

THOMAS NELSON
NEW KING JAMES VERSION™



Encountering God Study Bible

INSIGHTS FROM BLACKABY MINISTRIES
ON LIVING BY OUR FAITH

Encountering God Study Bible



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NKJV Encountering God Study Bible

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Foreword by Henry Blackaby

Every major turning point in my life was predicated by an encounter with God through His Word. I experienced salvation after meeting God face-to-face through Scripture. My calls into ministry, marriage, and major life choices resulted from unmistakable encounters with God through the pages of the Bible. God designed Scripture that way. The writer of Hebrews said, “For the word of God is living and powerful, and sharper than any two-edged sword, piercing even to the division of soul and spirit, and of joints and marrow, and is a discerner of the thoughts and intentions of the heart” (Heb. 4:12). Such has been my experience.

I grew up in Canada. My father immigrated from England. He modeled before his children a profound trust and commitment to God’s Word. I discovered that for each of my needs, God had an answer in the Bible. And every time I followed the Bible’s guidance, God did amazing things.

I will never forget facing one of the most crucial decisions of my life. I was a young pastor in the Los Angeles area. My wife Marilyn and I had four sons and a daughter still to come. Our church was growing and vibrant. I had a wonderful life. Then Marilyn and I attended a conference at which Baker James Cauthen, the international missions director for our denomination, preached. As he expounded on God’s Word, it was as if Marilyn and I stood in front of almighty God. God, through Scripture, demanded that we surrender our lives to Him. We were to withhold nothing and make no demands. We had to decide if we would obey Him, regardless of the cost. During the altar call, we slipped out of our pew and walked to the front of the auditorium. We surrendered everything to God that day.

Not long after that experience, we received a ridiculous invitation. Faith Baptist Church in Saskatoon, Canada, wanted me to move 1,700 miles to be their pastor. This church had experienced years of struggle and decline. It had dwindled to ten members. Its building was dilapidated. The previous month’s offerings totaled a mere \$90. How could I move my family of seven to such a difficult place? Marilyn and I went to the Lord in His Word. God met with us powerfully, and we knew we must go.

The day we arrived in Saskatoon, God spoke again. A car containing five men pulled into our driveway. They had traveled ninety miles from Prince Albert to ask if I would be their pastor, and I would drive ninety miles twice a week to lead them. It seemed impossible. But as I went to God’s Word, He clearly told me to say

yes. During the next twelve years, I continued to read Scripture, and God kept meeting me there. Every time he spoke, I said yes. God did incredible things. Our little church and its missions started thirty-eight missions, spanning as far as 500 miles east into the neighboring province. God led us to begin a Bible college to train ministers. People regularly told us we were crazy to attempt so much when we had so little. Indeed, it would have been preposterous had we not previously encountered God in His Word. But after we met with God, it appeared foolhardy not to proceed in faith.

Through the years people have asked me to share what I had learned about hearing from God and knowing His will. I eventually wrote those teachings down in a book called *Experiencing God*. In the years since, I have watched many other people encounter God in His Word as well. I remember speaking with a hardened veteran who had served in Vietnam and lost many fellow soldiers. He had steeled himself so he would no longer feel the excruciating pain of those experiences, and he found he could no longer love his wife or children. He had tried desperately to be set free from his hardened heart, but nothing worked. As I spoke with him, I shared from the Bible how God can exchange our heart of stone for a heart of flesh. Suddenly, he began to cry out, “It’s gone! It’s gone!” He told me his calloused heart was gone, and he was filled with love for God and his family once more.

I remember speaking at a Christian university’s chapel service about the holiness of God. Suddenly, holy God encountered us in that auditorium. No one who was in that room will ever forget what happened. Students began rushing to the stage, confessing their sins, and asking God and their fellow students to forgive them. People wept over their transgressions. When people encounter Almighty God, the experience is overwhelming.

Time and time again, I have watched God encounter people through His Word. On many of those occasions, I was preaching and carefully explaining what God said in the Bible when I could almost hear a collective gasp from the congregation. People began to rise up out of their seats and make their way to the front of the auditorium. My sermon wasn’t even finished, but people were desperate to be made right with holy God.

When we encounter God, we cannot remain the same. We must either harden ourselves and resist Him with all our might or surrender to Him and embrace His will with every fiber of

our being. Praise the Lord, we are all just one experience with God away from the most amazing walk with Him we have ever had.

So, I invite you to open this Bible with holy anticipation. In the following pages, you will not be inspired merely by timeless wisdom or majestic literature; you will come face-to-face with your Creator. You can ignore ancient writings, but you must submit to the Lord of the universe.

Throughout this Bible, my sons and I have highlighted many of the Scriptures that have profoundly impacted the greatest Christians

in history. You might be surprised by some of the seemingly obscure verses God has used to launch major revivals and transform great saints. So be forewarned. These pages have not lost their power. God encounters people in His Word today and transforms lives just as mightily as He always has.

Prayerfully open this Bible and ask the Lord to speak to you through its pages. Ready yourself to obey. Prepare for your life to be forever changed. You don't need another Bible reading. You need a fresh encounter with almighty God.

About The Writers

Henry Blackaby earned a BA from the University of British Columbia. He earned a BA and ThM from Golden Gate Baptist Theological Seminary (now Gateway Baptist Theological Seminary). He has earned five honorary doctorates. Best known for writing the Christian classic, *Experiencing God: Knowing and Doing the Will of God*, he has written dozens of books. These include the Gold Medallion winning *Experiencing God: Day by Day* and *Your Church Experiencing God Together*. He has also coauthored *Spiritual Leadership*, *Fresh Encounter*, *Hearing God's Voice*, *Flickering Lamps*, *Being Still with God*, *The Man God Uses*, *Experiencing the Cross*, and *The Solomon Promise*. Henry has spoken in 115 countries as well as at the White House, the Pentagon, and to the United Nations. Henry lives in Atlanta with his wife Marilyn. He serves as the President Emeritus of Blackaby Ministries International.

Richard Blackaby earned a BA Honors in History from the University of Saskatchewan. He also earned an MDiv and PhD from Southwestern Baptist Theological Seminary. He was granted an honorary doctorate from Dallas Baptist University. Richard has co-authored numerous books with his father, Henry, including *Experiencing God*, *Experiencing God: Day by Day*, *Spiritual Leadership*, *Fresh Encounter*, *Being Still with God*, *Flickering Lamps*, and *The Solomon Promise*. Richard has also written numerous other books, including *Living Out of the Overflow*, *The Seasons of God*, *Unlimiting God*, *Putting a Face on Grace*, *The Inspired Leader*, *Called to Be God's Leader: Lessons from the Life of Joshua*, *Experiencing God at Home*, *Rebellious Parenting*, *Developing a Powerful Praying Church*, and *The Ways of God*. Richard serves as the president of Blackaby Ministries International (www.blackaby.org) and travels internationally speaking on leadership, experiencing God, revival, and God in the marketplace.

