

AN OUTLINED COMMENTARY ON

GENESIS

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**GOSPEL
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Acknowledgment

These various commentaries and other Biblical studies were developed through many years of hard and close study of the Bible. I have had an insatiable appetite to learn all of God's Word possible. I grew up in the Beans Creek Community of Coffee County Tennessee. My family started attending the Lord's church at Beans Creek in 1949, where I was privileged to have sister Ethel Croft as an outstanding Bible class teacher. All seven member of my father's family were baptized into Christ, plus my wife, Marie. Each of our five children also obeyed the gospel.

Sister Croft greatly encouraged me to study the Bible and to become a good worker for the Lord. I tried not to cause her any disappointment. In 1978, after preaching for many years, the brethren at Beans Creek invited me to conduct a gospel meeting. Sister Croft, though she was in advanced years and had to drive a good distance, did not miss any of the services.

Since first becoming acquainted with the gospel more than seventy years ago, I have had the honor to hear some of the greatest gospel preachers of the time. Some of these well-known to most members of the Lord's church, but some of them labored in the shadows, learning and dispensing the truth of God quietly and effectively. Not so many people in the brotherhood today knew such preachers as Luke Gibbs and Henry Simmons. I have learned much and have been profited greatly from many gospel preachers and teachers through these many years. I am fully appreciative also to those many sound brethren who have published books which I have had the privilege to study. I began preaching in July of 1961 in Italy.

A debt of gratitude is owed by many to the instructors of Memphis School of Preaching for the tremendous work they did through the years, patiently teaching their students the wonderful word of life. I am especially grateful to these great men who were serving in this capacity during 1970-72, when I attended the school: Roy Hearn Frank Young, Richard Curry, Charles Pledge, Ray Hawk and E.L. Whitaker.

I claim no originality for all of the material presented in the material included in my books. There is no way to give proper credit to all who have contributed to the information I have learned, but in every case possible, acknowledgment is cited. I have attempted to be as accurate, clear and concise as my finite knowledge allows, but, as with all human productions, there will doubtless be imperfections. Our grasp of the infinite will of God is not absolute, despite the diligence of our efforts; there is always more to learn.

Some have incorrectly thought that my books are merely expansions of the notes I took while studying at MSOP. But those notes were skimpy at best, and were not in my possession when I wrote my material. [At the time I thought my memory was very good]. The notes were put together in connection with Bible classes I have taught for many years. For several years, it was necessary for me to work more than hundred hours weekly, as I prepared to teach two different Bible books each week, Sunday morning and Wednesday evening, while at the same time, during full-time work as a gospel preacher. These notes became the "Outlined Bible Commentaries" that have been made available to countless people. "Outlined" does not imply skimpy—these are full-length books.

It has not been my aim to make money through these efforts—indeed, we merely cover our expenses. Many of my books have been given away without charge. An uncounted numbers of books and compact discs were ordered and shipped out, for which no payment was ever received. I have learned from brethren who operated Bible Bookstores that they have had the same problem. One of these brethren reported that he had to secure his supply of Bibles, in locked cases, to prevent their being stolen.

The Bible quotations in my books are from the King James Version, unless noted otherwise. These books were intentionally put on 8.5 by 11 inch pages, to make the outline format easier to view. A normal hardback book contains about 800 words per page; my pages contain at least twice that number of words. The spiral-bound or wire-bound books are much less expensive to produce. My wife and I have done all the manual labor required to produce the books. The supplies, software and equipment are very costly. Marie still helps as much as she can despite the dementia she has had for several years—and her many surgeries and broken bones and heartaches.

Feel free to draw quotations from my material, including "Old Paths Studies." [Let me know if you would like to receive this monthly publication via the internet—free].

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December 23, 2021

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Table of Contents — Genesis

CHAPTER	PAGE	CHAPTER	PAGE
Introduction	3	26	208
1	13	27	213
2	27	28	218
3	53	29	223
4	65	30	227
5	74	31	232
6	78	32	237
7	88	33	242
8	94	34	245
9	98	35	250
10	104	36	256
11	109	37	262
12	117	38	271
13	124	39	276
14	134	40	281
15	139	41	285
16	146	42	292
17	150	43	298
18	160	44	302
19	166	45	307
20	175	46	312
21	179	47	317
22	185	48	322
23	190	49	326
24	196	50	335
25	203	Bibliography	338

INTRODUCTION TO GENESIS

A. Title of the Book.

1. The name “Genesis” is the title given by the Greek Septuagint Version of the Old Testament [LXX] and means “origin” or “beginning.” In the Hebrew version it is called “Bereshith” which means “in the beginning.” This name is derived from the first Hebrew word of Genesis 1:1.
2. Leupold: The name universally used in English for this book is “Genesis.” This name is a transliteration of the Greek word γένεσις, which constitutes the regular title from of old in the Septuagint and was taken over by Jerome into the Vulgate—*Liber Genesis*. Luther made a new departure when he substituted in his German Bible the title “The First Book of Moses”—a designation requiring no further commentary. In the Hebrew Bible the book constitutes the first part of the Pentateuch. As a distinct part it so naturally stands out as a unit that there can be no doubt that it was designed to be just such a unit They [the Jews] are wont to refer to the book by the title of *Bereshith*, the very first Hebrew word, meaning: “in the beginning.” [p.5].
3. The name given this book is appropriate, for the book describes the beginning of all things material:
 - a. The heavens and the earth (the universe).
 - b. The animal, vegetable, and mineral kingdoms.
 - c. Mankind and the human family.
4. Also the beginning of some spiritual concerns.
 - a. Sin.
 - b. The condemnation for sin.
 - c. Initial steps of the unfolding of the scheme of redemption.
 - d. Sacrifices.
 - e. The Hebrew people.

B. The Purpose of Genesis.

1. It gives a brief survey of divine history from the beginning until Israel enters Egypt. The book is not intended to give a complete and detailed account of history, but rather a survey of significant events and people relating to God’s plan to redeem man.
2. It gives a record of the origin of the universe and the things and beings which inhabit it. Genesis furnishes the only dependable and accurate record of creation. Science cannot speak authoritatively on the creation; it addresses only the things it can measure with material means. No man was present to witness the creation. The Creator revealed to Moses the information we have regarding this divine operation.
3. It begins to reveal the nature of God as Creator, Preserver, and Lawgiver. This information must be given progressively because of man’s finite nature.
4. It is primarily a book of religious history while dealing with human affairs. It shows how God deals with man; it was given for our learning and admonition. "For whatsoever things were written aforetime were written for our learning, that we through patience and comfort of the scriptures might have hope" (Rom. 15:4).
5. “The purpose of Genesis may be formulated thus: the book aims to relate how Israel was selected from among the nations of the world and became God’s chosen people. Since, however, this choice was not made because of the merit or the excellence of Israel’s ancestors but wholly because of God’s unmerited and unmeritable mercy, the book may also be said to be the story of God’s free grace in establishing Israel for Himself as His people” (Leupold, p.9).

C. The Author of Genesis.

1. The Bible is a unit: each part contributes to, and helps sustain and substantiate, the whole. To verify one part is to verify the whole. The five books which comprise the Pentateuch form a unit; to identify the writer of one of these books is to identify the writer of all five. [*The Pentateuch* is the name of the first five books of the Old Testament: Genesis, Exodus, Leviticus, Numbers, and Deuteronomy].
 - a. “If it could be proved that Moses did not write the Pentateuch and that the Pentateuch is neither genuine nor authentic, the credibility of every other book of the Old Testament would be lost. Not only would the Old Testament books be seriously questioned, but even the words of our Saviour would be rejected, for he attributed the authorship of the Pentateuch to Moses” (Pledge, p.137).
 - b. There is internal and external testimony and evidence which attribute the authorship to Moses. The Book of Genesis does not set forth an express statement concerning the identity of the author.

2. "...The circumstances that precisely give the information needed to make the book of Exodus intelligible is supplied by the book of Genesis. It is in Genesis that the promises to Abraham, Isaac, and Jacob are spelled out....Moreover, the fact that Exodus 1:1 begins with 'and' (Hebrew) indicates that it was intended to follow some preceding book" (Gleason Archer, Jr., p.169).
 3. The Pentateuch itself testifies that Moses was the author.
 - a. "And the Lord said unto Moses, Write this for memorial in a book, and rehearse it in the ears of Joshua..." (Ex. 17:14).
 - b. "And the Lord said unto Moses, Write thou these words: for after the tenor of these words I have made a covenant with thee and with Israel" (Ex. 34:27).
 - c. "These are the journeys of the children of Israel, which went forth out of the land of Egypt with their armies under the hand of Moses and Aaron. And Moses wrote their goings out according to their journeys by the commandment of the Lord: and these are their journeys according to their goings out" (Num. 33:1-2).
 - d. Exodus 24:3-8: "And Moses came and told the people all the words of the LORD, and all the judgments: and all the people answered with one voice, and said, All the words which the LORD hath said will we do. And Moses wrote all the words of the LORD, and rose up early in the morning, and builded an altar under the hill, and twelve pillars, according to the twelve tribes of Israel. And he sent young men of the children of Israel, which offered burnt offerings, and sacrificed peace offerings of oxen unto the LORD. And Moses took half of the blood, and put *it* in basins; and half of the blood he sprinkled on the altar. And he took the book of the covenant, and read in the audience of the people: and they said, All that the LORD hath said will we do, and be obedient. And Moses took the blood, and sprinkled *it* on the people, and said, Behold the blood of the covenant, which the LORD hath made with you concerning all these words."
 - e. Deuteronomy 31:9-11: "And Moses wrote this law, and delivered it unto the priests the sons of Levi, which bare the ark of the covenant of the LORD, and unto all the elders of Israel. And Moses commanded them, saying, At the end of *every* seven years, in the solemnity of the year of release, in the feast of tabernacles, When all Israel is come to appear before the LORD thy God in the place which he shall choose, thou shalt read this law before all Israel in their hearing."
 - f. Deuteronomy 31:24-26: "And it came to pass, when Moses had made an end of writing the words of this law in a book, until they were finished, That Moses commanded the Levites, which bare the ark of the covenant of the LORD, saying, Take this book of the law, and put it in the side of the ark of the covenant of the LORD your God, that it may be there for a witness against thee."
 4. The antiquity of the laws in the Pentateuch suggests Mosaic authorship. These laws had been observed by Israel from the time before they entered Canaan. These laws had been handed down from generation to generation with the understanding that Moses was the author.
 5. Some of the laws given in the Pentateuch would have been dangerous to the Israelites without the divine protection of God. The Jewish males were commanded to gather for religious observances three times each year; the Lawgiver assured them they would have no reason to fear an enemy attack while they were away from their families. "Thrice in the year shall all your menchildren appear before the Lord GOD, the God of Israel. For I will cast out the nations before thee, and enlarge thy borders: neither shall any man desire thy land, when thou shalt go up to appear before the LORD thy God thrice in the year" (Ex. 34:23-24).
 6. Other Old Testament books give evidence that Moses was the inspired penman of the Pentateuch (which includes Genesis). "The whole of the historical portion, from the book of Joshua down to Chronicles, Ezra, and Nehemiah, in connection with the history of Joshua, the Judges, and the Kings, represents the Pentateuch as being Moses' book of the Law" (Keil, p.164). See Pledge, pp.139-145.
 - a. Joshua 1:8: "This book of the law shall not depart out of thy mouth; but thou shalt meditate therein day and night, that thou mayest observe to do according to all that is written therein: for then thou shalt make thy way prosperous, and then thou shalt have good success."
 - b. Joshua 11:12: "And all the cities of those kings, and all the kings of them, did Joshua take, and smote them with the edge of the sword, *and* he utterly destroyed them, as Moses the servant of the LORD commanded."
 - c. Numbers 33:1-2: "These *are* the journeys of the children of Israel, which went forth out of the land of Egypt with their armies under the hand of Moses and Aaron. And Moses wrote their goings out
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- d. Deuteronomy 31:9-11: "And Moses wrote this law, and delivered it unto the priests the sons of Levi, which bare the ark of the covenant of the LORD, and unto all the elders of Israel. And Moses commanded them, saying, At the end of *every* seven years, in the solemnity of the year of release, in the feast of tabernacles, When all Israel is come to appear before the LORD thy God in the place which he shall choose, thou shalt read this law before all Israel in their hearing."
 - a. Judges 3:1-4: "Now these *are* the nations which the LORD left, to prove Israel by them, *even* as many of Israel as had not known all the wars of Canaan; Only that the generations of the children of Israel might know, to teach them war, at the least such as before knew nothing thereof; *Namely*, five lords of the Philistines, and all the Canaanites, and the Sidonians, and the Hivites that dwelt in mount Lebanon, from mount Baalhermon unto the entering in of Hamath. And they were to prove Israel by them, to know whether they would hearken unto the commandments of the LORD, which he commanded their fathers by the hand of Moses."
 - b. 1 Kings 2:3: "And keep the charge of the LORD thy God, to walk in his ways, to keep his statutes, and his commandments, and his judgments, and his testimonies, as it is written in the law of Moses, that thou mayest prosper in all that thou doest, and whithersoever thou turnest thyself."
 - c. 1 Chronicles 22:12-13: "Only the LORD give thee wisdom and understanding, and give thee charge concerning Israel, that thou mayest keep the law of the LORD thy God. Then shalt thou prosper, if thou takest heed to fulfil the statutes and judgments which the LORD charged Moses with concerning Israel: be strong, and of good courage; dread not, nor be dismayed."
 - d. 2 Chronicles 8:12-13: "Then Solomon offered...offering according to the commandment of Moses, on the sabbaths, and on the new moons, and on the solemn feasts, three times in the year, *even* in the feast of unleavened bread, and in the feast of weeks, and in the feast of tabernacles."
2. The testimony of Christ affirms Moses as the human instrument in writing the Pentateuch (again, which includes Genesis).
 - a. Matthew 8:4: "And Jesus saith unto him, See thou tell no man; but go thy way, show thyself to the priest, and offer the gift that Moses commanded, for a testimony unto them." Compare: "And the priest shall go forth out of the camp; and the priest shall look, and, behold, *if* the plague of leprosy be healed in the leper; Then shall the priest command to take for him that is to be cleansed two birds alive *and* clean, and cedar wood, and scarlet, and hyssop....And on the eighth day he shall take two he lambs without blemish, and one ewe lamb of the first year without blemish, and three tenth deals of fine flour *for* a meat offering, mingled with oil, and one log of oil" (Lev. 14:3-4, 10).
 - b. Matthew 19:7-8: "They say unto him, Why did Moses then command to give a writing of divorce-ment, and to put her away? He saith unto them, Moses because of the hardness of your hearts suffered you to put away your wives: but from the beginning it was not so." "When a man hath taken a wife, and married her, and it come to pass that she find no favour in his eyes, because he hath found some uncleanness in her: then let him write her a bill of divorcement, and give *it* in her hand, and send her out of his house" (Deut. 24:1).
 - c. Matthew 22:24: "Saying, Master, Moses said, If a man die, having no children, his brother shall marry his wife, and raise up seed unto his brother." Christ accepted this fact. "If brethren dwell together, and one of them die, and have no child, the wife of the dead shall not marry without unto a stranger: her husband's brother shall go in unto her, and take her to him to wife, and perform the duty of an husband's brother unto her" (Deut. 25:5).
 - d. Other Passages:
 - 1) Mark 7:10: "For Moses said, Honour thy father and thy mother; and, Whoso curseth father or mother, let him die the death."
 - 2) Mark 12:19-20: "Master, Moses wrote unto us, If a man's brother die, and leave *his* wife *behind him*, and leave no children, that his brother should take his wife, and raise up seed unto his brother. Now there were seven brethren: and the first took a wife, and dying left no seed."
 - 3) Luke 2:22: "And when the days of her purification according to the law of Moses were accomplished, they brought him to Jerusalem, to present *him* to the Lord."
 - 4) Luke 16:28, 31: "For I have five brethren; that he may testify unto them, lest they also come into this place of torment....And he said unto him, If they hear not Moses and the prophets, neither will they be persuaded, though one rose from the dead."
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- 5) John 5:45-46: "Do not think that I will accuse you to the Father: there is *one* that accuseth you, *even* Moses, in whom ye trust. For had ye believed Moses, ye would have believed me: for he wrote of me."
 - 6) John 7:19: "Did not Moses give you the law, and *yet* none of you keepeth the law? Why go ye about to kill me?"
 - 7) John 7:22-23: "Moses therefore gave unto you circumcision; (not because it is of Moses, but of the fathers;) and ye on the sabbath day circumcise a man. If a man on the sabbath day receive circumcision, that the law of Moses should not be broken; are ye angry at me, because I have made a man every whit whole on the sabbath day?"
 - 8) John 8:5: "Now Moses in the law commanded us, that such should be stoned: but what sayest thou?"
 - 9) John 9:29: "We know that God spake unto Moses: *as for* this *fellow*, we know not from whence he is."
3. Testimony of New Testament writers attests the Mosaic authorship of Genesis.
- a. Acts 3:22: "For Moses truly said unto the fathers, A prophet shall the Lord your God raise up unto you of your brethren, like unto me; him shall ye hear in all things whatsoever he shall say unto you."
 - b. Acts 6:11: "Then they suborned men, which said, We have heard him speak blasphemous words against Moses, and *against* God."
 - c. Acts 6:14: "For we have heard him say, that this Jesus of Nazareth shall destroy this place, and shall change the customs which Moses delivered us."
 - d. Acts 13:39: "And by him all that believe are justified from all things, from which ye could not be justified by the law of Moses."
 - e. Romans 3:2: "Much every way: chiefly, because that unto them were committed the oracles of God."
 - f. 1 Corinthians 9:9: "For it is written in the law of Moses, Thou shalt not muzzle the mouth of the ox that treadeth out the corn. Doth God take care for oxen?"
 - g. 2 Corinthians 3:7: "But if the ministration of death, written *and* engraven in stones, was glorious, so that the children of Israel could not stedfastly behold the face of Moses for the glory of his countenance; which *glory* was to be done away:"
 - h. 2 Corinthians 3:13: "And not as Moses, *which* put a veil over his face, that the children of Israel could not stedfastly look to the end of that which is abolished."
 - i. Hebrews 7:14: "For *it is* evident that our Lord sprang out of Juda; of which tribe Moses spake nothing concerning priesthood."
 - j. Hebrews 8:5: "Who serve unto the example and shadow of heavenly things, as Moses was admonished of God when he was about to make the tabernacle: for, See, saith he, *that* thou make all things according to the pattern showed to thee in the mount."
 - k. Hebrews 9:19: "For when Moses had spoken every precept to all the people according to the law, he took the blood of calves and of goats, with water, and scarlet wool, and hyssop, and sprinkled both the book, and all the people."
 - l. Hebrews 10:28: "He that despised Moses' law died without mercy under two or three witnesses."
4. Philo, an Egyptian Jew of the first century, affirmed Mosaic authorship; Josephus did, also. The language, style, and manner of writing used argue for the genuineness; the character of the contents argues likewise; the integrity of Moses and other inspired writers, and the Lord, affirm Mosaic authorship; the natural manner of writing indicates Moses, the leader of Israel during the events accounted in much of the Pentateuch, was the writer.
- a. There has been no valid evidence offered by critics which disproves Mosaic authorship of Genesis (and the Pentateuch). The author shows a thorough acquaintance with many matters pertaining to Egypt. He was familiar with many Egyptian names such as that of On, the native name for Heliopolis. Moses had the background for such knowledge. He was born, reared, and educated in Egypt; he had the opportunity and time to write the Pentateuch during the forty years of wandering in the wilderness. [Note: Inspiration does not require that the writer have personal knowledge of the information he is recording; indeed, all of the material would require inspiration for that data to be absolute and correct].
 - b. There was a great incentive for Moses to write the books: His people were about to enter Palestine; they needed the information he recorded since Israel was about to become a full-fledged nation; this nation was founded upon the moral and religious precepts which are recorded in the first five books of the Old Testament.
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- c. It should always be remembered that Moses was merely the human instrument through whom God chose to reveal the information recorded. The stories he recorded, the commands he spoke, and the precepts he uttered, all came from the Lord. The emphasis should not be placed on the human author, but upon the fact of his inspiration and the text itself.

B. The Unity of Genesis.

1. The book is skillfully organized and shows amazing unity. It is constructed around ten great generations (*toledoth*). [Cf. Coffman, pp.3-4].
 - a. The generation of the heavens and earth: Genesis 2:4—4:26.
 - b. The generation of Adam: Genesis 5:1—6:8.
 - c. The generation of the sons of Noah: Genesis 10:1—11:9.
 - d. The generation of the sons of Shem: Genesis 11:10-26.
 - e. The generation of Terah: Genesis 11:27—25:11.
 - f. The generation of Ishmael: Genesis 25:12-18.
 - g. The generation of Isaac: Genesis 25:19—35:29.
 - h. The generation of Esau: Genesis 36:1—37:1.
 - i. The generation of Jacob: Genesis 37:2—50:26.
2. "The unity of Genesis is exhibited in the invariable purpose which runs through every line of it, not a line, a paragraph, or chapter of it is misplaced....Straight as an arrow to the mark, every line of Genesis bears upon the ushering in of the Seed Singular promised to Eve before expulsion from Eden and finally culminating in the birth of the Son of God" (Coffman, p.4).
3. Genesis is perfectly united with the rest of the Bible.
 - a. Paradise is lost in Genesis; it is regained in Revelation. The whole Bible is one continuous discussion regarding Paradise lost and Paradise regained.
 - b. The twelve patriarchs of the Old Testament have their New Testament counterparts in the twelve apostles.
 - c. There are types and shadows in Genesis which have divine realities in the New Testament.
 - d. "Only God could have constructed such a unity line, bit by bit, throughout sixteen centuries of time with forty different writers from all times, occupations, and races of men! In the broad view, Genesis and the whole Bible reveal a single purpose, that of redeeming fallen man from the curse of sin" (Coffman, p.4).

C. Interpretation and Relevance of Genesis.

1. Exegesis: *ex* (out); *egesis* (to take from). Exegesis is to take from a verse only what God put in it. Once a person starts interpreting the Bible to fit current human theories, he must continually change his interpretations. Theories change, but God's word remains constant.
 - a. Psalms 119:89: "For ever, O LORD, thy word is settled in heaven."
 - b. Matthew 24:35: "Heaven and earth shall pass away, but my words shall not pass away."
 - c. John 10:35: "If he called them gods, unto whom the word of God came, and the scripture cannot be broken."
 2. Prejudices cause men to reject the Genesis account of creation.
 - a. Some are anti-supernatural; but if one rejects the supernatural in Genesis 1-2, he must rule out all other accounts of supernatural events in the Bible. To do that would rob the scriptures of their power, remove God from human history, and deprive us of the Savior.
 - b. Some are materialistic: to these there is no God; the universe made itself; man came into being purely by chance.
 - c. We must be willing to enter the study with an open mind.
 3. The New Testament and other parts of the Bible will shed much light on Genesis; and it will shed light on these other scriptures. "For whatsoever things were written aforetime were written for our learning, that we through patience and comfort of the scriptures might have hope" (Rom. 15:4).
 4. The relevancy of Genesis to modern man is seen in the following:
 - a. The Seed of woman is promised.
 - 1) Genesis 3:15: "And I will put enmity between thee and the woman, and between thy seed and her seed; it shall bruise thy head, and thou shalt bruise his heel."
 - 2) Galatians 4:4: "But when the fulness of the time was come, God sent forth his Son, made of a woman, made under the law."
 - b. The sacrifice of Christ is pictured.
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- 1) Genesis 4:4: "And Abel, he also brought of the firstlings of his flock and of the fat thereof. And the LORD had respect unto Abel and to his offering."
 - 2) John 1:29: "The next day John seeth Jesus coming unto him, and saith, Behold the Lamb of God, which taketh away the sin of the world."
 - c. The Seed of Abraham is promised.
 - 1) Genesis 22:18: "And in thy seed shall all the nations of the earth be blessed; because thou hast obeyed my voice."
 - 2) Galatians 3:16: "Now to Abraham and his seed were the promises made. He saith not, And to seeds, as of many; but as of one, And to thy seed, which is Christ."
 - d. The punishment of Noah's generation and of the Sodomites serves as warning of the wrath to be shown the wicked at the last day (Gen. 6-9).
 - 1) 2 Peter 3:6-7: "Whereby the world that then was, being overflowed with water, perished: But the heavens and the earth, which are now, by the same word are kept in store, reserved unto fire against the day of judgment and perdition of ungodly men."
 - 2) Jude 7: "Even as Sodom and Gomorrah, and the cities about them in like manner, giving themselves over to fornication, and going after strange flesh, are set forth for an example, suffering the vengeance of eternal fire."
 - e. Abraham's paying tithes to Melchizedec showed beforehand the superiority of Christianity over the Mosaic system (Gen. 14; Heb. 7).
 - f. Sarah and Hagar were types of the two covenants (Gen. 16-21; Gal. 4).
 - g. Isaac was a type of Christ (Gen. 22).
 - h. Shiloh (Christ) was promised to come through Judah.
 - 1) Genesis 49:10: "The sceptre shall not depart from Judah, nor a lawgiver from between his feet, until Shiloh come; and unto him *shall* the gathering of the people *be*."
 - 2) Hebrews 7:14: "For *it is* evident that our Lord sprang out of Juda; of which tribe Moses spake nothing concerning priesthood."
- D. Is the Genesis Account of Creation Fact or Myth?
1. The common definition of a myth is "a story of imagination which is not true." The classical definition of myth is a story told to enshrine absolute truth which could not be communicated to man otherwise. This type myth always carries with it a moral. What could be the moral of Genesis 1-11 if that passage is a myth?
 2. Genesis states facts. It contains non-scientific language but states facts of science. It is a revelation having a religious and spiritual aim; it shows the relation between man and God. The creation account is in order to faith (Heb. 11:1-6; Rom. 10:17). If this account is not true then our faith is based on a falsehood. But to show man that he is the crown of creation is to lift man up and show him he is above animals, and that he has certain responsibilities toward God and his fellowman.
 - a. Romans 10:17: "So then faith *cometh* by hearing, and hearing by the word of God."
 - b. Hebrews 11:1-6: "Now faith is the substance of things hoped for, the evidence of things not seen. For by it the elders obtained a good report. Through faith we understand that the worlds were framed by the word of God, so that things which are seen were not made of things which do appear. By faith Abel offered unto God a more excellent sacrifice than Cain, by which he obtained witness that he was righteous, God testifying of his gifts: and by it he being dead yet speaketh. By faith Enoch was translated that he should not see death; and was not found, because God had translated him: for before his translation he had this testimony, that he pleased God. But without faith *it is* impossible to please *him*: for he that cometh to God must believe that he is, and *that* he is a rewarder of them that diligently seek him."
 3. Leupold:
 - a. The issue involved briefly stated is: Have we history or legend in Genesis? A notable array of famous scholars can be cited in support of what the great majority of writers on the subject in our day regard as the only tenable view, namely Genesis is legend. From Wellhausen down outstanding names are Gunkel, Jeremias, Driver, Skinner, Procksch, etc., etc. However, we are not impressed by this array of learning, which we must without reservation class as pseudo-science on matters of this sort.
 - 1) Strong dogmatic presuppositions are too definitely displayed by these scholars: miracles are considered as practically impossible; so is plenary inspiration; Israel's history can rise to no higher levels than the Babylonian or the Egyptian; an arbitrary evolutionary standard is to be employed

- in measuring historical evidence. Besides, the following facts of Israel's history are overlooked.
- 2) The utter dissimilarity of the Genesis record and the legends of the nations (the sober common sense of average Christians has always been able to detect this difference much more clearly than the overtrained scholar, who often loses entirely his sense of perspective); b) the clear distinction preserved by Israel's sacred records of the successive stages of revelation (4:26; 17:22–27; Exod. 6:3; Exod. 20; Deut. 18:15–19; 1 Sam. 3:1, etc.).
 - 3) The accuracy of Israel's historical tradition (13:10; chapter 14; 20:20–24; chapter 25; 26:1; cf. also chapter 5 and chapter 10).
 - 4) Distinct efforts by the patriarchs to perpetuate the remembrance of events of outstanding religious importance (12:7; 13:18; 21:33; 33:20).
 - 5) The sober tone displayed in recording the most exalted revelation (we refer to the following chapters 12, 15, 18, 22, and 32:23–32).
 - 6) The utter impartiality displayed in recording the history of those who are the patriarchs and the fathers of tribes (12:10 ff; 20:1–18; 26:1–17; 30:1–43; chapter 34; chapter 38). Koenig's *Commentary* (p. 80 ff.) gives additional material on this score.
- b. A proper evaluation of the facts enumerated above leads definitely to the conclusion that Genesis gives a sober, accurate, historical account of the events that led to the separation of Israel from among the nations and to her establishment as a new nation with a divinely given destiny. If the other nations of this period are known to have had no records that for accuracy and sound historical pragmatism can begin to compare with the Biblical accounts, that cannot in any wise impugn the singular merit of the latter. Criticism has shown itself singularly weak in the direction of evaluating comparatively the merit of Biblical history. Attempts to cut everything of superior merit found in Israel's Sacred Writings down to the level of contemporary literature is still the bane of scholarship in the Old Testament field. [pp.11f].
4. "In a general way it would be correct to say that this book is singular in its kind, for it offers the only correct and satisfactory information that we possess concerning prehistoric times and the *Urgeschichte* ("history of the primitive ages"). It goes back beyond the reach of available historical sources and offers not mythical suppositions, not poetical fancies, not vague suggestions, but a positive record of things as they actually transpired and, at the same time, of matters of infinite moment for all mankind. But more specifically, all this material relative to prehistoric times and the *Urgeschichte* really provides the most substantial and even fundamental theological concepts. The major theological concepts are incomplete and leave much to be desired, if the content that Genesis offers should be subtracted. Before God can be known as Savior, He must be understood as the Creator of humankind and of the world. Just what manner of Father and Creator He is we find displayed in the two Creation chapters, Genesis 1 and 2. In like manner no adequate and correct conception of man is possible without a knowledge of the essentials concerning his creation, his original state, the image of God, and the like. Again, the problem of sin will constitute much more of a problem if the origin of sin, that is to say, the Fall into sin be not understood. With that fact correctly apprehended, we achieve a correct estimate of the degree of depravity that is characteristic of fallen men. Without the promise of ultimate victory through the Seed of the Woman all further revelations concerning the salvation to come must stand minus an adequate base upon which they can successfully build. In other words, certain vital questions in reference to the type of revelation that mankind needs find a satisfactory answer in Genesis and nowhere else. [Leupold, H. C. (1942), *Exposition of Genesis* (pp. 25–26). Grand Rapids, MI: Baker Book House.]
- E. The Days of Genesis One.
1. A Biblical statement or word is to be taken as literal unless there is something in the context which demands that it be taken as a figure of speech. There is nothing in the local or general context which indicates these days are not literal days.
 2. The days are equally divided between light and darkness. Plants were created on the third day; if the days were long geological periods, these plants would have died due to the extremely long and cold nights; the deep cold would be caused by the absence of sunlight for that long period of darkness. Also, many plants depend on insects to propagate; but insects were not created until the sixth day. Even if these days were only a few years in length, this plant life would have perished.
 3. The word "day" is translated from the Hebrew *yom*. This Hebrew word is used figuratively to refer to longer periods of time than the literal 24-hour day in many instances. However, in all instances where it is used with a numerical value (except in prophetic passages), it always has reference to a literal solar day.

In Genesis one, the numeric values of first, second, etc., are used. There are more than 100 such usages in the Old Testament. Moreover, when the plural form of “yom” is used, it always refers to 24-hour days. There are more than 700 such usages of the word in the Old Testament.

4. In the context, the seventh day is not distinguished from the other six days in length. We have no reason to believe it was any longer or shorter than the others. "For *in* six days the LORD made heaven and earth, the sea, and all that in them *is*, and rested the seventh day: wherefore the LORD blessed the sabbath day, and hallowed it" (Ex. 20:11). Adam and Eve were created on the sixth day. If the days were long geological periods of the length modernists claim, then Adam was extremely old before day number six ended. He lived through part of day six, through all of day seven, and for the rest of his 930 years. If these days were long eons of time, Adam would have been far older than the age assigned him. Many are unwilling to give up their day-age interpretation of Genesis one, and so have been driven to assert that Adam was not a real person. But New Testament passages clearly affirm that Adam was a real man, and the first man.
 - a. Matthew 19:4: "And he answered and said unto them, Have ye not read, that he which made *them* at the beginning made them male and female."
 - b. 1 Corinthians 15:21-22, 47: "For since by man *came* death, by man *came* also the resurrection of the dead. For as in Adam all die, even so in Christ shall all be made alive....The first man *is* of the earth, earthy: the second man *is* the Lord from heaven."
5. The Hebrew word “yom” is used and defined in Genesis 1:5: "And God called the light Day, and the darkness he called Night. And the evening and the morning were the first day."
 - a. “As added proof, the word is clearly defined the first time it is used. God defines his terms! ‘And God called the light Day, and the darkness he called Night. And the evening and the morning were the first day’ (Genesis 1:5). Yom is defined here as the light period in the regular succession of light and darkness, which, as the earth rotates on its axis, has continued ever since. This definition obviously precludes any possible interpretation as a geologic age” (Whitcomb, Quoted by Thompson in *The Bible and the Age of the Earth*).
 - b. God plainly said “the evening and morning were the first day.” Genesis 1:14 says that the sun and moon were to divide the day from the night, that they were to be for signs, seasons, days and for years. If the “days” were ages, then what are the years? What is the night?
6. “Had Moses wanted us to understand that these ‘days’ were actually long, geological periods of time, he could have used words that so-specified this point. But he did not! He could have used the Hebrew word ‘olam,’ or the word ‘dor,’ both of which would indicate indefinite periods of time. He could have modified the Hebrew ‘yom’ by the adjective ‘rab (yom rab—a ‘long’ day), but again, he did not. As one author has correctly pointed out, if God said that he created everything in six days, but really used six eons, wouldn’t that make God a deceptive, tricky, sneaky, deceitful God?” (Thompson, p.10).

F. The Date Genesis was Written.

1. About 1440-1400 B.C. (Coffman, p.18). "And it came to pass in the four hundred and eightieth year after the children of Israel were come out of the land of Egypt, in the fourth year of Solomon's reign over Israel, in the month Zif, which *is* the second month, that he began to build the house of the LORD" (1 Kings 6:1).
2. “Now the date of Moses’ birth was placed by Unger at about 1520....This was well ‘after’ the Hyksos rule (the kings favorable to Joseph), during which time a king arose ‘who knew not Joseph.’ The ensuing hatred and oppression of the Israelites resulted in the adoption of Moses into the royal family. Also, Moses lived 120 years, and that brings us down exactly to the year 1400 B.C.” (Coffman, p.19).
3. “The archaeological research of Professor John Garstang makes out a very strong case for the fall of Jericho, about 1400 B.C. (Coffman, p.19). Remember, Jericho fell to Joshua and his army shortly after the death of Moses.
4. “Egyptian history fits in with a 1440 date with Exodus, for there is testimony upon Egyptian monuments that show Thutmose IV not to have been the eldest son of Amenhotep II, leaving the likelihood that his first born perished in the Passover...” (Coffman, pp.19f).

G. Alleged Anachronisms in Genesis (Taken from Coffman, pp.20ff).

1. Anachronism: “1. The representation of something as existing or occurring at other than its proper time, esp. earlier. 2. Anything that is or seems to be out of its proper time in history” (Webster).
2. Genesis 12:6: "And Abram passed through the land unto the place of Sichem, unto the plain of Moreh. And the Canaanite *was* then in the land." What is meant is that Abraham left his native land to go to the land God would show him; when he arrived, he found it populated by the Canaanites; they were already

there.

3. Genesis 36:31: "And these *are* the kings that reigned in the land of Edom, before there reigned any king over the children of Israel." A list of Edomite kings is given which ruled before there was a king in Israel. This is said to prove that Genesis was written after Israel had kings. But, Genesis 17:6,16 is the background for the statement: Abraham was told that there would be kings among his descendants. "And I will make thee exceeding fruitful, and I will make nations of thee, and kings shall come out of thee.... And I will bless her, and give thee a son also of her: yea, I will bless her, and she shall be *a mother* of nations; kings of people shall be of her" (Gen. 17:6, 16).
 4. Genesis 23:2: "And Sarah died in Kirjatharba; the same *is* Hebron in the land of Canaan: and Abraham came to mourn for Sarah, and to weep for her." Hebron is mentioned as the same as Kirjatharba which is alleged to indicate a late date; but Hebron was the ancient name of the place, long before it was called Kirjatharba; Moses identified it with its original name, not with its being called Hebron at a later time. In fact, the reason that the Israelites changed the name at a later time is probably due to what Moses wrote here.
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GENESIS 1

A. Genesis 1:1-2: The Beginning.

1. Verse 1: "In the beginning God created the heaven and the earth."
 - a. This is perhaps the most profound statement ever uttered. Out of this great statement unfolds everything else that is contained in the word of God. By this very first statement in the Bible, every "ism" is refuted: materialism, atheism, scientism, polytheism, pantheism, fatalism, deism and rationalism. It is a summation of the creation, and is taken as an independent verse. The remainder of the chapter gives the details of the creation, and chapter two fills in specific details regarding the creation of man. This verse affirms that God is responsible for the existence of all things. "For every house is builded by some *man*; but he that built all things *is* God" (Heb. 3:4).
 - b. The word translated "God" comes from the Hebrew *elohim*. Clarke quotes an eminent Jewish scholar, Simeon ben Joachi, in his comment on the sixth section of Leviticus, who defines the word thus: "Come and see the mystery of the word ELOHIM; there are three degrees, and each degree by itself alone, and yet not withstanding they are all one, and joined together in one, and are not divided from each other" (p.28).
 - c. This Hebrew word for God is plural in number and includes three personalities. The Bible elsewhere reveals that God the Father, God the Son, and God the Holy Spirit are the three personalities of the Godhead, and that all had part in the original creation. There are three degrees insofar as authority is concerned. The sender is greater than the one sent; God sent Christ; Christ sent the Spirit.
 - 1) John 4:34: "Jesus saith unto them, My meat is to do the will of him that sent me, and to finish his work."
 - 2) John 16:7: "Nevertheless I tell you the truth; It is expedient for you that I go away: for if I go not away, the Comforter will not come unto you; but if I depart, I will send him unto you."
 - 3) John 1:1-3: "In the beginning was the Word, and the Word was with God, and the Word was God. The same was in the beginning with God. All things were made by him; and without him was not any thing made that was made."
 - 4) Colossians 1:15-17: "Who is the image of the invisible God, the firstborn of every creature: For by him were all things created, that are in heaven, and that are in earth, visible and invisible, whether *they be* thrones, or dominions, or principalities, or powers: all things were created by him, and for him: And he is before all things, and by him all things consist."
 - 5) Hebrews 1:1-3: "God, who at sundry times and in divers manners spake in time past unto the fathers by the prophets, Hath in these last days spoken unto us by *his* Son, whom he hath appointed heir of all things, by whom also he made the worlds; Who being the brightness of *his* glory, and the express image of his person, and upholding all things by the word of his power, when he had by himself purged our sins, sat down on the right hand of the Majesty on high."
 - 6) Genesis 1:2: "And the earth was without form, and void; and darkness *was* upon the face of the deep. And the Spirit of God moved upon the face of the waters."
 - 7) Psalms 104:30: "Thou sendest forth thy spirit, they are created: and thou renewest the face of the earth."
 - d. Our English word "God" translates the Greek word *theos* (in the New Testament). For lack of a better expression, this means "Divine Nature." There is only one divine nature, and only three persons who possess it.
 - 1) God the Father manifestly possesses it.
 - 2) Christ the Son possesses it: "For in him dwelleth all the fulness of the Godhead bodily" (Col. 2:9).
 - 3) The Holy Spirit possesses it: "But Peter said, Ananias, why hath Satan filled thine heart to lie to the Holy Ghost, and to keep back *part* of the price of the land? Whiles it remained, was it not thine own? and after it was sold, was it not in thine own power? why hast thou conceived this thing in thine heart? thou hast not lied unto men, but unto God" (Acts 5:3-4).
 - e. "In the beginning" is supported by scientific principles, which demand that there be a beginning. Matter is not eternal. The only two ultimate alternatives to explain the existence of the universe is (1) matter created itself, or (2) God created it. It is illogical and unscientific to affirm the first; it is both

logical and scientific to affirm the second alternative.

- 1) Psalms 14:1: "The fool hath said in his heart, *There is* no God. They are corrupt, they have done abominable works, *there is* none that doeth good."
 - 2) Psalms 19:1: "The heavens declare the glory of God; and the firmament sheweth his handiwork."
 - 3) Romans 1:20: "For the invisible things of him from the creation of the world are clearly seen, being understood by the things that are made, *even* his eternal power and Godhead; so that they are without excuse."
 - 4) Hebrews 3:4: "For every house is builded by some *man*; but he that built all things *is* God."
 - 5) Hebrews 11:3: "Through faith we understand that the worlds were framed by the word of God, so that things which are seen were not made of things which do appear."
- f. The phrase "in the beginning" (*berêshîth*) refers to the absolute beginning of created things, to the *Uranfang*. This fact is supported by the following arguments in the face of many and strong claims to the contrary. 1. The corresponding phrase in Greek, ἐν ἀρχῇ, which the Septuagint translators used here and which appears at the beginning of John's Gospel, is plainly a reference to the absolute beginning. 2. The noun *rêshîth* appears without the article, appearing in use practically as a proper noun, Absolute Beginning (K. S. 294 g). The Greek Hexapla of Origin supports this, for its transliteration with few exceptions gives βρῆσιθ, seldom βαρησηθ. 3. The rendering which takes the expression as referring to the absolute beginning of things makes for a simple, natural progression of thought and avoids that peculiar periodic sentence structure, which shall presently be discussed as highly unnatural. Because this noun *berêshîth* is without the article, that does not allow for its being taken as a genitive or construct case, viz. "in the beginning of God's creating," etc., for with that rendering attention is at once centered on the second verse and no reason appears for mentioning "the beginning" at all.¹
- g. "Created" is from the Hebrew *bara*. It is one of three Hebrew terms used in the early parts of Genesis, and usually describe a work of Divinity. The other two are *asah* (made) and *yatsar* (formed). *Bara* is used exclusively of God's work. The idea of creating something out of nothing is not always included in the word, but such is included in this verse.
- 1) Psalms 33:6-9: "By the word of the LORD were the heavens made; and all the host of them by the breath of his mouth. He gathereth the waters of the sea together as an heap: he layeth up the depth in storehouses. Let all the earth fear the LORD: let all the inhabitants of the world stand in awe of him. For he spake, and it was *done*; he commanded, and it stood fast."
 - 2) Hebrews 3:4: "For every house is builded by some *man*; but he that built all things *is* God."
- h. "Heaven" is plural in the American Standard Version (ASV). There are four heavens referred to in the Bible. The heavens here created included at least the first two listed below. These are the heavens to be destroyed at the Lord's return (Matt. 24:35; 2 Pet. 3:10-11).
- 1) Where the birds fly: "And I will appoint over them four kinds, saith the LORD: the sword to slay, and the dogs to tear, and the fowls of the heaven, and the beasts of the earth, to devour and destroy" (Jer. 15:3).
 - 2) Where the planets and stars are: "For the stars of heaven and the constellations thereof shall not give their light: the sun shall be darkened in his going forth, and the moon shall not cause her light to shine" (Isa. 13:10).
 - 3) Paradise, the part of Hades where Jesus, the thief, Lazarus, and Paul were.
 - a) Luke 23:43: "And Jesus said unto him, Verily I say unto thee, To day shalt thou be with me in paradise."
 - b) 2 Corinthians 12:2-4: "I knew a man in Christ above fourteen years ago, (whether in the body, I cannot tell; or whether out of the body, I cannot tell: God knoweth;) such an one caught up to the third heaven. And I knew such a man, (whether in the body, or out of the body, I cannot tell: God knoweth;) How that he was caught up into paradise, and heard unspeakable words, which it is not lawful for a man to utter."
 - c) Acts 14:19-20: "And there came thither *certain* Jews from Antioch and Iconium, who persuaded the people, and, having stoned Paul, drew *him* out of the city, supposing he had been dead. Howbeit, as the disciples stood round about him, he rose up, and came into the city: and the

¹ Leupold, H. C. (1942). [*Exposition of Genesis*](#) (p. 39). Grand Rapids, MI: Baker Book House.

next day he departed with Barnabas to Derbe."

- 4) Where God dwells: "The LORD *is* in his holy temple, the LORD'S throne *is* in heaven: his eyes behold, his eyelids try, the children of men" (Ps. 11:4).
- i. Five necessary scientific principles, identified by Herbert Spencer, are contained in Genesis 1:1.
 - 1) In the beginning—time.
 - 2) Heavens—space.
 - 3) Earth—matter.
 - 4) God—force.
 - 5) Created—motion.
2. Verse 2: "And the earth was without form, and void; and darkness *was* upon the face of the deep. And the Spirit of God moved upon the face of the waters."
 - a. Many scholars assert that this verse teaches that the earth became waste and void (chaotic). They allege that a phrase in Isaiah 45:18 ["created it not in vain"] indicates that the earth degenerated after the initial creation, and that God had to restore it. "For thus saith the LORD that created the heavens; God himself that formed the earth and made it; he hath established it, he created it not in vain, he formed it to be inhabited: I *am* the LORD; and *there is* none else" (Isa. 45:18).
 - 1) Some have gone to the extreme position of affirming that there was an entire race of men and a world predating Adam. Some read the "ice age" into this verse. Others equate this time and situation to when "Lucifer" fell from heaven. ["How art thou fallen from heaven, O Lucifer, son of the morning! how art thou cut down to the ground, which didst weaken the nations!" (Isa. 14:12). The context of this passage shows that *Lucifer* refers to the king of Babylon].
 - 2) But we must allow the passage to speak for itself. It will show that these theories are ground-ess speculations!
 - b. The earth was *without form*. It was "shapeless, unformed, without arrangement (see Clark); "abyss of formlessness" (Young). The earth was *void*. In its present state, it was not a fit place for habitation.
 - c. *Darkness* was on the face of the deep. Light had not yet been created; the mass of matter that was to become the earth as we know it was evidently covered by water.
 - d. The *Spirit* moved (or brooded) upon the face of the waters. "'Was brooding, as a hen broods her eggs, is a better translation for it denotes continuing action over the entire six days of creation in which the Spirit of God was tenderly caring for and assisting in 'hatching' or in bringing the universe to its full development and life" (Gatewood, p.164). This part of the verse shows that everything was under complete control. God did not lose control of his creation. If a catastrophe took place, why is it not described plainly and in detail? Notice how much space is given Noah's flood.
 - 1) Isaiah 45:18 does not say that God created the earth and it became void; rather it says he did not create it in vain or to be void forever.
 - 2) We can know that there was no pre-Adamic race for 1 Corinthians 15:21-22, 47 affirms that Adam was the first man.
 - e. The earth was at the first without form and void (unfit for human habitation, just as other planets are to this day).
 - f. Some scholars try to put millions of years between the first two verses of Genesis. "And he answered and said unto them, Have ye not read, that he which made *them* at the beginning made them male and female" (Matt. 19:4). God created man at or in the beginning, not millions, thousands, or even hundreds of years after the beginning.
3. Moses records this, not to satisfy idle curiosity, but to sketch the creation events. There is, therefore, much which is not revealed about the creation processes, due in part to man's limited ability to comprehend. Certainly the unenlightened ancients could not have grasped the scientific principles lying back of the events being described; and how much of these matters could even modern scientists among us understand?

B. Genesis 1:3-5: The First Day of Creation.

1. Verse 3: "And God said, Let there be light: and there was light."
 - a. Let there be light. Light is undefinable by science; it is one thing that is not relative (invariant). Light is a separate entity—not dependent on anything else.
 - b. "The language here indicates that the stupendous acts of Creation were performed by fiat. God spoke the word, and it was done. Could any process of creating light gradually even be imagined? Any chain of events leading to the development of light is inconceivable, the very thought of such a thing being

rejected by the intelligence. Primeval darkness demands just the fiat revealed in this verse as the only possible solution for it." (Coffman, p.28).

- c. "Psuedo-scientists at one time scoffed at Moses' supposed unscientific statement that light was made before the sun, moon, and stars since the light was made on the first day but the sun, moon, and stars were not made until the fourth day....Scientists now declare that light existed before the sun. Light is the result of rapid variations that move at a rate of 186,000 miles per second. Such vibrations do exist independent of the sun, such as in the electric bulb, in static electricity, or in other forms" (Gatewood, p.173).
2. Verses 4-5: "And God saw the light, that *it was* good: and God divided the light from the darkness. And God called the light Day, and the darkness he called Night. And the evening and the morning were the first day."
 - a. God separated light from darkness. "The creation of light, however, was no annihilation of darkness, no transformation of the dark material of the world into pure light, but a separation of the light from the primary matter, a separation which established and determined that interchange of light and darkness, which produces the distinction between day and night." (Keil, p.50).
 - b. This passage is usually taken as a reference to the initial division of night from day as the earth rotates. God gave names to these two periods of light and darkness which occur in successive order. "Where *is* the way *where* light dwelleth? and *as for* darkness, where *is* the place thereof, That thou shouldest take it to the bound thereof, and that thou shouldest know the paths *to* the house thereof?" (Job 38:19-20).
 - c. "When the next clause states, 'God separated the light from the darkness,' this does not mean 'separation' in the sense of 'disentangled.' They were not commingled together. *Wayyabhdel* means literally, 'and he caused a division,' that is in point of time, one functioning at one time, the other dominating at another. One is as much an entity or principle as the other. 'Darkness' is not cancelled and put out of existence. We can perhaps go so far as to claim that a '*spatial*' separation was also involved according to the terms of this account. Job 38:19-20, though largely a poetic statement, seems to give warrant for such a deduction. To make the idea of separation still more prominent the preposition 'between' is repeated before the second noun, and both nouns are given the article" (Leupold, Vol. 1, p.55).
 - d. "None but superficial thinkers can take offence at the idea of created things receiving names from God. The name of a thing is the expression of its nature. If the name be given by man, it fixes in a word the impression which it makes upon the human mind; but when given by God, it expresses the reality, what the thing is in God's creation, and the place assigned it there by the side of other things" (Keil, p.50).
 - 1) "Where is the way where light dwelleth? and as for darkness, where is the place thereof, That thou shouldest take it to the bound thereof, and that thou shouldest know the paths to the house thereof?" (Job 38:19-20).
 - 2) "Where [is] this — the way light dwelleth? And darkness, where [is] this — its place? That thou dost take it unto its boundary, And that thou dost understand The paths of its house" (Job 38:19-20, Young's Literal Translation).
3. The evening and morning were the first day. "It is to be observed, that the days of creation are bounded by the coming of evening and morning" (Keil, p.51). It was not until the fourth day the sun, moon, and stars received their appointments to be the determiners of seasons, days and years; but that does not necessarily mean they remained uncreated until the fourth day. It was on that day that they were commissioned to serve for signs.

C. Genesis 1:6-8: The Second Day.

1. Verses 6-8: "And God said, Let there be a firmament in the midst of the waters, and let it divide the waters from the waters. And God made the firmament, and divided the waters which *were* under the firmament from the waters which *were* above the firmament: and it was so. And God called the firmament Heaven. And the evening and the morning were the second day."
2. "On the second day of Creation, the waters covering the earth's surface were divided into two great reservoirs—one below the firmament and one above, the firmament being the expanse above the earth now corresponding to the troposphere" (*Genesis Flood*. p.229).
3. "The creation of the earth's atmosphere was God's work on the second day of creation. Jamieson pointed out that the term 'firmament' carries the meaning of 'an expanse...the beating out as of a plate of metal,

suggesting the utility of a shield, an apt figure indeed when it is recalled that the earth would long ago have been destroyed by showers of meteorites (as upon the moon, had it not been for the protection of our atmosphere" (Coffman, p.31f).

4. The firmament is the expanse of atmosphere around the earth. It is the first heaven.
 - a. The first heaven is where the birds fly: "Our persecutors are swifter than the eagles of the heaven: they pursued us upon the mountains, they laid wait for us in the wilderness" (Lam. 4:19).
 - b. The second heaven is where the stars and planets are: "For the stars of heaven and the constellations thereof shall not give their light: the sun shall be darkened in his going forth, and the moon shall not cause her light to shine" (Isaiah 13:10).
 - c. The third heaven is Paradise.
 - 1) Luke 23:43: "And Jesus said unto him, Verily I say unto thee, To day shalt thou be with me in paradise."
 - 2) Acts 14:19-20: "And there came thither *certain* Jews from Antioch and Iconium, who persuaded the people, and, having stoned Paul, drew *him* out of the city, supposing he had been dead. Howbeit, as the disciples stood round about him, he rose up, and came into the city: and the next day he departed with Barnabas to Derbe."
 - 3) 2 Corinthians 12:2-4: "I knew a man in Christ above fourteen years ago, (whether in the body, I cannot tell; or whether out of the body, I cannot tell: God knoweth;) such an one caught up to the third heaven. And I knew such a man, (whether in the body, or out of the body, I cannot tell: God knoweth;) How that he was caught up into paradise, and heard unspeakable words, which it is not lawful for a man to utter."
 - d. The fourth heaven is where God is: "The LORD *is* in his holy temple, the LORD'S throne *is* in heaven: his eyes behold, his eyelids try, the children of men" (Psalm 11:4).
5. "Some have considered it strange that such an expression as, 'divide the waters from the waters' should have been used here; but as it must be true in countless other instances, God was limited in his communication with mankind, not by any limitation within Himself, but by the limitations within man, In the days when this revelation was given, 'The Hebrew had no word for gas (or vapors).' Therefore, God said, 'Divide the waters (liquid) from the waters (gaseous)'" (Coffman, p.32),

D. Genesis 1:9-13: The Third Day.

1. Verses 9-10: "And God said, Let the waters under the heaven be gathered together unto one place, and let the dry *land* appear: and it was so. And God called the dry *land* Earth; and the gathering together of the waters called he Seas: and God saw that *it was good*."
 - a. "There is far more than sufficient water upon the earth to inundate all of the continents and the highest mountains; and it took an act of creation to separate the dry land from the seas. Nothing is revealed here as to how God did this. Many things might have entered into it. The stacking of water miles deep upon the polar caps of the earth, the fracture of the earth's crust by mighty cracks, and earthquakes thrusting above the primeval seas the continents and the mighty mountain systems are things which men suppose took place" (Coffman, p.33). This description might very well have taken place following Noah's flood to account for the present level of the seas.
 - b. God gathered the waters under heaven into *one place*. The Hebrew term literally means "one bed." Verse ten says that God called this collection of water *seas*. If the writer of this history was not inspired, how can we account for his knowing that all the waters of the oceans are connected, literally lying **in one bed**? A glance at a globe shows that all the seas are connected. Further, how did he know the sea could be classified in the plural? Living in those ancient times, he had no human knowledge of more than one sea.
 - c. "In what way the gathering of the earthly waters in the sea and the appearance of the dry land were effected, whether by the sinking or deepening of places in the body of the globe, into which the water was drawn off, or by the elevation of the solid ground, the record does not inform us, since it never describes the process by which effects are produced. It is probable, however, that the separation was caused both by depression and elevation" (Keil, p.54).
 - d. The waters were gathered into one place. An examination of a world map shows that all the seas are connected, literally in one place; yet, there are divisions which make it possible to correctly use the plural (seas). This is one of many indications of the divine inspiration of the account given by Moses. "Neither Moses, nor any other writer of that ancient time, had any personal knowledge that could have led to such a statement" (Coffman, p.33).
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2. Verses 11-13: "And God said, Let the earth bring forth grass, the herb yielding seed, *and* the fruit tree yielding fruit after his kind, whose seed *is* in itself, upon the earth: and it was so. And the earth brought forth grass, *and* herb yielding seed after his kind, and the tree yielding fruit, whose seed *was* in itself, after his kind: and God saw that *it was* good. And the evening and the morning were the third day."
- Three classifications of vegetable life were created next: grass, herbs, and trees. This includes all the vegetable kingdom. This is also the first life to begin; life began on land, not in the sea as the evolutionists and their compromising "cousins" (theistic evolutionists) assert. This second great creation on the third day followed the separation of the waters from the dry land which of necessity occurred first.
 - "One thing, however, is very significant. Plants, in order to continue to grow in the present economy, must have a soil, water, light, chemical nutrients, etc. The account has mentioned water and light, although in a somewhat different physical context than now provided, but the soil and nutrients must also be available. As now formed, soil requires a long period of preparation before becoming able to support plant growth. But here it must have been created essentially instantaneously, with all the necessary chemical constituents, rather than gradually developed over centuries of rock weathering, alluvial deposition, etc. Thus it had an appearance of being 'old' when it was still new. *It was created with an 'appearance' of age!* (*Genesis Flood*, p.232f).
 - The trees were created full-grown; if we could have been there to see them when they first appeared, they would have had the appearance of being several years old. Each specimen would have to have been created fully mature and placed in an environment which was perfectly adapted to its continued life and prosperity.
 - Each kind of vegetable life created was given the means of reproducing itself. Each can produce only after its own kind. Mutations occur within each kind: occasionally such are found naturally in nature; sometimes they are produced by man; but these are "overwhelmingly inclined to be harmful and not helpful, frustrating completely the theories of evolution which are totally inadequate as an explanation of various species of either plants or animals" (Coffman, p.33).
 - "Moreover, we must not picture the work of creation as consisting of the production of the first tender germs which were gradually developed into herbs, shrubs, and trees; on the contrary, we must regard it as one element in the miracle of creation itself, that at the word of God not only tender grasses, but herbs, shrubs, and trees, sprang out of the earth, each ripe for the formation of blossom and the bearing of seed and fruit, without the necessity of waiting for years before the vegetation created was ready to blossom and bear fruit" (Keil, p.56).
 - God saw that it was good. This statement is given seven times in the profound narrative. God does not do anything half-way, or imperfectly. He recognized and affirmed the completeness and perfection of the things he created.
 - In regards to age, the oldest living things that can be measured accurately are trees (plant life). It is interesting to notice that evolutionists have little to say about plant life! Without plant life, all other forms of life would perish.

E. Genesis 1:14-19: The Fourth Day.

- Verse 14: "And God said, Let there be lights in the firmament of the heaven to divide the day from the night; and let them be for signs, and for seasons, and for days, and years."
 - "After the earth had been clothed with vegetation, and fitted to be the abode of living beings, there were created on the fourth day the sun, moon, and stars, heavenly bodies in which the elementary light was concentrated, in order that its influence upon the earthly globe might be sufficiently modified and regulated for living beings to exist and thrive beneath its rays, in the water, in the air, and upon the dry land" (Keil, p.56).
 - "The heavens were created on Day 1, and this means that the sun, moon and stars were already created when this fourth day began. Thus, there is a recapitulation in Day 4 regarding the making of the sun, moon, and stars, the creation of Day 4 being the placement of them. This is a most enlightening consideration, as we shall point out in a moment. The treatment of these days as chronologically in sequence requires this understanding....
 - "The more reasonable interpretation, it appears to us, is that of understanding this Day 4 as a record of God's positioning celestial bodies already created on Day 1 in such a manner as to make possible the creation and sustenance of human life on earth. That such a special act of this nature is meant appears from the declaration in Gen. 1:17 that 'God set them in the firmament of heaven to give

light upon the earth.’ Note that it definitely is NOT said that God made them in this statement of their utility, but that He SET them, or PLACED them. The importance of this is not offset by the fact that it is also declared here specifically that God made the sun, the moon, and the stars. This is partial recapitulation of what was revealed in Day 1, but that part must be considered parenthetical in meaning.

- 2) “Based upon what the holy text says, the creative act of Day 4 was the positioning of our solar system by Divine fiat in such a manner as to provide the environment for humanity. Who could know how God did such a thing? That He did indeed do it is evident in the results. Where else in the billions of galaxies all around us in space is there another planet of suitable size, placed at suitable distance from its mother star, inclined at exactly the proper angle upon the plane of its orbit, possessing precisely the kind of satellite needed, as in the case of our moon, possessing the necessary water supply, the proper atmosphere with its delicately-balanced percentages of the component elements, performing continually the diurnal revolutions upon its own axis to give succession of day and night, and constantly moving in the annual revolutions around the sun in the plane of its own orbit, providing the seasons and marking the years? If this exceedingly complex and precise placement of the earth was not a special act of God, why is it, as far as can be determined, absolutely unique? Significantly, such things as signs, day and night, seasons, and years are categorically mentioned as the result of creation on Day 4. Therefore, we identify the placement that made all such things possible as the creative accomplishment of this day.
- 3) “Of course, this is precisely the point in the sacred account that, ‘The average modern man parts company with Genesis.’ He thinks it is absurd that the sun, moon, and stars came into being after the earth. And, the normal conservative answer that the sun, moon, and stars had been there all the time, obscured by the primeval mists, and that they were made visible by the creative actions of Day 4 is purely speculative and unprovable, such explanations being considered implausible by skeptics. As is always the case, skepticism and unbelief are due to ignorance. The holy record does not teach that the sun, moon, and stars were created on Day 4, but that they were SET, or PLACED, so as to achieve the necessary environment upon the earth. If God did not indeed do this, then who did? The sacred account before us is the only intelligent answer as to the reason for our earth's existence as it is.
- 4) “In the record of this day, there appears an impassable gulf separating Biblical truth from the pagan superstitions and beliefs of ancient times. In those days, men worshipped the sun, moon, and stars. ‘In pagan thought the divine stars controlled human destiny.’ But in this Biblical account, the celestial bodies do not control men, they serve men. The earth, not the galaxies, appears here as the object of God's special care and providence” (Coffman, Electronic Version).
- c. God appointed the sun, moon and stars to serve as signs, season, days, and years.
 - 1) Signs—the science of astronomy is exact and dependable. Much information has been obtained from observing the heavenly bodies that is useful to man (the means for having a reliable time-measuring system).
 - 2) Seasons—If the days of Genesis 1 were long periods of time (250,000 years each, for example), it would have been a million years before the sun began to measure time on earth.
 - 3) As indicated above, it is possible that the sun, moon, and stars were created in the original fiat (1:1) of God, and that they only received their appointments (commissions) to begin measuring time, etc., on the fourth day.
- d. “The sun, moon and stars were in existence but were not yet doing the work which gets to be theirs in the fourth day’s work. Light was in existence, but now these heavenly bodies come to be the ones which bear this light in themselves—‘light-bearers,’ ‘luminaries,’ *me’oroth*. Heavenly bodies were in existence, but from this point onward they begin to serve a definite purpose in reference to the earth” (Leupold, p.71).
2. Verses 15-19: “And let them be for lights in the firmament of the heaven to give light upon the earth: and it was so. And God made two great lights; the greater light to rule the day, and the lesser light to rule the night: *he made* the stars also. And God set them in the firmament of the heaven to give light upon the earth, And to rule over the day and over the night, and to divide the light from the darkness: and God saw that *it was* good. And the evening and the morning were the fourth day.”
 - a. NKJV: Then God said, "Let there be lights in the firmament of the 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. (Gen. 1:14-19).

- b. Another function for these heavenly bodies is to provide light for the earth. And with the light, the heat necessary to promote and sustain life. The sun and moon are called "great" in comparison to the relative light received on earth from them and the stars. The sun and moon work such influences on the earth that life would not be possible without them.
- c. Barnes:
 - 1) These lights are for "signs." They are to serve as the great natural chronometer of man, having its three units,— the day, the month, and the year—and marking the divisions of time, not only for agricultural and social purposes, but also for meeting out the eras of human history and the cycles of natural science. They are signs of place as well as of time-topometers, if we may use the term. By them the mariner has learned to mark the latitude and longitude of his ship, and the astronomer to determine with any assignable degree of precision the place as well as the time of the planetary orbs of heaven. The "seasons" are the natural seasons of the year, and the set times for civil and sacred purposes which man has attached to special days and years in the revolution of time.
 - 2)Since the cause of the distinction of day and night is the diurnal rotation of the earth on its axis in conjunction with a fixed source of light, which streamed in on the scene of creation as soon as the natural hinderance was removed, so the vicissitudes of the year are owing, along with these two conditions, to the annual revolution of the earth in its orbit round the sun, together with the obliquity of the ecliptic. To the phenomena so occasioned are to be added incidental variations arising from the revolution of the moon round the earth, and the small modifications caused by the various other bodies of the solar system. All these celestial phenomena come out from the artless simplicity of the sacred narrative as observable facts on the fourth day of that new creation. From the beginning of the solar system the earth must, from the nature of things, have revolved around the sun. But whether the rate of velocity was ever changed, or the obliquity of the ecliptic was now commenced or altered, we do not learn from this record. [Note: Obliquity of the ecliptic is the term used by astronomers for the inclination of Earth 's equator with respect to the ecliptic, or of Earth's rotation axis to a perpendicular to the ecliptic. It is about 23.4° and is currently decreasing 0.013 degrees (47 arcseconds) per hundred years because of planetary perturbations].

F. Genesis 1:20-23: The Fifth Day.

- 1. Verse 20: "And God said, Let the waters bring forth abundantly the moving creature that hath life, and fowl *that* may fly above the earth in the open firmament of heaven."
 - a. This is intended to identify the source of all earthly life—God created it in all its many forms. While the passage speaks of animal life beginning in the sea, we know from previous statements that plant life had already been created. This verse does not give any support to those who try to explain the biblical account of the Creation, so as to harmonize it with theistic evolution—asserting that God used evolution to bring life into existence. The inspired record of the Creation shows that God created marine life and bird life on the fifth day, not over some vast period of time. Furthermore, on the sixth day, all life forms that live on the earth were created. Within the space of forty-eight hours, Jehovah was able to populate the earth with animals and the first pair of humans.
 - b. "The message of this day is that God created life, there being utterly no other possible source of it. The plain and simple implication of the passage is that God created all of the species of life mentioned here simultaneously. The balance in creation that is still witnessed by the ecological systems in nature could not have come into being except by fiat. Nothing is more unreasonable and ridiculous than the various hypotheses of evolution" (Coffman, p.36).
 - c. "And God said, Let the waters swarm with swarms of living creatures, and let birds fly above the earth in the open firmament of heaven" (ASV). "...It is not stated that only a single pair was created of each kind; on the contrary, the words, 'let the waters swarm with living beings,' seem rather to indicate that the animals were created, not only in a rich variety of genera and species, but in large numbers of individuals" (Keil, p.61).
 - d. "There is a meaning in these words which is seldom noticed. Innumerable millions of animalcula are found in water. Eminent naturalists have discovered not less than 30,000 in a single drop! How
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inconceivably small must each be, and yet each a perfect animal.... What a proof is this of the manifold wisdom of God!... But the 'fecundity' of fishes is another point intended in the text; no creatures are so prolific as these... and what a merciful provision is this for the necessities of man!... In this also we may see that the kind 'providence' of God goes hand in hand with his creating energy. While he manifests his wisdom and his power, he is making a permanent provision for the sustenance of man through all his generations" (Clarke, p.37).

2. Verse 21: "And God created great whales, and every living creature that moveth, which the waters brought forth abundantly, after their kind, and every winged fowl after his kind: and God saw that *it was* good."
 - a. The Hebrew word "bara" is used here to describe the bringing into existence the life forms which are identified in this passage. The word "is only applied to a divine creation, the production of that which had no existence before" (Keil, p.47). It is used to describe the creation of the heaven and earth (vs. 1), of man (vs. 27), and of those life forms brought into existence on the fifth day (vs. 21). 'Bara' is always used in connection with God" (Pledge, p.173).
 - b. Instead of "whales," the ASV reads "great sea-monsters," referring to the large fish, whales, and large life forms inhabiting the seas, lakes, and rivers. "Tannin" (Hebrew) must be understood as a general term, not particular, and includes all the great aquatic animals (see Clarke, p.37).
 - c. A great abundance of life was brought forth in the waters, and all the winged fowls were likewise brought into being.
 - d. The divine stamp of approval is placed on this part of his creation: "God saw that it was good." "It is truly astonishing with what care, wisdom, and minute skill God has formed the different genera and species of birds, whether intended to live chiefly on land or in water. The structure of a single 'feather' affords a world of wonders..." (Clarke, p.37). God's eye for detail, his wondrous wisdom, and his supreme power are all seen in the beauty and design found in all of his creation.
3. Verse 22-23: "And God blessed them, saying, Be fruitful, and multiply, and fill the waters in the seas, and let fowl multiply in the earth. And the evening and the morning were the fifth day."
 - a. These many life forms created on this day, due to the divine blessing and command, have the power to "be fruitful and multiply," without which they would not be able to continue for the good of all.
 - b. There is a progression in the divine narrative of Genesis one culminating in the creation of man, the crown of the creation. "...The creation proceeds throughout from the lower to the higher; and in this ascending scale the fishes occupy to a great extent a lower place in the animal economy than birds, and both water animals and birds a lower place than land animals, more especially the mammalia" (Keil, p.61).
 - c. Marine and bird life have abundantly multiplied on the earth. The seas were filled with fish of all varieties; the air is filled with multitudes of fowls. Their proliferation shows that God's plan was accomplished. Among the many purposes filled by this abundance of life, is the vast food resource for mankind that these offer.

G. Genesis 1:24-31: The Sixth Day.

1. Verses 24-25: "And God said, Let the earth bring forth the living creature after his kind, cattle, and creeping thing, and beast of the earth after his kind: and it was so. And God made the beast of the earth after his kind, and cattle after their kind, and every thing that creepeth upon the earth after his kind: and God saw that *it was* good."
 - a. The sea and air are now filled with animal life; God now turns his attention to producing life to inhabit the land areas. "Living creatures" with which this passage begins is a general term, including all the land-dwelling creatures. "The recurring mention of 'after their kind' forbids the notion that various species upon the earth from themselves produced other species.... The fidelity of each species to this God-ordained law is constant" (Coffman, p.37).
 - b. All these forms of life are subdivided into three classifications.
 - 1) Cattle: from Hebrew word generally denoting the larger domesticated quadrupeds, but sometimes also the larger land animals as a whole (Keil, p.61).
 - 2) Creeping things: embraces the smaller land animals, with or without feet, 'This classification includes insects, small animals, worms, and reptiles.
 - 3) Beasts of the earth: the free roving wild animals. All the land animals not included in the first two classifications are included here.
2. Verses 26-28: "And God said, Let us make man in our image, after our likeness: and let them have dominion over the fish of the sea, and over the fowl of the air, and over the cattle, and over all the earth,

and over every creeping thing that creepeth upon the earth. So God created man in his *own* image, in the image of God created he him; male and female created he them. And God blessed them, and God said unto them, Be fruitful, and multiply, and replenish the earth, and subdue it: and have dominion over the fish of the sea, and over the fowl of the air, and over every living thing that moveth upon the earth."

- a. The plural word for "God" (Elohim) is used again; a clear reference is thus made to the Godhead, which the New Testament identifies as consisting of Three Persons. "Such views as making it like an editorial 'we,' or the majesterial plural, or as an inclusion of angelic hosts or other heavenly beings are totally inadequate. It cannot be believed that God discussed the creation with the angels and included them as participants in his decision to create man" (Coffman, p.38). We are not told that man was made in the image of angels; nor are we told that angels are made in the image of God. But we are told that man is made in the image of God.
- b. In our image; after our likeness: these two phrases are equal. In what sense are we made in God's image? Does a man's physical body look like God? God is Spirit (John 4:24); a spirit does not have flesh and bones (Luke 24:39); therefore, man is not made in the physical image of God since He has no physical body. Man has a soul or spirit; man has the ability to think, reason, understand, plan, and be creative; God has these same capabilities; it is in these areas that man is made in God's image. The Bible teaches that the spiritual part of man (soul, spirit), once it has been created (Zech. 12:1), will never cease to be (Matt. 25:46; 2 Thess. 1:6-9; 1 Thess. 4:13-18; Eccl. 12:7). God is infinitely pure and holy; when man comes into being, he is pure and holy; spiritually, intellectually and morally we are made in the image of God. Through sin, man loses the measure of the divine stamp; it is only as he obeys the gospel, he regains that image.
 - 1) Romans 10:13-18: "For whosoever shall call upon the name of the Lord shall be saved. How then shall they call on him in whom they have not believed? and how shall they believe in him of whom they have not heard? and how shall they hear without a preacher? And how shall they preach, except they be sent? as it is written, How beautiful are the feet of them that preach the gospel of peace, and bring glad tidings of good things! But they have not all obeyed the gospel. For Esaias saith, Lord, who hath believed our report? So then faith cometh by hearing, and hearing by the word of God. But I say, Have they not heard? Yes verily, their sound went into all the earth, and their words unto the ends of the world."
 - 2) Romans 6:3-4: "Know ye not, that so many of us as were baptized into Jesus Christ were baptized into his death? Therefore we are buried with him by baptism into death: that like as Christ was raised up from the dead by the glory of the Father, even so we also should walk in newness of life."
 - 3) Romans 12:1-2: "I beseech you therefore, brethren, by the mercies of God, that ye present your bodies a living sacrifice, holy, acceptable unto God, *which is* your reasonable service. And be not conformed to this world: but be ye transformed by the renewing of your mind, that ye may prove what *is* that good, and acceptable, and perfect, will of God."
 - 4) 2 Corinthians 3:18: "But we all, with open face beholding as in a glass the glory of the Lord, are changed into the same image from glory to glory, *even as* by the Spirit of the Lord."
 - 5) Ephesians 4:24: "And that ye put on the new man, which after God is created in righteousness and true holiness."
 - 6) Colossians 3:10: "And have put on the new *man*, which is renewed in knowledge after the image of him that created him."
 - 7) James 1:22-25: "But be ye doers of the word, and not hearers only, deceiving your own selves. For if any be a hearer of the word, and not a doer, he is like unto a man beholding his natural face in a glass: For he beholdeth himself, and goeth his way, and straightway forgetteth what manner of man he was. But whoso looketh into the perfect law of liberty, and continueth *therein*, he being not a forgetful hearer, but a doer of the work, this man shall be blessed in his deed."
- c. Let them have dominion: God intended even before he created man, for man to have dominion over the earth and all things therein.
 - 1) "He prepared every thing for his subsistence, convenience, and pleasure, before he brought him into being; so that, comparing little with great things, the house was built, furnished, and amply stored, by the time the destined tenant was ready to occupy it" (Clarke, p.40).
 - 2) "...God determined to give to the man about to be created in His likeness the supremacy, not only over the animal world, but over the earth itself; and this agrees with the blessing in ver. 28, where the newly created man is exhorted to replenish the earth and subdue it..." (Keil, p.64).

- d. God created man; male and female created he them. Compare Matthew 19:4: "Have ye not read, that he which made them at the beginning made them male and female...?" Thus, Jesus placed his stamp of approval on the Genesis record.
 - e. God blessed man and gave commandment that they be fruitful, and multiply, and replenish the earth. "The procreation and nurture of the continuing generations of mankind upon earth is a God-ordained privilege and commandment" (Coffman, p.39). Replenish "...does not envision a repopulation of the earth, but the spread of mankind throughout all the world. There is no record of previous populations that sometimes are alleged from what is written here to have existed prior to humanity" (Coffman, p.40.. The idea of "replenish" is, "to fill up; be full" (Young, p.608).
3. Verses 29-30: "And God said, Behold, I have given you every herb bearing seed, which *is* upon the face of all the earth, and every tree, in the which *is* the fruit of a tree yielding seed; to you it shall be for meat. And to every beast of the earth, and to every fowl of the air, and to every thing that creepeth upon the earth, wherein *there is* life, *I have given* every green herb for meat: and it was so."
- a. God addresses these statements to newly created man. In the statements, he tells Adam and Eve about man's God-given authority over the creation, and reveals what they are to eat for sustenance. "From this it follows, that according to the creative will of God, men were not to slaughter animals for food, nor were animals to prey upon one another; consequently, that the fact which now prevails universally in nature and the order of the world, the violent and often painful destruction of life, is not a primary law of nature, nor a divine institution founded in the creation itself, but entered the world along with death at the fall of man, and became a necessity of nature through the curse of sin" (Keil, p.65). There is no inspired record of man eating meat until after the flood (Gen. 9:3).
 - b. But, what about the carnivores? Could a lion subsist only on vegetation? What about the teeth of such beasts? All the information we have is what is suggested in this passage. We are simply told that the food God intended for the animals to eat was "every green herb." Does this mean that they were authorized and able to eat this type food, or does it mean that this was the only food they were permitted to eat? How long did this arrangement last? Only until sin enter the world and caused God to curse the earth? Was the violent death of animals and men a part of this curse? "And unto Adam he said, Because thou hast hearkened unto the voice of thy wife, and hast eaten of the tree, of which I commanded thee, saying, Thou shalt not eat of it: cursed *is* the ground for thy sake; in sorrow shalt thou eat *of* it all the days of thy life; Thorns also and thistles shall it bring forth to thee; and thou shalt eat the herb of the field; In the sweat of thy face shalt thou eat bread, till thou return unto the ground; for out of it wast thou taken: for dust thou *art*, and unto dust shalt thou return" (Gen. 3:17-19).
 - c. Pulpit Commentary:
 - 1) "The primitive charter of man's common property in the earth, and all that it contains, is the present section of this ancient document. Among other reasons for the formal conveyance to man of the herbs and trees may be noted a desire to keep him mindful of his dependent condition. Though lord of the creation, he was yet to draw the means of his subsistence from the creature which he ruled. Whether man was a vegetarian prior to the fall is debated. On the one hand it is contended that the original grant does not formally exclude the animals, and, in fact, says nothing about man's relation to the animals (Macdonald); that we cannot positively affirm that man's dominion over the animals did not involve the use of them for food (Murphy); and that as men offered sacrifices from their flocks, it is probable they ate the flesh of the victims (Calvin).
 - 2) "On the other hand it is argued that the Divine language cannot be held as importing more than it really says, and that Gen 9:3 distinctly teaches that man's right to the animal creation dates from the time of Noah (Kalisch, Knobel, Alford, &c.). Almost all nations have traditions of a golden age of innocence, when men abstained from killing animals (cf. Ovid, 'Met.,' 1:103-106)....'And to every beast of the earth, and to every fowl of the air, and to every thing that creepeth upon the earth, wherein there is life, I have given every green herb for meat.' The first of the three classes of plants, grass, was assigned to the animals for food. From this Delitzsch infers that prior to the introduction of sin the animals were not predaceous....Perhaps the most that can be safely concluded from the language is 'that it indicates merely the general fact that the support of the whole animal kingdom is based on vegetation' (Dawson)" [The Pulpit Commentary, Electronic Database. Copyright © 2001 by Biblesoft].
 - d. Barnes:
 - 1) "The whole vegetable world is assigned to the animals for food. In the terms of the original grant

the herb bearing seed and the tree bearing fruit are especially allotted to man, because the grain and the fruit were edible by man without much preparation. As usual in Scripture the chief parts are put for the whole, and accordingly this specification of the ordinary and the obvious covers the general principle that whatever part of the vegetable kingdom is convertible into food by the ingenuity of man is free for his use. It is plain that a vegetable diet alone is expressly conceded to man in this original conveyance, and it is probable that this alone was designed for him in the state in which he was created. But we must bear in mind that he was constituted master of the animal as well as of the vegetable world; and we cannot positively affirm that his dominion did not involve the use of them for food.

- 2) "The whole of the grasses and the green parts or leaves of the herbage are distributed among the inferior animals for food. Here, again, the common and prominent kind of sustenance only is specified. There are some animals that greedily devour the fruits of trees and the grain produced by the various herbs; and there are others that derive the most of their subsistence from preying on the smaller and weaker kinds of animals. Still, the main substance of the means of animal life, and the ultimate supply of the whole of it, are derived from the plant. Even this general statement is not to be received without exception, as there are certain lower descriptions of animals that derive sustenance even from the mineral world. But this brief narrative of things notes only the few palpable facts, leaving the details to the experience and judgment of the reader."
- e. There is much we do not know; it is useless to speculate: "The secret things belong unto the LORD our God: but those things which are revealed belong unto us and to our children for ever, that we may do all the words of this law" (Deut. 29:29). Unless there was a huge change made in the flesh-eating animals (lions, sharks, etc.), those carnivorous beasts could not survive on vegetables.
4. Verse 31: "And God saw every thing that he had made, and, behold, *it was* very good. And the evening and the morning were the sixth day."
 - a. God saw everything he had made, and pronounced it "very good." There was no imperfection in anything he made. This is true of the universe, the earth, the laws that pertain to the whole creation, to the lower forms of life, and of man himself. There was no imperfection in man's mind, soul, or body.
 - b. "I will give thanks unto thee; for I am fearfully and wonderfully made" (Ps. 139:14). The human body is a marvelous creation in design and function
 - 1) Psalms 139:1-14: "O LORD, thou hast searched me, and known me. Thou knowest my downsitting and mine uprising, thou understandest my thought afar off. Thou compassed my path and my lying down, and art acquainted with all my ways. For there is not a word in my tongue, but, lo, O LORD, thou knowest it altogether. Thou hast beset me behind and before, and laid thine hand upon me. Such knowledge is too wonderful for me; it is high, I cannot attain unto it. Whither shall I go from thy spirit? or whither shall I flee from thy presence? If I ascend up into heaven, thou art there: if I make my bed in hell, behold, thou art there. If I take the wings of the morning, and dwell in the uttermost parts of the sea; Even there shall thy hand lead me, and thy right hand shall hold me. If I say, Surely the darkness shall cover me; even the night shall be light about me. Yea, the darkness hideth not from thee; but the night shineth as the day: the darkness and the light are both alike to thee. For thou hast possessed my reins: thou hast covered me in my mother's womb. I will praise thee; for I am fearfully and wonderfully made: marvellous are thy works; and that my soul knoweth right well."
 - 2) Psalms 8:1-5: "O LORD our Lord, how excellent is thy name in all the earth! who hast set thy glory above the heavens. Out of the mouth of babes and sucklings hast thou ordained strength because of thine enemies, that thou mightest still the enemy and the avenger. When I consider thy heavens, the work of thy fingers, the moon and the stars, which thou hast ordained; What is man, that thou art mindful of him? and the son of man, that thou visitest him? For thou hast made him a little lower than the angels, and hast crowned him with glory and honour."

GENESIS 2

A. Genesis 2:1-3: The Summation of the Creation.

1. The second chapter is a sequel to chapter one; it does not contradict anything in chapter one, but rather gives further details regarding the creation of Adam and Eve. Chapter one is a chronological account of the creation week; chapter two gives additional information.
 - a. This chapter is not a duplicate account of creation; it shows the purpose of the creation. "It is not intended to be an account of the creation at all. 'The purpose of chapter two is to manifest the goodness of God by showing that before man existed God had prepared for him a perfect place. It is also to show the extent of the preparation God had made, and man's opportunity before God, so that in subsequent millenniums man might be able to understand the consequences of the sin of Adam more fully' (Pledge, p.181).
 - b. "Thus, this chapter is not another and contradictory account of creation, but a review of certain phases of creation, with respect to a new focus of interest, namely that of humanity. It must be viewed as supplementary information to what is already revealed in the preceding chapter. This change of focus is specified in verse 4b, where the shift from the 'heavens and the earth' occurs in the words, 'the earth and the heavens'(Coffman p.41).
 - c. "In the fourth verse, Moses wrote, 'These are the generations of the heavens and of the earth when they were created in the day that the Lord God made the earth and the heavens.' The primary reference in verse 4 is *not to the origin of the earth* but to *those things that followed* after the heavens and the earth had already been finished. Verse 1 states that all things were finished. Verse 4 uses the word *generations* to indicate the history of those things that followed after the creation of heaven and earth" (Pledge, p.181).
 - d. "It is most logical and fully in keeping with the unity of the entire book, therefore, to find here in chapter 2 an elaboration of what was revealed in chapter 1. In addition to this, the author...introduced the chapter in verse 4 as the *toledoth* of the heavens and the earth, meaning not their beginning but the developments that followed after their creation. This term, *toledoth*, is used ten times in the book of Genesis, setting off what may be received as an accurate outline of the whole book; and in every instance, this word signifies 'following developments'" (Coffman, p.41).
2. Verse 1: "Thus the heavens and the earth were finished, and all the host of them."
 - a. This summarizes the first chapter. With these words the start of another aspect of the creation is begun. Some people assert that this chapter contains contradictory information to the first chapter. But no one with a right mind would contradict himself "on the same page!" Obviously, this chapter simply and properly furnishes further information concerning the creation.
 - b. Notice that the verse affirms that the creation was completed—finished; there is no room for any supposed evolutionary changes.
 - c. All the host of them: "...Here [the Hebrew term] denotes the totality of the beings that fill the heaven and the earth; in other places (see especially Neh. 9:6) it is applied to the host of heaven, i.e., the stars (Deut. 4:19; 17:3) and according to a still later representation, to the angels also (1 Kings 22:19; Isa. 24:21; Neh. 9:6; Ps. 148:2)" (Keil, p.67).
 - 1) Deuteronomy 4:19: "And lest thou lift up thine eyes unto heaven, and when thou seest the sun, and the moon, and the stars, even all the host of heaven, shouldest be driven to worship them, and serve them, which the LORD thy God hath divided unto all nations under the whole heaven."
 - 2) Deuteronomy 17:3: "And hath gone and served other gods, and worshipped them, either the sun, or moon, or any of the host of heaven, which I have not commanded."
 - 3) 1 Kings 22:19: "And he said, Hear thou therefore the word of the LORD: I saw the LORD sitting on his throne, and all the host of heaven standing by him on his right hand and on his left."
 - 4) Isaiah 24:21: "And it shall come to pass in that day, that the LORD shall punish the host of the high ones that are on high, and the kings of the earth upon the earth."
 - 5) Nehemiah 9:6: "Thou, even thou, art LORD alone; thou hast made heaven, the heaven of heavens, with all their host, the earth, and all things that are therein, the seas, and all that is therein, and thou preservest them all; and the host of heaven worshippeth thee."
 - 6) Psalms 148:2: "Praise ye him, all his angels: praise ye him, all his hosts."
 - d. As a human artist finishes his masterpiece and ceases to work on it, God completed his great work and

ceased to produce anything new. To add anything further would have been to mar the master-piece. One cannot improve on perfection.

3. Verse 2: "And on the seventh day God ended his work which he had made; and he rested on the seventh day from all his work which he had made."
 - a. The verse does not say that God ceased from all activity, but that he rested from creating, i.e., he stopped creating things. The verse does not imply that God was tired.
 - b. The seventh day is not to be understood as being different from the preceding six days. God created the universe and the inhabitants thereof during the first six days, and on the seventh day, he ceased to create. On the seventh day he declared that his work was complete. Since then, no new animal species has been created; no new law of nature has been either created or removed; and the universe has continued virtually unchanged since then.
4. Verse 3: "And God blessed the seventh day, and sanctified it: because that in it he had rested from all his work which God created and made."
 - a. Moses recorded this information many centuries after the creation. "The blessing and sanctifying of the seventh day had regard, no doubt, to the Sabbath, which Israel as the people of God was afterwards to keep; but we are not to suppose that the theocratic Sabbath was instituted here, or that the institution of that Sabbath was transferred to the history of the creation" (Keil, p.69). There is no evidence that Adam ever heard of a sabbath; there is no evidence that Abraham or any other Old Testament worthy of the Patriarchal Age ever observed the sabbath.
 - b. Genesis 2 gives us the background of the sabbath; Nehemiah 9:13-14 tells us when God made the sabbath known: "Thou camest down also upon mount Sinai, and spakest with them from heaven, and gavest them right judgments, and true laws, good statutes and commandments: And madest known unto them thy holy sabbath, and commandedst them precepts, statutes, and laws, by the hand of Moses thy servant."
 - c. Israel knew nothing about keeping the sabbath until it was revealed on the mount (Num. 15; Neh. 9:13-14). The sabbath was **not** revealed to Adam, Noah, *et al*, but to Moses.
 - d. The reason for Israel's observance of the sabbath was on account of their deliverance from Egyptian bondage. "And remember that thou wast a servant in the land of Egypt, and *that* the LORD thy God brought thee out thence through a mighty hand and by a stretched out arm: therefore the LORD thy God commanded thee to keep the sabbath day" (Deut. 5:15).
 - e. The sabbath never was a sign between God and all men, but only between God and the children of Israel. "It is a sign between me and the children of Israel for ever: for *in* six days the LORD made heaven and earth, and on the seventh day he rested, and was refreshed" (Ex. 31:17).

B. Genesis 2:4-7: The Generations of the Heavens and Earth.

1. The word rendered "generations" (*toledoth*) occurs ten times in the book of Genesis, and introduces ten sections of the book.
 - a. Of the heavens and earth: Genesis 2:4—4:26.
 - b. Of Adam: Genesis 5:1—6:8.
 - c. Of Noah: Genesis 6:9—9:29.
 - d. Of Noah's sons: Genesis 10:1—11:9.
 - e. Of the sons of Shem: Genesis 11:10-26.
 - f. Of Terah: Genesis 11:27—25:11.
 - g. Of Ishmael: Genesis 25:12-18.
 - h. Of Isaac: Genesis 25:19—35:29.
 - i. Of Esau: Genesis 36:1—37:1.
 - j. Of Jacob: Genesis 37:2—50:26.
 2. "In all these uses of "toledoth," not one of them deals with the creation of what stands at the head of it, but with the subsequent developments. From this, it is mandatory to believe that the "toledoth" of the earth and heavens is not a discussion of their creation (except retrospectively), but of what came after-wards" (Coffman, p.44).
 3. Various names are given in the Old Testament in reference to God. This fact has been used by some Bible critics as evidence of their false documentary theories. The claim is that the final author of Genesis put together the contents of the book from various sources (documents); and that the different names were names employed by the authors of the different sources. (See Coffman, pp.44-48). Elsewhere, several names for God are used, even in the same verse.
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- a. Hosea 12:5: "Even the LORD God of hosts; the LORD *is* his memorial."
 - b. Habakkuk 1:12: "*Art* thou not from everlasting, O LORD my God, mine Holy One? we shall not die. O LORD, thou hast ordained them for judgment; and, O mighty God, thou hast established them for correction."
 4. "It is asserted that the different divine names employed are in themselves almost convincing proof of material from the pen of quite a different writer than he who submitted 1:1—2:3. It is true that the divine name *Yahweh* (or *Jahweh*) appears regularly in this chapter in conjunction with the name employed heretofore, *Elohim*. However, by way of refutation let the following facts be noted. In the first place, the critical assumption is a very narrow one, nor has it ever been proved, namely, the supposition that the writers of the various source-documents knew for the most part but *one* of the divine names, at least J and P for the most part knew but one name. It was blithely assumed that the earliest writers, of whom J was one, could know God from only one aspect. Secondly, all manner of arbitrary assumptions bolster up the initial assumption, so, for example, when in 3:5 *Elohim* alone appears, this is supposed to be a portion of another source which J used. Or when *Elohim* and *Yahweh* appear jointly in chapter two, i.e., regularly as *Yahweh Elohim*, this is supposed to be explained by the activity of some later redactor, not J, who combined the two to smoothe over the transition from the one name to the other, and so aimed to teach that in reality both authors believed in one and the same divine being. Such claims can never be proved" (Leupold, Vol. I, pp.105f).
 5. Verse 4: "These *are* the generations of the heavens and of the earth when they were created, in the day that the LORD God made the earth and the heavens."
 - a. The "Lord God"(Jehovah God, ASV). Clarke has an interesting discussion of the etymology of "Lord" in the English. He says that "Lord" is a contraction of the Angle-Saxon "Hlaford" which came to be written "Loverd," and later "Lord," from "bread" and hence "loaf." "The word, therefore, implies the 'giver of bread,' i.e., he who deals out all the necessities of life. Our ancient English noblemen were accustomed to keep a continual open house, where all their vassals, and all strangers, had full liberty to enter and eat as much as they would; and hence those noblemen had the honourable name of 'lords', i.e., 'the dispensers of bread'" (Clarke, p.42).
 - b. Generations: when it refers to people, we are to apply it to people; it is used here to be applied to the descendants of heaven and earth—the focus is upon man.
 - c. Regarding the word day as used here: "day" is used in a non-literal sense, and includes all the days of the creation week. The word is used in a different sense here from its use in Genesis 1—this is obvious from the context. The days of the creation week were literal 24-hour days. The word day of this verse includes the first six days of the creation. The seventh day was also a literal 24-hour day, as Exodus 20:8-11 reveals.
 6. Verses 5-6: "And every plant of the field before it was in the earth, and every herb of the field before it grew: for the LORD God had not caused it to rain upon the earth, and *there was* not a man to till the ground. But there went up a mist from the earth, and watered the whole face of the ground."
 - a. This is a difficult passage. Keil thinks that the reference is not to the creation of the plants but to the planting of the garden of Eden. "The growing of the shrubs and sprouting of the herbs is different from the creation or first production of the vegetable kingdom...moreover, 'the shrub and herb of the field' do not embrace the whole of the vegetable productions of the earth. It is not a fact that 'the field' is used in the second section in the same sense as the earth in the first'....Even the 'beast of the field' in ver. 19 and 3:1 is not synonymous with the 'beast of the earth' in chapt. 1:24,25, but is a more restricted term, denoting only such animals as live upon the field and are supported by its produce, whereas the 'beast of the earth' denotes all wild beasts as distinguished from tame cattle and reptiles" (p.77). He further states that the mist was the creative beginning of rain and that it may be inferred that it rained before the flood (p.78).
 - b. Coffman's view is that this passage gives details about the creation of the plant kingdom which chapter one omitted. He asserts that God created the vegetable kingdom at the first by creating the seed which produced each species. "The interesting statement that no plant was in the ground, and that no herb had sprung up appears to indicate that the seeds were in the ground for a period of time before plants appeared, giving the biblical answer to which came first the plant or the seed. It was the seed" (p. 46). [This view is questionable].
 - c. Clarke says: "It appears that God created every thing, not only perfect as it respects its nature, but also in a state of 'maturity', so that every vegetable production appeared at once in full growth; and this was
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- necessary that man, when he came into being, might find every thing ready for his use" (p.42).
- d. Verse five is a continuation of the sentence begun in verse four: God made the earth and the heavens, and every plant of the field and every herb of the field; he made every plant and every herb before it grew. That is, he made these plants without the need for them to grow. That they were made full-grown was necessary because he had not as yet caused rain to fall upon the earth and had not as yet created any man to till the soil. If the plants had to sprout, grow, and produce after their regular fashion, what did Adam and Eve eat while they waited for the first crop?
 - e. Verse six appends an additional thought to the statement of verse 5 ("the Lord God had not caused it to rain upon the earth"). No rain had fallen prior to the creation of the plant kingdom (thus it had been necessary for God to create plant life full-grown); but in order for plant life to thrive, moisture was necessary; although God had not caused rain to fall, he did take care of the need for moisture by causing a mist to arise from the earth and water the whole face of the earth.
 - f. A viable theory has been developed by scholars that has a bearing on this passage and the flood of Genesis 6-9: "Advocates of the canopy theory point out that Jupiter is enveloped in a 'shroud.' Saturn has rings, and Venus has a dense atmospheric envelope. Why then might not our earth have at one time had a shroud or a 'canopy'? The theory suggests that the mild climate prevailing in geological times may have been caused by a sheath of water vapor that surrounded the earth, high above the atmosphere, in the form of a vapor canopy. In support of this theory fossil evidence is presented to prove the warm climate in polar regions. The passage in the first chapter of Genesis that speaks of 'the waters that were above the firmament' is taken to mean a great quantity of water vapor, above the atmosphere, that surrounded the earth in the form of a canopy that remained suspended until it condensed into torrents of rain at the time of the flood...Now modern geology dismisses the canopy theory as a fanciful flight of the imagination, but canopy advocates reply that a water canopy provides the only satisfactory explanation that has ever been offered for a problem that has baffled geologists for centuries, namely, how to account for the uniformly mild, equable climate that pervaded polar regions in geologic times, as contrasted with the bitterly cold climate that prevails today. No geologist has ever been able to explain it" (Daly, pp.294f).
 - g. Did it rain prior to the flood? In reference to Genesis 2:5-6, Whitcomb and Morris state: "This verse is applied specifically to the initial completed creation, but there is no mention made of any change in this meteorological phenomenon after the fall, so it evidently continued until the time of the Deluge. This inference is supported also by the fact that the rainbow is mentioned as a new sign from God to man after the Flood, implying strongly that rain as we know it and the subsequent rainbow were experienced for the first time then (Genesis 9:11-17)" (*Genesis Flood*, p.241).
7. Verse 7: And the LORD God formed man of the dust of the ground, and breathed into his nostrils the breath of life; and man became a living soul."
- a. "And just where, it may be asked, did Moses find such a significant and world-shaking truth as this?....Information like this was not in the possession of the ancient pagans; nor could the light of nature have revealed it; and no human being was present to witness it! This is the word of God" (Coffman, P.47).
 - b. God formed Adam from earthy materials already in existence; he breathed into his nostrils the breath of life and man became a living soul. "'The breath of life,' here indicates no more than the life principle. This is demonstrated from the fact that the Hebrew phrase translated 'breath of life,' is repeatedly affirmed of the lower creation. (Cf. Gen. 1:30; 7:22). That which was breathed into man on this occasion was the life-breath. As the result, he became a 'living soul.'" (Woods, ALC, 1973, p.184).
 - 1) Genesis 1:19-21: "And the evening and the morning were the fourth day. And God said, Let the waters bring forth abundantly the moving creature that hath life, and fowl that may fly above the earth in the open firmament of heaven. And God created great whales, and every living creature that moveth, which the waters brought forth abundantly, after their kind, and every winged fowl after his kind: and God saw that it was good."
 - 2) Genesis 1:24: "And God said, Let the earth bring forth the living creature after his kind, cattle, and creeping thing, and beast of the earth after his kind: and it was so."
 - 3) Genesis 1:30: "And to every beast of the earth, and to every fowl of the air, and to every thing that creepeth upon the earth, wherein there is life, I have given every green herb for meat: and it was so."
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- 4) Genesis 7:22: "All in whose nostrils was the breath of life, of all that was in the dry land, died."
- c. "Breath of life" does not here refer to the spirit of man, but the life he has in common with the animal kingdom. "But when 'man became a living soul' (Gen 2:7), Moses was not then speaking of man's invisible, undying spirit, his immortal nature, in his becoming a living soul (a *nepnesh*, a breathing being), he was in company with the lower animals (Gen. 1:19-21, 24, 30). In Genesis 2:7 only the natural, physical body of Adam is mentioned, not the spiritual (1 Cor. 15:44-45). The soul there spoken of was his biological life (cf. Ex. 21:23; Matt. 2:20), and was mortal (cf. Num. 23:10). When the breath had left the body of that 'living soul' his corpse was a dead soul (cf. Num 5:2; 6:6)" (Hugo McCord, "Spiritual Sword," October, 1974, pp.16f).
- d. But man possesses an immortal (never-dying) nature which is sometimes called "soul" and often "spirit." Man is made in the image of God (Gen. 1:26-27; Acts 17:28). Everything produces after its own kind (Gen. 1:11). God is everlasting Spirit (John 4:24).
- 1) Romans 16:26: "But now is made manifest, and by the scriptures of the prophets, according to the commandment of the everlasting God, made known to all nations for the obedience of faith."
 - 2) 1 Timothy 6:16: "Who only hath immortality, dwelling in the light which no man can approach unto; whom no man hath seen, nor can see: to whom *be* honour and power everlasting. Amen."
 - 3) A spirit has no flesh and bones: "Behold my hands and my feet, that it is I myself: handle me, and see; for a spirit hath not flesh and bones, as ye see me have" (Luke 24:39).
 - 4) It is man's spirit that is made in God's image, for God has no fleshly body.
 - a) Zechariah 12:1: "The burden of the word of the LORD for Israel, saith the LORD, which stretcheth forth the heavens, and layeth the foundation of the earth, and formeth the spirit of man within him."
 - b) Hebrews 12:9: "Furthermore we have had fathers of our flesh which corrected *us*, and we gave *them* reverence: shall we not much rather be in subjection unto the **Father of spirits**, and live?"
 - 5) No physical body can go to heaven.
 - a) 1 Corinthians 15:50: "Now this I say, brethren, that flesh and blood cannot inherit the kingdom of God; neither doth corruption inherit incorruption." (Cf. 1 Cor. 15:42-58).
 - b) Philippians 3:20-21: "For our conversation is in heaven; from whence also we look for the Saviour, the Lord Jesus Christ: Who shall change our vile body, that it may be fashioned like unto his glorious body, according to the working whereby he is able even to subdue all things unto himself."
 - 6) The spirit knows, feels, recalls, etc. "For what man knoweth the things of a man, save the spirit of man which is in him? even so the things of God knoweth no man, but the Spirit of God" (1 Cor. 2:11).
 - 7) Places to which the body and spirit go at death are not the same.
 - a) James 2:26: "For as the body without the spirit is dead, so faith without works is dead also."
 - b) Ecclesiastes 12:7: "Then shall the dust return to the earth as it was: and the spirit shall return unto God who gave it."
 - c) Matthew 27:59-60: "And when Joseph had taken the body, he wrapped it in a clean linen cloth, And laid it in his own new tomb, which he had hewn out in the rock: and he rolled a great stone to the door of the sepulchre, and departed."
 - d) Luke 23:43: "And Jesus said unto him, Verily I say unto thee, To day shalt thou be with me in paradise."
 - e) Acts 2:27: "Because thou wilt not leave my soul in hell, neither wilt thou suffer thine Holy One to see corruption."
 - f) Acts 7:59: "And they stoned Stephen, calling upon *God*, and saying, Lord Jesus, receive my spirit."
 - 8) To be in the body is to be absent from the Lord.
 - a) 2 Corinthians 5:6: "Therefore *we are* always confident, knowing that, whilst we are at home in the body, we are absent from the Lord."
 - b) Philippians 1:22-24: "But if I live in the flesh, this *is* the fruit of my labour: yet what I shall choose I wot not. For I am in a strait betwixt two, having a desire to depart, and to be with Christ; which is far better: Nevertheless to abide in the flesh *is* more needful for you."
 - 9) Matthew 22:32: "I am the God of Abraham, and the God of Isaac, and the God of Jacob? God is not the God of the dead, but of the living." Abraham had been dead a few hundred years when God
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made this statement about him. (Cf. John 11:26; 1 Th. 3:13; 4:14; Jude 14; 1 Cor. 2:11; Dan. 7:15; Luke 23:46; 2 Cor. 4:16; 2 Pet. 1:12-15; Matt. 10:28; Luke 12:4,5 ["destroy" in Mt. 10:28 is "lost" in Mt. 10:6; Lk. 15:32; 19:10]. Jas. 5:19-20; 1 Pet. 1:9,22; 2 Cor. 12:1ff (see Woods, *Questions & Answers Open Forum*, Vol. 1, pp. 226-228).

e. Man and the soul:

1) Man is said to be a soul.

- a) Acts 2:41: "Then they that gladly received his word were baptized: and the same day there were added *unto them* about three thousand souls."
- b) Romans 13:1: "Let every soul be subject unto the higher powers. For there is no power but of God: the powers that be are ordained of God."
- c) 1 Peter 3:20: "Which sometime were disobedient, when once the longsuffering of God waited in the days of Noah, while the ark was a preparing, wherein few, that is, eight souls were saved by water."

2) But man also possesses a soul.

- a) Genesis 35:8: "But Deborah Rebekah's nurse died, and she was buried beneath Bethel under an oak: and the name of it was called Allonbachuth."
- b) Genesis 35:16-20: "And they journeyed from Beth-el; and there was but a little way to come to Ephrath: and Rachel travailed, and she had hard labour. And it came to pass, when she was in hard labour, that the midwife said unto her, Fear not; thou shalt have this son also. And it came to pass, as her soul was in departing, (for she died) that she called his name Ben-oni: but his father called him Benjamin. And Rachel died, and was buried in the way to Ephrath, which is Beth-lehem. And Jacob set a pillar upon her grave: that is the pillar of Rachel's grave unto this day."
- c) 1 Kings 17:21: "And he stretched himself upon the child three times, and cried unto the LORD, and said, O LORD my God, I pray thee, let this child's soul come into him again."
- d) Psalms 103:1: "Bless the LORD, O my soul: and all that is within me, *bless* his holy name."
- e) Revelation 20:4: "And I saw thrones, and they sat upon them, and judgment was given unto them: and *I saw* the souls of them that were beheaded for the witness of Jesus, and for the word of God, and which had not worshipped the beast, neither his image, neither had received *his* mark upon their foreheads, or in their hands; and they lived and reigned with Christ a thousand years."

f. The soul, as it relates to man, is a generic term; the spirit, a specific term. "Soul" relies on the context to indicate its meaning.

1) Whole person:

- a) Acts 2:41: "Then they that gladly received his word were baptized: and the same day there were added *unto them* about three thousand souls."
- b) 1 Peter 3:20: "Which sometime were disobedient, when once the longsuffering of God waited in the days of Noah, while the ark was a preparing, wherein few, that is, eight souls were saved by water."

2) Physical life: "He made a way to his anger; he spared not their soul from death, but gave their life over to the pestilence" (Ps. 78:50).

3) Synonymous with "spirit." "Because thou wilt not leave my soul in hell, neither wilt thou suffer thine Holy One to see corruption" (Acts 2:27).

4) Intellectual nature as opposed to lower physical nature and higher spiritual nature. "But the natural man receiveth not the things of the Spirit of God: for they are foolishness unto him: neither can he know *them*, because they are spiritually discerned" (1 Cor. 2:14). The natural man refers to a person trying to learn God's eternal truths by using his natural skills. No astronomer can learn these truths using his telescope, etc. No geologist can obtain these great verities with a shovel and pick, etc.

g. "Spirit" is applied to fish, animals, and birds. "Who knoweth the spirit of man that goeth upward, and the spirit of the beast that goeth downward to the earth?" (Eccl. 3:21). Animals do not possess eternal souls (spirits) like man's. Both man and beast have life; in this sense, an animal has a soul or spirit. But man also has an immortal element (Zech. 12:1; Dan. 7:15; Job 32:8). It is the spirit of man that is created in God's image.

- 1) At the death of a man, his spirit goes into God's keeping. "Then shall the dust return to the earth as it was: and the spirit shall return unto God who gave it" (Eccl. 12:7).

- 2) At death, the "spirit" of a beast "goeth downward to the earth." The animal ceases to be at death, but man continues his existence. No animal was created in the image of God.
- h. The soul (spirit) is man's undying part:
 - 1) Matthew 10:28: "And fear not them which kill the body, but are not able to kill the soul: but rather fear him which is able to destroy both soul and body in hell."
 - 2) Luke 12:4-5: "And I say unto you my friends, Be not afraid of them that kill the body, and after that have no more that they can do. But I will forewarn you whom ye shall fear: Fear him, which after he hath killed hath power to cast into hell; yea, I say unto you, Fear him."
 - 3) Hebrews 10:39: "But we are not of them who draw back unto perdition; but of them that believe to the saving of the soul."
 - 4) James 1:21: "Wherefore lay apart all filthiness and superfluity of naughtiness, and receive with meekness the engrafted word, which is able to save your souls."
 - 5) James 5:19-20: "Brethren, if any of you do err from the truth, and one convert him; Let him know, that he which converteth the sinner from the error of his way shall save a soul from death, and shall hide a multitude of sins."
 - 6) 1 Peter 1:9: "Receiving the end of your faith, *even* the salvation of *your* souls."
- i. The Lord God (Jehovah God, ASV). "The precise reason for the incorporation of Jehovah with the name of God surfaces in this. The word rendered here as Jehovah is actually 'Yahweh,' which in Hebrew corresponds to 'yatsar,' meaning to 'mold,' or 'to form.' Thus, it is God the molder, or former, who is appropriately indicated as the actor in this verse" (Coffman, p.47).
- j. By a wonderful, miraculous operation God fashioned the physical body of Adam from the physical materials he had already created. He breathed into this first man the breath of life and caused him to become a living being. Since "breath of life" is used also in reference to animals, we conclude that its use in Genesis 2:7 is in reference to the physical life of Adam which he had in common with the lower creation and not to his spirit.

C. Genesis 2:8-17: The Garden of Eden is Prepared for Adam.

- 1. Verse 8: "And the LORD God planted a garden eastward in Eden; and there he put the man whom he had formed."
 - a. God prepared a fitting place for man to live, a pleasant and beautiful garden. The LXX renders this statement, "God planted a paradise in Eden." The etymology [of *paradise*] is uncertain, according to Clarke, but other scholars say it is a Persian word and signifies a garden, a vineyard, and the place of the blessed: thus, "Pleasure Park." It is used in the New Testament to describe the part of hades where the righteous are blessed (Lk. 23:43; Lk. 16:19-31; 2 Cor. 12:2-4; cf. Acts 14:19-20), and to heaven (Rev. 2:7).
 - b. The exact location of Eden is unknown although the context associates its location with the Euphrates River. The garden was doubtless planted and prepared prior to Adam's creation.
 - c. "The author represents God as planting a beautiful garden for his new creatures. The word means an enclosure or a park. The LXX here uses a term that forms the basis for our word 'paradise.' Man's work in that garden was to exercise dominion while serving—a good combination. The duties probably were rigorous but enjoyable. Eden, or the land of Eden, probably lay in the lower part of the Babylonian valley. Though many rival claims for the location of Eden have been advanced, the evidence seems to point to the area between the Tigris and the Euphrates as the cradle of civilization. The Hebrew word Eden probably means 'enchantment,' 'pleasure,' or 'delight.' In this quiet place of indescribable beauty, man was to enjoy fellowship and companionship with the Creator, and to work in accord with the divine blueprint to perfect His will. Magnificent trees furnished sustaining food, but man had to work to care for them. Adequate water supply was ensured by a vast irrigation system, a network of rivers that flowed in and about the garden with its life-giving waters. In order to lead man to full moral and spiritual development, God gave him specific commands and a specific prohibition to govern his behavior. He also gave him the power of choice and set before him the privilege of growing in divine favor. Thus began the moral discipline of man" [Wycliffe Bible Commentary, Electronic Database. Copyright © 1962 by Moody Press].
 - d. "In accordance with a well-known characteristic of Hebrew composition, the writer, having carried his subject forward to a convenient place of rest, now reverts to a point of time in the six days antecedent to man's appearance on the earth. In anticipation of his arrival, it was needful that a suitable abode should be prepared for his reception. Accordingly, having already mentioned the creation of

plants, trees, and flowers, the narrative proceeds to describe the construction of Adam's early home. And the Lord God (Jehovah Elohim) planted—i.e. specially prepared—a garden (gan, a place protected by a fence, from ganan, to cover; hence a garden (cf. Deut 2:10; 1 Kings 21:2; Isa 51:3)....In the mean time it is simply noted that, this enchanting paradise having been specially prepared by Jehovah, there he put the man (Adam) whom he had formed" [The Pulpit Commentary, Electronic Database. Copyright © 2001 by Biblesoft].

2. Verse 9: "And out of the ground made the LORD God to grow every tree that is pleasant to the sight, and good for food; the tree of life also in the midst of the garden, and the tree of knowledge of good and evil."
 - a. God placed in Eden every tree that is pleasant to the sight, and those suitable for food. The narrative moves quickly from the references to the beautiful and bountiful trees to the two specific trees which have such great meaning to man's subsequent history—the tree of life and the tree of the knowledge of good and evil.
 - b. *Tree of life*: Many have scoffed at the idea that a food item could produce eternal life. However, this seems to be the implication given here by Moses (cf. 3:22-24). Some scholars (Clarke, for example) weaken this implication by suggesting that the tree of life merely refers to the various trees, plants, and herbs possessing various medicinal properties. There is no biblical support for this assertion. The Tree of Life was just as Moses purported it to be: a source of continual life for those who would partake of it. The influence of the tree of life may explain the long lives of the ancients. Their longevity decreased with each generation so that the psalmist could say that the average lifespan was seventy (Ps. 90:10). Following the entrance of sin into the world, man was kept from the tree of life. Symbolically, the tree of life has been transferred to heaven (Rev. 21-22).
 - c. *The tree of the knowledge of good and evil*: God placed a strict prohibition on the eating of the fruit of this tree. But he was not prohibiting their acquisition of knowledge about good and evil; rather he was prohibiting their gaining experiential knowledge of evil. The tree was not necessarily evil in itself, but God forbade their eating of its fruit in order to develop character within them. The disaster which resulted when they ate of this tree came not from the fruit but from their violation of God's order. This tree became the means by which God could test the faith and trust of Adam and Eve. When they ate of this tree, they lost the benefits of the tree of life. "Inherent in this is the truth that if man had obeyed his Creator death would not have overtaken him, a deduction from the fact that the penalty was imposed after disobedience, with the inclusion of the idea that the penalty would not have been enforced apart from disobedience" (Coffman, p.49).
 - 1) No one knows or can know what kind of tree this was. It is pure speculation to suggest it was an apple tree, etc.
 - 2) Adam and Eve already knew the difference between right and wrong. God had told them what they could do and what they were forbidden to do; they knew to follow his will was to do good, and to disregard his will was to do evil. The knowledge they could gain by eating the forbidden fruit was experimental knowledge (cf. Gen. 4:1). They would "know" evil by participating in it. This was what God was forbidding; he was not forbidding their gaining an understanding about good and evil; there would be nothing wrong with obtaining a knowledge about good and evil; there is definitely something wrong with doing evil; and to disobey God is to do evil.
 - 3) "Man was placed in the garden and given work to do. A tree was there for the development of his character, to provide daily opportunities for Adam and Eve to grow stronger, maturing in their relationship with God. There was one tree, the tree of knowledge of good and evil, whose fruit they could not eat. Man has always needed something to test his character, his will power, to help him grow stronger. This seems to be the purpose of the forbidden tree" (Pledge, p.184). God did not put the tree in the garden in order to bring about man's downfall; he being the God of love would not do that. But it was for man's benefit that he placed it there. If a man does not exercise self-restraint, what kind of person will he become? What use would God have for one who would not or could not control himself and consciously and sincerely seek to serve God?
 - 4) God placed in Eden everything necessary in order to the happiness of man. Every physical need and every spiritual, psychological, and social need. He gave him a law to follow, labor to perform, and love to enjoy; without these, there would be no happiness.
3. Verses 10-14: "And a river went out of Eden to water the garden; and from thence it was parted, and became into four heads. The name of the first *is* Pison: that *is* it which compasseth the whole land of Havilah, where *there is* gold; And the gold of that land *is* good: there *is* bdellium and the onyx stone. And

the name of the second river *is* Gihon: the same *is* it that compasseth the whole land of Ethiopia. And the name of the third river *is* Hiddekel: that *is* it which goeth toward the east of Assyria. And the fourth river *is* Euphrates."

- a. Mention is made of a river which exited Eden and afterwards parted into four "heads." The text does not necessarily affirm that this river originated in Eden, but that it went out of Eden, although it may have indeed risen in the garden. From this river the garden received water. "Heads" apparently refers to the points at which the four other rivers had their start. There was one river flowing through Eden which parted into four separate streams after leaving the garden. It would appear that if we could locate a place on earth matching this description we would have located Eden. But due to the natural topographical changes wrought by time and weather, and more especially by the ravages of the flood, no place has been found which exactly matches the description given.
- b. The four rivers are identified by name and some detail. [If the pre-flood surface of the earth was fully changed, the rivers then present would most likely have disappeared from the current surface].
 - 1) Pison (Pishon), which "compasseth the whole land of Havilah, where there is gold." Some scholars have suggested that this may be the Phasis river which empties into the Black Sea south of the Caucasus Mountains in southern Russia. Many other conjectures have been offered, but none carry proof. Even Havilah cannot be definitely located. The name was worn by various individuals in Old Testament history, and has been connected in one way or another with various localities. Smith's Dictionary of the Bible suggests that the desert region to the east of Palestine may be meant.
 - 2) Gihon is likewise obscure. Some have identified it as the Araxes river which flows into the Caspian Sea. This river "compasseth the whole land of Ethiopia (Cush). Gihon and Pison are no longer identifiable if indeed they still exist as rivers. A further difficulty in identifying them lies in the fact that the names of streams and geographical locations often change with time. One major view of the location of these four rivers places them in the mountains of Armenia where the Tigris and Euphrates and the Phasis and Araxes have their origin. But they do not begin with one stream.
 - 3) The Hiddekel is described as going toward the east of Assyria. A study of Daniel 10:4 shows that the Hiddekel is the Tigris River. Hiddekel is the Hebrew name for the Tigris River. Moses describes the Tigris as running to the east of Assyria (Nineveh), which it did until about 1300 B.C. when the city was moved east of the river. "This is a positive indication that the author of Genesis wrote before 1300, a conclusion that cannot be successfully denied" (Coffman, p.51).
 - 4) The Euphrates is not further described beyond the mention of its name. This implies that the Israelites to whom Moses wrote were already familiar with this river. Thus, the Euphrates to the east of Palestine, which empties into the Persian Gulf, and which is so prominent in Old Testament history, is clearly meant.
- c. "The traditional and generally accepted site of Eden is Babylonia, near the mouth of the Euphrates river, at Eridu, twelve miles south of Ur of the Chaldees. And one speculation is that in Adam's time the Tigris and Euphrates united for a short distance, divided again before entering the Persian Gulf; that the garden of Eden was located on the united stream between the junction and separation again of the two rivers, which together made the four branches or 'heads'; and that the two rivers as they continued toward the Gulf were no longer called Tigris and Euphrates but Pishon and Gihon" (ALC, September 9, 1979, p.16). It is unimportant to everything but our curiosity that we learn the exact location of Eden. That earthly Paradise was forever lost; there is a much greater Paradise to be won:
 - 1) John 14:1-3: "Let not your heart be troubled: ye believe in God, believe also in me. In my Father's house are many mansions: if *it were* not so, I would have told you. I go to prepare a place for you. And if I go and prepare a place for you, I will come again, and receive you unto myself; that where I am, *there* ye may be also."
 - 2) Romans 8:18: "For I reckon that the sufferings of this present time *are* not worthy *to be compared* with the glory which shall be revealed in us."
 - 3) 2 Corinthians 5:1,10,11: "For we know that if our earthly house of *this* tabernacle were dissolved, we have a building of God, an house not made with hands, eternal in the heavens....For we must all appear before the judgment seat of Christ; that every one may receive the things *done* in *his* body, according to that he hath done, whether *it be* good or bad. Knowing therefore the terror of the Lord, we persuade men; but we are made manifest unto God; and I trust also are made manifest in your consciences."
 - 4) Colossians 3:1-4: "If ye then be risen with Christ, seek those things which are above, where Christ

- sitteth on the right hand of God. Set your affection on things above, not on things on the earth. For ye are dead, and your life is hid with Christ in God. When Christ, *who is* our life, shall appear, then shall ye also appear with him in glory."
- 5) Revelation 22:14: "Blessed *are* they that do his commandments, that they may have right to the tree of life, and may enter in through the gates into the city."
- d. Can the Garden of Eden be located on earth today? We are told that virtually every part of the earth's surface has been mapped, photographed, searched today from satellites. No report has come this scribe's attention of the garden being seen. Much of the ocean floors have been searched, with not sight of Eden.
- e. "During the Flood, enormous amounts of sediment were eroded from the pre-Flood Earth's surface and sediment from the continents and ocean were piled on the continents, forming the bulk of the fossil record and much of the geologic column, beginning with the Cambrian strata. The Flood strata continue upward through the Paleozoic and Mesozoic rock strata, and end at either the top of those rock layers or continue a certain distance into the Cenozoic strata. Much of the Cenozoic sediment was laid down after the Flood or at the very end of it. Translation: the pre-Flood Earth surface was apparently wiped clean and, in some cases, buried under several miles of sediment. Many commentators guess that Eden is located in modern day Armenia or Iraq, but they do so, apparently, without understanding how drastic the Flood's geologic impact would have been across the entire surface of the Earth. The area where Eden is thought by many commentators to have been located is covered with immense amounts of Flood sediment. That means that Eden, if (1) it was not first completely eroded away by the Flood (which is likely), or (2) pushed down into the mantle during the Flood (there is a subduction zone along the north/ northeast side of the Arabian plate in the area where Eden is thought to have been), is now covered with roughly three to five miles of mud/ sediment deposited during and after the Flood" (Jeff Miller, *Does the Garden of Eden Still Exist?*, *Reason and Revelation*, Vol. 40, No. 11, p.22f).
4. Verses 15-17: "And the LORD God took the man, and put him into the garden of Eden to dress it and to keep it. And the LORD God commanded the man, saying, Of every tree of the garden thou mayest freely eat: But of the tree of the knowledge of good and evil, thou shalt not eat of it: for in the day that thou eatest thereof thou shalt surely die."
- a. Adam was placed in the garden and given instruction. God intended for man to have a happy life in the garden. He provided everything essential to that end. In order to be happy three things are necessary: someone to love, something to do, and restrictions.
- 1) In the latter part of this chapter a perfect companion was provided for Adam to love; their mutual love and companionship would promote happiness. Man is a social being and is not usually satisfied for long without sharing and caring.
 - 2) In this passage a job (labor) was given to Adam: to dress and keep the garden. He was not to lie about every day eating grapes and ambrosia; rather God knew that work was needed to keep him content and give him a sense of accomplishment. One who does not have to work for his living is often bored and will soon venture into forbidden activities. "An idle mind is the devil's workshop." God placed man in the garden in a state of innocence; he did not intend for man to live a life of idleness or play; he intended that he have purposeful employment; Adam did not have to toil in the garden, for hardship came after sin was introduced. God still expects his offspring to work:
 - a) 2 Thessalonians 3:10: "For even when we were with you, this we commanded you, that if any would not work, neither should he eat."
 - b) Ephesians 4:28: "Let him that stole steal no more: but rather let him labour, working with his hands the thing which is good, that he may have to give to him that needeth."
 - 3) "I don't pity the man who does hard work worth doing. I admire him. I pity the creature who doesn't work, at whichever end of the social scale he may regard himself as being" (T. Roosevelt).
 - 4) "A plowman on his feet (not thought of as high on the social scale) is higher than a gentleman (a man of rank who may disdain labor for himself) on his knees" (ALC, 1979, p.18).
 - 5) In the next two verses God placed a limitation on what Adam could do. Every fruit of this paradise was made available for him to eat except one. This was forbidden mainly to test his faith in God and to thus develop his character. Also, if one can do anything he is big enough to do and can afford it, life will become boresome. The rich who seek happiness in their wealth will find that material possessions, recreations and thrills do not satisfy for long; this discontent soon leads them into lives of profligacy. But when one has legitimate restrictions placed on his activities, he will learn self-control, without which
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he would not long be content.

- b. God gives Adam permission to eat of all the trees of the garden (except the one identified in the next verse). These included every tree that was pleasant to the sight and for food (vs. 9).
- c. "Every line of this chapter moved straight to the climactic revelation here. This divine commandment being the omphalic [pertaining to the navel] pivot upon which turned the temptation and Fall of mankind, their rebellion against their Creator, their expulsion from Eden, the curse of the earth for Adam's sake, and the ultimate execution of the penalty of death upon the whole of Adam's race, only the redeemed in Christ being promised the remission of the penalty!" (Coffman, p.52). God is shown to be the Creator and Benefactor in the preceding parts of Genesis, but here he is seen as the Ruler and Lawgiver. A wide liberty was given to man as shown in verse 16; but here he is restricted by the sovereign authority of God. In verse 15 Adam was told what he must do; in verse 16 what he may do, and in verse 17 what he must not do.
 - 1) There was nothing to be gained by eating the forbidden fruit; there was an untold amount of suffering and even death to be obtained by eating it. There was everything to lose and nothing to gain by eating it. "It was not a tree to increase intellectuality, but a tree of knowledge of good and evil. Man already knew good and only good" (ALC, p.18). The knowledge man gained through eating the forbidden fruit was a practical, experiential measure of good and evil: he obtained guilt and lost goodness. Intellectually, he already knew about these.
 - 2) No moral command was involved in this prohibiting command. What God was doing by the commandment was to test man's loyalty, his obedience to God, his recognition of God's sovereignty. The only reason the eating of this fruit was wrong was because God had divinely prohibited it. This is called a *positive divine law*, to distinguish it from a *moral* command. A *moral law* is required because it is right; a *positive divine law* is required because God bound it.
 - 3) The penalty for disobeying the command was "thou shalt surely die" (literally, "dying thou shalt die"). There are different kinds of death mentioned in the Bible but each carries the idea of some sort of separation.
 - a) When the spirit of man is separated from his physical body—physical death is the consequence (Jas. 2:26; Eccl. 12:7).
 - b) When a man becomes guilty of sin he is estranged (separated) from God—spiritual death (Ezek. 18:20; Isa. 59:1-2).
 - c) When one enters eternity estranged from God his eternal penalty is called "the second death" (Rev. 20:12-15; Mt. 25:46; 10:28; Lk. 12:4-5; 2 Th. 1:7-9; Mt. 7:21-23). "Spiritual death not reversed before physical death, results in the eternal second death" (ALC, p.19).
 - d) When Adam and Eve ate the forbidden fruit, they transgressed God's commandment and became guilty of sin (1 Jn. 3:4; Jas. 4: 17; 1 Jn. 5: 17; cf. Ps. 119:172). That very day, we may be sure, their bodies began to grow older, which would continue until they died physically; the moment they violated the command, they were estranged from God, thus became spiritually dead; and if they were not restored into the Father's favor, they will be forever separated from him by the second death.
 - 4) How much of this did Adam know beforehand? He would certainly know that it was not good to eat the forbidden fruit; he would just as certainly know that it was good not to eat it. Thus he had some intellectual knowledge about good and evil.
 - 5) The merciful and omniscient and omnipotent God knew beforehand that his offspring would not refrain from eating the fruit; thus, he had in mind from eternity a plan by which fallen man could be restored.
 - a) Ephesians 1:4: "According as he hath chosen us in him before the foundation of the world, that we should be holy and without blame before him in love."
 - b) 1 Peter 1:20: "Who verily was foreordained before the foundation of the world, but was manifest in these last times for you."
 - c) Ephesians 3:10-11: "To the intent that now unto the principalities and powers in heavenly places might be known by the church the manifold wisdom of God, According to the eternal purpose which he purposed in Christ Jesus our Lord."
 - d) Romans 16:25-26: "Now to him that is of power to stablish you according to my gospel, and the preaching of Jesus Christ, according to the revelation of the mystery, which was kept secret since the world began, But now is made manifest, and by the scriptures of the prophets, according to the commandment of the everlasting God, made known to all nations for the obedience of faith."
 - e) Revelation 13:8: "And all that dwell upon the earth shall worship him, whose names are not written in the book of life of the Lamb slain from the foundation of the world."

- d. In these verses we can see God's grace and law, principles by which he has always dealt with man. Grace and law were incorporated in his dealings with Noah, Abraham, and with Israel; both are integral parts of the new Covenant. "For the grace of God that bringeth salvation hath appeared to all men, Teaching us that, denying ungodliness and worldly lusts, we should live soberly, righteously, and godly, in this present world" (Titus 2:11-12).

D. Genesis 2:18-25: Adam and His Wife.

1. Verse 18: "And the LORD God said, *It is* not good that the man should be alone; I will make him an help meet for him."
 - a. This verse gives the background to the creation of Eve and introduces the narrative of her beginning. The passage does not suggest that God could not find a suitable mate for Adam from among the animal world. A being so wise and powerful to bring the universe and all earthly life into existence would surely have known from the first about the suitable mate for Adam and how he would bring her into being.
 - b. *It is not good that the man should be alone*: this announces a fact that we can all understand and appreciate. We are social creatures; we thrive and are happy around other people. We recognize our incompleteness without companionship and love, especially that of marriage and family. God encourages neither celibacy nor monasticism.
 - c. A "help meet for him" is a helper suitable for him; one to be and work at his side. She would possess neither superiority nor inferiority to the man. "Nevertheless, neither is the woman without the man, nor the man without the woman. in the Lord. For as the woman is of the man, so is the man also by the woman; but all things are of God" (1 Cor 11:11-12). Had it not been for the man there would not have been a woman; and had it not been for woman, there would not have been any man after Adam. In marriage is to be found the greatest mutual enrichment; or if divine guidelines are ignored, the potential for the greatest wretchedness.
2. Verses 19-20: "And out of the ground the LORD God formed every beast of the field, and every fowl of the air; and brought *them* unto Adam to see what he would call them: and whatsoever Adam called every living creature, that *was* the name thereof. And Adam gave names to all cattle, and to the fowl of the air, and to every beast of the field; but for Adam there was not found an help meet for him."
 - a. The time when these things in this context occurred must have been on the sixth day; Genesis 1:27 said God made man and woman on the sixth day. Here the details of the creation of woman are given. Before making Eve, God caused the animal creation to come before Adam so that names might be given them. Before God made the woman, he impressed on Adam his lack of a mate by bringing before Adam the animals. In order for him to name them it would be necessary for him to notice the different characteristics, including their sex.
 - b. The fact that Adam was to give a name to the animals indicates that he had been created with the faculty of speech and given a language in which to speak. Man could not have originated language on his own. Adam could both speak and understand language from the first (Gen. 2:16-17).
 - c. It is highly likely that Adam had help from God in providing names for the animals. Verses 23-24 are said to be the words of Adam, but when Christ cites this passage in Matthew 19:4-6, he attributed the words to God. It follows that God inspired Adam to make this pronouncement; and likewise he must have been inspired in giving these names.
3. Verses 21-22: "And the LORD God caused a deep sleep to fall upon Adam, and he slept: and he took one of his ribs, and closed up the flesh instead thereof; And the rib, which the LORD God had taken from man, made he a woman, and brought her unto the man."
 - a. "The mystery hidden before all time is inherently a part of God's revelation here. The sleep coming upon Adam was a prophecy of the death of Christ, the God-man, on calvary; and just as the wife of Adam I was taken from his side during that sleep, so that Church of Jesus Christ, the Bride of Adam II was, in a figure, taken from the side of Jesus Christ, from which, upon its being pierced by the spear, there came forth blood and water..." (Coffman, p.55).
 - b. Many people scoff at the idea that woman was made from Adam's rib, considering this a myth of the highest order. We are not given as much information as we would like, but all the information that we require is provided.
 - c. Why was she made from the rib? She was not made from a bone from his head lest the implication be left that she is to rule over the man; nor from the foot to preclude the notion that he was to trample her under his foot. From a rib from his side does imply the truth: that she is to be a true companion and helper of the man. "Dr. Elton Stubblefield, famed medical doctor conducting research in the mysteries of DNA, recently mentioned in a public lecture that, 'The rib is the only portion of the human body that carries within it every

- type (of which there are several) of cell to be found in a human body, and that theoretically, it is absolutely possible to clone an entire human being from a single rib!" (Coffman, p.56).
- d. The case implies also that the human body may be successfully opened during a deep sleep for a surgical procedure. This was not a developed and acceptable practice until modern times.
 - e. God brought the newly-formed woman unto Adam and she became his wife; God took an active part in this first marriage. He sanctioned it.
 - f. Is this account a real account of history? Christ, who was there, said it took place. He attributed the words which follow to God (Mt. 19:4ff) and affirmed that God made mankind in the beginning as male and female just as the Genesis record announces.
4. Verses 23-24: "And Adam said, This *is* now bone of my bones, and flesh of my flesh: she shall be called Woman, because she was taken out of Man. Therefore shall a man leave his father and his mother, and shall cleave unto his wife: and they shall be one flesh."
- a. Our English word "woman" shows in itself the close connection between man and woman: it is from an Anglo-Saxon term (womb-man) meaning "man with the womb."
 - b. In the Hebrew this close connection is also seen in the similarity of the words: "Ish" and "ishsha." "The man recognized in this new creation a divinely created companion who was fashioned to provide all that his hungry heart would need to carry out God's holy will. Woman ('ishsha) ... man ('ish). These two Hebrew words are much alike, even in sound. The only difference between them is that the word for 'woman' has a feminine ending. More recent lexicons declare that these words are not etymo-logically related. There is, however, no actual ground for rejecting the earlier view that the word for 'woman' is derived from the word for 'man'" [Wycliffe Bible Commentary, Electronic Database. Copyright © 1962 by Moody Press].
 - c. "This is now bone of my bones, and flesh of my flesh." This may be an exclamation of delight. The Hebrew word translated "now" is said to signify "now at length, or at last." It suggests that a help meet had finally been provided.
 - d. "One flesh" suggests the closeness of association. In Ephesians 5:22-33, Paul drew an analogy between Adam and Eve on one hand and Christ and his church on the other, and taught great truths regarding both relationships in so doing. "Adam was put to sleep in order to acquire his bride; Christ experienced the sleep of death in the acquisition of his church. Adam's side was opened in his sleep, so was Christ's pierced with a sword. From Adam's side a rib was taken; from Christ's flowed blood and water. From Adam's rib his bride was made (literally, builded); with Christ's blood the church was purchased (Acts 20:28)" (ALC, p.24).
 - e. God made a woman from Adam's rib, not another man. She was like Adam but different. In this difference lies her chief glory. She is not man's competitor but his complement. When woman tries to imitate man, she loses; she is not his equal in physical strength; if she becomes like man, she loses her femininity; it thus deprives her family, herself, and society of her greatest assets.
 - f. Therefore shall a man leave his father and mother. This indicates that the relationship is divinely intended to surpass all other earthly relationships, even that between parent and child. Our relationship with Christ is the only one which has greater priority. "What therefore God hath joined together, let not man put asunder" (Mt. 19:6). When a marriage takes place, it is intended that this new relationship be self-sustaining: that father and mother be left behind.
 - g. Notice that God did not make more than one wife for Adam; nor did he give Eve to more than one man. God intended that marriage be one man and one woman. "Nature itself should indicate that, providing almost an equal number of males and females. Almost, but not quite, the percentage of males being slightly higher. But the incidence of death is also higher among males, even in infancy as it is in old age, so that in countries where death in childbirth has been reduced almost to a minimum there are more elderly women than men. It has been observed also that after major wars and the depletion of males, for a time the percentage of male births have increased, restoring in a few years the normal balance between men and women. No satisfactory scientific explanation has been advanced. But it...is a manifestation of divine activity" (ALC, 1979, p.25).
 - h. "One flesh" has special reference to sexual union.
 - 1) 1 Corinthians 6:15-16: "Know ye not that your bodies are the members of Christ? shall I then take the members of Christ, and make them the members of an harlot? God forbid. What? know ye not that he which is joined to an harlot is one body? for two, saith he, shall be one flesh."
 - 2) 1 Corinthians 7:1-5: "Now concerning the things whereof ye wrote unto me: It is good for a man not to touch a woman. Nevertheless, to avoid fornication, let every man have his own wife, and let every
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woman have her own husband. Let the husband render unto the wife due benevolence: and likewise also the wife unto the husband. The wife hath not power of her own body, but the husband: and likewise also the husband hath not power of his own body, but the wife. Defraud ye not one the other, except it be with consent for a time, that ye may give yourselves to fasting and prayer; and come together again, that Satan tempt you not for your incontinency."

5. Verse 25: "And they were both naked, the man and his wife, and were not ashamed."
 - a. This gives a brief and beautiful picture of mankind's original innocence before the entrance of sin into his Paradise. It also suggests the kind of climate which existed in Eden.
 - b. This innocence remained until they sinned. Their sin was in violation of the command of verse 17. They lost their innocence and gained a sense of shame when they committed sin. One of the side effects of sin is shame.
 - c. Regarding the climate, it is obvious that Eden was not invaded by cold or else they would have had some kind of clothing. God made them clothes later but not for the purpose of keeping them warm; rather it was to hide their nakedness. There is plenty of evidence to indicate that the ancient climate was tropical. On Antarctica, algae has been found which can grow only in warm climates; in Siberia frozen bodies of mammoths have been found with tropical plants in their mouths and stomachs. How could tropical plants and a tropical climate been in those cold regions? The only satisfactory suggestion that has been offered is the "canopy theory" which says there was a thick layer of vaporized water surrounding the earth, keeping the temperature uniform around the globe.
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The Immortal Soul of Man

I. INTRODUCTION.

A. The Bible has much to say about our immortal nature.

1. 2 Corinthians 4:14-18: "Knowing that he which raised up the Lord Jesus shall raise up us also by Jesus, and shall present *us* with you. For all things *are* for your sakes, that the abundant grace might through the thanksgiving of many redound to the glory of God. For which cause we faint not; but though our outward man perish, yet the inward *man* is renewed day by day. For our light affliction, which is but for a moment, worketh for us a far more exceeding *and* eternal weight of glory; While we look not at the things which are seen, but at the things which are not seen: for the things which are seen *are* temporal; but the things which are not seen *are* eternal."
2. Matthew 16:26: "For what is a man profited, if he shall gain the whole world, and lose his own soul? or what shall a man give in exchange for his soul?"

B. The Bible declares that we are made in God's image.

1. Genesis 1:26-27: "And God said, Let us make man in our image, after our likeness: and let them have dominion over the fish of the sea, and over the fowl of the air, and over the cattle, and over all the earth, and over every creeping thing that creepeth upon the earth. So God created man in his *own* image, in the image of God created he him; male and female created he them." We are not told that man was made in the image of angels; nor are we told that angels are made in the image of God. But we are told that man is made in the image of God.
2. In our image; after our likeness —these two phrases are equal. In what sense are we made in God's image? Does a man's physical body look like God? God is Spirit (John 4:24); a spirit does not have flesh and bones (Luke 24:39); therefore, man is not made in the physical image of God since He has no physical body.
3. Man has a soul or spirit; man has the ability to think, reason, understand, plan, and be creative; God has these same capabilities; it is in these areas that man is made in God's image.
4. The Bible teaches that the spiritual part of man (soul, spirit), once it has been created (Zech. 12:1), will never cease to be (Matt. 25:46; 2 Thess. 1:6-9; 1 Thess. 4:13-18; Eccl. 12:7).
 - a. Zechariah 12:1: "The burden of the word of the LORD for Israel, saith the LORD, which stretcheth forth the heavens, and layeth the foundation of the earth, and formeth the spirit of man within him."
 - b. Matthew 25:46: "And these shall go away into everlasting punishment: but the righteous into life eternal."
 - c. 2 Thessalonians 1:6-9: "Seeing it is a righteous thing with God to recompense tribulation to them that trouble you; And to you who are troubled rest with us, when the Lord Jesus shall be revealed from heaven with his mighty angels, In flaming fire taking vengeance on them that know not God, and that obey not the gospel of our Lord Jesus Christ: Who shall be punished with everlasting destruction from the presence of the Lord, and from the glory of his power."
 - d. 1 Thessalonians 4:13-18: "But I would not have you to be ignorant, brethren, concerning them which are asleep, that ye sorrow not, even as others which have no hope. For if we believe that Jesus died and rose again, even so them also which sleep in Jesus will God bring with him. For this we say unto you by the word of the Lord, that we which are alive and remain unto the coming of the Lord shall not prevent them which are asleep. For the Lord himself shall descend from heaven with a shout, with the voice of the archangel, and with the trump of God: and the dead in Christ shall rise first: Then we which are alive and remain shall be caught up together with them in the clouds, to meet the Lord in the air: and so shall we ever be with the Lord. Wherefore comfort one another with these words."
 - e. Ecclesiastes 12:7: "Then shall the dust return to the earth as it was: and the spirit shall return unto God who gave it."
5. God is infinitely pure and holy; when man comes into being, he is pure and holy; spiritually, intellectually and morally we are made in the image of God. Through sin, man loses the measure of the divine stamp; it is only as he obeys the gospel, he regains that image.
 - a. Ephesians 4:24: "And that ye put on the new man, which after God is created in righteousness and true holiness."
 - b. Colossians 3:10: "And have put on the new man, which is renewed in knowledge after the image of him that created him."
 - c. Romans 12:1-2: "I beseech you therefore, brethren, by the mercies of God, that ye present your bodies

a living sacrifice, holy, acceptable unto God, which is your reasonable service. And be not conformed to this world: but be ye transformed by the renewing of your mind, that ye may prove what is that good, and acceptable, and perfect, will of God.”

- d. 2 Corinthians 3:18: “But we all, with open face beholding as in a glass the glory of the Lord, are changed into the same image from glory to glory, even as by the Spirit of the Lord.”
- e. James 1:22-25: “But be ye doers of the word, and not hearers only, deceiving your own selves. For if any be a hearer of the word, and not a doer, he is like unto a man beholding his natural face in a glass: For he beholdeth himself, and goeth his way, and straightway forgetteth what manner of man he was. But whoso looketh into the perfect law of liberty, and continueth therein, he being not a forgetful hearer, but a doer of the work, this man shall be blessed in his deed.”

II. THE WATCHTOWER WITNESSES ASSERT THAT WE DO NOT HAVE AN IMMORTAL SOUL.

A. They claim that one who dies is in a state of total unconsciousness.

1. This assertion they make in a tract entitled “What Hope for Dead Loved Ones?” (1987, Watchtower, Brooklyn, NY).
2. In an excellent article, Wayne Jackson uses the case of the Rich Man and Lazarus to show conclusively that the dead are fully conscious: “The narrative involves a certain rich man who lived in an expensive house (suggested by the word ‘gate’), who was luxuriously clothed, and who lived ‘in mirth and splendor every day’ (cf. ASVfn). By way of stark contrast, Lazarus, a beggar (the Greek word denotes the poorest of the poor), was unceremoniously dumped (so the original language indicates) daily at the wealthy man’s gate, hoping only for the crumbs that fell from that gentleman’s table. Any meager comfort that Lazarus enjoyed was provided by the foraging street dogs who licked the diseased tumors of his frail body. Finally, both men died and their state of affairs was dramatically altered. The rich man was subjected to agonizing torment while Lazarus was honored and comforted. It is in consideration of the details chronicled in verses 22ff that it becomes very obvious that the dead, both righteous and wicked, are conscious. Let us note some of these indications:
 - a. **Perception**—The rich man could see both Abraham and Lazarus; he thus possessed perception. Perception involves an awareness of objects, hence, consciousness.
 - b. **Satisfaction**—Lazarus was described as being “in Abraham’s bosom.” This expression is a biblical idiom which suggests a state of honor (cf. Jn. 1:18; 13:23). It implies that Lazarus was in a warm and respected fellowship with Abraham. Alfred Plummer notes that the language suggests that the former beggar now shares Abraham’s “happiness” (International Critical Commentary on Luke, Edinburgh: T.&T. Clark, 1896, p. 303). Clearly, this indicates consciousness.
 - c. **Sensation**—The rich man is in “torments.” Indeed, he is suffering “anguish,” which certainly affirms conscious sorrow (cf. 2:48; Acts 20:38). On the other hand, Lazarus is “comforted.”
 - d. **Communication**—The rich man could both speak and be spoken to. Communication is possible only with conscious beings. The suffering rebel had not been annihilated.
 - e. **Recognition**—The rich man recognized Lazarus and requested his services by name. Recognition involves consciousness.
 - f. **Comprehension**—The rich man made two requests of Abraham. First, he asked that Lazarus be permitted to dip his finger in water in order to cool his parched tongue. Abraham reasoned that such was impossible because an impassable gulf separated the righteous from the wicked. Second, the rich man requested that Lazarus be allowed to go and warn his brothers not to come to that place of punishment. The patriarch replied that those brethren had access to the Old Testament Scriptures, and that such was sufficient to prevent those kinsmen from dying lost if they were disposed to heed the message. Apparently, the rich man understood Abraham’s response; he had no further comment to make. Again, the narrative implies consciousness.
 - g. **Volition**—The rich man’s petition that Lazarus be allowed to enter the hades realm where he was, or that he be permitted to return to earth, implies that Lazarus had the volitional and/or locomotive ability to accomplish that feat if divinely allowed. That further suggests consciousness.
 - h. **Recollection**—Abraham reminded the rich man of his earthly status: “Son, remember that you in your lifetime received your good things....” “Where there is memory, there is consciousness.
 - i. **Emotion**—When the rich man reflected upon the spiritual condition of his earthly brothers, he evidenced concern, and urged that they be warned not to enter that dreadful hades realm. People without consciousness evidence no concern for others.
 - j. A careful and honest consideration of the information contained in this account can only lead to the

conclusion that the dead are conscious. Theories which allow for the extinction of the wicked, or for "soul-sleeping" on the part of the righteous dead, are not consistent with this divine teaching as given by Jesus Christ." [*Christian Courier Website*].

