

Genesis

A Study Book by

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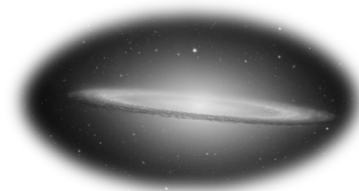
First Printing: January 2016

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Genesis 1

Genesis 1:1

In the beginning God created the heavens and the earth.



| | | | | | | |
|-----------|---------------|-------------|---------------|----------|---------|------------------|
| הָאָרֶץ | וְאֵת | הַשָּׁמַיִם | אֵת | אֱלֹהִים | בָּרָא | בְּרֵאשִׁית |
| the earth | and [+D O] | the heavens | [D O] | God | created | In the beginning |
| | Direct Object | | Direct Object | | | |

“*In the beginning God* is undoubtedly the most important sentence in the Bible” (A.W. Tozer)

The first question that comes to mind is, *In the beginning* of what? Well, it was not the beginning of the creation of angels or that dimension or realm which surrounds the throne of God because God told Job that when He *laid the foundations of the earth...the morning stars sang together and all the sons of God shouted for joy* (Job 38:4, 7). So these angelic creatures were already created before this creation took place. This creation was not about the dimension of reality that surrounds the throne of God, but about a new one, one that did not previously exist. And glancing forward in the context, we conclude this was the beginning of what we call the material universe.

בָּרָא (*bara*) is the next word in the Hebrew text. The word בָּרָא (*bara*) is almost always translated *created*. The word is used throughout the Bible with only God being the One doing the creating. The word does not necessarily mean a creation out of nothing (Isaiah 65:18, *I create Jerusalem for rejoicing*; Psalm 51:10, *Create in me a clean heart, O God*). But *bara* does mean creation from nothing here, in verses 21 and 27, and Isaiah 65:17, *For behold, I create a new heavens and a new earth*.

Day 1

Genesis 1:2

The earth was תְּהוֹמָוֹת (tohu wabohu) *formless and void*, or empty and formless, not chaotic. It was like a lump of clay to a potter, a piece of marble to a sculptor, an empty canvas to a painter. Before I start to write, I have my computer open, my layout, font type and size chosen, and my software ready, but the page is *tohu wabohu*. It’s empty until I form some words on it. The earth was a dark ball of rock (probably molten in the center, or it would become so as it heated up), with dirt on top, and covered by water hanging in space.

But moving over the surface of the deep water was *the Spirit of God*. From our understanding of the New Testament, we can assume this is the person of the Godhead we usually call the Holy Spirit. Moses would have understood this to be the Spirit of the one true God. So do we. But we also understand that the one true God has three persons. There is also much in the New Testament to connect God the Son to creation (John 1:1-3; Colossians 1:16; Hebrews 1:10). So apparently, all three persons of the Godhead were involved in creation.

Genesis 1:3-5

It is not clear when the timing of chapter one began, that is, whether day one began with 1:1, 1:2, or 1:3. But if it didn’t begin before, it certainly began with verse 3. The subject of the first day was the bringing of light to a dark earth, separating the darkness from the light, and naming the light *day* and the darkness *night*. This was not the sun or moon, since they were not created until day four (verses 14-19) but was some significant light from God that interrupted the darkness on the earth.

God created light without a heavenly body several times. He created light in the glory over the tabernacle, the star the wise men followed to Jerusalem and on to Bethlehem, the light surrounding Jesus on the Mount of Transfiguration, the light around the throne of God in Ezekiel 1; 3; 10; and Revelation 4–6; and the lighting of the New Earth from the New Jerusalem (Revelation 21–22).

The next question is, what does it mean when Moses used the word יום (*yom*) for *day*? Of course, the word יום (*yom*) for *day* can have many meanings. Here in Genesis 1:5 and in 1:18, it can mean the daylight hours of about half of a day. The word יום (*yom*) for *day* can also mean a period of time, as it does in Genesis 2:4, *This is the account of the heavens and the earth when they were created, in the day that the LORD God made earth and heaven.* But when the word *day* is preceded by a number, it always means a 24-hour period of time. Note the following from Paul Taylor:

The Hebrew *yom* occurs 2,282 times outside Genesis 1. It occurs 359 times with a number outside Genesis 1. Some of these occurrences use cardinal numbers (one, two, three, etc.) and some use ordinal numbers (first, second, third, etc.). However, in all 359 cases, the context clearly shows that a 24-hour day is being referenced. *Yom* occurs 19 times outside Genesis 1, together with either the word “morning” or “evening.” In all 19 cases, a 24-hour day is clearly intended. The words “morning” and “evening” occur together, without “day” 38 times outside Genesis 1. Each of these occurrences refers to a literal 24-hour day. Finally, the Hebrew *yom* occurs with the word “night” 53 times outside Genesis 1. Guess what! Each of these occurrences refers to a 24-hour day [February 14, 2013, <http://creationtoday.org>].

One might ask, “What more could God have done to communicate these were 24-hour days?” In the Law, God gave Moses Ten Commandments. In explaining the fourth commandment, Moses wrote, *...For in six days the LORD made the heavens and the earth, the sea and all that is in them, and rested on the seventh day; therefore the LORD blessed the sabbath day and made it holy* (Exodus 20:10-11).

Moses understood the sabbath day was the last 24-hour period of the week because God created in six of those and rested on the seventh of those. Moses did not understand the sabbath day to be an indefinite long period of time but a 24-hour period of time to model the day of rest following the six days of creation. We believe in six-24 hour days of creation because Moses did.

Before leaving the first day, we should notice that all the days are described with the statement, *And there was evening and there was morning, one day.*

Day 2

Genesis 1:6-8

There are three suggestions as to what happened here:

1. The water surrounding the earth from day one was a heavy fog-type vapor, not liquid water. On day two, that fog was separated into a water vapor canopy above and liquid water below.
2. The liquid water evaporated into clouds in the atmosphere.
3. There was a division in liquid water. The atmosphere supported a transparent layer of water above itself, allowing those on the earth to see the lights in space as through a fishbowl.

Whatever the suspended expanse was,

1. It watered the earth with a mist.
2. It provided a greenhouse effect that allowed humans to live about 900 years.
3. It provided sufficient vegetarian food for them and the animals.

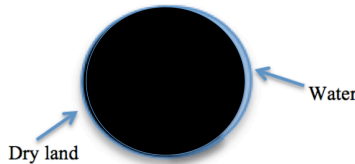
4. It was an even, comfortable temperature, so that Adam and Eve only needed clothing for shame, not warmth.

It would seem that the whole earth, not just the Garden of Eden, was a tropical paradise (weather wise), something like a benevolent Amazon jungle.

Day 3

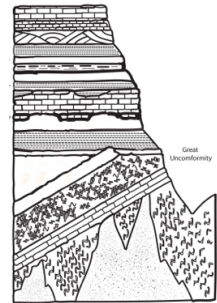
Genesis 1:9-13

There were two distinguishable acts of God on the third day. One was a rearrangement of a previous creation, resulting in dry land appearing and the formation of seas. The other was a new creation of vegetation from nothing.



The land seems to be in one place and the sea in another. The word for *dry land* is singular and the word for *seas* is plural, probably just indicating the sea was on either side of the dry land. Since the dry land appeared from what was all water, there had to be considerable upheaval in the earth's surface and down to considerable depths. In many geological

formations, such as the one pictured here of the Grand Canyon in Arizona, we see two distinctly different formations. In most such formations, we can notice a surface layer of deposits and an underlying layer of rock that was pushed up from beneath. Of course, we can only guess as to what happened when. But at least some of that underlying formation that we see in mountain areas may have been the result of dry land appearing on the third day (see Job 38:8-11).



The second act on the third day was the first creation of life in this universe, when *God said, "Let the earth sprout vegetation."* This vegetation consisted of *plants yielding seed, and fruit trees on the earth bearing fruit after their kind with seed in them.* So the plants were created with the appearance of age. They were mature plants, ready to reproduce. This tropical, greenhouse, earth was now covered with lush vegetation, which was created in the process of producing fruit and vegetables ready to eat.

Moses said that *God saw that it was good* two times on the third day. He previously said *God saw that the light was good*, in verse 4, but this is the first time God seems to have declared the whole day to be good.

Day 4

Genesis 1:14-19



The universe is a very large place, and it's full of moving objects. Current estimates run between 100 billion and 300 billion stars in our Milky Way galaxy, and most estimates say there are 100 billion galaxies in the universe. [Of course, all this is just a guess. The numbers keep changing every time we get a better telescope.]
And all of this was created on the fourth day.

We would like to make two observations:

1. The Earth Is Uniquely Stable

Outside our solar system, we see what astronomers call random acts of "chaos and destruction." There are planets crashing into their stars, unattached planets crashing into other planets, shock

waves of thousands of degrees traveling through the universe, stars eating up other stars, comets crashing into planets, black holes sucking in everything in their path, whole galaxies colliding into each other. It's chaos and destruction everywhere.

Even in our own solar system, chaos is not far away. Three planets, Mercury, Mars, and the dwarf planet Pluto, have significant elliptical orbits, which make life of any kind impossible. For example, Mercury is the closest to the sun and hence our hottest planet. But the elliptical orbit of Mercury, which takes 88 of our days, allows its temperature to drop to 300 degrees below zero when it swings farthest from the sun, three times colder than any place on earth. Also, its orbit is not constant. Each trip around the sun varies from the previous one. So life on such a planet is impossible. Pluto takes 248 years to circle the sun. Most of that time, it is a frozen block of rock and moisture, but when it gets close to the sun, it melts and creates an atmosphere of dense fog. But then it begins its path back to a surface temperature of 300 degrees below zero. Life is impossible on a planet with a significant elliptical orbit, even if that planet were exactly like the earth, and the average of its orbit were exactly that of the earth. The universe, including our own solar system, is full of chaos and destruction.

Except...here.

The earth is unique. It is stable and constant. It is described (by evolutionary astronomers) as an "oasis of tranquility" in a universe of chaos and destruction, and it's because of how the earth orbits the sun. Without earth's orbital stability, life could not exist. Life requires (besides an exact set of precise conditions for life on a planet) a nearly circular orbit of a planet, in just the right distance from a sun, and with a sun of exactly the right size and mass. Just a few differences in any of that make life impossible. As one astronomer said, "We've hit the orbital jackpot. We get a gentle ride." Another evolutionary astronomer said, "What's so amazing about the earth's orbit around the sun is not only is it stable, but it had to be stable for over a billion years for life to evolve on it."

Or, God created it that way.

Here's what is clear. Our earth's orbit is not just unusual in the universe, it's unique. Since the theory of evolution demands it, astronomers will keep looking for life somewhere else (and spend billions of tax dollars to do so). But no astronomer has been able to find anything like our earth, in a stable nearly circular orbit, anywhere in the universe. *He is before all things, and in Him all things hold together* (Colossians 1:17).

2. The Stars Were Visible On the Fourth Day

It takes the light from our sun about 8 minutes and 20 seconds to reach the earth. Whatever we observe happening on the surface of the sun happened a little over 8 minutes ago. It takes 4.24 light years for the light from our next nearest star, Proxima Centauri, to reach the earth. So what we see happening there, happened over four years ago. In 2011, astronomers witnessed the largest explosion known to date. It was in a distant galaxy, estimated to be 3 billion lightyears away, yet it was visible from earth. Astronomers tell us that a massive black hole was shocked by a star that suddenly got close. The black hole burst the star apart, swallowed up part of it, and sent the rest off into space as a gamma ray burst, which we could see on earth. But that means the explosion actually happened 3 billion years ago.

But our text says, *God said, "Let there be **lights in the expanse of the heavens**...and let them be for lights in the **expanse of the heavens** to give light on the earth"; and it was so...God placed them in the **expanse of the heavens** to give light on the earth.*

The *expanse* is defined in verses 6-8 as the atmosphere surrounding the earth between the water on earth and the suspended water. Verse 8 also says *He called the expanse heaven*. So verses 14-19 do not say that God placed stars in the distant universe some billions of light years away and waited for their light to get here. Rather, He *placed them in the expanse of the heavens*. The same place where the birds fly in verse 20. The light of the stars (and remember, in the Bible, a star is any light in the sky) was placed in the atmosphere of the night sky so that it gave *light on the earth*.

If that star is billions of lightyears away, then that star and its light seen on the earth were both created on the fourth day. To conclude that it took a billion years for that light to get here is like looking at a mature apple tree with ripe apples on it on the third day and concluding it took it ten years to grow and three months for those apples to develop and ripen. But the apple tree with its apples, seconds after it was created, was seconds old. Seconds after the light of the stars was placed in the earth's atmosphere, that light was seconds old, not millions of years old. However far away from the earth the star is, both it and its light in the earth's atmosphere existed at the instant of their creation on the fourth day.

Day 5

Genesis 1:20-23

The account of the creation of animal life was divided up into two days. Here, on the fifth day, we have only the creation of aquatic life and the birds that flew above it. Four groups were created:

1. ***Let the waters teem with swarms of living creatures.*** To date, there are some 230,000 different documented species of life living in the sea. And new ones are being discovered all the time. But according to marine fossil records, 98% of all documented species are now extinct. So when *God said, "Let the waters teem with swarms of living creatures,"* that was a whole lot of living creatures.
2. ***Let birds fly above the earth in the open expanse of the heavens.*** Again, the estimates vary, but most number the species of birds at about 10,000. Although bats and insects fly by a different method, we have only recently discovered (with the aid of slow motion photography) what makes most birds fly. We have long known, and imitated, the fact that their wing is an airfoil. But we have recently discovered that the lift is created by the thrust of the feathers on the tips of the wings as they point downward (as it is with an airplane propeller). The flapping of the wings does not create lift. It creates thrust, which allows the bird (and its wings' airfoil) to move forward, increasing the flow of air over the wing. This establishes lift when there is sufficient airflow over the wing as it is thrust forward by the tip feathers.
3. ***God created the great sea monsters.*** These would include the dinosaurs. God asked Job about two of those in Job 41:1, 8, 18-19, and 30-31.
4. ***God created every living creature that moves, with which the waters swarmed after their kind, and every winged bird after its kind.*** There are about 950,000 species of insects. No one knows for sure how many species of animals exist on earth. In fact, some 10,000 species of animals are discovered each year, with over one and a half million species already described. Projections for the total number of species on earth range from 2 million to 50 million.

"You alone are the LORD. You have made the heavens, the heaven of heavens with all their host, the earth and all that is on it, the seas and all that is in them. You give life to all of them and the heavenly host bows down before You (Nehemiah 9:6).

Day 6

Genesis 1:24-25

The command is literally, *Go out—the earth—living creature*. The idea is probably not that the creatures came from the earth, or that the earth brought them forth, but that they were to go out *on* the earth. There are three designations of earth (dry land) creatures:

1. *Cattle*, no doubt including all the domestic farm-type animals
2. *Creeping things*, things with no legs or short legs
3. *Beasts of the earth*, wild animals with long legs

There is an emphasis on the way these animals were to reproduce. It was *after their kind*. The command *after their kind* is given eight times in Genesis 1, and four of them are here on the sixth day. The phrase *after their kind* comes from one word, לְמִינָהּ (*Liminah*). The basic noun is מִין (*min*), which means *kind*, in the sense of kind of life form. It is preceded by לְ (*L*) followed by the feminine singular suffix translated *their*, but it's a singular. Basically, it says each animal was to reproduce according to its own particular kind.

The problem with replacing “kind” with “species” is that evolutionists consider any creature that will not mate with another one to be a different species. It has been established that there are several kinds of animals that, if separated from each other, will no longer mate. For example, squirrels that migrate around to a different side of a mountain will, after time, no longer mate with squirrels from the former side of the mountain. Evolutionists consider that to be the creation of a new species of squirrels. But, of course, they are still the same squirrels, and they all reproduce squirrels after their kind. So by this definition, a new species can develop, but the animal has not changed at all. So it is best to translate לְמִינָהּ (*Liminah*) *after*, or *according to, their kind*.

Day 6 (continued)

Genesis 1:26-31

There are at least six significant issues to discuss from the sixth day:

- 1. God referred to Himself with a plural pronoun**—Just exactly what Moses understood by the plural pronouns for God (*Us* and *Our*) is not clear. But whatever it meant to Moses, like the plural word for *God* used 31 times in Genesis 1, it certainly leads the way to the later revelation of the Trinity. And clearly, all three persons of the Godhead were involved in creation (Genesis 1:1-2; Colossians 1:16-17).
- 2. Let Us make man in Our image, according to Our likeness**—The words translated *image* and *likeness* are very similar. The first word תְּצַלֶּם (*tselem*) is usually just translated *image*. The second word דְּמוּתָהּ (*demuth*) has more of an emphasis on *something resembling something else*, so *likeness* is a good translation. It seems most likely that this phrase simply means we look like God, in the sense that we stand upright, have one head, two arms and two legs, with hands and feet, etc. The animals don't look like God, humans do (Revelation 1:13-16).
- 3. Male and female He created them**—It's interesting that God did not mention gender distinctions in the creation of animals, even though they were clearly there and clearly essential. It seems that the sexual distinctions in humans were more significant. It is also significant that God did not create any other category for man other than male and female. Therefore, the idea of God making someone homosexual, or bisexual, or transgendered, or any other gender variant is outside the scope of creation.

Males were created male and females were created female. There is absolutely no sexual ambiguity in the creation of humans.

4. Both man and all living creatures were vegetarians—From the time of Adam and Eve until the Flood of Noah, both humans and animals were vegetarians, and neither humans nor animals feared one another. Therefore, it is safe to say that animals were not hostile to man. So ruling the animals probably meant using the domestic ones and keeping the wild ones out of the cultivated fields.

After Noah's Flood, that all changed. God told Noah,

“The fear of you and the terror of you will be on every beast of the earth and on every bird of the sky; with everything that creeps on the ground, and all the fish of the sea, into your hand they are given. Every moving thing that is alive shall be food for you; I give all to you, as I gave the green plant” (Genesis 9:2-3).

Then, for the first time, Noah faced a hostile arrangement where man could hunt, kill, and eat animal flesh (as long as he drained the blood out of it – 9:4). It is reasonable to assume that this is also the time when animals were no longer vegetarians and could eat (sting, bite, and attack) humans. Then nature would no longer be balanced, by eating vegetables, but by man and animals killing and eating one another (what, on human moral standards, would be considered cruelty). Paul explained, *For the creation was subjected to futility, not willingly, but because of Him who subjected it, in hope that the creation itself also will be set free from its slavery to corruption* (Romans 8:20-21).

5. God blessed them; and God said to them, “Be fruitful and multiply, and fill the earth”—The blessing of God upon the male and the female resulted in two things—their being reproductively fruitful and ruling over the earth.

It seems best to see the commands, given to Adam and Eve and to Noah, to be for the administration they lived in. But, like all commands of the Bible, they must be applied to everyone because they come from God and hence reflect the heart of God. The difference is, with a command, we keep the specifics, whether or not we understand the reasons. With an application, we put the meaning of the command to use in our situation. All biblical commands are not addressed to us, but all of them must be applied by us. Application has to do with asking the author's intention. It's as if we were sitting around a table trying to figure out how to apply a passage, and we invite the author to slide up a chair to the table and join us.

6. Man was to subdue it [the earth]; and rule over the fish of the sea and over the birds of the sky and over every living thing that moves on the earth—The word for *subdue* is *כָּבַשׁ* (*kabash*). It means *to subdue, bring into bondage or into subjection*. The word for *rule* is *רָדָה* (*radah*). It's used here and in verse 28, and it means *to have dominion, rule, or dominate*. Clearly, man dominates nature. David elaborates on that in Psalm 8:6-8.

This has been developed into what is usually called the “cultural mandate.” Although many evangelicals are turning to this, it is primarily the teaching of the reformed and covenant communities. It says that this passage (Genesis 1:26-31) gives mankind a mandate to keep, guard, and improve the cultures of the world.

There are significant problems with the idea of a cultural mandate for Christians:

1. The command to Adam and Eve was not cultural, it was physical. Subduing and ruling over the earth is defined as *over the fish of the sea and over the birds of the sky and over every living thing that moves on the earth*. None of those creatures have culture. They have instincts,

tendencies, needs and drives, but not culture. Culture was only developed by man, because only man has moral inclinations. The commands of the sixth day for ruling the earth have nothing to do with ruling over mankind and human activities.

2. There is no indication that God directed humans to influence the cultures of the world at any time in history. For example, at the time of Noah, the cultures of the earth were bad (Genesis 6:5). In the midst of this, *Noah found grace in the eyes of the Lord*. But the Lord never told Noah to fix the culture, nor did He reprimand him for not doing so. Abraham was to journey to Canaan and dwell there, but he was never instructed to influence their culture. The Hebrews were made into a nation by the Mosaic Law, and they were responsible for the culture of the Jewish people, but not for the cultures of the nations around them.
3. The church was never commanded to change the world. The church is pictured as being **in** the world but **not of** the world, as being aliens and strangers with a citizenship in heaven, not on earth. Jesus and the apostles never became involved in changing or influencing the culture of the world around them. Their whole focus was on the church, the body of Christ, and their only mandate for the world was to *Go make disciples of all nations* (Matthew 28:19).

Although we see no basis for teaching what the covenant community calls a “cultural mandate,” we do have an obligation to apply the commands given to our original parents to subdue and rule over the earth. It is man’s responsibility to see that animals are treated well, kept from hurting people, and destroying the environment. Man can hunt them, eat them, diminish and enhance the size of herds, flocks, schools, and swarms. But he must also protect them from cruelty. We must not hunt whales to extinction and cut down all the forests without replenishing them. But all this is not to preserve the planet or its wildlife. God will destroy all of it, burning it up with *intense heat* (2 Peter 3:10-12). But from the commands of the sixth day, we can see that God wants us to be responsible to care for the plants and animals of the earth.

Applications from Genesis 1

1. Creation is not scientific. It’s historical. Science requires consistently repeatable observation. Since the conditions of creation do not exist today, it cannot be observed. Many have pointed out that Genesis is not a science book. True, but that is usually a statement made to disallow its accuracy. What such critics miss is that Genesis was written as a history book, not a religious myth. No one would question that Moses intended to write history after chapter 12. Moses was not a scientist, he was a historian, and Genesis is as historically verifiable as any credible historical resource. It’s only an anti-supernatural bias that denies Genesis as real history.
2. Follow the unchanging Bible, not the changing theories of evolutionary science. What is constantly evolving is not our world but what the evolutionists are telling us about it. What the evolutionists told us yesterday is not what they tell us today or what they will tell us tomorrow. They never have the definitive last word on anything. Consider what “science” told us was true only a few hundred years ago—the earth was flat, we should bleed sick people with leeches, gold could be made from lead, etc. But what Moses told us 3500 years ago is still true, doesn’t change, makes perfect sense, and is completely consistent with what we observe.
3. We should understand science as what we learn from repeatable observations, not philosophies that interpret those observations. It should be noted that the formation processes the evolutionists describe have never been observed. No astronomer has observed the collision of two stars spinning off a pulsar or forming a black hole. No one observed the Colorado River forming the Grand Canyon over 6 million years or any living creature becoming a different kind of creature. Observational science can only tell us what is there, not how it got there or how long it took to get there.

4. Worship God because He is an awesome Creator, a Lord of hosts, a God of infinite detail. Creation should drive us to our knees in humility before an omnipotent God. *Fear God, and give Him glory; ... worship Him who made the heaven and the earth and sea and springs of waters* (Revelation 14:7).

Questions from Genesis 1

1. *In the beginning God created the heavens and the earth* is a statement about
 - A. The beginning of all of God's creating
 - B. The beginning of the creation of our universe
 - C. The beginning of the creation of the earth
2. In the Bible, the word "day"
 - A. Means 24-hours when there is a number with it
 - B. Means 24-hours when there is a cardinal numbers (one, two, three, etc.) with it but not necessarily when there is an ordinal number (first, second, third, etc.) with it.
 - C. Means 24-hours, only in the context of evening and morning

Answers: (1) B. (2) A.

Genesis 2

Chapter 1 is chronologically-oriented; chapter 2 is event-oriented.

Chapter 1 focuses on the earth and ends in man; chapter 2 focuses on man and ends in marriage.

Chapter 1 is the creation sequence; chapter 2 is the bridge between creation and the sin of chapter 3.

Genesis 2:1-2

These two verses slam the door shut on any thoughts of evolution (theistic or otherwise). There is absolutely no way the theory of evolution and the Bible can both be true. The theory of evolution says everything evolved, and the evolution is ongoing. The Bible says the heavens, the earth, and everything in them were **completed** in six days. The word *כָּלָה* (*kalah*) means “to be complete, at an end, finished, or accomplished.” The word occurs twice here. We will discuss the *seventh day* with the next verse, but here we should notice that, by that seventh day, creation was **completed**.

Genesis 2:3

There are **three** things we should notice about *the seventh day*:

1. It was a 24-hour day. As discussed in chapter 1, when used outside of a metaphor, the word “day” always means a 24-hour period of time when preceded by a number. When God gave Moses the Ten Commandments, His fourth commandment was *Remember the sabbath day, to keep it holy... “For in six days the LORD made the heavens and the earth, the sea and all that is in them, and rested on the seventh day”* (Exodus 20:8).
2. Verse 3 gives us the additional concept that *God blessed the seventh day and sanctified it*. The word for **blessed** [בָּרַךְ (*barak*)] is a common one, meaning to give a special favor. The word for **sanctified** [קָדַשׁ (*qadash*)] means to be set apart or consecrated. God considered the sabbath as a day to be set apart, before He gave Moses the Law. When Israel was still in the wilderness and had not yet reached Mt. Sinai, Moses told them, *See, the LORD has given you the sabbath...* (Exodus 16:29). When He gave Moses the Ten Commandments, God emphasized the sanctification of what we call Saturday, the seventh day (Exodus 20:9-10). So in the Mosaic Law, God set apart Saturday, the last day of the week, just as He did at creation.
3. We are told that the reason for a sabbath day is ***because in it He rested from all His work which God had created and made***. The idea of resting on the seventh day seems to be minimized in the New Testament. While Jesus increased the emphasis on the other commandments, with statements like *you have heard but I say to you*, He seemed to redirect the emphasis (or at least the rabbinical emphasis) on the sabbath. After healing on the sabbath and allowing His disciples to pick grain on the sabbath, He explained that *The sabbath was made for man, and not man for the sabbath* (Mark 2:27).

As a conclusion, it is clear that, after His six (24-hour) days of creating, God rested on what we call Saturday, the seventh (24-hour) day, and sanctified it. This was not because He needed it, but as an example for man. The defining idea was *sabbath was made for man, and not man for the sabbath*.

Notice also that the setting of a sabbath day at the end of the six days of work established the concept of a seven-day week, which has permeated all through history.

Genesis 2:4

The first words of this verse are literally, *these* (plural) *are the genealogies* (or *generations*) *of*. The NASB word *account* is a good paraphrase, but a better word might be *sequence*. The verse does not begin a new or different account of creation (as the liberals have claimed) but refers to the previous sequence of what happened over six days. Verse 4 might be paraphrased, “These, the events which have just been presented, are the sequence of the heavens and the earth when they were created in six days.”

Notice the word *day* does not have a number in front of it and refers to the whole week of creation. We also see here the first introduction of the name יהוה *Yhvh* (i.e. *Yahweh*) in front of the word אֱלֹהִים (*elohim*) for God.

Genesis 2:5-6

Although green plants were created on the third day (Genesis 1:11-12), plants of the field (domestic shrubs) had not yet sprouted. This seems to be the kind of plants (like corn, beans, and potatoes) which required cultivation. Although their seeds were in the ground since the third day, these did not grow until after there was a man to take care of them on the sixth day.

These verses also tell us that the earth was not watered by rain because rain did not occur until the time of Noah’s Flood. Under the greenhouse effect created by the water (or water vapor) canopy above the atmosphere, the earth was full of vegetation, which was watered by a *mist* (or the word can mean *flow*), which allowed for a tropical forest condition on the earth.

Genesis 2:7

Man’s body was *formed* (one of the basic words for creation, used for the creation of both man—2:7-8, and animals—2:19) from the *dust from the ground*. After man sinned, God reminded man of this, telling him he would *return to the ground, because from it you were taken; for you are dust and to dust you shall return* (Genesis 3:19). The Hebrew words for “man” and “earth” are only two letters (one Hebrew letter) different. The word for man is אָדָם (*adam*), and the word for earth is אֲדָמָה (*adamah*). So man is dust. If you don’t think so, bury his dead body and see into what it turns.

But when God breathed into the man, he became a living being, literally “to-soul-living (being)” or “a living (being) with soul.” The word “soul” here does not denote spirituality but personality because the phrase is also used of animals (1:21, 24). Both man and animals have a body and a personality. Man, in his creation, was distinguished from animals two ways: (1) in that he was created in the image and likeness of God, and (2) in that he became *a living being* from the breath of God. What made man a spiritual being was that God breathed life into him.

Genesis 2:8-9

The discussion thus far has been about the creation of the earth in general. Humans were created from the dust of the earth, but not from the dust of the Garden of Eden. God created the Garden of Eden (the word *Eden* means “delight”) and then placed man into it. Apparently, this was not the first Eden. It seems there was a Garden of Eden in heaven, and this one was modeled after (or at least named after) that one. God told Lucifer, “*You were in Eden, the garden of God; every precious stone was your covering...On the day that you were created they were prepared*” (Ezekiel 28:13).

The garden God planted on earth was east of where He created Adam and Eve. Apparently, that was somewhere in Mesopotamia (modern Iraq), since two of the four rivers mentioned in verse 14, the

Tigris and the Euphrates, are well known. Of course, Noah's Flood rearranged the earth's geography and wiped out all evidence of Eden.

The statement in verse 9, *Out of the ground the LORD God caused to grow every tree that is pleasing to the sight and good for food* is not a reiteration of creation in general but a description of the growth God caused in the Garden of Eden. We also learn there were two special trees, seemingly close together: *the tree of life also in the midst of the garden, and the tree of the knowledge of good and evil*. The tree of life is a tree that gave life. Possibly eating from its fruit or its leaves would allow Adam and Eve to live forever, which is why they were cast out of the garden after the Fall, and not allowed to re-enter it. There is a similar tree in the New Jerusalem (Revelation 22:2, 14, 19) and *the leaves of the tree were for the healing of the nations*. The other tree in Eden was *the tree of the knowledge of good and evil*. Eating from its fruit was forbidden.

Genesis 2:10-14

We still have the Tigris and Euphrates Rivers. The Pishon flowed through the land of Havilah. This land was associated with several precious metals. Moses told us that the Gihon *flows around the whole land of Cush*. Elsewhere in the Old Testament, Cush refers to Ethiopia, the location of the headwaters of the Nile.

Genesis 2:15-17

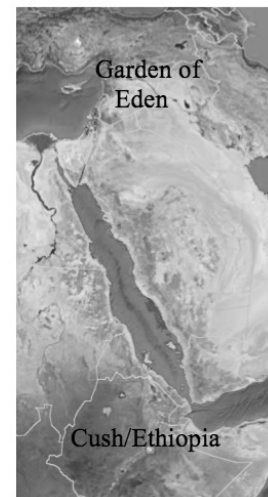
What is interesting about verse 15 is that the Garden of Eden needed to be cultivated and kept. The most reasonable conclusion is that man was meant to work before the Fall. So work, per se, is not part of the curse. Man was meant to work, and the ground, even without the curse, was meant to be worked and protected.

There is a common question asked about God's statement to Adam concerning the *tree of the knowledge of good and evil*. God said, *for in the day that you eat from it you will surely die*. But Adam and Eve did not die the day they ate from the tree. They actually lived over 900 years. I do believe Adam began to die as soon as he ate the fruit. But notice God did not put a number with the word *day* here. He did not say, "On the first day you eat from it you will surely die." The word *day* is used in many ways. In this chapter, the word *day* is used of a 24-hour period of time in verse 3 (the seventh day) and the whole time of creation in verse 4 (*in the day that the Lord made earth and heaven*). I suggest that this is not meant to be a prediction of when Adam would die, but an emphatic statement that he would.

Genesis 2:18-20

This is the first time God looked at His creation and said something about it was not good (Genesis 1:4, 10, 12, 18, 21, 25). It was *not good for the man to be alone*. This assumes there is an absolute standard for good, the character of God dictated the standard, and it included things being complete. It is not that God did something bad, but His creation was not yet finished. Then, before God made Eve, He brought the animals to Adam to name them. This required a good deal of creativity. Try going to a zoo and renaming the animals.

All this happened on the sixth day (Friday), the same day God created the wild beasts, the cattle, and the creeping things. Adam gave names to the wild beasts, the birds, and the domestic animals, but apparently, not to the sea creatures, the fish or things that crawled. But creation was not yet complete. The reason for Adam's assignment to name the animals and birds seemed to be for Adam to realize



he was alone. As he named them, he understood they all had mates and he didn't, *but for Adam there was not found a helper suitable for him*. He had not lived long enough to be lonely, but now he knew that, as a human being, he was alone.

