

Expanded Analysis of

GENESIS

"BLESSED BEGINNINGS"

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The Authorship of Genesis

Nowhere in Genesis is the author identified by name. But Genesis is the first book of a larger work, the first five books of the Bible, which we call the “Pentateuch,” and which Judaism identifies as the “Torah.” The Torah has always existed as a separate scroll, called the Torah scroll, or more formally, *Sefer Torah* (meaning Book of Torah). The first five books are thus a single unit. If we can establish the authorship of the Torah, we can establish the authorship of Genesis.

The Traditional (Conservative) View

Conservative Bible scholars have always held to the traditional view – that [Moses](#) is the author of the Pentateuch, and thus of Genesis. After all, the Biblical evidence is massive. Let us examine three strands of evidence.

First, there is solid evidence in the Pentateuch itself that [Moses](#) is the author. Such Scriptures include Exodus 17:14; 24:4, 7; 34:27-28; Numbers 33:1-2; Deuteronomy 31:9. These Scriptures are of such fundamental importance that they are reproduced here:

Exodus 17:14. Then the LORD said to Moses, “Write this in a book as a memorial and recite it to Joshua, that I will utterly blot out the memory of Amalek from under heaven.”

Exodus 24:4. Moses wrote down all the words of the LORD. Then he arose early in the morning, and built an altar at the foot of the mountain with twelve pillars for the twelve tribes of Israel.

Exodus 24:7. Then he [[Moses](#)] took the book of the covenant and read it in the hearing of the people; and they said, “All that the LORD has spoken we will do, and we will be obedient!”

Exodus 34:27-28. ²⁷Then the LORD said to Moses, “Write down these words, for in accordance with these words I have made a covenant with you and with Israel.” ²⁸So he was there with the LORD forty days and forty nights; he did not eat bread or drink water. And he wrote on the tablets the words of the covenant, the Ten Commandments.

Numbers 33:1-2. ¹These are the journeys of the sons of Israel, by which they came out from the land of Egypt by their armies, under the leadership of Moses and Aaron. ²Moses recorded their starting places according to their journeys by the command of the LORD, and these are their journeys according to their starting places.

Deuteronomy 31:9-11. ⁹So Moses wrote this law and gave it to the priests, the sons of Levi who carried the ark of the covenant of the LORD, and to all the elders of Israel. ¹⁰Then Moses commanded them, saying, “At the end of every seven years, at the time of the year of remission of debts, at the Feast of Booths, ¹¹when all Israel comes to appear before the LORD your God at the place which He will choose, you shall read this law in front of all Israel in their hearing.

Second, there is evidence outside the Pentateuch that [Moses](#) is its author. Here are examples: Joshua 1:7-8; 8:30-32, 34; 22:5; 23:6; 1 Kings 2:3; 2 Kings 14:6; 21:8; 1 Chronicles 22:13; Ezra 6:18; Nehemiah 13:1; Daniel 9:11-13; Malachi 4:4. This evidence is, again, crucial enough to warrant printing these texts:

Joshua 1:7-8. [Yahweh](#) to Joshua: ⁷“Only be strong and very courageous; be careful to do according to all the law which Moses My servant commanded you; do not turn from it to the right or to the left, so that you may have success wherever you go. ⁸“This book of the law shall not depart from your mouth, but you shall meditate on it day and night, so that you may be careful to do according to all that is written in it; for then you will make your way prosperous, and then you will have success.

Joshua 8:30-32, 34. Joshua, recording his own actions: ³⁰Then Joshua built an altar to the LORD, the God of Israel, in Mount Ebal, ³¹just as Moses the servant of the LORD had commanded the sons of Israel, as it is written in the book of the law of Moses, an altar of uncut stones on which no man had wielded an iron tool; and they offered burnt offerings on it to the LORD, and sacrificed peace offerings. ³²He wrote there on the stones a copy of the law of Moses, which he ¹ had written, in the presence of the sons of Israel. ³⁴Then afterward he read all the words of the law, the blessing and the curse, according to all that is written in the book of the law.

Joshua 22:5. Joshua to the two-and-a-half tribes of [Israel](#): “Only be very careful to observe the commandment and the law which Moses the servant of the LORD commanded you, to love the LORD your God and walk in all His ways and keep His commandments and hold fast to Him and serve Him with all your heart and with all your soul.”

Joshua 23:6. Joshua to [Israel](#): “Be very firm, then, to keep and do all that is written in the book of the law of Moses, so that you may not turn aside from it to the right hand or to the left,

1 Kings 2:3. David to Solomon: “Keep the charge of the LORD your God, to walk in His ways, to keep His statutes, His commandments, His ordinances, and His testimonies, according to what is written in the Law of Moses, that you may succeed in all that you do and wherever you turn,”

2 Kings 14:6. Stated about Amaziah: But the sons of the slayers he did not put to death, according to what is written in the book of the Law of Moses, as the LORD commanded, saying, “The fathers shall not be put to death for the sons, nor the sons be put to death for the fathers; but each shall be put to death for his own sin.”

2 Kings 21:8. Quotation of [Yahweh](#) by the writer: “And I will not make the feet of Israel wander anymore from the land which I gave their fathers, if only they will observe to do according to all that I have commanded them, and according to all the law that My servant Moses commanded them.”

1 Chronicles 22:13. David to Solomon: “Then you will prosper, if you are careful to observe the statutes and the ordinances which the LORD commanded Moses concerning Israel. Be strong and courageous, do not fear nor be dismayed.”

Ezra 6:18. Stated about the sons of [Israel](#), the [priests](#), the Levites, and the rest of the exiles: Then they appointed the priests to their divisions and the Levites in their orders for the service of God in Jerusalem, as it is written in the book of Moses.

Nehemiah 13:1. At the dedication of the rebuilt wall: On that day they read aloud from the book of Moses in the hearing of the people; and there was found written in it that no Ammonite or Moabite should ever enter the assembly of God,

Daniel 9:11-13. A portion of the prayer of Daniel: ¹¹“Indeed all Israel has transgressed Your law and turned aside, not obeying Your voice; so the curse has been poured out on us, along with the oath which is written in the law of Moses the servant of God, for we have sinned against Him. ¹²“Thus He has confirmed His words which He had spoken against us and against our rulers who ruled us, to bring on us great calamity; for under the whole heaven there has not been done anything like what was done to Jerusalem. ¹³“As it is written in the law of Moses, all this calamity has come on us; yet we have not sought the favor of the LORD our God by turning from our iniquity and giving attention to Your truth.

¹ Joshua 8:32 - he: [NASB](#) note: I.e. [Moses](#)

Malachi 4:4. An exhortation of Malachi: “Remember the law of Moses My servant, even the statutes and ordinances which I commanded him in Horeb for all Israel.”

Third, there is evidence in the New Testament that [Moses](#) wrote the Pentateuch: Matthew 8:4; 19:8; Mark 7:10; 12:26; Luke 16:29-31; 20:37; 24:27, 44-45; John 5:46-47; 7:19, 22-23; Acts 3:22; 15:1; 28:23; Romans 10:5; 10:19; 1 Corinthians 9:9; 2 Corinthians 3:15. Again, the importance of this discussion warrants printing the texts:

Matthew 8:4. Jesus, alluding to Leviticus 13:49; 14:1-57: And Jesus said to him, “See that you tell no one; but go, show yourself to the priest and present the offering that Moses commanded, as a testimony to them.”

Matthew 19:8. Jesus, referring to Deuteronomy 24:1-4: He said to them, “Because of your hardness of heart Moses permitted you to divorce your wives; but from the beginning it has not been this way.”

Mark 7:10. Jesus, quoting Exodus 20:12; 21:17; Deuteronomy 5:16; Leviticus 20:9: “For Moses said, ‘Honor your father and your mother’; and, ‘He who speaks evil of father or mother, is to be put to death’;

Mark 12:26. Jesus, quoting from Exodus 3:6: “But regarding the fact that the dead rise again, have you not read in the book of Moses, in the passage about the burning bush, how God spoke to him, saying, ‘I am the God of Abraham, and the God of Isaac, and the God of Jacob’?”

Luke 16:29-31. Jesus, quoting Abraham speaking to the rich man in Hades: ²⁹“But Abraham said, ‘They have Moses and the Prophets; let them hear them.’ ³⁰“But he said, ‘No, father Abraham, but if someone goes to them from the dead, they will repent!’ ³¹“But he said to him, ‘If they do not listen to Moses and the Prophets, they will not be persuaded even if someone rises from the dead.’”

Luke 20:37. Jesus, to certain Sadducees and scribes questioning Him: “But that the dead are raised, even Moses showed, in the passage about the burning bush, where he calls the Lord the God of Abraham, and the God of Isaac, and the God of Jacob.

Luke 24:27. Luke, describing Jesus’ conversation with the travelers to Emmaus: Then beginning with Moses and with all the prophets, He explained to them the things concerning Himself in all the Scriptures.

Luke 24:44-45. Jesus, addressing two disciples on the road to Emmaus: ⁴⁴Now He said to them, “These are My words which I spoke to you while I was still with you, that all things which are written about Me in the Law of Moses and the Prophets and the Psalms must be fulfilled.” ⁴⁵Then He opened their minds to understand the Scriptures,

John 5:46-47. Jesus, to the Jews who sought to kill Him: ⁴⁶“For if you believed Moses, you would believe Me, for he wrote about Me. ⁴⁷“But if you do not believe his writings, how will you believe My words?”

John 7:19. Jesus, to the crowd at the temple, alluding to the whole Torah, and specifically to Exodus 20:13: “Did not Moses give you the Law, and yet none of you carries out the Law? Why do you seek to kill Me?”

John 7:22-23. Jesus, alluding to Genesis 17:10-14; 21:4; Leviticus 12:3: ²²“For this reason Moses has given you circumcision (not because it is from Moses, but from the fathers), and on the Sabbath you circumcise a man. ²³“If a man receives circumcision on the Sabbath so that the Law of Moses will not be broken, are you angry with Me because I made an entire man well on the Sabbath?

Acts 3:22. Peter, in his sermon, alluding to Deuteronomy 18:15, 18: “Moses said, ‘The Lord God will raise up for you a prophet like me from your brethren; to Him you shall give heed to everything He says to you.’”

Acts 15:1. Unnamed Judaizers: Some men came down from Judea and began teaching the brethren, “Unless you are circumcised according to the custom of Moses, you cannot be saved.”

Acts 28:23. Luke, regarding Paul: When they had set a day for Paul, they came to him at his lodging in large numbers; and he was explaining to them by solemnly testifying about the kingdom of God and trying to persuade them concerning Jesus, from both the Law of Moses and from the Prophets, from morning until evening.

Romans 10:5. Paul, alluding to Leviticus 18:5: For Moses writes that the man who practices the righteousness which is based on law shall live by that righteousness.

Romans 10:19. Paul, quoting Deut. 32:21: But I say, surely Israel did not know, did they? First Moses says, “I will make you jealous by that which is not a nation, By a nation without understanding will I anger you.”

1 Corinthians 9:9. Paul, quoting Deuteronomy 25:4: For it is written in the Law of Moses, “You shall not muzzle the ox while he is threshing.” God is not concerned about oxen, is He?

2 Corinthians 3:15. Paul, alluding to Exodus 34:33-35: But to this day whenever Moses is read, a veil lies over their heart;

It is easy to see why scholars who take God’s Word at face value and have no agenda to discredit the Bible conclude that [Moses](#) is the author of the Torah. The internal evidence is massive.

The Critical (Liberal) View

Unfortunately, there will always be those who refuse to take the Bible at face value. I once encountered a president of a Bible College in another country who obviously took great delight in pointing out what he considered to be errors in the Gospel of Mark. In his conversation, he revealed that, when seeking higher education, he had been unable to find a seminary in his native country that satisfied him. Finally, he found one in America. He traveled to America, completed his degree program, and was satisfied with the training he received, one which reinforced the belief he already held, apparently, that there are errors in the Bible. I say that to say this. We often tend to believe that which we are predisposed to believe. There are obviously some Bible scholars who do not wish to take the Bible at face value. So they invent or discover scholarly hypotheses to circumvent the plain import of Scripture. Much of the information that follows is based upon the following source: “Did Moses Write Genesis?”²

Jean Astruc, writing in 1753, first noted that Genesis 1:1-2:3 used the name Elohim for God, while Genesis 2:4-24 used the name [Yahweh](#). He conjectured that the different names meant that different authors had originally written the competing texts, and that [Moses](#) had fused them into one document. Thus was born the Documentary Hypothesis. But subsequent scholars jettisoned Astruc’s belief that [Moses](#) had written the Pentateuch. As the Documentary Hypothesis developed, it came to mean that the Pentateuch consists of a series of documents, written over an extended period of time, written by a series of different authors, and finally redacted into its present form by

² “[Did Moses Write Genesis?](#)” by Dr. Terry Mortenson and Bodie Hodge.

one or more editors a thousand years after [Moses](#). Ultimately, the [evolutionary](#) dogma of Charles Darwin, which explains biology without God, was applied to the Bible, explaining the origin of the Torah without God, or at least not in the way the Bible purports it to be.³

The most popular Documentary Hypothesis (there are several) was published in 1895 by Julius Wellhausen. His hypothesis is as follows: There are four main strands of documents that lie behind the Pentateuch in its present form. The four main documents in the Pentateuch are the Yahwist Document (which used the name [Yahweh](#) – Jahweh or Jehovah – for God) (J); the Elohist Document (which used the name [Elohim](#) for God) (E); the Deuteronomistic Document, which includes most of Deuteronomy (D); and the [Priestly](#) Document, which includes most of Leviticus (P), supposedly written by [priests](#). These four different strands then are known by the acronym JEDP (sometimes JEPD). Each of these independent texts was written by an unknown author or series of authors (one can never know), and eventually redacted (edited) into its final form by an unknown redactor or redactors.

As far as a timeline is concerned, these “scissors-and-glue” – “cut-and-paste” scholars have concluded that J wrote his J document around 900-850 B.C.; that E wrote his E document around 750-700 B.C.; that D wrote his D document around the time of Josiah’s reforms in 621 B.C.; and that some [priest](#) or [priests](#) wrote the P document some time after the fall of Babylon in 586 B.C. The final redaction of the whole document into its present form by an unnamed redactor or redactors was accomplished about 400 B.C.⁴

By way of illustration, let me guide the reader to the official belief of the [Roman Catholic Church](#) as to the origins of the Pentateuch. Sadly, even [Roman Catholicism](#), which we ordinarily think of as being a conservative institution, has fallen prey to liberalism. Here, I quote at length from the [Introduction to the Pentateuch](#) found in the New American Bible, which can be accessed on the Vatican website. Note that the document quoted does not rule out [Moses](#)’ influence, but does not grant him authorship status “in the modern sense.” The Introduction speaks of the “historic sweep” of “the story of the formation of the People of God.”

The grandeur of this historic sweep is the result of a careful and complex joining of several historic traditions, or sources. These are primarily four: the so-called Yahwist, Elohist, Priestly and Deuteronomistic strands that run through the Pentateuch. (They are conveniently abbreviated as J, E, P and D.) Each brings to the Torah its own characteristics, its own theological viewpoint - a rich variety of interpretation that the sensitive reader will take pains to appreciate. A superficial difference between two of these sources is responsible for their names: the Yahwist prefers the name [Yahweh](#) (represented in translation as Lord) by which God revealed himself to Israel; the Elohist prefers the generic name for God, Elohim. The Yahwist is concrete, imaginative, using many anthropomorphisms in its theological approach, as seen, e.g., in the narrative of creation in Genesis 2, compared with the Priestly version in Genesis 1. The Elohist is more sober, moralistic. The Priestly strand, which emphasizes

³ Julius Wellhausen and [evolution](#): Let me quote from R. K. Harrison, *Introduction to the Old Testament*, 1969 edition, p. 22:

Wellhausen then applied his conclusion that the Mosaic legislation was the basic law code of post-exilic Judaism rather than the starting-point for the development of [Israelite](#) religious institutions to a reconstruction of Hebrew religion. Rejecting current theological interpretations in favor of Hegelian principles of causation and [evolution](#), he envisioned the early religious activity of [Israel](#) in terms of primitive impulses of an animistic character; consequently, he dismissed as unhistorical the sources which described patriarchal religion as monotheistic in nature.

And again, “His scheme bore all the marks of Hegelian [evolutionism](#)”

⁴ [“Did Moses write Genesis?”](#)

genealogies, is more severely theological in tone. The Deuteronomic approach is characterized by the intense hortatory style of Deuteronomy 5-11, and by certain principles from which it works, such as the centralization of worship in the Jerusalem temple.

However, even this analysis of the Pentateuch is an over-simplification, for it is not always possible to distinguish with certainty among the various sources. The fact is that each of these individual traditions incorporates much older material. The Yahwist was himself a collector and adapter. His narrative is made up of many disparate stories that have been reoriented, and given a meaning within the context in which they now stand; e.g., the story of [Abraham](#) and Isaac in Gen 22. Within the J and P traditions one has to reckon with many individual units; these had their own history and life-setting before they were brought together into the present more or less connected narrative.

This is not to deny the role of [Moses](#) in the development of the Pentateuch. It is true we do not conceive of him as the author of the books in the modern sense. But there is no reason to doubt that, in the events described in these traditions, he had a uniquely important role, especially as lawgiver. Even the later laws which have been added in P and D are presented as a Mosaic heritage. [Moses](#) is the lawgiver par excellence, and all later legislation is conceived in his spirit, and therefore attributed to him. Hence, the reader is not held to undeviating literalness in interpreting the words, "the LORD said to Moses." One must keep in mind that the Pentateuch is the crystallization of [Israel's](#) age-old relationship with God.

Evaluation

It is interesting that the writer of the Introduction to the Pentateuch in the New American Bible is careful "not to deny the role of [Moses](#) in the development of the Pentateuch." But what he offers with one hand, he takes away with the other. He concedes, "It is true we do not conceive of him as the author of the books in the modern sense." While he concedes Mosaic influence, he denies Mosaic authorship. The Documentary Hypothesis as expressed above on the Vatican website is sharply at variance with the united testimony of the Pentateuch itself, with the testimony of other writers in the Old Testament, with the testimony of Jesus, and with the testimony of the Apostles.

How can we evaluate the Documentary Hypothesis? Dr. Terry Mortenson and Bodie Hodge, conservatives, have co-authored an article that is the basis for much of this essay on the authorship of Genesis. The article is entitled, "[Did Moses Write Genesis?](#)" In their article the authors maintain the following about liberal scholars and other skeptics who have denied Mosaic authorship of the Torah. Let me summarize their evaluation:

- (1) They assumed the Bible is a man-made book, not a supernatural revelation from God. Then they manipulated the data of the text to support their agenda.
- (2) They assumed that [Israel's](#) religion has evolved, just as other, man-made religions have.
- (3) They wrongly asserted that the art of writing was unknown prior to the time of David's monarchy, and that, therefore, [Moses](#) could not have written the Torah.
- (4) Claiming to base their findings on the Biblical texts, they ignored the texts listed above, which assert that God commanded [Moses](#) to write and that he wrote. That is a biased, selective use of evidence.
- (5) They illogically assumed that no Hebrew writer was capable of using more than one name for

God.

(6) With their agenda-driven bias, they erroneously assumed that any Biblical statement is unreliable unless it can be proven elsewhere. And whenever there was a conflict between competing literature, they reflexively gave the preferential nod to the secular or pagan literature. They have not treated any other literature this way.

(7) When there was repetition in the Hebrew text, they automatically assumed more than one author was at work. (And, I might add, they maintained this despite the fact that Hebrew poetry itself is characterized by a repetition of ideas, not sounds.)

(8) They assumed they could scientifically date the biblical text even though there was no other ancient Hebrew literature with which to compare. (And, I might add, they completely ignored critical elements of the text that did not fit their template, such as the clear claims of Mosaic authorship.)

(9) Finally, and here I quote verbatim: “To date, no manuscript evidence of the J-document, E-document, P-document, D-document, or any of the other supposed fragments have ever been discovered. And there are no ancient Jewish commentaries that mention any of these imaginary documents or their alleged unnamed authors. All the manuscript evidence we have is for the first five books of the Bible just as we have them today. This is confirmed by the singular Jewish testimony (until the last few centuries) that these books are the writings of [Moses](#).”

Just as is the case with the theory of [evolution](#), proponents of the Documentary Hypothesis have systematically ignored evidence that does not fit their theory, and have manipulated evidence to fit their preconceived ideas. This is not scholarship. It is propaganda.

What is the motivation of those who hold to the Documentary Hypothesis? We cannot know for certain, of course, unless they choose to tell us. What was Wellhausen’s motivation? According to R. K. Harrison, “There can be little doubt that when Wellhausen promulgated his theory of Pentateuchal origins he was endeavoring to develop an instrument for the deeper understanding of Scripture.”⁵

Whatever the motivation of proponents of JEDP, the effects of their hypothesis is devastating. The tendency is to remove the supernatural from the Bible. Liberals delight in “late-dating” books of the Bible. Dating a book long after it purports to have been written severely dilutes the authenticity and historicity of the book. If [Moses](#) didn’t write the Torah, then we are left with oral tradition and editorial ingenuity. In the view of liberals, that whole process adds spurious details and embellishments about the miraculous that are not grounded in actual fact. Is that what they want? Why should I believe a Bible that is not authentic, that is not what it claims to be, but is actually a rewritten and rewritten story that has little basis in reality? Is it possible they don’t want us to believe the Bible? Do they want us to believe it is “just a story” – a story that has little basis in reality? For support of this conclusion see the offsite article from a conservative point of view, “[What is the documentary hypothesis?](#)”

Regardless of motive, the Documentary Hypothesis of JEDP wrecks havoc on one’s faith in the Scriptures. “Before his death in 1918 Wellhausen conceded that the rationalism which he had embraced so avidly in earlier years had made havoc of his own faith in the authority and

⁵ R. K. Harrison, *op. cit.*, p. 24.

authenticity of the Old Testament.”⁶

Conclusion

WordExplain rejects out of hand the Documentary Hypothesis. Observe that we do not know a single name of any of these alleged brilliant writers behind, J, E, D, and P. Nor do we know a single name of the alleged brilliant redactors (editors) who combined these hypothetical, alleged, disparate documents into one stupendous volume, the Torah which we now possess. Why don't we know their names? *Because they never did exist!* No one has ever found a single copy of the J document. No one has ever found a single copy of the E document. No one has ever found a single copy of the D document. And no one has ever found a single copy of the P document. Why not? Because the oldest extant copies of the Torah all exist as a single scroll, the Torah scroll. The separate documents hypothesized by these scholars *are figments of their imagination!*

There are many reasons why it is defensible to cite [Moses](#) as the author of the Pentateuch. The Egyptians of [Moses](#)' era could write. [Moses](#) himself was a highly educated man. Having been brought up in the courts of Pharaoh, he had received one of the premier educations of his era throughout the entire earth! Certainly he was educated enough to write. To think otherwise is intellectually indefensible. In fact, [Moses](#) was the most qualified person in all the world to have written the Torah! There are Biblical texts which state specifically that [Moses](#) wrote down that which God revealed to him. According to Charles Ryrie, in his Introduction to Genesis in the [Ryrie Study Bible](#), “eyewitness details point to a participant being the author, not an editor who lived centuries later (Ex. 15:27; Num. 2:1-31; 11:7-8).” Furthermore, according to Ryrie, “the author's information about Egyptian names, words, customs, and geography would have been difficult for an author or editor to have obtained in [Canaan](#) centuries after [Moses](#)' time (Gen. 13:10; 16:1-3; 33:18; 41:43; cf. Acts 7:22).”

Of course, [Moses](#) used sources. His use of the Hebrew word “*toledoth*” suggests that he used sources (see the note on 2:4 below). He would have used written or oral traditions handed down to him. And certainly God revealed to [Moses](#) many things he otherwise could not have known. But [Moses](#) wrote the Torah.

Of course there was a minimal amount of editing performed by someone after [Moses](#). He could not have written about his own death (Deut. 34:5-12). Likely Joshua recorded that. Genesis 12:6 appears to end with an editorial comment, “And the Canaanites were then in the land.” An edit does not alter the fact that [Moses](#) wrote the entire Pentateuch. A reference to Dan in Gen. 14:14 need not necessarily refer to the region that was allotted under the auspices of Joshua later. It more likely identified a city already in existence in [Moses](#)' day. Genesis 22:14 may reflect a later, editorial hand, but again, an edit here and there does not alter the fact that [Moses](#) wrote the entire book of Genesis, along with the other books that make up the Torah. To deny Mosaic authorship is to deny the inspiration of the whole Bible (2 Timothy 3:16).

The date of the composition of Genesis. Since, according to the entire Bible, [Moses](#) wrote the Torah, and since Genesis is an integral part of the Torah, the book of Genesis must be dated some time during the lifetime of [Moses](#) (ca. 1525-1405 B.C.) (Thomas Constable, [Notes on Genesis, 2019](#)). Since [Moses](#) was forty years old when God called him at the burning bush, we can confidently date the composition of Genesis by [Moses](#) in the 15th century B.C.

On the subject of the authorship of Genesis, WordExplain highly recommends the excellent article written from a conservative, biblical point of view, “[Did Moses Write Genesis?](#)” by Dr. Terry

⁶ R. K. Harrison, *op. cit.*, p. 26.

Mortenson and Bodie Hodge.

For another, brief discussion of the JEDP theory from a conservative viewpoint, see “[JEDP Theory – What is it?](#)”

For yet another, brief discussion of the Documentary Hypothesis from a conservative point of view, see “[What is the documentary hypothesis?](#)”

GENESIS

"BLESSED BEGINNINGS"

SECTION I. THE CREATION OF THE HEAVENS AND THE EARTH. 1:1 - 2:3

A 1 GOD'S BLESSED BEGINNING OF PERFECT CREATION 1 - 2

B 1 The Seven Days of Creation ⁷ 1:1 - 2:3

C 1 Day one: Heavens, earth, light 1:1-5

D 1 God's initial creation 1:1

E 1 The time of creation: {I} In the beginning ⁸

E 2 The identity of the Creator: God ⁹ created ¹⁰

⁷ Gen. 1:1 - 2:3 Title: The Seven Days of Creation: For a discussion of the creation week, see the on-site article, "[How Did Our World Get Here?](#)"

⁸ Gen. 1:1 - beginning: *reshith* ([7225](#)), most often translated by [NASB](#) as "beginning" (19 X), less often as "first" (16 X), + others. This is the beginning, not of God, for He is eternal, and not of created beings, for angels had already been created before the world, and rejoiced to see its creation (Job 38:4-7). This is, however, the beginning of the cosmos, or universe, the created order.

⁹ Gen. 1:1 - God: *Elohim* ([430](#)), the strong One. This is the generic name for God. It always appears as a plural. Many commentators call it "the plural of majesty." Be that as it may, to me that begs the point. God surely is one God, and there is only one God. We believe in monotheism, not polytheism. Yet God's plural name allows for the reality that He exists in three persons, Father, Son, and Holy Spirit. He is, after all, the most complex being in the universe or outside it. We cannot explain the [Trinity](#) adequately, but most certainly, God, Elohim, exists as a Trinity. We will be introduced to the Spirit of God in Genesis 1:2.

¹⁰ Gen. 1:1 - created: *bara*, [1254](#), usually translated as some form of the word "create." In this case, it means God created the heavens and the earth *ex nihilo* – out of nothing. There is no room for macro [evolution](#) in any sense in Genesis 1:1 - 2:3. Some try to squeeze [theistic evolution](#) out of Genesis, but that compromise satisfies no one. It is poor exegesis and poor science, because the order of creation dramatically contradicts the theory of [evolution](#). For example, in the theory of [evolution](#), the sun precedes the earth. In creation the earth is created before the sun or any stars.

It should here be noted that, apart from Divine revelation, it is impossible to date accurately the creation of the earth and the universe. That is because creation, by definition, requires a discrepancy between the apparent age of a created entity and its real age. Let me briefly illustrate.

Let us suppose that a modern anthropological, biological, and medical team could be transported back in time to the eighth day of creation. They would have encountered a fully grown, mature, Adam and Eve. On a purely superficial observational level, the team would have estimated the age of the couple to be in the neighborhood of 21-25 years of age. That would have been their apparent age. The team would have been in error, however. The couple's actual age would have been a mere two days. Closer, more scientific observation and testing would undoubtedly have led to some perplexing anomalies. The team would have been startled to discover, for example, that neither the male nor the female possessed a navel!

Next, let us suppose that a team of biologists encountered, on the eighth day of creation, a 60-foot red maple tree. Knowing that a healthy red maple, depending on growing conditions, grows from 1-2 feet per year, they would have calculated the tree to be somewhere between 30 and 60 years of age. But they would be wrong. This particular red maple would be only five days old. Had the team taken the trouble to cut down the tree and examine it, they would have been startled to discover a most remarkable anomaly – the tree would have had no growth rings!

Finally, let us suppose that a modern-day team of astronomers, complete with modern technology, could be

E 3 The identity of His first two created entities

G 1 the heavens ¹¹

G 2 and the earth.

D 2 The initial condition of the earth 1:2a

E 1 Uninhabitable and uninhabited: {2} The earth was formless and void,
¹²

E 2 Devoid of light: and darkness ¹³ was over

teleported back to the Garden of [Eden](#) on the eight day of creation. At night time, they would have looked at the stars in the heavens. With no artificial light, and absent the glare of the moon, they would have been able to peer deep into space. With their modern presuppositions they would have gazed at the most distant star clusters and would have concluded that they were at least [a billion light-years old](#). The team would have been in error, however. The real age of the star clusters would have been a mere four days!

These examples demonstrate my main point. It is impossible to have creation without there being a discrepancy between apparent age and real age. Thus, apart from Divine revelation, modern science will never be able to arrive at an accurate determination of the real age of the earth, the sun, or the universe.

¹¹ Gen. 1:1 - the heavens and the earth: “Heavens” is *shamayim* ([8064](#)), appearing 421X in the plural in the Hebrew Bible, and never in the singular. “Earth” is *erets* ([776](#)), translated ([NASB](#)) “land” or “lands” 1638 X; “earth” 655 X; or “ground” 119 X. (Also see the footnote on “earth” at Gen. 1:10 for more information on this important Hebrew noun.) In Gen. 1:1 *shamayim* refers to what we would today call “deep space,” the framework in which the earth was first placed on day one, and later, on the fourth day, the sun, moon, and the stars. *Ersets* here refers to the planet Earth in its initial, raw state as described momentarily.

There are Hebrew scholars who say that the phrase “heavens and earth” is a merism, or “totalism” – a title describing the finished universe. Under the “merism” view, Genesis 1:1-2 does not constitute part of Day One of creation, but rather a presumed antecedent creation. But if that view is correct, there is nothing in Genesis 1 that describes the beginning creation of our universe. That view also leads to an undatable origin of the earth and fanciful theories such as the [Chaos Theory of Origins](#), a modification of the [Gap Theory](#). Both of these theories are part of the Ruin / Reconstruction theory of origins. But they are all without adequate Biblical support. [Yahweh’s](#) own explanation is that in six days He 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” (Exod. 20:8-11). [Moses’](#) statements in Exodus 20:8-11 are consistent with his account in Genesis 2:1-3 that God’s creative work was completed in six days, and that God rested on the seventh, or Sabbath day. So the entire universe was created in six days. That means that Genesis 1:1-2 is not part of a title nor does it amount to a merism. Heaven and earth were separate components that God created on the first day of creation. Thus, creation is datable. (See the excellent article by Rick Freeman, “[Do the Genesis Genealogies Contain Gaps?](#)”

¹² Gen. 1:2 - formless and void: [NASB](#) footnote: “Or a waste and emptiness”. All forms of the Ruin / Reconstruction Theory attempt to paint the language here as chaotic, and the conditions described in verse 2 as caused by [Satan’s](#) ruin of the original heavens and earth, created in the dateless past. But the theory completely misses the mark. The earth as it existed initially on Day One was exactly what God intended *at that point*. There was nothing chaotic or ruined. Step by step during the Creation Week, God would mold the earth and the universe, fitting them for human existence and observation. The point of [Moses](#) is that the earth, as initially created by God, by design was formless, unfit for human habitation. Moreover it was also empty of anything. Because it was uninhabitable, it was also, of necessity, empty. See a word study of the Hebrew phrase, [tohu wabohu](#).

¹³ Gen. 1:2 - darkness: With no light, there could be no life.

- E 3 A deep aqueous matrix: the surface of the deep,¹⁴
- D 3 The creative activity of the Spirit of God 1:2b
- E 1 The nature of His activity: and the Spirit of God was moving¹⁵
- E 2 The location of His activity: over the surface of the waters.¹⁶
- D 4 God's decree of light: {3} Then God said, "Let there be light";
- D 5 The result of God's decree; and there was light.¹⁷
- D 6 God's assessment of the light He had created: {4} God saw that the light was good;¹⁸
- D 7 God's separation of light from darkness: and God separated the light from the darkness.

¹⁴ Gen. 1:2 - deep: the translation of the Hebrew *tehom*, [8415](#). It is translated in the [NASB](#) as "deep" or "deeps" 30 X, "depths" 4 X; "ocean depths" 1 X; and "springs" 1 X. At this stage in Day One of Creation, the earth was a vast, unlit matrix of water, and presumably, soil and mineral.

¹⁵ Gen. 1:2 - moving: [NASB](#) footnote: "Or *hovering*". [[JTB](#)]: The word *rachaph* ([7363](#)), occurring here in the [Piel](#) stem, which intensifies the action, describes the activity of the Spirit of God in Creation as hovering, or even vibrating on the face (surface) of the waters. There was nothing chaotic or evil about the state of the earth at this point. Quite to the contrary, the Spirit of God Himself was moving upon the face of the waters, presumably imbuing the planet with the appropriate building blocks to support life. It is also possible he was permeating the earth with energy. The earth was not deficient, but merely incomplete, not yet organized to be a hospitable environment for either fish or fowl, or land animals or man, their ruler. Those transformations would take place incrementally during the remainder of Day One and the subsequent five days of Creation (Gen. 1:3-31).

¹⁶ Gen. 1:2 - waters: the plural noun *mayim* ([4325](#)), "waters," appears 584 X in the OT, always in the plural. Today, 70% of the earth's surface is water. On Day One, 100% of the earth's surface was water.

¹⁷ Gen. 1:3 - and there was light: The light God called into existence was not the sun or some star, neither of which were created until the Fourth Day (Gen. 1:14-19). Rather, on Day 1, God created an independent source of light, in reference to which the Earth rotated on its axis, and because of which there was day and night on the globe. Though it cannot be proven, my conjecture is that the light God created was the visible display of His own glory. Note, for example, the optical displays of God's glory in Revelation 21:11, 23.

Since 1965, cosmologists have been aware of "[cosmic microwave background](#) radiation" (CMB), which they say is the strongest evidence for the Big Bang model of cosmology. I believe they are wrong. I believe that, when God created light, He created all the [spectra of light](#), including radio waves, microwaves, infrared rays, ultraviolet rays, X-rays, and gamma rays. It was at this first appearance of light in the universe that, I believe, CMB radiation filled all of the heavens God made. After He created the sun, moon, and planets on Day 4 of Creation, God perhaps tweaked the CMB so it [aligned itself with the ecliptic](#) – the plane of earth's orbit around the sun, [something that distresses Big Bang cosmologists!](#) (Note: search for "Copernicus" in the article.) See the off-site article, "[Does the Cosmic Microwave Background Confirm the Big Bang?](#)" See also WordExplain's article, "[A Critique of the Big Bang Theory.](#)"

¹⁸ Gen. 1:4 - God saw that the light was good: Repeatedly, God gives His assessment of that which He had created. This positive assessment appears in 1:4, 10, 12, 18, 21, 25, and 31. In the last instance, "God saw all that He had made, and behold, it was *very good*" (emphasis mine). "Good" is *tob* ([2896](#)), that which is "good, pleasant, agreeable."

- D 8 God's nomenclature: {5} God called ¹⁹ the light day, and the darkness He called night.
- D 9 The conclusion of day one: And there was evening and there was morning, one day.²⁰
- C 2 Second day: Atmosphere separating "earth water" and "space water" 1:6-8
- D 1 God's decree of an atmosphere: {6} Then God said, "Let there be an expanse ²¹ in the midst of the waters, and let it separate the waters from the waters."

¹⁹ Gen. 1:5 - God called (the light "day" and the darkness "night"): To name something is to classify it, organize it, control it. It is part of God's nature that He names things. Since He created man in His own likeness and image, it is not surprising that, later, God would bring animals to man to see what he would name them. And whatever man named an animal, that was its name (Gen. 2:19-20)! Today, if we discover a new disease, we name it. And we classify and label people. Often they resent our efforts to label and classify them, not wanting to be put into a box. But naming things is part of our warp and woof, and name things we will. It is part of being a man to name things. The important thing is for children of light to label things from God's perspective and not succumb to the label the [Satanically](#)-controlled world chooses to assign. People who call themselves "Pro-Choice," for example, really are not being entirely accurate. They refuse to permit the little people they kill to choose. They really are "Pro-Death" for unwanted babies.

²⁰ Gen. 1:5 - evening ... morning ... one day. The repetition of evening and morning marks the conclusion of Day One of creation. This means that any sort of [Day-Age Theory](#) is impossible. The days are 24-hour, solar days. "Day" *yom* ([3117](#)), connected with "evening" and "morning" and a numeral cannot be stretched into the interminable millions of years of the flawed [evolutionary](#) hypothesis.

²¹ Gen. 1:6 - expanse: Expanse translates *raqia* ([7549](#)), almost universally translated "expanse" in the [NASB](#). Other versions' translations here include ESV and Young's Literal, expanse; KJV, NKJV, firmament; NIV, vault; Common English, Contemporary English, and Good News, dome; The Message, sky. Functionally, I would call this expanse, "atmosphere." God inserted an atmosphere which served to separate waters below the atmosphere (i.e. the ocean surface) from the waters above the atmosphere (evidently a [water vapor canopy](#) of some sort). This explanation has fallen into disfavor even among many creation scientists, but I continue to think it is the most plausible explanation of what is going on here. Hydrologically, the early earth was vastly different than our present earth, for the following reasons: (1) The normal mode of living for mankind on the pristine earth was in a state of nudity (Gen. 2:25). That presupposes that the entire earth, which God commanded man to fill and subdue (Gen. 1:28), consisted of a warm environment. (2) There seems to have been no rain before the [Flood](#) (Gen. 2:5-6). (3) When God opened "the floodgates of the sky" there was enough moisture in the waters above the atmosphere to rain solidly for forty days and nights (Gen. 7:11-12). That is a prodigious amount of water that modern clouds simply cannot hold! (4) Longevity before the [Flood](#) was off the charts in today's terms. Men often lived in excess of 900 years (Gen. 5:1-27). After the [Flood](#), man's life-expectancy plummeted (Gen. 11:10-32). See "[The Declining Life Span of the Patriarchs Before and After the Great Flood](#)." It seems to me that the best explanation for this disparity is that a [water vapor canopy](#) helped shield the human race from harmful ultra-violet rays in the Pre-[Flood](#) era. Once that [water vapor canopy](#) was condensed out of existence in the [Great Flood](#), man's life-span began a steady free-fall. Great longevity prior to the [Flood](#) would extend to animals also. The great dinosaurs were large because they continued to grow for hundreds of years. See "[The Water Vapor Canopy Theory](#)" by the author. For a scientific discussion of the plausibility of the [water vapor canopy](#) theory, see "[Temperature Profiles for an Optimized Water Vapor Canopy](#)" by Larry Vardiman, PhD.

Addendum as of March 20, 2024: I think I prefer the word "vault" to describe accurately what God created here. This vault completely surrounded the earth, even as our atmosphere does today. The primary purpose of the vault on the second day was to separate the earth waters from the water vapor canopy. I believe that the vault housed an atmosphere so that humans and animals could bring oxygen and plants could imbibe carbon dioxide, a by-product of human and animal respiration.

I believe, furthermore that the word *raqia* ([7549](#)), "vault" found in Genesis 1:14, 15, 17 was a second vault, the vault of the heavens, so named in each of the preceding verses. It is the vault of outer space in which move the sun, moon, and stars. Like the lower vault, it too surrounds the earth, but at a vastly greater distance. The primary purpose of this vault is to house the celestial objects for the benefit of man.

- D 2 God's creation of an atmosphere: {7} God made the expanse,²² and separated the waters which were below the expanse from the waters which were above the expanse; and it was so.
- D 3 God's nomenclature of the atmosphere: {8} God called the expanse heaven.²³
- D 4 The conclusion of the second day: And there was evening and there was morning, a second day.
- C 3 Third day: Formation of land and vegetation 1:9-13
- D 1 God's decree to coalesce the waters and the dry land: {9} Then God said, "Let the waters below the heavens be gathered into one place, and let the dry land²⁴ appear";²⁵ and it was so.
- D 2 God's nomenclature: {10} God called the dry land earth,²⁶ and the gathering

²² Gen. 1:7 - expanse: [NASB](#) footnote: "Or *firmament*"

²³ Gen. 1:8 - God called the expanse heaven: God called the *raqia* (expanse, [7549](#)) *shamayim* (heavens, [8064](#)). Now already in Genesis, two distinctions between the word *shamayim*, heavens, can be noted. The first use of heavens was in 1:1 and referred to deep space, the framework in which earth was placed and in which the sun, moon, and stars would later be placed. Here in Gen. 1:8, *shamayim* refers to the atmosphere (expanse) that separated the sea waters from the suspended waters surrounding the earth as a canopy. This second heavens we have already noted as the atmosphere. The Bible distinguishes three different heavens, the third being the abode of God (2 Cor. 12:2). So there is the heaven in which birds fly, the heaven in which the sun and stars travel, and the heaven in which God lives. From the ground, of course, the appearances of the first two heavens are indistinguishable. The third cannot be seen from earth, or from anywhere in the lower two heavens.

²⁴ Gen. 1:9 - dry land: *yabbashah* ([3004](#)). Thus appeared the first continent or continents. It is not without reason to hypothesize that originally there was one land mass, Pangea, if you will. We cannot know for certain, but Walter Brown makes a credible case. In his explanation, all the dry land was one continent at the beginning. If his model is correct, the [Flood of Noah](#) divided the single continent [along either side of the mid-Atlantic Ocean Ridge](#). (This image is located [on this web page](#).) Ensuing rapid continental drift halted abruptly as all land masses closed in on what is now the Pacific Ocean. The ring of fire (volcanoes) around the perimeter of the Pacific Ocean is an ongoing testimony to the tortured stress placed on the subterranean regions by that drift. Brown has an [excellent description of the proposed process](#).

Regardless of whether there was initially one land mass or multiple land masses as there are today, it was at this point (Second Day) that land mass(es) emerged from the ocean depths. Psalm 104:1-9 records, I believe, the *process* whereby land masses emerged at Creation and also whereby they once again emerged at the end of the [Great Flood](#).

²⁵ Gen. 1:9 dry land appear: In a mighty, creative act, in the space of one day, God uplifted a prodigious amount of land mass into a continent or continents, establishing shorelines and continental slopes. His action was extremely efficient, and is described, I believe, in Psalm 104:5-9. The passage does double duty, I believe, for God used the same action to raise up submerged land masses after the [Flood of Noah](#). Since there was a fragile ark adrift the vast ocean, God took much longer to raise up the land masses and depress the ocean canyons to hold the extra water. This action is described in Genesis 8:1-13.

²⁶ Gen. 1:10 - earth: The word is *erets* ([776](#)), and is used more times in Genesis (311 X) than in any other book of the OT. The book second in usage of *erets* is Jeremiah (272 X). The two primary meanings of *erets* are "earth," and "land."

As "**earth**" it can mean 1. "whole earth (as opposed to a part)"; 2. earth (as opposed to heaven)"; 3. "earth" (inhabitants)".

As "**land**" it can mean 1. "country, territory"; 2. "district, region"; 3. "tribal territory"; 4. "piece of ground"; 5. "land of [Canaan](#), [Israel](#)"; 6. "inhabitants of land" 7. "Sheol, land without return, (under) world"; 8. "city (-state)".

of the waters He called seas;

- D 3 God's assessment: and God saw that it was good. ²⁷
- D 4 God's decree of vegetation: *{11}* Then God said, "Let the earth sprout vegetation: ²⁸ plants yielding seed, *and* fruit trees on the earth bearing fruit ²⁹ after their kind ³⁰ with seed in them";
- D 5 The appearance of vegetation as a result of God's decree: and it was so. *{12}* The earth brought forth vegetation, plants yielding seed after their kind, and trees bearing fruit with seed in them, after their kind; ³¹
- D 6 God's assessment: and God saw that it was good. ³²
- D 7 The conclusion of the third day: *{13}* There was evening and there was

As "**ground, surface of the earth**" it can mean 1. "ground"; 2. "soil."

Erets is used repeatedly in the first two chapters of Genesis, and in different senses. (1) References to the whole of planet earth include Genesis 1:1, 2, 15, 17, 22, 24, 25, 26, 28, 29, 30; 2:1, 4, 5. (2) Other references include earth as dry land as opposed to waters: Genesis 1:10, 11, 12, 20, 22. (3) Other references include earth as the ground upon which animals tread and crawl: Genesis 1:25, 26, 28, 30. (4) Other references include earth as that which man is responsible to cultivate: Genesis 2:5, 6. (5) And finally, other references include earth as a region or portion, usually translated "land": Genesis 2:11, 12, 13.

²⁷ Gen. 1:10 - and God saw that it was good: It is impossible that God could have called an earth and sea beds littered with the fossils of dead creatures "good" (*tōb*, [2896](#)). It was a pristine earth with pristine seas. There was no death, there were no fossils, there was no decay. It was good!

²⁸ Gen. 1:11 vegetation: God made vegetation to appear on the earth before He had created the sun, moon or stars. The dogma of [evolution](#) is incompatible with the historical account of God's creation of the earth. I call [evolution](#) a dogma, because it is a religious belief system not grounded on scientific facts, a belief system that deliberately ignores historical documentary evidence to the contrary.

²⁹ Gen. 1:11 - fruit trees ... bearing fruit: God created enough mature fruit trees already bearing fruit so that the first humans would have had sufficient to eat. It is impossible to have creation without also having an appearance of age that is greater than the real age. Scientific calculations as to the apparent age of the earth are doomed to inaccuracy because of their presumption of [uniformitarianism](#), the belief that geologic processes on earth and astrophysical processes up in the heavens have always happened at the same rate of speed. [Uniformitarianism](#) is a secular humanist assumption that belies the Biblical account of creation in six solar days and the account of a global flood, which accounts for the sedimentary layers littered with trillions of fossils. Both Creation and the [Flood](#) destroy the notion of [uniformitarianism](#). [Uniformitarian evolution](#) will always come up with wrong dates about the origin of stars, the solar system, and the earth.

³⁰ Gen. 1:11 - kind: A translation of the Hebrew word *min* ([4327](#)), meaning "kind" or "species." *Min* is not to be construed as being identical to the modern biological classification of *species*. It may, in fact be broader. However, *min* represents a distinct boundary or limit of development. There can be and is no change from one *min* to another *min*, even though there may be variation with a *min*. For example, there are many sizes and shapes of horses, but a horse can never evolve or mutate into a cow. Nor can a monkey or an ape ever evolve or mutate into a man. On this count, the dogma of [evolution](#) is utterly incompatible with the Biblical account of creation, which, by the way, is far more scientific. [Evolution](#), though it is the standard narrative of origins, is actually a gargantuan hoax which passes as settled fact. If [evolution](#) were true, there would be billions of transitional forms between one *min* and other *mins*. The truth of the matter is that there are none.

³¹ Gen. 1:12 - kind: See note on "kind" at 1:11.

³² Gen. 1:12 - good: Everything God creates is good.

morning, a third day.

- C 4 Fourth day: Heavenly luminaries/time measurers (sun, moon, stars) 1:14-19
 - D 1 God's decree of lights in the heavens: {14} Then God said, "Let there be lights in the expanse of the heavens"
 - D 2 God's purposes for the lights
 - E 1 to separate the day from the night,
 - E 2 and let them be for signs and for seasons
 - E 3 and for days and years;
 - E 4 {15} and let them be for lights in the expanse of the heavens ³³ to give light on the earth";
 - D 3 The result of God's decree: and it was so.
 - D 4 The account of God's creation of lights
 - E 1 Of two great lights: {16} God made the two great lights,
 - G 1 The sun: the greater light to govern the day, ³⁴

³³ Gen. 1:15 - lights in the expanse of the heavens: The expanse (*raqia*, [7549](#)) of the heavens (*shamayim*, [8064](#)) is necessarily to be distinguished from the expanse of the heavens in which the birds were to fly (1:20). The expanse of the heavens in which the sun, moon, and stars dwell is equivalent to the heavens (*shamayim*, [8064](#)) which God created on Day One (Gen. 1:1). Admittedly, I am making a technical distinction which the Hebrew text does not make. However, the Biblical text states that God altered that initial *shamayim* on Day Two by inserting a *raqia* between the waters above the *raqia* and the waters below it (Gen. 1:6-8). That *raqia* amounted to an atmosphere surrounded by a [Water Vapor Canopy](#). And, of course, even today, when we stand on the earth and gaze upward, we cannot distinguish between the atmosphere surrounding the earth and deep space inhabited by the stars. It all looks the same to us. When one takes a plane, however, and rises above the atmosphere or descends into it, there is a discernible dividing line between atmosphere and space. The language of Scripture does not contradict what we know today. I would be less than accurate, however, if I did not distinguish between the Pre-Flood conditions and the Post-Flood conditions. The Pre-Flood hydrological system had enough water to deposit torrential rains upon the entire globe for a solid forty days and nights. Today's hydrological system does not have nearly that amount of water in the atmosphere. Something has changed dramatically.

³⁴ Gen. 1:16 - the greater light to govern the day: A more literal translation: "the great light for governance of the day," where "governance" is the Feminine Singular noun *memshâlâh'* ([4475](#)), *rule, dominion, realm* ([BDB](#)). This noun is related to the verb *mâshâl* ([4910](#)), *to rule, have dominion* ([BDB](#)), used in Gen. 1:18.

There are some Bible scholars who, sadly, attempt to harmonize the Biblical creation account with the secular humanistic hypothesis of [evolution](#). But that is impossible to achieve. The Biblical record clearly indicates that God created the earth on Day One and the sun and moon on the Fourth Day. That order is anathema to [evolution](#), which insists that the [sun coalesced long before the earth did](#). The standard age of the earth, according to [evolutionists](#), is [4.54 billion years](#).. Astronomers have no way of dating the age of the sun. They calculate its age based on the [radiometric dating of moon rocks](#), believe it or not! But radiometric dating gives wildly differing results depending on which dating method is used. There are three assumptions one must make in using radiometric dating: (1) One must assume that the dating clock has operated at a known rate. (2) One must assume the clock's initial setting is known. (3) One must assume the clock has not been disturbed. (See Walt Brown, [Radiometric Dating](#).) None of these can be proven in regard to radiometric dating. None of these assumptions in regard to Radiometric Dating can be proven, for no human was there at the beginning to record observations. Moreover the theories devised to accommodate the latest scientific discoveries are always changing. Only one being was there in the beginning when it all came into existence, and that was God. If you reject His revelation, your pronouncements on origins will always be filled with error.

- G 2 The moon: and the lesser light to govern the night; ³⁵
- E 2 Of the stars: *He made* the stars also. ³⁶
- D 5 God's placement of the lights: {17} God placed them in the expanse of the heavens
- D 6 God's purposes for the lights
- E 1 to give light on the earth,
- E 2 {18} and to govern the day and the night, ³⁷
- E 3 and to separate the light from the darkness;
- D 7 God's assessment of the lights: and God saw that it was good. ³⁸
- D 8 The conclusion of the fourth day: {19} There was evening and there was morning, a fourth day.

Regardless, according to the Biblical account, God created plant life on the third day of creation, prior to His creation of the sun. Such a model is completely unacceptable to [evolution](#), which places the first appearance of land plants around [470 million years ago](#). It is impossible to harmonize [Biblical Creationism](#) with the [Big Bang](#) and [evolution](#). See a brief discussion of [Theistic Evolution](#).

³⁵ Gen. 1:16 - the lesser light to govern the night: A more literal translation: "the small light for governance of the night," where "governance" is the Feminine Singular noun *memshâlâh'* (4475), *rule, dominion, realm* (BDB). This noun is related to the verb *mâshâl* (4910), *to rule, have dominion* (BDB), used in Gen. 1:18.

³⁶ Gen. 1:16 - *He made* the stars also: Literally, "and the stars." Moses used no verb. In astronomy's understanding of the universe, stars are its main feature. Not so in God's view. The earth is the focal point of the universe. The sun and moon are needed, and stars are almost a footnote. If we were to extend the focus even further, it would go something like this: The earth is the focal point of the universe; man is the focus of life on the earth; and the ultimate man is Jesus the Messiah, upon whom the entire earth and man depend for existence and for redemption. [Evolutionists](#) use the great distance of distant starlight in an attempt to prove scientifically that the earth and the universe are [billions of years old](#). But their argument is fallacious. We have already stated that it is impossible to have Creation without also having a discrepancy between real age and apparent age. When God created the stars, He created them with their light rays already reaching earth so man could see them. Stars that could not be seen would be worthless. By the same token, when God created fruit trees in the Garden of [Eden](#), the fruit trees did not have to grow several seasons before they finally bore fruit. The fruit trees in the Garden of [Eden](#) were created with the fruit fully formed so man could eat and survive. For a discussion of distant starlight and the age of the universe from a [Biblical Creationism](#) point of view, see the article, "[The Age of the Universe, Part 1](#)."

³⁷ Gen. 1:18 - to govern the day and the night: "to govern" is the [Qal Infinitive Construct](#) of the verb *mâshâl* (4910), *to rule, have dominion* (BDB). This verb is related to the noun *memshâlâh'* (4475), *rule, dominion, realm* (BDB) that Moses used twice in Gen. 1:16.

³⁸ Gen. 1:18 - and God saw that it was good: The Biblical account of creation is incompatible with the prevailing cosmological model, that which we call "[The Big Bang](#)." The expanding universe has prompted astrophysicists to posit the expansion of the universe from a condition that they label a "[singularity](#)", a condition in which there was infinitely dense, infinitely hot matter with 0 size. This occurred some fourteen billion years ago. How a cosmic explosion could be labeled "good" is beyond credulity. Observed explosions are always destructive, not creative. The [Big Bang](#) is counterintuitive. If, in fact, the universe is expanding, it is doing so because that is the way God created it, not because there was a massive explosion. The universe is not fourteen billion years old. It is a mere 6,000 years old. For a scientific discussion of the age of the universe from a Biblical point of view, see "[The Age of the Universe, Part 1](#)."

- C 5 Fifth day: Aquatic and aviary animals *blessed* by Elohim 1:20-23
 - D 1 God's decree of aquatic and aviary creatures
 - E 1 Of marine creatures: {20} Then God said, "Let the waters teem with swarms of living creatures,
 - E 2 Of birds: and let birds fly above the earth in the open expanse of the heavens."
 - D 2 The account of God's creation
 - E 1 Of large sea monsters: {21} God created the great sea monsters
 - E 2 Of other sea creatures: and every living creature that moves, with which the waters swarmed after their kind,
 - E 3 Of winged creatures: and every winged bird after its kind;
 - D 3 God's assessment of His creatures: and God saw that it was good.
 - D 4 God's *blessing* of aquatic and aviary creatures: {22} God blessed them,³⁹ saying, "Be fruitful and multiply, and fill the waters in the seas, and let birds multiply on the earth."
 - D 5 The conclusion of the fifth day: {23} There was evening and there was morning, a fifth day.
- C 6 Sixth day: Land animals; Man in God's image *blessed* to "create" and rule 1:24-31
 - D 1 God's creation of land animals 1:24-25
 - E 1 God's decree of land animals
 - G 1 The origin of the creatures: {24} Then God said, "Let the earth bring forth
 - G 2 The identification of the creatures
 - H 1 living creatures after their kind:
 - H 2 cattle

³⁹ Gen. 1:22 - God blessed them: The word "blessed" is the [Piel Imperfect](#) of the verb *bârâk* (1288), to kneel down, or bless. It can indicate a verbal beneficence. Or the blessing can result in favorable circumstances for the individual blessed. This can include measurable wealth, as in the cases of Abraham, Isaac, and Jacob. To me the concept of blessing is the theme of Genesis. This verb occurs 72X in Genesis alone. It appears 74X in Psalms, the highest number of occurrences. I realize that the toledoth passages mark a structural outline of Genesis. However, the concept of blessing is a thematic method of dividing up the book.

The book of Genesis begins with God blessing His creatures and especially blessing man (Gen. 1:28), whom He had created in His likeness and image (Gen. 1:26). It ends with one of God's chosen and blessed patriarchs, Jacob, blessing his grandsons and sons with prophetic blessings appropriate to their individual characters (Gen. 48-49).

H 3 and creeping things

H 4 and beasts of the earth after their kind”;

E 2 The result of God’s decree: and it was so.

E 3 The account of God’s creation: {25} God made

G 1 the beasts of the earth after their kind,

G 2 and the cattle after their kind,

G 3 and everything that creeps on the ground after its kind;

E 4 God’s assessment of His creation of land animals: and God saw that it was good.

D 2 God's creation of man in His own image and likeness 1:26-31

E 1 God's creation of man 1:26-27

G 1 God's resolve to create man "in Our image and likeness" 1:26

H 1 {26} Then God said, “Let Us make man ⁴⁰ in Our image, ⁴¹

⁴⁰ Gen. 1:26 - man: The Hebrew noun is *âdâm* (120). But this noun does double duty. Most of the time, as here, it refers to generic man. Lexicographers have, somewhat arbitrarily, assigned a different, specific meaning to the same word, depending on the context. That specific designation is to the man, “Adam,” represented by the same Hebrew word, *âdâm*, but assigned an adjacent number, (121). It is transparent as to why we identify the first man as “Adam,” which is merely a transliteration of the Hebrew word for “Man.” But the reader should know that the same Hebrew noun, *âdâm*, appears, again, somewhat arbitrarily, under two different designations, 120 and 121. It is the same noun, and the context indicates whether the writer, in this case Moses, is speaking of generic mankind or of the specific individual, Adam. Sometimes the distinction is not always clear.

⁴¹ Gen. 1:26 - Let Us make man in Our image: God is a Spirit-being (John 4:24), and so His creation of man in His own image is a spiritual likeness, not a physical likeness. There are several ways in which we as humans were created in God’s image: (1) There is a moral likeness. God is a moral Being with a profound sense of right and wrong. God made us with a moral sense of right and wrong. We have consciences. Consciences can be wrongly programmed, and thus give a false reading. Nevertheless, we all have standards of right and wrong, of fair and unfair. No coyote, for example, has ever felt a twinge of conscience about killing a rabbit. (2) There is an intelligence likeness. Though various animals display certain levels of intelligence, there is a vast gulf between man and animals. Only man is able to create a computer, land humans on the moon, or perform brain surgery. (3) There is a communication likeness. God is a gregarious, relational Being. He created us for communion and fellowship. To do that, we must be able to communicate with Him and He with us. Language separates man from animals. Man can learn to communicate with animals, but no dolphin is able to speak fluent Chinese or English. (4) There is a spiritual likeness, otherwise called a “God-consciousness.” Though man’s ability to perceive God has been enormously hampered ever since his “fall” (Genesis 3), still, most humans have a God-consciousness. No animals have ever been found worshiping God. (5) There is a creative likeness. God is a creative Being. He gives man the ability to create other human lives that exist forever into eternity future in some status. This creative likeness is also seen in our ability to create beautiful music, art, architecture, landscapes, furniture, and machines. Man is the only being created in God’s likeness and image. Man is the crown of God’s creation!

- H 2 according to Our likeness;⁴²
- G 2 His decree that man should rule: and let them rule⁴³
 - H 1 over the fish of the sea
 - H 2 and over the birds of the sky
 - H 3 and over the cattle
 - H 4 and over all the earth,
 - H 5 and over every creeping thing that creeps on the earth.”
- G 3 The account of God’s creation of man 1:27
 - H 1 The fact of God’s creation of man: {27} God created man in His own image,
 - H 2 The unique nature of man – He was created to be like God: in the image of God He created him;
 - H 3 The specific gender of God’s creation of man: male and female He created them.
- E 2 God's commissioning of man 1:28
 - G 1 God’s blessing of man: {28} God blessed them;
 - G 2 God’s decree to man: and God said to them,
 - H 1 To be prolific upon the earth:
 - J 1 “Be fruitful

⁴² Gen. 1:26 - Let *Us* make man in *Our* image according to *Our* likeness (emphasis mine): The doctrine of the [Trinity](#) is not fully presented in the OT. There is, however, ample room for it. The Hebrew plural pronouns here are consistent with the plural name for God, *Elohim* ([430](#)), and provide ample room for the existence of the complex, Triune God.

⁴³ Gen. 1:26 - let them rule: “Rule” is the 3rd Masculine Plural [Qal Imperfect](#) of the verb *radah* ([7287](#)), used only twice in Genesis – here, and in Gen.1:28. It is used, for example, in 1 Kings 4:24, where it is said that Solomon had dominion (ruled) over everything west of the (Euphrates) River, from Tiphseh (on the Euphrates) to Gaza (west of [Israel](#) almost on the Mediterranean Sea coastline). God commissioned man to rule over all the animals, and even over the earth itself.

The modern environmental movement rejects man’s rulership over the animals and over the earth. It sees man as the biggest enemy of the earth. One of its goals is to cordon off man from as many acres of land as possible and leave it in its natural state. Where the protection of species runs at cross purposes with man’s desire to build or farm or settle, the environmental movement votes for animals and against man virtually every time. In fact, the environmental movement has become a haven for Marxists who want to use the environmental movement to attack capitalism. See Bolivia’s “[Law of the Rights of Mother Earth](#).”

Admittedly, man has not always done well protecting the environment. When Jesus Christ comes back to rule the earth, there will occur the greatest cooperation between business and agriculture and a sustainable environment this world has ever known since the [fall of man](#). See Isaiah 11:1-9; 35:1-10; 65:18-25; Amos 9:11-15.

- J 2 and multiply,
- J 3 and fill the earth,
- H 2 To subdue the earth: and subdue it;⁴⁴
- H 3 To rule over all earth's creatures
 - J 1 and rule over the fish of the sea
 - J 2 and over the birds of the sky
 - J 3 and over every living thing that moves on the earth.”
- E 3 God's provision of food for man and certain animals 1:29-30
 - G 1 His decree of provision for man: {29} Then God said, “Behold, I have given you
 - H 1 Every plant: every plant yielding seed that is on the surface of all the earth,
 - H 2 Every fruit tree; and every tree which has fruit yielding seed;
 - H 3 The purpose of God's gift: it shall be food for you;⁴⁵
 - G 2 His decree of provision for animals
 - H 1 Land animals: {30} and to every beast of the earth
 - H 2 Sky animals: and to every bird of the sky
 - H 3 Moving animals of every sort: and to every thing that moves on the earth which has life,
 - H 4 The description of God's gift: *I have given every green plant*
 - H 5 The purpose of God's gift: for food”;⁴⁶

⁴⁴ Gen. 1:28 - subdue it: God never intended that man should leave vast tracts of land untouched. It is man's job to improve nature, not leave it in the wild. Environmentalists' loathing of man's subduing of nature has actually led to destructive policies. For example, the notion that humans cannot even go into a standing forest and harvest dead wood and thin out trees has created situations in which forests have such an abundance of fuel that any fire whatever consumes square miles of trees. Whenever man rejects what God has established, tragedy strikes sooner or later.

⁴⁵ Gen. 1:29 - it shall be food for you: When God created man, he was a vegetarian. God's original earth, and indeed, original cosmos, had no death, no decay. There could be no eating of meat.

⁴⁶ Gen. 1:30 - every green plant for food: All animals were vegetarian when God first created them. Death did not arrive until man sinned (Gen. 3:1-7). As the [Apostle Paul](#) pointed out, it was through one man that “...sin entered the world, and death through sin ...” (Rom. 5:12).

- G 3 The result of God's decree: and it was so.
- E 4 God's assessment of His creation 1:31
 - G 1 God's observation of His entire creation: {31} God saw all that He had made,
 - G 2 God's superlative assessment of His entire creation: and behold, it was very good.⁴⁷
- E 5 The conclusion of the sixty day: And there was evening and there was morning, the sixth day.
- C 7 Seventh day: God's completion of creation and rest; His hallowing and *blessing* of the seventh day 2:1-3
 - D 1 The completion of the heavens and earth and all within them 2:1
 - E 1 Of the heavens and the earth: {1} Thus the heavens and the earth were completed,
 - E 2 Of all within them: and all their hosts.
 - D 2 God's resting on the seventh day on account of His having completed His work 2:2
 - E 1 The day of God's completion of His work: {2} By the seventh day God completed His work which He had done,
 - E 2 God's rest in commemoration of His completed work: and He rested on the seventh day from all His work which He had done.
 - E 3 God's *blessing* of the seventh day 2:3
 - G 1 God's *blessing* of the seventh day: {3} Then God blessed the seventh day
 - G 2 God's sanctification of the seventh day: and sanctified it,
 - G 3 The reason for His *blessing* and sanctification of the seventh day: because in it He rested from all His work which God had created and made.

⁴⁷ Gen. 1:31 - it was every good: It is unthinkable that an earth littered with trillions of fossils could be called good. Again, it is impossible to reconcile the Biblical record with the theory of [evolution](#). After God's creation of man and of all the animals was completed, it was very good. There was no death, no decay, no degeneration, no fossils, no supernovae. [Evolutionists](#) completely misconstrue the origin of fossils. Fossils are not the result of millions of years of gradual adaptation. In largest part, fossils are the result of a [global flood](#), described in Genesis 7-8. The date of [Noah's Flood](#), incidentally, was around [2348 BC](#), about 4360 years ago.

SECTION II. WHAT BECAME OF THE HEAVENS AND THE EARTH. 2:4 - 4:26**B 2 Additional Details of Creation 2:4-25**

C 1 Man's creation from dust; his placement in the Garden of [Eden](#) 2:4-9

D 1 The title – What Became of the Heavens and the Earth 2:4

E 1 The title: {4} This is the account ⁴⁸ of the heavens and the earth

E 2 The starting point: when they were created,

E 3 The time: in the day that the LORD God ⁴⁹ made earth and heaven.

D 2 Conditions existing prior to the creation of man 2:5-6

E 1 No shrub of the field: {5} Now no shrub of the field was yet in the earth, 2:5a

E 2 No plant of the field: and no plant of the field had yet sprouted, 2:5b

⁴⁸ Gen. 2:4 - account: The word is the plural *toledoth* ([8435](#)), in Genesis most frequently translated by the [NASB](#) as “generations.” It signifies “what eventuated from” or “what became of,” in this instance, “what became of” the heavens and the earth, whose creation was just detailed in Genesis 1:1-2:3. Most analytical outlines of Genesis are based on the *toledoth* recurrences. There is a lot to be said for that arrangement. However, basing an outline on the occurrences of *toledoth* does not, in my opinion, do justice to the theme of Genesis, which is one of blessing. For that reason, I have used the theme of blessing as a basis for outlining the book.

At the same time, I refer to the various sections of the book as, for example, “Section N. What Became of X,” where N refers to the number of a section and X refers to the name of an historical person. These sections are based on the occurrences of *toledoth*, but *toledoth* has no real bearing on the thematic outline of the book. *Toledoth* appears in Genesis in the following references: Gen. 2:4; 5:1; 6:9; 10:1, 32; 11:10, 27; 25:12, 13, 19; 36:1, 9; 37:2. Occasionally, the word appears as a repetition or explanation or summary (see, e.g., Gen. 10:32; 25:13; perhaps Gen. 36:9). There follows a list of the various sections. The reader will note that in my outline I have 11 sections, whereas below, I list only 9. That is because in the outline I arbitrarily assigned the actual creation of the heavens and the earth as section 1, even the word *toledoth* does not occur there. Moreover, since the Biblical text assigns two different *toledoth* to Esau, I included two sections for Esau in the Outline. In the following summation I list only one *toledoth* for Esau:

Section 1: What became of the heavens and earth (Gen. 2:4-4:26).

Section 2: What became of Adam. (Gen. 5:1-6:8).

Section 3: What became of Noah. (Gen. 6:9-9:29).

Section 4: What became of Shem, Ham, and Japheth, the sons of Noah. (Gen. 10:1-11:9).

Section 5: What became of Shem. (Gen. 11:10-26).

Section 6: What became of Terah. (Gen. 11:27-25:11).

Section 6: What became of Ishmael. (Gen. 25:12-18).

Section 7: What became of Isaac, son of [Abraham](#). (Gen. 25:19-35:29).

Section 8: What became of Esau, i.e. Edom. (Gen. 36:1-43).

Section 9: What became of Jacob. (Gen. 37:1,2-50:26).

⁴⁹ Gen. 2:4 - LORD God: This is the first time that the name LORD (*Yahweh*, [3068](#)) appears in Genesis. [Moses](#) used it 165X in 143 verses. *Yahweh*, the speculated real spelling of the name is actually spelled in Hebrew *yehōvâh*. It is believed that Hebrew copyists, bearing such a great respect for the name *Yahweh*, misspelled it by inserting vowel pointing from the name *Adonai*. The name *Yahweh* is derived from the verb “to be” (*hâyâh*, [01961](#)). It means that *Yahweh* is the “Self-Existing One” (Exod. 3:13-15), as *Yahweh* explained to [Moses](#). No one caused Him, and He had no beginning or ending. He always IS. *Yahweh* actually appears frequently in conjunction with the generic name for God, *Elohim* ([430](#)), as it does here.

- E 3 No rain: for the LORD God had not sent rain upon the earth,⁵⁰ 2:5c
- E 4 No man to cultivate: and there was no man to cultivate the ground. 2:5d
- E 5 The presence of a watering mist: {6} But a mist used to rise from the earth and water the whole surface of the ground. 2:6
- D 3 [Yahweh](#) Elohim's creation of man 2:7
- E 1 Forming him from the dust of the ground: {7} Then the LORD God formed man of dust from the ground,⁵¹
- E 2 Breathing life into him: and breathed into his nostrils the breath of life;⁵²
- E 3 The result – man became a living entity: and man became a living being.⁵³
- D 4 [Yahweh](#) Elohim's planting of a garden 2:8-9

⁵⁰ Gen. 2:5 - God had not sent rain upon the earth: A surface reading might lead one to the interpretation that God had not sent rain upon the earth yet, but He would in a few days. On the other hand, the phrase in Gen. 2:6, "But a mist used to rise from the earth and water the whole surface of the ground," tends to indicate that this was a settled condition in the Pre-Flood earth. This helps support the model of a [water vapor canopy](#). During the Flood, the [water-vapor canopy](#) collapsed and ceased to exist. Two things we know for certain: (1) Life expectancy prior to the [flood](#) was enormous. (2) After the Flood, life expectancy plummeted. Conclusion: something in man's environment before the Flood was radically altered afterwards.

⁵¹ Gen. 2:7 - formed man of dust from the ground: "man" is *adam* (120); "dust" is *aphar* (6083); "ground" is *adamah* (127). This chapter does not constitute an independent and conflicting account from chapter 1. Rather it is a supplemental, more detailed account of the most important created being, Man. After man sinned, God cursed him. He said, "By the sweat of your face you will eat bread, till [sic] you return to the ground, because from it you were taken; for you are dust, and to dust you shall return" (Gen. 3:19).

⁵² Gen. 2:7 - breathed into his nostrils the breath of life: This act of God sets man apart from all the animals and plants that God created. Man is the crown of God's creation. In the future, the eternal Word of God, who was in the beginning with God and was being God, and created all things, would become human flesh and dwell amongst mankind (John 1:1-3, 14). "Breathed" is the [Qal Imperfect](#) of the verb *naphach* (5301); "breath" is *neshamah* (5397); "life" is the plural *chayyim* (2416). This phrase could, perhaps, be translated, "And He breathed into his nostrils the breath of living ones."

⁵³ Gen. 2:7 - man became a living being: "Man" - *adam* (120) "became" *hayah* (1961) a "living" *chay* (2416) "being" *nephesh* (5315). *Nephesh* (5315) is a difficult concept to grasp. In the [NASB](#) it is most often translated as "soul(s)" (251X); as "life(ves)" (181X); as "person(s)" (88X) as "herself" or "himself" or "Himself" or "themselves" or "yourself(ves)" (65X). It is probably safe to say that *nephesh* refers, generally, to the animating force of both man and animals, infused into the otherwise inanimate bodies of each. *Nephesh* is used of marine life, described as "living" (*chay*, 2416) "creatures" (Gen. 1:20, 21); of land animals, described as "living" (*chay*, 2416) "creatures" (Gen. 1:24); of man described as a (living) "being" (Gen. 2:7); as the life force in blood (Gen. 9:4-5), and even as the "people" of [Sodom](#) (Gen. 14:21). It is clear that both animals and man possess *nephesh*. It is also clear from Scripture that only man will be resurrected into an eternal existence. There is no evidence that animals will be. (Jesus did not come as a dog to die for the sins of dogs, for example. He came only as man to die for the sins of man.) It seems evident to me, however, that there are and will be animals, and even animals of great intelligence in the afterlife. I note, for example, the four worshipful beings of Revelation 4:6-8; and Christ's return to earth from heaven astride a white horse (Rev. 19:11) accompanied by His heavenly armies, also mounted on white horses (Rev. 19:14).

- E 1 His planting of a garden: {8} The LORD God planted a garden ⁵⁴ 2:8a
- E 2 The location of the garden: toward the east, in Eden; 2:8b
- E 3 His situation of man in the garden: and there He placed the man whom He had formed. 2:8c
- E 4 His creation of trees in the garden 2:9
 - G 1 The provenance of the trees – the ground: {9} Out of the ground the LORD God caused to grow
 - G 2 The kind of trees
 - H 1 Aesthetic: every tree that is pleasing to the sight
 - H 2 Edible fruit: and good for food;
 - G 3 Two specific trees
 - H 1 the tree of life ⁵⁵ also in the midst of the garden,
 - H 2 and the tree of the knowledge of good and evil.
- C 2 The situation of man in [Eden](#); its rivers and forbidden tree 2:10-17
 - D 1 The rivers of [Eden](#) 2:10-14
 - E 1 The emanation of a river from [Eden](#): {10} Now a river flowed out of Eden 2:10a
 - E 2 The purpose of the river: to water the garden; 2:10b
 - E 3 The division of the river: and from there it divided and became four rivers. ⁵⁶ 2:10c-14

⁵⁴ Gen. 2:8 - man's initial habitat was a garden. The ultimate habitat of redeemed [Israel](#) and the [Church](#) is a garden-like city (Rev. 21:1 - 22:5).

⁵⁵ Gen. 2:9 - [tree of life](#): This tree appears to have qualities that perpetuate and enhance man's physical life and well-being, even in his pristine, unfallen, and thus immortal state. When God contemplated the likelihood of man eating of the [tree of life](#) in his fallen, mortal state, the horrors were so unspeakable that He did not complete His statement (Gen. 3:22). He promptly proceeded to banish man from the Garden, and He stationed cherubim and a flaming sword at the entrance to bar man from partaking (Gen. 3:22-24). The [tree of life](#) evidently appears again in New Jerusalem as a single tree, where it bears a different kind (or crop?) of fruit each month. Its leaves provide a therapeutic sense of well-being to all who partake (Rev. 22:2).

⁵⁶ Gen. 2:10 - from there it divided and became four rivers: This is most unusual, ordinarily rivers and creeks start from separate sources and merge into one larger river which eventually empties into a lake or into the sea. This river was different. It divided into four separate rivers. It is tempting to place the Garden of [Eden](#) in Mesopotamia, where two of these four rivers exist today. It is impossible, however, to know what the landscape looked like before [Noah's Flood](#). The devastation of [Noah's Flood](#) forever altered earth's surface, completely changing the topography. So there is no way of knowing if either the Tigris or the Euphrates follow the same route they did prior to the [Flood](#). Something has changed, for whereas the Tigris and the Euphrates now join, previously they divided from the original

G 1 The first river 2:11-12

H 1 Its name: {11} The name of the first is Pishon; 2:11a

H 2 Its location: it flows around the whole land of Havilah, 2:11b-12

J 1 The presence of gold: where there is gold. ⁵⁷ 2:11b

J 2 The high quality of the gold: {12} The gold of that land is good; 2:12a

J 3 Other entities: the bdellium ⁵⁸ and the onyx stone are there. 2:12b

G 2 The second river 2:13

H 1 Its name: {13} The name of the second river is Gihon;

H 2 Its location: it flows around the whole land of Cush.

G 3 The third river 2:14a

H 1 Its name: {14} The name of the third river is Tigris;

H 2 Its location: it flows east of Assyria. ⁵⁹

G 4 The fourth river: And the fourth river is the Euphrates. 2:14b

D 2 God's placing the man in the Garden of [Eden](#): {15} Then the LORD God took the man and put him into the garden of Eden 2:15

E 1 to cultivate it

river flowing from [Eden](#). The unusual description of these diverging rivers is consistent with a different hydrological system before the Flood as opposed to the present system. It is consistent with no rainfall (Gen. 2:5-6), but the recurrence of a mist. The world that then was apparently possessed a [Water Vapor Canopy](#) (Gen. 1:6-8).

⁵⁷ Gen. 2:11, 12: gold, bdellium, onyx: The mention of these substances, especially the metal and the semi-precious stone, in a favorable context suggests that God means for us to unearth these treasures. The environmentalists' propensity toward leaving nature untouched by man does not square with God's intentions. He does not want us to ruin the environment, but He does not want us to leave it untouched, either. As in so much of life, balance is required.

⁵⁸ Gen. 2:12 - bdellium: Bdellium (*bedolach*, [916](#)) occurs only twice in the OT, here and in Numbers 11:7, where it states, "Now the manna was like coriander seed, and its appearance like that of bdellium." So bdellium must have been well-known by the [sons of Israel](#). Manna's correspondence to coriander seed must have indicated its size, while its correspondence to bdellium must have indicated its shape, rather than its color or taste. Elsewhere manna is said to be white in color and like wafers and honey in taste (Exod. 16:31). Some Jewish commentators believe that pearls are meant. The Jewish Encyclopedia leans toward an [aromatic, resinous gum](#) from a certain tree.

⁵⁹ Gen. 2:14 - Assyria: The Biblical name for Assyria is *Ashshûr* ([804](#)). In the book of Genesis this name appears in Gen. 2:14; 10:11, 22; 25:18.

- E 2 and keep it.
- D 3 God's probation of the man 2:16-17
 - E 1 The freedom in eating: {16} The LORD God commanded the man, saying, 2:16
 - G 1 “From any tree of the garden you may eat
 - G 2 freely;
 - E 2 The prohibition of eating – not from the tree of the knowledge of good and evil: {17} but from the tree of the knowledge of good and evil you shall not eat,⁶⁰ 2:17
 - E 3 The consequence of disobedience 2:17
 - G 1 Immediate consequence: for in the day that you eat from it
 - G 2 Certain consequence: you will surely
 - G 3 Deadly consequence: die.”⁶¹

⁶⁰ Gen. 2:17 - from the tree of the knowledge of good and evil you shall not eat: Adam and Eve knew good, but they had no experiential knowledge of what evil looked like. What was required of them was that they trust God – that not knowing what evil was like and knowing only good was, in fact, best for them. As the historical narrative reveals, [Satan](#) succeeded in persuading them to trust in him, not God.

The rest is history. Adam and Eve came to know evil in a personal and experiential way that was devastating. Their fellowship with God was instantly broken. They lost their innocence. They were banished from the beautiful garden and the [tree of life](#). They began to age and suffer illness. Working for food became onerous, and their own firstborn son Cain would kill their second born, Abel. Knowledge was gained, but at a terrible price.

It is God's plan to put moral strictures on people. There was only one moral stricture initially, and otherwise, there was total freedom. But once the moral stricture was broken, more restrictions were necessary. Sinfulness brings Laws. In the grand scheme of things, God, in His infinite wisdom, decreed that His fellowship with Man would necessarily include the possibility, even the inevitability, of evil. People are free to make choices. But they are not free to evade the consequences of their choices.

Parents need to place appropriate restrictions on their children. They must state specific consequences of violating those restrictions. When their children violate the parents' restrictions, those consequences must inevitably and consistently ensue. If the parent waives the consequences, he is actually training his child to disobey. The results will be devastating!

Much is made of the belief that man has free will. That is not really accurate. Man does not have free will, but he does have the capacity to make decisions given a limited number of choices. If ever man had “free will,” it was in the beginning. But once man sinned, he no longer had a “free” will. He still had the capacity to make choices, but he would now inevitably make wrong choices. This is so because man was dead (see the discussion on “die” in Gen. 2:17).

Paul, in Ephesians 2:1-3, describes fallen man. (1) He is **dead** in his trespasses and sins. (2) He walks according to the course of this **world**. (3) He walks according to “**the prince of the power of the air**,” ([Satan](#)), “the spirit that is now working in the sons of disobedience.” (4) Man lives according to the **lusts of his flesh**, indulging the desires of the flesh and of the mind. (5) For these reasons men are by nature “**children of wrath**.” I don't call that being free. I call that being enslaved to sin, [Satan](#), and death. You may call it freedom, but I call it bondage.

Unless God reaches out to fallen man, man has no capacity to turn to God. This underscores the necessity of [Divine Election](#).

⁶¹ Gen. 2:17 - in the day you eat from it you will surely die: When I teach this passage to children, I ask them, “Did Adam and Eve die the day they sinned and ate from the tree of the knowledge of good and evil?” Usually they will reply, “No.” To which I respond, then God wasn't telling them the truth, was He?” Sometimes children will

C 3 God's creation of woman from the man's side, instituting marriage 2:18-25

D 1 [Yahweh](#) Elohim's resolve to rectify man's solitary condition 2:18

- E 1 His negative assessment of the man's solitary condition: *{18}* Then the LORD God said, "It is not good for the man to be alone;⁶²
- E 2 His resolve to rectify the man's solitary state: I will make him a helper suitable⁶³ for him."

respond, "No." Then I explain the following to them in words they can understand.

Truthfully, Adam and Eve did die the moment they sinned. The difficulty is that most humans have an inadequate understanding of death. There are three kinds of death – [Spiritual Death](#), followed by [Physical Death](#), followed by [Second Death](#). The prime characteristic of death is not cessation, but separation. No one ever ceases to exist when they die, but a separation always takes place. When Adam and Eve sinned, (1) they died [spiritually](#) instantly. They were separated from God and attempted, futilely, to hide from Him. (2) The process of [physical death](#) began to operate in their bodies instantly, but their bodies would not succumb until hundreds of years later. When they did die [physically](#) (see Genesis 5), their souls or spirits (I make no distinction here) were separated from their bodies. Their bodies soon decayed back into dust, but their souls/spirits continued to exist, detached from their bodies (3) If [spiritual death](#) is not remedied before [physical death](#) takes place, the inevitable and eternal result is [Second Death](#). [Second Death](#) is irremediable separation from God. [Second Death](#) takes place in a ghastly time frame – Eternity. And [Second Death](#) is experienced in a ghastly place, [The Lake of Fire and Brimstone](#) (sulfur). For further study, see "[The Three Different Kinds of Death](#)."

The reader is urged to make certain he has been united with God by placing his faith in Jesus the King (John 1:10-13; 3:16-18), who Himself is the exclusive Way to God, Truth Personified, and Life Personified (John 14:6).

⁶² Gen. 2:18 - it is not good for man to be alone: For the first time in God's creation of the cosmos and the earth and its inhabitants, God declared something to be "not good." It became readily apparent to Adam, as God brought the animals to him for naming-and-categorizing, that he, unlike the animals, had no suitable companion/helper. By special creation, God made woman out of man.

⁶³ Gen. 2:18 - suitable: [NASB](#) note – "literal translation: *corresponding to*". [JTB](#) note: The word translated "suitable" is *neged* (5048), used 152 X in the OT. Its most frequent [NASB](#) translations include "before" 60X; "opposite" 21X; "front" 15X. Furthermore, the word *neged* (5048) does not appear alone. Affixed to it is the letter *kaf*, which is typically translated "like" or "as." So an even more literal translation would be, "I will make him a helper as before him" or "as opposite him." So the whole idea is that woman is distinct from man, yet complementary to him and in his presence. So an even better translation might be, "I will make him a helper as complementary to him."

Why did God create marriage? This is a critically important, foundational building block in human society that a great many couples miss out on entirely. First, it is significant that God created Adam first, and then Eve. Adam is the leader. For a marriage to work out, the couple must recognize this. Second, on a sociological level, God created woman for man's benefit, not the reverse. Sociologically, God created woman to fill the void in man's relational existence. "It is not good for the man to be **alone**" (emphasis mine). In other words, God created woman for companionship with her husband. If a wife fails to realize that a primary role in her existence is to be a companion to her husband, their marriage will deteriorate. But God didn't stop there. He said, "I will make a **helper** suitable for him" (emphasis mine). So not only is a wife to be a *companion* for her husband, she is to be a *helper*. The Women's Liberation movement exists in defiance of God's design in creating marriage. For that reason, so-called "[Feminism](#)" (more accurately termed, "Anti-Masculinism") is destructive to a healthy marriage relationship.

Of course, procreation is a third reason for marriage (Gen. 1:27-28). God designed sexuality to be pleasurable, an encouragement to reproduction within the commitment of marriage. But if a couple focus only on the physical aspects of their relationship, to the neglect of the fundamental purposes for marriage (companionship and helping), the marriage will inevitably either end in divorce or decay into a tenuous, emotionally devastating mere coexistence. By way of illustration, when an actress and an actor meet while filming cinema and decide to marry, one can almost guarantee the marriage will not succeed. Why not? Because her whole existence is driven by making her own career succeed, not in being a companion to her husband and helping his career to succeed. She is working at cross-purposes to the reasons God designed marriage. Why should we be surprised if the marriage fails in a few years?

Today, of course, we live in a fallen world. Successful Christian marriages will exist when (a) a wife willingly submits to her husband in all things (Eph. 5:22-24) and (b) a husband loves his wife as Christ loved the Church and sacrificed Himself for her (Eph. 5:25-31). When either partner fails to live up to this standard, the marriage is

- D 2 The process [Yahweh](#) Elohim used to provide companionship and help for the man 2:19-22
 - E 1 [Yahweh](#) Elohim's prior creation of animals: {19} Out of the ground the LORD God formed every beast of the field and every bird of the sky, 2:19a
 - E 2 His bringing the animals to man to name/classify: and brought them to the man 2:19b
 - G 1 His purpose: to see what he would call them;
 - G 2 The result: and whatever the man called a living creature, that was its name.
 - E 3 The man's naming of the animals: {20} The man gave names 2:20a
 - G 1 to all the cattle,
 - G 2 and to the birds of the sky,
 - G 3 and to every beast of the field,
- E 4 The obvious deficiency: but for Adam ⁶⁴ there was not found a helper suitable for him. 2:20b
- E 5 [Yahweh](#) Elohim's immobilization of the man: {21} So the LORD God caused a deep sleep to fall upon the man, and he slept; 2:21a
- E 6 His extraction of a rib: then He took one of his ribs and closed up the flesh at that place. 2:21b

inevitably at risk.

⁶⁴ Gen. 2:20 but for Adam: [NASB](#) footnote – “Or *man*”. [JTB](#) note: The Hebrew text has repeatedly used the article before *adam* (120). Here there is no article, but only the prepositional prefix lamedh, signifying here “for”. The text could just as easily read, “but for man there was not found,” etc.

- E 7 [Yahweh](#) Elohim's fashioning woman from man's rib: {22} The LORD God fashioned⁶⁵ into a woman⁶⁶ the rib which He had taken from the man, 2:22a
- E 8 His presentation of woman to man: and brought her to the man. 2:22b
- D 3 The response of man to his gift from [Yahweh](#) Elohim 2:23
 - E 1 His analysis of the relationship: {23} The man said,
 - G 1 "This is now bone of my bones,
 - G 2 And flesh of my flesh;
 - E 2 His naming of his counterpart
 - G 1 Her name: She shall be called Woman,⁶⁷
 - G 2 His reason: Because she was taken out of Man."
- D 4 [Moses](#)' announcement of the inauguration of marriage 2:24
 - E 1 Separation: {24} For this reason a man shall leave his father and his mother,
 - E 2 Union: and be joined to his wife;
 - E 3 Unity: and they shall become one flesh.
- D 5 The status of the man and his wife in their Edenic state 2:25
 - E 1 Naked: {25} And the man and his wife were both naked
 - E 2 Not ashamed: and were not ashamed.

⁶⁵ Gen. 2:22 - fashioned: [NASB](#) note: "A literal translation: *built*". [JTB](#) note: the word is the [Qal Imperfect](#) of the verb *banah* (1129).

⁶⁶ Gen. 2:22 - woman: the noun is *ishshah* (802). It is clear from the Genesis record, confirmed by other Scriptures, that God's creation of the male first, and then the female, was both deliberate and intentional. Truth often, if not always, exists in tension. It is true that both male and female are created in the image of God, after His likeness (Gen. 1:26-27). So there is an equality of essence. In some instances, there is an equality of assignment. Both man and woman were commanded to proliferate the species and to rule the earth and its animals (Gen. 1:28). But it is equally true that God created Adam first, and then Eve, that God created Eve primarily for Adam's benefit, not the reverse. This has profound implications in marriage, in the home, and in the [church](#) (1 Timothy 2:11-15). So while there is an equality of essence in man and woman, and even an equality of broad assignment, there is not an equality of roles. This reality is not negotiable in terms of any national or tribal culture.

⁶⁷ Gen. 2:23 - she shall be called Woman, because she was taken out of Man: The unbiblical dogma of [feminism](#) seeks to separate woman from man, but even in the English language, they are inextricably joined. "Man" appears in "Woman," a delightful and accurate reflection of the same in the original Hebrew – "man" is *ish* (376) and "woman" is *ishshah* (802).

A 2 GOD'S UNIVERSAL JUDGMENT OF TOTAL DEPRAVITY 3 - 11**B 1 The *Blessing* of Creation Ruined By Total Depravity Judged By Universal Annihilation 3:1 - 8:19****C 1 Cursing and Death:** The first sin and its judgment 3

D 1 The serpent's successful tempting of mankind to eat of the forbidden tree with deadly, knowledge-changing results 3:1-7

E 1 The question of the serpent about God's restriction on eating 3:1

G 1 The shrewdness of the serpent: *{1}* Now the serpent ⁶⁸ was more crafty than any beast of the field which the LORD God had made.

G 2 His questioning of Elohim's one restriction: And he said to the woman, "Indeed, has God said, ⁶⁹ 'You shall not eat from any tree of the garden'?"

E 2 The woman's explanation of God's requirements about eating 3:2-3

G 1 Her toning down of the privilege of eating 3:2

H 1 *{2}* The woman said to the serpent, "From the fruit of the trees of the garden we may eat;

G 2 Her amplification of the single restriction: *{3}* but from the fruit of the tree which is in the middle of the garden, God has said, 'You shall not eat from it or touch it, or you will die.'" 3:3

E 3 The serpent's treachery 3:4-5

G 1 His denial of the consequence of death: *{4}* The serpent said to the woman, "You surely will not die!" ⁷⁰ 3:4

⁶⁸ Gen. 3:1 - the serpent: The Hebrew noun is *nâchâsh* (5175), appearing 29X in the OT. The word here appears with the prefixed article, "the serpent," indicating that [Moses](#) had in mind "the particular serpent." This was a real snake, but it was inhabited and empowered by [Satan](#) himself (Rev. 12:9). It is interesting that [Satan](#) used a subordinate creature, over whom man was to rule, to tempt the woman, who was created to help the man. [Satan](#) was a sneaky murderer and liar from the beginning (John 8:44).

⁶⁹ Gen. 3:1 - Indeed, has God said ...? [Satan](#)'s first tactic was to call into question what God had said. The implication already was that God had some sinister, ulterior motive in placing a restriction upon man. This remains [Satan](#)'s tactic, to call into question the validity and authority of God's Word. In the pulpit, in the Bible college, in the Seminary, in the church, in the nation, in the world, [Satan](#)'s first tactic is to call into question the validity and authority of God's Word. Tragically, in a great many cases all over the world down through history, he has succeeded.

⁷⁰ Gen. 3:4 - You surely will not die: [Satan](#)'s second tactic was to contradict the Word of God. It was not enough merely to contradict what God had said. He had to put his "spin" on why God had said what He had. His goal was to paint God not as genuine, having the best intentions for His subjects, but as having an ulterior, self-serving motivation. There was some truth in what [Satan](#) said – she would not [die physically](#) instantly. That would take centuries. But what [Satan](#) did not tell her was that before [physical death](#) comes, death by degrees, the process that we

G 2 His casting doubt upon the goodness of God's motives: {5} “For God knows that in the day you eat from it 3:5a

G 3 His sinister portrayal of God 3:5b

H 1 As depriving Eve of the marvelous experience of having her eyes opened: your eyes will be opened,

H 2 As wishing to prevent Eve from being like God: and you will be like God,

H 3 As depriving her of the exclusive knowledge of good and evil: knowing good and evil.”⁷¹

E 4 Eve's succumbing to temptation 3:6

G 1 Her attraction to the fruit: It was

H 1 Good for food: {6} When the woman saw that the tree was good for food,⁷²

H 2 Aesthetic to look upon: and that it was a delight to the eyes,⁷³

H 3 Desirable to make one wise: and that the tree was desirable

call aging, becomes increasingly debilitating and painful. More importantly, [Satan](#) did not tell her she would [die spiritually](#) instantly – that is, she would instantly be separated from God, the most horrible part of death. Finally, [Satan](#) did not tell her about [Second Death](#) – eternal separation from God in the [Lake of Fire](#), which God has prepared for the Devil and his angels (Matt. 25:41).

⁷¹ Gen. 3:5 - you will be like God, knowing good and evil: [Satan](#) was exceedingly cunning. He painted God as a self-serving tyrant who wanted to cheat the woman out of her rightful position (being like God) and out of a marvelous experience (knowing good and evil in an experiential sense). There is always a deceptive element of truth in every temptation. There will always be a certain advantage (if one can really call it that) of disobeying God. The freedom of self-will and self-rule is exhilarating! But [Satan](#) never tells you the whole truth, and neither do his children. Whatever short-term benefits of trusting [Satan](#) and distrusting God might be, the consequences of doing so are unspeakably evil and harmful. [Satan](#)'s third tactic was to paint God as being an evil, not a good person. [Satan](#) offered an intellectually plausible alternative explanation of reality – God was capricious, and wanted to deprive her of power, position, and experience. [Satan](#) has deceived most people in this world with that same tactic. [Satan](#) had remade God in his own likeness and his own image. People today, deceived by [Satan](#), do the same thing. They say, for example, “I can't believe a good God would ever send people to hell forever!” They say, “Sex is so beautiful and wonderful, I can't believe a good God would mean to deprive me of this pleasure outside of marriage!” They say, “I can't believe that God would deprive me of the privilege of using my gifts to preach to and teach men even though I am a woman!” They say, “God made me gay. I can't believe He wouldn't want me to be true to my core inner being!”

⁷² Gen. 3:6 - the tree was good for food: This is the temptation of the “lust of the flesh” stated by [John](#) in 1 John 2:16, and used by [Satan](#) against Jesus in Matt. 4:1-3. Indulging in gluttony and immorality are two examples of yielding to the “lust of the flesh.” Tragically, Eve succumbed to the “lust of the flesh.”

⁷³ Gen. 3:6 - a delight to the eyes: This is the temptation of the “lust of the eyes” stated by [John](#) in 1 John 2:16, and used by [Satan](#) against Jesus in Matt. 4:8-9. A man forsaking his wife of many years and pairing up with a younger, prettier woman is an example of yielding to the “lust of the eyes.” So also is purchasing a nice-looking home or wardrobe one can ill-afford to purchase. Tragically, Eve succumbed to the “lust of the eyes.”

to make *one* wise,⁷⁴

G 2 Her taking of the fruit and eating it: she took from its fruit and ate;⁷⁵

G 3 Her offering some to her husband: and she gave also to her husband with her,

E 5 Adam's succumbing to temptation: and he ate.⁷⁶ 3:6

E 6 The immediate consequences of sin 3:7

⁷⁴ Gen. 3:6 - desirable to make one wise: This is the temptation of “the boastful pride of life” stated by [John](#) in 1 John 2:16, and used by [Satan](#) against Jesus in Matt. 4:5-6. Notice that Satan even quoted Scripture to Jesus to justify the temptation! There are a lot of things that we humans do that may indicate we are capitulating to the temptation of the “pride of life.” Why do we drive the car we drive? Why do we wear the clothes we wear? Why do we go deeply into debt to buy the home in which we live? Why do we buy the latest Apple iPhone? Why do we “max out” our credit cards? Tragically, Eve succumbed to the temptation of “the boastful pride of life.” Every sin which we are tempted to commit represents one or a combination of these three types of temptation. With Eve, it was yielding to a combination of all three sources. Only Jesus has ever successfully resisted all temptation.

⁷⁵ Gen. 3:6 - she took from its fruit and ate: God revealed to Paul that Eve was deceived by [Satan](#), whereas Adam was not (1 Tim. 2:14). This has a profound implication in the [church](#). Women are not to teach men, nor are they to ask questions, certainly not questions designed to advance their own teaching agenda. (I have seen that happen.) What Scripture teaches us is that, even in a pristine, unfallen condition, woman by creation was more susceptible to the deception of theological error than man was. That is not a fault in woman, but rather an acknowledgment that she is wired differently than man *by design*. There are two reasons given in 1 Timothy 2:11-15 as to why women should not teach men the Scriptures. (1) The order of creation. God intentionally created man first, then woman. That has certain non-negotiable implications. (2) Susceptibility to theological deceit. In an unfallen state, woman was more susceptible to being deceived theologically than man. Nothing has changed. Neither of these two reasons are assignable to cultural conditions. They are an eternal verity.

Men and women have equal essence, but they do not have equal roles. Men and women have equal standing in the Body of Christ, as do Jews and Greeks, as do slaves and freemen (Gal. 3:28). But that does not obliterate God-assigned roles. Slaves are still to obey their lords in this life as a way of serving Christ (Eph. 6:5). The [sons of Israel](#) will be an honored nation throughout eternity (Matt. 19:28; Rev. 21:10-12). The [Church](#) will always have a special role as the [Bride of Christ](#) (Eph. 5:25-27; Rev. 19:7-9; 21:14). And in this life a wife will always be bound to submit herself to her husband as her head as to Christ (Eph. 5:11-13), while husbands are obligated to love their wives in the same sacrificial way that Christ loved the [Church](#) (Eph. 5:25-29). We see, then, that some of the foundational beliefs of the modern dogma of [feminism](#) thus run counter to Scripture.

This was, incidentally, the first instance of [feminism](#) – a woman acting independently of her husband. [Feminism](#) did not turn out well then, and, indeed, it never has since. This was, moreover, a deliberate assault upon the family as God ordained it. Adam, who should have protected his wife from the [Serpent's](#) deceit, remained passive. Eve, who should have deferred to her husband for advice, acted independently. We have here the beginnings of dysfunctional family life. An over-assertive wife and passive husband.

⁷⁶ Gen. 3:6 - and he ate: New Testament Scriptures teach that God held Adam responsible for the first sin. It was “through one man sin entered the world” (Rom. 5:12). And, “For as in Adam all die” (1 Cor. 15:22). In fact, Adam was the Federal and Biological Head of the human race. When he sinned, we all sinned (Rom. 5:12). The Scripture records that, though Eve had been deceived by the Devil, Adam had not been (1 Tim. 2:14). He was doubly culpable. What a tragedy for the human race. A momentary pleasure plunged the entire world into moral and spiritual chaos! All the evil that has ever been perpetrated by man can be traced back to this tragic act of disobedience by Adam. This should teach us that there is no such thing as a minor, or incidental sin. This sin was akin to stealing an orange from a fruit stand, according to human logic. It was not that big a deal. But the smallest sin is a VERY BIG DEAL. From this act of theft have stemmed all the wars, murders, tortures, despotic regimes, and broken marriages and broken homes in the entire course of human history. Every sin is deadly. Roman Catholicism's artificial distinction between [mortal and venial sins](#) is entirely unhelpful. All sin brings death. Mary, the mother of Jesus sinned. Otherwise she would not have died.

- G 1 The opening of their eyes: {7} Then the eyes of both of them were opened,
- G 2 Their perception of their nakedness: and they knew that they were naked;⁷⁷
- G 3 Their sewing of fig leaves to make loin coverings: and they sewed fig leaves together and made themselves loin coverings.

D 2 God's interrogation 3:8-13

E 1 The couple's hiding themselves from God 3:8

- G 1 The triggering sound: {8} They heard the sound of the LORD God walking in the garden in the cool of the day,
- G 2 Their negative reaction: and the man and his wife hid themselves from the presence of the LORD God⁷⁸ among the trees of the garden.

E 2 God's confronting Adam 3:9-12

- G 1 God's calling for the man: {9} Then the LORD God called to the man, and said to him, "Where are you?" 3:9
- G 2 Adam's explanation of secrecy because of shame from nakedness: {10} He said, "I heard the sound of You in the garden, and I was afraid because I was naked; so I hid myself." 3:10
- G 3 God's questioning of Adam: {11} And He said, 3:11
 - H 1 As to source of knowledge: "Who told you were naked?"
 - H 2 As to obedience: Have you eaten from the tree of which I

⁷⁷ Gen. 3:7 - they knew that they were naked: Adam and Eve had come to know the difference between good and evil in an experiential way. Already they became aware that their freedom had been compromised. They now felt that they needed to dress modestly. Ever since, people have worn some form of clothing. Going around naked in society is not respectable. We see the sign in a restaurant, "No shoes, no shirt, no service." The first era in which man lives was the era, or [dispensation](#), or framework of God's working with man was the age of [Innocence](#). Man now embarked upon the era of [Conscience](#), or [Moral Responsibility](#). Not every one of the various dispensations are explicitly spelled out in Scripture, but they are obviously there. God worked with mankind one way before he sinned, and another way afterwards. [Dispensationalism](#) simply acknowledges clear differences in the way God works with various people groups at various times. [Dispensations](#) explicitly stated in Scripture include [Law](#), [Grace](#), or [Church](#), [Tribulation](#), and [Millennial Kingdom](#). [Dispensationalism](#) is based on a [literal interpretation](#) of Scripture, even in prophetic passages, as opposed to a [non-literal](#) or metaphorical or spiritual interpretation.

⁷⁸ Gen. 3:8 - the man and his wife hid themselves from the presence of the LORD God: The fact that Adam and Eve hid themselves from the presence (literally, "face," *pânêh*, 6440) of [Yahweh](#) Elohim indicates that they had already [died spiritually](#). They were separated from God. What God had predicted (Gen. 2:17) had come true precisely as God had said. They disobeyed, and instantly, on that very day, they died. [Physical death](#) would take many years for them. But premature [physical death](#) would take place very soon for their second-born, Abel (Gen. 4:1-8).

commanded you not to eat?”

G 4 Adam's response: {12} The man said, 3:12

H 1 His blame of God: “The woman whom You gave to be with me,⁷⁹

H 2 His blame of the woman: she gave me from the tree,

H 3 His own admission: and I ate.”⁸⁰

E 3 God's confronting Eve: {13} Then the LORD God said to the woman, 3:13

G 1 His question: “What is this you have done?”

G 2 Her answer: And the woman said,

H 1 Her blame of the serpent: “The serpent deceived me,⁸¹

⁷⁹ Gen. 3:12 - The woman You gave to be with me: Adam, in one brief statement, attempted to exonerate himself. He blamed the woman for his sin, and he blamed God, who had given him the woman. Sinners, almost inevitably, seek to justify their having sinned by making excuses and blaming someone else. Spiritual growth comes only when I acknowledge that I am the culprit. I have sinned (Psa. 32:5; Prov. 28:13; 1 John 1:9).

⁸⁰ Gen. 3:12 - and I ate: Though Eve was the first human to sin, she was neither the federal head nor the biological head of the human race. Adam was. The truth is that “through one man sin entered the world, and death through sin, and so death spread to all men, because all sinned” (Rom. 5:12). This NT commentary on the [Fall of Man](#) reveals

(1) The historicity of Adam. Adam is not a [mythical](#) figure, but an historical person. To relegate Genesis 1-11 to the level of [myth](#) is to destroy the foundation of Salvation. If there is no First Adam, there can be no Second Adam (Rom. 5:14; 1 Cor. 15:22; 45).

(2) The culpability of Adam. It is Adam, not Eve, man, not woman, whom God charges with being the first sinner.

(3) The federal headship of Adam. In the phrase, “because all sinned” (Rom. 5:12), the verb “sinned” *hamartanō*, [264](#), appears in the [aorist](#) tense, which signifies “action at a point in time.” The reasonable deduction is that when Adam sinned, the entire human race sinned. He was our federal head, and he represented us. When he failed, we failed.

This sort of reasoning is anathema to many influenced by a Western mind-set. But we see it all the time. One President, one Senator, or one Representative can make a decision that adversely affects the entire nation, and we are powerless to alter it. It happens in sports. One kicker, at the end of a football game, wins or loses the game for the whole team, depending on whether he makes or misses his field goal. Let us remember that if Adam did not represent the entire human race when he sinned, then Jesus, the Second Adam, cannot have represented the entire human race when he died and rose again.

There are three reasons why all men are culpable as sinners: a) [Imputed sin](#). When Adam sinned, his sin was imputed (or charged) to every member of the human race. That is why we all die. b) [Inherited sin](#). We are by nature sinners, for we have inherited the evil virus of sin from our parents, who inherited it from theirs, who inherited it from our first parents, Adam and Eve. c) [Personal sin](#). Each one of us, personally, sins. On these three counts each of us is culpable, a guilty sinner in the eyes of God, doomed to eternal damnation, and in need of eternal salvation. See [“Three Reasons Man is Guilty.”](#)

⁸¹ Gen. 3:13 - The serpent deceived me: At least Eve was aware that she had been deceived, but by then it was too late. The [Apostle Paul](#) later acknowledged that Eve had been deceived, and that Adam had not. He used this as grounds that women, in the [Church Age](#), should not teach men (1 Tim. 2:11-15). The difficulty was that Eve really did not take ownership of her sin. She blamed the [serpent](#). At least she admitted that she had eaten. [Fallen](#) man has, ever since, tried to justify himself for his sins. We all want to believe that we should be given some sort of credit

H 2 Her own admission: and I ate.”

D 3 God's punishment of serpent, woman, and man 3:14-19

E 1 His cursing of the serpent 3:14-15

G 1 Consequential treatment: {14} The LORD God said to the serpent, “Because you have done this,⁸²

G 2 The greatness of cursing

H 1 More than all cattle: Cursed are you more than all cattle,⁸³

H 2 More than every other beast of the field: And more than every beast of the field;

G 3 Physical and strategic handicapping

H 1 Movement only upon its belly: On your belly you will go,

H 2 Imbibing of dust all its life: And dust⁸⁴ you will eat All the days of your life;

G 4 Enmity between species: 3:15

H 1 Between the serpent and the woman: {15} And I will put enmity⁸⁵ Between you and the woman,

H 2 Between the serpent's descendants and the woman's descendants: And between your seed and her seed;

J 1 The woman's descendant would **crush** the serpent's head [mandated because of the now inferior position

because “There were extenuating circumstances.” Someone else is to blame for my sins. Honesty before God compels us to confess our sins, to admit that we ourselves sinned against God (1 John 1:9).

⁸² Gen. 3:14 - Because you have done this: Observe that God never questioned the [serpent](#). God assigned punishment without discussion.

⁸³ Gen. 3:14 - Cursed are you more than all cattle: God’s curse on the serpent was two-pronged. He cursed the serpent, used by [Satan](#), but he also cursed [Satan](#), the villain using the [serpent](#) as a guise to deceive Eve (Rev. 12:9).

⁸⁴ Gen. 3:14 - dust: ‘*âphâr*’ ([6083](#)). A sign of humiliation, of suffering defeat. See the term "lick dust" in Mic. 7:17; Isa. 49:23; Ps. 72:9. (See H. C. [Leupold](#), *Exposition of Genesis*, Baker Book House, Grand Rapids, Michigan, c. 1942, The Wartburg Press, I, 162. See also [Leupold](#) online.) Note that God formed man from the dust of the ground (Gen. 2:7); that the physical serpent was cursed by having to eat dust always (Gen. 3:14); and that man was cursed by returning to dust after he had died (Gen. 3:19).

⁸⁵ Gen. 3:15 - enmity: ‘*êbâh*’ ([342](#)). Synonyms would be antagonism, animosity, hatred.

of the serpent]: He shall bruise you on the head,⁸⁶

J 2 The serpent would **crush** the heel of the woman's descendant [damage limited because of the now inferior position of the serpent]: And you shall bruise him on the heel.”⁸⁷

E 2 His punishment of the woman: {16} To the woman He said, 3:16

G 1 Hard labor in childbirth

H 1 “I will greatly multiply Your pain in childbirth,

H 2 In pain you will bring forth children;

G 2 Her desire would inevitably be toward her husband: Yet your desire⁸⁸ will be for your husband,

G 3 Her husband would rule her: And he will rule over you.”

E 3 His punishment of the man 3:17-19

G 1 Adam's sin, the cause of his punishment: {17} Then to Adam He said, 3:17a

H 1 Listening to his wife: “Because you have listened to the voice of your wife,

H 2 Eating from the tree of which God had commanded him not to eat: and have eaten from the tree about which I commanded you, saying, ‘You shall not eat from it’;

G 2 The curse upon the ground 3:17b-19

H 1 The cursing attributable to Adam's sin: Cursed is the

⁸⁶ Gen. 3:15 - He shall bruise you on the head: Thus God predicted that ultimately a specific man would triumph over the serpent, which ultimately must mean the powerful being using the snake, i.e. [Satan](#). From our N. T. vantage point, we of course know the identity of that victor – Jesus of Nazareth, the God-Man. The head wound would be a mortal wound. Ultimately, [Satan's](#) doom was assured when Jesus died on the cross and rose again, assuring redemption and resurrection for all men who would place their faith in Him. [Satan's](#) ultimate demise is yet future, when he will be forever deposited into the [Lake of Fire and Sulphur](#) (Rev. 20:10).

⁸⁷ Gen. 3:15 - you shall bruise him on the heel: [Satan](#) would severely wound Jesus, a reference to his death at the hands of wicked men on the cross (Acts 2:22-23; 4:25-28). Though Jesus would die [physically](#) and [spiritually](#) (He was briefly separated from God – Psa. 22:1; Matt. 27:46), He would not die the [Second Death](#) (Rev. 20:14-15). He would be resurrected. So His wound, though severe, was not ultimately terminal.

⁸⁸ Gen. 3:16 - desire: *teshûqâh'* ([8669](#)). What is the nature of this desire? "The woman had also broken through her divinely appointed subordination to the man; she had not only emancipated herself from the man to listen to the serpent, but had led the man into sin. For that she was punished with a desire bordering upon disease (...from שוק to run, to have a violent craving for a thing)" ... C. F. Keil and F. Delitzsch, *Commentary on the Old Testament*, Hendrickson Publishers, Peabody, Massachusetts, 1989, I, 103. Though there are exceptions, women crave to have a man, and will sometimes even tolerate evil men rather than remain alone.

ground because of you; 3:17b

H 2 Burdensome eating: Adam's eating of the ground would be only through painful toil (hard labor) all his life:

J 1 Exceptionless toil: In toil ⁸⁹ you will eat of it

J 2 Unremitting toil: All the days of your life.

H 3 Painful, complicated eating 3:18

J 1 The complication of painful thorns and thistles: {18}
"Both thorns and thistles ⁹⁰ it shall grow for you;

J 2 The burden of planting and harvesting crops instead of merely harvesting from trees: And you will eat the plants of the field; ⁹¹

H 4 Continual toil in eating: His toil is so continual that even when he stops to eat he is still perspiring: {19} By the sweat of your face You will eat bread,

H 5 Lifelong toil in eating – his toiling to gain food would last his entire life: Till you return to the ground,

H 6 Mortal eating – he would toil for food until he returned to the dust from which he was taken: Because from it you were taken;

J 1 For you are dust,

J 2 And to dust you shall return."

⁸⁹ Gen. 3:17 - toil: 'itstsābōn' (6093). [BDB](#)'s abbreviated definition is "pain, labour, hardship, sorrow, toil." This was Poetic Justice – since Adam's sin was to eat forbidden fruit, his punishment would consist of painful toil in order to keep eating. It is worth noting that the curse upon Eve was, in certain respects, the same as Adam's. She would experience pain or toil 'itstsābōn' (6093) in the labor of childbirth (Gen. 3:16), and he in regard to laboring to produce crops (Gen. 3:17). Later, Noah's father, Lamech (Gen. 5:28) would call his son "Noah," meaning "rest." He was in hopes that his son would give us rest [[NASB](#) note: Lit *comfort us in*] from our work and from the toil 'itstsābōn' (6093) of our hands arising from the ground which the LORD has cursed" (Gen. 5:29).

⁹⁰ Gen. 3:18 - thorns and thistles: Adam would have to contend with undesirable elements, such as thorns and thistles, intruding into his crops. All manner of noxious weeds would interfere with his crops of choice. Extra labor and time would be required to combat the undesirable elements that would grow, unbidden, among his crops. Even today, farmers must either cultivate their planted crop to remove weeds mechanically, or they must apply an herbicide that will have the same effect. There is additional fuel cost, time, and labor for either method, and both methods have their drawbacks. Cultivation introduces no contaminants into the soil, but it sacrifices moisture in the soil and makes the loose soil more susceptible to erosion when it rains or the wind blows. Herbicides selectively eliminate the weeds without tillage, thus reducing erosion, but contaminate the soil.

⁹¹ Gen. 3:18 - and you will eat the plants of the field: The idea seems to be as follows: In the Garden of [Eden](#), Adam was required to plant no crops. He and Eve were able to harvest fruit and nuts from trees. Now he would be expelled from the Garden. To subsist, he would be forced to plant all manner of crops (such as wheat or corn) and vegetables (such as carrots and lettuce) and fruits (such as strawberries and grapes).

D 4 God's provision for the couple 3:20-24

E 1 Adam's naming of his wife 3:20

G 1 His selected name: {20} Now the man called his wife's name Eve,⁹²

G 2 His reason: because she was the mother of all *the* living.⁹³

E 2 God's provision of more permanent clothing: {21} The LORD God made garments of skin for Adam and his wife, and clothed them.⁹⁴
3:21

E 3 God's prevention of eternally living death through partaking of the [Tree of Life](#) in the fallen state 3:22-24

G 1 God's acknowledgment that man had become in some way like the Godhead in knowing both good and evil: {22} Then the LORD God said, "Behold, the man has become like one of Us, knowing good and evil; 3:22

G 2 God's fear that man would now eat of the [tree of life](#) and perpetuate his ruined existence on earth: and now, he might stretch out his hand, and take also from the tree of life, and eat, and live forever"—⁹⁵

⁹² Gen. 3:20 - Eve: [NASB](#) note – "I.e. living; or life".

⁹³ Gen. 3:20 - the man called his wife's name Eve: Evidently this first human verbal reaction to the curse from God was Adam's acknowledgment that his wife would begin getting pregnant with extraordinary frequency now. He gives her a name that was entirely in keeping with her function now in society. She would be primarily "Mother!" Adam's calling his wife's name "Eve" was also a sign of faith in God's promise (Keil and Delitzsch, I, 106). Adam believed she would have descendants. Included among them, of course would be the ultimate descendant who would rescue humanity from the evil of the [serpent](#) (Gen. 3:15).

⁹⁴ Gen. 3:21 - clothed them: Several observations are in order:
 (1) Human sin adversely affects both the plant realm and the animal realm. Here animals die because of man's sin.
 (2) The death of an animal to rectify the results of man's sin dramatizes the need for [substitutionary atonement](#).
 (3) The fact that God killed an animal indicates that man is above animals. Animals may be used for man's benefit.
 (4) Presumably, though man did not at this point eat animals, he would, occasionally, need to kill them to provide himself clothing when the first garments wore out.
 (5) Modern western man's politically correct abhorrence at using animal furs is simply another indication of his disregard for God and His merciful provision.

⁹⁵ Gen. 3:22 - eat and live forever—: It is difficult for us to conceive of that which God considered to be such a horrible thought that He did not even finish His sentence. I don't think I can completely comprehend what God foresaw, but I think I have an inkling. We all watch with dismay the debilitating effects of aging. I suppose we all assume that aging and increasing disability and loss of mental acuity is normal, but it is not. In fact, had man never sinned, he would never have aged. Imagine if Adam had never sinned. He would still be here today with as much physical prowess and sharpness of mind as any 25-year-old man. But man sinned, and so that is not the case.

What happens is that, the longer we live, the more our body ages. Our bodies become increasingly less mobile, and our mind is no longer as sharp as it once was. Imagine someone whose mind kept functioning, but who kept eating of the [tree of life](#). Is it possible that his body would continue to deteriorate but that he would never die? Can

G 3 God's expulsion of man from the Garden 3:23-24

- H 1 His driving man out of the Garden of [Eden](#) to cultivate the soil 3:23-24a
- J 1 Banishment: {23} therefore the LORD God sent him out from the garden of Eden,
- J 2 Mission: to cultivate the ground from which he was taken.
- J 3 Expulsion: {24} So He drove the man out; ⁹⁶
- H 2 His stationing cherubim at the east entrance to guard the way to the [tree of life](#): and at the east of the garden of [Eden](#) He stationed 3:24b
- J 1 the cherubim ⁹⁷
- J 2 and the flaming sword ⁹⁸ which turned every direction to guard the way to the tree of life.

C 2 **The Deluge:** The accumulation of sin and its judgment 4:1 - 8:19

D 1 Cain's murder and career 4:1-25

E 1 Cain's murder of his brother Abel 4:1-8

G 1 Two births 4:1-2a

H 1 The birth of Cain 4:1

you imagine the hopelessness of being forever confined to an increasingly limited and dysfunctional body with never any hope of death or of resurrection? What an appalling thought! This is, I believe, what God wanted to prevent at all costs. For that reason, He banished man from the Garden and erected barriers to prevent man from partaking of the [Tree of Life](#) in his [fallen](#) condition.

⁹⁶ Gen. 3:23 - drove the man out: A forcible expulsion. The Hebrew verb is the [Piel Imperfect](#) of *shâlach'* (7971). It is a widely used verb with a wide variety of translations. The idea here is a forcible eviction. What seems to us to be cruel on the part of God was actually an act of compassion. The last thing he wanted was for man to eat of the [Tree of Life](#) in his [fallen](#) condition. That would have been catastrophic, unthinkable.

⁹⁷ Gen. 3:24 - the cherubim: the plural of the noun *kerûb* (3742), preceded by the article. [Cherubim](#) appear to be associated with guarding the presence of God. Here they guarded the way to the tree of life. [Cherubim](#) are a special order of [angels](#), or messengers of God. The word appears only here in the book of Genesis. It appears more prominently in the books of Exodus and 1 Kings, and most prominently in the book of the prophet Ezekiel.

⁹⁸ Gen. 3:24 - flaming sword: This mobile, constantly slashing sword of fire would be an awesome deterrent, along with the [cherubim](#), preventing any human from ever eating of the [tree of life](#)! As far as I know, this is the only reference in the entire Bible to a flaming sword. We are not told how long the [Tree of Life](#) existed here upon earth. If it existed as long as the [Flood of Noah](#), surely that deluge destroyed not only the Garden of [Eden](#), but also the [Tree of Life](#). We are told that the [Tree of Life](#) will forever grow with proliferating fruit in [New Jerusalem](#) (Rev. 22:2). Whether that is the same tree as that which appeared in the Garden of [Eden](#) is the subject of inquiry answerable only when we see God in [New Jerusalem](#), or Christ, when He returns to earth.

- J 1 Eve's conception: {1} Now the man had relations with his wife Eve, and she conceived
- J 2 Cain's birth: and gave birth to Cain,
- J 3 Eve's perspective: and she said, "I have gotten a manchild with the help of the LORD."
- H 2 The birth of Abel: {2} Again, she gave birth to his brother Abel. 4:2a
- G 2 Two careers 4:2b
 - H 1 Abel – herdsman: And Abel was a keeper of flocks,
 - H 2 Cain – farmer: but Cain was a tiller of the ground.
- G 3 Two offerings 4:3-4a
 - H 1 Cain's: From the fruit of the ground: {3} So it came about in the course of time that Cain brought an offering to the LORD of the fruit of the ground.
 - H 2 Abel's
 - J 1 From the firstlings of his flock: {4} Abel, on his part also brought of the firstlings of his flock
 - J 2 From their fat portions: and of their fat portions.⁹⁹
- G 4 Two responses 4:4b-5a
 - H 1 [Yahweh's](#) regard: And the LORD had regard 4:4b
 - J 1 for Abel
 - J 2 and for his offering;
 - H 2 [Yahweh's](#) disregard 4:5a
 - J 1 {5} but for Cain
 - J 2 and for his offering

⁹⁹ Gen. 4:4 - fat portions: The thought here, and at least [Leupold](#) (see also [Leupold](#) online) agrees, is that Abel brought the best – a real sacrifice because his heart was in it, while Cain brought perhaps out of habit without putting his heart into it – mere formalism and ritual, which God despises. It is also true that Abel offered of the firstlings of his flock. There is nothing in the worship of Cain that corresponds either to "firstlings" or "fat portions." His heart does not seem to have been in his offerings – he was not offering the best (see Thomas Constable's [Notes on Genesis, 2019](#)). I do not lean toward the explanation that God did not accept Cain's offering because it was not a blood offering. The text does not specify that it had to be a blood offering. Other factors are at work here, as explained above.

J 3 He had no regard. ¹⁰⁰

G 5 Cain and God 4:5b-7

H 1 Cain's response 4:5b

J 1 His anger: So Cain became very angry ¹⁰¹

J 2 His fallen countenance: and his countenance fell.

H 2 [Yahweh's](#) response: {6} Then the LORD said to Cain, 4:6-7

J 1 Question: “Why are you angry?” ¹⁰² 4:6

J 2 Question: And why has your countenance fallen?

J 3 Question: {7} “If you do well, will not your countenance be lifted up?” ¹⁰³ 4:7

J 4 Warning: And if you do not do well, sin is crouching at the door; and its desire is for you,

J 5 Recommendation: but you must master it.”

G 6 Cain and Abel 4:8

H 1 Cain's talking to Abel: {8} Cain told Abel his brother.

H 2 Cain's isolating Abel in the field: And it came about when they were in the field, ¹⁰⁴

H 3 Cain's murder of Abel: that Cain rose up against Abel his

¹⁰⁰ Gen. 4:5 - He had no regard: John declares that Cain was of the evil one (1 John 3:12). It is no wonder that God had no regard for his offering.

¹⁰¹ Gen. 4:5 - very angry: literally, “he burned exceedingly.” The verb “burned” is the [Qal Imperfect](#) of *chârâh*’ (2734), heightened by the adverb *me’ôd*’ (3966), “very,” or “exceedingly.”

¹⁰² Gen. 4:6 - Why are you angry: Literally, “Why do you burn?” – “burn” is the [Qal Perfect](#) of *chârâh*’ (2734).

¹⁰³ Gen. 4:7 - countenance: A fallen countenance (literally, face, *pâneh*’, 6440) comes from a sinful response to a situation. Here, the real problem was that Cain was just going through the motions in worshiping God. When God didn't accept his meaningless ritual, Cain grew angry first of all at God. His face showed that he was angry at God. The remedy for a fallen countenance is to do the right thing, as God suggested. Obviously Cain did not, and his animosity toward God mutated into envy and malice against his brother, which in turn eventuated in murder, the logical outcome of hate.

¹⁰⁴ Gen. 4:8 - when they were in the field: Sin wants isolation to do its dirty work. A willful departure from accountability leads to more and greater sin.

brother and killed him.¹⁰⁵

E 2 God's cursing of Cain from the ground to vagrancy 4:9-15

G 1 [Yahweh's](#) holding Cain accountable 4:9-10

H 1 [Yahweh's](#) query: {9} Then the LORD said to Cain, "Where is Abel your brother?" 4:9a

H 2 Cain's dishonest evasion 4:9b

J 1 His dishonesty: And he said, "I do not know.

J 2 His evasion: Am I my brother's keeper?"¹⁰⁶

H 3 [Yahweh's](#) reply: {10} He said, 4:10

J 1 His question: "What have you done?"

J 2 His accusation: The voice of your brother's blood¹⁰⁷ is crying to Me from the ground.¹⁰⁸

G 2 [Yahweh's](#) punishment of Cain 4:11-12

H 1 His cursing Cain from the ground 4:11-12a

J 1 The fact of cursing: {11} "Now you are cursed from the ground,¹⁰⁹

¹⁰⁵ Gen. 4:8 - killed him: [John the Apostle](#) reveals that Cain was of the evil one, i.e., [Satan](#), and that he killed his brother because his own deeds were evil, whereas his brother's deeds were righteous (1 John 3:12).

¹⁰⁶ Gen. 4:9 - Am I my brother's keeper: Cain's sin has progressed from anger against God to rebellion against God's word to envy and hate of mankind to murder of mankind to dishonesty!

¹⁰⁷ Gen. 4:10 - voice of your brother's blood: "Innocent blood has no voice, it may be, that is discernible by human ears, but it has one that reaches God, as the cry of a wicked deed demanding vengeance." [C. F. Keil and F. Delitzsch](#), *Commentary on the Old Testament*, Hendrickson Publishers, Peabody, Massachusetts, 1989, I, 113.

There is a vicious movement in our world that is called "Pro Choice." Doctors and women and our U.S. court system have taken the position that a woman has the constitutional right to abort an unwanted baby. "Pro Choice" is a complete and dishonest misnomer for the baby. The baby has "No Choice." The blood of millions of murdered babies cries out to God from the wombs of their alienated, hostile mothers. One day there will be an accounting. God hears their blood.

¹⁰⁸ Gen. 4:10 - from the ground: Ground is [adamah](#) (127), closely related to the word for man, [adam](#) (120). God formed man ([adam](#), 120) of dust from the ground ([adamah](#), 127) (Gen. 2:7). Now the blood of Cain's brother cries out to God from the [adamah](#) (ground, 127).

¹⁰⁹ Gen. 4:11 - cursed from the ground: God had already cursed the ground ([adamah](#), 127) because of the sin of Adam ([adam](#), 120) (Gen. 3:17). Adam (and his descendants) would eventually return to the ground ([adamah](#), 127) from which he had been taken (Gen. 3:19). Now, because the ground ([adamah](#), 127) had opened its mouth to receive the blood of Cain's brother (Gen. 4:10), Cain would be cursed from the ground ([adamah](#), 127) (4:11). The literal Hebrew is very emphatic: "And now, cursed – you – from the ground..." The idea is that he would be cursed *away from the ground*, so that he could no longer derive his livelihood from it, as had been the case prior to this time. This

- J 2 The reason for the cursing: which has opened its mouth to receive your brother's blood from your hand. 4:11
- J 3 The mechanics of cursing: {12} "When you cultivate the ground, it will no longer yield its strength to you; 4:12a
- H 2 His forcing Cain to be a nomad: you will be a vagrant and a wanderer on the earth." 4:12b
- G 3 Cain's protest to [Yahweh](#) 4:13-14
 - H 1 Of his inability to bear the punishment: {13} Cain said to the LORD, "My punishment is too great to bear!"¹¹⁰ 4:13
 - H 2 Of his being driven from the face of the ground: {14} "Behold, You have driven me this day from the face of the ground;
 - H 3 Of his being hidden from [Yahweh's](#) face: and from Your face I will be hidden,
 - H 4 Of his destiny of vagrancy and wandering on the earth: and I will be a vagrant and a wanderer on the earth,
 - H 5 Of his fear for his safety: and whoever finds me will kill me."
- G 4 [Yahweh's](#) protection of Cain 4:15
 - H 1 His decree of seven-fold vengeance on whoever would kill Cain: {15} So the LORD said to him, "Therefore whoever kills Cain, vengeance will be taken on him sevenfold."
 - H 2 His appointing a sign for Cain lest anyone kill him: And the LORD appointed a sign for Cain, so that no one finding him would slay him.

E 3 Cain's descendants; their occupational pursuits¹¹¹ and misadventures

curse is poetic justice: Inasmuch as the ground had sympathetically opened itself up to receive Abel's blood, it could no longer, then, be a supporter of Abel's murderer. God's logic, and His justice, was impeccable, as it always is.

¹¹⁰ Gen. 4:13 - My punishment is too great to bear: Tragically, Cain is fortunate to be alive. His gall is to complain of the injustice and unfairness of [Yahweh's](#) punishment!

¹¹¹ Gen. 4:16-24 title - occupational pursuits: Civilization's attempt to thwart the effects of God's curse is illustrated by the Cainitic economy as follows: (1) urban life was preferred by many, instead of "tilling the ground"; (2) nomadic life was preferred by others instead of the settled dwelling place required for agriculture; (3) cattle raising was inaugurated, probably because men had become meat eaters instead of being content with food grown from the earth; (4) metal working and tools were developed to ease the "toil" of the curse; (4) musical instruments were devised to mitigate the "sorrow"; (6) polygamy was introduced, instead of adhering to the monogamous form of

4:16-24

G 1 Cain's activities 4:16-17

- H 1 His departure from the presence of [Yahweh](#): {16} Then Cain went out from the presence of the LORD,¹¹² 4:16
- H 2 His residence in the land of Nod: and settled in the land of Nod,¹¹³ east of Eden.
- H 3 His begetting a son, Enoch: {17} Cain had relations with his wife and she conceived, and gave birth to Enoch; 4:17
- H 4 His building a city named Enoch: and he built a city,¹¹⁴ and called the name of the city Enoch, after the name of his son.

G 2 Cain's descendants from Enoch to Lamech: {18} Now to Enoch was born Irad, and Irad became the father of Mehujael, and Mehujael became the father of Methushael, and Methushael

marriage; (7) metallic weapons were invented, giving those who possessed them and were skilled in their use a great advantage over other men; (8) poetic boasting, as noted here in Lamech's song and as often characteristic of human poetry and writing, asserted man's self-sufficiency and independence of God. Henry M. Morris, *The Genesis Record*, Baker Book House, Grand Rapids, Michigan, 1976, 147.

JTB: I do not believe people were meat-eaters yet. That would not occur until after the [Flood](#) (Gen. 9:1-6). People raised livestock (for milk and wool) and lived in tents because they were nomads (Gen. 4:20). There is no evidence in this Scripture passage that men were making weapons. It is certainly possible, but not demanded by this Scripture (Gen. 4:22).

¹¹² Gen. 4:16 - Cain went out from the presence of the LORD: "presence" is, literally, "face," the noun *pāneh'* (6440). In Gen. 3:8, after Adam and Eve had disobeyed God by eating of the forbidden fruit, they felt guilty when they heard the sound of [Yahweh](#) Elohim walking in the garden, and had hidden themselves among the trees of the garden from His **face** (presence). In Gen. 4:5-6, Cain had become very angry at [Yahweh](#) for not accepting his sacrifice, and his **face** (countenance) had fallen. In Gen. 4:14 Cain had complained bitterly that God had driven Him from the **face** of the ground, and that he would be hidden from the **face** of [Yahweh](#). Now, Cain departed from the **face** of [Yahweh](#) (Gen. 4:16) (all emphases mine, indicating the same noun, *pāneh'* (6440)). For the first time in human history, human existence apart from the **face** (presence) – *pāneh'* (6440) of God became a lifestyle! What a tragedy!