3. The context of Ecclesiastes 9:5 destroys the Watchtower argument on the state of the dead.
 - a. They say: "Showing that death is a state of total unconsciousness, the Bible says: 'For the living are conscious that they will die; but as for the dead, *they are conscious of nothing at all.*' (Ecclesiastes 9:5). When a person dies, the Bible explains: 'His spirit goes out, he goes back to his ground; *in that day his thoughts do perish.*'—Psalm 146:3, 4."
 - b. But the text actually says: "For the living know that they shall die: but the dead know not any thing, neither have they any more a reward; for the memory of them is forgotten. Also their love, and their hatred, and their envy, is now perished; neither have they any more a portion for ever in any *thing that is done under the sun*" (Eccl. 9:5-6). The statement about the dead being unaware of anything is limited by the phrase, *under the sun*. Far from saying the dead are totally unconscious, the text simply affirms that the dead do not know what is going on back on earth.
 - c. Psalms 146:3-4: "Put not your trust in princes, *nor* in the son of man, in whom *there is* no help. His breath goeth forth, he returneth to his earth; in that very day his thoughts perish."
- (1) "Verse 3—Put not your trust in princes (comp. Ps 118:10). Israel was always apt to trust in bureau rather than Divine help. Now it was Egypt (Isa 30:2; 36:6), now Assyria (2 Kings 16:7), now their own kings or nobles. At the time of the return from the Captivity, too much was expected from Zerubbabel and the other 'princes'....Confidence in human aid of whatever kind is forbidden. In whom there is no help; or, 'that hath no saving power'....Verse 4—His breath goeth forth, he returneth to his earth; or, when his breath goes forth'—i.e., when he breathes his last—'he returns to his earth,' i.e. to the earth of which he was made (Gen 2:7,19). In that very day his thoughts perish. All his schemes and projects ('eshtonoth, a word not occurring elsewhere) come to an end—are nipped in the bud—perish. So weak is he, and not to be depended on" (from The Pulpit Commentary, Electronic Database. Copyright © 2001 by Biblesoft).
 - (2) "The Hebrew for 'thoughts' means—*lit.*, 'shinings,' 'polishings,' implying how *elaborately fabricated* were his *plans*....How can he bring 'help' or *salvation* to others who cannot save himself? Death suddenly snaps asunder his web of projects, and therefore ends all the hope that was placed in him" (Jamieson, Fausset, Brown, pp.406f).
 - (3) The text does not teach that a man is totally unconscious after death; it teaches that a man's plans, schemes, aspirations perish when he dies—he is no longer alive on earth to carry out any of those intentions. This coincides perfectly with all of the other statements in the Bible that teach man has a soul (a spirit) that departs from his physical body at the moment of death (Jas. 2:26).

B. They claim that man has no immortal soul.

1. "Yet someone may ask: 'Don't humans have an immortal soul that survives death?' Many have taught this, even saying that death is a doorway to another life. But that idea does not come from the Bible. Rather, God's Word teaches that you *are* a soul, that your soul is really *you*, with all your physical and mental qualities. (Genesis 2:7; Jeremiah 2:34; Proverbs 2:10) Also, the Bible says: 'The soul that is sinning—it itself will die.' (Ezekiel 18:4) Nowhere does the Bible teach that man has an immortal soul that survives the death of the body" (Watchtower, *ibid.*). But the word death means separation; when the spirit is separated from the body, the body is dead (Jas. 2:26); when a soul sins against God, it is separated from God—it is dead (Gen. 2:16-17).
2. 1 Thessalonians 5:23: "And the very God of peace sanctify you wholly; and *I pray God* your whole spirit and soul and body be preserved blameless unto the coming of our Lord Jesus Christ."
 - a. Paul here expresses his desire that the brethren be completely sanctified by the God of peace. This is not some miraculous change which God brings upon us, but the gradual growth we undergo as we study, learn, and improve in the Christian life. It is the apostle's heart-felt wish that the saints should reach this level of spiritual maturity, and enter into their heavenly reward at the end. It was his desire also that their whole spirit, soul, and body should be preserved blameless unto the coming of Christ. A distinction is made here between the spirit and the soul. Man is a triune being, possessing a physical body, physical life, and a spirit.
 - b. In the usual case, the words *spirit* and *soul* are used interchangeably in the Scriptures.
 - (1) Ecclesiastes 12:7: "Then shall the dust return to the earth as it was: and the spirit shall return unto God who gave it." The part of man which will be saved in eternity is called "the spirit."

- (2) Matthew 10:28: "And fear not them which kill the body, but are not able to kill the soul: but rather fear him which is able to destroy both soul and body in hell." Ezekiel 18:20: "The soul that sinneth, it shall die. The son shall not bear the iniquity of the father, neither shall the father bear the iniquity of the son: the righteousness of the righteous shall be upon him, and the wickedness of the wicked shall be upon him." The part of man which is subject to eternal punishment is here called "the soul."
- (3) Genesis 35:18: "And it came to pass, as her soul was in departing, (for she died) that she called his name Benoni: but his father called him Benjamin." What was it that departed from the dying body of Rachel? It was her spirit (her soul). It survived the death of her body.
- (4) James 2:26: "For as the body without the spirit is dead, so faith without works is dead also." The spirit survives the death of the body; this spirit is also called the "soul."
- (5) 1 Kings 17:21: "And he stretched himself upon the child three times, and cried unto the LORD, and said, O LORD my God, I pray thee, let this child's soul come into him again."
- (6) Zechariah 12:1: "The burden of the word of the LORD for Israel, saith the LORD, which stretcheth forth the heavens, and layeth the foundation of the earth, and **formeth the spirit of man within him.**" The spirit (soul) is formed within the physical body of a man.
- (7) Daniel 7:15: "I Daniel was grieved in my spirit in the midst of *my* body, and the visions of my head troubled me." His spirit (soul) was able to be grieved; it was present in the midst of his physical body. The spirit (soul) is a separate entity from the body.
- c. The word *soul* is also used in the Scriptures in reference to individuals (persons). "Which sometime were disobedient, when once the longsuffering of God waited in the days of Noah, while the ark was a preparing, wherein few, that is, eight souls were saved by water" (1 Pet. 3:20).
- d. The word *soul* is used in the Scriptures in reference to animal life which we possess in common with beasts. In this sense, animals have souls.
 - (1) Psalms 74:19: "O deliver not the soul of thy turtledove unto the multitude *of the wicked*: forget not the congregation of thy poor for ever."
 - (2) Psalms 72:13: "He shall spare the poor and needy, and shall save the souls of the needy." The needy are those in need of physical necessities; the provisions given was food to sustain their lives.
 - (3) Genesis 2:7: "And the LORD God formed man *of* the dust of the ground, and breathed into his nostrils the breath of life; and man became a living soul."
- e. The text speaks of the spirit, the soul, and the body of each of the saints; the spirit is the eternal part of the person; the soul in this usage is a reference to the life of the person; and the body referred to is the physical body in which the spirit dwells. Paul expresses his desire that the spirit, soul, and body of each of the saints might be preserved blameless unto the coming of Christ.
- f. "It is useless to attempt to draw from these words a technical, psychological statement of a threefold division of the human personality. If Paul recognized any such technical division, it was more probably twofold; the body or material part, and the immaterial part with its higher and lower sides—*πνεῦμα* and *ψυχὴ*" [Vincent's Word Studies in the New Testament].
- g. Another view: "The body is the fleshly part of man in which the soul or spirit dwells. The Bible makes no distinction between the soul and the spirit. The terms are used interchangeably and refer to the spiritual entity that dwells in the fleshly body and makes that body a man. The two words are used probably five hundred or more times in the Bible. In this instance they are used together, but as meaning the same thing. Paul, to strengthen his saying and to fully cover the ground, often used several words meaning much the same to give force and breadth to his expression. In this same Epistle are two other examples: "Ye are witnesses, and God also, how holily and righteously and unblamably we behaved ourselves toward you that believe." (2:10.) Here are three words with hardly a distinction in meaning to express the purity of his life and its worthiness to be followed by them. Again: "For what is our hope, or joy, or crown of glorying?" (2:19.) These words did not refer to distinct things or feelings. Then the lexicons define soul as *spirit* and spirit as *soul* showing that they are so used by all scholars. The body is the fleshly part of man in which the soul or spirit dwells. Life on earth is the union of the soul or spirit with the material body; the two combined constitute the living being or person as we see and behold him. Death is the separation of the soul, or spirit, from the material body; so this loses its vitality and crumbles into dust" [Gospel Advocate Commentaries].
3. The false witnesses of the Watchtower enterprise ignore many passages that must be considered before reaching any correct conclusion regarding the nature of the soul. They isolate a few verses that use the word "soul" in the sense of "physical life" and apply that meaning to all of the occurrences of the term.

III. THE SOUL IS IMMORTAL—IT NEVER CEASES TO EXIST.

A. The spirit makes us different from the animals.

1. Our having a spirit marks the difference between man and beast.
 - a. Job 32:8: "But *there* is a spirit in man: and the inspiration of the Almighty giveth them under-standing."
 - b. Daniel 7:15: "I Daniel was grieved in my spirit in the midst of *my* body, and the visions of my head troubled me."
 2. The spirit (soul) has no material properties.
 - a. Whether living or dead, the physical body has the same weight. A doctor, knowing that his patient was on the verge of death, weighed him before and after death; there was no change in the weight.
 - b. A dead body cannot see, cannot touch, cannot smell, cannot hear, and cannot taste. All of the senses it used in life are no longer available; that which animates the body is the spirit—and it departs from the body at death. In fact, the very absence of the spirit from the body **is** death: "For as the body without the spirit is dead, so faith without works is dead also" (Jas. 2:26).
 3. Biblical statements:
 - a. Genesis 5:21-24: "And Enoch lived sixty and five years, and begat Methuselah: And Enoch walked with God after he begat Methuselah three hundred years, and begat sons and daughters: And all the days of Enoch were three hundred sixty and five years: And Enoch walked with God: and he *was* not; for God took him."
 - b. Hebrews 11:5: "By faith Enoch was translated that he should not see death; and was not found, because God had translated him: for before his translation he had this testimony, that he pleased God."
 - c. 2 Kings 2:1-11: "And it came to pass, when the LORD would take up Elijah into heaven by a whirlwind, that Elijah went with Elisha from Gilgal. And Elijah said unto Elisha, Tarry here, I pray thee; for the LORD hath sent me to Bethel. And Elisha said *unto him*, *As* the LORD liveth, and *as* thy soul liveth, I will not leave thee. So they went down to Bethel. And the sons of the prophets that *were* at Bethel came forth to Elisha, and said unto him, Knowest thou that the LORD will take away thy master from thy head to day? And he said, Yea, I know *it*; hold ye your peace. And Elijah said unto him, Elisha, tarry here, I pray thee; for the LORD hath sent me to Jericho. And he said, *As* the LORD liveth, and *as* thy soul liveth, I will not leave thee. So they came to Jericho. And the sons of the prophets that *were* at Jericho came to Elisha, and said unto him, Knowest thou that the LORD will take away thy master from thy head to day? And he answered, Yea, I know *it*; hold ye your peace. And Elijah said unto him, Tarry, I pray thee, here; for the LORD hath sent me to Jordan. And he said, *As* the LORD liveth, and *as* thy soul liveth, I will not leave thee. And they two went on. And fifty men of the sons of the prophets went, and stood to view afar off: and they two stood by Jordan. And Elijah took his mantle, and wrapped *it* together, and smote the waters, and they were divided hither and thither, so that they two went over on dry ground. And it came to pass, when they were gone over, that Elijah said unto Elisha, Ask what I shall do for thee, before I be taken away from thee. And Elisha said, I pray thee, let a double portion of thy spirit be upon me. And he said, Thou hast asked a hard thing: *nevertheless*, if thou see me *when I am* taken from thee, it shall be so unto thee; but if not, it shall not be *so*. And it came to pass, as they still went on, and talked, that, behold, *there appeared* a chariot of fire, and horses of fire, and parted them both asunder; and Elijah went up by a whirlwind into heaven."
 - d. 1 Corinthians 15:50: "Now this I say, brethren, that flesh and blood cannot inherit the kingdom of God; neither doth corruption inherit incorruption."
 - e. James 2:26: "For as the body without the spirit is dead, so faith without works is dead also."
 4. Moses survived death: "And after six days Jesus taketh Peter, James, and John his brother, and bringeth them up into an high mountain apart, And was transfigured before them: and his face did shine as the sun, and his raiment was white as the light. And, behold, there appeared unto them Moses and Elias talking with him. Then answered Peter, and said unto Jesus, Lord, it is good for us to be here: if thou wilt, let us make here three tabernacles; one for thee, and one for Moses, and one for Elias. While he yet spake, behold, a bright cloud overshadowed them: and behold a voice out of the cloud, which said, This is my beloved Son, in whom I am well pleased; hear ye him" (Matt. 17:1-5).
 5. The souls of slain saints were alive and located under an altar: "And when he had opened the fifth seal, I saw under the altar the souls of them that were slain for the word of God, and for the testimony which they held: And they cried with a loud voice, saying, How long, O Lord, holy and true, dost thou not judge and avenge our blood on them that dwell on the earth? And white robes were given unto every one of them; and it was said unto them, that they should rest yet for a little season, until their fellowservants also and their
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- brethren, that should be killed as they *were*, should be fulfilled" (Rev. 6:9-11).
6. Paul's experience demonstrates the conscious survival of beyond death. For the argument Paul makes in this passage, the individual has to be Paul. "It is not expedient for me doubtless to glory. I will come to visions and revelations of the Lord. I knew a man in Christ above fourteen years ago, (whether in the body, I cannot tell; or whether out of the body, I cannot tell: God knoweth;) such an one caught up to the third heaven. And I knew such a man, (whether in the body, or out of the body, I cannot tell: God knoweth;) How that he was caught up into paradise, and heard unspeakable words, which it is not lawful for a man to utter" (2 Cor. 12:1-4. [It is certainly possible that the apostle *could* have been dead during this episode; it is certain in either case, that consciousness continues in the *Hadean* realm.
 - 7. The resurrections reported in the Scriptures show that death does not destroy the identity of the dead individual. Lazarus remained Lazarus; the widow's son was still her son; so also with Jairus' daughter. There is an "inner man" that is eternal: "For which cause we faint not; but though our outward man perish, yet the inward *man* is renewed day by day" (2 Cor. 4:16).
 - 8. The spirit (the soul) is the *knowing* part of man: "For what man knoweth the things of a man, save the spirit of man which is in him? even so the things of God knoweth no man, but the Spirit of God" (1 Cor. 2:11).
 - a. Knowledge and consciousness are not properties of the body—these pertain to the soul (spirit): "For as the body without the spirit is dead, so faith without works is dead also" (Jas. 2:26). There is neither knowledge nor consciousness in a dead body.
 - b. The heart (used in reference to the spirit or soul) lives forever.
 - (1) Psalms 22:26: "The meek shall eat and be satisfied: they shall praise the LORD that seek him: your heart shall live for ever."
 - (2) Proverbs 23:7: "For as he thinketh in his heart, so *is* he: Eat and drink, saith he to thee; but his heart *is* not with thee."
 - (3) Matthew 13:15: "For this people's heart is waxed gross, and *their* ears are dull of hearing, and their eyes they have closed; lest at any time they should see with *their* eyes and hear with *their* ears, and should understand with *their* heart, and should be converted, and I should heal them."
 - (4) Romans 10:8-9: "But what saith it? The word is nigh thee, *even* in thy mouth, and in thy heart: that is, the word of faith, which we preach; That if thou shalt confess with thy mouth the Lord Jesus, and shalt believe in thine heart that God hath raised him from the dead, thou shalt be saved."
 - c. The soul is incorruptible—immortal.
 - (1) 1 Timothy 1:17: "Now unto the King eternal, immortal, invisible, the only wise God, *be* honour and glory for ever and ever. Amen."
 - (2) 1 Peter 3:3-4: "Whose adorning let it not be that outward *adorning* of plaiting the hair, and of wearing of gold, or of putting on of apparel; But *let it be* the hidden man of the heart, in that which is not corruptible, *even the ornament* of a meek and quiet spirit, which is in the sight of God of great price." Note: We are made in God's image.
 - 9. Angels have no physical bodies, reserved for punishment.
 - a. 2 Peter 2:4: "For if God spared not the angels that sinned, but cast *them* down to hell, and delivered *them* into chains of darkness, to be reserved unto judgment."
 - b. 2 Peter 2:9: "The Lord knoweth how to deliver the godly out of temptations, and to reserve the unjust unto the day of judgment to be punished."
 - c. Jude 6: "And the angels which kept not their first estate, but left their own habitation, he hath reserved in everlasting chains under darkness unto the judgment of the great day."
- B. Relation of the soul to God the Father.**
1. Our spirit was given by Jehovah: "Then shall the dust return to the earth as it was: and the spirit shall return unto God who gave it" (Eccl 12:7).
 2. The Lord formed the spirit within our physical body: "The burden of the word of the LORD for Israel, saith the LORD, which stretcheth forth the heavens, and layeth the foundation of the earth, and formeth the spirit of man within him" (Zech. 12:1).
 3. Our spirit was formed by the Lord (Zech 12:1). The Lord forms the spirit of man within him.
 - a. The formation of the heavens and the laying of the earth's foundation were one-time acts, but the forming of the spirits of men is an on-going work.
 - b. There is more to a man than the physical body.
 - (1) Genesis 35:16-19: "And they journeyed from Bethel; and there was but a little way to come to Ephrath: and Rachel travailed, and she had hard labour. And it came to pass, when she was in hard

- labour, that the midwife said unto her, Fear not; thou shalt have this son also. And it came to pass, as her soul was in departing, (for she died) that she called his name Benoni: but his father called him Benjamin. And Rachel died, and was buried in the way to Ephrath, which *is* Bethlehem."
- (2) Job 32:8: "But *there is* a spirit in man..."
- (3) Romans 7:22: "For I delight in the law of God after the inward man."
- (4) 2 Corinthians 4:16: "For which cause we faint not; but though our outward man perish, yet the inward *man* is renewed day by day."
- (5) 1 Thessalonians 5:23: "And the very God of peace sanctify you wholly; and *I pray God* your whole spirit and soul and body be preserved blameless unto the coming of our Lord Jesus Christ."
- c. God is the father of our spirits. "Furthermore we have had fathers of our flesh which corrected us, and we gave them reverence: shall we not much rather be in subjection unto the Father of spirits, and live?" (Heb. 12:9: cf. Num. 16:22).
- d. When does God form the spirit within us? The only logical time is the moment of conception; it is then that the body begins to form and life begins. When the spirit leaves the physical body, death results (Jas. 2:26); consequently, it is when the spirit joins the human body that life begins.
4. We are made in God's image, but God has no physical image.
- a. Genesis 1:26-27: "And God said, Let us make man in our image, after our likeness: and let them have dominion over the fish of the sea, and over the fowl of the air, and over the cattle, and over all the earth, and over every creeping thing that creepeth upon the earth. So God created man in his *own* image, in the image of God created he him; male and female created he them."
- b. Luke 24:36-39: "And as they thus spake, Jesus himself stood in the midst of them, and saith unto them, Peace *be* unto you. But they were terrified and affrighted, and supposed that they had seen a spirit. And he said unto them, Why are ye troubled? and why do thoughts arise in your hearts? Behold my hands and my feet, that it is I myself: handle me, and see; for a spirit hath not flesh and bones, as ye see me have."
- c. John 4:24: "God *is* a Spirit: and they that worship him must worship *him* in spirit and in truth."
- d. We are the offspring of God.
- (1) Genesis 1:11: "And God said, Let the earth bring forth grass, the herb yielding seed, *and* the fruit tree yielding fruit after his kind, whose seed *is* in itself, upon the earth: and it was so."
- (2) Acts 17:28: "For in him we live, and move, and have our being; as certain also of your own poets have said, For we are also his offspring."
- (3) Eve's body came from Adam; Adam's body was created from the elements of the earth.
- (4) Our bodies are derived from earthly elements; our spirit came from God—made in his image.
5. God is the Father of our **spirits**: "Furthermore we have had fathers of our flesh which corrected us, and we gave them reverence: shall we not much rather be in subjection unto the Father of spirits, and live?" (Heb 12:9).
6. All souls belong to God.
- a. Ezekiel 18:4: "Behold, all souls are mine; as the soul of the father, so also the soul of the son is mine: the soul that sinneth, it shall die."
- b. 1 Corinthians 6:19-20: "What? know ye not that your body is the temple of the Holy Ghost *which is* in you, which ye have of God, and ye are not your own? For ye are bought with a price: therefore glorify God in your body, and in your spirit, which are God's."
7. We have a spiritual relation to Christ now, as the children of God: "For ye are all sons of God, through faith, in Christ Jesus. For as many of you as were baptized into Christ did put on Christ. There can be neither Jew nor Greek, there can be neither bond nor free, there can be no male and female; for ye all are one *man* in Christ Jesus. And if ye are Christ's, then are ye Abraham's seed, heirs according to promise" (Gal 3:26-29, ASV).

IV. VALUE OF THE SOUL.

A. To the body.

1. The spirit gives life.
2. The spirit provides understanding, judgment, affections, will, intellect, and consciousness.
3. The spirit furnishes us with memory and reason.
4. The body without the spirit is dead—it has none of these qualities.

B. The spirit is more important than the physical body.

1. Statements of the Scriptures thus teaching:

- a. Matthew 10:28: "And fear not them which kill the body, but are not able to kill the soul: but rather fear him which is able to destroy both soul and body in hell."
 - b. Matthew 16:26: "For what is a man profited, if he shall gain the whole world, and lose his own soul? or what shall a man give in exchange for his soul?"
 - c. Matthew 26:41: "Watch and pray, that ye enter not into temptation: the spirit indeed *is* willing, but the flesh *is* weak."
 2. Worldly-minded people expend vast sums of money to provide comfort for the body, and for preventing and curing disease.
 3. Many grieve over the loss of physical resources; some even try to blame God for these losses: "There were present at that season some that told him of the Galilaeans, whose blood Pilate had mingled with their sacrifices. And Jesus answering said unto them, Suppose ye that these Galilaeans were sinners above all the Galilaeans, because they suffered such things? I tell you, Nay: but, except ye repent, ye shall all likewise perish. Or those eighteen, upon whom the tower in Siloam fell, and slew them, think ye that they were sinners above all men that dwelt in Jerusalem? I tell you, Nay: but, except ye repent, ye shall all likewise perish" (Luke 13:1-5).
 4. The cries of infidels at death show that they then perceived the truth—but when it was too late to do them any good.
 - a. Thomas Paine, famous man of the American Revolution, wrote a book entitled *The Age of Reason*, in which he tried to destroy the Bible. He predicted that within fifty years, the Bible would be found only in museums. But his book has all but disappeared and the Bible is being printed in increasing numbers. Just before his death in 1809, Paine cried: "I would give worlds, if I had them, that the 'Age of Reason' had never been published. O Lord, help me! Christ help me!... Send even a child to stay with me, for it is hell to be alone. If ever the devil had an agent, I have been that one."
 - b. Voltaire, the infamous French infidel, spent his life trying to destroy the word of God. He spoke of Christ as "the cursed wretch." He arrogantly claimed that although it took twelve men to write the Bible (he is wrong about the number), by his single hand he would destroy it. But after his death, his very house was used by the Geneva Bible Society as a distributing center for the Bible. His last words included this melancholy cry: "I am abandoned by God and man...then I shall go to hell...O Christ! O Jesus Christ!"
- C. The soul is of vastly greater worth than world.
1. Statements of the Scriptures:
 - a. Matthew 16:26: "For what is a man profited, if he shall gain the whole world, and lose his own soul? or what shall a man give in exchange for his soul?"
 - b. Luke 9:25: "For what is a man advantaged, if he gain the whole world, and lose himself, or be cast away?"
 2. Alexander the Great mourned that he had "No more worlds to conquer!"
 3. The world passes away:
 - a. 2 Peter 3:10-14: "But the day of the Lord will come as a thief in the night; in the which the heavens shall pass away with a great noise, and the elements shall melt with fervent heat, the earth also and the works that are therein shall be burned up. *Seeing then that* all these things shall be dissolved, what manner *of persons* ought ye to be in *all* holy conversation and godliness, Looking for and hasting unto the coming of the day of God, wherein the heavens being on fire shall be dissolved, and the elements shall melt with fervent heat? Nevertheless we, according to his promise, look for new heavens and a new earth, wherein dwelleth righteousness. Wherefore, beloved, seeing that ye look for such things, be diligent that ye may be found of him in peace, without spot, and blameless."
 - b. 1 John 2:17: "And the world passeth away, and the lust thereof: but he that doeth the will of God abideth for ever."
 4. But the soul lives on:
 - a. Matthew 25:34: "Then shall the King say unto them on his right hand, Come, ye blessed of my Father, inherit the kingdom prepared for you from the foundation of the world."
 - b. Matthew 25:41: "Then shall he say also unto them on the left hand, Depart from me, ye cursed, into everlasting fire, prepared for the devil and his angels."
 - c. Matthew 25:46: "And these shall go away into everlasting punishment: but the righteous into life eternal."
 - d. 2 Corinthians 4:16: "For which cause we faint not; but though our outward man perish, yet the inward
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man is renewed day by day."

5. The most spiritual are willing to sacrifice themselves in behalf of their souls, in the service of God.
 - a. Martyrs willingly gave their physical lives.
 - (1) Many were slain in Roman arenas, fighting against beasts or brutish men.
 - (2) Many were burned at the stake, refusing to vilify Christ (cf. Polycarp).
 - (3) Many were crucified.
 - (4) These were more willing to die than forfeit their soul's reward.
 - b. Paul sacrificed his physical ease; he suffered great hardship, persecution, and hatred—for his soul's eternal reward.
 - (1) 2 Corinthians 11:23-28: "Are they ministers of Christ? (I speak as a fool) *I am* more; in labours more abundant, in stripes above measure, in prisons more frequent, in deaths oft. Of the Jews five times received I forty *stripes* save one. Thrice was I beaten with rods, once was I stoned, thrice I suffered shipwreck, a night and a day I have been in the deep; *In* journeyings often, *in* perils of waters, *in* perils of robbers, *in* perils by *mine own* countrymen, *in* perils by the heathen, *in* perils in the city, *in* perils in the wilderness, *in* perils in the sea, *in* perils among false brethren; In weariness and painfulness, in watchings often, in hunger and thirst, in fastings often, in cold and nakedness. Beside those things that are without, that which cometh upon me daily, the care of all the churches."
 - (2) Philippians 3:13-14: "Brethren, I count not myself to have apprehended: but *this* one thing *I do*, forgetting those things which are behind, and reaching forth unto those things which are before, I press toward the mark for the prize of the high calling of God in Christ Jesus."

D. Who cares for your soul?

1. God cares: "But God commendeth his love toward us, in that, while we were yet sinners, Christ died for us. Much more then, being now justified by his blood, we shall be saved from wrath through him" (Rom 5:8-9).
2. Christ cares:
 - a. Luke 19:10: "For the Son of man is come to seek and to save that which was lost."
 - b. John 15:13: "Greater love hath no man than this, that a man lay down his life for his friends."
3. Holy Spirit: "And the Spirit and the bride say, Come. And let him that heareth say, Come. And let him that is athirst come. And whosoever will, let him take the water of life freely" (Rev 22:17).
4. Angels: "I say unto you, that likewise joy shall be in heaven over one sinner that repenteth, more than over ninety and nine just persons, which need no repentance....Likewise, I say unto you, there is joy in the presence of the angels of God over one sinner that repenteth" (Luke 15:7,10).
5. The church, which spends great sums of money and effort in the interest of precious souls, yours included:
 - a. Mark 16:15-16: "And he said unto them, Go ye into all the world, and preach the gospel to every creature. He that believeth and is baptized shall be saved; but he that believeth not shall be damned."
 - b. 1 Corinthians 12:25-26: "That there should be no schism in the body; but *that* the members should have the same care one for another. And whether one member suffer, all the members suffer with it; or one member be honoured, all the members rejoice with it."
6. Those who have gone into eternity lost: "There was a certain rich man, which was clothed in purple and fine linen, and fared sumptuously every day: And there was a certain beggar named Lazarus, which was laid at his gate, full of sores, And desiring to be fed with the crumbs which fell from the rich man's table: moreover the dogs came and licked his sores. And it came to pass, that the beggar died, and was carried by the angels into Abraham's bosom: the rich man also died, and was buried; And in hell he lift up his eyes, being in torments, and seeth Abraham afar off, and Lazarus in his bosom. And he cried and said, Father Abraham, have mercy on me, and send Lazarus, that he may dip the tip of his finger in water, and cool my tongue; for I am tormented in this flame. But Abraham said, Son, remember that thou in thy lifetime receivedst thy good things, and likewise Lazarus evil things: but now he is comforted, and thou art tormented. And beside all this, between us and you there is a great gulf fixed: so that they which would pass from hence to you cannot; neither can they pass to us, that *would come* from thence. Then he said, I pray thee therefore, father, that thou wouldest send him to my father's house: For I have five brethren; that he may testify unto them, lest they also come into this place of torment" (Luke 16:19-28).

V. CONCLUSION.

A. Since the soul belongs to God, he must come first.

1. Scriptural statements:
 - a. Matthew 6:33: "But seek ye first the kingdom of God, and his righteousness; and all these things shall

be added unto you."

- b. 1 Corinthians 6:19-20: "What? know ye not that your body is the temple of the Holy Ghost *which is* in you, which ye have of God, and ye are not your own? For ye are bought with a price: therefore glorify God in your body, and in your spirit, which are God's."
 2. Allegiance is due him for he created us.
 3. Allegiance is due him for he allows us to live, despite our imperfections.
 4. Allegiance is due him for he sustains us.
- B. The soul's principal need is God:
1. We need the salvation from sin which only God can provide—through Christ.
 2. It is in the best interest of our soul to dedicate it to the service of God.
 3. Revelation 3:20-21: "Behold, I stand at the door, and knock: if any man hear my voice, and open the door, I will come in to him, and will sup with him, and he with me. To him that overcometh will I grant to sit with me in my throne, even as I also overcame, and am set down with my Father in his throne."
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GENESIS 3

A. Genesis 3:1-6: The Temptation and Fall into Sin.

1. Verse 1: "Now the serpent was more subtle than any beast of the field which the LORD God had made. And he said unto the woman, Yea, hath God said, Ye shall not eat of every tree of the garden?"
 - a. "The man, whom God had appointed lord of the earth and its inhabitants, was endowed with every thing requisite for the development of his nature and the fulfillment of his destiny. In the fruit of the trees of the garden he had food for the sustenance of his life; in the care of the garden itself, a field of labour for the exercise of his physical strength; in the animal and vegetable kingdom, a capacious region for the expansion of his intellect; in the tree of knowledge, a positive law for the training of his moral nature; and in the woman associated with him, a suitable companion and help. In such circumstances as these he might have developed both his physical and spiritual nature in accordance with the will of God. But a tempter approached him...and he yielded to the temptation to break the command of God" (Keil, p.91). Beginning with this verse, the temptation and fall are outlined.
 - b. The serpent was more subtle than any beast of the field which God had made. Notice that Moses did not say that the serpent was more subtle than any *other* beast of the field, but that he was more subtle than *any* beast. Coffman therefore says that "this is an indication that he was not a beast at all....The scriptures do not provide any hard information enabling a fuller identification of this creature which was used by Satan as an instrument in the temptation. There is simply no way to know what the serpent was like before the curse" (p.59). Clarke denies that the reference is to a serpent at all, but that some other creature is meant. He thinks it was likely a primate which was afterward required to naturally walk on all-fours. But the New Testament supports the common view that this creature was a serpent.
 - 1) 2 Corinthians 11:3: "But I fear, lest by any means, as the serpent beguiled Eve through his subtlety, so your minds should be corrupted from the simplicity that is in Christ."
 - 2) It is obvious from a study of the events of this passage and other references that the creature indicated was merely a tool or a disguise of Satan. Our enemy either took over this lowly creature and offered his enticements through it or he appeared in the form of a serpent. In Genesis 3:15 it is the devil whose head is to be crushed by the woman's seed (Christ). The meaning of *Satan* is "adversary, opponent." *Devil* means "slanderer, accuser."
 - 3) The best solution seems to be that Satan took over and used the serpent in tempting Eve. This view fits the whole picture. He took control of certain ones during New Testament times and caused them to do strange things. See Mark 9:14-29: "And when he came to *his* disciples, he saw a great multitude about them, and the scribes questioning with them. And straightway all the people, when they beheld him, were greatly amazed, and running to *him* saluted him. And he asked the scribes, What question ye with them? And one of the multitude answered and said, Master, I have brought unto thee my son, which hath a dumb spirit; And wheresoever he taketh him, he teareth him: and he foameth, and gnasheth with his teeth, and pineth away: and I spake to thy disciples that they should cast him out; and they could not. He answereth him, and saith, O faithless generation, how long shall I be with you? how long shall I suffer you? bring him unto me. And they brought him unto him: and when he saw him, straightway the spirit tare him; and he fell on the ground, and wallowed foaming. And he asked his father, How long is it ago since this came unto him? And he said, Of a child. And oftentimes it hath cast him into the fire, and into the waters, to destroy him: but if thou canst do any thing, have compassion on us, and help us. Jesus said unto him, If thou canst believe, all things *are* possible to him that believeth. And straightway the father of the child cried out, and said with tears, Lord, I believe; help thou mine unbelief. When Jesus saw that the people came running together, he rebuked the foul spirit, saying unto him, *Thou* dumb and deaf spirit, I charge thee, come out of him, and enter no more into him. And *the spirit* cried, and rent him sore, and came out of him: and he was as one dead; insomuch that many said, He is dead. But Jesus took him by the hand, and lifted him up; and he arose. And when he was come into the house, his disciples asked him privately, Why could not we cast him out? And he said unto them, This kind can come forth by nothing, but by prayer and fasting."
 - 4) Eve did not manifest any surprise at the serpent's ability to speak. This does not necessarily mean that serpents had the natural ability to vocalize; in her state of utter innocence she probably did not know.
 - c. "The trial of our first progenitors was ordained by God, because probation was essential to their spiritual development and self-determination. But as he did not desire that they should be tempted to their fall, he

would not suffer Satan to tempt them in a way which should surpass their human capacity....He came in [the form] of a creature, not only far inferior to God, but far below themselves, [so] they could have no excuse for allowing a mere animal to persuade them to break the commandment of God. For they had been made to have dominion over the beasts..." (Keil, pp.93f).

- d. Satan's first statement was designed to arouse doubt in Eve's mind about the goodness of God. Subtlety was a natural characteristic of the serpent (cf. Matt. 10:16). He referred to God by the term *Elohim* which is the impersonal name for him. This name carries the idea of covenant-making, and thus has a personality trait involved.
 - 1) "The conversation here begun by the serpent was on the part of the serpent a vicious, malicious lie, craftily designed to seduce and destroy the entire human family. He flatly contradicted and made light of the word of God; he lied to Eve regarding her becoming 'like God'; and he ascribed unworthy motives and intentions to the Almighty" (Coffman, pp.60f).
 - 2) In his first statement, ["Yea, hath God said, Ye shall not eat of every tree of the garden?"], he tried to focus her attention on the restriction and prohibition God had made regarding the tree of knowledge. That which is forbidden has always had a strong attraction for humans. The devil knew this and went straight to this vulnerable point with Eve.
 - 3) He used the impersonal name for God, thus chose to divert her attention away from the living personal God with this general term. And his question exaggerated the prohibition and was designed to build in her mind a distrust in God's goodness. "Do you mean that God has forbidden you to eat of any of all the trees?" He was implying that if God had forbidden them to eat of any of the trees it was because he was not being fair; he was being repressive and mean. A Christian's attitude will be, "How much can I do?" We do not focus on any restriction; these restrictions are intended for our good anyhow.
 - 4) Instead of turning away from him and shunning his words, she answered. Once the door is open, the enemy has the upper hand. If doubts are raised about a man's goodness, no one will listen to him; the same is true if God's goodness is distrusted.
 2. Verses 2-3: "And the woman said unto the serpent, We may eat of the fruit of the trees of the garden: But of the fruit of the tree which *is* in the midst of the garden, God hath said, Ye shall not eat of it, neither shall ye touch it, lest ye die."
 - a. Eve gave a lame reply. Some scholars think that she added to God's commandment, or at least exaggerated it with the statement, "Neither shall ye touch it." The command as given in Genesis 2:16-17 is very clear and plain; nothing is said there about their being forbidden to touch the tree. However, if she indeed added to God's word, that would have constituted a sin; thus, the first sin would not have been in eating the forbidden fruit but in corrupting God's word. Therefore, it may very well be that God had also told them not to touch the tree.
 - b. But when she listened to the devil's lie her slide into sin began. Doubt and skepticism are parents of sin and rebellion.
 - c. Eve may have been agreeing with the devil and may have been saying: "We have been permitted to eat of all the trees, but God has forbidden us to eat of the tree in the midst of the garden, and will not even let us touch it!"
 3. Verses 4-5: "And the serpent said unto the woman, Ye shall not surely die: For God doth know that in the day ye eat thereof, then your eyes shall be opened, and ye shall be as gods, knowing good and evil."
 - a. Satan first sought to create doubt in Eve's mind about God's goodness; here he brazenly assaults the truthfulness of God: "Ye shall not surely die!" And proceeds quickly to charging God with selfishness: "He has told you falsely that you will die if you eat this fruit; he has deceived you in this because he doesn't want you to become like him; he wants to keep you down and deprive you of what you need!" In his statements he has tried to damage in her eyes (1) the goodness of God; (2) the truthfulness of God; and (3) the unselfishness of God.
 - b. "Eating the forbidden fruit did not make them 'like God' at all, but sent them full of shame, fear, and apprehension into hiding from the loving face of the Creator, whose word they had violated. As for their 'knowing good and evil', that also was a half-lie. They already knew what was right and wrong. They knew it was wrong to eat of that certain tree; the additional knowledge they received was nothing beautiful and desirable at all. It was only that wretched, soul-killing knowledge that comes experientially to every sinner who violates God's word. What an unprincipled and malignant falsehood was Satan's alluring promise!" (Coffman, p. 63).
 - c. "The dimensions of Satan's lying contradiction of God in this passage are truly fantastic. As Kline put it,
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"With one stroke, Satan re-interpreted God as a devil, a liar possessed by jealous pride, and the way of the curse as the way of blessing!" It is simply an astounding mystery to us that Simpson, writing in Interpreter's Bible could have designated the tempter in this passage as a 'benefactor of the human race'" (Coffman, p.63).

- d. The knowledge of good and evil which Satan promised is far removed from the true likeness of God; Eve would have retained that likeness had she remained faithful to him. "The illusive hope of being like God excited a longing for the forbidden fruit" (Keil, p. 95).
- e. Contrast the devil's lies and half-lies and half-truths with the abiding truthfulness of God: "That by two immutable things, in which it was impossible for God to lie, we might have a strong consolation, who have fled for refuge to lay hold upon the hope set before us" (Heb. 6:18). Satan often misquotes Scripture with a deletion or addition of a word or in twisting its original intention.
 - 1) Deuteronomy 6:13,16, 18: "Thou shalt fear the LORD thy God, and serve him, and shalt swear by his name....Ye shall not tempt the LORD your God, as ye tempted him in Massah....And thou shalt do that which is right and good in the sight of the LORD: that it may be well with thee, and that thou mayest go in and possess the good land which the LORD swore unto thy fathers."
 - 2) Psalms 91:10-12: "There shall no evil befall thee, neither shall any plague come nigh thy dwelling. For he shall give his angels charge over thee, to keep thee in all thy ways. They shall bear thee up in their hands, lest thou dash thy foot against a stone." [As the Lord pointed out to Satan, this great truth does not give anyone the right to put God to the test].
 - 3) Matthew 4:1-11: "Then was Jesus led up of the Spirit into the wilderness to be tempted of the devil. And when he had fasted forty days and forty nights, he was afterward an hungred. And when the tempter came to him, he said, If thou be the Son of God, command that these stones be made bread. But he answered and said, It is written, Man shall not live by bread alone, but by every word that proceedeth out of the mouth of God. Then the devil taketh him up into the holy city, and setteth him on a pinnacle of the temple, And saith unto him, If thou be the Son of God, cast thyself down: for it is written, He shall give his angels charge concerning thee: and in their hands they shall bear thee up, lest at any time thou dash thy foot against a stone. Jesus said unto him, It is written again, Thou shalt not tempt the Lord thy God. Again, the devil taketh him up into an exceeding high mountain, and sheweth him all the kingdoms of the world, and the glory of them; And saith unto him, All these things will I give thee, if thou wilt fall down and worship me. Then saith Jesus unto him, Get thee hence, Satan: for it is written, Thou shalt worship the Lord thy God, and him only shalt thou serve. Then the devil leaveth him, and, behold, angels came and ministered unto him."
4. Verse 6: "And when the woman saw that the tree *was* good for food, and that it *was* pleasant to the eyes, and a tree to be desired to make *one* wise, she took of the fruit thereof, and did eat, and gave also unto her husband with her; and he did eat."
 - a. Eve fell victim to the temptation and violated God's law. She was tempted in three basic avenues: "Love not the world, neither the things *that are* in the world. If any man love the world, the love of the Father is not in him. For all that *is* in the world, the lust of the flesh, and the lust of the eyes, and the pride of life, is not of the Father, but is of the world. And the world passeth away, and the lust thereof: but he that doeth the will of God abideth for ever" (1 John 2:15-17; cf. Matt. 4:1-11).
 - 1) **Through the lust of the flesh:** she saw that the fruit was good for food; she had to have it (she thought) to satisfy the craving she had for it. The fact that God had prohibited her from eating it should have kept her well-away from it.
 - 2) **Through the lust of the eyes:** she saw that it was pleasant to the sight. There is often a pleasant appeal that sinful activities or items have. Beer commercials on TV are very appealing; liquor ads picture handsome men and beautiful women in most pleasant scenes. Sin can be very deceptive!
 - 3) **Through the pride or vainglory of life:** she saw it was a fruit to be desired to make one wise. She thought that she would become equal with God if she would but eat.
 - b. Eve was deceived by the lies of the devil (1 Tim 2:8ff; 2 Cor 11:3). Her instructions were extremely plain; she had every reason to believe God meant what he said; she should have been fully convinced regarding God's goodness. All she had to do was turn her back on the tempter and walk away, not listening to his lies. But she let herself be beguiled.
 - 1) 1 Timothy 2:8-15: "I will therefore that men pray every where, lifting up holy hands, without wrath and doubting. In like manner also, that women adorn themselves in modest apparel, with shamefacedness and sobriety; not with broided hair, or gold, or pearls, or costly array; But (which becometh women

professing godliness) with good works. Let the woman learn in silence with all subjection. But I suffer not a woman to teach, nor to usurp authority over the man, but to be in silence. For Adam was first formed, then Eve. And Adam was not deceived, but the woman being deceived was in the transgression. Notwithstanding she shall be saved in childbearing, if they continue in faith and charity and holiness with sobriety."

- 2) 2 Corinthians 11:3: "But I fear, lest by any means, as the serpent beguiled Eve through his subtilty, so your minds should be corrupted from the simplicity that is in Christ."
- c. She ate, and gave this forbidden fruit to Adam and he also ate. He was not deceived; Eve simply offered it to him (possibly telling him she had eaten it) and he apparently ate it unquestioningly; he ate it with his eyes open. Some scholars have suggested that Adam may have been present while the temptation was taking place: she "gave also unto her husband *with her*; and he did eat." Adam thought more of Eve than of God (1 Tim 2:14). He wanted to take care of the relationship with Eve before that with God. The devil had painted a rosy picture to Eve, but the reality of the matter was something entirely different.
5. Verses 7-8: "And the eyes of them both were opened, and they knew that they *were* naked; and they sewed fig leaves together, and made themselves aprons. And they heard the voice of the LORD God walking in the garden in the cool of the day: and Adam and his wife hid themselves from the presence of the LORD God amongst the trees of the garden."
 - a. The consequences of their sin began to be manifested. "What a tragic failure of Satan's glowing promises! 'Like God?' Well, God was never ashamed, conscious of an intolerable nakedness, fearful and seeking a place to hide. How brutally and viciously Satan had betrayed them!" (Coffman, p. 64).
 - b. They had lost their innocence and had gained shame and fear and guilt. "...The body ceased to be the pure abode of a spirit in fellowship with God, and in the purely natural state of the body the consciousness was produced not merely of the distinction of the sexes, but still more of the worth-lessness of the flesh; so that the man and woman stood ashamed in each other's presence, and endeavored to hide the disgrace of their spiritual nakedness... (Keil, pp.96f).
 - c. "That the natural feeling of shame, the origin of which is recorded here, had its root, not in sensuality or any physical corruption, but in the consciousness of guilt or shame before God, and consequently that it was the conscience which was really at work, is evident from the fact that the man and his wife hid themselves from Jehovah God among the trees of the garden, as soon as they heard the sound of his footsteps" (Keil, p. 97). God's "walking in the garden in the cool of the day" is an anthro-pomorphism. The only way God could communicate with man was on man's level; thus the Bible speaks of God in human terms. (There was no need for God to walk in the garden in the evening to be refreshed by the cool breeze; notice that it was the voice of God that they heard walking in the garden).
 - d. The first consequences of sin were shame, fear, a warped judgment (they hid themselves) and later, buck-passing (verses 12-13). They tried to cover their shame by using fig leaves as clothing and trying to hide from the all-seeing eye of God.
 - e. Physical death is the consequence of sin; the penalty for sin is eternal separation from God, in a state of horrible punishment.

B. Genesis 3:9-13: The Consequences of their Sin were Far-reaching.

1. Verse 9: "And the LORD God called unto Adam, and said unto him, Where *art* thou?"
 - a. God's question was not for the purpose of locating Adam; rather it was his method of confronting Adam with his sin. Adam was more concerned with hiding his shame than in the tragedy of having violated the will of his Creator.
 - b. This verse begins the arraignment of Adam and Eve before the Holy God whose law they had violated (Coffman).
2. Verses 10-11: "And he said, I heard thy voice in the garden, and I was afraid, because I *was* naked; and I hid myself. And he said, Who told thee that thou *wast* naked? Hast thou eaten of the tree, whereof I commanded thee that thou shouldest not eat?"
 - a. Sinful man could not hide from God nor conceal from him his sinful condition. When Adam said he was hiding his nakedness, he thereby told God he had sinned; his ugly secret was out.
 - b. "God had anticipated their sin and had formulated the remedy for their transgression (1 Corinthians 2:8). God went straight to the heart of the problem and asked Adam if he had eaten of the forbidden fruit" (Coffman, p. 66).
3. Verse 12: "And the man said, The woman whom thou gavest *to be* with me, she gave me of the tree, and I did eat."

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- a. In offering his excuse for his action, Adam (and later, Eve) did not deny what he had done: he simply tried to evade the responsibility for his actions by shifting the blame to Eve. This is a favorite ploy of sinners. We often try to place the blame on someone else or on the circumstances around us. But there is no excusing sin! God's word is too plain; each one must bear his own responsibility,
 - b. When we stand before God in the Judgment, we will stand alone: we cannot have another to answer for us (Rom. 14:10-12; 2 Cor. 5: 10). Adam tried unsuccessfully to evade responsibility by placing blame on Eve, and indirectly at least, on God for it was he who gave the woman to him!
4. Verse 13: "And the LORD God said unto the woman, What *is* this *that* thou hast done? And the woman said, The serpent beguiled me, and I did eat."
- a. God confronted Eve; she tried to shift responsibility to the serpent. But it was Eve who had violated the commandment, and it was to her that God looked and demanded the answer. Her reply was: "God, it's not my fault; the serpent tricked me into disobeying your instructions."
 - b. Excuses simply will not be acceptable.
- C. Genesis 3:14-19: Curses and the Promise.
1. Verse 14: "And the LORD God said unto the serpent, Because thou hast done this, thou *art* cursed above all cattle, and above every beast of the field; upon thy belly shalt thou go, and dust shalt thou eat all the days of thy life."
 - a. A curse is placed on the serpent. The serpent was either a literal snake which was taken over by Satan in order to accomplish his evil work of tempting Eve, or Satan took on the form of a serpent for this evil work. Demons were later enabled to take control of individuals; this operation took place during the time of the ministry of the Lord and his apostles, while there was miraculous power available to cast them out. This was another means of demonstrating the authority and correctness of the messages if the gospel.
 - 1) But when some individual was taken over by a demon, that person was not cursed because the demon had done its evil deed completely beyond the power of the victim. While the demon could cause the person to jump into the fire or water, that was not a wilful action of the victim; the evil spirit caused this. (Mark 9:14-29).
 - 2) The young lady at Philippi was under the control of an evil spirit (Acts 16:16-18). Through this unwitting victim, the evil spirit caused her to speak certain truths regarding Paul and Silas. Paul did not want to have the devil [through this evil machination] to support his work of preaching the gospel. No punishment whatever was pronounced upon the girl; Paul cast the evil spirit from her and set her free from this wicked influence.
 - 3) The young lad (Mark 9:14-19) deserved no punishment for having been taken over by the demon; the girl in Philippi likewise was not to be blamed for her unfortunate situation. The golden calf fashioned by Aaron as an object of worship by sinful Israel was destroyed, by that inanimate object was not being punished, but valuable gold from which it was made was eradicated: Israel was punished for their idolatry and by their loss of the gold.
 - b. A curse was placed on the serpent.
 - 1) Jamieson: "The words 'cursed above all cattle' do not imply that the serpent was to bear the heaviest weight of a curse which was to fall upon all cattle, and upon every beast of the field; because, though the whole inferior creation has suffered in common from the degradation of man its head (Rom 8:20), yet the serpent alone is the subject of this condemnatory sentence. It is specially cursed, because the original does not express a comparative degree—but 'amongst all cattle—apart from every beast of the field;' and though it may be difficult, with our imperfect knowledge of the reptile tribe, to say how the literal serpents, which apparently move in their proper sphere, and have a full enjoyment of existence, have been physically affected by the curse, there is no difficulty in its application to the spiritual serpent, who has become a greater object of divine abhorrence, as well as of human hatred, than any other being in the universe."
 - 2) Barnes on Genesis 3:14:
 - a) Sentence is pronounced upon the serpent in the presence, no doubt, of the man and woman. The serpent is not examined, first, because it is a mute, unreasoning animal in itself, and therefore incapable of judicial examination, and it was the serpent only that was palpable to the senses of our first parents in the temptation; and, secondly, because the true tempter was not a new, but an old offender.
 - b) As we will see, when God confronted Adam for his part in the rebellion, a curse was placed on the ground: "And unto Adam he said, Because thou hast hearkened unto the voice of thy wife, and hast
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- eaten of the tree, of which I commanded thee, saying, Thou shalt not eat of it: cursed is the ground for thy sake; in sorrow shalt thou eat of it all the days of thy life" (Gen. 3:17).
- c) Romans 8:18-22: "For I reckon that the sufferings of this present time are not worthy to be compared with the glory which shall be revealed to us-ward. For the earnest expectation of the creation waiteth for the revealing of the sons of God. For the creation was subjected to vanity, not of its own will, but by reason of him who subjected it, in hope that the creation itself also shall be delivered from the bondage of corruption into the liberty of the glory of the children of God. For we know that the whole creation groaneth and travaileth in pain together until now" (ASV).
- 3) Barnes on Romans 8:19-22:
- a) But I understand it as having a different signification; and as being used in the natural and usual signification of the word "creature," or "creation." It refers, as I suppose, to the whole animate creation; to all living beings; to the state of all created things here, as in a condition of pain and disorder, and groaning and death. Everything which we see; every creature which lives, is thus subjected to a state of servitude, pain, vanity, and death. The reasons for supposing that this is the true interpretation, are, (1) That the apostle expressly speaks of "the whole creation, of every creature, qualifying the phrase by the expression "we know," as if he was drawing an illustration from a well-understood, universal fact. (2) This interpretation makes consistent sense, and makes the verse have a direct bearing on the argument. "It is just an argument from analogy."
 - b) [Rom. 8:18] might be regarded as a melancholy description, and the question might arise, why was not the Christian at once delivered from this? The answer is in this verse. "It is just the condition of everything." It is the manifest principle on which God governs the world. The whole creation is in just this condition....It is a part of the universal system of things; it accords with everything we see; and we are not to be surprised that the church exists on the same principle.... [There various troubles and hardships are in the world because of sin—bw].
 - c) Until the time when the apostle wrote. It is equally true of the time since he wrote. It has been the characteristic of every age. It is remarkable that the apostle does not here say of "the whole creation," that it had any hope of deliverance; an additional consideration that shows that the interpretation above suggested is correct, Rom_8:20-21, Rom_8:23. Of the sighing and suffering universe, he says nothing with respect to its future state. He does not say that the suffering brutal creation shall be compensated, or shall be restored or raised up. He simply adverts to the fact that it suffers, as an illustration that the condition of the Christian is not singular and special. The Scriptures say nothing of the future condition of the brutal creation.
- c. Perhaps this matter could indeed have a connection to Romans 8:18-22: "For I reckon that the sufferings of this present time are not worthy to be compared with the glory which shall be revealed to us-ward. For the earnest expectation of the creation waiteth for the revealing of the sons of God. For the creation was subjected to vanity, not of its own will, but by reason of him who subjected it, in hope that the creation itself also shall be delivered from the bondage of corruption into the liberty of the glory of the children of God. For we know that the whole creation groaneth and travaileth in pain together until now" (ASV)."
- 1) The *creature* awaits the manifestation of the sons of God with great expectation. The thought is coupled with verse 18, and has reference to the glorification of God's people at the end of time. But what is this creature? The word translated creature (creation—ASV) does not settle the matter, for it is used in several distinct senses in the New Testament.
 - a) It is used to describe the material universe in Romans 1:25: "Who changed the truth of God into a lie, and worshipped and served the creature more than the Creator, who is blessed for ever. Amen."
 - b) It is also used in reference to mankind in Mark 16:15 and Colossians 1:23.
 - (1) Mark 16:15: "And he said unto them, Go ye into all the world, and preach the gospel to every creature."
 - (2) Colossians 1:23: "If ye continue in the faith grounded and settled, and *be* not moved away from the hope of the gospel, which ye have heard, *and* which was preached to every creature which is under heaven; whereof I Paul am made a minister."
 - c) Then it is used in reference to Christians in Galatians 6:15 and 2 Corinthians 5:17.
 - (1) 2 Corinthians 5:17: "Therefore if any man *be* in Christ, *he is* a new creature: old things are passed away; behold, all things are become new."
 - d) Galatians 6:15: "For in Christ Jesus neither circumcision availeth any thing, nor uncircum-cision, but a new creature."

- 2) "The most reasonable explanation seems to be this. Paul, in these passages, has *personified* the creation. He figuratively represents it as longing for deliverance as a prelude to that time when its purpose shall have been completed. When God's redemptive plan is brought to fruition, earthly affairs are ended. The righteous will obtain their reward in 'the new heavens and the new earth' (2 Pet. 3:13; Rev. 21:1), which is heaven itself. Just as there is a link between man's physical body and his new, resurrected spiritual body, even so *figuratively* there is a connection between the present creation and a new creation wherein eternal righteousness abides. This type of argument is not without precedent in the Scriptures. In Psalm 114, the inspired writer describes the deliverance of Jehovah's people from Egyptian bondage. In conjunction with that glorious event, various elements of the creation are depicted as cooperating with, and rejoicing at, Israel's freedom. The sea saw it and fled, the mountains skipped as rams, the hills frolicked like little lambs, and the earth trembled. The Old Testament is replete with this type of symbolism (cf. Psa. 96:12; 98:8; Isa. 35:1; 55:12). No one contends that the language in these passages is literal. In view of other clear biblical indications, why should such an assumption be made with reference to Romans 8? There is simply no need for that" (*Christian Courier*, "When The Creation Is Delivered, A Study of Romans 8:18-23," Vol. XXVI, No. 7, November, 1990). [This view seems to this scribe to be the better explanation—bw].
- d. The curse would not likely have been done if Satan had merely created for himself (but could Satan have created anything?) a fleshly body of a serpent; or if he took control of a snake for this work, the serpent must have had some culpability. But whatever the case may be, it is evident that the serpent family suffered a special curse from God for the role this serpent played in the downfall of man.
- e. That this is an account of real history is established by the New Testament's stamp of approval.
- 1) 2 Corinthians 11:3: "But I fear, lest by any means, as the serpent beguiled Eve through his subtlety, so your minds should be corrupted from the simplicity that is in Christ."
 - 2) 1 Timothy 2:8-15: "I will therefore that men pray every where, lifting up holy hands, without wrath and doubting. In like manner also, that women adorn themselves in modest apparel, with shamefacedness and sobriety; not with broided hair, or gold, or pearls, or costly array; But (which becometh women professing godliness) with good works. Let the woman learn in silence with all subjection. But I suffer not a woman to teach, nor to usurp authority over the man, but to be in silence. For Adam was first formed, then Eve. And Adam was not deceived, but the woman being deceived was in the transgression. Notwithstanding she shall be saved in childbearing, if they continue in faith and charity and holiness with sobriety."
- f. "Upon thy belly..." It appears that some change is indicated in the serpent's appearance from that moment. "Whereas most of the rest of animal life have feet or wings (or some other appendage) to use as means of locomotion, the serpent moves by sliding through the dirt. It is surely the case that going upon his belly (in contrast to a former state which was otherwise) [*perhaps—bw*] was a part of the curse" (ALC, 1973, p.199).
- 1) "...And dust shalt thou eat..." Because snakes must slither through the dust, their food is usually mixed with earthy residue. This description given, and as we know the case to be, is the lowest position on the creative scale.
 - 2) The punishment met the crime. The serpent had exalted himself above man, thus it must now proceed upon its belly. "It should be stressed that this may well be viewed not so much as punishment but simply action which gives emphasis to the humiliation and defeat of the tempter" (ALC, 1973, p.199).
- g. Is there any proof or evidence that the snake originally walked upright? Is so, God would have had to make drastic changes to his body, removing legs, or other means of locomotion given to these reptiles at the first.
2. Verse 15: "And I will put enmity between thee and the woman, and between thy seed and her seed; it shall bruise thy head, and thou shalt bruise his heel."
- a. The curse is expanded and made applicable to the devil himself. Notice that the tempter (verses 14-15) is not asked why he had tempted the woman; he is given no opportunity to try to place the blame on anyone else. God broadens the scope of the tempter's punishment to include enmity with other parties.
 - b. **Enmity** is hostility or division. After this curse, Eve (*et al*) was to consider the devil an enemy. The word *Satan* means "adversary, opponent"; *devil* means "accuser, slanderer." God established perpetual enmity between the human family and Satan; we are to consider him a powerful, conniving, never-tiring enemy who is bent on bringing about the eternal loss of our souls. Were it not for Christ, we would have no hope.
 - c. **Between thee and the woman:** "*Woman* here stands for the whole of Adam's race, a point emphasized a little later in verse 20, where it is stated that Eve is the 'mother of all living'" (Coffman, p. 67). As a general rule, humans both fear and hate snakes; this ought to be our disposition toward the devil and his falsehoods.

- d. **And between thy seed and her seed.** The enmity would continue between the seed of the devil (his followers) and the seed of woman. The KJV gives "...it shall bruise thy head;" the ASV gives "...he shall bruise thy head." In both cases, the singular is used in reference to the seed of woman. Some particular individual is being singled out as the seed of the woman.
- e. **The seed of the woman.** In the genealogies men are listed as the progenitors; only rarely are references given therein to women. The only seed of woman known is Jesus Christ (Galatians 4:4; cf. Gal. 3:16; Gen. 22:18). A Virgin Birth is the only situation wherein a child could accurately be called "the seed of woman." Jesus is the only one ever to have been born of a virgin (Isa. 7:14; Matt. 1:16ff).
- 1) Genesis 22:18: "And in thy seed shall all the nations of the earth be blessed; because thou hast obeyed my voice."
 - 2) Isaiah 7:14: "Therefore the Lord himself shall give you a sign; Behold, a virgin shall conceive, and bear a son, and shall call his name Immanuel."
 - 3) Matthew 1:18-25: "Now the birth of Jesus Christ was on this wise: When as his mother Mary was espoused to Joseph, before they came together, she was found with child of the Holy Ghost. Then Joseph her husband, being a just *man*, and not willing to make her a public example, was minded to put her away privily. But while he thought on these things, behold, the angel of the Lord appeared unto him in a dream, saying, Joseph, thou son of David, fear not to take unto thee Mary thy wife: for that which is conceived in her is of the Holy Ghost. And she shall bring forth a son, and thou shalt call his name JESUS: for he shall save his people from their sins. Now all this was done, that it might be fulfilled which was spoken of the Lord by the prophet, saying, Behold, a virgin shall be with child, and shall bring forth a son, and they shall call his name Emmanuel, which being interpreted is, God with us. Then Joseph being raised from sleep did as the angel of the Lord had bidden him, and took unto him his wife: And knew her not till she had brought forth her firstborn son: and he called his name JESUS."
 - 4) Galatians 3:16: "Now to Abraham and his seed were the promises made. He saith not, And to seeds, as of many; but as of one, And to thy seed, which is Christ."
 - 5) Galatians 4:4: "But when the fulness of the time was come, God sent forth his Son, made of a woman, made under the law."
- f. **It (or he, ASV) shall bruise thy head.** Since the seed of the woman is unquestionably Christ, then this is a promise of Christ's ultimate and complete victory over Satan. That victory was assured when he was raised from the dead:
- 1) "The gates of hades shall not prevail against it" (the building of his church; Matt. 16:16-18; Acts 2:22-24).
 - a) Matthew 16:16-18: "And Simon Peter answered and said, Thou art the Christ, the Son of the living God. And Jesus answered and said unto him, Blessed art thou, Simon Barjona: for flesh and blood hath not revealed *it* unto thee, but my Father which is in heaven. And I say also unto thee, That thou art Peter, and upon this rock I will build my church; and the gates of hell shall not prevail against it."
 - b) Acts 2:22-24: "Ye men of Israel, hear these words; Jesus of Nazareth, a man approved of God among you by miracles and wonders and signs, which God did by him in the midst of you, as ye yourselves also know: Him, being delivered by the determinate counsel and foreknowledge of God, ye have taken, and by wicked hands have crucified and slain: Whom God hath raised up, having loosed the pains of death: because it was not possible that he should be holden of it."
 - 2) "Forasmuch then as the children are partakers of flesh and blood, he also himself likewise took part of the same; that through death he might destroy him that had the power of death, that is, the devil" (Heb 2:14).
 - 3) "...When he ascended up on high, he led captivity captive..." (Eph. 4:8).
 - 4) "For since by man came death, by man came also the resurrection of the dead. For as in Adam all die, even so in Christ shall all be made alive....For he must reign, till he hath put all enemies under his feet. The last enemy that shall be destroyed is death" (1 Cor. 15:21-22, 25-26).
 - 5) "And the times of this ignorance God winked at; but now commandeth all men every where to repent: Because he hath appointed a day, in the which he will judge the world in righteousness by that man whom he hath ordained; whereof he hath given assurance unto all men, in that he hath raised him from the dead" (Acts 17:30-31).
- g. **Thou shalt bruise his heel.** This is a reference to the severe, though not fatal [for all time], wound inflicted by the devil on Christ when he was crucified. Satan doubtless thought he had gained the ultimate victory over God. But his "victory" was short-lived for on the third day the Son of God came forth from the hades
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realm, re-entered his physical body, never to die again (Col. 1:18; Eph. 1:19-23).

- 1) The ultimate, complete victory of Christ over Satan was assured when he was raised from the dead. Truly, a death-blow was administered to the devil on that glorious morning! It was a blow from which he can never recover. Every Christian has the power now to resist the devil and cause him to flee (Jas. 4:7); and the eventual resurrection of everyone from the dead has been made certain (John 5:28-29; Acts 24:15; 1 Thess. 4:13-18; Rev. 20:15-20).
- 2) "Thus, this twenty-seven word promise of healing for the sins of Adam's race conveyed limited information, but the significance of it is unlimited. In the light of subsequent events, it comprises as comprehensive and definite a statement of God's Plan of Redemption as could have been devised in so few words. Here is a summary of what is included: (1) it outlines the doctrine of the Incarnation, (2) and of the Virgin Birth, (3) has a prophecy of the crucifixion, and (4) of the final overthrow of Satan in hell, (5) announces the ultimate overthrow of evil, (6) the long agony of the human race, and (7) provides a message of hope and salvation for fallen humanity" (Coffman, p. 68).
3. Verse 16: "Unto the woman he said, I will greatly multiply thy sorrow and thy conception; in sorrow thou shalt bring forth children; and thy desire *shall be* to thy husband, and he shall rule over thee."
 - a. The punishment of the woman is delineated. A sentence was pronounced on Eve (and to her female descendants). "That the woman should bear children was the original will of God; but it was a punishment that henceforth she was to bear them in sorrow, i.e, with pains which threatened her own life as well as that of the child" (Keil, p. 103).
 - b. It appears from the statement of the verse that originally childbirth was not intended to be so painful to the woman. It does not appear that the females of the lower creation are in any significant pain while giving birth to their young. The statement also seems to indicate that women were to suffer in many ways, in addition (and in particular) to that of childbearing. The punishment in connection with childbearing is not in the fact of giving birth, but in the pain of birth. Moreover, many women suffer "morning sickness" during their pregnancy. And there are other negative side effects.
 - c. "Thy desire shall be to thy husband and he shall rule over thee." Women have a strong attraction for their husbands which cannot be obliterated from their nature. The man is designated as the head of the woman (in marriage); it is God's purpose that they be partners in this union, but that the authority and responsibility reside with the man: "But I would have you know, that the head of every man is Christ; and the head of the woman is the man; and the head of Christ is God" (1 Cor. 11:3; cf. Eph. 5:22-32).
 - d. This authority does not give the man the right to mistreat his wife, or become overbearing or despotic. Rather, husbands are to love their wives as Christ loved the church. Christ was willing to lay down his life for the church; the husband is to have this kind of love for his wife. This love will preclude any mistreatment or abuse of her. And the wife is commanded to obey her husband in all things that are right. The gospel exalts the role and status of women. Modern thought is that women are discriminated against if they are required to be submissive to the husband, or cannot do the same things men can do in the church. 1 Timothy 2:8-15 pictures their relative roles; one is not exalted over the other; each is simply given different roles to fulfill.
4. Verses 17-19: "And unto Adam he said, Because thou hast hearkened unto the voice of thy wife, and hast eaten of the tree, of which I commanded thee, saying, Thou shalt not eat of it: cursed *is* the ground for thy sake; in sorrow shalt thou eat *of* it all the days of thy life; Thorns also and thistles shall it bring forth to thee; and thou shalt eat the herb of the field; In the sweat of thy face shalt thou eat bread, till thou return unto the ground; for out of it wast thou taken: for dust thou *art*, and unto dust shalt thou return."
 - a. The punishment would be on Adam and his male offspring. The reason for the penalty was because Adam "hearkened unto the voice" of Eve and ate the fruit in violation of God's plain command to the contrary. Adam should have attempted to persuade Eve not to eat; if this had failed he should have refused to join her in the transgression. However, he sinned in full knowledge of what he was doing (1 Tim 2:14).
 - b. **Cursed is the ground for thy sake.** "It should be particularly noted that God's purpose in all of these judgments upon Adam and Eve was benign. God at once imposed upon the ground limitations and penalties against men, not as the mere punishment which disobedience had deserved, but as a means of a continual reminder of man's fallen estate, and as a means of hedging him in and procuring his seeking after God....God simply re-ordered this physical world in such a way that man would never be able to make himself too cozy in his state of rebellion against his Creator" (Coffman, p. 69). The curse was extensive, but none of us can know the full extent. Eden was a special place for man before the fall into sin. After sin entered human experience, Adam was cast out of the garden into a situation that was not nearly as

hospitable. (See Warren's, *Have Atheists Proved There Is No God?*, pp.44ff). Nature cooperated with Adam in the Garden; outside Paradise he had to struggle for his living. This struggle, with all its manifestations, is necessary in order for man to be spiritually, physically, emotionally, and socially mature.

- c. **In sorrow (in toil) shalt thou eat of it all the days of thy life.** In order to coax a living from the earth, man must toil, and by hard labor gain his living. Man's very existence depends on what he obtains from the ground, directly or indirectly. "The curse pronounced on man's account upon the soil created for him, consisted in the fact, that the earth no longer yielded spontaneously the fruits requisite for his maintenance, but the man was obliged to force out the necessities of life by labour and strenuous exertion" (Keil, p.104). This is but another consequence of sin!
- d. **Thorns also and thistles shall it bring forth to thee.** These tend to grow without any effort on man's part. Indeed, despite man's effort to stifle their progress, they prosper and thwart man. The good and profitable crops must be planted and nurtured with care and effort. Do you need a reminder of the grievousness of sin? Take note of the weeds, thorns, thistles, etc., with which you must contend!
- e. **Thou shalt eat the herb of the field.** Adam could no longer eat the delicacies of Eden. Now he must eat that which he produced through diligent effort, and against the assaults of the thorns and thistles and other forces of nature. We have no right to blame God for crop failures, droughts, famines, locusts, etc. Sin in the long ago forced these upon us! "Everything injurious to man in the organic, vegetable and animal creation, is the effect of the curse pronounced upon the earth for Adam's sin, however little we may be able to explain the manner in which the curse was carried into effect..." (Keil, p. 105).
- f. **In the sweat of thy face shalt thou eat bread.** Man must labor for his food, and this would produce sweat. Hot, tiresome labor is another consequence of sin.
- g. **Till thou return unto the ground; for out of it wast thou taken: for dust thou art, and unto dust shalt thou return.**
 - 1) Death for all men is assured with the exception of those alive when the Lord returns; these will not die in the common manner (1 Cor. 15:51-53; 1 Thess. 4:13-18; cf. Heb. 9:27; Jas. 4:13-14; Ps. 90:9-12).
 - 2) Man's physical body is assembled from various elements of the earth; these elements will invariably be returned to mother earth after the spirit leaves the body (Jas. 2:26; Eccl. 12:7).
 - 3) The fulfillment of the threat of Genesis 2:16-17 began to take effect immediately after their disobedience. From that moment they began to die physically (i.e., their bodies began to age), though their actual death was many years in the future. The instant they violated God's command, they lost their fellowship (their special standing) with God: thus their spiritual separation from God [spiritual death] was instantaneous.

D. Genesis 3:20-24: Adam and Eve Removed from the Garden.

1. Verse 20: "And Adam called his wife's name Eve; because she was the mother of all living."
 - a. Adam provided a name for his wife. *Eve* means "living." She was appropriately named for she became the mother of all other human beings. This answers the question as to where Cain later got his wife: he married a sister. There would not be the danger then as we have now in marrying a close relative. God would protect them initially from these dangers.
 - b. The verse emphasizes again that Adam and Eve were the first pair. Compare: "And hath made of one blood all nations of men for to dwell on all the face of the earth, and hath determined the times before appointed, and the bounds of their habitation" (Acts 17:26).
2. Verse 21: "Unto Adam also and to his wife did the LORD God make coats of skins, and clothed them."
 - a. Despite man's sin, God still had an interest in him: he provided them with clothing to cover their shame and protect them from the elements.
 - b. Animal-rights advocates would have taken issue with God for killing animals in order to furnish Adam and Eve proper clothing, but since it was right for him to do so then, it is right for us to do so today.
3. Verses 22-24: "And the LORD God said, Behold, the man is become as one of us, to know good and evil: and now, lest he put forth his hand, and take also of the tree of life, and eat, and live for ever: Therefore the LORD God sent him forth from the garden of Eden, to till the ground from whence he was taken. So he drove out the man; and he placed at the east of the garden of Eden Cherubims, and a flaming sword which turned every way, to keep the way of the tree of life."
 - a. They were driven from the garden to keep them from the tree of life, The "us" is a reference to the Divine Trinity.
 - 1) Matthew 3:13-17: "Then cometh Jesus from Galilee to Jordan unto John, to be baptized of him. But John forbad him, saying, I have need to be baptized of thee, and comest thou to me? And Jesus

answering said unto him, Suffer *it to be so* now: for thus it becometh us to fulfil all righteousness. Then he suffered him. And Jesus, when he was baptized, went up straightway out of the water: and, lo, the heavens were opened unto him, and he saw the Spirit of God descending like a dove, and lighting upon him: And lo a voice from heaven, saying, This is my beloved Son, in whom I am well pleased."

- 2) John 8:15-18: "Ye judge after the flesh; I judge no man. And yet if I judge, my judgment is true: for I am not alone, but I and the Father that sent me. It is also written in your law, that the testimony of two men is true. I am one that bear witness of myself, and the Father that sent me beareth witness of me."
- b. The implication is that if they had remained in Eden they could have eaten from the Tree of Life and lived perpetually. They had become evil, thus their lives could only have gotten worse and worse. Death is in the best interest of humanity. If there were no death, the sick would get sicker, the wicked would become more wicked; but there would be no way to rid the world of the wicked or for the terminally sick to recover. Life would be unbearable, and there would be no release.
 - c. They were driven from Eden for man's sake, not because of any threat they posed to the supremacy of God. They were not Gods, but had learned evil by experience; God knew about evil by his infinite knowledge and wisdom.
 - d. They were expelled from Eden and the approaches to the garden were guarded by angelic soldiers to prevent their re-entry. Thus is concluded man's first sad episode. We are not told how long the entrances were guarded, or what eventually happened to Eden.
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GENESIS 4

A. Genesis 4:1-8: Cain and Abel.

1. This chapter of Genesis lays down the basis for the later destruction of the world by the Great Flood by showing the evil introduced into the world by Cain and his offspring. The story of Cain and Abel is attested to by the inspired writers of the New Testament:
 - a. Matthew 23:35: "That upon you may come all the righteous blood shed upon the earth, from the blood of righteous Abel unto the blood of Zacharias son of Barachias, whom ye slew between the temple and the altar."
 - b. Hebrews 11:4: "By faith Abel offered unto God a more excellent sacrifice than Cain, by which he obtained witness that he was righteous, God testifying of his gifts: and by it he being dead yet speaketh."
 - c. Hebrews 12:24: "And to Jesus the mediator of the new covenant, and to the blood of sprinkling, that speaketh better things than *that of* Abel."
 - d. 1 John 3:12: "Not as Cain, *who* was of that wicked one, and slew his brother. And wherefore slew he him? Because his own works were evil, and his brother's righteous."
 - e. Jude 11: "Woe unto them! for they have gone in the way of Cain, and ran greedily after the error of Balaam for reward, and perished in the gainsaying of Core."
2. "Eating of the forbidden tree might have appeared to Adam and Eve as a minor event, but when they stood by the grave of Abel the true nature of what they had done began to be visible; but even that heart-breaking sorrow was only the first little pebble of that tremendous avalanche that would soon engulf all mankind in the floods of the great Deluge" (Coffman, p.73).
3. Verses 1-2: "And Adam knew Eve his wife; and she conceived, and bare Cain, and said, I have gotten a man from the LORD. And she again bare his brother Abel. And Abel was a keeper of sheep, but Cain was a tiller of the ground."
 - a. The birth of Adam and Eve's offspring did not begin until after their expulsion from Eden. The record indicates that Cain and Abel were the first of their children of which there were many (5:4). Adam was 130 years old when Seth was born (5:3). We are not told why Eve did not conceive during their time in the garden; perhaps they were not in Eden long enough, or perhaps it was due to providential hindrance. But now they became parents of the two boys named.
 - b. Adam knew his wife—a reference to the marital union—the consequence of which was the conception of Cain. Because this phrase (knew his wife) is not specifically used in connection with the conception of Abel, some scholars have supposed that Cain and Abel were twins. But this is speculation.
 - c. "Cain" means "acquisition" or "possession"; the name "Abel" means "breath, vapor, vanity." Cain was so-named because Eve observed that she and "gotten a man from the Lord." Why she named Abel as she did is not apparent. The fact that Eve provided the names of these sons indicates the antiquity of these events; later this privilege was assumed by the father.
 - d. Abel became a shepherd and Cain was a farmer. Each of these honorable professions is necessary in order for food and clothing. Diligent, honest labor is commended and commanded by the Bible:
 - 1) Ephesians 4:28: "Let him that stole steal no more: but rather let him labour, working with *his* hands the thing which is good, that he may have to give to him that needeth."
 - 2) 2 Thessalonians 3:6-14: "Now we command you, brethren, in the name of our Lord Jesus Christ, that ye withdraw yourselves from every brother that walketh disorderly, and not after the tradition which he received of us. For yourselves know how ye ought to follow us: for we behaved not ourselves disorderly among you; Neither did we eat any man's bread for nought; but wrought with labour and travail night and day, that we might not be chargeable to any of you: Not because we have not power, but to make ourselves an ensample unto you to follow us. For even when we were with you, this we commanded you, that if any would not work, neither should he eat. For we hear that there are some which walk among you disorderly, working not at all, but are busybodies. Now them that are such we command and exhort by our Lord Jesus Christ, that with quietness they work, and eat their own bread. But ye, brethren, be not weary in well doing. And if any man obey not our word by this epistle, note that man, and have no company with him, that he may be ashamed."
 - 3) 1 Timothy 5:8: "But if any provide not for his own, and specially for those of his own house, he hath denied the faith, and is worse than an infidel."
4. Verses 3-5: "And in process of time it came to pass, that Cain brought of the fruit of the ground an offering unto

the LORD. And Abel, he also brought of the firstlings of his flock and of the fat thereof. And the LORD had respect unto Abel and to his offering: But unto Cain and to his offering he had not respect. And Cain was very wroth, and his countenance fell."

- a. In process of time Cain and Abel offered sacrifices to God. Most modern scholars and preachers have a reluctance or inability to see why their sacrifices met with such different attitudes on God's part. Some have charged Cain with having an impure heart and impure motives. There is no reason to think Cain was impure prior to this occasion. The evil attitude of Cain did not appear until after his sacrifice was rejected by the Lord. The relative monetary value of their sacrifices is not indicated by the text. Cain brought of the fruit of the ground; Abel brought of the firstlings of his flock and the fat thereof (the choicest of the choice). Why was Abel's accepted? Why not Cain's? The facts of the case are easily established by an appeal to New Testament Scriptures.
 - 1) Hebrews 11:4: "By faith Abel offered unto God a more excellent sacrifice than Cain, by which he obtained witness that he was righteous, God testifying of his gifts: and by it he being dead yet speaketh."
 - 2) Romans 10:17: "So then faith *cometh* by hearing, and hearing by the word of God." Where there is no testimony from God there can be no faith; one cannot do by faith a thing which the Bible does not authorize: "Whosoever transgresseth, and abideth not in the doctrine of Christ, hath not God. He that abideth in the doctrine of Christ, he hath both the Father and the Son" (2 John 9).
 - 3) Acts 15:7: "And when there had been much disputing, Peter rose up, and said unto them, Men and brethren, ye know how that a good while ago God made choice among us, that the Gentiles by my mouth should hear the word of the gospel, and believe."
 - b. The reason why one was accepted and the other rejected was that Abel's was offered by faith (i.e., in harmony with God's instructions); Cain's was rejected because it was not by faith (was not in harmony with God's instructions).
 - 1) Although no specific mention is given in the record of Genesis four concerning God giving Cain and Abel instructions about the sacrifice, those instructions are required by the fact that Abel offered his sacrifice "by faith." God has never been a respecter of persons; there must be some objective standard by which he accepted one and rejected the other.
 - 2) Even if the basis of this acceptance or rejection was the impurity of Cain's heart (which cannot be proved), there would still have been a divine standard they each must meet—to offer the sacrifice with pure hearts and motives.
 - c. Abel's sacrifice was "more excellent" than Cain's. It was more excellent because he offered it in accordance with God's instructions (cf. Matt 21:23-27). The Lord showed in this passage that everything one does in the spiritual/religious realm is done by the authority of God or by the authority of man (according to God's plan or according to man's plan). What man plans in religion always fails to bring God's blessings; doing God's will always brings his blessings.
 - d. Where there is no law there is no sin (Rom. 4:15; 1 John 3:4). What Cain did constituted a sin; therefore, God had a law governing the sacrifice.
 - 1) Psalms 119:172: "My tongue shall speak of thy word: for all thy commandments *are* righteous-ness."
 - 2) Acts 10:34-35: "Then Peter opened his mouth, and said, Of a truth I perceive that God is no respecter of persons: But in every nation he that feareth him, and worketh righteousness, is accepted with him."
 - 3) Romans 4:15: "Because the law worketh wrath: for where no law is, *there is* no transgression."
 - 4) Romans 5:13: "For until the law sin was in the world: but sin is not imputed when there is no law."
 - 5) 1 John 3:4: "Whosoever committeth sin transgresseth also the law: for sin is the transgression of the law."
 - 6) 1 John 3:12: "Not as Cain, *who* was of that wicked one, and slew his brother. And wherefore slew he him? Because his own works were evil, and his brother's righteous."
5. Verses 5-7: "But unto Cain and to his offering he had not respect. And Cain was very wroth, and his countenance fell. And the LORD said unto Cain, Why art thou wroth? and why is thy countenance fallen? If thou doest well, shalt thou not be accepted? and if thou doest not well, sin lieth at the door. And unto thee *shall* be his desire, and thou shalt rule over him."
- a. When Cain knew that his offering had been rejected, he was very wroth (angry) and his countenance fell. He was sorely disappointed. It appears that he had wanted his sacrifice to be accepted, but when it was rejected, he became distraught, angry, and embittered.
 - b. Why art thou wroth? God was not asking for information but chose this as a means, as he had in the case of Adam, of confronting Cain with his error. "He seeks to lead Cain to consider why he is angry and why

his countenance is fallen with the desire that such contemplation will lead him to consider why his offering was not acceptable" (ALC, 1973, p.206).

- c. Cain may have been angry at himself, or at Abel since his brother's offering was accepted, or at God because his requirements were high and unchangeable.
- d. His countenance fell. Reference may be to the fact he looked to the ground and would not lift up his eyes toward God. If so, it was through shame and guilt. Remember how Adam and Eve tried to hide themselves from God. Perhaps the statement means that he was crestfallen and dejected over being rejected.
- e. Verse seven is probably the most difficult in the chapter: "If thou doest well, shalt thou not be accepted? and if thou doest not well, sin lieth at the door. And unto thee *shall be* his desire, and thou shalt rule over him."

Two explanations suggested:

- 1) "Even recognizing that Cain had done wrong, God here seems to offer him hope for the future. To Cain, God says, in effect, 'Even though you have done wrong (in not offering properly your sacrifice) there is opportunity for you to rectify your ways: repent and become obedient to my instructions. But, if you do not repent and amend your ways, sin will be at your door (as a wild beast) ever ready to devour you. Thus, you must be ruler over sin—you must master the temptation which confronts you'" (ALC, p.206). This view fits the verse and general context better than the following view.
 - 2) "This is one of the most difficult and disputed verses in Genesis, the problem being the identity of what is referred to in 'sin lieth at the door'....The word for 'sin' in this passage means 'sin offering, a common meaning of the word in scripture, as in Hosea 4:8, 2 Corinthians 5:21, and Hebrews 9:28'....Clement of Rome...correctly concluded that something was wrong with the sacrifice. Understanding 'sin offering' as the thing mentioned here strongly reinforces the necessary conclusion that the institution of sacrifice was already established and that God had laid down certain rules with reference to it, which rules Cain violated....Adam Clarke wrote, 'I have observed more than a hundred places in the OT where the word here is used for sin offering', and there is positively no reason whatever for understanding it differently here. To borrow Clarke's paraphrase of what God said, 'An animal proper to be offered as atonement for sin is now couching at the door of thy fold.'" (Coffman, pp.77f).
6. Verse 8: "And Cain talked with Abel his brother: and it came to pass, when they were in the field, that Cain rose up against Abel his brother, and slew him."
- a. Cain talked with his brother. What about? Perhaps to tell him what God had said although it appears strange that he would do so. The ASV says, "And Cain told Abel his brother." It may be that he coaxed Abel out into the field where he had opportunity to kill him. We cannot know whether it was premeditated murder or murder out of a fit of anger; the outcome is the same in either case.
 - 1) We do know what 1 John 3:12 said in describing the event: "Not as Cain, who was of that wicked one, and slew his brother. And wherefore slew he him? Because his own works were evil, and his brother's righteous."
 - 2) Incidentally, here is another point to show why Abel's sacrifice was accepted: it was righteous; a thing is righteous when it is done in accordance with God's word (Acts 10:34-35; Ps. 119:172).
 - b. It is interesting to notice that the first innovator was also the first murderer among Adam's race. An innovator is one who changes God's instructions. Innovators try to justify their actions.
 - c. One sin often leads to others, often more grievous than the first. Cain started out by substituting his own brand of offering for that which God had required; he was filled with anger at his being rejected, and envy over his brother's being accepted; he proceeded to murder Abel, and then to other sins in a vain attempt to conceal his crime.
 - d. "Not as Cain, who was of that wicked one, and slew his brother. And wherefore slew he him? Because his own works were evil, and his brother's righteous" (1 John 3:12). Cain was in the devil's family and slew his brother. "The word translated 'slew' here (*sphazo*) means, literally, to butcher, to slit the throat with a knife; and from this it may be inferred that this was the manner in which Cain took the life of Abel. If the word is to be taken in its literal import, this conclusion follows, though it is, of course, possible that it is used figuratively to kill, and thus without any indication of the method by which the murder took place" (Guy Woods, *Commentary on 1 John*, p.275).

B. Genesis 4:9-15: God Confronts Cain With His Sin.

1. Verse 9: "And the LORD said unto Cain, Where *is* Abel thy brother? And he said, I know not: *Am* I my brother's keeper?"
 - a. The Lord's question was designed to bring Cain face to face with his misdeed; it was God's intention obviously to get him to repent. When his parents were caught in their sin, they admitted it, reluctantly; but

- Cain told an outright lie. "I don't know where Abel is."
- b. He then tried to evade any responsibility in regards to his brother with his next statement: "Am I my brother's keeper?" He evidently thought he could keep God from discovering his crime. He lied, showed his indifference toward his brother, and remained impenitent; his sins of hatred, envy and murder rapidly grew into other sins.
 - c. Cain tried to excuse himself by denying that he had any responsibility to watch over his brother. *I cannot watch him all the time.*
2. Verse 10: "And he said, What hast thou done? the voice of thy brother's blood crieth unto me from the ground."
- a. "What hast thou done?" God charges Cain with the crime for he says that Abel's blood cries to Him from the ground. "Innocent blood has no voice, it may be, that is discernible by human ears, but it has one that reaches God, as the cry of a wicked deed demanding vengeance" (Keil, p.113).
 - b. The death of the saints is precious in the sight of God (Ps. 116:15). "God saw fit to include and preserve in his endless word the account of righteous Abel's faithfulness and untimely demise. The idiomatic statement concerning Abel's blood crying unto God from the earth has captivated the attention and imagination of the men of all generations. The writer of Hebrews mentioned, 'The blood of sprinkling that speaketh better things than the blood of Abel'" (Heb. 12:24) (Coffman, p.79).
 - c. "This is truly an emphatic way of bringing before the mind of Cain the enormous wrong of the sin he had committed. The question, along with the succeeding accusation, made clear to the cringing murderer that his crime was known to God. Oh, how each one of us should ever remember the words of the Psalmist, 'Jehovah, thou hast searched me, and know me. Thou knowest my downsitting and mine uprising; thou understandest my thought afar off. Thou searchest out my path and my lying down, and art acquainted with all my ways. For there is not a word in my tongue, but lo, Jehovah, thou knowest it altogether.' (Psalm 139: 1-4)" (ALC, 1973, p. 207).
 - d. What does the blood of Abel say? (Heb. 11:4). Coffman gave the following points:
 - 1) That God will one day avenge the crimes perpetrated against the innocent: "Dearly beloved, avenge not yourselves, but *rather* give place unto wrath: for it is written, Vengeance *is* mine; I will repay, saith the Lord" (Romans 12:19).
 - 2) That the righteous are hated without cause: "For this is the message that ye heard from the beginning, that we should love one another. Not as Cain, *who* was of that wicked one, and slew his brother. And wherefore slew he him? Because his own works were evil, and his brother's righteous. Marvel not, my brethren, if the world hate you" (1 John 3:11-13).
 - 3) That it does make a difference how men worship Almighty God.
 - 4) That faith is the only key to winning approval of God: "But without faith *it is* impossible to please *him*: for he that cometh to God must believe that he is, and *that* he is a rewarder of them that diligently seek him" (Heb. 11:6).
 - 5) That the only righteousness is in obeying the word of the Lord: "For I am not ashamed of the gospel of Christ: for it is the power of God unto salvation to every one that believeth; to the Jew first, and also to the Greek. For therein is the righteousness of God revealed from faith to faith: as it is written, The just shall live by faith" (Romans 1:16,17).
3. Verses 11-12: "And now *art* thou cursed from the earth, which hath opened her mouth to receive thy brother's blood from thy hand; When thou tillest the ground, it shall not henceforth yield unto thee her strength; a fugitive and a vagabond shalt thou be in the earth."
- a. This cursing is an extension of the curse placed upon the ground for Adam's sake: "And unto Adam he said, Because thou hast hearkened unto the voice of thy wife, and hast eaten of the tree, of which I commanded thee, saying, Thou shalt not eat of it: cursed *is* the ground for thy sake; in sorrow shalt thou eat *of* it all the days of thy life" (Gen. 3:17). There is no record of any curse being placed upon any man prior to this.
 - b. "Because the earth has been compelled to drink innocent blood, it rebels against the murderer, and when he tills it, withdraws its strength, so that the soil yields no produce; just as the land of Canaan is said to have spued out the Canaanites, on account of their abominations (Lev. 18:28)" (Keil, p.114). The fertile soil would not yield to his efforts as otherwise would have been the case. (We still suffer from the consequences of Adam's sin). Cain is to be a fugitive and wanderer.
 - c. "Heinous crime makes a coward of a man. His thoughts will *accuse* him wherever he goes. These constant self-accusations will make a coward out of him: his crime will be ever before him. He will flinch and turn at any sudden unexpected noise. He will do so because he is expecting the arm of the law or some avenging friend (of his victim) to pounce upon him at any moment. He will cry out in the night—during his
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- nightmarish dreams the blood of his victim cries out to him, and the victim's avenger pursues him in his dreams. Well did the writer of Proverbs say, 'The wicked flee when no man pursueth; but the righteous are bold as a lion.' (Prov. 28:1)" (ALC, 1973, p. 207).
- d. "Cain is later represented as going out and building a city; and from this we should conclude that the principal thing in view in this was probably the constant flight of wicked people loaded with guilt and apprehension. The grossly wicked are precisely the people in every community that are 'fleeing'... This does not exclude the other meaning, namely, that of a nomadic existence" (Coffman, p. 80).
4. Verse 13: "And Cain said unto the LORD, My punishment *is* greater than I can bear."
 - a. Cain complains of his punishment: "It is greater than I can bear!" He thought he was being mistreated by the Lord. He is not remorseful over his ill-treatment of his brother, but complains bitterly over the just punishment he receives.
 - b. This is the typical reaction of criminals over getting caught. Cain's punishment included:
 - 1) The ground would resist his tillage.
 - 2) He was cut off from God.
 - 3) He was in fear of death.
 - 4) He was cut off from man.
 5. Verse 14: "Behold, thou hast driven me out this day from the face of the earth; and from thy face shall I be hid; and I shall be a fugitive and a vagabond in the earth; and it shall come to pass, *that* every one that findeth me shall slay me."
 - a. Cain complains that he is being driven away "from the face of the earth"—from the area where his parents (and perhaps other brothers and sisters, 5:4) lived; the inhabited part of the earth. He was sent from the presence of the Lord: he could no longer be counted as part of the faithful; God would not be with him in the same sense or degree as before Abel's murder. Sin separates.
 - 1) Isaiah 59:1-2: "Behold, the LORD'S hand is not shortened, that it cannot save; neither his ear heavy, that it cannot hear: But your iniquities have separated between you and your God, and your sins have hid *his* face from you, that he will not hear."
 - 2) Ephesians 2:12: "That at that time ye were without Christ, being aliens from the commonwealth of Israel, and strangers from the covenants of promise, having no hope, and without God in the world."
 - b. Cain was fearful that others would slay him because of his murder. Critics have used this passage to assert that this event is mythical or that it occurred much later than the text indicates. In either case, they attack the integrity of the book, and hence, of the entire Bible. Cain's point may be in anticipation of other children being born to his parents, and that they, on becoming mature, would seek to avenge their brother's death by killing Cain.
 - c. Or, as more than likely is the case, Adam and Eve had already brought many children into the world. They lived for many centuries, and were no doubt able to reproduce far beyond the current age limitations. Adam lived 930 years (5:5). He was 130 years old when Seth was born. Eve was the same age as her husband; thus she brought forth Seth when she was 130 years old. We are not told how old she lived to be.
 - d. "In should be particularly noted that nothing in this chapter indicates either that Cain was the firstborn of Adam and Eve, or that these two were the only children they had. Commentators who speak as if such conclusions were true are ignoring the fact of this entire section of Genesis being an extremely condensed and abbreviated narrative. Adam and Eve lived many centuries and had 'sons and daughters' (5:4); and the total number of their children could well have been fantastic. Furthermore, the arbitrary placement of this episode in close proximity to the expulsion from Eden is forbidden by the words, 'In process of time,' in the very next verse (4:31). Right here is the true explanation of why Cain was afraid that he would be killed, following the murder of his brother, and also the true explanation of where he got his wife" (Coffman, p.75).
 6. Verse 15: "And the LORD said unto him, Therefore whosoever slayeth Cain, vengeance shall be taken on him sevenfold. And the LORD set a mark upon Cain, lest any finding him should kill him."
 - a. God "marked" Cain to prevent his being slain. What this mark was, we are not told. Several traditions exist concerning this mark, and other speculative notions have been suggested, from it being some kind of tattoo, to it being a dog to accompany and protect Cain. According to Clarke, various authors opined that it was: a horn growing from his forehead; the letter "tau" which stands for the Hebrew word for "repentance"; that he was a paralytic; a circle of the sun rising upon him; that made him impervious to drowning, hot air, thunder and lightning.
 - b. "The mark...is not to be regarded as a mark upon his body, as the rabbins and others have supposed, but as
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a certain sign which protected him from vengeance, though of what kind it is impossible to determine" (Keil, p.115).

- c. "Of greater interest is the fact that God did not punish Cain with death immediately; but this was not done, in all probability, because it was God's purpose to allow those generations immediately after Adam to run their course in headlong wickedness which would issue ultimately in a new beginning for humanity, following the Flood. Of significance too is the thought that the mercy of God for Cain was still available had he been willing to seek it" (Coffman, p.81).
 - 1) Ezekiel 18:31-32: "Cast away from you all your transgressions, whereby ye have transgressed; and make you a new heart and a new spirit: for why will ye die, O house of Israel? For I have no pleasure in the death of him that dieth, saith the Lord GOD: wherefore turn *yourselves*, and live ye."
 - 2) Romans 2:4: "Or despisest thou the riches of his goodness and forbearance and longsuffering; not knowing that the goodness of God leadeth thee to repentance?"
 - 3) 2 Peter 3:9: "The Lord is not slack concerning his promise, as some men count slackness; but is longsuffering to us-ward, not willing that any should perish, but that all should come to repentance."
- d. Cain's descendants all perished in the flood. Even if the mark was something visible or physical, all vestiges of it would have ended with the flood.
- e. If one assumes that Adam and Eve, and each succeeding marriage, produced 10 children and these children all intermarried, then by the time of Enoch (the 7th from Adam, Jude 14), there would have been 195,312 to have lived on earth. If 50% of these were still living at Enoch's time, the population would be 97,656. These numbers were produced by human wisdom and may be very, very low. Others have figured that the population reached into many millions of mankind.

C. Genesis 4:16-24: The Descendants of Cain.

1. Verses 16-18: "And Cain went out from the presence of the LORD, and dwelt in the land of Nod, on the east of Eden. And Cain knew his wife; and she conceived, and bare Enoch: and he builded a city, and called the name of the city, after the name of his son, Enoch. And unto Enoch was born Irad: and Irad begat Mehujael: and Mehujael begat Methusael: and Methusael begat Lamech."
 - a. One cannot go beyond the limits of God's knowledge and sight. Cain went from the presence of God as manifested in the Cherubims guarding Eden. The location of Nod is unknown. The name means "wandering"; some have suggested the verse should be translated, "And Cain went out from the presence of the Lord, from the east of Eden, and dwelt a vagabond on the earth" (Clark, p.61).
 - b. Josephus relates an old Jewish tradition: "He augmented his substance with rapine and violence. He excited men to procure pleasures and spells by robbery....His posterity became exceedingly wicked; he was bold in his profligate behavior, in acting unjustly, and doing injuries for gain" (see Coffman, p. 82; Josephus, p. 35).
 - c. Cain knew his wife; they began to raise a family, apparently quite a large one. He built a "city" and named it after his son, Enoch. This is not the Enoch of Jude 14 and Genesis 5:21-24.
 - d. "The construction of a city by Cain will cease to surprise us, if we consider that at the commencement of its erection, centuries had already passed since the creation of man, and Cain's descendants may by this time have increased considerably in numbers; also, (city) does not necessarily presuppose a large town, but simply an enclosed space with fortified dwellings, in contradistinction to the isolated tents of shepherds; and lastly, the words (he was building) merely indicate the commencement and progress of the building, but not its termination" (Keil, p.116).
 - e. "The similarity of some of the names of this genealogy to some of those in the genealogy of Seth is used as an excuse for some to claim that these are actually garbled accounts of the same genealogiesThe very variations in the names used demonstrates their belonging to separate lines...Abraham had a brother and a grandfather named Nahor; there were two Judas' in the Twelve, two Simons in the Twelve; and in the genealogy of Christ one finds such names as Amos, Nahum, Judas, Jesus, two Matthats, Eleazer, and a number of others that may easily be identified with persons outside Jesus' ancestry. There are so many Marys in the Bible..." (Coffman, pp.82f).
 - f. "The identity and similarity of names can prove nothing more than that the two branches of the human race did not keep entirely apart from each other; a fact established by their subsequently inter-marrying" (Keil, p.117).
2. Verses 19-24: "And Lamech took unto him two wives: the name of the one *was* Adah, and the name of the other Zillah. And Adah bare Jabal: he was the father of such as dwell in tents, and *of such as have* cattle. And his brother's name *was* Jubal: he was the father of all such as handle the harp and organ. And Zillah, she also

bare Tubalcain, an instructor of every artificer in brass and iron: and the sister of Tubalcain was Naamah. And Lamech said unto his wives, Adah and Zillah, Hear my voice; ye wives of Lamech, hearken unto my speech: for I have slain a man to my wounding, and a young man to my hurt. If Cain shall be avenged sevenfold, truly Lamech seventy and sevenfold."

- a. Lamech became the first polygamist by taking two wives. He was one of Cain's sons. The meaning of the names of his wives is: Adah (the adorned); Zillah (shady or the tinkling). These names may suggest he chose them for sensual purposes. The purpose of Moses in Genesis is to show the beginnings of certain things. Chapters 1-2 show the beginning of the universe and life on earth; chapter 3 details the beginning of sin; chapter 4 shows the beginning of sacrifice, sinful changing of God's worship, murder, building of cities, of polygamy, of musical instruments, and metal working.
- b. Notice, with the advance of technical progress came a steady decline in morality. "This has been characteristic of 'civilization' throughout the course of Adam's race. The enthronement of sin in the cities of the world begins also to appear in these early records of human development. 'The Bible puts a large question mark against all human endeavor that is not directly related to God.' Technical progress and moral decay seem to be a pattern established quite early in Adam's race" (Coffman, p. 84).
- c. One of Lamech's sons (Jabal) was the first of those who dwell in tents and keep cattle, a term perhaps inclusive of various domesticated animals.
- d. Jubal was the first to invent or use the harp and organ; string and wind types.
- e. Tubalcain was an "instructor" (KJV) or "forger of every cutting instrument of brass and iron" (ASV). His sister's name was Naamah ("pleasantness"). Keil says the term [instructor] means "all kinds of edge-tools for working in metals" (p.118). "Like all the inventions of humanity, the cutting instruments were both a blessing and a curse. They were invaluable in aiding man in cultivation, wood-working, house-building, and food preparation (besides many other useful and necessary things); but here also was the origin of the sword and the dagger! The 'Song of the Sword' that follows at once is a boastful threat supposedly founded upon the thought that with such a weapon as that invented by his son, Lamech would be able to avenge himself" (Coffman p. 84).
- f. According to Keil, the perfect tense of the verb (have slain, verse 23) "is expressive not of a deed accomplished, but of confident assurance...and the suffixes...are to be taken in a passive sense. The idea is this: 'whoever inflicts a wound or stripe on me, whether man or youth, I will put to death; and for every injury done to my person, I will take ten times more vengeance than that with which God promised to avenge the murder of my ancestor Cain" (p. 118). It was God who promised to be the avenger if anyone who slew Cain; but here Lamech asserted he would be able to bring about a 77-fold vengeance on his enemy; he would be more severe and powerful in retaliation than God! This is the oldest poem on record; it concerns murder and vengeance; it displays the arrogance of a wicked man.

D. Genesis 4:25-26: The Birth of Seth.

1. Verse 25: "And Adam knew his wife again; and she bare a son, and called his name Seth: For God, *said she*, hath appointed me another seed instead of Abel, whom Cain slew."
 - a. "The character of the ungodly family of Cainites was now fully developed in Lamech and his children. The history, therefore, turns from them, to indicate briefly the origin of the godly race. After Abel's death, Seth was born; this was during Adam's 130th year.
 - b. "The name Eve used here for God was 'Elohim'; however, she used the word 'Yahweh' (Jehovah) in speaking of God in verse 1. One of the great mis-assumptions of the current crop of Bible splitters is that the name Yahweh (Jehovah) was unknown till God revealed it to Moses at the burning bush (Exodus 3). But right here in this chapter Eve used two different names for God: Yahweh (v.1) and Elohim (v.25). The Exodus account, however, says nothing whatever about God's revelation to Moses concerning the sacred name being the first time that it had been known on earth, but merely reveals that the children of Israel at this stage of their development after four hundred years of slavery in a pagan land were at that time totally ignorant of that holy name" (Coffman, p.86).
 - c. Another seed instead of Abel. Clarke says, "Eve must have received on this occasion some Divine communication, else how could she have known that this son was appointed in the place of Abel, to continue that holy line by which the Messiah was to come?" (p.63).
 - d. The ancestry of Jesus is traced back to Adam through Seth (Luke 3:38). Eve, apparently knowing the faint promise recorded in Genesis 3:15, perhaps thought that Seth was to be the promised seed. It so appears from this verse.
2. Verse 26: "And to Seth, to him also there was born a son; and he called his name Enos: then began men to call

upon the name of the LORD."

- a. "...The great reason for the introduction of Seth and his posterity lies in the fact of their being the line through whom Messiah would eventually be born; but there is another significant thing here: 'Then began men to call upon the name of Jehovah...'" (Coffman, pp. 86f).
 - b. Bible critics think that the name Jehovah did not appear until centuries later, thus they reflect on the integrity of this verse. Instead of correcting their faulty views to be in accord with the Bible, they try to get rid of the verse or the entire chapter as spurious.
 - c. This is a reference to the beginning of public worship of God. Cain and his wicked offspring turned away from God in rebellion; Seth and his righteous descendants turned to God. "Thus, two great streams of humanity become visible in this chapter: the descendants of Cain rushing headlong to destruction, and the feeble beginnings in the descendants of Seth (whose very name meant *weakness*) of the followers of God" (Coffman, p. 87).
 - d. "While the family of Cainites, by the erection of a city, and the invention and development of worldly arts and business, were laying the foundation for the kingdom of this world; the family of the Sethites began, by united invocation of the name of the God of grace, to found and erect the kingdom of God" (Keil, p.120).
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GENESIS 5

A. Genesis 5:1-6: Adam and His Sons.

1. Coffman lists two special problems which are charged against this chapter by Biblical critics: (1) the long lives of the people of this section, and (2) the chronology of the passage which gives 1656 years between the creation and the flood.
 - a. "Regarding the first of these, there is nothing actually unreasonable about the extremely long lives of men in the morning of the race, before ravages of sin and disease had brought about the deterioration of men's bodies. All of the machinery for immortality already exists in the human body; and not even the separation of Adam's race from the 'tree of life' would have prevented longevity in the first few generations....With reference to the problem of a mere 1656 years lying between the Creation and the Flood, this presents no problem at all for the believer who accepts the Bible as true" (Coffman, pp.89f).
 - b. "In the genealogy of the Cainites no ages are given, since this family, as being accursed by God, had no future history. On the other hand, the family of Sethites, which acknowledged God, began from the time of Enos to call upon the name of the Lord, and was therefore preserved and sustained by God, in order that under the training of mercy and judgment the human race might attain the great purpose of its creation" (Keil, pp.120f).
2. Verses 1-2: "This *is* the book of the generations of Adam. In the day that God created man, in the likeness of God made he him; Male and female created he them; and blessed them, and called their name Adam, in the day when they were created."
 - a. The propagation of the race did not commence until after Adam and Eve were put out of the garden. This is a brief recapitulation of the preceding events which serves to introduce the real purpose of the chapter: the history of the descendants of righteous Seth. In the preceding chapter, Moses had detailed briefly the sordid history of ungodly Cain and his descendants. The two great lines of humanity continued until the Flood in which all were destroyed except Noah and his immediate family. They were of Seth's line.
 - b. Some view Adam as a generic name for the human race or for Israel. But the Bible puts it as the beginning of man, the first man. Adam was a type of Christ who would come later as the Great Anti-type (Rom. 5). If there was no real Adam, there could be no anti-type (Christ). Thus, Adam was a historical person. If "Adam" is used simply in reference to mankind, what happened to mankind when Adam died? The facts of the case do not admit such an interpretation; and there is nothing in the context to demand a figurative understanding. We learn from the passage that "Adam" was the family name of the first couple as well as the personal name of the first man. The blessing God gave them included all the benefits of Eden and of their subsequent earthly life.
3. Verses 3-32: "And Adam lived an hundred and thirty years, and begat *a son* in his own likeness, after his image; and called his name Seth: And the days of Adam after he had begotten Seth were eight hundred years: and he begat sons and daughters: And all the days that Adam lived were nine hundred and thirty years: and he died. And Seth lived an hundred and five years, and begat Enos: And Seth lived after he begat Enos eight hundred and seven years, and begat sons and daughters: And all the days of Seth were nine hundred and twelve years: and he died. And Enos lived ninety years, and begat Cainan: And Enos lived after he begat Cainan eight hundred and fifteen years, and begat sons and daughters: And all the days of Enos were nine hundred and five years: and he died. And Cainan lived seventy years, and begat Mahalaleel: And Cainan lived after he begat Mahalaleel eight hundred and forty years, and begat sons and daughters: And all the days of Cainan were nine hundred and ten years: and he died. And Mahalaleel lived sixty and five years, and begat Jared: And Mahalaleel lived after he begat Jared eight hundred and thirty years, and begat sons and daughters: And all the days of Mahalaleel were eight hundred ninety and five years: and he died. And Jared lived an hundred sixty and two years, and he begat Enoch: And Jared lived after he begat Enoch eight hundred years, and begat sons and daughters: And all the days of Jared were nine hundred sixty and two years: and he died. And Enoch lived sixty and five years, and begat Methuselah: And Enoch walked with God after he begat Methuselah three hundred years, and begat sons and daughters: And all the days of Enoch were three hundred sixty and five years: And Enoch walked with God: and he *was* not; for God took him. And Methuselah lived an hundred eighty and seven years, and begat Lamech: And Methuselah lived after he begat Lamech seven hundred eighty and two years, and begat sons and daughters: And all the days of Methuselah were nine hundred sixty and nine years: and he died. And Lamech lived an hundred eighty and two years, and begat a son: And he called his name Noah, saying, This *same* shall comfort us concerning our work and toil of our hands, because of the ground which the

LORD hath cursed. And Lamech lived after he begat Noah five hundred ninety and five years, and begat sons and daughters: And all the days of Lamech were seven hundred seventy and seven years: and he died. And Noah was five hundred years old: and Noah begat Shem, Ham, and Japheth."

- a. God had created Adam in his own image; after the fall, Adam is said to have begotten a son in *his* own image. The most important person in the line of descendants was not necessarily the one born first. From God's viewpoint, Seth was the most important son of Adam as far as the lineage is concerned. Seth was God's choice from whom Christ was to come. Five points are given in the following genealogies: lived # years; begat (name); lived after # years; begat (others); and died.
- b. The following chart gives the essentials of the genealogy of the chapter:

PATRIARCH	AGE AT	BIRTH OF	YEARS AFTER	TOTAL YEARS
Adam	130	Seth	800	930
Seth	105	Enos	807	912
Enos	90	Cainan	815	905
Cainan	70	Mahalaleel	840	910
Mahalaleel	65	Jared	830	895
Jared	162	Enoch	800	962
Enoch	65	Methuselah	300	365
Methuselah	187	Lamech	782	969
Lamech	182	Noah	595	777
Noah	500	Shem, Ham, Japheth	350 (After the Flood)	950

- c. The issue of whether the genealogy is to be taken as a full, literal genealogy or if it is intended only as representative (a partial listing) of the whole lineage is hotly contested. It is asserted by some that all of the generations are not listed (only the prominent men). Coffman claims that Hebrew writers commonly omitted names from genealogies, and that therefore this list is not to be understood as full and complete. However, Jude 14 says that Enoch was the seventh from Adam, which is just the case in Genesis 5. "And Jesus himself began to be about thirty years of age, being (as was supposed) the son of Joseph, which was *the son* of Heli, 24 Which was *the son* of Matthat, which was *the son* of Levi, which was *the son* of Melchi, which was *the son* of Janna, which was *the son* of Joseph, 25 Which was *the son* of Mattathias, which was *the son* of Amos, which was *the son* of Naum, which was *the son* of Esli, which was *the son* of Nagge, 26 Which was *the son* of Maath, which was *the son* of Mattathias, which was *the son* of Semei, which was *the son* of Joseph, which was *the son* of Juda, 27 Which was *the son* of Joanna, which was *the son* of Rhesa, which was *the son* of Zorobabel, which was *the son* of Salathiel, which was *the son* of Neri, 28 Which was *the son* of Melchi, which was *the son* of Addi, which was *the son* of Cosam, which was *the son* of Elmodam, which was *the son* of Er, 29 Which was *the son* of Jose, which was *the son* of Eliezer, which was *the son* of Jorim, which was *the son* of Matthat, which was *the son* of Levi, 30 Which was *the son* of Simeon, which was *the son* of Juda, which was *the son* of Joseph, which was *the son* of Jonan, which was *the son* of Eliakim, 31 Which was *the son* of Melea, which was *the son* of Menan, which was *the son* of Mattatha, which was *the son* of Nathan, which was *the son* of David, 32 Which was *the son* of Jesse, which was *the son* of Obed, which was *the son* of Booz, which was *the son* of Salmon, which was *the son* of Naasson, 33 Which was *the son* of Aminadab, which was *the son* of Aram, which was *the son* of Esrom, which was *the son* of Phares, which was *the son* of Juda, 34 Which was *the son* of Jacob, which was *the son* of Isaac, which was *the son* of Abraham, which was *the son* of Thara, which was *the son* of Nachor, 35 Which was *the son* of Saruch, which was *the son* of Ragau, which was *the son* of Phalec, which was *the son*

of Heber, which was *the son* of Sala, 36 Which was *the son* of Cainan, which was *the son* of Arphaxad, which was *the son* of Sem, which was *the son* of Noe, which was *the son* of Lamech, 37 Which was *the son* of Mathusala, which was *the son* of Enoch, which was *the son* of Jared, which was *the son* of Maleleel, which was *the son* of Cainan, 38 Which was *the son* of Enos, which was *the son* of Seth, which was *the son* of Adam, which was *the son* of God."

- d. "He begat sons and daughters." This follows the name of the principle offspring, who each figured in the lineage of Abraham and thus of Christ (Luke 3:23-38). The total number of children is not given. Their names are not listed. Only those who were in the direct line extending through Noah (Abraham, *et al*) to Christ are identified by name. What is said here about Adam is repeated in the cases of the men listed in the following verses.
- e. "And he died." "Eight times these ominous words appear in this chapter, emphasizing the reign of death in the long antediluvian journey of Adam's fallen race. What a brutal lie the glib denial of Satan proved to be! The big thing in the chapter, however, is the revelation that in spite of the universal reign of death, 'the sons of God, that is, people who responded to God's love and honored him, were continued in the posterity of Seth. Apparently Eve was the first to recognize the special significance of this patriarch, through whom the Chosen People would descend, and through whom, at last, the Messiah would be born. It is quite obvious that the Cainite descendants of Adam were 'sons of the devil,' and that the Sethites were the 'sons of God.' This chapter is particularly concerned with tracing the line of the 'sons of God.' This is evident in the very names that were given: *Seth* means appointed or seedling; *Enosh* means enquire of the Lord; *Mahalalel* means praise of God; *Jared* means descent; *Enoch* means dedicated; *Noah* means rest." (Coffman, p.93).
- f. The name of Methuselah means *dieth and sending forth*. It appears that his name contains a prophetic allusion to the coming flood. It figures out that he died the year of the flood, possibly in the flood itself. If the number of years one lives on earth determines usefulness, then his was a most useful and significant life since he lived 969 years. However, years do not determine usefulness; rather faithfulness is the determining factor in usefulness. It is significant that the patriarch who lived the shortest time was considered so loyal that God translated him over death, while his son, apparently the oldest man who ever lived (the oldest on record), died perhaps in the flood.
- g. Enoch walked with God. "In Enoch, the seventh from Adam through Seth, godliness attained its highest point; whilst ungodliness culminated in Lamech, the seventh from Adam through Cain, who made his sword his god. Enoch, therefore, like Elijah, was taken away by God, and carried into the heavenly paradise, so that he did not see (experience) death (Heb. 11:5); i.e., he was taken up from this temporal life and transferred into life eternal, being exempted by God from the law of death and of return to the dust, as those of the faithful will be, who shall be alive at the coming of Christ to judgment, and who in like manner shall not taste of death and corruption, but be changed in a moment" (Keil, p.125). "Enoch's translation stands about halfway between Adam and the flood, in the 987th year after the creation of Adam. Seth, Enos, Cainan, Mahalaleel, and Jared were still alive. His son Methuselah and his grandson Lamech were also living, the latter being 113 years old. Noah was not yet born, and Adam was dead" (*ibid.*, p.125).
- h. Lamech begat Noah ("comfort, rest"). A curse had been placed on the earth (vs. 29). The inhabitants of the earth had doubtless been looking for the "seed of woman" (3:15). It quickly became obvious that neither Cain nor Abel was the One. Perhaps something unusual occurred at the birth of Noah which caused them to think that this person being born would deliver them from the curse, hence his name was called "comfort" or "rest." "That the patriarchs of the old world felt the ills of this earthly life in all their severity, was attested by Lamech (vv. 28,29), when he gave his son, who was born 69 years after Enoch's translation, the name of Noah, saying, 'The same shall comfort us concerning our work and the toil of our hands, because of the ground which the Lord hath cursed'" (Keil, p.126). "The Jewish traditions make Noah an inventor of agricultural instruments and a rescuer of the soil from the ravages of poor tillage" (Coffman, p.95).
- i. God intervened directly into human history when sin reached a fever pitch: in Genesis 6 and Genesis 19; on the first coming of Christ; and finally at the second coming. The first advent was one of love and mercy for all; the second will be one of Judgment: "Marvel not at this: for the hour is coming, in the which all that are in the graves shall hear his voice, And shall come forth; they that have done good, unto the resurrection of life; and they that have done evil, unto the resurrection of damnation" (John 5:28-29).

GENESIS 6

A. Genesis 6:1-8: Man Corrupts Himself Through Violence and Sin.

1. The story of the flood which begins in this chapter is verified by the New Testament:
 - a. By Christ in Matthew 24:37-39: "But as the days of Noe *were*, so shall also the coming of the Son of man be. For as in the days that were before the flood they were eating and drinking, marrying and giving in marriage, until the day that Noe entered into the ark, And knew not until the flood came, and took them all away; so shall also the coming of the Son of man be."
 - b. By Paul in Hebrews 11:7: "By faith Noah, being warned of God of things not seen as yet, moved with fear, prepared an ark to the saving of his house; by the which he condemned the world, and became heir of the righteousness which is by faith."
 - c. By Peter:
 - 1) "Which sometime were disobedient, when once the longsuffering of God waited in the days of Noah, while the ark was a preparing, wherein few, that is, eight souls were saved by water" (1 Pet. 3:20).
 - 2) "For this they willingly are ignorant of, that by the word of God the heavens were of old, and the earth standing out of the water and in the water: Whereby the world that then was, being over-flowed with water, perished" (2 Pet. 3:5-6).
2. Verses 1-2: "And it came to pass, when men began to multiply on the face of the earth, and daughters were born unto them, That the sons of God saw the daughters of men that they *were* fair; and they took them wives of all which they chose."
 - a. Lying in the background of this chapter are the details of chapters 4 and 5 which show the respective development of the descendants of Cain and Seth. Wickedness characterized the Cainites and righteousness characterized the Sethites. It is evident that these two lines dwelled separately until the time of these verses. God has always demanded that the righteous remain distinct from the evil population.
 - 1) This he requires of his saints today: "Be ye not unequally yoked together with unbelievers: for what fellowship hath righteousness with unrighteousness? and what communion hath light with darkness? And what concord hath Christ with Belial? or what part hath he that believeth with an infidel? And what agreement hath the temple of God with idols? for ye are the temple of the living God; as God hath said, I will dwell in them, and walk in *them*; and I will be their God, and they shall be my people. Wherefore come out from among them, and be ye separate, saith the Lord, and touch not the unclean *thing*; and I will receive you, And will be a Father unto you, and ye shall be my sons and daughters, saith the Lord Almighty" (2 Cor. 6:14-18).
 - 2) He designed Israel to be separate and distinct from the heathen nations.
 - 3) The descendants of righteous Seth prospered while they remained apart from the Cainites. The awesome trouble that befell them came only after they began to intermingle with their sinful cousins.
 - b. "The sons of God" is a phrase that is apparently used of angelic beings in Job 1:6, 2:1; 38:7 and Daniel 3:25. (However, "angels" does not appear in these references). It is quite clear that angels are not being meant in our text.
 - 1) There are only two broad classifications of angels: angels of God and angels of Satan. Holy angels would not have so-acted as these "sons of God" did in polluting the human race; and "fallen angels" would never in any circumstance be designated as "sons of God" by the inspired writer.
 - 2) These sons of God are said to have taken wives from among the daughters of men. Jesus said plainly that angels do not marry (Matt. 22:30; Mark 12:25).
 - 3) If these sons of God were angels, why were they not punished? Only the human family received punishment in the judgment detailed in Genesis 6-9. The blame for the spiritual corruption that befell humanity was due to the sons of God marrying the daughters of men. "If angels, or other supernatural creatures, had been to blame for the gross wickedness about to envelop mankind, then God would have announced their punishment and destruction, instead of the punishment and destruction of men" (Coffman, p.99). Blame for this sinful condition is placed entirely upon mankind—Genesis 6:12 (not upon any angelic being): "And God looked upon the earth, and, behold, it was corrupt; for all flesh had corrupted his way upon the earth" (Gen. 6:12).
 - 4) The preceding narrative of Genesis logically identifies the sons of God as the descendants of Seth and the daughters of men as the descendants of Cain. Righteous men are called sons of God in other passages:

- a) Deuteronomy 32:5: "They have corrupted themselves, their spot *is not the spot* of his children: *they are* a perverse and crooked generation."
- b) Psalms 73:15: "If I say, I will speak thus; behold, I should offend *against* the generation of thy children."
- c) Psalms 80:17: "Let thy hand be upon the man of thy right hand, upon the son of man *whom* thou madest strong for thyself."
- d) Hosea 1:10: "Yet the number of the children of Israel shall be as the sand of the sea, which cannot be measured nor numbered; and it shall come to pass, *that* in the place where it was said unto them, *Ye are* not my people, *there* it shall be said unto them, *Ye are* the sons of the living God."
- c. The daughters of men. These were "fair"—charming, desirable. "The 'sons of God' were those people who were pious, God-fearing and moral; the 'daughters of men' were those people who gave priority to the flesh over the spirit" (ALC, 1973, p.211).
3. Verse 3: "And the LORD said, My spirit shall not always strive with man, for that he also *is* flesh: yet his days shall be an hundred and twenty years."
 - a. In the process of time, as sin became universal, God saw the need to take stern action. He decided not to strive with men forever. This implies that he, through his Spirit, had been engaged in some kind of struggle with mankind. According to 2 Peter 2:5, Noah was a preacher of righteousness; righteousness is defined as the commandments of God (Ps. 119:172); so Noah was a preacher of God's righteousness.
 - b. According to 1 Peter 3:18-20, Christ preached to Noah's wicked generation through the Spirit while the ark was being prepared. Therefore, putting these facts together, God was striving with man; he was striving with man by means of his Spirit; he was striving with men by means of his Spirit through Noah by the preaching Noah did. Christ, according to 1 Peter 3:18-21, was involved in the process! "For Christ also hath once suffered for sins, the just for the unjust, that he might bring us to God, being put to death in the flesh, but quickened by the Spirit: By which also he went and preached unto the spirits in prison; Which sometime were disobedient, when once the longsuffering of God waited in the days of Noah, while the ark was a preparing, wherein few, that is, eight souls were saved by water. The like figure whereunto *even* baptism doth also now save us (not the putting away of the filth of the flesh, but the answer of a good conscience toward God,) by the resurrection of Jesus Christ" (1 Pet. 3:18-21).
 - c. This was the way God strove with the Israelites.
 - 1) Nehemiah 9:20,30: "Thou gavest also thy good spirit to instruct them, and withheldest not thy manna from their mouth, and gavest them water for their thirst.... Yet many years didst thou forbear them, and testifiedst against them by thy spirit in thy prophets: yet would they not give ear: therefore gavest thou them into the hand of the people of the lands."
 - 2) In referring to this attitude, Stephen said, "Ye stiffnecked and uncircumcised in heart and ears, ye do always resist the Holy Ghost: as your fathers *did*, so *do ye*" (Acts 7:51).
 - d. God strives with men today through his word; when men resist the word of God, they resist God: "Howbeit when he, the Spirit of truth, is come, he will guide you into all truth: for he shall not speak of himself; but whatsoever he shall hear, *that* shall he speak: and he will show you things to come. He shall glorify me: for he shall receive of mine, and shall show *it* unto you" (John 16:13-14)
 - 1) Luke 10:16: "He that heareth you heareth me; and he that despiseth you despiseth me; and he that despiseth me despiseth him that sent me."
 - 2) Romans 10:17: "So then faith *cometh* by hearing, and hearing by the word of God."
 - 3) 1 Corinthians 4:15: "For though ye have ten thousand instructors in Christ, yet *have ye* not many fathers: for in Christ Jesus I have begotten you through the gospel."
 - 4) 2 Timothy 3:16-17: "All scripture *is* given by inspiration of God, and *is* profitable for doctrine, for reproof, for correction, for instruction in righteousness: That the man of God may be perfect, thoroughly furnished unto all good works."
 - 5) 1 Peter 1:23: "Being born again, not of corruptible seed, but of incorruptible, by the word of God, which liveth and abideth for ever." Compare: "Sanctify them through thy truth: thy word is truth" (John 17:17).
 - 6) John 8:32: "And ye shall know the truth, and the truth shall make you free" Compare: "Now ye are clean through the word which I have spoken unto you" (John 15:3).
 - 7) Acts 3:22-23: "For Moses truly said unto the fathers, A prophet shall the Lord your God raise up unto you of your brethren, like unto me; him shall ye hear in all things whatsoever he shall say unto you. And it shall come to pass, *that* every soul, which will not hear that prophet, shall be destroyed from among the people."

- 8) Colossians 3:16: "Let the word of Christ dwell in you richly in all wisdom; teaching and admonishing one another in psalms and hymns and spiritual songs, singing with grace in your hearts to the Lord."
- 9) Hebrews 4:12: "For the word of God *is* quick, and powerful, and sharper than any twoedged sword, piercing even to the dividing asunder of soul and spirit, and of the joints and marrow, and *is* a discernor of the thoughts and intents of the heart."
- e. God determined therefore to put a time limit on his striving with those of that generation. 1 Peter 3:20 describes this period as being the time God's longsuffering waited in the days of Noah while the ark was being built. God is longsuffering toward man, not desirous of punishing him, but sincerely wishing for man's repentance (2 Pet. 3:9; Rom. 2:4). Preachers are to preach the word with all longsuffering and doctrine (2 Tim. 4:2). Giving man 120 years is not a reference to a shortened life-span for humanity, but to a definite time limit to the mercy he was extending to them. "Therefore his days shall be 120 years: this means, not that human life should in future never attain a greater age than 120 years, but that a respite of 120 years should still be granted to the human race" (Keil, p. 136). Abraham, Isaac and Sarah all exceeded 120 years on earth; also Terah, Abraham's father (Genesis 11:10-32). These all lived after the flood.
- f. Noah was 500 when this chapter of his life began (5:32); he was 600 when he entered the ark and the flood began (7:11). He was a preacher of righteousness during the intervening years. It is obvious that he was not only announcing the impending judgment, but also extending an invitation for the wicked to repent and enter the ark with him and his family. If not, why the preaching? And why did Peter say that Christ preached to that generation in the person of Noah? Why was God longsuffering toward them during the time the ark was being constructed? Any of the others could have been saved in the ark if they had chosen. But certainly only those who would repent would be permitted entrance.
- g. From the time of his instructions from God to the time he entered the ark, was one hundred years. The time God gave rebellious mankind to change, was one hundred and twenty years. It appears that Noah did not preach for the full one hundred and twenty years. Was there someone else who preached before Noah's time? No mention is made of such.
4. Verse 4: "There were giants in the earth in those days; and also after that, when the sons of God came in unto the daughters of men, and they bare *children* to them, the same *became* mighty men which *were* of old, men of renown."
 - a. There were giants in the land then; the ASV gives "Nephilim." They were "giants" but not necessarily physical giants.
 - b. "Notice that the Nephilim (giants or mighty men) mentioned here did not come into existence as a result of the marriages mentioned. They were already in the land and remained there....The text says they 'were in the earth in those days' not that they 'came to be in the earth'" (ALC, 1973, p.211).
 - c. "Although it is likely that the men in view were men of great physical stature, the thought appears to pertain more to their exploits of daring and violent deeds....As to the meaning of 'mighty men,' the most probable interpretation is that which understands them as men of violence, roving, lawless gallants. 'The term in Hebrew implies not so much the idea of great stature as of reckless ferocity, impious and daring characters, who spread devastation and carnage far and wide'" (Coffman, p.102).
 - d. "To the unprejudiced mind, the words, as they stand, represent the Nephilim, who were on the earth in those days, as existing before the sons of God began to marry the daughters of men, and clearly distinguish them from the fruits of these marriages" (Keil, p.137).
 - e. What about the "giants?" Leupold: The translation "giants" (A. V.) is most unfortunate. It originated with the Septuagint (γίγαντες). It does not follow from Num. 13:33, even if there the "attackers" should also happen to have been giants. For "sons of Anak" means "sons of the long-necked one," and this *may* refer to gigantic stature. The unfortunate thing about this mistranslation is that it directs attention away from the moral issue (wicked bandits) to a physical one (tall stature). Besides, then, with a show of propriety modern interpreters combine the idea of giants with the misinterpretation about angel marriages and claim that the giants were the result of this union. But, in reality, nothing of the sort is found in the text. It is the result of a clever combination or of a mistranslation. Meek renders: "There were giants in the earth who were born to the gods whenever they had intercourse with the daughters of men." This amounts to an unwarranted alteration of the text in the interest of a dogmatic preconception. Note well, too, that if there were a notice about giants inserted here it would not at all fit into the connection. Several critics are compelled to admit that they do not know why v. 4 does not follow v. 2. Certain older translators were nearer the truth than the Septuagint. Aquila, who like Symmachus wrote to correct the Greek version, rendered *Nephilim* ἐπιπίπτοντες = "they who fall upon." Symmachus, in a similar strain, βίαιοι = "powerful."¹

5. Verse 5: "And God saw that the wickedness of man *was* great in the earth, and *that* every imagination of the thoughts of his heart *was* only evil continually."
 - a. The picture given depicts the total corruption of the human race, with the single exception of Noah (verse 8). The very hearts of the wicked were so corrupted that every imagination of the thoughts was evil continually (cf. Rom. 1:18-32).
 - b. This was the darkest hour on earth since the sin of Adam and Eve. Never since that time has humanity as a whole sunk to such depths of depravity. What preserves the race today are the faithful saints of the Lord's church.
 - 1) Matthew 5:13-16: "Ye are the salt of the earth: but if the salt have lost his savour, wherewith shall it be salted? it is thenceforth good for nothing, but to be cast out, and to be trodden under foot of men. Ye are the light of the world. A city that is set on an hill cannot be hid. Neither do men light a candle, and put it under a bushel, but on a candlestick; and it giveth light unto all that are in the house. Let your light so shine before men, that they may see your good works, and glorify your Father which is in heaven."
 - 2) Philippians 2:14-16: "Do all things without murmurings and disputings: That ye may be blameless and harmless, the sons of God, without rebuke, in the midst of a crooked and perverse nation, among whom ye shine as lights in the world; Holding forth the word of life; that I may rejoice in the day of Christ, that I have not run in vain, neither laboured in vain."
6. Verses 6-7: "And it repented the LORD that he had made man on the earth, and it grieved him at his heart. And the LORD said, I will destroy man whom I have created from the face of the earth; both man, and beast, and the creeping thing, and the fowls of the air; for it repenteth me that I have made them."
 - a. We are told of God's reaction to the evil that filled the earth. The Bible plainly states that God does not change and does not repent (Num. 23:9; 1 Sam. 15:29). If God is immutable, then in what sense does he repent of anything? It is obvious that since he cannot commit sin or do anything that is evil in any degree, he does not repent in the same way that man repents. "And God saw their works, that they turned from their evil way; and God repented of the evil, that he had said that he would do unto them; and he did *it* not" (Jonah 3:10). Malachi 3:6 says that God changes not. He remains unchanged through the ages. But when he determines to punish man, if that punishment is conditional, he will change his intended action if man meets the conditions involved. That was the case with the Ninevites of Jonah 3:10: "And God saw their works, that they turned from their evil way; and God repented of the evil, that he had said that he would do unto them; and he did *it* not."
 - b. God cannot repent in the same sense that he calls on man to repent. In the text, God repented "in the sense that he changed his relationship to and dealings with the man he had created. Man had been created for divine fellowship, but since man chose to sin and God cannot be in fellowship with evil, that relationship had to be altered. This does not deny the immutability of God—but establishes it! Because God is holy, just and incapable of fellowship with sin, his immutable nature demanded that a new relationship be established with man....When God was confronted with the sinfulness of man, he turned...from a state of fellowship with man to one of judgment against man. In this sense only did God repent" (ALC, 1973, p.212).
 - c. "The repentance of God is an anthropomorphic expression for the pain of the divine love at the sin of man, and signifies that 'God is hurt no less by the atrocious sins of men than if they pierced his heart with mortal anguish' (Calvin, in Keil, p.140).
 - d. The whole creation was under judgment (cf. Vs. 13). It was not in God's plan, however, to utterly destroy all earthly life; this is plain from the narrative. The information given thus far shows something about sin: it affects more than those who engage in it. In this case, notice that countless individuals in the animal kingdom suffered death as a consequence of human sin. Sin progresses in the life of him who begins to sin; it spreads to others and to other kinds of sin. Sin wears a mask; it is deceptive; it can never be satisfied; one bottle calls for another; one illicit love affair calls for another. The only answer to sin, the only power sufficient to break its hold, is the blood of Christ.
 - 1) Colossians 1:13-14: "Who hath delivered us from the power of darkness, and hath translated *us* into the kingdom of his dear Son: In whom we have redemption through his blood, *even* the forgiveness of sins."
 - 2) James 1:21: "Wherefore lay apart all filthiness and superfluity of naughtiness, and receive with meekness the engrafted word, which is able to save your souls."
 - e. Noah is the exception to the rest. Noah found favor with God. The next verse provides us the reason he found grace in the eyes of the Lord.

B. Genesis 6:8-13: A Righteous Man in an Unrighteous Generation.

1. Verses 8-9: "But Noah found grace in the eyes of the LORD. These *are* the generations of Noah: Noah was a

just man *and* perfect in his generations, *and* Noah walked with God."

- a. "Just" has reference to a righteous life. Noah stands in stark contrast to the rest of the race. He was not sinless but was sufficiently holy to make it possible for God to use him in continuing the human family. It was not God's intent to stamp out mankind; this is clear from the fact he gave a probationary period.
 - b. Noah was just (righteous); this describes his moral uprightness and conformity to God's divine standard; while other men forgot God and followed a way of their own, which always ends up in sin, Noah maintained the proper relationship with God. "By faith Noah, being warned of God of things not seen as yet, moved with fear, prepared an ark to the saving of his house; by the which he condemned the world, and became heir of the righteousness which is by faith" (Heb. 11:7).
 - c. He was perfect: not that he was without sin, since the only such person was Christ. But this term suggests that he was whole-heartedly serving Jehovah.
 - d. He walked with God. The only other person about whom this is expressly stated was Enoch, whom God translated over death. But he left Noah on earth for there was a great mission he must accomplish: preach to his sinful neighbors and continue the race.
2. Verse 10-13: "And Noah begat three sons, Shem, Ham, and Japheth. The earth also was corrupt before God, and the earth was filled with violence. And God looked upon the earth, and, behold, it was corrupt; for all flesh had corrupted his way upon the earth. And God said unto Noah, The end of all flesh is come before me; for the earth is filled with violence through them; and, behold, I will destroy them with the earth."
- a. The sons of Noah are named, but not necessarily in order of birth. Each of these sons was destined to become head over a great section of humanity.
 - b. This is a restatement of the divine judgment on the corrupted race. What is said here was presented partially in the earlier part of the chapter.
 - c. A depiction of man's spiritual condition is given. God saw them as being utterly corrupt. How did they see themselves? How does the average person today see himself? How God sees a man is the only thing that counts. The earth was filled with violence. This ties in with verse four. The Iron Rule [*Might Makes Right*] was being practiced.
 - d. God saw them as being corrupt; they had crossed the line; unless they repented, judgment must fall. The guilt is placed squarely on the guilty parties: the individuals themselves (Ezek. 18:20; 1 John 3:4; Rom. 3:23; 6:23). It was not God's fault that they had become guilty. The Calvinists declare [by implication] that God is at fault since he predestinated everything that was to be (according to their theories). But God says that the individual who sins is at fault; sin occurs when an individual violates some precept or command of God's word.
 - 1) Ezekiel 18:20: "The soul that sinneth, it shall die. The son shall not bear the iniquity of the father, neither shall the father bear the iniquity of the son: the righteousness of the righteous shall be upon him, and the wickedness of the wicked shall be upon him."
 - 2) Romans 3:23: "For all have sinned, and come short of the glory of God."
 - 3) Romans 6:23: "For the wages of sin *is* death; but the gift of God *is* eternal life through Jesus Christ our Lord."
 - 4) 1 John 3:4: "Whosoever committeth sin transgresseth also the law: for sin is the transgression of the law."
 - e. What dreadful words are given in verse thirteen!
 - 1) Matthew 7:21-23: "Not every one that saith unto me, Lord, Lord, shall enter into the kingdom of heaven; but he that doeth the will of my Father which is in heaven. Many will say to me in that day, Lord, Lord, have we not prophesied in thy name? and in thy name have cast out devils? and in thy name done many wonderful works? And then will I profess unto them, I never knew you: depart from me, ye that work iniquity."
 - 2) Matthew 25:41: "Then shall he say also unto them on the left hand, Depart from me, ye cursed, into everlasting fire, prepared for the devil and his angels."
 - f. The extent of the judgment is indicated by the Lord's statement. "The labors of skeptics to make some local event out of the destruction announced here are frustrated by the appearance of a great and universal flood in the mythologies of all nations, even those of the American Indians. If there was no universal flood, how could such a fact be accounted for? Besides that, the appearance of marine fossils upon all continents at elevations of very great height cannot be explained apart from what is written here" (Coffman, p.106). God said he would use the earth as the means of judgment. This he often did, as in the case of Sodom (Gen. 19).
 - g. God miraculously intervened in human history, using the common forces of nature in a universal

catastrophic disturbance, to bring about the proper punishment of sinful man.

- h. "Francis Schaeffer mentions in detail the example of prehistoric mammals of great size having been uncovered in the frozen wastes of Siberia, an area supposed to have been uniformly cold for thousands of years; and yet, whenever those tropical creatures froze, it took place so quickly that the plants found in their mouths, neither spit out nor swallowed, were still in the process of being eaten! As Schaeffer said, 'Nobody can explain this...nobody!' Thus the fact of catastrophe is certainly an element to be reckoned with. It is attested both by the word of God and evidence from the natural world in which we live" (Coffman, p.107). The scoffers of Peter's time denied the flood; and the unbelievers of our own age are scornful of the Bible's record of the flood.

C. Genesis 6:14-22: The Building of the Ark.

1. Verses 14-16: "Make thee an ark of gopher wood; rooms shalt thou make in the ark, and shalt pitch it within and without with pitch. And this *is the fashion* which thou shalt make it *of*: The length of the ark *shall be* three hundred cubits, the breadth of it fifty cubits, and the height of it thirty cubits. A window shalt thou make to the ark, and in a cubit shalt thou finish it above; and the door of the ark shalt thou set in the side thereof; *with* lower, second, and third *stories* shalt thou make it."
 - a. God gave instructions to Noah concerning the ark. The instructions were clear, easy to understand, but contained elements requiring effort, determination and endurance on the part of Noah. There would be much labor involved, and the unbelieving populace would certainly ridicule him for what he was doing.
 - 1) There had never been a universal flood before in all the history of the race; there was no reason for the flood according to their materialistic view, nor was there any discernible sign that would convince them that one was impending. Noah had never seen any such a flood before, but there was not any hesitation or unbelief on his part. His response was out of faith (Heb. 11:7); God offered this one means of escape—by his grace; Noah's faith led him to meet the conditions specified by God. This is the same process by which God saves today: grace (Eph. 2:8), faith (Rom. 1:16; Eph. 2:8; Rom. 5:1), and obedience (2 Thess. 1:6-9; Heb. 5:8-9; Matt. 7:21-23).
 - 2) As God destroyed the world back then by the flood, he promises to destroy the whole world, the universe, and all material things at the second coming of Christ (2 Peter 3). And as the waters of the flood became the means of Noah's deliverance, so the waters of baptism become the means of man's deliverance from sin today (1 Pet. 3:18-21).
 - b. It was not intended for the ark to be a means of travel, thus no provisions are made for steering or movement. It was not intended to be a ship in the modern sense, but a great floating chest or box. The word translated "ark" (*teba*) means a "chest" or "box." Baby Moses was placed in an ark (chest, box) constructed from bulrushes; and the Ark of the Covenant was a chest-like container in which were placed certain objects (the tables of the Law, a pot of manna, and Aaron's rod, Heb. 9:4). From the brief description given of the ark Noah was to build, it is not possible for us to get an exact picture of its appearance. It was simply a great, floating box, perhaps tapered at the ends.
 - 1) The identity of gopher wood is unknown. Many suppositions have been advanced, including Clarke's belief that it was cypress. He suggests this by virtue of the fact that cypress is known to be resistant to rot and worms, it was used in ancient times for ship-building, and that it was plentiful in Assyria (p. 70). This is still conjecture, even though possible.
 - 2) Pitch it inside and out with pitch. This asphalt material would seal the ark against the intrusion of water.
 - 3) Noah was to build rooms in the ark. It was to be partitioned off into cells or rooms, into which various inhabitants were to live during their stay on the ark.
 - c. The ark was to be 300 cubits long, 50 cubits wide, and 30 cubits high. The common assumption of the length of a cubit is eighteen inches. Taking this as the minimum measurement, the ark was 450 feet long, 75 feet wide and 45 feet high. The scale of modern ships is on the same ratio. It is possible that a cubit was more like 22 inches in length which would give a larger size of 550 feet long, 91 feet wide and 55 feet high. Clarke relates that a certain Mr. Greaves compared the actual size of the pyramids in Egypt with the accounts of their size given by some ancient writers and found the length of a cubit to be 21.88 inches (p. 70).
 - d. The cubit is said to be the length from a man's elbow to the tip of his longest finger. "For only Og king of Bashan remained of the remnant of giants; behold, his bedstead *was* a bedstead of iron; *is* it not in Rabbath of the children of Ammon? nine cubits *was* the length thereof, and four cubits the breadth of it, after the cubit of a man" (Deut. 3:11).
 - e. The Babylonian royal cubit was about 19.8 inches; one of the Egyptian cubits was about 20.65 inches and

- another was about 17.6; the Hebrews cubits was 20.4 and 17.5 respectively (Whitcomb & Morris, p. 10).
- f. Whitcomb and Morris computed the following using the shorter Hebrew measurement: "...It has a total deck area of approximately 95,700 square feet (equivalent to slightly more than the area of twenty standard college basketball courts), and its total volume was 1,396,000 cubic feet. The gross tonnage of the Ark (which is a measurement of cubic space rather than weight, one ton in this case being equivalent to 100 cubic feet of usable storage space) was about 13,960 tons, which would place it well within the category of large metal ocean-going vessels today" (p. 10).
 - g. Most animals are not very large. The average size of all animals, is the size of a sheep, some say a small rodent. One railroad stock car can carry about 240 sheep. This would mean that all 40,000 animals could fit in 167 railroad cars. The ark's total capacity was 569 stock cars. *The 40,000 animals would require less than 30% of the ark's space.* In other words all the animals could fit on one of the ark's three decks. This would leave the other 70% of the ark's space for Noah's family, food, supplies, and baggage. Noah may have taken tools, etc., for use after the flood.
 - h. Some question the possibility that four men could have constructed such a massive vessel. However, it is an assumption to say that only Noah and his sons did the work. He could have easily employed a sizeable number of outside workers.
 - i. Evidences of the universal flood:
 - 1) Some have asserted that the flood was only local in extent; but the size of the ark nullifies such a contention. Why would he have had to build such a huge ark if the flood was limited in scope? Why build an ark at all? Why not travel beyond the limits of the floodwaters? If local, why take so many animals and food aboard? If it was local, what held it back for such a long time from spreading across the surface of the earth? And how does one explain the fact that the flood covered the highest mountains (Gen. 7:19-20)? Some critics assert that the flood, local in nature, occurred when the Mediterranean Sea rose [they know not why], and the flood waters broke through into the Black Sea Region. But this ignores why the ancients had a flood record.
 - 2) Second Peter 3:3-7 confirms the story of the flood as related by Genesis. Christ also affirms that the flood occurred: "But of that day and hour knoweth no *man*, no, not the angels of heaven, but my Father only. But as the days of Noe *were*, so shall also the coming of the Son of man be. For as in the days that were before the flood they were eating and drinking, marrying and giving in marriage, until the day that Noe entered into the ark, And knew not until the flood came, and took them all away; so shall also the coming of the Son of man be" (Matt 24:36-39).
 - 3) The Grand Canyon gives evidence of the great flood, as does the fact of the layers of sedimentary rock found throughout the world; it was obviously laid down by a great inundation. The following is quoted from *The World that Perished*, John Whitcomb, pp.72f:
 - a) Dr. Morris has pointed out that according to the law of hydrodynamic selectivity a flood of the magnitude described in Genesis, with its unbelievably vast complex of sediment-saturated currents, would of necessity produce horizontal, superimposed layers of materials, selected by the moving waters according to their specific gravity and sphericity. As each current of water slowed down and deposited its load, another current would come from perhaps a different direction, carrying somewhat different types of materials, depositing them on top of the first layer without disturbing it. Thus, as various currents moved across the earth during the months of the Flood, a great series of sedimentary strata would be formed in various parts of the earth, in some cases to depths of many thousands of feet.
 - b) One of the, most spectacular evidences of what a year-long, world-wide Flood would accomplish may be seen in the Grand Canyon of Arizona. This gigantic formation is in some places more than 5,000 feet deep, 25,000 feet across, and extends for more than 100 miles to the east and west. As far as the eye can see, thick, horizontal deposits of various types of sediments rest conformably upon one another from the bottom of the canyon to the top.
 - c) According to uniformitarian concepts, numerous changes in environment, with great regional subsidences and uplifts, must have been involved, each layer representing millions of years of river deposits in a vast geosyncline or shallow sea, which gradually sank as the deposits accumulated. But this would be quite inconceivable. The strata simply could not have remained so nearly uniform and horizontal over such great areas and great periods of time, while undergoing such repeated and vast movements. "A better explanation according to creationists is that it was formed rapidly as water cut through not yet consolidated material that had been deposited by the flood of Noah's time. This

explanation is superior because it conforms to *the principles of hydrodynamics*. These principles state that water can not meander at the same time that it is cutting a deeper channel. The channel of the Colorado River is both deep and meandering." [Whitcomb and Morris, *The Genesis Flood*, p. 147].

