, into Leah's tent, and into the two maids' tents, but he did not find them. Then he went out of Leah's tent and entered Rachel's tent. 34 Now Rachel had taken the household idols, put them in the camel's saddle, and sat on them. And Laban searched all about the tent but did not find them. 35 And she said to her father, "Let it not displease my lord that I cannot rise before you, for the manner of women is with me." And he searched but did not find the household idols.

36 Then Jacob was angry and rebuked Laban, and Jacob answered and said to Laban: "What is my trespass? What is my sin, that you have so hotly pursued me? 37 Although you have searched all my things, what part of your household things have

you found? Set it here before my brethren and your brethren, that they may judge between us both! 38 These twenty years I have been with you; your ewes and your female goats have not miscarried their young, and I have not eaten the rams of your flock. 39 That which was torn by beasts I did not bring to you; I bore the loss of it. You required it from my hand, whether stolen by day or stolen by night. 40 There I was! In the day the drought consumed me, and the frost by night, and my sleep departed from my eyes. 41 Thus I have been in your house twenty years; I served you fourteen years for your two daughters, and six years for your flock, and you have changed my wages ten times. 42 Unless the God of my father, the God of Abraham and the Fear of Isaac, had been with me, surely now you would have sent me away empty-handed. God has seen my affliction and the labor of my hands, and rebuked you last night.”

*Laban’s Covenant with Jacob*

43 And Laban answered and said to Jacob, “These daughters are my daughters, and these children are my children, and this flock is my flock; all that you see is mine. But what can I do this day to these my daughters or to their children whom they have borne? 44 Now therefore, come, let us make a covenant, you and I, and let it be a witness between you and me.”

45 So Jacob took a stone and set it up as a pillar. 46 Then Jacob said to his brethren, “Gather stones.” And they took stones and made a heap, and they ate there on the heap. 47 Laban called it Jegar Sahadutha, but Jacob called it Galeed. 48 And Laban said, “This heap is a witness between you and me this day.” Therefore its name was called Galeed, 49 also Mizpah, because he said, “May the LORD watch between you and me when we are absent one from another. 50 If you afflict my daughters, or if you take other wives besides my daughters, although no man is with us—see, God is witness between you and me!”

51 Then Laban said to Jacob, "Here is this heap and here is this pillar, which I have placed between you and me. 52 This heap is a witness, and this pillar is a witness, that I will not pass beyond this heap to you, and you will not pass beyond this heap and this pillar to me, for harm. 53 The God of Abraham, the God of Nahor, and the God of their father judge between us." And Jacob swore by the Fear of his father Isaac. 54 Then Jacob offered a sacrifice on the mountain, and called his brethren to eat bread. And they ate bread and stayed all night on the mountain. 55 And early in the morning Laban arose, and kissed his sons and daughters and blessed them. Then Laban departed and returned to his place.

## **Chapter 32**

### *Esau Comes to Meet Jacob*

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

3 Then Jacob sent messengers before him to Esau his brother in the land of Seir, the country of Edom. 4 And he commanded them, saying, "Speak thus to my lord Esau, 'Thus your servant Jacob says: "I have dwelt with Laban and stayed there until now. 5 I have oxen, donkeys, flocks, and male and female servants; and I have sent to tell my lord, that I may find favor in your sight."'"

6 Then the messengers returned to Jacob, saying, "We came to your brother Esau, and he also is coming to meet you, and four hundred men are with him." 7 So Jacob was greatly afraid and distressed; and he divided the people that were with him, and the flocks and herds and camels, into two companies. 8 And he said, "If Esau comes to the one company and attacks it, then the other company which is left will escape."

9 Then Jacob said, "O God of my father Abraham and God of my father Isaac, the LORD who said to me, 'Return to your country and to your family, and I will deal well with you': 10 I am



Humanly speaking, this chapter tells of a very dangerous event, not only for Jacob and his family, but for the purposes of God. On a human level, it appears that the whole divine plan could have come apart here, if Jacob and his family had been attacked by Esau and his forces. And who could have fully blamed Esau, if he still harboured resentments and jealousies towards Jacob. Jacob is clearly in a great deal of distress, as he thinks his way through this problem - hence his prayer in verses 9-12. Jacob's prayer shows genuine repentance - "I am not worthy of the least of all the mercies and of all the truth which You have shown Your servant". Perhaps this repentant heart is part of the reason why Jacob was graced with a theophany - a pre-incarnate appearance of the Second Person of the Trinity in human form; because this is the only explanation of the mysterious person who wrestles with Jacob. After the encounter, Jacob remarks that "I have seen God face to face, and my life is preserved."

not worthy of the least of all the mercies and of all the truth which You have shown Your servant; for I crossed over this Jordan with my staff, and now I have become two companies. 11 Deliver me, I pray, from the hand of my brother, from the hand of Esau; for I fear him, lest he come and attack me and the mother with the children. 12 For You said, 'I will surely treat you well, and make your descendants as the sand of the sea, which cannot be numbered for multitude.'"

13 So he lodged there that same night, and took what came to his hand as a present for Esau his brother: 14 two hundred female goats and twenty male goats, two hundred ewes and twenty rams, 15 thirty milk camels with their colts, forty cows and ten bulls, twenty female donkeys and ten foals. 16 Then he delivered them to the hand of his servants, every drove by itself, and said to his servants, "Pass over before me, and put some distance between successive droves." 17 And he commanded the first one, saying, "When Esau my brother meets you and asks you, saying, 'To whom do you belong, and where are you going? Whose are these in front of you?' 18 then you shall say, 'They are your servant Jacob's. It is a present sent to my lord Esau; and behold, he also is

behind us.” 19 So he commanded the second, the third, and all who followed the droves, saying, “In this manner you shall speak to Esau when you find him; 20 and also say, ‘Behold, your servant Jacob is behind us.’” For he said, “I will appease him with the present that goes before me, and afterward I will see his face; perhaps he will accept me.” 21 So the present went on over before him, but he himself lodged that night in the camp.

### *Wrestling with God*

22 And he arose that night and took his two wives, his two female servants, and his eleven sons, and crossed over the ford of Jabbok. 23 He took them, sent them over the brook, and sent over what he had. 24 Then Jacob was left alone; and a Man wrestled with him until the breaking of day. 25 Now when He saw that He did not prevail against him, He touched the socket of his hip; and the socket of Jacob’s hip was out of joint as He wrestled with him. 26 And He said, “Let Me go, for the day breaks.”

But he said, “I will not let You go unless You bless me!”

27 So He said to him, “What is your name?”

He said, “Jacob.”

28 And He said, “Your name shall no longer be called Jacob, but Israel; for you have struggled with God and with men, and have prevailed.”

29 Then Jacob asked, saying, “Tell me Your name, I pray.”

And He said, “Why is it that you ask about My name?” And He blessed him there.

30 So Jacob called the name of the place Peniel: “For I have seen God face to face, and my life is preserved.” 31 Just as he crossed over Peniel the sun rose on him, and he limped on his hip. 32 Therefore to this day the children of Israel do not eat the muscle that shrank, which is on the hip socket, because He touched the socket of Jacob’s hip in the muscle that shrank.

This is what Henry Morris had to say about verse 4.  
“Then an amazing thing happened! Esau could restrain himself no longer and ran forward to Jacob, hugging and kissing him in a free display of joyful reunion and reconciliation. He had long since realized that Jacob had properly been entitled to the birthright and blessing, and that God had chosen Jacob to be the inheritor of the promises, and he was reconciled to this fact. Now finding that Jacob no longer held any bitterness in his heart toward him, but that he earnestly desired to regain their lost fellowship, Esau was overjoyed.”

## Chapter 33

### *Jacob and Esau Meet*

1 Now Jacob lifted his eyes and looked, and there, Esau was coming, and with him were four hundred men. So he divided the children among Leah, Rachel, and the two maidservants. 2 And he put the maidservants and their children in front, Leah and her children behind, and Rachel and Joseph last. 3 Then he crossed over before them and bowed himself to the ground seven times, until he came near to his brother.

4 But Esau ran to meet him, and embraced him, and fell on his neck and kissed him, and they wept. 5 And he lifted his eyes and saw the women and children, and said, “Who are these with you?”

So he said, “The children whom God has graciously given your servant.” 6 Then the maidservants came near, they and their children, and bowed down. 7 And Leah also came near with her children, and they bowed down. Afterward Joseph and Rachel came near, and they bowed down.

8 Then Esau said, “What do you mean by all this company which I met?”

And he said, “These are to find favor in the sight of my lord.”

9 But Esau said, “I have enough, my brother; keep what you have for yourself.”

10 And Jacob said, "No, please, if I have now found favor in your sight, then receive my present from my hand, inasmuch as I have seen your face as though I had seen the face of God, and you were pleased with me. 11 Please, take my blessing that is brought to you, because God has dealt graciously with me, and because I have enough." So he urged him, and he took it.

12 Then Esau said, "Let us take our journey; let us go, and I will go before you."

13 But Jacob said to him, "My lord knows that the children are weak, and the flocks and herds which are nursing are with me. And if the men should drive them hard one day, all the flock will die. 14 Please let my lord go on ahead before his servant. I will lead on slowly at a pace which the livestock that go before me, and the children, are able to endure, until I come to my lord in Seir."

15 And Esau said, "Now let me leave with you some of the people who are with me."

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

#### *Jacob Comes to Canaan*

18 Then Jacob came safely to the city of Shechem, which is in the land of Canaan, when he came from Padan Aram; and he pitched his tent before the city. 19 And he bought the parcel of land, where he had pitched his tent, from the children of Hamor, Shechem's father, for one hundred pieces of money. 20 Then he erected an altar there and called it El Elohe Israel.

## Chapter 34

### *The Dinah Incident*

1 Now Dinah the daughter of Leah, whom she had borne to 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 violated her. 3 His soul was strongly attracted to Dinah the daughter of Jacob, and he loved the young woman and spoke kindly to the young woman. 4 So Shechem spoke to his father Hamor, saying, "Get me this young woman as a wife."