In [New Jerusalem](#), there will no longer be any curse. The throne of God and of the Lamb will be present there, and His slaves will serve Him (Rev. 22:3). They will see His face (*pros'ōpon*, 4383), and His name will be on their foreheads (Rev. 22:4) ... and they will reign forever and ever (Rev. 22:5)! What an eternally blessed existence in contrast to that of Cain's!

¹¹³ Gen. 4:16 - land of Nod: "Nod" is *nôd* (5113), meaning "wandering." This noun is related to the verb *nûd* (5110), "to shake, wander, waver, move to and fro" Cain was a fugitive from the face of God and the face of the land, and he lived the rest of his life in the land of wandering, somewhere east of [Eden](#). What an aimless existence!

¹¹⁴ Gen. 4:17 - and he [Cain] built a city: "built" is the [Qal Participle](#) of the verb *bânâh'* (1129), to "build." The [participle](#) describes Cain's ongoing activity. This is the first account of urbanity – city-dwelling. Created to live in a garden, man now lives in a city. Man desires to band together into social and economic groups called cities. God accommodates himself to man's desire. All of life eternal will center around a city – [new Jerusalem](#). But it will certainly have a garden within its walls ([Rev. 21:1-22:5](#))!

Did Cain attempt to fly in the face of his judgment? Perhaps. He may have begun the city, but did not finish it, according to the Hebrew verb. See H. C. [Leupold](#), *Exposition of Genesis*, Baker Book House, Grand Rapids, Michigan, 1942, I, 216. See [Leupold Gen. 4 online](#).

became the father of Lamech. 4:18

G 3 Lamech's career 4:19-24

H 1 His bigamous marriages to Adah and Zillah: {19} Lamech took to himself two wives: ¹¹⁵ the name of the one was Adah, and the name of the other, Zillah. 4:19

H 2 The occupations ¹¹⁶ of his sons 4:20-22

J 1 Adah's son Jabal – father of tent-dwelling livestock herders: {20} Adah gave birth to Jabal; he was the father of those who dwell in tents ¹¹⁷ and *have* livestock. ¹¹⁸ 4:20

J 2 Adah's son Jubal – father of musicians (harp and flute – strings and woodwinds): {21} His brother's name was Jubal; he was the father of all those who play the lyre and pipe. ¹¹⁹ 4:21

J 3 Zillah's son Tubal-Cain – instructor of craftsmen in bronze and iron: {22} As for Zillah, she also gave birth to Tubal-cain, the forger ¹²⁰ of all implements of bronze and iron; and the sister of Tubal-cain was Naamah. 4:22

H 3 His destruction of human life in self-defense 4:23-24

J 1 His justification for killing a man – for wounding and hurting him: {23} Lamech said to his wives, “Adah and Zillah, Listen to my voice, You wives of Lamech, Give heed to my speech, For I have killed a

¹¹⁵ Gen. 4:19 - Lamech took to himself two wives: Institutional breakdown. Man continues the assault upon the family as God created it. [Satan](#) had initiated the assault upon the family (see the appropriate footnote at Gen. 3:6). Now man widens the breach.

¹¹⁶ Gen. 4:20-22 title - occupations: Man's creation in God's image, including intellect and creativity begins to display itself. Trades, professions and guilds develop.

¹¹⁷ Gen. 4:20 -dwell in tents: Mobility. Instead of living in a garden, man now lives in a tent. Man lived in tents before he lived in caves!

¹¹⁸ Gen. 4:20 - livestock: Animal husbandry: Man's freedom is hampered by the grazing requirements of his livestock.

¹¹⁹ Gen. 4:21 - lyre and harp: Culture / art. God's creation of man as creative beings includes from earliest times art forms unrelated to eating and survival, but merely enjoyment. The fact that culture comes from Cain's ungodly line is no more an indictment of music than Cain's building a city indicts all cities. God uses and blesses musical instruments (Ps. 150), art (see the Tabernacle and Temple) and cities (Rev. 21-22).

¹²⁰ Gen. 4:22 - forger: Metallurgy. Used in construction, industry (hand tools), and art forms.

man for wounding me;¹²¹ And a boy for striking me;
4:23

J 2 His declaration of 77-fold vengeance in contrast to Cain's 7-fold vengeance: {24} If Cain is avenged sevenfold, Then Lamech seventy-sevenfold.” 4:24

D 2 Adam's descendants through Seth: life marred by death 4:25 - 5:32

E 1 Adam's godly offspring 4:25-26

G 1 The birth of Seth

H 1 Intimacy: {25} Adam had relations with his wife again;

H 2 Birth: and she gave birth to a son,

H 3 Name: and named him Seth,¹²²

J 1 Reason: for, *she said*, “God has appointed¹²³ me another offspring¹²⁴ in place of Abel,

J 2 Explanation: for Cain killed him.” 4:25

G 2 The birth of Seth's son Enosh: {26} To Seth, to him also a son was born; and he called his name Enosh.

G 3 The significance of Enosh's birth: Then *men* began to call upon

¹²¹ Gen. 4:23 - I have killed a man for wounding me: Lamech is defending the fact that he has killed someone for injuring him, a "self-defense" pleading. Some commentators speculate that, in view of the context, he is holding aloft a sword newly-forged by his son and boasting of what he will do to anyone who harms him. That of course, cannot be proven.

Whatever the case, society was degenerating into violence, and, as history has shown us, it would only get worse.

¹²² Gen. 4:25 - Seth: “set in place of.” Eve’s act of naming Seth demonstrates her faith in God, who, she said, “has appointed me another offspring in the place of Abel, for Cain killed him.”

¹²³ Gen. 4:25 - appointed: Hebrew = the [Qal Perfect shith \(7896\)](#), translated in the [NASB](#) in 29 different ways in 86 occurrences! The point is that Eve recognized both Elohim’s [sovereignty](#) and His goodness. God permits things to happen that are very painful (such as permitting Cain to kill Abel). But God proactively causes things that are beneficial (like giving Eve a replacement son). After my wife and I were married, we planned and obtained two sons right on schedule. (I was a seminary student at the time, and timing was important!) We believed we were in control. During my ministry at my first church, my wife suffered two miscarriages. We came to realize that God is [sovereign](#), and that He dispenses children if and when He chooses! We became very dependent on God, and very humble in that regard. We came to realize we did not control the existence or destiny of our own children – God did! My wife had considerable difficulty with both subsequent pregnancies. By His [sovereign](#) grace, He brought two more children into our family. Every child is planned and created by God. There are no accidents. God creates new humans when and how He chooses! Eve came to realize that, and so did we.

¹²⁴ Gen. 4:25 - another offspring: Literally, another “seed” (*zera*, [2233](#)).

the name of the LORD.¹²⁵

SECTION III. WHAT BECAME OF ADAM. 5:1 - 6:8

E 2 The career of *blessed* Adam 5:1-5

G 1 The introduction to Adam's career 5:1-2

H 1 The statement of the succession from Adam: *{1}* This is the book of the generations of Adam.¹²⁶

H 2 Elohim's creation of man in His own likeness

J 1 The time of the creation: In the day when God created man,

J 2 The likeness of the creation: He made him in the likeness of God.

H 3 His creation of them as gender-specific: *{2}* He created them male and female,

H 4 His *blessing* them: and He blessed them

H 5 His naming them: and named them Man¹²⁷ in the day when they were created.

G 2 Adam's procreation of a son at a certain age – 130: *{3}* When Adam had lived one hundred and thirty years, he became the father¹²⁸ of *a son* in his own likeness, according to his image,

¹²⁵ Gen. 4:26 - "To call out by use of the name [Yahweh](#)." [BDB](#) Lexicon interprets this to mean "to use the name of [Yahweh](#) in worship." [Leupold](#) (I, 228): "We have here the first record of regular public worship." (See also [Leupold, Gen. 4](#), online.)

¹²⁶ Gen. 5:1 - This is the book of the generations of Adam: "book" is *sēpher* ([5612](#)). The Hebrew spelling is actually better represented in Blue Letter Bible's entry ([5612](#)). The term refers here to a written document. "Generations" is the plural of *tôledâh* ([8435](#)). It appears 39X in the OT, always in the plural, *tôledôt*, meaning here, the account of Man (Adam, *âdâm* ([121](#))) and his descendants. See the following footnote for an explanation of the somewhat arbitrary distinctions of the entries [120](#) and [121](#). In both instances it is the identical Hebrew noun.

¹²⁷ Gen. 5:2 - and named them Man: [NASB](#) note: "A literal translation: *Adam*." [JTB](#): The Hebrew noun is *âdâm* ([120](#)); ([121](#)). The reader will note that I have conflated both entries. There is only one word, *âdâm*, which appears sometimes in reference to generic mankind (most of the entries, somewhat arbitrarily designated [120](#)), and specifically referring to the character Adam (again, somewhat arbitrarily designated as [121](#)). There is no linguistic difference between the entries of [120](#) and [121](#). The distinction is made solely on the basis of context. Context is the best determiner of meaning when interpreting Scripture. Here in Genesis 5:2, the language clearly indicates that [Moses](#) was speaking of generic mankind here.

¹²⁸ Gen. 5:3 - Adam ... became the father of ... Seth: [NASB](#) note on "became the father": "A literal translation: *begot*, and so throughout the ch"

[JTB](#): "Became the father of" translates the single Hebrew word *yâlad'* ([3205](#)), meaning "to bear, bring forth, or beget." There are Hebrew scholars who insist that this begetting term can skip generations. No doubt there are instances in which that is true. But this is not one of those. This is a formulaic, closed genealogy. You cannot add

gaps to this genealogy. The insistence of many scholars on gaps in this genealogy has, I suspect, a hidden agenda. I may be wrong, but I suspect that if they were completely honest, these Hebrew scholars would have to admit that they have been cowed by the [evolutionary](#) dogma's insistence on enormous spans of time in the development of our earth and its species. I am afraid that, even subconsciously, these scholars allow contemporary science's pseudo-scientific biases to influence their exegesis. Minus the constraints of the biases of modern scientists and astronomers hypothesizing on the age of the earth, Hebrew scholars of old did not hesitate to recognize what is going on in Genesis 5 – a closed, linked genealogy that provides sufficient data for calculating the age of the earth. Archbishop Ussher used this genealogy, along with the genealogy in Genesis 11 to establish the date of the creation of the earth at 4004 BC. This can be done because both genealogies overlap – Shem appears in both. Careful historians can arrive at a fairly accurate date for [Abraham](#), who appears in the genealogy of Genesis 11. If Ussher is off a few years, that is immaterial. The point is that the Bible espouses a recent creation of earth.

Hebrew scholars who are uncomfortable with a young earth are forced to build time into the Genesis record. One way to do so is to fudge on the meaning of day (*yom*, [3117](#)) as it is used in Genesis 1. But an unbiased reading of Genesis 1 will not permit that. [Moses](#) spoke of ordinary solar days in unmistakable language. Another way to build time into Genesis is to insist that the genealogy of Genesis 5 skips generations. There is no credible evidence that it does. And even if, for the sake of the argument, we were to assume that it does, that still does not solve the time problem for proponents of an ancient earth. The formula used here is remarkably consistent. Ancestor A became the father of Descendant B at a certain age. Descendant B became the father of Descendant C at a certain age, and so on. These are unmistakable chronological links with which one can forge an unbroken chain of chronology. Creation is datable. [WordExplain](#) takes the position that there is no fluidity in the genealogies of Genesis 5 and 11.

Rick Freeman, has written an excellent article entitled, "[Do the Genesis Genealogies Contain Gaps?](#)" Freeman carefully delineates what he calls the "Non-Chronogenealogy" view – that there are gaps due to "fluidity" in the genealogies of Genesis 5 and 11. Arguments from "historical-critical" and even from "evangelical" scholars he summarizes as follows:

- (1) The genealogies in Genesis 4 and 5 are so alike that they must have evolved from a common source.
- (2) The symmetrical ten-generation form of the Genesis 5 and 11 genealogies with emphasis on the seventh position indicated schematization in the tradition of ancient Mesopotamian king, sage, and ancestor lists.
- (3) The lives of the patriarchs overlap too much in a no-gap reading of the text.
- (4) The oft repeated formula "X fathered Y" should be interpreted to mean that X fathered the line leading to Y.
- (5) Humankind originated longer ago than a no-gap reading of Genesis 5 and 11 will allow according to extra-biblical evidence.

In the article, Freeman proceeds to refute each of the conclusions of these non-conservative scholars. Here is his summary at the end of the article:

In summary, the case for fluidity during transmission of the Genesis 5 and 11 genealogies suffers from a lack of evidence. While all parties readily acknowledge fluidity in some ancient genealogies, scholars have yet to present sound evidence of fluidity in the Sethite and Shemite lists. Conflation adequately explains the similarity between Genesis 4 and 5. Wilson has shown that the supposed ten-generation standard genealogical form was a [myth](#) based on selected evidence. Arguments against overlapping patriarchal life-spans lack biblical support. No precedent exist (sic) for interpreting the formula "X lives Y years and fathered Z" to mean that "X lived Y years and fathered the line of Z." Such a meaning would in fact contradict many centuries of interpretive history.

Thus, the main arguments for fluidity in this case lack a firm basis. This lack of evidence for fluidity does not mean necessarily that fluidity has not occurred, because evidence might yet come to light. At present, however, one might easily conclude, at least as far as the biblical evidence is concerned, that no omissions, additions, or alterations (other than name confluations) have been made to the Genesis 5 and 11 genealogies.

This article has been published in print with an "Addendum on Second Cainan" as Chapter 10, "Do the Genesis 5 and 11 Genealogies Contain Gaps?" by Travis R. Freeman in the book, [Coming to Grips with Genesis: Biblical Authority and the Age of the Earth](#), edited by Terry Mortenson, Ph.D. and Thane H. Ury, Ph.D. Copyright 2008; Third printing, June 2009. I highly recommend this book. In the print edition, Freeman concludes as follows (p. 308):

The main arguments for gaps due to fluidity in the genealogies of Genesis 5 and 11 suffer from a lack of evidence. While all parties readily acknowledge fluidity in some ancient genealogies, no party has yet presented sound evidence of fluidity in the Sethite and Shemite lists. As far as the biblical evidence is concerned, no omissions or additions have been made to the Genesis 5 and 11 genealogies. There are no gaps there. This conclusion leads to two obvious and important implications for those who trust the Bible. First, the numbers supplied in Genesis 4 and 5 can and should be used for chronological purposes. Second, mankind is only about

and named him Seth.

G 3 His length of life after the specified procreation: {4} Then the days of Adam after he became the father of Seth were eight hundred years,

G 4 His other progeny: and he had *other* sons and daughters.

G 5 His total life span – 930: {5} So all the days that Adam lived were nine hundred and thirty years,

G 6 His death: and he died.

E 3 Seth's career 5:6-8

G 1 His procreation of a son at a certain age – 105: {6} Seth lived one hundred and five years, and became the father of Enosh.

G 2 His length of life after the specified procreation: {7} Then Seth lived eight hundred and seven years after he became the father of Enosh,

G 3 His other progeny: and he had *other* sons and daughters.

G 4 His total life span – 912: {8} So all the days of Seth were nine hundred and twelve years,

G 5 His death: and he died.

E 4 Enosh's career 5:9-11

G 1 His procreation of a son at a certain age – 90: {9} Enosh lived ninety years, and became the father of Kenan.

G 2 His length of life after the specified procreation: {10} Then Enosh lived eight hundred and fifteen years after he became the father of Kenan,

G 3 His other progeny: and he had *other* sons and daughters.

G 4 His total life span – 905: {11} So all the days of Enosh were nine hundred and five years,

G 5 His death: and he died.

E 5 Kenan's career 5:12-14

G 1 His procreation of a son at a certain age – 70: {12} Kenan lived seventy years, and became the father of Mahalalel.

6,000 years old. And since Adam and Eve were created on the sixth literal day of creation (as argued elsewhere in this volume), the whole universe is also only about 6,000 years old.

- G 2 His length of life after the specified procreation: {13} Then Kenan lived eight hundred and forty years after he became the father of Mahalalel,
- G 3 His other progeny: and he had *other* sons and daughters.
- G 4 His total life span – 910: {14} So all the days of Kenan were nine hundred and ten years,
- G 5 His death: and he died.
- E 6 Mahalalel's career 5:15-17
- G 1 His procreation of a son at a certain age – 65: {15} Mahalalel lived sixty-five years, and became the father of Jared.
- G 2 His length of life after the specified procreation: {16} Then Mahalalel lived eight hundred and thirty years after he became the father of Jared,
- G 3 His other progeny: and he had *other* sons and daughters.
- G 4 His total life span – 890: {17} So all the days of Mahalalel were eight hundred and ninety-five years,
- G 5 His death: and he died.
- E 7 Jared's career 5:18-20
- G 1 His procreation of a son at a certain age – 162: {18} Jared lived one hundred and sixty-two years, and became the father of Enoch.
- G 2 His length of life after the specified procreation: {19} Then Jared lived eight hundred years after he became the father of Enoch,
- G 3 His other progeny: and he had *other* sons and daughters.
- G 4 His total life span – 962: {20} So all the days of Jared were nine hundred and sixty-two years,
- G 5 His death: and he died.
- E 8 Enoch's career of fellowship with God; taken by God! 5:21-24
- G 1 His procreation of a son at a certain age – 65: {21} Enoch ¹²⁹ lived sixty-five years, and became the father of Methuselah.

¹²⁹ Gen. 5:21 - Enoch: Enoch is, I believe, a type of the Christian who (1) walks with God amid a Godless society, and (2) who is taken out miraculously from the face of the earth before the great judgment of God [in Enoch's case the [Flood](#); in the case of Christians alive at Christ's [return for His Church](#), the [Tribulation](#)].

- G 2 His length of life spent walking with God after the specified procreation: {22} Then Enoch walked with God three hundred years after he became the father of Methuselah,
- G 3 His other progeny: and he had *other* sons and daughters.
- G 4 His total life span – 365: {23} So all the days of Enoch were three hundred and sixty-five years.
- G 5 His departure, having walked with God: {24} Enoch walked with God; and he was not, for God took him.¹³⁰

E 9 Methuselah's career 5:25-27

- G 1 His procreation of a son at a certain age – 187: {25} Methuselah lived one hundred and eighty-seven years, and became the father of Lamech.
- G 2 His length of life after the specified procreation: {26} Then Methuselah lived seven hundred and eighty-two years after he became the father of Lamech,
- G 3 His other progeny: and he had *other* sons and daughters.
- G 4 His total life span – 969: {27} So all the days of Methuselah were nine hundred and sixty-nine years,¹³¹

¹³⁰ Gen. 5:24 - Enoch walked with God; and he was not, for God took him: There are many unanswered questions here. It is very clear that, contrary to everyone else in Gen. 5:1-31, Enoch did not die. Apparently one day, he disappeared. The text makes it clear that Enoch had an unusually close walk with God. Presumably God preferred having Enoch close to Him up in heaven, the abode of God, to facilitate closer, and more intimate fellowship. Did God give Enoch a resurrection type body? Paul stated with certainty that “flesh and blood cannot inherit the kingdom of God; nor does the perishable inherit the imperishable” (1 Cor. 15:50). So did God give Enoch a resurrection body just as He will one day give Christians who are alive at Christ’s return an imperishable body without having had to die first (1 Cor. 15:51-52; 1 Thess. 4:16-17)? The writer of Hebrews tells us “... it is appointed for men to die once ...” (Heb. 9:27). Will Enoch have to die yet? Living Christians who are raptured will not have to die, so there are exceptions. Was Enoch one of those exceptions in the OT? Will Enoch come back to earth, along with Elijah, who was also taken up to heaven without dying (2 Kings 2:11)? Will they be the two prophetic witnesses who, finally, are slain, resurrected, and taken to heaven (Rev. 11:3-13)? These are questions we cannot answer. Perhaps one day we will know the answers.

¹³¹ Gen. 5:27 - nine hundred and sixty-nine years: Methuselah is the high-water mark in human longevity. Compared to today, these ages are enormous. Those who insist on [uniformitarianism](#) as a guiding principle cannot abide by the notion that these ages are to be taken literally. Let me commend to the reader the stance taken by [H. C. Leupold](#) (see also [Leupold](#) online) many years ago. Whereas I don’t agree with every one of his observations, at least he took the dates literally:

At once we are struck by the longevity of these patriarchs; all except three lived in excess of nine hundred years. It is useless to attempt to evade this fact. The attempt to let the personal names represent tribes shatters on the clear statement of how old each father was when he begot a son. A complete generation is not thus brought forth within a tribe. Equally abortive is the attempt to claim that numerous links in the chain may have been omitted. Again the precise measuring of each forward step in reference to successive individuals peremptorily rules out such a claim. The most common suggestion by way of escape from the difficulty is to make "year" mean a shorter period, either one month or two, etc. Unfortunately, the term 1.234"year" knows of no such usage, and the suggestion must be treated as a mere surmise. He, however, who is duly impressed by the excellence of man’s original estate, will have no difficulty in accepting the

G 5 His death: and he died.

E 10 Lamech's career 5:28-31

G 1 His procreation of a son at a certain age – 182: {28} Lamech lived one hundred and eighty-two years, and became the father of a son.

H 1 His name for his son: {29} Now he called his name Noah,¹³² saying,

H 2 His reason for the name – his appreciation of the help of Noah, which would reduce the hard work from the curse: "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."

G 2 His length of life after the specified procreation: {30} Then Lamech lived five hundred and ninety-five years after he became the father of Noah,

G 3 His other progeny: and he had *other* sons and daughters.

G 4 His total life span – 777: {31} So all the days of Lamech were seven hundred and seventy-seven years,¹³³

common explanation that even under the curse of sin man's constitution displayed such vitality that it did not at first submit to the ravages of time until after many centuries had passed. Besides—a fact established by fossil finds—there are ample indications of a more salubrious climate in the antediluvian days. Nor should we forget that here is the race of godly men who lived temperately and sanely.

I might add this. Though I am an alumnus of [Dallas Theological Seminary](#), and though Dallas at least used to be a bastion of conservative Biblical scholarship, I have little to no appreciation for the viewpoint of Andrew P. Kvasnica, at the time of writing, a student at [DTS](#). He wrote an article evidently in conjunction with the 2005 Student Academic Conference at Dallas Seminary. In his article, entitled "[The Ages of the Antediluvian Patriarchs in Genesis 5](#)," appearing with the evident approval of the editors of [Bible.org](#), he concluded, "Assessment of the technical evidence leads to a lack of convincing conclusiveness on the exact meaning of the numbers, i.e., an interpretation that can explain all of the issues and that rings true with all aspects of the text." Essentially he concluded "We cannot know what the meaning of these numbers is." His conclusion reminds me of the wish-washy reply of the chief [priests](#) and elders in response to Jesus' counter-question, "The baptism of John was from what *source*, from heaven or from men?" (Matt. 21:23-27). Their answer was the same as Mr. Kvasnica: "We do not know."

¹³² Gen. 5:29 - Noah: Noah probably means "rest." The name Noah, *Noach* ([5146](#)) probably comes from the verb *nuach* ([5117](#)), "to rest." (See the appropriate note at Gen. 5:29 in [NETBible](#).)

¹³³ Gen. 5:31 - Lamech ... seven hundred and seventy-seven years: Discounting Enoch's Divinely-shortened life span, Lamech's life span sets a new record for shortness. Some speculate that his life was cut short by the [Flood](#). We cannot know that, for the text does not specify. Lamech's briefer life appears to be somewhat of an anomaly, especially when one compares it with Noah, who lived 950 years (Gen. 9:28-29). Noah, incidentally, lived on both sides of the [Flood](#). Whatever the effects of the post-[Flood](#) environment on the longevity of humans (and it appears to be dramatic), it certainly did not seem to affect Noah. For more information on this topic, refer to "[The Declining](#)

- G 5 His death: and he died.
- E 11 Noah introduced 5:32
 - G 1 His procreation of sons at a certain age – 500: {32} Noah was five hundred years old,
 - G 2 The three sons of Noah: and Noah became the father of Shem, Ham, and Japheth. ¹³⁴
- D 3 God's determination to judge the earth, saving only Noah 6
 - E 1 The cohabitation of fallen angels with women; their powerful, wealthy offspring 6:1-4
 - G 1 The corruption of the human race 6:1-2
 - H 1 The increase of humanity upon the earth: {1} Now it came about, when men began to multiply on the face of the land,
 - H 2 The increase of women on the earth: and daughters were born to them, 6:1
 - H 3 The attraction of the sons of God to the daughters of men 6:2
 - J 1 Their finding them beautiful: {2} that the sons of God ¹³⁵ saw that the daughters of men were beautiful;

[Life Span of the Patriarchs Before and After the Flood.](#)”

¹³⁴ Gen. 5:32 - Noah became the father of Shem, Ham, and Japheth: It is highly unusual that Noah was so old (500) before he fathered a son. It is also unusual that three sons, not one, are mentioned. We are told in Gen. 7:6 that Noah was 600 when the flood waters came upon the earth. We are told, furthermore, that Shem was 100 years old two years after the flood when he became the father of Arpachshad (Gen. 11:10). So in round terms, the numbers square. The presence of three names should not be taken to mean that these were triplets. Rather the story of the human race, and especially of the progenitor (Shem) of God's chosen Patriarchs, [Abram](#), Isaac, and Jacob must needs be told. A similar branching out appears in Gen. 11:27 – “Terah ... became the father of [Abram](#), Nahor, and Haran”

¹³⁵ Gen. 6:2 - sons of God: Much has been written about this cryptic passage. There are two main positions – (1) that the sons of God are descendants of the Godly line of Seth who polluted the Godly line by marrying ungodly non-Sethite women; (2) that the sons of God were angels who overstepped their bounds and cohabited with women.

In defense of view (1) it can be said a) that a completely human interpretation is the least problematic, and b) that Jesus' statement that “in the resurrection they neither marry nor are given in marriage, but are like angels in heaven” (Matt. 22:30; cf. Mark 12:25) forbids the possibility of angels cohabiting with women.

In defense of view (2) it can be argued as follows:

a) In every other use of the Hebrew phrase *bene Elohim* (sons of God) outside this passage (Gen. 6:2, 4) it refers to angels (Job 1:6; 2:1; 38:7), so why not here?

b) In response to the claim that angels cannot cohabit with women, Jesus' statement (Matt. 22:30; Mark 12:25) only refers to what good angels, the ones in heaven, do not do. It makes no statement about what evil angels, outside the realm of heaven, may or may not do.

c) Furthermore, the reality is that certain angels did, indeed, do something very evil. They sinned in such a way that God did not spare them, but rather “cast them into hell” (lit., *Tartaroō*, [5020](#) – the only use in the NT of this verb, which comes from the noun Tartarus) and committed them to pits (some MSS read “chains”) of darkness,

J 2 Their choosing for themselves wives: and they took wives for themselves, whomever they chose.

G 2 God's disapproval 6:3

H 1 His refusal to strive with man forever because he is flesh: {3} Then the LORD said, "My Spirit shall not strive with man forever, because he also is flesh;

H 2 His allotting man 120 years' extension: nevertheless his days shall be one hundred and twenty years."¹³⁶

G 3 Further corruption 6:4

H 1 The presence of Nephilim on the earth: {4} The Nephilim¹³⁷ were on the earth in those days, and also

reserved for judgment" (2 Pet. 2:4). Here is a literal translation of 2 Peter 2:4: "For if God, angels having sinned spared them not, but into pits of darkness having *Tartarused* them, He delivered them over, for the purpose of judgment keeping them..." It is my judgment that the place Peter labeled as "pits of darkness," to which God "*Tartarused*" certain angels who sinned, is equivalent to the "abyss," (*abussos*, [12](#)) a place to which certain demons begged Jesus not to send them (Luke 8:31). The abyss is the place from which certain demons will emerge during the [Tribulation](#) (Rev. 9:1, 2, 11); is the place from which the [Antichrist](#) ("beast") will emerge (Rev. 11:7; 17:8); and is the place in which [Satan](#) will be confined for a thousand years (Rev. 20:1, 3). It is unclear from Peter's statement what sin these angels committed, but a related statement by Jesus' half-brother Jude provides more specific information (Jude 1:6-7):

⁶And angels who did not keep their own domain, but abandoned their proper abode, He has kept in eternal bonds under darkness for the judgment of the great day, ⁷just as [Sodom](#) and Gomorrah and the cities around them, since they in the same way as these indulged in gross immorality and went after strange flesh, are exhibited as an example in undergoing the punishment of eternal fire.

Jude made quite a point of saying that the cities of [Sodom](#) and Gomorrah, and cities adjacent to them, committed gross immorality, going after strange flesh (the practice of homosexuality is a violation of God's design) *in the same way* that the angels (had practiced gross immorality), also going after strange flesh! In other words, there were angels who practiced gross immorality and went after strange (human) flesh. In my opinion, both 2 Peter 2:4 and Jude 1:6-7 relate back to the incident described in Genesis 6:1-2. This amounted to an attempted demonic perversion of the entire human race.

d) Something happened to the human race that was vile enough for God to wipe out the entire population of the earth except for Noah and his family, and the animals entrusted to his care.

Conclusion: View 2 seems to fit the evidence far better than View 1.

¹³⁶ Gen. 6:3 - one hundred and twenty years: This length of time probably does not refer to man's diminished life expectancy, but rather, to the amount of time God would allow to lapse before He instituted a global judgment – a life-destroying, sin-judging [Flood](#). See Thomas Constable's [Notes on Genesis, 2019](#) in connection with Gen. 6:3.

¹³⁷ Gen. 6:4 - Nephilim: These were on the earth both before and after "the sons of God saw that the daughters of men were beautiful" and "took wives for themselves" (see Thomas Constable, [Notes on Genesis, 2019](#), in reference to Gen. 6:4.

Nephilim ([5303](#)) appears only three times in the OT – here, and twice in Numbers 13:33. In the latter reference, the *Nephilim* are described as being gigantic in sight, but the context is one of warfare. *Nephilim* ([5303](#)), a plural noun, originates from the verb *naphal* ([5307](#)), to fall, or to fall upon someone. Taken together, the term *Nephilim* must describe large-framed warriors, those who would carry a huge advantage in warfare. These large warriors existed both before and after the mating of the "sons of God" (whom I take to be fallen angels) with the "daughters of men." The *Nephilim* were not a result of this mating, but, along with it, contributed to the general deterioration of the antediluvian society. This society was, as the subsequent narrative illustrates, on a collision course with Divine

afterward,

H 2 The reproduction of the sons of God with the daughters of men: when the sons of God came in to the daughters of men, and they bore *children* to them.

J 1 Of mighty men: Those were the mighty men who *were* of old,

J 2 Of men of renown: men of renown.

E 2 [Yahweh's](#) sorrowful purpose to blot out man and animals from off the earth, save Noah 6:5-7

G 1 God's observation of man's evil 6:5

H 1 The greatness of his wickedness on the earth: {5} Then the LORD saw that the wickedness of man was great on the earth,

H 2 The perpetually evil intent of the thoughts of man's heart: and that every intent of the thoughts of his heart was only evil continually. ¹³⁸

G 2 God's pain at man's corruption 6:6

H 1 His sorrow that He had made man on the earth: {6} The LORD was sorry that He had made man on the earth,

H 2 His heart-felt grief: and He was grieved in His heart.

G 3 God's resolve to blot man out 6:7

H 1 His resolve to blot out from the face of the earth mankind that He had created: {7} The LORD said, "I will blot out man whom I have created ¹³⁹ from the face of the land,

H 2 His determination to destroy everything

judgment.

¹³⁸ Gen. 6:5 - only evil continually: Literally, "and every purpose of the thoughts of his heart was only evil the whole day."

¹³⁹ Gen. 6:7 - I will blot out man whom I have created: Man was the crown of God's creation, whom He had created in His own likeness and image. Something must have gone terribly wrong with the human race for God to obliterate all of mankind except for eight surviving representatives. Evidently virtually the entire human race had been corrupted. This is one reason why it is difficult for me to maintain that the sin of Gen. 6:2 was merely Sethite men marrying non-Sethite women. I believe it was something far more sinister. Satan had attempted and was succeeding at corrupting nearly the entire race of man. Mankind had become corrupted and unremittently evil. Only that would account for God's drastic measures. Surely our world today is unremittently evil. But at least we have not been corrupted by demons assuming human bodies and perverting the human race.

J 1 Man: from man

J 2 Animals: to animals

J 3 Creeping things: to creeping things

J 4 Birds: and to birds of the sky;

H 3 His reason – His sorrow that He had made them: for I am sorry that I have made them."

E 3 Noah's righteousness contrasted with the violence and corruption of humanity on the earth 6:8-13

G 1 The righteousness of Noah 6:8-10

H 1 Noah's finding favor in God's eyes: {8} But Noah found favor in the eyes of the LORD.¹⁴⁰ 6:8

SECTION IV. WHAT BECAME OF NOAH. 6:9 - 9:29

H 2 Noah's righteousness 6:9: {9} These are *the records of the* generations of Noah.¹⁴¹

J 1 "A righteous man": Noah was a righteous man,

¹⁴⁰ Gen. 6:8 - Noah found favor in the eyes of the LORD: Noah was a recipient of God's favor (*chen*, [2580](#)). This is the first occurrence of this word in the OT. It is not accurate to say that *chen* carries the same meaning as "grace" (*charis*, [5485](#)) in the NT. A quick perusal of the uses of *chen* in Genesis reveals that the meaning here is that God found something favorable about Noah.

What was it about Noah that attracted God? The answer is given in Gen. 6:9 – "Noah was a righteous man, blameless in his time; Noah walked with God." So the record here is that because of Noah's godly character, God was favorably impressed with him, and determined to save him and his family out of all the inhabitants of the earth. Noah was a remarkable contrast to the rest of society. God entrusted the preservation of all of humanity upon the shoulders of this godly man and his offspring and their wives. It would be accurate to say that Noah merited God's favor because of his Godly character. That is quite in contrast with the New Testament *charis* ([5485](#)), which speaks of God's extending grace and mercy and forgiveness to us in Jesus, not because of our character, but quite in spite of it! It is when we were sinners, indeed, enemies of God, that He loved us and sacrificed His Son for us (Rom. 5:8, 10). Indeed, Paul made it clear that we New Testament believers in Jesus are saved by grace, through faith, apart from works, so that no one can boast. Works are not the cause of salvation, but the fruit of it (Eph. 2:8-10).

Let it be clear that I am not saying Noah was saved (in an eternal sense) because of his works. But I am saying that he was saved, in a temporal sense, from the judgment of the [Flood](#), because of his character. How was Noah saved in an eternal sense? The Scripture makes it clear: "By faith Noah, being warned by God about things not yet seen, in reverence prepared an ark for the salvation of his household, by which he condemned the world, and became an heir of the righteousness which is according to faith" (Hebrews 11:7).

To take the discussion one step farther back, we might ask the question, "Why did Noah, in complete contrast to the entire human race around him, have a Godly character?" The text does not address that issue. However, using NT theology, we could answer the question this way, "Noah was a Godly man because God graciously gave him a heart to love and follow God." In other words, Noah was one of the [elect](#), and that is why he responded to God and "earned" God's favor (*chen*). That however, is a NT understanding, and should not be read into the content of *chen* in Genesis 6:8.

¹⁴¹ Gen. 6:9 - the generations of Noah: Once again the plural of *tôledâh* ([8435](#)), here in connection with Noah appears, marking a new subject in [Moses'](#) narrative – "what became of Noah." See the previous occurrences in Gen. 2:4; 5:1; this occurrence in Gen. 6:9; followed by more occurrences in Gen. 10:1, 32; 11:10, 27; 25:12, 13, 19; 36:1, 9; 37:2

- J 2 "Blameless in his time": blameless in his time;
- J 3 "Walked with God": Noah walked with God.
- H 3 Noah's offspring: {10} Noah became the father of three sons: 6:10
- J 1 Shem,
- J 2 Ham,
- J 3 and Japheth.
- G 2 The corruption of the earth 6:11-12
- H 1 The corruption and violence of the earth 6:11
- J 1 {11} Now the earth was corrupt¹⁴² in the sight of God,
- J 2 and the earth was filled with violence.
- H 2 The universality of the corruption 6:12
- J 1 {12} God looked on the earth, and behold, it was corrupt;¹⁴³
- J 2 for all flesh had corrupted¹⁴⁴ their way upon the earth.
- G 3 God's communication to Noah 6:13
- H 1 Objective – The termination of all flesh: {13} Then God said to Noah, "The end of all flesh has come before Me;
- H 2 Reason – The filling of the earth with violence: for the earth is filled with violence because of them;
- H 3 Plan – To destroy man along with the earth: and behold, I

¹⁴² Gen. 6:11 - was corrupt: This translates the 3rd Person Singular [Niphal Imperfect](#) of the verb *shâchath'* (7843). Perhaps a more accurate translation might be, "Now the earth was being corrupted" The [Imperfect](#) aspect indicates that the earth was in the process of being corrupted.

¹⁴³ Gen. 6:12 - was corrupt: This translates the 3rd Person Singular [Niphal Perfect](#) of the verb *shâchath'* (7843). The [Perfect](#) aspect indicates the corruption had reached a stage of completeness. It was so bad, God's hand was forced (humanly speaking). There was no other recourse. God had to do something now.

¹⁴⁴ Gen. 6:12 - all flesh had corrupted their way: "had corrupted" translates the [Hifil Perfect](#) 3rd Person Singular of the verb *shâchath'* (7843). All flesh, meaning mankind, had deliberately corrupted themselves, and that corruption had reached a state of completion. That is why a global flood to cleanse the earth was God's only recourse. Yet God, in his grace, had given man 120 years to repent (Gen. 6:3). Outside of Noah's family of eight, no one did so. What a sad commentary on the corruption of the human race!

am about to destroy them with the earth.

E 4 God's commitment to Noah to save him, his family, and representative animals aboard a floating barge. Noah's compliance 6:14-22

G 1 The instructions for the ark 6:14-16

H 1 The materials 6:14

J 1 Building material: {14} "Make for yourself an ark of gopher wood;

J 2 Reinforcement and compartmentalization: you shall make the ark with rooms,

J 3 Water-proofing: and shall cover it inside and out with pitch.

H 2 The dimensions 6:15

J 1 Length – 300 cubits: {15} "This is how you shall make it: the length of the ark three hundred cubits,¹⁴⁵

J 2 Width – 50 cubits: its breadth fifty cubits,

J 3 Height – 30 cubits: and its height thirty cubits.

H 3 Design 6:16

J 1 Window surrounding ark – 1 cubit from top: {16} "You shall make a window for the ark, and finish it to a cubit from the top;

J 2 Door in side: and set the door of the ark in the side of it;

J 3 Three decks: you shall make it with lower, second, and third decks.

G 2 Intent to destroy 6:17

¹⁴⁵ Gen. 6:15 - cubits: [NASB](#) note: "I.e. One cubit equals approx 18 in." [[JTB](#)]: This was a gigantic, three-deck, floating barge. There is no reason to believe the ark was hydrodynamic at the prow and the stern. It would have had square corners. Its God-given design was perfect for maximum stability in tempestuous conditions and maximum volume. It was not designed to go anywhere, but merely to float. In terms Americans can understand, this barge was 450 feet long, 75 feet wide, and 45 feet high. This amounts to 1 ½ NFL football fields in length, excluding the endzones. An NFL field is 160 feet wide, a little more than twice as wide as the ark. No ship until the 19th century exceeded these dimensions! There would be approximately 13 feet of vertical clearance on each deck, enough headroom for juvenile representatives of all species, including dinosaurs. There was approximately 101,250 square feet of floor space. There was enough deck space to house enough sheep-sized animals to equal 55 modern railway stock cars, more than enough room to house representatives from all the Biblical "kinds" plus fodder or feed. It is likely that animals would have gone into a state of hibernation or near hibernation, which would cut down on their consumption of feed and the amount of waste that needed to be removed. (Chores never ended on this barge!!!)

- H 1 Identity of the destroyer – "I, even I!" {17} "Behold, I, even I
- H 2 Nature of the destruction – Flood of water: am bringing the flood of water ¹⁴⁶ upon the earth,
- H 3 Severity of the destruction
 - J 1 All flesh that breathes: to destroy all flesh in which is the breath of life, ¹⁴⁷
 - J 2 Totality: from under heaven;
 - J 3 Universal death of land-based animals: everything that is on the earth shall perish.
- G 3 Promise of covenant: {18} "But I will establish My covenant with you; ¹⁴⁸ 6:18a
- G 4 Instructions 6:18b-21
 - H 1 Preservation of human life: "And you shall enter the ark – you and your sons and your wife, and your sons' wives

¹⁴⁶ Gen. 6:17 - the flood of water: Literally, "the flood of waters." The word for waters, *mayim* (4325) always and only appears in the plural – 584 X in the OT. "The flood" (the noun is prefixed with the article) is a very specialized term – *mabbûl* (3999), "flood," or "deluge." It used only in Genesis (12 X in 11 verses) and Psalms (once), and it *always* refers to the [Great Flood of Noah](#). 6 times it appears in conjunction with the Hebrew word for water, always, as I indicated, appearing in the plural (*mayim*, 4325) – Gen. 6:17; 7:6, 7, 10; 9:11, 15. The rest of the time it appears simply as "the flood" or in instances where no article appears – "flood." The Greek word that translates the Hebrew *mabbûl* (3999) is *kataklysmós* (2627), from which we derive our English word, cataclysm. This Greek word appears but four times in the NT, always referring to [Noah's Flood](#).

¹⁴⁷ Gen. 6:17 - to destroy all flesh in which is the breath of life: God here refers to all air-breathing creatures, both those on land and those that fly in the air. Since this is "the flood of waters," it will not destroy all fish. However the turbidity and the violence of the upheaval will probably destroy most of the fish.

¹⁴⁸ Gen. 6:18 - I shall establish My covenant with you: The word "covenant" is *beriyth* (1285). It is a legal binding covenant, contract, agreement, compact between two parties. This was a unilateral [covenant](#), because God took the initiative to establish it, and because there is no evidence that God expected Noah formally to agree with it. God assumed that Noah would obey. Noah's building of the ark was the outward sign that he trusted in God (see Heb. 11:7). God knew Noah's character. He was a righteous man, blameless in his time, one who walked with God (Gen. 6:9). Most important, "Noah found favor in the eyes of the LORD" (Gen. 6:8). The performance of the terms of the [covenant](#) was incumbent upon God alone. This "[Pre-Flood Covenant](#)" was between God and Noah and his family, and, by implication, all the animal inhabitants that would board the ark. His [covenant](#) was that He, God, would preserve Noah, his family, and the cargo through the catastrophic disaster of the [Great Flood](#). This word "[covenant](#)," *beriyth* (1285), is exceedingly important in the OT. It appears 27 times in Genesis alone.

Later, *after the Flood*, God would institute His "[Flood Covenant](#)" between Himself and all of mankind and all of animal life upon the earth. That binding, unilateral agreement was that He would never again destroy the earth by means of water. Cold and heat, summer and winter, seedtime and harvest would never fail. The sign of that later [covenant](#) was the rainbow, which apparently had never before materialized. God outlined the terms of that [covenant](#) in Genesis 9:9-17. This was an "[Everlasting Covenant](#)." See the notes on "[covenant](#)" at Gen. 15:18 for a fuller description of the meaning of the formation of a [covenant](#). See also notes on the term "[covenant](#)" at Genesis 9:9 and Gen. 21:27. This important word "[covenant](#)," *beriyth* (1285) appears in this book 27 X – in Gen. 6:18; 9:9, 11, 12, 13, 15, 16, 17; 14:13; 15:18; 17:2, 4, 7, 7, 9, 10, 11, 13, 13, 14, 19, 19, 21; 21:27, 32; 26:28; 31:44. See also the Glossary item on the term "[Covenant](#)." See also the "[The Covenants of the Bible](#)."

with you." 6:18b

H 2 Preservation of animal life – Bring the following to keep them alive

J 1 The kinds – Bring two of each animal: {19} "And of every living thing of all flesh, you shall bring two of every *kind* into the ark,¹⁴⁹

J 2 The purpose: to keep *them* alive with you;

J 3 The gender: they shall be male and female.

J 4 The species: {20} "Of the birds after their kind,¹⁵⁰ and of the animals after their kind, of every creeping thing of the ground after its kind,

J 5 The number: two of every *kind* will come to you

J 6 The purpose re-stated: to keep *them* alive.

H 3 Provision – Gather together edible food: {21} "As for you, take for yourself some of all food which is edible, and gather *it* to yourself; and it shall be for food

J 1 For yourselves: for you

J 2 For the animals: and for them."

G 5 Obedience: {22} Thus Noah did; according to all that God had commanded him, so he did.¹⁵¹

D 4 **The Flood:** God's judgment of the totally depraved earth 7:1 - 8:19

E 1 **Preservation:** 7:1-12

G 1 God's instructions to Noah to take aboard the ark representative

¹⁴⁹ Gen. 6:19 - two of every *kind* into the ark: There is no word for "kind" in the Hebrew text here. Noah was to bring two "of every living thing of all flesh" into the ark. As the narrative developed, God brought the animals to Noah. So God determined the fixity of species that would survive. It is not necessary to think that a dog, a wolf, a coyote, and a dingo all had to be represented on the ark. God determined the representatives. All animals today in their diversity were derived from the animals aboard the ark. The word "kind" (*mîyn*, 4327), does not appear in this context until the next verse, Gen. 6:20). However, since the word would appear in the next verse, the editors of the [NASB](#) felt justified in inserting the word here for the sake of clarity in English.

¹⁵⁰ Gen. 6:20 - birds after their kind: Here the word "kind" (*mîyn*, 4327), or "classification" does appear. It is the same word that [Moses](#) used during the Creation account (Gen. 1:11, 12, 21, 24, 25). He used it 3 X in Gen. 6:20, and will use it another 4 X in Gen. 7:14.

¹⁵¹ Gen. 6:20 - according to all that God had commanded him, so he did: [Providentially](#), Noah obeyed God in every detail. Had he not done so, neither the human race nor any animal species would have survived, except for marine animals. Doubtless, Noah was the greatest Conservationist in all of human history!

wildlife 7:1-5

H 1 [Yahweh's](#) command to enter the ark: {1} Then the LORD said to Noah, "Enter the ark, 7:1

J 1 The people: you and all your household,

J 2 The reason: for you *alone* I have seen *to be* righteous¹⁵² before Me in this time.

H 2 [Yahweh's](#) command to take aboard animals 7:2-3

J 1 Of clean animals by sevens – male and his female: {2} "You shall take with you of every clean animal by sevens, a male and his female; 7:2

J 2 Of unclean animals, two – male and his female: and of the animals that are not clean two, a male and his female;

J 3 Of birds by sevens – male and female: {3} also of the birds of the sky, by sevens, male and female, 7:3

J 4 The reason: to keep offspring alive on the face of all the earth

H 3 [Yahweh's](#) explanation 7:4

J 1 Time framework: {4} "For after seven more days,

J 2 Phenomenon: I will send rain on the earth

J 3 Duration: forty days and forty nights;

J 4 Devastation: and I will blot out from the face of the land¹⁵³ every living thing that I have made!"¹⁵⁴

¹⁵² Gen. 7:1 - righteous: The Hebrew adjective *tsaddîyq* (6662), meaning “just,” “righteous,” “guiltless” (simple Hebrew-English dictionary found on [Bibloi 8.0](#)). Isn't it sad that Noah was the only righteous person on the face of the earth? Presumably, Noah had passed on his Godly outlook to the rest of his family, though the text does not state that explicitly. Evidently the rest of Noah's family were Godly enough to serve as starting points for the rest of human history. Neither Noah nor his sons were sinlessly perfect, as the post-[Flood](#) narrative will reveal.

¹⁵³ Gn. 7:4 - land: *erets* (776), which can be translated either “land” or “earth,” depending on the context. It could as easily have been translated “earth” here as “land.”

¹⁵⁴ Gen. 7:4 - and I will blot out from the face of the land every living thing that I have made: This must have pained God greatly to destroy all the humans which He had created in His own likeness and image (Gen. 1:26, 27). But that is not all. He had created all the different animals that moved about on the land and that flew in the air, and He had seen that what He had created was good (Gen. 1:21, 25). He had seen that everything He had created, including man and his habitat and the animals was *very* good (Gen. 1:31). Moreover, He was a God who could feel and extend compassion, not only to mankind, but also to animals (Jonah 4:11). Now all the animals and men, save a small remnant, would be put to death, and His beautiful earth and Garden of Eden would be ravaged beyond

- H 4 Noah's obedience: {5} Noah did according to all that the LORD had commanded him. ¹⁵⁵ 7:5
- G 2 The entry of Noah and wildlife into the ark; the [flood](#) of subterranean and atmospheric water for forty days 7:6-12
 - H 1 Noah's age: {6} Now Noah was six hundred years old when the flood of water came upon the earth. 7:6
 - H 2 The entry of Noah's family 7:7
 - J 1 Noah: {7} Then Noah
 - J 2 Noah's sons: and his sons
 - J 3 Noah's wife: and his wife
 - J 4 His sons wives: and his sons' wives with him entered the ark because of the water of the flood.
 - H 3 The entry of the animals 7:8-9
 - J 1 The categories – clean and unclean animals, of birds and everything that creeps on the ground: {8} Of clean animals and animals that are not clean and birds and everything that creeps on the ground, 7:8
 - J 2 The formation – their entry into the ark by two's, male and female as God commanded Noah: {9} there went into the ark to Noah by twos, male and

recognition, at least for a time. It must have pained God greatly.

¹⁵⁵ Gen. 7:5 - Noah did according to all that the LORD had commanded him: Once again, Noah's complete obedience is underscored (cf. Gen. 6:22). His survival, that of his family, and that of the animal representatives aboard the gigantic, three-story barge, was totally dependent on his obedience, motivated by his implicit faith in God and what God had said. I do not believe Noah had ever seen rain before. I do not believe he had ever seen a flood. And he certainly had never before seen a global flood. Yet he walked with God, and he trusted God (Gen. 6:9).

We read the Divine commentary on Noah in Heb. 11:7, "By faith Noah, being warned *by God* about things not yet seen, in reverence prepared an ark for the salvation of his household, by which he condemned the world, and became an heir of the righteousness which is according to faith."

This is truly remarkable. You cannot exist in eternity without faith in God. Faith means trust. I am certain that Noah conveyed God's warning to many of his neighbors as he and his sons built this prodigious barge. Perhaps he even employed some of them to help. But his explanation of why he was building this monstrous boat would have made them shake their heads and laugh at him, often to his face. They did not trust in Noah's God, and they did not believe what Noah's God had said. And they would perish in the [Flood](#). And they will all perish forever in the [Lake of Fire and Brimstone](#). Why? Because they did not trust God. Trust is the one commodity that God requires of us humans if we are to have fellowship with Him, both in the now and in the hereafter (Heb. 11:6). Do you, the reader, trust in God? And do you trust in Jesus, the [Messiah](#), the only way to God (John 14:6)? Your eternal survival depends on it! One final truth: The reality of your faith in God will be vindicated by your obedience to Him. That is the message of James 2:14-26. And it is the message of Genesis 6-8.

female,¹⁵⁶ as God had commanded Noah. 7:9

H 4 The chronology of the flood waters 7:10-11a

J 1 After seven days: *{10}* It came about after the seven days,¹⁵⁷ that the water of the flood came upon the earth. 7:10

J 2 In the 600th year of Noah's life: *{11}* In the six hundredth year of Noah's life, 7:11

J 3 In the 2nd month: in the second month,

J 4 On the 17th day of the month: on the seventeenth day of the month,¹⁵⁸ on the same day

H 5 The description of the cataclysm 7:11b

J 1 Subterranean eruptions: all the fountains of the great deep burst open,¹⁵⁹

J 2 Heavenly torrents: and the floodgates of the sky were

¹⁵⁶ Gen. 7:9 - male and female: Man in his utter arrogance and contempt for God blurs maleness and femaleness. God knew what He was doing when He created both animals and man male and female. When we defy God's order of creation, we will only reap sadness and suffering, futility and judgment.

¹⁵⁷ Gen. 7:10 - after seven days: For one week Noah, his family, and his menagerie existed in solitude aboard the ark. The week is symbolic of God's ordered time table, which man has never successfully altered. This gave the humans and the animals a time of peace and quiet to get everything in order and prepare for the imminent catastrophe. When the deluge began, every human and every animal aboard the ark would know about it. The week of quiet was important to establish an order and a schedule and work out feeding and waste removal difficulties.

I would imagine that people on the outside would gather and knock on the ark and howl with laughter and mockery at the imprisoned zoo. But at the end of the week, when the rain began to descend in unabated torrents, they would quickly change their tune and begin to plead for assistance from the inhabitants. But it would be too late.

This verse marks the first of a number of time markers in the [Flood](#) account. For further reference, see "[A Chronology of the Great Flood](#)."

¹⁵⁸ Gen. 7:11 - on the seventeenth day of the month: The catastrophic, global [Flood of Noah](#) is an historically and carefully documented event. See "[A Chronology of the Great Flood](#)." The signs of the [Great Flood](#) exist everywhere. All over the earth there are layers of sedimentary rock infused with billions of fossils.

There are [marine fossils at the top of Mt. Everest](#)! This was truly a [global flood](#). [Evolutionists](#) routinely ignore the evidence of this global catastrophe because it would invalidate their [uniformitarian](#) theory of cosmology over vast spans of time. Here is the standard non-biblical theory of the geologic activity [explaining marine fossils on Everest](#). That theory consists of "[plate tectonics](#)," A far more Biblical view, and one which far better explains associated phenomena, is the theory of "[hydroplate tectonics](#)."

¹⁵⁹ Gen. 7:11 - fountains of the great deep burst open: In the pre-[Flood](#) earth, there were enormous reservoirs of subterranean water. God triggered their release above the surface. This was the primary source of the water that flooded the entire earth. Walt Brown has provided online an excellent overview of his [hydroplate model](#) that effectively explains the geologic forces at work during [Noah's Flood](#).

opened.¹⁶⁰

J 3 Forty days' rainfall: {12} The rain fell upon the earth for forty days and forty nights.¹⁶¹ 7:12

E 2 **Catastrophe:** The prevailing of the waters upon the earth for 150 days; the death of all living 7:13-24

G 1 The bill of lading on the same day 7:13-16

H 1 The humans who entered – Noah, Shem, Ham, Japheth, Noah's wife, sons' wives: {13} On the very same day Noah and Shem and Ham and Japheth, the sons of Noah, and Noah's wife and the three wives of his sons with them, entered the ark, 7:13

H 2 The animals who entered 7:14

J 1 Every beast after its kind: {14} they and every beast after its kind,

J 2 Cattle after their kind: and all the cattle after their kind,

J 3 Every creeping thing after its kind: and every creeping thing that creeps on the earth after its kind,

J 4 Every bird after its kind: and every bird after its kind,

¹⁶⁰ Gen. 7:11 - the floodgates of the sky were opened: Literally, “the floodgates of the heavens (*shamayim*, [8064](#)) were opened.” This plural noun appears only in the plural in the OT. In the first eleven chapters of Genesis *shamayim* ([8064](#)) appears in Gen. 1:1, 8, 9, 14, 15, 17, 20, 26, 28, 30; 2:1, 4, 19, 20; 6:7, 17; 7:3, 11, 19, 23; 8:2; 11:4. The language [Moses](#) used here does not conform well with present-day meteorology and hydrology. He did not use the word “cloud” (*anan*, [6051](#)) at all in his discussion of the [Flood](#). It is my belief that he did not do so precisely because there were no clouds yet. In fact, *anan* ([6051](#)) (cloud) appears only three times in Genesis, all *after* the [Flood](#), and all in connection with the (rain) “bow” that God inaugurated as a sign of His faithfulness (Gen. 9:13, 14, 16). These facts are consistent with the [Water Vapor Canopy](#) theory – that the antediluvian earth was surrounded by an enormous, protective water vapor canopy. The entire earth was, as it were, enclosed in a gigantic “greenhouse” that resulted in fairly uniform temperatures around the globe. That is consistent with [tropical forests](#) and [tropical animal remains](#) discovered within the Arctic Circle. When God opened up the “floodgates of the heavens,” he collapsed the [Water Vapor Canopy](#). This provided enough water to rain steadily for forty days and forty nights. In the present cloud system on earth, there is not enough water stored to rain all over the globe continuously for forty days and nights. For a discussion of frozen mammoths found in permafrost, see Brown’s [visual](#) and [cartographic](#) display. See also the present author’s discussion, “[The Water Vapor Canopy Theory](#).”

¹⁶¹ Gen. 7:12 - forty days and forty nights: See “[A Chronology of the Great Flood](#).” There is not enough water in the present day cloud system to rain continuously all over the globe for forty days and forty nights. This again demonstrates that the antediluvian [water vapor canopy](#) is the model that best fits both the Biblical evidence and scientific evidence. According to Dr. Henry M. Morris, [The Genesis Record](#), p. 191,

A worldwide rain lasting forty days would be quite impossible under present atmospheric conditions; so this phenomenon required an utterly different source of atmospheric waters than now obtains. This we have already seen to be the “waters above the firmament,” the vast thermal blanket of invisible water vapor that maintained the greenhouse effect in the antediluvian world. These waters somehow were to condense and fall on the earth.

- J 5 All sorts of birds: all sorts of birds.
- H 3 Their entry to Noah in the ark 7:15-16a
 - J 1 By two's: {15} So they went into the ark to Noah, by twos ¹⁶² 7:15
 - J 2 All flesh: of all flesh in which was the breath of life.
 - J 3 Male and female of all flesh: {16} Those that entered, male and female of all flesh, entered 7:16
 - J 4 As God had commanded: as God had commanded him;
- H 4 [Yahweh's](#) closing [the door] behind Noah: and the LORD closed *it* behind him. 7:16b
- G 2 The arrival of the flood 7:17-20
 - H 1 Its onslaught for 40 days: {17} Then the flood came upon the earth for forty days, ¹⁶³ 7:17
 - H 2 Its increase: and the water increased
 - H 3 Its lifting up the ark above the earth: and lifted up the ark, so that it rose above the earth.
 - H 4 The waters' prevailing and increasing greatly upon the earth: {18} The water prevailed and increased greatly upon the earth, 7:18
 - H 5 The ark's floating upon the surface: and the ark floated on the surface of the water.
 - H 6 The waters' prevailing more and more upon the earth: {19} The water prevailed more and more upon the earth, 7:19a
 - H 7 The waters' covering of the mountains 7:19b-20
 - J 1 The covering of all the mountains: so that all the high mountains everywhere under the heavens were

¹⁶² Gen. 7:14 - So they went into the ark to Noah, by twos: God has placed within animals the sense to seek refuge in the face of danger. Birds, and even butterflies, migrate away from approaching cold. God selectively drew specific animals by pairs into the ark. That, of course, was a miracle. But the entire event of the [Flood](#) was supernatural. One cannot admit the existence of God without ascribing to Him the freedom to alter the laws of nature as He sees fit. Of course, to the faithless Bible critic, miracles are anathema. [Uniformitarians](#) decry a God who steps into nature and does things of an extraordinary nature. That is why critics label Genesis 1-11, including this passage, [myth](#). But the Bible presents it as sober history.

¹⁶³ Gen. 7:17 - forty days: See "[A Chronology of the Great Flood](#)."

covered. ¹⁶⁴ 7:19b

J 2 The waters' prevailing: {20} The water prevailed fifteen cubits higher, ¹⁶⁵ 7:20a

J 3 The end result: and the mountains were covered. 7:20b

G 3 The totality of destruction: all life 7:21-24

H 1 The perishing of all flesh that moved on the earth 7:21-22

J 1 Birds: {21} All flesh that moved on the earth perished, ¹⁶⁶ birds 7:21

J 2 Cattle: and cattle

J 3 Beasts: and beasts

J 4 Every swarming thing swarming on the earth: and every swarming thing that swarms upon the earth,

J 5 All mankind: and all mankind;

J 6 Of all that was on the dry land: {22} of all that was on the dry land, 7:22

J 7 Of all that breathed: all in whose nostrils was the breath of the spirit of life, died.

H 2 God as the executor of death – His blotting out every living thing on the face of the earth 7:23

J 1 Man: {23} Thus He blotted out every living thing that was upon the face of the land, from man

¹⁶⁴ Gen. 7:19b-20 - so that all the high mountains everywhere under the heavens were covered: Note how [Moses](#) did everything grammatically possible to assure the readers that the [Flood](#) was global in scope (emphasis mine): (1) The **mountains** were covered. (2) The **high** mountains were covered. (3) **All** the high mountains were covered. (4) All the high mountains **everywhere** were covered. (5) All the high mountains everywhere **under the heavens** were covered. (6) The water prevailed **fifteen cubits higher**. (7) And **the mountains were covered**.

¹⁶⁵ Gen. 7:20 - fifteen cubits higher: Assuming an eighteen-inch cubit, the flood waters exceeded the height of the highest mountains at the time of the [flood](#) by 22.5 feet. Why that height? So that the three-deck, covered barge could float with sufficient clearance over the highest of the mountains without running aground. In that event, monstrous waves could have smashed the ark to pieces. With adequate clearance, the ark was free to float its inhabitants to safety.

¹⁶⁶ Gen. 7:21 - All flesh that moved on the earth perished: This is another way of stating the global extent of the [Flood](#). There was no living creature that moved upon land or that flew in the air that could possibly withstand a [flood](#) that prevailed upon the earth in excess of six months, not even counting the abatement period. A great many fish and larger marine life such as whales would have perished in the roiling sediment. Yet some would have survived.

- J 2 Animals: to animals
 - J 3 Creeping things: to creeping things
 - J 4 Birds of the sky: and to birds of the sky, and they were blotted out from the earth;
 - H 3 The exception to destruction – Noah and those with him in the ark: and only Noah was left, together with those that were with him in the ark.
 - H 4 The prevailing of the water upon the earth 150 days: {24} The water prevailed upon the earth one hundred and fifty days. ¹⁶⁷ 7:24
- E 3 **Abatement** 8:1-12
- G 1 The flood abates; the ark rests on the mountains of Ararat 8:1-5
 - H 1 God's remembrance: {1} But God remembered 8:1a
 - J 1 Of Noah: Noah
 - J 2 Of livestock: and all the beasts and all the cattle that were with him in the ark;
 - H 2 God's activity 8:1b-2
 - J 1 God's causing a wind to pass over the earth, causing the water to subside: and God caused a wind ¹⁶⁸ to pass over the earth, and the water subsided. 8:1b
 - J 2 His closing of the fountains of the deep: {2} Also the fountains of the deep ¹⁶⁹ 8:2a
 - J 3 His closing of the floodgates of the heavens: and the floodgates of the sky were closed, 8:2b
 - J 4 The result – the restraining of the rain from the

¹⁶⁷ Gen. 7:24 - the water prevailed upon the earth one hundred and fifty days: This was the total amount of time the waters rose and covered the tops of the highest mountains. This figure includes the initial forty-day onslaught of continual rain (Gen. 7:4, 12, 17). See "[A Chronology of the Great Flood](#)."

¹⁶⁸ Gen. 8:1 - God caused a wind to pass over the earth: God was at work altering the atmospheric conditions to achieve evaporation of water. Post-[Flood](#) conditions gradually settled into an equilibrium such as that which we experience today.

¹⁶⁹ Gen. 8:2 - foundations of the deep ... were closed: The subterranean water source was prevented from replenishing the now evaporating water on the surface of the earth.

heavens: and the rain from the sky was restrained;¹⁷⁰

H 3 The results 8:3-5

- J 1 At the end of the 150 days, the water began to recede steadily: {3} and the water receded steadily from the earth, and at the end of one hundred and fifty days¹⁷¹ the water decreased. 8:3
- J 2 The resting of the ark on the mountains of Ararat on the 17th day of the 7th month: {4} In the seventh month, on the seventeenth day of the month, the ark rested upon the mountains of Ararat.¹⁷² 8:4
- J 3 The decreasing of the waters so that the mountain tops were visible on the 1st day of the 10th month:
- K1 Water decreases: {5} The water decreased steadily¹⁷³ until the tenth month;
- K2 Mountain tops become visible: in the tenth month, on the first day of the month,¹⁷⁴ the tops of the mountains became visible. 8:5

¹⁷⁰ Gen. 8:2 - rain from the sky was restrained: The non-stop deluge from, most likely, the [water vapor canopy](#), was completed after forty days. However, there seems now to have been different atmospheric conditions. So even after the forty days, periodic, perhaps frequent rain came down as evaporation also took place. But torrential rains subsided at this point by an act of God.

¹⁷¹ Gen. 8:3 - one hundred and fifty days: See "[A Chronology of the Great Flood.](#)"

¹⁷² Gen. 8:4 - mountains of Ararat: Keep in mind that, though the ark has rested on the mountains of Ararat, there is still a depth of some 20 odd feet covering the adjacent mountains. That is why mountain tops are not visible for an additional 2½ months. Note that the text specifies plural mountains, not just one mountain. It is difficult to pinpoint precisely where the ark finally grounded. Presumably it was on a level enough site not to endanger its disembarking occupants by tipping.

¹⁷³ Gen. 8:5 - The water decreased steadily: Note that this process is caused as much by orogeny ("mountain and continent building") as it is by valleys and ocean basins sinking down. Psalm 104:5-9 describes this process. God used some mechanism to deepen the ocean canyons and uplift the land masses. Some argue that the early verses of Psalm 104 are describing Creation, not the [Flood](#). I argue that God used the same process in both instances, for the earth as originally created on Day One was covered with water (Gen. 1:2, 9). The process of raising up land masses and sinking down ocean canyons would have been the same in Creation as it was in delivering the earth from the waters of [Noah's Flood](#). In Creation, that process would have been telescoped into one day. Here, because there was precious cargo aboard the ark, it had to be much more gradual. Most geologists assume plate tectonics have been at work over millions of years. But I believe they are wrong. The [Flood](#) occurred a mere 4500 years ago, in round numbers. Walt Brown assumes a [hydroplate theory](#) that fits in with Biblical evidence. He describes the forces at work to cause the [Flood](#) and to cause the land masses and mountain ranges to lift upwards afterwards. His theory is much more credible than that of uniformitarian geologists who espouse plate tectonics. See his online book, [In the Beginning: Compelling Evidence for Creation and the Flood](#). See in particular the section beginning at "[Part II: Fountains of the Great Deep.](#)" In this section he discusses the forces at work which caused land masses to reappear above sea level.

¹⁷⁴ Gen. 8:5 - first day of the month: See "[A Chronology of the Great Flood.](#)"

- G 2 Noah's testing of conditions by means of birds 8:6-12
 - H 1 His sending out a raven after 40 days 8:6-7
 - J 1 Noah's opening the window and sending out a raven 8:6-7a
 - K1 His opening of the window: {6} Then it came about at the end of forty days,¹⁷⁵ that Noah opened the window of the ark which he had made; 8:6
 - K2 His sending out a raven: {7} and he sent out a raven, 8:7a
 - J 2 The raven's continual flight until the water on the earth had dried up: and it flew here and there until the water was dried up from the earth. 8:7b
 - H 2 His sending out a dove 8:8-12
 - J 1 The return of the dove to the ark, finding no resting place 8:8-9
 - K1 Noah's sending out a dove: {8} Then he sent out a dove from him, to see if the water was abated from the face of the land; 8:8
 - K2 The futile search: {9} but the dove found no resting place for the sole of her foot, 8:9a
 - K3 The return of the dove: so she returned to him into the ark, 8:9b
 - K4 The reason given: for the water was on the surface of all the earth. 8:9c
 - K5 The action of Noah: Then he put out his hand and took her, and brought her into the ark to himself. 8:9d
 - J 2 The second return of the dove 7 days later with an olive leaf 8:10-11
 - K1 Noah's wait: {10} So he waited yet another seven days; 8:10a
 - K2 The renewed expedition: and again he sent out the dove from the ark. 8:10b

¹⁷⁵ Gen. 8:6 - forty days: See "[A Chronology of the Great Flood.](#)"

- K3 The return of the dove: {11} The dove came to him toward evening, 8:11a
- K4 The presence of vegetation: and behold, in her beak was a freshly picked olive leaf. 8:11b
- K5 The knowledge of Noah: So Noah knew that the water was abated from the earth. 8:11c
- J 3 The dove's third mission 7 days later – it's failure to return: {12} Then he waited yet another seven days, and sent out the dove; but she did not return to him again. 8:12
- E 4 **Exit:** The exit of Noah and his menagerie from the ark at the command of God 8:13-19
 - G 1 The chronology 8:13-14
 - H 1 The water's abatement on the 601st year, 1st month, 1st day 8:13
 - J 1 The time of the event: {13} Now it came about in the six hundred and first year, in the first *month*, on the first of the month,¹⁷⁶
 - J 2 The status of the earth: the water was dried up from the earth.
 - J 3 Noah's removal of the covering: Then Noah removed the covering of the ark,
 - J 4 His observation of the water's departure: and looked, and behold, the surface of the ground was dried up.
 - H 2 The ground's complete drying: {14} In the second month, on the twenty-seventh day¹⁷⁷ of the month, the earth was dry. 8:14
 - G 2 God's command to Noah 8:15-17
 - H 1 That humans should exit: {15} Then God spoke to Noah, saying, {16} "Go out of the ark, you and your wife and your sons and your sons' wives with you. 8:15-16
 - H 2 That animals should exit: {17} "Bring out with you every living thing of all flesh that is with you, 8:17

¹⁷⁶ Gen. 8:13 - first of the month: See "[A Chronology of the Great Flood.](#)"

¹⁷⁷ Gen. 8:15 - the twenty-seventh day: This marks the final time marker of the Flood. See "[A Chronology of the Great Flood.](#)"

- J 1 birds
- J 2 and animals
- J 3 and every creeping thing that creeps on the earth,
- H 3 That the animals should thus be able to multiply abundantly: that they may breed abundantly on the earth, and be fruitful and multiply on the earth."

G 3 Noah's obedience 8:18-19

- H 1 The exit of the humans: {18} So Noah went out, and his sons and his wife and his sons' wives with him. 8:18
- H 2 The exit of the animals: {19} Every beast, every creeping thing, and every bird, everything that moves on the earth, went out by their families from the ark. 8:19

B 2 The Blessing of Repopulation Ruined by Total Rebellion Judged By Universal Dispersion 8:20 - 11:9

C 1 **The New Beginning:** God's *blessing*, commissioning and covenant with Noah 8:20 - 9:19

D 1 Noah's offering to [Yahweh](#); [Yahweh's](#) resolve not to curse the ground nor destroy all living 8:20-22

E 1 Noah's building of an altar to [Yahweh](#): {20} Then Noah built an altar to the LORD, 8:20a

E 2 Noah's offerings upon the altar 8:20b

G 1 and took of every clean animal

G 2 and of every clean bird

G 3 and offered burnt offerings on the altar.

E 3 [Yahweh's](#) response to Noah's offering 8:21-22

G 1 His smelling of the aroma of the burnt offerings: {21} The LORD smelled the soothing aroma; 8:21

G 2 His saying to Himself

H 1 His resolve concerning the ground: and the LORD said to Himself, "I will never again curse the ground on account of man,

H 2 His reason: "for the intent of man's heart is evil from his youth

- H 3 His resolve against total destruction: "and I will never again destroy every living thing, as I have done."
- G 3 His assurance of regular cycles without disruption 8:22
 - H 1 The duration of His assurance: {22} "While the earth remains,
 - H 2 The cycles to continue without cessation:
 - J 1 Seedtime and harvest,¹⁷⁸
 - J 2 And cold and heat,
 - J 3 And summer and winter,
 - J 4 And day and night Shall not cease."
- D 2 God's *blessing* of Noah and sons; His commission to repopulate the earth 9:1-7
 - E 1 God's **blessing** of Noah and his sons: {1} And God blessed Noah and his sons and said to them, 9:1a
 - E 2 God's **commissioning** of Noah and his sons 9:1b
 - G 1 "Be fruitful¹⁷⁹
 - G 2 and multiply,
 - G 3 and fill the earth.
 - E 3 God's **provision** for Noah and his sons 9:2-4
 - G 1 **Protection:** {2} "The fear of you and the terror of you¹⁸⁰ 9:2

¹⁷⁸ Gen. 8:22 - seedtime and harvest, and cold and heat, and summer and winter ... shall not cease. It is my understanding that, assuming the [Water Vapor Canopy Theory](#), these three couplets had not heretofore existed. In the antediluvian world there were no distinguishable seasons, differentiated by temperature, called summer and winter. With the greenhouse effect of the [Water Vapor Canopy](#), there had been fairly uniform temperatures around the globe. There were no global ice caps, there was no snow, there was no rain, and there were no seasons. It is also possible that there was no tilt in the earth's axis, but I know of no Scriptures which hint at that. In the Post [Flood](#) era, all that would change. There would now be distinct seasons of cold and heat of growing and harvesting. The Post-[Flood](#) world was greatly different than the Pre-[Flood](#) world. Man's life expectancy would shrink dramatically.

¹⁷⁹ Gen. 9:1 - Be fruitful and multiply, and fill the earth: This repeated God's original command to Adam in the pristine, pre-sin, pre-Flood earth (Gen. 1:28). God would repeat this command in Gen. 9:7.

¹⁸⁰ Gen. 9:2 - The fear of you and the terror you: Previously there had been a harmonious relationship between man and animals. I believe all of mankind were vegetarians. Now because of the altered hydrological cycle due to the collapse of the [Water Vapor Canopy](#), the earth was no longer a global terrarium. There would no longer be a global spread of vegetation. Now deserts would emerge, and winter would arise, and crops would not grow. Man would be forced to start eating meat (Gen. 9:3-4). Likewise, certain animals would become carnivorous. To stop animals from eating man, God placed an unnatural fear of man into the animal kingdom.

H 1 Every beast of the land: will be on every beast of the earth¹⁸¹

H 2 Every fowl of the heavens: and on every bird of the sky;¹⁸²

H 3 Every “ground creeper”: with everything that creeps on the ground,¹⁸³

H 4 Every fish of the sea: and all the fish of the sea,

G 2 **Authority:** into your hand they are given.¹⁸⁴

G 3 **Sustenance**¹⁸⁵ 9:3-4

H 1 Totality: {3} "Every moving thing that is alive shall be food for you;¹⁸⁶ 9:3

H 2 Similarity: I give all to you, as *I gave* the green plant.

H 3 Restriction: {4} "Only you shall not eat flesh with its

¹⁸¹ Gen. 9:2 - earth: earth/land (*erets*, [776](#)).

¹⁸² Gen. 9:2 - sky: heavens (*shamayim*, [8064](#)).

¹⁸³ Gen. 9:2 - ground: ground/soil (*adamah*, [127](#)).

¹⁸⁴ Gen. 9:2 - into your hand they are given: God invests man with complete authority over all species of animals. This is an extension of the authority that God originally gave to man at creation (Gen. 1:26-28). However, there was now a qualitative difference. God immediately hereafter gave man the right to kill animals and eat them. This was evidently unheard of prior to this time. Man had killed animals for burnt offerings (Gen. 4:4), but not, evidently, for food.

¹⁸⁵ Gen. 9:3-4 title - sustenance: A summary – Man would now be able to eat animals for food, but he must respect the life principle (blood) in all living beings.

¹⁸⁶ Gen. 9:3 - food for you: Man had previously been only vegetarian. Now he would become carnivorous as well. Evidently certain animals also now became carnivorous. This is a fundamental change in the nature of things. What brought about this change? [Moses](#) does not tell us, but my conjecture is as follows. The great [flood](#) and the event(s) which caused it caused a fundamental change in the biosphere. We know from scientific research that fertile [tropical forests](#) once existed above the Arctic circle. Now there is permafrost. Evidently the entire globe, before the [Flood](#), had been like a gigantic terrarium. There had been uniform temperatures around the globe and an abundance of vegetation. This global vegetation was able to sustain the human race and all animal species. With the climactic changes that ensued because of God’s fundamental transformation of the biosphere, including the atmosphere, there would be a shortage of vegetation. For man and animals to survive everywhere on the globe, man, and evidently some animals, would now be forced to eat meat as well as vegetation in order to survive. Organizations such as [PETA](#) (People for the Ethical Treatment of Animals) are completely out of line for insisting that man cannot eat animals. They are morally wrong in their insistence, for they defy the authority of the God who made everything. There is no excuse for man mistreating animals. Man is to be a benevolent ruler over animals. But that benevolence does not deprive him of the right to kill animals for food.

life,¹⁸⁷ *that is*, its blood. 9:4

E 4 God's value of human life 9:5

- G 1 God's premium on human life: {5} "Surely I will require your lifeblood;¹⁸⁸
- G 2 His holding every animal accountable for taking human life: from every beast I will require it.¹⁸⁹
- G 3 His holding man accountable for taking human life: And from *every man*, from every man's brother I will require the life of man.¹⁹⁰

E 5 God's legislation enforcing the sanctity of human life 9:6

- G 1 The target of the law: {6} "Whoever sheds man's blood,

¹⁸⁷ Gen. 9:4 - you shall not eat flesh with its life, *that is*, its blood: "Life" translates *nephesh*, [5315](#). "Blood" translates *dam*, [1818](#). In the [NASB](#) *nephesh* is translated as some form of "soul" 251X, and as some form of "life" 181X. We think of a soul as being intangible and incorporeal. Life or life force is, in a sense, intangible, but it is housed in a body. The life force is sustained by means of blood (*dam*). Drain the blood out of an animal and the animal ceases to live. So Noah and all mankind were forbidden to eat blood because it was the life-force of the animal. Even in the eating of animals, there is a high respect to be paid to life. Again, animal "rights" activists are completely mistaken when they decree that it is immoral for man to eat animals. The doctrine that man cannot eat meat is the codification of rebellion against God. Paul calls it one of the doctrines of demons (1 Tim. 4:1-5). As our world approaches the time of the great [apostasy](#) (2 Thess. 2:3), that particular doctrine of demons will gain more and more traction.

¹⁸⁸ Gen. 9:5 - Surely I will require your lifeblood: This compounded last word translates two words in Hebrew, each with 2nd Person plural possessive pronouns suffixed, and the second word with the preposition *lamedh*, signifying "for" or "to" being prefixed. So the clause reads literally this way: "Surely y o u r blood (*dâm*, [1818](#)) for y o u r lives (*nephesh*, [5315](#)) I will require." What that means is spelled out in the next clauses.

¹⁸⁹ Gen. 9:5 - from every beast I will require it: God thus makes a quantum distinction between man and animals. Men are permitted by God to take the lives of animals for food. But animals are not permitted to kill men. Any animal who kills a man must be put to death.

¹⁹⁰ Gen. 9:5 - from every man's brother I will require the life of man: God places such a high value on human life that any man who kills another man must himself be put to death. In the case of animals, it was understood that an animal who took a human life was to be put to death. So it was understood with reference to man shedding human blood. But because this latter might be more difficult to carry out, in Gen. 9:6 God explicitly spelled out the policy He had already stated in 9:5. Many people in the United States and in other western countries *appear* to place a high value on human life. Yet they do everything they can to keep alive those who take the lives of others. Thus, they bend over backwards to prevent capital punishment. In states where capital punishment is legal, murderers on death row go many years before they are put to death, if ever.

But these practices by liberals in western societies actually demean the value of human life. They cheapen society's view of life. Capital punishment, consistently and swiftly and publicly carried out for all premeditated murders would sharply reduce murders. It would serve as a huge deterrent. The Scriptures accurately define premeditated murder (Numbers 35).

I read of a man charged with murder in Kansas back in the 1940's. Within forty-five days the trial had taken place and the murderer was hanged. That is a deterrent. People who drive automobiles stay in their lane because they know if they drive in the oncoming lane, they will suffer a horrible crash and will likely die. The law of oncoming traffic is a huge deterrent because it works every time. Our laws are so riddled with exceptions, and justice is delayed so long that the deterrent benefit is severely minimized. And life is cheap. We bless the killing of unborn children and call it a constitutional right. May God have mercy on America!

- G 2 The substance of the law: By man his blood shall be shed, ¹⁹¹
- G 3 The reason for the law: For in the image of God He made man. ¹⁹²
- E 6 God's reaffirmation of his Pro-Life / Pro-Reproduction Stance! 9:7
 - G 1 {7} "As for you, be fruitful
 - G 2 and multiply;
 - G 3 Populate the earth abundantly ¹⁹³
 - G 4 and multiply in it."
- D 3 God's covenant with Noah and descendants, and with wildlife not to destroy the earth by flood, signified by the rainbow 9:8-17
 - E 1 God's intention to establish His covenant 9:8-10
 - G 1 With Noah, his sons and their seed 9:8, 9
 - H 1 His speech to Noah and his sons: {8} Then God spoke to Noah and to his sons with him, saying, 9:8
 - H 2 His covenant with them and their descendants: {9} "Now behold, I Myself do establish My covenant ¹⁹⁴ with you,

¹⁹¹ Gen. 9:6 - Whoever sheds man's blood, by man shall his blood be shed: Here is God's moral, legal law. Premeditated murder (as opposed to accidental manslaughter – Numbers 35) must always be punished by the death of the perpetrator. That places a high value on human life. Failing to execute the murderer places a low value on human life.

¹⁹² Gen. 9:6 - for in the image of God He made man: The reason the capital punishment for premeditated murder is to be carried out consistently is that man is of inestimable value. Man, unlike any other created being, was created in God's image and likeness. Liberals in today's western societies decry capital punishment precisely because they do not believe man was created by God in His own likeness and image. They believe in the [myth of evolution](#), that man has accidentally arrived by random chance through mutation monitored by survival of the fittest. That cheapens human life. It is no wonder that modern men, even in many church affiliations, abhor capital punishment. They have placed a low value on human life because they believe in [evolution](#). Therefore they do not wish to institute the God-mandated policy that would elevate the value of human life and serve as a deterrent. All humans who, with pre-meditation, take the life of another, ought to be put death as swiftly as possible. The executions ought to be public to serve as a deterrent.

¹⁹³ Gen. 9:7 - Populate the earth abundantly: The English words "populate" and "abundantly" translate the single Hebrew [Qal Imperative](#) verb *shârats'* (8317), which means to swarm or teem or breed abundantly. Other uses of this word in Genesis refer to abundant animal reproduction: Gen. 1:20, 21; 7:21; 8:17.

¹⁹⁴ Gen. 9:9 - establish My covenant: God is in the [covenant](#)-making business. "[Covenant](#)" translates *berîyth'* (1285). This word appears 27 times in Genesis. It first appeared in Gen. 6:18, when God made a [covenant](#) with Noah and His family to preserve them safely aboard the ark. It now appears repeatedly in this context. God's [covenant](#) never again to flood the entire earth appears here in this context in Gen. 9:9, 11, 12, 13, 15, 16, 17. A *berîyth'* is a formal legal covenant, treaty, or compact between two parties. Here God instituted His covenant between Himself and Noah, and Noah's descendants, and all of the living creatures upon earth. See also substantive footnotes on "covenant" at Gen. 6:18; 15:18; 21:27.

and with your descendants after you; 9:9

G 2 With all animals {10} and with every living creature ¹⁹⁵ that is with you, 9:10

H 1 The fowls: the birds,

H 2 The cattle: the cattle,

H 3 Every living thing exiting the ark: and every beast of the earth ¹⁹⁶ with you; of all that comes out of the ark,

H 4 Every living thing of the land / earth: even every beast of the earth.

E 2 The substance of God's covenant 9:11

G 1 His resolve: {11} "I establish My covenant with you;

G 2 His protection

H 1 Of all humanity: and all flesh ¹⁹⁷ shall never again be cut off by the water of the flood,

H 2 Of the land / earth: neither shall there again be a flood ¹⁹⁸

One, at least, of God's [covenants](#) was bi-lateral, in which God promised to do something *if* those with whom He covenanted would do certain things. This was God's [covenant](#) with [Israel](#) at Mount Sinai, brokered by [Moses](#) (Exod. 19-40). We sometimes call this the [Mosaic Covenant](#). God would bless and protect [Israel](#) *if* they would obey him, but He would bring curses upon them if they *disobeyed* (see in particular Deut. 27-28).

Other covenants were unilateral, in which God unilaterally promised to do something. This covenant with Noah and his sons was unilateral. God simply guaranteed it would happen. The rainbow was the sign of the covenant (9:13). I call this the [Flood Covenant](#). Sometimes it is called the Noahic Covenant. This was an [everlasting](#), or eternal covenant. God would never again destroy the entire earth with a [Flood](#). Other unilateral, eternal covenants include God's covenants with [Abraham](#) (Gen. 15:7-21), [David](#) (2 Sam. 7:11-16; 1 Chron. 17:11-14; Ps. 89:3-4, 27-29, 34-37), and His [New Covenant](#) with [Israel](#) (Jer. 31:31-37). [The [Church](#) is graciously brought in under the salvatory aspects (not the territorial aspects) of the [New Covenant](#) (Heb. 8:6-13; 9:11-28).] For additional information, see the article, "[Everlasting Covenants of the Bible](#)." See also the Glossary item on the term "[Covenant](#)." See also "[The Covenants of the Bible](#)."

¹⁹⁵ Gen. 9:10 - creature: Translates *nephesh* ([5315](#)), soul / life. See the footnote on *nephesh* at 9:4.

¹⁹⁶ Gen. 9:10 - beast of the earth: "beast" translates *chayyah* ([2421](#)) – that which has life; "earth" translates *erets* ([776](#)) – land / earth. "Living thing" (*chayyah*) of the "earth" (*erets*) is repeated at the end of 9:10.

¹⁹⁷ Gen. 9:11 - all flesh: Heb. *bâsâr'* ([1320](#)), probably here referring not only to all *human* flesh, but also to all *animal* flesh. See similar uses at Gen. 6:17; 7:21; 9:15, 16, 17.

¹⁹⁸ Gen. 9:11 - flood: This of course refers to the great [flood](#), known in the O. T. as the *mabbûl* ([3999](#)), in the N.T. as the *kataklusmós* ([2627](#)). God was not saying there would never again be a flood. Rather, He promised there would never be a cataclysmic flood that would destroy the entire earth! *Mabbûl* appears 13 times in 11 verses in the OT:

Genesis 6:17. "Behold, I, even I am bringing the **flood** of water upon the earth, to destroy all flesh in which is the breath of life, from under heaven; everything that is on the earth shall perish.

to destroy the earth.”¹⁹⁹

E 3 The sign of the covenant 9:12-17

G 1 The parties: Made between – {12} God said, "This is the sign of the covenant which I am making between

H 1 God: Me 9:12

H 2 and Man: and you

H 3 and animals: and every living creature that is with you,²⁰⁰

G 2 The duration: for all successive generations;²⁰¹

G 3 The icon: {13} I set My bow²⁰² in the cloud,²⁰³ 9:13

Genesis 7:6-7. ⁶Now Noah was six hundred years old when the **flood** of water came upon the earth. ⁷Then Noah and his sons and his wife and his sons' wives with him entered the ark because of the water of the **flood**.

Genesis 7:10. It came about after the seven days, that the water of the **flood** came upon the earth.

Genesis 7:17. Then the **flood** came upon the earth for forty days, and the water increased and lifted up the ark, so that it rose above the earth.

Genesis 9:11. "I establish My covenant with you; and all flesh shall never again be cut off by the water of the **flood**, neither shall there again be a **flood** to destroy the earth."

Genesis 9:15. and I will remember My covenant, which is between Me and you and every living creature of all flesh; and never again shall the water become a flood to destroy all flesh.

Genesis 9:28. Noah lived three hundred and fifty years after the **flood**.

Genesis 10:1. Now these are the records of the generations of Shem, Ham, and Japheth, the sons of Noah; and sons were born to them after the **flood**.

Genesis 10:32. These are the families of the sons of Noah, according to their genealogies, by their nations; and out of these the nations were separated on the earth after the flood.

Genesis 11:10. These are the *records* of the generations of Shem. Shem was one hundred years old, and became the father of Arpachshad two years after the **flood**;

Psalms 29:10. The LORD sat *as King* at the **flood**; Yes, the LORD sits as King forever.

¹⁹⁹ Gen. 9:11 - to destroy the earth: "Earth" is *erets* (776), translated in the [NASB](#) 1638 X as "land(s)"; 655 X as "earth"; and 119 X as "ground."

²⁰⁰ Gen. 9:12 - every living creature that is with you: literally, "every soul (*nephesh*, 5315) of life (*chay*, 2416) which is with you."

²⁰¹ Gen. 9:12 - for all successive generations: Literally, "for generations into eternity"

²⁰² Gen. 9:13 - I set my bow: "Bow" is *qesheth* (7198). *Qesheth* is the same word as that for a bow (and arrow). It is a bow because it bows, or bends. We call this bow a "rainbow." I certainly could be in error, but I do not believe rainbows appeared prior to the [Great Flood](#). I believe the hydrology of the earth was radically different before the

- G 4 The purpose of the icon: and it shall be for a sign ²⁰⁴ of a covenant between Me and the earth. ²⁰⁵
- G 5 The association – bow in the cloud: {14} "It shall come about, when I bring a cloud over the earth, that the bow ²⁰⁶ will be seen in the cloud, 9:14

[Flood](#) than it is now after the [Flood](#). I believe there was a [Water Vapor Canopy](#) that surrounded the earth that made the earth uniformly warm and accounted for the long lives of those living before the [Flood](#). I believe it likely that clouds did not appear in the pre-[Flood](#) earth, and consequently, no rainbows appeared either. To insist that hydrology before the [Flood](#) was the same as it is today signals to me an affliction with the disease of presumed [uniformitarianism](#). To argue that God invested a pre-existing phenomenon with a new meaning, His covenant of No-[Flood](#), rings hollow in this text. If rainbows had appeared before the [Flood](#), they would hardly be a reassuring sign afterwards.

²⁰³ Gen. 9:13 - in the cloud: This is the first time in Genesis that the word “cloud” (*ânân*, [6051](#)) has appeared in the Genesis narrative. It appears but four times – all in this rainbow context – Gen. 9:13, 14, 14, 16. If there had been clouds from which the forty-day non-stop rain had poured forth, surely the word would have appeared at least once in the [Flood](#) narrative of Genesis 7:1-8:2. But it did not appear. The rain fell not from clouds (*ânân*, [6051](#)), but from the heavens, the plural *shamayim* ([8064](#)) – Gen. 7:11; 8:2. This is consistent with the understanding that the hydrological cycle of our planet was vastly different before the [Flood](#) than it was afterwards. I am convinced that the pre-[Flood](#) earth was uniformly warm, that a mist came up from the ground to water the earth, that there were no clouds in the sky, that there were no rainbows, and that there were no seasons. This all makes more sense to me than to assume a [uniformitarian](#) earth. That is the mistake that [evolutionists](#) blindly make. Let us not fall into the same trap.

²⁰⁴ Gen. 9:13 - sign: Presumably the bow had not appeared before this event because of the radically different atmosphere configuration before and after the [flood](#). A great many otherwise conservative Bible scholars are [uniformitarian](#) in the sense that they assume that the pre-[flood](#) atmospheric conditions were identical to the post-[flood](#) conditions. But clearly they were not. This can be argued on several counts: (1) The text of Genesis 1:6-8 states that God placed an expanse (*raqia*, [7549](#)) or atmosphere between the waters that were above it and below it. The waters above the *raqia* cannot be said to be identical to clouds described by God in Genesis 9:13-16 and observed today. “Waters” (Gen. 1:6-8) translates *mayim* ([4325](#)); but the word for “cloud” (Gen. 9:13-16) is distinctly different – *anan* ([6051](#)). Therefore, we conclude that the waters above the *raqia* in Genesis 1 must have referred to a [water vapor canopy](#). (2) To insist that there was no difference between pre- and post-[flood](#) atmospheres is to insist that rainbows had always existed. Clearly, God made a great deal out of this rainbow. The distinct impression is that this was a new thing. Of what value would the rainbow be as a sign of God’s eternal covenant if it had always existed? (3) A [uniformitarian](#) atmosphere interpretation cannot explain the dramatic decrease in longevity after the [Flood](#) as compared with longevity before the [Flood](#) (Gen. 5 cf. Gen. 11:10-32). (See “[The Declining Life Span of the Patriarchs](#).”) (4) A [uniformitarian](#) atmosphere interpretation cannot explain the existence of buried, petrified [tropical forests](#) and buried [frozen tropical animals](#) such as rhinoceroses and mammoths inside the Arctic Circle. Obviously the biosphere before the [Flood](#) differed greatly from the biosphere after the [Flood](#). No [uniformitarian](#) cosmology or biology or meteorology can explain the stark contrast.

²⁰⁵ Gen. 9:13 - a covenant between Me and the earth: It is fascinating that God made a [covenant](#) (*beriyth*, [1285](#)) between Himself and the land / earth (*erets*, [776](#)). [Covenants](#) are very important to God, and He always keeps His [covenants](#)! See “[The Covenants of the Bible](#).”

²⁰⁶ Gen. 9:14 - bow ... cloud: Literally, “And it shall be in my gathering a cloud upon the earth, then shall the bow be seen in the cloud.” God arranged it so that when the threat of rain was the most imminent, the sign of the reassurance – that there would never again be a great, catastrophic flood, was most apparent! Put another way, no cloud, no rainbow.

G 6 Remembrance: {15} and I will remember My covenant,²⁰⁷ which is between Me and you and every living creature of all flesh;²⁰⁸ 9:15a

G 7 Promise: and never again shall the water become a flood to destroy all flesh.²⁰⁹ 9:15b

G 8 Process 9:16

H 1 Trigger: {16} “When the bow is in the cloud,

H 2 Visualization: then I will look upon it, to remember the everlasting covenant²¹⁰

J 1 between God

J 2 and every living creature of all flesh that is on the earth.”²¹¹

G 9 Summary 9:17

H 1 Sign: {17} And God said to Noah, “This is the sign of the

²⁰⁷ Gen. 9:15 - and I will remember my covenant: “covenant” is *beriyth* (1285). See the appropriate footnotes on “covenant” at Genesis 6:18; 15:18; 21:27 for more information about this important term. See also the Glossary item on the term “[Covenant](#).” See also the “[The Covenants of the Bible](#).”

²⁰⁸ Gen. 9:15 - living creature of all flesh: Literally, the clause reads, “And I will remember my covenant which is between me and between you and between every soul (*nepshesh*, 5315) of life (*chay*, 2416) in all flesh.” Clearly God’s covenant not to bring another global flood was not only with man, but with all living creatures.

²⁰⁹ Gen. 9:15 - never again shall the water become a flood to destroy all flesh: The Flood of Noah was the second of four remarkable instances of God’s entering into the history of Planet Earth. According to Peter in 2 Peter 3:3-13, two of these events are past history and two are yet future. The first event was God’s original creation of the heavens, and of the earth out of a watery matrix (2 Pet. 2:5; cf. Gen. 1:1-9). The second was God’s destruction of the earth that then was by means of a Flood (2 Pet. 2:6; cf. Gen. 6:5-8:19). The third event is yet future in a time frame known as “the Day of the LORD.” God will destroy the heavens “with a roar, and the elements will be destroyed with intense heat, and the earth and its works will be burned up” (2 Pet. 3:10, 12; Rev. 20:11). The fourth event is also yet future. God will create [new heavens](#) and [new earth](#) in which only righteousness exists (Isa. 65:17; 66:22; 2 Pet. 3:13; Rev. 21:1).

²¹⁰ Gen. 9:16 - to remember the everlasting covenant: Literally, “to remember covenant of eternity” “Covenant” is *beriyth* (1285); “eternity” is *olam* (5769), looking backwards, “antiquity”; looking forwards “long duration,” “forever,” “ever,” “evermore,” “perpetuity.” As stated, evidently the bow was to be more of a reminder to God than to man; God needs no reminder, however, but man certainly does! Obviously, God stated this for man’s benefit, not His own. See the article, “[Everlasting Covenants of the Bible](#).” See the appropriate footnotes on “covenant” at Genesis 6:18; 15:18; 21:27 for more information about this important term. See also the Glossary item on the term “[Covenant](#).” See also the “[The Covenants of the Bible](#).”

²¹¹ Gen. 9:16 - every living creature of all flesh that is on the earth: Literally, “And the bow shall be in the clouds, and I shall see it, to remember a covenant of eternity between God and between every soul (*nepshesh*, 5315) of life (*chay*, 2416) in all flesh (*basar*, 1320) which is upon the earth.” “All flesh,” in this instance, probably includes man as well as animals.

covenant ²¹²

H 2 Parties: which I have established between Me and all flesh that is on the earth.”

D 4 Summary statement of Noah's three sons as progenitors of the human race 9:18-19

E 1 Noah's three sons: {18} Now the sons of Noah who came out of the ark were Shem and Ham and Japheth; ²¹³

E 2 Ham and [Canaan](#): and Ham was the father of Canaan. ²¹⁴

E 3 Repetition: {19} These three *were* the sons of Noah,

E 4 Repopulation: and from these the whole earth ²¹⁵ was populated.

C 2 The Seeds of Rebellion: The culmination in the judgment of Babel 9:20 - 11:9

D 1 The seeds of rebellion in the post-[flood](#) career of Noah and his sons 9:20 - 10:32

E 1 Noah's post-[flood](#) career 9:20-29

G 1 Noah's drunkenness; his subsequent cursing of disrespectful Ham's son [Canaan](#) and his *blessing* of Shem and Japheth 9:20-27

H 1 Noah's agricultural pursuits: {20} Then Noah began farming and planted a vineyard. 9:20

H 2 His drunken indiscretion 9:21

J 1 {21} He drank of the wine

²¹² Gen. 9:17 - sign of the covenant: Once again God uses this very important term, “covenant,” *beriyth* ([1285](#)). See the appropriate footnotes on “covenant” at Genesis 6:18; 15:18; 21:27 for more information about this term. See also the Glossary item on the term “[Covenant](#).” See also the “[The Covenants of the Bible](#).”

²¹³ Gen. 9:18 - Shem and Ham and Japheth: Japheth's sons will be listed at Gen. 10:2-5; Ham's sons at Gen. 10:6-20; Shem's sons at Gen. 10:21-31.

²¹⁴ Gen. 9:18 - Canaan: Why would [Moses](#) single out only Ham and only [Canaan](#)? The answer is that, in this narrative, [Canaan](#) is about to be cursed. He is introduced here. Ultimately the cursing of [Canaan](#) would guarantee the supremacy of the [sons of Jacob](#) over the [Canaanites](#) in the land of [Canaan](#). God is already setting the stage for His Divine, [Sovereign](#) will to be imposed on the earth!

²¹⁵ Gen. 9:19 - from these the whole earth was populated: “earth” = land / earth (*erets*, [776](#)). Despite the [myth](#) of [evolution](#), believed by the vast majority of academics, scientists, and populace of the earth, every person on this earth is biologically and genetically related to Noah and one of his three sons.

- J 2 and became drunk,²¹⁶
- J 3 and uncovered himself inside his tent.
- H 3 The deviousness of Ham 9:22
- J 1 {22} Ham, the father of Canaan, saw the nakedness of his father,
- J 2 and told his two brothers outside.
- H 4 The respect of Shem and Japheth 9:23
- J 1 Their covering of their naked father: {23} But Shem and Japheth took a garment and laid it upon both their shoulders and walked backward and covered the nakedness of their father;
- J 2 Their deliberate efforts not to see their father: and their faces were turned away, so that they did not see their father's nakedness.
- H 5 The knowledge of Noah: {24} When Noah awoke from his wine, he knew what his youngest son had done to him. 9:24
- H 6 Noah's cursing of Ham's son [Canaan](#) 9:25
- J 1 [Canaan](#) is cursed: {25} So he said, "Cursed be [Canaan](#);²¹⁷

²¹⁶ Gen. 9:21 - drunk: It would appear that [Moses](#)' sole purpose for including this unflattering vignette of Noah and his sons was to reveal God's [sovereign](#) disposition of certain ethnic and national groupings in the chapters and history to follow. God's [elective](#) purposes do not guarantee complete holiness in this life. We who have been chosen by God are still flawed human beings with a [sin nature](#) that will not be eradicated until after we die.

²¹⁷ Gen. 9:25 - Cursed be Canaan: [[RSB](#)] - "Whether [Canaan](#) was personally involved with his father Ham's sin we do not know (he might have seen Noah's condition first and then told his father). But Ham is punished for his dishonor to his father by having a son who would bring dishonor to him. The curse is not on the Hamites, but on the [Canaanites](#), the inhabitants of Palestine who were first subjected by Joshua and later by Solomon (cf. 1 Kings 9:20-21). The [Canaanites](#) long ago became extinct; the curse, therefore, cannot be applied to anyone today."

[[JTB](#)]: This writer is not so certain it can be proven that no [Canaanites](#) exist today and that, therefore, the curse cannot be applied to anyone today. God alone knows if any [Canaanites](#) exist today and how this prophecy may yet be fulfilled.

The Canaanites came to be known for their depraved immorality. Ham's lewd and lustful look at his own father resulted in his own son's moral depravity, enlarged in the lives of his descendants, the Canaanites. Thomas Constable, [Notes on Genesis, 2019](#), related a fascinating account of generational blessing and generational sin:

The husband of a former student told me that his ancestors many generations back were mainly believers. Several generations ago, 11 of 12 children became Christians. The head of his branch of the family was the twelfth child, the only unbeliever in that generation of the family. As the years passed, those 11 believing children produced many other Christian descendants who became preachers, teachers, pastors, doctors, missionaries, and other godly people who became a blessing to multitudes of people. His unbelieving ancestor produced several alcoholics, criminals, and blights on society. My student's husband was the first person in five generations to become a Christian from that branch of his family. The family tree of Jonathan Edwards, like the "godly branch" of the family just described, also produced much good fruit.

J 2 [Canaan](#) is to be the lowliest of servants to his brothers: A servant of servants ²¹⁸ He shall be to his brothers." ²¹⁹

H 7 Noah's blessing of Shem 9:26

J 1 His blessing of [Yahweh](#), Shem's God: {26} He also said, "Blessed ²²⁰ be the LORD, The God of Shem;

J 2 His consigning of [Canaan](#) to be Shem's servant: And let Canaan be his servant. ²²¹

H 8 Noah's blessing of Japheth 9:27

J 1 Divinely-caused territorial enlargement: {27} "May God enlarge Japheth, ²²²

J 2 Amicability with Shem: And let him dwell in the tents of Shem; ²²³

J 3 Servitude by [Canaan](#): And let Canaan be his servant."

G 2 Noah's post-[flood](#) time-line 9:28-29

H 1 Noah's life-span after the [flood](#): {28} Noah lived three

²¹⁸ Gen. 9:25 - servant of servants: [NASB](#) note: "I.e. The lowest of servants." [JTB](#): The Hebrew noun translated "servant" and "servants" is *ebed* ([5650](#)). Approximately 720 X in the OT it is translated in the [NASB](#) with some variation of "servant." About 68 X it is translated as a variation of "slave." The context is the determining factor in translation.

²¹⁹ Gen. 9:26 - servant ... to his brothers: It is not difficult to see how [Canaan](#) became a servant to certain descendants of Shem – the [Canaanites](#) were either destroyed by [Israel](#) or forced to serve at hard labor: 1 Kings 9:20-21 ([NASB](#)) {20} *As for* all the people who were left of the Amorites, the Hittites, the Perizzites, the Hivites and the Jebusites, who were not of the [sons of Israel](#), {21} their descendants who were left after them in the land whom the [sons of Israel](#) were unable to destroy utterly, from them Solomon levied forced laborers, even to this day.

This writer is unable to discern any time when the [Canaanites](#) became servants of Japheth. If this prophecy has not been fulfilled, it will yet.

²²⁰ Gen. 9:26 - Blessed: [[RSB](#)] - "[Yahweh](#) will be Shem's God and Shem's blessing. (Jews are of Semitic – from "Shem" – descent.)"

²²¹ Gen. 9:26 - And let Canaan be his servant: This prophecy of [Noah](#) would be fulfilled when God would give certain descendants of Shem, the [sons of Israel](#), dominance over the [Canaanites](#) of the land of [Canaan](#). This prophecy would be spelled out in more detail in Gen. 15:18-21, when God, through an irrevocable, unconditional [covenant](#), the [Abrahamic Covenant](#), give Abraham's descendants the land of [Canaan](#), authorizing them to conquer the [Canaanites](#) and displace them.

²²² Gen. 9:27 - enlarge Japheth: [[RSB](#)] - "The descendants of *Japheth* (which means 'enlargement') would spread throughout the earth and prosper."

²²³ Gen. 9:27 - dwell in the tents of Shem: [[RSB](#)] - "[This] means that spiritual blessings will come to the Japhethites through the God of the Semites."

hundred and fifty years after the flood. 9:28

H 2 Noah's total life-span: {29} So all the days of Noah were nine hundred and fifty years,²²⁴ 9:29

H 3 Noah's death: and he died.

SECTION V. WHAT BECAME OF THE SONS OF NOAH. 10:1 - 11:9

E 2 The careers and progeny of [Noah's](#) sons: Introductory statement regarding the offspring of [Noah's](#) three sons: {1} Now these are *the records of* the generations of Shem, Ham, and Japheth, the sons of Noah,²²⁵ and sons were born to them after the flood.²²⁶ [10:1] 10

G 1 The sons of **Japheth** 10:2-5

H 1 The sons of Japheth ben [Noah](#): {2} The sons of Japheth²²⁷ were Gomer²²⁸ and Magog and Madai²²⁹ and Javan²³⁰ and

²²⁴ Gen. 9:29 - all the days of Noah were nine hundred and fifty years: [Noah's](#) life-span was not abbreviated by having lived after the [Flood](#). The same cannot be said for the life spans of his sons and later generations. It is obvious to me that something was dramatically altered in the living conditions after the [Flood](#) compared to what they had been prior to the [Flood](#). I believe the difference was the collapse of the [Water Vapor Canopy](#) during the [Flood](#). The [Canopy](#) had helped shield earth's inhabitants from harmful ultra-violet rays from the sun. With the [Canopy](#) having been dissipated, climate and protection from harmful solar rays would be altered remarkably, and life-expectancy would plummet. See "[The Declining Life Expectancy of the Patriarchs](#)."

²²⁵ Gen. 10:1 - Now these are *the records of* the generations Shem, Ham, and Japheth, the sons of Noah: Literally, "Now these – generations – sons of Noah – Shem, Ham, Japheth," where "generations" is the plural *toledoth* ([8435](#)), which *always* appears in the plural in the OT. The sense here is, "Now here is what became of the sons of Noah – Shem, Ham, and Japheth." This is the fourth use of this noun. Its previous appearance was in Gen. 6:9. It will appear again in Gen. 10:32.

²²⁶ Gen. 10:1 - and sons were born to them after the flood: God, through [Moses](#), took pains to identify the descendants of the sons of Noah. Virtually every one of these names can be tied to a certain region or ethnic group. This is evidence of God's long-term plans of saving not only the [sons of Israel](#), but also large numbers of Gentiles (nations) who would place their faith in Him, and later, in God's Anointed King, Jesus of Nazareth.

²²⁷ Gen. 10:2 - Japheth: In its Greek form, the name Japheth, Iapetos, indicates the ancestor of the Greeks ([NetBible note 5 appearing at Gen. 10:2](#)).

²²⁸ Gen. 10:2 - Gomer: the ancestor of the Cimmerians ([NetBible note 6 appearing at Gen. 10:2](#)).

²²⁹ Gen. 10:2 - Madai: "the ancestor of the Medes, who lived east of Assyria" ([NetBible note 8 appearing at Gen. 10:2](#)).

²³⁰ Gen. 10:2 - Javan: "the father of the Hellenic race, the Ionians who lived in western Asia Minor" ([NetBible note 9 appearing at Gen. 10:2](#)).

Tubal ²³¹ and Meshech ²³² and Tiras. ²³³

H 2 The sons of **Gomer** ben Japheth: *{3}* The sons of Gomer²³⁴ *were* Ashkenaz ²³⁵ and Riphath ²³⁶ and Togarmah. ²³⁷

H 3 The sons of **Javan** ben Japheth: *{4}* The sons of Javan *were* Elishah ²³⁸ and Tarshish, ²³⁹ Kittim ²⁴⁰ and Dodanim.²⁴¹

H 4 The spread to the coastlands of the nations: *{5}* From these the coastlands of the nations were separated

J 1 into their lands,

J 2 every one according to his language,

J 3 according to their families,

²³¹ Gen. 10:2 - Tubal: “ancestor of militaristic tribes that lived north of the Black Sea” ([NetBible note 10 appearing at Gen. 10:2](#)).

²³² Gen. 10:2 - Meshech: “ancestor of the people known in the Assyrian records as the Musku” ([NetBible note 11 appearing at Gen. 10:2](#)).

²³³ Gen. 10:2 - Tiras: “ancestor of the Thracians, some of whom possibly became the Pelasgian pirates of the Aegean” ([NetBible note 12 appearing at Gen. 10:2](#)).

²³⁴ Gen. 10:3 - The sons of Gomer: These “were all northern tribes of the Upper Euphrates” ([NetBible note 13 appearing at Gen. 10:3](#)).

²³⁵ Gen. 10:3 - Ashkenaz: “the ancestor of a northern branch of Indo-Germanic tribes, possibly Scythians” ([NetBible note 14 appearing at Gen. 10:3](#)).

²³⁶ Gen. 10:3 - Riphath: “The descendants of Riphath lived in a district north of the road from Haran to Carchemish” ([NetBible note 15 appearing at Gen. 10:3](#)).

²³⁷ Gen. 10:3 - Togarmah: “Togarmah is also mention in Ezek. 38:6, where it refers to Tilgarimmu, the capital of Kammanu, which bordered Tabal in eastern Turkey” ([NetBible note 16 appearing at Gen. 10:3](#)).

²³⁸ Gen. 10:4 - Elishah: His descendants “populated Cyprus” ([NetBible note 17 appearing at Gen. 10:4](#)).

²³⁹ Gen. 10:4 - Tarshish: “The descendants of Tarshish settled along the southern coast of what is modern Turkey. However some identify the site Tarshish (see Jon. 1:3) with Sardinia or Spain” ([NetBible note 18 appearing at Gen. 10:4](#)).

²⁴⁰ Gen. 10:4 - Kittim: “The name Kittim is associated with Cyprus, as well as coastlands east of Rhodes. It is used in later texts to refer to the Romans” ([NetBible note 19 appearing at Gen. 10:4](#)).

²⁴¹ Gen. 10:4 - Dodanim: “Most of the MT mss read ‘Dodanim’ here, but 1 Chron. 1:7 has ‘Rodanim,’ perhaps referring to the island of Rhodes. But the Qere reading in 1 Chron. 1:7 suggests ‘Dodanim.’ Dodona is one of the most ancient and revered spots in ancient Greece” ([NetBible note 20 appearing at Gen. 10:4](#)).

J 4 into their nations.

G 2 The sons of **Ham**: {6} The sons of Ham were Cush²⁴² and Mizraim²⁴³ and Put²⁴⁴ and Canaan.²⁴⁵ [10:6] 10:6-12

H 1 The sons of **Cush**, son of Ham, featuring Nimrod, who established revolutionary kingdoms beginning at [Babylon](#) 10:7

J 1 The sons of Cush: {7} The sons of Cush were Seba²⁴⁶ and Havilah²⁴⁷ and Sabtah²⁴⁸ and Raamah²⁴⁹ and Sabteca;²⁵⁰ 10:7a

J 2 The sons of **Raamah**: and the sons of Raamah were Sheba²⁵¹ and Dedan.²⁵² 10:7b

H 2 The exploits of **Nimrod** descendant of Cush 10:8-12

²⁴² Gen. 10:6 - Cush: "The descendants of Cush settled in Nubia (Ethiopia)" ([NetBible note 21 appearing at Gen. 10:6](#)).

²⁴³ Gen. 10:6 - Mizraim: "The descendants of Mizraim settled in Upper and Lower Egypt" ([NetBible note 22 appearing at Gen. 10:6](#)).

²⁴⁴ Gen. 10:6 - Put: "The descendants of Put settled in Libya" ([NetBible note 23 appearing at Gen. 10:6](#)).

²⁴⁵ Gen. 10:6 - Canaan: "The descendants of Canaan lived in the region of Phoenicia (Palestine)" ([NetBible note 24 appearing at Gen. 10:6](#)). Palestine means "land of the Philistines," and is a later name for "Canaan" (Thomas Constable, [Notes on Genesis, 2019](#)). In the time of the priest Eli and the prophet Samuel, the Philistines' five major cities were Gaza, Ashkelon, Ashdod, Ekron, and Gath (1 Sam. 6:17-18). (See also the offsite "[The Five Philistine Cities](#)" for a map.)

²⁴⁶ Gen. 10:7 - Seba: "The descendants of Seba settled in Upper Egypt along the Nile" ([NetBible note 25 appearing at Gen. 10:7](#)).

²⁴⁷ Gen. 10:7 - Havilah: "The Hebrew name Havilah apparently means 'stretch of sand' Havilah's descendants settled in eastern Arabia" ([NetBible note 26 appearing at Gen. 10:7](#)).

²⁴⁸ Gen. 10:7 - Sabtah: "The descendants of Sabtah settled near the western shore of the [Persian Gulf](#) in ancient Hadramaut" ([NetBible note 27 appearing at Gen. 10:7](#)).

²⁴⁹ Gen. 10:7 - Raamah: "The descendants of Raamah settled in southwest Arabia" ([NetBible note 28 appearing at Gen. 10:7](#)).

²⁵⁰ Gen. 10:7 - Sabteca: "The descendants of Sabteca settled in Samadake, east toward the [Persian Gulf](#)" ([NetBible note 29 appearing at Gen. 10:7](#)).

²⁵¹ Gen. 10:7 - Sheba: "Sheba became the name of a kingdom in southwest Arabia" ([NetBible note 29 appearing at Gen. 10:7](#)). The Queen of Sheba later heard of the wealth and wisdom of Israel's King Solomon, and paid him an admiring, peaceful visit (1 Kings 10:1-13; 2 Chron. 9:1-12).

²⁵² Gen. 10:7 - Dedan: "The name Dedan is associated with 'Ula in northern Arabia'" ([NetBible note 30 appearing at Gen. 10:7](#)).

- J 1 His becoming a mighty one on the earth: {8} Now Cush became the father of Nimrod; ²⁵³ he became a mighty one ²⁵⁴ on the earth. 10:8
- J 2 His reputation as a mighty hunter before the Lord: {9} He was a mighty hunter before the LORD; therefore it is said, "Like Nimrod a mighty hunter ²⁵⁵ before the LORD." 10:9
- J 3 The beginning of his kingdom – Babel, Erech, Accad, and Calneh in the land of Shinar: {10} The beginning of his kingdom was
- K1 Babel ²⁵⁶
- K2 and Erech ²⁵⁷
- K3 and Accad ²⁵⁸
- K4 and Calneh, ²⁵⁹ in the land of Shinar. ²⁶⁰ 10:10

²⁵³ Gen. 10:8 - Nimrod: The name *Nimrod* “from *marad*, ‘we will revolt,’ points to some violent resistance to God. It is so characteristic that it can only have been given by his contemporaries, and thus have become a proper name (K & D, I, 165).” “Nimrod” is entry [5248](#). According to Constable, [Notes on Genesis, 2019](#),

It is possible that Sargon of Agade, whom many secular historians regard as the first ruler of Babylon, may be the "Nimrod" (meaning "We Shall Rebel") of verses 8-10. [\[474\]](#) – citing Jack Finegan, *Light from the Ancient Past*, and others.] Many people in ancient times had more than one name. Reference to him probably foreshadows 11:1-9. The Greeks connected the constellation Orion with Nimrod. [\[475\]](#) – citing Alexander Hislop, *The Two Babylons*.]

According to the [NetBible, Note 32 at Genesis 10:8](#), Embedded within Cush’s genealogy is an account of Nimrod, a mighty warrior. There have been many attempts to identify him, but none are convincing.”

²⁵⁴ Gen. 10:8 - mighty one: “Mighty one,” *gibbor* [\[1368\]](#) is used here, as in chap. 6:4, to denote a man who makes himself renowned for bold and daring deeds (K & D, I, 165).”

²⁵⁵ Gen. 10:9 - Like Nimrod, a mighty hunter before the LORD: Nimrod's hunting before the Lord was not in the will of God, but, according to context and [LXX](#), in opposition to the Lord. In context, his skill in hunting was the hunting of men, “a trapper of men by stratagem and force (K & D quoting Herder); Nimrod the hunter became a tyrant, a powerful hunter of men.” His success in hunting men to establish his imperial kingdom by tyranny and power in opposition to [Yahweh](#) was immortalized in a proverb (K & D I, 165, 166).”

²⁵⁶ Gen. 10:10 - Babel: [NASB](#) note: “Or [Babylon](#); cf Heb *balal*, confuse.” “Babel” is entry [894](#).

²⁵⁷ Gen. 10:10 - Erech: “Erech (ancient Uruk, modern Warka), one of the most ancient civilizations, was located southeast of Babylon” ([NetBible, note 37, appearing at Gen. 10:10](#)).

²⁵⁸ Gen. 10:10 - Accad: “Akkad, or ancient Agade, was associated with Sargon and located north of Babylon” ([NetBible, note 38, appearing at Gen. 10:10](#)).

²⁵⁹ Gen. 10:10 - Calneh: “No such place is known in Shinar (i.e., Babylonia). Therefore some have translated the Hebrew term כַּלְנֶהָ (khalneh) as “all of them,” referring to the three previous names (cf. NRSV)” ([NetBible, Note 39, appearing at Gen. 10:10](#)). On the other hand, two many times, I fear, modern day scholars take the position that if we can’t identify something today, it never existed. I prefer leaving Calneh as a place name. Just because we don’t know anything about it today doesn’t mean that it didn’t exist. I assume [Moses](#) knew what he was writing about. According to [K&D](#), Calneh “is found by early writers on the cite of *Ctesiphon*, now a great heap of ruins, twenty hours

J 4 His journey to Assyria, building Nineveh, Rehoboth-Ir, Calah, and Resen: *{11}* From that land he went forth into Assyria,²⁶¹ [10:11a] 10:11-12

K1 and built Nineveh²⁶² 10:11b

K2 and Rehoboth-Ir²⁶³

K3 and Calah,²⁶⁴

K4 *{12}* and Resen²⁶⁵ between Nineveh and Calah; that is the great city.²⁶⁶ 10:12

H 3 The sons of **Mizraim**, son of Ham: *{13}* Mizraim²⁶⁷ became the father of 10:13-14

north-east of Babel.”

²⁶⁰ Gen. 10:10 - in the land of Shinar: “Shinar ... of the province of [Babylon](#), on the Lower Euphrates and Tigris ([K & D](#) I, 167).” [Babylon](#) is situated in Babylonia, between the Tigris and Euphrates. *Shinâr*’ ([8152](#)) means “country of two rivers.”

²⁶¹ Gen. 10:11 - he went forth into Assyria: [Moses](#) continues to speak of Nimrod and his most extraordinary building crusade. Not content merely with founding Babel, Erech, Accad and Calneh, he journeyed to Assyria, and proceeded to build four might cities there. Assyria was the ancient kingdom on the east of the Tigris (east of Babylonia). Thus Nimrod, the rebel “in-your-face, God” tyrant established the oldest two empires, [Babylon](#) and Assyria, both terrible antagonists against God and His chosen people, [Israel](#). Modern day Iraq supplants both [Babylon](#) and Assyria. In Iraq, both remain sworn enemies of [Israel](#) and [Israel's](#) God to this day! The Biblical name for Assyria is *Ashshûr* ([804](#)). This name appears in this book in Gen. 2:14; 10:11, 22; 25:18.

²⁶² Gen. 10:11 - and built Nineveh: [Moses](#) continued to relate that Nimrod built four more ancient cities, apparently in close proximity. Nineveh was located near the Tigris River in Mesopotamia, in what is now Iraq. [Nineveh became most famous in the seventh century BC](#), when King Sennacherib (705-681 BC) made it his capital. The reluctant prophet, Jonah, was assigned by God to warn the city of impending judgment (Jonah 1:2; 3:1-4). Just as Jonah feared, the city repented (Jonah 3:5-4:11).

²⁶³ Gen. 10:11 - Rehoboth-Ir: “The name Rehoboth-Ir means “and broad streets of a city,” perhaps referring to a suburb of Nineveh” ([NetBible, note 44, appearing at Gen. 10:11](#)).

²⁶⁴ Gen. 10:11 - Calah: “Calah (modern Nimrud) was located twenty miles north of Nineveh” ([Net Bible, note 45, appearing at Gen. 10:11](#)).

²⁶⁵ Gen. 10:12 - and Resen between Nineveh and Calah: This is the fourth city that Nimrod built in Assyria. Calah was twenty miles north of Nineveh, and Resen was built between them. It is possible that these cities were, together, deemed to be the greater Nineveh metropolitan area.

²⁶⁶ Gen. 10:12 - that is the great city: Both [NASB](#) and [NetBible](#) take the great city to refer to Calah. [Keil and Delitzsch](#), on the other hand, apply the term “great city” to refer to the four composite cities of Nineveh, Rehoboth Ir, Calah, and Resen, a metropolitan area to which the name Nineveh came to be applied. Regardless, understanding these four cities as a metropolitan area under the name Nineveh well explains the description in Jonah 3 of Nineveh as being “an exceedingly great city, a three days walk” (Jonah 3:3), through which “Jonah began to go through the city for one day’s walk,” crying out his message of imminent judgment (Jonah 3:4).

²⁶⁷ Gen. 10:13 - Mizraim: The name of this descendant of Ham, over time, became synonymous with the country of Egypt.

- J 1 Ludim²⁶⁸ 10:13
- J 2 and Anamim²⁶⁹
- J 3 and Lehabim²⁷⁰
- J 4 and Naphtuhim²⁷¹
- J 5 {14} and Pathrusim²⁷² 10:14
- J 6 and Casluhim²⁷³ (from which came the Philistines)²⁷⁴
- J 7 and Caphtorim.²⁷⁵
- H 4 The sons of previously cursed **Canaan**, son of Ham 10:15-20
- J 1 The sons and clans of **Canaan**: {15} Canaan became the father of 10:15a-10:18a
- K1 Sidon, his firstborn,²⁷⁶ 10:15b

²⁶⁸ Gen. 10:13 - Ludim: The plural noun Ludim (notice the characteristic plural spelling, “im”) refers to the descendants of Lud. “The Ludites were African tribes west of the Nile Delta” ([NetBible note 49, appearing at Gen. 10:13](#)).

²⁶⁹ Gen. 10:13 - Anamim: “The Anamites lived in North Africa, west of Egypt, near Cyrene” ([NetBible note 50, appearing at Gen. 10:13](#)).

²⁷⁰ Gen. 10:13 - Lehabim: “The Lehabites are identified with the Libyans: ([NetBible note 51, appearing at Gen. 10:13](#)).

²⁷¹ Gen. 10:13 - Naphtuhim: “The Naphtuhites lived in Lower Egypt (the Nile Delta region)” ([NetBible note 52, appearing at Gen. 10:13](#)).

²⁷² Gen. 10:14 - Pathrusim: “The Pathrusites are known in Egyptian as P-to-reshi; they resided in Upper Egypt” ([NetBible note 53, appearing at Gen. 10:14](#)).

²⁷³ Gen. 10:14 - Casluhim: “The Casluhites lived in Crete and eventually settled east of the Egyptian Delta, between Egypt and Canaan” ([NetBible note 54, appearing at Gen. 10:14](#)).

²⁷⁴ Gen. 10:14 - (from whom came the Philistines): “Several commentators prefer to reverse the order of the words to put this clause after the next word, since the Philistines came from Crete (where the Caphtorites lived). But the table may suggest migration rather than lineage, and the Philistines, like the Israelites, came through the Nile Delta region of Egypt”... ([NetBible note 55, appearing at Gen. 10:14](#)).

²⁷⁵ Gen. 10:14 - Caphtorim: “The Caphtorites resided in Crete, but in Egyptian literature Caphtor refers to “the region beyond” the Mediterranean” ([NetBible note 56, appearing at Gen. 10:14](#)).

²⁷⁶ Gen. 10:15 - Sidon: “Sidon was the foremost city in Phoenicia; here Sidon may be the name of its founder” ([NetBible note 57, appearing at Gen. 10:15](#)).

- K2 and Heth²⁷⁷
- K3 {16} and the Jebusite²⁷⁸ 10:16
- K4 and the Amorite²⁷⁹
- K5 and the Girgashite²⁸⁰
- K6 {17} and the Hivite²⁸¹ 10:17
- K7 and the Arkite²⁸²

²⁷⁷ Gen. 10:15 - Heth: According to the editors of NetBible, “Some see a reference to “Hittites” here (cf. NIV), but this seems unlikely. See the note on the phrase “sons of Heth” in Gen 23:3” ([NetBible note 59, appearing at Gen. 10:15](#)).

The following excerpt is from [NetBible note 5, appearing at Genesis 23:3](#) - sons of Heth: “Heb ‘sons of Heth,’ the gentilic of which is הַתִּי (hitti) ‘Hittites.’ Some translations use ‘Hittites’ here (also in vv. 5, 7, 10, 16, 18, 20). But these people were not the classical Hittites of Anatolia (in Asia Minor, modern Turkey). These sons of Heth are apparently a Canaanite group (see Gen 10:15)”

JTB: I am certainly no ethnologist. But I feel compelled to ask this question: How do we know with certainty that some of the Canaanite “sons of Heth” did not emigrate to Anatolia? Frankly, I think that is a much more likely scenario than the one proposed by NetBible. Here is an article on the Hittites with which I agree. It concludes that the Hittites were descendants of the “Sons of Heth.” See the off-site article, “[Who were the Hittites?](#)”

My own wife was astute enough to suggest that my hypothesized migration of the sons of Heth from Canaan to Anatolia was prompted by God’s fracturing of the uni-language of the earth at the Tower of Babel in Genesis 11:1-9. I think that is a brilliant suggestion!

For the record Heth is *chêth* ([2845](#)), first appearing at Gen. 10:15, and appearing 13 X in Genesis and 1 X in 1 Chron. 1:13. The name Hittite is *chittîy* ([2850](#)), appearing 46 X in the OT, the first time being Gen. 15:20.

²⁷⁸ Gen. 10:16 - Jebusite: “The Jebusites were the Canaanite inhabitants of ancient Jerusalem” ([NetBible note 60, appearing at Gen. 10:16](#)). **JTB:** This is borne out in Josh. 18:28; Judges 1:21; 2 Sam. 5:6; 24:16, 18; 1 Chron. 11:4-6; 21:15; 2 Chron. 3:1. “Jebusite” is *Yebûsîy* ([2983](#)).

²⁷⁹ Gen. 10:16 - Amorite: “Here Amorites refers to smaller groups of Canaanite inhabitants of the mountainous regions of Palestine, rather than the large waves of Amurru, or western Semites, who migrated to the region” ([NetBible note 61, appearing at Gen. 10:16](#)). **JTB:** The Hebrew word is *Ēmôrîy* ([567](#)). Numbers 13:29 indicates that the Amorites lived in “the hill country.” The Arnon River on the east side of the Jordan River was the border between Moab and the Amorites (Num. 21:13). **Moses** gave as an inheritance to the sons of Gad, the sons of Reuben, and to the half-tribe of Joseph’s son Manasseh the kingdom of Sihon, king of the Amorites (Num. 32:33). Both Sihon and Og were Amorite kings, and both were dispossessed by Israel (Deut. 4:46-47). This was in “trans-Jordan,” the eastern side of the Jordan River, in the territory now known as the Arab nation, Jordan.

²⁸⁰ Gen. 10:16 - Girgashite: “The Girgashites are an otherwise unknown Canaanite tribe, though the name is possibly mentioned in Ugaritic texts (see G. J. Wenham, Genesis [WBC], 1:226)” ([NetBible note 62, appearing at Gen. 10:16](#)). Girgashite is *Girgâshîy* ([1622](#)). The **BDB** definition here suggests the name means “dwelling on a clayey soil.” It refers to “descendants of Canaan and one of the nations living east of the Sea of Galilee when the Israelites entered the promised land.”

²⁸¹ Gen. 10:17 - Hivite: “The Hivites were Canaanite tribes of a Hurrian origin” ([NetBible note 63, appearing at Gen. 10:17](#)). According to Studylight, the name Hivite, *chivvîy* ([2340](#)), means “villagers.” They were the 6th generation of Canaan, son of Ham, and lived in northern Canaan near Mount Hermon at the time of the conquest (see Josh. 11:3; Judges 3:3).

²⁸² Gen. 10:17 - Arkite: “The Arkites lived in Arka, a city in Lebanon, north of Sidon” ([NetBible note 64, appearing at Gen. 10:17](#)). According to Studylight’s depiction of **BDB** Arkite is similar to Arki “gnawing,” and refers to an inhabitant of Arki or Arka. The noun is *Arqîy*, [6208](#). The designation appears only here and in 1 Chron. 1:15, giving no indication of locale.

- K8 and the Sinite ²⁸³
- K9 {18} and the Arvadite ²⁸⁴ 10:18a
- K10 and the Zemarite ²⁸⁵
- K11 and the Hamathite; ²⁸⁶
- J 2 The spread of the [Canaanite](#) clans: and afterward the families of the Canaanite were spread abroad. 10:18b
- J 3 The territory of the [Canaanites](#): {19} The territory of the Canaanite extended 10:19
- K1 from Sidon ²⁸⁷
- K2 as you go toward Gerar, ²⁸⁸
- K3 as far as Gaza; ²⁸⁹

²⁸³ Gen. 10:17 - Sinite: “The Sinites lived in Sin, another town in Lebanon” ([NetBible note 65, appearing at Gen. 10:17](#)). According to [BDB](#), as appearing in Studylight, Sinite comes from Sin “thorn” or “clay.” It was “a tribe of the Canaanites descended from Canaan inhabiting the northern part of the Lebanon district.” It comes from the Hebrew *siyniy*, [5513](#). The appellation appears only here and in 1 Chron. 1:15, without any indications of locality.

²⁸⁴ Gen. 10:18 - Arvadite: “The Arvadites lived in the city Arvad, located on an island near the mainland close to the river El Kebir” ([NetBible note 66, appearing at Gen. 10:18](#)). The name is *Arvâdîy* ([721](#)) and means “I shall break loose” ([BDB](#) as quoted by Studylight). The name appears only here and in 1 Chron. 1:16, without any indications of locality.

²⁸⁵ Gen. 10:18 - Zemarite: “The Zemarites lived in the town Sumur, north of Arka” ([NetBible note 67, appearing at Gen. 10:18](#)). According to [BDB](#) as published in Studylight.org, Zemarite is related to Zemaraim, “double woolens.” The Hebrew is *tsemârîy*, ([6786](#)). The designation appears only in Gen. 10:18 and in 1 Chron. 1:16 without any indication of locale.