Thomas Blackaby earned a BED from the University of Saskatchewan, an MDiv BL from Southwestern Baptist Theological Seminary, and a DMin from Golden Gate Baptist Theological Seminary (now Gateway Seminary). He co-authored or authored, *The Man God Uses*, *Anointed to Be God's Servants: How God Blesses Those Who Serve Together*, *The Family God Uses*, *Experiencing God at Home*, *The Commands of Christ*, *Experiencing God at Home Day by Day*, as well as books for children and teenagers. He has served in many ministry positions in several countries and currently serves as a lead pastor near Vancouver, Canada.

Melvin Blackaby earned a BA in history from Hardin-Simmons University. He also

earned an MDiv and PhD from Southwestern Baptist Theological Seminary. Mel co-authored numerous books with his father, Henry, including: the Gold Medallion Award winning *Experiencing God Together*, as well as *What's So Spiritual about Your Gifts*, *Encounters with God*, *Experiencing the Resurrection*, and *Experiencing the Spirit: The Power of Pentecost Every Day*. He has also written *Going the Second Mile* and *Fellowship with Believers*. Mel is the Senior Pastor of First Baptist Church of Jonesboro, Georgia, and is involved in church planting and international missions. He is a sought-after conference speaker.

Norman Blackaby earned a BBS degree in History and Criminal Justice from Hardin-Simmons University and an MDiv with Biblical Languages. He holds a PhD in Biblical Background and Archaeology from Southwestern Seminary. Norman has served as a senior pastor of two churches and as a professor of Biblical Studies. He is the co-author of several books including *Character: The Pulse of a Disciple's Life*, *Encounters with God: Transforming Your Bible Study*, *Experiencing Prayer with Jesus*, and *Called and Accountable: Discovering Your Place in God's Eternal Purpose*, as well as numerous discipleship studies.

Mike Blackaby holds a masters degree from Southeastern Baptist Theological Seminary and a PhD in Worldview and Apologetics from Southern Baptist Theological Seminary. He has co-authored three books with his brother Daniel: *When Worlds Collide: Stepping Out and Standing Out in an Anti-God Culture: Seven Steps to Knowing, Doing, and Experiencing the Will of God for Teens*; and *Experiencing God for Teens*. He is currently a church planter in Victoria, BC, Canada.

Daniel Blackaby earned a PhD in Christianity and the Arts and a ThM in Philosophy, Apologetics, and Worldview from The Southern Baptist Theological Seminary. He also holds a MDiv from Golden Gate Baptist Theological Seminary (now Gateway Seminary) and a BA in English from North Greenville University. He has authored, co-authored, and contributed to multiple books, including *Experiencing God—Teen Bible Study*, *When Worlds Collide: Stepping Up and Standing Out in an Anti-God Culture*, *Apologetical Aesthetics*, and the imaginative young adult fantasy trilogy, *The Lost City Chronicles*. Daniel currently serves at Blackaby Ministries International as the director of The Collision (thecollision.org), a multi-media ministry equipping Christians for cultural engagement, and the Blackaby Bible Institute.

About the *Encountering God Study Bible*

The *Encountering God Study Bible* teaches you how to have daily encounters with God in the Bible. It encourages you to develop a regular habit of Bible reading and study, expecting great things to happen as God acts to engage us in His Word. Explanatory notes shed light on passages where needed. Examples are given of how God has encountered people many times in the past, using ordinary men and women in extraordinary ways to do His will—people in the Scriptures as well as people throughout history who were reading or hearing the Scriptures. And there are many suggestions about ways God might want to encounter you too!

ENCOUNTERING GOD: A MESSAGE FROM THE BLACKABYS

The deepest need of the human heart is to encounter God. People face many needs, some are physical, others are social or emotional. Spiritual needs, however, can only be met by God Himself. Only God can satisfy these desires, and He only does so on His own terms. What people need—in addition to good, sound information about God in Scripture—is a fresh encounter with God.

People need to move from an encounter with a principle or a doctrine to an experience with the living God, who is a Person. Just as in Bible times, being in the presence of the living God is an awesome experience. To stand before Him is to stand before the One who created the universe with only the sound of His voice. And He is the One who graciously provides salvation for all of fallen humanity.

Meeting God is life-changing. Everyday encounters are part of His plan. No one can leave His presence and remain the same.

Here is what most people miss. We do not encounter God. He encounters us. And He initiates encounters with us, not in order to give us warm devotional thoughts, but to forever change our lives. As He reveals His will to us, we are compelled to adjust our lives to His activity and join Him in His work.

We are surrounded by values, standards, and viewpoints that are contrary to Scripture and leave us disoriented to a Holy God. Every time we open God's Word, we have the opportunity to experience a dramatic encounter with the living God that will shake us and change our thinking. This is why we need fresh encounters with God and why we must seek such encounters. We must approach God's Word with hearts

that are willing to obey whatever God says to us. When we reverently and expectantly approach the Scriptures, God is ready to speak life-transforming words to us.

And we will never be the same again.

Wishing you many life-changing encounters with God,

Henry, Richard, Thomas, Melvin, Norman, Mike, and Daniel Blackaby

FEATURES OF THE *ENCOUNTERING GOD STUDY BIBLE*:

- *The New King James Version with notes and references.*
- *Book Introductions:*
Introductions set the scene for each biblical book, detailing its significance, structure, and importance for encountering God.
- *Explanatory Notes:*
Many hundreds of same-page footnotes explain ideas, events, people, or places in the text to make the meaning clear.
- *Encounter Notes:*
Hundreds of notes near relevant Bible texts highlight ways God might choose to encounter you in His word.
- *Historical Encounters:*
Near the pertinent Scripture passages, dramatic encounters with God are recounted in the lives of Christians through the centuries. What God did once He can do again!
- *Character Studies:*
The Bible is not about our view of God, it's about His view of us. Character studies spotlight God's interaction with men and women throughout His Word.
- *Word Studies:*
Significant terms in God's word are described to show their spiritual importance.
- *Encountering a Creative God:*
Aesthetic notes that delve into the rich artistry of God as Creator, highlighting the splendor of His creativity.
- *Explaining the Faith:*
Brief apologetic articles written in defense of the doctrine of Scripture, of why we as believers can be confident in the God of all hope who has brought us near to Him through His Son Jesus Christ.

- *How to Study the Bible:*

The Blackabys share the Bible study method God has used in countless ways.