- 4) The great fossil graveyards give strong evidence of the great flood. It has been estimated that more than 100,000 different species of fossils have been found; it appears that little or no fossilization is taking place today. In order for fossilization to occur the dead carcass must be quickly covered over with dirt or silt. In ordinary situations, a tree trunk or animal carcass is left exposed to the air and ravages of the weather and beasts; these are soon destroyed. Millions of buffalo were slain in the American West, but few if any of their bones are now found. The Bible teaches that lions were common in Palestine during Old Testament days, but those who know the country say that no bones have ever been found there of these beasts. When a fish dies in the ocean, its body usually floats to the surface or sinks to the bottom. In either case, the body decomposes or is eaten by other marine life within a matter of hours. Fossilized fish found "in sedimentary rock is very often preserved with all its bones intact. Entire shoals of fish over large areas, numbering billions of specimens, are found in a state of agony, but with no mark of a scavenger's attack" (Whitcomb, p.157).
- 5) Referring to the famous fossil deposit in Lincoln County, Wyoming, Whitcomb gives this quote: "Today, this oddity of nature is not only a tourist curiosity, but is furnishing some of the most perfect specimens of fossil fish and plants in the world....Other than the fish, palm leaves, from 6 to 8 feet in length and from 3 to 4 feet wide have been uncovered. The occurrence of these confirms the geological theory that the climate was tropical and quite unlike the blizzard-ridden mountains of Wyoming today. This theory was further substantiated in 1890 when an alligator was found....Several Gar-pike, ranging in size from 4 to 6 feet, have been disinterred, as have birds of about the size of the domestic chicken and resembling the snipe or plover in general conformation. In addition, specimens of sunfish, rasp-tongues, deep sea bass, chubs, pickerel and herring have been found, not to mention mollusca, crustaceans, birds, turtles, mammals and many varieties of insects" (p.157).
- 6) "Many rich fossils deposits have been found in caves, one of the outstanding being the Cumberland Bone Cave in Maryland. Remains of dozens of species of mammals, ranging from bats to mastodons, are found in the cave, together with some reptiles and birds—from different types of climates and habitats....This kind of thing does not lend itself well to uniformitarian interpretation but strongly suggests some sort of very unusual catastrophe (s). Other caves in the same region, within three miles of Cumberland, are barren of fossils" (ibid., p.158).
- 7) "A startling illustration of the fact that a great catastrophe once struck this planet may be found in the four or five million mammoths and other large animals which were destroyed in the north polar regions, many of them frozen instantly and preserved whole and undamaged, and in some cases either standing or kneeling upright! Ivan T. Sanderson, a prominent field zoologist who spent many years studying these phenomena, had attempted at first to explain this mass destruction of Arctic mammoths in non-catastrophic terms. But a special study of the Beresovka mammoth, which Russian scientists had transported from Siberia to the Leningrad Museum, caused his position to be 'almost completely reversed.' First, the mammoth was upright, but it had a broken hip. Second, its exterior was whole and perfect, with none of its two-foot long shaggy fur rubbed or torn off. Third, it was fresh; its parts, although they started to rot when the heat of fire got at them, were just as they had been in life; the stomach contents had not begun to decompose. Finally, there were buttercups on its tongue.' Animals as large as mammoths would require several hundred pounds of food daily just to survive; and there were many millions of them in this region where very little vegetation grows today. In order to freeze animals of this size in such a way that large crystals would not form within their body cells, temperatures of 150 degrees below zero would have to descend upon them instantly....The fact that only a catastrophe of the proportions described in Genesis 6-9 could have suddenly destroyed these vast numbers of large animals is becoming more and more obvious to unprejudiced investigators" (Whitcomb, pp.77-80).
- 8) "Trillions of tons of vegetation, much of it perfectly preserved, even to leaves and flowers, have been buried in all parts of the world, including Antarctica, in the form of coal. Each foot of coal represents many feet of compressed plant remains, and some coal seams are as much as thirty or forty feet in thickness....In the volume titled *Why Not Creation?* may be seen a remarkable photograph of a large tree trunk turned into coal, penetrating vertically through several layers of sedimentary strata. Surely this

- constitutes the final blow to the uniformist theory of coal formation for no tree could have remained in an upright position for thousands of years while sediments built up around it!" (Whitcomb, pp.80f).
- 9) "Another remarkable discovery is the perfectly preserved tracks of many kinds of animals, including dinosaurs. Among these dinosaur tracks have been found the footprints of human beings of great stature. Also, such ordinary ephemeral imprints as ripple marks and raindrop splash marks have been discovered quite frequently. These simply could not have been preserved apart from unique sedimentation processes" (Whitcomb, p.81).
 - j. The ark was to have a window, a door, and three stories (floors). Of the window God told Noah: "In a cubit shalt thou finish it above." "This opening, which likely ran along the entire top of the sides of the ark and was sheltered by the eaves, would serve to give both light and ventilation to the ark.
 - 1) If this was the nature of the opening, the phrase 'to a cubit shalt thou finish it upward' would become meaningful as the measure of distance to be left between the sides of the ark and the roof. This eighteen-inch opening running completely around the vessel would surely be adequate for its purposes" (ALC, 1973, pp.216f). "Another assumption often brought into a discussion regarding the 'window' (*tsohar*) of 6:16 is that it was one square cubit. Although many people have imagined Noah's ark as having one small window about 18 inches high by 18 inches wide, the phrase 'you shall finish it to a cubit from above' (6:16, NKJV; cf. RSV) does not give the Bible reader any clear dimensions of the opening. The text just says that Noah was to 'finish it to a cubit from the top' (NASB; 'upward,' ASV). The simple truth is, the **size** of the lighting apparatus mentioned in this verse is unspecified. The text indicates only the distance the opening was from the top of the ark, rather than the actual size of the window. Thus we cannot form a definite picture of it. But, we do know that nothing in the text warrants an interpretation that the 'window' was just a 'small opening' (as critics allege). A more probable theory, which aligns itself appropriately with the text, is that the opening described in Genesis 6:16 extended around the ark's circumference 18 inches from the top of the ark with an undeterminable height. According to geologist John Woodmorappe, such an opening would have provided sufficient light and ventilation for the ark (1996, pp. 37-44)" [Alleged Discrepancies and the Flood, by Eric Lyons].
 - 2) There was to be one door in the side of the ark. Everything about the ark speaks of wisdom and orderliness.
 - 3) The three stories or floors Noah was to build into the ark would multiply the amount of available space by a factor of three. It would be plenty large to contain the animals, food, and Noah's family for the duration of the flood. According a quote by Coffman, the dimensions of the ark "would give a reading of over 1,500,000 cubic feet, with over 100,000 square feet of deck space. The displacement tonnage of such a vessel has been placed at 43,000 tons, with a payload capacity of 21,800 tons" (p.108).
 - 4) "For the sake of realism, imagine waiting at a railroad crossing while ten freight trains, each pulling 52 boxcars, move slowly by, one after another. That is how much space was available in the Ark, for its capacity was equivalent to 520 modern railroad stock cars. A barge of such gigantic size, with its thousands of built-in compartments (Gen. 6:14) would have been sufficiently large to carry two of every **species** of air-breathing animal in the world today (and doubtless the tendency toward taxonomic splitting has produced more "species" than can be justified in terms of Genesis "kinds") on only half of its available deck space. The remaining space would have been occupied by Noah's family, five additional representatives of each of the comparatively few kinds of animals acceptable for sacrifice, two each of the kinds that have become extinct since the Flood, and food for them all (Gen. 6:21)" [Whitcomb, John C., *The World That Perished*].
 2. Verses 17-22: "And, behold, I, even I, do bring a flood of waters upon the earth, to destroy all flesh, wherein *is* the breath of life, from under heaven; *and* every thing that *is* in the earth shall die. But with thee will I establish my covenant; and thou shalt come into the ark, thou, and thy sons, and thy wife, and thy sons' wives with thee. And of every living thing of all flesh, two of every *sort* shalt thou bring into the ark, to keep *them* alive with thee; they shall be male and female. Of fowls after their kind, and of cattle after their kind, of every creeping thing of the earth after his kind, two of every *sort* shall come unto thee, to keep *them* alive. And take thou unto thee of all food that is eaten, and thou shalt gather *it* to thee; and it shall be for food for thee, and for them. Thus did Noah; according to all that God commanded him, so did he."
 - a. Noah was not a boat-engineer but he could follow a pattern just as Moses did many centuries later in constructing the tabernacle according the God's blueprint.
 - 1) Exodus 25:8-9: "And let them make me a sanctuary; that I may dwell among them. According to all that I show thee, *after* the pattern of the tabernacle, and the pattern of all the instruments thereof, even so

- shall ye make *it*."
- 2) Hebrews 8:5: "Who serve unto the example and shadow of heavenly things, as Moses was admonished of God when he was about to make the tabernacle: for, See, saith he, *that* thou make all things according to the pattern showed to thee in the mount."
 - b. A flood of water was to come upon the earth; the only means of escape was in following the divine plan. Today, there is but one plan by which men may be delivered from the conflagration of torment, and that is the gospel.
 - 1) Romans 1:16-17: "For I am not ashamed of the gospel of Christ: for it is the power of God unto salvation to every one that believeth; to the Jew first, and also to the Greek. For therein is the righteousness of God revealed from faith to faith: as it is written, The just shall live by faith."
 - 2) Mark 16:15-16: "And he said unto them, Go ye into all the world, and preach the gospel to every creature. He that believeth and is baptized shall be saved; but he that believeth not shall be damned."
 - 3) 1 Peter 1:22-25: "Seeing ye have purified your souls in obeying the truth through the Spirit unto unfeigned love of the brethren, see that ye love one another with a pure heart fervently: Being born again, not of corruptible seed, but of incorruptible, by the word of God, which liveth and abideth for ever. For all flesh is as grass, and all the glory of man as the flower of grass. The grass withereth, and the flower thereof falleth away: But the word of the Lord endureth for ever. And this is the word which by the gospel is preached unto you."
 - 4) Hebrews 4:15: "For we have not an high priest which cannot be touched with the feeling of our infirmities; but was in all points tempted like as we are, yet without sin."
 - c. Notice the emphatic statement: "And, behold, I, even I, do bring a flood of waters upon the earth, to destroy all flesh, wherein is the breath of life, from under heaven; and every thing that is in the earth shall die" (vs. 17). The extent of the deluge was to the end that all flesh in which there was the breath of life would perish; except those on the ark. The word translated "flood" is used only here in the Bible.
 - d. God would establish a covenant with Noah; it was by means of this agreement that Noah and his family were saved. This is the first occurrence of the term *covenant*. The covenant would be enlarged following the flood (see Gen. 9).
 - e. God specified the number of animal-life to be taken into the ark. A male and female were to be placed on the ark. In Genesis 7:2ff, additional details are given which show that clean animals were to be taken into the ark by sevens. Scholars are undecided whether this means seven individuals or seven pairs. The marginal reading gives "seven seven" which may mean seven pairs. Genesis 6:20 shows the means by which these animals would be gathered: they would come unto Noah. There would be no need for a great, world-wide roundup; God would cause them to come to the ark.
 - f. Sufficient food for all the inhabitants would have to be gathered and stored in the ark. This would be a great Job, but one which Noah could hire others to do.
 - g. Noah did all that God said. This is typical of what we would expect from one who walked with God. "By faith Noah, being warned of God of things not seen as yet, moved with fear, prepared an ark to the saving of his house; by the which he condemned the world, and became heir of the righteousness which is by faith" (Heb. 11:7). Genesis 7:5 again affirms Noah's complete obedience: "And Noah did according unto all that the LORD commanded him."
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GENESIS 7

A. Genesis 7:1-6: God Tells Noah to Enter the Ark.

1. Verse 7:1: "And the LORD said unto Noah, Come thou and all thy house into the ark; for thee have I seen righteous before me in this generation."
 - a. The ark was now completed; the period of grace was about to close; the flood was to begin in seven days (verse 4). Thus, Noah is invited to take up residence in the ark. The reason for his being given this privilege was his righteousness. Righteousness is the doing of God's will (Ps. 119:172; 1 John 3:7; Acts 10:34-35); it is produced by faith. Noah here shows his faith again for he entered the ark seven days before the flood came. But without God's grace, the offer would not have been made.
 - 1) Psalms 119:172: "My tongue shall speak of thy word: for all thy commandments *are* righteous-ness."
 - 2) Acts 10:34-35: "Then Peter opened *his* mouth, and said, Of a truth I perceive that God is no respecter of persons: But in every nation he that feareth him, and worketh righteousness, is accepted with him."
 - 3) 1 John 3:7: "Little children, let no man deceive you: he that doeth righteousness is righteous, even as he is righteous."
 - b. About 120 years earlier, God had told Noah about his intention to punish the fallen race with a great flood. Noah demonstrated his faith in God's word by building the ark even though there was nothing visible in nature to indicate such a catastrophe; he shows his faith again by entering the ark now, a week before the flood descended.
2. Verses 2-3: "Of every clean beast thou shalt take to thee by sevens, the male and his female: and of beasts that *are* not clean by two, the male and his female. Of fowls also of the air by sevens, the male and the female; to keep seed alive upon the face of all the earth."
 - a. Additional details are given here concerning the number of animals to be included in the ark's population. The previous chapter only mentioned two of each kind; here Noah is told to include by seven the clean beasts, male and female. Does this mean seven pairs or seven individuals of each kind? It appears that *seven pairs* is meant, for the text specifies *the male and his female*. Why seven? Perhaps for food and sacrifice. If for food, then these extras are included in Genesis 6:21. Had man eaten animal flesh before? Genesis 9:3 seems to say that only from that time did man eat flesh.
 - b. The unclean animals were to be taken by twos. God had determined some means of distinguishing the clean from the unclean; perhaps similar distinctions as are included in the Law of Moses given centuries later. God told Noah how many of each kind; he caused these animals to "come unto" Noah (Gen. 6:20).
 - c. The purpose of their being in the ark was to "keep seed alive upon the face of all the earth." If God had created life by means of evolution, why did he not do so again after the flood? He did not use evolution, but special creation, to bring them into being at the first. God could have spared Noah and his family on the ark without bringing animals on board. He could have created the animals again after the flood, but he used miracles only for extraordinary situations. He could have created men all over again, too, but all the lessons of the past would have been lost.
 - d. Notice again that Noah did not have to round up the animals.
 - 1) Genesis 6:20: "Of fowls after their kind, and of cattle after their kind, of every creeping thing of the earth after his kind, two of every *sort* shall come unto thee, to keep *them* alive."
 - 2) Genesis 7:9: "There went in two and two unto Noah into the ark, the male and the female, as God had commanded Noah."
 - 3) Genesis 7:15: "And they went in unto Noah into the ark, two and two of all flesh, wherein *is* the breath of life."
3. Verse 4: "For yet seven days, and I will cause it to rain upon the earth forty days and forty nights; and every living substance that I have made will I destroy from off the face of the earth."
 - a. In just seven days the flood was to come. God gave Noah plenty of time to finish up the final details and get safely into the ark. God knew exactly when the flood would commence and for how long it would continue.
 - b. The number forty is often used in the Bible, so much so that some have regarded it as a sacred number of trial and patience (Unger, cf. Coffman, p.115). Jesus and Elijah fasted 40 days; Moses' life is divided into three 40-year segments; the first three kings over Israel ruled 40 years each; Israel wandered in the wilderness 40 years.
 - c. Why were the innocent animals allowed to perish? "...Jamieson pointed out that such was necessary in order

to preserve the ecological balance on the earth. At a time when the human family was being reduced so drastically in numbers, the unlimited proliferation of the lower creation would have become a threat to the lives of men. In addition to this, God's punishment usually extended beyond the strict boundaries of the offense. Thus: Achan was not only destroyed, but his house also (Joshua 7:24-25)" (Coffman, p.115). When sin occurs, we reap what we sow, we reap more than we sow, and others reap from our sowing. "Thou shalt not bow down thyself to them, nor serve them: for I the LORD thy God *am* a jealous God, visiting the iniquity of the fathers upon the children unto the third and fourth *generation* of them that hate me; And showing mercy unto thousands of them that love me, and keep my commandments" (Exodus 20:5-6).

4. Verses 5-6: "And Noah did according unto all that the LORD commanded him. And Noah *was* six hundred years old when the flood of waters was upon the earth."
 - a. Noah was prompt and thorough in his obedience. The pattern of his life before God was one of obedience. To one who has committed himself to obeying God, that obedience is quickly forth-coming; it only asks: "Is this what God wants me to do?" The decision to do what God says has already been made; all that is needed is to know what God wants.
 - b. With this disposition of heart, the church could change the world. But the average member of the church today has not cultivated this disposition. Noah did all that God commanded, and in the way God prescribed.
 - c. The flood came during Noah's 600th year.

B. Genesis 7:7-10: Noah and His Family Enter the Ark, Along With the Animals.

1. Verse 7: "And Noah went in, and his sons, and his wife, and his sons' wives with him, into the ark, because of the waters of the flood."
 - a. "The entrance into the ark is presented in the text as a calm and orderly event. It took place according to God's detailed instructions and thus secured the ark's passengers for their safety amidst destruction. All preparations had now been completed and the flood would come at the time previously set in the divine timetable. God is not slack concerning either his promises or his warnings" (ALC, 1973, p.222).
 - b. They entered because of the waters of the flood. "And Noah went in, *i.e.*, began to go in a full week before the waters came (ver. 10). 'A proof of faith and a warning to the world.' And his sons, and his wife, and his sons' wives with him. In all eight persons (1 Peter 3:20); whence it is obvious that 'each had but one wife, and that polygamy, as it began among the Cainites, was most probably confined to them' (Poole). Into the ark, because of the waters of the flood. Literally, from the face of the waters, being moved with fear and impelled by faith (Heb 11:7)" [Pulpit Commentary, Electronic Database. Copyright © 2001 by Biblesoft].
2. Verses 8-10: "Of clean beasts, and of beasts that *are* not clean, and of fowls, and of every thing that creepeth upon the earth, There went in two and two unto Noah into the ark, the male and the female, as God had commanded Noah. And it came to pass after seven days, that the waters of the flood were upon the earth."
 - a. Here is a restatement of the details already given: both clean and unclean animals and birds entered the ark; they went in two and two, the male and the female; apparently the sevens were pairs. They went in by divine impulse.
 - b. Just as God had said, the waters of the flood began to fall after seven days. God always means what he says and does what he intends. He is not haphazard in his affairs.
 - c. "Nothing short of Divine power could have effected such a timely and orderly entrance of the creatures into the huge vessel (cf. their mode of exit, Gen 8:18). The seeming inconsistency of this verse with ver. 2, which says that the clean animals entered the ark by sevens, will be at once removed by connecting vers. 7 and 8 instead of 8 and 9, and commencing a new sentence with ver. 9" [Pulpit Commentary, Electronic Database. Copyright © 2001 by Biblesoft].
 - d. "The animals were not searched for, hunted out, and driven by Noah into the ark; they filed into it spontaneously: and perhaps their movements may be explained in part by some sensible impression and uneasiness on their bodies, like what is supposed to be the monitor of birds of passage, or by that natural instinct which prompts animals, under a secret pre-sentiment of danger, to seek refuge with man; but, over and above any such physical impulse, they must have been prompted by an overruling divine direction, as it is impossible, on any other principle, to account for their going in pairs" [Jamieson, Fausset, and Brown Commentary, Electronic Database. Copyright © 1997 by Biblesoft].

C. Genesis 7:11-16: Further Details of When the Flood Came, and Who was in the Ark.

1. Verses 11-12: "In the six hundredth year of Noah's life, in the second month, the seventeenth day of the month, the same day were all the fountains of the great deep broken up, and the windows of heaven were opened. And the rain was upon the earth forty days and forty nights."
 - a. Back in verse six the Bible stated that Noah was 600 when the flood began. Here the exact year, month and

- day of his life are given: in his 600th year, the second month, the seventeenth day of the month. This was the very day in which the rains began to fall and the fountains of the great deep were broken up.
- b. "The windows of heaven" is simply a figurative description of heavy rain. More perhaps is included. In Genesis 1:6-8, God created a firmament to divide the waters from the waters; this firmament (expanse, sky) separated the waters which were under the firmament from the waters which were above the firmament. Some conservative, reputable Bible scholars say that this upper supply of water was a vapor canopy which no longer exists. They say that this canopy of vaporized water completely surrounded the earth, giving a uniform temperature to the ancient earth prior to the flood. This is a good explanation of why Siberia and other regions, which are extremely cold today, at one time had a tropical climate. If this is the correct view, this vapor canopy became one of the prime sources of the flood waters. If all is meant in Genesis 1:6-8 is vaporized water in the atmosphere, then "windows of heaven" simply means that rain began to condense out of the atmosphere and fall as rain upon the earth in great quantities, and persisted for forty days.
 - c. The fountains of the great deep were broken up. This seems to describe the rupturing of great reservoirs of water located within the earth, which spewed forth huge amounts of water to hasten the inundation of the entire surface of the earth. Another view says, "...What is suggested seems to be that the waters of the great seas themselves were instrumental in such a super-colossal deluge. Such a thing might have been due to the sudden swelling and lifting of the ocean floor; which, if it returned later, would also have expedited the draining off of the flood waters. It is, of course, explicit that men cannot know how it happened" (Coffman, p.118).
 - d. This universal tragedy would naturally change the face of the earth considerably. The Grand Canyon, Yellowstone, and other great features would have been created by the stupendous effects of the flood. The great fossil graveyards would have been caused by the physical dynamics of the flood; the great petrified forests of the American southwest would have thus been possible. "'There lie thousands of fossilized logs, many of them broken up into short segments, others complete and unbroken....The average diameter of the logs is 3 to 4 feet, and the length 60 to 80 feet. Some logs 7 feet in greatest diameter and 125 feet long have been observed. None are standing in position of growth but, with branches stripped, lie scattered about as though floated by running water until stranded and subsequently buried in the places where they are now found. The original forests may have been scores of miles distant. The cell structure and fibers have been almost perfectly preserved by molecular replacement of silica...' Petrified logs have been an enigma to many scientists. The evidences point rather clearly to catastrophic conditions that prevailed at the time of the Flood, when these thousands of trunks were transported and grounded in huge log jams. Many of the trunks appear to have the bark intact, indicating rapid burial before rotting could occur. The wood tissue is very well preserved as agate. Foliage has been stripped from the trunks. This was no local catastrophe, because these types of fossil trees from the 'Triassic' are widespread over the Southwest. No geologist insists that the 'forest' is in situ, and it is obvious that petrified logs are not being formed anywhere in the world today" (Whitcomb, TWTP, p.108).
 - e. Evidence exists that the Sahara and other desert regions were once covered by water; the Great Salt Lake of Utah was once much larger than present.
 - f. The tropical climate of the early earth would be conducive to lush plant growth which was buried by the silt of the flood and was turned into huge beds of coal. The petroleum deposits (fossil fuels) were doubtless formed as a by-product of the flood.
 - g. As the earthy material stirred up and carried about by the flood settled down, the various layers of deposits were laid which later hardened into rock.
 - h. The rain continued for forty days; a restatement apparently for emphasis.
2. Verse 13: "In the selfsame day entered Noah, and Shem, and Ham, and Japheth, the sons of Noah, and Noah's wife, and the three wives of his sons with them, into the ark."
 - a. In the selfsame day: "It might mean all of the beings in the ark entered on a single day, or it might just as well mean that the 'day' here was that upon which their entry into the ark 'was completed'" (Coffman, p.119).
 - b. The animals went in unto Noah—he didn't have to round them up and drive them into the ark. Verse seven might be construed to suggest the sons may have had more than one wife each; this verse specifically limits the wives to three in number, one for each of the three sons.
 - c. Every creeping thing that creepeth upon the earth: includes a wide variety of animals. And every fowl and bird.
 3. Verses 7:15-16: "And they went in unto Noah into the ark, two and two of all flesh, wherein is the breath of life.
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And they that went in, went in male and female of all flesh, as God had commanded him: and the LORD shut him in."

- a. God preserved two of every kind of animal life, of those which breathe. Those animals, such as fish, whales, etc., which can live in water, were excluded. Perhaps the amphibians and water fowl were excluded also. Some have objected to the reliability of the Genesis record by asserting that there would not be enough space for the animals carried aboard. If a cubit was 18 inches, the total floor space was equivalent to 500 box cars. It is reasonable to say that the average animal size is about that of a sheep. Only about 200 box cars would be required.
- b. Notice also that not every specific type of animal life had to be taken; only the various "kinds". Only one "kind" of dog, horse, cow, sheep, etc., would be required. There is sufficient latitude in the genes of each kind to produce all the varieties now present of each "kind."
- c. God shut him in. When God shut the door all hope for saving any other person was gone. What a sad note! Noah had preached diligently for much of the 120 years, but only his own immediate family would listen. Compare: "And to the angel of the church in Philadelphia write; These things saith he that is holy, he that is true, he that hath the key of David, he that openeth, and no man shutteth; and shutteth, and no man openeth" (Rev. 3:7).

D. Genesis 7:17-20: The Extent of the Flood Described.

1. Verses 17-19: "And the flood was forty days upon the earth; and the waters increased, and bare up the ark, and it was lift up above the earth. And the waters prevailed, and were increased greatly upon the earth; and the ark went upon the face of the waters. And the waters prevailed exceedingly upon the earth; and all the high hills, that *were* under the whole heaven, were covered."
 - a. The flood continued to rise through the forty days; the ark was lifted up from the earth and commenced its year-long "float." "This three fold multiplication of the flood waters upon the earth is a most impressive superlative, culminating at last in the inundation of all the high mountains under heaven. Natural man has a rough time with this...such men are exactly like Noah's generation who also could not conceive of such a thing" (Coffman, p.120).
 - b. Note the 5-fold description:
 - 1) The waters increased and bare up the ark.
 - 2) The waters prevailed and increased.
 - 3) The ark was lifted up from the earth and was borne on the face of the waters.
 - 4) The waters prevailed exceedingly upon the earth.
 - 5) All the high hills were covered with by the water.
 - c. "Every nation under the heaven, in all continents, testifies to the truth of this report by its myths and legends, which are nothing but distorted and perverted tales of the same event; but this account is different. It is accurately and precisely dated; it is embedded in the matrix of a moral theology that assigns plausible and accurate moral reasons for the catastrophe" (Coffman, p.120).
 - d. God foresaw the future critics who would deny the truthfulness of the account by saying the flood was only local in extent. Thus, he specifies that ALL the high hills that were under THE WHOLE HEAVEN were covered by water. It is impossible for this to be true if the flood was only a local catastrophe. "Just as that event was a moral test for Noah's generation, it is still a moral test for our own generation....A scientific community that has no explanation whatever of how marine fossils are found at elevations above the snowline in the Cordilleras and the Himalayas are not at all convincing in their shouted denials that what is recorded here is a record of what really happened" (Coffman, p.121).
2. Verse 20: "Fifteen cubits upward did the waters prevail; and the mountains were covered."
 - a. So deep was the flood water that the highest points were covered by 15 cubits of water. The ark has been calculated as drawing 15 cubits of water.
 - b. The mountains may have been pushed higher after the flood or as the flood receded.

E. Genesis 7:21-24: The Consequences of the Flood.

1. "And all flesh died that moved upon the earth, both of fowl, and of cattle, and of beast, and of every creeping thing that creepeth upon the earth, and every man: All in whose nostrils *was* the breath of life, of all that *was* in the dry *land*, died. And every living substance was destroyed which was upon the face of the ground, both man, and cattle, and the creeping things, and the fowl of the heaven; and they were destroyed from the earth: and Noah only remained *alive*, and they that *were* with him in the ark. And the waters prevailed upon the earth an hundred and fifty days."
 2. These verses give a description of the tragedy of the flood: except for those aboard the ark, all air-breathing
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animals and men died. The flood prevailed for 150 days which includes the 40 days when the rain fell. "At this point, the waters began to subside, or at least ceased rising. Some have objected that there is not enough water on earth to cover all the high mountains; but this is a mistake. A change in the level of the ocean floor could easily have done what is recorded here....An unbelievable number of cubic miles of water is stacked upon the earth's polar caps in the form of ice" (Coffman, pp.121f).

3. Only those which breathed air remained alive who were with Noah on the ark. The Bible is very specific about this. This is the greatest tragedy to afflict the earth. A much greater tragedy awaits the earth at the Second Coming of Christ: "But the day of the Lord will come as a thief in the night; in the which the heavens shall pass away with a great noise, and the elements shall melt with fervent heat, the earth also and the works that are therein shall be burned up. Seeing then that all these things shall be dissolved, what manner of persons ought ye to be in all holy conversation and godliness" (2 Pet. 3:10-11).
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GENESIS 8

A. Genesis 8:1-5: God Caused the Great Flood to Dry Up from the Earth.

1. Verse 1: "And God remembered Noah, and every living thing, and all the cattle that *was* with him in the ark: and God made a wind to pass over the earth, and the waters asswaged."
 - a. God remembered Noah. This does not imply he had forgotten him in such a short time; it means just the opposite: he did not forget him. God did not forget them but at the proper time he took action to recover the inhabitants of the ark. Compare:
 - 1) Genesis 19:29: "And it came to pass, when God destroyed the cities of the plain, that God remembered Abraham, and sent Lot out of the midst of the overthrow, when he overthrew the cities in the which Lot dwelt."
 - 2) Exodus 2:24: "And God heard their groaning, and God remembered his covenant with Abraham, with Isaac, and with Jacob."
 - 3) 1 Samuel 1:19: "And they rose up in the morning early, and worshipped before the LORD, and returned, and came to their house to Ramah: and Elkanah knew Hannah his wife; and the LORD remembered her."
 - b. He made a wind to pass over the earth to assuage (cause to lessen; calm) the waters. "Such a phenomenon would have had a dual effect of (1) evaporation, and of (2) substantially aiding the movement of vast quantities of water back into the depression created by subsidence of the land level under the seas. The amount of the waters visible in the narrative requires the understanding that some major shift in land and ocean levels occurred. Tides that rise to great heights when a mighty hurricane moves inland are an illustration of how effective such a wind could have been" (Coffman, pp.123f).
 - c. "If ocean beds were broken up and raised with a corresponding lowering of land so that continents were overflowed from the sea as well as from rain, it would seem that there would have to have been reverse action for the flood waters to subside completely" (ALC, 1979, p.65).
 - d. The waters were dried up by the wind in part by evaporation and in part by the waters being pushed into the deepened sea beds. Obviously, the great weight of the water bearing down on the earth's crust would have depressed the land downward, making much room for the excess water. Clarke relates the experiences of a friend who went swimming in the Tigris River, not far from Baghdad. His bathing suit was dried "in a moment, that not one particle of moisture was left either on his body or in his bathing dress!" (ALC, 1979, p. 75). God used the wind in parting the Red Sea and in the story of Jonah.
2. Verse 2: "The fountains also of the deep and the windows of heaven were stopped, and the rain from heaven was restrained."
 - a. God stopped the fountains of the deep and caused the rain to cease from falling. The rain had stopped after forty days and nights. The fountains being stopped may have reference, as Coffman suggests, to the land level being shifted so that the sea would go back to its former place (p. 124).
 - b. "Then he proceeds to fit into place the other auxiliary agencies: a) 'the fountains of the deep were stopped' and b) 'the windows of the heavens.' Since 7:11 had told us of the opening of these sources of water, the author owes us a statement as to whether these continued open. But since the closing of these two cannot subtract from the waters but merely prevents further increase, the mention of these two is brought in as an afterthought, even as is the third contributory agency, the "pouring rain" (*gêshem*) mentioned previously 7:12. These three together, then, may be regarded as causes contributing only negatively to the abatement of the waters. [Leupold, H. C. (1942). *Exposition of Genesis* (pp. 309–310). Baker Book House].
3. Verses 3-4: "And the waters returned from off the earth continually: and after the end of the hundred and fifty days the waters were abated. And the ark rested in the seventh month, on the seventeenth day of the month, upon the mountains of Ararat."
 - a. God's plan for drying up the earth, whatever method it was, worked perfectly. The statement about the waters returning from off the earth seems to indicate they returned to the natural place—the sea bed.
 - b. After 150 days the waters were abated to the extent that the ark came to rest upon the mountains of Ararat: on the 17th of the 7th month.
4. Verse 5: "And the waters decreased continually until the tenth month: in the tenth *month*, on the first *day* of the month, were the tops of the mountains seen."
 - a. The waters continued to recede until, by the first day of the tenth month the tops of the mountains were

visible. This description does not pinpoint the exact peak upon which the ark came to rest. This range of mountains is in "the province of Armenia lying NE of Lake Van, including the fertile plain watered by the Araxes, on the right (SW) side of which Mt. Massis rises.' The area is that which lies along the alluvial plain of the Aras (Araxes) river near the point [where] the three borders of the Soviet Union, Iran and Turkey come together. Out of this region there rise two peaks, the Greater and the Lesser Ararat, the Greater rising to an elevation of 16,945' and the Lesser Ararat to a height of 12,877' above sea level. The plain itself is about 3,000' altitude. The peaks are in Turkish territory" (Coffman, p.125).

- b. Some think that the ark came to rest on the top of the higher peak since it was some time later before the other peaks were visible. The Bible does not identify the peak upon which the ark rested. This verse "would indicate that the ark came to rest in an area of mountains; and the inference is that if the ark had been resting upon any except the tallest within eyesight, the mountains would have been visible before the ark rested" (Coffman, p.125).
- c. Josephus quoted the following from Berosus the Chaldean: "It is said there is still some part of this ship in Armenia, at the mountain of the Cordyaeans; and that some people carry off pieces of the bitumen, which they take away, and use chiefly as amulets for the averting of mischiefs." He wrote also in commenting about the country called Carrae that "there was also in it the remains of that ark, wherein it is related that Noah escaped the deluge, and where they are still shewn to such as are desirous to see them." (Antiq. 1,3, 6, p.29; XX,2, 2, p.415).
- d. There have been several modern efforts to locate the ark. No conclusive evidence has yet been brought to light. Because of security problems it has been difficult to get permission to properly search the area. "The Commercial Appeal" (Memphis, 1-16-1975, p.42) carried an article about modern searches for the ark. The article said in part, "The lure of the ark is strong and evidence of its actual existence is strong, also. Scores of men throughout history, from several nations, have seen what appear to be relics of the ark on the mountain. There is no record of any of them coming away less than fairly well convinced that the ark is there, awaiting scientific confirmation. More, in fact, are absolutely convinced."
- e. The area where the ark landed was an excellent location from which the new beginning could commence. Going westward, man and beast could travel through Asia Minor and thence on into Europe; northward they could go into Russia; southward they could enter the Middle East, into Palestine, Egypt, and on into Africa. "...It was the most suitable spot in the world, for the tribes and nations that sprang from the sons of Noah to descend from its heights and spread into every land" (Keil, p.148).

B. Genesis 8:6-14: Preparations are Made to Leave the Ark.

1. Verses 6-7: "And it came to pass at the end of forty days, that Noah opened the window of the ark which he had made: And he sent forth a raven, which went forth to and fro, until the waters were dried up from off the earth."
 - a. At the end of forty days Noah opened the window and sent forth a raven. There was wisdom shown in sending this type bird. It is a scavenger and would feed on the floating carcasses of animals killed in the flood. It does not appear that this bird returned to the ark.
 - b. The raven would light in muddy places and could find lodging on the craggy face of the mountainside.
2. Verses 8-9: "Also he sent forth a dove from him, to see if the waters were abated from off the face of the ground; But the dove found no rest for the sole of her foot, and she returned unto him into the ark, for the waters were on the face of the whole earth: then he put forth his hand, and took her, and pulled her in unto him into the ark."
 - a. Noah then sent (probably after a week's interval) a dove out from the ark. The dove would naturally go to the lowlands.
 - b. But there was still no place for it to land for the face of the earth was still covered by water. It is said that a dove will land only where the ground is dry and clear.
3. Verses 10-11: "And he stayed yet other seven days; and again he sent forth the dove out of the ark; And the dove came in to him in the evening; and, lo, in her mouth was an olive leaf plucked off: so Noah knew that the waters were abated from off the earth."
 - a. After another 7 days he sent forth the dove again; in the evening she returned with an olive leaf in her mouth. What great news this must have been to Noah! This is the origin of the universal symbol of peace: the dove and olive leaf.
 - b. God had established the week at the creation; he gave Noah seven days' (a week's) notice before the deluge came (7:4); the birds were sent forth at 7-day intervals.
4. Verse 12: "And he stayed yet other seven days; and sent forth the dove; which returned not again unto him any more."

- a. After another seven days the dove was sent forth again, and did not return to the ark. This was evidence to Noah that the time was ripe for all to leave the ark. He did not leave until directed to do so by God.
 - b. Genesis 7:1: "And the LORD said unto Noah, Come thou and all thy house into the ark; for thee have I seen righteous before me in this generation."
 - c. Verses 15-16 of this chapter records God's order for Noah and his family to leave the ark.
5. Verses 13-14: "And it came to pass in the six hundredth and first year, in the first *month*, the first *day* of the month, the waters were dried up from off the earth: and Noah removed the covering of the ark, and looked, and, behold, the face of the ground was dry. And in the second month, on the seven and twentieth day of the month, was the earth dried."
- a. Noah removed the covering of the ark and beheld clearly the earth for the first time since entering the ark. This was the six hundredth and first year of his life, on the first day of the first month of that year. (God is orderly about his affairs). The earth was dried up (free of water, verse 13); the word "dry" in verse 14 means "dry and firm."
 - b. It would have been premature for Noah to descend from the ark at the earlier day of verse 13. It was on the 27th day of the second month that the earth was pronounced "dry and firm. " Noah had entered the ark during his 600th year, the 17th day of the 2nd month. He left the ark during his 601st year, the 27th day of the second month: his entire stay on the ark was one year and ten days.
 - c. There is a question in the minds of some scholars whether a solar or lunar year is meant. "The months of the ancient Hebrews were lunar; the first six consisted of thirty days each, the latter six of twenty-nine days; the whole twelve months making three hundred and fifty-four days: add to this eleven days, (for though he entered the ark the preceding year on the seventeenth day of the second month, he did not come out till the twenty-seventh of the same month in the following year), which make exactly three hundred and sixty-five days, the period of a complete solar revolution..." (Clarke, p.77).
 - d. "Noah waited some time, and then, on the first day of the first month, in the 601 st year of his life, removed the covering from the ark, that he might obtain a freer prospect over the earth. He could see that the surface of the earth was dry; but it was not till the 27 th day of the second month, 57 days, therefore, after the removal of the roof, that the earth was completely dried up" [Keil & Delitzsch Commentary on the Old Testament: New Updated Edition, Electronic Database. Copyright © 1996 by Hendrickson Publishers, Inc.].
 - e. Barnes gives the following information: "Noah delays apparently another month, and, on the first day of the new year, ventures to remove the covering of the ark and look around. The date of the complete drying of the land is then given. The interval from the entrance to the exit consists of the following periods:
 - 1) Rain continued.....40 days
 - 2) Waters prevailed.....150 days
 - 3) Waters subside.....99 days
 - 4) Noah delays.....40 days
 - 5) Sending of the raven and the dove.....20 days
 - 6) Another month.....29 days
 - 7) Interval until the 27th of the 2nd month.....57 days
 - 8) Sum-total of days.....365 days
 - f. "Hence, it appears that the interval was a lunar year of three hundred and fifty-six days nearly, and ten days; that is, as nearly as possible, a solar year. This passage is important on account of the divisions of time which it brings out at this early epoch. The week of seven days is plainly intimated. The lunar month and year are evidently known. It is remarkable that the ten additional days bring up the lunar year in whole numbers to the solar. It seems a tacit agreement with the real order of nature. According to the Hebrew text, the deluge commenced in the 1656th year of the race of man. According to all texts it occurred in the time of Noah, the ninth in descent from Adam" [Barnes' Notes, Electronic Database. Copyright © 1997 by Biblesoft].

C. Genesis 8:15-22: God Speaks to Noah.

1. Verses 15-19: "And God spake unto Noah, saying, Go forth of the ark, thou, and thy wife, and thy sons, and thy sons' wives with thee. Bring forth with thee every living thing that *is* with thee, of all flesh, *both* of fowl, and of cattle, and of every creeping thing that creepeth upon the earth; that they may breed abundantly in the earth, and be fruitful, and multiply upon the earth. And Noah went forth, and his sons, and his wife, and his sons' wives with him: Every beast, every creeping thing, and every fowl, *and* whatsoever creepeth upon the earth, after their kinds, went forth out of the ark."

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- a. God commands Noah to leave the ark and take with him his family and all the animals he had on board.
 - b. They are to reproduce and multiply upon the earth. These instructions were carried out: they all left the ark.
 2. Verse 20: "And Noah builded an altar unto the LORD; and took of every clean beast, and of every clean fowl, and offered burnt offerings on the altar."
 - a. Noah built an altar, the first specific mention of such. He gave a tremendous sacrifice: of every clean beast.
 - b. This would seem a waste to a worldly man since there was such a limited supply of animals. Noah showed his gratitude and his trust.
 3. Verse 21: "And the LORD smelled a sweet savour; and the LORD said in his heart, I will not again curse the ground any more for man's sake; for the imagination of man's heart *is* evil from his youth; neither will I again smite any more every thing living, as I have done."
 - a. God was well-pleased with this offering. He thereby resolved within himself never again to destroy the earth with a flood. (Noah was told about this later).
 - b. He will not do this again even though he knew Noah's descendants would not do any better than the previous wicked generation. Despite this fact, God would go forward with his great plan formulated from eternity; instead of destroying man, he will try to redeem him.
 4. Verse 22: "While the earth remaineth, seedtime and harvest, and cold and heat, and summer and winter, and day and night shall not cease."
 - a. God hereby resolved to continue the earth's seasons until the end of the earth. Implied in the statement is the fact that the earth will cease to be at some future date.
 - b. In the meantime we have God's unconditional promise of the continuation of the seasons.
 - c. Matthew 24:35: "Heaven and earth shall pass away, but my words shall not pass away."
 - d. 2 Peter 3:9-14: "The Lord is not slack concerning his promise, as some men count slackness; but is longsuffering to us-ward, not willing that any should perish, but that all should come to repentance. But the day of the Lord will come as a thief in the night; in the which the heavens shall pass away with a great noise, and the elements shall melt with fervent heat, the earth also and the works that are therein shall be burned up. *Seeing then that* all these things shall be dissolved, what manner *of persons* ought ye to be in *all* holy conversation and godliness, Looking for and hasting unto the coming of the day of God, wherein the heavens being on fire shall be dissolved, and the elements shall melt with fervent heat? Nevertheless we, according to his promise, look for new heavens and a new earth, wherein dwelleth righteousness. Wherefore, beloved, seeing that ye look for such things, be diligent that ye may be found of him in peace, without spot, and blameless."
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GENESIS 9

A. Genesis 9:1-7: Noah and His Offspring are Given a Commission and Restrictions.

1. Verse 1: "And God blessed Noah and his sons, and said unto them, Be fruitful, and multiply, and replenish the earth."
 - a. This is similar to Genesis 1:28-29: "And God blessed them, and God said unto them, Be fruitful, and multiply, and replenish the earth, and subdue it: and have dominion over the fish of the sea, and over the fowl of the air, and over every living thing that moveth upon the earth. And God said, Behold, I have given you every herb bearing seed, which *is* upon the face of all the earth, and every tree, in the which *is* the fruit of a tree yielding seed; to you it shall be for meat."
 - b. Without the blessings God conferred on Noah, man would have been unable to be re-established so formidably on earth. He was outnumbered by the animals, inferior in strength to them, and had to face a climate and environment which was not as hospitable or pleasant as before the flood. However, he did not have to face a world that was filled with sin as before. The sin that would enter their new world would be their own doing. Noah was no better than Adam, but he had the instructions of history from which to learn. God took steps to restrain future violence which had filled the earth prior to the flood: those guilty of murder were to be put to death.
 - c. The instructions in this verse called on them to fill up the earth.
 2. Verse 2: "And the fear of you and the dread of you shall be upon every beast of the earth, and upon every fowl of the air, upon all that moveth *upon* the earth, and upon all the fishes of the sea; into your hand are they delivered."
 - a. "There seems to be revealed here some fundamental change in the human creation's relationship to the animal kingdom. Just what it is we are unable to say, but apparently this divinely instilled fear might have been for the protection of man" (Coffman, p.134).
 - b. There is a natural fear in the animal world toward man, once they have seen the handiwork of man. "Did the horse know his own strength, and the weakness of the miserable wretch who unmercifully rides, drives, whips, goads, and oppresses him, would he not with one stroke of his hoof destroy his tyrant possessor?" (Clarke, p.79).
 - c. Leupold: "There was really need of some such regulation. The beasts, by their great numbers, as well as because of their more rapid propagation, and in many instances also because of their superior strength would soon have gotten the upper hand over man and exterminated him. God, therefore, makes a natural 'fear,' even a 'terror,' to dwell in their hearts. Even the birds, at least the stronger among them, need such restraint. 'Cattle' are not mentioned, for by nature the domesticated animals stand sufficiently under the control of man. Distinct from this is the second thought that mankind shall have control of all the smaller forms of animal life as well as of the fish, to do with them as may seem good to it. For the expression 'to be given in anyone's hand' signifies to be delivered into absolute control to be dealt with as the other may determine The truth of the fulfillment of this word lies in the fact that wild beasts consistently shun the haunts of men, except when driven by hunger. No matter how strong they may be, they dread man's presence, yes, are for the most part actually filled with 'terror' at the approach of man" [[*Exposition of Genesis*](#) (pp. 328–329). Grand Rapids, MI: Baker Book House].
 3. Verse 3: "Every moving thing that liveth shall be meat for you; even as the green herb have I given you all things."
 - a. The scholars have discussed for many years whether this marked the first time that man began to eat flesh or whether this was the time when God first gave his approval for flesh to be eaten. Some argue that the animal sacrifices were eaten after the offering was completed, since this was the practice under the Law. However, there is no specific reference in the record of any flesh being eaten by man prior to this time.
 - b. Man was given the right to eat animal flesh from this time forward. The Jews were restricted in what kind of flesh they could eat, but today those restrictions do not apply. "Now the Spirit speaketh expressly, that in the latter times some shall depart from the faith, giving heed to seducing spirits, and doctrines of devils; Speaking lies in hypocrisy; having their conscience seared with a hot iron; Forbidding to marry, and commanding to abstain from meats, which God hath created to be received with thanksgiving of them which believe and know the truth. For every creature of God is good, and nothing to be refused, if it be received with thanksgiving" (1 Tim. 4:1-4).
 - c. Leupold:
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- 1) Now man's power over the animal world is enlarged in another direction: animal diet is made permissible. If men before the Flood ever ate the meat of beasts, they did so without divine sanction. The reason for man's receiving this permission can only be surmised. Some claim that man's strength, waning more perceptibly after the Flood, required more solid nutriment. That is not impossible. For the full impact of the deteriorating effects of sin became progressively more apparent as time went on. Others hold that among the tokens of God's goodness there was also this, that He enlarged the scope of man's diet in order to show man His varied and manifold mercy. In any case, if a 'thing' moves (*rémes* in the broader sense) and is 'alive,' man may eat it....
 - 2) This restriction, however, has to do only with the manner of eating animal food: it may not be eaten 'with its life, that is its blood.' The word for life is here *néphesh*, elsewhere commonly rendered 'soul.' The rendering 'life' is, however, more common....The blood is, therefore, deserving of very considerate treatment.... The blood must first be drained (Lev. 7:27; 17:10, 14)....
 - 3) Keil no doubt is correct when he claims these restrictions are given in view of the ordinances that are later to govern the use of blood in sacrifices. This provision, then, of Noah's time prepares for the sacrificial use of blood, and that which is to be sacred in sacrifice, in fact, is the heart and essence of the sacrifice, should hardly be employed that a man may glut his appetite with it....Apparently, this prohibition demands primarily that all blood be properly drained from animals slain for food. Naturally, this provision would rule out all such cruel practices as those of the Abyssinians, who gouge out portions of meat from the shanks of living animals, fill up the cavity with dung, and then eat the warm bloody meat. [*ibid*].
4. Verse 4: "But flesh with the life thereof, *which is* the blood thereof, shall ye not eat."
- a. With more in mind than Noah could then know, God forbade the consumption of blood. He called the blood the life of the flesh. Life is sacred to God; he instills in Noah a knowledge of this sacredness.
 - b. Blood represents life.
 - 1) "Only be sure that thou eat not the blood: for the blood is the life; and thou mayest not eat the life with the flesh" (Dt. 12:23).
 - 2) "Only ye shall not eat the blood; ye shall pour it upon the earth as water" (Dt. 12:16).
 - 3) "...I will even set my face against that soul that eateth blood, and will cut him off from among his people. For the life of the flesh is in the blood: and I have given it to you upon the altar to make an atonement for your souls: for it is the blood that maketh an atonement for the soul....For it is the life of all flesh; the blood of it is for the life thereof: therefore I said unto the children of Israel, Ye shall eat the blood of no manner of flesh: for the life of all flesh is the blood thereof: whosoever eateth it shall be cut off" (Lev. 17:10,11,14).
 - c. Even under the gospel this law forbidding the eating of blood is affirmed.
 - 1) Matthew 26:28: "For this is my blood of the new testament, which is shed for many for the remission of sins."
 - 2) Acts 15:20: "But that we write unto them, that they abstain from pollutions of idols, and *from* fornication, and *from* things strangled, and *from* blood."
 - 3) Acts 15:29: "That ye abstain from meats offered to idols, and from blood, and from things strangled, and from fornication: from which if ye keep yourselves, ye shall do well. Fare ye well."
 - 4) Hebrews 9:22: "And almost all things are by the law purged with blood; and without shedding of blood is no remission."
 - 5) 1 Peter 1:18-19: "Forasmuch as ye know that ye were not redeemed with corruptible things, *as* silver and gold, from your vain conversation *received* by tradition from your fathers; But with the precious blood of Christ, as of a lamb without blemish and without spot."
5. Verses 5-7: "And surely your blood of your lives will I require; at the hand of every beast will I require it, and at the hand of man; at the hand of every man's brother will I require the life of man. Whoso sheddeth man's blood, by man shall his blood be shed: for in the image of God made he man. And you, be ye fruitful, and multiply; bring forth abundantly in the earth, and multiply therein."
- a. Does this verse belong with verse 4 or verse 6? It fits better with verse 6. Those who shed man's blood will be punished.
 - b. Verse six gives the principle of civil government. This legalizes and commands capital punishment. It is a universal edict that applies to murder, not to accidental death. "The unjustified leniency of the judiciary in our own times could not possibly have any different effect than did God's leniency in the case of Cain. If any human society would like to invite the return of universal violence that precipitated the Flood they

could choose no quicker way to do it than by their rejection of God's commandment regarding murderers" (Coffman, pp.136f).

- 1) Two different Hebrew words for "killing" are "ratsach" (murder) and "harag" (to put to death). "Thou shalt not kill (*ratsach*) (Ex. 20:13); "But thou shalt surely kill (*harag*, a legal execution) him" (Dt. 13:9).
- 2) Romans 13:1-7: "Let every soul be subject unto the higher powers. For there is no power but of God: the powers that be are ordained of God. Whosoever therefore resisteth the power, resisteth the ordinance of God: and they that resist shall receive to themselves damnation. For rulers are not a terror to good works, but to the evil. Wilt thou then not be afraid of the power? do that which is good, and thou shalt have praise of the same: For he is the minister of God to thee for good. But if thou do that which is evil, be afraid; for he beareth not the sword in vain: for he is the minister of God, a revenger to *execute* wrath upon him that doeth evil. Wherefore *ye* must needs be subject, not only for wrath, but also for conscience sake. For for this cause pay ye tribute also: for they are God's ministers, attending continually upon this very thing. Render therefore to all their dues: tribute to whom tribute *is due*; custom to whom custom; fear to whom fear; honour to whom honour."
- 3) "Of course, the manner of the enforcement of such a commandment was not prescribed here at a time prior to the establishment of human government, and that is the reason the next of kin under the patriarchal dispensation was given the responsibility, such an individual being called 'the avenger of blood'" (Coffman, p.137).
- c. Verse seven is a repeat of verse one. Compare Genesis 1:28-29: "And God blessed them, and God said unto them, Be fruitful, and multiply, and replenish the earth, and subdue it: and have dominion over the fish of the sea, and over the fowl of the air, and over every living thing that moveth upon the earth. And God said, Behold, I have given you every herb bearing seed, which *is* upon the face of all the earth, and every tree, in the which *is* the fruit of a tree yielding seed; to you it shall be for meat."
- d. In the church, we are to be fruitful and multiply spiritually.

B. Genesis 9:8-17: The Rainbow Covenant.

1. Verses 8-9: "And God spake unto Noah, and to his sons with him, saying, And I, behold, I establish my covenant with you, and with your seed after you."
 - a. The source of this covenant was God. A covenant is an agreement between two or more parties. When a covenant is established between God and man, it should not be understood as an agreement between two equals. In no relationship with God is man God's equal. God does, however, condescend to make the covenant.
 - b. Covenants are broadly classified into two categories: conditional and unconditional. This covenant is without conditions: God promises never again to bring such a flood on the earth. This shows that the flood of Genesis was world-wide in scope since many other floods of a local nature have come. Notice the emphatic nature of the covenant's source (cf. verse 17).
 - c. The promise was given to Noah and on down to every other generation and individual.
2. Verses 10-11: "And with every living creature that *is* with you, of the fowl, of the cattle, and of every beast of the earth with you; from all that go out of the ark, to every beast of the earth. And I will establish my covenant with you; neither shall all flesh be cut off any more by the waters of a flood; neither shall there any more be a flood to destroy the earth."
 - a. The scope of the covenant extends not only to all men but to the whole animal creation as well. The purpose of the covenant was to give assurance to mankind that they would not need to fear such a flood again.
 - b. "The need of such assurance as this is evident. Was there any need of settling down to life on earth again or should Noah and his company stay near the ark in anticipation of another deluge? God did not leave men in darkness or uncertainty on this point. He clearly promised that no such destruction of the world by water would come again" (ALC, 1973, p.233).
 - c. Notice that God qualified his promise to never destroy the earth again "by the waters of a flood." Second Peter 3 shows that it is to be destroyed by fire at the second coming of Christ: "But, beloved, be not ignorant of this one thing, that one day *is* with the Lord as a thousand years, and a thousand years as one day. The Lord is not slack concerning his promise, as some men count slackness; but is longsuffering to us-ward, not willing that any should perish, but that all should come to repentance. But the day of the Lord will come as a thief in the night; in the which the heavens shall pass away with a great noise, and the elements shall melt with fervent heat, the earth also and the works that are therein shall be burned up. *Seeing then that* all these things shall be dissolved, what manner *of persons* ought ye to be in *all* holy conversation and godliness" (2 Pet. 3:8-11).

3. Verses 12-13: "And God said, This *is* the token of the covenant which I make between me and you and every living creature that *is* with you, for perpetual generations: I do set my bow in the cloud, and it shall be for a token of a covenant between me and the earth."
 - a. The token of the covenant was the rainbow. Scholars have argued over whether this was the first instance of a rainbow. A rainbow occurs when the sun shines on droplets of water. Genesis 2:5-6 speaks of a mist which watered the earth; a mist is made up of small particles of water; thus a rainbow was possible prior to this occasion. It could be the case, if the canopy theory is true, that the rays of the sun could not penetrate the thick atmosphere and clouds sufficiently to cause a rainbow. After the heavy rain had depleted the canopy of excessive moisture, the sun would be able to produce a rainbow.
 - b. It appears that God was at this time assigning to the rainbow the commission of being a visible token of his promise never to destroy the earth again with water. It does not matter whether there had been or had not been any rainbow before this, the point of emphasis in the text is that this arc of colors was to assure man from that day forward of God's resolve never to bring another world-wide deluge. This token was the best sign possible for the purpose intended. The permanence of this covenant is seen by the statement that it was "for perpetual generations."
4. Verses 14-17: "And it shall come to pass, when I bring a cloud over the earth, that the bow shall be seen in the cloud: And I will remember my covenant, which *is* between me and you and every living creature of all flesh; and the waters shall no more become a flood to destroy all flesh. And the bow shall be in the cloud; and I will look upon it, that I may remember the everlasting covenant between God and every living creature of all flesh that *is* upon the earth. And God said unto Noah, This *is* the token of the covenant, which I have established between me and all flesh that *is* upon the earth."
 - a. When a dark rain cloud appeared during Noah's life subsequent to the flood the rainbow would signify to him lest he should be fearful, that God was keeping his promise.
 - b. God does not need some visible token to keep him reminded of his covenant; being omniscient and omnipotent, he cannot forget; but man needs such reminders. This passage teaches that God can be trusted. "But, beloved, be not ignorant of this one thing, that one day *is* with the Lord as a thousand years, and a thousand years as one day. The Lord is not slack concerning his promise, as some men count slackness; but is longsuffering to us-ward, not willing that any should perish, but that all should come to repentance" (2 Pet. 3:8-9).

C. Genesis 9:18-29: A Shameful Episode.

1. Verses 18-19: "And the sons of Noah, that went forth of the ark, were Shem, and Ham, and Japheth: and Ham *is* the father of Canaan. These *are* the three sons of Noah: and of them was the whole earth overspread."
 - a. Moses is recording this information and thus speaks from his perspective of time. From Shem, Ham and Japheth have all present men come. Chapter 10 goes into great detail in listing the descendants of Noah through his sons.
 - b. There was a period of bliss between leaving the ark and the events which are next related; enough time for Canaan and others to be born and mature (cf. Gen. 10:6).
2. Verses 20-21: "And Noah began *to be* an husbandman, and he planted a vineyard: And he drank of the wine, and was drunken; and he was uncovered within his tent."
 - a. Noah took up farming following the flood; he planted a vineyard and produced grapes, and from thence, wine. Some think Noah accidentally discovered wine and was unaware of its potency. This cannot be determined from the text. His drunkenness was very likely an act of sin.
 - b. Leupold:
 - 1) We have advanced quite a time from the Flood; at least, Noah's son Ham already has children, and even his youngest Canaan (see 10:6) is born already. Several decades may well have passed. Men have begun to rehabilitate themselves. Noah apparently took to agriculture at once, even as we already found the second man Cain engaged in this pursuit (4:2). The notion that mankind took a long time to advance to the point of becoming agriculturalists does not agree with the Biblical evidence....Noah's drunkenness is entirely excusable; and yet the nature of this record seems to imply guilt on Noah's part. Consequently, we are rather led to the conclusion that Noah began to cultivate a plant of whose cultivation and uses he had previously known.
 - 2) The having of grapes led to the making of wine. The having of wine leads to the drinking of it....Noah was not ignorant of the potency of the drink he had prepared.... It is not the young and untried Noah who sins. It is the seasoned man of God, ripe in experience, who is here brought low. The sober tone of the detailed narrative points strongly to Noah's guilt....The heat of wine leads the aged patriarch

involuntarily to thrust back his garment, wherewith he had been covered or had from force of habit covered himself as he lay down in his tent. [*ibid*].

- c. A second sin involved here was Noah's immodesty: literally, "he uncovered himself" (cf. Lev. 18:5-19; 1 Tim. 2:9).
 - 1) Leviticus 18:5-19: "Ye shall therefore keep my statutes, and my judgments: which if a man do, he shall live in them: *I am* the LORD. None of you shall approach to any that is near of kin to him, to uncover *their* nakedness: *I am* the LORD. The nakedness of thy father, or the nakedness of thy mother, shalt thou not uncover: she *is* thy mother; thou shalt not uncover her nakedness. The nakedness of thy father's wife shalt thou not uncover: it *is* thy father's nakedness. The nakedness of thy sister, the daughter of thy father, or daughter of thy mother, *whether she be* born at home, or born abroad, *even* their nakedness thou shalt not uncover. The nakedness of thy son's daughter, or of thy daughter's daughter, *even* their nakedness thou shalt not uncover: for theirs *is* thine own nakedness. The nakedness of thy father's wife's daughter, begotten of thy father, she *is* thy sister, thou shalt not uncover her nakedness. Thou shalt not uncover the nakedness of thy father's sister: she *is* thy father's near kinswoman. Thou shalt not uncover the nakedness of thy mother's sister; for she *is* thy mother's near kinswoman. Thou shalt not uncover the nakedness of thy father's brother, thou shalt not approach to his wife: she *is* thine aunt. Thou shalt not uncover the nakedness of thy daughter in law: she *is* thy son's wife; thou shalt not uncover her nakedness. Thou shalt not uncover the nakedness of thy brother's wife: it *is* thy brother's nakedness. Thou shalt not uncover the nakedness of a woman and her daughter, neither shalt thou take her son's daughter, or her daughter's daughter, to uncover her nakedness; *for they are* her near kinswomen: it *is* wickedness. Neither shalt thou take a wife to her sister, to vex *her*, to uncover her nakedness, beside the other in her life *time*. Also thou shalt not approach unto a woman to uncover her nakedness, as long as she is put apart for her uncleanness."
 - 2) 1 Timothy 2:9: "In like manner also, that women adorn themselves in modest apparel, with shamefacedness and sobriety; not with broided hair, or gold, or pearls, or costly array."
3. Verses 22:24: "And Ham, the father of Canaan, saw the nakedness of his father, and told his two brethren without. And Shem and Japheth took a garment, and laid *it* upon both their shoulders, and went backward, and covered the nakedness of their father; and their faces *were* backward, and they saw not their father's nakedness. And Noah awoke from his wine, and knew what his younger son had done unto him."
 - a. Ham saw his father's nakedness and told his brothers; Shem and Japheth modestly covered their father. "As shameful as Noah's actions were, still more shameful was the conduct of his son, Ham" (ALC, 1973, p.238).
 - b. "It is natural to suppose, as some have done, that Kennan [Canaan] had something to do with the guilt of this act. But there is no clear indication of this in the text, and Kennan's relationship to Ham may be again mentioned simply in anticipation of the subsequent prophecy. Ham is punished in his youngest son, who was perhaps a favorite" [Barnes' Notes, Electronic Database. Copyright © 1997 by Biblesoft].
 - c. "There is no evidence that the doom was inflicted personally on Canaan but, as in similar cases, fulfilled in the national subjection of his posterity (cf. Gen 27:29,37,40; 25:23; 14:4). And accordingly this malediction took effect in the moral degradation of the Canaanites, expulsion from the land of Canaan, and in the reduction to the most abject servitude of the few who were exempted from destruction by the Israelites (Josh 9:23)" [Jamieson, Fausset, and Brown Commentary, Electronic Database. Copyright © 1997 by Biblesoft].
 - d. "It was not Ham who was cursed, however, but his son Canaan. Ham had sinned against his father, and he was punished in his son. But the reason why Canaan was the only son named, is not to be found in the fact that Canaan was the youngest son of Ham, and Ham the youngest son of Noah, as Hofmann supposes. The latter is not an established fact; and the purely external circumstance, that Canaan had the misfortune to be the youngest son, could not be a just reason for cursing him alone. The real reason must either lie in the fact that Canaan was already walking in the steps of his father's impiety and sin, or else be sought in the name Canaan, in which Noah discerned, through the gift of prophecy, a significant omen; a supposition decidedly favoured by the analogy of the blessing pronounced upon Japhet, which is also founded upon the name. Canaan does not signify lowland, nor was it transferred, as many maintain, from the land to its inhabitants; it was first of all the name of the father of the tribe, from whom it was transferred to his descendants, and eventually to the land of which they took possession" [Keil & Delitzsch Commentary on the Old Testament: New Updated Edition, Electronic Database. Copyright © 1996 by Hendrickson Publishers, Inc.].
 - e. Leupold: Something struck the man as unusual at his awakening—perhaps the manner in which the robe

- was placed upon him. Surely, no one will have volunteered information. Certainly, the verb can hardly indicate that he perceived by prophetic inspiration. Ham is here called "his younger son." True, the adjective with the article may indicate the superlative. But such is not necessarily the case; cf. 1:16 *haggadhol* = "the greater," and *haqqaton* = "the lesser." Besides, on that score, according to 10:21, Japheth would then be "the oldest" (*haggadhol*), and the customary order (cf. our comments on v. 18): Shem, Ham, Japheth would be entirely meaningless, and a reasonable explanation for this sequence would be impossible. [*ibid.*, p.348].
4. Verses 25-27: "And he said, Cursed *be* Canaan; a servant of servants shall he be unto his brethren. And he said, Blessed *be* the LORD God of Shem; and Canaan shall be his servant. God shall enlarge Japheth, and he shall dwell in the tents of Shem; and Canaan shall be his servant."
 - a. Noah pronounced a divine curse on Canaan and blessings on the other two. This is not angry railings against Canaan by Noah for only God could cause these predictive elements to be fulfilled.
 - b. The Canaanites were much abused due to their own sinful conduct, and were under bondage to various other nations. Shem's descendants were greatly blessed, for among them were Abraham's seed; Japheth was enlarged, for his offspring filled Europe, North America, etc., and have been the source of great benefits to the human family. These would be the most receptive to the gospel after Acts 10.
 5. Verses 28-29: "And Noah lived after the flood three hundred and fifty years. And all the days of Noah were nine hundred and fifty years: and he died."
 - a. Noah lived 350 years after the flood and died at the age of 950. We are not told how long he lived following the shameful episode of verses 21-24.
 - b. "With an appropriate summary, cast after the pattern of chapter five, the total age of Noah is recorded, so that we are enabled to compare his age with the rest of the antediluvian patriarchs. To our surprise we find that he lived twenty years more than Adam. On the other hand, a bit of computation based on chapter eleven will reveal that thus Noah lived quite far into the life of Abraham" [Leupold, *ibid.*, p.353].
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GENESIS 10

A. Genesis 10:1-31:

"Now these *are* the generations of the sons of Noah, Shem, Ham, and Japheth: and unto them were sons born after the flood. 2 The sons of Japheth; Gomer, and Magog, and Madai, and Javan, and Tubal, and Meshech, and Tiras. 3 And the sons of Gomer; Ashkenaz, and Riphath, and Togarmah. 4 And the sons of Javan; Elishah, and Tarshish, Kittim, and Dodanim. 5 By these were the isles of the Gentiles divided in their lands; every one after his tongue, after their families, in their nations. 6 And the sons of Ham; Cush, and Mizraim, and Phut, and Canaan. 7 And the sons of Cush; Seba, and Havilah, and Sabtah, and Raamah, and Sabtechah: and the sons of Raamah; Sheba, and Dedan. 8 And Cush begat Nimrod: he began to be a mighty one in the earth. 9 He was a mighty hunter before the LORD: wherefore it is said, Even as Nimrod the mighty hunter before the LORD. 10 And the beginning of his kingdom was Babel, and Erech, and Accad, and Calneh, in the land of Shinar. 11 Out of that land went forth Asshur, and builded Nineveh, and the city Rehoboth, and Calah, 12 And Resen between Nineveh and Calah: the same *is* a great city. 13 And Mizraim begat Ludim, and Anamim, and Lehabim, and Naphtuhim, 14 And Pathrusim, and Casluhim, (out of whom came Philistim,) and Caphtorim. 15 And Canaan begat Sidon his firstborn, and Heth, 16 And the Jebusite, and the Amorite, and the Girgasite, 17 And the Hivite, and the Arkite, and the Sinite, 18 And the Arvadite, and the Zemarite, and the Hamathite: and afterward were the families of the Canaanites spread abroad. 19 And the border of the Canaanites was from Sidon, as thou comest to Gerar, unto Gaza; as thou goest, unto Sodom, and Gomorrah, and Admah, and Zeboim, even unto Lasha. 20 These *are* the sons of Ham, after their families, after their tongues, in their countries, *and* in their nations. 21 Unto Shem also, the father of all the children of Eber, the brother of Japheth the elder, even to him were *children* born. 22 The children of Shem; Elam, and Asshur, and Arphaxad, and Lud, and Aram. 23 And the children of Aram; Uz, and Hul, and Gether, and Mash. 24 And Arphaxad begat Salah; and Salah begat Eber. 25 And unto Eber were born two sons: the name of one *was* Peleg; for in his days was the earth divided; and his brother's name *was* Joktan. 26 And Joktan begat Almodad, and Sheleph, and Hazarmaveth, and Jerah, 27 And Hadoram, and Uzal, and Diklah, 28 And Obal, and Abimael, and Sheba, 29 And Ophir, and Havilah, and Jobab: all these *were* the sons of Joktan. 30 And their dwelling was from Mesha, as thou goest unto Sephar a mount of the east. 31 These *are* the sons of Shem, after their families, after their tongues, in their lands, after their nations. 32 These *are* the families of the sons of Noah, after their generations, in their nations: and by these were the nations divided in the earth after the flood."

B. Notes from Coffman, pp.145ff:

1. Christians should not ignore this chapter, the fundamental teaching of which is that all the nations of the earth are descended from a single ancestor and that, therefore, all the peoples of the earth are of "one blood" (Acts 17:26). There are no critical difficulties whatever in Genesis 10, for this record is the only document that has descended through the centuries to shed light upon the particular facts here related....Satan did the only thing he could do, that is, resort to the imaginations of wicked men, those imaginations, of course, being the only source of such alleged prior documents as "P" and "J." Until Satan can produce those documents and submit them to the same kind of examination that the Bible has encountered, they should not enter in any manner whatsoever into the interpretation of these pages. We cannot believe that there ever were any such documents. It is impossible to prove the existence of documents that have never been seen, that have never received even one mention throughout the ages of human history, and the content of which has never been determined....What is written here is the unique source of all the information humanity has concerning the origin of the nations.
2. The sacred writer did not design to be exhaustive in this report but merely to show that all the peoples of the earth descended from a single ancestor....Generally speaking, the sons of Japheth went north, those of Ham south and southeast, and the Shemites eastward. Josephus affirmed that the Shemites went all the way to the coast of India, an opinion apparently having some confirmation in the Semitic appearance of the North and South American Indians: "Shem, the third son of Noah, had five sons, who inhabited the land that began at the Euphrates, and reached to the Indian Ocean" (Josephus).
3. It is admitted even by critical opponents of the Bible that this tenth chapter of Genesis is a "remarkably accurate historical document." The descendants of Japheth settled primarily in Asia Minor and Europe, those of Ham populated Africa, Arabia, and Egypt, with the sons of Canaan occupying primarily the land that bore their name in perpetuity. The sons of Shem occupied the Tigris-Euphrates valley, spreading eastward and beyond into Asia.

C. The Following Information is Condensed from *Bakers Bible Atlas*, pp.37-44.

1. General.

- a. The ancient Israelites had more than an academic interest in the nations which surrounded them. Some of Israel's neighbors were bitter foes, while others had proved themselves friends and allies. The Table of Nations is not complete; the focus of attention is the Mediterranean region.
- b. At first glance the records appear to be personal rather than national. In some instances, we are not certain whether a name is to be taken in a personal or tribal sense. The statement that "Canaan begat Sidon his firstborn" (Gen. 10:15) appears to be a simple genealogical statement, but four verses later it is clear that Sidon was a city marking one of the borders of the Canaanites. Historically, Sidon was the "firstborn" of the Canaanite cities.
- c. The Table is arranged in climactic form. The first reference is to the Japhetic peoples who occupied Europe and parts of Asia. These people were remote from Biblical Israel. The Hamitic peoples of Asia and Africa are given second place. Semitic history, of which the family of Abraham is a conspicuous part, is presented last.

2. The Japhetic Nations (Ancestors of the Gentiles).

- a. Seven families of the "sons of Japheth" (Gen. 10:2) are named.

- 1) Gomer. The Assyrian monuments speak of the Gimirrar, known to the Greeks as Kimmerioi. According to Homer they lived north of the Black Sea. Later they traveled westward, maintaining a foothold in Cappadocia. Three sons of Gomer are mentioned in Genesis 10:3.
 - a) Ashkenaz. Jeremiah speaks of Ashkenaz as a people allied with Armenia: "Set ye up a standard in the land, blow the trumpet among the nations, prepare the nations against her, call together against her the kingdoms of Ararat, Minni, and Ashchenaz; appoint a captain against her; cause the horses to come up as the rough caterpillars" (Jer. 51:27).
 - b) Riphath. Josephus located Riphath in Paphlagonia, an ancient Roman province in Asia Minor on the south coast of the Black sea. Neither the Bible nor secular literature affords a definite clue to the identity of Riphath.
 - c) Togarmah. Josephus identified Togarmah with the Phrygians who were famous for their horses: "They of the house of Togarmah traded in thy fairs with horses and horsemen and mules" (Ezek. 27:14).
 - 2) Magog. The Amarna Tablets from Egypt (14th century B.C.) mention a people called "Gagaia" who may be related to the Gog associated with Magog (Ezek. 38:39). Josephus equated Magog with the Scythians who inhabited the area north and east of the Caspian Sea, and who invaded Palestine during the 7th century B.C.
 - 3) Madai. The word Madai is uniformly translated "Medes," a people who lived south of the Caspian Sea. By 700 B.C. Media was a prosperous kingdom. The Medes formed an important part of the empire of Cyrus.
 - 4) Javan. Javan is the Hebrew name for the Ionians or, more generally, the Greeks. Cuneiform inscriptions of Sargon speak of "the Javanites who are in the midst of the sea." The first contacts of Israel with Greeks was with the Ionians of Asia Minor and adjacent islands who, like the Phoenicians, were noted for their trade and commerce. There are four subdivisions of Javan.
 - a) Elishah. The name Elishah usually occurs with the Hebrew word for islands. Traditionally, Elishah has been associated with the Greek colonies of southern Italy and Sicily.
 - b) Tarshis. The most remote goal of Mediterranean commerce in both classical and Old Testament times was Tartessus in southern Spain. Tarsus in Asia Minor, (Paul's birthplace) and a Tarshis in Sardinia have similar names.
 - c) Kittim. Kittim, strictly speaking, is the island of Cyprus. The Habakkuk Commentary found at Qumran mentions Israel's enemies as the Kittim.
 - d) Dodanim (or Rodanim). The letters "d" and "r" in Hebrew are very similar and there is some question concerning the correct reading of this word. Genesis 10:4 and 1 Chronicles 1:7. No definite location can be assigned.
 - 5) Tubal and Meshech. Scripture usually associates the two names. Ezekiel 27:13; 32:26; 38:2-3; 39:1. Assyrian texts mention the Tabali of Asia Minor who gave "great horses" as tribute to Ashurbanipal. Their territory was close to Cilicia, a land famed for its horses (1 Kings 10:28).
 - a) 1 Kings 10:28: "And Solomon had horses brought out of Egypt, and linen yarn: the king's merchants received the linen yarn at a price."
 - b) Ezekiel 27:13: "Javan, Tubal, and Meshech, they *were* thy merchants: they traded the persons of men
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- and vessels of brass in thy market."
- c) Ezekiel 32:26: "There *is* Meshech, Tubal, and all her multitude: her graves *are* round about him: all of them uncircumcised, slain by the sword, though they caused their terror in the land of the living."
 - d) Ezekiel 38:2-3: "Son of man, set thy face against Gog, the land of Magog, the chief prince of Meshech and Tubal, and prophesy against him, And say, Thus saith the Lord GOD; Behold, I *am* against thee, O Gog, the chief prince of Meshech and Tubal."
 - e) Ezekiel 39:1: "Therefore, thou son of man, prophesy against Gog, and say, Thus saith the Lord GOD; Behold, I *am* against thee, O Gog, the chief prince of Meshech and Tubal."
- 6) Tiras. Probably identical with the Tyrsenoi of classical tradition and the Turusha of earlier Egyptian texts, the people known as Tiras occupied islands and coast lands of the Aegean. These islanders are doubtless the piratical sea people known as Turusha who invaded Syria and Egypt during the 13th century B.C.
3. The Hamitic Nations (Ancestors of the darker races).
- a. The peoples known in the scriptures as Hamites rose to prominence early in history. Israel had closer contacts with them than with the more remote Japhetic peoples.
 - b. Four sons of Ham are mentioned in Genesis 10:6.
 - 1) Cush. Traditionally Cush has been translated "Ethiopia" following usage of the ancient Greeks. The descendants of Cush represent 6 other people.
 - a) Seba. Seba appears to have been located in Africa, presumably near Cush. The name should be distinguished from Sheba in SW Arabia.
 - b) Havilah. Havilah is thought to have been located in central Arabia bordering the coast of the Persian Gulf.
 - c) Sabtah (or Sabatah). The Greek geographer, Pliny, speaks of Sabota, a name corresponding to the Shabwat of the South Arabic inscriptions. No definite location can be assigned.
 - d) Raamah. Raamah has not been identified, but it is believed to have been located in southeastern Arabia near Ma'an. Two subdivisions of Raaman are mentioned. Sheba was the land of the Sabaeans in Yemen; Dedan, a people of northwestern Arabia along the Red Sea
 - e) Sabtechah. The area of Sabtechah is uncertain. It is probably in southeastern Arabia.
 - f) Nimrod. Nimrod is named as the founder of an early empire in Babylon. His reputation as a cruel conqueror has given rise to many legends. Jewish Aggadah made him the founder of the Tower of Babel. A Ziggurat near Babylon is known by the Arabs as Birs Nimrud. All this points to a location in lower Mesopotamia.
 - 2) Mizraim (Hebrew word for Egypt). The family of Mizraim had several branches.
 - a) Ludim. The Hamitic Ludim of North Africa served as bowmen in the armies of Egypt and Tyre (Isa. 66:19; Ezek. 27:10; 30:5).
 - b) Anamim. Nothing is known about the Anamim.
 - c) Lehabim, or Lubim. A people known as Libyans dwelt on the southern shore of the Mediterranean, west of Egypt. The 22nd Dynasty of Egypt was Libyan in origin.
 - d) Naphtuhim. Identification of the Naphtuhim is uncertain. Some have derived the name from the Egyptian Na Ptah, "the people of Ptah," and associated Naphtuhim with the district around Memphis, the center of Ptah worship. A more probable suggestion relates Naphtuhim to "northern land," the Egyptian Delta.
 - e) Pathrusim. The term Pathrusim is used of the people of Pathros (Jer. 44: 15), a name based on the Egyptian word for the south. Southern or Upper Egypt included the narrow valley of the Nile from the First Cataract at Aswan to the head of the Delta. Ezekiel (29:14) calls Pathros the land of the origin of the Egyptians.
 - f) Casluhim. We have no hint concerning the home or history of the Casluhim except for the note that they were ancestors of the Philistines.
 - g) Caphtorim. Caphtor is usually identified with the island of Crete, known as Keftiu in Egyptian sources. The Philistines are said to have come from Caphtor (Amos 9:7). Possibly the Keftiu occupied not only the island of Crete but also surrounding islands and coastlands.
 - 3) Phut or Put. Old Persian inscriptions mention Putaya, a district in North Africa west of the Nile Delta. Another identification suggested for Phut is ancient Punt, modern Somaliland in East Africa.
 - 4) Canaan. The land of the Phoenicians and the Canaanites of Syria and Palestine was called Canaan during Israel's early history. Important Canaanite groups include:

- a) Sidon. The Phoenician city of Sidon is termed the "firstborn" of Canaan. It is mentioned in the Amarna Tablets (1400 B.C.) and appears to have been the greatest of the Phoenician coastal cities until outstripped by its "daughter" Tyre.
 - b) Heth. The "sons of Heth" are the Hittites whose ancient political and cultural center was at the bend of the Halys River in Asia Minor. In the day of Abraham, Hittites were settled in the Hebron area. After the Conquest under Joshua they continued to live among the Israelites. Ephron, a Hittite soldier in David's army, was judicially murdered by the king.
 - c) Jebusites. The Jebusites maintained their stronghold in the city of Jebus, the name which they gave to the city of Jerusalem. They resisted Israelite strength until the time of David when Jebus was captured and under the name of Jerusalem, made capital of united Israel. Remnants of the Jebusites were subjected to bond service by Solomon. 1 Kings 9:20.
 - d) Amorites. Amorites were among the primitive inhabitants of Canaan encountered by Abraham. They are described as inhabiting the west shore of the Dead Sea and the nearby mountains (Gen. 14:7,13). Two Amorite kingdoms occupied the area from the Arnon River to Mount Hermon (Deut 3:8) and their rulers, Sihon and Og, were defeated in their battle against Joshua (Num. 21:34-35). Amorites moved into western Palestine and their name there became practically synonymous with the Canaanites. Amorite tribes also settled in Mesopotamia where one of their number, Hammurabi, became famous as an able king and lawgiver.
 - e) Girgasites. Aside from the fact that they are a Canaanite tribe we know nothing of the Gir-gasites.
 - f) Hivites. Tribes known as Hivites dwelt at Shechem during the time of Jacob (Gen. 33:18; 34:2). Joshua entered an alliance with the Hivites (Josh. 9). The Hivites have been closely related to the Horites.
 - g) Arkites. Arkites were inhabitants of the Phoenician city of Arqa, twelve and one-half miles north of Tripolis at the northwestern foot of the Lebanon.
 - h) Sinites. The annals of the Assyrian monarch Tiglath-pileser III mention the people of Siannu "on the shore of the sea" (Mediterranean) along with the cities of Arqa and Simirra.
 - i) Arvadites. Arvad, the most northerly of the Phoenician cities, was located 125 miles north of Tyre. Built on an island about two miles from the mainland, Arvad was able to resist Pharaoh Thutmose III when most of the Phoenician cities surrendered to Egypt.
 - j) Zernarites. Mention is frequently made of Simirra in the Assyrian annals of Tiglath-pileser III and his successors. The earlier Amarna letters mention the city of Sumur. Its location has not been established.
 - k) Hamathites. Hamath was an influential city on the Orontes River in Syria. Under David, Solomon, and Jeroboam II, the city of Hamath formed the northern boundary of Israel (2 Sam. 8:9; 1 Kings 6:65; 2 Kings 14:25).
4. The Semitic Nations (Shem—Ancestor of the Hebrews).
- a. The writer of Genesis arranged his genealogies in such a way that the reader is prepared for the elaboration of the line of Shem through Terah and Abraham. Five major branches of the Semitic family:
 - 1) Elam. The province beyond the Tigris River, north of the Persian Gulf and east of Babylon was known as Elam. Periodically the warlike Elamites invaded the Fertile Crescent and secured control of southern Mesopotamia. An Elamite conqueror sacked Babylon and carried the famous stele bearing the code of Hammurabi to his capital at Susa.
 - 2) Asshur. North of Babylon in the Tigris-Euphrates Valley, Asshur, or Assyria, grew into one of the great powers of antiquity. From its capital at Nineveh, on the Tigris River, Assyria ruled a territory which extended westward to the Mediterranean. Samaria, the capital of Israel, fell to the Assyrians in 722 B.C. and Jerusalem barely escaped capture by Sennacherib two decades later.
 - 3) Arphaxad (or Arpachshad). Ptolemy, the Greek geographer, mentions an Arrapachitis on the great Zab River, northeast of Nineveh, which some students identify with Biblical Arphaxas. Others consider the word a compound of Arpak and Chesed, Arpak of the Chesdim (Biblical Chaldeans).
 - a) From the family of Arphaxad came Eber (Gen. 10:24), the patronymic ancestor of the Hebrews. The line of Abraham is traced through Eber (Gen. 11:11-28).
 - b) Another branch of the Arphaxas line was that of Joktan, from whom arose thirteen Arabian tribes that dwelt in the southeastern and southern sections of the Arabian Peninsula.
 - c) In some instances names appear here which also occur in the genealogy of Ham:
 - (1) Hazarmaveth. The name is known elsewhere as Hadramaut, the narrow, arid coastal plain and

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- broad plateau of South Arabia.
- (2) Sheba. The south Arabian kingdom of Sheba, or Seba, had a high culture. The visit of the Queen of Sheba to Solomon was doubtless concerned, in part, with trade arrangements.
 - (3) Ophir. The exact location of Ophir is not known. Ophir was noted for its fine gold. In exchange for copper, produced in the Israelite refineries, Solomon's ships brought back silver, gold, etc. (1 Kings 10:22).
 - (4) Havilah. Havilah is thought to have been located north of Sheba in Arabia, between Ophir and Hazarmaveth. The name Havilah is also used of the gold-producing region through which the Pishon, one of the rivers flowing out of Eden, passed (Gen. 2:11-12).
 - d) Lud. The term Lud is probably a reference to the Lydians of Asia Minor. Egyptian monuments locate the Luden near Mesopotamia. It has been conjectured that they were displaced by the Assyrians, after which they migrated to Asia Minor. When the fabulously rich Croesus was defeated by Cyrus the Great, Lydian independence came to an end.
 - e) Aram. The region known as Aram, or Syria, was inhabited by people known as Aramaeans. "Aram of the Two Rivers" translated "Mesopotamia" was the name given to the region around Haran in northern Mesopotamia where Laban "the Aramaean," and other members of Abraham's family, settled. Aramaic states centering in Zobah, Maachah, Geshur, and Damascus played an important role in later Biblical history.
5. Addition Notes (Coffman, pp.152f).
- a. In the day the earth was divided (Gen. 10:25). "This is one of the very interesting lines in the chapter; and, of course, men are not agreed on what is meant by it. The usual explanation of it is as a reference to the division about to be related in the next chapter, the confusion of tongues." Two other ideas suggested: (1) to Noah's dividing the earth among his sons, and (2) widespread landslips on the earth's surface. There is no evidence to either of these two views.
 - b. "Medical science...has added a vital...truth...that there is no distinction whatever among the races as to the types of blood, persons of any race being able to provide the material for a blood transfusion to persons of any other race." This substantiates the Biblical evidence that we have all descended from a common ancestor. "And hath made of one blood all nations of men for to dwell on all the face of the earth..." (Acts 17:26).
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GENESIS 11

A. Genesis 11:1-9: The Tower of Babel.

1. Verse 1: "And the whole earth was of one language, and of one speech."
 - a. At the time of the events of the text the entire population spoke the same language and speech. They could all perfectly understand one another. We have no way of knowing what that original language was, but it was obviously the same that was spoken by Noah, and very likely even by Adam and Eve.
 - b. The events of this text began to occur about 100 years after the flood. The division of the earth occurred during the days of Peleg (10:25), who was a descendant of Shem through Arphaxad, Salah, and Eber. Arphaxad was born when Shem was 100 years old, two years following the flood; Salah was born when Arphaxad was 35 years old; Salah was 30 when his son Eber was born; Eber was 34 when Peleg was born: $2 + 35 + 30 + 34 = 101$.
 - c. This chapter explains the occasion of the division of the nations and the various tongues that began to be spoken (Gen. 10:5,20,25,31,32). Noah lived 350 years after the flood so he was still alive when these events occurred, although we do not know that he was present when the tower was being erected. These figures assume that there were no omissions in the genealogy given later in this chapter. However, Luke's genealogy (3:34-36) corresponds to the list given in Genesis 11 except that Cainan is introduced between Salah and Arphaxad, which adds one generation. And that may mean that the list is abbreviated at other places. *However, see Thompson's comment below.*
 - d. This chapter is important not only because it reveals the origin of the various languages and how the various nations came to develop separately, but more importantly shows that God punished their rebellion.
 - e. "We are told over and over again that the genealogies cannot be used for anything relating to chronology because there are 'gaps' in them. But there are some important points that are conveniently overlooked by those who suggest such.
 - 1) "One is this: 'We are told again and again that some of these genealogies contain gaps: but what is never pointed out by those who lay the emphasis on these gaps, is that they only know of the existence of these gaps because the Bible elsewhere fills them in. How otherwise could one know of them? But if they are filled in, they are not gaps at all! Thus in the final analysis the argument is completely without foundation.'
 - 2) "Furthermore, and this point needs to be driven home, *even if there were gaps in the genealogies, there would not necessarily be gaps in the chronologies therein recorded. The question of chronology is not the same as that of genealogy!* 'Gaps in genealogies, however, do not prove gaps in chronologies. The known gaps all occur in non-chronological genealogies. Moreover, even if there were gaps in the genealogies of Genesis 5 and 11, this would not affect the chronological information therein recorded, for even if Enosh were the great-grandson of Seth, it would still be the case that Seth was 105 years old when Enosh was born, according to a simple reading of the text. Thus genealogy and chronology are distinct problems with distinct characteristics. They ought not to be confused.'
 - 3) "Notice also that the 'gaps' occur in derivative genealogies, not original ones. Matthew is at liberty to arrange his genealogy of Christ in three groups of 14, making some 'omissions,' because his genealogy is derived from the complete lists found in the Old Testament and elsewhere.
 - 4) "In the genealogies of Genesis 5 and 11, remember also that the inclusion of the father's age at the time of his son's birth is wholly without meaning or use unless chronology is intended! Else why would the Holy Spirit give us such irrelevant information?" (Bert Thompson, "The Bible and the Age of the Earth," Apologetics Press).
2. Verse 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."
 - a. The descendants of Noah had continued to cling together, apparently wandering from place to place. In making their journey, they came to a desirable location known as the plain of Shinar. Here they dwelt. It appears that the entire population was present although some smaller bands may have broken off earlier (there is no indication of this, however).
 - b. They had been journeying "from the east," or according to the margin, eastward. They were about 500 miles southeast of Ararat at this point. The land of Shinar was the southern part of Mesopotamia, known as Sumer and later, Babylonia; it corresponds roughly with modern Iraq, between Baghdad and the Persian Gulf (ALC, 1979, p.88).
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3. Verse 3: "And they said one to another, Go to, let us make brick, and burn them thoroughly. And they had brick for stone, and slime had they for mortar."
 - a. This area was an alluvial plain having few trees, so their building material was, of necessity, brick. They burned the brick instead of letting them dry in the sun. For mortar they used "slime" (bitumen, an asphaltic material). [If we should wonder what they used for burning the bricks, we may find the answer in the presence of bitumen].
 - b. "Excavators have been amazed at how durable these bricks have been and how strongly they were bonded by the bitumen" (ALC, 1979, pp.88f). Alluvial plains are usually without trees and stones.
 4. Verse 4: "And they said, Go to, let us build us a city and a tower, whose top *may reach* unto heaven; and let us make us a name, lest we be scattered abroad upon the face of the whole earth."
 - a. They decided to build a city and a tower the purpose of which was "lest we be scattered abroad upon the face of the whole earth." This intention of staying in one place was a direct refusal to follow God's instructions to Noah and his sons to "be fruitful, and multiply, and replenish the earth" (9:1).
 - b. Some have supposed that the tower had a religious significance, and well it may have had, but none is indicated by the text. Others think that the purpose of the tower was to escape another flood, but the tower would not have offered sanctuary to all of them, and why would they build such a sanctuary on the lower plains and not on the highest mountain?
 - c. Their aim was not to build a means of ascending to God's abode but rather something that would reach into the heavens (sky); cf. skyscraper. It was a monument to their own pride; it was a means of defying God. This tower was the first of several ziggurats which later had temples on top in which idol worship was conducted.
 - d. The Scriptures do not identify the ringleaders in the foolish effort. "The traditional account handed down by Josephus carries the stamp of truth in the simplicity that says, 'It was Nimrod who excited them to such an affront and contempt of God; he was the grandson of Ham the son of Noah.' Josephus also affirmed that Nimrod had taught that it was cowardice to submit to God, and wrong to praise God for benefits, because it was through the courage and daring of men themselves that all blessings and benefits came" (Coffman, p.159).
 - e. Josephus' comments on the issue are these:
 - 1) Now it was Nimrod who excited them to such an affront and contempt of God. He was the grandson of Ham, the son of Noah, a bold man, and of great strength of hand. He persuaded them not to ascribe it to God, as if it was through his means they were happy, but to believe that it was their own courage which procured that happiness.
 - 2) He also gradually changed the government into tyranny, seeing no other way of turning men from the fear of God, but to bring them into a constant dependence on his power. He also said he would be revenged on God, if he should have a mind to drown the world again; for that he would build a tower too high for the waters to be able to reach! and that he would avenge himself on God for destroying their forefathers! Now the multitude were very ready to follow the determination of Nimrod, and to esteem it a piece of cowardice to submit to God; and they built a tower, neither sparing any pains, nor being in any degree negligent about the work: and, by reason of the multitude of hands employed in it, it grew very high, sooner than any one could expect; but the thickness of it was so great, and it was so strongly built, that thereby its great height seemed, upon the view, to be less than it really was.
 - 3) It was built of burnt brick, cemented together with mortar, made of bitumen, that it might not be liable to admit water. When God saw that they acted so madly, he did not resolve to destroy them utterly, since they were not grown wiser by the destruction of the former sinners; but he caused a tumult among them, by producing in them divers languages, and causing that, through the multitude of those languages, they should not be able to understand one another. The place wherein they built the tower is now called Babylon, because of the confusion of that language which they readily understood before; for the Hebrews mean by the word Babel, confusion.
 - 4) The Sibyl also makes mention of this tower, and of the confusion of the language, when she says thus: "When all men were of one language, some of them built a high tower, as if they would thereby ascend up to heaven, but the gods sent storms of wind and overthrew the tower, and gave every one his peculiar language; and for this reason it was that the city was called Babylon" [Electronic Version].
 - f. Notice the arrogance and pride involved in their venture: let US build US a city and a tower...and let US make US a name... They were elevating themselves into the place rightfully belonging to God. These men were intelligent; they would not think they could build a physical edifice that would extend to heaven itself.
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- g. The purpose of the tower was to keep the people from scattering. God instructed them to spread over the face of the earth; they decided to stay in one place. Their rebellion against God resulted in their being divided by language, and widely scattered. The differences in language would cause those who spoke the same language to collect in one area; over the years, differences in culture among these various group would develop, which in turn would promote dissensions and warfare.
5. Verses 5-7: "And the LORD came down to see the city and the tower, which the children of men built. And the LORD said, Behold, the people *is* one, and they have all one language; and this they begin to do: and now nothing will be restrained from them, which they have imagined to do. Go to, let us go down, and there confound their language, that they may not understand one another's speech."
- a. God uses accommodative language here in order to express himself clearly to us. "This is called anthropomorphism; and this passage is loaded with it. Significantly, while man was boasting of his tower 'to reach heaven,' God couldn't even see it (the tower) without making a trip down to earth! Despite the fact that God sees everything continually throughout the whole universe, this manner of speech is superlative as an exposure of the foolishness and wickedness of men" (Coffman, p.160).
- b. Jehovah could see that if this rebellion was left unhindered, wickedness would spread quickly throughout the population. Hence, he decided to intervene. *Let us go down* implies the presence of the "trinitarian godhead more fully apparent in the NT, but certainly not any kind of a conference with angels, or some kind of a 'community of gods,' as imagined by some (Coffman, p.161).
- c. God decided to disrupt their evil plan by confusing their language so that they could not understand each other. He recognized the strength of unity and the weakness of disunity. That is why we are called on to be united (John 17:20-21) and to speak the same things (1 Cor. 1:10). We are not told the details of how God caused their language to become confused. We are not told exactly how Christ turned the water into wine. A supernatural act cannot be explained by scientific equation or theory.
- d. God's power has not diminished; nor has his opposition to man's rebellion. Through the centuries he has brought to destruction such rebellious civilizations as Tyre, Sidon, Nineveh, Babylon, Sodom and Gomorrah, Jerusalem, pagan Rome, *et al.* And no doubt he was behind the downfall of the Ottoman Empire, the Holy Roman Empire, and Nazi Germany and Japan during World War II. Communist Russia is doomed to fall; also the USA if we continue down the road of unbelief. However, Christians can be the saving influence (Matt. 5:13-16; cf. Col. 3:6). [This material was written a few years before the USSR disintegrated in 1991].
- e. "Without being able to understand one another, proper coordination of activity was impossible and likely alienations occurred" (ALC, 1979, p.90). It is not likely that every individual had his own language following this episode, but rather that family groups spoke the same language, thus the divisions would be along family lines.
6. Verses 8-9: "So the LORD scattered them abroad from thence upon the face of all the earth: and they left off to build the city. Therefore is the name of it called Babel; because the LORD did there confound the language of all the earth: and from thence did the LORD scatter them abroad upon the face of all the earth."
- a. The Lord's plan worked perfectly; there was no possibility of failure. They quit their building and were scattered over the earth as the Lord intended. It was for the good of man that they be spread abroad: there would be less likelihood of the same sins contaminating the whole population; also, there would be a greater supply of food; and disease would not ravage the entire race.
- b. The name of the place was called Babel because of the confusing of the languages. It was later called Babylon. English has a similar word, babble.
- c. "There have been conflicting traditions as to the location of the tower of Babel, but only two principle ones. That of the Jews and Arabs is that it was located at Borsippa, ten miles southwest from the center of the city of Babylon. It is now called *Birs-Nimroud*, explained as a corruption of *Birj Nimroud*, or Tower of Nimrod. The English Orientalist, Sir Henry Rawlinson, discovered in a foundation corner of the ruins a cylinder with this inscription: 'The tower of Borsippa, which a former king erected, and completed to the height of 42 cubits, whose summit he did not finish, fell to ruins in ancient times....The great god Marduk urged me to restore it....' Its ruins still tower fifty yards above the mass of ruins surrounding it. The other principle tradition, now commonly favored by archaeologists as more likely, is that of the Babylonians themselves, identifying the tower with the ruins just north of the Marduk temple, in the center of the city of Babylon. One of the tablets recovered from the area reads: 'The building of this illustrious tower offended the gods. In a night they threw down what they had built. They scattered them abroad, and made strange their speech.' This sounds as if a tradition of Babel. It is said that now the site is an immense hole 330 feet square, which
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has been used as a quarry from which to take bricks, and may represent the dimensions of the platform on which the tower was erected" (ALC, 1979, pp. 86f).

- d. "Here is the story of how Babylon got its name, a name which has been on the tongue of all generations, and a name that memorializes eternally the dramatic event that produced its name" (Coffman, p.162).
- e. While the building of the tower was left off, "it is believed by many that it was resumed later, and this tower became the pattern for all similar towers, called ziggurats...in other Babylonian cities, more than (24) of which have been identified. These may also have inspired the building of the pyramids of Egypt at a later time" (ALC, 1979, p.86).

B. Genesis 11:10-26: The Descendants of Shem.

1. Verses 10-26: "These are the generations of Shem: Shem was an hundred years old, and begat Arphaxad two years after the flood: And Shem lived after he begat Arphaxad five hundred years, and begat sons and daughters. And Arphaxad lived five and thirty years, and begat Salah: And Arphaxad lived after he begat Salah four hundred and three years, and begat sons and daughters. And Salah lived thirty years, and begat Eber: And Salah lived after he begat Eber four hundred and three years, and begat sons and daughters. And Eber lived four and thirty years, and begat Peleg: And Eber lived after he begat Peleg four hundred and thirty years, and begat sons and daughters. And Peleg lived thirty years, and begat Reu: And Peleg lived after he begat Reu two hundred and nine years, and begat sons and daughters. And Reu lived two and thirty years, and begat Serug: And Reu lived after he begat Serug two hundred and seven years, and begat sons and daughters. And Serug lived thirty years, and begat Nahor: And Serug lived after he begat Nahor two hundred years, and begat sons and daughters. And Nahor lived nine and twenty years, and begat Terah: And Nahor lived after he begat Terah an hundred and nineteen years, and begat sons and daughters. And Terah lived seventy years, and begat Abram, Nahor, and Haran."
2. The narrative traces the descendants of Shem in a direct line to Terah the father of Abraham. "...The aim of the inspired writer was to trace the central facts of the scheme of human redemption, rather than to write a general history of mankind....God promised that this redemption would be wrought through the seed of the woman (Gen. 3:15), and the fulfillment of that promise is the chief word which is described throughout the Sacred Scriptures. The earlier part of the Bible shows the need for redemption, and now we are to see something of the method by which God accomplished his purpose and redeemed the lost through one man, his family, and his nation" (ALC, 1959, p.49). The genealogy given in this section is that leading up to Abraham through whom Christ later came. "The first five members of this pedigree have already been given in the genealogy of the Shemites; and in that case the object was to point out the connection in which all the descendants of Eber stood to one another. They are repeated here to show the direct line of descent of the Terahites through Peleg from Shem, but more especially to follow the chronological thread of the family line, which could not be given in the genealogical tree without disturbing the uniformity of its plan. By the statement in verse 10, that '*Shem, a hundred years old, begat Arphaxad two years after the flood,*' the chronological data already given of Noah's age at the birth of his sons (chap, 5:32) and at the commencement of the flood (7:11) are made still more definite" (Keil, p.177).
3. One obvious thing in comparing the genealogical tables of chapters 5 and 11 is the difference in the length of time those named lived. Noah lived 950 years, but Shem lived only 600; Arphaxad lived 438 years; Salah 433; Eber 464; Peleg lived only 239; Serug 230; Terah 205; Abraham 175 (25:7). Their life-spans shortened, but they begat children at an earlier age. "There is nothing astonishing, therefore, in the circumstance, that wherever Abraham went be found tribes, towns, and kingdoms, though only 365 years had elapsed since the flood, when we consider that eleven generations would have followed one another in that time, and that, supposing every marriage to have been blessed with eight children on an average (four male and four female), the eleventh generation would contain 12,582,912 couples, or 25,165,824 individuals. And if we reckon ten children as the average number, the eleventh generation would contain 146,484,375 pairs, or 292,968,750 individuals. In neither of these cases have we included such of the earlier generations as would still be living, although their number would be by no means inconsiderable, since nearly all the patriarchs from Shem to Terah were alive at the time of Abram's migration" (Keil, p.178).

4. Table of names, ages, and offspring:

NAME	AGE	SON	LIVED ON	AGE AT DEATH
Shem	100	Arphaxad	500	600
Arphaxad	35	Salah	403	438
Salah	30	Eber	403	433
Eber	34	Peleg	430	464
Peleg	30	Reu	209	239
Reu	32	Serug	207	239
Serug	30	Nahor	200	230
Nahor	29	Terah	119	148
Terah	70	Haran*	135	205
Terah	130	Abraham*	75	205

* Figured from other passages, including 11:26-32; 12:4. Since Haran died first it appears that he was the eldest; Abraham is named first because of his importance.

C. Genesis 11:27-32: The Genealogy of Terah.

1. Verse 27-29: "Now these *are* the generations of Terah: Terah begat Abram, Nahor, and Haran; and Haran begat Lot. And Haran died before his father Terah in the land of his nativity, in Ur of the Chaldees. And Abram and Nahor took them wives: the name of Abram's wife *was* Sarai; and the name of Nahor's wife, Milcah, the daughter of Haran, the father of Milcah, and the father of Iscah."
 - a. "Verse 27 provides the additional information that Terah had two other sons besides Abraham, i.e., Nahor...and Haran, the father of Lot. This was probably given to explain the association of Lot with Abraham, in subsequent chapters of Genesis. He apparently became, in fact, a kind of adopted son of Abraham, following the death of Haran in Ur of the Chaldees" (Coffman, p.164).
 - b. The passage identifies the wives of Nahor and Abraham. Nahor married the daughter of Haran (Milcah); Abraham married Sarai (Sarah) who was his half-sister (she was Terah's daughter but her mother was not Abraham's mother (20:12). Some scholars have supposed that Iscah and Sarai are the same, but there is no evidence in the text supporting this.
2. Verses 30-31: "But Sarai was barren; she *had* no child. And Terah took Abram his son, and Lot the son of Haran his son's son, and Sarai his daughter in law, his son Abram's wife; and they went forth with them from Ur of the Chaldees, to go into the land of Canaan; and they came unto Haran, and dwelt there."
 - a. Sarah was barren, a fact that will become very important as the story unfolds.
 - b. Terah took his two remaining sons, Abram and Nahor, and their wives, and Lot, and journeyed toward the land of Canaan. [Nahor is not named in the text, but it is likely that he was in the company, for later we find him at Haran]. They got as far as Haran and abode there for some period of time.
 - c. The text has not yet given us the reason for this journey, although the next chapter makes it very plain. Stephen tells us (Acts 7:2) that God had called Abraham while he was still in Mesopotamia before he traveled to Haran; he was in Ur of the Chaldees at the time of this call.
 - d. Joshua 24:2 reveals that Terah and others of his line were idol worshipers, but Abraham was not an idolater: "And Joshua said unto all the people, Thus saith the LORD God of Israel, Your fathers dwelt on the other side of the flood in old time, *even* Terah, the father of Abraham, and the father of Nachor: and they served other gods" (Josh. 24:2).
 - e. "When Abraham migrated from Ur, the city was idolatrous, given over to the worship of the moon deity Nannar and his consort Nin-Gal; a sacred area and a ziggurat were devoted to this idolatry ...Nannar was also worshiped at Haran to which Terah migrated" (Unger, quoted by Coffman, p.165).
 - f. How old was Lot? Haran (Lot's father) was 60 when Abraham was born. It is possible that Lot was as old as Abraham, or nearly so. This assumes that Haran was Terah's oldest son.
3. Verse 32: "And the days of Terah were two hundred and five years: and Terah died in Haran."
 - a. We are told in verse 26 that Terah was 70 when his children began to be born. The verse did not say that Terah was seventy when Abram was born.
 - b. "It merely affirms that all three of Terah's sons were born after he was 70 years of age; and it gives no hint whatever that Abram was even first born, one of the pure assumptions due to the prominence give his name in Genesis; but that prominence might have been the sole reason for naming Abram first, and, therefore, he might well have been the youngest son. Since Terah died at age 205, as this verse says; and, since Abraham was 75 when he left Haran [Gen. 12:4] (Acts 7:4), then Terah was 130 years old when Abraham was born....And the fact of Haran's having died in Ur at an age not specified, the presumption must be that he was the one born some [60] years earlier when Terah was only 70, thus being the oldest son and the first to die" (Coffman, p.165).
4. "This brings a great division of Genesis to a close. Whereas, the previous chapters have dealt with universal events, or events concerned with the history of all the Adamic race, the following chapters will take up the narrative relative to the deeds and fortunes of the 'Chosen Nation,' the posterity of Abraham, through whom a Messiah to redeem all men was promised" (Coffman, p.166).
5. Note from ALC, 1980, pp.231f on Ur of the Chaldees: "If Ur of the Chaldees, the place of Abram's nativity, was the ancient city also called Mugheir, and Mugayyar, as generally believed, it was at one time situated on the Persian Gulf at the mouth of the Euphrates river, though with time the Gulf receded and the Euphrates changed its course to the east of Ur, which was also only twelve miles from Eridu, the traditional site of the Garden of Eden, in what is now known as Iran. Just preceding Abram's time, Ur is said to have been the most magnificent city in all the world, and had grown to be the world's leading city. Under two of its most famous kings, Ur-engur and Duugi, it ruled from the Persian Gulf to the Mediterranean Sea. Then, about Abram's time,

it was eclipsed by Babylon, but remained important long afterward. By Abram's day, idolatry had come to flourish, with many gods and goddesses being worshiped. The principle deity of Ur was Sin, the moon-god, and his wife was Ningal, the moon-goddess, who had many names....One of her names was Nina, from which the city of Nineveh was named. Her commonest name in Chaldea, or Babylonia, or Mesopotamia (all these terms being used for the same general region, with the latter also extending further north), was Ishtar. Being the deification of the sex passion, her worship was licentious and sacred prostitution was universally connected with it. Every maid, wife, and widow was expected to participate at least once in a lifetime, in addition to there being priestesses permanently attached to the temples for the same purpose....How [Abraham] learned of the true God, or became convinced that besides him there was no other, we are not told. But Noah, who had lived with Methuselah six hundred years before the flood, also lived to the time Abram was born, and Abram could have learned directly from Noah's son Shem his father's account of the flood and Methuselah's account of Adam and Eve in the Garden of Eden, the latter's life having overlapped Adam's by two hundred and forty-three years. Also, we know that God appeared to Abram at the time of his call for him to leave his homeland and relatives, and go into a land he would show him. Whether Jehovah had appeared to him earlier, we know not, but he very well might have done so from time to time to encourage and strengthen Abram in his monotheistic faith—which within itself was indication of a strong and independent nature, since he had to resist family influence in order to maintain such."

6. He was willing to leave home and family at God's bidding:
 - a. Romans 4:11: "And he received the sign of circumcision, a seal of the righteousness of the faith which *he had yet* being uncircumcised: that he might be the father of all them that believe, though they be not circumcised; that righteousness might be imputed unto them also."
 - b. Hebrews 11:8: "By faith Abraham, when he was called to go out into a place which he should after receive for an inheritance, obeyed; and he went out, not knowing whither he went."
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GENESIS 12

A. Genesis 12:1-5: Abraham is Commanded to Leave Ur.

1. Verse 1: "Now the LORD had said unto Abram, Get thee out of thy country, and from thy kindred, and from thy father's house, unto a land that I will show thee."
 - a. The KJV gives this call as past tense, indicating that the call was received while he was still in Ur. Acts 7:2-4 says that Abraham was called prior to leaving Ur: "And he said, Men, brethren, and fathers, hearken; The God of glory appeared unto our father Abraham, **when he was in Mesopotamia, before he dwelt in Charan**, and said unto him, Get thee out of thy country, and from thy kindred, and come into the land which I shall show thee. Then came he out of the land of the Chaldaeans, and dwelt in Charan: and from thence, when his father was dead, he removed him into this land, wherein ye now dwell."
 - b. The scholars say this call in Genesis 12:1 should be understood as present tense, and that it is a second call, and was made while Abraham was in Haran, not in Ur. This writer has found no proof of this assertion, and therefore concludes that the KJV is correct in placing this call as taking place in Ur, as Stephen states in Acts seven.
 - c. It was necessary for Abraham to leave the idolatrous land of Ur in order to insure that he and his offspring remain untainted by the wicked practices of his countrymen and kinsmen. Terah and his relatives were idol worshippers: "And Joshua said unto all the people, Thus saith the Lord God of Israel, Your fathers dwelt on the other side of the flood [the Euphrates River] in old time, even Terah, the father of Abraham, and the father of Nachor: and they served other gods" (Josh. 24:2). How Abraham became a worshiper of Jehovah is not stated.
 - 1) The genealogy of chapter 11 indicates that Shem was still alive. He begat his first son (Arphaxad) two years after the great flood, and lived 500 more years (11:10-11). Noah lived 350 years past the flood (9:28-29). Abraham was probably the youngest son of Terah. He is placed first in the list of Terah's sons because of his prominence in the Bible story. He was 75 when his father died at the age of 205. Terah's first son was born when he was 70; this was probably Haran since he died prior to the family's departure from Ur. (See notes on 11:27ff.) If (1) there are no generations omitted from the genealogy of chapter 11, and (2) Abraham was the youngest son of Terah, then Abraham was born about 352 years after the flood. Thus his life overlapped that of Shem about 150 years.
 - 2) With these facts in hand, Abraham could very likely have learned the truth about Jehovah from Noah through his son Shem. Luke's account of the genealogy of Genesis 11 includes "Cainan" between Arphaxad and Salah (Lk 3:35-36). If this one generation is omitted from the Genesis record, perhaps others are also; this could properly be done by the inspired writer of Genesis (Moses) in the interest of brevity since he is giving only a sketch of history leading up to Abraham. Still, the years specified could remain accurate; and a difficulty would be encountered: Arphaxad was 35 when Salah was born; if Cainan was Salah's father, then Arphaxad would have been Salah's grandfather—at the tender age of 35! Or perhaps, if Cainan comes between Arphaxad and Salah, Arphaxad was 35 when Cainan was born, Cainan's age at the birth of Salah not being mentioned by Luke. There may be some detail of information about Cainan which is not given. Could he have been the father of Salah and Arphaxad the step-father? Or consider this: The Law, which came later, specified that if a man died without leaving seed, his brother was to marry the widow and raise up seed to his dead brother. Perhaps Cainan died without offspring and his brother Arphaxad begat Salah unto his dead brother. This is uncertain. The sons of Shem are listed in Genesis 10:22; Cainan is not in the list.
 - 3) Cainan must be accounted for; some have chosen to say the appearance of his name in Luke's record is a mistake—a copyist's error. The best explanation is probably that Luke adds (by inspiration) his name, and that for brevity's sake, Moses omitted him from the Genesis genealogy. In this case, totaling the fathers' ages at the birth of their sons results in an inaccurate dating procedure for determining whether Shem was contemporary with Abraham.
 - d. Abram was told to leave Ur and go "unto a land that I will show thee." It would have been difficult enough to leave the land of one's birth, where all his relatives, friends, and familiar surrounding were; but add to that the uncertainty of destination, the hardships, expenses and dangers of journey, and the degree of Abraham's faith becomes great indeed.
 - 1) The distance from Ur to Haran was about 600 miles; it was about 400 more miles into Canaan. The journey would be difficult and take much time.

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- 2) Ur of the Chaldees had an advanced civilization, "The Sumerian city of Ur, on the lower Euphrates River, was rediscovered by J.E. Taylor and exploratory excavations were made in 1854. During the years 1922 to 1934 large-scale excavations were carried out....Spectacular discoveries of Sumerian history and culture reflect life during a period long before the time of Abraham. It is now evident that Ur was not a primitive city in the days of the patriarchs. As one of the important Sumerian cities it possessed an elaborate system of writing, advanced means of mathematical calculations, religious records, refined specimens of art, a school, and much else that modern man equates with civilization and refinement" (*Baker's Bible Atlas*, p.55).
 - 3) The great faith of Abraham is demonstrated in his willingness to leave these advanced surroundings and go to some strange, unidentified place, facing untold hazards along the way. "By faith Abraham, when he was called to go out into a place which he should after receive for an inheritance, obeyed; and he went out, not knowing whither he went" (Heb. 11:8).
 - 4) Part of this command required him to leave his father's house. As indicated in Genesis 11:27-32, Abraham traveled with his father and other members of his father's family to Haran, where he remained with them until Terah's death.
2. Verse 2: "And I will make of thee a great nation, and I will bless thee, and make thy name great; and thou shalt be a blessing."
- a. God promised to make of Abraham a great nation. In fact, several nations came from his descendants: the nation of Israel, the Arab nations (through Ishmael), the Edomites (through Esau), the offspring of the six sons of Keturah (Gen. 25:1-5), and the greatest nation, Spiritual Israel.
 - b. God promised to bless Abraham. This he did materially and spiritually. He became a very prosperous and wealthy man, and lived under the protective hand of providence. God blessed all of his worthy efforts.
 - c. Abraham would be a blessing to others. Because of the kind of man Abraham was, his children were blessed (cf. Gen. 18:19). Because of Abraham, his later descendants (the nation of Israel) received wonderful blessings. And his spiritual offspring today (Christians) have the greatest of all blessings:
 - 1) Genesis 18:19: "For I know him, that he will command his children and his household after him, and they shall keep the way of the LORD, to do justice and judgment; that the LORD may bring upon Abraham that which he hath spoken of him."
 - 2) Galatians 3:8-29: "And the scripture, foreseeing that God would justify the heathen through faith, preached before the gospel unto Abraham, *saying*, In thee shall all nations be blessed. So then they which be of faith are blessed with faithful Abraham. For as many as are of the works of the law are under the curse: for it is written, Cursed *is* every one that continueth not in all things which are written in the book of the law to do them. But that no man is justified by the law in the sight of God, *it is* evident: for, The just shall live by faith. And the law is not of faith: but, The man that doeth them shall live in them. Christ hath redeemed us from the curse of the law, being made a curse for us: for it is written, Cursed *is* every one that hangeth on a tree: That the blessing of Abraham might come on the Gentiles through Jesus Christ; that we might receive the promise of the Spirit through faith. Brethren, I speak after the manner of men; Though *it be* but a man's covenant, yet *if it be* confirmed, no man disannulleth, or addeth thereto. Now to Abraham and his seed were the promises made. He saith not, And to seeds, as of many; but as of one, And to thy seed, which is Christ. And this I say, *that* the covenant, that was confirmed before of God in Christ, the law, which was four hundred and thirty years after, cannot disannul, that it should make the promise of none effect. For if the inheritance *be* of the law, *it is* no more of promise: but God gave *it* to Abraham by promise. Wherefore then *serveth* the law? It was added because of transgressions, till the seed should come to whom the promise was made; *and it was* ordained by angels in the hand of a mediator. Now a mediator is not *a mediator* of one, but God is one. *Is* the law then against the promises of God? God forbid: for if there had been a law given which could have given life, verily righteousness should have been by the law. But the scripture hath concluded all under sin, that the promise by faith of Jesus Christ might be given to them that believe. But before faith came, we were kept under the law, shut up unto the faith which should afterwards be revealed. Wherefore the law was our schoolmaster *to bring us* unto Christ, that we might be justified by faith. But after that faith is come, we are no longer under a schoolmaster. For ye are all the children of God by faith in Christ Jesus. For as many of you as have been baptized into Christ have put on Christ. There is neither Jew nor Greek, there is neither bond nor free, there is neither male nor female: for ye are all one in Christ Jesus. And if ye *be* Christ's, then are ye Abraham's seed, and heirs according to the promise."
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- 3) Ephesians 1:3: "Blessed *be* the God and Father of our Lord Jesus Christ, who hath blessed us with all spiritual blessings in heavenly *places* in Christ:"
 - d. Moslems, Jews and Christians look to Abraham as their beloved ancestor. Thus, in this and other ways, God has made Abraham's name great.
 3. Verse 3: "And I will bless them that bless thee, and curse him that curseth thee: and in thee shall all families of the earth be blessed."
 - a. "This was fulfilled literally in the long centuries of God's chosen mantle of protective love that sheltered and preserved the Chosen People till at last the Christ was born in Bethlehem; it continues to be fulfilled in the blessing of those who aided the progress of Christianity and in the woes that fell upon the persecutors. Lactantius wrote twenty pages of the most interesting discussions of the awful punishments, judgments, and miseries that befell the notorious persecutors of Christianity, giving in detail the things that happened to Nero, Domitian, Decius, Valerian, Aurellan, Diocletian, etc. Without any doubt, this great promise today belongs to the true Israel of God in exactly the same manner as it applied under the old covenant to the old Israel" (Coffman, pp.172f).
 - b. All the families of the earth have been and are being blessed through Abraham in that his greatest seed, Christ, offers eternal, spiritual blessings to all.
 - 1) Genesis 22:18: "And in thy seed shall all the nations of the earth be blessed; because thou hast obeyed my voice."
 - 2) Galatians 3:8,16: "And the scripture, foreseeing that God would justify the heathen through faith, preached before the gospel unto Abraham, *saying*, In thee shall all nations be blessed....Now to Abraham and his seed were the promises made. He saith not, And to seeds, as of many; but as of one, And to thy seed, which is Christ."
 - 3) Galatians 3:28-29: "There is neither Jew nor Greek, there is neither bond nor free, there is neither male nor female: for ye are all one in Christ Jesus. And if ye *be* Christ's, then are ye Abraham's seed, and heirs according to the promise."
 - 4) Acts 2:39: "For the promise is unto you, and to your children, and to all that are afar off, *even* as many as the Lord our God shall call."
 4. Verses 4-5: "So Abram departed, as the LORD had spoken unto him; and Lot went with him: and Abram *was* seventy and five years old when he departed out of Haran. And Abram took Sarai his wife, and Lot his brother's son, and all their substance that they had gathered, and the souls that they had gotten in Haran; and they went forth to go into the land of Canaan; and into the land of Canaan they came."
 - a. When Terah died at the age of 205, Abraham departed Haran to continue his journey into the land of promise. He was seventy-five years of age at the time. He took his wife and the servants he had gotten during his stay at Haran. He also took Lot, his nephew, with him. Was this a mistake? Being with Abraham could have great blessings for Lot and his family. However, there were problems Lot caused for his uncle which might have been avoided if he had not accompanied Abraham (cf. Gen. 13,14,19). However, Lot's servants and family doubtless added to the security of the whole clan. If Lot had remained at Haran, he may have fallen into the same condition his kinsman Laban later developed.
 - b. Abraham with all his great company undertook this journey and successfully came into Canaan. "The dimensions of this migration were probably greater than might be supposed. Josephus described Abram's company as 'an army from the land of the Chaldeans...'" (Coffman, p.175).
 - c. Josephus reports: Berosus mentions our father Abram without naming him, when he says thus: "In the tenth generation after the Flood, there was among the Chaldeans a man righteous and great, and skillful in the celestial science." But Hecatseus does more than barely mention him; for he composed, and left behind him, a book concerning him. And Nicolaus of Damascus, in the fourth book of his History, says thus: "Abram reigned at Damascus, being a foreigner, who came with an army out of the land above Babylon, called the land of the Chaldeans: but, after a long time, he got him up, and removed from that country also, with his people, and went into the land then called the land of Canaan, but now the land of Judea, and this when his posterity were become a multitude; as to which posterity of his, we relate their history in another work. Now the name of Abram is even still famous in the country of Damascus; and there is shown a village named from him, The Habitation of Abram" [Electronic Version].
- B. Genesis 12:6-9. Abram Enters Canaan.
1. Verses 6-7: "And Abram passed through the land unto the place of Sichem, unto the plain of Moreh. And the Canaanite *was* then in the land. And the LORD appeared unto Abram, and said, Unto thy seed will I give this land: and there builded he an altar unto the LORD, who appeared unto him."

- a. Other versions:
 - 1) "And Abram passed through the land unto the place of Shechem, unto the oak of Moreh. And the Canaanite was then in the land. And Jehovah appeared unto Abram, and said, Unto thy seed will I give this land: and there builded he an altar unto Jehovah, who appeared unto him" (ASV).
 - 2) "Abram passed through the land to the place at Shechem, to the oak of Moreh. At that time the Canaanites were in the land. Then the Lord appeared to Abram and said, 'To your offspring I will give this land.' So he built there an altar to the Lord, who had appeared to him" (ESV).
 - 3) "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. 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" (NKJV).
 - b. He came first to Sichem, also called Shechem; it is the same as Sychar in John 4. There he built an altar for the purpose of sacrificing. Although no sacrifice is expressly named in the passage, the construction of the altar implies the offering. Why else build an altar?
 - c. Instead of "plain of Moreh" the ASV gives "oak of Moreh."
 - d. By the reference to the Canaanite being then in the land some Bible critics try to make the writing of Genesis much later than the time of Moses.
 - 1) "There is absolutely nothing in this that indicates a time long afterwards following Israel's conquest of Canaan. Moses, the author, merely affirmed in this that when Abram arrived at the 'promised land' it was already occupied by a native pagan population, thus contrasting the ideal with the practical state of Abram's affairs....'It is simply a declaration that the land was not an unoccupied stretch of territory but a populated region, thus making the fulfillment of the ensuing promise all the more difficult, and all the greater a trial for the faith of the patriarch'" (Coffman, p.176).
 - 2) "This is stated in preparation for the promise about to be given to Abram. For no one can fully realize the greatness of the thing promised to Abram until he remembers that the land promised to the posterity of Abram was already occupied by the Canaanites. But Abram's faith is not daunted by this seeming difficulty. Almost immediately criticism makes this clause manifestly post-Mosaic. However, it does not require great ingenuity to understand that Moses could have written thus" (Leupold, Vol. I, p.419),
 - e. Even though the Canaanites were there, Abram believed God. The land that he had been promised was already occupied so that he could not immediately claim it as his own. He had to be content to wander in it, but not take possession of it; for the rest of his days he was a sojourner in the land.
 - 1) Hebrews 11:10: "For he looked for a city which hath foundations, whose builder and maker *is* God."
 - 2) Hebrews 11:13-16: "These all died in faith, not having received the promises, but having seen them afar off, and were persuaded of *them*, and embraced *them*, and confessed that they were strangers and pilgrims on the earth. For they that say such things declare plainly that they seek a country. And truly, if they had been mindful of that *country* from whence they came out, they might have had opportunity to have returned. But now they desire a better *country*, that is, an heavenly: wherefore God is not ashamed to be called their God: for he hath prepared for them a city."
 - 3) Hebrews 13:14: "For here have we no continuing city, but we seek one to come."
 - f. The Lord appeared to Abram there to indicate to Abram that this was the land that was intended in the promise. God stated that the land was to be given to Abram's seed. He never actually owned the land. The building of the altars in Shechem and later at Bethel carried a symbolic significance of vast proportions. Some scholars think that the appearances of Jehovah to Abram were pre-incarnate appearances of Christ (Coffman, p. 177).
2. Verses 8-9: "And he removed from thence unto a mountain on the east of Bethel, and pitched his tent, *having* Bethel on the west, and Hai on the east: and there he builded an altar unto the LORD, and called upon the name of the LORD. And Abram journeyed, going on still toward the south."
 - a. Abram moved south to a point between Bethel and Hai (Ai), about 20 miles from Shechem. Here he pitched his tent and built another altar unto the Lord. Moses states that Abram "called upon the name of the Lord."
 - b. "In March, 1983, the Jerusalem University published a complicated computer analysis of Genesis, stating that the conclusion is that a single author wrote the whole Pentateuch....There is absolutely nothing in the multiple sources nonsense about the Pentateuch that has any merit whatever" (Coffman, *ibid.*).
- C. Genesis 12:10-12: Abram's Shameful Conduct in Egypt.
1. Verse 10: "And there was a famine in the land: and Abram went down into Egypt to sojourn there; for the famine *was* grievous in the land."
 - a. A famine descended upon the land, which may have been sent as a test of Abram's faith. There is no record

- of God's telling him to go out of the land into Egypt; it may be that this was of his own doing. It almost became his undoing. He had entered the land of promise but found it occupied by an unholy band of people; then the famine struck.
- b. "It is ever thus with those who would follow the Lord. After one has taken the step and made the move, the problems often seem to multiply...." The Egyptians, like the Canaanites, were descendants of Ham (through Mizraim, not Canaan) and were also polytheistic, cruel and immoral" (Coffman, p.178).
 2. Verses 11-13: "And it came to pass, when he was come near to enter into Egypt, that he said unto Sarai his wife, Behold now, I know that thou *art* a fair woman to look upon: Therefore it shall come to pass, when the Egyptians shall see thee, that they shall say, This *is* his wife: and they will kill me, but they will save thee alive. Say, I pray thee, thou *art* my sister: that it may be well with me for thy sake; and my soul shall live because of thee."
 - a. Some have called what happens here the low point in Abram's life. He was facing a genuine danger, and it would appear obvious to him that he must take some kind of step to protect himself. It seems that he had forgotten the promises God made and the implications of those promises. If God was going to make a great nation of Abraham, it follows that he would be obligated to protect him in order to do so.
 - b. "The Bible, unlike any other book ever written, tells it all, the good and the bad alike; and the sins of its heroes are related in the same unimpassioned words as those that give their deeds of glory and triumph....Abraham, standing here in a situation closely akin to that of the patriarch Noah, demonstrated quickly enough, as did Noah, that the sinless One who would enter our earth life from above would forever stand infinitely above and beyond all others. Not even Abraham could save men. That would be the mission of the Christ. When rebuked by the Pharaoh, Abram offered no defense, nor can we, for the cowardly, lying manner that disgraced his conduct here" (Coffman, p.179).
 - c. As they neared Egypt, he told his wife that the Egyptians, seeing her as a fair woman, would kill him in order to have her. She was 10 years younger than her husband and was at the middle point of her life (she died at age 127). She was in the prime of life (Gen. 17:17). She gave birth to Isaac at the age of 90, a miraculous event. If Abram's plan had worked, and his life was spared, what would have become of Sarah? Would she not have ended up in some wicked man's harem?
 - d. The half-truth he concocted to tell was a whole lie. Even though she was his half-sister, she was also his wife. Genesis 20:12 shows that they shared the same father but had different mothers. Their chief relationship was husband and wife, not brother and sister. Hence, the statement they planned to make was a falsehood, a deception.
 - e. The purpose of this plan was to preserve Abram's life. This is another case of one running ahead of God, and trying to do the work that properly belongs to him. Sarah did a similar thing later when she told her husband to have a child by Hagar. We are not to run ahead of God, or away from God; we are to walk before him, follow after him and walk with him. These various figures are presented in the Bible describing our various relationships with God (cf. Gen. 5:24; 17:1; Eph. 5:1).
 - 1) Genesis 5:24: "And Enoch walked with God: and he *was* not; for God took him."
 - 2) Genesis 17:1: "And when Abram was ninety years old and nine, the LORD appeared to Abram, and said unto him, I *am* the Almighty God; walk before me, and be thou perfect."
 - 3) Ephesians 5:1: "Be ye therefore followers of God, as dear children."
 3. Verse 14: "And it came to pass, that, when Abram was come into Egypt, the Egyptians beheld the woman that she *was* very fair."
 - a. The Eastern women who wear the veil are shielded from the sun's rays, and thus we have read reports of some who were seventy years of age who still had the skin of young women.
 - b. The Egyptians immediately learned that she was a "very fair" woman.
 4. Verses 15-16: "The princes also of Pharaoh saw her, and commended her before Pharaoh: and the woman was taken into Pharaoh's house. And he entreated Abram well for her sake: and he had sheep, and oxen, and he asses, and menservants, and maidservants, and she asses, and camels."
 - a. The princes of Egypt, on the lookout for some way to please their king, beheld the beauty of Sarai (Sarah) and commended her to their Pharaoh. She was taken into his house. "What a disaster this was! The mother of 'the Chosen People' was at this point committed to the harem of Pharaoh; and, without divine intervention, all of the promises to Abraham would have been lost" (Coffman, p.180).
 - b. She was about 65 at the time, depending on just how long they had stayed in Canaan before removing to Egypt. Abraham was 75 when he entered Canaan, and was ten years Sarai's senior.
 - c. "Pharaoh" was the name or title of the kings of Egypt "till the commencement of the Grecian monarchy,

- after which they were called Ptolemies. When a woman was brought into the seraglio or harem of the eastern princes, she underwent for a considerable time certain purifications before she was brought into the king's presence. It was in this interim that God plagued Pharaoh and his house with plagues, so that Sarai was restored before she could have been taken to the bed of the Egyptian king" (Clarke, p.96).
- d. Pharaoh treated Abraham very well on account of Sarai, giving him large numbers of sheep, oxen, asses, camels, and servants, both men and women. "Critics have been quick to allege that camels were not known in Egypt till a period long after the usual date assigned to Genesis; but they have been completely frustrated by the excavation of bones of camels from Mesopotamia dating from the 18th century B.C. It is indeed a safe deduction that since camels were in use at such an early date in Mesopotamia, they were certainly known in Egypt. This text proves that Pharaoh had them in such abundance that he counted them among the gifts to Abraham" (Coffman, p.180). He was rich and prosperous before; he was more so now. What Pharaoh was intending with Sarai was wrong, and interfered with God's plan. God next takes steps to thwart those intentions.
5. Verse 17: "And the LORD plagued Pharaoh and his house with great plagues because of Sarai Abram's wife."
 - a. We are not told the nature of these plagues except that they were very great. There were more than one of these plagues. These were forerunners of the plagues later to be visited upon the Egyptians when God was working to bring Abraham's descendants from Egypt several hundred years later during the time of Moses. See Exodus 1-14.
 - b. We are not told what kind of plagues were sent; Josephus asserted they included some kind of serious physical disorder, and also a sedition against the government. Whatever they were, Pharaoh knew the source of them was heavenly; he took no vengeance against Abram and did not take back his gifts. Pharaoh must have been a very shaken man.
 6. Verses 18-19: "And Pharaoh called Abram, and said, What *is* this *that* thou hast done unto me? why didst thou not tell me that she *was* thy wife? Why saidst thou, She *is* my sister? so I might have taken her to me to wife: now therefore behold thy wife, take *her*, and go thy way."
 - a. Pharaoh spoke critically to Abram, using language similar to that of the sailors to Jonah: "Then were the men exceedingly afraid, and said unto him, Why hast thou done this? For the men knew that he fled from the presence of the LORD, because he had told them" (1:10). He demanded to know why Abram did not plainly tell him that Sarai was his wife. He was aware of how close he came to personal disaster if he had taken her as his own.
 - b. "For as Pharaoh had discovered in the plague the wrath of the God of Abraham, he did not venture to treat him harshly, but rather sought to mitigate the anger of his God, by the safe-conduct which he granted him on his departure. But Abram was not justified by this result, as was very apparent from the fact, that he was mute under Pharaoh's reproofs, and did not venture to utter a single word in vindication of his conduct, as he did in the similar circumstances described in 20:11,12" (Keil, p.198).
 7. Verse 20: "And Pharaoh commanded *his* men concerning him: and they sent him away, and his wife, and all that he had."
 - a. "This is viewed as a military escort for the protection and safe passage of Abram's company, Pharaoh evidently fearing God's vengeance against him for any harm that might come to Abram. One of the great curiosities of the OT is the appearance of two other stories very similar, although different, from the one related here" (Coffman, p.181).
 - b. Abraham repeated this experience when he was residing in Gerar. In Genesis 26:7-11, Isaac told the people of Gerar that Rebekah was his sister, instead of truthfully saying that she was his wife.
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GENESIS 13

A. Genesis 13:1-4: Abram and His Company Return to Canaan from Egypt.

1. Verse 1: "And Abram went up out of Egypt, he, and his wife, and all that he had, and Lot with him, into the south."
 - a. "Abram, having returned from Egypt to the south of Canaan with his wife and property uninjured, through the gracious protection of God, proceeded with Lot...into the neighborhood of Bethel and Ai, where he had previously encamped and built an altar (chap. 12:8), that he might there call upon the name of the Lord again" (Keil, p.198).
 - b. Notice that no mention was made about him building an altar and sacrificing unto God while he dwelt in Egypt. This may further suggest that his move to Egypt was without the approval of God, although we have no positive evidence to that end.
 - c. The text speaks of them coming "into the south," meaning they arrived in the southern part of Canaan. "A land of sparse and scanty springs and small rainfall, the South was essentially pastoral. Grazing was normally plentiful early in the year. Camels and goats could sustain life even through the summer. But large flocks and herds usually had to be taken elsewhere during the dry seasons. To a large extent it was a land of nomads rather than settled inhabitants" (ALC, 1980, p.243).
 - d. Lot is named as being in Abram's company when they returned. He has been with his uncle since they departed from Haran some time earlier. No mention was expressly made that Lot accompanied Abram into Egypt; but since he came up out of Egypt with him, it is certain that he went down into Egypt. This is implicit evidence; it is just as sure as explicit evidence.
 - e. In the preceding chapter we see the low point of Abram's life; in this chapter he shines forth as we would expect a great man of God to do, but Lot places himself in a bad light spiritually. Second Peter 2:7 speaks of Lot as being righteous. He takes a bad step in this chapter that ultimately leads him into Sodom where he loses part of his family. Little decisions can result in great gain or loss.
2. Verse 2: "And Abram *was* very rich in cattle, in silver, and in gold."
 - a. Abram was a very rich man. Looking only at his material gain while in Egypt, it was a worthwhile trip; but no venture is successful if one commits sin in the process. This is one of the many passages in the Bible where wealth and righteousness are shown not to be mutually exclusive.
 - b. It is not money that is evil, but the love of money (cf. 1 Tim. 6:6-20). Philemon was not a poor man (he owned one or more servants, including Onesimus). Philemon was a faithful Christian.
3. Verses 3-4: "And he went on his journeys from the south even to Bethel, unto the place where his tent had been at the beginning, between Bethel and Hai; Unto the place of the altar, which he had made there at the first: and there Abram called on the name of the LORD."
 - a. "He went on his journeys"—indicates that he traveled by stages as he made his way northward to Bethel. He called on the name of Jehovah at Bethel. To call on the name of the Lord in the New Testament means to be obedient to him; it means the same thing here, including Abram's worship and faithfulness to God. Romans 10:13 and Acts 2:21 teach that we must call on the name of the Lord to be saved (salvation is conditional).
 - 1) Acts 2:21: "And it shall come to pass, *that* whosoever shall call on the name of the Lord shall be saved."
 - 2) Romans 10:13: "For whosoever shall call upon the name of the Lord shall be saved."
 - b. The New Testament also shows how to call on the name of the Lord. Calling on the name of Lord does not mean to pray to him or merely to utter words with our lips.
 - 1) Proverbs 28:9: "He that turneth away his ear from hearing the law, even his prayer *shall be* abomination."
 - 2) Matthew 7:21-23: "Not every one that saith unto me, Lord, Lord, shall enter into the kingdom of heaven; but he that doeth the will of my Father which is in heaven. Many will say to me in that day, Lord, Lord, have we not prophesied in thy name? and in thy name have cast out devils? and in thy name done many wonderful works? And then will I profess unto them, I never knew you: depart from me, ye that work iniquity."
 - 3) Luke 6:46: "And why call ye me, Lord, Lord, and do not the things which I say?"
 - 4) 1 John 3:22: "And whatsoever we ask, we receive of him, because we keep his commandments, and do those things that are pleasing in his sight."
 - c. Calling on the Lord's name is explained in Romans 10:13-17: "For whosoever shall call upon the name of

the Lord shall be saved. How then shall they call on him in whom they have not believed? and how shall they believe in him of whom they have not heard? and how shall they hear without a preacher? And how shall they preach, except they be sent? as it is written, How beautiful are the feet of them that preach the gospel of peace, and bring glad tidings of good things! But they have not all obeyed the gospel. For Esaias saith, Lord, who hath believed our report? So then faith *cometh* by hearing, and hearing by the word of God."

- 1) The gospel is God's power to save (Rom. 1:16); this is the theme of Romans. So the gospel of Christ is an essential part of this calling.
- 2) We cannot call without believing; one cannot believe without hearing (10:14,17). The gospel shows what we are to believe and why.
- 3) Two statements in the context are used interchangeably and therefore are the same in meaning: (1) calling on the name of the Lord (vs. 13) and (2) obeying the gospel (vs. 16). The two statements are identical in meaning. We call on the name of the Lord when we obey the gospel (at which point we become Christians: "And now why tarriest thou? arise, and be baptized, and wash away thy sins, calling on the name of the Lord"—Acts 22:16).
- 4) We are saved at the point we obey the gospel.
 - a) Romans 6:16-18: "Know ye not, that to whom ye yield yourselves servants to obey, his servants ye are to whom ye obey; whether of sin unto death, or of obedience unto righteousness? But God be thanked, that ye were the servants of sin, but ye have obeyed from the heart that form of doctrine which was delivered you. Being then made free from sin, ye became the servants of righteousness."
 - b) 2 Thessalonians 1:7-9: "And to you who are troubled rest with us, when the Lord Jesus shall be revealed from heaven with his mighty angels, In flaming fire taking vengeance on them that know not God, and that obey not the gospel of our Lord Jesus Christ: Who shall be punished with everlasting destruction from the presence of the Lord, and from the glory of his power."
 - c) Hebrews 5:8-9: "Though he were a Son, yet learned he obedience by the things which he suffered; And being made perfect, he became the author of eternal salvation unto all them that obey him."
- d. Peter explains how to call on the name of the Lord in Acts 2.
 - 1) Acts 2:21-36 shows why Jesus should be called: he is the resurrected Son of God, the Messiah promised in the Old Testament.
 - 2) When they heard and understood the message the apostles preached, they believed the evidence, saw the need to call on the name of the Lord, and asked a question to learn how to call on his name (2:37). The inspired answer: "Then Peter said unto them, Repent, and be baptized every one of you in the name of Jesus Christ for the remission of sins, and ye shall receive the gift of the Holy Ghost" (Acts 2:38; cf. 9:6; 22:16).
- e. "Calling on the name of the Lord" is an Old Testament idea (Gen. 13:4; Joel 2:32). Mark 16:15-16 spells out the New Testament's definition of the phrase.
 - 1) Genesis 13:4: "Unto the place of the altar, which he had made there at the first: and there Abram called on the name of the LORD."
 - 2) Joel 2:32: "And it shall come to pass, *that* whosoever shall call on the name of the LORD shall be delivered: for in mount Zion and in Jerusalem shall be deliverance, as the LORD hath said, and in the remnant whom the LORD shall call."
 - 3) Mark 16:15-16: "And he said unto them, Go ye into all the world, and preach the gospel to every creature. He that believeth and is baptized shall be saved; but he that believeth not shall be damned."
- f. Abraham called on the Lord's name by worshiping at the altar and being faithful in life. Christians call on the Lord's name by being obedient to the gospel:
 - 1) Acts 9:14: "And here he hath authority from the chief priests to bind all that call on thy name."
 - 2) Acts 9:21: "But all that heard *him* were amazed, and said; Is not this he that destroyed them which called on this name in Jerusalem, and came hither for that intent, that he might bring them bound unto the chief priests?"
 - 3) Hebrews 5:9: "And being made perfect, he became the author of eternal salvation unto all them that obey him."
 - 4) Galatians 5:7: "Ye did run well; who did hinder you that ye should not obey the truth?"

B. Genesis 13:5-13: Strife Causes Abram and Lot to Separate.

1. Verses 5-7: "And Lot also, which went with Abram, had flocks, and herds, and tents. And the land was not able to bear them, that they might dwell together: for their substance was great, so that they could not dwell together."

And there was a strife between the herdmen of Abram's cattle and the herdmen of Lot's cattle: and the Canaanite and the Perizzite dwelled then in the land."