Genesis 2:21-22

The unique creation of the woman is described but not explained. Why Eve was created from a rib of Adam is unknown. Of course, this does not mean men have, or should have, one less rib than women (as some have suggested). If a man had a rib surgically removed today, it would not affect the number of ribs his children would have, since that is determined by the genetic code of his DNA. Although the word *rib* never occurs again in the Bible, the Apostle Paul confirmed this as a factual event, when he said, *For man does not originate from woman, but woman from man...* (1 Corinthians 11:8-9).

Verse 18 tells us she was a helper suitable (literally, “a helper corresponding to him” or “a corresponding helper” or “a counterpart”) for the man. This is probably best described in Proverbs 31.

Genesis 2:23

Adam's recognition, *This is now bone of my bones, and flesh of my flesh*, is not some romantic exhortation, as many preachers have claimed. This is merely a statement of Adam recognizing his own likeness in the woman. In Genesis 1:27, we read that *God created man in His own image, in the image of God He created him; male and female He created them*. Apparently, neither males nor females, by themselves, represent the image of God. At any rate, what God had in mind for mankind was for humanity to be represented by two similar, yet very different, creations.

Genesis 2:24

This is not a command to Adam and Eve, they had no mother or father to leave. Moses is interjecting an inspired comment about what creates marriage, having *a wife*. There are three things involved:

- The first is leaving. It is the man who takes the initiative to leave his mother and father. A male who is supported by his parents is still a boy and not ready for manhood and the taking of a wife.
- The second requirement is to be joined to his wife. This does not define sexual relations. The word *דָּבַק* (*dabaq*), here translated *joined* (KJV *cleave*), has the idea of clinging to or keeping close to, not sexual relations. So the second requirement is to cling to his wife in close relationship instead of to his parents.
- The third requirement is to establish a one-flesh relationship. This is about establishing a sexual intimacy, but notice that, even though they were also commanded to *be fruitful and multiply* (1:28), bearing children was not a requirement for marriage, sexual relations were.

Genesis 2:25

Notice that the author now, in verses 24 and 25, considers Eve to be Adam's *wife*. It's true, the word *אִשָּׁה* (*ishshah*) can be translated as a *wife* or a *woman*. Strong lists these (among many infrequent translations) as the major translation of the word: “wife (278), wives (105), woman (204), women (103).” Nonetheless, *אִשָּׁה* (*ishshah*) is the normal word used throughout the Old Testament for *wife*. It is, therefore, safe to say that Eve was considered to be Adam's wife at this time.

We are not told that Adam and Eve had sexual relations until after the Fall (see 4:1). So, although sex is part of marriage and consummates marriage, having sexual relations does not initiate or define marriage. Malachi 2:14 says, the *wife of your youth...is your companion and your wife by covenant*. Eve was created to be Adam's companion, and his statement about her is a covenant. Marriage, then, begins with a covenant. Living together, without an officially recognized covenant, is not marriage.

The statement, that they *were both naked and were not ashamed*, sets the stage for chapter three. The greatest moral drama of the world is about to take place, and it began with naked unashamed humans. The fact that the author tells us they were *not ashamed* assumes that under the post-fall conditions we live in today, they would have been. In Leviticus 18, illicit sexual activity is defined nine times as *uncovering the nakedness* of someone. So Adam and Eve were sinless, married, naked, and not ashamed. But all that was about to change.

Applications from Genesis 2

1. Never compromise any author's intended meaning of a text of the Bible for the theory of evolution. Genesis clearly says that creation was completed on the sixth day. All changes in animal and plant life are adaptations to their surroundings, not one kind of creature evolving into another kind of creature. Everything we observe in the universe is complete. There is no observation of anything changing into some different kind of thing.
2. *The sabbath was made for man, and not man for the sabbath* (Mark 2:27). It becomes very hard to prove that the church is commanded to make a particular day of the week a rest day. And going to church on Sunday (or Saturday, the sabbath) is a lot of work. It hardly meets the qualifications of a sabbath day. What we actually see among godly Christian people in the church, the body of Christ, is that *one person regards one day above another, another regards every day alike* (Romans 1:5). Nevertheless, a day of rest is part of the creation model (Genesis 2:3).
3. Marriage begins with a publically recognized covenant that includes:
 - a. Leaving the financial, psychological, and emotional attachment to our parents
 - b. Clinging to a close relationship with a member of the opposite sex
 - c. Having sexual relations with that person

Questions from Genesis 2

1. The command to keep the sabbath day as a day of rest was first given
 - A. After God created the world in six days
 - B. Between creation and the giving of the Mosaic Law at Mount Sinai
 - C. At Mount Sinai
2. Which is true?
 - A. All plants were created on the third day
 - B. Some plants were created on the sixth day
 - C. Some plants were only created as seeds on the third day
3. The phrase *man became a living being* means
 - A. Man became a personal being
 - B. Man became a spiritual being
 - C. Man became a being in the image of God
4. When Adam said of Eve, *This is now bone of my bones, and flesh of my flesh*, he meant
 - A. He was physically attracted to her
 - B. She was physically like him
 - C. She was physically taken from his bones and flesh
5. *They shall become one flesh* means that marriage includes
 - A. Sex
 - B. Companionship
 - C. Having children

Answers: (1) B (Exodus 16:29). (2) C (Genesis 2:5). (3) A. (4) B. (5) A.

Genesis 3

Chapter 1 is the creation of the universe, ending in man.

Chapter 2 is the creation of man, ending in marriage.

Chapter 3 is the sin of the man and the woman, ending in their fall.



Genesis 3:1

The serpent was apparently an attractive creature, who was able to rise and move in an upright (cobra-like) position before it was cursed to crawl on its *belly* (3:14). It may have spoken to Eve from such a stance or from a tree. The word *crafty* [אָרוּם (*arum*)] can mean, *shrewd*, or *sensible*. This is not necessarily a bad word. Solomon used a form of this word when he said wisdom would give *prudence* [a form of אָרוּם (*arum*)] *to the naive* (Proverbs 1:4). But as a matter of fact, the word is usually used in a negative way. For example, through Jeremiah, God said,

For My people are foolish, they know Me not; they are stupid children and have no understanding. They are shrewd [אָרוּם (*arum*)] *to do evil, but to do good they do not know* (Jeremiah 4:22).

The personality of the animal itself was shrewd, and Satan added a morality to the serpent's personality. Satan possessed and spoke through the serpent. But the Bible does not actually reveal that it is Satan until 4,000 years later when we are told in Revelation 12:9 about *the serpent of old who is called the devil and Satan, who deceives the whole world*. Eve apparently did not know animals could not talk, because she was not alarmed about a talking snake, nor did she suspect it was possessed by the devil. That probably means they were only in the Garden of Eden a short amount of time.

Genesis 3:2-3

It seems that Adam and Eve were not together when the serpent talked to Eve. She clarified the serpent's question with her understanding of God's only restrictive command, which had been passed along to her from Adam. It is not clear if Eve repeated the command correctly. Most say she didn't because she added the restriction *or touch it* from the command to *not eat from it*. But there are three possibilities:

1. She added the "or touch it" restriction.
2. Adam miscommunicated it to her.
3. God actually gave them the "or touch it" command, but it was not recorded earlier.

Genesis 3:4-5

This is the second time, and the only other recorded time, that the serpent spoke to Eve. He mixed

- The truth (*your eyes will be opened...knowing good and evil*)
- With a lie (*You surely will not die*)
- Implied that God had evil selfish intentions (*God knows...your eyes will be opened*) and
- Indicated that God wanted to hold them back by preventing them from being like Him (*knowing good and evil*).

Genesis 3:6

The term *with her* [עִמָּה (*amah*)] sounds like she ate the fruit in Adam's presence. Apparently, she was tempted alone but sinned in the presence of Adam. Many say Eve's temptation was along the same lines as Christ's temptation and the categories given in 1 John 2:16 (*the lust of the flesh, and the lust of the eyes, and the pride of life* – KJV). But that seems a bit of a force-fit. The only one that is clearly the same is *the lust of the eyes*. What tempted Eve was that she saw no personal value in God's imposed restriction. It did not protect anyone, and it kept her from beauty, food, and wisdom.

Another question that comes up here is whether there was a difference between Eve's sin and Adam's sin. Paul makes two comments on this:

- *It was not Adam who was deceived, but **the woman being deceived**, fell into transgression (1 Timothy 2:14).*
- *But I am afraid that, as **the serpent deceived Eve** by his craftiness, your minds will be led astray from the simplicity and purity of devotion to Christ (2 Corinthians 11:3).*

Deception is defined here as being *led astray*. And Paul said this happened to Eve but not to Adam. Certainly, Paul was not declaring Adam innocent. Actually, he seemed to lay the responsibility on Adam, when he wrote, *through **one man** sin entered into the world, and death through sin, and so death spread to all men (Romans 5:12)*. There are (at least) three possibilities:

1. Ryrie writes, "**Eve was deceived; Adam ate knowingly** (cf. 1 Tim. 2:14)." Eve was convinced that what she did was not wrong. Adam knew it was wrong but did it anyway. This seems most likely.
2. **They ate the fruit for different reasons.** Eve ate it because the fruit was desirable. Adam ate it because she gave it to him. True, but they both disobeyed God.
3. **Eve was deceived by the devil and Adam was deceived by Eve.** Satan's path to Adam was through the woman. Possibly, women are more easily deceived by Satan than men, and men are more easily deceived by women, than women are by men.

Genesis 3:7

When Adam and Eve disobeyed God, they committed the first human sin. This began the process of death, for themselves and for all living things.

- Romans 5:14, *Nevertheless death reigned from Adam until Moses, even over those who had not sinned in the likeness of the offense of Adam.*
- 1 Corinthians 15:22, *For as in Adam all die, so also in Christ all will be made alive.*
- Romans 8:20-21, *For the creation was subjected to futility, not willingly, but because of Him who subjected it, in hope that the creation itself also will be set free from its slavery to corruption.*
- Hebrews 9:27, *And inasmuch as it is appointed for men to die once and after this comes judgment.*

This is another area where the Scripture eliminates any possibility of any kind of evolution. Evolution requires the death of creatures and prehistoric humans for millions of years before Adam and Eve. The Bible says death began with Adam and Eve's sin. If there was a gradual evolution of pre-humans before Adam and Eve (all of whom died out in spite of them supposedly being more able to survive than apes), it would quite arbitrary to say Adam and Eve became the dividing line between pre-humans and humans.

Eve thought the food would make her wise, but that's not what happened. Wisdom is never attained by disobeying the Word of God. It is the fear of God, and the knowledge of God, that is the beginning of wisdom (Proverbs 1:7; 2:5; Hosea 6:6). What Adam and Eve got was what the tree gave – the knowledge of good and evil. And that created in them a conscience, *in that they show the work of the Law written in their hearts, their conscience bearing witness and their thoughts alternately accusing or else defending them (Romans 2:15)*.

It is interesting that the result of eating the fruit was *they knew that they were naked; and they sewed fig leaves together and made themselves loin coverings*. The shame of nakedness is unique to humans. All animals are naked in that they are not clothed, nor are their loins covered. Yet they experience no shame about that. Animals have no concept of "nakedness." Obtaining the knowledge of good and evil included the idea that it was evil to be naked and good to be clothed, at least enough to

cover their sexual differences. So it seems that the knowledge of good and evil either created the sex drive or perverted it to our present condition. If we were dropped into the Garden of Eden, we would be aware of our nakedness and immediately seek a covering. And although Adam and Eve were commanded to multiply, which included having sexual intercourse, we are not told they had sex until after the Fall (4:1).

Genesis 3:8-11

Let's make a few unrelated observations here:

- Since they could hear God walking, He had a form that walked and made noise. This is further evidence that this was God the Son, the One we call Jesus (John 1:18; Colossians 1:15).
- It was *in the cool of the day*, so the warming (greenhouse) effect of the water or water vapor above the atmosphere did not keep the day from becoming cool in the evening.
- Their sin not only changed the relationship between Adam and Eve, it broke their fellowship with God. Now, instead of talking with Him, they hid from Him.
- God asked three questions to which He already knew the answers. They were not for information but for the revelation of sin, the conviction of sin, and revelation that it cannot be covered up.

Genesis 3:12-13

Four observations:

- Neither Adam nor Eve lied about what they did.
- Their sin was only against God. They did nothing against one another. The original sin had nothing to do with hurting someone else.
- Both blamed someone else for what they did. Actually, Adam seemed to blame both Eve and God (*The woman whom You gave to be with me*).
- The only thing God took into consideration was their disobedience to a literal understanding of His command, not their reasons for it. The fact that Eve felt she had a good reason to break God's command, and both Adam and Eve blamed someone else for it, did not enter into God's judgment. He judged them for not keeping His command – understood literally.

Genesis 3:14-15

First of all, notice this whole sentence is addressed to the serpent. The serpent is compared to the cattle and the beasts of the field. His curse will be greater than theirs. But because the serpent tempted Eve, he was cursed in four ways:

1. He would crawl on his belly.
2. He would eat dust (not as food but as a result of being in the dust).
3. There would be mutual hatred (*enmity*) between the snake and the woman and that will extend to their offspring. Snakes and people will not like each other. Notice, this was not true of the other animals until after Noah's Flood (Genesis 9:2).
4. Snakes would attack the offspring of the woman (*bruise him on the heel*), but the offspring of the woman would still have dominion over the snake (*he shall bruise you on the head*).

Nearly every evangelical commentary I read, and nearly every message I hear, about this passage claims that this is a prophecy about the clash between Christ and Satan, where Christ ultimately bruises Satan on the head. Would someone please tell me where on earth this comes from? There is nothing in the context anywhere about a conflict between Christ and Satan. Moses clearly did not have such a thing in mind. If this was God's meaning, we can only declare it to be so if we have some other passage that says so. And there is none. Not in the Old Testament. Not in the New Testament. This is not a prophecy. It's a curse. It's not something that will happen somewhere in the

future, it would happen as soon as they were thrown out of the garden. Of course, Christ defeated Satan on the cross, but there is no way to determine that this passage predicts that.

Genesis 3:16

There are two curses unique to the woman:

1. Multiplied pain in childbirth
2. The conflicting desire for a husband who will rule over her

The word for *desire* [תְּשׁוּקָה (*teshuqah*)] comes from the idea of “longing for” and is always translated *desire*. But it is a very rare word, and there are several more common Hebrew words for *desire*. Also, this word [תְּשׁוּקָה (*teshuqah*)] is used in Genesis 4:7. When God told Cain, *sin is crouching at the door; and its desire [תְּשׁוּקָה (*teshuqah*)] is for you*, here it is sin that desires to rule over Cain.

So there are (at least) three possible interpretations for the phrase *yet your desire will be for your husband*:

1. You (the woman) desired or had desire for your husband. Allen Ross writes, “It is better to translate the verse, ‘Your desire *was* for your husband.’ Having overstepped her bounds in this, she would now be mastered by him” (“Bible Knowledge Commentary”).
2. You (the woman) will have a desire, in the sense of an attraction, for your husband, in spite of the fact that he will give you children that will *greatly multiply your pain in childbirth*.
3. You (the woman) will desire to rule over your husband. Instead, *he will rule over you*.

The third option seems most likely.

Genesis 3:17-19

The reason for Adam’s curse was not just that he listened to his wife but that he listened to the voice of his wife instead of listening to the voice of God. It seems that a man often feels justified in violating the Word of God if his wife approves it or suggests it. Examples might include doing nothing about an older child living in sin, spending money they don’t have, or participating in gossip.

The curse itself is twofold—toil and death. Not just work but exhausting labor in order to survive. And he wouldn’t survive. Adam was to be a vegetarian (*you will eat the plants of the field*), but the field would not just grow eatable plants. It would also grow both thorns and thistles.

The specifics of these curses were just for Adam and Eve. For example, Noah did not have to be a vegetarian and Abraham was a shepherd, not a farmer of fields. He did not have to hoe out thorns and thistles. But the application is to all of mankind. Women have pain in childbirth and struggle to rule over a husband. Men work to survive, and it will be an uphill battle. And both will die and return to dust. Allen Ross put it this way: “No matter how hard people try to do away with male dominion, agonizing labor, painful childbearing, and death, these evils will continue because sin is present. They are fruits of sin” (“Bible Knowledge Commentary”).

Genesis 3:20-21

Adam now gave his wife the specific name Eve [חַוְוָה (*Chavvah*)]. The word means *living, life, or life producer*. The reason Adam gave for the name is a pretty obvious prediction (not a prophecy) that she would be the mother of all future human life.

Then God made garments of animal skin. They were not for warmth because the earth was still a tropical climate under the suspended canopy of water or water vapor. The purpose seems to be to

replace the fig leaf loin covering Adam and Eve made. Notice, this implies the killing of some animals, and possibly the extinction of a certain kind of animal, if they had yet to reproduce.

Genesis 3:22a

This is fascinating in several ways:

- First of all, it is further evidence that when man was created in the image and likeness of God, it did not include his moral character. It is here at the Fall, not at creation, that humans become like God in their knowledge of good and evil.
- Next, there is the intriguing question, “How could Adam and Eve make a decision to eat or not eat the fruit if they did not yet have the knowledge of good and evil?” In the garden, they just had
 1. A command from God
 2. A temptation from the devil
 3. A free will to choose

They did not need to know about good and evil itself, only obedience and disobedience. Obedience does not require the understanding of good and evil. For example, a small child can learn, “Only eat one cookie before supper, or you will be sent to your room.” This involves obedience without any concept of why eating one cookie is good or eating a dozen of them is bad.

- Then there is the question, “What does it mean *the man has become like one of Us?*” With the eating of the fruit, they elevated their moral responsibility to a whole new level. They went from simple obedience/disobedience to the knowledge of good and evil itself. Now they had God’s understanding of good and evil (*Us* probably refers to the Trinity). God had the understanding of good and evil because God is good, and what He does is always good (by definition), and He does not change. But Adam and Eve didn’t know that, since they were not the source of good. They only knew obedience and disobedience. But when they ate the fruit, they picked up God’s understanding of good and evil (*written in their hearts* – Romans 2:15).

Genesis 3:22b-24

It was now imperative that man not be able to live forever. There were at least two reasons for that:

1. God said *for in the day that you eat from it you will surely die* (2:17). God’s character requires judgment of sin. Allowing them to live would violate the Word of God and the character of God.
2. If Adam and Eve were allowed to live, there would be no hope for their redemption. To live on in sin is not redemption. Only in the death of their physical bodies, made of dust, could they be resurrected to a glorified body (Daniel 12:13; 1 Corinthians 15:19-22).

God also stationed an angel to guard the tree of life, to make sure they couldn’t return to eat from it and live forever. The Garden of Eden probably existed until it was destroyed by the Flood at the time of Noah, about 1500 years later.

Applications from Genesis 3

1. Chapter 3 is a perfect case study of temptation and sin because neither can be blamed on environment or heredity. Adam and Eve did not have abusive parents, a poor upbringing, financial poverty, bad influences, or even a sin nature. They had a command from God, a temptation from Satan, and a free will to choose. Although Scripture makes it abundantly clear that God is sovereign, Genesis 3 is all about man's free will to choose.
2. Satan's strategy in the temptation of Eve was to turn a "God has said" into a "Has God said?" Satan changed a command of God into a question for discussion. The focus of the discussion was on what God had restricted. It is interesting that Satan did not want to discuss God's positive commands, to *cultivate and keep* the garden or *be fruitful and multiply, and fill the earth, and subdue it; and rule over the fish of the sea and over the birds of the sky and over every living thing that moves on the earth*. Instead, Satan focused on God's only restriction. The idea is that personal restrictions, which limit our pleasure and development, are bad. Therefore, a good God would not impose such restrictions.
3. God said Adam and Eve were now in the place of *knowing good and evil*. That means they knew good, and therefore, its perversion—evil. Good is what God is, and evil is anything contrary to that. A thing and a good thing are the same thing. A broken thing is a bad thing, but it cannot exist without a good thing to break. For example, if I say, "I can't drive you home because my car is in the shop," you understand that I have a car. If I have a broken car, it assumes I have a car, which was once not broken. Adam and Eve went from knowing obedience and its contrast disobedience, to knowing good and its perversion—evil.

Questions from Genesis 3

1. The serpent's first comment to Eve was basically
 - A. A question
 - B. A statement
 - C. An accusation
2. The serpent's second comment to Eve was basically
 - A. A question
 - B. A statement
 - C. An accusation
3. 1 John 2:16 says, *For all that is in the world, the lust of the flesh and the lust of the eyes and the boastful pride of life, is not from the Father, but is from the world*. Which one is the same as Eve's reason for eating the fruit?
 - A. *The lust of the flesh*
 - B. *The lust of the eye*
 - C. *The boastful pride of life*
 - D. All of the above
4. Adam's curse was toil and death because
 - A. He listened to the voice of his wife
 - B. He ate of the fruit
 - C. He was now held to the standard of knowing good and evil
5. True or False? Because of his sin, Adam was cursed to work.
6. True or False? An angel guarded the way to the garden so Adam and Eve could not enter it.

Answers: (1) A. (2) C. (3) B. (4) B. (5) False. (6) False. He guarded the way to the tree of life.

Genesis 4

Genesis 4 is about Adam and Eve's first three children. Seth becomes the forefather of Noah, so only his line endures. We are all descendants of Adam through Seth. But the first drama is the historical account of the conflict and the consequences of the clash between the first two brothers, Cain and Abel.

Genesis 4:1-2

This is the first reference to specific sexual relations in the Bible (literally, *Adam knew Eve his wife*). The sentence covers the whole nine months between the conception and the birth of Cain. Literally, Eve said, *I have gotten [acquired, or bought] a man with the Lord*. She was giving credit to the Lord for her conception by Adam and safe delivery of her firstborn. The name *Cain* means *gotten one* [very similar to the word for *bought*]. The name *Abel* has the same basic Hebrew letters as the word for *vanity* (see Romans 8:20). Verse 2 then sets the stage for the first murder. By trade, Abel was a shepherd and Cain was a farmer.

Genesis 4:3-5

We are told nothing here, or anywhere else in the Bible, about any prior instruction given by God for their offerings (it's the word for *offering* not the word for *sacrifice*) or even that they were to bring offerings to the Lord. Nonetheless, these are the first recorded offerings given to God. Both brothers clearly thought they were doing a good thing, so Cain became angry when his was not accepted.

Most commentators downplay the fact that one was an animal offering and the other a vegetable offering, and clearly, there was more to it than that. But, even though a vegetable offering is not necessarily inappropriate (Leviticus 2:1, 4, 14, 15), it is also true that *without shedding of blood there is no forgiveness* (Hebrews 9:22), which is why Christ's blood paid for the sin nature we received from Adam (Romans 5:9). So it seems unlikely that this did not have something to do with the animal/blood offering being regarded by God. What we know from Genesis 4 is that God had regard for *Abel and for his offering* but not for *Cain and for his offering*.

There were two elements involved—the man and the offering. The personal element is seen in Cain's angry response. Isaiah 1:11-18 tells us that offering a sacrifice without a clean heart is not acceptable to God. Hebrews 11:4 says, *By faith Abel offered to God a better sacrifice than Cain, through which he obtained the testimony that he was righteous*. So apparently, Cain's faith had something to do with it. Nonetheless, the fact remains that each brought an offering from their labor, and only the animal/blood sacrifice was acceptable.

Genesis 4:6-7

Cain was angry because God was not pleased with what he thought would please God. So God gave Cain a chance to *do well*. But that meant he had to humble himself, and it probably meant that he had to purchase or request an animal offering from his brother. God warned him he was on the edge of falling off into sin. He had not presented an acceptable offering, but he had not yet disobeyed the Word of God. Sin is here described two ways:

1. *Sin is crouching at the door*. Sin is personalized into the form of a demon or an animal, crouching, ready to pounce on Cain.
2. *Its desire is for you*. The word *desire* here is the same Hebrew word used in Genesis 3:16 for the curse on the woman desiring a husband who would rule over her.

Cain's assignment was to *master* (it's also the word for *rule over*) the temptation that was trying to master him. It is interesting that God did not tell him that there was something he could do to make the sin temptation go away. This is a microcosm of the spiritual warfare with our sin nature. It wants to master (*rule over*) us. We can't make it go away, but we can master (*rule over*) it.

Genesis 4:8-10

It is not clear what Cain told Abel, but this was not a crime of passion or manslaughter. Cain premeditated his brother's murder. As with most sins, Cain's sin of murder is accompanied by lying. It seems that Cain did not know that God was omnipresent and omniscient. Somehow, he thought he could deceive God into believing that he didn't know where Abel was. The Apostle John gave us a little more perspective on this.

...not as Cain, who was of the evil one and slew his brother. And for what reason did he slay him? Because his deeds were evil, and his brother's were righteous (1 John 3:12).

John told us that it is not just the murder that was evil, but that Cain's deeds were evil before the murder. He committed the murder *because his deeds were evil*. Evil deeds come from evil thoughts.

Genesis 4:11-15

This is clearly not in the same age as Noah or Moses, both of whom were told to exercise capital punishment on murderers. God not only does not put Cain to death, He does not let anyone else do it either. God gave Cain two curses:

1. *When you cultivate the ground, it will no longer yield its strength to you*
2. *You will be a vagrant and a wanderer on the earth*

This is not a curse of starvation. Food was abundantly available on the earth. Until the Flood, the earth remained a benevolent tropical jungle. But Cain would have to eat what he found, not raise what he wanted. And even if he could find enough food near home, he was cursed to be *a vagrant and a wanderer*. He understood that to mean he was also driven away from God.

Cain's response is not completely clear. *My punishment is too great to bear* (NASB, KJV also uses *punishment*). But this word can be translated as *My iniquity is too great to bear*. אָוֹן (*avon*) is translated *iniquity* more than it is translated *punishment*. Although it's not clear, this may be a show of remorse on Cain's part. That would also account for God's merciful addition to his curse, some sort of sign that promised a seven-fold punishment on anyone who killed Cain (4:24). It's also interesting that Cain seems to be projecting into the future when there will be other people on the earth. We do not know how many daughters Adam and Eve had, or when they had them, but Cain's fear of future harm was either from his sisters or the future offspring and descendants of Adam and Eve.

Genesis 4:16-24

Here we have the first account of the formation of a society. Many years have passed, and Cain has taken a wife (a sister, niece, or grandniece). Ryrie adds, "Since Adam's and Eve's genetic systems had no mutant genes in them, such a marriage would not be dangerous as it is today."

Cain's offspring and Adam's offspring multiply on the earth. Cain, and some of them, built a village. So Cain did not wander forever, or very far. Apparently, Adam and Eve and their extended family lived in a different village. In Cain's village, *in the land of Nod east of Eden*, we see the first bigamy, the first cattle ranches, the first musical instruments, and the first technology. But we also see that sin did not end with Cain. Lamech killed someone (possibly two people) and threatened *seventy-sevenfold* pay back on anyone seeking revenge.

Genesis 4:25-26

Next, we have a flashback, probably to the time right after Cain killed Abel. Adam and Eve also had daughters (5:4), who are not named, numbered, or listed. The next listed birth is Seth. His name means “appointed one.”

The text says, *Then men began to call upon the name of the LORD*. It is hard to know what that means, but it seems to be a good thing. In some way, they attempted to establish a regular fellowship with God. What’s interesting is, apparently, people had not done so before Seth’s son Enosh was born.

Applications from Genesis 4

1. The sex drive we experience today is a perversion of what God first gave Adam and Eve. The statement in Genesis 4:1, *the man had relations with [literally, knew] his wife Eve*, may mean this is the first time they had sexual relations, although it could be first time it resulted in Eve becoming pregnant. Today, the sex drive not only fills the earth with people, it fills the earth with fornication, adultery, unwanted pregnancies, single parents, divorce, jealousy, hatred, and disease. Our sex drive just may be the single most misery-producing pleasure on the planet. We should never think that our sex drive is “normal” or “given by God,” as if it were the only part of creation that was not perverted by the Fall. *For the creation was subjected to futility... and corruption* (Romans 8:20-21), including our sex drive.
2. The Word of God trumps everything else. Cain was angry because God was not pleased with what Cain thought would please God. Cain thought God would be pleased with a vegetable sacrifice until God said He wasn’t. We can ultimately only know about what pleases God when He tells us. In other words, the Word of God trumps everything. If we think something is good and God says it isn’t, then it isn’t. The Israelite’s conscience may have told them *you shall love your neighbor as yourself*, but their conscience would not tell them *You shall not...wear a garment upon you of two kinds of material mixed together* (Leviticus 19:18-19). For that, they needed to obey the Word of God. If your conscience tells you it’s okay to commit acts of fornication, homosexuality, divorce/remarriage, or lying, then *sin is crouching at the door; and its desire is for you, but you must master it* – because God says so.

Questions from Genesis 4

1. From Genesis 4, we learn that Cain was angry because
 - A. God liked animal sacrifices better than vegetable sacrifices
 - B. His younger brother pleased God, and he didn’t
 - C. Abel had more faith than Cain
 - D. All of the above
2. Cain lied to God about
 - A. What he had done
 - B. Knowing where his brother was
 - C. Thinking he should be his brother’s keeper
3. True or False? Cain must have married his sister.
4. True or False? After his sin and curse, Cain spent most of his life living in a city.
5. True or False? Today’s Arabs are descendants of Seth.

Answers: (1) A. (B and C would only be known from Hebrews 11) (2) B. (3) False. It could have been a niece or grand-niece. (4) True (4:17). (5) True. Everyone is.

Genesis 5

Chapter 1 begins with the creation of the universe, ending in man.

Chapter 2 begins with the creation of man, ending in marriage.

Chapter 3 begins with the sin of the man, ending in the Fall.

Chapter 4 begins with the conception of Cain (whose line terminates at the Flood), ending with the conception of Seth (whose line endures).

Chapter 5 begins with Seth (the line of those who *began to call upon the name of the LORD*), ending with Noah and his three sons.

Genesis 5:1-2

The reference to a record of *generations* occurs throughout the book of Genesis (see 2:4; 6:9; 10:1; 11:10, 27; 25:12, 19; 36:1; 37:2). The addition here of the word סֵפֶר (*saphar*), meaning *book* or *document*, may mean that Moses used another written source, or several other sources, when he composed the book of Genesis. Nevertheless, whatever he used, the final inspired-of-God composition is that of Moses (Matthew 19:4-8; Luke 16:29-31; 24:27, 44; John 5:46). Moses began chapter 5 with a summary statement of the creation of man, as he summarized all of God's creation in 2:1-4.

Genesis 5:3-32

Ten patriarchs are listed here. Moses gives us four details of all ten:

1. The name of the patriarch
2. The age of patriarch at the time his first son was born
3. How long each patriarch lived after his first son was born
4. The age of the patriarch at his death

The average age of the patriarchs at their death was 912 years. Seven of them lived over 900 years, plus one lived 895 years. Since the longevity declined quickly after the Flood, we can conclude that the likely cause was the protection provided by the water (or water vapor) canopy created on Day Two. After the Flood, the life span declined exponentially until it reached *seventy years, or if due to strength, eighty years* at the time of Moses (Psalm 90:10).

Between creation and the Flood, 1,656 years elapsed. Many have suggested that there are gaps in the genealogies, therefore, there could be more time involved, although they point out that, at most, this would be thousands, not millions, of years. Those suggesting gaps in the genealogies do not get their information from Genesis 5 but from the secular dating of things like the Egyptian pyramids and other biblical genealogies that have gaps in them.

The problem with this idea is that it is only true of genealogies, not chronologies. To say "Jesus is the son of David" or "David is the father of Jesus" is true as a genealogical statement. The assumption is that not all forefathers are necessarily included in a genealogy, and the Hebrews had no word for grandfather, great-grandfather, etc. But in Genesis 5, we have a chronology, not just a genealogy. We do not simply have a list of father and sons but the specific ages when these fathers had these sons and how long each lived before they, in turn, had a son. One has to disturb the author's clear intention to assume the chronology is incomplete.

There are two patriarchs who receive special attention in this chapter. One is Enoch. Two times the text tells us *he walked with God*. Then he was raptured, and *he was not, for God took him*. This only happened one other time recorded in Scripture, and that was when Elijah was taken up in a *chariot of fire* and a *whirlwind* (2 Kings 2:11).

The other special mention is that of Lamech, the father of Noah. When Noah was born, Lamech said, *This one will give us rest from our work and from the toil of our hands arising from the ground which the LORD has cursed.* It is not clear how to understand this.

Actually, this may not be a prophecy at all but just a statement of Lamech's hope. Clearly, if anything, the Flood increased the results of the curse, with shorter life spans, more severe weather patterns, and the extinction of many animals due to the geological upheaval and the removal of the water (or water vapor) canopy. It is possible that God meant it as an ultimate salvation of mankind in the future by Christ (as Ryrie said), but this is certainly not something Lamech had in mind.

Verse 32 says, *Noah was five hundred years old, and Noah became the father of Shem, Ham, and Japheth*, who were born during the 120 years Noah was building the ark. This introduces the next four chapters about the global Flood. The Flood is the second greatest event in Genesis (second only to creation). It is also the second greatest event in the formation of the world in which we live.