- *In-text Bible maps plus full-color maps in back*
- *Timeline*

- *Harmony of the Gospels*

- *Read Through the Bible in a Year Plan*

- *Prophecies of the Messiah Fulfilled*

- *Extensive NKJV Bible Concordance including the major Bible words, people, and places*

How To Study The Bible

HEAR GOD SPEAKING IN HIS WORD

The Bible is unique among all literature. It is God's definitive word for humanity. God has provided a written revelation of Himself through the divinely inspired writings of people He appointed to impart His message. The word *inspiration* means "God-breathed" (2 Tim. 3:16). God, through the Holy Spirit, guided the writers of the text to communicate exactly what was on His heart for His people (2 Pet. 1:20, 21). As God's revealed truth, the Scriptures are absolutely authoritative. God's Word is the plumb line or standard by which to evaluate all human activity and reasoning.

"Inspiration of Scripture" can be considered in three ways.

Revelation: the act of God whereby He communicates Himself and His will to people (Amos 3:7; Mic. 4:2; Heb. 1:1, 2).

Inspiration: the influence of the Holy Spirit upon people's minds which rendered them agents of God for the infallible communication of that revelation (2 Tim. 3:16, 17; 2 Pet. 1:21).

Illumination or enlightenment: the divine quickening of the human mind, allowing people to understand the truth that has been revealed and communicated (John 14:26; 16:13; 1 Cor. 2:12–14).

God speaks to His people. As you read your Bible, understand that your Creator wants to communicate with you. To reject the Bible's message is to reject God Himself. To accept His message is to find abundant life, as God purposed when He created you.

The Bible is fascinating because of its diversity and remarkable unity. There are sixty-six books, divided into the Old and New Testaments. The Scriptures were penned by a diverse collection of authors representing a variety of languages and cultures. Its literary forms include historical, legal, poetic, prophetic, gospel, epistle, and apocalyptic. Out of a variety of literary forms, the Bible presents a clear, consistent message from Genesis through Revelation. Like the various instruments in an orchestra, each biblical book contributes to a beautiful, masterful harmony.

God's Word instructs us through relevant teaching on life's critical issues: life and death, sin and salvation, and love and an eternal relationship with God. The Bible relates God's gracious intervention in human history to show us the way of eternal life. More than merely

words on a page, the Bible is an encounter with God Himself. The Bible is often called the "Living Word," for in reading it one discovers that the God of the Word is present and prepared to meet with those who seek Him. No book is more critical to your life than the Bible.

ENCOUNTER GOD IN HIS WORD

The Scriptures are filled with the compelling stories of real people. You will read about the triumphs and shortfalls of kings, politicians, religious leaders, farmers, soldiers, slaves, and even young children. But the essence of the Bible is the Lord Himself. The Bible is God-centered. This study Bible, therefore, is designed to help you encounter God on every page. God is pursuing you for Himself as you read and study His Word. So prepare to meet with Him and enter His presence. Can you imagine a greater opportunity than to interact with the God of the universe? Do not be intimidated by the Bible's length or weighty substance. Approach it with confident expectation. You have been invited to a personal meeting with God! Anticipate an encounter with Him whenever you open His Word. A supernatural transformation happens to those who study the Scriptures with a sincere desire to know God.

God speaks by the Holy Spirit through the Bible. He also communicates during your time of prayer, in your life circumstances, and through the church. Read your Bible in an attitude of prayer, and allow the Holy Spirit to make you aware of God's activity around your life. As He guides you specifically, write down what you learn, meditate on it, and adjust your life to what you have heard. As you go about your day, look to see how the truths He has revealed apply to your life. God is not random, but orderly and intentional in the way He speaks to you. He knows what is in your future. He prepares you to live life from His perspective. Whenever you become confused, hurry to God's Word and ask Him to bring clarity to your situation. Remain in His presence and seek Him with all your heart, and He will illuminate your life.

Understanding the nature of God's Word quickly dispels two common fallacies. First is the perception that the Bible is too difficult for the average person to understand. Neither the brilliant person nor the simple can understand Scripture unaided by the Holy Spirit. But anyone who earnestly seeks God through His Word receives the Holy Spirit's help to attain knowledge of Him. The Bible gives everyone

equal access to spiritual truth. A second myth is that the Bible is irrelevant or somehow removed from real life situations. Of course the truth is exactly the opposite. God is real and wants to be personally involved in your life. He knows your past, your present situation, and the future that lies before you. What could be more practical or more exciting than spending time with God in His Word? He wants to develop a personal, life-transforming relationship with you. The Bible is the most relevant book you'll ever read.

Every person who reads the Bible can learn from it. However, there are prerequisites to obtaining its maximum benefit. First, you must be born again (John 3:3, 5). Physical birth initiates growth. Likewise, we cannot grow spiritually in the knowledge of God until we have been born into His family and have received the gift of His Spirit. Sin has damaged our capacity to know God. To obtain spiritual truth we need the Spirit. Second, your attitude will influence the outcome of your Bible study. Resist the temptation to focus on what others have said about the Bible, and allow the Holy Spirit to guide you as you study God's Word for yourself. Use commentaries only as a secondary source. Third, make a conscious decision ahead of time to act upon whatever the Holy Spirit teaches you. An obedient heart will open the door for truth to come in. Begin your Bible study with prayer, asking the Holy Spirit to guide your thoughts and impress upon you what is on God's heart. Then make plans to adjust your life immediately, whether it involves an attitude change or a specific action. If you are a Christian with a receptive heart and a desire to do God's will, you're in the best position to experience God as never before.

UNDERSTAND WHAT GOD IS SAYING

The variety of writing found in the Bible and the lengthy span between the biblical age and our own generation can make interpreting the Scriptures daunting. However, some guidelines are helpful in understanding the meaning of the text.

As you study a book or passage, consider the original meaning of the words you are reading. What did the author have in mind when he wrote and what would the original recipients have understood when they received the message? When the text was written or spoken, there was an immediate meaning and application for the audience. Here are some suggestions to aid you in your study.

Keep in mind the type of literature you are reading. For example, the books of Kings are historical literature and should be viewed differently than a book of prophecy such as Ezekiel. First and Second Kings present a royal history of the kings of Israel and Judah as God related to His people. The material lays out the facts such as names, dates, and specific events

related to the people of Israel. However, the prophetic books present descriptive visions that often include highly symbolic language. Therefore, when reading Kings you can usually take the literal meaning of the text, while in a book of prophecy many portions must be read figuratively. The different types of writing you will encounter are: poetry, prophecy, narrative, letter (epistles), history, gospel, and apocalyptic.