- a. Verse two emphasized the great wealth and property of Abram; verse five shows Lot also possessed tents and herds. So great was their combined wealth in livestock that the land could not support them both in the same place. There was strife between the herdmen of Lot and herdmen of Abram, no doubt over the limited grazing and water.
 - b. They were not the only ones in the area for the Perizzites were there also (then: already in the land). Abram and Lot "had to graze their flocks and herds on land not in use by the local residents. That, besides the fact that there may not have been complete recovery from the drought that had occasioned the sojourn in Egypt, but mostly the fact that the combined flocks and herds of Abram and Lot were just too much now for the area to support them, made it impractical for Abram and Lot to remain together" (ALC, 1980, p.244).
 2. Verses 8-9: "And Abram said unto Lot, Let there be no strife, I pray thee, between me and thee, and between my herdmen and thy herdmen; for we *be* brethren. *Is* not the whole land before thee? separate thyself, I pray thee, from me: if *thou wilt take* the left hand, then I will go to the right; or if *thou depart* to the right hand, then I will go to the left."
 - a. Abram took the initiative to resolve the problem. His actions and words here put the patriarch in the most favorable light; he is conducting himself much differently from his actions in Egypt.
 - b. "As the leader of the expedition into the land of Canaan, as the patriarch and senior kinsman of Lot, Abram had every right to demand his own choice of direction; but he magnanimously and graciously yielded the choice of pasturage to his nephew" (Coffman, p.187).
 - c. The land had been promised to Abram and his offspring, not to Lot. Because they were brethren (close kinsmen and companions), there ought not to be any strife between them. This righteous man gave Lot the first choice of territory.
 3. Verse 10: "And Lot lifted up his eyes, and beheld all the plain of Jordan, that it *was* well watered every where, before the LORD destroyed Sodom and Gomorrah, *even* as the garden of the LORD, like the land of Egypt, as thou comest unto Zoar."
 - a. "The objection that it would have been impossible for Lot to have seen 'all the Plain' from any vantage point near Bethel is a ridiculous quibble. Actually, there is a vantage point near Bethel, mentioned thus: 'The Burg Beitin a few minutes SE of the village, is described as one of the great viewpoints of Palestine.' The place affords an extraordinarily extensive view of the whole lower course of the Jordan and of the northern end of the Dead Sea" (Coffman, p.188).
 - b. The area Lot viewed, at that time, before Sodom and Gomorrah were destroyed, was well-watered and desirable. Moses describes it as being like the "garden of the Lord" (Eden), and like certain lush areas in Egypt with which the Israelites were familiar; and "as thou comest unto Zoar" (one of the cities of the plain).
 - c. "The expression 'Plain of the Jordan' could apply to any or all of the broader parts of the Jordan valley, which is contended by some as including the area of the Dead Sea, even bordering it on the south as well as on the north. Opinion has divided between the northern and southern ends of the Dead Sea as the location of 'the cities of the plain'—Sodom, Gomorrah, Admah, Zeboiim, and Bela (Zoar)—and 'the vale of Siddim (the same is the Salt Sea)' (14:3). If it was the northern end, it was in the vicinity of Jericho. If it was the southern end, it is now mostly covered by the shallow southern one-third of the Dead Sea. Such is expressed as fact by Josephus, *Antiquities of the Jews*, Book I, Chapter 9, and that concept held sway for centuries. Consensus later shifted to the other for a time. Now, however, the consensus again strongly favors the southern area" (ALC, 1980, p.245).
 4. Verse 11: "Then Lot chose him all the plain of Jordan; and Lot journeyed east: and they separated themselves the one from the other."
 - a. The well-watered plain of Jordan suited Lot just fine, so being guided by his selfishness, he chose this area. "As a matter of fact, however, Lot could have been attracted first to the Plain in the Jericho area, and then moved further and further south to the more lush and expansive vale of Siddim with its five cities either within it or near by, south of the Dead Sea, if that is where they were located. And the Dead Sea could have come to cover this vale and the burned out area of the cities as its level rose, which it has been doing through the centuries and still does gradually. If that is not the case, then the vale of Siddim had to be where the deep northern part of the Dead Sea now is, only a few miles south of Jericho" (ALC, 1980, p.245). The two great companies parted.
 - b. "Thus was effected the separation of Abraham from a portion of that kindred which God had commanded him to forsake in the first place" (Coffman, p.188). One of the chief purposes, however, for God
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- commanding Abraham to separate himself from his relatives was to avoid the contamination of idolatry. Lot is called a righteous man (2 Pet. 2:7), so it appears that it was all right for him to be in Abram's company as long as it was feasible.
- c. The logical choice appeared to be the one Lot made. Later events show that he had made a grievous error. But by taking the territory remaining, Abraham did not lose anything; God saw to it that he continued to prosper and be blessed. Abraham increased, but Lot saw trouble and loss due to his choice here. This illustrates the great Bible truth that walking by faith pays more than it costs.
 - d. Valley of Siddim: (sid'im; "the valley of the fields"; perhaps so called from the high cultivation in which it was kept before the destruction of Sodom and the other cities). The scene of the battle between Chedorlaomer and his allies, and the five confederate kings (Gen 14:3). However, it is possible that Siddim may designate "salt flats" from Hittite *siyanta*, "salt." In any case the term denotes the territory S of the peninsula of "The Tongue," which projects into the Dead Sea from the E shore. This region underwent a violent cataclysm about the middle of the twentieth century B.C. when its cities were destroyed and its area became submerged under the waters of the Dead Sea (Gen 19). Some writers unwarrantedly contend for the location of Siddim at the N end of the Dead Sea. But archaeological evidence now disfavors this view. The region was full of "tar pits" (14:10), and here the Egyptians got the bitumen with which they embalmed their dead; even to this day "pits" exist. [New Unger's Bible Dictionary. Originally published by Moody Press of Chicago, Illinois. Copyright © 1988].
5. Verses 12-13: "Abram dwelled in the land of Canaan, and Lot dwelled in the cities of the plain, and pitched *his* tent toward Sodom. But the men of Sodom *were* wicked and sinners before the LORD exceedingly."
- a. While Abram dwelled in Canaan, Lot pitched his tent toward Sodom. In anticipation of later events recorded in chapter 19, this passage stresses the sinfulness of the men of Sodom. "The probable purpose of including this here was to emphasize the foolishness of Lot's choice. The wickedness of Sodom consisted of the most vile and repulsive sexual perversion, even the infamous name of the city being perpetuated in the name of their characteristic sin....How foolish must men be who can believe that God is any better pleased by this type of gross wickedness than he was in Sodom, or that he will any more refrain from punishing it than he did then!" (Coffman, p.189).
 - b. Clarke shows that "sinners" is translated from the Hebrew "chattaim" (from *chats*), which means "to miss the mark, to step wrong, to miscarry." It is the same as the Greek "amartauo" which carries the same definition. A sinner is one who misses the mark; his aim is faulty. The people of Sodom were deemed "exceedingly" sinful in the true estimation of the Lord. They may have thought of themselves as very progressive and blessed; but the Lord's judgment is the only one that counts.
 - c. When Lot made his choice, he perhaps thought there was no inherent danger in being close to Sodom and its wicked inhabitants. We can imagine that he may have felt he was sufficiently strong to withstand whatever influence and temptations they might bring to bear. Christians make the same kind of foolish mistakes when they think they are strong enough to overcome the evil influences under which their human wisdom places them (cf. 1 Cor. 10:12). Lot did not contaminate himself with their sins, but because of his choice, he lost most of his family.
 - d. Sodom: (burning), one of the most ancient cities of Syria. It is commonly mentioned in connection with Gomorrah, but also with Admah and Zeboim, and on one occasion — Gen 14:1 — with Bela or Zoar. Sodom was evidently the chief town in the settlement. The four are first named in the ethnological records of Gen 10:19, as belonging to the Canaanites. The next mention of the name of Sodom, Gen 13:10-13, gives more certain indication of the position of the city. Abram and Lot are standing together between Bethel and Ai, ver. 3, taking a survey of the land around and below them. Eastward of them, and absolutely at their feet, lay the "circle of Jordan." The whole circle was one great oasis — "a garden of Jehovah." ver. 10. In the midst of the garden the four cities of Sodom, Gomorrah, Admah and Zeboim appear to have been situated. It is necessary to notice how absolutely the cities are identified with the district. In the subsequent account of their destruction, Gen 19:1, the topographical terms are employed with all the precision which is characteristic of such early times. The mention of the Jordan is conclusive as to the situation of the district, for the Jordan ceases where it enters the Dead Sea, and can have no existence south of that point. The catastrophe by which they were destroyed is described in Gen 19:1, as a shower of brimstone and fire from Jehovah. However we may interpret the words of the earliest narrative, one thing is certain — that the lake was not one of the agents in the catastrophe. From all these passages, though much is obscure, two things seem clear:

- 1) That Sodom and the rest of the cities of the plain of Jordan stood on the north of the Dead Sea;

- 2) That neither the cities nor the district were submerged by the lake, but that the cities were overthrown and the land spoiled, and that it may still be seen in its desolate condition. When, however, we turn to more modern views, we discover a remarkable variance from these conclusions.
- 3) The opinion long current that the five cities were submerged in the lake, and that their remains — walls, columns and capitals — might be still discerned below the water, hardly needs refutation after the distinct statement and the constant implication of Scripture. But,
- 4) A more serious departure from the terms of the ancient history is exhibited in the prevalent opinion that the cities stood at the south end of the lake. This appears to have been the belief of Josephus and Jerome. It seems to have been universally held by the medieval historians and pilgrims, and it is adopted by modern topographers probably without exception.
 - a) There are several grounds for this belief; but the main point on which Dr. Robinson rests his argument is the situation of Zoar. (a) "Lot," says he, "fled to Zoar, which was near to Sodom; and Zoar lay almost at the southern end of the present sea, probably in the month of Wady Kerak ." (b) Another consideration in favor of placing the cities at the southern end of the lake is the existence of similar names in that direction. (c) A third argument, and perhaps the weightiest of the three, is the existence of the salt mountain at the south of the lake, and its tendency to split off in columnar masses presenting a rude resemblance to the human form. But it is by no means certain that salt does not exist at other spots round the lake. (d) (A fourth and yet stronger argument is drawn from the fact that Abraham saw the smoke of the burning cities from Hebron. (e) A fifth argument is found in the numerous lime-pits found at that southern end of the Dead Sea. Robinson, Schaff, Baedeker, Lieutenant Lynch and others favor this view. — ED.)
 - b) It thus appears that on the situation of Sodom no satisfactory conclusion can at present be readied: On the one hand, the narrative of Genesis seems to state positively that it lay at the northern end of the Dead Sea. On the other hand, long-continued tradition and the names of the existing spots seem to pronounce with almost equal positiveness that it was at its southern end.
 - c) Of the catastrophe which destroyed the city and the district of Sodom we can hardly hope ever to form a satisfactory conception. Some catastrophe there undoubtedly was but what secondary agencies, besides fire, were employed in the accomplishment of the punishment cannot be safely determined in the almost total absence of exact scientific description of the natural features of the ground round the lake. We may suppose, however, that the actual agent in the ignition and destruction of the cities had been of the nature of a tremendous thunder-storm accompanied by a discharge of meteoric stones, (and that these set on fire the bitumen with which the soil was saturated, and which was used in building the city. And it may be that this burning out of the soil caused the plain to sink below the level of the Dead Sea, and the waters to flow over it — if indeed Sodom and its sister cities are really under the water. — ED.)
 - d) The miserable fate of Sodom and Gomorrah is held up as a warning in numerous passages of the Old and New Testaments. Mark 8:11; 2 Peter 2:6; Jude 4-7. [Smith's Bible Dictionary, PC Study Bible, © 2003, 2006 by Biblesoft].
- e. McGarvey provides the following insightful information about Sodom:
 - 1) One of the most interesting questions connected with the topography of the lower Jordan **plain** is that concerning the sites of Sodom and Gomorrah, and the other three cities confederated with them. The chief point at issue is whether they were near the upper end or the lower end of the Dead Sea. If at the upper end, they probably stood on the Plain of Jericho, south of Wady Kelt ; if at the lower end, the plain in which they stood must be now occupied by the lagoon. Explorers are divided over the question, the earlier class favoring the southern locality, and the more recent class the northern.
 - 2) All of the local traditions preserved among the natives of the country are in favor of the southern locality. The ridge of rock-salt extending along the southwestern shore of the sea is called *Jebel Us'dum* (Mount Sodom), from the belief that Sodom stood near it. The sea itself is called *Bahr Lut* (Sea of Lot), from the belief that it is connected with Lot's history; and the two traditions taken in connection evidently point to the southern end of the sea as the site of Sodom. Furthermore, the name of Zoar, the city to which Lot fled when he left Sodom, is still attached to the ruins of an ancient town near the neck of the peninsula, in the Arabic form of *Zoghal*.
 - 3) As we have said in our description of the Dead Sea, the supposition of the southern locality requires the additional supposition that the present lagoon was then a plain, and that its surface was sunk either by the convulsions attending the destruction of the cities, or by fire consuming the "slime-pits," which

abounded in the plain, so that the water of the sea flowed in upon it and covered it a few feet deep, as at present. This supposition finds some support in the Scriptures. That some serious change in the condition of the surface itself occurred seems to be affirmed in the statements that God “overthrew those cities, and *all the plain*,” and that Abraham, when he viewed the scene the next morning, “looked toward Sodom and Gomorrah, and toward all the *land of the plain*; and behold, and lo, the smoke of the *country* went up as the smoke of a furnace.”

- 4) On the other hand, against the southern locality and in favor of the northern, are urged the following considerations:
 - a) Chedorlaomer, having subdued certain tribes south of the Dead Sea, next smote the “Amorites, who dwelt in Haze’zon-Tamar,” before he approached Sodom. But Haze’zon-Tamar is En’gedi, which lies half-way up the western shore of the sea, and the supposition of a southern site for Sodom would require the army to have passed Sodom and gone twenty miles up the coast to attack En’gedi, and then to have returned to attack Sodom. This is by no means probable.
 - b) When Abraham and Lot were about to separate at Bethel, it is said that Lot “lifted up his eyes and beheld all the plain of the Jordan; that it was well watered everywhere before the Lord destroyed Sodom and Gomorrah.” It is urged that Lot could not have seen this plain if it had been at the southern end of the Dead Sea. But this objection has less force than has been ascribed to it, for Lot could not literally have seen “all the plain of the Jordan” as this expression is now understood, unless he had gone about ten miles east of Bethel and stood upon some of the mountains overlooking it. Still, it is true that by doing this he could have seen all the plain, and to have seen all the plain south of the Dead Sea he would have been compelled to travel more than double the distance. It may be, after all, that the historian, in using this language about Lot, refers to his mental survey of a plain which he must have seen very often before, rather than to a literal survey of it with his eyes.
 - c) After Lot had made his survey, it is said that he “chose him all the plain of the Jordan,” and that he “dwelt in the cities of the plain, and pitched his tent toward Sodom.” It is affirmed that these “cities of the plain are the same “cities of the plain” which were destroyed with Sodom, and that the plain is by clear implication “the plain of the Jordan.” But the plain south of the Dead Sea, 45 miles below the mouth of the Jordan, could not, with any propriety of speech, be called the “plain of the Jordan.”
 - d) In the view which Moses enjoyed from the top of Pisgah, it is said that he saw “the plain of the valley of Jericho, the city of palm-trees, unto Zoar.” This language implies some connection, not very remote, between Zoar and the Plain of Jericho, and the language could scarcely be used if the two were separated by the entire length of the Dead Sea. But Zoar was one of the five cities of the plain, spared from the fate of the others for Lot’s sake, and its locality determines, proximately, the locality of the others. Professor Merrill, of the Palestine Exploration Society, claims to have found Zoar, both in name and location, in *Tell Ektanu*, of the six mounds mentioned in a former part of this section, on the eastern border of the Plain of Moab. An account of the discovery, together with an elaborate argument in favor of locating the destroyed cities in the Plain of Moab, is given in the Fourth Annual Statement of the Palestine Exploration Society, 1877.
- 5) A candid consideration of the evidences above adduced seems to require us to abandon the old theory as to the location of these cities, and to suppose that the local traditions, which furnish almost its only support, originated from an unsuccessful attempt at an early period since the Christian era to settle the question which still remains unsettled among scholars and explorers. Of one fact the investigations thus far instituted clearly convince us,—that the besom of God’s destruction swept clean when it swept these cities away, leaving not a vestige behind. This is certainly the case if they were at the southern end of the sea; and Conder’s explorations make it equally certain if they were on the Plain of Jericho. He says: “Over almost every acre of ground between Jericho and the Dead Sea I rode day by day. The whole is a white desert, except near the hills, where rich herbage grows after the rains. The time of year was most favorable for such explorations, because no long grass existed to hide any ruins. In all that plain I found no ruin, except the old monastery of St. John and a little hermit’s cave; and it seems to me that no other ruin will ever there be found.”
- 6) Professor Merrill has directed attention in an entirely new direction—to the plain at the head of the Dead Sea on the eastern side of the Jordan; and if he is correct in locating Zoar, the other cities must certainly have been in the same plain, seeing that Lot could not have crossed the river and traversed the width of the plain besides, between daylight and sunrise, the time of his flight from Sodom to Zoar. But

this plain has also been examined almost as carefully as the one on the opposite side of the river without satisfactory results. Excavations may possibly yet bring something to light which surface examinations have failed to reveal, but this is the only source of hope now left for the discovery of a single stone that once lay in the walls of Sodom. (J.W. McGarvey. *Lands of the Bible*, pp.347-350, 1878).

f. More recent information has been published:

- 1) Have Sodom and Gomorrah been found? Walter E. Rast, of Valparaiso University, and R. Thomas Schaub, of Indiana University of Pennsylvania, excavated two sites near the eastern shore of the Dead Sea in Jordan and say they strongly believe these are the biblical cities destroyed by fire (see *Biblical Archaeology Review*, Sept./Oct. 1980, p. 27).
- 2) The principal site, Bab edh-Dhra, lies less than one mile east of the Lissan, a tongue-like peninsula that protrudes into the Dead Sea on the eastern shore. It was occupied during the Early Bronze Age (third millennium B.C.). Overlooking the Dead Sea from a height of 550 feet, Bab edh-Dhra was no doubt built on a bluff for defense purposes. The site consists of a town and a large cemetery. One scholar estimated that the cemetery is composed of more than 20,000 tombs in which more than 500,000 people were buried along with more than three million pottery vessels. A large rectangular structure found inside the town is thought to be a temple. The archaeologists also uncovered the remains of what they believe was the altar associated with the temple.
- 3) It is significant that there are only five sites located in the Dead Sea area, each near a flowing spring; that all five date to the same time, the Early Bronze Age; and that there is no other evidence of occupation in the area until the Roman period more than 2,000 years later. Sodom and Gomorrah had been part of a coalition of five cities that had rebelled against their overlord (Gen 14). The five are generally referred to as the "cities of the plain" (Gen 13:12; 19:29) and include Sodom, Gomorrah, Admah, Zeboiim, and Bella, or Zoar (Gen 14:2). Geographical references in Gen 14 seem to suggest that they were located in the Dead Sea area. One reference is to "Siddim Valley (that is, the valley of the Dead Sea)" (Gen 14:3).
- 4) If Bab edh-Dhra and the four other sites are indeed the remains of the five "cities of the plain," it is also significant that the foundations of some of the buildings were buried under tons of rubble, and that beneath the rubble there is clear evidence of a fiery conflagration. [Willmington's Bible Handbook by Harold Willmington Copyright © 1997 by Harold L. Willmington].

C. Genesis 13:14-18: God Reaffirms His Land Promise to Abraham.

1. Verses 14-15: "And the LORD said unto Abram, after that Lot was separated from him, Lift up now thine eyes, and look from the place where thou art northward, and southward, and eastward, and westward: For all the land which thou seest, to thee will I give it, and to thy seed for ever."
 - a. In some way undescribed in the text, God told Abraham to survey the land around him. This entire territory was to belong to Abraham's seed, which is specified later in chapter 15. The patriarch himself only wandered through and sojourned in the land. Did this promise of the land give modern day Israel a God-given right to the land? They and many others think so. "As far as the fleshly Israel is concerned, all of God's blessings upon them were contingent, absolutely, upon their acceptance of the rule of God and upon their following in the steps of Abraham's faith, which they resolutely refused to do. They formally rejected God's government in the elevation of Saul to the monarchy, and were ultimately cast off altogether as being God's Chosen People in any racial or secular sense" (Coffman, p.190).
 - b. The word "for ever" does not always mean eternal, never-ending. It is used to describe the full measure of time allotted to a certain thing.
 - 1) Jonah was in the sea **for ever** (Jonah 2:6).
 - 2) God honored the land promises to the fullest degree:
 - a) Joshua 21:43-45: "And the LORD gave unto Israel all the land which he swore to give unto their fathers; and they possessed it, and dwelt therein. And the LORD gave them rest round about, according to all that he swore unto their fathers: and there stood not a man of all their enemies before them; the LORD delivered all their enemies into their hand. There failed not ought of any good thing which the LORD had spoken unto the house of Israel; all came to pass."
 - b) 1 Kings 4:21: "And Solomon reigned over all kingdoms from the river unto the land of the Philistines, and unto the border of Egypt: they brought presents, and served Solomon all the days of his life."
 - c) 2 Chronicles 9:26: "And he reigned over all the kings from the river even unto the land of the Philistines, and to the border of Egypt."
 - 3) Their retaining possession of the land was conditional (Jer. 18:1-10; 19:1-12; Duet. 8:19-20; 4:26; Josh.

- 23:10-16; Deut. 6:10; Deut. 29-30). Israel did not live up to their bargain and they lost the land. In a spiritual sense, the church is God's Israel today, and figuratively inherits the earth (Matt. 5:5). Christians are called "Jews" in Romans 2:28-29; the church is "the Israel of God" (Gal. 6:16).
- c. There are perhaps five million Jews in Palestine today; they have been migrating there over many years. But to have that small percentage of the Jews present in the land does not mean the nation has been restored to the land. For a restoration of Israel to occur, there must be an identification of the various tribes, a division of the land along the Old Testament lines, a re-establishment of the Aaronic priesthood, a return to the Old Testament system of worship, including the temple, and a restoration of the Law of Moses in its fullness. This would nullify the work of Christ and destroy the gospel system, the system God was planning and preparing for throughout Old Testament history.
- 1) Isaiah 2:2-4: "And it shall come to pass in the last days, *that* the mountain of the Lord's house shall be established in the top of the mountains, and shall be exalted above the hills; and all nations shall flow unto it. And many people shall go and say, Come ye, and let us go up to the mountain of the LORD, to the house of the God of Jacob; and he will teach us of his ways, and we will walk in his paths: for out of Zion shall go forth the law, and the word of the LORD from Jerusalem. And he shall judge among the nations, and shall rebuke many people: and they shall beat their swords into plowshares, and their spears into pruninghooks: nation shall not lift up sword against nation, neither shall they learn war any more."
 - 2) Jeremiah 31:31-34: "Behold, the days come, saith the LORD, that I will make a new covenant with the house of Israel, and with the house of Judah: Not according to the covenant that I made with their fathers in the day *that* I took them by the hand to bring them out of the land of Egypt; which my covenant they brake, although I was an husband unto them, saith the LORD: But this *shall be* the covenant that I will make with the house of Israel; After those days, saith the LORD, I will put my law in their inward parts, and write it in their hearts; and will be their God, and they shall be my people. And they shall teach no more every man his neighbour, and every man his brother, saying, Know the LORD: for they shall all know me, from the least of them unto the greatest of them, saith the LORD: for I will forgive their iniquity, and I will remember their sin no more."
 - 3) Matthew 5:17: "Think not that I am come to destroy the law, or the prophets: I am not come to destroy, but to fulfil."
 - 4) Galatians 3:26-29: "For ye are all the children of God by faith in Christ Jesus. For as many of you as have been baptized into Christ have put on Christ. There is neither Jew nor Greek, there is neither bond nor free, there is neither male nor female: for ye are all one in Christ Jesus. And if ye *be* Christ's, then are ye Abraham's seed, and heirs according to the promise."
 - 5) Ephesians 3:1-11: "For this cause I Paul, the prisoner of Jesus Christ for you Gentiles, If ye have heard of the dispensation of the grace of God which is given me to you-ward: How that by revelation he made known unto me the mystery; (as I wrote afore in few words, Whereby, when ye read, ye may understand my knowledge in the mystery of Christ) Which in other ages was not made known unto the sons of men, as it is now revealed unto his holy apostles and prophets by the Spirit; That the Gentiles should be fellowheirs, and of the same body, and partakers of his promise in Christ by the gospel: Whereof I was made a minister, according to the gift of the grace of God given unto me by the effectual working of his power. Unto me, who am less than the least of all saints, is this grace given, that I should preach among the Gentiles the unsearchable riches of Christ; And to make all *men* see what *is* the fellowship of the mystery, which from the beginning of the world hath been hid in God, who created all things by Jesus Christ: To the intent that now unto the principalities and powers in heavenly *places* might be known by the church the manifold wisdom of God, According to the eternal purpose which he purposed in Christ Jesus our Lord."
2. Verse 16: "And I will make thy seed as the dust of the earth: so that if a man can number the dust of the earth, *then* shall thy seed also be numbered."
- a. God promised to make his descendants to be so numerous they could not be counted. This was said while Abraham remained without child. He made good the promise!
 - b. The number of Israelites who left Egypt can be estimated. There were 600,000 fighting men. If there were one woman and two children for each of these men, there would have been 2.4 million in all. The number could be much higher.
 - 1) Exodus 12:37: "And the children of Israel journeyed from Rameses to Succoth, about six hundred thousand on foot *that were* men, beside children."
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- 2) Exodus 38:26: "A bekah for every man, *that is*, half a shekel, after the shekel of the sanctuary, for every one that went to be numbered, from twenty years old and upward, for six hundred thousand and three thousand and five hundred and fifty *men*."
 - 3) Numbers 1:46: "Even all they that were numbered were six hundred thousand and three thousand and five hundred and fifty."
 - 4) Numbers 2:32: "These *are* those which were numbered of the children of Israel by the house of their fathers: all those that were numbered of the camps throughout their hosts *were* six hundred thousand and three thousand and five hundred and fifty."
 - 5) Numbers 11:21: "And Moses said, The people, among whom I *am*, *are* six hundred thousand footmen; and thou hast said, I will give them flesh, that they may eat a whole month."
 - 6) Numbers 26:51: "These *were* the numbered of the children of Israel, six hundred thousand and a thousand seven hundred and thirty."
 - 7) Numbers 31:32: "And the booty, *being* the rest of the prey which the men of war had caught, was six hundred thousand and seventy thousand and five thousand sheep."
3. Verses 17-18: "Arise, walk through the land in the length of it and in the breadth of it; for I will give it unto thee. Then Abram removed *his* tent, and came and dwelt in the plain of Mamre, which *is* in Hebron, and built there an altar unto the LORD."
- a. Abram is told to "walk through the land" and inspect it. Abram moved from Bethel to Hebron, originally called Kirjath-arba, about 19 miles southwest of Jerusalem. It was an old city even then. It was situated "at the junction of all the principal highways of the region, standing out prominently on the landscape, 3040' above sea level" (Coffman, p.190).
 - b. There Abram built another altar, and settled himself down to live. He made this place the central point of his subsequent stay in Canaan (Keil, p. 210). "And the LORD appeared unto him in the plains of Mamre: and he sat in the tent door in the heat of the day" (Gen. 18:1). "Mamre was an Amorite then living, with whom Abram made a league, chap. 14:13" (Clarke, p.99). [The ASV and noted scholars give "oak" instead of "plain" of Mamre].
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GENESIS 14

A. Genesis 14:1-12: The Battle of the Nine Kings.

1. Verse 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;"
 - a. The four invading kings are identified by name and territory each controlled. In view of the fact that Abram with only a few hundred men was able to later rout them indicates these were petty kings having a relatively small army between them, unlike the vast armies several centuries later from Assyria and Babylon which devastated Israel and Judah.
 - b. Amraphel king of Shinar. "Shinar" is said to be a poetic name applied to Babylon (Coffman, p.193). Coffman also asserts that "Shinar" is used here to describe some small city, different from and smaller than, the real Babylon. He refers to certain little cities in Texas bearing such names as New York City, Boston, London, and Moscow. Jewish commentators have stressed for a long time that the cities of the invading kings were near to Canaan. However, there is no evidence in the text to indicate that Shinar is anything but the original territory bearing that name, located to the north of the Persian Gulf, and including such ancient cities as Babel, Erech, Accad, and Calneh (Gen. 10:10; 11:2; Dan. 1:2). (Cf. Baker's, p.319).
 - c. Arioch king of Ellasar. The location of Ellasar has not been determined with any certainty. Numerous conjectures have been made.
 - d. Chedorlaomer king of Elam. This is the name of the region east of the Tigris River, and east of Babylonia. There was an ancient empire located there, although it does not appear to have been very powerful at this time. Chedorlaomer exercised the leadership of the invading force.
 - e. Tidal king of nations. Instead of "nations" the American Standard Version has "Goiim" which means "nations." Coffman suggests that this may simply be a flowery title he had applied to himself for greater prestige, as with "...General Lopez De Santa Ana's styling himself the 'Emperor of North America'" (pp. 194f).
2. Verses 2-3: "*That these made war with Bera king of Sodom, and with Birsha king of Gomorrah, Shinab king of Admah, and Shemeber king of Zeboiim, and the king of Bela, which is Zoar. All these were joined together in the vale of Siddim, which is the salt sea.*"
 - a. These four kings made war against Bera king of Sodom, Birsha king of Gomorrah, Shinab king of Admah, Shemeber king of Zeboiim, and the king of Bela (also known as Zoar).
 - b. The battle was fought in the vale of Siddim (which is the Salt Sea). This area was a valley at the time but following the overthrow of Sodom and Gomorrah and the cities of the plain it was covered by the Salt Sea (the Dead Sea). Thus the ruins of Sodom and Gomorrah lie beneath the turbid waters of the Dead Sea, unseen by human eye, or perhaps adjacent to the lake.
3. Verses 4-7: "*Twelve years they served Chedorlaomer, and in the thirteenth year they rebelled. And in the fourteenth year came Chedorlaomer, and the kings that were with him, and smote the Rephaims in Ashteroth Karnaim, and the Zuzims in Ham, and the Emims in Shaveh Kiriathaim, And the Horites in their mount Seir, unto Elparan, which is by the wilderness. And they returned, and came to Enmishpat, which is Kadesh, and smote all the country of the Amalekites, and also the Amorites, that dwelt in Hazezontamar.*"
 - a. The occasion of the battle was the revolt of the five cities (Sodom, etc.) against the rule of Chedorlaomer which he had held over then for twelve years. In those days a conquered city or nation was obligated to pay tribute to the conqueror, which sometimes was very onerous. When these kings rebelled, Chedorlaomer led a confederated army of an unknown size into Canaan to subjugate the rebels again. It was to his advantage to keep the trade route open between Elam and Egypt, which of necessity ran through Palestine. His caravans would be subject to raids by these five rebellious kings. But before joining battle with the rebels, the invading army attacked and defeated various other tribes of Canaan.
 - b. They smote the Rephaims in Ashteroth Karnaim. "...All that is known with certainty of the Rephaim is, that they were a tribe of gigantic stature, and in the time of Abram had spread over the whole of Peraea, and held not only Bashan, but the country afterwards possessed by the Moabites; from which possessions they were subsequently expelled by the descendants of Lot and the Amorites, and so nearly exterminated, that Og, king of Bashan, is described as the remnant of the Rephaim (Deut. 2:20; 3:11,13; Josh. 12:4; 13:12" (Keil p.203).
 - c. According to Keil, the Zuzims in Ham were probably the people whom the Ammonites called *Zam zummin* and were reckoned among the Rephaim (Dt. 2:20). *Baker's Atlas* says they occupied the eastern plateau

south of Bashan and Gilead. Ham is thought by some to be Rabbath-ammon (Modern Amman). After the Ammonites pushed into Zuzim territory, the Zuzim lost their tribal identity (p.79).

- d. The Emims of Shaveh Kiriathaim. Clarke says they were as tall as the Anakim; they dwelt among the Moabites later and were considered to be giants: "The Emims dwelt therein in times past, a people great, and many, and tall, as the Anakims; Which also were accounted giants, as the Anakims; but the Moabites call them Emims" (Deut. 2:10-11). Baker says they were located south of the Zusim and east of the Dead Sea. The Moabites later occupied their land (p.79).
 - e. The Horites in mount Seir. They dwelt in Mount Seir until Esau and his sons drove them out (Duet. 2:22; Gen. 36:21-30; Clarke, p.101). El-paran was in the wilderness of Paran, south of Canaan and including Kadesh-barnea (Num. 13:26; cf. Baker, p.313). En-mishpat is the old name for Kadesh.
 - f. Passing by or through En-mishpat, the invaders smote the land of the Amalekites and the Ammonites who dwelt at Hazeon-tamar (also known as En-geddi; cf. Josh. 15:62; 2 Chron. 20:2). The land of the Amalekites was that which the Amalekites later possessed.
4. Verses 8-9: "And there went out the king of Sodom, and the king of Gomorrah, and the king of Admah, and the king of Zeboiim, and the king of Bela (the same *is* Zoar;) and they joined battle with them in the vale of Siddim; With Chedorlaomer the king of Elam, and with Tidal king of nations, and Amraphel king of Shinar, and Arioch king of Ellasar; four kings with five."
 - a. "After conquering all these tribes to the east and west of the Arabah, they gave battle to the kings of the Pentapolis ["five cities"] in the vale of Siddim, and put them to flight" (Keil, p.205). "The different order in which the invading kings are listed is significant in that this listing appears to be in the order of their importance. Sure enough, Amraphel king of Shinar is next to the bottom of the list here, instead of leading" (Coffman, p.195).
 - b. The success these invaders had indicate that they must have had a sizeable raiding party, although not on the order of later invading armies.
 5. Verse 10: "And the vale of Siddim *was full of slimepits*; and the kings of Sodom and Gomorrah fled, and fell there; and they that remained fled to the mountain."
 - a. The army of the five kings was defeated soundly by Chedorlaomer's men. The vale of Siddim was characterized by slime pits, places where asphalt or bitumen rose from the earth. This was a bad place to fight a battle or to run through in order to escape (Clarke, p.101). Regarding "fell there," Clarke says it "either means they were defeated on this spot, and many of them slain or that multitudes of them had perished in the bitumen-pits which abounded there" (p.101).
 - b. "The kings of Sodom fell there, the valley being full of asphalt-pits, and the ground therefore unfavourable for flight; but the others escaped to the mountains" (Keil, p.205).
 6. Verses 11-12: "And they took all the goods of Sodom and Gomorrah, and all their victuals, and went their way. And they took Lot, Abram's brother's son, who dwelt in Sodom, and his goods, and departed."
 - a. The invaders had had a very successful venture throughout their campaign. They had defeated all the armies that came against them; now they began their journey home, taking the spoils of war with them, including the food stores of Sodom and Gomorrah, Lot and his goods, and women also. Later, Abraham "...brought back all the goods, and also brought again his brother Lot, and his goods, and the women also, and the people" (Gen. 14:16).
 - b. The most significant thing related in the narrative of the chapter thus far is the capture of Lot.

B. Genesis 14:13-16: Abram Rescues Lot.

1. Verse 13: "And there came one that had escaped, and told Abram the Hebrew; for he dwelt in the plain of Mamre the Amorite, brother of Eshcol, and brother of Aner: and these *were* confederate with Abram."
 - a. An escapee (called a fugitive) brought word to Abram regarding Lot. Abram is called "the Hebrew," which according to many Bible scholars means "from beyond the river" (Euphrates) since that describes his origin. This is the first time "Hebrew" appears in the Bible.
 - b. Abram had as confederates, Mamre, Eshcol and Aner; these were chieftains in the area where Abram lived. We are not told how many fighting men these friends took with them for the forth-coming fight with Chedorlaomer (cf. verse 24),
2. Verse 14: "And when Abram heard that his brother was taken captive, he armed his trained *servants*, born in his own house, three hundred and eighteen, and pursued *them* unto Dan."
 - a. Abram on hearing the news about his "brother" Lot immediately began preparations for mounting a rescue. He took 318 trained servants, men born in his house. It would have been necessary to leave a sizeable number of servants and workers behind to defend his wife and holdings and to tend the flocks and herds;

he still have 318 men to go with him. This suggests the immense size of Abram's house.

- b. The Dan mentioned is not necessarily the same Dan so prominent in later Hebrew history (according to some scholars). The Dan of later times was about 40 miles southwest of Damascus.
3. Verse 15: "And he divided himself against them, he and his servants, by night, and smote them, and pursued them unto Hobah, which *is* on the left hand of Damascus."
 - a. We are not told how many men were in Chedorlaomer's army. Abram's strategy was simple and effective. For the plan to succeed he did not have to have a vast army to rout an army several times larger than his own. Gideon later routed a huge army with a band of only 300 men (Judges 7).
 - b. The plan followed by Arabs of more modern times is described in the following way: "When a defeated party resolves to pursue the enemy, they wait till these are fast asleep; then, as they have no idea of posting sentinels, they rush upon them from different directions, striking down the tent poles—if there is any fight at all it is the fray of a tumultuous mob—a panic commonly ensues, and the whole contest is ended with little or no loss on either side" (ALC, 1959, p.62).
 - c. Abram's plan was to strike at night while the enemy was asleep, flushed with victory, and confident there was no pursuit. They would have no reason to suspect an attack; it is likely that many of the soldiers were worn out by the fighting and marching, and perhaps many were drunk, enjoying the spoils of their previous successes. A small band of dedicated, determined, and well-trained fighters can put to flight a much larger enemy with such a simple, effective plan as this. Modern generals have developed successful operations patterned after this plan. Abram was able to defeat the enemy handily!
4. Verse 16: "And he brought back all the goods, and also brought again his brother Lot, and his goods, and the women also, and the people."
 - a. Abram's greatness has begun to shine forth in the events of chapters 13 and 14. "If Abram had been merely a man of the world, he probably would have felt that he was under no obligation to Lot. But if Lot did not measure up to the high standards of his uncle when the opportunity for making that kind of choice was given him, Abram was not at liberty to step down to the lower level of Lot. Cf. Gal. 6:1,2; James 5:19,20" (ALC, 1959, p.61).
 - 1) Galatians 6:1-2: "Brethren, if a man be overtaken in a fault, ye which are spiritual, restore such an one in the spirit of meekness; considering thyself, lest thou also be tempted. Bear ye one another's burdens, and so fulfil the law of Christ."
 - 2) James 5:19-20: "Brethren, if any of you do err from the truth, and one convert him; Let him know, that he which converteth the sinner from the error of his way shall save a soul from death, and shall hide a multitude of sins."
 - b. It was a consequence of Lot's pitching his tent toward Sodom that he got into this difficulty. The thought of this verse "is brought in by the sacred historian with peculiar interest and tenderness. All who read the account must be in pain for the fate of wives and daughters fallen into the hands of a ferocious, licentious, and victorious soldiery....Abram had disposed his attack so judiciously, and so promptly executed his measures, that not only all the baggage, but all the females also, were recovered" (Clarke, p.102).
 - c. The success of this venture would confirm to all who learned of it that God was with Abram.

C. Genesis 14:17-24: Abram is Met by Melchizedek.

1. Verses 17-18: "And the king of Sodom went out to meet him after his return from the slaughter of Chedorlaomer, and of the kings that *were* with him, at the valley of Shaveh, which *is* the king's dale. And Melchizedek king of Salem brought forth bread and wine: and he *was* the priest of the most high God."
 - a. As he returned with the kidnapped people and merchandise, the king of Salem came out to meet Abram in the king's dale.
 - b. "In 14:2, it is said that the kings of Sodom and Gomorrah fell in the vale of Siddim among the slime pits, but this could have reference to their armies rather than themselves in person. Likewise, when the slaughter of Chedorlaomer and the kings with him is mentioned, it does not necessarily mean that these kings personally were slain, but may refer to what happened to their armies. The word 'slaughter' suggests killing in large numbers. So, not only did the invading armies lose all their booty and prisoners, but also many of their own men....God had given Abram great victory. He would now be an even more important man in the eyes of the inhabitants of the land whither Jehovah had brought him....It was no doubt for Lot's sake particularly that Abram embarked upon this expedition, at great risk and not a little cost" (ALC, 1980, pp.248f). These kings may have indeed been slain. Also, their thrones could have been taken over by successors.
 - c. The king's dale. This is the same as that mentioned in 2 Samuel 18:18; likely the same as the valley of

- Jehoshaphat (or Kidron) located just east of Jerusalem.
- d. King of Salem. In Psalm 76:2, "Salem" is equated with "Zion" which is equated with "Jerusalem" (147:12). Since these are used interchangeably, Salem must be Jerusalem. "Salem" means peace. David later captured this city from the Jebusites and made it his capital city. It was on one of the mountains nearby that Isaac was "offered."
 - e. Melchizedek. Without the information furnished by the New Testament, we would know almost nothing about this man. Some have conjectured that he was Noah, or Shem, or Enoch, or some other old patriarch. He was not an idol worshiper, for Abram recognized him as a priest of the most high God, and Moses reported this of him.
 - 1) Melchizedek brought bread and wine forth as food for the company. Some scholars think there was a religious significance to this, perhaps typical of the Lord's Supper.
 - 2) The purpose of this part of the narrative is to stress the importance of this man's priesthood, which was typical of Christ's.
 - 3) "The NT, of course, has a magnificent discussion of this event in Hebrews, where it is mentioned in 5:5,6,10; 6:20, and repeatedly throughout chapter 7. The only other reference to Melchizedek in the Bible is in Psalm 110:4" (Coffman, p.199).
 - a) Hebrews 5:5-6: "So also Christ glorified not himself to be made an high priest; but he that said unto him, Thou art my Son, to day have I begotten thee. As he saith also in another *place*, Thou *art* a priest for ever after the order of Melchisedec."
 - b) Hebrews 5:10: "Called of God an high priest after the order of Melchisedec."
 - c) Psalms 110:4: "The LORD hath sworn, and will not repent, Thou *art* a priest for ever after the order of Melchizedek."
2. Verses 19-20: "And he blessed him, and said, Blessed *be* Abram of the most high God, possessor of heaven and earth: And blessed be the most high God, which hath delivered thine enemies into thy hand. And he gave him tithes of all."
 - a. Melchizedek blessed Abram and praised God for the victory. He is presented in the passage as both priest and king. God was already blessing Abraham as he had promised to do in Genesis 12:1ff; and he was being a blessing to others.
 - b. Melchizedek serves as a type of Christ in that he was both king and priest. "Even he shall build the temple of the LORD; and he shall bear the glory, and shall sit and rule upon his throne; and he shall be a priest upon his throne: and the counsel of peace shall be between them both" (Zech 6:13).
 - c. His priesthood was typical of the Lord's in that it had neither beginning nor end as far as the scriptures are concerned: "Without father, without mother, without descent, having neither beginning of days, nor end of life; but made like unto the Son of God; abideth a priest continually" (Heb. 7:3). There was a beginning and ending of the Levitical priesthood: it began with Aaron and ended at the cross; it was passed down through the descendants of Aaron. But neither Melchizedek nor Christ received their priesthood through some mortal lineage. Each was the first and last of the line.
 - d. Hebrews 7 exalts the priesthood of Christ over the Levitical priesthood. It shows that Abraham was the father of the Israelite nation, including the Levitical priests; he was greater than his descendants, yet he paid tithes to Melchizedek; therefore, the priesthood of Melchizedek was greater than the Levitical line. Since Christ is the Son of God, the Messiah, he is greater than both Melchizedek and Aaron.
 - e. This is the first mention of paying the tenth, or tithes, in the Bible.
 3. Verses 21-24: "And the king of Sodom said unto Abram, Give me the persons, and take the goods to thyself. And Abram said to the king of Sodom, I have lift up mine hand unto the LORD, the most high God, the possessor of heaven and earth, That I will not *take* from a thread even to a shoelatchet, and that I will not take any thing that *is* thine, lest thou shouldest say, I have made Abram rich: Save only that which the young men have eaten, and the portion of the men which went with me, Aner, Eshcol, and Mamre; let them take their portion."
 - a. The king of Sodom, either Bela or his successor, offered the recovered goods to Abraham, who promptly declined. He had lifted his hand to God (made a vow) not to take anything, except what his men had eaten.
 - b. His confederates would have to decide for themselves whether to take anything. He would not take a thread (string used to tie up a girl's hair) or a shoelatchet (shoe string), lest it be said that the king of Sodom had made Abram rich; he wanted nothing to do with him or Sodom.
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GENESIS 15

A. Genesis 15:1-6: Jehovah Communicates With Abram in a Vision.

1. Following the battle with the invading kings of chapter 14, Abraham returned home. He was living in the plain of Mamre, at Hebron. He now had a different situation: before he had had no real enemies and had fought no battles. But now he was known to be capable of waging war, although in a limited way. The Canaanites among whom he dwelled, would now possibly cast a wary eye toward Abram. And the invaders might possibly be entertaining ideas of retribution for their humiliating defeat. Thus, the assurance God gave him in this chapter was all the more needed. After the great feat Elijah accomplished on mount Carmel (1 Kings 18), that great prophet had to contend with some tremulous doubts (1 Kings 19:1-14). It is likely that Abram needed to be reassured. At any rate, this was the effect of this encounter.
2. Verse 1: "After these things the word of the LORD came unto Abram in a vision, saying, Fear not, Abram: *I am thy shield, and thy exceeding great reward.*"
 - a. This manifestation of Jehovah to Abraham was the fifth in a series of nine appearances (ALC, 1959, p.66). [It would be the fourth of eight if Genesis. 12:1 is the original appearance and not the second]. There is a notable difference in this appearance of the Lord: here it is said that "the word of the Lord came to Abram." In the preceding cases the text simply states that God "said unto Abram" or "the Lord appeared unto Abram" (12:1; 12:7; 13:14). The difference may only be in the words chosen to describe the encounter. But some scholars think that the Lord had spoken directly or through an intermediary in the earlier meetings. Here the text plainly says that this meeting was "in a vision."
 - b. God addresses Abraham in a vision. Keil, Coffman, and others think that all the events which follow in the chapter are all part of this same vision. If part is visionary and part is actual, it would be difficult and perhaps arbitrary to show the distinction.
 - c. "...Not only is every mark wanting, which would warrant us in assuming a transition from the purely inward and spiritual sphere, to the outward sphere of the senses, but the entire revelation culminates in a prophetic sleep, which also bears the character of a vision."
 - 1) As it was in a deep sleep that Abram saw the passing of the divine appearance through the carefully arranged portions of the sacrifice, and no reference is made either to the burning of them, as in Judg. 8:21, or to any other removal, the arrangement of the sacrificial animals must also have been a purely internal process.
 - 2) To regard this as an outward act, we must break up the continuity of the narrative in a most arbitrary way, and not only transfer the commencement of the vision into the night, and suppose it to have lasted from twelve to eighteen hours, but we must interpolate the burning of the sacrifices, etc., in a still more arbitrary manner, merely for the sake of supporting the erroneous assumption, that visionary procedures had no objective reality, or, at all events, less evidence of reality than outward acts, and things perceived by the senses.
 - 3) A vision wrought by God was not a mere fancy, or a subjective play of the thoughts, but a spiritual fact, which was not only in all respects as real as things discernible by the senses, but which surpassed in its lasting significance the acts and events that strike the eye" (Keil, p.210).
 - d. *After these things.* It was not until Abram was completely away from Terah's house that this covenant was struck; thus the events of chapters 13 and 14 are an integral part of the story of Abraham. The introduction of Melchizedek was important primarily for New Testament purposes, but also to show that Abram did not invent the idea of Jehovah: here was one who was already serving God independent of the principal of the story.
 - e. There was the possibility that the invading band which Abram had defeated in rescuing Lot might return to attack Abram. This could naturally and easily arouse trepidation in the patriarch. The years were also slipping away and as yet Abram had no son. Hence, this word of assurance.
 - 1) *I am thy shield.* A shield was a weapon a soldier used in defending himself in battle. God would be a shield to Abraham, thus would protect him from whatever attack or danger he might face.
 - 2) *Thy exceeding great reward.* The only heir Abram had at the time was his steward (verses 2-3). While Abraham had much material wealth it was all almost meaningless without a son. God would bless Abraham immensely, in every way.
 - 3) Notice that the source of this communication was Jehovah; he is the author of the promises given. Some Bible scholars think that this Personage is Christ.

3. Verses 2-3: "And Abram said, Lord GOD, what wilt thou give me, seeing I go childless, and the steward of my house *is* this Eliezer of Damascus? And Abram said, Behold, to me thou hast given no seed: and, lo, one born in my house is mine heir."
 - a. In reference to God's promise of "thy exceeding great reward," Abram asked what would be given him. He seems to be saying that all the wealth in the world is of no great worth without a proper heir. Eliezer, Abram's steward, was the heir but not a son. This was probably the "eldest servant" of Genesis 24:2.
 - b. Abraham had been in the land for about ten years now, and the promises of Genesis 12:1-3 had not yet come to fruition. It was natural and proper for Abraham to raise this point.
 4. Verses 4-5: "And, behold, the word of the LORD *came* unto him, saying, This shall not be thine heir; but he that shall come forth out of thine own bowels shall be thine heir. And he brought him forth abroad, and said, Look now toward heaven, and tell the stars, if thou be able to number them: and he said unto him, So shall thy seed be."
 - a. "In seeking to enable Abram to grasp something of the magnitude of his posterity, Jehovah used three metaphors, namely (1) the dust of the earth, 13:16; (2) the stars of the heaven, 15:5; and (3) the sand upon the seashore, 22:17. In the case now before us, Abram had just expressed his concern for an heir, and this was God's response to him. It had been some years since Jehovah had first promised to make of Abram a great nation (12: 1-3), and Abram must be taught that when Jehovah makes a promise it will be fulfilled. The original promise to Abram not only required an heir; it also required numerous posterity; and the starry heavens became a sensible sign to support the patriarch's faith" (ALC, 1959, p.67).
 - b. "The innumerability of the stars is a scientific truth, there being, in fact, innumerable galaxies, the total number of stars in any one of them being innumerable; and the question rises as to how such a fact is mentioned so casually; and the answer has to lie in the omniscience of God, the real author of Genesis" (Coffman, p.206).
 - c. The word "seed" has two uses: a single seed and many seeds. In this usage it refers to the innumerable offspring of Abraham, physical and spiritual, including Jews, Arabs, and others whose ancestry was traceable to Abraham, and figuratively, to spiritual Israel, Christians. In Genesis 3:15 and 26:4, "seed" is used singularly in reference to Christ: "Now to Abraham and his seed were the promises made. He saith not, And to seeds, as of many; but as of one, And to thy seed, which is Christ. And this I say, *that* the covenant, that was confirmed before of God in Christ, the law, which was four hundred and thirty years after, cannot disannul, that it should make the promise of none effect. For if the inheritance *be* of the law, *it is* no more of promise: but God gave *it* to Abraham by promise. Wherefore then *serveth* the law? It was added because of transgressions, till the seed should come to whom the promise was made; *and it was* ordained by angels in the hand of a mediator" (Gal. 3:16-19).
 5. Verse 6: "And he believed in the LORD; and he counted it to him for righteousness."
 - a. Coffman says, "One may only be astounded at the amount of nonsense written about this verse, which is hailed as the plan of salvation for the sinners of all ages, some even claiming that Abram was 'saved by faith only,' and trying to find here a corroboration of the great Lutheran heresy" (p. 209).
 - b. "One of the strangest things in all the field of Bible exegesis is the contention so generally made that this language refers to the justification of Abraham as an alien sinner. It seems to be taken for granted that up to the time spoken of in this verse, Abraham was an unforgiven, condemned sinner....The facts are all against such a supposition" (Whiteside, *Romans*, pp.89f).
 - c. If Abram was still an unsaved sinner, why did God bless, protect, and guide him as he had been doing? Did God accept Abraham's worship at the various altars he built? He was already acceptable to God in a degree, but his final justification came only after he offered Isaac. "Was not Abraham our father justified by works, when he had offered Isaac his son upon the altar?" (Jas. 2:21; cf. Gen. 22:1-12).
 - d. "Paul's statements concerning this event in such passages as Romans 4:3,5, etc., have no reference whatever to Abram's receiving justification without obedience, but to the fact that his justification was not, in any, sense, founded upon circumcision and the Law of Moses. No one in any dispensation was ever justified apart from obedience. Abram's justification was totally apart from the Law of Moses, which came over 400 years afterwards; but it was not apart from obedience" (Coffman, p.210).
 - e. This is the first appearance in the scriptures of the word "righteousness." "If one's words were perfect—if his character were without a flaw—his works would be counted for righteousness. No one, however, can properly claim righteousness by that standard except Jesus Christ. But, if one's works demonstrate the faith in God that he requires, God will forgive his imperfections and count his faith for righteousness. This is how Abram was righteous, as seen from Romans 4:1-8, and as stated in the above text. That is the only way any
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of us can be righteous, for we all sin and come short of the glory of God (Rom. 3:23), and 'If we say that we have not sinned, we make him a liar, and his word is not in us' (1 John 1:10).

- 1) "It should also be observed, however, that there is no forgiveness, and hence no righteousness by faith, unless in one's heart he is determined to obey God and is doing so to the best of his ability. An important characteristic is described by the word 'repentance'—a change of mind, that is, of mind-set—so that instead of regarding iniquity in one's heart, or not being particularly concerned about his conduct, he is sorry for known sins and seeking forgiveness of them, determined not to be repeating them.
 - 2) "In such case, while (through) weakness or ignorance there will be isolated acts of sin, sin will not be habitual. Right conduct will be habitual and sin the exception. Hence, relatively speaking, one's manner of life will be righteous. He will be practicing righteousness instead of practicing sin, and in that sense may even be referred to as 'blameless.' The very fact, however, that one practices unrighteousness is proof that he is not righteous by faith....
 - 3) "In the New Testament scriptures—the doctrine of righteousness by faith is more fully and minutely developed than in the Old Testament writings. If our mind-set is right, and righteousness is our practice, we are said to be 'walking in the light' and 'the blood of Jesus his Son cleanseth us from all sin' (1 John 1:7)—that is, it keeps cleaning us from all isolated acts of sin" (ALC, 1979, p.254f).
- f. "God ascribed to him or imputed to him a state or condition which was acceptable to God. This was not the result of any meritorious work which he did, but as a result of his faith—a faith which led him to believe anything which God said, regardless of the circumstances under which it was spoken, and which caused him to endeavor to do everything that God commanded, regardless of the cost or difficulty in doing it. Cf. Rom. 4:16-25" (ALC, 1959, p.87).
6. Excerpt from author's comments on James 2:21-22: "Was not Abraham our father justified by works, when he had offered Isaac his son upon the altar? Seest thou how faith wrought with his works, and by works was faith made perfect?"
- a. The case of Abraham is next introduced. The principle of Abraham's justification illustrates the manner by which all men are justified today. His case is frequently cited in the Bible for this purpose (Gen. 12:1-3; 15:1-20; 17:1-8; Heb. 11:8-18; Gal. 3:15-29).
 - b. Abraham and his experiences were familiar to all Christians, Jews and Gentiles alike. He is the spiritual ancestor of people of true faith today (Rom. 4:1-25; Gal. 3:29).
 - c. Abraham was justified, that is, he was counted, reckoned, pronounced, declared to be in a right relationship with God. The basic significance of justification is acquittal; to not be considered as an enemy of God; no separation exists between a justified person and God.
 - 1) Isaiah 59:1-2: "Behold, the LORD'S hand is not shortened, that it cannot save; neither his ear heavy, that it cannot hear: But your iniquities have separated between you and your God, and your sins have hid *his* face from you, that he will not hear."
 - 2) Philippians 2:12-13: "Wherefore, my beloved, as ye have always obeyed, not as in my presence only, but now much more in my absence, work out your own salvation with fear and trembling. For it is God which worketh in you both to will and to do of *his* good pleasure."
 - d. One who is justified has been declared not to be guilty any more.
 - 1) Matthew 12:37: "For by thy words thou shalt be justified, and by thy words thou shalt be condemned." The words we spoke on earth that we are still accountable for will be a determining factor in our eternal destiny. Depending on the nature of the words we used, our words form an index to our spiritual condition. Our works will also be considered (Rev. 20:12-13).
 - 2) Acts 13:39: "And by him all that believe are justified from all things, from which ye could not be justified by the law of Moses." An alien sinner is justified on the basis of faith (an active, living faith), not by the Law of Moses (or by a dead faith).
 - e. Abraham was justified by works. Not even the objector would deny this truth. The text does not mean he was justified by means of works, but out of works. God issued the verdict when the works appeared. "By" (Greek, *ex*) means "out of." Only God can justify; he justifies when the conditional works appear.
 - f. When was Abraham justified? When he offered up Isaac. What blessing would he have received if he had offered Isaac without the command to do so? (That is, if he had decided on his own to offer his son). He would have received no blessing, but further condemnation. What blessing would he have received if he had disregarded the command to offer Isaac? None. He would not have been justified.
 - 1) Hebrews 11:30: "By faith the walls of Jericho fell down, after they were compassed about seven days."
 - 2) John 9:6-7: "When he had thus spoken, he spat on the ground, and made clay of the spittle, and he

anointed the eyes of the blind man with the clay, And said unto him, Go, wash in the pool of Siloam, (which is by interpretation, Sent.) He went his way therefore, and washed, and came seeing."

3) See also 2 Kings 5:1-14.

- g. Abraham's faith exercised itself (acted, wrought with his works) in offering Isaac. God told him to offer his son; Abraham believed God meant what he said; so he did what God said do. What if he had refused to offer his son? It would have meant he did not believe God. But he obeyed, thus did he demonstrate his faith, and was justified.

1) By his works his faith was made perfect. To be made perfect is to consummate, complete, finish. The tenses of the words are important. "Faith was continually exercising itself (imperfect tense) with works (the command to offer up Isaac on the altar), and out of these works faith was perfected at once (aorist tense). Neither works, nor faith operating alone can justify; each in cooperation with the other produces that status wherein God justifies" (Guy N. Woods, *Commentary on James*, Gospel Advocate Co., 1965, p.143).

2) Neither works nor faith alone can justify; each in cooperation with the other produces the great blessing of justification. "For in Jesus Christ neither circumcision availeth any thing, nor uncircumcision; but faith which worketh by love" (Gal. 5:6).

B. Genesis 15:7-11: Preparations for the Covenant.

1. Verses 7-8: "And he said unto him, I *am* the LORD that brought thee out of Ur of the Chaldees, to give thee this land to inherit it. And he said, Lord GOD, whereby shall I know that I shall inherit it?"
 - a. God had a purpose in mind when he called Abram to leave Ur. The covenant he was about to make with the patriarch grew out of God's own character: he had promised Abram certain things, and he was bound to fulfill the same. But these commitments had not been realized by Abram as yet, thus he asked for a sign. This is not an indication of a lack of faith but was a realistic inquiry after information, specifically for confirmation of the promise. Compare the attitude of Mary in Luke 1:34-38 with that of Zacharias in Luke 1:18-20.
 - 1) Luke 1:34-38: "Then said Mary unto the angel, How shall this be, seeing I know not a man? And the angel answered and said unto her, The Holy Ghost shall come upon thee, and the power of the Highest shall overshadow thee: therefore also that holy thing which shall be born of thee shall be called the Son of God. And, behold, thy cousin Elisabeth, she hath also conceived a son in her old age: and this is the sixth month with her, who was called barren. For with God nothing shall be impossible. And Mary said, Behold the handmaid of the Lord; be it unto me according to thy word. And the angel departed from her."
 - 2) Luke 1:18-20: "And Zacharias said unto the angel, Whereby shall I know this? for I am an old man, and my wife well stricken in years. And the angel answering said unto him, I am Gabriel, that stand in the presence of God; and am sent to speak unto thee, and to show thee these glad tidings. And, behold, thou shalt be dumb, and not able to speak, until the day that these things shall be performed, because thou believest not my words, which shall be fulfilled in their season."
 - b. "Adonai is the word which the Jews in reading always substitute for Jehovah, as they count it impious to pronounce this name. Adonai signifies my director, basis, supporter, prop, or stay.... This word often occurs in the Hebrew Bible, and is rendered in our translation Lord..." (Clarke, p.106).
2. Verses 9-11: "And he said unto him, Take me an heifer of three years old, and a she goat of three years old, and a ram of three years old, and a turtledove, and a young pigeon. And he took unto him all these, and divided them in the midst, and laid each piece one against another: but the birds divided he not. And when the fowls came down upon the carcases, Abram drove them away."
 - a. God instructed Abram to take certain animals for a special purpose. Each of these animals and birds were later used in the sacrifices of the Law of Moses. Three year old animals would presumably be in their prime thus ideal for sacrifice. However, apparently these animals were not sacrificed since there is no mention of them being burned. We remember also that these events were seen in a vision.
 - b. "The proceeding corresponded rather to the custom, prevalent in many ancient nations, of slaughtering animals when concluding a covenant, and after dividing them into pieces, of laying the pieces opposite to one another, that the persons making the covenant might pass between them.... It is evident from Jer. 34:18 that this was still customary among the Israelites of later times" (Keil, p.214). Abram did not divide the birds, a practice also followed under the Law (Lev. 1:17).
 - c. In the visionary scene being described, birds of prey attempted to descend upon the slain animals, but Abram drove them away. This perhaps symbolized the later assaults of Egypt on Abraham's descendants,

or simply that Abram would not allow them to pollute or devour this consecrated offering.

- 1) Matthew 13:4: "And when he sowed, some *seeds* fell by the way side, and the fowls came and devoured them up."
- 2) Matthew 24:28: "For wheresoever the carcase is, there will the eagles be gathered together."
- d. It appears that Abram was following an established custom of the ancient time for solemnizing a covenant. The custom called for the two parties in the pact to pass between the divided animals, the two parts representing the two parties. "But in the case before us the animals represented Abram and his seed, not in the fact of their being slaughtered, as significant of the slaying of that seed, but only in what happened to and in connection with the slaughtered animals: birds of prey attempted to eat them, and when extreme darkness came on, the glory of God passed through them" (Keil, pp.214f).

C. Genesis 15:12-21: The Covenant and its Scope.

1. Verse 12: "And when the sun was going down, a deep sleep fell upon Abram; and, lo, an horror of great darkness fell upon him."
 - a. The same original word is used to describe the deep sleep Adam experienced when God removed a rib with which to make Eve. The present case occurred as the sun was going down. This could still be part of the vision begun in verse 1.
 - b. The horror of great darkness probably was intended to prefigure the affliction Abram's seed would endure during the 400 years of bondage described in the next verse.
2. Verses 13-14: "And he said unto Abram, Know of a surety that thy seed shall be a stranger in a land *that is* not theirs, and shall serve them; and they shall afflict them four hundred years; And also that nation, whom they shall serve, will I judge: and afterward shall they come out with great substance."
 - a. This is all part of the sign for which Abram asked (vs. 8). It was not a pleasant sign, but it did at least assure him he would have a posterity. His seed would be strangers in a foreign land where they would be afflicted for 400 years. This may simply be a rounded-off figure.
 - 1) Exodus 12:40: "Now the sojourning of the children of Israel, who dwelt in Egypt, *was* four hundred and thirty years."
 - 2) Acts 7:6: "And God spake on this wise, That his seed should sojourn in a strange land; and that they should bring them into bondage, and entreat *them* evil four hundred years."
 - 3) Galatians 3:17: "And this I say, *that* the covenant, that was confirmed before of God in Christ, the law, which was four hundred and thirty years after, cannot disannul, that it should make the promise of none effect."
 - b. "Abram is here given a detailed view of the fortunes of his people for four hundred years. Their privation would be characterized by exile, bondage, and affliction; but at the end of the specified period, the nation which had enslaved and afflicted them would itself be judged of God, and the children of Abram would leave that country with great substance" (ALC, 1959, p.69).
 - c. The ten plagues of Exodus fulfill this part of God's statement. They left Egypt with wealth also: "And he called for Moses and Aaron by night, and said, Rise up, *and* get you forth from among my people, both ye and the children of Israel; and go, serve the LORD, as ye have said. Also take your flocks and your herds, as ye have said, and be gone; and bless me also. And the Egyptians were urgent upon the people, that they might send them out of the land in haste; for they said, *We be* all dead *men*. And the people took their dough before it was leavened, their kneadingtroughs being bound up in their clothes upon their shoulders. And the children of Israel did according to the word of Moses; and they borrowed of the Egyptians jewels of silver, and jewels of gold, and raiment: And the LORD gave the people favour in the sight of the Egyptians, so that they lent unto them *such things as they required*. And they spoiled the Egyptians. And the children of Israel journeyed from Rameses to Succoth, about six hundred thousand on foot *that were* men, beside children. And a mixed multitude went up also with them; and flocks, and herds, *even* very much cattle" (Ex. 12:31-38).
3. Verse 15: "And thou shalt go to thy fathers in peace; thou shalt be buried in a good old age."
 - a. Abram is assured that he will go to his fathers in peace, at a good old age. His fathers were not buried in the same place as Abram; thus this statement did not describe a common grave.
 - b. Rather, the reference is to the spirit world, called *Sheol* in the Old Testament, and *Hades* in the New Testament. His body was buried, but his soul went into the spiritual world to dwell with the spirits of his fathers—those patriarchs who died in obedience to God.
4. Verse 16: "But in the fourth generation they shall come hither again: for the iniquity of the Amorites *is* not yet full."

- a. His descendants would leave the persecuting country (which was not identified here) in the fourth generation. In this instance, a generation is made equal to a hundred years. Abraham lived to be 175, Isaac was 180, Jacob was 147, and Joseph was 110. After the specified time had passed, his seed would return to this place where Abram now dwelt.
 - b. This time factor was necessary because the iniquity of the Amorites was not yet full. God would not dispossess a people who had not yet reached the depths of depravity. But looking into the future he could foresee the time when their iniquity was full; they would then be dispossessed. God's plans involve such complicated factors as to overwhelm the finite mind of man! Later when the Amorites were conquered, it was because they had lost the right to the land due to their own sinfulness; Israel lost it later on for the same cause.
 - c. The Amorites were the most powerful of those inhabiting Canaan; their name is probably used here as a collective reference to all the Canaanitish population.
5. Verse 17: "And it came to pass, that, when the sun went down, and it was dark, behold a smoking furnace, and a burning lamp that passed between those pieces."
- a. In leading Israel from Egypt to Canaan, the Lord's presence was symbolized by the pillar of cloud by day and pillar of fire by night. Here the presence of God is pictured as a furnace of smoke and a burning lamp which passed between the pieces of the slain animals. It was his method of confirming to Abraham his commitment to fulfill his promises, especially in giving Abram a posterity.
 - b. Notice that Abraham did not pass between the carcasses; it was God's covenant which he was making with the patriarch; only God would keep the covenant.
6. Verse 18: "In the same day the LORD made a covenant with Abram, saying, Unto thy seed have I given this land, from the river of Egypt unto the great river, the river Euphrates."
- a. This is the statement which shows the purpose of the foregoing information. It symbolized the covenant God made with Abram. He promised that his seed would possess the land from the river of Egypt to the river Euphrates. This was fulfilled under the reigns of David and Solomon.
 - 1) 2 Samuel 8:3: "David smote also Hadadezer, the son of Rehob, king of Zobah, as he went to recover his border at the river Euphrates."
 - 2) 1 Kings 4:21: "And Solomon reigned over all kingdoms from the river unto the land of the Philistines, and unto the border of Egypt: they brought presents, and served Solomon all the days of his life."
 - 3) 2 Chronicles 9:26: "And he reigned over all the kings from the river even unto the land of the Philistines, and to the border of Egypt."
 - b. The river of Egypt is either the Nile or one of its branches, or the Wady of Arish on the border of Egypt.
7. Verses 19-21: The Kenites, and the Kenizzites, and the Kadmonites, And the Hittites, and the Perizzites, and the Rephaims, And the Amorites, and the Canaanites, and the Girgashites, and the Jebusites."
- a. Ten nations of Canaan are named; later they are reckoned at seven.
 - 1) Deuteronomy 7:1: "When the LORD thy God shall bring thee into the land whither thou goest to possess it, and hath cast out many nations before thee, the Hittites, and the Girgashites, and the Amorites, and the Canaanites, and the Perizzites, and the Hivites, and the Jebusites, seven nations greater and mightier than thou."
 - 2) Acts 13:19: "And when he had destroyed seven nations in the land of Chanaan, he divided their land to them by lot."
 - b. "Probably some of them which existed in Abram's time had been blended with others before the time of Moses, so that seven only out of the ten remained; see part of these noticed Gen. 10" (Clarke, p.108).
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GENESIS 16

A. Genesis 16:1-6: Sarai's Plan Which Backfired.

1. It would seem that Abram, following the awesome and glorious experiences of the preceding chapter would have had little trouble staying on the straight and narrow. He had actually witnessed a supernatural vision of covenant-making on the part of Jehovah, and had been thereby assured of a great progeny. However, the lesson of the present chapter shows how easy it is for otherwise good people to put their trust in human reasoning which usurps the plan and will of God. Time was slipping away and as yet he had no child of his own. His patience was weakening. For our own good, God often takes more time than we think necessary to work out certain affairs. It was not until the events of chapter 18 that Abraham was plainly told that Sarai was to be the mother of the promised son.
 - a. When once he understood this he had no further trouble in keeping his trust completely in Jehovah.
 - 1) Romans 4:19-22: "And being not weak in faith, he considered not his own body now dead, when he was about an hundred years old, neither yet the deadness of Sarah's womb: He staggered not at the promise of God through unbelief; but was strong in faith, giving glory to God; And being fully persuaded that, what he had promised, he was able also to perform. And therefore it was imputed to him for righteousness."
 - 2) Hebrews 11:11-12: "Through faith also Sara herself received strength to conceive seed, and was delivered of a child when she was past age, because she judged him faithful who had promised. Therefore sprang there even of one, and him as good as dead, *so many* as the stars of the sky in multitude, and as the sand which is by the sea shore innumerable."
 - b. Although the birth of Ishmael was not according to God's plan, he still used that information to teach a powerful lesson in Galatians 4:21-31: "Tell me, ye that desire to be under the law, do ye not hear the law? For it is written, that Abraham had two sons, the one by a bondmaid, the other by a freewoman. But he *who was* of the bondwoman was born after the flesh; but he of the freewoman *was* by promise. Which things are an allegory: for these are the two covenants; the one from the mount Sinai, which gendereth to bondage, which is Agar. For this Agar is mount Sinai in Arabia, and answereth to Jerusalem which now is, and is in bondage with her children. But Jerusalem which is above is free, which is the mother of us all. For it is written, Rejoice, *thou* barren that bearest not; break forth and cry, thou that travailest not: for the desolate hath many more children than she which hath an husband. Now we, brethren, as Isaac was, are the children of promise. But as then he that was born after the flesh persecuted him *that was born* after the Spirit, even so *it is* now. Nevertheless what saith the scripture? Cast out the bondwoman and her son: for the son of the bondwoman shall not be heir with the son of the freewoman. So then, brethren, we are not children of the bondwoman, but of the free."
 - c. As we shall see, Sarai's ill-advised plan to which Abram acquiesced was a grievous blunder which has caused incalculable misery to the race ever since.
2. Verses 1-2: "Now Sarai Abram's wife bare him no children: and she had an handmaid, an Egyptian, whose name *was* Hagar. And Sarai said unto Abram, Behold now, the LORD hath restrained me from bearing: I pray thee, go in unto my maid; it may be that I may obtain children by her. And Abram hearkened to the voice of Sarai."
 - a. Genesis 11:30 stated the reason for their lack of children—she was barren. "This fact, coupled with the additional fact that it had not been made plain to Sarai that she personally would be the mother of the promised seed of Abram, along with the custom of the day, apparently accounts, in part at least, for the plan Sarai suggested here. Her impatience was also probably a factor" (ALC, 1959, p.72). At the time of this chapter they had been in the land for ten years (vs. 3). It would seem to the human mind that if the promised seed was to really be given, it should have arrived by then. It had not, thus the scheme was devised to which Abram agreed, apparently without much if any struggle. Sarai's plan: "I can bear no children; take Hagar my maidservant to wife; raise up seed by her." Since Hagar belonged to Sarai, any children she had would be Sarai's—legally. "Hagar" is a Hebrew name; she probably was acquired by Abraham while in Egypt (12:16). If so, she was given a Hebrew name. Hagar was in the flower of womanhood, while Sarai was seventy-five years of age, past the age of normal child-bearing. Even Abraham was aged, and his body was considered as good as dead a few years later—getting near to death or procreationally.
 - b. Such a suggestion would be shocking to the higher spiritual ideals of Christianity. But concubinage and polygamy were accepted practices in those dark days. It was during those days of spiritual ignorance that

God winked at some things: "And the times of this ignorance God winked at; but now commandeth all men every where to repent: Because he hath appointed a day, in the which he will judge the world in righteousness by that man whom he hath ordained; whereof he hath given assurance unto all men, in that he hath raised him from the dead" (Acts 17:30-31). The human standards of the time permitted such things, although such activities were not in keeping with the divine standard.

- c. "The faith of both Abram and Sarai was seriously defective, as revealed in the events recorded here. God does not need human help to fulfill his promises; what is required of men is that they trust God no matter how impossible the fulfillment of his word may appear to be" (Coffman, pp.215f).
 - d. Sarai devised the plan; Abram agreed to it. This is similar to the fall of Adam and Eve. There were several things wrong with the plan:
 - 1) It violated God's plan for monogamous marriage which he instituted in the beginning (Gen. 2).
 - 2) It was a sinful use of Hagar who was not consulted about her wishes in the whole scheme.
 - 3) It was presumptuous for them to think God needed help in providing the promised seed.
 - 4) Their plan encouraged others in the future to practice concubinage and polygamy, which resulted in untold harm and misery to future generations. Their influence is still being felt among the Arab nations today.
 - e. Their plan was purely human in origin. It seemed good but turned out otherwise, as do all plans which are out of line with God's will. "For my thoughts are not your thoughts, neither are your ways my ways, saith the Lord. For as the heavens are higher than the earth, so are my ways higher than your ways, and my thoughts than your thoughts" (Isa. 55:8-9).
3. Verses 3-4: "And Sarai Abram's wife took Hagar her maid the Egyptian, after Abram had dwelt ten years in the land of Canaan, and gave her to her husband Abram to be his wife. And he went in unto Hagar, and she conceived: and when she saw that she had conceived, her mistress was despised in her eyes."
- a. These events occurred ten years after they entered the land; Abram was 75 when he came into Canaan initially (12:4); Sarai was ten years younger than Abram (17:17, 24); thus at this present time Abram was 85 and Sarai 75. Abram took Hagar as his wife, and when she conceived, she despised Sarai. It was because of Hagar's pride over having conceived, which Sarai could not do, that brought on Hagar's wrongful attitude toward her mistress.
 - b. "Hagar was then Abram's wife; and although she was not on an equality with Sarai, being in fact her slave, she nevertheless despised her mistress....It was impossible for Hagar to be sent away by Sarai, for the laws of that period granted certain rights to slave wives; and Hagar could neither have been sold nor dismissed....'Polygamy is always bound to be the fruitful mother of envy, jealousy, and strife'" (Coffman, p.217). The Code of Hammurabi reportedly warns expressly that "a slave girl elevated by her mistress should not and could not claim equality" (ibid.).
 - c. "Marriage contracts in some instances stipulated that a wife, if barren, furnish her husband with a slave wife. One Nuzi contract reads: 'If Giliminu [the bride] does not bear children, she shall take a Lulla woman [a slave] as a wife for Shennima [the bridegroom]'" (ALC, 1979, p.258).
4. Verses 5-6: "And Sarai said unto Abram, My wrong *be* upon thee: I have given my maid into thy bosom; and when she saw that she had conceived, I was despised in her eyes: the LORD judge between me and thee. But Abram said unto Sarai, Behold, thy maid *is* in thy hand; do to her as it pleaseth thee. And when Sarai dealt hardly with her, she fled from her face."
- a. Sarai's pride was hurt, she was filled with jealousy, and placed the blame for Hagar's disposition on Abraham. The wrong she was suffering at the hand of Hagar was Abram's fault (so claimed Sarai). Or, it may be that Sarai was simply telling Abram it was his duty to straighten out this bad situation. "The Lord judge between me and thee"—may imply that Abram, rather than she, was responsible for this problem. However, we remember that it was Sarai who devised the scheme.
 - b. "Abram was at that time powerless to find a solution to the problem; because, in fact, there really was no solution, any more than there is a solution today for the Arab-Israeli conflict that troubles the whole world. As Hagar was Sarai's property, and since the whole situation was due to her initial suggestion, Abram simply checked the problem back to Sarai" (Coffman, p.218).
 - c. Sarai dealt very harshly with Hagar, which apparently refers to a beating. So severe was this treatment that Hagar ran away.

B. Genesis 16:7-14: The Angel of the Lord Intervenes.

1. Verse 7: "And the angel of the LORD found her by a fountain of water in the wilderness, by the fountain in the way to Shur."

- a. The angel of the Lord found Hagar by a fountain on the way to Shur. Shur was near Egypt, so obviously she was on her way back to her native land. Verse 14 locates the fountain between Kadesh and Bered.
- b. Scholars think that she was at a caravan station about fifty miles south of Beersheba and twelve miles west of Kadesh-barnea (ALC, 1979, p.260).
- c. She had traveled some little distance from Abraham's tent, but perhaps had not had enough time to think her situation over clearly. The timing of the angel's arrival was excellent.
2. Verses 8-9: "And he said, Hagar, Sarai's maid, whence camest thou? and whither wilt thou go? And she said, I flee from the face of my mistress Sarai. And the angel of the LORD said unto her, Return to thy mistress, and submit thyself under her hands."
 - a. The angel tells Hagar to return to her mistress. She was on an illegal flight for which she could have been severely punished. "As the fruit of her womb was the seed of Abram, she was to return to his house and there bear him a son who, though not the seed promised by God, would be honoured for Abram's sake with the blessing of an innumerable posterity" (Keil, p.220).
 - b. This is similar to the story related in the book of Philemon about Onesimus who ran away from his master, Philemon, but was converted to Christ by Paul in Rome, and was subsequently sent back to Philemon.
3. Verses 10-12: "And the angel of the LORD said unto her, I will multiply thy seed exceedingly, that it shall not be numbered for multitude. And the angel of the LORD said unto her, Behold, thou *art* with child, and shalt bear a son, and shalt call his name Ishmael; because the LORD hath heard thy affliction. And he will be a wild man; his hand *will be* against every man, and every man's hand against him; and he shall dwell in the presence of all his brethren."
 - a. Detailed prophecies are given regarding the child she was to bear. He would have a large number of descendants: there are nearly a billion of them living today. His name was to be called Ishmael which means "God shall hear" (margin). The sex of the child was foreknown and foretold. This was beyond human knowledge until the past few years. Verse 12 prophetically described him as becoming a wild man, whose hand would be against every man, and every man's hand against him, and he would live in the presence of all his brethren.
 - b. The term "wild man" is in reference to the wild onager, "that wild and untamable animal, roaming at its will in the desert, of which so highly poetic a description is given in Job 39:5-8, depicts most aptly 'the Bedouin's boundless love of freedom as he rides about in the desert, spear in hand, upon his camel or his horse, hardy, frugal, revelling in the varied beauty of nature, and despising town life in every form'" (Keil, p.220).
 - c. "Many potentates among the Abyssinians, Persians, Egyptians, and Turks, have endeavoured to subjugate the wandering of wild Arabs; but, though they have had temporary triumphs, they have been ultimately unsuccessful. Sesostrius, Cyrus, Pompey, and Trajan, all endeavoured to conquer Arabia, but in vain. From the beginning to the present day they have maintained their independency, and God preserves them as a lasting monument of his providential care, and an incontestable argument of the truth of Divine Revelation. Had the Pentateuch no other argument to evince its Divine origin, the account of Ishmael and the prophecy concerning his descendants, collated with their history and manner of life during a period of nearly four thousand years, would be sufficient. Indeed the argument is so absolutely demonstrative, that the man who would attempt its refutation, in the sight of reason and common sense would stand convicted of the most ridiculous presumption and folly" (Clarke, p.111).
 - d. "The country which these free descendants of Ishmael may be properly said to possess stretches from Aleppo to the Arabian Sea, and from Egypt to the Persian Gulf; a tract of land not less than 1800 miles in length, by 900 in breadth" (ibid.). "The geographical notice of the dwelling-place of the Ishmaelites hardly exhausts the force of the expression, which also indicated that Ishmael would maintain an independent standing before (in the presence of) all the descendants of Abraham. History has confirmed this promise. The Ishmaelites have continued to this day in free and undiminished possession of the extensive peninsula between the Euphrates, the Straits of Suez, and the Red Sea, from which they have overspread both Northern Africa and Southern Asia" (Keil, pp.220f).
 - e. Ishmael's descendants have been the source of countless wars and strife, affecting virtually everyone. Neither Ishmael nor his descendants could get along with others for very long. The Arabs of more modern times are still dedicated enemies to the descendants of Abraham through Isaac, and of New Testament Christians. "That race has neither been dissipated by conquest, not lost by migration, nor confounded with the blood of other countries. They have continued to dwell in the presence of their brethren, a distinct nation, wearing upon the whole the same features and aspects which this prophecy first impressed upon

- them" (Marcus Dods, *The Book of Genesis*, New York, Eaton and Mains, p.151, Quoted by Coffman, p.221).
4. Verses 13-14: "And she called the name of the LORD that spake unto her, Thou God seest me: for she said, Have I also here looked after him that seeth me? Wherefore the well was called Beerlahairoi; behold, *it is* between Kadesh and Bered."
 - a. Scholars say this is difficult to translate. The thought of the passage is clear enough: God had seen Hagar's distress, heeded her cry, comforted her, put her on the right course homeward, and gave magnificent prophecies relating to her unborn child. This son would be a wild sort of a man, destined to be the enemy of Israel forever; this must have been hard for Abram and Sarai to accept. (Cf. Coffman, p.222).
 - b. "The general sense taken out of it is this, that Hagar was now convinced that God himself had appeared unto her, and was surprised to find that, notwithstanding this, she was still permitted to live; for it is generally supposed that if God appeared to any, they must be consumed by his glories. This is frequently alluded to in the sacred writings" (Clarke, p.111).
 - c. "The interposition of the angel of Jehovah had its immediate and beneficial effect upon Hagar. It led to a realization of the presence of God, and it prompted a memorial of his promise. 'The well of the living one who seeth me' seems to be the well where life is preserved after seeing God. The well was located in the southern part of Palestine, but the exact site is somewhat in doubt" (ALC, 1959, p.75).
 5. Verses 15-16: "And Hagar bare Abram a son: and Abram called his son's name, which Hagar bare, Ishmael. And Abram *was* fourscore and six years old, when Hagar bare Ishmael to Abram."
 - a. Although not plainly stated, it is clearly implied that Hagar returned to Abram and Sarai, and there her son was born. "Abram must have learned from Hagar the facts concerning her visit with the angel; for he gave the child the name which had been divinely selected. This was the first instance of a name being chosen for one before his birth, although several occurred in later times, as the Bible shows" (ALC, 1959, p.75).
 - b. "Much of the future of Israel would be related to the Ishmaelites and the nations that came from them, much in the same manner as the Edomites entered the picture following the birth of Esau" (Coffman, p.222).
 - c. Abraham's age is given as 86 at the time of Ishmael's birth. It was another 13 years before God appeared to him again, when he was 99 years old, and made the specific promise of the intended son to be born of Sarai. During the intervening years he and Sarai would have to live with the situation which they had brought upon themselves. He probably thought that Ishmael was the promised seed, and even spoke of this with the Lord: "Then Abraham fell upon his face, and laughed, and said in his heart, Shall *a child* be born unto him that is an hundred years old? and shall Sarah, that is ninety years old, bear? And Abraham said unto God, O that Ishmael might live before thee!" (Gen. 17:17-18).
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GENESIS 17

A. Genesis 17:1-8: The Renewal of the Covenant.

1. "This chapter is a confirmation, elaboration, and further explanation of the covenant already in existence, the covenant God made with Abram in 12:1ff. Here there began to appear some of the duties and obligations incumbent upon Israel and deriving from the covenant. The rite of circumcision was initiated as the sign of the existing covenant....'Therefore, this is not an additional covenant to that described in ch. 15, nor a different traditional account of the transaction contained in ch. 15, nor the original Elohist narrative of which ch. 15 was an imitation; but it was an intimation that the covenant already concluded was about to be carried into execution, and the promise of a son was more specifically determined as the offspring of Sarai'" (Coffman, p.223).
2. Verses 1-2: "And when Abram was ninety years old and nine, the LORD appeared to Abram, and said unto him, *I am* the Almighty God; walk before me, and be thou perfect. And I will make my covenant between me and thee, and will multiply thee exceedingly."
 - a. This occurred more than 25 years after Abram left Ur of the Chaldees, and about 14 years after Abram and Sarai conspired to produce the promised seed through Hagar. We are not told of any appearance of God to Abram from the time he was 86 until the time of this chapter, a span of 13 years.
 - b. Abram is said to have been 99 at this time; in verse 17 he speaks of himself as being 100 years old, but he was allowing enough time for the child to be born.
 - c. The Almighty God—*El Shaddai*. Regarding this name, Keil says it "belonged to the sphere of salvation forming one element in the manifestation of Jehovah, the covenant God, as possessing the power to realize his promises, even when the order of nature presented no prospect of their fulfillment, and the powers of nature were insufficient to secure it" (p.223). This name for God is found 6 times in Genesis and 31 times in Job (Coffman). In this passage God used two names for himself: Jehovah and Almighty God. The latter suggests his awesome power.
 - d. The command to Abram was: walk before me and be thou perfect. The idea of walking before, or in front of, some authority figure is for a proper inspection to be made of the individual's way. It does not suggest that Abram was to take the lead, but that God would be examining Abram's conduct. We read of individuals walking with God (Enoch and Noah), being told to follow after God (Eph. 5:1), and here of Abram being told to walk before God. Abram and Sarai had run ahead of God in the sense of trying to do God's part in providing the promised seed.
 - e. Be thou perfect. God was not commanding that which was impossible for Abram; it is impossible to live a sinless life (Eccl. 7:20; Rom 3:23; Gen. 8:21); therefore, only in an accommodative or limited sense was Abram expected to be perfect. Scholars define perfect as meaning "maturity, completeness, wholeness." In Matthew 5:48, we are told to be perfect even as God is perfect; but according to the context, the perfection of God being discussed is his love for his enemies as well as for his friends; if we love all men, enemy and friend alike, then are we perfect as is God, but not sinlessly perfect. Nor are we perfect to the degree God is perfect in this equitable love.
 - f. Abram had obligations to fulfill; God had his part to accomplish in this covenant; this mutual obligation arrangement illustrates the principle by which we are saved today: God's grace and our faith. God's part is further indicated in verse 4; Abram's in verses 9-10. New knowledge always carries with it new obligations. When Abram received this new information of chapter 17, more also was expected of him (verse 1b).
 - g. In verse 2 God promised to make (renew and confirm) the covenant and to multiply Abram's seed "exceedingly." But this promise was conditional as noted above. Compare: "*At what* instant I shall speak concerning a nation, and concerning a kingdom, to pluck up, and to pull down, and to destroy *it*; If that nation, against whom I have pronounced, turn from their evil, I will repent of the evil that I thought to do unto them. And *at what* instant I shall speak concerning a nation, and concerning a kingdom, to build and to plant *it*; If it do evil in my sight, that it obey not my voice, then I will repent of the good, wherewith I said I would benefit them" (Jer. 18:7-10).
3. Verses 3-4: "And Abram fell on his face: and God talked with him, saying, As for me, behold, my covenant *is* with thee, and thou shalt be a father of many nations."
 - a. Abram showed proper reverence for Jehovah by falling on his face. The way to be exalted before God who is on the throne is to humble one's self before him. With man on his face and God on his throne, this is the proper arrangement in order for man to come near to God.

- 1) Ecclesiastes 5:1-2: "Keep thy foot when thou goest to the house of God, and be more ready to hear, than to give the sacrifice of fools: for they consider not that they do evil. Be not rash with thy mouth, and let not thine heart be hasty to utter *any* thing before God: for God *is* in heaven, and thou upon earth: therefore let thy words be few."
- 2) Hebrews 12:28-29: "Wherefore we receiving a kingdom which cannot be moved, let us have grace, whereby we may serve God acceptably with reverence and godly fear: For our God *is* a consuming fire."
- b. God promised that Abram would be the father of many nations. This was fulfilled literally: Israel, Ishmaelites, Edomites, Christians. This would be part of God's obligations: "As for me...."
- c. God changed the name of Abram to Abraham. Although there does not seem to be full agreement among the scholars on the exact meanings of these two names, it appears that Abram means "High Father," and Abraham means "Father of a great multitude." God gave the names of Abraham, Sarah, Isaac, and Ishmael.
4. Verses 5-6: "Neither shall thy name any more be called Abram, but thy name shall be Abraham; for a father of many nations have I made thee. And I will make thee exceeding fruitful, and I will make nations of thee, and kings shall come out of thee."
 - a. The covenant was intended to include Abraham and his descendants. It was not intended to be a never-ending covenant with Israel to the end of time but "throughout their generations" (ASV). According to the scholars, the word translated "everlasting" does not always mean eternal or never-ending, but rather "age-lasting." It embraces all the period of time under consideration. "If that period is to be endless, then 'everlasting' means endless. But, if the period is not endless, then 'everlasting' as it relates to that period, simply embraces all of it" (ALC, 1980, p.264).
 - b. This everlasting covenant with Israel, in the light of New Testament information, was simply to last throughout the time period of Israel's special standing as God's chosen people. When Christ came, he fulfilled the Old Law which gave Israel that special standing, took it out of the way, and inaugurated an entirely new system, based on gospel obedience, not on fleshly kinship to Abraham (Matt. 3:1-12; Col. 2:14; Eph. 2:11-22; Heb. 8; 10:9-12).
5. Verse 8: "And I will give unto thee, and to thy seed after thee, the land wherein thou art a stranger, all the land of Canaan, for an everlasting possession; and I will be their God."
 - a. Many religionists think that Israel received in this promise a perpetual title to Palestine; and that by virtue of this statement, they have an undeniable right to possess it even today. However, this promise was conditioned on Israel's keeping the terms of the covenant which included all the details of the Law of Moses.
 - b. Land promised:
 - 1) Genesis 15:18: "In the same day the LORD made a covenant with Abram, saying, Unto thy seed have I given this land, from the river of Egypt unto the great river, the river Euphrates."
 - 2) Genesis 17:8: "And I will give unto thee, and to thy seed after thee, the land wherein thou art a stranger, all the land of Canaan, for an everlasting possession; and I will be their God."
 - 3) Numbers 34:1-12: "And the LORD spake unto Moses, saying, Command the children of Israel, and say unto them, When ye come into the land of Canaan; (this *is* the land that shall fall unto you for an inheritance, *even* the land of Canaan with the coasts thereof:) Then your south quarter shall be from the wilderness of Zin along by the coast of Edom, and your south border shall be the outmost coast of the salt sea eastward: And your border shall turn from the south to the ascent of Akrabbim, and pass on to Zin: and the going forth thereof shall be from the south to Kadeshbarnea, and shall go on to Hazaraddar, and pass on to Azmon: And the border shall fetch a compass from Azmon unto the river of Egypt, and the goings out of it shall be at the sea. And *as for* the western border, ye shall even have the great sea for a border: this shall be your west border. And this shall be your north border: from the great sea ye shall point out for you mount Hor: From mount Hor ye shall point out *your border* unto the entrance of Hamath; and the goings forth of the border shall be to Zedad: And the border shall go on to Ziphron, and the goings out of it shall be at Hazarenan: this shall be your north border. And ye shall point out your east border from Hazarenan to Shepham: And the coast shall go down from Shepham to Riblah, on the east side of Ain; and the border shall descend, and shall reach unto the side of the sea of Chinnereth eastward: And the border shall go down to Jordan, and the goings out of it shall be at the salt sea: this shall be your land with the coasts thereof round about."
 - c. Land promise was fulfilled:
 - 1) Joshua 21:43-45: "And the LORD gave unto Israel all the land which he sware to give unto their fathers; and they possessed it, and dwelt therein. And the LORD gave them rest round about, according to all

that he swore unto their fathers: and there stood not a man of all their enemies before them; the LORD delivered all their enemies into their hand. There failed not ought of any good thing which the LORD had spoken unto the house of Israel; all came to pass."

- 2) Joshua 23:14-16: "And, behold, this day I *am* going the way of all the earth: and ye know in all your hearts and in all your souls, that not one thing hath failed of all the good things which the LORD your God spake concerning you; all are come to pass unto you, *and* not one thing hath failed thereof. Therefore it shall come to pass, *that* as all good things are come upon you, which the LORD your God promised you; so shall the LORD bring upon you all evil things, until he have destroyed you from off this good land which the LORD your God hath given you. When ye have transgressed the covenant of the LORD your God, which he commanded you, and have gone and served other gods, and bowed yourselves to them; then shall the anger of the LORD be kindled against you, and ye shall perish quickly from off the good land which he hath given unto you."
 - 3) 2 Samuel 8:3: "David smote also Hadadezer, the son of Rehob, king of Zobah, as he went to recover his border at the river Euphrates."
 - 4) 1 Kings 4:21: "And Solomon reigned over all kingdoms from the river unto the land of the Philistines, and unto the border of Egypt: they brought presents, and served Solomon all the days of his life."
 - 5) 2 Chronicles 9:26: "And he reigned over all the kings from the river even unto the land of the Philistines, and to the border of Egypt."
- d. Land promise was conditional:
- 1) Deuteronomy 4:25-26: "When thou shalt beget children, and children's children, and ye shall have remained long in the land, and shall corrupt *yourselves*, and make a graven image, *or* the likeness of any *thing*, and shall do evil in the sight of the LORD thy God, to provoke him to anger: I call heaven and earth to witness against you this day, that ye shall soon utterly perish from off the land whereunto ye go over Jordan to possess it; ye shall not prolong *your* days upon it, but shall utterly be destroyed."
 - 2) Joshua 23:15-16: "Therefore it shall come to pass, *that* as all good things are come upon you, which the LORD your God promised you; so shall the LORD bring upon you all evil things, until he have destroyed you from off this good land which the LORD your God hath given you. When ye have transgressed the covenant of the LORD your God, which he commanded you, and have gone and served other gods, and bowed yourselves to them; then shall the anger of the LORD be kindled against you, and ye shall perish quickly from off the good land which he hath given unto you."
 - 3) Ezekiel 16:48-49: "*As* I live, saith the Lord GOD, Sodom thy sister hath not done, she nor her daughters, as thou hast done, thou and thy daughters. Behold, this was the iniquity of thy sister Sodom, pride, fulness of bread, and abundance of idleness was in her and in her daughters, neither did she strengthen the hand of the poor and needy."

LAND PROMISED	FULFILLED	CONDITIONAL
Gen. 15:18	Josh. 21:43-45	Deut. 4:25-26
Gen. 17:8	Josh. 23:14-16	Josh. 23:15-16
Num. 34:1-12	2 Sam. 8:3; 1 Kings 4:21; 2 Chr. 9:26	Ezek. 16:48-49

- e. Israel ceased to be God's chosen people when the New Testament took effect. Today, God's chosen people is "spiritual Israel" (the church of Christ).
- 1) Romans 2:28-29: "For he is not a Jew, which is one outwardly; neither *is that* circumcision, which is outward in the flesh: But he *is* a Jew, which is one inwardly; and circumcision *is that* of the heart, in the spirit, *and* not in the letter; whose praise *is* not of men, but of God."
 - 2) Galatians 1:1-3: "Paul, an apostle, (not of men, neither by man, but by Jesus Christ, and God the Father, who raised him from the dead;) And all the brethren which are with me, unto the churches of Galatia: Grace *be* to you and peace from God the Father, and *from* our Lord Jesus Christ."
 - 3) Galatians 6:16: "And as many as walk according to this rule, peace *be* on them, and mercy, and upon the Israel of God."
- f. "Whatever the meaning of everlasting, Israel forfeited the promise in its entirety by rebelling against

God....Israel has no more right to the land of Palestine than the Arabs, or the French or the Germans" (Coffman, pp.227f). When the majority of the Jews rejected Christ and the gospel (cf. John 8; Acts 4:11-12; 28:22-29; Matt. 13:15-17), they were cast out of their land (Matt. 23:36-39; 24:1-35), which occurred in A.D. 70. Only a small part of the Jews have lived in Palestine since that time. Compare: "Behold therefore the goodness and severity of God: on them which fell, severity; but toward thee, goodness, if thou continue in *his* goodness: otherwise thou also shalt be cut off" (Rom. 11:22).

B. Genesis 17:9-14: The Token of Circumcision.

1. Verse 9: "And God said unto Abraham, Thou shalt keep my covenant therefore, thou, and thy seed after thee in their generations."
 - a. Another statement of the conditional nature of the covenant: Abraham and his seed were to keep their obligations under this covenant. This was to continue "throughout their generations" (ASV), i.e., as long as they remained God's chosen people.
 - b. God never intended for this covenant to be eternal.
 - 1) Genesis 49:10: "The sceptre shall not depart from Judah, nor a lawgiver from between his feet, until Shiloh come; and unto him *shall* the gathering of the people *be*."
 - 2) Isaiah 2:2-4: "And it shall come to pass in the last days, *that* the mountain of the Lord's house shall be established in the top of the mountains, and shall be exalted above the hills; and all nations shall flow unto it. And many people shall go and say, Come ye, and let us go up to the mountain of the LORD, to the house of the God of Jacob; and he will teach us of his ways, and we will walk in his paths: for out of Zion shall go forth the law, and the word of the LORD from Jerusalem. And he shall judge among the nations, and shall rebuke many people: and they shall beat their swords into plowshares, and their spears into pruninghooks: nation shall not lift up sword against nation, neither shall they learn war any more."
 - 3) Jeremiah 31:31-34: "Behold, the days come, saith the LORD, that I will make a new covenant with the house of Israel, and with the house of Judah: Not according to the covenant that I made with their fathers in the day *that* I took them by the hand to bring them out of the land of Egypt; which my covenant they brake, although I was an husband unto them, saith the LORD: But this *shall be* the covenant that I will make with the house of Israel; After those days, saith the LORD, I will put my law in their inward parts, and write it in their hearts; and will be their God, and they shall be my people. And they shall teach no more every man his neighbour, and every man his brother, saying, Know the LORD: for they shall all know me, from the least of them unto the greatest of them, saith the LORD: for I will forgive their iniquity, and I will remember their sin no more."
 - 4) Hebrews 8: "Now of the things which we have spoken *this is* the sum: We have such a high priest, who is set on the right hand of the throne of the Majesty in the heavens; A minister of the sanctuary, and of the true tabernacle, which the Lord pitched, and not man. For every high priest is ordained to offer gifts and sacrifices: wherefore *it is* of necessity that this man have somewhat also to offer. For if he were on earth, he should not be a priest, seeing that there are priests that offer gifts according to the law: Who serve unto the example and shadow of heavenly things, as Moses was admonished of God when he was about to make the tabernacle: for, See, saith he, *that* thou make all things according to the pattern showed to thee in the mount. But now hath he obtained a more excellent ministry, by how much also he is the mediator of a better covenant, which was established upon better promises. For if that first *covenant* had been faultless, then should no place have been sought for the second. For finding fault with them, he saith, Behold, the days come, saith the Lord, when I will make a new covenant with the house of Israel and with the house of Judah: Not according to the covenant that I made with their fathers in the day when I took them by the hand to lead them out of the land of Egypt; because they continued not in my covenant, and I regarded them not, saith the Lord. For this *is* the covenant that I will make with the house of Israel after those days, saith the Lord; I will put my laws into their mind, and write them in their hearts: and I will be to them a God, and they shall be to me a people: And they shall not teach every man his neighbour, and every man his brother, saying, Know the Lord: for all shall know me, from the least to the greatest. For I will be merciful to their unrighteousness, and their sins and their iniquities will I remember no more. In that he saith, A new *covenant*, he hath made the first old. Now that which decayeth and waxeth old *is* ready to vanish away."
 - 5) Galatians 3:16-19: "Now to Abraham and his seed were the promises made. He saith not, And to seeds, as of many; but as of one, And to thy seed, which is Christ. And this I say, *that* the covenant, that was confirmed before of God in Christ, the law, which was four hundred and thirty years after, cannot

disannul, that it should make the promise of none effect. For if the inheritance *be* of the law, *it is* no more of promise: but God gave *it* to Abraham by promise. Wherefore then *serveth* the law? It was added because of transgressions, till the seed should come to whom the promise was made; *and it was* ordained by angels in the hand of a mediator."

2. Verses 10-12: "This *is* my covenant, which ye shall keep, between me and you and thy seed after thee; Every man child among you shall be circumcised. And ye shall circumcise the flesh of your foreskin; and it shall be a token of the covenant betwixt me and you. And he that is eight days old shall be circumcised among you, every man child in your generations, he that is born in the house, or bought with money of any stranger, which *is* not of thy seed."
 - a. Circumcision was not the covenant, but a token of the covenant. The Jews later exalted it to the status of the covenant itself (Coffman, pp.228f). "Fleshly circumcision marked an individual as belonging to Abraham either by birth or purchase (vs. 12-13), which he had to do in order to be eligible to inherit the temporal promises made to Abraham. Now that Christ has come, of the seed of Abraham, and is the ultimate seed through whom all nations are to be blessed, and the covenant has been spiritualized, fleshly circumcision is not required. But spiritual circumcision is. The emphasis of that truth was a considerable burden to the preaching and writing of the apostle Paul, found to a greater or lesser degree in nearly all his epistles. 'For he is not a Jew who is one outwardly; neither is that circumcision which is outward in the flesh: but he is a Jew who is one inwardly; and circumcision is that of the heart, in the spirit not in the letter; whose praise is not of men, but of God. (Rom. 2:28-29)" (ALC, 1980. p.264).
 - b. Galatians 5:1-6: "...Behold, I Paul say unto you, that if ye be circumcised, Christ shall profit you nothing. For I testify again to every man that is circumcised, that he is a debtor to do the whole law. Christ is become of no effect unto you, whosoever of you are justified by the law; ye are fallen from grace....For in Jesus Christ neither circumcision availeth any thing, nor uncircumcision; but faith which worketh by love."
 - c. Some scholars have claimed that on the 8th day after birth, the day circumcision was to be done, a clotting factor is in the baby's blood. The new mother was considered unclean until the 8th day; and lambs, etc., could be offered in sacrifice only after 7 days.
 - 1) Leviticus 12:2-3: "Speak unto the children of Israel, saying, If a woman have conceived seed, and born a man child: then she shall be unclean seven days; according to the days of the separation for her infirmity shall she be unclean. And in the eighth day the flesh of his foreskin shall be circumcised."
 - 2) Leviticus 22:27: "When a bullock, or a sheep, or a goat, is brought forth, then it shall be seven days under the dam; and from the eighth day and thenceforth it shall be accepted for an offering made by fire unto the LORD."
 - d. Coffman points out some similarities between Old Testament circumcision and New Testament baptism (pp.229f):
 - 1) It was mandatory for all males who belonged to Abram's posterity; baptism is mandatory for all who wish to become Christians, both male and female.
 - 2) One who refused to comply with circumcision was rejected and cut off from God's people; those who reject baptism are deprived of membership in God's family.
 - 3) It did not take the place of obedience to God's other commandments; baptism does not relieve one of his Christian duties.
 - 4) Circumcision stood at the gateway of entrance by birth into the Abrahamic covenant; baptism puts one into God's family.
 - 5) There was a "cutting off" in circumcision; there is a "putting away" of the old man of sin in baptism.
 - e. Coffman also points out some differences:
 - 1) Circumcision was for males only; baptism is for male and female.
 - 2) Circumcision was performed on infants 8 days old; baptism is administered only to one who is old enough to have sinned, to believe, repent and confess faith in Christ.
 - 3) Circumcision had nothing to do with forgiveness of sins; baptism is for that very purpose.
 - 4) In circumcision, the initiative was taken by someone other than the individual; in baptism, the individual must make the choice himself and initiate the action.
 - 5) Abraham was justified apart from circumcision; no one can be justified today apart from baptism. "Paul indeed compared circumcision and baptism, but in that comparison, the necessity of putting off the old man with his sinful deeds was the point under consideration" (p.230).
 - 6) Circumcision was merely a "token" of the covenant, whereas baptism into Christ is an essential element of the Christian covenant itself. Circumcision was only a token, but baptism is more than that; and it is

never referred to as a "sign" or "a token" in the Bible, despite the frequency with which human writers use such expressions.

- f. Comments on Colossians 2:11-13: "In whom also ye are circumcised with the circumcision made without hands, in putting off the body of the sins of the flesh by the circumcision of Christ: Buried with him in baptism, wherein also ye are risen with *him* through the faith of the operation of God, who hath raised him from the dead. And you, being dead in your sins and the uncircumcision of your flesh, hath he quickened together with him, having forgiven you all trespasses."
 - 1) *Circumcised with a circumcision not made with hands.* Under the Law, this was a physical operation; under the gospel, it is a spiritual circumcision.
 - 2) *In the putting off.* As we take off and discard old, worn out clothing, and don new apparel, so we are said to put off the old man with his deeds, and put on the new man which is renewed in knowledge after the image of Christ (Col. 3:9,10,12).
 - 3) *The body of the sins of the flesh.* The physical body is the physical abode and instrument which makes it possible for us to operate in this material world. While the spirit is often willing to serve God, the fleshly lusts of the body are often opposed to obedience. The body often leads us into sin, hence it is referred to as "sinful flesh" (Rom. 8:3) and "body of sin" (Rom. 6:6). "Circumcision is only the outward removal, by human hands, of a small part of that body which to so many is an instrument by which sin holds them captive" (Shepherd, p.279). Christians have determined to put aside the lusts of the flesh; they are committed to keeping the lusts of the flesh under the control of Christ (by the gospel); hence, in a manner of speaking, they have cut off and cast aside the sinful appetites of the body.
 - a) 1 Corinthians 6:19-20: "What? know ye not that your body is the temple of the Holy Ghost *which is* in you, which ye have of God, and ye are not your own? For ye are bought with a price: therefore glorify God in your body, and in your spirit, which are God's."
 - b) 1 Corinthians 9:27: "But I keep under my body, and bring *it* into subjection: lest that by any means, when I have preached to others, I myself should be a castaway."
 - 4) *In the circumcision of Christ.* When we obey the gospel, Christ cuts off the guilt of our past sins; he gives us guidance and encouragement in living a purer life in the future. Literal circumcision under the Law was a type of the true circumcision under the gospel.
 - 5) *Buried with him in baptism.* Paul now turns from figurative to literal language. The process he figuratively described in verse 11 as "circumcision not made with hands" (ASV), he describes as baptism in verse 12. Baptism is the point at which our past guilt is removed and we enter Christ, We are then separated from the guilt and practice of sin.
 - 6) *Wherein also ye are risen with him.* "Raised" is taken from the action of coming up out of the water. As Christ was buried following his death on the cross, so are we buried in water after we have died to the practice of sin (repentance); and as he was raised up to a new life from the grave, so we are raised up with Christ from our watery grave to live a new kind of life. We have this new life because we are now in union with Christ—we have been baptized into him.
 - 7) *Through the faith of the operation of God.* The definite article "the" is in the Greek text before "faith" which in other places means the reference is to the gospel, "the faith once for all delivered to the saints" (Jude 3, ASV). The ASV does not include the article in Colossians 2:12; the KJV includes it. If the article is to be excluded, then our personal faith is being emphasized ("we are raised with him through our faith in the working of God"); if the article is included, the gospel system is stressed (we are raised with him through the working of God as he operates using the faith). The former is smoother, but the latter is the better view. God worked to bring about Christ's resurrection; he is involved also in our being raised up from the grave of baptism. Baptism is effective only if it is preceded by faith in this operation of God.
 - a) Mark 16:15-16: "And he said unto them, Go ye into all the world, and preach the gospel to every creature. He that believeth and is baptized shall be saved; but he that believeth not shall be damned."
 - b) John 3:16: "For God so loved the world, that he gave his only begotten Son, that whosoever believeth in him should not perish, but have everlasting life."
 - c) Hebrews 11:6: "But without faith *it is* impossible to please *him*: for he that cometh to God must believe that he is, and *that* he is a rewarder of them that diligently seek him."
 - 8) *And you, being dead in your sins and the uncircumcision of your flesh.* The Colossians were Gentiles and uncircumcised. They were spiritually dead.
 - 9) *Hath he quickened together with him, having forgiven you all trespasses.* They had been raised up from

baptism and made alive and forgiven. In the next verse, Paul shows that the Law of Moses had been taken out of the way when Christ died. The point overall is to refute the Judaizers who were trying to get the Gentile saints to be circumcised and follow the Law. Circumcision was no longer valid, for the Old Testament was not now in effect. The circumcision of the gospel is spiritual; it involves the removal of the practice and guilt of sin which is accomplished in faith, repentance and baptism, followed by a new way of life.

3. Verse 13: "He that is born in thy house, and he that is bought with thy money, must needs be circumcised: and my covenant shall be in your flesh for an everlasting covenant."
 - a. Not only must Abraham be circumcised (verse 10), and every male descendant of Abram (verses 11-12), but also the male child born of Abram's servants, and those Abram bought.
 - b. This circumcision would be a sign in their flesh of the covenant between God and Abraham.
4. Verse 14: "And the uncircumcised man child whose flesh of his foreskin is not circumcised, that soul shall be cut off from his people; he hath broken my covenant."
 - a. The male who was not circumcised would be cut off from his people; by this omission he came to be in violation of the covenant.
 - b. The initial responsibility for circumcising an infant was with the father, but after that child had grown to know about the covenant, it became his obligation. A failure to comply resulted in being separated from the holy descendants of Abraham.

C. Genesis 17:15-19: The Birth of Isaac Foretold.

1. Verses 15-16: "And God said unto Abraham, As for Sarai thy wife, thou shalt not call her name Sarai, but Sarah *shall* her name *be*. And I will bless her, and give thee a son also of her: yea, I will bless her, and she shall be *a mother* of nations; kings of people shall be of her."
 - a. Sarai is renamed "Sarah." God supplied the names for Abraham, Sarai, Ishmael, and Isaac. There is some uncertainty regarding the exact meaning of her names. "Sarai" may come from the name of a barren mountain. The name "Sarah" means "Princess" according to some scholars. The new name may also mean "mother of nations" for this is predicted of her following her name-change (vs. 16).
 - b. God now promises for the first time that Sarah was to be the mother of the promised seed. She would in fact be the mother of nations of people and of kings. She had despaired of having any child at all. Her doubts and fears were to be for nought. She enjoys a unique place in history: "Even as Sara obeyed Abraham, calling him lord: whose daughters ye are, as long as ye do well, and are not afraid with any amazement" (1 Pet. 3:6; cf. Gal. 4:21-31).
2. Verse 17: "Then Abraham fell upon his face, and laughed, and said in his heart, Shall *a child* be born unto him that is an hundred years old? and shall Sarah, that is ninety years old, bear?"
 - a. Abraham fell upon his face and laughed—perhaps in amazement. "The promise was so immensely great, that he sank in adoration to the ground, and so immensely paradoxical, that he could not help laughing" (Keil, p.225).
 - b. Abraham's laugh was not a laugh of doubt or unbelief, for that would be in conflict with Romans 4:19-22: "And being not weak in faith, be considered not his own body now dead, when he was about an hundred years old, neither yet the deadness of Sarah's womb: he staggered not at the promise of God through unbelief; but was strong in faith, giving glory to God; and being persuaded that, what he had promised, he was able also to perform. And therefore it was imputed to him for righteousness."
 - c. Abraham was 99 at the time (verse 1); in saying he was 100, he was allowing for the time necessary for the child to be conceived and born. These thoughts were not openly expressed by Abraham, but only said within himself.
3. Verses 18-19: "And Abraham said unto God, O that Ishmael might live before thee! And God said, Sarah thy wife shall bear thee a son indeed; and thou shalt call his name Isaac: and I will establish my covenant with him for an everlasting covenant, *and* with his seed after him."
 - a. "If by 'living' before God, Abraham meant that the covenant with himself and his seed should be established with Ishmael instead of Isaac or even conjointly with him, no. But, if he meant that he should be blessed in some other yet significant way, yes. Probably Abraham meant the latter, for God said, 'And as for Ishmael, I have heard thee: behold, I have blessed him...and I will make him a great nation. As previously noted, the Arab world traces its lineage back to Ishmael' (ALC, 1980, p, 270). Ishmael was thirteen years old at the time.
 - b. God again promised that Sarah would bear a son; this son was to be named Isaac. The name means "he laughs" or "laughter." "When God designated 'Isaac' as the name of the son Sarah was to bear unto

Abraham, he was memorializing Abraham's joy at the news that Sarah was to have a son. Fortunate is the child whose parents desired his birth." A preacher was adopted as a small child; some of his little playmates were tormenting him with this fact. His mother was about to step in and defend her son, but stopped when she heard him say: "Yes, but my parents picked me out personally; your parents got you by chance!"

D. Genesis 17:20-22: Ishmael is Blessed but Excluded From Being an Heir of the Covenant.

1. Verse 20: "And as for Ishmael, I have heard thee: Behold, I have blessed him, and will make him fruitful, and will multiply him exceedingly; twelve princes shall he beget, and I will make him a great nation."
 - a. God said he had heard Abraham's request in Ishmael's behalf (cf. verse 18). This verse indicates the meaning of verse 18, namely that Abraham was making a request for his son Ishmael to be blessed by God. God had already decided what blessings Ishmael was to receive. He would be very fruitful; he would have an extensive offspring; twelve princes would be among his descendants.
 - b. Notice that Isaac would beget kings, but Ishmael would beget princes. Ishmael was born of a bond woman; Isaac of a free woman. Isaac would be the son of promise (21:12); he was called Abraham's "only begotten son" [*monogenes*] in Hebrews 11:17. Isaac was the only son of promise; a unique, one-of-a-kind son. But because of his relationship with Abraham, Ishmael was to be richly blessed.
2. Verse 21: "But my covenant will I establish with Isaac, which Sarah shall bear unto thee at this set time in the next year."
 - a. God specifically states that the covenant would continue through Isaac, not Ishmael. "For the first time, God set the time when the son would be born. We may wonder why God made Abraham wait such a long time for the fulfillment of the glorious promise; but it was absolutely imperative that the father of the Chosen People should truly believe God and know of a certainty that God's promises would be fulfilled, no matter how impossible and unreasonable they might have seemed from the human standpoint" (Coffman, p.232).
 - b. Sarah would bear Isaac at "this set time in the next year."
3. Verse 22: "And he left off talking with him, and God went up from Abraham."
 - a. God concluded his conversation with Abraham. Leupold: "The interview is definitely terminated by God. Whether now Abraham saw Him who appeared to Him actually ascend upward, or whether the correct statement that God ascended upward from the earth is merely made by the author Moses as a more highly descriptive way of telling of God's departure, matters little. God's abode is higher than the earth, and the Scriptures consistently describe it as being thus: therefore—'God went up.'"
 - b. The exact nature of this communication is not stated, but we are told that God went up from Abraham. It appears to have been in a more direct means rather than in a vision as in the previous chapter.

E. Genesis 17:23-27: Abraham Immediately Obeys God's Command Regarding Circumcision.

1. Verse 23: "And Abraham took Ishmael his son, and all that were born in his house, and all that were bought with his money, every male among the men of Abraham's house; and circumcised the flesh of their foreskin in the selfsame day, as God had said unto him."
 - a. "The significant thing revealed here is that Abraham obeyed God immediately and completely. There were no short-cuts or exemptions; he did it all exactly as God commanded him....In the days of Abraham, (circumcision) was performed with a flint knife, showing how close that era was to what is called the Stone Age" (Coffman, p.233).
 - b. "Some have criticized the foregoing language (vv. 22-27) as being needlessly repetitive. But notice the distinctive feature of each statement: (1) Circumcision was administered to Abraham and all his household immediately, the self-same day that God enjoined it. (2) The respective ages of Abraham and Ishmael at the time of circumcision are given. (3) The entire household of Abraham were circumcised simultaneously with him. It is characteristic of Hebrew speech to repeat with added details" (ALC, 1980, pp.270f).
 - c. We are told that the operation of circumcision is painful and causes soreness for several days. "And unto Hamor and unto Shechem his son hearkened all that went out of the gate of his city; and every male was circumcised, all that went out of the gate of his city. And it came to pass on the third day, when they were sore, that two of the sons of Jacob, Simeon and Levi, Dinah's brethren, took each man his sword, and came upon the city boldly, and slew all the males. And they slew Hamor and Shechem his son with the edge of the sword, and took Dinah out of Shechem's house, and went out" (Gen. 34:24-26).
2. Verses 24-25: "And Abraham *was* ninety years old and nine, when he was circumcised in the flesh of his foreskin. And Ishmael his son *was* thirteen years old, when he was circumcised in the flesh of his foreskin."
 - a. Abraham was ninety-nine years old and Ishmael was thirteen years old at the time these activities took place.
 - b. "Abraham was circumcised as a token in his flesh of the covenant God had made with him and his seed.

And circumcision of the male members of his household marked them as belonging to him either by birth or purchase, to enable them to be eligible to inherit the temporal blessings promised to Abraham and his seed. For 'the uncircumcised male who is not circumcised in the flesh of his foreskin, that soul shall be cut off from his people; he hath broken my covenant' (17:14). The uncircumcised were to be excommunicated" (ALC, 1980, p. 271).

3. Verses 26-27: "In the selfsame day was Abraham circumcised, and Ishmael his son. And all the men of his house, born in the house, and bought with money of the stranger, were circumcised with him."
 - a. All the male members of Abraham's household, a considerable number indeed when we recall that he had had 318 hired servants who went with him in the rescue of Lot in chapter 14. Several years had passed and undoubtedly there was a much larger number of men, boys and male infants now. These were all circumcised the same day, and evidently on the very day in which God had communicated with Abraham. Perhaps many *surgeons* were involved in this great operation.
 - b. "It has been observed that the rite of circumcision was of course attended with pain and something approaching personal humiliation, and yet the self-abasement and pain were joyfully assented to in view of the coming gift of the covenant. And it has been remarked that so should Christians delightfully accept tribulation and any sort of bodily indignity that God may impose, considering them as nothing in comparison with the eternal weight of glory. The apostle Paul declared: 'For I reckon that the sufferings of this present time are not worthy to be compared with the glory which shall be revealed to us-ward' (Rom. 8:18)" (ALC, 1980, p.271).
 - c. Second Corinthians 4:16-18 affirms a similar truth regarding the short-lived nature of earthly trials while heaven and its glories are never-ending: "For which cause we faint not; but though our outward man perish, yet the inward *man* is renewed day by day. For our light affliction, which is but for a moment, worketh for us a far more exceeding *and* eternal weight of glory; While we look not at the things which are seen, but at the things which are not seen: for the things which are seen *are* temporal; but the things which are not seen *are* eternal."
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GENESIS 18

A. Introduction and Background Information.

1. "Having been received into the covenant with God through the rite of circumcision, Abraham was shortly afterwards honoured by being allowed to receive and entertain the Lord and two angels in his tent. This fresh manifestation of God had a double purpose, viz., to establish Sarah's faith in the promise that she should bear a son in her old age (vv. 1-15), and to announce the judgment on Sodom and Gomorrah (vv. 16-33)" (Keil, p.228).
2. "The visit of the Lord and two angels to Abraham has the side effect of 'revealing an additional characteristic of Abraham, in his hospitality.' Regarding the time when the events of these first fifteen verses took place, it was no doubt not very long after the appearance of the Lord to Abraham in the previous chapter" (Coffman, p.236).

B. Genesis 18:1-5: The Three Heavenly Visitors.

1. Verse 1: "And the LORD appeared unto him in the plains of Mamre: and he sat in the tent door in the heat of the day."
 - a. Abraham was still living in the plains of Mamre, an area that belonged to his good friend Mamre who had assisted him in rescuing Lot (Chapter 14). The word "plains" is translated "oaks" in the ASV.
 - b. Abraham's encampment may have been in an oak grove which pertained to Mamre. It was mid-day, and Abraham was sitting at the entrance of his tent. It has been customary in many countries through the centuries to have a period of rest at this time, following a noon meal. Where he sat was likely a cool place.
2. Verse 2: "And he lift up his eyes and looked, and, lo, three men stood by him: and when he saw *them*, he ran to meet them from the tent door, and bowed himself toward the ground."
 - a. He observed three strange men standing nearby. These men Abraham took to be strangers traveling through the land. Being the hospitable man that he was, the patriarch ran to them and bowed himself before them on the ground in the Eastern custom. These three had every appearance of being men: in their form, in their eating, in their dress. The Lord ate with the disciples after his resurrection: "And they gave him a piece of a broiled fish, and of an honeycomb. And he took *it*, and did eat before them" (Lk. 24:42-43).
 - b. "It would appear that Abraham was not, at first, aware of the heavenly status of his guests. Hebrews 13:2 is apparently a reference to this very event; and there it is stated that the host entertained 'angels unaware.' If this is the case, we may not interpret Abraham's bowing himself to the earth as an act of worship, but as a warm friendly greeting only, after the manner and customs of the times" (Coffman, p.236).
 - c. These men turned out to be heavenly beings in human form. One of the three is spoken of as "the Lord" (verses 13,17,22,26,30,33), The other two are called "angels" (19:1). The spokesman for the three was the one called "Lord," who was likely Christ.
 - d. Abraham was not content to merely invite them by calling aloud, but ran to them to greet them warmly and invite them to eat. He did not eat with them, but rather stood by as the host while they ate (vs. 8).
3. Verses 3-5: "And said, My Lord, if now I have found favour in thy sight, pass not away, I pray thee, from thy servant: Let a little water, I pray you, be fetched, and wash your feet, and rest yourselves under the tree: And I will fetch a morsel of bread, and comfort ye your hearts; after that ye shall pass on: for therefore are ye come to your servant. And they said, So do, as thou hast said."
 - a. "This language is extravagant by our standards; but here it was the Oriental's way of displaying every courtesy and honor to strangers..." Coffman, p.236)
 - b. "In those ancient times shoes such as ours were not in use; and the foot was protected by sandals or soles, which fastened round the foot with straps. It was therefore a great refreshment in so hot a country to get the feet washed at the end of a day's journey; and this is the first thing that Abraham proposes" (Clarke, pp.118f). Christ did not introduce footwashing at the last supper (John 13), but made use of a custom that had been practiced for centuries as an act of courtesy and hospitality, in order to teach the 12 a lesson on humility. The text does not definitely say that Abraham washed their feet, but since he fulfilled the other parts of his offer, it may be supposed that this hospitable act was also administered.
 - 1) Genesis 19:2: "And he said, Behold now, my lords, turn in, I pray you, into your servant's house, and tarry all night, and wash your feet, and ye shall rise up early, and go on your ways. And they said, Nay; but we will abide in the street all night."
 - 2) Genesis 24:32: "And the man came into the house: and he ungirded his camels, and gave straw and provender for the camels, and water to wash his feet, and the men's feet that *were* with him."

3) Genesis 43:24: "And the man brought the men into Joseph's house, and gave *them* water, and they washed their feet; and he gave their asses provender."

- c. They were invited to rest under the tree while he brought water and had food prepared; then they could continue their journey. He spoke of a "little water" and a "morsel of bread." By using such words he minimized his contribution to their refreshment. They accepted his kind and enthusiastic hospitality.
- d. By this means they would "comfort" their heart; they would be strengthened and refreshed by eating and drinking (Judges 19:5). "The eating of material food on the part of these heavenly beings was not in appearance only, but was really eating; an act which may be attributed to the corporeality assumed, and is to be regarded as analogous to the eating on the part of the risen and glorified Christ (Luke 24:41 sqq.), although the miracle still remains physiologically incomprehensible" (Keil, p.228).
- e. It seems that Abraham still did not know their true identities, for had he known, he could realize that heavenly beings have no need of earthly sustenance. This makes his hospitality all the more significant.

C. Genesis 18:6-8: The Three Heavenly Guests Entertained.

- 1. Verse 6: "And Abraham hastened into the tent unto Sarah, and said, Make ready quickly three measures of fine meal, knead *it*, and make cakes upon the hearth."
 - a. It might take an hour to prepare such a meal as Abraham proposed. Thus he made haste to get it done. He quickly told Sarah to take three measures of fine meal and make cakes (bread) upon the hearth.
 - b. Abraham had many servants (perhaps several hundred). It is likely that Sarah had the bread-making done by servants just as Abraham had a young man to dress the calf.
 - c. The three measures of meal have been estimated to be equal about 13 quarts, more than three gallons. A great deal of bread would have been made from this amount of flour.
 - d. "When the hearth is strongly heated with the fire that has been kindled on it, they remove the coals, sweep off the ashes, and lay on the bread, and then cover it with the hot cinders" (Clarke, p.119). This, according to Clarke, was the way people in the east baked bread on the hearth.
- 2. Verse 7: "And Abraham ran unto the herd, and fetched a calf tender and good, and gave *it* unto a young man; and he hastened to dress it."
 - a. Abraham selected a tender and good calf to be prepared and cooked. He had called for a large amount of freshly-made bread to be prepared from fine meal; the meat would also be the best available.
 - b. He did not scrimp in preparing a feast for his honored guests, either in what he fed them or in the amount he prepared for them.
- 3. Verse 8: "And he took butter, and milk, and the calf which he had dressed, and set *it* before them; and he stood by them under the tree, and they did eat."
 - a. He also provided them butter and milk. The butter is said to have been curdled milk, or "curds." Coffman describes it as yogurt (p. 238). Curds and milk and bread were common foods. "But the flesh of animals was a rarity, said to be served only on special occasions. Compare the killing of the fatted calf upon the return of the prodigal in one of Jesus' stories (Luke 15:11-32)" (ALC, 1980, p.276).
 - b. The guests ate. This was not for nourishment but to demonstrate that they were not mere apparitions. Jesus did the same following his resurrection.
 - c. These guests were in the material form of men, but this was not their real heavenly nature. "But this and other theophanies, as such visual appearances of God are called, may be thought of as forerunners of God being manifest in actual flesh in the person of Jesus Christ centuries later" (ibid.).

D. Genesis 18:9-15: Sarah is Promised a Son.

- 1. Verses 9-11: "And they said unto him, Where *is* Sarah thy wife? And he said, Behold, in the tent. And he said, I will certainly return unto thee according to the time of life; and, lo, Sarah thy wife shall have a son. And Sarah heard *it* in the tent door, which *was* behind him. Now Abraham and Sarah *were* old *and* well stricken in age; *and* it ceased to be with Sarah after the manner of women."
 - a. The guests asked of Sarah's whereabouts. They, being heavenly beings, were not asking for information. Their request shows they were not mere men: they knew Abraham and Sarah, their relationship as man and wife, and called Sarah by name. She was in the tent, behind the Speaker.
 - b. "Up to this point, the identity of Abraham's guests could have been unknown; but, with this interchange, both Sarah, and certainly Abraham, knew the supernatural nature of their guests. It had been only a short while since the name had been given to Sarah, yet 'He' knew it; also 'He' knew of their desire for a son, and apparently also, that God had promised that Sarah would be the mother" (Coffman, p.239).
 - c. Their asking for Sarah was a good way to bring up the message they had for her. She and Abraham could know, since the guests obviously knew intimate details about them both, that these were heavenly beings.
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This would make their words more credible.

- d. Notice that the initial question is attributed to the three; but in verse ten, one of the three is the spokesman. This Spokesman assures Abraham that "I" will make it possible for Sarah to conceive and bear a son. The pronouns "he" and "him" in this verse are obviously in reference to the one later called "the Lord."
 - e. Both Abraham and Sarah were well stricken in age; Sarah was beyond the child-bearing years. She was 89 and he was 99. There was no natural way for her to conceive.
2. Verses 12-13: "Therefore Sarah laughed within herself, saying, After I am waxed old shall I have pleasure, my lord being old also? And the LORD said unto Abraham, Wherefore did Sarah laugh, saying, Shall I of a surety bear a child, which am old?"
- a. From a human view point it seemed absolutely impossible for Sarah to have a child. When Sarah overheard this promise of the Heavenly Being, she laughed. This was a natural outburst; it occurred within herself and was not audible. The words she said were also "within herself." These were the secret communings of her inner voice; she had no idea that they could be "heard" by the guests. She was no doubt greatly shocked when she saw the Guest had read her mind.
 - b. This shock came when the Guest asked Abraham, "Why did Sarah laugh?" She had no way of knowing that he knew she was near enough to overhear their conversation. Abraham could not know of his wife's reaction.
 - c. Sarah's reference to Abraham as "my lord" indicates the great respect she had for her husband. This statement was made in her heart. She would not have used such a respectful term if she had not meant it—since this was her heart communing with itself. She did not call him "lord" because she feared him, therefore. Peter speaks of her calling him lord: "Even as Sara obeyed Abraham, calling him lord: whose daughters ye are, as long as ye do well, and are not afraid with any amazement" (1 Pet. 3:6).
 - d. "Sarah's laugh, mentioned above, was not one altogether of faith, but partially of doubt. She had no objection to the experience. But it sounded too good to be true. Jehovah knew her thoughts. And to further demonstrate his omniscience, he remarked upon what Sarah had done and repeated substantially what she had said only 'within herself'" (ALC, 1980, p.276).
3. Verses 14-15: "Is any thing too hard for the LORD? At the time appointed I will return unto thee, according to the time of life, and Sarah shall have a son. Then Sarah denied, saying, I laughed not; for she was afraid. And he said, Nay; but thou didst laugh."
- a. "With God all things are possible" (Mt. 19:26). The question of the text was asked of Abraham but was for Sarah's benefit. She was inside the tent, near the door, but behind the Lord, and thus out of his vision if he were merely a man. But he knew about her laugh and what her thoughts had been. She could hear the Lord speak of these matters and know that he was not a mere man. The question was rhetorical, being a forceful way of affirming that there was nothing too hard for the Lord. It was a gentle rebuke of her lack of faith. Hebrews 11:11 says: "Through faith also Sarah herself received strength to conceive seed, and was delivered of a child when she was past age, because she judged him faithful who had promised." For a moment at least she had her doubts about the "blessed event" but faith soon flooded her heart. The lesson Sarah learned is one needed by most of our contemporaries today.
 - b. "Many deny the creation narrative of Genesis, the virgin birth of Christ, the reality of the blood atonement, the resurrection of the dead, etc., as if these were impossible with God, if indeed there is a God. But the universe with its infinite variety of tenantry is a reality and has to have a cause." This cause is what the Bible calls God and refers to by the name of Jehovah. From what he obviously has done, 'Is there any thing too hard for Jehovah?'" (ALC, 1980, 274).
 - c. "Anything...except a logical impossibility, as the creation of two hills without a valley between them or of both an immovable object and an irresistible force" (ibid.).
 - d. Sarah denied having laughed—because she was afraid. She understood that this was no ordinary man. He insisted that she had indeed laughed. There is no record of a second denial. It was doubtless at this point that faith began to reassert itself. "As to the purpose of this episode, the big thing in it was apparently the strengthening of Sarah's faith and her enlistment as an enthusiastic partner in the achievement of God's purpose" (Coffman, p.241).

E. Genesis 18:16-33: Abraham Pleads in Behalf of Sodom.

1. Verses 16-18: "And the men rose up from thence, and looked toward Sodom: and Abraham went with them to bring them on the way. And the LORD said, Shall I hide from Abraham that thing which I do; Seeing that Abraham shall surely become a great and mighty nation, and all the nations of the earth shall be blessed in him?"

- a. The guests arose and looked toward Sodom. Bible students generally agree that the Dead Sea is the site of Sodom, either on the north or south end. All the Bible references to Sodom (literal or figurative) stress its moral corruption.
 - 1) Genesis 19:5: "And they called unto Lot, and said unto him, Where *are* the men which came in to thee this night? bring them out unto us, that we may know them."
 - 2) Deuteronomy 23:17: "There shall be no whore of the daughters of Israel, nor a sodomite of the sons of Israel."
 - 3) 1 Kings 14:24: "And there were also sodomites in the land: *and* they did according to all the abominations of the nations which the LORD cast out before the children of Israel."
 - 4) Ezekiel 16:46-50: "And thine elder sister *is* Samaria, she and her daughters that dwell at thy left hand: and thy younger sister, that dwelleth at thy right hand, *is* Sodom and her daughters. Yet hast thou not walked after their ways, nor done after their abominations: but, as *if that were* a very little *thing*, thou wast corrupted more than they in all thy ways. *As* I live, saith the Lord GOD, Sodom thy sister hath not done, she nor her daughters, as thou hast done, thou and thy daughters. Behold, this was the iniquity of thy sister Sodom, pride, fulness of bread, and abundance of idleness was in her and in her daughters, neither did she strengthen the hand of the poor and needy. And they were haughty, and committed abomination before me: therefore I took them away as I saw *good*."
 - 5) Romans 1:26-27: "For this cause God gave them up unto vile affections: for even their women did change the natural use into that which is against nature: And likewise also the men, leaving the natural use of the woman, burned in their lust one toward another; men with men working that which is unseemly, and receiving in themselves that recompense of their error which was meet."
 - b. Lot was now living in Sodom. He evidently retained his personal righteousness but he suffered from having associated with the city. The purpose of the Lord's comment here and his later destruction of the wicked cities was to emphasize to the human family the ultimate horrible penalty of sinful living. It was especially important to underscore this awesome lesson to Abraham who would pass it on to his descendants. Even with this lesson Israel fell away and was punished repeatedly.
2. Verse 19: "For I know him, that he will command his children and his household after him, and they shall keep the way of the LORD, to do justice and judgment; that the LORD may bring upon Abraham that which he hath spoken of him."
 - a. This is one of the great reasons God chose Abraham. God knew that he would be able to influence future generations of his offspring. That was a time when few men acknowledged God; true religion was perishing from the earth; an era of spiritual darkness was about to descend upon the race. Abraham was God's choice for perpetuating true worship and obedience, and as the forebear of the nation through which God would later send the Savior.
 - b. "All men should thank God for this ability of Abraham; for he had the power to perpetuate the name and worship of Almighty God upon the earth through the long, long midnight of Gentile paganism" (Coffman, p.243).
 3. Verses 20-22: "And the LORD said, Because the cry of Sodom and Gomorrah is great, and because their sin is very grievous; I will go down now, and see whether they have done altogether according to the cry of it, which is come unto me; and if not, I will know. And the men turned their faces from thence, and went toward Sodom: but Abraham stood yet before the LORD."
 - a. God determined to show his plans to Abraham concerning the destruction of Sodom and Gomorrah. God's omniscience gave him instant and complete knowledge of all earthly activities; it was not necessary for him to literally come to earth. This was done for Abraham's benefit.
 - b. While the two angels (18:22; 19:1) went on to Sodom, Abraham still stood before the Lord. Chapter nineteen shows what later happened in Sodom.
 - 1) Genesis 18:22: "And the men turned their faces from thence, and went toward Sodom: but Abraham stood yet before the LORD."
 - 2) Genesis 19:1: "And there came two angels to Sodom at even; and Lot sat in the gate of Sodom: and Lot seeing *them* rose up to meet them; and he bowed himself with his face toward the ground.;"
 4. Verses 23-25: "And Abraham drew near, and said, Wilt thou also destroy the righteous with the wicked? Peradventure there be fifty righteous within the city: wilt thou also destroy and not spare the place for the fifty righteous that *are* therein? That be far from thee to do after this manner, to slay the righteous with the wicked: and that the righteous should be as the wicked, that be far from thee: Shall not the Judge of all the earth do right?"
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- a. Abraham recognized "the Judge of all the earth." He knew God would not destroy the righteous with the wicked.
 - b. His aim was probably to deliver righteous Lot.
 5. Verses 26-33: "And the LORD said, If I find in Sodom fifty righteous within the city, then I will spare all the place for their sakes. And Abraham answered and said, Behold now, I have taken upon me to speak unto the Lord, which *am but* dust and ashes: Peradventure there shall lack five of the fifty righteous: wilt thou destroy all the city for *lack of* five? And he said, If I find there forty and five, I will not destroy *it*. And he spake unto him yet again, and said, Peradventure there shall be forty found there. And he said, I will not do *it* for forty's sake. And he said *unto him*, Oh let not the Lord be angry, and I will speak: Peradventure there shall thirty be found there. And he said, I will not do *it*, if I find thirty there. And he said, Behold now, I have taken upon me to speak unto the Lord: Peradventure there shall be twenty found there. And he said, I will not destroy *it* for twenty's sake. And he said, Oh let not the Lord be angry, and I will speak yet but this once: Peradventure ten shall be found there. And he said, I will not destroy *it* for ten's sake. And the LORD went his way, as soon as he had left communing with Abraham: and Abraham returned unto his place."
 - a. In quick succession, Abraham secured God's agreement not to destroy Sodom if 50, 45, 40, 30, 20, or 10 righteous people could be found there. He could assume that Lot and his family, numbering at least ten, would still be righteous; if so, they and the city would be spared. Obviously not even ten were found (ch. 19).
 - b. God's people are naturally concerned about the welfare of others. Notice the effectiveness of persistent prayer.
 - c. There should have been at least ten righteous souls in Sodom, in Lot's own family. The following may be gleaned from Genesis 19:12-14: "And the men said unto Lot, Hast thou here any besides? son in law, and thy sons, and thy daughters, and whatsoever thou hast in the city, bring *them* out of this place: For we will destroy this place, because the cry of them is waxen great before the face of the LORD; and the LORD hath sent us to destroy it. And Lot went out, and spake unto his sons in law, which married his daughters, and said, Up, get you out of this place; for the LORD will destroy this city. But he seemed as one that mocked unto his sons in law."
 - 1) Lot.
 - 2) Lot's wife.
 - 3) Lot's two unmarried daughters.
 - 4) He had two or more sons.
 - 5) Two or more married daughters.
 - 6) Two or more sons-in-law.
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GENESIS 19

A. Genesis 19:1-3: The Two Angels Arrive in Sodom.

1. The destruction of Sodom and Gomorrah is used in the New Testament to describe the Second Coming of Christ and the resultant destruction of the world.
 - a. Luke 17:29-32: "But the same day that Lot went out of Sodom it rained fire and brimstone from heaven, and destroyed *them* all. Even thus shall it be in the day when the Son of man is revealed. In that day, he which shall be upon the housetop, and his stuff in the house, let him not come down to take it away: and he that is in the field, let him likewise not return back. Remember Lot's wife."
 - b. 2 Peter 2:6-10: "And turning the cities of Sodom and Gomorrha into ashes condemned *them* with an overthrow, making *them* an ensample unto those that after should live ungodly; And delivered just Lot, vexed with the filthy conversation of the wicked: (For that righteous man dwelling among them, in seeing and hearing, vexed *his* righteous soul from day to day with *their* unlawful deeds;) The Lord knoweth how to deliver the godly out of temptations, and to reserve the unjust unto the day of judgment to be punished: But chiefly them that walk after the flesh in the lust of uncleanness, and despise government. Presumptuous *are they*, selfwilled, they are not afraid to speak evil of dignities."
 - c. Jude 1:7: "Even as Sodom and Gomorrha, and the cities about them in like manner, giving themselves over to fornication, and going after strange flesh, are set forth for an example, suffering the vengeance of eternal fire."
2. The overthrow of Sodom illustrates God's punishment of the wicked but also his desire and ability to deliver the righteous from that destruction. Lot and his daughters were saved from Sodom; Noah and his family were delivered from the destruction of the flood; according to ancient reports, no Christians died in the destruction of Jerusalem in A.D. 70.
 - a. As an object lesson on the sure punishment of the wicked, God saw to it that the story of Sodom was not forgotten by the human family. That some tremendous event occurred in the Dead Sea area is obvious. This was the location of Sodom and Gomorrah; a beautiful place before their fall: "And Lot lifted up his eyes, and beheld all the plain of Jordan, that it was well-watered every where, before the Lord destroyed Sodom and Gomorrah, even as the garden of the Lord, like the land of Egypt, as thou comest unto Zoar" (Gen. 13:10).
 - b. The Dead Sea is the earth's lowest body of water; the lowest point on earth is located there. The Dead Sea is so full of salt and minerals that there are no fish in it. This chapter in Genesis gives us the details of how this area was changed from a paradise into the desolate region it is today.
3. Verse 1: "And there came two angels to Sodom at even; and Lot sat in the gate of Sodom: and Lot seeing *them* rose up to meet them; and he bowed himself with his face toward the ground."
 - a. The two angels arrived at Sodom in the evening. These are the same two who together with their Companion had visited and eaten with Abraham (Gen. 18). These two are spoken of as "men" in the previous chapter, but in this verse are identified as angels. They had taken on the form of men for this special mission on earth.
 - b. It was twenty or more miles from Hebron where Abraham lived to where Sodom is thought to have been. The narrative suggests that it was evening on the same day they had eaten with Abraham that they arrived at Sodom. Their journey was probably made by some miraculous means since at the normal travel rate of walking, it would have taken much of a day to cover the distance.
 - c. Lot was sitting at the gate of Sodom. We are not told why. The gate of a city was the place of judgment, where legal disputes were settled, business deals were reached, and news was disseminated. Some have supposed that Lot was a magistrate and thus account for his presence at the gate. Several years before, invading kings had captured Sodom, carried Lot and others away captive, and had looted the city. Lot's uncle, Abraham, had rescued the captives and returned the goods. For this the people of Sodom were no doubt grateful, and thus Lot would have had a position of respect and honor among them. He was certainly a wealthy man. In one or more ways, therefore, his presence at the gate is accounted for: as a magistrate, or as a businessman, or as a common citizen. The Sodomites had allowed him and his family to safely dwell there without being molested, probably because of his prominence. Knowing about his uncle's military venture (Gen. 14), perhaps they were fearful to molest Lot lest Abraham should take action against them.
 - d. Peter describes Lot as being righteous (2 Pet. 2:7). Some have speculated that he only meant that he was righteous in a relative sense: compared to the Sodomites, he was righteous; and compared to his generation.

Noah was righteous: "But Noah found grace in the eyes of the LORD" (Gen. 6:8). While there is no reason to suppose Lot was a spiritual giant as Abraham, still there is no reason to think he was unrighteous. He erred in several matters but he was not a degenerate. Those were dark days; few people knew the Living God; there was no written revelation from Jehovah to guide man. Lot's errors are manifest, but so also are certain righteous attitudes: he could be persuaded to drink strong drink but he would not commit incest while in control of his mind.

- e. For whatever reason, Lot was at the gate at the time the angels appeared. He rose to meet them, bowed himself toward the earth in the common greeting of the time.
4. Verses 2-3: "And he said, Behold now, my lords, turn in, I pray you, into your servant's house, and tarry all night, and wash your feet, and ye shall rise up early, and go on your ways. And they said, Nay; but we will abide in the street all night. And he pressed upon them greatly; and they turned in unto him, and entered into his house; and he made them a feast, and did bake unleavened bread, and they did eat."
 - a. Lot invited these two strangers to spend the night with him. He may have offered this hospitality as a means of protecting the visitors from being attacked by the Sodomites. They declined the invitation at first, asserting their intention to spend the night on the street.
 - b. "But they yielded to Lot's entreaty to enter his house; for the deliverance of Lot, after having ascertained his state of mind, formed part of their commission, and entering into his house might only serve to manifest the sin of Sodom in all its heinousness" (Keil, p.232).
 - c. We might suppose that it was a regular practice of Lot to sit at the gate, to invite any unsuspecting traveler to spend the night under his protection.

B. Genesis 19:4-11: The Sodomites Assault Lot's House.

1. Verses 4-5: "But before they lay down, the men of the city, *even* the men of Sodom, compassed the house round, both old and young, all the people from every quarter: And they called unto Lot, and said unto him, Where *are* the men which came in to thee this night? bring them out unto us, that we may know them."
 - a. Before the angels retired for the night, the men of Sodom, having learned about the presence of the strangers, surrounded the house and demanded that Lot send them out to them. It appears that the entire male population of the city was involved.
 - b. "That we may know them" is a euphemism for homosexual activity. This is a reference "to the carnal sin of poederastia, a crime very prevalent among the Canaanites" (Keil, p.233).
 - 1) Leviticus 18:22-30: "Thou shalt not lie with mankind, as with womankind: it *is* abomination. Neither shalt thou lie with any beast to defile thyself therewith: neither shall any woman stand before a beast to lie down thereto: it *is* confusion. Defile not ye yourselves in any of these things: for in all these the nations are defiled which I cast out before you: And the land is defiled: therefore I do visit the iniquity thereof upon it, and the land itself vomiteth out her inhabitants. Ye shall therefore keep my statutes and my judgments, and shall not commit *any* of these abominations; *neither* any of your own nation, nor any stranger that sojourneth among you: (For all these abominations have the men of the land done, which *were* before you, and the land is defiled;) That the land spue not you out also, when ye defile it, as it spued out the nations that *were* before you. For whosoever shall commit any of these abominations, even the souls that commit *them* shall be cut off from among their people. Therefore shall ye keep mine ordinance, that *ye* commit not *any one* of these abominable customs, which were committed before you, and that ye defile not yourselves therein: I *am* the LORD your God."
 - 2) Leviticus 20:23: "And ye shall not walk in the manners of the nation, which I cast out before you: for they committed all these things, and therefore I abhorred them."
 - 3) Romans 1:27: "And likewise also the men, leaving the natural use of the woman, burned in their lust one toward another; men with men working that which is unseemly, and receiving in themselves that recompense of their error which was meet."
 - c. Many nations have fallen due to the prevalence of this horrible practice. Some things are too shameful even to discuss. "And have no fellowship with the unfruitful works of darkness, but rather reprove *them*. For it is a shame even to speak of those things which are done of them in secret" (Eph. 5:11-12). Josephus wrote of a tradition that the two angels were "of beautiful countenances, and this to an extraordinary degree...they resolved themselves to enjoy these beautiful boys by force and violence ..." (Ant., XI,3, p.35). "Pederasty" means "lover of boys; sodomy between males, esp, as practiced by a man with a boy" (Webster's New World Dictionary, p.1047).
2. Verses 6-8: "And Lot went out at the door unto them, and shut the door after him, And said, I pray you, brethren, do not so wickedly. Behold now, I have two daughters which have not known man; let me, I pray you,

bring them out unto you, and do ye to them as *is* good in your eyes: only unto these men do nothing; for therefore came they under the shadow of my roof."

- a. Lot stepped outside and shut the door behind him; he pleaded with them to desist from this wicked pursuit. He even offered to give them his two virgin daughters to do with as they pleased. This latter offer may have been in an effort to shame them. Cf. Judges 19:22ff.
 - b. He may not have been exposing his daughter to any danger since the men of Sodom were so perverse in their lust. However, as the case in Judges 19 shows, such people are subject to any kind of sinful conduct.
 - c. Coffman thinks that this offer is just another indication of Lot's sinfulness. He refers to these wicked men as "my brethren." "In his anxiety, Lot was willing to sacrifice to the sanctity of hospitality his duty as a father, which ought to have been still more sacred, 'and committed the sin of seeking to avert sin by sin'....Even if he expected that his daughters would suffer no harm...the offer was a grievous violation of his paternal duty" (Keil, p.233).
3. Verse 9: "And they said, Stand back. And they said *again*, This one *fellow* came in to sojourn, and he will needs be a judge: now will we deal worse with thee, than with them. And they pressed sore upon the man, *even* Lot, and came near to break the door."
- a. Lot's pleadings fell on deaf ears; these men were past reason. Their passion was beyond control, and could be stymied only by force.
 - b. "If Lot had thought up until that moment that he enjoyed any real influence in Sodom, it disappeared with this blunt rejection. The gratification of carnal lust is supreme with every homosexual. They would even subject Lot himself to their vile passions....The unhindered gratification of their lust upon three men would inevitably have ended in their murder....A similar incident in Judges 19 is all the proof that is needed that murder would have resulted" (Coffman, p.251).
4. Verses 10-11: "But the men put forth their hand, and pulled Lot into the house to them, and shut to the door. And they smote the men that *were* at the door of the house with blindness, both small and great: so that they wearied themselves to find the door."
- a. The angels pulled Lot inside to safety, and with miraculous power, smote the Sodomites with blindness. But still they sought to enter the house so strong and vile was their lust. Some scholars think this was not physical blindness (Coffman, Keil) but simply an inability to identify where they were. However, there is no apparent reason to understand this blindness other than in its common usage. Compare 2 Kings 8:8-23.
 - b. The blindness of the Sodomites may have only been temporary. "And the men said unto Lot, Hast thou here any besides? son in law, and thy sons, and thy daughters, and whatsoever thou hast in the city, bring *them* out of this place: For we will destroy this place, because the cry of them is waxen great before the face of the LORD; and the LORD hath sent us to destroy it. And Lot went out, and spake unto his sons in law, which married his daughters, and said, Up, get you out of this place; for the LORD will destroy this city. But he seemed as one that mocked unto his sons in law" (Gen. 19:12-14).
 - c. Acts 13:6-12: "And when they had gone through the isle unto Paphos, they found a certain sorcerer, a false prophet, a Jew, whose name was Bar-jesus: Which was with the deputy of the country, Sergius Paulus, a prudent man; who called for Barnabas and Saul, and desired to hear the word of God. But Elymas the sorcerer (for so is his name by interpretation) withstood them, seeking to turn away the deputy from the faith. Then Saul, (who also is called Paul,) filled with the Holy Ghost, set his eyes on him, And said, O full of all subtilty and all mischief, thou child of the devil, thou enemy of all righteousness, wilt thou not cease to pervert the right ways of the Lord? And now, behold, the hand of the Lord is upon thee, and thou shalt be blind, not seeing the sun for a season. And immediately there fell on him a mist and a darkness; and he went about seeking some to lead him by the hand. Then the deputy, when he saw what was done, believed, being astonished at the doctrine of the Lord."

C. Genesis 19:12-14: Lot Fails to Get His Sons-in-law to Leave Sodom.

1. Verses 12-13: "And the men said unto Lot, Hast thou here any besides? son in law, and thy sons, and thy daughters, and whatsoever thou hast in the city, bring *them* out of this place: For we will destroy this place, because the cry of them is waxen great before the face of the LORD; and the LORD hath sent us to destroy it."
 - a. The angels asked Lot about any other kinsmen he had in the city: son-in-law, sons, daughters, etc.; if so, they were to be told about the impending destruction and urged to leave the city. The angels mentioned a plurality of sons. From this, with the fact that he had two or more sons-in-law, and two unmarried daughters, plus himself and his wife, that there could have been the minimum of ten righteous people in Lot's family.
 - b. Leupold: "So the angels with great kindness temper the appalling announcement. But when their
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announcement is made, there is no ambiguity about it: the place is to be destroyed; they themselves are to be the agents of this destruction; the cause that makes this destruction imperative is therefore that the outcry over the inhabitants of the city has reached the point where Yahweh Himself must interfere, in fact, He is the one who has directly commissioned these His agents."