²⁸⁶ Gen. 10:18 - Hamathite: “The Hamathites lived in Hamath on the Orontes River” ([NetBible note 68, appearing at Gen. 10:18](#)). The Hebrew is *châmâthîy* ([2577](#)). It appears only in Gen. 10:18 and 1 Chron. 1:16 without any indication of locale.

²⁸⁷ Gen. 10:19 - Sidon: The Hebrew is *tsîydôn* ([6721](#)). According to [BDB](#), as quoted in Studylight.org, Sidon means “hunting.” It refers to the ancient Phoenician city, on the Mediterranean coast north of Tyre. Sidon was frequently grouped together with Tyre (Jer. 25:22; 27:3; 47:4; Ezek. 27:8; Joel 3:4; Zech. 9:2).

²⁸⁸ Gen. 10:19 - Gerar: Hebrew *gerâr* ([1642](#)), “a lodging place;” “a Philistine town south of Gaza, modern ‘Umm,”” quoting [BDB](#) in Studylight.org.

²⁸⁹ Gen. 10:19 - Gaza: Hebrew *azzâh* ([5804](#)), Azzah = “the strong” – “another name for Gaza, a city of the Philistines located in the extreme southwest of Palestine close to the Mediterranean” ([BDB](#) as found in Studylight.org).

K4 as you go toward Sodom ²⁹⁰

K5 and Gomorrah ²⁹¹

K6 and Admah ²⁹²

K7 and Zeboiim, ²⁹³

K8 as far as Lasha. ²⁹⁴

H 5 The summary statement of the sons of Ham: {20} These are the sons of Ham, 10:20

J 1 according to their families,

J 2 according to their languages,

J 3 by their lands,

J 4 by their nations.

G 3 The sons of **Shem** 10:21-31

²⁹⁰ Gen. 10:19 - Sodom: Hebrew *sedôm* (5467). “Sodom = ‘burning’ – a Canaanite city, usually paired with Gomorrah, located in the area of the Dead Sea and the Jordan River; both cities destroyed by God in judgment” (quoting [BDB](#) in StudyLight.org). For more information see the [Glossary Entry on Sodom](#). Sodom will be linked with the next several cities, Gomorrah, Admah, and Zeboiim in the account of the abduction of Abram’s nephew Lot (Gen. 14:2, 8). These were called the cities of the “valley,” (literally, “circle”) in Gen. 19:25, 28, cities that were destroyed by fire and brimstone from God in heaven because of their extreme immorality.

²⁹¹ Gen. 10:19 - Gomorrah: Hebrew “*‘āmôrâh* (6017), Gomorrah = ‘submersion’ – the twin city in evil with Sodom, both destroyed in judgment by God with fire from heaven” ([BDB](#), as quoted in StudyLight.org). According to Gen. 13:10, Gomorrah was, at this point in [Moses](#)’ narrative, situated near Sodom in the well-watered valley of the Jordan River, and appeared to be similar in quality and abundance of vegetation to the Garden of Eden (Gen. 13:10). Later on, the LORD lamented, “The outcry of Sodom and Gomorrah is indeed great, and their sin is exceedingly grave” (Gen. 18:20). Consequently Yahweh “rained on Sodom and Gomorrah brimstone and fire from the LORD out of heaven” (Gen. 19:24). The devastation was so great that when Abraham “looked down toward Sodom and Gomorrah and toward all the land of the valley, and he saw, and behold, the smoke of the land ascended like the smoke of a furnace” (Gen. 19:28). [Gomorrah](#) is believed presently to have been situated in the area adjacent the southern end of the Dead Sea. The land of Sodom, Gomorrah, Admah, and Zeboiim is now a land of brimstone and salt and burning waste, unsown, and unproductive, and no grass grows in it” (Deut. 29:23). The land of Sodom and Gomorrah became “a place possessed by nettles and salt pits, and a perpetual desolation” (Zeph. 2:9).

²⁹² Gen. 10:19 - Admah: “*‘admâh* (126), Admah = “red earth” – a city in the Siddim Valley” ([BDB](#), as quoted in StudyLight.org). Admah is mentioned in Gen. 10:19; 14:2, 8; Deut. 29:23; Hos. 11:8. [Admah](#) was perhaps located midway between Zeboiim and Zoar south of the Dead Sea. Gomorrah was farther to the north, but immediately adjacent the Dead Sea. Sodom was still further north, but at the south end of the Dead Sea.

²⁹³ Gen. 10:19 - Zeboiim: Hebrew, *tsebîyîym* (6636), Zeboim or Zeboiim = ‘gazelles’ – one of the five cities in the plain which included Sodom and Gomorrah” ([BDB](#), as quoted in StudyLight.org). See [Zeboiim](#).

²⁹⁴ Gen. 10:19 - Lasha: Hebrew “*‘lésha* (3962), Lasha = ‘fissure’ – a place in the southeast of Palestine at the limit of the Canaanites territory, near Sodom and Gomorrah” ([BDB](#), as appearing in StudyLight.org). [BibleAtlas](#) places it at the NW edge of the Dead Sea, but this is nowhere near Sodom and Gomorrah. This verse is the only time [Lasha](#) appears in the entire OT. So precise identification is extremely difficult.

H 1 The sons of Shem {21} Also to Shem, the father of all the children of Eber,²⁹⁵ and the older brother of Japheth, children were born. {22} The sons of Shem were 10:21-22

J 1 Elam²⁹⁶

J 2 and Asshur²⁹⁷

J 3 and Arpachshad²⁹⁸

J 4 and Lud²⁹⁹

J 5 and Aram.³⁰⁰

H 2 The sons of **Aram**, son of Shem: {23} The sons of Aram were 20:23

J 1 Uz³⁰¹

²⁹⁵ Gen. 10:21 - Eber: In Hebrew, *'éber* (5677). In English it is Eber or Heber = 'the region beyond.' He was the "son of Salah (NASB = Shelah), great grandson of Shem, father of Peleg and Joktan" (BDB as quoted in StudyLight.org).

²⁹⁶ Gen. 10:22 - Elam: "The Hebrew name Elam (עֵלָם, 'elam) means "highland." The Elamites were a non-Semitic people who lived east of Babylon" (NetBible note 75 appearing at Gen. 10:22). In Hebrew the name is *'éylâm* (5867), a name which means "eternity," according to BDB, appearing in StudyLight.org). This is the name of seven different men in the OT. But it also is "a province east of Babylon and northeast of the lower Tigris (*noun proper locative*)" (BDB). This designation comes from Daniel 8:2.

²⁹⁷ Gen. 10:22 - Asshur: The Biblical name for Assyria is *Ashshûr* (804). In the book of Genesis this name appears in Gen. 2:14; 10:11, 22; 25:18. "Asshur is the name for the Assyrians. Asshur was the region in which Nimrod expanded his power (see v. 11, where the name is also mentioned). When names appear in both sections of a genealogical list, it probably means that there were both Hamites and Shemites living in that region in antiquity, especially if the name is a place name" (NetBible note 76, appearing at Gen. 10:22).

²⁹⁸ Gen. 10:22 - Arpachshad: NetBible, Arphaxad – "The descendants of Arphaxad may have lived northeast of Nineveh" (NetBible note 77, appearing at Gen. 10:22). Hebrew – "*arpakshad* (775) – Arphaxad = I shall fail as the breast: he cursed the breast-bottle' – third son of Shem" (BDB, appearing in StudyLight.org). This name appears 6X in Gen. 10-11 and 3X in 1 Chronicles.

²⁹⁹ Gen. 10:22 - Lud: "Lud may have been the ancestor of the Ludbu, who lived near the Tigris River" (NetBible note 78, appearing at Gen. 10:22). According to BDB, quoted in StudyLight.org, *lûd* (3865) refers to Lud or Lydia = "strife," and refers to "the 4th listed son of Shem and supposed progenitor of the Lydians (*noun proper masculine*);" or it could refer to "descendants of Lud the son of Shem who settled in northern Africa (*noun patrial*)."

³⁰⁰ Gen. 10:22 - Aram: "Aram became the collective name of the northern tribes living in the steppes of Mesopotamia and speaking Aramaic dialects" (NetBible note 79, appearing at Gen. 10:22). Hebrew, *'ârâm* (758). BDB entry, as appearing in StudyLight.org: Aram or Arameans = "exalted" – it refers variously to (1) Aram or Syria the nation (Judges 10:6); (2) the Syrian or Aramean people (2 Sam. 8:5); (3) [as here, the] fifth son of Shem (Gen. 10:22, 23; 1 Chron. 1:17); (4) a grandson of Nahor (Gen. 22:20, 21); (5) a descendant of Asher (1 Chron. 7:30-34). See the BibleAtlas map of Aram.

³⁰¹ Gen. 10:23 - Uz, Hul, Gether, Mash: Little is known about these sons of Aram (see NetBible note 80, appearing at Gen. 10:23). Uz is *'ûts* (5780). BDB, appearing in StudyLight.org states that Uz = "wooded." He is a son of Aram and grandson of Shem. BibleAtlas places the land of Uz in Saudi Arabia to the east of Biblical Edom.

J 2 and Hul ³⁰²

J 3 and Gether ³⁰³

J 4 and Mash. ³⁰⁴

H 3 The descendants of **Arpachshad**, son of Shem 10:24-25

J 1 {24} Arpachshad ³⁰⁵ became the father of Shelah; ³⁰⁶
10:24a

J 2 and Shelah became the father of Eber. ³⁰⁷ 10:24b

J 3 {25} Two sons were born to Eber; ³⁰⁸ 10:25

K1 the name of the one *was* Peleg, ³⁰⁹ for in his
days the earth was divided; ³¹⁰

Giving some credence to that view, Job lived in the land of Uz (Job 1:1). No location is hinted at, though. Jer. 25:20 at least places it somewhere in the vicinity of Canaan. More conclusively, Jeremiah associates Edom with dwelling in the land of Uz (Lam. 4:21). Perhaps the land of western Saudi Arabia makes sense.

³⁰² Gen. 10:23 - Hul: Hebrew, *chûl* (2343). [BDB](#) (in Studylight.org) – “Hul = “circle” – the second son of Aram and grandson of Shem.” No location is hinted at. The name appears only in Gen. 10:23; 1 Chron. 1:17.

³⁰³ Gen. 10:23 - Gether: Hebrew, *gether* (1666). [BDB](#) (in Studylight.org) – “Gether = ‘fear’ – the third in order of the sons of Aram.” He appears only in Gen. 10:23; 1 Chron. 1:17.

³⁰⁴ Gen. 10:23 - Mash: Hebrew, *mash* (4851). “The MT reads “Mash”; the LXX and 1 Chr 1:17 read ‘Meshech’” ([NetBible, a portion of note 80, appearing at Gen. 10:23](#)). [BDB](#) (in Studylight.org) – “Mash = ‘drawn out’ – one of the sons of Aram; also ‘Meshech’.” The present spelling, “Mash,” appears only in Gen. 10:23.

³⁰⁵ Gen. 10:24 - Arpachshad: (775). See prior note at Gen. 10:23.

³⁰⁶ Gen. 10:24 - Shelah: “The MT reads “Arphaxad fathered Shelah”; the LXX reads “Arphaxad fathered Cainan, and Cainan fathered Sala [= Shelah].” The LXX reading also appears to lie behind Luke 3:35-36” ([NetBible note 82, appearing at Gen. 10:24](#)). Shelah, Hebrew, *shelach* (7974). [BDB](#) (appearing in Studylight.org) – “Salah or Shelah = ‘sprout’ – son of Arphaxad and father of Eber.”

³⁰⁷ Gen. 10:24 - Eber: (5677). See footnote on Eber at Gen. 10:21.

³⁰⁸ Gen. 10:25 - Eber: (5677). See footnote on Eber at Gen. 10:21.

³⁰⁹ Gen. 10:25 - Peleg: (6389), [BDB](#), as appearing in Studylight.org, “Peleg = ‘division’ – son of Eber and brother of Joktan.” Also identified as the father of Reu. See the next footnote for the meaning of “for in his days the earth was divided.”

³¹⁰ Gen. 10:25 - the name of the one *was* Peleg, for in his days the earth was divided: The name *Péleg* (6389) means “Division;” “was divided” is the [Nifal](#) Perfect of the verb *pâlág* (6385), meaning, in the [Niphal](#), “to be split, be divided” ([BDB](#)). Some have speculated Peleg’s name refers to a continental drift, in which our present day continents were divided from one another. It is far more likely that the present form of our continents took place as a result of the [Hydroplate](#) activity of the [Great Flood](#). More likely, this division of the earth took place in the form of God’s judgment on the evil rebellion of mankind at the Tower of [Babel](#) (Gen. 11:1-9). Man’s suddenly differentiated languages forced people with the same language to divide out into separate corners of the world.

K2 and his brother's name *was* Joktan.³¹¹

H 4 The sons of **Joktan**, descendant of Arpachshad, son of Shem 10:26-30

J 1 The sons of Joktan: {26} Joktan became the father of

K1 Almodad³¹²

K2 and Sheleph³¹³

K3 and Hazarmaveth³¹⁴

K4 and Jerah³¹⁵

K5 {27} and Hadoram³¹⁶

K6 and Uzal³¹⁷

“The expression “the earth was divided” may refer to dividing the land with canals, but more likely it anticipates the division of languages at Babel (Gen 11). The verb פָּלַג (palag, “separate, divide”) is used in Ps 55:9 for a division of languages” ([NetBible, note 84, appearing at Gen. 10:25](#)).

³¹¹ Gen. 10:25 - Joktan: Hebrew, *yoqtân* (3355). [BDB](#), appearing in StudyLight.org, “Joktan = ‘smallness’ – son of Eber and descendant of Shem and patriarch of various Arabian tribes.”

³¹² Gen. 10:26 - Almodad: Hebrew, *‘almôdâd* (486). [BDB](#), appearing in StudyLight.org, “Almodad = ‘not measured’ – a descendant of Shem.” “The name Almodad combines the Arabic article al with modad (“friend”). Almodad was the ancestor of a South Arabian people” ([NetBible.org, note 86, appearing at Gen. 10:26](#)). Almodad was the son of Joktan and brother of Sheleph and others.

³¹³ Gen. 10:26 - Sheleph: Hebrew, *sheleph*, (8026). [BDB](#), appearing in StudyLight.org, “Sheleph = ‘a drawing forth’ – the second son of Joktan and a descendant of Shem.” “The name Sheleph may be related to Shilph, a district of Yemen; Shalph is a Yemenite tribe” ([NetBible.org, note 87, appearing at Gen. 10:27](#)).

³¹⁴ Gen. 10:26 - Hazarmaveth: Hebrew, *châtsarmâveth* (2700). [BDB](#), appearing in StudyLight.org, “Hazarmaveth = ‘village of death’ – the 3rd in order of the sons of Joktan (*noun proper masculine*).” “The name Hazarmaveth should be equated with Hadramawt, located in Southern Arabia” ([NetBible.org, note 88, appearing at Gen. 10:26](#)).

“Hazarmaveth (Hebrew chatsarmaweth), the name of a son of Joktan attached to a clan or district in South Arabia (Genesis 10:26 1 Chronicles 1:20). It is represented by the modern Chadramaut, a broad and fruitful valley running nearly parallel with the coast for about 100 miles, north of el-Yemen. The ruins and inscriptions found by Glaser show that it was once the home of a great civilization, the capital being Sabata (Genesis 10:7) (Glaser, Skizze, II, 20, 423)” (Portion of an article in [BibleAtlas.org](#)).

³¹⁵ Gen. 10:26 - Jerah: Hebrew, *yerach* (3392). [BDB](#), appearing in StudyLight.org, “Jerah = ‘new moon’ – a 4th son of Joktan and progenitor of an Arabian tribe.” This name appears only in Gen. 10:26 and 1 Chron. 1:20.

³¹⁶ Gen. 10:27 - Hadoram: Hebrew, *hâdôrâm* (1913). [BDB](#), appearing in StudyLight.org, “Hadoram = “noble honour” – (1) the 5th son of Joktan; (2) a son of Tou, king of Hamath ...; (3) the intendant of taxes under David, Solomon, and Rehoboam; also called ‘Adoniram’ and ‘Adoram.’”

³¹⁷ Gen. 10:27 - Uzal: Hebrew, *‘ûzâl* (187). [BDB](#), appearing in StudyLight.org, “Uzal = ‘I shall be flooded’ – sixth son of Joktan.” According to BibleAtlas.org [Uzal](#) as a place name “is identical with the Arabic ‘Auzal, the old capital of Yemen ...” [NetBible.org note 90](#), appearing at Gen. 10:27 reads, “Uzal was the name of the old capital of

K7 and Diklah ³¹⁸

K8 {28} and Obal ³¹⁹

K9 and Abimael ³²⁰

K10 and Sheba ³²¹

K11 {29} and Ophir ³²²

K12 and Havilah ³²³

K13 and Jobab; ³²⁴ all these were the sons of Joktan.

Yemen.”

³¹⁸ Gen. 10:27 - Diklah: [NetBible note 91](#), appearing at Gen. 10:27, “The name Diklah means ‘date-palm.’” Hebrew, *diqlāh* (1853). [BDB](#), appearing in [StudyLight.org](#), “Diklah = ‘palm grove’ – (1) a son of Joktan of Arabia (*noun proper masculine*); (2) an Arabian territory or people? (*noun proper locative*).”

³¹⁹ Gen. 10:28 - Obal: Hebrew, *’ōbāl* (5745). [BDB](#), appearing in [StudyLight.org](#), “Obal = ‘stripped bare’ – a son of Joktan and the founder of an Arab tribe.” [NetBible note 92](#), appearing at Gen. 10:28, “Obal was a name used for several localities in Yemen.”

³²⁰ Gen. 10:28 - Abimael: Hebrew, *’ābīmā’ēl* (39). [BDB](#), appearing in [StudyLight.org](#), “Abimael = ‘my father is El (*God*)’ – son of Joktan, descendant of Shem.” [NetBible, note 93](#), appearing at Gen. 10:28, “The name Abimael is a genuine Sabean form which means ‘my father, truly, he is God.’”

³²¹ Gen. 10:28 - Sheba: [NetBible.org, note 94](#), appearing at Gen. 10:28, “The descendants of Sheba lived in South Arabia, where the Joktanites were more powerful than the Hamites.” Hebrew, *shebā’* (7614). [BDB](#), appearing in [StudyLight.org](#), “Sheba = ‘seven’ or ‘an oath’ – (1) son of Joktan and a descendant of Seth (*noun proper masculine*) (4) a nation in southern Arabia (*noun proper locative*).” See [BibleAtlas.org](#) designation of the nation of [Sheba](#).

³²² Gen. 10:29 - Ophir: Hebrew, *’ōphir* (211). [BDB](#), appearing in [StudyLight.org](#), “Ophir = ‘reducing to ashes’ – (1) eleventh son of Joktan; (2) a land or city in southern Arabia in Solomon’s trade route where gold was evidently traded for goods; (3) characteristic of fine gold; (4) fine gold.” [NetBible.org, note 95](#), appearing at Gen. 10:29, “Ophir became the name of a territory in South Arabia. Many of the references to Ophir are connected with gold (e.g., 1 Kgs 9:28, 10:11, 22:48; 1 Chr 29:4; 2 Chr 8:18, 9:10; Job 22:24, 28:16; Ps 45:9; Isa 13:12).”

³²³ Gen. 10:29 - Havilah: Hebrew, *chāvīylāh* (2341). [BDB](#), appearing in [StudyLight.org](#), “Havilah = ‘circle’ – 1) a part of Eden through which flowed the river Pison (Araxes); was probably the Grecian Colchis, in the northeast corner of Asia Minor, near the Caspian Sea (*noun proper locative*); 2) a district in Arabia of the Ishmaelites named from the 2nd son of Cush; probably the district of Kualan, in the northwestern part of Yemen (*noun proper locative*); 3) a son of Cush (*noun proper masculine*); 4) a son of Joktan (*noun proper masculine*). [NetBible.org, note 96, appearing at Gen. 10:29](#), “Havilah is listed with Ham in v. 7.” [JTB](#): I do not know the intent of this comment. But it almost seems as though [NetBible](#) is questioning the validity of the name “Havilah” appearing under two different ancestors. My response is this: The appearance of the name “Havilah” under two different ancestors should not be taken as a contradiction in the Biblical account. Obviously Ham had a descendant named “Havilah” (Gen. 10:6, 7), and so did Shem (Gen. 10:21, 29, 31). It is not uncommon for different people to give the same name to different children. I, for example, have two grandsons named “Levi.”

³²⁴ Gen. 10:29 - Jobab: Hebrew, *yōbāb* (3103). [BDB](#), appearing in [StudyLight.org](#), “Jobab = ‘a desert’ – (1) the last in order of the sons of Joktan, a descendant of Shem; (2) one of the kings of Edom; (3) the king of Madon located in northern Canaan, and one of the kings who opposed Joshua during the conquest and who were routed at Meron; (4) head of a Benjamite house; (5) another Benjamite.”

10:26-29

- J 2 The settlement of the sons of Joktan: {30} Now their settlement extended from Mesha³²⁵ as you go toward Sephar,³²⁶ the hill country of the east. 10:30
- H 5 The summary statement of the sons of Shem: {31} These are the sons of Shem, 10:31
- J 1 according to their families,
- J 2 according to their languages,
- J 3 by their lands,
- J 4 according to their nations.
- G 4 Summary statement about repopulation of the earth through Noah's sons 10:32
- H 1 {32} These are the families of the sons of Noah,³²⁷
- H 2 according to their genealogies,³²⁸
- H 3 by their nations;
- H 4 and out of these the nations were separated on the earth after the flood.
- D 2 The culmination of **rebellion** at Babel: God's judgmental dispersion of mankind 11:1-9
- E 1 **Man's Rebellion – Centralization:** The purpose of men to build a city and tower as a rallying point in their rebellion against God to unite instead of repopulating the earth 11:1-4
- G 1 **Condition:** Same language: {1} Now the whole earth used the

³²⁵ Gen. 10:30 - Mesha: Hebrew, *mêshâ'* (4852). [BDB](#), appearing in [StudyLight.org](#), "Mesha = 'freedom' – a region one of the limits of the territory of the Joktanites when they first settled in Arabia."

³²⁶ Gen. 10:30 - Sephar: Hebrew, *sephâr* (5611). [BDB](#), appearing in [StudyLight.org](#), "Sephar = 'a numbering' – a place in southern Arabia." This place name appears only here in the NT. [BibleAtlas.org](#), map of [Sephar](#) in Arabia.

³²⁷ Gen. 10:32 - families of the sons of Noah: Every person alive on the earth today is genetically related to Noah. Additionally every person on earth is genetically related to one of Noah's sons. Extra genetic information came from Noah's unnamed wife. Additionally, every person alive today has genetic information derived from one of the three unnamed wives of Noah's sons, Shem, Ham, or Japheth.

³²⁸ Gen. 10:32 - genealogies: Hebrew, plural of *tôledâh* (8435). [BDB](#), appearing in [StudyLight.org](#), "(1) descendants, results, proceedings, generations, genealogies (1a) account of men and their descendants (1a1) genealogical list of one's descendants"

same language and the same words.³²⁹ 11:1

G 2 **Migration:** Their movement east to the plain of Shinar 11:2

H 1 Their journey: {2} It came about as they journeyed east,

H 2 Their settlement: that they found a plain in the land of Shinar³³⁰ and settled there.

G 3 **Technology:** Their technological advance: {3} They said to one another,

H 1 Their proposal: “Come, let us make bricks and burn them thoroughly.”³³¹

H 2 Their technology

J 1 Bricks: And they used brick for stone,

J 2 Mortar: and they used tar for mortar. 11:3

G 4 Their proposal to build 11:4

H 1 The items to build

J 1 A city: {4} They said, “Come, let us build for ourselves a city,

J 2 A tower whose top will reach to heaven: and a tower whose top will reach into heaven,³³²

H 2 The motives to build

³²⁹ Gen. 11:1 - Now the whole earth used the same language and the same words: The modern world has been indoctrinated (may I say brain-washed) with the assumed and unproven dogma of evolution. Philologists assume that languages were originally polyglot, having developed from different people at different places. They are wrong. The whole earth originally spoke a unilanguage. We have no idea what that original language was.

³³⁰ Gen. 11:2 - Shinar: NetBible.org, a portion of note 5, appearing in Gen. 11, “*Shinar* is the region of Babylonia.”

³³¹ Gen. 11:3 - let us make bricks and burn *them* thoroughly: “The speech contains two cohortatives of exhortation followed by their respective cognate accusatives: “let us brick bricks” (מִיִּבְנֵה הַבְּרִיקָה, *nilbناه lvenim*) and “burn for burning” (הַפְּרִישׁ לִשְׂרֵפָה, *nisrfah lisrefah*). This stresses the intensity of the undertaking; it also reflects the Akkadian text which uses similar constructions (see E. A. Speiser, Genesis [AB], 75-76)” (NetBible.org, note 7, appearing in Genesis 11).

³³² Gen. 11:4 - a tower whose top *will reach* into heaven: “A translation of “heavens” for שָׁמַיִם (*shamayim*) fits this context because the Babylonian ziggurats had temples at the top, suggesting they reached to the heavens, the dwelling place of the gods” (NetBible.org, note 10, appearing in Genesis 11).

J 1 Pride: and let us make for ourselves a name,³³³

J 2 Rebellion: otherwise we will be scattered abroad over the face of the whole earth.”³³⁴

E 2 **God's Judgment – Multiplication:** His proliferation of man's languages, thus guaranteeing disunity and consequent repopulation of the earth through dispersion 11:5-9

G 1 **Inspection:** {5} The LORD came down to see the city and the tower which the sons of men had built. 11:5

G 2 **Evaluation:** 11:6a

H 1 Unity: {6} The LORD said, “Behold, they are one people,

H 2 Communication: and they all have the same language.

G 3 **Projection** 11:6b

H 1 The novel precedent: And this is what they began to do,

H 2 The unnerving trend: and now nothing which they purpose to do will be impossible for them.³³⁵

G 4 **Determination** 11:7

H 1 Disruption: {7} “Come, let Us go down and there confuse their language,

³³³ Gen. 11:4 - make a name for ourselves: There was hubris here.

³³⁴ Gen. 11:4 - otherwise we will be scattered abroad over the face of the whole earth: God had commanded Noah and his sons, “Be fruitful and multiply, and fill the earth” (Gen. 9:1). This plot of the people on the plain of Shinar was deliberate rebellion against the command of God. God saw their planned rebellion as resulting in terrible evil. The evil was so unspeakable that God put an instant and effect stop to their insurrection.

I believe the construction of the city of [Babylon](#) and its tower was the first attempt at the United Nations. Though most believe the United Nations is a noble and worthwhile enterprise, I see it differently. When the Nations of the World unite, they inevitably represent an anti-God, anti-Christ, and anti-Israeli point of view. Today the United Nations promotes world-wide such evils as abortion, homosexuality, and one-world government. The UN is profoundly pro-Palestinian and anti-[Israel](#), and anti-American. The UN will eventually support the Godless, controlling, murderous global threat of the [Antichrist](#) (Rev. 13:1-18) and, for awhile, the [evil prostitute, Babylon the Great](#) (Rev. 17:1-19:6).

³³⁵ Gen. 11:6 - and now nothing which they purpose to do will be impossible for them: When the nations of the world unite to defy what God has told them to do, there is no stopping the evil that they will commit. That is why the godless United Nations is so dangerous. When the [Church](#) has been removed from the earth at the [Rapture](#), there will be no stopping the great evil the nations of the world unite to perform. The [Holy Spirit](#) in the [Church](#) is now restraining the “mystery of lawlessness” which “is already at work ...” (2 Thess. 2:6-7). “The One now restraining will do so until He departs from the midst” (literal rendering of 2 Thess. 2:7). The departure of the [Holy Spirit](#) in the [Church](#) will result in “[the apostasy](#)” (2 Thess. 2:3) and the unveiling of “[The Lawless One](#)” (2 Thess. 2:8) that begins “[the Day of the Lord](#)” (2 Thess. 2:2) – that time of great trouble upon the earth known as the [Tribulation](#). The “[Man of Lawlessness](#)” (2 Thess. 2:3) will commit unspeakable evil (2 Thess. 2:4; Rev. 13:1-18). The evil of the United Nations will be overthrown when the King of Kings returns in great power and glory to destroy the evil world ruler and his minions (Psalm 2:1-12; 2 Thess. 1:6-10; 2:8-12; Rev. 19:11-21).

H 2 Resultant confusion: so that they will not understand one another's speech."

G 5 Action 11:8

H 1 **Global dispersion:** {8} So the LORD scattered them abroad from there over the face of the whole earth;

H 2 **Project-halting frustration:** and they stopped building the city.

G 6 Explanation 11:9

H 1 **Nomenclature:** {9} Therefore its name was called Babel,³³⁶

H 2 **Explanation**

J 1 Confusion: because there the LORD confused the language of the whole earth;³³⁷

J 2 Dispersion: and from there the LORD scattered them abroad over the face of the whole earth.³³⁸

³³⁶ Gen. 11:9 - Babel: [NASB](#) note: "Or *Babylon*; cf. Heb. *balal*, confuse." [JTB]: Heb. *bâbel* (894). Later Babylonians considered their city to have been built in heaven by the gods as a celestial city. It was built with mud bricks in a similar process as described in Gen. 11:3. They constructed a ziggurat and built a shrine at the top as a dwelling for certain gods. This was located in the private headquarters of Marduk, the king of the gods ([Enuma Elish VI, lines 53-64](#)). They called the city Bab-ili – "The Gate of God" ([Enuma Elish VI, lines 70-72](#)). Archeologists tell us that every brick was inscribed with the name of the Babylonian god, Marduk (Allen P. Ross, Genesis, [TBKC](#)).

Ever since Nimrod founded [Babylon](#) (Gen. 10:8-10), it has symbolized rebellion against God. That trend was profoundly amplified at the ill-fated construction of the city and the tower (Gen. 11:1-4). Later God used [Babylon](#) to destroy and deport Judah in 606, 597, and 586 B.C. It is no surprise that the final form of [Babylon](#) will be deemed an evil [prostitute](#) in defiance of God, in the form of a false religion with profound world-wide, murderous political influence (Rev. 17:1-18:24). That will be in sharp contrast with [New Jerusalem](#) portrayed as, and populated by the pure [Bride of Christ](#) and redeemed [Sons of Israel](#) of all ages (Rev. 21:1-22:5).

³³⁷ Gen. 11:9 - because there the LORD confused the language of the whole earth: "confused" is the [Qal Perfect](#) of the verb *bâlâl* (1101), which means to "mingle, mix, confuse, confound" ([BDB](#)). The Perfect aspect indicates, not a gradual, but a completed process. The confusion was immediate. There is a play on words here. The Hebrew *bâlâl* (confuse) sounds similar to the Hebrew *bâbel* (Babel), the name of the city of [Babylon](#). The confused languages were immediate and world-wide. There was no evolutionary process here.

God originally created one man and one woman. They, of course, spoke the same language, as did their descendants. God's multiplication of languages was a judgment to prevent united, unthinkably evil human rebellion. Presumably in [New Jerusalem](#) and upon [New Earth](#), we will all speak the same language, for there will be no rebels defying God there.

³³⁸ Gen. 11:9 - and from there the LORD scattered them abroad over the face of the whole earth: "scattered" is the [Hifil Perfect](#) of the verb *pûts* (6327), meaning here "scattered" or "dispersed." Though this process likely took a little time as people found others who could speak their language and moved to different parts of the globe, [Moses](#) views the scattering as a finished, completed event. Language, not race, was the major factor in why certain groups of people moved to certain parts of our earth. The subsequent in-breeding developed into racial characteristics. The first humans after the [Flood](#) necessarily originated from Mesopotamia, not Africa. The oldest unearthed human fossils, of course, were caused by the world-wide devastation of the [Flood](#). Human remains found in burial sites (such as the pyramids of Egypt) were most likely post-[Flood](#), and post-[Babel](#). It is highly unlikely the pyramids and other burial sites would have survived the hydrological and geological devastation caused by the [Flood](#). This

SECTION VI. WHAT BECAME OF SHEM. 11:10-26

A 3 GOD'S UNCONDITIONAL COVENANT OF *BLESSING* BY SOVEREIGN
ELECTION THROUGH FAITH 11:10 - 50:26B 1 God's Elective *Blessing* of Abraham 11:10 - 25:18C 1 The introduction of the one to be *blessed*: The genealogy from Noah's son Shem to Abram 11:10-32³³⁹

D 1 Shem 11:10-11

E 1 The Title – The generations of Shem: *{10}* These are *the records of* the generations of Shem.³⁴⁰ 11:10

E 2 Shem's begetting of Arpachshad at the age of 100

G 1 His age: Shem was one hundred years old,

G 2 The date of his fathering Arpachshad: and became the father of Arpachshad two years after the flood;

E 3 Shem's post-Arpachshad career 11:11

G 1 His post-Arpachshad life-span: *{11}* and Shem lived five hundred years³⁴¹ after he became the father of Arpachshad,

dispersion was likely in the days of Peleg (Gen. 10:25).

³³⁹ Need to link important terms: Gen. 11:10-32 - Title – The genealogy from Noah's son Shem to Abram: Obviously, in the narrative of Genesis, Abram is a pivotal character. As the record will demonstrate, Abram, later Abraham, and his son of promise, Isaac, and Isaac's son of promise, Jacob, are the special objects of God's favor and His choice. God will seek to bless the world through this blood line. Ultimately that blessing will come through Jacob's twelve sons, who will become the Nation of Israel. Even though Israel, for millennia, because of disobedience, has been outside God's full favor, God is not through with the nation. The promised Messiah would be born through Israel. Ultimately, Israel will be the leading nation of the world through the regime established in New Jerusalem (Rev. 21:2, 10, 12). God's plan was also to bless Gentiles. Redeemed Gentiles will inhabit New Earth (Rev. 21:24, 26). And Gentiles of the Church Age will live in New Jerusalem, along with redeemed Israelis (Rev. 21:9-10, 14).

There is no valid exegetical reason to hypothesize gaps or enormous amounts of time into these genealogies. Biblical exegetes should not be cowed by scientists' theories for enormous amounts of time based on flawed premises. See the article by Dr. Rick Freeman entitled, "Do the Genesis Genealogies Contain Gaps?" See also the article by Dr. Terry Mortenson and Dr. John Morris entitled, "The Key to the Age of the Earth."

³⁴⁰ Gen. 11:10 - These are *the records of* the generations of Shem: "generations" is the plural of *tôledâh* (8435). In this context it can be translated, "This is what became of Shem."

³⁴¹ Gen. 11:11 - five hundred years: Shem's total life span was approximately 600 years. (It is difficult to know whether his precise age at death was 600 or 602. We will use the round number of 600 years.) The precipitous decline in Shem's life-expectancy compared to that of his father Noah, who lived to be 950 (Gen. 9:29) confirms that living conditions *after* the collapse of the Water Vapor Canopy in the Great Flood were not nearly as amenable to longevity as they were *prior* to the Flood. I believe there was a significantly greater exposure to harmful solar ultraviolet rays *after* the Flood as contrasted with conditions *before* the Flood. See "The Declining Life Span of the Patriarchs."

G 2 His begetting of other children: and he had *other* sons and daughters.

D 2 Arpachshad 11:12-13

E 1 Arpachshad's begetting of Shelah at the age of 35: {12} Arpachshad lived thirty-five years, and became the father of Shelah; 11:12

E 2 Arpachshad's post-Shelah career 11:13

G 1 His post-Shelah life-span: {13} and Arpachshad³⁴² lived four hundred and three years after he became the father of Shelah,

G 2 His begetting of other children: and he had *other* sons and daughters.

D 3 Shelah 11:14-15

E 1 Shelah's begetting of Eber at 30: {14} Shelah lived thirty years, and became the father of Eber; 11:14

E 2 Shelah's post-Eber career 11:15

G 1 His post-Eber life-span: {15} and Shelah³⁴³ lived four hundred and three years after he became the father of Eber,

G 2 His begetting of other children: and he had *other* sons and daughters.

D 4 Eber 11:16-17

E 1 Eber's begetting of Peleg at 34: {16} Eber lived thirty-four years, and became the father of Peleg; 11:16

E 2 Eber's post-Peleg career 11:17

G 1 His post-Peleg life-span: {17} and Eber³⁴⁴ lived four hundred and thirty years after he became the father of Peleg,

G 2 His begetting of other children: and he had *other* sons and daughters.

D 5 Peleg (Earth divided through language multiplication) 11:18-19

E 1 Peleg's begetting of Reu at 30: {18} Peleg lived thirty years, and

³⁴² Gen. 11:13 - Arpachshad: [Arpachshad's life-expectancy](#) was a mere 438 years, less than half that of his Pre-Flood ancestors.

³⁴³ Gen. 11:14 - Shelah: His [life-expectancy was 433 years](#), not that much different than that of his father.

³⁴⁴ Gen. 11:17 - Eber: [Eber lived 464 years](#), slightly longer than either his father or his grandfather.

became the father of Reu; 11:18

E 2 Peleg's post-Reu career 11:19

G 1 His post-Reu life-span: {19} and Peleg³⁴⁵ lived two hundred and nine years after he became the father of Reu,

G 2 His begetting of other children: and he had *other* sons and daughters.

D 6 Reu 11:20-21

E 1 Reu's begetting of Serug at 32: {20} Reu lived thirty-two years, and became the father of Serug; 11:20

E 2 Reu's post-Serug career 11:21

G 1 His post-Reu life-span: {21} and Reu³⁴⁶ lived two hundred and seven years after he became the father of Serug,

G 2 His begetting of other children: and he had *other* sons and daughters.

D 7 Serug 11:22-23

E 1 Serug's begetting of Nahor at 30: {22} Serug lived thirty years, and became the father of Nahor; 11:22

E 2 Serug's post-Nahor career 11:23

G 1 His post-Nahor life-span: {23} and Serug³⁴⁷ lived two hundred years after he became the father of Nahor,

G 2 His begetting of other children: and he had *other* sons and daughters.

D 8 Nahor 11:24-25

E 1 Nahor's begetting of Terah at 29: {24} Nahor lived twenty-nine years, and became the father of Terah; 11:24

³⁴⁵ Gen. 11:19 - Peleg: Once again, [Peleg's life-expectancy](#) dropped drastically, compared with that of his father, grandfather, and great-grandfather. He was a mere 239 when he died. He was the first of three consecutive generations to maintain a mere two centuries + range of life-expectancy. [Peleg's life-expectancy](#) was only a fourth of that of his pre-[Flood](#) ancestors. We were told that the earth was divided during his life (Gen. 10:25), probably a reference to the dispersion of all of humanity over the earth based on language compatibility (Gen. 11:1-9).

³⁴⁶ Gen. 11:21 - Reu: [Reu lived 239 years](#), the same as his father, Peleg. But their life span was about a fourth of that of their pre-[Flood](#) ancestors.

³⁴⁷ Gen. 11:23 - Serug: [Serug lived 230 years](#), 9 years less than his father and grandfather, almost exactly a fourth that of his pre-[Flood](#) ancestors. He was the last of three consecutive generations that would attain to at least 200 years.

E 2 Nahor's post-Terah career 11:25

G 1 His post-Terah life-span: {25} and Nahor ³⁴⁸ lived one hundred and nineteen years after he became the father of Terah,

G 2 His begetting of other children: and he had *other* sons and daughters.

D 9 Terah 11:26

E 1 Terah's life of 70 years: {26} Terah lived seventy years,

E 2 His begetting of three sons: and became the father of Abram, Nahor and Haran.

SECTION VII. WHAT BECAME OF TERAH. 11:27 - 25:11

D 10 The generations of Terah, including his departure from Ur with [Abram](#) and Lot to Haran 11:27-32

E 1 The title: {27} Now these are *the records* of the generations of Terah.³⁴⁹

E 2 The sons of Terah: Terah became the father of Abram,³⁵⁰ Nahor and

³⁴⁸ Gen. 11:25 - Nahor: Nahor, Abram's grandfather, shockingly, [lived but 148 years](#), an abrupt decline compared to the three preceding generations. Both his son Terah (205 years) and his grandson Abram / Abraham (175 years, Gen. 25:7) outlived him.

³⁴⁹ Gen. 11:27 - Now these are *the records* of the generations of Terah: Notice that the words "the records of" do not appear in the Hebrew text. The text reads very simply, "And these are generations of Terah." The word "generations" is the plural *toledoth* ([8435](#)) from the presumed singular *tôledâh*, which, however, never appears in the Hebrew Bible. *Toledoth* appears 39X in the OT, always in the plural. According to [BDB](#) (appearing in [Biblioi 8.0](#)) it means, especially in genealogies, "account of a man and his descendants." We could paraphrase this initial statement in Gen. 11:27, "Now here is what became of Terah." Somewhat shocking to us linear thinkers, "What became of Terah," from Gen. 11:27 - 25:11 is primarily the account of Abraham.

Defending [Moses](#), however, the story line is not just about Abraham. This section also includes Abram's brother **Haran**, whose son was Lot, who accompanied Abram into Canaan (Gen. 12:5), settled in Sodom (Gen. 13:12), was kidnapped from Sodom (Gen. 14), and was rescued by angels from Sodom (Gen. 19).

Moreover this history also includes Abram's brother Nahor, who married Milcah, the daughter of Haran (Gen. 11:29). Later we are told that Milcah bore to Nahor several sons, including Bethuel, who became the father of Rebecca (Gen. 22:20-23). Rebekah would become the wife of Abraham's son Isaac (Gen. 24).

This all seems a bit incestuous, or nearly so, to us westerners. But nothing was amiss in that culture. Abraham, for example, married his half sister (Gen. 20:11-13). In our modern culture we have laws preventing too close a marriage to prevent mutations from inbreeding. My point is that, although Abram is the main character in Gen. 11:27-25:11, the descendants of his brothers Haran and Nahor, also sons of Terah, also figure into the narrative in significant, if not substantial manner. This section is truly "what became of Terah (and his family)." The next *toledoth* will appear in Gen. 25:12, 13, "What became of Ishmael, Abram's son whom Hagar the Egyptian, Sarai's maid, bore to Abraham."

³⁵⁰ Gen. 11:27 - Abram: Abram, later Abraham, will be the central figure in this *toledoth*, from Gen. 11:27-25:11. He will be the object of God's elective call (Gen. 12:1-3), the father of the promised seed Isaac, in turn the father of the chosen seed Jacob, later Israel, the progenitor of the twelve [sons of Israel](#), who eventually form God's chosen nation, the Nation of Israel, from whom the Messiah is born. Tragically, Abram also became the father of Ishmael by Hagar the Egyptian. Muslim Arabs tie their religion to Ishmael, son of Abram. So in a real sense, Abram is the father of three competing religions, Judaism, Christianity, and Islam. The wars and bloodshed between

Haran;

E 3 The career of Haran

G 1 His begetting of Lot: and Haran became the father of Lot. ³⁵¹

G 2 His premature death 11:28

H 1 The time and circumstances of his death: {28} Haran died in the presence of his father Terah in the land of his birth,

H 2 The place of his death: in Ur of the Chaldeans.

E 4 The marriages of [Abram](#) and Nahor 11:29-30

G 1 The announcement of their marriages: {29} Abram and Nahor took wives for themselves. 11:29

G 2 The identities of their wives

H 1 The name of Abram's wife was Sarai; ³⁵²

H 2 and the name of Nahor's wife was Milcah, the daughter of Haran, the father of Milcah and Iscah.

G 3 The barrenness of [Abram's](#) wife: {30} Sarai was barren; she had no child. ³⁵³ 11:30

adherents of these three religions has been staggering down through the centuries.

³⁵¹ Gen. 11:27 - Lot: Hebrew, *lôt* (3876), the proper name identifying the son of Haran, grandson of Terah, and nephew of [Abram](#), later [Abraham](#). Lot is a side character whose name will crop up again in the Genesis narrative. He became the protégé of Terah, his grandfather, after his own father, Haran died in Ur of the Chaldees. After Terah died in Haran, Lot became the protégé of his uncle [Abram](#). In Canaan, the flocks of the uncle and nephew became too great to be sustained in the same area. So [Abram](#) gave Lot his choice of real estate, and he, sadly, settled in Sodom, a wicked city (Gen. 13). Later the people of Sodom, including Lot, were kidnaped, and [Abram](#) was forced to rescue them (Gen. 14). When the evil of Sodom became so great God had to destroy the city, two angels rescued Lot, his wife, and their two daughters. Lot's wife perished by looking back longingly at the city (Gen. 19). In the NT Lot is mentioned in Luke 17:28-32, and in 2 Pet. 2:7, where he was identified as a righteous man, distressed by the depraved conduct of the lawless people surrounding him (2 Pet. 2:7-9). In the same passage he is set forward as evidence that the Lord knows how to rescue the godly from trials and to hold the unrighteous for punishment on the day of judgment! In Luke 17:28-32, Jesus used the sudden destruction that fell upon the city of Sodom after Lot's departure to the sudden destruction that will befall Godless people at Christ's return!

³⁵² Gen. 11:29 - Sarai: Hebrew *sâray* (8297), "princess." This was her given name, and it appears 17X, only in Genesis. God later (Gen. 17:15) changed it to "Sarah" (*sârâh*, 8283), variously designated as "princess," merely a variation of Sarai; also "noblewoman," "lady," "gentlewoman." According to [NetBible, note 37](#) at Gen. 17:15, "Sarah. The name change seems to be a dialectical variation, both spellings meaning "princess" or "queen." Like the name Abram, the name Sarai symbolized the past. The new name Sarah, like the name Abraham, would be a reminder of what God intended to do for Sarah in the future."

³⁵³ Gen. 11:30 - Sarai was barren; she had no child: This biological fact would be a driving force in the ensuing narrative. It would lead to the disastrous decision by Sarai to give her Egyptian slave girl Hagar to Abram as a concubine. Hagar was indeed fertile, and she bore Abram Ishmael (Gen. 16:1-15), the opponent and rival to God's plan, Isaac, the child of promise who was miraculously conceived when Sarai / Sarah was not only barren, but had

- E 5 The departure of Terah with part of his family from Ur of the Chaldeans for [Canaan](#) 11:31
- G 1 The names of those accompanying Terah
- H 1 {31} Terah took Abram his son,
- H 2 and Lot the son of Haran, his grandson,
- H 3 and Sarai his daughter-in-law, his son Abram's wife;
- G 2 Their point of departure: and they went out together from Ur of the Chaldeans
- G 3 Their projected destination: in order to enter the land of Canaan,³⁵⁴
- G 4 Their settling in Haran instead: and they went as far as Haran,³⁵⁵ and settled there.
- E 6 The death of Terah in Haran: {32} The days of Terah³⁵⁶ were two hundred and five years; and Terah died in Haran.

C 2 The inaugural promise of *blessing* 12:1-9

- D 1 God's promise of universal *blessing* to and through [Abram](#) and his posterity 12:1-3

reached the stage of menopause (Gen. 17:15-19; 21:1-7).

³⁵⁴ Gen. 11:31 - to enter the land of Canaan: The details of the move from Ur to Canaan seem a little murky to me. Obviously, through [Moses](#), the story reads exactly as God intended, so I am not questioning the accuracy, reliability, or style of the narrative. Here is my interpretation: (1) Yahweh spoke only to Abram (Gen. 12:1-3) when he was in Ur of the Chaldees (Gen. 15:7; Acts 7:2). God commanded him to leave his country, his father's house, and his relatives to the land He would show him (Gen. 12:1). We will discuss the other details at Gen. 12:1-3. (2) Terah, Abram's father, obviously heard from Abram what Yahweh had told his son. (3) Apparently also affirming his faith in Abram's new God, Terah took Abram, his now fatherless grandson Lot, and Sarai, his daughter-in-law and headed for Canaan, departing from Ur of the Chaldees (Gen. 11:31). (4) For reasons unstated in the text, the trip to Canaan stalled in Haran, well-situated in the "Fertile Crescent" (Gen. 11:31). (5) Subsequently, Terah died (Gen. 11:32) (6) This freed Abram to continue on his journey to Canaan, now accompanied only by his wife Sarai and his nephew Lot (Gen. 12:4-5).

³⁵⁵ Gen. 11:31 - Haran: Hebrew, *chârân* (2771). [Haran](#) is actually located in modern day Syria on a tributary of the Euphrates River. This verse records that they settled there. Why? We are not told. Since the next verse records Terah's death, I speculate that the journey grew too great, and the destination too non-specific for Terah. He had been a city-dweller all his life. To live in a land apart from any city was, perhaps, too much for him. Perhaps he felt he was reaching the end of his days. Perhaps he told Abram, "Look, I can't keep going on this trip. I will stay here and you continue on without me." I can imagine Abram saying, "Father, I will never leave you on your own." And so he stayed with his father until the latter died. Then he and Sarai and Lot were free to continue on their journey.

³⁵⁶ Gen. 11:32 - Terah: Terah, father of Abraham, lived to be 205 years old. His is the last age-of-death recorded in Genesis 11. Abraham's age of 175 years at death will not be recorded until Gen. 25:7. Abraham is not included in the table of the [Declining Life Span of Patriarchs](#). The longevity of Post-Flood patriarchs was but 36% that of Pre-Flood patriarchs.

- E 1 The **terms of blessing**: {1} Now the LORD said to Abram,³⁵⁷ “Go forth 12:1
- G 1 from your country,³⁵⁸
- G 2 And from your relatives³⁵⁹
- G 3 And from your father's house,³⁶⁰
- G 4 To the land which I will show you;³⁶¹

³⁵⁷ Gen. 12:1 - Now the LORD said to [Abram](#): This marks the first and only instance of [Yahweh's](#) singling out one person, selected members of his descendants, and, from them, a particular nation as His own unique people. In NT terms, we would call this [Election](#), God's [Sovereign](#) choice of certain people to be His own, irrespective of their merits. The promised seed of [Abraham](#) would include his son Isaac (not Ishmael), Jacob (not Esau) and the descendants of the twelve sons of Jacob, later renamed [Israel](#). Within the nation of [Israel](#) there was a much smaller segment (often called the “[remnant](#)” – Isa. 11:11; Jer. 23:3) who would trust in the God of [Israel](#). Blood descent in and of itself, was insufficient. The only blood descendants of [Abraham](#), Isaac, and Jacob who would benefit *eternally* from a relationship with God would be those who also trusted in Him.

God would make an unconditional, irrevocable covenant with [Abram](#) in Genesis 15. We call this covenant the [Abrahamic Covenant](#). The sign of the covenant was [circumcision](#) (Genesis 17). God's blessing of the nation of [Israel](#) in any generation was conditioned upon faith, demonstrated by obedience (Deut. 28), but the ultimate faithfulness of eschatological [Israel](#) is guaranteed under the terms of the [New Covenant](#) (Jer. 31:27-37). For further study, see [Abrahamic Covenant](#), [New Covenant](#), and “[God's Part in Salvation – Election](#).”

The [Church](#) is not the New [Israel](#), and throughout eternity there is not merely one people of God. Just as God Himself is a TriUnity comprised of three distinct persons who make up One God, so there will be, in eternity three distinct peoples who will experience unity as the people of God. These three distinct people groupings are (redeemed) [Israel](#), the [Church](#), and redeemed [Nations](#) who are neither part of [Israel](#) nor the [Church](#). This is clear from John's depiction of the [Eternal State](#) in Revelation 21:1-22:5. Today, [Messianic Jews](#) have dual citizenship. They are members both of the [Church](#) and of [Israel](#).

³⁵⁸ Gen. 12:1 - from your country: Abram's first act of obedience was to leave his country, Ur of the Chaldeans (Gen. 11:31; Gen. 12:4). The rest of God's command in this verse he obeyed incrementally.

³⁵⁹ Gen. 12:1 - and from your relatives: This, Abram did not obey right away. His nephew Lot accompanied him, probably at the insistence of Abram's father, who was also the grandfather of Lot. Abram did not part ways with Lot until the decision was forced upon him by an over-grazing controversy (Gen. 13:5-13).

³⁶⁰ Gen. 12:1 - and from your father's house: Again, Abram did not obey Yahweh right away. His father Terah accompanied him. Actually Gen. 11:31 states that Terah was taking the initiative in leaving Ur and beginning the journey to Canaan. In Gen. 11:31, [Moses](#) writes that the extended family left for Canaan. That may be an editorial, proleptic comment, for the actual text of Yahweh's communication with Abram in Gen. 12:1 leaves the impression the destination of the journey was unknown – God would reveal it when Abram arrived in the chosen land. My conjecture is that Terah heard from Abram the call of Yahweh, and that he believed in Abram's God, and chose to accompany his son. Terah did not wish to leave behind the only son of his deceased son, Haran (Gen. 11:28). And so Terah insisted on bringing along Lot. My further conjecture is that by the time the entourage reached the city of Haran in Syria, Terah felt unable to continue. Perhaps, as old as he was, he felt the time of his impending death drawing near. In any event, the extended family stayed in Haran until Terah's death (Gen. 11:31, 32). At that point Abram felt free to move on toward the promised land, still accompanied, however, by his nephew, Lot.

³⁶¹ Gen. 12:1 - to the land I will show you: There are three major components of God's promise to [Abram](#), later confirmed as His unilateral, unconditional covenant (Gen. 15). We call this covenant the [Abrahamic Covenant](#). The first major component of the [Abrahamic Covenant](#) is **LAND**. There is a specific piece of land God promised to [Abram](#) and His descendants of promise. It is the land originally known as [Canaan](#), now as [Israel](#). God promised Abram and his descendants that the land, as far as he could see, was theirs in perpetuity (Gen. 13:14-17). The Northern and Southern boundaries of this land are the Euphrates River, and the River of Egypt (Gen. 15:7-18). The arrival of the [Church Age](#) does not alter the land component of the Abrahamic blessing. Jesus predicted that

E 2 The **content** of *blessing*: 12:2-3

- G 1 Great nation: {2} And I will make you a great nation, ³⁶²
- G 2 Blessing: And I will bless you, ³⁶³
- G 3 Honor: And make your name great; ³⁶⁴
- G 4 Command of reciprocal blessing: And so you shall be a blessing;³⁶⁵

“Jerusalem will be trampled under foot by the Gentiles until the times of the Gentiles are fulfilled” (Luke 21:24). That remains true to this very day. But one day “the times of the Gentiles” will be completed, and [Israel](#) will have her land back – every bit of it. Those Christians who deny [Israel’s](#) perpetual claim on the land of [Israel](#) do so because they fail to take these texts literally. They believe the [Church](#) has forever replaced [Israel](#) as God’s means of blessing the world. We call this errant belief “[Supersessionism](#)” or “[Replacement Theology](#).” See also the article, “[Is God a Zionist?](#)”

³⁶² Gen. 12:2 - I will make you a great nation: The second major component of the [Abrahamic Covenant](#) is **NATION**. The three men, [Abraham](#), Isaac, and Jacob are the patriarchs of the nation of [Israel](#). Jacob, whose name was later changed by God to [Israel](#), is the titular head of the nation, and his twelve sons are the tribal leaders. Though the nation of [Israel](#) has often been disobedient to God, God has never given up on her (Ezekiel 40-48; Zech. 12-14). Indeed, “the gifts and the calling of God are irrevocable” (Rom. 11:28-29). Today, we are in a huge chronological hiatus between the 69th and 70th seven’s of Daniel’s prophecy (Dan. 9:24-27). But after a nearly 2,000-year stretch in which the State of [Israel](#) had ceased to exist, it reappeared on the stage of human history against all odds on May 14, 1948. And there is an ongoing future for the State of [Israel](#) (Rev. 7:1-8; 14:1-5). It is no accident that the eternal, holy city is named “[New Jerusalem](#),” not “New York” or “New Delhi” (Rev. 21:1-22:5). I believe that the redeemed State of [Israel](#) will exist in perpetuity on an identifiable piece of real estate on [New Earth](#). In fact, three identifiable people groupings will exist in unity as slaves of God (Rev. 22:3) throughout eternity – redeemed [Israel](#), the [Church](#), and redeemed [Gentiles](#) who are part of neither (Rev. 21:12-14, 24-26). For further study, go to the article, “[New Jerusalem](#).”

³⁶³ Gen. 12:2 - And I will bless you: The third major component of the [Abrahamic Covenant](#) is **BLESSING**. The word “bless” is the Hebrew verb *barak*, [1288](#), used more times in Genesis (72X) than in any other OT book except Psalms (74X). Genesis is all about God’s blessing the people He made. Even after man sinned against God, and after He had destroyed all but eight people, He blessed Noah and his sons, telling them to repopulate the earth. Then God singled out one man, [Abraham](#), and his son of promise and his grandson of promise. He promised to bless them. They were to be a blessing. It was God’s plan through [Abraham](#), Isaac, and Jacob, to bless all the families of the world. God blessed the patriarchs spiritually, but he also blessed them materially. This statement applies to [Abraham](#) (Gen. 24:35), to Isaac (Gen. 26:2-5, 12-14), and to Jacob (Gen. 30:27-30, 43; 31:1-9). Jesus, the Jewish [Messiah](#), is God’s means of blessing all the families of the earth through [Abraham](#), Isaac, Jacob, and the nation of [Israel](#). Those blessings are spiritual in nature (Eph. 1:3-14). For the nation of [Israel](#), the blessings of God are conditioned upon obedience (Deut. 28). For nearly two millennia, [Israel](#) has been disenfranchised from her own land. But in the last century, God re-established [Israel](#) as a state in order to fulfill His predicted plans for her. [Israel](#) awaits a time of great trouble (Zech. 12:1-4; 13:8-9; 14:1-2). But the Deliverer will come to Zion – to those who turn from transgression in [Israel](#) (Isa. 59:20-21; Zech. 12:10-13:3), and God will bless redeemed [Israel](#) not only spiritually but in fabulous wealth from all over the world (Isa. 2:1-4; 11; 60; 61:2-9; 62; 65:8-10, 16, 18-25; 66:10-14, 18-23). When [Israel](#) is right with God, when all the sinners have been removed from the earth (Matt. 25:31-46), and when the righteous inherit the earth (Matt. 5:5; Rev. 22:1-5), the physical, as well as the material blessings poured out upon [Israel](#) will spill over and bless the redeemed nations of the earth as well (Rom. 11:15; Rev. 21:24-26; 22:1-5).

³⁶⁴ Gen. 12:2 - and make your name great: Indeed, [Abram](#) / [Abraham](#) has had a great name. He is, in a sense, the father whether wittingly or unwittingly of three great religions – Judaism, Christianity, and Islam.

³⁶⁵ Gen. 12:2 - and you shall be a blessing: the NASB footnote reads, “*Lit be a blessing.*” So this was a command. Part of the blessing motif in Genesis is that Abram was blessed in order to be a blessing. That still holds true for us Christians today, by way of application.

G 5 Blessing of friends: {3} And I will bless those who bless you,³⁶⁶

G 6 Cursing of enemies: And the one who curses you I will curse.³⁶⁷

G 7 Global blessing: And in you all the families of the earth will be blessed.”³⁶⁸

D 2 God's promise of the land of [Canaan](#) to Abram's posterity 12:4-9

E 1 Abram's obedience 12:4-6

G 1 The statement of his obedience 12:4

H 1 Abram obeyed [Yahweh's](#) command: {4} So Abram went forth as the LORD had spoken to him;

H 2 Lot's accompaniment: and Lot went with him.

H 3 Abram's age: Now Abram was seventy-five years old when he departed from Haran.³⁶⁹

³⁶⁶ Gen. 12:3 - I will bless those who bless you: Historically, Abimelech and Phicol sought an alliance with [Abraham](#) because they could see God was with him (Gen. 21:22-23). Later, Abimelech of Gerar sought an alliance with Isaac because he could tell Isaac was blessed of the LORD (Gen. 26:26-29). Historically, the United States of America has been a strong ally of the nation of [Israel](#). Personally, I am convinced that is one of the major reasons God has blessed and protected this country. Even though, now, our country has largely thumbed its collective nose at God and Jesus Christ, there is at least one redeeming factor. President Donald Trump has done what no other US President had done – he has moved the US Embassy in [Israel](#) from Tel Aviv to Jerusalem, the eternal capital of [Israel](#). The move was consummated on May 14, 2018, precisely on the 70th anniversary of the founding of the modern State of [Israel](#). Our country has little to protect itself from the fierce judgment of God (Rom. 1:18-32). That singular show of deference to [Israel](#) may have bought God’s blessing and protection for this nation for just a little longer.

³⁶⁷ Gen. 12:3 - and the one who curses you I will curse: Since the founding of the modern state of [Israel](#) May 14, 2048, the Arab peoples who have cursed [Israel](#) have found themselves cursed. The hatred of the “[Palestinians](#)” for [Israel](#) has brought them only poverty, alienation, and squalor. By contrast, nations such as Jordan and Egypt have fared much better when they have restrained their inveterate hatred for God’s chosen people. Syria, a hotbed of undiminished venom against [Israel](#), has been war-torn and dictator-oppressed.

³⁶⁸ Gen. 12:3 - and in you all the families of the earth will be blessed: Ultimately this world-wide blessing began at the crucifixion and resurrection of the [Israeli](#) Messiah, Jesus of Nazareth. Though the Jewish people have largely rejected their ultimate Prophet / Priest / King, large numbers of [Gentiles](#) have placed their trust in Him. Where peoples have submitted to the Great King, observable blessing has followed. Christian nations of the West have prospered because of their at least nominal allegiance to [Christ](#), the King. Hospitals have been built, slavery abolished, ordered societies established and prospered, and beneficence extended to the poor. God has blessed all the families of the earth through Abraham and especially through His [Messianic](#) descendant, Jesus. When [Israel](#) places her collective trust in Jesus her King (Zech. 12:10-13:1), [Israel](#) will prosper and become the leading nation of the world. Nations who submit to [Israel](#) and to [Israel's](#) King Jesus will prosper. Those who don't will experience adversity (Isaiah 60:1-22; Zechariah 14:1-21).

³⁶⁹ Gen. 12:4 - departed from Haran: The record seems to indicate that the death of Terah (Gen. 11:32), [Abram's](#) father, was the factor that enabled [Abram](#) to resume his obedience to Yahweh and move to Canaan. As the text reads here, it suggests that [Abram](#) knew where he was going – to Canaan. Either God had revealed that to him after he departed from Ur, or else he still did not know his destination, and would keep traveling until Yahweh told him this was the right place. If the latter is true, [Moses](#) narrates the history in light of the fact that Canaan was the ultimate destination.

- G 2 His retinue: {5} Abram took
 - H 1 Sarai his wife
 - H 2 and Lot his nephew,³⁷⁰
 - H 3 Accumulated possessions: and all their possessions which they had accumulated,
 - H 4 Accumulated persons in Haran: and the persons which they had acquired in Haran, 12:5a
- G 3 His departure to and arrival in [Canaan](#) 12:5b
 - H 1 and they set out for the land of Canaan;³⁷¹
 - H 2 thus they came to the land of Canaan.
- G 4 His passage through the land 12:6
 - H 1 His arrival at Shechem, to the oak of Moreh: {6} Abram passed through the land as far as the site of Shechem,³⁷² to the oak of Moreh.³⁷³
 - H 2 The presence of [Canaanites](#): Now the Canaanite *was* then in the land.
- E 2 Abram's worship 12:7-9
 - G 1 [Yahweh's](#) confirmation of His promise 12:7a
 - H 1 His appearance to Abram: {7} The LORD appeared to Abram and said,
 - H 2 His promise to give Abram's descendants this land: "To

³⁷⁰ Gen. 12:5 - Lot his nephew: See the appropriate footnote at Gen. 11:27 for more information about Lot.

³⁷¹ Gen. 12:5 - and they set out for the land of Canaan: As the text reads, evidently, at some point after [Abram's](#) departure from Ur of the Chaldeans, God had specified the land to which they were to travel.

³⁷² Gen. 12:6 - Shechem: Hebrew, *shekem* (7927). BDB, appearing in StudyLight.org, "Shechem = 'back' or 'shoulder' 1) son of Hamor, the chieftain of the Hivites at Shechem at the time of Jacob's arrival (*noun proper masculine*); 2) a city in Manasseh; located in a valley between Mount Ebal and Mount Gerizim, 34 miles (54 kilometers) north of Jerusalem ... (*noun proper locative*)."

³⁷³ Gen. 12:6 - Moreh: The oak, or terebinth of [Moreh](#) was evidently a tree at which "teaching" took place. Hebrew, *môreh* (4176). BDB, appearing in StudyLight.org, "Moreh = 'teacher' 1) the oak tree at Shechem when he first entered Canaan; close to the mountains of Ebal and Gerizim" [Moreh](#) evidently was situated at the throat of the valley that led westward between Mt. Ebal and Mt. Gerizim. Ebal was to the North and Gerizim to the South.

your descendants³⁷⁴ I will give this land."³⁷⁵

G 2 [Abram's](#) response 12:7b-9

H 1 His building an altar to the Lord at Shechem: So he built an altar³⁷⁶ there to the LORD who had appeared to him. 12:7b

H 2 His worship at Bethel 12:8

J 1 His travel to the mountain east of Bethel: {8} Then he proceeded from there to the mountain on the east of Bethel,³⁷⁷ and pitched his tent, with Bethel on the west and Ai on the east;

J 2 His building an altar: and there he built an altar to the LORD

J 3 His calling on the name of the Lord: and called upon the name of the LORD.³⁷⁸

H 3 His travel toward the Negev: {9} Abram journeyed on, continuing toward the Negev.³⁷⁹ 12:9

C 3 [Abram's](#) deceit in his departure from the land of *blessing* to Egypt 12:10-20

³⁷⁴ Gen. 12:7 - To your descendants: Lit., "to your seed," the singular of *zéra* (2233), seed; "your" is Masculine Singular, referring to Abram.

³⁷⁵ Gen. 12:7 - To your descendants I will give this land: [Yahweh](#) confirmed to [Abram](#) that this was the specific piece of real estate He had [sovereignly](#) granted to [Abram's](#) descendants. At this point, it was assumed by all parties that the particular descendants [Yahweh](#) had in mind were the descendants of [Abram](#) and Sarai. There was no point in specifying further *which* descendants would inherit the land, for there were *no* descendants at this time. Furthermore, neither [Abram](#) nor Sarai had entertained the thought of a surrogate mother for [Abram's](#) children. Thus, it can be safely assumed that [Yahweh's](#) promise of the land of [Canaan](#) to [Abram's](#) descendants was a promise to the descendants of [Abram](#) and Sarai, and to no others.

³⁷⁶ Gen. 12:7 - he built an altar there to the LORD who had appeared to him: This was an act of worship. This was Yahweh's first appearance to [Abram](#) after His initial appearance when [Abram](#) still lived in Ur of the Chaldeans. No doubt [Abram](#) was exceedingly grateful for this confirming appearance of Yahweh. It confirmed two things to [Abram](#): (1) He was in the proper land; (2) God promised to give this land to the seed of [Abraham](#). [Abram](#) believed God. There was no indication that the land would ever be his. But now God had just promised that this land, the land of Canaan, He would give to the seed of [Abram](#). Great cause for exultant, appreciative worship of Yahweh!

³⁷⁷ Gen. 12:8 - Bethel: Hebrew, *bêyth-êl* (1008). It means "house of God." [Abram](#) pitched his tent east of [Bethel](#) with [Ai](#) on the east and [Bethel](#) on the west. Once again, he built an altar to Yahweh and called on the name of Yahweh, an act of worship.

³⁷⁸ Gen. 12:8 - called upon the name of the LORD: This is [Abram's](#) second altar that he built to Yahweh (see Gen. 12:7), but it is the first time it is said that "he called upon the name of the LORD" (Yahweh), obviously an act of worship, as was building an altar to Yahweh (Gen. 12:7, 8). See the appropriate note at Gen. 2:4 for an explanation of the name "LORD" or Yahweh.

³⁷⁹ Gen. 12:9 - Negev: [NASB](#) footnote: "I.e. South country"

- D 1 The beginning problem – the unfavorable circumstance – famine in the land: {10} Now there was a famine in the land;³⁸⁰ 12:10
- E 1 [Abram's](#) reaction: **SURVIVAL DECISION:** so Abram went down to Egypt
- E 2 [Abram's](#) plan: to sojourn there,
- E 3 [Abram's](#) reason: for the famine was severe³⁸¹ in the land.
- D 2 The new problem: [Abram's](#) concern over the implications of Sarai's beauty 12:11-13

³⁸⁰ Gen. 12:10 - famine: Here [Abram](#) had just arrived in the Promised Land, the land God had promised to [Abram](#) and his descendants. Immediately God permits a problem to arise – famine. It almost seems that God was testing [Abram](#) to see if he would remain in the Land of Promise or not. [Abram](#) delivered himself from the problem God had created (famine) by fleeing. But now he found himself in a problem of his own making – fear for his life on account of his beautiful wife. [Abram's](#) first solution was to flee the place of God's stated, but not apparent blessing. His second solution was to lie about his relationship with Sarai. Now he has a greater problem – he is losing his wife and he does not know how to get her back. Now [Satan](#) was succeeding in yet another attempt to ruin the promised seed of redemption. First of all [Satan](#) successfully spoiled the entire human race by successfully tempting Eve. Then he corrupted the whole human race by introducing angelic/demonically-controlled marriages. Now he threatens to ruin the seed by which God had promised to bless the entire earth! The situation is alleviated only by God's striking Pharaoh and all his house with great plagues because of Sarai. To Pharaoh it is evidently revealed that Sarai is [Abram's](#) wife. Nowhere in the text does God chide [Abram](#). But Pharaoh certainly does. The pagan king scolds the man of God for being dishonest! So God's reputation was stained by [Abram's](#) action. A subtle, but real problem that ensued was that Sarai acquired an Egyptian slave-girl in Egypt. Ultimately [Abram](#) and Sarai, in their human wisdom apart from God, would arrange to have Hagar bear children to [Abram](#) because Sarai was barren. The Ishmaelites (Arabs) were born, and they continue to be a problem to [Abram](#) and Sarai's children, fighting against them and even blowing themselves to bits to injure and maim and kill the children of [Abram](#) and Sarai. Lessons to learn:

1. [Leupold](#) (I, 423; [Leupold](#) online): "They who faithfully obey God's behests are not promptly rewarded by God in all things. Particular difficulties may arise as an outgrowth of their obedience."
2. God tests our faith by allowing problems to arise in our lives.
3. When we serve God, He allows problems in our lives to demonstrate our faithfulness to Him, even under duress. Prime example, Job.
4. [Abram](#) did not ask God's direction or His blessing on fleeing from the land of [Canaan](#). We have to assume it was not God's will for Him to leave. If you want to argue that it was permissible for [Abram](#) to leave [Canaan](#), was it permissible for him to lie about Sarai being his wife? Definitely not.
5. God expects us to weather the problems and not depart from His place of blessing.
 - a. The marriage we are in.
 - b. The health He has given us.
 - c. The abilities He has given us.
 - d. The assignments He has given us (like witnessing)
 - e. The children He has given us.
6. If we stay in the place of blessing, even with its apparent problems, we must take by faith the truth that God will make a way out for us.
7. If we depart the place of blessing, we will find ourselves in worse problems with far more serious long-term implications than what we have now!
8. Great men of God are human and they make mistakes. God graciously finds them a way out, but God doesn't necessarily shield them from the long-term disaster that strikes them or their descendants because of their mistakes. It was as a member of Pharaoh's harem that Sarai undoubtedly was given Hagar as a servant girl. Hagar stayed with Sarai when the family returned to [Canaan](#). The rest (i.e., the interminable Arab-Israeli conflict) is history!

³⁸¹ Gen. 12:10 - severe: Not only was there a famine in the land, but God made sure it was a severe famine. Did God want [Abram](#) to stay in [Canaan](#) or did He force him out?

- E 1 [Abram's](#) growing uneasiness 12:11
- G 1 The occasion – coming near to Egypt: {11} It came about when he came near to Egypt,
- G 2 The cause – [Abram's](#) acknowledgment of Sarai's beauty: that he said to Sarai his wife, "See now, I know that you are a beautiful woman;
- E 2 [Abram's](#) projection: {12} and when the Egyptians see you, they will say, 'This is his wife'; and they will kill me, but they will let you live. 12:12
- G 1 Of murder: "And they will kill me"³⁸²
- G 2 Of marriage: "But they will let you live"
- E 3 [Abram's](#) solution: Deception for the preservation of his life 12:13
- G 1 [Abram's](#) request – **SURVIVAL DECISION:** {13} "Please say that you are my sister"³⁸³
- G 2 [Abram's](#) reason:
- H 1 so that it may go well with me because of you,
- H 2 and that I may live on account of you."
- D 3 A further problem: Pharaoh's acquisition of Sarai for his harem 12:14-16
- E 1 The observation of Sarai's beauty: {14} It came about when Abram came into Egypt, the Egyptians saw that the woman was very beautiful.³⁸⁴ 12:14

³⁸² Gen. 12:12 - kill: [Leupold](#) (I, 424; [Leupold](#) online): "[Abram](#) knows how little the rights of foreigners were respected in olden times. He also knows how beautiful women would be sought out when they came to a foreign land. He also understands that marriage was respected sufficiently that men felt they must dispose of the husband before they could take his wife. Egyptian parallels prove that men had no hesitation about committing murder in an effort to secure their object."

³⁸³ Gen. 12:13 - sister: It is true that Sarai was [Abram's](#) half-sister (Gen. 20:12), but she was also his wife. Is a believer ever justified in telling a lie? [Leupold](#) (I, 422; [Leupold](#) online): "... the narrative as such in its unvarnished truth so plainly sets forth the unworthy sentiments that animated the patriarch, that the sympathetic reader is almost made to blush for the thing done by the man of God." [Leupold](#) (I, 424; [Leupold](#) online): "...there is something cowardly and mean about expecting Sarai to encounter the hazards in order that [Abram](#) might avoid danger." [Leupold](#) (I, 425; [Leupold](#) online): "Fully aware of the fact that such a course may involve the sacrifice of Sarai's honor in order that he himself might fare well, he nevertheless asks Sarai to make the sacrifice. [Abram](#) never sank lower, as far as we know, than when he made this request. Sarai's acquiescence, however, seems to grow out of the idea that there actually is no other safe course to follow.

³⁸⁴ Gen. 12:14 - beautiful: [RSB](#): "Though Sarai was 65, she doubtless was in her prime, since the life span of the patriarchs was about twice that of people today. Sarah was 127 when she died, and [Abraham](#) was 175 when he died."

- E 2 The recommendation to Pharaoh: {15} Pharaoh's ³⁸⁵ officials saw her and praised her to Pharaoh; 12:15a
- E 3 The taking of Sarai into Pharaoh's house: and the woman was taken into Pharaoh's house. 12:15b
- E 4 The dowry accorded [Abram](#) 12:16
 - G 1 {16} Therefore he treated Abram well for her sake;
 - G 2 and gave him sheep and oxen and donkeys and male and female servants and female donkeys and camels. ³⁸⁶
- D 4 A final problem: God's solution: Calamity strikes Pharaoh 12:17-20
 - E 1 Pharaoh's calamity: {17} But the LORD struck ³⁸⁷ Pharaoh and his house with great plagues because of Sarai, Abram's wife. 12:17
 - E 2 The nature of the problem: Pharaoh's disbelief at the dishonesty of chosen [Abram](#) 12:18-19
 - G 1 What have you done to me? {18} Then Pharaoh called Abram and said, "What is this you have done to me? ³⁸⁸ 12:18
 - G 2 Why didn't you tell me she was your wife? Why did you not tell me that she was your wife?
 - G 3 Why did you tell me she was your sister? {19} "Why did you

³⁸⁵ Gen. 12:15 - Pharaoh: The meaning is apparently "great house," and was the common title of the king of Egypt. In Hebrew the word is *par'oh* ([6547](#)). It appears 94X in 72 verses in Genesis. It appears 115X in 106 verses in Exodus. These two books together comprise the vast majority of uses in the OT.

³⁸⁶ Gen. 12:16 - camels: "The first reference to camels in Scripture occurs in verse 16. For many years, scholars believed that the ancients did not domesticate camels until much later than the patriarchal period. They believed that references to camels in Genesis indicated historical inaccuracies. However, the archaeological evidence for the early domestication of camels has proved these critics wrong" (Thomas Constable, *Notes on Genesis, 2019*, quoting John J. Davis, "The Camel in Biblical Narratives," in *A Tribute to Gleason Archer*, pp. 141-52).

³⁸⁷ Gen. 12:16 - Lord struck: Unfortunately, in our endeavors to extricate ourselves from our poor choices, God has to bail us out. In so doing, we damage not only His reputation, but other people. It is never in our best interests or in the best interests of the unbelievers around us, for us to sin! God's intervention on [Abram's](#) behalf is the first demonstration of God's intention to make good on His pledge to "bless those who bless you and curse those who curse you" (Gen. 12:2). This pledge of God's makes it dangerous for the policy of a number of U. S. Presidents to attempt to establish a Palestinian state in the middle of [Israel](#).

[Leupold](#) (I, 427; [Leupold](#) online): "...[Abram's](#) lie does not make him a worthy recipient of divine mercy. But God's mercy outruns man's merit.... Since [Abram](#) is the father of the seed of promise, Sarai, the mother, must be safeguarded. Man's sin almost defeats God's purpose, but God's mercy prevails.... What these afflictions were we shall never be able to determine; ... Apparently they were intended to be of a kind that would prevent Pharaoh from approaching Sarai, for the [Piel](#) of *nagha'* [[5060](#)] is used 'only of smiting with disease.'"

³⁸⁸ Gen. 12:18 - what have you done? Pharaoh, the pagan, had higher standards for [Abram](#), the believer, than [Abram](#) had for himself. [Abram](#) appears speechless in this whole interchange except for his asking Sarai to misrepresent their relationship for his sake.

say, 'She is my sister,' so that I took her for my wife? 12:19a

E 3 Pharaoh's banishment of [Abram](#) 12:19-20

G 1 His return of Sarai: Now then, here is your wife, 12:19b

G 2 His command to leave: take her and go." ³⁸⁹ 12:19c

G 3 His provision of an escort: {20} Pharaoh commanded *his* men concerning him; and they escorted ³⁹⁰ him away, with his wife and all that belonged to him. 12:20

C 4 Elective spill-over: God's protection of Lot through *blessed* [Abram's](#) rescue 13:1 - 14:24

D 1 The Divinely engineered separation of [Abram](#) from Lot in [Canaan](#) 13:1-18

E 1 [Abram's](#) gracious permission of Lot to select the Jordan valley to avoid strife over grazing rights 13:1-13

G 1 **Return to [Canaan](#)** 13:1-4

H 1 **Departure** 13:1

J 1 His destination: So Abram went up from Egypt to the Negev, ³⁹¹

J 2 His retinue and possessions: he and his wife and all that belonged to him, and Lot with him.

H 2 **Accumulated Wealth:** {2} Now Abram was very rich in

³⁸⁹ Gen. 12:19 - go: [Leupold](#) (I, 428; [Leupold](#) online): "The rebuke that [Abram](#) deserves he receives at the hands of one who is not even a worshiper of [Yahweh](#). It consists in a rather curt dismissal. The fact that [Abram](#) receives it in silence indicates that [Abram](#) was aware of his deserving to be rebuked; and so, by representing the case thus, the author indicates where the right and the wrong of the matter lay."

³⁹⁰ Gen. 12:20 - escorted: [Leupold](#) (I, 429; [Leupold](#) online): Pharaoh has been duly impressed. He would not venture to do [Abram](#) harm. The appointing of men of his own to guard the sojourner is a tacit admission to the effect that serious danger really threatened. Besides, since God has made it plain that His favor rests upon [Abram](#), Pharaoh feels that God might take vengeance upon him if he let evil befall [Abram](#)."

Psalm 105:8-15 provides an interesting commentary on this event: 8 He has remembered His covenant forever, The word which He commanded to a thousand generations, 9 *The covenant* which He made with [Abraham](#), And His oath to Isaac. 10 Then He confirmed it to Jacob for a statute, To [Israel](#) as an everlasting covenant, 11 Saying, "To you I will give the land of [Canaan](#) As the portion of your inheritance," 12 When they were only a few men in number, Very few, and strangers in it. 13 And they wandered about from nation to nation, From *one* kingdom to another people. 14 He permitted no man to oppress them, And He reprov'd kings for their sakes: 15 "Do not touch My anointed ones, And do My prophets no harm."

This passage reveals that God very likely actually spoke to Pharaoh. It also reveals that the three patriarchs were considered by God as his anointed ones, His [prophets](#)!

³⁹¹ Gen. 13:1 - Negev: [NASB](#) footnote: "I.e. South country"

livestock, in silver and in gold. ³⁹² 13:2

H 3 **Return** 13:3

J 1 To Bethel: *{3}* He went on his journeys ³⁹³ from the Negev ³⁹⁴ as far as Bethel,

J 2 His prior residence: to the place where his tent had been at the beginning, ³⁹⁵ between Bethel and Ai,

H 4 **Resumption of Communication with God** 13:4

J 1 Where precisely? *{4}* to the place of the altar which he had made there formerly;

J 2 What did he do? and there Abram called ³⁹⁶ on the name of the LORD.

G 2 **Complication in [Canaan](#)** 13:5-13

H 1 **Additional accumulation** by Lot: *{5}* Now Lot, who went with Abram, also had flocks and herds and tents. 13:5

H 2 **Incompatibility** 13:6

J 1 Fact: *{6}* And the land could not sustain them while dwelling together,

J 2 Reason: Why? for their possessions were so great that they were not able to remain together.

³⁹² Gen. 13:2 - Now [Abram](#) was very rich in livestock, in silver and in gold: Already in the historical narrative we are seeing that God's blessing, for the patriarchs, included physical, material wealth (see Gen. 12:1-3). The much more likely blessings for New Testament Church-Age believers are spiritual in nature, not physical (Eph. 1:3-14). The "[Prosperity Gospel](#)" has it all wrong.

³⁹³ Gen. 13:3 - He went on his journeys: [NASB](#) footnote: "Lit by his stages"

³⁹⁴ Gen. 13:3 - Negev: [NASB](#) footnote: "I.e. South country"

³⁹⁵ Gen. 13:3 - as far as Bethel, to the place where his tent had been at the beginning: **PRINCIPLE:** The one backsliding must return to the place of original departure. ([Manning](#), Abraham, p. 13) "Between the time of his leaving and returning to the promised land we find no record of [Abraham's](#) association with God. Like [Abraham](#), the Christian can run away from an unpleasant part of God's processing or he can try to skirt around it. If he means business with God, he must eventually go through it. **PRINCIPLE:** ([Manning](#), Abr., p. 13) "The journey of faith is always resumed exactly at the point where it left off."

³⁹⁶ Gen. 13:4 - called on the name of the LORD: His calling on the Lord must have been a strange mixture of guilt at having left and at having compromised his wife and joy at returning. One wonders how much communicating with God [Abram](#) had done in Egypt – no altars were built there! **PRINCIPLE:** When we have stepped outside of God's will, communicating with God is an unattractive ordeal which we neglect.

H 3 Resultant Strife 13:7

J 1 {7} And there was strife between the herdsmen of Abram's livestock and the herdsmen of Lot's livestock.

J 2 Now the Canaanite³⁹⁷ and the Perizzite were dwelling then in the land.

H 4 Initiative for Peace 13:8

J 1 {8} So Abram said to Lot, "Please let there be no strife³⁹⁸ between you and me, nor between my herdsmen and your herdsmen,

J 2 Why? for we are brothers.

H 5 **Urge to Separate:** {9} "Is not the whole land before you? Please separate from me;

H 6 Option to Choose First 13:9

J 1 if *to* the left, then I will go to the right;

J 2 or if *to* the right, then I will go to the left."

H 7 Lot's Choice 13:10-11

J 1 **His Look:** {10} Lot lifted up his eyes and saw all the valley of the Jordan, that it was well watered everywhere³⁹⁹ 13:10

³⁹⁷ Gen. 13:7 - Canaanite: The idea is that, not only were [Abram](#) and Lot competing with one another, but they were also competing with the [Canaanites](#) and Perizzites ([Leupold](#), I, 434; [Leupold](#) online). "Another thought lies involved in the statement about the original inhabitants: it was hardly a fitting situation to have the men who followed the true God falling into quarrels with one another in the sight of the idolatrous inhabitants of the land. The '[Canaanites](#),' apparently, dwelt largely in fortified cities. The 'Perizzites,' akin apparently to *perazi*, 'the hamlet-dweller,' lived more in the open country, and they may have been of the original inhabitants of [Canaan](#), but were not of the stock of Ham (cf. 10:15-18). They are also listed in 34:30 and Judg. 1:4, 5 together with the [Canaanites](#), and were also of the nations to be dispossessed by [Israel](#) (Gen. 15:20; Exod. 3:17, and 17 times)." ([Leupold](#), I, 434-35; [Leupold](#) online.)

³⁹⁸ Gen. 13:8 - strife: [Abram](#) takes the initiative to resolve the dispute. (1) He suggests a peaceful separation. (2) He gives Lot the option to choose first. Question: Does [Abram](#) sense this is the way for him to obey God fully? **PRINCIPLE:** God brings trouble into our lives to separate us from the things which retard our spiritual progress. **PRINCIPLE:** Sometimes the things we hold dearest (in this case Lot) are the things which prevent us from fitting completely into God's plans.

³⁹⁹ Gen. 13:10 - Lot lifted up his eyes and saw all the valley of the Jordan, that it was well watered everywhere: This reminds one of the siren temptation of "the lust of the eyes" (1 John 2:16). Eve fell prey to this tactic of Satan's (Gen. 3:6), and so, it seems, did Lot. There is a strong warning siren that appears as a footnote in Gen. 13:13, "Now the men of Sodom were wicked exceedingly and sinners against the LORD." Did Lot know this ahead of time? We don't know, but Lot's choice would bode ill for him and his family. One can speculate that Lot found his wife in Sodom? She certainly left her heart in Sodom (Gen. 19:17, 26), and it cost her her life. Jesus, by the way, was able to

J 2 Time: – *this was* before the LORD destroyed Sodom and Gomorrah

J 3 Comparison #1: – like the garden of the LORD,

J 4 Comparison #2: like the land of Egypt as you go to Zoar.

J 5 **His Choice:** {11} So Lot chose for himself all the valley of the Jordan, 13:11

J 6 **Their Separation:** and Lot journeyed eastward.⁴⁰⁰ Thus they separated⁴⁰¹ from each other. 13:11

H 8 **Residence** 13:12

J 1 {12} Abram settled⁴⁰² in the land of Canaan,

J 2 while Lot settled in the cities of the valley, and moved his tents as far as Sodom.

H 9 **Premonition:** {13} Now the men of Sodom were wicked exceedingly and sinners⁴⁰³ against the LORD. 13:13

E 2 [Yahweh's](#) consequent confirmation to [Abram](#) of His promise of the land of [Canaan](#) and numerous descendants 13:14-18

G 1 [Yahweh's](#) affirmation 13:14-17

H 1 **Communication** 13:14

resist the strong appeal of the “lust of the eyes” (Matt. 4:8-11).

⁴⁰⁰ Gen. 13:11 - Lot journeyed eastward: Heading toward the east does not seem to bode well in Biblical literature. After murdering his brother Abel, Cain departed from the presence of the LORD, and settled in the land of Nod, east of Eden (Gen. 4:16). The people of the post-Flood earth journeyed east, found a plain in the land of Shinar, settled there, and built a city and a tower of defiance against God (Gen. 11:1-4). Abraham sent the sons of his concubines eastward, away from his son Isaac (Gen. 25:6). The “sons of the east” were inveterate enemies of Israel (Judges 6:3, 33; 7:12; 8:10; Ezek. 25:4). Sun-worshippers faced the east (Ezek. 8:16). The glory of the LORD departed from the temple in Jerusalem on the east side of the city (Ezek. 11:23). On a positive note, Ezekiel saw the glory of the LORD returning to the Millennial temple by way of the gate facing east (Ezek. 43:1-5).

⁴⁰¹ Gen. 13:11 - separated: In giving Lot the first choice, [Abraham](#) surrendered the most luscious pasture land. Note that ultimately God moved Lot's people into the land of Moab, SE of the Dead Sea. Except along the Arnon Valley, this was certainly not well-watered land!

⁴⁰² Gen. 13:12 - settled: [NASB](#) note – lit. dwelt.

⁴⁰³ Gen. 13:13 - sinners: Question: Did Lot lack moral perception of what was really good for his family and himself? Many years ago Vice President Dan Quayle commented about the impropriety of Murphy Brown's being featured as an unmarried mother. The great bulk of the reactions reflected ridicule toward the Vice President. The reactors against Quayle were spiritually blind and naive. They didn't understand moral, spiritual issues. They didn't understand that glorifying evil promotes it. People desire to promote evil because their hearts are dark with evil themselves (John 3:19-21)!

- J 1 **The occasion:** {14} The LORD said to Abram, after Lot had separated from him,
- J 2 **The call to visualize:** "Now lift up your eyes and look from the place where you are, northward and southward and eastward and westward;
- H 2 **Gift of Land** {15} for all the land which you see, I will give it 13:15
- J 1 Individual graciousness: to you
- J 2 Posterity graciousness: and to your descendants ⁴⁰⁴
- J 3 Eternal graciousness: forever. ⁴⁰⁵
- H 3 **Gift of Innumerable Descendants:** {16} "I will make your descendants ⁴⁰⁶ as the dust of the earth, so that if anyone can number the dust of the earth, then your descendants can also be numbered.
- H 4 **Challenge to Walk in the Land by Faith:** {17} "Arise,

⁴⁰⁴ Gen. 13:15 - descendants: [NASB](#) footnote: "Lit *seed*." [JTB](#): The Hebrew is singular of *zera* (2233), "seed." The word looks at [Abram's](#) collective seed as a single unit. Yahweh was speaking of the land which [Abram](#) could see. This land Yahweh promised to give to [Abraham's](#) seed forever. The seed must be the physical, believing seed of [Abraham](#), the [sons of Israel](#), who would inherit the land of Canaan forever. It is true that, ultimately, the singular "seed" refers to Christ (Gal. 3:16). It is also true that we who belong to Christ become [Abraham's](#) descendants (literally, "seed," the singular of *spërma*, 4690). This is in fulfillment of God's promise to [Abraham](#), "And in you all the families of the earth will be blessed" (Gen. 12:3). We must distinguish, however, between [Abraham's](#) physical seed and his spiritual seed through faith in Christ. The same Paul who wrote Galatians 3 also wrote Romans 9-11, where he carefully distinguished the "believing" physical seed of [Abraham](#), Isaac, and Jacob from us Gentiles. But clearly we believing Gentiles benefit incredibly from our relation to Christ. The whole purpose of Romans 11 is to state that God has *not* rejected His people, [Israel](#). And Paul warned us Gentiles of being filled with pride and arrogance against [Israel](#) (Rom. 11:18)! There will come a time when all [Israel](#) is saved (Rom. 11:26). The gifts and calling of God are irrevocable (Rom. 11:29)! "...A partial hardening has happened to [Israel](#) until the fullness of the Gentiles has come in" (Rom. 11:25). Then, "...all [Israel](#) will be saved" (Rom. 11:26)! So we believing Gentiles inherit spiritual blessings (Eph. 1:3-14) as [Abraham's](#) spiritual seed. But we do not inherit physical blessings, and we certainly do not inherit the land of [Israel](#)! That belongs to the believing physical descendants of [Abraham](#), Isaac, and Jacob. The Christian in this world is promised tribulation, not physical blessings (John 16:33).

⁴⁰⁵ Gen. 13:15 - forever: The Hebrew noun is *ôlâm* (5769). According to BDB it signifies "long duration, antiquity, futurity." There is no time limitation on [Yahweh's](#) bequeathal of the land of [Canaan](#) to [Abram](#) and his descendants. See also Gen. 17:7, 8, 13, 19. It is an affront to the veracity of God to claim that [Israel](#) has forever forfeited her claim on the land of promise. If God fails to keep His eternal promise of the land of [Canaan](#) to the nation of [Israel](#), how can we trust Him to keep His promise of forgiveness and eternal life to the believer in Jesus? I suspect that [New Earth](#) will contain a slice of land designated as [Israel](#) for a perpetual possession of the [Sons of Israel](#) throughout eternity. Time will tell if I am correct or not, but I certainly lean that way. How else could the land of [Israel](#) be a perpetual possession for the seed of [Abraham](#)?

⁴⁰⁶ Gen. 13:16 - descendants: [NASB](#) footnote: "Lit *seed*." [JTB](#): The Hebrew is singular of *zera* (2233), "seed." The word looks at [Abram's](#) collective seed as a single unit.

walk about the land ⁴⁰⁷ through its length and breadth; for I will give it to you."

G 2 [Abram's](#) response 13:18

H 1 His move to Hebron: *{18}* Then Abram moved his tent and came and dwelt by the oaks of Mamre, which are in Hebron, ⁴⁰⁸

H 2 His building an altar to [Yahweh](#): and there he built an altar to the LORD.

D 2 Blessed [Abram's](#) rescue of Lot 14:1-24

E 1 The capture of [Sodom](#) and Lot by a four-king Iranian Confederation 14:1-12

G 1 The Siddim Valley Revolt 14:1-4

H 1 Mesopotamian Confederacy 14:1

J 1 *{1}* And it came about in the days of Amraphel king of Shinar, ⁴⁰⁹

J 2 Arioch king of Ellasar,

J 3 [Chedorlaomer](#) king of Elam,

J 4 and Tidal king of Goiim, 14:1

H 2 War: *{2}* that they made war ⁴¹⁰ 14:2a

H 3 Siddim Valley Confederacy 14:2b

⁴⁰⁷ Gen. 13:17 - walk about the land through its length and breadth, for I will give it to you: No clearer statement could be made by [Yahweh](#) of his intention to give a specific piece of real estate to [Abram](#). This land does not belong to any so-called "[Palestinians](#)," whether they be Muslim or Christian. It belongs to the physical seed of [Abram](#) and Sarai.

⁴⁰⁸ Gen. 13:18 - oaks of Mamre, which are in Hebron: The noun "oaks" is *êlôn* ([436](#)), always translated as "oak(s)" in the NASB. Also called "[terebinth](#);" of Mamre (*mamrê*, [4471](#)) likely refers here to an Amorite, who, shortly, would be counted as Abram's ally (Gen. 14:13, 24). It is also very possible that the "oak grove" belonging to Mamre also became associated with that locale. A further designation of that place was "Hebron" (*chebrôn*, [2275](#)). "Hebron is the highest town in the Promised Land, with an elevation of about 3,050 feet. Its site is strategic, lying midway between Jerusalem and Beersheba" (Constable, [Notes on Genesis, 2019](#)). According to [BDB](#), as appearing in [StudyLight.org](#), Hebron is twenty miles south of Jerusalem and twenty miles north of Beersheba. Once again, [Abram](#) worshiped God here.

⁴⁰⁹ Gen. 14:1 - Shinar: Babylonia; Ellasar: N. Mesopotamia; Elam: later became Persia and still later, Iran; Goiim: Hebrew word meaning "nations," often translated "[Gentiles](#)." "These were perhaps a collection of nomadic peoples not yet a nation?"

⁴¹⁰ Gen. 14:2 - war: The Mesopotamian (Iraqi/Iranian) Confederation made war with the Siddim Valley Confederation (towns in the Dead Sea Basin) .

- J 1 with Bera king of Sodom,⁴¹¹
- J 2 and with Birsha king of Gomorrah,
- J 3 Shinab king of Admah,
- J 4 and Shemeber king of Zeboiim,
- J 5 and the king of Bela (that is, Zoar).
- H 4 Location: {3} All these came as allies to the [valley of Siddim](#) (that is, the Salt Sea).⁴¹² 14:3
- H 5 Servitude: {4} Twelve years they had served [Chedorlaomer](#),⁴¹³ 14:4a
- H 6 Revolt: but the thirteenth year they rebelled. 14:4b
- G 2 The Palestinian Invasion 14:5-7
 - H 1 Timing: {5} In the fourteenth year 14:5a
 - H 2 The invaders: [Chedorlaomer](#) and the kings that were with him,
 - H 3 The conquered: came and defeated
 - J 1 the Rephaim in Ashteroth-karnaim⁴¹⁴
 - J 2 and the Zuzim in Ham⁴¹⁵
 - J 3 and the Emim in Shaveh-kiriathaim,⁴¹⁶
 - J 4 Horites in Mt. Seir: {6} and the Horites in their

⁴¹¹ Gen. 14:2 - [Sodom](#), [Gomorrah](#), [Admah](#), [Zeboiim](#), [Bela \(Zoar\)](#): These are all towns in close association with one another at the south end of the Dead Sea.

⁴¹² Gen. 14:2 - valley of Siddim: i.e. Salt Sea or Dead Sea basin.

⁴¹³ Gen. 14:4 - [Chedorlaomer](#): This king seems to be the leader of the Iraqi/Iranian coalition.

⁴¹⁴ Gen. 14:5 - Rephaim in Ashteroth-karnaim: This area refers to both sides of the Jordan River, to the North of the Dead Sea.

⁴¹⁵ Gen. 14:5 - Zuzim in Ham: This area was South of Rephaim, on the East side of the Jordan River, Northeast of the Dead Sea. *Zuzim* ([2104](#)) may refer to “roving creatures” ([BDB](#)).

⁴¹⁶ Gen. 14:5 - Emim in Shaveh-kiriathaim: These were giants in the land of Moab, East of the Dead Sea. (See Deut. 2:10, 11).

Mount Seir, as far as El-paran,⁴¹⁷ which is by the wilderness. 14:6

J 5 En-Mishpat (Kadesh): {7} Then they turned back and came to En-mishpat (that is, Kadesh),⁴¹⁸ and conquered all the country of the Amalekites,⁴¹⁹ 14:7

J 6 Hazazon-Tamar: and also the Amorites,⁴²⁰ who lived in Hazazon-tamar.⁴²¹

G 3 Siddim Valley Invasion 14:8-12

H 1 Battle Array 14:8-9

J 1 The Siddim Valley Coalition: {8} And the king of Sodom and the king of Gomorrah and the king of Admah and the king of Zeboiim and the king of Bela (that is, Zoar) came out; and they arrayed for battle against them in the valley of Siddim, 14:8

J 2 Vs. the Mesopotamian Confederation: {9} against Chedorlaomer king of Elam and Tidal king of Goiim and Amraphel king of Shinar and Arioch king of Ellasar – four kings against five. 14:9

H 2 Road Hazards: {10} Now the valley of Siddim was full of tar pits;⁴²² 14:10

H 3 Defeat and Disarray 14:10

J 1 Flight: and the kings of Sodom and Gomorrah fled,

⁴¹⁷ Gen. 14:6 - El paran; wilderness: El-paran is modern Elat, on the Gulf of Aqaba; “by the wilderness” refers to the area SE of the Dead Sea, later inhabited by the Edomites, descended in part from Esau. Today it is part of the modern Hashemite Kingdom of [Jordan](#), created in 1946.

⁴¹⁸ Gen. 14:7 - Kadesh: Hebrew, *qâdêsh* ([6946](#)), meaning, on the one hand “holy,” but also referring to a city in the extreme south of Judah. Also spelled “Kedesh,” and also referred to as “Kadesh-barnea.” Here it is also identified as [En-mishpat](#).

⁴¹⁹ Gen. 14:7 - country of the Amalekites: SW of the Dead Sea.

⁴²⁰ Gen. 14:7 - Amorites: These peoples lived WSW of the Dead Sea.

⁴²¹ Gen. 14:7 - Hazazon-tamar: Hebrew, *chatsâtsôn tâmâr* ([2688](#)) = “dividing the date palm” – 1) an Amorite city; 2) a town situated in the desert of Judah; probably Engedi; 3) maybe the “Tamar” of Solomon’s day” ([BDB](#), as appearing in [StudyLight.org](#)). See [Hazazon-tamar](#) in [BibleAtlas.org](#).

⁴²² Gen. 14:10 - tar pits: The word for “tar” (or “bitumen”) occurs earlier in the story of the building of the tower in Babylon (see Gen 11:3)... “Now the Valley of Siddim [was] pits, pits of tar.” This parenthetical disjunctive clause emphasizes the abundance of tar pits in the area through repetition of the noun “pits” ([Footnote 18](#), appearing at Gen. 14:10 in [NetBible.org](#)).

- J 2 Entrapment: and they fell into them. ⁴²³
- J 3 Survivors: But those who survived fled to the hill country.
- H 4 Looting: {11} Then they took ⁴²⁴ all the goods of Sodom and Gomorrah and all their food supply, and departed. 14:11
- H 5 Capture: {12} They also took Lot, Abram's nephew, and his possessions and departed, for he was living in Sodom. 14:12
- E 2 Counterattack! [Abram's](#) daring rescue of Lot and the [Sodomites](#) 14:13-16
 - G 1 Information: {13} Then a fugitive came and told Abram the Hebrew. ⁴²⁵ 14:13
 - G 2 Association: Now he was living by the oaks of
 - H 1 Mamre the Amorite,
 - H 2 brother of Eshcol
 - H 3 and brother of Aner,
 - G 3 Alliance: and these were allies with Abram.
 - G 4 Pursuit: {14} When Abram heard that his relative had been taken captive, he led out his trained men, born in his house, three

⁴²³ Gen. 14:10 - they fell into them: "They" is a general reference to some of the armies of the kings of Sodom and Gomorrah. The king of Sodom, at least, was among those who survived. He later met [Abram](#) returning from having conquered Chedorlaomer and the Mediterranean Confederation, rescuing the inhabitants of Sodom (Gen. 14:17, 21-24).

⁴²⁴ Gen. 14:11 - they took: Meaning the conquering Mesopotamian Confederacy.

⁴²⁵ Gen. 14:13 - [Abram](#) the Hebrew: This is the first occurrence of the word "Hebrew" (*Ibri*, [5680](#)). It may mean "one who is a descendent of Eber." But it is also a name for [Israeli](#) people. According to [BDB](#), it means "one from beyond," and is "a designation of the patriarchs and the [Israelites](#)." In Genesis the word is used six times: 14:13; 39:14, 17; 40:15; 41:12; 43:32.

hundred and eighteen,⁴²⁶ and went in pursuit as far as Dan.⁴²⁷

G 5 Battle Tactics 14:15a

H 1 Dividing up his forces: {15} He divided his forces⁴²⁸ against them

H 2 Surprise, night-time attack: by night,⁴²⁹ he and his servants,

G 6 Success: and defeated them, 14:15b

G 7 Pursuit: and pursued them as far as Hobah, which is north of Damascus.⁴³⁰ 14:15c

G 8 Repossession: {16} He brought back all the goods, and also brought back his relative Lot with his possessions, and also the women, and the people. 14:16

E 3 The Welcoming Party of Two Kings: [Abram's](#) encounter with the kings of Jerusalem and [Sodom](#) 14:17-24

G 1 [Melchizedek's priestly blessing](#) of God and [Abram](#) 14:17-20

H 1 Return: {17} Then after his return from the defeat of Chedorlaomer and the kings who were with him, 14:17a

H 2 Welcoming Committee: 14:17b-18

⁴²⁶ Gen. 14:14 - three hundred and eighteen: Evidently this number refers only to the servants [Abram](#) put into battle. According to Gen. 14:24, Mamre, Eshcol and Aner were Amorite rulers who went along with [Abram](#), along with their men. The actual number of combatants under [Abram's](#) control as general may have been closer to 1000 or 1200. He is counting on the loyalty and known quantity of his men, that of his allies, plus very likely the help from God he believes will come. Humanly speaking he is at a disadvantage. 1) The Mesopotamian invaders probably outnumber [Abram's](#) forces. 2) They have a huge backlog of experience. 3) They have an unbroken string of successes.

⁴²⁷ Gen. 14:15 - Dan: "The appearance of the later name 'Dan' [v. 14] is a post-Mosaic updating of the place name for later readers." [635] (Constable, [Notes on Genesis, 2019](#), quoting Kenneth A. Mathews, *New American Commentary*, Gen. 11:27-50:26, p. 147). This does not invalidate Mosaic authorship of Genesis, or of the Pentateuch.

⁴²⁸ Gen. 14:15 - divided up his forces: This perhaps gave the illusion of a larger number of attackers. It certainly occupied the startled opponents on multiple fronts.

⁴²⁹ Gen. 14:15 - by night: The element of night-time surprise by [Abram](#) and his allies must have been completely unnerving. The targets of the attack had no idea anyone was even pursuing them, much less close by. Darkness would have concealed their movements. Obviously, God was protecting [Abram](#), and God's unseen, heavenly army must have fought against the Mesopotamians, routing them completely.

⁴³⁰ Gen. 14:15 - Damascus: The capital of Syria. This whole journey from the place where [Abram](#) had been living was, for [Abram](#) and his troops perhaps a distance of 100-150 miles, one way! What a daring rescue.

- J 1 The king of [Sodom](#): the king of Sodom went out to meet him at the valley of Shaveh (that is, the King's Valley). ⁴³¹ 14:17b
- J 2 [Melchizedek](#): {18} And Melchizedek ⁴³² king of Salem ⁴³³ brought out bread and wine; ⁴³⁴ now he was a priest ⁴³⁵ of God Most High. ⁴³⁶ 14:18

⁴³¹ Gen. 14:17 - the King's Valley: "The King's Valley is possibly a reference to what came to be known later as the Kidron Valley" ([NetBible.org note 45](#) appearing at Gen. 14:17).

⁴³² Gen. 14:18 - Melchizedek: [Melchizedek](#) is a most enigmatic figure. His name means, "[King](#) of Righteousness." His position is that he was [King](#) of Salem (Heb. *Shalem*, [8004](#)), an earlier version of Jerusalem. Salem means "peaceful." So [Melchizedek](#) was [King](#) of Righteousness and [King](#) of Peace. But [Melchizedek](#) had a dual status. He was both [king](#) and [priest](#). He was a [priest](#) of God Most High. In the later Hebrew economy, Davidic [kings](#) necessarily came from the tribe of Judah. But they could not be [priests](#), for [priests](#) could originate only from the tribe of Levi and be sons of Aaron within that tribe. But the ultimate seed of [Abraham](#), Jesus, was to be, at the same time, [Prophet](#), [Priest](#) and [King](#). As [Prophet](#) He could come from any tribe. As [King](#), He had to come from the tribe of Judah. But that would disqualify Him from being [Priest](#). However, [Yahweh](#) revealed to David that the Messiah would be [priest](#) forever after the order of [Melchizedek](#) (Psalm 110:1-4). The writer of Hebrews (Heb. 5:6, 10; 6:20) quotes Psalm 110:4 to demonstrate that Jesus was [priest](#) after a different order, the order of [Melchizedek](#), not the order of Aaron / Levi. Thus, the two offices of [King](#) and [Priest](#) are combined in one person, Jesus of Nazareth, forever! [Melchizedek](#) is a type, or [prophetic](#) preview, of [King](#) / [Priest](#) Jesus. The writer of Hebrews introduces an interesting point when he states that [Melchizedek](#) "Without father, without mother, without genealogy, having neither beginning of days nor end of life, but made like the Son of God, he remains a priest perpetually." Many commentators interpret that statement metaphorically, explaining that, *according to the record of Genesis*, [Melchizedek](#) had none of the above, but we all know he really did. I reject that view of hubris, maintaining that [Melchizedek](#) was either (1) a specially created man, or (2) he was an angel (messenger), or (3) he was the [pre-incarnate Christ](#). Though each of these solutions has its own problems, none of them is as severe as making a Biblical writer to mean the opposite of what he actually said.

⁴³³ Gen. 14:18 - Salem: Hebrew, *shâlêm* ([8004](#)). [BDB](#), as appearing in StudyLight.org, "Salem = 'peace' – 1) the place of which Melchizedek was king 1a) most Jewish commentators affirm that it is the same as Jerusalem."

Footnote 46 at NetBible.org Genesis 14:18 reads as follows:

Salem is traditionally identified as the Jebusite stronghold of old Jerusalem. Accordingly, there has been much speculation about its king. Though some have identified him with the preincarnate Christ or with Noah's son Shem, it is far more likely that Melchizedek was a Canaanite royal priest whom God used to renew the promise of the blessing to Abram, perhaps because Abram considered Melchizedek his spiritual superior. But Melchizedek remains an enigma. In a book filled with genealogical records he appears on the scene without a genealogy and then disappears from the narrative. In Ps 110 the Lord declares that the Davidic king is a royal priest after the pattern of Melchizedek.

I disagree with NetBible's identification of [Melchizedek](#) as a Canaanite royal priest. I believe he was most likely an appearance of the [pre-incarnate Christ](#). The commentary by the author of Hebrews (Heb. 7:1-3) is a controlling perspective. See the Glossary entry on [Melchizedek](#).

⁴³⁴ Gen. 14:18 - bread and wine: Most likely these were rations for [Abraham's](#) troops and returning hostages. But this act on the part of [Melchizedek](#) was an act of solidarity with and appreciation for [Abram](#) and [Abram's](#) God, whom both served. The bread and wine were probably not a sacerdotal ceremony, but in some way foreshadow the observance of the Lord's table instituted by Jesus as a remembrance of His sacrificial death (Matt. 26:26-29; 1 Cor. 11:23-26).

⁴³⁵ Gen. 14:18 - priest: Hebrew, *kōhên* ([3548](#)), [priest](#) – a mediator between God and man.

⁴³⁶ Gen. 14:18 - now he was a priest of God Most High: That which made [Melchizedek](#), King of Salem, unique was that he was both king *and* [priest](#). He was a fitting [type](#) (or prophetic preview) of the [Messiah](#), who also would be both King (Psa. 110:1-3, 5-7) and [Priest](#) (Psa. 110:4).

"God Most High" translates *Él* ([410](#)), "God" or "Mighty One" and *Elyôn* ([5945](#)), "Highest." This dual

H 3 Blessing 14:19-20

J 1 [Melchizedek](#) blessed [Abram](#): {19} He blessed him⁴³⁷ and said, "Blessed be [Abram](#) of God Most High, Possessor of heaven and earth;"⁴³⁸ 14:19

J 2 [Melchizedek](#) blessed God: {20} And blessed be God Most High,⁴³⁹ Who has delivered your enemies into your hand." 14:20a

H 4 Tithe – [Abram's](#) tithe to God through [Melchizedek](#): He gave him a tenth of all.⁴⁴⁰ 14:20b

designation of God occurs but four times in Genesis – all in this passage: Gen. 14:18, 19, 20, 22. The word *elyôn* occurs by itself one more time in Genesis – Gen. 40:17, where it is translated, “top.” Not only did [Melchizedek](#) worship God Most High (Gen. 14:18); so also did [Abram](#) (Gen. 14:22).

⁴³⁷ Gen. 14:19 - he blessed him: “he blessed him” is the 3rd Person Singular [Piel Imperfect](#) plus the 3rd Person Singular suffix of the verb *bârak* (1288), to bless intensively. [Melchizedek](#) blessed [Abram](#) by calling for God Most High to bless [Abram](#). This blessing consisted of the broadest of all blessings, both spiritual and physical. By blessing [Abram](#), [Melchizedek](#) was calling for the blessing of God upon himself. As Yahweh had promised [Abram](#), “I will bless those who bless you” (Gen. 12:3). As the writer of Hebrew pointed out, [Melchizedek's](#) blessing of [Abram](#) implicitly acknowledged that [Melchizedek](#) was greater than [Abram](#) (Heb. 12:7). The inference is that Christ's priesthood was, therefore, greater than the priesthood obtained through [Abram's](#) descendants, Levi and Aaron.

⁴³⁸ Gen. 14:19 - Possessor of heaven and earth: The verb “possessor” is *qânâh* (7069), which means, almost universally, “to acquire” or “to purchase.” [BDB \(Bibloi 8.0\)](#) also intimate that it can speak of God “originating, creating,” but that is really a derived theological concept from this passage, not inherent in the word itself. [NetBible.org](#) translates the verb as “Creator,” inferring that the cognate Ugaritic employs two “homonymic” roots, one of which means to create, and the other meaning to acquire or purchase. But the editors of NetBible ([footnote 49 at Gen. 14:19](#)) point to Genesis 4:1 as proof of the meaning, “create.” There, however, the connection is unimpressive. There is no reason why Eve should have said, “I have *created* a manchild with *the help of* the LORD rather than the NASB's “I have *gotten* a manchild with *the help of* the LORD.” Moreover, who is to say definitively, lacking any clear evidence, that the Hebrew is influenced by the Ugaritic? I prefer to stay with the uniform translation, “Possessor, along with [NASB](#). If God possesses heaven and earth, presumably He does so because He created it. Frankly, “Possessor” fits the context here of owning property far better than the meaning of “Creator.” In Genesis 14:22, Abram refuses any of the booty from his rescue / raid for himself. Why should he? His God owns heaven and earth and is more than able to provide for Abram's needs!

⁴³⁹ Gen. 14:20 - And blessed be God most High: Not only did [Melchizedek](#) bless [Abram](#), but he blessed God Most High, who, he correctly concluded, had been the cause of [Abram's](#) victory. There is no way [Abram's](#) small force could have conquered the hardened, battle tested, undefeated forces of Chedorlaomer and his allies without Divine engineering!

⁴⁴⁰ Gen. 14:20 - tenth of all: The tenth of the spoil he had recovered. “The proof that the [Melchizedekan priesthood](#) (and Christ's) is superior to the Aaronic, or Levitical, [priesthood](#) is that Levi's great-grandfather [Abraham](#) paid tithes to [Melchizedek](#), and that Levi, though unborn, was involved” (Heb. 7:4-10) ([Ryrie Study Bible](#) note on Heb. 7:6). [JTB:] Here are some summary observations about this remarkable incident:

1. [Melchizedek](#) was one of two [kings](#) who welcomed [Abram](#).
2. He was combination [King](#) and [Priest](#).
3. He was [King-Priest](#) at Jerusalem.
4. He was a Righteous [King](#).
5. He was a Peaceful [King](#).
6. He was a [King](#) who was [Priest](#) of the One True God. How he ever came to know God remains a mystery. Doubtless many of his people were believers in the one true God.
7. His names are a picture of the qualities of the Great [King](#), Jesus: Righteousness and Peace. (And by the way, it is impossible to have peace without first having righteousness!)

G 2 [Abram's](#) refusal of remuneration from Bera, the King of [Sodom](#) 14:21-24

H 1 Endowment offer: {21} The king of Sodom said to Abram, "Give the people to me and take the goods for yourself." 14:21

H 2 [Abram's](#) refusal to the king of [Sodom](#) 14:22-24

J 1 His Person of his prior oath: {22} Abram said to the king of Sodom, "I have sworn to the LORD God Most High, possessor of heaven and earth,

J 2 The substance of his oath: {23} that I will not take a thread or a sandal thong or anything that is yours,

J 3 The purpose of his oath: for fear you would say, 'I have made Abram rich.'⁴⁴¹

J 4 The exception to his oath: {24} "I will take nothing except what the young men have eaten, and the share of the men who went with me, Aner, Eshcol, and Mamre; let them take their share."

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8. His offices of being a [King](#) and [Priest](#) picture the offices of the Great [King-Priest](#) – Jesus.
 - a. A [Priest](#) brings men to God.
 - b. A [King](#) rules over men He has brought to God.
 9. His refreshment which he provided for [Abram's](#) men, bread and wine, was a picture of the Lord's Table, looking ahead to the Body and Blood of Jesus.
 10. His blessing of [Abram](#) showed he was a superior to [Abram](#).
 - a. Thus, any [priests](#) who would follow in his line would be superior to any [priests](#) following in the line of Aaron, descendant of [Abram](#).
 - b. So [King-Priest](#) Jesus is superior to any [priests](#) who descend from Aaron.
 11. The two [kings](#) both dealt in monetary terms.
 - a. Bera, the [King](#) of [Sodom](#) volunteered to give [Abram](#) spoils. This would have obligated [Abram](#) to the [King](#) of [Sodom](#). According to Genesis 18 and 19, Bera would have been an evil [king](#), "[King](#) of Evil."
 - b. The [King](#) of Jerusalem gave a voluntary gift to [Abram's](#) men, and requested nothing. Yet [Abram](#) gave him a tithe, showing his submission to him, "[King](#) of Righteousness" and "[King](#) of Peace."
 12. There are always two [kings](#) vying for our allegiance, the [King](#) of Evil and the [King](#) of Righteousness. We, like [Abram](#), must voluntarily submit to and honor one or the other. There is no middle choice. To which [King](#) are you submitting?

⁴⁴¹ Gen. 14:23 - for fear you would say, "I have made Abram rich:" A couple of comments are in order. (1) [Abram](#) has been profoundly influenced by [Melchizedek](#), it seems. He calls his God, "God Most High," echoing the language of [Melchizedek](#) in Gen. 14:19, 20. (2) [Abram](#) had just given [Melchizedek](#), King / Priest of Salem (presumably Jerusalem), a righteous king, a tenth of all the booty. The King of Sodom had witnessed this. He probably felt some jealousy or covetousness. However, his bargaining power was nil. He magnanimously requested only the people of Sodom, offering [Abram](#) the plunder. But doubtless, he was hoping for more, and so he used a reverse psychology, in my thinking. (3) [Abram](#) had contemplated this whole plunder apportionment carefully in his mind. He would make certain his allies, Aner, Eshcol, and Mamre, received their fair share (Gen. 14:24). But [Abram](#) had already sworn an oath to God Most High, Possessor of heaven and earth, that he would not take one stitch of clothing from the King of Sodom. (4) His motive in so doing was to prevent the King of Sodom from thinking or saying in any way that he was the one who had made [Abram](#) wealthy. (5) One almost gets the feeling that [Abram](#) knew of the character of the King of Sodom and the men of the city (see Gen. 19:1-11). There was no possible way [Abram](#) wanted to be indebted in any sense to this evil man. (6) Our theology powerfully determines our financial priorities!!!

- C 5 God's reinforcement of His promise to [Abram](#) through an unconditional covenant, the [Abrahamic Covenant](#). 15:1-21 **BELIEVING IN THE DEPENDABILITY OF GOD**
- D 1 [Yahweh's](#) appearance promising protection and numerous descendants to [Abram](#), believing, thus justified 15:1-6
- E 1 God's communication to [Abram](#): {1} After these things the word of the LORD came to Abram in a vision, saying, 15:1
- G 1 Fear: "Do not fear, Abram,
- G 2 Shield: I am a shield to you; ⁴⁴²
- G 3 Reward: Your reward shall be very great." ⁴⁴³
- E 2 [Abram's](#) response: Concern over lack of blood heirs 15:2-3
- G 1 His childlessness: {2} Abram said, "O Lord GOD, what will You give me, since I am childless, ⁴⁴⁴15:2a
- G 2 His heir: and the heir of my house is Eliezer of Damascus?" 15:2b
- G 3 His explanation of inheritance problem: {3} And Abram said, "Since You have given no offspring to me, one born in my house is my heir." 15:3
- E 3 God's reply to [Abram](#) 15:4-5
- G 1 Rebuttal: {4} Then behold, the word of the LORD came to him, saying, "This man will not be your heir; 15:4a
- G 2 Reaffirmation 15:4b-5
- H 1 **Of his own seed to be his heir:** but one who will come forth from your own body, he shall be your heir." 15:4
- H 2 **Of countless seed** (Object lesson): {5} And He took him outside and said, "Now look toward the heavens, and count

⁴⁴² Gen. 15:1 - I am a shield to you: Perhaps [Yahweh](#) was reassuring [Abram](#) because the latter had undertaken an extremely dangerous mission on behalf of his nephew, Lot. Having done so, [Abram](#) might well be the target of larger coalitions seeking to dislodge him from power. [Yahweh](#) would protect him in the future, just as He had in the recent past.

⁴⁴³ Gen. 15:1 - Your reward shall be very great: [Abram](#) had not taken any part of the plunder he had recovered for himself. [Yahweh](#) assured him that his reward from [Yahweh](#) would more than compensate for his sacrifice.

⁴⁴⁴ Gen. 15:2 - what will You give me, since I am childless: In faith, [Abram](#) took [Yahweh](#) at His word. He looked at "reward" in terms of descendants. Whatever Abram possessed, he wanted to pass on to his physical descendants. [Yahweh](#) had promised him as many descendants as the dust of the earth (Gen. 13:16), but as yet, Sarai had borne him not a single child.

the stars, if you are able to count them." And He said to him, "So shall your descendants be."⁴⁴⁵ 15:5

- E 4 [Abram's](#) response of faith: {6} Then he believed in the LORD; 15:6a
- E 5 God's judicial response of justification: and He reckoned it to him as righteousness.⁴⁴⁶ 15:6b
- D 2 [Yahweh's](#) repeated promise of [Canaan](#) to [Abram](#); [Abram's](#) request for confirmation 15:7-8
- E 1 His reminder of His gift of this land to [Abram](#): {7} And He said to him, "I am the LORD who brought you out of Ur of the Chaldeans, to give you this land to possess it."⁴⁴⁷ 15:7

⁴⁴⁵ Gen. 15:5 - So shall your descendants be: Literally, "So shall be your seed," where "seed" is the singular of the noun *zéra* (2233), "seed." Another good translation would be "posterity," which is a singular noun, but yet which captures the multiplicity envisioned by Yahweh. [Abram's](#) seed, or posterity, would be as numerous as the stars.

[Yahweh](#) was deliberately guiding this conversation to cover two parts of the Abrahamic Promise that were yet unfulfilled. When [Yahweh](#) told [Abram](#) He would be his shield and reward, that was speaking of the Blessings component of the [Abrahamic Covenant](#). But [Abram](#) was already very wealthy, and he understood the Blessings component. Where his faith struggled was with the other two components, the Descendants component and the Land component. [Abram](#) had steered the conversation away from the Blessings and now concentrated on the Descendants component. [Yahweh](#) assured him his descendants would be as numerous as the stars. On a given night, without any surrounding competition from competing city lights, one can observe approximately 3000 stars with the naked eye. It was not [Yahweh's](#) intention to limit [Abram's](#) descendants to a mere 3000. A thinking person would assume that the stars which one can observe are merely a deposit on a great many more stars out there. The stars were innumerable, and [Abram's](#) descendants (literally, "seed") would also be innumerable. At the end of this next revelation to [Abram](#), God would deal with the Land component of His promise (Gen. 15:17-21). Moreover, He was just about to reinforce His promise to [Abram](#) with a unilateral [covenant](#), which we call the "[Abrahamic Covenant](#)."

One more comment is in order. In Gal. 3:16, Paul takes note of the singular number of "seed" in the promises to [Abraham](#), and finds in the singular Christ, their fulfillment. I do not deny Paul's interpretation. But Genesis 15:5 cannot be construed to mean *only* that [Abraham's](#) seed found its ultimate fulfillment in Christ. It makes little sense, for example, to say that [Abram's](#) ultimate singular seed, Christ, would be as numerous as the stars of the heavens, which [Abram](#) was unable to count. That would be nonsense. So despite Paul's use of the singularity of "seed" as referring to Christ, that does not exhaust the meaning which [Abram](#) was to understand here, that his *physical posterity* was to be as numerous as the stars of the heavens. That refers to the nation known as the [sons of Israel](#). Some say that the numerical quantity here must also refer to [Abram's spiritual](#) seed, which would be comprised largely of [Gentiles](#). Paul unquestionably makes that inference in Romans 4:13-18. But the primary meaning here must refer to [Abram's physical](#) seed, the nation of [Israel](#). In short, there are two legitimate, Biblical interpretations, and both are correct.

⁴⁴⁶ Gen. 15:6 - He reckoned it to him as righteousness: How was [Abram](#) saved? Not by performing animal sacrifices. Not by believing in the [Messiah](#). How could he have known about Him? He was saved by grace through faith in God and His revealed revelation (Rom. 4:18). That has always been the means of salvation. Today, it has been revealed to us that we must trust in Jesus, the [Messiah](#), the Son of God. When we trust in Jesus, God counts it to us for righteousness (Rom. 3:21-26; Gal. 2:16, 20, 22; Eph. 3:12) . Just so, when [Abram](#) believed God's revelation, God counted it to him for righteousness. There has always been only one way of salvation. The content of the faith might differ from one age to the next, but the absolute necessity of faith has always existed. [Abram](#) believed in God's promise that his descendants would be as numerous as the stars in the heavens. We believe God's promise of eternal life through faith in [Messiah](#) Jesus. But salvation has always and will always be by grace through faith (Eph. 2:8-10).

⁴⁴⁷ Gen. 15:7 - to give you this land to possess it: [Abram](#) struggled with the *Descendants/Nation* component of the [Abrahamic Covenant](#) because he had no children. Nevertheless, having witnessed [Abram's](#) embrace through faith of His promise of as many descendants as the stars of the heaven, [Yahweh](#) now proceeded to challenge the other stumbling block in [Abram's](#) faith – the issue of *Land*, the third component of the Abrahamic blessing. [Abram](#) did not possess one square centimeter of the land. [Yahweh](#) sought here to expand [Abram's](#) knowledge base, and thus his

- E 2 [Abram's](#) request for assurance: {8} He said, "O Lord GOD, how may I know that I will possess it?" ⁴⁴⁸ 15:8
- D 3 [Yahweh's](#) unconditional, unilateral, [blood covenant](#) of the land to [Abram's](#) descendants 15:9-21
- E 1 God's instruction to prepare for a sacrifice 15:9-10
- G 1 God's request for animals: {9} So He said to him, "Bring Me a three year old heifer, and a three year old female goat, and a three year old ram, and a turtledove, and a young pigeon." 15:9
- G 2 [Abram's](#) compliance 15:10
- H 1 Bringing the animals: {10} Then he brought all these to Him ⁴⁴⁹
- H 2 Dividing the animals: and cut them in two, and laid each half opposite the other; but he did not cut the birds.
- E 2 God's delay 15:11-12a
- G 1 [Abram's](#) need to defend the sacrifice: {11} The birds of prey came down upon the carcasses, and Abram drove them away. ⁴⁵⁰ 15:11
- G 2 The delay until the end of the day: {12} Now when the sun was

faith.

⁴⁴⁸ Gen. 15:8 - how may I know that I will possess it: [Yahweh](#) had not belittled [Abram's](#) searching question about *Descendants*. In fact, [Yahweh](#) had given [Abram](#) a tangible object lesson – the stars of the heavens. [Abram](#) learned that [Yahweh](#) wanted to substantiate his struggling faith. [Abram's](#) question was asking for some way that [Yahweh](#) would tangibly undergird his faith, now, in regard to the *Land* component of God's promise. [Yahweh](#) did not disappoint him! He entered into a [blood covenant](#) with [Abram](#)!

⁴⁴⁹ Gen. 15:10 - he brought all these to Him: [Abram](#) knew exactly what God was calling for. He knew that [Yahweh](#) was going to enter into a binding [blood covenant](#) with him. [Abram](#) didn't have to be told what to do. He took each animal, killed it, and divided the larger ones in two, and simply placed the birds one on each side. He and [Yahweh](#) were then to walk between the dead animals. This symbolized that whichever party failed to keep his part of the [covenant](#) was liable to die! In [Abram's](#) day, one could not enter into a more solemn or binding [covenant](#) than the [Blood Covenant](#)! This would be [Yahweh's](#) binding guarantee, on threat of His own death, that He would give this Land of [Canaan](#) to [Abram's](#) descendants! For Christians today, caught up in [Replacement Theology](#), to claim that [Israel](#) has no right to the land of [Canaan](#), the land of [Israel](#), as defined in Genesis 15, is an affront to the very *existence* of God!

⁴⁵⁰ Gen. 15:11 - [Abram](#) drove them away: [Abram](#) was waiting for [Yahweh](#) to appear and walk with him between the dead animals in a most solemn, binding, [Covenant of Blood](#). [Abram](#) waited so long that the vultures began to descend upon the carcasses. But he drove them away because [Yahweh](#) had not yet appeared. Do the vultures symbolize the intent of Gentile nations to destroy Israel or to destroy God's covenant with [Abram](#)? Perhaps, but we cannot know for certain. The text does not tell us.

going down,⁴⁵¹ 15:12a

E 3 God's communication 15:12b-21

G 1 The sleep of [Abram](#) 15:12b

H 1 Deep sleep: a deep sleep⁴⁵² fell upon Abram;

H 2 Terror: and behold, terror

H 3 Great darkness: *and* great darkness fell upon him.⁴⁵³

G 2 The prophecy concerning the future 15:13-16

H 1 His descendants' future migration 15:13-1

J 1 Migration: *{13}* God said to Abram, "Know for certain that your descendants will be strangers in a land that is not theirs,⁴⁵⁴ 15:13a

J 2 Enslavement: where they will be enslaved and oppressed⁴⁵⁵ four hundred years. 15:13b

J 3 Justice: *{14}* "But I will also judge the nation whom they will serve,⁴⁵⁶ 5:14a

J 4 Deliverance: and afterward they will come out 15:14b

⁴⁵¹ Gen. 15:12 - sun was going down: [Yahweh](#) waited to recommence His conversation with [Abram](#) until it grew darker. The darkness would contrast visually with the "flaming torch" that would pass between the pieces when it grew completely dark (Gen. 15:17). Meanwhile, [Yahweh](#) had some longer-term information to pass on to [Abram](#). This had to be revealed so [Abram](#) would know the time frame of the fulfillment of this [Blood Covenant](#).

⁴⁵² Gen. 15:12 - deep sleep: [Yahweh](#) immobilized [Abram](#) and put him into a trance. [Abram](#) would be unable to walk between the dead animals with [Yahweh](#)! [Yahweh](#) would walk between them all by Himself!

⁴⁵³ Gen. 15:12 - terror and great darkness fell upon him: The visual and emotional effects would serve to heighten the drama going on here and enable [Abram](#) to remember this experience with great vividness. The darkness and terror were also appropriate in view of the somber, harrowing experience [Abram's](#) descendants would be forced to endure. They would become aliens in a foreign country [Egypt] for four centuries! Their experience as exiles would also include horrible slavery! This was disheartening news, indeed!

⁴⁵⁴ Gen. 15:13 - strangers in a land that is not theirs: This was a prediction of [Israel's](#) lengthy exile in Egypt, described in the opening chapters of [Exodus](#).

⁴⁵⁵ Gen. 15:13 - enslaved and oppressed: Why would [Yahweh](#) permit the descendants of [Abram](#) to be treated brutally for so long? The answer is simple, yet profound. If life were easy, they would have insufficient motivation to leave!

⁴⁵⁶ Gen. 15:14 - judge the nation whom they will serve: This statement assured [Abram](#) that justice would be served. This judgment took the form of the Ten Plagues, the last of which would so wrench the hardened heart of Egypt's Pharaoh that even he would ask the [sons of Israel](#) to leave!

- J 5 Enrichment: with many possessions. ⁴⁵⁷ 5:14c
- H 2 [Abram's](#) personal future 15:15
 - J 1 Peace in death: {15} "As for you, you shall go to your fathers in peace;" ⁴⁵⁸
 - J 2 Longevity: you will be buried at a good old age.
- H 3 His descendants' future return 15:16
 - J 1 The time and place of return – [Canaan](#): {16} "Then in the fourth generation ⁴⁵⁹ they will return here,
 - J 2 A factor in the delayed return: for the iniquity of the Amorite is not yet complete." ⁴⁶⁰
- G 3 God's unilateral sealing of His [covenant](#) 15:17
 - H 1 The time: After sunset. {17} It came about when the sun had set, ⁴⁶¹

⁴⁵⁷ Gen. 15:14 - with many possessions: [Israel](#) would loot the Egyptians as they exited their former prison (Ex. 3:21; 12:36).