Second, consider the context in which the material was written. What was going on in the writer's life when the passage was written? As you read Philippians, a book marked by continued teachings on joy, it is significant that Paul was in a Roman prison when he wrote the letter. This fact brought depth and strength to Paul's words as he proclaimed the joy of Christ in the midst of his own harsh circumstances. Knowing the historical setting is also pivotal. For example, the prophets Amos, Hosea, Micah, and Isaiah called the people to return to God to avoid the coming judgment as the Assyrian empire posed a looming threat to their national survival.

Third, watch for significant transition words. In the apostle Paul's letters you will notice long running ideas and thoughts connected by the word "therefore." Consider this a signal to go back and reread the proceeding verses, as they provide needed insights into the passage. Repeated words or ideas such as "truly, truly" or "He opened His mouth and taught them saying" found in the gospels are essentially saying "you need to listen closely because this is important." Highlight the transitional or key words in a passage. Many times a word or idea is emphasized because it is the focal truth for the passage.

Fourth, use the Bible to interpret itself. Some passages are harder to grasp than others. This study Bible has a center column reference which helps you find other verses that teach the same or similar truths, or that use the same wording and phrases. The best explanation of a biblical passage comes from other verses that teach similar truths. For example, a particular event may be briefly recorded in one of the gospels, but expanded upon and explained in a different gospel. Using the Bible to interpret itself also provides a broader understanding of the truth of Scripture. For example, John 14:13 says, "And whatever you ask in My name, that I will do, that the Father may be glorified in the Son." If we were only to read this verse we might conclude that we can have anything we want as long as we ask in Jesus' name. However, when this verse is considered along with 1 John 5:14 ("Now this is the confidence that we have in Him, that if we ask anything according to His will, He hears us") and James 4:3 ("You ask and do not receive, because you ask amiss, that you may spend it on your pleasures"), a much clearer

picture emerges of what it means to ask and receive from the Lord.

Fifth, after you have searched the Scriptures for yourself, you may want to consult a commentary or another helpful resource related to the passage. A commentary can provide insights you may have missed or offer a perspective you had not considered. It is vital, however, that you make it a habit to study the Scriptures for yourself under the guidance of the Holy Spirit before seeking other opinions.

Finally, remember that you are not attempting to create meaning, but to discover the meaning of the text with the Holy Spirit's guidance. Trust that God has given us His Word because He wants to reveal truth. There will be times when specific verses seem to jump off the page and apply directly to your life. At other times you will learn biblical principles that apply to you.

APPLY GOD'S WORD TO YOUR LIFE

Part of the Bible's captivating appeal is that it tells about ordinary people who encountered the living and powerful God. Any encounter with God through the Scriptures will create an opportunity for you to know and experience more of Him. Anticipate that each and every time you read the Scriptures the Holy Spirit will be revealing the ways, nature, and will of God, specifically applying these truths to your life personally.

The psalmist stated "Your word I have hidden in my heart, that I might not sin against You" (Ps. 119:11). In the face of temptation, Jesus quoted Scripture (Matt. 4:1-11). The understanding and application of Scripture in your personal life will become one of the greatest helps to deter you from sinning against God. Scripture will guide your thoughts and actions in the face of difficult times or occasions of temptation. The Psalmist understood this and declared "Your word is a lamp to my feet and a light to my path" (Ps. 119:105). God's Word, when understood and applied, will bring wisdom and direction as you walk through this life. The apostle Paul declared "all scripture is given by

inspiration of God, and is profitable for doctrine, for reproof, for correction, for instruction in righteousness" (2 Tim. 3:16). As we come to know and apply the Scriptures to our lives, we then need to share God's Word with other people whom He brings around us. People do not need our advice; they need God's wisdom. As you teach, preach, or share with others, the content of what you share is vital. God's Word given to a hurting person will bring life. Jesus, declared that the words He spoke would create deep, abiding joy in the lives of the disciples (John 15:11). Jesus also taught that "you shall know the truth, and the truth shall make you free" (John 8:32). When the truth of God's Word is received and applied, people are set free. Therefore, as we relate to others who are in bondage, we must declare God's Word and not our own human reasoning. The power to set people free is clearly seen in Peter's sermon at Pentecost. When the Lord drew a crowd around the disciples, Peter preached truth from the prophet Joel, and three thousand people came to faith in Christ that day (Acts 2).

Biblical interpretation alone is not sufficient for our lives. The truths of Scripture must be applied personally and corporately. The parable of the sower provides a powerful illustration of the blessings or consequences of how we receive God's Word. Reading the Bible for information and never applying its truth is like scattering the seed of the Word on rocky and unproductive soil. However, those who seek to live out and practice the Word of God can expect to see the truths of God manifested greatly in their lives and in the lives of those around them (Matt. 13).

Reading the Bible is not primarily an exercise for information; it is for transformation. It is one thing to know truth, it is another thing to experience the truth of God working in your life. This is your opportunity to encounter God and to be changed in His presence. When God speaks, nothing remains the same. Concentrated time with God will add a dimension to your life that can come only from Him. Jesus said, "He who has ears to hear, let him hear" (Matt. 13:9).

Preface to the New King James Version®

PURPOSE

To understand the heart behind the New King James Version, one need look no further than the stated intentions of the original King James scholars: "Not to make a new translation . . . but to make a good one better." Indebted to the earlier work of William Tyndale and others, they saw their best contribution to consist in revising and enhancing the excellence of the English versions which had sprung from the Reformation of the sixteenth century. In harmony with the purpose of the King James scholars, the translators and editors of the present work have not pursued a goal of innovation. They have perceived the Holy Bible, New King James Version, as a continuation of the labors of the earlier translators, thus unlocking for today's readers the spiritual treasures found especially in the Authorized Version of the Holy Scriptures.

A LIVING LEGACY

For more than four hundred years, and throughout several revisions of its English form, the King James Bible has been deeply revered among the English-speaking peoples of the world. The precision of translation for which it is historically renowned, and its majesty of style, have enabled that monumental version of the Word of God to become the mainspring of the religion, language, and legal foundations of our civilization.

Although the Elizabethan period and our own era share in zeal for technical advance, the former period was more aggressively devoted to classical learning. Along with this awakened concern for the classics came a flourishing companion interest in the Scriptures, an interest that was enlivened by the conviction that the manuscripts were providentially handed down and were a trustworthy record of the inspired Word of God. The King James translators were committed to producing an English Bible that would be a precise translation, and by no means a paraphrase or a broadly approximate rendering. On the one hand, the scholars were almost as familiar with the original languages of the Bible as with their native English. On the other hand, their reverence for the divine Author and His Word assured a translation of the Scriptures in which only a principle of utmost accuracy could be accepted.

