

The Book of Beginnings

GENESIS



BIBLE STUDY COURSE BY
RICHARD "RUSTY" DAVID RUTHERFORD

Genesis: The Book of Beginnings

The Mysterious Providence of God

Then the earth shook and quaked. Even the foundations of the mountains trembled. They shook violently because he was angry. Smoke went up from his nostrils and a raging fire came out of his mouth. Glowing coals flared up from it.

He spread apart the Heavens and came down with a dark cloud under his feet. He rode on one of the angels as he flew and he soared on the wings of the wind. He made darkness his hiding place and the dark rain clouds his covering.

Out of the brightness in front of him, those rain clouds passed by with hailstones and lightning. **YHWH** thundered in the Heavens. The Most High made his voice heard with hailstones and lightning. He shot his arrows and scattered them. He flashed streaks of lightning and threw them into confusion. **Psalm 18:7-14** by King David

Written and taught by
Richard “Rusty” Rutherford

Columbus, Texas

2021

Copyright Notices and Policies

Scripture text is the **GOD’S WORD** translation. © 1995 by God’s Word to the Nations. All rights reserved. Used with permission.

All other text is © 2021 The Sudan Family Foundation. All rights reserved. Other than as specifically authorized below, no part of this course book may be reproduced, distributed, or transmitted in any form or by any means, including photocopying or other electronic or mechanical method, without prior written permission, except in the case of brief quotations embodied in critical reviews and certain other noncommercial uses permitted by copyright law. For permission requests, please email accessthebible@gmail.com.

You may use this course book for your own personal study or for teaching or participating in a Bible study group or class with others. You may download a copy of this course book to your computer, print or otherwise make paper photocopies for use in your own personal study or use in a Bible study group or class. If you charge for any copies, you may only charge for the cost of copying.

You may NOT make changes to the content of this course book and then attribute the course material to Mr. Rutherford.

Table of Contents

Introduction		9
Day 1	God Creates His Creation	
	Chapters 1:1-2:3	14
TOLDOT 1	The Account of the Heavens and the Earth	18
Day 2	A More Detailed Account of God and His Creation	
	Chapters 2:4-25	20
Day 3	Man and Woman Disobey God	
	Chapters 3:1-24	23
Day 4	The Ungodly and Godly Lines of Humans	
	Chapters 4:1-26	26
TOLDOT 2	This is the Account of Adam and his descendants:	29
Day 5	The Sons of Adam	
	Chapters 5:1-32	30
Day 6	Humans Are Evil	
	Chapters 6:1-8	33
TOLDAT 3	This is the Account of Noah and His Descendants	35
Day 7	The Great Flood and Its Aftermath	
	Chapters 6:1-9:28	36
TOLDOT 4	This is the Account of Noah's sons Shem, Ham, and Japeth	44
Day 8	Descendants of Noah and the Tower of Babel	
	Chapters 10:1-11:9	45
TOLDAT 5	This is the Account of Shem and his descendants:	48
Day 9	Descendants of Shem	
	Chapters 11:10-32	49
TOLDAT 6	This is the Account of Terah and his descendants:	51
Day 10	Terah Moves to Haran	
	Chapters 11:27-32	52
Day 11	Abram Leaves Haran for Canaan	
	Chapters 12:1-14:24	54
Day 12	YHWH Tells Abram His Own Son Will Be His Heir	
	Chapters 15:1-16:16	61

Day 13	YHWH Tell Abraham Sarah Will Birth a Son Chapters 17:1-18:32	66
Day 14	YHWH Destroys Sodom and Gomorrah Chapters 19:1-21:32	73
Day 15	YHWH Radically Tests Abraham Chapters 21:1-23:19	79
Day 16	Abraham Finds a Wife for Isaac and for Himself Chapters 24:1-25:11	87
TOLDAT 7	This is the Account of the descendants of Abraham's son Ishmael	94
Day 17	The Twelve Tribes of Ishmael Chapters 25:12-18	95
TOLDAT 8	This is the Account of Abraham's son Isaac and his descendants.	96
Day 18	Isaac and His Twins: Esau and Jacob Chapters 25:19-26:34	97
Day 19	Jacob Steals Esau's Blessing Chapters 27:1-28:22	103
Day 20	Jacob Loves Rachel and Begins a Family Chapters 29:1-31:55	111
Day 21	Jacob Reconciles with God and with Esau Chapters 32:1-32	123
Day 22	Jacob Meets Esau Chapters 33:1-35:29	127
TOLDAT 9	This is the Account of Esau, that is Edom, and his descendants	135
Day 23	The Land of Esau Called Edom Chapter 36:1-43	136
TOLDOT 10	This is the Account of Jacob and His Descendants:	139
Day 24	Jacob Favored Joseph Disgusting His Brothers Chapter 37:1-41:23	140
Day 25	Joseph Becomes Prime Minister of Egypt Chapters 41:1-57	150
Day 26	Jacob Sends His Sons to Egypt to Buy Grain Chapters 42:1-43:34	155
Day 27	Joseph Reveals Himself to His Brothers Chapters 44:1-45:28	163

Day 28	Jacob and His Family Moves to Egypt Chapters 46:1-47:31	169
Day 29	Jacob Blesses Everyone Chapters 48:1-49:33	176
Day 30	Joseph Forgives His Brothers Chapters 50:1-26	182
EPILOGUE	Moses Writes <u>Genesis</u>	186

Notes on This Bible Translation and My Editorial Insertions

The translation used in this study is the *GOD'S WORD* translation. © 1995 by God's Word to the Nations Mission Society (GWT). The GWT translation is an attempt to make the English text of the Bible developed in the 1500's more readable to modern Americans. It is not a paraphrase, but it has retranslated the oldest manuscripts into modern American English at about newspaper level using "closest natural equivalence". The Bible is meant by God to be understood. Therefore, using modern language is essential.

I have used this translation in my teaching since 1996 and have found it very accurate. I love the King James Version and so when there are variances in the GWT, I may insert within the Bible text the original transliterated Hebrew or Greek word in **10-point bold-face type** followed by an English word to help better understand the meaning of the passage. English words added to aid in understanding are also in 10-point type but are not in bold. Lastly, if the original Hebrew or Greek word appears in the Bible 10 times or less, I may also indicate how often it appears (e.g., 10x or 2x, etc.). Here's an example from John 11:33 and the raising of Lazarus involving three Greek words:

³³When Jesus saw her crying and the Jews who were crying with her were deeply moved *embrimaomai*-groaned 5x *pneuma*-spirit and troubled *tarasso*-agitated.

This has shown me that the GWT translation is remarkable for finding the right meanings to phrases that are often difficult to translate.

Notes on Font Usage

All text is in the Big Caslon font. Scripture text is in regular 14-point. If I have inserted parallel Scripture quotations, they are also in regular 14-point, but are slightly further indented (.08) than the main Scripture text and are enclosed by brackets []. All Scripture citations are in **12-point bold face**. All my comments and questions to think about are in regular 12-point.

Author's Preface



A very good friend of mine has always said that Genesis is his favorite book because without understanding this book, one cannot understand the Bible.

Moses organized this book by dividing it into ten generations or *toldots*

1. The Account of the Heavens and the Earth.
2. The Account of the descendants of Adam.
3. The Account of the descendants Noah
4. The Account of the sons of Noah
5. The Account of the sons of Shem
6. The Account of the sons of Terah
7. The Account of the sons Ishmael
8. The Account of the sons of Isaac
9. The Account of the sons of Esau
10. The Account of the sons of Jacob

I have divided this book further by 26 events called Days. God has a plan for his Creation and his plan will be fulfilled. Graciously, God has revealed part of his plan to mankind through human writers he inspired through his Holy Spirit. We call this plan the Bible that we have divided into two testaments and these testaments into 66 books.

The first book is Genesis that Jews call simply *bereshit* or beginning. It is the first of five books written by Moses that Jews call the Towrah. It consists of Genesis, Exodus, Leviticus, Numbers, and Deuteronomy.

Some of these Days or events are long and some are short. Out of all of the stories in the history of his people, Moses selected these stories to include in this first book of the Bible. We wonder why some are included. There are many mysteries in Genesis that we can't fully understand. While Moses probably lived his 120 years from 1350 -1230 BC, these stories in Genesis are much earlier. The Bible says the Hebrews were in Egypt 400 years. But these stories go back long before that.

A good question to ask is *when* Moses composed Genesis? A better question to ask is *why* Moses composed Genesis? I believe it is because he wanted God's people to know why God selected the Hebrews as his Chosen People. He also wanted to show them how God developed their ancient ancestors who were only ordinary human beings as they are. As God developed Noah, Abraham, and Jacob, so he also developed the current people called Israelites and later Jews.

All of these people were part of God's plan to reconcile all God's human creatures to himself so that he could extend his glory through them by having them reflect his glory back to him.

The Name of God in Genesis and in the Pentateuch

God's personal name **YHWH** that he revealed to Moses when he met him at the burning bush Exodus 3:14 can be translated *I AM That I AM* and *I WILL BE Whom I WILL BE*. In Hebrew, it is simply *hayah* meaning *being*. Jews feel this name is too sacred to be written or said so they substitute the word LORD. This word appears 208 times in the KJV version of Genesis. It represents the immanent nature of God, his desire to have a relationship with humans.

The generic name *God* in Hebrew *'elohim* appears 218 times in the KJV version of Genesis. It represents the transcendent nature of God, that he is wholly other, different from humans. God is also called *God Almighty* or *'el saday* six times. God is also called *'el* 8x, and *'adonay* or Lord, a word that appears 8x.

Moses will use **YHWH** 162x in Genesis, 397x in Exodus, 311x in Leviticus, 396x in Numbers, and 548x in Deuteronomy. Only Jeremiah 710x and Psalms 687x exceed this use. Isaiah will use it 425 x and Ezekiel 217x,

Moses will use *'elohim* 218x in Genesis, 139x in Exodus, 53x in Leviticus, 27x in Numbers, and 374x in Deuteronomy. Again, only Psalms 365x and Jeremiah 145x come close. Isaiah uses it 94x and Ezekiel 36x.

Moses will combine the words *Lord God* 28x in Genesis, 14x in Exodus, and 9x in Deuteronomy. Moses will use the expression *the Lord thy God* one time in Genesis, 9x in Exodus, 5x in Leviticus, and 196x in Deuteronomy.

It should be obvious that God is the main actor in Genesis and in most of the Towrah. Therefore, I have indicated the Hebrew words used for God's name throughout the text. Hopefully, this will give you an appreciation of how actively God is working throughout Genesis.

Genesis is a Book of Many Blessings and a Few Curses

Moses uses the word *barak* or *bless* 73x in Genesis, 6x in Exodus, 2x in Leviticus, 17x in Numbers, and 39x in Deuteronomy. The word appears the most in Psalms 75x. Moses uses the word *berakah* in Genesis 16x, Exodus 1x, Leviticus 1x, and in Deuteronomy 12x. The word appears 9x in the Psalms. The word *'asar* meaning *blessed* appears once in Genesis.

In Genesis, Moses will use words translated *curse* *qalal* 2x, *'arar* 8x, *qelalah* 2x.

The Nation Israel's Story Begins with the Three Patriarchs

The patriarchs Abraham, Isaac, and Jacob play a big part in the story of the nation called Israel. The phrase *Abraham, Isaac, and Jacob* appears in **Genesis 50:24**; **Deuteronomy 1:8**; **9:5**; **9:27**; **2 Kings 13:23**; and **Jeremiah 33:26**. Abraham lived 175 years. **Genesis 25:7**. Isaac lived 180 years. **Genesis 35:28**. Jacob lived 147 years. **Genesis 47:27**

God Changes Jacob's Name to Israel but His Name Jacob Sticks.

Jacob meets God at the Jabbok River just before he meets his brother Esau. There he wrestled *'abaq* 2x until dawn. At dawn, Jacob asked the man to bless him. The man said:

[Your name will no longer be Jacob but Israel because you have struggled *sara*-power 2x with God and with man and you have won *yakol*-prevailed. **Genesis 32:28**]

Later, God confirms this name change with Jacob at Bethel:

[God said to him: Your name is Jacob. You will no longer be called Jacob, but your name will be Israel. So he named him Israel. **Genesis 35:10**]

However, Israel will be called by the name *Jacob* in the Book of Genesis 27x after that. Apparently, the new name really didn't stick. Even God calls him Jacob twice at Bethel. **Genesis 46:2.** After God renamed Abram Abraham, the patriarch is always then called Abraham. But not so with Jacob. Why is that?

This is why I think the character that deserves the most profound or intense consideration and study in Genesis is Jacob. I have a Jacob in my life and perhaps, if I can better understand the Jacob of the Bible, I can better understand my Jacob.

Shalom in Jesus,

Rusty

Introduction

Abraham was famous for meeting God and living at four places: Shechem, Bethel, Hebron, and Beersheba. The three patriarchs, Abraham, Isaac, and Jacob, would return to these four places. Bethel is located just north of Jerusalem.

The Book of Genesis has two parts: Chapters 1-11 that is called the Pre-History. Chapters 12-50 that is called the History of the Nation of Israel. I have divided it by events called Days. Days 1-6 are the Pre-History and Days 7-26 are the History.

The History begins with **YHWH** or God calling Abram from his home in Haran in Mesopotamia to travel south 400 miles to Shechem in Canaan. This is a new land where Abram was to create a new nation whose descendants would bless the earth. **Genesis 12:3**. At Shechem, in the center of Canaan, Abram would meet **YHWH** and build an altar. Abram would travel south to Bethel where he would meet **YHWH** and build an altar. Then he would travel to Hebron where he would make his home.

Twenty-five years later, when Abraham was 100 years old, his wife Sarah at 90 years old would birth Abraham's son Isaac as **YHWH** had promised. Later Isaac, whose wife Rebekah was from Haran, would birth twins: Esau and Jacob. **YHWH** told Rebekah the older Esau would serve the younger Jacob. Rebekah then encouraged and helped Jacob to trick his father Isaac into giving him the firstborn's blessing. Esau was furious and planned to kill Jacob. So Rebekah sent him to Haran in Mesopotamia to her relatives, including her brother Laban.

On the way, **YHWH** met Jacob at Bethel and promised to be with him and bring him home to Canaan. Jacob had 20 years of adventures in Haran sparring with a greater trickster than himself – Uncle Laban. During this time, Jacob acquired two wives and two concubines creating 11 sons and one daughter. All this time, **YHWH** was protecting Jacob and blessing him.

After 20 years, Jacob had to get away from unethical Uncle Laban. In fact, **YHWH** tells him to leave. So he leaves with his wife, children, and animals and returns to Canaan. But then Jacob had to deal with his older brother Esau whom he had deceived. When he learned Esau was coming with 400 men, Jacob panicked. One night at the Jabbok River, he met an angel from **YHWH** with whom he wrestled all night. In the morning, Jacob demanded a blessing from the man. The man changed his name from Jacob to Israel meaning *he it is who struggles with God and man and prevails*.

Jacob meets Esau who reconciles with Jacob. For some unknown reason, Jacob does not immediately return to his father Isaac at Hebron, but goes to Shechem where his grandfather Abraham had first met with **YHWH** and built an altar. There Jacob's daughter Dinah is raped by the son of the Shechemite leader so two of Jacob's sons kill all the men in the town. Jacob then goes to Bethel where **YHWH** meets him and confirms his name change to Israel. Then the family departs for Hebron to see his father Isaac.

On the way, his favorite wife Rachel dies while giving birth to her second son Benjamin. Jacob settles in Hebron and his father Isaac dies at 180 years old. Seventeen years later, Joseph, Jacob's favorite son by Rachel, who was deeply favored by his father but resented by his brothers, is kidnapped by the brothers and sold to Arab traders going to Egypt. This son is remarkable as **YHWH** gives him dreams and their interpretation.

While Joseph is employed as a slave in Egypt, **YHWH** favors him enabling everything he does to prosper. But his master's wife accuses him of rape and he is put in prison. While in prison he interprets dreams for two of the prisoners.

Finally, this talent is made known to Pharaoh, the King of Egypt. When Pharaoh has a terrible dream, Joseph is called to interpret. His excellent explanation and plan to counter the famine coming from **YHWH** causes the Pharaoh to make Joseph second in command of all Egypt. Joseph is now 30 years old. He has been in Egypt 13 years, and constantly gives **YHWH** all the credit for his success.

Later in Canaan, the world-wide famine affects Jacob and his family. So Jacob sends ten of his sons to Egypt. He refuses to send Benjamin for this is his remaining favorite son. The brothers meet Joseph who is selling grain, but don't recognize him. Jacob speaks harshly to them accusing them of being spies. He puts them in jail for three days. He arrests Simeon and sends them back saying they must bring their younger brother with them if they want more grain.

The brothers tell Jacob. Jacob is sad, but declares Benjamin will not go to Egypt. Yet the famine was so severe Jacob now says: Go to Egypt. But we must take Benjamin, they said. Jacob replied: May God Almighty make him merciful so he will send Benjamin and Simeon back. If I lose my children, I lose my children. **Genesis 43:14**

When the brothers come to Joseph, Joseph commanded them to go to his house. When Joseph saw Benjamin he leaves the room and cries. Joseph orders a banquet. Then he sends them all back home but has a servant place his silver cup in their grain sack. They had only gone a short way when Joseph's servant comes and searches their sacks. The silver cup was in Benjamin's sack.

They are all brought before Joseph. Judah pleaded for Benjamin. His loss would kill our father Jacob, he says. Let me be taken as your slave instead. Joseph dismisses all the Egyptian servants. Then he says: I am Joseph, your brother. **YHWH** sent me ahead of you to save lives. You didn't send me here. **YHWH** sent me to Egypt. Then Joseph says: Go back to your father and tell him to come live in Egypt. He should bring his family and live with me.

Jacob was stunned when he was told. He says: You have convinced me that my son Joseph is still alive. I will go and see him before I die. **Genesis 45:28**. Jacob remembered that **YHWH** had told Isaac not to go to Egypt. So he travels to Beersheba where Abraham and Isaac had lived. **YHWH** tells him not to be afraid to go to Egypt. I will make you a great nation there, he said.

Jacob and his family move to Egypt. The number of Jacob's direct descendants was 66. The grand total of people in Jacob's household who went to Egypt was 70. **Genesis 36:26**. Jacob met the Pharaoh who asked him about his life. Jacob said:

[The length of my stay on earth has been 130 years. The years of my life have been few and difficult, fewer than my ancestors' years. **Genesis 47:9**]

Jacob lives in Egypt 17 years, so he lived a total of 147 years. He blesses Joseph's two sons Manasseh and Ephraim so they too would receive land in Canaan when they returned. Then he blesses Joseph, the son of his favorite wife Rachel:

[May God *'elohim*, in whose presence my grandfather Abraham and my father Isaac walked; may God *'elohim* who has been my shepherd all my life to this very day; may the Messenger *mal'ak*—angel, who has rescued me from all evil bless, these boys. May they be called by my name and by the name of my grandfather Abraham and my father Isaac. May they have many children on earth. **Genesis 48:15-16**]

Before his dies, Jacob blessed his sons. His longest blessing was for Joseph:

[Joseph is a fruitful tree, a fruitful tree by a spring, with branches climbing over a wall. Archers provoked him, shot at him, and attacked him. But his bow stayed steady, and his arms remained limber, because of the help of the Mighty One of Jacob, because of the name of the Shepherd, the Rock of Israel, because of the God *'elohim* of your father who helps you, because of the Almighty *saday* who gives you blessings

from the Heavens above, blessings from the deep springs below the ground, blessings from breasts and womb.

The blessings of your father are greater than the blessings of the oldest mountains and the riches of the ancient hills. May these blessings rest on the head of Joseph, on the crown of the prince among his brothers.

Genesis 49:22-26]

Pharaoh allows Joseph to travel to Canaan to bury his father in the cave in the field of Machpelah in Hebron where Abraham, Isaac and their wives are buried.

Genesis ends with Jacob's sons falsely saying Jacob said before he died:

[This is what you should say to Joseph: I'm begging you to forgive the crime and the sin your brothers committed against you. What they did was very evil. **Genesis 50:17**]

Joseph replies to them:

[Don't be afraid. I can't take God's *'elohim* place. Even though you planned evil against me, God *'elohim* planned good to come out of it. This was to keep many people alive, as he is doing now. Don't be afraid! I will provide for you and your children. **Genesis 50:19-21.**]

Joseph's last words to his brothers were these:

[I'm about to die. God *'elohim* will definitely take care of you and take you out of this land to the land he swore with an oath to give to Abraham, Isaac, and Jacob. God *'elohim* will definitely take care of you. Be sure to carry my bones back with you. **Genesis 50:24-25**]

The Book of Genesis tells us the story of the beginning of the nation called Israel. However, as we read the following books of Moses –Exodus, Leviticus, Numbers, Deuteronomy – we conclude the nation really should be called the Nation of Jacob. Although **YHWH** was faithful to them, they weren't always faithful to him. They worshiped strange gods and did not follow the rules **YHWH** laid down in his Towrah.

Yet Jacob was the father of Joseph who loved **YHWH** and lived the life **YHWH** wanted him to live. The potential for the nation of Israel to live a godly life was there. Later the

prophets especially Isaiah would talk of a righteous remnant, a faithful few who would love God and live holy lives. From this righteous remnant would come a Messiah, an Anointed One, who would rule not only the nation of the Chosen People in God's name, but the entire world of God's Creation.

Day 1

God Creates His Creation

Genesis 1:1-2:3

¹In the beginning *re'sit* God *'elohim* created *bara'* Heaven *samayim* and earth *'eres*.

²The earth was formless *tou* and empty *bou*, and darkness *hosek* covered the deep water *tehom*. The Spirit *ruah* of God *'elohim* was hovering over the water *mayim*.

³Then God *'elohim* said *'amar*. Let there be light *'or*. So there was light *'or*.
⁴God *'elohim* saw the light was good *tob*. So God *'elohim* separated the light from the darkness. ⁵God *'elohim* named the light *day yom* and the darkness he named *night layil*. There was evening *'ereb*, then morning *boqer* — the first day.

⁶Then God said *'elohim*. Let there be a horizon in the middle of the water in order to separate the water. ⁷So God *'elohim* made the horizon and separated the water above and below the horizon. And so it was. ⁸God *'elohim* named \perp what was above \perp the horizon *sky samayim*. There was evening, then morning—a second day.

⁹Then God *'elohim* said: Let the water under the sky come together in one area and let the dry land appear. And so it was. ¹⁰God *'elohim* named the dry land *earth*. The water which came together he named *sea*. God *'elohim* saw that it was good.

¹¹Then God *'elohim* said: Let the earth produce vegetation: plants bearing seeds, each according to its own type, and fruit trees bearing fruit with seeds, each according to its own type. And so it was. ¹²The earth produced vegetation: plants bearing seeds, each according to its own type, and trees bearing fruit with seeds, each according to its own type. God *'elohim* saw that they were good. ¹³There was evening, then morning—a third day.

¹⁴Then God *'elohim* said: Let there be lights in the sky to separate the day from the night. They will be signs and will mark religious festivals, days, and years. ¹⁵They will be lights in the sky to shine on the earth. And so it was ¹⁶God *'elohim* made the two bright lights: the larger light to rule the day and the smaller light to rule the night. He also made the stars. ¹⁷God *'elohim* put them in the sky to give light to the earth, ¹⁸to dominate the day and the night, and to separate the light from the darkness. God *'elohim* saw that it was good. ¹⁹There was evening, then morning—a fourth day.

²⁰Then God *'elohim* said: Let the water swarm with swimming creatures, and let birds fly through the sky over the earth. ²¹So God *'elohim* created the large sea creatures *tannin*, every type of creature that swims around in the water and every type of flying bird. God *'elohim* saw that they were good. ²²God *'elohim* blessed *barak* them and said: Be fertile, increase in number, fill the sea, and let there be many birds on the earth. ²³There was evening, then morning—a fifth day.

²⁴Then God *'elohim* said: Let the earth produce every type of living *hay* creature: every type of domestic animal, crawling animal, and wild animal. And so it was. ²⁵God *'elohim* made every type of wild animal, every type of domestic animal, and every type of creature that crawls on the ground. God *'elohim* saw that they were good *tob*.

²⁶Then God *'elohim* said: Let us make humans *'adam* in our image, in our likeness. Let them rule the fish in the sea, the birds in the sky, the domestic animals all over the earth, and all the animals that crawl on the earth.

²⁷So God *'elohim* created *bara'*humans *'adam* in his image. In the image of God *'elohim* he created *bara'* them. He created *bara'* them male *zakar* and female *neqaba*.

²⁸God *'elohim* blessed *barak* them and said: Be fertile, increase in number, fill the earth, and be its master. Rule the fish in the sea, the birds in the sky, and all the animals that crawl on the earth.

²⁹God *'elohim* said: I have given you every plant with seeds on the face of the earth and every tree that has fruit with seeds . This will be your food ³⁰I have given all green plants as food to every land animal, every bird in the sky, and every animal that crawls on the earth—every living *hay*, breathing animal. And so it was.

³¹God *'elohim* saw everything that he had made and that it was very *me'od* good *to*. There was evening, then morning—the sixth day.

²¹Heaven and earth and everything in them were finished *kala*. ²By the seventh day God *'elohim* had finished *kala* the work *mela'ka* he had been doing. On the seventh day he stopped *sabat*-rested the work he had been doing .

³Then God *'elohim* blessed *barak* the seventh day and set it apart as holy *qadas*, because on that day he stopped all his work of creation *bara'*.

WHAT HAVE WE LEARNED SO FAR?

This is a poetic description of the creation of the Heavens and the earth by God. Moses drew from the verbal and written ancient stories preserved by the Hebrews. In this story, only the generic name *'elohim* is used for God.

Everything proceeds in a orderly way, in an effortless manner. Each event builds on the other. God pronounces what he has done as good. On the sixth day, God creates living animals and human beings, both male and female. He declares what he has created as very good.

On the seventh day God rested from his work of creation. He blessed this day and set it apart as holy. This will begin God's cycle of time, six days of work followed by a day of rest to honor the Creator of Heaven and earth.

THINGS TO THINK ABOUT

1. Jonathan Edwards says that the reason God created Creation was to extend his glory. He wants all that he has created then to reflect his glory back to him. A tree reflects God's glory when it is a tree. A lion reflects God's glory when it acts as a lion. How do human beings reflect God's glory?
2. Christians see the Triune God acting in Creation. Describe how the Trinity - the Father, the Son, and the Holy Spirit is reflected in the first three verses.

3. God produces order in his Creation. Everything is created according to its own type. God loves fruit trees. Why are these trees so important for humans?
4. Why does the writer call the sun and moon the larger light and the smaller light rather than sun and moon? He says there are lights in the sky instead of calling them stars. Why?
5. How can there be days before the sun and moon were created?
6. God first blesses the fish and birds. Then he blesses animals and humans. What does it mean when God blesses them?
7. What is God's purpose in blessing the seventh day?

TOLDOT I

This is the account *toldot* of Heaven and Earth when they were created, at the time when the Lord God made Earth and Heaven. **Genesis 2:4**

Day 2

A More Detailed Account of God's Creation of Man and Woman

Genesis 2:4-25

^{2:4}This is the account *toldot*-generations of Heaven and earth when they were created *bara'*, at the time when YHWH God *'elohim* made *'asa* earth and Heaven.

⁵Wild bushes and plants were not on the earth yet because YHWH God *'elohim* hadn't sent rain on the earth. Also, there was no one to farm the land.

⁶Instead, underground water would come up from the earth and water the entire surface of the ground.

⁷Then YHWH *'elohim* formed *yasar* the man *'adam* from the dust of the earth *'adama* and blew the breath *nesama'* of life *hay* into his nostrils. The man *'adam* became a living *hay* being *nepes*-soul.

⁸YHWH God *'elohim* planted a garden in Eden, in the east. That's where he put the man whom he had formed. ⁹YHWH God *'elohim* made all the trees grow out of the ground. These trees were nice to look at and their fruit was good to eat. The Tree of Life *hay* and the Tree of the Knowledge *da'at* of Good *tob* and Evil *ra'* grew in the middle of the garden.

¹⁰A river flowed from Eden to water the garden. Outside the garden it divided into four rivers. ¹¹The name of the first river is Pishon. This is the one that winds throughout Havilah, where there is gold. ¹²(The gold of that land is pure. Bdellium and onyx are also found there.) ¹³The name of the second river is Gihon. This is the one that winds throughout Sudan. ¹⁴The name of the third river is Tigris. This is the one that flows east of Assyria. The fourth river is the Euphrates.

¹⁵Then YHWH God *'elohim* took the man *'adam* and put him in the Garden of Eden to farm *'abad* the land and to take care of *samar*-keep it. ¹⁶YHWH God

'elohim commanded the man. He said: You are free to eat *'akal* from any tree *'es* in the garden. ¹⁷ But you must never eat from the Tree of the Knowledge of Good and Evil because when you eat from it, you will certainly die *mut*.

¹⁸ Then YHWH God *'elohim* said: It is not good for the man to be alone. I will make a helper *'ezer* who is right for him.

¹⁹ YHWH God *'elohim* had formed all the wild animals and all the birds out of the ground. Then he brought them to the man to see what he would call them. Whatever the man called each creature became its name. ²⁰ So the man named all the domestic animals, all the birds, and all the wild animals.

But the man found no helper who was right for him. ²¹ So YHWH God *'elohim* caused him to fall into a deep sleep. While the man was sleeping, YHWH God *'elohim* took out one of the man's ribs and closed up the flesh at that place. ²² Then YHWH God *'elohim* formed a woman *'issa* from the rib that he had taken from the man *'adam*. He brought her to the man *'adam*.

²³ The man *'adam* said: This is now bone of my bones and flesh of my flesh. She will be named *woman 'issa* because she was taken from man *'is*.

²⁴ That is why a man *'is* will leave his father *'ab* and mother *'em* and will be united with his wife *'issa*, and they will become one flesh. ²⁵ The man *'adam* and his wife *'issa* were both naked *'arom* but they weren't ashamed *bus* of it.

WHAT HAVE WE LEARNED SO FAR?

This is not a second account of Creation but a more detailed explanation of it. Notice that the writer now calls the creator YHWH God *'elohim*. The focus is on the creation of human beings - man *'is* and woman *'issa*.

YHWH God *'elohim* places the man in the garden to care for it. He commands the man not to eat from one tree, the Tree of the Knowledge of Good and Evil. If Adam eats from this tree, he will be disobeying God, separating himself from God, and be spiritually dead.

YHWH God *'elohim* decides Adam needs a helper. So he brings all the wild and domestic animals and birds to Adam to name them. Adam names each, but none of them is suitable for

him as a helper. **YHWH** God *'elohim* then causes Adam to fall into a deep sleep while God removes a rib and forms woman *'issa* from the rib.

Adam is delighted with the woman *'issa*. He says a man *'is* will leave his father *'ab* and mother *'em* and cling *dabaq* with his wife *'issa* becoming one *'ehad* flesh *basar*. Both were naked *'arom* and unashamed *bus*.

THINGS TO THINK ABOUT

1. What job does God assign Adam to do?
2. Why does God place a restriction on what Adam may eat?
3. Does Adam know what spiritual death means and what consequences it will have?
4. Why does God decide Adam needs a helper? Why weren't any of the animals or birds a suitable helper for Adam?
5. Why is Adam delighted with the woman God made?
6. Why does the writer mention the concepts of a mother, a father, and man's relationship with his wife here?
7. Why does the writer introduce the concept of shame here?

EXTRA CREDIT

Why does the writer use the title **YHWH** God *'elohim* for God instead of merely God *'elohim* like the first story?

Day 3

The Man and Woman Disobey God and Are Driven Out of the Garden

Genesis 3:1-24

The First Sin and God's First Promise of Redemption

³¹The snake *nahas* was more clever *'arum* than all the wild animals YHWH God *'elohim* had made. He asked the woman *'issa*: Did God *'elohim* really say: You must never *lo*'eat *'akal* the fruit of any tree in the garden?

²The woman answered the snake: We're allowed to eat the fruit from any tree in the garden ³except the tree in the middle of the garden. God *'elohim* said: You must never eat it or touch it. If you do, you will die.

⁴You certainly won't die, the snake told the woman ⁵God *'elohim* knows that when you eat it your eyes will be opened. You'll be like God *'elohim*, knowing *yada*'good *tob* and evil *ra*:

⁶The woman saw that the tree had fruit that was good to eat, nice to look at, and desirable for making someone wise. So she took some of the fruit and ate it. She also gave some to her husband, who was with her, and he ate it.

⁷Then their eyes were opened, and they both realized that they were naked. They sewed fig leaves together and made clothes for themselves.

God Searches for the Humans He Created

⁸In the cool of the evening, the man and his wife heard YHWH God *'elohim* walking around in the garden. So they hid from YHWH God *'elohim* among the trees in the garden.

⁹YHWH God *'elohim* called to the man and asked him: Where are you?

¹⁰ He answered: I heard you in the garden. I was afraid *yare* because I was naked, so I hid.

¹¹ <God> asked: Who told you that you were naked? Did you eat fruit from the tree I commanded you not to eat from?

¹² The man answered: That woman *issa*, the one you gave me, gave me some fruit from the tree, and I ate it.

¹³ Then YHWH God *'elohim* asked the woman: What have you done?

The snake deceived me and I ate, the woman answered.

¹⁴ So YHWH God *'elohim* said to the snake: Because you have done this, you are cursed more than all the wild or domestic animals. You will crawl on your belly. You will be the lowest of animals as long as you live.