⁴⁵⁸ Gen. 15:15 - go to your fathers in peace: In contrast to his descendants, who would experience great persecution for a long time, [Abram](#) himself would experience peace.

⁴⁵⁹ Gen. 15:16 - fourth generation: If Israel were enslaved 400 years, and would return in the fourth generation, then at that time a generation was 100 years, roughly speaking. Though having diminished greatly from the [days of Adam and Noah](#), by our standards, longevity was much greater then than it is today.

⁴⁶⁰ Gen. 15:16 - for the iniquity of the Amorite is not yet complete: The term "the Amorite" serves as a *synecdoche* for the ten Canaanite nations listed in Gen. 15:19-20. A *synecdoche* is a figure of speech in which one part serves to represent the whole, in this case, the whole group of Canaanite nations (Constable, [Notes on Genesis, 2019](#)). This sober commentary by God reveals that nations and regions have a quota of evil. When a nation or region's quota of wickedness has been filled up, God will send another nation or nations to destroy that nation and occupy its territory. In the [sovereignty](#), [foreknowledge](#), and [providence](#) of God, the time was not yet ripe for judgment upon the [Amorites](#) who inhabited the land of [Canaan](#). But in four centuries they would fill up their quota of evil, and God's judgment would thunder down upon them. This judgment would come in the form of the advancing armies of [Israel](#). God is justified in giving the land of [Canaan](#) to whomever He wishes (Isa. 29:16; 45:9; Rom. 9:21). But He was more than justified in taking it away from the [Amorites](#) because of their great evil. On two counts, then, God was justified in making [Israel](#) the perpetual owners of [Canaan](#). First, because God is God, and He can do whatever He wishes. Second, because the evil [Amorites](#) eventually earned judgment from God for their evil behavior.

I believe God has given America incredible blessings because of her largely Christian foundation. But to whom much is given, much shall be required (Luke 12:48). America has steadily and ever more rapidly departed from God and His values. America's quotient of evil is rapidly filling up to the point of no return, barring a heaven-sent revival. May God have mercy on us! I furthermore believe that the steady invasion of America by caravans of Central Americans from the south is part of God's judgment on this country. We have filled up our quota of evil, and even President Donald Trump, with a Republican majority in both the Senate, and, for a time, in the House, was powerless to stop the invasion!

⁴⁶¹ Gen. 15:17 - sun had set: [Yahweh's](#) revelation to [Abram](#) took some time. Now it was completely dark, the sun having set some time ago.

- H 2 The condition – very dark: that it was very dark,
- H 3 The specter
- J 1 A smoking oven: and behold, *there appeared a smoking oven*
- J 2 A flaming torch: and a flaming torch ⁴⁶²
- H 4 The action: which passed between these pieces. ⁴⁶³
- G 4 The terms of [Yahweh's](#) Unilateral [Blood-Covenant](#) with [Abram](#) 15:18-21
- H 1 The author: {18} On that day the LORD made a covenant⁴⁶⁴ with Abram, saying, 15:18a
- H 2 The land: "To your descendants I have given this land, ⁴⁶⁵ 15:18b
- H 3 The boundaries: From the river of Egypt as far as the great

⁴⁶² Gen. 15:17 - smoking oven and a flaming torch: Together, these symbolized [Yahweh](#). Presumably the flaming torch (*lappiyd*, [3940](#)) was lit in the smoking oven, which was a portable fire pot (*tannür*, [8574](#)) ([BDB](#), appearing in [Biblioi 8.0](#)). Together, the singular image of the smoking-oven-and-flaming- torch ([Yahweh](#)) passed between the animals and was easily observed by [Abram](#) in the complete blackness.

⁴⁶³ Gen. 15:17 - passed between these pieces: The implication cannot be overstated. [Abram](#) remained completely immobilized. But he could see and hear. He watched as [Yahweh](#) walked between the pieces *all by Himself!*! What [Abram](#) had assumed was to be a *Bilateral Blood Covenant* turned out to be a *Unilateral Blood Covenant*. [Yahweh](#) was unequivocally stating that the fulfillment of this [Blood Covenant](#) was a Divine responsibility only! This was an Unconditional [Covenant](#), dependent wholly upon [Yahweh's](#) faithfulness! If the terms stated in this [covenant](#) are not fulfilled, [Yahweh](#) will die!

By way of theological application, God's gifts and calling are irrevocable (Rom. 11:29). He cannot make a [Blood Covenant](#) with [Abram](#) that He will give [Abram](#) and his physical seed specific real estate and then renege on His promise! The theological stance of [Supersessionism](#), that the [Church](#) supersedes [Israel](#), is a bankrupt theology.

⁴⁶⁴ Gen. 15:18 - made a covenant: Literally the Hebrew reads, "In that day [Yahweh](#) cut with [Abram](#) a [covenant](#)." "Cut" (*karath*, [3772](#)) is typical Hebrew idiom for "making" a [covenant](#) (*beriyth*, [1285](#)), "binding agreement." It is appropriate terminology because [Abram](#) literally "cut" the animals in two, dividing them so the parties could walk between them, obligating both parties to keep the covenant on pain of death. See the Glossary entry, "[Blood Covenant](#)." See also the "[The Covenants of the Bible](#)." Of course, in this instance, [Yahweh](#) alone walked between the dead animals, so it was [Yahweh](#) who cut the covenant. The verbal terms of this covenant affect both the Descendants (Seed) component and the Land component of God's promise to Abram. Both comprise the contents of Genesis 15:1-21, and specifically, of Gen. 15:18-21.

⁴⁶⁵ Gen. 15:18 - to your descendants I have given this land: Nothing could be clearer than that [Yahweh](#) deliberately bequeathed the land of [Canaan](#) to the physical descendants (literally, "seed," the singular of *zera*, [2233](#)) of [Abram](#). Which descendants of [Abram](#)? Why of course, the descendants of [Abram](#) and his only wife, Sarai. There were no other wives at this point, so why should [Yahweh](#) have had to specify? Moreover, even after [Abram](#) had resorted to taking Hagar as a concubine and fathering Ishmael (Gen. 16:15), God specified to [Abraham](#) that He would establish His [everlasting covenant](#) with his son Isaac, which Sarah would bear to him, and with Isaac's seed (Gen. 17:19).

river, the river Euphrates: ⁴⁶⁶15:18c

⁴⁶⁶ Gen. 15:18 - From the river of Egypt as far as the great river, the river Euphrates: Here for the first time [Yahweh](#) provides the Southern and Northern borders of the land [Yahweh](#) has given to the state of [Israel](#). Two questions must be resolved: (1) What is the “River (*nâhâr*, [5104](#)) of Egypt”? and (2) Does [Israel](#) inherit the whole interior between the two borders?

(1) As to the first question, many scholars believe the River of Egypt is the Wadi El Arish, located on the Mediterranean side of the triangular Sinai Peninsula. The Wadi El Arish has, indeed, served as a border between Egypt and [Israel](#). Many scholars believe that Wadi El Arish should thus be identified as the southwestern border of the land [Yahweh](#) gave to [Abram's](#) descendants as recorded in Genesis 15:18.

That is certainly possible. But how can a usually dry river bed form a matching counterpart to "the great river, the River Euphrates"? For that reason, I once personally leaned toward the view that "the river of Egypt" referred to an eastern branch of the Nile River delta system.

However, having read an article on "[The Brook of Egypt](#)" by M. G. Kyle, I changed my mind. He noted that [Moses](#), who knew the land of Egypt well, invariably identified Egyptian rivers with the word *yeôr* ([2975](#)). The "Brook of Egypt" is mentioned six times in the OT, and never does a single writer, including [Moses](#), use the word *yeôr* ([2975](#)) in describing it. Five times writers used the word *nachal* ([5158](#)) (Num. 34:5; Josh. 15:4, 47; 1 Kings 8:65; Isa. 27:12) and once the word *nahar* ([5104](#)) (Gen. 15:18). **Conclusion:** The Brook of Egypt, or River of Egypt, cannot be an Egyptian river. [Moses](#) was too discriminating for that. Just as a Louisianan calls Louisiana rivers bayous, so [Moses](#), who grew up in Egypt, called Egyptian rivers *yeôr(im)* and other rivers outside of Egypt, *nachal* or *nahar*. Therefore, the "Brook of Egypt" or "River of Egypt" is best identified with the Wadi El Arish, in the Sinai Peninsula, not an Eastern branch of the Nile River, which would have been identified as *yeôr*.

(2) As to the question regarding the extremities of the land, [Israel](#) has, to my knowledge, never treated the entire extent of land from the "River of Egypt" to the "Euphrates River as being "the land of [Israel](#)." It appears that when the northern borders were assigned by God, those borders never reached the Euphrates River. However, under the reign of Solomon, at least, [Israel](#) controlled all the land to the west of the Euphrates River clear to Gaza.

a) Southern Border, Assigned: According to [Yahweh's](#) instructions to [Moses](#) (Numbers 34:1-5), the Southern border of [Israel](#) was to extend from the Southern end of the Dead Sea to the "Pass of Scorpions" ("ascent of Akrabbim") to Zin, running south of Kadesh Barnea to Hazaraddar to Azmon to the Brook of Egypt, ending at the Mediterranean Sea.

b) Southern Border, Assigned: According to Joshua 15:1-4, the Southern border of Judah was from the lower end of the Salt Sea to the Ascent of Akrabbim, to Zin, South of Kadesh-Barnea, to Hezron, to Addar, to Karka to Azmon to the Brook of Egypt, ending at the Mediterranean Sea.

c) Northern Border, Assigned: [Yahweh](#) revealed to [Moses Israel's](#) Northern Border in Numbers 34:7-9. It was to extend from the Mediterranean Sea to Mount Hor to Lebo-hammath to Zedad to Ziphron, ending at Hazar-enan. There is difficulty in determining "[Mount Hor](#)" (see the bottom paragraph). Lebo-Hammath is probably to be identified with the district of Hamath (see 2 Chron. 8:4) rather than with the modern-day city of Hamah on the banks of the Orontes River. [Zedad](#) may refer to Zadad or Sadad, "a village on the road between Ribleh and Qaryetain" (W. M. Christie, "[Zedad](#)." Disclaimer: I profoundly disagree with Christie's characterization of the Northern Border as "ideal." He does not believe it was ever meant to be realized, either here, or in Ezekiel 47:15. But see [Yahweh's](#) expectations in Josh. 13:1-7. Christie is incorrect. God is not through with [Israel](#).) Ziphron was located on the border of the territory of Hamath and Damascus. Hazar-enan was 27 miles to the Northwest of Palmyra. But there is dispute on the location of almost every one of these geographical entities. What we can say with certainty is that none of these place names reached the Euphrates River.

d) Northern Border, Delineated in Generalities: When Joshua was advanced in years, [Yahweh](#) told him there was much land yet to be possessed (Josh. 13:1). In Joshua 13:5-6, He said,
⁵and the land of the Gebalite, and all of Lebanon, toward the east, from Baal-gad below Mount Hermon as far as Lebo-hammath. ⁶All the inhabitants of the hill country from Lebanon as far as Misrephoth-maim, all the Sidonians, I will drive them out from before the [sons of Israel](#); only allot it to Israel for an inheritance as I have commanded you.

Again, Lebo-hammath probably refers to the district of Hamath. It is worth noting that [Yahweh](#) intended [Israel](#) to possess much of modern-day Lebanon as part of the land of [Canaan](#).

e) Northern and Southern Borders, Actual: At Solomon's dedication of the Temple, a great assembly of [Israel](#) observed a dedicatory feast. The people came from the "entrance of Hamath" to "the brook of Egypt"

(1 Kings 8:65; 2 Chron. 7:8). Hamath, then, was perhaps the city farthest to the North, and was located on the Orontes River. If so, it is to be identified with the modern day city of Hama in West-Central Syria, to the North-East of modern Lebanon. But according to [Keil and Delitzsch](#), it is difficult to ascertain the Northern Border of [Israel](#). It may well rather be the southern edge of the *Kingdom* of Hamath that is spoken of here, rather than the *city* of Hamath. That would put the Northern Border of [Israel](#) farther to the South, but still far North of its modern day boundaries. In any event, it does not appear that [Israel](#) has ever extended clear to the Euphrates. That day is yet coming.

f) Northern and Southern Borders, Promised: Just as [Yahweh](#), in Genesis 15:18, bequeathed the entire territory between the two rivers to [Israel](#), so Isaiah (Isa. 27:12) predicted that [Yahweh](#) would repeople the Sons of [Israel](#) in all the territory “from the flowing stream of the Euphrates to the brook of Egypt.”

g) Northern Extremity, Solomon’s control: Though it can be debated as to whether or not Tiphseh constituted a Northern border of [Israel](#), it cannot be debated that Solomon “had dominion over everything west of the River, from Tiphseh even to Gaza, over all the kings west of the River; and he had peace on all sides around about him” (1 Kings 4:24). Tiphseh was situated on the South bank of the Euphrates River just before it bends toward the North due East of Aleppo. One day [Israel](#) will again control all that territory down to the Brook of Egypt. [Israel](#) will one day own part of what is now known as Syria.

Conclusion: Historically, [Israel](#) has used the Wadi El Arish (Brook of Egypt) as its Southwestern Border. In the North, [Israel](#) has possessed land up to and perhaps including part of the Southern District of Hamath. In Solomon’s day, he gained control of all the land West of the Euphrates, from Tiphseh to Gaza (1 Kings 4:24). But it is difficult to say that anyone considered that conquered land to be part of [Israel](#). The day is yet coming when it will be considered the land of [Israel](#) – from the Euphrates all the way down to the Brook of Egypt. All that territory will be known as the land of [Israel](#) first, during Christ’s [Millennial Reign](#), and second, perhaps in Eternity upon [New Earth](#).

H 4 The peoples to be displaced 15:19-21

- J 1 Kenite, Kenizzite, Kadmonite: {19} the Kenite⁴⁶⁷ and the Kenizzite⁴⁶⁸ and the Kadmonite⁴⁶⁹ 15:19
- J 2 Hittite, Perizzite, Rephaim: {20} and the Hittite⁴⁷⁰ and the Perizzite⁴⁷¹ and the Rephaim⁴⁷² 15:20

⁴⁶⁷ Gen. 15:19 - the Kenite: Each of these adjectival proper names is preceded by the Hebrew definite article, "... which is used here generically for the class of people identified" ([NetBible.org note 52, appearing at Genesis 15:21](#)). "The Kenite" translates *Qeyniy* (7017). It means "smiths." It refers to "the tribe from which the father-in-law of [Moses](#) was a member and which lived in the area between southern Palestine and the mountains of Sinai" ([BDB](#), as quoted in [StudyLight.org](#), entry [7017](#)).

⁴⁶⁸ Gen. 15:19 - the Kenizzite: *Qēnizziy* (7074), a Canaanite tribe whose region is not known. The name means "hunter." Caleb, fellow believing spy of Joshua, is identified as the son of Jephunneh, the Kenizzite (Num. 32:12; Josh. 14:6, 14).

⁴⁶⁹ Gen. 15:19 - the Kadmonite: *Qadmônîy* (6935), "easterners," appearing only here in the OT. A related word, spelled the same way, but evidently considered to be a different word by lexicographers is *qadmônîy* (6931). It means, variously, (1) "east" (Job 18:20; Ezek. 10:19; 11:1) or "eastern" in reference to the eastern or Dead Sea as opposed to the western or Mediterranean Sea (Ezek 47:18; Joel 2:20); (2) "ancients" (1 Sam. 24:13); and (3) "former" (Mal. 3:4). Why these two are not considered to be the same word by [BDB](#) is beyond me. [Gesenius](#) counts them as the same word.

⁴⁷⁰ Gen. 15:20 - the Hittite: *Chittîy* (2850). According to [BDB](#) (as appearing in [StudyLight.org](#)) "Hittite" = "descendant of Heth" and refers to "the nation descended from Heth, the 2nd son of Canaan [Gen. 10:15]; once inhabitants of central Anatolia (modern Turkey), later in north Lebanon." However, assuming the Biblical record to be the correct one, I place the Hittites in Canaan first. They would later have moved to Anatolia. See my note on "Heth" at Gen. 10:15.

⁴⁷¹ Gen. 15:20 - the Perizzite: *Perizzîy* (6522) – [BDB](#) (as appearing in [StudyLight.org](#)) "Perizzite = 'belonging to a village' – a people who inhabited southern Canaan prior to the conquest." It appears 23X in the OT, 3X in this book, at Gen. 13:7; 15:20; 34:30. They were to be dispossessed by Israel. The "Simple Hebrew-English Dictionary" (appearing in [Bibloi 8.0](#)) suggests the term refers to those living in open or rural country. There were still Perizzites living in the land in post-exilic times (Ezra 9:1).

⁴⁷² Gen. 15:20 - the Rephaim: Hebrew, *Rephaiym*, presumed plural of *Râphâh* (7497). According to [BDB](#) (as appearing in [StudyLight.org](#)), it means "giants, Rephaim – old tribe of giants." [NASB](#) typically translates the plural proper noun as "Rephaim." However, it translates the term as "giant(s)" in 2 Sam. 21:16, 18, 20, 22; 2 Chron. 20:4, 6, 8. There is mention made of the "[Valley of Rephaim](#)," with its possible location coinciding with that of [Baal-](#)

J 3 Amorite, [Canaanite](#), Girschite, Jebusite: {21} and the Amorite⁴⁷³ and the Canaanite⁴⁷⁴ and the Girschite⁴⁷⁵ and the Jebusite."⁴⁷⁶ 15:21

C 6 The birth of Ishmael as a human device to fulfill God's promise of *blessing* 16

D 1 Human Impatience: Sarai's ill-advised offering of Hagar⁴⁷⁷ as wife to [Abram](#) to raise up seed for [Abram](#) and herself 16:1-6

E 1 Problem # 1: **Barrenness**: Sarai had borne no children 16:1-3

G 1 Proposed Solution: Hagar 16:1-2

H 1 Sarai's inability: {1} Now Sarai, Abram's wife had borne

[Perazim](#) as indicated (Josh. 15:8; 18:16). In these passages, the Valley of Rephaim is near Jerusalem. However, there are also clear indications in Scripture that [Rephaim](#) was (were) also located east of the Jordan, in [Bashan](#) (Deut. 3:11, 13; Josh. 12:4; 13:12).

⁴⁷³ Gen. 15:21 - the Amorite: Hebrew, *emôrîy* ([567](#)), a people indigenous to the land of Canaan, and descendants of Canaan (Gen. 10:15-16). According to [BDB](#), as appearing in [StudyLight.org](#), the name means “a sayer.” At times they seem to represent the Canaanites as a whole (Gen. 15:16). At other times, as in this passage (Gen. 15:19-21), they are but one of ten ethnic groups to be dispossessed from Canaan by the [sons of Israel](#). [Moses](#) noted that the Amorites, Jebusites, and Hittites were living in the hill country (Num. 13:29). Elsewhere, the [Arnon River](#), in modern day Jordan, was the border between Moab and the Amorites (Num. 21:13). [Heshbon](#) (Num. 21:26), at the NE corner of the Dead Sea, was the city of Sihon, king of the Amorites. [Jazer](#), north of Heshbon, was also an Amorite city (Num. 21:32). [Gilead](#) (Num 32:29, 39) was apparently a region east of the Jordan and SE of the Sea of Galilee designated as Amorite country. [Bashan](#), farther north from [Gilead](#), and NE of the Sea of Galilee, was also Amorite country (Deut. 4:47).

⁴⁷⁴ Gen. 15:21 - the Canaanite: Hebrew, *Kenâanîy* ([3669](#)), possibly meaning “zealous,” was, as in Gen. 15:19-21), a specific ethnic grouping in the Promised Land. Yet the term “[Canaan](#)” also represented a fairly broad area (Gen. 10:19). The Canaanites were descendants of Canaan (Gen. 10:15-19).

⁴⁷⁵ Gen. 15:21 - the Girschite: Hebrew, *Girgâshîy* ([1622](#)), “dwelling on a clayey soil” (from [BDB](#), appearing in [StudyLight.org](#)). Used 7X in the OT, always in a list of the dispossessed nations of Canaan, with no specific geographical location given. [Blue Letter Bible](#) suggests they lived east of the Sea of Galilee. But no hint of that is given in Biblical texts. The Girschites were descendants of Canaan (Gen. 10:15-16).

⁴⁷⁶ Gen. 15:21 - the Jebusite: Hebrew, *Yebûsîy* ([2983](#)), descendants of Canaan (Gen. 10:15-16). Jebus (*yebûs*, [2982](#)), was an early name for the city of Jerusalem and the immediately surrounding area (Judges 19:10, 11; 2 Chron. 11:4, 5). Kenite ... Jebusite (Gen. 15:19-21): Five of these nations were descendants of Canaan (Gen. 10:15-19), who was cursed by Noah (Gen. 9:24-27). At [Yahweh's](#) command, [Israel](#) would exterminate most of these people and inherit their land as a gift from [Yahweh](#). Today, our world would be horrified and endeavor to put a stop to “ethnic cleansing.” But God is a righteous God, and He gave these subjugated peoples exactly what they deserved. He gave to [Israel](#) as a gift that which she did not deserve, the entire land of [Canaan](#). And He gave to the [Canaanite](#) nations that which they well-deserved – judgment! God’s ways are higher than man’s ways as the heavens are higher than the earth (Isa. 55:8-9).

⁴⁷⁷ Gen. 16:1-6 title - Sarai’s ill-advised offering of Hagar: In this section we have a Divinely-produced problem with human attempts at solution. This is certain: When we try to solve Divine problems with fleshly solutions, we only create more problems! And the original problem remains unchanged! The energy of the flesh is always deadly and counterproductive! The ongoing Arab-[Israeli](#) dispute today has its origin in Sarai and [Abram's](#) fleshly solution!

him no *children*, ⁴⁷⁸ 16:1

H 2 Sarai's possession: and she had an Egyptian maid whose name was Hagar. ⁴⁷⁹ 16:1b

H 3 Sarai's acknowledgment: {2} So Sarai said to Abram, "Now behold, the LORD has prevented me from bearing *children*. 16:2a

H 4 Sarai's advice: Please go in to my maid; 16:2b

H 5 Sarai's motive: perhaps I will obtain children through her. ⁴⁸⁰ 16:2c

G 2 Action 16:2d-4

H 1 [Abram's](#) listening to Sarai: And Abram listened to the voice of Sarai. ⁴⁸¹ 16:2d

H 2 The time: {3} After Abram had lived ten years in the land of Canaan, 16:3a

H 3 Sarai's gift: Abram's wife Sarai took Hagar the Egyptian,

⁴⁷⁸ Gen. 16:1 - Now Sarai, Abram's wife had borne him no *children*: Though Abram had been blessed by God and promised as many descendants (literally, "seed") as the stars of the heavens (Gen. 15:5), he had a problem. His wife was infertile.

⁴⁷⁹ Gen. 16:1 - and she had an Egyptian maid whose name was Hagar: Hagar (*Hâgâr*, [1904](#)) means "flight." Was this her given name, or did she acquire the name after she fled from her mistress, Sarai? Perhaps we will never know.

The text does not say so, but it is likely that Sarai had acquired her maid (*shiphchâh*, [8198](#)) as a dowry gift from Pharaoh (Gen. 12:16). Though Constable ([Notes on Genesis, 2019](#)) is convinced Hagar was a maid, a personal attendant, and not a slave, I disagree. If one has no choice in the matter, he or she is a slave. Hagar was likely a slave-girl given as a personal attendant.

[Abram](#) and Sarai had temporarily left Canaan, the land of promise (Gen. 12:7), for Egypt because of the famine (Gen. 12:10). When we leave the place of God's blessing because of a problem, it seems that we often encounter another problem in the new place that eventually becomes greater than the initial problem from which we were endeavoring to escape. Hagar's descendants through Ishmael and his Egyptian wife (Gen. 21:21) almost certainly include some, but perhaps [not all of the Arab peoples](#). Certainly the Arabs as a class are a great and persistent enemy of the [sons of Israel](#), Sarai and [Abraham's](#) descendants by promise.

In the NT, Paul uses Hagar and Sarai as an allegory, *allégoréō* ([238](#)) (Gal. 4:24; see the context in Gal. 4:21-31). Hagar the slave-girl represents the bondage of the Law at Mt. Sinai = present Jerusalem; while Sarai, the free woman, represents [New Jerusalem](#) above, and the freedom of the [Spirit](#) (Gal. 4:21-31).

⁴⁸⁰ Gen. 16:2 - Perhaps I will obtain children through her: It was customary in that day, if a wife were infertile, for her to give a slave girl / personal attendant to her husband in order to provide a surrogate womb. The child born from that union would be considered as the legal heir of the husband. Sarai could at least exert some degree of control over this child, more so than if [Abram](#) had taken a second wife (Constable, [Notes on Genesis, 2019](#), quoting Gordon J. Wenham, *Genesis 16-50*, p. 7). In effect, Hagar became [Abram's](#) concubine.

⁴⁸¹ Gen. 16:2 - Abram listened to the voice of Sarai: We have another example of a husband passively allowing his wife to talk him into something that was not God's will, nor God's plan. Endless trouble ensued from his passivity. The first example was that of Adam passively allowing his wife to be tempted by Satan, disguised as a serpent. The trouble that ensued from that passivity and Adam's subsequent participation was incalculably greater than in this instance.

her maid, and gave her to her husband Abram as his wife.⁴⁸² 16:3b

H 4 [Abram](#) and Hagar's success: {4} He went in to Hagar,⁴⁸³ and she conceived; 16:4a

E 2 Resultant Problem #2: *Friction* 16:4b-6

G 1 Hagar toward Sarai: and when she saw that she had conceived, her mistress was despised in her sight.⁴⁸⁴ 16:4b

G 2 Sarai toward [Abram](#): 16:5 {5} And Sarai said to Abram,

H 1 Her blaming of her husband: "May the wrong done me be upon you."⁴⁸⁵

H 2 Her description: I gave my maid into your arms, but when she saw that she had conceived, I was despised in her sight.

H 3 Her asking [Yahweh](#) for vindication at the expense of her husband: May the LORD judge between you and me."⁴⁸⁶

G 3 New Solution – Discipline: {6} But Abram said to Sarai, 16:6a

H 1 [Abram's](#) counsel

J 1 Ownership: Behold, your maid is in your power.⁴⁸⁷

⁴⁸² Gen. 16:3 - wife: The Hebrew is *'ish-shâh'* (802), literally, she gave Hagar to Abram, her husband (*'îysh*, 376, literally, "man" or "husband" as the context dictates) for a woman (to be understood as the woman of his possession, i.e. his wife). Though she could not be aware in advance of all the complexities, Sarai was deliberately introducing competition into her home. That does not sound like a good idea. And, indeed, as the narrative reveals, it was not a good idea. *'ish-shâh'* (woman / wife) first appears in Genesis in Gen. 2:22, 23, 24, 25. *'îysh* (man / husband) first appears in Genesis in Gen. 2:23, 24. The generic name for man as a specie is *'âdâm* (120).

⁴⁸³ Gen. 16:4 - he went in to Hagar: The Hebrew for "he went in" is the common verb *bô'* (935), meaning "to go in" or "to come in." This was, of course, a euphemism for sexual intercourse. This terminology seems to me to be far more impersonal than another euphemism, "Now the man *had relations with* his wife," where a more literal translation would read, "Now the man *knew* his wife, Eve." "Knew" (NASB, "had relations with") is *yâdâ'* (3045)

⁴⁸⁴ Gen. 16:4 - her mistress was despised in her sight: When it became clear that infertility was Sarai's problem, not [Abram's](#), Hagar despised her barren mistress. The evils of polygamy are certainly underscored here!

⁴⁸⁵ Gen. 16:5 - May the wrong done me be upon you! Is this feminine logic or merely fallen human logic? The idea was Sarai's and now that she is viewed with contempt by Hagar, it is all Abram's fault! I have worked with people like this. I do what someone suggests, and things don't turn out well, and suddenly, it's all my fault!

⁴⁸⁶ Gen. 16:5 - May the LORD judge between you and me: Though it was Sarai's idea, and [Abram](#) had cooperated with her, she now placed the blame for the rift between herself and her maid wholly upon [Abram's](#) shoulders! Emotion is oftentimes not very logical!

⁴⁸⁷ Gen. 16:6 - in your power: [Abram](#) acknowledged that Hagar is really still, and primarily, Sarai's slave girl / maid.

J 2 Discipline: Do to her what is good in your sight. ⁴⁸⁸

H 2 Sarai's action: So Sarai treated her harshly,

E 3 Yet another problem #3 – Runaway Maid : and she fled from her presence. ⁴⁸⁹ 16:6b

D 2 Divine Intervention ⁴⁹⁰ 16:7-12

E 1 Divine Discovery: {7} Now the angel of the LORD ⁴⁹¹ found her by a spring of water in the wilderness, by the spring on the way to Shur. ⁴⁹² 16:7

E 2 Divine Question: {8} He said, "Hagar, Sarai's maid, where have you come from and where are you going?" 16:8a

E 3 Hagar's response: And she said, "I am fleeing from the presence of my mistress Sarai." 16:8b

⁴⁸⁸ Gen. 16:6 - do to her what is good in your sight: [Abram](#) counseled Sarai to take whatever measures were necessary to bring this arrogant and disrespectful slave back into line.

⁴⁸⁹ Gen. 16:6 - she fled from her presence: Hagar's name is symbolic. It comes from the basic idea "to flee." Perhaps it was the name that was given to her after this incident. This whole incident is symbolic. It shows that a woman who had her claim to fame in a mixed up marital situation, and who found herself fleeing from the place of God's blessing, in submission to her mistress, is in some sense, the mother of Islam. Islam has fled from the true God, and Islam has distorted ideas about marriage.

⁴⁹⁰ Gen. 16:7-12 title - Divine Intervention: Hagar's flight from her harsh mistress is rebuffed by [Yahweh's](#) promise of multiplied descendants through her yet unborn child Ishmael. In this section, we have human-produced problems resolved by God's solutions. The humanly created problems are resolved by Biblical principles and God's grace. The original problem – Sarai's infertility – remained unsolved, but only in man's mind, not God's.

⁴⁹¹ Gen. 16:7 - the angel of the LORD found her: It should be noted that the Hebrew noun *mal'āk* ([4397](#)) means, simply, "messenger." This term appears 17X in the book of Genesis. All but two refer to supernatural messengers from Yahweh (or from God). The two exceptions are when Jacob sent human messengers to his brother Esau en route from Syria back to Canaan (Gen. 32:3, 6). Messengers from God have special power and authority.

This is the first reference to a messenger ([4397](#)) in the book of Genesis. There is no article preceding the noun. Literally, the text reads, "Now found her – messenger of Yahweh – by a spring of waters" Several observations are in order: (1) This messenger spoke to Hagar with authority, commanding Hagar to return to her mistress and submit to her (Gen. 16:9). (2) Moreover, he spoke as though he were Yahweh: "I will greatly multiply your descendants so that they will be too many to count" (Gen. 16:10). (3) He predicted the future (Gen. 16:11-12). (4) Hagar interpreted this messenger as being God, amazed that she was still alive for having seen him (Gen. 16:13). (5) Therefore we conclude that this messenger is God personified. (6) We further conclude, theologically, that this messenger was none other than the [pre-incarnate Christ](#). (7) We conclude, further, that in the OT, the Second Person of the Godhead manifested Himself from time to time as the *Messenger* of God. In the NT He was termed by John to be the *Message* (*lógos*, [3056](#)) of God (John 1:1-3, 14; 1 John 1:1; Rev. 19:13).

Whitelaw offers three points about the [Angel of the LORD](#) (taken from H. C. [Leupold's](#) commentary on Genesis, p. 500): (1) He identified Himself with the Lord. (2) Those to whom He appears understand His Deity. (3) The Biblical writers call Him [Yahweh](#) (Jehovah). See [Leupold](#) online. See the author's Glossary entry on "[Angel of Yahweh](#)." See also the article, "[The Angel of Yahweh](#)."

⁴⁹² Gen. 16:7 - on the way to Shur: This may refer to a line of fortresses near the Gulf of Suez, indicating she was returning to Egypt ([Leupold](#), p.500). See [Leupold](#) online.

- E 4 Divine Command: {9} Then the angel of the LORD said to her, 16:9
 - G 1 Return: "Return to your mistress,
 - G 2 Submit: and submit yourself to her authority."
- E 5 Divine Promises: 16:10-12
 - G 1 Promise of multiplication of her distant descendants: {10} Moreover, the angel of the LORD said to her, "I will greatly multiply your descendants so that they will be too many to count."⁴⁹³ 16:10
 - G 2 Promise regarding her immediate descendant 16:11-12
 - H 1 Acknowledgment of conception: {11} The angel of the LORD said to her further, "Behold, you are with child,
 - H 2 Identification of gender: And you will bear a son;
 - H 3 Prescription of name: And you shall call his name Ishmael,⁴⁹⁴
 - H 4 Logic: Because the LORD has given heed to your affliction.⁴⁹⁵
 - H 5 Depiction of Character 16:12
 - J 1 Independent, self-sufficient: {12} "He will be a wild donkey of a man,⁴⁹⁶
 - J 2 Adversarial: His hand *will be* against everyone, And everyone's hand *will be* against him;⁴⁹⁷

⁴⁹³ Gen. 16:10 - "I will greatly multiply your descendants so that they will be too many to count": God did that. Her son by Abram was Ishmael. Ishmael's twelve sons are listed in Genesis 25:13 ff. Many of Ishmael's sons whose names are associated with a specific geographic location are identified as Arab tribes. Isaac's son Esau married into the clan of Ishmael (Gen. 28:6-9).

⁴⁹⁴ Gen. 16:11 - Ishmael: [NASB](#) note: "I.e. God hears"

⁴⁹⁵ Gen. 16:11 - the LORD has given heed to your affliction: Ishmael's name means, "God Hears!"

⁴⁹⁶ Gen. 16:12 - He will be a wild donkey of a man: "The prophetic description of Ishmael as a 'wild ass of a man' [v. 12] (RSV) is rather intriguing. The animal referred to is the wild and untamable onager, which roams the desert at will. This figure of speech depicts very accurately the freedom-loving Bedouin moving across vast stretches of land." John Davis, *From Paradise to Prison*, p. 189, quoted by Constable, [Notes on Genesis, 2019](#). The term "wild donkey" translates one Hebrew word, *pereh* ([6501](#)). Wild donkeys inhabited the wilderness (Job 24:5; Jer. 2:24), in which they roamed freely (Job 39:5).

⁴⁹⁷ Gen. 12:12 - against ... against: The Arabs, descendants, at least in part, of Ishmael, cannot get along with one another, much less with [Israel](#). For example, in June of 2017 the Arab nations of Bahrain, Egypt, Saudi Arabia, and the UAE placed an embargo upon tiny Qatar, also an Arab state, "amid claims and counter-claims of state-sponsored

- J 3 Location / hostility: And he will live to the east of all his brothers." ⁴⁹⁸ 16:12
- D 3 Human Obedience: Hagar's appreciative, submissive return, bearing [Abram](#) Ishmael 16:13-16
- E 1 Hagar's gratefulness: {13} Then she called the name of the LORD who spoke to her, "You are a God who sees"; ⁴⁹⁹ 16:13a
- E 2 Hagar's amazement: for she said, "Have I even remained alive here after seeing him?" ⁵⁰⁰ 16:13b
- E 3 Hagar's memorial: {14} Therefore the well was called Beer-lahai-roi; ⁵⁰¹ behold, it is between Kadesh and Bered. 16:14
- E 4 Hagar's (implied) return and submission
- G 1 Hagar's delivery: {15} So Hagar bore Abram a son; 16:15a
- G 2 [Abram's](#) obedience: and Abram called the name of his son, whom Hagar bore, Ishmael. ⁵⁰² 16:15b

hacking, the promotion of fake news and support for terrorism" – Dominic Dudley, [Forbes](#) magazine.

⁴⁹⁸ Gen. 16:12 - live to the east of all his brothers: Moving to the east carries ominous overtones in the early history of man (Gen. 3:24; 4:16; 11:2; 13:11; 16:12; 41:6, 23, 27). This phrase can also carry the idea of "in hostility toward or defiance of his brothers." [Leupold](#), p. 505, (see also [Leupold](#) online) states, "We should say, he will carry a chip on his shoulder and have his finger on the trigger."

The Arabs have had a spiritual beginning. They can trace back their origin, at least in part, to [Abram](#), even to the God of [Abram](#). They have been blessed by [Yahweh](#) out of deference to [Abram](#), but they were not, and never have been, the children of God's promise. And so the religious beginnings have been fouled and twisted by [Satan](#). The Allah of the Arabs is not Jehovah of the **Hebrews**, for Allah in the *Koran* does not recognize the exclusive program of God through Isaac, the only child of promise. Nor is Allah the God of the **Christian**, for the *Koran* does not recognize that Jesus is the ultimate Word of God, far superior to any false prophet such as Muhammed. The present state of constant warlike conditions between the Arabs and [Israel](#) is simply a proof that the Bible, not the *Koran* is correct. God said that Ishmael would be antagonistic and intolerant, and indeed, he was and is. Any Arab, and any Muslim and any Jewish person can be saved by placing his faith in Jesus of Nazareth, the Jewish [Messiah](#), and the world's [Messiah](#). He is King of kings and Lord of lords (Rev. 17:14; 19:16), the Lamb of God who takes away the sins of the world (John 1:29, 35).

⁴⁹⁹ Gen. 16:13 - Then she called the name of the LORD who spoke to her, "You are a God who sees": The text states that this messenger was none other than Yahweh ([3068](#)). Hagar identified Him as "God" – 'él ([410](#)), an abbreviation of *Elohim* ([430](#)). The language could not be clearer, in my estimation, that this was a pre-incarnate appearance of the Second Person of the Godhead. This was the Ultimate [Messenger of Yahweh](#). Hagar was grateful that this God *saw* her and took note of her plight!

⁵⁰⁰ Gen. 16:13 - "Have I even remained here alive after seeing Him?": Since she had seen God Himself, she was surprised she remained alive. This further corroborates the interpretation that this messenger was Deity, not merely an angel (messenger) sent by Him.

⁵⁰¹ Gen. 16:14 - Beer-lahai-roi: [NASB](#) note: "I.e. the well of the living one who sees me"

⁵⁰² Gen. 16:15 - Ishmael: [Abram](#) had respect for Yahweh's revelation to Hagar. [Abram](#) believed Hagar when she told him that God Himself had appeared to her. He obeyed Yahweh.

- G 3 [Abram's](#) age: {16} Abram was eighty-six years old when Hagar bore Ishmael to him. 16:16
- C 7 God's requirement of [circumcision](#) as a sign ⁵⁰³ of [Abraham's](#) acceptance of the reconfirmed covenant to be perpetuated through Isaac 17
- D 1 **The Confirmation of the Covenant:** Requirement and Blessings: El Shaddai's confirmation of His [covenant](#) with [Abram](#) conditioned upon his fellowship and obedience 17:1-8
- E 1 The appearance of God 17:1-3a
- G 1 [Abram's](#) age: 99 17:1 {1} Now when Abram was ninety-nine years old, ⁵⁰⁴ 17:1a
- G 2 [Yahweh's](#) revelation: the LORD appeared to Abram 17:1b
- G 3 [Yahweh's](#) identification of Himself: and said to him, "I am God Almighty;" ⁵⁰⁵ 17:1c
- G 4 [Yahweh's](#) commission: Walk before Me and be blameless. ⁵⁰⁶ 17:1d
- G 5 [Yahweh's](#) confirmation: 17:2 {2} "I will establish My covenant between Me and you," ⁵⁰⁷ 17:2a

⁵⁰³ Gen. Chapter 17 title - God's requirement of [circumcision](#) as a sign of [Abraham's](#) acceptance of the reconfirmed [covenant](#) to be perpetuated through Isaac: Genesis 15 is God's sign of keeping the [covenant](#). It is a unilateral [covenant](#). Genesis 17 is [Abraham's](#) sign of keeping the [covenant](#). Failure to keep the terms of the [covenant](#) in Genesis 17 would disqualify an individual, or even the nation. But the nation would be disqualified only for a time, not permanently. The long-term blessing of [Abraham's](#) descendants is just as certain as the existence of God Himself. If there is no long-term guarantee of a future [Israel](#) occupying all the land God has promised, blessed and obedient to God, then there is no long-term guarantee of the existence of God!

⁵⁰⁴ Gen. 17:1 - ninety nine: Ishmael would have been thirteen (see Gen. 16:16).

⁵⁰⁵ Gen. 17:1 - God Almighty: El = Strong One; Shaddai = coming from "mountain" = The over-powering Mighty One standing on a mountain. The Hebrew is 'el (410) *Shadday* (7706). This is the first appearance of the name El Shadday in all of Scripture.

⁵⁰⁶ Gen. 17:1 - Walk before Me and be blameless: There is a hint of conditionality coming here. God's [Abrahamic Covenant](#) was unconditional. But for individual descendants of [Abram](#) to participate in the [covenant](#) required faith and obedience (the two are never far apart, are they – if you trust someone, you will do what he says. If you do not trust someone, you will not do what he says). Part of this obedience would be to observe the sign of the [Abrahamic Covenant](#), [circumcision](#), which God would mention in just a moment, in Gen. 17:10.

⁵⁰⁷ Gen. 17:2 - I will establish My covenant between Me and you: "I will establish" translates the First Person Singular [Cohortative](#) of the [Qal Imperfect](#) of the verb *nāthan* (5414), a fluid verb meaning, "give, bestow, grant, establish."

This covenant, *beriyth* (1285) is not a new one. The designation *beriyth* occupies a role of fundamental importance in this chapter. It appears in Gen. 17:2, 4, 7, 7, 9, 10, 11, 13, 13, 14, 19, 19, 21. In this chapter God *reinforces* the unconditional [Abrahamic Covenant](#) He established with [Abram](#) perpetually and unilaterally in Genesis 15. However, in this appearance to [Abram](#) God will establish a new *sign* of the covenant, the sign of [circumcision](#) (Gen. 17:9-14). God's [Covenant with Abram](#) was unilateral and unconditional. Yet here He establishes the condition of [circumcision](#) for [Abram's](#) male descendants to be able to *participate* in the unconditional covenant.

- G 6 [Yahweh's](#) blessing: And I will multiply you exceedingly." ⁵⁰⁸ 17:2b
- G 7 [Abram's](#) reaction – humility: {3} Abram fell on his face, 17:3a
- E 2 God's further comments 17:3b-8
 - G 1 Communication: and God talked with him, saying, 17:3b
 - G 2 Confirmation: {4} "As for Me, behold, My covenant is with you, ⁵⁰⁹ 17:4a
 - G 3 Internationalism: And you will be the father of a multitude of nations. ⁵¹⁰ 17:4b
 - G 4 Name Change 17:5
 - H 1 Old name: {5} "No longer shall your name be called Abram, ⁵¹¹
 - H 2 New name: But your name shall be Abraham; ⁵¹²
 - H 3 Significance: For I will make you ⁵¹³ the father of a multitude of nations. ⁵¹⁴

Moreover, God will change the names of both [Abram](#) (Gen. 17:5) and Sarai (Gen. 17:15-16). Furthermore, in a sort of crescendo, Sarah would bear to [Abraham](#) a son, to be named Isaac (Gen. 17:19), with whom God would further establish His [Abrahamic Covenant](#) (Gen. 17:19, 21).

God lets [Abram](#) know this [Covenant](#) is very special. It is between Me (God) and you ([Abram](#)).

⁵⁰⁸ Gen. 17:2 - multiply you exceedingly: Literally, "and I will increase you in exceeding excessiveness."

⁵⁰⁹ Gen. 17:4 - My covenant is with you: Literally, "I - behold - My [covenant](#) is with you!"

⁵¹⁰ Gen. 17:4 - And you will be the father of a multitude of nations: I believe God intended this promise to be fulfilled on two levels, a physical, and a spiritual level. On a physical level God meant that [Abram's](#) physical descendants through his sons would comprise a multitude of nations. These sons were Isaac and Ishmael, but also sons born to his wife Keturah (Gen. 25:1-6). On a spiritual level, God meant that [Abraham](#) would be a spiritual father of all those who had the faith of [Abraham](#) regardless of whether or not they were [circumcised](#) (Rom. 4:9-18).

⁵¹¹ Gen. 17:5 - Abram: [NASB](#) note: "I.e. exalted father."

⁵¹² Gen. 17:5 - Abraham: [NASB](#) note: "I.e. father of a multitude."

⁵¹³ Gen. 17:5 - For I will make you: The text could be translated, "For I have appointed you to be the father of a multitude of nations."

⁵¹⁴ Gen. 17:5 - father of a multitude of nations: Once again, I believe God intended this promise to be fulfilled on two levels, a physical, and a spiritual level. On a physical level God meant that [Abram's](#) physical descendants (e.g., Gen. 25:1-6) through his sons would comprise a multitude of nations. On a spiritual level, God meant that [Abraham](#) would be a spiritual father of all those who had the faith of [Abraham](#) regardless of whether or not they were [circumcised](#) (Rom. 4:9-18).

- G 5 Fruitfulness: {6} "I will make you exceedingly fruitful,⁵¹⁵ 17:6a
- G 6 Nationalism: and I will make nations⁵¹⁶ of you, 17:6b
- G 7 Royalty: and kings⁵¹⁷ will come forth from you.
- G 8 [Covenant](#): 17:7a
- H 1 The instigator of the [covenant](#): {7} "I will establish My covenant⁵¹⁸
- H 2 The primary participants: between Me and you
- H 3 The descendant participants: and your descendants⁵¹⁹ after you
- H 4 The generational participants: throughout their generations
- H 5 The perpetual time-frame of the [covenant](#): for an everlasting covenant,⁵²⁰
- G 9 Motive: to be God to you and to your descendants after you.

⁵¹⁵ Gen. 17:6 - make you exceedingly fruitful: Literally, "I will make you fruitful in excessive excessiveness."

⁵¹⁶ Gen. 17:6 - nations: Through [Abraham's](#) son Isaac would come the nation of Israel. Through his son Ishmael would come several nations, many of them demonstrably Arab. There would be at least one nation (Edom) through his grandson Esau (Gen. 25:30; 32:3; 36:1, 8-9). Through his wife Keturah would come a number of nations (Gen. 25:1-6).

⁵¹⁷ Gen. 17:6 - kings: Through [Abraham](#) would arise kings of Israel, Edom, Arabia, and other nations not specified. The greatest king will be Jesus of Nazareth (Rev. 19:11-16). He will reign as King of kings and Lord of lords (Rev. 19:16).

⁵¹⁸ Gen. 17:7 - I will establish My covenant: "I will establish" is the [Hiphil Perfect](#) of the verb *qûm* (6965), meaning, in the [Hiphil](#), in this context, "establish." The [Perfect](#) aspect looks at the action as a completed one without reference to time. However, the future translation is justified because God Almighty is looking at the binding agreement between Himself and [Abram's](#) seed after him *throughout their generations* for an *everlasting* covenant. So "I will establish" is an accurate translation. The reader should note that this verb is different than the one used by God Almighty in Gen. 17:2. That verb was *nâthan* (5414), a fluid verb meaning, "give, bestow, grant, establish." Here the context is an everlasting covenant in the future, and so the present verb *qûm* (6965) is appropriate. In Gen. 17:2 God was giving the covenant. Here, he asserts He will complete the task of making it binding between Himself and [Abram](#) and his seed forever.

⁵¹⁹ Gen. 17:7 - your descendants after you: "Descendants" is the translation of the Heb. *zera* (2233), which, with one exception (1 Sam. 8:15), *always* appears in the singular in the OT. Literally, the word means "seed" (often so translated in the AV, and less frequently even in the [NASB](#) – see Gen. 1:11, 12, 29; 3:15; 8:22). "Descendant" is a more euphemistic translation. Literally, the translation here in 17:7 reads, "I will establish My [covenant](#) between Me and between you, and between your seed (singular) after you throughout their (plural) generations (plural) for a [covenant](#) of eternity" The word "seed" (*zera*, 2233) appears in this chapter in 17:7, 8, 9, 10, 12, 19.

⁵²⁰ Gen. 17:7 - everlasting covenant: Literally, "for a [covenant](#) of eternity" (*ôlâm*, 5769), long time; eternity. [Replacement theology](#) completely misrepresents such passages as Ephesians 2:11-22 when it insists that there is no future for the physical descendants of [Abraham](#) and Sarah through Isaac and Jacob *as a nation*. This was a [covenant](#) of eternity. See "[Everlasting Covenants of the Bible](#)." See also "[Supersessionism](#)."

17:7b

G 10 Land

H 1 The Giver: {8} "I will give

H 2 The grantees

J 1 to you

J 2 and to your descendants after you,

H 3 The bequest

J 1 the land of your sojournings,

J 2 all the land of Canaan,⁵²¹H 4 The length of the grant: for an everlasting possession;⁵²²G 11 Relationship: and I will be their God."⁵²³ 17:8

⁵²¹ Gen. 17:8 - all the land of Canaan: All the land of Canaan belongs to the believing physical seed of [Abraham](#) through Isaac and Jacob forever.

⁵²² Gen. 17:8 - for an everlasting possession: Literally, "for a possession of eternity." The land of [Canaan](#), the whole land, belongs to [Abraham](#) and to his seed after him as an eternal possession as one of the stipulations of God's eternal, unconditional [covenant](#) with [Abraham](#) and his seed after him. This covenant is called the [Abrahamic Covenant](#). God would agree to bless [Abraham's](#) son Ishmael on account of [Abraham](#) (Gen. 17:20). But God just as clearly would exclude Ishmael from this eternal [covenant](#), and from any claim to the land (Gen. 17:15-21). God would establish His [covenant](#) with [Abraham](#) through [Abraham's](#) son to be born of Sarah (Gen. 17:15, 19, 21). Ishmael would be blessed, but he could lay no claim whatever to the [covenant](#) God made with [Abraham](#) and Isaac and Jacob, nor to the land.

This [covenant](#) is an eternal [covenant](#) with eternal implications. It is the people of [Israel](#), not any Arabs, whether they be part of the recently invented group called "[Palestinians](#)" or not, which have a legitimate claim to the complete land that God bequeathed to [Abraham](#) and his seed through Isaac and Jacob. It is Arabs who today are occupiers of [Israeli](#) land, not Jews who are occupiers of [Palestinian](#) land.

WordExplain repudiates the statements made in "[An Open Letter to Evangelicals and Other Interested Parties: The People of God, the Land of Israel, and the Impartiality of the Gospel](#)" which deny that the land of [Israel](#) belongs to the people of [Israel](#). This position paper was first published online on the website of [Knox Theological Seminary](#), Fort Lauderdale, FL, in 2002. I am presently unable to locate that document on Knox's website. In 2012 I viewed this letter on the website of [Providence Reformed Church](#) of Bakersfield, CA, but it no longer appears there. Because this open letter keeps disappearing, I have placed a [copy on my own website](#) for reference purposes. Mike Stallard has written an excellent critique of and response to the "Open Letter to Evangelicals." His position paper is entitled, "[A Dispensational Response to the Knox Seminary Open Letter to Evangelicals](#)." Barry E. Horner has also critiqued the "Open Letter to Evangelicals" on pp. 66-82 of his book entitled, [Future Israel: Why Christian Anti-Judaism Must Be Challenged](#). [WordExplain](#) agrees with both Stallard and Horner.

Because this land is promised to [Abram](#) and his seed forever, I believe that [New Earth](#) will contain a land defined as the land of [Israel](#). It will be the functional center of the earth. I furthermore believe that [New Jerusalem](#), the capital city of this eternal land / country of [Israel](#), will orbit the earth much as our present moon does. Whether or not [New Jerusalem](#) circumnavigates [New Earth](#) in an orbit geosynchronous with the future land of [Israel](#), I do not know. That is entirely possible. But I personally am convinced it will orbit the earth as hinted at in Rev. 21:1-22:5.

⁵²³ Gen. 17:8 - and I will be their God: God first tells [Abram](#) what he will get out of this [covenant](#) arrangement in 17:1-8a; Then he mentions twice what He, God gets out of it – the privilege of being [Abram's](#) God and his descendants' God in 17:7b, 8b. God is a gregarious being. He greatly enjoys fellowship and intimacy with each of

D 2 **The Sign of the Confirmed [Covenant](#):** Elohim's institution of [circumcision](#) as a mandatory sign of participation in the [covenant](#) by [Abraham](#) and descendants 17:9-14

E 1 **Obligation:** {9} God said further to Abraham, 17:9

G 1 "Now as for you, you shall keep My covenant, you

G 2 and your descendants after you throughout their generations.

E 2 **[Circumcision](#)** 17:10-12

G 1 **[Covenant](#):** {10} "This is My covenant, ⁵²⁴

G 2 Obligation: which you shall keep,

H 1 between Me and you

H 2 and your descendants after you:

G 3 Totality: every male among you

G 4 Ceremony: shall be circumcised.

G 5 Location: {11} "And you shall be circumcised ⁵²⁵ in the flesh of

His human creatures, made in His own likeness and image (Gen. 1:26, 27), who willingly enter into fellowship with Him! To accomplish that, God is in the [choosing](#) business. He chose [Abram](#), his son Isaac, his son Jacob, and his descendants to be a special people of His own. God greatly desires for fellowship with the nation of [Israel](#), as it would eventuate.

⁵²⁴ Gen. 17:10 - This is my covenant, which you shall keep, ... every male among you shall be [circumcised](#): Constable, [Notes on Genesis, 2019](#), takes the position that there are, in this chapter, actually two covenants – the [Abrahamic Covenant](#) and a separate “Covenant of Circumcision.” Here is an excerpt of his explanation, given following his heading of “17:1-8”:

The references to the "covenant" in this chapter have caused some confusion. The Abrahamic Covenant (ch. 15) is in view (vv. 4, 7, 11, 19, 21), but also the outward sign of that covenant, which was the Covenant of Circumcision (vv. 2, 9, 10, 13, 14; cf. Acts 7:8). Thus [Moses](#) used the word "covenant" with two different references here, though throughout, the Abrahamic Covenant is in view.[651] Perhaps visualizing the Covenant of Circumcision as a smaller circle, within the larger circle of the Abrahamic Covenant, will help. Whereas the Abrahamic Covenant was unconditional, the Covenant of Circumcision depended on Abram's obedience (vv. 1-2). God would bless Abram: as Abram obeyed God by circumcising his household. This blessing would be in the form of multiplying Abram's descendants "exceedingly," even more than God had already promised. The rite of circumcision was to be a continuing sign of the Abrahamic Covenant to all of Abram's descendants.

I prefer to take the position that there is only one covenant in view, the [Abrahamic Covenant](#). God is not here issuing a separate “Covenant of Circumcision” which is a subset of the [Abrahamic Covenant](#). Rather, God is stipulating [circumcision](#) as a sign of [Abraham's](#) (and his descendants') *participation* in the [Abrahamic Covenant](#). Even at that, mere outward participation in [circumcision](#) would avail nothing if the heart were not also [circumcised](#) (Jer. 9:25-26; Ezek. 44:7, 9; Acts 7:51).

⁵²⁵ Gen. 17:11 - And you shall be [circumcised](#): The verb is the 2nd Person Masculine Plural [Nifal Perfect](#) of *mīl* (4135), “be [circumcised](#).” It carries the idea of modifying that which is in front of you. The Greek verb used in the [LXX](#) here is more explicit – the 2nd Person Plural [Future Indicative Passive](#) of *peritémnō* (4059), “you shall be cut

your foreskin,⁵²⁶

- G 6 Signification: and it shall be the sign of the covenant⁵²⁷ between Me and you. 17:11
- G 7 Status / Age: {12} "And every male among you who is eight days old shall be circumcised"⁵²⁸
- G 8 Perpetuity: throughout your generations,
- G 9 Extent – even servants / slaves:
 - H 1 Born slaves: a *servant* who is born in the house
 - H 2 Purchased slaves: or who is bought with money from any foreigner, who is not of your descendants. 17:12
 - H 3 Repetition: {13} "A *servant* who is born in your house or who is bought with your money shall surely be circumcised;
- G 10 The sign of the perpetual [covenant](#): thus shall My covenant be in

around.”

⁵²⁶ Gen. 17:11 - circumcised in the flesh of your foreskin: [Circumcision](#) of the male reproductive organ was an appropriate reminder of God’s perpetual [covenant](#) with the seed, *zéra*, [2233](#), (descendants) of [Abraham](#). Every time a [circumcised](#) male urinated or copulated, he would be reminded of his unique relationship with God as an observant descendant of [Abraham](#). On a practical side, there are hygienic and health reasons for [circumcision](#). There is, for example, a lower incidence of cancer of the male organ among [circumcised](#) males than among uncircumcised.

God was never interested merely in Israelis circumcising only the foreskins of their flesh. He was yearning for them to circumcise the foreskins of their heart (Jer. 4:4; 9:26; Acts 7:51).

⁵²⁷ Gen. 17:11 - sign of the [covenant](#): [Circumcision](#) is the sign of participation in the [Abrahamic Covenant](#) between God and the descendants of [Abraham](#) through Isaac and Jacob (as the record would soon delineate). Similarly, baptism is the sign of one’s commitment to Jesus as [Messiah](#) ([King](#)) (Matt. 28:18-20). It should be noted that it was faith that saved [Abraham](#) (Gen. 15:6), just as it is faith that saves the New Testament believer in Jesus (John 3:16; Eph. 2:8-10). Since the fathers of eight-day-old male infants were required to have their infants [circumcised](#), some have concluded that the parents of infants in the [Church](#) should have their infants [baptized](#). But that does not fit the evidence of New Testament Scripture. There is no evidence that [baptism](#) of [Gentile](#) infants replaces the [circumcision](#) of [Jewish](#) male infants. Furthermore, there is no evidence in the New Testament of anyone being [baptized](#) who has not first believed in Jesus. Placing one’s faith in Jesus presupposes a certain level of cognitive maturity, and therefore far beyond the ability of an infant. The example of the Philippian jailer and his entire household being [baptized](#) cannot be used as proof of infant [baptism](#). The text specifically states that the jailer had “believed in God” together with all his household (Acts 16:31-34). This presupposes that all who were [baptized](#) had sufficient cognitive ability also to place their faith in the Lord Jesus as well as in God, who sent Him.

⁵²⁸ Gen. 17:12 - and every male among you who is eight days old shall be [circumcised](#): Literally, the text reads, “And son of eight days shall be [circumcised](#) among you – every male throughout your generations – one who is born in house or bought with money from any son of a foreigner which he is not from your seed.” God had already stated that every descendant (lit., seed) of [Abraham](#) should be [circumcised](#) (Gen. 17:10). Now in Gen. 17:12 He added the requirement that the [circumcision](#) must be performed on the eighth day, and also that any slave (or servant) who is born in his house or purchased from another must also be [circumcised](#). The term *slave* (or *servant*) is not used in the Hebrew text, but is understood from the context.

your flesh for an everlasting covenant. ⁵²⁹

E 3 **Penalty** 17:14

G 1 Violation: {14} "But an uncircumcised male who is not circumcised in the flesh of his foreskin,

G 2 Penalty: that person shall be cut off from his people; ⁵³⁰

G 3 Reason: he has broken My covenant."

D 3 **The Specification of the Covenant:** Elohim's revelation of Sarah as the *blessed* bearer of Isaac as the [covenantal](#) child 17:15-22

E 1 Sarai's **name change** {15} Then God said to Abraham, "As for Sarai your wife, 17:15

G 1 you shall not call her name Sarai,

G 2 but Sarah ⁵³¹ *shall be* her name.

E 2 **Reason** 17:16

G 1 Blessing! {16} "I will bless her, ⁵³²

G 2 Son: and indeed I will give you a son by her. ⁵³³

G 3 Blessing! Then I will bless her, ⁵³⁴

⁵²⁹ Gen. 17:13 - everlasting covenant: The text reads, literally, "and it shall be my [covenant](#) in your flesh for a [covenant](#) of eternity (*olâm*, [5769](#))." [5769](#)

⁵³⁰ Gen. 17:14 - cut off from his people: I.e., killed. Some have concluded that the uncircumcised Hebrew was merely to be ostracized or excommunicated from the community. But the experience of [Yahweh](#) with [Moses](#) and his uncircumcised son suggests otherwise (Exod. 4:24-26). [Moses](#)' wife Zipporah was clearly disgusted with the whole affair, but her revulsion deterred neither [Yahweh](#) nor [Moses](#). [Moses](#) understood what was at stake.

⁵³¹ Gen. 17:15 - Sarah: [NASB](#) note: "I.e. princess". [[JTB](#): The name change was subtle. "Sarai" means, "My Princess," while "Sarah" simply means, "Princess." The significance lay in that now, Sarai, who formerly had been merely [Abram's](#) "Princess," would now become royalty, "Princess" in her own right, for she would be the mother of [kings](#) (Gen. 17:16).]

⁵³² Gen 17:16 - I will bless her: This blessing is interpreted as meaning the blessing of a son, to be named Isaac (Gen. 17:19).

⁵³³ Gen. 17:16 - I will give you a son by her: This son, clearly, was to be the son of promise. The other son, Ishmael, was a son by the efforts of the flesh. Isaac was the son God always envisioned to be [Abraham's](#) heir and fellow-participant, with him, in the [Abrahamic Covenant](#), which included Nation; Land; and Blessings.

⁵³⁴ Gen. 17:16 - Then I will bless her: This blessing is interpreted as meaning that Sarah would become the mother of nations and that kings of peoples will come from her.

G 4 Mother of nations: and she shall be *a mother of nations*; ⁵³⁵

G 5 Mother of kings of multiple peoples: kings of peoples will come from her." ⁵³⁶

E 3 [Abraham's Reaction](#): 17:17-18

G 1 **Amusement** 17:17

H 1 Prostration: {17} Then Abraham fell on his face

H 2 Laughter: and laughed, ⁵³⁷

H 3 Inner thoughts: and said in his heart,

J 1 "Will a child be born to a man one hundred years old?

J 2 And will Sarah, who is ninety years old, bear *a child*?"

G 2 **Request**: {18} And Abraham said to God, "Oh that Ishmael might live before You!" 17:18

E 4 **God's Response** 17:19-22

G 1 **Exclusion**: {19} But God said, "No, ⁵³⁸ 17:19

⁵³⁵ Gen. 17:16 - and she shall be *a mother of nations*: [John Gill](#) surmises that this prophecy would be fulfilled in that Sarah was to be the mother "of the twelve tribes of Israel; of the two nations of Israel and Judah" But I do not know that Scripture ever considers the twelve tribes as twelve distinct nations. Moreover, the division of the nation into "Israel" and "Judah" was an act of judgment by God upon Solomon, and not to be a permanent one. So in my thinking [Gill's interpretation](#) does not do justice to the text. Perhaps, in the providence of God, descendants of Sarah have married Gentiles and spawned nations of which we do not entirely know.

⁵³⁶ Gen. 17:16 - kings of peoples shall come from her: [John Gill](#) interprets this as meaning "... David, and Solomon, and others, and especially the King Messiah." While that is undoubtedly true, I do not see how that interpretation fulfills the prophecy of "kings of peoples" (emphasis mine). It is possible that descendants of Sarah have married Gentiles and have spawned kings of which we do not know. Or, perhaps, this prophecy has never yet been fulfilled. However, during the [Millennial](#) reign of Christ it would not surprise me in the least if descendants of Sarah serve as kings over certain nations. The same might also be true in the [Eternal State](#) (Rev. 21:24).

⁵³⁷ Gen. 17:17 - and laughed: Though [Abraham](#) laughed, he nonetheless believed God, for he immediately became concerned and requested that God would permit Ishmael, his first-born, to be the son of God's blessing (17:18). This shows not only [Abraham's](#) faith, but his misperception of the superior will of God. This is what happens when we act in the energy of the flesh (produce a son by Hagar, not Sarah) – we keep insisting that God must bless our meager plans instead of blessing fully His superior plans. And in the process, we reap ourselves oceans of tears, as witness the animosity that soon developed in [Abraham's](#) family, and the perpetual Arab-[Israeli](#) dispute that began to worsen exponentially in the first half of the twentieth century and continues unabated today.

⁵³⁸ Gen. 17:19 - No: In this section God insists that it is to be Sarah, not Hagar, that God will use; that it is to be Isaac, not Ishmael, that God will use to bless the world. There are times when God is very inclusive, but other times when God is exceedingly exclusive. That should not surprise us. After all, God designed marriage to be exclusive.

H 1 Birth of a son by Sarah: but Sarah your wife will bear you a son,

H 2 Name: and you shall call his name Isaac; ⁵³⁹

H 3 [Covenant](#)

J 1 With Isaac: and I will establish My covenant with him

J 2 Eternal [covenant](#): for an everlasting covenant ⁵⁴⁰

J 3 With Isaac's descendants: for his descendants after him. ⁵⁴¹

G 2 Affirmation 17:20

H 1 Hearing: {20} "As for Ishmael, I have heard you; ⁵⁴²

H 2 Blessing

J 1 Blessing: behold, I will bless him,

J 2 Fruitful: and will make him fruitful

J 3 Prolific: and will multiply him exceedingly. ⁵⁴³

J 4 Father of royalty: He shall become the father of twelve princes,

J 5 Great nation: and I will make him a great nation.

G 3 Repetition

H 1 [Covenant](#): {21} "But My covenant I will establish

⁵³⁹ Gen. 17:19 - Isaac: [NASB](#) footnote: "I.e. he laughs." In Hebrew, the name is *Yitschâq* ([3327](#)).

⁵⁴⁰ Gen. 17:19 - for an everlasting covenant: Once again, Elohim's [covenant](#) with Isaac was also a "[covenant](#) of eternity (*olâm*, [5769](#))." God's New Testament plan of incorporating [Gentiles](#) into His sphere of blessings in the Assembly ([Church](#)) does not invalidate God's eternal promises to [Abraham](#), Isaac, Jacob, and Jacob's descendants of Nation, Land, and Blessings.

⁵⁴¹ Gen. 17:19 - for his descendants after him: Not only was Isaac the recipient of God's "[Covenant](#) of Eternity," but so also were his descendants. The particular descendants of Isaac who would inherit the [Abrahamic Promise and Covenant](#) were to be the descendants of Jacob, not Esau (Gen. 25:19-34; 27-28).

⁵⁴² Gen. 17:20 - as for Ishmael, I have heard you: God used a pun. Ishmael's name means, "God hears." – "As for God Hears, I have heard you."

⁵⁴³ Gen. 17:20 - multiply him exceedingly: Literally, "I will multiply him in exceedingly excessiveness." God has kept His word. Arabs outnumber Jews exponentially!

- H 2 Target: with Isaac, ⁵⁴⁴ 17:21
- H 3 Mother: whom Sarah will bear to you
- H 4 Time: at this season next year."
- G 4 **Departure** {22} When He finished talking with him, God went up from Abraham. 17:22
- D 4 **The Acceptance of the Covenant:** [Abraham's](#) prompt and obedient [circumcision](#) of his household 17:23-27
 - E 1 [Abraham's](#) obedience in [circumcision](#) 17:23
 - G 1 The **completeness**: All the males.
 - H 1 {23} Then Abraham took Ishmael his son, ⁵⁴⁵
 - H 2 and all *the servants* ⁵⁴⁶ who were born in his house
 - H 3 and all who were bought with his money,
 - H 4 every male among the men of Abraham's household,
 - G 2 The action: and circumcised the flesh of their foreskin
 - G 3 The promptness: in the very same day, ⁵⁴⁷
 - G 4 The compliance: as God had said to him.
 - E 2 The **time** of the [circumcision](#) 17:24-27
 - G 1 [Abraham's](#) age: {24} Now Abraham was ninety-nine years old when he was circumcised in the flesh of his foreskin. 17:24.
 - G 2 Ishmael's age: {25} And Ishmael his son was thirteen years old when he was circumcised in the flesh of his foreskin.

⁵⁴⁴ Gen. 17:21 - But my covenant I will establish with Isaac: Ishmael was to be [circumcised](#), but [Yahweh](#) did not establish His [covenant](#) with Ishmael. Rather, God established His "[covenant](#) of eternity" with Isaac, to be born of Sarah in about a year.

⁵⁴⁵ Gen. 17:23 - Ishmael his son: Ishmael was his son, born in his house.

⁵⁴⁶ Gen. 17:23 - the servants: these words do not appear in the text, but they are implied, for [Abraham](#) had no other sons than Ishmael. These would be slaves like Hagar (Gal. 4:24-25). Hagar had evidently been purchased (or gifted?) in Egypt (Gen. 16:1, 3; 21:9, 12) during [Abram](#) and Sarai's stay there. Although a female, Hagar would illustrate a slave who had been purchased by [Abraham](#), rather than a slave who had been born in his house. Obviously, the statement applied to male, not to female slaves.

⁵⁴⁷ Gen. 17:22 - in the very same day: The Hebrew text reads, "in the bone of the day."

- G 3 The day of the [circumcision](#): {26} In the very same day⁵⁴⁸ Abraham was circumcised, and Ishmael his son. 17:26
- G 4 The extent of the [circumcision](#) 17:27
- H 1 {27} All the men of his household,
- J 1 who were born in the house
- J 2 or bought with money from a foreigner,
- H 2 were circumcised with him.
- C 8 God's confirmation of Isaac to Sarah 18:1-15
- D 1 [Abraham's](#) provision of hospitality for three visitors including [Yahweh](#) 18:1-8
- E 1 The appearance of [Yahweh](#) to [Abraham](#) 18:1
- G 1 The identification of the visitor: {1} Now the LORD appeared to him⁵⁴⁹
- G 2 The place: by the oaks of Mamre,
- G 3 The circumstance: while he was sitting at the tent door
- G 4 The time: in the heat of the day.
- E 2 The actions of [Abraham](#) 18:2-8
- G 1 His sighting: {2} When he lifted up his eyes and looked, behold, three men⁵⁵⁰ were standing opposite him;
- G 2 His alacrity: and when he saw *them*, he ran⁵⁵¹ from the tent door

⁵⁴⁸ Gen. 17:26 - in the very same day: They were both [circumcised](#) immediately ("in the bone of the day"). This shows [Abraham's](#) penchant for instant obedience. We should all follow his example!

⁵⁴⁹ Gen. 18:1 - Now the LORD appeared to him: This was a [Theophany](#), an actual appearance of God. In my understanding this was technically a [Christophany](#), an appearance of the Second Person of the Godhead, who would occasionally appear in the OT as [The Angel of Yahweh](#). Later, he would appear permanently as Jesus, son of Mary, the Jewish [Messiah](#). As the text reveals, (Gen. 18:2) [Yahweh](#) appeared as a man. In Genesis 15, [Yahweh](#) appeared as a burning oven and a flaming torch. [Yahweh](#) is prominent in Genesis 18, appearing in Gen. 18:1, 13, 14, 17, 19, 20, 22, 26, and 33.

⁵⁵⁰ Gen. 18:2 - three men: One of these three, the leader, turned out to be [Yahweh](#), referenced in Gen. 18:1. The other two were "messengers," (*malâk*, [4397](#)), usually transliterated as "[angels](#)" from the Greek *áγγελος* ([32](#)), so identified in Gen. 19:1, 15.

⁵⁵¹ Gen. 18:2 - ran: Jewish men do not run! *Old Jewish men really do not run!* [Abraham](#) must have detected something highly unusual about this trio. They must have appeared suddenly, out of thin air, as it were. I believe [Abraham](#) suspected this was [Yahweh](#). His suspicions would be confirmed as the afternoon wore on.

to meet them

G 3 His subservience

H 1 His prostration: and bowed himself to the earth,

H 2 His polite address: {3} and said, "My lord, ⁵⁵² if now I have found favor in your ⁵⁵³ sight, 18:3a

G 4 His offer of hospitality 18:3-5

H 1 His invitation: please do not pass your servant by. ⁵⁵⁴ 18:3b

H 2 His offer of cleansing: {4} "Please let ⁵⁵⁵ a little water be brought and wash your feet, ⁵⁵⁶

H 3 His offer of shaded rest: and rest yourselves under the tree;

H 4 His offer of food: {5} and I will bring you a piece of bread, so that you may refresh yourselves;

H 5 Permission: after that you may go on, since you have visited your servant."

H 6 Acceptance: And they said, "So do, as you have said."

G 5 His preparations 18:6-8

H 1 His haste 18:6

J 1 {6} Abraham hurried ⁵⁵⁷ into the tent to Sarah,

⁵⁵² Gen. 18:3 - lord: *adon*, [113](#), meaning "lord" or "master." If the speaker attaches the first person singular possessive pronoun "my," as in "my lord," the Hebrew word is *adonai*. Here [Abraham](#) was addressing one person, "my lord," obviously the leader of the trio. This is a term of respect, and it acknowledged [Abraham's](#) subservience to his lord or master. It does not necessarily imply [Deity](#), but again, I suspect [Abraham](#) suspected the leader of the trio was [Yahweh](#).

⁵⁵³ Gen. 18:3 - your sight: "your" is singular. [Abraham](#) is addressing only the prominent visitor at this point.

⁵⁵⁴ Gen. 18:3 - do not pass your servant by: [Abraham](#) continues to address only the one he had addressed as "my lord" (*Adonai*, [113](#)). "Do not pass" is singular; "your" (servant) is singular.

⁵⁵⁵ Gen. 18:4 - please let: The verb is still singular. [Abraham](#) is asking "Adonai" for permission.

⁵⁵⁶ Gen. 18:4 - your feet: For the first time, [Abraham](#) takes into consideration the other two. "Your" is plural.

⁵⁵⁷ Gen. 18:6 - hurried: Why all the hurry, here and down through the preparation process? I suspect [Abraham](#) was very anxious to have fellowship with God – and he wanted to get back. His whole ploy in getting food was partly to buy time with God – He wanted to enjoy the fellowship as long as possible! Of course he also wanted to offer hospitality. But I suspect he wanted to prolong this visit as much as possible. [Abraham](#) would have known that during this visit, God would communicate something important to [Abraham](#). That had always been true even when [Abraham](#) had not visibly seen God. Communication was very important to God, [Abraham](#) realized. And [Abraham](#)

- J 2 and said, “Quickly,
- H 2 Of cakes – instructions to Sarah:
- J 1 prepare three measures of fine flour,
- J 2 knead it
- J 3 and make bread cakes.”
- H 3 Of meat
- J 1 His haste: {7} Abraham also ran to the herd,
- J 2 His selection: and took a tender and choice calf⁵⁵⁸
- J 3 His delegation: and gave it to the servant,
- J 4 Hasty preparation: and he hurried to prepare it.
- H 4 Of drink
- J 1 {8} He took curds⁵⁵⁹
- J 2 and milk
- H 5 Of meat: and the calf which he had prepared,
- G 6 His serving of the meal
- H 1 Presentation: and placed it before them;
- H 2 Attending: and he was standing by them under the tree as they ate.⁵⁶⁰
- D 2 [Yahweh's](#) prediction of Sarah's bearing a son in one year 18:9-15

was eager to hear what God had to say this time. This whole passage reminds us that [Abraham](#) is called “the friend of God” (James 2:23).

⁵⁵⁸ Gen. 18:7 - calf: This appears to be a young bull calf. The Heb. reads *bên-bâqâr* (*bên*, [1121](#)), meaning here “son of” and (*bâqâr*, [1241](#)), meaning here “cattle herd” or perhaps “ox.” Both *bên* and *bâqâr* are singular masculine nouns. Most Hebrew words are masculine, and *bâqâr* does not have to mean a male specimen of cattle. But *bên* is always masculine, “son”. There is another word for “daughter.” This was a bull calf.

⁵⁵⁹ Gen. 18:8 - curds: Heb. *chêmâh*, [2529](#), usually translated “curds,” twice, “butter.”

⁵⁶⁰ Gen. 18:8 - as they ate: This is a most fascinating setting. Here are [Yahweh](#) and two [angels](#) coming to visit [Abraham](#). They wait perhaps an hour at minimum while [Abraham](#) and Sarah and the servant are preparing food. They wait under the shade of a tree. [Abraham](#) comes to present them their food. He is their waiter, and so he stands beside them respectfully to see if they need anything else. So God and two angels eat a meal before [Abraham](#) while he respectfully waits on them. This is utterly amazing!

E 1 The query of the trio 18:9

G 1 Their question: {9} Then they said to him, ⁵⁶¹ “Where is Sarah your wife?” ⁵⁶²

G 2 [Abraham’s](#) response: And he said, “There, in the tent.”

E 2 The leader’s reconfirmation 18:10

G 1 Return visit: {10} He said, “I will surely return to you” ⁵⁶³

G 2 Time: at this time next year; ⁵⁶⁴

G 3 Prediction: and behold, Sarah your wife will have a son.”

E 3 Sarah’s reaction 18:10b-12

G 1 Her overhearing: And Sarah was listening at the tent door, which was behind him. 18:10b

G 2 Her condition, and that of her husband 18:11

H 1 Their age: {11} Now Abraham and Sarah were old, advanced in age; ⁵⁶⁵

H 2 Her menopause: Sarah was past childbearing. ⁵⁶⁶

G 3 Her cynicism 18:12

⁵⁶¹ Gen. 18:9 - they said to him: It is the leader of the trio only who has the authority to accomplish what will be predicted – the birth of a baby to a barren, post-menopausal wife. Yet all three ask the question! This is most remarkable in and of itself. Furthermore, in this male-dominated culture, Sarah was not even allowed to be present at this male dinner party. Yet all three inquire about her at the same time! Why? I believe it was to catch Sarah’s attention, in the tent behind the leader!

⁵⁶² Gen. 18:9 - Where is Sarah your wife? This, then, is the first major purpose for [Yahweh’s](#) visit with [Abraham](#). He has something important to say that Sarah must hear. The second purpose is revealed beginning in Gen. 18:17-21. This second purpose was that [Yahweh](#) wished to reveal to [Abraham](#) his plans to visit the city of [Sodom](#) and see how much evil there was there, for he had heard about it. This will involve [Abraham’s](#) nephew, Lot.

⁵⁶³ Gen. 18:10 - I will surely return to you: The Heb. idiom: “Return, I will return to you” is emphatic; “to you” is the masculine singular pronoun. This return was an emphatic certainty. It was the speaker who would return, and he would return to [Abraham](#), not Sarah! This emphatic “returning” identifies to [Abraham](#) that [Yahweh](#) is the one speaking to him.

⁵⁶⁴ Gen. 18:10 - at this time next year: Literally, “at the time alive (or living or renewing)”. The word is *chay* (2416). In the context, it means, “a year from now.”

⁵⁶⁵ Gen. 18:11 - old, advanced in age: Literally, “Now [Abraham](#) and Sarah were old, advancing in days.”

⁵⁶⁶ Gen. 18:11 - past childbearing: Literally, “It had ceased to be for Sarah after the manner of women.” By now, Sarah had three strikes against her: (1) She was infertile. (2) She had reached the age of menopause. (3) She was an old woman. In the natural order of things, a pregnancy was impossible. God had other ideas, however.

- H 1 Her laughter: {12} Sarah laughed to herself, saying,
- H 2 Her age: “After I have become old, shall I have pleasure,⁵⁶⁷
- H 3 Her husband’s age: my lord being old also?”
- E 4 [Yahweh’s](#) scolding conversation about and to Sarah 18:13-15
 - G 1 His accusation to [Abraham](#): {13} And the LORD said to Abraham, “Why did Sarah laugh,⁵⁶⁸ saying, ‘Shall I indeed bear a *child*, when I am *so* old?’ 18:13
 - G 2 His query about omnipotence: {14} “Is anything too difficult⁵⁶⁹ for the LORD? 18:14a
 - G 3 His repetition 18:14b
 - H 1 Appointed time: At the appointed time I will return to you,⁵⁷⁰
 - H 2 Specific time: at this time next year,
 - H 3 Result: and Sarah will have a son.”
 - G 4 Sarah's denial 18:15
 - H 1 Denial: {15} Sarah denied *it* however, saying, “I did not laugh”;
 - H 2 Motive: for she was afraid.⁵⁷¹

⁵⁶⁷ Gen. 18:12 - pleasure: A more literal rendering: “After my being worn out, should there be to me pleasure ...?” By pleasure, Sarah meant the pleasure of being the mother of a son.

⁵⁶⁸ Gen. 18:13 - Why did Sarah laugh? [Yahweh](#) sensed that, though [Abraham](#) had laughed earlier (Gen. 17:17), he had believed Him. Sarah did not. Thus the importance of this special visit to [Abraham](#) which was, in actuality, a visit for the benefit of Sarah! It was designed to strengthen her faith. Faith is always necessary to serve God (Heb. 11:6). As later Scripture records, this visit had its desired effect – Sarah believed God, considering Him faithful (Heb. 11:11)!

⁵⁶⁹ Gen. 18:14 - too difficult: “Difficult” translates *pâlâ*, [6381](#), “extraordinary.” A more literal translation: “Is [Yahweh's](#) word unattainable for Him?” In other words [Yahweh](#) was asking [Abraham](#), “Is she suggesting I can't pull this off?” [Yahweh](#) was singularly unimpressed!

⁵⁷⁰ Gen. 18:14 - I will return to you: “To you” is second person masc. singular. [Yahweh](#) will return to [Abraham](#).

⁵⁷¹ Gen. 18:15 - for she was afraid: Sarah was understandably afraid to admit she didn't trust God. Sarah's lack of faith, as well as her lack of honesty, earned her confrontation with the Almighty. At least she did fear God. That is a much needed and sadly absent commodity in today's world – a fear of God. The most intolerant people are those who do not fear God and cannot tolerate Him or His people.

- G 5 [Yahweh's](#) rebuttal: And He said, "No, but you did laugh."⁵⁷²
- C 9 Elective Spill-over: God's preservation of Lot on account of *blessed* [Abraham](#) 18:16 - 19:38
- D 1 [Yahweh's](#) revelation to [Abraham](#) of judgment on [Sodom](#) 18:16-33
- E 1 [Yahweh's](#) revelation to *blessed* [Abraham](#) of His intention to scrutinize [Sodom's](#) grievous sin 18:16-21
- G 1 The visitors' focus upon [Sodom](#) 18:16
- H 1 The movement of the men: {16} Then the men rose up from there, and looked down toward Sodom;⁵⁷³
- H 2 The accompaniment of [Abraham](#): and Abraham was walking with them to send them off.
- G 2 [Yahweh's](#) question about revealing his plans to [Abraham](#) 18:17-19
- H 1 The question: {17} The LORD said, "Shall I hide from Abraham what I am about to do, 18:17
- H 2 The rationale: No, because of [Abraham's](#) position as 18:18-19
- J 1 Father of a future great nation: {18} since Abraham will surely become a great and mighty nation, 18:18a
- J 2 Source of international *blessing*: and in him all the nations of the earth will be blessed? 18:18b
- J 3 Chosen by [Yahweh](#): {19} "For I have chosen him, 18:19a
- J 4 Teacher of [Yahweh's](#) way of righteousness: so that he may command his children and his household after him⁵⁷⁴ to keep the way of the LORD by doing

⁵⁷² Gen. 18:15 - No, but you did laugh: [Yahweh](#) (see Gen. 18:13) always has the last word. Don't try to argue with God!

⁵⁷³ Gen. 18:16 - the men ... looked down toward [Sodom](#): Their first message to [Abraham](#) (but primarily to Sarah) having been delivered, the men now focus their gaze on [Sodom](#), in the valley below. This is their second purpose for this earthly visit. [Yahweh](#) will reveal his intention to scrutinize the evil city of [Sodom](#). In the process, the narrative reveals how utterly corrupt [Sodom](#) was, and how terrible was the judgment [Sodom](#) reaped. This whole incident is designed to be an eternal illustration of God's ability to rescue the righteous from judgment and to destine the evil for fiery destruction (2 Pet. 2:6-9).

⁵⁷⁴ Gen. 18:19 - command his children and his household after him: It is the solemn duty of men and fathers to serve their families as the household [priest](#). We men shoulder the lion's share of instructing our children and even our household slaves (employees) in such a way that they commit not only to faith in God, but also to obedience to

righteousness and justice,⁵⁷⁵ 18:19b

J 5 To permit [Yahweh's](#) fulfillment: so that the LORD may bring upon Abraham what He has spoken about him.”⁵⁷⁶ 18:19c

G 3 [Yahweh's](#) analysis of [Sodom](#) and Gomorrah 18:20

H 1 Their cry is great: {20} And the LORD said, “The outcry of Sodom and Gomorrah is indeed great,

H 2 Their sin is exceedingly heavy: and their sin is exceedingly grave.

G 4 [Yahweh's](#) resolve to scrutinize more closely 18:21

H 1 His intention to descend to [Sodom](#) and Gomorrah: {21} “I will go down now,

H 2 His objective – to see if matters are as bad as the reports He has received: and see if they have done entirely according to its outcry, which has come to Me;⁵⁷⁷

H 3 The final outcome: and if not, I will know.”

G 5 The departure of two of the men 18:22

H 1 The destination of their departure: {22} Then the men turned away from there and went toward Sodom,⁵⁷⁸

H 2 The situation of [Abraham](#) and [Yahweh](#): while Abraham

His ways. This is an awesome and solemn responsibility. Passing on one's faith to one's children is first and foremost a man's job (Deut. 6:1-15), to which wives and mothers can certainly add their blessing. But if the father is lax, the mother will not, unless by the grace of God, be able to compensate adequately.

⁵⁷⁵ Gen. 18:13 - to keep the way of the LORD by doing righteousness and justice: The goal of religious instruction is never mere Bible knowledge. It is a changed lifestyle, consisting of righteousness and justice.

⁵⁷⁶ Gen. 18:19 - so that the LORD may bring upon [Abraham](#) what He has spoken about him: [Yahweh's](#) relationship with [Abraham](#) shows the interplay between God's [sovereignty](#) and man's responsibility. [Yahweh](#) had made an unconditional [covenant](#) with [Abram](#) (Gen. 15). But God's blessings are conditional upon our cooperation and obedience. If we are going to reap God's blessings, we must obey Him and follow Him. In New Testament Calvinistic theological terms, “The elect must and will persevere in their walk with God.”

⁵⁷⁷ Gen. 18:21 - outcry, which has come to Me: Somehow, [Yahweh](#) was receiving blistering reports on the great evil of [Sodom](#) and its outlying districts. Of course, [Yahweh](#) knows everything. I suspect there were angels who were regularly reporting to [Yahweh](#) on the evils of [Sodom](#). The word “outcry” (*tsa' aqah*, [6818](#)), identifies the cries and screams of those who are being abused and harmed by others.

⁵⁷⁸ Gen. 18:22 - the men ... went toward [Sodom](#): Everyone present understood that the departure of these two men meant that they were emissaries of [Yahweh](#) to determine how much evil there was in the city, and whether or not it was worthy of judgment. As it turns out, these men are actually [angels](#) (messengers) who appeared as men (Gen. 19:1, 15).

was still standing before the LORD.

E 2 [Abraham's](#) bargaining with God to spare the city if sufficient righteous can be found 18:23-33

G 1 [Abraham's](#) concern for Lot 18:23-24

H 1 His stepping closer: {23} Abraham came near and said, 18:23a

H 2 His question: “Will You indeed sweep away the righteous with the wicked?”⁵⁷⁹ 18:23b

H 3 His hypothetical case: {24} “Suppose there are fifty righteous within the city; 18:24a

H 4 His resultant question: will You indeed sweep it away and not spare the place for the sake of the fifty righteous who are in it? 18:24b

G 2 [Abraham's](#) concern for [Yahweh's](#) justice 18:25-26

H 1 His protest: {25} “Far be it from You to do such a thing, to slay the righteous with the wicked, 18:25a

H 2 His analysis: so that the righteous and the wicked are treated alike. 18:25b

H 3 His repeated protest: Far be it from You! 18:25c

H 4 His hortatory question: Shall not the Judge of all the earth deal justly?”⁵⁸⁰ 18:25d

H 5 [Yahweh's](#) response 18:26

J 1 Fifty righteous: {26} So the LORD said, “If I find in Sodom fifty righteous within the city,

J 2 Judgment canceled: then I will spare the whole place on their account.”⁵⁸¹

⁵⁷⁹ Gen. 18:23 - Will you indeed sweep away the righteous with the wicked? [Abraham](#) must have known something of the evils of [Sodom](#). Certainly he interpreted that [Yahweh's](#) investigation of the city would conclude in a death sentence for the city. [Abraham](#) was concerned about the way in which this judgment would impact his nephew Lot and his family.

⁵⁸⁰ Gen. 18:25 - Shall not the Judge of all the earth deal justly? [Abraham's](#) candid dialogue with [Yahweh](#) is remarkable. He confronts [Yahweh](#) with what he sees as an injustice. In [Abraham's](#) view it is unthinkable that the One who is Judge of all the earth will judge a particular portion of the earth unfairly.

⁵⁸¹ Gen. 18:26 - I will spare the whole place on their account: [Yahweh](#) essentially agreed with [Abraham's](#) thesis. In this particular instance it was not right or fair to destroy the righteous along with the wicked. If fifty righteous could be found in [Sodom](#), [Yahweh](#) would spare the whole city and the surrounding area.

G 3 [Abraham's](#) bargaining 18:27-32H 1 [Abraham's](#) second offer 18:27-28

- J 1 [Abraham's](#) humility: {27} And Abraham replied, “Now behold, I have ventured to speak to the Lord, although I am *but* dust and ashes. 18:27
- J 2 [Abraham's](#) proposal: {28} “Suppose the fifty righteous are lacking five, will You destroy the whole city because of five?” 18:28a
- J 3 Adonai’s response: And He said, “I will not destroy *it* if I find forty-five there.” 18:28b

H 2 [Abraham's](#) third offer 18:29

- J 1 [Abraham's](#) persistence: {29} He spoke to Him yet again and said, “Suppose forty are found there?”
- J 2 Adonai’s reply: And He said, “I will not do *it* on account of the forty.”

H 3 [Abraham's](#) fourth offer 18:30

- J 1 [Abraham's](#) timidity: {30} Then he said, “Oh may the Lord not be angry, and I shall speak;
- J 2 [Abraham's](#) proposal: suppose thirty are found there?”
- J 3 Adonai’s reply: And He said, “I will not do *it* if I find thirty there.”

H 4 [Abraham's](#) fifth offer 18:31

- J 1 [Abraham's](#) uneasiness: {31} And he said, “Now behold, I have ventured to speak to the Lord;
- J 2 [Abraham's](#) proposal: suppose twenty are found there?”
- J 3 Adonai’s reply: And He said, “I will not destroy *it* on account of the twenty.”

H 5 [Abraham's](#) sixth (and final) offer 18:32

- J 1 [Abraham's](#) cringing: 32 Then he said, “Oh may the Lord not be angry, and I shall speak only this once;
- J 2 [Abraham's](#) proposal: suppose ten are found

there?”⁵⁸²

J 3 Adonai’s reply: And He said, “I will not destroy *it* on account of the ten.”

G 4 The departure 18:33

H 1 [Yahweh's](#) departure: {33} As soon as He had finished speaking to Abraham the LORD departed,

H 2 [Abraham's](#) return: and Abraham returned to his place.

D 2 [Yahweh's](#) merciful rescue of Lot from [Sodom](#) for [Abraham's](#) sake 19

E 1 Lot's scandal-marred hospitality of two angels 19:1-11

G 1 The meeting 19:1

H 1 The arrival of the angels

J 1 The place: {1} Now the two angels ⁵⁸³ came to Sodom

J 2 The time: in the evening

J 3 The circumstance: as Lot ⁵⁸⁴ was sitting in the gate of

⁵⁸² Gen. 18:32 - suppose ten are found there? [Abraham's](#) bottom line was ten righteous people. Unfortunately, [Abraham](#) knew something of what [Sodom](#) was like. As long as [Yahweh](#) was in a concessionary mode, [Abraham](#) would go as low as he dared. And [Yahweh](#), remarkably, agreed. As it turns out, [Yahweh](#) already knew there were not ten righteous people in [Sodom](#). The visit of the two men would graphically illustrate that truth in less than 24 hours!

⁵⁸³ Gen. 19:1 - the two angels: These were the two men who appeared to [Abraham](#) along with [Yahweh](#) in Gen. 18. The word for angels is *malak*, [4397](#), which literally means, “messenger,” appearing here in the plural. Similarly the Greek word for [angels](#) is *aggelos*, [32](#), which also means “messenger.” These two messengers from God would, merely by their presence in the appearance of human males, arouse the evil passions of the men of [Sodom](#), all of whom, as this historical narrative will shortly depict, were militant homosexuals. Thus they would provide a first-hand, “on the ground” display to [Yahweh](#) of the evil of the city. Moreover, they would shortly deliver an urgent message to Lot and his family – “Get out of this evil city, because we are about to destroy it (Gen. 19:12-13)!”

⁵⁸⁴ Gen. 19:1 - Lot. Several observations about Lot are to be made here:

- (1) Evidently Lot was a city elder/judge in [Sodom](#) (Gen. 19:1, 9).
- (2) The men’s words in Gen. 19:9 should be taken as a surly acknowledgment and complaint about his being a judge, not a denial of his position. He was acknowledged to have a sense of righteousness. This is precisely what the evil men complained about.
- (3) Evidently he was a righteous man, else he would not have been rescued from [Sodom](#) (Gen. 18:22-33).
- (4) Elsewhere, Peter calls him a righteous man (2 Peter 2:7-8), saying that he was vexed and enormously frustrated by the evil of his city.
- (5) This is perhaps why Lot would shortly insist these men spent the night with him. He knew of the bestial nature of the men of [Sodom](#) – he knew these hapless visitors would be gang-raped before the night was over; thus he **insisted** on providing safety for them.
- (6) The fact that Lot, judge of the city, arose from his seat and bowed deeply to the visitors suggests that he intuitively perceived they were not mere men, but something more than men. His reaction resembles, if it does not exactly duplicate, the reaction of his uncle [Abraham](#) toward the three men when he first saw them (Gen. 18:1-2). His extension of hospitality would also resemble that of [Abraham](#).

Sodom.

H 2 The response of Lot

J 1 Observation: When Lot saw *them*,

J 2 Action: he rose to meet them

J 3 Respect: and bowed down *with his* face to the ground.

G 2 Lot's extension of hospitality 19:2-3

H 1 His address: {2} And he said, "Now behold, my lords,"⁵⁸⁵

H 2 His invitation

J 1 Lodging: please turn aside into your servant's house,

J 2 Anticipated time: and spend the night,

J 3 Cleansing: and wash your feet;

J 4 Departure: then you may rise early and go on your way."

H 3 Their refusal: They said however, "No, but we shall spend the night in the square."

H 4 Lot's insistence: {3} Yet he urged them strongly,⁵⁸⁶ 19:3aH 5 Their acceptance: so they turned aside to him and entered his house;⁵⁸⁷ 19:3b

H 6 Meal preparation 19:3c

J 1 and he prepared a feast for them,⁵⁸⁸

⁵⁸⁵ Gen. 19:2 - my lords: In addressing these two angels appearing as men, Lot called them "my lords" (*adonay*, [136](#)), a term of respect used in reference to God, and less frequently, of men. Of the nine uses in Genesis, [Abraham](#) addressed [Yahweh](#) as *Adonay* in Gen. 15:2, 8; 18:27, 30, 31, 32; Lot addressed the angels as *adonay* in Gen. 19:2, 18; and finally, Abimelech addressed God as *Adonay* in Gen. 20:4.

⁵⁸⁶ Gen. 19:3 - Yet he urged them strongly: Lot must have known the evil character of the men of [Sodom](#). To spend the night in the town square was asking to be raped by the men of the city.

⁵⁸⁷ Gen. 19:3 - they ... entered his house: In Lot's mind, a scandal has been averted. These men would not become victims of the evil appetites of the men of [Sodom](#). They were safe in his house.

⁵⁸⁸ Gen. 19:3 - he prepared a feast for them: In Middle Eastern culture, to extend hospitality to others and to eat with them was a commitment to guarantee their safety and well-being. This was an inviolable, iron-clad guarantee.

- J 2 and baked unleavened bread,
- H 7 Partaking: and they ate. 19:3d
- G 3 The attempted gang-rape of the angels by the men of the city 19:4-11
 - H 1 The time: {4} Before they lay down, ⁵⁸⁹19:4a
 - H 2 The participants 19:4b
 - J 1 The gender: the men of the city,
 - J 2 The location: the men of Sodom,
 - J 3 The tactic: surrounded the house,
 - J 4 The age: both young and old,
 - J 5 The inclusion: all the people
 - J 6 The extent: from every quarter; ⁵⁹⁰
 - H 3 Their evil request 19:5
 - J 1 The object of their address: {5} and they called to Lot and said to him,
 - J 2 Their target: “Where are the men ⁵⁹¹ who came to you tonight?”

⁵⁸⁹ Gen. 19:4 - before they lay down: In a matter of three or four hours, the news about the new men in town had spread like wildfire through the homosexual city of [Sodom](#). Before Lot and his guests even were ready to retire for the night, the men of [Sodom](#) arrived at Lot’s house and surrounded it, panting with lust. The human degradation and perversion narrated in this chapter is stunning.

⁵⁹⁰ Gen. 19:4 - all the people from every quarter: The Hebrew text in this verse is plodding, deliberate, and stunningly all-inclusive. Here is how it reads: “Before they lay down, men of the city – men of [Sodom](#), surrounded the house, both young and even old – all the people, from extremity (meaning even from the outlying districts of the city).” The word for “men” is the masculine plural of the word *ish* ([376](#)), the counterpart of *ishah*, woman. Men (*ish*) is stated twice: “Men of the city” – “men of [Sodom](#)” (with the second member specifying which city). The language is deliberately and stunningly inclusive: 1) Men of the city; 2) Men of the city – men of [Sodom](#); 3) Men of the city – men of [Sodom](#) surrounded the house (with evil intent – there could be no escape); 4) Men of the city – men of [Sodom](#) surrounded the house – both young and old; 5) Men of the city – men of [Sodom](#) surrounded the house – both young and old – all the people; 6) Men of the city – men of [Sodom](#) surrounded the house – both young and old – all the people from extremity (i.e. from even the outlying districts of the city).

What we have here is total homosexual mob rule and intimidation of Lot and his two male guests. Every male in the city, from every part of the city regardless of age participated in this massive intimidation of Lot and his two male guests. This is homosexuality at its ugliest, carried to its logical extreme.

⁵⁹¹ Gen. 19:5 - Where are the men: The men (*ish*, [376](#), cf. Gen. 19:4) identified Lot’s guests as men (*ish*, [376](#), cf. Gen. 19:5), even though they were actually [angels](#) (literally, messengers, *malak*, [4397](#), cf. Gen. 19:1). Earlier, [Moses](#) had identified them, as well as [Yahweh](#) Himself as men (*ish*, [376](#), cf. Gen. 18:2). [Yahweh’s](#) strategy in testing the evil of [Sodom](#) was to send two [angels](#)/messengers appearing to be men as bait. The strategy was instantly successful, for all the men of [Sodom](#) were practicing homosexuals.

- J 3 Their demand: Bring them out to us
- J 4 Their evil goal: that we may have relations with them.”⁵⁹²
- H 4 Lot's desperate attempt to defuse the situation 19:6-8
- J 1 His action: {6} But Lot went out to them at the doorway, and shut the door behind him,
- J 2 His rebuke: {7} and said, “Please, my brothers,⁵⁹³ do not act wickedly.”⁵⁹⁴
- J 3 His sordid alternative – his two virgin daughters: {8} “Now behold, I have two daughters⁵⁹⁵ who have not had relations with man;

⁵⁹² Gen. 19:5 - that we may have relations with them: Literally, “that we may know them.” *Yada* (3045) ordinarily means simply, “to know.” Here, however, it is a euphemism (in a horrific context) for “have sexual relations with.” The same word is used of a healthy, heterosexual union within the bonds of marriage, for example, in Gen. 4:1, 17, 25. Lot would say in a few moments (Gen. 19:8) that his daughters had not “had relations with man,” literally, that they “had not known (*yada*) man.”

Because of God’s progressive judgment upon America (Romans 1:18-32), many leaders, politicians, educators, journalists, and homosexual activists have succeeded in portraying homosexuality as a virtue and any criticism of it as a great evil. Now, with the unconstitutional decision of the Supreme Court on June 26, 2015 barring states from forbidding homosexual marriage, the militant left has succeeded. They label us who hold to the Bible as intolerant. But the ones who are really intolerant are those on the left who support homosexuality. No one could be more intolerant than these homosexuals who would have forced their way into Lot’s home had they not been struck with blindness. The most intolerant among us are those who will not tolerate God.

There is nothing virtuous about homosexuality. Homosexuality can only survive by recruitment, not by reproduction. Homosexuals force their lifestyle upon others. Homosexuals are willing to force their way upon those who do not want to participate in their vice. Historically and anecdotally, homosexuals prey upon young boys. There were Roman senators who had “boys” at home.

There are those who will accuse me of being a homophobe. I do not fear homosexuals. But I fear homosexuality. Indeed, I fear all sin, because all sin brings death and destruction as a consequence (Romans 3:23; 6:23). The person I fear most is God. Sadly, supporters of homosexuality do not. The fiery destruction of the homosexuality-embracing city of [Sodom](#) and surrounding cities is a graphic warning of the eternal punishment that will befall all who do not admit their sin and embrace the [King](#) who died and rose again for their own eternal salvation (John 3:18, 36; Rev. 20:12-15).

⁵⁹³ Gen. 19:7 - Please, my brothers: As tactfully as he possibly can under duress, Lot was desperately attempting to defuse a volatile situation. Even though not a native of [Sodom](#), he identified himself with the men, calling them his brothers (*ach*, 251).

⁵⁹⁴ Gen. 19:7 - do not act wickedly: Lot used the verb *raa* (7489). This verb, in the [Hifil](#) stem, can incorporate the idea of inflicting harm on someone. What Lot was saying was, “Do not perpetrate harm.” Participating in homosexuality harms others.

⁵⁹⁵ Gen. 19:8 - I have two daughters: It is inconceivable to us as fathers in the Western world that we would offer up our two virgin daughters to these evil, perverted men. Yet we do not understand Middle East culture. To offer two men sanctuary and a meal in one’s own home makes one obliged to protect them at all costs. Lot was offering the abominable to avoid the unthinkable. For him, it was the lesser of two evils. Lot’s offer, though despicable, was at least understandable from a Middle Eastern point of view. On a much lesser scale, I have sometimes, in American presidential elections, held my nose and voted for the lesser of two evils. But there is no justification for Lot. His offer was unconscionable.

- J 4 His offer: please let me bring them out to you,
 - J 5 His permission: and do to them whatever you like;
 - J 6 His plea for restraint: only do nothing to these men,
 - J 7 His reason: inasmuch as they have come under the shelter of my roof.”
- H 5 The men's evil response 19:9
- J 1 Their reply: {9} But they said, “Stand aside.”⁵⁹⁶
 - J 2 Their resentment: Furthermore, they said, “This one came in as an alien, and already he is acting like a judge;⁵⁹⁷
 - J 3 Their revenge: now we will treat you worse than them.”⁵⁹⁸
 - J 4 Their forcible assault: So they pressed hard against Lot
 - J 5 Their near success: and came near to break the door.⁵⁹⁹
- H 6 The angels' rescue of Lot 19:10-11
- J 1 Their action: {10} But the men⁶⁰⁰ reached out their hands
 - J 2 Their rescue: and brought Lot into the house with

⁵⁹⁶ Gen. 19:9 - Stand aside: The abomination of homosexuality is utterly transparent. God created man by design and desire to enjoy sexual relations with woman, his wife (Gen. 1:26-28; 2:18-24). But these men had forsaken God so wholly that their God-given desire had become completely perverted. The offer of sex with Lot’s two virgin daughters did not begin to tempt them. They were consumed with lust for these men!

⁵⁹⁷ Gen. 19:9 - came in as an alien ... acting like a judge: Literally, “he is judging like a judge.” In fact, Lot, though he had moved into [Sodom](#), was so highly respected that he had become a judge. What they objected to was his “judging like a judge” on this particular occasion. Presumably Lot had repeatedly in the past expressed his frustrations with the evil moral tone of the people of [Sodom](#).

⁵⁹⁸ Gen. 19:9 - Now we will treat you worse than them: Lot had pled with his neighbors not to abuse (*raa*, [7489](#)) his guests (Gen. 19:7). Now they threatened him, “We will abuse (*raa*, [7489](#)) you worse than them!” They never succeeded in that, for their stronger initial impulse was to abuse the good-looking house guests Lot had sheltered. Instead, they tried to get around Lot and force their way into his home. These men were militant homosexuals. Had they succeeded in abusing his guests, there is no telling what they would have done to Lot.

⁵⁹⁹ Gen. 19:9 - came near to break the door: These men were willing to commit virtually any crime to satisfy their lust.

⁶⁰⁰ Gen. 19:10 - the men: The text again identifies the [angels](#) as men (*ish*, [376](#)).

them,⁶⁰¹

J 3 Their protection: and shut the door.

J 4 Their judgment: {11} They struck the men who were at the doorway of the house with blindness, both small and great,⁶⁰²

J 5 Their success: so that they wearied themselves trying to find the doorway.⁶⁰³

E 2 The angels' frantic rescue of Lot's family 19:12-22

G 1 The angels' evacuation notice 19:12-13

H 1 The mens' question: {12} Then the *two* men said to Lot, "Whom else have you here? A son-in-law, and your sons, and your daughters, and whomever you have in the city, 19:12a

H 2 The mens' command: bring *them* out of the place; 19:12b

H 3 The mens' reason 19:13

⁶⁰¹ Gen. 19:10 - brought Lot into the house with them: The success of the two [angels](#) in extricating Lot from the lusting mob who were pushing forward to enter his house, without at the same time permitting the mass of humanity to surge relentlessly through the open door, can only be explained in miraculous terms. The laws of physics would not permit the [angels](#) to suddenly shut the door on the pushing, shoving intruders without supernatural effort.

⁶⁰² Gen. 19:11 - They struck the men ... with blindness, both small and great: But retrieving the shaken Lot and slamming shut the door would not stop this crazed mob: The [angels](#) blinded every man out there, whether great or small, probably a reference to their social and business status. Only this supernatural affliction would prevent the mob from entering Lot's home.

⁶⁰³ Gen. 19:11 - they wearied themselves trying to find the doorway: The men of [Sodom](#) were utterly crazed for homosexual perversion, as demonstrated by the following: (1) Every man in the city, regardless of socioeconomic status, participated. (2) The existence of two new men in the city excited the [Sodomites](#) within a matter of three or four hours. (3) They were prepared to stop at nothing to fulfill their lust. (4) Even when they were struck with blindness they *still* persisted in trying to get into Lot's house! (5) The city of [Sodom](#) became synonymous with homosexual deviancy as evidenced by the long-standing use of "[sodomy](#)" in European and American legal terminology and codes.

Why did God allow Lot to go through this humiliating mistreatment by the men of his city? And furthermore, why did God permit this sordid event to be included in the annals of human history as recorded in the Bible? (1) To let Lot know that the evil in the city was irremediable. Judgment was inevitable. (2) To justify to [Abraham](#) [Yahweh's](#) destruction of the city of [Sodom](#) and the entire area. (3) To illustrate to the human race that sometimes sin reaches a point where there is no cure and no forgiveness. The only solution is death and destruction. (4) Furthermore, God recorded this to give us a graphic illustration of God's judgment when people reject Him (Romans 1:18-32)! This somber passage (Rom. 1:18-32) outlines God's progressive judgment upon man when man forsakes Him. The first judgment is immorality. The second judgment upon a society is perverted immorality – homosexuality and lesbianism. The third judgment is a perverted mind. I personally in my lifetime have watched these three judgments overtake an America that has thumbed its nose at God. (5) This event serves to illustrate that "the Lord knows how to rescue the godly from temptation, and to keep the unrighteous under punishment for the day of judgment..." (2 Pet. 2:4-9). (6) And, last, "... [Sodom](#) and Gomorrah and the cities around them, since they in the same way as these indulged in gross immorality and went after strange flesh, are exhibited as an example in undergoing the punishment of eternal fire" (Jude 1:7).

- J 1 Impending destruction: {13} for we are about to destroy this place,⁶⁰⁴
- J 2 Because of immense evil: because their outcry has become so great before the LORD
- J 3 Because of Divine command: that the LORD has sent us to destroy it.”
- G 2 Lot's futile pleading with his sons-in-law-to-be 19:14
 - H 1 His urgent plea: {14} Lot went out and spoke to his sons-in-law, who were to marry his daughters, and said, “Up, get out of this place, for the LORD will destroy the city.”
 - H 2 Their blind refusal: But he appeared to his sons-in-law to be jesting.
- G 3 The angels' redoubled urgency 19:15-16
 - H 1 The time of the appeal: {15} When morning dawned,
 - H 2 The content of the appeal: the angels urged Lot, saying, “Up, take your wife and your two daughters who are here,
 - H 3 The reason for the appeal: or you will be swept away in the punishment of the city.”
 - H 4 The hesitation of Lot: {16} But he hesitated. 19:16a
- G 4 The angels' compelling of Lot to exit 19:16-17
 - H 1 Their seizure: So the men seized his hand and the hand of his wife and the hands of his two daughters,
 - H 2 The reason: for the compassion of the LORD was upon him;
 - H 3 Their action: and they brought him out, and put him outside the city. 19:16
 - H 4 The command of one: {17} When they had brought them outside, one said, 19:17
 - J 1 “Escape for your life!
 - J 2 Do not look behind you,

⁶⁰⁴ Gen. 19:13 - we are about to destroy this place: God had granted these [angels](#) sufficient authority and power to engineer the destruction of [Sodom](#) and its evil citizens. There was no remedy. Lot and his family had better flee the coming judgment!

- J 3 and do not stay anywhere in the valley;
- J 4 escape to the mountains,⁶⁰⁵
- H 5 His reason: or you will be swept away.”
- G 5 Lot's plea for mercy 19:18-22
 - H 1 His demurral: {18} But Lot said to them, “Oh no, my lords! 19:18
 - H 2 His recognition of mercy 19:19
 - J 1 {19} “Now behold, your servant has found favor in your sight,
 - J 2 and you have magnified your lovingkindness, which you have shown me by saving my life;
 - H 3 His objection: but I cannot escape to the mountains, for the disaster will overtake me and I will die;
 - H 4 His request 19:20a
 - J 1 {20} now behold, this town is near *enough* to flee to, and it is small.
 - J 2 Please, let me escape there (is it not small?)
 - H 5 His reason: that my life may be saved.” 19:20b
 - H 6 The angel's reply 19:21-22
 - J 1 Acquiescence: {21} He said to him, “Behold, I grant you this request also, not to overthrow the town of which you have spoken. 19:21
 - J 2 Haste: {22} “Hurry, escape there, for I cannot do anything until you arrive there.” 19:22a
 - J 3 Editorial footnote: Therefore the name of the town was called Zoar.⁶⁰⁶ 19:22b
- G 6 The time of Lot's escape: {23} The sun had risen over the earth when Lot came to Zoar.
- E 3 The judgment of Yahweh 19:23-29

⁶⁰⁵ Gen. 19:17 - escape to the mountains: Evidently the whole valley would be flooded with a fiery, molten lava-like substance.

⁶⁰⁶ Gen. 19:22 - Zoar: [NASB](#) footnote: “I.e. small”

- G 1 The fiery nature of the judgment 19:24
- H 1 The cities: {24} Then the LORD rained on Sodom and Gomorrah
 - H 2 The substance: brimstone and fire
 - H 3 The source: from the LORD out of heaven, ⁶⁰⁷
- G 2 The extent of the judgment 19:25
- H 1 Cities: {25} and He overthrew those cities,
 - H 2 Surrounding region: and all the valley, ⁶⁰⁸
 - H 3 Inhabitants: and all the inhabitants of the cities,
 - H 4 Vegetation: and what grew on the ground.
- G 3 The tragic consequence of disobedience 19:26
- H 1 The disobedience of Lot's wife: {26} But his wife, ⁶⁰⁹ from behind him, looked *back*,
 - H 2 Her fate: and she became a pillar of salt.
- G 4 [Abraham's](#) role in the tragedy 19:27-29
- H 1 His inquisitiveness 19:27-28

⁶⁰⁷ Gen. 19:24 - brimstone and fire from the LORD out of heaven: (1) "brimstone and fire" means burning sulfur. (2) The burning sulfur was not a volcanic eruption. It rained down from [Yahweh](#) out of the heavens. [Keil and Delitzsch](#), in their commentary on this passage, record the following:

By this rain of fire and brimstone not only were the cities and their inhabitants consumed, but even the soil, which abounded in asphalt, was set on fire, so that the entire valley was burned out and sank, or was overthrown ([haphak](#), [2015](#)) i.e., utterly destroyed, and the Dead Sea took its place.

In the next paragraph, there appears the following note:

(Note: Whether the Dead Sea originated in this catastrophe, or whether there was previously a lake, possibly a fresh water lake, at the north of the valley of Siddim, which was enlarged to the dimensions of the existing sea by the destruction of the valley with its cities, and received its present character at the same time, is a question which has been raised, since Capt. *Lynch* has discovered by actual measurement the remarkable fact, that the bottom of the lake consists of two totally different levels, which are separated by a peninsula that stretches to a very great distance into the lake from the eastern shore; so that whilst the lake to the north of this peninsula is, on an average, from 1000 to 1200 feet deep, the southern portion is at the most 16 feet deep, and generally much less, the bottom being covered with salt mud, and heated by hot springs from below.)

⁶⁰⁸ Gen. 19:25 - valley: Lit., circle, *kikâr*, [3603](#).

⁶⁰⁹ Gen. 19:26 - (Lot's) wife: In Luke 17:28-33, Jesus likened what happened to Lot's wife to that which will happen to many people alive when He will be revealed at His [Second Coming](#). They will be more concerned with protecting their treasured possessions than they will be about escaping terrible judgment (2 Thess. 1:6-10). Just as Lot's wife was destroyed because her heart was still back in [Sodom](#) with her possessions, so also many will be destroyed at Christ's [Second Coming](#). Their hearts will be attached to their possessions and lifestyle instead of being intent on escaping judgment. "Whoever seeks to keep his life will lose it, and whoever loses *his life* will preserve it" (Luke 17:33).

- J 1 His movement: {27} Now Abraham arose early in the morning and went to the place where he had stood before the LORD;
- J 2 His gaze: {28} and he looked down toward Sodom and Gomorrah, and toward all the land of the valley, and he saw,
- H 2 The conflagration: and behold, the smoke of the land ascended like the smoke of a furnace.
- H 3 God's remembrance 19:29
 - J 1 His destruction: {29} Thus it came about, when God destroyed the cities of the valley,
 - J 2 His remembrance: that God remembered Abraham,
 - J 3 His sparing of Lot: and sent Lot out of the midst of the overthrow, when He overthrew the cities in which Lot lived.
- E 4 Epilogue: Lot's tragic incest 19:30-38
 - G 1 Lot's subsequent departure to the mountain 19:30
 - H 1 His departure: {30} Lot went up from Zoar, and stayed in the mountains, and his two daughters with him;
 - H 2 His reason: for he was afraid to stay in Zoar;⁶¹⁰
 - H 3 His living quarters: and he stayed in a cave, he and his two daughters.
 - G 2 His daughter's statement of their dilemma 19:31
 - H 1 Age: {31} Then the firstborn said to the younger, "Our father is old,
 - H 2 Absence of character: and there is not a man on earth⁶¹¹ to come in to us after the manner of the earth.

⁶¹⁰ Gen. 17:30 - afraid to stay in Zoar: Apparently the same problem existed in Zoar. What Lot had perceived to be a blessing was really a curse. The men of Zoar were evidently as abominable as the men of [Sodom](#)!

⁶¹¹ Gen. 19:31 - not a man on earth: The Hebrew word *erets* ([776](#)) is more often translated "land" than "earth", and so it should be here. What the elder daughter meant was, "There is not a man in all this land (region) (*erets*, [776](#)) to come in to us after the manner of the earth (*erets*, [776](#)). She understood that the men of [Sodom](#), and presumably the other cities in the valley, had been destroyed because they were homosexuals. Zoar had been spared, but apparently the men there had been the same. Thus, Lot, fearful for his life, had fled to the mountains as the [angel](#) had instructed (Gen. 19:17). Had Lot obeyed, the city of Zoar would have been destroyed also. Since, in the view of the daughter, there were no men in the whole region left, or else the ones who were left were not inclined toward heterosexuality, she was left without recourse. Thus enfolded a tragic epilogue to the life of Lot.

G 3 Her incestuous suggestion 19:32

H 1 Drug: {32} “Come, let us make our father drink wine,

H 2 Deed: and let us lie with him

H 3 Desire: that we may preserve our family through our father.”

G 4 His daughters' deeds 19:33-35

H 1 The first daughter's actions 19:33

J 1 The drugging by the daughters: {33} So they made their father drink wine that night,

J 2 The deed of incest: and the firstborn went in and lay with her father;

J 3 The ignorance of their father: and he did not know when she lay down or when she arose.

H 2 The suggestion of the elder daughter: {34} On the following day, the firstborn said to the younger, 19:34

J 1 Deed: “Behold, I lay last night with my father;

J 2 Drug: let us make him drink wine tonight also;

J 3 Proposed deed: then you go in and lie with him,

J 4 Justification: that we may preserve our family through our father.”

H 3 The second daughter's actions 19:35

J 1 The drugging by the daughters: {35} So they made their father drink wine that night also,

J 2 The deed of incest: and the younger arose and lay with him;

J 3 The ignorance of the father: and he did not know when she lay down or when she arose.

G 5 The national outcome 19:36-38

H 1 The incestuous result: {36} Thus both the daughters of Lot were with child by their father. 19:36

H 2 The origin of Moab 19:37

J 1 Son: {37} The firstborn bore a son,

J 2 Name: and called his name Moab; ⁶¹²

J 3 Descendants: he is the father of the Moabites to this day.

H 3 The origin of Ammon 19:38

J 1 Son: {38} As for the younger, she also bore a son,

J 2 Name: and called his name Ben-ammi; ⁶¹³

J 3 Descendants; he is the father of the sons of Ammon ⁶¹⁴ to this day. ⁶¹⁵

C 10 God's merciful rescue of Sarah from Abimelech to preserve the [covenantal](#) seed 20

D 1 [Abraham's](#) fearful passing off of Sarah as his sister to Abimelech 20:1-7

E 1 His move to Gerar 20:1

G 1 [Abraham's](#) departure to the Negev: {1} Now Abraham journeyed from there toward the land of the Negev, ⁶¹⁶

⁶¹² Gen. 19:37 - Moab: "From Father." What a terrible name for a mother to give to her son!

⁶¹³ Gen. 19:38 - Ben-ammi: Meaning, "Son of My People."

⁶¹⁴ Gen. 19:38 - Ammon: The name is preserved yet in the city of [Amman, Jordan](#).

⁶¹⁵ Gen. 19:38 - to this day: Why is Genesis 19 included in the Bible? (1) It shows the evil nature of sin. (2) It demonstrates the lengths to which God will go in order to inspect sin. (3) It shows the lengths to which God will go in order to honor his promise to [Abraham](#) to protect the righteous. Strictly speaking God went above and beyond the call of duty in accordance with his promise to [Abraham](#) about preserving the region if ten righteous existed (only three did). (4) It demonstrates that sooner or later, iniquity reaches a point where it must be judged, even in this life. (5) It is an object lesson of the judgment to befall the earth at Christ's return: [a] Just as life went on as normal, but suddenly the judgment of God befell [Sodom](#) and Gomorrah... [b] So at Christ's return life will go on apace, when suddenly unbelievers will be destroyed at Christ's unveiling. [c] Those who are attached to the things of this world, unprepared to leave them emotionally, will thus indicate, as did Lot's wife, their real spiritual condition – unrighteousness. They will be consumed in judgment. (6) The [angels](#) were able by their coming, to indicate who was righteous and who was not. (a) So, at Christ's return to rule the earth, the [angels](#) will be involved in sorting out the wicked from the righteous. (Matt. 13:40-42: Note here that, unlike in [Sodom](#), the wicked will be taken away in judgment, while at Christ's return, the righteous are left to inherit the [millennial](#) earth.) (b) Apparently, only Lot and his two daughters were righteous. (7) Lot's materialistic choice of Gen. 13 has by now turned out to be exceedingly hollow: [a] He lost all his possessions. [b] He lost his wife. [c] He lost his honor: He became the father and the grandfather of two boys. What a tragic choice. (8) Yet even here the grace of God shines through. Ruth, a Moabitess, descendant of Lot, is the ancestor of King David (Ruth 4:21-22; Matt. 1:5-6) and included in the line of Jesus Christ (Matt. 1:16), the coming [King](#) of all [Kings](#) on the earth!

⁶¹⁶ Gen. 20:1 - Negev: [NASB](#) note: "I.e. South country." The Hebrew term is *Négeb* ([5045](#)), pronounced, "Négev." The root means "dry" or "parched regions." In the [LXX](#) it is usually translated "desert." Since the Negev is South of Judah, it also came to have the meaning of "South" ([Negev, BibleAtlas.org](#)).

- G 2 The general area of his settling: and settled between Kadesh⁶¹⁷ and Shur;⁶¹⁸
- G 3 His temporary residence: then he sojourned in Gerar.⁶¹⁹
- E 2 His deception about his wife: {2} Abraham said of Sarah his wife, “She is my sister.”⁶²⁰ 20:2a
- E 3 Abimelech’s taking of Sarah into his harem: So Abimelech⁶²¹ king of Gerar sent and took Sarah. 20:2b
- E 4 The communication between God and Abimelech 20:3-7
- G 1 The deathly warning from God (Elohim) 20:3
- H 1 The manner: In a dream at night: {3} But God came to Abimelech in a dream of the night,⁶²² and said to him,
- H 2 The threat: “Behold, you are a dead man

⁶¹⁷ Gen. 20:1 - Kadesh: Hebrew, *Qâdêsh* (6946), pronounced kaw-deesh’, and meaning “holy.” It is a city in the extreme South of Judah and is also called “Kedesh” or “Kadesh-barnea.” This city lies West of the Southern portion of the Dead Sea ([Kadesh-barnea](#)).

⁶¹⁸ Gen. 20:1 - Shur: Hebrew, Shûr (7793), meaning “wall.” According to [Gesenius](#), it is a city on the borders of Egypt and Palestine (Gen. 16:7; 20:1; 25:18; 1 Sam. 15:7; 27:8). It “...is placed where Suez now stands.” It also refers to “The desert extending from the borders of Palestine to Shur is called “the wilderness of Shur” (Ex. 15:22) and “the wilderness of Etham” (Num. 33:3). Bible Atlas places the [Shur Desert](#) to the East of the Nile Delta and to the West of the Brook of Egypt (Wadi el-Arish).

⁶¹⁹ Gen. 20:1 - Gerar: Hebrew, Gerâr (1642), meaning “a lodging place” – a Philistine town south of Gaza. In the days of the patriarchs Gerar was ruled by a King Abimelech (Gen. 20:2; 26:1, 26). It was situated in a valley (Gen. 26:17). In the days of Asa, Judah’s army destroyed all the cities around Gerar and carried off plunder (2 Chron. 14:13, 14) following a successful defeat of the invading Zerah the Ethiopian (2 Chron. 14:9-15). See the BibleAtlas map of [Gerar](#) and the [Valley of Gerar](#).

⁶²⁰ Gen. 20:2 - she is my sister: As [Abraham](#) would later justify, Sarah was actually his half sister – the daughter of his father but not of his mother (Gen. 20:12).

After all these years, why does [Abraham](#) now make the same indiscretion he did in Egypt? Has he not learned his lesson from that incident with Pharaoh? What about contamination of Sarah? What a vile thing for the child of promise to be Abimelech’s and Sarah’s! [Abraham’s](#) own answer is the fear of being killed (Gen. 20:11).

Fear is not logical. (1) [Abraham](#) overcame fear in his reckless but successful raid to save Lot and the people of [Sodom](#) (Gen. 14). (2) Yet now he could not overcome the fear of danger connected with being married to a beautiful woman. (3) By the same token, he overlooked God’s repeated promises that he and Sarah would have a son, now less than a year away. The conception had not yet taken place. Would God possibly let him die before that took place? (4) Fear overlooks God’s promises and His past performances!

⁶²¹ Gen. 20:2 - Abimelech: His name means “My Father, King.” Thomas Constable, [Notes on Genesis, 2019](#), following Gordon Wenham, asserts that “Abimelech” is, like “Pharaoh” a title rather than a name.

⁶²² Gen. 20:3 - But God came to Abimelech in a dream of the night: It is fascinating that God took such great pains with a Godless Philistine king, especially after [Abraham](#) had been so duplicitous, operating out of fear and a lack of trust in God. It was the grace of God that compelled Him to preserve the conjugal integrity of Sarah so the promised seed of [Abraham](#) would not be contaminated by another. Sometimes God, in His grace, rescues us out of traps we have created for ourselves.

H 3 The reason: because of the woman whom you have taken, for she is married.”⁶²³

G 2 The response of Abimelech 20:4-5

H 1 His non-consummation of the marriage: {4} Now Abimelech had not come near her; 20:4a

H 2 His protest of injustice: and he said, “Lord, will You slay a nation, even *though* blameless? 20:4b

H 3 His presentation of evidence 20:5a

J 1 [Abraham’s](#) statement: {5} “Did he not himself say to me, ‘She is my sister’?”

J 2 Sarah’s statement: And she herself said, ‘He is my brother.’

H 4 His innocence of motive 20:5b

J 1 In the integrity of my heart

J 2 and the innocence of my hands⁶²⁴ I have done this.” 20:5

G 3 The reply of God in the dream 20:6-7

H 1 His awareness of Abimelech's integrity: {6} Then God said to him in the dream, “Yes, I know that in the integrity of your heart you have done this,⁶²⁵ 20:6a

H 2 His restraining Abimelech from sinning against Him: and I also kept you from sinning against Me; therefore I did not let you touch her. 20:6b

H 3 His instructions 20:7

J 1 The command: {7} “Now therefore, restore the man’s wife,

⁶²³ Gen. 20:3 - for she is married: Literally, “for she is mastered to her master.”

⁶²⁴ Gen. 20:5 - innocence of my hands: literally, “cleanness of my hands.”

⁶²⁵ Gen. 20:6 - Yes, I know that in the integrity of your heart you have done this: God is indeed a gracious and righteous God. He acknowledged Abimelech’s pure motives.

J 2 The remedy: for he is a prophet,⁶²⁶ and he will pray for you and you will live.

J 3 The deadly alternative: But if you do not restore her, know that you shall surely die,⁶²⁷ you and all who are yours.”

D 2 Abimelech's Divinely-motivated restoration of Sarah to [Abraham](#) 20:8-18

E 1 Abimelech's communication with his own people 20:8

G 1 His report 20:8

H 1 Prompt action: {8} So Abimelech arose early in the morning

H 2 Summons: and called all his servants

H 3 Information: and told all these things in their hearing;

G 2 His subjects' response: and the men were greatly frightened.

E 2 Abimelech's communication with [Abraham](#) 20:9-13

G 1 His calling of [Abraham](#): {9} Then Abimelech called Abraham and said to him, 20:9a

G 2 His indignation with [Abraham](#) 20:9b-10

H 1 His query: “What have you done to us? 20:9b

H 2 His probe: And how have I sinned⁶²⁸ against you, that you

⁶²⁶ Gen. 20:7 - for he is a prophet: God considered [Abraham](#) to be a [prophet](#) (*nâbîy'*, [5030](#)). A *nâbîy'* was a spokesman for God or for another as the context dictates. [Abraham](#) was a [prophet](#), not because he regularly delivered messages from God to people as did [Moses](#) or Isaiah or Jeremiah. He was a [prophet](#) because God talked with him directly. No doubt [Abraham](#) repeated the messages he had been given to others in his family. Whether he had a wider audience is neither stated nor implied in the narrative of Genesis. This is the first and only use of this term in Genesis. It appears more frequently thereafter.

Aaron was to be [Moses' prophet](#) (Exod. 7:1). [Moses](#) was a [prophet](#) (Deut. 18:15; 34:10). False [prophets](#) were to be executed (Deut. 18:20). 100% accuracy in predictions was a requirement for being a true [prophet](#) of God (Deut. 18:22). There was no margin for error.

⁶²⁷ Gen. 20:7 - you shall surely die: Why did God take such great and explicit pains to stop this marriage as opposed to his lengthier and less drastic methods with Pharaoh? The answer: Because of the time framework of promise of imminent conception He had made to [Abraham](#) and Sarah. This conception could not be seen as a union of Abimelech and Sarah! Abimelech had strong motivations to rid himself of another man's wife! He did not wish to die. He believed God!

⁶²⁸ Gen. 20:9 - sinned: [Qal Perfect](#) of the verb *châtâ'* ([2398](#)), to sin, or miss the goal or path of right and duty ([BDB](#)).

have brought on me and on my kingdom a great sin? ⁶²⁹
20:9c

H 3 His rebuke: You have done to me things that ought not to be done.” 20:9d

H 4 His search for [Abraham’s](#) motive: {10} And Abimelech said to Abraham, “What have you encountered, that you have done this thing?” 20:10

G 3 The explanation of [Abraham](#) 20:11-13

H 1 His fear 20:11

J 1 The absence of God-fearing people in this place: {11} Abraham said, “Because I thought, surely there is no fear of God in this place,

J 2 His fear of death on account of his wife: and they will kill me because of my wife. 20:11

H 2 His statement of the facts 20:12

J 1 Their blood relation: {12} “Besides, she actually is my sister, the daughter of my father, but not the daughter of my mother,

J 2 Their matrimonial union: and she became my wife;

H 3 His agreement with Sarah 20:13

J 1 The time of the agreement: {13} and it came about, when God caused me to wander from my father’s house,

J 2 The terms of the agreement: that I said to her, ‘This is the kindness ⁶³⁰ which you will show to me: everywhere we go, say of me, “He is my brother.”’”

E 3 Abimelech’s restoration of Sarah to [Abraham](#) 20:14-16

G 1 His gifts to [Abraham](#) 20:14a

H 1 Flocks {14} Abimelech then took

⁶²⁹ Gen. 20:9 - sin: the noun *châtâ’âh* ([2401](#)), meaning sin or lapse or fault. This word appears only here in Genesis, 3X in Exodus and once in 2 Kings, always preceded in Hebrew and English by the word “great,” so it is translated ([NASB](#)) “great sin.” It appears 3 additional times only in the book of Psalms always without the adjective “great.” It is translated ([NASB](#)) simply as “sin” in Psa. 32:1; 109:7. The lone exception is Psalm 40:6 (40:7 in Hebrew), where it is translated as “sin offering,” a meaning required by the synonymous parallelism.

⁶³⁰ Gen. 20:13 - kindness: *chesed* ([2617](#)) – “loyal love.”