In 1786 Catholic scholar Alexander Geddes said of the King James Bible, "If accuracy and strictest attention to the letter of the text be supposed to constitute an excellent version,

this is of all versions the most excellent." George Bernard Shaw became a literary legend in the twentieth century because of his severe and often humorous criticisms of our most cherished values. Surprisingly, however, Shaw pays the following tribute to the scholars commissioned by King James: "The translation was extraordinarily well done because to the translators what they were translating was not merely a curious collection of ancient books written by different authors in different stages of culture, but the Word of God divinely revealed through His chosen and expressly inspired scribes. In this conviction they carried out their work with boundless reverence and care and achieved a beautifully artistic result."¹ History agrees with these estimates. Therefore, while seeking to maintain the excellent *form* of the traditional English Bible, special care has also been taken in the present edition to guard the *precision* of the King James Version, which is the legacy of the 1611 translators.

COMPLETE EQUIVALENCE IN TRANSLATION

Where new translation has been necessary in the New King James Version, the most complete representation of the original has been rendered by considering the history of usage and etymology of words in their contexts. This principle of complete equivalence seeks to preserve *all* of the information in the text, while presenting it in good literary form. Dynamic equivalence, a relatively recent procedure in Bible translation, commonly results in paraphrasing where a more literal rendering is needed to reflect a specific and vital sense. For example, complete equivalence truly renders the original text in expressions such as "lifted her voice and wept" (Gen. 21:16); "I gave you cleanness of teeth" (Amos 4:6); "Jesus met them, saying, 'Rejoice!'" (Matt. 28:9); and "Woman, what does your concern have to do with Me?" (John 2:4). Complete equivalence translates fully, in order to provide an English text that is both accurate and readable.

In keeping with the principle of complete equivalence, it is the policy to translate interjections which are commonly omitted in modern language renderings of the Bible. As an example, the interjection *behold*, in the older King James editions, continues to have a place in English usage, especially in dramatically calling attention to a spectacular scene, or an event of profound importance such as the Immanuel prophecy of Isaiah 7:14. Consequently, *behold*

¹ G.S. Paine, *The Men Behind the King James Version*, 1977 ed. (Baker Book House: Grand Rapids, MI, 1959), 182-83.

is retained for these occasions in the present edition. However, the Hebrew and Greek originals for this word can be translated variously, depending on the circumstances in the passage. Therefore, in addition to *behold*, words such as *indeed*, *look*, *see*, and *surely* are also rendered to convey the appropriate sense suggested by the context in each case.

In faithfulness to God and to our readers, it was deemed appropriate that all participating scholars sign a statement affirming their belief in the verbal and plenary inspiration of Scripture, and in the inerrancy of the original autographs.

DEVOTIONAL QUALITY

The King James scholars readily appreciated the intrinsic beauty of divine revelation. They accordingly disciplined their talents to render wellchosen English words of their time, as well as a graceful, often musical arrangement of language, which has stirred the hearts of Bible readers through the years. The translators, the committees, and the editors of the present edition, while sensitive to the late-twentieth-century English idiom, and while adhering faithfully to the Hebrew, Aramaic, and Greek texts, have sought to maintain those lyrical and devotional qualities that are so highly regarded in the Authorized Version. This devotional quality is especially apparent in the poetic and prophetic books, although even the relatively plain style of the Gospels and Epistles cannot strictly be likened, as sometimes suggested, to modern newspaper style. The Koine Greek of the New Testament is influenced by the Hebrew background of the writers, for whom even the gospel narratives were not merely flat utterance, but often song in various degrees of rhythm.

THE STYLE

Students of the Bible applaud the timeless devotional character of our historic Bible. Yet it is also universally understood that our language, like all living languages, has undergone profound change since 1611. Subsequent revisions of the King James Bible have sought to keep abreast of changes in English speech. The present work is a further step toward this objective. Where obsolescence and other reading difficulties exist, present-day vocabulary, punctuation, and grammar have been carefully integrated. Words representing ancient objects, such as *chariot* and *phylactery*, have no modern substitutes and are therefore retained.

A special feature of the New King James Version is its conformity to the thought flow of the 1611 Bible. The reader discovers that the sequence and selection of words, phrases, and clauses of the new edition, while much clearer, are so close to the traditional that there is remarkable ease in listening to the reading of either edition while following with the other.

In the discipline of translating biblical and other ancient languages, a standard method of transliteration, that is, the English spelling of untranslated words, such as names of persons and places, has never been commonly adopted. In keeping with the design of the present work, the King James spelling of untranslated words is retained, although made uniform throughout. For example, instead of the spellings *Isaiah* and *Elijah* in the Old Testament, and *Esaias* and *Elias* in the New Testament, *Isaiah* and *Elijah* now appear in both Testaments.

King James doctrinal and theological terms, for example, *propitiation*, *justification*, and *sanctification*, are generally familiar to English-speaking peoples. Such terms have been retained except where the original language indicates need for a more precise translation.

Readers of the Authorized Version will immediately be struck by the absence of several pronouns: *thee*, *thou*, and *ye* are replaced by the simple *you*, while *your* and *yours* are substituted for *thy* and *thine* as applicable. *Thee*, *thou*, *thy* and *thine* were once forms of address to express a special relationship to human as well as divine persons. These pronouns are no longer part of our language. However, reverence for God in the present work is preserved by capitalizing pronouns, including *You*, *Your*, and *Yours*, which refer to Him. Additionally, capitalization of these pronouns benefits the reader by clearly distinguishing divine and human persons referred to in a passage. Without such capitalization the distinction is often obscure, because the antecedent of a pronoun is not always clear in the English translation.

In addition to the pronoun usages of the seventeenth century, the *-eth* and *-est* verb endings, so familiar in the earlier King James editions, are now obsolete. Unless a speaker is schooled in these verb endings, there is common difficulty in selecting the correct form to be used with a given subject of the verb in vocal prayer. That is, should we use *love*, *loveth*, or *lovest*? *do*, *doeth*, *doest*, or *dost*? *have*, *hath*, or *hast*? Because these forms are obsolete, contemporary English usage has been substituted for the previous verb endings.

In older editions of the King James Version, the frequency of the connective *and* far exceeded the limits of present English usage. Also, biblical linguists agree that the Hebrew and Greek original words for this conjunction may commonly be translated otherwise, depending on the immediate context. Therefore, instead of *and*, alternatives such as *also*, *but*, *however*, *now*, *so*, *then*, and *thus* are accordingly rendered in the present edition, when the original language permits.

The real character of the Authorized Version does not reside in its archaic pronouns or verbs or other grammatical forms of the seventeenth

century, but rather in the care taken by its scholars to impart the letter and spirit of the original text in a majestic and reverent style.