- c. The guilt of the people of the cities of this plain was so great that they must be destroyed. These angels were assigned the mission of bringing about this destruction. There was a need for haste.
2. Verse 14: "And Lot went out, and spake unto his sons in law, which married his daughters, and said, Up, get you out of this place; for the LORD will destroy this city. But he seemed as one that mocked unto his sons in law."
 - a. Lot went out to speak to his sons-in-law which had married his daughters. No mention is made here of any sons. This indicates that Lot had at least two married daughters and two unmarried daughters still living at home. Some scholars think that these men were only engaged to the two virgin daughters. But there is nothing in the text indicating a betrothal; the plain words of the text say these men had married his daughters (so at least two are included), and that he had two other daughters at home. The argument about the betrothal is based primarily on the fact that when Lot went out, the text says he spoke to the sons-in-law, and says nothing about speaking to any married daughters. However, the daughters would have followed the will of their husbands; the husbands rejected Lot's plea for them to leave the city. These men were rulers in their houses; their wives were under the husbands' control. Since the husbands refused to go, so their wives would stay behind also. To the credit of the betrothal view, the ASV has as a marginal note, "who were to marry" his daughters. The text says (literally), "those taking his daughters" (ALC, 1980, p.280).
 - b. "What a sad commentary this is upon the family of Lot! Sodom had already destroyed his loved ones. There was no need whatever for him to approach his sons; they long ago had rejected 'the old man' and fallen in enthusiastically with the 'new morality' of Sodom. Even his married daughters had no option; their marriage to Sodomites had removed it; hence the only way of saving even them was by approaching their husbands, who, of course, hooted at the idea of flight" (Coffman, p.252).
 - c. Were the sons-in-law involved in the previous attempted assault on the angels? If so, their blindness had disappeared which would seem unlikely after only a short interval. Probably not all of the men were fully afflicted with the perverseness described. It was safe for Lot to venture out into the night; the mob may still have been blind.
 - d. "The judgment of the Lord upon Sodom was *justified*. The apostle Paul stated flatly that proponents and practitioners of the type of sins visible here are 'worthy of death' (Romans 1:32); and the permissible views of the current society are not sufficient grounds for setting aside divine law. Furthermore, it may not be supposed for one moment that God is any more pleased with the sexual aberrations associated with Sodom in our own day than he was then. In fact, many discerning observers of the current resurgence of this wickedness have pointed out that the usually fatal disease called AIDS could be, and likely is, a divine visitation visible this very day as a deterrent to such sins....The fact of Sodom's destruction having been made a type of the final Judgment would appear to suggest that the proliferation and acceptance of the sins of Sodom will again reach a climax before the coming of that great and dreadful Day. God help men to heed the warning" (Coffman, p.252).

D. Genesis 19:15-26: Lot Escapes as Sodom and Gomorrah are Destroyed.

1. Verses 15-16: "And when the morning arose, then the angels hastened Lot, saying, Arise, take thy wife, and thy two daughters, which are here; lest thou be consumed in the iniquity of the city. And while he lingered, the men laid hold upon his hand, and upon the hand of his wife, and upon the hand of his two daughters; the LORD being merciful unto him: and they brought him forth, and set him without the city."
 - a. The next morning the angels urged Lot to hasten to leave the city. He was to take the daughters "which are here," evidently implying there were other daughters who were not present. They were to hurry lest they be consumed in the iniquity of the city, *i.e.*, lest they perish in the punishment about to fall upon the wicked of the city. No reference is made to saving any of the wealth Lot had accumulated. Instead of hastening to leave the city, Lot lingered; this may have been due to a reluctance to abandon his possessions. There was no time to delay, yet Lot held back. The angels took hold of these four (Lot, his wife, and their two daughters), by the hand, and led them forth to safety. It appears that each angel held on to the hand of two persons, perhaps walking between the two. One may have led Lot and his wife, the other the daughters. The angels did not leave them on their own until safely out of the city.
 - b. They were privileged to escape because of the mercy of God. But they did not fully comprehend the urgency of the situation. Only later could Lot appreciate the great blessing he had received. How many today

- comprehend and appreciate the great blessings of being in Christ? We will not be able to fully grasp the importance of it until we enter eternity.
- c. The escape of Lot and part of his family illustrates the power of prayer. Were it not for the prayer of Abraham in behalf of Sodom, even these few would not have been spared. "Confess *your* faults one to another, and pray one for another, that ye may be healed. The effectual fervent prayer of a righteous man availeth much" (James 5:16).
 2. Verse 17: "And it came to pass, when they had brought them forth abroad, that he said, Escape for thy life; look not behind thee, neither stay thou in all the plain; escape to the mountain, lest thou be consumed."
 - a. The delay and hesitation of Lot do not give a picture of his finest hour. His great wealth and the rest of his family he was leaving behind caused him to drag his feet. As the angels prepared to leave them, they instructed Lot to flee to the mountains, the ones lying to the east and southeast of Sodom; these mountains were later called the mountains of Moab. Again they were warned to make haste lest they be consumed.
 - b. Leupold: Lot's delay has made unbending haste a necessity. *Nephesh*, usually "soul," is used in the sense of life, as often, especially in the expression "flee for your life." The command not to "look behind them" is primarily for the purpose of demonstrating the necessity of utmost haste. The third behest forbids stopping anywhere in the so-called Round (*kikkar*) of the Jordan, sometimes rendered "the Plain of the Jordan" (see 13:10). Difficult though it will make the flight, they must take their course "to the mountains"—the fourth direction—lest they be swept away.
 3. Verses 18-22: "And Lot said unto them, Oh, not so, my Lord: Behold now, thy servant hath found grace in thy sight, and thou hast magnified thy mercy, which thou hast showed unto me in saving my life; and I cannot escape to the mountain, lest some evil take me, and I die: Behold now, this city *is* near to flee unto, and it *is* a little one: Oh, let me escape thither, (*is* it not a little one?) and my soul shall live. And he said unto him, See, I have accepted thee concerning this thing also, that I will not overthrow this city, for the which thou hast spoken. Haste thee, escape thither; for I cannot do any thing till thou be come thither. Therefore the name of the city was called Zoar."
 - a. Lot took issue with the instructions. He did not want to go to the mountains, fearing some danger. So he pleaded that he might be able to find safety in a little city nearby, one later called Zoar ("little"). He emphasized the smallness of the city, suggesting that it was too insignificant to be destroyed along with Sodom. The angel, speaking the Lord's will, agreed to spare Zoar and allow Lot to find refuge there. The destruction of the cities would occur after Lot was secure.
 - b. "Lot, instead of cheerfully obeying the commandment of the Lord, appealed to the great mercy shown to him in the preservation of his life, and to the impossibility of his escaping to the mountains, without the evil overtaking him, and entreated therefore that he might be allowed to take refuge in the small and neighboring city, i.e., in Bela, which received the name of Zoar (chapt. 14:2) on account of Lot's calling it little" (Keil, p.235).
 - c. "It is quite evident here that not merely Sodom and Gomorrah, but other cities were destroyed at the same time, Zoar being spared only upon the intercession of Lot. 'Archaeological explorations within the last decade have shown that at the time of Abraham there were five large cities on the eastern side of the southern portion of the Dead Sea.' The names of these were Sodom, the southernmost, Gomorrah, Zoar, Admah, and Zeboim in order toward the north. This sheds light on Jude 7, where these other cities are the subject of the clause stating that they too had given themselves over to fornication, etc. 'in like manner' to Sodom and Gomorrah. See also Deuteronomy 29:23, and Hosea 11:8" (Coffman, pp.254f).
 - 1) Deuteronomy 29:23: "*And that* the whole land thereof *is* brimstone, and salt, *and* burning, *that* it is not sown, nor beareth, nor any grass groweth therein, like the overthrow of Sodom, and Gomorrah, Admah, and Zeboim, which the LORD overthrew in his anger, and in his wrath."
 - 2) Hosea 11:8: "How shall I give thee up, Ephraim? *how* shall I deliver thee, Israel? how shall I make thee as Admah? *how* shall I set thee as Zeboim? mine heart is turned within me, my repentings are kindled together."
 4. Verses 23-25: "The sun was risen upon the earth when Lot entered into Zoar. Then the LORD rained upon Sodom and upon Gomorrah brimstone and fire from the LORD out of heaven; And he overthrew those cities, and all the plain, and all the inhabitants of the cities, and that which grew upon the ground."
 - a. The sun was well up when Lot entered into Zoar. It was then that the Lord rained brimstone and fire upon the cities. The destruction was so complete that those cities, and all the once Paradise-like plain, all the inhabitants, and that which grew upon the ground were destroyed. It must have been an awesome sight and sound!

- b. "There has been much discussion as to *how* the Lord rained fire and brimstone on the cities—whether miraculously creating them in the heavens, which he could have done, or by igniting escaping gases in the area by lightning or otherwise, maybe by spontaneous combustion, and causing enormous explosions of igneous materials that fell back on the cities and set them on fire. The area at the southern end of the Dead Sea abounds in such materials. 'Slime' is one of them—that is, pitch or bitumen or asphalt, a petroleum product that melts and burns, giving off sulphurous fumes. Under Mt. Usdom, or, Mount of Sodom, is a layer of salt one hundred fifty feet thick, and above that is a stratum of marl mingled with free sulphur. It is altogether possible that at the proper time God kindled the gases; that a great explosion took place; that salt and free sulphur, or salt and bitumen with its sulphurous compound, were thrown red hot into the heavens, so that it literally rained fire and brimstone (sulphur) from heaven" (ALC, 1980, pp.281f).
 - c. "By this rain of fire and brimstone not only were the cities and their inhabitants consumed, but even the soil, which abounded in asphalt, was set on fire, so that the entire valley was burned out and sank, or was overthrown...i.e., utterly destroyed, and the Dead Sea took its place!....Even to the present day the Dead Sea, with the sulphurous vapour which hangs about it, the great blocks of saltpetre and sulphur which lie on every hand, and the utter absence of the slightest trace of animal and vegetable life in its waters, are a striking testimony to this catastrophe, which is held up in both the Old and New Testaments, as a fearfully solemn judgment of God for the warning of self-secure and presumptuous sinners" (Keil, pp.235f).
 - d. "When the time was ripe, God destroyed them by means and in a manner truly known only to God. Just so, at the end of our own age, when human rebellion is finally and irrevocably out of control, God has promised to destroy, not merely a few wicked cities, but the entire world; and we receive God's promises as sure and certain of fulfillment" (Coffman, p.255).
5. Verse 26: "But his wife looked back from behind him, and she became a pillar of salt."
- a. They were commanded not to look back. Did this forbid even a backward glance? When it says that Lot's wife became a pillar of salt, does this mean she was instantly turned into a pillar of salt? These are some of the questions that are raised and about which there is disagreement among the scholars.
 - b. Coffman agrees with Keil's analysis: "Lot's wife, having been killed by the fiery and sulfurous vapour with which the air was filled, was afterwards encrusted with salt, resembling an actual statue of salt; just as, even now, from the saline exhalation of the Dead Sea, objects near it are quickly covered with a crust of salt" (p.256).
 - c. The point of emphasis in the verse is that she disobeyed the command, and in consequence of that disobedience, became a pillar of salt. Whether this was instantly accomplished or occurred over a longer period of time, is of little importance; nor is the precise method the Lord employed in bringing about this punishment for her disobedience important. That he did so is important. Did Lot have a fine mansion in Sodom? Was it richly furnished? If so, that could have added to the weakness of Lot's wife in leaving.
 - d. Perhaps more than a backward glance was involved in her actions. It may be the case that her heart remained in Sodom, where her possessions and part of her family were. "Lot's wife made some effort to escape the impending disaster. But she let her curiosity and her inordinate love for the things of Sodom (as well as for her family, probably) cause her to disobey orders and look back. It was a fatal act. The woman was fixed to the spot, and her body became a pillar of salt, covered and encrusted with deposits from the raining brimstone. There it stood for many years, a dreadful warning against disobedience to the specific command of God, and a mute reminder of the Lord's unchanging character" [Wycliffe Bible Commentary, Electronic Database. Copyright © 1962 by Moody Press].
 - e. "How she died is not specifically stated. But her body either petrified into a pillar of salt or became encrusted with liquefied and falling salt, the latter being more likely. If such were the case it likely was also hot. If she was caught in a sheet of heated and liquefied salt, that likely took her life as well as encrusting her. And the family were no doubt unaware till they had stopped in Zoar and the burning ceased, for they were not to look back on their journey" (ALC, 1980, p.281).
 - f. "It is said that there are many pillars of salt at the south end of the Dead Sea which have borne the name of Lot's wife, and that everything about that region seems to dovetail exactly with the biblical account of Sodom and Gomorrah" (ALC, *ibid.*).
 - g. "Remember Lot's wife" (Luke 17:31-32).
 - h. The overthrow was indeed miraculous with perhaps God using some natural materials.
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Pillars of Salt at the Dead Sea

E. Genesis 19:27-38: The Aftermath of the Destruction.

1. Verses 27-28: "And Abraham gat up early in the morning to the place where he stood before the LORD: And he looked toward Sodom and Gomorrah, and toward all the land of the plain, and beheld, and, lo, the smoke of the country went up as the smoke of a furnace."
 - a. What an awesome sight this must have been for Abraham to behold! "In the loneliness of faith, Abraham appears here, awe-stricken, stunned, speechless, and grieving over the fate of a city he had sought through prayer to save" (Coffman, p.257).
 - b. "It would appear that not only the cities, but also the land of the Plain as a whole was on fire, distinctly possible if deposits of petroleum products near the surface were ignited to cause an enormous conflagration. If that happened, it might also account for the Dead Sea now covering what once was the vale of Siddim with its numerous 'slime pits' (14:3,10)" (ALC, 1980, p.282).
2. Verse 29: "And it came to pass, when God destroyed the cities of the plain, that God remembered Abraham, and sent Lot out of the midst of the overthrow, when he overthrew the cities in the which Lot dwelt."
 - a. This is a summary verse, restating the overall events of the preceding verses. It suggests that Lot was delivered from the destruction, not so much for his own sake as for that of Abraham. The fervent prayer of a righteous man avails much (James 5:16). Here is an instance where the prayer of a righteous man did produce much good.
 - b. "Lot and his family were given the opportunity for salvation because of the entreaty of Abraham. They still had to make proper use of that opportunity, and almost failed. And Lot's wife did fail at the last. Such is possible for us also. But one may never know how much his own opportunities for salvation were the result of somebody else's interest and prayers. And we ought to pray consistently and fervently for the lost, and for specific lost persons. Abraham's example was a tremendous one" (ALC, 1980, p.282).
3. Verse 30: "And Lot went up out of Zoar, and dwelt in the mountain, and his two daughters with him; for he feared to dwell in Zoar: and he dwelt in a cave, he and his two daughters."
 - a. Now Lot grew dissatisfied with living in Zoar. We are not told how long he had been there. It was little, if not wrong, for him to insist on stopping at Zoar when he was told to flee to the mountains while escaping from Sodom. Now it was equally wrong for him to flee to the mountains after being assured that it was safe for him to live in Zoar.
 - b. He was fearful of remaining in the little city; he had earlier said he was fearful to go to the mountains. But we can feel sympathy for him when we remember he had lost perhaps all his worldly goods and most of his family. But remember also that it was his original selfish choice (Gen. 13) that ultimately led him to take up residence in the wicked city of Sodom. Even at that time, Sodom was known as a sinful place. "Abram dwelled in the land of Canaan, and Lot dwelled in the cities of the plain, and pitched *his* tent toward Sodom. But the men of Sodom *were* wicked and sinners before the LORD exceedingly" (Gen. 13:12-13).
4. Verses 31-38: "And the firstborn said unto the younger, Our father *is* old, and *there is* not a man in the earth to come in unto us after the manner of all the earth: Come, let us make our father drink wine, and we will lie with him, that we may preserve seed of our father. And they made their father drink wine that night: and the firstborn went in, and lay with her father; and he perceived not when she lay down, nor when she arose. And it came to pass on the morrow, that the firstborn said unto the younger, Behold, I lay yesternight with my father: let us make him drink wine this night also; and go thou in, *and* lie with him, that we may preserve seed of our father. And they made their father drink wine that night also: and the younger arose, and lay with him; and he perceived not when she lay down, nor when she arose. Thus were both the daughters of Lot with child by their

father. And the firstborn bare a son, and called his name Moab: the same *is* the father of the Moabites unto this day. And the younger, she also bare a son, and called his name Benammi: the same *is* the father of the children of Ammon unto this day."

- a. The incestuous plan of Lot's daughters is set forth and fulfilled. The older of the two suggested, in view of the fact that Lot was old, and there was no one available for them to marry, that they make their father drink wine, and lie with him so as to preserve seed for him. For such a proposal to be seriously considered by them indicates that the wickedness of Sodom had influenced their thinking.
 - b. They had just left Zoar which, though a small city, nevertheless must have had some eligible men residing there. They had no reason to think that they were the only ones still alive on the earth. Perhaps they thought, as Keil suggested, "that no man would link himself with them, the only survivors of a country smitten by the curse of God. If it was not lust, therefore, which impelled them to this shameful deed, their conduct was worthy of Sodom..." (Keil, p.237).
 - c. Where had the wine been procured? From Zoar? From his own supplies prior to leaving Sodom? If they had not been in possession of this wine, the shameful events of this passage would not have occurred. No wonder strong warnings were given: "Look not thou upon the wine when it is red, when it giveth his colour in the cup, when it moveth itself aright. At the last it biteth like a serpent, and stingeth like an adder. Thine eyes shall behold strange women, and thine heart shall utter perverse things" (Prov. 23:31-33).
 - d. It is obvious that the daughters knew their father would not consent to their plan if he were in his right mind. They knew they had to get him drunk so as not to know what was going on. The fact that he drank is a bad reflection on Lot; but that he would not have been partner to incest without being out of his mind is complimentary to his moral character. "That Lot's daughters knew the action they initiated was sinful was proved by the fact that they knew that their father would not knowingly participate in it" (Coffman, p.259).
 - e. First the older daughter and then the younger daughter, on successive nights, got their father drunk, lay with him, and conceived by him. Lot never knew what was going on. But he was surely guilty of drunkenness. Terrible things happen when drunkenness occurs. "And Noah began *to be* an husbandman, and he planted a vineyard: And he drank of the wine, and was drunken; and he was uncovered within his tent. And Ham, the father of Canaan, saw the nakedness of his father, and told his two brethren without. And Shem and Japheth took a garment, and laid *it* upon both their shoulders, and went backward, and covered the nakedness of their father; and their faces *were* backward, and they saw not their father's nakedness. And Noah awoke from his wine, and knew what his younger son had done unto him. And he said, Cursed *be* Canaan; a servant of servants shall he be unto his brethren. And he said, Blessed *be* the LORD God of Shem; and Canaan shall be his servant. God shall enlarge Japheth, and he shall dwell in the tents of Shem; and Canaan shall be his servant" (Gen. 9:20-27).
 - f. The boys born out of this incestuous affair were named Moab ("from a father") and Ben-ammi ("son of my kinsman"). They became the fathers of the Moabite and Ammonite nations (Num. 25). Later, Solomon got into trouble when he took pagan women as wives and concubines.
 - 1) 1 Kings 7:8: "And his house where he dwelt *had* another court within the porch, *which* was of the like work. Solomon made also an house for Pharaoh's daughter, whom he had taken *to wife*, like unto this porch."
 - 2) 1 Kings 11:5: "For Solomon went after Ashtoreth the goddess of the Zidonians, and after Milcom the abomination of the Ammonites."
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GENESIS 20

A. Genesis 20:1-7: Abraham Sojourns at Gerar.

1. "This whole chapter deals with another incident in the lives of Abraham and Sarah in which Sarah was represented by both of them as being the sister of Abraham and not his wife. It appears here that this subterfuge was a definite characteristic or the *modus operandi* adopted by the patriarch as a maneuver which both of them doubtless considered to be a protective device, designed to prevent Abraham from being killed by someone coveting his beautiful wife. From the human standpoint, it worked....It should be noted, however, that the special providence of God's intervention was required in each of the biblical incidents in order to prevent frustration of the divine purpose regarding the seed of Abraham (and Sarah). That Abraham was wrong in both these episodes is certain" (Coffman, p.261).
 2. Leupold:
 - a. On the very eve of the fulfillment of the long-hoped-for promise, Abraham, largely through his own sins, imperils the precious hope. So once again, as so often in Genesis, the sovereign mercy of God is made to stand forth as supreme, that no flesh may glory before God.
 - b. It would be foolish to deny the similarity of this episode with those other episodes recorded in Gen. 12:10 ff. and 26:1 ff. It is equally foolish to claim the identity of the incidents on the ground that they merely represent three different forms of the original event, forms assumed while being transmitted by tradition. Critics seem to forget that life just happens to be so strange a thing that certain incidents may repeat themselves in the course of one life, or that the lives of children often constitute a strange parallel to those of their parents. Besides, there certainly are striking differences between this account and that of 12:10 ff. as well as striking points of similarity.
 - c. Note the following six points of difference: two different places are involved, Egypt and Philistia; two different monarchs of quite different character; one, idolatrous, the other, one who fears the true God; different circumstances prevail, a famine on the one hand, nomadic migration on the other; different modes of revelation are employed—the one king surmises the truth, the other receives revelation in a dream; the patriarch's reaction to the accusation is quite different in the two instances involved—in the first, silence; then in the second instance, a free explanation before a king of sufficient spiritual discernment; lastly, the conclusions of the two episodes are radically different from one another—in the first instance, dismissal from the land; in the second, an invitation to stay in the land. We are compelled, therefore, to reverse the critical verdict: "it is impossible to doubt that the two are variants of the same tradition." We have here two distinct, though similar, events.
 - d. If we remember besides that about twenty years had elapsed between the two incidents (cf. 12:4 with 17:1), we can well understand how the memory of the first had paled upon the consciousness of the patriarch. Abraham should not have been so forgetful, but even the patriarchs were frail mortals and poor sinners. In any event, why should a nation perpetuate several forms of an incident that reflects no honor whatsoever upon its first father?
 3. Verse 1: "And Abraham journeyed from thence toward the south country, and dwelled between Kadesh and Shur, and sojourned in Gerar."
 - a. From thence—from the place where Abraham had been dwelling for some time: the plain of Mamre. The patriarch journeyed to the area between Kadesh and Shur, and sojourned at Gerar. We are not told the reason for the move. Clarke speculated that, "It is very likely that this holy man was so deeply affected with the melancholy prospect of the ruined cities, and not knowing what has become of his nephew Lot and his family, that he could no longer bear to dwell within sight of the place" (p.229).
 - b. However, it may have been simply in search of different pastures for his herds and flocks. Gerar is said to have been a "Philistine city, identified with Tell Abu Hureira, a mound about 11 miles SE of Gaza. It was populated during every period of the Bronze and Iron Ages, with indications of a prosperous period during the middle Bronze Age, the age of the patriarchs" (T.C. Mitchell, as quoted by Coffman, p.263).
 4. Verses 2-3: "And Abraham said of Sarah his wife, She *is* my sister: and Abimelech king of Gerar sent, and took Sarah. But God came to Abimelech in a dream by night, and said to him, Behold, thou *art but* a dead man, for the woman which thou hast taken; for she *is* a man's wife."
 - a. Abraham and Sarah again used the half-truth they had used in Egypt (Gen. 12:10-20). According to verse 13, this had been their plan and practice since they entered the land. Sarah had been seventy years of age when the earlier episode with Pharaoh occurred. She was now almost ninety and probably was already
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- pregnant with Isaac. Her youthful beauty had likely faded by this time. It is probable that he desired to have Sarah as a wife, not so much for her beauty as for the powerful ally her "brother" Abraham would be. The story of Abraham's rescue of Lot would have become common knowledge.
- b. The great number of servants and the huge wealth of Abraham would be self-evident. Abimelech, the king of Gerar, took Sarah into his house, intending that she should become part of his harem. Before he came near her, God spoke to him in a dream, announcing the strong measures he was about to take against Abimelech since Sarah was already married.
 - c. "Father-king" was used by the ancients to designate their monarch; in Philistine the word is "Abimelech"; in Persian it is "Padi-shah"; in Egyptian it is "Pharaoh" (see Coffman, p.264). These terms were used as titles and not as the name of the person occupying the throne.
 - d. The most practical way of assuring an alliance for mutual strength in those ancient days was for the king to marry into the family of one whose friendship was sought. This at least partly explains why Solomon had so many wives.
 - 1) 1 Kings 3:1: "And Solomon made affinity with Pharaoh king of Egypt, and took Pharaoh's daughter, and brought her into the city of David, until he had made an end of building his own house, and the house of the LORD, and the wall of Jerusalem round about."
 - 2) 1 Kings 11:1-3: "But king Solomon loved many strange women, together with the daughter of Pharaoh, women of the Moabites, Ammonites, Edomites, Zidonians, *and* Hittites; Of the nations *concerning* which the LORD said unto the children of Israel, Ye shall not go in to them, neither shall they come in unto you: *for* surely they will turn away your heart after their gods: Solomon clave unto these in love. And he had seven hundred wives, princesses, and three hundred concubines: and his wives turned away his heart."
5. Verses 4-5: "But Abimelech had not come near her: and he said, Lord, wilt thou slay also a righteous nation? Said he not unto me, She *is* my sister? and she, even she herself said, He *is* my brother: in the integrity of my heart and innocency of my hands have I done this."
- a. In the dream Abimelech responded to God by pleading ignorance of the fact that she was another man's wife. He said that both Sarah and Abraham had assured him that Sarah was Abraham's sister. The king claimed it was out of the integrity (simplicity, sincerity) of his heart he had sought Sarah as a wife. He said that his ignorance of her true status rendered him innocent of wrong-doing.
 - b. "It is important to note that Abimelech had also heard of the destruction of the whole nation of the Sodomites and feared that the same thing might befall his people....Note also that he believed in the true God as having control over the nations, not merely one, and that he considered that God to be righteous and fair in his treatment of men....The 'integrity' and 'innocence' of Abimelech are restricted in meaning to his conduct and intentions toward Sarah. Abimelech was better than some men, but there is no hint here of his being sinless" (Coffman, p.265).
6. Verse 6: "And God said unto him in a dream, Yea, I know that thou didst this in the integrity of thy heart; for I also withheld thee from sinning against me: therefore suffered I thee not to touch her."
- a. God knew the heart of Abimelech, and agreed with the king about his sincerity. Because he had been honest in his actions, God had kept the king from touching Sarah and thus prevented his committing sin in so doing. For Abimelech to "touch" Sarah would have constituted sin. How had God prevented this sin? By afflicting the king and his house with some kind of ailment (Gen. 20:17-18).
 - b. "...God had struck an entire household (a very great one) with a serious and potentially fatal disease for the specific purpose of preventing a sin against his purpose. A similar instance is the sudden death of Herod recorded in Acts 12" (Coffman, p.265).
7. Verse 7: "Now therefore restore the man *his* wife; for he *is* a prophet, and he shall pray for thee, and thou shalt live: and if thou restore *her* not, know thou that thou shalt surely die, thou, and all that *are* thine."
- a. This is the first occurrence of the word "prophet." A prophet is one who spoke for God (Lk. 1:70; Heb. 1:1); these were guided supernaturally in what they spoke or else they might have spoken the wrong thing (2 Pet. 1:20-21; 2 Sam. 23:2; Eph. 3:1-11; 1 Cor. 2: 9-14; 14:37; cf. Acts 2:1-4).
 - b. What they spoke had to do with the past, the present or the future. In the case of Abraham, who is said here to be a prophet, the power to intercede in another's behalf also pertained to him. Intercession more properly belongs to the office of a priest.
 - c. Since Abraham lived during the Patriarchal Age, so-named because the father in the family was the one through whom God communicated any message and who was the one to offer the sacrifices, he had the power to perform the offices of priest and prophet. Abraham would be able to pray in behalf of Abimelech

and his household that the affliction be lifted. This was done (vv. 17-18). Without this intercession, the king and all who pertained to him would surely die.

B. Genesis 20:8-10: Abimelech Confronts Abraham.

1. Verse 8: "Therefore Abimelech rose early in the morning, and called all his servants, and told all these things in their ears: and the men were sore afraid."
 - a. Abimelech acted quickly to bring this sorry situation to a pleasant conclusion. He arose early in the morning and reported the dream to his people. The men were all "sore afraid."
 - b. The same God who had recently brought a horrible end to Sodom and Gomorrah was now threatening them with sure death. What God had done to Sodom had evidently made a strong impression on the people of Gerar. For a time they considered themselves to be a righteous nation.
2. Verse 9: "Then Abimelech called Abraham, and said unto him, What hast thou done unto us? and what have I offended thee, that thou hast brought on me and on my kingdom a great sin? thou hast done deeds unto me that ought not to be done."
 - a. "Here Abraham received a just rebuke from a man far less favored than himself in spiritual matters. The great patriarch here appears in a sorry light" (Coffman, p.267).
 - b. "Abimelech did this publicly in the presence of his servants, partly for his own justification in the sight of his dependents, and partly to put Abraham to shame" (Keil, p.240).
 - c. "In what a humiliating plight does the patriarch now appear—he, a servant of the true God, rebuked by a Philistine prince. Who would not rather be in the place of Abimelech than of the honoured but sadly offending patriarch! What a dignified attitude is that of the king—calmly and justly reproving the sin of the prophet, but respecting his person, and heaping coals of fire on his head by the liberal presents made to him" [Jamieson, Fausset, and Brown Commentary, Electronic Database. Copyright © 1997 by BibleSoft].
3. Verse 10: "And Abimelech said unto Abraham, What sawest thou, that thou hast done this thing?"
 - a. "What sawest thou?" Had Abraham actually seen anything going on in Gerar to give him reason to know that these were wicked people? Had he seen any of them committing murder or fornication? Abraham may have assumed they were evil and godless without proper evidence.
 - b. "He challenges him to assign a cause for his suspecting them as a dangerous people for an honest man to live among: 'What sawest thou, that thou hast done this thing? v. 10. What reason hadst thou to think that if we had known her to be thy wife thou wouldst have been exposed to any danger by it?' Note, A suspicion of our goodness is justly reckoned a greater affront than a slight upon our greatness" [Matthew Henry's Commentary on the Whole Bible: New Modern Edition, Electronic Database. Copyright © 1991 by Hendrickson Publishers, Inc.].

C. Genesis 20:11-13: Abraham Offers Weak Excuses.

1. Verse 11: "And Abraham said, Because I thought, Surely the fear of God is not in this place; and they will slay me for my wife's sake."
 - a. He feared for his own safety, thinking that there was no fear of God in Gerar. He had thought the same thing about Egypt (12:12), and evidently with good cause. God brought some severe plagues against Pharaoh and his people for Sarah's sake.
 - b. Abraham misjudged Abimelech and his people. He expected to see fear of God at that place; that reverence was not obvious to him at the first. The fact that the people of this place retained a measure of knowledge of God indicates that some still possessed information about God, information that had been passed down through the generations from Noah's time.
 - c. The patriarch's excuse was that he feared for his own life.
 2. Verse 12: "And yet indeed *she is* my sister; she *is* the daughter of my father, but not the daughter of my mother; and she became my wife."
 - a. His second excuse was the feeble claim that she really is my sister; she is the daughter of my father but not the daughter of my mother. His greater relationship to Sarah was that she was his wife.
 - b. The annals of Ebn Batrick contain, along with other traditions, the assertion that Terah first married a woman by the name of "Yona" who was Abraham's mother; later Terah supposedly married Tehevitah who was the mother of Sarah (see Clarke, p.131).
 3. Verse 13: "And it came to pass, when God caused me to wander from my father's house, that I said unto her, This *is* thy kindness which thou shalt show unto me; at every place whither we shall come, say of me, He *is* my brother."
 - a. Abraham then relates the plan he developed when he left his father's house, to claim that Sarah was his sister, instead of saying she was his wife. She was more closely akin to him by the wifely relationship than
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the sisterly connection.

- b. His half-truth was actually a whole lie. A lie is an attempt by word, deed, etc., to deceive.

D. Genesis 20:14-18: Abimelech Reproves Abraham and Sarah.

1. Verses 14-15: "And Abimelech took sheep, and oxen, and menservants, and womenservants, and gave *them* unto Abraham, and restored him Sarah his wife. And Abimelech said, Behold, my land *is* before thee: dwell where it pleaseth thee."
 - a. To Abraham he gave sheep, oxen, and servants, and restored to him his wife. He also gave the patriarch permission to dwell in any place in the kingdom he desired. By this generosity, Abimelech demonstrated to Abraham that he was a righteous person, and was not at all the evil man Abraham supposed him to be.
 - b. This was a further reproof of the patriarch's shameful conduct. Abraham had failed to learn the lesson that God was going to protect him where ever he went. Abimelech was benevolent because he believed God and knew the close standing Abraham had with the Almighty.
 2. Verse 16: "And unto Sarah he said, Behold, I have given thy brother a thousand *pieces* of silver: behold, he *is* to thee a covering of the eyes, unto all that *are* with thee, and with all *other*: thus she was reproofed."
 - a. The one thousand pieces of silver may be in addition to the other gifts, or as some have thought, the value of those other gifts. The one thousand pieces of silver may mean a thousand shekels of silver. The shekel of the sanctuary weighed 20 gerahs (Ex. 30:13); a gerah is said to have equaled 16 grains of barley; after the captivity a shekel increased to 384 grains of barley.
 - b. "On the subject of ancient weights and measures, very little that is satisfactory is known" (Clarke, p.132).
 3. Verses 17-18: "So Abraham prayed unto God: and God healed Abimelech, and his wife, and his maidservants; and they bare *children*. For the LORD had fast closed up all the wombs of the house of Abimelech, because of Sarah Abraham's wife."
 - a. Abraham prayed unto God in their behalf; the prayer was heard and answered. God healed Abimelech, his wife, his maid servants; their child-bearing ability was restored. The affliction is not precisely identified; it was removed at Abraham's prayer.
 - b. Leupold: Abraham does what God had ascribed to him as a prophetic function and privilege (v. 7), and as a result of his intercession the disability laid upon the king's entire household is healed. The very fact that this disability is described as something that was healed (*rapha* ') suggests that it should be classed as a sickness. This disability could hardly mean that pregnant mothers were prevented from bringing forth their offspring, as some interpret, but rather that conception, particularly the coitus, was rendered impossible. For so v. 18 is to be understood. This was Yahweh's mode of rendering the mother of the promised seed safe.
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GENESIS 21

A. Introduction.

1. "The long-deferred hope of the son of promise is finally fulfilled, but it is shortly followed by a grievous disappointment in another direction. This double experience demonstrates that, as God's dealings nurtured faith, so, on the other hand, less pleasant experiences kept the sojourner from feeling too much at home in a world that is not to be the final goal of our hopes" (Leupold, p.594).
2. This chapter relates the birth of Isaac, the feast given at his weaning, the expulsion of Hagar and Ishmael, the miraculous intervention in behalf of these exiles, and the treaty between Abimelech and Abraham. "The narrative here is closely synchronized with the preceding chapters, and fully in harmony with all that was previously revealed in them. The previous chapter (20), which recounted Abraham's first encounter with Abimelech, was a necessary prelude to this, because it shows how Abraham and his company were amicably settled in southern Canaan, which for many years to come was destined to be Abraham's permanent base of operations" (Coffman, p.271).

B. Genesis 21:1-7: The Birth of Isaac.

1. Verse 1: "And the LORD visited Sarah as he had said, and the LORD did unto Sarah as he had spoken."
 - a. That God fully keeps his promises is illustrated by this passage. He did as he had spoken.
 - 1) Genesis 17:21: "But my covenant will I establish with Isaac, which Sarah shall bear unto thee at this set time in the next year."
 - 2) Genesis 18:14: "Is any thing too hard for the LORD? At the time appointed I will return unto thee, according to the time of life, and Sarah shall have a son."
 - b. They had been waiting about 25 years for this promise to be fulfilled. They had concocted the ill-advised and sinful plan by which Ishmael was born, a scheme that brought them both much grief, and an untold amount of sorrow on the world in general. They did not understand God's plan very well, or they did not have the patience to wait on God to work out his plan.
 - 1) Genesis 12:1-4: "Now the LORD had said unto Abram, Get thee out of thy country, and from thy kindred, and from thy father's house, unto a land that I will show thee: And I will make of thee a great nation, and I will bless thee, and make thy name great; and thou shalt be a blessing: And I will bless them that bless thee, and curse him that curseth thee: and in thee shall all families of the earth be blessed. So Abram departed, as the LORD had spoken unto him; and Lot went with him: and Abram was seventy and five years old when he departed out of Haran."
 - 2) Genesis 21:5: "And Abraham was an hundred years old, when his son Isaac was born unto him."
 - c. "The characteristic Hebrew idiom here employs the *paqadh*, 'to attend to' or 'to visit.' God's drawing near to one, whether in mercy or in severity, is described by that term....A similar use in a good sense appears in 50:24, 25 and in Exod. 13:19" (Leupold, p.594).
 - d. "Here the verb practically implies that God comes and leaves the son, more appropriately, however, this act is attributed to 'Yahweh, for the merciful God here kept His covenant promise' (ibid., pp.594f).
2. Verse 2: "For Sarah conceived, and bare Abraham a son in his old age, at the set time of which God had spoken to him."
 - a. Verse one reports in a general statement what verse two gives in specifics. The aged Sarah conceived and bore a son to Abraham at the appointed time.
 - 1) Genesis 17:21: "But my covenant will I establish with Isaac, which Sarah shall bear unto thee at this set time in the next year."
 - 2) Genesis 18:14: "Is any thing too hard for the LORD? At the time appointed I will return unto thee, according to the time of life, and Sarah shall have a son."
 - b. "To convey the thought that everything was being done in strict conformity with the very specific promise, the statement is also added that this all transpired 'at the set time which Yahweh had designated'" (Leupold, p.595).
3. Verses 3-5: "And Abraham called the name of his son that was born unto him, whom Sarah bare to him, Isaac. And Abraham circumcised his son Isaac being eight days old, as God had commanded him. And Abraham was an hundred years old, when his son Isaac was born unto him."
 - a. God had already decided upon the name for this child, as well as the fact of his birth and gender (cf. 17:17-19). The name "Isaac" means "laughter," and was given on account of Sarah's laugh of incredulity at the time of the promise (18:9-15); Abraham also laughed, perhaps in amazement and joy, when he heard the

promise earlier: "And I will bless her, and give thee a son also of her: yea, I will bless her, and she shall be *a mother* of nations; kings of people shall be of her. Then Abraham fell upon his face, and laughed, and said in his heart, Shall *a child* be born unto him that is an hundred years old? and shall Sarah, that is ninety years old, bear? And Abraham said unto God, O that Ishmael might live before thee! And God said, Sarah thy wife shall bear thee a son indeed; and thou shalt call his name Isaac: and I will establish my covenant with him for an everlasting covenant, *and* with his seed after him. And as for Ishmael, I have heard thee: Behold, I have blessed him, and will make him fruitful, and will multiply him exceedingly; twelve princes shall he beget, and I will make him a great nation. But my covenant will I establish with Isaac, which Sarah shall bear unto thee at this set time in the next year" (Gen. 17:16-21).

- b. Coffman suggests, in a wider sense, Isaac's name refers to the joy that would come to those living later who would be saved through the Messiah, who was to be the ultimate Seed of Abraham through Isaac (p.272).
 - c. "For Isaac—*yitschaq*—"he laughs, Kal imperfect of *tsachaq*" (Leupold, p.595).
 - d. Isaac was circumcised when he was eight days old, in full compliance with the covenant God had made with Abraham and his house (17:9-14). "This continued ever afterwards as the invariable custom of the Jews; but the Arabians who descended through Ishmael observe the rite at the beginning of the 13th year, as it was initiated in the instance of Ishmael" (ibid.).
 - e. Though we have already been told Abraham's age, that fact is again stated. His age of one hundred and Sarah's age of ninety (17:17) show the miraculous nature of Isaac's birth. A supernatural gift was bestowed on both of these in order to make the birth possible. He was truly the child of promise. Compare: "Now we, brethren, as Isaac was, are the children of promise" (Gal. 4:28).
4. Verses 6-7: "And Sarah said, God hath made me to laugh, *so that* all that hear will laugh with me. And she said, Who would have said unto Abraham, that Sarah should have given children suck? for I have born *him* a son in his old age."
- a. By being blessed with this son of promise, Sarah had the great reproach of barrenness removed. Hence, there would be just cause for her to rejoice and for others to rejoice with her. Her use of the plural ("children") in verse seven is significant.
 - b. The plural includes the singular. How many children must an elder have (who is otherwise qualified) in order to meet this requirement? To save unnecessary trouble, a candidate with only one child might have to withdraw, however if Sarah's statement is correct ("children"), even though she had only one child, it follows that a man with only one child is also included in New Testament passages which use the plural ("children"). In these New Testament passages, emphasis is on quality, not quantity.
 - 1) 1 Timothy 3:4: "One that ruleth well his own house, having his children in subjection with all gravity."
 - 2) Titus 1:6: "If any be blameless, the husband of one wife, having faithful children not accused of riot or unruly."

C. Genesis 21:8-10: The Weaning Feast.

1. Verse 8: "And the child grew, and was weaned: and Abraham made a great feast the *same* day that Isaac was weaned."
 - a. This was to be a joyous occasion. "All of the happiness that should have come to Abraham and Sarah with the birth of this long-awaited son, however, did not come. The terrible evils of polygamy, and the tangled affairs of their domestic life, resulted almost at once in jealousy, strife, enmity, and division. The climax came on the occasion of the feast given to celebrate the weaning of Isaac" (Coffman, p.272).
 - b. We are not told how old Isaac was when he was "weaned." From the uninspired book of II Maccabees (7:27-28) comes a statement about a certain woman who weaned her son when he was three years old. II Chronicles 31:16 speaks of Hezekiah making provisions for Levites and priests, including children three years old and upward. This may have been the common age of weaning during those ancient times.
 - c. "Weaning" may have reference to more than removal from the mother's breast. It may have meant the time when the child was taken more in hand by the father to begin learning his life's trade or profession.
 - d. Abraham made a "great feast." It was intended to be a wonderfully joyous occasion. But apparently the discouraging incident in the next verse took place on this very day. But some scholars think that event came later.
2. Verse 9: "And Sarah saw the son of Hagar the Egyptian, which she had born unto Abraham, mocking."
 - a. Some of the modern versions change the verb "mocking" to "playing with." But the word translated "mocking" is the exact same word used in Genesis 19:14 to describe how Lot's sons-in-law reacted when he told them about the impending destruction of Sodom: "He seemed as one that *mocked*...."
 - b. According to Galatians 4:28-30, Ishmael was persecuting Isaac: "Now we, brethren, as Isaac was, are the

children of promise. But as then he that was born after the flesh persecuted him *that was born* after the Spirit, even so *it is* now. Nevertheless what saith the scripture? Cast out the bondwoman and her son: for the son of the bondwoman shall not be heir with the son of the freewoman." In some unspecified way, he was tormenting, mocking the son of promise. Sarah could not abide this, thus she demanded strong action from her husband.

3. Verse 10: "Wherefore she said unto Abraham, Cast out this bondwoman and her son: for the son of this bondwoman shall not be heir with my son, *even* with Isaac."
 - a. Sarah observed Ishmael mistreating her son Isaac. She discerned the true nature of Ishmael sooner and more correctly than Abraham (Leupold, p.600). "Sarah was perfectly within the rights of any perceptive mother who sought to protect the interest of her son. Ishmael was considerably older than Isaac; and Abraham was already of an advanced age, and Josephus was doubtless correct in attributing Sarah's action to her apprehension that, due to his being so much older than Isaac, Ishmael, 'being older, would be able to do injuries to Isaac when their father should be dead''There was a legal tradition that stipulated that a son of a slave woman could forego his inheritance claim in exchange for freedom'; and that was exactly the option that Sarah determined to force upon Hagar and Ishmael" (Coffman, p.274).
 - b. Sarah was right in making the request of Abraham to cast these two out; this we can know because God concurred with her and told Abraham to do so. "Sarah's determined action is the *only thing* that could have prevented open warfare between the two half-brothers at some later time....One glimpse of the mocking, sneering face of Ishmael as he belittled and made light of Isaac was all that was required to trigger the sudden and dramatic action of Sarah; but she knew what she was doing. Of course, a superficial examination of the situation may lead to an interpretation which sees merely human rivalry involved and ascribes to Sarah a kind of vindictive cruelty. Such an approach makes it impossible to account satisfactorily for God's concurring in Sarah's verdict" (Leupold, p.801).

D. Genesis 21:11-13: God Directs Abraham to Send Hagar and Ishmael Away.

1. Verse 11: "And the thing was very grievous in Abraham's sight because of his son."
 - a. Ishmael was Abraham's son, thus Sarah's demand was "very grievous" to him. His attitude was determined by his emotional attachment to Ishmael. "The Hebrew idiom here says: 'the thing was very bad in the eyes of Abraham'" (Leupold, p.602).
 - b. "Abraham and Sarah were then reaping the bitterness created by themselves when they chose to introduce a slave girl into Abraham's bedchamber as his wife....What a heart-wrenching decision it was, but Abraham courageously faced the problem and resolved it as God commanded him" (Coffman, p.275).
2. Verses 12-13: "And God said unto Abraham, Let it not be grievous in thy sight because of the lad, and because of thy bondwoman; in all that Sarah hath said unto thee, hearken unto her voice; for in Isaac shall thy seed be called. And also of the son of the bondwoman will I make a nation, because he *is* thy seed."
 - a. God told the patriarch to follow Sarah's request because "in Isaac shall thy seed be called." The true descendants of Abraham through which the Promised Seed would later come were those descendants of Isaac, not those of Ishmael. But God assured Abraham that Ishmael would be protected and blessed by God's providence, and he would become the head of a nation.
 - b. "Consequently, Abraham need have no misgivings as to whether the son will survive or not. This gracious reassurance makes obedience easier for Abraham" (Leupold, p.603). Here is a case where it was the right thing for the wife to speak up and make a demand of her husband. The husband is to be obeyed only in those cases when his wishes or demands are right or indifferent; not in those cases where sinful conduct is ordered.

E. Genesis 21:14-21: God Preserves Hagar and Ishmael.

1. Verse 14: "And Abraham rose up early in the morning, and took bread, and a bottle of water, and gave *it* unto Hagar, putting *it* on her shoulder, and the child, and sent her away: and she departed, and wandered in the wilderness of Beersheba."
 - a. Sarah had seen that for peace to return to her household, it was necessary for Hagar and Ishmael to be evicted. God told Abraham to heed Sarah's demand, and assured the patriarch that there was no cause for alarm on his part. Ishmael would be cared for, and Abraham's seed would be given through Isaac. Abraham therefore sent Hagar and her son away, giving her a bottle of water, and of course whatever other supplies and money he deemed to be necessary. However, only bread and water are named.
 - b. "It would be totally out of character for Abraham to have sent them away without sufficient provisions, or monies with which to procure them, sufficient for the journey she was compelled to make. The love of Abraham for Ishmael would have prevented such an injustice. Besides that, when Abraham sent away his
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- concubines, near the end of his career, it is written that, 'Unto the sons of the concubines that Abraham had, Abraham gave gifts; and he sent them away from Isaac his son' (Genesis 25:6)" (Coffman, p.277). Abraham placed the supplies on the shoulders of both Hagar and Ishmael.
- c. They wandered in the wilderness of Beersheba, an area in the direction of Egypt from where Abraham was encamped. Hagar, being an Egyptian by birth, would naturally have headed back home, just as she had done when she fled from Sarah in Genesis 16. It is evident that she "wandered" into the wilderness because she lost her way. There would have been sufficient water to get her to a well as she made her journey.
 - d. Beersheba is said to have been situated about fifty miles southwest of Jerusalem, about half way between the Mediterranean and the southern end of the Dead Sea. Its importance lay in the fact that wells were located there and thus it was a watering place for the camel caravans enroute to and from Egypt.
 - e. By virtue of the fact that Hagar and Ishmael were sent away by their master and mistress, they were being given their freedom. They were no longer servants.
2. Verses 15-16: "And the water was spent in the bottle, and she cast the child under one of the shrubs. And she went, and sat her down over against *him* a good way off, as it were a bowshot: for she said, Let me not see the death of the child. And she sat over against *him*, and lift up her voice, and wept."
 - a. Having lost her way (Leupold, p.605), she soon ran out of water in the dry country through which she was passing. She cast the child under a shrub. A casual reading might give the idea that Ishmael was a little boy who was being carried by his mother. But he was 14 years old when Isaac was born; he was not sent away until after Isaac was weaned, which was done when a child was about three years old (see notes on verse 8). Ishmael was seventeen or more, about the same age of Joseph when he was sold by his brothers into slavery. The word "child" is "lad" and does not mean an infant, but a boy or young man.
 - b. "Finally the lad, though (according to 16:18 combined with 21:8) easily seventeen years old, yet finds his unseasoned strength wavering before that of his mother—a situation not at all uncommon, for the lusty strength of youth often lacks seasoning and so falls short in point of endurance. For a time the mother supports the son, but her fast-failing strength cannot long bear to be doubly taxed... She drops him hastily in exhaustion, an act for which the Hebrew uses the expressive *tashlekh*, 'she cast, or 'threw' him. A parallel New Testament usage is found Matt. 15:30 ('they cast down them i.e., the sick, at His feet'). Another parallel is Gen. 24:64: 'cast down' for 'alighted quickly'" (Leupold, pp.605f).
 - c. Hagar could not bear to see her son suffer and die, so she went a short distance off, a bowshot's distance: the distance archers place their targets (Keil). She has despaired of rescue; there she sat awaiting the slow death of her son and herself. She lifts up her voice in lamentation and grief. Notice the skill with which the inspired writer pictures this mother's love.
 3. Verses 17-18: "And God heard the voice of the lad; and the angel of God called to Hagar out of heaven, and said unto her, What aileth thee, Hagar? fear not; for God hath heard the voice of the lad where he *is*. Arise, lift up the lad, and hold him in thine hand; for I will make him a great nation."
 - a. The fortunes of Ishmael. God cares for the wanderers. He hears the voice of the lad, whose sufferings from thirst are greater than those of the mother. An angel is sent, who addresses Hagar in the simple words of encouragement and direction. "Hold thy hand upon him." Lay thy hand firmly upon him. The former promise (Gen. 16:10) is renewed to her. God also opened her eyes that she saw a well of water, from which the bottle is replenished, and she and the lad are recruited for their further journey....All events are alike ascribed to an ever-watchful Providence, whether they flow from the ordinary laws of nature or some higher law of the divine will. "God was with the lad." Ishmael may have been cured of his childish spleen. It is possible also his father did not forget him, but sent him a stock of cattle with which to begin the pastoral life on his account. "He became an archer." He grew an archer, or multiplied into a tribe of archers. Paran (Gen. 14:6) lay south of Palestine, and therefore on the way to Egypt, out of which his mother took him a wife. The Ishmaelites, therefore, both root and branch, were descended on the mother's side from the Egyptians" (Barnes).
 - b. Nothing is said about Ishmael crying out, but this passage shows that he did, for God heard the voice of the lad. The thing that moved God to show compassion was the cry of the boy.
 - c. The angel addressed Hagar, not Ishmael, and asked, "What aileth thee?" She had forgotten the promise of 16:10ff. There was no need for her to be fearful; God would fulfill his promise. She was told to lift up the lad and hold him in her hand; this means "raise up the lad and support him well" (Leupold).
 - d. "It is an idiomatic expression meaning, 'Give him thy support now, and take care of him till he reaches manhood'" (Coffman, p.279).
 - e. The angel reminded Hagar of the promise that God would make Ishmael a great nation.
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4. Verse 19: "And God opened her eyes, and she saw a well of water; and she went, and filled the bottle with water, and gave the lad drink."
 - a. Her eyes were not necessarily opened miraculously. Clarke says that God simply directed her to find water (p.134).
 - b. Leupold agrees: "Add to this the necessary observation that such wells in the wilderness were usually covered over to prevent excessive evaporation but were then usually marked by some sign to help travelers locate them, and the whole situation is quite readily understood" (p.608).
 5. Verses 20-21: "And God was with the lad; and he grew, and dwelt in the wilderness, and became an archer. And he dwelt in the wilderness of Paran: and his mother took him a wife out of the land of Egypt."
 - a. God watched over Ishmael providentially as he grew to manhood. He continued to live in the wilderness, and became a proficient archer. "There is likelihood that Ishmael, who (vs. 17) had called upon God in prayer, and Hagar, who also had learned to believe in the true God while in Abraham's household, were both persons who stood in the faith all their days and, no doubt, sought to communicate this saving knowledge to their descendants" (Leupold, p.609).
 - b. He lived in the Wilderness of Paran which covered the eastern part of the Sinai Peninsula, from Kadesh-barnea to the Red Sea.
 - c. Hagar took him a wife from Egypt.
- F. Genesis 21:22-34: Abraham and Abimelech Conclude an Agreement.
1. Verses 22-24: "And it came to pass at that time, that Abimelech and Phichol the chief captain of his host spake unto Abraham, saying, God *is* with thee in all that thou doest: Now therefore swear unto me here by God that thou wilt not deal falsely with me, nor with my son, nor with my son's son: *but* according to the kindness that I have done unto thee, thou shalt do unto me, and to the land wherein thou hast sojourned."
 - a. Abraham's increasing power and prosperity had likely decided Abimelech to seek out the covenant described in this passage. "This little incident shows forth clearly how influential and prominent a personage Abraham had become under Yahweh's blessing: neighboring kings were concerned about retaining his goodwill; he ranked on a par with the mighty men of his day. Besides, this groundwork of the story is essential to a proper understanding of Isaac's experiences with the Philistines" (Leupold, p.610).
 - b. Since no explanation is given as to Abimelech's identity, it follows that he is the same one as in chapter twenty.
 - c. Even these Philistines could recognize that God had been with Abraham, and wished to have an amicable association with the patriarch. Thus Abimelech asks Abraham to swear not to deal falsely with him, his son, and his son's son. He sought a pact that would insure peace between Abraham's house and Abimelech's house, in the present and future.
 - d. Abraham agreed with this proposal,
 2. Verses 25-26: "And Abraham reproved Abimelech because of a well of water, which Abimelech's servants had violently taken away. And Abimelech said, I wot not who hath done this thing: neither didst thou tell me, neither yet heard I *of it*, but to day."
 - a. After agreeing to engage in the proposed covenant, Abraham quickly brings up a problem which had developed. Some of Abimelech's people had violently taken over a well that Abraham had dug (vs. 30). The king pleaded ignorance of that affair. It is evident, although unstated, that the well was given back to Abraham. The patriarch brought up the question about the well at the proper time. He agreed to the pact but before entering into it, this problem must be solved.
 - b. "A water well on the edge of the desert was the power of life and death in the hands of the persons controlling it; and that famous well at Beersheba is reported to be still in use after the passing of millenniums. There are many descriptions of it: 'The great well has an internal diameter at the mouth of 12 '6", a circumference of 40'. The shaft is solid masonry of high quality to a great depth until it reaches rock, where a spring perpetually feeds it....A second well, about 600' further south is 5' in diameter, but of equally good construction. The digging of this well involved cutting through 16' of solid rock. It is 38' from the top to the surface of the water'" (Coffman, p.260).
 3. Verses 27-30: "And Abraham took sheep and oxen, and gave them unto Abimelech; and both of them made a covenant. And Abraham set seven ewe lambs of the flock by themselves. And Abimelech said unto Abraham, What *mean* these seven ewe lambs which thou hast set by themselves? And he said, For *these* seven ewe lambs shalt thou take of my hand, that they may be a witness unto me, that I have digged this well."
 - a. See notes on 15:9-11 for details on the making of ancient covenants. The animals were divided and placed in two parallel rows; the principles in the pact each passed between the divided animals.
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- b. Abraham placed seven ewe lambs off to themselves, separate from the covenant animals. He explained to Abimelech that these were his, and were meant to signify that the well belonged to Abraham. Obviously, Abimelech accepted.
 - 4. Verses 31-32: "Wherefore he called that place Beersheba; because there they swore both of them. Thus they made a covenant at Beersheba: then Abimelech rose up, and Phichol the chief captain of his host, and they returned into the land of the Philistines."
 - a. "The play on words involved is not caught in English without some explanation....For it so happens that the root for 'swearing' and the root for 'seven' are identical in Hebrew, *shabha*'..." (Leupold, p.613).
 - b. "Seven" is a reference here to the lambs. The agreement reached, Abimelech and his general returned home.
 - 5. Verses 33-34: "And *Abraham* planted a grove in Beersheba, and called there on the name of the LORD, the everlasting God. And Abraham sojourned in the Philistines' land many days."
 - a. Notice that Hagar and Ishmael were not very far away from the place where the covenant was made.
 - b. The ASV has "tamarisk tree" instead of "grove" in KJV. "The tamarisk with its firm and durable wood was a fitting emblem of the Everlasting God" (Leupold, p.614). Abraham sojourned in the land of the Philistines many days.
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GENESIS 22

A. Introduction.

1. "We are told in Heb. 11:6 that no one can please God without faith, and that alone is sufficient to make the lesson now before us one which should receive our undivided attention. But before faith is perfected it must be tried or tested, and that requires some kind or action on the part of the individual in question. But just any kind or action will not do; it must be action which has been ordained by God" (ALC, 1959, p.226).
2. God had great things in mind for Abraham's descendants, physical and spiritual. But since no stream can rise higher than its source, Abraham must be tested and proved in order for him to be "the father of the faithful." In this chapter, Abraham shows that to him the doing of God's will is supreme. "Was not Abraham our father justified by works, when he had offered Isaac his son upon the altar? Seest thou how faith wrought with his works, and by works was faith made perfect? And the scripture was fulfilled which saith, Abraham believed God, and it was imputed unto him for righteousness: and he was called the Friend of God. Ye see then how that by works a man is justified, and not by faith only" (Jas. 2:21-24).
3. "With this chapter we reach the climax of the faith life of Abraham—the supreme test and the supreme victory....The inner need of it becomes apparent when we weigh carefully how much love Abraham would naturally bestow upon his son Isaac....But strong love on the part of man, even if such a love be good and natural, is apt in the course of time to crowd aside the higher love of God. Abraham was in extreme danger of coming by slow degrees and in a manner hardly observed by himself to the point where he would have loved his son more than his God" (Leupold, p.616).
4. "This great chapter lies at the very heart of Genesis, and for that matter, at the center and citadel of the entire Old Covenant" (Coffman, p.283).
5. We are apt to think when we read this chapter that the subject is the sacrifice of Isaac. However, the proper emphasis is stated in the first verse: it deals with the trying of Abraham's faith. His faith was proved by the demand God gave him to offer Isaac. This command seems to contradict the gracious promises God had been giving Abraham since he left Ur of the Chaldees. It seemed to have originated more with Satan than with God. "Yet herein the patriarch's faith proved itself a true faith, that he leaned in full trust upon his God that all must eventuate to the glory of God and to the eternal good of His children" (Leupold, p.618).
6. Why did God command such a thing?
 - a. At least one of the purposes as it related to Abraham was given by Francisco thus: "Not until Abraham acted upon his faith did that faith come to fruition. Until he lifted the knife over his son, his ultimate surrender to God had not occurred. Faith is not just a nice attitude toward God; it is submission to his will. 'To will it in the heart is not enough. The act is the ultimate test.' That this view is correct appears certain in the light of James' statement that Abraham was justified 'when he offered up Isaac' (James 2:21)" (Clyde T. Francisco, TBC *Genesis*, Broadman Press Nashville, 1962, p.27; quoted by Coffman, p.284).
 - b. "All over the ancient pagan world, human sacrifice was everywhere practiced, with great kings sacrificing their own sons, as did some of the kings of Israel; and since that abominable practice was so wide-spread and influential in the world, it was a matter of eternal consequence that the faith of Abraham should have been demonstrated as being superior to the faith of pagans, in every particular" (Coffman, p.284).
 - c. "However, one of the greatest and most likely purposes of God in thus testing the faith of Abraham was that of providing a type of the Lord Jesus Christ in the person of Isaac" (Coffman, p.285).

B. Genesis 22:1-2: The Command to Offer Isaac.

1. Verse 1: "And it came to pass after these things, that God did tempt Abraham, and said unto him, Abraham: and he said, Behold, *here I am*."
 - a. At some unspecified period of time following the events of the preceding chapter, God spoke to Abraham, announcing the greatest test of faith any man was ever asked to undertake. God likely spoke to Abraham in a dream since the Bible says that the great man arose early in the morning to obey (vs. 3).
 - b. The KJV speaks of this being a temptation, but not in the sense of an enticement to sin.
 - 1) "Blessed is the man that endureth temptation: for when he is tried, he shall receive the crown of life, which the Lord hath promised to them that love him" (Jas. 1:12).
 - 2) "By faith Abraham, when he *was tried*, offered up Isaac: and he that had received the promises offered up his only begotten son" (Heb. 11:17).
 - 3) "And it came to pass after these things, that God did prove Abraham..." (Gen. 22:1, ASV).

- c. None of the things which God had previously asked of Abraham demanded such a sacrifice as did this. Abraham could have come to have the natural desire to depart from Ur, but the only way the patriarch would have offered Isaac would be at the command of the Almighty!
 - d. We test and prove products before we put trust in them. Engineers test the soundness and durability of iron girders and ships' cables before putting them into service. They do not judge them merely by how they look. So faith must be tested.
2. Verse 2: "And he said, Take now thy son, thine only *son* Isaac, whom thou lovest, and get thee into the land of Moriah; and offer him there for a burnt offering upon one of the mountains which I will tell thee of."
- a. Notice how specific God's instruction was: take (1) thy son, (2) thine only son, (3) Isaac, (4) whom thou lovest. This is said to be the first mention in the Old Testament of love. It is significant that the first mention of love in the New Testament is God's audible announcement from heaven that Jesus is his beloved Son (Mt. 3: 17). Isaac is a type of Christ. Both were sons of promise; both came by miraculous birth; both were sacrificed (Isaac only in the mind and intent of his father); both were raised up (Isaac in a figure).
 - b. Abraham was to offer Isaac on one of the mountains in the land of Moriah. The Bible does not directly say that the place intended was Jerusalem but that is the most likely place. 2 Chronicles 3:1 speaks of Solomon building the temple in Jerusalem on Mount Moriah (cf. 2 Sam. 24:18ff). Some have suggested that the site could very well have been the exact place where Jesus was crucified, Golgotha.
 - c. The record does not tell when and how God related to Abraham exactly which mountain on which the sacrifice was to be made. That he did so is implied.

C. Genesis 22:3-8: The Preparation for the Sacrifice.

1. Verses 3-4: "And Abraham rose up early in the morning, and saddled his ass, and took two of his young men with him, and Isaac his son, and clave the wood for the burnt offering, and rose up, and went unto the place of which God had told him. Then on the third day Abraham lifted up his eyes, and saw the place afar off."
 - a. Abraham rose early in the morning to carry out God's instructions. He had fixed his heart to obey God regardless of what was commanded, thus there is no quibbling on his part. Did Abraham tell Sarah what he was going to do? There is nothing in the record to answer this question. He made haste to obey. "Thy word *is* true *from* the beginning: and every one of thy righteous judgments *endureth* for ever" (Ps. 119:160).
 - b. He made the proper preparations: he saddled an ass; cut the wood; took two young men and Isaac, and began his journey. The young men were taken to help with the work along the way; the donkey probably carried the wood and perhaps other supplies.
 - c. On the third day, Abraham spotted the place afar off. The distance from Beersheba to Jerusalem was about 50 miles. They probably arrived in the area about noon on the third day; the events which are related in the following verses took place on that same day.
 - d. Remember that Abraham was quite old at this time: well over a hundred years. We are not told how old Isaac was. Josephus asserts that he was 25, which would make his father 125. He is referred to as a "lad" in verse 5, a term which was applied to young men:
 - 1) Joseph (Gen. 41:12,40,46): he was 30 years old; Shechem (Gen. 34:19): was of marriageable age; Soldiers (1 Sam 30:17; 1 Kings 20:14).
 - 2) Joshua (Ex 33:11; Josh. 24:29): he is said to have been 45-50 at the time.
 - e. "Nothing in the literature of mankind approaches the dramatic and heart-breaking pathos of these stark words" (Coffman, p.287).
2. Verse 5: "And Abraham said unto his young men, Abide ye here with the ass; and I and the lad will go yonder and worship, and come again to you."
 - a. The two young men were not permitted to accompany Abraham and Isaac as they went on to Moriah. Notice that Abraham said they would go and return: both of them. Thus the great man believed that somehow God would work things out: "Accounting that God was able to raise him up, even from the dead; from whence also he received him in a figure" (Heb. 11:19).
 - b. Abraham said he and Isaac would go on the mountain and worship. "This is a classical definition of worship; worship does not mean feelings of ecstasy, for Abraham's heart was breaking...is not some kind of subjective attitude..." (Coffman, p.288).
 - c. Notice also that they left their present location to go to worship. From this we may perceive that all we do is not worship. Abraham did not worship until he arrived at the prescribed place and began the prescribed sacrifice.
3. Verses 6-8: "And Abraham took the wood of the burnt offering, and laid *it* upon Isaac his son; and he took the fire in his hand, and a knife; and they went both of them together. And Isaac spake unto Abraham his father,

and said, My father: and he said, Here *am* I, my son. And he said, Behold the fire and the wood: but where *is* the lamb for a burnt offering? And Abraham said, My son, God will provide himself a lamb for a burnt offering: so they went both of them together."

- a. He put the wood on Isaac, thus showing that the lad was not the child most folks think he was. Abraham took the fire for the wood and the knife with which to slay Isaac. They made their way to the top. What must have been going through Abraham's mind?
- b. As they went along, Isaac asks the burning question: where is the lamb? How this must have seared Abraham's heart! He replied that God would provide a lamb.

D. Genesis 22:9-14: The Sacrifice is Offered.

1. Verse 9: "And they came to the place which God had told him of; and Abraham built an altar there, and laid the wood in order, and bound Isaac his son, and laid him on the altar upon the wood."
 - a. Abraham built the altar and arranged the wood; he bound his son and laid him on the wood. If Isaac was large and strong enough to bear the load of wood, he would have been strong enough to resist his aged father's efforts to bind him. It is obvious that Isaac did not struggle; thus Abraham must have told him what he was about.
 - b. As Christ did not refuse the cross, so Isaac did not refuse to be an offering. This was a great test of faith for Abraham and for his son; both passed gloriously!
2. Verses 10-12: "And Abraham stretched forth his hand, and took the knife to slay his son. And the angel of the LORD called unto him out of heaven, and said, Abraham, Abraham: and he said, Here *am* I. And he said, Lay not thine hand upon the lad, neither do thou any thing unto him: for now I know that thou fearest God, seeing thou hast not withheld thy son, thine only *son* from me."
 - a. As he stretched forth his hand and took the knife, the angel of the Lord stopped him.
 - b. In his heart he had already resolved to offer his son; God knew his heart.
3. Verses 13-14: "And Abraham lifted up his eyes, and looked, and behold behind *him* a ram caught in a thicket by his horns: and Abraham went and took the ram, and offered him up for a burnt offering in the stead of his son. And Abraham called the name of that place Jehovahjireh: as it is said *to* this day, In the mount of the LORD it shall be seen."
 - a. Then the patriarch saw a ram caught in a thicket by the horns; this he offered as the sacrifice. God had indeed provided!
 - b. He named this place, Jehovah-jireh: the Lord will see, or provide.

E. Genesis 22:15-19: The Promise Restated.

1. Verses 15-16: "And the angel of the LORD called unto Abraham out of heaven the second time, And said, By myself have I sworn, saith the LORD, for because thou hast done this thing, and hast not withheld thy son, thine only *son*:"
 - a. Bible critics claim that "the second time" implies that a redactor has inserted additional information into the text. Such critics try to explain the Old Testament's existence on the basis of the Fragmentary Hypothesis, which asserts that legends and myths were passed down for many generations until someone put these stories in written form; and various other unknown writers in later generations added bits and pieces to the story. There is absolutely no proof to establish such a theory, and much evidence which disproves it in its entirety. See Jonah 3 where God addressed that prophet a second time.
 - b. "I have sworn." After Abraham had sacrificed the ram, the angel of the Lord called this second time to Abraham, renewing the Promise, and confirmed it with an oath. "For when God made promise to Abraham, because he could swear by no greater, he swore by himself, saying, Surely blessing I will bless thee, and multiplying I will multiply thee. And so, after he had patiently endured, he obtained the promise. For men verily swear by the greater: and an oath for confirmation is to them an end of all strife. Wherein God, willing more abundantly to show unto the heirs of promise the immutability of his counsel, confirmed it by an oath: that by two immutable things, in which it was impossible for God to lie, we might have a strong consolation, who have fled for refuge to lay hold upon the hope set before us..." (Heb. 6:13-18).
 - c. "The outstanding feature about this word is the new and entirely unique element of the divine oath: God swore by Himself. No other instance of God's oath by himself appears in the Scriptures, except when the oath is mentioned where God swears that Israel because of its disobedience shall not enter into the land of promise (Num. 14:28), or when it is said that the Lord swore to give the Promised Land to Israel" (Leupold, p.634).
 - d. "Thine only son." Isaac was the only son of promise; he was the legal son. Ishmael was to have no part in the great promise; the lineage leading down through the ages to Christ went through Isaac.
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2. Verse 17: "That in blessing I will bless thee, and in multiplying I will multiply thy seed as the stars of the heaven, and as the sand which *is* upon the sea shore; and thy seed shall possess the gate of his enemies."
 - a. God promised again that Abraham's descendants would be as innumerable as the stars in the sky, and added that they would also be as numerous as the sands on the seashore.
 - b. The Lord is illustrating to Abraham the vast number of descendants he would have, both physical and spiritual. The word "seed" in the first part of verse 17 includes all the descendants of Abraham. There is some debate about the meaning of the same word in the last clause of the verse.
 - 1) Coffman says it is to be understood as singular and applied to Christ. He argues that the Jews do not today "possess the gates" of their enemies, and that during most of their Bible history they did not do so. To possess the gate of the enemy is to have control over the city. The key-point of a city's defense was with its gate. He says that only in Christ is this promise realized (p.293).
 - 2) Others apply it to Israel throughout its 1500-year history as God's chosen people. As long as they were faithful, they were enabled by God to overcome any enemy which assailed them. The promise would not have applied during those times when they were unfaithful.
 3. Verse 18: "And in thy seed shall all the nations of the earth be blessed; because thou hast obeyed my voice."
 - a. It is clear from Galatians that this statement is fulfilled in Christ: "Now to Abraham and his seed were the promises made. He saith not, And to seeds, as of many; but as of one, And to thy seed, which is Christ" (3:16). Paul's argument turned on the difference between the singular and plural of "seed." "The seed" through whom all the nations would be blessed Paul identifies as Christ.
 - 1) Galatians 3:26-29: "For ye are all the children of God by faith in Christ Jesus. For as many of you as have been baptized into Christ have put on Christ. There is neither Jew nor Greek, there is neither bond nor free, there is neither male nor female: for ye are all one in Christ Jesus. "And if ye *be* Christ's, then are ye Abraham's seed, and heirs according to the promise."
 - 2) Acts 3:22-23: "For Moses truly said unto the fathers, A prophet shall the Lord your God raise up unto you of your brethren, like unto me; him shall ye hear in all things whatsoever he shall say unto you. And it shall come to pass, *that* every soul, which will not hear that prophet, shall be destroyed from among the people."
 - 3) Acts 4:11-12: "This is the stone which was set at nought of you builders, which is become the head of the corner. Neither is there salvation in any other: for there is none other name under heaven given among men, whereby we must be saved."
 - b. God would arrange these blessings because of the obedient faith of Abraham. The world does not appreciate how much it owes Abraham. If that patriarch had failed the test, where would we be today?
 4. Verse 19: "So Abraham returned unto his young men, and they rose up and went together to Beersheba; and Abraham dwelt at Beersheba."
 - a. He and Isaac were still on the mountain while the preceding information was being revealed. Afterwards, they returned to the young men and went back to Beersheba.
 - b. Did Abraham and/or Isaac tell about these events to Sarah? It would be hard to think they did not speak of these powerful experiences.
- F. Genesis 22:20-24: Update on Abraham's Brother, Nahor.
1. Verse 20: "And it came to pass after these things, that it was told Abraham, saying, Behold, Milcah, she hath also born children unto thy brother Nahor."
 - a. This information was probably delivered by someone in a passing caravan.
 - b. There was probably little travel between those places, so news spread slowly.
 2. Verses 21-24: "Huz his firstborn, and Buz his brother, and Kemuel the father of Aram, And Chesed, and Hazo, and Pildash, and Jidlaph, and Bethuel. And Bethuel begat Rebekah: these eight Milcah did bear to Nahor, Abraham's brother. And his concubine, whose name *was* Reumah, she bare also Tebah, and Gaham, and Thahash, and Maachah."
 - a. The significance of this passage is to give the background of Rebekah, who was to become Isaac's wife. On some of the names listed, see the following verses: Genesis 10:23 (Hut); Jeremiah 25:23; Job 32:2 (Buz).
 - b. Bethuel was the father of Laban and Rebekah (Gen. 24:24,29). Isaac married Rebekah; and Jacob later married Laban's two daughters, Leah and Rachel (Gen 28:6-7; 29:15-30).
 - c. Some of these names were used by other people.
 3. Isaac: A type of Christ (See Coffman, p.294).
 - a. Each was born of a miraculous birth: Christ of a virgin; Isaac of aged parents.
 - b. Both were sons of promise.
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- 1) Genesis 17:17: "Then Abraham fell upon his face, and laughed, and said in his heart, Shall *a child* be born unto him that is an hundred years old? and shall Sarah, that is ninety years old, bear?"
 - 2) Micah 5:2: "But thou, Bethlehem Ephratah, *though* thou be little among the thousands of Judah, *yet* out of thee shall he come forth unto me *that is* to be ruler in Israel; whose goings forth *have been* from of old, from everlasting."
 - 3) Galatians 4:4: "But when the fulness of the time was come, God sent forth his Son, made of a woman, made under the law."
 - c. Both were called "the only begotten son."
 - 1) John 3:16: "For God so loved the world, that he gave his only begotten Son, that whosoever believeth in him should not perish, but have everlasting life."
 - 2) Hebrews 11:17: "By faith Abraham, when he was tried, offered up Isaac: and he that had received the promises offered up his only begotten *son*."
 - d. Both bore wood on the way to be sacrificed.
 - 1) Genesis 22:6: "And Abraham took the wood of the burnt offering, and laid *it* upon Isaac his son; and he took the fire in his hand, and a knife; and they went both of them together."
 - 2) John 19:17: "And he bearing his cross went forth into a place called *the place* of a skull, which is called in the Hebrew Golgotha."
 - e. Both Jesus and Isaac consented to suffer death.
 - 1) John 10:17-18: "Therefore doth my Father love me, because I lay down my life, that I might take it again. No man taketh it from me, but I lay it down of myself. I have power to lay it down, and I have power to take it again. This commandment have I received of my Father."
 - 2) Genesis 22:1-12.
 - f. Both consented to be "bound."
 - g. Both were laid upon the wood.
 - h. Both were offered by their fathers.
 - i. Both sacrifices occurred on the same hill.
 - j. Both were in the prime and vigor of life.
 - k. Both were possibly about 33 years of age.
 - l. Both were "dead" for three days and nights: Christ literally; Isaac figuratively.
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GENESIS 23

A. Genesis 23:1-2: Sarah Dies at Age 127.

1. Verse 1: "And Sarah was an hundred and seven and twenty years old: *these were* the years of the life of Sarah."
 - a. Bible critics assert that this chapter belongs to the so-called Priestly Source (P) in the Fragmentary Hypothesis. However, a few years ago the Hebrew University in Jerusalem published a five-year computer study which revealed that a single author wrote the entire Pentateuch. Thus the critical theory was shown to be false. "After the climax of the preceding chapter the events of the life of Abraham taper off gradually toward the conclusion. The seemingly unimportant event of this chapter, an event that could have been reported far more briefly, is recorded at greater length because it is an act of faith, in fact, a rather outstanding act" (Leupold, p.640). The events depicted furnish us with a worthy picture of the patriarch, and form a tribute to the godliness of Sarah. It is a very fitting and proper inclusion of the inspired Moses.
 - b. Sarah is the only woman whose age is expressly given in the scriptures; hers is the only detailed report of a woman's death and burial recorded in the Bible (Coffman). She died at the age of 127 years, when Isaac was 37 years old. Some scholars suppose that Isaac was about 33 when he was taken by Abraham to be offered (Gen. 22). Josephus said her death occurred "a little while after" Isaac was taken to be offered. This statement, together with the similarities between Isaac and Jesus, might lead us to suppose she died about four years after Genesis 22. However, the Bible does not tell us Isaac's age in Genesis 22. The word "lad" could describe one at most any age, up possibly even to fifty. He was big and strong enough to carry the entire load of wood to be used in the sacrifice.
 - c. Sarah is considered an important woman in the Scriptures; she is used in Galatians 4:22ff as a type of "the Jerusalem which is above." Peter spoke of Christian women as being Sarah's daughters if they maintained the spiritual qualities which characterized her (1 Pet. 3:1-6). Sarah and Mary are two of the most outstanding women in the Bible.
2. Verse 2: "And Sarah died in Kirjatharba; the same *is* Hebron in the land of Canaan: and Abraham came to mourn for Sarah, and to weep for her."
 - a. She died at Kirjath-arba, which is also known as Hebron. "The name Kirjath Arba, *i.e.* the city of Arba, which Hebron bears here and also in chap. 35:27, and other passages, and which it still bore at the time of the conquest of Canaan by the Israelites (Josh. 14:15), was not the original name of the city, but was first given to it by Arba the Anakite and his family, who had not yet arrived there in the time of the patriarchs. It was probably given by them when they took possession of the city, and remained until the Israelites captured it and restored the original name" (Keil, pp.254f).
 - b. Sarah died in the land of Canaan. Evidently Abraham had moved back to Hebron from Beersheba. The fact that Sarah died in Canaan is significant in that it tied the posterity of Abraham to that land.
 - c. Abraham came to mourn for Sarah. This implies that he was not present, at least not in the tent with her, when she died. The weeping and mourning was usually accompanied by the lamenter falling upon the ground (cf. 2 Sam. 12:1-23).
 - d. From Genesis 3:15, the history of the scheme of redemption flows through Sarah, who miraculously bore Isaac, on to Mary who conceived Jesus while still a virgin. God put great honor on each of these women.

B. Genesis 23:3-16: Abraham Buys Machpelah.

1. Verses 3-4: "And Abraham stood up from before his dead, and spake unto the sons of Heth, saying, I *am* a stranger and a sojourner with you: give me a possession of a buryingplace with you, that I may bury my dead out of my sight."
 - a. Abraham mourned, but he could not spend the rest of his life grieving. It was often the case that the body of the deceased was interred on the same day of their death. He mourned, but then had to make the necessary preparations for her burial. He went to the Hittites among whom he dwelt to ask of them a burial place. By asking them to "give" him the burying-place, he was not suggesting that they donate it free of charge, but used the term as we use it today.
 - b. "The tragic end of the life of a loved one never fails to be a traumatic shock to the bereaved; but the part of nobility is that of acceptance in humble submissiveness to the will of God, drying the tears, and confronting the tasks that remain....How shameful is that response to grief that permits sorrow to overcome the mourner, that renounces all duty, turns resentful against God himself, and becomes, finally, not only more tragic than death itself but sinful as well" (Coffman, pp.297f).

- c. God had promised Canaan to Abraham's descendants but the patriarch till now owned not a square inch. He fully believed that God would fulfill his promise, thus he set out to buy a permanent burial site for his beloved wife, which was also intended to later receive his own body, and those of his offspring. This is a very strong declaration of faith on his part. This is the first mention of a grave in the Old Testament. Civilized people through the centuries chose burial to cremation.
 - d. The children of Heth were descendants of Heth, one of the sons of Canaan; they were known as the Hittites, a powerful nation at one time. They possessed the city and the territory surrounding it. He must obtain the property from them.
 - e. He begins by acknowledging that he is a stranger and sojourner among them. A stranger is a foreigner in a strange land possessing no property and having no fixed dwelling; one who is only passing through. A sojourner is one who owns no property but is living temporarily in a land not his own. Abraham understood that he was a stranger and sojourner on the earth itself: "By faith Abraham, when he was called to go out into a place which he should after receive for an inheritance, obeyed; and he went out, not knowing whither he went. By faith he sojourned in the land of promise, as *in* a strange country, dwelling in tabernacles with Isaac and Jacob, the heirs with him of the same promise: For he looked for a city which hath foundations, whose builder and maker *is* God. Through faith also Sara herself received strength to conceive seed, and was delivered of a child when she was past age, because she judged him faithful who had promised. Therefore sprang there even of one, and him as good as dead, *so many* as the stars of the sky in multitude, and as the sand which is by the sea shore innumerable. These all died in faith, not having received the promises, but having seen them afar off, and were persuaded of *them*, and embraced *them*, and confessed that they were strangers and pilgrims on the earth. For they that say such things declare plainly that they seek a country. And truly, if they had been mindful of that *country* from whence they came out, they might have had opportunity to have returned. But now they desire a better *country*, that is, an heavenly: wherefore God is not ashamed to be called their God: for he hath prepared for them a city" (Heb 11:8-16).
 - f. The reason for his bringing up the subject to his neighbors was based on the ancient oriental custom of using a mediator in this kind of commercial transaction (Coffman).
2. Verses 5-6: "And the children of Heth answered Abraham, saying unto him, Hear us, my lord: thou *art* a mighty prince among us: in the choice of our sepulchres bury thy dead; none of us shall withhold from thee his sepulchre, but that thou mayest bury thy dead."
 - a. The Hittites responded in a very friendly manner to Abraham's request. They offered him the free use of any of their sepulchres. They spoke of him being a "mighty prince" among them. The margin and ASV render this, "prince of God." This heathen people knew that God was with Abraham.
 - b. No doubt stories of his past exploits, perhaps even his intercession in behalf of Sodom, were known. Certainly they could know that no enemy had done harm to this man, which could be accounted for on the basis that God was with him. They knew God only in a limited way, and probably had perverted his worship by using idols. But they were friendly toward Abraham, and seemed to be honorable men.
 3. Verses 7-9: "And Abraham stood up, and bowed himself to the people of the land, *even* to the children of Heth. And he communed with them, saying, If it be your mind that I should bury my dead out of my sight; hear me, and entreat for me to Ephron the son of Zohar, That he may give me the cave of Machpelah, which he hath, which *is* in the end of his field; for as much money as it is worth he shall give it me for a possession of a buryingplace amongst you."
 - a. Abraham stood up and bowed himself before the people, the common display of courtesy of the time. He asks that they entreat Ephron to sell him a certain place that would fit his need: the cave of Machpelah. He did not ask to buy the field that went with it.
 - b. According to the scholars, if he had sold only the cave and retained the field, Ephron would still have been liable for the taxes of the entire parcel of land. Hence, he concluded an agreement in which Abraham bought the field and the cave. "'Under the old Hittite law code, a landholder continued to be responsible for the dues (taxes) on a recognized unit of property unless he disposed of it in its entirety'" (Meredith G. Kline, NBCR, Grand Rapids: Eerdmans Publishing Co., 1970, p.100; quoted by Coffman, p. 300). Abraham was willing to pay the worth of the property.
 4. Verses 10-11: "And Ephron dwelt among the children of Heth: and Ephron the Hittite answered Abraham in the audience of the children of Heth, *even* of all that went in at the gate of his city, saying, Nay, my lord, hear me: the field give I thee, and the cave that *is* therein, I give it thee; in the presence of the sons of my people give I it thee: bury thy dead."
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- a. They were now at the gate of the city where such business was usually conducted. There were many people present to witness the following transaction. Ephron offered to give the property to Abraham.
 - b. "Abraham should consider the field and the cave as already given to him. However, we are afraid, judging at least by what all Oriental travelers report under this head, that this remarkable liberality was an empty gesture. Orientals offer you as a gift whatever you admire; they do not expect that you will take it.....It would... have been rather improper for Abraham to accept the generous offer, because in that case Abraham would really have been ready to receive from a heathen man what in reality he had already received from a higher hand..." (Leupold, p.648).
 - c. Concerning the Oriental custom of offering to give to the prospective buyer the thing he was wanting to purchase, Keil says: "This was a turn in the affair which is still customary in the East; the design, so far as it is seriously meant at all, being either to obtain a present in return which will abundantly compensate for the value of the gift, or, what is still more frequently the case, to preclude any abatement in the price to be asked" (p.255).
5. Verses 12-16: "And Abraham bowed down himself before the people of the land. And he spake unto Ephron in the audience of the people of the land, saying, But if thou *wilt give it*, I pray thee, hear me: I will give thee money for the field; take *it* of me, and I will bury my dead there. And Ephron answered Abraham, saying unto him, My lord, hearken unto me: the land *is worth* four hundred shekels of silver; what *is* that betwixt me and thee? bury therefore thy dead. And Abraham hearkened unto Ephron; and Abraham weighed to Ephron the silver, which he had named in the audience of the sons of Heth, four hundred shekels of silver, current *money* with the merchant."
- a. Abraham bowed himself before the people and insisted that he wanted to pay for the land. According to Ephron, the land was worth 400 shekels of silver. "By all accounts, 400 shekels of silver was an exorbitant price. 'Omri paid 6,000 shekels for the whole site of Samaria; and Jeremiah gave only 17 shekels for a parcel of land probably about the size of Machpelah'" (Coffman, p.301). "And he bought the hill Samaria of Shemer for two talents of silver, and built on the hill, and called the name of the city which he built, after the name of Shemer, owner of the hill, Samaria" (I Kings 16:24).
 - b. Abraham did not offer any quibble, but promptly weighed out the amount. "The shekel of silver 'current with the merchant,' i.e. the shekel which passed in trade as of standard weight, was 274 Parisian grains, so that the price of the piece of land was £52, 10s.; a very considerable amount for that time" (Keil, p.256). "What is that betwixt me and thee...?" "The land is worth 400 shekels of silver, a trifling amount for such wealthy men as we."

C. Genesis 23:17-20: Machpelah Described.

1. Verses 17-18: "And the field of Ephron, which *was* in Machpelah, which *was* before Mamre, the field, and the cave which *was* therein, and all the trees that *were* in the field, that *were* in all the borders round about, were made sure Unto Abraham for a possession in the presence of the children of Heth, before all that went in at the gate of his city."
- a. For his 400 shekels of silver, Abraham got the field, the cave, and all the trees which were in the field and around the borders of the property. The property was legally and officially turned over to Abraham. The deal was made sure. The property was said to be "before" Mamre.
- b. "This expression means 'east of Mamre. 'Ancient man considered the east to be in front of him.' The place of Machpelah is still visible today toward Hebron, where a great mosque has been constructed over the cave where Abraham, Isaac, Jacob, and their respective wives, Sarah, Rebekah, and Leah lie entombed. Archeological confirmation of the authenticity of the site, however, is impossible, since all entrances to the actual cave have long been sealed; and no Christian has been allowed in the cave itself for the better half of a millennium. There is little doubt, however, that the grave sites, if not the actual remains, are really there. Deane conjectured that, whether or not the bodies of Abraham, Isaac, and their wives have been preserved, there can be little doubt that, 'The embalmed mummy of Jacob may exist in a state of preservation as perfect as that of any Pharaoh of Egypt.' Notably, Isaac, although one of the great types of Jesus, was not a type in the manner of his burial; that honor pertained to Jacob. Just as Joseph begged the body of the first Israel from Pharaoh; another Joseph begged the body of the Second Israel from Pilate; and both were buried 'mummy style,' as John 19:40 affirms. Neither Jacob nor Jesus was buried in a 'shroud' (Coffman, p.302).
- c. McGarvey has some informative material about the Cave of Macpelah:
 - 1) "The center of attraction at Hebron is the har'am, or sacred inclosure, which is supposed to include the Cave of Macpelah. It is at the upper edge of the town, and near its southern end. Its wall is built of beveled stones, like those in the oldest part of the temple-wall in Jerusalem, and this has led many to

suppose that it was built by Solomon....The old wall is from 50 to 60 feet high, according to the slope of the ground, and it is strengthened by square pilasters at regular intervals. A new wall, running up some 10 to 15 feet higher, has been built by the Moslem on top of the old one. The space inclosed by this wall is a quadrangle 112 feet wide and 198 feet long....Houses are built against the side toward the town, a flight of broad steps ascends on the southeast side to the level of a portico which runs across the northeastern end, and in this end which is toward the hill, is the entrance.

- 2) "Under the escort of the sheikh of the town a Christian is allowed to ascend the steps, but he must go no farther; and when he is approaching even this near, the women and boys of the town are heaping bitter curses on his head. The prince of Wales was the first person of Christian faith permitted to enter this inclosure since the Moslem have had possession of it. This occurred in 1862, and Dean Stanley, who accompanied him as one of his suite, gives an interesting account of the visit....The same privilege was accorded the Marquis of Bute in 1866, and Crown-Prince of Prussia in 1869. About one-third of the interior space is occupied by a mosque, once a Christian church.
- 3) "Cenotaphs [a tomb or monument] of Abraham and Sarah, Isaac and Rebecca, Jacob and Leah, occupy spots, some within the mosque and some outside of it, and one also represents Joseph, who, according to a Moslem tradition, was disinterred after being buried at Shechem, and removed to this place. The distinguished visitors just named were allowed to examine these objects, but were not permitted to descend into the cavern beneath the floor, which is the real restingplace of the dead; nor, indeed, were they allowed to see the door by which admission is gained. They saw only a circular hole into the rock, eight inches in diameter, which is supposed to pass through the roof of the cave.
- 4) "The Moslem guardians of the mosque say that even they dare not enter the cavern lest they incur the displeasure of the holy dead and be smitten with a curse. They relate that about 2500 years ago a servant of a great king entered there; that he went in sound in mind and corpulent in person, but that he came out blind, deaf, withered, and crippled. A similar feeling of superstitious dread attaches to all such shrines in the minds of the Moslem, and doubtless this is one cause of their persistent opposition against the entrance of Christians into their holy places.....
- 5) "It is quite possible that the body of Jacob is yet there in a good state of preservation, seeing that it was embalmed in the best style of Egyptian art; but it is scarcely possible that the bones of any of the other occupants of the cave are yet preserved" (pp.248-250).
- d. The ISBE provides this information about Machpelah:
 - 1) "It is over this cave that the chief mystery hangs. It is not known whether it has been entered by any man at present alive, Moslem or otherwise. While the cave was in the hands of the Crusaders, pilgrims and others were allowed to visit this spot. Thus Rabbi Benjamin of Tudela, writing in 1163 AD, says that 'if a Jew comes, who gives an additional fee to the keeper of the cave, an iron door is opened, which dates from the times of our forefathers who rest in peace, and with a burning candle in his hand the visitor descends into a first cave which is empty, traverses a second in the same state and at last reaches a third which contains six sepulchres—those of Abraham, Isaac and Jacob, and of Sarah, Rebecca and Leah, one opposite the other....
 - 2) A lamp burns in the cave and upon the sepulchre continually, both night and day.' The account reminds us of the condition of many Christian tomb-shrines in Palestine today" [International Standard Bible Encyclopaedia, Electronic Database Copyright (c)1996 by Biblesoft]/
- e. "Incidentally, we are here informed also what it was that prompted Abraham's desire for this particular piece of ground: it lay 'over against Mamre,' therefore directly within sight of Mamre and contiguous to it. Abraham wanted a place of burial as near as possible to his place of residence, which since 14:13 apparently had always been the terebinths of Mamre, when Abraham was dwelling in the vicinity of Hebron" (Leupold, p. 651).
- f. "For Abraham in faith desired that his wife's and his own remains might rest in the land that had been promised to him and his descendants after him. He wanted his descendants to know that he had believed the divine promise. The presence of his sepulchre among them would in later years be mute but eloquent testimony to them all that Abraham was sure of the validity of God's promises" (ibid.).
- g. The deal was consummated before the children of Heth. Thus was it made sure.
2. Verses 19-20: "And after this, Abraham buried Sarah his wife in the cave of the field of Machpelah before Mamre: the same *is* Hebron in the land of Canaan. And the field, and the cave that *is* therein, were made sure unto Abraham for a possession of a buryingplace by the sons of Heth."

- a. "Some have marvelled that so much is made of this in the Bible; but the importance of it lies in the fact that this was the only part of the literal land of Canaan that Abraham ever owned" (Coffman, p.302).
- b. The statement that Mamre is Hebron seems to mean that Mamre is part of Hebron.
- c. Did Abraham believe in the resurrection of the dead? "By faith Abraham, when he was tried, offered up Isaac: and he that had received the promises offered up his only begotten *son*. Of whom it was said, That in Isaac shall thy seed be called: Accounting that God *was* able to raise *him* up, even from the dead; from whence also he received him in a figure" (Heb. 11:17-19).
- d. Machpelah: "The tract containing the field and cave in the end of Ephron's field, which Abraham bought as his burying ground from Ephron and the sons of Heth (Gen 23:9); his only possession in the land of promise. All ancient versions translated Machpelah 'the double cave,' from *kaphal*, to divide or double. Either there were two entrances or two receptacles for bodies. Gesenius derives it from a root, 'portion.' A mosque now covers it. The sacred precinct (*harem* (OT:2765) is enclosed by a wall, the oldest in Palestine. The masonry is more antique than the S.W. wall of the haram at Jerusalem; one stone is 38 ft. long, 3 1/4 ft. deep. The beveling is shallow, and at latest belongs to the age of Solomon; Jewish ancient tradition ascribes it to David. It lay near Hebron....The sepulchers of Abraham, Sarah, Isaac, Rebekah, Jacob, and Leah are shown on the mosque floor; but the real sepulchers are in the cave below the floor; the cave opens to the S., and the bodies were laid with their heads to the N" [Fausset's Bible Dictionary, Electronic Database Copyright ©1998 by BibleSoft].

D. Note on the Alleged Contradiction Between Genesis 23, Joshua 24:32, and Acts 7:15-16.

1. "One of the so-called 'contradictions' in the Bible is related in this purchase of Machpelah from Ephron. Stephen...stated that, 'Our fathers were carried over into Shechem, and laid in the sepulchre that Abraham bought for a sum of money of the sons of Emmor (presumably the same as Shechem)' (Acts 7:16). Like all such variations, our failure to understand them stems from the extremely abbreviated record contained in the Bible. Stephen referred to a second purchase of a burial site in Shechem, another place where Abraham had built an altar" (Coffman, p.303). He lived nearly 40 years after Sarah died and had time to do a great many things not recorded in the sacred text.
2. "Certainly, none of Stephen's hearers accused him of having any of his facts wrong; and we are certain that if Stephen's words had not been strictly true, that evil crowd that stoned him to death would have shouted the error to the highest heaven" (Coffman, pp.303f).
3. There were two purchases made by different men at different times.
 - a. Joshua 24:32: "And the bones of Joseph, which the children of Israel brought up out of Egypt, buried they in Shechem, in a parcel of ground which Jacob bought of the sons of Hamor the father of Shechem for an hundred pieces of silver: and it became the inheritance of the children of Joseph."
 - b. Acts 7:15-16: "So Jacob went down into Egypt, and died, he, and our fathers, And were carried over into Sychem, and laid in the sepulchre that Abraham bought for a sum of money of the sons of Emmor the father of Sychem."

GENESIS 24

A. Genesis 24: The Servant is Sent to Locate a Bride for Isaac.

1. Verse 1: "And Abraham was old, *and* well stricken in age: and the LORD had blessed Abraham in all things."
 - a. This lengthy chapter relates many details of how a suitable bride was found for Isaac. Abraham continued fully to believe the promises of God regarding his offspring, accordingly, plans were made for his promised son to have a wife. Isaac was 40 years old at this time, and Abraham was 140. Sarah had been dead for three years. Abraham lived on for 35 years more after the events of this chapter.
 - b. Abraham was old: well-stricken in age—advanced in days. He had been wonderfully blessed by Jehovah in every way. He was financially well able to obtain a wife for his son.
 2. Verses 2-4: "And Abraham said unto his eldest servant of his house, that ruled over all that he had, Put, I pray thee, thy hand under my thigh: And I will make thee swear by the LORD, the God of heaven, and the God of the earth, that thou shalt not take a wife unto my son of the daughters of the Canaanites, among whom I dwell: But thou shalt go unto my country, and to my kindred, and take a wife unto my son Isaac."
 - a. The account does not identify the servant by name, it only shows that he was the chief servant over all of Abraham's property. It is not likely he is the same as Eliezer who was Abraham's steward in Genesis 15:2, which was 54-60 years earlier. Eliezer would have been in the patriarch's employ several years before being made steward; more than fifty years had passed; Eliezer could possibly be 100 years old or older by now. "Eldest" probably refers to rank rather than age (Leupold; cf. 50:7; Isa. 3:2).
 - b. Hand under the thigh: this is thought to be a sacred form of oath-taking in those ancient days. "And the time drew nigh that Israel must die: and he called his son Joseph, and said unto him, If now I have found grace in thy sight, put, I pray thee, thy hand under my thigh, and deal kindly and truly with me; bury me not, I pray thee, in Egypt" (Gen. 47:29). These are the only two references to this practice. These are also the last recorded words of Abraham in the Old Testament record.
 - c. He was specifically charged not to take a wife for Isaac from among the Canaanites, but only from among his own kindred. Abraham's chief concern was that Isaac have as a wife, one who was also a believer in the Living God. This was important not only for Isaac's sake, but for the spiritual welfare of his descendants. The Canaanites were tainted by idolatry and ignorance of Jehovah. There was also a matter of "bloodline."
 3. Verse 5: "And the servant said unto him, Peradventure the woman will not be willing to follow me unto this land: must I needs bring thy son again unto the land from whence thou camest?"
 - a. A natural question presents itself to the mind of this servant: what if I find no woman who is willing to come into this land? Shall I take thy son to a suitable woman living there? It would be difficult to find a woman willing to break all ties with her immediate family and friends to go to a strange land to marry a strange man.
 - b. "*Prima, facie* it was a natural and reasonable hypothesis that the bride elect should demur to undertake a long and arduous journey to marry a husband she had never seen; accordingly, the ancient messenger desires to understand whether he might not be at liberty to act upon the other alternative. Must I needs bring thy son again unto the land from whence thou camest? In reply to which the patriarch solemnly interdicts him from attempting to seduce his son, under any pretext whatever, to leave the land of promise" [The Pulpit Commentary, Electronic Database. Copyright © 2001 by BibleSoft].
 4. Verses 6-8: "And Abraham said unto him, Beware thou that thou bring not my son thither again. The LORD God of heaven, which took me from my father's house, and from the land of my kindred, and which spake unto me, and that sware unto me, saying, Unto thy seed will I give this land; he shall send his angel before thee, and thou shalt take a wife unto my son from thence. And if the woman will not be willing to follow thee, then thou shalt be clear from this my oath: only bring not my son thither again."
 - a. Abraham strongly warned the servant not to take Isaac to that country where his father had formerly lived. God had promised to give Canaan to Abraham's seed, and the patriarch was determined to keep his son in that promised land.
 - b. God's promises would have been valueless without a wife for Isaac; hence Abraham believed that God would aid the search for a suitable bride. But in case none was found, the servant was released from his charge.
 5. Verse 9: "And the servant put his hand under the thigh of Abraham his master, and sware to him concerning that matter."
 - a. The servant performed the oath as Abraham had asked.
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- b. "After the issues are clear to both parties, the oath is given as it was demanded. The 'master' relationship is emphasized on Abraham's part, because the servant recognized that this relation increased his obligation in the matter. This was not a case of friend pleasing a friend but of a servant obeying his master..." (Leupold, p.663).

B. Genesis 24:10-14: The Servant's Water-Test.

1. Verse 10: "And the servant took ten camels of the camels of his master, and departed; for all the goods of his master *were* in his hand: and he arose, and went to Mesopotamia, unto the city of Nahor."
 - a. Nothing is said of the experiences on the journey. He took ten camels, the proper supplies and gifts, and enough men for the task. He arrived at the city of Nahor in Mesopotamia. Mesopotamia "normally means the land between the Tigris and Euphrates rivers; but some scholars insist that another usage was in view here and that the two rivers were upper tributaries of the greater rivers. This is of little importance, because, in any case, the servant went to the city of Nahor, according to his instructions" (Coffman, p.307).
 - b. "Nahor's city is Haran" (27:43; 28:10)" (Leupold).
2. Verse 11: "And he made his camels to kneel down without the city by a well of water at the time of the evening, *even* the time that women go out to draw *water*."
 - a. The caravan arrived at Haran and stopped at the water well at evening. God was obviously blessing this endeavor, and even the time of arrival was ideal.
 - b. "'It is the work of females in the East to draw water both morning and evening; and they may be seen going in groups to the wells, with their vessels on the hip or on the, shoulder' (Roberts' Oriental Illustrations, p. 27). 'About great cities men often carry, water, both on donkeys and on their own backs; but in the country, among the unsophisticated natives, women only go to the well or the fountain; and often, when traveling, have I seen long files of them going and returning with their pitchers at the time when women go out to draw water' (Thomson, 'Land and Book,' p. 592)" [The Pulpit Commentary, Electronic Database. Copyright © 2001 by Biblesoft].
3. Verses 12-14: "And he said, O LORD God of my master Abraham, I pray thee, send me good speed this day, and show kindness unto my master Abraham. Behold, I stand *here* by the well of water; and the daughters of the men of the city come out to draw water: And let it come to pass, that the damsel to whom I shall say, Let down thy pitcher, I pray thee, that I may drink; and she shall say, Drink, and I will give thy camels drink also: *let the same be she that* thou hast appointed for thy servant Isaac; and thereby shall I know that thou hast showed kindness unto my master."
 - a. This servant had imbibed the spirit of his master and was also a worshiper of God. His reverent prayer was answered. He was not making arbitrary conditions for God to meet but was simply offering a means by which he could identify the right lady. His prayer was unselfish; it sought the best for Abraham.
 - b. The test was not a light matter. Camels are able to drink large quantities of water, and there were ten in this group. Several pitchers of water would be required. "The girl measuring up to this requirement would certainly be very distinctly marked from all others by virtue of this accomplishment. Such a prayer demands a very strong faith in the providence of God..." (Leupold, p.665).

C. Genesis 24:15-27: Rebekah Meets the Test.

1. Verses 15-16: "And it came to pass, before he had done speaking, that, behold, Rebekah came out, who was born to Bethuel, son of Milcah, the wife of Nahor, Abraham's brother, with her pitcher upon her shoulder. And the damsel *was* very fair to look upon, a virgin, neither had any man known her: and she went down to the well, and filled her pitcher, and came up."
 - a. Even before the servant finished his prayer, Rebekah arrived and filled her pitcher. She has already been named in the sacred text: "And Bethuel begat Rebekah: these eight Milcah did bear to Nahor, Abraham's brother" (Gen. 22:23). She is the granddaughter of Abraham's brother Nahor; thus she was second-cousin to Isaac.
 - b. Leupold says that the record of her carrying her pitcher on her shoulder is correct; evidence from that ancient place and time show this to have been the practice, while in Egypt and other places the procedure was to carry the pitcher on the head. Rebekah had admirable qualities not asked for in the servant's prayer: she was beautiful and a virgin.
 - c. She descended the steps to the water. "And she went down to the well—'nearly all wells in the East are in wadys, and have steps down to the water' (Thomson, 'Land and Book,' p. 592)—and filled her pitcher, and came up—probably wholly unconscious of the old man's admiration, though by no means unprepared for his request, which immediately followed" [The Pulpit Commentary, Electronic Database. Copyright © 2001 by Biblesoft].
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2. Verses 17-20: "And the servant ran to meet her, and said, Let me, I pray thee, drink a little water of thy pitcher. And she said, Drink, my lord: and she hasted, and let down her pitcher upon her hand, and gave him drink. And when she had done giving him drink, she said, I will draw *water* for thy camels also, until they have done drinking. And she hasted, and emptied her pitcher into the trough, and ran again unto the well to draw *water*, and drew for all his camels."
 - a. The servant ran (eagerly approached) the girl and asked for a drink. She gave him a drink of water, emptied the pitcher in the trough, and volunteered to bring enough water for the camels.
 - b. Her response was courteous and modest, and offered in few words. Hers is an example of ungrudging hospitality.
 3. Verses 21-22: "And the man wondering at her held his peace, to wit whether the LORD had made his journey prosperous or not. And it came to pass, as the camels had done drinking, that the man took a golden earring of half a shekel weight, and two bracelets for her hands of ten *shekels* weight of gold."
 - a. The servant wondered and carefully considered Rebekah. "And the man looked stedfastly on her, holding his peace to know whether Jehovah had made his journey prosperous or not" (ASV).
 - b. He gave her a golden earring (ring—ASV) and two bracelets of gold.
 - c. "This inward rumination obviously took place while the whole scene was being enacted before his eyes—the beautiful young girl filling the water-troughs, and the thirsty camels sucking up the cooling drink. The loveliness of mind and body, both which he desired in Isaac's bride, was manifestly present in Rebekah; but still the questions remained to be determined, Was she one of Abraham's kindred, was she single? and would she follow him to Canaan?—points of moment to the solution of which he now proceeds" [The Pulpit Commentary, Electronic Database. Copyright © 2001 by BibleSoft].
 4. Verses 23-25: "And said, Whose daughter *art* thou? tell me, I pray thee: is there room *in* thy father's house for us to lodge in? And she said unto him, I *am* the daughter of Bethuel the son of Milcah, which she bare unto Nahor."
 - a. She had, so far, more than exceeded the requirements as set forth by Abraham. But there remained another: was she of Abraham's kin? He also asked whether there was room so that he and his men might lodge for the night. She stated that there was both feed and room, and that she was the daughter of Bethuel the son of Nahor (Abraham's brother). She names her father and mother and grandfather; if the man had not heard of one, perhaps he had heard of one of the others.
 - b. "The emotions of the servant would be difficult to describe as the hoped-for answer, which he might almost have deemed impossible, actually fell from the girl's lips" (Leupold, p.670).
 5. Verses 26-27: "And the man bowed down his head, and worshipped the LORD. And he said, Blessed *be* the LORD God of my master Abraham, who hath not left destitute my master of his mercy and his truth: I *being* in the way, the LORD led me to the house of my master's brethren."
 - a. "True, the outcome of the enterprise as granted to this man in answer to his prayer was as marvelous a display of divine providence, perhaps, as ever a mortal witnessed. Such mercy called for acknowledgment. But he that will make his acknowledgment as freely and as openly as does this man is both a devout and a courageous soul" (Leupold, *ibid.*).
 - b. The servant already knew that Rebekah was the proper maiden. "His bursting into prayer of gratitude and thanksgiving even while Rebekah confronted him contained repeated references to 'Abraham,' the magic name in all that part of the world, and about whom Rebekah, no doubt, had frequently heard. She would not have failed to mention this as soon as she reported the interview to the family" (Coffman, p.309).
- D. Genesis 24:28-48: The Servant Meets Rebekah's Family.
1. Verses 28-31: "And the damsel ran, and told *them of* her mother's house these things. And Rebekah had a brother, and his name *was* Laban: and Laban ran out unto the man, unto the well. And it came to pass, when he saw the earring and bracelets upon his sister's hands, and when he heard the words of Rebekah his sister, saying, Thus spake the man unto me; that he came unto the man; and, behold, he stood by the camels at the well. And he said, Come in, thou blessed of the LORD; wherefore standest thou without? for I have prepared the house, and room for the camels."
 - a. Rebekah ran and told those of her mother's house of the events just past. There may be some significance to her going to her mother's house. It could mean that her father was dead; but Bethuel is mentioned in verse 50 who could be her father or even a brother. Several possibilities exist:
 - 1) If Bethuel is her father, then he may have been aged and infirm so that his son Laban exercised much authority in the family.
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- 2) Bethuel is a brother to Rebekah and Laban, and bears his father's name; if this is so, then the father was dead as Josephus asserts (Ant., Bk 1, 16,2; p.38).
- 3) In polygamous marriages, the children would naturally be more attached to their mother than the father; this could explain why Rebekah ran to her mother's house.
- b. Her brother, Laban, was later characterized by greed and guile. Even now he may have already been developing these unholy traits. When he saw the gold jewelry, then he ran out to meet this stranger. However, this interest may have been genuine. Later information shows that Laban was an idol worshiper.
 - 1) Genesis 31:25-32: "Then Laban overtook Jacob. Now Jacob had pitched his tent in the mount: and Laban with his brethren pitched in the mount of Gilead. And Laban said to Jacob, What hast thou done, that thou hast stolen away unawares to me, and carried away my daughters, as captives *taken* with the sword? Wherefore didst thou flee away secretly, and steal away from me; and didst not tell me, that I might have sent thee away with mirth, and with songs, with tabret, and with harp? And hast not suffered me to kiss my sons and my daughters? thou hast now done foolishly in *so* doing. It is in the power of my hand to do you hurt: but the God of your father spake unto me yesternight, saying, Take thou heed that thou speak not to Jacob either good or bad. And now, *though* thou wouldest needs be gone, because thou sore longedst after thy father's house, *yet* wherefore hast thou stolen my gods? And Jacob answered and said to Laban, Because I was afraid: for I said, Peradventure thou wouldest take by force thy daughters from me. With whomsoever thou findest thy gods, let him not live: before our brethren discern thou what *is* thine with me, and take *it* to thee. For Jacob knew not that Rachel had stolen them."
 - 2) Even Abraham's father worshiped idols: "And Joshua said unto all the people, Thus saith the LORD God of Israel, Your fathers dwelt on the other side of the flood in old time, *even* Terah, the father of Abraham, and the father of Nachor: and they served other gods" (Josh. 24:2).
- c. Laban invited the man to enter for the preparations had been made.
2. Verses 32-33: "And the man came into the house: and he ungirded his camels, and gave straw and provender for the camels, and water to wash his feet, and the men's feet that *were* with him. And there was set *meat* before him to eat: but he said, I will not eat, until I have told mine errand. And he said, Speak on."
 - a. After his camels were taken care of and water had been given for the washing of the company's feet, the hosts placed food before them. But Abraham's trusted servant declined to eat until he has related his purpose for coming. His mission was greatly on his mind.
 - b. He understood full well that God's hand had been involved in the proceedings, and thus he was bent on fulfilling his mission before seeing to his own physical needs.
3. Verses 34-41: "And he said, I *am* Abraham's servant. And the LORD hath blessed my master greatly; and he is become great: and he hath given him flocks, and herds, and silver, and gold, and menservants, and maidservants, and camels, and asses. And Sarah my master's wife bare a son to my master when she was old: and unto him hath he given all that he hath. And my master made me swear, saying, Thou shalt not take a wife to my son of the daughters of the Canaanites, in whose land I dwell: But thou shalt go unto my father's house, and to my kindred, and take a wife unto my son. And I said unto my master, Peradventure the woman will not follow me. And he said unto me, The LORD, before whom I walk, will send his angel with thee, and prosper thy way; and thou shalt take a wife for my son of my kindred, and of my father's house: Then shalt thou be clear from *this* my oath, when thou comest to my kindred; and if they give not thee *one*, thou shalt be clear from my oath."
- a. The servant gives the full details of how he came to be there. God had greatly blessed Abraham; Sarah had borne a son to him in her old age; Abraham had sent him on the mission of procuring a suitable bride for Isaac; angelic assistance would be tendered if necessary. Thus had he come to Haran.
- b. "For one who represents his master and his master's son in a marriage proposition it is essential that he make an accurate and complete statement of his master's standing and of his master's son's financial prospects. So a condensed account of Abraham's growth in wealth and cattle is given. But even in this matter the servant has caught his master's spirit and does not attribute the good fortune of his master to anything other than to Yahweh's blessing. The unusual story of Isaac's birth belongs into the picture, else the hearers cannot know how the son of one brother should be a candidate in marriage for the granddaughter of another brother. Besides, the incidental importance of Isaac's financial standing receives just the proper amount of emphasis when it is indicated that he is the sole heir to his father's wealth" (Leupold, pp.675f)
4. Verses 42-48: "And I came this day unto the well, and said, O LORD God of my master Abraham, if now thou do prosper my way which I go: Behold, I stand by the well of water; and it shall come to pass, that when the

virgin cometh forth to draw *water*; and I say to her, Give me, I pray thee, a little water of thy pitcher to drink; And she say to me, Both drink thou, and I will also draw for thy camels: *let* the same *be* the woman whom the LORD hath appointed out for my master's son. And before I had done speaking in mine heart, behold, Rebekah came forth with her pitcher on her shoulder; and she went down unto the well, and drew *water*: and I said unto her, Let me drink, I pray thee. And she made haste, and let down her pitcher from her *shoulder*, and said, Drink, and I will give thy camels drink also: so I drank, and she made the camels drink also. And I asked her, and said, Whose daughter *art* thou? And she said, The daughter of Bethuel, Nahor's son, whom Milcah bare unto him: and I put the earring upon her face, and the bracelets upon her hands. And I bowed down my head, and worshipped the LORD, and blessed the LORD God of my master Abraham, which had led me in the right way to take my master's brother's daughter unto his son."

- a. He recounts the events at the well. He had placed the earring upon Rebekah's face which may describe a nose jewel worn by some of the ancient women.
- b. He mentions the prayer of thanksgiving when he saw that Rebekah indeed met all requirements,

E. Genesis 24:49-60: Rebekah Accepts the Proposal.

1. Verses 49-53: "And now if ye will deal kindly and truly with my master, tell me: and if not, tell me; that I may turn to the right hand, or to the left. Then Laban and Bethuel answered and said, The thing proceedeth from the LORD: we cannot speak unto thee bad or good. Behold, Rebekah *is* before thee, take *her*, and go, and let her be thy master's son's wife, as the LORD hath spoken. And it came to pass, that, when Abraham's servant heard their words, he worshipped the LORD, *bowing himself* to the earth. And the servant brought forth jewels of silver, and jewels of gold, and raiment, and gave *them* to Rebekah: he gave also to her brother and to her mother precious things."
 - a. He now makes a straightforward request for Rebekah to become Isaac's wife. The proposal is gladly accepted by the family. The man gave thanks to God again for the success of the mission.
 - b. He then gave precious gifts to Rebekah, her mother and brother. No gifts are said to have been given to her father, lending credence to the idea that he was dead or so incapacitated that gifts would have been superfluous.
2. Verses 54-60: "And they did eat and drink, he and the men that *were* with him, and tarried all night; and they rose up in the morning, and he said, Send me away unto my master. And her brother and her mother said, Let the damsel abide with us *a few* days, at the least ten; after that she shall go. And he said unto them, Hinder me not, seeing the LORD hath prospered my way; send me away that I may go to my master. And they said, We will call the damsel, and inquire at her mouth. And they called Rebekah, and said unto her, Wilt thou go with this man? And she said, I will go. And they sent away Rebekah their sister, and her nurse, and Abraham's servant, and his men. And they blessed Rebekah, and said unto her, Thou *art* our sister, be thou *the mother* of thousands of millions, and let thy seed possess the gate of those which hate them."
 - a. His mission completed successfully, the man can now relax, eat and drink, and pillow his head in sleep with great contentment. On arising in the morning, he requested that he be allowed to commence his journey homeward.
 - b. The family wanted Rebekah to stay for ten days so that they could get used to the idea of her departing. But Abraham's servant insisted on leaving immediately, in view of the fact that the Lord had blessed him with speedy success thus far. They agreed to an immediate departure if Rebekah consented. She quickly gave her consent. They permitted her to depart.
 - c. She took with her a nurse (Deborah, Gen. 35:8); verse 61 shows that she took several damsels also. These were maid servants. Deborah seems to have been a long and devoted servant to Rebekah, and would be an invaluable companion in the uncertainties of the future. The family pronounced their blessings on Rebekah.

F. Genesis 24:61-67: Isaac and Rebekah Meet.

1. Verses 61-63: "And Rebekah arose, and her damsels, and they rode upon the camels, and followed the man: and the servant took Rebekah, and went his way. And Isaac came from the way of the well Lahairoi; for he dwelt in the south country. And Isaac went out to meditate in the field at the eventide: and he lifted up his eyes, and saw, and, behold, the camels *were* coming."
 - a. They made their journey back to Canaan without any reported difficulty. Isaac had been at the well of Lahairoi (Gen. 16:14). Apparently having just returned from this sacred place, he was in the field at eventide to meditate.
 - b. This gives us an insight into the spiritual nature of Isaac. He was one of the spiritual giants of Old Testament history.
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2. Verses 64-67: "And Rebekah lifted up her eyes, and when she saw Isaac, she lighted off the camel. For she *had* said unto the servant, What man *is* this that walketh in the field to meet us? And the servant *had* said, It *is* my master: therefore she took a veil, and covered herself. And the servant told Isaac all things that he had done. And Isaac brought her into his mother Sarah's tent, and took Rebekah, and she became his wife; and he loved her: and Isaac was comforted after his mother's *death*."
 - a. Rebekah seems to know that the man walking in the field was Isaac. When this was confirmed, she covered her face with the veil, the customary covering indicating modesty and respect. While she was obviously courageous, she was not marked by unseemly boldness.
 - b. The servant recounts the experiences of his journey. Isaac installed Rebekah in his mother's tent; they were married; he grew to love her; and thus he found comfort to overcome the loss of his mother.

G. Analogies Between Isaac and His Bride and Christ and His Bride (see Coffman).

1. Isaac did not go in person to procure his bride; the primary requirement she was to meet was in having a willingness to follow the messenger who would lead her to the bridegroom. Christ does not personally go to seek out the bride, but sends the Holy Spirit-given Word to make his appeal. Individual Christians comprise the bride of Christ.
 2. The messenger proposed a water test by which to identify the prospective bride; Rebekah met that test fully. The messenger of Christ proposes a water test for his spiritual bride (the church). Each individual must be born of the water and Spirit (John 3:5; Mark 16:16; Acts 10:47-48). Four of the seven miraculous signs in John which proved Jesus is the Christ, and thus to build faith in us that he is the Christ, involve water: water into wine; healing at the Pool of Bethesda; healing in the Pool of Siloam; his walking on the sea.
 3. Rebekah was elected when she passed the water test; so the believer is elected when the water test of baptism is met. But she had to meet further conditions before being with Isaac; so the Christian must remain faithful to be with Christ.
 4. As Rebekah's relatives were enriched by her election, so the world is enriched by the election of the saints in its midst.
 5. As Rebekah had to bid goodbye to family, so Christians must put Christ before family.
 6. The servant presented the bride to the bridegroom at the end of the journey homeward. So the church is presented to Christ following the successful completion of its journey through life. Isaac met his bride at eventide; Christ meets his bride at the even of life. As Isaac went forth to meet Rebekah, so Christ will go forth from heaven (1 Thess. 4:13-17) to meet his bride.
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GENESIS 25

A. Genesis 25:1-4: Keturah and Her Children.

1. Verse 1: "Then again Abraham took a wife, and her name *was* Keturah."
 - a. "One of the 'problems' associated with the chapter concerns Abraham's marriage to Keturah; did that occur before or after the death of Sarah?" (Coffman, p.317). The "problem" may be more imaginary than real. The most natural reading indicates that after his beloved wife Sarah died, Abraham took another wife and to them were born six sons.
 - b. The main objections to this are that Abraham required a special act of God to enable him to become the father of Isaac; and the six sons of Keturah would have been too young to send away if they had been born after Sarah's death. But as God gave Moses extraordinary strength to live his 120 years with eyesight and strength unabated, so could this act of God (Cf. Rom 4:19) have had lasting effects on the patriarch. If the six sons were still young when they were dismissed from Abraham's tent, their mother and servants could have continued to care for them. Notice that verse 6 says that the sons of the concubines (plural) were sent away. 1 Chronicles 1:32-33 identifies Keturah as Abraham's concubine: "Now the sons of Keturah, Abraham's concubine: she bare Zimran, and Jokshan, and Medan, and Midian, and Ishbak, and Shuah. And the sons of Jokshan; Sheba, and Dedan. And the sons of Midian; Ephah, and Ephraim, and Heman, and Shimon, and Abida, and Eldaah. All these *are* the sons of Keturah."
 - c. "According to the laws of Hebrew composition, this event may have taken place before that recorded in the close of the previous chapter. Of this law we have several examples in this very chapter. And there is nothing contrary to the customs of that period in adding wife to wife. We cannot say that Abraham was hindered from taking Keturah in the lifetime of Sarah by any moral feeling which would not also have hindered him from taking Hagar.
 - 1) "It has been also noticed that Keturah is called a concubine, which is thought to imply that the proper wife was still living; and that Abraham was a very old man at the death of Sarah. But, on the other hand, it is to be remembered that these sons were in any case born after the birth of Isaac, and therefore after Abraham was renewed in vital powers. If this renewal of vigor remained after the birth of Isaac, it may have continued some time after the death of Sarah, whom he survived thirty-eight years. His abstinence from any concubine until Sarah gave him Hagar is against his taking any other during Sarah's lifetime.
 - 2) "His loneliness on the death of Sarah may have prompted him to seek a companion of his old age. And if this step was delayed until Isaac was married, and therefore separated from him, an additional motive would impel him in the same direction. He was not bound to raise this wife to the full rights of a proper wife, even though Sarah were dead. And six sons might be born to him twenty-five years before his death. And if Hagar and Ishmael were dismissed when he was about fifteen years old, so might Keturah when her youngest was twenty or twenty-five. We are not warranted, then, still less compelled, to place Abraham's second marriage before the death of Sarah, or even the marriage of Isaac. It seems to appear in the narrative in the order of time" [Barnes' Notes, Electronic Database. Copyright © 1997 by Biblesoft].
 - d. Leupold:
 - 1) This wife is listed in v. 6 as having been only on the level of a "concubine," so also 1 Chron. 1:32. That raises the much discussed question whether Abraham had her as a concubine already during Sarah's lifetime. We may dismiss as utterly without foundation and most unlikely the Jewish notion that "Keturah" is merely another name for Hagar, who was later taken back by Abraham. But whereas notable commentators are ready to concede that Keturah may have been taken during Sarah's lifetime, yet that would seem to conflict rather seriously with Abraham's pronounced monogamistic leanings; for he took Hagar only as a last resort to realize God's promise.
 - 2) The claim that in the event of his taking Keturah after Sarah's death some of the six sons must have been dismissed at the too early age of about twenty-five years, should not be regarded too seriously. Though ordinarily sons may have been married at the age of forty and established for themselves, that is merely a rather broad inference drawn from the exceptional case of Isaac. Rom. 4:19 ("his own body now as good as dead") is not to be taken too literally.
 - 3) Apparently, the rejuvenation which the patriarch experienced, enabling him to be father to Isaac, was of more than merely the most transitory kind. Luther rightly argues that Abraham saw that he was to beget more children in order to fulfill the promise of 17:4 and so in faith he proceeded to enter upon

another marriage. Consequently, no blame of any sort attaches to the patriarch for this step: "he was not guilty of levity, nor of intemperate lust," or of any other shortcoming in this case.

- 4) If he does not allow quite the same rank to Keturah, it still is a regular marriage. But Abraham must surely have felt that the rank of the mother of the child of promise was to be regarded as higher than that of any second wife.

2. Verses 2-4: "And she bare him Zimran, and Jokshan, and Medan, and Midian, and Ishbak, and Shuah. And Jokshan begat Sheba, and Dedan. And the sons of Dedan were Asshurim, and Letushim, and Leummim. And the sons of Midian; Ephah, and Ephher, and Hanoah, and Abidah, and Eldaah. All these *were* the children of Keturah."
 - a. Little is known about the descendants of these men. They are included in the record, at least in part, to show the fulfillment of the promise of Genesis 17:4: "As for me, behold, my covenant *is* with thee, and thou shalt be a father of many nations."
 - b. Midian is better known than any of the others in that later Moses married a woman of this nation (Ex. 2). Sheba is probably connected with the land from which the notable queen came to behold the greatness of Solomon (1 Kings 10).

B. Genesis 25:5-11: Keturah's Sons Dismissed and the Death of Abraham.

1. Verses 5-6: "And Abraham gave all that he had unto Isaac. But unto the sons of the concubines, which Abraham had, Abraham gave gifts, and sent them away from Isaac his son, while he yet lived, eastward, unto the east country."
 - a. The patriarch shows his great wisdom in making the proper assignment of his property and possessions prior to his death. To Isaac he gave all that he had. But he gave gifts to the sons of Keturah and sent them away from Isaac. These gifts were a gesture of good will, and were just. The gifts "would involve about so much of cattle and goods as would constitute a reasonable nucleus to make possible a fair ranch" (Leupold, p.692).
 - b. These measures show Abraham's wisdom and graciousness, for he relieved Isaac of any future problems from kinsmen demanding their share of the inheritance, while taking care of the immediate needs of his other legal offspring.
 - c. Notice the plural "concubines." This implies there were more than one. Coffman asserts, "A plurality of concubines is the required meaning of the plural here, and we cannot believe that either Keturah or Hagar is included. Right here is the explanation of those 318 men 'born in Abraham's house' (Genesis 14:14) who went to war with him in the rescue of the King of Sodom" (p.319). However, it seems highly unlikely that his fathering 318 children would have been passed over so lightly in the Record. The "concubines" were probably Keturah and Hagar (or some other concubine), although the latter was sent away years earlier.
2. Verses 7-8: "And these *are* the days of the years of Abraham's life which he lived, an hundred threescore and fifteen years. Then Abraham gave up the ghost, and died in a good old age, an old man, and full *of years*; and was gathered to his people."
 - a. The total years of Abraham's life were 175. This was said to have been a good old age. This was far shorter than the lives of Noah and many others of that earlier time. Half of Abraham's years is a long life for us living today.
 - b. Abraham gave up the ghost. The English word "ghost" was the old word for "spirit." With the passing of years, any living language changes. Originally, the English word spirit meant what we mean when we use "ghost" in modern English. These two words have exchanged meanings. To give up the ghost is a unique way of describing one's death.
 - c. He was "gathered to his people." This does not mean that he was buried with his ancestors. It is not speaking of his body at all. They were buried in the Chaldees, and he in Canaan. Keil says, "This phrase is constantly distinguished from departing this life and being buried."
 - 1) It denotes the reunion in Sheol with friends who have gone before, and therefore presupposes faith in the personal continuance of a man after death" (p.263).
 - 2) "Unger pointed out this expression is used of only six persons: Abraham (25:8), Ishmael (25:18), Isaac (35:29), Jacob (49:29-33), Aaron (Num. 20:24), and Moses (Deut. 32:50)" (Coffman, p.321).
 - d. "Abraham's death at age 175 means that he lived until Jacob and Esau were about fifteen. That so little appears in Genesis concerning the intervening years between the marriage of Isaac and the death of Abraham, derives from the changed focus of the narrative, which is primarily that of the history of the promised Messiah and the line through whom he was delivered. Thus, Abraham here fades out of the

picture, and Isaac and Jacob take center stage. Except for the few references here, nothing is known of the last thirty-five years of Abraham's life" (Coffman, p.321).

3. Verses 9-11: "And his sons Isaac and Ishmael buried him in the cave of Machpelah, in the field of Ephron the son of Zohar the Hittite, which *is* before Mamre; The field which Abraham purchased of the sons of Heth: there was Abraham buried, and Sarah his wife. And it came to pass after the death of Abraham, that God blessed his son Isaac; and Isaac dwelt by the well Lahairoi."
 - a. Many times the death of a parent will bring estranged brothers back together. Death in the family can eradicate pride, passion, and malice. Isaac and Ishmael are united in their common grief over the loss of their father. Perhaps the last time they saw each other was when Abraham had sent Hagar and Ishmael away (Gen. 21).
 - b. God blessed the man who now assumed the reins of Abraham's household. The birthright which pertained to the Messiah's lineage was given into his hands. God had made a choice as to which of Abraham's sons would occupy this place.
 - c. Isaac and Ishmael buried their father in the cave where Sarah's body lay. They parted again, and Isaac took up residence at Beer-Lairoi where Hagar had gone (Gen. 18:14).

C. Genesis 25:12-18: The Generations of Ishmael.

1. Verses 12-18: "Now these *are* the generations of Ishmael, Abraham's son, whom Hagar the Egyptian, Sarah's handmaid, bare unto Abraham: And these *are* the names of the sons of Ishmael, by their names, according to their generations: the firstborn of Ishmael, Nebajoth; and Kedar, and Adbeel, and Mibsam, And Mishma, and Dumah, and Massa, Hadar, and Tema, Jetur, Naphish, and Kedemah: These *are* the sons of Ishmael, and these *are* their names, by their towns, and by their castles; twelve princes according to their nations. And these *are* the years of the life of Ishmael, an hundred and thirty and seven years: and he gave up the ghost and died; and was gathered unto his people. And they dwelt from Havilah unto Shur, that *is* before Egypt, as thou goest toward Assyria: *and* he died in the presence of all his brethren."
2. "These seven verses are all that are devoted to Ishmael's posterity, the chief focus of the sacred narrator's concern being, not the posterity of Ishmael, but that of Isaac, to whom he turned at once....'Through millennia of migrations and intermarriages, it seems likely that all of these peoples, the descendants of Keturah, together with the descendants of Ishmael, Lot, and Esau, along with earlier descendants of Shem, and, in some cases, Ham, have gradually merged and become the modern day Arabic peoples'" (Coffman, p.321).
3. "At the time Abraham was buried, Ishmael was nearly ninety years old; and by that time his sons were all grown into strong and powerful leaders with strongholds and villages of their own, so they were called, 'Twelve princes according to their nations.'" (ibid.).

D. Genesis 25:19-23: The Generations of Isaac.

1. Verses 19-20: "And these *are* the generations of Isaac, Abraham's son: Abraham begat Isaac: And Isaac was forty years old when he took Rebekah to wife, the daughter of Bethuel the Syrian of Padanaram, the sister to Laban the Syrian."
 - a. Isaac was 40 when he married Rebekah; he was 60 when Jacob and Esau were born. Since he was born when Abraham was 100, this made Abraham 160 at the birth of the twins. Their grandfather lived on for 15 years after their birth.
 - 1) Genesis 21:5: "And Abraham was an hundred years old, when his son Isaac was born unto him."
 - 2) Genesis 25:8: "Then Abraham gave up the ghost, and died in a good old age, an old man, and full of years; and was gathered to his people."
 - 3) Genesis 25:20: "And Isaac was forty years old when he took Rebekah to wife, the daughter of Bethuel the Syrian of Padanaram, the sister to Laban the Syrian."
 - 4) Genesis 25:26: "And after that came his brother out, and his hand took hold on Esau's heel; and his name was called Jacob: and Isaac *was* threescore years old when she bare them."
 - b. Isaac was 75 when Abraham died.
 2. Verse 21: "And Isaac entreated the LORD for his wife, because she *was* barren: and the LORD was entreated of him, and Rebekah his wife conceived."
 - a. It is interesting to notice that both Sarah and Rebekah were once barren. This shows that God's people often have problems and hardships, which test and develop faith. Isaac entreated the Lord in her behalf.
 - b. At this time Abraham was still alive.
 3. Verses 22-23: "And the children struggled together within her; and she said, If *it be* so, why *am* I thus? And she went to inquire of the LORD. And the LORD said unto her, Two nations *are* in thy womb, and two manner
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of people shall be separated from thy bowels; and *the one* people shall be stronger than *the other* people; and the elder shall serve the younger."

- a. She conceived (vs. 21) and soon became dismayed when there was a violent struggle within her. Where and by whom did she inquire of the Lord? It is possible that Abraham was the intermediary since he was a prophet of God: "Now therefore restore the man *his* wife; for he *is* a prophet, and he shall pray for thee, and thou shalt live: and if thou restore *her* not, know thou that thou shalt surely die, thou, and all that *are* thine....So Abraham prayed unto God: and God healed Abimelech, and his wife, and his maidservants; and they bare *children*" (Gen. 20:7,17).
- b. The Lord told her some remarkable things:
 - 1) She was to bear twins.
 - 2) The twins were boys.
 - 3) Each would produce a nation.
 - 4) The nation of the younger would be stronger.
 - 5) The nation of the older would serve the nation of the younger. [Esau did not serve Jacob personally, but his descendants did. The prophecy pertained more to their nations than to the twins].
- c. Passages:
 - 1) Malachi 1:1-5: "The burden of the word of the LORD to Israel by Malachi. I have loved you, saith the LORD. Yet ye say, Wherein hast thou loved us? *Was* not Esau Jacob's brother? saith the LORD: yet I loved Jacob, And I hated Esau, and laid his mountains and his heritage waste for the dragons of the wilderness. Whereas Edom saith, We are impoverished, but we will return and build the desolate places; thus saith the LORD of hosts, They shall build, but I will throw down; and they shall call them, The border of wickedness, and, The people against whom the LORD hath indignation for ever. And your eyes shall see, and ye shall say, The LORD will be magnified from the border of Israel."
 - 2) Romans 9:10-13: "And not only *this*; but when Rebecca also had conceived by one, *even* by our father Isaac; (For *the children* being not yet born, neither having done any good or evil, that the purpose of God according to election might stand, not of works, but of him that calleth;) It was said unto her, The elder shall serve the younger. As it is written, Jacob have I loved, but Esau have I hated."
- d. "Jacob have I loved and Esau have I hated"—this was written centuries after they both were dead. Thus, the nation of each is meant; God loved Jacob in that he chose him and his lineage through which to send the Messiah and therefore blessed and preserved them.

E. Genesis 25:24-34: The Birth and Early Years of Jacob and Esau.

1. Verses 24-26: "And when her days to be delivered were fulfilled, behold, *there were* twins in her womb. And the first came out red, all over like an hairy garment; and they called his name Esau. And after that came his brother out, and his hand took hold on Esau's heel; and his name was called Jacob: and Isaac *was* threescore years old when she bare them."
 - a. Esau was the first one born: he was red and hairy, thus his name. Jacob took the heel of his twin brother in the birth process, thus he was called Jacob ("supplanter" or "heelcatcher").
 - b. These names were prophetic, for Esau was a profane and worldly man, akin to animals; Jacob was cunning, thus was a supplanter.
 2. Verses 27-34: "And the boys grew: and Esau was a cunning hunter, a man of the field; and Jacob *was* a plain man, dwelling in tents. And Isaac loved Esau, because he did eat of *his* venison: but Rebekah loved Jacob. And Jacob sod pottage: and Esau came from the field, and he *was* faint: And Esau said to Jacob, Feed me, I pray thee, with that same red *pottage*; for I *am* faint: therefore was his name called Edom. And Jacob said, Sell me this day thy birthright. And Esau said, Behold, I *am* at the point to die: and what profit shall this birthright do to me? And Jacob said, Swear to me this day; and he sware unto him: and he sold his birthright unto Jacob. Then Jacob gave Esau bread and pottage of lentiles; and he did eat and drink, and rose up, and went his way: thus Esau despised *his* birthright."
 - a. The outcome of this episode was Esau's fault. The New Testament reveals that Esau was a profane person and a fornicator: "Lest there *be* any fornicator, or profane person, as Esau, who for one morsel of meat sold his birthright" (Heb. 12:16).
 - b. Esau was a hunter and at home in the wilds. Jacob was a simple, stay-at-home type. Jacob had boiled pottage (probably with lentils). "A thick soup usually made from lentils and vegetables, and spiced with various herbs. Jacob served pottage and bread to the famished Esau in return for the birthright (Gen. 25:29-34). Elisha added meal to a tainted recipe of pottage at Gilgal (2 Kings 4:38-41)" (Holman's PC Bible Dictionary).
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- c. Esau came in from a foray, very hungry. “With the ravenous appetite resulting from outdoor activity Esau can hardly restrain himself. His words are expressive of his uncontrolled hunger. He asks not merely with a mild ‘feed me’ (A.V.) or an equally mild ‘let me taste’ but ... ‘let me swallow,’ almost, ‘let me gulp.’ Besides, his haste does not allow him even to try to name the pottage under preparation; he just designates is: ‘of the red, that red’” (Leupold, p.711).
 - d. He thought so little of his birthright that he sold it to Jacob for a meal. Jacob was sneaky, but he was the better man for the job. God could develop him into the right kind of man; Esau was not the right material.
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GENESIS 26

A. Genesis 26:1-5: The Promise Renewed to Isaac.

1. Verses 1-2: "And there was a famine in the land, beside the first famine that was in the days of Abraham. And Isaac went unto Abimelech king of the Philistines unto Gerar. And the LORD appeared unto him, and said, Go not down into Egypt; dwell in the land which I shall tell thee of."
 - a. There was another famine similar to that which drove Abraham from Canaan nearly a hundred years earlier. The author specifically points out that this is another and different experience involving Isaac, not Abraham. The critics assert that the two experiences were really only one, and were written by unknown sources.
 - b. "Since the period of medieval history during which the wisest (?), greatest (?), and most respected religious scholars (?), on earth were disputing the profound question of how many angels can stand on the point of a needle, nothing has ever appeared in that same category of human arrogance, conceit and ignorance until the present era, hopefully now coming to an end, when men with the most impressive academic credentials are squandering their talents in useless and preposterous discussions of the 'sources' of Genesis" (Coffman, p.330).
 - c. This famine may have been caused by a drought, a weather phenomenon. Meteorologists say that weather has a pattern, and speak of "the hundred year flood plain" of river systems. It had been about a hundred years since the famine of Abraham's time.
 - 1) If this "pattern" is true, those who might be superstitious could find something else to worry about: the last great famine in our country took place in the 1930s, about ninety years ago. The dust bowl, which also occurred during the Great Depression, had a tremendous effect on the population.
 - 2) The 1920s was a time of frivolity, moral looseness, crime and sin; the hard times of the depression, coupled with the famine, may have delivered America from an untimely demise. Those hard times cultivated the strength, stamina, fortitude and a healthy measure of morality to prepare the nation to endure World War Two.
 - 3) None of us can predict the future, but with the immorality, political corruption, division, abortion, easy divorce, homosexuality, and the host of other spiritual ills afflicting our nation, many have been fearing some great tragedy in our future. We pray for an improvement in morals and politics, and in business, as well as in family and school affairs.
 - d. Isaac went to Abimelech, king of the Philistines at Gerar. It appears he had the idea of going into Egypt as Abraham had done. God told him to abide in the land which was one day to belong to his descendants.
 - e. This Abimelech is not likely the same one Abraham had dealt with. The scholars suggest that the name was equivalent to "pharaoh," a title more than a name.
2. Verses 3-4: "Sojourn in this land, and I will be with thee, and will bless thee; for unto thee, and unto thy seed, I will give all these countries, and I will perform the oath which I swore unto Abraham thy father; And I will make thy seed to multiply as the stars of heaven, and will give unto thy seed all these countries; and in thy seed shall all the nations of the earth be blessed."
 - a. God affirmed that he would establish the promise which he had sworn to Abraham, but Isaac must remain in the land of promise. Among the blessings God would extend are those stated in this passage.
 - b. The land of promise would be given to Isaac and his seed. "All these lands" included the various components of Canaan. This promise was realized when Joshua led Israel in conquest of the land a few centuries later; under David, the full extent of the territory intended was obtained.
 - 1) Joshua 23:14-15: "And, behold, this day I *am* going the way of all the earth: and ye know in all your hearts and in all your souls, that not one thing hath failed of all the good things which the LORD your God spake concerning you; all are come to pass unto you, *and* not one thing hath failed thereof. Therefore it shall come to pass, *that* as all good things are come upon you, which the LORD your God promised you; so shall the LORD bring upon you all evil things, until he have destroyed you from off this good land which the LORD your God hath given you."
 - 2) 2 Samuel 8:3: "David smote also Hadadezer, the son of Rehob, king of Zobah, as he went to recover his border at the river Euphrates."
 - c. God would perform his oath. "This is an exceedingly important passage. Here the great Abrahamic promise of 'the seed' who should bless all nations of the earth was repeated, and Isaac was identified as the person through whom God's eternal purposes would continue to be unfolded" (Coffman, p.331).

- d. His descendants would be as numerous as the stars: a metaphor emphasizing the huge number of people involved.
- e. In his seed would all the nations of earth be blessed. This is the promise of the Messiah, for the Israelite nation itself has not been the source of such blessings.
3. Verse 5: "Because that Abraham obeyed my voice, and kept my charge, my commandments, my statutes, and my laws."
 - a. God would do these things because of the obedience of Abraham. "Those who fancy that Abraham was saved by 'faith only' should read this verse. God's fulfillment of his promise to Abraham was here said to have been 'because, that is, as a result of, Abraham's obedience. The sequence here is not that God saved Abraham, and then Abraham obeyed because God saved him; but that Abraham obeyed, and because he did so, God saved him and fulfilled his promise" (Coffman, p.332).
 - b. Notice how specific God is in describing the obedience of the patriarch: he did everything God required of him.

B. Genesis 26:6-16: Isaac Prospers at Gerar.

1. Verses 6-8: "And Isaac dwelt in Gerar: And the men of the place asked *him* of his wife; and he said, She *is* my sister: for he feared to say, *She is* my wife; lest, *said he*, the men of the place should kill me for Rebekah; because she *was* fair to look upon. And it came to pass, when he had been there a long time, that Abimelech king of the Philistines looked out at a window, and saw, and, behold, Isaac *was* sporting with Rebekah his wife."
 - a. NKJV: So Isaac dwelt in Gerar. 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." 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. Then Abimelech called Isaac and said, "Quite obviously she *is* your wife; so how could you say, 'She *is* my sister'?"
 - b. While the patriarch was dwelling among the Philistines, he passed Rebekah off to them as his sister and not as his wife. Abraham had done this on at least two occasions, and one of these was at this same place involving another Abimelech. Remembrance of that event may have remained in Gerar (cf. 20:17-18).
 - c. It is doubtful that Isaac followed his father's example because of the material gain that had resulted from the scheme. No one had made any effort to obtain Rebekah as a wife. Abimelech was looking from a window one day and saw Isaac "sporting" with Rebekah, which indicated she was Isaac's wife and not merely a sister.
 2. Verses 9-11: "And Abimelech called Isaac, and said, Behold, of a surety she *is* thy wife: and how saidst thou, She *is* my sister? And Isaac said unto him, Because I said, Lest I die for her. And Abimelech said, What *is* this thou hast done unto us? one of the people might lightly have lien with thy wife, and thou shouldest have brought guiltiness upon us. And Abimelech charged all *his* people, saying, He that toucheth this man or his wife shall surely be put to death."
 - a. Abimelech reproved Isaac for this falsehood. Isaac said he was fearful of being slain for her if he told the truth. The king rebuked the patriarch for he was in the wrong in this instance. Although Isaac was a very spiritually minded man, yet he erred here.
 - b. Abimelech issued an edict forbidding his people to "touch" Isaac or Rebekah.
 3. Verses 12-16: "Then Isaac sowed in that land, and received in the same year an hundredfold: and the LORD blessed him. And the man waxed great, and went forward, and grew until he became very great: For he had possession of flocks, and possession of herds, and great store of servants: and the Philistines envied him. For all the wells which his father's servants had digged in the days of Abraham his father, the Philistines had stopped them, and filled them with earth. And Abimelech said unto Isaac, Go from us; for thou art much mightier than we."
 - a. Isaac was not only an owner of flocks and herds, but was now a farmer. His crops increased a hundredfold. This is the first mention of seed-sowing in the Bible. The famine had subsided by now, or was not present at Gerar.
 - b. His wealth increased greatly under the providential hand of God. Compare the terminology of verse 13 with that of Genesis 7:18-19: "And the waters prevailed, and were increased greatly upon the earth; and the ark went upon the face of the waters. And the waters prevailed exceedingly upon the earth; and all the high hills, that *were* under the whole heaven, were covered." So great was his possessions and wealth that he was envied by the Philistines. The Philistines, acting out envy and spite, filled the wells which Abraham had
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earlier dug in that place. Coffman thinks that these wells may have been those at Beerlahairoi and Beersheba, and that the reference to them in verse 15 is in anticipation of the episode which is discussed next. Verse 18 appears to confirm this point.

- c. Because of his great wealth and power which came by that wealth, the king asked him to remove himself from their midst. This eviction grew out of the envy and spite which the people had toward him. Isaac also represented a potential threat to them.