- J 1 sheep
- J 2 and oxen
- H 2 Slaves
 - J 1 and male ⁶³¹
 - J 2 and female servants, ⁶³² and gave them to Abraham, ⁶³³
- G 2 His return of Sarah to [Abraham](#): and restored his wife Sarah to him. 20:14b
- G 3 His offer to [Abraham](#) 20:15
 - H 1 Land: {15} Abimelech said, “Behold, my land is before you;
 - H 2 Permission: settle wherever you please.”
- G 4 His speech to Sarah: {16} To Sarah he said, 20:16
 - H 1 Payment: “Behold, I have given your brother a thousand pieces of silver; ⁶³⁴
 - H 2 Purpose: behold, it is your vindication ⁶³⁵ before all who

⁶³¹ Gen. 20:14 - male: The one Hebrew word is *ebed* (5650), and refers to a male servant or slave. It is used 803 times in the OT, and far more often in the [NASB](#) is translated *servant* rather than *slave*. However, if Abimelech gave them to [Abraham](#), they had no choice in the matter, and they did not control their own destiny. I am justified, therefore, in labeling them slaves. If someone owns you, you are a slave. For example, Potiphar’s wife described Joseph to her husband as an *ebed*, and she had no reason to be complimentary! (Gen. 39:17, 19). He was a slave with great latitude and responsibility, but he was still a slave.

⁶³² Gen. 20:14 - female servants: These two English words translate the one Hebrew word *shiphchah* (note the feminine ending – *ah*) (8198), used 63 times in the OT, most often in the [NASB](#) translated maid or maidservant, rarely slave. But the same applies. If someone owns you and gives you to another, you do not control your own destiny, and you are a slave. *Shiphchah* seems often to connote a female slave who is the personal attendant of a freewoman, and thus her personal property. For example, Sarai had a slave girl who served as her personal attendant, her *shiphchah* (8198), named Hagar (Gen. 16:1, 2, 3, 5, 6, 8; 25:12).

⁶³³ Gen. 20:14 - and gave them to him: The flocks and slaves were an expiatory gift to [Abraham](#) for having wronged him in taking from him his wife. This would have been a sizeable payment!

⁶³⁴ Gen. 20:16 - thousand pieces of silver: This appears to be an additional amount of coinage given by Abimelech to [Abraham](#) in addition to the livestock and slaves (not a statement of the value of the livestock and slaves). Abimelech here ironically calls [Abraham](#) Sarah’s brother!

⁶³⁵ Gen. 20:16 - vindication: The noun *kesuth* (3682) is, literally, a covering. In some respects it is here similar to the verb *kaphar* (3722), “to cover,” or “to make an atonement,” used, for example, in Lev. 17:11. There God explained that He had given to [Israel](#) the blood of animal sacrifices upon the sacrificial altar to cover, or atone for the peoples’ sins. In both cases the sacrificial gift “covered over” the offense. Such sacrifices can never actually remove guilt, but they “cover” the guilt.

are with you,

H 3 Accomplishment: and before all men you are cleared.”

E 4 The intercession of [Abraham](#) 20:17-18

G 1 [Abraham's](#) prayer to Elohim: {17} Abraham prayed to God, 20:17a

G 2 The fact of Elohim's healing 20:17b

H 1 Of Abimelech: and God healed Abimelech ⁶³⁶

H 2 Of his wife: and his wife

H 3 Of his concubines: and his maids,

G 3 The nature of the healing: so that they bore *children*. 20:17c

G 4 The need for the healing 20:18

H 1 The symptom: {18} For the LORD had closed fast all the wombs ⁶³⁷ of the household of Abimelech

H 2 The cause: because of Sarah, [Abraham's](#) wife.

C 11 The miraculous, heralded birth of the [covenantal](#) seed, Isaac 21:1-21

D 1 [Yahweh's](#) enablement of Sarah to conceive and bear Isaac 21:1-7

E 1 The promise-fulfilling action of [Yahweh](#) 21:1-2

G 1 The veracity of [Yahweh](#) 21:1

H 1 {1} Then the LORD took note of Sarah as He had said,

Another possible interpretation is that the thousand pieces of silver were given to purchase veils or coverings both for Sarah and also her maidservants so that they would not be a temptation for other men to lust after them in the future. If this interpretation is correct, it would amount to biting sarcasm (so [John Gill](#))!

⁶³⁶ Gen. 20:17 - And God healed Abimelech: Evidently, because of Sarah, Abimelech had rapidly developed some sort of disease and stood in need of healing.

⁶³⁷ Gen. 20:18 - closed fast all the wombs: [Abraham's](#) sin of partial dishonesty and fear ensnared and damaged others. Our sins rarely affect merely ourselves. They have a domino effect. Some observations are in order: (1) It is likely that each of us has a besetting sin. (2) When we sin, we drag others into sin with us, often as innocent bystanders. (3) It is not only our plans that are thus damaged, but also God's. (4) Sometimes God graciously reduces the sinister implications of the Law of the Harvest. (5) God mercifully determines to pursue His [sovereign](#) plans in spite of His erring children.

It almost seems that a certain amount of time had to lapse before it could be discerned that all the women in Abimelech's household had closed wombs. Perhaps a number of the women had experienced sudden miscarriages as a Divine judgment upon Abimelech. Otherwise, how would they know? If not miscarriage, then a sizable number of months must have taken place so that Abimelech and his household would have known that none of them were getting pregnant. The miscarriage theory has some merit to it.

- H 2 and the LORD did for Sarah as He had promised.
- G 2 The birth of the baby 21:2
 - H 1 Sarah's conception! {2} So Sarah conceived
 - H 2 Sarah's giving birth for the benefit of [Abraham](#)
 - J 1 A son: and bore a son to Abraham
 - J 2 In [Abraham's](#) old age: in his old age,
 - J 3 At the time: at the appointed time of which God had spoken to him.
- E 2 The precise obedience of [Abraham](#) 21:3-5
 - G 1 In the naming of his son: {3} Abraham called the name of his son who was born to him, whom Sarah bore to him, Isaac. ⁶³⁸ 21:3
 - G 2 In the circumcising of his son 21:4
 - H 1 The fact: {4} Then Abraham circumcised his son Isaac
 - H 2 The time: when he was eight days old,
 - H 3 The obedience: as God had commanded him.
 - G 3 The circumstances of [Abraham](#): {5} Now Abraham was one hundred years old ⁶³⁹ when his son Isaac was born to him. 21:5
- E 3 The joyous astonishment of Sarah 21:6-7
 - G 1 Her glee 21:6
 - H 1 Her acknowledgment of God's gift: {6} Sarah said, "God has made laughter for me;
 - H 2 Her imagining of others' reactions: everyone who hears will laugh with me."
 - G 2 Her incredulity 21:7
 - H 1 {7} And she said, "Who would have said to Abraham that Sarah would nurse children?"

⁶³⁸ Gen. 21:3 - Isaac: The name means, "He laughs." God commanded the boy should be named "Isaac" in Gen. 17:19. In Hebrew, the name is *Yitschâq* ([3327](#)).

⁶³⁹ Gen. 21:5 - one hundred years old: literally, "the son of 100 years."

H 2 Yet I have borne him a son in his old age.”

D 2 [Abraham's](#) reluctant expulsion of the mocking Ishmael at the request of Sarah reinforced by God 21:8-14

E 1 The confrontation in the family 21:8-11

G 1 Isaac's feast 21:8

H 1 His growth: {8} The child grew

H 2 His weaning: and was weaned,⁶⁴⁰

H 3 The feast in his honor : and Abraham made a great feast on the day that Isaac was weaned.

G 2 Ishmael's mockery 21:9

H 1 The observer: {9} Now Sarah saw

H 2 The perpetrator: the son of Hagar the Egyptian, whom she had borne to Abraham,

H 3 The activity: mocking.⁶⁴¹

G 3 Sarah's fury 21:10

H 1 Her demand for expulsion: {10} Therefore she said to

⁶⁴⁰ Gen. 21:8 - and was weaned: Weaning usually took place at the age of 2 or 3 (see 1 Sam. 1:22-24; Hos. 1:8) (Constable, [Notes on Genesis, 2019](#)).

⁶⁴¹ Gen. 21:9 - mocking: The Hebrew word translated ‘mocking’ (v. 9) comes from the same root as Isaac's name (in Hebrew, the name is *Yitschâq* (3327), which means ‘laughing.’ The verb here is *tsâchaq* (6711). However the participle of the verb here appears in the intensive ([Piel](#)) form in Hebrew, indicating that Ishmael was not simply laughing but cruelly ridiculing Isaac (cf. Gal. 4:29) (Thomas Constable, [Notes on Genesis, 2019](#)). Ishmael was fourteen when Isaac was born. If Hebrew children are weaned at age two or older, Ishmael was now at least sixteen or perhaps older. This was a deliberate, calculated mocking. Similar uses of this verb in the [Piel](#) stem include Gen. 19:14; Judges 16:25.

Abraham, “Drive out ⁶⁴² this maid ⁶⁴³ and her son,

H 2 Her reason for expulsion: for the son of this maid shall not be an heir with my son Isaac.” ⁶⁴⁴

G 4 [Abraham's](#) pain 21:11

H 1 His reaction: *{11}* The matter distressed Abraham greatly⁶⁴⁵

H 2 His reason: because of his son.

E 2 The communication from Elohim 21:12-13

G 1 His reassurance: *{12}* But God said to Abraham, “Do not be distressed ⁶⁴⁶ 21:12a

H 1 because of the lad

⁶⁴² Gen. 21:10 - Drive out (this maid and her son): Paul quotes Sarah’s Gen. 21:10 command in Gal. 4:30 as part of his allegorical ([238](#)) (Gal. 4:24) application of this historical crisis. He used this event as an incentive to dissuade Hebrew and Gentile Christians from attempting to turn to the [Law](#) as a means of sanctification (Gal. 4:21-31). He likened Hagar and her slave-son, Ishmael to the [Old Covenant](#), given at Mount Sinai, which corresponded to the present Jerusalem. Hagar and Ishmael, along with earthly Jerusalem, in Paul’s allegory, represented slavery to the [Law](#). He pictured Sarah, the free woman, and her free son Isaac, as belonging to the “Jerusalem above” (i.e., [New Jerusalem](#)), a free city (Gal. 4:26). NT Christians, “brothers,” are, like Isaac, “children of promise” (Gal. 4:28). Paul’s allegorical conclusion is found in Gal. 4:31 – since we NT Christians are not children of a bondwoman, but children of the free woman, we should not live enslaved to the [Law](#), but we should live as those who are redeemed from the [Law](#) (Gal. 4:5), who are free sons of God. We should live by the power of the [Holy Spirit](#), whom God sent into our hearts (Gal. 4:6). In short, we should live under the [New Covenant](#), not the [Old Covenant](#).

I know of well-meaning, but ill-advised Christians who want to place themselves back under the [Law](#), the [Old Covenant](#). That is not God’s plan for us Christians. He wants us to live under the [New Covenant](#).

⁶⁴³ Gen. 21:10 - this maid: Sarah, in her fury, was very selective in her use of words. She did not here identify Hagar as her own *shiphchah* ([8198](#)), a slave who is a woman’s personal attendant, as she had previously (Gen. 16:1, 2, 3, 5, 6, 8). Rather, she identified Hagar as “this *amah*” ([519](#)), a slave girl/woman who is the concubine of a freeman. (See the same association in Genesis 20:17, where God healed Abimelech, his wife, and his maids [slave concubines] so that they could once again bear children.) She does not even dignify Hagar’s position by associating her with [Abraham](#) – “your *amah* ([519](#)).” Rather, she referred to Hagar as the impersonal but demonstrative “this *amah*! Sarah used the identical phrase yet again in this same verse when she gave [Abraham](#) her reason for the expulsion of Hagar and her son.

⁶⁴⁴ Gen. 21:10 - for the son of this maid shall not be an heir with my son Isaac: According to Constable ([Notes on Genesis, 2019](#)),

Normally in ancient Near Eastern culture, the son of a concubine became the heir of his mother but not of his father (cf. Judg. 9:1-3). Now that [Abraham](#) had a son by his wife, Sarah did not want Ishmael to share Isaac’s inheritance.

Sarah had tolerated Hagar and Ishmael up to this point. But his mockery of her son triggered an abrupt and monumental explosion. She was not about to have this disrespectful son of a slave-girl compete with her son!

⁶⁴⁵ Gen. 21:11 - the matter distressed [Abraham](#) greatly: Literally, “The matter was exceedingly evil in the eyes of Abraham on account of his son.”

⁶⁴⁶ Gen. 21:12 - Do not be distressed: Literally, “Let it not be evil in your eyes ...”

- H 2 and your maid;⁶⁴⁷
- G 2 His directive: whatever Sarah tells you, listen to her, 21:12b
- G 3 His reason: for through Isaac your descendants shall be named.⁶⁴⁸ 21:12c
- G 4 His promise concerning the son of the slave woman 21:13
 - H 1 National prominence: {13} “And of the son of the maid⁶⁴⁹ I will make a nation also,
 - H 2 Ancestral reason: because he is your descendant.”⁶⁵⁰
- E 3 The painful obedience 21:14
 - G 1 The time: {14} So Abraham rose early in the morning⁶⁵¹
 - G 2 The provision: and took bread and a skin of water and gave them to Hagar, putting them on her shoulder, and gave her the boy,
 - G 3 The expulsion: and sent her away.⁶⁵²

⁶⁴⁷ Gen. 21:12 - your maid: Sarah (in Gen. 21:10) had refused to identify Hagar as her husband’s *amah* (519). She had referred to Hagar as “this *amah*.” Here, Elohim designates Hagar as [Abraham’s amah](#) (519), in this context, a slave girl/woman who is the concubine of a freeman, and thus his personal property (see the same use in Gen. 20:17). *Amah* (519) is used 56 times in the Hebrew Bible; 7 times in Genesis.

⁶⁴⁸ Gen. 21:12 - through Isaac your descendants shall be named: More literally, “because in Isaac shall be called your seed” (*zera*, 2233). In a progeny context *zera* is typically (and euphemistically) translated in the [NASB](#) as descendant(s). Here it actually occurs in the singular, not the plural. Previous references to [Abraham’s](#) seed of promise include Gen. 12:7; 13:15, 16; 15:5, 13, 18; 17:7, 8, and, most notably, Gen. 17:8-9, where Elohim specified the [Abrahamic blessing](#) would be conveyed through Isaac (not Ishmael). By Divine directive, Ishmael and the Arabs are forever denied any legitimate claim to ownership of the land of [Israel](#). The land belongs to the descendants of [Abraham](#) and Sarah through Isaac, not [Abraham](#) and Hagar through Ishmael. The so-called [Palestinians](#) have no rightful legal claim to a single square centimeter of [Israeli](#) land. Like any Gentiles (nations), all [Palestinians](#) may partake of the international blessings promised to [Abraham](#) and the [New Covenant](#) by means of faith in Jesus, the Great [King](#), who is, incidentally, infinitely superior to the false prophet Muhammad.

⁶⁴⁹ Gen. 21:13 - maid: Here Elohim refers to Hagar not as *your amah* (519) (in this context, female slave/concubine), but simply as “the *amah*.”

⁶⁵⁰ Gen. 21:13 - descendant: Literally, “seed” (*zera*, 2223), most often in this context, euphemistically translated “descendant” by [NASB](#) editors. Ishmael was [Abraham’s](#) seed, but not His seed of promise (see Gen. 17:8-9; 21:12).

⁶⁵¹ Gen. 21:14 - So Abraham rose early in the morning: Abraham’s prompt and complete obedience expressed his strong faith in God. If we trust God, we obey Him. If we don’t obey Him, it is because we don’t trust Him. The words of the song “Trust and Obey” are theologically accurate. “Trust and obey, for there’s no other way – to be happy in Jesus, but to trust and obey.”

⁶⁵² Gen. 21:14 - sent her away: Some observations: (1) It is painful to obey God at times. This is true because God is testing our allegiance. Are we willing enough to obey him that we will endure pain? (2) The earlier pain that [Abraham](#) and Sarah tried to circumvent was the pain of being childless for years, even though God had promised them children. Because they were unable to endure that pain, they constructed a human method to fulfill God’s promises. (3) In turning to human methods to help God along, [Abraham](#) ultimately created an even greater pain –

- G 4 The aimless departure: And she departed and wandered about in the wilderness of Beersheba.⁶⁵³
- D 3 God's gracious sparing of Ishmael in the desert to *bless* [Abraham](#) 21:15-21
 - E 1 Desperation in the desert 21:15-16
 - G 1 The depletion of supplies: {15} And the water in the skin was used up, 21:15
 - G 2 The discarding of the child: and she left the boy under one of the bushes. 21:15
 - G 3 The despair of the mother 21:16
 - H 1 Her departure: {16} Then she went and sat down opposite him, about a bowshot away,
 - H 2 Her reason: for she said, “Do not let me see the boy die.”
 - H 3 Her grief: And she sat opposite him, and lifted up her voice and wept.
 - E 2 The provision of Elohim in the desert 21:17-19
 - G 1 Elohim's hearing the youth's voice: {17} God heard the lad crying;⁶⁵⁴ 21:17a
 - G 2 Elohim's response 21:17b

first of all, disharmony between himself and Sarah and Hagar, and now disharmony between Ishmael and Sarah. Now the greatest pain of all for [Abraham](#) – having to send his cherished first-born away. (4) And now [Abraham's](#) painfully belated obedience also causes pain to others – to Hagar and to Ishmael! This must have been hard on Hagar. She had obeyed God and had submitted herself to Sarah. Now it is not *her* insubmission, but her son's that causes them to be driven out. She must have felt dejected and perhaps bitter against God! (5) The pain that we cause by our fleshly solutions may fester interminably and continue spreading. There is international pain between Arabs and [Israelis](#) today. This pain will only be resolved when Jesus, the ultimate Seed of [Abraham](#), returns to rule this world. (6) Blended families experience stress that traditional nuclear families do not experience. (7) Trying to do things the human way instead of God's way creates additional stress. (8) Children (including adolescents) can sometimes develop visibly unsympathetic and unspiritual responses to God and His plan. This was true of Ishmael. (9) The sign of an obedient heart (here [Abraham's](#)) is prompt obedience despite tears!

⁶⁵³ Gen. 21:14 - wilderness of Beersheba: Hebrew, *Be'êr Sheba'* (884) – “well of the sevenfold oath” – a city at the south edge of Israel. See the map of [Beersheba](#). “Wilderness” is *midbâr* (4057). It refers to an uninhabited area (see Job 38:26, which defines it). Here [NASB](#) translates the word as “desert,” a rare translation. Elsewhere it is almost universally translated “wilderness.” Pasture land can be referred to as “wilderness” (Jer. 9:10).

⁶⁵⁴ Gen. 21:17 - God heard the lad crying: Note that Elohim moved in response to Ishmael's tears, not those of Hagar! Why? Because God's [covenant](#) is with [Abraham](#), not Hagar. God has promised to bless Ishmael (not Hagar) for [Abraham's](#) sake.

- H 1 The method of response: and the angel of God ⁶⁵⁵ called to Hagar
- H 2 The place of response: from heaven
- H 3 The question: and said to her, “What is the matter with you, Hagar?”
- G 3 Elohim's reassurance 21:17c
 - H 1 The caution: Do not fear,
 - H 2 The reason: for God has heard the voice of the lad where he is.
- G 4 Elohim's instruction 21:18
 - H 1 Overcome inertia: {18} “Arise, lift up the lad, and hold him by the hand,
 - H 2 Look ahead to the future: for I will make a great nation of him.” ⁶⁵⁶
- G 5 Elohim's provision 21:19
 - H 1 Vision: {19} Then God opened her eyes
 - H 2 Observation: and she saw a well of water;
 - H 3 Action: and she went and filled the skin with water
 - H 4 Relief: and gave the lad a drink.
- E 3 The development of Ishmael in the desert 21:20-21
 - G 1 Elohim's superintendence: {20} God was with the lad, 21:20a
 - G 2 Ishmael's progress 21:20b
 - H 1 Maturity: and he grew;

⁶⁵⁵ Gen. 21:17 - angel of God: Literally, “messenger of Elohim.” This person is a messenger (*mal'âk*, [4397](#)) of Elohim, *Ēlôhîym* ([430](#)). Appropriately, he refers to God as a person distinct from himself – “God has heard the voice of the lad where he is” (Gen. 21:17). Yet the messenger spoke of God in the first person, “I will make a great nation of him” (Gen. 21:17). I conclude therefore that this was an appearance of the pre-incarnate Messiah, or Christ, before He became man. See the Glossary entry on “[Angel of the LORD; Angel of Yahweh](#).” See the article, “[The Angel of Yahweh](#).”

⁶⁵⁶ Gen. 21:18 - for I will make a great nation of him: Here the messenger speaks as though He Himself were God. I conclude that this particular messenger (angel) is the Second Person of the Godhead. He is God, and yet He is the ultimate Messenger of God. In the OT, the Second Person of the Godhead was occasionally referred to as the *Messenger* of God. In the terminology of the [Apostle John](#) in the NT He is referred to as the *Message* (*Logos*, [3056](#)) of God (John 1:1-3, 14; 1 John 1:1; Rev. 19:13). He is the Angel of Yahweh ([Glossary](#)); ([Article](#)).

- H 2 Habitat: and he lived in the wilderness
- H 3 Skill: and became an archer.⁶⁵⁷
- G 3 Ishmael's residence: {21} He lived in the wilderness of Paran,⁶⁵⁸ 21:21a
- G 4 Ishmael's marriage: and his mother took a wife for him from the land of Egypt. 21:21b
- C 12 Abimelech's covenant with [Abraham](#) as independent testimony of the fulfillment of God's promise to *bless* Abraham 21:22-34
 - D 1 Abimelech's acknowledgment of Divine Blessing 21:22.
 - E 1 The observers 21:22a
 - G 1 {22} Now it came about at that time that Abimelech⁶⁵⁹
 - G 2 and Phicol, the commander of his army,
 - E 2 The initiative: spoke to Abraham, saying, 21:22b
 - E 3 The observation: "God is with you in all that you do;"⁶⁶⁰ 21:22c
 - D 2 Abimelech's request for integrity and kindness 21:23-24
 - E 1 The request for an oath of kindness 21:23
 - G 1 The nature of the oath: {23} now therefore, swear to me here by God
 - G 2 The content of the oath
 - H 1 Truthfulness: that you will not deal falsely

⁶⁵⁷ Gen. 21:20 - archer: There are actually two Hebrew words here. Ishmael became an archer (*rabah*, [7235](#), [participle](#)), literally, "one shooting" "with a bow" (*qashshath*, [7199](#), noun).

⁶⁵⁸ Gen. 21:21 - wilderness of Paran: Hebrew, *Pârân* ([6290](#)), meaning, "place of caverns." "wilderness area bounded on the north by Palestine, on the west by the wilderness of Etham, on the south by the desert of Sinai, and on the east by the valley of Arabah; the exodus was through this area and probably all 18 stops were in this area." See "[Wilderness of Paran](#)."

⁶⁵⁹ Gen. 21:22 - Abimelech: His name means, "My Father – [King](#)." He is evidently a [King](#) in the land of the Philistines (see 21:32), and is also evidently the same as Abimelech, [King](#) of Gerar, referred to in Genesis 20 (Thomas Constable, [Notes on Genesis, 2019](#)). In the former episode, the Divinely promised seed was in jeopardy. In the present episode, the Divinely promised land is in jeopardy (see the comments by [Bruce Waltke](#) as quoted by Constable, [Notes on Genesis, 2019](#)).

⁶⁶⁰ Gen. 21:22 - God is with you in all that you do: Here is an important principle for a Christian living in a non-Christian world: Live so that unbelievers can observe that God is blessing your life!

- J 1 with me
- J 2 or with my offspring
- J 3 or with my posterity,
- H 2 Kindness: but according to the kindness ⁶⁶¹ that I have shown to you,
- J 1 you shall show to me
- J 2 and to the land in which you have sojourned.”
- E 2 The agreement to the oath: {24} Abraham said, “I swear it.” 21:24
- D 3 [Abraham’s](#) communication of a water rights grievance 21:25-26
 - E 1 [Abraham’s](#) statement of the grievance 21:25
 - G 1 Complaint: {25} But Abraham complained to Abimelech ⁶⁶²
 - G 2 Reason: because of the well of water which the servants of Abimelech had seized.
 - E 2 Abimelech’s claim of ignorance 21:26
 - G 1 His ignorance: {26} And Abimelech said, “I do not know who has done this thing;
 - G 2 His lack of culpability
 - H 1 you did not tell me, ⁶⁶³
 - H 2 nor did I hear of it until today.”
- D 4 [Abraham’s](#) formalization of the mutual non-aggression treaty 21:27
 - E 1 [Abraham’s](#) gift: {27} Abraham took sheep and oxen and gave them to

⁶⁶¹ Gen. 21:23 - kindness: Another principle for living as a Christian in a non-Christian world: Be seen as a protector of your neighbors.

⁶⁶² Gen. 21:25 - [Abraham](#) complained: Another principle for living as a Christian in a non-Christian world: Be honest enough to communicate to your neighbors when something is wrong.

⁶⁶³ Gen. 21:26 - you did not tell me: More principles for living as a Christian in a non-Christian world: (1) **Resentment:** Do not let wrongs suffered be the most prominent driving force in your life. This taking of a well had happened earlier. How much earlier, we do not know. But [Abraham](#) had not immediately charged Abimelech with misconduct the moment he had heard about the issue. It was not something important enough to bring up except under the terms of this conversation and agreement, which Abimelech, not he, had initiated. (2) **Timing:** When the time is right, communicate without anger. (3) **Assumption:** Don't assume your neighbor is belligerent. The wrong done you may well not be deliberate! It is entirely possible, of course, that Abimelech knew very well about his subjects' having stolen Abraham's well. But for the record, he was ignorant of the fact, as he stated.

Abimelech,

E 2 The mutual [covenant](#): and the two of them made a covenant. ⁶⁶⁴

D 5 [Abraham's](#) formalization of his water-rights claim 21:28-32

E 1 Segregation: {28} Then Abraham set seven ewe lambs of the flock by themselves. 21:28

E 2 Question: {29} Abimelech said to Abraham, "What do these seven ewe lambs mean, which you have set by themselves?" 21:29

E 3 Significance: {30} He said, "You shall take these seven ewe lambs from my hand so that it may be a witness to me, that I dug this well." 21:30

E 4 Name: {31} Therefore he called that place Beersheba, ⁶⁶⁵ because there the two of them took an oath. 21:31

E 5 Formalization: {32} So they made a covenant ⁶⁶⁶ at Beersheba; 21:32a

E 6 Departure: and Abimelech and Phicol, the commander of his army, arose and returned to the land of the Philistines. 21:32b

D 6 [Abraham's](#) worship 21:33

E 1 His planting of a tree: {33} *Abraham* planted a tamarisk tree ⁶⁶⁷ at

⁶⁶⁴ Gen. 21:27 - made a covenant: In typical Hebrew idiom, "they cut – (the) two of them – a [covenant](#)." "[Covenant](#)" is *berith*, [1285](#). The term "cut" implies that the throats of the animals were slit, the blood drained, and the animals offered in a sacrifice. Typically the two parties would eat the meat together, which, in Middle East culture, amounts to an additional mutual guarantee of preservation of the person with whom one eats. You don't betray someone with whom you have eaten a meal. The text does not state whether the two actually killed the animals and ate a meal. Abimelech had asked for an oath, and he received more than that – a [covenant](#). The [covenant](#) constituted a mutual non-aggression treaty between the two parties. Another principle for living as a Christian in a non-Christian world: **Formalization**: It may be necessary to formalize your agreement with your neighbor. (Putting things in writing circumvents misunderstandings.) It used to be that a handshake was all that was necessary. But in today's society, many agreements need to be formalized. If it ever comes to a matter of law, having a signed agreement in writing is crucial. See also the "[The Covenants of the Bible](#)."

⁶⁶⁵ Gen. 21:31 - Beer Sheba: The name Beer Sheba ([884](#)) is really a pun. *Beer* ([875](#)) is "well" and *Sheba* is "Seven" (*sheba*, [7651](#)) – "Well of Seven." However, the three Hebrew radicals (consonants) that make up *Sheba* ([7651](#)) (*shin*, *beth*, and *ayin*), "seven," are the same three radicals that comprise the word *shaba* ([7650](#)), "to swear" (an oath) – *shin*, *beth*, and *ayin*. In terms of the pun, the name could also be interpreted as "Well of the Oath."

⁶⁶⁶ Gen. 21:32 - covenant: This second [covenant](#), initiated by [Abraham](#), and to which Abimelech agreed, legally granted [Abraham](#) ownership of the well at Beer Sheba.

⁶⁶⁷ Gen. 21:33 - tamarisk tree: In the immediately ensuing context, there must have been something spiritually significant about planting a tree, and that specie of tree. According to [Keil and Delitzsch](#), commentary on Genesis, "The planting of this long-lived tree, with its hard wood, and its long, narrow, thickly clustered, evergreen leaves, was to be a type of the ever-enduring grace of the faithful [covenant](#) God." It is not without significance that [Abraham](#) planted a tree that would always be green and that would serve as a monument to the God who would be with him throughout eternity. It is good for individuals and families to make monuments about their relationship with God!

Beersheba,

- E 2 His calling on the name of [Yahweh](#): and there he called on the name of the LORD, the Everlasting God.⁶⁶⁸
- D 7 [Abraham's](#) pilgrimage: {34} And Abraham sojourned in the land of the Philistines for many days.⁶⁶⁹ 21:34
- C 13 [Yahweh's](#) testing confirmation of His [covenant](#) of *blessing* with [Abraham](#) 22:1-19
 - D 1 Elohim's testing of [Abraham's](#) loyalty by asking him to sacrifice the [covenantal](#) seed, Isaac 22:1-2
 - E 1 The time of Elohim's communication: {1} Now it came about after these things, 22:1a
 - E 2 The nature of Elohim's communication: that God tested Abraham,⁶⁷⁰ 22:1b
 - E 3 The address of Elohim: and said to him, "Abraham!" 22:1c
 - E 4 The response of [Abraham](#): And he said, "Here I am." 22:1d
 - E 5 The substance of Elohim's communication 22:2
 - G 1 The barriers to obedience 22:2a
 - H 1 {2} He said, "Take now your son,
 - H 2 your only son,
 - H 3 whom you love,

⁶⁶⁸ Gen. 21:33 - Everlasting God: Literally, "and he called there [at Beer Sheba] upon the name of [Yahweh](#), God of Eternity." Having finally secured a place of real estate he could call his own, [Abraham](#) believed that [Yahweh](#) would be with him throughout all eternity. He would eventually secure for [Abraham](#) all the land He had promised!

⁶⁶⁹ Gen. 21:34 - [Abraham](#) sojourned in the land of the Philistines for many days: We Christians also must hold loosely to our land, our home and to our possessions. We are pilgrims here upon this earth during our lifetimes. The time will come when we followers of the [Great King](#) will inherit the entire earth (Matt. 5:5).

⁶⁷⁰ Gen. 22:1 - God tested Abraham: "Tested" here is the [Piel Perfect](#) of *nâsâh* ([5254](#)), to test, try, or prove. It is legitimate for God to test, try, or prove a man's faith in and loyalty to Him, as here with Abraham, and, in 2 Chron. 32:31, with Hezekiah. God legitimately and repeatedly tested Israel (Ex. 15:25; 16:4; 20:20; Deut. 8:2; 13:3; Judges 2:22; 3:1, 4).

It was illegitimate for Israel to test, try, or prove God's loyalty or goodness (Ex. 17:2, 17; Num. 14:22; Deut. 6:16; Ps. 78:18, 41, 56; 95:9; 106:14).

Interestingly enough, God did not rebuke Gideon for testing or confirming God's will for him to serve as judge over Israel (Judges 6:39). David legitimately tested Saul's armor and sword, but rejected both (1 Sam. 17:39). The Queen of Sheba legitimately tested Solomon with questions (1 Kings 10:1; 2 Chron. 9:1). Solomon legitimately tested the worth of pleasure and wisdom (Ecc. 2:1; 7:23). Daniel legitimately asked to be tested concerning his requested diet (Dan. 1:12, 14).

- H 4 Isaac,
- G 2 The geography of obedience: and go to the land of Moriah,⁶⁷¹ 22:2b
- G 3 The cost of obedience: and offer him⁶⁷² there as a burnt offering⁶⁷³ on one of the mountains of which I will tell you.” 22:2c
- D 2 [Abraham's](#) obedient attempt to sacrifice Isaac 22:3-10
 - E 1 [Abraham's](#) prompt obedience 22:3
 - G 1 The time of his obedience: {3} So Abraham rose early in the morning⁶⁷⁴ 22:3a
 - G 2 The actions of his obedience 22:3b
 - H 1 and saddled his donkey,
 - H 2 and took two of his young men with him
 - H 3 and Isaac his son;
 - H 4 and he split wood for the burnt offering,
 - H 5 and arose
 - H 6 and went to the place of which God had told him.

⁶⁷¹ Gen. 22:2 - land of Moriah: Moriah, Hebrew, *Môrîyâh* (4179), which means “Chosen by Yahweh.” It appears in the entire OT only here and in 2 Chron. 3:1, where it is designated as the site of the threshing-floor of Ornan the Jebusite, which David had purchased from him to offer sacrifices to stay the destructive sword of the Angel of Yahweh. David purchased it as a place of offering, and it is the place upon which Solomon built the magnificent first Temple. So it is believed that the place where God had [Abraham](#) offer up his only son of promise, Isaac, was Mount Moriah, the very place God had chosen to serve as a temple. God offered up His only Son not far from there, on Mount Golgatha. Today, this most sacred holy site of Israel is defiled by the Islamic Dome of the Rock and the Al Aqsa Mosque. One day these Islamic structures will be torn down and the Great King will have His [Millennial](#) Temple built there (Ezek. 40:1-46:24).

⁶⁷² Gen. 22:2 - offer him: the [Hifil Imperative](#) of the verb '*âlâh* (5927), to ascend or cause to ascend. Abraham was to lift up his son Isaac on to the altar on which he was to be killed and burned as a burnt offering. This verb is closely related to the noun '*olah* (5930), almost universally translated by [NASB](#) as “burnt offering(s).”

⁶⁷³ Gen. 22:2 - burnt offering: The Hebrew is the noun '*olah* (5930), almost universally translated by [NASB](#) as “burnt offering(s).” The idea is that the sacrifice is consumed in flames. The flames and the smoke ascend upwards. This noun is closely related to the verb '*âlâh* (5927), to ascend or cause to ascend. Another term for “burnt offering” is “holocaust.” The reader will immediately recognize that term as the one used to identify the event in which six million Jewish people were exterminated by Hitler’s evil regime in World War II.

⁶⁷⁴ Gen. 22:3 - So Abraham rose early in the morning: Abraham’s prompt obedience, once again, is truly remarkable. See also Gen. 21:14.

- E 2 The sighting of the mountain 22:4
 - G 1 The time: {4} On the third day
 - G 2 The sighting: Abraham raised his eyes and saw the place from a distance.
- E 3 The plan 22:5
 - G 1 The addressees: {5} Abraham said to his young men,
 - G 2 Remain: “Stay here with the donkey,
 - G 3 Departure: and I and the lad will go over there;
 - G 4 Purpose: and we will worship ⁶⁷⁵
 - G 5 Return: and return to you.” ⁶⁷⁶
- E 4 The joint effort 22:6
 - G 1 The transportation of the wood: {6} Abraham took the wood of the burnt offering and laid it on Isaac his son, ⁶⁷⁷
 - G 2 The transportation of the implements of sacrifice: and he took in his hand the fire and the knife. ⁶⁷⁸
 - G 3 The journey of the twosome: So the two of them walked on together. ⁶⁷⁹
- E 5 The critical question: Where would the lamb come from? 22:7-8
 - G 1 The address of Isaac: {7} Isaac spoke to Abraham his father and said, “My father!”

⁶⁷⁵ Gen. 22:5 - and we will worship: [Abraham](#) framed the upcoming sacrifice of his son as an act of worship toward [Yahweh](#). Indeed it was!

⁶⁷⁶ Gen. 22:5: According to Hebrews 11:17-19 this statement was evidently an act of faith on the part of [Abraham](#) that God would resurrect the lad after he had killed him and burned him!

⁶⁷⁷ Gen. 22:6 - [Abraham](#) took the wood of the burnt offering and put it on Isaac his son: Just as [Abraham](#) laid the wood of the sacrifice on his only son of promise, so God would later lay the wooden implement of sacrifice, the cross, on His only Son!

⁶⁷⁸ Gen. 22:6 - the fire and the knife: [Abraham](#) was intending to slit his son’s throat while he lay on the wood on the altar, then light the wood and burn his son’s body with fire!

⁶⁷⁹ Gen. 22:6 - So the two of them walked on together: In the case of [Abraham](#) and Isaac, the son was at first oblivious of his father’s attention. In the case of God and Jesus, both were fully knowledgeable. Regardless, in both instances, the sacrifice was a joint effort. This heart-rending phrase, pregnant with meaning, is first uttered by [Moses](#) in Gen. 22:6, then repeated in Gen. 22:8.

- G 2 The response of [Abraham](#): And he said, “Here I am, my son.”
 - G 3 Isaac’s question: And he said, “Behold, the fire and the wood, but where is the lamb for the burnt offering?”
 - G 4 [Abraham’s](#) answer: {8} Abraham said, “God will provide for Himself the lamb ⁶⁸⁰ for the burnt offering, my son.”
 - G 5 The journey of the twosome: So the two of them walked on together. ⁶⁸¹
- E 6 The preparation 22:9
- G 1 Arrival: {9} Then they came to the place of which God had told him;
 - G 2 Construction: and Abraham built the altar there
 - G 3 Preparation: and arranged the wood,
 - G 4 Bondage: and bound his son Isaac and laid him on the altar,
 - G 5 Placement: on top of the wood.
- E 7 The sacrifice 22:10
- G 1 Stretch: {10} Abraham stretched out his hand ⁶⁸²
 - G 2 Grasp: and took the knife
 - G 3 Purpose: to slay his son.
- D 3 God's provision of a substitutionary sacrifice 22:11-14
- E 1 The shout! 22:11
- G 1 The speaker: {11} But the angel of the LORD called to him from heaven ⁶⁸³

⁶⁸⁰ Gen. 22:8 - God will provide for Himself the lamb: In the case of God and His Son, the lamb God provided was the Son (John 1:29, 36).

⁶⁸¹ Gen. 22:8 - So the two of them walked on together: This is the second occurrence of this phrase (see Gen. 22:6). It symbolizes the Father and the Son walking to Calvary together for the Sacrifice, where the Father would slay His son through the envy of the Jews and the knife of the Gentiles for the sins of both!

⁶⁸² Gen. 22:10 - stretched out his hand: These are slow motion, graphic details – freeze frames. Time stops during this agonizing description...

⁶⁸³ Gen. 22:11 - the angel of the LORD called to him from heaven: Literally, “And called to him – [messenger of Yahweh](#) – from the heavens, and he said, ‘Abraham! Abraham!’” The [Messenger \(Angel\) of Yahweh](#) can be none other than the [pre-incarnate Christ](#). He is identified as being a messenger of Yahweh, representing [Yahweh](#), but in

- G 2 The speech: and said, “Abraham, Abraham!”⁶⁸⁴
- G 3 The response: And he said, “Here I am.”
- E 2 The command! 22:12
- G 1 {12} He said, “Do not stretch out your hand against the lad,
G 2 and do nothing to him;
- E 3 The commendation: for now I know that you fear God,⁶⁸⁵
- E 4 The reason for the commendation: since you have not withheld your son, your only son, from Me.”⁶⁸⁶
- E 5 The substitute 22:13
- G 1 Sighting: {13} Then Abraham raised his eyes and looked,
G 2 A ram: and behold, behind *him* a ram caught in the thicket by his horns;
G 3 Capture: and Abraham went and took the ram⁶⁸⁷
G 4 Offering: and offered him up for a burnt offering⁶⁸⁸

the next breath (Gen. 22:12) He identifies Himself as being [Yahweh](#)! See the note there. In paintings of this event, the angel is seen appearing just above [Abraham](#) or on his side almost physically restraining him. The Biblical text states that the messenger called “from the heavens.” There is no evidence that any angel appeared in [Abraham’s](#) presence. [Abraham](#) apparently heard the angel, but never saw him, unlike the situation described in Genesis 18. See additional information on the [Messenger of Yahweh](#).

⁶⁸⁴ Gen. 22:11 - Abraham, Abraham!: One can hear the tone of urgency in the repetition!

⁶⁸⁵ Gen. 22:12 - fear God: Literally, the translation runs something like this: “Because I know that a fearer of Elohim you are – you have not withheld from me your son, your only one!” This Elohim who so commended [Abraham](#) for not withholding his only son would some day actually go through with the deed, not withholding His only Son from death, that He might bring many sons to glory!” (Heb. 2:10.)

⁶⁸⁶ Gen. 22:12 - since you have not withheld your son, your only son, from Me: Literally, “you have not withheld your son, your only one, from Me.” Here, the [Messenger of Yahweh](#) identifies Himself as God. One is reminded of the following statements about God and Jesus, literal translations by the author from the Greek text: John 1:14 “...glory as of only-born from Father ...”; John 3:16 “...so that the Son, the only-born He gave ...”; John 3:18 “...he has not believed into the name of the only-born Son of the God.” 1 John 4:9 “...that the Son of Him, the only-born, the God sent into the world.” For further reflection, see the author’s [Word Study on “Only-Born” – monogenēs \(3439\)](#), “only-born.” God did not withhold from us His “only-born” Son, Jesus! This demonstrated His great love for us humans (John 3:16; 1 John 4:9).

⁶⁸⁷ Gen. 22:13 - ram: The Hebrew is *'ayil* ([352](#)), ram, a male sheep. Jesus would later be the Lamb of God, who takes away the sin of the world (John 1:29, 36)!

⁶⁸⁸ Gen. 22:13 - burnt offering: Again, the word is *'ôlâh* ([5930](#)), the same term used in Gen. 8:20; 22:2, 3, 6, 7, 8. It is almost universally translated “burnt offering” in the [NASB](#). See the footnote about “burnt offering” at Gen. 22:2.

- G 5 Substitution: in the place of his son.⁶⁸⁹
- E 6 The memorial 22:14
 - G 1 Name: {14} Abraham called the name of that place The LORD Will Provide,⁶⁹⁰
 - G 2 Explanation: as it is said to this day, “In the mount of the LORD it will be provided.”⁶⁹¹
- D 4 God's oath of multiplied *blessing* of [Abraham](#) and his seed 22:15-19 (cf. Hebrews 6:13-18)
 - E 1 The oath behind the promise 22:15-16
 - G 1 The identity of the speaker: {15} Then the angel of the LORD called to Abraham a second time from heaven, 22:15
 - G 2 The nature of the communication – an oath 22:16
 - H 1 The guarantor of the oath – [Yahweh](#) Himself: {16} and said, “By Myself I have sworn, declares the LORD,
 - H 2 The reason for the oath: because you have done this thing and have not withheld your son, your only son,
 - G 3 The substance of the promise 22:17-18
 - G 4 Intensity of blessing: {17} indeed I will greatly bless you,⁶⁹² 22:17a
 - G 5 Increase of descendants: and I will greatly multiply your seed 22:17b
 - H 1 as the stars of the heavens

⁶⁸⁹ Gen. 22:13 - in the place of his son: This substitute offering clearly illustrates the nature of [substitutionary atonement](#). In the case of Isaac, the [messenger of Yahweh](#) pointed out to [Abraham](#) a substitutionary animal sacrifice in the stead of his son Isaac. In the case of Jesus, some 2,000 years later, God provided no substitute in the place of His only begotten Son. He sacrificed His own Son as an offering, not in worshiping Himself, but in providing someone worthy as a [substitutionary atonement](#) for the sins of all mankind (John 1:29, 36; Rom. 3:24-25; 1 John 2:2; 4:10)! This [substitutionary atonement](#) allows all who come to God through faith in Jesus to worship Him. The symbolism in Gen. 22:13 is immense and profound!

⁶⁹⁰ Gen. 22:14 - The LORD Will Provide: Yahweh (3068) will provide – [Qal Imperfect](#) of *râ'âh* (7200), meaning, “see,” “observe,” “give attention to,” “perceive.”

⁶⁹¹ Gen. 22:14 - in the mount of the LORD it will be provided: Note the prophecy! “God will provide on the Mountain of Calvary!”

⁶⁹² Gen. 22:17 - Indeed, I will greatly bless you: Literally, “blessing, I will bless you.”

- H 2 and as the sand which is on the seashore;
- G 6 Supremacy of descendants: and your seed shall possess the gate of their enemies.⁶⁹³ 22:17c
- G 7 Blessing through descendants: {18} “In your seed all the nations of the earth shall be blessed, 22:18a
- G 8 Reason for blessing: because you have obeyed My voice.” 22:18b
- E 2 The return after the promise 22:19
 - G 1 Return: {19} So Abraham returned to his young men,
 - G 2 Journey: and they arose and went together to Beersheba;
 - G 3 Dwelling: and Abraham lived at Beersheba.”
- C 14 [Abraham's](#) acquisition of a God-fearing wife for Isaac, spurred by word of Nahor's offspring and by Sarah's death 22:20 - 24:67
 - D 1 The report to [Abraham](#) of his brother Nahor's descendants 22:20-24
 - E 1 Nahor's descendants by his wife Milcah 23:20-23
 - G 1 The sons of Nahor by his wife Milcah:
 - H 1 Report: {20} Now it came about after these things, that it was told Abraham, saying,
 - H 2 Substance: "Behold, Milcah also has borne children to your brother Nahor: [22:20b] 22:20b-22
 - J 1 {21} Uz his firstborn 22:21
 - J 2 and Buz his brother
 - J 3 and Kemuel the father of Aram
 - J 4 {22} and Chesed 22:22
 - J 5 and Hazo

⁶⁹³ Gen. 22:17 - your seed shall possess the gate of their enemies: From time to time that has been true, as [Israel](#) has obeyed God, led by faithful leaders. It was, for example, true during the reign of David and the early reign of Solomon. At other times, however, the reverse has been true. The book of Lamentations and Psalm 74 and Psalm 79 sorrowfully rehearse the judgment of God. The priest Zacharias, filled with the Holy Spirit, prophesied of this future time (Luke 1:67-75). Ultimately this prediction by the [angel of Yahweh](#) will come true when [Messiah](#) returns, conquers all His enemies, and rules the nations with a rod of iron (Psalm 2; Zech. 14; Rev. 19:11-21; 20:1-6). It will also be pre-eminently true when [Messiah](#) and God reign as co-regents from [New Jerusalem](#) on [New Earth](#) during the [Eternal Kingdom](#) (Rev. 21-22).

J 6 and Pildash

J 7 and Jidlaph

J 8 and Bethuel."

G 2 Bethuel's begetting of Rebekah: {23} Bethuel became the father of Rebekah; ⁶⁹⁴ 22:23a

G 3 The summary of Milcah and Nahor's children: these eight Milcah bore to Nahor, Abraham's brother. 22:23b

E 2 Nahor's sons by his concubine Reumah: {24} His concubine, ⁶⁹⁵ whose name was Reumah, also bore 22:24

G 1 Tebah

G 2 and Gaham

G 3 and Tahash

G 4 and Maacah. 23:24

D 2 The death of Sarah ⁶⁹⁶ 23

E 1 The details of Sarah's death 23:1-2

G 1 Sarah's life-span: {1} Now Sarah lived one hundred and twenty-seven years; ⁶⁹⁷ *these were* the years of the life of Sarah.

⁶⁹⁴ Gen. 22:23 - Rebekah: The primary purpose of [Moses'](#) insertion of this genealogical information in the record was to prepare the reader for the upcoming urgent quest of [Abraham](#) for a bride for his son Isaac, recorded in Genesis 24. Rebekah was the daughter of Bethuel and his proper wife, Milcah (Gen. 22:23), not Bethuel's concubine, Reumah (Gen. 22:24).

⁶⁹⁵ Gen. 22:24 - concubine: *pîylégesh* (6370). According to [John Gill](#), a concubine was "Not an harlot, but a secondary wife, who was under the proper and lawful wife, and a sort of a head servant in the family, and chiefly kept for the procreation of children; which was not thought either unlawful or dishonourable in those times such as was Hagar in Abraham's family." In Genesis the term "concubine" is used in Gen. 22:24; 25:6; 35:22; 36:12. Sadly, even the great King David had at least ten concubines (2 Sam. 25:16), whom Absalom defiled (2 Sam. 16:21, 22). Tragically, Solomon had 700 wives and 300 concubines. His wives turned his heart away from God (1 Kings 11:3).

⁶⁹⁶ Gen. 23 Title - The death of Sarah: Though this entire chapter records the death and disposition of the body of Sarah, there appears to be a greater theme – land. This chapter illustrates the fact that Abraham was truly a nomad and had no place even to bury his beloved wife. It also records the fact that Abraham did, indeed, finally own a small tract of land. It was a testament to Abraham that he did not take his wife's body back to Ur of the Chaldees and bury her there. He was irrevocably committed to the land God had promised even. Even though it would take four hundred years for his descendants to possess this land, possess it they would. Abraham believed that, and so he buried his wife here. See Thomas Constable's discussion, [Notes on Genesis, 2019](#).

⁶⁹⁷ Gen. 23:1 - one hundred and twenty-seven years: Sarah was 127 when she died (Gen. 23:1). Isaac was 37 when she died. [Abraham](#) died at the age of 175 (Gen. 25:8), 38 years after the death of Sarah (Thomas Constable, [Notes on Genesis, 2019](#), comment at Gen. 23:1). According to my calculations, and using [Abraham](#) as a baseline, Sarai was born in 2046 BC, presumably in Ur of the Chaldees. She died in 1919 BC in Kiriath-Arba (Hebron),

23:1

- G 2 The place of Sarah's death: {2} Sarah died in Kiriath-arba⁶⁹⁸ (that is, Hebron)⁶⁹⁹ in the land of Canaan; 23:2a
- G 3 [Abraham's](#) mourning: and Abraham went in to mourn for Sarah and to weep for her. 23:2b
- E 2 [Abraham's](#) ironic purchase of a burial site for Sarah in the land of [Canaan](#) 23:3-18.
 - G 1 The permission for burial 23:3-6
 - H 1 [Abraham's](#) request to the sons of Heth for permission to bury Sarah in their land 23:3-4
 - J 1 The audience of [Abraham](#): {3} Then Abraham rose from before his dead, and spoke to the sons of Heth,⁷⁰⁰ saying, 23:3
 - J 2 The plaintive status of [Abraham](#): {4} "I am a stranger and a sojourner among you; 23:4a
 - J 3 The request of [Abraham](#): give me a burial site among you that I may bury my dead out of my sight." 23:4b
 - H 2 The sons of Heth grant [Abraham](#) permission 23:5-6
 - J 1 The identity of the speakers: {5} The sons of Heth answered Abraham, saying to him, 23:5

Canaan (Gen. 23:1-2). Her actual burial site, which [Abraham](#) purchased for 400 shekels of silver (Gen. 23:26) was in the cave of the field at Machpelah facing Mamre (i.e., Hebron), in the land of Canaan (Gen. 23:19).

⁶⁹⁸ Gen. 23:2 - Kiriath-arba: Hebrew, *qiryath hâ'arba'* (7153) = "city of Arba," an early name of the city which, after the conquest, was called Hebron. Arba was the greatest man among the Anakim (Josh. 14:15). "Greatest" here is to be understood as "largest." The Anakim (6062) were giants. See a map of [Kiriath-arba](#). Sadly, [Hebron](#), the city of the land [Abraham](#) purchased, and which the [Sons of Israel](#) conquered, is now controlled by the spuriously so-called "[Palestinians](#)."

⁶⁹⁹ Gen. 23:2 - Hebron: Hebrew, *chebrôn* (2275), meaning "association," a city in south Judah approximately 20 miles south of Jerusalem and 20 miles north of Beersheba. The was the city given to Caleb at the conquest (Josh. 14:13; Judges 1:20). Hebron was the city from which David reigned over Judah for seven years (2 Sam. 2:1, 3, 11). See the [map of Hebron](#).

⁷⁰⁰ Gen. 23:3 - sons of Heth: According to Constable ([Notes on Genesis, 2019](#), quoting [Bryant G. Wood](#), "These "Hittites" ("sons of Heth" or "Hethites") were residents of Canaan, not members of the mighty Hittite Empire, that later flourished north of the Promised Land, in modern Turkey and Syria, ancient Anatolia." My question is this: Who is to say that the later mighty Hittite Empire was not composed from some of the "Sons of Heth"?)

"Heth," in Hebrew is *Chêth* (2845), which means "terror." He was a son of Canaan and the progenitor of the Hittites.

- J 2 The respect of the speakers: {6} "Hear us, my lord, you are a mighty prince among us; 23:6a
- J 3 The granting of permission: bury your dead in the choicest of our graves;⁷⁰¹ 23:6b
- J 4 The unlimited cooperation: none of us will refuse you his grave for burying your dead." 23:6c
- G 2 The site for burial 23:7-11
- H 1 [Abraham's](#) request to purchase the cave of Machpelah, owned by Ephron son of Zohar 23:7-9
- J 1 The deference of [Abraham](#): {7} So Abraham rose and bowed to the people of the land, the sons of Heth. 23:7
- J 2 The selection of [Abraham](#): {8} And he spoke with them, saying, "If it is your wish *for me* to bury my dead out of my sight, hear me, and approach Ephron the son of Zohar for me, 23:8
- J 3 The object of his request – the cave of Machpelah: {9} that he may give me the cave of Machpelah⁷⁰² which he owns, which is at the end of his field; 23:9a
- J 4 The terms of his request – full price: for the full price let him give it to me in your presence for a burial site." 23:9b
- H 2 Ephron grants permission to [Abraham](#) at no charge 23:10-11
- J 1 The situation of Ephron – legally present: {10} Now Ephron was sitting among the sons of Heth; and Ephron the Hittite⁷⁰³ answered Abraham in the

⁷⁰¹ Gen. 23:6 - bury your dead in the choicest of our graves: This warm response from the sons of Heth exhibited their respect for Abraham. Abraham then asked for the cave of Machpelah, owned by Ephron, son of Zohar (Gen. 23:8-9).

⁷⁰² Gen. 23:9 - cave of Machpelah: The cave of [Machpelah](#) is before, or east, of Hebron (Gen. 25:9), another name for Mamre (Gen. 23:19). [Machpelah](#), Hebrew, *Makpêlâh* (4375) means "double" or "portion." [Abraham](#) buried Sarah there (Gen. 23:19). Later, [Abraham](#) himself was buried in the cave (Gen. 25:9). So also were Isaac, Rebekah, Leah, and Jacob (Gen. 49:29-32; 50:12-13). While the Crusaders controlled the tomb, Jews were allowed to visit the tomb for a fee to the keeper. In 1163 a rabbi wrote that the [six sepulchres](#) could be seen. It is now impossible to gain access to the cave.

⁷⁰³ Gen. 23:10 - Hittite: Hebrew, *Chittîy* (2850). [Abraham's](#) descendants, the [Sons of Israel](#), would later conquer the Hittites under the leadership of Joshua (Exod. 23:23; Josh. 11:1-9; 12:1-8).

hearing of the sons of Heth; *even* of all who went in at the gate of his city, saying, 23:10

J 2 The counter-offer of Ephron – the entire field along with its cave: {11} "No, my lord, hear me; I give you the field,⁷⁰⁴ and I give you the cave that is in it. In the presence of the sons of my people I give it to you; bury your dead." 23:11

G 3 The price of burial 23:12-16

H 1 [Abraham's](#) offer to buy the entire field 23:12-13

J 1 His legally binding offer: {12} And Abraham bowed before the people of the land. 23:12

J 2 His insistence on buying the field: {13} He spoke to Ephron in the hearing of the people of the land, saying, "If you will only please listen to me; I will give the price of the field, accept *it* from me that I may bury my dead there." 23:13

H 2 Ephron's show of reluctance in naming the price of four hundred shekels of silver 23:14-15

J 1 The identity of the speaker: {14} Then Ephron answered Abraham, saying to him, 23:14

J 2 His protest: {15} "My lord, listen to me; 23:15a

J 3 His setting a price: a piece of land worth four hundred shekels of silver,⁷⁰⁵ 23:15b

J 4 His pretense of indifference: what is that between me and you? 23:15c

J 5 His granting of permission: So bury your dead." 23:15d

H 3 [Abraham's](#) payment of 400 shekels of silver for the burial

⁷⁰⁴ Gen. 23:11 - I give you the field: Why did Ephron bargain for the whole field rather than just the cave? According to Constable, [Notes on Genesis, 2019](#),

Hittite law specified that when a landowner sold only part of his property to someone else, the original owner had to continue to pay all taxes on the land and remained obligated to the state for military service. However, if he sold the entire tract, the new owner became responsible (cf. 1 Chron. 21:24).[842] Consequently, Ephron held out for the entire tract, knowing that Abraham needed to make his purchase quickly so he could bury Sarah.[843]

⁷⁰⁵ Gen. 23:15 - four hundred shekels of silver: This was an [exorbitant price](#), it seems. Nevertheless, [Abraham](#) was prepared to pay it without bargaining.

site 23:16

J 1 [Abraham's](#) attention: {16} Abraham listened to Ephron;

J 2 [Abraham's](#) payment: and Abraham weighed out for Ephron the silver which he had named in the hearing of the sons of Heth, four hundred shekels of silver,

J 3 [Abraham's](#) standard: commercial standard.

G 4 The legalization of the burial 23:17-18

H 1 The legal description of the land 23:17a

J 1 The seller: {17} So Ephron's

J 2 The real estate: field,

J 3 The location: which was in Machpelah, which faced Mamre,⁷⁰⁶

H 2 The inclusions 23:17b

J 1 the field

J 2 and cave which was in it,

J 3 and all the trees which were in the field, that were within all the confines of its border,

H 3 The legal description of the transaction: were deeded over 23:17c

H 4 The purchaser: {18} to Abraham for a possession 23:18a

H 5 The witnesses 23:18b

J 1 Their identity: in the presence of the sons of Heth,

J 2 Their legal standing: before all who went in at the gate of his city.

E 3 The burial of Sarah 23:19-20

⁷⁰⁶ Gen. 23:17 - in Machpelah, which faced Mamre: Literally, "in Machpelah, which was to the face of Mamre." "To the face of" is *lipenêy*, a prefixed lamedh followed by the plural of *paneh* (6440), which always appears in the plural, *pânîym*. BDB (Bibloi 8.0) state, with some uncertainty, that the phrase here could mean, "to the East of." Indeed, [Machpelah](#) is to the east of Hebron, or Mamre (Gen. 23:19).

- G 1 [Abraham's](#) burial of Sarah: {19} After this, Abraham buried Sarah his wife ⁷⁰⁷ 23:19a
- G 2 The site of the burial 23:19b
- H 1 in the cave
- H 2 of the field
- H 3 at Machpelah
- H 4 facing Mamre (that is, Hebron) ⁷⁰⁸
- H 5 in the land of Canaan.
- G 3 The summary statement of the event: {20} So the field and the cave that is in it, were deeded over to Abraham for a burial site by the sons of Heth. ⁷⁰⁹ 23:20
- D 3 *Blessed* [Abraham's](#) acquisition of a godly wife for Isaac 24
- E 1 *Blessed* [Abraham's](#) charging of his slave to acquire a wife for Isaac from among [Abraham's](#) relatives 24:1-9
- G 1 [Abraham's](#) condition 24:1
- H 1 Aged: {1} Now Abraham was old, advanced in age;
- H 2 Blessed by [Yahweh](#): and the LORD had blessed Abraham in every way. ⁷¹⁰
- G 2 [Abraham's](#) selection of a slave 24:2a

⁷⁰⁷ Gen. 23:19 - Abraham buried Sarah his wife: "The very fact that Abraham buried Sarah in the land of Canaan is proof of his unwavering faith. Knowing that his descendants would have to endure four hundred years of bitter bondage in a foreign country (15:13), he looked beyond that to the ultimate fulfillment of God's promises." [850] (Thomas Constable, *Notes on Genesis 2019*, quoting John J. Davis, *Paradise to Prison*, p. 223.)

[Constable](#) aptly concludes, "The time of death should be the time when the godly proclaim their faith most loudly, in view of their hope in God's promises."

⁷⁰⁸ Gen. 23:19 - facing Mamre (that is, Hebron): Demonstrating that [Mamre](#) and [Hebron](#) are one and the same, certainly in the same vicinity.

⁷⁰⁹ Gen. 23:20 - deeded over to [Abraham](#) for a burial site by the sons of Heth: Some observations are in order here: (1) Though God had promised [Abraham](#) all the land of [Canaan](#) for an eternal possession, he owned nothing. He had assured himself the water rights to the well at Beer Sheba, but he owned nothing. Here, he had to buy land to bury his dead wife Sarah's body! (2) Faith must be prepared to trust God even when life's goals are preceded by death. (3) Faith must understand that this life is not all there is! (4) Faith always believes the next life is where the greatest rewards are to be found! (5) Sometimes our vision of how God's promises will be fulfilled must be buried.

⁷¹⁰ Gen. 24:1 - the LORD had blessed Abraham in every way: This was certainly in fulfillment of Yahweh's promise in Gen. 12:2, "And I will bless you."

H 1 The oldest in his house: {2} Abraham said to his servant, the oldest of his household

H 2 The one ruling over everything: who had charge of all that he owned,

G 3 The solemnity of the mission 24:2b-3a

H 1 Hand under thigh: "Please place your hand under my thigh,"⁷¹¹ 24:2b

H 2 The oath: {3} and I will make you swear by the LORD, the God of heaven and the God of earth, 24:3a

G 4 The objective of the mission 24:3b-4

H 1 Negative: that you shall not take a wife for my son from the daughters of the Canaanites, among whom I live, 24:3b

H 2 {4} but you will go to my country and to my relatives, and take a wife for my son Isaac."⁷¹² 24:4

G 5 The clarification of the slave 24:5

H 1 Hypothetical refusal: {5} The servant said to him,

⁷¹¹ Gen. 24:2 - place your hand under my thigh: "'Putting a hand under another's thigh was a solemn way of signifying that if the oath were violated, the children, yet unborn, would avenge the act of disloyalty.'"[856] (Thomas Constable, *Notes on Genesis, 2019*, quoting Kyle M. Yates, "Genesis" in the *Wycliffe Bible Commentary*, p. 28).

⁷¹² Gen. 24:3 - take a wife for my son Isaac: "Those who do the will of God prayerfully and obediently, are led by God." (Prov. 3:5,6) (*TBKC*, p.68). Here are some principles:

A. Christian parents should plan ahead for their children's marriages.

1. Christian parents should be concerned that their children marry a committed Christian.
2. Christian parents should help provide opportunity for their children to marry a committed Christian.
3. Christian parents may need to be prepared to spend energy and expense to provide a pool of committed Christians for their children to marry.
4. Christian parents must believe that God is concerned about whom their children marry, and must believe that He will provide a suitable partner. (Otherwise, why pray?)

B. Practical Suggestions:

1. Pray for your children and their future partners.
2. Believe that God has your children's best in mind and that He is going to do something positive about your children's marriage partners.
3. Spend time discussing with your children the importance of marrying a committed Christian.
4. Exert some influence over your children's friends.
5. Have social contact with other committed Christian families your age.
6. Arrange matters so your children are able to spend time with other committed Christian young people. (They may never marry, but they are setting standards in their own minds of how a committed Christian ought and ought not to act. Their friends become part of that standard.)
7. One of the factors you may need to consider when selecting a church is the number of families the same age as yours.
8. Be sure to help your children take advantage of gatherings of other Christian young people.
 - a. Christian camps.
 - b. Christian conferences
 - c. Christian schools.

“Suppose the woman is not willing to follow me to this land;

H 2 Consequent return? should I take your son back to the land from where you came?”

G 6 [Abraham's](#) clear response: 24:6-8

H 1 His forbidding Isaac to leave [Canaan](#): {6} Then Abraham said to him, “Beware that you do not take my son back there! 24:6

H 2 His assurance 24:7

J 1 His identification of God: {7} “The LORD, the God of heaven,

J 2 The action of God: who took me from my father’s house and from the land of my birth,

J 3 The communication of God: and who spoke to me

J 4 The oath of God: and who swore to me, saying,

J 5 The bequeathal of God: ‘To your descendants I will give this land,’

J 6 The provision of God: He will send His angel before you,⁷¹³

J 7 The conviction of [Abraham](#): and you will take a wife for my son from there.

H 3 His release from obligation:

J 1 Unwillingness: {8} “But if the woman is not willing to follow you,

J 2 Freedom from obligation: then you will be free from this my oath;

H 4 Repeat prohibition: only do not take my son back there.”⁷¹⁴ 24:8

⁷¹³ Gen. 24:7 - He will send His angel before you: The word “angel” is the Hebrew *mal’âk* (4397), “messenger.” [Abraham](#) had encountered this messenger before (Gen. 22:11, 15). He was, I believe the [Angel of Yahweh](#), the [pre-incarnate Christ](#). [Abraham](#) was confident this Messenger would accompany his trusted slave to the land of Syria to obtain a wife for Isaac from among his relatives, who were also fearers of Yahweh.

⁷¹⁴ Gen. 24:8 - only do not take my son back there: Abraham was irrevocably committed to the land of Canaan, the land God had promised to him and to his seed (descendants).

- G 7 The slave's oath of obedience: {9} So the servant placed his hand under the thigh of Abraham his master, and swore to him concerning this matter. 24:9
- E 2 The slave's request of [Yahweh](#) for guidance through a predetermined sign 24:10-14
- G 1 The slave's trip 24:10
- H 1 His organization: {10} Then the servant took ten camels from the camels of his master,
- H 2 His bargaining power: and set out with a variety of good things of his master's in his hand;
- H 3 His arrival at the city of Abraham's brother Nahor, located in Mesopotamia: and he arose and went to Mesopotamia,⁷¹⁵ to the city of Nahor.⁷¹⁶
- G 2 The slave's timing: {11} He made the camels kneel down outside the city by the well of water at evening time, the time when women go out to draw water. 24:11
- G 3 The slave's prayer 24:12-14
- H 1 General request 24:12
- J 1 Grant me success: {12} He said, "O LORD, the God of my master Abraham, please grant me success today,
- J 2 Show loyal love to my master [Abraham](#): and show lovingkindness to my master Abraham.
- H 2 The condition 24:13-14
- J 1 Women are coming: {13} "Behold, I am standing by the spring, and the daughters of the men of the city are coming out to draw water; 24:13
- J 2 His test: {14} now may it be that the girl to whom I say, 'Please let down your jar so that I may drink,' and who answers, 'Drink, and I will water your camels also'—*may she be the one* whom You have

⁷¹⁵ Gen. 24:10 - Mesopotamia: This single word in English translates two in Hebrew, *'āram nahārayim* ([763](#)), which means, "Aram of the two rivers." Aram refers to Syria. The "two rivers" refers to the Tigris and Euphrates. See the map of [Mesopotamia](#), a name derived from the [LXX](#).

⁷¹⁶ Gen. 24:10 - to the city of Nahor: Nahor, Hebrew *Nāchôr* ([5152](#)), refers, in this instance, to the son of Terah and brother of [Abraham](#) (Gen. 11:26; 24:15, 24).

appointed for Your servant Isaac; 24:14a

H 3 His conclusion: and by this I will know that You have shown lovingkindness to my master.”⁷¹⁷ 24:14b

E 3 Rebekah's fulfillment of the sign 24:15-27

G 1 The providential⁷¹⁸ arrival of Rebekah 24:15-16

H 1 The time of her arrival: {15} Before he had finished speaking, 24:15a

H 2 Her qualifying family: behold, Rebekah who was born to Bethuel the son of Milcah, the wife of Abraham's brother Nahor, 24:15b

H 3 Her qualifying asset: came out with her jar on her shoulder. 24:15c

H 4 Her bonus asset: {16} The girl was very beautiful, 24:16a

H 5 Her additional qualifying asset 24:16b

J 1 a virgin,

J 2 and no man had had relations with her;

H 6 Her activity: and she went down to the spring and filled her jar and came up. 24:16c

G 2 The slave sets the test in motion 24:17-18

⁷¹⁷ Gen. 24:14 - By this I will know that you have shown lovingkindness to my master: “Lovingkindness” is *chêséd* (2617), which [Bruce Waltke](#), my Hebrew professor, translated, “loyal love.” [Abraham's](#) trusted slave, himself a strong believer in Yahweh, had set up a possible, yet highly improbable sign for God to fulfill. It would not be unlikely that a timid young woman would simply ignore his request for a drink at the well. But even if she were self-confident enough to give him a drink, what young woman would possibly volunteer to draw water for ten thirsty camels (Gen. 24:10)?

By way of application, what does a man look for in a wife? She must be:

1. A believer (That's why [Abraham](#) sent the slave to [Abraham's](#) relatives.)
2. Outgoing (Willing to talk with a strange man)
3. Flexible (Willing to give water to a strange man.)
4. Initiative-taking (Able to observe what else needs to be done and take steps to do it.)
5. Helpful (Be willing to help someone else.)
6. Generous (Willing to volunteer to water a stranger's camels.)
7. Self-Sacrificial (Willing to draw water for ten thirsty camels (Gen. 24:10) at the end of a long trip!)

⁷¹⁸ Gen. 24:15-16 title - providential: I use the word [providential](#) deliberately. Every one of the trusted slave's requirements were met. (1) She was a young woman. (2) She gave water to the slave at his request. (3) She also drew water for his ten thirsty camels. (4) She was a virgin (he had not requested this, but she indeed was). (5) She was a relative of [Abraham](#)! (6) To top it all off, and the slave had not requested this, she was beautiful! This had to be the hand of God working! So often the hand of God is at work behind the scenes, and we marvel at Him! Sometimes, I suspect, we are completely oblivious of God's hand at work. Shame on us!

H 1 His request for a drink: {17} Then the servant ran to meet her, and said, "Please let me drink a little water from your jar." 24:17

H 2 Her prompt compliance: {18} She said, "Drink, my lord"; and she quickly lowered her jar to her hand, and gave him a drink. 24:18

G 3 Rebekah's watering of the camels 24:19-21

H 1 Her volunteering: {19} Now when she had finished giving him a drink, she said, "I will draw also for your camels until they have finished drinking." ⁷¹⁹ 24:19

H 2 Her watering all his camels: {20} So she quickly emptied her jar into the trough, and ran back to the well to draw, and she drew for all his camels. ⁷²⁰ 24:20

H 3 The slave's pondering whether [Yahweh](#) had given him success! {21} Meanwhile, the man was gazing at her in silence, to know whether the LORD had made his journey successful or not. 24:21

G 4 The slave's request for lodging 24:22-25

H 1 His promotional gifts of jewelry: {22} When the camels had finished drinking, the man took a gold ring⁷²¹ weighing a half-shekel and two bracelets for her wrists weighing ten shekels in gold, 24:22

H 2 His query about her father: {23} and said, "Whose daughter are you? 24:23a

H 3 His request for lodging at her father's home: Please tell me, is there room for us to lodge in your father's house?"

⁷¹⁹ Gen. 24:19 - until they have finished drinking: This young woman was not going to leave a strenuous, time-consuming job half done! And she volunteered! A remarkable woman, indeed!

⁷²⁰ Gen. 24:20 - she drew for all his camels: This is nothing short of amazing! If the clay pot she were carrying held 5 gallons of water, each trip down to the well she would be shouldering perhaps a minimum of 45 pounds. A thirsty camel can drink 30 gallons of water in 15 minutes. Ten thirsty camels might drink 300 gallons of water, which might mean 50 or 60 trips down to the well! Rebekah was an amazing answer to prayer!

⁷²¹ Gen. 24:22 - gold ring...bracelets: These promotional gifts served both as reward (for a job well done) and an incentive or deposit for more gifts to come. These gifts to Rebekah served:

1. To reward or "tip" her for a job well done.
2. To inform Rebekah and her parents that he had special designs upon her.
3. To demonstrate the financial soundness of his master.
4. To serve as tangible evidence of his ability to pay a handsome dowry.
5. To gain the good will of the parents and the girl. (It worked! – Gen. 24:30) "What could be more exciting than seeing someone from a long-lost relative's home? Answer = Seeing someone from a *wealthy* long-lost relative's home!"

24:23b

H 4 Rebekah's reply 24:24-25

J 1 Her family root: {24} She said to him, “I am the daughter of Bethuel, the son of Milcah, whom she bore to Nahor.”⁷²² 24:24

J 2 Her assurance of lodging: {25} Again she said to him, “We have plenty of both straw and feed, and room to lodge in.” 24:25

G 5 The slave's worship 24:26-27

H 1 His bowing and worshiping of [Yahweh](#): {26} Then the man bowed low and worshiped the LORD. 24:26

H 2 His blessing of [Yahweh](#) 24:27

J 1 His statement of blessing: {27} He said, “Blessed be the LORD, the God of my master Abraham,⁷²³

J 2 For His loyal love: who has not forsaken His lovingkindness⁷²⁴ and His truth toward my master;

J 3 For His guidance: as for me, the LORD has guided me in the way to the house of my master’s brothers.”

E 4 The slave's presentation of his mission to Bethuel and Laban on behalf of his *blessed* master [Abraham](#) 24:28-49

G 1 The hospitality offered the slave 24:28-33

H 1 The report of the girl: {28} Then the girl ran and told her mother’s household about these things. 24:28

H 2 The favorable impression of Laban 24:29-30

J 1 The introduction of Laban: {29} Now Rebekah had a brother whose name was Laban; 24:29a

⁷²² Gen. 24:24 - Bethuel ... Milcah ... Nahor: God had unerringly placed in precise proximity to [Abraham’s](#) slave just exactly the right young woman from just exactly the right family! Praise the Lord!

⁷²³ Gen. 24:27 - Blessed be the LORD: This was a devout servant of God and slave of his master. He was ecstatic that God had so clearly answered his prayer for guidance!

⁷²⁴ Gen. 24:27 - lovingkindness: Hebrew, *chêséd* (2617), meaning “loyal love.” This term is used frequently in Genesis (11X), but most frequently in the Psalter (129X).

- J 2 The alacrity of Laban: and Laban ran ⁷²⁵ outside to the man at the spring. 24:29b
- J 3 The observation of Laban: {30} When he saw the ring and the bracelets on his sister's wrists, 24:30a
- J 4 The hearing of Laban: and when he heard the words of Rebekah his sister, saying, "This is what the man said to me," 24:30b
- J 5 The approach of Laban: he went to the man; and behold, he was standing by the camels at the spring. 24:30c
- H 3 The invitation of Laban 24:31
- J 1 His designation of the servant: {31} ⁷²⁵ And he said, "Come in, blessed of the LORD!" ⁷²⁶
- J 2 His invitation: Why do you stand outside since I have prepared the house, and a place for the camels?" 24:31
- H 4 Laban's provision for beast and man 24:32
- J 1 Entry: {32} So the man entered the house.
- J 2 Provision for camels: Then Laban unloaded the camels, and he gave straw and feed to the camels,

⁷²⁵ Gen. 24:29 - Laban ran: The Hebrew verb is *rûts* (7323). I am told it is not common for men to run in that culture. Laban journeyed to the spring with alacrity! My thinking is that Laban was captivated by wealth. When he saw his young sister's jewelry, he was very favorably impressed! Of course, that is exactly what Abraham's slave was hoping to accomplish!

⁷²⁶ Gen. 24:31 - blessed of the LORD: Several observations about Laban are in order:

(1) He was a man of some spiritual discernment. He was acquainted with [Yahweh](#), the God who had called [Abraham](#). Whether he himself was fully a believer in [Yahweh](#) is open to question, but at least he had a positive perception of [Yahweh](#). As the narrative will later reveal, Laban was a polytheistic syncretist – while he presumably worshiped [Yahweh](#), he also possessed other gods which he presumably worshiped (Gen. 31:19, 30-35).

(2) Laban understood the basic principle that [Yahweh](#) had promised to bless [Abraham](#) and his progeny (Gen. 12:1-3). [Abraham](#) had undoubtedly informed his own brother Nahor of [Yahweh's](#) call, and Nahor had passed this information on to his son Bethuel, who likewise had informed his own children, who included both Laban and Rebekah (Gen. 22:20-23; 24:15, 29). Today's Christians who have been deceived by the "[health and wealth gospel](#)" can identify with Laban's line of reasoning. Having observed all the camels (think SUV's or trucks today) and the servants (think employees today) and the wealth bestowed on his sister Rebekah, he understood that [Abraham](#) had been blessed by [Yahweh](#). Indeed, much of the blessing of [Yahweh](#), at least from an observational viewpoint, was material wealth and prosperity. Prosperity was a tangible sign of [Yahweh's](#) blessing of [Abraham](#) and his descendants of promise, according to the record in Genesis (Gen. 21:22; 24:1, 31, 35; 26:12-14; 30:27-30; 39:5). What modern day Christians fail to distinguish is that God's promise of material blessings are limited to the physical descendants of [Abraham](#), Isaac, and Jacob who also believe in God. No such prosperity necessarily attends the spiritual descendants of [Abraham](#). In fact, our blessings our distinctly said to be spiritual, not physical (Eph. 1:3-14).

(3) Though the record here in Genesis 24 does not reveal it, Laban appears to have been avaricious. This would later become evident in his manipulative dealings with his nephew Jacob (Gen. 29-31).

- J 3 Provision for humans: and water to wash his feet and the feet of the men who were with him. 24:32
- H 5 Laban's offer of food: {33} But when *food* was set before him to eat, 24:33a
- H 6 The servant's refusal: he said, "I will not eat until I have told my business." 24:33b
- H 7 Laban's permission: And he said, "Speak on." 24:33c
- G 2 The story of the slave 24:34-49
 - H 1 The identity of the slave: {34} So he said, "I am Abraham's servant. 24:34
 - H 2 The financial condition of his master 24:35-36
 - J 1 Greatly blessed by [Yahweh](#) in wealth: {35} "The LORD has greatly blessed my master, so that he has become rich; and He has given him flocks and herds, and silver and gold, and servants and maids, and camels and donkeys. 24:35
 - J 2 Father of a son by Sarah in her old age: {36} "Now Sarah my master's wife bore a son to my master in her old age, 24:36a
 - J 3 The son is heir to his father's entire fortune: and he has given him all that he has. 24:36b
 - H 3 The assignment given the slave under oath by [Abraham](#): finding a wife for the son 24:37-42
 - J 1 Not from the [Canaanites](#): {37} "My master made me swear, saying, 'You shall not take a wife for my son from the daughters of the Canaanites, in whose land I live; 24:37
 - J 2 But from his relatives: {38} but you shall go to my father's house and to my relatives, and take a wife for my son.' 24:38
 - J 3 His question about the contingency of the woman's unwillingness: {39} "I said to my master, 'Suppose the woman does not follow me.' 24:39
 - J 4 [Abraham's](#) assurance of the success provided by [Yahweh's](#) angel: {40} "He said to me, 'The LORD, before whom I have walked, will send His angel with you to make your journey successful, and you will take a wife for my son from my relatives and

from my father's house; 24:40

J 5 His freedom from the oath if the girl will not come: {41} then you will be free from my oath, when you come to my relatives; and if they do not give her to you, you will be free from my oath.' 24:41

H 4 The slave's prayer at the spring 24:42-44

J 1 His arrival: {42} "So I came today to the spring, and said, 24:42a

J 2 His preliminary request for success: 'O LORD, the God of my master Abraham, if now You will make my journey on which I go successful; 24:42b

J 3 His designation of a sign for a certain maiden: {43} behold, I am standing by the spring, and may it be that the maiden who comes out to draw, and to whom I say, "Please let me drink a little water from your jar"; {44} and she will say to me, "You drink, and I will draw for your camels also"; 24:43-44a

J 4 His request that the maiden who fulfilled the sign also be the woman appointed by [Yahweh](#): let her be the woman whom the LORD has appointed for my master's son.' 24:44b

H 5 The slave's interaction with Rebekah 24:45-48

J 1 The time of his interaction: {45} "Before I had finished speaking in my heart, 24:45a

J 2 The arrival of Rebekah: behold, Rebekah came out with her jar on her shoulder, and went down to the spring and drew, 24:45b

J 3 The slave's request for a drink: and I said to her, 'Please let me drink.' 24:45c

J 4 Her giving him a drink and watering the camels as well: {46} "She quickly lowered her jar from her *shoulder*, and said, 'Drink, and I will water your camels also'; so I drank, and she watered the camels also. 24:46

J 5 His determination of her parentage: {47} "Then I asked her, and said, 'Whose daughter are you?' And she said, 'The daughter of Bethuel, Nahor's son, whom Milcah bore to him'; 24:47a

J 6 His bestowal of gifts: and I put the ring on her nose,

and the bracelets on her wrists. 24:47b

J 7 His worship of [Yahweh](#): {48} “And I bowed low and worshiped the LORD, and blessed the LORD, the God of my master Abraham, who had guided me in the right way to take the daughter of my master’s kinsman for his son. 24:48

H 6 The slave's asking for an answer: {49} “So now if you are going to deal kindly and truly⁷²⁷ with my master, tell me; and if not, let me know, that I may turn to the right hand or the left.” 24:49

E 5 Bethuel and Laban's *blessing* on Rebekah in her departure 24:50-60

G 1 The answer of Bethuel and Laban 24:50-51

H 1 Their acknowledgment of [Yahweh's sovereignty](#): {50} Then Laban and Bethuel replied, “The matter comes from the LORD; 24:50a

H 2 Their inability to confirm or repudiate: *so* we cannot speak to you bad or good. 24:50b

H 3 Their granting him permission to take Rebekah to be the wife of his master's son as [Yahweh](#) had spoken: {51} “Here is Rebekah before you, take *her* and go, and let her be the wife of your master’s son, as the LORD has spoken.” 24:51

G 2 The response of the slave 24:52-54

H 1 His bowing himself to the ground before [Yahweh](#): {52} When Abraham’s servant heard their words, he bowed himself to the ground before the LORD. 24:52

H 2 His giving of gifts to Rebekah, her brother and her mother: {53} The servant brought out articles of silver and articles of gold, and garments, and gave them to Rebekah; he also gave precious things to her brother and to her mother. 24:53

H 3 His acceptance of hospitality: {54} Then he and the men who were with him ate and drank and spent the night. 24:54a

G 3 The request for departure 24:54b-60

H 1 His request to depart the next morning: When they arose

⁷²⁷ Gen. 24:49 - deal kindly and truly: [NASB](#) note: “A literal translation: *show lovingkindness and truth*”

in the morning, he said, “Send me away to my master.”
24:54b

H 2 The counter by Rebekah's mother and brother: {55} But her brother and her mother said, “Let the girl stay with us a few days, say ten; afterward she may go.” 24:55

H 3 The slave's renewed request based upon [Yahweh's](#) leading: {56} He said to them, “Do not delay me, since the LORD has prospered my way. Send me away that I may go to my master.” 24:56

H 4 Their consultation with Rebekah 24:57-58

J 1 Their compromise: {57} And they said, “We will call the girl and consult her wishes.” 24:57

J 2 Their asking of Rebekah: {58} Then they called Rebekah and said to her, “Will you go with this man?” 24: 58a

J 3 Rebekah's agreement to leave: And she said, “I will go.” ⁷²⁸ 24:58b

H 5 The send-off 24:59-60

J 1 Summary – their send-off of Rebekah: {59} Thus they sent away their sister Rebekah and her nurse with Abraham’s servant and his men. 24:59

J 2 Their blessing of fertility: {60} They blessed Rebekah and said to her, “May you, our sister, Become thousands of ten thousands, 24:60a

J 3 Their blessing of victory: And may your descendants possess The gate of those who hate them.” ⁷²⁹ 24:60b

E 6 The meeting and marriage of Isaac and Rebekah 24:61-67

G 1 The company's departure: {61} Then Rebekah arose with her

⁷²⁸ Gen. 24:58 - and she said, “I will go.”: This took an act of faith on the part of Rebekah – faith in the one true God. She would never see her family again, as far as the record of Genesis reveals. There is further evidence of Rebekah’s faith in God. When her twins were giving her a difficult pregnancy, she went to inquire of the LORD, who revealed to her that her older son would serve her younger son (Gen. 25:22-23).

⁷²⁹ Gen. 24:60 - And may your descendants possess the gate of those who hate them: This war is still being waged with ferocity by the Arabs surrounding [Israel](#). Some day believing [Israel](#) will win entirely and for eternity (Rev. 21:1-22:5).

maids, and they mounted the camels ⁷³⁰ and followed the man. So the servant took Rebekah and departed. 24:61

G 2 The actions of Isaac 24:62-63

H 1 His return from Beer-lahai-roi: {62} Now Isaac had come from going to Beer-lahai-roi; ⁷³¹ for he was living in the Negev. ⁷³² 24:62

H 2 His meditating in the field toward evening: {63} Isaac went out to meditate ⁷³³ in the field toward evening; 24:63a

H 3 His sighting of the camels: and he lifted up his eyes and looked, and behold, camels were coming. 24:63b

G 3 The actions of Rebekah 24:64-65

H 1 Her sighting of the advancing Isaac: {64} Rebekah lifted up her eyes, and when she saw Isaac she dismounted from the camel. 24:64

H 2 Her question: {65} She said to the servant, “Who is that man walking in the field to meet us?” 24:65a

H 3 The slave’s reply: And the servant said, “He is my master.” 24:65b

H 4 Her veiling of herself: Then she took her veil and covered herself. 24:65b

G 4 The servant's report to Isaac: {66} The servant told Isaac all the

⁷³⁰ Gen. 24:61 - mounted the camels: The servant of [Abraham](#) had brought ten camels (Gen. 24:10) in faith. Not only were they to carry goods and supplies, but they were to serve as mounts for the bride and her maids and their belongings to return to Canaan! The slave was a good planner and his plans were plans of faith in God’s providing success!

⁷³¹ Gen. 24:62 - Beer-lahai-roi: Hebrew, *Be’êr lachay rô’îy* ([883](#)), “Well of the Living One Seeing Me.” This name is used only three times in the entire OT, and only in Genesis. The references include Gen. 16:14; 24:62; 25:11. In the first instance, Hagar had fled from her mistress Sarai, and found a spring of water in the wilderness. There the [Angel of the LORD](#) met her, instructing her to return to Sarai, and predicting the destiny of her son Ishmael (Gen. 16:1-14). Because of Hagar’s naming of [Yahweh](#) (Gen. 16:13), the well was called “[Beer-lahai-roi](#),” situated between [Kadesh](#) and [Bered](#) (Gen. 16:14).

⁷³² Gen. 24:62 - Negev: Hebrew, *Negeb* ([5045](#)), the South country. “Negev is the name for the southern desert region in the land of Canaan” (NetBible [note 106](#) at Gen. 24:62).

⁷³³ Gen. 24:63 - to meditate: Hebrew, the [Qal](#) Infinitive Construct of *sûach* ([7742](#)). This verb is used only here in the entire OT, and is therefore difficult to translate. Strong identifies it as “a primitive root; to muse pensively: – meditate.” I suspect Isaac was “prayer-walking” – walking about in the open country to think and perhaps even to pray for the success of the trusted slave who was to bring back his bride. I believe Isaac was out walking in a prayerful, anticipatory mood.

things that he had done. 24:66

G 5 Isaac's marriage to Rebekah 24:67

H 1 His bringing her into his mother's tent: {67} Then Isaac brought her into his mother Sarah's tent,

H 2 His marriage to Rebekah: and he took Rebekah, and she became his wife,

H 3 His love for her: and he loved her;⁷³⁴

H 4 His comfort after his mother's death: thus Isaac was comforted after his mother's death.

C 15 The closing of careers: The deaths of [Abraham](#) and Ishmael 25:1-18

D 1 [Abraham's](#) remarriage, bequests to his sons, death and burial by Isaac and Ishmael 25:1-11

E 1 His remarriage to Keturah: {1} Now Abraham took another wife, whose name was Keturah.⁷³⁵ 25:1

E 2 His descendants by Keturah: {2} She bore to him Zimran and Jokshan and Medan and Midian⁷³⁶ and Ishbak and Shuah. 25:2

G 1 The sons of Jokshan and Dedan 25:3

H 1 The sons of Jokshan: {3} Jokshan became the father of Sheba and Dedan.

H 2 The sons of Dedan, son of Jokshan: And the sons of Dedan were Asshurim⁷³⁷ and Letushim and Leummim.

⁷³⁴ Gen. 24:67 - and he loved her: "loved" is the [Qal Imperfect](#) of the verb *'āhab* (157). In Genesis, this verb is used of [Abraham's](#) love for Isaac (Gen. 22:2); Isaac's love for Rebekah (Gen. 24:67); Isaac's love for Esau, and Rebekah's love for Jacob (Gen. 25:28); Isaac's love for food (Gen. 27:4, 9, 14); Jacob's love for Rachel (Gen. 29:30); Leah's craving of love from her husband (Gen. 29:32); Shechem's love for Dinah (Gen. 34:3); Israel's love for Joseph (Gen. 37:4); and Jacob's love for Benjamin (Gen. 44:20).

⁷³⁵ Gen. 25:1 - Keturah: Hebrew, *qetûrâh* (6989), meaning "incense." The English names Catherine and Katherine come from this Hebrew name. She was [Abraham's](#) wife (*'ishshâh*, 802) which he took for himself after the death of Sarah. The name Keturah appears only in Gen. 25:1, 4; 1 Chron. 1:32, 33. In 1 Chron. 1:32, Keturah is identified as [Abraham's](#) concubine (*pîylégesh*, 6370), which refers to a concubine or paramour. My guess is that the writer of Chronicles did so to underscore the fact that Sarah was [Abraham's](#) primary, and most important wife.

⁷³⁶ Gen. 25:2 - Midian. Hebrew, *Midyân* (4080). This son of [Abraham](#) and Keturah will appear later in the Biblical narratives. Midian appears prominently, for example, in the book of Numbers, and even more so in the book of Judges. [Midian](#) refers to a desert area in Saudi Arabia to the east of the Gulf of Aqaba. [Moses](#) married Zipporah, a daughter of Jethro, a priest of Midian (Exod. 2:16-22; 3:1).

⁷³⁷ Gen. 25:3 - Asshurim ... Letushim ... Leummim: These tribal names each appear only one time in the OT – in this verse. It is impossible to make any certain identification of their identity or their geography.

- G 2 The sons of Midian: {4} The sons of Midian *were* Ephah and Ephraim and Hanoch and Abida and Eldaah. 25:4a
- G 3 Summary: All these *were* the sons of Keturah. 25:4b
- E 3 His bequeathal of all to Isaac: {5} Now Abraham gave all that he had to Isaac; 25:5
- E 4 His gifts to and disassociation from the sons of his concubines 25:6
 - G 1 His giving of gifts: {6} but to the sons of his concubines,⁷³⁸ Abraham gave gifts while he was still living,
 - G 2 His dispersion of his other sons from Isaac: and sent them away from his son Isaac eastward, to the land of the east.⁷³⁹
- E 5 His age: {7} These are all the years of Abraham's life that he lived, one hundred and seventy-five years. 25:7
- E 6 His death: {8} Abraham breathed his last and died in a ripe old age, an old man and satisfied *with life*; and he was gathered to his people. 25:8
- E 7 His burial 25:9-10
 - G 1 Those who buried him: {9} Then his sons Isaac and Ishmael buried him 25:9a
 - G 2 The place of burial 25:9b
 - H 1 in the cave of Machpelah,⁷⁴⁰
 - H 2 in the field of Ephron the son of Zohar the Hittite,

⁷³⁸ Gen. 25:6 - concubines: It would appear that [Abraham](#) not only married Keturah, apparently after the death of Sarah, but had other, unidentified women as his concubines, the plural of *pîylégesh* (6370). As great a man of faith as [Abraham](#) was, he did not follow God's order of marriage, which was one woman for one man for life (Gen. 1:1-2:25). The Scriptural record does not explicitly condemn him for deviating from God's order. But implicitly, and with the perspective of four millennia of history, we can see what a great evil polygamy is.

⁷³⁹ Gen. 25:6 - eastward, to the land of the east: Both "eastward" and "east" translate the same word, *qedem* (6924). In historical narratives, as here, it typically means "east" or "eastward." In poetic contexts, such as Psalms and certain prophetic writings, it means "from of old" or "ancient." Context strongly influences translation. Here, "eastward" and "to the land of the east" probably refers to the [Arabian peninsula](#). [Abraham](#) sent his other sons away from the land of Canaan so Isaac and his descendants could have sole possession of the promised land. That worked fairly well as long as the [Sons of Israel](#) were obeying God. When they disobeyed, God sent in enemy nations to prod them into returning to Him. In AD 70 and AD 135, [Israelis](#) were dispersed all over the world. The modern State of [Israel](#) was founded on May 14, 1948. Modern-day [Israel](#) is surrounded by a great sea of Arabian or at least Arabic-speaking peoples, all of whom, to one degree or another, are relentless enemies of [Israel](#).

⁷⁴⁰ Gen. 25:9 - cave of Machpelah: The cave of [Machpelah](#) is before, or east, of Hebron (Gen. 25:9), another name for Mamre (Gen. 23:19). [Machpelah](#), Hebrew, *Makpêlâh* (4375) means "double" or "portion." See the note at Gen. 23:9 for more information.

H 3 facing Mamre,

G 3 The ownership of the burial site: {10} the field which Abraham purchased from the sons of Heth; 25:10a

G 4 The situation of his burial: there Abraham was buried with Sarah his wife. 25:10b

E 8 God's blessing of Isaac 25:11

G 1 The timing of God's blessing: {11} It came about after the death of Abraham,

G 2 The fact of God's blessing: that God blessed his son Isaac;⁷⁴¹

G 3 The situation of Isaac: and Isaac lived by Beer-lahai-roi.

SECTION VIII. WHAT BECAME OF ISHMAEL. 25:12-18

D 2 The progeny and death of Ishmael 25:12-18

E 1 The Title: The Record of What Became of Ishmael: {12} Now these are *the records* of the generations of Ishmael,⁷⁴² 25:12

G 1 Ishmael's relation to [Abraham](#): Abraham's son,

G 2 Ishmael's relation to Hagar: whom Hagar the Egyptian,

G 3 Hagar's relation to Sarah: Sarah's maid, bore to Abraham;

E 2 The names of the sons of Ishmael: {13} and these are the names of

⁷⁴¹ Gen. 25:11 - God blessed his son Isaac: God was faithful in preserving Isaac (Gen. 22) and in blessing (Gen. 12:1-3) the seed of promise (Gen. 17:15-19, 21). Please observe that God retains the right to select whom He will bless and with whom He will enter a [covenant](#). God chose [Abraham](#), and no one else in his family. God chose Isaac, not Ishmael. God will shortly choose Jacob, not Esau. Very clearly, the issue is God's choice, not man's merit. God's [election](#) is abundantly clear in the OT and abundantly clear in the NT. [Covenant theologians](#) in their [amilennialism](#) and [non-literalism](#) minimize or negate God's perpetual choice of [Abraham](#) and his physical descendants through Isaac and Jacob (Jer. 31:27-37). If God cannot be trusted to perpetuate His [election](#) of the believing physical descendants of [Abraham](#), Isaac, and Jacob through the nation of [Israel](#), how can He be trusted to perpetuate his [election](#) of [Gentiles](#)? See also "[God's Part in Salvation – Election](#)."

⁷⁴² Gen. 25:12 - Now these are *the records* of the generations of Ishmael: Note that the words "the records of" do not appear in the Hebrew text. The reading is "Now these are the generations (the plural *tôledôt*, [8435](#)) of Ishmael. See the notes at Gen. 2:4; 11:27 for more information on this characteristic term. Here it means, "What became of Ishmael."

Observe that God's plans for Ishmael were minimal at best. Oh, He would bless him, to be sure. He would multiply Ishmael exceedingly, making him the father of twelve princes and a great nation. He had promised [Abraham](#) that (Gen. 17:20). But the Divine record here gives him but scant attention – seven verses – Gen. 25:12-18! Several of Ishmael's sons who are identified with a specific geographical location are associated with Arab tribes.

the sons of Ishmael, by their names, in the order of their birth: ⁷⁴³
25:13

G 1 Nebaioth, ⁷⁴⁴ the firstborn of Ishmael,

G 2 and Kedar ⁷⁴⁵

G 3 and Adbeel ⁷⁴⁶

G 4 and Mibsam ⁷⁴⁷

G 5 {14} and Mishma ⁷⁴⁸ 25:14

G 6 and Dumah ⁷⁴⁹

G 7 and Massa, ⁷⁵⁰

G 8 {15} Hadad ⁷⁵¹ 25:15

⁷⁴³ Gen. 25:13 - in the order of their birth: This phrase in [NASB](#) translates but one word in Hebrew, the plural *tôledôt*, [8435](#). The [NASB](#) note reads, “Lit in regard to their generations.”

⁷⁴⁴ Gen. 25:13 - Nebaioth: Hebrew, *Nebâyôth* ([5032](#)), the firstborn of Ishmael. According to BibleAtlas.org, Josephus, followed by Jerome, regarded [Nebaioth](#) as identical with the Nabateans, the great trading community and ally of Rome, whose capital and stronghold was Petra. Isaiah prophesied that the rams of Nebaioth will serve Millennial Zion as sacrificial animals (Isa. 60:7).

⁷⁴⁵ Gen. 25:13 - Kedar: Hebrew, *Qêdâr* ([6938](#)), meaning, “dark.” The second-listed son of Ishmael. The Kedarites appear to be a nomadic (Bedouin?), tent-dwelling people (Psa. 120:5; Song of Solomon 1:5). Kedar is associated with Arabia (Ezek. 27:21). According to BibleAtlas.org, [Kedar](#) refers to Arabia.

According to [Wikipeda](#), “father of the Qedarites, a northern Arab tribe that controlled the area between the Persian Gulf and the Sinai Peninsula. According to tradition, he is the ancestor of the Quraysh tribe, and thus of the Islamic prophet Muhammad.” (See the [following note](#) crediting sources.)

⁷⁴⁶ Gen. 25:13 - Adbeel: Hebrew, *'Adbē'êl* ([110](#)), meaning “chastened of God.” 3rd son of Ishmael. This name appears only here and in 1 Chron. 1:29. There is no geographical association with this name.

⁷⁴⁷ Gen. 25:13 - Mibsam: Hebrew, *Mibśâm* ([4017](#)), meaning “sweet odor.” The 4th listed son of Ishmael. No geographical association is linked to this name.

⁷⁴⁸ Gen. 25:14 - Mishma: Hebrew, *Mishmâ'* ([4927](#)), “a hearing,” or “what is heard.” No geographical location is associated with this 5th listed son of Ishmael.

⁷⁴⁹ Gen. 25:14 - Dumah: Hebrew, *Dûmâh* ([1746](#)). The name means “silence.” The 6th son of Ishmael, and apparently, once again, synonymous with Arabia. See the map of [Dumah](#). The Simple Hebrew-English Dictionary ([Biblioi 8.0](#)) states that it refers to [Idumea](#), but that is hardly Arabia. The latter is probably part of the territory of Judah as listed in Joshua 15:52, somewhere in the general vicinity of Hebron.

⁷⁵⁰ Gen. 25:14 - Massa: Hebrew, *Massá'* ([4854](#)), the 7th son of Ishmael. His name means “burden.” There is no indication of a geographical location indicated in Scripture.

⁷⁵¹ Gen. 25:15 - Hadad: Hebrew, *Châdad* ([2301](#)), the 8th son of Ishmael. His name means “mighty.” According to [Gesenius](#), his name means “sharpness,” but he alters the final *daleth* [d] to a *resh* [r] to arrive at that meaning. With his emended spelling he states that there is a tribe in Yemen that originated from this son of Ishmael. But altering Hebrew spelling is, for me, not an acceptable methodology. The [Masoretes](#) were very meticulous in their

- G 9 and Tema,⁷⁵²
- G 10 Jetur,⁷⁵³
- G 11 Naphish⁷⁵⁴
- G 12 and Kedemah.⁷⁵⁵
- E 3 Summary and explanation: {16} These are the sons of Ishmael and these are their names, 25:16
- G 1 by their villages,
- G 2 and by their camps;
- G 3 twelve princes according to their tribes.⁷⁵⁶
- E 4 The life-span and death of Ishmael 25:17
- G 1 His life-span: {17} These are the years of the life of Ishmael, one hundred and thirty-seven years;
- G 2 His death: and he breathed his last and died, and was gathered to his people.
- E 5 The territory of Ishmael 25:18
- G 1 Their location: {18} They settled from Havilah to Shur which is

transcription of Scripture. There is no known geographical location associated with this son of Ishmael.

⁷⁵² Gen. 25:15 - Tema: Hebrew, *Tēmâ'* (8485), meaning “desert.” He was the 9th son of Ishmael. [Tema](#) is a place-name (Job 6:19; Isa. 21:14). BibleAtlas.org identifies [Tema](#) as meaning “south country,” and identifies it as “Teima or Tayma, ... an oasis which lies about 200 miles North of el-Medina, and some 40 miles South of Dumat el-Jandel (Dumah), now known as el-Jauf.” Job 6:19 places [Tema](#) and [Sheba](#) in the same general location. [Sheba](#) would be farther to the south in Arabia, bordering the Red Sea and the Gulf of Aden.

⁷⁵³ Gen. 25:15 - Jetur: Hebrew, *yeṭûr* (3195), meaning, “enclosed.” He was the 10th son of Ishmael. At the conquest, the sons of Reuben, the Gadites, and the half-tribe of Manasseh battled against and overcame the Hagrites, Jetur, Naphish, and Nodab (1 Chron. 5:18-19). BibleAtlas.org identifies Jetur with [Ituraea](#).

⁷⁵⁴ Gen. 25:15 - Naphish: Hebrew, *Nâphîysh* (5305), the 11th son of Ishmael. His name means “refreshment.” At the conquest, the sons of Reuben, the Gadites, and the half-tribe of Manasseh battled against and overcame the Hagrites, Jetur, Naphish, and Nodab (1 Chron. 5:18-19). BibleAtlas.org identifies [Naphish](#) with Golan. [Strong](#) identifies Naphish with an Arabian tribe. So does [BDB](#).

⁷⁵⁵ Gen. 25:15 - Kedemah: Hebrew, *Qêdemâh* (6929), the 12th son of Ishmael. His name means “original.” There is no plausible geographical association with his name.

⁷⁵⁶ Gen. 25:16 - twelve princes according to their tribes: “princes” is the plural of *nâsîy'* (5387), one lifted up, a leader, ruler; “tribes” is the plural of *ûmmah* (523), people, tribe, nation, used only in the OT in Gen. 25:16; Num. 25:15; Psa. 117:1. This word is used frequently in Arabic, especially in regard to the Islamic “[community](#).”

east of Egypt as one goes toward Assyria;⁷⁵⁷

G 2 Their disposition: he settled in defiance of all his relatives.⁷⁵⁸

SECTION IX. WHAT BECAME OF ISAAC. 25:19 - 35:29

B 2 God's Elective Blessing of Isaac and His Election of Jacob unto Blessing 25:19 - 28:9

C 1 [Yahweh's](#) election of Jacob over Esau 25:19-34

D 1 [Yahweh's](#) pre-natal prediction of His election of Jacob 25:19-26

E 1 Introductory matters 25:19-20

G 1 The Title – What Became of Isaac ben [Abraham](#): {19} Now these are *the records* of the generations of Isaac,⁷⁵⁹ Abraham's son: Abraham became the father of Isaac; 25:19

G 2 Isaac's age of 40 when he married Rebekah: {20} and Isaac was forty years old when he took Rebekah, 25:20a

G 3 Rebekah's ancestry: the daughter of Bethuel the Aramean⁷⁶⁰ of Paddan-aram, the sister of Laban the Aramean, to be his wife. 25:20b

E 2 Problems in marriage: Isaac's prayer on behalf of his barren wife 25:21

G 1 The statement of prayer: {21} Isaac prayed to the LORD⁷⁶¹ on

⁷⁵⁷ Gen. 25:18 - Assyria: The Biblical name for Assyria is *Ashshûr* (804). In the book of Genesis this name appears in Gen. 2:14; 10:11, 22; 25:18.

⁷⁵⁸ Gen. 25:18 - he settled in defiance of all his relatives: Just as the [Angel of Yahweh](#) had predicted to Hagar, there was, there has been, and there always will be turmoil among the the descendants of Ishmael (see Allen P. Ross, Genesis, [The Bible Knowledge Commentary, TBKC](#)). As of this writing (2/5/19), the Arab nations of Egypt, Saudi Arabia, and the United Arab Emirates have now for over a year united in an embargo against the Arab country of Qatar, chiefly because of that nation's not always politically-correct news organ, [Al Jazeera](#). The only way Arabs unite today is through [OPEC](#) and in common opposition to a mutual enemy, [Israel](#). But even that unity is tenuous. It is worth noting that [Qatar is not a member of OPEC](#).

⁷⁵⁹ Gen. 25:19 - Now these are *the records* of the generations of Isaac: Literally, "Now these are the generations (the plural *tôledôt*, [8435](#)) of Isaac." This characteristic phrase begins the story of "what happened to Isaac, son of Abraham."

⁷⁶⁰ Gen. 25:20 - Bethuel the Aramean: Aramean is *'ārammîy* (761), "Syrian." Though it did not begin that way, historically, the Syrians have been enemies of Israel. That is especially true today, in which [Syria is being controlled by Iran](#) and by the viciously anti-Israel [Hezbollah](#).

⁷⁶¹ Gen. 25:21: Isaac prayed to the LORD: Problems are ever the motivation for prayer. If we do not have problems we do not pray. If we have problems, we pray. Problems are God's jolts that throw us onto our knees in pain.

Romans 5:3-5 3 And not only this, but we also exult in our tribulations, knowing that tribulation brings about

behalf of his wife,

G 2 The motive for prayer – Rebekah's barrenness: because she was barren;

G 3 The response to the prayer

H 1 [Yahweh's](#) answer: and the LORD answered him

H 2 Rebekah's conception: and Rebekah his wife conceived.⁷⁶²

E 3 Problems in pregnancy 25:22-23

G 1 The struggle of the children within Rebekah 25:22

H 1 The statement of the struggle: {22} But the children⁷⁶³ struggled together within her;⁷⁶⁴

H 2 The perplexity of Rebekah: and she said, "If it is so, why then am I *this way*?"

G 2 Her inquiry of [Yahweh](#): So she went to inquire of the LORD.⁷⁶⁵ 25:22

G 3 The response of [Yahweh](#) 25:23

H 1 Two nations: {23} The LORD said to her, "Two nations

perseverance; 4 and perseverance, proven character; and proven character, hope; 5 and hope does not disappoint, because the love of God has been poured out within our hearts through the Holy Spirit who was given to us.

We should take pride in troubles, for these give us patience, experience, and hope, for God through hope assures us more and more of His love for us!

⁷⁶² Gen. 25:21 - Rebekah his wife conceived: This was in answer to Isaac's prayer. Every pregnancy, every conception, is a gift from God. He is the author of life. It is not our prerogative to determine which conceived child lives and which conceived child dies. To insist it is our prerogative constitutes narcissism of the highest degree. Our choice is whether or not we will copulate. If we copulate, we have made our decision. The result of our action is God's doing, not ours. God will hold us accountable for taking another's life if we willfully terminate the pregnancy.

⁷⁶³ Gen. 25:22 - children: Literally "sons." The Hebrew is the plural of *bên* (1121), almost universally translated "son(s)." The context determines whether or not it should occasionally be translated as "child" (or "children" in the plural). An example of the latter is Gen. 36:25, which lists both a male and a female. In this instance, (Gen. 25:22), both offspring are males, so there is no reason not to translate the word as "sons."

⁷⁶⁴ Gen. 25:22 - But the children struggled within her: God's answers to prayer often send us not fewer problems, but more problems of a different nature! Getting answers to prayer will not keep us from having problems; it will merely change the landscape for new problems. Don't pray if you want to get rid of all your problems. It doesn't work that way. God sees us as growing amid problems IF we take them to him and seek His perspective on them. If we never see things from God's perspective, the problems are wasted on us and we merely grow bitter.

⁷⁶⁵ Gen. 25:22 - she went to inquire of the LORD: Two observations: (1) The struggle within her womb must have been a mighty one! (2) It is always appropriate, and never inappropriate to inquire of the LORD as to what is happening in our lives! There is nothing too great nor too small that we cannot take it to the LORD.

are in your womb;⁷⁶⁶

H 2 Two peoples: And two peoples will be separated from your body;

H 3 Disparity in strength: And one people shall be stronger than the other;

H 4 Disparity in servitude: And the older shall serve the younger."⁷⁶⁷

E 4 Problems in delivery 25:24-26

G 1 The onset of delivery of twins: {24} When her days to be delivered were fulfilled, behold, there were twins in her womb. 25:24

G 2 The arrival of Esau, red and hairy {25} Now the first came forth red, all over like a hairy garment; and they named him Esau.⁷⁶⁸ 25:25

G 3 The arrival of Jacob holding Esau's heel: {26} Afterward his brother came forth with his hand holding on to Esau's heel, so his name was called Jacob;⁷⁶⁹ 25:26a

⁷⁶⁶ Gen. 25:23 - Two nations are in your womb: Incredible implications for the inception of life. Not only are the beings within her called "children" (v. 22), but they are called nations and peoples. To destroy an unborn baby is not only to destroy a human being, but to destroy a progeny – perhaps a nation!

⁷⁶⁷ Gen. 25:23 - The older shall serve the younger: Two things would stand out to Rebekah as not being desirable. 1) When she would hope to have family unity, this was not to be. There would be two distinct nations and ethnic groupings coming from her womb. 2) When she would hope to have the older child be preeminent, this was not to be. The older would serve the younger! As the narrative will further reveal, Rebekah will believe God and act accordingly. She will do so in opposition to her husband Isaac, who will not believe this prophecy, and will act in defiance of it. This unhappy situation will result in family dysfunction and alienation.

This prophecy from the LORD indicates the reality of [election](#) in God's world. It may be distasteful to some, but it is, nonetheless, true. Personally, I am exceedingly grateful for God's [election](#) of me to [salvation](#). Had He not done so, I would be at enmity with Him and suffer horrible consequences, both in this life and in the one to come!

There is a dire prophecy from the LORD as to the ultimate destiny of the "house of Esau" in Obadiah 1:18. God's disposition against Esau is also revealed in Malachi 1:1-5. Using this passage in Genesis 25:22-23, Paul maintains, in Rom. 9:10-13 God's right to choose whomever He wishes, a choice not based on merit, but upon God's inscrutable will. Paul denies any injustice on God's part. He has the right to shower mercy and compassion on whomever He wishes, and he has the right to harden whomever He wishes (Rom. 9:14-18). That same selective mercy and power of choice which God retains benefits, in the long term, us Gentiles, who were not among God's chosen ethnicity in the days of Abraham, Isaac, and Jacob (Rom. 9:19-26). In the end, there will come a time when all Israelis will be saved (Rom. 11:26-27; cf. Isa. 59:20-21).

⁷⁶⁸ Gen. 25:25 - Esau: "Red anticipates the play on the meaning of Esau's other name, Edom, which means "red," (cf. Gen. 25:30). Hairy was a Hebrew pun on the name Esau." ([RSB](#)) Gen.25:30 "and Esau said to Jacob, 'Please let me have a swallow of that red stuff there, for I am famished.' Therefore his name was called Edom."

⁷⁶⁹ Gen. 25:26 - Jacob: [NASB](#) note: "I.e. one who takes by the heel or supplants." [[JTB](#): Jacob means "heel catcher," "trickster," or "supplanter" (cf. 27:36). ([RSB](#)). Gen. 27:36 "Then he said, 'Is he not rightly named Jacob, for he has supplanted me these two times? He took away my birthright, and behold, now he has taken away my blessing....'"]

E 5 Isaac's age of 60 at the birth of his sons: and Isaac was sixty years old⁷⁷⁰ when she gave birth to them. 25:26b

D 2 Esau's foolish sale of his birthright to Jacob 25:27-34

E 1 The pursuits of the two sons at maturity 25:27

G 1 The time of the characterization: {27} When the boys grew up,⁷⁷¹

G 2 Esau

H 1 Esau became a skillful hunter,

H 2 a man of the field,

G 3 Jacob

H 1 but Jacob was a peaceful man,⁷⁷²

H 2 living in tents.

E 2 Problems in family unity 25:28

G 1 Isaac's love for Esau: {28} Now Isaac loved Esau, because he

⁷⁷⁰ Gen. 25:26 - Isaac was sixty years old: Rebekah had been barren for twenty years!

⁷⁷¹ Gen. 25:27 - When the boys grew up: This was the classic mismatch if there ever was one. Esau was the athlete, who polished his prowess at shooting a bow or hurling a javelin. He was an outdoorsman. Jacob, on the other hand, tended to hang around home more. Father Isaac opted for the jock who brought home trophy deer and pheasant, while mother Rebekah opted for the more sensible, stay-at-home, supportive son who more nearly held her value system. Undoubtedly, too, she had taken to heart God's promise of the younger's superiority. The latter fact Isaac completely ignored.

⁷⁷² Gen. 25:27 - Jacob was a peaceful man: (8535), *tam*. "peaceful" (**NASB**) man (KJV: "plain"; **JTB**: "perfect" or "upright" or perhaps "well-balanced.") From the following 7 samples of 15 occurrences, it would seem that Jacob was at the least more mature, more balanced, a complete man, while Esau, the jock, was undisciplined and unbalanced – always off on the run to find more sport. It may also well hint at a more spiritual and Godly approach to life on the part of Jacob than on the part of Esau. Certainly that turned out to be the case! The appropriate translations of *tam* in the **NASB** below are in bold font.

1. Genesis 25:27 When the boys grew up, Esau became a skillful hunter, a man of the field, but Jacob was a **peaceful** man, living in tents.
2. Exodus 36:29. They were double beneath, and together they were **complete** to its top to the first ring; thus he did with both of them for the two corners.
3. Job 1:1 There was a man in the land of Uz whose name was Job; and that man was **blameless**, upright, fearing God and turning away from evil.
4. Job 8:20. "Lo, God will not reject a man of **integrity**, Nor will He support the evildoers."
5. Job 9:22 "It is all one; therefore I say, 'He destroys the **guiltless** and the wicked.'
6. Psalms 37:37 Mark the **blameless** man, and behold the upright; For the man of peace will have a posterity.
7. Song of Solomon 5:2 "I was asleep but my heart was awake. A voice! My beloved was knocking: 'Open to me, my sister, my darling, My dove, my **perfect** one! For my head is drenched with dew, My locks with the damp of the night.'

had a taste for game,

G 2 Rebekah's love for Jacob: but Rebekah loved Jacob.

E 3 The birthright barter 25:29-34

G 1 The setup 25:29

H 1 Jacob's timely preparation of cooked stew: {29} When Jacob had cooked stew,

H 2 Esau's famished return from hunting: Esau came in from the field and he was famished;

G 2 The request of Esau 25:30

H 1 Esau's request: {30} and Esau said to Jacob, "Please let me have a swallow⁷⁷³ of that red stuff there, for I am famished."

H 2 Esau's nickname: Therefore his name was called Edom.⁷⁷⁴

G 3 The counter-offer of Jacob 25:31-32

J 1 Jacob's counter: {31} But Jacob said, "First sell me your birthright." 25:31

J 2 Esau's response: {32} Esau said, "Behold, I am about to die; so of what *use* then is the birthright to me?" 25:32

G 4 Esau's sale of his birthright 25:33-34

H 1 Esau's oath to give Jacob his birthright 25:33

J 1 Jacob's demand: {33} And Jacob said, "First swear to me";

J 2 Esau's compliance: so he swore to him,

J 3 The net result: and sold his birthright to Jacob.

H 2 Jacob's giving Esau bread and lentil stew 25:34a-c

J 1 Jacob's provision: {34} Then Jacob gave Esau bread

⁷⁷³ Gen. 25:30 - a swallow: Literally, "a greedy gulp."

⁷⁷⁴ Gen. 25:30 - Edom: [NASB](#) footnote: "I.e. red"

and lentil stew; 25:34a

J 2 Esau's partaking: and he ate and drank, and rose
25:34b

J 3 Esau's departure: and went on his way. 25:34c

H 3 [Moses'](#) editorial analysis: Thus Esau despised his
birthright. ⁷⁷⁵ 25:34d

C 2 God's obvious confirmation of the [covenanted](#) *blessing* with Isaac despite the
latter's lapse 26:1-33

D 1 Isaac's deceitful sojourn in Gerar in response to God's promised *blessing*
26:1-11

E 1 Problem: Recurring famine! {1} Now there was a famine in the
land, besides the previous famine that had occurred in the days of
Abraham. 26:1a

E 2 Isaac's departure to the Philistines: So Isaac went to Gerar, ⁷⁷⁶ to
Abimelech king of the Philistines. ⁷⁷⁷ 26:1b

E 3 [Yahweh's](#) appearance to Isaac: {2} The LORD appeared to him
[26:2a] 26:2-7

G 1 His warning not to go to Egypt: and said, "Do not go down to
Egypt; stay in the land of which I shall tell you. 26:2b

G 2 His instructions to stay in [Canaan](#): {3} "Sojourn in this land
26:3a

G 3 His conveying to Isaac the Abrahamic *Blessing* 26:3b-5

⁷⁷⁵ Gen. 25:35 - Esau despised his birthright: See Hebrews 12:16-17 – ¹⁶ “that *there be* no immoral or godless person like Esau, who sold his own birthright for a *single* meal. ¹⁷For you know that even afterwards, when he desired to inherit the blessing, he was rejected, for he found no place for repentance, though he sought for it with tears.” The reader is baffled at Esau’s actions. Even from a purely mercenary perspective, his actions are mindless! Why would you throw away the rights of the firstborn? But an even greater character flaw was revealed by his action. The Scriptures are not kind to Esau. The writer of Hebrews describes him as being “immoral” and “godless”! That means that Esau’s greatest problem was not logic, but a spiritual vacancy. How sad!

⁷⁷⁶ Gen. 26:1 - Gerar: Hebrew, *Gerâr* (1642), a Philistine town south of Gaza. See the map of [Gerar](#). It is worth noting that God allotted the land of the Philistines, including the entire Gaza strip to [Israel](#) through Isaac (Gen. 26:1-6).

⁷⁷⁷ Gen. 26:1 - Abimelech, king of the Philistines: Abimelech, Hebrew, *’Ābîymelek* (40), meaning, “My Father is King,” is perhaps here a title, rather than a proper name. This name (or title) appears extensively in Genesis, even more often in Judges, and only twice thereafter. This Abimelech was king of the Philistines, Hebrew, here, the plural of *Pelishṭîy* (6430), meaning, evidently “immigrants,” inhabitants of Philistia; “descendants of Mizraim who immigrated from Caphtor (Crete?) to the western seacoast of Canaan” (Gen. 10:14). These later became relentless enemies of [Israel](#). See a [map of Philistia](#).

- H 1 His presence: and I will be with you 26:3b
- H 2 His *blessing*: and bless you, ⁷⁷⁸ 26:3c
- H 3 His bequeathal of the lands: for to you and to your descendants ⁷⁷⁹ I will give all these lands, ⁷⁸⁰ 26:3d
- H 4 His extension of the [Abrahamic Covenant](#): and I will establish the oath which I swore to your father Abraham. ⁷⁸¹ 26:3e
- H 5 His multiplication of Isaac's seed: {4} "I will multiply your descendants as the stars of heaven, ⁷⁸² 26:4a
- H 6 His bequeathal of land to Isaac's seed: and will give your descendants all these lands; 26:4b
- H 7 His blessing the entire earth through Isaac's seed: and by your descendants all the nations of the earth shall be blessed; ⁷⁸³ 26:4c
- H 8 The obedience of [Abraham](#): {5} because Abraham obeyed Me and kept My charge, My commandments, My statutes and My laws." 26:5

⁷⁷⁸ Gen. 26:3 - and I will bless you: The **First Component** of the [Abrahamic Covenant](#) mentioned here for Isaac is that of **BLESSING**. See also Gen. 12:2, 3, where God told [Abraham](#), "I will **ble**ss you" (Gen. 12:2); and "you shall be a **ble**ssing" (Gen. 12:2); and "I will **ble**ss those who **ble**ss you" (Gen. 12:3); and "in you all the families of the earth will be **ble**ssed" (Gen. 12:3).

⁷⁷⁹ Gen. 26:3 - to your descendants: Literally, "to your seed," the singular of *zera'* ([2233](#)). This word looks at Isaac's seed as a collective, single unit. It will appear, in the singular, three more times in this context in Gen. 26:4. See the notes at Genesis 17:7; 21:12 for further discussion. **SEED** (or **Descendants** or **Progeny**) is the **Second Component** of the [Abrahamic Covenant](#) mentioned here. God had first promised to [Abraham](#) that He would make of him a great NATION (*gôy*, [1471](#)) in Gen. 12:2. He had amplified the **SEED** promise in Gen. 13:14-16, Gen. 15:5, and elsewhere.

⁷⁸⁰ Gen. 26:3 - I will give all these lands: **LAND** is the **Third Component** of the [Abrahamic Covenant](#). God first promised [Abraham](#) unspecified **LAND** (Gen. 12:1). He amplified the **LAND** promise in Gen. 12:6-7; 13:14-17; 15:7-21. Now He promised this same **LAND** to Isaac (Gen. 26:3)! The **LAND** of Canaan does not belong to the [Palestinians](#), but to the seed of [Abraham](#) through Isaac and (later) Jacob.

⁷⁸¹ Gen. 26:3 - and I will establish the oath which I swore to your father Abraham: Very clearly, the [Abrahamic Covenant](#) which [Yahweh](#) had established with [Abraham](#) (Gen. 12:1-3; 13:14-17; 15:1-21; 17:1-14), He established also with Isaac (not Ishmael) (Gen. 26:2-5; see also Gen. 17:15-22). This same [Abrahamic Covenant](#) God would later establish also with Isaac's son Jacob (not Esau) (Gen. 28:10-17).

⁷⁸² Gen. 26:4 - I will multiply your descendants as the stars of heaven: The second component of the [Abrahamic Covenant](#) mentioned here is that of **Descendants** (literally, "**Seed**"). It is first mentioned here in Gen. 26:3. See Gen. 12:2, where God told [Abraham](#), "I will make you a great nation."

⁷⁸³ Gen. 26:4 - and by your descendants all the nations of the earth shall be blessed: Here [Yahweh](#) extended the international promise He had made to [Abraham](#) (Gen. 12:3) to his son Isaac. Ultimately this will be fulfilled by [Abraham](#) and Isaac's greatest seed, Jesus, the [Messiah](#).

G 4 Isaac's response to God's revelation: {6} So Isaac lived in Gerar. 26:6

E 4 The incident at Gerar concerning Isaac's wife 26:7-11

G 1 The men's notice of Rebekah: {7} When the men of the place asked about his wife, ⁷⁸⁴ 26:7a

G 2 Isaac's fearful duplicity 26:7b

H 1 His duplicity: he said, "She is my sister," ⁷⁸⁵

H 2 His fear: for he was afraid to say, "my wife," *thinking*, "the men of the place might kill me on account of Rebekah, for she is beautiful."

G 3 Abimelech's observation of Isaac and Rebekah 26:8

H 1 The time frame: {8} It came about, when he had been there a long time,

H 2 The observation of Abimelech: that Abimelech king of the Philistines looked out through a window, and saw,

H 3 The affection of Isaac: and behold, Isaac was caressing his wife Rebekah.

G 4 Abimelech's interrogation of Isaac 26:9

H 1 His calling of Isaac: {9} Then Abimelech called Isaac and said,

H 2 His accusation: "Behold, certainly she is your wife!" ⁷⁸⁶

H 3 His questioning of Isaac's lie: How then did you say, 'She is my sister'?"

H 4 Isaac's admission – his fear of foul play: And Isaac said

⁷⁸⁴ Gen. 26:7 - about his wife: "wife" is the Hebrew *'ishshâh* (802), variously translated "woman" (Gen. 2:22, 23), occasionally, "female" (Gen. 7:2), but most frequently, "wife" (Gen. 3:8; 26:7). The context must determine translation.

⁷⁸⁵ Gen. 26:7 - sister: Hebrew is *'âchôth* (269), universally translated "sister" in the [NASB](#), with two exceptions – Ezek. 1:23, where it is translated as the "other," meaning, the "other" [or "sister"] wing of the living being, or cherub; also, in a similar context, Ezek. 3:13, where it is translated as "another" [or "sister"] wing of the living beings. In Hebrew usage "sister" can refer to a full female sibling, or to what we would call a "half sister," referring to a female with whom one shared the same father, but different mothers.

Sadly, Isaac committed the same duplicity for the same reason as had his father, Abraham (Gen. 12:12-13; 20:2, 12).

⁷⁸⁶ Gen. 26:9 - your wife!: the Hebrew is *'ishshâh* (802), "wife," less frequently, "woman."

to him, "Because I said, 'I might die on account of her.'"

G 5 Abimelech's reprimand 26:10

H 1 His scolding Isaac: *{10}* Abimelech said, "What is this you have done to us?"

H 2 His hypothesis of transgression: One of the people might easily have lain with your wife,

H 3 His concern about guilt: and you would have brought guilt upon us."

G 6 Abimelech's solemn warning: *{11}* So Abimelech charged all the people, saying, "He who touches this man or his wife shall surely be put to death." 26:11

D 2 God's *blessing* of Isaac precipitating envious Philistine expulsion 26:12-17

E 1 Isaac's harvest: *{12}* Now Isaac sowed in that land and reaped in the same year a hundredfold. 26:12a

E 2 [Yahweh's](#) blessing: And the LORD blessed him,⁷⁸⁷ [26:12b] 26:12b-14b

G 1 His wealth: *{13}* and the man became rich, and continued to grow richer until he became very wealthy; 26:13b

G 2 His livestock: *{14}* for he had possessions of flocks and herds 26:14a

G 3 His household: and a great household, 26:14b

E 3 The Philistines' mistreatment of Isaac 26:14c-16

G 1 Their envy: so that the Philistines envied him.⁷⁸⁸ 26:14c

⁷⁸⁷ Gen. 26:12 - the LORD blessed him: Clearly [Yahweh's](#) blessing of Isaac resulted in great wealth and prosperity (Gen. 26:12-14). The blessing resulting in material prosperity was God's prerogative toward the patriarchs of [Israel](#) and toward [Israel](#) the nation, as long as she was obedient to God (Deut. 28:1-14). Disobedience resulted in cursing (Deut. 28:15-68). God has never promised physical prosperity to the [Church](#) as a result of blessing. The [Church's](#) blessings are spiritual (Eph. 1:3-14). The hucksters of the "[Health and Wealth Gospel](#)" will one day have to give an account to Jesus for their false teaching.

⁷⁸⁸ Gen. 26:14 - the Philistines envied him: Fallen human nature being what it is the Philistines envied, were jealous of ([Piel Imperfect](#) of *qânâ'* (7065) Isaac and his wealth. Their jealousy was so overwhelming they went to the trouble of making life difficult for him and his herdsmen by stopping up the wells his father Abraham had dug (Gen. 26:14-15). Socialism, which is gaining ground in America, is simply an expression of evil greed. Wealthy people don't deserve what they have, so I will make life as hard for them as possible by imposing on them all manner of restrictions and taxes. Moreover I will do everything I can to redistribute their wealth so I can have money I haven't earned.

- G 2 Their spiteful stopping of the wells [Abraham](#) had dug: {15} Now all the wells which his father's servants had dug in the days of Abraham his father, the Philistines stopped up by filling them with earth. 26:15
- G 3 Abimelech's dismissal of Isaac: {16} Then Abimelech said to Isaac, "Go away from us, for you are too powerful for us." 26:16
- E 4 Isaac's departure to Gerar: {17} And Isaac departed from there and camped in the valley of Gerar, and settled there. 26:17
- D 3 Quarrels over well-rights 26:18-22
 - E 1 The quarrel over Esek
 - G 1 Isaac's redigging [Abraham's](#) old wells: {18} Then Isaac dug again the wells of water which had been dug in the days of his father Abraham, 26:18
 - H 1 The need to redig: for the Philistines had stopped them up after the death of Abraham;⁷⁸⁹
 - H 2 The name reaffirmation: and he gave them the same names which his father had given them.
 - G 2 The confiscation by the herdsmen of Gerar 26:19-20a
 - H 1 Isaac's new well: {19} But when Isaac's servants dug in the valley and found there a well of flowing water, 26:19
 - H 2 The spurious claim of Gerar: {20} the herdsmen of Gerar quarreled with the herdsmen of Isaac, saying, "The water is ours!"⁷⁹⁰ 26:20a
 - G 3 Isaac's naming of the well: So he named the well Esek,⁷⁹¹ because they contended with him. 26:20b

⁷⁸⁹ Gen. 26:18 - the Philistines had stopped them up after the death of Abraham: If someone had gone to all the trouble of digging wells, and he was no longer there, why would you ruin his wells? Why would you not use them yourself? Obviously the Philistines had envied Abraham also, and had ruined his wells out of spite. That is the curious heritage of today's Palestinians, and the Arabs generally, who inhabited the land of Israel after the forced departure of most of the Hebrew people. The living conditions have been nothing short of squalid. Petulant and persistent envy becomes a self-defeating way of life.

⁷⁹⁰ Gen. 26:20 - The water is ours!: This is ever the mind-set of socialism. Arbitrarily insisting that something good that others have earned is not theirs, but yours! Socialism is greed on steroids, but small people everywhere warm to the idea. And it never works!

⁷⁹¹ Gen. 26:20 - Esek: Hebrew, 'Êseq ([6230](#)), meaning, "contention." This is the only occurrence of this word in the OT.

- E 2 The quarrel over Sitnah: {21} Then they dug another well,⁷⁹² and they quarreled over it too, so he named it Sitnah.⁷⁹³ 26:21
- E 3 The success of Rehoboth 26:22
- G 1 His departure: {22} He moved away from there
- G 2 His effort: and dug another well,
- G 3 No confrontation: and they did not quarrel over it;
- G 4 His grateful naming: so he named it Rehoboth,⁷⁹⁴ for he said, "At last the LORD has made room for us,⁷⁹⁵ and we will be fruitful in the land."
- D 4 [Yahweh's](#) appearance to Isaac reaffirming His *blessing* of Isaac for the sake of [Abraham](#) 26:23-25
- E 1 His departure to Beersheba: {23} Then he went up from there to Beersheba. 26:23
- E 2 [Yahweh's](#) appearance to Isaac: {24} The LORD appeared to him the same night and said, 26:24
- G 1 His Self-Identification: "I am the God of your father Abraham;
- G 2 His calming presence: Do not fear, for I am with you.
- G 3 His promised *blessing*: I will bless you,⁷⁹⁶

⁷⁹² Gen. 26:21 - Then they dug another well: Isaac exhibited the spirit of non-resistance (Deut. 32:35; Prov. 20:22; 25:21-22; cf. Rom. 12:18-21).

⁷⁹³ Gen. 26:21 - Sitnah: Hebrew, *Šitnâh* ([7586](#)), "strife" – used only here in the entire OT.

⁷⁹⁴ Gen. 26:22 - Rehoboth: Hebrew, Rechôbôth ([7344](#)), "wide places or streets," used in Gen. 10:11; 26:22; 36:37; 1 Chron. 1:48.