5 And Jacob heard that he had defiled Dinah his daughter. Now his sons were with his livestock in the field; so Jacob held his peace until they came. 6 Then Hamor the father of Shechem went out to Jacob to speak with him. 7 And the sons of Jacob came in from the field when they heard it; and the men were grieved and very angry, because he had done a disgraceful thing in Israel by lying with Jacob's daughter, a thing which ought not to be done. 8 But Hamor spoke with them, saying, "The soul of my son Shechem longs for your daughter. Please give her to him as a wife. 9 And make marriages with us; give your daughters to us, and take our daughters to yourselves. 10 So you shall dwell with us, and the land shall be before you. Dwell and trade in it, and acquire possessions for yourselves in it."

11 Then Shechem said to her father and her brothers, "Let me find favor in your eyes, and whatever you say to me I will give. 12 Ask me ever so much dowry and gift, and I will give according to what you say to me; but give me the young woman as a wife."

13 But the sons of Jacob answered Shechem and Hamor his father, and spoke deceitfully, because he had defiled Dinah their sister. 14 And they said to them, "We cannot do this thing, to give our sister to one who is uncircumcised, for that would be a

Yet another danger could have destroyed the promises of God. Hamor was suggesting that Jacob and his family assimilate with the local Canaanites - a people who were already under God's judgment. If they had done so, the entire purity of the promised lines - both the Messianic line, and the general descent of God's people - would have been compromised.

But this is getting ahead of ourselves. The crisis was initiated by the violation of Jacob's daughter Dinah. This violation is not specified as a rape. It is therefore more likely to have been a seduction. The principle culprit in the affair is obviously Shechem, who carried out the violation. However, the wording suggests that there is some blame also to be attached to Dinah herself.

As a young woman, perhaps in her teens, there was no reason for her to be going out with "the daughters of the land". It would appear that Shechem's actions were not considered unusual in his society - hence the fact that Hamor does not apologise for his son's actions. So there was probably a general sense of immorality in the culture - much as in today's society. Perhaps Dinah was behaving in a manner familiar to other local girls and boys. Shouldn't her family have trained her more righteously?

How could they? They were not living in righteousness themselves. Perhaps we now see some of the problems of Jacob's worldly compromises, as he attempts to be both a worshipper of God and a polygamist. Perhaps some of these problems would not have arisen, had Jacob insisted on marrying Rachel and Rachel only, when Laban attempted to trick him..

Jacob's lack of parental control is seen when his sons commit an even greater crime - an act of genocide, as a revenge of a sexual sin. The result of the angry rashfulness of Dinah's brothers is that the whole family is put into severe danger from the neighbouring Canaanites. Genesis 34 is not the finest hour for Jacob's family.

reproach to us. 15 But on this condition we will consent to you: If you will become as we are, if every male of you is circumcised, 16 then we will give our daughters to you, and we will take your daughters to us; and we will dwell with you, and we will become

one people. 17 But if you will not heed us and be circumcised, then we will take our daughter and be gone.”

18 And their words pleased Hamor and Shechem, Hamor’s son. 19 So the young man did not delay to do the thing, because he delighted in Jacob’s daughter. He was more honorable than all the household of his father.

20 And Hamor and Shechem his son came to the gate of their city, and spoke with the men of their city, saying: 21 “These men are at peace with us. Therefore let them dwell in the land and trade in it. For indeed the land is large enough for them. Let us take their daughters to us as wives, and let us give them our daughters. 22 Only on this condition will the men consent to dwell with us, to be one people: if every male among us is circumcised as they are circumcised. 23 Will not their livestock, their property, and every animal of theirs be ours? Only let us consent to them, and they will dwell with us.” 24 And all who went out of the gate of his city heeded Hamor and Shechem his son; every male was circumcised, all who went out of the gate of his city.

25 Now it came to pass on the third day, when they were in pain, that two of the sons of Jacob, Simeon and Levi, Dinah’s brothers, each took his sword and came boldly upon the city and killed all the males. 26 And they killed Hamor and Shechem his son with the edge of the sword, and took Dinah from Shechem’s house, and went out. 27 The sons of Jacob came upon the slain, and plundered the city, because their sister had been defiled. 28 They took their sheep, their oxen, and their donkeys, what was in the city and what was in the field, 29 and all their wealth. All their little ones and their wives they took captive; and they plundered even all that was in the houses.

After all this turmoil, Jacob is being told by God to return to the place where God had first met with him. This is a principle that we first encountered with Abraham in Genesis 12.

## 35

*Have you read **Genesis** lately? (NKJV)*

30 Then Jacob said to Simeon and Levi, “You have troubled me by making me obnoxious among the inhabitants of the land, among the Canaanites and the Perizzites; and since I am few in number, they will gather themselves together against me and kill me. I shall be destroyed, my household and I.”

31 But they said, “Should he treat our sister like a harlot?”

## Chapter 35

*Jacob’s Return to Bethel*

1 Then God said to Jacob, “Arise, go up to Bethel and dwell there; and make an altar there to God, who appeared to you when you fled from the face of Esau your brother.”

2 And Jacob said to his household and to all who were with him, “Put away the foreign gods that are among you, purify yourselves, and change your garments. 3 Then let us arise and go up to Bethel; and I will make an altar there to God, who answered me in the day of my distress and has been with me in the way which I have gone.” 4 So they gave Jacob all the foreign gods which were in their hands, and the earrings which were in their ears; and Jacob hid them under the terebinth tree which was by Shechem.

5 And they journeyed, and the terror of God was upon the cities that were all around them, and they did not pursue the sons of Jacob. 6 So Jacob came to Luz (that is, Bethel), which is in the land of Canaan, he and all the people who were with him. 7 And he built an altar there and called the place El Bethel, because there God appeared to him when he fled from the face of his brother.

God protected Jacob’s family, despite their actions. No one would pursue the family, because “the terror of God” was upon them. This does not excuse the brothers’ actions, but shows that God brought good out of the situation.



8 Now Deborah, Rebekah's nurse, died, and she was buried below Bethel under the terebinth tree. So the name of it was called Allon Bachuth.

9 Then God appeared to Jacob again, when he came from Padan Aram, and blessed him. 10 And God said to him, "Your name is Jacob; your name shall not be called Jacob anymore, but Israel shall be your name." So He called his name Israel. 11 Also God said to him: "I am God Almighty. Be fruitful and multiply; a nation and a company of nations shall proceed from you, and kings shall come from your body. 12 The land which I gave Abraham and Isaac I give to you; and to your descendants after you I give this land." 13 Then God went up from him in the place where He talked with him. 14 So Jacob set up a pillar in the place where He talked with him, a pillar of stone; and he poured a drink offering on it, and he poured oil on it. 15 And Jacob called the name of the place where God spoke with him, Bethel.

#### *Death of Rachel*

16 Then they journeyed from Bethel. And when there was but a little distance to go to Ephrath, Rachel labored in childbirth, and she had hard labor. 17 Now it came to pass, when she was in hard labor, that the midwife said to her, "Do not fear; you will have this son also." 18 And so it was, as her soul was departing (for she died), that she called his name Ben-Oni; but his father called him Benjamin. 19 So Rachel died and was buried on the way to Ephrath (that is, Bethlehem). 20 And Jacob set a pillar on her grave, which is the pillar of Rachel's grave to this day.

21 Then Israel journeyed and pitched his tent beyond the tower of Eder. 22 And it happened, when Israel dwelt in that land, that Reuben went and lay with Bilhah his father's concubine; and Israel heard about it.

#### *Jacob's Twelve Sons*

## 36

*Have you read **Genesis** lately? (NKJV)*

Now the sons of Jacob were twelve: 23 the sons of Leah were Reuben, Jacob's firstborn, and Simeon, Levi, Judah, Issachar, and Zebulun; 24 the sons of Rachel were Joseph and Benjamin; 25 the sons of Bilhah, Rachel's maidservant, were Dan and Naphtali; 26 and the sons of Zilpah, Leah's maidservant, were Gad and Asher. These were the sons of Jacob who were born to him in Padan Aram.

### *Death of Isaac*

27 Then Jacob came to his father Isaac at Mamre, or Kirjath Arba (that is, Hebron), where Abraham and Isaac had dwelt. 28 Now the days of Isaac were one hundred and eighty years. 29 So Isaac breathed his last and died, and was gathered to his people, being old and full of days. And his sons Esau and Jacob buried him.

## **Chapter 36**

### *The Family of Esau*

1 Now this is the genealogy of Esau, who is Edom. 2 Esau took his wives from the daughters of Canaan: Adah the daughter of Elon the Hittite; Aholibamah the daughter of Anah, the daughter of Zibeon the Hivite; 3 and Basemath, Ishmael's daughter, sister of Nebajoth. 4 Now Adah bore Eliphaz to Esau, and Basemath bore Reuel. 5 And Aholibamah bore Jeush, Jaalam, and Korah. These were the sons of Esau who were born to him in the land of Canaan.

It seems that Esau moved his family to the Mount Seir area voluntarily, but this was according to the purposes of God. Otherwise, when Israel returned, many generations later, from Egypt, they would have had to remove their own kin - the Edomites - from the Promised Land. As it was, although the Edomites caused problems (which led to their ultimate demise), they did not have to be forcibly removed from the Promised Land along with the Canaanites, during Joshua's campaigns.

6 Then Esau took his wives, his sons, his daughters, and all the persons of his household, his cattle and all his animals, and all his goods which he had gained in the land of Canaan, and went to a country away from the presence of his brother Jacob. 7 For their possessions were too great for them to dwell together, and the land where they were strangers could not support them because of their livestock. 8 So Esau dwelt in Mount Seir. Esau is Edom.

9 And this is the genealogy of Esau the father of the Edomites in Mount Seir. 10 These were the names of Esau's sons: Eliphaz the son of Adah the wife of Esau, and Reuel the son of Basemath the wife of Esau. 11 And the sons of Eliphaz were Teman, Omar, Zepho, Gatam, and Kenaz.

12 Now Timna was the concubine of Eliphaz, Esau's son, and she bore Amalek to Eliphaz. These were the sons of Adah, Esau's wife.

13 These were the sons of Reuel: Nahath, Zerah, Shammah, and Mizzah. These were the sons of Basemath, Esau's wife.

14 These were the sons of Aholibamah, Esau's wife, the daughter of Anah, the daughter of Zibeon. And she bore to Esau: Jeush, Jaalam, and Korah.

#### *The Chiefs of Edom*

15 These were the chiefs of the sons of Esau. The sons of Eliphaz, the firstborn son of Esau, were Chief Teman, Chief Omar, Chief Zepho, Chief Kenaz, 16 Chief Korah, Chief Gatam, and Chief Amalek. These were the chiefs of Eliphaz in the land of Edom. They were the sons of Adah.