God Speaks the Gospel Before the Gospel

¹⁵ I will make you and the woman hostile toward each other. I will make your descendants and her descendant hostile toward each other. He will crush *sup*_{4x} your head, and you will bruise *sup* his heel.

God promises the snake that the woman's descendant will defeat him although he will cause him to suffer.

¹⁶ He said to the woman: I will increase your pain and your labor when you give birth to children. Yet, you will long for your husband, and he will rule you.

¹⁷ Then he said to the man: You listened to your wife and ate fruit from the tree, although I commanded you: You must never eat its fruit.

The ground is cursed *'arar* because of you. Through hard work you will eat [food that comes] from it every day of your life. ¹⁸ The ground will grow thorns and thistles for you, and you will eat wild plants. ¹⁹ By the sweat of your brow, you will produce food to eat until you return to the ground, because you were taken from it. You are dust, and you will return to dust.

²⁰ Adam named his wife Eve [Life] because she became the mother of every living person. ²¹ YHWH God '*elohim* made clothes from animal skins for the man and his wife and dressed them.

God Drives Adam and Eve Out of the Garden of Eden

²² Then YHWH God '*elohim* said: The man has become like one of us, since he knows good and evil. He must not reach out and take the fruit from the Tree of Life and eat. Then he would live forever. ²³ So YHWH God '*elohim* sent *salah* the man out of the Garden of Eden to farm the ground from which the man had been formed.

²⁴ After he sent *garas*—drove the man out, God placed angels *kerub*—cherubims and a flaming sword that turned in all directions east of the Garden of Eden. He placed them there to guard the way to the Tree of Life.

WHAT HAVE WE LEARNED SO FAR?

This event is known as the Fall of mankind – separation from God '*elohim*. Before the disobedience of the human beings, there was a close personal relationship between the Creator and his human creatures. But after the Fall, there was separation. God '*elohim* would not allow them to re-enter the Garden of Eden.

YHWH God '*elohim* had created Adam with a free will in which he could choose. He chose the names of all the birds and animals. God '*elohim* gave him a Helper to live with him. This Helper was also given a free will.

God '*elohim* also created a clever snake we call Satan or the Accuser. This snake tempted the woman to disobey God '*elohim* by saying that God '*elohim* had not told them the truth. Instead he lied to them to keep them subservient or obedient to himself. If they ate the fruit of the Tree of the Knowledge of Good and Evil, they would be equal to God '*elohim*, not below him.

The woman made a choice. She disobeyed God '*elohim* and then gave Adam some of the forbidden fruit and he chose to eat it. This was deliberate disobedience of God '*elohim* and they both knew it. So they separated themselves from God '*elohim* by hiding and covered their shame with fig leaves.

When God '*elohim* called to them, they said they were afraid for they knew they had disobeyed him. God '*elohim* first asked Adam to whom he had given the command: Did you disobey my command? He answered: The woman you gave me gave me some fruit and I ate it. Then

God *'elohim* asked the woman: What have you done? The snake deceived me and I ate the fruit. Notice, neither lied. Both told the truth.

Now **YHWH** God *'elohim* pronounces curses instead of blessings on all three of them. To the snake he declares that one day the woman's descendant will crush him. To the woman, he says she will have pain in childbirth and you will seek to rule your husband but he will rule over you. To the man, he says the ground will not give up its produce without hard work. And one day, you will die physically and return to dust of the earth.

Adam then names his wife Eve, the mother of all living persons. God *'elohim* kills animals and gives their skins to make clothes for Adam and Eve. Then God *'elohim* expels them from the Garden of Eden and places a flaming sword and angels at the entrance to guard it.

THINGS TO THINK ABOUT

1. Why and when did God create a clever snake? What was his purpose in doing so?
2. Why did Eve want to become wise? What did that mean to her?
3. Why was Satan's appeal to become like God *'elohim* so appealing to Eve?
4. Why wasn't Adam resistant when Eve offered him the forbidden fruit to eat?
5. Did Adam and Eve immediately realize they had disobeyed God? How did they demonstrate this knowledge?
6. Why did Adam blame Eve rather than accept his responsibility for disobeying God?
7. Why does God curse the three in this order: the snake, the woman, and the man? Why isn't the man cursed first?

EXTRA CREDIT

Why does *'elohim* God cast the man and the woman out of the Garden? He could simply have eliminated the Tree of Life.

EXTRA, EXTRA CREDIT

Does God *'elohim* casting Adam and Eve out of the Garden of Eden mean that they are now separated from God *'elohim* forever? Why not?

Day 4

The Ungodly Line and the Godly Line of Humans

Genesis 4:1-26

^{4:1} Adam made love *yada'* to his wife Eve. She became pregnant and gave birth to Cain. She said: I have gotten the man that **YHWH** promised.

² Then she gave birth to another child, Abel, Cain's brother. Abel was a shepherd and Cain was a farmer.

³ Later Cain brought some crops from the land as an offering to **YHWH**

⁴ Abel also brought some choice parts of the firstborn animals from his flock. **YHWH** approved *sa'a* of Abel and his offering *minha*, ⁵ but he didn't approve *sa'a* of Cain and his offering.

So Cain became very angry *hara* and was disappointed. ⁶ Then **YHWH** asked Cain: Why are you angry and why do you look disappointed? ⁷ If you do well, won't you be accepted? But if you don't do well, sin *hatta'at* is lying outside your door ready to attack. It wants to control you, but you must master it.

⁸ Cain talked to his brother Abel. Later, when they were in the fields, Cain attacked his brother Abel and killed *harag* him. ⁹ **YHWH** asked Cain: Where is your brother Abel? I don't know, he answered. Am I supposed to take care of my brother?

¹⁰ **YHWH** asked: What have you done? Your brother's blood *dam* is crying out to me from the ground. ¹¹ So now you are cursed *'arar* from the ground that has received the blood of your brother whom you killed. ¹² When you farm the ground, it will no longer yield its best for you. You will be a fugitive *nua'*, a wanderer *nud* on the earth.

¹³ But Cain said to **YHWH**: My punishment is more than I can stand.

¹⁴ You have forced me off this land today. I have to hide from you and

become a fugitive, a wanderer on the earth. Now anyone who finds me will kill *harag* me.

¹⁵ So YHWH said to him: Not so. Anyone who kills *harag* Cain will suffer vengeance seven times over. YHWH gave Cain a sign *ot*-mark so that anyone meeting him would not kill him.

¹⁶ Then Cain left YHWH's presence and lived in Nod [The Land of Wandering], east of Eden.

Cain's Ungodly Line of Descendants — Cain to Lamech

¹⁷ Cain made love *yada'*-knew to his wife. She became pregnant and gave birth to Enoch. Cain was building a city. He named it Enoch after his son. ¹⁸ To Enoch was born Irad. Irad was the father of Mehujael. Mehujael was the father of Methushael. And Methushael was the father of Lamech.

¹⁹ Lamech married two women, one named Adah and the other Zillah. ²⁰ Adah gave birth to Jabal. He was the first person to live in tents and have livestock. ²¹ His brother's name was Jubal. He was the first person to play the harp and the flute. ²² Zillah also had a son, Tubalcain, who made bronze and iron tools. Tubalcain's sister was Naamah.

²³ Lamech said to his wives: Adah and Zillah, listen to me. Wives of Lamech, hear what I say. I killed *harag* a man for bruising *pesa'* 8x me, a young man for wounding *habura'* 7x me. ²⁴ If Cain is avenged 7 times, then Lamech, 77 times.

Adam's Godly Ten Descendants—Adam to Noah

²⁵ Adam made love *yada'* to his wife again. She gave birth to a son and named him Seth because \perp she said: \perp God *'elohim* has given me another child in place of Abel, since Cain killed *harag* him.

²⁶ A son was also born to Seth, and he named him Enosh. At that time people began to worship *qara'*-call *sem*-name of YHWH.

WHAT HAVE WE LEARNED SO FAR?

Cain and Able were brothers. Cain was a farmer and Able was a shepherd. Apparently, Adam taught his sons that they were to give offerings to God *'elohim* to thank him. Both boys brought offerings to God *'elohim*. God *'elohim* accepted Able's offering but he did not accept Cain's offering. So Cain became angry.

God *'elohim* talked to Cain instructing him that his anger would drive him to sin. However, he Cain must stop that drive. Cain did not stop that drive and murdered his brother. God *'elohim* then talked to Cain. Your brother's blood is crying out to me. You are now cursed and the land will no longer give you its best. You will be a wanderer on the earth. But I will give you a mark so people would be afraid to kill him. Cain then left **YHWH**'s presence. He had seven descendants.

The Descendants of Seth

The third son of Adam was Seth. A descendant of Seth was Enosh. At that time people began to worship **YHWH**.

TOLDOT₂

This is the written account of Adam and his descendants. **Genesis 5:1**

ADAM

SETH

ENOSH

KENAN

MAHALALEL

JARED

ENOCH

METHUSELAH

LAMECH

NOAH

Day 5

The Sons of Adam

Genesis 5:1-32

^{5:1} This is the written account *seper*-book of **Adam** and his descendants *toldot*.

When God created humans, he made them in the likeness of God.

² He created *bara*'them male and female. He blessed *barak* them and called them humans '*adam* when he created *bara*'them.

³ When Adam was 130 years old, he became the father of a son in his own likeness, in his own image. He named him **Seth**. ⁴ After Adam became the father of Seth, he lived 800 years and had other sons and daughters. ⁵ Adam lived a total of 930 years; then he died.

⁶ When Seth was 105 years old, he became the father of **Enosh**. ⁷ After he became the father of Enosh, Seth lived 807 years and had other sons and daughters. ⁸ Seth lived a total of 912 years; then he died.

⁹ When Enosh was 90 years old, he became the father of **Kenan**. ¹⁰ After he became the father of Kenan, Enosh lived 815 years and had other sons and daughters. ¹¹ Enosh lived a total of 905 years; then he died.

¹² When Kenan was 70 years old, he became the father of **Mahalalel**. ¹³ After he became the father of Mahalalel, Kenan lived 840 years and had other sons and daughters. ¹⁴ Kenan lived a total of 910 years; then he died.

¹⁵ When Mahalalel was 65 years old, he became the father of **Jared**. ¹⁶ After he became the father of Jared, Mahalalel lived 830 years and had other sons and daughters. ¹⁷ Mahalalel lived a total of 895 years; then he died.

¹⁸ When Jared was 162 years old, he became the father of **Enoch**. ¹⁹ After he became the father of Enoch, Jared lived 800 years and had other sons and daughters. ²⁰ Jared lived a total of 962 years; then he died.

²¹When Enoch was 65 years old, he became the father of **Methuselah**.

²²After he became the father of Methuselah, Enoch walked with God for 300 years and had other sons and daughters. ²³Enoch lived a total of 365 years. ²⁴Enoch walked *halak* with God *’elohim*; then he was gone because God *’elohim* took *laqah* him.

²⁵When Methuselah was 187 years old, he became the father of **Lamech**.

²⁶After he became the father of Lamech, Methuselah lived 782 years and had other sons and daughters. ²⁷Methuselah lived a total of 969 years; then he died.

²⁸When Lamech was 182 years old, he became the father of a son. ²⁹He named him **Noah** [Relief], and said: This child will bring us relief from the work and painful labor of our hands since **YHWH** has cursed the ground.

³⁰After Lamech became the father of Noah, he lived 595 years and had other sons and daughters. ³¹Lamech lived a total of 777 years; then he died.

³²When Noah was 500 years old, he became the father of **Shem**, **Ham**, and **Japheth**.

WHAT HAVE WE LEARNED SO FAR?

We are now given the godly line of Seth. There are nine generations to Noah. At the time of Seth’s son Enosh, people began to call on the name of **YHWH**. Enoch did not die but God took him to Heaven. We are not told why. Methuselah lived the longest of any person. He lived long enough to see the flood come. The final man in this listing is Noah who had three sons.

Presumably, all of these men called on the name of **YHWH** as opposed to the descendants of Cain who did not.

THINGS TO THINK ABOUT

1. Why are we given the length of the lives of Seth’s descendants and not given the length of the lives of Cain’s descendants.
2. Why are Cain’s descendants not given a *toldot* like Seth’s descendants?
3. What is the reason for the long lives of Seth’s descendants?

4. Why was Enoch translated rather than physically died?
5. Why isn't more said about the relationship of Seth's descendants with God *'elohim*?
6. How many of these descendants of Seth lived to see the flood come?
7. Were Shem, Ham, and Japeth triplets? How could they all have been born when Noah was 500 years old?

Day 6

Humans Are Evil

Genesis 6:1-8

^{6:1}The number of people increased all over the earth, and daughters were born to them. ²The sons *ben* of God *'elohim* saw that the daughters of other humans were beautiful. So they married any woman *'issa* they chose.

³Then YHWH said: My Spirit will not struggle with humans forever, because they are flesh and blood. They will live 120 years.

⁴The Nephilim *napil*-giants were on the earth in those days, as well as later, when the sons *ben* of God *'elohim* slept *bo*-came in with the daughters *bat* of other humans and had children by them. These children were famous *gibor*-mighty men long ago.

⁵YHWH saw *ra'a*' how evil *ra*' humans had become on the earth. All day long their deepest *yesser* thoughts *mahasaba leb*-heart were nothing *raq* but evil *ra*'.

⁶YHWH was sorry *naham*-repent that he had made humans on the earth, and he was heartbroken *'asab leb*. ⁷So he said: I will wipe off *maha*-destroy the face of the earth *'adama* these humans that I created *bara*'. I will wipe out not only humans, but also domestic animals, crawling animals, and birds. I'm sorry *naham* that I made them. ⁸But YHWH was pleased *hen*-grace with Noah.

WHAT HAVE WE LEARNED SO FAR?

This a very strange story. Who were the Nephilim? Were they angelic creatures? If so, when did God *'elohim* create them? Were they simply angels who left the place and order God *'elohim* created them for?

Jude, the brother of James says:

[God held angels for judgment on the Great Day. They were held in darkness bound by eternal chains. These are angels who didn't keep their position of authority but abandoned their assigned place. **Jude 1:6.**]

Peter says in his 2nd letter:

[God didn't spare angels who sinned. He threw them into Hell where he secured them with chains of darkness and is holding them for judgment. God didn't spare the ancient world either. He brought the flood on the world of ungodly people but he protected Noah and seven other people. Noah was his messenger who told people about the kind of life that has God's approval. **2 Peter 2:4-5.**]

But there were other disobedient humans, the line of the descendants of Cain. In contrast, there were the descendants of Seth. They appear to have loved God *'elohim* and called on his name. Yet at this time, the only members of this line with whom God *'elohim* was pleased with were Noah and his sons.

TOLDOT₃

This is the account *toldot* of Noah and his descendants. **Genesis 6:**

SHEM

HAM

JAPETH

Day 7

The Great Flood and Its Aftermath

Genesis 6:9-9:29

^{6:9}This is the account *toldot* of Noah and his descendants.

Noah had God's approval *sadiq* and was a man of integrity *tamim* among the people of his time. He walked *halak* with God *'elohim*. ¹⁰ He had three sons: Shem, Ham, and Japheth.

God Chooses to Destroy People and Animals on the Earth

¹¹The world was corrupt *sahat* in God's *'elohim* sight and full *mala'* of violence *hamas*. ¹² God *'elohim* saw *ra'a'* the world and how corrupt *sahat* it was because all people on earth lived evil lives *sahat*-corrupt *derek*-way.

¹³God *'elohim* said to Noah: I have decided to put an end *qes* to all people because the earth is full of their violence. Now I'm going to destroy them along with the earth.

God Commands Noah to Build a Boat

¹⁴ Make yourself a ship *teba*-ark of cypress wood. Make rooms in the ship and coat it inside and out with tar. ¹⁵ This is how you should build it: the ship is to be 450 feet long, 75 feet wide, and 45 feet high. ¹⁶ Make a roof for the ship, and leave an 18-inch-high opening at the top. Put a door in the side of the ship. Build the ship with lower, middle, and upper decks.

¹⁷ I'm about to send a flood *mabul mayim*-water on the earth to destroy all people *basar*-flesh under the sky—every living, breathing human. Everything on earth will die *gava'*.

God Cuts a Covenant with Noah

¹⁸“But I will make my Covenant *berit* to you. You, your sons, your wife, and your sons’ wives will go into the ship. ¹⁹Bring two of every living *hay* creature *basar*-flesh into the ship in order to keep them alive with you. They must be male and female. ²⁰Two of every type of bird, every type of domestic animal, and every type of creature that crawls on the ground will come to you to be kept alive. ²¹Take every kind of food that can be eaten and store it. It will be food for you and the animals.”

²²Noah did this. He did everything that God had commanded him.

The Flood Comes

⁷¹YHWH said to Noah: Go into the ship with your whole family because I have seen that you alone are righteous *sadiq* among the people of today *dor*-generation.

²Take with you seven pairs of every kind of clean *taor* animal, a male and a female of each, and one pair of every kind of unclean *taor* animal, a male and a female. ³Also, take seven pairs of every kind of bird, a male and a female of each to preserve animal life all over the earth after the flood

⁴In seven days I will send rain to the earth for 40 days and 40 nights. I will wipe off the face of the earth every living creature that I have made.”

⁵So Noah did everything that YHWH commanded him.

The Flood Begins in Noah’s 600th Year of Life

⁶Noah was 600 years old when the flood came to the earth. ⁷Noah, his sons, his wife, and his sons’ wives went into the ship to escape the floodwaters. ⁸Clean and unclean animals, birds, and creatures that crawl on the ground ⁹came to Noah to go into the ship in pairs, a male and female of each, as God had commanded Noah.

¹⁰Seven days later the flood came on the earth. ¹¹On the seventeenth day of the second month of the six hundredth year of Noah’s life, all the deep

springs burst open. The sky opened ¹²and rain came pouring down on the earth for 40 days and 40 nights.

¹³On that same day Noah and his sons Shem, Ham, and Japheth, as well as Noah's wife and his three daughters-in-law went into the ship. ¹⁴They had with them every type of wild animal, every type of domestic animal, every type of creature that crawls on the earth, and every type of bird, every creature with wings. ¹⁵A pair of every living, breathing animal came to Noah to go into the ship. ¹⁶A male and a female of every animal went in as God had commanded Noah. Then **YHWH** closed the door behind them.

¹⁷The flood continued for 40 days on the earth. The water increased and lifted the ship so that it rose high above the ground. ¹⁸As the water rose and became very deep, the ship floated on top of the water. ¹⁹The water rose very high above the earth. It covered all the high mountains everywhere under the sky ²⁰It rose 23 feet above the mountaintops.

²¹Every creature that crawls on the earth died, including birds, domestic and wild animals, and everything that swarms over the earth, along with every human. ²²Everything on dry land, every living, breathing creature died. ²³Every living creature on the face of the earth was wiped out. Humans, domestic animals, crawling creatures, and birds were wiped off the earth. Only Noah and those with him in the ship were left.

²⁴The floodwaters were on the earth for 150 days.

God Remembers Noah

^{8:1} God remembered Noah and all the wild and domestic animals with him in the ship. So God made a wind blow over the earth and the water started to go down. ²The deep springs and the sky had been shut and the rain had stopped pouring. ³The water began to recede from the land. At the end of 150 days the water had decreased.

⁴On the seventeenth day of the seventh month, the ship came to rest in the mountains of Ararat. ⁵The water kept decreasing until the tenth month. On the first day of the tenth month, the tops of the mountains appeared.

⁶After 40 more days Noah opened the window he had made in the ship ⁷and sent out a raven. It kept flying back and forth until the water on the land had dried up. ⁸Next, he sent out a dove to see if the water was gone from the surface of the ground. ⁹The dove couldn't find a place to land because the water was still all over the earth. So it came back to Noah in the ship. He reached out and brought the dove back into the ship

¹⁰He waited seven more days and again sent the dove out of the ship. ¹¹The dove came to him in the evening and in its beak was a freshly plucked olive leaf. Then Noah knew that the water was gone from the earth. ¹²He waited seven more days and sent out the dove again but it never came back to him.

¹³By the first day of the first month of Noah's six hundred and first year, the water on the land had dried up. Noah opened the top of the ship, looked out, and saw the surface of the ground. ¹⁴By the twenty-seventh day of the second month the land was dry.

God Commands Noah and His Family to Leave the Ark

¹⁵Then God *elohim* spoke to Noah: ¹⁶Come out of the ship with your wife, your sons, and your sons' wives. ¹⁷Bring out every animal that's with you: birds, domestic animals, and every creature that crawls on the earth. Be fertile, increase in number, and spread over the earth.

¹⁸So Noah came out with his sons, his wife, and his sons' wives. ¹⁹Every animal, crawling creature, and bird — everything that moves on the earth — came out of the ship, one kind after another.

²⁰Noah built an altar *mizbeah* to **YHWH**. On it he made a burnt offering of each type of clean *taor* animal and clean *taor* bird. ²¹**YHWH** smelled the soothing aroma.

God Says He Will Never Again Kill Every Living Creature

He said to himself: I will never again curse *qalal* the ground because of humans, even though from birth *naur*-youth *yecer*-imagination their hearts *leb* are set on nothing but evil *ra'*. I will never again kill *naka* every living creature as I have just done.

²²As long as the earth exists, planting and harvesting, cold and heat, summer and winter, day and night will never stop.

God Blesses Noah and His Sons

⁹¹ God *'elohim* blessed *barak* Noah and his sons and said to them: Be fertile *para*, increase in number *raba*, and fill *mala'*the earth. ²All the wild animals and all the birds will fear *mora'* you and be terrified *hat* of you. Every creature that crawls on the ground and all the fish in the sea have been put under your control. ³Everything that lives and moves will be your food. I gave you green plants as food; I now give you everything else.

God Commands Blood Not Be Eaten Nor Must Humans Murder Another Human

⁴“But you are not to eat meat with blood *dam* in it. (Blood is life.) ⁵In addition, I will demand your blood for your life *hay*. I will demand it from any animal or from any person. I will demand the life of any person \perp who kills \perp another person.

⁶Whoever sheds *sapak* human blood, by humans his blood will be shed *sapak*, because in the image of God *'elohim*, God made humans.

⁷Be fertile, and increase in number. Spread over the earth, and increase.

God's Covenant Sign of the Rainbow

⁸God *'elohim* also said to Noah and his sons: ⁹I am going to make my Covenant to you, your descendants, ¹⁰and every living being that is with

you — birds, domestic animals, and all the wild animals, all those that came out of the ship — every living thing on earth ¹I am making my Covenant to you. Never again will all life be killed by floodwaters. Never again will there be a flood that destroys the earth.

¹²God *’elohim* said: This is the sign of the Covenant I am giving to you and every living being that is with you for generations to come. ¹³I will put my rainbow *qeset* in the clouds to be a sign of my Covenant to the earth. ¹⁴Whenever I form clouds over the earth, a rainbow will appear in the clouds. ¹⁵Then I will remember my Covenant to you and every living animal. Never again will water become a flood to destroy all life. ¹⁶Whenever the rainbow appears in the clouds, I will see it and remember my everlasting Covenant to every living animal on earth.”

¹⁷So God *’elohim* said to Noah: This is the sign of the Covenant I am making to all life on earth.

Noah Curses Canaan But Blesses Shem and Japheth

¹⁸Noah’s sons, who came out of the ship, were Shem, Ham, and Japheth. ¹⁹These were Noah’s three sons. From them the whole earth was populated. Ham was the father of Canaan.

²⁰Noah, a farmer, was the first person to plant a vineyard. ²¹He drank some wine, got drunk, and lay naked inside his tent. ²²Ham, father of Canaan, saw his father naked. So he went outside and told his two brothers.

²³Shem and Japheth took a blanket and laid it over their shoulders. Then they walked in backwards and covered their father’s naked body. They turned their faces away so that they didn’t see their father naked.

²⁴When Noah sobered up, he found out what his youngest son had done to him. ²⁵So he said: Canaan is cursed. He will be the lowest slave to his brothers. ²⁶Praise **YHWH**, the God of Shem. Canaan will be his slave. ²⁷May God expand the territory of Japheth. May he live in the tents of Shem. Canaan will be his slave.

²⁸ Noah lived 350 years after the flood. ²⁹ Noah lived a total of 950 years; then he died.

WHAT HAVE WE LEARNED SO FAR?

God decided to bring a flood on all the earth to kill all human beings except Noah, his wife, his three sons, and their wives, eight persons in all. He told Noah to build an Ark.

He said: I'm going to make my Covenant with you and your descendants. You are to bring two of every living creature with you into the Ark. Bring food for them and for you. Noah did everything God commanded. Most scholars conclude it took Noah about years to build the Ark.

Rain fell on the earth 40 days and 40 nights. Noah was 600 years old when the flood came on the earth. Not only rain came down from the sky but the deep springs in the earth burst forth. God closed the door of the Ark and the flood began. The floodwaters were on the earth for 150 days. They began on the 17th day of the 2nd month of Noah's 600th year. **Genesis 7:10**

Noah came out of the Ark on the 27th day of the 2nd month of Noah's 601st year. **Genesis 8:13**. They had been on the Ark one year and ten days. Noah came out as did the animals. Noah built an altar to **YHWH** and made a burnt offering of each type of clean animal and clean bird. **YHWH** said I will never again kill every living creature as I have just done.

God *'elohim* blessed Noah and his sons. He then told them they could eat animals for the first time as long as they drained the blood first. God *'elohim* also said: I'm making my Covenant that never again will life be killed by floodwaters. This is a sign to you. Whenever I form clouds, a rainbow will appear in the clouds.

Noah planted a vineyard and then became drunk. He lay naked inside his tent. Ham, the father of Canaan, saw his father naked and told his brothers. Shem and Japheth took a blanket and walked in backwards and covered their father's body. When Noah found out what Ham had done, he cursed Ham's descendants. Canaan will be the slave of Shem, he said. Noah lived 350 years after the flood dying when he was 950 years old.

THINGS TO THINK ABOUT

1. Weren't there remaining descendants of Shem on earth when the flood came?
2. What were the clean animals and birds Noah took on the Ark and later offered to God *'elohim* as a sacrifice?
3. Why didn't God *'elohim* want humans to eat the blood of animals?

4. What was the sign of the rainbow supposed to convey?
5. Describe the Everlasting Covenant with Noah and every living being.
6. Why did Noah curse Ham's son instead of Ham? What did Ham do?
7. Did God's *elohim* flood accomplish what **YHWH** set out to do?

TOLDOT 4

This is the account toldot of Noah's sons **Shem**, **Ham**, and **Japeth**, and their descendants. Shem, Ham, and Japeth had children after the flood.

Genesis 10:1

14 Descendants of JAPETH

30 Descendants of HAM

26 Descendants SHEM

Day 8

The Descendants of Noah and the Tower of Babel

Genesis 10:1-11:9

The Descendants of Japheth

^{10:1} This is the account ~~told~~ of Noah's sons Shem, Ham, and Japheth, and their descendants. Shem, Ham and Japheth had children after the flood.

²Japheth's descendants were Gomer, Magog, Madai, Javan, Tubal, Meshech, and Tiras. ³Gomer's descendants were Ashkenaz, Riphath, and Togarmah. ⁴Javan's descendants were the people from Elishah, Tarshish, Cyprus, and Rhodes

⁵From these descendants the people of the coastlands spread into their own countries. Each nation had its own language and families.

The Descendants of Ham

⁶Ham's descendants were Cush, Egypt, Put, and Canaan. ⁷Cush's descendants were Seba, Havilah, Sabtah, Raamah, and Sabteca. Raamah's descendants were Sheba and Dedan.

Nimrod Builds Babylon

⁸**Cush** was the father of Nimrod, the first mighty warrior on the earth. ⁹He was a mighty hunter *panim*-before **YHWH** <blessed>. That's why people used to say: ◡ He's ◡ like Nimrod, a mighty hunter *panim*-before **YHWH** <blessed.>

¹⁰The first ◡ cities ◡ in his kingdom were Babylon, Erech, Accad, and Calneh in Shinar [Babylonia]. ¹¹He went from that land to Assyria and built Nineveh, Rehoboth Ir, Calah, ¹²and Resen, the great city between Nineveh and Calah.

¹³**Egypt** was the ancestor of the Ludites, Anamites, Lehabites, Naphtuhites, ¹⁴Pathrusites, Casluhites from whom the Philistines came, and the Caphtorites.

¹⁵**Canaan** was the father of Sidon his firstborn, then Heth, ¹⁶also the Jebusites, the Amorites, the Girgashites, ¹⁷the Hivites, the Arkites, the Sinites, ¹⁸the Arvadites, the Zemarites, and the Hamathites.

Later the Canaanite families scattered. ¹⁹The border of the Canaanites extended from Sidon toward Gerar as far as Gaza and then toward Sodom, Gomorrah, Admah, and Zeboiim as far as Lasha.

²⁰These were Ham's descendants by families and languages within their countries and nations.

The Descendants of Shem

²¹Shem, Japheth's older brother, also had children ─ Shem was ─ the ancestor of all the sons of **Eber**.

²²Shem's descendants were Elam, Asshur, Arpachshad, Lud, and Aram.

²³**Aram's** descendants were Uz, Hul, Gether, and Mash. ²⁴**Arpachshad** was the father of Shelah, and **Shelah** was the father of **Eber**. ²⁵Two sons were born to Eber. The name of the one was **Peleg** [Division], because in his day the earth was divided. His brother's name was **Joktan**.

²⁶**Joktan** was the father of Almodad, Sheleph, Hazarmaveth, Jerah, ²⁷Hadoram, Uzal, Diklah, ²⁸Obal, Abimael, Sheba, ²⁹Ophir, Havilah, and Jobab. These were Joktan's sons. ³⁰The region where they lived extended from Mesha toward Sephar in the eastern mountains.

³¹These were Shem's descendants by families and languages within their countries according to their nations.

³²These were the families of Noah's sons listed by their genealogies, nation by nation. From these ─ descendants ─ the nations spread over the earth after the flood.

The Tower of Babel

¹The whole world had one language with a common vocabulary. ²As people moved toward the east they found a plain in Shinar [Babylonia] and settled there.

³They said to one another: Let's make bricks and bake them thoroughly. They used bricks as stones and tar as mortar.

⁴Then they said: Let's build a city for ourselves and a tower with its top in the sky. Let's make a name for ourselves so that we won't become scattered all over the face of the earth.

⁵YHWH came down to see the city and the tower that the descendants of Adam were building. ⁶YHWH said: They are one people with one language. This is only the beginning of what they will do. Now nothing they plan to do will be too difficult for them. ⁷Let us go down there and mix up their language so that they won't understand each other.

⁸So YHWH scattered them all over the face of the earth and they stopped building the city. ⁹This is why it was named Babel, because there YHWH turned the language of the whole earth into babble. From that place YHWH scattered them all over the face of the earth.

TOLDOT 5

This is the account of Shem and his descendants. **Genesis 11:10**

ARPACHSHAD

SHELAH

EBER

PELEG

REU

SERUG

NAHOR

TERAH

DAY 9

The Descendants of Shem—Shem to Terah

Genesis 11:10-26

¹⁰This is the account *toldot* of **Shem** and his descendants. Two years after the flood when Shem was 100 years old, he became the father of **Arpachshad**. ¹¹After he became the father of Arpachshad, Shem lived 500 years and had other sons and daughters.

¹²Arpachshad was 35 years old when he became the father of **Shelah**. ¹³After he became the father of Shelah, Arpachshad lived 403 years and had other sons and daughters.

¹⁴Shelah was 30 years old when he became the father of **Eber**. ¹⁵After he became the father of Eber, Shelah lived 403 years and had other sons and daughters.

¹⁶Eber was 34 years old when he became the father of **Peleg**. ¹⁷After he became the father of Peleg, Eber lived 430 years and had other sons and daughters.

¹⁸Peleg was 30 years old when he became the father of **Reu**. ¹⁹After he became the father of Reu, Peleg lived 209 years and had other sons and daughters.

²⁰Reu was 32 years old when he became the father of **Serug**. ²¹After he became the father of Serug, Reu lived 207 years and had other sons and daughters.

²²Serug was 30 years old when he became the father of **Nahor**. ²³After he became the father of Nahor, Serug lived 200 years and had other sons and daughters.

²⁴ Nahor was 29 years old when he became the father of **Terah**. ²⁵ After he became the father of Terah, Nahor lived 119 years and had other sons and daughters.

²⁶ Terah was 70 years old when he became the father of **Abram**, **Nahor**, and **Haran**.

TOLDAT 6

This is the account of Terah and his descendants. **Genesis 11:27**

ABRAM

NAHOR

HARAN

DAY 10

Terah Moves to Haran

Genesis 11:27-32

²⁷This is the account *toldot* of Terah and his descendants. Terah was the father of Abram, Nahor, and Haran. Haran was the father of Lot. ²⁸While his father Terah was still alive, Haran died in Ur of the Chaldeans, his native land. ²⁹Both Abram and Nahor married. The name of Abram's wife was Sarai, and the name of Nahor's wife was Milcah, daughter of Haran. Haran was the father of Milcah and Iscah. ³⁰Sarai was not able to have children.

³¹Terah took his son Abram, his grandson Lot (son of Haran), and his daughter-in-law Sarai, wife of his son Abram. They set out together from Ur of the Chaldeans to go to Canaan. When they came as far as Haran, they stayed there ³²Terah lived 205 years and died in Haran.

WHAT HAVE WE LEARNED SO FAR?