C. Genesis 26:17-22: Isaac Moves to the Valley of Gerar.

1. Verses 17-19: "And Isaac departed thence, and pitched his tent in the valley of Gerar, and dwelt there. And Isaac digged again the wells of water, which they had digged in the days of Abraham his father; for the Philistines had stopped them after the death of Abraham: and he called their names after the names by which his father had called them. And Isaac's servants digged in the valley, and found there a well of springing water."
 - a. In that arid land, especially to a man of Isaac's profession, a plentiful source of water was imperative. Thus he had his servants redig the wells which Abraham had earlier dug. He gave these wells the same names they had been given by Abraham. This establishes Isaac's right to these wells.
 - b. The "living water" which his servants found is apparently a new well, one of great value.
2. Verses 20-22: "And the herdmen of Gerar did strive with Isaac's herdmen, saying, The water *is* ours: and he called the name of the well Esek; because they strove with him. And they digged another well, and strove for that also: and he called the name of it Sitnah. And he removed from thence, and digged another well; and for that they strove not: and he called the name of it Rehoboth; and he said, For now the LORD hath made room for us, and we shall be fruitful in the land."
 - a. The Philistines contested ownership of this well; Isaac dug another. When they strove for it also, Isaac dug yet another well. The first of these he called Ezek, because they strove with him over it; the second he called Sitnah, and the third Rehoboth.
 - b. Scholars have translated these names in the following ways: The Quarrel Veil, The Hatred Veil, and the Well of Ample Room (Morris); Dispute, Opposition, and Room (Aalders); Contention, Enmity, and Room (Unger); Strife, Animosity, and Peace (Coffman, p.336).
3. "One of the big things in the chapter is the friendly and peaceful nature of Isaac, who exhibited many of the graces and much of the meekness of the Lord Jesus Christ. Abimelech I had given Abraham the right to live in his whole domain; and the envious Philistines were acting illegally by trying to prevent Isaac's use of their country. When disputes arose, Isaac resolved them by yielding and moving to another place, trusting Jehovah rather than taking things into his own hands and engaging in armed conflict" (Coffman, p.336).

D. Genesis 26:23-25: Isaac Moves to Beersheba.

1. Verses 23-24: "And he went up from thence to Beersheba. And the LORD appeared unto him the same night, and said, *I am* the God of Abraham thy father: fear not, for *I am* with thee, and will bless thee, and multiply thy seed for my servant Abraham's sake."
 - a. On moving to Beersheba, God appeared to Isaac.
 - b. "Perhaps out of fear of the continuing hostility of the Philistines Isaac gave ground and went all the way to Beersheba. That he did the right thing in this was at once confirmed by a reassuring appearance of Jehovah to the patriarch the very night he arrived there....With this vision, Isaac knew that all was well. He at once 'pitched his tent' there, an idiom meaning that he established his residence there, just as Abraham had done following the treaty with Abimelech I" (Coffman, p.336f).
2. Verse 25: "And he builded an altar there, and called upon the name of the LORD, and pitched his tent there: and there Isaac's servants digged a well."
 - a. Isaac built an altar at that place. The God-fearing patriarchs could be traced across the land by the many altars they erected.
 - b. "A place marked by divine appearance is a sacred spot where Yahweh is to be worshipped in a particular sense. So, following the good example of his father, Isaac builds an altar, where, of course, he offers sacrifice—a thing so obvious that it is not even mentioned—and engages in public worship in the course of which God's character and His words are extolled, for this is involved in 'calling upon the name of Yahweh'" (Leupold, pp. 729f).

E. Genesis 26:26-33: The Peace Treaty Renewed with the Philistines.

1. Verses 26-29: "Then Abimelech went to him from Gerar, and Ahuzzath one of his friends, and Phichol the chief captain of his army. And Isaac said unto them, Wherefore come ye to me, seeing ye hate me, and have sent me away from you? And they said, We saw certainly that the LORD was with thee: and we said, Let there be now an oath betwixt us, *even* betwixt us and thee, and let us make a covenant with thee; That thou wilt do

us no hurt, as we have not touched thee, and as we have done unto thee nothing but good, and have sent thee away in peace: thou *art* now the blessed of the LORD."

- a. Three of the important Philistine men sought a pact with Isaac. Phicol may also be a title (cf. General) rather than a proper name. Since they had shown hatred for Isaac, he asks why they wanted a treaty.
 - b. Their reply is that they saw that the Lord was with Isaac; thus they thought it wise to be friendly with him who stood in such good favor with the Almighty. They reminded him that they had not harmed him at all.
2. Verses 30-31: "And he made them a feast, and they did eat and drink. And they rose up betimes in the morning, and swore one to another: and Isaac sent them away, and they departed from him in peace."
- a. Isaac agreed to the pact, and concluded it with them with the proper feast and formalities that were appropriate.
 - b. "There is no mention of any banquet in the case of Abraham's covenant, which may be noted as another point of difference between the two transactions. A similar entertainment accompanied Jacob's covenant with Laban (Gen 31:54); while in the Mosaic system the sacrificial meal formed an integral part of the regularly-appointed sacrificial worship (Lev 7:15,31; Deut 12:7,17; vide Kurtz, 'Sacrificial Worship,' § 79)—and they did eat and drink. And they rose up betimes in the morning, and swore one to another—literally, a man to his brother. On the derivation of the verb to swear from the word for seven, see Gen 21:23—and Isaac sent them away, and they departed from him in peace" [The Pulpit Commentary, Electronic Database. Copyright © 2001 by BibleSoft].
3. Verses 32-33: "And it came to pass the same day, that Isaac's servants came, and told him concerning the well which they had digged, and said unto him, We have found water. And he called it Shebah: therefore the name of the city is Beersheba unto this day."
- a. On the very day this peace treaty was concluded, good news came from the men who were engaged in digging a new well: we have struck water! He named it "Shebah" which means "oath" (margin).
 - b. "As the treaty made on oath between Abimelech and Isaac was only a renewal of his covenant concluded before with Abraham, so the name Beersheba was also renewed by the well *Shebah*. The reality of the occurrence is supported by the fact that the two wells are in existence still..." (Keil, p.273).

F. Genesis 26:34-35: Esau's Polygamous Marriages.

1. Verse 34: "And Esau was forty years old when he took to wife Judith the daughter of Beeri the Hittite, and Bashemath the daughter of Elon the Hittite."
 - a. At the age of 40, Esau married two Hittite women: Judith and Bashemath. Abraham had introduced polygamy into his line and Esau and Jacob followed suit.
 - b. The power of influence is beyond our comprehension.
2. Verse 35: "Which were a grief of mind unto Isaac and to Rebekah."
 - a. These marriages were a grief to his parents since these were idol worshipers. His marriage to pagan idolaters was a major feature in the downward trend of Esau's descendants.
 - b. Leupold:
 - 1) Esau's incapacity for spiritual values is further illustrated by this step. He is not concerned about conserving the spiritual heritage of the family. Wives, two of them, unfortunately, of the Hittite stock which gave evidence of Canaanite contamination, were married (Hebrew: "he took to wife"). *Yehûdhîth* is a form that is quite possible without attempting to derive it from Judah; it may come from the name of the town *Jehûd* (Josh. 19:45) which lay in the confines of the territory later inhabited by Dan.
 - 2) "Grief of mind" (*morath rûach* = "bitterness of spirit") resulted from this marriage. The corrupt heathenish way of these wives will have been the source of this grief.
 - 3) As to the location of the sites of Isaac's wells, "Rehoboth" might well be *er-Rheibe*, some twenty miles southwest of Beersheba. Robinson claimed to have found a spot Wadi Shutain, or Schutnet, which might be "Sitnah." Beersheba will, no doubt, be *Bires-seba* in a wadi of the same name.

GENESIS 27

A. Introduction.

1. "Beginning with this chapter and throughout the rest of Genesis, the life, posterity, and activities of Jacob are the invariable theme....The almost monotonous detail of this section is a strange mingling of righteousness and wickedness, of successes and disasters, or heroism and knavery, of strength and weakness, and of doubt and faith. The purpose of this detailed account would appear to be that of providing a window of observation from which the clear and inevitable consequences of sin are manifested in the lives of Israel, with the necessary deduction that whatever happened to them provides a safe prophecy of what always happens when sin is indulged" (Coffman, p.343).
 - a. Romans 15:4: "For whatsoever things were written aforetime were written for our learning, that we through patience and comfort of the scriptures might have hope."
 - b. 1 Corinthians 10:6: "Now these things were our examples, to the intent we should not lust after evil things, as they also lusted."
 - c. 1 Corinthians 10:11: "Now all these things happened unto them for ensamples: and they are written for our admonition, upon whom the ends of the world are come."
2. "The uniqueness and inspiration of this amazing narrative are inherent in the variety and completeness of the revelation. What men spoke in their own hearts, the true basis of their motivation, the secrets of their intentions, what they did in the loneliness of the field, or upon their beds with their wives or concubines, what they did when they were away from home, how they reacted to temptation, and why they acted as they did, how they cheated and deceived each other, what they dreamed, the vows they made, the sorrows they bore, the hardships they endured....Fiction indeed relates many intimate and private actions of its subjects, but the design is never that of fairness in presenting a total picture..." (ibid., pp.343f).

B. Genesis 27:1-5: Isaac Plans to Bless Esau.

1. Verse 1: "And it came to pass, that when Isaac was old, and his eyes were dim, so that he could not see, he called Esau his eldest son, and said unto him, My son: and he said unto him, Behold, *here am I*."
- a. This chapter is usually understood as an example of Jacob and Rebekah's duplicity, but as this section indicates, Isaac initiated a plan by which he would bypass the prophecy which gave Jacob the blessing. He either willingly tried to overturn God's plan, or was not responsible for his actions due to his advanced age.
- b. "And the children struggled together within her; and she said, If *it be* so, why *am I* thus? And she went to inquire of the LORD. And the LORD said unto her, Two nations *are* in thy womb, and two manner of people shall be separated from thy bowels; and *the one* people shall be stronger than *the other* people; and the elder shall serve the younger" (Gen. 25:22-23). Certainly Rebekah told Isaac what the Lord had revealed to her. Isaac was now about 137 years old according to the calculations of the scholars.
 - 1) Genesis 25:26: "And after that came his brother out, and his hand took hold on Esau's heel; and his name was called Jacob: and Isaac *was* threescore years old when she bare them."
 - 2) Genesis 31:38: "This twenty years *have I been* with thee; thy ewes and thy she goats have not cast their young, and the rams of thy flock have I not eaten."
 - 3) Genesis 47:9: "And Jacob said unto Pharaoh, The days of the years of my pilgrimage *are* an hundred and thirty years: few and evil have the days of the years of my life been, and have not attained unto the days of the years of the life of my fathers in the days of their pilgrimage."
- c. Ishmael had died at the age of 137: "And these *are* the years of the life of Ishmael, an hundred and thirty and seven years: and he gave up the ghost and died; and was gathered unto his people" (Gen. 25:17).
- d. "This correct estimate of *Luther's* is based upon the following calculation:—When Joseph was introduced to Pharaoh he was thirty years old (41:46), and when Jacob went into Egypt, thirty-nine, as the seven years of abundance and two years of famine had then passed by (45:6). But Jacob was at that time 130 years old (47:9). Consequently Joseph was born before Jacob was ninety-one; and as his birth took place in the fourteenth year of Jacob's sojourn in Mesopotamia (cf. 30:25, and 29:18, 21 and 27), Jacob's flight to Laban occurred in the seventy-seventh year of his own life, and the 137th of Isaac's" (Keil, pp.273f, footnote).
- e. Isaac thought that his death was impending, and he wanted to pass the blessing on to his favorite son while he had time. He was misled in his thinking for he lived on about 43 more years, dying at the age of 180 (35:28).

- f. He was blind or nearly so. He had to depend on the other four senses to detect the deception of Jacob. His sense of hearing told him the voice he heard was Jacob's, but his senses of smell and touch said it was Esau; his taste said the food he ate was prepared by Esau. He should have gone by his sense of hearing.
 2. Verses 2-5: "And he said, Behold now, I am old, I know not the day of my death: Now therefore take, I pray thee, thy weapons, thy quiver and thy bow, and go out to the field, and take me *some* venison; And make me savoury meat, such as I love, and bring *it* to me, that I may eat; that my soul may bless thee before I die. And Rebekah heard when Isaac spake to Esau his son. And Esau went to the field to hunt *for* venison, *and* to bring *it*."
 - a. Isaac asked Esau to take his weapons and kill wild game (venison), a dish he was especially fond of eating. After eating this meal, Isaac planned to pronounce the special blessings belonging to the Promised One's lineage upon this unworthy man. He spoke of his soul doing the blessing, meaning that his innermost part would be directly involved in this pronouncement. These blessings were prophetic in nature (cf. 48:10ff; 50:24-25; Deut. 33; Josh. 23; 2 Sam. 23:1ff; 1 Kings 2:1ff).
 - b. Rebekah overheard this plan and took some steps to insure that Jacob receive the blessing as the Lord intended. Her plan was effective; it produced the proper result; God did not speak out against her and Jacob for what they did.
 - c. There were certain things God overlooked in that ancient and dark time (Acts 17:30). Also, the participants in these events received certain punishments.
 - 1) Isaac suffered in that Esau lost the blessing anyway, and his posterity (Edom) met with many hardships and problems. He was also separated from his other son for many years.
 - 2) Esau suffered for his despising the birthright and being willing to give it up for a bowl of pottage. He lost the double-portion of the inheritance.
 - 3) Rebekah suffered by being deprived of both of her sons: Esau was further estranged and Jacob left for Padan-aram. There is no proof she saw him again.
 - 4) Jacob suffered through many years of hardship, deception and injustice at the hands of his father-in-law; he was separated from his favorite son [Joseph]; and had his daughter violated.
 - 5) The unity of Isaac's family was shattered; each member suffered. Sin has ugly wages even in this life.
 - C. Genesis 27:6-17: Rebekah's Counter-Plan.
 1. Verses 6-10: "And Rebekah spake unto Jacob her son, saying, Behold, I heard thy father speak unto Esau thy brother, saying, Bring me venison, and make me savoury meat, that I may eat, and bless thee before the LORD before my death. Now therefore, my son, obey my voice according to that which I command thee. Go now to the flock, and fetch me from thence two good kids of the goats; and I will make them savoury meat for thy father, such as he loveth: And thou shalt bring *it* to thy father, that he may eat, and that he may bless thee before his death."
 - a. Having been eavesdropping (cf. 18:10), Rebekah learned what her husband was planning. She quickly laid a counter-plan by which to thwart Isaac's intent, and preserved the prediction of the Lord (25:23). Jacob is told to take two kids (young goats) which she would use in preparing a savory dish for his father.
 - b. The plan was that Jacob should take the food to Isaac, pretend he was Esau, and thus receive the blessing.
 2. Verses 11-17: "And Jacob said to Rebekah his mother, Behold, Esau my brother *is* a hairy man, and I *am* a smooth man: My father peradventure will feel me, and I shall seem to him as a deceiver; and I shall bring a curse upon me, and not a blessing. And his mother said unto him, Upon me *be* thy curse, my son: only obey my voice, and go fetch me *them*. And he went, and fetched, and brought *them* to his mother: and his mother made savoury meat, such as his father loved. And Rebekah took goodly raiment of her eldest son Esau, which *were* with her in the house, and put them upon Jacob her younger son: And she put the skins of the kids of the goats upon his hands, and upon the smooth of his neck: And she gave the savoury meat and the bread, which she had prepared, into the hand of her son Jacob."
 - a. Jacob immediately saw a potential problem: if my father feels me he will see I am not hairy as Esau is, and being known as a deceiver, I will be cursed instead of blessed. Rebekah said she would take the blame, and urged him to do as she said. She used the soft hide of the kids to cover his hands and neck, and had him wear some of Esau's clothes.
 - b. They only had to worry about Isaac's sense of hearing, and even that may have partially been provided for since Jacob and Esau were twins, and their voices may have been very similar.
 - D. Genesis 27:18-29: Rebekah's Plan Works Perfectly.
 1. Verses 18-24: "And he came unto his father, and said, My father: and he said, Here *am* I; who *art* thou, my son? And Jacob said unto his father, I *am* Esau thy firstborn; I have done according as thou badest me: arise,
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I pray thee, sit and eat of my venison, that thy soul may bless me. And Isaac said unto his son, How *is it* that thou hast found *it* so quickly, my son? And he said, Because the LORD thy God brought *it* to me. And Isaac said unto Jacob, Come near, I pray thee, that I may feel thee, my son, whether thou *be* my very son Esau or not. And Jacob went near unto Isaac his father; and he felt him, and said, The voice *is* Jacob's voice, but the hands *are* the hands of Esau. And he discerned him not, because his hands were hairy, as his brother Esau's hands: so he blessed him. And he said, *Art* thou my very son Esau? And he said, *I am.*"

- a. On entering his father's chamber, Isaac inquires who he is. Jacob asserts that he is Esau, the firstborn, and invites him to rise and eat the food he had requested. Isaac is doubtful that Esau could have found game and prepared it so quickly. But Jacob claims that the Lord had blessed his efforts. But Isaac is unconvinced and tells him to approach him so he can feel him. He decides that the voice is Jacob's but the hands were Esau's, therefore this must really be Esau.
 - b. Marshall Keeble used to warn people against using their "feelings" in their religion, saying, "If Isaac had stuck to hearing and ignored his feelings, he would not have been deceived." Notice the points in which Jacob deceived his father:
 - 1) He plainly stated that he was Isaac's firstborn.
 - 2) He said he had brought the venison Isaac had sent him out to get.
 - 3) He claimed that God had aided him in obtaining the meat so quickly.
 - 4) He wore Esau's clothes which gave him the smell of Esau.
 - 5) He wore goat hair on his hands and neck by which to deceive Isaac.
 - 6) He plainly answered his father by saying he really was Esau.
2. Verses 25-29: "And he said, Bring *it* near to me, and I will eat of my son's venison, that my soul may bless thee. And he brought *it* near to him, and he did eat: and he brought him wine, and he drank. And his father Isaac said unto him, Come near now, and kiss me, my son. And he came near, and kissed him: and he smelled the smell of his raiment, and blessed him, and said, See, the smell of my son *is* as the smell of a field which the LORD hath blessed: Therefore God give thee of the dew of heaven, and the fatness of the earth, and plenty of corn and wine: Let people serve thee, and nations bow down to thee: be lord over thy brethren, and let thy mother's sons bow down to thee: cursed *be* every one that curseth thee, and blessed *be* he that blesseth thee."
- a. Isaac then proceeded to bless Jacob, thinking he was Esau. "Rebekah's cunning plan of deception addressed all of Isaac's four remaining senses except hearing. Hearing should have been enough for Isaac to discern the truth, but, as he had turned away from hearing God's word with reference to his two sons, it was fitting indeed that he should have ignored hearing as it also concerned the words of Jacob" (Coffman, p.350).
 - b. Jacob kissed his father (cf. 2 Sam. 20:9; Mt. 26:49). Palestine has heavy dews which are nearly as beneficial as rain; hence this term is used as a symbol of the rich blessings which Jacob and his posterity would receive. Other nations would give way to them; all of the Canaanite nations were conquered by Israel. As long as they remained faithful to God they were protected from other nations. Even the posterity of Esau would serve Jacob's.

E. Genesis 27:30-46: The Deception is Discovered.

1. Verses 30-36: "And it came to pass, as soon as Isaac had made an end of blessing Jacob, and Jacob was yet scarce gone out from the presence of Isaac his father, that Esau his brother came in from his hunting. And he also had made savoury meat, and brought it unto his father, and said unto his father, Let my father arise, and eat of his son's venison, that thy soul may bless me. And Isaac his father said unto him, Who *art* thou? And he said, *I am* thy son, thy firstborn Esau. And Isaac trembled very exceedingly, and said, Who? where *is* he that hath taken venison, and brought *it* me, and I have eaten of all before thou camest, and have blessed him? yea, *and* he shall be blessed. And when Esau heard the words of his father, he cried with a great and exceeding bitter cry, and said unto his father, Bless me, *even* me also, O my father. And he said, Thy brother came with subtlety, and hath taken away thy blessing. And he said, Is not he rightly named Jacob? for he hath supplanted me these two times: he took away my birthright; and, behold, now he hath taken away my blessing. And he said, Hast thou not reserved a blessing for me?"
- a. Esau prepared the savory meat and brought it to Isaac. He used almost identical words in identifying himself. His father trembled exceedingly and asked who had just left his presence. The Hebrew phrase indicates that Jacob had barely left when Esau came.
- b. He knew the answer even before completing his statement. Isaac knew and said that even though he did not intend the blessing for Jacob, Jacob would indeed have it. And it was impossible for him to change what had been done though Esau pleaded most touchingly.

- c. Hebrews 12:17: "For ye know how that afterward, when he would have inherited the blessing, he was rejected: for he found no place of repentance, though he sought it carefully with tears." The repentance here means a change of mind on Isaac's part.
2. Verses 37-40: "And Isaac answered and said unto Esau, Behold, I have made him thy lord, and all his brethren have I given to him for servants; and with corn and wine have I sustained him: and what shall I do now unto thee, my son? And Esau said unto his father, Hast thou but one blessing, my father? bless me, *even* me also, O my father. And Esau lifted up his voice, and wept. And Isaac his father answered and said unto him, Behold, thy dwelling shall be the fatness of the earth, and of the dew of heaven from above; And by thy sword shalt thou live, and shalt serve thy brother; and it shall come to pass when thou shalt have the dominion, that thou shalt break his yoke from off thy neck."
 - a. "And Isaac answered and said unto Esau, Behold, I have made him thy lord, and all his brethren have I given to him for servants. And with grain and new wine have I sustained him. And what then shall I do for thee, my son? And Esau said unto his father, Hast thou but one blessing, my father? Bless me, *even* me also, O my father. And Esau lifted up his voice, and wept. And Isaac his father answered and said unto him, Behold, of the fatness of the earth shall be thy dwelling, And of the dew of heaven from above. And by thy sword shalt thou live, and thou shalt serve thy brother. And it shall come to pass, when thou shalt break loose, That thou shalt shake his yoke from off thy neck." (ASV).
 - b. Isaac did the best he could for Esau. "And by thy sword shalt thou live, and thou shalt serve thy brother. And it shall come to pass, when **thou shalt break loose**, That thou shalt shake his yoke from off thy neck" (vs. 40, ASV). The phrase can be translated in either way. Esau's descendants would dwell in a very arid area, making their way by the sword.
 - 1) 2 Kings 8:20-22: "In his days Edom revolted from under the hand of Judah, and made a king over themselves. So Joram went over to Zair, and all the chariots with him: and he rose by night, and smote the Edomites which compassed him about, and the captains of the chariots: and the people fled into their tents. Yet Edom revolted from under the hand of Judah unto this day. Then Libnah revolted at the same time."
 - 2) 2 Chronicles 21:8-10: "In his days the Edomites revolted from under the dominion of Judah, and made themselves a king. Then Jehoram went forth with his princes, and all his chariots with him: and he rose up by night, and smote the Edomites which compassed him in, and the captains of the chariots. So the Edomites revolted from under the hand of Judah unto this day. The same time *also* did Libnah revolt from under his hand; because he had forsaken the LORD God of his fathers."
 - 3) Obadiah 1:10: "For *thy* violence against thy brother Jacob shame shall cover thee, and thou shalt be cut off for ever."
 - c. The Idumeans were among his posterity from which Herod the Great came.
3. Verses 41-46: "And Esau hated Jacob because of the blessing wherewith his father blessed him: and Esau said in his heart, The days of mourning for my father are at hand; then will I slay my brother Jacob. And these words of Esau her elder son were told to Rebekah: and she sent and called Jacob her younger son, and said unto him, Behold, thy brother Esau, as touching thee, doth comfort himself, *purposing* to kill thee. Now therefore, my son, obey my voice; and arise, flee thou to Laban my brother to Haran; And tarry with him a few days, until thy brother's fury turn away; Until thy brother's anger turn away from thee, and he forget *that* which thou hast done to him: then I will send, and fetch thee from thence: why should I be deprived also of you both in one day? And Rebekah said to Isaac, I am weary of my life because of the daughters of Heth: if Jacob take a wife of the daughters of Heth, such as these *which are* of the daughters of the land, what good shall my life do me?"
 - a. Esau would wait until Isaac died, then he would slay Jacob. Rebekah learned of this, thus plans for him to flee to her brother for safety. She spares Isaac knowledge of Esau's plan; he agrees for Jacob to seek a wife at Laban's.
 - b. "Such was the state of Isaac's health at that time, though he lived more than forty years afterward, that his death was expected by all; and Esau thought that would be a favourable time for him to avenge himself on his brother Jacob, as, according to the custom of the times, the sons were always present at the burial of the father. Ishmael came from his own country to assist Isaac to bury Abraham; and both Jacob and Esau assisted in burying their father Isaac, but the enmity between them had happily subsided long before that time....
 - 1) "There is no doubt that Esau, in his hatred to his brother, felt himself pleased with the thought that he should soon have the opportunity of avenging his wrongs....It was probably forty years before he returned, and it is likely Rebekah saw him no more; for it is the general opinion of the Jewish rabbis that

she died before Jacob's return from Padan-aram, whether the period of his stay be considered twenty or forty years....

- 2) "If Esau should kill Jacob, then the nearest akin to Jacob, who was by the patriarchal law, Gen 9:6, the avenger of blood, would kill Esau and both these deaths might possibly take place in the same day. This appears to be the meaning of Rebekah. Those who are ever endeavouring to sanctify the means by the end, are full of perplexity and distress. God will not give his blessing to even a divine service, if not done in his own way, on principles of truth and righteousness. Rebekah and her son would take the means out of God's hands; they compassed themselves with their own sparks, and warmed themselves with their own fire and this had they at the hand of God, they lay down in sorrow. God would have brought about his designs in a way consistent with his own perfections; for he had fully determined that the elder should serve the younger, and that the Messiah should spring not from the family of Esau, but from that of Jacob, and needed not the cunning craftiness or deceits of men to accomplish his purposes. Yet in his mercy he overruled all these circumstances, and produced good, where things, if left to their own operations and issues, would have produced nothing but evil. However, after this reprehensible transaction we hear no more of Rebekah. The Holy Spirit mentions her no more, her burial excepted, Gen 49:31....
 - 3) "It is very likely that Rebekah kept many of the circumstances related above from the knowledge of Isaac; but as Jacob could not go to Padan-aram without his knowledge, she appears here quite in her own character, framing an excuse for his departure, and concealing the true cause. Abraham had been solicitous to get a wife for his son Isaac from a branch of his own family; hence, she was brought from Syria. She is now afraid, or pretends to be afraid, that her son Jacob will marry among the Hittites, as Esau had done; and therefore makes this to Isaac the ostensible reason why Jacob should immediately go to Padan-aram, that he might get a wife there. Isaac, not knowing the true cause of sending him away, readily falls in with Rebekah's proposal, and immediately calls Jacob, gives him suitable directions and his blessing, and sends him away. This view of the subject makes all consistent and natural; and we see at once the reason of the abrupt speech contained in this verse, which should be placed at the beginning of the following chapter [Adam Clarke, Biblesoft].
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GENESIS 28

A. Genesis 28:1-5: Isaac Sends Jacob to Padan-Aram.

1. Verse 1: "And Isaac called Jacob, and blessed him, and charged him, and said unto him, Thou shalt not take a wife of the daughters of Canaan."
 - a. Isaac's actions grow out of his wife's suggestion in the previous verse. She had said nothing to Isaac regarding Esau's intention to kill his brother Jacob following the death of their father. She probably did not want to add to her husband's woes by telling him about another family problem. She named a worthy reason for Jacob to leave home: so he could find a suitable wife from among a more godly people. But he would also be spared from Esau's evil intent. So Isaac blessed Jacob and charged him not to take a wife from among the idolatrous Canaanites.
 - b. "Despite this lack of candor, it is hard to fault Rebekah for the skilled manner in which she prevailed with Isaac, who promptly bestowed fully the blessing, without reservation, which the word of God, long known to him, had plainly commanded" (Coffman, p. 355). "Why a separate act of blessing really is yet necessary after the formal blessing of the preceding chapter, will appear when we examine v.4" (Leupold, p.765).
 - c. Notice that Isaac does not send some wise and reliable servant to procure a wife for Jacob, but sends the son himself, and him without any kind of escort and with few provisions. Perhaps he knew more than anyone thought about Esau's attitude toward Jacob. And since Jacob was perhaps 77 years old, he was old enough to tend to his own courtship! [Some have figured his age to have been 57 at this time].
 - 1) "Jacob's age is arrived at as follows: Joseph was thirty years old when introduced to Pharaoh, and, allowing for seven years of plenty and two of famine (45:6), Joseph was 39 years old when Jacob went to Egypt, at which time Jacob was 130 years of age. Therefore Joseph was born before Jacob was 91. His birth occurred in the fourteenth year of Jacob's sojourn in Mesopotamia (30:25; 29:18, 21, 27), which would mean Jacob's flight took place in his seventy-seventh year" [New Unger's Bible Encyclopedia, PC Study Bible].
 - 2) Another view claims that Jacob spent 40 years in Haran: "...In the view of Kennicott and Speaker's Commentary Jacob went to Laban at 57; in the first 14 years had sons, Reuben, Simeon, Levi, and Judah by Leah; Dan and Naphtali by Bilhah; in the 20 years (Gen. 35:33) next had Gad and Asher by Zilpah, Issachar and Zebulun by Leah, lastly Dinah by Leah and Joseph by Rachel; then six years' service for cattle, then flees from Padan Aram where he had been 40 years, at 97. In Jacob's 98 th year Benjamin is born and Rachel dies. Joseph at 17 goes to Egypt, at 30 is governor. At 130 Jacob goes to Egypt (Gen 46:1); dies at 147 (Gen 47:28). The assigning of 40, instead of 20, years to his sojourn with Laban allows time for Er and Onan to be grown up when married; their strong passions leading them to marry, even so, at an early age for that time. The common chronology needs some correction, since it makes Judah marry at 20, Er and Onan at 15" [Fausset's Bible Dictionary, Electronic Database Copyright ©1998 by Biblesoft].
2. Verses 2-4: "Arise, go to Padanaram, to the house of Bethuel thy mother's father; and take thee a wife from thence of the daughters of Laban thy mother's brother. And God Almighty bless thee, and make thee fruitful, and multiply thee, that thou mayest be a multitude of people; And give thee the blessing of Abraham, to thee, and to thy seed with thee; that thou mayest inherit the land wherein thou art a stranger, which God gave unto Abraham."
 - a. Isaac did not want Jacob to marry a woman from among the Canaanites since they were not worshipers of the true God. The only others he knew about who might still be loyal to Jehovah would be the family from which his wife had come. He knows that Jacob is the chosen one through whom the lineage of Abraham is to be continued and thus confers more fully the Abrahamic promise, including the land promise.
 - b. "The difference between this blessing, and the one Isaac mistakenly conferred upon Jacob earlier, is rather striking. In the first, there was no mention of the Abrahamic promise; but here Isaac apparently made an effort to go all the way in conferring the covenant blessing; but even in this there could have been a deficiency, a lack supplied by God himself in the vision that came as a sequel, that being the fact that 'all the families of the earth' would be blessed in his seed" (Coffman, p.356).
 - c. "Sobered by the failure of his attempt and made wiser, he freely gives what he fully understands to have been divinely destined for Jacob....Isaac also had not ventured to bestow the land of promise on the one who presumably was Esau, now he unmistakably bestows it on Jacob, that which is now a 'land of sojourning' where the patriarchs have as yet no permanent possession except a burial place" (Leupold, p.767).

3. Verse 5: "And Isaac sent away Jacob: and he went to Padanaram unto Laban, son of Bethuel the Syrian, the brother of Rebekah, Jacob's and Esau's mother."
 - a. The inspired author reports that Isaac sent Jacob away and that Jacob fulfilled his father's instructions. No mention is made of any great preparations for his journey; or that he took more than a few supplies: "I am not worthy of the least of all the mercies, and of all the truth, which thou hast showed unto thy servant; for with my staff I passed over this Jordan; and now I am become two bands" (Gen. 32:10). It was important that Jacob learn the lesson of faith in Jehovah.
 - b. Abraham had learned it through much difficulty. Now Jacob is called on to face an uncertain future which required him to place his full trust in the Lord. He went out with nothing, and came back with much.

B. Genesis 28:6-9: Esau Takes Another Wife.

1. Verses 6-7: "When Esau saw that Isaac had blessed Jacob, and sent him away to Padanaram, to take him a wife from thence; and that as he blessed him he gave him a charge, saying, Thou shalt not take a wife of the daughters of Canaan; And that Jacob obeyed his father and his mother, and was gone to Padanaram."
 - a. Esau saw that his brother was sent away and learned the purpose of his leaving.
 - b. He learned of the specific charge that Jacob was not to take a wife from the Canaanites. "When Esau saw—desirous to humour his parents, and if possible get the last will revoked, he became wise when too late (see Matt 25:10), and hoped, by gratifying his parents in one thing, to atone for all his former delinquencies. But he only made bad worse; and though he did not marry a 'wife of the daughters of Canaan,' he married into a family which God had rejected; it showed a partial reformation, but no repentance, because he gave no proofs of abating his vindictive purposes against his brother, nor cherishing that pious spirit that would have gratified his father—he was like Micah (see Judg 17:13: see the note at Gen 36:2)" [Jamieson, Fausset, and Brown Commentary, Electronic Database. Copyright © 1997 by Biblesoft].
2. Verse 8: "And Esau seeing that the daughters of Canaan pleased not Isaac his father."
 - a. It appears that this was news to Esau that his parents did not approve of his previous marriages to the Hittite women: "And Esau was forty years old when he took to wife Judith the daughter of Beeri the Hittite, and Bashemath the daughter of Elon the Hittite: Which were a grief of mind unto Isaac and to Rebekah" (Gen. 26:34-35).
 - b. He now learns of their displeasure, or only now begins to appreciate the seriousness of it. In either case, it demonstrates his lack of spiritual perception. It was a very serious mistake to have married idol worshipers.
 - c. "Growing up in a household where it was well known why Abraham had taken pains to secure a non-Canaanite wife for Isaac, Esau never seems to have understood why this was done. The entire spiritual heritage and all spiritual traditions had not as yet begun to mean anything to Esau. These few verses help us to understand very clearly why God could not use Esau..." (Leupold, p.769). "Lest there *be* any fornicator, or profane person, as Esau, who for one morsel of meat sold his birthright" (Heb. 12:16).
3. Verse 9: "Then went Esau unto Ishmael, and took unto the wives which he had Mahalath the daughter of Ishmael Abraham's son, the sister of Nebajoth, to be his wife."
 - a. He then tried to amend a bad situation by marrying a daughter of Ishmael. This bore a surface similarity to Jacob's upcoming marriage. But he had already entered into a polygamous relationship; this new marriage only made a bad situation worse.
 - b. Abraham's relationship with Hagar had its evil influence on both Jacob and Esau, and thousands in future generations.

C. Genesis 28:10-15: Jacob's Vision at Bethel.

1. Verses 10-11: "And Jacob went out from Beersheba, and went toward Haran. And he lighted upon a certain place, and tarried there all night, because the sun was set; and he took of the stones of that place, and put *them* for his pillows, and lay down in that place to sleep."
 - a. He began his journey from Beersheba enroute to Haran, a journey of 500 miles (Coffman). From Beersheba to Bethel where he spent the night in question was a distance of 70 miles (in a straight line). The text does not say that he made that distance on the first day, but is setting the stage for the great scene next to unfold. He came to a certain place on this day of travel and decided to spend the night there. This was not some pagan holy place, but a place and time which God chose to communicate with Jacob, who was now to be the patriarch with whom he was now dealing.
 - b. "The hardy shepherd is not disturbed by the experience [of sleeping in the open in a strange place], for shepherds often spend the night thus and are observed to this day sleeping with a stone for a pillow. Here 'mera'ashtaw' does not actually mean 'pillow' but 'head place'—a proper distinction, for pillows are soft, 'head places' not necessarily so" (Leupold, p.771).
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2. Verse 12: "And he dreamed, and behold a ladder set up on the earth, and the top of it reached to heaven: and behold the angels of God ascending and descending on it."
 - a. This is the first appearance of God to Jacob. Others are recorded in 31:3,11-13; 32:1-2; 32:24-30; 35:1; 35:9-13; 46:4 (seven in all).
 - 1) Genesis 31:3: "And the LORD said unto Jacob, Return unto the land of thy fathers, and to thy kindred; and I will be with thee."
 - 2) Genesis 31:11-13: "And the angel of God spake unto me in a dream, *saying*, Jacob: And I said, Here *am* I. And he said, Lift up now thine eyes, and see, all the rams which leap upon the cattle *are* ringstreaked, speckled, and grisled: for I have seen all that Laban doeth unto thee. I *am* the God of Bethel, where thou anointedst the pillar, *and* where thou vowedst a vow unto me: now arise, get thee out from this land, and return unto the land of thy kindred."
 - 3) Genesis 32:1-2: "And Jacob went on his way, and the angels of God met him. 2 And when Jacob saw them, he said, This *is* God's host: and he called the name of that place Mahanaim."
 - 4) Genesis 32:24-30: "And Jacob was left alone; and there wrestled a man with him until the breaking of the day. And when he saw that he prevailed not against him, he touched the hollow of his thigh; and the hollow of Jacob's thigh was out of joint, as he wrestled with him. And he said, Let me go, for the day breaketh. And he said, I will not let thee go, except thou bless me. And he said unto him, What *is* thy name? And he said, Jacob. And he said, Thy name shall be called no more Jacob, but Israel: for as a prince hast thou power with God and with men, and hast prevailed. And Jacob asked *him*, and said, Tell *me*, I pray thee, thy name. And he said, Wherefore *is* it *that* thou dost ask after my name? And he blessed him there. And Jacob called the name of the place Peniel: for I have seen God face to face, and my life is preserved."
 - 5) Genesis 35:1: "And God said unto Jacob, Arise, go up to Bethel, and dwell there: and make there an altar unto God, that appeared unto thee when thou fleddest from the face of Esau thy brother."
 - 6) Genesis 35:9-13: "And God appeared unto Jacob again, when he came out of Padanaram, and blessed him. And God said unto him, Thy name *is* Jacob: thy name shall not be called any more Jacob, but Israel shall be thy name: and he called his name Israel. And God said unto him, I *am* God Almighty: be fruitful and multiply; a nation and a company of nations shall be of thee, and kings shall come out of thy loins; And the land which I gave Abraham and Isaac, to thee I will give it, and to thy seed after thee will I give the land. And God went up from him in the place where he talked with him."
 - 7) Genesis 46:4: "I will go down with thee into Egypt; and I will also surely bring thee up *again*: and Joseph shall put his hand upon thine eyes."
 - b. "On this instance the ladder is the most notable external feature of the dream. The word 'sullam,' used only here, is well-established in its meaning 'ladder.' If it reaches from earth to heaven, that does not necessitate anything grotesque; dreams seem to make the strangest things appear perfectly natural. Nor could a ladder sufficiently broad to allow angels to ascend and descend constitute an incongruity in a dream" (Leupold, p.772).
 - c. Coffman makes the following points regarding the significance of the dream:
 - 1) Jacob had engaged in multiple deceptions and falsehoods. He was the heir of great wealth; but this journey would appear to have been taken on foot with minimal provisions (cf. vs. 20). He no doubt felt rejected, ashamed, and frightened.
 - 2) But that night, God appeared to him in a dream. As the author of Hebrews said (1:1), God spoke to the fathers "in various ways." In this instance, it was by a dream. God reassured Jacob of his love and protection, confirmed to him the Abrahamic covenant, and promised him heavenly protection until he should return to that land again.
 - 3) Many dreams are not even remembered the next morning; and in rare cases any longer than a few days; but this one has haunted the imaginations of men for millenniums of time. It was not merely intended to bless Jacob, but all subsequent generations of mankind as well.
 - 4) The dream shows the continual interest of God in his human creation. The omnipresence of God, called also his ubiquitousness, was also shown in this dream.
 - 5) Jesus evidently alludes to this dream in John 1:51: "Hereafter ye shall see heaven open, and the angels of God ascending and descending upon the Son of man."
 3. Verses 13-15: "And, behold, the LORD stood above it, and said, I *am* the LORD God of Abraham thy father, and the God of Isaac: the land whereon thou liest, to thee will I give it, and to thy seed; And thy seed shall be as the dust of the earth, and thou shalt spread abroad to the west, and to the east, and to the north, and to the
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south: and in thee and in thy seed shall all the families of the earth be blessed. And, behold, I *am* with thee, and will keep thee in all *places* whither thou goest, and will bring thee again into this land; for I will not leave thee, until I have done *that* which I have spoken to thee of."

- a. Jacob is not the rascal we tend to think. He seriously erred, but he was the best man for the job God had in mind. With time, God could mold him into a spiritual giant. Even now he is being strengthened in faith and encouraged by the great promises now being made to him. He has been sent away from his family and the home he has known all his life; even though he is much more than a boy, he still had natural fears and dismays.
- b. God identified himself (Jehovah), and immediately bestowed upon Jacob possession of the land where he now was. He never actually owned it directly any more than did his father and grandfather; it was promised to their descendants.
- c. The next portion of the heavenly message promised him a great number of offspring. These would be spread abroad in all directions. Compare:
 - 1) Genesis 13:16: "And I will make thy seed as the dust of the earth: so that if a man can number the dust of the earth, *then* shall thy seed also be numbered."
 - 2) Genesis 22:17: "That in blessing I will bless thee, and in multiplying I will multiply thy seed as the stars of the heaven, and as the sand which *is* upon the sea shore; and thy seed shall possess the gate of his enemies."
- d. In the seed of Jacob (which pertained also to Abraham and Isaac) would all be blessed. This finds fulfillment in Christ: "Now to Abraham and his seed were the promises made. He saith not, And to seeds, as of many; but as of one, And to thy seed, which is Christ" (Gal. 3:16).
- e. The final part pertained to Jacob's own personal welfare. God would be with him even until Jacob returned to his own land. This promise indicated he would live, prosper and return home.

D. Genesis 28:16-22: Jacob's Vow.

1. Verse 16: "And Jacob awaked out of his sleep, and he said, Surely the LORD is in this place; and I knew *it* not."
 - a. The patriarchs knew of the omniscience of God, but his awesome presence ever made a strong impression on them, just as it would on us if we were to behold a manifestation of him.
 - b. The manifestations of God to the patriarchs were not as frequent as it may seem [only seven are listed in Jacob's case].
 2. Verses 17-19: "And he was afraid, and said, How dreadful *is* this place! this *is* none other but the house of God, and this *is* the gate of heaven. And Jacob rose up early in the morning, and took the stone that he had put *for* his pillows, and set it up *for* a pillar, and poured oil upon the top of it. And he called the name of that place Bethel: but the name of that city *was called* Luz at the first."
 - a. Jacob was fearful (awe-stricken) by the events of the dream. He knew this was no mere imaginings of a travel-weary man.
 - b. According to ancient custom, or as something he deemed proper, Jacob set up the stone as a marker. The city at this site was first called Luz, later Bethel.
 3. Verses 21-22: "So that I come again to my father's house in peace; then shall the LORD be my God: And this stone, which I have set *for* a pillar, shall be God's house: and of all that thou shalt give me I will surely give the tenth unto thee."
 - a. "The conditional nature of Jacob's vow in this place should not be overly stressed....Jacob considered the fulfillment of that condition as being certain, founded upon the unchanging word of God; and thus his vow is in effect a promise to give a tenth of all to God's service" (Coffman, p.363).
 - b. This experience had nothing to do with Jacob's conversion since he was already considered a child of God.
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GENESIS 29

A. Introduction and Background.

1. "It is interesting that the multiple documents theorists have radically changed their minds about this chapter...now assigning it differently than formerly, indicating the total lack of any stability in the theories" (Coffman, p.365).
2. "In this chapter the major emphasis lies on God's gracious providence: in the preceding chapter Yahweh had promised to manifest His grace to Jacob; here definite tokens of that grace are received. Jacob finds those of his mother's family without difficulty; he meets with a pleasant reception; his years of work are rendered delightful; he secures a wife from the relationship of his mother; children come from this union. In the second place, of course, there are also indications of just retribution when the deceiver is also deceived" (Leupold, p.782).
3. Regarding the age of Jacob at this time which some have figured was seventy-seven: "In terms of normal aging and life spans today, these figures could be cut almost in half to correspond to the equivalent situations in our own time" (Morris, see Coffman, p.365).

B. Genesis 29:1-8: Jacob Arrives at the Well Near Haran.

1. Verses 1-3: "Then Jacob went on his journey, and came into the land of the people of the east. And he looked, and behold a well in the field, and, lo, there *were* three flocks of sheep lying by it; for out of that well they watered the flocks: and a great stone *was* upon the well's mouth. And thither were all the flocks gathered: and they rolled the stone from the well's mouth, and watered the sheep, and put the stone again upon the well's mouth in his place."
 - a. He came to a well in a field where shepherds watered their flocks; the well was covered by a great stone. This is not likely the same well where the servant of Abraham first met Rebekah.
 - b. Three flocks with their shepherds were lying near the well. These got there early so as to be first in line. Verse 3 is a parenthetical statement.
2. Verses 4-6: "And Jacob said unto them, My brethren, whence *be* ye? And they said, Of Haran *are* we. And he said unto them, Know ye Laban the son of Nahor? And they said, We know *him*. And he said unto them, *Is* he well? And they said, *He is* well: and, behold, Rachel his daughter cometh with the sheep."
 - a. They apparently spoke the same language. Jacob asked them where they were from. These shepherds may have been young men or boys since they were waiting for other shepherds to remove the stone.
 - b. When Jacob heard they were from Haran, the patriarch asked about Laban, his uncle. They reported that he was well and that even now his daughter was bringing Laban's sheep in for watering. Notice that he calls Laban the son of Nahor when in reality Laban was Nahor's grandson.
3. Verses 7-8: "And he said, Lo, *it is* yet high day, neither *is it* time that the cattle should be gathered together: water ye the sheep, and go *and* feed *them*. And they said, We cannot, until all the flocks be gathered together, and *till* they roll the stone from the well's mouth; then we water the sheep."
 - a. He gives the shepherds a mild rebuke for bringing the sheep in from the pasture while there was yet much daylight remaining. He urges them to water the flocks and take them back out to graze.
 - b. They said they could not until all the flocks had gathered and the large stone be removed from the well. These shepherds appear to have been unable to move the stone themselves.

C. Genesis 29:9-20: Jacob Meets Laban and Rachel, and Enter's Laban's House.

1. Verses 9-12: "And while he yet spake with them, Rachel came with her father's sheep: for she kept them. And it came to pass, when Jacob saw Rachel the daughter of Laban his mother's brother, and the sheep of Laban his mother's brother, that Jacob went near, and rolled the stone from the well's mouth, and watered the flock of Laban his mother's brother. And Jacob kissed Rachel, and lifted up his voice, and wept. And Jacob told Rachel that he *was* her father's brother, and that he *was* Rebekah's son: and she ran and told her father."
 - a. Notice the repetition of the phrase, *mother's brother*. "Allowing for the fact that in those days, among a different people, a kiss of cousins was a proper greeting, there is little doubt that Rachel was taken quite unawares and may well have been astonished, for as yet she knew nothing of this strong shepherd's identity. The more natural procedure would have been to explain first who he was, then to give the kiss of greeting. The reverse of the procedure indicates how his glad emotions ran away with him" (Leupold, p.789).
 - b. The kiss and the tears were of joy and excitement over finding his kinsmen following a journey of about 500 miles.

2. Verses 13-14: "And it came to pass, when Laban heard the tidings of Jacob his sister's son, that he ran to meet him, and embraced him, and kissed him, and brought him to his house. And he told Laban all these things. And Laban said to him, Surely thou *art* my bone and my flesh. And he abode with him the space of a month."
 - a. Laban is told about Jacob's arrival. Laban greeted his nephew with the ancient customary kiss. After informing his uncle of "all these things" (giving him news of his family and why he had come), Laban announced that this is certainly his "bone and flesh."
 - b. This is akin to our term, "own flesh and blood." We have no reason to think Laban was being insincere in his warm greeting. But did Jacob tell him about his deception of Esau?
 3. Verses 15-20: "And Laban said unto Jacob, Because thou *art* my brother, shouldest thou therefore serve me for nought? tell me, what *shall* thy wages *be*? And Laban had two daughters: the name of the elder *was* Leah, and the name of the younger *was* Rachel. Leah *was* tender eyed; but Rachel was beautiful and well favoured. And Jacob loved Rachel; and said, I will serve thee seven years for Rachel thy younger daughter. And Laban said, *It is* better that I give her to thee, than that I should give her to another man: abide with me. And Jacob served seven years for Rachel; and they seemed unto him *but* a few days, for the love he had to her."
 - a. After staying a month, Laban broached the subject of wages: You being a kinsman should not serve me without pay; what should thy wages be?
 - b. We are now introduced to Laban's two daughters. Leah is said to have been tender-eyed while Rachel was beautiful and well-favored. The scholars are undecided about the meaning of Leah's tender eyes. Leupold thinks that she did not have "that clearcut brilliance and lustre that the Orientals love." Coffman suggests that this may describe her principal beauty as being in the luster and softness of her eyes. If so, then Rachel's description gives her a more sensational appearance than Leah.
 - c. Jacob had decided he wanted Rachel as his wife, so he volunteered to serve Laban seven years for her. Laban said he had rather give her to Jacob than anyone else, and thus agreed to the deal. He had doubtless seen the value of having Jacob in his household, for his competent labor as well as for the kinship factor.
 - d. "Without sentimentality or cheap emotionalism the author describes very beautifully and most effectively the strength of Jacob's love. Years seemed like mere days "for the love he had to her" (Leupold, p.794).
- D. Genesis 29:21-30: Laban Deceives Jacob.
1. Verses 21-24: "And Jacob said unto Laban, Give *me* my wife, for my days are fulfilled, that I may go in unto her. And Laban gathered together all the men of the place, and made a feast. And it came to pass in the evening, that he took Leah his daughter, and brought her to him; and he went in unto her. And Laban gave unto his daughter Leah Zilpah his maid *for* an handmaid."
 - a. At the end of the seven years of service, Jacob approached Laban with a reminder that the time had been fulfilled. Laban should have initiated this action. Employers have been known to selfishly ignore an agreed-upon proposal until the workers brought it to their attention. Laban gave a feast, and in the evening (under the cover of darkness and the veil), he brought Leah unto Jacob.
 - b. This was one of the meanest tricks one could play on another. It could not have been accomplished without Leah's agreement. And somehow Rachel had to be kept quiet, either to getting her to agree to the plan, or perhaps by some subtle subplot or through force. Zilpah is introduced at this point, for she will become an important part in the story of Jacob later.
 2. Verses 25-30: "And it came to pass, that in the morning, behold, it *was* Leah: and he said to Laban, What *is* this thou hast done unto me? did not I serve with thee for Rachel? wherefore then hast thou beguiled me? And Laban said, It must not be so done in our country, to give the younger before the firstborn. Fulfil her week, and we will give thee this also for the service which thou shalt serve with me yet seven other years. And Jacob did so, and fulfilled her week: and he gave him Rachel his daughter to wife also. And Laban gave to Rachel his daughter Bilhah his handmaid to be her maid. And he went in also unto Rachel, and he loved also Rachel more than Leah, and served with him yet seven other years."
 - a. Jacob did not discover the true identity of his wife until the next morning. His delusion was possible owing to the darkness and the veil Leah wore. They were obviously of similar size and build. Leah knew full well that Jacob was being deceived; she must bear part of the responsibility for the trickery unless she was herself deceived by her father into believing that Jacob sought her as his wife.
 - b. Jacob knew that the blame must be placed on Laban, and to him he goes with a question showing his outrage: What is this thou hast done unto me? I have worked seven years for Rachel. Why have you tricked me? Jacob is not as outraged as he could have been. Perhaps he called to memory the effect his own trickery had had on Isaac and Esau. He now knew how it felt to be victimized by an unscrupulous scheme. The deceiver had himself been deceived!
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- c. "The marvelous story of the love Jacob had for Rachel, the deceit and avarice of Laban, the helplessness of Jacob during this period of humiliation, and the mockery of a wedding feast in which the bride was denied to her husband and another substituted in her stead—all this is here related in a compact and beautiful style to give one of the most intriguing narratives ever given as a record of actual events" (Coffman, pp.372f).
- d. The ageless principle of a man reaping what he has sown is illustrated several times in the narrative. Jacob, who tricked his brother and father, is grievously deceived; Laban was repaid later when he lost his daughters and grandchildren, along with much of his wealth when Jacob returned to Canaan; Leah was deprived of her husband's love, and Rachel remained barren for many years and had to share her husband with Leah.
- e. Jacob agreed to serve Laban for another seven years to receive Rachel as his wife. He fulfilled Leah's week, a period of time set apart for newlyweds to be together. He then married Rachel. He loved Rachel more than he loved Leah.

E. Genesis 29:31-35: Leah is Blessed with Four Healthy Sons.

- 1. Verse 31: "And when the LORD saw that Leah *was* hated, he opened her womb: but Rachel *was* barren."
 - a. This sheds much light on the Lord's statement in Luke 14:26: to hate, as used in these cases, means to love less (cf. Gen. 29:30; Matt. 10:37). When the Lord observed that Leah was loved less than Rachel, he allowed Leah to bear children while Rachel remained barren. Keep in mind that Leah was Jacob's official wife.
 - b. Matthew 10:37: "He that loveth father or mother more than me is not worthy of me: and he that loveth son or daughter more than me is not worthy of me."
 - 2. Verses 32-35: "And Leah conceived, and bare a son, and she called his name Reuben: for she said, Surely the LORD hath looked upon my affliction; now therefore my husband will love me. And she conceived again, and bare a son; and said, Because the LORD hath heard that I *was* hated, he hath therefore given me this *son* also: and she called his name Simeon. And she conceived again, and bare a son; and said, Now this time will my husband be joined unto me, because I have born him three sons: therefore was his name called Levi. And she conceived again, and bare a son: and she said, Now will I praise the LORD: therefore she called his name Judah; and left bearing."
 - a. Leah bears four sons to Jacob. The first is named "Reuben" She thinks her husband will now love her more, and gives the credit to the Lord for this son.
 - b. She seems to have become a very spiritual woman for the time when her statements following the birth of her sons are considered. Her devotion seems to have grown with the arrival of each of her children.
 - 3. Notes from Coffman concerning Leah and Rachel:
 - a. Leah was the stronger and a more suitable wife for Jacob; she was the principal wife. She was mother of six of his sons (Gen. 30:19), half of the 12 patriarchs. Her son Judah became progenitor of the chief tribe of Israel. David descended from her. She was the first, thus the lawful, wife of Jacob. Jesus was born as a descendant of her son Judah. She was buried with her husband while Rachel was buried elsewhere: "And they journeyed from Bethel; and there was but a little way to come to Ephrath: and Rachel travailed, and she had hard labour. And it came to pass, when she was in hard labour, that the midwife said unto her, Fear not; thou shalt have this son also. And it came to pass, as her soul was in departing, (for she died) that she called his name Benoni: but his father called him Benjamin. And Rachel died, and was buried in the way to Ephrath, which *is* Bethlehem. And Jacob set a pillar upon her grave: that *is* the pillar of Rachel's grave unto this day" (Gen. 35:16-20).
 - b. Rachel, being more beautiful than Leah, was the special object of Jacob's love, that being the principal element in her place in scripture, and in the history of the Chosen People. She was the second, not the first wife, of Jacob. She was impatient and demanding in the matter of her barrenness (30:1-6). Through her posterity, sexual perversion began in Israel (Hos. 9:9; Judg. 19:10).
 - 1) Judges 19:10: "But the man would not tarry that night, but he rose up and departed, and came over against Jebus, which *is* Jerusalem; and *there were* with him two asses saddled, his concubine also *was* with him."
 - 2) Hosea 9:9: "They have deeply corrupted *themselves*, as in the days of Gibeah: *therefore* he will remember their iniquity, he will visit their sins."
 - c. Her descendant Ephraim led the rebellion that divided Israel and caused the majority of the nation to go into apostasy: "Ephraim *is* joined to idols: let him alone" (Hos. 4:17). She was not buried with her husband at
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Machpelah. Apparently, she sponsored and kept alive pagan idolatry among the Israelites (Gen. 31:32-35). She re-introduced concubinage.

- 1) Genesis 31:32-35: "With whomsoever thou findest thy gods, let him not live: before our brethren discern thou what *is* thine with me, and take *it* to thee. For Jacob knew not that Rachel had stolen them. And Laban went into Jacob's tent, and into Leah's tent, and into the two maidservants' tents; but he found *them* not. Then went he out of Leah's tent, and entered into Rachel's tent. Now Rachel had taken the images, and put them in the camel's furniture, and sat upon them. And Laban searched all the tent, but found *them* not. And she said to her father, Let it not displease my lord that I cannot rise up before thee; for the custom of women *is* upon me. And he searched, but found not the images."
 - 2) Hosea 4:17: "Ephraim *is* joined to idols: let him alone."
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GENESIS 30

A. The Twelve Patriarchs:

NAME	MOTHER	MEANING
Reuben	Leah	See a Son: Jacob will love me now.
Simeon	Leah	Heard: God has heard my prayers.
Levi	Leah	Attached: Jacob will stay with me.
Judah	Leah	Praise: I will praise Jehovah.
Dan	Bilhah	Judging: God hath vindicated me.
Naphtali	Bilhah	Wrestling: I have wrestled Leah and prevailed.
Gad	Zilpah	Troop, Luck: Gained ground on Rachel.
Asher	Zilpah	Happy: Happy am I.
Issachar	Leah	Hire: Bought a night with Jacob.
Zebulun	Leah	Dwelling: Jacob will dwell with me now.
Joseph	Rachel	Adding: May God give me another son.
Benjamin	Rachel	Son of the Right Hand: (Given by Jacob); Benoni: "Son of My Sorrow" (Rachel's choice).

B. Genesis 30:1-8: Rachel gives Bilhah to Jacob as Concubine.

1. Verses 1-2: "And when Rachel saw that she bare Jacob no children, Rachel envied her sister; and said unto Jacob, Give me children, or else I die. And Jacob's anger was kindled against Rachel: and he said, *Am I in God's stead, who hath withheld from thee the fruit of the womb?*"
 - a. Rachel shows a decided spiritual weakness in the speech to Jacob. The inspired historian does not try to cover up any of the faults of the characters he describes, but plainly states Rachel was afflicted with the sin of envy. A woman fulfills her destiny in childbearing. Rachel had been unable to bear children; she envied her sister who had borne four sons already; she demanded that Jacob give her children or else she would die.
 - b. This was a rash statement for she did die when her second son was born. "And they journeyed from Bethel; and there was but a little way to come to Ephrath: and Rachel travailed, and she had hard labour. And it came to pass, when she was in hard labour, that the midwife said unto her, Fear not; thou shalt have this son also. And it came to pass, as her soul was in departing, (for she died) that she called his name Benoni: but his father called him Benjamin. And Rachel died, and was buried in the way to Ephrath, which *is* Bethlehem. And Jacob set a pillar upon her grave: that *is* the pillar of Rachel's grave unto this day" (Gen. 35:16-20).
 - c. Jacob rebuked her by asking the rhetorical question, "Am I in God's stead?" He affirmed by his question that only God could make her able to bear children. He says also that God had withheld the "fruit of the womb" from her, meaning children. It appears she had not approached God in prayer to ask for children. Laban was a worshiper of idols, and she had a propensity for them as well.
2. Verses 3-4: "And she said, Behold my maid Bilhah, go in unto her; and she shall bear upon my knees, that I may also have children by her. And she gave him Bilhah her handmaid to wife: and Jacob went in unto her."
 - a. Jacob "...was not sufficiently strong in faith to bring the problem before God in prayer together with his wife. Isaac's example (25:21) should have taught him what was to be done in such a case, and, surely, Jacob

had learned from his mother about that incident. Again, the miscarriage of Abraham's plan when Sarah substituted Hagar should have taught Jacob the inadequacy of the plan that was being devised. Jacob still appears as a man who has quite a bit to learn" (Leupold, pp.805f).

- b. To "go in unto" is a euphemism for sexual intercourse. To "bear children upon my knees" indicates that the children borne by the handmaid would be Rachel's by right of ownership. There is no indication that Bilhah was consulted for her consent in this matter. Jacob agreed to Rachel's plan.
3. Verses 5-8: "And Bilhah conceived, and bare Jacob a son. And Rachel said, God hath judged me, and hath also heard my voice, and hath given me a son: therefore called she his name Dan. And Bilhah Rachel's maid conceived again, and bare Jacob a second son. And Rachel said, With great wrestlings have I wrestled with my sister, and I have prevailed: and she called his name Naphtali."
 - a. Rachel thus introduced concubinage into the family of Jacob "with consequences of unmitigated sorrow (Coffman, p.376). It was not long before Leah followed suit.
 - b. The divine plan for marriage was ignored. Over an unspecified period of time, two sons were born to Bilhah: Dan and Naphtali. The Record does not report any other children being born to this handmaid.

C. Genesis 30:9-21: The Sons of Zilpah and the Other Children of Leah.

1. Verses 9-13: "When Leah saw that she had left bearing, she took Zilpah her maid, and gave her Jacob to wife. And Zilpah Leah's maid bare Jacob a son. And Leah said, A troop cometh: and she called his name Gad. And Zilpah Leah's maid bare Jacob a second son. And Leah said, Happy am I, for the daughters will call me blessed: and she called his name Asher. hen Leah saw that Rachel's handmaid bore no more children, she gave to Jacob her handmaid, Zilpah, for the purpose of producing children for her."
 - a. This handmaid [Zilpah] bore two sons, Gad and Asher.
 - b. "When Leah saw that she had left bearing (literally, stood from bearing, as in Gen 29:35), she took Zilpah her maid, and gave her to Jacob to wife - being in this led astray by Rachel's sinful example, both as to the spirit of unholy rivalry she cherished, and the questionable means she employed for its gratification. And Zilpah Leah's maid bare Jacob a son. And Leah said, A troop cometh....And Zilpah, Leah's maid, bare Jacob a second son. And Leah said, Happy am I, - literally, in my happiness, so am I ('Speaker's Commentary'); or, for or to my happiness (Keil, Kalisch)—for the daughters will call me blessed (or, happy): and she called his name Asher—i.e. Happy am I" [Pulpit Commentary, Electronic Database. Copyright © 2001 by Biblesoft].
2. Verses 14-15: "And Reuben went in the days of wheat harvest, and found mandrakes in the field, and brought them unto his mother Leah. Then Rachel said to Leah, Give me, I pray thee, of thy son's mandrakes. And she said unto her, *Is it* a small matter that thou hast taken my husband? and wouldest thou take away my son's mandrakes also? And Rachel said, Therefore he shall lie with thee to night for thy son's mandrakes."
 - a. Leah's oldest son, Reuben, was in the field in the days of wheat harvest and found mandrakes. "Mandrake (*Mandragora officinarum*), called 'The Love Apple,' is a stemless perennial of the night shade family, having emetic, purgative, and narcotic qualities. The forked, torso-like shape of the tap-root gave rise to many superstitions. Aphrodisiac properties were ascribed it. The plant grew widely in Palestine" (Coffman, p.377). The superstition regarding the mandrakes is not supported by the divine record; it simply reports that Rachel subscribed to that myth. It seems that she thought Leah was able to bear children because of them and thus asked politely for some of the mandrakes Reuben had found.
 - b. We are not told how old this lad was, although some scholars think he was only about four. This passage is an indication of the frequent clashes which must have arisen between these two sisters, and is another argument against polygamy. The sisters struck a bargain: in exchange for some of the mandrakes, Rachel would consent to Jacob spending the night with Leah. Leah had hoped that Jacob would love her more after the birth of her four sons (29:32), but evidently was disappointed in this.
 - c. "The frank narrative of the Scriptures on this point makes us blush with shame at the indelicate bargaining of the sisters—one of the fruits of a bigamous connection" (Leupold, p.812).
3. Verse 16: "And Jacob came out of the field in the evening, and Leah went out to meet him, and said, Thou must come in unto me; for surely I have hired thee with my son's mandrakes. And he lay with her that night."
 - a. Jacob came home that evening to the news that the sleeping arrangements had been changed: he was to spend the night in Leah's tent that night: "I have hired thee with thy son's mandrakes."
 - b. "Jacob's lot cannot have been a very happy one. To an extent he was shuttled back and forth between the two wives and even their handmaids.... Leah almost triumphantly claims him as a result of her bargain, as he comes in from the field" (ibid. p.813).

4. Verses 17-21: "And God hearkened unto Leah, and she conceived, and bare Jacob the fifth son. And Leah said, God hath given me my hire, because I have given my maiden to my husband: and she called his name Issachar. And Leah conceived again, and bare Jacob the sixth son. And Leah said, God hath endued me *with* a good dowry; now will my husband dwell with me, because I have born him six sons: and she called his name Zebulun. And afterwards she bare a daughter, and called her name Dinah."
 - a. There must have been some faith in God on Leah's part for we are now told that God hearkened unto her and allowed her to conceive. She bore two sons, Issachar and Zebulun, and later a daughter who was named Dinah ("Judgment").
 - b. Genesis 37:35 and Genesis 46:7,15 show that there were several daughters in Jacob's family; the total number of his family is reported as 33: "These *be* the sons of Leah, which she bare unto Jacob in Padanaram, with his daughter Dinah: all the souls of his sons and his daughters *were* thirty and three" (Gen. 46:15).

D. Genesis 30:22-24: The Birth of Joseph.

1. Verse 22: "And God remembered Rachel, and God hearkened to her, and opened her womb."
 - a. God remembered Rachel: not that he had forgotten about her, but in the sense that he granted her request.
 - b. So she had apparently prayed to him to lift her barrenness. This God did.
2. Verses 23-24: "And she conceived, and bare a son; and said, God hath taken away my reproach: And she called his name Joseph; and said, The LORD shall add to me another son."
 - a. She conceived and bore a son. "God hath taken away my reproach." To be barren was considered by the Israelite women to be the greatest curse.
 - b. This son was named Joseph which means "adding" because she hoped God would add another son to her family. The story had advanced several years from the time of the mandrakes incident so that no credence can be attached to the superstition. "Quite humbly Rachel, who early in her marriage may have been a more or less haughty and self-sufficient personage, now gives God the glory..." (Leupold, p.815).

E. Genesis 30:25-36: Jacob and Laban Agree on What Jacob's Wages are to be.

1. Verses 25-26: "And it came to pass, when Rachel had born Joseph, that Jacob said unto Laban, Send me away, that I may go unto mine own place, and to my country. Give *me* my wives and my children, for whom I have served thee, and let me go: for thou knowest my service which I have done thee."
 - a. After Joseph's birth, Jacob requested that Laban send him and his family away so they could return to Palestine. He had completed his period of service (14 years). If he had just then completed that service, then Joseph was born during his 14th year in Haran. More than 14 years may have passed, thus making Jacob younger than the 77 the scholars have asserted for his age on leaving Palestine.
 - b. Jacob called attention to the worthy service he had wrought for Laban.
 2. Verses 27-30: "And Laban said unto him, I pray thee, if I have found favour in thine eyes, *tarry*: for I have learned by experience that the LORD hath blessed me for thy sake. And he said, Appoint me thy wages, and I will give *it*. And he said unto him, Thou knowest how I have served thee, and how thy cattle was with me. For *it was* little which thou hadst before I *came*, and it is *now* increased unto a multitude; and the LORD hath blessed thee since my coming: and now when shall I provide for mine own house also?"
 - a. Laban asked him what the wages ought to be if he stayed longer. He had seen that God had indeed blessed Jacob's efforts. He says he had learned by experience that the Lord had "blessed me for thy sake."
 - b. Jacob reminded Laban that he had had but little when he arrived but now his flocks had increased to a multitude.
 3. Verses 31-36: "And he said, What shall I give thee? And Jacob said, Thou shalt not give me any thing: if thou wilt do this thing for me, I will again feed *and* keep thy flock. I will pass through all thy flock to day, removing from thence all the speckled and spotted cattle, and all the brown cattle among the sheep, and the spotted and speckled among the goats: and *of such* shall be my hire. So shall my righteousness answer for me in time to come, when it shall come for my hire before thy face: every one that *is* not speckled and spotted among the goats, and brown among the sheep, that shall be counted stolen with me. And Laban said, Behold, I would it might be according to thy word. And he removed that day the he goats that were ringstreaked and spotted, and all the she goats that were speckled and spotted, *and* every one that had *some* white in it, and all the brown among the sheep, and gave *them* into the hand of his sons. And he set three days' journey betwixt himself and Jacob: and Jacob fed the rest of Laban's flocks."
 - a. Jacob said that all the speckled and spotted livestock were to be removed from the flock; and when the time for reckoning should come, he would take all the sheep and goats which were spotted and speckled; he would not take any of Laban's current flock.
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- b. Laban hastily agreed for what Jacob had agreed to take were the exception, not the rule. Laban separated those of the flock which were spotted and speckled, and moved them away by a space of 3-days journey (about 50 miles) and put them in the care of his own sons. Jacob was placed in control of the remaining part of Laban's herd which had no spotted and speckled members. So Jacob was starting with a distinct disadvantage.

F. Genesis 30:37-43: Jacob is Well-Blessed by Jehovah.

1. Verses 37-42: "And Jacob took him rods of green poplar, and of the hazel and chestnut tree; and pilled white streaks in them, and made the white appear which *was* in the rods. And he set the rods which he had pilled before the flocks in the gutters in the watering troughs when the flocks came to drink, that they should conceive when they came to drink. And the flocks conceived before the rods, and brought forth cattle ringstreaked, speckled, and spotted. And Jacob did separate the lambs, and set the faces of the flocks toward the ringstreaked, and all the brown in the flock of Laban; and he put his own flocks by themselves, and put them not unto Laban's cattle. And it came to pass, whensoever the stronger cattle did conceive, that Jacob laid the rods before the eyes of the cattle in the gutters, that they might conceive among the rods. But when the cattle were feeble, he put *them* not in: so the feebler were Laban's, and the stronger Jacob's."
 - a. Jacob's stratagem is said to have some reliability. "It has long been an opinion that whatever makes a strong impression on the mind of the female in the time of conception and gestation, will have a corresponding influence on the mind or body of the fetus" (Clarke, p.189).
 - b. The Record says nothing about such, but it is certainly within the realm of possibility that this plan was in accordance with some revelation of God. It was either (1) a pagan superstition with no value to it at all, or (2) based on some scientific principle that works, or (3) a plan God gave Jacob for the purpose of testing his faith so as to give him a great wealth in property. The third is in keeping with other procedures God employed in other cases (the fall of Jericho; Naaman's cleansing).
2. Verse 43: "And the man increased exceedingly, and had much cattle, and maidservants, and menservants, and camels, and asses."
 - a. God had promised Jacob that he would bless him (28:13-15). In this summary verse God gave him great wealth in cattle, maidservants, menservants, camels, and asses. Later, when he inherited his father's substance, he was a truly wealthy and powerful man.
 - b. "When he found that his project succeeded, through the special blessing of God upon it, he contrived, by using it only with the stronger cattle, to secure to himself those that were most valuable, leaving the feebler to Laban, v. 41, 42. Thus Jacob increased exceedingly (v. 43), and grew very rich in a little time. This success of his policy, it is true, was not sufficient to justify it, if there had been any thing fraudulent or unjust in it, which we are sure there was not, for he did it by divine direction (Gen 31:12); nor was there any thing in the thing itself but the honest improvement of a fair bargain, which the divine providence wonderfully prospered, both in justice to Jacob whom Laban had wronged and dealt hardly with and in pursuance of the particular promises made to him of the tokens of the divine favour, Note, Those who, while their beginning is small, are humble and honest, contented and industrious, are in a likely way to see their latter end greatly increasing. He that is faithful in a little shall be entrusted with more. He that is faithful in that which is another man's shall be entrusted with something of his own. Jacob, who had been a just servant, became a rich master" [Matthew Henry's Commentary on the Whole Bible: New Modern Edition, Electronic Database. Copyright © 1991 by Hendrickson Publishers, Inc.].

GENESIS 31

A. Introduction.

1. "In this chapter is the record of Jacob's leaving Paddan-aram and taking the long journey back to his ancestral home at Beersheba, taking with him his wives and children and all of the wealth which he gathered 'beyond the River,' i.e., the Euphrates. His increasing awareness of the increasing hostility of Laban, his enlistment of his wives as helpers in his secret departure, the actual departure, Laban's angry pursuit, their confrontation in the hills of Gilead, and the amicable settlement of their hostilities, which was commemorated by the erection of a cairn of stones and a festive meal together—all are here interwoven to form one of the most interesting chapters in the Bible. This effective narrative is a unity, a fact attested by the skilled and brilliant manner of its presentation" (Coffman, p.381).
2. The chapter may be divided into three sections: (1) the flight of Jacob from Laban; (2) the pursuit of Laban and their confrontation; and (3) their covenant.

B. Genesis 31:1-21: Jacob Flees from Padan-aram.

1. Verses 1-3: "And he heard the words of Laban's sons, saying, Jacob hath taken away all that *was* our father's; and of *that* which *was* our father's hath he gotten all this glory. And Jacob beheld the countenance of Laban, and, behold, it *was* not toward him as before. And the LORD said unto Jacob, Return unto the land of thy fathers, and to thy kindred; and I will be with thee."
 - a. The sons of Laban discuss the great wealth Jacob had obtained in contrast with the relatively small fortune their father possessed. They assert that Jacob had grown rich by taking away their father's wealth. This was a reaction to the closing statement of the previous chapter. But Jacob had not defrauded Laban; and neither was Laban impoverished. God had blessed Jacob, but Laban was reaping from his own selfish schemes.
 - b. Jacob learned of the conversation these brothers had held, either by being told or by overhearing it. God spoke to Jacob in a dream (verses 11-13) and instructed him to return to his own country. He promised to be with Jacob, thus implying his continued safety and prosperity,
2. Verses 4-6: "And Jacob sent and called Rachel and Leah to the field unto his flock, And said unto them, I see your father's countenance, that it *is* not toward me as before; but the God of my father hath been with me. And ye know that with all my power I have served your father."
 - a. Jacob called his wives out to the field where he spoke to them about Laban's current attitude toward Jacob: his face is not toward me as formerly.
 - b. He told them that God had been with him in his efforts: a fact that could be easily discerned. Jacob reminded them how he had served their father faithfully.
3. Verses 7-13: "And your father hath deceived me, and changed my wages ten times; but God suffered him not to hurt me. If he said thus, The speckled shall be thy wages; then all the cattle bare speckled: and if he said thus, The ringstreaked shall be thy hire; then bare all the cattle ringstreaked. Thus God hath taken away the cattle of your father, and given *them* to me. And it came to pass at the time that the cattle conceived, that I lifted up mine eyes, and saw in a dream, and, behold, the rams which leaped upon the cattle *were* ringstreaked, speckled, and grisdled. And the angel of God spake unto me in a dream, *saying*, Jacob: And I said, Here *am* I. And he said, Lift up now thine eyes, and see, all the rams which leap upon the cattle *are* ringstreaked, speckled, and grisdled: for I have seen all that Laban doeth unto thee. I *am* the God of Bethel, where thou anointedst the pillar, *and* where thou vowedst a vow unto me: now arise, get thee out from this land, and return unto the land of thy kindred."
 - a. He next pointed out how Laban had mistreated him by his deceit. These sisters were fully appraised of Laban's deceit in Jacob's marriage agreement. But furthermore, Laban had changed Jacob's wages "ten" times. "Whereas at first it was merely stipulated that all that was unusual in color should be Jacob's (30:32). Laban had changed these terms so that only one particular class of the off-color sheep or goats should be Jacob's..." (Leupold, p.831). "Ten times" may not be intended as a literal number, but as a figure of speech expressing "numerous times." The number ten expresses the idea of completeness (cf. Coffman, p.384).
 - b. Despite Laban's evil efforts, God did not allow these changed wages to hurt Jacob; he still received God's bounty. When Laban restricted Jacob's wages to only the speckled animals, then the young were born speckled. The same was true when he changed it to the ringstraked. God was behind this blessing for Jacob.
 - c. God spoke to Jacob in a dream and identified himself as the One who had spoken to Jacob at Bethel (see Gen. 28). In the intervening 20 years there is no record of him speaking to Jacob. But in this dream God reminded Jacob of the events at Bethel and how Jacob had vowed a vow in response to God's promise to be with him. He now tells the patriarch to return to the land of promise.

- d. These things Jacob tells to his wives to prepare them for departing from their father.
 - 4. Verses 14-16: "And Rachel and Leah answered and said unto him, *Is there* yet any portion or inheritance for us in our father's house? Are we not counted of him strangers? for he hath sold us, and hath quite devoured also our money. For all the riches which God hath taken from our father, that *is* ours, and our children's: now then, whatsoever God hath said unto thee, do."
 - a. "Since Jacob married in Laban's house, Laban gave his daughters no presents. The whole dowry of Jacob's fourteen years of hard labor went to Laban. His daughters considered that he had simply 'sold' them" (Coffman, p.385).
 - b. The two wives agreed with Jacob. Jacob had labored fourteen years for their hands in marriage, and the advantages and prosperity Laban had thereby received, he kept and used it selfishly. They could see no inheritance coming to them or to their children.
 - c. "Apparently, the long pent-up grievances find expression in these words. Ultimately, then, the wives arrive at the same conclusion that the best thing Jacob can do is to obey God's commands and depart" (Leupold, p.837). Their decision grew out of anger toward their father; Jacob's grew out of his desire to obey the Lord.
 - 5. Verses 17-21: "Then Jacob rose up, and set his sons and his wives upon camels; And he carried away all his cattle, and all his goods which he had gotten, the cattle of his getting, which he had gotten in Padanaram, for to go to Isaac his father in the land of Canaan. And Laban went to shear his sheep: and Rachel had stolen the images that *were* her father's. And Jacob stole away unawares to Laban the Syrian, in that he told him not that he fled. So he fled with all that he had; and he rose up, and passed over the river, and set his face *toward* the mount Gilead."
 - a. Jacob put his family upon camels (to make better time and in view of their ages). The oldest was about 13: he worked for Laban for 20 years; he married after 7 of those twenty years. His youngest (Joseph) was about six. He carried away all his livestock and possessions, and began his journey back to Isaac.
 - b. Jacob chose an opportunity to make his secret departure: Laban was shearing his sheep which were kept three-days' journey from Jacob's. It would be three days at the earliest before Laban could learn of their leaving. He had good reason to depart secretly since Laban had the power to deprive him of his family and goods, by force if necessary (cf. verse 29).
 - C. Genesis 31:22-42: Laban Pursues and Overtakes Jacob at Gilead.
 - 1. Verses 22-24: "And it was told Laban on the third day that Jacob was fled. And he took his brethren with him, and pursued after him seven days' journey; and they overtook him in the mount Gilead. And God came to Laban the Syrian in a dream by night, and said unto him, Take heed that thou speak not to Jacob either good or bad."
 - a. On the third day, Laban learned of Jacob's departure. We are not told how soon it was that he left in pursuit, but after seven days of travel, he overtook Jacob.
 - b. God came to Laban in a dream to warn him to harm Jacob in no way: "Do not speak good or bad to him." This probably occurred on the night before he caught up with Jacob.
 - c. "Laban ...pursued after him. After three days Laban learned of the flight. As soon as he could get his men organized for pursuit, he was on his way to overtake them. Even though it was a journey of three hundred miles, he was able to catch the fleeing group in the hill country of Gilead. On the way, Laban received a strange message from God, a command to abstain from bringing any pressure to bear on Jacob. He was not to speak either good or bad to him, i.e., he was not to say anything. (Opposites are frequently used in Scripture to indicate totality)" [The Wycliffe Bible Commentary, Electronic Database. Copyright © 1962 by Moody Press].
 - d. "The distance between Padan-aram and mount Gilead was a little over 300 miles, to perform which Jacob must at least have taken ten days, though Laban, who was less encumbered than his son-in-law, accomplished it in seven, which might easily be done by traveling from forty to forty-five miles a day, by no means a great feat for a camel" [The Pulpit Commentary, Electronic Database. Copyright © 2001 by Biblesoft].
 - 2. Verses 25-29: "Then Laban overtook Jacob. Now Jacob had pitched his tent in the mount: and Laban with his brethren pitched in the mount of Gilead. And Laban said to Jacob, What hast thou done, that thou hast stolen away unawares to me, and carried away my daughters, as captives *taken* with the sword? Wherefore didst thou flee away secretly, and steal away from me; and didst not tell me, that I might have sent thee away with mirth, and with songs, with tabret, and with harp? And hast not suffered me to kiss my sons and my daughters? thou hast now done foolishly in *so* doing. It is in the power of my hand to do you hurt: but the God of your father spake unto me yesternight, saying, Take thou heed that thou speak not to Jacob either good or bad."
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- a. Gilead lay east of Jordan, between the land of Moab and the Yarmuk River. It was here the fateful confrontation unfolded. Heeding God's warning, Laban did not attack Jacob, but he demanded why Jacob had fled away secretly without giving him a chance to send them away with festivities or to kiss his sons and daughters. He speaks of his having the power to harm Jacob but for the warning of God.
- b. "Well remembering God's warning and not for a moment daring to carry out his threat, Laban nevertheless claims that he could do Jacob harm. He mentions no wrong that Jacob did, He merely boasts. But the overwhelming impression of God's warning here compels him to admit all that God had said and so explains why he utters all his treats as vain words—a queer conclusion for one who thus far tried to play the part of a man grievously wronged" (Leupold, p.345).
3. Verses 30-32: "And now, *though* thou wouldst needs be gone, because thou sore longedst after thy father's house, *yet* wherefore hast thou stolen my gods? And Jacob answered and said to Laban, Because I was afraid: for I said, Peradventure thou wouldst take by force thy daughters from me. With whomsoever thou findest thy gods, let him not live: before our brethren discern thou what *is* thine with me, and take *it* to thee. For Jacob knew not that Rachel had stolen them."
 - a. Though you longed to see your family in Canaan, why did you steal my gods? Jacob responded to the first question: he left secretly because he feared being deprived of his wives.
 - b. The accusation about the missing gods was thrown in abruptly, possibly to catch Jacob off guard. He responded to that charge by inviting Laban to search for the gods. He was so sure they were not there that he was willing for the thief, if there was one, to be slain.
 - c. If the "gods" were divine beings, why did they allow themselves to be stolen? This shows the utter foolishness of idolatry. Cf. Isaiah 44:9-20.
4. Verses 33-35: "And Laban went into Jacob's tent, and into Leah's tent, and into the two maidservants' tents; but he found *them* not. Then went he out of Leah's tent, and entered into Rachel's tent. Now Rachel had taken the images, and put them in the camel's furniture, and sat upon them. And Laban searched all the tent, but found *them* not. And she said to her father, Let it not displease my lord that I cannot rise up before thee; for the custom of women *is* upon me. And he searched, but found not the images."
 - a. What would Jacob have done if the gods had been found? Would he have allowed his beloved Rachel to be slain? What would Laban have done? Why were the gods so valuable?
 - b. Laban searched the tents of Jacob, Leah, and the two maidservants, and entered into Rachel's tent. Each of these lived in separate tents.
 - c. He did not find the teraphim (idols) in any of the tents. Rachel had taken the gods, and they were even now hidden in the camel's saddle and she was sitting thereon. "By waiting till the last critical moment she diverts attention from the fact that she may be upon the teraphim. For who would care to trouble a menstruating woman suffering pain?" (Leupold, p.848).
 - d. "The claim of Rachel that, 'The manner of women is upon me, was ...a condition that, in ancient times, was believed to make women 'unclean,' thus defiling anything that they touched. To Laban, this meant that it would have been unthinkable that Rachel in such a condition would have come near his sacred images, much less sit on them!" (Coffman, p.389).
5. Verses 36-42: "And Jacob was wroth, and chided with Laban: and Jacob answered and said to Laban, What *is* my trespass? what *is* my sin, that thou hast so hotly pursued after me? Whereas thou hast searched all my stuff, what hast thou found of all thy household stuff? set *it* here before my brethren and thy brethren, that they may judge betwixt us both. This twenty years *have I been* with thee; thy ewes and thy she goats have not cast their young, and the rams of thy flock have I not eaten. That which was torn *of beasts* I brought not unto thee; I bare the loss of it; of my hand didst thou require it, *whether* stolen by day, or stolen by night. *Thus* I was; in the day the drought consumed me, and the frost by night; and my sleep departed from mine eyes. Thus have I been twenty years in thy house; I served thee fourteen years for thy two daughters, and six years for thy cattle: and thou hast changed my wages ten times. Except the God of my father, the God of Abraham, and the fear of Isaac, had been with me, surely thou hadst sent me away now empty. God hath seen mine affliction and the labour of my hands, and rebuked *thee* yesternight."
 - a. Jacob became very angry; he demanded to know his guilt. He speaks strongly of how Laban had mistreated him by making him pay for the animals which were torn by beasts or stolen; the common procedure was for the shepherd to be blameless if the carcass could be presented to the owner.
 - 1) Exodus 22:13: "If it be torn in pieces, *then* let him bring it *for* witness, *and* he shall not make good that which was torn."

- 2) Amos 3:12: "Thus saith the LORD; As the shepherd taketh out of the mouth of the lion two legs, or a piece of an ear; so shall the children of Israel be taken out that dwell in Samaria in the corner of a bed, and in Damascus *in* a couch."
- b. Jacob had also suffered from the heat and cold; he had gone without sleep; all in doing the best service he could manage for Laban.
- c. He had thus served Laban for 20 years (a key number in figuring Jacob's age when he left home:
 - 1) He was 130 when Joseph was 39 (47:9; 41:46).
 - a) Genesis 41:46: "And Joseph *was* thirty years old when he stood before Pharaoh king of Egypt. And Joseph went out from the presence of Pharaoh, and went throughout all the land of Egypt."
 - b) Genesis 47:9: "And Jacob said unto Pharaoh, The days of the years of my pilgrimage *are* an hundred and thirty years: few and evil have the days of the years of my life been, and have not attained unto the days of the years of the life of my fathers in the days of their pilgrimage."
 - 2) Joseph was born during Jacob's 14th year with Laban; 130 minus 39 = 91; 91 minus 14 = 77 (at the time he left home; some say 57).

D. Genesis 31:43-55: Laban and Jacob Make a Covenant.

1. Verses 43-44: "And Laban answered and said unto Jacob, *These* daughters *are* my daughters, and *these* children *are* my children, and *these* cattle *are* my cattle, and all that thou seest *is* mine: and what can I do this day unto these my daughters, or unto their children which they have born? Now therefore come thou, let us make a covenant, I and thou; and let it be for a witness between me and thee."
 - a. "In a rather grandiose fashion he claims that all Jacob has—household and cattle—is his own. The only use he makes of this strong claim is that, naturally, these being his own family, he would not harm them....But being a suspicious character, he fears that Jacob might eventually do what he apparently would have done under like circumstances, namely, after arriving home and having grown strong, he may come with an armed band to avenge all the wrongs of the past" (Leupold, p.852).
 - b. He proposes a "non-aggression pact!"
 2. Verses 45-55: "And Jacob took a stone, and set it up *for* a pillar. And Jacob said unto his brethren, Gather stones; and they took stones, and made an heap: and they did eat there upon the heap. And Laban called it Jegarsahadutha: but Jacob called it Galeed. And Laban said, This heap *is* a witness between me and thee this day. Therefore was the name of it called Galeed; And Mizpah; for he said, The LORD watch between me and thee, when we are absent one from another. If thou shalt afflict my daughters, or if thou shalt take *other* wives beside my daughters, no man *is* with us; see, God *is* witness betwixt me and thee. And Laban said to Jacob, Behold this heap, and behold *this* pillar, which I have cast betwixt me and thee; This heap *be* witness, and *this* pillar *be* witness, that I will not pass over this heap to thee, and that thou shalt not pass over this heap and this pillar unto me, for harm. The God of Abraham, and the God of Nahor, the God of their father, judge betwixt us. And Jacob swore by the fear of his father Isaac. Then Jacob offered sacrifice upon the mount, and called his brethren to eat bread: and they did eat bread, and tarried all night in the mount. And early in the morning Laban rose up, and kissed his sons and his daughters, and blessed them: and Laban departed, and returned unto his place."
 - a. The proper ceremony was observed; a cairn was raised symbolic of the pledges made; the place is given a name by each party. They will not pass by the heap to harm each other.
 - b. Laban warns Jacob needlessly not to afflict his daughters or take any other wives. Jacob offered a sacrifice; they ate a meal there; and early in the morning, after Laban had kissed his sons and daughters, they parted company.
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GENESIS 32

A. Introduction.

1. "Here we have the preliminaries for the meeting of the long-estranged brothers Jacob and Esau, a moving, dramatic account of their moving toward a reunion after many years of separation; both, in the mean-while, having become wealthy. The actual, face to face meeting of the brothers does not take place till the next chapter; but all of the background for it is here. Jacob's fear, with which he had lived for so many years, his prayer to God for divine help in the approaching crisis, his precautions to protect his family against the potential hostility of Esau, with special concern for Rachel and her children, the rich gifts sent to Esau, his wrestling all night with an angel of God at Peniel, and, most significant of all, the heavenly award to Jacob of a new name—these are the events of this chapter which have challenged the thoughts of men for ages" (Coffman, p.395).
2. Jacob's life was filled with one difficulty or tragedy after another. No sooner had he obtained peace with Laban than he had to face his anger.

B. Genesis 32: 1-8: Jacob Prepares to Meet His Brother.

1. Verses 1-2: "And Jacob went on his way, and the angels of God met him. And when Jacob saw them, he said, *This is God's host*: and he called the name of that place Mahanaim."
 - a. He had a similar experience in a dream as he journeyed from Canaan to Mesopotamia. Now he sees some of God's angels. The text says that Jacob saw them; it does not say how he beheld them, or that anyone else saw this majestic sight. It thus appears that only Jacob was witness to it. Second Kings 6:17 describes a case it which only Elisha saw the angelic host; his servant did not behold them until the prophet had prayed that his eyes might be opened: "And Elisha prayed, and said, LORD, I pray thee, open his eyes, that he may see. And the LORD opened the eyes of the young man; and he saw: and, behold, the mountain *was* full of horses and chariots of fire round about Elisha."
 - b. The purpose of this sight was to bolster Jacob's confidence as he entered his own country and prepared to face his brother.
 - c. He gave the name "Mahanaim" to this place. "This word is a dual form meaning, two hosts or bands. The visible band was Jacob and his servants; the invisible band (momentarily visible to Jacob) was that of the angels. 'Mahanaim was later a distinguished city, situated just north of the Jabbok; and the name and remains are still preserved in a place called Mahneb'" (Coffman, pp.395f).
2. Verses 3-5: "And Jacob sent messengers before him to Esau his brother unto the land of Seir, the country of Edom. And he commanded them, saying, Thus shall ye speak unto my lord Esau; Thy servant Jacob saith thus, I have sojourned with Laban, and stayed there until now: And I have oxen, and asses, flocks, and menservants, and womenservants: and I have sent to tell my lord, that I may find grace in thy sight."
 - a. Jacob had no reason to believe that Esau's attitude toward him had changed, so he laid some plans by which he hoped to become reconciled with his brother. He sent messengers to the land where Esau lived to report that he was returning to Canaan. He made it clear that he was not looking for a fight. The message also speaks somewhat of Jacob's wealth, showing Esau that he would not be a financial burden on him.
 - b. At the same time, the wording is such to prevent Esau getting the idea that Jacob is boasting of wealth. He showed diplomacy in his statement, addressing Esau as the master and Jacob as the servant. And he plainly tells where he has been. Jacob dictated the very message that was to be delivered to his brother.
3. Verses 6-8: "And the messengers returned to Jacob, saying, We came to thy brother Esau, and also he cometh to meet thee, and four hundred men with him. Then Jacob was greatly afraid and distressed: and he divided the people that *was* with him, and the flocks, and herds, and the camels, into two bands; And said, If Esau come to the one company, and smite it, then the other company which is left shall escape."
 - a. The messengers came back with a frightening message: Esau is coming to meet you and he has 400 men with him! Naturally, Jacob perceived the worst: he is coming to wreak vengeance on me for what I did to him. But he remembered the Lord's promise, and intelligently worked out the best feasible plan.
 - b. When Jacob left home some twenty years earlier, his mother had promised to send word to him when Esau's anger died away: "And these words of Esau her elder son were told to Rebekah: and she sent and called Jacob her younger son, and said unto him, Behold, thy brother Esau, as touching thee, doth comfort himself, *purposing* to kill thee. Now therefore, my son, obey my voice; and arise, flee thou to Laban my brother to Haran; And tarry with him a few days, until thy brother's fury turn away; ⁴⁵ Until thy brother's anger turn away from thee, and he forget *that* which thou hast done to him: then I will send, and fetch thee from thence:

why should I be deprived also of you both in one day?" (Gen. 27:42-45). But no word ever came. Rebekah may have died while he was away.

- c. He did two things: he took the precautions which his own wisdom dictated and he offered a very fervent prayer to God. His plan was to divide his company into two sections, thinking that if Esau attacked one, the other might escape. "He realized that they would require God's protection, and he fully intended to call on the Lord. But he realized it was wise, as well as in keeping with God's will, to take what natural precautions were opened to him as quickly as possible, after which he could pray in good faith, knowing that he had done all that he could and that the Lord would have to take over the rest of the way" (Henry Morris, *The Genesis Record*, Grand Rapids, Baker Book House, 1976, p.496, quoted by Coffman, p.397).
- d. Apparently, Esau sent back no message which made his approach even more ominous.

C. Genesis 32:9-12: Jacob's Fervent Prayer.

1. Verses 9-12: "And Jacob said, O God of my father Abraham, and God of my father Isaac, the LORD which saidst unto me, Return unto thy country, and to thy kindred, and I will deal well with thee: I am not worthy of the least of all the mercies, and of all the truth, which thou hast showed unto thy servant; for with my staff I passed over this Jordan; and now I am become two bands. Deliver me, I pray thee, from the hand of my brother, from the hand of Esau: for I fear him, lest he will come and smite me, *and* the mother with the children. And thou saidst, I will surely do thee good, and make thy seed as the sand of the sea, which cannot be numbered for multitude."
- a. Jacob's sinful conduct toward his brother many years earlier was the basis for his present fear. Sin has always had its effect on a man's heart and life; often these effects are harsh and hurtful even in this life. There may have been no reason for his fear, for Josephus asserts that he was glad to learn of Jacob's return: "NOW as Jacob was proceeding on his journey to the land of Canaan, angels appeared to him, and suggested to him good hope of his future condition; and that place he named the Camp of God. And being desirous of knowing what his brother's intentions were to him, he sent messengers, to give him an exact account of every thing, as being afraid, on account of the enmities between them. He charged those that were sent, to say to Esau, 'Jacob had thought it wrong to live together with him while he was in anger against him, and so had gone out of the country; and that he now, thinking the length of time of his absence must have made up their differences, was returning; that he brought with him his wives, and his children, with what possessions he had gotten; and delivered himself, with what was most dear to him, into his hands; and should think it his greatest happiness to partake together with his brother of what God had bestowed upon him.' So these messengers told him this message. Upon which Esau was very glad, and met his brother with four hundred men" (*Antiquities*, Book 1, Chapter 20, p.43). Of course, Josephus was not an inspired writer.
- b. "He should not be sharply criticized for taking precautionary measures first and praying afterward. Many a man in the face of extreme danger has lost his sense of proportion. Besides, there are emergencies that call for action first and prayer afterward" (Leupold, p.966).
2. "I am not worthy"—shows the humble nature Jacob now possesses. This is the right attitude with which to approach God.
 - a. Isaiah 66:2: "For all those *things* hath mine hand made, and all those *things* have been, saith the LORD: but to this *man* will I look, *even to him that is* poor and of a contrite spirit, and trembleth at my word."
 - b. Luke 17:10: "So likewise ye, when ye shall have done all those things which are commanded you, say, We are unprofitable servants: we have done that which was our duty to do."
3. "My staff and I passed over this Jordan." This implies that he was quite alone when he made his initial journey. This is used to introduce the greatness of his wealth on his homeward trek: he left with nothing but his staff, but is returning with these two bands of people and livestock. He speaks of these things to emphasize the most wonderful way God had blessed him already.
4. He then addressed the emergency at hand and asks that God deliver him from the hand of his brother. He thus admitted openly his fear of his brother, as well he should, for the danger was real. Only after the unique way in which these two brothers met was Esau's decision made regarding how he would receive his brother. "Jacob says literally: 'mother upon children,' apparently using a proverbial expression, '*em*,' singular, because usually there is one 'mother,' and *al banim*, 'upon children,' because in case of attack the mother would bend over her children in an effort to shield them with her own body" (Leupold, p.868).

D. Genesis 32:13-23: Jacob Sends Gifts to His Brother.

1. Verses 13-16: "And he lodged there that same night; and took of that which came to his hand a present for Esau his brother; Two hundred she goats, and twenty he goats, two hundred ewes, and twenty rams, Thirty

milch camels with their colts, forty kine, and ten bulls, twenty she asses, and ten foals. And he delivered *them* into the hand of his servants, every drove by themselves; and said unto his servants, Pass over before me, and put a space betwixt drove and drove."

- a. Jacob spent the night at the present location which is later indicated to be at the ford of the river Jabbok (verse 22). The gift was prepared hurriedly for Esau was not far away. "Though the major work is accomplished, for Jacob committed all the issues into God's hands in the prayer recorded above, yet prudence and foresight are to find their place in the course followed by Jacob. Prayer does not necessarily result in inaction" (Leupold, p.869).
 - b. Jacob must have had enormous wealth for the number of animals involved is said to be 550-580 individuals, depending on how many young was involved. Coffman estimates the worth in today's money for this gift would be one hundred thousand dollars or more.
 - c. There were 220 goats, 220 sheep, 30 milch camels with their colts, 40 cows, 10 bulls, 20 she asses and ten foals.
2. Verses 17-21: "And he commanded the foremost, saying, When Esau my brother meeteth thee, and asketh thee, saying, Whose *art* thou? and whither goest thou? and whose *are* these before thee? Then thou shalt say, *They be* thy servant Jacob's; it *is* a present sent unto my lord Esau: and, behold, also he *is* behind us. And so commanded he the second, and the third, and all that followed the droves, saying, On this manner shall ye speak unto Esau, when ye find him. And say ye moreover, Behold, thy servant Jacob *is* behind us. For he said, I will appease him with the present that goeth before me, and afterward I will see his face; peradventure he will accept of me. So went the present over before him: and himself lodged that night in the company."
- a. These animals were divided into different droves. "The skilled arrangement of its presentation is one of the marvels of this episode. None of the drove captains knew that he was being followed by another drove, for he was instructed to say, 'Jacob is behind us.' Thus, no loose-tongued servant could appraise Esau of the full extent of the gift, which he would not know until Jacob himself appeared. This intention lay behind Jacob's instruction that there should be a space between drove and drove" (Coffman, pp.398f).
 - b. Verse 20 is a key verse, identifying Jacob's intentions: "And say ye moreover, Behold, thy servant Jacob *is* behind us. For he said, I will appease him with the present that goeth before me, and afterward I will see his face; peradventure he will accept of me."
3. Verses 22-23: "And he rose up that night, and took his two wives, and his two womenservants, and his eleven sons, and passed over the ford Jabbok. And he took them, and sent them over the brook, and sent over that he had."
- a. Jabbok is a stream that flows west into the Jordan, about halfway between the Sea of Galilee and the Dead Sea. The name *Jabbok* means "wrestler," a name apparently taken from the story which immediately follows in the context.
 - b. Jabbok: "A stream in Eastern Palestine first named in the history of Jacob, as crossed by the patriarch on his return from Paddan-aram, after leaving Mahanaim (Gen 32:22 ff). On the bank of this river he had his strange conflict with an unknown antagonist. The Jabbok was the northern boundary of the territory of Sihon the Amorite (Num 21:24). It is also named as the border of Ammon (Deut 3:16). It is now called Nahr ez-Zerqa, 'river of blue,' referring to the clear blue color of its water. It rises near to 'Amman-Rabbath Ammon—and makes a wide circuit, flowing first to the East, then to the Northwest, until it is joined by the stream from Wady Jerash, at which point it turns westward, and flows, with many windings, to the Jordan, the confluence being just North of ed-Damiyeh. It drains a wider area than any other stream East of the Jordan, except the Yarmuk. The bed of the river is in a deep gorge with steep, and in many places precipitous, banks. It is a great cleft, cutting the land of Gilead in two. It is lined along its course by a luxuriant growth of oleander which, in season, lights up the valley with brilliant color. The length of the stream, taking no account of its innumerable windings, is about 60 miles. The mouth of the river has changed its position from time to time. In the lower reaches the vegetation is tropical. The river is fordable at many points, save when in full flood. The particular ford referred to in Gen 32 cannot now be identified" [International Standard Bible Encyclopaedia, Electronic Database Copyright ©1996 by Biblesoft].
- E. Genesis 32:24-32: Jacob Wrestles With the Heavenly Messenger.
1. "And Jacob was left alone; and there wrestled a man with him until the breaking of the day."
 - a. Jacob was alone after his family crossed over the stream; during the night he wrestled with a "man" until the break of day. This is one of the most dark and difficult passages in the Old Testament.

- b. Same deny it took place literally. Some assert it was merely a prayer. They state their denials of the reality of the experience, but we have no reason to doubt the report of the text: it is presented as a real occurrence and as such it must be accepted.
- c. Leupold has some interesting comments:
 - 1) The natural thing for the master of the entire establishment to do is to stay behind to check whether all have really crossed or whether some stragglers of this great host still need directions. In the solitude of the night as Jacob is "left alone," his thoughts naturally turn to prayer again, for he is a godly man. However, here the unusual statement of the case describes his prayer thus: "a man wrestled with him until dawn arose." Rightly Luther says: "Every man holds that this text is one of the most obscure in the Old Testament." There is no commentator who can so expound this experience as to clear up perfectly every difficulty involved. This much, however, is relatively clear: Jacob was praying; the terms used to describe the prayer make us aware of the fact that the prayer described involved a struggle of the entire man, body and soul; the struggle was not imaginary; ... The verb *'abhaq* is correctly translated "wrestled," as just about all translators agree. It matters little whether it be derived from the noun *'abhaq*, which means "dust" and so the verb is construed to mean "roll in the dust," or "to become dusty" or "to raise the dust"; or whether the root *chabhaq* is compared, which means "to clasp," as wrestlers do.
 - 2) The Biblical commentary on the passage is Hos. 12:4: "Yea, he had power over the angel, and prevailed; he wept and made supplication unto Him." The antagonist is here described as an "angel." But since the theophanies of the Old Testament regularly involve the Angel of the Lord, we need not be surprised that He who usually assumed angelic guise here assumes, as later in the Incarnation, human form. Again, by way of commentary, "wrestling" is defined as "he wept and made supplication unto Him." That certainly is a description of agonizing prayer. However, when v. 3 of Hos. 12 is compared, we learn that this struggle in Jacob's manhood was the culmination of the tendency displayed before birth, when by seizing his brother's heel he displayed how eager he was to obtain the spiritual blessings God was ready to bestow. This experience and this trend in Jacob's character is held up before his descendants of a later day that they may seek to emulate it.^B
2. Verses 24-29: "And Jacob was left alone; and there wrestled a man with him until the breaking of the day. And when he saw that he prevailed not against him, he touched the hollow of his thigh; and the hollow of Jacob's thigh was out of joint, as he wrestled with him. And he said, Let me go, for the day breaketh. And he said, I will not let thee go, except thou bless me. And he said unto him, What *is* thy name? And he said, Jacob. And he said, Thy name shall be called no more Jacob, but Israel: for as a prince hast thou power with God and with men, and hast prevailed. And Jacob asked *him*, and said, Tell *me*, I pray thee, thy name. And he said, Wherefore *is it that* thou dost ask after my name? And he blessed him there."
 - a. When the "man" could not prevail against Jacob, he touched Jacob's thigh: dislocated his thigh socket (hip joint); we are not told whether this was a temporary or permanent injury.
 - b. Hosea 12:3-4 identifies the "man" as an angel: "He took his brother by the heel in the womb, and by his strength he had power with God: Yea, he had power over the angel, and prevailed: he wept, and made supplication unto him: he found him *in* Bethel, and there he spake with us" (Hos. 12:3-4). How could a man over-power an angel? Obviously no man could do so, unless it was God's purpose to permit it. That Jacob's opponent was more than a man is indicated by his putting the patriarch's thigh out of joint with only a touch.
 - c. The angel asked Jacob's name (not for information but to call attention to the name he was to receive). "Jacob" (supplanter, heel-catcher) becomes "Israel" (prince of God).
3. Verses 30-32: "And Jacob called the name of the place Peniel: for I have seen God face to face, and my life is preserved. And as he passed over Penuel the sun rose upon him, and he halted upon his thigh. Therefore the children of Israel eat not *of* the sinew which shrank, which *is* upon the hollow of the thigh, unto this day: because he touched the hollow of Jacob's thigh in the sinew that shrank."
 - a. Jacob named the place "Peniel" ("The Face of God"). He had not seen the literal face of God for no one has seen him.
 - 1) John 5:37: "And the Father himself, which hath sent me, hath borne witness of me. Ye have neither heard his voice at any time, nor seen his shape."

^B Leupold, H. C. (1942). *Exposition of Genesis* (pp. 874–876). Grand Rapids, MI: Baker Book House.

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- 2) 1 Timothy 6:16: "Who only hath immortality, dwelling in the light which no man can approach unto; whom no man hath seen, nor can see: to whom *be* honour and power everlasting. Amen."
 - 3) 1 John 4:12: "No man hath seen God at any time. If we love one another, God dwelleth in us, and his love is perfected in us."
 - 4) John 1:18: "No man hath seen God at any time; the only begotten Son, which is in the bosom of the Father, he hath declared *him*."
 - 5) Exodus 33:20-23: "And he said, Thou canst not see my face: for there shall no man see me, and live. And the LORD said, Behold, *there is* a place by me, and thou shalt stand upon a rock: And it shall come to pass, while my glory passeth by, that I will put thee in a clift of the rock, and will cover thee with my hand while I pass by: And I will take away mine hand, and thou shalt see my back parts: but my face shall not be seen."
 - 6) Luke 24:39: "Behold my hands and my feet, that it is I myself: handle me, and see; for a spirit hath not flesh and bones, as ye see me have."
- b. God is a spirit being which no physical eye can behold. A Divine Being could only be seen by man if he manifested himself in some material form. This is how Moses saw him. This is how Jacob saw God "face to face." "He took his brother by the heel in the womb, and by his strength he had power with God: Yea, he had power over the angel, and prevailed: he wept, and made supplication unto him: he found him *in* Bethel, and there he spake with us" (Hos. 12:3-4).
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GENESIS 33

A. Genesis 33:1-11: The Brothers Meet Amicably.

1. Verses 1-3: "And Jacob lifted up his eyes, and looked, and, behold, Esau came, and with him four hundred men. And he divided the children unto Leah, and unto Rachel, and unto the two handmaids. And he put the handmaids and their children foremost, and Leah and her children after, and Rachel and Joseph hindmost. And he passed over before them, and bowed himself to the ground seven times, until he came near to his brother."
 - a. Jacob made last minute plans to divide his family in a special way. This plan put Rachel and Joseph in a place of greatest safety and made it possible to present them to Esau last, thus saving the favorites until the end. If Esau is hostile, Jacob's place is the most hazardous while Rachel and Joseph's the least dangerous. It appears that Esau had war on his mind since he was accompanied by 400 men. As the two companies drew near, Jacob bowed himself before Esau seven times in keeping with the ancient custom.
 - b. The Tell el-Amarna tablets, which date back to the 14th century B.C., record: "At the feet of the king, my lord, seven times and seven times do I fall." (Leupold, p.886). It is said that this expression is found more than 50 times on these tablets. "Jacob indicates only his deep respect and courtesy toward his brother. Jacob's deceit in the matter of the blessing had made an unceremonious fraternal greeting impossible. Yet Jacob does not indicate Esau to be ruler over him, but he does strongly indicate his willingness to show Esau all due respect and consideration. We have no reason for questioning the sincerity of Jacob's courteous approach" (ibid.).
 2. Verses 4-7: "And Esau ran to meet him, and embraced him, and fell on his neck, and kissed him: and they wept. And he lifted up his eyes, and saw the women and the children; and said, Who *are* those with thee? And he said, The children which God hath graciously given thy servant. Then the handmaidens came near, they and their children, and they bowed themselves. And Leah also with her children came near, and bowed themselves: and after came Joseph near and Rachel, and they bowed themselves."
 - a. All the hostility which Esau may have felt quickly vanished; he ran to meet his brother and greeted him with hugs, kisses and tears. If Esau was unclear as to what attitude he would manifest toward Jacob, any thoughts of vengeance evaporated. "That Esau really forgave Jacob seems too obvious to deny; and we agree with Francisco that, 'Such forgiveness is hardly a possible virtue without the providence of God.' Thus we must conclude that God had been working on Esau as well as upon Jacob during the intervening twenty years of their long separation" (Coffman, p.406).
 - b. Esau sees the women and children and inquires to whom they belong. When Jacob left he was unmarried. So he naturally asks his question. Jacob gives God the credit for having graciously given him these.
 - c. The handmaidens, their children, his wives and their children are then introduced to Esau in the order of Jacob's arrangement.
 3. Verses 8-11: "And he said, What *meanest* thou by all this drove which I met? And he said, *These are* to find grace in the sight of my lord. And Esau said, I have enough, my brother; keep that thou hast unto thyself. And Jacob said, Nay, I pray thee, if now I have found grace in thy sight, then receive my present at my hand: for therefore I have seen thy face, as though I had seen the face of God, and thou wast pleased with me. Take, I pray thee, my blessing that is brought to thee; because God hath dealt graciously with me, and because I have enough. And he urged him, and he took *it*."
 - a. Esau then asks about the meaning of the droves of livestock he had met. Jacob plainly states that it was a gift by the which he might find grace in Esau's sight. Esau says he has enough and does not need this rich gift. He could hardly be expected to receive such a gift without protesting his unwillingness to do so. Apparently he was wealthy himself. Jacob said he also had enough, statements identical in the English translations, but in the original there is a difference: Esau said he had enough, but Jacob said he had everything. At Jacob's insistence, Esau accepts the gift.
 - b. "If the customs of the Orient of our day are an index of the attitude of bygone days, then the acceptance of the gift of the person seeking reconciliation would have been the surest proof that all was well" (Leupold, p.889). In verse 10, Jacob said he had seen Esau's face as though he had seen the face of God. The friendliness of Esau's countenance reflected the providential dealings of God.
 - c. Compare:
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- 1) 1 Samuel 29:9: "And Achish answered and said to David, I know that thou *art* good in my sight, as an angel of God: notwithstanding the princes of the Philistines have said, He shall not go up with us to the battle."
- 2) 2 Samuel 14:17: "Then thine handmaid said, The word of my lord the king shall now be comfortable: for as an angel of God, so *is* my lord the king to discern good and bad: therefore the LORD thy God will be with thee."

B. Genesis 33:12-17: The Two Brothers Part Company.

1. Verses 12-15: "And he said, Let us take our journey, and let us go, and I will go before thee. And he said unto him, My lord knoweth that the children *are* tender, and the flocks and herds with young *are* with me: and if men should overdrive them one day, all the flock will die. Let my lord, I pray thee, pass over before his servant: and I will lead on softly, according as the cattle that goeth before me and the children be able to endure, until I come unto my lord unto Seir. And Esau said, Let me now leave with thee *some* of the folk that *are* with me. And he said, What needeth it? let me find grace in the sight of my lord."
 - a. Esau recommends that their two companies travel together, but Jacob demurs, saying that his company could not safely keep pace with Esau's. Both brothers are doubtless speaking honestly.
 - b. "The cattle have actually been driven to the limit in Jacob's escape from Laban, and caution must be used lest they be overdriven. On the other hand, the slow progress of Jacob's cattle would have proved irksome to Esau's unencumbered soldiery. Nor were Jacob's children equal to a strenuous journey, for Reuben, the eldest, could not have been more than twelve years old" (Leupold, p.891).
 - c. Esau then suggests that he leave some of his men to travel with Jacob, but this is also declined. Jacob replies that Esau's good will would be sufficient. It appears that Jacob knows he should not become too closely entangled with his brother who was not to be part of the promised nation, and who had shown inclinations toward a worldly, profane life. At any rate, Jacob politely declines this offer as well.
2. Verses 16-17: "So Esau returned that day on his way unto Seir. And Jacob journeyed to Succoth, and built him an house, and made booths for his cattle: therefore the name of the place is called Succoth."
 - a. Esau returned to Seir, Jacob settled at Succoth and built a house. The place was given the name Succoth on account of the booths which Jacob erected there to protect his cattle.
 - b. "These booths are described by travelers as something still occupied by the Bedouin in the Jordan valley, and as being 'rude huts of reeds, sometimes covered with long grass, and sometimes with a piece of tent' (Whitelaw)" (Leupold, p.894),

C. Genesis 33:18-20: Jacob Moves to Shechem.

1. Verses 18-20: "And Jacob came to Shalem, a city of Shechem, which *is* in the land of Canaan, when he came from Padanaram; and pitched his tent before the city. And he bought a parcel of a field, where he had spread his tent, at the hand of the children of Hamor, Shechem's father, for an hundred pieces of money. And he erected there an altar, and called it Elelohe-Israel."
 2. We are not told how long he lived at Succoth; it may have been several years. "These final verses of the chapter speak of the Patriarch's entry into Canaan, to the city of Shechem, where he purchased property... and apparently intended to stay a long time. However, misfortune that befell Dinah, and the bloody vengeance of her brothers...interfered with those plans. The property which Jacob bought here was the first that he owned in the Promised Land. It later served as a burial plot; and Joseph's bones were interred there (Joshua 24:32), when the children of Israel entered Canaan" (Coffman, p.409),
 3. "It is notable that Jacob built an altar here, thus following in the steps of Abraham who built an altar wherever he went....How long Jacob stayed in Shechem is not exactly known, but it was apparently a minimum of ten or twelve years....The entry of Jacob, however, into Canaan, was evidently considered by the inspired author of Genesis as an extremely important event" (ibid.).
 4. "...God had revealed prophetically to Abraham, some four hundred years of servitude lay ahead of Israel before God would bring the whole nation into Canaan. That period of bondage was destined to be in Egypt; and the Genesis account moves swiftly and dramatically to recount the events that set the stage for the posterity of Israel in the land of Egypt" (ibid.).
 5. "Before ringing down the curtain on Jacob in Shechem, we should remember that Jacob dugged a well there, that the Christ himself sat on the edge of it and taught the Samaritan woman from Sychar. It is situated between Mount Ebal and Mount Gerizim, and was located very near the future city of Samaria, which became the capital of the Northern Israel after the division of the kingdom. Oddly enough, the well of Jacob here was never mentioned in the OT, but John 4:6 speaks of it. Samaria had not been built when Jacob resided there. This
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whole territory became, in time, the portion of the Promised Land occupied by Ephraim, the principal tribe of Northern Israel" (Coffman, p.410).

6. After the example of Abraham as he entered the land, Jacob also built an altar. "The name of the altar embodies the sum of Jacob's spiritual experience, which he sought to transfer to coming generations.... Jacob is remembering God's promise, and God has in an outstanding way proved Himself a God well able to keep His promises. The common name for God, 'el,' covers this thought. By the use of his own new name, 'Israel,' Jacob indicates that the restored, new man within him was the one that understood this newly acquired truth concerning God" (Leupold, p.895). The name given the altar may be translated, "Mighty is the God of Israel, or God is the God of Israel" (Coffman, p.410).
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GENESIS 34

A. Introduction.

1. "This chapter is unique, containing the only personal reference to Dinah in the whole Bible...Jacob had bought the land at Shechem, and some personal reason, such as the ravishing of Dinah, is the most reasonable explanation of why he went back to Bethel. Furthermore, the savage cruelty of Simeon and Levi was remembered by Jacob in the patriarchal blessings of Genesis 49; and there is absolutely no reason whatever for refusing to understand this narrative as being true to the facts involving the persons indicated" (Coffman, p.411).
2. "This chapter fits into the overall design of Moses, the author, that purpose being to show that, despite Jacob's evident intention of acquiring property and settling down in Shechem, which would inevitably have led to the amalgamation of the Jews with the pagan populations of Canaan, God overruled such a patriarchal mistake by the tragic events of this chapter. If Jacob had been permitted to do as he evidently intended, the purpose of God would have been frustrated....'Israel must remain a sojourner until all the land is theirs. To settle down too soon would be to lose all sense of destiny and to become just like the Canaanites.' Also...this chapter shows how God made use of the passions, sins, and wickedness of men in the achievement of his ultimate goals. None of this, to be sure, implies any approval whatever of the gross treachery and cruelty indulged by the sons of Jacob. The basic truth of the chapter is that Jacob and his family were settled in Shechem, evidently intending to stay there; but God's will was accomplished in the dark deeds of the events here deployed upon the sacred page. Jacob would promptly go back to Bethel for a new beginning" (Coffman, pp.411f).

B. Genesis 34:1-5: Dinah is Defiled.

1. Verse 1: "And Dinah the daughter of Leah, which she bare unto Jacob, went out to see the daughters of the land."
 - a. Dinah was probably in her teens at the time. We are told here that she was the daughter of Jacob by Leah. Dinah is the only girl identified by name, and that was because of the tragic events of this chapter and the effects these events had on some of his sons.
 - b. Genesis 46:15 shows that there were 33 children born to Jacob family: 12 boys and 21 girls: "These be the sons of Leah, which she bare unto Jacob in Padan-aram, with his daughter Dinah: all the souls of his sons and his daughters were thirty and three" (Gen. 46:15).
 - c. On the occasion described by this verse, Dinah made a fateful decision to go out to see the women of the country. We are not told whether she had her parents' permission, or for what purpose she wanted to see those women. We are not told whether this was the first such excursion or whether there had been others. Josephus says (Ant. Book 1, Chapter 21, 1) that there was a festival in Shechem and that Dinah went into the city to see the finery the Canaanite women were wearing.
 - d. As it turned out, her visit was a disastrous one for her personally, and resulted in difficulties for her family. Her excursion was ill-advised and dangerous; it had evil effects on her and many others. Actions often greatly affect others.
 2. Verse 2: "And when Shechem the son of Hamor the Hivite, prince of the country, saw her, he took her, and lay with her, and defiled her."
 - a. Josephus says, "But when Shechem, the son of Hamor the king, saw her, he defiled her by violence; and, being greatly in love with her, desired of his father that he would procure the damsel to him for a wife" (ibid.).
 - b. From the information given in the chapter, it appears that Shechem raped Dinah and forced her to live in his house. "These very words, *laqach*, meaning that, 'an irresistible force was used,' *innah*, meaning that Dinah was humbled, and *timme'*, meaning defiled are indeed eloquent regarding the bestiality to which Dinah was subjected" (Coffman, p.413).
 3. Verses 3-5: "And his soul clave unto Dinah the daughter of Jacob, and he loved the damsel, and spake kindly unto the damsel. And Shechem spake unto his father Hamor, saying, Get me this damsel to wife. And Jacob heard that he had defiled Dinah his daughter: now his sons were with his cattle in the field: and Jacob held his peace until they were come."
 - a. There is no indication of remorse on the part of Shechem or his father. To his credit, it is said that Shechem loved Dinah and desired to marry her. The morality of the Canaanites was notoriously low even in this early time, for an unmarried girl was ravaged and there was not a word said (apparently) against the man who
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committed the crime. But Shechem earnestly loves Dinah, and besought his father to obtain permission for him to take her as his wife.

- b. We are not told how Jacob learned of the violation of his daughter. He did not learn this from Dinah personally for she was still being held in Shechem's house (see vs. 26). Jacob learned of this disturbing development, but he held his peace until his sons came in from the field.

C. Genesis 34:6-12: Hamor Approaches Jacob and His Sons With a Proposal.

1. Verses 6-7: "And Hamor the father of Shechem went out unto Jacob to commune with him. And the sons of Jacob came out of the field when they heard *it*: and the men were grieved, and they were very wroth, because he had wrought folly in Israel in lying with Jacob's daughter; which thing ought not to be done."
 - a. Hamor went out of the city to meet with Jacob and make the request his son had suggested. In the meantime, Dinah's brothers learned what had happened and came in from the field, grieving and very angry. Shechem had wrought folly in Israel (in the family of Jacob), and against Israel (in that Jacob was hurt and shamed).
 - b. "The excessive anger of the sons of Jacob should have been anticipated by Shechem. Throughout the East at that time, there was a generally-held opinion, in evidence even today, that, 'A brother is more dishonored by the seduction of a sister than by the infidelity of a wife, because one may divorce a wife; but a sister or daughter always retains the relationship'" (Coffman, p.415).
 - c. These brothers knew that Shechem's actions constituted an act of wrong-doing. Thus were they very angry. Sin is the transgression of God's law (1 John 3:40; Shechem committed sin; God had no written law at the time, but he had set in motion, at the beginning, certain moral precepts to which all people are amenable.
2. Verses 8-10: "And Hamor communed with them, saying, The soul of my son Shechem longeth for your daughter: I pray you give her him to wife. And make ye marriages with us, *and* give your daughters unto us, and take our daughters unto you. And ye shall dwell with us: and the land shall be before you; dwell and trade ye therein, and get you possessions therein."
 - a. Hamor plainly stated his son's attachment to Dinah and his desire to marry her. He broadened the appeal to the end that they might freely intermarry with one another, and that Jacob would have free access to the land and might continue to live there and prosper. Verse 23 shows that Hamor was speaking deceitfully to Jacob. Jacob's sons acted dishonorably in the events which follow, but Hamor was equally wrong. He was counting on the ability of his people to swallow up Jacob and his wealth as time continued.
 - b. Had Jacob acceded to this request, gone would have been the plans and purposes of God in developing the Israelite nation. This was one of a great number of occasions when the future of God's plans hung in the balance.
3. Verses 11-12: "And Shechem said unto her father and unto her brethren, Let me find grace in your eyes, and what ye shall say unto me I will give. Ask me never so much dowry and gift, and I will give according as ye shall say unto me: but give me the damsel to wife."
 - a. Shechem was not content to let his father's words stand alone; he stated that he was willing to give whatever dowry Dinah's family would ask. He was quite obviously in earnest in his love for her. Verse 19 says he was more honorable than all of his father's house.
 - b. Since he was no outstanding spiritual specimen (he had defiled a virtuous female), the rest of the clan must have been vile indeed!
4. "The great thrust of this chapter is to show how God used the faults and even the gross wickedness of men in the furtherance of his wise designs. In the people of this chapter, no one appears without blame, even sin; but if Almighty God should be restricted to using only perfect and righteous people, all would be lost. Of course, this does not nullify the truth that all sinners, even the ones God might use, must suffer the consequences of their sins. This chapter stresses that truth: Shechem was killed, along with his father; Dinah was left brokenhearted and defiled; Jacob was forced to leave a profitable business; and his guilty sons bore his curse (Genesis 49:5,6). Yet God's redemptive plan moved on" (Coffman, p.416).

D. Genesis 34:13-24: Jacob's Sons Make a Counter-Proposal.

1. Verses 13-17: "And the sons of Jacob answered Shechem and Hamor his father deceitfully, and said, because he had defiled Dinah their sister: And they said unto them, We cannot do this thing, to give our sister to one that is uncircumcised; for that *were* a reproach unto us: But in this will we consent unto you: If ye will be as we *be*, that every male of you be circumcised; Then will we give our daughters unto you, and we will take your daughters to us, and we will dwell with you, and we will become one people. But if ye will not hearken unto us, to be circumcised; then will we take our daughter, and we will be gone."

- a. "Though right in refusing the proposition of the Hivites—for had Israel accepted, his descendants would have disappeared among the more numerous Canaanites and their spiritual heritage would have been sacrificed—yet Jacob's sons' sin grievously in the manner of their refusal....In other words, all the while they were speaking this outrage kept running through their mind, and so all their speaking had to do with avenging this outrage. Rightly they insist that they cannot mingle in marriage with the uncircumcised—but, of course, mere carnal circumcision cannot make any nation worthy to share with them in their rare heritage. So Jacob's sons are guilty of treating the sign of the covenant lightly..." (Leupold, p.904).
 - b. So they proposed that all the men of Shechem be circumcised; only then would they consent to allow Hamor's son to take Dinah as his wife and for the others of their family to intermarry with these Canaanites. The condition stated by Jacob's sons was demanding, and it would fail if any of the Shechemites refused to accept it.
 - c. "There is a possibility that Jacob's sons never dreamed of the Shechemites submitting to the conditions they laid down. What an unreasonable thing to demand, that all the males of the city should be circumcised. Such an agreement surprises us today, after millenniums of time; and the surprise of the sons of Jacob must indeed have been shocking" (Coffman, p.417).
2. Verses 18-19: "And their words pleased Hamor, and Shechem Hamor's son. And the young man deferred not to do the thing, because he had delight in Jacob's daughter: and he *was* more honourable than all the house of his father." "And their words pleased Hamor, and Shechem Hamor's son. And the young man deferred not to do the thing, because he had delight in Jacob's daughter: and he was honored above all the house of his father" (ASV).
 - a. Hamor and Shechem were pleased at the condition imposed by Jacob's sons. It was not too grievous a requirement, especially for Shechem who dearly loved Dinah. The father is agreeable on account of his son. Shechem was an honored young man in his father's house (See ASV). If the ASV rendering is more accurate, the text is saying that Shechem was highly esteemed by the folks at home, which would imply that the men might not have been as receptive if someone other than Shechem had been involved.
 3. Verses 20-24: "And Hamor and Shechem his son came unto the gate of their city, and communed with the men of their city, saying, These men *are* peaceable with us; therefore let them dwell in the land, and trade therein; for the land, behold, *it is* large enough for them; let us take their daughters to us for wives, and let us give them our daughters. Only herein will the men consent unto us for to dwell with us, to be one people, if every male among us be circumcised, as they *are* circumcised. *Shall* not their cattle and their substance and every beast of theirs *be* ours? only let us consent unto them, and they will dwell with us. And unto Hamor and unto Shechem his son hearkened all that went out of the gate of his city; and every male was circumcised, all that went out of the gate of his city."
 - a. Although Hamor and Shechem had assented to the condition, they still had to convince the rest of the male population. Their arguments before their people went along this line: (1) Jacob's family was peaceable; (2) the land is big enough for both them and us; (3) we can trade and intermarry with them; (4) before this is possible we must consent to be circumcised; (5) this will be a small price to pay for we shall soon possess their substance and their flocks and herds.
 - b. This was a very artful speech, and appealed to the Hivites. They all adopted the plan. "The skill by which Hamor and Shechem proposed their acceptance and made it look good to the people must be hailed as a marvel. "Hamor's speech was a diplomatic masterpiece. Without reference to the Dinah episode, or to his own personal interest, he showed that the agreement would be of great value to the townspeople" (Coffman, p.418).
 - c. It was an essential part of God's plan that the Israelite nation should remain isolated from the pagan population. If they had mixed and mingled with them freely, the greater numbers of the pagans would have soon corrupted and swallowed them. The lineage of the Messiah must be kept clear and traceable, and the prophecies regarding him must be clearly shown.
 - 1) Genesis 3:15: "And I will put enmity between thee and the woman, and between thy seed and her seed; it shall bruise thy head, and thou shalt bruise his heel."
 - 2) Genesis 49:10: "The sceptre shall not depart from Judah, nor a lawgiver from between his feet, until Shiloh come; and unto him *shall* the gathering of the people *be*."
 - 3) 2 Samuel 7:12-13: "And when thy days be fulfilled, and thou shalt sleep with thy fathers, I will set up thy seed after thee, which shall proceed out of thy bowels, and I will establish his kingdom. He shall build an house for my name, and I will stablish the throne of his kingdom for ever."

- 4) Micah 5:2: "But thou, Bethlehem Ephratah, *though* thou be little among the thousands of Judah, *yet* out of thee shall he come forth unto me *that is* to be ruler in Israel; whose goings forth *have been* from of old, from everlasting."
- 5) Isaiah 7:14: "Therefore the Lord himself shall give you a sign; Behold, a virgin shall conceive, and bear a son, and shall call his name Immanuel."
- 6) Matthew 1:18-23: "Now the birth of Jesus Christ was on this wise: When as his mother Mary was espoused to Joseph, before they came together, she was found with child of the Holy Ghost. Then Joseph her husband, being a just *man*, and not willing to make her a public example, was minded to put her away privily. But while he thought on these things, behold, the angel of the Lord appeared unto him in a dream, saying, Joseph, thou son of David, fear not to take unto thee Mary thy wife: for that which is conceived in her is of the Holy Ghost. And she shall bring forth a son, and thou shalt call his name JESUS: for he shall save his people from their sins. Now all this was done, that it might be fulfilled which was spoken of the Lord by the prophet, saying, Behold, a virgin shall be with child, and shall bring forth a son, and they shall call his name Emmanuel, which being interpreted is, God with us."
- 7) Galatians 4:4-5: "But when the fulness of the time was come, God sent forth his Son, made of a woman, made under the law, To redeem them that were under the law, that we might receive the adoption of sons."

E. Genesis 34:25-31: The Plan of Jacob's Sons Brought to Fruition.

1. Verses 25-26: "And it came to pass on the third day, when they were sore, that two of the sons of Jacob, Simeon and Levi, Dinah's brethren, took each man his sword, and came upon the city boldly, and slew all the males. And they slew Hamor and Shechem his son with the edge of the sword, and took Dinah out of Shechem's house, and went out."
 - a. On the third day, when the men of Shechem were incapacitated, Simeon and Levi entered the city and slew all the males.
 - b. These were two of Dinah's full brothers. The others did not participate. These two men were probably in their early twenties.
 2. Verses 26-29: "And they slew Hamor and Shechem his son with the edge of the sword, and took Dinah out of Shechem's house, and went out. The sons of Jacob came upon the slain, and spoiled the city, because they had defiled their sister. They took their sheep, and their oxen, and their asses, and that which *was* in the city, and that which *was* in the field, And all their wealth, and all their little ones, and their wives took they captive, and spoiled even all that *was* in the house."
 - a. The Bible records these events in its usual calm, objective way. It does not gloss over the guile of these brothers, or the vengeance they wrought on their enemy, or the spoiling of the enemy's goods. We cannot condone such conduct today, but it must be remembered that they lived in a cruel, ignorant world; the Old Testament had not even been written; the Law had not yet been given; the gospel precepts were still far in the future; God overlooked certain things in that time frame (Acts 17:30).
 - b. The brothers removed Dinah from Shechem's house where she had been held.
 3. Verses 30-31: "And Jacob said to Simeon and Levi, Ye have troubled me to make me to stink among the inhabitants of the land, among the Canaanites and the Perizzites: and I *being* few in number, they shall gather themselves together against me, and slay me; and I shall be destroyed, I and my house. And they said, Should he deal with our sister as with an harlot?"
 - a. Jacob did not condone his sons' actions. He feared that the Canaanites would unite and destroy Jacob and his little band.
 - b. But the sons insisted that they could not permit their sister to be treated as a harlot. "Our word *harlot* is said to have been derived from a very odd circumstance: Robert, duke of Normandy, seeing a fine-looking country girl dancing with her companions on the green, took her to his bed. She was the daughter of a *skinner*, and her name was *Arlotta*; and of her *William*, surnamed *The Conqueror*, was born. Hence it is said all such women were from her called *harlots*, as William himself was usually termed *the Bastard*. But *horelet*, the diminutive of *whore*, is not a less likely derivation" (Clarke, p.209).
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GENESIS 35

A. Introduction.

1. This chapter contains some interesting items in the life of Jacob. It marks the turning point in Jacob's life: his faith matures and he is able to take up the full mantle of his patriarchal calling. Some scholars, including Coffman, assert that the material is not in chronological sequence, but there does not seem to be anything in the chapter which demands that conclusion. The information is of sketchy detail, but it is important to round out the story of Jacob's spiritual maturity.
2. The events of the chapter can be divided into the following sections:
 - a. Jacob's return to Bethel: Genesis 35:1-7.
 - b. The death and burial of Deborah: Genesis 35:8.
 - c. God appears to Jacob and reaffirms the patriarchal promise: Genesis 35:9-15.
 - d. The death of Rachel: Genesis 35:16-20.
 - e. The incest of Reuben with Bilhah: Genesis 35:22.
 - f. A list of Jacob's twelve sons: Genesis 35:22-26.
 - g. Jacob's final visit with Isaac and Isaac's death and burial: Genesis 35:27-29.

B. Genesis 35:1-8: Jacob Returns to Bethel.

1. Verse 1: "And God said unto Jacob, Arise, go up to Bethel, and dwell there: and make there an altar unto God, that appeared unto thee when thou fleddest from the face of Esau thy brother."
 - a. We are not told how God delivered the message included in the verse, but he stated very plainly what he expected Jacob to do there.
 - b. He reminds Jacob of the events which had occurred there during the patriarch's flight from Esau many years before.
 - c. "The acute distress of Jacob due to his sons' massacre of the Shechemites had probably sent the patriarch to his knees in prayer. God's answer came in the command to 'Go up to Bethel'....To go 'up' to Bethel was true geographically, for the place was a thousand feet above the lowland of Shechem..." (Coffman, p.415).
2. Verse 2-4: "Then Jacob said unto his household, and to all that *were* with him, Put away the strange gods that *are* among you, and be clean, and change your garments: And let us arise, and go up to Bethel; and I will make there an altar unto God, who answered me in the day of my distress, and was with me in the way which I went. And they gave unto Jacob all the strange gods which *were* in their hand, and *all their* earrings which *were* in their ears; and Jacob hid them under the oak which *was* by Shechem."
 - a. Jacob knew that they were not prepared to stand in the presence of God. Isaiah said, "Woe is me! for I am undone; because I am a man of unclean lips, and I dwell in the midst of a people of unclean lips: for mine eyes have seen the King, the Lord of hosts" (Isa. 6:5). This was spoken on the occasion of the visionary scene described in the context. Jacob had been impressed in a similar way by the dream he had in Genesis 28 at Bethel. Thus did he call on his people to put away their idols, change their garments, and present themselves with him before God at Bethel.
 - b. Jacob's sons had been involved in a tragic event at Shechem; Rachel had possibly stolen her father's idols for the purpose of worshiping them (31:19); it is likely that some of his servants were idol worshipers; the sacking of Shechem may have brought other idols into the camp. These must all be put away; their hearts must be purified; and they were to put on other clothes which would symbolize a new beginning.
 - 1) Romans 6:1-6: "What shall we say then? Shall we continue in sin, that grace may abound? God forbid. How shall we, that are dead to sin, live any longer therein? Know ye not, that so many of us as were baptized into Jesus Christ were baptized into his death? Therefore we are buried with him by baptism into death: that like as Christ was raised up from the dead by the glory of the Father, even so we also should walk in newness of life. For if we have been planted together in the likeness of his death, we shall be also *in the likeness* of *his* resurrection: Knowing this, that our old man is crucified with *him*, that the body of sin might be destroyed, that henceforth we should not serve sin."
 - 2) Galatians 3:26-29: "For ye are all the children of God by faith in Christ Jesus. For as many of you as have been baptized into Christ have put on Christ. There is neither Jew nor Greek, there is neither bond nor free, there is neither male nor female: for ye are all one in Christ Jesus. And if ye *be* Christ's, then are ye Abraham's seed, and heirs according to the promise."
 - 3) Colossians 3:8-11: "But now ye also put off all these; anger, wrath, malice, blasphemy, filthy communication out of your mouth. Lie not one to another, seeing that ye have put off the old man with

- his deeds; And have put on the new *man*, which is renewed in knowledge after the image of him that created him: Where there is neither Greek nor Jew, circumcision nor uncircumcision, Barbarian, Scythian, bond *nor* free: but Christ *is* all, and in all."
- c. Josephus says, "As he was therefore purifying his followers, he lighted upon the gods of Laban; (for he did not before know they were stolen by Rachel;) and he hid them in the earth, under an oak, in Shechem. And departing thence, he offered sacrifice at Bethel, the place where he saw his dream, when he went first into Mesopotamia" (*Antiquities*, Book 1, Chapter 21, Section 2).
 - d. They gave to Jacob their idols and the earrings they wore. They evidently entered wholeheartedly into the spirit of the occasion. "There was nothing innocent about those ear rings. 'These were amulets with idolatrous significance.' 'They were often covered with allegorical figures and mysterious sentences, supposed to be endowed with talismanic virtue'" (Coffman, p.426).
3. Verse 5: "And they journeyed: and the terror of God was upon the cities that *were* round about them, and they did not pursue after the sons of Jacob."
 - a. The terror of the Lord came on the cities in the area so that Jacob and his company could safely make their journey to Bethel. This protection was needed because of what Jacob's sons had done in Shechem. There was a real danger from this, so much so that God had to take a hand to prevent any harm to the elect family. We are not told how God brought this terror upon the Canaanites. That this terror was effective is seen from the fact that none pursued after Jacob to do him harm. The people of Jericho, centuries later, heard what God had done in Israel's behalf, and their hearts melted. Compare: "And she said unto the men, I know that the LORD hath given you the land, and that your terror is fallen upon us, and that all the inhabitants of the land faint because of you" (Josh. 2:9).
 - b. Many times did God have to step in to protect and preserve his Chosen People. He meant what he had promised Jacob in Genesis 28:15: "And, behold, I *am* with thee, and will keep thee in all *places* whither thou goest, and will bring thee again into this land; for I will not leave thee, until I have done *that* which I have spoken to thee of."
 - c. This present protection must have had a steadying and faith-building effect on Jacob and company.
 4. Verses 6-7: "So Jacob came to Luz, which *is* in the land of Canaan, that *is*, Bethel, he and all the people that *were* with him. And he built there an altar, and called the place Elbethel: because there God appeared unto him, when he fled from the face of his brother."
 - a. Jacob came to Bethel with his people—evidently all his household. He built the altar as God had directed. He named the place "El-Beth-El." In the name was a tribute to God. Leupold says the name means, "the Strong God of Bethel."
 - b. "It is probable that this place was unoccupied ground when Jacob first went to it. (See the note at Gen 28:11.) The name of Beth-el, which was now renewed and which would of course, be confined to Jacob and his family, did not supersede the original one, Luz, until long after. It is now identified with the modern Beitin, and lies on the western slope of the mountain on which Abraham built his altar (Gen 13:8)" [Jamieson, Fausset, and Brown Commentary, Electronic Database. Copyright © 1997 by Biblosoft].
 - c. McGarvey speaks of Bethel: "It is 12 miles north of Jerusalem, and from the hill on which it stands Jerusalem is distinctly seen. It occupies the southern slope of a very rocky hill, and the region immediately about it is the most rocky spot thus far seen on the road from Jerusalem; but the soil is rich where any can be found, and grain grows luxuriously where the surface of the ground is almost hidden with stones. Stone orchards of figs abound and freshly-planted vineyards, while stone walls recently thrown up on the borders of the little fields show that vigorous efforts are being made to extent the tillable area....At the foot of the hill just south of the village is a spring which rises within a pool about 10 feet wide by 12 feet long, and six deep....Just below the pool is a large reservoir, partly cut into the rock, with a solid rock bottom exposed in one part. . The southern and eastern walls are still standing, showing that the reservoir was originally about 10 feet deep, and its dimensions are 317 by 214 feet. A rich piece of ground southwest of the pool containing four or five acres was being set with tomato-plants when the author was there in May, 1879, and many women and boys were carrying water from the pool with which to water the plants as they were set. Immediately east of Bethel is a higher ridge, separated from the one on which Bethel stands by a narrow valley which descends toward the south, deepening rapidly as it goes. This is the 'Mountain east of Bethel' on which Abraham pitched his tent" (*Lands of the Bible*, p.239).
 5. Verse 8: "But Deborah Rebekah's nurse died, and she was buried beneath Bethel under an oak: and the name of it was called Allonbachuth."

- a. Deborah had been Rebekah's nurse (24:59). "If will forever remain a puzzle how she came to be with Jacob at Bethel. The simplest surmise is that after Rebekah's death she may have chosen to attach herself to Jacob, because she had loved and tended him in infancy and in youth" (Leupold, p.919).
- b. Rebekah's death and burial are not mentioned in the Scriptures. It is significant that while the mistress of the house is omitted from the Lord's obituary column, the lowly servant of the mistress has a rather prominent place. This shows that the Lord does not recognize the social distinctions which are so popular and meaningful to men. She was buried under an oak tree near Bethel. The place of Deborah's burial was called "Allonbachuth" which means "The Oak of Weeping," thus implying that her departure was accompanied with much weeping and mourning, and thus that she was a highly esteemed member of Jacob's household.
- c. "If Deborah's death occurred here at Bethel on the occasion of Jacob's return, then she must have been at least 150 years of age, which is not at all unreasonable in view of the ages recorded for other people of that same historical period....'Deborah had either been sent by Rebekah to take care of her daughter-in-law and grandsons, or had gone of her own accord into Jacob's household after the death of her mistress Rebekah. The mourning at her death, and the perpetuation of her memory, are proofs that she must have been a faithful and highly esteemed servant in Jacob's house'" (Coffman, p.428).
- d. The Oak of Weeping was a monument to a godly servant whose loss was felt.

C. Genesis 35:9-15: God Appears to Jacob Again.

1. Verses 9-11: "And God appeared unto Jacob again, when he came out of Padanaram, and blessed him. And God said unto him, Thy name *is* Jacob: thy name shall not be called any more Jacob, but Israel shall be thy name: and he called his name Israel. And God said unto him, I *am* God Almighty: be fruitful and multiply; a nation and a company of nations shall be of thee, and kings shall come out of thy loins."
 - a. "Apparently the author's point of view is that Jacob is to be regarded as still on his way home from Paddan-Aram" (Leupold, p.920). God appeared to Jacob and blessed him. The occasion in mind was after he had left Padan-Aram.
 - b. The command to be fruitful and multiply would not apply to Jacob personally since his family was already given (unless Benjamin was yet unborn); the emphasis of the command was on his children and their children. God reaffirms the name change of Jacob to Israel, that a nation and company of nations would arise from his offspring, and that kings would be among his progeny. The mantle of the Chosen Line was passing down to Jacob.
2. Verses 12-15: "And the land which I gave Abraham and Isaac, to thee I will give it, and to thy seed after thee will I give the land. And God went up from him in the place where he talked with him. And Jacob set up a pillar in the place where he talked with him, *even* a pillar of stone: and he poured a drink offering thereon, and he poured oil thereon. And Jacob called the name of the place where God spake with him, Bethel."
 - a. God went up from the place where he talked with Jacob. The patriarch set up a pillar at this place and poured a drink offering and oil on it, and called this place Bethel. This is the same place as in Genesis 28:19: "And he called the name of that place Bethel: but the name of that city *was called* Luz at the first." On that occasion when Jacob gave this name to the place, he was the only human present; now his family and household were present, so the name is given especially for their information. Perhaps all his company had seen the manifestation of God (an angel in human form as in Gen. 19?) and thus this place was special to them all.

D. Genesis 35:16-20: The Birth of Benjamin and the Death of Rachel.

1. Verses 16-17: "And they journeyed from Bethel; and there was but a little way to come to Ephrath: and Rachel travailed, and she had hard labour. And it came to pass, when she was in hard labour, that the midwife said unto her, Fear not; thou shalt have this son also."
 - a. Jacob was apparently enroute to see his father for that is where he is located at the end of the chapter. As they made their journey, the company came near to Ephrath. "Now '*ephrath*' means 'fruitful region' and must have been a certain fruitful area within which Bethlehem was the most prominent town" (Leupold, p.923). But Coffman observes, "We should be thankful for the ASV parenthesis, *the same is Bethlehem*, as it saves us from all kinds of allegations about contradictions and various sources. Bethlehem was the same as Ephrath; and sometimes, the names were even used together, as in Micah 5:2..." (p.430).
 - b. It was when they came to this place that Rachel went into labor; she was in much travail; the labor was hard. It was a time of great sorrow for her. The midwife tried to reassure Rachel: "Fear not; thou shalt have this son also." It seems that she was offering comforting words of hope to her; but she did not have reason to know that the baby would be a boy.

2. Verse 18: "And it came to pass, as her soul was in departing, (for she died) that she called his name Benoni: but his father called him Benjamin."
 - a. This is a strange case where the mother gave the baby a name which was changed by the father. When one sees the meaning of the name given by the mother, we can see why it was altered by Jacob. Rachel called his name Benoni which means, "The Son of my Sorrow." Naturally, Jacob would not want his last son to bear such a name through life, so he altered the name to Benjamin, which means, "Son of my Right Hand" or "Son of Days" ("Son of my Old Age").
 - b. Rachel gave the name at the very end of her life: as her soul was departing, for she died. Her dying words were expressions of sorrow. There was something that departed from Rachel as she died: that thing is called her soul.
3. Verses 19-20: "And Rachel died, and was buried in the way to Ephrath, which *is* Bethlehem. And Jacob set a pillar upon her grave: that *is* the pillar of Rachel's grave unto this day."
 - a. Rachel was buried in or near Bethlehem, and Moses says that in his day her burial place was still present.
 - 1) 1 Samuel 10:2: "When thou art departed from me to day, then thou shalt find two men by Rachel's sepulchre in the border of Benjamin at Zelzah; and they will say unto thee, The asses which thou wentest to seek are found: and, lo, thy father hath left the care of the asses, and sorroweth for you, saying, What shall I do for my son?"
 - 2) Jeremiah 31:15: "Thus saith the LORD; A voice was heard in Ramah, lamentation, *and* bitter weeping; Rahel weeping for her children refused to be comforted for her children, because they *were* not."
 - b. Moses inserted such information to arouse interest on the part of Israel, and give them something to identify with.