17 These were the sons of Reuel, Esau's son: Chief Nahath, Chief Zerah, Chief Shammah, and Chief Mizzah. These were the chiefs of Reuel in the land of Edom. These were the sons of Basemath, Esau's wife.

18 And these were the sons of Aholibamah, Esau's wife: Chief Jeush, Chief Jaalam, and Chief Korah. These were the chiefs who descended from Aholibamah, Esau's wife, the daughter of Anah.

19 These were the sons of Esau, who is Edom, and these were their chiefs.

#### *The Sons of Seir*

20 These were the sons of Seir the Horite who inhabited the land: Lotan, Shobal, Zibeon, Anah, 21 Dishon, Ezer, and Dishan. These were the chiefs of the Horites, the sons of Seir, in the land of Edom.

22 And the sons of Lotan were Hori and Hemam. Lotan's sister was Timna.

23 These were the sons of Shobal: Alvan, Manahath, Ebal, Shepho, and Onam.

24 These were the sons of Zibeon: both Ajah and Anah. This was the Anah who found the water in the wilderness as he pastured the donkeys of his father Zibeon. 25 These were the children of Anah: Dishon and Aholibamah the daughter of Anah.

26 These were the sons of Dishon: Hemdan, Eshban, Ithran, and Cheran. 27 These were the sons of Ezer: Bilhan, Zaavan, and Akan. 28 These were the sons of Dishan: Uz and Aran.

29 These were the chiefs of the Horites: Chief Lotan, Chief Shobal, Chief Zibeon, Chief Anah, 30 Chief Dishon, Chief Ezer, and Chief Dishan. These were the chiefs of the Horites, according to their chiefs in the land of Seir.

#### *The Kings of Edom*

31 Now these were the kings who reigned in the land of Edom before any king reigned over the children of Israel: 32 Bela the son of Beor reigned in Edom, and the name of his city was Dinhabah. 33 And when Bela died, Jobab the son of Zerah of Bozrah reigned in his place. 34 When Jobab died, Husham of the land of the Temanites reigned in his place. 35 And when Husham died, Hadad the son of Bedad, who attacked Midian in the field of Moab, reigned in his place. And the name of his city was Avith. 36

*Have you read **Genesis** lately? (NKJV)*

37

When Hadad died, Samlah of Masrekah reigned in his place. 37 And when Samlah died, Saul of Rehoboth-by-the-River reigned in his place. 38 When Saul died, Baal-Hanan the son of Achbor reigned in his place. 39 And when Baal-Hanan the son of Achbor died, Hadar reigned in his place; and the name of his city was Pau. His wife's name was Mehetabel, the daughter of Matred, the daughter of Mezahab.

#### *The Chiefs of Esau*

40 And these were the names of the chiefs of Esau, according to their families and their places, by their names: Chief Timnah, Chief Alvah, Chief Jetheth, 41 Chief Aholibamah, Chief Elah, Chief Pinon, 42 Chief Kenaz, Chief Teman, Chief Mibzar, 43 Chief Magdiel, and Chief Iram. These were the chiefs of Edom, according to their dwelling places in the land of their possession. Esau was the father of the Edomites.

## **Chapter 37**

### *Joseph Dreams of Greatness*

1 Now Jacob dwelt in the land where his father was a stranger, in the land of Canaan. 2 This is the history of Jacob.

Joseph, being seventeen years old, was feeding the flock with his brothers. And the lad was with the sons of Bilhah and the sons of Zilpah, his father's wives; and Joseph brought a bad report of them to his father.

Up to this point, the main characters at the forefront of the narrative in Genesis have all been part of the Messianic line - Adam, Noah, Abraham, Isaac and Jacob. The focus is now on the life of Joseph; but Joseph was not part of the Messianic line: that honour was reserved for his brother Judah.

3 Now Israel loved Joseph more than all his children, because he was the son of his old age. Also he made him a tunic of many colors. 4 But when his brothers saw that their father loved him more than all his brothers, they hated him and could not speak peaceably to him.

5 Now Joseph had a dream, and he told it to his brothers; and they hated him even more. 6 So he said to them, "Please hear this dream which I have dreamed: 7 There we were, binding sheaves in the field. Then behold, my sheaf arose and also stood upright; and indeed your sheaves stood all around and bowed down to my sheaf."

8 And his brothers said to him, "Shall you indeed reign over us? Or shall you indeed have dominion over us?" So they hated him even more for his dreams and for his words.

9 Then he dreamed still another dream and told it to his brothers, and said, "Look, I have dreamed another dream. And this time, the sun, the moon, and the eleven stars bowed down to me."

10 So he told it to his father and his brothers; and his father rebuked him and said to him, "What is this dream that you have dreamed? Shall your mother and I and your brothers indeed come to bow down to the earth before you?" 11 And his brothers envied him, but his father kept the matter in mind.

#### *Joseph Sold by His Brothers*

12 Then his brothers went to feed their father's flock in Shechem. 13 And Israel said to Joseph, "Are not your brothers feeding the flock in Shechem? Come, I will send you to them."

So he said to him, "Here I am."

14 Then he said to him, "Please go and see if it is well with your brothers and well with the flocks, and bring back word to me." So he sent him out of the Valley of Hebron, and he went to Shechem.

15 Now a certain man found him, and there he was, wandering in the field. And the man asked him, saying, "What are you seeking?"

16 So he said, "I am seeking my brothers. Please tell me where they are feeding their flocks."

17 And the man said, "They have departed from here, for I heard them say, 'Let us go to Dothan.'" So Joseph went after his brothers and found them in Dothan.

18 Now when they saw him afar off, even before he came near them, they conspired against him to kill him. 19 Then they said to one another, "Look, this dreamer is coming! 20 Come therefore, let us now kill him and cast him into some pit; and we shall say, 'Some wild beast has devoured him.' We shall see what will become of his dreams!"

21 But Reuben heard it, and he delivered him out of their hands, and said, "Let us not kill him." 22 And Reuben said to them, "Shed no blood, but cast him into this pit which is in the wilderness, and do not lay a hand on him"—that he might deliver him out of their hands, and bring him back to his father.

23 So it came to pass, when Joseph had come to his brothers, that they stripped Joseph of his tunic, the tunic of many colors that was on him. 24 Then 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 a meal. Then they lifted their eyes and looked, and there was a company of Ishmaelites, coming from Gilead with their camels, bearing spices, balm, and myrrh,

Once again, we have a catalogue of mistakes and sins. Jacob should not have favoured one son above the others. The brothers should not have hated Joseph. And Joseph should have shown more humility in his conversations with them - even his doting father rebuked him for his arrogance.

The wicked plan, first to kill Joseph, then to sell him into slavery, but pretend to their father that he was dead, was used by God to bring about good. Joseph himself made this point towards the end of Genesis.

on their way to carry them down to Egypt. 26 So Judah said to his brothers, "What profit is there if we kill our brother and conceal his blood? 27 Come and let us sell him to the Ishmaelites, and let not our hand be upon him, for he is our brother and our flesh." And his brothers listened. 28 Then Midianite traders passed by; so the brothers pulled Joseph up and lifted him out of the pit, and sold him to the Ishmaelites for twenty shekels of silver. And they took Joseph to Egypt.

29 Then Reuben returned to the pit, and indeed Joseph was not in the pit; and he tore his clothes. 30 And he returned to his brothers and said, "The lad is no more; and I, where shall I go?"

31 So they took Joseph's tunic, killed a kid of the goats, and dipped the tunic in the blood. 32 Then they sent the tunic of many colors, and they brought it to their father and said, "We have found this. Do you know whether it is your son's tunic or not?"

33 And he recognized it and said, "It is my son's tunic. A wild beast has devoured him. Without doubt Joseph is torn to pieces." 34 Then Jacob tore his clothes, put sackcloth on his waist, and mourned for his son many days. 35 And all his sons and all his daughters arose to comfort him; but he refused to be comforted, and he said, "For I shall go down into the grave to my son in mourning." Thus his father wept for him.

36 Now the Midianites had sold him in Egypt to Potiphar, an officer of Pharaoh and captain of the guard.

## **Chapter 38**

### *Judah and Tamar*

1 It came to pass at that time that Judah departed from his brothers, and visited a certain Adullamite whose name was Hirah. 2 And Judah saw there a daughter of a certain Canaanite whose name was Shua, and he married her and went in to her. 3 So she conceived and bore a son, and he called his name Er. 4 She



Joseph's story is interrupted by this account of Judah and Tamar. Few come out of this story well. Judah comes out badly, for having deceived Tamar and not given her in marriage to his third son Shelah, while preventing her from marrying elsewhere. Er comes out badly, because he was so wicked that God had to kill him off. Onan comes out badly by refusing to obey his father in giving Tamar a son - a wickedness that led to his death, also. It ought to be noted that the sin of Onan was not the actual act of emitting on the ground, but of disobedience.

Tamar's own actions, in trying to get a son, were themselves questionable - though it can be argued that Judah's deception of her partly excused her. Nevertheless, Judah shows his repentance later, when he declares that "she has been more righteous than I". Despite this problematic event, both Judah and Tamar are named in the ancestry of Jesus Christ.

conceived again and bore a son, and she called his name Onan. 5 And she conceived yet again and bore a son, and called his name Shelah. He was at Chezib when she bore him.

6 Then Judah took a wife for Er his firstborn, and her name was Tamar. 7 But Er, Judah's firstborn, was wicked in the sight of the LORD, and the LORD killed him. 8 And Judah said to Onan, "Go in to your brother's wife and marry her, and raise up an heir to your brother." 9 But Onan knew that the heir would not be his; and it came to pass, when he went in to his brother's wife, that he emitted on the ground, lest he should give an heir to his brother. 10 And the thing which he did displeased the LORD; therefore He killed him also.

11 Then Judah said to Tamar his daughter-in-law, "Remain a widow in your father's house till my son Shelah is grown." For he said, "Lest he also die like his brothers." And Tamar went and dwelt in her father's house.