Japheth's descendants spread throughout Asia and Europe. The Bible calls them the people of the coastlands *isles*. **Genesis 10:5**

Canaan was the son of Ham who was the father of the seven nations that inhabited the land of Canaan when the Israelites entered under Joshua around 1350 BC.

Nimrod was the grandson of Ham, a mighty hunter. He built the city of Babylon where the Tower of Babel was built. It was Babylon that people built a great tower that reached the sky. The people wanted this tower so that they would not be scattered over the earth. At this time, all people spoke one language.

YHWH saw what they were doing. They were intending to thwart his plan for the peoples to spread out throughout the earth. So he confused their languages and they spread abroad. **YHWH** turned their common language into many languages so they could not understand each other.

Shem was the father of Arpachshad. He was the father of Shelah. He was the father of Eber. He was the father of Peleg. He was the father of Reu. He was the father of Serug. He was the father of Nahor. He was the father of Terah. He was the father of Abram, Nahor, and Haran.

Abram was married to Sarai. Nahor was married to Milcah, daughter of Haran. Haran died. Terah took Abram and his wife Sarai, his grandson Lot, the son of Haran, to go to Canaan. But when they reach Haran, they stayed there.

THINGS TO THINK ABOUT

1. Why did people want to build the Tower of Babel? Why didn't **YHWH** want them to build it?
2. Noah cursed Canaan, the son of Ham who had disgraced him. He said he would be a slave of the son of Seth. How did this prophecy come true?
3. Israelites would be most interested in Terah as he was the father of Abram later to become Abraham. Why did Terah move to Haran in Mesopotamia?
4. Abraham's relatives in Haran become important as Abraham sends his servant there to get a wife for his son Isaac. **Genesis 24:24**. Describe these relatives with a family tree beginning with Terah and ending with Rebekah.
5. Abraham's relatives in Haran become important again as Abraham's grandson Jacob goes to Haran to find a wife. **Genesis 29:5**. Describe these relatives with a family tree beginning with Terah and ending with Rachel and Leah.
6. Terah was planning to go to Canaan but he stayed in Haran and died there. Why didn't he go to Canaan with Abraham?

Day II

Abram Leaves His Home at Haran and Follows God

Genesis 12:1-14:24

YHWH's First Promise/Covenant to Abram at Haran

^{12:1} YHWH said to Abram: Leave your land, your relatives, and your father's home. Go to the land *'eres* that I will show *ra'a*' you. ²I will make you a great nation, I will bless *barak* you. I will make your name great and you will be a blessing *beraka*.

³I will bless *barak* those who bless *barak* you, and whoever curses *qalal* you, I will curse *'arar*. Through you every family on earth will be blessed *barak*.

YHWH's Second Promise to Abram at Shechem

⁴So Abram left, as YHWH had told him and Lot went with him. Abram was 75 years old when he left Haran. ⁵Abram set out for Canaan. He took along his wife Sarai, his nephew Lot, and all the possessions they had accumulated and the servants they had acquired in Haran.

⁶They arrived in Canaan, and Abram traveled through the land to the oak tree belonging to Moreh at Shechem. At that time the Canaanites were in the land. ⁷Then YHWH appeared to Abram and said: I'm going to give this land to your descendants. So he built an altar there to YHWH who had appeared to him.

⁸He moved on to the hills east of Bethel and he put up his tent—with Bethel on the west and Ai on the east. He also built an altar to YHWH there and worshiped YHWH. ⁹Abram kept moving toward the Negev the desert to the south.

Abram Disobeys God and Goes to Egypt

¹⁰There was a famine in the land. Abram went to Egypt to stay awhile because the famine was severe. ¹¹When he was about to enter Egypt, Abram said to his wife Sarai: I know that you're a beautiful woman. ¹²When the Egyptians see you, they'll say: This is his wife. Then they'll kill me but let you live. ¹³Please say that you're my sister. Then everything will be alright for me and because of you I will live.

¹⁴When Abram arrived in Egypt, the Egyptians saw how very beautiful his wife was. ¹⁵When Pharaoh's officials saw her, they raved about her to Pharaoh, so Sarai was taken to Pharaoh's palace ¹⁶Everything went well for Abram because of her and he was given sheep, cattle, donkeys, male and female slaves, and camels.

¹⁷However, YHWH struck Pharaoh and his household with terrible plagues because of Sarai, Abram's wife.

¹⁸Then Pharaoh called for Abram: What have you done to me? he asked. Why didn't you tell me that she's your wife? ¹⁹Why did you say: She's my sister and allow me to take her for my wife? Here's your wife. Take her and go.

²⁰Pharaoh gave his men orders concerning Abram. They sent Abram away with his wife and everything that he had.

Abram Returns to Canaan and Worships at Bethel

^{13:1} Abram left Egypt with his wife and everything he had and went to the Negev. Lot was with him. ² Abram was very rich because he had livestock, silver, and gold. ³ He traveled from place to place. He went from the Negev as far as Bethel, to the area between Bethel and Ai where his tent had been originally, ⁴ where he had first made an altar. There Abram worshiped YHWH.

Abram and Lot Separate

⁵Lot, who had been traveling with Abram, also had his own sheep, cattle, and tents. ⁶There wasn't enough pastureland for both of them. They had so many possessions that they were unable to remain together. ⁷Quarrels broke out between Abram's herders and Lot's herders. Canaanites and Perizzites were also living in that area.

⁸Abram said to Lot: Please, let's not have any more quarrels between us or between our herders. After all, we're relatives. ⁹Isn't all this land yours also? Let's separate. If you go to the left, I'll go to the right, and if you go to the right, I'll go to the left.

¹⁰Then Lot looked in the direction of Zoar as far as he could see. He saw that the whole Jordan Plain was well-watered like YHWH's garden or like Egypt. This was before the LORD destroyed Sodom and Gomorrah.

¹¹Lot chose the whole Jordan Plain for himself. He moved toward the east. They each went their own way. ¹²Abram lived in Canaan, while Lot lived among the cities of the plain, moving his tents as far as Sodom. ¹³The people who lived in Sodom were very wicked. They committed terrible sins against YHWH.

YHWH's Third Promise to Abram at Hebron

¹⁴After Lot left, YHWH said to Abram: Look north, south, east, and west of where you are. ¹⁵I will give all the land you see to you and to your descendants for an indefinite period of time. ¹⁶I will also give you as many descendants as the dust of the earth. If anyone could count the dust of the earth, then he could also count your descendants.

¹⁷Go. Walk back and forth across the entire land because I will give it to you. ¹⁸So Abram moved his tents and went to live by the oak trees belonging to Mamre at Hebron. There he built an altar for the LORD.

Abram Rescues Lot from Captivity with the Four Kings

¹At that time ¹four Kings ¹—King Amraphel of Shinar ^{Babylon}, King Arioch of Ellasar, King Chedorlaomer of Elam ^{near Babylon}, and King Tidal of Goiim—²went to war against ¹five kings ¹—King Bera of Sodom, King Birsha of Gomorrah, King Shinab of Admah, King Shemeber of Zeboiim, and the King of Bela, that is, Zoar.

³The five Kings joined forces and met in the valley of Siddim, that is, the Dead Sea ⁴For 12 years they had been subject to Chedorlaomer, but in the thirteenth year they rebelled.

⁵In the fourteenth year Chedorlaomer and his allies came and defeated the Rephaim at Ashteroth Karnaim, the Zuzim at Ham, the Emim at Shaveh Kiriathaim,⁶ and the Horites in the hill country of Seir, going as far as El Paran on the edge of the desert.

⁷On their way back, they came to En Mishpat, that is, Kadesh, and they conquered the whole territory of the Amalekites and also the Amorites who were living at Hazazon Tamar.

⁸Then the Kings of Sodom, Gomorrah, Admah, Zeboiim, and Bela, that is, Zoar, marched out and prepared for battle in the valley of Siddim. ⁹They fought against King Chedorlaomer of Elam, King Tidal of Goiim, King Amraphel of Shinar, and King Arioch of Ellasar—four kings against five.

¹⁰The valley of Siddim was full of tar pits. As the Kings of Sodom and Gomorrah fled, they fell because of the tar pits, but the other Kings fled to the hills. ¹¹So the four Kings took all the possessions of Sodom and Gomorrah, as well as all their food, and left. ¹²They also took Abram's nephew Lot and his possessions since he was living in Sodom.

Abram Is Told about the Capture of His Nephew Lot

¹³Then a soldier who had escaped came and told Abram the Hebrew what had happened. He was living next to the oak trees belonging to Mamre the Amorite, a brother of Eshcol and Aner. These men were Abram's allies.

¹⁴When Abram heard that his nephew had been captured, he armed his 318 trained men born in his own household, and pursued the four kings all the way to Dan

¹⁵He split up his men to attack them at night. He defeated them, pursuing them all the way to Hobah, which is north of Damascus. ¹⁶He brought back everything they had, including women and soldiers. He also brought back his relative Lot and his possessions.

The Priest/King Melchizedek Blesses Abram

¹⁷After Abram came back from defeating Chedorlaomer and his allies, the King of Sodom came out to meet him in the Shaveh Valley, that is, the King's Valley.

¹⁸Then King Melchizedek of Salem brought out bread and wine. He was a priest *kohen* of God 'el Most High 'elyon. ¹⁹He blessed *barak* Abram and said:

Blessed *barak* is Abram by God 'el Most High 'elyon, Maker *qana*—possessor of Heaven and Earth. ²⁰Blessed *barak* is God 'el Most High 'elyon, who has handed your enemies over to you. Then Abram gave him a tenth of everything.

²¹The King of Sodom said to Abram: Give me the people and keep everything else for yourself. ²²But Abram said to the King of Sodom:

I now raise my hand and solemnly swear to YHWH God 'el Most High 'elyon, Maker *qana* of Heaven and earth ²³that I won't take a thread or a sandal strap. I won't take anything that is yours so that you will never be able to say: I made Abram rich. ²⁴I won't take one single thing except what my men have eaten. But let my allies Aner, Eshcol, and Mamre take their share

WHAT HAVE WE LEARNED SO FAR?

Abram who is living in Haran, is called by **YHWH** to go the land he will show him. There **YHWH** promised to make Abram a great nation. He would bless him and make his name great. **YHWH** would bless those who bless Abram and curse those who curse him. Through him, every family on earth would be blessed. This is the unilateral Covenant God cut with Abram.

Abram left his father Terah, his brother and his family, and set off south toward Canaan with his wife Sarai, his nephew Lot, their servants and their possessions. He arrived first at Shechem, in the center of the land of Canaan.

Abram built an altar there and worshiped **YHWH**. Then he moved south toward the Negev desert. There was a famine in the land so Abram went to Egypt. What a mistake. Sarai was a beautiful woman so Abram persuaded Sarai to say she was Abram's sister instead of his wife so the Egyptians wouldn't kill him. Word quickly got to the Pharaoh of Sarai's beauty and she was taken into his herem. Abram was given many presents by Pharaoh. But **YHWH** struck Pharaoh with plagues, so Pharaoh demanded Abram quickly leave with Sarai.

Abram's nephew Lot went to live in the fertile plain where Sodom and Gomorrah were located. Abram stayed a Hebron where Sarai made their home. Abram heard that four Kings from Babylon had come into Canaan and defeated the Kings there. They also captured Lot and his family and departed back north. Abram heard Lot had been captured so he pursued the Kings north of Damascus. He and his Amorite allies recovered Lot and his family and many goods.

Then King Melchizadek, a Priest/King from Salem came out to Abram with bread and wine. He blessed Abram in the name of God *el*/Most High *elyon*. Abram gave him a tithe of the war booty. Then Abram swore in the name of **YHWH** God *el*/Most High *elyon* that the King of Sodom would not give him anything. Abram knew exactly who he was worshiping: **YHWH**.

THINGS TO THINK ABOUT

1. How does Abram first learn about **YHWH**? We learn later that his Abram's relatives had household gods. **Genesis 31:30**
2. Why does God promise Abram the blessing to become a great nation.

3. Why does Abram take Lot along with him? Does Lot believe in **YHWH**?
4. **YHWH** never talks to Sarai. Does Sarai believe in **YHWH**?
5. If God promises Abram to give this Land to his descendants, why does Abram leave Canaan for Egypt? Why doesn't he ask God to help him first?
6. Does Abram ask God's advice before pursuing Chedorlaomer and the other three Kings from Babylon? Why not?
7. What is the purpose of the Priest/King Melchizadek coming from Salem to bless Abram?

Day 12

YHWH Promises Abram His Own Son Will Be His Heir

Genesis 15:1-16:16

^{15:1} Later YHWH spoke his Word *dabar* to Abram in a vision *mahaze* 4x. He said: Abram, don't be afraid. I am your shield. Your reward will be very great.

²Abram asked: Almighty *'Adonay* YHWH, what will you give me? Since I'm going to die without children, Eliezer of Damascus will inherit my household. ³You have given me no children, so this member of my household will be my heir.

⁴Suddenly, YHWH spoke his word to Abram again. He said: This man will not be your heir. Your own son will be your heir. ⁵He took Abram outside and said: Now look up at the sky and count the stars, if you are able to count them. He also said to him: That's how many descendants you will have.

⁶Then Abram believed *'aman* YHWH and that faith was regarded as the basis *hasab* of Abram's approval *sedeqa*-righteousness by YHWH. ⁷Then YHWH said to him: I am YHWH, who brought you out of Ur of the Chaldeans to give you this land so that you will take possession of it."

⁸Abram asked: Almighty *'adonay* YHWH, how can I be certain that I will take possession of it?

YHWH Conducts a Covenant Ceremony

⁹He answered Abram: Bring me a three-year-old heifer, a three-year-old female goat, a three-year-old ram, a mourning dove, and a pigeon. ¹⁰So Abram brought all these animals to him. He cut each of them in half and laid each half opposite the other. However, he did not cut the birds in half.

¹¹When birds of prey came down upon the carcasses, Abram drove them away ¹²As the sun was just about to set, a deep sleep—a dreadful, deep darkness—came over Abram.

¹³God said to Abram: You can know for sure that your descendants will live in a land that is not their own, where they will be slaves, and they will be oppressed for 400 years. ¹⁴But I will punish the nation they serve, and after that they will come out with many possessions ¹⁵But you will die in peace and be buried at a very old age.

¹⁶In the fourth generation your descendants will come back here, because the sin of the Amorites will not have run its course until then.

¹⁷The sun had gone down, and it was dark. Suddenly a smoking oven and a flaming torch passed between the animal pieces ¹⁸At that time **YHWH** made a Covenant to Abram. He said: I will give this land to your descendants. This is the land from the river of Egypt to the great river, the Euphrates.

¹⁹It is the land of the Kenites, the Kenizzites, the Kadmonites, ²⁰the Hittites, the Perizzites, the Rephaim, ²¹the Amorites, the Canaanites, the Girgashites, and the Jebusites.

Sarai Proposes to Help God Keep His Promise

^{16:1} Sarai, Abram's wife, was not able to have children. She owned an Egyptian slave named Hagar. ²So Sarai said to Abram: **YHWH** has kept me from having children. Why don't you sleep with my slave? Maybe I can build a family through her. Abram agreed with Sarai.

³After Abram had lived in Canaan for ten years, Abram's wife Sarai took her Egyptian slave Hagar and gave her to her husband Abram to be his

wife. ⁴He slept with Hagar, and she became pregnant. When Hagar realized that she was pregnant, she began to be disrespectful to Sarai, her owner.

⁵So Sarai complained to Abram: I'm being treated unfairly. And it's your fault. I know that I gave my slave to you, but now that she's pregnant, she's being disrespectful to me. May YHWH decide who is right—you or me.

⁶Abram answered Sarai: Here, she's your slave. Do what you like with her. Then Sarai mistreated Hagar so much that she ran away.

⁷The Messenger *mal'ak*-angel of YHWH found her by a spring in the desert, the spring on the way to Shur. ⁸He said: Hagar, Sarai's slave, where have you come from, and where are you going?

She answered: I'm running away from my owner Sarai. ⁹The Messenger of YHWH said to her: Go back to your owner and place yourself under her authority. ¹⁰The Messenger of YHWH also said to her: I will give you many descendants. No one will be able to count them because there will be so many. ¹¹Then the Messenger of YHWH said to her,

“You are pregnant, and you will give birth to a son. You will name him Ishmael [God Hears], because YHWH has heard your cry of distress. ¹²He will be as free and wild as an untamed donkey. He will fight with everyone, and everyone will fight with him. He will have conflicts with all his relatives.

¹³Hagar named YHWH, who had been speaking to her, You Are the God *el* Who Watches Over Me *roi* *6x*. She said: This is the place where I watched *l* the one *l* who watches over me. ¹⁴This is why the well is named Beer Lahai Roi [Well of the Living One Who Watches Over Me]. It is still there between Kadesh and Bered.

Hagar Births Abram's Son Ishmael

¹⁵Hagar gave birth to Abram's son . Abram named him Ishmael as God had told Hagar. ¹⁶Abram was 86 years old when Hagar gave birth to Ishmael.

WHAT HAVE WE LEARNED SO FAR?

Abram was 75 years old when he left Haran and his wife Sarai was 65 years old and barren. **YHWH** met Abram and asked him: You have told me I will have many descendants, but I am getting old, my wife is barren, so my chief servant Eliezer of Damascus will be my heir. **YHWH** said: He will not be your heir. Your own son will be your heir. Your descendants will be as many as the stars in the sky.

Abram believed **YHWH**. Then Abram asked **YHWH** for a sign. God *'elohim* cut a Covenant with Abram. Animals were cut in pieces, **YHWH** made Abram sleep, and God *'elohim* himself walked between the animal pieces signifying what would be done to him if he broke the Covenant. **YHWH** also said to Abram:

Your descendants will leave this land for another land where they will be slaves for 400 years. But I will punish that nation and they will come out of it with many possessions. In the 4th generation, your descents will return here because the sin of the Amorites will not have run its course until then.

Abram was now 85 years old. He had been in Canaan 10 years. Sarai grew impatient to have children so she convinced Abram to sleep with her Egyptian maid Hagar and have a baby. **YHWH** wasn't consulted. So Abram had sex with Hagar she became pregnant. But then Hagar became uppity. Sarai mistreated Hagar so much that she left the camp going south toward Egypt.

YHWH's angel met Hagar and convinced her to return. He also promised her son will be named Ishmael meaning *God 'el Hears*. He will be strong but fight with all his relatives. Hagar named this place: Beer Lahai Roi, *Well of the Living One Who Watches Over Me*.

Hagar gave birth to Ishmael. Abram was now 86 years old and Sarai as 76 years old.

THINGS TO THINK ABOUT

1. If Abram was asleep, how did Moses know about the details of the Covenant ceremony where **YHWH** walked between the cut pieces of the animals?
2. Why didn't Abram ask **YHWH** before sleeping with Hagar?

3. Where was Hagar intending to live?
4. How did Hagar recognize the Angel of **YHWH**?
5. Why is **YHWH**'s promise to Hagar of Ishmael's future be an encouragement to her? Many see Ishmael being compared to an onager – a wild donkey. **Job 39:5**. These animals were often inbred with domestic donkeys to improve their strength and spirit.
6. Why will Beer Lahai Roi will become an important place for Isaac?. Read **Genesis 24:62**
7. Abram is now 86. He has been in Canaan for 11 years. When will God keep his promise? Or is Ishmael the promised descendant?

Day 13

YHWH Tells Abraham that Sarah Will Birth a Son

Genesis 17:1-18:32

YHWH's Fifth Promise to Abraham

^{17:1} When Abram was 99 years old, appeared to him. He said to Abram: I am God *'el* Almighty *saday*. Live *halak* in my presence *panim* with integrity *tamim*. ²I will give you my Covenant *berit* and I will give you very many descendants. ³Immediately, Abram bowed with his face touching the ground.

[God *'elohim* spoke to Moses. I am YHWH. I appeared to Abraham, Isaac and Jacob as God *'el* Almighty *saday* but I didn't make myself known to them by my name, YHWH. I even made a Covenant to give them Canaan, the land where they lived as foreigners. Exodus 6:2-4]

The title *El Saday* appears in Genesis 17:1; 28:3; 35:11; 43:14; 48:3; 49:25

YHWH Changes Abram's Name to Abraham

Again God *'elohim* spoke to him: ⁴My Covenant is still with you. You will become the father of many nations. ⁵So your name will no longer be Abram [Exalted Father], but Abraham [Father of Many] because I have made you a father of many nations. ⁶I will give you many descendants. Many nations and kings will come from you.

⁷I will make my Covenant *berit* to you and your descendants for generations to come as an Everlasting *'olam* Covenant *berit*. I will be your God *'elohim* and the God *'elohim* of your descendants. ⁸I am also giving this Land where you are living — all of Canaan — to you and your descendants as your permanent possession. And I will be your God *'elohim*.

YHWH Instructs Abraham As to the Sign of the Covenant

⁹God *'elohim* also said to Abraham: You and your descendants in generations to come are to be faithful to my Covenant. ¹⁰This is how you are to be faithful to my Covenant: Every male among you is to be circumcised. ¹¹All of you must be circumcised. That will be the sign of the Covenant from me to you.

¹²For generations to come every male child who is eight days old must be circumcised, whether he is born in your household or bought with money from a foreigner who's not related to you. ¹³Every male born in your household or bought with your money is to be circumcised without exception. So my Covenant will be a sign on your flesh, an Everlasting Covenant. ¹⁴Any uncircumcised male must be excluded from his people because he has rejected my Covenant.

YHWH Changes Sarai's Name to Sarah

¹⁵God *'elohim* said to Abraham: Don't call your wife by the name Sarai anymore. Instead, her name is Sarah [Princess]. ¹⁶I will bless her and I will also give you a son by her. I will bless her, and she will become a mother of nations, and Kings will come from her.

¹⁷Immediately, Abraham bowed with his face touching the ground. He laughed as he thought to himself: Can a son be born to a hundred-year-old man? Can Sarah, a ninety-year-old woman, have a child?

¹⁸Then Abraham said to God *'elohim*: Why not let Ishmael be my heir?
¹⁹God *'elohim* replied: No. Your wife Sarah will give you a son and you will name him Isaac [He Laughs]. I will make an Everlasting Covenant to him and his descendants.

²⁰I have heard your request about Ishmael. Yes, I will bless him, make him fertile, and increase the number of his descendants. He will be the father of 12 princes, and I will make him a great nation.

²¹ But I will make my Covenant to Isaac. Sarah will give birth to him at this time next year. ²² When God *’elohim* finished speaking with Abraham, he left him.

Abraham’s Household Is Circumcised

²³ So Abraham took his son Ishmael, everyone born in his household, and everyone bought with money — every male in his household — and circumcised them that day as God *’elohim* had told him. ²⁴ Abraham was 99 years old when he was circumcised. ²⁵ His son Ishmael was 13 years old when he was circumcised. ²⁶ That same day Abraham and his son Ishmael were circumcised. ²⁷ All the men of his household, whether born in the household or bought with money from a foreigner, were circumcised with him.

YHWH Appears Before Abraham

^{18:1} YHWH appeared to Abraham by the oak trees belonging to Mamre as he was sitting at the entrance of his tent during the hottest part of the day. ² Abraham looked up, and suddenly he saw three men standing near him. When he saw them, he ran to meet them, and he bowed with his face touching the ground.

³ Please, sir, Abraham said, stop by to visit me for a while. ⁴ Why don’t we let someone bring a little water? After you wash your feet, you can stretch out and rest under the tree. ⁵ Let me bring some bread so that you can regain your strength. After that you can leave, since this is why you stopped by to visit me. They answered: That’s fine. Do as you say.”

⁶ So Abraham hurried into the tent to find Sarah. Quick, he said, get three measures of flour, knead it, and make bread. ⁷ Then Abraham ran to the herd and took one of his best calves. He gave it to his servant, who prepared it quickly. ⁸ Abraham took cheese and milk, as well as the meat, and set these in front of them. Then he stood by them under the tree as they ate.

⁹They asked him: Where is your wife Sarah? He answered: Over there, in the tent. ¹⁰YHWH said: I promise I'll come back to you next year at this time and your wife Sarah will have a son

Sarah happened to be listening at the entrance of the tent that was behind him. ¹¹Abraham and Sarah were old. Sarah was past the age of childbearing. ¹²And so Sarah laughed to herself thinking: Now that I've become old, will I enjoy myself again? What's more, my husband is old.

¹³YHWH asked Abraham: Why did Sarah laugh and say: Can I really have a child now that I'm old? ¹⁴Is anything too hard for YHWH? I will come back to you next year at this time and Sarah will have a son. ¹⁵Because she was afraid, Sarah denied that she had laughed. But YHWH said: Yes, you did laugh.

God Decides to Tell Abraham He Will Destroy Sodom Where Lot Lives

¹⁶Then the men got up to leave. As Abraham was walking with them to see them off, they looked toward Sodom.

¹⁷YHWH said to himself: I shouldn't hide what I am going to do from Abraham. ¹⁸After all, Abraham is going to become a great and mighty nation and through him all the nations of the earth will be blessed. ¹⁹I have chosen him so that he will direct his children and his family after him to keep the way of YHWH by doing what is right and just. In this way I, YHWH, will do what I have promised Abraham.

²⁰YHWH also said: Sodom and Gomorrah have many complaints against them and their sin *hatta'at* is very *me'od* serious *kabad*. ²¹I must go down and see whether these complaints are true. If not, I will know it.

Abraham Argues with God

²²From there the men turned and went on toward Sodom but Abraham remained standing *'amad* in front *panim* of YHWH.

²³Abraham came closer and asked: Are you really going to sweep away the innocent with the guilty? ²⁴What if there are 50 innocent people in the city? Are you really going to sweep them away? Won't you spare that place for the sake of the 50 innocent people who are in it? ²⁵It would be unthinkable for you to do such a thing, to treat the innocent and the guilty alike and to kill the innocent with the guilty. That would be unthinkable. Won't the judge of the whole earth do what is fair *mispat*? ²⁶YHWH said: If I find 50 innocent people inside the city of Sodom, I will spare the whole place for their sake.

²⁷Abraham asked: Consider now, if I may be so bold as to ask you, although I'm only dust and ashes, ²⁸what if there are 45 innocent people? Will you destroy the whole city because of 5 fewer people? YHWH answered: I will not destroy it if I find 45 there.

²⁹Abraham asked him again: What if 40 are found there? He answered: For the sake of the 40 I will not do it. ³⁰Please don't be angry if I speak again, Abraham said. What if 30 are found there? He answered: If I find 30 there, I will not do it.

³¹Look now, if I may be so bold as to ask you, Abraham said. What if 20 are found there? He answered: I will not destroy it for the sake of the 20. ³²Please don't be angry if I speak only one more time, Abraham said. What if 10 are found there? He answered. I will not destroy it for the sake of the 10.

³³When YHWH finished speaking to Abraham, he left. Abraham returned home.

WHAT HAVE WE LEARNED SO FAR?

YHWH appears to Abram when he is 99 years old. He renames Abram Abraham meaning *Father of Many*. He renews his Covenant with Abram and gives him a sign of the Covenant – circumcision. Since this procedure affects the male organ that causes the seed to create descendants, it is a reminder that the character of Abraham is to continue through his descendants.

Then **YHWH** renames Sarai to Sarah meaning *Princess*. Your wife Sarah will give you a son and you will name him Isaac meaning *He laughs*. God *'elohim* reminds Abraham he will remember Ishmael and make him the father of 12 princes. But I will remember my promise to Isaac. Sarah will give birth to him at this time next year.

Later, **YHWH** again appears to Abraham as one of three men who comes to his tent. Abraham offers them hospitality. YHWH again says Sarah will have a son and Sarah overhears and laughs. How can I bear a son at 89 years old? Because Sarah was afraid, she denied she laughed. But YHWH said: Yes, you did laugh.

Now two of the men leave to go to Sodom. YHWH decides to tell Abraham about his plan to destroy Sodom and Gomorrah where Abraham's nephew Lot lives with his family. He tells Abraham but Abraham asks: Will you destroy the righteous with the wicked? In sincere desperation, Abraham argues **YHWH** down from 50 innocent men to 10. Unfortunately, there are not even ten innocent men in Sodom. How wonderful that **YHWH** patiently listens to Abraham.

THINGS TO THINK ABOUT

1. Why does God change Abram's name to Abraham?
2. God confirms his Covenant with Abraham to give title to the Land of Canaan to his descendants that will be many and they will bless all the families of the earth. **Genesis 12:3**. Then he gives them a Sign of the Covenant Circumcision of all male children. Why is this sign necessary?
3. This is the second Covenant God makes with mankind. He will make five Covenants:

Noachic	Sign: Rainbow
Abrahamic	Circumcision
Mosaic	Sabbath
Davidic	Throne of the Messiah
New Covenant	Bread and Wine

What is the purpose of the Covenant God makes with humans?

4. God makes a wonderful statement about Abraham:

[I have chosen him so that he will keep *samar* his children and his family after him to keep the way *derek* of YHWH by doing what is right *sedaqa*-righteousness and just *mispat*-justice. **Genesis 18:19**]

Does Abraham do this with his children?

5. Why does **YHWH** tell Abraham about his plan to destroy Sodom?
6. Why does Abraham argue with God *elohim*?
7. Why doesn't God tell Abraham he will save Lot and his family?

Day 14

God Destroys Sodom and Gomorrah

Genesis 19:1-21:32

Lot's Guests Are Assaulted

^{19:1} The two angels came to Sodom in the evening as Lot was sitting in the gateway. When Lot saw them, he got up to meet them and bowed with his face touching the ground. ²He said: Please, gentlemen, why don't you come to my home and spend the night? ─ You can ─ wash your feet there. Then early tomorrow morning you can continue your journey. No, they answered, we'd rather spend the night in the city square.

³But he insisted so strongly that they came with him and went into his home. He prepared a special dinner for them, baked some unleavened bread, and they ate. ⁴Before they had gone to bed, all the young and old male citizens of Sodom surrounded the house. ⁵They called to Lot: Where are the men who came to ─ stay with ─ you tonight? Bring them out to us so that we can have sex with them.

⁶Then Lot went outside and shut the door behind him. ⁷Please, my friends, don't be so wicked, he said. ⁸Look, I have two daughters who have never had sex. Why don't you let me bring them out to you? Do whatever you like with them. But don't do anything to these men, since I'm responsible for them.

⁹But the men yelled: Get out of the way. This man came here to stay awhile. Now he wants to be our judge. We're going to treat you worse than those men. They pushed hard against Lot and lunged forward to break down the door.

¹⁰The men ─ inside ─ reached out, pulled Lot into the house with them and shut the door ─ Then they struck all the men who were in the doorway of

the house, young and old alike, with blindness so that they gave up trying to find the door.

Lot Leaves Sodom and the Cities Are Destroyed

^{19:12} Then the men asked Lot: Do you have anyone else here — any in-laws, sons, daughters, or any other relatives in the city? Get them out of here ¹³ because we're going to destroy this place. The complaints to **YHWH** against its people are so loud that **YHWH** has sent us to destroy it.

¹⁴ So Lot went out and spoke to the men engaged to his daughters. He said: Hurry. Get out of this place, because **YHWH** is going to destroy the city. But they thought he was joking.

¹⁵ As soon as it was dawn, the angels urged Lot by saying: Quick. Take your wife and your two daughters who are here or you'll be swept away when the city is punished. ¹⁶ When he hesitated, the men grabbed him, his wife, and his two daughters by their hands, because **YHWH** wanted to spare Lot. They brought them safely outside the city.

¹⁷ As soon as they were outside, one of the angels said: Run for your lives. Don't look behind you and don't stop on the plain. Run for the hills or you'll be swept away.

¹⁸ Lot answered: Oh no! ¹⁹ Even though you've been so good to me and though you've been very kind to me by saving my life, I can't run as far as the hills. This disaster will overtake me and I'll die. ²⁰ Look, there's a city near enough to flee to, and it's small. Why don't you let me run there? Isn't it small? Then my life will be saved.

²¹ The angel said to him: All right, I will grant you this request too. I will not destroy the city you're talking about. ²² Run there quickly, because I can't do anything until you get there. The city is named Zoar [Small].

YHWH Destroys The Two Cities

^{19:23}The sun had just risen over the land as Lot came to Zoar. ²⁴Then YHWH made burning sulfur and fire rain out of Heaven on Sodom and Gomorrah. ²⁵He destroyed those cities, the whole plain, all who lived in the cities, and whatever grew on the ground. ²⁶Lot's wife looked back and turned into a column of salt.

²⁷Early the next morning Abraham came to the place where he had stood in front of YHWH. ²⁸When he looked toward Sodom and Gomorrah and all the land in the plain, he saw smoke rising from the land like the thick smoke of a furnace.

²⁹When God destroyed the cities on the plain, he remembered Abraham. Lot was allowed to escape from the destruction that came to the cities where he was living.

Lot's Daughters Have Sons by Their Father

³⁰Lot left Zoar because he was afraid to stay there. He and his two daughters settled in the mountains where they lived in a cave. ³¹The older daughter said to the younger one: Our father is old. No men are here. We can't get married as other people do. ³²Let's give our father wine to drink. Then we'll go to bed with him so that we'll be able to preserve our family line through our father.

³³That night they gave their father wine to drink. Then the older one went to bed with her father. He didn't know when she came to bed or when she got up.

³⁴The next day the older daughter said to the younger one: I did it. Last night I went to bed with my father. Let's give him wine to drink again tonight. Then you go to bed with him so that we'll be able to preserve our family line through our father.

³⁵That night they gave their father wine to drink again. Then the younger one went to bed with him. He didn't know when she came to bed or when she got up.