Applications from Genesis 5

1. The severity of sin is seen in the judgments of God. After the original sin, Adam and Eve were condemned to laborious work for Adam, painful childbirth for Eve, and death for both of them. Chapter five is the chapter of fulfillment of God's warning *you will surely die* (2:17). Eight times in chapter five it says *and he died*.
2. Adam and Eve and their children were still in a world that allowed people to live for around 900 years. It was a tropical earth, filled with benevolent animals and edible fruits and vegetables. Of course, because of sin, thorns and thistles grew as abundantly as the fruits and vegetables, so men had to work hard. Nonetheless, they were a whole lot healthier than we are today. But this world was about to be wiped out because of the sin of the antediluvian (pre-flood) people. Today, we still work hard, plus we get diseases that cause us to live less than 10% as long as they lived, plus we have the problems caused by the curse of dissimilar languages (chapter 11). The groaning of the natural world should draw our attention to the consequences of violating the character of a holy God.

Questions from Genesis 5

1. As to the age of the antediluvian patriarchs when they died,
 - A. The youngest was the father of the oldest
 - B. The oldest was the father of the youngest
 - C. Three of them died before the age of 900
2. Which is true?
 - A. Chapter 5 is a genealogy that leaves out some antediluvian patriarchs.
 - B. Chapter 5 is a genealogy that includes all antediluvian patriarchs.
 - C. Chapter 5 is a chronology that leaves out some antediluvian patriarchs.
 - D. Chapter 5 is a chronology that includes all antediluvian patriarchs.
 - E. B and D
 - F. A and C
3. In New Testament terms, the statement *Enoch walked with God* means Enoch
 - A. Was saved
 - B. Became mature
 - C. Worshiped God

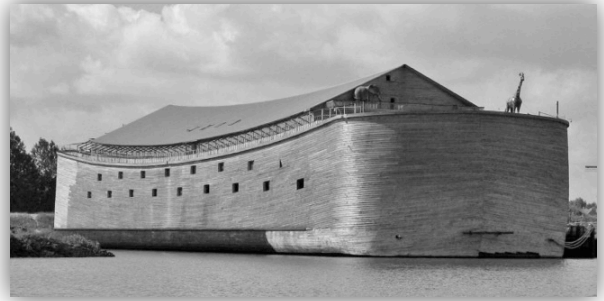
4. Hebrews 9:27 tells us that *it is appointed for men to die once and after this comes judgment*. How does that relate to the fact that *Enoch walked with God; and he was not, for God took him* (5:24)?
 - A. Enoch will be one of the two witnesses of Revelation, and he will die then.
 - B. Enoch was one of those raised when Jesus rose from the dead (Matthew 27:52), who will then have to die a natural death.
 - C. Enoch is an exception to Hebrews 9:27.
5. What is the most probable way that Moses wrote Genesis?
 - A. God probably spoke the words and Moses wrote them down.
 - B. Moses probably referred to already written documents and then composed the book.
 - C. Moses probably wrote down words that God put in his mind.

Answers: (1) B. (A and C would be true if Enoch had died). (2) E. (3) B. (In the New Testament, *Walk* usually indicates maturity beyond salvation—Ephesians 4:1.) (4) C. (That’s the point to his being taken, Elijah’s translation, and the Rapture of 1 Thessalonians 4:13-18. They were exceptional.) (5) B. (Divine inspiration includes the author’s composition, and possibly Moses used other sources, see 5:1; 6:9; and 10:1.)

Genesis 6

Genesis 6:1-4

First, let's notice that these *daughters of men were beautiful* – apparently not Neanderthals. And it was not just that the *sons of God* thought they were beautiful, rather they recognized the objective fact of their beauty. The antediluvian races were apparently good-looking people.



Over the years, there have been (at least) four different suggestions given to interpret the *sons of God* who took wives from the *daughters of men*:

1. They were fallen angels who came to earth and had sexual relations with women, resulting in the giant Nephilim people. This is the oldest view we have record of (codex Alexandrinus). The only support for this idea comes from Job 1:6 where angels are called the *sons of God*.

But this view violates Matthew 22:30 – *For in the resurrection they neither marry nor are given in marriage, but are like angels in heaven*. This also contradicts one of the most basic rules of interpretation, that the context determines the meaning. It is not legitimate to take a word or phrase from one context and insert it into a different context, especially when there is a meaning supplied by the immediate context. Also, the Nephilim (meaning “to fall,” i.e., to fall upon opponents) were on the earth before the sons of God married the daughters of men.

2. They were ungodly kings, the royalty of the day taking whatever woman they wanted. This is also very old (Targum Onkelos).

But, although this is possible, there is no reason to limit this to the royalty. And how do we know the earth had developed a royalty?

3. These were men possessed by fallen angels.

But this is just a speculation. Again, this is possible, but there is no mention of fallen angels, bad angels, demons, or evil spirits in Genesis. The only use of the word “angel” in Genesis is *the angel of the Lord* and the good angels who delivered Lot from Sodom and appeared to Jacob.

4. They were men from the “line of Seth” (Diestel, *Geschichte* p. 499). In other words, men from the godly line of Seth married women from the ungodly line of Cain.

This best fits the context. Moses had just presented the Cain line in chapter 4 and the Seth line in chapter 5. Chapter 6 begins with the statement, *Now it came about, when men began to multiply on the face of the land, and daughters were born to them*. So the subject continues to be men and their offspring on the earth. There is no reason to insert the idea of bad angels into this. [Calvin wrote, “It was, therefore, base ingratitude in the posterity of Seth, to mingle themselves with the children of Cain.” The *Scofield Reference Bible* says, “Verse 2 marks the breaking down of the separation between the godly line of Seth and the godless line of Cain.”]

Verse 3 indicates that this is an introduction to the account of the Flood (*Then the LORD said, “My Spirit shall not strive with man forever, because he also is flesh; nevertheless his days shall be one hundred and twenty years*). The 120 years is the time between that statement and the Flood. It’s an interlude or a calm before the storm during which Noah would build the ark and have three sons.

Genesis 6:5

Jesus said that, when He returns, the moral situation on the earth will be ...*just like the days of Noah. For as in those days before the flood they were eating and drinking, marrying and giving in marriage, until the day that Noah entered the ark, and they did not understand until the flood came and took them all away; so will the coming of the Son of Man be* (Matthew 24:37-39).

This is often taken to mean that people will be going on, “life as usual,” and not expecting the Second Coming. That’s true. But it is also true that the “life as usual” will be as in the days of Noah when *every intent of the thoughts of his heart was only evil continually*. From verses 11 and 12, we also learn that *the earth was filled with violence...for all flesh had corrupted their way upon the earth*.

Genesis 6:6-7

Here is an interesting glimpse into the heart of God. He was *sorry* [the word נָחַם (*nacham*) can mean *sorry, comforted, or repented*] *that He had made man*. So how could God be *sorry* and *grieved* over what He Himself did?

First of all, we need to understand that God is immutable. He does not change.

- Malachi 3:6, *For I, the LORD, do not change.*
- James 1:17, *...with whom there is no variation or shifting shadow.*
- Hebrews 13:8, *Jesus Christ is the same yesterday and today and forever.*

Next, we need to remember that God is sovereign. He plans all things and then brings them to pass.

- Isaiah 37:26, *Have you not heard? Long ago I did it, From ancient times I planned it. Now I have brought it to pass.*
- Isaiah 48:3, *I declared the former things long ago and they went forth from My mouth, and I proclaimed them. Suddenly I acted, and they came to pass.*
- Ephesians 1:11, *also we have obtained an inheritance, having been predestined according to His purpose who works all things after the counsel of His will,*
- Romans 9:21, *Or does not the potter have a right over the clay, to make from the same lump one vessel for honorable use and another for common use?*

Also, we need to understand that God is a person, not a machine, so He can be grieved and have sorrow. Therefore, God has a plan and a will, but not all His will is in His plan. For example, I may have a plan for what I am going to do today, but that plan does not include everything I want to do today. I will not put all my will in my plan because the best plan for the day includes some things I would rather not do. If I am a teacher and plan to give a test that some students will fail, I will still be sorry and grieved when they fail. When God was sorry (even in the sense of regretful) that He made man, that sorrow/regret was in His plan. Just because it did not take Him by surprise does not mean the sorrow/regret was not real.

But this is also an example of man’s unhindered free will. The antediluvian race was not programmed or manipulated to sin. It was by their own free will choice *that every intent of the thoughts of his heart was only evil continually*. Therefore, they merited the judgment of God. Their choices earned it, and God’s holy character demanded it. God is 100% sovereign, and they were 100% free to make moral choices.

Genesis 6:8-10

What Noah received from God is called חֵן (*chen*), the common word for *grace*. This is the first mention of grace in the Bible, and it does not seem to fit the traditional definition of “unmerited favor.” Of course, we are all sinners, therefore, any favor from God is unmerited. But clearly, the reason Noah received it was because, unlike the others where *every intent of the thoughts of his heart being only evil continually, Noah was a righteous man, blameless in his time; Noah walked with God*. So the context of grace does not sound like it was unmerited. It does not sound arbitrary. It does not sound like the unconditional election of Calvinism (the U of TULIP). It sounds like there were definite conditions that motivated God to give grace to Noah and his family and not give grace to the others.

Genesis 6:11-13

In addition to (and as a result of) the thoughts of the antediluvian people being evil, their actions were violent and corrupt. There is no difference between our thoughts and our deeds. Jesus said, *Either make the tree good and its fruit good, or make the tree bad and its fruit bad; for the tree is known by its fruit* (Matthew 12:33).

Genesis 6:14-16

The ark would be 150 X 25 X 15 meters high. It would be considerably longer but only half as wide as a professional FIFA soccer field. It was to be made of gopher wood, possibly cypress or cedar. It was to have three decks, with several rooms on each deck, the number of rooms is not specified. The



ark was to have a door in the side and a window (or open) area on the top, measuring a cubit in height and running like a gallery around the top edge of the ark. Then the whole ark was to be covered with pitch (probably tar from nearby tar pits) inside and out, obviously to keep it from leaking. Ryrie has the best overall description of the ark: “Although we do not know for certain the length of the cubit mentioned here, later in history it was about 18 inches. A vessel of such dimensions would have a displacement of about 20,000 tons and gross tonnage of about 14,000 tons. Its carrying capacity equaled that of 522 stand-

ard railroad stock cars (each of which can hold 240 sheep). Only 188 cars would be required to hold 45,000 sheep-sized animals, leaving three trains of 104 cars each for food, Noah’s family, and “range” for the animals.

Genesis 6:17-18

The first word of verse 17 is אֲנִי (*vaani*), literally, *I Myself*. With this, God is making it clear that the upcoming Flood will be His own doing. It will be an act of the judgment of God, because violating God’s holiness, not just the way they treated each other, is the sin of the antediluvian people. Also, notice that what God predicts is a catastrophic event, not a supernatural event. So God wants to make it clear that this upcoming global Flood will not just be thought of as a quirk of nature, but a natural disaster that *I Myself* will bring about. But God also confirms to Noah that He will establish His covenant with him, a reference to the rainbow covenant of chapter 9. This includes the preservation of Noah and his wife and his sons and their wives.



Genesis 6:19-22

...through which the world at that time was destroyed, being flooded with water (2 Peter 3:6).

Peter confirmed that this was indeed a global Flood, and it killed *all flesh in which is the breath of life*. There were two exceptions to the death of *all flesh*. One was the animals that were on the ark, and the other was everything in the sea that did not need to breathe air continually. Every kind of creature that could survive in either fresh or salt water did not need to be on the ark. We can assume the rain was all fresh water, as the water (or water vapor) canopy collapsed. We can also assume that the existing sea was salt water and that as both mingled together there were large pockets of both fresh and salt water existing in various places around the earth. For example, the fossil record of the American desert southwest, nowhere near any salt-water sea, has a plentiful record of sea creatures that once lived and died there.



Global Oil Deposits

Also, the global oil deposits assume the death of a multitude of animals at the same time with their bodies trapped under pressure and buried. The natural death of animals gradually, as it happens today and has happened all through history, would never result in our large deposits of oil and natural gas.

As the water (or water vapor) canopy collapsed, its tropical greenhouse effect disappeared. This turned the deluge of the floodwater into hot subtropical water at the earth's equator but also into massive ice formation at the poles. This also meant that the gradual receding of the glaciers caused their own formations, such as the American Great Lakes, as temperatures warmed, and the earth found its new "normal."



This sudden freezing left some animals frozen to death almost immediately. For example, the woolly mammoth is among the most studied of the antediluvian world because of the discovery of frozen carcasses in Siberia and Alaska. They appeared to have been frozen instantly, with tropical vegetation frozen in their stomachs.

Applications from Genesis 6

1. Let's go back to the thought that the *daughters of men were beautiful* – apparently, not Neanderthals. Beauty is not subjective, nor is it just "in the eyes of the beholder." If it were only subjective, we would not sell fashion magazines or pictures of landscapes and waterfalls. Beauty is what we would expect of both men and women being close descendants of Adam and Eve. The idea of an ugly prehistoric man is a mockery of the creation by God of a perfect man and woman.
2. Jesus said that the moral situation on the earth, just before His Second Coming, will be *just like the days of Noah* (Matthew 24:37-39). Today, we are headed in that direction rapidly, but we aren't quite there yet. If we define morality biblically, then the world is worse than it has ever been since the days of Noah. Yeah, I know, every generation has always thought that. And no, it's not just that we are better at recording statistics. People like the Caesars of Rome, Genghis Kahn, Hitler, and Stalin committed isolated evil. But the general public believed it was evil. Today, the general public believes evil is good. Between the 1960s and today, there has been a change in public morality that has never occurred before in history. When I grew up in the 1950s

and 60s, my parents and my public school teachers believed the same as most people all over the world believed all through history. They believed things like divorce/remarriage, homosexuality, lying, cheating, receiving government money without working, premarital cohabitation, and abortions were all problems. Today, those sins are thought to be solutions. Today, you are the problem if you oppose these things. The heart of man is just as wicked as always, but the development of that evil is increasing. The proof is—

- (1) There is a greater percentage of evil
- (2) There is a greater tolerance of evil
- (3) There is a greater availability of evil
- (4) There is a general mentality that evil is a solution

There are still a lot of good people, but we are rapidly approaching the days of Noah when *every intent of the thoughts of his heart was only evil continually*.

Questions from Genesis 6

1. When God said *his days shall be one hundred and twenty years*, that meant
 - A. Someone born at that time would only live 120 years.
 - B. There would be 120 years before God would destroy the earth.
 - C. It would take Noah 120 years to build the ark.
 - D. A and B
 - E. All of the above
2. The Nephilim were
 - A. The genealogical forefathers of the giant Goliath, the one killed by David
 - B. The offspring of the *sons of God* and the *daughters of men*
 - C. Early giants of the antediluvian people
3. The earth was more evil than any other time in history
 - A. During the days of Noah before the Flood
 - B. At the time of Christ when Jesus was crucified
 - C. Today
4. Which animals/creatures most likely did not get on the ark?
 - A. Alligators
 - B. Dinosaurs
 - C. Woolly Mammoths
5. True or False? The Flood was a supernatural act of God.

Answers: (1) E. (2) C. (3) A. (4) A. (5) False (it was a natural catastrophic act of God).

Genesis 7

Genesis 7:1

We know exactly how God spoke to Adam and Eve, and we can assume He spoke to Cain the same way, through a theophany in the form of a man walking in the Garden or on the newly created earth. From John 1 and Colossians 1, we can further conclude these theophany appearances were of the pre-incarnate Christ.

However, although God spoke to Noah five times, we do not know how He did that. The phrase *God* [אלהים (Elohim)] *said to Noah* is in 6:13 and 9:17, and *God* [אלהים (Elohim)] *spoke to Noah* is in 8:15 and 9:8. But here in 7:1 is the only time we see the phrase *The Lord* [יהוה (Yahweh)] *said to Noah*. Since there is no indication of a theophany, a dream, or a vision, we can assume that Noah heard a voice from God. The word אלהים (Elohim) is the general word for “God” in the plural form, but it is interesting that the word יהוה (Yahweh) is used in Genesis and in Job, tying these ancient writings to the revelation given to the Hebrews (Genesis 2:4; Job 1:6).

When God told Noah that it was time to enter the ark (in 7:1), He repeated the reason given in 6:8, 9, and 22, which is also why Ezekiel lists Noah as one of the three great men of God, and Hebrews calls him a man of faith.

- Genesis 6:8, *But Noah found favor [grace] in the eyes of the LORD.*
- Genesis 6:9, *Noah was a righteous man, blameless in his time; Noah walked with God.*
- Genesis 6:22, *Thus Noah did; according to all that God had commanded him, so he did.*
- Genesis 7:1, *for you [Noah] alone I have seen to be righteous before Me in this time*
- Ezekiel 14:14, *“even though these three men, Noah, Daniel and Job were in its midst, by their own righteousness they could only deliver themselves,” declares the Lord GOD.*
- Hebrews 11:7, *By faith Noah...became an heir of the righteousness which is according to faith.*

Genesis 7:2-5

The clean animals were taken on the ark by sevens, instead of by twos, probably, because after the Flood was over, *Noah built an altar to the LORD, and took of every clean animal and of every clean bird and offered burnt offerings on the altar* (Genesis 8:20). So clean animals were distinguished here, a thousand years before they were designated as such for both eating and sacrificing under the Mosaic Law (Leviticus 11:2-23; Deuteronomy 14).

Those taken by twos were *to keep offspring alive on the face of all the earth*. So, as with the future Millennial Kingdom (and in contrast with the New Jerusalem), God planned to preserve the earth by starting over with the generation of the same genealogical kinds of animals and human beings He had originally created. Then God said the rain would start in seven days, and it would rain for forty days and nights. This would destroy the protective water canopy and, together with opening up fountains of the deep, would *blot out from the face of the land every living thing* that needed to breathe air and live on the land.

Genesis 7:6-12

Noah began building the ark 120 years before the Flood. At that time, he was 480 years old. But we are also told that *Noah was five hundred years old, and Noah became the father of Shem, Ham, and Japheth* (Genesis 5:32). Assuming the boys were not triplets, they were born, grew up, and took

wives for themselves between Noah's age 500 and 600, during the last 100 years that Noah worked on the ark. These boys lived with the building of the ark their whole lives before the Flood.

The water that covered the earth did not just come from a collapsing canopy. What apparently happened was, originally the earth was divided between a land mass and a water mass. On the third day, *God said, "Let the waters below the heavens be gathered into one place, and let the dry land appear"; and it was so (1:9)*. But at the time of the Flood, the earth was ripped apart so that *all the fountains of the great deep burst open*. A glance at any map of ocean topography reveals that the continents of the earth were at one time together. Clearly, Africa was connected to South America, Europe to North America, and the Orient to the west coast of the Americas. Even in the details like the Baja Peninsula of California fitting up against Mexico and the island of Madagascar fitting against the coast of Mozambique, ocean topography shows that everything at one time fit together.

Genesis 7:13-16

Eight people entered the ark. Moses wants us to understand that the wives of Noah and his sons entered the ark. This meant that Noah's daughters-in-law had to leave behind mothers and fathers and siblings who would die in the Flood. There is nothing in Genesis that tells us that God offered the possibility of anyone else getting on the ark.

Genesis 7:17-24

The Flood killed massive amounts of humans and animals, along with an earth filled with vegetation, as the water level rose above the highest mountains of the antediluvian earth. This does not necessarily mean it would cover our mountains today, because our mountains may have been caused by the movement of the continents and the opening of the subterranean floodgates.

Then, over the next year (while Noah and all were in the ark), the dead were buried by the turmoil that split the earth. This upheaval created massive low areas which drained the water off into our oceans and formed the dry land of our continents and islands. The sudden massive burial of plants, animals, and humans probably created our deposits of coal, oil, and natural gas.

How many people were killed in the Flood?

There are a lot of different estimates based on guesses about family size and duration of reproduction. But most estimates put the world's population at the time of the Flood to be more than our population of 7 billion today.

Since the earth's landmass was all connected, it was relatively easy to migrate across it, plus it had a favorable climate and an abundant vegetation growth. This accounts for many of the ancient civilizations discovered around the world. So by the time of the Flood, the earth was filled with people. For example, *godlikeproductions.com* reports this:

"1656 years is more than sufficient time to completely fill up the earth with people. A conservative population growth calculation would place the population at the time of the flood as 7 billion people at least, perhaps it was even higher."

The population growth, however, virtually eliminates any possibility of an "Old Earth" view of Genesis 1-5. If there were, say, 2,500 years between creation and the Flood, instead of the 1656 logged in Genesis, there would be so many people on the earth that the land could not sustain them. Even given wars and disease, most estimates say the population would be far beyond what the earth could sustain, some even suggest it would be in the trillions.

If one proposes an evolutionary development, the population numbers are nothing short of absurd. Don Batten [*creation.com*] reports the following:

Evolutionists claim that mankind evolved from apes about a million years ago. If the population had grown at just 0.01% per year since then (doubling only every 7,000 years), there could be 10^{43} people today—that's a number with 43 zeros after it..." Those who adhere to the evolutionary story argue that disease, famine and war kept the numbers almost constant for most of this period. The problem is, that has already been figured into the above estimate, since it calculated at a 0.01% per year growth rate instead our 1.7% per year growth rate today.

Applications from Genesis 7

1. Noah, and godly men and women throughout biblical history, stand out with words and phrases like *found grace in the eyes of the LORD, righteous man, walked with God, did according to all that God had commanded*. And they are usually connected with a contrast to the morality of the times in which they lived. For example, God described Noah as *blameless in his time*, and *righteous before Me in this time*. The word the NASB translates *time* is the common Hebrew word [דֹר (*dor*)] for *generation*, which here refers to the entire antediluvian race. Walking with God will always be in contrast to walking with the world. God's Word will either convert the sinner or make him angry.
2. God told Noah, "*I will blot out from the face of the land every living thing that I have made*" (7:4). Notice that God assumed no commitment to His creation. Paul wrote, *Or does not the potter have a right over the clay, to make from the same lump one vessel for honorable use and another for common use?* (Romans 9:21). Later, God committed Himself to the preservation of Israel on earth (Ezekiel 37), and to believers eternally (John 5:24). But He made no such commitment to Adam for the human race.

Questions from Chapter 7

1. The reason God told Noah to enter the ark was because of
 - A. The righteousness of Noah himself
 - B. The righteousness of his family
 - C. The righteousness of the Seth line
2. Noah knew to build the ark and what time to enter it because
 - A. God spoke to him in words.
 - B. God appeared to him as He did to Adam.
 - C. God gave him a vision.
3. God told Noah, "*You shall take with you of every clean animal by sevens*" because
 - A. Noah would need them for sacrifice after he left the ark.
 - B. They would be needed to make sure clean animals did not go extinct.
 - C. Noah was never told why he was to take clean animals by sevens.
4. Which is correct?
 - A. The rain started before the water from the earth.
 - B. The rain and the water from the earth started on the same day.
 - C. The water from the earth started before the rain.
5. According to most estimates, how many people died in Noah's Flood?
 - A. 7 million
 - B. 7 billion
 - C. 7 trillion

Answers: (1) A. (2) A. (3) C. (4) B. (5) B.

Genesis 8

Genesis 8:1-3

Three other times in the Bible we read *God remembered*:

- Genesis 19:29, **God remembered Abraham**, and sent Lot out of the midst of the overthrow, when He overthrew the cities in which Lot lived.
- Genesis 30:22, **God remembered Rachel**, and God gave heed to her and opened her womb.
- Exodus 2:24, **God remembered His covenant with Abraham, Isaac, and Jacob**.

None of these are about God's recall. They are about two things:

1. God being true to His Word
2. God's lovingkindness

Four things happened to make the earth re-habitable:

1. *God caused a wind to pass over the earth.*
The wind was not just to help the water subside but to dry the otherwise muddy earth, thus allowing for farming and the seeds in the ground to sprout again.
2. *The fountains of the deep...were closed.*
The fountains of the deep were an underground source of water that flooded the earth from beneath, as the rain did from above. God asked Job, "*Have you entered into the springs of the sea or walked in the recesses of the deep?*" (Job 38:16).
3. *The rain from the sky was restrained.*
The rain was not shut off. The earth would be watered by rain, but the rain was *restrained* from becoming a universal flood.
4. *The water receded steadily from the earth.*
The water receded as the land rose, fell, buckled, and separated into its current form, and the water drained off into the oceans, forming much of our current geological landscape. The separation of the continents began when the rain began, *on the same day all the fountains of the great deep burst open, and the floodgates of the sky were opened* (7:11). The separation of the continents was well underway before the ark came to rest on Ararat because *at the end of one hundred and fifty days the water decreased*.

Genesis 8:4-5

Mount Ararat (Turkish: *Ağrı Dağı*) rises 16,854 feet (5,137 meters) above sea level. Since the word for "mountain," here in Genesis 8, is plural (*mountains of Ararat*), it may not be indicating any one particular peak. There are actually two main peaks by that name today, one called "Mount Ararat" and the other "Little Ararat." After floating for 150 days, the ark probably came to rest on one of these peaks.



Little Ararat (left) and Mt. Ararat (right)

Concerning the ongoing search for Noah's Ark, John D. Morris, Ph.D. of the Institute for Creation Research, reports the following:

The evidence for the existence of Noah's Ark is impressive and growing as research continues, but it is also a fact that **no objective proof has yet been produced**. We have every reason to believe that the remains have been preserved on Mt. Ararat in eastern Turkey, and we have every reason to hope that proof will soon be forthcoming, but as of this writing, the search goes on (icr.org, emphasis mine).

Throughout the Flood account, we are given specific days of the month that certain things happened. The problem is, we do not know what calendar Noah or Moses were using. There are several possibilities:

1. It was Noah's personal calendar, starting with his own age.
2. It was a known calendar at Noah's time.
3. It was a solar calendar of 365 days.
4. It was a lunar calendar of 354 days.
5. It was the common ancient calendar of 360 days.

There is strong information supporting #1, #2 and #5 as being a 360-day year (12 months of 30 days each). The significant clue lays in the time between when the rain began and when the ark ran aground on Mount Ararat. That time is given to be 150 days. But that same time is also given as from the 17th of the 2nd month to the 17th of the 7th month. That means a period of 5 months was exactly 150 days, divided by 5 = 30 days per month, which would be a 360-day year.

It is clear that many very sophisticated ancient societies, some with studious astronomers, used a 360-day calendar. The ancient Sumerians, Babylonians, and Egyptians in the Near East, and the Mayas and Incas in ancient America, all spoke of an actual 360-day year, not just a 360-day calendar. There are several statements by writers like Plutarch who (in A.D. 75) said, "During the reign of Romulus [the mythical founder of Rome 27/28 March, 771 B.C.] ...they only kept to the one rule that the whole course of the year contained three hundred and sixty days" [translated by John Dryden].

This leads to some interesting questions:

- Could the earth, at some time in ancient history, have actually taken exactly 360 days to circle the sun?
- Could God have created a perfectly circular orbit for the earth of 360 days, when He *saw that it was good*, and later altered it to 365.2421897 days?
- Why would ancient societies, completely isolated from each other, have a 360-day calendar?

On the Hebrew calendar: the first month is Nisan (March-April), the second month is Iyar (April-May), the seventh month is Tishri (September-October), and the tenth month is Tevet (December-January).

If we were to associate these Hebrew calendar months with Noah's calendar, just to give us a time perspective, then:

- He would have entered the ark in the late spring (around the first of May, *in the second month, on the seventeenth day of the month*).
- The ark would have come to rest on Mount Ararat in the fall (around the first of October).
- The tops of the mountains would be visible sometime in December.
- Noah would have sent out the doves in January.
- And he would have left the ark around the middle of May.

Genesis 8:6-12

Again, with the same qualifications given above, the forty days of verse 6 would fall in January, 40 days after the mountains became visible in December, when Noah *sent out a raven, and it flew here and there*.

The raven is a scavenger capable of finding food in the water and perching on the smallest surface or twig. So, apparently, the raven did not return to the ark. It just kept flying around, perching on floating sticks and logs and eating from things in the water *until the water was dried up from the earth*. The dove is much more particular about its food and resting places, so it just flew around and, finding no suitable place to rest, returned to the ark. Seven days later, he sent out another dove, and it returned with an olive leaf in its beak. Seven days later, he repeated the task, but it did not return.

Genesis 8:13-19

The statement *in the first month, on the first of the month, Noah removed the covering of the ark, and looked* may mean that previous to this, Noah had not looked out of the ark. At any rate, Noah did not leave the ark until the 27th of the second month. So, at least he looked out of the ark for nearly two months before he left it. It seems that since God told him to go into the ark, Noah was going to wait for God to tell him to leave it. And that's exactly what God did on the 27th of the second month. God spoke to Noah in an audible voice [because the word דָּבַר (*dabar*) translated *spoke* never means anything else] and told him to:

1. Go out of the ark
2. Take his wife, his sons, and their wives out of the ark
3. Let all the animals out of the ark

The purpose being *that they may breed abundantly on the earth, and be fruitful and multiply*.

Genesis 8:20-22

Although Cain and Abel brought an offering to God (4:3-5), this is the first mention of anyone building an *altar* or offering a *burnt offering*. Noah killed and burned on the altar one *of every clean animal and of every clean bird*, which he had taken on the ark by sevens. God has welcomed the offering of animal sacrifices in every age of history (including the future Millennial Kingdom), except during this church age. For this age, God defined sacrifice as praise to Himself and giving to others.

Through Him then, let us continually offer up a sacrifice of praise to God, that is, the fruit of lips that give thanks to His name. And do not neglect doing good and sharing, for with such sacrifices God is pleased (Hebrews 13:15-16).

This is also the first time a burnt offering is called a *soothing aroma* to the Lord. But it's certainly not the last. This phrase is used over 40 times to describe acceptable offerings throughout the Old Testament. In the New Testament, Paul described Christ's death as *an offering and a sacrifice to God as a fragrant aroma* (Ephesians 5:2). He also described the contribution of the Philippians as a *fragrant aroma, an acceptable sacrifice, well-pleasing to God* (Philippians 4:18).

Then Moses made us privy to some of God's thoughts. There are two phrases that set the context for these thoughts:

- Because *the intent of man's heart is evil from his youth* – the moral context
- *While the earth remains* – the chronological context

With these two things in mind, *the LORD said to Himself*:

1. *"I will never again curse the ground on account of man,"* that is, not *while the earth remains*. But eventually, the *elements will be destroyed with intense heat, and the earth and its works will be burned up* (2 Peter 3:10).
2. *"I will never again destroy every living thing."* The future *great tribulation* will almost do that, but not quite. Jesus said, *"Unless those days had been cut short, no life would have been saved; but for the sake of the elect those days will be cut short"* (Matthew 24:22).
3. *"Seedtime and harvest, and cold and heat, and summer and winter, and day and night shall not cease."*

This last thought introduced man to a whole new world. None of these existed, or existed to the same extreme measure, in the antediluvian earth. The new earth, no longer protected by a water (or a water vapor) canopy, will now get very hot and very cold. It will require planning and scheduling of days and nights and seasons, for hunting, farming, and manufacturing. With the dangers of things like earthquakes, volcanoes, severe weather patterns, and a 90% shorter life span, an ordered nature will provide a predictability people can work with.

Applications from Genesis 8

1. Maturity includes obedience to the Word of God, understood in a plain, ordinary, normal way. What made Noah a man of God was his obedience to the commands of God, without paraphrasing or modifying them. *Thus Noah did; according to all that God had commanded him, so he did* (6:22). In 7:5, we read, *Noah did according to all that the LORD had commanded him*. I'm sure Noah and his family had apartments on the upper deck near the windows. And the animals were vegetarians and docile, with many probably hibernating. Nevertheless, Noah and his family were basically living in a huge three-story floating barn. I'm sure there was a great temptation to leave the ark sooner, rather than later. But God told him to enter the ark, and Noah was not about to leave until God told him to *go out*. Throughout Scripture, men and women of God do not paraphrase, allegorize, or presume upon the Word of God.
2. God does not punish the righteous along with the sinners, but everyone connected to the sinner suffers collateral damage. There are two mega examples of this in Genesis. The sin of Adam and Eve resulted in a death sentence for all of us, and the sin of the antediluvian people resulted in not just the Flood but also a more hostile world. The earth was now a violent place, with fault lines, extreme weather patterns, disease, and a 90% reduced lifespan. Sin is never simple or dealt with simply. If sin were simply a matter of forgiveness, "love wins," or "hate the sin but love the sinner," then the holy Son of God would not have had to leave heaven, come to earth, be hated, rejected, tortured, and die on the cross.

Questions from Genesis 8

1. How long did Noah's ark float?
 - A. Three months
 - B. Five months
 - C. Seven months
2. According to the chronology of the Flood, a year was considered to be
 - A. 354 days
 - B. 360 days
 - C. 365 days
3. The statement, *But God remembered Noah*, refers to
 - A. God's omniscience
 - B. God's love
 - C. God's sovereignty
4. When Noah left the ark, he presented to God, for the first time ever,
 - A. An altar
 - B. A burnt offering
 - C. The sacrifice of a clean animal
 - D. A and B
 - E. All of the above

Answers: (1) B. (2) B. (3) B. (4) E.

Genesis 9

Genesis chapter 9 begins a new era in the outworking of God's purpose. The rules changed when Adam sinned and was removed from the Garden of Eden. But now the rules change again. Man's relationship will change with respect to nature, the animals, and earth itself. The new arrangement is usually called the Rainbow Covenant.