THE FORMAT

The format of the New King James Version is designed to enhance the vividness and devotional quality of the Holy Scriptures.

Subject headings assist the reader to identify topics and transitions in the biblical content.

Words or phrases in *italics* indicate expressions in the original language which require clarification by additional English words, as also done throughout the history of the King James Bible.

Poetry is structured as contemporary verse to reflect the poetic form and beauty of the passage in the original language.

The covenant name of God was usually translated from the Hebrew as LORD or GOD (using capital letters as shown) in the King James Old Testament. This tradition is maintained. In the present edition the name is so capitalized whenever the covenant name is quoted in the New Testament from a passage in the Old Testament.

THE OLD TESTAMENT TEXT

The Hebrew Bible has come down to us through the scrupulous care of ancient scribes who copied the original text in successive generations. By the sixth century AD, the scribes were succeeded by a group known as the Masoretes, who continued to preserve the sacred Scriptures for another five hundred years in a form known as the Masoretic Text. Babylonia, Palestine, and Tiberias were the main centers of Masoretic activity; but by the tenth century AD the Masoretes of Tiberias, led by the family of ben Asher, gained the ascendancy. Through subsequent editions, the ben Asher text became in the twelfth century the only recognized form of the Hebrew Scriptures.

Daniel Bomberg printed the first Rabbinic Bible in 1516–17; that work was followed in 1524–25 by a second edition prepared by Jacob ben Chayyim and also published by Bomberg. The text of ben Chayyim was adopted in most subsequent Hebrew Bibles, including those used by the King James translators. The ben Chayyim text was also used for the first two editions of Rudolph Kittel's *Biblia Hebraica* of 1906 and 1912. In 1937 Paul Kahle published a third edition of *Biblia Hebraica*. This edition was based on the oldest dated manuscript of the ben Asher text, the Leningrad Manuscript B19a (AD 1008), which Kahle regarded as superior to that used by ben Chayyim.

For the New King James Version, the text used was the 1967/1977 Stuttgart edition of the *Biblia Hebraica*, with frequent comparisons being made with the Bomberg edition of 1524–25. The Septuagint (Greek) Version of the

Old Testament and the Latin Vulgate also were consulted. In addition to referring to a variety of ancient versions of the Hebrew Scriptures, the New King James Version draws on the resources of relevant manuscripts from the Dead Sea caves. In the few places where the Hebrew was so obscure that the 1611 King James was compelled to follow one of the versions, but where information is now available to resolve the problems, the New King James Version follows the Hebrew text. Significant variations are recorded in the translators' notes.

THE NEW TESTAMENT TEXT

There is more manuscript support for the New Testament than for any other body of ancient literature. Over five thousand Greek, eight thousand Latin, and many more manuscripts in other languages attest the integrity of the New Testament. There is only one basic New Testament used by Protestants, Roman Catholics, and Orthodox, by conservatives and liberals. Minor variations in hand copying have appeared through the centuries, before mechanical printing began about AD 1450.

Some variations exist in the spelling of Greek words, in word order, and in similar details. These ordinarily do not show up in translation and do not affect the sense of the text in any way.

Other manuscript differences such as omission or inclusion of a word or a clause, and two paragraphs in the Gospels, should not overshadow the overwhelming degree of *agreement* which exists among the ancient records. Bible readers may be assured that the most important differences in English New Testaments of today are due, not to manuscript divergence, but to the way in which translators view the task of translation: How literally should the text be rendered? How does the translator view the matter of biblical inspiration? Does the translator adopt a paraphrase when a literal rendering would be quite clear and more to the point? The New King James Version follows the historic precedent of the Authorized Version in maintaining a literal approach to translation, except where the idiom of the original language cannot be translated directly into our tongue.

The King James New Testament was based on the traditional text of the Greek-speaking churches, first published in 1516, and later called the Textus Receptus or Received Text. Although based on the relatively few available manuscripts, these were representative of many more which existed at the time but only became known later. In the late nineteenth century, B. Westcott and F. Hort taught that this text had been officially edited by the fourth-century church, but a total lack of historical evidence for this event has forced a revision of the theory. It is now widely held that the Byzantine Text that largely supports the Textus Receptus has

as much right as the Alexandrian or any other tradition to be weighed in determining the text of the New Testament.

Since the 1880s most contemporary translations of the New Testament have relied upon a relatively few manuscripts discovered chiefly in the late nineteenth and early twentieth centuries. Such translations depend primarily on two manuscripts, Codex Vaticanus and Codex Sinaiticus, because of their greater age. The Greek text obtained by using these sources and the related papyri (our most ancient manuscripts) is known as the Alexandrian Text. However, some scholars have grounds for doubting the faithfulness of Vaticanus and Sinaiticus, since they often disagree with one another, and Sinaiticus exhibits excessive omission.

A third viewpoint of New Testament scholarship holds that the best text is based on the consensus of the majority of existing Greek manuscripts. This text is called the Majority Text. Most of these manuscripts are in substantial agreement. Even though many are late, and none is earlier than the fifth century, usually their readings are verified by papyri, ancient versions, quotations from the early church fathers, or a combination of these. The Majority Text is similar to the Textus Receptus, but it corrects those readings which have little or no support in the Greek manuscript tradition.

Today, scholars agree that the science of New Testament textual criticism is in a state of flux. Very few scholars still favor the Textus Receptus as such, and then often for its historical prestige as the text of Luther, Calvin, Tyndale, and the King James Version. For about a century most have followed a Critical Text (so called because it is edited according to specific principles of textual criticism) which depends heavily upon the Alexandrian type of text. More recently many have abandoned this Critical Text (which is quite similar to the one edited by Westcott and Hort) for one that is more eclectic. Finally, a small but growing number of scholars prefer the Majority Text, which is close to the traditional text except in the Revelation.

In light of these facts, and also because the New King James Version is the fifth revision of a historic document translated from specific Greek texts, the editors decided to retain the traditional text in the body of the New Testament

and to indicate major Critical and Majority Text variant readings in the translators' notes. Although these variations are duly indicated in the translator's notes of the present edition, it is most important to emphasize that fully eighty-five percent of the New Testament text is the same in the Textus Receptus, the Alexandrian Text, and the Majority Text.

The textual notes in the present edition of the New Testament make no evaluation of readings, but do clearly indicate the manuscript sources of readings. They objectively present the facts without such tendentious remarks as "the best manuscripts omit" or "the most reliable manuscripts read." Such notes are value judgments that differ according to varying viewpoints on the text. By giving a clearly defined set of variants the New King James Version benefits readers of all textual persuasions.