³⁶So Lot's two daughters became pregnant by their father. ³⁷The older one gave birth to a son and named him Moab. He is the ancestor of the Moabites of today. ³⁸The younger daughter also gave birth to a son and named him Ben Ammi. He is the ancestor of the Ammonites of today.

Abraham Deceives Abimelech

^{20:1} Abraham moved to the Negev and settled between Kadesh and Shur. While he was living in Gerar, ²Abraham told everyone that his wife Sarah was his sister. So King Abimelech of Gerar sent men to take Sarah.

³God *'elohim* came to Abimelech in a dream one night and said to him: You're going to die because of the woman that you've taken. She's a married woman. ⁴Abimelech hadn't come near her, so he asked: Lord *'adonay*, will you destroy a nation even if it's innocent? ⁵Didn't he tell me himself: She's my sister? Didn't she even say: He's my brother? I did this in all innocence and with a clear conscience.

⁶Yes, I know that you did this with a clear conscience, God *'elohim* said to him in the dream. In fact, I kept you from sinning against me. That's why I didn't let you touch her. ⁷Give the man's wife back to him now, because he's a prophet. He will pray for you, and you will live. But if you don't give her back, you and all who belong to you are doomed to die.

⁸Early in the morning Abimelech called together all his officials. He told them about all of this, and they were terrified.

⁹Then Abimelech called for Abraham and asked him: What have you done to us? How have I sinned against you that you would bring such a serious sin on me and my kingdom? You shouldn't have done this to me.

¹⁰Abimelech also asked Abraham: What were you thinking when you did this?

¹¹Abraham said: I thought that because there are no God-fearing *'elohim yir'ah* people in this place, I'd be killed because of my wife ¹²Besides, she is my sister — my father's daughter but not my mother's. She is also my wife. ¹³When God had me leave my father's home and travel around, I said to her: Do me a favor: Wherever we go, say that I'm your brother.

¹⁴Then Abimelech took sheep, cattle, and male and female slaves and gave them to Abraham. He also gave his wife Sarah back to him. ¹⁵Abimelech said: Look, here's my land. Live anywhere you like. ¹⁶He said to Sarah: Don't forget, I've given your brother 25 pounds of silver. This is to silence any criticism against you from everyone with you. You're completely cleared."

¹⁷Abraham prayed to God, and God healed Abimelech, his wife, and his female slaves so that they could have children. ¹⁸ **YHWH** *Elohim* had made it impossible for any woman in Abimelech's household to have children because of Abraham's wife Sarah.

WHAT HAVE WE LEARNED SO FAR?

The two angels come to Sodom and Lot invites them into his home. The young and old men of Sodom come to the door and demand Lot send the strangers out so they can have sex with them. Lot refuses and offers his two unmarried daughters instead. The men attempt to break down the door but the angels make them blind.

The angels tell Lot to warn his relatives to leave. Lot attempts to get the girls' fiancées to leave with them but they refused. When Lot hesitated to leave the angels grabbed him, his wife, and his two daughters and brought them safety outside the city. Then they told them to run for their lives and don't look back. Run for the hills. Lot asked if he could go to Zoar. The angels approved.

Lot's wife looked back and she was turned into a pillar of salt. Lot and the two girls ran to Zoar. Then they moved out to a cave in the hills because they were afraid. The two girls were worried they would die without children. So they got their father drunk and both had sex with him and became pregnant. Their children became the nations of Moab and Ammon that surrounded Israel.

Meanwhile Abraham moved his family from Hebron to Gerar, the land of the Philistines south and west toward the Mediterranean Sea between Kadesh and Shur. While he was living there, Abraham told everyone Sarah was his sister, the same as he did in Egypt previously.

King Abimelech than took Sarah into his haram. **YHWH** came to the King and told him: You are going to die. You have taken a married woman. Abimelech cried out: Lord *'adonay*, I didn't know. **YHWH** then said: Give the man's wife back to him.

The King gave Abraham sheep, cattle, and slaves. He also gave him 25 pounds of silver. He said: Live anywhere you wish. Abraham prayed to God *'elohim* and God *'elohim* healed Abimelech and household so that the women could bear children.

THINGS TO THINK ABOUT

1. Why did Lot offer his two daughters to the Sodomites?
2. Why did **YHWH** save Lot and his family from Sodom?
3. Why did Lot hesitate *mahahh* in leaving Sodom? **Genesis 19:16**
- 4 Why did Lot's wife look back?
5. Why didn't Lot and his family go back to live with Abraham?
6. Why did Abraham move south from Hebron to the land of Gerar to Beersheba?
7. Why would Abraham pass off Sarah as his wife a second time?

Day 15

God Radically Tests Abraham

Genesis 21:1-23:19

Sarah Finally Births Isaac at Age 90

^{21:1} God *'elohim* came to help Sarah and did for her what he had promised
²So she became pregnant, and at the exact time God had promised, she gave birth to a son for Abraham in his old age. ³Abraham named his newborn son Isaac. ⁴When Isaac was eight days old, Abraham circumcised him as God had commanded. ⁵Abraham was 100 years old when his son Isaac was born.

⁶Sarah said: God has brought me laughter *sahaq* ^{2x} and everyone who hears about this will laugh *sahaq* with me. ⁷Who would have predicted to Abraham that Sarah would nurse children? Yet, I have given him a son in his old age.

Sarah Becomes Angry at Ishmael

⁸The child grew and was weaned. On the day Isaac was weaned, Abraham held a big feast. ⁹Sarah saw that Abraham's son by Hagar the Egyptian was laughing at Isaac.

Isaac is about 4 years old. Ishmael is 14 years old.

Sarah Demands Abraham Send Ishmael and Hagar Away

¹⁰She said to Abraham: Get rid of this slave and her son because this slave's son must never share the inheritance with my son Isaac.

¹¹Abraham was upset by this because of his son Ishmael. ¹²But God *'elohim* said to Abraham: Don't be upset about the boy and your slave. Listen to what Sarah says because through Isaac your descendants will carry on your

name. ¹³Besides, I will make the slave's son into a nation also, because he is your child.

¹⁴Early the next morning Abraham took bread and a container of water and gave them to Hagar, putting them on her shoulder. He also gave her the boy and sent her on her way.

So she left and wandered around in the desert near Beersheba ¹⁵When the water in the container was gone, she put the boy under one of the bushes.

¹⁶Then she went about as far away as an arrow can be shot and sat down. She said to herself: I don't want to watch the boy die. So she sat down and sobbed loudly.

¹⁷God *'elohim* heard the boy crying, and the Messenger *mal'ak* of God *'elohim* called to Hagar from Heaven. What's the matter, Hagar? he asked her. Don't be afraid. God *'elohim* has heard the boy crying from the bushes.

¹⁸Come on, help the boy up. Take him by the hand because I'm going to make him into a great nation.

¹⁹God *'elohim* opened her eyes. Then she saw a well. She filled the container with water and gave the boy a drink.

²⁰God *'elohim* was with the boy as he grew up. He lived in the desert and became a skilled archer. ²¹He lived in the desert of Paran and his mother got him a wife from Egypt.

Abraham's Agreement with Abimelech

²²At that time Abimelech, accompanied by Phicol, the commander of his army, said to Abraham: God *'elohim* is with you in everything you do.

²³Now, swear an oath to me here in front of God *'elohim* that you will never cheat me, my children, or my descendants. Show me and the land where you've been living the same kindness that I have shown you. ²⁴Abraham said: I so swear.

²⁵Then Abraham complained to Abimelech about a well which Abimelech's servants had seized. ²⁶Abimelech replied: I don't know who did this. You didn't tell me, and I didn't hear about it until today

²⁷Abraham took some sheep and cattle and gave them to Abimelech and the two of them made an agreement. ²⁸Then Abraham set apart seven female lambs from the flock. ²⁹Abimelech asked him: What is the meaning of these seven female lambs you have set apart?

³⁰Abraham answered: Accept these lambs from me so that they may be proof that I dug this well. ³¹This is why that place is called Beersheba because both of them swore an oath there.

³²After they made the treaty at Beersheba, Abimelech and Phicol, the commander of his army, left and went back to the land of the Philistines. ³³Abraham planted a tamarisk tree at Beersheba and worshiped YHWH, the Everlasting *'olam* God *el*, there. ³⁴Abraham lived a long time in the land of the Philistines.

God Tests Abraham

^{22:1} Later God *'elohim* tested Abraham and called to him: Abraham. Yes, here I am, he answered. ²God *'elohim* said: Take your son, your only *yahid* son Isaac, whom you love *'ahab*, and go to Moriah. Sacrifice him there as a burnt offering *'ola* on one of the mountains that I will show you.

³Early *sakam* the next morning Abraham saddled his donkey. He took with him two of his servants and his son Isaac. When he had cut the wood for the burnt offering, he set out for the place that God had told him about.

⁴Two days later Abraham saw the place in the distance. ⁵Then Abraham said to his servants: You stay here with the donkey while the boy and I go over there. <We'll> worship. After that <we'll> come back to you.

⁶Then Abraham took the wood for the burnt offering and gave it to his son Isaac. Abraham carried the burning coals and the knife. The two of them went on together.

⁷Isaac spoke up and said: Father? Yes, Son? Abraham answered. Isaac asked: We have the burning coals and the wood but where is the lamb for the burnt offering? ⁸Abraham answered: God *'elohim* will provide a lamb for the burnt offering, Son. The two of them went on together

⁹When they came to the place that God had told him about, Abraham built the altar and arranged the wood on it. Then he tied up his son Isaac and laid him on top of the wood on the altar. ¹⁰Next, Abraham picked up the knife and took it in his hand to sacrifice his son

¹¹But the Messenger *mal'ak* of YHWH called to him from Heaven and said: Abraham. Abraham. Yes? he answered. ¹²“Do not lay a hand on the boy, he said. Do not do anything to him. Now I know that you fear *yare'* God *'elohim* because you did not refuse to give me your son, your only son.

¹³When Abraham looked around, he saw a ram behind him caught by its horns in a bush. So Abraham took the ram and sacrificed it as a burnt offering in place of his son.

¹⁴Abraham named that place YHWH Will Provide *yir'e*. It is still said today: On the mountain of YHWH it will be provided.

YHWH's Seventh Promise to Abraham

¹⁵Then the Messenger *mal'ak* of YHWH called to Abraham from Heaven a second time ¹⁶and said:

I am taking an oath *saba'* on my own name, declares YHWH, that because you have done this and have not refused to give me your son, your only son, ¹⁷I will certainly bless *barak barak* you and make your descendants as numerous as the stars in the sky and the grains of sand on the seashore. Your descendants will take possession of their enemies' cities. ¹⁸Through your descendant all the nations of the earth will be blessed *barak* because you have obeyed me.

¹⁹Then Abraham returned to his servants, and together they left for Beersheba. Abraham remained in Beersheba while Sarah apparently moved .

Abraham Learns of Nahor's Descendants

²⁰ Later Abraham was told: Milcah has given birth to these children of your brother Nahor ²¹ Uz, the firstborn, Buz, his brother, Kemuel, father of Aram, ²² Kesed, Hazo, Pildash, Jidlaph, and Bethuel.

²³ Bethuel is the father of Rebekah. Milcah had these eight sons by Abraham's brother Nahor. ²⁴ Nahor's concubine whose name was Reumah had the following children: Tebah, Gaham, Tahash, and Maacah.

Sarah's Death

^{23:1} Sarah lived to be 127 years old. This was the length of her life. ² She died in Kiriath Arba, that is, Hebron in Canaan. Abraham who was now 137 years old went to mourn for Sarah and to cry about her death.

³ Then Abraham left the side of his dead wife and spoke to the Hittites: ⁴ "I'm a stranger with no permanent home. Let me have some of your property for a tomb so that I can bury my dead wife.

⁵ The Hittites answered Abraham: ⁶ "Listen to us, sir. You are a mighty leader among us. Bury your dead in one of our best tombs. Not one of us will withhold from you his tomb for burying your dead.

⁷ Abraham got up in front of the Hittites, the people of that region, and bowed with his face touching the ground. ⁸ He said to them: If you are willing to let me bury my wife, listen to me. Encourage Ephron, son of Zohar, ⁹ to let me have the cave of Machpelah that he owns at the end of his field. He should sell it to me for its full price as my property to be used as a tomb among you.

¹⁰ Ephron was sitting among the Hittites. He answered Abraham so that everyone who was entering the city gate could hear him. He said: ¹¹ "No sir, listen to me. I'm giving you the field together with the cave that is in it. My people are witnesses that I'm giving it to you. Bury your wife.

¹²Abraham bowed down again in front of the people of that region. ¹³He spoke to Ephron so that the people of that region could hear him. He said: If you would only listen to me. I will pay you the price of the field. Take it from me so that I can bury my wife there.

¹⁴Ephron answered Abraham: ¹⁵“Sir, listen to me. The land is worth ten pounds of silver. What is that between us? Bury your wife.

¹⁶Abraham agreed to Ephron’s terms. So he weighed out for Ephron the amount stated in front of the Hittites: ten pounds of silver at the current merchants’ exchange rate.

¹⁷So Ephron’s field at Machpelah, east of Mamre, was sold ¹⁸to Abraham. His property included the field with the cave in it as well as all the trees inside the boundaries of the field. The Hittites together with all who had entered the city gate were the official witnesses for the agreement.

¹⁹After this, Abraham buried his wife Sarah in the cave in the field of Machpelah, east of Mamre, that is, Hebron. ²⁰So the field and its cave were sold by the Hittites to Abraham as his property to be used as a tomb.

WHAT HAVE WE LEARNED SO FAR?

Moses says that God tests *nasa*-proves Abraham. Pastor Randy Smith calls this *the Great Surrender*. He says that **YHWH** tests each believer to give up the thing he loves best in favor of God. This prevents anything from becoming an idol, a god greater than **YHWH**.

While they were living at Beersheba, **YHWH** calls Abraham to take Isaac north to Mount Moriah apparently Salem later Jerusalem and offer him as a burnt offering to **YHWH**. Early in the morning apparently without informing Sarah, Abraham, Isaac, and two servants leave. Two days later near the mountain, Abraham and Isaac leave the servants. He tells them: We’ll worship and then we’ll return.

As Abraham and his son walk, Isaac asks: We have the burning coals and the wood, but where is the lamb for the offering. God will provide the lamb, says Abraham. They went on together. The silence must have been deafening.

Abraham built the altar, arranged the wood, and tied up his son Isaac. He picked up the knife but the Messenger of **YHWH** said: Do not lay a hand on the boy. Abraham saw a ram caught in the thicket and sacrificed the ram.

Then **YHWH** speaks to Abraham this time swearing upon his own name. He confirms the Covenant he has with Abraham. Then Abraham and Isaac returned to Beersheba. Abraham remained at Beersheba while apparently Isaac went to Hebron to join his mother Sarah.

Later, Abraham learns of his relatives in Haran. His brother Nahor's wife Milcah has given birth to eight children. Among these is Bethuel. Bethuel is the father of Rebekah. Nahor's concubine has also given birth to four children.

Sarah lived to be 127 years old. Abraham is now 137 years old. Abraham traveled to Hebron to purchase land for a grave for Sarah and bought it from the Hittites at an outrageously high price. So Abraham buried Sarah in the cave in the field of Machpelah east of Mamre or Hebron.

THINGS TO THINK ABOUT

1. God command to sacrifice is a hard story. For a father like me, it makes me shudder and I admit I have wondered about this story for many years. Yet God is sovereign and commands absolute obedience. Examine this story and describe why God has the absolute right to command this. Then explain why he asks this of us.
2. Although the Bible does not say this, I am certain Abraham did not tell Sarah he was going to do this. Some interpretations describe Sarah chasing after Abraham. The Bible only says early in the morning Abraham and Isaac set out. Why else would Abraham set out early? This certainly wasn't something he wanted to do quickly.
3. Notice Abraham was fully convinced that he would not have to kill Isaac. He told the servants: Wait here and we'll return.

[Abraham said to his young men: Abide *yasab* here with the ass *hamor* and the lad *na'ar* and I will go *yalak* yonder *ko* and worship *saha* and come back *sub*. Genesis 22:5]

Moreover, when Isaac asked his father where is the lamb for the burnt offering, Abraham replied: *God will furnish the lamb.* Genesis 22:7

The Book of Hebrews says:

[When God tested Abraham, faith led him to offer his son Isaac. Abraham, the one who received the promises from God was willing offer his only son as a sacrifice. God said to him: Through Isaac your descendants will carry on your name. Abraham believed that God would bring Isaac back from the dead. Abraham did receive Isaac back from the dead in a figurative sense. **Hebrews 11:17-19**]

Describe Abraham's amazing faith in God's promise.

4. Do you think Randy Smith's statement that God will require a Great Surrender of what each believer loves best is true? Why?
5. Why does Abraham keep in touch with his relatives in Haran?
6. Why do the Hittites take advantage of Abraham when they know that he has no other alternative to find a place to bury Sarah?
7. Why didn't Sarah stay with Abraham at Beersheba and move to Hebron?

Day 16

Abraham Finds a Wife for Isaac and Then a Second Wife for Himself

Genesis 24:1-25:11

Abraham Instructs His Servant to Go to Haran and Find a Wife for Isaac

^{24:1} By now Abraham was old, and YHWH had blessed him in every way.

² So Abraham said to the senior servant of his household who was in charge of all that he owned: Take a solemn oath. ³ I want you to swear by YHWH God *‘elohim* of Heaven and earth that you will not get my son a wife from the daughters of the Canaanites among whom I’m living. ⁴ Instead, you will go to the land of my relatives and get a wife for my son Isaac.

⁵ The servant asked him: What if the woman doesn’t want to come back to this land with me? Should I take your son all the way back to the land you came from?

⁶ “Make sure that you do not take my son back there, Abraham said to him ⁷ YHWH God *‘elohim* of Heaven took me from my father’s home and the land of my family. He spoke to me and swore this oath: I will give this Land to your descendants.

God [He] will send his angel *mal’ak* ahead of you and you will get my son a wife *’issa* from there. ⁸ If the woman doesn’t want to come back with you, then you’ll be free from this oath that you swear to me. But don’t take my son back there. ⁹ So the servant did as his master Abraham commanded and swore the oath to him concerning this.

¹⁰ Then the servant took ten of his master’s camels and left, taking with him all of his master’s best things. He traveled to Aram Naharaim, Nahor’s city.

Abraham's Servant Asks God to Find a Wife for Isaac

¹¹The servant had the camels kneel down outside the city by the well. It was evening, when the women would go out to draw water. ¹²Then he prayed: **YHWH** God *elohim* of my master Abraham, make me successful today. Show your kindness to Abraham.

¹³Here I am standing by the spring, and the girls of the city are coming out to draw water. ¹⁴I will ask a girl: May I please have a drink from your jar? If she answers: Have a drink, and I'll also water your camels, let her be the one you have chosen for your servant Isaac. This way I'll know that you've shown your kindness to my master."

¹⁵Before he had finished praying, Rebekah came with her jar on her shoulder. She was the daughter of Bethuel, son of Milcah, who was the wife of Abraham's brother Nahor. ¹⁶The girl was a very attractive virgin. No man had ever had sexual intercourse with her. She went down to the spring, filled her jar, and came back.

¹⁷The servant ran to meet her and said: Please give me a drink of water. ¹⁸Drink, sir, she said. She quickly lowered her jar to her hand and gave him a drink.

¹⁹When she had finished giving him a drink, she said: I'll also keep drawing water for your camels until they've had enough to drink. ²⁰So she quickly emptied her jar into the water trough, ran back to the well to draw more water, and drew enough for all his camels ²¹The man was silently watching her to see whether or not **YHWH** had made his trip successful.

²²When the camels had finished drinking, the man took out a gold nose ring weighing a fifth of an ounce and two gold bracelets weighing four ounces. ²³He asked: Whose daughter are you? Please tell me whether there is room in your father's house for us to spend the night.

²⁴She answered him: I'm the daughter of Bethuel, son of Milcah and Nahor. ²⁵We have plenty of straw and feed for your camels and room for you to spend the night.

²⁶The man knelt, bowing to **YHWH** with his face touching the ground. ²⁷He said: Praise **YHWH**, the God *elohim* of my master Abraham. **YHWH** hasn't failed to be kind and faithful to my master. **YHWH** has led me on this trip to the home of my master's relatives.

²⁸The girl ran and told her mother's household about these things.

²⁹Rebekah had a brother whose name was Laban. ³⁰He saw the nose ring and the bracelets on his sister's wrists and heard her tell what the man had said to her. Immediately, Laban ran out to the man by the spring.

He came to the man, who was standing with the camels by the spring. ³¹He said: Come in, you whom **YHWH** has blessed. Why are you standing out here? I have straightened up the house and made a place for the camels.

³²So the man went into the house. The camels were unloaded and given straw and feed. Then water was brought for him and his men to wash their feet. ³³When the food was put in front of him, he said: I won't eat until I've said what I have to say. Speak up, Laban said.

³⁴I am Abraham's servant, he said. ³⁵**YHWH** has blessed my master, and he has become wealthy. **YHWH** has given him sheep and cattle, silver and gold, male and female slaves, camels and donkeys ³⁶My master's wife Sarah gave him a son in her old age, and my master has given that son everything he has.

³⁷My master made me swear this oath: Don't get a wife for my son from the daughters of the Canaanites in whose land I'm living. ³⁸Instead, go to my father's home and to my relatives and get my son a wife.'

³⁹I asked my master: What if the woman won't come back with me? ⁴⁰"He answered me: I have been living the way **YHWH** wants me to. **YHWH**

will send his angel *mal'ak* with you to make your trip successful. You will get my son a wife from my relatives and from my father's family. ⁴¹Then you will be free from your oath to me. You will also be free of your oath to me if my relatives are not willing to do this when you go to them.

⁴²“When I came to the spring today, I prayed: **YHWH** God *'elohim* of my master Abraham, please make my trip successful. ⁴³I'm standing by the spring. I'll say to the young woman who comes out to draw water: Please give me a drink of water. ⁴⁴If she says to me: Not only may you have a drink, but I will also draw water for your camels, let her be the woman **YHWH** has chosen for my master's son.’

⁴⁵Before I had finished praying, Rebekah came with her jar on her shoulder. She went down to the spring and drew water. So I asked her: May I have a drink? ⁴⁶She quickly lowered her jar and said: Have a drink and I'll water your camels too. So I drank and she also watered the camels.

⁴⁷Then I asked her: Whose daughter are you? She answered: The daughter of Bethuel, son of Nahor and Milcah.

I put the ring in her nose and the bracelets on her wrists. ⁴⁸I knelt, bowing down to **YHWH**. I praised **YHWH**, the God *'elohim* of my master Abraham. **YHWH** led me in the right direction to get the daughter of my master's relative for his son. ⁴⁹Tell me whether or not you're going to show my master true kindness so that I will know what to do.

Laban and Bethuel Give Rebekah to Isaac

⁵⁰Laban and Bethuel answered: This is from **YHWH**. We can't say anything to you one way or another. ⁵¹Here's Rebekah. Take her and go. She will become the wife of your master's son, as **YHWH** has said.

⁵²When Abraham's servant heard their answer, he bowed down to **YHWH**. ⁵³The servant took out gold and silver jewelry and clothes and gave them to Rebekah. He also gave expensive presents to her brother and mother.

⁵⁴Then he and the men who were with him ate and drank and spent the night.

When they got up in the morning, he said: Let me go back to my master. ⁵⁵Her brother and mother replied: Let the girl stay with us ten days or so. After that she may go.

⁵⁶He said to them, “Don’t delay me now that **YHWH** has made my trip successful. Let me go back to my master. ⁵⁷So they said: We’ll call the girl and ask her. ⁵⁸They called for Rebekah and asked her: Will you go with this man? She said: Yes, I’ll go.

⁵⁹So they let their sister Rebekah and her nurse go with Abraham’s servant and his men. ⁶⁰They gave Rebekah a blessing: May you, our sister, become the mother of many thousands of children. May your descendants take possession of their enemies’ cities.

⁶¹Then Rebekah and her maids left. Riding on camels, they followed the man. The servant took Rebekah and left.

Isaac and Rebekah Are Married

⁶²Isaac had just come back from Beer Lahai Roi, since he was living in the Negev. ⁶³Toward evening Isaac went out into the field to meditate. When he looked up, he saw camels coming. ⁶⁴When Rebekah saw Isaac, she got down from her camel. ⁶⁵She asked the servant: Who is that man over there coming through the field to meet us? That is my master, the servant answered. Then she took her veil and covered herself.

⁶⁶The servant reported to Isaac everything he had done. ⁶⁷Isaac took her into his mother Sarah’s tent. He married Rebekah. She became his wife, and he loved her. So Isaac was comforted after his mother’s death.

Abraham's Second Marriage and His Death

²⁵¹ Abraham at least 137 years old married again and his wife's name was Keturah. He will not die until he is 175 years old. ² Keturah gave birth to these sons of Abraham: Zimran, Jokshan, Medan, Midian, Ishbak, and Shuah.

³ Jokshan was the father of Sheba and Dedan. Dedan's descendants were the Assyrians, the Letushites, and the Leummites. ⁴ The sons of Midian were Ephah, Ephher, Hanoah, Abida, and Eldaah. These were the descendants of Keturah.

⁵ Abraham left everything he had to Isaac. ⁶ But while he was still living, Abraham had given gifts to the sons of his concubines. He sent them away from his son Isaac to a land in the east.

⁷ Abraham lived 175 years – 38 years after Sarah died. ⁸ Then he took his last breath and died at a very old age. After a long and full life, he joined his ancestors in death.

Both Isaac and Ishmael Buried Their Father Abraham

⁹ His sons Isaac and Ishmael buried him in the cave of Machpelah in the field of Ephron, son of Zohar the Hittite. The cave is east of Mamre. ¹⁰ This was the field that Abraham had bought from the Hittites. There Abraham was buried with his wife Sarah. ¹¹ After Abraham died, God blessed his son Isaac, who settled near Beer Lahai Roi.

WHAT HAVE WE LEARNED SO FAR?

Abraham now sends his servant to his brother Nahor's relatives in Haran to find a wife for Isaac who is now 40 years old and living at Beer Lahai Roi where Hagar had met the angel of **YHWH**. Abraham makes the servant take a solemn oath to be guided by **YHWH** God.

The servant takes ten camels and many gifts and travels to Haran. He prays to **YHWH** God *'elohim*. If I ask a girl for a drink of water and she offers to water my camels, then you are indicating to me this the one for Isaac. Rebecca, the granddaughter of Abraham's brother Nahor came and offered to water his camels. This was quite a task as each camel can drink 20 gallons of water and the girl's pitcher held about 3/4 of a gallon.

The servant watched and gave Rebekah gifts. Then he asked if she had room for him to stay the night. She said yes. So Rebekah ran and told her mother. Rebekah's brother Laban saw the gifts and came running to the servant. *Come you whom YHWH has blessed*, he said. They offered the servant food but he said he must complete his mission before he ate.

Then the servant told of his mission for Abraham. Rebekah's father Bethuel and her brother Laban said: *This is from YHWH. Here's Rebekah. Take her and go. She will become the wife of your master's son, as YHWH has said.*

In the morning, the servant said: Let me go back to my master. Rebekah's mother and brother Laban asked for ten days to get her ready. The servant begged: Please don't delay me. They called Rebekah and she said: *Yes, I'll go.* So they, together with Rebekah's nurse left immediately for Beersheba.

Isaac saw them coming back just as he was returning from Beer Lahai Roi. He was meditating in the field when he saw the servant arrive. Isaac took Rebekah's into his mother Sarah's and married her. He loved her.

Abraham then married again at 147 years to a woman named Keturah. She gave him six sons. Abraham left everything to Isaac but he gave presents to his sons and sent them away to the east. At 175 years Abraham died and was buried by Isaac and Ishmael with Sarah. Isaac and Rebekah settled near Beer Lahai Roi.

THINGS TO THINK ABOUT

1. Why did Abraham send his servant to Haran to get a wife for Isaac?
2. How pious were Nahor's relatives. How can you tell? If Rebekah pious?
3. How does the servant indicate that **YHWH** is directing the selection of a wife for his son Isaac?
4. Isaac seems to be a very quiet man while Rebekah seems very strong and active. Will they make a good marriage?
5. Why is Isaac so attached to Beer Lahai Roi? When did he last see Hagar? How old was he?
6. Apparently Abraham had concubines in addition to Keturah. Why aren't we told anything about Keturah? Why did he send the sons of his concubines to the east?
7. Where was Ishmael living so he could learn of Abraham's death? Did he have contact with his brother Isaac before this?

TOLDAT 7

This is the account of the descendants of Abraham's son Ishmael **Genesis**
25:12

NEBAIOTH

KEDAR

ADBEEL

MIBSAM

MISHMA

DUMAH

MASSA

HADAD

TEMA

JETUR

NAPHISH

KEDEMAH

Day 17

The 12 Tribes of Ishmael

Genesis 25:12-18

¹²This is the account *toldot* of the descendants of Abraham's son Ishmael. He was the son of Sarah's Egyptian slave Hagar and Abraham.

¹³These are the names of the sons of Ishmael listed in the order of their birth: Nebaioth, Ishmael's firstborn, Kedar, Adbeel, Mibsam, ¹⁴Mishma, Dumah, Massa, ¹⁵Hadad, Tema, Jetur, Naphish, and Kedemah. ¹⁶These are the sons of Ishmael and their names listed by their settlements and camps—12 leaders of their tribes.

¹⁷Ishmael lived 137 years. Then he took his last breath and died. He joined his ancestors in death. ¹⁸His descendants lived as nomads from the region of Havilah to Shur, which is near Egypt, in the direction of Assyria. They all fought with each other

WHAT HAVE WE LEARNED SO FAR?

[God *elohim* was with the boy as he grew up. He lived in the desert and became a skilled archer. He lived in the desert of Parah and his mother got him a wife from Egypt. Genesis 21:20-21]

We don't know much about Ishmael.

TOLDAT 8

This is the account of Abraham's son Isaac and his descendants. **Genesis**
25:19

Day 18

Isaac and Rebekah: A Monogamous Marriage with Twin Sons

Genesis 25:19-26:34

Isaac took her into his mother Sarah's tent. He married Rebekah. She became his wife and he loved *'ahab* her. So Isaac was comforted after his mother's death. Genesis 24:67

This is only the second time the word *love* appears in Genesis. It occurs 13x.

Rebekah Gives Birth to Esau and Jacob

^{25:19} This is the account *toldot* of Abraham's son Isaac and his descendants. Abraham was the father of Isaac. ²⁰ Isaac was 40 years old when he married Rebekah, daughter of Bethuel the Aramean from Paddan Aram and sister of Laban the Aramean.

²¹ Isaac prayed to YHWH for his wife because she was childless. YHWH answered his prayer and his wife Rebekah became pregnant. ²² When the children inside her were struggling with each other, she said: If it's like this now, what will become of me? So she went to ask YHWH.

²³ YHWH said to her: Two countries are in your womb. Two nations will go their separate ways from birth. One nation will be stronger than the other, and the older will serve the younger.

²⁴ When the time came for her to give birth, she had twins. ²⁵ The first one born was red. His whole body was covered with hair, so they named him Esau [Hairy]. ²⁶ Afterwards, his brother was born with his hand holding on to Esau's heel, and so he was named Jacob [Heel]. Isaac was 60 years old when they were born.

Rebekah had been barren for 20 years.

The Twins Are Very Different from Each Other

²⁷They grew up. Esau became an expert hunter, an outdoorsman. Jacob remained a quiet man, staying around the tents. ²⁸Because Isaac liked to eat the meat of wild animals, he loved Esau. However, Rebekah loved Jacob.

Esau Sells His Right as First Born Son to Jacob

²⁹Once, Jacob was preparing a meal when Esau, exhausted, came in from outdoors. ³⁰So Esau said to Jacob: Let me have the whole pot of red stuff to eat — that red stuff — I'm exhausted. This is why he was called Edom or red. ³¹Jacob responded: First, sell me your rights as firstborn. ³²I'm about to die. Esau said. What good is my inheritance to me?

³³First, swear an oath, Jacob said. So Esau swore an oath to him and sold him his rights as firstborn ³⁴Then Jacob gave Esau a meal of bread and lentils. He ate and drank and then he got up and left.

This is how Esau showed his contempt for his rights as firstborn.

YHWH's First Promise to Isaac

^{26:1} There was a famine in the land in addition to the earlier one during Abraham's time. So Isaac went to the land of King Abimelech of the Philistines in Gerar.

²YHWH appeared to Isaac and said: Don't go to Egypt. Stay where I tell you. ³Live here in this land for a while and I <will be with you> and bless *barak* you. I will give all these lands to you and your descendants. I will keep the oath that I swore to your father Abraham.

⁴I will make your descendants as numerous as the stars in the sky and give all these lands to your descendants. Through your descendant all the nations of the earth will be blessed *barak*. ⁵I will bless you because Abraham obeyed me and completed the duties, commands, laws, and instructions I gave him. ⁶So Isaac lived in Gerar.

The word *barak* meaning *bless* appears 73x in Genesis. Only in Psalms does it appear more 75x.

Isaac Deceives King Abimelech as Did His Father Abraham

⁷When the men of that place asked about his wife, Isaac answered: She's my sister. He was afraid to say: my wife. He thought that the men of that place would kill *harag* him to get Rebekah because she was an attractive woman.