Genesis 9:1

The blessing of God is connected to the command *be fruitful and multiply*, given twice in chapter one (1:22, 28), one is for the animals and the other in reference to Adam and Eve. The command is given to Noah and his family twice in this chapter (9:1, 7). After this, it was never given again. The encouragement to reproduce was only given as a reinforcement of the Abrahamic Covenant concerning the multiplication of the nation of Israel (Genesis 28:3; 35:11; Leviticus 26:9; Jeremiah 23:3). But this is the last time God commands or encourages all humans to *be fruitful and multiply*.

Genesis 9:2-4

The announcement that *the terror of you will be on every beast of the earth* indicates that it probably wasn't there before. In the antediluvian earth, both man and animals were vegetarians, so they had very little interaction with one another. Some domestic animals may have been used for farming and transportation, but there was no fear between man and animals. Now all that changed. Men could kill and eat animals, and vice versa. So nature took on a whole new animosity, with a violent aggression.

The only dietary restriction for the new administration was that the blood had to be drained out of the meat of an animal before it could be eaten. The command to not eat blood was also a part of the Mosaic Law, where God gave an explanation for not eating blood: (1) *For the life of the flesh is in the blood* and (2) *it is the blood by reason of the life that makes atonement* (Leviticus 17:10-11). And Hebrews 9:22 tells us, *without the shedding of blood, there is no forgiveness*.

While preparing the apostles for this grace/church age, Jesus *declared all foods clean* (Mark 7:19). And Peter received no restrictions when he was told to *kill and eat* formerly unclean animals (Acts 10:13; 11:7). But when the apostles and elders wrote to the Gentile converts, after their meeting in Jerusalem, they included the instruction *that you abstain from things sacrificed to idols and from blood* (Acts 15:19-20). If this means from eating blood, then we can assume that the dietary blood prohibition carries on throughout the different administrations of man on earth.

Genesis 9:5-7

Capital punishment is declared for anyone who murders a human being. If a man or woman is murdered, then other men and women are to take it upon themselves to kill the murderer. This is a responsibility for justice, not another murder. The reason for the sanctity of human life over animal life is because humans are made in the image of God. This capital punishment for killing humans extended to animals as well. For example, in the Law we read, *If an ox gores a man or a woman to death, the ox shall surely be stoned and its flesh shall not be eaten* (Exodus 21:28). What is interesting about the capital punishment on animals that kill humans is that animals have no moral code. They have no moral or spiritual nature at all. So it's about the act of killing someone made in the image of God that is the issue, not just the motive behind it.

The intriguing question here is, "Who decides when a murder has taken place, and 'who done it'?" Because this requires the establishment of some government order, Noah's post-flood era has been called the administration of government.

Genesis 9:8-10

This is probably the first time Noah's sons heard the voice of God. The word translated *spoke* implies an audible voice.

This time when God spoke, He announced an unconditional covenant. This unconditional covenant was a promise to Noah, his sons, and *every beast of the earth*. It would **not** be conditioned on their obedience or faithfulness. It was a one-way unilateral promise from God.

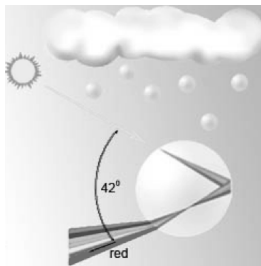
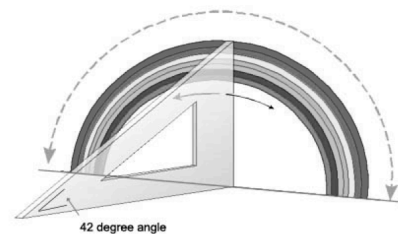
Genesis 9:11-17

First, Some Information about Rainbows

A rainbow is not a "thing" which goes about appearing from place-to-place, like a tornado or a hurricane. It's an optical phenomena created by certain conditions. It will be visible anywhere, when those conditions are right. Those conditions can even be arranged in a person's own backyard, with their back to the sun, squirting a fine spray of water in the air.

Only three things are needed:

- Sunlight
- Raindrops
- Viewers positioned in such a way that the sunlight is behind them and the raindrops in front of them.

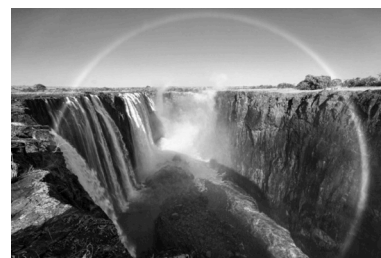


Sunlight has many wavelengths, which appear as colors. When sunlight enters a drop of rain, its light slows down because of the water, so it bends and hits the back of the drop at an angle, which bounces some of it back into the drop and some of it out at a 42-degree angle from the sun. During this journey, some light bends more, some less. When it exits the drop, the longest wavelength will be red, exiting at a 42-degree angle to the viewer. The shortest will be the blue tones at 40 degrees.

The red colors will always appear at the top of the rainbow, and the blue colors always appear at the bottom. In order to see the rainbow, the viewer must be able to see the sun shining on raindrops between these angles.

A rainbow is actually a sphere (because raindrops are spheres), which appears as a part of a flat circle, which is actually a round ball. It would appear as a complete circle except the ground cuts the sphere in half. If the viewing angle is right, a full circle rainbow can be seen. Four times God associates the rainbow with a cloud:

- *I set My bow in the cloud*
- *When I bring a cloud over the earth*
- *The bow will be seen in the cloud*
- *When the bow is in the cloud*



Of course, rain comes from clouds. So you will not see a rainbow in the sky without some sort of clouds to produce the rain. But somewhere else in the sky, behind the observer, there must be sunshine. Rain was something new to the post-flood world. Before the Flood, there was no rain, and therefore, no clouds, *but a mist used to rise from the earth and water the whole surface of the ground* (Genesis 2:6). There was also a water (or water vapor) fishbowl-like canopy over the earth, preventing the formation of rain and the clouds from which the rain comes.

In the post-flood world, they would see two new phenomena: rain and clouds. So people would not panic and think God was flooding the earth again, from time-to-time, the sun would be shining from behind them as the rain came from the cloud in front of them. Whenever their angle was between 40 and 42 degrees from the sun, *the bow will be seen in the cloud*. So rain, clouds, and rainbows were new, and the rainbow was God's sign to them that He would keep His covenant. When there is rain and sunshine and an observer at the right angle, the rainbow will always be there. So will God's covenant.

Genesis 9:18-24

This passage, with all of its interpretive problems, is all about one major point—the curse of the Canaanites, the immigrants to the land that God gave to Abraham 500 years after the Flood. Notice that Ham is called *the father of Canaan* two times in the passage.

After telling us that the whole earth was repopulated by the offspring of Noah's three sons, Moses gives us a brief five-sentence account of what happened to cause the curse on the Canaanites.

Since Noah came from the pre-flood world where everybody was a vegetarian, he did what he knew how to do and began farming. In this account, enough time had passed, since the departure from the ark, for Noah to plant a garden, harvest the grapes, and make wine, then drink to the place where he became drunk. While lying in his tent, probably because of the feeling of heat from the alcohol, Noah uncovered himself to cool off.

This is the first use of the word *wine* in the Bible, but probably not the first drunkenness from alcohol. Noah was certainly aware of the effects of drinking alcohol. Jesus told the apostles, "*For as in those days before the flood they were eating and drinking, marrying and giving in marriage, until the day that Noah entered the ark*" (Matthew 24:38).

As Noah lay half asleep, and more than half drunk, *Ham, the father of Canaan, saw the nakedness of his father, and told his two brothers outside*. This one sentence is all we know about the sin of Noah's youngest son Ham, which resulted in the curse of Ham's son Canaan, which is the whole point of the passage. Ham told his brothers what he had done, but we know very little about what he did. Many varied and strange theories have been proposed. But the most likely answer is that it was considered a serious breach of the family morality for anyone to see the nakedness of the patriarch. What we know Ham did, and his brothers did not do, was to look at his father's nakedness.

Genesis 9:25-29

When Noah awoke from his drunkenness, he knew what had happened. And the one he cursed was not his son Ham but Ham's son Canaan. This restricted the curse because Ham's other children (whose descendants included the Babylonians, Assyrians, and Egyptians – 10:6ff) were not cursed. The reason for the curse on Canaan is unknown. Commentators offer speculations, but it's best to simply say we don't know why the curse was given to Canaan and his descendants.

The statement *Blessed be the LORD, the God of Shem; and let Canaan be his servant* undoubtedly refers to the servitude of the Canaanites to the Israelites. The Canaanites were first brought into subjection by Joshua, but they remained in the Land. They were placed in submission to Solomon, but they were still tempting the Israelites at the time of Ezra (1 Kings 9:20-21; Ezra 9:1). They became extinct some time during the inter-testament period. So the curse cannot be applied to anyone today.

- *May God enlarge Japheth*, refers to the growth in numbers of the white-skinned northern people (like Russians, and those who would become Europeans, Scandinavians, Anglos, and Saxons).

- *And let him [Japheth] dwell in the tents of Shem* means that spiritual and material blessing will come to the Japhethites through the God of the Shemites (which is the God of Israel).
- *And let Canaan be his [Shem's] servant* reemphasizes the fact that the ancient Canaanites would be in subjection to the Israelites, who are descendants of Shem.

This is the last we know about the life of Noah. He lived to be 950 years old, which meant he lived past the building of the Tower of Babel.

Applications from Genesis 9

1. We should keep the commands of our age. Genesis chapter 9 begins a new era. When it comes to identifying a new era or age, Paul uses the word οἰκονομία (*oikonomia*), which can be translated *administration*, *dispensation* or *stewardship* (Strong's). A form of the word is used throughout the gospels for a *manager* or *steward* appointed to administrate someone's affairs. But Paul used the word οἰκονομία (*oikonomia*) in Ephesians 1:10; 3:9; and 1 Timothy 1:4 to distinguish a particular age or era or arrangement between God and man. Changing an οἰκονομία (*oikonomia*) in the outworking of God's purpose is like crossing a border, except it's a border in history. It's crossing the border into a different *administration*. As with all border crossings, some of the laws are the same, some are similar, and some are very different.
2. We should obey our government. Because of the command for capital punishment, Noah's post-flood era has been called the administration of government. But actually, there is no mention of government in Genesis 9. The only government before the Mosaic Law was the directives of the family patriarch, with justice for life-taking being only loosely controlled. After the Mosaic Law ended at the cross (Romans 10:4; Galatians 3-4), and the church age began in Acts 2, decisions of justice were left up to civil governments because they were established by God, however corrupt they may be (Romans 13:1-7; 1 Peter 2:13-17). The only exception was civil disobedience in the case where the government tells people to disobey God (Acts 4:19-20).

Questions from Genesis 9

1. What could Noah do after Genesis 9 that would have been a sin before he got off the ark?
 - A. Get his wife pregnant
 - B. Eat a ham sandwich
 - C. Go hunting for animals
2. Capital punishment, under the Rainbow Covenant, applied to
 - A. Animals killing people
 - B. People killing animals
 - C. Animals killing animals
3. The curse on Canaan involved people in the Old Testament who lived in today's
 - A. Southern Russia
 - B. Nation of Israel
 - C. Northern Africa
4. True or False? Shem will be enlarged.
5. True or False? Japheth will be blessed.
6. True or False? Ham will be a servant.

Answers: (1) B. Not C because he may have hunted animals to use for transportation or to protect his garden from being eaten. (2) A. (3) B. (4) False. (5) False. (6) False.

Genesis 10

Genesis 10:1

Everyone everywhere in the world today is a descendant of one of the three sons of Noah: Shem, Ham, and Japheth. Genesis 10 begins and ends (verses 1 & 32) by identifying *the sons of Noah* as the forefathers of the people of the earth. This is a genealogy (repeated in 1 Chronicles 1), not a chronology (as we have in Genesis 5 and 11), so we don't know exactly how long each of these people lived. The only time indicator is the general reference, *after the flood*.

Genesis 10:2-5, We Are Told of 14 Descendants of Japheth

There is, as you might expect, since these are ancient designations, some disagreement and some speculation as to who these people became. But, in general, the Japhethites went north and west. Most white-skinned European and Anglo-Saxon people are descendants of Japheth.

- **Gomer** is the forefather of the people who went toward the northern oceans of the furthest limits



of the earth, including the Germans and the people of Britain and Wales. Most of us of European descent are also descendants of Gomer.

- **Magog** is southern Russia.
- **Madai** represents the Medes.
- **Javan** is identified by Josephus as the Greeks.
- **Tubal** is the ancestor of our modern Georgians.
- **Meshech** is identified with the Armenians.
- **Tiras** is the ancestor of the Persians.

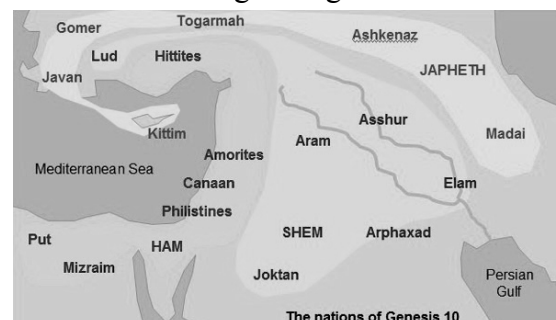
Genesis 10:6-20, We Are Told of 31 Descendants of Ham

In general, the descendants of Ham went south to what is today Africa, Arabia, and Israel. But Ham is also the father of the ancient Assyrians and Babylonians. Ham had four sons: Cush, Mizraim, Put, and Canaan.

- **Cush** and his descendants went to North Africa and Arabia.
- **Mizraim** [Hebrew: מִצְרַיִם (Miṣrāyim)] is the Hebrew and Aramaic name for the land of Egypt. Neo-Babylonian texts also use the term *Mizraim* for Egypt.
- **Put or Phut** is Libya.
- **Canaan** was the cursed son of Ham, and his descendants moved to the land that God gave to Abraham. They occupied the territory from today's Lebanon to the Gaza Strip.
- **Sidon** was the predominant Phoenician city, still the third largest city in Lebanon.
- **Heth**'s descendants were probably the Hittites, from whom Abraham bought the land where he buried his wife Sarah (Genesis 23:10, 19).
- **Amorites** show up throughout the Old Testament and seemed to be living throughout Canaan.

Genesis 10:21-32, We Are Told of 27 Descendants of Shem

This paragraph begins mentioning that Shem was *the father of all the children of Eber*. Eber is in the family line of Arpachshad, the line that leads to Abraham (11:10-27).



The sons of Shem were Elam and Asshur and Arpachshad and Lud and Aram. Although they mostly moved south, some Shemites also moved west and east. We are also told of *the sons of Joktan, Now their settlement extended from Mesha as you go toward Sephar, the hill country of the east.* Sephar is on the shore of the Indian Ocean. So it seems that some Shemites through Arpachshad through Joktan went east toward India.



The statement in 10:25, *for in his days the earth was divided* (also mentioned in 10:5, 20, and 31) probably refers to the scattering at the Tower of Babel in 11:9. Apparently, not only their location but their language was changed because verses 5, 20, & 31 tell us these were separated, *according to their families, according to their languages, by their lands, according to their nations* (10:31).

Applications from Genesis 10

1. It's important to know that you came from a real ancestor. Not only did we all come from Adam and Noah, but we also came from one of Noah's sons. One of our forefathers was either Shem or Ham or Japheth. And we can probably know which one. We can't know what they looked like, of course, but we can know that there really was such a man, and he really is our father. We did not just evolve from some unknown ape. We came by the creation of God and a real genealogy. Even if we cannot trace it very far back, it really exists.
2. The people migrated by their own free will and the predetermined sovereignty of God. This is especially clear when it comes to the Canaanites (*the Hittite, the Hivite, the Perizzite, the Girgashite, the Amorite, and the Jebusite*). These people chose, by their own free will, to migrate to the land they called Canaan, later named Palestine, today's Israel. But they were a people cursed by God from the time of Noah (Genesis 9:25). They occupied the land God gave to Abraham, and God instructed Joshua and the tribes of Israel to drive them out.

Questions from Chapter 10 (Use more than one direction, if it applies.)

1. From where the ark landed on Mount Ararat, the Sons of **Japheth** migrated in which direction?
 - A. North
 - B. South
 - C. East
 - D. West
2. From where the ark landed on Mount Ararat, the Sons of **Ham** migrated in which direction?
 - A. North
 - B. South
 - C. East
 - D. West
3. From where the ark landed on Mount Ararat, the Sons of **Shem** migrated in which direction?
 - A. North
 - B. South
 - C. East
 - D. West

Answers: (1) A. and D. (2) B. and D. (3) B. and C. and D.

Genesis 11

Genesis 11 has three paragraphs. The first is about the Tower of Babel, the second about the chronology of the Seth line to Abraham, and the third is about the family of Terah.



Genesis 11:1

Ryrie makes the point that there are two things which make the Bible totally incompatible with evolution:

“The unbridgeable gap between animal sounds and human language, as well as the statement of this verse that originally all men spoke the same language, are inexplicable by the theory of evolution” (*Ryrie Study Bible*).

In a paper “The Origin of Language,” Charles V. Taylor wrote, “No true link has ever been found with animal communication” [creation.com/origin-of-language].

Even the Wikipedia admits, “...there is no consensus on the ultimate origin or age of human language....”

Animals can communicate. Evolutionists call that communication “language” because, even though there is no evidence for it, they want us to think it evolved into human language. Actually, animal communication is a completely different thing. Animals can communicate needs and desires, but they do not create words. A word is “a single distinct conceptual unit” (*New American Oxford Dictionary*). That includes conceptual representations of objects, emotions, and ideas. Language exists when words are created and used in a form that can be analyzed with rules of grammar. No animal communication has anything like grammar, but all human languages do. As humans have created new languages over the centuries, those languages all have an order, which can be analyzed with rules of grammar, even though the people who create those languages have no idea about grammar.

There are three huge unbridgeable gaps between animal sounds and human language:

1. Grammar is the greatest evidence that language is given to humankind—not developed or invented. The most “primitive” tribes have languages with grammar that is complex, precise, and logical.
2. Humans also use words to express concepts like morality, philosophy, religion, hope, love, fear, joy, outrage, and determination.
3. Animal communication does not change, but humans continually create new words to accompany the changes they make in technology and culture. There are “...approximately 1,000 new entries to Oxford Dictionaries Online every year” [oxforddictionaries.com].

Language was given to Adam and Eve in the Garden of Eden. It may have developed some accents and dialects over the approximately 1700 years between creation and the Tower of Babel, but *they all used the same words*. Then, God suddenly changed this to other verbal concepts, and ideas expressed in different words with different grammatical arrangements, which became the parent languages that forced people to separate. Those languages then developed into the approximately 6,500 languages we have today. [However, 2,000 of those are spoken by less than 1,000 people each and are about to die out.]

Genesis 11:2-3

The translation *they journeyed east* deserves comment. Babylon is almost directly south of Mount Ararat. The Hebrew word קדם (*qadam*) is usually translated *east*. It is possible they traveled west to Syria and then followed the Euphrates southeast to Babylon. There is an ancient archeological excavation at Ebla, Syria that dates to 2400 B.C. (which we will discuss at the end of this chapter), so it is possible they were in Syria before they traveled more or less east to Babylon. But קדם (*qadam*), the word here translated “east,” is also the word for *ancient times*. The word is preceded by the Hebrew מ (*mem*), like the English “m,” which represents the pronoun *from*. So the phrase might be translated, *It came about as they journeyed from ancient times*.

Verse 3 says *they used brick for stone, and they used tar for mortar*, probably meaning they used bricks *instead of* stone and tar *instead of* mortar. We know that, later on, the Babylonians built several towers called ziggurats. Constructing ziggurats on the Mesopotamian plain was not as easy as building pyramids in Egypt. The area lacked the stone deposits the Egyptians used, and the wood available was mostly from palm trees, not the best for construction. So the people of Mesopotamia



used what they had in abundance: mud and straw. The ziggurat towers were constructed of mud bricks made by mixing chopped straw with clay and pouring the results into molds. The bricks were either baked in ovens, or allowed to bake in the sun. Then they were fastened together by using bitumen, a slimy material used widely as a binding and coating material throughout the Mesopotamian plain, and sometimes imported from east of the Tigris River in today’s Iran. Although it was probably not a ziggurat, this is most likely how the Tower of Babel was constructed.

Genesis 11:4

They found a great place to live, on the Euphrates River in the Mesopotamian plain (most likely the historical location of Babylon), so they decided to build a city to support themselves, and a tower to rally around. Actually, they had four goals, all of which were interrelated:

1. To build a city
2. To build a tower
3. To make a name for themselves
4. To keep them from being *scattered abroad over the face of the whole earth*

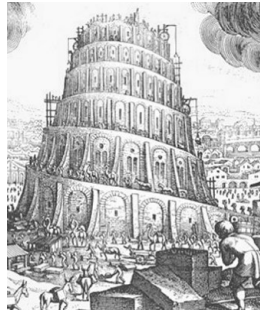
The problem was, God commanded them to *be fruitful and multiply, and fill the earth... Populate the earth abundantly and multiply in it* (Genesis 9:1, 7). So they:

1. Built a community
2. Built a central place to keep them together
3. Developed their pride [the word for *name* is שם (*shem*), which can mean *name* or *fame*]
4. Disobeyed a direct command of God

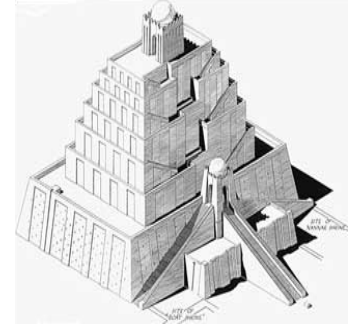
The Size and Shape of the Tower

Archaeologists, examining the remains of the city of Babylon, have found what appears to be the foundation of such a tower. They have discovered a square of “earthen embankments” of some three hundred feet (about the length of an NFL football field or a FIFA soccer field). Some suggest that it was a tower to the god Jupiter. Although idolatry was the purpose for the Babylonian ziggurats, the Bible does not mention idolatry as a purpose for the Tower of Babel.

There is also no proof that the Tower of Babel was the same as the ziggurats of the Babylonians. The Babylonian ziggurats were built in the 600s B.C. The Tower of Babel was built 1700 years earlier, around 2300 B.C. It is commonly taught that the tower had the shape of a spiral cone. But the word



here for tower, מגדל (*migdal*), is the common Hebrew word for a military *watchtower* (see 2 Kings 17:9). So, more likely, it had a rectangular base with an ascending stairway, or multiple stairways, that would reach to the top. We do not know the dimensions of the original Tower of Babel. What we do know is the people set a goal to build a city with a very tall tower *whose top will reach into heaven* in the midst of the city, around 2300 B.C., a hundred years or so after the universal Flood.



The tower was built while Noah was still alive, although he is never mentioned in connection with the migration, the construction of the city, or the tower.

Genesis 11:5

Literally, *and came down Yahweh to see the city and the tower*. *Down* is clearly a figurative word. God did not travel from “up” to “down.” But the bigger issue is, being omniscient and omnipresent, why did God need to come to see it at all? You will recall that, in Genesis 18:20-21, Moses recorded God making a similar statement about the homosexuality of Sodom and Gomorrah, “...*I will go down now, and see if they have done entirely according to its outcry.*”

There are three possibilities to consider:

1. Moses could be making a distinction between God’s omniscience/omnipresence and His localized presence. God is everywhere, but He is also somewhere. Ezekiel, Isaiah, and the Apostle John standing before God’s throne was not the same as them being every day in God’s omnipresence. Jesus at the right hand of God is not the same as the presence of Jesus when 2 or 3 gather together. The presence of the Holy Spirit at the baptism of Jesus is not the same as the indwelling of the Spirit in the believer. God’s presence does not yield more knowledge than His omniscience, nonetheless, experiencing something in person is real. It may be like the difference between hearing of someone being in prison or dying of cancer and going to visit that person. Although we do not know why *Jesus wept* at the funeral of Lazarus (John 11:35), it was not because He had just learned of his death. His weeping was connected to the occasion when He experienced it.
2. It could be that Moses was telling us that God would come down in a theophany. The word for “God” used here is *Yahweh*, which is often used of a theophany of Jesus in the Old Testament. We know that God came in a theophany to Abraham, Jacob, Moses, Joshua, Gideon, and Hannah. We also know that *No one has seen God at any time* (John 1:18) and *Jesus is the image of the invisible God* (Colossians 1:15). It seems God the Son is the One who appeared to Abraham in Genesis 18–19, so He may be the one who *came down to see the city and the tower*.
3. It could be that Moses meant the whole expression. *The LORD came down to see*, as a figure of speech. In that case, he is not saying the LORD came down as a special presence or a theophany. This would then just be an expression describing the focus of God on the situation.

Genesis 11:6

We do not know what the original language was, but we know the problem was not that they had the same language. God created them with one language. The problem was what they did with what God gave them.

The statement, *and now nothing which they purpose to do will be impossible for them*, is about their skillful innovations, which is similar to what we today call technology. God never seems to be impressed with man's technology. Technology is not sinful. Noah used technology to build the ark. Abraham used technology to dig water wells. Moses used it to build the tabernacle, as did Solomon to build the temple. And the apostles certainly used Greek and Roman technology to spread the Gospel. But technology can also be used the way the people at the Tower of Babel used it—to be self-sufficient, to make a name for themselves, and to ignore the commands of God.



Genesis 11:7-9

Come, let Us is probably a communication within the Trinity and possibly a statement to the angelic world about joining in the judgment (as they did with Sodom in Genesis 19).

The judgment was to *confuse their language, so that they will not understand one another's speech*.

The greatest divider of the people of this world is not race, culture, skin color, or religion. The greatest divider of people is language

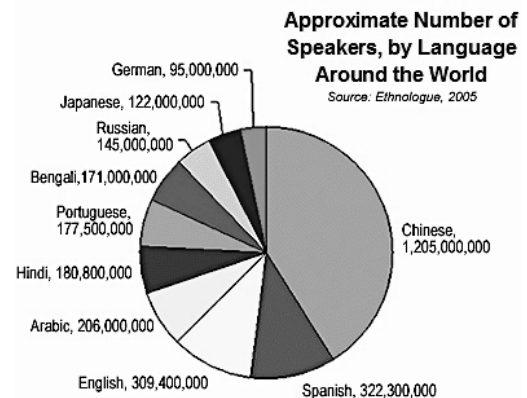
This is the third catastrophic curse on mankind.

First was the Fall (the sentence of death)

Second was the Flood (the removal of longevity)

Third was the confusion of languages (the division of the people of the earth)

God created different languages. Man multiplied them into even more languages, and today we are moving in the opposite direction—toward a few major languages and English dominating all of them. And the reason is globalization made possible by technology.



Of course, not all languages were created in Genesis 11. From what we know about how languages develop, we can assume that when God confused the languages at the Tower of Babel, He established parent languages. All the other languages have developed from them. People within the main family groups could understand each other because chapter 10 tells us, *the nations were separated into their lands, every one according to his language, according to their families* (10:5, 32). But suddenly they could not understand people from other family clans. So the building stopped, and they began to migrate according to the family clans listed in chapter 10.

The separation and isolation enhanced what we know as racial distinctions. The world only began getting back together in a significant way a couple hundred years ago. And a true mingling of the global races is even more recent.

The Flood is approximately 2400 B.C., and the Tower of Babel is about 2300 B.C.

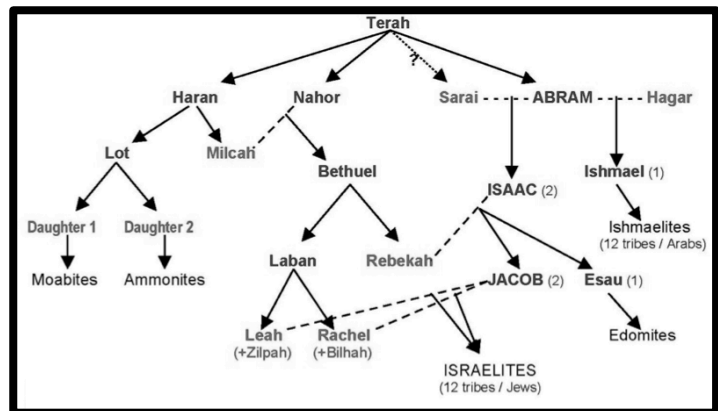
Genesis 11:10-26

This is the genealogy from Noah's son Shem to Terah in verse 25. As we read it, it seems straightforward, straight line, and almost boring. But actually, it's the source of much discussion. The real issue is whether we have a young or old earth. Both views are held by many orthodox biblical creationists whom we respect. The two basic views of this passage are:

- The old earth view says this is a selective list of the genealogy from Noah's son Shem to Abraham, which has gaps in it. It should be seen as an "open genealogy" and does not allow us to calculate the years of time that elapsed before Abraham.
- The young earth view says this is a complete or "closed" list, a chronology of all the patriarchs from Noah's son Shem to Abraham, allowing us to calculate the years that passed. This is our position and the most likely way to understand this passage. The lists in Genesis 5 and 11 are not just genealogies but chronologies. Genealogies often leave out names. To say, "Jesus is the Son of David" is a genealogy. But what we have in Genesis 5 and 11 are chronologies, where the patriarchs are listed with their age when they begot a son, whose age is also listed when he begot a son, and so on.

Genesis 11:27-32

This final paragraph of chapter 11 gives the beginning of the family tree of Terah. It also shows the origin of Lot, who becomes a prominent person later in Genesis. Apparently, Terah was an idolater because Joshua 24:2 says, *Joshua said to all the people, "Thus says the LORD, the God of Israel, 'From ancient times your fathers lived beyond the River, namely, Terah, the father of Abraham and the father of Nahor, and they served other gods.'"*

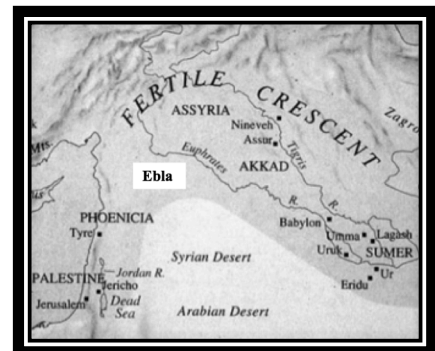


The river referred to by Joshua is undoubtedly the Euphrates, so the comment by Joshua shows that God called Abram from the polytheism that surrounded him in Mesopotamia, and to abandon the religion of his father.

It is interesting that the chapter ends telling us *The days of Terah were two hundred and five years; and Terah died.* Longevity had taken a nosedive since the Flood. The average lifespan before the flood was 915 years, now Terah died at 205.

Excavations at Ebla, Syria Confirm the Authenticity of Genesis

Approximately 18,000 clay tablets and other fragments were found laying in piles at the site of the ancient city of Ebla in Syria in 1974-75. Archeologists tell us that these clay tablets, written in Sumerian and Eblaite, a Semitic dialect, indicate the city flourished from 2400 to 2250 B.C. Since the Flood was around 2400 and the Tower of Babel was around 2300, these dates are close. The tablets include a reference to the five cities recorded in Genesis 14:8-9: Sodom, Gomorrah, Admah, Zeboiim, and Bela in the exact same sequence as Genesis 14. Also, one of Ebla's major kings was named Eber, not the same person, but the same name



that Moses listed in Genesis 10 and 11. The Ebla tablets, dated a thousand years before Moses (who wrote Genesis around 1,400 B.C.), reveal a high level of sophistication in writing and describe a civilization that parallels the civilization of Abraham as he moved from Ur to Haran to the land of Canaan. [See informationa-
boutgod.com.]



Applications from Genesis 11

There were (at least) four basic sins committed at the Tower of Babel:

1. They disobeyed a direct command of God.

Application? Simple. Don't disobey a specific command of God for our age.

2. Their motivation was based in pride. The spiritual purpose for the tower was to *make for ourselves a name* (or a *fame*).

Application? Simple. Don't be proud of anyone or anything, ever.

3. They disobeyed God by doing something that was not necessarily wrong. Their sin was not in building a city or a tower. There is no command of God that prohibited either one. But they used something, that was not in-and-of-itself sinful, to disobey a command of God. If we asked them about their building project, they might say, "What's the problem? God never prohibited building cities and towers."

Application? Not so simple. Because the act itself is not sinful, we can easily justify what we are doing when it results in disobeying or not fulfilling a command of God. An example might be involvement in political or social causes that rob us of the time and energy to *Go therefore make disciples, be My witnesses and entrust these to faithful men who will be able to teach others also* (Matthew 28:1; Acts 1:8; 2 Timothy 2:2).

4. They used technology to disobey God.

Application? Don't buy into the idea that technology, such as the development of the West, is the grace of God. It can be used to spread the Gospel, but it will also be used to bring the antichrist to power. Technology can be a power for good or evil. Technology is a tool. Be careful how you use it.

Questions from Genesis 11

True or False?

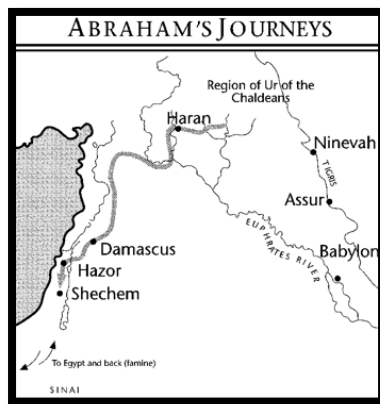
1. Adam and Noah probably spoke the same language.
2. Noah and Abraham probably spoke the same language.
3. Shem and Abraham probably spoke the same language.
4. Arpachshad and Terah probably spoke the same language.
5. Terah and Joseph probably spoke the same language.