⁷⁹⁵ Gen. 26:22 - At last the LORD has made room for us: Isaac was, at times, a man of remarkable spiritual discernment, a trait that showed in his speech. He practiced non-resistance toward his "enemies," and when respite finally came, he attributed that relief to [Yahweh](#). He believed that he would now be "fruitful in the land" because of [Yahweh's](#) action on his behalf. Our faith in God (or lack thereof) is to be seen in our conversation, our attitudes, and our actions. It is not surprising that, in the next paragraph, [Yahweh](#) appeared to Isaac (Gen. 26:23-24).

⁷⁹⁶ Gen. 26:24 - I will bless you: [Yahweh](#) is reaffirming to Isaac the [Abrahamic Covenant](#), made first, of course, with [Abraham](#), and then specifically extended to Isaac (Gen. 26:2-5). Here [Yahweh](#) repeats the component of **BLESSING**. "I will bless you" is the [Piel Perfect](#) of *bârak* ([1288](#)). The verb has the idea of bending the knee. Ordinarily, men bow the knee and bless God. But out of God's mercy, love, and grace, He chooses to bless men! Part of that blessing is the multiplication of Isaac's **SEED** (Gen. 26:24). This conversation of God with Isaac omits any reference to **LAND**, but God had already spoken of the **LAND** component in Gen. 26:3.

- G 4 His promised multiplication: and multiply your descendants,⁷⁹⁷
- G 5 His motivation: For the sake of My servant Abraham."
- E 3 Isaac's response 26:25
 - G 1 Altar: {25} So he built an altar there
 - G 2 Worship: and called upon the name of the LORD,
 - G 3 Residence: and pitched his tent there;
 - G 4 Water: and there Isaac's servants dug a well.
- D 5 Abimelech's obtaining of a peace treaty with Isaac in view of the latter's obvious Divine *blessing* 26:26-33
 - E 1 The approach of Abimelech: {26} Then Abimelech came to him from Gerar with his adviser Ahuzzath and Phicol the commander of his army. 26:26
 - E 2 The reproach of Isaac: {27} Isaac said to them, "Why have you come to me, since you hate me and have sent me away from you?" 26:27
 - E 3 The response of the Philistines – their observation of the blessing of [Yahweh!](#) {28} They said, "We see plainly that the LORD has been with you; 26:28a
 - E 4 The proposal of the Philistines 26:28b-29
 - G 1 The form of a binding covenant: so we said, 'Let there now be an oath between us, *even* between you and us, and let us make a covenant with you, 26:28b
 - G 2 The terms of the covenant 26:29
 - H 1 Their request for non-harm: {29} that you will do us no harm,
 - H 2 Their own purported policy of good
 - J 1 Their purported non-harm: just as we have not touched you
 - J 2 Their purported good: and have done to you nothing but good

⁷⁹⁷ Gen. 26:24 - and multiply your descendants: “descendants” translates the singular of *zera'* (2233), “seed.” This promise of God refers, of course, to His commitment to multiply the **SEED** of Isaac, the **SEED** component of the [Abrahamic Covenant](#).

J 3 Their peaceful parting acknowledging [Yahweh's blessing](#): and have sent you away in peace. You are now the blessed of the LORD."⁷⁹⁸

E 5 Isaac's agreement 26:30-31

G 1 His provision of a feast: {30} Then he made them a feast, and they ate and drank. 26:30

G 2 Their exchange of oaths: {31} In the morning they arose early and exchanged oaths; 26:31a

G 3 Their peaceful departure: then Isaac sent them away and they departed from him in peace. 26:31b

E 6 Isaac's "re-founding" of Beersheba 26:32-33

G 1 The finding of a well: {32} Now it came about on the same day, that Isaac's servants came in and told him about the well which they had dug, and said to him, "We have found water." 26:32

G 2 The naming of the well: {33} So he called it Shibah;⁷⁹⁹ 26:33a

G 3 The origin of Beersheba: therefore the name of the city is Beersheba⁸⁰⁰ to this day. 26:33b

C 3 The thwarting of Isaac's intention to give the covenanted *blessing* to Esau instead of Jacob 26:34 - 28:9

D 1 Esau's unhappy [Canaanite](#) marriages 26:34-35

⁷⁹⁸ Gen. 26:29 - You are now the blessed of the LORD: It is fascinating that Abimelech, Ahuzzath, and Phicol would admit officially, at least to Isaac, that the latter was, indeed, blessed by Yahweh, Isaac's God. Abimelech had asked Isaac to leave the area (Gen. 26:16), and Isaac had done so peaceably (Gen. 26:17). Why this sudden journey to Isaac and request for a covenant (Gen. 26:28)? The text does not answer the question. But I can only surmise that Isaac's departure at the request of Abimelech had noticeably decreased the prosperity of the Philistines in some tangible ways. They were seeing the results of God's promise to [Abraham](#) that He would bless those who bless him and curse those who cursed him (Gen. 12:3). God had promised that to [Abraham](#), but it seems God was also fulfilling that in terms of [Abraham's](#) son, Isaac. The Philistines had chosen deliberately to curse Isaac by asking him to depart. Now they were suffering the adverse consequences. Their hope was that, in making a covenant with Isaac, they could regain the blessings they had previously enjoyed by allowing Isaac to stay among them.

I believe that promise is still true today, and on an international basis. God blesses the nations who bless Israel, and He curses the nations who curse Israel. That is one reason why America, which has departed so far from God, still enjoys a remarkable degree of prosperity and supremacy in the world.

⁷⁹⁹ Gen. 26:33 - Shiba: "Seven" – Has the connotation of "oath," probably because seven lambs were used in the agreement (see Gen. 26:31). Beersheba means "Well of the Seven." [Abraham](#) had made an agreement there also, giving the well its earliest history (Gen. 21:28-32).

⁸⁰⁰ Gen. 26:33 - Beersheba: Hebrew consists of two words, *be'ér* (875) and *sheba'* (7651), "seven." Literally, it means "Well of Seven." However, the two nouns in immediate succession are treated, in Hebrew lexicons, as a single entity, *be'ér sheba'* (884), "well of the seven-fold oath." The site of this well became a city, that of [Beersheba](#).

- E 1 Esau's marriage at age forty: {34} When Esau was forty years old he married 26:34
 - G 1 Judith the daughter of Beerli the Hittite,
 - G 2 and Basemath the daughter of Elon the Hittite;
 - G 3 To Judith, daughter of Beerli the Hittite
 - G 4 To Basemath, daughter of Elon the Hittite
- E 2 The grieved reaction of Isaac and Rebekah: {35} and they brought grief⁸⁰¹ to Isaac and Rebekah.⁸⁰² 26:35
- D 2 Isaac's determination to give the covenanted *blessing* to Esau 27:1-4
 - E 1 Isaac's physical condition 27:1a
 - G 1 His advanced age: {1} Now it came about, when Isaac was old⁸⁰³ 27:1
 - G 2 His impaired eyesight: and his eyes were too dim to see,
 - E 2 Isaac's desire to bless Esau 27:1b-4
 - G 1 His calling of his older son, Esau: that he called his older son Esau and said to him, "My son." And he said to him, "Here I am." 27:1b
 - G 2 His explanation of his impending death: {2} Isaac said, "Behold now, I am old *and* I do not know the day of my death. 27:2
 - G 3 His request for his favorite food to be brought to him 27:3-4
 - H 1 Take: {3} "Now then, please take your gear, your quiver and your bow,
 - H 2 Go: and go out to the field
 - H 3 Hunt: and hunt game for me;

⁸⁰¹ Gen. 26:35 - brought grief: [NASB](#) note: "A literal translation: *were a bitterness of spirit to*"

⁸⁰² Gen. 26:35 - Isaac and Rebekah: Note that these two had taken special pains, at the behest of [Abraham](#), to marry into the faith of [Yahweh](#). Their son Esau had not their heart for [Yahweh](#), and did not follow their example. Isaac and Rebekah's disaffection with Esau's wives will come into play in the next chapter as Rebekah uses marriage as a justification for sending Jacob away from Esau to her relatives in Paddan-Aram (Gen. 27:46-28:2).

⁸⁰³ Gen. 27:1 - old: "Isaac was 137 at this time, but he lived 43 more years (cf. Gen. 35:28)." Charles Ryrie, *Ryrie Study Bible* ([RSB](#)).

H 4 Prepare: {4} and prepare a savory dish for me such as I love,

H 5 Bring: and bring it to me that I may eat,

G 4 His intention to **ble**ss Esau before he died: so that my soul may bless⁸⁰⁴ you before I die.”⁸⁰⁵ 27:4

⁸⁰⁴ Gen. 27:4 - bless: The Hebrew verb is *barak* (1288), used extensively in Genesis 27 (Gen. 27:4, 7, 10, 19, 23, 25, 27, 29, 30, 31, 33, 34, 38, 41). The corresponding noun used in Genesis 27 is *berakah* (1293), blessing (Gen. 27:12, 35, 36, 38, 41). Genesis 27 thus constitutes a key chapter in the discussion of *ble*ssing in the book of Genesis. This chapter narrates another battle between the *elect* seed of *Abraham* and the non-elect seed. It was the intention of Isaac to pass on the *Abrahamic ble*ssing to Esau. It was the intention of Esau to receive that blessing. But Esau did not have the faith of Jacob, and he was not chosen by God to inherit the *Abrahamic ble*ssing. Rebekah and Jacob, though both devious, possessed faith. Jacob had been chosen by God to inherit the blessing of *Abraham*, and inherit he would. Esau's people eventually lived in and took over the territory east and south of the Dead Sea today controlled by Jordan. Esau also married into the line of Ishmael, and some of his people were Arabs. These live in the land of modern Saudi Arabia, but have also permeated much of the Middle East. The descendants of Esau and Ishmael have no inherent claim upon the holy land. They did not inherit the blessing of *Abraham*, which God *sovereignly* chose to bestow upon Isaac, and then upon Jacob and his twelve sons.

⁸⁰⁵ Gen. 27:4 - bless you before I die: Rebekah had experienced a difficult pregnancy, so much so that she had inquired of *Yahweh* as to why there was such turmoil within her womb. *Yahweh* had revealed to her that she was bearing twins, and that each of her sons would father separate nations. But He had also revealed that the people of the younger son would be stronger than the people of the older, and that the older would serve the younger (Gen. 25:22-23).

It is abundantly clear from what follows that Rebekah believed this prophecy and took it to heart; but that Isaac did not. Doubtless Rebekah had conveyed *Yahweh's* words to her husband Isaac, but he had ignored them all his life. He was motivated by two factors: (1) his cultural understanding that the first-born inherited the leading role amongst his siblings and should receive a greater share of the family inheritance; and (2) his own personal preference for Esau and his athletic, outdoorsman, big-game hunting abilities which catered to Isaac's proclivity for the taste of game (Gen. 25:27-28).

It is also clear from what followed that Isaac had every intention of passing on the blessing that *Yahweh* had given to his father *Abraham*, and that he himself had inherited from *Abraham*, on to his own first-born, Esau. This contravened *Yahweh's* announced intention to convey the *Abrahamic ble*ssing to the second-born, Jacob. So Isaac was following his own heart, not the heart of God. Candidly, he was rebelling against *Yahweh* and *Yahweh's* eternal *sovereign* plans.

While the subsequent dishonesty of both Rebekah and Jacob cannot be condoned, it can at least be explained. Rebekah was determined that what *Yahweh* had announced to her would not be undone by her own husband. "By hook or by crook" she was determined that the *Abrahamic ble*ssing would be passed on to her favorite son, Jacob.

There is much in this historical narrative that is sad – the favoritism of each parent, the dishonesty and deception of Rebekah and Jacob against a defenseless, blind Isaac, and the tragic consequences of dishonesty that continue on down the family's history. But there is one thing, at least, that is noble. Rebekah was determined that God's revealed will would not be overthrown. Her motives were less than pure. She was undoubtedly motivated by her own personal favoritism toward Jacob (25:28). But at least she was operating in harmony with God's revealed will. Isaac was not.

What would have happened if Rebekah and Jacob would *not* have been dishonest and deceived Isaac into giving Jacob the *Abrahamic ble*ssing? The answer is that we as readers are not given the answer to that question. To attempt to answer that question is an exercise in futility. In the *sovereignty* of God, this chapter accurately narrates how matters turned out. And it has been confirmed to us through the *Apostle Paul* that God had *sovereignly* chosen the younger son, Jacob, over the older son, Esau (Rom. 9:10-16).

The Bible everywhere proclaims the doctrine of *Election*. God had chosen Jacob, not Esau, and His choice had nothing to do with the moral worth of either, for when He had chosen Jacob, neither child had done anything good or evil (Rom. 9:11). *Election* serves God's purposes, not man's (Rom. 9:11, 14-16). *Election* is one of the most difficult teachings for many Christians to understand and to accept. But *election* is just as true for any of us who have trusted in Jesus in the *Church age* as it was true for *Abraham* and his descendants of promise back then.

Equally sadly, there are many Christians who are convinced of New Testament *election*, but who countermand Old Testament *election*. They believe the *Church* has permanently replaced *Israel*, and that the promises God made to *Abraham*, Isaac, and Jacob have been invalidated. Nothing could be further from the truth. God's gifts and calling

- D 3 Rebekah's plan to detour the covenanted *blessing* to Jacob by deceit 27:5-17
 - E 1 Rebekah's overhearing Isaac's plan to bless Esau: {5} Rebekah was listening while Isaac spoke to his son Esau. 27:5a
 - E 2 Rebekah's conversation with Jacob 27:5-13
 - G 1 Her timing: So when Esau went to the field to hunt for game to bring *home*, 27:5b
 - G 2 Her report to Jacob 27:6-7
 - H 1 The conversation overheard: {6} Rebekah said to her son Jacob, “Behold, I heard your father speak to your brother Esau, saying, 27:6
 - H 2 Isaac's request for game so that he could **ble**ss Esau before his death 27:7
 - J 1 Bring: {7} ‘Bring me *some* game
 - J 2 Prepare: and prepare a savory dish for me,
 - J 3 Eat: that I may eat,
 - J 4 Bless: and bless you in the presence of the LORD ⁸⁰⁶ before my death.’
- G 3 Her instructions 27:8-10
 - H 1 To Jacob to obey: {8} “Now therefore, my son, listen to me as I command you. 27:8
 - H 2 To bring two choice kids from the flock so she could prepare a savory dish for Isaac: {9} “Go now to the flock and bring me two choice young goats from there, that I may prepare them *as* a savory dish for your father, such as he loves. 27:9
 - H 3 To bring the dish to his father to obtain his **ble**ssing before his death: {10} “Then you shall bring *it* to your father, that he may eat, so that he may bless you before his death.” 27:10

are irrevocable (Rom. 11:29). If God cannot be trusted to keep His [election](#) of believing [Israel](#) as a nation (Rom. 11:26-27), why are we so biased as to think He will keep His [election](#) of us believing Gentiles today? That, to me, conveys an attitude of undiminished arrogance on the part of us Gentiles, an arrogance that Paul clearly warned us to avoid (Rom. 11:17-27). [WordExplain](#) adamantly opposes [Replacement Theology](#), also known as [Supersessionism](#).

⁸⁰⁶ Gen. 27:7 - bless you in the presence of the LORD: Hebrews 11:20 – By faith Isaac blessed Jacob and Esau concerning things to come.

G 4 Jacob's objections 27:11-13

- H 1 Because of his smoothness contrasted with Esau's hairiness: {11} Jacob answered his mother Rebekah, "Behold, Esau my brother is a hairy man and I am a smooth man. 27:11
- H 2 His fear of being found out: {12} "Perhaps my father will feel me, then I will be as a deceiver in his sight, 27:12a
- H 3 His fear of being cursed instead of **blessed**: and I will bring upon myself a curse and not a blessing." 27:12b
- H 4 His mother's response: {13} But his mother said to him, 27:13
 - J 1 "Your curse be on me, my son;
 - J 2 only obey my voice, and go, get *them* for me."

G 5 Jacob's compliance 27:14

- H 1 {14} So he went and got *them*, and brought *them* to his mother;
- H 2 and his mother made savory food such as his father loved.

G 6 Rebekah's disguise of Jacob 27:15-17

- H 1 Her clothing Jacob with Esau's best garments: {15} Then Rebekah took the best garments of Esau her elder son, which were with her in the house, and put them on Jacob her younger son. 27:15
- H 2 Her placing the skins of the kids on Jacob's hands and neck: {16} And she put the skins of the young goats on his hands and on the smooth part of his neck. 27:16
- H 3 Her giving the savory food and bread to Jacob: {17} She also gave the savory food and the bread, which she had made, to her son Jacob. 27:17

D 4 The deceived Isaac grants Jacob the covenantal *blessing* he had intended for Esau 27:18-29

E 1 The description of the deception 27:18-27a

- G 1 Jacob's presentation of himself to his father: {18} Then he came to his father and said, "My father." 27:18a
- G 2 Isaac's query about his identity 27:18b-19

- H 1 The query: And he said, “Here I am. Who are you, my son?” 27:18b
- H 2 Jacob's portrayal of himself to his father as Esau 27:19
 - J 1 His identification of himself as Esau, his father's firstborn: {19} Jacob said to his father, “I am Esau your firstborn;
 - J 2 His statement of his obedience: I have done as you told me. Get up,
 - J 3 His request to Isaac to eat so that the latter might **ble**ss him: please, sit and eat of my game, that you may bless me.”
- G 3 Isaac's query about his speed 27:20
 - H 1 His query: {20} Isaac said to his son, “How is it that you have *it* so quickly, my son?”
 - H 2 Jacob's reply: And he said, “Because the LORD your God caused *it* to happen⁸⁰⁷ to me.”
- G 4 Isaac's query about his personal characteristics 27:21-23
 - H 1 His request to come closer to feel the identity of the speaker: {21} Then Isaac said to Jacob, “Please come close, that I may feel you, my son, whether you are really my son Esau or not.” 27:21
 - H 2 His vacillation about the voice: {22} So Jacob came close to Isaac his father, and he felt him and said, “The voice is the voice of Jacob, 27:22a
 - H 3 His conviction about the hands: but the hands are the hands of Esau.” 27:22b
 - H 4 His inability to recognize Jacob 27:23
 - J 1 The reason: {23} He did not recognize him, because his hands were hairy like his brother Esau’s hands;
 - J 2 The consequent **ble**ssing: so he blessed him.

⁸⁰⁷ Gen. 27:20 - God caused it to happen: Jacob’s lie is breath-taking. Yet there was an element of truth. God had decreed that the older would serve the younger. And it was happening! And yet lying is wrong. Jacob was sowing an evil seed, and he would reap an evil harvest. Later on in this historical narrative, his Uncle Laban would deceive Jacob horribly, and repeatedly. Most cruelly, eleven of Jacob’s sons would deceive him into thinking for years that his favorite son was dead, killed by a wild animal. We have a saying, “What goes around, comes around.” We reap what we sow.

G 5 Isaac's query about his name 27:24

H 1 His query: {24} And he said, "Are you really my son Esau?"

H 2 Jacob's response: And he said, "I am."

G 6 Isaac's partaking of the food 27:25

H 1 The request: {25} So he said, "Bring *it* to me, and I will eat of my son's game, that I may bless you."

H 2 The prepared meal: And he brought *it* to him, and he ate;

H 3 Wine: he also brought him wine and he drank.

G 7 Isaac's confirmation through intimacy 27:26-27

H 1 Isaac's request: {26} Then his father Isaac said to him, "Please come close and kiss me, my son." 27:26

H 2 Jacob's coming close and kissing his father: {27} So he came close and kissed him; 27:27a

H 3 Isaac's smelling of Esau's clothes, which Jacob was wearing: and when he smelled the smell of his garments, 27:27b

E 2 The description of the **blessing** 27:27c-29

G 1 The blessing of agriculture: he blessed him and said, [27:27c] 27:27c-28

H 1 "See, the smell of my son is like the smell of a field which the LORD has blessed; 27:27d

H 2 {28} Now may God give you of the dew of heaven, 27:28a

H 3 And of the fatness of the earth, 27:28b

H 4 And an abundance of grain and new wine; 27:28c

G 2 The blessing of [sovereignty](#) 27:29a

H 1 International superiority

J 1 {29} May peoples serve you,

J 2 And nations bow down to you;

H 2 Family superiority

- J 1 Be master of your brothers,⁸⁰⁸
- J 2 And may your mother's sons bow down to you.
- G 3 The blessing of [Abraham](#) 27:29b
 - H 1 Cursed be those who curse you,
 - H 2 And blessed be those who bless you.”⁸⁰⁹
- D 5 Isaac's secondary *blessing* of the enraged Esau 27:30-41
 - E 1 Esau's return from hunting 27:30-31
 - G 1 His timing 27:30
 - H 1 *Blessing: {30}* Now it came about, as soon as Isaac had finished blessing Jacob,
 - H 2 Departure: and Jacob had hardly gone out from the presence of Isaac his father,
 - H 3 Arrival: that Esau his brother came in from his hunting.
 - G 2 His preparation of savory food for his father: *{31}* Then he also made savory food, and brought it to his father; 27:31a
 - E 2 Esau's request of Isaac to eat of his game and bless him 27:31b-32
 - G 1 Esau's request for his *blessing*: and he said to his father, “Let my father arise and eat of his son's game, that you may bless me.” 27:31b
 - G 2 Isaac's clarification of identity: *{32}* Isaac his father said to him, “Who are you?” 27:32a
 - G 3 Esau's response: And he said, “I am your son, your firstborn, Esau.” 27:32b
 - E 3 Isaac's incredulous response 27:33
 - G 1 His violent trembling: *{33}* Then Isaac trembled violently, and said,

⁸⁰⁸ Gen. 27:29 - Be master of your brothers: Though he was completely duped, Isaac was giving the blessing of sibling superiority to Jacob just as God had promised to Rebekah before the boys were even born (Gen. 25:23; cf. Rom. 9:10-13)!

⁸⁰⁹ Gen. 27:29 - Cursed be those who curse you, and blessed be those who bless you: This cursing and blessing comes straight from the original promise of God to [Abraham](#) (Gen. 12:3). This is truly remarkable!

- G 2 His question: “Who was he then that hunted game and brought *it* to me, so that I ate of all *of it* before you came, and blessed him?”
- G 3 His pronouncement: Yes, and he shall be blessed.”⁸¹⁰
- E 4 Esau's bitter plea to be *blessed* 27:34
- G 1 His emotion: {34} When Esau heard the words of his father, he cried out with an exceedingly great and bitter cry,
- G 2 His plea for a *blessing*: and said to his father, “Bless me, *even* me also, O my father!”
- E 5 Isaac and Esau's discussion of Jacob 27:35-36a
- G 1 Isaac's analysis 27:35
- H 1 Jacob’s deceit: {35} And he said, “Your brother came deceitfully
- H 2 Jacob’s stealing of Esau’s *blessing*: and has taken away your blessing.”
- G 2 Esau's despairing analysis 27:36a
- H 1 {36} Then he said, “Is he not rightly named Jacob,⁸¹¹ for he has supplanted me these two times?
- H 2 He took away my birthright,
- H 3 and behold, now he has taken away my blessing.”
- E 6 Isaac's secondary *blessing* of Esau 27:36b-40
- G 1 Esau's plea: And he said, “Have you not reserved a blessing for me?” 27:36b
- G 2 Isaac's reply: {37} But Isaac replied to Esau, 27:37
- H 1 Jacob’s mastery: “Behold, I have made him your master,
- H 2 Esau’s servitude: and all his relatives I have given to him

⁸¹⁰ Gen. 27:33 - Yes, and he shall be blessed: “Isaac realized his blessing had been given in irreversible legal form” (Charles C. Ryrie, [Ryrie Study Bible](#)). JTB: However, this was not merely a legal technicality – it was an irreversible prophecy. Isaac served as a [prophet](#). What he had predicted could not be changed.

⁸¹¹ Gen. 27:36 - rightly named Jacob: “The Hebrew *ya 'aqob*, [3290](#) (‘Jacob’) is similar to *'aqeb*, [6119](#) (‘heel’). From Jacob’s grasping Esau’s heel at birth came the nickname ‘heel-holder,’ (i.e. one who outwits by trickery) ‘just as in wrestling an attempt may be made to throw the opponent by grasping the heel’” (Thomas Constable, [Notes on Genesis, 2019](#), comments on Genesis 25:26, concluding with his quotation of [Keil and Delitzsch](#), 1:268.

as servants;

H 3 Jacob's bounty: and with grain and new wine I have sustained him.

H 4 Isaac's powerlessness: Now as for you then, what can I do, my son?"

G 3 Esau's pathetic request 27:38

H 1 His query of Esau's power to *bless*: {38} Esau said to his father, "Do you have only one blessing, my father?"

H 2 His plea for *blessing*: Bless me, *even* me also, O my father."

H 3 His chagrin: So Esau lifted his voice and wept.⁸¹²

G 4 Isaac's *blessing* of *Esau*: {39} Then Isaac his father answered and said to him, 27:39-40

H 1 Esau's dwelling 27:39

J 1 "Behold, away from the fertility of the earth shall be your dwelling,⁸¹³

J 2 And away from the dew of heaven from above.

H 2 Esau's existence 27:40

⁸¹² Gen. 27:38 - Esau lifted up his voice and wept: The writer of Hebrews gives a fascinating perspective (Heb. 12:15-17):

15 See to it that no one comes short of the grace of God; that no root of bitterness springing up causes trouble, and by it many be defiled; 16 that there be no immoral or godless person like Esau, who sold his own birthright for a single meal. 17 For you know that even afterwards, when he desired to inherit the blessing, he was rejected, for he found no place for repentance, though he sought for it with tears.

[Thomas Constable](#) states, concerning Heb. 12:16-17,

"Whether or not Esau was saved is not relevant to this discussion. The writer uses him as an illustration of the fact that the saved can lose their firstborn inheritance rights. His example is applied to those who have come to the church of the firstborn ones (Heb. 12:23).

By way of application for modern day Christians, Constable explained to me in a personal email, "... this would be a double portion of God's blessing in some form."

⁸¹³ Gen. 27:39 - away from the fertility of the earth shall be your dwelling: [Thomas Constable](#) comments,

The "mountains of Edom" (Esau's "dwelling") are some of the most desolate and barren of any on earth today. They stand to the southeast of the Dead Sea. Esau's descendants would subsist by hunting people, just as Esau had subsisted by hunting game.

- J 1 Warlike: 40 “By your sword you shall live,⁸¹⁴
- J 2 Servile: And your brother you shall serve;
- J 3 Rebellious: But it shall come about when you become restless,
- J 4 Revolutionary: That you will break his yoke from your neck.”

G 5 Esau's grudge against Jacob 27:41

- H 1 The fact of his grudge: {41} So Esau bore a grudge against Jacob
- H 2 The source of his grudge – paternal *blessing*: because of the blessing with which his father had blessed him;
- H 3 The result of his grudge: and Esau said to himself,
 - J 1 Anticipation: “The days of mourning for my father are near;
 - J 2 Assassination: then I will kill my brother Jacob.”⁸¹⁵

D 6 Isaac's cognizant bequeathal of the Abrahamic *blessing* to Jacob 27:42 - 28:9

E 1 Rebekah's plan to protect Jacob from Esau 27:42-46

G 1 Her overhearing Esau's plot to kill Jacob 27:42

- H 1 Report: {42} Now when the words of her elder son Esau were reported to Rebekah,⁸¹⁶
- H 2 Request: she sent and called her younger son Jacob,
- H 3 Information: and said to him, “Behold your brother Esau

⁸¹⁴ Gen. 27:40 - By your sword you shall live: Esau’s descendants would be warlike. Blood from the line of Esau exists in certain Arab contexts. The Arabs have certainly been warlike. Nothing more aptly illustrates that statement than the sad history of Islam. One Israeli with whom I corresponded, not a believer in Jesus, described Islam as “a murderous desert cult.” A more apt description could not be stated.

⁸¹⁵ Gen. 27:41 - then I will kill my brother Jacob: I am reminded of the words of James (James 1:14-15): 14 “But each one is tempted when he is carried away and enticed by his own lust. 15 Then when lust has conceived, it gives birth to sin; and when sin is accomplished, it brings forth death.”

⁸¹⁶ Gen. 27:42 - when the words of her elder son Esau were reported to Rebekah: The degree of intrigue, deceit, back-stabbing, ill-will, and dysfunction in this family is amazing. Rebekah was quite a manipulator. She manipulated her son Jacob to deceive her husband, Isaac. Then she manipulated Jacob into fleeing for safety. Then she manipulated her husband, Isaac into blessing Jacob’s departure to Syria – not for safety, but for marriage. You couldn’t dream up this plot!

is consoling himself concerning you *by planning* to kill you.

G 2 Her warning Jacob to flee 27:43-45

H 1 Her exhortations 27:43

J 1 To heed: {43} “Now therefore, my son, obey my voice,

J 2 To flee: and arise, flee to Haran, to my brother Laban!

H 2 Her expectation of the duration of Jacob’s exile 27:44-45

J 1 Brevity: {44} “Stay with him a few days, 27:44a

J 2 Amelioration: until your brother’s fury subsides, 27:44b

J 3 Diminution: {45} until your brother’s anger against you subsides 27:45a

J 4 Forgetfulness: and he forgets what you did to him. 27:45b

H 3 Her plan: Then I will send and get you from there. 27:45c

H 4 Her rationale: Why should I be bereaved of you both in one day?” 27:45d

G 3 Her manipulation of Isaac 27:46

H 1 Her disapproval of the daughters of Heth: {46} Rebekah said to Isaac, “I am tired of living because of the daughters of Heth;

H 2 Her fear of Jacob’s potential marriage

J 1 Her hypothesis: if Jacob takes a wife from the daughters of Heth, like these, from the daughters of the land,

J 2 Her projected dismay: what good will my life be to me?”

E 2 Isaac's acquiescence and Abrahamic *blessing* of the plan for Jacob to secure a God-fearing cousin in marriage 28:1-5

G 1 Isaac's calling of Jacob and *blessing* him: {1} So Isaac called Jacob and blessed him 28:1a

G 2 Isaac's instructions to Jacob about marriage 28:1b-2

H 1 His charge to Jacob: and charged him, and said to him, “You shall not take a wife from the daughters of Canaan. 28:1b

H 2 His instructions to go marry a cousin 28:2

J 1 Location: {2} “Arise, go to Paddan-aram, to the house of Bethuel your mother’s father;

J 2 Action: and from there take to yourself a wife from the daughters of Laban your mother’s brother.

G 3 Isaac's bequeathing the Abrahamic *blessing* to Jacob 28:3-4

H 1 BLESSING – Divine blessing: {3} “May God Almighty bless you⁸¹⁷ 28:3a

H 2 DESCENDANTS – Multiplied descendants 28:3b

J 1 and make you fruitful and multiply you,⁸¹⁸

J 2 that you may become a company of peoples.

H 3 LAND – The land of promise 28:4

J 1 Abrahamic blessing: {4}⁸¹⁹ “May He also give you the blessing of Abraham,

J 2 To Jacob and his line: to you and to your descendants with you,

J 3 Possession of the land of promise: that you may

⁸¹⁷ Gen. 28:3 - May God Almighty bless you: The blessing God gave to [Abraham](#) in Genesis 12:1-3 consisted of three components – blessing, descendants, and land. Here Isaac blessed Jacob.

⁸¹⁸ Gen. 28:3 - make you fruitful and multiply you: A second component of the Abrahamic blessing (Gen. 12:1-3) is multiplied descendants. Here Isaac passes that blessing on to Jacob.

⁸¹⁹ Gen. 28:4 - May He also give you the blessing of Abraham: Whereas in chapter 27 Isaac unwittingly blessed Jacob while thinking he was blessing Esau, here in chapter 28 he knowingly and deliberately gave the formulaic Abrahamic blessing to Jacob. By now he had conceded it was God’s will, and he volitionally committed to it. The Abrahamic blessing was first given in Genesis 12:1-3. It consists of these three things: (1) the blessing of [Yahweh](#), (2) multiplied descendants, and (3) land – a specific plot of real estate (Gen. 15:18-21; 17:8) called [Canaan](#) (Gen. 11:31; 12:5; 13:12; 17:8, etc.), and now properly labeled “[Israel](#)” (not “occupied territory” or “West Bank”). Further passages reveal that this three-fold blessing was buttressed by an unconditional, unilateral [covenant](#) on the part of [Yahweh](#) (Gen. 15:7-21), that it was eternal (Gen. 13:14-15; 17:7-8), and that it is irrevocable (Rom. 11:1-29). No amount of tortured New Testament exegesis can relegate these truths into a metaphorical fulfillment in the [Church](#) or in the [Messiah](#). For more information on the [Abrahamic Covenant](#), see also “[The Abrahamic Covenant, An Everlasting Covenant](#).”

possess the land of your sojournings, which God gave to Abraham.”⁸²⁰

G 4 Isaac’s sending of Jacob away 28:5

H 1 {5} Then Isaac sent Jacob away,

H 2 The travel: and he went to Paddan-aram

H 3 The family

J 1 to Laban, son of Bethuel the Aramean,

J 2 the brother of Rebekah, the mother of Jacob and Esau.

E 3 Esau's belated attempt to secure a wife with relative integrity 28:6-9

G 1 Esau’s witnessing of Isaac’s treatment of Jacob 28:6

H 1 His blessing: {6} Now Esau saw that Isaac had blessed Jacob

H 2 His dispatch: and sent him away to Paddan-aram

H 3 His assignment: to take to himself a wife from there,

H 4 His charge: *and that* when he blessed him he charged him, saying, “You shall not take a wife from the daughters of Canaan,”

G 2 Esau’s witnessing of Jacob’s obedience 28:7

H 1 Obedience: {7} and that Jacob had obeyed his father and his mother

H 2 Departure: and had gone to Paddan-aram.

G 3 Esau’s conclusion: {8} So Esau saw that the daughters of Canaan displeased his father Isaac; 28:8

G 4 Esau’s intermarriage into the clan of Ishmael 28:9

⁸²⁰ Gen. 28:4 - possess the land of your sojournings, which God gave to [Abraham](#): The third component of the Abrahamic blessing (Gen. 12:1-3) is land. Here, Isaac specifically included the land component into his blessing of Jacob. Jacob and his descendants were to possess the land God promised to [Abraham](#). Ishmael and his descendants had already been excluded from the land of [Canaan](#). Now Esau and his descendants, some, but not all of whom would also be descendants of Ishmael (see Gen. 28:9), were excluded from the land of [Canaan](#), now properly known as [Israel](#). So-called “[Palestinians](#)” have no Biblical claim to the land of [Israel](#), no matter what “[Replacement Theology](#)” advocates or the United Nations or any other entities assert.

H 1 His departure: {9} and Esau went to Ishmael,⁸²¹

H 2 His marriage to Mahalath: and married, besides the wives that he had, Mahalath⁸²² the daughter of Ishmael, Abraham's son, the sister of Nebaioth.

B 3 God's Elective *Blessing* of Jacob More Than Esau 28:10 - 36:43

C 1 [Yahweh's](#) promise to Jacob of the *blessings* of [Abraham](#) and Isaac 28:10-22

D 1 [Yahweh's](#) communication of *blessings* to Jacob in a dream en route to Haran 28:10-17

E 1 Jacob's departure: {10} Then Jacob departed from Beersheba and went toward Haran. 28:10

E 2 Jacob's overnight camp 28:11

G 1 His camp: {11} He came to a certain place and spent the night there, because the sun had set;

G 2 His sleeping situation: and he took one of the stones of the place and put it under his head, and lay down in that place.

E 3 Jacob's dream 28:12-15

G 1 The ladder to heaven with angels commuting: {12} He had a dream, 28:12

H 1 The ladder from earth to heaven: and behold, a ladder was set on the earth with its top reaching to heaven;

H 2 The movement of angels: and behold, the angels of God were ascending and descending on it. 28:12

G 2 The speech of [Yahweh](#): {13} And behold, the LORD stood above it and said, [28:13a] 28:13-15

H 1 I am the God of your fathers: "I am the LORD, the God of your father Abraham and the God of Isaac;⁸²³ 28:13b

⁸²¹ Gen. 28:9 - to Ishmael: Technically speaking, Esau went to the descendants of Ishmael, the latter having been dead now for fourteen years ([Keil and Delitzsch](#)).

⁸²² Gen. 28:9 - Mahalath: Mahalath, daughter of Ishmael, was thus a half first-cousin of Esau. Further mention is made of Mahalath and her sister Nebaioth in Gen. 36:3. This move on the part of Esau was meant to endear himself to his father. But in so doing, the non-elect Esau married a wife from the clan of the non-elect Ishmael. Nothing was going to change.

⁸²³ Gen. 28:13 - I am the LORD, the God of your father Abraham and the God of Isaac: Isaac had intentionally blessed Jacob with the [Abrahamic Blessing](#) (Gen. 28:3-4). Now [Yahweh](#) Himself appeared to Jacob in a dream and conveyed to Jacob the same blessing that He had first given to [Abraham](#), then to Isaac. This blessing consisted of

- H 2 LAND – I will give this land to you and your descendants: the land on which you lie,⁸²⁴ I will give it to you and to your descendants.⁸²⁵ 28:13c
- H 3 DESCENDANTS – Your descendants will be numerous: {14} "Your descendants will also be like the dust of the earth, 28:14a
- H 4 You will spread in all directions: and you will spread out to the west and to the east and to the north and to the south; 28:14b
- H 5 BLESSING – I will bless all the world through you and your descendants: and in you and in your descendants shall all the families of the earth be blessed.⁸²⁶ 28:14c
- H 6 I will keep you safe: {15} "Behold, I am with you and will keep you wherever you go, 28:15a
- H 7 I will bring you back here: and will bring you back to this land; 28:15b
- H 8 I will not leave you: for I will not leave you until I have done what I have promised you." 28:15c

three components – here given in a different order – land, descendants, and blessing.

⁸²⁴ Gen. 28:13 - land on which you lie: In [Yahweh's](#) address to Jacob, He first conveyed ownership of the land (*erets*, [776](#)) on which Jacob was sleeping to Jacob and his descendants. Jacob would name this place Bethel (House of God) (Gen. 28:17). So the rightful owners of the land of [Canaan](#) (see 28:14) are Jacob and his descendants. No subsequent history, which is often misrepresented, by the way, can alter that. Jesus Himself predicted that "Jerusalem will be trampled under foot by the [Gentiles](#) until the [times of the Gentiles](#) are fulfilled" (Luke 21:24). Jesus was correct. Even today, the people of [Israel](#) are powerless to erect a temple on the Temple Mount because the Temple Mount is contaminated by an Islamic shrine and an Islamic mosque. [Gentile](#) domination of Jerusalem will cease at the close of Daniel's seventieth seven of years (Dan. 9:24-27). Christ will terminate that [Gentile](#) domination at His [Second Coming](#) (Isa. 59:15-21; 63:1-6; Zech. 14:1-9; Matt. 24:29-25:46; 2 Thess. 1:6-2:12; Rev. 19:11-20:6).

⁸²⁵ Gen. 28:13 - give it to you and your descendants: Multiplied descendants (singular of the noun *zérah*, [2233](#)) were a second component of the [Abrahamic blessing](#). [Yahweh](#) had first conferred His blessing upon [Abraham](#), then upon his son of promise Isaac, and now upon Isaac's son of promise, Jacob. It is worth noting here that the people of Jacob are inseparable from the land of Jacob.

⁸²⁶ Gen. 28:14 - blessed: The whole of [Yahweh's](#) speech (28:13-15) was a blessing upon Jacob, but here He used the specific word blessed (3rd Person Plural [Nifal Perfect](#) of the verb *barak*, [1288](#)). Just as He had told [Abraham](#), [Yahweh](#) now told Jacob that in Jacob, and in Jacob's descendants (the people of [Israel](#)), all the world would be blessed (obviously by [Yahweh](#) Himself). The people of [Israel](#) have brought great blessing to the world through the Hebrew Bible and through Judaism. But the greatest blessing of the people of [Israel](#) has been, and continues to be, the [Israeli Messiah](#), Jesus. Unfortunately, the people of [Israel](#) have rejected their Messiah. In their disbelief some with Jewish heritage, like [Karl Marx](#), have brought a great curse upon the world. But Zechariah (Zech. 12:10-13:2) predicted a time of national repentance. So did Isaiah (Isa. 59:15b-21). [Israel](#) is presently maligned, but one day will become, from a national point of view, the greatest source of blessing for the world (Isa. 2:1-4; 19:18-25; 60:1-3; 61:11; Rom. 11:15).

E 4 Jacob's reaction to the dream 28:16-17

G 1 His acknowledgment of [Yahweh's](#) presence: {16} Then Jacob awoke from his sleep and said, "Surely the LORD is in this place, and I did not know it." 28:16

G 2 His fearful reverence toward this site 28:17

H 1 His fear: {17} He was afraid and said,

H 2 His awe: "How awesome is this place!

H 3 His identification: This is none other than the house of God,⁸²⁷ and this is the gate of heaven."

D 2 Jacob's vow to accept [Yahweh](#) as his God and to tithe in return for provision and safe-conduct 28:18-22

E 1 Jacob's commemoration of the site 28:18-19

G 1 His erection of an altar: {18} So Jacob rose early in the morning, and took the stone that he had put under his head and set it up as a pillar and poured oil on its top. 28:18

G 2 His naming the site "House of God": {19} He called the name of that place Bethel;⁸²⁸ however, previously the name of the city had been Luz.⁸²⁹ 28:19

E 2 Jacob's vow 28:20-22

G 1 His conditions 28:20-21a

H 1 If Elohim will provide for him: {20} Then Jacob made a vow,⁸³⁰ saying, 28:20

⁸²⁷ Gen. 28:17 - house of God: "House" is *bayith* ([1004](#)) and "God" is *Elohim* ([430](#)).

⁸²⁸ Gen. 28:19 - Bethel: *Bêyth-Él* ([1008](#)) incorporates into one word the word for "house" (*bayith*) and an abbreviation of the name of God (*Elohim* becomes *El*). Thus, Bethel means "House of God."

⁸²⁹ Gen. 28:19 - however, previously the name of the city had been Luz: Hebrew, *lûz*, pronounced looz ([3870](#)), meaning "almond tree." Non-conservative scholars have cited explanations of this nature as proof that Moses did not write the Pentateuch. However, there is no reason that Moses himself could not have included this particular explanation. Moreover, even if a later hand added the explanation, that in no way disqualifies Moses as the author. See a [map of Luz](#) (Bethel).

⁸³⁰ Gen. 28:20 - Then Jacob made a vow: Literally, "Then vowed Jacob a vow," wherein "vowed" is the [Qal Imperfect](#) of *nâdar* ([5087](#)) and "vow" is the noun *neder* ([5088](#)). The seriousness of vowing a vow is illustrated in Numbers 30:2, "If a man makes a vow to the LORD, or takes an oath to bind himself with a binding obligation he shall not violate his word; he shall do according to all that proceeds out of his mouth." Solomon warned, "It is better that you should not vow than that you should vow and not pay" (Eccl. 5:5).

Obviously, [Yahweh's](#) appearance to Jacob in a dream had a profound effect upon him. How much of a believer in [Yahweh](#) he had been prior to this time is difficult to ascertain. But there is no question that Jacob at this point

- J 1 His presence: "If God will be with me
- J 2 His protection: and will keep me on this journey that I take,
- J 3 His provision of food: and will give me food to eat
- J 4 His provision of clothing: and garments to wear,
- H 2 If he returns safely to his father: {21} and I return to my father's house in safety, 28:21a
- G 2 His promise 28:21b-22
 - H 1 His adoption of [Yahweh](#) as his God: then the LORD will be my God.⁸³¹ 28:21b
 - H 2 This stone will be God's house: {22} "This stone, which I have set up as a pillar, will be God's house, 28:22a
 - H 3 I will tithe to God: and of all that You give me I will surely give a tenth to You."⁸³² 28:22b
- C 2 [Yahweh's](#) familial and material *blessing* of Jacob in Paddan-aram 29 - 30
 - D 1 The [sovereignly](#) controlled expansion of Jacob's family 29:1 - 30:24
 - E 1 Jacob's marriages 29:1-30

made a serious commitment to [Yahweh](#), albeit a conditional one. Essentially, his vow was, "God, if you will stay with me, protect me on my journey, provide for me, and I return to my father's house in safety, then [Yahweh](#) will be my God."

It is significant that when [Yahweh](#) later spoke to Jacob up in Aram, He commanded him, "Return to the land of your fathers and to your relatives, and I will be with you" (Gen. 31:3). Shortly thereafter, Jacob informed his wives of that conversation with God. He quoted God as saying, "I am the God of Bethel, where you anointed a pillar, where you made a vow to Me; now arise, leave this land, and return to the land of your birth" (Gen. 31:13). After Jacob had returned to [Canaan](#) and was living in Shechem, God spoke to Jacob again. He said, "Arise, go up to Bethel and live there, and make an altar there to God, who appeared to you when you fled from your brother Esau" (Gen. 35:1). So Jacob obeyed, returning to Bethel in the land of [Canaan](#), and he built there an altar to God (Gen. 35:6-7).

Today there is an [Israeli](#) settlement at [Beit El](#). In 2019 it had a population of 6,500. "The international community [considers settlements in the West Bank illegal](#) under international law, but the [Israeli](#) government disputes this." [WordExplain](#) also repudiates the legitimacy of unbiblical international law as it is applied to [Israel](#) in this case.

⁸³¹ Gen. 28:21 - then the LORD will be my God: At some point in our journey of faith, we must each make the God of the Bible our own personal God. And with New Testament revelation, we must each make Jesus, the [Jewish King](#), our own personal [King](#).

⁸³² Gen. 28:22 - I will surely give a tenth to you: The Hebrew here, literally, reads, "to tenth I will tenth to You." The first occurrence is the [Piel](#) Infinitive Absolute of the verb '*âsar*' ([6237](#)); the second occurrence is the [Piel](#) Imperfect of the verb '*âsar*' ([6237](#)). In English, the verb "tithe" means "give a tenth." Literally, Jacob said, "To tithe, I will tithe to you." The [Piel](#) in both cases expressed intensity and firm resolve. This is the first occurrence of tithing in the entire Bible. Tithing is never commanded in the New Testament. Giving in the New Testament should be voluntary, joyful, sacrificial, yet commensurate with what one possesses (2 Cor. 8:1-9:15).

G 1 Jacob's discovery of Rachel 29:1-12

H 1 Jacob's arrival at a well with flocks of sheep 29:1-3

J 1 His arrival: {1} Then Jacob went on his journey, and came to the land of the sons of the east. 29:1

J 2 The well, the flocks, the stone 29:2

K1 The well: {2} He looked, and saw a well in the field,

K2 The flocks: and behold, three flocks of sheep were lying there beside it, for from that well they watered the flocks.

K3 The stone: Now the stone on the mouth of the well was large.

J 3 The editorial explanation of the custom of feeding all flocks at the same time 29:3

K1 The gathering: {3} When all the flocks were gathered there,

K2 The removal: they would then roll the stone from the mouth of the well

K3 The watering: and water the sheep,

K4 The replacement: and put the stone back in its place on the mouth of the well.

H 2 Jacob's inquiry concerning Laban and the customs of shepherding 29:4-8

J 1 The shepherds' hometown: {4} Jacob said to them, "My brothers, where are you from?" And they said, "We are from Haran." 29:4

J 2 The shepherds' familiarity with Laban: {5} He said to them, "Do you know Laban the son of Nahor?" And they said, "We know *him*." 29:5

J 3 The shepherds' acquiescence concerning Laban's welfare: {6} And he said to them, "Is it well with him?" And they said, "It is well, 29:6a

J 4 The shepherds' identification of Rachel, Laban's daughter: and here is Rachel his daughter coming with the sheep." 29:6b

- J 5 Jacob's suggestion they water and pasture their flocks: {7} He said, "Behold, it is still high day; it is not time for the livestock to be gathered. Water the sheep, and go, pasture them." 29:7
- J 6 The shepherds' explanation of their watering policy: {8} But they said, "We cannot, until all the flocks are gathered, and they roll the stone from the mouth of the well; then we water the sheep." 29:8
- H 3 Jacob's emotional greeting of Rachel 29:9-12
 - J 1 The arrival of Rachel: {9} While he was still speaking with them, Rachel came with her father's sheep,⁸³³ for she was a shepherdess. 29:9
 - J 2 Jacob's watering Laban's flock 29:10
 - K1 His observation of Rachel: {10} When Jacob saw Rachel the daughter of Laban his mother's brother,
 - K2 His observation of Laban's sheep: and the sheep of Laban his mother's brother,
 - K3 His removal of the stone: Jacob went up and rolled the stone from the mouth of the well
 - K4 His watering of Laban's flock: and watered the flock of Laban his mother's brother.
 - J 3 Jacob's emotional greeting of Rachel: {11} Then Jacob kissed Rachel, and lifted his voice and wept. 29:11
 - J 4 Jacob's identification of himself as a relative: {12} Jacob told Rachel that he was a relative of her father and that he was Rebekah's son, 29:12a
 - J 5 Rachel's return home to report: and she ran and told her father. 29:12b
- G 2 Jacob's agreement to serve Laban seven years for Rachel, his daughter 29:13-20
 - H 1 Laban's hospitality toward Jacob 29:13-14

⁸³³ Gen. 29:12 - Rachel came with her father's sheep: Just as God had providentially guided Abraham's slave to the well at the city of Nahor, and he had prayed for Divine guidance, and God had brought Rebekah (Gen. 24:10-21), so God providentially guided Jacob to encounter Rachel.

- J 1 Laban's warm greeting: {13} So when Laban heard the news of Jacob his sister's son, he ran to meet him, and embraced him and kissed him and brought him to his house. 29:13a
- J 2 Jacob's story: Then he related to Laban all these things. 29:13b
- J 3 Laban's hospitality toward Jacob as a relative: {14} Laban said to him, "Surely you are my bone and my flesh." 29:14a
- J 4 Jacob's stay with Laban: And he stayed with him a month. 29:14b
- H 2 Laban's agreement on Jacob's wages 29:15-20
 - J 1 Laban's query of Jacob concerning terms of employment: {15} Then Laban said to Jacob, "Because you are my relative, should you therefore serve me for nothing? Tell me, what shall your wages be?" 29:15
 - J 2 The description of Laban's daughters 29:16-17
 - K1 Their names: {16} Now Laban had two daughters; the name of the older was Leah, and the name of the younger was Rachel. 29:16
 - K2 Their contrasting beauty: {17} And Leah's eyes were weak, but Rachel was beautiful of form and face. 29:17
 - J 3 Jacob's offer to serve Laban for seven years for his daughter Rachel: {18} Now Jacob loved Rachel, so he said, "I will serve you seven years for your younger daughter Rachel." 29:18
 - J 4 Laban's agreement: {19} Laban said, "It is better that I give her to you than to give her to another man; stay with me." 29:19
 - J 5 Jacob's loving, seven-year service: {20} So Jacob served seven years for Rachel and they seemed to him but a few days because of his love for her. 29:20
- G 3 Laban's deception in giving Jacob Leah instead of Rachel, forcing Jacob to work seven years more for Rachel 29:21-30
 - H 1 Jacob's request for the wedding: {21} Then Jacob said to

Laban, "Give *me* my wife, for my time is completed, that I may go in to her." 29:21

H 2 Laban's wedding feast: {22} Laban gathered all the men of the place and made a feast. 29:22

H 3 Laban's substitution of Leah 29:23-24

J 1 The time of Laban's substitution: {23} Now in the evening he took his daughter Leah, and brought her to him;⁸³⁴ 29:23a

J 2 Jacob's consummation of the marriage: and *Jacob* went in to her. 29:23b

J 3 Laban's contribution of Zilpah: {24} Laban also gave his maid Zilpah⁸³⁵ to his daughter Leah as a maid. 29:24

H 4 Jacob's confrontation with Laban 29:25

J 1 His discovery of Leah: {25} So it came about in the morning that, behold, it was Leah!

J 2 His question to Laban: And he said to Laban, "What is this you have done to me?"

J 3 His service for Rachel: Was it not for Rachel that I served with you?

J 4 His question why! Why then have you deceived me?"⁸³⁶

⁸³⁴ Gen. 29:23 - Now in the evening he took his daughter Leah, and brought her to him: Laban shows himself to be a dishonest, sneaky man, and, in my opinion, a greedy man. Again, in my opinion, Laban's plan all along was to secure another seven years of relatively inexpensive labor from Jacob, in which the latter would be forced to pay for his chosen bride *again*. Tragically, deceit was characteristic of this family.

⁸³⁵ Gen. 29:24 - Zilpah: Zilpah is mentioned here because, though a side-player, she would become prominent as the mother of several of Jacob's children. Out of jealousy, Leah (with Jacob's consent) would later allow Zilpah to enter Jacob's harem because she, Leah, had stopped bearing children (Gen. 30:9-13). What a sadly dysfunctional family!

⁸³⁶ Gen. 29:25 - Why then have you deceived me? It is highly ironic that Jacob, who, at the instigation of his mother Rebekah, had blatantly deceived his own father, now finds that Laban, his mother's brother, has deceived him! Two observations are in order:

(1) Deceit seems to have been endemic in this family. a) Rebekah and Jacob deceived Isaac; b) Laban and Leah deceived Jacob; c) Rachel would later steal her father's household idols and deceive her father; d) Simeon and Levi would deceive the men of Shechem and kill them; e) Jacob's sons would sell Joseph into slavery and deceive their father about what happened.

(2) This historical account is an excellent illustration of the law of sowing and reaping. Paul wrote, "Do not be deceived, God is not mocked; for whatever a man sows, this he will also reap" (Gal. 6:7). In our culture we have this saying, "What goes around comes around." Jacob was receiving poetic justice – he was tasting a dose of his own medicine, and it didn't taste very good at all. What a dismal and disheartening harvest.

- H 5 Laban's explanation: {26} But Laban said, "It is not the practice in our place to marry off the younger before the firstborn. 29:26
- H 6 Laban's counter-offer – seven more years for the second bride (Rachel) 29:27
- J 1 His instruction to Jacob to complete the wedding festivities for Leah: {27} "Complete the week of this one,
- J 2 His promise then to give Rachel to Jacob: and we will give you the other also
- J 3 His price – another seven years labor: for the service which you shall serve with me for another seven years."⁸³⁷
- H 7 Laban's giving Rachel to Jacob a week later 29:28-29
- J 1 Jacob's compliance – his completion of the marriage festivities with Leah: {28} Jacob did so and completed her week,⁸³⁸ 29:28a
- J 2 Laban's gift of Rachel to Jacob: and he gave him his daughter Rachel as his wife. 29:28b
- J 3 Laban's gift of Bilhah to Rachel: {29} Laban also gave his maid Bilhah⁸³⁹ to his daughter Rachel as her maid. 29:29
- H 8 Jacob's consummation of his marriage with Rachel: {30} So *Jacob* went in to Rachel also, 29:30a
- H 9 Jacob's greater love for Rachel: and indeed he loved

Sadly, this family would be a dysfunctional family. Leah would yearn all her life for the love of her husband, but never experience it. God rebuked Jacob for his lack of love and closed Rachel's womb. There was jealousy and infighting in this family perpetually. Joseph, the eventual first-born of Rachel, would become such a prize to his father that his brothers would eventually hate and despise him and sell him as a slave.

Polygamy is acknowledged as existing in the Old Testament, but wherever it is described, the results are devastating. Polygamy was never God's plan for marriage. When He created the first man, He created but one wife for him, Eve.

⁸³⁷ Gen.29:27 - another seven years: This seems to have been sneaky Laban's motive all along – to secure another seven years from Jacob at relatively little expense to himself.

⁸³⁸ Gen.29:28 - completed her week: This was the [week of celebration](#) typical of weddings in that culture. After seven days, Laban gave Rachel to Jacob, but he would be indebted to Laban another seven years.

⁸³⁹ Gen. 29:29 - Bilhah: Bilhah is mentioned because she will later, at the behest of Rachel, join Jacob's harem to raise up children ostensibly, on behalf of Rachel (Gen. 30:1-8).

Rachel more than Leah, 29:30b

H 10 Jacob's additional seven-year service: and he served with Laban for another seven years. 29:30c

E 2 Jacob's offspring 29:31 - 30:24

G 1 [Yahweh's](#) shutting of Rachel's womb, *blessing* Leah with Reuben, Simeon, and Levi 29:31-35

H 1 [Yahweh's](#) action: {31} Now the LORD saw 29:31

J 1 Leah unloved, but fertile: that Leah was unloved,⁸⁴⁰ and He opened her womb,⁸⁴¹

J 2 Rachel loved, but barren: but Rachel was barren.

H 2 Leah's first son, **Reuben** {32} Leah conceived and bore a son 29:32

J 1 Name significance: and named him Reuben, for she said, "Because the LORD has seen my affliction;"⁸⁴² (Reuben means, "Look, a son!")

J 2 Her hope: surely now my husband will love me."⁸⁴³

H 3 Leah's second son, **Simeon**: {33} Then she conceived again and bore a son and said, 29:33

J 1 Leah's reasoning: "Because the LORD has heard

⁸⁴⁰ Gen. 29:31 - Now the LORD saw that Leah was unloved: The verb "unloved" is the verb *sâné'* (8130). It should be translated "was hated." It is correctly translated that way when it describes the other brothers' hatred of the favorite son, Joseph in Gen. 37:4. The LORD saw Leah was hated. This same verb will appear in Gen. 29:33.

⁸⁴¹ Gen. 29:31 - and He opened her womb: Though Leah had participated in a fraudulent wedding night, Yahweh does not seem to let Jacob off the hook. It was his responsibility to love his wife regardless, and instead, he was hating her. God punished Jacob's favorite wife by sealing her womb and rewarded Jacob's hated wife by opening up her womb. God has an interesting way of leveling the playing field.

The almost sordid account of the bigamous, and then polygamous journey of Jacob is detailed here to account for the historical origin of the twelve sons of [Israel](#), a later name for Jacob. It also lays the ground work for the brothers' later hatred of the favored son of Jacob, Joseph.

⁸⁴² Gen. 29:32 - the LORD has seen my affliction: Tragically, Leah had willingly participated with her father in deceiving Jacob. Her life would be an unending affliction. What a sad description of marriage! The one redeeming feature is that Leah seems to have had a walk with God. She brings Yahweh into her sad conversations time and again.

⁸⁴³ Gen. 29:32 - surely now my husband will love me: This sad complaint will surface again and again in this marriage. Polygamous marriages are a curse.

that I am unloved,⁸⁴⁴ He has therefore given me this *son* also."

J 2 The boy's name: So she named him Simeon. (Simeon means "hearing.")

H 4 Leah's third son, **Levi**: {34} She conceived again and bore a son and said, 29:34

J 1 Leah's hope: "Now this time my husband will become attached to me, because I have borne him three sons."⁸⁴⁵

J 2 The boy's name: Therefore he was named Levi. (Levi means "attached.")

H 5 Leah's fourth son, **Judah**: {35} And she conceived again and bore a son and said, 29:35

J 1 Leah's response: "This time I will praise the LORD."⁸⁴⁶ Therefore she named him Judah.

J 2 Leah's cessation: Then she stopped bearing. (Judah means "praise.")

G 2 Rachel's desperate gift of Bilhah to Jacob as wife; the births of Dan and Naphtali 30:1-8

H 1 The discord between Rachel and Jacob (30:1-4)

J 1 Rachel's observation: {1} Now when Rachel saw that she bore Jacob no children, 30:1a

J 2 Rachel's jealousy: she became jealous of her sister;⁸⁴⁷ 30:1b

⁸⁴⁴ Gen. 29:33 - Because the LORD has heard that I am unloved: The verb "I am unloved" is the verb *sânê'* (8130). It should be translated "I am hated." This is the same verb used in Gen. 29:31 and in Gen. 37:4, where it is correctly translated that Joseph's brothers *hated* him. Here is another sad description of Leah's marriage. She is unloved. Again, she maintains her faith in Yahweh. He had heard about her unloved condition.

⁸⁴⁵ Gen. 29:34 - this time my husband will become attached to me, because I have borne him three sons: One's heart goes out to Leah, who is hated by her husband. And yet, she helped perpetrate the fraud. She pretended to be her sister on the wedding night, and so she is reaping a harvest of deceit. But God has no mercy on Jacob. He provides the hated wife with children while the loved wife remains infertile.

⁸⁴⁶ Gen. 29:35 - This time I will praise the LORD: Though Leah is trapped in an uncaring marriage, she maintains her faith in Yahweh. This is remarkable!

⁸⁴⁷ Gen. 30:1 - she became jealous of her sister: Rachel enjoyed the status of being the favored wife. But her inability to bear children was a relentless reality that weighed heavily on her. She became jealous of the unfavored wife! What a turn-around. Once again, the evils of polygamy abound.

- J 3 Rachel's demand: and she said to Jacob, "Give me children, or else I die."⁸⁴⁸ 30:1c
- J 4 Jacob's anger: {2} Then Jacob's anger burned against Rachel, and he said, "Am I in the place of God,⁸⁴⁹ who has withheld from you the fruit of the womb?" 30:2
- J 5 Rachel's solution 30:3-4
- K1 Her offer of Bilhah as a concubine for proxy child-bearing: {3} She said, "Here is my maid Bilhah, go in to her that she may bear on my knees, that through her I too may have children."⁸⁵⁰
- K2 Jacob's compliance: {4} So she gave him her maid Bilhah as a wife, and Jacob went in to her.
- H 2 Bilhah's first son, **Dan** 30:5-6
- J 1 The first result of Jacob and Rachel's arrangement: {5} Bilhah conceived and bore Jacob a son. 30:5
- J 2 Rachel's interpretation: {6} Then Rachel said, "God has vindicated me, and has indeed heard my voice and has given me a son."⁸⁵¹ 30:6a
- J 3 The significance of the name: Therefore she named him Dan.⁸⁵² (Dan means "justice.") 30:6b

⁸⁴⁸ Gen. 30:1 - Give me children, or else I die: The attitude of Hebrew women toward child birth contrasted with the attitude of many American women and other women around the world is truly remarkable. To Rachel, having children was a matter of life and death. To many American women, children are a curse, and they take every measure to snuff out the lives of their unborn children.

⁸⁴⁹ Gen. 30:2 - Am I in the place of God: Jacob has a point. He understands that God is the One who grants or withholds children. Obviously, Jacob was not the one who was infertile.

⁸⁵⁰ Gen. 30:3 - that through her I too may have children: Though acceptable in Middle Eastern culture, this was NEVER God's plan. He created for Adam one wife, and God designed them to live together as man and wife forever. Polygamy is a great evil and cause for much dysfunction. Presumably, Muhammad justified his polygamy by following Jacob's example of four wives.

⁸⁵¹ Gen. 30:6 - God has vindicated me, and has indeed heard my voice: At least through the struggles of infertility, Rachel is acknowledging her prayer to God, and is acknowledging His Sovereignty. For her, life is all about a struggle for survival against her sister. This is ironic since she is the favored wife.

⁸⁵² Gen. 30:5 - she named him Dan: The fact that Rachel, not Bilhah, named the baby, supports the view that culturally (and legally) Dan was Rachel's son, not Bilhah's. That did not alter the fact, however, that Rachel did not and could not bear children of her own.

H 3 Bilhah's second son, **Naphtali** 30:7-8

J 1 Bilhah's second son: {7} Rachel's maid Bilhah conceived again and bore Jacob a second son 30:7

J 2 Rachel's interpretation: {8} So Rachel said, "With mighty wrestlings I have wrestled with my sister, *and* I have indeed prevailed." ⁸⁵³ 30:8a

J 3 The significance of the name: And she named him Naphtali. (Naphtali means "wrestling.") 30:8b

G 3 Leah's competitive gift of Zilpah to Jacob as wife; the births of Gad and Asher 30:9-13

H 1 Leah's gift of Zilpah: {9} When Leah saw that she had stopped bearing, she took her maid Zilpah and gave her to Jacob as a wife. ⁸⁵⁴ 30:9

H 2 Zilpah's first son, **Gad** 30:10-11

J 1 The result: {10} Leah's maid Zilpah bore Jacob a son. 30:10

J 2 Leah's reaction: {11} Then Leah said, "How fortunate!" ⁸⁵⁵ 30:11a

J 3 The significance of the name: So she named him Gad. (Gad means "luck" or "fortune.") 30:11b

H 3 Zilpah's second son, **Asher** 30:12-13

J 1 Zilpah's second son: {12} Leah's maid Zilpah bore Jacob a second son. 30:12

J 2 Leah's reaction: {13} Then Leah said, "Happy am I! For women will call me happy." 30:13a

J 3 The significance of the second son: So she named him Asher. (Asher means "happy.") 30:13b

⁸⁵³ Gen. 30:8 - With mighty wrestlings I have wrestled with my sister, *and* I have indeed prevailed: This is a sad commentary on the bleak and painful existence of a woman trapped in polygamy. There is no mention of God here.

⁸⁵⁴ Gen. 30:9 - When Leah saw that she had stopped bearing, she took her maid Zilpah and gave her to Jacob as a wife: The slimy serpent of polygamy in this dysfunctional family worms its way upward yet another branch. Jealousy and one-up-manship strike again. Now Jacob has another wife in his harem. What a sad commentary! Yet God used this dysfunctional family to birth His chosen nation. God is able to take bad things and bring good out of them for His own (Rom. 8:28)!

⁸⁵⁵ Gen. 30:11 - How fortunate: Having given her maid to her husband as a fourth wife, Leah is no longer talking about God.

G 4 Leah's hire of Jacob through mandrakes; the births of Issachar, Zebulun, and Dinah 30:14-21

H 1 Rachel's request of Leah 30:14

J 1 Reuben's find: {14} Now in the days of wheat harvest Reuben went and found mandrakes in the field,

J 2 Reuben's gift: and brought them to his mother Leah.

J 3 Rachel's request: Then Rachel said to Leah, "Please give me some of your son's mandrakes."⁸⁵⁶

H 2 Leah's angry response 30:15

J 1 Rachel's theft of her husband: {15} But she said to her, "Is it a small matter for you to take my husband? 30:15a

J 2 Rachel's theft of her son's gift: And would you take my son's mandrakes also?" 30:15b

H 3 Rachel's bargain: So Rachel said, "Therefore he may lie with you tonight in return for your son's mandrakes." 30:15c

H 4 Leah's proposal 30:16

J 1 Jacob's return: {16} When Jacob came in from the field in the evening,

J 2 Leah's initiative: then Leah went out to meet him

J 3 Leah's request: and said, "You must come in to me,

J 4 Leah's reason: for I have surely hired you with my son's mandrakes."

J 5 Jacob's compliance: So he lay with her that night.

H 5 God's response to Leah, a fifth son, **Issachar** 30:17-18

J 1 {17} God gave heed to Leah,⁸⁵⁷ and she conceived

⁸⁵⁶ Gen. 30:14 - mandrakes: This plant was thought to facilitate conception. See Thomas Constable, [Notes on Genesis, 2019](#).

⁸⁵⁷ Gen. 30:17 - God gave heed to Leah: This chapter further reveals the [sovereignty](#) of God. Herbal remedies (or gynecologists) do not determine reproduction. God does!

and bore Jacob a fifth son. 30:17

J 2 Leah's interpretation: {18} Then Leah said, "God has given me my wages because I gave my maid to my husband."⁸⁵⁸ 30:18a

J 3 The significance of the name: So she named him Issachar. (Issachar means "reward.") 30:18b

H 6 Leah's sixth son, **Zebulun** 30:19-20

J 1 Leah's conception and child-bearing: {19} Leah conceived again and bore a sixth son to Jacob. 30:19

J 2 Leah's interpretation: {20} Then Leah said, "God has endowed me with a good gift;"⁸⁵⁹ 30:20a

J 3 Leah's hope: now my husband will dwell with me, because I have borne him six sons."⁸⁶⁰ 30:20b

J 4 The significance of the name: So she named him Zebulun. (Zebulun means "dwelling.") 30:20c

H 7 Leah's seventh child, a daughter, **Dinah**: {21} Afterward she bore a daughter and named her Dinah.⁸⁶¹ 30:21

G 5 Elohim's gift of a son to Rachel, **Joseph** 30:22-24

H 1 God's opening of Rachel's womb: {22} Then God remembered Rachel, and God gave heed to her and opened her womb.⁸⁶² 30:22

⁸⁵⁸ Gen. 30:18 - God has given me my wages because I gave my maid to my husband: Leah's theology is flawed. God caused her to become pregnant not because she had given her maid to her husband, but because He answers prayer, and because He is a compassionate God. At least she is once again talking about God!

⁸⁵⁹ Gen. 30:20 - God has endowed me with a good gift: Once again, now that Leah has given birth to a son, she is acknowledging God's sovereignty and benevolence.

⁸⁶⁰ Gen. 30:20 - now my husband will dwell with me, because I have borne him six sons: "Dwell" is the verb *zâbal* (2082), probably meaning, "exalt, honor" (BDB). What a tragedy. Years earlier, Leah had cooperated with her father in deceiving Jacob when he (Jacob) had thought he was marrying Rachel. After having borne Jacob six children, Leah is still desperately hoping for his love. This chapter trumpets loudly the counter-productivity of deceit and the evil of polygamy.

⁸⁶¹ Gen. 30:21 - Dinah: In this male-dominated family, Dinah is mentioned because she figures prominently in the disaster at Shechem later (Gen. 34).

⁸⁶² Gen. 30:22 - God ... opened her womb: Again, it is God, not doctors or fertility medications, who heals infertility.

H 2 Rachel's interpretation: {23} So she conceived and bore a son and said, "God has taken away my reproach."⁸⁶³ 30:23

H 3 The significance of the name: {24} She named him Joseph,⁸⁶⁴ 30:24a

H 4 Rachel's prayer: saying, "May the LORD give me another son."⁸⁶⁵ 30:24b

D 2 The expansion of Jacob's herds 30:25-43

E 1 Laban's perception of [Yahweh's blessing](#) on Jacob; his agreement to allow Jacob to build up his own herds while continuing to work for Laban 30:25-36

G 1 Jacob's request to be sent home 30:25-26

H 1 His request to Laban for permission to return home 30:25

J 1 The time of his request: {25} Now it came about when Rachel had borne Joseph,

J 2 The nature of his request: that Jacob said to Laban, "Send me away,

J 3 The purpose for his request: that I may go to my own place and to my own country.

H 2 His request for his wives and children 30:26

J 1 Wives: {26} "Give me my wives

J 2 Children: and my children

J 3 Service: for whom I have served you,

J 4 Departure: and let me depart;

J 5 Awareness: for you yourself know my service which I have rendered you."

G 2 Laban's request for Jacob to stay 30:27-28

⁸⁶³ Gen. 30:23 - God has taken away my reproach: Though her sister Leah seems more attune to God, here at least, Rachel acknowledges the activity of God on her behalf.

⁸⁶⁴ Gen. 30:24 - Joseph: Joseph means "May the Lord add" or perhaps "He has taken away." According to [3130](#), the name means, "Jehovah has added."

⁸⁶⁵ Gen. 30:24 - May the LORD give me another son: In naming Joseph, Rachel announces her dependence on Yahweh.

- H 1 His request: {27} But Laban said to him, "If now it pleases you, stay with me; 30:27a
- H 2 His reason – because [Yahweh](#) had blessed him on Jacob's account: I have divined that the LORD has blessed me on your account." ⁸⁶⁶ 30:27b
- H 3 His offer for Jacob to state his wages: {28} He continued, "Name me your wages, and I will give it." 30:28
- G 3 Jacob's acknowledgment of [Yahweh's](#) blessing of Laban. His uncertainty how he himself should fare 30:29-30
- H 1 His hard work: {29} But he said to him, "You yourself know how I have served you and how your cattle have fared with me. 30:29
- H 2 [Yahweh's](#) blessing: {30} "For you had little before I came and it has increased to a multitude, and the LORD has blessed you wherever I turned. 30:30a
- H 3 His concern for his own welfare: But now, when shall I provide for my own household also?" ⁸⁶⁷ 30:30b
- G 4 Laban's repeated offer: {31} So he said, "What shall I give you?" 30:31a
- G 5 Jacob's tender – his hire will be the speckled, spotted, and black sheep and goats 30:31b-33
- H 1 His part - continue working for Laban: And Jacob said, "You shall not give me anything. If you will do this one thing for me, I will again pasture and keep your flock: 30:31b
- H 2 His culling out for himself the odd-colored sheep and goats: {32} let me pass through your entire flock today, removing from there 30:32

⁸⁶⁶ Gen. 30:27 - I have divined that the LORD has blessed me on your account: The blessings that God gave to Abraham, to Isaac, and to Jacob was palpable and tangible. Likewise, God's promise that He would bless those who blessed the trio, and curse those who cursed the trio (Gen. 12:3) was also very tangible. Here Laban was being blessed because he was doing for Jacob that which he had stated he would do. Now, in order to keep Jacob at his place, he offers to negotiate with Jacob appropriate compensation (other than paying for his two brides).

⁸⁶⁷ Gen. 30:30: But now, when shall I provide for my own household also: Jacob certainly has a point. He has spent fourteen years of his life raise the standard of living considerably for Laban. He has acquired four wives and a dozen children, but he has nothing else to show for it. He needs to provide for his own family.

- J 1 Sheep: every speckled and spotted ⁸⁶⁸ sheep
- J 2 Lambs: and every black one among the lambs
- J 3 Goats: and the spotted and speckled among the goats;
- J 4 Wages: and such shall be my wages. 30:32
- H 3 Any not speckled, spotted, or black among his property will be considered stolen 30:33
 - J 1 Honesty: {33} "So my honesty will answer for me later, when you come concerning my wages.
 - J 2 Criteria: Every one that is not speckled and spotted among the goats and black among the lambs, if found with me,
 - J 3 Crime: will be considered stolen."
- G 6 Laban's agreement: {34} Laban said, "Good, let it be according to your word." 30:34
- G 7 Laban's removal of the odd-colored sheep and goats 30:35-36
 - H 1 Laban's sorting 30:35a
 - J 1 Of male goats: {35} So he removed on that day ⁸⁶⁹ the striped and spotted male goats
 - J 2 Of female goats: and all the speckled and spotted female goats, every one with white in it,

⁸⁶⁸ Gen. 30:32 - speckled and spotted: Jacob was proposing to remove all the odd-colored sheep and goats. These would be his starter flock and herd. From these he would further develop his own flocks and herds. Even though Laban agreed (Gen. 30:34), he immediately reneged on the bargain. He did not let Jacob remove any of the odd-colored among the livestock. Instead, Laban removed all the odd-colored and gave them all into the keeping of his sons and removed them three days' journey from the normally-colored flock and herd he left Jacob to tend. He left Jacob without any odd-colored animals to cross-breed. Laban thus lessened, in a genetic sense, the likelihood that the normally-colored flocks and herds under Jacob's supervision would breed odd-colored animals. Furthermore, what incentive would Laban's sons have to help Jacob's odd-colored animals that they were tending thrive? There would be no incentive. In a sense, Laban was cutting off his nose to spite his face. Laban, as we have already seen, was a sneaky, duplicitous man. Yet God would bless Jacob, anyway. Jacob would also subsequently attempt to rig the breeding artificially, but it was God who blessed, not either Laban or Jacob who artificially manipulated.

⁸⁶⁹ Gen. 30:35 - So he removed on that day: Instead of leaving the sorting to Jacob, Laban immediately undertook to control the process himself. Laban immediately sought to manipulate the system to gain for himself an unfair advantage, just as he had done fourteen years earlier by substituting Leah for Rachel to gain seven more years of service from Jacob.

- J 3 Of sheep: and all the black ones among the sheep, 30:35a
- H 2 Laban's giving Jacob's flock into his own sons' care: and gave them into the care of his sons. ⁸⁷⁰ 30:35b
- H 3 Laban's moving of Jacob's flock a three days' journey 30:36
 - J 1 The separation: {36} And he put a distance of three days' journey ⁸⁷¹ between himself and Jacob,
 - J 2 The responsibility of Jacob: and Jacob fed the rest of Laban's flocks.
- E 2 Jacob's attempted manipulation of the flocks for strength and prolific breeding; his rise to prosperity 30:37-43
 - G 1 Jacob's carving of stripes into rods: {37} Then Jacob took fresh rods of poplar and almond and plane trees, and peeled white stripes in them, exposing the white which was in the rods. 30:37
 - G 2 Jacob's prenatal "striped" influence on his flocks: {38} He set the rods which he had peeled in front of the flocks in the gutters, even in the watering troughs, where the flocks came to drink; and they mated when they came to drink. 30:38
 - G 3 The striped and speckled offspring: {39} So the flocks mated by the rods, and the flocks brought forth striped, speckled, and spotted. ⁸⁷² 30:39
 - G 4 Jacob's further prenatal influence on the new lambs 30:40-42
 - H 1 His causing the normal colored flock to face the odd-

⁸⁷⁰ Gen. 30:35 - gave them into the care of his sons: Instead of permitting Jacob to tend his own herds and flocks, Laban gave Jacob's livestock into the care of his own sons. What motivation would they have to look out for Jacob's best interests? Laban was rigging the system for his own advantage.

⁸⁷¹ Gen. 30:36 - three days' journey: Laban further manipulated the system to his own advantage. He physically removed the odd-colored and marked animals a great distance away from Laban's flock so there could be no cross-breeding. He did his best to ensure that a minimal number of odd-colored and marked animals would be born into the standard-colored, non-marked flocks and herds Jacob was tending. Laban was a manipulator par excellence. He does not seem to have been a devout follower of [Yahweh](#).

⁸⁷² Gen. 30:39 - striped, speckled, and spotted: Just as Laban attempted to manipulate, so did Jacob. However, Jacob's attempt at genetic engineering no more caused the striped, speckled, and spotted animals to breed successfully than did Rachel's "purchase" of mandrakes cause her to conceive (Gen. 30:14). God coincided his prospering of Jacob's flocks with Jacob's artificial breeding system, but it was God who blessed Jacob and caused him to prosper, not Jacob's manipulative ingenuity. "As with many of the tricks which Jacob attempts in these narratives, God blessed Jacob in spite of them, not because of or through them" (Thomas Constable, [Notes on Genesis, 2019](#), quoting [John Sailhamer](#) in *The Pentateuch as Narrative*, p. 196).

colored flock (for the purpose of stimulating odd-coloring): {40} Jacob separated the lambs, and made the flocks face toward the striped and all the black in the flock of Laban; and he put his own herds apart, and did not put them with Laban's flock. 30:40

H 2 His use of striped rods only when stronger animals were mating: {41} Moreover, whenever the stronger of the flock were mating, Jacob would place the rods in the sight of the flock in the gutters, so that they might mate by the rods; 30:41

H 3 His non-use of the rods when weaker animals were mating: {42} but when the flock was feeble, he did not put them in; 30:42a

G 5 The results of Jacob's efforts 30:42b-43

H 1 His flocks were superior to Laban's: so the feebler were Laban's and the stronger Jacob's. 30:42b

H 2 The statement of his prosperity: {43} So the man became exceedingly prosperous, 30:43a

H 3 The examples of his prosperity 30:43b

J 1 Flocks: and had large flocks

J 2 Servants: and female and male servants

J 3 Transportational livestock: and camels⁸⁷³ and donkeys.

C 3 [Yahweh's blessing](#) of Jacob's obedient return to [Canaan](#) 31 - 35

D 1 In reconciliation 31 - 33

E 1 With Laban 31

G 1 Jacob's intentions to return to [Canaan](#) in response to Laban's ill-will and [Yahweh's](#) instructions 31:1-16

H 1 The first motivation to return to [Canaan](#): Laban's ill will 31:1-2

J 1 Laban's sons' charging of Jacob with theft: {1} Now Jacob heard the words of Laban's sons, saying,

⁸⁷³ Gen. 30:43 - camels: The fact that Jacob owns camels indicates his wealth, since these animals were rare and costly ([Constable](#), quoting Kenneth A. Matthews, New American Commentary series, Broadman & Holman Publishers, 1996, *Genesis 11:27 - 50:26*, p. 503).

"Jacob has taken away all that was our father's,⁸⁷⁴ and from what belonged to our father he has made all this wealth." 31:1

J 2 Laban's unfriendly attitude toward Jacob: {2} Jacob saw the attitude⁸⁷⁵ of Laban, and behold, it was not friendly toward him as formerly.⁸⁷⁶ 31:2

H 2 The second motivation to return to [Canaan](#) – the command of [Yahweh](#) 31:3

J 1 The command: {3} Then the LORD said to Jacob, "Return to the land of your fathers and to your relatives,⁸⁷⁷

J 2 The promise: and I will be with you."⁸⁷⁸

H 3 Jacob's first response: convincing his wives 31:4-13

J 1 His calling of Rachel and Leah to the field: {4} So Jacob sent and called Rachel and Leah to his flock in the field,⁸⁷⁹ 31:4

⁸⁷⁴ Gen. 31:1 - Jacob has taken away all that was our father's: Month after month, Laban's sons could see that Jacob's flocks were growing larger than their father's flocks before their very eyes. According to Jacob, Laban kept changing the rules of which flocks were his own and which were Jacob's. He changed the rules ten times (Gen. 31:7, 41)! Yet, no matter how often Laban changed the rules, Jacob's flocks grew larger! This was God at work in His sovereignty!

⁸⁷⁵ Gen. 31:2 - attitude: [NASB](#) note: "A literal translation: *face*"

⁸⁷⁶ Gen. 31:2 - it was not friendly toward him as formerly: Some times it takes an altering of previously favorable circumstances to motivate us to move in a new direction. Here God made certain there was a human motivation for Jacob to return to the land of Canaan. Having achieved that, God then *commanded* Jacob to return (Gen. 31:3). Jacob was sufficiently motivated to obey. It has happened to me on more than one occasion that changing circumstances and attitudes have motivated me to seek another ministry elsewhere.

⁸⁷⁷ Gen. 31:3 - Return to the land of your fathers and to your relatives: This is a pivotal point in Jacob's life. Twenty years earlier, this same God, Yahweh, had appeared to Jacob in a dream at a place Jacob later called "Bethel" (Gen.28:19), and had identified Himself as "the God of your father Abraham and the God of Isaac" (Gen. 28:13). Yahweh had promised to give to Jacob and to his seed the land upon which Jacob was sleeping (Gen. 28:13). Jacob's seed would multiply as the dust of the earth, and would spread out in all directions (Gen. 28:14). In Jacob and in his seed all the families of the earth would be blessed (Gen. 28:14). Yahweh would be with Jacob and bring him back to this land, unfailingly keeping His promise (Gen. 28:15). Now twenty years later, having allowed Laban's attitude toward Jacob to sour, and using that as motivation for Jacob, Yahweh instructs Jacob to return to the land of his fathers (Abraham and Isaac) and to return to his relatives.

⁸⁷⁸ Gen. 31:3 - and I will be with you: Once again, as He had promised Jacob twenty years earlier (Gen. 28:15), Yahweh promised to be with Jacob.

⁸⁷⁹ Gen. 30:4 - Jacob ... called Rachel and Leah to his flock in the field: Jacob knew that pressure for him to stay with Laban and endure increasingly harsh conditions was inevitable. Jacob needed a secure place to conduct a family conference. He could hardly bring Rachel into Leah's tent, or Leah into Rachel's tent. Some other meeting place at home would be subject to surveillance, if even by friendly eyes. Out in the field was the best place to secure a private and secure family conference. Since he was contemplating leaving his wives' father, it was necessary to seek their

- J 2 Their father's changed attitude: {5} and said to them, "I see your father's attitude, that it is not friendly toward me as formerly, 31:5a
- J 3 The presence of Elohim: but the God of my father has been with me. ⁸⁸⁰ 31:5b
- J 4 His faithfulness in serving Laban: {6} "You know that I have served your father with all my strength. 31:6
- J 5 Their father's duplicity: {7} "Yet your father has cheated me and changed my wages ten times; ⁸⁸¹ however, God did not allow him to hurt me. 31:7
- J 6 Elohim's thwarting their father's duplicity: {8} "If he spoke thus, 'The speckled shall be your wages,' then all the flock brought forth speckled; and if he spoke thus, 'The striped shall be your wages,' then all the flock brought forth striped. 31:8
- J 7 The net result of Elohim's blessing: {9} "Thus God has taken away your father's livestock and given them to me. 31:9
- J 8 The dream of his flock success: {10} "And it came about at the time when the flock were mating that I lifted up my eyes and saw in a dream, and behold, the male goats which were mating were striped, speckled, and mottled. 31:10
- J 9 The angel of Elohim's confirmation of His blessing Jacob: {11} "Then the angel of God ⁸⁸² said to me in

approval for such a bold move, especially since, in Jacob's thinking, the departure necessitated a clandestine escape.

⁸⁸⁰ Gen. 31:5 - but the God of my father has been with me: Jacob identified his father's God, *'Ēlôhîym* (430), as his own. The God (Elohim) of his father, Isaac, has been with him. Jacob can tell this by the way God has prospered him with children and with livestock. By way of contrast, Laban, in a confrontational mood, will identify the same God (Elohim), not as his own God, but as the God (Elohim) of *your* (Jacob's) father (Isaac) (Gen. 31:24, 29).

⁸⁸¹ Gen. 31:7 - your father has cheated me and changed my wages ten times: Jacob would elaborate on this charge in Gen. 31:8, and repeat the charge to Laban in Gen. 31:41. Laban is depicted in Genesis as being a grasping, greedy, covetous man – always desiring to gain the advantage financially over other people, and willing to use dishonesty and to break rules to get his way. Some of this character flaw had rubbed off on his sister Rebekah, who, two decades earlier, had used subterfuge to make certain that her favored son Jacob had received the Abrahamic blessing from her husband Isaac (Gen. 27:1-29). And Laban's daughter, who was also Jacob's favored wife, Rachel, was not above using deception to steal her father's household gods (Gen. 31:19, 30-35). More about that later.

⁸⁸² Gen. 31:11 - the angel of God: The text identifies this person as Yahweh (Gen. 31:3). Here, Jacob calls Him "Messenger, *mal'āk* (4397) of the God" (Elohim). In my understanding this Messenger (Angel) is to be identified with the [Pre-Incarnate Christ](#). He is the [Messenger of Yahweh](#), also known as the [Angel of the LORD](#).

As Jacob relates this Messenger's conversation with him in his dream (Gen. 31:10), he gives more detail than was narrated in Gen. 31:3. The detail is recorded in Gen. 31:10-13.

the dream, 'Jacob,' and I said, 'Here I am.' {12} "He said, 'Lift up now your eyes and see that all the male goats which are mating are striped, speckled, and mottled; for I have seen all that Laban has been doing to you. 31:11-12

J 10 The angel's identification of Himself as the Elohim of Bethel: {13} 'I am the God of Bethel, where you anointed a pillar, where you made a vow to Me; ⁸⁸³ 31:13a

J 11 His command to Jacob to return: now arise, leave this land, and return to the land of your birth." 31:13b

H 4 The agreement of Rachel and Leah with Jacob 31:14-16

J 1 Their asserting their virtual disinheritance: {14} Rachel and Leah said to him, "Do we still have any portion or inheritance in our father's house? ⁸⁸⁴ 31:14

J 2 Their charge that their father had consumed their dowry price: {15} "Are we not reckoned by him as foreigners? For he has sold us, and has also entirely consumed our purchase price. 31:15

J 3 Their belief that Elohim has only taken away from their father that which rightfully belonged to them, anyway: {16} "Surely all the wealth which God has taken away from our father belongs to us and our children; 31:16a

J 4 Their permission that Jacob should obey Elohim: now then, do whatever God has said to you." ⁸⁸⁵

⁸⁸³ Gen. 31:13 - I am the God of Bethel, where you anointed a pillar, where you made a vow to Me: Here, this Messenger of Yahweh identifies Himself as "the God of Bethel," the place where Jacob had anointed a pillar and made a vow to Him (Gen. 28:18-22). He instructs Jacob to leave this land (of Aram) and to return to the land of his birth (Canaan, later [Israel](#)).

⁸⁸⁴ Gen. 31:14 - Do we still have any portion or inheritance in our father's house: Jacob's two wives, who are daughters of Laban, feel disinherited by their own father. They think he views them as "foreigners" (*nokrîy*, [5237](#)) (Gen. 31:15). They believe God has rightfully taken away the wealth from their father that really belonged to them (Gen. 31:15-16). They give Jacob their blessing in doing what God had told him to do (Gen. 31:16). I believe this is the motivation behind Rachel's stealing her father's *teraphim*, or household idols (Gen. 31:19). See the footnote there. The two women's feelings against their own father merely serve to demonstrate the level of dysfunction in this extended family. How sad!

⁸⁸⁵ Gen. 31:16 - do whatever God has said to you: Jacob's two wives submit themselves to their husband Jacob, trusting that he has accurately and honestly reported the words of God. In submitting to Jacob, they also submit to God. They are headed to Canaan, a land in which they have never set foot. As arduous as travel was back in those days, they were resigned never to see their family of origin again.

31:16b

G 2 Jacob's surreptitious flight from Laban 31:17-21.

- H 1 His loading up his family: {17} Then Jacob arose and put his children and his wives upon camels; 31:17
- H 2 His gathering together all his property to return to Isaac in [Canaan](#): {18} and he drove away all his livestock and all his property which he had gathered, his acquired livestock which he had gathered in Paddan-aram,⁸⁸⁶ to go to the land of Canaan to his father Isaac. 31:18
- H 3 Rachel's stealing of Laban's household idols: {19} When Laban had gone to shear his flock, then Rachel stole the household idols⁸⁸⁷ that were her father's. 31:19
- H 4 Jacob's deception of Laban by not telling him of his departure: {20} And Jacob deceived Laban the Aramean by not telling him that he was fleeing.⁸⁸⁸ 31:20
- H 5 Jacob's flight 31:21
- J 1 Crossing the Euphrates: {21} So he fled with all

⁸⁸⁶ Gen. 31:18 - Paddan-aram: It is possible that this locale is to be identified with the town of Haran. [See the map](#). In the Hebrew text, the two names are together. According to [Gesenius](#) the name Padan means "field" or "plain." Connected with Aram (a region of Syria), it refers to the plateau or table land of Syria ([6307](#)).

⁸⁸⁷ Gen. 31:19 - household idols: This term is the single plural Hebrew word *terâphîym* ([8655](#)). It is used but 15X in the entire OT, three times here in Genesis (Gen. 31:19, 34, 35). It is almost always translated by the NASB as "household idol(s)." Once it is translated as "idolatry" (1 Sam. 15:23), and twice it is left untranslated, appearing as "teraphim" (2 Kings 23:24; Zech. 10:2).

The text here specifically stated that the teraphim, household idols, that Rachel stole belonged to Laban. So Rachel did not worship them, but apparently Laban did. One suspects that he did not truly believe in the One True God. If he did, he certainly polluted that worship with worship of his teraphim. What motivated Rachel to steal them? There is disagreement here. Some refer to the Nuzi tablets, which state that he who possesses the household gods is the legitimate heir ([Constable, citing](#) West, p. 70; and Wood, *A Survey ...*, p. 28). I believe that is the likely reason that Rachel stole her father's teraphim. Others, however, disagree, stating that Rachel took the idols for her own protection and blessing ([Constable, citing](#) Kitchen, *The Bible ...*, and Barker, p. 135). To me the words of both Rachel and Leah are telling, "Do we still have any portion or inheritance in our father's house? Are we not reckoned by him as foreigners? For he has sold us, and has also entirely consumed our purchase price. Surely all the wealth which God has taken away from our father belongs to us and our children; now then, do whatever God has said to you" (Gen. 31:14-16). I think Rachel stole the *teraphim* as an insurance policy protecting her interests in her father's family fortune.

⁸⁸⁸ Gen. 31:20 - And Jacob deceived Laban the Aramean by not telling him that he was fleeing: Jacob has a long history with Laban, his Syrian father-in-law – twenty years, to be exact. Laban deceived Jacob on his wedding night, and Laban had been tinkering with Jacob's wages for years to gain an advantage financially, but to no avail. Jacob should have been honest with his father-in-law and told him he was departing. Jacob did not do so because he was afraid of Laban (Gen. 31:31). But fear of humans causes us to distrust God. God had told Jacob to head back to Canaan. Jacob should have trusted in God's protection. God had said He would be with Jacob.

It was fear of Esau that led Jacob to flee to Syria in the first place. It was fear of Laban that motivated Jacob to depart clandestinely. The closer Jacob drew to Canaan, the more renewed fear of Esau dominated his actions (Gen. 32:3-23). Fear is a harsh taskmaster. Fear of man severely hampers trust in God.

that he had; and he arose and crossed the Euphrates River,

J 2 Heading toward Gilead: and set his face toward the hill country of Gilead.

G 3 Laban's overtaking of Jacob, softened by the warning of God 31:22-32

H 1 Laban's pursuit of Jacob 31:22-23

J 1 His hearing about Jacob's departure: {22} When it was told Laban on the third day that Jacob had fled, 31:22

J 2 His pursuit of Jacob to Gilead for seven days: {23} then he took his kinsmen with him and pursued him a distance of seven days' journey, and he overtook him in the hill country of Gilead. ⁸⁸⁹ 31:23

H 2 Elohim's warning to Laban: {24} God came to Laban the Aramean in a dream of the night and said to him, "Be careful that you do not speak to Jacob either good or bad." ⁸⁹⁰ 31:24

H 3 Laban's overtaking of Jacob: {25} Laban caught up with Jacob. Now Jacob had pitched his tent in the hill country, and Laban with his kinsmen camped in the hill country of Gilead. 31:25

H 4 Laban's lecture to Jacob 31:26-30

J 1 His questioning Jacob's deceitful abduction of his daughters: {26} Then Laban said to Jacob, "What have you done by deceiving me and carrying away my daughters like captives of the sword? 31:26

J 2 His questioning Jacob's deceitful flight, depriving him of a festive send-off: {27} "Why did you flee secretly and deceive me, and did not tell me so that I might have sent you away with joy and with songs,

⁸⁸⁹ Gen. 31:23 - he overtook him in the hill country of Gilead: It took Laban and his sons seven days to traverse land that Jacob had covered in ten. Jacob was slowed down by all his flocks. Laban was not. Jacob had traveled quite a distance, far beyond the natural boundary of the Euphrates River before Laban caught up with him. There was no way Laban was going to compel Jacob to return to Aram except by force. And God had warned him not do so (Gen. 31:24, 29). See a [map of Gilead](#).

⁸⁹⁰ Gen. 31:24 - Be careful that you do not speak to Jacob either good or bad: God knew Laban's character well enough. He took the extraordinary means of visiting Laban at night in a dream and warning him not to harm Jacob. There is no telling what might have happened had God not warned Laban. Laban was not a good man. Avarice warps a man's character.

with timbrel and with lyre; 31:27

J 3 His charging Jacob with failure to allow him to say goodbye to his sons and daughters: {28} and did not allow me to kiss my sons and my daughters? Now you have done foolishly. 31:28

J 4 His power to do harm to Jacob was blocked by the Elohim of Jacob's father: {29} "It is in my power to do you harm, but the God of your father⁸⁹¹ spoke to me last night, saying, 'Be careful not to speak either good or bad to Jacob.' 31:29

J 5 His understanding that Jacob longed for his own father's house: {30} "Now you have indeed gone away because you longed greatly for your father's house; 31:30a

J 6 His charging Jacob with stealing his *elohim*: but why did you steal my gods?"⁸⁹² 31:30b

H 5 Jacob's reply to Laban 31:31-32

J 1 He had stolen away because he was afraid Laban would take away his daughters by force: {31} Then Jacob replied to Laban, "Because I was afraid, for I thought that you would take your daughters from me by force."⁸⁹³ 31:31

J 2 Whoever had stolen Laban's *elohim* would be put to death: {32} "The one with whom you find your

⁸⁹¹ Gen. 31:29 - the God of your father: This is a telling phrase. Laban speaks of the God of Jacob's father, Isaac. He does not claim this God as his own. In fact, he will momentarily accuse Jacob of having stolen his gods (Gen. 31:30)! I may be wrong, but it will not surprise me if we do not see Laban in heaven. I hope I am wrong.

⁸⁹² Gen. 31:30 - but why did you steal my gods: After chiding Jacob for his deceptive, clandestine, uncaring flight, Laban justifies Jacob's desire to see his father again. But what really disturbs him is Jacob's theft of his gods (*elohim*, 430). I think there were two things that disturbed Laban. One was the audacity of Jacob to steal his gods. At best, Laban's worship of the real God was sadly tarnished with idolatry. At worst, Laban did not really believe in the true God, but believed in his man-made gods. He does not here call them *teraphim* (8655), but *elohim* (430)! That is remarkable. And he identifies Jacob's God as "the God, *elohim* (430), of your father (Gen. 31:29)." So Laban does not claim the true God has his own.

The other remarkable thing that disturbed Laban was the significance of his *elohim* (430). I suspect this avaricious man understood that he who possessed the family idols, *teraphim* (8655), was the true heir. Of all things he wanted to prevent that from happening!

⁸⁹³ Gen. 31:31 - Because I was afraid, for I thought that you would take your daughters from me by force: Here Jacob is being honest. He is answering Laban's question as to why he, Jacob, had departed surreptitiously from Laban's presence without proper notification or a farewell party. He was afraid of Laban, and especially afraid that Laban would strip him of his family. There was no real trust or love between these two men. What a tragedy!

- gods⁸⁹⁴ shall not live; 31:32a
- J 3 Take what is yours: in the presence of our kinsmen point out what is yours among my belongings and take it for yourself." 31:32b
- J 4 Jacob's ignorance of Rachel's theft: For Jacob did not know that Rachel had stolen them. 31:32c
- G 4 Laban's fruitless search for his inheritance-bequeathing family idols 31:33-35
- H 1 Laban's fruitless search: {33} So Laban went into Jacob's tent and into Leah's tent and into the tent of the two maids, but he did not find them. Then he went out of Leah's tent and entered Rachel's tent. 31:33
- H 2 Rachel's hiding of the idols: {34} Now Rachel had taken the household idols⁸⁹⁵ and put them in the camel's saddle, and she sat on them. And Laban felt through all the tent but did not find them. 31:34
- H 3 Rachel's pretense at having her period: {35} She said to her father, "Let not my lord be angry that I cannot rise before you, for the manner of women is upon me."⁸⁹⁶ 31:35a
- H 4 Laban's inability to find the household idols: So he searched but did not find the household idols. 31:35b
- G 5 Jacob's angry protest of innocence despite Laban's treachery 31:36-42
- H 1 Jacob's anger at Laban's accusation of theft 31:36-37
- J 1 What is my sin? {36} Then Jacob became angry⁸⁹⁷ and contended with Laban; and Jacob said to Laban, "What is my transgression? What is my sin that you have hotly pursued me? 31:36

⁸⁹⁴ Gen. 31:32 - your gods: The Hebrew word is *elohim* (430). Jacob is using Laban's terminology. Both are referring to the *teraphim* (8655), the family idols that Rachel had stolen (Gen. 31:19, 34).

⁸⁹⁵ Gen. 31:34 - household idols: Here, Moses, the author of Genesis, again labels that which Laban had previously designated (Gen. 31:30) as his "gods" (*'elôhîym*, 430) as "household idols" (*terâphîym*, 8655). This latter word is used but 15X in the entire OT, three times here in Genesis (Gen. 31:19, 34, 35).

⁸⁹⁶ Gen. 31:35 - the manner of women is upon me: Rachel lied, claiming that she could not rise because of her monthly period.

⁸⁹⁷ Gen. 31:36 - Then Jacob became angry: Laban was justifiably angry, from his point of view, that Jacob had sneaked away from him without a proper farewell party, and Laban had vented against Jacob (Gen. 31:25-30). Jacob understood that. But when Laban accused Jacob of stealing his gods, and no stolen goods could be found, Jacob erupted in anger against Laban and vented all of his frustrations against his father-in-law (Gen. 31:36-42).

- J 2 What of yours have you found?: {37} "Though you have felt through all my goods, what have you found of all your household goods? Set it here before my kinsmen and your kinsmen, that they may decide between us two. 31:37
- H 2 Jacob's recounting of his faithful service 31:38-41a
- J 1 Jacob's faithful service for twenty years: {38} "These twenty years I have been with you; your ewes and your female goats have not miscarried, nor have I eaten the rams of your flocks. 31:38
- J 2 Laban's pitiless accounting of every animal: {39} "That which was torn of beasts I did not bring to you; I bore the loss of it myself. You required it of my hand whether stolen by day or stolen by night. 31:39
- J 3 Jacob's endurance of heat and cold: {40} "Thus I was: by day the heat consumed me and the frost by night, and my sleep fled from my eyes. 31:40
- J 4 Jacob's twenty years of service: {41} "These twenty years I have been in your house; I served you fourteen years for your two daughters and six years for your flock, 31:41a
- H 3 Jacob's charging Laban with unfairness restrained only by Elohim's instructions last night 31:41b-42
- J 1 Laban's changing his wages ten times: and you changed my wages ten times. 31:41b
- J 2 If Elohim of Isaac and [Abraham](#) had not looked after him, Laban would have sent him away empty-handed: {42} "If the God of my father,⁸⁹⁸ the God of Abraham, and the fear of Isaac, had not been for me, surely now you would have sent me away empty-handed. 31:42a
- J 3 Elohim rendered judgment to you last night: God has seen my affliction and the toil of my hands, so

⁸⁹⁸ Gen. 31:42 - the God of my father: Here, in a remarkable series of statements, Jacob reveals the God in whom he trusted, and to whom he was loyal. He identifies the God he worships as (1) the God (*Elohim*, [430](#)) of his father; (2) the God (*Elohim*, [430](#)) of Abraham; and (3) the fear (or more often, dread, or terror, or once, panic) (*pachad*, [6343](#)) of Isaac. By "the fear of Isaac" Jacob was referring the God whom Isaac feared, Yahweh. Every one on earth needs to have a fear or dread of God. This includes an awe of His power and might along with a dread of offending Him. The ungodly person has "no fear of God before his eyes" (Psalm 36:1; Rom. 3:18). Christians are exhorted, "let us cleanse ourselves from all defilement of flesh and spirit, perfecting holiness in the fear (*phobos*, [5401](#)) of God" (2 Cor. 7:1).

He rendered judgment last night." 31:42b

G 6 Jacob and Laban's treaty of no harm and fidelity 31:43-55

H 1 Laban's arrogant retort: {43} Then Laban replied to Jacob, 31:43a

J 1 The daughters are mine: "The daughters are my daughters,

J 2 The children are mine: and the children are my children,

J 3 The flocks are mine: and the flocks are my flocks,

J 4 Everything you have is mine: and all that you see is mine.⁸⁹⁹

H 2 Laban's admission of his own powerlessness: But what can I do this day to these my daughters or to their children whom they have borne? 31:43b

H 3 Laban's suggestion of a covenant: {44} "So now come, let us make a covenant,⁹⁰⁰ you and I, and let it be a witness between you and me." 31:44

H 4 Jacob's erection of a pillar and a heap of stones 31:45-46

J 1 Jacob's setting up a stone as a pillar: {45} Then Jacob took a stone and set it up as a pillar. 31:45

J 2 Jacob's men gather stones: {46} Jacob said to his kinsmen, "Gather stones." 31:46a

J 3 Their eating by the heap of stones: So they took stones and made a heap, and they ate there by the heap. 31:46b

H 5 The names given to the heap of stones 31:47-49

⁸⁹⁹ Gen. 31:42 - all that you see is mine: Laban is a greedy, avaricious, arrogant, and controlling man. Jacob was probably right. If God had not warned Laban, he probably would have attempted to recover everything Jacob owned. Provisionally, God was with Jacob, and He would not let that happen.

⁹⁰⁰ Gen. 31:44 - let us make a covenant: In good Hebrew idiom, Laban said, "let us cut a covenant," where "cut" translates the Hebrew [Qal Imperfect](#) verb *kârath* (3772), and "covenant" is the noun *berîyth* (1285). The covenant was ratified by killing (cutting) an animal or animals, which were then roasted and served as a meal. In this particular covenant a pile or heap of stones was the prominent visible and memorial feature. The terms of the covenant were spelled out in the words of Laban. This was not a covenant of friendship. It was a covenant of non-aggression. Both Laban and Jacob assigned a name to the covenant, Laban's name was in Aramaic, while Jacob's name was in Hebrew.

- J 1 Laban's: {47} Now Laban called it Jegar-sahadutha,⁹⁰¹ 31:47a
- J 2 Jacob's: but Jacob called it Galeed.⁹⁰² 31:47b
- J 3 Laban's interpretation -- this heap is a witness between us: {48} Laban said, "This heap is a witness between you and me this day." Therefore it was named Galeed, 31:48
- J 4 Mizpah (watchtower): {49} and Mizpah,⁹⁰³ for he said, "May the LORD watch between you and me when we are absent one from the other."⁹⁰⁴ 31:49
- H 6 The terms of the treaty 31:50-53
- J 1 Jacob is not to mistreat his daughters: {50} "If you mistreat my daughters, 31:50a
- J 2 Jacob is not to take other wives: or if you take wives besides my daughters, 31:50b
- J 3 Elohim will see all you do! although no man is with us, see, God is witness between you and me." 31:50c
- J 4 The heap and pillar mean that neither will pass this point to harm the other: {51} Laban said to Jacob, "Behold this heap and behold the pillar which I have set between you and me. {52} "This heap is a witness, and the pillar is a witness, 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. 31:51-52
- J 5 May the Elohim of [Abraham](#) and Nahor judge

⁹⁰¹ Gen. 31:47 - Jegar-Sahadutha: [NASB](#) note: "I.e. the heap of witness, in Aram" [[JTB](#) note: "Aram" means "Aramaic."]

⁹⁰² Gen. 31:47 - Galeed: [NASB](#) note: "I.e. the heap of witness, in Heb" [[JTB](#) note: "Heb" means "Hebrew."]

⁹⁰³ Gen. 31:49 - Mizpah: [NASB](#) note: "A literal translation: the *Mizpah*; ie. the watch tower"

⁹⁰⁴ Gen. 31:49 - May the LORD watch between you and me when we are absent one from the other: When I was a child in elementary school in Newton, KS, we were released from school periodically to attend a Bible teaching session led by some women from our community. I can remember them teaching this passage as a good prayer to pray as we departed. With the best of intentions, these ladies surely did not read the context. This is not a prayer of blessing. It is uttered by a scowling Laban who did not trust Jacob at all. What he meant was, "When I can't see you to check up on you, may Elohim spy on you to make sure you are treating my daughters fairly. And by the way, you better not cross over this boundary to hurt me, or else!"

between us: {53} "The God of Abraham and the God of Nahor, the God of their father, judge between us." ⁹⁰⁵ 31:53a

J 6 Jacob's oath: So Jacob swore by the fear of his father Isaac. ⁹⁰⁶ 31:53b

H 7 Jacob's offering a sacrifice and call for a feast: {54} Then Jacob offered a sacrifice ⁹⁰⁷ on the mountain, and called his kinsmen to the meal; and they ate the meal ⁹⁰⁸ and spent the night on the mountain. 31:54

H 8 Laban's farewell and departure 31:55

J 1 His farewell: {55} Early in the morning Laban arose, ⁹⁰⁹ and kissed his sons and his daughters

J 2 His blessing: and blessed them.

J 3 His departure: Then Laban departed and returned to his place. ⁹¹⁰

E 2 With Esau 32 - 33

⁹⁰⁵ Gen. 31:53 - judge between us: Since Laban used the plural of judge (the [Qal Imperfect](#) of the verb *shâphat*, [8199](#)), he was, according to [Constable](#), referring to two different Gods – the God of Abraham, Jacob’s God, on the one hand, and the pagan God of Nahor, his own God, on the other.

⁹⁰⁶ Gen. 31:53 - Jacob swore by the fear of his father Isaac: Jacob clearly did not swear by the pagan god of Nahor. He swore by His own God, whom his father Isaac feared.

⁹⁰⁷ Gen. 31:54 - Jacob offered a sacrifice: This is the “cutting” portion of “cutting a covenant.” There must be an animal sacrificed in order to ratify the covenant. The idea is that if either party reneged on this covenant, he deserved to be killed as this animal had been killed. The word for “offered” is the verb *zâbach* (2076). It means to “slaughter” or “sacrifice” or “kill.” The word for sacrifice is the related noun *zebach* (2077). So literally, the text reads that Jacob “sacrificed a sacrifice.”

⁹⁰⁸ Gen. 31:54 - and called his kinsmen to the meal; and they ate the meal. The kinsmen would be Laban and his sons and any other men who came along to assist Laban. Eating the sacrificed meat and other food was also part of the ratification of the covenant proposed by Laban. Jacob was the one who had to provide the meat, because he had driven all his flocks ahead. Laban had brought no flocks along when pursuing Jacob. In Middle Eastern culture, eating a meal with someone is an inviolable guarantee of non-aggression. You protect someone with whom you share a meal. This gives an understanding to Lot’s willingness to sacrifice the virginity of his daughters rather than give his angelic guests over to the lustful homosexuals of Sodom (Gen. 19:1-8).

⁹⁰⁹ Gen. 31:55 - Early in the morning Laban arose: This verse, in the Hebrew text, is Gen. 32:1.

⁹¹⁰ Gen. 31:55 - Then Laban departed and returned to his place: This, to me, was a sad departure. Feelings between Laban and his sons on the one hand, and between Jacob and his family on the other, had been strained. Those strained feelings were aggravated by Jacob’s deceitful and under-handed departure. The tension between Laban and Jacob had erupted in angry shouts back and forth at one another. Finally, the ill will had been, at least outwardly, laid to rest, and they had both signed the Middle East version of a non-aggression pact. Now Laban kissed his daughters and grandchildren goodbye. They would never again see one another. This is very sad.

On day all the angst in my family and in the Church Universal and between nations and races and cultures will all be submerged in the universal reign of the Messiah over the globe.

- G 1 Jacob's encounter with the angels of God at Mahanaim 32:1-2
- H 1 The angels of God meeting Jacob as he was returning: {1} Now as Jacob went on his way, the angels of God⁹¹¹ met him. 32:1
- H 2 Jacob's identifying the place as "God's Camp," naming it Mahanaim: {2} Jacob said when he saw them, "This is God's camp."⁹¹² So he named that place Mahanaim.⁹¹³ 32:2
- G 2 Jacob's fear of Esau; his division of his company into two and prayer to God for protection based on past promises 32:3-12
- H 1 An ominous exchange of messengers 32:3-6
- J 1 Jacob sends messengers to Esau: {3} Then Jacob sent messengers before him to his brother Esau in the land of Seir, the country of Edom. 32:3
- J 2 The message – I have acquired wealth from Laban; I'm returning and I wish to find favor in your sight: {4} He also commanded them saying, "Thus you shall say to my lord Esau: 'Thus says your servant Jacob, "I have sojourned with Laban, and stayed until now; {5} I have oxen and donkeys and flocks and male and female servants; and I have sent to tell my lord, that I may find favor in your sight.'" " 32:4-5
- J 3 The messengers' ominous report – Esau is coming to meet you with 400 men! {6} The messengers returned to Jacob, saying, "We came to your brother Esau, and furthermore he is coming to meet you,

⁹¹¹ Gen. 32:1 - the angels of God met him: Or, more literally, "messengers of God encountered him." This was a providentially-arranged meeting. These angels, more literally, "messengers" (plural of *mal'âk*, 4397) were sent to Jacob by God Himself. Yahweh had promised to be with Jacob (Gen. 31:3), and this meeting was God's reassurance to Jacob that He was there. God had protected Jacob from an antagonistic Laban, and now God would protect Jacob from an even more antagonistic Esau, who had already threatened to kill Jacob (Gen. 27:41). Jacob was very much afraid of Esau, and knew that he would have to encounter him sooner or later. God was reassuring Jacob of His protective presence.

⁹¹² Gen. 32:2 - camp: [NASB](#) footnote: "Or *company*." In most contexts this term simply means "encampment," without any military overtones. This is generally true throughout [Israel's](#) wilderness journeys. In other contexts, however, it conveys a military connotation, e.g., Josh. 8:13; 10:5; 11:4. It is my belief that these camps of heavenly messengers were to be understood as military encampments of God's heavenly armies.

⁹¹³ Gen. 32:2 - Mahanaim: [NASB](#) footnote: "I.e. Two Camps, or Two Companies"

and four hundred men are with him." ⁹¹⁴ 32:6

H 2 The fearful response of Jacob 32:7-8

- J 1 Jacob's fear: {7} Then Jacob was greatly afraid and distressed; ⁹¹⁵
- J 2 His division of his family into two groups: and he divided the people who were with him, and the flocks and the herds and the camels, into two companies; 32:7
- J 3 His rationale – if one group is attacked, the other will flee: {8} for he said, "If Esau comes to the one company and attacks it, then the company which is left will escape." 32:8

H 3 Jacob's prayer 32:9-12

- J 1 His identification of God: {9} Jacob said, "O God of my father Abraham and God of my father Isaac, O LORD, ⁹¹⁶
- J 2 His reviewing [Yahweh's](#) command to him to return with Divine blessing: who said to me, 'Return to your country and to your relatives, and I will prosper you,' 32:9
- J 3 His unworthiness of [Yahweh's](#) loyal love and faithfulness; {10} I am unworthy ⁹¹⁷ of all the lovingkindness ⁹¹⁸ and of all the faithfulness ⁹¹⁹

⁹¹⁴ Gen. 32:6 - four hundred men are with him: This would be a sizeable army, one that would be impossible for Jacob to match. Just why Esau felt it necessary to bring such a force is unclear to me. Certainly it would send a message to Jacob that Esau was a force to be reckoned with if Jacob had any ill intentions. But Esau's eventual meeting with Jacob was one of warmth and emotion (Gen. 33:4). What was the purpose of the army? Perhaps Jacob's series of gifts (Gen. 32:13-21) had the desired effect of appeasing Esau.

⁹¹⁵ Gen. 32:7 - Then Jacob was greatly afraid and distressed: Obviously the news of Esau's trip to meet him with a four-hundred-man army completely unnerved Jacob. This prompted the fervent prayer of Jacob recorded in Gen. 32:9-12. Unfortunately, it also provoked the divisive self-preservation tactics of Jacob which could not but reinforce animosity between certain segments of his family (Gen. 32:7-8; 33:1-3).

⁹¹⁶ Gen. 32:9 - O LORD: There is no question as to which God Jacob worships and whom He addresses here. He calls him "God (*'Ēlōhîym*, [430](#)) of my father Abraham," and "God (*'Ēlōhîym*, [430](#)) of my father Isaac," and "LORD" (*Yehôvâh* – as the vowels are pointed in the [MT](#), but probably more accurately, *Yahweh*, [3068](#)), "the One having told him to return to his country and to his relatives, and He would prosper him."

⁹¹⁷ Gen. 32:10 - I am unworthy: Jacob is growing in his walk with God. He has a lot of rough edges, yet, but he now realizes, in view of all that God has done for him in the last twenty years, that he is the object of God's lovingkindness and faithfulness. His growth in his family and in his possessions is solid evidence.

⁹¹⁸ Gen. 32:10 - lovingkindness: This is the plural of the noun *chêsêd* ([2617](#)), and should technically be translated, "lovingkindnesses." [Bruce Waltke](#), my Hebrew professor, translated the word "loyal love." Yahweh would later show *loyal love* to Jacob's son Joseph in prison in Egypt (Gen. 39:21). Jacob, nearing the end of his life, would ask

which You have shown to Your servant; for with my staff only I crossed this Jordan, and now I have become two companies. 32:10

- J 4 His request for deliverance from Esau, whom he fears: {11} "Deliver me, I pray, from the hand of my brother, from the hand of Esau; for I fear him, that he will come and attack me and the mothers with the children."⁹²⁰ 32:11
- J 5 His reminder of God's promise to multiply his offspring: {12} "For You said, 'I will surely prosper you and make your descendants as the sand of the sea,'⁹²¹ which is too great to be numbered." 32:12

G 3 Jacob's preparations to appease Esau with gifts 32:13-21

H 1 A list of the gifts 32:13-15

- J 1 Goats: {13} So he spent the night there. Then he selected from what he had with him a present⁹²² for his brother Esau: {14} two hundred female goats and twenty male goats, 32:13-14a
- J 2 Sheep: two hundred ewes and twenty rams, 32:14b
- J 3 Camels: {15} thirty milking camels and their colts, 32:15a
- J 4 Cattle: forty cows and ten bulls, 32:15b
- J 5 Donkeys: twenty female donkeys and ten male donkeys. 32:15c

H 2 Instructions to his help 32:16-20

his son Joseph to show him *loyal love* and not bury him in Egypt (Gen. 47:29), but in the burial place of his fathers in the Promised Land (Gen. 47:30).

⁹¹⁹ Gen. 32:10 - faithfulness: The noun is *'emeth* (571), most often translated by [NASB](#) as "truth," less often as "true" and "faithfulness." Obviously the two concepts of truth and faithfulness, or dependability, are related. Jacob considered God to be faithful because He was true – He had kept His promises.

⁹²⁰ Gen. 32:11 - for I fear him, that he will come and attack me and the mothers with the children: Jacob's fear was palpable, because Esau was approaching him with an army of four hundred men. This overwhelming fear motivated his prayer to God, who had already met him with an encampment of heavenly messengers.

⁹²¹ Gen. 32:12 - make your descendants as the sand of the sea: God had made this promise to Jacob at Bethel in a dream (Gen. 28:13-15). In that instance, God had said He would make Jacob's seed as the dust of the earth (Gen. 28:14). In Jacob's mind, there was no difference in the metaphors. Other Biblical writers used the same metaphor as that which Jacob here used – Isa. 10:22; Jer. 33:22; Hos. 1:10.

⁹²² Gen. 32:13 - present: What an appeasement gift! 550 animals! These would be driven to Esau in a succession of droves (Gen. 32:16).

- J 1 The spacing of the livestock: {16} He delivered them into the hand of his servants, every drove by itself, and said to his servants, "Pass on before me, and put a space between droves." 32:16
- J 2 The hypothetical question from Esau: {17} He commanded the one in front, saying, "When my brother Esau meets you and asks you, saying, 'To whom do you belong, and where are you going, and to whom do these animals in front of you belong?' 32:17
- J 3 The approved response: {18} then you shall say, 'These belong to your servant Jacob; it is a present sent to my lord Esau. And behold, he also is behind us.'" 32:18
- J 4 Subsequent responses: {19} Then he commanded also the second and the third, and all those who followed the droves, saying, "After this manner you shall speak to Esau when you find him; 32:19
- J 5 The approach of Jacob your servant! {20} and you shall say, 'Behold, your servant Jacob also is behind us.' " 20a
- H 3 The thought of Jacob – appeasing him with gifts to promote acceptance: For he said, "I will appease him ⁹²³ with the present that goes before me. Then afterward I will see his face; perhaps he will accept me." 32:20b
- H 4 Jacob's remaining behind that night: {21} So the present passed on before him, while he himself spent that night in the camp. 32:21
- G 4 Jacob's wrestling with God at Peniel until the latter *blesses* him 32:22-32
- H 1 Jacob's taking across the stream his entire family 32:22-23
- J 1 {22} Now he arose that same night and took his two wives and his two maids and his eleven children, and crossed the ford of the Jabbok.

⁹²³ Gen. 32:20 - I will appease him: Jacob used the verb *kâphar* (3722) with the *Piel* stem, meaning “to cover over” in the sense of “pacify,” “propitiate,” “atone for” his past sin of impersonating his brother to obtain the Abrahamic blessing from their blind father Isaac (Gen. 27:1-41). This verb is used one other time in this book – in Genesis 6:14, where it appears in the *Qal* stem, where it is recorded that God told Noah to build an ark of gopher wood, then *cover* it inside and out with pitch.

- J 2 {23} He took them and sent them across the stream.
And he sent across whatever he had.
- H 2 Jacob's being left alone: {24} Then Jacob was left alone,
32:24a
- H 3 Jacob's wrestling match 32:24-26
- J 1 The statement: and a man wrestled with him until
daybreak. ⁹²⁴ 32:24b
- J 2 The man's miraculous dislocation of Jacob's hip
because he could not overpower him: {25} When
he saw that he had not prevailed against him, ⁹²⁵ he
touched the socket of his thigh; so the socket of
Jacob's thigh was dislocated while he wrestled with
him. 32:25
- J 3 The man's request for Jacob to let him go as dawn
was breaking: {26} Then he said, "Let me go, for
the dawn is breaking." 32:26a
- H 4 Jacob's conversation 32:26-29
- J 1 Jacob's insistence on a **blessing** before letting the
man go: But he said, "I will not let you go unless
you bless me." 32:26b
- J 2 The man's changing Jacob's name to [Israel](#) – "for
you have striven with God and with men and have
prevailed." 37:27-28
- K1 The man's query: {27} So he said to him,
"What is your name?" 32:27a
- K2 Jacob's reply: And he said, "Jacob." 32:27b

⁹²⁴ Gen. 32:24 - a man wrestled with him until daybreak: According to Charles Ryrie (*Ryrie Study Bible*), "The man who wrestled Jacob is called an angel in Hosea 12:4 and was evidently the preincarnate Christ. Jacob's wrestling involved agonizing prayer (Hos. 12:4)." [[JTB](#)]: I here quote the extended passage from Hosea 12:2-6:

²The LORD also has a dispute with Judah, And will punish Jacob according to his ways; He will repay him according to his deeds. ³In the womb he took his brother by the heel, And in his maturity he contended with God. ⁴Yes, he wrestled with the angel and prevailed; He wept and sought His favor. He found Him at Bethel And there He spoke with us, ⁵Even the LORD, the God of hosts, The LORD is His name. ⁶Therefore, return to your God, Observe kindness and justice, And wait for your God continually.

⁹²⁵ Gen. 32:25 - When he saw that he had not prevailed against him: The comments of Charles Ryrie ([RSB](#)): "32:25-28 God allowed Himself to be overcome by Jacob, though He crippled him (whether temporarily or for the rest of his life is not stated). His limp, however, was proof that this was no mere dream. The Lord wanted to depart before daylight lest Jacob see Him (cf. Exod. 33:20), but Jacob insisted on being blessed first. So God changed his name from *Jacob* ... to [Israel](#) which means "he fights or persists with God" (in prevailing prayer)."

- K3 The man's pronouncement: {28} He said, "Your name shall no longer be Jacob, but Israel; ⁹²⁶ 32:28a
- K4 The man's reason: for you have striven with God and with men ⁹²⁷ and have prevailed." 32:28b
- J 3 Jacob's asking for the man's name: {29} Then Jacob asked him and said, "Please tell me your name." 32:29a
- J 4 The man's failure to respond: But he said, "Why is it that you ask my name?" 32:29b
- J 5 The man's **blessing** him there: And he blessed him there. 32:29c
- H 5 Jacob's reaction 32:30-31
- J 1 His naming the place "Peniel" : {30} So Jacob named the place Peniel, ⁹²⁸ 32:30a
- J 2 His reason: for *he said*, "I have seen God face to face, yet my life has been preserved!" ⁹²⁹ 32:30b
- J 3 His limping across Penuel at daybreak: {31} Now the sun rose upon him just as he crossed over Penuel, and he was limping on his thigh. ⁹³⁰ 32:31
- H 6 The refusal of the sons of Israel to eat the hip sinew because the man touched Jacob's hip socket: {32} Therefore, to this day the sons of Israel do not eat the

⁹²⁶ Gen. 32:28 - Israel: [NASB](#) footnote: "I.e. he who strives with God, or God strives"

⁹²⁷ Gen. 32:28 - you have striven with God and with men: The verb "have striven" is the [Qal Perfect](#) of *sârâh* ([8280](#)). It is used only here in Genesis, and in Hos. 12:3, where Jacob *contended* with God. In the [MT](#), there appears a related, but slightly different verb in Hos. 12:4, where he *wrestled* with the angel and prevailed. In view of the fact that the man stated that Jacob had striven with God, it makes sense to conclude that the man, also identified in Hos. 12:4 as a messenger, was the [pre-incarnate Christ](#).

⁹²⁸ Gen. 32:30 - Peniel: [NASB](#) footnote: "I.e. the face of God"

⁹²⁹ Gen. 32:30 - I have seen God face to face, yet my life has been preserved: Jacob was certainly convinced he had seen God "face to face," yet his life had been preserved. I believe it was the [pre-incarnate Christ](#) whom he had encountered.

⁹³⁰ Gen. 32:31 - limping on his thigh: Jacob had tangible proof that he had encountered a formidable opponent who had used supernatural means to gain an advantage over him. I have wrestled before, and it is an exhausting sport. For Jacob to wrestle all night with his opponent speaks to me of incredible endurance. As we would say it, Jacob "hung on for dear life." The event described in this narrative is one of the more obscure episodes in the Bible.

sinew of the hip which is on the socket of the thigh, because he touched the socket of Jacob's thigh in the sinew of the hip. 32:32

G 5 The cordial, if strained, meeting between Esau and Jacob 33:1-17

H 1 The ominous approach of Esau: {1} Then Jacob lifted his eyes and looked, and behold, Esau was coming, and four hundred men with him. 33:1a

H 2 Jacob's division of his family 33:1b-2

J 1 The general statement: So he divided the children among Leah and Rachel and the two maids. 33:1b

J 2 The pecking order: {2} He put the maids and their children in front, and Leah and her children next, and Rachel and Joseph last.⁹³¹ 33:2

H 3 Jacob's humble approach to his brother: {3} But he himself passed on ahead of them and bowed down to the ground seven times,⁹³² until he came near to his brother. 33:3

H 4 Esau's emotional greeting of Jacob: {4} Then Esau ran to meet him and embraced him, and fell on his neck and kissed him, and they wept.⁹³³ 33:4

H 5 Esau's query of Jacob's human retinue 33:5-7

J 1 Esau's query: {5} He lifted his eyes and saw the women and the children, and said, "Who are these with you?" 33:5a

J 2 Jacob's response: So he said, "The children whom God has graciously given your servant." 33:5b

⁹³¹ Gen. 33:2 - Rachel and Joseph last: The pecking order in the family could not go unobserved by Jacob's other wives and children. The maids and their children and Leah and her children were more expendable than Rachel and her son Joseph. The backlash against Jacob's favoritism toward Rachel and Joseph would rear its ugly head in Genesis 37, when Jacob's other sons grew so furious with Joseph that they sold him into slavery!

⁹³² Gen. 33:3 - bowed down to the ground seven times: Seven seems, in the Bible, to be the number of completeness. Years ago God had predicted to Rebekah that the older would serve the younger (Gen. 25:23). Yet here, Jacob, in my opinion, goes beyond appropriate respect and all but grovels before his brother out of a desperate sense of self-preservation. But no amount of posturing would change God's decree. The older would serve the younger.

⁹³³ Gen. 33:4 - Then Esau ran to meet him and embraced him, and fell on his neck and kissed him, and they wept: Esau's attitude and actions are a tremendous answer to Jacob's prayer. Gone was the murderous hostility Esau had held toward Jacob in the past (Gen. 27:41). What an answer to prayer!

- J 3 The respect of the maids and children: {6} Then the maids came near with their children, and they bowed down. 33:6
- J 4 The respect of Leah and children: {7} Leah likewise came near with her children, and they bowed down; 33:7a
- J 5 The respect of Joseph and Rachel: and afterward Joseph came near with Rachel, and they bowed down. 33:7b
- H 6 Esau's query of all the herd he had met 33:8-11
- J 1 Esau's query: {8} And he said, "What do you mean by all this company which I have met?" 33:8a
- J 2 Jacob's response: And he said, "To find favor in the sight of my lord." 33:8b
- J 3 Esau's initial refusal: {9} But Esau said, "I have plenty, my brother; let what you have be your own." 33:9
- J 4 Jacob's insistence 33:10-11a
- K 1 As proof of his favor in Esau's sight: {10} Jacob said, "No, please, if now I have found favor in your sight, then take my present from my hand, for I see your face as one sees the face of God,⁹³⁴ and you have received me favorably. 33:10
- K 2 Because Elohim has been with him and he has plenty: {11} "Please take my gift which has been brought to you, because God has dealt graciously with me and because I have plenty." 33:11a
- J 5 Esau's acceptance: Thus he urged him and he took it. 33:11b
- H 7 Esau's proposal to travel together {12} Then Esau said, "Let us take our journey and go, and I will go before you." 33:12
- H 8 Jacob's refusal 33:13-14

⁹³⁴ Gen. 33:10 - I see your face as one sees the face of God: Jacob had experienced looking at God face to face (Gen. 32:24-30). God was favorably disposed toward him: Now he sees that Esau's face is favorably disposed toward him also, and he is grateful.

- J 1 It's too hard for the children and flocks: {13} But he said to him, "My lord knows that the children are frail and that the flocks and herds which are nursing are a care to me. And if they are driven hard one day, all the flocks will die. 33:13
- J 2 You go ahead and I'll follow at a leisurely pace: {14} "Please let my lord pass on before his servant, and I will proceed at my leisure, according to the pace of the cattle that are before me and according to the pace of the children, until I come to my lord at Seir." 33:14
- H 9 Esau's offer of an armed guard: {15} Esau said, "Please let me leave with you some of the people who are with me." 33:15a
- H 10 Jacob's refusal: But he said, "What need is there? ⁹³⁵ Let me find favor in the sight of my lord." 33:15b
- H 11 Esau's return to Seir: {16} So Esau returned that day on his way to Seir. 33:16
- H 12 Jacob's settlement at Succoth: {17} Jacob journeyed to Succoth, ⁹³⁶ and built for himself a house and made booths for his livestock; therefore the place is named Succoth. 33:17
- G 6 Jacob's settling in Shechem and erection of an altar to the God of [Israel](#) 33:18-20
- H 1 Jacob's arrival at Shechem: {18} Now Jacob came safely to the city of Shechem, ⁹³⁷ which is in the land of Canaan, when he came from Paddan-aram, and camped before the city. 33:18
- H 2 Jacob's purchase of land to pitch his tent: {19} He bought the piece of land where he had pitched his tent from the

⁹³⁵ Gen. 33:15 - What need is there?: [NASB](#) footnote: "A literal translation: *Why this?*" [JTB](#): Esau desired a friendly brotherly relationship with his brother Jacob, but the latter would have none of it. The strained relationship between Jacob and Esau had been moderated, but the relationship of the two was still dysfunctional, at least from Jacob's point of view. The Edomites, descendants of Esau, later became enemies of [Israel](#) (1 Sam. 14:47; 2 Sam. 8:13). Part of the enmity resulted as a Divine judgment against [Israel](#) on account of the idolatry tragically introduced by King Solomon (1 Kings 11:1-22).

⁹³⁶ Gen. 33:17 - Succoth: [NASB](#) footnote: "I.e. booths." [JTB](#): See a [map of Succoth](#).