12 Now in the process of time the daughter of Shua, Judah's wife, died; and Judah was comforted, and went up to his sheepshearers at Timnah, he and his friend Hirah the Adullamite. 13 And it was told Tamar, saying, "Look, your father-in-law is going up to Timnah to shear his sheep." 14 So she took off her

widow's garments, covered herself with a veil and wrapped herself, and sat in an open place which was on the way to Timnah; for she saw that Shelah was grown, and she was not given to him as a wife. 15 When Judah saw her, he thought she was a harlot, because she had covered her face. 16 Then he turned to her by the way, and said, "Please let me come in to you"; for he did not know that she was his daughter-in-law.

So she said, "What will you give me, that you may come in to me?"

17 And he said, "I will send a young goat from the flock."

So she said, "Will you give me a pledge till you send it?"

18 Then he said, "What pledge shall I give you?"

So she said, "Your signet and cord, and your staff that is in your hand." Then he gave them to her, and went in to her, and she conceived by him. 19 So she arose and went away, and laid aside her veil and put on the garments of her widowhood.

20 And Judah sent the young goat by the hand of his friend the Adullamite, to receive his pledge from the woman's hand, but he did not find her. 21 Then he asked the men of that place, saying, "Where is the harlot who was openly by the roadside?"

And they said, "There was no harlot in this place."

22 So he returned to Judah and said, "I cannot find her. Also, the men of the place said there was no harlot in this place."

23 Then Judah said, "Let her take them for herself, lest we be shamed; for I sent this young goat and you have not found her."

24 And it came to pass, about three months after, that Judah was told, saying, "Tamar your daughter-in-law has played the harlot; furthermore she is with child by harlotry."

So Judah said, "Bring her out and let her be burned!"

25 When she was brought out, she sent to her father-in-law, saying, "By the man to whom these belong, I am with child." And she said, "Please determine whose these are—the signet and cord, and staff."

26 So Judah acknowledged them and said, "She has been more righteous than I, because I did not give her to Shelah my son." And he never knew her again.

27 Now it came to pass, at the time for giving birth, that behold, twins were in her womb. 28 And so it was, when she was giving birth, that the one put out his hand; and the midwife took a scarlet thread and bound it on his hand, saying, "This one came out first." 29 Then it happened, as he drew back his hand, that his brother came out unexpectedly; and she said, "How did you break through? This breach be upon you!" Therefore his name was called Perez. 30 Afterward his brother came out who had the scarlet thread on his hand. And his name was called Zerah.

## **Chapter 39**

### *Joseph a Slave in Egypt*

1 Now Joseph had been taken down to Egypt. And Potiphar, an officer of Pharaoh, captain of the guard, an Egyptian, bought him from the Ishmaelites who had taken him down there. 2 The LORD was with Joseph, and he was a successful 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 he did to prosper in his hand. 4 So Joseph found favor in his sight, and served him. Then he made him overseer of his house, and all that he had he put under his authority. 5 So it was, from the time that he had made him overseer of his house and all that he had, that the LORD blessed the Egyptian's house for Joseph's sake; and the blessing of the LORD was on all that he had in the house and in the field. 6 Thus he left all that he had in Joseph's hand, and he did not know what he had except for the bread which he ate.

Now Joseph was handsome in form and appearance.

7 And it came to pass after these things that his master's wife cast longing eyes on Joseph, and she said, "Lie with me."

Why do bad things happen to good people? Joseph behaves impeccably in this account. Yet he ends up being thrown into prison for years. However, if he hadn't been in prison, sharing space with more illustrious prisoners, he might never have met the Pharaoh.

8 But he refused and said to his master's wife, "Look, my master does not know what is with me in the house, and he has committed all that he has to my hand. 9 There is no one greater in this house than I, nor has he kept back anything from me but you, because you are his wife. How then can I do this great wickedness, and sin against God?"

10 So it was, as she spoke to Joseph day by day, that he did not heed her, to lie with her or to be with her.

11 But it happened about this time, when Joseph went into the house to do his work, and none of the men of the house was inside, 12 that she caught him by his garment, saying, "Lie with me." But he left his garment in her hand, and fled and ran outside. 13 And so it was, when she saw that he had left his garment in her hand and fled outside, 14 that she called to the men of her house and spoke to them, saying, "See, he has brought in to us a Hebrew to mock us. He came in to me to lie with me, and I cried out with a loud voice. 15 And it happened, when he heard that I lifted my voice and cried out, that he left his garment with me, and fled and went outside."

16 So she kept his garment with her until his master came home. 17 Then she spoke to him with words like these, saying, "The Hebrew servant whom you brought to us came in to me to mock me; 18 so it happened, as I lifted my voice and cried out, that he left his garment with me and fled outside."

19 So it was, when his master heard the words which his wife spoke to him, saying, "Your servant did to me after this manner," that his anger was aroused. 20 Then Joseph's master took him and put him into the prison, a place where the king's prisoners were confined. And he was there in the prison. 21 But the LORD

was with Joseph and showed him mercy, and He gave him favor in the sight of the keeper of the prison. 22 And the keeper of the prison committed to Joseph's hand all the prisoners who were in the prison; whatever they did there, it was his doing. 23 The keeper of the prison did not look into anything that was under Joseph's authority, because the LORD was with him; and whatever he did, the LORD made it prosper.

## **Chapter 40**

### *The Prisoners' Dreams*

1 It came to pass after these things that the butler and the baker of the king of Egypt offended their lord, the king of Egypt. 2 And Pharaoh was angry with his two officers, the chief butler and the chief baker. 3 So he put them in custody in the house of the captain of the guard, in the prison, the place where Joseph was confined. 4 And the captain of the guard charged Joseph with them, and he served them; so they were in custody for a while.

5 Then the butler and the baker of the king of Egypt, who were confined in the prison, had a dream, both of them, each man's dream in one night and each man's dream with its own interpretation. 6 And Joseph came in to them in the morning and looked at them, and saw that they were sad. 7 So he asked Pharaoh's officers who were with him in the custody of his lord's house, saying, "Why do you look so sad today?"

8 And they said to him, "We each have had a dream, and there is no interpreter of it."

So Joseph said to them, "Do not interpretations belong to God? Tell them to me, please."

9 Then the chief butler told his dream to Joseph, and said to him, "Behold, in my dream a vine was before me, 10 and in the vine were three branches; it was as though it budded, its blossoms shot forth, and its clusters brought forth ripe grapes. 11 Then Pharaoh's cup was in my hand; and I took the grapes and

pressed them into Pharaoh's cup, and placed the cup in Pharaoh's hand."

12 And Joseph said to him, "This is the interpretation of it: The three branches are three days. 13 Now within three days Pharaoh will lift up your head and restore you to your place, and you will put Pharaoh's cup in his hand according to the former manner, when you were his butler. 14 But remember me when it is well with you, and please show kindness to me; make mention of me to Pharaoh, and get me out of this house. 15 For indeed I was stolen away from the land of the Hebrews; and also I have done nothing here that they should put me into the dungeon."

16 When the chief baker saw that the interpretation was good, he said to Joseph, "I also was in my dream, and there were three white baskets on my head. 17 In the uppermost basket were all kinds of baked goods for Pharaoh, and the birds ate them out of the basket on my head."

18 So Joseph answered and said, "This is the interpretation of it: The three baskets are three days. 19 Within three days Pharaoh will lift off your head from you and hang you on a tree; and the birds will eat your flesh from you."

20 Now it came to pass on the third day, which was Pharaoh's birthday, that he made a feast for all his servants; and he lifted up the head of the chief butler and of the chief baker among his servants. 21 Then he restored the chief butler to his butlership again, and he placed the cup in Pharaoh's hand. 22 But he hanged the chief baker, as Joseph had interpreted to them. 23 Yet the chief butler did not remember Joseph, but forgot him.

## **Chapter 41**

### *Pharaoh's Dreams*

1 Then it came to pass, at the end of two full years, that Pharaoh had a dream; and behold, he stood by the river. 2 Suddenly there came up out of the river seven cows, fine looking

There is, at this point, a similarity between Joseph and Daniel, who were both given the gift of interpreting dreams, and who both became great leaders in their host nations.

and fat; and they fed in the meadow. 3 Then behold, seven other cows came up after them out of the river, ugly and gaunt, and stood by the other cows on the bank of the river. 4 And the ugly and gaunt cows ate up the seven fine looking and fat cows. So Pharaoh awoke. 5 He slept and dreamed a second time; and suddenly seven heads of grain came up on one stalk, plump and good. 6 Then behold, seven thin heads, blighted by the east wind, sprang up after them. 7 And the seven thin heads devoured the seven plump and full heads. So Pharaoh awoke, and indeed, it was a dream. 8 Now 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 its wise men. And Pharaoh told them his dreams, but there was no one who could interpret them for Pharaoh.

9 Then the chief butler spoke to Pharaoh, saying: "I remember my faults this day. 10 When Pharaoh was angry with his servants, and put me in custody in the house of the captain of the guard, both me and the chief baker, 11 we each had a dream in one night, he and I. Each of us dreamed according to the interpretation of his own dream. 12 Now there was a young Hebrew man with us there, a servant of the captain of the guard. And we told him, and he interpreted our dreams for us; to each man he interpreted according to his own dream. 13 And it came to pass, just as he interpreted for us, so it happened. He restored me to my office, and he hanged him."

14 Then Pharaoh sent and called Joseph, and they brought him quickly out of the dungeon; and he shaved, changed his clothing, and came to Pharaoh. 15 And Pharaoh said to Joseph, "I have had a dream, and there is no one who can interpret it. But I have heard it said of you that you can understand a dream, to interpret it."

Joseph's interpretation of Pharaoh's dreams was remarkable enough. However, it was the wisdom of his interpretation that particularly impressed Pharaoh. Pharaoh was not appointing a mere dreamer to this post, which was rather like a Prime Minister - he was appointing someone who could give clear, sensible advice and act upon it.

For this reason, Pharaoh gave him great power. Through Joseph's actions, Egypt became hugely important, and thrived, while the other Middle Eastern tribes and nations were all failing.

16 So Joseph answered Pharaoh, saying, "It is not in me; God will give Pharaoh an answer of peace."

17 Then Pharaoh said to Joseph: "Behold, in my dream I stood on the bank of the river. 18 Suddenly seven cows came up out of the river, fine looking and fat; and they fed in the meadow. 19 Then behold, seven other cows came up after them, poor and very ugly and gaunt, such ugliness as I have never seen in all the land of Egypt. 20 And the gaunt and ugly cows ate up the first seven, the fat cows. 21 When they had eaten them up, no one would have known that they had eaten them, for they were just as ugly as at the beginning. So I awoke. 22 Also I saw in my dream, and suddenly seven heads came up on one stalk, full and good. 23 Then behold, seven heads, withered, thin, and blighted by the east wind, sprang up after them. 24 And the thin heads devoured the seven good heads. So I told this to the magicians, but there was no one who could explain it to me."