Answers: (1) True. (2) False. (3) False. (4) True (Arpachshad's language would be changed at the Tower, but Terah was his descendant.) (5) True.

Genesis 12

Genesis 12:1

Chapter 12 begins by taking us back to when Abram was still living in Ur of the Chaldeans. Stephen told the council in Acts 7:2, *The God of glory appeared to our father Abraham when he was in Mesopotamia, before he lived in Haran.* So Abram heard from God while he was still in Ur. The text reads, *And said Yahweh to Abram.* This word for *said* is the same Hebrew word אָמַר (*amar*) used for God speaking to Adam, Eve, Cain, Abel, and Noah. It's the very common word used for people speaking to one another in words. So, although we do not know the form this communication took, we know that Abram did not just have a feeling of God's call, or get a circumstantial inkling of God's leading. This was a plain, audible, verbal command from God to Abram.



The command included Abram making a clean break from his past. He was to leave three (overlapping) areas:

- His *country* (a geographic and cultural move)
- His *relatives* (a change of relationships)
- His *father's house* (leaving close family)

And he was to *go forth* to an unfamiliar land, which God would show him when, but not before, he got there.

Genesis 12:2-3

As Noah was selected by God's *grace* amidst the judgment of the Flood, Abram was selected by God's *blessing* after the judgment of the Tower of Babel. The Hebrew word בְּרָכָה (*berakah*) for *blessing*

is a *gift*, that is, a *benefit*. So the *grace* given to Noah (Genesis 6:8) was a "selective favor" and the *blessing* given to Abram was a "selective benefit." And connected to that benefit was the promise, *I will...make your name great.* Certainly, we all know Abram's name. Even the people of the land of Canaan recognized *God is with you in all that you do* (Genesis 21:22).

The next phrase, *you will be a blessing*, is often poorly translated. This is not just a prediction, it's a command—you *shall* (imperative masculine singular) *be a blessing*. So actually, Abram was given two general commands:

1. To leave his homeland and go to Canaan
2. To be a blessing (give a benefit) to the land that God loved (Deuteronomy 11:11-12)

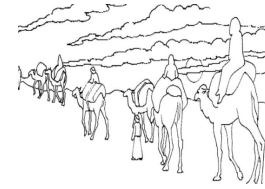
So God chose a land and now He chose a people, the seed of Abram, to care for that land.

The Abrahamic Covenant is then concluded with three promises:

1. *I will bless those who bless you.* God will *give a benefit* to those who give a benefit to Abram.
2. *The one who curses you I will curse.* God will invoke "harm or misery" (Oxford Dictionary definition of the word "curse") on those who do so to Abram.
3. *In you all the families of the earth will be blessed.* It is not clear how Moses (or Abram) understood this. But it is clear, from the later revelation given to the Apostle Paul, that God understood it to include the salvation Jesus Christ (the seed of Abraham) would bring to the world (Galatians 3:3, 10).

Genesis 12:4-5

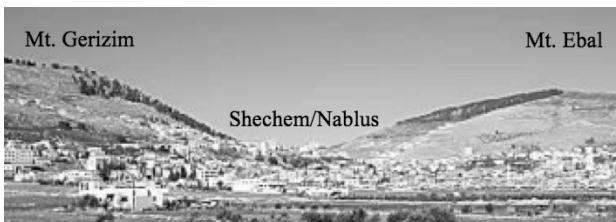
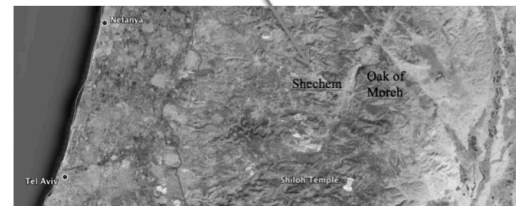
When Abram was 75 and Sarah was 65, after their father Terah died, they departed from Haran. They left with an entourage of people (literally *souls which he had acquired*). It was apparently common for others to join and serve a patriarch or family for their own support and security. Gentiles followed Moses in the wilderness. The Midianites lived with the Israelites in the Land. Abram's entourage seems to have also included slaves. But it also seems that the servants became proselytes to Abram's faith. In other words, they believed in Abram's testimony of Yahweh commanding him to go to Canaan. When Abram circumcised himself and Ishmael, it also included *all the servants who were born in his house and all who were bought with his money, every male among the men of Abraham's household* (Genesis 17:23).



Genesis 12:6-7

Leaving Haran, Abram traveled southwest along what became the Via Maris, the oldest highway in the world, stretching from Babylon to Egypt. Although it wasn't much of a road yet, it had been about 350 years since the Flood and 250 years since the Tower of Babel, so there was probably a trail for Abram's caravan to follow.

They would have traveled through Damascus, then west to the southern edge of Mount Hermon near the area that would later be occupied by the tribe of Dan. Then they turned south following the western ridge of the Hula Valley in what is today Upper Galilee. When they came to the Sea of Galilee (then called the Sea of Chinnereth), they followed its western rim through what is now Tiberius.



Then they most likely went through the Jezreel Valley down what became the Old Patriarch's Road, which ran through the central mountain area of Canaan until they came to Shechem (today's city of Nablus). Shechem is in the one-mile (1.6 kilometer) valley defined by Mount Ebal on the north and Mount Gerizim on the South.

Next, Moses tells us *the Canaanite was then in the land*, genealogically tying the people of the land to Noah's grandson Canaan, who was cursed in Genesis 9:25. Canaan's relatives emigrated here, probably after the scattering at the Tower of Babel. So the Canaanites may have been in the land 250 years before Abram arrived.

To our knowledge, Abram did not climb Gerizim or Ebal, he climbed the mountain just east of Mount Ebal to a place called the Oak of Moreh. Here we read for the first time, *The Lord appeared to Abram*. God spoke to Abram in Ur of the Chaldeans and in Haran of northern Mesopotamia, but the first time we are told God **appeared** to Abram was in the land Canaan on this mountain at the Oak of Moreh.

God appeared to Abram three times that we know of:

1. Here, across from Shechem
2. When God sealed His covenant with him by circumcision (in chapter 17)

3. When God appeared with two angels in Hebron and told him Sarah would have a child, just before the angels removed Lot from Sodom and destroyed the city (in chapters 18–19).

Then God gave Abram a promise. One brief sentence that is the foundation for understanding all prophetic history. The statement reiterates the promise of land and seed, and implies a blessing.

To your descendants I will give this land.

Before he left that mountain and the Oak of Moreh, Abram *built an altar there to the LORD who had appeared to him*. There is both a tree and the ruins of an altar there today. Neither of them were there at Abram’s time, of course, but they do serve to mark the location.



Genesis 12:8

Then Abram traveled south *to the mountain on the east of Bethel...and there he built an altar to the LORD*. This altar became a significant place of worship. Abram returned here after his sojourn in Egypt (13:4). This was where Abram would soon separate from Lot (13:11), and where later his grandson Jacob had a dream where *a ladder was set on the earth with its top reaching to heaven; and behold, the angels of God were ascending and descending on it* (28:12). This is also the place where (600 years later) Joshua lost his first battle after the victory at Jericho. Regrettably, 1100 years after Abram, this was also one place (the other was in Dan) where Jeroboam set up an idolatrous golden calf for the Israelites of the Northern Kingdom to worship (1 Kings 12:28-29).

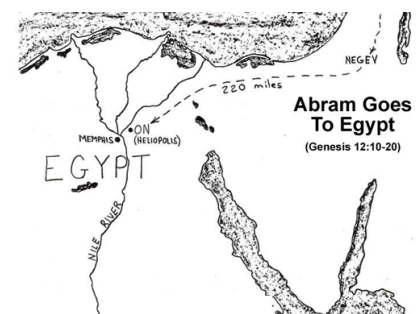
Noah was the first person (we know of) to *build an altar to the Lord* (to Yahweh) and offer *burnt offerings on the altar* (8:20). During his life in the Land, Abram built four altars:

1. The one at the Oak of Moreh, the mountain across from Shechem (verse 7)
2. This one at Bethel (verse 8)
3. In a place called *the oaks of Mamre* in Hebron (13:18)
4. At the place on Mount Moriah (the later location of temple in Jerusalem), where God told him to sacrifice his son Isaac (22:2, 9)

Genesis 12:9-10

Abram kept moving south. Bedouins have to keep moving because their sheep and cattle eat up all the grass, and they have to keep finding new grazing land. The Negev is the far southern part of Israel, which today is mostly a desert.

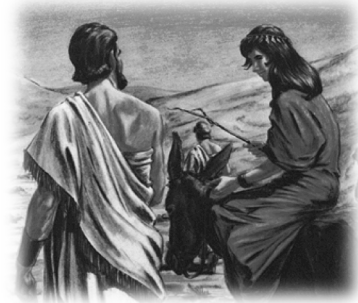
We don’t know how it looked in Abram’s time, but we do know there was a famine, and famines were not uncommon (see 26:1 and 41:56; Ruth 1:1). It wouldn’t help for Abram to go back north because *the famine was severe in the land*. So Abram went south and west to Egypt where there was a large metropolitan area, the fertile land of Goshen in the Nile Delta, and irrigated crops along the Nile River. Apparently, it was common for people in the area to go to Egypt when there was famine. An inscription on the grave of Horemheb (a pharaoh who reigned in the 1300s B.C.) reads: “Certain of the foreigners who know not how they may live have come.... Their countries are starving” (Ancient Near Eastern Texts, Princeton, 1969).



The word גֵר (*gur*) can mean *sojourn, live or dwell as a foreigner or stay*. So it does not tell us if Abram planned a short or prolonged time in Egypt. Possibly he didn't know himself. But it is fair to assume he believed God's covenant and planned an eventual return to Canaan.

Genesis 12:11-13

As they were approaching Egypt, Abram told Sarah *you are a beautiful woman*. Admittedly, that's a good way to start a conversation with your wife. Sarah was 65 years old and Abram was 75 when they left Haran. But the longevity at the time was about twice ours (Terah died at 205, Abram died at 175, and Sarah lived to be 127). Putting this together with Abram's (and the Egyptians') statement about Sarah's beauty, we can conclude that she was a strikingly beautiful woman, probably comparable in appearance to an age today in the late 20s or early 30s. Abram probably appeared as one would in their late 30s or early 40s. We can assume, from the fact that Moses recorded no response from Sarah, that she agreed with the plan. Actually, she seems to have agreed with it before they left Mesopotamia (Genesis 20:12-13).



Genesis 12:14-15

Sarah's beauty is confirmed by the fact that the Egyptians also *saw that the woman was very beautiful*. She was apparently put in Pharaoh's special harem, the one in his own house. It's amazing that his officials picked her out as being so beautiful that they thought it was prudent to praise her to Pharaoh. This confirms that beauty is not just "in the eyes of the beholder." It was the same in Egypt as it was in Canaan or Mesopotamia. Beauty is objective, not subjective.

Genesis 12:16

If you condemn Abram for what he did, keep in mind that God never did, at least Moses never said He did. In itself that's not all that significant because, although there is much judgment in Genesis, there are many patriarch sins recorded without comment from God.

Genesis 12:17

The nature of the disease or diseases is not known. Many have suggested they were the kind of illnesses that prevented Pharaoh from having sexual relations with Sarah. It was not hard for Pharaoh to figure out that having Sarah was the problem because, as soon as she arrived, he and his house became severely ill with *great plagues*.

Genesis 12:18-20

Clearly, Pharaoh was angry with Abram. He asked three questions, which are all basically the same question, asked three ways. Actually, none of them are questions, anyway, they are all accusations. It's clear Pharaoh is angry, and Abram is kicked out of the country.

Applications from Genesis 12

Ethical decisions can be difficult. Here are the main ethical systems, including the one suggested here:

Non-Christian Ethical Systems

1. *The end justifies the means* – A justifiable end justifies a bad means — **but** there is no way to determine what constitutes a justifiable end. One might say the end of promoting homosexual marriage justifies voting for lying politicians.
2. *Situation Ethics* — The situation itself determines what is right — **but** to say the situation determines what is right means I determine what's right.
3. *Pragmatism* – What works is what works over the long haul — **but** there is no way to determine what works long-term.

Christian Ethical Systems

1. *Absolutism* – This says just keep the absolute biblical command you are facing. Real conflicts do not exist. It's true that morals are absolute, **but** the Bible describes many conflicts. The mega-conflict is that the cross of Christ violates the justice of God. It's a violation of justice for the innocent to pay for the sins of the guilty (Ezekiel 18 & 33). But, at the cross, the innocent paid for the sins of the guilty (2 Corinthians 5:21).
2. *Hierarchicalism* – This says to keep the highest moral norm in every situation. For example, life-saving is a higher law than truth-telling. It's true that there is a hierarchy of values, **but** the Bible has many lists of absolute morals with no statement of an absolute hierarchy. Hierarchies must be discerned from situations, but situations are not commands. For example, life-keeping was not a priority over truth-telling when Jael killed Sisera in Judges 4:17-22.
3. *Focus on God's goodness* – Biblical morals are absolute, not relative. Also, some virtues (and sins) are greater than others. But we are responsible to make decisions about life situations, which have real conflicts without a biblically prescribed hierarchy which require wisdom and where obeying one will violate another. One thing is clear biblically, it should always be our purpose to glorify God by focusing on what is good according to the character of God.

Questions from Genesis 12

1. Abram was to leave
 - A. His aunts, uncles, and cousins
 - B. Ur of the Chaldeans
 - C. His father's business
2. The reason Abram asked Sarah to say she was his sister was
 - A. Because she actually was his sister
 - B. Because she was very beautiful
 - C. Because he had told her to say that before they left Mesopotamia
 - D. All of the above
3. Pharaoh and his house had great plagues because
 - A. Sarah was Abram's wife
 - B. Sarah was very beautiful
 - C. Sarah had been kidnapped
 - D. All of the above

4. Was it sinful for Abram to say (or ask Sarah to say) she was his sister?
 - A. Yes
 - B. No
 - C. Maybe
5. Pharaoh knew that Sarah was Abram's wife because *The Lord struck Pharaoh and his house with great plagues*. Does that mean we can determine God's leading through circumstances?
 - A. Yes
 - B. No
 - C. Maybe

Answers: (1) A. He was told to leave his family and country, not a city or business. (2) B. The others are true but not the reason. (3) C. The others are only relevant because *she was taken*. (4) C. It goes to motive, and motives cannot be known. (5) B. Unlike Pharaoh, we have a sufficient Scripture to apply. Anything else is guessing.

Genesis 13

Genesis 13:1-4

In a sense, the first paragraph of chapter 13 is a transition between Abram's sojourn in Egypt and the rest of his life. Moses emphasized the fact that, as Abram left Egypt, he not only had his beautiful wife Sarah, but he was extremely wealthy, his wealth being measured in both livestock and precious metals. Abram returned to Bethel/Ai, the second place he built an altar (the first being on the hill called *the oak of Moreh*, east of *Shechem*—12:6). There, Abram prayed to Yahweh.



Genesis 13:5-7

The second paragraph set the stage for the separation of Abram and Lot. Lot was also wealthy. His wealth is listed as livestock and tents, but not precious metals. The mention of the Canaanites and Perizzites (another clan of Canaanites, who are mentioned throughout the Old Testament—34:30; Deuteronomy 7:1-4; Judges 1:1-7; 3:5-6; 1 Kings 9:20-21; Ezra 9:1) was probably because these Canaanites had already possessed the choice places in the land. This meant Abram and Lot had to keep moving their livestock to find new grass.

Genesis 13:8-13

The third paragraph of chapter 13 displays the characters of Abram and Lot:

- Abram's character is evident in three ways:
 1. He was a **peacemaker**. He wanted *no strife between you and me*—verse 8.
 2. He approached a conflict situation with **humility**. He was clearly Lot's superior, genealogically and physically. All of Lot's possessions were his because of Abram, and Abram could have simply said, "The land was given to me, go find your own land." Yet, Abram called them *brothers*.
 3. He took the **second choice**. The normal way to divide things fairly between two people is for one person to make the division line and the other one to make the first choice. But Abram invited Lot to do both.
- Lot's character is evident in two ways:
 1. He chose **selfishly** what appeared to be the most flourishing place.
 2. He was **insensitive to evil**. He did not consider the (apparently, well-known) fact that the *men of Sodom were wicked exceedingly and sinners against the LORD*—13:13.



We should also not leave this paragraph without noting the comment that the Jordan River Valley was *like the garden of the LORD, like the land of Egypt as you go to Zoar*. This helps validate the Mosaic authorship of Genesis. We don't know where Zoar was, but the author did, indicating that the author was familiar with Egypt, as Moses, of course, was.

Genesis 13:14-18

The fourth paragraph repeats the Abrahamic Covenant by an audible voice [אָמַר (*amar*)] from God. As in chapter 12, it is a promise of **land**—verse 15a, **seed**—verse 15b, and **blessing**—verse 16. Abram is invited to walk about the land, but he just *moved his tent and came and dwelt by the oaks of Mamre, which are in Hebron, and there he built an altar to the LORD*—verse 18.

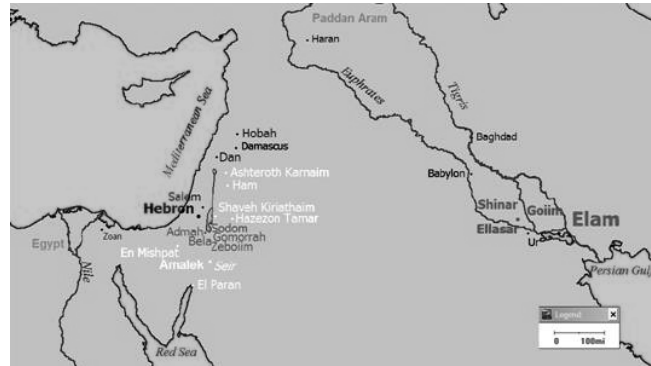
Genesis 14

Genesis 14:1-12

After Lot moved his tents as far as Sodom (13:12), and Abram moved to Hebron, four kings from Mesopotamia, under the leadership of Chedorlaomer, king of Elam, came over to conquer five kings in southern Canaan. Ryrie lists the following identifications:

1. *Shinar*—Babylonia
2. *Ellasar*—Uncertain; perhaps North Mesopotamia
3. *Elam*—The area that was later Persia
4. *Goiim* (or king of nations), likely, a nomadic people who had not yet formed a kingdom

These four kings represent most of ancient southern Mesopotamia, and their armies conquered five kings from the valley of *Siddim* (that is, the Salt Sea), probably from Masada and south.



In *The Biblical Archaeologist* of May 1976, and in public lectures and discussions at the University of Michigan in November 1976, Professor Giovanni Pettinato, of the University of Rome, reported on about 17,000 tablets found at the excavation site in Ebla, Syria, dated around 2200 B.C. and earlier. So this would be about 200 years before Abram went to Canaan and less than 100 years after the Tower of Babel. The following are excerpts from “EBLA: Its Impact on Bible Records” by Clifford Wilson, M.A., B.D., Ph.D.



“One aspect of special interest to Bible students is that a number of Old Testament cities are referred to... There is Salim, possibly the city of Melchizedec, Hazor, Lachish, Megiddo, Gaza, Dor, Sinai, Ashtaroth, Joppa and Damascus. Of special interest is Urusalima (Jerusalem), this being the earliest known reference to this city. Although a city called Salim is referred to in the tablets, there is no indication just what its geographic location is. It is referred to separately from Urusalima (Jerusalem), and this would indicate that the two cities are separate. Two of the towns mentioned are Sodom and Gomorrah... There are actually references to five “cities of the Plain” (to use the Biblical term at Genesis 14:2), and these were Sodom, Gomorrah, Admah, Zeboim, and Zoar” [<http://www.icr.org>].

The kings of the five cities south of the Dead Sea served the Mesopotamian kings for 12 years, then, in the thirteenth year, they rebelled (14:4), so the Mesopotamian kings, under the leadership of Chedorlaomer, returned and defeated the kings of the valley of *Siddim* (that is, the salt Sea) and...they took all the goods of Sodom and Gomorrah and all their food supply, and departed. They also took Lot, Abram’s nephew (14:11).

Genesis 14:13-16

Someone escaped from the battle and hiked over the Judean Wilderness to tell Abram in Hebron. So Abram put together an army of men from his friends Eshcol and Aner, plus 318 men that were *his trained men born in his house*. These were, apparently, young men trained for this kind of warfare. This gives us some idea of the size and organized complexity of Abram’s household.

The text says they pursued them as far as Dan. Since Dan was not called Dan until after the time of the Judges, the text has been edited to update the name to Dan. This was probably done by Ezra, as he *read from the book, from the law of God, translating to give the sense so that they understood the reading* (Nehemiah 8:8).

Abram's private army divided forces at Dan, surrounded the Mesopotamian kings, and defeated them at a place called Hobah, north of Damascus. Then Abram returned with all the goods and the kidnapped people.

Genesis 14:17-24

On his way back to Hebron, Abram and his army passed through *the valley of Shaveh (that is, the King's Valley)*, which was probably the Kidron Valley (2 Samuel 18:18). Here, Abram is met by the king of Sodom and by Melchizedek, who is also discussed in Hebrews 7. Between here and Hebrews 7, we learn 10 things about Melchizedek:

- **Both** Genesis 14 and Hebrews 7 say Melchizedek was (1) king of Salem, (2) priest of the Most High God, (3) the one who blessed Abram, and (4) was given a tenth of all the spoil of battle.
- **Genesis adds** that Melchizedek also blessed God.
- **Hebrews adds** six other facts about Melchizedek not given in Genesis: (5) he is the king of righteousness; (6) he is the king of peace; (7) he is without father, without mother, i.e., he has no genealogy; (8) he has neither beginning of days nor end of life; (9) he is made like the Son of God; and (10) he remains a priest perpetually.

From Genesis 14, Melchizedek sounds like a man living in a city called Salem. From Hebrews 7, He sounds like a preincarnate theophany of Christ. But Hebrews 7:15 talks about Jesus as *another priest [who] arises according to the likeness of Melchizedek*. From this, it seems that the author of Hebrews is presenting Melchizedek from Genesis as one who comes from heaven, or at least his priesthood comes from heaven, and is placed on earth as a priest of God for this encounter with Abram.

So our options are:

1. Melchizedek was a heavenly being who represented this heavenly eternal priesthood. This is favored by Hebrews 7:15.
2. Melchizedek was an earthly man designated to meet Abram, but the priesthood he represented was eternal. This is favored by Genesis 14:18-20, and the requirement for a priest to be a human in Hebrews 5:1.
3. Melchizedek was a pre-incarnate appearance of Christ, and the *other priest* of Hebrews 7:15 is post-incarnate resurrected Christ. This is favored by the fact that there are other preincarnate appearances of Christ.

Frankly, I don't see that we have enough evidence to confidently choose one of these options over the other.

After Melchizedek gave Abram bread and wine, Abram gave him ten percent of the spoils. This is the first mention of tithing. Notice, this was not a tax of regular income, as it was under the Mosaic Law, but a tenth of the spoil of this rescue operation.

The king of Sodom suggested that Abram keep the rest of the goods and just give him the people Abram had rescued. But Abram said he would only keep what the men had already consumed and the payment for his friends Eshcol and Aner. The reason Abram gave was *for fear you would say, 'I have made Abram rich* (14:23).

Genesis 15

Genesis 15:1-7

After many years of marriage (Ryrie says 10 years), Abram still had no children. And apparently, that's what was on his mind when God came to him in a vision and said, *Do not fear, Abram, I am a shield to you; Your reward shall be very great.* Most likely, God was telling him not to fear being childless because Abram responded with, *I am childless, and the heir of my house is Eliezer of Damascus.* Ryrie says, "Tablets that have been discovered show that it was customary for wealthy, childless couples to adopt a servant and make him their heir." Anyway, it is clear that Abram intended to make his chief servant his heir. God clearly told Abram, *This man will not be your heir; but one who will come forth from your own body.* But God did not tell him, at this point, that the child would come from Sarah. God only took him out at night and pointed to the sky and told him his children will be as uncountable as the stars. This is followed by the first statement of faith in the Bible:

Then he believed in the LORD; and He reckoned it to him as righteousness.

The word *believed* is a translation of the Hebrew verb אָמַן (*aman*), basically meaning *to confirm*, or *affirm* – similar to our word "amen." So Abram said "amen" to God's promise of verse 5. But when Paul quoted this in Romans 4:3 and Galatians 3:6 and James quoted it in James 2:23, the New Testament authors use the Greek work πιστεύω (*pisteuo*) for *belief* or *faith*. And Abraham's faith was חָשַׁב (*chashab*) *reckoned, accounted to, or thought of* as righteousness. What Abram believed was that he would have a child. Then God also reiterated the rest of the Abrahamic Covenant, that He would give him the land of Canaan as a possession.

Genesis 15:8-10

When Abram asked, "*How may I know that I will possess it?*" God specified a very strange ceremony of splitting animals in half. Then, later that night, God passed some sort of fire between them. All of this signified a solemn oath between them (Jeremiah 34:18-19). Other than that, we are not told what any of this means, although the procedure was apparently familiar to Abram.

Genesis 15:11-14

Verse 11 tells us that some *birds of prey came down upon the carcasses, and Abram drove them away.* This may have been an indication to Abram that something bad would happen, thus accounting for the next verse, telling us *a deep sleep fell upon Abram; and behold, terror and great darkness fell upon him.* God then explained this fear, apparently caused by the sign of the birds of prey, saying, *your descendants will be strangers in a land that is not theirs, where they will be enslaved and oppressed four hundred years, approximating the 430 years the Israelites were in Egypt (Exodus 12:40).*

Genesis 15:15-21

God then told Abram of his death at an old age and that his descendants would return to the land. But God also made an interesting statement. He said, *in the fourth generation they will return here, for the iniquity of the Amorite is not yet complete* (15:16). So God would use Israel's invasion under Joshua to judge the Amorites. That means God knew the Amorites were sinners, their sin was not bad enough for judgment, but it would be in 400 years. God knew what the Amorites were going to do, and what He was going to do about what they were going to do. So His plan included the free will sins of the Amorites, for that sin to increase for 400 years, and for them to be judged for that sin.

Genesis 16

Genesis 16:1-6

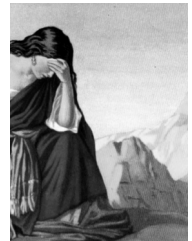
Abram was 75 years old when he first left Haran for Canaan (12:4). Now, after 10 years in Canaan, Abram was 85, Sarah was 75, and they still had no children. Sarah concluded (correctly, considering the sovereignty of God), *The Lord has prevented me from bearing*. Although her analysis was correct, her solution was not to wait on the Lord but to give her maid Hagar to Abram. Ross writes, “In the legal custom of that day, a barren woman could give her maid to her husband as a wife, and the child born of that union was regarded as the first wife’s child” (Allen Ross, “Bible Knowledge Commentary”).

As with Adam, Abram also *listened to the voice of his wife* and took her maid Hagar as a *wife*. Sarah probably acquired Hagar when they left Egypt (12:16). What Abram did was apparently neither illegal nor immoral. The word *ishshah* (אִשָּׁה) can mean either *wife* or *woman*, and it undoubtedly means one he had legal/moral sexual relations with. This was not fornication or adultery. But it is not clear if she became a legal wife. Before he died, Abram took another wife/woman named Keturah, who bore him six more sons. But Genesis 25:6 says, *to the sons of his concubines, Abraham gave gifts*, probably meaning that Hagar and Keturah were considered concubines, a wife/woman he had legal children with, but not a wife whose children had a right to his inheritance. This seems to be confirmed, when they were arguing, and Abram stated that Sarah had power over Hagar to send her away. But Hagar apparently left on her own accord, when Sarah *treated her harshly*.

Genesis 16:7-14

This paragraph describes an event which, if Hagar’s conclusion was correct, is one of the few theophanies of God. She said, “*You are a God who sees;*” *for she said, “Have I even remained alive here after seeing Him.”* We would then conclude this was a pre-incarnate appearance of Christ (John 1:18). This Angel (or Messenger) of Yahweh, Hagar calls אֱלֹהֵי רֵאִי (El-raei, or El-roi), *a God who sees*. The place is then named Beer-lahai-roi. It is an unknown location south of Beersheba, the same place where Isaac lived (24:62). The Messenger tells Hagar five things:

1. *Return to your mistress, and submit yourself to her authority.*
2. *I will greatly multiply your descendants so that they will be too many to count.*
3. *And you will bear a son; and you shall call his name Ishmael,*
4. *He will be a wild donkey of a man, His hand will be against everyone, And everyone’s hand will be against him;*
5. *And he will live to the east of all his brothers.*



The descendants of Ishmael are the Arabs, who, in general, have always been in conflict *against everyone*. But it should be noted that major atrocities have been committed by Muslims, not Arabs. For example, Iran and Turkey are also governed by Muslims, and they are not Arabs. And Arab Christians are not committing atrocities. The word *east* in the fifth statement is usually translated *in the face of, in the presence of* or simply *before*. The point is, they are always going to be there, and they will always *be against everyone*.

Genesis 16:15-16

The chapter ends with a brief paragraph confirming what the Messenger told Hagar. When Ishmael was born (about a year after the chapter began), Abram was 86 years old and Sarah was 76, but we do not know the age of Hagar.

Genesis 17

Genesis 17:1-8

Thirteen years have elapsed, since the last chapter when Ishmael was born. In chapter 17, Abram is 99 and Sarah is 89, well beyond her childbearing years. Yahweh appeared to Abram and identified Himself as אֱלֹהֵי שָׁדַי (*El-shadi*), God Almighty. But Moses also identified Him here as אֱלֹהִים (*Elohim*), the plural word used for “God” since creation. God told Abram to *walk before Me and be blameless*, and He repeated the Abrahamic Covenant. Then God changed his name from Abram (exalted father) to Abraham (father of a multitude). And remember, Sarah was still barren. This means the people would have to address Abram as Abraham, the father of a multitude, declaring God’s covenant, with no evidence for it except the Word of God.



Genesis 17:9-14

This paragraph contains the command for circumcision of every male. It is indeed a strange sign for a covenant. It was not unique to Israel, it included servants and those born into their households, and it was only for males. Many have suggested reasons for this symbol (cleanliness, separation, purity), but no explanation is given. Nonetheless, it was very significant to God. Any male over eight days old, who was not circumcised, was to be cut off from the Jewish people. This command was repeated for the Jews throughout their generations but was never prescribed for the church. Circumcision for this age is only symbolic of being set apart by the Spirit (Romans 2:28-29).

Genesis 17:15-27

Sarah’s name is changed from Sarai (princess) to Sarah (my princess). The significance is not obvious. Possibly it indicated she would be Abraham’s princess, that is, the one who would bear his children of the covenant. With this announcement, *Abraham fell on his face and laughed*.

Laughter in the Bible (and all ancient literature) was never about humor – as in a funny story. Laughter was either silliness or mocking, and both were usually condemned. Abraham’s laugh seems to be a sign of disbelief, based on his age and that of Sarah.

So Abraham says something most Jews wish he hadn’t said, “*Oh that Ishmael might live before You.*” God assured Abraham that the covenant would be fulfilled through Sarah. Nonetheless, He would bless Ishmael, multiplying him exceedingly. Specifically, he would have 12 sons.

The chapter ends telling us that Abraham obeyed God and circumcised himself at 99, Ishmael at 13, and all who were in his household.

Genesis 18

Genesis 18:1-15

Verse 1 tells us that Yahweh appeared to Abraham *by the oaks of Mamre*, a place near Hebron, *while he was sitting at the tent door in the heat of the day*. Notice that, “Abraham’s stay in Palestine was characterized by tents (cf. 12:8; 13:3) and altars (cf. 12:7, 8; 13:4, 18; 26:25), rather than by palaces and temples” (Ryrie). Abraham’s vast wealth did not result in luxurious living.

When Yahweh and two angels approached Abraham’s tent, they looked like men and, apparently, Abraham recognized Yahweh from previous appearances. This was the same Yahweh who walked with Adam in the Garden, spoke to Noah, went down to see the Tower of Babel, and had given revelation to Abraham before. Abraham offered them bread, then asked Sarah and a servant to prepare a full meal of bread cakes, veal, cheese (curds) and milk. After, or during, the meal, Yahweh told Abraham that Sarah would have a child. Sarah, hearing it from inside the tent, laughed. This led to a statement of the omnipotence of Yahweh, *Is anything too difficult for the Lord?* Sarah must have joined the conversation sometime during the meal because she denied laughing, and Yahweh said directly to her, “*No, but you did laugh*” (18:14-15), also revealing His omniscience.