⁸When he had been there a long time, King Abimelech of the Philistines looked out of his window and saw Isaac caressing *sahaq* his wife Rebekah. ⁹Abimelech called for Isaac and said: So she's really your wife. How could you say: She's my sister? Isaac answered him: I thought I would be killed *harag* because of her.

¹⁰Then Abimelech said: What have you done to us. One of the people might have easily gone to bed with your wife and then you would have made us guilty of sin. ¹¹So Abimelech ordered his people: Anyone who touches this man or his wife will be put to death.

¹²Isaac planted \perp crops \perp in that land. In that same year he harvested a hundred times as much as he had planted because **YHWH** had blessed *barak* him. ¹³He continued to be successful becoming very rich. ¹⁴Because he owned so many flocks, herds, and servants, the Philistines became jealous of him.

¹⁵So the Philistines filled in all the wells that his father's servants had dug during his father Abraham's lifetime. ¹⁶Finally, Abimelech said to Isaac: Go away from us. You've become more powerful than we are.

¹⁷So Isaac moved away. He set up his tents in the Gerar Valley and lived there. ⁸He dug out the wells that had been dug during his father Abraham's lifetime. The Philistines had filled them in after Abraham's death. He gave them the same names that his father had given them.

¹⁹Isaac's servants dug in the valley and found a spring-fed well. ²⁰The herders from Gerar quarreled with Isaac's herders claiming: This water is ours. So Isaac named the well Esek [Argument], because they had argued with him. ²¹Then they dug another well and they quarreled over that one too. So Isaac named it Sitnah [Accusation].

²²He moved on from there and dug another well. They didn't quarrel over this one. So he named it Rehoboth [Roomy] and said: Now YHWH has made room for us, and we will prosper in this land.

YHWH's Second Promise to Isaac

^{26:23}He went from there to Beersheba where his father Abraham had lived. ²⁴That night YHWH appeared to Isaac and said: I am the God *'elohim* of your father Abraham. Don't be afraid because I am with *et* you. I will bless *barak* you and increase the number of your descendants for my servant Abraham's sake. ²⁵So Isaac built an altar *mizbeah* there and worshiped *qara*-called *sem*-name YHWH. He also pitched his tent in that place and his servants dug a well there.

Isaac's Agreement with Abimelech

²⁶Abimelech, his friend Ahuzzath, and Phicol, the commander of his army, came from Gerar to see Isaac. ²⁷Isaac asked them: Why have you come to me, since you hate me and sent me away from you?

²⁸They answered: We have seen that YHWH <is with you>. So we thought: There should be a solemn agreement *'ala*-oath between us. We'd like to make an agreement *berit*-Covenant with you ²⁹that you will not harm us, since we have not touched you. We have done only good to you and let you go in peace *salom*. Now you are blessed *barak* by YHWH.

³⁰Isaac prepared a special dinner for them, and they ate and drank. ³¹Early the next morning they exchanged oaths. Then Isaac sent them on their way, and they left peacefully *salom*.

³²That same day Isaac's servants came and told him about a well they had dug. They said to him: We've found water. ³³So he named it Shibah [Oath]. That is why the name of the city is still Beersheba today.

Esau's Marriages

³⁴When Esau was 40 years old, he married Judith, daughter of Beerli the Hittite. He also married Basemath, daughter of Elon the Hittite. ³⁵These women brought Isaac and Rebekah a lot of grief.

WHAT HAVE WE LEARNED SO FAR?

Isaac really loved Rebekah. Although they were different in temperament, they got along. They had twin sons who were also very different. Opposite attract so gentle Isaac loved Esau who was an aggressive hunter while aggressive Rebekah loved gentle Jacob who was more of a thinker and planner.

While Rebekah was pregnant with the twins, the twins wrestled in her womb making her labor difficult. Rebekah asked **YHWH** what was going on. **YHWH** told her:

[Two countries are in your womb. Two nations will go their separate ways from birth. One nation will be stronger than the other and older will serve the younger. **Genesis 25:23**]

Esau came out of the womb first while Jacob then emerged holding onto Esau's heel. Since Esau was red and hairy, he was called Esau. Jacob was called Jacob a heel grabber. Isaac was 60 years old when the twins were born. Rebekah had been barren 20 years.

As they grew up, Esau became an excellent hunter. His father Isaac loved the meat he caught. Jacob stayed in the tents with his mother Rebekah. One day Jacob cooked a red meat soup. Esau came in exhausted from hunting and demanded some of the red stuff. Jacob demanded he give him his rights as a first born. Esau was too tired to argue so he sold it him for the red stuff.

There was a famine in the land so Isaac moved east to Gerar. When men asked about Rebekah, Isaac said she was his sister. One day the King of the Philistines Abimelech saw Isaac caressing Rebekah. So he called Isaac in and berated him. One of us might have gone in to your wife and we would be guilty of sin. So Abimelech ordered his people to stay away from Rebekah.

Since **YHWH** blessed Isaac, his crops and herds became very large. The Philistines became jealous so Abimelech told Isaac to move away to the east. Later Abimelech came to Isaac and said: *We have seen YHWH has blessed you. So make a Covenant we will not harm each other.* They ate a Covenant meal and swore oaths.

Meanwhile, Esau at age 40 married two Canaanite women who brought Isaac and Rebekah a lot of grief.

THINGS TO THINK ABOUT

1. Did Rebekah tell Jacob early about **YHWH**'s prophecy regarding the birthright – that the elder would serve the younger? If not, why would Jacob demand Esau give up his birthright before he served him the red stuff?
2. Why would Isaac want to go to Egypt rather than stay in Gerar? Wouldn't God protect him in Gerar? Wouldn't Abraham have told him of his misadventure there? Abraham apparently had 40 years with Isaac before he was on his own.
3. Why is Isaac duplicating Abraham's ruse of passing off his wife as his sister?
4. Finally Isaac moves east from Gerar to Beersheba where Abraham had lived. Why does he move there? Is it because it is nearer Beer Lahai Roi? One scholar believes Beer Lahai Roi is on Mount Seir, the territory of Edom where Esau settled.

Day 19

Jacob Deceives Isaac and Is Sent Away

Genesis 27:1-28:22

Jacob Steals Isaac's Blessing

^{27:1} When Isaac was old and going blind, he called his older son Esau and said to him: Son. Esau answered: Here I am. ² Isaac said: I'm old. I don't know when I'm going to die. ³ Now take your hunting equipment, your quiver and bow, and go out into the open country and hunt some wild game for me. ⁴ Prepare a good-tasting meal for me, just the way I like *'ahab-*love it. Bring it to me to eat so that I will bless *barak* you before I die.

Rebekah Plots to Deceive Her Husband

⁵ Rebekah was listening while Isaac was speaking to his son Esau. When Esau went into the open country to hunt for some wild game to bring back, ⁶ Rebekah said to her son Jacob: I've just heard your father speaking to your brother Esau. ⁷ He said: Bring me some wild game, and prepare a good-tasting meal for me to eat so that I will bless *barak* you in the presence of YHWH before I die.

⁸ Now listen to me, Son, and do what I tell you. ⁹ Go to the flock, and get me two good young goats. I'll prepare them as a good-tasting meal for your father, just the way he likes *'ahab-*loves it. ¹⁰ Then take it to your father to eat so that he will bless *barak* you before he dies.

¹¹ Jacob said to his mother Rebekah: My brother Esau is a hairy man, and my skin is smooth. ¹² My father will feel \perp my skin \perp and think I'm mocking him. Then I'll bring a curse *qelalah* on myself instead of a blessing *beraka*.

¹³ His mother responded: Let any curse on you fall on me, Son. Just obey me and go. Get me \perp the young goats \perp . ¹⁴ He went and got them and

brought them to his mother. She prepared a good-tasting meal, just the way his father liked *'ahab*-loved it.

¹⁵Then Rebekah took her older son Esau's good clothes, which she had in the house, and put them on her younger son Jacob. ¹⁶She put the skins from the young goats on his hands and on the back of his neck. ¹⁷Then she gave her son Jacob the good-tasting meal and the bread she had prepared.

Jacob Goes to Deceive His Father

^{27:18}He went to his father and said: Father? Yes? he answered. Who are you, Son? ¹⁹Jacob answered his father: I'm Esau, your firstborn. I've done what you told me. Sit up and eat this meat I've hunted for you so that you may bless *barak* me.

²⁰Isaac asked his son: How did you find it so quickly, Son? **YHWH** your God *'elohim* brought it to me, he answered.

Jacob first calls God **YHWH** here.

²¹Then Isaac said to Jacob: Come over here so that I can feel your skin, Son, _L to find out _L whether or not you really are my son Esau. ²²So Jacob went over to his father. Isaac felt _L his skin _L. The voice is Jacob's, he said, but the hands are Esau's. ²³He didn't recognize Jacob, because his hands were hairy like his brother Esau's hands. So he blessed *barak* him.

²⁴Are you really my son Esau?" he asked him. I am, Jacob answered. ²⁵Isaac said: Bring me some of the game and I will eat it, Son, so that I will bless *barak* you. Jacob brought it to Isaac, and he ate it. Jacob also brought him wine and he drank it.

²⁶Then his father Isaac said to him: Come here and give me a kiss, Son. ²⁷He went over and gave him a kiss. When Isaac smelled his clothes, he blessed *barak* him and said:

“The smell of my son is like the smell of open country that **YHWH** has blessed *barak*.²⁸ May God *elohim* give you dew from the sky, fertile fields on the earth, and plenty of fresh grain and new wine.

²⁹May nations serve you. May people bow down to you. Be the master of your brothers, and may the sons of your mother bow down to you. May those who curse *‘arar* you be cursed *‘arar*. May those who bless *barak* you be blessed *barak*.

Esau Discovers Jacob Has Stolen His Blessing

^{27:30}Isaac finished blessing *barak* Jacob. Jacob had barely left when his brother Esau came in from hunting. ³¹He, too, prepared a good-tasting meal and brought it to his father. Then he said to his father: Please, Father, eat some of the meat I’ve hunted for you so that you will bless *barak* me.

³²Who are you? his father Isaac asked him. I’m your firstborn son Esau, he answered. ³³Trembling violently all over, Isaac asked: Who hunted game and brought it to me? I ate it before you came in. I blessed *barak* him, and he will stay blessed *barak*.

³⁴When Esau heard these words from his father, he shouted out a very loud and bitter cry and said to his father: Bless *barak* me too, Father. ³⁵Isaac said: Your brother came and deceived *mirma*-subtly me and has taken away your blessing *beraka*.

³⁶Esau said: Isn’t that why he’s named Jacob? He’s cheated me twice already. He took my rights as firstborn and now he’s taken my blessing *beraka*. So he asked: Haven’t you saved a blessing *beraka* for me?

³⁷Isaac answered Esau: I have made him your master and I have made all his brothers serve him. I’ve provided fresh grain and new wine for him. What is left for me to do for you, Son?

³⁸Esau asked, “Do you have only one blessing *beraka*, Father? Bless *barak* me too, Father. And Esau sobbed loudly. ³⁹His father Isaac answered him:

The place where you live will lack the fertile fields of the earth and the dew from the sky above. ⁴⁰You will use your sword to live, and you will serve your brother. But eventually you will gain your freedom and break his yoke off your neck.

⁴¹So Esau hated *satam* ^{6x} Jacob because of the blessing *beraka* that his father had given him. Esau said to himself: The time to mourn for my father is near. Then I'll kill *harag* my brother Jacob.

Rebeka Sends Jacob Off to Her Brother Laban in Paddan Haran

^{27:42}When Rebekah was told what her older son Esau had said, she sent for her younger son Jacob and said to him: Watch out. Your brother Esau is comforting himself by planning to kill *harag* you.

⁴³So now, Son, obey me. Quick. Run away to my brother Laban in Haran. ⁴⁴Stay with him awhile, until your brother's anger cools down. ⁴⁵When your brother's anger is gone and he has forgotten what you did to him, I'll send for you and get you back. Why should I lose both of you in one day?

⁴⁶Rebekah said to Isaac: I can't stand Hittite women. If Jacob marries a Hittite woman like one of those from around here, I might as well die

Rebekah has found an excuse to send Jacob away without telling Isaac Esau is planning to kill Jacob. See **Genesis 26:35**

Isaac Sends Jacob Away

^{28:1}Isaac called for Jacob and blessed *barak* him. Then he commanded him: You are not to marry any of the Canaanite women. ²Quick. Go to Paddan Aram. Go to the home of Bethuel, your mother's father, and get yourself a wife from there from the daughters of your uncle Laban.

³May God *el* Almighty *saday* bless *barak* you, make you fertile, and increase the number of your descendants so that you will become a community of people. ⁴May he give to you and your descendants the blessing of Abraham

so that you may take possession of the Land where you are now living, the Land that God gave to Abraham.

Isaac is confirming to Jacob that he is the child of the promised Covenant God made with Abraham to give him the Land of Canaan rather than Esau.

⁵Isaac sent Jacob to Paddan Aram. Jacob went to live with Laban, son of Bethuel the Aramean and brother of Rebekah. She was the mother of Jacob and Esau.

⁶Esau learned that Isaac had blessed *barak* Jacob and had sent him away to Paddan Aram to get a wife from there. He learned that Isaac had blessed Jacob and had commanded him not to marry any of the Canaanite women. ⁷He also learned that Jacob had obeyed his father and mother and had left for Paddan Aram.

⁸Esau realized that his father Isaac disapproved of Canaanite women. ⁹So he went to Ishmael and married Mahalath, daughter of Abraham's son Ishmael and sister of Nebaioth, in addition to the wives he had.

Jacob's First Encounter with God

¹⁰Jacob left Beersheba and traveled toward Haran. ¹¹When he came to a certain place, he stopped for the night because the sun had gone down. He took one of the stones from that place, put it under his head, and lay down there.

¹²He had a dream in which he saw a stairway set up on the earth with its top reaching up to Heaven. He saw the angels *mal'ak* of God *'elohim* going up and coming down on it. ¹³**YHWH** was standing above it saying: I am **YHWH**, the God *'elohim* of your grandfather Abraham and the God *'elohim* of Isaac.

I will give the Land *'eres* on which you are lying to you and your descendants. ¹⁴Your descendants will be like the dust on the earth. You will spread out to the west and to the east, to the north and to the south. Through you and through your descendant every family on earth will be

blessed *barak*.¹⁵ Remember, <I am with you> and will watch over you *samar*-keep wherever you go. I will also bring you back *sub*-return to this Land because I will not leave *azab* you until I do what I've promised *dabar* you.

¹⁶Then Jacob woke up from his sleep and exclaimed: Certainly *'aken*, **YHWH** is in this place, and I didn't know *yada*' it. ¹⁷Filled with awe *yare*'-afraid, he said: How awe-inspiring *yare*' this place is. Certainly, this is the House *bayit* of God *'elohim* and the Gateway *sa'ar* to Heaven *samayim*.

¹⁸Early the next morning Jacob took the stone he had put under his head. He set it up as a marker and poured olive oil on top of it. ¹⁹He named that place Bethel [House of God]. Previously, the name of the city was Luz.

Jacob Makes a Vow to God

²⁰Then Jacob made a vow:

If God *'elohim* will be with me and will watch over *samar*-keep me on my trip and give me food to eat and clothes to wear, ²¹and if I return *sub*-safely *salom*-peace to my father's home, then **YHWH** will be my God *'elohim*

²²This stone that I have set up as a marker will be the House of God *'elohim*, and I will surely give you a tenth of everything you give me.

Apparently, Isaac had taught his son Jacob that **YHWH** must be given a tithe as Abraham had previously given a tithe to Melchizedek. **Genesis 14:20**

WHAT HAVE WE LEARNED SO FAR?

Rebekah overhears Isaac asking Esau to get him wild game so he can then bless him. So she tells him to get two young goats. She will fix them so Jacob can be blessed by Isaac rather than Esau. Jacob protested he does not look like Esau but Rebekah brushed that aside. Just obey me and go, she said.

Jacob brought the goats. Then she put Esau's clothes on Jacob and put skins from the young goats on his hands and on the back of his neck.

Jacob came to Isaac and said: Father, I'm Esau. Here is the good meal you wanted. Eat it so you can bless me. How did you find it so quickly, my Son, asked Esau. **YHWH** your God

'elohim brought it to me, he said. Esau felt his skin. The voice is Jacob's said Isaac but the skin is Esau's .

Isaac blessed Jacob. *May God give you rain, fertile fields, and fresh rain and new wine. Be the master of your brothers.* Then he repeated the last of **YHWH**'s blessing on Abraham.

Genesis 12:3

Jacob had just left the tent when Esau arrived. *Father, here is the meal I made for you. Who are you?* asked Isaac. *I'm Esau.* Isaac said: *I've already given the blessing to Jacob.* Esau shouted: *Bless me too Father.* Isaac said: *The place where you live will not have rain so you will kill your food. You will serve your brother but eventually will break his yoke off your neck.*

Immediately, Rebekah heard what happened. So she told Jacob. *Run to my brother Laban in Haran. Esau wants to kill you. When he cools down, I'll send for you.*

Rebekah tells Isaac she is sending Jacob to Haran to get a wife. Isaac calls Jacob and says: *May you have blessings that God gave Abraham.* Esau learns that Jacob has left and that Rebekah does not like Canaanite women. So he located Ishmael and married his daughter Mahalath.

Jacob left Beersheba and traveled toward Haran. He stopped for the night and slept in the desert. While he slept he dreamed there was a ladder connecting Heaven and earth with angels going up and coming down on it. Above the ladder **YHWH** was standing saying: *I am **YHWH**, the God of your grandfather Abraham and your Father Isaac. I will give you this Land and many descendants. Through you every family will be blessed. I will watch over you and I will bring you back here.*

Jacob woke up filled with awe saying: *This is the House of God 'elohim and the Gateway to Heaven.* Jacob named that place Bethel. Then Jacob made a vow: *If God 'elohim will be with me and protect me and bring me safely back to my Father's house, then **YHWH** will be my God 'elohim. I will certainly tithe my possessions to him.*

THINGS TO THINK ABOUT

1. What was Rebekah's motivation in having Jacob get blessed by Isaac.
2. What is Rebekah's relationship with God? Apparently she doesn't mind receiving a curse for deceiving Isaac.

3. What did Rebeka teach Jacob about **YHWH** and God *'elohim*. He seems to be familiar with God's personal name and God's title.
4. Jacob is not afraid to lie to Isaac about **YHWH**, Jacob's God, giving him the meal to bring to Isaac. This should tell us where Jacob is in relationship with **YHWH**. Describe Jacob's current relationship with God.
5. Isaac was 40 years old when he married Rebekah. Yet she was barren for a while. Jacob will be in Haran for 20 years before he returns home. Isaac will die at 180 years old. How old is Isaac right now?
6. What was so dramatic about Jacob's dream at Bethel that he made a vow to God?
7. Read through the blessings God gives Jacob. What those that God has already given both Abraham and Isaac?

EXTRA CREDIT

How did Esau find Ishmael in order to marry his daughter? Did Ishmael keep in touch with Isaac? Remember Ishmael came to Hebron to bury Abraham. **Genesis 25:9**

Day 20

Jacob Loves Rachel and Creates a Family

Genesis 29:1-31:55

Jacob's Arrival in Haran

^{29:1} Jacob continued on his trip and came to the land in the east. ² He looked around and out in a field he saw a well with a large stone over the opening. Three flocks of sheep were lying down near it because the flocks were watered from that well. ³ When all the flocks were gathered there, the stone would be rolled off the opening of the well so that the sheep could be watered. Then the stone would be put back in place over the opening of the well.

⁴ Jacob asked some people: My friends, where are you from? We're from Haran, they replied. ⁵ He asked them: Do you know Laban, Nahor's grandson? They answered: We do. ⁶ How is he doing? Jacob asked them. He's fine, they answered. Here comes his daughter Rachel with the sheep.

⁷ It's still the middle of the day, he said. It isn't time yet to gather the livestock. Water the sheep. Then let them graze. ⁸ They replied: We can't until all the flocks are gathered. When the stone is rolled off the opening of the well, we can water the sheep.

⁹ While he was still talking to them, Rachel arrived with her father's sheep, because she was a shepherd. ¹⁰ Jacob saw Rachel, daughter of his uncle Laban, with his uncle Laban's sheep. He came forward and rolled the stone off the opening of the well and watered his uncle Laban's sheep. ¹¹ Then Jacob kissed *nasaq* Rachel and sobbed loudly *baka*.

^{29:12} When Jacob told Rachel that he was her father's nephew and that he was Rebekah's son, she ran and told her father.

¹³As soon as Laban heard the news about his sister's son Jacob, he ran to meet him. He hugged and kissed him and brought him into his home. Then Jacob told Laban all that had happened. ¹⁴Laban said to him: You are my own flesh and blood.

Jacob Obtains Wives

Jacob stayed with him for a whole month. ^{29:15}Then Laban said to him: Just because you're my relative doesn't mean that you should work for nothing. Tell me what your wages should be.

¹⁶Laban had two daughters. The name of the older one was Leah, and the name of the younger one was Rachel. ¹⁷Leah had attractive eyes but Rachel had a beautiful figure and beautiful features. ¹⁸Jacob loved *'ahab* Rachel. So he offered: I'll work seven years in return for your younger daughter Rachel.

¹⁹Laban responded: It's better that I give her to you than to any other man. Stay with me. ²⁰Jacob worked *'abad*-served seven years in return for Rachel, but the years seemed like only a few days to him because he loved *'ahaba*'her.

²¹└ At the end of the seven years └ Jacob said to Laban: The time is up. Give me my wife *'issa*. I want to sleep *bo*'-go in with her.

²²So Laban invited all the people of that place and gave a wedding feast.

Laban Deceives Jacob Giving Him Leah Instead of Rachel

^{29:23}In the evening Laban took his daughter Leah and brought her to Jacob. Jacob slept with her. When morning came, he realized it was Leah. ²⁴Laban had given his slave Zilpah to his daughter Leah as her slave.

²⁵What have you done to me? Jacob asked Laban. Didn't I work for you in return for Rachel? Why did you cheat me?

²⁶Laban answered: It's not our custom to give the younger daughter └ in marriage └ before the older one. ²⁷Finish the week of wedding festivities

with this daughter. Then we will give you the other one too. But you'll have to work for me another seven years.

²⁸That's what Jacob did. He finished the week with Leah. Then Laban gave his daughter Rachel to him as his wife. ²⁹Laban had given his slave Bilhah to his daughter Rachel as her slave. ³⁰Jacob slept with Rachel too. He loved *'ahab* Rachel more than Leah. So he worked for Laban another seven years.

Leah and Rachel Compete for Jacob's Love

^{29:31}When YHWH saw Leah was unloved *sane'*-hated, he made it possible for her to have children, but Rachel had none *'aqar*-barren. ³²Leah became pregnant and gave birth to a son. She named him **Reuben** [Here's My Son], because she said: Certainly *ki*, YHWH has seen my misery; now my husband *'is* will love *'ahab* me. ³³She became pregnant again and gave birth to another son. She said, "Certainly, YHWH has heard that I'm unloved *sane'*; and he also has given me this son. So she named him **Simeon** [Hearing].

³⁴She became pregnant again and gave birth to another son. She said: Now at last my husband *'is* will become attached *lava*-joined to me because I've given him three sons. So she named him **Levi** [Attached]. ³⁵She became pregnant again and gave birth to another son. She said: This time I will praise *yada'* YHWH. So she named him **Judah** [Praise]. Then she stopped having children.

Rachel Attempts to Compete with Leah

^{30:1} Rachel saw that she could not have children for Jacob, and she became jealous of her sister. She said to Jacob: Give me children, or I'll die. ²Jacob became angry with Rachel and asked: Can I take the place of God *'elohim* who has kept you from having children?

³She said: Here's my servant Bilhah. Sleep with her. She can have children for me and I can build a family for myself through her. ⁴So she gave him her

slave Bilhah as his wife and Jacob slept with her. ⁵Bilhah became pregnant, and she gave birth to a son for Jacob.

⁶Rachel said: Now God *'elohim* has judged in my favor. He has heard my prayer and has given me a son. So she named him **Dan** [He Judges].

⁷Rachel's slave Bilhah became pregnant again and gave birth to a second son for Jacob. ⁸Rachel said: I have had a great struggle *naptulim*—wrestling ^{ix} with my sister, and I have won. So she named him **Naphtali** [My Struggle].

⁹When Leah saw that she had stopped having children, she took her slave Zilpah and gave her to Jacob as his wife. ¹⁰Leah's slave Zilpah gave birth to a son for Jacob. ¹¹Leah said: I've been lucky. So she called him **Gad** [Luck].

¹²Leah's slave Zilpah gave birth to her second son for Jacob. ¹³Leah said: I've been blessed. Women will call me blessed *'asher*. So she named him **Asher** [Blessing].

¹⁴During the wheat harvest Reuben went out into the fields and found some mandrakes *duday* ^{7x}. He brought them to his mother Leah. Rachel said to Leah: Please give me some of your son's mandrakes. ¹⁵Leah replied: Isn't it enough that you took my husband? Are you also going to take my son's mandrakes? Rachel said: Very well, Jacob can go to bed with you tonight in return for your son's mandrakes.

¹⁶As Jacob was coming in from the fields that evening, Leah went out to meet him. You are to sleep with me, she said. You are my reward for my son's mandrakes. So he went to bed with her that night. ¹⁷God *'elohim* answered Leah's prayer. She became pregnant and gave birth to her fifth son for Jacob. ¹⁸Leah said: God *'elohim* has given me my reward because I gave my slave to my husband. So she named him **Issachar** [Reward].

¹⁹She became pregnant again and gave birth to her sixth son for Jacob.

²⁰Leah said: God *'elohim* has presented me with a beautiful present. This time my husband will honor me because I have given him six sons. So she named him **Zebulun** [Honor].

²¹ Later she gave birth to a daughter and named her **Dinah**.

God Remembered Rachel and Allowed Her to Birth a Son

²² Then God remembered Rachel. God '*elohim* answered her prayer and made it possible for her to have children. ²³ So she became pregnant and gave birth to a son. Then she said: God '*elohim* has taken away my disgrace.

²⁴ She named him **Joseph** [May He Give Another] and said: May **YHWH** give me another son.

Laban and Jacob Attempt to Out Trick Each Other

²⁵ After Rachel gave birth to Joseph, Jacob said to Laban: Let me go home to my own country. ²⁶ Give me my wives and my children for whom I've worked and let me go. You know how much work I've done for you.

²⁷ Laban replied: Listen to me. I've learned from the signs I've seen that **YHWH** has blessed me because of you. ²⁸ So he offered: Name your wages and I'll pay them.

²⁹ Jacob responded: You know how much work I've done for you and what has happened to your livestock under my care. ³⁰ The little that you had before I came has grown to a large amount. **YHWH** has blessed you wherever I've been. When can I do something for my own family? ³¹ Laban asked: What should I give you?

Don't give me anything, Jacob answered. Instead, do something for me. Then I'll go back to taking care of and watching your flocks again. ³² Let me go through all of your flocks today and take every speckled or spotted sheep, every black lamb, and every spotted or speckled goat. They will be my wages.

³³ My honesty will speak for itself whenever you come to check on my wages. Any goat I have that isn't speckled or spotted or any lamb that isn't black will be considered stolen.

³⁴ Laban answered: Agreed. We'll do as you've said. ³⁵ However, that same day Laban took out the striped and spotted male goats, all the speckled and spotted female goats, everyone with white on it, and every black lamb. He had his sons take charge of them. ³⁶ He traveled three days away from Jacob. Jacob continued to take care of the rest of Laban's flocks.

³⁷ Then Jacob took fresh-cut branches of poplar, almond, and plane trees and peeled the bark on them in strips of white, uncovering the white which was on the branches. ³⁸ He placed the peeled branches in the troughs directly in front of the flocks, at the watering places where the flocks came to drink. When they were in heat and came to drink, ³⁹ they mated in front of the branches. Then they gave birth to young that were striped, speckled, or spotted.

⁴⁰ Jacob separated the rams from the flock and made the rest of the sheep face any that were striped or black in Laban's flocks. So he made separate herds for himself and did not add them to Laban's flocks.

⁴¹ Whenever the stronger of the flocks were in heat, Jacob would lay the branches in the troughs in front of them so that they would mate by the branches. ⁴² But when the flocks in heat were weak, he didn't lay down the branches. So the weaker ones belonged to Laban and the stronger ones to Jacob. ⁴³ As a result, Jacob became very wealthy. He had large flocks, male and female slaves, camels, and donkeys.

YHWH Tells Jacob to Return Home to Hebron

^{31:1} Jacob heard that Laban's sons were saying: Jacob has taken everything that belonged to our father and has gained all his wealth from him. ² Jacob also noticed that Laban did not appear as friendly to him as before *temol*.

³ Then **YHWH** said to Jacob: Go back *sub*-return to the land of your ancestors and to your relatives <and I will be with you>.

⁴ So Jacob sent a message to Rachel and Leah to come out to the open country where his flocks were. ⁵ He said to them: I have seen that your

father isn't as friendly to me as he was before, but the God *'elohim* of my father has been with me *haya*.

You know that I have worked as hard as I could for your father. ⁷Your father has cheated me. He has changed my wages 10 times. But God *'elohim* hasn't let him harm me. ⁸Whenever he said: The speckled ones will be your wages, all the flocks gave birth to speckled young. And whenever he said: The striped ones will be your wages all the flocks gave birth to striped young. ⁹So God *'elohim* has taken away your father's livestock and has given them to me.

¹⁰“During the mating season I had a dream: I looked up and saw that the male goats which were mating were striped, speckled, or spotted. ¹¹In the dream the Messenger *mal'ak* of God *'elohim* called to me: Jacob, I answered: Yes, here I am. ¹²He said:

Look up and see that all the male goats which are mating are striped, speckled, or spotted, because I have seen everything that Laban is doing to you. ¹³I am the God *el* who appeared to you at Bethel, where you poured olive oil on a stone marker for a holy purpose and where you made a vow to me. Now leave this land, and go back to the Land of your relatives.

¹⁴Rachel and Leah answered him: Is there anything left in our father's household for us to inherit? ¹⁵Doesn't he Laban think of us as foreigners? Not only did he sell us, but he has used up the money that was paid for us. ¹⁶Certainly, all the wealth that God *'elohim* took away from our father belongs to us and our children. Now do whatever God *'elohim* has told you.

Jacob Leaves Haran for Canaan

¹⁷Then Jacob put his children and his wives on camels. ¹⁸He drove all his livestock ahead of him and took all the possessions that he had accumulated. He took his own livestock that he had accumulated in Paddan Aram and went back to his father Isaac in Canaan.

¹⁹When Laban went to shear his sheep, Rachel stole her father's idols.
²⁰Jacob also tricked Laban the Aramean by not telling him he was leaving.
²¹So he left in a hurry with all that belonged to him. He crossed the Euphrates River and went toward the mountains of Gilead.

Laban Pursues Jacob to Canaan

²²Two days later Laban was told that Jacob had left in a hurry. ²³He and his relatives pursued Jacob for seven days. Laban caught up with him in the mountains of Gilead.

²⁴God *'elohim* came to Laban the Aramean in a dream at night and said to him: Be careful not to say anything at all to Jacob.

²⁵When Laban finally caught up with Jacob, Jacob had put up his tents in the mountains. So Laban and his relatives put up their tents in the mountains of Gilead.

Laban Questions Jacob Despite God's Command

²⁶Then Laban asked Jacob: What have you done by tricking me? You've carried off my daughters like prisoners of war. ²⁷Why did you leave secretly and trick me? You didn't even tell me you were leaving. I would have sent you on your way rejoicing, with songs accompanied by tambourines and lyres.

²⁸You didn't even let me kiss my grandchildren and my daughters. You've done a foolish thing ²⁹I have the power to harm you. Last night the God *'elohim* of your father said to me: Be careful not to say anything at all to Jacob. ³⁰Now you have left for your father's home because you were so homesick. But why did you steal my gods *'elohim*?

Now we know that Laban if he worships **YHWH** does so synchronistically because he also worships other gods.

³¹Jacob answered Laban: I left because I was afraid. I thought you would take your daughters away from me by force. ³²If you find your gods *'elohim*,

the one who has them will not be allowed to live. In the presence of our relatives, search as much as you want through what I have, and take what is yours. Jacob didn't know that Rachel had stolen the gods *'elohim*.

³³ So Laban went into Jacob's tent, into Leah's tent, and into the tent of the two slaves. But he found nothing. He came out of Leah's tent and went into Rachel's tent. ³⁴ Rachel had taken the idols and had put them in her camel's saddle-bag and was sitting on them. Laban rummaged through the whole tent but found nothing.

³⁵ Rachel said to her father: Don't be angry, Father, but I can't get up to greet you. I'm having my period. So even though Laban had made a thorough search, he didn't find the idols.

³⁶ Then Jacob became angry and confronted Laban: What is my crime? Jacob demanded of Laban. What is my offense that you have come chasing after me? ³⁷ Now that you've rummaged through all my things, did you find anything from your house? Put it here in front of all our relatives. Let them decide which one of us is right.

³⁸ "I've been with you for 20 years. Your sheep and goats never miscarried and I never ate any rams from your flocks. ³⁹ I never brought you any of the flock that was killed by wild animals. I paid for the loss myself. That's what you demanded of me when any of the flock was stolen during the day or at night. ⁴⁰ The scorching heat during the day and the cold at night wore me down, and I lost a lot of sleep.