25 Then Joseph said to Pharaoh, "The dreams of Pharaoh are one; God has shown Pharaoh what He is about to do: 26 The seven good cows are seven years, and the seven good heads are seven years; the dreams are one. 27 And the seven thin and ugly cows which came up after them are seven years, and the seven empty heads blighted by the east wind are seven years of famine. 28 This is the thing which I have spoken to Pharaoh. God has shown Pharaoh what He is about to do. 29 Indeed seven years of great plenty will come throughout all the land of Egypt; 30 but after them seven years of famine will arise, and all the plenty will



be forgotten in the land of Egypt; and the famine will deplete the land. 31 So the plenty will not be known in the land because of the famine following, for it will be very severe. 32 And the dream was repeated to Pharaoh twice because the thing is established by God, and God will shortly bring it to pass.

33 "Now therefore, let Pharaoh select a discerning and wise man, and set him over the land of Egypt. 34 Let Pharaoh do this, and let him appoint officers over the land, to collect one-fifth of the produce of the land of Egypt in the seven plentiful years. 35 And let them gather all the food of those good years that are coming, and store up grain under the authority of Pharaoh, and let them keep food in the cities. 36 Then that food shall be as a reserve for the land for the seven years of famine which shall be in the land of Egypt, that the land may not perish during the famine."

*Joseph's Rise to Power*

37 So the advice was good in the eyes of Pharaoh and in the eyes of all his servants. 38 And Pharaoh said to his servants, "Can we find such a one as this, a man in whom is the Spirit of God?"

39 Then Pharaoh said to Joseph, "Inasmuch as God has shown you all this, there is no one as discerning and wise as you. 40 You shall be over my house, and all my people shall be ruled according to your word; only in regard to the throne will I be greater than you." 41 And Pharaoh said to Joseph, "See, I have set you over all the land of Egypt."

42 Then Pharaoh took his signet ring off his hand and put it on Joseph's hand; and he clothed him in garments of fine linen and put a gold chain around his neck. 43 And he had him ride in the second chariot which he had; and they cried out before him, "Bow the knee!" So he set him over all the land of Egypt. 44 Pharaoh also said to Joseph, "I am Pharaoh, and without your consent no man may lift his hand or foot in all the land of Egypt." 45 And Pharaoh called Joseph's name Zaphnath-Paaneah. And he

gave him as a wife Asenath, the daughter of Poti-Pherah priest of On. So Joseph went out over all the land of Egypt.

46 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 Now in the seven plentiful years the ground brought forth abundantly. 48 So 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; he laid up in every city the food of the fields which surrounded them. 49 Joseph gathered very much grain, as the sand of the sea, until he stopped counting, for it was immeasurable.

50 And to Joseph were born two sons before the years of famine came, whom Asenath, the daughter of Poti-Pherah priest of On, bore to him. 51 Joseph called the name of the firstborn Manasseh: "For God has made me forget all my toil and all my father's house." 52 And the name of the second he called Ephraim: "For God has caused me to be fruitful in the land of my affliction."

53 Then the seven years of plenty which were in the land of Egypt ended, 54 and the seven years of famine began to come, as Joseph had said. The famine was in all lands, but in all the land of Egypt there was bread. 55 So when all the land of Egypt was famished, the people cried to Pharaoh for bread. Then Pharaoh said to all the Egyptians, "Go to Joseph; whatever he says to you, do." 56 The famine was over all the face of the earth, and Joseph opened all the storehouses and sold to the Egyptians. And the famine became severe in the land of Egypt. 57 So all countries came to Joseph in Egypt to buy grain, because the famine was severe in all lands.

## Chapter 42

### *Joseph's Brothers Go to Egypt*

1 When Jacob saw that there was grain in Egypt, Jacob said to his sons, "Why do you look at one another?" 2 And he said, "Indeed I have heard that there is grain in Egypt; go down to that place and buy for us there, that we may live and not die."

3 So Joseph's ten brothers went down to buy grain in Egypt. 4 But Jacob did not send Joseph's brother Benjamin with his brothers, for he said, "Lest some calamity befall him." 5 And the sons of Israel went to buy grain among those who journeyed, for the famine was in the land of Canaan.

6 Now Joseph was governor over the land; and it was he who sold to all the people of the land. And Joseph's brothers came and bowed down before him with their faces to the earth. 7 Joseph saw his brothers and recognized them, but he acted as a stranger to them and spoke roughly to them. Then he said to them, "Where do you come from?"

And they said, "From the land of Canaan to buy food."

8 So Joseph recognized his brothers, but they did not recognize him. 9 Then Joseph remembered the dreams which he had dreamed about them, and said to them, "You are spies! You have come to see the nakedness of the land!"

10 And they said to him, "No, my lord, but your servants have come to buy food. 11 We are all one man's sons; we are honest men; your servants are not spies."

It is no wonder that Joseph's brothers did not recognise him. He was a lot older than the teenager, whom they had got rid of so long ago. They sold him as a slave, yet now he was dressed as a king. They sold him to the Ishmaelites. They were not to know that the Ishmaelites had sold him on again. But he recognised them - they were older, but presumably not dressed too much different.

12 But he said to them, "No, but you have come to see the nakedness of the land."

13 And they said, "Your servants are twelve brothers, the sons of one man in the land of Canaan; and in fact, the youngest is with our father today, and one is no more."

14 But Joseph said to them, "It is as I spoke to you, saying, 'You are spies!' 15 In this manner you shall be tested: By the life of Pharaoh, you shall not leave this place unless your youngest brother comes here. 16 Send one of you, and let him bring your brother; and you shall be kept in prison, that your words may be tested to see whether there is any truth in you; or else, by the life of Pharaoh, surely you are spies!" 17 So he put them all together in prison three days.

18 Then Joseph said to them the third day, "Do this and live, for I fear God: 19 If you are honest men, let one of your brothers be confined to your prison house; but you, go and carry grain for the famine of your houses. 20 And bring your youngest brother to me; so your words will be verified, and you shall not die."

And they did so. 21 Then they said to one another, "We are truly guilty concerning our brother, for we saw the anguish of his soul when he pleaded with us, and we would not hear; therefore this distress has come upon us."

22 And Reuben answered them, saying, "Did I not speak to you, saying, 'Do not sin against the boy'; and you would not listen? Therefore behold, his blood is now required of us." 23 But they did not know that Joseph understood them, for he spoke to them through an interpreter. 24 And he turned himself away from them and wept. Then he returned to them again, and talked with them. And he took Simeon from them and bound him before their eyes.

#### *The Brothers Return to Canaan*

25 Then Joseph gave a command to fill their sacks with grain, to restore every man's money to his sack, and to give them

provisions for the journey. Thus he did for them. 26 So they loaded their donkeys with the grain and departed from there. 27 But as one of them opened his sack to give his donkey feed at the encampment, he saw his money; and there it was, in the mouth of his sack. 28 So he said to his brothers, "My money has been restored, and there it is, in my sack!" Then their hearts failed them and they were afraid, saying to one another, "What is this that God has done to us?"

29 Then they went to Jacob their father in the land of Canaan and told him all that had happened to them, saying: 30 "The man who is lord of the land spoke roughly to us, and took us for spies of the country. 31 But we said to him, 'We are honest men; we are not spies. 32 We are twelve brothers, sons of our father; one is no more, and the youngest is with our father this day in the land of Canaan.' 33 Then the man, the lord of the country, said to us, 'By this I will know that you are honest men: Leave one of your brothers here with me, take food for the famine of your households, and be gone. 34 And bring your youngest brother to me; so I shall know that you are not spies, but that you are honest men. I will grant your brother to you, and you may trade in the land.'"

35 Then it happened as they emptied their sacks, that surprisingly each man's bundle of money was in his sack; and when they and their father saw the bundles of money, they were afraid. 36 And Jacob their father said to them, "You have bereaved me: Joseph is no more, Simeon is no more, and you want to take Benjamin. All these things are against me."

37 Then Reuben spoke to his father, saying, "Kill my two sons if I do not bring him back to you; put him in my hands, and I will bring him back to you."

38 But he said, "My son shall not go down with you, for his brother is dead, and he is left alone. If any calamity should befall him along the way in which you go, then you would bring down my gray hair with sorrow to the grave."

## Chapter 43

### *Joseph's Brothers Return with Benjamin*

1 Now the famine was severe in the land. 2 And it came to pass, when they had eaten up the grain which they had brought from Egypt, that their father said to them, "Go back, buy us a little food."

3 But Judah spoke to him, saying, "The man solemnly warned us, saying, 'You shall not see my face unless your brother is with you.' 4 If you send our brother with us, we will go down and buy you food. 5 But if you will not send him, we will not go down; for the man said to us, 'You shall not see my face unless your brother is with you.'"

6 And Israel said, "Why did you deal so wrongfully with me as to tell the man whether you had still another brother?"

7 But they said, "The man asked us pointedly about ourselves and our family, saying, 'Is your father still alive? Have you another brother?' And we told him according to these words. Could we possibly have known that he would say, 'Bring your brother down'?"

8 Then Judah said to Israel his father, "Send the lad with me, and we will arise and go, that we may live and not die, both we and you and also our little ones. 9 I myself will be surety for him; from my hand you shall require him. If I do not bring him back to you and set him before you, then let me bear the blame forever. 10 For if we had not lingered, surely by now we would have returned this second time."

11 And their father Israel said to them, "If it must be so, then do this: Take some of the best fruits of the land in your vessels

Although they had not recognised Joseph, they knew that it was their sin against him that had brought this calamity on them. It is clear that long, slow repentance was finally breaking out amongst these hardened men.

and carry down a present for the man—a little balm and a little honey, spices and myrrh, pistachio nuts and almonds. 12 Take double money in your hand, and take back in your hand the money that was returned in the mouth of your sacks; perhaps it was an oversight. 13 Take your brother also, and arise, go back to the man. 14 And may God Almighty give you mercy before the man, that he may release your other brother and Benjamin. If I am bereaved, I am bereaved!”