Genesis 18:16-21

After the meal, Abraham accompanied the men as they walked over the Judean hill country to where they could see Sodom and the cities of the valley south of the Dead Sea. Moses then gives us a glimpse into the Lord’s thoughts. He asked Himself if He should tell Abraham what He was about to do to Sodom. His decision was to tell Abraham because He had *chosen him, so that he may command his children and his household after him to keep the way of the LORD by doing righteousness and justice* (18:19). What He told Abraham was, “*I will go down now, and see if they have done entirely according to its outcry, which has come to Me; and if not, I will know*” (18:21). All this is fascinating. The Lord, the One who not only knows everything but has predestined everything, asked Himself what to do and went (sent the two angels) to Sodom to see if it was really as bad as the *outcry* about them. It is similar to when He went down to see the Tower of Babel. The predetermination of the event did not eliminate the free will and, therefore, moral responsibility of those committing the sin, nor the real experience of the Lord learning about it. It seems that the sovereignty of God, the free will of man, and the experience of reality as it happens are all 100% real.

Genesis 18:22-33

The two angels left Abraham and the Lord and went down to Sodom. Then Abraham tried to negotiate a settlement to spare Sodom, if there were some righteous men in the city. The Lord agreed all the way down to 10 men. But, of course, only Lot was righteous (2 Peter 2:7). The basic principle that Abraham used, and the Lord agreed with, is: *Shall not the Judge of all the earth deal justly* (18:25). This is the basic statement of all judgment. First, we should notice that Yahweh (a theophany of pre-incarnate Christ – John 1:18) is the Judge of all the earth (John 5:22). Then we should notice that whatever His judgment was, it would be just. For example, “How will God judge those who have never heard the Gospel?” Answer: justly. However, the justice of God is not fairness, measuring one against another, but justice, in the sense of consistency with His own character. Also, notice here the Lord agreed to not destroy Sodom if there were 10 righteous men in the city. This shows the patience and endurance of the Lord. I suspect the reason we have not been Raptured and the world is not yet experiencing the future great tribulation is because, as evil as the world is, there are still some righteous men.

Genesis 19

Genesis 19:1-11

When the two angels, who left Abraham and the Lord in the Judean hill country, arrived at Sodom, Lot was sitting in the gate. Some suggest Lot was a judge or city elder, but more likely he had received word that they were coming and knew who they were because *when Lot saw them, he rose to meet them and bowed down with his face to the ground.*

The angels wanted to stay in the city square, apparently, where visitors would spend the night if they had no other lodging. But Lot, knowing the danger from the homosexuals of Sodom, *urged them strongly* to stay with him. So the homosexual men of the city came to Lot's door to have sexual relations with the angels, *both young and old, all the people from every quarter.*

Lot offered his daughters to them, but they wanted the men. We can only speculate about why Lot offered his daughters. It could be he was actually willing to sacrifice their virginity, or that he considered angels of higher value than his daughters, or it may have been because he knew the homosexual men would not take them. At any rate, the angels pulled Lot back into the house and struck the homosexuals with blindness. [I have referred to these men as homosexuals for the sake of convenience, but the Bible does not do so, anywhere. Neither the Bible, nor science, identifies anyone as biologically homosexual. It only recognizes homosexual acts.]

Genesis 19:12-29

During the night, at the encouragement of the angels, Lot told his *sons-in-law* about the upcoming destruction of Sodom, but they thought he was joking. These may have been husbands to additional daughters of Lot who died in the destruction, but more likely they were young men betrothed to his virgin daughters. In the morning, the angels had to force Lot, his two daughters, and his wife to leave. After the four of them were outside of the city, Lot asked the angels and was granted permission to go to the small town of Zoar. As they were fleeing, *God rained on Sodom and Gomorrah brimstone and fire.* Meanwhile, Lot's wife turned back and became a pillar of salt. The paragraph ends telling us that Abraham went back to the Judean hill country and saw the smoke of the burning cities.

Jesus compared His Second Coming to both the days of Noah and Lot. Both were times of great evil and progressive technological development. Concerning Lot's time in Sodom, Jesus said: *they were eating, they were drinking, they were buying, they were selling, they were planting, they were building* (Luke 17:28). He also said *remember Lot's wife* (verse 30).

Genesis 19:30-38

We don't know why Lot left Zoar, possibly the people there blamed him for the destruction of Sodom, but more likely he was afraid it would be destroyed by further seismic activity. At any rate, they lived in a cave, where his two daughters got him drunk with wine (further proof that the wine in the Bible was alcoholic) and had sexual relations with him. Moses makes it clear that, in both cases, Lot was so drunk that *he did not know when she lay down or when she arose.* It is very likely that the daughters got this idea from the immorality of Sodom. Their children were named Moab and Ben-Ammi, whose descendants were the Moabites and Ammonites, who lived east of the Dead Sea.



Genesis 20



Genesis 20:1-7

Abraham moved his herds south to Gerar, a city near the coast, about 12 miles (19 kilometers) south of Gaza and about 50 miles (80 kilometers) southwest of Hebron, in the land of the Philistines (21:34). This probably meant the land was much more fertile than it is today.

Whereas it can be argued that Abraham was not at fault when Pharaoh took Sarah in chapter 12, he was clearly at fault here. When Abraham spoke to *Abimelech king of Gerar*, he volunteered the information *she is my sister*, and Sarah also said *he is my brother*. Even though Abimelech apparently took many unmarried women into his harem, Abraham's half-truth about Sarah was not clearly necessary. It was an obvious intent to deceive Abimelech and save himself, while putting Sarah in danger. [Note that Sarah was 90 years old but probably appeared as mid-40s today.]

Abimelech then, in a dream, had a revelation and a conversation with God. There are at least four interesting moral principles here:

1. Abimelech considered himself blameless and innocent, even though he had taken a woman into his harem for sexual relations outside of marriage. And God agreed *that in the integrity of your heart you have done this*.
Fornication, sinful today, was only regulated in Abraham's dispensation.
2. If Abimelech had proceeded to have sexual relations with Sarah, he would have been *sinning* (committing adultery), whether he knew about her being married or not. God said, *"I also kept you from sinning against Me."*
Sinful acts are sinful, whether we know it or not, because sin is against God.
3. In order to prevent sin and his own death, Abimelech had to restore Sarah to Abraham.
It is up to us to choose to rectify a sinful situation.
4. God intervened because Abraham was *a prophet*, and God would fulfill the Abrahamic Covenant through Sarah.
Although it would be sinful in any case, we should not expect God to intervene in every case.

Genesis 20:8-16

In the morning, Abimelech told his servants about the dream and then talked to Abraham. In the conversation, Abraham revealed three things:

- *I thought...they will kill me because of my wife.*
- *She actually is my sister, the daughter of my father, but not the daughter of my mother.*
- *It came about, when God caused me to wander from my father's house, that I said to her, "This is the kindness which you will show to me: everywhere we go, say of me, 'He is my brother.'"*

Once again, Abraham escapes with gifts of animals, servants, and a lot of cash (1000 pieces of silver).

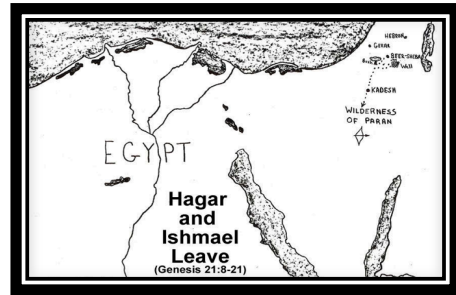
Genesis 20:17-18

At the end of the chapter, Moses tells us that Abraham prayed for Abimelech, and God healed him, his wife, and his maids. God had kept them from having children. This probably meant they had a disease that prevented them from having sexual relations because it is not likely Abraham was in Gerar long enough for them to realize they were simply not getting pregnant.

Genesis 21

Genesis 21:1-21

At the age of 90, Sarah had a son by a clearly miraculous conception. Since she was beyond childbearing years, it appears God created an egg within her and re-started her whole reproductive system. Abraham named the child Isaac and circumcised him on his eighth day. Isaac means, “he laughs.” Sarah confirmed, “*God had made laughter for me.*” This is one of the few times laughter is used in a positive way in Scripture, but notice it is about being joyful, not humorous. There is no humor in the Bible.

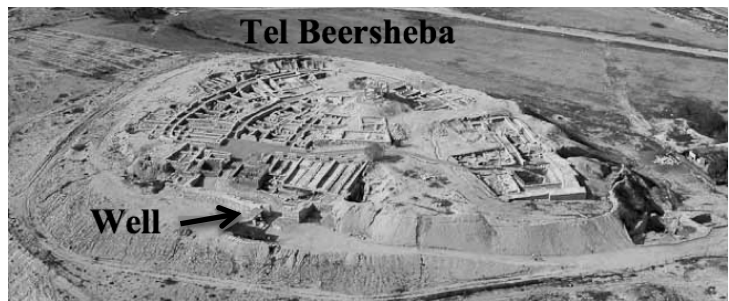


But when Isaac was weaned (usually at two or three years old), Ishmael, now maybe 15 or 16, was *mocking* (another word for *laughing at*) Isaac. Sarah insisted that Abraham drive away Hagar and Ishmael. Moses tells us that *the matter distressed Abraham greatly*. But God spoke to Abraham, telling him to do as Sarah asked. It is interesting that God recognized the emotional pain it would cause Abraham to lose contact with his son but agreed with Sarah because it confirmed the Abrahamic Covenant. What God was doing was more important than Abraham’s feelings.

Hagar and Ishmael wandered in the wilderness south of what would later be called Beersheba. As she and the boy were about to die, *the angel of the God called to Hagar* and assured her they would survive and God would *make a great nation of Ishmael*. Before the paragraph ends, we learn:

- They lived in the wilderness of Paran
- Ishmael became an archer
- Hagar got him an Egyptian wife

So the Arab people are $\frac{3}{4}$ Egyptian, since Hagar was also an Egyptian.



Genesis 21:22-34

In the second paragraph of this chapter, we learn that Abimelech and his army commander Phicol approached Abraham and asked for assurances of peace between them. The size of Abraham’s household, his success, and God’s warning to Abimelech all, no doubt, played a part in Abimelech’s desire for peace. When Abraham complained about a well that his men had dug and Abimelech’s men had seized, Abimelech said he didn’t know about it, and they made an oath of peace. The deal ended with Abraham giving Abimelech, besides other animals, seven ewe lambs. The place was then called Beersheba, which means both “well of the oath” and “well of the seven.” Such a well still exists today in the tel of ancient Beersheba.

The paragraph ends with a couple of interesting comments. Abraham called the name of the Lord :אל עולם (Yahweh El Olam) *The Lord God Everlasting*. It is a declaration of the attribute of God known as **eternity = to be without the restriction of time**.

In verse 34, we learn, *Abraham sojourned in the land of the Philistines for many days*. Some critics say that a mention of the *Philistines* is inaccurate because they supposedly did not appear in Palestine until after 1190 B.C. But the reference is to *the land of the Philistines*, i.e. the land that would later belong to the Philistines. The same is done in other designations such as in the use of the locations of Dan and Beersheba, before they were so-named that in the progress of history.

Genesis 22

Genesis 22:1-14

Genesis 22 describes one of the most studied moral situations of all time. It is discussed in Bible colleges and seminaries, as well as in liberal arts colleges and universities. It is analyzed and debated by everyone, from believers to atheists. The paragraph begins with a statement that *God tested Abraham*. The test ends with the statement in verse 14, *now I know that you fear God*. In the paragraph, God told Abraham to sacrifice his son Isaac on Mount Moriah, the later site of Solomon's Temple.



The first question that comes to mind is, “Since God knows everything that will happen or could happen and He has planned everything that does happen, why did Abraham have to be tested in order for God to know something about his character?” The answer is, in order for morality to be real, Abraham's ability to make unhindered free-will decisions must be just as real as God's sovereignty over those decisions. Otherwise, we would be robots, toy soldiers, machines incapable of love and obedience. Also, God is both transcendent beyond human experience and eminent, involved in human experience. Therefore, He experiences what we do, and that experience is also real. So transcendently God knew Abraham's character, but eminently He learned of it through Abraham's obedience.

The other major question is, “How is this an example of positive moral ethics? In what sense is premeditated murder a positive moral act?” It could be argued from Abraham's answer to Isaac, “*God will provide for Himself the lamb for the burnt offering*,” that Abraham never intended to kill his son. But then he would have failed the test. And according to Hebrews 11:19, it seems Abraham expected that he would kill Isaac, and God would raise him from the dead. So the answer is that obedience to God trumps all other commands.

That being the case, the significant issue is how to recognize the Word of God. The real test for Abraham was not if he would obey God. For Abraham, that was a given. The test was to know that it was God he was obeying. My wife was on the jury of a trial for a woman who murdered her children because “God told her to, just like Abraham.” Radical Muslims murder Christians and Jews and anyone who does not convert to Islam, because God told them to in the Koran. And in the Bible, God told Saul to *put to death both man and woman, child and infant* of the Amalekites. So it's all about our confidence in determining the Word of God that dictates our morality. In the Bible, faith is trust in evidence. Everywhere else, faith is trust without evidence.



After God changed His command to “*Do not stretch out your hand against the lad, and do nothing to him*,” Abraham looked behind him and found a ram caught in the thicket by his horns; and...offered him up for a burnt offering in the place of his son (22:12-13). Then Abraham named the place יהוה יראה [Yahweh Yereh (KJV, Jehovah-jireh)], “the Lord sees” or “the Lord provides.”

Genesis 22:15-24

The second part of the chapter repeats the Abrahamic Covenant and tells us that Abraham returned and lived in Beersheba. The last five verses tell us that Abraham learned about the descendants of his relatives Milcah and Nahor, from whom he would later seek a bride for Isaac.

Genesis 23

Genesis 23:1-2

After the “sacrifice of Isaac” event, Abraham moved to Beersheba. But here we learn that Sarah died in Hebron. So they apparently moved back to Hebron. The text says Abraham *went* (KJV *came*) to mourn for Sarah. That could mean he was with the flocks and herds, and not present with Sarah when she died. Sarah was 127, Isaac was 37 at the time, Abraham was 137, and he would live another 48 years.



Genesis 23:3-16

After mourning for Sarah, Abraham sought to bury her body in a cave near Hebron. The owners of the field were Hittites (23:3, 5, 7, 10, 16, 18, 20). The Hittites did not become a great empire until the 14th century B.C. (Joshua 1:4), but some of them migrated south into Canaan much earlier, probably for commercial reasons. The events of this chapter reflect an oral tradition that was later written in Hittite law. Abraham was clearly held in high esteem by the various groups living in Canaan. So when he asked about buying this cave, he was well received. Abraham addressed a group of Hittites, and one *Ephron the son of Zohar* in particular, because he owned the cave Abraham wished to acquire. Although Abraham wanted the cave, Ephron wanted to sell him the whole field. The “I will give you” discussion is only a purchase procedure whereby Abraham received the whole field for the high price of 400 shekels of silver.

Genesis 23:17-20

The transaction which bought the cave of Machpelah in Mamre of Hebron was finalized *in the hearing of the sons of Heth; even of all who went in at the gate of his city* (23:10), the place of legal and business dealings (19:1). Sarah was not the only one buried in this cave. Eventually, Abraham (25:9), Isaac, his wife Rebekah, their son Jacob, and his first wife Leah (49:29-31; 50:13) were also buried there. But the significance of this purchase goes beyond buying a burial place. It was the first and only piece of the land that Abraham legally owned, and it represented his severing of all ties with Mesopotamia.

Today, this structure sits above the location of the “Cave of the Patriarchs” in Hebron. It was originally constructed by Herod the Great (who reigned from 44-4 B.C.).



Genesis 24

Genesis 24:1-9

Abraham was now old and had one priority left on his “bucket list” – to find a wife for Isaac. So Abraham delegated the job to his oldest servant, probably the Eliezer of chapter 15. Abraham gave Eliezer the strict instruction to get a wife for Isaac from his own relatives, not from the Canaanites, and certainly not to take Isaac back to Aram. Placing his hand *under my thigh* is probably a euphemism for placing his hand on Abraham’s reproductive organs. It must have been common because Jacob made Joseph swear the same way about not burying him in Egypt (47:29). The significance is unknown, except both clearly understood it as a solemn oath.



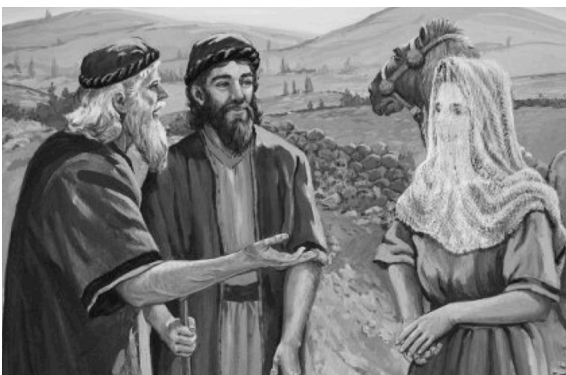
Genesis 24:10-27

Next, we read about Abraham’s servant being guided by the Lord to a well where His prayer is answered. He knew Rebekah was the girl he was seeking when she gave him a drink from the well and watered his 10 camels. The question is, can we determine the will of God this way? Can we ask for a sign and expect an answer, which is a guiding directive from God?

Let’s keep something in mind. This is about God fulfilling His covenant with Abraham. There was a direct verbal revelation from God to Abraham that his seed would continue through Isaac. This was about what God was doing. This is not an example of what God does for anybody who wants direction for something. Although we are not told how Abraham or his servant knew to ask for such a sign, we do know that it was unique and unusual. The Bible is a record of these unique interventions of God. There is no suggestion that such interventions happen to anyone outside the biblical record.

Genesis 24:28-59

Rebekah’s brother Laban took the leadership in the situation. He invited Eliezer and his men to stay. Eliezer recounted his mission and God’s providence. Then the family gave their permission and blessing for Eliezer to take Rebekah to Isaac. Allen Ross writes, “In that society, a woman’s brother gave his sister in marriage, which explains why Laban, Rebekah’s brother, was the negotiator in this marriage contract” (BKC). Maybe, but Laban also was directing the family’s affairs when Jacob came back years later. It seems more like he was head of the family, perhaps after his father’s death. Ryrie tells us that the “gifts to the bride-to-be and her family constituted a kind of dowry, assuring the financial competence of the groom.” Laban and her mother wanted her to stay another 10 days,



but Eliezer wanted to leave right away. They asked Rebekah, and she said, “*I will go.*” So she and her nurse left with Eliezer immediately.

Genesis 24:60-67

The chapter ends with Rebekah being married to Isaac, who was 40 at the time. Isaac did three things:

- *He brought her into his mother Sarah’s tent*
- *He took Rebekah, and she became his wife, and*
- *He loved her*

Genesis 25



Genesis 25:1-6

We are not told when Abraham married Keturah, but the verb *took* and the adjective *another* suggest it was after Sarah's death. Sarah died at 127, when Abraham was 137. If Abraham married Keturah the next year (at his age 138) and since he died at 175, Keturah would have been married to Abraham for 37 years (175 – 138 = 37). She bore him six sons and probably some unnamed daughters. None of these were miraculous births, so she had to be quite young when she was first married to Abraham. Keturah was called both a wife (25:1) and a concubine (1 Chronicles 1:32). A concubine was not a mistress, she was a legal wife, but her children did not share in the inheritance of her husband's family.

The names of the sons Keturah bore Abraham represent later nations to the south and east of Israel. Of special interest are the sons Sheba and Dedan, the ancient names for those in Saudi Arabia. Also the Midianites were prominent through the Old Testament. The Midianites bought Joseph from his brothers and sold him to Pharaoh, the wife of Moses was a Midianite, and the Midianites were the ones oppressing Israel when Gideon was called to be a judge against them.

The *concubines* of verse 6 are probably Hagar and Keturah, and verses 5 and 6 describe the difference between the children of a wife and those of a concubine/wife. The gifts Abraham gave the children of Keturah were probably starter herds and flocks, so that they could sustain themselves as they established a new home *eastward to the land of the east*.

Genesis 25:7-11

Moses makes two comments about Abraham at his death: he was (1) *satisfied with life* and (2) *he was gathered to his people*. The second comment seems to assume life after death and that believers who die are reunited with believers they knew when they were alive. Abraham was buried in the same cave he purchased for Sarah's burial. Ishmael returned and joined in with Isaac for the funeral. After that, we are told *Isaac lived by Beer-lahai-roi*, the same place (somewhere south of Beersheba) where the angel of the Lord met Hagar and Ishmael when they were near death (16:14) and where Isaac first met Rebekah (24:62).



Genesis 25:12-18

By the time Ishmael died at the age of 137, he had 12 sons, as God had predicted (17:20). They lived from Havilah (in north-central Arabia) to Shur (between Beersheba and Egypt). The Ishmaelites lived in hostility toward [or the word can mean *east of*] all their brothers.

Genesis 25:19-36

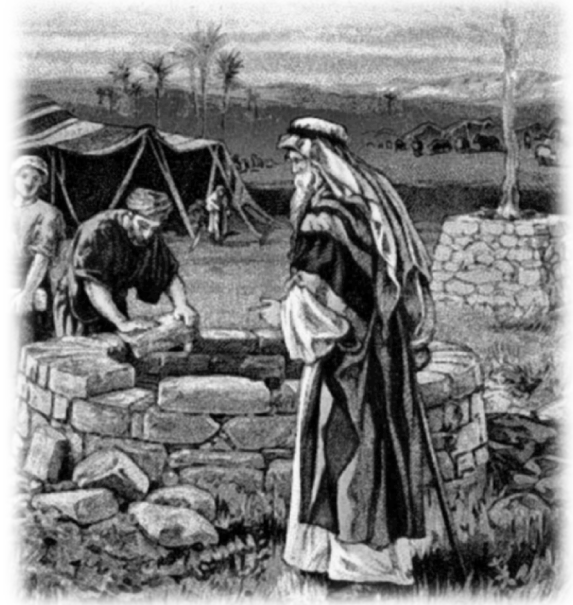
Next, the discussion turns to Isaac and Rebekah. Like Sarah, Rebekah was also barren, and God answered Isaac's prayer for her to have a child. But this was a natural, not a supernatural, pregnancy. The conflict in her womb revealed the later conflict between the twin brothers, where *the older shall serve the younger*. As the boys grew up, Isaac favored Esau and Rebekah favored Jacob. When Esau returned from an unsuccessful hunting trip, he sold his birthright to Jacob for some lentil stew. The chapter ends, telling us, *thus Esau despised his birthright*.

[See Applications and Questions from the Life of Abraham on page 98]

Genesis 26

Genesis 26:1-5

Because of another famine in the land, Isaac moved to Gerar, which put him in the territory of King Abimelech. This was not the same Abimelech as in chapter 20, since that occurred 97 years earlier. Abimelech seems to be a title, like Pharaoh, Caesar, and Herod. God told Isaac to not go any further south into Egypt, then repeated the Abrahamic Covenant to him.



Genesis 26:6-14

Being afraid he would be killed because of his beautiful wife, Isaac said she was his sister. Almost every commentator emphasizes the obvious similarities between this lie and Abraham's. And it is a good example of like-father-like-son. But there are also notable differences:

- Abraham actually went all the way to Egypt in chapter 12, Isaac stayed in the land.
- Isaac told the men his wife was his sister, but he did not ask her to say that.
- Isaac told a complete lie. Rebekah was not a half-sister, as Sarah was to Abraham.
- They were in Gerar a long time.
- Isaac's lie was discovered because he was seen caressing Rebekah, not by an intervention of God.
- Rebekah was not taken into Abimelech's harem. The danger was that *one of the people might easily have lain with her*.

Genesis 26:15-22

Next, we learn about the war of the wells. The Hebrews seemed to be experts at well-digging. The wells allowed them to stay longer in one place because they provided the needed water for the people and the flocks and herds. This meant they did not have to live near a fresh water source, which faced the danger of drying up in the summer. First, we learn that the Philistines stopped up the wells Abraham's people had dug. But when Isaac dug two wells of his own, Abimelech's men ran him off, and Isaac seems to offer no opposition. Finally, they leave him alone with the third well he dug further inland.

Genesis 26:23-35

After this, Isaac moved to Beersheba, and the night he arrived, God appeared to him and repeated the Abrahamic Covenant. So Isaac built an altar, pitched his tent there, and his servants dug another well. But Abimelech recognized that *The Lord had been with you*, probably meaning that Isaac was becoming wealthier and more powerful, most likely in sheer numbers of his animals and people in his household. So Abimelech and his advisors visited Isaac, asking for a mutual oath of peace. Isaac agreed, and they exchanged oaths. Isaac named the well there Shibah ("oath" or "seven"), similar to the earlier treaty Abraham made when he named the city Beersheba (21:23-24, 31).

The chapter ends setting the stage for chapter 27. Moses tells us that, when Esau was 40 years old, he married two Hittite women (Judith and Basemath), *and they brought grief to Isaac and Rebekah*.

Genesis 27



Genesis 27:1-45

Chapter 27 is presented in five paragraphs:

1. Verses 1-4, Isaac Offered to Bless Esau

Isaac was old and nearly blind. He was 137 at this time, but he lived 43 more years (35:28). *His eyes were too dim to see.* Isaac's proposed blessing on Esau was driven by his love for Esau and his love for food (25:28).

2. Verses 5-17, Rebekah Conspired with Jacob

This paragraph tells us the deception was all Rebekah's idea. She devised a plot to get Jacob the blessing by making a replacement meal and dressing Jacob up so that he smelled and felt like Esau.

3. Verses 18-29, Jacob Deceived Isaac

Encouraged by his mother, Jacob lied to his father twice, once about his identity and then about God giving him success in hunting. Isaac voiced suspicion but decided to believe Jacob, based on limited verification and contrary to other clear evidence—Jacob's voice and his soon return. Isaac believed Jacob's non-evidential statement about God's help, instead of the evidence that he returned too soon. All Isaac had to do was ask both sons to stand before him. The paragraph ends with a blessing on Jacob of prosperity, domination, and a curse on his enemies, contrasted with a blessing on his friends.

4. Verses 30-40, Esau Returned to Isaac

At the realization of the deception, both Esau and his father responded emotionally. The paragraph also tells us that Jacob's blessing was in an irreversible legal form. So Jacob had acquired both the birthright (25:27-34) and the blessing of his father. Esau's descendants (the Edomites) would live in a land of mountains and wilderness (Malachi 1:3).

5. Verses 41-45, Rebekah Told Jacob to Flee

When Rebekah heard that Esau was planning to kill Jacob, she told him to *flee to Haran, to my brother Laban! Stay with him a few days, until your brother's fury subsides.* But he stayed 20 years (31:41), and she never saw him again. When he returned, she had died but Isaac was still alive.

Genesis 27:46

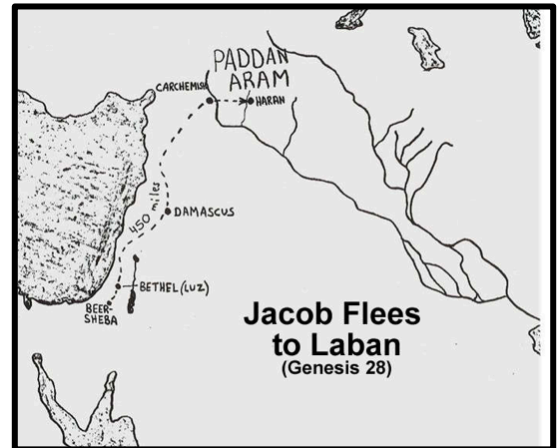
The chapter ends with an introduction to chapter 28. Rebekah appealed to Isaac to instruct Jacob to not take a wife from the land because she is *tired of living because of the daughters of Heth* to whom Esau was married.

But there is a significant overriding issue here. Before the boys were born, God told Rebekah *the older shall serve the younger* (Genesis 25:33). In Malachi 1:2 and Romans 9:13, we learn that God said, "*Jacob I loved, but Esau I hated.*" So this whole thing came about by the deception of Rebekah and Jacob AND the sovereign plan of God. In Romans, Paul's conclusion is God's statement to Moses, *I will have mercy on whom I have mercy, and I will have compassion on whom I have compassion* (Exodus 33:19; Romans 9:15). So (1) both God's sovereignty and man's free will are 100% true, and (2) God's choice cannot be determined by someone's observable moral actions. It is, therefore, impossible to determine someone's election by whether he or she has "made Christ Lord of his or her life."

Genesis 28

Genesis 28:1-5

Isaac called Jacob and repeated the blessing, which passed on the Abrahamic Covenant to Jacob. Also, at Rebekah's request, instructed him to *not take a wife from the daughters of Canaan* but to go to Paddan-aram, and take to yourself a wife from the daughters of Laban your mother's brother. To marry Canaanites would destroy the purity of the Semitic (Shemite) line because the Canaanites were mixed breeds of various (Hamite) tribes. But it would also mix the worship of God with Canaanite idolatry. Isaac specified that the blessing was from *El-Shadi* [אל-שדי] *God Almighty*, the title God gave for Himself when He spoke to Abraham in 17:1].

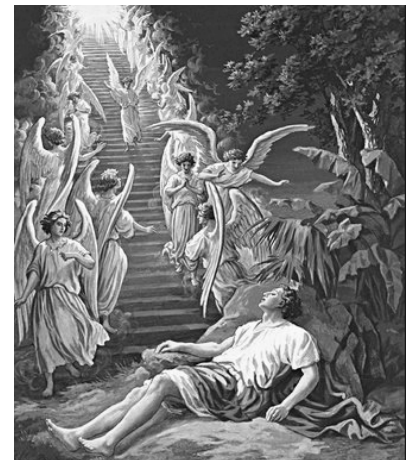


Genesis 28:6-9

Next, we see the reflections and actions of Esau after Jacob left. Since his first two Hittite wives were a plague to his mother and *displeased his father Isaac*, Esau married a third wife, an Ishmaelite (Ishmael himself having died 14 years earlier). The unchosen son of Isaac married into the line of the unchosen son of Abraham. So the Edomites may be part Hebrew and part Hittite, or part Hebrew and part Egyptian (since Ishmael married an Egyptian).

Genesis 28:10-15

Soon after he left for Aram, Jacob came to the second location where Abraham had built an altar in the land, the place which Jacob would name Bethel. That night he had a dream of a *ladder*, more like a stairway, *set on the earth with its top reaching to heaven; and behold, the angels of God were ascending and descending on it*. Then he saw Yahweh standing above the angels, and He repeated the Abrahamic Covenant to Jacob.



Genesis 28:16-22

Jacob responded to the dream/vision in five ways:

1. He feared God.
2. He anointed the stone he slept on as a pillar to God.
3. He named the place Bethel (the house of God).
4. He made an if/then vow to God. If God would take care of him and bring him back, then *Yahweh* (the Lord) would be his *Elohim* (sovereign God).
5. He would tithe 10% of all that You give me.

The significance of the chapter is that Jacob, who was a liar and a deceiver, became a fearful believer when he received the revelation of the Word of God.

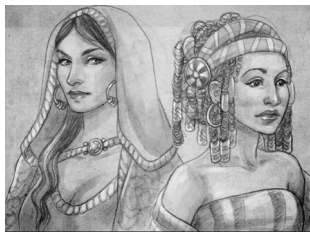
Genesis 29



Genesis 29:1-12

As Jacob came near to the city of Haran, he noticed a well with three flocks of sheep gathered around it. While asking the shepherds about Laban, he was informed that the approaching shepherdess was Rachel, Laban's daughter. Apparently, the stone slab covering the well was normally rolled away by Laban's servants in the evening, so all the flocks could be watered together. But when Rachel arrived, Jacob rolled the stone away and watered her sheep. *Then Jacob kissed Rachel and lifted up his voice and wept*, probably more like a laughing cry of rejoicing. Then he told her he was her cousin, her aunt Rebekah's son.

Genesis 29:13-30



When Rachel told her father Laban, he greeted Jacob warmly and Jacob stayed for a month, working for Laban, but all the time falling more in love with Rachel. When Laban asked, "*Should you therefore serve me for nothing? Tell me, what shall your wages be?*" Jacob said, "*I will serve you seven years for your younger daughter Rachel.*" But we are also told that Laban had an older daughter Leah, *And Leah's eyes were weak, but Rachel was beautiful of form and face.* Notice that Moses emphasized the

fact that the wives of the first three Hebrew patriarchs were beautiful: Sarah (12:11), Rebekah (24:15-16), and Rachel (29:17).

The seven years of work passed quickly for Jacob because of his love for Rachel (29:20). When the time came for the wedding, Rachel's older sister Leah was substituted for Rachel. The women were apparently the same size, the tent would be totally dark, and the men had no doubt been drinking. One can only imagine the trauma Rachel went through that night, knowing that Jacob was unknowingly sleeping with her sister.



In the morning, Jacob found out that he was married to Leah. Laban's explanation was, "*...it is not the practice in our place to marry off the younger before the firstborn. Complete the week of this one, and we will give you the other also for the service which you shall serve with me for another seven years.*" Since *week* means *period of seven*, it is not clear whether Laban meant he should complete a week-long wedding ceremony for Leah and then get Rachel, though he would work for Laban another seven years, or that Jacob should complete the remaining days of the seven-year period for Leah, then another seven for Rachel. At any rate, he ended up with two wives, and he loved Rachel more than Leah.