E. Genesis 35:21-26: The List of Jacob's Sons and Their Mothers.

1. Verses 21-22: "And Israel journeyed, and spread his tent beyond the tower of Edar. And it came to pass, when Israel dwelt in that land, that Reuben went and lay with Bilhah his father's concubine: and Israel heard *it*. Now the sons of Jacob were twelve:"
 - a. Jacob moved on from the site of the previous experiences on beyond the tower of Edar. Leupold says this place refers to "the tower of the flocks," a place where the shepherds would oversee their flocks. Compare: "And thou, O tower of the flock, the strong hold of the daughter of Zion, unto thee shall it come, even the first dominion; the kingdom shall come to the daughter of Jerusalem" (Mic. 4:8).
 - b. "The tower of the flock was probably a watch-tower where shepherds guarded their flocks by night. It was a mile (Jerome) or more south of Bethlehem. Here Reuben was guilty of the shameful deed which came to the knowledge of his father, and occasions the allusion in Gen 49:4. He was by this act degraded from his position in the holy family. The division of the open parashah in the text here is more in accordance with the sense than that of the verse" [Barnes' Notes, Electronic Database. Copyright (c) 1997 by Biblosoft].
 - c. This tells of yet another sorry episode in the life of one of Jacob's sons. Reuben lay with Bilhah, his father's concubine, Rachel's handmaiden. The Bible simply states the fact without elaboration. We are not even told what Jacob's reaction to it was, although we may be sure he strongly disapproved of it. This information gives us the necessary background for the statement of Genesis 49:3-4: "Reuben, thou *art* my firstborn, my might, and the beginning of my strength, the excellency of dignity, and the excellency of power: Unstable as water, thou shalt not excel; because thou wentest up to thy father's bed; then defiledst thou *it*: he went up to my couch." His character is mentioned also in Deuteronomy 33:6 and 1 Chronicles 5:1.
 - 1) Deuteronomy 33:6: "Let Reuben live, and not die; and let *not* his men be few."
 - 2) 1 Chronicles 5:1: "Now the sons of Reuben the firstborn of Israel, (for he *was* the firstborn; but, forasmuch as he defiled his father's bed, his birthright was given unto the sons of Joseph the son of Israel: and the genealogy is not to be reckoned after the birthright."
 2. Verses 23-26: "The sons of Leah; Reuben, Jacob's firstborn, and Simeon, and Levi, and Judah, and Issachar, and Zebulun: The sons of Rachel; Joseph, and Benjamin: And the sons of Bilhah, Rachel's handmaid; Dan, and Naphtali: And the sons of Zilpah, Leah's handmaid; Gad, and Asher: these *are* the sons of Jacob, which were born to him in Padanaram."
 - a. The six sons of Leah are named: Reuben, Simeon, Levi, Judah, Issachar, and Zebulun. The two sons of Rachel are given next: Joseph and Benjamin. Then follow the two sons of Bilhah, Rachel's maid: Dan and Naphtali. Finally, the two sons of Zilpah, Leah's maid, are named: Gad and Asher. All of these sons except Benjamin were born in Padan-Aram. Why did the inspired writer indicate that all twelve were born there?
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- b. "These twelve are all said to have been born in Paddan-Aram, though everyone knows that Benjamin was born in Canaan. *Yulladh* as a singular with a plural subject ('these' being the antecedent) is to be accounted for by the fact that after they have been summarized, they appear to the writer as one group. The passive of this verb is a convenient mode of avoiding the mention of numerous subjects..." (Leupold, p.928).
- c. "As a group, the twelve were indeed born in Paddan-aram. Such loose use of prepositional phrases is common in all languages, no less than in the sacred text" (Coffman, p.432).

F. Genesis 35:27-29: The Death of Isaac.

1. Verse 27: "And Jacob came unto Isaac his father unto Mamre, unto the city of Arbah, which *is* Hebron, where Abraham and Isaac sojourned."
 - a. The details given here, as in other places, show that Moses is well-informed with the names of places although he was 400 years removed from the times of which he writes. Being inspired, he had entirely accurate information.
 - b. By mentioning the fact that Abraham and Isaac sojourned at Mamre, in Arbah, which is Hebron, was not for the purpose of imparting new facts, but to suggest what drew Jacob to journey to that location. The place was filled with memories of his grandfather, and evidently his father still abode there.
 2. Verses 28-29: "And the days of Isaac were an hundred and fourscore years. And Isaac gave up the ghost, and died, and was gathered unto his people, *being* old and full of days: and his sons Esau and Jacob buried him."
 - a. Isaac died at the age of 180. He was gathered to his fathers, a reference to a reunion beyond this life in the hades realm. Jacob and Esau buried their father in Machpelah (although the details are not given in this text).
 - b. "From this time onward Jacob enters into the full patriarchal heritage, having at last attained to the spiritual maturity which is analogous to that of the patriarch. Coincident with this is Isaac's receding into the background. Consequently Isaac's death is now reported, though it did not take place for another twelve or thirteen years. For shortly after this, when Joseph was sold into Egypt, he was seventeen years old. When he stood before Pharaoh he was thirty (41:46)....But in closing the life of Isaac it is proper to mention his death, though in reality this did not occur for another twelve years. Strange to say, Isaac lived to witness Jacob's grief over Joseph" (Leupold, p.929).
 - c. "Although this is the last mention of the brothers in each other's company, it is reasonable to suppose that they might have enjoyed many visits together, as the land of Seir was not all that far away from Hebron. The Bible never caters to the mere curiosity of its readers. It is also likely that Israel had visited Isaac repeatedly, although no visit is recorded. The appearance of Deborah as a member of Israel's household almost guarantees this" (Coffman, p.433).
 3. "Keil relates the basis of the calculations that indicate Isaac's living some dozen years after the events of Jacob's return from Paddan-aram. 'He lived to witness the grief of Jacob at the loss of Joseph, and died but a short time before his promotion in Egypt, which occurred thirteen years after Joseph was sold, and only ten years before Jacob's removal with his family to Egypt, as Jacob was 130 years old when he was presented to Pharaoh (47:9); but the historical significance of his life was at an end when Jacob returned home with his twelve sons'" (Coffman, p.433).
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GENESIS 36

A. Introduction.

1. Some Bible critics charge that this chapter is a list of meaningless names, and even say that it is an act of "penance" just to read it. But there are certain reasons why this information was made part of God's inspired word.
 - a. The chapter discloses the fulfillment of the patriarchal promise that Esau would be blessed materially: "And it came to pass, as soon as Isaac had made an end of blessing Jacob, and Jacob was yet scarce gone out from the presence of Isaac his father, that Esau his brother came in from his hunting. And he also had made savoury meat, and brought it unto his father, and said unto his father, Let my father arise, and eat of his son's venison, that thy soul may bless me. And Isaac his father said unto him, Who *art* thou? And he said, I *am* thy son, thy firstborn Esau. And Isaac trembled very exceedingly, and said, Who? where *is* he that hath taken venison, and brought *it* me, and I have eaten of all before thou camest, and have blessed him? yea, *and* he shall be blessed. And when Esau heard the words of his father, he cried with a great and exceeding bitter cry, and said unto his father, Bless me, *even* me also, O my father. And he said, Thy brother came with subtlety, and hath taken away thy blessing. And he said, Is not he rightly named Jacob? for he hath supplanted me these two times: he took away my birthright; and, behold, now he hath taken away my blessing. And he said, Hast thou not reserved a blessing for me? And Isaac answered and said unto Esau, Behold, I have made him thy lord, and all his brethren have I given to him for servants; and with corn and wine have I sustained him: and what shall I do now unto thee, my son? And Esau said unto his father, Hast thou but one blessing, my father? bless me, *even* me also, O my father. And Esau lifted up his voice, and wept. And Isaac his father answered and said unto him, Behold, thy dwelling shall be the fatness of the earth, and of the dew of heaven from above; And by thy sword shalt thou live, and shalt serve thy brother; and it shall come to pass when thou shalt have the dominion, that thou shalt break his yoke from off thy neck" (Gen. 27:30-40).
 - b. It was necessary to list the descendants of both Jacob and Esau to show the line from which the Messiah sprang.
 - c. The information given shows the sad result of entangling one's self with the unholy people of the world. Esau intermarried with them and his descendants became engrossed in all manner of sin. We can see the wisdom of not accepting the proposed plan of Hamor the Shechemite (Gen. 34).
 - d. The chapter shows the kind of government adopted by Esau's descendants. Their later history shows the evils of a corrupted monarchy. Verse 31 stands as an early warning to Israel against embracing that system: "And these *are* the kings that reigned in the land of Edom, before there reigned any king over the children of Israel."
 - e. The chapter shows that Esau dwelt outside the territory promised to his brother's descendants. Thus he avoided interfering with the development of Jacob's family. When he had the means of destroying Jacob, Esau refrained from doing so. This good attitude of Esau was praiseworthy and needed to be brought to Israel's attention when they later came to take possession of Canaan.
2. "In 27:39,40 a blessing had been pronounced upon Esau, a blessing which was not meaningless. It is worth tracing down how it pleased the Almighty to bless Esau and to make him to become a nation. This skeleton history of Esau serves this purpose and at the same time bears testimony to a breadth of interest on Moses' part that was indeed worthy of emulation. For though Esau had, indeed, begun to display its inveterate animosity quite fully at Moses' time, Moses believed that it behooved Israel to have a generous interest in this brother-race" (Leupold, p.932).
3. The outline of the chapter shows that the aim of Moses was not merely to present a brief list of unknown and unimportant people.
 - a. Esau's wives and children and their settlement in Seir: verses 1-8.
 - b. Esau's descendants: verses 9-14.
 - c. The Edomite chiefs (dukes): verses 15-19.
 - d. The Horite chiefs: verses 20-30.
 - e. The Edomite kings: verses 31-39.
 - f. The seats of the chiefs of Edom: verses 40-43.
4. 1 Chronicles 1:35-54 gives a parallel list.

B. Genesis 36:1-8: Esau's Wives and Children.

1. Verses 1-5: "Now these *are* the generations of Esau, who *is* Edom. Esau took his wives of the daughters of Canaan; Adah the daughter of Elon the Hittite, and Aholibamah the daughter of Anah the daughter of Zibeon the Hivite; And Bashemath Ishmael's daughter, sister of Nebajoth. And Adah bare to Esau Eliphaz; and Bashemath bare Reuel; And Aholibamah bare Jeush, and Jaalam, and Korah: these *are* the sons of Esau, which were born unto him in the land of Canaan."
 - a. This is the ninth of the ten "toledoths" ["generations"] of Genesis. There are differences in the lists of names of Esau's wives as given in 26:34 and 28:9 and here. In the earlier accounts they are listed as Judith the daughter of Beeri the Hittite, Basemath the daughter of Elon the Hittite and Mahalath the daughter of Ishmael. "Apparently, then, Judith must be identified with Oholibamah, Basemath with Adah—for both are followed by the name of the same father 'Elon'—and Mahalath must be the Basemath of our list, because in each case follows the father's name, 'Ishmael.' The reason for identifying Judith with Oholibamah may be made somewhat more convincing by noting that Oholibamah is described (v.2) as 'the daughter of Anah'....Such changes of names need surprise no one, for Orientals commonly go under several names, especially the women, who frequently receive a new name at marriage" (Leupold, p.934).
 - b. Since the history is hardly more than a sketch, there is room for supposing that Esau may have had other wives than those mentioned in the earlier record. But it is not certainly known why the names do not perfectly agree. Leupold's explanation may be correct.
 - c. Barnes offers this view: "On comparing the account of his two wives whom he married at forty with the present, the first, namely, Judith, daughter of Beeri the Hittite, no longer appears either by her own name, that of her father, or that of her tribe. Hence, we presume that in the course of the past forty-seven years she has died without male issue. This presumption is favored by the circumstance that the daughter of Elon the Hittite is now advanced into the first place. If it seems undesirable to anyone to make any presumption of this kind, we have only to say that in the absence of the connecting links in a historical statement like this, we must make some supposition to show the possibility of the events related. The presumption we have made seems easier and therefore, more likely than that the names of the individual, the father and the tribe, should be all different, and the order of the two wives reversed, and yet that the same person should be intended; and hence, we have adopted it as a possible arrangement, leaving to others the preference of any other possibility that may be suggested. For after all it should be remembered that testimony only could determine what were the actual circumstances. She who was formerly called Basemath appears here with the name of Adah. At a time when proper names were still significant, the application of more than one name to the same individual was not unusual" [Barnes' Notes, Electronic Database. Copyright © 1997 by BibleSoft].
 - d. The wives of Esau bore the following sons unto Esau while in Canaan:

WIFE	SON (S)
Adah	Eliphaz
Bashemath	Reuel
Aholibamah	Jeush, Jaalam, and Korah

2. Verses 6-8: "And Esau took his wives, and his sons, and his daughters, and all the persons of his house, and his cattle, and all his beasts, and all his substance, which he had got in the land of Canaan; and went into the country from the face of his brother Jacob. For their riches were more than that they might dwell together; and the land wherein they were strangers could not bear them because of their cattle. Thus dwelt Esau in mount Seir: Esau *is* Edom."
 - a. It became necessary for Esau to move out of Canaan proper, to Seir. He was destined by the patriarchal promise to give way before Jacob. The livestock of these brothers was so vast that the land could not sustain them both. Abraham and Lot met with this same problem (Gen. 13). There were probably more Canaanites living in the land at this time, and since Jacob and Esau did not own property, they had to use for pasture that which the inhabitants did not need.
 - b. Esau was probably resigned to his lot in life with reference to Jacob, hence he made the move. Moses pointed out that Esau is equivalent to Edom. Mount Seir lay south of the Dead Sea and was situated between Moab to the north and the Gulf of Aqaba to the south.

C. Genesis 36:9-14: Esau's Sons and Grandsons.

1. Verses 9-14: "And these *are* the generations of Esau the father of the Edomites in mount Seir: These *are* the names of Esau's sons; Eliphaz the son of Adah the wife of Esau, Reuel the son of Bashemath the wife of Esau. And the sons of Eliphaz were Teman, Omar, Zepho, and Gatam, and Kenaz. And Timna was concubine to Eliphaz Esau's son; and she bare to Eliphaz Amalek: these *were* the sons of Adah Esau's wife. And these *are* the sons of Reuel; Nahath, and Zerah, Shammah, and Mizzah: these were the sons of Bashemath Esau's wife. And these were the sons of Aholibamah, the daughter of Anah the daughter of Zibeon, Esau's wife: and she bare to Esau Jeush, and Jaalam, and Korah."
2. This passage begins with similar words to those in verse 1, the difference being that this part deals with Esau in Seir while the first part had to do with Esau in Canaan.
3. The grandsons of Esau are listed as follows:

SON	GRANDSON
Eliphaz	Teman, Omar, Zepho, Gatam, Kenaz
Eliphaz (by Timna)	Amalek
Reuel	Nahath, Zera, Shammah, Mizzah

4. "With minor variations, these are all called 'Chiefs' or 'Dukes' of Edom in the next paragraph" (Coffman, p.439). The word "son" is used loosely at times in reference to grandsons.
5. "If we note Amalek as belonging among the Edomites (v. 12), we can understand how, being the son of a concubine, he may have been discriminated against and how that may have resulted in his separation from his brethren" (Leupold, p.939). This Amalek is said to have been the father of the Amalekite nation which proved to be a strong enemy of Israel many years later.

D. Genesis 36:15-19: The Dukes (Chiefs) Among Esau's Descendants.

1. "These *were* dukes of the sons of Esau: the sons of Eliphaz the firstborn *son* of Esau; duke Teman, duke Omar, duke Zepho, duke Kenaz, Duke Korah, duke Gatam, *and* duke Amalek: these *are* the dukes *that came* of Eliphaz in the land of Edom; these *were* the sons of Adah. And these *are* the sons of Reuel Esau's son; duke Nahath, duke Zerah, duke Shammah, duke Mizzah: these *are* the dukes *that came* of Reuel in the land of Edom; these *are* the sons of Bashemath Esau's wife. And these *are* the sons of Aholibamah Esau's wife; duke Jeush, duke Jaalam, duke Korah: these *were* the dukes *that came* of Aholibamah the daughter of Anah, Esau's wife. These *are* the sons of Esau, who *is* Edom, and these *are* their dukes."
2. This shows that the Edomites were inclined early to exalting rulers over them, or that these rulers took control.
3. The word translated "dukes" may be equivalent to "chiliarch," a ruler over a thousand. The ASV gives "chiefs" instead of dukes.
4. "One of the most important of these chiefs was Teman, the oldest son of Eliphaz, who later developed into a powerful tribe, becoming so important that the whole land of Edom was sometimes called Teman (Amos 1:12, Obadiah 9)" (Coffman, p.440).
 - a. Amos 1:12: "But I will send a fire upon Teman, which shall devour the palaces of Bozrah."
 - b. Obadiah 1:9: "And thy mighty *men*, O Teman, shall be dismayed, to the end that every one of the mount of Esau may be cut off by slaughter."

E. Genesis 36:20-30: The Horite Chiefs.

1. Verses 20-30: "These *are* the sons of Seir the Horite, who inhabited the land; Lotan, and Shobal, and Zibeon, and Anah, And Dishon, and Ezer, and Dishan: these *are* the dukes of the Horites, the children of Seir in the land of Edom. And the children of Lotan were Hori and Hemam; and Lotan's sister *was* Timna. And the children of Shobal *were* these; Alvan, and Manahath, and Ebal, Shepho, and Onam. And these *are* the children of Zibeon; both Ajah, and Anah: this *was that* Anah that found the mules in the wilderness, as he fed the asses of Zibeon his father. And the children of Anah *were* these; Dishon, and Aholibamah the daughter of Anah. And these *are* the children of Dishon; Hemdan, and Eshban, and Ithran, and Cheran. The children of Ezer *are* these; Bilhan, and Zaavan, and Akan. The children of Dishan *are* these; Uz, and Aran. These *are* the dukes *that came* of the Horites; duke Lotan, duke Shobal, duke Zibeon, duke Anah, Duke Dishon, duke Ezer, duke Dishan: these *are* the dukes *that came* of Hori, among their dukes in the land of Seir."

2. The Horites were in Seir when Esau settled there. The Edomites eventually mixed with them through marriage and finally came to dominate the whole area. Seir got its name from a prominent Horite of that name. Timna, the concubine of Eliphaz to whom Amalek was born, was the sister of Lotan, who was the son of Seir. "What Esau did here through intermarriage with the pagans of Seir, Jacob likewise could have done at Shechem; but the result would have been just as disastrous as it was for the posterity of Esau. Sure, Esau took over the country, but the pagan culture of Seir took over the Edomites. Thus, the wisdom of God's providential interference with Jacob's continued residence in Shechem is demonstrated in this chapter" (Coffman, pp.440f).
3. Verse 24: "And these *are* the children of Zibeon; both Ajah, and Anah: this *was that* Anah that found the mules in the wilderness, as he fed the asses of Zibeon his father."
 - a. The word rendered "mules" in the KJV is translated "hot springs" in the ASV. "The Jews had lost the meaning of the word and so invented the conjecture that it meant 'mules'...an idea that may be traced to Jewish antipathy for the Edomites, whom they by this fiction describe as men tampering with the original purpose of the Creator....Hot springs, it is claimed, are still found at the point where the ancient pilgrimage route from Damascus crosses the Wadi Hesa, about ten miles southeast of the Dead Sea, and so in Edomite territory" (Leupold, p.943).
 - b. But Coffman says: "Jewish scholars generally favor the AV rendition of 'mules,' which we also favor. A feeding lot for asses is a far more likely place to find a mule than a hot spring. *The Tarrgum of Jonathan* paraphrases this place as follows: 'This is the Anah who united the *onager* with the *tame ass*; and in the process of time, he found *mules* produced by them" (Coffman, p.441).

F. Genesis 36:31-39: The Kings of Edom.

1. Verse 31: "And these *are* the kings that reigned in the land of Edom, before there reigned any king over the children of Israel."
 - a. Moses states this several centuries after the time of Jacob and Esau. "The blunt notice...that those kings of Edom came earlier than the rise of the monarchy in Israel emphasizes the fact that Israel had, as a result of Edom's experience, a detailed picture of what would eventually happen to them if they adopted a monarchical system. Those who like to view the reference to kings arising in Israel (v.31) as a proof of a late date for Genesis are frustrated, absolutely, by the fact that, such a later time, after there had indeed arisen kings in Israel, such an implied warning would have been without any meaning whatever" (Coffman, p.435).
 - b. Moses had predicted in his writings to the nation that the time would come when they would demand a king to their own hurt (Deut. 17:14-20). In fact, earlier in the book of Genesis he had recorded the promise God made to Abraham that kings would arise among his offspring (35:11; 17:4ff). He had put before the minds of his auditors the fact that they would some day be subjected to kings.
 - 1) Genesis 17:4-6: "As for me, behold, my covenant *is* with thee, and thou shalt be a father of many nations. Neither shall thy name any more be called Abram, but thy name shall be Abraham; for a father of many nations have I made thee. And I will make thee exceeding fruitful, and I will make nations of thee, and kings shall come out of thee."
 - 2) Genesis 35:11: "And God said unto him, I *am* God Almighty: be fruitful and multiply; a nation and a company of nations shall be of thee, and kings shall come out of thy loins."
 - 3) Deuteronomy 17:14-20: "When thou art come unto the land which the LORD thy God giveth thee, and shalt possess it, and shalt dwell therein, and shalt say, I will set a king over me, like as all the nations that *are* about me; Thou shalt in any wise set *him* king over thee, whom the LORD thy God shall choose: *one* from among thy brethren shalt thou set king over thee: thou mayest not set a stranger over thee, which *is* not thy brother. But he shall not multiply horses to himself, nor cause the people to return to Egypt, to the end that he should multiply horses: forasmuch as the LORD hath said unto you, Ye shall henceforth return no more that way. Neither shall he multiply wives to himself, that his heart turn not away: neither shall he greatly multiply to himself silver and gold. And it shall be, when he sitteth upon the throne of his kingdom, that he shall write him a copy of this law in a book out of *that which is* before the priests the Levites: And it shall be with him, and he shall read therein all the days of his life: that he may learn to fear the LORD his God, to keep all the words of this law and these statutes, to do them: That his heart be not lifted up above his brethren, and that he turn not aside from the commandment, *to* the right hand, or *to* the left: to the end that he may prolong *his* days in his kingdom, he, and his children, in the midst of Israel."
 - c. Thus there is no evidence here to support the Bible critics' assertion that Moses did not write Genesis, but that it came much later. If they were to be successful in pressing their claims the Bible would be thrown

into confusion, its inspiration brought into great question (to say the least), its authenticity undermined, and its authority destroyed.

- d. This "does not refer to the time after the monarchy was introduced into Israel under Saul, but was written with the promise in mind, that kings should come from Jacob (25:11, cf. 17:4ff), and merely expresses the thought that Edom became a kingdom at an earlier period than Israel" (Keil, p.327).
 - e. "This reference to the kings to which their sister nation had submitted (was) a warning against the desires of the children of Israel to have kings" (Henry Morris, *The Genesis Record*, Grand Rapids, Baker Book House, 1976, p.530; quoted by Coffman, p.442).
2. Verses 32-39: "And Bela the son of Beor reigned in Edom: and the name of his city *was* Dinhabah. And Bela died, and Jobab the son of Zerah of Bozrah reigned in his stead. And Jobab died, and Husham of the land of Temani reigned in his stead. And Husham died, and Hadad the son of Bedad, who smote Midian in the field of Moab, reigned in his stead: and the name of his city *was* Avith. And Hadad died, and Samlah of Masrekah reigned in his stead. And Samlah died, and Saul of Rehoboth *by* the river reigned in his stead. And Saul died, and Baalhanan the son of Achbor reigned in his stead. And Baalhanan the son of Achbor died, and Hadar reigned in his stead: and the name of his city *was* Pau; and his wife's name *was* Mehetabel, the daughter of Matred, the daughter of Mezahab."
- a. "And what a warning this monarchy was for Israel! Every single one of the kings was succeeded by another not his son. The inference that they were overthrown violently is irresistible....Of course, exactly this same pattern developed during the reigns of the last series of kings in Northern Israel. Israel had their warning quite early in their history, but they heeded it not. The fourth king on the list was distinguished by his fighting the Midianites on the field of Moab. The Midianites were south of Edom, and the Moabites were north of Edom, Edom being squarely between them; and some have suggested that this presents a problem. The only problem is the total disappearance from history of any reference to such a war, except for this brief note in Genesis. Most Americans would have no problem with a statement that, 'Andrew Jackson fought the British in New Orleans.' How did the British happen to be in New Orleans? They went there; and that is exactly how the Midianites came to be in Moab. Before leaving this paragraph, it should be noted that the capital of the monarchy was moved with the accession of each new king. What a scramble that was!" (Coffman, pp.442f).
 - b. Regarding verse 31, Leupold further states, "All claims, therefore, that this list of Edomitish kings must have been made in Saul's day or David's time or even Solomon's are poorly substantiated. In fact, our contention gains added support from the fact that the death of the last king is not mentioned. This could easily be accounted for by the fact that Moses, who was well informed on the subject he treated, mentions the last king as contemporary with the time of his writing. For himself Moses does not know how many additional kings Esau will have or how long it will be before Israel has kings" (p.945).

G. Genesis 36:40-43: The Places of the Edomite Chiefs.

1. Verses 40-43: "And these *are* the names of the dukes *that came* of Esau, according to their families, after their places, by their names; duke Timnah, duke Alvah, duke Jetheth, Duke Aholibamah, duke Elah, duke Pinon, Duke Kenaz, duke Teman, duke Mibzar, Duke Magdiel, duke Iram: these *be* the dukes of Edom, according to their habitations in the land of their possession: he *is* Esau the father of the Edomites."
2. These are the names of the chiefs of Esau by clans according to their places of residence. "The apparent inclusion of women's names, Timna and Oholibamah, as titles of certain chiefs shows that the chief took his title from the tribal mother in some cases. That this list does not exactly correspond with that given above presents no problem, for it probably represents the chiefs at a later time than that of the earlier list. The unifying of the tribes under the names of Timna and Oholibamah indicates this" (Coffman, p.443).
3. We have the plain statement in verse 43 that Esau is the father of the Edomites. This is the name by which they are known in the Biblical record.

GENESIS 37

A. Introduction.

1. This begins the tenth and last division of Genesis introduced by "*toledoth*" (generation). This section is called the "generations of Jacob." Since the story from here to the end of Genesis primarily involves Joseph's life and experiences, some Bible critics assert a discrepancy between the story line and the statement in verse 2 that the author is dealing with the generations of Jacob. However, the story of Joseph, although it covers many chapters, is still secondary to the overall history of Israel.
 - a. The story shows how Abraham's descendants came to be in Egypt, which thing God had revealed many years earlier to Abraham (Gen. 15). This section gives the details of how this chosen family moved to Egypt where they, in time, grew into a nation. The story of Joseph gives the details of how they came to be there.
 - b. In the story itself, there are many marvelous lessons, not the least of which is a demonstration of the Providence of God.
 - c. "One very noticeable feature of this 'history' (*toledoth*) is the predominance of Joseph practically throughout the entire section. Yet for all that, though he is the mainspring of the movement of the history, Jacob is still the dominant character. We remind of this, for though Joseph is prominent, he is not to be estimated too highly. God never appeared to him as he did to his father Jacob, or to Isaac and to Abraham" (Leupold, p.950).
2. Joseph is one of the great men of the Bible; he stands head and shoulders about his brothers. Although the New Testament does not specifically call Joseph a type of Christ, yet there are many similarities between the two.
 - a. Both were greatly loved by their fathers:
 - 1) Genesis 37:3: "Now Israel loved Joseph more than all his children, because he *was* the son of his old age: and he made him a coat of *many* colours."
 - 2) Genesis 37:32-35: "And they sent the coat of *many* colours, and they brought *it* to their father; and said, This have we found: know now whether it *be* thy son's coat or no. And he knew it, and said, *It is* my son's coat; an evil beast hath devoured him; Joseph is without doubt rent in pieces. And Jacob rent his clothes, and put sackcloth upon his loins, and mourned for his son many days. And all his sons and all his daughters rose up to comfort him; but he refused to be comforted; and he said, For I will go down into the grave unto my son mourning. Thus his father wept for him."
 - 3) John 17:22-26: "And the glory which thou gavest me I have given them; that they may be one, even as we are one: I in them, and thou in me, that they may be made perfect in one; and that the world may know that thou hast sent me, and hast loved them, as thou hast loved me. Father, I will that they also, whom thou hast given me, be with me where I am; that they may behold my glory, which thou hast given me: for thou lovedst me before the foundation of the world. O righteous Father, the world hath not known thee: but I have known thee, and these have known that thou hast sent me. And I have declared unto them thy name, and will declare *it*: that the love wherewith thou hast loved me may be in them, and I in them."
 - b. Both were rejected by their kinsmen:
 - 1) Genesis 37:4-11: "And when his brethren saw that their father loved him more than all his brethren, they hated him, and could not speak peaceably unto him. And Joseph dreamed a dream, and he told *it* his brethren: and they hated him yet the more. And he said unto them, Hear, I pray you, this dream which I have dreamed: For, behold, we *were* binding sheaves in the field, and, lo, my sheaf arose, and also stood upright; and, behold, your sheaves stood round about, and made obeisance to my sheaf. And his brethren said to him, Shalt thou indeed reign over us? or shalt thou indeed have dominion over us? And they hated him yet the more for his dreams, and for his words. And he dreamed yet another dream, and told it his brethren, and said, Behold, I have dreamed a dream more; and, behold, the sun and the moon and the eleven stars made obeisance to me. And he told *it* to his father, and to his brethren: and his father rebuked him, and said unto him, What *is* this dream that thou hast dreamed? Shall I and thy mother and thy brethren indeed come to bow down ourselves to thee to the earth? And his brethren envied him; but his father observed the saying."
 - 2) John 1:11-12: "He came unto his own, and his own received him not. But as many as received him, to them gave he power to become the sons of God, *even* to them that believe on his name."
 - 3) John 6:66: "From that *time* many of his disciples went back, and walked no more with him."

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- 4) John 7:5: "For neither did his brethren believe in him."
- c. Both were sold by their own brethren for silver:
- 1) Genesis 37:23-28: "And it came to pass, when Joseph was come unto his brethren, that they stripped Joseph out of his coat, *his* coat of *many* colours that *was* on him; And they took him, and cast him into a pit: and the pit *was* empty, *there was* no water in it. And they sat down to eat bread: and they lifted up their eyes and looked, and, behold, a company of Ishmeelites came from Gilead with their camels bearing spicery and balm and myrrh, going to carry *it* down to Egypt. And Judah said unto his brethren, What profit *is it* if we slay our brother, and conceal his blood? Come, and let us sell him to the Ishmeelites, and let not our hand be upon him; for he *is* our brother *and* our flesh. And his brethren were content. Then there passed by Midianites merchantmen; and they drew and lifted up Joseph out of the pit, and sold Joseph to the Ishmeelites for twenty *pieces* of silver: and they brought Joseph into Egypt."
 - 2) Matthew 26:14-16: "Then one of the twelve, called Judas Iscariot, went unto the chief priests, And said *unto them*, What will ye give me, and I will deliver him unto you? And they covenanted with him for thirty pieces of silver. And from that time he sought opportunity to betray him."
- d. Both suffered wrong for doing right:
- 1) Genesis 39:9-20: "*There is* none greater in this house than I; neither hath he kept back any thing from me but thee, because thou *art* his wife: how then can I do this great wickedness, and sin against God? And it came to pass, as she spake to Joseph day by day, that he hearkened not unto her, to lie by her, *or* to be with her. And it came to pass about this time, that *Joseph* went into the house to do his business; and *there was* none of the men of the house there within. And she caught him by his garment, saying, Lie with me: and he left his garment in her hand, and fled, and got him out. And it came to pass, when she saw that he had left his garment in her hand, and was fled forth, That she called unto the men of her house, and spake unto them, saying, See, he hath brought in an Hebrew unto us to mock us; he came in unto me to lie with me, and I cried with a loud voice: And it came to pass, when he heard that I lifted up my voice and cried, that he left his garment with me, and fled, and got him out. And she laid up his garment by her, until his lord came home. And she spake unto him according to these words, saying, The Hebrew servant, which thou hast brought unto us, came in unto me to mock me: And it came to pass, as I lifted up my voice and cried, that he left his garment with me, and fled out. And it came to pass, when his master heard the words of his wife, which she spake unto him, saying, After this manner did thy servant to me; that his wrath was kindled. And Joseph's master took him, and put him into the prison, a place where the king's prisoners *were* bound: and he was there in the prison."
 - 2) John 8:46: "Which of you convinceth me of sin? And if I say the truth, why do ye not believe me?"
 - 3) 1 Peter 2:21-25: "For even hereunto were ye called: because Christ also suffered for us, leaving us an example, that ye should follow his steps: Who did no sin, neither was guile found in his mouth: Who, when he was reviled, reviled not again; when he suffered, he threatened not; but committed *himself* to him that judgeth righteously: Who his own self bare our sins in his own body on the tree, that we, being dead to sins, should live unto righteousness: by whose stripes ye were healed. For ye were as sheep going astray; but are now returned unto the Shepherd and Bishop of your souls."
 - 4) 1 Peter 3:18: "For Christ also hath once suffered for sins, the just for the unjust, that he might bring us to God, being put to death in the flesh, but quickened by the Spirit."
- e. Both remained faithful to God:
- 1) Genesis 39:1-6: "And Joseph was brought down to Egypt; and Potiphar, an officer of Pharaoh, captain of the guard, an Egyptian, bought him of the hands of the Ishmeelites, which had brought him down thither. And the LORD was with Joseph, and he was a prosperous man; and he was in the house of his master the Egyptian. And his master saw that the LORD *was* with him, and that the LORD made all that he did to prosper in his hand. And Joseph found grace in his sight, and he served him: and he made him overseer over his house, and all *that* he had he put into his hand. And it came to pass from the time *that* he had made him overseer in his house, and over all that he had, that the LORD blessed the Egyptian's house for Joseph's sake; and the blessing of the LORD was upon all that he had in the house, and in the field. And he left all that he had in Joseph's hand; and he knew not ought he had, save the bread which he did eat. And Joseph was *a* goodly *person*, and well favoured."
 - 2) Genesis 39:20-23: "And Joseph's master took him, and put him into the prison, a place where the king's prisoners *were* bound: and he was there in the prison. But the LORD was with Joseph, and showed him mercy, and gave him favour in the sight of the keeper of the prison. And the keeper of the prison committed to Joseph's hand all the prisoners that *were* in the prison; and whatsoever they did there, he
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- was the doer *of it*. The keeper of the prison looked not to any thing *that was* under his hand; because the LORD was with him, and *that* which he did, the LORD made *it* to prosper."
- 3) Matthew 26:39: "And he went a little farther, and fell on his face, and prayed, saying, O my Father, if it be possible, let this cup pass from me: nevertheless not as I will, but as thou *wilt*."
 - 4) Acts 7:9-10: "And the patriarchs, moved with envy, sold Joseph into Egypt: but God was with him, And delivered him out of all his afflictions, and gave him favour and wisdom in the sight of Pharaoh king of Egypt; and he made him governor over Egypt and all his house."
 - 5) Hebrews 2:17: "Wherefore in all things it behoved him to be made like unto *his* brethren, that he might be a merciful and faithful high priest in things *pertaining* to God, to make reconciliation for the sins of the people."
 - 6) Hebrews 3:1-2: "Wherefore, holy brethren, partakers of the heavenly calling, consider the Apostle and High Priest of our profession, Christ Jesus; Who was faithful to him that appointed him, as also Moses *was faithful* in all his house."
- f. Both were exalted:
- 1) Genesis 39:4: "And Joseph found grace in his sight, and he served him: and he made him overseer over his house, and all *that* he had he put into his hand."
 - 2) Genesis 39:21-23: "But the LORD was with Joseph, and showed him mercy, and gave him favour in the sight of the keeper of the prison. And the keeper of the prison committed to Joseph's hand all the prisoners that *were* in the prison; and whatsoever they did there, he was the doer *of it*. The keeper of the prison looked not to any thing *that was* under his hand; because the LORD was with him, and *that* which he did, the LORD made *it* to prosper."
 - 3) Genesis 41:40-41: "Thou shalt be over my house, and according unto thy word shall all my people be ruled: only in the throne will I be greater than thou. And Pharaoh said unto Joseph, See, I have set thee over all the land of Egypt."
 - 4) Acts 2:33: "Therefore being by the right hand of God exalted, and having received of the Father the promise of the Holy Ghost, he hath shed forth this, which ye now see and hear."
 - 5) Philippians 2:9-11: "Wherefore God also hath highly exalted him, and given him a name which is above every name: That at the name of Jesus every knee should bow, of *things* in heaven, and *things* in earth, and *things* under the earth; And *that* every tongue should confess that Jesus Christ *is* Lord, to the glory of God the Father."
 - 6) Hebrews 12:1-12: "Wherefore seeing we also are compassed about with so great a cloud of witnesses, let us lay aside every weight, and the sin which doth so easily beset *us*, and let us run with patience the race that is set before us, Looking unto Jesus the author and finisher of *our* faith; who for the joy that was set before him endured the cross, despising the shame, and is set down at the right hand of the throne of God. For consider him that endured such contradiction of sinners against himself, lest ye be wearied and faint in your minds."
- g. Both had forgiving hearts:
- 1) Genesis 45:5: "Now therefore be not grieved, nor angry with yourselves, that ye sold me hither: for God did send me before you to preserve life."
 - 2) Genesis 45:15: "Moreover he kissed all his brethren, and wept upon them: and after that his brethren talked with him."
 - 3) Luke 23:34: "Then said Jesus, Father, forgive them; for they know not what they do. And they parted his raiment, and cast lots."
 - 4) Hebrews 4:14-16: "Seeing then that we have a great high priest, that is passed into the heavens, Jesus the Son of God, let us hold fast *our* profession. For we have not an high priest which cannot be touched with the feeling of our infirmities; but was in all points tempted like as *we are*, yet without sin. Let us therefore come boldly unto the throne of grace, that we may obtain mercy, and find grace to help in time of need."
 - 5) Hebrews 7:25-27: "Wherefore he is able also to save them to the uttermost that come unto God by him, seeing he ever liveth to make intercession for them. For such an high priest became us, *who is* holy, harmless, undefiled, separate from sinners, and made higher than the heavens; Who needeth not daily, as those high priests, to offer up sacrifice, first for his own sins, and then for the people's: for this he did once, when he offered up himself."
- h. Both were the only source of help:
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- 1) Genesis 41:45: "And Pharaoh called Joseph's name Zaphnathpaaneah; and he gave him to wife Asenath the daughter of Potipherah priest of On. And Joseph went out over *all* the land of Egypt."
- 2) Genesis 41:57: "And all countries came into Egypt to Joseph for to buy *corn*; because that the famine was *so* sore in all lands."
- 3) Genesis 42:6: "And Joseph *was* the governor over the land, *and* he *it was* that sold to all the people of the land: and Joseph's brethren came, and bowed down themselves before him *with* their faces to the earth."
- 4) John 6:68: "Then Simon Peter answered him, Lord, to whom shall we go? thou hast the words of eternal life."
- 5) John 14:6: "Jesus saith unto him, I am the way, the truth, and the life: no man cometh unto the Father, but by me."
- 6) Acts 4:11-12: "This is the stone which was set at nought of you builders, which is become the head of the corner. Neither is there salvation in any other: for there is none other name under heaven given among men, whereby we must be saved."
3. This final section of Genesis is divided into the following parts:
 - a. Joseph is sold into slavery: Chapter 37.
 - b. Judah continues the Messianic line through his daughter-in-law: Chapter 38.
 - c. Joseph is put in prison in Egypt: Chapter 39.
 - d. Joseph interprets the dreams of the butler and baker: Chapter 40.
 - e. Joseph interprets the dreams of Pharaoh: Chapter 41.
 - f. Joseph's brothers come into Egypt for food: Chapters 41-44.
 - g. Joseph reveals himself to his brothers: Chapter 45.
 - h. Jacob and his family move to Egypt: Chapters 46-47.
 - i. Jacob blesses the sons of Joseph: Chapter 48.
 - j. Final blessing and prophecy of Jacob: Chapter 49.
 - k. Death and burial of Jacob; death of Joseph: Chapter 50.
- B. Genesis 37:1-4: Jacob's Favoritism Breeds Hatred Toward Joseph.
 1. Verses 1-2: "And Jacob dwelt in the land wherein his father was a stranger, in the land of Canaan. These *are* the generations of Jacob. Joseph, *being* seventeen years old, was feeding the flock with his brethren; and the lad *was* with the sons of Bilhah, and with the sons of Zilpah, his father's wives: and Joseph brought unto his father their evil report."
 - a. This verse "implies that Jacob had now entered upon his father's inheritance, and carries on the patriarchal pilgrim-life in Canaan, the further development of which was determined by the wonderful career of Joseph" (Keil, p.334).
 - b. At the age of seventeen, Joseph was working with the sons of Bilhah and Zilpah, when something happened which Joseph related to Jacob. We are not told what it was but simply that it was something those young men had done. Joseph acted rightly in relating the event. These brothers were near the same age of Joseph. The information of the verse is related as background for the animosity toward Joseph the brothers felt toward Joseph.
 2. Verse 3: "Now Israel loved Joseph more than all his children, because he *was* the son of his old age: and he made him a coat of *many* colours."
 - a. Jacob's favoritism is additional reason for the brothers to hate Joseph. His partiality toward Joseph led him to make him a special coat. The scholars say that there is a difficulty in translating the term given in the KJV as "the coat of many colours." The thing of importance about the coat is the distinction it gave to Joseph.
 - 1) "The implications of Joseph's receiving it were that he was his father's special favorite, and that, in all likelihood, the birthright, forfeited by Reuben's adultery with one of Jacob's wives, would eventually pass to Joseph, which of course, it did" (Coffman, p.449).
 - 2) "A coat of many colours—'a coat made up of stripes of differently-coloured cloth.' Similar to this was the toga praetexta of the Roman youth, which was white, striped or fringed with purple, this they wore till they were seventeen years of age, when they changed it for the toga virilis, or toga pura, which was all white. Such vestures as clothing of distinction are worn all over Persia, India, and China to the present day. It is no wonder that his brothers should envy him, when his father had thus made him such a distinguished object of his partial love. We have already seen some of the evils produced by this unwarrantable conduct of parents in preferring one child to all the rest. The old fable of the ape and her

favourite cub, which she hugged to death through kindness, was directed against such foolish parental fondnesses as these" [Adam Clarke's Commentary, Electronic Database. Copyright © 1996 by Biblesoft].

- b. "How strange it is that Jacob, who himself had been brought up in a household of foolish parental preferences between their sons, and who thus had accurate knowledge of the foolishness of such parental preferences, should have, himself, foolishly indulged in the same wickedness" (ibid.).
 - c. It is common for the child of one's old age, especially the last child, to be a pet, or otherwise receive special treatment. Joseph was the next to last son, and was the first child of the favorite wife, Rachel. Also, Jacob may have intended for Joseph to be the select one upon whom the special privileges of the patriarchal promise was to be conferred. Reuben had forfeited his right by his fornication, and Simeon and Levi were certainly poor candidates (cf. Gen. 34).
3. Verse 4: "And when his brethren saw that their father loved him more than all his brethren, they hated him, and could not speak peaceably unto him."
- a. So great was the animosity of the brothers toward Joseph that they could not speak peaceably to him. This hatred was caused especially by the favoritism Jacob was showing him, plus Joseph's "telling on" some of his brothers (vs. 2).
 - b. "Could not speak peaceably unto him—i.e., in a kind, friendly manner; they did not say, 'Peace be to thee,' the usual expression of good wishes among friends and acquaintances. It is deemed a sacred duty to give all this form of salutation; and the withholding of it is an unmistakable sign of dislike or secret hostility. The habitual refusal of Joseph's brethren, therefore, to meet him with 'the salaam' showed how ill-disposed they were toward him. It is very natural in parents to love the youngest, and feel partial to those who excel in talents or amiableness. But in a family constituted as Jacob's—many children by different mothers—he showed great and criminal indiscretion" [Jamieson, Fausset, and Brown Commentary, Electronic Database. Copyright © 1997 by Biblesoft].
 - c. "'They could not speak peace to him,' i.e., they would not speak to him in a friendly manner. They would not even wish him well. The eastern method of salutation is, 'Peace be to thee!'....Now as peace among those nations comprehends all kinds of blessings spiritual and temporal, so they are careful not to say it to those whom they do not cordially wish well. It is not an unusual thing for an Arab or a Turk to hesitate to return the *salam*, if given by a Christian, or by one of whom he has not a favourable opinion; and this, in their own country, may be ever considered as a mark of hostility, not only as a proof that they do not wish you well but that if they have an opportunity they would do you harm. This was precisely the case with respect to Joseph's brothers; they would not give him the *salam*, and therefore felt themselves at liberty to take the first opportunity to injure him" [Adam Clarke's Commentary, Electronic Database. Copyright © 1996 by Biblesoft]

C. Genesis 37:5-11: The Dreams of Joseph Create More Hatred and Envy.

1. Verses 5-8: "And Joseph dreamed a dream, and he told *it* his brethren: and they hated him yet the more. And he said unto them, Hear, I pray you, this dream which I have dreamed: For, behold, we *were* binding sheaves in the field, and, lo, my sheaf arose, and also stood upright; and, behold, your sheaves stood round about, and made obeisance to my sheaf. And his brethren said to him, Shalt thou indeed reign over us? or shalt thou indeed have dominion over us? And they hated him yet the more for his dreams, and for his words."
 - a. The first dream pictured Joseph and his brothers binding sheaves in the field. Joseph's sheaf remained upright while those of his brothers bowed down before his. This implied that Joseph would have dominion over them. They refused to believe that this could ever occur. However, Genesis 50:18 shows the dream came true in a literal sense: "And his brethren also went and fell down before his face; and they said, Behold, we *be* thy servants."
 - b. They hated him the more for his dream and the telling of it.
 2. Verses 9-11: "And he dreamed yet another dream, and told it his brethren, and said, Behold, I have dreamed a dream more; and, behold, the sun and the moon and the eleven stars made obeisance to me. And he told *it* to his father, and to his brethren: and his father rebuked him, and said unto him, What *is* this dream that thou hast dreamed? Shall I and thy mother and thy brethren indeed come to bow down ourselves to thee to the earth? And his brethren envied him; but his father observed the saying."
 - a. His second dream had the same obvious meaning as the first, with the added feature of including his father and mother in the obeisance given Joseph. His mother was dead, but she lived on in his memory. Dreams are not expected to have historical accuracy in every detail.
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- b. Jacob rebuked Joseph over this dream. The young man could have no control over his dreams, but he could have refrained from reporting them. Common sense dictates that nothing good could come out of telling such a dream to those ten evil men. Jacob understood the sun to refer to himself, the moon to Joseph's mother, and the eleven stars to his other sons.
- c. This dream added envy to the hearts of the brothers toward Joseph. And like Mary (Luke 2:19), Jacob stored up memory of these dreams in his heart. "But Mary kept all these things, and pondered *them* in her heart" (Luke 2:19).
- d. "The brothers with their ill-will could not see anything in the dreams but the suggestions of his own ambition and pride of heart; and even the father, notwithstanding his partiality, was grieved by the second dream" (Keil, p.335).
- e. Whence came these dreams? And their fulfillment? It is obvious that God was behind both the giving and the fulfillment. Only in the giving and interpretation of dreams are there to be found miraculous acts in the life of Joseph (as far as the Record reveals).

D. Genesis 37:12-22: Joseph is Sent to Learn the Welfare of His Ten Brethren.

1. Verses 12-13: "And his brethren went to feed their father's flock in Shechem. And Israel said unto Joseph, Do not thy brethren feed *the flock* in Shechem? come, and I will send thee unto them. And he said to him, Here *am I*."
 - a. After a time, the brothers went to feed their father's flock at Shechem. Why they should go there after the shameful episode of chapter 34 is worthy of notice. It may be that the fear of God still held the citizenry in check from seeking vengeance on Jacob's family. Also, these were hard and courageous men, living in a hard time. It was natural for Jacob, remembering what his sons had done earlier at Shechem, should be concerned about their welfare. Not suspecting the treachery of his ten older sons, he sent Joseph on this mission. Joseph was apparently still about 17.
 - b. Jacob had no way of knowing that this would be the last time he would see his beloved Joseph for twenty-two years. He could not foresee the heartache and loss he would soon be experiencing. Joseph could not know in advance the treachery that awaited him, or the horrible things he was about to face.
 - c. A simple decision, a plan of action, can sometimes lead to tragedy or happiness. By passing a car on the road, or by not doing so, may result in safety and health, or an accident and tragic loss. How we need the providence of God! We ought to be continually thankful to the Almighty for the protection and health and happiness he has graciously provided.
 2. Verses 14-17: "And he said to him, Go, I pray thee, see whether it be well with thy brethren, and well with the flocks; and bring me word again. So he sent him out of the vale of Hebron, and he came to Shechem. And a certain man found him, and, behold, *he was* wandering in the field: and the man asked him, saying, What seekest thou? And he said, I seek my brethren: tell me, I pray thee, where they feed *their flocks*. And the man said, They are departed hence; for I heard them say, Let us go to Dothan. And Joseph went after his brethren, and found them in Dothan."
 - a. Jacob was residing in the vale of Hebron at the time. Hebron, also known as Kirjath-Arba, was located 19 miles southwest of Jerusalem. At an elevation of 3,040, it is the highest town in Palestine. Jerusalem is at an elevation of 2,500 feet.
 - b. He traveled to Shechem, a distance of about 50 miles, but his brothers were not there. A man Joseph met told him he had overheard them talking about going further north to Dothan, another 15 miles.
 - c. Dothan: A place to the North of Shechem whither Jacob's sons went for pasture for the flocks; where Joseph who followed them was sold to the Ishmaelites, after having been imprisoned in a 'pit' (Gen 37:17 ff). Here in later days the eyes of Elisha's servant were opened to see the mountain 'full of horses and chariots of fire,' guarding his master from the encircling Syrians (2 Kings 6:13 ff). This is certainly to be identified with Tell Dothan, which lies on the East of the ancient road leading from Gilead across Esdraelon to the seacoast, and thence to Egypt. It is about 5 miles to the Southwest of Jenin. There are some traces of old buildings, two cisterns—Dothayin or Dothayin = 'two cisterns' or 'pits'—and one copious spring. Excellent pasture is found in the surrounding plain, and on the adjoining slopes" [International Standard Bible Encyclopaedia, Electronic Database Copyright ©1996 by Biblesoft].
 - d. In obedience to his father's instructions, Joseph gladly made the long and hazardous journey to check on the welfare of his ten older brothers. "Joseph and his father had both of them more of the innocence of the dove than of the wisdom of the serpent, else he had never come thus into the hands of those that hated him: but God designed it all for good. See in Joseph an instance, 1. Of dutifulness to his father. Though he was his father's darling, yet he was made, and was willing to be, his father's servant. How readily does he wait
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his father's orders! Here I am, v. 13. Note, Those children that are best beloved by their parents should be most obedient to their parents; and then their love is well-bestowed and well-returned. 2. Of kindness to his brethren. Though he knew they hated him and envied him, yet he made no objections against his father's commands, either from the distance of the place or the danger of the journey, but cheerfully embraced the opportunity of showing his respect to his brethren. Note, It is a very good lesson, though it is learnt with difficulty and rarely practised, to love those that hate us; if our relations do not their duty to us, yet we must not be wanting in our duty to them....Joseph was sent by his father to Shechem, to see whether his brethren were well there, and whether the country had not risen upon them and destroyed them, in revenge of their barbarous murder of the Shechemites some years before. But Joseph, not finding them there, went to Dothan, which showed that he undertook this journey, not only in obedience to his father (for then he might have returned when he missed them at Shechem, having done what his father told him), but out of love to his brethren, and therefore he sought diligently till he found them. Thus, let brotherly love continue, and let us give proofs of it" [Matthew Henry's Commentary on the Whole Bible: New Modern Edition, Electronic Database. Copyright © 1991 by Hendrickson Publishers, Inc.].

3. Verses 18-20: "And when they saw him afar off, even before he came near unto them, they conspired against him to slay him. And they said one to another, Behold, this dreamer cometh. Come now therefore, and let us slay him, and cast him into some pit, and we will say, Some evil beast hath devoured him: and we shall see what will become of his dreams."
 - a. The brothers saw and recognized Joseph while he was still a ways off. The hatred and envy they felt for him boiled to the surface, and immediately a suggestion was made to kill him and dispose of the body; they could claim that some beast had devoured him.
 - b. Evil plans can be laid rather quickly! "Sin in haste, repent at leisure!" By killing him they could destroy his dreams.
4. Verses 21-22: "And Reuben heard *it*, and he delivered him out of their hands; and said, Let us not kill him. And Reuben said unto them, Shed no blood, *but* cast him into this pit that *is* in the wilderness, and lay no hand upon him; that he might rid him out of their hands, to deliver him to his father again."
 - a. Reuben, the eldest, spoke up in behalf of his brother. He suggested that they not kill Joseph, but rather put him in "this pit." He meant for them to think that he meant they should leave him in the pit to slowly die of starvation. But he was merely using this as a ruse; he intended to come back later and draw him out.
 - b. The pit was a cistern which collected water during the rainy season, held it for a time, and later went dry. Verse 24 shows that the pit was now dry. It was deep enough, and the walls were sufficiently smooth, that there was little or no chance of anyone climbing out unaided.
 - c. Reuben's attempt to protect Joseph is commendable, but loses some of its merit on account of its craftiness.
 - d. How could God use such evil men as the heads of the tribes of his chosen nation? The fact is, that he did not use them in their present condition. But after some hardships and problems, he was able to soften them, and make them to be better men. But how could the descendants of righteous and holy Abraham descend so low? Leupold gives these two factors: "The one, these fruits are largely the outgrowth of a bigamous home; a home lacking inner harmony and true discipline, as must needs be the case where there are more wives than one, produces misbegotten children. The other factor is this: depending on a godly ancestry, these men neglected to watch and pray, each man for himself, and so they fell prey to the clever devices of the wicked one" (p. 964).

E. Genesis 37:23-28: An Alternate Plan Developed to Sell Joseph.

1. Verses 23-25: "And it came to pass, when Joseph was come unto his brethren, that they stripped Joseph out of his coat, *his* coat of *many* colours that *was* on him; And they took him, and cast him into a pit: and the pit *was* empty, *there was* no water in it. And they sat down to eat bread: and they lifted up their eyes and looked, and, behold, a company of Ishmeelites came from Gilead with their camels bearing spicery and balm and myrrh, going to carry *it* down to Egypt."
 - a. They stripped away Joseph's coat, and cast him into the pit. The pit was empty of water.
 - b. They sat down to eat bread. Bread was eaten at every meal, so "to eat bread" came to mean "to eat a meal." They could eat knowing that their innocent brother was in a pit just a short distance away. "A road passes a short distance to the north of Dothan, another more prominent highway goes a bit farther to the east coming from across the Jordan, passing Beisan or Bethshean and continuing down through the center of the land to Hebron and from there deflecting southwestward to Egypt" (Leupold, p.968).
 - c. Joseph may have passed only a short distance from his father enroute to Egypt. The caravan was composed of Ishmaelites who were Midianites by residence; or the group contained both Ishmaelites and Midianites;

or the terms were used as one (Judgs. 8:24ff). "They are called Midianites (Gen 37:28)...the Medanites (Gen 37:36), being a traveling caravan composed of a mixed association of Arabians. Medan and Midian, sons of Keturah (Gen 25:2), became heads of tribes, whose settlement was on the east of the Dead Sea. The Medanites lay south of their brethren, extending along the eastern boundary of Edom toward Sinai. Those tribes of Northern Arabia had already addicted themselves to commerce, and long did they enjoy a monopoly, the carrying trade being entirely in their hands, because the Egyptians themselves did not engage in foreign commerce. Being in the time of Jacob small tribes, they united for the purposes of trade, and thus the Midianites, the Medanites, and a party of Ishmaelites, who inhabited the same country, were all concerned in the transaction which involved the sale of Joseph. Either the name of the one people or the other might be used in describing this traveling caravan, as they were all in co-partnery (cf. Judg 8:22,24,26)" [Jamieson, Fausset, and Brown Commentary, Electronic Database. Copyright © 1997 by Biblesoft].

2. Verses 26-28: "And Judah said unto his brethren, What profit *is it* if we slay our brother, and conceal his blood? Come, and let us sell him to the Ishmeelites, and let not our hand be upon him; for he *is* our brother *and* our flesh. And his brethren were content. Then there passed by Midianites merchantmen; and they drew and lifted up Joseph out of the pit, and sold Joseph to the Ishmeelites for twenty *pieces* of silver: and they brought Joseph into Egypt."
- a. Judah proposed that they sell Joseph—no profit if we kill him! For twenty pieces of silver they sold their brother.
- b. "Sure they sold him; but one only needs to turn a few pages until all of the posterity of these heartless brothers is suffering under the whips of the taskmasters in Egypt. What a horrible price to pay for the sale of a brother! Thus history, in which God's finger always writes, has a way of executing retribution upon the wrongdoers" (Coffman, p.454).

F. Genesis 29-36: Jacob Mourns Over Joseph.

1. Verses 29-33: "And Reuben returned unto the pit; and, behold, Joseph *was* not in the pit; and he rent his clothes. And he returned unto his brethren, and said, The child *is* not; and I, whither shall I go? And they took Joseph's coat, and killed a kid of the goats, and dipped the coat in the blood; And they sent the coat of *many* colours, and they brought *it* to their father; and said, This have we found: know now whether it *be* thy son's coat or no. And he knew it, and said, *It is* my son's coat; an evil beast hath devoured him; Joseph is without doubt rent in pieces."
 - a. Reuben had been absent during the sale; he grieved over the situation. He rent his clothing in grief. As the oldest brother, he should have taken charge of the situation; and being the eldest, he would be looked to by Jacob to give an accounting.
 - b. The brothers soaked Joseph's beautiful coat in the blood of a slain goat, and bringing it to their father, asked whether this was "thy son's coat." They knew it was, and knew full-well what had become of Joseph, but they allowed their father to reach a natural conclusion—that Joseph had been killed and eaten by some wild beast.
 - c. Jacob the deceiver was again deceived himself! Notice that the brothers did not say that a beast had killed Joseph; they presented evidence that led Jacob to reach this conclusion.
 - d. Their hatred for Joseph led them to commit the awful crimes delineated in the context. They were doubtless greatly shocked over the terrible effect this report had on their father. That they suffered from this guilty knowledge is seen when they later began to deal with the "great man" of Egypt.
 2. Verses 34-36: "And Jacob rent his clothes, and put sackcloth upon his loins, and mourned for his son many days. And all his sons and all his daughters rose up to comfort him; but he refused to be comforted; and he said, For I will go down into the grave unto my son mourning. Thus his father wept for him. And the Midianites sold him into Egypt unto Potiphar, an officer of Pharaoh's, *and* captain of the guard."
 - a. A life of grief and misery descended on Jacob; he could not be comforted in this loss. Notice that he had believed a lie which produced these feelings.
 - b. "Grave" is *sheol*, equivalent to the Greek New Testament word *hades*.
 - c. In Egypt, the Midianites sold Joseph to Potiphar who was a "captain of the guard" (literally, captain of the slaughterers, the executioners).
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GENESIS 38

A. Introduction.

1. "The following sketch from the life of Judah is intended to point out the origin of the leading families of the future princely tribe in Israel, and at the same time to show in what danger the sons of Jacob would have been of forgetting the sacred vocation of their race, through marriages with Canaanitish women, and of perishing in the sin of Canaan, if the mercy of God had not interposed, and by leading Joseph into Egypt prepared the way for the removal of the whole house of Jacob into that land, and thus protected the family, just as it was expanding into a nation, from the corrupting influence of the manners and customs of Canaan" (Keil, pp.338f).
2. "For the present, no matter how strongly Jacob's sons may have believed in the divine destiny of their family, they were running grave danger of being submerged by the Canaanite element, making matrimonial alliances with them, adopting Canaanite ideals of life, and so being ultimately absorbed by their dominant element. For it is to be observed repeatedly that, though the Canaanites were already far inferior to Israel morally, they were very amiable and ready to establish closer contacts with the descendants of Abraham. Realizing this, we can the more readily see why a sojourn in a land like Egypt was a necessity from the Lord's point of view. For the Egyptians of old were noted for their aversion to strangers, especially to shepherds (46:34)" (Leupold, p.976).
3. In order for Israel to be developed into a holy, separate nation, and maintained in that righteous status, God saw the need for welding them together by a common hardship which was accomplished in their years of Egyptian bondage. Their sanctity was obtained by sending them into a land where they would not be absorbed by the host nation. The bond with which God united the children of Israel is still holding today.
4. At the time of the present chapter, the morals of Judah were very low. Things are participated in by Judah and Tamar which are shocking to our higher sense of morality. But the Holy Spirit did not try to cover up the sins of the leading characters in the Bible.

B. Genesis 38:1-11: Judah's Family.

1. Verse 1: "And it came to pass at that time, that Judah went down from his brethren, and turned in to a certain Adullamite, whose name *was* Hirah."
 - a. At this time: connects with the events of the preceding chapter. We are not told why Judah left his brothers and went to live among the Canaanites. Some scholars have speculated that he was vexed over how his brothers had treated Joseph and their hypocrisy in letting their father conclude that Joseph was dead. It was his idea to sell Joseph instead of killing him, which shows a degree of mercy; but his morality left much to be desired.
 - b. Joseph was in Egypt twenty-two years before he moved his father's family to be with him there. There is enough time during this twenty-two-year period for the events of this chapter to take place, although some scholars think the initial events of this chapter could have begun prior to the selling of Joseph.
 - c. Judah stayed with Hirah, an Adullamite. Adullam is said to have been situated in the western part of the territory which later was given to the tribe of Judah.
 2. Verses 2-5: "And Judah saw there a daughter of a certain Canaanite, whose name *was* Shuah; and he took her, and went in unto her. And she conceived, and bare a son; and he called his name Er. And she conceived again, and bare a son; and she called his name Onan. And she yet again conceived, and bare a son; and called his name Shelah: and he was at Chezib, when she bare him."
 - a. Judah met a Canaanite girl whose father's name was Shuah (vs 12). Shuah is a name meaning "opulence" according to Leupold. Judah took Shuah's daughter to wife. Verse twelve indicates that Judah married her. He did not consult Jacob, he did not show proper regard to the lady's background, and did not follow the precedent of his father and grandfather and take a wife from among his own kinsmen (although likely the descendants of Laban were little or no better than the Canaanites).
 - b. To this union three sons were born: Er, Onan, and Shelah. Judah named the first, the wife named the other two. None of these three was to receive the birthright of Israel. Why was the name of the place where Shelah was born included in the divine record? This place (Chezib) was located in the southern portion of the lowland of Judah (Keil), and the descendants of Shelah may well have known the location of their ancestor's birth when they came into the land under Joshua. "Chezib—probably the same as Achzib (Josh 15:44; Mic 1:14,15) and Chezeba (1 Chron 4:22), which in the partitioning of the land fell to the sons of Shelah, and was here mentioned that Shelah's descendants might know the birthplace of their ancestor (Keil); or the fact of Judah's absence at the birth of his third son may be recorded as the reason of the name,
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'Peace,' 'Rest,' 'Prosperity', which the child received (Gerlach)" [Pulpit Commentary, Electronic Database. Copyright © 2001 by BibleSoft].

3. Verses 6-7: "And Judah took a wife for Er his firstborn, whose name *was* Tamar. And Er, Judah's firstborn, was wicked in the sight of the LORD; and the LORD slew him."
 - a. When Er, Judah's oldest son, reached age, Judah selected a wife for him. Her name was Tamar ("palm tree"). For some unnamed reason, God considered Er to be a wicked man, thus he slew him. We are not told why he was wicked or how he was slain (cf. Acts 5:1-11; 12:23).
 - b. When a man commits sin, God is under no obligation to keep him alive:
 - 1) Genesis 2:16-17: "And the LORD God commanded the man, saying, Of every tree of the garden thou mayest freely eat: But of the tree of the knowledge of good and evil, thou shalt not eat of it: for in the day that thou eatest thereof thou shalt surely die."
 - 2) Romans 2:4: "Or despisest thou the riches of his goodness and forbearance and longsuffering; not knowing that the goodness of God leadeth thee to repentance?"
 - 3) Romans 6:23: "For the wages of sin *is* death; but the gift of God *is* eternal life through Jesus Christ our Lord."
 - 4) Romans 8:2: "For the law of the Spirit of life in Christ Jesus hath made me free from the law of sin and death."
 - 5) 2 Peter 3:9: "The Lord is not slack concerning his promise, as some men count slackness; but is longsuffering to us-ward, not willing that any should perish, but that all should come to repentance."
 4. Verses 8-10: "And Judah said unto Onan, Go in unto thy brother's wife, and marry her, and raise up seed to thy brother. And Onan knew that the seed should not be his; and it came to pass, when he went in unto his brother's wife, that he spilled *it* on the ground, lest that he should give seed to his brother. And the thing which he did displeased the LORD: wherefore he slew him also."
 - a. Judah told his next eldest son, Onan, to marry Tamar, and raise up seed to his dead brother. "The custom of levirate marriage, which is first mentioned here, and is found in different forms among Indians, Persians, and other nations of Asia and Africa, was not founded upon a divine command, but upon an ancient tradition, originating probably in Chaldea. It was not abolished, however, by the Mosaic law (Deut. 35:5ff), but only so far restricted as not to allow it to interfere with the sanctity of marriage; and with this limitation it was enjoined as a duty of affection to build up the brother's house, and to preserve his family and name" (Keil, p.340).
 - b. "The family or tribal ownership of land [in Israel] required this arrangement in order to assure a more equitable distribution of real estate. Without such an arrangement, the death of a childless man would have transferred his estate to another branch of the family" (Coffman, p.461).
 - c. Onan knew that the children produced would not be his, thus he took precaution to keep Tamar from conceiving. The Bible is extremely plain, but not vulgar, in relating the story. It does not pander to idle curiosity, but simply and plainly gives the facts.
 - d. "This act not only betrayed a want of affection to his brother, combined with a despicable covetous-ness for his possession and inheritance, but was also a sin against the divine institution of marriage and its object, and was therefore punished by Jehovah with sudden death" (Keil, p.340).
 - e. What Onan did was a continuing practice as is indicated by the Hebrew verbs. He persistently and maliciously cheated Tamar of her right to have children. This interfered with God's divine plan regarding the Promised Seed (Gen. 3:15), hence he slew him also.
 5. Verse 11: "Then said Judah to Tamar his daughter in law, Remain a widow at thy father's house, till Shelah my son be grown: for he said, Lest peradventure he die also, as his brethren *did*. And Tamar went and dwelt in her father's house."
 - a. According to custom, Tamar should be next given to Judah's third son, when he was fully grown. But by now, Judah had gotten the notion that Tamar was a jinx, thus he mollified her by a vague promise to give her to his remaining son when he was grown. But the words do not clearly make that promise—then only imply it. Tamar had not been able to conceive in her other two marriages: the reason in the first is not given, the second is revealed.
 - b. Now Judah is planning to disappoint her again. He implied he would give her to Shelah but secretly he did not intend to fulfill it. He was merely putting her off. He told her to remain a widow in her father's house until Shelah was of age. As the divine record later reveals, Tamar did indeed conceive, and became an ancestor to Jesus of Nazareth. The death of Judah's two sons was due to their own sinfulness, not to any bad luck brought on them by Tamar.
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C. Genesis 38:12-26: Tamar Conceives by her Father-in-law.

1. Verse 12: "And in process of time the daughter of Shuah Judah's wife died; and Judah was comforted, and went up unto his sheepshearers to Timnath, he and his friend Hirah the Adullamite."
 - a. As time "rocked on," Judah's wife died. After his grief had subsided, he and his friend Hirah (vs. 1) went up to Timnath to shear Judah's sheep.
 - b. Traditionally, sheep-shearing time was a time of feast and frolic. Timnath was located on the mountains of Judah (cf. Josh. 15:57).
 2. Verses 13-14: "And it was told Tamar, saying, Behold thy father in law goeth up to Timnath to shear his sheep. And she put her widow's garments off from her, and covered her with a veil, and wrapped herself, and sat in an open place, which *is* by the way to Timnath; for she saw that Shelah was grown, and she was not given unto him to wife."
 - a. Tamar, though living at her father's house, kept up with the affairs of Judah. She learned of his trip to Timnath, and made certain arrangements. She removed her widow's garb and covered her face with a veil and wrapped herself to appear as a prostitute.
 - b. "It seems she is determined to secure offspring if she can, and if her father-in-law has thwarted her, she purposes to thwart him. Mere lust cannot be laid to her charge. On the other hand, her course is far from innocent" (Leupold, p.982). Knowing the festive occasions accompanying sheep-shearing, she knew what was likely going on under those circumstances, hence her plan was to appear as a harlot to entrap Judah.
 3. Verses 15-18: "When Judah saw her, he thought her *to be* an harlot; because she had covered her face. And he turned unto her by the way, and said, Go to, I pray thee, let me come in unto thee; (for he knew not that she *was* his daughter in law.) And she said, What wilt thou give me, that thou mayest come in unto me? And he said, I will send *thee* a kid from the flock. And she said, Wilt thou give *me* a pledge, till thou send *it*? And he said, What pledge shall I give thee? And she said, Thy signet, and thy bracelets, and thy staff that *is* in thine hand. And he gave *it* her, and came in unto her, and she conceived by him."
 - a. She positioned herself in a place where she was apt to see Judah and for him to see her. The nature of the case, the reason behind her actions, shows that if someone else had approached her, she would have declined the offer. But how did she know that she could entrap Judah? How could she know he was that kind of man? Perhaps this was not the first time he had done what he now did, and Tamar knew of it. Her stratagem worked perfectly.
 - b. "Shrewdly Tamar asks for what she can use as evidence of a conclusive sort, should circumstances make it necessary: seal, cord, and staff. The 'seal' (chotham) may have been a ring or even a cylinder seal, such as the Babylonians commonly used. This was always carried around upon his person by the well-to-do man, suspended by the 'cord' (pethil); cf. Song 8:6. The 'staff' may have been like those which, according to Herodotus, the Babylonians carried, having at its head a specially carved figure of 'an apple, or a rose, or a lily, or an eagle, or any such thing, for no man may carry a staff without a device.' (Herodotus 1:195, cited by Delitzsch)" (Leupold, pp.984f). The AV has "bracelets" instead of "cord."
 - c. We may not be able to know the identity and significance of these items, nor is it necessary that we know. The thing of importance about them is that they could be easily identified as belonging to Judah. Tamar's plan was to become pregnant by her father-in-law, and the items she collected from him was to prove conclusively that he was the father.
 - d. "Little could Judah have realized that he had just become the father of a great multitude through Tamar, including the Christ himself. Why did God permit such a thing? Simply because Tamar was a convert from the paganism to the true faith; and, by her, God would cut off the fountain head of paganism in the Chosen People, an influence which had already entrenched itself in the household of Judah through the Canaanite daughter of Shua" (Coffman, p.464).
 4. Verses 19-23: "And she arose, and went away, and laid by her veil from her, and put on the garments of her widowhood. And Judah sent the kid by the hand of his friend the Adullamite, to receive *his* pledge from the woman's hand: but he found her not. Then he asked the men of that place, saying, Where *is* the harlot, that *was* openly by the way side? And they said, There was no harlot in this *place*. And he returned to Judah, and said, I cannot find her; and also the men of the place said, *that* there was no harlot in this *place*. And Judah said, Let her take *it* to her, lest we be shamed: behold, I sent this kid, and thou hast not found her."
 - a. Judah had promised a kid to the "prostitute" and had shown his willingness to make good on the bargain by leaving behind some "collateral." He next sent payment to her by his friend, Hirah the Adullamite; he was to pay the debt for Judah and retrieve the personal items. On coming to the place, the prostitute could not be found; the men of that place did not even know of her.
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- 1) The word translated "harlot" is a word meaning "religious prostitute." Ancient idolaters often engaged in immoral conduct in connection with their idol worship.
- 2) Why did not Judah go personally to redeem the pledge? And why did they not make further inquiries to locate the harlot? If he had gone himself, he would have been subjected to possible shame; if further search for the woman was made, his evil conduct might have been discovered. He was willing to give up his personal items, which may have been more valuable to him than the animal he promised, just so he would not be embarrassed.
- b. The publicity he wanted to avoid came to light in the most embarrassing way, and before far more people than Judah could have imagined. For thousands of years, millions and millions of people have read and heard and discussed his dark secret! And every detail of it was fully open to the eyes of the Almighty.
 - 1) Hebrews 4:13: "Neither is there any creature that is not manifest in his sight: but all things are naked and opened unto the eyes of him with whom we have to do."
 - 2) Psalm 90:8: "Thou hast set our iniquities before thee, our secret sins in the light of thy countenance."
 - 3) Numbers 32:23: "But if ye will not do so, behold, ye have sinned against the Lord: and be sure your sin will find you out."
 - 4) Genesis 44:16: "And Judah said, What shall we say unto my lord? what shall we speak? or how shall we clear ourselves? God hath found out the iniquity of thy servants: behold, we are my lord's servants, both we, and he also with whom the cup is found."
5. Verses 24-26: "And it came to pass about three months after, that it was told Judah, saying, Tamar thy daughter in law hath played the harlot; and also, behold, she *is* with child by whoredom. And Judah said, Bring her forth, and let her be burnt. When she *was* brought forth, she sent to her father in law, saying, By the man, whose these *are*, *am* I with child: and she said, Discern, I pray thee, whose *are* these, the signet, and bracelets, and staff. And Judah acknowledged *them*, and said, She hath been more righteous than I; because that I gave her not to Shelah my son. And he knew her again no more."
- a. About three months later, someone discovered Tamar's pregnancy and reported it to Judah. The charge was that she had played the harlot. One may wonder whether someone in the household had seen her go out clothed as a prostitute, or whether they simply made the charge. Her condition was found out, and Judah, as head of the family, felt duty-bound to pass proper sentence against her. He had decided before talking with her that she was to be burned. He was quick to see her sin, but tried to cover up his own (cf. David—2 Sam. 12).
- b. Tamar sent out the personal items and asked him to tell whose they were. As sinful as her actions had been, at least she had not acted out of lust; Judah had acted from lust and had failed to fulfill his promise to give his youngest son to Tamar as husband. God was able to use this sorry situation, however, in working out his great plan.

D. Genesis 38:27-30: The Birth of Pharez and Zerah.

1. Verses 27-30: "And it came to pass in the time of her travail, that, behold, twins *were* in her womb. And it came to pass, when she travailed, that *the one* put out *his* hand: and the midwife took and bound upon his hand a scarlet thread, saying, This came out first. And it came to pass, as he drew back his hand, that, behold, his brother came out: and she said, How hast thou broken forth? *this* breach *be* upon thee: therefore his name was called Pharez. And afterward came out his brother, that had the scarlet thread upon his hand: and his name was called Zarah."
 2. Tamar had conceived twins, and in giving them birth, the hand of one was first visible. The midwife tied a scarlet thread to his hand so as to identify him as the firstborn. He drew back his hand and the other brother was born first. This firstborn son continued the line of the Messiah.
 3. "Such details were recorded because of the importance of the key link in Messiah's line. Perez, the firstborn, was the one through whom Jesus came. It was only an oddity that the firstborn was not Zerah; and perhaps the ancients saw in this a figure of how narrowly the Messianic line was spared the necessity of passing down from the daughter of Shua the Canaanite" (Coffman, p.467).
 4. "The binding of the scarlet thread about the wrist of the child whose arm appeared first in the birth, serves to show us how solicitously the privileges of the birthright were preserved. Had not this caution been taken by the midwife, Pharez would have had the right of primogeniture to the prejudice of his older brother, Zarah. And yet Pharez is usually reckoned in the genealogical tables before Zarah; and from him, not Zarah, does the line of our Lord proceed. See Matt 1:3. Probably the two brothers, as being twins, were conjoined in the privileges belonging to the birthright. And it came to pass, as he drew back his hand, that, behold, his brother came out: and she said, How hast thou broken forth? *this* breach *be* upon thee: therefore his name was called Pharez....And
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afterward came out his brother, that had the scarlet thread upon his hand: and his name was called Zarah”
[Adam Clarke's Commentary, Electronic Database. Copyright © 1996 by Biblesoft].

GENESIS 39

A. Several Purposes are Accomplished by this Chapter.

1. It stands as a refutation of the evil lives of those described in the preceding chapter. Whereas Judah, his sons, and Tamar were involved in wicked and questionable activities, Joseph keeps himself pure even though he was strongly enticed.
2. We learn how Joseph is seasoned by hardship, and thus has his character refined by the purifying fire of tribulation. He was wickedly sold into slavery, falsely accused of wrongdoing by Potiphar's wife, and spent several years in prison.
3. His history as given in this chapter reveals his progress to the point he became second in rank among the ruling class of Egypt. This advancement was not quick or painless. He became familiar with Egyptian culture while serving Potiphar; he is strengthened by the rigors and confinement of prison.
4. The story illustrates how righteous men can suffer even though they are guiltless.

B. Genesis 39:1-6: Joseph Gains Favor in Potiphar's House.

1. Verse 1: "And Joseph was brought down to Egypt; and Potiphar, an officer of Pharaoh, captain of the guard, an Egyptian, bought him of the hands of the Ishmeelites, which had brought him down thither."
 - a. The Ishmeelites were the ones who sold Joseph to Potiphar. However, in Genesis 37:36 the Midianites are said to be the sellers. The same company contained both Ishmeelites and Midianites, or these terms are used interchangeably.
 - b. Potiphar is called an Egyptian. We would expect that all the officials there would be Egyptians, but this verse seems to be making a special point in identifying Potiphar as an Egyptian. Rimmer (*Dead Men Tell Tales*, pp.70ff) says that an invasion of Egypt by Semites from Ur (probably Sumerians) overwhelmed Egypt. "Thus, when Abraham entered Egypt, he found that it was ruled by his relatives! Thus we have an explanation of the cordial welcome that a Sumerian from Ur received from a pharaoh in Egypt. This contact is well established through the arts of that day, by pottery, by frescoes, and by means of the records of ancient customs....The second contact of Egypt and the Genesis record is found in the Experience of Joseph....Nor was Joseph's phenomenal rise to power unusual in the strange culture of that day and time. We must remember that Joseph was a Semite at a Semitic court. There is an unconscious introduction of a collateral fact in the simple statement of Genesis thirty-nine, verse one. After being told that Joseph was sold to a man named Potiphar, the statement is made that Potiphar was an Egyptian....The pharaoh himself being an invader, he had surrounded himself with trusted men of his own race and family. As far as may now be ascertained, Potiphar was the only Egyptian who had preserved his life and kept his place at the court. He seems to have been the chief officer of the bodyguard of Pharaoh, and as such was entrusted with the dubious honor of executing the Pharaoh's personal enemies" (pp.70-72).
 - c. "The race of Potiphar is also given as Egyptian, an essential note, for, if this was during the Hyksos kings of Egypt, the employment of Egyptians who were of a different race was unusual, and may also explain why Potiphar was a eunuch. We have already noted that the word could have meant merely a king's officer, but the possibility remains that he was actually a eunuch. If so, it would explain his wife's inordinate desire to seduce Joseph. Morris elaborated this thesis rather fully as follows: 'It was a custom in ancient pagan countries, beginning with Sumeria, to require prominent officers associated closely with the king's court to be castrated, in order to minimize the possibility of their taking over the kingdom and founding their own dynasty. Here it seems that either Potiphar (already married) had consented to be castrated in order to hold the office, or that his wife, after the event, married him for financial or political reasons. Some eunuchs were known to have wives'" [Coffman, StudyLight.org].
 - d. Potiphar: An Egyptian and an officer ('captain of the bodyguard') of Pharaoh. When Joseph was taken to Egypt Potiphar purchased him from the Midianite merchants. Potiphar was so favorably impressed by the ability and fidelity of Joseph that he made him overseer of his house and committed all his possessions to his care. Upon the accusation of his wife, Potiphar cast Joseph into prison (Gen 39:1-20), c. 1890 B.C. After this we hear no more of Potiphar, unless, which is not likely, he was the chief of the executioners afterward mentioned" [The New Unger's Bible Dictionary. Originally published by Moody Press of Chicago, Illinois. Copyright © 1988].
 - e. Potiphar is called "the captain of the guard" (vs. 1); Pharaoh's butler and baker are placed under "the captain of the guard" (40:1-3); Potiphar may be the one referred to in this latter instance also. Some scholars think

that "officer" means "eunuch." Compare 1 Samuel 8:15 where the same word is used. Keil states (p.338) the word is used "in most of the passages of the Old Testament, for courtier or chamberlain, without regard to the primary meaning, as Potiphar was married."

2. Verse 2: "And the LORD was with Joseph, and he was a prosperous man; and he was in the house of his master the Egyptian."
 - a. God was fully aware of Joseph's sufferings, and "was with Joseph." This is an important feature of the chapter for the phrase appears also in verses 3,5,21, and 23. Joseph was permitted to live in his master's house, and was not required to abide in the servants' quarters.
 - b. It is unclear whether he immediately was allowed this privilege or (which is more likely) was granted this privilege after he had proved himself to be a great asset to Potiphar's material well-being.
3. Verses 3-4: "And his master saw that the LORD *was* with him, and that the LORD made all that he did to prosper in his hand. And Joseph found grace in his sight, and he served him: and he made him overseer over his house, and all *that* he had he put into his hand."
 - a. Joseph was obviously well endowed with natural ability, but the thing that made the chief difference was the fact that God blessed his efforts.
 - b. "As the account progresses, we are made to feel the successive and, no doubt, gradual stages by which Joseph moved forward in the process of time: God was with him; God prospering him; Joseph living in the Egyptian's house; the Egyptian taking note of Yahweh's blessing; his taking note of the fact that every project of Joseph's thrived; the resultant increase of favor that Joseph enjoys, and so forth" (Leupold, p.994).
 - c. Since Potiphar was an important official in the land, Joseph could scarcely have risen higher. Potiphar was most likely very wealthy, prominent, and powerful; and his properties must have been considerable. Thus, with his promotion to overseer of his master's concerns, Joseph became a man of considerable prominence and importance, even though he remained a slave. In old times, quite often the slaves were more highly educated and talented than the great men they served.
4. Verses 5-6: "And it came to pass from the time *that* he had made him overseer in his house, and over all that he had, that the LORD blessed the Egyptian's house for Joseph's sake; and the blessing of the LORD was upon all that he had in the house, and in the field. And he left all that he had in Joseph's hand; and he knew not ought he had, save the bread which he did eat. And Joseph was *a goodly person*, and well favoured."
 - a. After this elevation in office, Joseph, being blessed by God, brought about even greater advantage to Potiphar. A faithful child of God quite frequently becomes a source of blessing, in one way or another, to those with whom he has contact. Potiphar gave Joseph control over all his property, "and he knew not ought he had, save the bread which he ate." Some scholars think this latter clause means that Joseph had control over everything but the food which his master ate; that Potiphar oversaw that function himself. But if he trusted Joseph with all his wealth, he would trust him in matters of his health also.
 - b. Keil states that "he left to Joseph everything that he had, and did not trouble himself about anything but his own eating" (p.344). This is the most obvious and most likely meaning.
 - c. A tribute of praise is given to the physical appearance of Joseph: he was a goodly person and well favored. The same description is given of his mother, Rachel, in Genesis 29:17: "Leah was tender eyed; but Rachel was beautiful and well favoured." Similar statements have been made only of two other men: David (1 Sam. 16:12; 17:42) and Absalom (2 Sam. 14:25). Joseph probably inherited his good looks from his mother. But his spiritual beauty exceeded his physical attractiveness.
 - 1) 1 Samuel 16:12: "And he sent, and brought him in. Now he was ruddy, and withal of a beautiful countenance, and goodly to look upon. And Jehovah said, Arise, anoint him; for this is he."
 - 2) 1 Samuel 17:42: "And when the Philistine looked about, and saw David, he disdained him; for he was but a youth, and ruddy, and withal of a fair countenance."
 - 3) 2 Samuel 14:25: "Now in all Israel there was none to be so much praised as Absalom for his beauty: from the sole of his foot even to the crown of his head there was no blemish in him."

C. Genesis 39:7-20: Joseph Suffers Because of Unjust Accusations.

1. Verse 7: "And it came to pass after these things, that his master's wife cast her eyes upon Joseph; and she said, Lie with me."
 - a. Potiphar's wife was shameless. She fits the description given of ancient Egyptian women who are said to have been lascivious and unfaithful (Leupold, p.997).
 - b. Joseph's advancement in importance probably brought with it better clothing, so that his natural beauty was presented to even greater advantage. Her proposal was shameless.
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2. Verses 8-10: "But he refused, and said unto his master's wife, Behold, my master wotteth not what *is* with me in the house, and he hath committed all that he hath to my hand; *There is* none greater in this house than I; neither hath he kept back any thing from me but thee, because thou *art* his wife: how then can I do this great wickedness, and sin against God? And it came to pass, as she spake to Joseph day by day, that he hearkened not unto her, to lie by her, *or* to be with her."
 - a. Joseph promptly, definitely and clearly turned down the enticement. "What a temptation this presented to Joseph. The youthful passions of life were at full tide in him; he might have reasoned that it would be the means of his escape from slavery; he might have felt that the wrongs he had suffered entitled him to any revenge that was handy; the prospect of secrecy was evident; he was far from home, living in a culture that did not have the moral standards he believed in; it might also have occurred to him that his refusal would make his status worse, and, most importantly of all, it was a continual and persistent temptation that was renewed 'day by day' (Coffman, p.473).
 - b. Joseph reasoned with the woman that he had been greatly honored by his master; he thus implied he would be dishonoring one who had treated him very well.
 - c. He further argued that, while all of Potiphar's possessions had been placed under Joseph's control, that authority did not include Potiphar's wife.
 - d. He reminded her that she was Potiphar's wife.
 - e. He concluded by stating that the deed proposed would be a sin against God. Wickedness is sin; and sin is done against God. He set forth many principles governing the moral conduct of man; when man, even those who have not perceived those principles, violates the same, he has acted against God.
 - f. Josephus goes into much detail, and offers additional information, about the encounters between Joseph and the woman. One wonders where he obtained his information, and whether it is accurate. He claims that the occasion of the ensuing passage occurred during a festival when Potiphar's wife feigned illness, and stayed home, to prepare yet another enticement for Joseph. (See Book II, chapter 4, pp.46ff).
 - g. Joseph overcame the allurements she offered day by day; and he sought to avoid her presence altogether.
 3. Verses 11-12: "And it came to pass about this time, that *Joseph* went into the house to do his business; and *there was* none of the men of the house there within. And she caught him by his garment, saying, Lie with me: and he left his garment in her hand, and fled, and got him out."
 - a. On this occasion she had timed her approach with forethought: none of the men of the house was present. In going about his normal activities, Joseph entered the house to conduct his business. She caught him by his garment; he thought it prudent to flee; she maintained hold on the garment, so that he fled from the house at least partly unclothed.
 - b. This is the second time that a garment was the focal point in his troubles: his coat of many colors had aroused the ire of his brethren; and now this garment caused an untenable condition for him when he had to leave it behind as he fled.
 4. Verses 13-16: "And it came to pass, when she saw that he had left his garment in her hand, and was fled forth, That she called unto the men of her house, and spake unto them, saying, See, he hath brought in an Hebrew unto us to mock us; he came in unto me to lie with me, and I cried with a loud voice: And it came to pass, when he heard that I lifted up my voice and cried, that he left his garment with me, and fled, and got him out. And she laid up his garment by her, until his lord came home."
 - a. When she saw that he had left his garment and had fled, she knew that her actions were apt to be exposed. Instead of telling the truth and taking whatever consequences the situation required, she false accused Joseph of having made the advancement. Although she does not call her husband by name, she accused him of bringing a Hebrew into the house to "mock us." Her accusation had the appearance of truth since Joseph's garment was there; and who would take a slave's word over the mistress' word? She claimed that she was able to drive Joseph away only after crying out with a loud voice.
 - b. "Now either servants might come and see the coat and raise incriminating questions, or they might also have witnessed the hasty exit of Joseph. In either case Potiphar's wife would stand under strong suspicion. To divert suspicion to Joseph she hastily goes on the offensive by raising an outcry, summoning the men of the household and making the protestation of an outraged innocence. When her passion put her in danger, its unholy flame burns against Joseph without any consideration of what might befall him. In this respect she presents an analogy to Amnon (II Sam. 13:15-19). By raising an outcry she puts herself in the class of those who are mentioned (in) Deut. 22:24 and have a claim upon innocence by virtue of their outcry. The charge that Joseph acted indiscreetly in leaving his coat behind overlooks the fact that an emergency had actually arisen, calling for immediate and determined action" (Leupold, p.999).
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- c. There is a time to fight and there is a time to flee; wisdom which grows out of a strong knowledge and belief of God's word will determine which is to be done.
 - 1) 1 Timothy 6:12: "Fight the good fight of faith, lay hold on eternal life, whereunto thou art also called, and hast professed a good profession before many witnesses."
 - 2) 2 Timothy 2:22: "Flee also youthful lusts: but follow righteousness, faith, charity, peace, with them that call on the Lord out of a pure heart."
- 5. Verses 17-20: "And she spake unto him according to these words, saying, The Hebrew servant, which thou hast brought unto us, came in unto me to mock me: And it came to pass, as I lifted up my voice and cried, that he left his garment with me, and fled out. And it came to pass, when his master heard the words of his wife, which she spake unto him, saying, After this manner did thy servant to me; that his wrath was kindled. And Joseph's master took him, and put him into the prison, a place where the king's prisoners *were* bound: and he was there in the prison."
 - a. "This latter designation of Joseph as 'a Hebrew man' is a term used for all the descendants of Eber (11:16). 'Hebrews,' as a term, therefore, included a much broader scope than the later term 'Israelites.' Only after Jacob's family became a more prominent group, did the later term come into vogue. The term ('Hebrews') may, therefore, correspond to the Habiri of the Tell-el-Amarna tablets, although the incursions coming from the south at that time may have nothing to do with Israelites" (Leupold, p.1000).
 - b. When Potiphar came home, she set before him the plan which she had concocted. There was circumstantial evidence present, enough to create a real problem.
 - c. Potiphar's anger flared up, but the text does not say it was directed toward Joseph. "Perhaps it was caused chiefly by the vexation created by the whole bothersome incident. Since he could not disprove his wife's statements—it would hardly have done to take a foreign slave's word against his wife's—all that remained was to do the conventional thing and to punish Joseph and incidentally to get rid of a most efficient business manager. This interpretation of the master's anger is confirmed by the further consideration that the customary punishment for adultery was extreme. To be cast into a prison was a relatively light penalty. In view of the things that are yet to develop the writer tells us that the prison was the one used for the king's prisoners" (Leupold, p.1001).
 - d. Verse 20 indicates that prison life had its rigors at the beginning of his stay. Note that the verse states that the prisoners were bound there. "He sent a man before them, even Joseph, who was sold for a servant: whose feet they hurt with fetters: he was laid in iron: until the time that his word came: the word of the Lord tried him" (Ps. 105:17-19).
 - e. It may be that Potiphar had as much faith in Joseph's denial as he did in his wife's accusation. The sentence against Joseph was not death. He placed Joseph in a prison under his control; no mention is made of any kind of trial. "From these considerations, many scholars have concluded that perhaps Potiphar accepted the truth of his wife's charges against Joseph with something less than total belief" (Coffman, p.476).
- D. Genesis 39:21-23: Joseph Advances to Authority While in Prison.
 - 1. Verses 21-22: "But the LORD was with Joseph, and showed him mercy, and gave him favour in the sight of the keeper of the prison. And the keeper of the prison committed to Joseph's hand all the prisoners that *were* in the prison; and whatsoever they did there, he was the doer *of it*."
 - a. In Tennessee talk, it would appear that Joseph was "snakebit!" Every time things were going well with him, some tragedy developed, and that not of his own doing. But God was still on his side, so that soon he obtained favor of the keeper of the prison.
 - b. In time, how much time is not clear, Joseph was advanced to a position of such authority that he was in charge of all the other prisoners. Joseph's talents were no doubt known to the man in charge, and if it is the case as it seems to be, the prison was under Potiphar's overall control, and so he may have spoken in Joseph's behalf.
 - c. However, the promotion of Joseph was God's providential doing. God is working in the affairs of Joseph for the good of Joseph, of the entire family of Israel, and for the Scheme of Redemption which is being prepared.
 - 1) Genesis 12:1-3: "Now the LORD had said unto Abram, Get thee out of thy country, and from thy kindred, and from thy father's house, unto a land that I will show thee: And I will make of thee a great nation, and I will bless thee, and make thy name great; and thou shalt be a blessing: And I will bless them that bless thee, and curse him that curseth thee: and in thee shall all families of the earth be blessed."

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- 2) Galatians 4:4-5: "But when the fulness of the time was come, God sent forth his Son, made of a woman, made under the law, To redeem them that were under the law, that we might receive the adoption of sons."
 2. Verse 23: "The keeper of the prison looked not to any thing *that was* under his hand; because the LORD was with him, and *that* which he did, the LORD made *it* to prosper."
 - a. The keeper of the prison had such trust in Joseph that he did not need to check on his work. Such should be the degree of trust that each saint obtains in the sight of his employer.
 - b. A faithful Christian is completely trustworthy!
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GENESIS 40

A. Genesis 40:1-4: The King's Butler and Baker Incur the Displeasure of Pharaoh.

1. Verse 1: "And it came to pass after these things, *that* the butler of the king of Egypt and *his* baker had offended their lord the king of Egypt."
 - a. Some time after the events of the preceding chapter in which Joseph rejects the advances of Potiphar's wife and is subsequently cast into prison, the butler and baker who served the king also incurred the wrath of their master and were sent to prison. We are not told how much time had elapsed. The "butler" was also known as the "cupbearer" as in Nehemiah 1:11 and 2 Kings 18:17 ("Rabshakeh" is Aramaic for "chief of the cupbearers").
 - 1) 2 Kings 18:17: "And the king of Assyria sent Tartan and Rabsaris and Rabshakeh from Lachish to king Hezekiah with a great host against Jerusalem. And they went up and came to Jerusalem. And when they were come up, they came and stood by the conduit of the upper pool, which *is* in the highway of the fuller's field."
 - 2) Nehemiah 1:11: "O Lord, I beseech thee, let now thine ear be attentive to the prayer of thy servant, and to the prayer of thy servants, who desire to fear thy name: and prosper, I pray thee, thy servant this day, and grant him mercy in the sight of this man. For I was the king's cupbearer."
 - b. The baker is as the name implies. Both the baker and the butler had offended their lord the king of Egypt and were imprisoned for their offenses. The Bible does not report their offense, but Jewish tradition says, "The chief baker was put into prison because a pebble had been found in the pastry he baked for Pharaoh; and he was guilty of a misdemeanor because he had neglected the sifting of the flour. A fly had happened to fall into the wine that the chief butler poured for Pharaoh, but that could not be construed as caused by any negligence on his part. Thus, the butler had not committed a punishable offense" (*Wellsprings of Torah*, p.76, quoted by Coffman, p.480).
2. Verses 2-3: "And Pharaoh was wroth against two *of* his officers, against the chief of the butlers, and against the chief of the bakers. And he put them in ward in the house of the captain of the guard, into the prison, the place where Joseph *was* bound."
 - a. These two officers of the court were placed in the charge of the captain of the guard. This captain of the guard may have been Potiphar (39:1). The prison was located at the same site as Potiphar's palace, since these two new prisoners were put in prison in the house of the captain of the guard.
 - b. This was the same place Joseph was being held. The keeper of the prison was the man in charge of it; Potiphar appears to have been the over all superintendent of the prison as well as captain of the guard.
 - c. "The head cup-bearer and head baker had committed crimes against the king of Egypt, and were imprisoned in 'the prison of the house of the captain of the trabantes, the prison where Joseph himself was confined;' the state-prison, according to Eastern custom, forming part of the same building as the dwelling-house of the chief of the executioners. From a regard to the exalted position of these two prisoners, Potiphar ordered Joseph to wait upon them, not to keep watch over them; for '*et* (OT:853) *paaqad* (OT:6485) does not mean to appoint as guard, but to place by the side of a person" [Keil & Delitzsch Commentary on the Old Testament: New Updated Edition, Electronic Database. Copyright © 1996 by Hendrickson Publishers, Inc.].
3. Verse 4: "And the captain of the guard charged Joseph with them, and he served them: and they continued a season in ward."
 - a. The captain of the guard gave them into Joseph's charge, not necessarily meaning that he guarded them, but took care of them, as the next clause indicates. By this time Potiphar's anger toward Joseph had cooled and the keeper of the prison had developed a high regard for Joseph.
 - b. The chief butler and chief baker were important men, for they had easy access to the king himself; these men might re-acquire the king's favor and be re-instated; thus they were to be well-treated while in prison. The arrangement of their being in prison and in the care of Joseph continued for "a season."

B. Genesis 40:5-8: The Two Officers Each Dreamed a Dream.

1. Verse 5: "And they dreamed a dream both of them, each man his dream in one night, each man according to the interpretation of his dream, the butler and the baker of the king of Egypt, which *were* bound in the prison."
 - a. There were certain peculiarities about these dreams which suggest they were not of the ordinary variety. The dreams came to the two men during the same night; there were similarities between the dreams; each dream carried the suggestion of a message which was quite beyond the comprehension of men; but each dream was distinct from the other, and the inspired writer says that each had a different message.

- b. The Egyptians, according to the scholars, believed in the prophetic nature of dreams, and so it appears that God used this device several times in his dealings with the Egyptians (Coffman).
 - 2. Verses 6-7: "And Joseph came in unto them in the morning, and looked upon them, and, behold, they *were* sad. And he asked Pharaoh's officers that *were* with him in the ward of his lord's house, saying, Wherefore look ye *so* sadly to day?"
 - a. When Joseph came in to their cell in the morning, he saw that something was wrong. They strongly believed that these dreams had some great importance, and they had no one to interpret these dreams —thus they were disturbed.
 - b. "For Joseph to notice this at once indicates his kindness in attending upon the men who have been allotted to him. They had been 'entrusted' to Joseph (v.4), and Joseph took all such commissions very seriously. Therein lay a large measure of the secret of his success. Had Joseph not inquired of them why they were so gloomy, the entire chain of events that followed might have been rendered impossible" (Leupold, p.1009).
 - 3. Verse 8: "And they said unto him, We have dreamed a dream, and *there is* no interpreter of it. And Joseph said unto them, *Do* not interpretations *belong* to God? tell me *them*, I pray you."
 - a. They either had access to no interpreter, being in prison, or else they thought no man could interpret their dreams. Obviously, God had given these dreams to these men, and Joseph declares that only God can interpret them. Joseph asks that they relate the dreams to him.
 - b. "Appearing in the connection in which it does, it strongly suggests that Joseph surmised that under the circumstances God would grant the favor of interpretation to him, and he asks with this in mind" (ibid.).
- C. Genesis 40:9-15: Joseph Interprets the Butler's Dream.
- 1. Verses 9-11: "And the chief butler told his dream to Joseph, and said to him, In my dream, behold, a vine *was* before me; And in the vine *were* three branches: and it *was* as though it budded, *and* her blossoms shot forth; and the clusters thereof brought forth ripe grapes: And Pharaoh's cup *was* in my hand: and I took the grapes, and pressed them into Pharaoh's cup, and I gave the cup into Pharaoh's hand."
 - a. He saw a vine which had three branches; the buds appeared and the blossoms shot forth, and the clusters of grapes developed. This growth and maturation occurred rapidly. Pharaoh's cup was in his hand, so he took the grapes and pressed the juice into the cup and gave the cup to the king. "Among the inscriptions on the temple of Edfu is one in which the king is seen with a cup in his hand, and underneath are the words, 'They press grapes into the water, and the king drinks'" (Dummelow, quoted by Coffman, p.483).
 - b. "The cultivation of the vine, and the making and drinking of wine, among the Egyptians, are established beyond question by ancient testimony and the earliest monuments, notwithstanding the statement of Herodotus (2,77) to the contrary" (Keil, p.347).
 - 1) Numbers 20:5: "And wherefore have ye made us to come up out of Egypt, to bring us in unto this evil place? it *is* no place of seed, or of figs, or of vines, or of pomegranates; neither *is* there any water to drink."
 - 2) Psalms 78:47: "He destroyed their vines with hail, and their sycamore trees with frost."
 - 3) Psalms 105:33: "He smote their vines also and their fig trees; and brake the trees of their coasts."
 - 2. Verses 12-13: "And Joseph said unto him, This *is* the interpretation of it: The three branches *are* three days: Yet within three days shall Pharaoh lift up thine head, and restore thee unto thy place: and thou shalt deliver Pharaoh's cup into his hand, after the former manner when thou wast his butler."
 - a. Joseph simply interprets the dream to mean that within three days Pharaoh would "lift up thine head," and restore you to your former position. "The three branches are three days."
 - b. "That is, The three branches signify three days; so, *this is my body*, that is, this bread *signifies or represents* my body; *this cup is my blood, represents my blood*; a form of speech frequently used in the sacred writings, for the Hebrew has no proper word by which our terms *signifies, represents, &c.*, are expressed; therefore it says such a thing *IS*, for *represents, points out, &c.* And because several of our ancestors would understand such words in their *true, genuine, critical, and sole meaning*, Queen Mary, Bishops Gardiner, Bonner, and the rest of that demoniacal crew, reduced them to ashes in Smithfield and elsewhere! (Clarke, p.231).
 - 3. Verses 14-15: "But think on me when it shall be well with thee, and show kindness, I pray thee, unto me, and make mention of me unto Pharaoh, and bring me out of this house: For indeed I was stolen away out of the land of the Hebrews: and here also have I done nothing that they should put me into the dungeon."
 - a. Joseph asks that the butler remember him when he is restored, and make mention of him to the king. He states that he had been unjustly treated and did not deserve to be in prison. Although Joseph carried a measure of responsibility and operated within the prison with a degree of freedom, he was nonetheless in
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prison. Note also that he expressed no doubt whatsoever about the dream being fulfilled just as he interpreted.

- b. Critics say that there is a conflict between Joseph's saying he was "stolen" and the facts as previously stated. But both descriptions are correct: his brothers did indeed sell him into slavery; but they did not have the right to sell him since he was not their property to sell; the Midianites bought stolen property. Joseph was carried away from home secretly and by force; he did not run away from some crime, and he did not sell himself into slavery.
- c. Critics also accuse Moses of an anachronism by having Joseph say he had been taken from the land of the Hebrews. They claim that the land of Palestine did not become the land of the Hebrews until centuries after Joseph lived. But Joseph and all the family of Jacob were Hebrews, as were Isaac and Abraham before them; they lived in Palestine although they did not own the land in fact at the time; coming from the land where Abraham and Isaac and Jacob lived, he could accurately state that this was the land of the Hebrews. They had been promised the land also, so in promise it was theirs.

D. Genesis 40:16-19: The Baker's Dream Related and Interpreted.

1. Verses 16-17: "When the chief baker saw that the interpretation was good, he said unto Joseph, I also *was* in my dream, and, behold, *I had* three white baskets on my head: And in the uppermost basket *there was* of all manner of bakemeats for Pharaoh; and the birds did eat them out of the basket upon my head."
 - a. The chief baker, on seeing that the interpretation of his compatriot's dream was good, related his own dream. He saw himself with three baskets on his head. Some scholars say that the baked items were white, not the baskets; the marginal reading says that the basket were full of holes (perhaps to allow air to circulate). The ASV gives "white bread." In the dream, the topmost basket has all manner of baked food for Pharaoh which the birds ate from the basket.
 - b. "The birds are liable to be especially bold in a land where, as was the case in the days of old, no beast or bird was molested. But one thing the baker failed to notice, which is really one of the outstanding things of the dream and which was really ominous: he was unable to drive the birds off; they ate unmolested" (Leupold, p.1015).
2. Verses 18-19: "And Joseph answered and said, This *is* the interpretation thereof: The three baskets *are* three days: Yet within three days shall Pharaoh lift up thy head from off thee, and shall hang thee on a tree; and the birds shall eat thy flesh from off thee."
 - a. The three baskets represented three days; within three days Pharaoh would lift up his head from his body and hang the baker on a tree; the birds would eat his flesh.
 - b. "A great deal of uncertainty focuses upon the exact manner of the baker's execution, some supposing that he was first beheaded, and then impaled; and others taking the position that he was simply hanged. Since either method would answer perfectly to the tenor of Joseph's interpretation of the baker's dream, it cannot be a very important question" (Coffman, p.486).
 - c. "However simple and close this interpretation of the two dreams may appear, the exact accordance with the fulfillment was a miracle wrought by God, and showed that as the dreams originated in the instigation of God, the interpretation was His inspiration also" (Keil, p.348).

E. Genesis 40:20-23: The Fulfillment of the Interpretations.

1. Verse 20: "And it came to pass the third day, *which was* Pharaoh's birthday, that he made a feast unto all his servants: and he lifted up the head of the chief butler and of the chief baker among his servants."
 - a. A feast was prepared for Pharaoh's birthday.
 - b. Royal birthdays were celebrated by 'banquets' (*mishteh*—a 'drinking') and by amnesties, if the king was so minded. Both are common features of antiquity for royal birthdays at least for the Ptolemaic period according to the Rosetta stone" (Leupold, pp.1016f).
2. Verses 21-23: "And he restored the chief butler unto his butlership again; and he gave the cup into Pharaoh's hand: But he hanged the chief baker: as Joseph had interpreted to them. Yet did not the chief butler remember Joseph, but forgot him."
 - a. The butler was restored to office and the baker was hanged. But for some cause unstated in the text, the butler forgot to mention Joseph to Pharaoh.
 - b. "The verifying of Joseph's interpretation of the dreams, on the very day prefixed. The chief butler and baker were both advanced, one to his office, the other to the gallows, and both at the three days' end. Note, Very great changes, both for the better and for the worse, often happen in a very little time, so sudden are the revolutions of the wheel of nature. The occasion of giving judgement severally upon their case was the

solemnizing of Pharaoh's birth-day, on which, all his servants being obliged by custom to attend him, these two came to be enquired after, and the cause of their commitment looked into.

- 1) "The solemnizing of the birth-day of princes has been an ancient piece of respect done them; and if it be not abused, as Jeroboam's was (Hos 7:5), and Herod's (Mark 6:21), is a usage innocent enough....On Pharaoh's birth-day he lifted up the head of these two prisoners, that is, arraigned and tried them (when Naboth was tried he was set on high among the people, 1 Kings 21:9), and he restored the chief butler, and hanged the chief baker. If the butler was innocent and the baker guilty, we must own the equity of Providence in clearing up the innocency of the innocent, and making the sin of the guilty to find him out. If both were either equally innocent or equally guilty, it is an instance of the arbitrariness of such great princes as pride themselves in that power which Nebuchadnezzar set up for (Dan 5:19, whom he would he slew, and whom he would he kept alive)....
- 2) "The disappointing of Joseph's expectation from the chief butler: He remembered not Joseph, but forgot him, v. 23. (1.) See here an instance of base ingratitude; Joseph had deserved well at his hands, had ministered to him, sympathized with him, helped him to a favourable interpretation of his dream, had recommended himself to him as an extraordinary person upon all accounts; and yet he forgot him. We must not think it strange if in this world we have hatred shown us for our love, and slights for our respects. (2.) See how apt those that are themselves at ease are to forget others in distress. Perhaps it is in allusion to this story that the prophet speaks of those that drink wine in bowls, and are not grieved for the affliction of Joseph, Amos 6:6. Let us learn hence to cease from man. Joseph perhaps depended too much upon his interest in the chief butler, and promised himself too much from him; he learned by his disappointment to trust in God only. We cannot expect too little from man nor too much from God.
- 3) "Some observe the resemblance between Joseph and Christ in this story. Joseph's fellow-sufferers were like the two thieves that were crucified with Christ—the one saved, the other condemned....One of these, when Joseph said to him, Remember me when it shall be well with thee, forget him; but one of those, when he said to Christ, Remember me when thou comest into thy kingdom, was not forgotten. We justly blame the chief butler's ingratitude to Joseph, yet we conduct ourselves much more disingenuously towards the Lord Jesus. Joseph had but foretold the chief butler's enlargement, but Christ wrought out ours, mediated with the King of kings for us; yet we forget him, though often reminded of him, though we have promised never to forget him: thus ill do we requite him, like foolish people and unwise" [Matthew Henry's Commentary on the Whole Bible: New Modern Edition, Electronic Database. Copyright © 1991 by Hendrickson Publishers, Inc.].

GENESIS 41

A. Genesis 41:1-8: Pharaoh's Two Dreams.

1. Three pairs of dreams have a prominent part in Joseph's story, and these dreams all have a bearing on each other. Joseph had two dreams as a boy which presaged his exaltation and his kinsmen bowing before him. The king's butler and baker each had a dream while in prison which Joseph correctly interpreted. His interpretation of the butler's dream led in time to his being called in to interpret Pharaoh's dreams, which consequently led to his exaltation which this chapter reports.
2. Verses 1-4: "And it came to pass at the end of two full years, that Pharaoh dreamed: and, behold, he stood by the river. And, behold, there came up out of the river seven well favoured kine and fattleshed; and they fed in a meadow. And, behold, seven other kine came up after them out of the river, ill favoured and leanfleshed; and stood by the *other* kine upon the brink of the river. And the ill favoured and leanfleshed kine did eat up the seven well favoured and fat kine. So Pharaoh awoke."
 - a. After two full years had passed from the time of the events of the previous chapter, Pharaoh dreamed a dream which obviously was engendered by God. Joseph had told the butler of his unjust imprisonment and requested that he bring his case before the king on his restoration to favor. But the butler forgot. Two years later pharaoh's dreams jogged the butler's memory. In this first dream, Pharaoh stood by the river and saw seven "kine" (cows) come up from the river and begin feeding in a meadow. These were fat and well-favored.
 - b. As the dream continued he saw seven other cows come from the river and stand beside the fat cows. The last cows were gaunt and ill-favored. These gaunt and ill-favored cows ate up the fat cows, but they grew no fatter (vs. 21). The king awoke at such a startling and strange dream. Cows turning carnivorous is indeed unreal, but in a dream anything is possible. He was startled awake.
3. Verses 5-7: "And he slept and dreamed the second time: and, behold, seven ears of corn came up upon one stalk, rank and good. And, behold, seven thin ears and blasted with the east wind sprung up after them. And the seven thin ears devoured the seven rank and full ears. And Pharaoh awoke, and, behold, *it was* a dream."
 - a. The second dream had the same form as the first, only ears of grain appeared. Again, the first seven were full and plump, and the second seven were thin. Egypt was known as the granary of the ancient world (Leupold) because of the rich flood plains of the Nile.
 - b. But the thin ears of grain were blasted with the east wind. In Palestine, the east wind came from the hot desert and spelled disaster to crops:
 - 1) Exodus 10:13: "And Moses stretched forth his rod over the land of Egypt, and the LORD brought an east wind upon the land all that day, and all *that* night; *and* when it was morning, the east wind brought the locusts."
 - 2) Exodus 14:21: "And Moses stretched out his hand over the sea; and the LORD caused the sea to go *back* by a strong east wind all that night, and made the sea dry *land*, and the waters were divided."
 - 3) Ezekiel 17:10: "Yea, behold, *being* planted, shall it prosper? shall it not utterly wither, when the east wind toucheth it? it shall wither in the furrows where it grew."
 - 4) Hosea 13:15: "Though he be fruitful among *his* brethren, an east wind shall come, the wind of the LORD shall come up from the wilderness, and his spring shall become dry, and his fountain shall be dried up: he shall spoil the treasure of all pleasant vessels."
 - 5) Jonah 4:8: "And it came to pass, when the sun did arise, that God prepared a vehement east wind; and the sun beat upon the head of Jonah, that he fainted, and wished in himself to die, and said, *It is* better for me to die than to live."
 - 6) Habakkuk 1:9: "They shall come all for violence: their faces shall sup up *as* the east wind, and they shall gather the captivity as the sand."
 - 7) "The destructive nature of the simoom or smoom is mentioned by almost all travelers. Mr. Bruce speaks of it in his Travels in Egypt. On their way to Syene, Idris their guide, seeing one of these destroying blasts coming, cried out with a loud voice to the company, 'Fall upon your faces, for here is the simoom!' 'I saw,' says Mr. B. 'from the southeast a haze come, in colour like the purple part of the rainbow, but not so compressed or thick. It did not occupy twenty yards in breadth, and was about twelve feet high from the ground. It was a kind of blush upon the air, and it moved very rapidly, for I scarce could turn to fall upon the ground, with my head northward, when I felt the heat of its current plainly upon my face. We all lay flat upon the ground, as if dead, till Idris told us it was blown over. The meteor

or purple haze which I saw was indeed passed, but the light air that still blew was of a heat to threaten suffocation. For my part, I found distinctly in my breast that I had imbibed a part of it; nor was I free from an asthmatic sensation till I had been some months in Italy, at the bathe of Poretta, nearly two years afterward.'—Travels, vol. vi., p. 462. On another occasion the whole company were made ill by one of these pestilential blasts, so that they had scarcely strength to load their camels.—ibid., p. 484" [Adam Clarke's Commentary, Electronic Database. Copyright © 1996 by Biblesoft].

4. Verse 8: "And it came to pass in the morning that his spirit was troubled; and he sent and called for all the magicians of Egypt, and all the wise men thereof: and Pharaoh told them his dream; but *there was* none that could interpret them unto Pharaoh."
 - a. The dream was so powerful that Pharaoh knew it was a dream only after he awoke. He was still troubled by the dreams the next morning and called for the magicians and wise men of Egypt to interpret them but they could not.
 - b. The meaning of the dream is so obvious to us, but they did not have the key to understand the meaning. Without that key, which only God could supply, the door of their understanding remained locked.

B. Genesis 41:9-13: The Butler Remembers Joseph.

1. Verse 9: "Then spake the chief butler unto Pharaoh, saying, I do remember my faults this day:"
 - a. One is caused to wonder how such an important event in the life of a man could have been forgotten. Surely the man remembered that he spent some time in prison and was subject to losing his life; and surely he could remember the events surrounding his release and restoration.
 - b. He either forgot willfully or honestly. It might have been the case that God orchestrated the timing of these events for reasons that may be beyond our comprehension.
2. Verses 10-13: "Pharaoh was wroth with his servants, and put me in ward in the captain of the guard's house, *both* me and the chief baker: And we dreamed a dream in one night, I and he; we dreamed each man according to the interpretation of his dream. And *there was* there with us a young man, an Hebrew, servant to the captain of the guard; and we told him, and he interpreted to us our dreams; to each man according to his dream he did interpret. And it came to pass, as he interpreted to us, so it was; me he restored unto mine office, and him he hanged."
 - a. He related how he and the chief baker had fallen under the wrath of pharaoh and were placed in prison. These two dreamed a dream in the same night which a young man, a Hebrew, servant of the captain of the guard (Potiphar?), interpreted.
 - b. He butler related that the interpretations of the dreams were exactly fulfilled. The baker was hanged and the butler was restored to office.

C. Genesis 41:14-24: Joseph is Summoned from Prison and Hears Pharaoh's Dreams.

1. Verse 14: "Then Pharaoh sent and called Joseph, and they brought him hastily out of the dungeon: and he shaved *himself*, and changed his raiment, and came in unto Pharaoh."
 - a. Pharaoh is uninterested in who the interpreter is, only that he learn the meaning of these strange dreams.
 - b. Joseph was quickly brought from the dungeon; he shaved, put on a change of garments, and came before Pharaoh. The shaving was likely of the head and beard.
 - c. "The Egyptians were the only Oriental nation that liked a smooth chin. All slaves, and foreigners who were reduced to that condition, were obliged, on their arrival in that country, to conform to the cleanly habits of the natives, by shaving their beards and heads, the latter of which were covered with a close cap. Thus prepared, Joseph was conducted to the palace, where the king seemed to have been anxiously waiting his arrival" [Jamieson, Fausset, and Brown Commentary, Electronic Database. Copyright © 1997 by Biblesoft].
2. Verses 15-16: "And Pharaoh said unto Joseph, I have dreamed a dream, and *there is* none that can interpret it: and I have heard say of thee, *that* thou canst understand a dream to interpret it. And Joseph answered Pharaoh, saying, *It is* not in me: God shall give Pharaoh an answer of peace."
 - a. Pharaoh began the meeting by stating that he had had a dream and that he had heard that Joseph had the ability to understand and interpret dreams. Joseph's reply shows the intense reverence he had for God. He would not allow this tribute to be paid to him when God deserved the credit. Thus, "God shall give Pharaoh an answer of peace."
 - b. "We may well be astounded at the downright honesty which refuses to profit even in an emergency by a slight distortion of the truth. As far as Joseph was concerned, absolute truthfulness in guarding God's honor was far more important than personal advantage. After twelve years and more of injustice Joseph's first consideration is not deliverance but to take care that his relation to his God be entirely upright....Note also the tactful courtesy of Joseph's reply: he does not by unwarranted claims take advantage of a situation that

might make him appear a great expert and all the court magicians poor bunglers—an attitude that would have antagonized these courtiers" (Leupold, pp.1025f).

3. Verses 17-24: "And Pharaoh said unto Joseph, In my dream, behold, I stood upon the bank of the river: And, behold, there came up out of the river seven kine, fatfleshed and well favoured; and they fed in a meadow: And, behold, seven other kine came up after them, poor and very ill favoured and leanfleshed, such as I never saw in all the land of Egypt for badness: And the lean and the ill favoured kine did eat up the first seven fat kine: And when they had eaten them up, it could not be known that they had eaten them; but they *were* still ill favoured, as at the beginning. So I awoke. And I saw in my dream, and, behold, seven ears came up in one stalk, full and good: And, behold, seven ears, withered, thin, *and* blasted with the east wind, sprung up after them: And the thin ears devoured the seven good ears: and I told *this* unto the magicians; but *there was* none that could declare *it* to me."
- a. Pharaoh recounts the dreams with only slight variation as that already given. The August ruler was greatly interested in his dreams, and instead of having an attendant give the report, he chose to report the full details himself to Joseph.
- b. "The slight differences in phraseology are due to the literary instinct for variety" (Leupold, p.1027).

D. Genesis 41:25-36: Joseph Interprets the Dreams and Suggests What Ought to be Done.

1. Verse 25: "And Joseph said unto Pharaoh, The dream of Pharaoh *is* one: God hath showed Pharaoh what he *is* about to do."
 - a. With conciseness and skill, Joseph gives the meaning of the dreams. He states first that the dreams are the same; it simply is given in different forms.
 - b. God had chosen to show to Pharaoh what he was intending to do. Thus the dreams had to do with forthcoming events.
 2. Verses 26-28: "The seven good kine *are* seven years; and the seven good ears *are* seven years: the dream *is* one. And the seven thin and ill favoured kine that came up after them *are* seven years; and the seven empty ears blasted with the east wind shall be seven years of famine. This *is* the thing which I have spoken unto Pharaoh: What God *is* about to do he sheweth unto Pharaoh."
 - a. The seven fat cows and the seven full ears of grain represent the same thing; the seven thin cows and the seven thin ears of grain represent the same thing. As the seven ill-favored cows and ears represent a grievous famine, the seven well favored cows and ears represent seven years of plenty. He again states that God was revealing his plans to Pharaoh through the dreams which he allowed Joseph to interpret.
 - b. The significance of the number seven is the all-important feature: seven years are meant. To have applied them to anything else would have been error. Knowing they meant years makes the rest of the dreams simple to grasp.
 3. Verses 29-32: "Behold, there come seven years of great plenty throughout all the land of Egypt: And there shall arise after them seven years of famine; and all the plenty shall be forgotten in the land of Egypt; and the famine shall consume the land; And the plenty shall not be known in the land by reason of that famine following; for it *shall be* very grievous. And for that the dream was doubled unto Pharaoh twice; *it is* because the thing *is* established by God, and God will shortly bring it to pass."
 - a. The seven years of plenty would be wonderful, but the excess produced by them would be eaten up by the famine which would follow closely behind. Joseph states that since God gave the dream in two different forms, the thing he intended to do was well established and would shortly come to pass.
 - b. They would begin to come to pass shortly, and within a relatively short span of time (14 years), would be completely fulfilled. Compare: "The Revelation of Jesus Christ, which God gave unto him, to show unto his servants things which must shortly come to pass; and he sent and signified *it* by his angel unto his servant John" (Rev. 1:1).
 4. Verses 33-36: "Now therefore let Pharaoh look out a man discreet and wise, and set him over the land of Egypt. Let Pharaoh do *this*, and let him appoint officers over the land, and take up the fifth part of the land of Egypt in the seven plenteous years. And let them gather all the food of those good years that come, and lay up corn under the hand of Pharaoh, and let them keep food in the cities. And that food shall be for store to the land against the seven years of famine, which shall be in the land of Egypt; that the land perish not through the famine."
 - a. Joseph then suggests that Pharaoh should select a man to take charge of the plan which he immediately outlines. This man must be discreet and wise, and should have able assistants working with him. The administrator must be shrewd (have insight) and wise (have constructive capacity —Leupold). The plan is as masterful as the preceding interpretation.
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- b. During the seven years of plenty one fifth of the grain should be taken up and stored in the cities, where it would be more readily accessible and more easily defended. Archaeology had discovered huge storage bins in Egypt which could be the very ones of the present story.

E. Genesis 41:37-45: Pharaoh Gladly Accepts the Interpretation and the Plan.

1. Verses 37-40: "And the thing was good in the eyes of Pharaoh, and in the eyes of all his servants. And Pharaoh said unto his servants, Can we find *such a one* as this *is*, a man in whom the Spirit of God *is*? And Pharaoh said unto Joseph, Forasmuch as God hath showed thee all this, *there is* none so discreet and wise as thou *art*: Thou shalt be over my house, and according unto thy word shall all my people be ruled: only in the throne will I be greater than thou."
 - a. Pharaoh was wise in that he could see the value of Joseph. He and his advisors quickly agree that he is the man to be appointed administrator of this great plan. Only in the throne, i.e., final, absolute authority, would Pharaoh be greater than Joseph.
 - b. "He put him into an honourable office; not only employed him to buy up corn, but made him prime-minister of state, comptroller of the household—Thou shalt be over my house, chief justice of the kingdom—according to thy word shall all my people be ruled, or armed, as some read it, and then it bespeaks him general of the forces. His commission was very ample: I have set thee over all the land of Egypt (v. 41); without thee shall no man lift up his hand or foot (v. 44); all the affairs of the kingdom must pass through his hand. Nay (v. 40), only in the throne will I be greater than thou. Note, It is the wisdom of princes to prefer those, and the happiness of people to have those preferred, to places of power and trust, in whom the Spirit of God is. It is probable that there were those about the court who opposed Joseph's preferment, which occasioned Pharaoh so often to repeat the grant, and with that solemn sanction (v. 44), I am Pharaoh. When the proposal was made that there should be a corn-master-general nominated, it is said (v. 37), Pharaoh's servants were all pleased with the proposal, each hoping for the place; but when Pharaoh said to them, 'Joseph shall be the man,' we do not read that they made him any answer, being uneasy at it, and acquiescing only because they could not help it. Joseph had enemies, no doubt, archers that shot at him, and hated him (Gen 49:23), as Daniel, Gen 6:4" [Matthew Henry's Commentary on the Whole Bible: New Modern Edition, Electronic Database. Copyright © 1991 by Hendrickson Publishers, Inc.].
2. Verses 41-45: "And Pharaoh said unto Joseph, See, I have set thee over all the land of Egypt. And Pharaoh took off his ring from his hand, and put it upon Joseph's hand, and arrayed him in vestures of fine linen, and put a gold chain about his neck; And he made him to ride in the second chariot which he had; and they cried before him, Bow the knee: and he made him *ruler* over all the land of Egypt. And Pharaoh said unto Joseph, I *am* Pharaoh, and without thee shall no man lift up his hand or foot in all the land of Egypt. And Pharaoh called Joseph's name Zaphnathpaaneah; and he gave him to wife Asenath the daughter of Potipherah priest of On. And Joseph went out over *all* the land of Egypt."
 - a. Pharaoh took the ring from his hand and put in on Joseph's hand. This was the signet ring which bore the official seal. He was also provided with clothing of fine linen, and a gold chain. He was introduced to the people in a magnificent way, by a grand parade in which Joseph rode in the second chariot. The cry preceded him for the people to "bow the knee." Pharaoh provided Joseph a wife from one of the important families in the land: the daughter of Potipherah, priest of On (Hieropolis).
 - b. "From a very early date there was a celebrated temple of the sun here, with a learned priesthood which held the first place among the priests' colleges of Egypt....This promotion of Joseph, from the position of a Hebrew slave pining in prison to the highest post of honour in the Egyptian kingdom, is perfectly conceivable, on the one hand, from the great importance attached in ancient times to the interpretation of dreams and to all occult science, especially among the Egyptians, and on the other hand, from the despotic form of government in the East; but the miraculous power of God is to be seen in the fact, that God, endowed Joseph with the gift of infallible interpretation, and so ordered the circumstances that this gift opened the way for him to occupy that position in which he became the preserver, not of Egypt alone, but of his own family also" (Keil p.352).
 - c. It is clear that Joseph had no ambition to this office; he would be perfectly happy to have received his freedom. After his appointment, Joseph made an inspection tour of Egypt.
3. The new name given Joseph (Zaph-nath-pa-a-neah) has the marginal meaning of "A revealer of Secrets" or "The man to whom secrets are revealed." Some scholars have thought that it may mean Savior of the World, a meaning which fit what Joseph accomplished in a sense. His wife's name was Asenath. "Thus Joseph's marriage was to the daughter of a pagan priest, she herself being named after one of the pagan goddesses of Egypt....'The lines of Ephraim and Manasseh were later leaders in Israel's idolatry.' There can be little doubt that

the idolatrous tendencies of Joseph's sons had originated with Asenath" (Coffman, p.495). However, their descendants who entered Canaan under Joshua were not idol worshipers as far as we know. They became idolaters later on.

F. Genesis 41:46-52: The Seven Plenteous Years.

1. Verse 46: "And Joseph *was* thirty years old when he stood before Pharaoh king of Egypt. And Joseph went out from the presence of Pharaoh, and went throughout all the land of Egypt."
 - a. We are told that Joseph was 30 years of age when he was brought from the prison and promoted. He was seventeen when his slavery commenced (Gen. 37:2); he had spent about thirteen years in trouble and hardship.
 - b. Joseph traveled throughout the land after being promoted to greatness. Such a trip would take time, and would accomplish various purposes including becoming known to the people and laying plans for the accumulation of the food reserves.
 - c. "Bow the knee" mentioned in verse 43 is from a word still being used in the land, being a command to camels.
2. Verses 47-49: "And in the seven plenteous years the earth brought forth by handfuls. And he gathered up all the food of the seven years, which were in the land of Egypt, and laid up the food in the cities: the food of the field, which *was* round about every city, laid he up in the same. And Joseph gathered corn as the sand of the sea, very much, until he left numbering; for *it was* without number."
 - a. The seven plenteous years came and the plans for storing the abundant crops were carried out. So great was the harvests that the grain was numbered as the sand of the sea, so great in fact that they quit counting.
 - b. "The very practical plan was followed of gathering the abundance found round about the individual cities into these cities. The amount laid up in reserve must have seemed needlessly abundant. Ultimately those entrusted with keeping the records lost count of what reserves they actually had. Perhaps arithmetic had not advanced sufficiently to deal with such enormous totals" (Leupold, p.1037).
3. Verses 50-52: "And unto Joseph were born two sons before the years of famine came, which Asenath the daughter of Potipherah priest of On bare unto him. And Joseph called the name of the firstborn Manasseh: For God, *said he*, hath made me forget all my toil, and all my father's house. And the name of the second called he Ephraim: For God hath caused me to be fruitful in the land of my affliction."
 - a. Joseph's wife bore him two sons. The first he named Manasseh, because God "hath made me forget all my toil, and all my father's house." Manasseh means "forgetting." It is a terrible thing to be glad to have forgotten "all my father's house."
 - b. J.W. McGarvey suggested that this was because Joseph had labored under the belief that Jacob would soon rescue him from captivity just as Abraham had done for Lot (Gen. 14). After sufficient time had passed, he gave up all hope of being freed. He would naturally think that his father did not have enough concern to attempt a rescue. This view appears to square with all the facts in evidence. Another possibility is that he was glad to have forgotten his ten brothers who had treated him so badly.
 - c. The second son he named Ephraim, "Fruitful." God had made him to become fruitful in the land of his affliction.

G. Genesis 41:53-57: The Seven Years of Famine Begin.

1. Verses 53-54: "And the seven years of plenteousness, that was in the land of Egypt, were ended. And the seven years of dearth began to come, according as Joseph had said: and the dearth was in all lands; but in all the land of Egypt there was bread."
 - a. Following the seven plenteous years, the famine descended in all lands. There was want all around, but in Egypt there was bread. Everything that Joseph had been able to say in regards to Pharaoh's dream came true.
 - b. Just how widespread was the famine? The description that all lands were affected is taken by many as a figure of speech. But we are in no position to know, some four thousand years later, whether this was literal or a hyperbole. Certainly, Egypt and those other lands in the area were afflicted, and perhaps also the whole civilized world.
 - c. Ancient Egypt owed its fertility to the over-spreading of the Nile. There is little rain that falls in Egypt, only about 8-12 inches annually, and that almost exclusively along the Mediterranean Coast. The Nile begins in Africa and flows a total of more than 4,000 miles, making it the longest river system in the world. The Nile made Egyptian civilization possible, for without it the whole land would be part of the great desert which crosses northern Africa and the Arabian peninsula. Ancient historians did not exaggerate when they called
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- Egypt "the gift of the Nile." The Nile is said to have had seven mouths in ancient times, two of which were of particular significance.
- d. The predictability of the Nile floods formed the basis for the economy and ultimately, the wealth of Egypt. Each year the flood begins in June at the head of the Delta (modern Cairo). It reaches its height in October, after which it recedes until April. As the flood waters recede, crops are sown on the moist fertile soil. An inadequate inundation spells famine for Egypt. At Thebes in Upper Egypt the Nile at flood stage is about 36 feet above its ordinary level. By the time it reaches the head of the Delta it has diminished to 25 feet above normal. It is only about four feet above normal when it reaches the Sea. The famine, if it was limited to the general area, was likely due to the lack of the annual Nile flood.
2. Verses 55-56: "And when all the land of Egypt was famished, the people cried to Pharaoh for bread: and Pharaoh said unto all the Egyptians, Go unto Joseph; what he saith to you, do. And the famine was over all the face of the earth: And Joseph opened all the storehouses, and sold unto the Egyptians; and the famine waxed sore in the land of Egypt."
- a. When the famine was established, and the people began to feel its pinch, they cried out to Pharaoh for relief. They were sent to Joseph, who opened the storehouses and sold to the Egyptians. The famine was grievous, just as Joseph had predicted. Verse 56 indicates that the whole of the settled earth was afflicted by this famine.
 - b. Leupold cites *The Deciding Voice of the Monuments*, p.225f, by Kyle, who claims that evidence for this great famine is found in ancient records.
 - c. "The granaries of Egypt are represented on the monuments. 'In the tomb of Amenemha at Beni-hassan there is the painting of a great storehouse, before whose door lies a great heap of grain already winnowed. Near by stands the bushel with which it is measured, and the registrar who takes the account' (Hengstenberg's 'Egypt and the Books of Moses,' p. 36)—and sold unto the Egyptians (cf. Prov 2:26);—and the famine waxed sore (literally, became strong) in the land of Egypt. A remarkable inscription from the tomb at Eileythia of Barn, which Brugsch ('Histoire d'Egypte,' second ed., p. 174, seqq.) assigns to the latter part of the seventeenth dynasty, mentions a dearth of several years in Egypt ('A famine having broken out during many years, I gave corn to the town during each famine'), which that distinguished Egyptologist identifies with the famine of Joseph under Apophis, the shepherd king (vide 'Encyclopedia Britannica,' ninth edition, art. Egypt); but, this, according to Bunsen ('Egypt's Place, 3:334), is rather to be detected in a dearth of several years which occurred in the time of Osirtasen I., and which is mentioned in an inscription at Beni-hassan, recording the fact that during its prevalence food was supplied by Amenee, the governor of a district of Upper Egypt (Smith's' Dict.,' art. Joseph). The character of Chnumhotep (a near relative and favorite of Osirtasen I., and his immediate successor), and the recorded events of his government, as described in the Beni-hassan monuments, also remind one of Joseph:—'he (i.e. Chnumhotep) injured no little child; he oppressed no widow; he detained for his own purpose no fisherman; took from his work no shepherd; no overseer's men were taken. There was no beggar in his days; no one starved in his time. When years of famine occurred he ploughed all the lands of the district, producing abundant food; no one starved in it; he treated the widow as a woman with a husband to protect her' (vide 'Speaker's Commentary,' vol. 1. p. 450). And all countries (i.e. people from all the adjoining lands) came into Egypt to Joseph for to buy corn; because the famine was so sore in all lands" [Pulpit Commentary, Electronic Database. Copyright © 2001 by BibleSoft].
3. Verse 57: "And all countries came into Egypt to Joseph for to buy *corn*; because that the famine was *so* sore in all lands."
- a. The countries in the general area heard about there being grain in Egypt, and thus they came there to buy.
 - b. This prepares the way for the information in the next chapter of the entry into Egypt of Joseph's brothers, and the eventual reunion of Jacob and his family in Egypt.
 - c. The statement God made to Abraham in Genesis 15, regarding his descendants being under the arm of affliction in a foreign land, is about to begin taking shape.
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GENESIS 42

A. Introduction.

1. "The next logical step in this development [of Joseph's story] is the contact between the exalted slave brother and the needy brethren who appear before him as humble and suspected petitioners. A broader point of view needs to be regarded here. Left to themselves, the sons of Jacob, yielding to the effect of sin, would have drifted apart and have lost all true unity as a family group. Joseph by his discriminating direction cancels the effects of incipient sin and leads the brothers to oneness of heart and purpose. In so doing, he prepares them so that they are found ready to go down into Egypt and there as *one group* to uphold the best traditions of their family. But for this reconstructed unity Jacob's family would have disintegrated in Egypt, would have lost its racial identity, and would have been absorbed by the Egyptians" (Leupold, p.1042).
2. God's mighty hand was behind all these activities, using the men involved to work out his plan. He had chosen the right country for the 400 years of hardship, a country that would not likely absorb Israel due to their national dislike for shepherds. Despite the discouragement and shortsightedness of Israel, things were nevertheless under control.

B. Genesis 42:1-5: The Ten Sons are Sent to Egypt to Buy Grain.

1. Verses 1-2: "Now when Jacob saw that there was corn in Egypt, Jacob said unto his sons, Why do ye look one upon another? And he said, Behold, I have heard that there is corn in Egypt: get you down thither, and buy for us from thence; that we may live, and not die."
 - a. Through some means unspecified in the text, Jacob learned that there was grain in Egypt—perhaps by the report of some traveler who had come from there. He took decisive action by directing his ten sons to go to Egypt to buy food. He suggested that these sons were simply looking at each other, wondering who should do what in order to solve their dire problem.
 - b. Jacob indicated the severity of the famine when he described it as a matter of life and death. This is just another in a long series of dangers which threatened the Messianic Line.
2. Verses 3-5: "And Joseph's ten brethren went down to buy corn in Egypt. But Benjamin, Joseph's brother, Jacob sent not with his brethren; for he said, Lest peradventure mischief befall him. And the sons of Israel came to buy *corn* among those that came: for the famine was in the land of Canaan."
 - a. The ten sons made their journey to Egypt. Jacob did not permit his youngest son Benjamin to accompany them lest some mischief befall him. It appears that Benjamin had replaced Joseph as Jacob's favorite.
 - b. This company of brothers arrived in Egypt as part of a stream of other men coming to buy food. The land of Canaan was sorely afflicted with the great famine, so many came to Egypt for the same purpose.

C. Genesis 42:6-20: The Brothers Appear Before Joseph.

1. Verse 6: "And Joseph *was* the governor over the land, *and he it was* that sold to all the people of the land: and Joseph's brethren came, and bowed down themselves before him *with* their faces to the earth."
 - a. It is likely that Joseph did not handle all the transactions personally for this would be beyond the ability of one man. Rather, the usual sales would be handled by his staff, while he would assign himself the task of dealing with foreigners who came to buy food. Leupold says that this "may be construed to mean that he superintended all selling and was at hand particularly to give personal attention to all extraordinary cases, especially those that had to do with the sale of grain to foreigners" (p.1045).
 - b. "Any group of strangers who might have been suspected of being spies would inevitably have been referred to Joseph; and this would appear to have been exactly what occurred here" (Coffman, pp.498f). His brethren came before Joseph and bowed themselves to the ground.
2. Verses 7-9: "And Joseph saw his brethren, and he knew them, but made himself strange unto them, and spake roughly unto them; and he said unto them, Whence come ye? And they said, From the land of Canaan to buy food. And Joseph knew his brethren, but they knew not him. And Joseph remembered the dreams which he dreamed of them, and said unto them, Ye *are* spies; to see the nakedness of the land ye are come."
 - a. Joseph recognized them but they did not know him. Between the ages of 25 to 50 there may not be any great change in the outward appearance of a man. These brothers were quickly known to Joseph, but he had changed in appearance, station and dress; and they had no reason to know Joseph was still alive, and certainly none to think him to be in such a position of great authority. These men were probably wearing beards, but the ancient Egyptians were said to have been clean shaven, and perhaps having their hair shaved off also.

- b. On recognizing them, he spoke roughly to them, saying hard things to them through an interpreter (vs. 23). He remembered his dream when he saw them bowing before him (in keeping with the dream of Gen. 37:5-7).
 - 1) Genesis 37:5-7: "And Joseph dreamed a dream, and he told *it* his brethren: and they hated him yet the more. And he said unto them, Hear, I pray you, this dream which I have dreamed: For, behold, we *were* binding sheaves in the field, and, lo, my sheaf arose, and also stood upright; and, behold, your sheaves stood round about, and made obeisance to my sheaf."
 - 2) Genesis 42:23: "And they knew not that Joseph understood *them*; for he spake unto them by an interpreter."
 - c. He roughly charged them with being spies. He would know these were no spies, but some of the scholars have surmised that Joseph's subordinates had raised this charge against the brothers and had brought them before the governor to have their case heard. But this is mere conjecture.
 - d. He was giving them a portion of what they deserved. When he saw ten he might naturally have wondered about the eleventh. Had they done to Benjamin as they had done to him?
 3. Verses 10-12: "And they said unto him, Nay, my lord, but to buy food are thy servants come. We *are* all one man's sons; we *are* true *men*, thy servants are no spies. And he said unto them, Nay, but to see the nakedness of the land ye are come."
 - a. They replied that they had simply come to buy food, and that they were all the sons of one man, therefore not spies. Their argument was worthy of note: a man bent on spying out the land preparatory to invading would not send ten of his sons on such a dangerous mission.
 - b. "This is nothing more than a natural attempt of honest men to tell the whole truth and so to extricate themselves from a difficult position" (Leupold, p.1049). But Joseph insisted that they were spies come to spy out the nakedness of the land. The nakedness of the land would be the weaknesses that could be attacked.
 4. Verse 13: "And they said, Thy servants *are* twelve brethren, the sons of one man in the land of Canaan; and, behold, the youngest *is* this day with our father, and one *is* not."
 - a. They in turn replied, being more specific in their answer, that there were twelve sons in the family: the present ten, the youngest which was with the father, and the other "is not" (is dead).
 - b. "About 1922 a group of archaeologists from a certain university went to Africa and the Holy Land to make some excavations in hope of further establishing proof of the Bible. Included in the group was a skeptic who declared that given a year's time, he would come up with sufficient testimony to discredit the Bible completely. He thought that he would be able to do that, but before the end of the year he came back to the same company confessing, 'I have been a fool.' This man had discovered that what he had set out to disprove could not be done. The records he had uncovered had proved to him that he had been wrong. Among his many revealing discoveries was a metal plate with the words 'And Joseph is not.' This statement implies that Joseph of the Old Testament was a real character who at one time lived, but at the time that plate was engraved, had passed on to his eternal reward. Such discoveries, then, support the fact that the Bible is a record of the true facts of every historical event which men have been able to verify" (H.A. Dixon, *Saving Faith and Other Sermons*, p.31).
 5. Verses 14-17: "And Joseph said unto them, That *is it* that I spake unto you, saying, Ye *are* spies: Hereby ye shall be proved: By the life of Pharaoh ye shall not go forth hence, except your youngest brother come hither. Send one of you, and let him fetch your brother, and ye shall be kept in prison, that your words may be proved, whether *there be any* truth in you: or else by the life of Pharaoh surely ye *are* spies. And he put them all together into ward three days."
 - a. Joseph stated again they that were spies, but that he would give them an opportunity to prove their innocence: he would keep nine of them in Egypt while the 10th returned home and bring the youngest brother back with him.
 - b. "Under the rules of that ancient society, every accused was considered guilty until proved innocent, and the burden of proof was always upon the defendant" (Coffman, p.500). This is the opposite of American jurisprudence where one is considered innocent until his guilt is established by the prosecutor. If they did not or could not produce the youngest, they were surely guilty of spying. He then put them "all together into ward three days."
 - c. His plan would discover the attitude of the ten toward Benjamin, and more to the point, it would be a means of getting his only full brother into Egypt where he could enjoy the prosperity Joseph had obtained. Their being imprisoned for three days would give the brothers time to contemplate their situation. They had been
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free to roam the country in their prior years, so this confinement would be especially frightening. It would give them a taste of what they had caused Joseph to endure.

6. Verses 18-20: "And Joseph said unto them the third day, This do, and live; *for* I fear God: If ye *be* true *men*, let one of your brethren be bound in the house of your prison: go ye, carry corn for the famine of your houses: But bring your youngest brother unto me; so shall your words be verified, and ye shall not die. And they did so."
 - a. Joseph modified his requirement somewhat, and freed nine of them to return home with the food they had come to buy, and only required one to stay behind as a kind of surety. He would not allow his family back home to suffer even though he had the right and power to punish these evil men with imprisonment. He warned those returning home to bring the youngest brother "and ye shall not die."
 - b. "From this appears that the imprisonment of the alleged spies implied also that they were to be executed, a not unlikely sentence in view of the charges under which they had been imprisoned" (Coffman, p.501). The reason Joseph gave for the easing of his requirement was, "For I fear God."
 - c. Verse 27 gives a summary statement: "And they did so." They agreed with the proposal and fulfilled the same.

D. Genesis 42:21-28: The Nine are Sent on Their Way With the Food They Came to Purchase.

1. Verses 21-22: "And they said one to another, We *are* verily guilty concerning our brother, in that we saw the anguish of his soul, when he besought us, and we would not hear; therefore is this distress come upon us. And Reuben answered them, saying, Spake I not unto you, saying, Do not sin against the child; and ye would not hear? therefore, behold, also his blood is required."
 - a. They discussed the proposal among themselves in the presence of Joseph, never thinking that he might understand their language. The things they said had a very strong emotional impact on the governor. They admitted their guilt in their sorry treatment of Joseph twenty years before. They had turned a deaf ear to his pleadings and were unmoved by the anguish of soul he suffered. Because of their evil treatment and unfeeling attitude toward Joseph, they reasoned, this present difficulty has come upon us.
 - b. Then Reuben, the eldest, spoke up to remind them that he had spoken in behalf of Joseph, warning them not to "sin against the child." But they would not take heed. Because they fulfilled their evil plan, "his blood is required." "And surely your blood of your lives will I require; at the hand of every beast will I require it, and at the hand of man; at the hand of every man's brother will I require the life of man. Whoso sheddeth man's blood, by man shall his blood be shed: for in the image of God made he man" (Gen. 9:5-6).
 - c. Joseph had just told them that he feared God; therefore they had reason to think that Joseph would satisfy the divine injunction. "Twenty years had not removed the horrible guilt of those brothers; and, although they had not actually killed their brother, they had little doubt that death had indeed claimed him" (Coffman, p.502).
 - d. From their talk, Joseph learned that Reuben had befriended him, and thus when the hostage was selected, it was the second oldest, Simeon, and not Reuben, who was chosen. Joseph had acted wisely in speaking to them through an interpreter else he might not have learned these details which undoubtedly had an effect on the outcome of the story.
2. Verses 23-24: "And they knew not that Joseph understood *them*; for he spake unto them by an interpreter. And he turned himself about from them, and wept; and returned to them again, and communed with them, and took from them Simeon, and bound him before their eyes."
 - a. They had no reason to suspect their talk had been understood by the governor. And Joseph never suspected he would hear such things from them. He had known them to be evil and hard men; now they were showing signs of penitence.
 - b. That Joseph did not hate his brothers is evident from verse 24. He turned away from them and left the room, and after weeping, returned to them and communed with them. He selected Simeon as the one who was to be held until the rest returned with Benjamin. He had Simeon bound in their presence. This brother was one of the cruelest of the lot:
 - 1) Genesis 34:25: "And it came to pass on the third day, when they were sore, that two of the sons of Jacob, Simeon and Levi, Dinah's brethren, took each man his sword, and came upon the city boldly, and slew all the males."
 - 2) Genesis 49:5-7: "Simeon and Levi *are* brethren; instruments of cruelty *are* in their habitations. O my soul, come not thou into their secret; unto their assembly, mine honour, be not thou united: for in their anger they slew a man, and in their selfwill they digged down a wall. Cursed *be* their anger, for *it was* fierce; and their wrath, for it was cruel: I will divide them in Jacob, and scatter them in Israel."