15 So the men took that present and Benjamin, and they took double money in their hand, and arose and went down to Egypt; and they stood before Joseph. 16 When Joseph saw Benjamin with them, he said to the steward of his house, “Take these men to my home, and slaughter an animal and make ready; for these men will dine with me at noon.” 17 Then the man did as Joseph ordered, and the man brought the men into Joseph’s house.

18 Now the men were afraid because they were brought into Joseph’s house; and they said, “It is because of the money, which was returned in our sacks the first time, that we are brought in, so that he may make a case against us and seize us, to take us as slaves with our donkeys.”

19 When they drew near to the steward of Joseph’s house, they talked with him at the door of the house, 20 and said, “O sir, we indeed came down the first time to buy food; 21 but it happened, when we came to the encampment, that we opened our sacks, and there, each man’s money was in the mouth of his sack, our money in full weight; so we have brought it back in our hand. 22 And we have brought down other money in our hands to buy food. We do not know who put our money in our sacks.”

23 But he said, “Peace be with you, do not be afraid. Your God and the God of your father has given you treasure in your sacks; I had your money.” Then he brought Simeon out to them.

24 So the man brought the men into Joseph’s house and gave them water, and they washed their feet; and he gave their donkeys feed. 25 Then they made the present ready for Joseph’s coming at noon, for they heard that they would eat bread there.

Joseph believed that his act was necessary in order to determine the hearts of his brothers, and to give them the opportunity fully to repent. Nevertheless, it was hard for him to do so. He almost failed to continue the task when he met his younger brother, Benjamin - his only full brother, as all the others were half-brothers. Love sometimes has to be tough.

26 And when Joseph came home, they brought him the present which was in their hand into the house, and bowed down before him to the earth. 27 Then he asked them about their well-being, and said, "Is your father well, the old man of whom you spoke? Is he still alive?"

28 And they answered, "Your servant our father is in good health; he is still alive." And they bowed their heads down and prostrated themselves.

29 Then he lifted his eyes and saw his brother Benjamin, his mother's son, and said, "Is this your younger brother of whom you spoke to me?" And he said, "God be gracious to you, my son." 30 Now his heart yearned for his brother; so Joseph made haste and sought somewhere to weep. And he went into his chamber and wept there. 31 Then he washed his face and came out; and he restrained himself, and said, "Serve the bread."

32 So they set him a place by himself, and them by themselves, and the Egyptians who ate with him by themselves; because the Egyptians could not eat food with the Hebrews, for that is an abomination to the Egyptians. 33 And they sat before him, the firstborn according to his birthright and the youngest according to his youth; and the men looked in astonishment at one another. 34 Then he took servings to them from before him, but Benjamin's serving was five times as much as any of theirs. So they drank and were merry with him.



## Chapter 44

### *Joseph's Cup*

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 each man's money in the mouth of his sack. 2 Also put my cup, the silver cup, in the mouth of the sack of the youngest, and his grain money." So he did according to the word that Joseph had spoken. 3 As soon as the morning dawned, the men were sent away, they and their donkeys. 4 When they had gone out of the city, and were not yet far off, Joseph said to his steward, "Get up, follow the men; and when you overtake them, say to them, 'Why have you repaid evil for good? 5 Is not this the one from which my lord drinks, and with which he indeed practices divination? You have done evil in so doing.'"

6 So he overtook them, and he spoke to them these same words. 7 And they said to him, "Why does my lord say these words? Far be it from us that your servants should do such a thing. 8 Look, we brought back to you from the land of Canaan the money which we found in the mouth of our sacks. How then could we steal silver or gold from your lord's house? 9 With whomever of your servants it is found, let him die, and we also will be my lord's slaves."

10 And he said, "Now also let it be according to your words; he with whom it is found shall be my slave, and you shall be blameless." 11 Then each man speedily let down his sack to the

Since the Messiah was to come from the line of Judah, it is perhaps significant that it is through Judah's full and frank confession that the final reconciliations can be made. Perhaps Judah's previous confessional experience, over his sin against Tamar, made him the man most likely to honour God by public repentance now.

ground, and each opened his sack. 12 So he searched. He began with the oldest and left off with the youngest; and the cup was found in Benjamin's sack. 13 Then they tore their clothes, and each man loaded his donkey and returned to the city.

14 So Judah and his brothers came to Joseph's house, and he was still there; and they fell before him on the ground. 15 And Joseph said to them, "What deed is this you have done? Did you not know that such a man as I can certainly practice divination?"

16 Then Judah said, "What shall we say to my lord? What shall we speak? Or how shall we clear ourselves? God has found out the iniquity of your servants; here we are, my lord's slaves, both we and he also with whom the cup was found."

17 But he said, "Far be it from me that I should do so; the man in whose hand the cup was found, he shall be my slave. And as for you, go up in peace to your father."

#### *Judah Intercedes for Benjamin*

18 Then Judah came near to him and said: "O my lord, please let your servant speak a word in my lord's hearing, and do not let your anger burn against your servant; for you are even like Pharaoh. 19 My lord asked his servants, saying, 'Have you a father or a brother?' 20 And we said to my lord, 'We have a father, an old man, and a child of his old age, who is young; his brother is dead, and he alone is left of his mother's children, and his father loves him.' 21 Then you said to your servants, 'Bring him down to me, that I may set my eyes on him.' 22 And we said to my lord, 'The lad cannot leave his father, for if he should leave his father, his father would die.' 23 But you said to your servants, 'Unless your youngest brother comes down with you, you shall see my face no more.'

24 "So it was, when we went up to your servant my father, that we told him the words of my lord. 25 And our father said, 'Go back and buy us a little food.' 26 But we said, 'We cannot go down; if our youngest brother is with us, then we will go down;

for we may not see the man's face unless our youngest brother is with us.' 27 Then your servant my father said to us, 'You know that my wife bore me two sons; 28 and the one went out from me, and I said, "Surely he is torn to pieces"; and I have not seen him since. 29 But if you take this one also from me, and calamity befalls him, you shall bring down my gray hair with sorrow to the grave.'

30 "Now therefore, when I come to your servant my father, and the lad is not with us, since his life is bound up in the lad's life, 31 it will happen, when he sees that the lad is not with us, that he will die. So your servants will bring down the gray hair of your servant our father with sorrow to the grave. 32 For your servant became surety for the lad to my father, saying, 'If I do not bring him back to you, then I shall bear the blame before my father forever.' 33 Now therefore, please let your servant remain instead of the lad as a slave to my lord, and let the lad go up with his brothers. 34 For how shall I go up to my father if the lad is not with me, lest perhaps I see the evil that would come upon my father?"

## **Chapter 45**

### *Joseph Revealed to His Brothers*

1 Then Joseph could not restrain himself before all those who stood by him, and he cried out, "Make everyone go out from me!" So no one stood with him while Joseph made himself known to his brothers. 2 And he wept aloud, and the Egyptians and the house of Pharaoh heard it.

Hearing this great leader speak to them in their own language must have been traumatic for these brothers. They immediately realised that this man had understood all their private conversations. It might have taken a little while more for the truth to sink in - this great man was, in fact, their lost brother. No wonder their first reaction was fear.

3 Then Joseph said to his brothers, "I am Joseph; does my father still live?" But his brothers could not answer him, for they were dismayed in his presence. 4 And Joseph said to his brothers, "Please come near to me." So they came near. Then he said: "I am Joseph your brother, whom you sold into Egypt. 5 But now, do not therefore be grieved or angry with yourselves because you sold me here; for God sent me before you to preserve life. 6 For these two years the famine has been in the land, and there are still five years in which there will be neither plowing nor harvesting. 7 And God sent me before you to preserve a posterity for you in the earth, and to save your lives by a great deliverance. 8 So now it was not you who sent me here, but God; and He has made me a father to Pharaoh, and lord of all his house, and a ruler throughout all the land of Egypt.

9 "Hurry and go up to my father, and say to him, 'Thus says your son Joseph: "God has made me lord of all Egypt; come down to me, do not tarry. 10 You shall dwell in the land of Goshen, and you shall be near to me, you and your children, your children's children, your flocks and your herds, and all that you have. 11 There I will provide for you, lest you and your household, and all that you have, come to poverty; for there are still five years of famine.'"

12 "And behold, your eyes and the eyes of my brother Benjamin see that it is my mouth that speaks to you. 13 So you shall tell my father of all my glory in Egypt, and of all that you have seen; and you shall hurry and bring my father down here."

14 Then he fell on his brother Benjamin's neck and wept, and Benjamin wept on his neck. 15 Moreover he kissed all his

The Bible starts to call Jacob by his new name again - Israel. This is because it was these amazing events that moulded the nation of Israel. If Joseph had not been leader in Israel, and if his brothers had not repented and been reconciled, the family would simply have been absorbed into Middle Eastern culture, rather than remaining as God's chosen people.

brothers and wept over them, and after that his brothers talked with him.

16 Now the report of it was heard in Pharaoh's house, saying, "Joseph's brothers have come." So it pleased Pharaoh and his servants well. 17 And Pharaoh said to Joseph, "Say to your brothers, 'Do this: Load your animals and depart; go to the land of Canaan. 18 Bring your father and your households and come to me; I will give you the best of the land of Egypt, and you will eat the fat of the land. 19 Now you are commanded—do this: Take carts out of the land of Egypt for your little ones and your wives; bring your father and come. 20 Also do not be concerned about your goods, for the best of all the land of Egypt is yours.'"

21 Then the sons of Israel did so; and Joseph gave them carts, according to the command of Pharaoh, and he gave them provisions for the journey. 22 He gave to all of them, to each man, changes of garments; but to Benjamin he gave three hundred pieces of silver and five changes of garments. 23 And he sent to his father these things: ten donkeys loaded with the good things of Egypt, and ten female donkeys loaded with grain, bread, and food for his father for the journey. 24 So he sent his brothers away, and they departed; and he said to them, "See that you do not become troubled along the way."

25 Then they went up out of Egypt, and came to the land of Canaan to Jacob their father. 26 And they told him, saying, "Joseph is still alive, and he is governor over all the land of Egypt." And Jacob's heart stood still, because he did not believe them. 27 But when they told him all the words which Joseph had said to them, and when he saw the carts which Joseph had sent to carry him, the spirit of Jacob their father revived. 28 Then Israel said, "It is enough. Joseph my son is still alive. I will go and see him before I die."