Verse 31 tells us something about God. *Now the LORD saw that Leah was unloved, and He opened her womb, but Rachel was barren.* God had no objection to Jacob loving Rachel, but He responded to Leah not being loved. Jacob was in a situation he did not ask for, he was in love with the wife he asked for, yet God favored the wife he did not ask for because he did not love her, which he was incapable of doing—romantically speaking. And romance [אהבה (*ahabah* or *ahavah*) affection] is the love being discussed here. So Leah bore Jacob four sons: Reuben, Simeon, Levi, and Judah. The chapter ends saying, *Then she stopped bearing.*

Genesis 30

Genesis 30:1-24

Leah gave birth to Jacob's four sons: **Reuben, Simeon, Levi, and Judah**. So several years had passed before *Rachel saw that she bore Jacob no children and she became jealous of her sister*. In her frustration, she blamed Jacob, but realizing that was absurd, she *gave him her maid Bilhah as a wife* to bear children for her. Since that is also what Sarah did, we can assume the custom was acceptable among the Semites of Mesopotamia. Bilhah bore Jacob two sons: **Dan** and **Naphtali**. Since Leah had stopped bearing, she countered Rachel's move by giving Jacob her maid Zilpah *as a wife*, who conceived and bore Jacob two more sons, **Gad** and **Asher**.



Rachel and Joseph

The events of verses 14-16 tell us: (1) Jacob was living (at least most of the time) with Rachel, (2) Leah considered Rachel as having taken her husband away from her, and (3) both believed the mandrakes found by Leah's son Reuben would promote conception. So Rachel gave up sleeping with Jacob for one night as a price for the mandrakes. Leah conceived again and had **Issachar**. Later, she had **Zebulun**. Leah's comments after the birth of these (her fifth and sixth) sons are revealing. After Issachar, she said, *God has given me my wages because I gave my maid to my husband*. So she considered it a morally positive thing, approved by God, to give her maid to Jacob. And after Zebulun was born, she said, *now my husband will dwell with me, because I have borne him six sons*, indicating that Jacob still lived (most of the time) with Rachel. Then Leah had the family's only daughter, **Dinah**.

After nearly 20 years of marriage, *God remembered Rachel, and God gave heed to her and opened her womb*, and she had a son she named **Joseph**. Joseph was the 12th child, the 11th son, and the favorite of his father. Joseph would be hated by his brothers, a prophet of God, one of the great men of the Bible, and the future patriarch of the family.

Genesis 30:25-36

The next paragraph is about Jacob beginning his separation from Laban with a large enough flock to support his four wives and 12 children. Laban wanted him to stay and care for his flocks. Jacob agreed to do this, if he could keep as his wages the off-colored and spotted animals that would be born. Laban agreed but then separated the spotted animals and gave them to his son, to reduce Jacob's chances of acquiring a large herd. But, of course, those animals not visibly spotted had latent genes that would produce spotted offspring.



Genesis 30:37-43

Where Jacob got the idea that striped branches produced spotted flocks is unknown. Possibly it was some ancient folklore, or maybe he was just doing it as a way of asking for help from the Lord. But the idea itself is useless. At any rate, we know three things:

1. What sheep look at when they mate has nothing to do with their offspring.
2. God used what Jacob did to make his sheep have spotted offspring.
3. Jacob ultimately recognized that it was God who caused his flocks to increase (31:7-12).

Jacob also used a biologically sound principle, *whenever the stronger of the flock were mating*, they would most likely produce stronger offspring.

Genesis 31

Genesis 31:1-16

With mounting anxiety between Jacob and Laban, plus complaints from Laban's sons, Jacob decided it was time to leave. More significantly, he had a revelation from God telling him to *leave this land, and return to the land of your birth*. But Jacob handled the situation wisely when it came to telling his wives. He met with them secretly in a field. Rather than just announcing what they were going to do, he explained the situation and the revelation from God. This implied that he was asking for their involvement in the decision. They both concurred that Laban was not acting in their best interest, and it was time to leave.



Genesis 31:17-35

Jacob waited until Laban went away to shear his flock, then he put his wives and family on camels and left for Canaan. Jacob deceived Laban because he did not tell Laban he was leaving, and Rachael, unbeknownst to Jacob, stole her father's תְּרָפִים (*teraphim*). There are several theories as to why she stole the teraphim: (1) they were fertility gods, (2) they represented Jacob's right to Laban's estate, (3) Rachel used them for divination. But more likely (4) she simply took them for their monetary value (they may have been made of silver).

Three days later, Laban learned they had fled, so he pursued them and caught up with them seven days later in the area between the Yarmuk and the Jabbok Rivers in the Transjordan territory of Gilead. Laban probably wanted to harm Jacob and take back his daughters and grandchildren, but God told him in a dream to *not speak to Jacob either good or bad*. Jacob said he left because he feared that Laban would take his wives, and Laban complained that Jacob took his teraphim, but Laban called them his אֱלֹהִים (*Elohim*), that is, his gods. Jacob did not know that Rachel had stolen them because she had *put them in the camel's saddle*. Laban never found them because when he came to Rachel, she claimed to be in *the manner of women*.

Genesis 31:36-55

Then Jacob and Laban both claimed ownership of the cattle, the women, and the children. After recounting each other's faults, they made a covenant of peace and set up a pillar to mark the place of the agreement. Laban said the covenant meant two things:

1. *If you mistreat my daughters, or if you take wives besides my daughters, although no man is with us, see, God is witness between you and me.*
2. *That I will not pass by this heap to you for harm, and you will not pass by this heap and this pillar to me, for harm.*

Before they parted, Jacob offered a sacrifice and ate a meal together with his kinsmen. In the morning, Laban kissed all his relatives, and they both left for home.

Genesis 32

Genesis 32:1-2

The chapter begins by saying that Jacob *went on his way* from his meeting with Laban. Moses then gives us a four (Hebrew) word descriptions of a vision. Literally, *and met—with him—angels—of God*. Since Jacob named the place *Mahanaim*, which means *two camps*, it is possible that from his camp Jacob could see an angelic camp. No revelation from the angels is recorded, but the glimpse into the angelic dimension was undoubtedly given to encourage Jacob to return to the Land. Jacob had just finished a conflict with his father-in-law Laban and now faced another one with his brother Esau.



Genesis 32:3-21

Jacob is not the young deceiver he was when he tricked Esau out of his birthright 20 years ago. Nonetheless, he would have to face his brother. He sent a message and received word that Esau was coming with 400 men. That could be disastrous, if Esau still intended to kill Jacob. So Jacob divided his company into two groups and prayed for help. His prayer included three things:

1. A reminder of what God had promised—*I will prosper you*
2. A statement of thankfulness and humility—*I am unworthy*
3. A request for deliverance from Esau, in a context of fear for his family

Then he sent messengers to Esau with a large gift of 550 animals. So he prayed and he prepared.

Genesis 32:22-32

Next, we have one of the most unusual visions in the Bible. Jacob sent the servants to Esau at night, possibly because it was easier to travel at night, and *that same night and took his two wives and his two maids and his eleven children, and crossed the ford of the Jabbok*, a river at the base of a deep wadi that bordered Gilead on the south and flowed into the Jordan about 24 miles (38 kilometers) north of the Dead Sea. After his family was across, Jacob was about to follow, probably looking to see if any stray animals had been separated in the crossing, when a man came to him and wrestled with him all night, apparently, not allowing him to cross the Jabbok. The discussion, with clarifications, went like this:

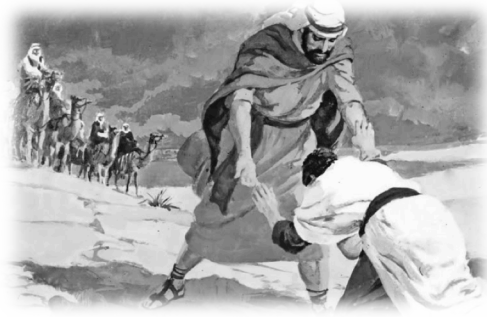
When he [the messenger of God] saw that he [the messenger of God] had not prevailed against him [Jacob], he [the messenger of God] touched the socket of his [Jacob's], thigh; so the socket of Jacob's thigh was dislocated while he [Jacob] wrestled with him [the messenger of God]. Then he [the messenger of God] said, "Let me go, for the dawn is breaking." But he [Jacob], said, "I will not let you go unless you bless me." So he [the messenger of God] said to him, "What is your name?" And he said, "Jacob." He [the messenger of God] said, "Your name shall no longer be Jacob, but Israel; for you have striven with God and with men and have prevailed."

Somewhere during the all-night wrestling match, Jacob realized he was wrestling with the God of Abraham and Isaac, because Jacob asked Him for a blessing and called the place Peniel, which means "the face of God." So God, probably the pre-incarnate person we know as Jesus, wrestled with Jacob, did not prevail, dislocated Jacob's hip, and asked to be released. When Jacob demanded a blessing, He changed Jacob's name to Israel, literally, "God wrestler." Now Jacob had to face Esau limping on a bad thigh. The point of the wrestling is never explained, but we can see that Jacob could wrestle against God, and he could not win, but he could hold on and ask for a blessing.

Genesis 33

Genesis 33:1-7

Jacob saw his brother Esau, whom Jacob had swindled out of his birthright and his father's blessing 20 years ago, coming with 400 men. So he feared that Esau was still out for revenge. As a response, Jacob lined up his wives, with their children, in order of how he perceived the importance of the wives. So his two concubines were first, in the most dangerous place, then Leah, then Rachel in the safest place, each with their children. But then Jacob put himself in the most dangerous place, going out in front of them to meet his brother, limping on a bad hip.



When the brothers met, Jacob *bowed...seven times*. Ryrie says this was “a widely attested sign of homage, fit for a king.” Esau ran to meet Jacob, embraced him, and kissed him. Then they both wept. Jacob referred to himself as his brother's “servant” (verses 5 & 14) and to Esau as “my lord” (verses 8 & 13-15), whereas Esau simply called Jacob “my brother” (verse 9). This contrasts with their father's blessing when Isaac made Jacob Esau's lord (27:29).

Genesis 33:8-11

The discussion about Esau receiving Jacob's gift has two interesting aspects:

1. When Esau asked the purpose of the gift of 550 animals, Jacob said, “*These are to find grace in the sight of my lord*” (verse 8, KJV). This is the common Hebrew word [חֵן] (*chen*) for “grace” used for the grace of God throughout the Old Testament. Jacob is requesting the selective, though undeserved, favor of Esau.
2. Jacob called his gift a blessing. *Please take my gift* [בָּרַךְ] (*barak*). Here, translated *gift* is the root word for *blessing* (verse 11)]. So Jacob is offering back something of the blessing he swindled from Esau 20 years earlier.

Genesis 33:12-20

The remainder of the recorded discussion between Jacob and Esau was designed by Jacob to result in a permanent separation between them. So Esau returned to Mt. Seir and the territory called Edom, the mountain range running south from the Dead Sea to the Gulf of Aqaba. As far as we know, Jacob and Esau did not see one another again, until they came together at the time of their father Isaac's funeral (35:29).

Then *Jacob journeyed to Succoth, and built for himself a house and made booths for his livestock; therefore the place is named Succoth*. Besides Succoth, Jacob also named Bethel (28:19), Galeed (31:47), Mahanaim (32:2), and Peniel (32:30). Ryrie suggests, “As much as 10 years' time may have been spent in Succoth before Jacob went to Shechem.”



Shechem sits between Mount Ebal and Mount Gerizim, directly west of the Jabbok River and about 20 miles (32 kilometers) inside Canaan from the Jordan River. This is where Abram first camped when he arrived in Canaan (12:6). Jacob, like Abram, purchased a portion of the land and there and set up an altar (12:7) and named it אֱלֹהֵי יִשְׂרָאֵל (*El Elohe Israel*), “God is the God of Israel.”

Genesis 34



This chapter describes an interesting moral dilemma, including many ethical questions:

- Should Dinah have sought for female companionship among *the daughters of the land*?
- Was it right for Jacob to keep silent until his sons returned?
- Was it appropriate for Dinah's brothers to seek revenge/justice?
- Was the deceptive scheme of the brothers justified in order to avoid intermarriage with the Hivites?
- Was it right to kill the Hivites as a retribution for the rape of Dinah?
- Was the final comment of Simeon and Levi, *Should he treat our sister as a harlot*, a justifiable reason for their action?

Genesis 34:1-7

At the age of 14 or 15, Jacob's only daughter Dinah decided she wanted to get to know some other girls. Instead, she encountered Shechem, the prince of the city, who *took her and lay with her by force*. It is legitimate to call this rape, but it was not the usual rape, which is more of an act of violence than romance. Shechem loved [אָהַב (*aheb*) *was deeply attracted to and spoke kindly to*] Dinah and wanted to marry her. Nothing is said about her feelings in the matter, but she was apparently kept in a comfortable but kidnapped situation, as Shechem's father negotiated a deal for their marriage, which included an open door for any Hebrew-Hivite intermarriage. All this was before Dinah's brothers heard about it. When they *came in from the field*, possibly several days later, they were (1) *grieved and* (2) *very angry because he had done a disgraceful thing*.

Genesis 34:8-29

When Dinah's brothers got home, there appears to be a second meeting, this time between Shechem's father Hamor and all the brothers with Jacob, where Hamor offered to make a *bridal payment and gift* for Dinah to become his son Shechem's wife. The brothers apparently got together privately and devised the deceptive plan whereby they pretended to agree to a deal that included mutual commerce, as well as interracial marriages, if the Hivites would become circumcised. Then they presented this to Hamor in a third meeting. Hamor agreed, but he now had the unenviable job of convincing the men of the city that this was a good deal.

It is possible that Jacob and the other brothers just intended to use the incapacitation, due to the circumcision, to retrieve Dinah and loot the city. But two of the brothers took upon themselves to go further. Simeon and Levi, no doubt including all the male servants in their respective households, went to the city on the third day, when the circumcisions would be the most incapacitating, and slaughtered all the men. Then the other brothers, who may or may not have been in on the murder plot, took their livestock and *captured and looted all their wealth and all their little ones and their wives, even all that was in the houses*.

Genesis 34:30-31

Jacob was clearly unaware of the plan to kill the males of the city and strongly criticized Simeon and Levi for doing so. He remembered this his whole life and took it into consideration in his blessing of his sons at the time of his death (Genesis 49:5-7). But the final comment of the chapter comes from Simeon and Levi, when *they said*, "*Should he treat our sister as a harlot?*"

Genesis 35

Jacob moved four times in chapter 35: first to Bethel (verses 1-15), then to Bethlehem (verses 16-20), then to the tower of Eder (between Bethlehem and Hebron (verses 16-26), and finally to Hebron (verses 27). There are also three funerals mentioned: Rebekah's nurse Deborah, buried below Bethel; Rachel, buried near Bethlehem; and Isaac, buried with Abraham and Sarah in the cave at Hebron.



Genesis 35:1-4

God “told” [אָמַר (*amar*) means *to utter* or *say*], indicating God spoke verbally, telling Jacob to go to Bethel and make an altar there to אֱל (el), the masculine singular word for “God.” Jacob then told all those in his household to:

1. *Put away the foreign gods which are among you, and*
2. *Purify yourselves and*
3. *Change your garments, including removing the rings which were in their ears*

This is the only passage in the Bible that mentions what is, apparently, men wearing earrings. *Jacob hid them under the oak which was near Shechem, so they could not go back and get them.*

Genesis 35:5-20

Jacob went to Bethel and built an altar, as God had commanded him. He called the place Bethel. The place was originally Luz, but Moses called it Bethel ten times before Jacob named it in verse 15.

The big events of this chapter are the birth of Benjamin and the death of Rachel in childbirth. She was buried in *Ephrath* [or *Ephrathah*] (*that is, Bethlehem*). Verse 18 has the most precise description of death in the Bible. *It came about as her soul was departing (for she died)*. Death is when the soul [נֶפֶשׁ (*nephesh*) soul, spirit, life] departs the body.

As she was dying, Rachel *named him Ben-oni*. The name means “son of my sorrow or misfortune.” *But his father called him Benjamin*, which means “son of the right hand” or “son of honor.”

Genesis 35:21-26

After the burial of Rachel at Bethlehem, Jacob moved to *the tower of Eder*. Ryrie says that “*the tower of Eder* was a watchtower (for shepherds) between Bethlehem and Hebron.” While they were there, *Reuben went and lay with Bilhah, his father's concubine, and Israel heard*. It is possible that Reuben, being Jacob's oldest son, was trying to replace his father as patriarch prematurely by the pagan procedure of taking his concubine. Whatever his purpose, the result was, he *lost* his birthright (Genesis 49:3-4; 1 Chronicles 5:1-2).

Genesis 35:27-29

Jacob then moved to Hebron, while his father Isaac was still living. When Isaac died at 180, Esau returned and joined with Jacob for the funeral.

Chapter 35 is transitional in that it marks the end of era. Rachel and Isaac have died, Jacob renewed his vows to God, the sons that represent the 12 tribes of Israel have all been born, and they are back living in the Land.

Genesis 36

Allen Ross says, “This chapter is complicated and difficult, the details quite baffling.” With the sons of Jacob complete, Moses followed his earlier format, and here gave us the genealogical history of the line God did not choose, before going on to the chosen line of Israel in chapter 37. Through Malachi, God said,

I have loved Jacob; but I have hated Esau, and I have made his mountains a desolation and appointed his inheritance for the jackals of the wilderness (Malachi 1:2-3).

Hated, of course, means “not chosen.” Yet, there is a lot of detail of the descendants of the unchosen line.

Genesis 36:1-8



The first paragraph of chapter 36 gives us the three wives of Esau: Adah, Oholibamah, and Basemath. Oholibamah was a great-granddaughter of Seir the Horite, whose descendants were living in Edom when Esau went there (36:20, 25), making some of Esau’s descendants a mingling of the Hebrews and Horites. Two of the wives (Adah and Oholibama) are not the same as those listed earlier in 26:34 and 28:9. Most likely, the others had died or taken different names. These three wives bore Esau five sons. It is interesting that Esau’s sons were born in the land of Israel and moved out, whereas Jacob’s sons were born out of the Land (except for Benjamin) and moved into the Land. Throughout the chapter, Moses reminds us that these were the Edomites, who were often in conflict with Israel.

Genesis 36:9-19

Esau had 5 sons and 10 or 11 grandsons, depending on if Korah is included. The Hebrew text lists him in verse 16 but not in verse 11 or in 1 Chronicles 1:36. Possibly he died young. Each of the 10 grandsons plus three of the sons are called a *chief*, indicating the head of a tribe, with Esau as the patriarch.

Genesis 36:20-30

These verses list the sons, grandsons, and granddaughters of Seir the Horite. The Horites seem to be the original inhabitants of the land, who probably migrated there after the tower of Babel. Seir’s seven sons were Horite chiefs (verse 29). They were conquered by Esau (Deuteronomy 2:12), who then married Oholibamah, Seir’s great-granddaughter.

Genesis 36:31-39

It is not stated how the kings of this paragraph were related to Esau, but the point is that they were *kings who reigned in the land of Edom before any king reigned over the sons of Israel*.

Genesis 36:40-43

This list of *chiefs descended from Esau* are called *the chiefs of Edom (that is, Esau, the father of the Edomites)*, according to their habitations in the land of their possession.

Genesis 37

This chapter begins the last major section of Genesis, the account of the life of Joseph. It opens with Joseph at 17 years of age, hated by his brothers, and ends with him as the patriarch of the family.

Genesis 37:1-11

First, we are told that *Jacob lived in the land where his father had sojourned*. In contrast with Esau, who presided over sons who were chiefs, Jacob didn't rule over any territory. Throughout Scripture, we see the power of the world through chiefs and rulers, like Esau and his sons, and the power of God coming about through humility, struggle, and suffering, as with the story of Jacob and Joseph.

The initial hatred of the brothers for Joseph was triggered by two events:

- (1) The *bad report* Joseph brought to Jacob about his brothers after pasturing sheep with them.
- (2) Jacob favoring Joseph with a coat of many colors.

To add fuel to the fire, Joseph related the content of two dreams to his brothers:

- In one dream, his brother's sheaves of grain bowed down to Joseph's sheaf.
- In the second dream, the *sun and the moon and eleven stars were bowing down to him*.

Both dreams made the brothers furious.

It is often said that Joseph did this in pride. It can be argued that Joseph would have been well advised to keep the dreams to himself, but there is no evidence his motive was pride. And, of course, the dreams revealed exactly what happened.

Genesis 37:12-30

Jacob sent Joseph to check on his brothers who *went to pasture their father's flock in Shechem*. Being told that they went north to the Dothan pass, which is at the southern end of the Carmel ridge, Joseph went up there to find them. Seeing him coming, the brothers decided to *kill him and throw him into one of the pits; and...say, 'A wild beast devoured him.'*

But two of the brothers had a problem with murdering Joseph.

- The first to come up with an alternative plan was Reuben, whose moral standards lay somewhere between adultery and murder.
- The second was Judah, who suggested they sell them to the *Ishmaelites* (not descendants of Ishmael but a general term for desert wanderers), in this case, a group of Midianites.

Apparently, Reuben was away when they sold Joseph to the *Midianite traders* because, when Reuben came back, he was surprised that Joseph was missing.

Genesis 37:31-36

Reuben then joined in with the other brothers, and *they took Joseph's tunic, and slaughtered a male goat and dipped the tunic in the blood; and they sent the varicolored tunic and brought it to their father* (verses 31-32). So the brother's cruelty was not just to Joseph but to their father, who mourned for Joseph and refused to be comforted.

Their hatred and jealousy caused both Jacob and Joseph years of suffering.

The chapter ends telling us that the *Midianites*, who bought Joseph as a slave, *sold him in Egypt to Potiphar, who was Pharaoh's officer, the captain of the bodyguard*.

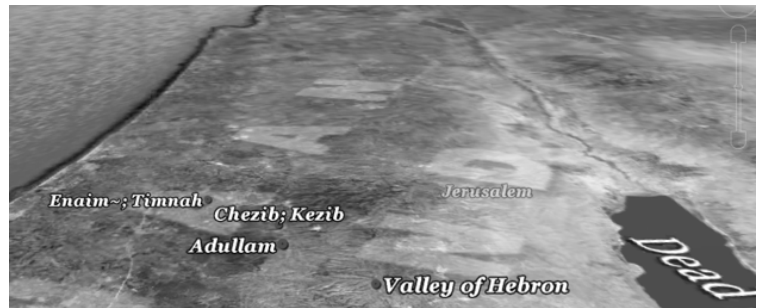
Genesis 38

Chapter 38 is the amazing story of Judah and Tamar. The point of this account is to tell us about the birth of their child Perez. Perez is the great-great-grandson of Abraham, whose line of descendants leads to David, and then on to Jesus, the Messiah. Perez is listed in biblical genealogies 17 times. His descendants include Boaz, David, and both Joseph and Mary, by David's sons Solomon and Nathan. But the interesting thing is, Moses did not tell us a detailed account of the births about any of the children born to any of the other 11 sons, only Perez. Even the birth of Joseph's sons is only mentioned briefly. Yet here we have an elaborate account of the strange events that led to the birth of Perez. Clearly, the reason is to show the readers that this is the line that went to David and on to Jesus. But how would Moses know that? How would he know to emphasize this particular birth? He wrote it 500 years before David and 1500 years before Jesus.



Genesis 38:1-23

After Joseph was sold to the Midianites, and during the time he was a slave in Potiphar's house and in an Egyptian prison, Judah left the family to visit a friend named Hirah in Adullam. This is where David later gathered his troops, on the northern ridge of the Elah Valley (the valley where David also killed Goliath).



Judah lived in the Elah and Sorek Valleys for many years. He married a Canaanite girl from there named Shua, and she bore him three sons, Er, Onan, and Shelah. Then Judah found Tamar as a wife for Er. When God killed Er, because he *was evil in the sight of the LORD*, Tamar was given to Onan, who went in to her but refused to raise up children for his brother by spilling *his seed on the ground*. So God killed him, too. The marriage of a widow to the brother of her deceased husband was later part of the Mosaic Law (Deuteronomy 25:5-10). Onan's spilling *his seed* was about his desire to have the inheritance of the firstborn for himself, since it would otherwise go to Tamar's child, even though fathered by Onan. Judah promised to give his youngest son Shelah to Tamar when Shelah was older, but Judah never did. Later Judah's wife died, and he *went up to his sheepshearers at Timnah*, which is in the Sorek Valley (the place where Samson was later tricked by and had his affair with Delilah). On the way, Tamar dressed up like a *temple prostitute* and enticed Judah to have sex with her, leaving his *seal, his cord, and his staff*, as a pledge for a future payment.

Genesis 38:24-30

When Tamar turned up pregnant (with twins) three months later, Judah wanted her to be burned. But when she produced his *seal, his cord, and his staff*, he said, "*She is more righteous than I, inasmuch as I did not give her to my son Shelah.*" He also committed fornication, although it was not adultery, since neither of them were married. *And he did not have relations with her again* (verse 26). During the delivery, the hand of Zerah came out first, and *the midwife took and tied a scarlet thread on his hand*, to indicate that he was the firstborn. Then Perez was born breach. But the point being made is that Perez, the one we know who was in the line of David and Christ, was not the firstborn and, therefore, was not to receive his father's inheritance. Later, when all the Israelites went to Egypt under Joseph's protection, Judah took Tamar and her two sons with them (Genesis 46:12).

Genesis 39

Genesis 39:1-6

The first paragraph of chapter 39 tells us about Joseph's success in the household of *Potiphar, an Egyptian officer of Pharaoh, the captain of the bodyguard*. We learn:

1. Joseph was successful, defined as all he did prospered.
2. The reason Joseph was successful is that *the LORD was with him*.
3. Potiphar recognized that Joseph's success came from his God.
4. Potiphar put Joseph in charge of the entire household.

The last phrase of verse 6 introduces the next paragraph. *Now Joseph was handsome in form and appearance*. Since *Joseph was thirty years old when he stood before Pharaoh (41:46)*, and he was in prison about two years, we can assume that he was about 28 years old at the beginning of verse 7. And since he was 17 when his brothers sold him, he had been a servant to Potiphar for about 11 years.



Genesis 39:7-20



Potiphar's wife watched a 17-year-old slave become a handsome 28-year-old steward, and her sexual desires brought her to ask him to commit adultery with her.

Joseph's refusal was based on two arguments:

- (1) It would be a betrayal of the trust Potiphar had placed in him.
- (2) It would be a sin against God. As with David's adultery with Bathsheba (Psalm 51:4), this would not be a sin against Potiphar but against God.

As she spoke to Joseph day after day, he did not listen to her to lie beside her or be with her (verse 10). So one day, when the other men were away, she caught him by his outer garment, and he left it, and fled.

Then she told Potiphar it was the other way around, which landed Joseph in prison. Some suggest that Potiphar didn't believe his wife or he would have had Joseph killed. This seems unlikely, since the text tells us *his anger burned* when he heard it.

It's hard to judge, since we weren't there, but it would seem Joseph made two mistakes:

- (1) He did not go to Potiphar with the situation earlier.
- (2) He left his garment when he fled.

At any rate, he seemed to be given no opportunity to explain before his was thrown into prison.

Genesis 39:21-23

Then a similar scenario developed in prison:

1. Joseph did things that made him favored by the chief jailor.
2. The reason he was successful was that *the LORD was with Joseph*.
3. The chief jailor recognized that Joseph's success came from his God.
4. The chief jailor put Joseph in charge of the entire prison.

Genesis 40

Genesis 40:1-19

A *cupbearer* is an official who served drinks to the king. A *baker* was the one who prepared the king's food. So both had to be trustworthy individuals. We are not told what happened, but for some reason, they both *offended their lord, the king of Egypt*, so *Pharaoh was furious with his two officials*. Possibly, someone tried to poison Pharaoh, and he first thought both were involved, and then after they were in prison for a while, Pharaoh was able to determine the blame lay only with the baker. At any rate, they were put in prison where the jailor had placed Joseph in charge.



It is interesting that the title used for Potiphar in 39:1, שָׂר הַטַּבָּחִים (*shar ha-tabahim*) *Captain of the bodyguard*, is not the same as the title *chief jailor* of the prison, but it is the same exact title as one who put Joseph in charge of the cupbearer and the baker in 40:4. So it seems that Potiphar was in charge of a certain prison, and when the cupbearer and the baker were placed in his prison, he personally put Joseph in charge of them. This could indicate he still had an affection, or at least a respect, for Joseph.

Both the cupbearer and the baker are in Potiphar's prison for a while before they have dreams. When Joseph noticed they were looking depressed, he got them to tell him the dreams and gave them an interpretation—one of restoration for the cupbearer, one of death by hanging for the baker.

But when Joseph interpreted the dream of the cupbearer, he added the request,

Only keep me in mind when it goes well with you, and please do me a kindness by mentioning me to Pharaoh and get me out of this house. For I was in fact kidnapped from the land of the Hebrews, and even here I have done nothing that they should have put me into the dungeon (Genesis 40:14).

Genesis 40:20-23

On the exact time Joseph predicted, three days later, it was Pharaoh's birthday, and at his party feast, he restored the cupbearer and hung the baker, exactly as Joseph had said. The chapter ends with the statement, *Yet the chief cupbearer did not remember Joseph, but forgot him.*

The request of Joseph to be remembered is very significant. Joseph, who believed in the sovereignty of God and the predestination of all things through the plan of God (50:20), is telling the cupbearer he was kidnapped and innocent. So Joseph was trying to better his own condition by his own efforts, and at the same time, he was dependent upon the sovereignty of God.

~100% sovereignty of God

~100% unhindered free will of man

Genesis 41

Genesis 41:1-24

The first thing we learn in chapter 41 is that Joseph was in prison for two years after he interpreted the dreams of the cupbearer and the baker, so possibly 2 ½ years altogether.

Next, we are told about Pharaoh's dream. In his dream, 14 cows standing half-submerged in the Nile, as protection from the sun and flies, come up onto dry land. First are seven sleek, fat cows. Then seven ugly, skinny cows, who proceed to eat up the fat cows. Then Pharaoh had another dream, possibly the same night, where *seven ears of grain came up on a single stalk, plump and good* (probably corn), were eaten by seven thin and scorched ears of grain.

The magicians of Egypt were unable to figure it out and apparently afraid to guess about it. The word got around, so that the baker heard what was going on and told Pharaoh about the *Hebrew youth* who interpreted his dream. When *Pharaoh sent and called for Joseph*, Pharaoh's servants *hurriedly brought him out of the dungeon*, but before they could bring him to Pharaoh, he *shaved himself and changed his clothes*. Egyptian men shaved all the hair off their bodies and considered the Hebrews dirty people because they did not shave. So Joseph had to not only be cleaned up and change from his prison clothes, he had to shave off at least his beard, if not all of his hair.

Pharaoh said to Joseph, *"I have heard it said about you, that when you hear a dream you can interpret it."* But Joseph did not take credit for that. He said, *"It is not in me; God will give Pharaoh a favorable answer"* (verses 16-17). We are reminded of Daniel's great statement to Nebuchadnezzar: *"...neither wise men, conjurers, magicians nor diviners are able to declare it to the king. However, there is a God in heaven who reveals mysteries"* (Daniel 2:27-28). So Pharaoh repeated his dream to Joseph.

Genesis 41:25-57

Joseph interpreted the dream as seven years of abundance, followed by seven years of famine. But Joseph also gave four suggestions as to how Pharaoh should prepare for the seven years of famine:

1. *Look for a man discerning and wise, and set him over the land of Egypt*
2. *Appoint overseers in charge of the land*
3. *Exact a fifth of the produce of the land of Egypt in the seven years of abundance*
4. *Gather all the food of these good years that are coming, and store up the grain for food in the cities under Pharaoh's authority*

Concluding with, *Let the food become as a reserve for the land for the seven years of famine.*

Since Pharaoh's servants could not suggest someone to manage this project, Pharaoh gave Joseph the job, adding, *"Since God has informed you of all this, there is no one so discerning and wise as you are. You shall be over my house, and according to your command all my people shall do homage; only in the throne I will be greater than you."* No doubt Potiphar and his wife were expected to attend state occasions where Joseph was present and now #2 in the land. One might imagine the fear of Potiphar's wife, realizing one word from Joseph and she would lose her head. But apparently, Joseph never mentioned it.

Joseph was also given an Egyptian name (Zaphenath-paneah), and an Egyptian wife (Asenath), who bore him two sons (Manasseh and Ephraim) during the seven years of plenty. And during the famine years, *all the earth came to Egypt to buy grain from Joseph.*

Genesis 42

This begins the final section of the book of Genesis—the move of the Israelites to Egypt. The point of these chapters is to show that there is no salvation without repentance. And repentance requires humility and confession of sin. Joseph’s role was to deliver his family from the famine to safety under his protection in Egypt. However, what the brothers needed was not just a physical deliverance but a spiritual cleansing. And for that to happen, Joseph knew his brothers had to end the lie and tell the truth about their sin, confessing it to their father. The narrative is a picture of our salvation. We can only come to God by repentance, and we can only repent in humility, confessing our sins to our heavenly Father.



Chapter 42 is about the first visit of the brothers to Egypt.