⁴¹ I've been with your household 20 years now. I worked for you 14 years for your two daughters and 6 years for your flocks, and you changed my wages 10 times ⁴² If the God *'elohim* of my father, the God *'elohim* of Abraham and the Fear *pahad* of Isaac, had not been with me, you would have sent me away empty-handed by now. God *'elohim* has seen my misery and hard work, and last night he made it right.

This is the first time the title *the fear of Isaac* appears. He whom Isaac feared was the God *'elohim* of Jacob.

[This is what **YHWH** said with his powerful hand on me: Don't say that everything these people call a conspiracy is a conspiracy. Don't fear what they fear. Don't let it terrify you. Remember that **YHWH** of Armies is holy. He is the one you should fear and the one you should be afraid of. **Isaiah 8:11-13**]

Even though **YHWH** called himself the God *'elohim* of Isaac **Genesis 28:13**, Jacob would have been lacking in reverence if he referred to the God *'elohim* of Isaac since Isaac was still alive.

The Covenant of Mizpah

⁴³Then Laban answered Jacob: These are my daughters, my grandchildren, and my flocks. Everything you see is mine. Yet, what can I do today for my daughters or for their children? ⁴⁴Now, let's make an agreement *berit*—Covenant and let it stand as a witness between you and me.

⁴⁵Jacob took a stone and set it up as a marker. ⁴⁶Then Jacob said to his relatives: Gather some stones. They took stones, put them into a pile, and ate there by the pile of stones. ⁴⁷⌋ In his language ⌋ Aramaic Laban called it Jegar Sahadutha [Witness Pile], but Jacob called it Galeed in Hebrew.

⁴⁸Laban said: This pile of stones stands as a witness between you and me today. This is why it was named Galeed ⁴⁹and also Mizpah [Watchtower], because he said: May **YHWH** watch *sapa* between you and me when we're unable to see each other. ⁵⁰If you mistreat my daughters or marry other women behind my back, remember that God *'elohim* stands as a witness between you and me.

⁵¹Laban said to Jacob: Here is the pile of stones, and here is the marker that I have set up between you and me. ⁵²This pile of stones and this marker stand as witnesses that I will not go past the pile of stones to harm you, and that you will not go past the pile of stones or marker to harm me. ⁵³May the God *'elohim* of Abraham and Nahor—the God *'elohim* of their father—judge between us.

So Jacob swore this oath by the fear *pahad* of his father Isaac ⁵⁴ and offered a sacrifice on the mountain. He invited his relatives to eat the meal with him. They ate with him and spent the night on the mountain.

Remember that when a Covenant is made, a meal is eaten.

⁵⁵ Early the next morning Laban kissed his grandchildren and his daughters and blessed *barak* them. Then Laban left and went back home.

WHAT HAVE WE LEARNED SO FAR?

This session takes 20 years. Jacob arrives at a well and soon Rachel comes. Jacob took the heavy stone off the well and then kissed Rachel sobbing as he told her his story. When Rachel's brother Laban heard Jacob was there, he came running and welcomed him warmly.

Jacob stayed with Laban an entire month. Then Laban asked him what his wages should be. Jacob replied: I'll work seven years for your daughter Rachel. Jacob worked hard but the time seemed short because he loved Rachel.

When the seven years were up, Jacob said to Laban. Please give me Rachel as my wife. So Laban gave a wedding feast. That night Laban brought the older daughter to Jacob and Jacob slept with her. In the morning he was shocked. He confronted Laban. Laban calmly replied that it is our custom to marry the older daughter first. Continue the wedding ceremonies for a week and then marry Rachel. But you'll have to work another seven years.

Now the two girls compete for Jacob's love by having babies. Leah has four sons in a row. Unfortunately, Rachel could not get pregnant so she offered her slave Bilhah to Jacob saying: I can have a child through her. Bilhah conceived and Rachel named the son Naphtali meaning My Struggle. Leah then offered Jacob her slave and she conceived. Leah conceived two more sons and then a daughter.

Finally Rachel conceived a son and she named him Joseph meaning *May God Give Me Another Son*. Jacob now had eleven sons and one daughter. So he said to Laban: Give me my wives and let me go. Laban said: Work for me and tell me your wages. Jacob offered Laban the pure white sheep and coats while he took the black, speckled or spotted ones. Laban agreed. But before beginning,, Laban had his sons take away the existing black, speckled, or spotted sheep and goats.

Jacob now did so animal husbandry tricks to created more multi-colored sheep and goats. And Jacob's herds prospered greatly. But Laban's sons murmured against Jacob and even Laban did not seem so friendly. **YHWH** said to Jacob: Go back to the land of your

ancestors and I will be with you. So Jacob called Rachel and Leah and they agreed as they felt Laban had also betrayed them taking their dowries. Do whatever God 'elohim has told you, they said.

Jacob put his wife and children and camels and left with his herds and flocks. Rachel stole Laban's household idols. He crossed the Euphrates River and went into the country of Gilead east of the Jordan River. Laban and his relatives pursued Jacob for seven day and finally caught up with him in the mountains of Gilead.

He was outraged but Jacob stated how he had cheated him again and again. Then Laban asked: Why did you have to steal my household idols? Jacob denied it and said: Search the camp. The one who stole them must die. Laban searched but Rachel said on a camel pack and said when Laban wanted to search: I can't get up. I'm having my period. Laban was stumped so he said to Jacob: Let's make a Covenant.

So they piled up stones as a marker and ate a meal together. Laban kissed his grandchildren and left.

THINGS TO THINK ABOUT

1. How could Laban trick Jacob with Leah? At the marriage ceremony, names were used. Did they use Rachel's name? If so, Leah wasn't legally married to Jacob. And it seems difficult Jacob did not recognize Leah in the tent all night. How did Laban make the deception work?
2. Why did **YHWH** allow the trickster Jacob to be outtrickstered by Laban? What lesson was **YHWH** teaching Jacob?
3. What were Leah and Rachel's relationship with **YHWH**? What does this say about how their children were raised? Joseph, Rachel's son, is going to turn out to be very godly. What accounts for this? Who teaches him about **YHWH**?
4. How do we see Rachel's attitude toward God in the name she gives her son Joseph?
5. How does God show Jacob in Haran that he with him and protecting him?
6. What was Laban intending to do with Jacob when he pursued him? Why did he even bother to pursue him?
7. Laban swears by the God of Abraham and Nahor. Did Nahor, Abraham's brother know **YHWH**? Does Laban believe in the God of Abraham? How can you tell?

Day 21

Jacob Reconciles with God and Esau

Genesis 32:1-32

^{32:1} As Jacob went on his way, God's *'elohim* angels *mal'ak* met him. ²When he saw them, Jacob said: This is God's *'elohim* camp. He named that place Mahanaim [Two Camps].

Jacob Sends Messengers to Esau

³Jacob sent messengers ahead of him to his brother Esau in Seir, the country of Edom. ⁴He commanded them to give this message to Esau:

Sir, this is what Jacob has to say: I've been living with Laban and have stayed until now. ⁵I have cattle and donkeys, sheep and goats, and male and female slaves. I've sent ─ these messengers ─ to tell you ─ this news ─ in order to win your favor.

⁶When the messengers came back to Jacob, they said: We went to your brother Esau. He is coming to meet you with 400 men. ⁷Jacob was terrified and distressed. So he divided the people, the sheep and goats, the cattle, and the camels into two camps. ⁸He thought: "If Esau attacks the one camp, then the other camp will be able to escape.

⁹Then Jacob prayed:

God *'elohim* of my grandfather Abraham and God *'elohim* of my father Isaac. YHWH, you said to me: Go back *sub*-return to your Land and to your relatives and I will make you prosperous. ¹⁰I'm not worthy of all the love *hesed* and faithfulness *'emet* you have shown me. I only had a shepherd's staff when I crossed the Jordan River but now I have two camps.

¹¹Please save me from my brother Esau because I'm afraid of him. I'm afraid that he'll come and attack me and the mothers and children too. ¹²But you

did say: I will make sure that you are prosperous and that your descendants will be as many as the grains of sand on the seashore. No one will be able to count them because there are so many.

¹³ He stayed there that night. Then he prepared a gift for his brother Esau from what he had brought with him: ¹⁴ 200 female goats and 20 male goats, 200 female sheep and 20 male sheep, ¹⁵ 30 female camels with their young, 40 cows and 10 bulls, 20 female donkeys and 10 male donkeys.

¹⁶ He placed servants in charge of each herd. Then he said to his servants: Go ahead of me and keep a distance between the herds.

¹⁷ He commanded the first servant: When my brother Esau meets you and asks you: To whom do you belong, and where are you going, and whose animals are these ahead of you? ¹⁸ then say: Sir, they belong to your servant Jacob. This is a gift sent to you. Jacob is right behind us. ¹⁹ He also commanded the second servant, the third, and all the others who followed the herds.

He said: Say the same thing to Esau when you find him. ²⁰ And be sure to add: Jacob is right behind us, sir. He thought: I'll make peace with him by giving him this gift that I'm sending ahead of me. After that I will see him, and he'll welcome me back.

²¹ So Jacob sent the gift ahead of him while he stayed in the camp that night.

Jacob's Encounter with God—He Wrestles with God

²² During that night he got up and gathered his two wives, his two slaves and his eleven children and crossed at the shallow part of the Jabbok River. ²³ After he sent them across the stream, he sent everything else across ²⁴ So Jacob was left alone.

Then a man wrestled *’abaq* with him until dawn. ²⁵ When the man saw that he could not win against Jacob, he touched the socket of Jacob's hip so that it was dislocated as they wrestled.

²⁶Then the man said: Let me go. It's almost dawn. But Jacob answered: I won't let you go until you bless *barak* me. ²⁷So the man asked him: What's your name? Jacob, he answered. ²⁸The man said: Your name will no longer be Jacob but Israel [He Struggles With God], because you have struggled *sara*-power 2x with God *'elohim* and with men — and you have won *yakol*-prevailed.

[He took his brother by the heel in the womb, and by his strength he had power *sara* 2x with God. Yea he had power *sur* 3x over the angel and prevailed. He wept and made supplication to him. He found him in Bethel and there he spoke to him. Hosea 12:3-4. KJV]

²⁹Jacob said: Please tell me your name. The man answered: Why do you ask for my name? Then he blessed *barak* Jacob there.

³⁰So Jacob named that place Peniel [Face of God], because he said: I have seen *ra'a'* God *'elohim* face *panim* to face *panim* , but my life *nepes*-soul was saved *nasal*-preserved.

³¹The sun rose as he passed Penuel. He was limping because of his hip. ³²Therefore, even today the people of Israel do not eat the muscle of the thigh attached to the hip socket because God touched the socket of Jacob's hip at the muscle of the thigh.

WHAT HAVE WE LEARNED SO FAR?

How wonderful it is that God sends his angels to meet Jacob as he comes back to Canaan. Jacob then sends messengers to Esau in Seir that he is returning to meet him at Mahanaim. Esau replies and says he is coming with 400 men. Jacob is terrified. So Jacob prays: God *'elohim* of my grandfather Abraham and God *'elohim* of my father Isaac. You said you would protect me and prosper me. Please save me from my brother Esau.

During the night, Jacob brought his two wives, his two slaves, and his children to the north side of the River Jabbok. Then he returned to the south side of the river and he was alone. A man came and wrestled with him until dawn. During the wrestling, the man touched Jacob's hip so that it was dislocated.

As a sun arose, the man said: Let me go. Jacob said: I won't let you go until you bless me. The man said: Your name is now Israel because you have struggled with God and won. Jacob named the place Peniel meaning Face of God *'elohim*.

THINGS TO THINK ABOUT

1. Why did Jacob wrestle with the man?. What was the wrestling all about?
2. Was God attempting to force Jacob to give up something?
3. Who was the man? Apparently this was a supernatural struggle.
4. While Jacob won, he was given a limp the rest of his life to remind him of this struggle. What did this limp represent?

Day 22

Jacob Meets Esau

Genesis 33:1-35:29

Esau Comes to Jacob with 400 Men

^{33:1} Jacob saw Esau coming with 400 men. So he divided the children among Leah, Rachel, and the two slaves. ²He put the slaves and their children in front, Leah and her children after them, and Rachel and Joseph last.

³He went on ahead of them and bowed seven times with his face touching the ground as he came near his brother.

⁴Then Esau ran to meet Jacob. Esau hugged him, threw his arms around him, and kissed him. They both cried

⁵When he saw the women and children, Esau asked: Who are these people here with you? The children God *'elohim* has graciously given me, sir, Jacob answered.

⁶Then the slaves and their children came forward and bowed down. ⁷Likewise, Leah and her children came forward and bowed down. Finally, Joseph and Rachel came forward and bowed down.

⁸Then Esau asked: Why did you send this whole group _L of people and animals _L I met? He answered: To win your favor *hen*, sir *'adon*. ⁹Esau said: I have enough. Keep what you have, Brother *'ah*.

¹⁰Jacob said: No, please take the gift I'm giving you, because I've seen *ra'a'* your face *panim* as if I were seeing *ra'a'* the face *panim* of God *'elohim*, and yet you welcomed me so warmly ¹¹Please take the present *beraka* blessing I've brought you, because God *'elohim* has been gracious *hanan* to me and has given me all that I need.

So Esau took it because Jacob insisted.

Esau Offers to Accompany Jacob Back to His Home in Seir

¹²Then Esau said: Let's get ready to go and I'll go with you.

¹³Jacob said to him: Sir, you know that the children are frail and that I have to take care of the flocks and cattle that are nursing their young. If they're driven too hard for even one day, all the flocks will die.

¹⁴Go ahead of me, sir. I will slowly and gently guide the herds that are in front of me at their pace and at the children's pace until I come to you in Seir. ¹⁵Esau said: Then let me leave some of my men with you. Why do that? Jacob asked. I only want to win your favor, sir.

¹⁶That day Esau started back south to Seir. ¹⁷But Jacob moved on west to Succoth, where he built a house for himself and made shelters for his livestock. That is why the place is named Succoth [Shelters].

Jacob Comes to Shechem in Canaan

¹⁸So having come from Paddan Aram, Jacob came safely to the city of Shechem in Canaan. He camped within sight of the city. ¹⁹Then he bought the piece of land on which he had put up his tents. He bought it from the sons of Hamor, father of Shechem, for 100 pieces of silver. ²⁰He set up an altar *mizbeah* there and named it God Is the God of Israel *Eleohe-Israel*.

Remember that Shechem is the first place Abraham came to in Canaan. Abraham built an altar there. **Genesis 12:6**

Shechem, son of the Hivite Ruler Hamor, rapes Dinah

^{34:1} Dinah, daughter of Leah and Jacob, went out to visit some of the Canaanite women. ²When Shechem, son of the local ruler Hamor the Hivite, saw her, he took her and raped *ana* her. ³He became very fond of Jacob's daughter Dinah. He loved *ahab* the girl and spoke tenderly to her. ⁴So Shechem said to his father Hamor: Get me this girl for my wife *issa*.

⁵Jacob heard that Shechem had dishonored *tame*'his daughter Dinah. His sons were with his livestock out in the open country so Jacob kept quiet until they came home.

⁶ Shechem's father Hamor came to Jacob to speak with him. ⁷Jacob's sons came in from the open country as soon as they heard the news. The men felt outraged and very angry because Shechem had committed such a godless act against Israel's family by raping Jacob's daughter. This shouldn't have happened.

Hamor Asks Jacob to Allow Dinah to Marry Shechem

⁸Hamor told them: My son Shechem has his heart set on your daughter. Please let her marry *issa* him. ⁹Intermarry with us. Give your daughters to us and take ours for yourselves. ¹⁰You can live with us and the land will be yours. Live here, move about freely in this area and acquire property here.

¹¹Then Shechem said to Dinah's father and her brothers: Do me this favor. I'll give you whatever you ask. ¹²Set the price I must pay for the bride and the gift I must give her as high as you want. I'll pay exactly what you tell me. Give me the girl as my wife.

¹³Then Jacob's sons gave Shechem and his father Hamor a misleading answer because he had dishonored their sister Dinah. ¹⁴They said: We can't do this. We can't give our sister to a man who is uncircumcised. That would be a disgrace to us. ¹⁵We will give our consent to you only on one condition: Every male must be circumcised as we are ¹⁶Then we'll give our daughters to you and take yours for ourselves and we'll live with you and become one people. ¹⁷If you won't agree to be circumcised, we'll take our daughter and go.

¹⁸Their proposal seemed good to Hamor and his son Shechem. ¹⁹The young man didn't waste any time in doing what they said because he took such pleasure in Jacob's daughter. He was the most honored person in all his father's family.

²⁰ So Hamor and his son Shechem went to their city gate to speak to the men of their city. They said: ²¹ These people are friendly toward us, so let them live in our land and move about freely in the area. Look, there's plenty of room in this land for them. We can marry their daughters and let them marry ours.

²² [However] these people will consent to live with us and become one nation on one condition. Every male must be circumcised as they are. ²³ Won't their livestock, their personal property, and all their animals be ours? We only need to agree to do this for them. Then they'll live with us.

²⁴ All the men who had come out to the city gate agreed with Hamor and his son Shechem. So they were all circumcised at the city gate.

Simeon and Levi Attack the Shechemites

^{34:25} Two days later, while the men were still in pain, two of Jacob's sons, Simeon and Levi, Dinah's brothers, took their swords and boldly attacked the city. They killed every man ²⁶ including Hamor and his son Shechem. They took Dinah from Shechem's home and left.

²⁷ Then Jacob's sons stripped the corpses and looted the city where their sister had been dishonored. ²⁸ They took the sheep and goats, cattle, donkeys, and whatever else was in the city or out in the fields. ²⁹ They carried off all the wealth and all the women and children and looted everything in the houses.

Jacob Rebukes Simeon and Levi

^{34:30} Then Jacob said to Simeon and Levi: You have caused me a lot of trouble. You've made the people living in the area, the Canaanites and the Perizzites, hate me. There are only a few of us. If they join forces against me and attack me, my family and I will be wiped out.

³¹ Simeon and Levi asked: Should Shechem have been allowed to treat our sister like a prostitute?

God Calls Jacob to Meet Him at Bethel

^{35:1} Then God *'elohim* said to Jacob:

Go to Bethel and live there. Make an altar *mizbeah* there. I am the God *'el* who appeared to you when you were fleeing from your brother Esau.

Jacob Demands His Family Give Up Their Idols

^{35:2} So Jacob said to his family and those who were with him: Get rid of the foreign *nekar*-strange gods *'elohim* which you have, wash yourselves until you are ritually clean and change your clothes. ³Then let's go to Bethel. I will make an altar *mizbeah* there to God *'el*, who answered me when I was troubled and who has been *halak*-walked with me wherever I've gone *derek*-way. ⁴So they gave Jacob all the foreign *nekar* gods *'elohim* that they had in their possession as well as the earrings that they had on. Jacob buried these things under the oak tree near Shechem.

God Sent His Terror with Jacob and His People

⁵As they moved on, God *'elohim* made the people of the cities that were all around them terrified *hita*-terror ^{ix} so that no one pursued them.

⁶Jacob and all the people who were with him came to Luz, that is Bethel in the land of Canaan. ⁷He built an altar *mizbeah* there and called that place El Bethel [God of the House of God]. That's where God *'elohim* had revealed himself to Jacob when he was fleeing from his brother. **Genesis 28:12**

⁸Rebekah's nurse Deborah died and was buried under the oak tree outside Bethel. So Jacob called it the Tree of Crying.

God Confirms Jacob's Name Is Changed to Israel

^{35:9} Then God *'elohim* appeared once more to Jacob after he came back from Paddan Aram and he blessed *barak* him. ¹⁰God *'elohim* said to him: Your

name is Jacob. You will no longer be called Jacob but your name will be Israel. So he named him Israel.

¹¹God *'elohim* also said to him:

I am God *'el* Almighty *saday*. Be fertile, and increase in number. A nation and a community of nations will come from you, and Kings will come from you. ¹²I will give you the Land *'eres* that I gave to Abraham and Isaac. I will also give this Land to your descendants.

¹³Then God *'elohim* went up *'ala*-arose from him at the place where he had spoken with him. ¹⁴So Jacob set up a memorial, a stone marker, to mark the place where <God> he had spoken with him. He poured a wine offering and olive oil on it. ¹⁵Jacob named the place where God *'elohim* had spoken with him Bethel [House of God].

Rachel Dies While Birthing Benjamin

¹⁶Then they moved on from Bethel. When they were still some distance from Ephrath, Rachel went into labor and was having severe labor pains. ¹⁷During one of her pains, the midwife said to her: Don't be afraid. You're having another son. ¹⁸Rachel was dying. As she took her last breath, she named her son Benoni [Son of My Sorrow], but his father named him Benjamin [Son of My Right Hand].

¹⁹Rachel died and was buried on the way to Ephrath, that is, Bethlehem. ²⁰Then Jacob set up a stone as a marker for her grave. The same marker is at Rachel's grave today.

Reuben Has Sex with Bilhah

²¹Israel moved on again and put up his tent beyond Migdal Eder. ²²While Israel was living in that region, Reuben went to bed with his father's concubine Bilhah, and Israel heard about it.

A List of the Sons of Jacob Re-Named by God Israel

Jacob had 12 sons.

²³The sons of **Leah** were Jacob's firstborn Reuben, then Simeon, Levi, Judah, Issachar, and Zebulun. ²⁴The sons of **Rachel** were Joseph and Benjamin. ²⁵The sons of Rachel's slave **Bilhah** were Dan and Naphtali. ²⁶The sons of Leah's slave **Zilpah** were Gad and Asher. These were Jacob's sons, who were born in Paddan Aram.

Jacob Finally Arrives Home to Hebron and Sees Isaac

²⁷Jacob came home to his father Isaac to Mamre's city, Kiriath Arba, that is, Hebron. Abraham and Isaac had lived there for a while. ²⁸Isaac was 180 years old ²⁹when he took his last breath and died. He joined his ancestors in death at a very old age. His sons Esau and Jacob buried him.

WHAT HAVE WE LEARNED SO FAR?

Jacob saw Esau coming with 400 men. So he ran ahead of his family and bowed to the ground seven times. Esau threw his arms around him and hugged him and kissed him. Both of them wept. Jacob pressed his gift on Esau who at first refused. But Jacob pleaded: Seeing your face was like seeing the face of God and yet you welcomed me so warmly. Please accept my gifts.

Esau said: I'll accompany you to Seir. But Jacob said: I'll have to move very slowly so please go ahead of me. Then instead of going south to Seir, Jacob turned west and went to Shechem. He camped within sight of the city. Then he bought the land where he had put up his tents.

Dinah, Leah's daughter, went out to visit some of the Canaanite women. Shechem, the son of the city leader Hamor, saw Dinah, raped her and took her to his house. But Shechem loved Dinah and asked his father to approach Jacob to get her for his wife.

Jacob heard Shechem had raped Dinah. But he kept quiet until his sons came in from the fields. The sons were outraged. Hamor came to Jacob and asked that Dinah marry Shechem. Jacob's sons demanded that Shechem and all the men of the town first be circumcised. Then when the men were in pain, Simeon and Levi killed all the men of the town, seized the women and children and all their goods.

God *'elohim* then told Jacob to go to Bethel. Jacob told all the members of his family to get rid of their idols and purify themselves. As they traveled, God sent his terror so all the surrounding peoples were afraid of them. Jacob came to Bethel and built an altar to

YHWH. God again confirmed his Covenant with Jacob. Rachel's nurse Deborah died as they travel south to Hebron.

Now Rachel went into labor. It was a difficult labor and she gave birth but then died. Rachel named her son Benoni meaning *Son of My Sorrow* but Jacob named the boy Benjamin meaning *Son of my Right Hand*. Jacob continued to move south but heard that Reuben had sex with Bilhah, Rachel's slave.

Finally, Jacob and his family arrived at Hebron. Isaac was still alive but was 180 years old. Esau came up from Seir to Hebron to help Jacob bury him.

THINGS TO THINK ABOUT

1. Jacob could have sent messengers to Esau when he came back to Hebron while his father was there. Wasn't Jacob anxious to see his father? Why did he decide to meet Esau first?
2. When Jacob heard Esau was coming with 400 men, he was terrified and laden with guilt for his previous actions with his brother. Fearing the worst, he set up his camp so that what he valued least was put in front. Finally, he separated himself from all his family. Why did he do that?
3. Esau and Jacob reconciled. Apparently Jacob saw a great change in Esau? What was this change?
4. Why did Esau even think that Jacob would go to Seir rather than to see his father at Hebron?
5. Rebekah had promised to send for Jacob when Esau cooled down. **Genesis 27:45** But she didn't contact Jacob for the 20 years he was in Haran and apparently died before she saw him again. Why didn't Rebekah keep her promise?
6. Isaac died at 120 years old. How old was he when Jacob left for Haran?
7. How old was Jacob by the time he return to see Isaac die?

TOLDOT 9

This is the account toldot of Esau, that is Edom, and his descendants.
Genesis 36:1

Day 23

The Origin of Edom

Genesis 36:1-43

^{36:1} This is the account *toldot* of Esau, that is, Edom and his descendants.

² Esau chose his wives from the women of Canaan: Adah, daughter of Elon the Hittite; Oholibamah, daughter of Anah and granddaughter of Zibeon the Hivite. ³ Also he married Basemath, daughter of Ishmael and sister of Nebaioth.

⁴ Adah gave birth to Eliphaz for Esau, and Basemath gave birth to Reuel. ⁵ Oholibamah gave birth to Jeush, Jalam, and Korah. These were the sons of Esau who were born in Canaan.

⁶ Esau took his wives, his sons, his daughters, all the members of his household, his possessions, all his cattle, and everything he had accumulated in Canaan and went to another land away from his brother Jacob. ⁷ He did this because they Esau and Isaac had too many possessions to live together. There wasn't enough pastureland for all of their livestock. ⁸ So Esau, who was also known as Edom, lived in the mountains of Seir.

⁹ This is the account of Esau and his descendants. He was the father of the people of Edom in the mountains of Seir.

¹⁰ These were the names of Esau's sons: Eliphaz, son of Esau's wife Adah, and Reuel, son of Esau's wife Basemath.

¹¹ The sons of Eliphaz were Teman, Omar, Zepho, Gatam, and Kenaz. ¹² Timna was a concubine of Esau's son Eliphaz. She gave birth to Amalek for Eliphaz. These were the grandsons of Esau's wife Adah.

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

¹⁴These were the sons of Esau's wife Oholibamah, daughter of Anah and granddaughter of Zibeon. She gave birth to Jeush, Jalam, and Korah for Esau.

¹⁵These were the tribal leaders among Esau's descendants:

The sons of Eliphaz, Esau's firstborn, were Teman, Omar, Zepho, Kenaz, ¹⁶Korah, Gatam, and Amalek. These were the tribal leaders descended from Eliphaz in Edom. They were the grandsons of Adah.

¹⁷These were the tribal leaders among the descendants of Esau's son Reuel: Nahath, Zerah, Shammah, and Mizzah. These were the tribal leaders descended from Reuel in Edom. They were the grandsons of Esau's wife Basemath.

¹⁸These were the tribal leaders among the descendants of Esau's wife Oholibamah: Jeush, Jalam, and Korah. These were the tribal leaders descended from Esau's wife Oholibamah, Anah's daughter.

¹⁹These were the descendants of Esau, that is, Edom, who were tribal leaders. ²⁰These were the sons of Seir the Horite, the people living in that land: Lotan, Shobal, Zibeon, Anah, ²¹Dishon, Ezer, and Dishan. These Horite tribal leaders were the sons of Seir in Edom.

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

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

²⁴These were the sons of Zibeon: Aiah and Anah. Anah found the hot springs in the desert while he was taking care of the donkeys that belonged to his father Zibeon.

²⁵These were the children of Anah: Dishon and Oholibamah, daughter of Anah. ²⁶These were the sons of Dishon: Hemdan, Eshban, Ithran, and Cheran. ²⁷These were the sons of Ezer: Bilhan, Zaavan, and Akan. ²⁸These were the sons of Dishan: Uz and Aran.

²⁹These were the Horite tribal leaders: Lotan, Shobal, Zibeon, Anah, ³⁰Dishon, Ezer, and Dishan. These were the Horite tribal leaders in the land of Seir.

³¹These were the Kings who ruled Edom before any King ruled the people of Israel: ³²Bela, son of Beor, ruled Edom. The name of his capital city was Dinhabah. ³³After Bela died, Jobab, son of Zerah from Bozrah, succeeded him as King. ³⁴After Jobab died, Husham from the land of the Temanites succeeded him as King.

³⁵After Husham died, Hadad, son of Bedad succeeded him as King. Hadad defeated the Midianites in the country of Moab. The name of his capital city was Avith. ³⁶After Hadad died, Samlah from Masrekah succeeded him as King.

³⁷After Samlah died, Shaul from Rehoboth on the river succeeded him as King. ³⁸After Shaul died, Baal Hanan, son of Achbor, succeeded him as King. ³⁹After Baal Hanan, son of Achbor, died, Hadar succeeded him as King, and the name of his capital city was Pau. His wife's name was Mehetabel, daughter of Matred and granddaughter of Mezahab.

⁴⁰These were the names of the tribal leaders descended from Esau, by family, place, and name: Timna, Alvah, Jetheth, ⁴¹Oholibamah, Elah, Pinon, ⁴²Kenaz, Teman, Mibzar, ⁴³Magdiel, and Iram.

These were the tribal leaders of Edom listed by the places where they lived and the property they owned. Esau was the father of the people of Edom.

WHAT HAVE WE LEARNED SO FAR?

We don't know much about Esau and his descendants. The Horite leaders are a mystery. Apparently these were independent peoples living in Edom before Esau took it over.

THINGS TO THINK ABOUT

1. Why don't we know much about Edom or Esau's life? After all, he is Abraham's grandson.

TOLDOT 10

This is the Account *toldot* of Jacob and his descendants. **Genesis 37:2**

Jacob had twelve sons. The sons of Leah were Jacob's firstborn **Reuben**, then **Simeon**, **Levi**, **Judah**, **Issachar**, and **Zebulun**. The sons of Rachel were **Joseph** and **Benjamin**. The sons of Rachel's slave Bilhah were Dan and **Naphtali**. The sons of Leah's slave Zilpah were **Gad** and **Asher**. These were Jacob's sons, born in Paddan Aram, **Genesis 35:23-26**

Day 24

Jacob Favors His Son Joseph to the Disgust of His Brothers

Genesis 37:1-40:23

^{37:1} Jacob continued to live in the land of Canaan where his father had lived.

²This is the account of Jacob and his descendants.

Joseph's Brothers Sell Him into Slavery

Joseph was a seventeen-year-old young man. He took care of the flocks with the sons of Bilhah and Zilpah, his father's wives. Joseph told his father about the bad things his brothers were doing.

³Israel loved *'ahab* Joseph more than all his sons because Joseph had been born in Israel's old age. So he made Joseph a special robe with long sleeves.

⁴Joseph's brothers saw *ra'a'* that their father loved *'ahab* him more than any of them. They hated *sane* Joseph and couldn't speak to him on friendly terms.

⁵Joseph had a dream. When he told his brothers, they hated *sane'* him even more. ⁶He said to them: Please listen to the dream I had. ⁷We were tying grain into bundles out in the field and suddenly mine stood up. It remained standing while your bundles gathered around my bundle and bowed down to it.

⁸Then his brothers asked him: Are you going to be our King or rule us? They hated him even more for his dreams and his words.

⁹Then he had another dream and he told it to his brothers. Listen, he said: I had another dream I saw the sun, the moon, and 11 stars bowing down to me.

¹⁰When he told his father and his brothers, his father criticized him by asking: What's this dream you had? Will your mother and I and your

brothers come and bow down in front of you? ¹¹So his brothers were jealous of him but his father kept thinking about these things.

¹² His brothers had gone to take care of their father's flocks at Shechem.

Jacob Sends Joseph to Check on His Brothers

^{37:13} Israel then said to Joseph: Your brothers are taking care of the flocks at Shechem. I'm going to send you to them. Joseph responded: I'll go. ¹⁴ Israel said: See how your brothers and the flocks are doing and bring some news back to me. Then he sent Joseph away from the Hebron Valley.

When Joseph came to Shechem, ¹⁵a man found him wandering around in the open country. What are you looking for? the man asked. ¹⁶Joseph replied: I'm looking for my brothers. Please tell me where they're taking care of their flocks. ”

¹⁷The man said: They moved on from here. I heard them say: Let's go to Dothan. So Joseph went after his brothers and found them at Dothan. ¹⁸They saw him from a distance. Before he reached them, they plotted to kill him.

¹⁹They said to each other: Look, here comes that master dreamer. ²⁰Let's kill him, throw him into one of the cisterns and say that a wild animal has eaten him. Then we'll see what happens to his dreams.

²¹When Reuben heard this, he tried to save Joseph from their plot. Let's not kill him, he said. ²²Let's not have any bloodshed. Put him into that cistern that's out in the desert, but don't hurt him. Reuben wanted to rescue Joseph from them and bring him back to his father.

²³So when Joseph reached his brothers, they stripped him of his special robe with long sleeves. ²⁴Then they took him and put him into an empty cistern. It had no water in it.

²⁵As they sat down to eat, they saw a caravan of Ishmaelites coming from Gilead. Their camels were carrying the materials for cosmetics, medicine, and embalming. They were on their way to take them to Egypt.

Judah Suggests the Brothers Sell Joseph to the Ishmaelites

²⁶Judah asked his brothers: What will we gain by killing our brother and covering up his death? ²⁷Let's sell him to the Ishmaelites. Let's not hurt him because he is our brother, our own flesh and blood." His brothers agreed.