⁹³⁷ Gen. 33:18 - Shechem: See the [map of Shechem](#).

hand of the sons of Hamor, Shechem's father,⁹³⁸ for one hundred pieces of money. 33:19

H 3 Jacob's erection of an altar {20} Then he erected there an altar and called it El-Elohe-Israel.⁹³⁹ 33:20

D 2 Elohim's *blessing* of Jacob in [Canaan](#) despite the amoral and immoral behavior of his sons 34 - 35

E 1 Simeon and Levi's amoral, retaliatory massacre of the men of Shechem 34

G 1 Shechem ben Hamor's defilement of Dinah; his request to marry her 34:1-4

H 1 Dinah's mission: {1} Now Dinah the daughter of Leah, whom she had borne to Jacob, went out to visit the daughters of the land. 34:1

H 2 Shechem's rape: {2} When Shechem the son of Hamor the Hivite, the prince of the land, saw her, he took her and lay with her by force. 34:2

H 3 Shechem's attraction: {3} He was deeply attracted to Dinah the daughter of Jacob, and he loved the girl and spoke tenderly to her. 34:3

H 4 Shechem's request: {4} So Shechem spoke to his father Hamor, saying, "Get me this young girl for a wife." 34:4

G 2 Hamor's official request for marriage and intermarriage 34:5-12

H 1 Jacob's silence: {5} Now Jacob heard that he had defiled Dinah his daughter; but his sons were with his livestock in the field, so Jacob kept silent until they came in. 34:5

H 2 Hamor's mission: {6} Then Hamor the father of Shechem went out to Jacob to speak with him. 34:7

H 3 The anger of Jacob's sons: {7} Now the sons of Jacob came in from the field when they heard it; and the men were grieved, and they were very angry because he had

⁹³⁸ Gen. 33:19 - Hamor, Shechem's father: It appears that Hamor built a city and called it Shechem, after the name of his son. See [John Gill](#).

⁹³⁹ Gen. 33:20 - El-Elohe-Israel: This is a unique name (415) for God, appearing only here in the entire OT. It means "the Mighty God of [Israel](#)," [Israel](#) being the new name for Jacob (Gen. 32:28). This is Jacob's name for God, and he affixed this name to his altar. It seems apparent that Jacob's wrestling with the pre-incarnate Christ (Gen. 32:24-32) had a profound spiritual impact on him. See the comments by [Constable](#) in the latter part of this chapter.

done a disgraceful thing in Israel by lying with Jacob's daughter, for such a thing ought not to be done. 34:7

H 4 Hamor's explanation: {8} But Hamor spoke with them, saying, "The soul of my son Shechem longs for your daughter; please give her to him in marriage. 34:8

H 5 Hamor's request for an alliance 34:9-10

J 1 Intermarriage: {9} "Intermarry with us; ⁹⁴⁰ give your daughters to us and take our daughters for yourselves. 34:9

J 2 Trade benefits: {10} "Thus you shall live with us, and the land shall be open before you; live and trade in it and acquire property in it." 34:10

H 6 Shechem's willingness to pay a dowry 34:11-12

J 1 His promise: {11} Shechem also said to her father and to her brothers, "If I find favor in your sight, then I will give whatever you say to me. 34:11

J 2 His request for marriage: {12} "Ask me ever so much bridal payment and gift, and I will give according as you say to me; but give me the girl in marriage." 34:12

G 3 The deceitful agreement of Jacob's sons on condition of [circumcision](#) 34:13-17

H 1 The deceit of Jacob's sons: {13} But Jacob's sons answered Shechem and his father Hamor with deceit, ⁹⁴¹ because he had defiled Dinah their sister. 34:17

H 2 Their condition of [circumcision](#) 34:14-17

J 1 The stigma of uncircumcision: {14} They said to them, "We cannot do this thing, to give our sister to one who is uncircumcised, for that would be a disgrace to us. 34:14

J 2 Their condition of [circumcision](#): {15} "Only on this

⁹⁴⁰ Gen. 34:9 - Intermarry with us: This was a good political move on the part of Hamor, but it was the very thing Abraham and Isaac had sought to avoid – marriage of pagan women. The tragic, murderous retaliation that ensued, though abhorrent, at least helped maintain the purity of the faith. I am not condoning the murders, but in the end God's ideal of a pure faith was maintained, at least for a time.

⁹⁴¹ Gen. 34:13 - deceit: Deceit seems endemic in Jacob's family.

condition will we consent to you: if you will become like us, in that every male of you be circumcised,⁹⁴² 34:15

J 3 Their agreement to the alliance: {16} then we will give our daughters to you, and we will take your daughters for ourselves, and we will live with you and become one people. 34:16

J 4 Their refusal to participate without [circumcision](#): {17} "But if you will not listen to us to be circumcised, then we will take our daughter and go."⁹⁴³ 34:17

G 4 The eager compliance of the men of the city 34:18-24

H 1 The agreement of Hamor and Shechem: {18} Now their words seemed reasonable to Hamor and Shechem, Hamor's son. 34:18

H 2 The speedy compliance of respected Shechem: {19} The young man did not delay to do the thing, because he was delighted with Jacob's daughter. Now he was more respected than all the household of his father. 34:19

H 3 The conversation of Hamor and Shechem with the men of the city 34:20-24

J 1 The meeting: {20} So Hamor and his son Shechem came to the gate of their city and spoke to the men of their city, saying, 34:20

J 2 The proposal of an alliance: {21} "These men are friendly with us; therefore let them live in the land and trade in it, for behold, the land is large enough for them. Let us take their daughters in marriage, and give our daughters to them. 34:21

J 3 The explanation of the condition: {22} "Only on this condition will the men consent to us to live with us, to become one people: that every male among us be circumcised as they are circumcised. 34:22

⁹⁴² Gen. 34:15 - every male of you be circumcised: On the surface, this seems like a flimsy attempt to align the two clans on religious grounds, and thus legitimize intermarriage. To Jacob and his sons, circumcision was the sign of participation in the Abrahamic Covenant (Gen. 17:1-27). [Constable, however, objects to this](#). I do not, however, find his arguments compelling. Regardless, to Simeon and Levi, Shechemite incorporation into the Abrahamic Covenant was not the *real* motive for their requiring circumcision.

⁹⁴³ Gen. 34:17 - then we will take our daughter and go: The clan could have taken Dinah and left for other parts without slaughtering the men of Shechem. That would have been far more honorable.

- J 4 Their anticipated gain: {23} "Will not their livestock and their property and all their animals be ours? ⁹⁴⁴ Only let us consent to them, and they will live with us." 34:23
- J 5 The compliance of the men: {24} All who went out of the gate of his city listened to Hamor and to his son Shechem, and every male was circumcised, all who went out of the gate of his city. 34:24
- G 5 The ruthless attack of Simeon and Levi on the unsuspecting men of Shechem in retaliation for the rape of their sister 34:25-31
- H 1 The disability of the men: {25} Now it came about on the third day, when they were in pain, 34:25a
- H 2 The slaughter by Simeon and Levi 34:25b-26
- J 1 The surprise attack: that two of Jacob's sons, Simeon and Levi, Dinah's brothers, each took his sword and came upon the city unawares, and killed every male. ⁹⁴⁵ 34:25b
- J 2 Their murder of Hamor and Shechem: {26} They killed Hamor and his son Shechem with the edge of the sword, 34:26a
- J 3 Their abduction of Dinah: and took Dinah from Shechem's house, and went forth. 34:26b
- H 3 The looting by Jacob's sons 34:27-29
- J 1 The summary statement: {27} Jacob's sons came upon the slain and looted the city, ⁹⁴⁶ because they had defiled their sister. 34:27
- J 2 Their plunder of livestock: {28} They took their flocks and their herds and their donkeys, and that which was in the city and that which was in the field; 34:28

⁹⁴⁴ Gen. 34:22 - Will not their livestock and their property and all their animals be ours: There was dishonesty on both sides. Jacob's sons were dishonest, but so were the Shechemites. They did not view circumcision as a religious rite but as a commercial rite. They plotted that they would be the greater beneficiaries of this relationship.

⁹⁴⁵ Gen. 34:25 - killed every male: This was treachery in its most murderous form.

⁹⁴⁶ Gen. 34:27 - looted the city: Instead of the Shechemites swallowing up the wealth of the [sons of Israel](#), the [sons of Israel](#) swallowed up the wealth of the men of Shechem. Though Simeon and Levi perpetrated the murder, the rest of the sons greedily profited from their actions.

J 3 Their abduction of wives and children: {29} and they captured and looted all their wealth and all their little ones and their wives,⁹⁴⁷ even all that was in the houses. 34:29

H 4 The dismay of Jacob 34:30

J 1 His fear of perception: {30} Then Jacob said to Simeon and Levi, "You have brought trouble on me by making me odious among the inhabitants of the land,⁹⁴⁸ among the Canaanites and the Perizzites;

J 2 His fear of reprisal: and my men being few in number, they will gather together against me and attack me and I will be destroyed, I and my household."

H 5 The honor code of Jacob's sons: {31} But they said, "Should he treat our sister as a harlot?"⁹⁴⁹ 34:31

E 2 Elohim's renewal to Jacob of the *blessings* of the [Abrahamic covenant](#) 35:1-15

G 1 Elohim's instructions to Jacob to return to Bethel and make an altar to God 35:1-4

H 1 Elohim's command to Jacob to return to Bethel: {1} Then God said to Jacob, "Arise, go up to Bethel and live

⁹⁴⁷ Gen. 34:29 - captured ... all their little ones and their wives: An outright departure from that portion of the land would have prevented intermarriage with these Hivites (Gen. 34:2). But now the [Sons of Israel](#) intermarried among them any way. The purity of the line as far as devoted worship of Yahweh alone had now been jeopardized. This would not be the last time Satan endeavored to pull away the [sons of Israel](#) from the worship of Yahweh by using pagan intermarriage (Num. 25:1-18).

⁹⁴⁸ Gen. 34:30 - You have brought trouble on me by making me odious among the inhabitants of the land: Jacob's concern over the matter seems not to have been the murderous treachery of his sons, but rather of endangering his own existence and that of his clan. So his greater concern was self-preservation, rather than berating the evils of murder and pillaging.

In Jacob's prophecy concerning his sons (Gen. 49:1-27), he gives special attention to Levi and Simeon as brothers (Gen. 49:5-7). Jacob acknowledges the violence of their swords, disassociates himself from them, berates their murder of men and laming of oxen, curses their anger and wrath, and disperses them in the nation of [Israel](#). Most interestingly, in an act of mercy and grace, God granted the priesthood to the sons of Aaron the Levite (Exod. 28:1), and granted to the Levites the ministry of priestly assistance (Exod. 38:21; Num. 1:47-54; 3:6-8)!

⁹⁴⁹ Gen. 34:31 - Should he treat our sister as a harlot: Simeon and Levi justified the brutal execution of all the men of the city on account of the rape by one of their number of their sister. This whole affair seems utterly incomprehensible. Constable does a good job of [quantifying the significance](#) of this sordid chapter:

- (1) It explains why Jacob passed over Simeon and Levi for special blessing.
- (2) It shows the importance of keeping the chosen seed separate from the Canaanites.
- (3) It gives a reason for the sanctification of Jacob's household that follows (Gen. 35:2-4).
- (4) It demonstrates the sovereign control of God.... namely, that God works through and often in spite of the limited self-serving plans of human beings.

there,⁹⁵⁰ and make an altar there to God, who appeared to you when you fled from your brother Esau."⁹⁵¹ 35:1

H 2 Jacob's instructions to his household: {2} So Jacob said to his household and to all who were with him, [35:2a] 35:2-3a

J 1 "Put away the foreign gods which are among you,"⁹⁵² 35:2b

J 2 and purify yourselves 35:2c

J 3 and change your garments; 35:2d

J 4 {3} and let us arise and go up to Bethel, 35:3a

H 3 Jacob's intention to make an altar to Elohim: and I will make an altar there to God,⁹⁵³ 35:3b

J 1 who answered me in the day of my distress

J 2 and has been with me wherever I have gone."

H 4 His family's response 35:4

J 1 {4} So they gave to Jacob all the foreign gods which

⁹⁵⁰ Gen. 35:1 - Arise, go up to Bethel and live there: The last time God had directed Jacob to go anywhere was back in Syria, where He had told him to return to the land of his fathers, and that He would be with him (Gen. 31:3).

⁹⁵¹ Gen. 35:1 - make an altar there to God, who appeared to you when you fled from your brother Esau: Not only was God explicit about the place to which Jacob was to move his clan, but also about the activity and its purpose. He was to build an altar to God who had appeared to him on the occasion when he had been there before, fleeing from his brother Esau. God wants to revisit the promise that He had made to Jacob and Jacob's promise to serve God upon safe deliverance back to the promised land (Gen. 28:10-22). According to [Constable](#), this is the first and only time God commanded a patriarch to build an altar. In my opinion, God was calling Jacob and his family to renewed holiness, purity, and worship of Himself alone. Without this command, I doubt that Jacob would have purged his family of the false gods they had acquired.

⁹⁵² Gen. 35:2 - Put away the foreign gods which are among you: It is incomprehensible to me why any of Jacob's children would have brought along foreign gods. However, we note that Rachel had stolen her father's *teraphim* (Gen. 31:19, 34). We also surmise that at least some of his sons had taken some of the wives and daughters of the slain men of Shechem as their own (Gen. 34:28-29). Presumably these women had brought along with them their own household gods. The word "foreign" is the Hebrew *nêkâr* ([5236](#)); "gods" is the familiar plural *'êlôhîym* ([430](#)). In my opinion, unless God had commanded Jacob to return to the hallowed site of Bethel and build an altar, Jacob would not have purged his family of their foreign gods. We still have our foreign gods today. In my opinion, a great many rural churches worship the gods of sports, and school activities, and summer club activities, which take precedence over the regular Sunday worship in the local church.

⁹⁵³ Gen. 35:3 - and I will make an altar there to God: Jacob characterized God as (1) the one who answered him in the day of his distress and (2) the one who had been with him wherever he had gone. This seems characteristic of Jacob's walk with God. He was in constant distress, yet God remained faithful to him and delivered him ([Constable](#), quoting [Sailhamer](#)).

- they had ⁹⁵⁴
- J 2 and the rings which were in their ears, ⁹⁵⁵
- J 3 and Jacob hid them under the oak which was near Shechem.
- G 2 The Divinely-protected journey of the clan to Bethel; Jacob's erection of an altar at Bethel; the death of Deborah 35:5-8
- H 1 The fear of the surrounding cities: {5} As they journeyed, there was a great terror upon the cities which were around them, ⁹⁵⁶ and they did not pursue the sons of Jacob. 35:6
- H 2 Jacob's arrival at Bethel: {6} So Jacob came to Luz (that is, Bethel), which is in the land of Canaan, he and all the people who were with him. 35:6
- H 3 Jacob's building an altar: {7} He built an altar there, 35:7
- J 1 The name: and called the place El-bethel, ⁹⁵⁷
- J 2 The reason: because there God had revealed Himself to him when he fled from his brother.
- H 4 The death and burial of Deborah 35:8
- J 1 Her death: {8} Now Deborah, Rebekah's nurse, died, ⁹⁵⁸

⁹⁵⁴ Gen. 35:4 - all the foreign gods which they had: It is tragic that Jacob had allowed members of his family to possess foreign gods. Finally now, at the prodding of God, he finally takes the initiative to lead his family in purifying themselves to prepare to worship God at Bethel.

⁹⁵⁵ Gen. 35:4 - the rings which were in their ears: These must not have been merely ornamental ear rings such as the nose ring that Abraham's servant gave to Rebekah (Gen. 24:22, 30, 47). These must have had some connection with idolatry and the worship of false gods.

⁹⁵⁶ Gen. 35:5 - there was a great terror upon the cities which were around them: Though word had presumably circulated around about the murderous nature of the clan of Jacob, God prevented the surrounding cities from pursuing Jacob by placing a dread of the clan in their hearts. They stayed where they were. Once again God is proving faithful to Jacob, aka [Israel](#), and his sons despite their flaws. God's protection seems to be a consequence of the clan's corporate purification of themselves.

⁹⁵⁷ Gen. 35:7 - El-bethel: Heb. *'El Beyth-'El* ([416](#)) means "God of the House of God." This name recalls the incident, years earlier, when Jacob had fled from his brother Esau. Yahweh had dramatically met him at night in a vision with angels (messengers) of God ascending and descending a ladder that reached from earth to heaven with Yahweh standing above it and addressing Jacob. (Gen. 28:12-15). This was a life-changing event in Jacob's spiritual pilgrimage. Now he worships that same God, Yahweh, and builds an altar there and re-names the place "God of the House of God." Jacob will soon, after another visit from Yahweh, simplify the name and call it simply "Bethel," meaning "House of God" (Gen. 35:15).

⁹⁵⁸ Gen. 35:8 - Deborah, Rebekah's nurse, died: There has been no record of Rebekah's death. Yet here is recorded the death of her nurse. My theory is that, after Rebekah had died, Deborah had joined Jacob's entourage. The record of Deborah's death is a veiled hint that Rebekah herself had died. [Constable](#), citing [Waltke](#), conjectures

- J 2 Her burial: and she was buried below Bethel under the oak;
- J 3 The name of the site: it was named Allon-bacuth. ("Oak of Weeping")
- G 3 Elohim's appearance to Jacob, renaming him [Israel](#); His renewal of the *blessings* and promises related to the [Abrahamic covenant](#) 35:9-15
 - H 1 The appearance of Elohim 35:9
 - J 1 {9} Then God appeared to Jacob again when he came from Paddan-aram,
 - J 2 and He blessed him.
 - H 2 His confirmation of Jacob's name change 35:10
 - J 1 {10} God said to him, "Your name is Jacob; You shall no longer be called Jacob,
 - J 2 But Israel shall be your name." ⁹⁵⁹
 - J 3 Thus He called him Israel. ⁹⁶⁰
 - H 3 His identification of himself as El Shaddai: {11} God also said to him, "I am God Almighty; ⁹⁶¹ 35:11a
 - H 4 His command: Be fruitful and multiply; ⁹⁶² 35:11b

that this was an appropriate mechanism inasmuch as Rebekah had deceived her husband, Isaac. Perhaps one day, in the next life, we will find out the reasons for some of these peculiar statements or non-statements in the Bible. Right now it is pure conjecture.

⁹⁵⁹ Gen. 35:10 - Israel shall be your name: God had already named Jacob [Israel](#) (Gen. 32:28). But the name [Israel](#) crops up more frequently in the narrative that follows (Gen. 35:21,22; 36:31; 37:3, 13; 42:5; 43:6, 8, 11; 45:21, 28; 46:1, 2, 5, 8, 29, 30; 47:27, 29).

⁹⁶⁰ Gen. 35:10 - Israel: The name means "He strives with Elohim." According to etymological experts ([3478](#)), it means "God prevails."

⁹⁶¹ Gen. 35:11 - God Almighty: Heb. El Shadday, where *Él* ([410](#)), "strong one," or "powerful one" is an abbreviation of *Élôhîym* ([430](#)), "strong ones" – the generic name for God, and *Shadday* ([7706](#)) means "Almighty" or "All-Powerful." It is used 48X in the OT. It first appeared in Gen. 17:1, where God revealed Himself to Abram as "God Almighty."

⁹⁶² Gen. 35:11 - Be fruitful and multiply: This amounts to a confirmation to Jacob of the [Abrahamic Covenant](#). [John Sailhamer](#), "Genesis," p. 218, quoted in [Constable](#) aptly states the following:

"The importance of God's words to Jacob in vv. 11-12 cannot be overemphasized. First, God's words 'be fruitful and increase in number' recalled clearly the primeval **blessing** of Creation (1:28) and hence showed God to be still 'at work' in bringing about the **blessing** to all mankind through Jacob. Second, for the first time since 17:16 ('kings of peoples will come from her'), the mention is made of **royalty** ('kings,' v. 11) in the promised line.

H 5 His blessing 35:11c-12

- J 1 Nations: A nation and a company of nations shall come from you,⁹⁶³ 35:11c
- J 2 Kings: And kings⁹⁶⁴ shall come forth from you. 35:11d
- J 3 Land: {12} "The land⁹⁶⁵ which I gave to Abraham and Isaac, I will give it to you, And I will give the land to your descendants after you."⁹⁶⁶ 35:12

H 6 His departure: {13} Then God went up from him⁹⁶⁷ in the place where He had spoken with him. 35:13

H 7 Jacob's response 35:14-15

- J 1 His setting up a pillar: {14} Jacob set up a pillar in the place where He had spoken with him, a pillar of stone, 35:14a
- J 2 His anointing the pillar: and he poured out a drink offering on it; he also poured oil on it. 35:14b
- J 3 His naming the place Bethel: {15} So Jacob named the place where God had spoken with him,

Third, the promise of the **land**, first given to Abraham and then to Isaac, was renewed here with Jacob (v. 12). Thus within these brief words several major themes of the book have come together. The primeval **blessing** of mankind was renewed through the promise of a **royal offspring** and the gift of the **land**." (Emphasis mine.)

The original Abrahamic blessing (Gen. 12:1-3) consisted of Blessing; Seed (Descendants); and Land. Those three elements are repeated here in slightly altered form. "Be fruitful and multiply" is, as Sailhamer noted, a Blessing as well as a Command (see Gen. 1:28; see also Gen. 12:2, 3).

⁹⁶³ Gen. 35:11 - A nation and a company of nations shall come from you: This amplifies the "Seed" or "Descendants" portion of the [Abrahamic Blessing / Covenant](#) (Gen. 12:2).

⁹⁶⁴ Gen. 35:11 - kings: Again, this amplifies the "Seed" or "Descendants" portion of the [Abrahamic Blessing / Covenant](#) (Gen. 12:2; 28:13-14)

⁹⁶⁵ Gen. 35:12 - land: Land, the land of Canaan is the third inseparable and irrevocable portion of the [Abrahamic Covenant](#) confirmed to Isaac, to Jacob, and to Jacob's seed (descendants). Roman Catholicism, Greek Orthodoxy, and mainline Protestantism do a great disservice to God and to the nation of [Israel](#) in refusing to grant [Israel](#) legitimacy in the land God promised to her as an [Everlasting Covenant](#) (Gen. 13:14-15; 15:1-21). Today, [Israel](#) is not occupying Palestinian land. Palestinians are occupying Israeli land!

⁹⁶⁶ Gen. 35:12 - I will give the land to your descendants after you: "Descendants" is, literally, "seed," the singular of *zera'* ([2233](#)). The land of Canaan is the perpetual inheritance of the physical offspring of Jacob. Later Scripture reveals that only the believing remnant of Jacob's seed will ultimately inherit the land (Isa. 10:22; Rom. 9:27). See also Isa. 59:20-21; Rom. 11:25-27).

⁹⁶⁷ Gen. 35:13 - God went up from him: This seems to imply that God Himself, likely the [pre-incarnate Christ](#), had been conversing with Jacob face to face (see [Constable](#)).

Bethel.⁹⁶⁸ 35:15

E 3 Milestones in Jacob's family 35:16-29

G 1 The birth of Benjamin and death of Rachel 35:16-20

H 1 The journey to Ephrath (Bethlehem): {16} Then they journeyed from Bethel; and when there was still some distance to go to Ephrath, 35:16a

H 2 Rachel's hard labor: Rachel began to give birth and she suffered severe labor. 35:16b

H 3 The consolation of the midwife: {17} When she was in severe labor the midwife said to her, "Do not fear, for now you have another son." 35:17

H 4 Rachel's dying name for her son: {18} It came about as her soul was departing (for she died), that she named him Ben-oni; ⁹⁶⁹ 35:18a

H 5 Jacob's renaming of his son: but his father called him Benjamin. ⁹⁷⁰ 35:18b

H 6 The Burial of Rachel: {19} So Rachel died and was buried ⁹⁷¹ on the way to Ephrath (that is, Bethlehem). 35:19

H 7 Jacob's erection of a pillar: {20} Jacob set up a pillar over her grave; that is the pillar of Rachel's grave to this day. 35:20

G 2 Reuben's immoral incest with Bilhah 35:21-22a

H 1 The journey of [Israel](#): {21} Then Israel journeyed on and pitched his tent beyond the tower of Eder. 35:21

H 2 The incest of Reuben: {22} It came about while Israel

⁹⁶⁸ Gen. 35:15 - Bethel: [NASB](#) footnote: "I.e. the house of God" [[JTB](#) note: literally, "House of El," (an abbreviation of *Elohim*, generic name for God.)]

⁹⁶⁹ Gen. 35:18 - Ben-oni: [NASB](#) footnote: "I.e. the son of my sorrow." [Constable](#) suggests it means "Son of My Pain."

⁹⁷⁰ Gen. 35:18 - Benjamin: [NASB](#) footnote: "I.e. the son of the right hand." [Constable](#) suggests it means "Son of My Good Fortune."

⁹⁷¹ Gen. 35:19 - Rachel died and was buried: It must have pained Jacob greatly that one more son came from his favorite wife, Rachel, but that son cost him the life of his favorite wife. [Constable](#) points out the irony that Rachel, who pleaded with Jacob for children, "Give me children, or else I die" (Gen. 30:1), died giving birth to a child.

was dwelling in that land, that Reuben went and lay with Bilhah his father's concubine,⁹⁷² and Israel heard of it. 35:22a

- G 3 The list of Jacob's twelve sons: Now there were twelve sons of Jacob – [35:22b] 35:22b-26
- H 1 By Leah: {23} the sons of Leah: Reuben, Jacob's firstborn, then Simeon and Levi and Judah and Issachar and Zebulun; 35:23
- H 2 By Rachel: {24} the sons of Rachel: Joseph and Benjamin; 35:24
- H 3 By Bilhah: {25} and the sons of Bilhah, Rachel's maid: Dan and Naphtali; 35:25
- H 4 By Zilpah: {26} and the sons of Zilpah, Leah's maid: Gad and Asher. 35:26a
- H 5 Their provenance: These are the sons of Jacob who were born to him in Paddan-aram. 35:26b
- G 4 Jacob's reunion with Isaac: {27} Jacob came to his father Isaac⁹⁷³ at Mamre of Kiriath-arba (that is, Hebron),⁹⁷⁴ where Abraham and Isaac had sojourned. 35:27
- G 5 The death of Isaac; his burial by Jacob and Esau 35:28-29

⁹⁷² Gen. 35:22 - Reuben ... lay with Bilhah his father's concubine: This was an [act of rebellion](#) against his father as well as an act of lust. Bilhah was Rachel's maid (Gen. 29:29; 30:3-7). Reuben was Jacob's first-born by his unfavored wife, Leah (Gen. 29:31-32). Reuben lost the rights of the first-born (Gen. 49:2-4). Jacob's second and third sons, also by Leah, Simeon and Levi, forfeited the rights of the first-born through their violence (Gen. 49:5-7). Judah, Jacob's fourth son, also by Leah, was extended the ruling rights of the first-born. Jacob's other sons would be down to him (Gen. 49:8), and the scepter would not depart from Judah (Gen. 49:10), and to this ultimate ruler from Judah, Jesus, will the obedience of the peoples manifest itself (Gen. 49:10). Jacob's favorite son Joseph is identified as the one "distinguished among his brothers" (Gen. 49:26). Joseph would inherit the double blessing of the firstborn inasmuch as his two sons, Ephraim and Manasseh, would be counted as tribes in [Israel](#) for the purposes of inheriting land in Canaan. Judah received the first allotment of land in Canaan (Josh. 15:1-63). The two sons of Joseph, Ephraim and Manasseh, were the next to be allotted territory, Ephraim first (Josh. 16:1-10) and Manasseh second (Josh. 17:1-18).

⁹⁷³ Gen. 35:27 - Jacob came to his father Isaac: This is the only record in the OT that Jacob returned to see his father Isaac after Jacob had returned from Syria. [Constable opines](#) that Jacob had seen his father on several occasions after his return, but the text does not say that. We cannot know that. We do know that Jacob's vow of serving God included the proviso that he return to his father's house in safety (Gen. 28:20-21). Here, the record clearly states that Jacob was reunited with his father before Isaac's death (Gen. 35:28-29), and so we know that God faithfully kept His portion of the vow / bargain.

⁹⁷⁴ Gen. 35:27 - Hebron: This city is the second-most important city to Israelis. Yet it was occupied by [215, 452 Palestinians](#), while a mere 500-850 Jewish settlers were living there as of 2016. In 1968 Israelis established a Jewish presence in the nearby community of Kiryat Arba. Today [Kiryat Arba has 6,650 Israeli residents](#). See the map of Hebron's ["H1 and H2" zones](#).

H 1 The life-span of Isaac: {28} Now the days of Isaac were one hundred and eighty years. 35:28

H 2 The death of Isaac: {29} Isaac breathed his last and died⁹⁷⁵ and was gathered to his people, an old man of ripe age; 35:29a

H 3 The burial of Isaac: and his sons Esau and Jacob buried him.⁹⁷⁶ 35:29b

SECTION X. WHAT BECAME OF ESAU. 36:1-8

C 4 The genealogy of the secondarily - *blessed* Esau 36

D 1 The generations of Esau announced: {1} Now these are the records of the generations of Esau (that is, Edom).⁹⁷⁷ 36:1

D 2 The wives, sons, and movement of Esau 36:2-8

E 1 The wives of Esau: {2} Esau took his wives from the daughters of [Canaan](#).⁹⁷⁸ [36:2a] 36:2-3

⁹⁷⁵ Gen. 35:29 - Isaac breathed his last and died: Constable, quoting Sailhamer:

The end of the Jacob narratives is marked by the death of his father, Isaac. The purpose of this notice is not simply to record Isaac's death but rather to show the complete fulfillment of God's promise to Jacob (28:21). According to Jacob's vow, he had asked that God watch over him during his sojourn and return him safely to the house of his father. Thus the conclusion of the narrative marks the final fulfillment of these words as Jacob returned to the house of his father, Isaac, before he died.

⁹⁷⁶ Gen. 35:29 - His sons Esau and Jacob buried him: According to the record given, the only thing that ever brought these two brothers together after their meeting in Genesis 33 was the death of their father. Dysfunctional families are a cause for sadness. Lest we think that the two never encountered each other, it is reported in Gen. 36:6-7 that Esau moved to another land away from his brother Jacob because their property had become too great for them to live together – the land could not sustain their combined herds of livestock. So presumably they would have had some contact. But the text does not specifically say that they encountered one another. We know from the text that they joined together to bury their father, Isaac.

⁹⁷⁷ Gen. 36:1 - Now these are *the records of* the generations of Esau (that is, Edom): Literally, “Now these are the generations of Esau – he is Edom.” “Generations” translates the plural *toledot* of the singular *tôledâh* (8435). We paraphrase the meaning as follows: “Now this is what became of Esau, who is Edom.” So Esau was important enough in the thinking of Moses, guided by the Holy Spirit, to warrant an abbreviated *toledot*. In fact, uncharacteristically, he warranted two brief *toledots*, as we shall see.

⁹⁷⁸ Gen. 36:2 - Esau took his wives from the daughters of Canaan: This indicates the spiritual shallowness of Esau. He was not concerned to marry someone who shared his belief, however feeble it might have been, in Yahweh, the one true God. Instead, he married Canaanite women. He tried to assuage his parents' concern and made some sort of attempt to rectify the situation by marrying a daughter of Ishmael (Gen. 28:6-9; 36:3). But it is doubtful that she had much of a positive spiritual influence on Esau. Ishmael and Esau together are progenitors of some, if not most of the Arabs. The vast majority of Arabs are Muslims today, worshiping the god they call Allah. But he is not the true God, for he is not the God of Abraham, Isaac, and Jacob. The spiritual impact of Esau and of Ishmael has not been a good one. The rest of the Bible does not have much good to say about Esau. It is said that Yahweh loved Jacob, but hated Esau (Mal. 1:2-3; Rom. 9:13). The writer of Hebrews placed Esau in the category of the immoral and godless (Heb. 12:16).

- G 1 Adah: Adah the daughter of Elon the Hittite,⁹⁷⁹ 36:2b
- G 2 Oholibamah: and Oholibamah 36:2c
 - H 1 the daughter of Anah
 - H 2 and the granddaughter of Zibeon the Hivite;⁹⁸⁰
- G 3 Basemath: {3} also Basemath, Ishmael's daughter, the sister of Nebaioth. 36:3
- E 2 The sons of Esau 36:4-5
 - G 1 By Adah: {4} Adah bore Eliphaz to Esau, 36:4a
 - G 2 By Basemath: and Basemath bore Reuel, 36:4b
 - G 3 By Oholibamah: {5} and Oholibamah bore Jeush and Jalam and Korah. 36:5a
 - G 4 Summary: These are the sons of Esau who were born to him in the land of [Canaan](#). 36:5b
- E 3 The movement of Esau 36:6-8
 - G 1 The departure of Esau: {6} Then Esau took his wives and his sons and his daughters and all his household, and his livestock and all his cattle and all his goods which he had acquired in the land of Canaan, and went to another land away from his brother Jacob.⁹⁸¹ 36:6
 - G 2 The reason for his departure 36:7
 - H 1 Many livestock: {7} For their property had become too great for them to live together,

⁹⁷⁹ Gen. 36:2 - Hittite: from *Chittîy* ([2850](#)), descendants of Heth. God promised Abram He would give to him and to his seed the land of Hittites (Gen. 15:18-20).

⁹⁸⁰ Gen. 36:2 - Hivite: Hebrew, *Chivvîy* ([2340](#)), meaning “villagers,” the 6th generation of descendants of Canaan, son of Ham. Hamor, ruler of Shechem, was a Hivite, as was his son Shechem (Gen. 34:2). The Hivites were not among those listed in Gen. 15:18-21 as doomed to be conquered by the [sons of Israel](#). However they were listed to be conquered and exterminated by [Israel](#) in such passages as Ex. 3:8, 17; 13:5; Deut. 7:1; 20:17; Josh. 3:10; 9:1. The Gibeonites, with whom Joshua made peace without consulting the Lord, were actually Hivites (Josh. 9:7) who escaped death by means of subterfuge (Josh. 9:3-27).

⁹⁸¹ Gen. 36:6 - Esau ... went to another land away from his brother Jacob: Evidently the two brothers were in close enough proximity that grazing their livestock in the same region became impossible (Gen. 36:7). We are not told how the decision for Esau to move away came about, unlike the departure of Lot from Abram –(Gen. 13:5-13). Nevertheless, it was in the [sovereign](#) plan of God for Esau to move away, for God had given this land to Jacob and his seed, not to Esau (Gen. 35:9-12).

H 2 Insufficient land: and the land where they sojourned could not sustain them because of their livestock.

G 3 Esau's destination: {8} So Esau lived in the hill country of Seir;⁹⁸² Esau is Edom.⁹⁸³ 36:8

SECTION ELEVEN: WHAT BECAME OF ESAU, FATHER OF EDMITES IN THE HILL COUNTRY OF SEIR. 36:9-37:1

D 3 The names of Esau's sons and grandsons 36:9-14

E 1 The official title – Toledoth: {9} These then are *the records of* the generations of Esau the father of the Edomites in the hill country of Seir.⁹⁸⁴ 36:9

E 2 {10} These are the names of Esau's sons: [36:10a] 36:10-14

G 1 The first generation of Esau's sons 36:10b

H 1 Eliphaz the son of Esau's wife Adah,

H 2 Reuel the son of Esau's wife Basemath.

G 2 The descendants of Esau's sons 36:11-13

⁹⁸² Gen. 36:8 - Seir: Hebrew, *śé'îyr* (8165), meaning “hairy” or “shaggy.” The Horites were evidently the original inhabitants of Seir (Gen. 14:6). Seir was named after Seir, the Horite (Gen. 36:20, 21). Esau apparently had moved to Seir before Jacob returned from Syria, for that is where Jacob sent messengers (Gen. 32:3, 14, 16). It must have been after that time that Esau moved back into Canaan, where his flocks competed with Jacob's (Gen. 36:5, 6). When the competition grew too keen, however, Esau evidently had returned to Seir (Gen. 36:6-8). Esau was known as the father of the Edomites living in the hill country of Seir (Gen. 36:9). It seems that the sons of Esau eventually displaced the Horites as the leading clan / ethnicity of Seir. The region's name, by usage, gradually changed from Seir to Edom.

⁹⁸³ Gen. 36:8 - Esau is Edom: Esau, Hebrew, *Ēśāv* (6215), meaning “hairy;” Edom, Hebrew, *Ēdôm* (123), meaning “red.” In other words, the land to which Esau permanently emigrated switched from being identified as “Seir” to being identified as “Edom.” Edom is also known as Idumea, its Greek name. [Herod the Great](#) was an Idumean, and thus a descendant of Esau. The people of [Israel](#) were not fond of Herod, a [ruthless tyrant](#).

⁹⁸⁴ Gen. 36:9 - These then are *the records of* the generations of Esau the father of the Edomites in the hill country of Seir: This is a very specific toledot (8435), specifically identifying Esau as the father of the Edomites in the hill country of Seir. The first *toledot* (Gen. 36:1-8) gave only Esau, his wives, and their sons. It also included his move from Canaan to Seir. This *toledot* (Gen. 36:9-37:1) is much more complex. It gives (1) the names of Esau's sons and grandsons (Gen. 36:9-14); (2) the chiefs of the sons of Esau (Gen. 36:15-19); (3) the sons and grandsons of Seir the Horite, the original inhabitants of the land (Gen. 36:20-30), including their chiefs (Gen. 36:29-30); (4) kings who reigned in the land of Edom before there were kings in [Israel](#) (Gen. 36:31-39); (5) the names of chiefs who descended from Esau (Gen. 36:40-43); (6) and the last verse of this second *toledot* of Esau specifies that Jacob lived in the land of Canaan, where his father had sojourned (Gen. 37:1).

The following quotation is found in [Constable](#), quoting [Kenneth A. Matthews](#), *Genesis 11:27-50:26*, p. 632, New American Commentary Series, concerning the two successive *toledots* of Esau:

"That there are two toledot headings for Esau makes his treatment in two consecutive sections exceptional in the book. The first section [36:1-8] focuses on family and homeland, and the second [36:9—37:1] centers on his offspring as a developing nation. These two sections are flanked by the major narrative toledot sections of Isaac (25:19—35:29) and Jacob (37:2—50:26)."

H 1 {11} The sons of Eliphaz were [36:11] 36:11-12

J 1 Teman,

J 2 Omar,

J 3 Zepho

J 4 and Gatam

J 5 and Kenaz.

J 6 {12} Timna was a concubine of Esau's son Eliphaz and she bore Amalek to Eliphaz. 36:12a

J 7 The grandmother of the sons of Eliphaz: These are the sons of Esau's wife Adah. 36:12b

H 2 {13} These are the sons of Reuel: 36:13

J 1 Nahath

J 2 and Zerah,

J 3 Shammah

J 4 and Mizzah.

J 5 The grandmother of the sons of Reuel: These were the sons of Esau's wife Basemath.

G 3 The sons of Esau by his wife Oholibamah: {14} These were the sons of Esau's wife Oholibamah, the daughter of Anah and the granddaughter of Zibeon: she bore to Esau, 36:14

H 1 Jeush

H 2 and Jalam

H 3 and Korah.

D 4 The chiefs of the sons of Esau: {15} These are the chiefs⁹⁸⁵ of the sons of Esau. [36:15a] 36:15-19

E 1 The sons of Eliphaz, the firstborn of Esau, are 36:15b-16

⁹⁸⁵ Gen. 36:15 - chiefs: The Hebrew term is *'alûph* or *'allûph* (441) meaning “chief” or “tribal leader” or “clan ruler. This is its first appearance in Genesis. It is used 43X in 16 verses. In Genesis the term is restricted only to the descendants of Esau (Gen. 36:15-19) and to the descendants of Seir, the Horite, original inhabitants of the land of Seir / Edom (Gen. 36:20-21; 29-30).

G 1 chief Teman,

G 2 chief Omar,

G 3 chief Zepho,

G 4 chief Kenaz,

G 5 {16} chief Korah, 36:16

G 6 chief Gatam,

G 7 chief Amalek.

G 8 Conclusion

H 1 These are the chiefs descended from Eliphaz in the land of Edom;

H 2 these are the sons of Adah.

E 2 {17} These are the sons of Reuel, Esau's son: 36:17

G 1 chief Nahath,

G 2 chief Zerah,

G 3 chief Shammah,

G 4 chief Mizzah.

G 5 Conclusion

H 1 These are the chiefs descended from Reuel in the land of Edom;

H 2 these are the sons of Esau's wife Basemath.

E 3 {18} These are the sons of Esau's wife Oholibamah: 36:18

G 1 chief Jeush,

G 2 chief Jalam,

G 3 chief Korah.

G 4 Conclusion: These are the chiefs descended from Esau's wife Oholibamah, the daughter of Anah.

E 4 Conclusion 36:19

G 1 {19} These are the sons of Esau (that is, Edom),

G 2 and these are their chiefs.

D 5 The sons and grandsons of Seir the Horite 36:20-30

E 1 The sons of Seir the Horite: {20} These are the sons of Seir the Horite, the inhabitants of the land: [36:20] 36:20-21

G 1 Lotan

G 2 and Shobal

G 3 and Zibeon

G 4 and Anah,

G 5 {21} and Dishon 36:21

G 6 and Ezer

G 7 and Dishan.

G 8 Conclusion: These are the chiefs descended from the Horites, the sons of Seir in the land of Edom.

E 2 The grandsons of Seir the Horite 36:22-28

G 1 {22} The sons of Lotan were 36:22

H 1 Hori

H 2 and Hemam;

H 3 and Lotan's sister was Timna.

G 2 {23} These are the sons of Shobal: 36:23

H 1 Alvan

H 2 and Manahath

H 3 and Ebal,

H 4 Shepho

H 5 and Onam.

G 3 {24} These are the sons of Zibeon: 36:24

H 1 Aiah

H 2 and Anah--he is the Anah who found the hot springs in the wilderness when he was pasturing the donkeys of his

father Zibeon.

G 4 {25} These are the children of Anah: 36:25

H 1 Dishon,

H 2 and Oholibamah, the daughter of Anah.

G 5 {26} These are the sons of Dishon: 36:26

H 1 Hemdan

H 2 and Eshban

H 3 and Ithran

H 4 and Cheran.

G 6 {27} These are the sons of Ezer: 36:27

H 1 Bilhan

H 2 and Zaavan

H 3 and Akan.

G 7 {28} These are the sons of Dishan: 26:28

H 1 Uz

H 2 and Aran.

E 3 The chiefs of the Horites: {29} These are the chiefs descended from the Horites: [36:29] 36:29-30

G 1 chief Lotan,

G 2 chief Shobal,

G 3 chief Zibeon,

G 4 chief Anah,

G 5 {30} chief Dishon, 36:30

G 6 chief Ezer,

G 7 chief Dishan.

G 8 Conclusion: These are the chiefs descended from the Horites, according to their various chiefs in the land of Seir.

- D 6 Kings in the land of Edom: {31} Now these are the kings who reigned⁹⁸⁶ in the land of Edom before any king reigned over the sons of Israel.⁹⁸⁷ [36:31] 36:31-39
- E 1 Bela: {32} Bela the son of Beor reigned⁹⁸⁸ in Edom, and the name of his city was Dinhabah. 36:32
- E 2 Jobab: {33} Then Bela died, and Jobab the son of Zerah of Bozrah became king⁹⁸⁹ in his place.
- E 3 Husham: {34} Then Jobab died, and Husham of the land of the Temanites became king in his place.
- E 4 Hadad: {35} Then Husham died, and Hadad the son of Bedad, who defeated Midian in the field of Moab, became king in his place; and the name of his city was Avith.
- E 5 Samlah: {36} Then Hadad died, and Samlah of Masrekah became king in his place.
- E 6 Shaul: {37} Then Samlah died, and Shaul of Rehoboth on the Euphrates River became king in his place.
- E 7 Baal-hanan: {38} Then Shaul died, and Baal-hanan the son of Achbor became king in his place.
- E 8 Hadar
- G 1 The death of his predecessor: {39} Then Baal-hanan the son of Achbor died,
- G 2 His rule: and Hadar became king in his place;

⁹⁸⁶ Gen. 36:31 - kings who reigned: The noun “kings” translates the plural of the standard Hebrew word for “king,” *melek* (4428). The term “king” first appears in Genesis 14:1, and appears 41X in this book. “Reigned” is the related verb *mālak* (4427), first appearing in Genesis here, in Gen. 36:31. [NASB](#) translates it variously as “reigned” or, more frequently, “became king.” It is used 12X in Genesis, most often in Gen. 36, but twice in regard to Joseph in Gen. 37:8. Kingship in Edom was not a matter of family descent. Different kings are from different cities and from different family lines. Whether the transfer of power was peaceful or through violent means is not stated in the text.

⁹⁸⁷ Gen. 36:31 - before any king reigned over the sons of Israel: It is possible that this is a post-Mosaic explanation, added after the time when kings reigned in [Israel](#). [Constable](#) believes so. If that is true, it in no way diminishes the fact that Moses is the author of the Pentateuch. On the other hand, it is also possible that Moses wrote this. He was, after all, a prophet with whom God at times communicated the future (see Deut. 18:15-19). God may have revealed to Moses that [Israel](#) would one day have kings.

⁹⁸⁸ Gen. 36:32 - reigned: This is the verb *mālak* (4427), to “reign” or “rule over.”

⁹⁸⁹ Gen. 36:33 - became king: This is the verb *mālak* (4427), the same word that was translated “reigned” in Gen. 36:32. Why the [NASB](#) suddenly began translating this verb “became king” is beyond my comprehension. Why not translate it the same way each time?

G 3 His city: and the name of his city was Pau;

G 4 His wife: and his wife's name was Mehetabel, the daughter of Matred, daughter of Mezahab.

D 7 The names of chiefs descended from Esau: {40} Now these are the names of the chiefs ⁹⁹⁰ descended from Esau, according to their families and their localities, by their names: [36:40] 36:40-43

E 1 chief Timna,

E 2 chief Alvah,

E 3 chief Jetheth,

E 4 {41} chief Oholibamah, 36:41

E 5 chief Elah,

E 6 chief Pinon,

E 7 {42} chief Kenaz, 36:42

E 8 chief Teman,

E 9 chief Mibzar,

E 10 {43} chief Magdiel, 36:43a

E 11 chief Iram. 36:43b

E 12 Conclusion: These are the chiefs of Edom (that is, Esau, the father of the Edomites), according to their habitations in the land of their possession. 36:43c

B 4 God's Elective *Blessing* of Despised Joseph Above His Brothers 37 - 50

C 1 Joseph's destiny and disowning 37

D 1 Jacob's generations 37:1-2a

E 1 Jacob's land: {1} Now Jacob lived in the land where his father had sojourned, in the land of Canaan. 37:1

SECTION TWELVE. WHAT BECAME OF JACOB. 37:22-50:26

E 2 What became of Jacob: {2} These are *the records of* the generations

⁹⁹⁰ Gen. 36:40 - chiefs: Moses reverted to the terminology of "chiefs," *'alûph* or *'allûph* (441) rather than "kings," *melek* (4428).

of Jacob. ⁹⁹¹ 37:2a

D 2 Joseph's favored position 37:2b-11

E 1 Jacob's favoritism toward Joseph 37:2b-4

G 1 The situation of Joseph: {2b} Joseph, when seventeen years of age, was pasturing the flock with his brothers while he was *still* a youth, along with the sons of Bilhah and the sons of Zilpah, his father's wives. 37:2b

G 2 The conscience of Joseph: And Joseph brought back a bad report about them to their father. ⁹⁹² 37:2c

G 3 The favoritism of [Israel](#) 37:3

H 1 His love: {3} Now Israel loved Joseph more than all his sons,

H 2 His reason: because he was the son of his old age; ⁹⁹³

H 3 His gift: and he made him a varicolored tunic. ⁹⁹⁴

G 4 The jealousy of Joseph's brothers 37:4

H 1 Their observation: {4} His brothers saw that their father loved him more than all his brothers; ⁹⁹⁵

⁹⁹¹ Gen. 37:2 - These are *the records of the generations of Jacob*: Literally, “These – generations of Jacob.” “Generations is, once again, the plural *toledot* of *tôledâh* (8435), and we paraphrase it, “This is what became of Jacob.” The larger part of this narrative explains how Jacob and his family moved down to Egypt. Jacob’s favorite son Joseph, despised by his brothers, is the key to the narrative. Moses began this narrative immediately with events surrounding Joseph’s betrayal by his brothers and his being taken as a slave to Egypt.

⁹⁹² Gen. 37:2 - Joseph brought back a bad report about them to their father: I may be wrong, but it seems to me that Joseph is often vilified by preachers as being a spoiled brat turned tattler. I don’t see that. I think the Biblical record portrays Joseph as a person of unimpeachable character. I think he was conscientious, and was distressed when his brothers were treating the flock in a manner in which he knew his father would not be pleased. Joseph may have been somewhat naive, but most teenagers are. I believe Joseph was utterly sincere, and that, being an obedient son, he had nothing but the best interests of his father in mind. His sterling character and strong faith in [Yahweh](#) are illustrated by his refusal to yield to the seductive efforts of Potiphar’s wife (39:6-12). There, he viewed sleeping with her not only as a great evil against Potiphar but also a sin against God. Would to God we all had the steely, Godly character of Joseph!

⁹⁹³ Gen. 37:3 - son of his old age: Some speculate that the term “son of his old age” means that Joseph was especially wise. That seems unlikely to me, for the same term, *zâqûn* (2208) is also applied to Benjamin (Gen. 44:20), and there is no indication in the text that Benjamin was particularly wise. All four uses in Genesis indicate an affinity because of old age, and none of them indicate affinity because of maturity or wisdom.

⁹⁹⁴ Gen. 37:2 - varicolored tunic: [NASB](#) note: “Or *full-length robe*.” [JTB](#): However, this robe was probably also [ornamental](#).

⁹⁹⁵ Gen. 37:4 - His brothers saw that their father loved him more than all his brothers: “loved” is the verb *’âhab* (157). Partiality and favoritism in a family is easily observed by other family members. To Jacob, his favoritism toward Joseph was perfectly logical and justifiable. To his other sons, it was a deadly slight that was highly

- H 2 Their hatred: and *so* they hated him ⁹⁹⁶
- H 3 Their confrontational communication: and could not speak to him on friendly terms. ⁹⁹⁷
- E 2 Joseph's Divinely-given dreams of his destiny of superiority among his own family 37:5-11
 - G 1 The first dream – Joseph's brothers' sheaves bowing down to him 37:5-8
 - H 1 The summary of the dream and its results: {5} Then Joseph had a dream, ⁹⁹⁸ and when he told it to his brothers, they hated him ⁹⁹⁹ even more. 37:5
 - H 2 The request of Joseph: {6} He said to them, "Please listen to this dream which I have had; 37:6
 - H 3 The process of harvest: {7} for behold, we were binding sheaves in the field, 37:7a
 - H 4 The exaltation of Joseph's sheaf: and lo, my sheaf rose up and also stood erect; 37:7b
 - H 5 The humility of the brothers' sheaves: and behold, your sheaves gathered around and bowed down to my sheaf." ¹⁰⁰⁰ 37:7c
 - H 6 The reaction of the brothers 37:8
 - J 1 Their incredulity: {8} Then his brothers said to

offensive. It would reach its peak when the unloved brothers ganged up on the favorite son and sold him into slavery, deceiving their father in the process. This dysfunctional family will grow even more dysfunctional.

⁹⁹⁶ Gen. 37: 4 - and *so* they hated him: “hated” is the verb *śânê’* (8130). This is the same verb used to describe Jacob’s attitude toward Leah in Gen. 29:31, 33. The NASB text reads that Leah was “unloved.” But it is this verb – she was “hated.” Jacob’s hatred of Leah comes back to haunt him in that her sons (and the other concubines’ sons) hate his favorite son. Whatever a man sows, that shall he also reap (Gal. 6:7).

⁹⁹⁷ Gen. 37:4 - on friendly terms: [NASB](#) note: “A literal translation: *in peace*”

⁹⁹⁸ Gen. 37:5 - dream: Hebrew, *chālôm* (2472). In the book of Genesis, to a peculiar degree, dreams are mechanisms by which God communicated to individuals. Sometimes the dreams are good (Gen. 31:11), sometimes, bad (Gen. 40:16).

⁹⁹⁹ Gen. 37:5 - they hated him even more: The verb “hated” is *śânê’* (8130).

¹⁰⁰⁰ Gen. 37:7 - your sheaves ... bowed down to my sheaf: [Constable](#) opines that in this dream “God revealed that Joseph’s brothers would come to him for *bread or food*, symbolized by the sheaves of grain.” That may be a bit of a stretch, but it is at least a plausible interpretation.

him, "Are you actually going to reign ¹⁰⁰¹ over us?
Or are you really going to rule ¹⁰⁰² over us?"

J 2 Their hatred: So they hated him ¹⁰⁰³ even more for
his dreams and for his words. ¹⁰⁰⁴

G 2 Joseph's second dream – The prostration of the sun, moon, and
eleven stars before him 37:9-11

H 1 The content of the dream: {9} Now he had still another
dream, ¹⁰⁰⁵ and related it to his brothers, and said, "Lo, I
have had still another dream; and behold, the sun and the
moon and eleven stars were bowing down to me." ¹⁰⁰⁶
37:9

H 2 His telling of the dream: {10} He related *it* to his father
and to his brothers; 37:10a

H 3 The reactions of his family 37:10b-11

J 1 The rebuke of his father: and his father rebuked
him and said to him, 37:10b

K1 His query: "What is this dream that you have
had?"

¹⁰⁰¹ Gen. 37:8 - reign: This is the verb *mālak* (4427), "to reign." This verb is related, of course, to the noun *melek* (4428), "king." Little did these brothers know that some day their brother would reign over them as second in command to the King (Pharaoh) of Egypt! This rulership would turn out for the safe-keeping of the family! God has an uncanny way of bringing good out of evil for those who love Him, who are called according to His purpose (Rom. 8:28)!

¹⁰⁰² Gen. 37:8 - rule: This is the verb *māshal* (4910), "to rule over, have dominion over, reign over." Interestingly enough, using this verb, Joseph later revealed to his brothers that he was "*ruler* over all the land of Egypt" (Gen. 49:8)! And the brothers would report back to Jacob, their father that Joseph was indeed "*ruler* over all the land of Egypt" (Gen. 49:26)!

¹⁰⁰³ Gen. 37:8 - they hated him even more: The verb "hated" is once again *sānê'* (8130).

¹⁰⁰⁴ Gen. 37:8 - for his dreams and for his words: Obviously this dream had a profound effect upon Joseph. He felt compelled to tell his brothers about it. They easily caught the meaning of the dream, but so had he. He could not help but noticed his brothers' adverse reaction after he mentioned his first dream. But that did not stop him from telling about his second dream.

¹⁰⁰⁵ Gen. 37:9 - still another dream: "dream" is, again, *chālôm* (2472), in this context, God's way of communicating with Joseph and with Jacob and his eleven other sons. We might question the wisdom of Joseph's sharing yet another dream with his brothers, since it again portrayed him in a superior light and them in a subordinate position. But it must be that the dream had such an impact on Joseph that he could not help himself. He had to share it. I believe that was part of the Sovereignty of God to let the whole family know what God's plans were. They could like it or not, disbelieve it or grow incensed at Joseph, but it was not going to change God's plan. The brothers now grew jealous, but father Jacob began to think about these omens and ponder their meaning.

¹⁰⁰⁶ Gen. 37:9 - sun, moon, and eleven stars were bowing down to me: According to [Constable](#), this dream portrayed that "Joseph was himself supreme over the whole house of [Israel](#), symbolized by the 'sun and moon and eleven stars.'"

- K2 His interpretation: Shall I and your mother and your brothers actually come to bow ourselves down before you to the ground?" ¹⁰⁰⁷
- J 2 The jealousy of his brothers: {11} His brothers were jealous ¹⁰⁰⁸ of him, 37:11a
- J 3 The contemplation of his father: but his father kept the saying *in mind*. ¹⁰⁰⁹ 37:11b
- D 3 Joseph's disposal by his brothers 37:12-36
- E 1 Joseph's errand to check up on his brothers at Shechem and Dothan 37:12-17
- G 1 The situation of Joseph's brothers: {12} Then his brothers went to pasture their father's flock in Shechem. 37:12
- G 2 [Israel's](#) assignment for Joseph 37:13-14
- H 1 The proposal of [Israel](#): {13} Israel said to Joseph, "Are not your brothers pasturing *the flock* in Shechem? Come, and I will send you to them." 37:13a
- H 2 The willingness of Joseph: And he said to him, "I will go." ¹⁰¹⁰ 37:13b
- H 3 The assignment of [Israel](#) 37:14
- J 1 Investigation: {14} Then he said to him, "Go now and see about the welfare of your brothers and the welfare of the flock,

¹⁰⁰⁷ Gen. 37:10 - bow ourselves down before you to the ground: Jacob correctly interpreted the meaning of the dream!

¹⁰⁰⁸ Gen. 37:11 - his brothers were jealous of him: This is a different verb than the verb "hated." "Jealous" is the [Piel Imperfect](#) of *qânâ'* (7065). This is interesting. Not only did his brothers hate him, but they were jealous of him. This was a deadly mix. Their hatred and jealousy would lead them almost to murder, but, short of that, to selling their brother into slavery. And they didn't mind bringing heartache to their own father in the process. But through all the human depravity, God had a plan (Gen. 50:15-21, especially v. 20).

¹⁰⁰⁹ Gen. 37:11 - his father kept the saying *in mind*: At least Jacob kept open the possibility that God was revealing some truth in advance. But he was not blinded by hatred and jealousy, as were his other sons. In retrospect, Joseph and his brothers were on a collision course. On a human level we can understand it, if not condone it. But through it all was the subtle intervention of God orchestrating this collision that would put Joseph where God wanted him to be. Later on, God would orchestrate a famine to take ten of the brothers down to Egypt and place them in the presence of Joseph where they would voluntarily prostrate themselves before him (Gen. 42:1-6). Truth is stranger than fiction!

¹⁰¹⁰ Gen. 37:13 - I will go: Joseph, it appears to me, was an obedient son who respected his father. He would willingly do what his father asked. The greatest obedient son who respected his father and would do what his father asked was Jesus, the [Messiah](#).

J 2 Report: and bring word back to me." ¹⁰¹¹

J 3 Departure: So he sent him from the valley of Hebron, and he came to Shechem.

G 3 Joseph's search for his brothers 37:15-17

H 1 The question of a man encountered at Shechem: {15} A man found him, and behold, he was wandering in the field; and the man asked him, "What are you looking for?" 37:15

H 2 Joseph's request for information: {16} He said, "I am looking for my brothers; please tell me where they are pasturing *the flock*." 37:16

H 3 The information from the man: {17} Then the man said, "They have moved from here; for I heard *them* say, 'Let us go to Dothan.'" 37:17a

H 4 Joseph's success: So Joseph went after his brothers and found them at Dothan. 37:17b

E 2 The brothers' plot to kill Joseph 37:18-24

G 1 The summary of the plot: {18} When they saw him from a distance and before he came close to them, they plotted against him to put him to death. ¹⁰¹² 37:18

G 2 The details of the plot 37:19-20

H 1 Their labeling of Joseph: {19} They said to one another, "Here comes this dreamer!" ¹⁰¹³ 37:19

H 2 Their proposal to kill him and to blame a wild beast: {20} "Now then, come and let us kill him and throw him into one of the pits; and we will say, 'A wild beast

¹⁰¹¹ Gen. 37:14 - bring back word to me: In effect, Jacob was using Joseph as a spy, though no one would have framed the matter in those terms. The collision would soon take place.

¹⁰¹² Gen. 37:18 - they plotted against him to put him to death: So enraged were these brothers at Joseph that their first intent was to kill him. Human courts generally look at actual crimes committed rather than prosecuting on a passion held but not indulged. But God is different He inevitably looks at the heart as the determiner of a person's real character (Matt. 5:21-22; 27-28).

¹⁰¹³ Gen. 37:19 - Here comes this dreamer: Literally, "Here comes this one – the lord of the dreams!" – where "lord" or "master / owner" is *ba'al* (1167) and "dreams" is the plural of *chalown* (2472). As Gill states, the chief motivation behind the brothers' desire to kill Joseph was his dreams. They believed that by killing the dreamer, they could terminate his dreams. But God had other plans. Joseph would live. Moreover these brothers would live to see their worst nightmares confirmed!

devoured him.' ¹⁰¹⁴ 37:20a

H 3 Their objective: Then let us see what will become of his dreams!" 37:20b

G 3 The intervention of Reuben 37:21-22

H 1 His rescue of Joseph: {21} But Reuben heard *this* and rescued him out of their hands 37:21a

H 2 The reasoning of Reuben – do not be guilty of shedding blood 37:21b-22a

J 1 and said, "Let us not take his life." ¹⁰¹⁵ 37:21b

J 2 {22} Reuben further said to them, "Shed no blood. 37:22a

H 3 The counter-proposal of Reuben: Throw him into this pit that is in the wilderness, but do not lay hands on him" ¹⁰¹⁶ 37:22b

H 4 The motivation of Reuben: – that he might rescue him out of their hands, to restore him to his father. 37:22c

G 4 The compliance of the brothers with Reuben's proposal 37:23-24

H 1 Their stripping Joseph of his coat: {23} So it came about, when Joseph reached his brothers, that they stripped Joseph of his tunic, the varicolored tunic that was on him; 37:23

H 2 Their throwing him into the pit: {24} and they took him

¹⁰¹⁴ Gen. 37:20 - a wild beast devoured him: Murder and deceit are necessary bedfellows. These men ended up deceiving their own father for years. Jacob will receive another strong dose of the medicine he dished out to his own father decades earlier.

¹⁰¹⁵ Gen. 37:21 - Let us not take his life: Reuben, being the eldest of the sons, felt a responsibility for saving Joseph. He had earlier dishonored his father by sleeping with his father's concubine. Now at least, there is a vestige of good in him that wants to prevent the outright murder of Joseph. He has a plan, later on, to rescue Joseph and restore him to his father (Gen. 37:22).

¹⁰¹⁶ Gen. 37:21 - throw him into this pit ... but do not lay hands on him: Reuben's logic, to which his brothers responded, was that it was really bad to shed blood and outright murder someone. But if they threw Joseph into this pit and abandoned him, he would die a "natural" death and they would be rid of him but would not be guilty of blood-shed. In the [providence](#) of God, this made sense to the perverted minds of the brothers, and Joseph's immediate demise was averted. To Reuben's credit he planned, later on, to rescue Joseph. But while he was absent, other circumstances arose and his brothers disposed of Joseph without having to kill him at all.

and threw him into the pit.¹⁰¹⁷ Now the pit was empty, without any water in it. 37:24

E 3 The brothers' sale of Joseph to Ishmaelites 37:25-28

G 1 Their meal: {25} Then they sat down to eat a meal.¹⁰¹⁸ 37:25a

G 2 Their sighting: And as they raised their eyes and looked, behold, 37:25b

H 1 Identity: a caravan of Ishmaelites¹⁰¹⁹

H 2 Origin: was coming from Gilead,

H 3 Goods: with their camels bearing aromatic gum and balm and myrrh,¹⁰²⁰

H 4 Destination: on their way to bring *them* down to Egypt.

G 3 Judah's vision of profit 36:26-27b

H 1 Murder earns no money: {26} Judah said to his brothers, "What profit is it for us to kill our brother and cover up his blood? 36:26

H 2 Proposal: {27} "Come and let us sell him to the Ishmaelites and not lay our hands on him, 36:27a

H 3 Acknowledgment: for he is our brother, our *own* flesh." 36:27b

G 4 The acquiescence of his brothers: And his brothers listened *to him*. 36:27c

¹⁰¹⁷ Gen. 37:24 - they ... threw him into the pit: As the later record shows Joseph kept pleading with his brothers not to throw him into the pit and leave him there (Gen. 42:21).

¹⁰¹⁸ Gen. 37:25 - they sat down to eat a meal: The utter callousness of these brothers is mind-boggling. They had thrown their half-brother into a pit to let him dehydrate and starve to death. While he was pleading for mercy, they sat down to eat their lunch leaving him to starve.

¹⁰¹⁹ Gen. 37:25 - a caravan of Ishmaelites: Once again, in the [providence](#) of God, a caravan of Ishmaelites appeared on the horizon at just the right time. Judah had the sudden idea of making some money off of selling Joseph to the caravan. They would be rid of their obnoxious brother, but they would not be guilty of blood-shed. And they would make some money from their sale of him. God's timing was just right! There was evidently a close relationship between Midianites and Ishmaelites (Gen. 37:28; Judges 8:24). In the latter passage Ishmaelites (*yishmā'ē'līy*, [3459](#)) were characterized as having gold earrings.

¹⁰²⁰ Gen. 37:25 - camels bearing aromatic gum and balm and myrrh: This is a very descriptive, eye-witness account. Once the brothers had spotted the caravan, they called the camel-riders over, found out who they were, what they were carrying, where they had come from, and where they were headed. The fact that Egypt was their destination provided the plausible rationale of the brothers to get rid of Joseph and send him off to a far country. They would never see him again. He would probably die as a slave at someone else's hand, but it wouldn't be theirs.

- G 5 Their sale of Joseph to the Midianites/Ishmaelites 37:28a
- H 1 Arrival: {28} Then some Midianite traders ¹⁰²¹ passed by,
- H 2 Extrication: so they pulled *him* up and lifted Joseph out of the pit,
- H 3 Sale: and sold him to the Ishmaelites for twenty *shekels* of silver. ¹⁰²²
- G 6 Joseph's departure to Egypt: Thus they brought Joseph into Egypt. ¹⁰²³ 37:28b
- E 4 The brothers' deception of Jacob their father regarding the supposed death of Joseph 37:29-36
- G 1 Reuben's return: {29} Now Reuben returned to the pit, and behold, Joseph was not in the pit; 37:29a
- G 2 Reuben's dismay 37:29b-30
- H 1 Sign: so he tore his garments. 37:29b
- H 2 Absence: {30} He returned to his brothers and said, "The boy is not *there*; 37:30a
- H 3 Dilemma: as for me, where am I to go?" ¹⁰²⁴ 37:30b
- G 3 The brothers' ploy 37:31-33
- H 1 Disguise: {31} So they took Joseph's tunic, and slaughtered a male goat and dipped the tunic in the

¹⁰²¹ Gen. 37:28 - Midianite traders: Midian ([4080](#)) was a son of Abraham by his wife Keturah (Gen. 25:1-2). The sons of Midian are listed in Gen. 25:4. Abraham sent the sons of his concubines "eastward, to the land of the east" (Gen. 25:5-6). See a [map of Midian](#). Midianites ([4084](#)) were descendants of Midian, living on the Arabian peninsula. These were also known as Ishmaelites ([3459](#)) (Gen. 37:25, 27, 28; 39:1), descendants of Ishmael, possibly because they intermarried with one another. Another possible explanation is that the caravan contained a [mixture](#) of both Ishmaelites and Midianites.

¹⁰²² Gen. 37:28 - twenty *shekels* of silver: The Hebrew text does not contain the word "shekels." It says simply, that the brothers sold Joseph to the Ishmaelites "for twenty of silver." Centuries later, Judas would betray Jesus for "thirty of silver" (Matt. 26:15).

¹⁰²³ Gen. 27:28 - thus they brought Joseph into Egypt: "they" – meaning the Midianite / Ishmaelite traders.

¹⁰²⁴ Gen. 27:30 - "where am I to go: Reuben had obviously intended to rescue Joseph. But now that he was gone, he no idea what to do next. It is interesting to note that though Reuben was truly saddened at Joseph's disappearance, he was not afraid to participate in the lie to their father as to what had happened to Joseph. They contrived the "death by wild animal" falsehood to convince their father that Joseph had disappeared through no fault of their own. That these men would be willing to deceive their father for years under false pretenses after having sold their brother into slavery merely shows the depth of their depravity.

blood;¹⁰²⁵ 37:31

H 2 Presentation: {32} and they sent the varicolored tunic and brought it to their father and said, "We found this; please examine *it* to *see* whether it is your son's tunic or not." 37:32

H 3 Examination: {33} Then he examined it and said, "It is my son's tunic. 37:33a

H 4 Conclusion 37:33b

J 1 A wild beast has devoured him;

J 2 Joseph has surely been torn to pieces!" ¹⁰²⁶

G 4 The sorrow of Jacob 37:34-35

H 1 Torn garments: {34} So Jacob tore his clothes, 37:34a

H 2 Sackcloth: and put sackcloth on his loins 37:34b

H 3 Interminable mourning: and mourned for his son many days. 37:34c

H 4 Attempted consolation: {35} Then all his sons and all his daughters ¹⁰²⁷ arose to comfort him, 37:35a

H 5 Unconsolable: but he refused to be comforted. 37:35b

H 6 Prediction: And he said, "Surely I will go down to Sheol in mourning for my son." ¹⁰²⁸ 37:35c

H 7 Summary: So his father wept for him. 37:35d

G 5 The disposition of Joseph in Egypt 37:36

H 1 His sale: {36} Meanwhile, the Midianites sold him in

¹⁰²⁵ Gen. 37:31 - dipped the tunic in blood: Brazen deceit by these cruel brothers!

¹⁰²⁶ Gen. 37:33 - Joseph has surely been torn to pieces: Jacob had deviously deceived his own father Isaac as to his identity to secure the coveted blessing of [Abraham](#). Now Jacob reaps a cruel harvest. He is heartlessly deceived by his own sons as to the whereabouts of his favorite son, Joseph (Gal. 6:7-8a). The brothers are rid of a hated enemy, but their consciences will continue to haunt them.

¹⁰²⁷ Gen. 37:35 - all his daughters: Jacob had more daughters than Dinah (Gen. 30:21; 34:1).

¹⁰²⁸ Gen. 37:35 - Surely I will go down to Sheol in mourning for my son: Jacob was inconsolable. He was convinced he would die of grief. Jacob's remaining sons (less Benjamin) were willing to cause great grief to their own father to be rid of hated Joseph. Later on, Joseph would test them to see if their attitude toward their father had changed or not.

Egypt 37:36a

H 2 His owner 37:36b

J 1 Name: to Potiphar,

J 2 Relation: Pharaoh's officer,¹⁰²⁹

J 3 Position: the captain of the bodyguard.

C 2 Joseph's Divinely - *blessed* moral superiority over Judah 38 - 39

D 1 Judah's moral bankruptcy¹⁰³⁰ 38

E 1 As seen in his marriage to a [Canaanite](#) 38:1-5

G 1 Judah's visit to Hirah: *{1}* And it came about at that time, that Judah departed from his brothers and visited a certain Adullamite, whose name was Hirah. 38:1

G 2 His marriage to the daughter of Shua, a Canaanite: *{2}* Judah saw there a daughter of a certain Canaanite¹⁰³¹ whose name was Shua; and he took her and went in to her. 38:2

G 3 The sons of Judah by his [Canaanite](#) wife 38:3-5

H 1 Er: *{3}* So she conceived and bore a son and he named him Er. 38:3

H 2 Onan: *{4}* Then she conceived again and bore a son and named him Onan. 38:4

H 3 Shelah: *{5}* She bore still another son and named him Shelah; and it was at Chezib that she bore him. 38:5

E 2 As seen in his evil sons 38:6-10

G 1 Er and Tamar 38:6-7

¹⁰²⁹ Gen. 37:36 - Pharaoh's officer: In the [providence](#) of God, Potiphar's connection with Pharaoh would prove to be a link to future redemption and service beyond belief.

¹⁰³⁰ Gen. chapter 38 title – Judah's moral bankruptcy: Not only is his bankruptcy seen in Gen. 38, but it is also seen in his mercenary cruelty in suggesting his brothers sell Joseph as a slave to make a profit (Gen. 37:26-27).

¹⁰³¹ Gen. 38:2 - daughter of a certain [Canaanite](#): Some observations: (1) Godly [Abraham](#) had made a real point to provide a God-fearing wife for his son Isaac. (2) Jacob, [Abraham's](#) grandson, apparently had no such scruples. Though he himself married presumable believers, he made no effort to ensure that his sons married believers. (3) Certainly Judah, [Abraham's](#) great-grandson has no such scruples, for he married a local [Canaanite](#). The PRINCIPLE: It is critical that believers in Christ marry only committed believers in Christ.

H 1 Judah's arrangement of Tamar to wed Er: {6} Now Judah took a wife for Er his firstborn, and her name *was* Tamar. 38:6

H 2 [Yahweh's](#) taking of evil Er's life: {7} But Er, Judah's firstborn, was evil in the sight of the LORD,¹⁰³² so the LORD took his life. 38:7

G 2 Onan and Tamar 38:8-10

H 1 Judah's instruction of Onan to marry his sister-in-law: {8} Then Judah said to Onan, "Go in to your brother's wife, and perform your duty as a brother-in-law to her, and raise up offspring for your brother."¹⁰³³ 38:8

H 2 Onan's refusal to provide children for his dead brother: {9} Onan knew that the offspring would not be his; so when he went in to his brother's wife, he wasted his seed on the ground in order not to give offspring to his brother. 38:9

H 3 [Yahweh's](#) taking of Onan's life: {10} But what he did was displeasing in the sight of the LORD; so He took his life also.¹⁰³⁴ 38:10

E 3 As seen in his deceitful instruction to Tamar to wait for his son Shelah 38:11

G 1 His instruction:{11} Then Judah said to his daughter-in-law Tamar, "Remain a widow in your father's house until my son Shelah grows up";¹⁰³⁵

¹⁰³² Gen. 38:7 - was evil in the sight of the LORD: We are not told in what way Er was evil in Yahweh's sight. All we are told that his evil was great enough that Yahweh took his life. It is impossible for us humans to know why someone dies. However, I suspect that I have witnessed God take the life of a son whose father had been evil. The father was deeply grieved, but he had caused great grief to someone else in the family.

¹⁰³³ Gen. 38:8 - raise up offspring for your brother: Long before Moses incorporated this practice of "[Levirate](#)" marriage into the Israeli code of laws (Deut. 25:5-10), it was already a cultural / legal norm in the land of Canaan. According to [Constable](#) it was also common in Asia, Africa, and other areas, but it originated in Mesopotamia.

¹⁰³⁴ Gen. 38:10 - so He took his life also: Some observations are in order here: (1) Judah, together with his wife Shua, was unable to convey even a sense of decency and morality in his sons, much less a fear of God! (2) If you don't marry a Christian partner, you will get no spiritual help from that non-Christian. (3) Even in patriarchal times, the unwritten law of [levirate marriage](#) was a customary procedure. (4) Even though Tamar was, we assume, a [Canaanite](#), she was not even as evil as Er. God killed him and let her live! (5) Onan was a selfish man, and unwilling to raise up children to his dead brother's name. He refused to cooperate with the custom of [levirate marriage](#), and God killed him as well! PRINCIPLE: Out-of-fellowship Christians marry out-of-fellowship spouses who together rear ungodly children.

¹⁰³⁵ Gen. 38:11 - until my son Shelah grows up: Judah was deceitful. He pretended to offer hope to Tamar that she would one day marry his youngest son Shelah when he grew up. But he never intended to give him to her, lest he die also.

- G 2 His secret fear: for he thought, "*I am afraid* that he too may die like his brothers."
- G 3 Tamar's compliance: So Tamar went and lived in her father's house.
- E 4 As seen in his own immorality 38:12-30
 - G 1 Judah's union with a prostitute (in actuality his daughter-in-law, Tamar) 38:12-19
 - H 1 The death of Judah's wife: {12} Now after a considerable time Shua's daughter, the wife of Judah, died; and when the time of mourning was ended, 38:12a
 - H 2 Judah's journey to Timnah: Judah went up to his sheepshearers at Timnah, he and his friend Hirah the Adullamite. 38:12b
 - H 3 Tamar's disguising herself as a prostitute 38:13-14
 - J 1 Her information about Judah: {13} It was told to Tamar, "Behold, your father-in-law is going up to Timnah to shear his sheep." 38:13
 - J 2 Her disguising herself as a prostitute: {14} So she removed her widow's garments and covered *herself* with a veil,¹⁰³⁶ and wrapped herself, and sat in the gateway of Enaim, which is on the road to Timnah; 38:14a
 - J 3 Her reason – Shelah was grown and remained a widow: for she saw that Shelah had grown up, and she had not been given to him as a wife. 38:14b
 - H 4 Judah's request to the prostitute 38:15-16a
 - J 1 His misperception: {15} When Judah saw her, he thought she *was* a harlot,¹⁰³⁷ for she had covered her face. 38:15
 - J 2 His request: {16} So he turned aside to her by the road, and said, "Here now, let me come in to you"; for he did not know that she was his daughter-in-law. 38:16a

¹⁰³⁶ Gen. 38:14 - veil: [NASB](#) footnote: "Or *shawl*"

¹⁰³⁷ Gen. 38:15 - harlot: This is the [Qal Participle](#) of the verb *zânâh* ([2181](#)). We might render this phrase, "he thought she was practicing prostitution."

- H 5 Tamar's inquiry about payment: And she said, "What will you give me, that you may come in to me?" 38:16b
- H 6 Judah's promise of a goat: {17} He said, therefore, "I will send you a young goat from the flock." 38:17a
- H 7 Tamar's request for security: She said, moreover, "Will you give a pledge until you send *it*?" 38:17b
- H 8 Judah's asking her what she wanted: {18} He said, "What pledge shall I give you?" 38:18a
- H 9 Tamar's reply: And she said, "Your seal and your cord, and your staff that is in your hand." ¹⁰³⁸ 38:18b
- H 10 Tamar's conception: So he gave *them* to her and went in to her, and she conceived by him. ¹⁰³⁹ 38:18c
- H 11 Tamar's return to widowhood status: {19} Then she arose and departed, and removed her veil and put on her widow's garments. 38:19

G 2 Judah's fruitless attempt to pay the prostitute 38:20-23

- H 1 Judah's attempt to pay by his friend Hirah: {20} When Judah sent the young goat by his friend the Adullamite, to receive the pledge from the woman's hand, he did not find her. 38:20
- H 2 Hirah's unsuccessful search for the prostitute: {21} He asked the men of her place, saying, "Where is the temple prostitute ¹⁰⁴⁰ who was by the road at Enaim?" But they said, "There has been no temple prostitute here." 38:21
- H 3 His report to Judah: {22} So he returned to Judah, and said, "I did not find her; and furthermore, the men of the place said, "There has been no temple prostitute here.""

¹⁰³⁸ Gen. 38:18 - Your seal and your cord, and your staff that is in your hand: Tamar was being very shrewd. She knew she was doing something that would get her in deep trouble. So she carefully bargained for undeniable evidence of the identity of the man who would sleep with her.

¹⁰³⁹ Gen. 38:18 - and she conceived by him: As crude and as lewd as this was, the conception was from God. Too often in the book of Genesis we have already witnessed that conception is never guaranteed. Rebekah was, for a time, infertile. So was Rachel. God closed her womb and opened up the womb of the hated wife, Leah. This woman, Tamar, desperately wanted children, and she had one chance to become pregnant. And she did. Because God opened up her womb.

¹⁰⁴⁰ Gen. 38:21 - temple prostitute: This is an entirely different word from the verb *zânâh* (2181), used in Gen. 28:15. This word is the feminine singular of the noun *qâdêsh* (6945), meaning a female cult or temple prostitute. This same word is used again in Gen. 38:21 and in Gen. 38:22. It sometimes is used with the male gender, indicating a male cult prostitute (2 Kings 23:7).

38:22

H 4 Judah's decision to let the prostitute keep his personal belongings: {23} Then Judah said, "Let her keep them, otherwise we will become a laughingstock. After all, I sent this young goat, but you did not find her." 38:23

G 3 Pregnant Tamar's saving of her life by identifying Judah as her consort 38:24-26

H 1 Judah hears of Tamar's prostitution: {24} Now it was about three months later that Judah was informed, "Your daughter-in-law Tamar has played the harlot,¹⁰⁴¹ and behold, she is also with child by harlotry."¹⁰⁴² 38:24a

H 2 Judah's condemning her to death: Then Judah said, "Bring her out and let her be burned!"¹⁰⁴³ 38:24b

H 3 Tamar's revelation of her consort's identity: {25} It was while she was being brought out that she sent to her father-in-law, saying, "I am with child by the man to whom these things belong." And she said, "Please examine and see, whose signet ring and cords and staff are these?" 38:25

H 4 Judah's justification of Tamar because he had not given her his son Shelah: {26} Judah recognized *them*, and said, "She is more righteous than I,¹⁰⁴⁴ inasmuch as I did not give her to my son Shelah." 38:26a

H 5 Judah's abstinence from Tamar: And he did not have relations with her again. 38:26b

G 4 The births of Perez and Zerah 38:27-30

H 1 The discovery of twins: {27} It came about at the time

¹⁰⁴¹ Gen. 38:24 - played the harlot: This verb is the feminine singular [Qal Perfect](#) of *zânâh* (2181). The [Perfect](#) indicates a completed action. The report was that Tamar had practiced prostitution, and that she was pregnant by virtue of her prostitution.

¹⁰⁴² Gen. 38:24 - harlotry: the masculine plural of the noun *zânûn* (2183). Literally, it could be translated, "she is with child by prostitutions." [NASB](#) always translates this noun as "harlotry" or "harlotries."

¹⁰⁴³ Gen. 38:24 - let her be burned! This self-righteous hypocrisy is still endemic in the Middle East. Muslim men, for example, can be excused for immorality on the grounds that the woman was flirtatious. But women caught in immorality lose their honor, and, in some cases, their lives. Fortunately for Tamar, she had carefully documented the identity of her lover.

¹⁰⁴⁴ Gen. 38:26 - she is more righteous than I: At least Judah had enough conscience to admit the truth and desist from burning Tamar. Had he done so and been consistent, he should have died himself!

she was giving birth, that behold, there were twins in her womb. 38:27

- H 2 The midwife's tying a scarlet thread on the wrist of one: {28} Moreover, it took place while she was giving birth, one put out a hand, and the midwife took and tied a scarlet *thread* on his hand, saying, "This one came out first." 38:28
- H 3 The birth of the other baby first! {29} But it came about as he drew back his hand, that behold, his brother came out. 38:29a
- H 4 Her naming the first-born Perez: Then she said, "What a breach you have made for yourself!" So he was named Perez. ¹⁰⁴⁵ 38:29b
- H 5 Her naming the second-born Zerah: {30} Afterward his brother came out who had the scarlet *thread* on his hand; and he was named Zerah. ¹⁰⁴⁶

D 2 Joseph's Divine *blessing* and moral strength 39

E 1 Joseph's Divinely - *blessed* excellence as overseer of Potiphar's house 39:1-6

G 1 The disposition of Joseph: {1} Now Joseph had been taken down to Egypt; and Potiphar, an Egyptian officer of Pharaoh, ¹⁰⁴⁷ the captain of the bodyguard, bought him from the Ishmaelites, who had taken him down there. 39:1

G 2 The blessing of [Yahweh](#) 39:2

H 1 His presence with Joseph: {2} The LORD was with Joseph,

H 2 Joseph's success: so he became a successful man. ¹⁰⁴⁸

¹⁰⁴⁵ Gen. 38:29 - Perez: [NASB](#) footnote: "I.e. a breach" [[JTB](#): "A breach" or "one who breaks through" – Constable, [Notes on Genesis, 2019](#); "Forging through" - [Leupold](#); see also [Leupold](#) online]

¹⁰⁴⁶ Gen. 38:30 - Zerah: [NASB](#) footnote: "I.e. a dawning or brightness" [[JTB](#): "dawning," i.e., "red" or "scarlet" – Constable, [Notes on Genesis, 2019](#)]

¹⁰⁴⁷ Gen. 39:1 - officer of Pharaoh: God's [sovereignty](#) and [providence](#) are present here in that Joseph was purchased by a person who would (1) give Joseph initial experience in management and (2) place him in contact with individuals who knew the king, as the rest of the narrative will point out.

¹⁰⁴⁸ Gen. 39:2 - Successful: God's blessing is evident in Joseph's status, first here, in that He was with Joseph, second, in that he became successful. The blessing of the Lord brings success on God's terms.

- H 3 Joseph's situation: And he was in the house of his master, the Egyptian.
- G 3 The observation of Potiphar: {3} Now his master saw ¹⁰⁴⁹ 39:3
- H 1 [Yahweh's](#) presence with Joseph: that the LORD was with him
- H 2 Joseph's resultant success: and *how* the LORD caused all that he did to prosper in his hand.
- G 4 The promotion of Joseph 39:4
- H 1 Potiphar's approval: {4} So Joseph found favor ¹⁰⁵⁰ in his sight
- H 2 Joseph's status as personal servant of Potiphar: and became his personal servant; ¹⁰⁵¹
- H 3 Joseph's status as household manager: and he made him overseer over his house, and all that he owned he put in his charge.
- G 5 The blessing of [Yahweh](#) 39:5
- H 1 The beginning of the blessing: {5} It came about that from the time he made him overseer in his house and over all that he owned,
- H 2 The statement of the blessing: the LORD blessed the Egyptian's house on account of Joseph; ¹⁰⁵²

¹⁰⁴⁹ Gen. 39:3 - master saw: The Lord's blessing is evident to others!

¹⁰⁵⁰ Gen. 39:4 - favor: The word is *chen* ([2580](#)), meaning favor or acceptance. It is first used in Gen. 6:8, where it is said that Noah found favor (KJV, "grace") in the eyes of the LORD. Here Joseph found favor in the eyes of his master, Potiphar.

¹⁰⁵¹ Gen. 39:4 - became his personal servant: this phrase is the [Piel Imperfect](#) of the verb *shâraṯ* ([8334](#)), "to minister, serve, minister to." This is a higher order of service, as Elisha's chief servant, or as Joshua assisted Moses, or as Elisha served Elijah. In other words Joseph was not merely a slave, although he was that. He was more than that, a trusted personal assistant. This verb is used only once more in Gen. 40:4, where the captain of the bodyguard put Joseph in charge of Pharaoh's chief cupbearer and chief baker.

¹⁰⁵² Gen. 39:5 - the LORD blessed the Egyptian's house on account of Joseph: God had promised to bless Abraham, Isaac, and Jacob, and now he was not only blessing Joseph, he was blessing the one who blessed Joseph (Gen. 12:3). Doubtless, "Bless" is a theme of Genesis. "Blessed" is the [Piel Imperfect](#) of the verb *bârâk* ([1288](#)), to kneel down or bless. This verb is used in Genesis alone 72X, second only to Psalms (74X). See the appropriate footnote at Gen. 1:22, the first occurrence, for more information on this verb. It is interesting to note that the text of Genesis never states that God blessed Joseph. Rather, God's blessing of Joseph is more oblique. Here, He blessed Potiphar's house on account of Joseph! Jacob explicitly blessed Joseph and his two sons in Genesis 48:9, 15, 16, 20; 49:25. Thematically, the verb *bârâk* ([1288](#)) appears more frequently in Genesis 27 (17X) than in any other chapter.

- H 3 The restatement of the blessing: thus the LORD'S blessing ¹⁰⁵³ was upon all that he owned, in the house and in the field.
- G 6 The extent of Joseph's responsibility 39:6
 - H 1 The totality of the responsibility: {6} So he left everything he owned in Joseph's charge;
 - H 2 The exclusion -- Potiphar's food: and with him *there* he did not concern himself with anything except the food which he ate.
- G 7 The prelude to disaster: Now Joseph was handsome in form and appearance.
- E 2 Potiphar's rejected wife's framing of Joseph 39:7-18
 - G 1 Mrs. Potiphar's attempted seductions of Joseph 39:7-12
 - H 1 Her lustful invitation: {7} It came about after these events that his master's wife looked with desire at Joseph, and she said, "Lie with me." ¹⁰⁵⁴ 39:7
 - H 2 Joseph's refusal: {8} But he refused and said to his master's wife, 39:8-9
 - J 1 His master's entrusting everything into his care: "Behold, with me *here*, my master does not concern himself with anything in the house, and he has put all that he owns in my charge. 39:8
 - J 2 The greatness of his position: {9} "There is no one greater in this house than I, 39:9a
 - J 3 The exclusion of his wife: and he has withheld

This passage marked the struggle between Jacob and Esau to secure the blessing of their father Isaac. It appears 9X in chapters 48-49, Jacob's blessing of Joseph and his two sons over and above his other eleven sons.

¹⁰⁵³ Gen. 39:5 - the LORD's blessing: Blessing, the noun *berákáh* ([1293](#)), corresponds with the verb *bárák* ([1288](#)), "to bless." This noun is used 16X in the book of Genesis. Moses made a huge point of stating that God was blessing Potiphar on account of Joseph. The verb appears in Gen. 39:5 and so does the noun. It is interesting that the text of Genesis never speaks about God's blessings (the noun) in regard to Joseph. But certainly God did, although the term here is used obliquely – we can tell God's blessings were upon Joseph because of His blessings upon Potiphar. However, in Jacob's blessings with which he blessed his sons (Gen. 49:28), he used the noun blessings 5X upon Joseph (Gen. 49:25, 26), and never once upon any of his other sons! Thematically, the noun "blessings" *berákáh* ([1293](#)), which appears 16X in the entire book of Genesis, appears most frequently in chapters 27 (6X), Isaac's mistaken blessings pronounced upon Jacob instead of Esau, and in chapter 49 (6X), Jacob's singling out Joseph and his sons for blessings far above the blessings he pronounced on his other eleven sons.

¹⁰⁵⁴ Gen. 39:7 - lie with me: Women can be sexual aggressors!

nothing from me except you, because you are his wife. 39:9b

J 4 The abhorrence of sinning against Potiphar: How then could I do this great evil 39:9c

J 5 The abhorrence of sinning against God! and sin against God?" ¹⁰⁵⁵ 39:9d

H 3 Her repeated, but unsuccessful seductions: {10} As she spoke to Joseph day after day, he did not listen to her to lie beside her *or* be with her. ¹⁰⁵⁶ 39:10

H 4 Her final abortive attempt 39:11-12

J 1 The isolation of Joseph: {11} Now it happened one day that he went into the house to do his work, and none of the men of the household was there inside. 39:11

J 2 The forcefulness of Mrs. Potiphar: {12} She caught him by his garment, saying, "Lie with me!" 39:12a

J 3 The flight of Joseph: And he left his garment in her hand and fled, ¹⁰⁵⁷ and went outside. 39:12b

G 2 Mrs. Potiphar's framing ¹⁰⁵⁸ of Joseph 39:13-18

¹⁰⁵⁵ Gen. 39:9 - sin against God: Joseph's response illustrates clearly that fornication (for him – adultery for her) would wrong her husband and wrong God. That is the way sin usually operates – it leaves a wronged human being and a wronged God.

¹⁰⁵⁶ Gen. 39:10 - day after day: Joseph's sterling character is amazing on several counts: (1) He was isolated from the restraints of his home country and culture. (2) He was isolated from any family restraints. (3) He was isolated from any external religious restraints. (4) He did not have to take the dangerous step of a proposal himself. (5) He could see that this woman wanted the affair. (6) He, being a slave, was not in a position to refuse her. (7) He had to face this temptation not just once, but day after day after day! (8) It is significant that Joseph's steely resistance came from his internal relationship with God, which no family rejection, cultural isolation, or aroused feminine advances could shake. (9) The final test would come on a day when absolutely no one else was left in the house to serve as a witness. (10) Needless to say, Joseph's incredible resistance to temptation stands in sharp contrast to the moral looseness of Reuben (Gen. 35:22) and Judah (Gen. 38:13-18). (11) Joseph's resistance was such that he would not only not listen to her, but he wouldn't even spend time with her, an intelligent precaution! (12) Joseph's morality is an incredible lesson to us today!

¹⁰⁵⁷ Gen. 39:12 - fled: Joseph's flight from fornication is a beautiful illustration of the admonition in 1 Corinthians 6:18-20 – "Flee imorality"! Evidently Joseph, caught firmly by Mrs. Potiphar, but unwilling to harm her in a struggle, simply slipped out of his garment.

¹⁰⁵⁸ Gen. 39:13-18 title - framing: There is no better illustration than this of the true nature of Mrs. Potiphar's relationship with Joseph. She, and everyone with Hollywood mores, would have said she had fallen in love with Joseph. Nothing could be further from the truth, however. She had simply fallen in lust with him. She was interested solely in self-gratification. When she finally saw that there was no way she could manipulate him into gratifying her sexual desires, she manipulated his destruction! Unrequited lust turns to hate! She never did love him, for love always seeks for the good of the person loved. She certainly did not seek Joseph's best interests.

- H 1 The chagrin of Mrs. Potiphar: {13} When she saw that he had left his garment in her hand and had fled outside, 39:13
- H 2 Her deceitful report to the other male household slaves 39:14-15
 - J 1 Her tampering with other possible witnesses (obstruction of justice) {14} she called to the men of her household and said to them, 39:14a
 - J 2 Her blaming of her husband: "See, he has brought in 39:14b
 - J 3 Her anti-semitic slur: a Hebrew 39:14c
 - J 4 Her stirring up ethnic bigotry: to us to make sport of us; 39:14d
 - J 5 Her accusation of rape: he came in to me to lie with me, 39:14e
 - J 6 Her false testimony of having screamed: and I screamed. 39:14f
 - J 7 Her false testimony of his having fled in fright: {15} "When he heard that I raised my voice and screamed,¹⁰⁵⁹ he left his garment beside me and fled and went outside." 39:15
- H 3 Her deceitful report to her husband 39:16-18
 - J 1 Her wait: {16} So she left his garment beside her until his master came home. 39:16
 - J 2 Her anti-semitic slur: {17} Then she spoke to him with these words, "The Hebrew slave, 39:17a
 - J 3 Her blaming of her husband: whom you brought to us, 39:17b
 - J 4 Her accusation of rape: came in to me to make

Note, furthermore, that sin springs from a defective character. A defective character is never confined to merely one sin. Someone who will break the 7th commandment ("Thou shalt not commit adultery") will break the 9th ("Thou shalt not bear false witness against thy neighbor") and the 10th ("Thou shalt not covet"). Mrs. Potiphar's defective character, resulting in her breaking of these multiple commandments, sadly, was graphically duplicated, in modern U.S. history, in the Oval Office under President Clinton.

¹⁰⁵⁹ Gen. 39:15 - screamed: [NASB](#) footnote: "A literal translation: *called out*"

sport of me; 39:17c

J 5 Her false testimony about having screamed for help: {18} and as I raised my voice and screamed, 39:18a

J 6 Her misrepresentation of evidence: he left his garment beside me and fled outside." 39:18b

E 3 Joseph's rise to managerial position despite his wrongful confinement in prison 39:19-23

G 1 Joseph's wrongful imprisonment 39:19-20

H 1 The anger of his master: {19} Now when his master heard the words of his wife, which she spoke to him, saying, "This is what your slave did to me," his anger burned. 39:19

H 2 His imprisonment of Joseph: {20} So Joseph's master took him and put him into the jail, the place where the king's prisoners were confined; and he was there in the jail.¹⁰⁶⁰ 39:20

G 2 Joseph's promotion to assistant warden 39:21-23

H 1 The blessing of [Yahweh](#) 39:21

J 1 His presence with Joseph: {21} But the LORD was with Joseph

J 2 His kindness to Joseph: and extended kindness¹⁰⁶¹ to him,

J 3 His predispositioning of the chief jailer: and gave him favor¹⁰⁶² in the sight of the chief jailer.

H 2 The resultant actions of the chief jailer

J 1 His placing Joseph in total charge of all the prisoners in the jail: {22} The chief jailer

¹⁰⁶⁰ Gen. 39:20 - jail: For the second time Joseph finds himself rejected, imprisoned, and lied about! This must have been a dark time in Joseph's life. The one wild card was that [Yahweh](#) was with Him. If God is with me, I need not fear what man may do to me! Psalm 118:6; Prov. 29:25; Heb. 13:6.

¹⁰⁶¹ Gen. 39:21 - kindness: the noun is *chésed* (2617), goodness, kindness, faithfulness. According to [Bruce Waltke](#), my former Hebrew professor, "loyal love." Yahweh was with Joseph, and He extended loyal love to him. God has not forgotten Joseph.

¹⁰⁶² Gen. 39:21 - and gave him favor: God gave Joseph *chên* (2580), acceptance, appreciation, favorable evaluation – in the eyes of the prison warden.

committed to Joseph's charge all the prisoners who were in the jail; so that whatever was done there, he was responsible *for it*.¹⁰⁶³ 39:22

J 2 The totality of Joseph's control: {23} The chief jailer did not supervise anything under Joseph's charge 39:23

J 3 The Divine prospering: because the LORD was with him; and whatever he did, the LORD made to prosper.¹⁰⁶⁴

C 3 Joseph's Divinely-guided interpretations of dreams 40:1 - 41:36

D 1 Of the dreams of Pharaoh's chief cupbearer and baker 40¹⁰⁶⁵

E 1 The confinement of Pharaoh's chief cupbearer and baker in prison 40:1-4

G 1 The offense of the cupbearer and baker: {1} Then it came about after these things, the cupbearer and the baker for the king of Egypt offended their lord, the king of Egypt. 40:1

G 2 The wrath of Pharaoh: {2} Pharaoh was furious with his two officials, the chief cupbearer and the chief baker. 40:2

G 3 Their confinement in Joseph's jail: {3} So he put them in confinement in the house of the captain of the bodyguard, in

¹⁰⁶³ Gen. 39:22 - whatever was done there, he was responsible: This is truly amazing. Just as Potiphar had given Joseph complete charge over everything, now the prison warden puts Joseph in charge of everything, including the prisoners. The warden now has virtually nothing to do. Joseph must have exhibited some visible management skills, and the warden saw it. More importantly, through the grace of God, Joseph now receives more experience in management than includes management of recalcitrant people – the prisoners. God is preparing Joseph for the task of managing Egypt's upcoming seven years of plenty followed by seven years of famine. Joseph has no way of knowing this, of course. His job, and ours, was to be faithful in the positions in which we find ourselves. If we are faithful in a little, He will give us greater responsibility and opportunity later on, even in the next life, the Kingdom of Christ. Parables in the NT convey the same idea. Faithfulness in service now will be rewarded by enhanced opportunity for service in Christ's kingdom (Matt. 25:14-30; Luke 19:11-27).

¹⁰⁶⁴ Gen. 39:23 - the Lord was with him: The beauty of Joseph's story is that no matter how bleak the circumstances may seem, when God is with you, there is incredible blessing! God had a plan to bless Joseph that no human being or chain of events could ever bury or distort. This idea is expressed beautifully in Jeremiah 29:11, "For I know the plans that I have for you," declares the LORD, "plans for welfare and not for calamity to give you a future and a hope." A similar theme is found in Ephesians 1:3 "Blessed be the God and Father of our Lord Jesus Christ, who has blessed us with every spiritual blessing in the heavenly *places* in Christ." Application: When you stay true to God, He will bless you no matter how dismal your path or how unfairly others treat you!

¹⁰⁶⁵ Gen. ch. 40: Never doubt in the dark what God has shown you in the light. God had revealed to Joseph His plan to elevate Joseph above his brothers. Joseph evidently knew God had given him a special ability to interpret dreams. Now, as he has the opportunity to interpret dreams, he immediately volunteers to "go out on a limb" for the two captive officials of Pharaoh. Even though justice had miscarried in his life; even though he was at a low ebb in his life, he did not doubt that God was working. He used the gifts God had given him and remained faithful where God had placed him!

the jail, the *same* place where Joseph was imprisoned. 40:3

G 4 The jurisdiction of Joseph: {4} The captain of the bodyguard¹⁰⁶⁶ put Joseph in charge of them, and he took care of them; and they were in confinement for some time. 40:4

E 2 The dreams of the cupbearer and baker 40:5-8

G 1 The statement concerning the dreams: {5} Then the cupbearer and the baker for the king of Egypt, who were confined in jail, both had a dream the same night,¹⁰⁶⁷ each man with his *own* dream *and* each dream with its *own* interpretation.¹⁰⁶⁸ 40:5

G 2 The dejection of the dreamers: {6} When Joseph came to them in the morning and observed them, behold, they were dejected. 40:6

G 3 The query of Joseph: {7} He asked Pharaoh's officials who were with him in confinement in his master's house, "Why are your faces so sad today?"¹⁰⁶⁹ 40:7

G 4 The response of the dreamers – no one to interpret: {8} Then they said to him, "We have had a dream and there is no one to

¹⁰⁶⁶ Gen. 40:4 - the captain of the bodyguard: This was presumably none other than Joseph's previous boss, Potiphar (Gen. 37:36; 39:1). The chief jailer evidently was subordinate to Potiphar. The text reads as though Potiphar knew that the chief jailer had placed Joseph in charge of everything, and Potiphar placed these two royal prisoners under the custody of Joseph. God's [providence](#) is at work. Only if Joseph is in charge of the entire prison would he come in contact with these two royal prisoners. They would dream dreams that needed to be interpreted. So the two skills that God had given Joseph – the ability to manage efficiently, and the ability to interpret dreams – would both come to play in the following narrative.

¹⁰⁶⁷ Gen. 40:5 - both had a dream the same night: In typical Hebrew style, both "dreamed a dream." "Dreamed" is the verb *chalam* ([2492](#)), and "dream" is the noun *chālôm* ([2472](#)). Once again, God's [providence](#) is seen. He arranged for both of these officials to have a dream the same night. Both of them would be puzzled and desire an interpretation. The only person in the world known at this time to have the God-given ability to interpret dreams was their defacto prison warden, Joseph. What a coincidence!

¹⁰⁶⁸ Gen. 40:5 - each dream with its *own* interpretation: *pithrôn'* ([6623](#)). In context, the noun has to mean the explanation of the meaning of a cryptic dream. This noun is used but 5X in the whole OT, all in Genesis in connection with Joseph (Gen. 40:5, 8, 12, 18; 41:11). The corresponding verb is *pâthâr* ([6622](#)), used 9X in 7 verses. Again, its meaning is to explain the meaning of cryptic dreams. All of these occurrences appear in Genesis and all are related in some way to Joseph or to dreams which he either explained or would explain (Gen. 40:8, 16, 22; 41:8, 12, 13, 15).

¹⁰⁶⁹ Gen. 40:7 - Why are your faces so sad today: Joseph did not go about his business ignorant of his surroundings. He obviously interacted with the prisoners in his charge. He was observant enough to notice the body language and demeanor of his two special prisoners was different today. They did not exhibit their typical behavior or demeanor – they were sad. Joseph was developing appropriate people skills. These would enable him to interact with people successfully because he could read their body language. He would really need these skills in his upcoming job. Joseph's people skills were not evident in his dealings with his brothers, but they were being fine-tuned here in the jail.

interpret it." ¹⁰⁷⁰ 40:8a

G 5 Joseph's volunteering to listen to interpret their dreams: Then Joseph said to them, 40:8b

H 1 His ascribing to God the interpretation of dreams: "Do not interpretations belong to God?" ¹⁰⁷¹

H 2 His requesting of the details of the dreams: Tell *it* to me, please." ¹⁰⁷²

E 3 Joseph's favorable interpretation of the cupbearer's dream 40:9-15

G 1 The facts of the dream: {9} So the chief cupbearer told his dream to Joseph, and said to him, [40:9a] 40:9-11

H 1 The vine: "In my dream, behold, *there was* a vine in front of me; 40:9b

H 2 The three branches: {10} and on the vine *were* three branches. 40:10a

H 3 The ripe grapes: And as it was budding, its blossoms came out, *and* its clusters produced ripe grapes. 40:10b

H 4 His giving Pharaoh grape juice: {11} "Now Pharaoh's cup was in my hand; so I took the grapes and squeezed them into Pharaoh's cup, and I put the cup into Pharaoh's hand." 40:11

G 2 Joseph's interpretation: {12} Then Joseph said to him, "This is the interpretation of it: ¹⁰⁷³ [40:12a] 40:12-13

¹⁰⁷⁰ Gen. 40:8 - no one to interpret it: The king's cupbearer and baker were disconsolate because each had dreamed a dream, yet there was no one able to interpret the meaning. "Dreamed" is the verb *chalam* (2492), and "dream" is the noun *chālôm* (2472). "Interpret" is the verb *pâthâr* (6622). They lamented that no one was able to explain to them the meaning of their dreams. Obviously, both officials were impressed with the conviction that their dreams meant something that they ought to know. But no one could decipher the meaning.

¹⁰⁷¹ Gen. 40:8 - Do not interpretations belong to God?: Obviously Joseph, who had experienced two profound dreams, believed God could explain the meaning. I presume, then, that God had provided the explanation for both of the dreams Joseph had dreamed earlier (Gen. 37:5-11). He knew what they meant. I also presume, moreover, assessing Joseph's character, that he had some degree of faith that, no matter how difficult his situation was at the present, his own dreams would eventually come true. How that would come to be, he had no idea. "Interpretations" is the plural of *pithrôn'* (6623).

¹⁰⁷² Gen. 40:8 - Tell *it* to me, please: It appears that not only did Joseph believe interpretations came to God, but that he believed God had given to him a special ability to interpret dreams. His own dreams had not come true. Yet he was convinced God had given him the ability to interpret correctly.

¹⁰⁷³ Gen. 40:12 - interpretation: Joseph said, literally, "This is his interpretation" with "his interpretation" translating the masculine singular of the noun *pithrôn'* (6623) with a 3rd masculine singular suffix. That does not translate well in English, so we would say, "This is its interpretation."

- H 1 The meaning of the three branches: the three branches are three days; 40:12b
- H 2 His removal from prison in three days: {13} within three more days Pharaoh will lift up ¹⁰⁷⁴ your head 40:13a
- H 3 His restoration to office as cupbearer: and restore you to your office; and you will put Pharaoh's cup into his hand according to your former custom when you were his cupbearer. 40:13b

G 3 Joseph's request for clemency 40:14-15

- H 1 His asking to be mentioned to Pharaoh: {14} "Only keep me in mind when it goes well with you, and please do me a kindness by mentioning me to Pharaoh ¹⁰⁷⁵ and get me out of this house. 40:14
- H 2 His explanation of the injustices done to him 40:15
 - J 1 His having been kidnapped from [Canaan](#): {15} "For I was in fact kidnapped from the land of the Hebrews, ¹⁰⁷⁶
 - J 2 His having been unjustly treated in Egypt: and even here I have done nothing that they should have put me into the dungeon." ¹⁰⁷⁷

E 4 Joseph's unfavorable interpretation of the baker's dream 40:16-19

G 1 The dream of the baker 40:16-17

- H 1 The hope of the baker: {16} When the chief baker saw that he had interpreted favorably, he said to Joseph, 40:16a

¹⁰⁷⁴ Gen. 40:13 - lift up: [NASB](#) footnote: "Or possibly *forgive you*." JTB: The verb here is the [Qal Imperfect](#) of the verb *násá* ([5375](#)), literally, to *lift up*. Joseph assumed, by his following comments, that this was a favorable action by Pharaoh. The cupbearer would be lifted up from the dungeon and would be exalted to his previous status.

¹⁰⁷⁵ Gen. 40:14 - by mentioning me to Pharaoh: Joseph was so convinced that he had given the cupbearer the correct interpretation that he asked him, when restored to his office, to request assistance from Pharaoh to extricate him from his wrongfully imprisoned status.

¹⁰⁷⁶ Gen. 40:15 - I was in fact kidnapped from the land of the Hebrews: "I was ... kidnapped" translates the [Pual](#) stem of the verb *gánáb* ([1589](#)), the passive intensive of the verb "steal away," here, "was stolen away," or better, in English, "I was kidnapped." The main verb is preceded by the [Infinitive Absolute](#) of the same verb stem. This intensifies the action. [NASB](#) translates the [Infinitive Absolute](#) with the words "in fact." We could render the Hebrew more graphically by translating the phrase, "I was violently kidnapped from the land of the Hebrews."

¹⁰⁷⁷ Gen. 40:15 - dungeon: Hebrew, *bôr* ([953](#)), *pit, well, cistern*, rarely, *dungeon*, depending on the context. Joseph earlier was thrown into a *bôr* ([953](#)), a pit that had no water (Gen. 37:20, 22, 24, 28, 29). But here, and in Gen. 41:14, the same word is translated *dungeon*. Could it be that the *dungeon* was a sort of basement?

- H 2 The three baskets of bread: "I also saw in my dream, and behold, *there were* three baskets of white bread on my head; 40:16b
- H 3 The baked goods for Pharaoh: {17} and in the top basket *there were* some of all sorts of baked food for Pharaoh, 40:17a
- H 4 The birds eating the baked goods: and the birds were eating them out of the basket on my head." 40:17b
- G 2 The interpretation of Joseph: {18} Then Joseph answered and said, "This is its interpretation: [40:18a] 40:18-19
 - H 1 The meaning of the three baskets: the three baskets are three days; 40:18b
 - H 2 Pharaoh's execution of the baker: {19} within three more days Pharaoh will lift up your head from you¹⁰⁷⁸ 40:19a
 - H 3 His impalement: and will hang you on a tree, 40:19b
 - H 4 His public exposure: and the birds will eat your flesh off you."¹⁰⁷⁹ 40:19c
- E 5 The precise fulfillment of the two dreams 40:20-23
 - G 1 Joseph's accuracy regarding the day: {20} Thus it came about on the third day, 40:20a
 - H 1 The significance of the day: *which was* Pharaoh's birthday,
 - H 2 The celebration on the day: that he made a feast for all his servants;
 - G 2 Joseph's accuracy regarding their removal from prison: and he lifted up the head of the chief cupbearer and the head of the chief baker among his servants. 40:20b
 - G 3 Joseph's accuracy regarding the men's destinies 40:21-22

¹⁰⁷⁸ Gen. 40:19 - Pharaoh will lift up your head from you: "lift up" is once again the [Qal Imperfect](#) of the verb *násá* (5375), literally, to *lift up*. However, Joseph adds "from you," a qualification he did not make when speaking to the cupbearer. This is a literal lifting up of the baker's head. His head would be severed from his body, and his corpse would be impaled on a stake or tree and publicly exposed. Egyptians did this to prevent the spirit from resting in the afterlife ([Constable](#), citing [Wenham](#) and [Wiersbe](#)). [Josephus](#) called this crucifixion.

¹⁰⁷⁹ Gen. 40:19 - hang you on a tree: God grants to rulers a certain [sovereignty](#). Rulers, like God, have life-and-death power over others. No attempt is made in the narrative to justify or condemn the decisions made by Pharaoh. A [sovereign](#) may do whatever he wishes!

H 1 The restoration to office of the chief cupbearer: {21} He restored the chief cupbearer to his office, and he put the cup into Pharaoh's hand; 40:21

H 2 The hanging of the chief baker: {22} but he hanged¹⁰⁸⁰ the chief baker, just as Joseph had interpreted to them. 40:22

G 4 The failure of the chief cupbearer to remember Joseph: {23} Yet the chief cupbearer did not remember Joseph, but forgot him.¹⁰⁸¹ 40:23

D 2 Of the dreams of Pharaoh 41:1-36

E 1 Pharaoh's two dreams 41:1-8

G 1 His first dream: The cows from the Nile 41:1-4

H 1 The introduction to the dream 41:1

J 1 The time of the dream: {1} Now it happened at the end of two full years

J 2 The recipient of the dream: that Pharaoh had a dream,¹⁰⁸²

J 3 The situation of the dream: and behold,¹⁰⁸³ he was standing by the Nile.¹⁰⁸⁴

H 2 Seven fat cows ascend from the Nile, grazing: {2} And

¹⁰⁸⁰ Gen. 40:22 - hanged: the [Qal Perfect](#) of the verb *tâlâh* (8518).

¹⁰⁸¹ Gen. 40:23 - forgot him: The chief cupbearer was Joseph's only key to escape his wrongful imprisonment. But the key person forgot Joseph for two years. Joseph must have grown despondent, but we are not told that. We see things in this narrative from God's perspective. God had a time-table. And He was working on His time-table meticulously. When everything in Egypt and Canaan and in the life of Joseph and of Pharaoh was aligned just right, God gave Pharaoh a dream. The uninterpretable dream was what triggered the memory of the chief cupbearer.

¹⁰⁸² Gen. 41:1 - Pharaoh had a dream: literally, "Pharaoh dreaming," translating the [Qal Participle](#) of *chalam* (2492). God sent this dream to Pharaoh a full two years after the chief cupbearer had been restored to office.

¹⁰⁸³ Gen. 41:1 - behold: Hebrew, *hinnêh'* (2009), "Behold!" or "look!" or "see!" This interjection occurs 175X in Genesis, and 6X here in the early part of this chapter (Gen. 41:1, 2, 3, 5, 6, 7). With this term, Moses invites the reader to see the dream through Pharaoh's eyes (NetBible, [Gen. 41:2, footnote 3](#)). [NASB](#) translates the particle in these verses as "behold" 5X and "lo" 1X (in Gen. 41:2).

¹⁰⁸⁴ Gen. 41:1 - Nile: Hebrew, *ye'ôr* (2975), the main river of Egypt. See the article and map, [Nile River and surrounding area](#). See also the [enlarged map](#). This river floods twice a year, depositing rich soil along its banks. In low-lying areas, the fertile land continually spreads farther east and farther west. The Nile River is arguably the most significant physical feature of Egypt. In a sense, the Nile is the life-blood of Egypt. It is interesting that Pharaoh's dream had to do with this most important feature of the nation.

lo,¹⁰⁸⁵ from the Nile there came up seven cows,¹⁰⁸⁶ sleek and fat;¹⁰⁸⁷ and they grazed in the marsh grass. 41:2

H 3 Seven gaunt cows ascend from the Nile: {3} Then behold, seven other cows came up after them from the Nile, ugly and gaunt,¹⁰⁸⁸ and they stood by the *other* cows on the bank of the Nile. 41:3

H 4 The gaunt cows eat up the fat cows: {4} The ugly and gaunt cows ate up the seven sleek and fat cows. Then Pharaoh awoke.¹⁰⁸⁹ 41:4

G 2 His second dream: The ears of corn 41:5-7

H 1 Seven good ears on a stalk: {5} He fell asleep and dreamed a second time; and behold, seven ears of grain¹⁰⁹⁰ came up on a single stalk, plump and good. 41:5

H 2 Seven thin ears: {6} Then behold, seven ears, thin and scorched by the east wind, sprouted up after them. 41:6

H 3 The thin ears devour the good ears: {7} The thin ears swallowed up the seven plump and full ears. Then Pharaoh awoke, and behold, *it was* a dream. 41:7

G 3 The concern caused by the dreams 41:8

H 1 Pharaoh's anxiety: {8} Now in the morning his spirit

¹⁰⁸⁵ Gen. 41:2 - lo: The same word, *hinnêh'* (2009), as [NASB](#) translated in Gen. 41:1, "behold."

¹⁰⁸⁶ Gen. 41:2 - cows: Hebrew, *pârâh* (6510), "cow" or "cows" exclusively in [NASB](#). Used sparingly in the OT (26X), but frequently, especially in this portion of the narrative here in Genesis (8X in Gen. 41 alone).

¹⁰⁸⁷ Gen. 41:2 - sleek and fat: Obviously, these cows were well-fed, indicating a time of plenty in the land.

¹⁰⁸⁸ Gen. 41:3 - ugly and gaunt: It would make a great deal of sense if these cows represented a famine that would completely displace the time of plenty.

¹⁰⁸⁹ Gen. 41:4 - Pharaoh awoke: Not only did God give this troubling dream to Pharaoh, but He awakened him so he had time to ponder and install this dream in his more long-term memory. Many times dreams at night are troubling at night, but after we awaken, we have difficulty remembering them. Not this dream!

¹⁰⁹⁰ Gen. 41:5 - ears of grain: This three-word phrase in English actually translates but one in Hebrew, *shibbôleth* (7641), meaning simply "ears." NASB translators have added the words "of grain" so the reader knows the subject is agronomy, not human anatomy. Hereafter, the term is properly translated as "ears" without the "of grain" qualifier (Gen. 41:6, 7, 22, 23, 24, 26, 27). As to what type of grain this is, it is impossible to tell from the Hebrew text. In English, the term "ears" typically connotes corn. We usually refer to "heads" of wheat. In actual fact, it really makes no difference if we are speaking of corn or wheat. Both plants typically produce only a ear or head of grain per stalk. Sometimes one finds stalks with two ears of corn. But to have seven ears of corn on a single stalk or seven heads of wheat on a single stalk *never* happens. Clearly the number seven was chosen to match up with the seven cows.

was troubled,¹⁰⁹¹

H 2 Pharaoh's summons: so he sent and called for all the magicians¹⁰⁹² of Egypt, and all its wise men.¹⁰⁹³

H 3 Pharaoh's revelations: And Pharaoh told them his dreams,

H 4 The interpreters' inability: but there was no one who could interpret¹⁰⁹⁴ them to Pharaoh.

E 2 The cupbearer's remembrance of Joseph 41:9-13

G 1 His introduction: {9} Then the chief cupbearer spoke to Pharaoh,¹⁰⁹⁵ saying, "I would make mention today of my *own* offenses. 41:9

G 2 The confinement of the cupbearer and the baker: {10} "Pharaoh was furious with his servants, and he put me in confinement in the house of the captain of the bodyguard, *both* me and the chief baker. 41:10

¹⁰⁹¹ Gen. 41:8 - troubled: It is no wonder that Pharaoh was troubled. As the ruler over all Egypt, the matching dreams of the Nile River with seven fat cows eaten by seven starving cows, along with seven plump ears of grain eaten by seven thin ears symbolizes a collapsing farm economy. That would affect all Egyptians, which would not make it easy for him to govern the land. But what did the dreams really mean? Dreams are often forgotten, but God caused these graphic dreams to overpower Pharaoh's consciousness when he awoke, and this filled him with anxiety.

¹⁰⁹² Gen. 41:8 - magicians: *chartôm'* (2748), *diviner, magician, astrologer* (BDB); simple dictionary – soothsayer, priest. This word is rarely used in the OT – only here and in Gen. 41:24 in Genesis; 7X in 6 verses in Exodus in connection with Moses' demands upon Pharaoh and the ten plagues (Ex. 7:11, 22; 8:7, 18, 19; 9:11); and 7X in Daniel (Dan. 1:20; 2:2, 10, 27; 4:4, 6; 5:11). It is obvious Pharaoh was greatly disturbed and intent upon learning the meaning of these bizarre twin dreams, so different, yet both possessing a disturbing agricultural theme.

¹⁰⁹³ Gen. 41:8 - all its wise men: "wise men" translates the Hebrew plural adjective *châkâm'* (2450), meaning, in this context, and in the plural, a "class of *learned* and *shrewd* men, including astrologers, magicians, and the like, of Egypt; Babylon; Persia" (BDB). This would be synonymous with, but probably a more extensive category than *chartôm'* (2748). Pharaoh called up all his big guns to provide an interpretation.

¹⁰⁹⁴ Gen. 41:8 - no one who could interpret: "interpret," the Qal Participle of the verb *pâtar'* (6622), used 9X in 7 verses and only in Genesis (Gen. 40:8, 16, 22; 41:8, 12, 13, 15). This verb always means "to explain the meaning of dreams." It is always used in connection with the Joseph narrative and the various dreams contained therein. Pharaoh's wise men and astrologers could not interpret, but Joseph, by a gift from God, could do so. I believe God withheld any reasonable sounding interpretation from Pharaoh's magicians so that only Joseph's interpretation would make sense to the king and his court. God was engineering his master plan for Egypt, but especially for the sons of Israel.

¹⁰⁹⁵ Gen. 41:9 - Then the chief cupbearer spoke to Pharaoh: At precisely the right moment on God's time-table, He providentially jolted the otherwise selfish memory of the chief cupbearer concerning Joseph's ability to interpret dreams. Presumably the cupbearer was more concerned about his own job security and being spared from death than he was about remembering Joseph to Pharaoh. Any mention of his dark experience in prison was anathema to the cupbearer. Now, however, the situation had changed dramatically. His king had dreamed two disturbing dreams. And he, the cupbearer, was the only person in a position to provide the king with the answer to the king's quest for an explanation. Now the cupbearer was willing, since he could be of help to Pharaoh, to provide him, quite apologetically, with an explanation of the interpretive skill of a former co-prisoner, Joseph.

- G 3 The dreams of the prisoners: {11} "We had a dream on the same night, he and I; each of us dreamed according to the interpretation of his *own* dream. 41:11
- G 4 The interpretations of a Hebrew youth: {12} "Now a Hebrew youth *was* with us there, a servant of the captain of the bodyguard, and we related *them* to him, and he interpreted our dreams for us. To each one he interpreted according to his *own* dream. 41:12
- G 5 The fulfillment of the interpretations: {13} "And just as he interpreted for us, so it happened; he restored me in my office, but he hanged him." 41:13
- E 3 Pharaoh's relating of the dreams to Joseph 41:14-24
 - G 1 Pharaoh's sending for Joseph: {14} Then Pharaoh sent and called for Joseph, and they hurriedly brought him out of the dungeon;¹⁰⁹⁶ and when he had shaved himself and changed his clothes, he came to Pharaoh. 41:14
 - G 2 The introduction of the pair 41:15-16
 - H 1 Pharaoh's attributing to Joseph the ability to interpret Gedreams: {15} Pharaoh said to Joseph, "I have had a dream, but no one can interpret it; and I have heard it said about you, that when you hear a dream you can interpret it." 41:15
 - H 2 Joseph's promising that God would provide an interpretation of peace: {16} Joseph then answered Pharaoh, saying, "It is not in me; God will give Pharaoh a favorable answer."¹⁰⁹⁷ 41:16
 - G 3 The cows from the Nile 41:17-21
 - H 1 Pharaoh's situation: {17} So Pharaoh spoke to Joseph, "In my dream, behold, I was standing on the bank of the Nile; 41:17
 - H 2 Seven fat cows agrazing: {18} and behold, seven cows, fat and sleek came up out of the Nile, and they grazed in the marsh grass. 41:18

¹⁰⁹⁶ Gen. 41:14 - dungeon: *bôr* (953) – [BDB](#), *pit, cistern, well*, but in this case presumably a basement-type structure where prisoners were housed. Joseph had been thrown into a dry well or cistern by his brothers (Gen. 37:24, 28), but subsequently placed in the dungeon (Gen. 40:15) on account of a false accusation of Potiphar's wife.

¹⁰⁹⁷ Gen. 41:16 - It is not in me; God will give Pharaoh a favorable answer: Joseph was a conscientious man. He was unwilling to yield to the temptation to gain prestige for himself. He quickly gave God the credit for his ability to interpret dreams. I take the term "favorable answer" not to mean the dream would turn out to be a positive event, but rather that God would give to Pharaoh an accurate understanding of the meaning of the dream.

- H 3 Seven gaunt cows ascending: {19} "Lo, seven other cows came up after them, poor and very ugly and gaunt, such as I had never seen for ugliness in all the land of Egypt; 41:19
- H 4 Seven gaunt cows amunching: {20} and the lean and ugly cows ate up the first seven fat cows. 41:20
- H 5 Seven gaunt cows still gaunt: {21} "Yet when they had devoured them, it could not be detected that they had devoured them, for they were just as ugly as before. Then I awoke. 41:21
- G 4 The ears of corn 41:22-24
 - H 1 Seven good ears on a single stalk: {22} "I saw also in my dream, and behold, seven ears, full and good, came up on a single stalk; 41:22
 - H 2 Seven withered ears: {23} and lo, seven ears, withered, thin, *and* scorched by the east wind, sprouted up after them; 41:23
 - H 3 Seven withered ears swallow up seven good ears: {24} and the thin ears swallowed the seven good ears. 41:24a
- G 5 The inability of the magicians to interpret: Then I told it to the magicians, but there was no one who could explain it to me." 41:24b
- E 4 Joseph's interpretation: seven good years; seven bad years 41:25-32
 - G 1 Joseph's preliminary assessment 41:25
 - H 1 The identical meaning of the two dreams: {25} Now Joseph said to Pharaoh, "Pharaoh's dreams are one *and the same*;"¹⁰⁹⁸
 - H 2 God's advance revelation to Pharaoh of impending history: God has told to Pharaoh what He is about to do.
 - G 2 The seven good cows and good ears are seven [good] years: {26} "The seven good cows are seven years; and the seven good ears are seven years; the dreams are one *and the same*." 41:26
 - G 3 The seven gaunt cows and thin ears are seven years of famine:

¹⁰⁹⁸ Gen. 41:25 - one *and the same*: In other words, the interpretation of each dream would be the same interpretation. Presumably the repetition of the same meaning under different figures (dreams) emphasized the certainty of the coming events.

{27} "The seven lean and ugly cows that came up after them are seven years, and the seven thin ears scorched by the east wind will be seven years of famine. ¹⁰⁹⁹ 41:27

G 4 The over-all interpretation 41:28-31

H 1 God has shown you what He is going to do: {28} "It is as I have spoken to Pharaoh: God has shown to Pharaoh what He is about to do. ¹¹⁰⁰ 41:28

H 2 Seven years of abundance are coming: {29} "Behold, seven years of great abundance are coming in all the land of Egypt; 41:29

H 3 Seven years of famine are coming: {30} and after them seven years of famine will come, 41:30a

H 4 The severity of the famine – the abundance of the good years will be eaten up by the famine of the bad years: 41:30b-31

J 1 and all the abundance will be forgotten in the land of Egypt, 41:30b

J 2 and the famine will ravage the land. 41:30c

J 3 {31} "So the abundance will be unknown in the land because of that subsequent famine; 41:31a

J 4 for it *will be* very severe. 41:31b

G 5 The significance of the double dream 41:32

H 1 God has determined to do it! {32} "Now as for the repeating of the dream to Pharaoh twice, *it means* that the matter is determined by God,

H 2 God will bring it about quickly! and God will quickly bring it about.

¹⁰⁹⁹ Gen. 41:27 - seven years of famine: Famine, *ra'âb* (7458), dominates the next chapters of Genesis. It appears 24X in Genesis, 20X in Gen. 41-47 alone. A famine is a shortage of food, generally caused by a shortage of rainfall. Sometimes famine is caused by the self-serving ambitions of unscrupulous political leaders. The term "famine" appears repeatedly in Genesis 41 – 12X, in fact.

¹¹⁰⁰ Gen. 41:28 - God has shown to Pharaoh what He is about to do: Doubtless, Pharaoh was a complete pagan. Why should God condescend to tell Pharaoh what He is about to do? One reason is that God had compassion on the people of Egypt. He would provide them a way to overcome the effects of the famine. Presumably also, God wanted to draw certain Egyptians to believe in Himself. This He would do through this remarkable turn of events *which had been predicted in dreams*. But the primary reason for the warning was to allow Joseph to provide a way of deliverance for his family and bring them to Egypt, where they would stay for over four centuries. This tweaking of human history is nothing short of remarkable. God is Sovereign, and He does whatever He wishes for His purposes!

- E 5 Joseph's recommendation to Pharaoh for Egyptian survival during the coming famine 41:33-36
- G 1 Appoint a FEMA Coordinator (Federal Emergency Management Administration): {33} "Now let Pharaoh look for a man discerning and wise, and set him over the land of Egypt.¹¹⁰¹ 41:33
 - G 2 Appoint grain administrators throughout the land – Emergency Grain Reserve Administrators (EGRA): {34} "Let Pharaoh take action to appoint overseers¹¹⁰² in charge of the land, 41:34a
 - G 3 Institute a 20% grain tax during the seven good years: and let him exact a fifth *of the produce* of the land of Egypt in the seven years of abundance. 41:34b
 - G 4 Have the EGRA's control the Grain Reserve 41:35-36
 - H 1 Gather the grain: {35} "Then let them gather all the food of these good years that are coming, and store up the grain¹¹⁰³ for food in the cities under Pharaoh's authority, 41:35a
 - H 2 Guard the grain: and let them guard *it*.¹¹⁰⁴ 41:35b
 - H 3 Dispense the grain during the famine: {36} "Let the food become as a reserve for the land for the seven years of famine which will occur in the land of Egypt, so that the

¹¹⁰¹ Gen. 41:33 - Now let Pharaoh look for a man discerning and wise, and set him over the land of Egypt: As a person who is at least a little bit acquainted with the demands of administration, I perceive that Joseph's plan is nothing short of miraculous. In other words, I believe that God not only gave Joseph the interpretation of Pharaoh's two dreams, he gave Joseph a master plan to control the dire effects of the oncoming famine. Joseph had gained experience in managing Potiphar's household, and he had gained experience in administering the prison. But nothing could really prepare him completely for the task of managing an entire nation for the next fourteen years in plenty and in famine. The plan was God's doing.

It is obvious that Pharaoh was overwhelmingly impressed not only with Joseph's grasp of the meaning of the dreams, but also with his grasp of the whole national economy and his ability to prepare a cohesive master plan that would help the country emerge unscathed from both the prosperous years and the years of famine. Joseph's ability to interpret, his grasp of the appropriate master plan, and Pharaoh's immediate and comprehensive approval were all perceptible manifestations of God's guiding, [sovereign](#), [providential](#) hand. God was in control here, and He had an obedient servant to manage all the details for the glory of God. May we all be Josephs – submissive to the will of God, and willing stewards of each opportunity God gives us!

¹¹⁰² Gen. 41:34 - overseers: Hebrew, *pâqîyd* ([6496](#)). [BDB](#), *commissioner, deputy, overseer*. [NASB](#): *overseer, officer, lieutenant, leader*. Joseph saw these individuals as middle level administrators who would supervise the collection and guarding of grain in the various cities of Egypt under the top level official who would be directly responsible to Pharaoh.

¹¹⁰³ Gen. 41:35 - grain: Hebrew, *bâr* ([1250](#)) grain of any kind, whether wheat or corn.

¹¹⁰⁴ Gen. 41:35 - let them guard *it*: Hebrew, *shâmâr* ([8104](#)), in this context, guard, keep, preserve, confine under lock and key. Joseph understood that the amount of grain gathered in the good years we become a real temptation for thieves during the good years and for desperate citizens during the bad years.

land will not perish during the famine." 41:36

C 4 Joseph's Divinely-guided promotion to power in Egypt 41:37-57

D 1 Pharaoh's promotion of Joseph to second in command; his provision of Asenath in marriage for Joseph 41:37-45

E 1 Pharaoh's approbation of Joseph 41:37-39

G 1 Pharaoh's approval of Joseph's proposal: {37} Now the proposal seemed good to Pharaoh and to all his servants. ¹¹⁰⁵ 41:37

G 2 Pharaoh's sensing of God's Spirit within Joseph: {38} Then Pharaoh said to his servants, "Can we find a man like this, in whom is a divine spirit?" ¹¹⁰⁶ 41:38

G 3 Pharaoh's approving judgment concerning Joseph: {39} So Pharaoh said to Joseph, "Since God has informed you of all this, there is no one so discerning and wise as you are. 41:39

E 2 Pharaoh's appointment of Joseph as second in command 41:40-41

G 1 Over Pharaoh's house: {40} "You shall be over my house, 41:40a

G 2 The right to receive homage: and according to your command all my people shall do homage; ¹¹⁰⁷ 41:40b

G 3 The stipulation of Pharaoh's own throne rights: only in the

¹¹⁰⁵ Gen. 41:37 - the proposal seemed good to Pharaoh and to all his servants: This approval by Pharaoh and all his advisors was directly engineered by God. God's guiding hand is seen in every component of the life of Joseph, even though His hand, at times, seemed invisible to Joseph. On a human level, no official is going to object to taxing heavily during a time of plenty. On the other hand, Pharaoh's decision to lift from confinement a prisoner and give him the power to control the entire land is nothing short of miraculous. I cannot imagine such a scenario in the politics of Washington, D.C., the capital of my country. It is clear that Pharaoh believed Joseph's interpretation, took it very seriously, and believed he was the best person to put in charge of a huge segment of the Egyptian economy. This is truly remarkable! This entire narrative bears the stamp of the [sovereignty](#) and [providence](#) of God.