Where significant variations occur in the New Testament Greek manuscripts, textual notes are classified as follows:

NU-Text

These variations from the traditional text generally represent the Alexandrian or Egyptian type of text described previously in "The New Testament Text." They are found in the Critical Text published in the twenty-seventh edition of the Nestle-Aland Greek New Testament (N) and in the United Bible Societies' fourth edition (U), hence the acronym, "NU-Text."

M-TEXT

This symbol indicates points of variation in the Majority Text from the traditional text, as also previously discussed in "The New Testament Text." It should be noted that M stands for whatever reading is printed in the published *Greek New Testament According to the Majority Text*, whether supported by overwhelming, strong, or only a divided majority textual tradition.

The textual notes reflect the scholarship of the past 150 years and will assist the reader to observe the variations between the different manuscript traditions of the New Testament. Such information is generally not available in English translations of the New Testament.

Old Testament

THE FIRST BOOK OF MOSES CALLED Genesis

Introduction

The Book of Genesis is the first of five books comprising the Pentateuch, which means “five books.” These five books are Genesis, Exodus, Leviticus, Numbers, and Deuteronomy. In Hebrew, these same books are called the *Torah*, meaning “Instruction” or “Law.” While the Book of Genesis is presented as a single work in the Old Testament, it should be viewed with the other four books of the Pentateuch as a unified work or an anthology.

The Pentateuch divides into two uneven sections: Genesis 1—11 provide a universal history and the origins of creation; Genesis 12—Deuteronomy 34 explains how the Israelites became the covenant people of God. Genesis provides a theological history addressing the beginning of time to the death of Joseph in Egypt.

The title *Genesis* comes from the Greek word meaning “origin” or “source.” The Hebrew title was drawn from the first word of Genesis 1, translated “In the beginning.” Both titles are appropriate, as Genesis sets the foundation for much of the theology of the Old Testament, including topics such as the character of God, creation, salvation, sin, family, mission, humanity, covenant, and hope.

While the work is anonymous, the testimony of the Old and New Testaments and church tradition has attributed authorship of Genesis and the rest of the Pentateuch to Moses. The Old Testament indicates that Moses was commanded to write down the events of the Israelites’ journey as God led them to the Promised Land (Ex. 17:14; Num. 33:1–2). He was also commanded to record the laws given to them by God (Ex. 24:4, 7; 34:27–35). In addition, many New Testament scriptures attribute the first five books to Moses (Mark 12:26; Luke 2:22; 16:29; 24:27; John 5:46–47; 7:19; Acts 13:39; Rom. 10:5).

Significance

Genesis presents undeniable truths about God and humanity that stand in clear contrast to other religious texts from the ancient Near East. In a time when different cultures believed in multiple gods that fought and manipulated each other, Genesis begins with an explicit declaration of the sovereign God who has always been in existence (1:1). God chose to create the universe and exercise His dominion over His creation. Genesis presents a vital understanding of mankind’s role and relationship to God in contrast to the surrounding religions of the ancient Near East.

The days of creation (1:1—2:3) move toward the climax at day six with the creation of man and woman. God viewed people as the high point of creation from the very beginning, making them in His image (1:26). Humanity was not merely created to serve the needs of God as other religions claimed; rather, God desired an intimate relationship and fellowship with those He had created.

The Book of Genesis explains God’s choice to use Abraham as the father of Israel and the nation’s organization around the tribes of the sons of Abraham. In addition, Genesis records God’s covenant with Abram (ch. 15), which provides the foundation for understanding much of the Old Testament, namely, God’s desire to use the children of Abraham to be a blessing to the rest of the world.

Structure

The book has two distinct sections. The first section, 1:1—11:26, includes the creation accounts, the fall of humankind, God’s judgment, the deliverance of Noah, and the record of the spread of people around the world. The second section records how God worked in the lives of Abraham (11:27—25:18), Isaac (25:19—26:35), Jacob (27:1—37:1), and Joseph (37:2—50:26) to bring about His purposes to create a

people set apart for Himself. Another way to view the structure of Genesis is based on the book's use of the word *toledoth*, meaning "begettings." Based on this word, the material can be divided as follows:

Creation (1:1—2:2:3)

Toledoth of the Heavens and Earth (2:4—4:26)

Toledoth of Adam (5:1—6:8)

Toledoth of Noah (6:9—9:29)

Toledoth of Shem, Ham, and Japheth (10:1—11:9)

Toledoth of Shem (11:10—26)

Toledoth of Terah (11:27—25:11)

Toledoth of Ishmael (25:12—18)

Toledoth of Isaac (25:19—35:29)

Toledoth of Esau (36:1—37:1)

Toledoth of Jacob (37:2—50:6)

Encountering God Through Genesis

The Bible's purpose is not merely to provide a history of the people who walked with God in ancient times, but to reveal God Himself: His nature, His purposes, and His ways. Genesis provides a record of how God walked with those He chose to use to accomplish His plans. The God we worship is the same yesterday, today, and forever (Heb. 13:8). He does not change with time. As you study this book, be careful to connect what is revealed about God's nature to your present situation in life. For example, God is the Creator of all and remains in control over His creation. This truth is essential as we live out our faith in a troubled world. While it may seem that evil or the world is taking over or has the upper hand, the truth is that God has never relinquished His control of His creation.

Take time to let the Holy Spirit bring an appreciation of the place of humanity in God's creation. People are the climax in a creation that God called "good." Let this truth shape your understanding of how God views you. When you read in other parts of Scripture the care God takes in knowing you, your thoughts, your days, and your future, remember the care He took in creating you. Amid such a unique and complex universe, God viewed humanity as superior to everything else He made. This same truth helps us understand why God cares so much about how we treat other people. The call in Scripture to take care of the widow, orphan, and foreigner, or the challenges to love and respect others, find their origins in Genesis and the creation. As you encounter God in these chapters, it will change how you view and interact with others God created in His image. You will be challenged as you read the opening chapters of Genesis and see how God continues to judge while consistently relating to humanity in mercy.

While encountering God in the patriarchal narratives of Genesis 12—50, you will be confronted with many truths. However, two essential facts stand out: God faithfully fulfills His promises and Abraham worked out his faith in God in the middle of the vagaries of life. Take note of how God protected Abram: in Egypt (12:10—20), during a dispute with Lot (14:14—18), in a regional war (14:20), and during a time of great discouragement (15:1—21). Remember that God has a proven track record of faithfulness during tough times that will encourage you in your own life. Alongside God's faithfulness, we see how Abraham continued to walk with God in faith. There were times he did well (12:4; 13:8; 14:21—24; 15:6), and there were times that he struggled (12:13; 15:2). The testimony of these passages encourages us to continue to live faithfully before God. Of course, there will be times of failure, but the teachings from Abraham's accounts call us not to allow failures to discourage us from coming back to God and continuing fellowship with Him.