Genesis 42:1-8

Jacob learned, probably from traveling traders, that there was food in Egypt, so he sent 10 of his sons to buy grain, keeping his youngest son Benjamin, the only remaining child of Rachel, at home. When the brothers arrived in Egypt and stood before Joseph, Moses makes the point that they *bowed down to him with their faces to the ground*, thus fulfilling the dream Joseph had as a boy (37:7-10). Joseph recognized his brothers, but they did not recognize him, since he was only 17 when they sold him as a slave, and now he was in his late 30s, shaved, wearing Egyptian clothes, and using an interpreter.

Genesis 42:9-17

Remembering his childhood dreams, Joseph realized that he was responsible for their wellbeing. But since Benjamin, his only full brother, and his father were not with the brothers, he had to manipulate them into bringing Benjamin and his father to Egypt. So Joseph accused the brothers of being spies. Of course, they denied it, so Joseph put them in prison for three days to think about the idea of bringing Benjamin to Egypt, while all but one of them stayed behind.

Genesis 42:18-28

On the third day, Joseph told them, “*Do this and live, for I fear God.*” The word he used for “God” was *Elohim*, the plural word for a sovereign God, not *Yahweh* (KJV Jehovah), the name connected with the God of Israel. Also, notice Joseph identified his faith with the word *fear* and that he connected that faith with honesty and integrity. So he offered to let them leave, with a stipulation that only one of them stay behind in Egypt.

The brothers then spoke to each other in Hebrew, not knowing that Joseph understood them, seeing this as consequence of their sin (Galatians 6:7). Joseph *turned away from them and wept* but then sent them away, keeping only Simeon, returning their money, and filling their bags with grain. When the brothers discovered the returned money, they feared that Joseph would accuse them of theft, which would support his accusation that they were spies. This brought the brothers *trembling to one another, saying, “What is this that God has done to us?”*

Genesis 42:29

When they told the story to Jacob, he said, “*you have bereaved me of my children: Joseph is no more, and Simeon is no more, and you would take Benjamin; all these things are against me.*” Then Reuben offered to be the protector for Benjamin, but Jacob refused to let him go with them.

Genesis 43

Genesis 43:1-15

The severe famine continued, which meant that there was no grain for making bread, and very little grazing land for the livestock. Jacob had to feed, not only his sons but their wives, his grandchildren, many servants, and his livestock. So, even though the brothers brought back multiple sacks of grain from Egypt, it was soon all consumed. Judah said enough time had elapsed for them to have returned to Egypt twice. So within a month or two, they had used up the grain.

But the droughts that cause famines are an act of God. No one else can orchestrate a drought. So while the free-will decisions of Joseph were forcing the Israelites to come to Egypt, God was also supplying a famine to fulfill His plan for the Israelites to live in Egypt 400 years (Genesis 15:13). The situation of the Israelites was being dictated back to them from the future, by God. While, at the same time, it was being engineered from the present, by Joseph.

Judah then took over the leadership of the family in that:

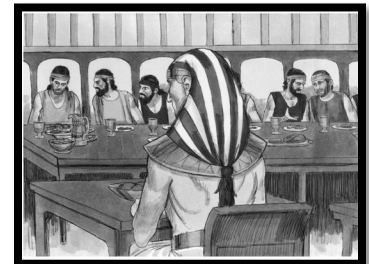
1. He was ready to take action to resolve the problem – *we will arise and go*
2. He dealt with the situation logically, factually, and objectively – *that we may live and not die*
3. He was willing to take responsibility – *I myself will be surety for him* [i.e., Benjamin]

Although they are short on food, Jacob tells them to take *the man as a present a little balm and a little honey, aromatic gum and myrrh, pistachio nuts and almonds*. Possibly these were not available in Egypt or they were just luxury items. Jacob expressed his hope for אֱלֹהֵי שָׁדַי (*El Shaddai*), God Almighty, to show compassion toward the brothers. So they took the gifts, plus Benjamin, and returned to Egypt.

Genesis 43:16-34

There are four events in this last paragraph:

- **First** is the initial reencounter with Joseph, where he saw Benjamin and announced a meal in his own house at noon.
- **Second** is the discussion between the brothers and Joseph's steward, who could obviously speak Hebrew, so he was probably the one functioning as a translator. The brothers explain that they returned the money, but the steward told them, "*Be at ease, do not be afraid. Your God and the God of your father has given you treasure in your sacks; I had your money,*" apparently, indicating that he was the one who returned their money.
- **Third**, Joseph returned, asked about his father's welfare, and seeing Benjamin, again left the room to weep, again.
- **Fourth** is the scene when Joseph returned and they ate a feast together. Well, not exactly together. The Egyptians ate separately, Joseph ate separately, and the brothers ate separately. The explanation we are given is, *the Egyptians could not eat bread with the Hebrews, for that is loathsome to the Egyptians*. But then we learn that Joseph *took portions to them from his own table, but Benjamin's portion was five times as much as any of theirs. So they feasted and drank freely with him.*



Notice that Joseph was carrying out a deception. But it was not to conceal the truth as a lie, instead it was like the trickery used to bring about a surprise birthday party. Joseph's deception was all about revealing the truth. The end game was not a lie, but the truth.

Genesis 44

Genesis 44:1-16

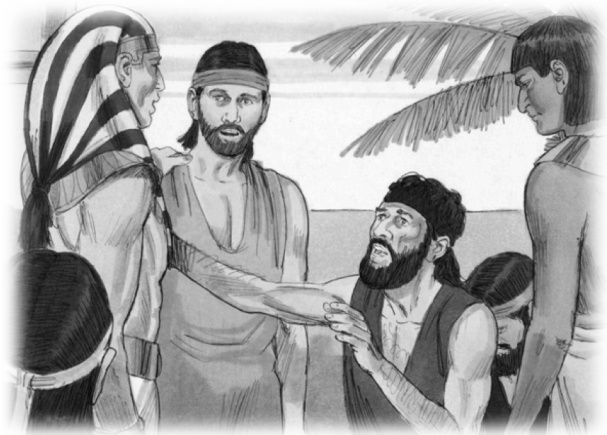
In chapter 44, Joseph's deception is ratcheted up a notch. He came up with a plan to justify keeping Benjamin in Egypt by placing his silver divining cup (verses 5 and 15) in Benjamin's sack, then sending the servants out to stop them and discover it. Of course, Joseph did not use the cup for divination, it was all just to intensify the situation.



Joseph's actions are similar to the story the prophet Nathan told David, which resulted in David's repentance, and the parables Jesus told about the Pharisees, which resulted in their hatred of Jesus. All these were designed to increase tension, to see if the guilty would repent. They were acute circumstances contrived to reveal the true nature of the sinner's heart. Like David's adultery with Bathsheba, the Pharisees with their pride, and Jacob's sons with their treachery against Joseph, there was now a situation that forced a response. With the Pharisees, it was self-justification via their Rabbinic Judaism. With David and Joseph's brothers, it was repentance. Judah told Joseph, "*God has found out the iniquity of your servants.*"

Genesis 44:17-34

In the second part of the chapter, we learn that Judah stood up to follow through on his own commitment. Joseph declared that the rest could go, but he would keep Benjamin. Then Judah gave an account of the discussion with their father, including his own promise to be responsible for Benjamin. As a result, he offered himself as a substitution *instead of* Benjamin.



The reason Judah gave was not just honoring his commitment but concern for their father. When Jacob *sees that the lad is not with us, he will die.* So Judah is concerned about what he was not

concerned about when they lied to Jacob about Joseph. Now Judah was thinking about the suffering it would cause their father.

This does remind us of the substitution Judah's future descendant, Jesus, made on the cross. We should not make too much of it, since this incident was never listed as a type of Christ, and Judah's situation was caused by his own sin and those of his brothers. Nonetheless, it was a voluntary substitution of one life for another. More significant, it was the kind of heart repentance and personal sacrifice that is pleasing to the Lord.

Genesis 45

Genesis 45:1-15

In chapter 45, when his brothers arrived, we learn that there are five years left of the famine, meaning they were two years into it and Joseph had been ruling Egypt under Pharaoh for 9 years. When Joseph heard Judah's offer, he *could not control himself before all those who stood by him, and he cried, "Have everyone go out from me."* Then for the third of five times, he wept over his brothers (42:24; 43:30; 45:14; 50:17; see also 50:1, where he wept over his father).



Joseph revealed who he was in two ways: he gave his name, and he spoke to them for the first time in Hebrew, and unlike his translator, it was without any Egyptian accent (verse 12).

Next, we have a close-up look at Joseph's understanding of all this from what he told his brothers:

1. *Now do not be grieved or angry with yourselves, because you sold me here*
2. *God sent me before you...to preserve for you a remnant in the earth*
3. *[God sent me before you] to keep you alive by a great deliverance*

Therefore it was not you who sent me here, but God (verses 5-8)

It is unlikely Joseph would have made the first point, if he had not seen their repentance and concern for their father. But his other points reflect a solid commitment to the sovereignty of God. Although they were to be repentant, they were not to be *grieved or angry*. They were not to be introspective within themselves or angry with one another, because this was all in the plan of God.

But when we project the sovereignty of God back on Joseph's first point, it shows that Joseph saw God as sovereign over their sin. This is interesting because God hated their sin. So we must then conclude that Joseph is telling us that the plan of God contains things that are not according to His will. Not all of God's will is in His plan. The two are not the same. And at the same time, all of this came about by the evil free will choices of the brothers and the good free will decisions of Joseph.

Genesis 45:16-20

The second paragraph of the chapter tells us Pharaoh's response to the news of the arrival of Joseph's brothers. Of course, Pharaoh is extremely appreciative of Joseph. Joseph has essentially made Pharaoh the richest, most influential ruler in the western world. There is little Pharaoh wouldn't do for Joseph. So Pharaoh told him to move his family to Egypt, and *I will give you the best of the land of Egypt and you will eat the fat of the land*. Actually, Pharaoh made it into a command.

Genesis 45:21-28

Complying with Pharaoh's orders, Joseph sent his brothers away with: (1) *wagons*, (2) *provisions for the journey*, (3) *changes of garments*, (4) *three hundred pieces of silver and five changes of garments* for Benjamin, and (5) *ten donkeys loaded with the best things of Egypt, and ten female donkeys loaded with grain and bread and sustenance for his father on the journey*.

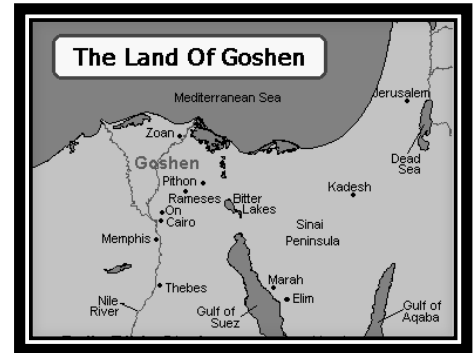
The brothers returned to their father with good news, but it also required a confession on their part – *Joseph is still alive*. After a long discussion, Jacob concluded, *It is enough; my son Joseph is still alive. I will go and see him before I die*. Actually, he was not about to die. We are later told *Jacob lived in the land of Egypt seventeen years; so the length of Jacob's life was one hundred and forty-seven years* (47:28).

Genesis 46

Genesis 46:1-7

Having heard the news that Joseph was still alive and having received the gifts from Pharaoh, Jacob packed up all he had and left Hebron, headed for the land of Goshen on the Nile Delta. When he reached Beersheba, he offered a sacrifice to God and received a night vision from God. In the vision (verses 3-4), God identified Himself, then told Jacob five things:

1. *Do not be afraid to go down to Egypt*, an assurance that it was okay to leave the Land
2. *I will make you a great nation there*, a continuation of the Abrahamic Covenant
3. *I will go down with you to Egypt*, a promise that this was not just of Pharaoh or Joseph
4. *I will also surely bring you up again*, a reference to bringing His people back to the Land
5. *Joseph will close your eyes*, a prediction of his death in the presence of Joseph



Genesis 46:8-27

This paragraph includes the names of the Israelites who went to Egypt and the total number who lived in Egypt. The 33 mentioned in verse 15 include Jacob and Dinah (and this is the last time we hear anything about her). Moses also points out *the sons of Judah* included *Er and Onan and Shelah and Perez and Zerah (but Er and Onan died in the land of Canaan)*. Perez and Zerah were the twins Judah had with Tamar, his daughter-in-law, and Perez is a forefather of Jesus (Matthew 1:3).

The 70 of verse 27 include the 66 of verse 26 plus Jacob, Joseph, and Joseph's two sons Ephraim and Manasseh (Exodus 1:5; Deuteronomy 10:22). Ryrie points out, "However, the total number, including wives of Jacob's sons and grandsons and husbands of his daughters and granddaughters (not listed), would have been greater than 70."

Genesis 46:28-34

Then Jacob sent Judah on ahead, literally *to be before him to Joseph to show to him to Goshen* (KJV *to direct his face to Goshen*).

The point is for Judah to go on ahead and let Jo-



seph know that they would be arriving in Goshen, not coming directly to Joseph who was probably living in Memphis [the ancient capital, 20 km (12 miles) south of today's Cairo].

When he received word from his brother Judah, *Joseph prepared his chariot and went up [north] to Goshen to meet his father Israel; as soon as he appeared before him, he fell on his neck and wept on his neck a long time*. Part of Joseph's greeting included the information that Pharaoh would want to see Jacob, and when he did, it would be a good idea to say they were keepers of livestock rather than shepherds because *every shepherd is loathsome to the Egyptians*.

Genesis 47

Genesis 47:1-6

After Joseph met his father, he told Pharaoh that the Israelites were in Goshen. Then Joseph took five of his brothers (we are not told which ones) and presented them to Pharaoh. Pharaoh asked about their occupation. They said they were shepherds (against Joseph's advice). Then they asked permission to *live*

[יָשָׁב (*yashab*), better translated *dwell* or *sit* , indicating a temporary dwelling] in the land. Next, Pharaoh addressed Joseph, rather than speaking through a translator, telling him to settle his family in the best of the land, which was the fertile delta of Goshen. Pharaoh also suggested some of the brothers then might be placed in charge of his own livestock.



Genesis 47:7-12

Then, finally, Jacob, the patriarch of the Hebrews, met Pharaoh, the most powerful leader of the western world, made powerful in no small part by Jacob's son Joseph. The greeting was friendly and cordial – *Jacob blessed Pharaoh*. What they talked about appears to be longevity and aging. Obviously, we only have a small portion of the conversation, but Pharaoh asked Jacob, literally, *How many are the days of your years?* Longevity was dropping rapidly since the Flood, which was probably also the case in Egypt. Both Pharaoh and Jacob recognized the fact that life was getting shorter, and no one knew how short it would get, until Moses wrote, *As for the days of our life, they contain seventy years, or if due to strength, eighty years* (Psalm 90:10). Jacob told Pharaoh he was 130 but that he would not live as long as his fathers. Jacob did live another 17 years before he died at the age of 147. But he was correct in that he did not attain the longevity of Abraham (175) or of Isaac (180). So Jacob settled them in the land of *Rameses* (verse 11). This was a later designation for the land of Goshen.

Genesis 47:13-27

This paragraph tells us how Joseph conducted business for Pharaoh [probably Sesostrius III (who reigned from 1878 B.C. until his death in 1839 B.C.)]. The result was that the people were saved from starvation, and Pharaoh owned all of Egypt except the land of the priests.

- First, Joseph sold them food, from the supply he had stored up during the 7 years of plenty.
- As the famine became more severe, he accepted livestock (horses, sheep, goats, cattle, and donkeys) as payment.
- Then he took land as a payment.
- After the land belonged to Pharaoh, Joseph gave people seed to plant with the stipulation that Pharaoh was to receive one fifth of the produce.

So the people survived, but Pharaoh owned their land, except for the land of the Israelites living in Goshen, *who acquired property in it and were fruitful and became very numerous*.

Genesis 47:28-31

After living in Goshen for 17 years, Jacob was about to die. He called Joseph and requested that he not be buried in Egypt but in the burial place of his fathers, that is, with Abraham and Isaac in the cave of Machpelah in Hebron. Allen Ross tells us Jacob was born in 2006 B.C. and died in 1859 B.C.

Genesis 48

Genesis 48:1-7

When Joseph got the message that his father was sick, he took his two sons and went up to Goshen to see him. Jacob sat up in (or on) his bed and reviewed God's guidance over his life and the assurance of the fulfillment of the Abrahamic Covenant. Then Jacob said, "*Ephraim and Manasseh shall be mine, as Reuben and Simeon are,*" meaning, Jacob was adopting them, thus elevating them to an inheritance position with his other sons, resulting in Joseph receiving a double blessing. That also seems to indicate that Joseph replaced Reuben as the one receiving the rights of the first-born.



Genesis 48:8-20

Jacob was nearly blind (probably from cataracts, like his father Isaac), so he could barely see Joseph's sons, but when he was aware of their presence, he wanted to bless them. When Joseph placed Jacob's hand on the heads of his grandsons, Jacob crossed his arms giving a greater blessing to Ephraim, the younger son. Once again, God blessed the younger instead of the older son, as He had done choosing Isaac over Ishmael, Jacob over Esau, and even, apparently, Joseph over Reuben. And as Jacob predicted, Ephraim became the dominant tribe of the Northern Kingdom, often equated with the name Israel (Isaiah 7:2; Hosea 4:17; 13:1).

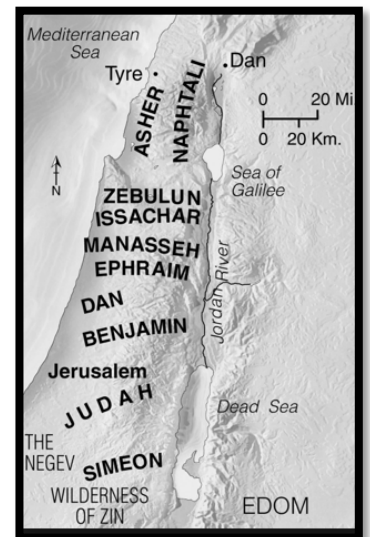
Jacob's blessing on Joseph is quite interesting in that he seems to identify the God who guided him as a messenger of God, who was also God. He makes three descriptive statements, all intended to be of the same person:

1. *The God [אֱלֹהִים (Elohim)] before whom my fathers Abraham and Isaac walked*
2. *The God [אֱלֹהִים (Elohim)] who has been my shepherd all my life to this day*
3. *The angel [מַלְאָךְ (malak)] who has redeemed me from all evil*

Jacob claimed that the God of Abraham and Isaac was his own shepherd, the first time that description is used of God. Then he said that He was also a [מַלְאָךְ (malak)], translated either *angel* or *messenger*, or *an angel who was a messenger*. But here the messenger is also God. So it seems that Jacob somehow understood a messenger of God was the God who appeared to him, his father, and his grandfather. Although Jacob did not know it, his statement sounds like this is God the Son being a messenger for God the Father (John 1:18). This is also the first time God is referred to as a [גּוֹעַל (goel)] redeemer (Exodus 6:6; Isaiah 59:20; Ruth 4:4).

Genesis 48:21-22

Jacob assured Joseph that *God will be with you, and bring you [that is, your descendants] back to the land of your fathers*. Then he said, "*I give you one portion more than your brothers, which I took from the hand of the Amorite with my sword and my bow.*" This portion of land may be the one referred to in John 4:5, where we read that *Jesus came to a city of Samaria called Sychar, near the parcel of ground that Jacob gave to his son Joseph*.



Genesis 49

Genesis 49:1-2

In chapter 49, Jacob said that the purpose for gathering his sons together was *that I may tell you what will befall you in the days to come*. His predictions also sound like a reference to Israel's future in the land of Canaan, in their distant future with the coming of the Messiah, and Millennial Kingdom.

Genesis 49:3-27

49:3-4, Reuben, the firstborn, received the first predictions. Jacob remembered Reuben's adultery with Bilhah (35:22) and predicted he would be *uncontrolled as water*, [literally *a boiling over of water*] and *shall not have preeminence*. No leader, prophet, or judge came from the tribe of Reuben (Judges 5:15-16; 1 Chronicles 5:1).

49:5-7, Simeon and Levi were cursed and despised because of their cruelty in the slaying of the men of Shechem (34:25). Simeon was given an inheritance within the inheritance of Judah (Joshua 19:1; 1 Chronicles 4:39-43). The Levites had no inheritance, except the cities scattered throughout the land (Joshua 21:1-3).

49:8-12, Judah is clearly predicted to be the leading tribe, but their prominence did not begin to be fulfilled until the time of David, about 700 years later. In the Apocalypse, Jesus is called *the Lion of the tribe of Judah, the Root of David* (Revelation 5:5). Jacob's prediction, *The scepter shall not depart from Judah, nor the ruler's staff from between his feet, until Shiloh comes*, seems to refer to the Davidic line of kings through Solomon and on to Joseph (Matthew 1), whose marriage to Mary, David's descendant through his son Nathan (Luke 3:23-38), continued *the ruler's staff* on through the Millennial Kingdom, which is when *Shiloh (peace)* comes. Verses 11-12 describe the millennial prosperity, with an abundance of wine and milk.

49:13, Zebulun *will dwell at the seashore...toward Sidon*. It's a reference to the location of their territory (Joshua 19:10-16).

49:14-15, Issachar would be *a strong donkey, lying down between the sheepfolds*. The idea is that he will be powerful but lazy and surrounded by strong people.

49:16-18, Dan *shall be a serpent in the way*. One of the judges, Samson, was a Danite (Judges 13:2ff), and he judged Israel for 20 years. But the Danites were the worst tribe of Israel, in the sense that they left their assigned territory, moved north, killed the peaceful people of Laish and set up an idolatrous community. They are the only tribe omitted from the list in Revelation 7:4-8.

49:19, Gad would be settled east of the Jordan and be vulnerable to raiders, so they would need strong warriors (1 Chronicles 5:18; 12:8).

49:20, Asher was given the rich seacoast area north of Mount Carmel (Joshua 19:24-31).

49:21, Naphtali... *gives beautiful words*, apparently, in written form such as poetry or in speech, but we have no example of either.

49:22-26, Joseph receives the most eloquent blessing. Verses 23-24 are a metaphoric history of Joseph. Verses 25-26 are blessings for Joseph. Victory in battle was experienced by Joshua, Deborah, and Samuel, from the tribe of Ephraim, as well as Gideon and Jephthah, from the tribe of Manasseh.

49:27, Benjamin is described as a *ravenous (devouring) wolf*. We are reminded of the cruelty of the Benjaminites in Judges 20. Both Sauls of the Bible are from the tribe of Benjamin. King Saul was a *ravenous wolf*, even toward David. Saul who became the Apostle Paul was the same until his conversion on the road to Damascus.

Genesis 49:28-30

The chapter ends with Jacob repeating his request to be buried in Hebron.

Genesis 50

Genesis 50:1-14

Chapter 50 begins with the death of Jacob and ends with the death of Joseph. The first paragraph is about the funeral of Jacob. His body was embalmed, a procedure which required 40 days and included removing the vital organs and dehydrating the body while wrapping it tightly. *The Egyptians wept for him seventy days* [which is 2 ½ months] “just two days short of the normal time of mourning for a Pharaoh” (“Bible Knowledge Commentary”).

Then, with Pharaoh’s permission, Joseph led a huge funeral procession back to the land of Canaan. It included Egyptian dignitaries, charioteers, plus Joseph’s own family and brothers. *They left only their little ones and their flocks and their herds in the land of Goshen.* This was Joseph’s first time back in his own land in 39 years, and his last time. He had lived in Egypt 22 years before Jacob arrived, plus Jacob lived there 17 years. The funeral procession *came to the threshing floor of Atad, which is beyond the Jordan* where they *observed seven days mourning.* This is east of the Jordan River, just north of the Dead Sea. It was not on the way to the cave of Machpelah in Hebron, so it is unclear why they went there. This is the area where later the Israelites gathered, before Joshua led them across the Jordan on dry land. It’s near the place where Elijah was taken up in a fiery chariot to heaven, and where Jesus was baptized. After this, Jacob’s body was taken to Hebron and buried in the cave of Machpelah, where Abraham, Sarah, Isaac, Rebekah, and Jacob’s wife Leah were buried.

Genesis 50:15-18

Now that Jacob was dead, the brothers were afraid that Joseph would get revenge for their treachery. So they sent a message to Joseph saying that their father asked, *“Please forgive, I beg you, the transgression of your brothers.”* It’s questionable if this was true, but when Joseph heard it, he wept. This is the sixth (recorded) time we are told about Joseph weeping (42:24; 43:30; 45:2, 14; 50:1).

Genesis 50:19-26

In the last paragraph of the book, we learn about Joseph’s theology concerning the sovereignty of God. It’s not the first time we heard of it. Back in chapter 45, he told his brothers, *“Now do not be grieved or angry with yourselves, because you sold me here, for God sent me before you to preserve life...Now, therefore, it was not you who sent me here, but God”* (v. 5 & 8). Here he repeated this idea, but with an added moral emphasis. *“Do not be afraid, for am I in God’s place? As for you, you meant evil against me, but God meant it for good”* (verses 49-50). We, therefore, learn:

1. Free will decisions (*you sold me here*) are part of the sovereign plan to God (*it was not you who sent me here, but God*).
2. The evil acts of people (like Joseph’s brothers) can be the good acts of God.
3. God’s plan included (Joseph’s) suffering in order to bring about a good result.
4. God never explained His action of planning (in this case Joseph’s) suffering.
5. The action taken to relieve suffering (Joseph trying to get out of prison) was both good and contrary to the plan of God.

Joseph predicted *you shall carry my bones up from here.* When he died at 110, his body was embalmed and placed in a mummy case and kept 400 years in Egypt. When Moses led the Israelites out of Egypt, Joseph’s body was taken along, carried for 40 years in the wilderness, and finally buried in the land by the city of Shechem (Joshua 24:32).

[See Applications and Questions from the Lives of Jacob and Joseph on pages 99-100]

Applications from the Life of Abraham

- 1. Following God means leaving the cultural values of your country.** *Now the LORD said to Abram, "Go forth from your country, and from your relatives and from your father's house, to the land which I will show you" (Genesis 12:1).* We can't follow God and our nation's culture. Whether it be conservative or liberal, the culture of the world in which we were born is not our homeland. *For our citizenship is in heaven, from which also we eagerly wait for...the Lord Jesus Christ (Philippians 3:20).*
- 2. A half-truth is still a lie.** Actually, most lies are at least half true. What Satan told Eve in the garden was half true. When Abraham told Pharaoh, and later Abimelech, that Sarah was his sister, it was half true. He said, *"She actually is my sister, the daughter of my father, but not the daughter of my mother, and she became my wife" (Genesis 20:12).* But the half-truth communicated the lie that she was not his wife.
- 3. When we get into a sinful situation innocently, we must get out of it willfully.** When Abimelech took Sarah into his harem, he understood that she was an unmarried sister of Abraham. *But God came to Abimelech in a dream of the night, and said to him, "Behold, you are a dead man because of the woman whom you have taken, for she is married."* Abimelech's appeal was, *"In the integrity of my heart and the innocence of my hands I have done this."* God responded with, *"Yes, I know that in the integrity of your heart you have done this...restore the man's wife, for he is a prophet, and he will pray for you and you will live" (Genesis 20:2-7).* The world we live in may throw us into potentially sinful situations we did not ask for, but as soon as we notice it, we need to take positive willful action to get out of that situation.
- 4. Obedience to God must be a priority over family.** Abraham was asked to sacrifice his son. Of course, God will not ask us to do that. But it is very possible that we will be asked to sacrifice a relationship with an unrepentant, sinful family member in order to avoid a position of approving the sin for the rest of the family. *A little leaven leavens the whole lump (1 Corinthians 5:6).*
- 5. Obey only the Word of God, not circumstantial inclinations.** Abraham was willing to sacrifice his son because God told him to in words. He did not get the idea from putting together clues from his circumstances, which can be disastrous for determining God's will.

Questions from the Life of Abraham Answers on page 100

1. When Abraham and Sarah first agreed for her to be called his sister, they were in
 - A. Mesopotamia
 - B. Canaan
 - C. Egypt
2. Abraham first built an altar to the Lord at
 - A. The oak of Mamre
 - B. The oak of Moreh
 - C. The Tamarisk tree
3. To tell him Sarah would have a son, two angels and the Lord came to Abraham in
 - A. Hebron
 - B. Beersheba
 - C. The Judean wilderness
4. To save the righteous people of Sodom, Abraham negotiated with the Lord in
 - A. Hebron
 - B. Beersheba
 - C. The Judean Wilderness

Applications from the Life of Jacob

- 1. Desire what God desires.** The first thing we read that Jacob said was a response to his brother's request for food, *first sell me your birthright* (Genesis 25:31). Later, he tricked his father Isaac into giving him the blessing intended for his brother Esau (Genesis 27). Yet God repeated the Abrahamic Covenant to Jacob, answered his prayers, brought him back to the land, and developed the 12 tribes of Israel from his 12 sons. In spite of Jacob's immature methods, he wanted what God wanted, to establish the genealogical family promises to Abraham and Isaac. Even though he did it poorly, Jacob wanted the same thing God was doing.
- 2. Maturity can happen over time, but only if we leave home and focus on God.** Jacob began as a mama's boy, tricking and swindling his way into a blessing. But when he left home (and his mother), he also learned to trust God, work hard for what he loved, and be responsible for a large family. He moved from not thinking about God, to making a deal with God, to trusting God, to depending on God. And it happened because his focus gradually turned from loving his inheritance, to loving a wife, to loving his family, to loving God.
- 3. There is a selective aspect to love, which is both inclusive and exclusive, involving both problem solving and problem creating, resulting in both intimacy and detachment, reaping both affection and jealousy.** Jacob loved his inheritance, but that put him at odds with Esau. Jacob loved Rachel, but that put him at odds with Leah. Jacob loved Joseph, but that put Joseph at odds with his brothers. Even God said, "*I have loved Jacob; but I have hated Esau*" (Malachi 1:3). God's love for Jacob (Israel) put him at odds with the Esau-ites (the Edomites), and all those who hated Israel. If you love your family, they will take precedent over other families. We can't love what is good without hating what is evil. We can't love what God loves, without hating what God hates.

Questions from the Life of Jacob [Answers on page 100]

1. When Jacob left his mother, Rebekah advised him to *flee to Haran, to my brother Laban! Stay with him a few days, until your brother's fury subsides*. But
 - A. She did not see him for 7 years
 - B. She did not see him for 20 years
 - C. She never saw him again
2. Jacob's firstborn son was
 - A. Reuben
 - B. Judah
 - C. Levi
3. Who bore children first?
 - A. Bilhah
 - B. Zilpah
 - C. Keturah
4. Jacob wrestled all night with the angel at
 - A. The Jordan River
 - B. The Jabbok River
 - C. The Euphrates River
5. The children of Jacob's daughter Dinah
 - A. Became Canaanites
 - B. Became Israelites
 - C. Are never mentioned

Applications from the Life of Joseph

- Sovereignty and free will** are a big part of Joseph's theology. The classic statement is: *Do not be afraid, for am I in God's place? As for you, you meant evil against me, but God meant it for good* (Genesis 20:49-50). It is often called 50/20 vision (after Genesis 50:20), which is better than 20/20 vision. It is clear that Joseph was sold into slavery into Egypt by the premeditated free will actions of his brothers, who first planned to kill him, then decided to sell him to the Ishmaelites. Joseph became prominent in Potiphar's house and in prison because of his hard work and ingenuity, and he was sent to prison because of his free will choice to refuse the advances of Potiphar's wife. But in the end, he saw the whole thing as engineered by God. The free-will decisions and the plan of God were both 100% true.
- Deception and truth** are also an issue with Joseph. But in the end, he saw the whole thing as engineered by God. The free-will decisions and the plan of God were both 100% true. Joseph's deception cannot be called a lie, if a lie is an attempt to hide or pervert the truth. His goal was neither. Like the deception which paves the way for a surprise birthday party, Joseph maneuvered his brothers into not only learning the truth, but confessing the truth of the sin they committed 22 years earlier.
- Bad works and God's works** are compared in the life of Joseph. The bad works of Joseph's brothers, the bad advance of Potiphar's wife, and the bad decision of Pharaoh's servant to not remember Joseph in prison were all part of God's work to bring Joseph up before Pharaoh at exactly the right time.

Questions from the Life of Joseph [Answers Below]

Draw a line from the statement on the left to where it would occur in the scale on the right

| | |
|---|-----|
| | 10 |
| 1. Joseph's age when he was sold into slavery | 20 |
| 2. The number of cows in Pharaoh's dream | 30 |
| 3. Years Joseph was in Egypt before he saw Jacob | 40 |
| 4. The years Joseph lived in Egypt before he returned to the land | 50 |
| 5. The number of Israelites who went to Egypt | 60 |
| 6. The number of years Joseph lived in Egypt | 70 |
| 7. The number of years Jacob lived in Egypt | 90 |
| | 110 |

Answers to Questions about Abraham: 1. A (20:13). 2. B (12:7). 3. A (18:1). 4. C (18:16).

Answers to Questions about Jacob: 1. C. 2. A. 3. C (because she was Abraham's concubine/wife but of Jacobs concubine/wives it's A). 4. B. 5. C (although B is probably also true).

Answers to Questions about Joseph: 1. = 17. 2. = 14. 3. =22 (30-17=13+9=22). 4. = 39 (22+17). 5. =70. 6. = 93 (110-17=93). 7. = 17.