¹¹⁰⁶ Gen. 41:38 - in whom is a divine spirit: The Hebrew text is quite remarkable. Literally, Pharaoh said to his servants, "Can we find a man like this in whom is spirit of Gods?" "Spirit" is the noun *rûach* ([7307](#)) and "Gods" is the plural proper noun *Elohim* ([430](#)). Pharaoh was a polytheist, but he used the identical word for God Joseph had used in Gen. 41:16. From our vantage point as Christians, we would say that Pharaoh could detect the Spirit of God in Joseph! May we all live that way!

¹¹⁰⁷ Gen. 41:40 - do homage: the [Qal Imperfect](#) of the verb *nâshaq* ([5401](#)), literally, "to kiss" ([BDB](#)). This verb is used in the same sense in Psalm 2:12, where kings and judges of the earth (Psalm 2:10) are exhorted to serve Yahweh with fear (Psalm 2:11), and *kiss* the Son (Messiah) so that He does not become angry and you perish in the way (Psalm 2:12) (emphasis mine)!

throne I will be greater than you." ¹¹⁰⁸ 41:40c

G 4 Pharaoh's placement of Joseph over all Egypt: {41} Pharaoh said to Joseph, "See, I have set you over all the land of Egypt." 41:41

E 3 Pharaoh's provision of symbols of authority ¹¹⁰⁹ 41:42-43b

G 1 The signet ring: {42} Then Pharaoh took off his signet ring from his hand and put it on Joseph's hand, 41:42a

G 2 The royal garments: and clothed him in garments of fine linen 41:42b

G 3 The gold necklace: and put the gold necklace around his neck. 41:42c

G 4 The second chariot: {43} He had him ride in his second chariot; 41:43a

G 5 The proclamation of deference: and they proclaimed before him, "Bow the knee!" 41:43b

E 4 The further statement of Joseph's authority 41:43c-44

G 1 The summary of Pharaoh's appointment of Joseph: And he set him over all the land of Egypt. 41:43c

G 2 The limit of Joseph's authority: {44} Moreover, Pharaoh said to Joseph, "Though I am Pharaoh, 41:44a

G 3 They hyperbolic extent of Joseph's authority: yet without your permission no one shall raise his hand or foot in all the land of Egypt." 41:44b

E 5 Pharaoh's Egyptianizing of Joseph 41:45

G 1 His giving him an Egyptian name: {45} Then Pharaoh named

¹¹⁰⁸ Gen. 41:40 - only in the throne I will be greater than you: The authority with which Pharaoh endowed Joseph was second only to his own! This is nothing short of amazing. The Bible never states that Joseph is a [type](#) of the Messiah, in my opinion he is. The Messiah has been granted authority second only to that of God Himself! He is presently seated at the right hand of God (Eph. 1:20; Heb. 10:12), awaiting the time when He will return to earth as the Messianic King and His enemies will become a footstool for His feet (Psalm 110:1).

¹¹⁰⁹ Gen. 41:42-44 titles - symbols of authority; statement of authority: The symbols and statement of Joseph's authority in the land of Egypt authorized by Pharaoh is staggering to me. This is nothing but the hand of God [providentially](#) at work in the life of Joseph to accomplish the dreams God had given to him (Gen. 37:5-11). God had a plan for Joseph to seat him in authority over his father and all his brothers as a means of saving the nation. This is, again, to me symbolic of the authority He has given and will give to His Messianic Son, Jesus, to whom all peoples must submit in the process of their own salvation.

Joseph Zaphenath-paneah; ¹¹¹⁰

G 2 His giving him an Egyptian wife: and he gave him Asenath, the daughter of Potiphra priest of On, as his wife. ¹¹¹¹ And Joseph went forth over the land of Egypt.

D 2 Joseph's assumption of duties and establishment of the grain reserve 41:46-49

E 1 Joseph's age of accession: {46} Now Joseph was thirty years old when he stood ¹¹¹² before Pharaoh, king of Egypt. 41:46a

E 2 Joseph's beginning of his work: And Joseph went out from the presence of Pharaoh and went through all the land of Egypt. 41:46b

E 3 The description of Joseph's work 41:47-49

G 1 The abundant production during the seven years: {47} During the seven years ¹¹¹³ of plenty the land brought forth abundantly. 41:47

G 2 Joseph's gathering of food during the seven years of plenty: {48} So he gathered all the food of *these* seven years which occurred in the land of Egypt 41:48a

G 3 Joseph's distributive storage of the grain: and placed the food

¹¹¹⁰ Gen. 41:45 - Zaphenath-paneah: [NASB](#) note: "Probably Egyptian for 'God speaks; he lives'"

¹¹¹¹ Gen. 41:45 - he gave him Asenath, the daughter of Potiphra priest of On, as his wife: Pharaoh arranged for Joseph to marry into the upper echelon of Egyptian society. "Asenath" means "Belonging to (the goddess) Neith." Asenath's father was Potiphra, meaning "He whom Ra (the sun god) Gave." Potiphra was apparently a priest in the celebrated Temple of the Sun, located in the city of "On" (Greek, Heliopolis) ten miles north of modern Cairo. (This information is derived from [Constable](#).)

Once again, there is Divine symbolism, I believe. God has given to His [Messianic](#) Son, Jesus, a largely Gentile [bride](#), the [Church](#) (Eph. 5:22-32). Jesus is in the process of sanctifying His [Bride](#). We hear about Joseph's Egyptian bride in Gen. 41:45, 50, and Gen. 46:20. We surmise that Joseph led her and their two sons, Ephraim and Manasseh, to faith in the One True God.

¹¹¹² Gen. 41:46 - stood before: [NASB](#) footnote: "Or *entered the service of*"

¹¹¹³ Gen. 41:47 - seven years: I have been taught all my life that the number 7 is the number of completeness. I have not personally documented that, but there certainly are myriads of seven's in the Bible. God completed His six days of creation, and rested the seventh, so we have a seven-day week (Gen.1:1-2:4). God would avenge Cain seven-fold (Gen. 4:15). After Noah and his entourage entered the ark, God waited seven days to send the Flood (Gen. 7:10). God sent Pharaoh a dream of seven cows and seven ears of grain (Gen. 41:2-7). Seventy seven's of years were determined upon Daniel's people and Jerusalem (Dan. 9:24-27), etc. In the book of Revelation, there are multiple seven's – seven churches (Rev.2-3); seven spirits of God (Rev. 3:1); seven lamps of fire (Rev. 4:5); a Lamb that had seven horns and seven eyes, which are the seven spirit of God (Rev. 5:6); a book with seven seals (Rev. 6:1); seven angels blowing seven trumpets (Rev. 8:2, 6); seven peals of thunder (Rev. 10:3-4); seven angels with seven plagues poured out in seven bowls of God's wrath (Rev. 15:1, 6, 7).

in the cities; he placed in every city ¹¹¹⁴ the food from its own surrounding fields. 41:48b

G 4 The extent of Joseph's storage: {49} Thus Joseph stored up grain in great abundance like the sand of the sea, until he stopped measuring *it*, for it was beyond measure. 41:49

D 3 God' gracious gift of sons to Joseph – The birth of Joseph's two sons 41:50-52

E 1 The firstborn – Manasseh 41:50-51

G 1 The time of birth: {50} Now before the year of famine came,

G 2 The number of sons: two sons were born to Joseph,

G 3 The mother of the sons: whom Asenath, the daughter of Potiphera priest of On, ¹¹¹⁵ bore to him.

G 4 The name of the firstborn: {51} Joseph named the firstborn Manasseh, ¹¹¹⁶

G 5 The significance of his name: "For," *he said*, "God has made me forget all my trouble and all my father's household." ¹¹¹⁷

E 2 The secondborn – Ephraim 41:52

G 1 The name of the second: {52} He named the second Ephraim, ¹¹¹⁸

G 2 The significance of the name: "For," *he said*, "God has made me fruitful in the land of my affliction." ¹¹¹⁹

¹¹¹⁴ Gen. 41:48 - every city: Instead of stockpiling the grain in the capital city, Joseph wisely preserved it in the various cities for easier distribution during the coming time of famine.

¹¹¹⁵ Gen. 41:50 - On: [NASB](#) footnote: "Or *Heliopolis*"

¹¹¹⁶ Gen. 41:51 - Manasseh: [NASB](#) footnote: "I.e. making to forget." [JTB](#): Because of God's Divinely-engineered blessing of Joseph and Jacob's later blessing, Manasseh would be come a separate tribe or clan of the nation of [Israel](#).

¹¹¹⁷ Gen. 41:51 - God has made me forget all my trouble and all my father's household: Though Joseph was a mature, confident ruler of Egypt, and a devout follower of Yahweh, the pain of his struggles and his forced alienation from his family and father never left him.

¹¹¹⁸ Gen. 41:52 - Ephraim: [NASB](#) footnote: "I.e. fruitfulness." [JTB](#): Because of God's Divinely-engineered blessing of Joseph and Jacob's later blessing, Ephraim would be come a separate tribe or clan of the nation of [Israel](#).

¹¹¹⁹ Gen. 41:52 - land of my affliction: Though Joseph was second in command in Egypt, he never forgot that being sold by his brothers into the land of Egypt, where he was first enslaved and later imprisoned, was a time of great personal affliction. He would never return to the Promised Land until his bones were carried there (Exod. 13:19). His was a rewarding life, but it had been a hard life.

D 4 The arrival of the famine 41:53-57

E 1 The fulfillment of the prophetic dreams 41:53-54

- G 1 The end of the years of plenty: {53} When the seven years of plenty which had been in the land of Egypt came to an end,¹¹²⁰ 41:53
- G 2 The arrival of the widespread famine: {54} and the seven years of famine began to come, just as Joseph had said, then there was famine in all the lands,¹¹²¹ 41:54a
- G 3 The presence of bread in Egypt: but in all the land of Egypt there was bread. 41:54b

E 2 The prominence of Joseph 41:55-57

- G 1 The cry of the people to Pharaoh: {55} So when all the land of Egypt was famished, the people cried out to Pharaoh for bread; 41:55a
- G 2 Pharaoh's official deference to Joseph: and Pharaoh said to all the Egyptians, "Go to Joseph; whatever he says to you, you shall do."¹¹²² 41:55b
- G 3 Joseph's sale of grain to the Egyptians: {56} When the famine was *spread* over all the face of the earth, then Joseph opened all the storehouses, and sold to the Egyptians; and the famine

¹¹²⁰ 41:53 - came to an end: Finally, exactly as Joseph had predicted, in accordance with Pharaoh's dreams, the years of plenty came to an end. The people had grown accustomed to having all they needed, with much surplus left over, and probably were taken quite by surprise that such prosperity could not be regarded as a permanent right which they had somehow acquired by virtue of being residents of Egypt. When one has grown used to a certain high standard of living, he considers anything less a severe imposition, even though most of the people in the world have had to be content with a much lower quality of life than anything he can imagine. Certain ominous signs today, for example, seem to suggest that Americans will soon have to give up many of the creature comforts which they have come to regard as rights and necessities; and such deprivations, if they come, will undoubtedly be considered impossibly traumatic by most of us.

The story of Joseph in Egypt, if nothing else, should warn us that the blessings of prosperity come from the Lord and can as easily be removed by the Lord, as He wills. It should also teach us the value of saving a portion of what comes to hand, not only by depositing it in the bank account against a future rainy day, but even more by devoting it to the service of Christ, where it can never be lost. "If therefore ye have not been faithful in the unrighteous mammon, who will commit to your trust the true riches?" (Luke 16:11). (Henry M. Morris, [The Genesis Record](#), p. 590)

¹¹²¹ Gen. 41:54 - famine in all the lands: We are not told with any precision how widespread this famine was. However, we certainly know it had afflicted the land of Canaan as well as Egypt. Probably it affected countries and regions such as Syria, Mesopotamia, Arabia, and a portion of North Africa. This famine was almost certainly caused by an extended drought.

¹¹²² Gen.41:55 - Go to Joseph; whatever he says to you, you shall do: Pharaoh was a good administrator. He could have taken over the Grain Exchange himself as a way to control his subjects and advance his own importance and stature. But he did not do so. He wisely left Joseph completely in charge, evidently now thoroughly convinced that Joseph could be trusted to manage the whole situation efficiently and equitably.

was severe in the land of Egypt. 41:56

G 4 Joseph's sale of grain to all the earth! {57} *The people of all the earth came to Egypt to buy grain from Joseph,¹¹²³ because the famine was severe in all the earth.¹¹²⁴ 41:57*

C 5 Joseph's [sovereign](#) reconciliation toward and offer of salvation to his brothers 42:1 - 45:20

D 1 Joseph's brothers' first trip to Egypt for grain; Joseph's hostage-enforced condition for their return: the accompaniment of Benjamin 42

E 1 Jacob's sending of his sons to Egypt for grain 42:1-7

G 1 Jacob's awareness of grain in Egypt: {1} Now Jacob saw that there was grain in Egypt, 42:1a

G 2 His sending of his sons 42:1b-4

H 1 His rebuke: and Jacob said to his sons, "Why are you staring at one another?" 42:1b

H 2 His instructions to go: {2} He said, "Behold, I have heard that there is grain in Egypt; go down there and buy *some* for us from that place, so that we may live and not die." 42:2

H 3 Their departure to Egypt: {3} Then ten brothers of Joseph went down to buy grain from Egypt. 42:3

¹¹²³ Gen. 41:57 - to buy grain from Joseph: Advocates of welfarism may wonder why Joseph did not simply give the food to the people instead of making them buy it. Joseph instead maintained strict control over the supplies, in order to prevent looting and waste, knowing that even the vast supplies that had been accumulated would have to be carefully husbanded to last through seven long years of famine. He then sold the grain for a reasonable price and on an equitable basis to all who were in need of grain. Had it been given away, it would have rewarded indolence and shortsightedness. Furthermore, the grain had been acquired by lawful and fair means, by devoting most of the government's taxing and buying power to it for seven years. To give it away would have rewarded slothfulness and disincentivized hard work. It was thus perfectly right and proper for the grain to be sold, not given as a handout, to all who could afford to pay. It is reasonable to assume that special provision was made for those who were truly in poverty and unable to buy. Quite likely, they were employed in government service or construction of one form or another, in order to earn the necessary cash or credit to buy the supplies they needed. The people could hardly be taxed in significant amounts during the years of famine, since they were producing little; so the income from the sale of grain in effect had to take the place of taxes during those years. . . .

It is remarkable that the 20 percent of the produce during the seven years of plenty sufficed to meet all needs, not only for the Egyptians but also for those delegations from other lands, during the seven years of famine. The population thus got by on only one-fourth of what had been available during the seven good years. These proportions constitute a remarkable testimony to both the overwhelming abundance which God had provided during the first seven years and also to the exceptional efficiency of Joseph's management of the gradually dwindling stores of grain during the last seven years. People can, when they have to, get by quite well on far less than they are accustomed to enjoying during good times. God has graciously promised to supply all our needs (Philippians 4:19), but not necessarily all our wants" (Morris, [The Genesis Record](#), pp. 591-592).

¹¹²⁴ Gen.41:57 - the famine was severe in all the earth: Presumably this refers to the ancient Egyptian Empire ([see the map](#)).

- H 4 His refusal to send Benjamin: {4} But Jacob did not send Joseph's brother Benjamin with his brothers, for he said, "I am afraid that harm may befall him." ¹¹²⁵ 42:4
- G 3 Their arrival in Egypt: {5} So the sons of Israel came to buy grain among those who were coming, for the famine was in the land of Canaan *also*. 42:5
- G 4 Their encounter with Joseph 42:6-7
- H 1 Joseph's lofty position 42:6a
- J 1 Ruler: {6} Now Joseph was the ruler over the land;
- J 2 Grain-seller: he was the one who sold to all the people of the land.
- H 2 Their bowing down before him: And Joseph's brothers came and bowed down to him with *their* faces to the ground. ¹¹²⁶ 42:6b
- H 3 His recognition of them: {7} When Joseph saw his brothers he recognized them, 42:7a
- H 4 His disguised, harsh manner: but he disguised himself to them and spoke to them harshly. ¹¹²⁷ 42:7b

¹¹²⁵ Gen. 42:4 - Benjamin: Allen Ross ([TBKC](#)) speculates that Jacob had come to suspect that the brothers were responsible for Joseph's death. H. C. [Leupold](#) disagrees (p. 1044; see also [Leupold](#) online). Personally, I doubt Ross is correct. I suspect that the same feelings of favoritism that Jacob exhibited toward Joseph, he also exhibited toward Benjamin. Both were sons of his favorite wife, Rachel. The dysfunction in this family continues, even after the death of the favorite wife.

¹¹²⁶ Gen. 42:6 - bowed down to him with *their* faces to the ground: Here then, finally, is the first installment on the fulfillment of Joseph's dream! He had seen the baker's dream, the cupbearer's dream, and Pharaoh's two dreams fulfilled; now, at last, one of his! The same verb is used as that in Gen. 37:7! Warren Wiersbe ([Expository Outlines on the O. T.](#)) notes that Joseph had dreamed that 11 brothers would bow down before him (Gen. 37:9-10). Thus, the dream was not totally fulfilled. He would know that Benjamin would, indeed, come back with the brothers, but his father would need some persuasion.

¹¹²⁷ Gen. 42:7 - disguised ... spoke harshly: Why did Joseph disguise himself? Why did he speak harshly to them? Answer: He didn't want them to know who he was; he wanted them to fear him. But why the intrigue? What did Joseph have in mind? In retrospect we know the following: 1) He wanted them to reveal as much about themselves as possible so that he could find a way to place them into a trap and test them. 2) He would ultimately force them into dealing with the slavery issue themselves – by locking them up in prison and by retaining one of their number as a slave. 3) His ultimate goal was to give them the opportunity to do to the remaining favorite son, Benjamin, the same thing they had done to him – sell him into slavery. 4) He would, in the process, find out whether they were prepared to admit they had done him wrong (the first step in reconciliation). 5) He would also find out whether they had changed their character (item #3). 6) In the process, he hoped to bring about a total reconciliation. "As Luther develops at length, Joseph's dealings with his brethren were analogous to those of God when he deals with sinners who are to be led to repentance. Dods offers the key to the situation in the words: "Joseph was, of course, well aware that in the analysis of character the most potent elements are only brought into clear view, when the test of severe trouble is applied and when men are thrown out of all conventional modes of thinking and speaking."

- H 5 His question: And he said to them, "Where have you come from?" 42:7c
- H 6 Their response: And they said, "From the land of Canaan, to buy food." 42:7d
- E 2 Joseph's accusation of espionage against his unsuspecting brothers 42:8-17
- G 1 The repetition of Joseph's recognition of his brothers: {8} But Joseph had recognized his brothers, although they did not recognize him. 42:8
- G 2 Joseph's remembrance of his dreams! {9} Joseph remembered the dreams which he had about them, 42:9a
- G 3 His accusations of espionage 42:9b-17
- H 1 His first accusation: and said to them, "You are spies;¹¹²⁸ you have come to look at the undefended parts of our land." 42:9b
- H 2 Their denial: {10} Then they said to him, "No, my lord, 42:10a
- H 3 Their attempts to give information to exonerate their motives 42:10b-11
- J 1 Their coming to buy food: but your servants¹¹²⁹ have come to buy food. 42:10b
- J 2 Their family (as opposed to military) status: {11} "We are all sons of one man; 42:11a
- J 3 Their honesty: we are honest men, 42:11b
- J 4 Their subservience, not spying: your servants are not spies." 42:11c
- H 4 His pressuring them with renewed charges of espionage: {12} Yet he said to them, "No, but you have come to look at the undefended parts of our land!" 42:12

¹¹²⁸ Gen. 42:9 - spies: Four times Joseph accused the brothers of being spies (Gen. 42: 9, 12, 14, 16). "You are spies" is the [Piel](#) Plural [Participle](#) of [râgál](#) (7270). This verb is used 26X in the OT, 24X in the intensive [Piel](#) stem to indicate literal spying. Two other typical instances of this verb in the [Piel](#) stem include Josh. 2:1; 6:22, where Joshua sent two men to spy out Jericho. Rahab the harlot lodged them and protected them because of her faith in Yahweh!

¹¹²⁹ Gen. 42:10 - your servants: The plural noun is 'ebed (5650), pronounced, *eh'ved*. There is little differentiation in this noun between "slave" and "servant." In fulfilling Joseph's God-given dreams (Gen.37:5-11), his brothers voluntarily identify themselves as Joseph's "slaves / servants." Quite amazing!

- H 5 Their protests of innocence in greater specificity ¹¹³⁰
42:13
- J 1 They are his servants: {13} But they said, "Your servants
- J 2 There are twelve brothers: are twelve brothers *in all*,
- J 3 The sons of one man: the sons of one man
- J 4 In the land of [Canaan](#): in the land of Canaan;
- J 5 The youngest brother is at home: and behold, the youngest is with our father today, ¹¹³¹
- J 6 Another is dead: and one is no longer alive."
- H 6 Joseph's setting up a test to prove their innocence or otherwise 42:14-17
- J 1 His persistence in accusing them of espionage: {14} Joseph said to them, "It is as I said to you, you are spies; 42:14
- J 2 His announcement of a test: {15} by this you will be tested: 42:15a
- J 3 Their brother must be present: by the life of Pharaoh, you shall not go from this place unless your youngest brother comes here! 42:15b
- J 4 They are to send for their brother: {16} "Send one of you that he may get your brother, 42:16a
- J 5 While they remain confined: while you remain

¹¹³⁰ Gen. 42:13 title - greater specificity: Their tactic is that the more facts about themselves they truthfully represent, the more likely they will be exonerated. Of course, Joseph, totally unbeknown to them, sits as a lawyer / judge who knows all the facts of the case. He is going to get them to tell him something that can be verified and around which he can devise a plan to test them.

How much of this dialogue had Joseph anticipated in advance? Did his plan of action spring up spontaneously, or had he gone through this drama over and over again and planned exactly what he would say and do when the time came? I believe the latter to be the case. I believe he understood that, when the famine arrived, and people from afar began coming to buy grain, that he would sooner or later, meet his brothers. He had a plan of action all mapped out to test them and, hopefully, to bring them to reconciliation.

¹¹³¹ Gen. 42:13 - the youngest is with our father today: This is the critical piece of information Joseph needed his brothers to reveal spontaneously so that he could frame them and evaluate their hearts. He would engineer a circumstance implicating the favorite remaining son, Benjamin. Would they allow favorite son Benjamin to remain a slave in Egypt while they escaped home to their father? Would they sacrifice Benjamin just as they had sacrificed Joseph so many years earlier? Had the brothers experienced a change of heart? Would they again cause their father great grief in order to satisfy their own jealousy (Gen. 44:1-34)?

confined, 42:16b

J 6 That their words might be tested: that your words may be tested, whether there is truth in you. 42:16c

J 7 Dishonesty is proof of espionage: But if not, by the life of Pharaoh, surely you are spies." 42:16d

J 8 His imprisonment of them: {17} So he put them all together in prison for three days.¹¹³² 42:17

E 3 Joseph's confinement of Simeon until the others should bring back Benjamin 42:18-24

G 1 His softening of his test 42:18-20

H 1 His acknowledgment of God: {18} Now Joseph said to them on the third day, "Do this and live,¹¹³³ for I fear God: 42:18

H 2 His retention of only one of the brothers: {19} if you are honest men, let one of your brothers be confined in your prison; 42:19a

H 3 His permission of them to return to their country: but as for *the rest of you*, go, carry grain for the famine of your households, 42:19b

¹¹³² Gen. 42:17 - prison for three days: "For the present the brothers must have a dose of their own medicine. As they once had refused to listen to a brother's plea, so now their pleas must be rudely rejected ([Leupold](#), p. 1050; see also [Leupold](#) online)." Joseph, acting as God's agent of redemption, gave to his brothers exactly what they had given him – imprisonment. However, Joseph's actions were bent on achieving redemption, not revenge. His plan all along was to send them all back in order to provide food for his father and their families. But he could not let them know that. His long-range goal was to force them to bring Benjamin back. He knew of the resistance of his father in this matter. It would be almost impossible for them to convince their father to permit Benjamin to return. Therefore he had to create the illusion, but yet the reality of severity with them. HE MEANT BUSINESS! To convince them, he left them imprisoned for three days.

"There was a very appropriate strategy as well as psychology about this imprisonment. [As Dod has stated], 'So new an experience to these free dwellers in tents as imprisonment under grim Egyptian guards worked wonders in them.' The psychological reaction was bound to be a comparison between what their imprisoned brother must have suffered and what they are suffering now. The more or less dormant conscience was bound to awaken at this point ([Leupold](#), p. 1051; see also [Leupold](#) online)." When Joseph relented, it was critical that he retain a bargaining chip – Simeon. Presumably he kept Simeon either because he had been one of the most relentless in wishing the death of Joseph, although the text of Gen. 37 does not say so. In support of that hypothesis, we do know that Reuben, Simeon, and Levi, in that order, were the first three sons of Jacob by his unloved wife, Leah (Gen. 29:31-35). We also know that Simeon and Levi, the second and third sons of Jacob and Leah, were known for being impetuous and cruel (cf. Gen. 34:25; 49:5-7).

¹¹³³ Gen. 42:18 - Do this and live: What Joseph is doing is making as many connections to his disappearance as he can. They sold him, the despised brother, as a slave into Egypt and thought him dead. Now he would retain one of them, an accepted brother, as a slave in Egypt, where he would probably die after a time. The comparisons between what they had voluntarily done to Joseph and what was involuntarily happening to them now were too striking and too emotion-charged to go unnoticed! Joseph was doing a supreme job of bringing emotion and reality into his therapy!

H 4 His instructions to bring the youngest brother to verify their words: {20} and bring your youngest brother to me, so your words may be verified, and you will not die." 42:20a

H 5 Their agreement to his test: And they did so. 42:20b

G 2 Their emotional reaction to the chain of events 42:21-23

H 1 Their admission of guilt: {21} Then they said to one another, "Truly we are guilty¹¹³⁴ concerning our brother, because we saw the distress of his soul when he pleaded with us, yet we would not listen; therefore this distress has come upon us." 42:21

H 2 Reuben's assessment that their troubles are a judgment for their sin: {22} Reuben answered them, saying, "Did I not tell you, 'Do not sin against the boy'; and you would not listen? Now comes the reckoning for his blood."¹¹³⁵ 42:22

H 3 Their unawareness of Joseph's understanding: {23} They did not know, however, that Joseph understood, for there was an interpreter between them. 42:23

G 3 Joseph's reaction to them 42:24

H 1 His emotional response toward them: {24} He turned away from them and wept.¹¹³⁶

H 2 His deliberate binding of Simeon in front of them: But when he returned to them and spoke to them, he took Simeon¹¹³⁷ from them and bound him before their eyes.

E 4 Joseph's return of money to each brother 42:25-28

¹¹³⁴ Gen. 42:21 - Truly we are guilty: "They admit guilt, the 'only acknowledgment of sin in the book of Genesis" (Inglis, quoted by Whitelaw, quoted by H. C. [Leupold](#), p. 1053; see also [Leupold](#) online).

¹¹³⁵ Gen. 42:22 - Now comes the reckoning for his blood: After all these years, the truth came out. Joseph was playing the part of the convicting power of the Spirit of God. But his motives were benevolent, not vindictive.

¹¹³⁶ Gen. 42:24 - wept: The relived pain of years ago was overwhelming. Joseph had to leave the room momentarily. But he returned with steely resolve.

¹¹³⁷ Gen. 42:24 - Simeon: "It might have been Reuben, the first-born, but he had half acquitted himself by preventing more serious steps. Simeon seemed to stand in need of a special measure of corrective treatment. He was among the most cruel of the brethren; cf. Gen. 34:25; 49:5-7" ([Leupold](#), p. 1054; see also [Leupold](#) online). Moreover, as we have seen, Simeon was one of the three oldest sons of Jacob, all by the despised wife Leah (Gen. 29:31-35). He and they had the most reason to despise Joseph, and he had probably freely exhibited his contempt. But the sons of Jacob who were not born of Rachel all had reason to exercise solidarity. The other brothers would stick up for Simeon.

G 1 The orders of Joseph 42:25

H 1 To give them grain: {25} Then Joseph gave orders to fill their bags with grain

H 2 To return their money: and to restore every man's money in his sack, ¹¹³⁸

H 3 To give them provisions: and to give them provisions for the journey. And thus it was done for them.

G 2 The departure of the brothers: {26} So they loaded their donkeys with their grain and departed from there. 42:26

G 3 The dismaying discovery of the brothers 42:27-28

H 1 The discovery of the returned money: {27} As one of *them* opened his sack to give his donkey fodder at the lodging place, he saw his money; and behold, it was in the mouth of his sack. 42:27

H 2 The report to the brothers: {28} Then he said to his brothers, "My money has been returned, and behold, it is even in my sack." 42:28a

H 3 The dismay of the brothers: And their hearts sank, ¹¹³⁹ 42:28b

H 4 The brothers' fear at God's actions: and they *turned* trembling to one another, saying, "What is this that God has done to us?" ¹¹⁴⁰ 42:28c

¹¹³⁸ Gen. 42:25 - restore every man's money in his sack: The brothers would misinterpret Joseph's motives in doing so. But really, his motives were benign (Gen. 43:16-23).

¹¹³⁹ Gen. 42:28 - and their hearts sank: They apparently felt that Joseph would accuse them of theft, which would support his contention that they were spies. (Allen P. Ross, [TBKC](#))

¹¹⁴⁰ Gen. 42:28 - God has done to us: The brothers were indeed experiencing the judgment of God, but it was a kinder judgment than they thought. Joseph was really extending kindness to them, but of course, after their recent experience, they had no way of knowing that. Joseph is very much a picture of God, endeavoring to achieve reconciliation in the lives of rebellious and recalcitrant humans. Most are unwilling to admit their wrong and submit to God unless they are placed under a great deal of emotional duress. God, in His [sovereignty](#), is really kindly disposed toward us. But because we are so willful and stubborn, unwilling to admit our wrongs, He, like Joseph, often has to play rough with us to motivate us to submit to Him and do His bidding. Joseph was acting as God in the lives of his brothers.

Application: Parents ought to do the same thing with their own children. We ought to provide an environment of love for our children. But we also ought to put the fear of God and the fear of Dad into them. If we dads are wishy-washy and don't make an emotional connection in our child with his disobedience, the rebellion will never be driven from him. We parents are God to our children. What lessons about God do your children learn from you? (If I badger Dad long enough, he will give in? If I pit Mom against Dad, he will give in? Dad is afraid to punish me because I throw such bad temper tantrums? His punishments never hurt? His bark is worse than his bite?. He lets me get away with things? He says one thing but never enforces it? I can talk him out of just about anything?)

- E 5 The brothers' traumatic report to their father: {29} When they came to their father Jacob in the land of Canaan, they told him all that had happened to them, saying, [42:29] 42:29-34
- G 1 Their having been harshly branded as spies: {30} "The man, the lord of the land, spoke harshly with us, and took us for spies of the country. 42:30
- G 2 Their attempts to exonerate themselves: {31} "But we said to him, [42:31a] 42:31-32
- H 1 'We are honest men; 42:31b
- H 2 we are not spies. 42:31b
- H 3 {32} 'We are twelve brothers, sons of our father; 42:32
- J 1 one is no longer alive,
- J 2 and the youngest is with our father today in the land of Canaan.'
- G 3 The ruler's test: {33} "The man, the lord of the land, said to us, 'By this I will know that you are honest men [42:33a] 42:33-34
- H 1 Hostage: leave one of your brothers with me 42:33b
- H 2 Provision: and take *grain for* the famine of your households, and go. 42:33c
- H 3 Presentation of proof of integrity: {34} 'But bring your youngest brother to me that I may know that you are not spies, but honest men. 42:34a
- H 4 Conditional promise of favor 42:34b
- J 1 Return of hostage brother: I will give your brother to you,
- J 2 Permission to purchase additional grain: and you may trade in the land."
- E 6 Jacob's refusal to permit Benjamin's departure 42:35-38
- G 1 Their dismayed discovery of returned money: {35} Now it came about as they were emptying their sacks, that behold, every man's bundle of money *was* in his sack; and when they and their father saw their bundles of money, they were dismayed. 42:35
- G 2 Jacob's displeasure at them for bereaving him of his children:

{36} Their father Jacob said to them, "You have bereaved ¹¹⁴¹ me of my children: 42:36

H 1 Joseph's demise: Joseph is no more,

H 2 Simeon's demise: and Simeon is no more,

H 3 Benjamin's contemplated demise: and you would take Benjamin; all these things are against me."

G 3 Reuben's overzealous attempt to assure his father of Benjamin's safe return if entrusted into his care: {37} Then Reuben ¹¹⁴² spoke to his father, saying, "You may put my two sons to death if I do not bring him *back* to you; put him in my care, and I will return him to you." 42:37

G 4 Jacob's refusal: {38} But Jacob said, "My son shall not go down with you; ¹¹⁴³ 42:38

H 1 A premature death: for his brother is dead,

H 2 A sole existence: and he alone is left.

H 3 An anticipated sorrowful death: If harm should befall him on the journey you are taking, then you will bring my gray hair down to Sheol in sorrow."

D 2 The brothers' second trip to Egypt 43:1 - 45:20

E 1 The trip to Egypt and meal with Joseph 43

G 1 The family discussion about sending Benjamin along 43:1-10

H 1 The severity of the famine: {1} Now the famine was severe in the land. 43:1

H 2 The command of Jacob: {2} So it came about when they had finished eating the grain which they had brought from Egypt, that their father said to them, "Go back, buy us a little food." 43:2

¹¹⁴¹ Gen. 42:36 - you have bereaved me: Warren Wiersbe (*Expository Outlines on the O. T.*) wonders if Jacob understood the brothers had been behind Joseph's supposed death. We cannot prove that. But Jacob does seem to hold his sons responsible for the absence of Joseph and Simeon, and now, potentially, Benjamin.

¹¹⁴² Gen. 42:37 - Reuben: "Now Reuben seeks to make good at least his share of the original wrong by a rather extravagant offer, which has been described as bearing the marks rather of "a crude heroism than of any common sense" (Lange, quoted by [Leupold](#), p. 1058; see also [Leupold](#) online).

¹¹⁴³ Gen. 42:38 - My son shall not go down with you: Jacob flatly refused to send Benjamin along on the next trip. Increasingly hungry stomachs, however, eventually changed his mind (Gen. 43:1-15).

H 3 The protest of Judah 43:3-5

J 1 The warning of "the man:" {3} Judah spoke to him, however, saying, "The man solemnly warned us, 'You shall not see my face unless your brother is with you.' 43:3

J 2 His willingness to go if accompanied by Benjamin: {4} "If you send our brother with us, we will go down and buy you food. 43:4

J 3 His refusal to go if unaccompanied by Benjamin: {5} "But if you do not send *him*, we will not go down; for the man said to us, 'You will not see my face unless your brother is with you.'" 43:5

H 4 The disgust of Jacob – Why did you tell them you had another brother? {6} Then Israel said, "Why did you treat me so badly by telling the man whether you still had *another* brother?" 43:6

H 5 The explanation of the brothers 43:7

J 1 The specific questions of the man: {7} But they said, "The man questioned particularly about us and our relatives, saying, 'Is your father still alive? Have you *another* brother?' So we answered his questions. ¹¹⁴⁴

J 2 The impossibility of their predicting his demands: Could we possibly know that he would say, 'Bring your brother down?'"

H 6 The renewed request of Judah 43:8-10

J 1 The urgency of his request: {8} Judah said to his father Israel, "Send the lad with me and we will arise and go, that we may live and not die, we as well as you and our little ones. 43:8

J 2 His offer of surety for Benjamin: {9} "I myself will be surety for him; you may hold me responsible for him. ¹¹⁴⁵ If I do not bring him *back* to you and set him before you, then let me bear the blame before you forever. 43:9

¹¹⁴⁴ Gen. 43:7 - So we answered his questions: The brothers, of course, had no way of knowing that Joseph, their questioner, was deliberately leading them along of path of self-incrimination. That is what prosecuting attorneys do.

¹¹⁴⁵ Gen. 43:9 - hold me responsible for him: Judah's impassioned plea to his father seems to have won the day. Jacob finally consented. The survival of his clan was at stake.

J 3 The futility of delay: {10} "For if we had not delayed, surely by now we could have returned twice." 43:10

G 2 Jacob's reluctant release of Benjamin 43:11-15

H 1 His provision of gifts: {11} Then their father Israel said to them, "If *it must be* so, then do this: take some of the best products of the land in your bags, and carry down to the man as a present, a little balm and a little honey, aromatic gum and myrrh, pistachio nuts and almonds. 43:11

H 2 His provision of double payment: {12} "Take double *the* money in your hand, and take back in your hand the money that was returned in the mouth of your sacks; perhaps it was a mistake. 43:12

H 3 His release of Benjamin: {13} "Take your brother also, and arise, return to the man; 43:13

H 4 His prayer for Divine assistance: {14} and may God Almighty grant you compassion ¹¹⁴⁶ in the sight of the man, so that he will release to you your other brother and Benjamin. 43:14a

H 5 His resigned fatalism: And as for me, if I am bereaved of my children, I am bereaved." 43:14b

H 6 The departure of the brothers: {15} So the men took this present, and they took double *the* money in their hand, and Benjamin; then they arose and went down to Egypt and stood before Joseph. 43:15

G 3 Joseph's steward's invitation of the brothers to a meal; his allayment of their fears 43:16-25

H 1 Joseph's preparations to entertain his brothers 43:16-17

J 1 Joseph's instructions to his steward {16} When Joseph saw Benjamin with them, he said to his house steward, ¹¹⁴⁷ "Bring the men into the house, and slay an animal and make ready; for the men are

¹¹⁴⁶ Gen. 43:14 - may God Almighty grant you compassion: "God Almighty" is *El* (410) *Shadday* (7706). This is the name by which God had revealed Himself to Jacob previously at Bethel (Gen. 28:3; 35:11). "Compassion" is the noun *racham* (7356), in Genesis, used only here and in Gen. 43:30, where we are told that Joseph was *deeply* stirred over his brother Benjamin and had to leave the room and weep.

¹¹⁴⁷ Gen. 43:16 - to his house steward: Literally, "to his over house," where "over" translates the preposition '*al*' (5921) and "house" translates the noun *bayith* (1004).

to dine with me at noon." 43:16

J 2 The steward's compliance: {17} So the man did as Joseph said, and brought the men to Joseph's house. 43:17

H 2 The fearful reaction of Joseph's brothers 43:18

J 1 Their fear: {18} Now the men were afraid, because they were brought to Joseph's house;

J 2 Their theory – the official was seeking an occasion to seize them as slaves because of their previous non-payment: and they said, "It is because of the money that was returned in our sacks the first time that we are being brought in, that he may seek occasion against us and fall upon us, and take us for slaves with our donkeys."

H 3 Their attempt to rectify their situation 43:19-22

J 1 Their approach to the steward: {19} So they came near to Joseph's house steward, and spoke to him at the entrance of the house, 43:19

J 2 Their description of their discovery of the money they had found in their sacks: {20} and said, "Oh, my lord, we indeed came down the first time to buy food, {21} and it came about when we came to the lodging place, that we opened our sacks, and behold, each man's money was in the mouth of his sack, our money in full. 43:20-21a

J 3 Their return of the money: So we have brought it back in our hand. 43:21b

J 4 Their bringing additional money to purchase new grain: {22} "We have also brought down other money in our hand to buy food; we do not know who put our money in our sacks." 43:22

H 4 The steward's reassurance 43:23

J 1 His directive not to fear: {23} He said, "Be at ease,¹¹⁴⁸ do not be afraid.

J 2 His assertion that their God had given them their money: Your God and the God of your father has

¹¹⁴⁸ Gen. 43:23 - Be at ease: [NASB](#) footnote: "A literal translation: *Peace be to you*"

given you treasure in your sacks; ¹¹⁴⁹

J 3 His admission that he had controlled their money: I had your money."

J 4 His bringing of Simeon to them: Then he brought Simeon out to them.

H 5 The preparations for the meal 43:24-25

J 1 Washing up: {24} Then the man brought the men into Joseph's house and gave them water, and they washed their feet; 43:24a

J 2 Provision for their donkeys: and he gave their donkeys fodder. 43:24b

J 3 The brothers' preparation of a gift for Joseph: {25} So they prepared the present for Joseph's coming at noon; for they had heard that they were to eat a meal there. 43:25

G 4 Joseph's meal with his brothers 43:26-34

H 1 The initial meeting 43:26-30

J 1 The brothers' humble presentation of their gift: {26} When Joseph came home, they brought into the house to him the present which was in their hand and bowed to the ground before him. 43:26

J 2 Joseph's asking them of their welfare and that of their father: {27} Then he asked them about their welfare, and said, "Is your old father well, of whom you spoke? Is he still alive?" 43:27

J 3 The brothers' humble reply: {28} They said, "Your servant our father is well; he is still alive." They bowed down in homage. 43:28

J 4 Joseph's blessing of Benjamin: {29} As he lifted his eyes and saw his brother Benjamin, his mother's son, he said, "Is this your youngest brother, of

¹¹⁴⁹ Gen. 43:23 - Your God and the God of your father: We cannot tell from this comment whether Joseph's house steward had become a believer in the one true God. However, we can certainly ascertain that Joseph had freely spoken with his house steward about Yahweh. The steward is completely familiar with Joseph's God, who is also the God of Joseph's father, Jacob. We can also ascertain that the house steward knew that these men were Joseph's brothers and that, though Joseph had treated them as spies, he was really kindly disposed toward them and meant them good, not evil. However, Joseph must have shared with his steward at least a measure of his plan. There were still some upcoming experiences the brothers must encounter in order to uncover their true spiritual and moral condition.

whom you spoke to me?" And he said, "May God be gracious to you, my son." 43:29

J 5 Joseph's struggle to control his emotions: {30} Joseph hurried *out* for he was deeply stirred over his brother, and he sought *a place* to weep; and he entered his chamber and wept there. ¹¹⁵⁰ 43:30

H 2 The eating of the meal 43:31-34

J 1 Joseph's ordering the meal to be served: {31} Then he washed his face and came out; and he controlled himself and said, "Serve the meal." 43:31

J 2 The separate servings: {32} So they served him by himself, and them by themselves, and the Egyptians who ate with him by themselves, because the Egyptians could not eat bread with the Hebrews, for that is loathsome to the Egyptians. 43:32

J 3 His having them seated according to birth order: {33} Now they were seated before him, the firstborn according to his birthright and the youngest according to his youth, and the men looked at one another in astonishment. ¹¹⁵¹ 43:33

J 4 His serving them from his own table: {34} He took portions to them from his own table, 43:34a

J 5 His heavy favoritism toward Benjamin: but Benjamin's portion was five times as much as any of theirs. ¹¹⁵² 44:34b

J 6 The summarization of the meal: So they feasted and drank freely with him. 44:34c

E 2 Joseph's framing of Benjamin to ascertain the condition of his brothers' hearts 44

¹¹⁵⁰ Gen. 43:30 - wept there: The emotions coursing through Joseph's body and soul were so overpowering he could not control himself and had to depart momentarily. This whole account is an exceedingly graphic one. Joseph's emotions and the contrasting emotions of his brothers, who did not know who he was, are striking indeed.

¹¹⁵¹ Gen. 43:33 - the men looked at one another in astonishment: The details of this narrative are graphic and realistic. Of course the brothers would be astonished! How could they have possibly known that this ruler was their brother, whom they assumed had died as a slave years earlier. Joseph was creating the illusion that he was a person with occult powers. His house steward would actually state this in Gen. 44:5.

¹¹⁵² Gen. 43:34 - Benjamin's portion was five times as much as any of theirs: Joseph was deliberately reinforcing the impression that Benjamin was the favored son. His plan was to create the opportunity for the brothers once again to consign their father's favorite son to slavery in Egypt while they went on their way. How would they respond?

- G 1 Joseph's placing of his silver cup in Benjamin's sack to implicate him; his sending of the steward to capture the men 44:1-5
- H 1 The instructions of Joseph: {1} Then he commanded his house steward, saying, 4:1-2
- J 1 "Fill the men's sacks with food, as much as they can carry, 44:1a
- J 2 and put each man's money in the mouth of his sack. 44:1b
- J 3 {2} "Put my cup, the silver cup, in the mouth of the sack of the youngest, and his money for the grain." And he did as Joseph had told *him*. 44:2
- H 2 The departure of the brothers: {3} As soon as it was light, the men were sent away, they with their donkeys. 44:3
- H 3 Joseph's instructions to his steward to pursue the brothers 44:4-5
- J 1 The timing of the order: {4} They had *just* gone out of the city, *and* were not far off, when Joseph said to his house steward, 44:4a
- J 2 The order to pursue: "Up, follow the men; and when you overtake them, say to them, 44:4b
- J 3 The charge of repaying evil for good; "Why have you repaid evil for good? 44:4c
- J 4 The accusation of theft: {5} "Is not this the one from which my lord drinks and which he indeed uses for divination?" ¹¹⁵³ 44:5a
- J 5 The charge of wrong-doing: "You have done wrong in doing this." 44:5b
- G 2 The steward's finding of the cup in Benjamin's possession 44:6-13
- H 1 The action of the steward: {6} So he overtook them and spoke these words to them. 44:6

¹¹⁵³ Gen. 44:5 - divination: It may be that Joseph was padding his story for effect. It was true that God showed him things in the future. It was not true that God had shown him anything in particular about this situation, but inasmuch as Joseph appeared to know everything that was going on (and indeed *did* know it), it certainly seemed so.

H 2 The protest of the brothers 44:7

J 1 Their rebuke of the steward: {7} They said to him, "Why does my lord speak such words as these?"

J 2 Their protest of innocence: Far be it from your servants to do such a thing.

H 3 The proof of their innocence – their past behavior 44:8

J 1 Their having returned the money: {8} "Behold, the money which we found in the mouth of our sacks we have brought back to you from the land of Canaan.

J 2 The unthinkablelessness of theft: How then could we steal silver or gold from your lord's house?

H 4 Further proof of their innocence – their extravagant offer of death and servitude 44:9-10

J 1 Their offer of death and slavery to prove their innocence: {9} "With whomever of your servants it is found, let him die, and we also will be my lord's slaves." ¹¹⁵⁴ 44:9

J 2 The counter of the steward – slavery for the guilty, freedom for the rest: {10} So he said, "Now let it also be according to your words; he with whom it is found shall be my slave, ¹¹⁵⁵ and *the rest of you* shall be innocent." 44:10

H 5 The search for the cup 44:11-12

J 1 Each opening his sack: {11} Then they hurried, each man lowered his sack to the ground, and each man opened his sack. 44:11

J 2 The chronological search: {12} He searched, beginning with the oldest and ending with the youngest, 44:12

J 3 The finding of the cup: and the cup was found in Benjamin's sack. 44:12b

H 6 The desperate return to the city: {13} Then they tore

¹¹⁵⁴ Gen. 44:9 - slaves: The plural of 'ebed (5650), which can mean *servant* or *slave*. "Slaves" here is certainly the appropriate translation.

¹¹⁵⁵ Gen. 44:10 - slave: The singular of 'ebed (5650), here meaning *slave*.

their clothes,¹¹⁵⁶ and when each man loaded his donkey, they returned to the city. 44:13

G 3 Judah's admission of Divinely-ascertained guilt and just imprisonment 44:14-17

H 1 The brothers' subservience before Joseph: {14} When Judah and his brothers came to Joseph's house, he was still there,¹¹⁵⁷ and they fell to the ground before him.¹¹⁵⁸ 44:14

H 2 Joseph's charging them with sabotaging his divination: {15} Joseph said to them, "What is this deed that you have done? Do you not know that such a man as I can indeed practice divination?"¹¹⁵⁹ 44:15

H 3 Judah's admission of corporate culpability and concession of consequent corporate servitude 44:16

J 1 Their inability to justify themselves: {16} So Judah said, "What can we say to my lord? What can we speak? And how can we justify ourselves?"

J 2 His admission that God had exposed their sin: God has found out the iniquity¹¹⁶⁰ of your servants;¹¹⁶¹

J 3 His resigned acceptance of slavery: behold, we are my lord's slaves,¹¹⁶² both we and the one in whose

¹¹⁵⁶ Gen. 44:13 - tore their clothes: A sign of great grief and abject horror.

¹¹⁵⁷ Gen. 44:14 - still there: Under normal circumstances, Joseph would never have come home for dinner, perhaps. Certainly he would not have stayed there. But this day was different. Of course he was still there!

¹¹⁵⁸ Gen. 44:14 - fell to the ground: Once again the earlier prediction based upon Joseph's vision is fulfilled! See Gen. 37:5-11.

¹¹⁵⁹ Gen. 44:15 - divination: Here, what Joseph says is actually true. God *had* revealed the future to him. Here he makes no specific reference to the cup. On the evidence that they have seen, they have no reason to dispute his word!

¹¹⁶⁰ Gen. 44:16 - iniquity: Through an uncanny set of circumstances, Judah, as the spokesman for the group admits that God has found out the iniquity of the brothers. What he is probably referring to is the iniquity of having stolen the ruler's cup. But in the back of his mind he is also thinking of their iniquity of having previously sold their own brother into slavery. They have already pledged that the guilty one shall die and all the rest of them shall be the man's slaves. Here they back down on the death promise. Judah does offer brotherly solidarity, however – they will all stay together and be the slaves of this ruler. Both instances demonstrate a real change of heart. The irony must have been incredible to them. Here they had sold their brother into slavery in Egypt. Now here they all were going to be slaves in Egypt!

¹¹⁶¹ Gen. 44:16 - your servants: The plural of 'ebed (5650), here translated by the [NASB](#) as "servants."

¹¹⁶² Gen. 44:16 - slaves: The plural of 'ebed (5650), here translated by the [NASB](#) as "slaves."

possession the cup has been found."

H 4 Joseph's counter of slavery only for the guilty party: {17}
But he said, "Far be it from me to do this. The man in whose possession the cup has been found, he shall be my slave; but as for you, go up in peace to your father."¹¹⁶³
44:17

G 4 Judah's offering of himself as hostage instead of Benjamin, thereby demonstrating the brothers' change of heart 44:18-34

H 1 Judah's plea for an audience: {18} Then Judah¹¹⁶⁴ approached him, and said, "Oh my lord, may your servant please speak a word in my lord's ears, and do not be angry with your servant; for you are equal to Pharaoh. 44:18

H 2 Judah's history of their dealings with the ruler and their father 44:19-29

J 1 The earlier question as to whether they had a father or brother: {19} "My lord asked his servants, saying, 'Have you a father or a brother?' 44:19

J 2 Their response to his question: {20} "We said to my lord, 'We have an old father and a little child of *his* old age. Now his brother is dead, so he alone is left of his mother, and his father loves him.' 44:20

J 3 The ruler's request to see the brother: {21} "Then you said to your servants, 'Bring him down to me that I may set my eyes on him.' 44:21

J 4 The brothers' refusal on grounds of injury to their father: {22} "But we said to my lord, 'The lad cannot leave his father, for if he should leave his father, his father would die.' 44:22

J 5 The ruler's insistence: {23} "You said to your servants, however, 'Unless your youngest brother comes down with you, you will not see my face again.' 44:23

J 6 Their report of the order to their father: {24} "Thus it came about when we went up to your servant my

¹¹⁶³ Gen. 44:17 - go in peace: Here now was Joseph's greatest test laid before them. The opportunity for they themselves to go home free while the favorite son of their father stayed in slavery! What a masterfully executed temptation!

¹¹⁶⁴ Gen. 44:18 - Judah: In this sequence of events, Judah shows his advancement as a leader and as an advocate of self-sacrifice.

father, we told him the words of my lord. {25} "Our father said, 'Go back, buy us a little food.' {26} "But we said, 'We cannot go down. If our youngest brother is with us, then we will go down; for we cannot see the man's face unless our youngest brother is with us.' 44:24-26

J 7 Jacob's agony at sending the boy: {27} "Your servant my father said to us, 'You know that my wife bore me two sons; {28} and the one went out from me, and I said, "Surely he is torn in pieces," and I have not seen him since. {29} 'If you take this one also from me, and harm befalls him, you will bring my gray hair down to Sheol in sorrow.' 44:27-29

H 3 Judah's projection of his father's demise 44:30-32

J 1 If Judah returns without Benjamin: {30} "Now, therefore, when I come to your servant my father, and the lad is not with us, since his life is bound up in the lad's life, 44:30

J 2 His father will die: {31} when he sees that the lad is not *with us*, he will die. 44:31a

J 3 His sons will be responsible for their father's death: Thus your servants will bring the gray hair of your servant our father down to Sheol in sorrow. 44:31b

J 4 Judah's bearing responsibility for his half-brother: {32} "For your servant became surety for the lad to my father, saying, 'If I do not bring him *back* to you, then let me bear the blame before my father forever.' 44:32

H 4 Judah's volunteering to be a substitute slave for Benjamin 44:33-34

J 1 His request: {33} "Now, therefore, please let your servant remain ¹¹⁶⁵ instead of the lad a slave ¹¹⁶⁶ to my lord, and let the lad go up with his brothers. 44:33

J 2 His fear of evil to his father if Benjamin is enslaved:

¹¹⁶⁵ Gen. 44:33 - let your servant remain: This is the height of Judah's soliloquy. Here he offers himself as a substitute slave for Benjamin. This shows his change of heart! "Servant" is the singular of '*ebed* ([5650](#)), here translated by the [NASB](#) as "servant."

¹¹⁶⁶ Gen. 44:33 - slave: The singular of '*ebed* ([5650](#)), here translated by the [NASB](#) as "slave."

{34} "For how shall I go up to my father if the lad is not with me – for fear that I see the evil that would overtake my father?" ¹¹⁶⁷ 44:34

E 3 Joseph's revelation and invitation 45:1-20

G 1 Joseph's revelation of himself as the Divinely-appointed savior of the clan of Jacob 45:1-8

H 1 Joseph's emotional catharsis 45:1-2

J 1 His inability to control himself: {1} Then Joseph could not control himself before all those who stood by him, 45:1a

J 2 His removal of all servants: and he cried, "Have everyone go out from me." 45:1b

J 3 His privacy with his brothers: So there was no man with him when Joseph made himself known to his brothers. 45:1c

J 4 His loud sobbing: {2} He wept so loudly that the Egyptians heard *it*, and the household of Pharaoh heard *of it*. 45:2

H 2 His revelation of himself to them 45:3

J 1 His self-identification: {3} Then Joseph said to his brothers, "I am Joseph!

J 2 His question concerning his father: Is my father still alive?"

J 3 The non-response of his brothers: But his brothers could not answer him, for they were dismayed at his presence.

H 3 His reassurance of his brothers 45:4-5

J 1 His request for them to come closer: {4} Then Joseph said to his brothers, "Please come closer to me." And they came closer. 45:4a

¹¹⁶⁷ Gen. 44:34 - overtake my father: Judah's obvious concern for his father is the clincher, as far as Joseph is concerned. When his brothers had shipped him off to Egypt, they had obviously disrespected him. But they had also disrespected their father. With this last plea, the hearts of the brothers have been revealed – their admission of guilt before God – thus, their admission of having done wrong by their brother (implied); their willingness to be enslaved together; Judah's offering himself as a substitute for their father's favorite son; their change of heart toward their father, being unwilling this time to offend him. What a remarkable transformation of their hearts had taken place!

- J 2 His repetition of his identity: And he said, "I am your brother Joseph, whom you sold into Egypt." ¹¹⁶⁸ 45:4b
- J 3 His urging them against self-recrimination: {5} "Now do not be grieved or angry with yourselves, because you sold me here, 45:5a
- H 4 His persuasion concerning the beneficent [sovereignty](#) of God 45:5b-8
- J 1 His belief in God's [sovereign](#) plan for preservation of life through him: for God sent me before you to preserve life. ¹¹⁶⁹ 45:5b
- J 2 His explanation of the famine: {6} "For the famine *has been* in the land these two years, and there are still five years in which there will be neither plowing nor harvesting. 45:6
- J 3 God's preparation of himself to preserve their clan: {7} "God sent me before you to preserve for you a remnant in the earth, and to keep you alive by a great deliverance. 45:7
- J 4 His reiteration that it was God who had placed him in his position: {8} "Now, therefore, it was not you who sent me here, but God; ¹¹⁷⁰ 45:8a

¹¹⁶⁸ Gen. 45:4 - I am your brother Joseph, whom you sold into Egypt: These words must have pierced their hearts like a javelin. It would take these brothers a little time to comprehend and absorb what Joseph was telling them. And even after their father's death, they would lie to Joseph out of fear of his reprisal (Gen. 50:15-21).

¹¹⁶⁹ Gen. 45:5 - God sent me before you to preserve life: A firm belief in the [Sovereignty](#) and [Providence](#) of God is a glorious elixir that will salve the hurts and disappointments in life. We all need Joseph's perspective!

¹¹⁷⁰ Gen. 45:8 - Now, therefore, it was not you who sent me here, but God: Joseph's positive outlook upon life and his obvious faith in and dependence upon God is nothing short of remarkable. His emotions were obviously raw and concealed only with great effort, but his willingness to forgive and move ahead are exceedingly positive examples for each of us! [Thomas Constable](#) records several noteworthy theological statements regarding Joseph's perspective, quoting others:

"This statement is the theological heart of the account of Jacob's line (see 50:19-21; Acts 7:9-10). God directs the maze of human guilt to achieve his good and set purposes (Acts 2:23; 4:28). Such faith establishes the redemptive kingdom of God." ([Bruce Waltke](#))

"It is divine sovereignty that undergirds the optimism of Genesis. 'God sent me to preserve life,' says Joseph." ([Gordon Wenham](#))

"Then, why was Joseph so great? He was great because of his faith in God, which manifested itself in a magnanimous attitude toward others and his magnificent attitude toward difficulties. A strong faith leads to a good attitude." ([Charles Swindoll](#))

"Happy is the man whose eye is open to see the hand of God in every-day events, for to him life always possesses a wonderful and true joy and glory." ([W. H. Griffith Thomas](#))

- J 5 His acknowledgment of his mighty position in Egypt: and He has made me a father to Pharaoh and lord of all his household and ruler over all the land of Egypt. ¹¹⁷¹ 45:8b
- G 2 Joseph's emotional invitation of the clan to Egypt 45:9-15
- H 1 His instructions for them to pass on to his father {9}
"Hurry and go up to my father, and say to him, 'Thus says your son Joseph, (45:9a) 45:9-11
- J 1 His powerful position in Egypt: "God has made me lord of all Egypt; 45:9b
- J 2 His urging to come quickly to Egypt: come down to me, do not delay. 45:9c
- J 3 His provision of good living quarters in Goshen: {10} "You shall live in the land of Goshen, and you shall be near me, you and your children and your children's children and your flocks and your herds and all that you have. 45:10
- J 4 His provision for his family during the remainder of the famine: {11} "There I will also provide for you, for there are still five years of famine *to come*, and you and your household and all that you have would be impoverished." 45:11
- H 2 His urging them to describe his situation in Egypt as they have witnessed it 45:12-13
- J 1 His acknowledgment of their first-hand perspective: {12} "Behold, your eyes see, and the eyes of my brother Benjamin *see*, that it is my mouth which is speaking to you. 45:12
- J 2 His urging them to persuade his father to come: {13} "Now you must tell my father of all my splendor in Egypt, and all that you have seen; and you must hurry and bring my father down here." 45:13
- H 3 His emotional closure 45:14-15
- J 1 The reciprocal emotion between Joseph and

¹¹⁷¹ Gen. 45:8 - He had made me: Joseph was cognizant of God's guiding hand. God had done three things for him – (1) made him a father to Pharaoh; (2) made him lord of all Pharaoh's household; (3) made him ruler over all the land of Egypt. What a lofty position!

Benjamin: {14} Then he fell on his brother Benjamin's neck and wept,¹¹⁷² and Benjamin wept on his neck. 45:14

- J 2 His emotional greeting of his other brothers: {15} He kissed all his brothers and wept on them, 45:15a
- J 3 The conversation of the brothers with him: and afterward his brothers talked with him. 45:15b

G 3 Pharaoh's concurrence with the invitation 45:16-20

H 1 Pharaoh's pleasure at hearing about Joseph's brothers: {16} Now when the news was heard in Pharaoh's house that Joseph's brothers had come, it pleased Pharaoh and his servants. 45:16

H 2 Pharaoh's instruction to Joseph to resettle his family in Egypt 45:17-20

- J 1 His instruction to bring his family: {17} Then Pharaoh said to Joseph, "Say to your brothers, 'Do this: load your beasts and go to the land of Canaan, 45:17
- J 2 His promise of the best land of Egypt: {18} and take your father and your households and come to me, and I will give you the best of the land of Egypt and you will eat the fat of the land.' 45:18
- J 3 His authorization of wagons from Egypt: {19} "Now you are ordered, 'Do this: take wagons from the land of Egypt for your little ones and for your wives, and bring your father and come. 45:19
- J 4 His promise of unlimited supply from Egypt! {20} 'Do not concern yourselves with your goods, for the best of all the land of Egypt is yours.'"¹¹⁷³ 45:20

C 6 Jacob's move to Egypt as approved by God 45:21 - 47:12

D 1 Jacob's decision to see Joseph 45:21-28

¹¹⁷² Gen. 45:14 - wept: The [Qal Imperfect](#) of the verb *bākāh'* (1058), "to weep." This verb is used 114X in the OT, 16X in Genesis. Several of these instances in Genesis occur with Joseph in regard to his brothers (Gen. 42:24; 43:30; 45:14; 50:17) and twice in connection with his father (Gen. 46:29; 50:1).

¹¹⁷³ Gen. 45:20 - the best of all the land of Egypt is yours: Pharaoh's remarkable magnanimity toward Joseph's family was remarkable. It was engineered by God and showed Pharaoh's fervent gratitude to Joseph for saving his country from certain ruin.

E 1 Joseph's provisions for the trip 45:21-22

G 1 Wagons and food: {21} Then the sons of Israel did so; and Joseph gave them wagons ¹¹⁷⁴ according to the command of Pharaoh, and gave them provisions for the journey. 45:21

G 2 Gifts to his brothers 45:22

G 3 A change of clothes to each brother: {22} To each of them he gave changes of garments, ¹¹⁷⁵

H 1 To Benjamin

J 1 but to Benjamin he gave three hundred *pieces of* silver

J 2 and five changes of garments.

G 4 Gifts to his father 45:23

H 1 {23} To his father he sent as follows: ten donkeys loaded with the best things of Egypt,

H 2 and ten female donkeys loaded with grain and bread and sustenance for his father on the journey.

E 2 Joseph's sending off of his brothers 45:24

G 1 {24} So he sent his brothers away,

G 2 and as they departed, he said to them, "Do not quarrel on the journey." ¹¹⁷⁶

E 3 The conversation of the brothers with their father. 45:25-28

G 1 Their initial report to Jacob disbelieved 45:25-26

H 1 Their arrival: {25} Then they went up from Egypt, and came to the land of Canaan to their father Jacob. 45:25

¹¹⁷⁴ Gen. 45:21 - wagons: The wagons (plural of 'ăgâlâh, *cart, wagon, trailer* – [5621](#)) Joseph's brothers took back to Canaan with them were the tangible evidence to Jacob that his presumed dead son was, indeed, quite alive (Gen. 45:27).

¹¹⁷⁵ Gen. 45:22 - To each of them he gave changes of garments: This magnanimous largesse was designed to reassure Joseph's brothers he bore them no residual ill will.

¹¹⁷⁶ Gen. 45:24 - Do not quarrel on the journey: "Quarrel" is the [Qal Imperfect](#) of *râgâz* ([7264](#)), meaning, in the [Qal](#) *to quake, be disquieted, be excited, be perturbed* ([BDB](#)). I concur with the [NASB](#) translation here. I believe Joseph was concerned that his brothers not engage in reciprocal recriminations and accusations about their past treatment of Joseph. He had forgiven them, so they should not quarrel about whose fault it was.

- H 2 Their report that Joseph is alive and rules Egypt: {26} They told him, saying, "Joseph is still alive, and indeed he is ruler over all the land of Egypt." ¹¹⁷⁷ 45:26a
- H 3 Jacob's stunned disbelief: But he was stunned, for he did not believe them. ¹¹⁷⁸ 45:26b
- G 2 Their detailed report finally believed 45:27-28
- H 1 Their report of Joseph's words: {27} When they told him all the words of Joseph that he had spoken to them, 45:27a
- H 2 His seeing the wagons: and when he saw the wagons ¹¹⁷⁹ that Joseph had sent to carry him, 45:27b
- H 3 The revival of Jacob's spirit: the spirit of their father Jacob revived. 45:27c
- H 4 [Israel's](#) consent to go 45:28
- J 1 His belief that Joseph is alive: {28} Then Israel said, "It is enough; my son Joseph is still alive.
- J 2 His endeavor to go see him: I will go and see him before I die." ¹¹⁸⁰
- D 2 Elohim's confirmation of [Israel's](#) move to Egypt 46:1-7
- E 1 Jacob's setting out for Egypt: {1} So Israel set out with all that he had, 46:1a
- E 2 His offering of sacrifices to God at Beersheba: and came to Beersheba, and offered sacrifices to the God of his father Isaac. 46:1b

¹¹⁷⁷ Gen. 45:26 - he is ruler over all the land of Egypt: "ruler" is the [Qal Participle](#) of *mâshâl* (4910), to rule, have dominion (BDB). Not surprisingly, this is the same verb Joseph's brothers had used against him in protest against the idea that he would rule over them (Gen. 37:8). Joseph himself had described his position as being "ruler over all the land of Egypt" (Gen. 45:8), and here, his brothers affirmed that fact to their own father (Gen. 45:26). Other uses of this verb in Genesis include Gen. 1:18; 3:16; 4:7; 24:2. Perhaps the most interesting use here is that God created the sun, moon, and stars to "rule over" or "govern" the day and night (Gen. 1:18).

¹¹⁷⁸ Gen. 45:26 - he did not believe them: "believe" is the [Hiphil Perfect](#) of the verb *'âmân* (539), which, in the [Hiphil](#) stem, and in this context, means, "believe" or "trust." Small wonder. His sons had led him to believe Joseph was dead. Now, years later, they are telling him he is alive? There is no record in Genesis that Joseph's brothers ever told their father what they had done to Joseph. Perhaps they did, but there is no record of it.

¹¹⁷⁹ Gen. 45:27 - saw the wagons: These wagons were the visible, tangible proof that Joseph was alive. Jacob knew his sons had left with donkeys only – no wagons (Gen. 44:3, 13).

¹¹⁸⁰ Gen. 45:28 - I will go and see him before I die: At this point, it seems, Jacob had in mind merely a visit to Egypt. Yet Joseph had in mind an emigration to Egypt.

- E 3 God's speaking to Jacob in a night vision 46:2-4
 - G 1 God's call to Jacob: {2} God spoke to Israel in visions of the night and said, "Jacob, Jacob." 46:2a
 - G 2 Jacob's response: And he said, "Here I am." 46:2b
 - G 3 God's self-identification: {3} He said, "I am God, the God of your father; 46:3a
 - G 4 God's reassurance of Jacob 46:3b-4
 - H 1 Do not fear the move: do not be afraid to go down to Egypt,¹¹⁸¹ 46:3b
 - H 2 God's promise to multiply the nation in Egypt: for I will make you a great nation there. 46:3c
 - H 3 God's promised presence: {4} "I will go down with you to Egypt, 46:4a
 - H 4 God's assurance of the nation's return: and I will also surely bring you up again; 46:4b
 - H 5 God's assurance that Jacob would be in Egypt even at death, but attended by Joseph: and Joseph will close your eyes." 46:4c
- E 4 Jacob's departure from Beersheba: {5} Then Jacob arose from Beersheba; 46:5a
- E 5 The summary of the move orchestrated by the sons of [Israel](#) from [Canaan](#) to Egypt 46:5b-7
 - G 1 The transportation of people 46:5b
 - H 1 and the sons of Israel carried their father Jacob
 - H 2 and their little ones
 - H 3 and their wives in the wagons which Pharaoh had sent to carry him.
 - G 2 The movement of goods {6} They took their livestock and their property, which they had acquired in the land of Canaan, and

¹¹⁸¹ Gen. 46:3 - do not be afraid to go down to Egypt: Here God gave Jacob the necessary reassurance that he was following the will of God. God told him several things relative to His previous promises and the Abrahamic Covenant: (1) Jacob was not to fear the move to Egypt. (2) God would make of him a great nation in Egypt. (3) God would go with him. (4) God would bring the progeny of Jacob back to Canaan, the Promised Land. (5) Jacob himself would not return, for his son Joseph would "close his eyes" – that is, care for his body after his death.

came to Egypt, 46:6

G 3 The summary of people: Jacob and all his descendants with him: {7} his sons and his grandsons with him, his daughters and his granddaughters, and all his descendants ¹¹⁸² he brought with him to Egypt. 46:7

D 3 The register of all who moved to Egypt: {8} Now these are the names of the sons of Israel, Jacob and his sons, who went to Egypt: ¹¹⁸³ [46:8] 46:8-27

E 1 The sons of Leah 46:9-15

G 1 Reuben, Jacob's firstborn. {9} The sons of Reuben: Hanoch and Pallu and Hezron and Carmi. 46:9

G 2 {10} The sons of Simeon: Jemuel and Jamin and Ohad and Jachin and Zohar and Shaul the son of a Canaanite woman. ¹¹⁸⁴ 46:10

G 3 {11} The sons of Levi: Gershon, Kohath, and Merari. 46:11

G 4 {12} The sons of Judah: Er and Onan and Shelah and Perez and Zerah (but Er and Onan died in the land of Canaan). And the sons of Perez were Hezron and Hamul. 46:12

G 5 {13} The sons of Issachar: Tola and Puvvah and Iob and Shimron. 46:13

G 6 {14} The sons of Zebulun: Sered and Elon and Jahleel. 46:14

G 7 {15} These are the sons of Leah, whom she bore to Jacob in Paddan-aram, with his daughter Dinah; all his sons and his daughters *numbered* thirty-three 46:15.

E 2 The sons of Zilpah 46:16-18

¹¹⁸² Gen. 46:7 - descendants: literally, "seed," the singular of *zerá* ([2233](#)).

¹¹⁸³ Gen. 46:8 - the sons of Israel ... who went to Egypt: This is a very segregated list. Moses carefully listed the progeny of Jacob by each wife and concubine. This was a very dysfunctional family, yet God, in His mercy, has used and will use this family for His glory.

¹¹⁸⁴ Gen. 46:10 - Shaul the son of a Canaanite woman: Simeon had married a Canaanite. So, likewise, had Judah (Gen. 46:12; cf. Gen. 38:2). [Constable](#) adds an interesting footnote:

God promised to make Jacob's family "a great nation" in Egypt (cf. 12:2; 15:13-14; 17:6, 20; 18:18; 21:13-8). Because of the Egyptians' disdain for Hebrew shepherds, Jacob's family was not in danger of suffering amalgamation into Egyptian life—as they had been in danger of being absorbed into Canaanite life. They also received the best land in Egypt. The Israelites' removal to Egypt was a divine discipline, too. Jacob's sons had failed to stay separate from the Canaanites, so God, in keeping with His promise, temporarily removed them from the land He had promised them. Note the parallels with Esau's migration to Seir (cf. 36:2-8 and 46:8—47:27).

- G 1 {16} The sons of Gad: Ziphion and Haggi, Shuni and Ezbon, Eri and Arodi and Areli. 46:16
- G 2 {17} The sons of Asher: Imnah and Ishvah and Ishvi and Beriah and their sister Serah. And the sons of Beriah: Heber and Malchiel. 46:17
- G 3 {18} These are the sons of Zilpah, whom Laban gave to his daughter Leah; and she bore to Jacob these sixteen persons. 46:18
- E 3 The sons of Rachel: {19} The sons of Jacob's wife Rachel: Joseph and Benjamin. [46:19] 46:19-22
- G 1 {20} Now to Joseph in the land of Egypt were born Manasseh and Ephraim, whom Asenath, the daughter of Potiphera, priest of On, bore to him. 46:20
- G 2 {21} The sons of Benjamin: Bela and Becher and Ashbel, Gera and Naaman, Ehi and Rosh, Muppm and Huppm and Ard. 46:21
- G 3 {22} These are the sons of Rachel, who were born to Jacob; *there were* fourteen persons in all. 46:22
- E 4 The sons of Bilhah 46:23-25
- G 1 {23} The sons of Dan: Hushim. 46:23
- G 2 {24} The sons of Naphtali: Jahzeel and Guni and Jezer and Shillem. 46:24
- G 3 {25} These are the sons of Bilhah, whom Laban gave to his daughter Rachel, and she bore these to Jacob; *there were* seven persons in all. 46:25
- E 5 The summary 46:26-27
- G 1 The blood descendants of Jacob: {26} All the persons belonging to Jacob, who came to Egypt, his direct descendants, not including the wives of Jacob's sons, *were* sixty-six persons in all,¹¹⁸⁵ 46:26
- G 2 The sons of Joseph: {27} and the sons of Joseph, who were

¹¹⁸⁵ Gen. 46:26 - sixty-six persons in all: According to [Constable](#), "The "66" referred to in verse 26 excluded Jacob, Joseph, Ephraim, and Manasseh; or perhaps Er and Onan (v. 12) and Ephraim and Manasseh. Stephen said there were "75," but he must have added Joseph's three grandsons and two great-grandsons (Acts 7:14). These five were born later, as were some or all of Benjamin's 10 sons (v. 21), in all probability. Quoting [Keil and Delitzsch](#), [Constable](#) adds, "... according to a view which we frequently meet with in the Old Testament, though strange to our modes of thought, [they] came into Egypt *in lumbus patrum* [i.e., in the loins of their father]."

born to him in Egypt were two; 46:27a

G 3 The total of the bloodline (including Jacob and Joseph): all the persons of the house of Jacob, who came to Egypt, *were* seventy. ¹¹⁸⁶ 46:27b

D 4 Joseph's meeting with Jacob 46:28-34

E 1 The task of Judah as guide: {28} Now he sent Judah before him to Joseph, to point out *the way* before him to Goshen; 46:28a

E 2 The arrival of the clan in Goshen: and they came into the land of Goshen. ¹¹⁸⁷ 46:28b

E 3 Joseph's journey to Goshen: {29} Joseph prepared his chariot and went up to Goshen to meet his father Israel; 46:29a

E 4 Joseph's emotional meeting with his father: as soon as he appeared before him, he fell on his neck and wept on his neck a long time. ¹¹⁸⁸ 46:29b

E 5 [Israel's](#) great relief at having seen his son: {30} Then Israel said to Joseph, "Now let me die, since I have seen your face, that you are still alive." 46:30

E 6 Joseph's instructions to his extended family 46:31-34

G 1 He will report to Pharaoh of the family's arrival: {31} Joseph said to his brothers and to his father's household, "I will go up and tell Pharaoh, and will say to him, 'My brothers and my father's household, who *were* in the land of Canaan, have come to me; 46:31

G 2 He will explain that his brothers are keepers of livestock: {32}

¹¹⁸⁶ Gen. 46:27 - seventy: [Constable](#) quotes [John Sailhamer](#) as follows:

"It can hardly go without notice that the number of nations in Genesis 10 is also 'seventy.' Just as the 'seventy nations' represent all the descendants of Adam, so now the 'seventy sons' represent all the descendants of Abraham, Isaac, and Jacob—the children of [Israel](#). Here in narrative form is a demonstration of the theme in Deuteronomy 32:8 that God apportioned the boundaries of the nations (Ge 10) according to the number of the children of [Israel](#). Thus the writer has gone to great lengths to portray the new nation of [Israel](#) as a new humanity and Abraham as a second Adam. The blessing that is to come through Abraham and his seed is a restoration of the original blessing of Adam, a blessing which was lost in the Fall."

¹¹⁸⁷ Gen. 46:28 - they came into the land of Goshen: At Joseph's promise and Pharaoh's generosity, Joseph's family were given prime real estate in the fertile [Nile River Delta](#).

¹¹⁸⁸ Gen. 46:29 - wept on his neck a long time: Joseph really loved his father, and always had kept his father's best interests in mind. The pent-up emotion at their reunion took a long time to dissipate. The verb "wept" is the [Qal Imperfect](#) of *bākāh*' ([1510](#)), used of Joseph in Gen. 42:24; 43:30; 45:14, 15; 46:29; 50:1, 17. Much earlier, when Jacob had been misled to believe Joseph was dead, he had wept (Gen. 37:35). This term can be used to identify a not-so-spontaneous, extended time of mourning (Gen. 50:3).

and the men are shepherds, for they have been keepers of livestock; and they have brought their flocks and their herds and all that they have.' 46:32

G 3 Pharaoh's presumed inquiry as to their occupation: {33} "When Pharaoh calls you and says, 'What is your occupation?' 46:33

G 4 The brothers are to identify themselves as keepers of livestock: {34} you shall say, 'Your servants have been keepers of livestock from our youth even until now, both we and our fathers,' 46:34a

G 5 The purpose of the reply 46:34b

H 1 Settling in good land: that you may live in the land of Goshen;

H 2 Working around the cultural bias of the Egyptians: for every shepherd is loathsome to the Egyptians."¹¹⁸⁹

D 5 Joseph's family meets Pharaoh 47:1-12

E 1 Joseph's report to Pharaoh that his family had arrived in Goshen: {1} Then Joseph went in and told Pharaoh, and said, "My father and my brothers and their flocks and their herds and all that they have, have come out of the land of Canaan; and behold, they are in the land of Goshen." 47:1

E 2 Joseph's brothers meet Pharaoh 47:2-6

G 1 His presentation of five brothers: {2} He took five men from among his brothers and presented them to Pharaoh.¹¹⁹⁰ 47:2

G 2 Pharaoh ascertains the brothers are shepherds 47:3

H 1 His question: {3} Then Pharaoh said to his brothers, "What is your occupation?"

¹¹⁸⁹ Gen. 46:34 - for every shepherd is loathsome to the Egyptians: The term "is loathsome" translates the noun *tô'ēbah'* (8441), "abomination." This noun is used only here and in Gen. 43:32 in this book. It is also used in Exod. 8:26. There it is implied that livestock such as sheep, goats, and cows are an abomination to Egyptians. [Constable](#) explained it this way, citing [Keil and Delitzsch](#):

Egyptians loathed shepherds, because agriculture was the basis of Egyptian society, and the Nile River and its delta, where Goshen was, sustained it (v. 34). The Egyptian farmers organized their fields carefully, and controlled them relatively easily and neatly, but without large herds of livestock. The comparative difficulty, of controlling great herds of sheep, goats, and cows, led the Egyptians to think of those who cared for these animals as crude and barbaric.

¹¹⁹⁰ Gen. 47:2 - presented them to Pharaoh: Joseph was being very diplomatic. He always understood that he ruled at the behest of Pharaoh. He exercised what we call good "public relations" with Pharaoh, carefully and selectively introducing his family to Pharaoh. Joseph wanted to give Pharaoh the best possible impression of his family.

- H 2 Their reply: So they said to Pharaoh, "Your servants are shepherds, both we and our fathers."
- G 3 The brothers request to live in Goshen: {4} They said to Pharaoh, "We have come to sojourn in the land, for there is no pasture for your servants' flocks, for the famine is severe in the land of Canaan. Now, therefore, please let your servants live in the land of Goshen." 47:4
- G 4 Pharaoh's generous reply 47:5-6
- H 1 Acknowledging their arrival: {5} Then Pharaoh said to Joseph, "Your father and your brothers have come to you. 47:5
- H 2 Allowing them to settle in Goshen: {6} "The land of Egypt is at your disposal; ¹¹⁹¹ settle your father and your brothers in the best of the land, let them live in the land of Goshen; 47:6a
- H 3 Authorizing their appointment as royal herd managers: and if you know any capable men among them, then put them in charge of my livestock." 47:6b
- E 3 Joseph's father Jacob meets Pharaoh 47:7-10
- G 1 The introduction: {7} Then Joseph brought his father Jacob and presented him to Pharaoh; 47:7a
- G 2 Jacob's blessing of Pharaoh: and Jacob blessed Pharaoh. ¹¹⁹² 47:7b
- G 3 The conversation between Pharaoh and Jacob 47:8-10
- H 1 Pharaoh's asking of Jacob's age: {8} Pharaoh said to Jacob, "How many years have you lived?" 47:8
- H 2 Jacob's response 47:9
- J 1 He is 130: {9} So Jacob said to Pharaoh, "The years

¹¹⁹¹ Gen. 47:6 - at your disposal: [NASB](#) footnote: "A literal translation: *before you*"

¹¹⁹² Gen. 47:7 - Jacob blessed Pharaoh: "blessed" is the Piel Imperfect of the verb *bârak* ([1288](#)). One is reminded that when [Abram](#) returned to [Canaan](#) after his defeat of the kings, he was met by [Melchizedek](#), king of Salem, priest of Most High God. [Melchizedek](#) blessed [Abram](#), who gave him a tenth of all the booty (Gen. 14:17-21). The writer to the Hebrews provides the commentary that the lesser was blessed by the greater (Heb. 7:1-10). In the present context also, the lesser was blessed by the greater, from God's point of view. No matter that Pharaoh was king of perhaps the greatest empire on earth at that point, God had chosen [Abraham](#) and his seed, Jacob and the [sons of Israel](#) to bless the world (Gen. 12:1-3). In a small way, Jacob was fulfilling that mission.

of my sojourning ¹¹⁹³ are one hundred and thirty;

J 2 His years have been few and unpleasant: few and unpleasant have been the years of my life, ¹¹⁹⁴

J 3 He is not as long-lived as his fathers: nor have they attained the years that my fathers lived during the days of their sojourning."

H 3 Jacob's blessing and departure: {10} And Jacob blessed Pharaoh, and went out from his presence. 47:10

E 4 Joseph's settling of his family in Egypt 47:11-12

G 1 In the best of the land: {11} So Joseph settled his father and his brothers and gave them a possession in the land of Egypt, in the best of the land, in the land of Rameses, ¹¹⁹⁵ as Pharaoh had ordered. 47:11

G 2 Providing them with food: {12} Joseph provided his father and his brothers and all his father's household with food, according to their little ones. 47:12

C 7 Joseph's administration of the Egyptian grain exchange 47:13-26

D 1 Joseph's sale of grain to Egyptians in exchange for money and livestock 47:13-19

E 1 The condition in the land 47:13

G 1 The symptom: {13} Now there was no food in all the land,

G 2 The cause: because the famine was very severe,

G 3 The effect: so that the land of Egypt and the land of Canaan languished because of the famine.

¹¹⁹³ Gen. 47:9 - the years of my sojourning: "sojourning" translates the noun *mâgûr'* (4033). The term depicts a non-resident nomadic existence, which accurately identifies the early patriarchs. It is used in this book in Gen. 17:8; 28:4; 36:7; 37:1, and twice in Gen. 47:9.

¹¹⁹⁴ Gen. 47:9 - few and unpleasant have been the years of my life: To this point Jacob had lived 130 years. Abraham had lived 175, and Isaac 180. Jacob had experienced a hard life, but some of that was his own fault. He had been forced to flee from his brother Esau to Syria because he had deceived his own father and stolen his brother's blessing. He lived for twenty years with Laban, a man who deceived him and was continually changing his wages. Jacob had a favorite wife and this brought dysfunction into his home, characterized by polygamy. This favoritism had bereaved him (he thought) of his favorite son. Now he was forced to flee from his promised land because of famine. Life had, indeed, been difficult for Jacob. [Constable](#) records some interesting reflections on the life of Jacob.

¹¹⁹⁵ Gen. 47:11 - land of Rameses: Skeptics can find no Rameses listed in secular history at this time. So they tend to discount the Biblical record and "late-date" [Israel's](#) exodus from Egypt. But this reflects a certain arrogance that we know more today than Moses did when he wrote this book. [Constable](#) has provided some solutions to this apparent anomaly.

E 2 Joseph's sale of grain for cash ¹¹⁹⁶ 47:14-15a

G 1 Joseph's collection of the money: {14} Joseph gathered all the money that was found in the land of Egypt and in the land of Canaan for the grain which they bought, 47:14a

G 2 Joseph's disposition of the money: and Joseph brought the money into Pharaoh's house. 47:14b

G 3 The drying up of the money supply: {15} When the money was all spent ¹¹⁹⁷ in the land of Egypt and in the land of Canaan, 47:15a

E 3 Joseph's sale of grain for livestock 47:15b-17

G 1 The Egyptians' plea for food: all the Egyptians came to Joseph and said, 47:15b

H 1 Their plea: "Give us food,

H 2 Their peril: for why should we die in your presence?

H 3 Their plight: For *our* money is gone."

G 2 His proposal: {16} Then Joseph said, "Give up your livestock, ¹¹⁹⁸ and I will give you *food* for your livestock, since *your* money is gone." 47:16

G 3 Their compliance: {17} So they brought their livestock to Joseph, and Joseph gave them food in exchange for 47:17a

H 1 the horses

¹¹⁹⁶ Gen. 47:14 - money: Note that Joseph never gave grain away. It always had to be purchased. Instinctively, Joseph knew that something of value had to be exchanged for the value of the grain. It is true that here, in an emergency, a central government was needed to save the country. But morale in the country was salvaged in that there were no government handouts, however severe the situation grew. Cash was required to buy the grain.

¹¹⁹⁷ Gen. 47:15 - money ... all spent: Joseph understood that for the economy of the country to be stable, the government could not simply print paper money without any real value. Inflation would have settled in on the country with a vengeance. Real value must be purchased with real assets.

¹¹⁹⁸ Gen. 47:16 - livestock: Again, Joseph resisted the urge to give people something freely from the government for nothing. They would have to pay. They were out of cash, but they still had assets that had a certain amount of liquidity – their livestock. To some extent, this relieved them of a certain burden – their draft animals were not only useless, but burdensome. There was no point in keeping them because they could not be used to till the ground, for there were no crops that could grow. Liquidating these assets would provide the Egyptians with cash and, at the same time remove a commodity from their care and maintenance that had become a liability! The difficulty was that the flocks could no longer provide wool and milk, nor could the livestock provide meat. But then again, they would no longer consume grain that their human owners needed, either. Presumably, either the government was able to feed the animals or they were slaughtered to preserve grain for humans. In any case, the morale of the people could be kept high, because they were not receiving a self-demeaning government handout – Joseph was not developing a welfare class. These people were still strong and self-reliant. Joseph was wise, indeed!

- H 2 and the flocks
- H 3 and the herds
- H 4 and the donkeys;
- G 4 The summary: and he fed them with food in exchange for all their livestock that year. 47:17b
- D 2 Joseph's sale of grain to Egyptians in exchange for land 47:18-26
 - E 1 The proposal of the Egyptians 47:18-19
 - G 1 The timing of the proposal: {18} When that year was ended, they came to him the next year and said to him, 47:18a
 - G 2 The background of their proposal 47:18b-19
 - H 1 Their money had been spent: "We will not hide from my lord that our money is all spent, 47:18b
 - H 2 Their cattle assets had been liquidated: and the cattle are my lord's. 47:18c
 - H 3 Their listing of their remaining assets: There is nothing left for my lord except our bodies and our lands. 47:18d
 - H 4 Their plight: {19} "Why should we die before your eyes, both we and our land? 47:19a
 - H 5 Their proposal: Buy us and our land for food,¹¹⁹⁹ and we and our land will be slaves to Pharaoh. So give us seed, that we may live and not die, and that the land may not be desolate." 47:19b

¹¹⁹⁹ Gen. 47:19 - buy us and our land for food: Note that people had quickly become accustomed to paying for the government services! They maintained their morale. In this case they themselves came to the government with an offer of selling off their land and themselves to the government. They would lose their independence, but they would save their lives. It is difficult to conceive of our politicians of FEMA in Washington taking such a hard-line approach to an obvious national emergency. But notice that the peoples' morale did not suffer.

Morris, *The Genesis Record*, p. 640: "Some people have felt that this was a scheme of Joseph not only to get wealth but also to enslave the people. However, it was their proposal, not Joseph's, and whatever gain was involved accrued to Pharaoh not to Joseph. It is true that it created what amounted to a feudalistic economy, but the alternative – that of placing everyone on a dole system – would have destroyed personal and national morale, would have bankrupted the government, and probably would have culminated in social anarchy. The stores of food would soon have been depleted and mass starvation would have followed.

The people had learned to trust Joseph. He had always charged them a fair price and, even though they had used up all their money and marketable possessions, they still had their self-respect.

Joseph agreed to their terms, and so title to most of the property in Egypt passed to the state. In order to expedite distribution of grain and seed, and to best utilize the labor purchased in this manner, Joseph relocated many of the people, moving them nearer the various cities where the storehouses were situated. Presumably these people were employed in some form of productive work. The system certainly left something to be desired in terms of human freedom; but a centralized bureaucracy is preferable to mass starvation and anarchy, especially when the bureaucracy is administered intelligently and unselfishly, as it was by Joseph."

E 2 The policy of Joseph 47:20-26

G 1 Joseph's purchase of the land: {20} So Joseph bought all the land of Egypt for Pharaoh, for every Egyptian sold his field, because the famine ¹²⁰⁰ was severe upon them. Thus the land became Pharaoh's. 47:20

G 2 Joseph's removal of the people off the land and into the cities 47:21-22

H 1 The general rule for all the people: {21} As for the people, he removed them to the cities from one end of Egypt's border to the other. 47:21

H 2 The exception – the priests' land was not sold: {22} Only the land of the priests he did not buy, 47:22

J 1 The reason: for the priests had an allotment from Pharaoh,

J 2 Their practice: and they lived off the allotment which Pharaoh gave them.

J 3 Their exemption: Therefore, they did not sell their land.

G 3 Joseph's policy for the future 47:23-26

H 1 His purchase of the people and their land for the government: {23} Then Joseph said to the people, "Behold, I have today bought you and your land for Pharaoh; 47:23a

H 2 His provision of seed for them to sow as tenant farmers on government land: now, *here* is seed for you, and you may sow the land. 47:23b

H 3 The fixed price of tenant-farming 47:24

J 1 One-fifth for the government: {24} "At the harvest you shall give a fifth to Pharaoh,¹²⁰¹

J 2 Four-fifths for the tenant farmers: and four-fifths

¹²⁰⁰ Gen. 47:20 - famine: This is the final occurrence of the term "famine," *râ'âb* ([7458](#)), in the book of Genesis.

¹²⁰¹ Gen. 47:24 - fifth: Morris, [The Genesis Record](#), p. 641: "In effect, this amounted to a permanent annual income tax of 20 percent of gross income. This is not excessive in terms of present-day standards, especially since these farmers had no rent to pay, no cost of investment or upkeep, in fact nothing except their own personal expenses. . . . It is noteworthy that there was little, if any, complaining about these terms. To the contrary, the citizens were grateful to Joseph for saving their lives, recognizing that they were being treated fairly and generously and that there could really be no other plan which would work as well under the circumstances."

shall be your own

K1 for seed of the field

K2 and for your food and for those of your households and as food for your little ones."

H 4 The gratitude of the people: {25} So they said, "You have saved our lives! Let us find favor in the sight of my lord, and we will be Pharaoh's slaves." 47:25

H 5 The codification of the policy 47:26

J 1 The statute: {26} Joseph made it a statute concerning the land of Egypt *valid* to this day, that Pharaoh should have the fifth;

J 2 The exception: only the land of the priests did not become Pharaoh's.

C 8 Jacob's bequeathal of special *blessings* to Joseph beyond those to his other sons in his final days 47:27 - 50:14

D 1 [Israel's](#) request to be buried in [Canaan](#) 47:27-31

E 1 The success of [Israel](#) in Goshen 47:27

G 1 Their situation: {27} Now Israel lived in the land of Egypt, in Goshen,

G 2 Their acquisition of property: and they acquired property in it

G 3 Their prolific reproduction: and were fruitful and became very numerous.

E 2 The longevity of Jacob 47:28

G 1 His time in Egypt: {28} Jacob lived in the land of Egypt seventeen years;

G 2 His total life span: so the length of Jacob's life was one hundred and forty-seven years.¹²⁰²

E 3 The request of Jacob 47:29

G 1 The timing of his request: {29} When the time for Israel to die drew near, 47:29a

¹²⁰² Gen. 47:28 - one hundred forty seven years: [Constable](#): "Jacob "lived" his last "17 years" in the care of Joseph, who, ironically, had spent the first 17 years of his life in Jacob's care (37:2)."

- G 2 His sending for Joseph: he called his son Joseph and said to him, 47:29b
- G 3 The sign of the oath he required: "Please, if I have found favor in your sight, place now your hand under my thigh and deal with me in kindness and faithfulness. 47:29c
- G 4 His request not to be buried in Egypt: Please do not bury me in Egypt, 47:29d
- G 5 His request to be buried with his fathers in [Canaan](#): {30} but when I lie down with my fathers, you shall carry me out of Egypt and bury me in their burial place." 47:30a
- G 6 Joseph's compliance: And he said, "I will do as you have said." 47:30b
- G 7 Jacob's request for an oath: {31} He said, "Swear to me." 47:31a
- G 8 Joseph's compliance: So he swore to him. 47:31b
- G 9 [Israel's](#) reaction: Then Israel bowed *in worship* at the head of the bed.¹²⁰³ 47:31c

D 2 Jacob's selective *blessing* of his grandsons – Joseph's sons 48

- E 1 Jacob's claiming of Joseph's sons for himself, the one *blessed* by God Almighty 48:1-7
 - G 1 The report of illness: {1} Now it came about after these things that Joseph was told, "Behold, your father is sick." 48:1
 - G 2 The visit of Joseph: So he took his two sons Manasseh and Ephraim with him. 48:1b
 - G 3 The determination of Jacob: {2} When it was told to Jacob, "Behold, your son Joseph has come to you," Israel¹²⁰⁴ collected his strength and sat up in the bed. 48:2
 - G 4 Jacob's speech to Joseph 48:3-7

¹²⁰³ Gen. 47:31 - Then Israel bowed *in worship* at the head of the bed: Jacob's request to Joseph to be buried with his fathers in the land of Canaan was an act of faith and worship.

¹²⁰⁴ Gen. 48:2 - Jacob ... Israel: There is a curious interplay here between the names Jacob ([3290](#)), "Heel-holder" or "Supplanter" and the God-given name [Israel](#) ([3478](#)), "Prince with God." The name *Jacob* is used 180X in Genesis, and the name [Israel](#) but 43X. Here, both names are used in the same verse. It appears that Jacob was acting here as the official patriarch of the family and of the nation, so Moses used the name [Israel](#) deliberately. As [Constable](#) has stated, "It was as "[Israel](#)," the "Prince with God," that Jacob performed this official and significant act (vv. 2-4; cf. Heb. 11:21). His action was in harmony with God's will and purpose for the chosen family, and it involved the patriarchal promises to which he referred (cf. 35:10-12)."

- H 1 God's appearance to Jacob at Luz: {3} Then Jacob said to Joseph, "God Almighty appeared to me at Luz ¹²⁰⁵ in the land of Canaan and blessed me, ¹²⁰⁶ 48:3
- H 2 God's blessing: {4} and He said to me, 48:4
- J 1 'Behold, I will make you fruitful and numerous,
- J 2 and I will make you a company of peoples,
- J 3 and will give this land to your descendants after you for an everlasting possession.' ¹²⁰⁷
- H 3 Jacob's claiming Joseph's two sons as his own 48:5-6
- J 1 General statement: {5} "Now your two sons, who were born to you in the land of Egypt before I came to you in Egypt, are mine; 48:5a
- J 2 Specific identification: Ephraim and Manasseh shall be mine, as Reuben and Simeon are. ¹²⁰⁸ 48:5b
- J 3 The alignment of Joseph's future offspring: {6} "But your offspring that have been born after them shall be yours; they shall be called by the names of their brothers in their inheritance. 48:6
- H 4 Jacob's rehearsal of the death of Rachel 48:7
- J 1 Her death: {7} "Now as for me, when I came from Paddan, Rachel died, to my sorrow, in the land of Canaan on the journey,

¹²⁰⁵ Gen. 48:3 - Luz: The original name of the place that Jacob subsequently named "Bethel" – "House of God" (Gen. 28:19; 35:6; 48:3).

¹²⁰⁶ Gen. 48:3 - blessed me: "It is appropriate that the end of Genesis should draw to a close with repeated references to the thematic word of the book (b-r-k, 'to bless') ([Constable](#), quoting [Kenneth A. Matthews](#), Genesis 11:27-50:26, New American Commentary series, p. 863).

¹²⁰⁷ Gen. 48:4 - and will give this land to your descendants after you for an everlasting possession: The question we interpreters must ask ourselves is this – how did those to whom the promises were given understand them? Here the answer is transparent. Jacob believed God had promised to him and to his seed (literally) the land of [Canaan](#) for an everlasting possession. How dare we [Gentiles](#) arrogantly presume God's promises have been invalidated, and that "land" means "the whole world" as a possession of us [Gentiles](#) in the [Church](#)?

¹²⁰⁸ Gen. 48:5 - Ephraim and Manasseh shall be mine, as Reuben and Simeon are: This is the genesis of the incorporation of Joseph's two sons Ephraim and Manasseh as tribes or clans of [Israel](#). In this way Jacob assured Joseph of the double-inheritance normally given to the first-born. In the sovereignty of God, Ephraim and Manasseh became two tribes of [Israel](#) and were allotted land. There is no tribe named "Joseph," but Ephraim and Manasseh together constitute his tribe. Levi became the Levitical / Priestly tribe, and inherited no land. Priests and Levites were to live in the cities of refuge and in additional towns granted to them. These cities would include outlying pasture land as well (Numbers 35; Joshua 20-21).

- J 2 The place: when there was still some distance to go to Ephrath;
- J 3 Her burial: and I buried her there on the way to Ephrath (that is, Bethlehem)."
- E 2 Jacob's *blessings* of Joseph and of Ephraim above Manasseh, giving Joseph a double share in the inheritance of [Canaan](#) 48:8-22
 - G 1 The identification of Joseph's sons 48:8-9
 - H 1 [Israel's](#) query: {8} When Israel saw Joseph's sons, he said, "Who are these?" 48:8
 - H 2 Joseph's response: {9} Joseph said to his father, "They are my sons, whom God has given me here." 48:9a
 - H 3 [Israel's](#) request: So he said, "Bring them to me, please, that I may bless them." ¹²⁰⁹ 48:9b
 - G 2 [Israel's](#) greeting of the sons 48:10-11
 - H 1 The explanation of [Israel's](#) poor vision: {10} Now the eyes of Israel were *so* dim from age *that* he could not see. 48:10a
 - H 2 The warm greeting: Then Joseph brought them close to him, and he kissed them and embraced them. 48:10b
 - H 3 The gratefulness of [Israel](#): {11} Israel said to Joseph, "I never expected to see your face, and behold, God has let me see your children as well." 48:11
 - G 3 Joseph's positioning of his sons 48:12-13
 - H 1 His respect: {12} Then Joseph took them from his knees, and bowed with his face to the ground. 48:12
 - H 2 His placing of his sons in birth order before [Israel](#): {13} Joseph took them both, Ephraim with his right hand toward Israel's left, and Manasseh with his left hand toward Israel's right, and brought them close to him. 48:13
 - G 4 [Israel's](#) reversal of his hands 48:14

¹²⁰⁹ Gen. 48:9 - that I may bless them: "Blessing" is the theme of Genesis. The book of Genesis began with God blessing His creation and especially blessing man, whom He had created in His likeness and image. It ends with one of God's chosen and blessed patriarchs, Jacob, blessing his grandsons and sons with prophetic blessings appropriate to their individual characters. "Bless" here is the [Piel Imperfect](#) of the verb *bârâk* ([1288](#)). This verb is used an impressive 72X in the book of Genesis.

- H 1 His right hand on the head of Ephraim, the younger: {14} But Israel stretched out his right hand and laid it on the head of Ephraim, who was the younger,¹²¹⁰
- H 2 His left hand on the head of Manasseh the firstborn: and his left hand on Manasseh's head, crossing his hands, although Manasseh was the firstborn.
- G 5 [Israel's](#) blessing of Joseph through the latter's sons: {15} He blessed Joseph, and said, [48:15a] 48:15-16a
 - H 1 His identification of God 48:15b-16a
 - J 1 The God of his fathers: "The God before whom my fathers Abraham and Isaac walked, 48:15b
 - J 2 His own personal shepherd: The God who has been my shepherd all my life to this day, 48:15c
 - J 3 His redeeming angel: {16} The angel who has redeemed me from all evil,¹²¹¹ 48:16a
 - H 2 His blessing 48:16b
 - J 1 Blessing: Bless the lads;
 - J 2 Name
 - K1 His bequeathal of his name: And may my name live on in them,
 - K2 His bequeathal of his father's names: And the names of my fathers Abraham and Isaac;
 - J 3 Multiplication: And may they grow into a multitude in the midst of the earth."
 - H 3 The reaction of Joseph 48:17-18
 - J 1 His displeasure: {17} When Joseph saw that his father laid his right hand on Ephraim's head, it displeased him; 48:17a

¹²¹⁰ Gen. 48:14 - Ephraim, who was the younger: Jacob, under the guidance of God, deliberately gave pre-eminence to the younger in the nation of [Israel](#).

¹²¹¹ Gen. 48:16 - the angel who has redeemed me from all evil: Jacob has spoken with God several times. Yet here he identifies a certain "angel," *mal'āk*' (4397), properly, "messenger" as representative of God. It is my belief that this is the "[Messenger of Yahweh](#)," none other than the pre-incarnate Christ. See also the article "[The Angel of Yahweh](#)."

- J 2 His action: and he grasped his father's hand to remove it from Ephraim's head to Manasseh's head. 48:17b
- J 3 His attempted correction: {18} Joseph said to his father, "Not so, my father, for this one is the firstborn. Place your right hand on his head." 48:18
- H 4 The refusal of [Israel](#) 48:19
 - J 1 Refusal: {19} But his father refused and said,
 - J 2 His self-awareness: "I know, my son, I know;
 - J 3 The greatness of the firstborn: he also will become a people and he also will be great.
 - J 4 The superiority of the younger brother
 - K1 In greatness: However, his younger brother shall be greater than he,¹²¹²
 - K2 In progeny: and his descendants shall become a multitude of nations."
- H 5 The amplification 48:20
 - J 1 The nomenclature of blessing: {20} He blessed them that day, saying, "By you Israel will pronounce blessing, saying, 'May God make you like Ephraim and Manasseh!' "
 - J 2 The priority of Ephraim: Thus he put Ephraim before Manasseh.
- H 6 The final blessing 48:21-22
 - J 1 Impending death: {21} Then Israel said to Joseph, "Behold, I am about to die, 48:21a

¹²¹² Gen. 48:19 - his younger brother shall be greater than he: [Constable](#) explains as follows:

Jacob's blessing of Ephraim and Manasseh also carried prophetic significance and force (vv. 19-20). Under the inspiration of God, Jacob deliberately gave Ephraim the privileged "firstborn blessing," and predicted his preeminence. This was the fourth consecutive generation of Abraham's descendants in which the normal pattern of the firstborn assuming prominence over the second born was reversed: Isaac over Ishmael, Jacob over Esau, Joseph over Reuben, and Ephraim over Manasseh. We can see this blessing in the process of its fulfillment, during the Judges Period, when the tribe of Ephraim had grown very large and influential. The combined tribes of Ephraim and Manasseh increased from 72,700, in the second year after the Exodus (Num. 1:32-35), to 85,200, forty years later (Num. 26:28-37). By contrast, the tribes of Reuben and Simeon decreased from 105,800 to 65,930 during the same period.

- J 2 Ultimate return: but God will be with you, and bring you back to the land of your fathers. 48:21b
- J 3 Double portion: {22} "I give you one portion more than your brothers,¹²¹³ which I took from the hand of the Amorite with my sword and my bow." 48:22
- D 3 Jacob's pre-death prophecy concerning, and *blessing* of, his sons 49:1-28
 - E 1 Jacob's assembling of his sons to prophesy their future 49:1-2
 - G 1 The statement of the summons: Then Jacob summoned his sons and said, 49:1a
 - G 2 The predictive purpose of the summons: "Assemble yourselves that I may tell you what will befall you in the days to come."¹²¹⁴ 49:1b
 - G 3 The repetition of the summons 49:2
 - H 1 {2} "Gather together and hear, O sons of Jacob;
 - H 2 And listen to Israel your father.
 - E 2 Reuben's demotion because of his incest with his father's slave-concubine 49:3-4
 - G 1 His acknowledgment of Reuben's status as firstborn 49:3
 - H 1 {3} "Reuben, you are my firstborn;
 - H 2 My might and the beginning of my strength,
 - H 3 Preeminent in dignity and preeminent in power.
 - G 2 His demotion of Reuben 49:4
 - H 1 His lack of self-control: {4} "Uncontrolled as water,
 - H 2 His ban from firstborn status: you shall not have

¹²¹³ Gen. 48:22 - I give you one portion more than your brothers: This prophetic blessing of Joseph was fulfilled in that Joseph's two sons, Ephraim and Manasseh, were both counted as tribes of [Israel](#). Through them Joseph was assigned one more portion of land than his brothers.

¹²¹⁴ Gen. 49:1 - what will befall you in the days to come: Jacob was serving as a Divinely-inspired prophet here, predicting the future. This important chapter is also identified as Jacob's blessing the twelve tribes of [Israel](#) (Gen. 49:28).

preeminence,¹²¹⁵

H 3 His disqualifying act

J 1 Because you went up to your father's bed;¹²¹⁶

J 2 Then you defiled *it* – he went up to my couch.

E 3 Simeon and Levi's dispersion in [Israel](#) because of their violence
49:5-7

G 1 The connection of Simeon and Levi: {5} "Simeon and Levi are brothers; 49:5a

G 2 Their violent nature: Their swords are implements of violence.
49:5b

G 3 Jacob's disassociation from them 49:6a

H 1 {6} "Let my soul not enter into their council;

H 2 Let not my glory be united with their assembly;

G 4 The reason for his disassociation 49:6b

H 1 Murder of men: Because in their anger they slew men,¹²¹⁷

H 2 Cruelty toward animals: And in their self-will they lamed oxen.

G 5 Jacob's indictment in the form of a curse 49:7a

H 1 Of their anger: {7} "Cursed be their anger, for it is fierce;

H 2 Of their wrath: And their wrath, for it is cruel.

G 6 Jacob's prophecy of judgment 49:7b

H 1 I will disperse them in Jacob,

¹²¹⁵ Gen. 49:4 - preeminence: As the firstborn, Reuben might have expected to be the recipient of Jacob's greatest blessing. Such was not to be the case. In fact, Joseph, the firstborn son of the favorite wife, would receive a double-portion in the land (Gen. 48:5-22; 49:22-26). 1 Chron. 5:1-2 also refers to Reuben's forfeiture of his birthright to Joseph. Furthermore, the line of the [Messiah](#) would come through Judah, not Reuben (Gen. 49:8-10).

¹²¹⁶ Gen. 49:4 - father's bed: Reuben's incest with Bilhah is recorded in Gen. 35:22.

¹²¹⁷ Gen. 49:6 - slew men: Simeon and Levi's deceitful treachery toward Hamor, his son Shechem, and all the men of the city is recorded in Gen. 34.

H 2 And scatter them in Israel.¹²¹⁸

E 4 Judah, the lion's possession of the scepter 49:8-12

G 1 Judah's superiority predicted 49:8

H 1 Judah, the object of praise: {8} "Judah, your brothers shall praise you;

H 2 Judah's superiority over his enemies: Your hand shall be on the neck of your enemies;

H 3 Judah's superiority over his father's sons: Your father's sons shall bow down to you.

G 2 Judah's superiority depicted in the imagery of a lion 49:9

H 1 His youthful emergence: {9} "Judah is a lion's whelp;

H 2 His skill as a predator: From the prey, my son, you have gone up.

H 3 His security following conquest: He couches, he lies down as a lion,

H 4 His invincibility: And as a lion, who dares rouse him up?

G 3 Judah's superiority revealed in kingly terms 49:10-12

H 1 The prediction of a royal line to arise from Judah 49:10a

J 1 {10} "The scepter shall not depart from Judah,

J 2 Nor the ruler's staff from between his feet,

H 2 The arrival of the ultimate king: Until Shiloh¹²¹⁹ comes, 49:10b

H 3 His achievement of global submission: And to him *shall*

¹²¹⁸ Gen. 49:7 – scatter them in [Israel](#): In fulfillment, Levi was given no tribal property to possess, but only certain specified cities of refuge and some additional cities. Simeon was allotted territory within that of Judah (Josh. 19:1, 9), which all but guaranteed Simeon's absorption into another tribe. God, in His grace, chose Levi as the tribe of [priests](#) and tabernacle/temple assistants.

¹²¹⁹ Gen. 49:10 - Shiloh: A better translation: "The scepter shall not depart from Judah, nor the ruler's staff from between his feet, until He comes to whom it belongs." In other words, this passage is [Messianic](#), looking ahead to the coming of the Great [King](#), Jesus of Nazareth, Son of David, of the Tribe of Judah. This passage looks ahead to the [Millennial](#) reign of Jesus (Isa. 2:1-4) and to the eternal co-regency of Jesus with His Father in [New Jerusalem](#) in connection with [New Earth](#) (Rev. 21-22).

be the obedience of the peoples.¹²²⁰ 49:10c

H 4 The abundance of his reign 49:11-12

J 1 {11} "He ties *his* foal to the vine,¹²²¹ And his donkey's colt to the choice vine; 49:11a

J 2 He washes¹²²² his garments in wine, And his robes in the blood of grapes. 49:11b

J 3 {12} "His eyes¹²²³ are dull¹²²⁴ from wine, And his teeth white from¹²²⁵ milk. 49:12

E 5 Zebulun's dwelling at the seashore near Lebanon 49:13

G 1 The maritime trade benefits for Zebulun

H 1 {13} "Zebulun will dwell at the seashore;¹²²⁶

H 2 And he *shall be* a haven for ships,

G 2 Zebulun a beneficiary of the port of Sidon: And his flank *shall be* toward Sidon.¹²²⁷

E 6 Issachar, strong bearer of burdens at work 49:14-15

¹²²⁰ Gen. 49:10 - obedience of the peoples: The [Messiah](#) will rule as [King](#) over all the earth (Zech. 14:9).

¹²²¹ Gen. 49:11 - vine: The idea is that grape vines will be so plentiful that they will be used for hitching posts. (Allen P. Ross, Genesis, [The Bible Knowledge Commentary](#).) Amos 9:11-15 depicts the prosperity of the coming [Millennial Kingdom](#). Portions of Isaiah 60 describe the [Millennial Kingdom](#), while other portions focus especially on [New Jerusalem](#) and [New Earth](#).

¹²²² Gen. 49:11 - washes: The idea is that the fruit of the vine will be as common as laundry water. Allen P. Ross, Genesis, [The Bible Knowledge Commentary](#).

¹²²³ Gen. 49:12 - eyes, teeth: A picturesque way of describing the abundance of wine and milk. Allen P. Ross, Genesis, [The Bible Knowledge Commentary](#).

¹²²⁴ Gen. 49:12 - dull: [NASB](#) footnote: "Or *darker than*"

¹²²⁵ Gen. 49:12 - white from: [NASB](#) footnote: "Or *whiter than*"

¹²²⁶ Gen. 49:13 - seashore: This is not to be taken as though Zebulun would be situated adjacent the Mediterranean Sea, for it was not. Rather, its near proximity to the Sea would allow it to reap the benefits of being nearby. Zebulun would be sandwiched between Asher on its west and Naphtali on its east. (Allen P. Ross, Genesis, [The Bible Knowledge Commentary](#)).

¹²²⁷ Gen. 49:13 - Sidon: Though Zebulun was some distance SE of Sidon, it would still benefit from this major (now Lebanese) seaport. It is also possible that at one point a portion of Zebulun did, in fact, touch the Mediterranean.

- G 1 Issachar likened to a beast of burden 49:14
 - H 1 {14} "Issachar is a strong donkey,
 - H 2 Lying down between the sheepfolds.
- G 2 The good situation of Issachar 49:15a
 - H 1 {15} "When he saw that a resting place was good
 - H 2 And that the land was pleasant,
- G 3 The accommodating nature of the tribe of Issachar 49:15b
 - H 1 The destiny of Issachar: He bowed his shoulder to bear *burdens*,
 - H 2 The enslavement of Issachar: And became a slave at forced labor.¹²²⁸
- E 7 Dan, a judge, expert in quick-strike guerilla warfare 49:16-18
 - G 1 Dan's role as a judge 49:16
 - H 1 {16} "Dan shall judge his people,¹²²⁹
 - H 2 As one of the tribes of Israel.
 - G 2 Dan's treachery 49:17-18
 - H 1 {17} "Dan shall be a serpent in the way,¹²³⁰ 49:17
 - H 2 A horned snake in the path,
 - H 3 That bites the horse's heels,
 - H 4 So that his rider falls backward.
 - G 3 Jacob's longing for Yahweh's ultimate salvation: {18} "For Your salvation I wait, O LORD. 49:18
- E 8 Gad, a raider 49:19

¹²²⁸ Gen. 49:15 - slave at forced labor: "Issachar, located in the fertile broad pleasant plain of Esdraelon, was often subject to invading armies" (Allen P. Ross, Genesis, [The Bible Knowledge Commentary](#)).

¹²²⁹ Gen. 49:16 - Dan shall judge his people: This was fulfilled through the judgeship of Samson, which benefitted all [Israel](#) (Judges 13-16). So [Constable](#).

¹²³⁰ Gen. 49:17 - Dan shall be a serpent in the way: Perhaps this is a reference to Dan's leading [Israel](#) into idolatry (Judges 17-18). So [Constable](#).

- G 1 {19} "As for Gad, raiders shall raid him,¹²³¹
- G 2 But he will raid *at* their heels.
- E 9 Asher, sponsor of gourmet food 49:20
- G 1 {20} "As for Asher, his food shall be rich,
- G 2 And he will yield royal dainties.
- E 10 Naphtali, speaker of beautiful words 49:21
- G 1 {21} "Naphtali is a doe let loose,
- G 2 He gives beautiful words.
- E 11 Joseph, a fruitful bough, superlatively *blessed* 49:22-26
- G 1 Joseph's fruitfulness 49:22
- H 1 {22} "Joseph is a fruitful bough,¹²³²
- H 2 A fruitful bough¹²³³ by a spring;
- H 3 *Its* branches¹²³⁴ run over a wall.
- G 2 The attacks on Joseph by his brothers 49:23
- H 1 {23} "The archers bitterly attacked him,¹²³⁵
- H 2 And shot *at him* and harassed him;
- G 3 The resilience of Joseph 49:24a
- H 1 {24} But his bow remained firm,

¹²³¹ Gen. 49:19 - As for Gad, raiders shall raid him: The name Gad means "A Troop." There are repeated allusions to warfare in this verse. This prophecy by Jacob seems to mean that Gad would be a warlike tribe, sometimes conquering, sometimes being conquered. In the end, Gad would be victorious. See [Gill](#).

¹²³² Gen. 49:22 - bough: [NASB](#) footnote: "A literal translation: *son*" [[JTB](#): "bough" translates the Hebrew word for "son," *ben*, [1121](#)]. So also the next occurrence.]

¹²³³ Gen. 49:22 - bough: Literally, "son" (*ben*, [1121](#)).

¹²³⁴ Gen. 49:22 - branches: [NASB](#) footnote: "A literal translation: *daughters*". [JTB](#): The point of this prophecy is that Joseph would be a prolific tribe. His two sons, Ephraim and Manasseh, would comprise a huge percentage of the nation of [Israel](#) by population.

¹²³⁵ Gen. 49:23 - the archers bitterly attacked him: A reference to Joseph's brothers, who so despised him that they sold him into slavery (Gen. 37).

- H 2 And his arms were agile,
- G 4 Sustained by God 49:24b-25a
 - H 1 From the hands of the Mighty One of Jacob 49:24b
 - H 2 (From there is the Shepherd, 49:24c
 - H 3 the Stone of Israel), 49:24d
 - H 4 {25} From the God of your father who helps you, 49:25a
- G 5 Blessed by God: And by the Almighty who blesses you ¹²³⁶ 49:25b-26
 - H 1 *With* blessings of heaven above, ¹²³⁷ 49:25b
 - H 2 Blessings of the deep that lies beneath, 49:25c
 - H 3 Blessings of the breasts and of the womb. 49:25d
 - H 4 {26} "The blessings of your father 49:26a
 - J 1 Have surpassed the blessings of my ancestors
 - J 2 Up to the utmost bound of the everlasting hills;
 - H 5 May they be on the head of Joseph, 49:26b
 - H 6 And on the crown of the head of the one distinguished among his brothers. 49:26c
- E 12 Benjamin, a fierce warrior 49:27
 - G 1 {27} "Benjamin is a ravenous wolf; ¹²³⁸
 - G 2 In the morning he devours the prey,
 - G 3 And in the evening he divides the spoil."

¹²³⁶ Gen. 49:25 - the Almighty who blesses you: This chapter is all about blessing. Jacob made certain that his son Joseph would be ultimately blessed through his sons Ephraim and Manasseh. "Blesses" is the [Piel Imperfect](#) of the verb *báarak'* ([1288](#)).

¹²³⁷ Gen. 49:25 - *with* blessings of heaven above: Every occurrence of "blessings" in vv. 25, 26 is the noun *berákâh'* ([1293](#)). This noun is used 16X in Genesis. Six of the uses have to do with Joseph.

¹²³⁸ Gen. 49:27 - Benjamin is a ravenous wolf: The tribe of Benjamin had many valiant warriors (Judg. 20:16; 1 Chron. 8:40; ch. 12; 2 Chron. 14:8; 17:17). In a civil war between Benjamin and the other tribes (Judges 20), 26,000 troops from Benjamin twice routed the opposing Israeli representative tribe, killing 22,000 one day and 18,000 the next. On the third day, Benjamin was overwhelmingly defeated on account of the promise of Yahweh.

E 13 The summary of Jacob's blessings 49:28

- G 1 {28} All these are the twelve tribes of Israel,¹²³⁹
- G 2 and this is what their father said to them when he blessed them.
- G 3 He blessed them, every one with the blessing appropriate to him.¹²⁴⁰

D 4 Jacob's death and burial 49:29 - 50:14

E 1 Jacob's charge of burial at Mamre in [Canaan](#); his death 49:29-33

- G 1 Jacob's charge: {29} Then he charged them and said to them, [49:29a] 49:29-32
- H 1 His imminent death: "I am about to be gathered to my people; 49:29b
- H 2 His choice of burial site: bury me with my fathers¹²⁴¹ in the cave that is in the field of Ephron the Hittite, [49:29c] 49:29c-30
- J 1 {30} in the cave that is in the field of Machpelah, which is before Mamre, in the land of Canaan, 49:30a
- J 2 which Abraham bought along with the field from Ephron the Hittite for a burial site. 49:30b
- H 3 His reasons – historical continuity 49:31
- J 1 {31} "There they buried Abraham and his wife Sarah,
- J 2 there they buried Isaac and his wife Rebekah,

¹²³⁹ Gen. 49:28 - All these are the twelve tribes of Israel: As recorded by Moses, these prophecies / blessings recorded in advance the fates of the official twelve clans or tribes of the nation of [Israel](#). "Tribes" is the plural of *shé'bet* (7626). This noun has the primary meaning of *rod, staff, club, sceptre* (BDB). This meaning is evident in such passages as Psa. 2:9; 23:4; 45:6, along with other poetic and prophetic books. These words connote power and authority. There is, however, a derived meaning, referring to an authoritative division of the nation of [Israel](#) based on the twelve sons of Jacob. That meaning is the word "tribe," the overwhelming translation in the historical books of the OT, especially in Numbers through 2 Chronicles.

¹²⁴⁰ Gen. 49:28 - He blessed them, every one with the blessing appropriate to him: These prophecies (Gen. 49:1) were here designated as a "blessing" (*berâkâh'* 1293) appropriate to the character of each son.

¹²⁴¹ Gen. 49:29 - bury me with my fathers: This request was an act of faith in God. Jacob believed that God had given him and his family the land of Canaan. They did not yet own the entire land, but Abraham had purchased from the sons of Heth (Gen. 49:32) the specified cave and surrounding land as a permanent possession (Gen. 23:1-20).

- J 3 and there I buried Leah–
- H 4 His right to burial 49:32
 - J 1 {32} the field and the cave that is in it,
 - J 2 purchased from the sons of Heth."
- G 2 Jacob's death 49:33
 - H 1 {33} When Jacob finished charging his sons,
 - H 2 he drew his feet into the bed
 - H 3 and breathed his last,
 - H 4 and was gathered to his people.
- E 2 Jacob's forty-day embalming 50:1-3
 - G 1 Joseph's sorrow: {1} Then Joseph fell on his father's face, and wept over him and kissed him.¹²⁴² 50:1
 - G 2 Joseph's command to embalm: {2} Joseph commanded his servants the physicians to embalm his father. So the physicians embalmed Israel. 50:2
 - G 3 The time involved 50:3
 - H 1 For embalming: {3} Now forty days were required for it, for such is the period required for embalming.
 - H 2 For mourning: And the Egyptians wept for him seventy days.
- E 3 Jacob's burial in [Canaan](#) 50:4-14
 - G 1 Joseph's request to Pharaoh 50:4-5
 - H 1 Joseph's enlistment of Pharaoh's household to speak on his behalf: {4} When the days of mourning for him were past, Joseph spoke to the household of Pharaoh, saying, "If now I have found favor in your sight, please speak to Pharaoh, saying, 50:4

¹²⁴² Gen. 50:1 - Then Joseph fell on his father's face, and wept over him and kissed him: This is touching evidence that Joseph deeply loved his father. Did the other brothers weep over their father? The text does not record that they did. The blessings of the preceding chapter were definitely slanted in favor of Joseph. I suspect the other brothers continued to harbor some ill will against their father for his obvious favoritism toward Joseph. But we cannot prove that. It is an argument from silence. Nevertheless, no evidence is presented in the text that the other brothers wept over their father. In the [sovereignty](#) of God, the fact remains that Joseph's two sons each count as an official tribe of [Israel](#). That is symbolic of the special bond between Joseph and his father.

- H 2 His father's instructions: {5} 'My father made me swear, saying, 50:5a
- J 1 "Behold, I am about to die;
- J 2 in my grave which I dug for myself in the land of Canaan, there you shall bury me."
- H 3 His request to depart to bury his father: Now therefore, please let me go up and bury my father; then I will return.'" 50:5b
- G 2 Pharaoh's permission: {6} Pharaoh said, "Go up and bury your father, as he made you swear." 50:6
- G 3 The entourage to [Canaan](#) 50:7-9
- H 1 Joseph: {7} So Joseph went up to bury his father, 50:7a
- H 2 The Egyptian officials 50:7b
- J 1 and with him went up all the servants of Pharaoh,¹²⁴³
- J 2 the elders of his household
- J 3 and all the elders of the land of Egypt,
- H 3 The descendants of Jacob 50:8
- J 1 {8} and all the household of Joseph
- J 2 and his brothers
- J 3 and his father's household;
- J 4 The exceptions: they left only their little ones and their flocks and their herds in the land of Goshen.
- H 4 The Egyptian military escort 50:9
- J 1 {9} There also went up with him both chariots and horsemen;

¹²⁴³ Gen. 50:7 - and with him went up all the servants of Pharaoh: The departure from Egypt to Canaan all the officials of Pharaoh shows the high regard with which Pharaoh and his court esteemed Joseph. [Constable](#), citing [E. W. Hengstenberg](#), *Egypt and the Books of Moses*, pp. 70-71, states, "Jacob's elaborate funeral was probably due, both to the high regard in which the Egyptians held him as Joseph's father, and to the Egyptians' love of showy funeral ceremonies (vv. 7-10)." Citing [Allan P. Ross](#) in "Genesis" in *TBKC*, p. 100, [Constable](#) states, "The Egyptians mourned for Jacob "seventy days," just two days less than they normally mourned the death of a Pharaoh."

J 2 and it was a very great company.

G 4 The mourning in [Canaan](#) 50:10-11

H 1 The lamentation at Atad 50:10

J 1 The location: {10} When they came to the threshing floor of Atad, which is beyond the Jordan,

J 2 The lamentation: they lamented there with a very great and sorrowful lamentation;

J 3 The time: and he observed seven days mourning for his father.

H 2 The reaction of the [Canaanites](#) 50:11

J 1 The [Canaanite](#) observation: {11} Now when the inhabitants of the land, the Canaanites, saw the mourning at the threshing floor of Atad, they said, "This is a grievous mourning for the Egyptians."

J 2 The origin of name: Therefore it was named Abel-mizraim,¹²⁴⁴ which is beyond the Jordan.

G 5 The burial site 50:12-13

H 1 The obedience of Jacob's sons: {12} Thus his sons did for him as he had charged them; 50:12

H 2 Their burial of Jacob in the cave of Machpelah 50:13

J 1 The proper land: {13} for his sons carried him to the land of Canaan

J 2 The proper cave: and buried him in the cave¹²⁴⁵ of the field of Machpelah before Mamre, which Abraham had bought along with the field for a burial site from Ephron the Hittite.

G 6 The return to Egypt 50:14

H 1 {14} After he had buried his father,

H 2 Joseph returned to Egypt,

¹²⁴⁴ Gen. 50:11 - Abel Mizraim: This name means "Mourning of the Egyptians." ([NetBible.org](#), footnote at Gen. 50:11).

¹²⁴⁵ Gen. 50:13 - cave: This burial site is in the modern day city of [Hebron](#).

H 3 he and his brothers,

H 4 and all who had gone up with him to bury his father.

C 9 Joseph's assurance of forgiveness and protection for his brothers 50:15-21

D 1 The fear of Joseph's brothers 50:15

E 1 The occasion – their father's death: {15} When Joseph's brothers saw that their father was dead, they said,

E 2 Their fear of revenge: "What if Joseph bears a grudge against us and pays us back in full for all the wrong which we did to him!"

D 2 The spurious request of the brothers 50:16-17b

E 1 Their attribution of their request to their father: {16} So they sent *a message* to Joseph, saying, "Your father charged before he died,"¹²⁴⁶ saying, 50:16

E 2 The pseudo-request of Jacob for forgiveness: {17} "Thus you shall say to Joseph, "Please forgive, I beg you, the transgression of your brothers and their sin, for they did you wrong." ' 50:17a

E 3 The brothers' request for forgiveness: And now, please forgive the transgression of the servants of the God of your father." 50:17b

D 3 The emotional reaction of Joseph: And Joseph wept when they spoke to him.¹²⁴⁷ 50:17c

D 4 The submission of Joseph's brothers: {18} Then his brothers also came and fell down before him and said, "Behold, we are your servants."¹²⁴⁸ 50:18

D 5 Joseph's kindly reply 50:19-21

E 1 Not to fear: {19} But Joseph said to them, "Do not be afraid, 50:19a

E 2 He is not God's spokesman: for am I in God's place? 50:19b

¹²⁴⁶ Gen. 50:16 - Your father charged before he died: This was a fiction created by the brothers to protect themselves. It reveals three things. (1) They were willing to be dishonest to protect their own interests. (2) They were counting on the obvious love that Joseph had for his father. (3) They didn't really understand Joseph's ability to forgive and his good will for both his father and his father's sons, his own brothers. In other words, they didn't really know Joseph's good character.

¹²⁴⁷ Gen. 50:17 - Joseph wept when they spoke to him: This is the final occurrence of the verb *bākāh'* (1058) in Genesis. It appears here as a [Qal Imperfect](#). It shows the emotional heart of Joseph, but it also exposes the traumatic life he had endured at the hands of his brothers. Joseph had forgiven, but the wounds were still there.

¹²⁴⁸ Gen. 50:18 - Behold, we are your servants: Once again, Joseph's brothers voluntarily acknowledge their subservience to Joseph, fulfilling the prophetic dreams which God had given to him (Gen. 37:5-11).

- E 3 His acknowledgment of their evil intent: {20} "As for you, you meant evil against me, 50:20a
 - E 4 God's good in overruling evil intentions 50:20b
 - G 1 To nurture Israel in the womb of Egypt: *but* God meant it for good in order to bring about this present result,¹²⁴⁹
 - G 2 To preserve Israel alive: to preserve many people alive.
 - E 5 His comforting promise of provision 50:21
 - G 1 {21} "So therefore, do not be afraid;
 - G 2 I will provide for you and your little ones." So he comforted them and spoke kindly to them.
- C 10 Joseph's request for burial in [Canaan](#); his death 50:22-26
- D 1 The life-span of Joseph in Egypt 50:22
 - E 1 Joseph's situation in Egypt: {22} Now Joseph stayed in Egypt, he and his father's household,
 - E 2 Joseph's life-span: and Joseph lived one hundred and ten years. 50:22
 - D 2 The progeny of Joseph 50:23
 - E 1 Of Ephraim: {23} Joseph saw the third generation of Ephraim's sons; Of Manasseh: also the sons of Machir, the son of Manasseh, were born on Joseph's knees.
 - D 3 The request of Joseph to be buried in [Canaan](#) 50:24-25
 - E 1 His impending death: {24} Joseph said to his brothers, "I am about to die, 50:24a
 - E 2 His belief in their return to [Canaan](#): but God will surely take care of you and bring you up from this land to the land which He promised on oath to Abraham, to Isaac and to Jacob." 50:24b
 - E 3 The oath of cooperation required by Joseph: {25} Then Joseph made the sons of Israel swear, saying, "God will surely take care of you,

¹²⁴⁹ Gen. 50:20 - God meant it for good to bring about this present result: Joseph is a remarkable Biblical example of one who lived out in his own life the truth of Romans 8:28 centuries before it was written – the truth that God works all things together for good on behalf of those who love Him, who are called according to His purpose. This is an encouragement to me personally. I have experienced dysfunction in my family and in my extended family that is a source of grief and incredulity to me. I cannot explain it. Yet I believe that God has a plan, the comprehension of which I am incapable in this life. With the eye of faith, I believe that God will one day explain it. Meanwhile, I continue to trust in the wisdom and goodness of God.

and you shall carry my bones up from here." ¹²⁵⁰ 50:25

D 4 The death of Joseph 50:26

E 1 His death: {26} So Joseph died

E 2 His age: at the age of one hundred and ten years;

E 3 His burial: and he was embalmed and placed in a coffin in Egypt. ¹²⁵¹

EXPANDED ANALYTICAL OUTLINE OF GENESIS

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¹²⁵⁰ Gen. 50:25 - you shall carry my bones up from here: Joseph shared the same faith as his father Jacob, his father Isaac, and his father Abraham. He believed that God had given the land of Canaan to the sons of Israel, and that one day Israel would take possession of the land God had given them in perpetuity. Moses made certain Joseph's bones were brought along in Israel's exodus from Egypt (Exod. 13:19). They were buried at Shechem in the plot of ground Jacob had purchased from the sons of Hamor the father of Shechem (Josh. 24:32). The writer of Hebrews cites this request of Joseph as evidence of his faith (Heb. 11:22).

¹²⁵¹ Gen. 50:26 - he was embalmed and placed in a coffin in Egypt: The book of Genesis begins with man placed in a beautiful garden in Eden, able to partake of the tree of life. It ends with a believing patriarch embalmed in a coffin in Egypt. The stark contrast illustrates God's magnificent plan for man along with the tragedy of man's defilement of that plan. But we believers, though in the process of dying, by faith, as Joseph, take hold of God's promises and anticipate that one day, He will fulfill them.