There is further reassurance for Jacob, as God appears to him again - presumably for the first time since his last sojourn to Bethel.

## **Chapter 46**

### *Jacob's Journey to Egypt*

1 So Israel took his journey with all that he had, and came to Beersheba, and offered sacrifices to the God of his father Isaac. 2 Then God spoke to Israel in the visions of the night, and said, "Jacob, Jacob!"

And he said, "Here I am."

3 So He said, "I am God, the God of your father; do not fear to go down to Egypt, for I will make of you a great nation there. 4 I will go down with you to Egypt, and I will also surely bring you up again; and Joseph will put his hand on your eyes."

5 Then Jacob arose from Beersheba; and the sons of Israel carried their father Jacob, their little ones, and their wives, in the carts which Pharaoh had sent to carry him. 6 So they took their livestock and their goods, which they had acquired in the land of Canaan, and went to Egypt, Jacob and all his descendants with him. 7 His sons and his sons' sons, his daughters and his sons' daughters, and all his descendants he brought with him to Egypt.

8 Now these were the names of the children of Israel, Jacob and his sons, who went to Egypt: Reuben was Jacob's firstborn. 9 The sons of Reuben were Hanoch, Pallu, Hezron, and Carmi. 10 The sons of Simeon were Jemuel, Jamin, Ohad, Jachin, Zohar, and Shaul, the son of a Canaanite woman. 11 The sons of Levi were Gershon, Kohath, and Merari. 12 The sons of Judah were Er, Onan, Shelah, Perez, and Zerah (but Er and Onan died in the land of Canaan). The sons of Perez were Hezron and Hamul. 13 The sons of Issachar were Tola, Puvah, Job, and Shimron. 14 The sons of Zebulun were Sered, Elon, and Jahleel. 15 These were the sons of Leah, whom she bore to Jacob in Padan Aram, with his daughter Dinah. All the persons, his sons and his daughters, were thirty-three.

16 The sons of Gad were Ziphion, Haggi, Shuni, Ezbon, Eri, Arodi, and Areli. 17 The sons of Asher were Jimnah, Ishuah, Isui,

Beriah, and Serah, their sister. And the sons of Beriah were Heber and Malchiel. 18 These were the sons of Zilpah, whom Laban gave to Leah his daughter; and these she bore to Jacob: sixteen persons.

19 The sons of Rachel, Jacob's wife, were Joseph and Benjamin. 20 And to Joseph in the land of Egypt were born Manasseh and Ephraim, whom Asenath, the daughter of Poti-Pherah priest of On, bore to him. 21 The sons of Benjamin were Belah, Becher, Ashbel, Gera, Naaman, Ehi, Rosh, Muppim, Huppim, and Ard. 22 These were the sons of Rachel, who were born to Jacob: fourteen persons in all.

23 The son of Dan was Hushim. 24 The sons of Naphtali were Jahzeel, Guni, Jezer, and Shillem. 25 These were the sons of Bilhah, whom Laban gave to Rachel his daughter, and she bore these to Jacob: seven persons in all.

26 All the persons who went with Jacob to Egypt, who came from his body, besides Jacob's sons' wives, were sixty-six persons in all. 27 And the sons of Joseph who were born to him in Egypt were two persons. All the persons of the house of Jacob who went to Egypt were seventy.

#### *Jacob Settles in Goshen*

28 Then he sent Judah before him to Joseph, to point out before him the way to Goshen. And they came to the land of Goshen. 29 So Joseph made ready his chariot and went up to Goshen to meet his father Israel; and he presented himself to him, and fell on his neck and wept on his neck a good while.

30 And Israel said to Joseph, "Now let me die, since I have seen your face, because you are still alive."

31 Then Joseph said to his brothers and to his father's household, "I will go up and tell Pharaoh, and say to him, 'My brothers and those of my father's house, who were in the land of Canaan, have come to me. 32 And the men are shepherds, for their occupation has been to feed livestock; and they have

brought their flocks, their herds, and all that they have.’ 33 So it shall be, when Pharaoh calls you and says, ‘What is your occupation?’ 34 that you shall say, ‘Your servants’ occupation has been with livestock from our youth even till now, both we and also our fathers,’ that you may dwell in the land of Goshen; for every shepherd is an abomination to the Egyptians.”

## Chapter 47

1 Then Joseph went and told Pharaoh, and said, “My father and my brothers, their flocks and their herds and all that they possess, have come from the land of Canaan; and indeed they are in the land of Goshen.” 2 And he took five men from among his brothers and presented them to Pharaoh. 3 Then Pharaoh said to his brothers, “What is your occupation?”

And they said to Pharaoh, “Your servants are shepherds, both we and also our fathers.” 4 And they said to Pharaoh, “We have come to dwell in the land, because your servants have no pasture for their flocks, for the famine is severe in the land of Canaan. Now therefore, please let your servants dwell in the land of Goshen.”

5 Then Pharaoh spoke to Joseph, saying, “Your father and your brothers have come to you. 6 The land of Egypt is before you. Have your father and brothers dwell in the best of the land; let them dwell in the land of Goshen. And if you know any competent men among them, then make them chief herdsmen over my livestock.”

In the time of Moses, another Pharaoh was to be cursed. It is noteworthy that this Pharaoh is blessed by the patriarch Jacob. After all, it was this Pharaoh who recognised Joseph’s wisdom, and appointed him to a high position. It was also this Pharaoh who unhesitatingly backed Joseph’s decision to invite his family to live in Egypt. That he did this with no prompting, and that he did it gladly, speaks well of his attitude.



7 Then Joseph brought in his father Jacob and set him before Pharaoh; and Jacob blessed Pharaoh. 8 Pharaoh said to Jacob, "How old are you?"

9 And Jacob said to Pharaoh, "The days of the years of my pilgrimage are one hundred and thirty years; few and evil have been the days of the years of my life, and they have not attained to the days of the years of the life of my fathers in the days of their pilgrimage." 10 So Jacob blessed Pharaoh, and went out from before Pharaoh.

11 And Joseph situated his father and his brothers, and gave them a possession in the land of Egypt, in the best of the land, in the land of Rameses, as Pharaoh had commanded. 12 Then Joseph provided his father, his brothers, and all his father's household with bread, according to the number in their families.

#### *Joseph Deals with the Famine*

13 Now there was no bread in all the land; for the famine was very severe, so that the land of Egypt and the land of Canaan languished because 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 grain which they bought; and Joseph brought the money into Pharaoh's house.

15 So when the money failed in the land of Egypt and in the land of Canaan, all the Egyptians came to Joseph and said, "Give us bread, for why should we die in your presence? For the money has failed."

16 Then Joseph said, "Give your livestock, and I will give you bread for your livestock, if the money is gone." 17 So they brought their livestock to Joseph, and Joseph gave them bread in exchange for the horses, the flocks, the cattle of the herds, and for the donkeys. Thus he fed them with bread in exchange for all their livestock that year.

18 When that year had ended, they came to him the next year and said to him, "We will not hide from my lord that our money is

gone; my lord also has our herds of livestock. There is nothing left in the sight of my lord but our bodies and our lands. 19 Why should we die before your eyes, both we and our land? Buy us and our land for bread, and we and our land will be servants of Pharaoh; give us seed, that we may live and not die, that the land may not be desolate.”

20 Then Joseph bought all the land of Egypt for Pharaoh; for every man of the Egyptians sold his field, because the famine was severe upon them. So the land became Pharaoh’s. 21 And as for the people, he moved them into the cities, from one end of the borders of Egypt to the other end. 22 Only the land of the priests he did not buy; for the priests had rations allotted to them by Pharaoh, and they ate their rations which Pharaoh gave them; therefore they did not sell their lands.

23 Then Joseph said to the people, “Indeed I have bought you and your land this day for Pharaoh. Look, here is seed for you, and you shall sow the land. 24 And it shall come to pass in the harvest that you shall give one-fifth to Pharaoh. Four-fifths shall be your own, as seed for the field and for your food, for those of your households and as food for your little ones.”

25 So they said, “You have saved our lives; let us find favor in the sight of my lord, and we will be Pharaoh’s servants.” 26 And Joseph made it a law over the land of Egypt to this day, that Pharaoh should have one-fifth, except for the land of the priests only, which did not become Pharaoh’s.

#### *Joseph’s Vow to Jacob*

27 So Israel dwelt in the land of Egypt, in the country of Goshen; and they had possessions there and grew and multiplied exceedingly. 28 And Jacob lived in the land of Egypt seventeen years. So the length of Jacob’s life was one hundred and forty-seven years. 29 When the time drew near that Israel must die, he called his son Joseph and said to him, “Now if I have found favor in your sight, please put your hand under my thigh, and deal

Jacob knew all about God's special blessing sometimes being on the second son, rather than the first. That is why he gives the second-born Ephraim the pre-eminence over the first-born Manassah. That is why, much later, the God could refer, through the prophet Jeremiah, to Ephraim as "My firstborn" (Jeremiah 31:9). Ephraim was to become the dominant tribe in Northern Israel, and would form the main portion of the Northern kingdom, when Israel divided after Solomon's time.

kindly and truly with me. Please do not bury me in Egypt, 30 but let me lie with my fathers; you shall carry me out of Egypt and bury me in their burial place."

And he said, "I will do as you have said."

31 Then he said, "Swear to me." And he swore to him. So Israel bowed himself on the head of the bed.

## Chapter 48

### *Jacob Blesses Joseph's Sons*

1 Now it came to pass after these things that Joseph was told, "Indeed your father is sick"; and he took with him his two sons, Manasseh and Ephraim. 2 And Jacob was told, "Look, your son Joseph is coming to you"; and Israel strengthened himself and sat up on the bed. 3 Then Jacob said to Joseph: "God Almighty appeared to me at Luz in the land of Canaan and blessed me, 4 and said to me, 'Behold, I will make you fruitful and multiply you, and I will make of you a multitude of people, and give this land to your descendants after you as an everlasting possession.' 5 And now your two sons, Ephraim and Manasseh, who were born to you in the land of Egypt before I came to you in Egypt, are mine; as Reuben and Simeon, they shall be mine. 6 Your offspring whom you beget after them shall be yours; they will be called by the name of their brothers in their inheritance. 7 But as for me, when I came from Padan, Rachel died beside me in the land of Canaan

on the way, when there was but a little distance to go to Ephrath; and I buried her there on the way to Ephrath (that is, Bethlehem).”