3. Verses 25-26: "Then Joseph commanded to fill their sacks with corn, and to restore every man's money into his sack, and to give them provision for the way: and thus did he unto them. And they laded their asses with the corn, and departed thence."
 - a. Joseph gave order that the men be given the grain they came to buy, and that every man's money be hidden in the sacks of grain. So they loaded the grain and left.
 - b. "There are two sorts of sacks taken notice of under different names in the history of Joseph, which ought not to be confounded—the one for grain, the other for the baggage and everything in general which a person carries with him for his own use. There are no wagons used almost in all Asia, as far as to India: everything is carried upon beasts of burden in sacks of wool, covered in the middle with leather down to the bottom, the better to make resistance to water, etc. Sacks of this sort are now called Tambellit. They enclose in them their things done up in large parcels. It is of this kind of sacks we are to understand what is said here in the latter clause, and not of the sacks in which they carried their grain (Chardin, quoted in Harmer's 'Observations.' vol. ii., p. 189). The money may have been in bags containing certain sums (cf. 2 Kings 5:23; Isa 46:6; Prov 7:20; Hag 1:6). This private generosity was not an infringement of his duty—a defrauding of the revenue. He would have a discretionary power—he was daily enriching the king's exchequer—and he might have paid the sum from his own purse. They laded their asses with the corn, and departed thence. They probably returned by the same route as they had journeyed into Egypt; and, as the family were living at Hebron, the shortest course was by the way of Beer-sheba or Gaza, through the northern part of the wilderness of Shur. There is no weight in the objection to the historic truth of this narrative, founded on the employment of donkeys. Modern travelers who have passed through this desert have gone on horses and donkeys; and although it is a journey of twelve days, during which the tourists carried their own supplies of water in skin bottles, the latter beasts of burden stood the fatigue well, drinking of the brackish water which the rare wells of the desert furnished. Donkeys, as well as camels, are used in traversing this route; but horses are very unsuitable" [Jamieson, Fausset, and Brown Commentary, Electronic Database. Copyright © 1997 by Biblesoft].
4. Verses 27-28: "And as one of them opened his sack to give his ass provender in the inn, he espied his money; for, behold, it *was* in his sack's mouth. And he said unto his brethren, My money is restored; and, lo, *it is* even in my sack: and their heart failed *them*, and they were afraid, saying one to another, What *is* this *that* God hath done unto us?"
 - a. As they made their journey, which would require several days, they came to a certain place where they camped. We are not told how far from Egypt they were at the time or which of the men discovered his money in the sack. But he needed some feed for his animals, and randomly opening a sack, discovered that his money had been returned. Later, they all discovered that each of them had had his money restored. But this first discovery caused them great consternation.
 - b. The text does not suggest that each man had only one sack and only one ass. If the journey to Egypt was to have any effect on preserving the family, each would have had to have many sacks and thus many animals. Remember that the family of Jacob numbered 66 plus the wives of 9 of the brothers.
 - 1) Genesis 46:26: "All the souls that came with Jacob into Egypt, which came out of his loins, besides Jacob's sons' wives, all the souls *were* threescore and six."
 - 2) Acts 7:14: "Then sent Joseph, and called his father Jacob to *him*, and all his kindred, threescore and fifteen souls."
 - 3) It follows that Benjamin was still unmarried; and Judah's wife was dead. The sixty-six of Genesis 46:26 and the seventy-five of Acts 7:14 are thus reconciled.
 - 4) To this number must be added the many servants and herdsmen of the clan. Thus, a great caravan of animals was needed to supply enough food for all these and for the animals.
 - c. The lodging place is not apt to have been an inn. Keil says the word means "a resting-place, not inn, both here and in Exodus 4:24; for there can hardly have been caravanserais at that time, either in the desert or by the desert road" (p.358).
 - d. Because of the large number of sacks being transported, it was not deemed proper to search all the sacks to see if the other men's money had also been restored.
 - e. Their consternation is justified in view of the rough words Joseph had spoken to his brothers. If he had suspected them of being spies when the evidence indicated otherwise, what would he say to them when he learned that they had not even paid for the grain they obtained! They had no reason to think that the governor would have returned their money. But from Joseph's point of view, he could not take money from

his own kinsmen in order to preserve their lives when it was within his power to give those supplies without charge to them. Joseph's greatness is visible in this.

E. Genesis 42:29-38: The Brethren Report to their Father.

1. Verses 29-34: "And they came unto Jacob their father unto the land of Canaan, and told him all that befell unto them; saying, The man, *who is* the lord of the land, spake roughly to us, and took us for spies of the country. And we said unto him, *We are true men*; we are no spies: *We be* twelve brethren, sons of our father; *one is* not, and the youngest *is* this day with our father in the land of Canaan. And the man, the lord of the country, said unto us, Hereby shall I know that *ye are true men*; leave one of your brethren *here* with me, and take *food for* the famine of your households, and be gone: And bring your youngest brother unto me: then shall I know that *ye are* no spies, but *that ye are true men*: so will I deliver you your brother, and ye shall traffic in the land."
 - a. They gave a full report of their experiences in Egypt to Jacob. "This report covers what the preceding verses record. Joseph is designated as 'the lord' (*adhone*y—plural of potentiality) of the land.' It is rather significant that they omit to tell their father of the disgrace of spending three days in prison. Neither do they inform him that Simeon was left behind bound. That, of course, he discovered himself" (Leupold, p.1057).
 - b. Barnes reports: "They would probably occupy six or seven days on the journey. Apparently at the first stage one opened his sack to give provender to his ass. The discovery of the silver in its mouth strikes them with terror. In a strange land and with an uneasy conscience they are easily alarmed. It was not convenient or necessary to open all the bags on the way, and so they make no further discovery" [Biblesoft].
 2. Verses 35-38: "And it came to pass as they emptied their sacks, that, behold, every man's bundle of money *was* in his sack: and when *both* they and their father saw the bundles of money, they were afraid. And Jacob their father said unto them, *Me have ye bereaved of my children*: Joseph *is* not, and Simeon *is* not, and ye will take Benjamin *away*: all these things are against me. And Reuben spake unto his father, saying, Slay my two sons, if I bring him not to thee: deliver him into my hand, and I will bring him to thee again. And he said, My son shall not go down with you; for his brother is dead, and he is left alone: if mischief befell him by the way in the which ye go, then shall ye bring down my gray hairs with sorrow to the grave."
 - a. As they emptied their sacks, they each discovered that their money had all been restored. This caused great fear among them all. Jacob lays the blame for these problems on the ten, and rightly so for had they not sold Joseph, the problem would have been non-existent. However, these circumstances, good and bad, were used by God to bring about the fruition of his plan and promise: he was going to build a great, powerful nation from Abraham's seed; to weld them together it was necessary for them to undergo some severe adversity; he therefore predicted that they would spend 400 years in bondage: "And he said unto Abram, Know of a surety that thy seed shall be a stranger in a land *that is* not theirs, and shall serve them; and they shall afflict them four hundred years; *14* And also that nation, whom they shall serve, will I judge: and afterward shall they come out with great substance" (Gen. 15:13-14).
 - b. It was necessary for God to preserve them through the present famine; he sent Joseph into Egypt ahead of the family to pave the way for them to enter the land of their future affliction, and to have their lives preserved from the current dearth.
 - c. Reuben showed his honesty and sincerity by offering his two sons for Jacob to slay if anything befell Benjamin if they could only take him with him on their next trip. But it was a foolhardy suggestion, for what man would kill his own grandchildren?
 - d. Jacob foresaw the darkest potential. He thought everything was working against him, but God was working them out for his good! His faith turns to fear for a while; he is not considering the sanctity of God's promise to Abraham and Isaac, and renewed to himself. But he can only see his last days, should Benjamin die, will be in terrible grief. He was torturing himself for no reason; he should have trusted God more!
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GENESIS 43

A. Introduction.

1. Jacob had earlier firmly stated that he would not allow his youngest son to venture into Egypt with his older brothers lest some evil befall him as with Joseph and Simeon. But under the harsh reality of the famine, he was compelled to consent to Benjamin's accompanying them, after Judah made his impassioned appeal. The patriarch tried to make the best possible preparation for a successful journey by sending a gift to the great one in Egypt. He also ordered that the money that had been returned by Joseph be carried back.
2. "That we are dealing with hard historical facts in this narrative is evident from the wealth of detail concerning social, political, cultural, and economic conditions mentioned here which are corroborated absolutely by the archeological findings of the present century....The details of Joseph's elevation to viceroy of Egypt is exactly how Egyptian artists depicted this ceremony. The ring, the costly vestments, the gold chain, even the second chariot have been found on murals and reliefs. 'There is even a spot on the Nile river that bears the name of Joseph!'" (Coffman, p.507).

B. Genesis 43:1-14: Jacob is Persuaded to Allow Benjamin to go with his Brothers.

1. Verses 1-2: "And the famine *was* sore in the land. And it came to pass, when they had eaten up the corn which they had brought out of Egypt, their father said unto them, Go again, buy us a little food."
 - a. The famine continued to afflict the land, and since the grain the brothers had brought from Egypt had been consumed, Jacob directs them to return for more. Genesis 45:6 shows it was during the second year of the famine that this second journey was made, and that five more years of the dearth remained. God's purposes in all these events were perhaps many and complex.
 - b. One of the things accomplished was a lesson to Jacob that he must rely on God, for all the devices men may employ are weak and often ineffective. Jacob saw only the problems and difficulties; he did not discern the providential hand of God in these heartaches and hardships. Jacob asked his sons to return to Egypt and "buy us a little corn" (little in terms of their actual need).
2. Verses 3-5: "And Judah spake unto him, saying, The man did solemnly protest unto us, saying, Ye shall not see my face, except your brother *be* with you. If thou wilt send our brother with us, we will go down and buy thee food: But if thou wilt not send *him*, we will not go down: for the man said unto us, Ye shall not see my face, except your brother *be* with you."
 - a. Judah now becomes the spokesman for the brothers. Reuben's offer of his own two sons had already been rejected by Jacob: "And Reuben spake unto his father, saying, Slay my two sons, if I bring him not to thee: deliver him into my hand, and I will bring him to thee again. And he said, My son shall not go down with you; for his brother is dead, and he is left alone: if mischief befall him by the way in the which ye go, then shall ye bring down my gray hairs with sorrow to the grave" (Gen. 42:37-38).
 - 1) He had also incurred his father's displeasure by his incest: "And it came to pass, when Israel dwelt in that land, that Reuben went and lay with Bilhah his father's concubine: and Israel heard *it*. Now the sons of Jacob were twelve" (Gen. 35:22).
 - 2) Simeon was imprisoned in Egypt, and Levi was known as a cruel man: "And it came to pass on the third day, when they were sore, that two of the sons of Jacob, Simeon and Levi, Dinah's brethren, took each man his sword, and came upon the city boldly, and slew all the males" (Gen. 34:25).
 - b. Judah, the oldest after Reuben, Simeon, and Levi, now speaks for the rest. He reminded his father that "the man" (the great one whose voice was the final authority), who had spoken roughly to them, had solemnly declared that they would see his face no more unless Benjamin was with them. If they could not "see his face," there would be no food sold to them; and without that food, they would all soon perish. Hence, Judah pleaded with his father to send Benjamin, otherwise they would not go, for it would be a fruitless effort. He helps his father to reach a difficult but inevitable decision.
3. Verses 6-7: "And Israel said, Wherefore dealt ye *so* ill with me, *as* to tell the man whether ye had yet a brother? And they said, The man asked us straitly of our state, and of our kindred, saying, *Is* your father yet alive? have ye *another* brother? and we told him according to the tenor of these words: could we certainly know that he would say, Bring your brother down?"
 - a. Israel asked why it was that they had dealt so ill with him as to tell "the man" about their youngest brother. They replied that the man had inquired and that they gave him an open and honest answer, never thinking that he would make such a demand of them.

- b. Genesis 44:19 "confirms the correctness of this seventh verse. Consequently 42:13 is more in the nature of an inexact account such as all men frequently give before the issues are clearly defined. For, without a doubt, much more was said in the course of the conversation than the few words recorded, which in a summary way indicate the major points touched upon" (Leupold, p.1063).
4. Verses 8-10: "And Judah said unto Israel his father, Send the lad with me, and we will arise and go; that we may live, and not die, both we, and thou, *and* also our little ones. I will be surety for him; of my hand shalt thou require him: if I bring him not unto thee, and set him before thee, then let me bear the blame for ever: For except we had lingered, surely now we had returned this second time."
- a. Judah continued his appeal that Benjamin be sent, stating that unless he accompanied them, they would all die from the famine anyway, thus implying Jacob's fear of harm befalling Benjamin was secondary. He then offered himself as a surety for the safe return of Benjamin.
- b. If they had not delayed, Judah says they could have already obtained food. The margin and some scholars state that the phrase means they could have made two trips to Egypt in the time they had waited since their first trip.
- c. Benjamin was probably in his early twenties at this time.
5. Verses 11-13: "And their father Israel said unto them, If *it must be* so now, do this; take of the best fruits in the land in your vessels, and carry down the man a present, a little balm, and a little honey, spices, and myrrh, nuts, and almonds: And take double money in your hand; and the money that was brought again in the mouth of your sacks, carry *it* again in your hand; peradventure it *was* an oversight: Take also your brother, and arise, go again unto the man:"
- a. Jacob saw the wisdom behind Judah's argument and consented to let his youngest son go. Having made this decision, he resolved to make the best of the effort by instructing his sons to take along a gift to "the man"—balm, honey, spices, and myrrh, nuts, and almonds; plus the money which they found in their sacks and enough extra money for new purchases of food.
- b. Balm—an aromatic gum resin obtained from certain trees or plants; used medicinally and as a scent: "*Is there* no balm in Gilead; *is there* no physician there? why then is not the health of the daughter of my people recovered?" (Jer. 8:22). It is also called balsam.
- c. Myrrh—a valuable ointment used in ancient purification rites (Esth. 2:12), as a perfume (Ps. 14:8; Prov. 7:17); it was a gift brought to the infant Jesus (Mt. 2:11). Both myrrh and balm were used in embalming.
- d. Honey—Some scholars think this might have been "grape honey, boiled down from fresh grape juice to the consistency of syrup, a product of which Delitzsch reported that 300 camels' burden of it still was being exported annually to Egypt from Hebron in his day" (Leupold, pp.1065f). The most likely understanding, however, is bee honey which abounded in Canaan, a land that flowed with milk and honey.
6. Verse 14: "And God Almighty give you mercy before the man, that he may send away your other brother, and Benjamin. If I be bereaved *of my children*, I am bereaved."
- a. Jacob was content now to place everything else in the hands of God. He had done all he could do, that he knew to do. The name he applies to God is "El Shadday," which he had used of himself to Abraham in Genesis 17:1: "And when Abram was ninety years old and nine, the LORD appeared to Abram, and said unto him, *I am* the Almighty God; walk before me, and be thou perfect."
- b. The term suggests the great power of God. Jacob had earlier thought that everything was going against him (42:36), but actually everything was going according to God's plan. God had not lost control. Now Jacob is willing to place his trust unconditionally in the Lord.
- 1) 2 Kings 7:4: "If we say, We will enter into the city, then the famine *is* in the city, and we shall die there: and if we sit still here, we die also. Now therefore come, and let us fall unto the host of the Syrians: if they save us alive, we shall live; and if they kill us, we shall but die."
- 2) Esther 4:14-16: "For if thou altogether holdest thy peace at this time, *then* shall there enlargement and deliverance arise to the Jews from another place; but thou and thy father's house shall be destroyed: and who knoweth whether thou art come to the kingdom for *such* a time as this? Then Esther bade *them* return Mordecai *this answer*, Go, gather together all the Jews that are present in Shushan, and fast ye for me, and neither eat nor drink three days, night or day: I also and my maidens will fast likewise; and so will I go in unto the king, which *is* not according to the law: and if I perish, I perish."
- C. Genesis 43:15-25: The Brothers Return to Egypt.
1. Verses 15-17: "And the men took that present, and they took double money in their hand, and Benjamin; and rose up, and went down to Egypt, and stood before Joseph. And when Joseph saw Benjamin with them, he said

to the ruler of his house, Bring *these* men home, and slay, and make ready; for *these* men shall dine with me at noon. And the man did as Joseph bade; and the man brought the men into Joseph's house."

- a. They took the gift and Benjamin with them, made their journey without incident and came before Joseph again.
 - b. When Joseph saw Benjamin, he told his steward to take these men to his house and have a meal prepared, for they would eat with him at noon. The man did as his master directed.
2. Verse 18: "And the men were afraid, because they were brought into Joseph's house; and they said, Because of the money that was returned in our sacks at the first time are we brought in; that he may seek occasion against us, and fall upon us, and take us for bondmen, and our asses."
- a. "The fear of the brothers is understandable enough. Joseph, the Chief Deputy of the all-powerful Pharaoh was supreme in Egypt, no doubt living in a place befitting his rank and authority. That these travelers from the land of Canaan were invited into such a place was no doubt an occasion for the most dreadful apprehension and fear" (Coffman, p.512).
 - b. He had treated them roughly before and now invited them to his palace! Nothing good could come from this invitation (they thought).
3. Verses 19-23: "And they came near to the steward of Joseph's house, and they communed with him at the door of the house, And said, O sir, we came indeed down at the first time to buy food: And it came to pass, when we came to the inn, that we opened our sacks, and, behold, *every* man's money *was* in the mouth of his sack, our money in full weight: and we have brought it again in our hand. And other money have we brought down in our hands to buy food: we cannot tell who put our money in our sacks. And he said, Peace *be* to you, fear not: your God, and the God of your father, hath given you treasure in your sacks: I had your money. And he brought Simeon out unto them."
- a. As they were about to enter the house, they spoke to the steward to explain about the returned money, and how and when they had discovered it. By this they sought to avert any plan for their hurt the governor might have concocted. The steward gave them assurance, by saying that their money came into his hand, and by reuniting them with Simeon. His statement that he had their money is a bit misleading, but he was living in a dark and ignorant time before the great principles of the gospel were given.
 - b. We do not know whether he was a believer in the God of Abraham, but he accounted for the money by saying that God had given it as a treasure to them. These men were being completely honest in their report. The steward was no doubt acquainted with the situation enough to know that they were truthful, although he did not know about his master's past.
4. Verses 24-25: "And the man brought the men into Joseph's house, and gave *them* water, and they washed their feet; and he gave their asses provender. And they made ready the present against Joseph came at noon: for they heard that they should eat bread there."
- a. Having put their minds at ease about the matter of the money, and having freed Simeon, he brought them into Joseph's house, gave them water to wash their feet, and had their animals fed.
 - b. The brothers then made ready their gift to present to Joseph at his arrival for the noon meal.

D. Genesis 43:26-34: Joseph Eats with his Brethren.

1. Verse 26: "And when Joseph came home, they brought him the present which *was* in their hand into the house, and bowed themselves to him to the earth."
 - a. At his arrival, the brothers bow before him again, and present their gift to him. We are not told how Joseph received the gift; apparently he showed little notice to it as his exalted status would require.
 - b. His boyhood dreams are again fulfilled by their bowing before him.
2. Verses 27-28: "And he asked them of *their* welfare, and said, *Is* your father well, the old man of whom ye spake? *Is* he yet alive? And they answered, Thy servant our father *is* in good health, he *is* yet alive. And they bowed down their heads, and made obeisance."
- a. He now made inquiry, in a casual manner, about their welfare and about their father, "the old man of whom ye spake."
 - b. He was intensely interested in his father's welfare and if he still lived. They told him that Jacob was still in good health, and again bowed before Joseph.
3. Verses 29-30: "And he lifted up his eyes, and saw his brother Benjamin, his mother's son, and said, *Is* this your younger brother, of whom ye spake unto me? And he said, God be gracious unto thee, my son. And Joseph made haste; for his bowels did yearn upon his brother: and he sought *where* to weep; and he entered into *his* chamber, and wept there."
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- a. Joseph then looked at Benjamin, his only full brother, and asked if this was the younger brother they had mentioned. Not waiting for an answer, he said to Benjamin, "God be gracious unto thee, my son."
 - b. Remember that he still spoke to them through an interpreter. Emotion welled up so strongly within him that he left the room in haste and went into his private chambers to weep. Until now his self-control was excellent.
4. Verses 31-34: "And he washed his face, and went out, and refrained himself, and said, Set on bread. And they set on for him by himself, and for them by themselves, and for the Egyptians, which did eat with him, by themselves: because the Egyptians might not eat bread with the Hebrews; for that *is* an abomination unto the Egyptians. And they sat before him, the firstborn according to his birthright, and the youngest according to his youth: and the men marvelled one at another. And he took *and sent* messes unto them from before him: but Benjamin's mess was five times so much as any of theirs. And they drank, and were merry with him."
- a. After washing his face and composing himself, Joseph returned and directed his servants to serve the meal. Joseph ate alone, the Egyptians with him at another table, and the brothers ate by themselves. They were amazed when they were seated according to their ages.
 - b. Joseph gave Benjamin five times as much as the other ten were given.
 - c. The last sentence does not mean that they became drunk, but that their hunger and thirst were completely satisfied.
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GENESIS 44

A. Introduction.

1. "The importance of this chapter lies in the narrative of Judah's offering of himself as a substitute for Benjamin, in which he made an impassioned plea to Joseph on behalf of his brother and his father....'It is the finest specimen of dignified and persuasive eloquence in the OT'" (Coffman, p.517).
2. "To appreciate this supernatural quality of the narrative, one should read the tedious, belabored report of the same episode in the works of Josephus. The Bible bears its own imprimatur as *the word of God*" (ibid., p.518).

B. Genesis 44:1-5: Joseph Sends his Brothers Home with Food and Returns their Money.

1. Verses 1-2: "And he commanded the steward of his house, saying, Fill the men's sacks *with* food, as much as they can carry, and put every man's money in his sack's mouth. And put my cup, the silver cup, in the sack's mouth of the youngest, and his corn money. And he did according to the word that Joseph had spoken."
 - a. Joseph instructs his steward to fill their sacks with as much grain as they can carry, and secretly to return their money. Further, in a move that has puzzled Bible scholars through the centuries, he told him to place his special, silver cup in the sack that pertained to Benjamin.
 - b. One reason that he did so was to make this a test for his brothers. The ten had treated Joseph wickedly, and he wanted to see what their attitude toward his full brother was. He had earlier put their honesty to a test, which they passed, when he returned their money. The episode of the silver cup would determine whether they would abandon the youngest to a life in Egyptian bondage. It would also show whether they were concerned about their father. But it does not seem likely that Joseph would have used such an elaborate ruse in demanding that they bring Benjamin on their next trip to Egypt if he only wanted to test their love for their youngest brother.
 - c. McGarvey, one of the best Bible scholars of all time, suggested that Joseph desired to have his only full brother at his side, to enjoy the full benefits of his own exalted status in Egypt. This view explains why he demanded that the brothers bring Benjamin with them when they returned for more grain.
2. Verses 3-5: "As soon as the morning was light, the men were sent away, they and their asses. *And* when they were gone out of the city, *and* not *yet* far off, Joseph said unto his steward, Up, follow after the men; and when thou dost overtake them, say unto them, Wherefore have ye rewarded evil for good? *Is* not this *it* in which my lord drinketh, and whereby indeed he divineth? ye have done evil in so doing."
 - a. The eleven brothers were sent on their way as soon as it was light. They would naturally be in the best of spirits as they began their journey homeward: they had had the honor of eating at the house of the great man of Egypt; they had been reunited with Simeon; they had not met with any difficulty in the matter of the returned money; they had been able to obtain plenty of food to take home; and nothing evil had befallen their brother Benjamin. Their fortune would appear to be on the rise. Unbeknownst to them, Joseph was instructing his steward to pursue after them, and demand why they had stolen his silver cup. One of the points he was to bring up to them regarding the cup was that it was the means by which Joseph could "divine."
 - b. "Practicing divination is a heathen custom. The type referred to here is cup-divination....As far as the practice is concerned, it is said to have been used in several forms. Some poured clear water into a bowl or a cup and then strewed into the water small pieces or particles of gold and of silver or even precious stones. Some poured oil into the water. Still others observed the manner in which light rays broke on the surface. Usually the resulting designs to be observed in the water, whether from the particles thrown into it or from the oil, were construed after certain rules in order to draw conclusions as to the future. Surely, if Joseph had imitated these customs, he would have been guilty of heathenish and sinful practices. Or does he merely feign that he uses them? Such feigning would have been a form of deception both here and in v. 15" (Leupold, p.1081).
 - c. Joseph would have been more apt to use this as a mere ruse to convince the brothers that they could not trick him. Remember that this was a time before God had given any of the written word; and the great principles of the gospel had not yet been revealed: "And the times of this ignorance God winked at; but now commandeth all men every where to repent" (Acts 17:30).

C. Genesis 44:6-13: The "Stolen" Cup is Found in Benjamin's Sack.

1. Verse 6-9: "And he overtook them, and he spake unto them these same words. And they said unto him, Wherefore saith my lord these words? God forbid that thy servants should do according to this thing: Behold, the money, which we found in our sacks' mouths, we brought again unto thee out of the land of Canaan: how

then should we steal out of thy lord's house silver or gold? With whomsoever of thy servants it be found, both let him die, and we also will be my lord's bondmen."

- a. The steward overtook the caravan and spoke as Joseph had directed. Being completely innocent of any wrongdoing in this particular, they expressed incredulity and dismay at the charge of stealing the cup. They offered a strong argument in their own defense by reminding the steward that they had returned the money which had been found in their sacks after they had returned to Canaan from the first trip.
 - b. Since they were honest in that transaction, they should be trusted in the matter of the silver cup. They were so sure that the cup would not be found in their possession, an extravagant offer was made: the guilty party would be slain and the rest would become servants.
2. Verse 10: "And he said, Now also *let it be* according unto your words: he with whom it is found shall be my servant; and ye shall be blameless."
- a. The steward apparently understood Joseph's plan, and agreed to part of the proposal the brothers had made.
 - b. No one would die, but the one having the cup would become a servant but the rest of the company would be blameless.
3. Verses 11-13: "Then they speedily took down every man his sack to the ground, and opened every man his sack. And he searched, *and* began at the eldest, and left at the youngest: and the cup was found in Benjamin's sack. Then they rent their clothes, and laded every man his ass, and returned to the city."
- a. They quickly unloaded the sacks and exposed the contents. The sacks removed would be the ones personally carried by the brothers; the entire cargo of food would be very large, sufficient to feed many people and animals for an extended period of time. Possibly each man had a sack which he carried for personal use on the journey. A search of the sacks was made, from the oldest to the youngest, and the cup was of course found in Benjamin's possession. The steward knew all along where the cup was, but went through the motions of a serious search.
 - b. The brothers were now faced with a most severe test: they could abandon Benjamin to Egyptian slavery, and thus preserve their own freedom and ignore the evil impact this would have on their father; or they could return to Egypt to plead for their young brother. If this was designed as a test of their character, they surely passed it! If this was a ruse by which Joseph sought to bring his brother into Egypt to enjoy the fruits of his success, it was working well. It is likely that Joseph intended to accomplish both results.
 - c. They rent their clothes (a sign of extreme dismay), reloaded their supplies, and returned to the city. We are not told which city this was. Notice that they did not rebuke Benjamin; perhaps they thought he was guilty.

D. Genesis 44:14-17: The Brethren Stand Before Joseph in Defense of Benjamin.

1. Verse 14-15: "And Judah and his brethren came to Joseph's house; for he *was* yet there: and they fell before him on the ground. And Joseph said unto them, What deed *is* this that ye have done? wot ye not that such a man as I can certainly divine?"
 - a. They returned to Joseph's house and fell before him again. In anticipation of their return, Joseph stayed at his house.
 - b. Joseph (obviously still speaking through an interpreter) demanded why they had done what they did. Of course he knew they were innocent, but he had to go through the motions of a trial. He pointed out that they should have known that such a man as he was could "divine." Again, this was still part of the plan he was executing.
 2. Verse 16: "And Judah said, What shall we say unto my lord? what shall we speak? or how shall we clear ourselves? God hath found out the iniquity of thy servants: behold, we *are* my lord's servants, both we, and *he* also with whom the cup is found."
 - a. They threw themselves on the mercy of Joseph. They asked, "What can we say, or how can we clear ourselves?" Judah is the spokesman, and he shows their helplessness in the face of the evidence. Judah is thinking of the guilt they had been bearing for more than twenty years in the case of the evil they had done to their brother Joseph. This is the cause of his statement, "God hath found out the iniquity of thy servants." He did not spell out the details of this iniquity, but Joseph could know what was meant.
 - b. Judah knew that divine retribution was being exacted. "Judah by this could not have meant that they were in any manner guilty as charged with reference to the cup. The thing that had haunted the guilty brothers for twenty years was their sinful, unmerciful hatred of their brother Joseph; and time had in no manner healed their guilty hearts. Their wicked act still seared and burned in their souls; and, therefore, in the present disaster, Judah confessed their guilt (in principle) and accepted the horrible penalty threatening them even as the penitent thief on Calvary had done, 'as the just reward of our deeds!' This was a plateau of spiritual perception far above anything that Joseph could have expected of his brothers" (Coffman, pp.521f).
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- c. Thus did Judah throw himself and his brothers on the mercy of this great man, and stood ready to accept whatever fate he chose to impose on them.
3. Joseph, calling attention to his faith in God, stated that he would not punish any innocent people: only the man who had the cup would become his servant; the rest could return to their father. Again, they could have abandoned their brother but would not!

E. Genesis 44:18-34: Judah's Impassioned Plea in Behalf of Benjamin and Jacob.

1. "The plea which Judah made on behalf of Benjamin is one of the most arresting speeches on record; and it is as ingenious as it is pathetic" (ALC, 1959, p.264). Judah's plea is a masterpiece; it is simple and direct; it appeals to all but the hard of heart. It contained some revelations to Joseph which, together with the heart-touching plea, melted Joseph's resolve, and lead directly to his identifying himself to his brothers. The tender plea came from the lips of him who had acted so cruelly in selling Joseph and in deceiving Jacob about the fate of his favorite son.
2. Verses 18-23: "Then Judah came near unto him, and said, Oh my lord, let thy servant, I pray thee, speak a word in my lord's ears, and let not thine anger burn against thy servant: for thou *art* even as Pharaoh. My lord asked his servants, saying, Have ye a father, or a brother? And we said unto my lord, We have a father, an old man, and a child of his old age, a little one; and his brother is dead, and he alone is left of his mother, and his father loveth him. And thou saidst unto thy servants, Bring him down unto me, that I may set mine eyes upon him. And we said unto my lord, The lad cannot leave his father: for *if* he should leave his father, *his father* would die. And thou saidst unto thy servants, Except your youngest brother come down with you, ye shall see my face no more."
- a. "Beginning with the request for a gracious hearing, as he was speaking to the ears of one who was equal to Pharaoh (who could condemn or pardon like the king), Judah depicted in natural, affecting, powerful, and irresistible words the love of their aged father to this son of his old age, and his grief when they told him that they were not to come into the presence of the lord of Egypt again without Benjamin..." (Keil, p.364).
- b. It is not clear whether Judah spoke so privately with Joseph as to be heard only by him, or whether he was simply asking for the privilege of making his appeal to this great man who was equal to Pharaoh in power to punish or pardon. It is likely that all the eleven approached Joseph as Judah made his appeal.
- c. Judah reminded Joseph that when they had first come to Egypt, he had asked them about their father and if they had another brother. He stated that they had told him of their aged father and the youngest son, and of the other son who was now dead (so they presumed). When Joseph had told them to bring the brother with them, they had pleaded with him saying that it would break their father's heart if any evil befell this lad. Joseph had insisted on their bringing the young man if they wanted more food.
3. Verses 24-29: "And it came to pass when we came up unto thy servant my father, we told him the words of my lord. And our father said, Go again, *and* buy us a little food. And we said, We cannot go down: if our youngest brother be with us, then will we go down: for we may not see the man's face, except our youngest brother *be* with us. And thy servant my father said unto us, Ye know that my wife bare me two *sons*: And the one went out from me, and I said, Surely he is torn in pieces; and I saw him not since: And if ye take this also from me, and mischief befall him, ye shall bring down my gray hairs with sorrow to the grave."
- a. Judah continued his appeal by telling Joseph their father's reaction to the need for Benjamin to accompany them when they returned for more food. When Jacob had told them to go again to Egypt, they reminded their father that Benjamin must go also. He quoted Jacob's words: "Ye know that my wife bare me two sons: and the one went out from me, and I said, 'Surely he is torn in pieces; and I saw him not since: and if ye take this also from me...ye shall bring down my gray hairs with sorrow to the grave.'"
- b. "It is well to note the difference in Judah's phraseology when talking to Joseph. He told his father that they would 'not go down,' if Benjamin did not accompany them; but when he was talking to Joseph, he said that he told his father that 'we cannot go down'" (ALC, 1959, p.265).
- c. It appears that Joseph had been carrying the wrong idea about his father through the years. Knowing about Abraham's rescue of Lot (Gen. 14), Joseph would naturally think he would be rescued by his father. In his youthful inexperience, he would not expect his father would think him dead; surely he would find out from the other sons what had happened, and on discovering the truth, would dispatch men to set him free. The caravan roads leading to Egypt would pass within a few miles of the family's dwelling place. But after years passed, Joseph would get the idea that his father did not care enough about him to attempt a rescue; hence, he expressed gratitude that God had helped him to forget his father's house (41:51). So this statement (44:27-28) was a revelation to Joseph: his father had not rescued him because he thought him dead!

- d. "He learned that Jacob was under the impression that Joseph was dead; and inasmuch as Joseph and Benjamin were the only sons of his favorite wife Rachel, he was entirely unwilling to allow any chance to be taken regarding the safety and welfare of Benjamin" (ALC, 1959, p.265).
 - e. From Judah's comments Joseph learned the real and abiding love Jacob still felt for Joseph and Benjamin. He still grieved for Joseph, and to lose Benjamin would be more than he could bear.
 - f. "Ye shall bring down my gray hairs with sorrow to the grave." The word translated "grave" is "Sheol," which is equivalent to the New Testament word "hades." Reference is not to the tomb in which his body would rest, but to the afterworld, "the unseen state" (Young's Concordance, p.432).
4. Verses 30-34: "Now therefore when I come to thy servant my father, and the lad *be* not with us; seeing that his life is bound up in the lad's life; It shall come to pass, when he seeth that the lad *is* not *with us*, that he will die: and thy servants shall bring down the gray hairs of thy servant our father with sorrow to the grave. For thy servant became surety for the lad unto my father, saying, If I bring him not unto thee, then I shall bear the blame to my father for ever. Now therefore, I pray thee, let thy servant abide instead of the lad a bondman to my lord; and let the lad go up with his brethren. For how shall I go up to my father, and the lad *be* not with me? lest peradventure I see the evil that shall come on my father."
- a. "This must have been another great revelation to Joseph, since it was Judah himself who took the lead in selling Joseph into slavery. Judah, along with his nine other brothers, had seen the grief of Jacob for Joseph and they had been compelled to live with an accusing conscience for twenty years; and now, if another blow comes to their father, his grief will be unbearable, and he will therefore die. The brothers were not prepared for Jacob's reaction regarding Joseph; but now, after the years of experience they are fully aware of that which they may expect if Benjamin is retained in Egypt" (ALC, 1959, pp.265f).
 - b. "The hard-hearted Judah, who was willing to sell his brother into bondage, and then lie to his father about it and lead him to think that he had been killed; and further, to allow the father to continue his grief for twenty years with no hope of finding the lost boy, although he was only about two hundred miles away:—this is the man now before us who prefers bondage himself than to see further grief come to his father. There is nothing like the discipline of life to bring out and deepen character; and Judah knew what it meant to drink from its cup even to the bitterest dregs; but he did not drink in vain" (ibid., p.266).
 - c. A great lesson growing out of this episode is that God does not choose people for what they are, but for what he can make them to become. Judah offers himself in Benjamin's place. What a marvelous change! It appears that the tragic events of chapter 38 had already occurred. Judah had tasted the bitter drink of divine retribution; he had grown spiritually; he was fit to become the head of the tribe through which Christ would come.
- 1) Hebrews 12:7-12: "If ye endure chastening, God dealeth with you as with sons; for what son is he whom the father chasteneth not? But if ye be without chastisement, whereof all are partakers, then are ye bastards, and not sons. Furthermore we have had fathers of our flesh which corrected *us*, and we gave *them* reverence: shall we not much rather be in subjection unto the Father of spirits, and live? For they verily for a few days chastened *us* after their own pleasure; but he for *our* profit, that *we* might be partakers of his holiness. Now no chastening for the present seemeth to be joyous, but grievous: nevertheless afterward it yieldeth the peaceable fruit of righteousness unto them which are exercised thereby. Wherefore lift up the hands which hang down, and the feeble knees."
 - 2) Hebrews 7:14: "For *it is* evident that our Lord sprang out of Juda; of which tribe Moses spake nothing concerning priesthood."
 - 3) Revelation 5:5: "And one of the elders saith unto me, Weep not: behold, the Lion of the tribe of Juda, the Root of David, hath prevailed to open the book, and to loose the seven seals thereof."
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GENESIS 45

A. Genesis 45:1-4: Joseph Reveals His Identity to His Brothers.

1. Verse 1: "Then Joseph could not refrain himself before all them that stood by him; and he cried, Cause every man to go out from me. And there stood no man with him, while Joseph made himself known unto his brethren."
 - a. On hearing the touching speech by his brother Judah, perhaps even before the interpreter could give the translation, Joseph commanded everyone to leave the room except his eleven brothers. He wanted the proper privacy so that he could give rein to his emotions and make himself known to his brethren.
 - b. "Our deeper emotions are not to be displayed before the general public. What is sacred to a family group may only be an object of curiosity or of amusement to those outside the group" (Leupold, p.1091).
 - c. His orders were followed; only he and his brothers remained in the room. Hence, he now began to speak directly with them in his native tongue.
 2. Verse 2: "And he wept aloud: and the Egyptians and the house of Pharaoh heard."
 - a. He wept aloud (margin, "gave forth his voice in weeping"—cf. Numbers 14:1). "The effect which Judah's plea produced on Joseph was overwhelming, but we must not lose sight of what it was about the speech which brought about such great results. The speech itself was a masterpiece, considered from any point of view, and its eloquence approached the sublime; but when all the facts are carefully brought into focus, it will have to be admitted that the thing about it which affected Joseph most was the truth which he had learned about his father, his brethren, and the purpose of God. Joseph had evidently misjudged all of these, and that apparently had greatly affected his whole attitude, but when the truth dawned upon him, the fires of his old love for his family returned, and it was utterly impossible for him to contain himself" (ALC, 1959, p.269).
 - b. Only inspiration could give such a record of human emotion. The house of Pharaoh heard. The king's palace was either in close proximity to the house of Joseph, or else a message was quickly delivered to Pharaoh regarding the transaction going on at Joseph's house. Verse sixteen shows it must have been the latter. Only the twelve brothers were in the room, but the other Egyptians would be close at hand and likely could overhear.
 3. Verse 3: "And Joseph said unto his brethren, I *am* Joseph; doth my father yet live? And his brethren could not answer him; for they were troubled at his presence."
 - a. When all had gone forth from the room, he simply stated to his brothers, "I am Joseph." He immediately asked whether his father was yet alive. He had already heard about his father. "Before he had asked as a stranger; now he asks as a brother, expecting such an account as one brother might give to another. Besides, as has been repeatedly pointed out, Joseph softens the harshness of the startling announcement, 'I am Joseph,' by an eager, friendly inquiry about his father" (Leupold, p.1091).
 - b. His brethren were so shocked at this revelation that they could not even speak. This will be the speechless terror that shall overwhelm the wicked in the Judgment.
 - c. We can appreciate their shock for they had surmised that Joseph was likely dead now, after more than twenty years had passed. There was not an inkling on their part that this great man before whom they stood could be Joseph. They were so troubled by this information that Joseph had to repeat it in the next verse.
 - d. The word "troubled" means "trembling, terrified" (Leupold). They had already been exposed to the rough treatment and words of which the great ruler was capable; now understanding him to be their brother whom they had treated even more harshly, and knowing the great power he now possessed, they could only anticipate vengeance.
 4. Verse 4: "And Joseph said unto his brethren, Come near to me, I pray you. And they came near. And he said, I *am* Joseph your brother, whom ye sold into Egypt."
 - a. Joseph showed only sincere friendliness; he bade them approach him. They meekly obeyed. He repeated his former statement, adding that he was their brother and that they had sold him into slavery.
 - b. This would surely prove to them he was really Joseph for perhaps no one besides the ten and Joseph himself knew how he came to be in Egypt.
 - c. "He very abruptly (as one uneasy till it was out) tells them who he was: I am Joseph. They knew him only by his Egyptian name, Zaphnath-paaneah, his Hebrew name being lost and forgotten in Egypt; but now he teaches them to call him by that: I am Joseph; nay, that they might not suspect it was another of the same name, he explains himself (v. 4): I am Joseph, your brother. This would both humble them yet more for their
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sin in selling him, and would encourage them to hope for kind treatment. Thus when Christ would convince Paul he said, I am Jesus; and when he would comfort his disciples he said, It is I, be not afraid. This word, at first, startled Joseph's brethren; they started back through fear, or at least stood still astonished; but Joseph called kindly and familiarly to them: Come near, I pray you. Thus when Christ manifests himself to his people he encourages them to draw near to him with a true heart. Perhaps, being about to speak of their selling him, he would not speak aloud, lest the Egyptians should overhear, and it should make the Hebrews to be yet more an abomination to them; therefore he would have them come near, that he might whisper with them, which, now that the tide of his passion was a little over, he was able to do, whereas at first he could not but cry out" [Matthew Henry's Commentary on the Whole Bible: New Modern Edition, Electronic Database. Copyright © 1991 by Hendrickson Publishers, Inc.].

B. Genesis 45:5-8: Joseph Reassures his Brethren that they had Nothing to Fear from Him.

1. Verse 5: "Now therefore be not grieved, nor angry with yourselves, that ye sold me hither: for God did send me before you to preserve life."
 - a. The words of Joseph made it clear to them that he was intending no retribution. He assures them that they have no cause to be angry with themselves for their having wronged their innocent brother those many years ago; in fact, he states, their selling him into slavery was used by God as the means for preserving life.
 - b. Primarily, the lives of Jacob's posterity, but the Egyptians and others were greatly benefitted by what Joseph did in storing up sufficient food from the prosperous years. God's people are a source of immeasurable blessings to those around them.
 - 1) Matthew 5:13-16: "Ye are the salt of the earth: but if the salt have lost his savour, wherewith shall it be salted? it is thenceforth good for nothing, but to be cast out, and to be trodden under foot of men. Ye are the light of the world. A city that is set on an hill cannot be hid. Neither do men light a candle, and put it under a bushel, but on a candlestick; and it giveth light unto all that are in the house. Let your light so shine before men, that they may see your good works, and glorify your Father which is in heaven."
 - 2) Philippians 2:15-16: "That ye may be blameless and harmless, the sons of God, without rebuke, in the midst of a crooked and perverse nation, among whom ye shine as lights in the world; Holding forth the word of life; that I may rejoice in the day of Christ, that I have not run in vain, neither laboured in vain."
 - c. Joseph now sees for the first time that God's providential hand had been behind the scenes, guiding the affairs as they developed. A lesser man in his position might have thought that his exaltation was due to his own strength and talent. Joseph knew better. Without God's power, Joseph would have lived out his life and died as a lowly slave. One of the greatest dangers of success is the prideful thought that our greatness in position or wealth is due to our own doings.
 - d. Esther became queen in Persia, not because of her own efforts and worth, but because God needed someone in a position of influence. He enabled her to become queen in Persia. There was no reason for either Joseph or Esther to exult in their exalted station, but rather to realize how marvelous is God's power, and how little indeed was their own! A proud man is truly a blind man.
2. Verse 6: "For these two years *hath* the famine *been* in the land: and yet *there are* five years, in the which *there shall* neither *be* earing nor harvest."
 - a. He reveals to the brethren that while two years of famine had passed, there yet remained five more such years in which there would be neither earing nor harvest. The ASV gives "plowing" and harvest in this verse.
 - b. Genesis 47:19 shows that the Egyptians came to buy "seed" which implies they sought to grow crops during this dearth, but obviously they had little or no success in their farming attempts. The information about the five more years of famine was news to the brethren.
3. Verse 7: "And God sent me before you to preserve you a posterity in the earth, and to save your lives by a great deliverance."
 - a. Joseph again states that God had been behind his coming into Egypt. Without his divine intervention, Joseph would have remained in Canaan. We get a small glimpse into the unfathomable complexities of God's day-to-day dealings with mankind. He knew the hearts of the ten brothers, knew the kind of mettle of which Joseph was made, and used these and other factors in working out his will: through the anguish caused by selling their brother into slavery, God brought about a change of heart in them; through the pain Jacob suffered over the loss of his favorite son, he became a stronger man; and by the hardships Joseph endured patiently, his faith grew, he was able to fill a vital need, and his story stands as a wonderful source of instruction and encouragement to multiplied millions who learn of it from the Bible.

- b. Joseph stated that God had sent him into Egypt to "preserve you a posterity in the earth." Without his work in Egypt, the family of Abraham would have ended. But by his work, their lives were saved by "a great deliverance."
 - c. The statement in this verse suggests the wisdom of Joseph in sending the Egyptians from the room. The Egyptians would hardly have appreciated the peculiar destiny of Israel (Leupold, p.1093).
4. Verse 8: "So now *it was* not you *that* sent me hither, but God: and he hath made me a father to Pharaoh, and lord of all his house, and a ruler throughout all the land of Egypt."
- a. "He not only did not hold the sin of selling him into bondage against his brethren, but also asked them to forget the whole affair, and not to chide themselves for their action. Instead of regarding the action of his brothers as something which he should seek to avenge, he attributed the entire matter to the providence of God" (ALC, 1959, p.270).
 - b. To be a father to Pharaoh is a reference to the exalted position Joseph occupied in Pharaoh's government. "A father to Pharaoh, lord of all his house, and ruler over all the land of Egypt involved colossal responsibilities" (ibid.).
- C. Genesis 45:9-15: The Brothers are Tearfully Reconciled.
1. Verses 9-11: "Haste ye, and go up to my father, and say unto him, Thus saith thy son Joseph, God hath made me lord of all Egypt: come down unto me, tarry not: And thou shalt dwell in the land of Goshen, and thou shalt be near unto me, thou, and thy children, and thy children's children, and thy flocks, and thy herds, and all that thou hast: And there will I nourish thee; for yet *there are* five years of famine; lest thou, and thy household, and all that thou hast, come to poverty."
- a. This would assure Jacob that no danger awaited them in Egypt, since Joseph held such a high and powerful position in Pharaoh's government.
 - b. Joseph earnestly desired to see his father again, and lest the family suffer any longer from the famine, he besought his brothers to hasten to Canaan, and bring the whole clan to Egypt. He even advised them what they should say to Jacob: "Thus saith thy son Joseph, God hath made me lord of all Egypt: come down unto me, tarry not...." By describing himself as "lord of all Egypt" Joseph was not engaging in prideful boasting; rather he was simply stating a fact, and had already given God the proper credit.
 - c. "The land of Goshen, also called 'the land of Rameses' (Gen. 47:11), was located in that part of Egypt which was nearest to Palestine. *Harper's Bible Dictionary* says it was a valley some thirty to forty miles long, extending from Lake Timsah to the Nile....It appears to have been an ideal place for pastoral people. When Jacob and his household arrived in Goshen, they remained there until Joseph came to them. It was from this section of Egypt that the Exodus began. See Ex. 12:37" (ibid.).
 - d. The family would live in that choice place where they would be near Joseph, who would still have his official duties to perform, and would benefit from his special status in the land.
 - e. "It is believed that in these days the Egyptian court was held in Zoan or Tanis, perhaps twenty or twenty-five miles directly north of Goshen....He himself, Joseph, agrees to provide for all these while they are there during the five years of famine that still remain. Otherwise the family would 'come to poverty'" (Leupold, p.1095).
2. Verses 12-13: "And, behold, your eyes see, and the eyes of my brother Benjamin, that *it is* my mouth that speaketh unto you. And ye shall tell my father of all my glory in Egypt, and of all that ye have seen; and ye shall haste and bring down my father hither."
- a. As an assurance to Jacob that the brothers are not telling him a falsehood, Joseph reminds them that both the ten and Benjamin saw and heard this from Joseph. Jacob would be more inclined to believe Benjamin than the ten for he had seen and heard so much that was deceitful and wrong from them. Thus they were to bring Jacob to Egypt.
 - b. "Lastly, Joseph enjoins upon his brethren to tell their father of all his 'renown'....The purpose of this information is not to be self-glorification on Joseph's part, for this is mentioned last and briefly, and certainly not in a vainglorious fashion. The purpose of telling of Joseph's renown must then simply be to convince the father that Joseph possesses sufficient power to carry through all that he has agreed to do for his family" (Leupold, p.1096).
3. Verses 14-15: "And he fell upon his brother Benjamin's neck, and wept; and Benjamin wept upon his neck. Moreover he kissed all his brethren, and wept upon them: and after that his brethren talked with him."
- a. Having identified himself, made his request known, and thus to have soothed any doubts in their minds, he greeted them with emotion.
 - b. Naturally his strongest feelings were for his full brother, Benjamin. They were all weeping—for joy.
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D. Genesis 45:16-20: Pharaoh Gives Orders Regarding the Removal of Jacob to Goshen.

1. Verse 16: "And the fame thereof was heard in Pharaoh's house, saying, Joseph's brethren are come: and it pleased Pharaoh well, and his servants."
 - a. When the full information was given to Pharaoh, the king was well-pleased. His right-hand man, Joseph, enjoyed his complete confidence; and what was good for Joseph, was good for Egypt.
 - b. This verse sheds some light on verse two where news about the identity of Joseph's brethren and their reunion was brought to Pharaoh's attention.
2. Verses 17-18: "And Pharaoh said unto Joseph, Say unto thy brethren, This do ye; lade your beasts, and go, get you unto the land of Canaan; And take your father and your households, and come unto me: and I will give you the good of the land of Egypt, and ye shall eat the fat of the land."
 - a. Pharaoh instructed Joseph to tell his brothers to load their beasts, return to Canaan, gather their father and families and come to Egypt. He would give them the good of the land and they would enjoy the "fat" of the land.
 - b. "Since Joseph was so universally esteemed, all things connected with his fortunes were a matter of interest to all. In this instance Pharaoh might well be pleased, for a kind of stigma had been attached to Joseph's origin; for he had been accounted a slave. Now proof is offered that Joseph comes of an honorable family of free nomads..." (Leupold, p.1098).
3. Verses 19-20: "Now thou art commanded, this do ye; take you wagons out of the land of Egypt for your little ones, and for your wives, and bring your father, and come. Also regard not your stuff; for the good of all the land of Egypt is yours."
 - a. Pharaoh further instructs Joseph to provide wagons with which to transport the family. These were two- or four-wheel carts.
 - b. They were not to be concerned about their "stuff," which included "household furniture, agricultural utensils, or implements of any description. They were not to delay nor encumber themselves with articles which could be readily found in Egypt, and were not worth so long a carriage" (Clarke, p.251).

E. Genesis 45:21-24: Joseph Gives these Instructions to his Brothers.

1. Verses 21-22: "And the children of Israel did so: and Joseph gave them wagons, according to the commandment of Pharaoh, and gave them provision for the way. To all of them he gave each man changes of raiment; but to Benjamin he gave three hundred *pieces* of silver, and five changes of raiment."
 - a. He provided the wagons as Pharaoh had ordered; he gave them ample provisions for the round trip. He furnished each of the men changes of raiment; to Benjamin he gave five changes of raiment and three hundred pieces of silver.
 - b. The price of a slave according to Exodus 21:32 was thirty shekels of silver; this gift was perhaps equal to the price of ten slaves.
2. Verses 23-24: "And to his father he sent after this *manner*; ten asses laden with the good things of Egypt, and ten she asses laden with corn and bread and meat for his father by the way. So he sent his brethren away, and they departed: and he said unto them, See that ye fall not out by the way."
 - a. Joseph sent his father certain gifts: ten asses laden with the good things of Egypt (we are not told what these items were, but they of course would be valuable gifts); and ten other asses laden with corn, bread and meat for his father's journey.
 - b. The brothers were sent on their journey with the above instructions and provisions, and this final word of admonition: "see that ye fall not out by the way." Joseph knew his brothers well, and human nature; he was aware that they might get to accusing each other over their misdeeds.
 - c. "Evidently Joseph here was guarding against the brothers falling into recriminations against each other, some evidence of which had already outcropped in 42:22. It was actually too late to lay the blame on this one or that one; all were totally guilty; and now the whole ugly episode would have to be poured out in their father's ears" (Coffman, p.530).

F. Genesis 45:25-28: Joseph Learns the Good News.

1. Verses 25-26: "And they went up out of Egypt, and came into the land of Canaan unto Jacob their father, And told him, saying, Joseph *is* yet alive, and he *is* governor over all the land of Egypt. And Jacob's heart fainted, for he believed them not."
 - a. Jacob does not seem to be overly impressed with Joseph's stature in Egypt; but he was virtually overcome by the fact that he was still alive. The news was just too good to be true! His heart almost failed.
 - b. "His unbelief of the brothers at the outset of their glowing report is understandable enough" (Coffman, p.530). We know that at least one of their earlier reports (cf. 37:32-34) was deceitful.
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2. Verses 27-28: "And they told him all the words of Joseph, which he had said unto them: and when he saw the wagons which Joseph had sent to carry him, the spirit of Jacob their father revived: And Israel said, *It is enough*; Joseph my son *is* yet alive: I will go and see him before I die."
- a. He did not dare to believe them—until he saw the Egyptian wagons nearing his tent. He now decided to hearken to Joseph's word and begin the journey into Egypt which was to last for many generations, fulfilling God's statement to Abraham: "And he said unto Abram, Know of a surety that thy seed shall be a stranger in a land *that is* not theirs, and shall serve them; and they shall afflict them four hundred years; And also that nation, whom they shall serve, will I judge: and afterward shall they come out with great substance. And thou shalt go to thy fathers in peace; thou shalt be buried in a good old age. But in the fourth generation they shall come hither again: for the iniquity of the Amorites *is* not yet full" (Gen. 15:13-16).
 - b. "What a wonder is this record of how it happened! God overruled the hatreds, jealousies, and envious wickedness of men to place one of Jacob's sons on the throne of the land of Egypt, who, in time, brought the whole posterity of Israel to live there. The Egyptians detested foreigners, especially shepherds; and, thus there would be no easy possibility of Jacob's posterity forming marriages with pagans, as had already begun to happen in the case of Judah. Not only that, in Egypt, they would have the protective arm of a powerful central government which would secure them....Under those divinely appointed conditions, they would indeed grow into a mighty nation!" (Coffman, p.531).
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GENESIS 46

A. Introduction.

1. The move of Israel into Egypt was no small matter. First, there was a great deal of planning and work involved to transfer the entire household, together with the tents and other goods, and all the flocks and herds belonging to this wealthy family. Then there was the emotional issue of departing from the land promised to them through Abraham to go into an alien country. However, on the positive side, there was the prospect of being with the beloved son Joseph, and being near to the food necessary to sustain life.
2. As noted previously, God had wisely selected the country in which the descendants of Abraham would be in bondage for four hundred years (cf. Gen. 15:13-14). Israel was a clan of shepherds and herdsmen, an occupation disdained by the Egyptians. This natural enmity between Israel and Egypt would preclude intermarriage, thus would tend to preserve Israel's worship of the one true God. Inter-marriage with idol worshipers or unbelievers always tends toward leading the faithful partner into sin and error.

B. Genesis 46:1-7: Israel's Journey to Egypt Begins.

1. Verse 1: "And Israel took his journey with all that he had, and came to Beersheba, and offered sacrifices unto the God of his father Isaac."
 - a. The journey was started, probably from Hebron, and continued to Beersheba where Jacob paused for a period of time in order to offer sacrifices unto God. "Prayers and provender never hinder any man's journey." Beersheba was on the southern limits of the promised land. It was perfectly logical that worship be offered before fully taking leave of Canaan. Isaac had lived at this place and had erected an altar there; it may be that Jacob sacrificed on this very altar.
 - b. No mention has been made about Jacob inquiring of God whether to make the journey, although undoubtedly he had done so. He could see the logical requirement of journeying to Egypt, but it was necessary to have God's approval before setting out on such a momentous move.
2. Verses 2-4: "And God spake unto Israel in the visions of the night, and said, Jacob, Jacob. And he said, Here *am* I. And he said, I *am* God, the God of thy father: fear not to go down into Egypt; for I will there make of thee a great nation: I will go down with thee into Egypt; and I will also surely bring thee up *again*: and Joseph shall put his hand upon thine eyes."
 - a. God broke his silence and communicated with Jacob in a vision of the night. As far as the Divine Record is concerned, this was the last time God appeared to Jacob. There are only eight such appearances to Jacob recorded in the Bible:
 - 1) Genesis 28:13: "And, behold, the LORD stood above it, and said, I *am* the LORD God of Abraham thy father, and the God of Isaac: the land whereon thou liest, to thee will I give it, and to thy seed."
 - 2) Genesis 31:3: "And the LORD said unto Jacob, Return unto the land of thy fathers, and to thy kindred; and I will be with thee."
 - 3) Genesis 31:11: "And the angel of God spake unto me in a dream, *saying*, Jacob: And I said, Here *am* I."
 - 4) Genesis 32:1: "And Jacob went on his way, and the angels of God met him."
 - 5) Genesis 32:30: "And Jacob called the name of the place Peniel: for I have seen God face to face, and my life is preserved."
 - 6) Genesis 35:1: "And God said unto Jacob, Arise, go up to Bethel, and dwell there: and make there an altar unto God, that appeared unto thee when thou fleddest from the face of Esau thy brother."
 - 7) Genesis 35:9: "And God appeared unto Jacob again, when he came out of Padanaram, and blessed him."
 - 8) Genesis 46:2: "And God spake unto Israel in the visions of the night, and said, Jacob, Jacob. And he said, Here *am* I."
 - b. Pentecostal types today have the notion that the Holy Spirit is buzzing about the world, whispering into the ear, and otherwise giving special revelations to millions of folks. But even in the age when direct communications and miracles were in evidence, they were very rare. With the giving of the completed New Testament, the need for such direct manifestations was ended, and so the miraculous works of God ended—until the Second Coming of Christ.
 - c. God assured Jacob that this move into Egypt had his approval and encouragement. It would be in Egypt that God would make his descendants to become a great nation. The Patriarch may have understood that this was the beginning of the fulfillment of the information God had given to Abraham in Genesis 15:13-14.
 - d. God promised that he would bring him (Israel's descendants) up again into Canaan. There was no need for Jacob to be fearful about this move. Abraham had sojourned in Egypt to his hurt; Isaac had been forbidden

to go into Egypt; but Jacob now, for the special purposes intended, was encouraged to follow through with his move.

- e. "Joseph shall put his hand upon thine eyes." This is a reference to the actions of closing the eyes of a dead person. God was saying to Jacob that he would arrive in Egypt safely, and that Joseph would live to do this final act for his father. "The closing of the eyes in death was a rite anciently performed by the *hands* of a loved one. In colonial America, after loving hands had closed the eyes, coins (usually nickels) were placed upon the eyes till *rigor mortis* ensued. From this came the proverb for a petty thief: 'He would steal a nickel off a dead man's eyes'" (Coffman, p.536).
3. Verses 5-7: "And Jacob rose up from Beersheba: and the sons of Israel carried Jacob their father, and their little ones, and their wives, in the wagons which Pharaoh had sent to carry him. And they took their cattle, and their goods, which they had gotten in the land of Canaan, and came into Egypt, Jacob, and all his seed with him: His sons, and his sons' sons with him, his daughters, and his sons' daughters, and all his seed brought he with him into Egypt."
 - a. Following this special communication from God, Jacob arose to continue his journey. The wagons were used to transport Jacob and the wives and children. They had with them the cattle (flocks and herds) and the servants that belonged to his household.
 - b. Pharaoh had said that they could leave all their goods back in Canaan, but verse six shows that Jacob had brought all their possessions with them, as well they should. God had provided them with all these things, so they could not simply abandon them. Also, their specific tools and goods might not be readily available in Egypt. Further, since promises are often made which are soon forgotten, it was wise to bring what they could instead of trusting the Egyptians to provide for their needs. Jacob brought all his possessions and family. All of Israel entered Egypt; all of Israel later departed.

C. Genesis 46:8-27: The Offspring of Jacob.

1. Leah's sons and their offspring:

REUBEN	SIMEON	LEVI	JUDAH	ISSACHAR	ZEBULON
Hanoch	Kemuel	Gershon	Er (dead)	Tola	Sered
Phallu	Jamin	Kohath	Onan (Dead)	Phuvah	Elon
Hezron	Chad	Merari	Shelah	Job	Jaheel
Carmi	Zohar		Pharez	Shimron	
	Shaul		Hamul		
			Zerah		

2. Zilpah's sons (Leah's handmaid) and their offspring:

GAD	ASHER
Zipion	Jimnah
Haggi	Ishuah
Shuni	Beriah (Sons: Beber and Malchiel)
Ezhon	Serah
Eri	
Arodi	
Aareli	

3. Rachel's sons and their offspring:

JOSEPH	BENJAMIN
Manasseh	Bela
Ephraim	Becher
	Ashbel
	Gera
	Naaman
	Ehi
	Rosh
	Muppm
	Huppm
	Ard

4. Bilhah's Offspring (Rachel's handmaid) and their offspring:

DAN	NAPHTALI
Hushim	Jahzeel
	Guni
	Jezer
	Shillem

5. Verses 26-27: "All the souls that came with Jacob into Egypt, which came out of his loins, besides Jacob's sons' wives, all the souls *were* threescore and six; And the sons of Joseph, which were born him in Egypt, *were* two souls: all the souls of the house of Jacob, which came into Egypt, *were* threescore and ten."
- The numbers given here and in Acts 7:14 have been the source of difficulty to some, however when the facts are consulted, the numbers agree. Verse 26 speaks of those who went with Jacob into Egypt, except the wives of his sons: Judah's wife was dead, Benjamin was unmarried, Joseph and his family are not considered, so the nine wives of the other brothers make 75.
 - The numbers sixty-six and seventy of these two verses are reconciled simply by adding the family of Joseph to the sixty-six. There were 66 which accompanied Jacob into Egypt (not counting his daughters-in-law; there were seventy in all counting Joseph's family. But what if Benjamin was married? Is the number seventy intended to be definite, or is it a special "divine" number? (cf. Gen. 10). We take it as a definite number.
 - Numbers 11:16: "And the LORD said unto Moses, Gather unto me seventy men of the elders of Israel, whom thou knowest to be the elders of the people, and officers over them; and bring them unto the tabernacle of the congregation, that they may stand there with thee."
 - 2 Chronicles 36:21: "To fulfil the word of the LORD by the mouth of Jeremiah, until the land had enjoyed her sabbaths: *for* as long as she lay desolate she kept sabbath, to fulfil threescore and ten years."
 - Psalms 90:10: "The days of our years *are* threescore years and ten; and if by reason of strength *they be* fourscore years, yet *is* their strength labour and sorrow; for it is soon cut off, and we fly away."
 - Daniel 9:24: "Seventy weeks are determined upon thy people and upon thy holy city, to finish the transgression, and to make an end of sins, and to make reconciliation for iniquity, and to bring in everlasting righteousness, and to seal up the vision and prophecy, and to anoint the most Holy."
 - Luke 10:1: "After these things the Lord appointed other seventy also, and sent them two and two before his face into every city and place, whither he himself would come."

D. Genesis 46:28-34: Jacob and Joseph Reunited.

- Verses 28-30: "And he sent Judah before him unto Joseph, to direct his face unto Goshen; and they came into the land of Goshen. And Joseph made ready his chariot, and went up to meet Israel his father, to Goshen, and presented himself unto him; and he fell on his neck, and wept on his neck a good while. And Israel said unto Joseph, Now let me die, since I have seen thy face, because thou *art* yet alive."
 - As the great company neared Egypt, Jacob sent Judah on ahead to learn the exact location in Goshen they were to settle. Judah had by now established himself as the strong and stalwart son, capable of leadership, and worthy to become the ancestor of Christ. Judah became the forerunner of the family to enter Egypt; his illustrious Offspring became our Forerunner into heaven: "Whither the forerunner is for us entered, *even* Jesus, made an high priest for ever after the order of Melchisedec" (Heb. 6:20).
 - Joseph met his father, traveling in his splendid state chariot. They wept on each other's neck a great while, apparently speaking nothing.
 - Jacob indicated he was ready to die now that he had gotten to see his beloved son again. He lived for 17 more years, however: "And Jacob said unto Pharaoh, The days of the years of my pilgrimage *are* an hundred and thirty years: few and evil have the days of the years of my life been, and have not attained unto the days of the years of the life of my fathers in the days of their pilgrimage....And Jacob lived in the land of Egypt seventeen years: so the whole age of Jacob was an hundred forty and seven years" (Gen. 47:9,28).
 - Verses 31-34: "And Joseph said unto his brethren, and unto his father's house, I will go up, and show Pharaoh, and say unto him, My brethren, and my father's house, which *were* in the land of Canaan, are come unto me; And the men *are* shepherds, for their trade hath been to feed cattle; and they have brought their flocks, and their herds, and all that they have. And it shall come to pass, when Pharaoh shall call you, and shall say, What *is* your occupation? That ye shall say, Thy servants' trade hath been about cattle from our youth even until now, both we, *and* also our fathers: that ye may dwell in the land of Goshen; for every shepherd *is* an abomination unto the Egyptians."
 - Joseph told his kinsmen that he would go directly to Pharaoh and report their arrival to him. He would tell the king that they were all shepherds by trade and had brought their flocks and herds with them into Goshen. He instructed them to give the same information to anyone who asked them about their occupation. They were to stress the fact that they had always followed that line of business.
 - The reason for this preparation was on account of the attitude of the Egyptians toward people of their line of work. There is ample evidence that this attitude described in the narrative was factual, based on ancient Egyptian monuments where shepherds are pictured in repulsive form. This is further confirmed by ancient
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testimony. The Egyptians worshiped animals, including the very kind which were sacrificed by Israel. Joseph gave his instructions to preclude any misunderstanding on the part of Pharaoh and the Egyptians.

GENESIS 47

A. Introduction.

1. According to Leupold's chronology, the Exodus occurred about 1449 B.C. Taking Exodus 12:40 at face value, that Israel dwelt in Egypt 430 years, places the events of the present text at about 1880 B.C. "The usual assumption, made quite apart from strictly chronological issues, is that Joseph must have had contact with the Hyksos kings, whose rule is commonly dated from 1680-1580 B.C. This assumption builds on the somewhat plausible contention that the Hyksos rulers, themselves shepherd kings, will have been friendly disposed toward Israel and his family—also shepherd folk. Yet the assumption is gaining ground that 'Hyksos' meant 'Ruler of Countries' [George A. Bardon, *Archaeology and the Bible* (1937) p.18]. Besides, we still maintain that the chronology of the Bible points to a date for the Exodus in the fifteenth century—about 1449 B.C. We also believe that Exod. 12:40 is a correct statement—the time that the children of Israel dwelt in Egypt was 430 years.' This should lead exegetes to look for the famine in the days of Joseph about the year 1880 B.C. If now available historical data of Egyptian history reveal nothing concerning Joseph or the famine or the agrarian policy developed by Joseph, such silence by no means discredits the Mosaic record. It means nothing more than that the available records concerning things Egyptian are incomplete" (Leupold, pp.1123f).
2. "If now available historical data of Egyptian history reveal nothing concerning Joseph or the famine or the agrarian policy developed by Joseph, such silence by no means discredits the Mosaic record. It means nothing more than that the available records concerning things Egyptian are incomplete" (Leupold, pp.1123f).

B. Genesis 47:1-12: Joseph's Family Announced to Pharaoh.

1. Verse 1: "Then Joseph came and told Pharaoh, and said, My father and my brethren, and their flocks, and their herds, and all that they have, are come out of the land of Canaan; and, behold, they *are* in the land of Goshen."
 - a. After settling his family in Goshen, Joseph made a formal announcement to Pharaoh regarding them. It was necessary to obtain Pharaoh's public permission for them to live in Goshen, for which private approval had earlier been granted. Joseph appraises the king of the arrival of his family, and so gives Pharaoh the occasion to formally welcome them into the land of their illustrious kinsman, Joseph.
 - b. "Besides, though Joseph was overlord over the whole land, he would have laid himself open to criticism had he provided for his own family in so liberal a manner as Pharaoh had suggested. It was the part of wisdom to have Pharaoh confirm publicly what he had originally suggested, and so to let it appear that the settlement of Israel was Pharaoh's work" (ibid., p.1124).
 - c. The announcement served to inform the king also of the fact that they had brought all their flocks, herds, and possessions with them. All they would need would be a place to set up their operations, a place already agreed upon.
 2. Verses 2-4: "And he took some of his brethren, *even* five men, and presented them unto Pharaoh. And Pharaoh said unto his brethren, What *is* your occupation? And they said unto Pharaoh, Thy servants *are* shepherds, both we, *and* also our fathers. They said moreover unto Pharaoh, For to sojourn in the land are we come; for thy servants have no pasture for their flocks; for the famine *is* sore in the land of Canaan: now therefore, we pray thee, let thy servants dwell in the land of Goshen."
 - a. Joseph presented five of his brethren to Pharaoh. We are not told which of the eleven men comprised the number. The wisdom of their famous brother would be able to decide how many and which of the family to present. Joseph had correctly discerned the question Pharaoh would ask the men, hence he had prepared his brothers to give the proper answer.
 - b. The full truth is always to be desired above deception and guile. They were told by Joseph to simply state the facts: they were shepherds; they had always been shepherds; this was the line followed by their family. Some critics might assert that the very idea of these lowly shepherds being given a royal audience is naive, but these men were the close kinsmen of the second greatest leader in the land.
 - c. Their response included a remark that they had come to "sojourn" in the land due to the severe famine in their own country. In this statement they showed the king that they were in Egypt out of necessity and that they did not intend to become permanent residents. To sojourn means to "settle for the time being."
 3. Verses 5-6: "And Pharaoh spake unto Joseph, saying, Thy father and thy brethren are come unto thee: The land of Egypt *is* before thee; in the best of the land make thy father and brethren to dwell; in the land of Goshen let them dwell: and if thou knowest *any* men of activity among them, then make them rulers over my cattle."
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- a. The king did not disappoint Joseph; he evidently remembered his former commitment. Permission was quickly given for them to dwell in Goshen. Furthermore, he asked if there were capable men among the family, that they were to be employed in also taking care of the royal cattle.
 - b. No details are given whether Jacob's sons took charge of the king's flocks and herds, but there is no reason to doubt that the offer was accepted.
 4. Verses 7-10: "And Joseph brought in Jacob his father, and set him before Pharaoh: and Jacob blessed Pharaoh. And Pharaoh said unto Jacob, How old *art* thou? And Jacob said unto Pharaoh, The days of the years of my pilgrimage *are* an hundred and thirty years: few and evil have the days of the years of my life been, and have not attained unto the days of the years of the life of my fathers in the days of their pilgrimage. And Jacob blessed Pharaoh, and went out from before Pharaoh."
 - a. Joseph next presented his father to the king. Jacob, the venerable old patriarch greeted Pharaoh with a blessing. "The simple old shepherd contrasts very favorably with the Egyptian monarch. In fact, the very report of the incident seeks to convey the impression that Jacob actually stood forth as the greater figure according to a true analysis, for 'Jacob blessed Pharaoh.' 'But without any dispute the less is blessed of the better' (Heb. 7:7)...Conscious that he, a true child of God, has more to offer by his blessing than any earthly monarch can offer him, Jacob here blesses as by an act and a display of true faith" (Leupold, p.1128).
 - b. "This episode is one of the grand scenes of the Bible. Pharaoh was the autocratic ruler of the mightiest nation on earth; Jacob was the patriarchal head of God's Chosen Race, through whom redemption would come to all mankind.
 - 1) "That Jacob was fully conscious of his own status in that situation is evident in what he did. As long as Egypt sheltered and protected the covenant people, that long, God blessed and protected Egypt. But when another king arose who 'knew not Joseph,' and when Egypt turned viciously upon the Israel of God, the heavenly blessing was withdrawn, and one disaster after another overwhelmed them.
 - 2) "One may wonder if Pharaoh appreciated this blessing. To him, Jacob might have seemed to be merely an old man seeking relief from the starvation that threatened to wipe out his family; but the hand of the Almighty was upholding Jacob; and the blessing of God was surely his to bestow" (Coffman, p.546).
 - c. Jacob must have appeared to be an extremely old individual for Pharaoh inquired as to the number of his days. Jacob stated that he was 130 years old. He commented also that his days had been few in comparison with the length of his forebears: Abraham had lived to be 175 and Isaac to 180 years of age.
 - d. Jacob also stated that his years had been filled with evil. He had done more than a little that was wrong, but his point was that he had faced much difficulty in life. A brief review of his life bears out the great amount of hardships he faced, a part of which he brought upon himself.
 - 1) He had not been loved by his father as much as his twin brother, Esau.
 - 2) He had bought his brother's birthright and ended up being hated by his brother.
 - 3) He had had to leave home in order to escape his brother's attempts on his life.
 - 4) He lived many long years in servitude to Laban, going without proper shelter and rest.
 - 5) His father-in-law (Laban) had deceived him in regards to his marriage to Rachel, had connived to force him to serve him longer than agreed upon, had changed his wages many times, and had pursued after him with the intention of doing him harm.
 - 6) He had suffered as a result of the cruelty his ten oldest sons had shown to his son Joseph.
 - 7) Some of his sons had slain the men of Shechem and thus caused him grief.
 - 8) His son Joseph had been sold into slavery and his other sons had deceived him into believing that he had been slain by wild beasts.
 - 9) His daughter had been defiled; Reuben had committed incest; the terrible famine.
 - e. Jacob spoke of his life as a "pilgrimage." The only part of the promised land his forebears actually possessed was the burying place at Machpelah. The writer of Hebrews described them as looking for a city with lasting foundations, the heavenly city of God (Heb. 11:10). "Jacob's word here is a testimonial to his acceptance of the promise God made to Abraham, and of his absolute belief in the ultimate fulfillment of it. None of the patriarchs viewed the world as their permanent dwelling place, nor the earth as the true home of the soul. The mightiest king on earth had just given him a deed to Goshen, but Jacob was still a 'pilgrim.' Our English word for *pilgrim* literally means 'one who crosses the field,' and came into usage during the Crusades, when, upon nearly any given morning, settled residents could see a lonely 'wanderer' on the way to the Holy Land, 'crossing the field.' Montgomery had this: 'A pilgrim is one seeking a country not yet reached. The remembrance of this keeps the life God-ward. Its blessedness consists not in present enjoyment, but in preparation for the life to come'" (Coffman, pp. 546f).
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- f. On leaving the presence of the king, Jacob pronounced another blessing on Pharaoh.
5. Verses 11-12: "And Joseph placed his father and his brethren, and gave them a possession in the land of Egypt, in the best of the land, in the land of Rameses, as Pharaoh had commanded. And Joseph nourished his father, and his brethren, and all his father's household, with bread, according to *their* families."
- a. Joseph settled his father's family in the land of Egypt, in the choice place for their needs. Moses, writing centuries later, identified the area as the "land of Rameses," evidently the name by which Goshen was then known. "Rameses, a city later built in Goshen, was not constructed till the children of Israel, then enslaved, built it for Pharaoh (Exodus 1:11)" (Coffman, p.548). It appears that by giving them a possession in the land, Joseph allowed them to purchase property; if so, they had a more permanent foothold in Egypt than they had had thus far in Canaan (Leupold, p.1130).
- b. Joseph took care of his family in the best way possible. He provided them with a good land on which to live, and supplied them with sufficient food.
- c. Goshen was located "in the eastern Delta area, including the Wadi Tumilat, a fertile region which connected the Nile to the Bitter Lakes.... And was near the royal palace where Joseph served as vizier" (*The Biblical World*, p.270).
- d. Leupold describes its location as bordering on Arabia Petraea to the east; reaching to the Nile toward the west (because the Israelites had an abundance of fish—Num. 11:5); it then skirted the Tanitic arm of the Nile for the fields of Zoan (Tanis) are said to have been the scene of the mighty acts of God in Egypt (Ps. 78:12,43) (pp.1131f).
- 1) Numbers 11:5: "We remember the fish, which we did eat in Egypt freely; the cucumbers, and the melons, and the leeks, and the onions, and the garlic:"
- 2) Psalms 78:12: "Marvellous things did he in the sight of their fathers, in the land of Egypt, *in* the field of Zoan."
- 3) Psalms 78:43: "How he had wrought his signs in Egypt, and his wonders in the field of Zoan:"
- C. Genesis 47:13-26: Joseph's Dealings with the Egyptians.
1. Verses 13-14: "And *there was* no bread in all the land; for the famine *was* very sore, so that the land of Egypt and *all* the land of Canaan fainted by reason of the famine. And Joseph gathered up all the money that was found in the land of Egypt, and in the land of Canaan, for the corn which they bought: and Joseph brought the money into Pharaoh's house."
- a. The famine waxed harsh in the lands of Egypt and Canaan. So great was this dearth that the people spent all their money for food, the money coming into Pharaoh's treasury.
- b. This was the first of three steps by which Pharaoh came to possess Egypt.
2. Verses 15-17: "And when money failed in the land of Egypt, and in the land of Canaan, all the Egyptians came unto Joseph, and said, Give us bread: for why should we die in thy presence? for the money faileth. And Joseph said, Give your cattle; and I will give you for your cattle, if money fail. And they brought their cattle unto Joseph: and Joseph gave them bread *in exchange* for horses, and for the flocks, and for the cattle of the herds, and for the asses: and he fed them with bread for all their cattle for that year."
- a. The famine was still in full force after the people had spent all their money for food. They came to Joseph, confessing that they had no more money, and requested that he give them food. Joseph told them he would give them food in exchange for their livestock. This was not the plan of a heartless man who was willing to take every advantage of the emergency. Rather, he was doing them a favor: if they could not feed themselves they could not feed the animals. But the government was able to take proper care of the animals. "Yet, apparently, afterward Joseph restored their cattle and livestock and provided the Egyptians with seed grain and merely charged what was not an exorbitant tax for a fertile land. The Scriptures neither commend nor censure Joseph's measures, but these measures are quite readily defended" (Leupold, p.1133). The people agreed to the proposition, so for that year they were fed at the cost of their cattle. This was the second of the steps by which Pharaoh gained possession of the land.
3. Verses 18-20: "When that year was ended, they came unto him the second year, and said unto him, We will not hide *it* from my lord, how that our money is spent; my lord also hath our herds of cattle; there is not ought left in the sight of my lord, but our bodies, and our lands: Wherefore shall we die before thine eyes, both we and our land? buy us and our land for bread, and we and our land will be servants unto Pharaoh: and give *us* seed, that we may live, and not die, that the land be not desolate. And Joseph bought all the land of Egypt for Pharaoh; for the Egyptians sold every man his field, because the famine prevailed over them: so the land became Pharaoh's."
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- a. The third step was taken by the suggestion of the people themselves. When the food purchased at the expense of their cattle was consumed, the people came before Joseph with a plain declaration of their plight: our money is gone, our cattle are gone; we are without food; all we have left to give is ourselves and our lands. We will give title of our land and become servants of Pharaoh if we are provided food. This took place the year after they had traded their cattle ("the second year"). Joseph was trying to make the grain go as far as possible, so he waited until the people approached him with their requests for food.
- b. "The people speak of their land as dying by a kind of zeugma, for the land deteriorates if it be not worked, and here their plea is for seed. Now this may bring us in point of time to the last year of the famine where they may justly reckon with the idea of again working their lands; or this may mean that a bit of sowing was attempted annually in a few portions where this might yield slight returns. But, in any case, the plan to sell themselves and their land for bread emanated from the people; it was not a scheme of Joseph's to enslave them, as some seem to imply....Outright donations have no place in his relief measures" (ibid., p.1135).
4. Verses 21-26: "And as for the people, he removed them to cities from *one* end of the borders of Egypt even to the *other* end thereof. Only the land of the priests bought he not; for the priests had a portion *assigned them* of Pharaoh, and did eat their portion which Pharaoh gave them: wherefore they sold not their lands. Then Joseph said unto the people, Behold, I have bought you this day and your land for Pharaoh: lo, *here is* seed for you, and ye shall sow the land. And it shall come to pass in the increase, that ye shall give the fifth *part* unto Pharaoh, and four parts shall be your own, for seed of the field, and for your food, and for them of your households, and for food for your little ones. And they said, Thou hast saved our lives: let us find grace in the sight of my lord, and we will be Pharaoh's servants. And Joseph made it a law over the land of Egypt unto this day, *that* Pharaoh should have the fifth *part*; except the land of the priests only, *which* became not Pharaoh's."
 - a. As a matter of expediency, Joseph relocates the people in cities to make it easier to provide for them. Remember that the storage centers had been built in the cities. While the people had sold their lands to the government, the priests retained possession of their land, probably because of the great influence they had.
 - b. Joseph provided seed for the people to plant. This may have been the last year of the famine. Since the land now belonged to Pharaoh, and the people were under his control, they were to freely operate the land, but pay 20% of the produce as a tax to the government. This is not overly oppressive. We pay that much or more of our income to our government in the form of taxes. Sharecroppers in Tennessee used to "make a trade" with landowners to farm the land, which meant they tilled the soil, bought the seed and fertilizer, and did all the work, and gave the landowner one third of the produce.
 - c. The people did not resent the deals they made with Joseph. They realized that he had saved their lives. Indeed, one wonders what would have happened if Joseph had not come to Egypt or had not rightly interpreted the dreams of Pharaoh.
 - d. The 20% law was still extant when Moses wrote the Pentateuch 400 years later (Coffman, p.550).
 - e. "'And it shall come to pass in the increase, that ye shall give the fifth part unto Pharaoh, and four parts shall be your own, for seed of the field, and for your food, and for them of your households, and for food for your little ones.' This verse is a sufficient refutation of the oft-preferred charge that Joseph had despoiled the Egyptians of their liberties, and converted a free people into a horde of abject slaves. Slave-owners are not usually content with a tax of only twenty percent on the gross revenues of their estates. Nor does it seem reasonable to allege that this was an exorbitant demand on the part either of Joseph or of Pharaoh. If in the seven years of plenty the people could afford to part with a fifth part of their produce, might not an improved system of agriculture enable them, under the new regulations, to pay as much as that in the shape of rent, and with quite as much ease? At all events the people themselves did not consider that they were being subjected to any harsh or unjust exaction" [The Pulpit Commentary, Electronic Database. Copyright © 2001 by Biblesoft].

D. Genesis 47:27-31: Jacob's Life Nears an End.

1. Verse 27-29: "And Israel dwelt in the land of Egypt, in the country of Goshen; and they had possessions therein, and grew, and multiplied exceedingly. And Jacob lived in the land of Egypt seventeen years: so the whole age of Jacob was an hundred forty and seven years. And the time drew nigh that Israel must die: and he called his son Joseph, and said unto him, If now I have found grace in thy sight, put, I pray thee, thy hand under my thigh, and deal kindly and truly with me; bury me not, I pray thee, in Egypt."
 - a. Israel lived on in the land; they had possessions there; their numbers increased and multiplied exceedingly. From the small number which entered Egypt, a nation of a few million was developed by the time they left Egypt: "Even all they that were numbered were six hundred thousand and three thousand and five hundred and fifty" (Num. 1:46). Since the men of military age numbered in excess of six hundred thousand, and

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- assuming one woman and two children for each of the six hundred thousand, gives a number above two million.
- b. Jacob lived in the land seventeen years: from age 130 to age 147. As he saw his end approaching, he began to make final preparations. Having called Joseph to him, he asked him to "put thy hand under my thigh" and pledge that he would not bury him in Egypt. The meaning of this peculiar expression is much discussed.
2. Verses 30-31: "But I will lie with my fathers, and thou shalt carry me out of Egypt, and bury me in their buryingplace. And he said, I will do as thou hast said. And he said, Swear unto me. And he swore unto him. And Israel bowed himself upon the bed's head."
- a. This was not the sentimental ravings of an old, foolish man. Jacob was showing that he was fully persuaded that Canaan would be possessed by his descendants just as God had promised. He was still walking by faith: "By faith Jacob, when he was a dying, blessed both the sons of Joseph; and worshipped, *leaning* upon the top of his staff" (Heb. 11:21). Joseph agreed.
 - b. Hebrews 11:21 speaks of Jacob blessing the two sons of Joseph and worshipping, leaning upon his staff. This has evoked much discussion, with some scholars thinking that the Hebrews writer or Moses in this text has been miscopied. The difference between the two words (bed and staff) is only in punctuation excluded in the original.
 - c. Other suggest that it was customary for the staff to be placed at the head of the chief's bed. If this view is so, then both accounts are accurate. Or Paul may be describing another occasion entirely with Hebrews 11:21, in one statement, referring to two different events (the blessing and the worshipping). The worship may be different from the case in Genesis 47:31.
 - d. "Israel bowed himself upon the bed's head. Oriental beds have neither posts nor canopy, being simply mats spread on the floor, or divans raised a little from it. The meaning is, that having probably been sitting upon it, he turned himself, and bowed in the attitude of devotional reverence, with his face toward the place where his head was usually laid. [According to the present Masoretic points, *hamiTaah* (OT:4296) signifies the bed (Gen 48:2; 49:33). But the text of the Septuagint translators seems to have read *hamaTeah* (OT:4294), the staff.] Since it is not said that at this time Jacob was sick, the latter interpretation may be the true one; and the apostle (Heb 11:21) quotes it, because the Greek version was then in common use. But perhaps it may be conjoined with the other, as we may suppose the patriarch sitting on his bed and leaning on his favourite staff" [Jamieson, Fausset, and Brown Commentary, Electronic Database. Copyright (c) 1997 by Biblesoft].
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GENESIS 48

A. Genesis 48:1-4: Joseph Visits His Sick Father.

1. Verse 1: "And it came to pass after these things, that *one* told Joseph, Behold, thy father *is* sick: and he took with him his two sons, Manasseh and Ephraim."
 - a. A message is given to Joseph reporting his father's illness. We are not told how much time had passed since the events of the preceding chapter, merely that it occurred "after these things." It is likely that this was only a short time before the death of Jacob, in view of the fact that he is pictured as seriously ill.
 - b. Joseph took with him his two sons when he went to visit his father. If this is shortly before Jacob's death, then Manasseh and Ephraim were about twenty years of age.
2. Verse 2: "And *one* told Jacob, and said, Behold, thy son Joseph cometh unto thee: and Israel strengthened himself, and sat upon the bed."
 - a. When Jacob learned that Joseph was coming to see him, he strengthened himself and sat upon the bed. Notice the use of the two names: Jacob learned about Joseph's coming and Israel gathered up his strength. When "Israel" is used, his patriarchal office is stressed.
 - b. "Jacob, upon notice of his son's visit, prepared himself as well as he could to entertain him, v. 2. He did what he could to rouse his spirits, and to stir up the gift that was in him; what little was left of bodily strength he put forth to the utmost, and sat upon the bed. Note, It is very good for sick and aged people to be as lively and cheerful as they can, that they may not faint in the day of adversity. Strengthen thyself, as Jacob here, and God will strengthen thee; hearten thyself and help thyself, and God will help and hearten thee. Let the spirit sustain the infirmity" [Matthew Henry's Commentary on the Whole Bible: New Modern Edition, Electronic Database. Copyright © 1991 by Hendrickson Publishers, Inc.].
3. Verses 3-4: "And Jacob said unto Joseph, God Almighty appeared unto me at Luz in the land of Canaan, and blessed me, And said unto me, Behold, I will make thee fruitful, and multiply thee, and I will make of thee a multitude of people; and will give this land to thy seed after thee *for* an everlasting possession."
 - a. Jacob stated the information he had received from God at Luz (Bethel) when the Lord spoke to him there. The appearance is not specified as that of Genesis 28:19 or of Genesis 35:9-13, so either or both is meant. Luz was the original name of that place but Jacob changed it to Bethel.
 - b. "All of the patriarchs realized that the promise of the land of Canaan to their seed was to have its fulfillment in the far distant future. It is of that sacred promise which Jacob spoke in this final interview with Joseph" (Coffman, p.554).
 - c. Jacob repeated the promise he had received at Luz as background for the action he was about to take. The land is said to be intended as an "everlasting" possession for Abraham's descendants. "Everlasting" is used in the Old Testament in different senses, not always synonymous with eternal. It emphasizes the fullness of the time indicated, whether of a relatively short duration or eternal.
 - d. That promise was conditioned on the obedience of the people: "But it shall come to pass, if thou wilt not hearken unto the voice of the LORD thy God, to observe to do all his commandments and his statutes which I command thee this day; that all these curses shall come upon thee, and overtake thee: Cursed *shalt* thou *be* in the city, and cursed *shalt* thou *be* in the field. Cursed *shall be* thy basket and thy store. Cursed *shall be* the fruit of thy body, and the fruit of thy land, the increase of thy kine, and the flocks of thy sheep. Cursed *shalt* thou *be* when thou comest in, and cursed *shalt* thou *be* when thou goest out. The LORD shall send upon thee cursing, vexation, and rebuke, in all that thou settest thine hand unto for to do, until thou be destroyed, and until thou perish quickly; because of the wickedness of thy doings, whereby thou hast forsaken me. The LORD shall make the pestilence cleave unto thee, until he have consumed thee from off the land, whither thou goest to possess it. The LORD shall smite thee with a consumption, and with a fever, and with an inflammation, and with an extreme burning, and with the sword, and with blasting, and with mildew; and they shall pursue thee until thou perish. And thy heaven that *is* over thy head shall be brass, and the earth that is under thee *shall be* iron. The LORD shall make the rain of thy land powder and dust: from heaven shall it come down upon thee, until thou be destroyed. The LORD shall cause thee to be smitten before thine enemies: thou shalt go out one way against them, and flee seven ways before them: and shalt be removed into all the kingdoms of the earth" (Deut. 28:15-25).

B. Genesis 48:5-14: Israel Adopts Manasseh and Ephraim.

1. Verse 5: "And now thy two sons, Ephraim and Manasseh, which were born unto thee in the land of Egypt before I came unto thee into Egypt, *are* mine; as Reuben and Simeon, they shall be mine."
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- a. The two sons of Joseph are now to be considered as Jacob's sons, equal to Reuben and Simeon, Jacob's oldest natural sons. This does not mean that Joseph's sons were in any way to replace Reuben and Simeon, although these two men had gotten involved in sin on more than one occasion; they were simply to occupy positions as heads of tribes just as the other eleven sons of Jacob. Joseph did not have a tribe named after him, however his descendants were in the two tribes named after his two sons.
 - b. For inheritance purposes, Manasseh and Ephraim were considered Jacob's sons, although literally they were his grandsons. Through his two sons, Joseph would receive a double portion, "one of the principal benefits pertaining to the birthright, an honor that Jacob surely felt that Joseph was qualified to receive. Not only was Joseph first born of Rachel, the only wife that Jacob ever decided to marry; but additionally he was the saviour of the whole nation in being the instrument through whom God had preserved the covenant people through the famine" (Coffman, p.555).
2. Verse 6: "And thy issue, which thou begetteth after them, shall be thine, *and* shall be called after the name of their brethren in their inheritance."
- a. Jacob makes it plain that any other sons that Joseph might have would not be considered in the same way as these first two. In the genealogical tables, any future sons of Joseph would be listed as Joseph's sons, and not as Jacob's sons.
 - b. They would not form separate tribes but "shall be reckoned as belonging to Ephraim and Manasseh, and receive their possessions among these tribes, and in their inheritance. These other sons of Joseph are not mentioned anywhere; but their descendants are at any rate included in the families of Ephraim and Manasseh mentioned in Num. 26:28-37; 1 Chron. 7:14-29" (Keil, p.382).
- 1) Numbers 26:28-37: "The sons of Joseph after their families *were* Manasseh and Ephraim. Of the sons of Manasseh: of Machir, the family of the Machirites: and Machir begat Gilead: of Gilead *come* the family of the Gileadites. These *are* the sons of Gilead: of Jeezer, the family of the Jeezerites: of Helek, the family of the Helekites: And of Asriel, the family of the Asrielites: and of Shechem, the family of the Shechemites: And of Shemida, the family of the Shemidaites: and of Hephher, the family of the Hephherites. And Zelophehad the son of Hephher had no sons, but daughters: and the names of the daughters of Zelophehad *were* Mahlah, and Noah, Hoglah, Milcah, and Tirzah. These *are* the families of Manasseh, and those that were numbered of them, fifty and two thousand and seven hundred. These *are* the sons of Ephraim after their families: of Shuthelah, the family of the Shuthalhites: of Becher, the family of the Bachrites: of Tahan, the family of the Tahanites. And these *are* the sons of Shuthelah: of Eran, the family of the Eranites. These *are* the families of the sons of Ephraim according to those that were numbered of them, thirty and two thousand and five hundred. These *are* the sons of Joseph after their families."
 - 2) 1 Chronicles 7:14-29: "The sons of Manasseh; Ashriel, whom she bare: (*but* his concubine the Aramitess bare Machir the father of Gilead: And Machir took to wife *the sister* of Huphim and Shuphim, whose sister's name *was* Maachah;) and the name of the second *was* Zelophehad: and Zelophehad had daughters. And Maachah the wife of Machir bare a son, and she called his name Peresh; and the name of his brother *was* Sheresh; and his sons *were* Ulam and Rakem. And the sons of Ulam; Bedan. These *were* the sons of Gilead, the son of Machir, the son of Manasseh. And his sister Hammoleketh bare Ishod, and Abiezer, and Mahalah. And the sons of Shemidah were, Ahian, and Shechem, and Likhi, and Aniam. And the sons of Ephraim; Shuthelah, and Bered his son, and Tahath his son, and Eladah his son, and Tahath his son, And Zabad his son, and Shuthelah his son, and Ezer, and Elead, whom the men of Gath *that were* born in *that* land slew, because they came down to take away their cattle. And Ephraim their father mourned many days, and his brethren came to comfort him. And when he went in to his wife, she conceived, and bare a son, and he called his name Beriah, because it went evil with his house. (And his daughter *was* Sherah, who built Bethhoron the nether, and the upper, and Uzzenasherah.) And Rephah *was* his son, also Resheph, and Telah his son, and Tahan his son, Laadan his son, Ammihud his son, Elishama his son, Non his son, Jehoshuah his son. And their possessions and habitations *were*, Bethel and the towns thereof, and eastward Naaran, and westward Gezer, with the towns thereof; Shechem also and the towns thereof, unto Gaza and the towns thereof: And by the borders of the children of Manasseh, Bethshean and her towns, Taanach and her towns, Megiddo and her towns, Dor and her towns. In these dwelt the children of Joseph the son of Israel."
3. Verses 7-11: "And as for me, when I came from Padan, Rachel died by me in the land of Canaan in the way, when yet *there was* but a little way to come unto Ephrath: and I buried her there in the way of Ephrath; the same is Bethlehem. And Israel beheld Joseph's sons, and said, Who *are* these? And Joseph said unto his father, They

are my sons, whom God hath given me in this *place*. And he said, Bring them, I pray thee, unto me, and I will bless them. Now the eyes of Israel were dim for age, *so that* he could not see. And he brought them near unto him; and he kissed them, and embraced them. And Israel said unto Joseph, I had not thought to see thy face: and, lo, God hath showed me also thy seed."

- a. "Reading superficially, we might suppose that Jacob's thoughts went wandering at this point after the manner of old men, who are not as keen of mind as they once were; and so he seems to run off into a bit of reminiscing, which comes to an abrupt close with this verse. However.... Jacob's words show a logical progression. Here Jacob motivates his choice of Joseph's sons a bit more fully. Not only are they adopted because of God's promise to make Jacob fruitful, but also because Rachel, his beloved wife, of whom he had anticipated further issue, had died prematurely at Ephrathah—Bethlehem—at the time of the return of the family from Paddan (usually called Paddan-Aram)....Now Jacob had naturally destined Rachel to be his only wife. Her sons should have been the first-born. By this arrangement of the adoption of her son's sons, Ephraim and Manasseh receive this position as is indicated by I Chron. 5:1,2. From another point of view this is very proper, inasmuch as the portion of the first-born always was a double one, and here, then, Joseph in his two sons actually receives that double portion" (Leupold, pp. 1148f).
 - b. Bible critics try to find fault with the record here, claiming that verses eight and ten indicate Jacob is blind, while verse eleven speaks of his ability to see. But blind men often speak of "seeing" some one or some thing. Anyway, the text does not say Jacob was blind, but that his eyes were "dim" (heavy); he could see but not see well. In our country, one can be legally blind, but still be able to see to some limited degree.
 - c. In verse eight, it might be that the two young men were standing a little too far away for Jacob to recognize them, or that he had not seen them in such a long time that they had changed greatly as they grew. Young people grow so fast sometimes that people who do not see them often may be surprised at how much they have changed. Joseph tells his father these are his two sons.
 - d. He attributes their presence to the goodness of God. Israel embraced and kissed these two boys, saying to Joseph that he had not even thought he would be able to see Joseph again, but God had been so merciful that he not only saw him, but his sons also. Notice the gratitude expressed to God.
4. Verse 12: "And Joseph brought them out from between his knees, and he bowed himself with his face to the earth."
- a. In gratitude to his father, Joseph fell down before Jacob, bowing his face to the earth. But in order to do this, he first had to move his sons away from Jacob's knees.
 - b. "When brought to the old man who was sitting upon his bed, they naturally stood at either side of his knees while he embraced them. The preposition involved is *me'im* = 'from at,' which is best rendered 'beside' in this case" (Leupold, p.1151).
5. Verses 13-14: "And Joseph took them both, Ephraim in his right hand toward Israel's left hand, and Manasseh in his left hand toward Israel's right hand, and brought *them* near unto him. And Israel stretched out his right hand, and laid *it* upon Ephraim's head, who *was* the younger, and his left hand upon Manasseh's head, guiding his hands wittingly; for Manasseh *was* the firstborn."
- a. Joseph took his sons, and placed them so that Jacob's right hand would easily and naturally find his oldest son, Manasseh, and Ephraim on his father's left. This was the orderly way to do it for the forthcoming blessing; the accepted method was for the firstborn to receive the best blessing.
 - b. Jacob crossed his arms so that his right hand rested upon Ephraim, not Manasseh as Joseph had supposed would be done.
- C. Genesis 48:15-22: Israel Blesses Ephraim and Manasseh.
1. Verses 15-16: "And he blessed Joseph, and said, God, before whom my fathers Abraham and Isaac did walk, the God which fed me all my life long unto this day, The Angel which redeemed me from all evil, bless the lads; and let my name be named on them, and the name of my fathers Abraham and Isaac; and let them grow into a multitude in the midst of the earth."
 - a. The blessing is said to have been pronounced upon Joseph, and properly so, but it was actually on Joseph's offspring. In the blessing, Jacob made three references to God. "*Art* thou not from everlasting, O LORD my God, mine Holy One? we shall not die. O LORD, thou hast ordained them for judgment; and, O mighty God, thou hast established them for correction" (Hab. 1:12). As he looked back over his life, he could see the guiding influence of the Almighty, who had also directed the way of Abraham and Isaac before him.
 - b. He made request that God accept these two boys as part of Israel, and that they might grow into a multitude of people on earth. The term "grow" is from a name for fish, and refers to the rapidity with which fish multiply.

2. Verses 17-18: "And when Joseph saw that his father laid his right hand upon the head of Ephraim, it displeased him: and he held up his father's hand, to remove it from Ephraim's head unto Manasseh's head. And Joseph said unto his father, Not so, my father: for this *is* the firstborn; put thy right hand upon his head."
 - a. Before the blessing had preceded to specifics, Joseph interrupted his father by telling him that his right hand was on the wrong lad.
 - b. Joseph, not having the prophetic insight possessed by Jacob, did not know that the younger should receive the greater blessing. Being displeased that his father had mixed up what he thought was the proper order, he corrected Jacob.
 3. Verse 19: "And his father refused, and said, I know *it*, my son, I know *it*: he also shall become a people, and he also shall be great: but truly his younger brother shall be greater than he, and his seed shall become a multitude of nations."
 - a. Jacob knew what he was doing, and said plainly that he had made no mistake. The older would become a great people, but the younger would be greater than he. Only one possessing prophetic powers (inspiration) could know the future. The first census of Moses' time numbered the tribe of Ephraim at 40,500 men while that of Manasseh amounted to 32,200.
 - b. "Ephraim's house led the rebellion against Rehoboam following the death of Solomon, and also took the leading part upon numerous occasions in the history of Israel. So completely was the Northern Israel identified with Ephraim, that the whole nation came to be called, in time, Ephraim, that name being used for Israel dozens of times in the prophecy of Hosea" (Coffman, p.559).
 - c. Many times when God made choice between brothers, the younger was chosen over the older: Isaac over Ishmael; Jacob over Esau; Joseph over Reuben; Ephraim over Manasseh. "The first shall be last and the last shall be first" (Matt. 19:30).
 4. Verses 20-22: "And he blessed them that day, saying, In thee shall Israel bless, saying, God make thee as Ephraim and as Manasseh: and he set Ephraim before Manasseh. And Israel said unto Joseph, Behold, I die: but God shall be with you, and bring you again unto the land of your fathers. Moreover I have given to thee one portion above thy brethren, which I took out of the hand of the Amorite with my sword and with my bow."
 - a. The action of Jacob in blessing Ephraim over Manasseh became a proverb in later times. He promised Joseph that God would indeed bring his family back into Canaan. He did not mention any time factor, but stated it would be after his own death.
 - b. The "portion" means mountain, mountain slope or shoulder, and is the name of Shechem. This portion which he said he had taken by force from the Amorite with his bow and sword he gave to Joseph. Jacob is not presented in the Bible as a warrior, however he plainly states what he had done in this instance. Evidently, this is a reference to an event which is not otherwise recorded in the Scriptures. Some think it was prospective in nature and was fulfilled later when Israel conquered the land.
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GENESIS 49

A. Introduction.

1. Jacob concludes his long and eventful life by pronouncing blessings upon his sons, as others before and after him did: Isaac (Gen. 27), Moses (Deut. 33), Joshua (Ch. 24), Samuel (I Sam. 12). The blessing he gave them was also a prophecy. It was generally a blessing, but contained certain censures against the evil tendencies of some of them.
2. "Upon closer study this blessing of Jacob stands revealed as a piece of rare beauty. Lange has summarized the elements of poetic excellence as 'rhythmical movement, a beautiful parallelism of members, a profusion of figures, a play upon the names of the sons, other instances of *paronomasia*, unusual modes of expression, a truly exalted spirit, as well as a heartfelt warmth'" (Leupold, p.1160).
3. Jacob had known his sons all their lives; he knew their strengths and weaknesses. In his closing moments, he was able to bring this knowledge to bear with the divine guidance of God to formulate a final pithy message to each of these sons who were the foundation of the great nation of Israel. This final word from the grand old patriarch was needed by Jacob's descendants as they approached the dismal days of bondage under the cruel taskmasters of Egypt. "By the use of it men of Israel could look forward to the blessed time when the tribes would be safely established in the Promised Land, every tribe in its own inheritance" (ibid., p.1164).
4. Bible critics have railed against this chapter, as they have with many other parts of God's word. The position they had already accepted prior to examining the sacred text is (1) to deny the existence of real prophecy, (2) assert that the patriarchs were too ignorant and unlearned to produce such exalted utterances as that of this chapter, (3) affirm that some unknown man or men later produced the literature at hand and assigned it to Jacob, and (4) twist and torture any statement which opposes their preconceived views to make the inspired author say what was never meant to be said.
5. "The blessing gives, in short sayings full of bold and thoroughly original pictures, only general outlines of a prophetic character, which are to receive their definite concrete form from the historical development of the tribes in the future; and throughout it possesses both in form and substance a certain antique stamp, in which its genuineness is unmistakably apparent" (Keil, p.389).

B. Genesis 49:1-2: Jacob Calls his Sons together for the Final Blessing.

1. Verse 1: "And Jacob called unto his sons, and said, Gather yourselves together, that I may tell you *that* which shall befall you in the last days."
 - a. The call went forth from the Patriarch for his sons to gather before him. This must have been a very important date and event in the memory of the family for many years. He stated that he had information to give them regarding "that which shall befall you in the last days." This time factor includes the coming years of the next few generations, and at least part has application to the Gospel Age. He is obviously not intending to address the final events of all time. The ASV has "the latter days."
 - b. "Not a single utterance announces the capture of the promised land; not a single one points specially to the time of Joshua. On the contrary, Jacob presupposes not only the increase of his sons into powerful tribes, but also the conquest of Canaan, as already fulfilled; foretells to his sons, whom he sees in spirit as populous tribes, growth and prosperity on the soil in their possession; and dilates upon their relation to one another in Canaan and to the nations round about..." (Keil, p.388).
2. Verse 2: "Gather yourselves together, and hear, ye sons of Jacob; and hearken unto Israel your father."
 - a. He gives here the second statement of a double exhortation to assemble before him to hear his final words. He could speak from his own knowledge and was guided by the Holy Spirit.
 - 1) 2 Samuel 23:1-2: "Now these *be* the last words of David. David the son of Jesse said, and the man *who* was raised up on high, the anointed of the God of Jacob, and the sweet psalmist of Israel, said, The spirit of the LORD spake by me, and his word *was* in my tongue."
 - 2) Acts 1:16: "Men *and* brethren, this scripture must needs have been fulfilled, which the Holy Ghost by the mouth of David spake before concerning Judas, which was guide to them that took Jesus."
 - b. Notice that he speaks both as Jacob (their father) and as Israel (the father of the nation).

C. Genesis 49:3-27: The Messages to the Sons.

1. Verses 3-4: "Reuben, thou *art* my firstborn, my might, and the beginning of my strength, the excellency of dignity, and the excellency of power: Unstable as water, thou shalt not excel; because thou wentest up to thy father's bed; then defiledst thou *it*: he went up to my couch."

- a. "The father multiplies himself and grows strong through his children. Therefore the firstborn may well be regarded as a pledge of what the others yet to come may achieve together with him.... The latter expression, 'beginning of might,' is on several occasions used in the Scriptures in reference to the first-born: Deut. 21:17b; Ps. 78:51; 105:36" (Leupold, p.1169).
 - 1) Deuteronomy 21:17: "But he shall acknowledge the son of the hated *for* the firstborn, by giving him a double portion of all that he hath: for he *is* the beginning of his strength; the right of the firstborn *is* his."
 - 2) Psalms 78:51: "And smote all the firstborn in Egypt; the chief of *their* strength in the tabernacles of Ham."
 - 3) Psalms 105:36: "He smote also all the firstborn in their land, the chief of all their strength."
 - b. There was something special attached to the firstborn, especially in those early days. Dignity and authority were ascribed to the first son. But Reuben was an exception to the rule, as the next verse indicates. He did not reach the great heights intended for him because he was spiritually unsteady.
 - c. He is described as "unstable as water." The ASV has "boiling over as water." Another possible rendering is "turbulent as a flood." Reuben appears to have been a weak character, reckless, wanton, lustful, frivolous and prideful (all of which is said to be included in the meaning of the Hebrew term). He is so-styled because he went "up to thy father's bed" and defiled it. Thus, he is said to be unsteady because of this case of incest. The last clause of verse four is given in the third person, as if Jacob turned from Reuben to address this last remark to the others.
 - d. "It should be noted that Jacob's pronouncement here was fulfilled exactly in all the subsequent life of Reuben. He never furnished a leader of any kind to the nation. His was the first tribe to ask for a place to settle, and that *before* they ever entered Canaan (Numbers 32). They erected an unauthorized place of worship (Joshua 22:10-34). In the days of Deborah and Barak, his tribe violated their pledge and refused to answer the call to arms (Judges 5:15,16)" (Coffman, p.564).
 - e. "Another outbreak of his licentious lack of restraint appears in his descendants when Korah's rebellion flares up in the wilderness (Num. 16)" (Leupold, p.1171).
2. Verses 5-7: "Simeon and Levi *are* brethren; instruments of cruelty *are in* their habitations. O my soul, come not thou into their secret; unto their assembly, mine honour, be not thou united: for in their anger they slew a man, and in their selfwill they digged down a wall. Cursed *be* their anger, for *it was* fierce; and their wrath, for it was cruel: I will divide them in Jacob, and scatter them in Israel."
- a. Simeon and Levi were brothers in the flesh, and in disposition also. These were the two who acted cruelly and shamefully in the episode of Dinah's defilement (Gen. 34). They slew the Shechemites when they were unable to defend themselves.
 - b. The KJV has "digged down a wall" while the ASV has "hocked an ox." Apparently, there is similarity between the words or different meanings of the same words. In either case, an additional detail is given in this account. Nothing is said in the first report about any cattle (oxen) being hocked, only that cattle were taken as booty. To hock is to sever the tendons of the hind feet so that the animal is lamed. If the KJV rendering is correct, then they gained access to the city or perhaps some building in the city by means of digging down a wall. The Hebrew term (khur) means to dig; "mekherah" would be a digging tool. Leupold suggests that this may have been the instrument used in the murder of the men of Shechem. Jacob's plea was that his soul and honor might not take part with their evil ways. Notice two other translations of the text:
 - 1) "Simeon and Levi are brethren; Weapons of violence are their swords. O my soul, come not thou into their council; Unto their assembly, my glory, be not thou united; For in their anger they slew a man, And in their self-will they hocked an ox. Cursed be their anger, for it was fierce; And their wrath, for it was cruel: I will divide them in Jacob, And scatter them in Israel" (Gen. 49:5-7, ASV).
 - 2) "Simeon and Levi are brothers; Instruments of cruelty are in their dwelling place. 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. 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" (Gen. 49:5-7, NKJV).
 - c. Because of their fierce anger, and what it had led them to do, they were to be scattered in Israel. "Since the cooperation of these brothers had produced some very shameful results, God would divide them. Jacob's prophecy was fulfilled in the most remarkable manner. At the time of the conquest of Canaan, Simeon had become the smallest of the tribes of Israel (Numbers 26:14). The tribe was passed over in the blessing of Moses (Deuteronomy 33). It received no separate assignment of territory, but merely a few cities within the limits of Judah (Joshua 19:1-9). Those were absorbed into Judah; and those who remained emigrated in two

detachments, and sought out settlements for themselves outside the limits of Canaan (1 Chronicles 4:27-43)" (Coffman, p.565).

- d. "In the case of Levi the situation is different. The Levites were, indeed, dispersed throughout the whole land in the cities mentioned Josh. 21:1-40. But in their dispersion these ministers of the sanctuary served as teachers of Israel and so really became a wholesome leaven, whose influence was felt for good by all. Of course, the turn for the better in the case of the Levites came with Exod. 32:26ff ..." (Leupold, p.1175). "And of Levi he said, *Let thy Thummim and thy Urim be with thy holy one, whom thou didst prove at Massah, and with whom thou didst strive at the waters of Meribah; Who said unto his father and to his mother, I have not seen him; neither did he acknowledge his brethren, nor knew his own children: for they have observed thy word, and kept thy covenant. They shall teach Jacob thy judgments, and Israel thy law: they shall put incense before thee, and whole burnt sacrifice upon thine altar. Bless, LORD, his substance, and accept the work of his hands: smite through the loins of them that rise against him, and of them that hate him, that they rise not again*" (Deut.33:8-11).
3. Verses 8-12: "Judah, thou *art he* whom thy brethren shall praise: thy hand *shall be* in the neck of thine enemies; thy father's children shall bow down before thee. Judah *is* a lion's whelp: from the prey, my son, thou art gone up: he stooped down, he couched as a lion, and as an old lion; who shall rouse him up? The sceptre shall not depart from Judah, nor a lawgiver from between his feet, until Shiloh come; and unto him *shall* the gathering of the people *be*. Binding his foal unto the vine, and his ass's colt unto the choice vine; he washed his garments in wine, and his clothes in the blood of grapes: His eyes *shall be* red with wine, and his teeth white with milk."
 - a. The other Israelites would, in some way and time, praise Judah. This tribe became dominant, and from this tribe came such great ones as David and Solomon, and it was from Judah that Jesus sprang (Heb. 7:14). The name Judah means "praise." The patriarch deposed that this illustrious son-tribe would be honored and respected, and in the person of its most illustrious member, it would be praised.
 - b. The war-like character of Judah's descendants is next stressed: he would have his hand on the nape of the neck of his enemies. The foe is pictured as fleeing from his presence, and Judah is said to have his hand on their neck, thus having them in control. The fact is stated that his brethren would bow themselves before him, speaking in terms of their descendants.
 - 1) "The most significant instance appears in II Sam. 5:1-3, where all the tribes of Israel are compelled to admit Judah's superiority in David" (Leupold, p.1177).
 - 2) "This is a prophecy that the right of rulership shall pertain to the tribe of Judah; but this did not come to pass at once. Moses was from Levi, Joshua from Ephraim, Gideon from Manasseh, Samson from Dan, Samuel from Ephraim, and Saul from Benjamin. However, in the long sweep through history the prophecy was completely fulfilled only in Judah and the house of David, one of his descendants whose reign prefigured the everlasting kingdom of the Messiah" (Coffman, p.566).
 - c. Jacob next gives a fuller picture of Judah's strength, courage, and regal standing by the use of the figure of the lion. The first description is to liken him to the "whelp of a lion"—a reference to a young lion in the fullness of strength of his newly acquired maturity, not to a lion cub. He is depicted as having eaten his fill of his prey and has gone up to his den (i.e., in the mountains, Song 4:8). After such a bold beast has lain down in his den, who would dare to rouse him. For "old lion" the ASV has "lioness." "All this furnishes a bold, clear picture of Judah's lion-like courage and strength. By these words a foundation is laid for great achievements yet to follow. Verses 8 and 9 create a sense of expectation, for they ascribe to Judah acknowledged pre-eminence, courage and strength" (Leupold p.1177).
 - d. "The sceptre is the symbol of regal command, and in its earliest form it was a long staff, which the king held in his hand when speaking in public assemblies... and when he sat upon his throne he rested it between his feet, inclining towards himself (see the representation of a Persian king in the ruins of Persepolis, *Niebuhr Reisebeschr.* ii. 145)" (Keil, p.393). The idea is "that no one shall remove Judah's sceptre, or Judah's dominion will not be taken away from him until a certain climax is achieved..." (Leupold, p.1178).
 - e. "Shiloh" is used as a reference to a person since the concluding thought in the verse states that "to him (Shiloh) shall the gathering of the people be." John alludes to this passage (verses 8-12) in Revelation 5:5 by describing Christ as the "lion of the tribe of Judah." The meaning of Shiloh is "rest" or "one who gives rest" (cf. Matt. 11:28-30; 2 Thess. 1:6-7). To "Shiloh" will the gathering or the obedience of the people be. "This, then, is an attractive description of the conquests of the Gospel, and so the critical objection falls to the ground which charges that the term "Shiloh," if construed as above, is 'at most a negative word, denoting mere tranquillity'" (Leupold, 1180).

- f. The Messiah sprang from the regal tribe of Judah. He is able to provide peace to his followers (between them and God; between themselves; and within themselves). If Jesus is not the Messiah, there would be no way for the real Messiah to prove his identity, since all the genealogical tables identifying the Jewish tribes, have long since been destroyed.
 4. Verses 11-12: "Binding his foal unto the vine, and his ass's colt unto the choice vine; he washed his garments in wine, and his clothes in the blood of grapes: His eyes *shall be* red with wine, and his teeth white with milk."
 - a. These verses apply to either Judah or to the Messiah. In either case, the language is certainly figurative. To apply the language to Judah's posterity seems to be less fraught with difficulty. But how could verse twelve be understood if the reference is to Christ? "If they are referred to Judah, they do nothing more than to describe the exuberant fertility that is to prevail in his land, the unexpressed condition being that the uninterrupted enjoyment of these blessings would depend upon Judah's fidelity to his God" (Leupold, p.1184).
 - b. "He tethers...his ass to the vine.' The participle used indicates that Judah habitually does this. His reason for so doing is because vines grow in such profusion in the land—that a man will have no hesitation about tethering the ass to them. What if one vine be damaged? The loss is not felt because there is no end of vines...A man would not even show hesitation about binding the more restless 'ass's colt to the choice vine...The verb 'wash' in the next comparison is not to be taken literally. It merely describes graphically a picturesque episode from the time of treading out the grapes after the grape harvest. So full will the press be that they that tread out the grapes will stain their garments so profusely that they will come out of the press looking like men who have washed their garments in wine" (Leupold, p.1184).
 - c. Verse twelve would also have a figurative meaning, suggesting the abundant produce of the Promised Land, the land which flowed with milk and honey. The Lord is not condoning drunkenness by the reference.
 5. Verse 13: "Zebulun shall dwell at the haven of the sea; and he *shall be* for an haven of ships; and his border *shall be* unto Zidon."
 - a. The land given to this tribe was not actually adjacent to Sidon, but was "towards the coast of ships, and his side towards Zidon" (Keil, p.402). It is not definitely stated that Zebulun would dwell at or on the seacoast but toward it.
 - b. "For though Zebulun's territory touched the Sea of Galilee on the east and swept westward over a big portion of the Plain of Esdraelon, it yet went only two-thirds of the way to the Mediterranean coastline, having Asher between it and the sea" (Leupold, p.1185).
 - c. Deuteronomy 33:18-19: "And of Zebulun he said, Rejoice, Zebulun, in thy going out; and, Issachar, in thy tents. They shall call the people unto the mountain; there they shall offer sacrifices of righteousness: for they shall suck of the abundance of the seas, and of treasures hid in the sand." This indicates that Zebulun's blessings lay in the riches they would be able to acquire from those who plowed the seas, having ready access to the city of Sidon.
 6. Verses 14-15: "Issachar *is* a strong ass couching down between two burdens: And he saw that rest *was* good, and the land that *it was* pleasant; and bowed his shoulder to bear, and became a servant unto tribute."
 - a. The phraseology suggests that Issachar was a strong man and that his offspring partook of this trait also. His territory lay southwest of the Sea of Galilee.
 - b. The text indicates that he enjoyed rest, took pleasure in the land allotted him, and complacently accepted oppression and servanthood rather than fight to maintain freedom and independence. Morris paraphrased the prophecy that Issachar would be "Strong, but docile and lazy."
 - c. "Either sheepfolds abound in his territory, and the members of the tribe are thought of as settled in a country where sheepfolds abound; or else the tribe is thought of as a unit being situated between tribes where sheepfolds abound" (Leupold, p.1187).
 7. Verses 16-17: "Dan shall judge his people, as one of the tribes of Israel. Dan shall be a serpent by the way, an adder in the path, that biteth the horse heels, so that his rider shall fall backward."
 - a. The point is that Dan would be few in number and less strong militarily than others, but that he would be able to overcome his enemy by cunning. Dan would be an administrator of justice, a play on his name which means "judge."
 - b. See Judges 18 for the account of how the Danites captured Laish. Samson was a Danite.
 8. Verse 18: "I have waited for thy salvation, O LORD."
 - a. This is an interruption in the process of blessing his children. He has stated the various natural strengths of some of his sons: Judah the lion, Issachar the strong ass, Dan the cunning serpent.
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- b. There were also many hardships, disasters, and conflicts awaiting his posterity. In this timely statement, the patriarch appeals to the Lord for the help he alone could provide. Jacob understands that though man may have natural strengths, success ultimately depends on Jehovah's mighty hand.
9. Verse 19: "Gad, a troop shall overcome him: but he shall overcome at the last."
- a. "There is a triple play here upon *Gad*, which means *troop*. Apparently, bravery in battle is the thing prophesied, a quality in this tribe which is confirmed by the scriptural reference in 1 Chronicles 12:8-15" (Coffman, p.571).
- b. The enemy may press him sore, but he would fight back successfully. "And of the Gadites there separated themselves unto David into the hold to the wilderness men of might, *and* men of war *fit* for the battle, that could handle shield and buckler, whose faces *were like* the faces of lions, and *were* as swift as the roes upon the mountains; Ezer the first, Obadiah the second, Eliab the third, Mishmannah the fourth, Jeremiah the fifth, Attai the sixth, Eliel the seventh, Johanan the eighth, Elzabad the ninth, Jeremiah the tenth, Machbanai the eleventh. These *were* of the sons of Gad, captains of the host: one of the least *was* over an hundred, and the greatest over a thousand. These *are* they that went over Jordan in the first month, when it had overflowed all his banks; and they put to flight all *them* of the valleys, *both* toward the east, and toward the west" (1 Chron. 12:8-15).
- c. "Jacob, therefore, foresees that Gad will be especially exposed to the raids of marauding bands. Gad was exposed to the bands of roving marauders from the desert—Midianites and Ammonites and Arabians. But though that was the case, Gad was not slow about defending himself and striking back. Of the courage of those of Gad we read in David's time I Chron. 12:8 and before, 5:18" (Leupold, pp.1190f).
- 1) 1 Chronicles 5:18: "The sons of Reuben, and the Gadites, and half the tribe of Manasseh, of valiant men, men able to bear buckler and sword, and to shoot with bow, and skilful in war, *were* four and forty thousand seven hundred and threescore, that went out to the war."
- 2) 1 Chronicles 12:8: "And of the Gadites there separated themselves unto David into the hold to the wilderness men of might, *and* men of war *fit* for the battle, that could handle shield and buckler, whose faces *were like* the faces of lions, and *were* as swift as the roes upon the mountains."
10. Verse 20: "Out of Asher his bread *shall be* fat, and he shall yield royal dainties."
- a. "In 1 Kings 5:11, it is revealed that Asher lived in the lowlands along the Mediterranean between Carmel and Tyre, a fruitful and fertile region; and Solomon supplied the household of King Hiram from the wheat and oil products of this region" (Coffman, p.571).
- b. Deuteronomy 33:24: "And of Asher he said, *Let Asher be* blessed with children; let him be acceptable to his brethren, and let him dip his foot in oil." It was a land that produced royal delicacies, sufficient to grace any king's table.
11. Verse 21: "Naphtali *is* a hind let loose: he giveth goodly words."
- a. Few details are given concerning this tribe other than their part in defeating the army of Jabin (Judges 4,5; cf. Deborah's song).
- b. The reference may be to a characteristic of swiftness on the part of the men of this tribe. The figure used to describe them is also used in 2 Samuel 22:34 to illustrate fleetness of foot: "He maketh my feet like hinds' *feet*: and setteth me upon my high places."
12. Verses 22-26: "Joseph *is* a fruitful bough, *even* a fruitful bough by a well; *whose* branches run over the wall: The archers have sorely grieved him, and shot *at him*, and hated him: But his bow abode in strength, and the arms of his hands were made strong by the hands of the mighty *God* of Jacob; (from thence *is* the shepherd, the stone of Israel:) *Even* by the God of thy father, who shall help thee; and by the Almighty, who shall bless thee with blessings of heaven above, blessings of the deep that lieth under, blessings of the breasts, and of the womb: The blessings of thy father have prevailed above the blessings of my progenitors unto the utmost bound of the everlasting hills: they shall be on the head of Joseph, and on the crown of the head of him that was separate from his brethren."
- a. This son of Jacob is called a fruitful bough growing by a well whose branches extend over the wall. "Such a healthy, thriving, full-grown, well-supported, fruit-bearing vine well portrays the fruitful sturdy tribe of Joseph or Ephraim and Manasseh" (Leupold, p.1194). This description aptly fits Joseph, the man, also. He was there when his people needed him the most, and supplied all their necessities.
- b. This description paints an entirely different picture. His enemies would be many, and would press him sore; but he would be able to defend himself. Because God would strengthen his arms, he would be able to succeed against the enemy.
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- c. Jacob promises Joseph that the God of his fathers would help him. The blessings he would receive would be truly great, including rain, sunshine and pleasant breezes (from heaven above), those which spring from the deep recesses of the earth, and blessings of the breast and womb (an abundant offspring). "Spiritually they never excelled. It was among the tribe of Ephraim that one of its sons, Jeroboam, instituted the calf worship, whereby he 'made Israel to sin'" (Leupold, p.1197).
- d. "It is difficult at first to determine the exact import of the expression 'the blessings of thy father.' Is the genitive 'of thy father' objective or subjective, i.e., 'the blessing that thy father bestows,' then Jacob's word would convey the thought: I can bless more potently than my own forefathers. That would be presumption on Jacob's part. There is left the objective genitive, i.e., 'the blessings that thy father received.' Then the following statement involves: God has blessed me more abundantly than my fathers—a word spoken, indeed, in all humility in the sense of, 'Lord, I am not worthy'" (ibid.). "On the crown of the head of him that was separate from his brethren" is a reference to the disfavor with which Joseph's brothers viewed him.
- e. In the preceding verses, Jacob used several names and descriptions of God.
 - 1) The Mighty One of Jacob.
 - a) Psalms 132:2: "How he swore unto the LORD, *and* vowed unto the mighty *God* of Jacob."
 - b) Psalms 132:5: "Until I find out a place for the LORD, an habitation for the mighty *God* of Jacob."
 - c) Isaiah 49:16: "Behold, I have graven thee upon the palms of *my* hands; thy walls *are* continually before me."
 - d) Isaiah 60:16: "Thou shalt also suck the milk of the Gentiles, and shalt suck the breast of kings: and thou shalt know that I the LORD *am* thy Saviour and thy Redeemer, the mighty One of Jacob."
 - 2) The Shepherd.
 - a) Psalms 23: "The LORD *is* my shepherd; I shall not want. He maketh me to lie down in green pastures: he leadeth me beside the still waters. He restoreth my soul: he leadeth me in the paths of righteousness for his name's sake. Yea, though I walk through the valley of the shadow of death, I will fear no evil: for thou *art* with me; thy rod and thy staff they comfort me. Thou preparest a table before me in the presence of mine enemies: thou anointest my head with oil; my cup runneth over. Surely goodness and mercy shall follow me all the days of my life: and I will dwell in the house of the LORD for ever."
 - b) Psalms 80:1: "Give ear, O Shepherd of Israel, thou that leadest Joseph like a flock; thou that dwellest *between* the cherubims, shine forth."
 - c) Ezekiel 34:11-16: "For thus saith the Lord GOD; Behold, I, *even* I, will both search my sheep, and seek them out. As a shepherd seeketh out his flock in the day that he is among his sheep *that are* scattered; so will I seek out my sheep, and will deliver them out of all places where they have been scattered in the cloudy and dark day. And I will bring them out from the people, and gather them from the countries, and will bring them to their own land, and feed them upon the mountains of Israel by the rivers, and in all the inhabited places of the country. I will feed them in a good pasture, and upon the high mountains of Israel shall their fold be: there shall they lie in a good fold, and *in* a fat pasture shall they feed upon the mountains of Israel. I will feed my flock, and I will cause them to lie down, saith the Lord GOD. I will seek that which was lost, and bring again that which was driven away, and will bind up *that which was* broken, and will strengthen that which was sick: but I will destroy the fat and the strong; I will feed them with judgment."
 - 3) The Stone of Israel.
 - a) Deuteronomy 32:4: "*He is* the Rock, his work *is* perfect: for all his ways *are* judgment: a God of truth and without iniquity, just and right *is* he."
 - b) Deuteronomy 32:15: "But Jeshurun waxed fat, and kicked: thou art waxen fat, thou art grown thick, thou art covered *with fatness*; then he forsook God *which* made him, and lightly esteemed the Rock of his salvation."
 - c) Deuteronomy 32:18: "Of the Rock *that* begat thee thou art unmindful, and hast forgotten God that formed thee."
 - d) Deuteronomy 32:30-31: "How should one chase a thousand, and two put ten thousand to flight, except their Rock had sold them, and the LORD had shut them up? For their rock *is* not as our Rock, even our enemies themselves *being* judges."
 - e) Psalms 18:2: "The LORD *is* my rock, and my fortress, and my deliverer; my God, my strength, in whom I will trust; my buckler, and the horn of my salvation, *and* my high tower."

- 4) The God of thy Father: "And God said moreover unto Moses, Thus shalt thou say unto the children of Israel, The LORD God of your fathers, the God of Abraham, the God of Isaac, and the God of Jacob, hath sent me unto you: this *is* my name for ever, and this *is* my memorial unto all generations" (Ex. 3:15).
- 5) God Almighty.
 - a) Genesis 17:1: "And when Abram was ninety years old and nine, the LORD appeared to Abram, and said unto him, I *am* the Almighty God; walk before me, and be thou perfect."
 - b) Genesis 28:3: "And God Almighty bless thee, and make thee fruitful, and multiply thee, that thou mayest be a multitude of people."
 - c) Genesis 35:11: "And God said unto him, I *am* God Almighty: be fruitful and multiply; a nation and a company of nations shall be of thee, and kings shall come out of thy loins."
 - d) Genesis 43:14: "And God Almighty give you mercy before the man, that he may send away your other brother, and Benjamin. If I be bereaved of *my children*, I am bereaved."
 - e) Exodus 6:3: "And I appeared unto Abraham, unto Isaac, and unto Jacob, by *the name of* God Almighty, but by my name JEHOVAH was I not known to them."
13. Verse 27: "Benjamin shall ravin *as* a wolf: in the morning he shall devour the prey, and at night he shall divide the spoil."
 - a. Jacob intended no criticism of his youngest son. Benjamin would be successful in the ferocious manner in which they would deal with the enemy. Among those of this tribe who lived up to this standard were Ehud (Judges 3:15) and Saul (I Sam. 11).
 - b. The whole tribe had this characteristic, although not always in the right cause (cf. Judges 20). Saul of Tarsus was a member of this tribe (Phil. 3:5). He was fearless and strong in his dealings with enemies of the gospel.
 - c. The last part of the verse depicts him as always having prey. In the morning he devours his prey, and in the evening, changing the figure, he divides the spoil.
- D. Genesis 49:28-33: Jacob Issues his Final Charge to his Sons, and Dies.
 1. Verse 28: "All these *are* the twelve tribes of Israel: and this *is it* that their father spake unto them, and blessed them; every one according to his blessing he blessed them."
 - a. Overall, the statements to the sons were blessings, even though some were words of censure. These twelve sons would have families that would continue, and which would develop into tribes. They would all be blessed in one or more ways.
 - b. "[Every one according to his blessing] That is, guided by the unerring Spirit of prophecy, Jacob now foretold to each of his sons all the important events which should take place during their successive generations, and the predominant characteristic of each tribe, and, at the same time, made some comparatively obscure references to the advent of the Messiah, and the redemption of the world by him" [Adam Clarke's Commentary, Electronic Database. Copyright © 1996 by Biblesoft].
 2. Verses 29-32: "And he charged them, and said unto them, I am to be gathered unto my people: bury me with my fathers in the cave that *is* in the field of Ephron the Hittite, In the cave that *is* in the field of Machpelah, which *is* before Mamre, in the land of Canaan, which Abraham bought with the field of Ephron the Hittite for a possession of a buryingplace. There they buried Abraham and Sarah his wife; there they buried Isaac and Rebekah his wife; and there I buried Leah. The purchase of the field and of the cave that *is* therein *was* from the children of Heth."
 - a. In his final charge, he commanded them to bury his body in Machpelah where his father and grandfather had been entombed. He had already placed Joseph under oath to insure he was buried there, but now he includes all his sons in this demand. Jacob knew that his demise was imminent. He gave them details regarding the burial place perhaps to define to them exactly the location and size of the property that was involved. When they carried their father's body there for burial, the Canaanites were still occupying the land. They would not have to be concerned about any title fights when the whole nation returned to Canaan under Moses and Joshua.
 - b. Notice that Jacob speaks of his deceased people as still existing: I am to be gathered unto my people. He is not speaking in this instance of the disposition of his body, but of his spirit departing to be in company with his forebears. Having his physical remains disposed of in a tomb is one thing, but being gathered to his people is quite another.
 - c. By requesting his body to be interred in Machpelah, Jacob evinces faith in the promises of God that his descendants would take possession of the land. "All three patriarchs wanted their children to have clear

- testimony that they had believed God's promises also in reference to the land that was ultimately to be theirs" (Leupold, p. 1202).
- d. We are told that Rebekah was buried there, a detail that has not been previously revealed.
3. Verse 33: "And when Jacob had made an end of commanding his sons, he gathered up his feet into the bed, and yielded up the ghost, and was gathered unto his people."
 - a. "Jacob's very last act on earth was an act of faith. When the charge is finished, he draws up his feet into his bed. Apparently, he had summoned up his last strength and had sat up in bed to bless his own sons, even as he had done to bless Joseph's sons (48:2). Practically immediately thereafter he 'expired,' whether the process of dying was instantaneous or whether it occupied several hours....Such remarkable instances occur from time to time where men remain in full possession of their faculties to the end and are also entirely certain that their end is just at hand" (ibid.).
 - b. His age is not given at this point, but he had already spoken of it when he was before Pharaoh in Genesis 47:8-9, at which time he was one hundred and thirty years of age. Genesis 47:28 shows that he lived in Egypt for seventeen more years, dying at the age of one hundred and forty-seven. So the earthly life of the last of the three great patriarchs was over.
 - 1) Genesis 47:8-9: "And Pharaoh said unto Jacob, How old *art* thou? And Jacob said unto Pharaoh, The days of the years of my pilgrimage *are* an hundred and thirty years: few and evil have the days of the years of my life been, and have not attained unto the days of the years of the life of my fathers in the days of their pilgrimage."
 - 2) Genesis 47:28: "And Jacob lived in the land of Egypt seventeen years: so the whole age of Jacob was an hundred forty and seven years."
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GENESIS 50

A. Introduction.

1. "This chapter records one of the great actions of faith. Joseph was one of the most popular and successful Prime Ministers (if we may call him that) who ever lived. This man Joseph might indeed have been buried in one of the pyramids, or have received the most elaborate and expensive burial that the wealth of Egypt could provide; but he renounced all of that and took a pledge of his brothers that when they went up out of Egypt into the land God had promised to Abraham, Isaac, and Jacob, they would also remember to carry his bones along with them and bury him in the land of Canaan..." (Coffman, p.575).
2. "The story of Jacob's burial is told in a rather detailed fashion, more so than is any other burial except Sarah's in the book of Genesis (chapter 23), because it gives a fine example of faith on the part of the patriarchs. Jacob desired burial in the land of promise, thereby testifying to his faith in the promise....The entire material of the chapter is an excellent preparation for the book of Exodus" (Leupold, p.1204).

B. Genesis 50:1-6: Preparations for Jacob's Burial.

1. Verse 1: "And Joseph fell upon his father's face, and wept upon him, and kissed him."
 - a. Joseph, in his great sorrow, fell on his father's face and kissed him. This took place immediately after Israel's death, so the chapter division may not be at the best point. It appears that all the sons were present when Israel died since his death came soon after he concluded the blessing he gave them in the previous chapter.
 - b. Joseph's deeply felt grief is specifically mentioned because he and his father were so close. It fulfilled the promise of Genesis 46:4: "I will go down with thee into Egypt; and I will also surely bring thee up *again*: and Joseph shall put his hand upon thine eyes."
2. Verses 2-3: "And Joseph commanded his servants the physicians to embalm his father: and the physicians embalmed Israel. And forty days were fulfilled for him; for so are fulfilled the days of those which are embalmed: and the Egyptians mourned for him threescore and ten days."
 - a. A man of Joseph's importance had a retinue of physicians assigned to him. These included men possessing the unique knowledge and skill for embalming possessed by the Egyptians. To these men Joseph gave orders that his father's body be embalmed. This was needed due to the long period of mourning anticipated, and the lengthy journey for the burial in Canaan.
 - b. Forty days of mourning were devoted toward the patriarch, and seventy days were required for the embalming process. These days were no doubt concurrent. The embalming indicated is the process of mummification.
3. Verses 4-6: "And when the days of his mourning were past, Joseph spake unto the house of Pharaoh, saying, If now I have found grace in your eyes, speak, I pray you, in the ears of Pharaoh, saying, My father made me swear, saying, Lo, I die: in my grave which I have digged for me in the land of Canaan, there shalt thou bury me. Now therefore let me go up, I pray thee, and bury my father, and I will come again. And Pharaoh said, Go up, and bury thy father, according as he made thee swear."
 - a. Following the period of mourning, Joseph asked permission of Pharaoh to transport his father's body to Canaan for burial. He told the king of his father's special request that he be buried there, in the grave Jacob had dug. The patriarch was to be buried in the cave of Machpelah, in a recess (declivity) which he had caused to be hewn.
 - b. Joseph made his request to Pharaoh's household, rather than directly to the king personally. We are not told why he chose this course, but we may be sure that it was the more reasonable course.
 - c. Pharaoh quickly gave assent to the proposal.

C. Genesis 50:7-14: The Burial of Israel.

1. Verses 7-8: "And Joseph went up to bury his father: and with him went up all the servants of Pharaoh, the elders of his house, and all the elders of the land of Egypt, And all the house of Joseph, and his brethren, and his father's house: only their little ones, and their flocks, and their herds, they left in the land of Goshen."
 - a. Details regarding who were in the great company which went up to Canaan are given here. The servants of Pharaoh, elders in his house and elders of the land of Egypt; all the house of Joseph; all the sons of Jacob and their offspring; only the little ones of the family and the flocks and herds remained behind. The journey would be too difficult for all of these to be taken, and besides that, their remaining behind would assure Pharaoh that the Israelites would return to Egypt.
 - b. Notice the one to whom all this honor was being directed. Jacob was not a great king, nor was he some famous statesman; he was not a military hero. He was simply a humble servant of God. He would not have

been given this great tribute had it not been for his illustrious son; but who was his son and why was he held in high esteem? God had given him the ability to interpret the dreams of Pharaoh, and thus provided the means for avoiding the full destruction the famine would have otherwise brought.

2. Verses 9-11: "And there went up with him both chariots and horsemen: and it was a very great company. And they came to the threshingfloor of Atad, which *is* beyond Jordan, and there they mourned with a great and very sore lamentation: and he made a mourning for his father seven days. And when the inhabitants of the land, the Canaanites, saw the mourning in the floor of Atad, they said, This *is* a grievous mourning to the Egyptians: wherefore the name of it was called Abelmizraim, which *is* beyond Jordan."
 - a. The company had with it chariots and horsemen, and was truly a very great company. The chariots may have been the wagons to carry the people and supplies; the horsemen was a military escort to insure safety of passage. They came in time to the threshingfloor of Atad which is said to be "beyond Jordan," a term usually referring to the area east of Jordan.
 - b. The route taken would have avoided the land of Philistia, who would have likely construed the great company as an Egyptian invasion. Another period of mourning was had for Jacob, lasting for seven days. The mourning offered by such a large company so impressed the Canaanites in the vicinity that they gave a new name to the place: Abelmizraim ("The Mourning of the Egyptians").
3. Verses 12-14: "And his sons did unto him according as he commanded them: For his sons carried him into the land of Canaan, and buried him in the cave of the field of Machpelah, which Abraham bought with the field for a possession of a buryingplace of Ephron the Hittite, before Mamre. And Joseph returned into Egypt, he, and his brethren, and all that went up with him to bury his father, after he had buried his father."
 - a. Jacob's sons fulfilled their father's request in that they carried him into the promised land and buried him in Machpelah. It appears that only the family made this final leg of the journey; the rest of the company seems to have stayed at the camp until the family returned.
 - b. The Egyptian officials accompanying Joseph may have gone with him to Machpelah. Jacob was buried with his lawful wife, Leah. Rachel had died on the journey from Paddan-aram, and was buried enroute to Canaan.
 - c. Joseph thence returned to Egypt, he and his brethren, and all the rest of the great company.

D. Genesis 50:15-21: Joseph Reassures His Brethren.

1. Verse 15: "And when Joseph's brethren saw that their father was dead, they said, Joseph will per-adventure hate us, and will certainly requite us all the evil which we did unto him."
 - a. Following the return to Goshen, the brethren (the ten) began to worry that perhaps Joseph will take vengeance on them for the evil they had done to him (Gen. 37). They assumed that Joseph had dealt kindly with them only for their father's sake. This is a case of guilty conscience.
 - b. Josephus claimed that this episode took place prior to the return to Egypt. The time factor is unimportant; it is important that they thought that their brother might turn against them and avenge himself on them now that Jacob was dead.
 2. Verses 16-17: "And they sent a messenger unto Joseph, saying, Thy father did command before he died, saying, So shall ye say unto Joseph, Forgive, I pray thee now, the trespass of thy brethren, and their sin; for they did unto thee evil: and now, we pray thee, forgive the trespass of the servants of the God of thy father. And Joseph wept when they spake unto him."
 - a. They advised Joseph of their apprehension through a messenger. They plainly admitted their guilt, something they had not clearly done before (as far as the record reports). Their approach was to assert that Jacob, before his death, had directed them to make this request of Joseph. Having stated their father's request, they added their own to it by pleading for him to forgive them. When Joseph heard them, he wept. We are not otherwise told whether Jacob had made the statement assigned to him. In the absence of information to the contrary, we accept their claim at face value.
 - b. It would be a disservice to these penitent men to assert that they had made up the story. Jacob knew the characters of his sons, especially Joseph's. There is no reason to think he mistrusted the sincerity of Joseph's reconciliation with his brothers. The direction he gave his ten sons may have been to lead them to fully confess their wrong-doing so that any remaining doubt in their minds about the reconciliation might be relieved. Also, confession is good for the conscience.
 3. Verses 18-21: "And his brethren also went and fell down before his face; and they said, Behold, we *be* thy servants. And Joseph said unto them, Fear not: for *am* I in the place of God? But as for you, ye thought evil against me; *but* God meant it unto good, to bring to pass, as *it is* this day, to save much people alive. Now
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therefore fear ye not: I will nourish you, and your little ones. And he comforted them, and spake kindly unto them."

- a. The brothers fell down before Joseph and placed themselves before him as his servants. Joseph's response does honor to his spirituality: he states by a rhetorical question that he is not in the place of God (to exact vengeance—cf. Rom. 12:17ff). He tells them they have no reason to be fearful of any reprisal. He again states as he had already done in Genesis 45:5-8, that God's hand had been behind the events which led him into Egypt: "Now therefore be not grieved, nor angry with yourselves, that ye sold me hither: for God did send me before you to preserve life. For these two years *hath* the famine *been* in the land: and yet *there are* five years, in the which *there shall* neither *be* earing nor harvest. And God sent me before you to preserve you a posterity in the earth, and to save your lives by a great deliverance. So now *it was* not you *that* sent me hither, but God: and he hath made me a father to Pharaoh, and lord of all his house, and a ruler throughout all the land of Egypt."
- b. He is not saying that God is responsible for their mistreatment of Joseph, but that while they intended him evil, God worked it out to the benefit of all. Their evil God turned into a blessing. He then again assures them that he will continue to nourish them and their little ones. Thus did Joseph set their hearts at ease as he spoke these kind words.

E. Genesis 50:22-26: Joseph's Death in Egypt.

1. Verses 22-23: "And Joseph dwelt in Egypt, he, and his father's house: and Joseph lived an hundred and ten years. And Joseph saw Ephraim's children of the third *generation*: the children also of Machir the son of Manasseh were brought up upon Joseph's knees."
 - a. Joseph lived to be a hundred and ten years of age. His life was long enough that he saw Ephraim's children of the third generation: meaning Ephraim's grandchildren or perhaps even his great-grandchildren. Ephraim and Manasseh were born while Joseph was still in his thirties.
 - b. In the next seventy-five years ($35 + 75 = 110$) three other generations of his family could have been born. Joseph lived long enough to bear upon his knees all these generations. Machir was head of a powerful group in Manasseh's line.
 2. Verses 24-26: "And Joseph said unto his brethren, I die: and God will surely visit you, and bring you out of this land unto the land which he sware to Abraham, to Isaac, and to Jacob. And Joseph took an oath of the children of Israel, saying, God will surely visit you, and ye shall carry up my bones from hence. So Joseph died, *being* an hundred and ten years old: and they embalmed him, and he was put in a coffin in Egypt."
 - a. Joseph told his brethren, as he neared the end of his earthly sojourn, that God would surely bring them out of Egypt into the land of promise. He required an oath of them that when that time came that they were to bear his remains thence to be buried in that land. "And the bones of Joseph, which the children of Israel brought up out of Egypt, buried they in Shechem, in a parcel of ground which Jacob bought of the sons of Hamor the father of Shechem for an hundred pieces of silver: and it became the inheritance of the children of Joseph" (Josh. 24:32).
 - b. This verse concludes the marvelous book of Genesis, and summarizes the details of Joseph's death by simply stating that when he died, they embalmed his body, and placed it in a coffin, preparatory to the great Exodus from Egypt.
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