²⁸As the Midianite merchants were passing by, the brothers pulled Joseph out of the cistern. They sold him to the Ishmaelites for eight ounces of silver. The Ishmaelites took him to Egypt.

²⁹When Reuben came back to the cistern and saw that Joseph was no longer there, he tore his clothes in grief. ³⁰He went back to his brothers and said: The boy isn't there. What am I going to do?

The Brothers Deceive Their Father Jacob Saying Joseph Has Been Killed

³⁷³¹So they took Joseph's robe, killed a goat, and dipped the robe in the blood ³²Then they brought the special robe with long sleeves to their father and said: We found this. You better examine it to see whether it's your son's robe or not. ³³He recognized it and said: It is my son's robe. A wild animal has eaten. Joseph must have been torn to pieces.

³⁴Then, to show his grief, Jacob tore his clothes, put sackcloth around his waist, and mourned for his son a long time. ³⁵All his other sons and daughters came to comfort him, but he refused to be comforted. He said: No, I will mourn for my son until I die. This is how Joseph's father cried over him.

Joseph Is Sold As a Slave to Potiphar, Pharaoh's Captain

³⁶Meanwhile, in Egypt the Midianites sold Joseph to Potiphar, one of Pharaoh's officials and captain of the guard.

Judah's Sin with Tamar

^{38:1} About that time Judah left his brothers and went to stay with a man from Adullam whose name was Hirah. ²There Judah met the daughter of a Canaanite man whose name was Shua. He married her and slept with her. ³She became pregnant and gave birth to a son named Er. ⁴She became pregnant again and gave birth to another son, whom she named Onan. ⁵Then she became pregnant again and gave birth to another son, whom she named Shelah. He was born at Kezib.

⁶Judah chose a wife for his firstborn son Er. Her name was Tamar. ⁷Er angered YHWH. So YHWH took away his life. ⁸Then Judah said to Onan: Go sleep with your brother's widow. Do your duty for her as a brother-in-law, and produce a descendant for your brother.

⁹But Onan knew that the descendant wouldn't belong to him, so whenever he slept with his brother's widow, he wasted his semen on the ground to avoid giving his brother a descendant. ¹⁰What Onan did angered YHWH so much that YHWH took away Onan's life too.

¹¹Then Judah said to his daughter-in-law Tamar: Return to your father's home. Live as a widow until my son Shelah grows up. He thought that this son, too, might die like his brothers. So Tamar went to live in her father's home.

¹²After a long time Judah's wife, the daughter of Shua, died. When Judah had finished mourning, he and his friend Hirah from Adullam went to Timnah where the men were shearing Judah's sheep.

¹³As soon as Tamar was told that her father-in-law was on his way to Timnah to shear his sheep, ¹⁴she took off her widow's clothes, covered her face with a veil, and disguised herself. Then she sat down at the entrance to Enaim, which is on the road to Timnah. She did this because she realized that Shelah was grown up now, and she hadn't been given to him in marriage.

¹⁵When Judah saw her, he thought she was a prostitute because she had covered her face. ¹⁶Since he didn't know she was his daughter-in-law, he approached her by the roadside and said: Come on, let's sleep together. She asked: What will you pay to sleep with me?

¹⁷"I'll send you a young goat from the flock, he answered. She said: First give me something as a deposit until you send it. ¹⁸What should I give you as a deposit? he asked. Your signet ring, its cord, and the shepherd's staff that's in your hand, she answered.

So he gave them to her. Then he slept with her and she became pregnant. ¹⁹After she got up and left, she took off her veil and put her widow's clothes back on.

²⁰Judah sent his friend Hirah to deliver the young goat so that he could get back his deposit from the woman, but his friend couldn't find her. ²¹He asked the men of that area: Where's that prostitute who was beside the road at Enaim? There's no prostitute here, they answered.

²²So he went back to Judah and said: I couldn't find her. Even the men of that area said: There's no prostitute here. ²³Then Judah said: Let her keep what I gave her or we'll become a laughingstock. After all, I did send her this young goat, but you couldn't find her.

²⁴About three months later Judah was told: Your daughter-in-law Tamar has been acting like a prostitute. What's more, because of it she's pregnant. Judah ordered: Bring her out to be burned.

²⁵As she was brought out, she sent a message to her father-in-law: I'm pregnant by the man who owns these things. See if you recognize whose signet ring, cord, and shepherd's staff these are.

²⁶Judah recognized them and said: She's not guilty. I am. She did this because I haven't given her my son Shelah. Judah never made love to her again.

²⁷The time came for Tamar to give birth, and she had twin boys. ²⁸When she was giving birth, one of them put out his hand . The midwife took a piece of red yarn, tied it on his wrist, and said: This one came out first. ²⁹As he pulled back his hand, his brother was born. So she said: Is this how you burst into the world. He was named Perez [Bursting Into] ³⁰After that his brother was born with the red yarn on his hand. He was named Zerah [Sunrise].

Joseph in Potiphar's House

^{39:1} Joseph had been taken to Egypt. Potiphar, one of Pharaoh's Egyptian officials and captain of the guard, bought him from the Ishmaelites who had taken him there.

²**YHWH** <was with> Joseph, so he became a successful man. He worked in the house of his Egyptian master ³Joseph's master saw that **YHWH** <was with> him and that **YHWH** made everything he did successful. ⁴Potiphar liked Joseph so much that he made him his trusted servant. He put him in charge of his household and everything he owned.

⁵From that time on **YHWH** blessed *barak* the Egyptian's household because of Joseph. Therefore, **YHWH**'s blessing *beraka* was on everything Potiphar owned in his house and in his fields. ⁶So he left all that he owned in Joseph's care. He wasn't concerned about anything except the food he ate.

Joseph was well-built and handsome After a while his master's wife began to desire Joseph so she said: Come to bed with me.

⁸But Joseph refused and said to her:

My master doesn't concern himself with anything in the house. He trusts me with everything he owns. ⁹No one in this house is greater than I. He's kept nothing back from me except you because you're his wife. How could I do such a wicked *ra*'thing and sin *hata*' against God *'elohim*?

¹⁰Although she kept asking Joseph day after day, he refused to go to bed with her or be with her.

¹¹One day he went into the house to do his work, and none of the household servants were there. ¹²She grabbed him by his clothes and said: Come to bed with me. But he ran outside and left his clothes in her hand.

¹³When she realized that he had gone but had left his clothes behind, ¹⁴she called her household servants and said to them: Look. My husband brought this Hebrew here to fool around *sahaq* with us. He came in *bo'* and tried to go to bed *sakab* with me, but I screamed as loud as I could. ¹⁵As soon as he heard me scream, he ran outside and left his clothes with me.

¹⁶She kept Joseph's clothes with her until his master came home. ¹⁷Then she told him the same story: The Hebrew slave you brought here came in *bo'* and tried to fool around *sahaq* with me. ¹⁸But when I screamed, he ran outside and left his clothes with me.

¹⁹When Potiphar heard his wife's story, especially when she said; This is what your slave did to me, he became very angry *'ap-wrath hara-kindled*. ²⁰So Joseph's master arrested him and put him in the same prison where the King's prisoners were kept.

While Joseph was in prison, ²¹YHWH <was with> him. YHWH reached out to him *nata*-showed with his unchanging love *hesed* and gave him protection *hen*-favor. YHWH also put Joseph on good terms with the warden. ²²So the warden placed Joseph in charge of all the prisoners who were in that prison. Joseph became responsible for everything that they were doing.

²³The warden paid no attention to anything under Joseph's care because YHWH <was with> Joseph and made whatever he did successful.

Joseph Interprets the Dreams of Two of the Prisoners

^{40:1} Later the King's cupbearer and his baker offended their master, the King of Egypt. ² Pharaoh was angry with his chief cupbearer and his chief baker. ³ He put them in the prison of the captain of the guard, the same place where Joseph was a prisoner. ⁴ The captain of the guard assigned them to Joseph, and he took care of them.

After they had been confined for some time,⁵both prisoners — the cupbearer and the baker for the King of Egypt — had dreams one night. Each man had a dream with its own special meaning.

⁶When Joseph came to them in the morning, he saw that they were upset. ⁷So he asked these officials of Pharaoh who were with him in his master's prison: Why do you look so unhappy today?

⁸We both had dreams, they answered him, but there's no one to tell us what they mean. Isn't God *'elohim* the only one who can tell what they mean? Joseph asked them: Why don't you tell me all about them.

⁹So the chief cupbearer told Joseph his dream. He said: In my dream a grapevine with three branches appeared in front of me. ¹⁰Soon after it sprouted it blossomed. Then its clusters ripened into grapes. ¹¹Pharaoh's cup was in my hand, so I took the grapes and squeezed them into it. I put the cup in Pharaoh's hand.

¹²"This is what it means" Joseph said to him. The three branches are three days. ¹³In the next three days Pharaoh will release you and restore you to your position. You will put Pharaoh's cup in his hand as you used to do when you were his cupbearer. ¹

⁴Remember me when things go well for you, and please do me a favor. Mention me to Pharaoh and get me out of this prison. ¹⁵I was kidnapped from the land of the Hebrews and even here I've done nothing to deserve being put in this prison."

¹⁶The chief baker saw that the meaning Joseph had given to the cupbearer's dream was good. So he said to Joseph: I had a dream too. In my dream three baskets of white baked goods were on my head. ¹⁷The top basket contained all kinds of baked goods for Pharaoh, but the birds were eating them out of the basket on my head.

¹⁸This is what it means, Joseph replied. The three baskets are three days.
¹⁹In the next three days Pharaoh will cut off your head and hang your dead body on a pole. The birds will eat the flesh from your bones.

²⁰Two days later, on his birthday, Pharaoh had a special dinner prepared for all his servants. Of all his servants he gave special attention to the chief cupbearer and the chief baker. ²¹He restored the chief cupbearer to his position. So the cupbearer put the cup in Pharaoh's hand. ²²But he hung the chief baker just as Joseph had said in his interpretation.

²³Nevertheless, the chief cupbearer didn't remember Joseph. He forgot all about him.

WHAT HAVE WE LEARNED SO FAR?

Jacob loves Joseph deeply and openly favors him angering his brothers. He even gives him a coat with long sleeves signifying he really doesn't have to do manual labor. When Joseph is 17 years old and Jacob is 108 years old, Joseph tells his brothers a dream. We were harvesting grain and suddenly all your grain bundles bowed down to mine. Then he had another dream and told them: The sun, moon, stars were bowing down to me. This angered the brothers even more. They not only disliked Jacob's favoritism but Joseph was an arrogant younger brother.

Jacob sent his sons north to Shechem to graze the flocks. After some time, he sent Joseph north to check on them. Joseph found his brothers but they wanted to kill him. Reuben suggested they put him in a dry cistern. Then when they saw some Arab traders coming, Judah suggested they sell him to the merchants.

Joseph was sold in Egypt to Pharaoh's captain of the guard. Potiphar. Then we are told the story of Judah who left his brothers and created a family. The time passes.

Judah married a Canaanite woman named Shua who gave him three sons. Judah chose a wife for his oldest son Er named Tamar. But Er angered **YHWH** so he died. So Judah told his second son Onam: *Go sleep with Tamar and give her a son.* Onam slept with her but spilled his semen on the ground. This angered **YHWH** so Onam died. Judah then told Tamar: *Return to your father's house until my youngest son Shelah grows up.*

Time passes and Judah did not ask Shelah to have sex with Tamar. Meanwhile Judah's wife Shua died. Tamar found out Judah was traveling to get his sheep sheared. So she disguised

herself as a prostitute and sat beside the road. Judah met her and engaged her promising her a young goat. Before Judah left her, she asked for a deposit of his signet ring and his shepherd's staff. Judah had sex with her and left.

Later, Judah sent a friend to deliver the goat but he couldn't find her. Later still, Judah learned that Tamar was pregnant. So he ordered her burned. But she produced the signet ring and the shepherd's staff. Tamar gave birth to Perez and Zerah.

Meanwhile, **YHWH** was with Joseph and Potiphar's household flourished under his management. But Potiphar's wife was enamored of Joseph and attempted to have sex with him. When Joseph spurned her, she accused Joseph of rape and Joseph was put in prison.

Yet even though in prison **YHWH** was with Joseph. So the warden put Joseph in charge of the prison. Two of Pharaoh's officials were put in prison. Each had a dream. They asked Joseph to interpret their dream. Joseph did and shortly later, the two returned to Pharaoh. Pharaoh restored one and killed the other just as Joseph had interpreted.

THINGS TO THINK ABOUT

1. Why did Joseph tell his brothers and his father his dreams?
2. Why does Moses tell the story of Judah and Tamar? How does this contribute to the story of Abraham's ancestors?
3. Why is **YHWH** blessing Joseph? Does Joseph believe in **YHWH**? What did Joseph learn about **YHWH** from Jacob?
4. What were Joseph's thoughts about **YHWH** when he was put in prison for no fault of his own? What did he think God was doing to him?
5. Who does Joseph give responsibility for allowing him to interpret the dreams in prison? Why does he do this?

Day 25

Joseph Becomes Prime Minister of Egypt

Genesis 41:1-57

Joseph Interprets Pharaoh's Dreams

¹After two full years Pharaoh had a dream. He dreamed he was standing by the Nile River. ²Suddenly, seven nice-looking, well-fed cows came up from the river and began to graze among the reeds. ³Seven other cows came up from the river behind them. These cows were sickly and skinny. They stood behind the first seven cows on the riverbank. ⁴The cows that were sickly and skinny ate the seven nice-looking, well-fed cows. Then Pharaoh woke up.

⁵He fell asleep again and had a second dream. Seven good, healthy heads of grain were growing on a single stalk. ⁶Seven other heads of grain, thin and scorched by the east wind, sprouted behind them. ⁷The thin heads of grain swallowed the seven full, healthy heads. Then Pharaoh woke up. It was only a dream.

⁸In the morning he was so upset that he sent for all the magicians and wise men of Egypt. Pharaoh told them his dreams but no one could tell him what they meant.

⁹Then the chief cupbearer spoke to Pharaoh. I remember a promise I failed to keep. ¹⁰Some time ago when Pharaoh was angry with his servants, he confined me and the chief baker to the captain of the guard's prison. ¹¹We both had dreams the same night. Each dream had its own meaning.

¹²A young Hebrew, a slave of the captain of the guard, was with us. We told him our dreams and he told each of us what they meant. ¹³What he told us happened, Pharaoh restored me to my position, but he hung the baker on a pole.

¹⁴Then Pharaoh sent for Joseph, and immediately he was brought from the prison. After he had shaved and changed his clothes, he came in front of Pharaoh.

¹⁵Pharaoh said to Joseph: I had a dream, and no one can tell me what it means. I heard that when you are told a dream, you can say what it means.

¹⁶Joseph answered Pharaoh: I can't, but God *'elohim* can give Pharaoh the answer that he needs.

¹⁷Then Pharaoh said to Joseph: In my dream I was standing on the bank of the Nile. ¹⁸Suddenly, seven nice-looking, well-fed cows came up from the river and began to graze among the reeds. ¹⁹Seven other cows came up behind them. These cows were scrawny, very sick, and thin. I've never seen such sickly cows in all of Egypt. ²⁰The thin, sickly cows ate up the seven well-fed ones. ²¹Even though they had eaten them, no one could tell they had eaten them. They looked just as sick as before. Then I woke up.

²²"In my second dream I saw seven good, full heads of grain growing on a single stalk. ²³Seven other heads of grain, withered, thin, and scorched by the east wind, sprouted behind them. ²⁴The thin heads of grain swallowed the seven good heads. I told this to the magicians but no one could tell me what it meant.

²⁵Then Joseph said to Pharaoh. Pharaoh had the same dream twice. God *'elohim* has told Pharaoh what he's going to do. ²⁶The seven good cows are seven years and the seven good heads of grain are seven years. It's all the same dream. ²⁷The seven thin, sickly cows that came up behind them are seven years. The seven empty heads of grain scorched by the east wind are also seven years. Seven years of famine are coming.

²⁸It's just as I said to Pharaoh. God *'elohim* has shown Pharaoh what he's going to do. ²⁹Seven years are coming when there will be plenty of food in Egypt. ³⁰After them will come seven years of famine. People will forget that there was plenty of food in Egypt and the famine will ruin the land.

³¹ People won't remember that there once was plenty of food in the land, because the coming famine will be so severe.

³² The reason Pharaoh has had a recurring dream is because the matter has been definitely decided by God *'elohim* and he will do it very soon.

Joseph Advises Pharaoh How to Manage the Famine

³³ "Pharaoh should look for a wise and intelligent man and put him in charge of Egypt. ³⁴ Make arrangements to appoint supervisors over the land to take a fifth of Egypt's harvest during the seven good years. ³⁵ Have them collect all the food during these good years and store up grain under Pharaoh's control to be kept for food in the cities. ³⁶ This food will be a reserve supply for our country during the seven years of famine that will happen in Egypt. Then the land will not be ruined by the famine.

³⁷ Pharaoh and all his servants liked the idea. ³⁸ So Pharaoh asked his servants: Can we find anyone like this — a man who has God's *'elohim* Spirit *ruah* in him?

³⁹ Then Pharaoh said to Joseph: Because God *'elohim* has let you know all this, there is no one as wise and intelligent as you. ⁴⁰ You will be in charge of my palace, and all my people will do what you say. I will be more important than you only because I'm Pharaoh.

⁴¹ Then Pharaoh said to Joseph: I now put you in charge of Egypt. ⁴² Then Pharaoh took off his signet ring and put it on Joseph's finger. He had Joseph dressed in robes of fine linen and put a gold chain around his neck. ⁴³ He had him ride in the chariot of the second-in-command. Men ran ahead of him and shouted: Make way. Pharaoh put Joseph in charge of Egypt.

⁴⁴ He also said to Joseph. Even though I am Pharaoh, no one anywhere in Egypt will do anything without your permission. ⁴⁵ Pharaoh named Joseph Zaphenath paneah and gave him Asenath as his wife. She was the

daughter of Potiphera, priest from the city of On. Joseph traveled around Egypt.

Joseph Serves Pharaoh as His Prime Minister

⁴⁶Joseph was 30 years old when he entered the service of Pharaoh, the King of Egypt. He left Pharaoh and traveled all around Egypt. ⁴⁷During the seven good years the land produced large harvests. ⁴⁸Joseph collected all the food grown in Egypt during those seven years and put this food in the cities. In each city he put the food from the fields around it. ⁴⁹Joseph stored up grain in huge quantities like the sand on the seashore. He had so much that he finally gave up keeping any records because he couldn't measure it all.

Joseph's Wife Gives Him Two Sons

⁵⁰Before the years of famine came, Joseph had two sons by Asenath, daughter of Potiphera, priest from the city of On. ⁵¹Joseph named his firstborn son **Manasseh** [He Helps Me Forget], because God helped him forget all his troubles and all about his father's family. ⁵²He named the second son **Ephraim** [Blessed Twice With Children], because God *elohim* gave him children in the land where he had suffered.

⁵³The seven years when there was plenty of food in Egypt came to an end. ⁵⁴Then the seven years of famine began as Joseph had said they would. All the other countries were experiencing famine. Yet, there was food in Egypt.

⁵⁵When everyone in Egypt began to feel the effects of the famine, the people cried to Pharaoh for food. But Pharaoh said to all the Egyptians: Go to Joseph. Do what he tells you.

⁵⁶When the famine had spread all over the country, Joseph opened all the storehouses and sold grain to the Egyptians. He did this because the famine was severe in Egypt. ⁵⁷The whole world came to Joseph in Egypt to buy grain, since the famine was so severe all over the world.

WHAT HAVE WE LEARNED SO FAR?

Then the Pharaoh had a dream. His magicians couldn't interpret the dream. Pharaoh's official who had been with Joseph remembered Joseph's interpretation and told Pharaoh. So Joseph was called before Pharaoh. Joseph interpreted the dream that was about seven good years of harvest and then seven years of famine. He did such a good job and suggested a way to manage through this calamity that the Pharaoh promoted him to Prime Minister. Joseph was only 30 years old. He had been in Egypt 13 years.

During the seven years of plenty, Joseph collected food from all over Egypt and put it in storehouses. Then the seven years of famine came, and Joseph sold this grain in Egypt and to those who came to Egypt to buy grain as the famine was world-wide.

THINGS TO THINK ABOUT

1. What did Pharaoh think when Joseph said: *I can't interpret your dream but God 'elohim can give Pharaoh an answer he needs?* Does Pharaoh simply say: *Get on with interpreting the dream* or does he ask about **YHWH**?
2. Why does Pharaoh give Joseph a wife who is the daughter of a priest? What does this reveal about what Pharaoh thinks about Joseph's character?
3. Why does Pharaoh give Joseph the Egyptian name of Zaphenath paneah, the man to whom mysteries are revealed?

Day 26

Joseph's Brothers Go to Egypt to Buy Grain

Genesis 42:1-43:34

Jacob Sends Ten Sons to Egypt

^{42:1} When Jacob found out that grain was for sale in Egypt, he said to his sons: Why do you keep looking at each other? ²I've heard there's grain for sale in Egypt. Go there and buy some for us so that we won't starve to death.

³Ten of Joseph's brothers went to buy grain in Egypt. ⁴Jacob wouldn't send Joseph's brother Benjamin with the other brothers, because he was afraid that something would happen to him. ⁵Israel's sons left with the others who were going to buy grain, because there was also famine in Canaan.

Joseph Sends Nine of His Brothers Back to Canaan

⁶As governor of the country, Joseph was selling grain to everyone. So when Joseph's brothers arrived, they bowed in front of him with their faces touching the ground. ⁷As soon as Joseph saw his brothers, he recognized them. But he acted as if he didn't know them and spoke harshly to them. Where did you come from? he asked them. From Canaan, to buy food, they answered.

⁸Even though Joseph recognized his brothers, they didn't recognize him. ⁹Then he remembered the dreams he once had about them. You're spies, he said to them, and you've come to find out where our country is unprotected.

¹⁰No, sir, they answered him. We've come to buy food. ¹¹We're all sons of one man. We're honest men, not spies. ¹²He said to them: No. You've come to find out where our country is unprotected. ¹³They answered him:

We were 12 brothers, sons of one man in Canaan. The youngest brother stayed with our father and the other one is no longer with us.

¹⁴It's just as I told you, Joseph said to them. You're spies. ¹⁵This is how you'll be tested. I solemnly swear, as surely as Pharaoh lives, that you won't leave this place unless your youngest brother comes here

¹⁶One of you must be sent to get your brother while the rest of you stay in prison. We'll see if you're telling the truth. If not, I solemnly swear, as surely as Pharaoh lives, you are spies. ¹⁷Then he put them in jail for three days.

¹⁸On the third day Joseph said to them: Do this and you will live. I, too, fear *yare'* God *'elohim*. ¹⁹If you are honest men, you will let one of your brothers stay here in prison. The rest of you will go and take grain back to your starving families ²⁰But you must bring me your youngest brother. This will show that you've been telling the truth. Then you won't die. So they agreed.

²¹They said to each other: We're surely being punished for what we did to our brother. We saw how troubled he was when he pleaded with us for mercy, but we wouldn't listen. That's why we're in trouble now.

²²Reuben said to them: Didn't I tell you not to sin against the boy? But you wouldn't listen. Now we must pay for this bloodshed.

²³They didn't know that Joseph could understand them, because he was speaking through an interpreter. ²⁴He stepped away from them to cry. When he could speak to them again, he came back. Then he picked Simeon and had him arrested right in front of their eyes.

²⁵Joseph gave orders to fill their bags with grain. He put each man's money back into his sack and gave them supplies for their trip. After their bags were filled, ²⁶they loaded their grain on their donkeys and left.

²⁷At the place where they stopped for the night, one of them opened his sack to feed his donkey. His money was right inside his sack. ²⁸He said to his brothers: My money has been put back. It's right here in my sack.

They wanted to die. They trembled and turned to each other and asked: What has God *elohim* done to us?

The Brothers Tell Jacob What Has Happened

²⁹When they came to their father Jacob in Canaan, they told him all that had happened to them. They said: ³⁰The Governor of that land spoke harshly to us and treated us like spies. ³¹But we said to him: We're honest men, not spies. ³²We were 12 brothers, sons of the same father. One is no longer with us. The youngest brother stayed with our father in Canaan.

³³Then the Governor of that land said to us: This is how I'll know that you're honest men. Leave one of your brothers with me. Take food for your starving families and go. ³⁴But bring me your youngest brother. Then I'll know that you're not spies but honest men. I'll give your brother back to you, and you'll be able to move about freely in this country.

³⁵As they were emptying their sacks, each man found his bag of money in his sack. When they and their father saw the bags of money, they were frightened.

Jacob Complains About His Life

³⁶Their father Jacob said to them: You're going to make me lose all my children. Joseph is no longer with us. Simeon is no longer with us and now you want to take Benjamin. Everything's against me.

³⁷So Reuben said to his father: You may put my two sons to death if I don't bring him back to you. Let me take care of him and I'll bring him back to you.

³⁸Jacob replied: My son will not go with you. His brother is dead and he's the only one left. If any harm comes to him on the trip you're taking, the grief would drive this gray-haired old man to his grave.

Jacob Sends Ten Sons Back to Egypt

^{43:1}The famine was severe in the land. ²When they finished eating the grain they had brought from Egypt, Israel said to his sons: Go back and buy us a little more food.

³Judah said to him: The man gave us a severe warning. You won't be allowed to see me again unless your brother is with you. ⁴If you let our brother go with us, we'll go and buy food for you. ⁵If you won't let him go, we won't go. The man said to us: You won't be allowed to see me again unless your brother is with you.

⁶Israel asked: Why have you made trouble for me by telling the man you had another brother? ⁷They answered: The man kept asking about us and our family: Is your father still alive? Do you have another brother? We simply answered his questions. How could we possibly know he would say: Bring your brother here?

⁸Then Judah said to his father Israel: Send the boy along with me. Let's get going so that we won't starve to death. ⁹I guarantee that he will come back. You can hold me responsible for him. If I don't bring him back to you and place him here in front of you, you can blame me the rest of my life ¹⁰If we hadn't waited so long, we could have made this trip twice by now.

Jacob Reluctantly Allows Benjamin to Go to Egypt

^{43:11}Then their father Israel said to them: If that's the way it has to be, then take the man a gift. Put some of the best products of the land in your bags. Take a little balm, a little honey, gum, myrrh, pistachio nuts, and almonds. ¹²Take twice as much money with you. You must return the money that was put back in your sacks. Maybe it was a mistake.

¹³Take your brother, and go back to the man. ¹⁴May God *el* Almighty *saday* make him merciful *raham* to you so that he will send your other brother and Benjamin home with you. If I lose my children, I lose my children.

¹⁵The men took the gifts, twice as much money, and Benjamin. They went to Egypt, where they presented themselves to Joseph.

The Banquet at Joseph's House

¹⁶When Joseph saw Benjamin with them, he said to the man in charge of his house, "Take these men to my house. Butcher an animal and prepare a meal because they are going to eat with me at noon."

¹⁷So the man did as Joseph said and took them to Joseph's house. ¹⁸The men were frightened, because they had been brought to Joseph's house. They thought: We've been brought here because of the money that was put back into our sacks the first time. They're going to attack us, overpower us, take our donkeys, and make us slaves.

¹⁹So they came to the man in charge of Joseph's house and spoke to him at the door. ²⁰Please, sir, they said, we came here to buy food once before. ²¹When we stopped for the night, we opened our sacks, and each man found all of his money inside. So we brought it back with us. ²²We also brought more money to buy food. We have no idea who put our money back in our sacks.

²³It's all right *salom*-peace, he said. Don't be afraid *yare*: Your God *elohim*, the God *elohim* of your father, must have given you treasure in your sacks. I received your money. Then he brought Simeon out to them.

²⁴The man took the brothers into Joseph's house. He gave them water to wash their feet and feed for their donkeys. ²⁵They got their gifts ready for Joseph's return at noon because they had heard they were going to eat there.

²⁶When Joseph came home, they gave him the gifts they had brought to the house. Then they bowed to him with their faces touching the ground.

²⁷He asked them how they were. Then he said: You told me about your elderly father. How is he? Is he still alive? ²⁸They answered: Yes, sir. Our father is alive and well. Then they knelt, bowing down.

Joseph Is Emotionally Wrought at Seeing Benjamin

^{43:29}As Joseph looked around, he saw his brother Benjamin, his mother's son. Is this your youngest brother, the one you told me about? he asked. God *'elohim* be gracious *hanan* to you, my son, he said.

³⁰Deeply moved at the sight of his brother, he hurried away, looking for a place to cry. He went into his private room and cried there. ³¹Then he washed his face and came out. He was in control of his emotions when he said: Serve the food.

³²He was served separately from his brothers. The Egyptians who were there with him were also served separately, because they found it offensive to eat with Hebrews. ³³The brothers were seated facing him according to their ages — from the oldest to the youngest. They looked at each other in amazement.

³⁴Joseph had portions of food brought to them from his table, but Benjamin's portion was five times more than any of the others. So they ate and drank with Joseph until they were drunk.

WHAT HAVE WE LEARNED SO FAR?

The famine is not only in Egypt but world-wide and also in Canaan. So Joseph sends ten of the brothers to buy grain. Jacob will not send Benjamin, his second favorite son.

Joseph saw his brothers and recognized him but they did not recognize him. It had been 20 years. He questioned them accusing them of being spies attempting to find out Egypt's defenses. They protested. We are 12 brothers, sons of one man in Canaan. The youngest brother stayed with our father and the other brother is no longer with us.

You're not telling the truth, said Joseph. This is how we'll find out. One of you must go back and get your younger brother while the rest of you remain in my prison. Three days later, Joseph said: Do this and you will live. I, too, fear God 'elohim. One of you will remain in my prison while the rest go back to bring back your youngest brother.

The brothers talked among themselves saying: We're certainly being punished for what he did to Joseph. Joseph understood them but they didn't realize it because he was speaking to them through an interpreter. Then he arrested Simeon. He filled their sacks with grain, put their money back in their sacks, and sent them back to Canaan.

When they arrived at Hebron, they told Jacob what had happened. They also told him about the money in their sacks and that the Governor had demanded they bring their younger brother with them if they came to buy grain again. Jacob was in anguish. He said: *You're going to make me lose all my children. Joseph is no longer with us, Simeon is no longer with us, and now you want to take Benjamin. Everything's against me.*

The famine was severe so beside Jacob's protests, they brothers took Benjamin. Jacob said: *If I lose my children, I lose my children.*

When the men arrived in Egypt, they were taken to Joseph's house. They said to the man in charge of Joseph's house: *Please sir, we came to buy grain before. But when we opened our grain sacks, our money was returned to us. So we brought it and more to pay for the grain.* The man replied: *It is all right. Your God 'elohim, the God 'elohim of your father, must have given you treasure in your sack. I received your money.* Then he brought Simeon out of the prison to be with them.

Joseph arrived at the house at noon. The brothers gave him their gifts and bowed low before him. Joseph saw his brother Benjamin. Then he left the room to cry. Then he washed his face and conducted a banquet for them. The brothers were seated according to their ages. They were amazed. They ate and drank with Joseph until they were drunk.

THINGS TO THINK ABOUT

1. Why does Joseph say? *Do this and live. I, too, fear God 'elohim.* Even if spoken through an interpreter, the brothers should question this and wonder why he says this.
2. Why does Joseph put the money back in their sacks? What does he want them to think?
3. When Jacob hears the money is in their sacks, does Jacob think they have sold Simeon?
4. Jacob says: *Everything is against me.* How different this is from the Jacob at Bethel. What does this tell us about Jacob's faith at this point?
5. Jacob does express a kind of blessing when he sends the brothers back again to Egypt with Benjamin. **Genesis 43:14.** But he doesn't have much faith for he ends with: *If I lose my children, I lose my children.* Does Jacob have any faith in **YHWH**?

6. How can the man in charge of Joseph's house say: *I received your money?* **Genesis 43:23**
He hasn't.

7. What did the brothers think when they were seated in order of age? Didn't they have any suspicion that Joseph was the Governor?

Day 27

Joseph Determines to Learn His Brothers' Hearts

Genesis 44:1-47:31

Joseph's Plan to Trap His Brothers

^{44:1} Joseph commanded the man in charge of his house: Fill the men's sacks with as much food as they can carry. Put each man's money in his sack. ²Then put my silver cup in the youngest brother's sack along with the money for his grain. He did what Joseph told him.

³At dawn the men were sent on their way with their donkeys. They had not gone far from the city when Joseph said to the man in charge of his house: Go after those men at once, and when you catch up with them, say to them: Why have you paid me back with evil when I was good to you? ⁵Isn't this the cup that my master drinks from and that he uses for telling the future? What you have done is evil.

⁶When he caught up with them, he repeated these words to them. ⁷They answered him: Sir, how can you say such things? We would never think of doing anything like that. ⁸We brought the money we found in our sacks back from Canaan. So why would we steal any silver or gold from your master's house? ⁹If one of us has it, he will die, and the rest of us will become your slaves.

¹⁰I agree, he said. We'll do what you've said. The man who has the cup will be my slave and the rest of you can go free. ¹¹Each one quickly lowered his sack to the ground and opened it. ¹²Then the man made a thorough search. He began with the oldest and ended with the youngest. The cup was found in Benjamin's sack.

^{44:3}When they saw this, they tore their clothes in grief. Then each one loaded his donkey and went back into the city.