8 Then Israel saw Joseph’s sons, and said, “Who are these?”

9 Joseph said to his father, “They are my sons, whom God has given me in this place.”

And he said, “Please bring them to me, and I will bless them.”

10 Now the eyes of Israel were dim with age, so that he could not see. Then Joseph brought them near him, and he kissed them and embraced them. 11 And Israel said to Joseph, “I had not thought to see your face; but in fact, God has also shown me your offspring!”

12 So Joseph brought them from beside his knees, and he bowed down with his face to the earth. 13 And Joseph took them both, Ephraim with his right hand toward Israel’s left hand, and Manasseh with his left hand toward Israel’s right hand, and brought them near him. 14 Then Israel stretched out his right hand and laid it on Ephraim’s head, who was the younger, and his left hand on Manasseh’s head, guiding his hands knowingly, for Manasseh was the firstborn. 15 And he blessed Joseph, and said:

“God, before whom my fathers Abraham and Isaac walked,  
The God who has fed me all my life long to this day,

16 The Angel who has redeemed me from all evil,  
Bless the lads;  
Let my name be named upon them,  
And the name of my fathers Abraham and Isaac;  
And let them grow into a multitude in the midst of the earth.”

17 Now when Joseph saw that his father laid his right hand on the head of Ephraim, it displeased him; so he took hold of his father’s hand to remove it from Ephraim’s head to Manasseh’s head. 18 And Joseph said to his father, “Not so, my father, for this one is the firstborn; put your right hand on his head.”

19 But his father refused and said, "I know, my son, I know. He also shall become a people, and he also shall be great; but truly his younger brother shall be greater than he, and his descendants shall become a multitude of nations."

20 So he blessed them that day, saying, "By you Israel will bless, saying, 'May God make you as Ephraim and as Manasseh!'" And thus he set Ephraim before Manasseh.

21 Then Israel said to Joseph, "Behold, I am dying, but God will be with you and bring you back to the land of your fathers. 22 Moreover I have given to you one portion above your brothers, which I took from the hand of the Amorite with my sword and my bow."

## **Chapter 49**

### *Jacob's Last Words to His Sons*

1 And Jacob called his sons and said, "Gather together, that I may tell you what shall befall you in the last days:

2 " Gather together and hear, you sons of Jacob,  
And listen to Israel your father.

3 " Reuben, you are my firstborn,  
My might and the beginning of my strength,  
The excellency of dignity and the excellency of power.

4 Unstable as water, you shall not excel,  
Because you went up to your father's bed;  
Then you defiled it—  
He went up to my couch.

5 " Simeon and Levi are brothers;  
Instruments of cruelty are in their dwelling place.

Genesis 49:8-12 is a remarkable prophecy concerning Judah, his descendents, and, in particular, his most important descendent - Jesus. Judah is described as a lion. This description is used in Revelation, where Jesus is described as “the lion of the tribe of Judah” (Revelation 5:5). The sceptre is a symbol of kingship. Judah was not to attain this for 640 years - until the time of King David. But that sceptre has not departed, because it belongs to Jesus.

Shiloh is a title - it probably means “the one who brings peace”. If that is so, then the Messiah is being described as the King of Peace. Finally, we have the analogy of blood and wine that we see throughout the Bible. Judah’s garments are to be washed in wine, or in blood. Such liquids do not normally cleanse, but it is the blood of Jesus that cleanses us from all sin.

- 6 Let not my soul enter their council;  
 Let not my honor be united to their assembly;  
 For in their anger they slew a man,  
 And in their self-will they hamstrung an ox.
- 7 Cursed be their anger, for it is fierce;  
 And their wrath, for it is cruel!  
 I will divide them in Jacob  
 And scatter them in Israel.
- 8 “ Judah, you are he whom your brothers shall praise;  
 Your hand shall be on the neck of your enemies;  
 Your father’s children shall bow down before you.
- 9 Judah is a lion’s whelp;  
 From the prey, my son, you have gone up.  
 He bows down, he lies down as a lion;  
 And as a lion, who shall rouse him?
- 10 The scepter shall not depart from Judah,  
 Nor a lawgiver from between his feet,

*Have you read **Genesis** lately? (NKJV)*

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Until Shiloh comes;  
And to Him shall be the obedience of the people.

11 Binding his donkey to the vine,  
And his donkey's colt to the choice vine,  
He washed his garments in wine,  
And his clothes in the blood of grapes.

12 His eyes are darker than wine,  
And his teeth whiter than milk.

13 " Zebulun shall dwell by the haven of the sea;  
He shall become a haven for ships,  
And his border shall adjoin Sidon.

14 " Issachar is a strong donkey,  
Lying down between two burdens;

15 He saw that rest was good,  
And that the land was pleasant;  
He bowed his shoulder to bear a burden,  
And became a band of slaves.

16 "Dan shall judge his people  
As one of the tribes of Israel.

17 Dan shall be a serpent by the way,  
A viper by the path,  
That bites the horse's heels  
So that its rider shall fall backward.

18 I have waited for your salvation, O LORD!

19 "Gad, a troop shall tramp upon him,  
But he shall triumph at last.

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20 "Bread from Asher shall be rich,  
And he shall yield royal dainties.

21 " Naphtali is a deer let loose;  
He uses beautiful words.

22 " Joseph is a fruitful bough,  
A fruitful bough by a well;  
His branches run over the wall.

23 The archers have bitterly grieved him,  
Shot at him and hated him.

24 But his bow remained in strength,  
And the arms of his hands were made strong  
By the hands of the Mighty God of Jacob  
(From there is the Shepherd, the Stone of Israel),

25 By the God of your father who will help you,  
And by the Almighty who will bless you  
With blessings of heaven above,  
Blessings of the deep that lies beneath,  
Blessings of the breasts and of the womb.

26 The blessings of your father  
Have excelled the blessings of my ancestors,  
Up to the utmost bound of the everlasting hills.  
They shall be on the head of Joseph,  
And on the crown of the head of him who was separate  
from his brothers.

27 " Benjamin is a ravenous wolf;  
In the morning he shall devour the prey,  
And at night he shall divide the spoil."



Chapter 50 winds up this remarkable book. Joseph reassures his brothers that his forgiveness is real - not just for the sake of his father. And Joseph keeps his promise to his father, having him buried in the only land which, at that time, legally belonged to God's people - the land bought by Abraham in which to bury his wife, Sarah.

28 All these are the twelve tribes of Israel, and this is what their father spoke to them. And he blessed them; he blessed each one according to his own blessing.

#### *Jacob's Death and Burial*

29 Then he charged them and said to them: "I am to be gathered to my people; bury me with my fathers in the cave that is in the field of Ephron the Hittite, 30 in the cave that is in the field of Machpelah, which is before Mamre in the land of Canaan, which Abraham bought with the field of Ephron the Hittite as a possession for a burial place. 31 There they buried Abraham and Sarah his wife, there they buried Isaac and Rebekah his wife, and there I buried Leah. 32 The field and the cave that is there were purchased from the sons of Heth." 33 And when Jacob had finished commanding his sons, he drew his feet up into the bed and breathed his last, and was gathered to his people.

## **Chapter 50**

1 Then Joseph fell on his father's face and wept over him, and kissed him. 2 And Joseph commanded his servants the physicians to embalm his father. So the physicians embalmed Israel. 3 Forty days were required for him, for such are the days required for those who are embalmed; and the Egyptians mourned for him seventy days.

4 Now when the days of his mourning were past, Joseph spoke to the household of Pharaoh, saying, "If now I have found favor in

your eyes, please speak in the hearing of Pharaoh, saying, 5 'My father made me swear, saying, "Behold, I am dying; in my grave which I dug for myself in the land of Canaan, there you shall bury me." Now therefore, please let me go up and bury my father, and I will come back.'"

6 And Pharaoh said, "Go up and bury your father, as he made you swear."

7 So Joseph went up to bury his father; and with him went up all the servants of Pharaoh, the elders of his house, and all the elders of the land of Egypt, 8 as well as all the house of Joseph, his brothers, and his father's house. Only their little ones, 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 gathering.

10 Then they came to the threshing floor of Atad, which is beyond the Jordan, and they mourned there with a great and very solemn lamentation. He observed seven days of mourning for his father. 11 And when the inhabitants of the land, the Canaanites, saw the mourning at the threshing floor of Atad, they said, "This is a deep mourning of the Egyptians." Therefore its name was called Abel Mizraim, which is beyond the Jordan.

12 So his sons did for him just as he had commanded them. 13 For his sons carried him to the land of Canaan, and buried him in the cave of the field of Machpelah, before Mamre, which Abraham bought with the field from Ephron the Hittite as property for a burial place. 14 And after he had buried his father, Joseph returned to Egypt, he and his brothers and all who went up with him to bury his father.

#### *Joseph Reassures His Brothers*

15 When Joseph's brothers saw that their father was dead, they said, "Perhaps Joseph will hate us, and may actually repay us for all the evil which we did to him." 16 So they sent messengers to Joseph, saying, "Before your father died he commanded,

saying, 17 'Thus you shall say to Joseph: "I beg you, please forgive the trespass of your brothers and their sin; for they did evil to you.'" Now, please, forgive the trespass of the servants of the God of your father." And Joseph wept when they spoke to him.

18 Then his brothers also went and fell down before his face, and they said, "Behold, we are your servants."

19 Joseph said to them, "Do not be afraid, for am I in the place of God? 20 But as for you, you meant evil against me; but God meant it for good, in order to bring it about as it is this day, to save many people alive. 21 Now therefore, do not be afraid; I will provide for you and your little ones." And he comforted them and spoke kindly to them.

#### *Death of Joseph*

22 So Joseph dwelt in Egypt, he and his father's household. And Joseph lived one hundred and ten years. 23 Joseph saw Ephraim's children to the third generation. The children of Machir, the son of Manasseh, were also brought up on Joseph's knees.

24 And Joseph said to his brethren, "I am dying; but God will surely visit you, and bring you out of this land to the land of which He swore to Abraham, to Isaac, and to Jacob." 25 Then Joseph took an oath from the children of Israel, saying, "God will surely visit you, and you shall carry up my bones from here." 26 So Joseph died, being one hundred and ten years old; and they embalmed him, and he was put in a coffin in Egypt.

*Have you read **Genesis** lately? (NKJV)*