¹⁴Judah and his brothers arrived at Joseph's house while Joseph was still there. Immediately, they bowed with their faces touching the ground.

¹⁵Joseph asked them: What have you done? Don't you know that a man like me can find things out because he knows the future?"

¹⁶Sir *'adon*, what can we say to you? Judah asked. How else can we explain it? How can we prove we're innocent? God *'elohim* has uncovered our guilt. Now all of us are your slaves, including the one who had the cup.

¹⁷But Joseph said: I would never think of doing that. Only the man who had the cup will be my slave. The rest of you can go back to your father in peace.

Judah Defends Benjamin

^{44:18}Then Judah went up to Joseph and said: Please, sir, let me speak openly with you. Don't be angry with me, although you are equal to Pharaoh. ¹⁹Sir, you asked us: Do you have a father or a brother? ²⁰We answered: We have a father who is old and a younger brother born to him when he was already old. The boy's brother is dead, so he's the only one of his mother's sons left, and his father loves *'ahab* him.

²¹"Then you said to us: Bring him here to me so that I can see him myself. ²²We replied: The boy can't leave his father. If the boy leaves him, his father will die. ²³Then you told us: If your youngest brother doesn't come here with you, you will never be allowed to see me again. ²⁴When we went back to our father, we told him what you had said.

²⁵Then our father said: Go back and buy us a little more food. ²⁶We answered: We can't go back. We can only go back if our youngest brother is with us. The man won't see us unless our youngest brother is with us.

²⁷"Then our father said to us: You know that my wife \perp Rachel \perp gave me two sons. ²⁸One is gone, and I said,,: He must have been torn to pieces. I haven't seen him since. ²⁹If you take this one away from me too and anything happens to him, you'll drive this gray-haired old man to his grave.

³⁰“Our father’s life is wrapped up with the boy’s life. If I come home without the boy³¹ and he sees that the boy isn’t with me, he’ll die. The grief would drive our gray-haired old father to his grave.

³²“I guaranteed my father that the boy would come back. I said: If I don’t bring him back to you, then you can blame me the rest of my life, Father.

³³Sir, please let me stay and be your slave in the boy’s place and let the boy go back with his brothers. ³⁴How could I go back to my father if the boy isn’t with me? I couldn’t bear to see my father’s misery.

Joseph Reveals His Identity

^{45:1} Joseph could no longer control his emotions in front of everyone who was standing around him so he cried out: Have everyone leave me. No one else was there when Joseph told his brothers who he was. ²He cried so loudly that the Egyptians heard him and Pharaoh’s household heard about it.

³Joseph said to his brothers: I am Joseph. Is my father still alive?” His brothers could not answer him because they were afraid of him.

⁴“Please come closer to me: Joseph said to his brothers. When they did so, he said: I am Joseph, the brother you sold into slavery in Egypt.

Joseph Explains to His Brothers God’s Plan for His Life

^{45:5} Now, don’t be sad or angry with yourselves that you sold me. God *’elohim* sent me ahead of you to save lives. ⁶The famine has been in the land for two years. There will be five more years without plowing or harvesting. ⁷God *’elohim* sent me ahead of you to make sure that you would have descendants on the earth and to save your lives in an amazing way.

⁸It wasn’t you who sent me here, but God *’elohim*. He has made me like a father to Pharaoh, lord *’adon* over his entire household, and ruler of Egypt.

Joseph Commands the Brothers Bring His Father Jacob to Egypt

^{45:9} Hurry back to my father and say to him: This is what your son Joseph says: God *‘elohim* has made me lord *‘adon* of Egypt. Come here to me right away. ¹⁰ Live in the land of Goshen, where you will be near me. Live there with your children and your grandchildren, as well as your flocks, your herds, and everything you have.

¹¹ I will provide for you in Egypt, since there will be five more years of famine. Then you, your family, and all who belong to you won't lose everything.

¹² You and my brother Benjamin can see for yourselves that I am the one who is speaking to you. ¹³ Tell my father how greatly honored I am in Egypt and about everything you have seen. Hurry and bring my father here.

¹⁴ He threw his arms around his brother Benjamin and cried with Benjamin, who was crying on his shoulder. ¹⁵ He kissed all his brothers and cried with them. After that his brothers talked with him.

Pharaoh Invites Jacob's Family to Live in Egypt

¹⁶ When Pharaoh's household heard the news that Joseph's brothers had come, Pharaoh and his officials were pleased. ¹⁷ So Pharaoh said to Joseph: Say to your brothers: Load up your animals and go back to Canaan. ¹⁸ Take your father and your families and come to me. I will give you the best land in Egypt. Then you can enjoy the best food in the land.

¹⁹ Give them this order: Take wagons with you from Egypt for your children and your wives. Bring your father, and come back. ²⁰ Don't worry about your belongings because the best of everything in Egypt is yours.

²¹ Israel's sons did as they were told. Joseph gave them wagons and supplies for their trip as Pharaoh had ordered. ²² He gave each of them a change of clothes, but he gave Benjamin three hundred pieces of silver and five changes of clothes. ²³ He sent his father ten male donkeys carrying Egypt's best products and ten female donkeys carrying grain, bread, and food for

his father's trip. ²⁴ So Joseph sent his brothers on their way. As they were leaving, he said to them: Don't quarrel on your way back.

The Brothers Arrive Back in Canaan

²⁵ So they left Egypt and came to their father Jacob in Canaan. ²⁶ They told him: Joseph is still alive. Yes, he is ruler of Egypt. Jacob was stunned and didn't believe them. ²⁷ Yet, when they told their father everything Joseph had said to them and he saw the wagons Joseph had sent to bring him back, his spirits were lifted.

²⁸ "You have convinced me, Israel said. My son Joseph is still alive. I will go and see him before I die.

WHAT HAVE WE LEARNED SO FAR?

Joseph told the man in charge of his house: Fill the man's sacks with food, put their money in their sack, and put my silver cup in Benjamin's sack. They had not gone far from the city when the man in charge of Joseph's house caught up with them accused them of stealing Joseph's silver cup. They denied it said who has it will die and we will be your slaves.

The sacks were searched and the silver cup was found in Benjamin's sack. Then they returned under guard to the city. Joseph asked them: *Why have you done this?* Judah said: *We can't explain it. How can we prove we're innocent. God 'elohim has uncovered our guilt.* Joseph said: *Only the one who stole my cup is guilty. The rest of you can return to your father.*

Judah pleaded on behalf of his father Jacob. *If we don't bring Benjamin back, Jacob will die. Take me instead. Let the boy go back with his brothers.*

Joseph dismissed all the Egyptians from the room. He cried loudly: *I am Joseph. You sold me into slavery. But God 'elohim send me to Egypt ahead of you to save lives. Hurry back to your father Jacob. Tell him to move to Egypt right away and I'll take care of him and his family. There will be five more years of famine. You can live in Goshen near me.*

Joseph hugged and kissed all his brothers.

Pharaoh agreed with Joseph. Take wagons from Egypt and bring your father back with his family. As they were leaving Joseph said: *Don't quarrel on the way back.*

The brothers returned and told Jacob. He was stunned and didn't believe them until he saw the Egyptian wagons. Jacob said: You have convinced me. My son Joseph is still alive. I will go and see him before I die.

THINGS TO THINK ABOUT

1. Now that Jacob is in charge of the family, there seems to be a distinct lack of blessings. Count the number of times Abraham gives blessings. Count the number of times Isaac gives blessings. Now count the number of times Jacob gives blessings.
2. What does Joseph think the brothers will do when he finds the silver cup in Benjamin's sack?
3. Why is it Judah who speaks up instead of Reuben, the eldest brother?
4. Why don't the brothers praise God when Joseph reveals himself?
5. Joseph ascribes his adventures since the brother's sold him to the providence of God *'elohim*. Describe how he tells his story.
6. Why did Joseph say to his brothers: Don't quarrel on the way back?
7. Why didn't Jacob thank God *'elohim* for all that happened?

Day 28

Jacob Leaves Canaan and Moves to Egypt with His Family

Genesis 46:1-47:31

Jacob's Final Encounter with God

^{46:1} Israel moved with all he had. When he came to Beersheba, he offered sacrifices to the God *'elohim* of his father Isaac.

Apparently Jacob and his family had been living at Hebron where Isaac had died. Jacob remembered God's warning to Isaac not to leave Canaan.

[YHWH appeared to Isaac and said: Don't go to Egypt. Stay where I tell you. Live in this Land for a while and I will be with you and bless you. I will give all these Lands to you and your descendants. I will keep the oath that I swore to your father Abraham. Genesis 26:2-3]

²God *'elohim* spoke to Israel in a vision *mar'a* that night and said: Jacob, Jacob. Here I am, he answered.

³I am God *'el*, the God *'elohim* of your father, he said. Don't be afraid *yare'* to go *yarad*—go down to Egypt, because I will make you a great nation there.

⁴I will go *yarad*—go down <with you> to Egypt, and I will make sure you come back *'ala'*—back up again. Joseph will close your eyes _L when you die _L.”

⁵So Jacob left Beersheba. Israel's sons put their father Jacob, their children, and their wives in the wagons Pharaoh had sent to bring him back. ⁶They also took their livestock and the possessions they had accumulated in Canaan.

Jacob and all his family arrived in Egypt. ⁷He had brought his sons, his grandsons, his daughters, and his granddaughters—his entire family.

Jacob's Descendants

⁸These are the names of Israel's descendants, Jacob and his descendants, who arrived in Egypt. Reuben was Jacob's firstborn.

⁹The sons of **Reuben** were Hanoch, Pallu, Hezron, and Carmi.

¹⁰The sons of **Simeon** were Jemuel, Jamin, Ohad, Jakin, Zohar, and Shaul, the son of a Canaanite woman.

¹¹The sons of **Levi** were Gershon, Kohath, and Merari.

¹²The sons of **Judah** were Er, Onan, Shelah, Perez, and Zerah. Er and Onan had died in Canaan. The sons of Perez were Hezron and Hamul.

¹³The sons of **Issachar** were Tola, Puvah, Iob, and Shimron.

¹⁴The sons of **Zebulun** were Sered, Elon, and Jahleel.

¹⁵These were the descendants of the sons Leah gave to Jacob in Paddan Aram, in addition to his daughter Dinah. The total number of these sons and daughters was 33.

¹⁶The sons of **Gad** were Ziphion, Haggi, Shuni, Ezbon, Eri, Arodi, and Areli.

¹⁷The sons of **Asher** were Imnah, Ishvah, Ishvi, and Beriah. Their sister was Serah. The sons of Beriah were Heber and Malchiel.

¹⁸These were the descendants of Zilpah, whom Laban gave to his daughter Leah. She gave birth to these children for Jacob. The total was 16.

¹⁹The sons of Jacob's wife Rachel were Joseph and Benjamin.

²⁰In Egypt, Manasseh and Ephraim were born to **Joseph** by Asenath, daughter of Potiphera, priest from the city of On.

²¹The sons of **Benjamin** were Bela, Beker, Ashbel, Gera, Naaman, Ehi, Rosh, Muppim, Huppim, and Ard.

²² These were the descendants of Rachel who were born to Jacob. The total was 14.

²³ The son of **Dan** was Hushim.

²⁴ The sons of **Naphtali** were Jahzeel, Guni, Jezer, and Shillem.

²⁵ These were the descendants of Billhah, whom Laban gave to his daughter Rachel. She gave birth to these sons for Jacob. The total was 7.

²⁶ The total number of Jacob's direct descendants who went with him to Egypt was 66. This didn't include the wives of Jacob's sons. ²⁷ Joseph had two sons who were born in Egypt. The grand total of people in Jacob's household who went to Egypt was 70.

Joseph and Jacob [Israel] Reunited

²⁸ Israel sent Judah ahead of him to Joseph to get directions to Goshen. When Israel's family arrived in the region of Goshen, ²⁹ Joseph prepared his chariot and went to meet his father Israel. As soon as he saw his father, he threw his arms around him and cried on his shoulder a long time.

³⁰ Israel said to Joseph: Now that I've seen for myself that you're still alive, I'm ready to die.

³¹ Then Joseph said to his brothers and his father's family: I'm going to Pharaoh to tell him: My brothers and my father's family, who were in Canaan, have come to me. ³² The men are shepherds. They take care of livestock. They've brought their flocks and herds and everything they own.'

³³ Now, when Pharaoh calls for you and asks: What kind of work do you do? ³⁴ you must answer: We have taken care of herds all our lives, as our ancestors have done. ┘ You must say this ┘ so that you may live in the region of Goshen because all shepherds are disgusting to Egyptians

Jacob Meets Pharaoh

^{47:1} Joseph went and told Pharaoh: My father and my brothers have arrived from Canaan with their flocks, herds, and everything they have. Now they are in Goshen. ²Since he had taken five of his brothers with him, he presented them to Pharaoh.

³Pharaoh asked the brothers,; What kind of work do you do? They answered Pharaoh: We are shepherds, as were our ancestors. ⁴We have come to live in this land for a while. The famine is so severe in Canaan that there's no pasture for our flocks. So please let us live in Goshen.

⁵Then Pharaoh said to Joseph: Your father and your brothers have come to you. ⁶All of Egypt is available to you. Have your father and your brothers live in the best part of the land. Let them live in Goshen. If they are qualified, put them in charge of my livestock.

Jacob Meets Pharaoh

^{47:7}Then Joseph brought his father Jacob and had him stand in front of Pharaoh. Jacob blessed *barak* Pharaoh. ⁸Pharaoh asked him: How old are you?

⁹Jacob answered Pharaoh: The length of my stay on earth has been 130 years. The years of my life have been few and difficult, fewer than my ancestors' years ¹⁰Then Jacob blessed *barak* Pharaoh and left.

¹¹As Pharaoh had ordered, Joseph had his father and his brothers live in the best part of Egypt, the region of Rameses. He gave them property there. ¹²Joseph also provided his father, his brothers, and all his father's family with food based on the number of children they had.

Joseph Acquires All the Land in Egypt for Pharaoh

¹³The famine was so severe that there was no food anywhere. Neither Egypt nor Canaan were producing crops because of the famine ¹⁴Joseph collected all the money that could be found in Egypt and in Canaan as

payment for the grain people bought. Then he took it to Pharaoh's palace.
¹⁵When the money in Egypt and Canaan was gone, all the Egyptians came to Joseph. Give us food, they said. Do you want us to die right in front of you? We don't have any more money.

¹⁶Joseph replied: If you don't have any more money, give me your livestock and I'll give you food in exchange. ¹⁷So they brought their livestock to Joseph and he gave them food in exchange for their horses, sheep, goats, cattle, and donkeys. During that year he supplied them with food in exchange for all their livestock.

¹⁸When that year was over, they came to him the next year. Sir, they said to him, you know that our money is gone and you have all our livestock. There's nothing left to bring you except our bodies and our land. ¹⁹Do you want us to die right in front of you? Do you want the land to be ruined?

Take us and our land in exchange for food. Then we will be Pharaoh's slaves and our land will be his property. But give us seed so that we won't starve to death and the ground won't become a desert."

²⁰Joseph bought all the land in Egypt for Pharaoh. Every Egyptian sold his fields because the famine was so severe. The land became Pharaoh's. ²¹All over Egypt Joseph moved the people to the cities. ²²But he didn't buy the priests' land because the priests received an income from Pharaoh, and they lived on that income. That's why they didn't sell their land.

²³Joseph said to the people: Now that I have bought you and your land for Pharaoh, here is seed for you. Plant crops in the land. ²⁴Every time you harvest, give one-fifth of the produce to Pharaoh. Four-fifths will be yours to use as seed for your fields and as food for your households. ²⁵You have saved our lives, they said: Please, sir, we are willing to be Pharaoh's slaves.

²⁶Joseph made a law concerning the land in Egypt which is still in force today: One-fifth of the produce belongs to Pharaoh. Only the land of the priests didn't belong to Pharaoh.

Jacob's Last Days in Egypt

²⁷ So the Israelites settled in Egypt in the region of Goshen. They acquired property there and had many children.

²⁸ Jacob lived in Egypt 17 years, so he lived a total of 147 years. ²⁹ Israel was about to die. He called for his son Joseph and said to him: I want you to swear that you love me and are faithful to me. Please don't bury me here. ³⁰ I want to rest with my ancestors. Take me out of Egypt, and bury me in their tomb in Hebron.

I will do as you say, Joseph answered. ³¹ Swear to me, he said. So Joseph swore to him. Then Israel bowed down in prayer with his face at the head of his bed.

WHAT HAVE WE LEARNED SO FAR?

Jacob moved his family from Hebron to Beersheba. There he worshiped the God *'elohim* of his father Isaac. **YHWH** said: *Don't be afraid to go to Egypt. I will make you a great nation there. I will go with you to Egypt and make sure you come back here. Joseph will close your eyes.*

Seventy people in Jacob's household went to Egypt. Jacob met Joseph. They hugged and cried. Joseph told his brothers: *You will see Pharaoh. Be certain you tell him you are shepherds. Then you will be able to live in Goshen.*

Jacob now met Pharaoh. He blessed *barak* him. Pharaoh asked Jacob: *How old are you?* 137 years, Jacob answered. And he added: *The years of my life have been few and difficult, fewer than my ancestor's years.* Then Jacob blessed *barak* Pharaoh again and left.

For the remainder of the famine, Joseph administered the giving of food in Egypt. Joseph collected money for the grain in the storehouses. When the money was gone, Joseph asked for their livestock. Then Joseph bought all the land in Egypt for Pharaoh except the land of the priests. Joseph moved all the people off their land into the cities. Joseph then gave them seed to plant and said: Give one-fifth of your produce to Pharaoh. Four-fifths will be yours to use as seed and as food for your households.

Jacob lived 17 years in Egypt so he lived a total of 147 years. Jacob told Joseph: Don't bury me in Egypt. Take my bones back to Canaan.

THINGS TO THINK ABOUT

1. Jacob is obedient to God *‘elohim* and speaks to him at Beersheba before he leaves the Land. God *‘elohim* allows him to leave Canaan but promises him he will bring him back to Canaan. Why is this important?
2. Israel sends Judah ahead of him to get directions to Goshen. Why does Jacob send Judah rather than his eldest son Reuben?
3. Why does Joseph insist that the brothers tell Pharaoh they are shepherds?
4. How can Jacob bless Pharaoh? Melchizadek blessed Abraham. The greater blessed the lesser. **Hebrews 7:7**. And Jacob blessed Pharaoh twice.
5. Jacob tells Pharaoh: *The years of my life have been few and difficult, fewer than my ancestor's years*. Why doesn't Jacob praise **YHWH** for all that he has done for him throughout his trials?
6. God will keep his promise to bring Jacob's body back to Canaan to be buried with his ancestors at Hebron. But will Jacob keep his promises to God?

Day 29

Jacob Blesses Everyone

Genesis 48:1-49:33

Jacob Blesses Joseph's Two Sons

^{48:1} Later Joseph was told: Your father is ill. So he took his two sons Manasseh and Ephraim ^ל to see Jacob ^ל. ² When Jacob was told: Your son Joseph is here to see you, Israel gathered his strength and sat up in bed.

³ Jacob said to Joseph: God *el* Almighty *saday* appeared to me at LUZ Bethel in Canaan and blessed *barak* me. ⁴ He said to me: I will make you fertile and increase the number of your descendants so that you will become a community of people. I will give this Land to your descendants as a permanent possession.

⁵ "So your two sons, who were born in Egypt before I came here, are my sons. Ephraim and Manasseh will be mine just as Reuben and Simeon are. ⁶ Any other children you have after them will be yours. They will inherit the land listed under their brothers' names.

⁷ As I was coming back from Paddan, Rachel died in Canaan when we were still some distance from Ephrath. So I buried her there on the way to Ephrath, that is, Bethlehem.

⁸ When Israel saw Joseph's sons, he asked: Who are they? ⁹ They are my sons, whom God has given me here in Egypt, Joseph answered his father. Then Israel said: Please bring them to me so that I may bless *barak* them.

^{48:10} Israel's eyesight was failing because of old age and he could hardly see. So Joseph brought his sons close to his father and Israel hugged them and kissed them. ¹¹ Israel said to Joseph: I never expected to see you again and now God *elohim* has even let me see your sons.

¹²Joseph took them off his father's lap and bowed with his face touching the ground. ¹³Then Joseph took both of them, Ephraim on his right, facing Israel's left, and Manasseh on his left, facing Israel's right, and brought them close to him. ¹⁴But Israel crossed his hands and reached out. He put his right hand on Ephraim's head, although Ephraim was the younger son. He put his left hand on Manasseh's head, although Manasseh was older.

¹⁵Then Jacob blessed *barak* Joseph:

May God *'elohim*, in whose presence my grandfather Abraham and my father Isaac walked, may God *'elohim*, who has been my Shepherd *ra'a'* all my life to this very day, ¹⁶may the Messenger *mal'ak*-angel, who has rescued *ga'al*-redeemed me from all evil, bless *barak* these boys. May they be called by my name and by the names of my grandfather Abraham and my father Isaac. May they have many children on the earth.

¹⁷When Joseph saw that his father had put his right hand on Ephraim's head, he didn't like it. So he took his father's hand in order to move it from Ephraim's head to Manasseh's. ⁸Then he said to his father: That's not right, Father. This is the firstborn. Put your right hand on his head.

¹⁹His father refused and said: I know, Son, I know. Manasseh, too, will become a nation, and he, too, will be important. Nevertheless, his younger brother will be more important than he and his descendants will become many nations.

²⁰That day he blessed *barak* them. He said: Because of you, Israel will speak this blessing *barak*. May God *'elohim* make you like Ephraim and Manasseh. In this way Israel put Ephraim ahead of Manasseh.

²¹Then Israel said to Joseph: Now I'm about to die but God *'elohim* <will be with you>. He will bring you back *sub* to the land of your fathers ²²I'm giving you one more mountain ridge than your brothers. I took it from the Amorites with my own sword and bow.

This is the location of Jacob's well where Jesus met the woman of Samaria. **John 4:5-6,12.**

Jacob Prophecies about His 12 Sons

^{49:1} Jacob called for his sons and said: Come here and let me tell you what will happen to you in the days to come.

²Gather around and listen, sons of Jacob. Listen to your father Israel.

³**Reuben**, you are my firstborn, my strength, the very first son I had, first in majesty and first in power. ⁴You will no longer be first because you were out of control like a flood and you climbed into your father's bed. Then you dishonored it. He climbed up on my couch.

Reuben went to bed with Jacob's concubine Bilhah, the slave of his favorite wife Rachel. **Genesis 35:22.** Jacob never forgot this.

⁵**Simeon** and **Levi** are brothers. Their swords are weapons of violence.

⁶Do not let me attend their secret meetings. Do not let me join their assembly. In their anger they murdered men. At their whim they crippled cattle.

⁷May their anger be cursed because it's so fierce. May their fury be cursed because it's so cruel. I will divide them among \perp the sons of \perp Jacob and scatter them among \perp the tribes of \perp Israel.

While Simeon was given land at the distribution by Joshua, his land was quickly absorbed by Judah. Jacob remembered their killing of the men at Shechem. **Genesis 34:25.** The Levites were given no land of their own but given cities with pastureland by each of the tribes.

⁸**Judah**, your brothers will praise you. Your hand will be on the neck of your enemies. Your father's sons will bow down to you. ⁹Judah, you are a lion cub. You have come back from the kill, my son. He lies down and rests like a lion. He is like a lioness. Who dares to disturb him? ¹⁰A scepter will never depart from Judah nor a ruler's staff from between his feet until Shiloh comes and the people obey him.

This is a prophecy of the coming royal Anointed One or Messiah. Shiloh means: *the one to whom it belongs*. Judah will be the royal tribe from whom King David of Bethlehem will come. The Messiah will be called the Lion from the tribe of Judah.

¹¹He will tie his donkey to a grapevine, his colt to the best vine. He will wash his clothes in wine, his garments in the blood of grapes. ¹²His eyes are darker than wine. His teeth are whiter than milk.

¹³**Zebulun** will live by the coast. He will have ships by the coast. His border will go as far as Sidon.

¹⁴**Issachar** is a strong donkey, lying down between the saddlebags. ¹⁵When he sees that his resting place is good and that the land is pleasant, he will bend his back to the burden and will become a slave laborer.

¹⁶**Dan** will hand down decisions for his people as one of the tribes of Israel. ¹⁷Dan will be a snake on a road, a viper on a path, that bites a horse's heels so that its rider falls off backwards. ¹⁸I wait *qava* with hope for you to rescue me *yesu'a*-salvation, O YHWH.

¹⁹**Gad** will be attacked by a band of raiders, but he will strike back at their heels.

²⁰**Asher's** food will be rich. He will provide delicacies fit for a king.

²¹**Naphtali** is a doe set free that has beautiful fawns.

²²**Joseph** is a fruitful tree, a fruitful tree by a spring, with branches climbing over a wall.

²³Archers provoked him, shot at him, and attacked him. ²⁴But his bow stayed steady, and his arms remained limber because of the help of the Mighty *'obir* 6x One of Jacob, because of the name of the Shepherd *ra'a'*, the Rock *'eben* of Israel, ²⁵because of the God *'el* of your father who helps you, because of the Almighty *saday* who gives *barak*-blesses you blessings *beraka'* from the Heavens above, blessings *beraka'* from the deep springs below the ground, blessings *beraka'* from breasts and womb.

²⁷**Benjamin** is a ravenous wolf. In the morning he devours his prey. In the evening he divides the plunder.

²⁸These are the 12 tribes of Israel and what their father said to them when he gave *barak* each of them his special blessing *beraka*:

²⁹Then he gave them these instructions: I am about to join my ancestors in death. Bury me with my ancestors in the cave in the field of Ephron the Hittite. ³⁰Abraham bought the cave that is in the field of Machpelah, east of Mamre in Canaan, from Ephron the Hittite to use as a tomb. ³¹Abraham and his wife Sarah are buried there. Isaac and his wife Rebekah are buried there. I also buried Leah there. ³²The field and the cave in it were bought from the Hittites.

³³When Jacob finished giving these instructions to his sons, he pulled his feet into his bed. He took his last breath and joined his ancestors in death.

WHAT HAVE WE LEARNED SO FAR?

While Jacob's blessings have been sparse up to now, he blesses Pharaoh, Ephraim and Manasseh, and Joseph. But he doesn't bless all of his twelve sons. He doesn't even bless Benjamin. Why not?

In Jacob's prophesies of Zebulun, he alludes to the property they will receive after Joshua has conquered the land of Canaan and driven out most of the Canaanites. But the Bible never speaks of any of the Israelites as going to see except Jonah. It the Phoenicians that are the sailors. Jacob again is concerned that his bones are taken back to Canaan and buried at the cave in Hebron.

THINGS TO THINK ABOUT

1. Go back through the story of Jacob. Whom does Jacob bless and why?
2. Why does Jacob put Ephraim ahead of Manasseh?
3. Jacob calls God *elohim the one who has been the Shepherd all his life*. But he doesn't act very grateful for God's leading and protection. Why not?
4. Jacob directly gives Joseph a mountain ridge in Shechem. This is the only land Jacob gives anyone. Why does he do this? What other land in Canaan did a patriarch buy and from whom?

5. Jacob's prophecy on Judah is astounding. The Messiah or Shiloh will come from his tribe. Explain how this happens.
6. *The Mighty One of Jacob* is a rare expression. **Genesis 49:24**. It only appears again in **Isaiah 49:26** and **Isaiah 60:16**. What does Jacob mean by using this expression for **YHWH**?
7. Why doesn't Jacob bless each of his sons?

Day 30

Joseph Goes to Canaan and Buries Jacob at Hebron

Genesis 50:1-26

Joseph Buries His Father

¹ Joseph threw himself on his father, cried over him, and kissed him. ² Then Joseph ordered the doctors in his service to embalm his father. So the doctors embalmed Israel. ³ The embalming was completed in the usual time — 40 days. The Egyptians mourned for him 70 days.

⁴ When the time of mourning for Jacob was over, Joseph spoke to the Pharaoh's palace staff. He said: Please speak directly to Pharaoh. Tell him: ⁵ My father made me swear an oath. He said: I'm about to die. Bury me in the tomb I bought for myself in Canaan. Please let me go there and bury my father. Then I'll come back. ⁶ Pharaoh replied: Go and bury your father, as you have promised him.

⁷ So Joseph left to bury his father. All Pharaoh's officials, the leaders in his palace staff, and all the leaders of Egypt went with him. ⁸ Joseph's household, his brothers, and his father's household also went with him. Only their children, their flocks, and their cattle were left in Goshen. ⁹ Chariots and horsemen went with him. It was a very large group.

¹⁰ When they came to the threshing floor of Atad, which is on the east side of the Jordan River, they began a great and solemn ceremony to mourn Jacob's death. Joseph took seven days to mourn his father's death.

¹¹ When the Canaanites living there saw the funeral ceremonies at the threshing floor of Atad, they said: These funeral ceremonies are taken very seriously by the Egyptians. That's why that place on the east side of the Jordan was named Abel Mizraim [Egyptian Funeral Ceremonies].

¹²Jacob's sons did for him what he had told them to do. ¹³They carried him back to Canaan and buried him in the cave in the field of Machpelah, east of Mamre at Hebron. Abraham had bought this tomb from Ephron the Hittite. Genesis 23:20

¹⁴After Joseph had buried his father, he went back to Egypt along with his brothers and everyone who had gone there with him to bury his father.

Joseph Forgives His Brothers

¹⁵Joseph's brothers realized what their father's death could mean. So they thought: What if Joseph holds a grudge against us? What if he decides to pay us back for all the evil we did to him?

¹⁶They sent a messenger to Joseph to say: Before your father died, he commanded us: ¹⁷This is what you should say to Joseph: I'm begging you to forgive the crime and the sin your brothers committed against you. What they did to you was very evil. So now, please forgive our crime, because we are servants of your father's God *elohim*. Joseph cried when he got their message.

¹⁸Then his brothers also came and immediately bowed down in front of him. We are your slaves, they said.

¹⁹Joseph said to them: Don't be afraid *yare'*. I can't take God's *elohim* place. ²⁰Even though you planned evil *ra'* against me, God *elohim* planned good *tob* to come out of it. This was to keep many people alive, as he is doing now.

²¹Don't be afraid *yare'*. I will provide for you and your children. In this way he reassured them, setting their minds at ease.

²²Joseph and his father's family stayed in Egypt. Joseph lived to be 110 years old. ²³He saw his grandchildren, Ephraim's children. Even the children of Machir, son of Manasseh, were adopted by Joseph at birth.

Joseph Dies

²⁴At last Joseph said to his brothers: I'm about to die. God *'elohim* will definitely take care of you and take you out of this land to the land he swore with an oath to give to Abraham, Isaac, and Jacob.

[God said to Abram: You can know for sure that your descendants will live in a land that is not their own where they will be slaves, and will be oppressed for 400 years. But I will punish the nation they serve and after that they will come out with many possessions. But you will die in peace and be buried at a very old age. In the fourth generation your descendants will come back here because the sin of the Amorites will not have run its course until then. **Genesis 15:13-16**]

God has prophesied these events to Abram many years before. In the following Book of Exodus we will learn how these events take place.

²⁵Joseph made Israel's sons swear an oath. He said: God *'elohim* will definitely take care of you. So be sure to carry my bones back with you.

²⁶Joseph died when he was 110 years old. His body was embalmed and placed in a coffin in Egypt awaiting transport to Canaan.

WHAT HAVE WE LEARNED SO FAR?

The Egyptians took death very seriously. So did the patriarchs. So as Jacob desired, Joseph took his body back to Canaan to bury with Abraham and Isaac at the cave in Hebron. It was an elaborate Egyptian ceremony. Many people were involved since Joseph was the Governor of Egypt.

But Joseph's brothers were worried that Joseph might suddenly turn against them remembering their selling him as a slave. So they lied saying Jacob had told them to say to Joseph that he was begging them to forgive his brothers. Then they themselves asked Joseph to forgive them.

Joseph was very magnanimous generous. He said: *Even though you planned evil against me, God planned good to come out of it. This was to keep many people alive as he is doing now. Don't be afraid. I will provide for you and your children.*

Joseph lived to be 110 years old seeing his grandchildren. He requested his brothers to carry his bones back to Canaan when they returned. His descendants did this when they left Egypt 400 years later under Moses:

[Moses took the bones of Joseph with him because Joseph had made the Israelites solemnly swear to do this. Joseph had said: God will definite come to help you. When he does, take my bones with you.
Exodus 13:19]

THINGS TO THINK ABOUT

1. Why did the Egyptian ceremonies take place on the east side of the Jordan River rather than inside Canaan itself?
2. What was causing Joseph's brothers to lie to him about Jacob?
3. Didn't Joseph simply repeat what he had said before. Where did he say this?
4. Joseph did not live as long as the patriarchs. Why did they live longer than him. What were their ages at death?
5. Why was Joseph so insistent that his bones be taken back to Canaan?
6. Identify Jacob's age at the significant events in his life. When does he first think he is going to die?
7. Describe Jacob's faith in God when he dies compared to the faith of Joseph.

EPILOGUE

Moses Writes Genesis

Tradition says that Moses wrote the books of the Towrah: Genesis, Exodus, Leviticus, Numbers, and Deuteronomy. The number of Jewish words in the Towrah is 79,975 and the number of letters is 304,805. Scribes counted these to make certain their copy was correct.

There are 38,262 English words in the King James Version of Genesis, 32,685 in Exodus, 24,541 in Leviticus, 32,896 in Numbers, and 28,352 in Deuteronomy.