THE HISTORY OF CREATION

In the ^abeginning ^bGod created the heavens and the earth.

2 The earth was ^awithout form, and void; and darkness ¹was on the face of the deep. ^bAnd the Spirit of God was hovering over the face of the waters.

3 ^aThen God said, ^b“Let there be ^clight”; and there was light.

4 And God saw the light, that *it was* good; and God divided the light from the darkness.

5 God called the light Day, and the ^adarkness He called Night. ¹So the evening and the morning were the first day.

ENCOUNTER NOTE

Gen. 1:1

In the Beginning — God

The Old Testament opens with the understanding that God has always been in existence. He had no creator, nor was He or will He ever be dependent upon anyone or anything.

WORD STUDY

God

Gen. 1:1 The opening creation account 1:1—2:3 uses *Elohim* exclusively to refer to God rather than *Yahweh* (Lord). *Elohim* is used more frequently than any other name for God. The form is a plural form alongside a singular verb to express honor or majesty. This form is a “majestic plural” that reflects special reverence.

WORD STUDY

Created

Gen. 1:1 “Created” (*bārā*) is used to describe a new or special activity, and its subject is always God. Its use in the opening verse declares that God and God alone began a new work when He chose to create the universe.

CHAPTER 1

1^a Ps. 102:25; Is. 40:21; [John 1:1—3; Heb. 1:10] ^b Gen. 2:4; [Ps. 8:3; 89:11; 90:2]; Is. 44:24; Acts 17:24; Rom. 1:20; [Heb. 1:2; 11:3]; Rev. 4:11

2^a Jer. 4:23; ^b [Gen. 6:3]; Job 26:13; Ps. 33:6; 104:30; Is. 40:13, 14 ¹Words in italic type have been added for clarity. They are not found in the original Hebrew or Aramaic.

3^a Ps. 33:6, 9 ^b 2 Cor. 4:6 ^c [Heb. 11:3]

5^a Job 37:18; Ps. 19:2; 33:6; 74:16; 104:20; 136:5; Jer. 10:12 ¹Lit. *And evening was, and morning was, a day, one.*

6^a Job 37:18; Jer. 10:12; 2 Pet. 3:5 ¹expanse

7^a Job 38:8—11; Prov. 8:27—29 ^b Ps. 148:4

9^a Job 26:10; Ps. 104:6—9; Prov. 8:29; Jer. 5:22; 2 Pet. 3:5 ^b Ps. 24:1, 2; 33:7; 95:5

11^a Ps. 65:9—13; 104:14; Heb. 6:7 ^b 2 Sam. 16:1; Luke 6:44

14^a Deut. 4:19; Ps. 74:16; 136:5—9 ^b Ps. 104:19

16^a Ps. 136:8 ^b Deut. 17:3; Ps. 8:3 ^c Deut. 4:19; Job 38:7; Is. 40:26 ¹luminaries

17^a Gen. 15:5; Jer. 33:20, 25

WORD STUDY

Made

Gen. 1:7 “Made” (*ʿāšā*) is a word that means “to make something from existing material.” This is important as it shows God was involved and in contact with His creation.

6 Then God said, ^a“Let there be a ¹firmament in the midst of the waters, and let it divide the waters from the waters.”

7 Thus God made the firmament, ^aand divided the waters which *were* under the firmament from the waters which *were* ^babove the firmament; and it was so.

8 And God called the firmament Heaven. So the evening and the morning were the second day.

9 Then God said, ^a“Let the waters under the heavens be gathered together into one place, and ^blet the dry *land* appear”; and it was so.

10 And God called the dry *land* Earth, and the gathering together of the waters He called Seas. And God saw that *it was* good.

11 Then God said, “Let the earth ^abring forth grass, the herb *that* yields seed, *and* the ^bfruit tree *that* yields fruit according to its kind, whose seed *is* in itself, on the earth”; and it was so.

12 And the earth brought forth grass, the herb *that* yields seed according to its kind, and the tree *that* yields fruit, whose seed *is* in itself according to its kind. And God saw that *it was* good.

13 So the evening and the morning were the third day.

14 Then God said, “Let there be ^alights in the firmament of the heavens to divide the day from the night; and let them be for signs and ^bseasons, and for days and years;

15 “and let them be for lights in the firmament of the heavens to give light on the earth”; and it was so.

16 Then God made two great ¹lights: the ^agreater light to rule the day, and the ^blesser light to rule the night. *He made* ^cthe stars also.

17 God set them in the firmament of the ^aheavens to give light on the earth,

1:1 Modern cosmology confirms that time, matter, and energy came into being at a specific moment in the past.

1:2 For ancient peoples, the “deep,” which is covered in “darkness,” as well as being “without form, and void,”

referred to the realm of chaos. God brought order to that which was considered uncontrollable.

1:3 It is essential to recognize that God simply spoke and formed His creation. From the first verses of Genesis, God’s authority is on display.

18 and to ^arule over the day and over the night, and to divide the light from the darkness. And God saw that *it was* good.
19 So the evening and the morning were the fourth day.

20 Then God said, “Let the waters abound with an abundance of living ¹creatures, and let birds fly above the earth across the face of the ²firmament of the heavens.”

21 So ^aGod created great sea creatures and every living thing that moves, with which the waters abounded, according to their kind, and every winged bird according to its kind. And God saw that *it was* good.

22 And God blessed them, saying, “Be fruitful and multiply, and fill the waters in the seas, and let birds multiply on the earth.”

23 So the evening and the morning were the fifth day.

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

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

26 Then God said, “Let Us make man in Our image, according to Our likeness; ^blet them have dominion over the fish of the sea, over the birds of the air, and over the cattle, over ¹all the earth and over every creeping thing that creeps on the earth.”

18 ^a Jer. 31:35

20 ¹ souls
² expanse

21 ^a Ps. 104:25–28

22 ^a Gen. 8:17

26 ^a Gen. 9:6;
Ps. 100:3; Eccl.

7:29; [Eph.
4:24]; James
3:9 ^b Gen. 9:2;
Ps. 8:6–8 ¹ Syr.
all the wild
animals of

27 ^a Gen. 5:2;
1 Cor. 11:7
^b Matt. 19:4;
[Mark 10:6–8]

28 ^a Gen. 9:1;
7; Lev. 26:9
^b 1 Cor. 9:27
¹ moves about
on

29 ^a Gen. 9:3; Ps.
104:14, 15

30 ^a Ps. 145:15
^b Job 38:41 ¹ a
living soul

31 ^a [Ps. 104:24;
1 Tim. 4:4]

CHAPTER 2

1 ^a Ps. 33:6

2 ^a Ex. 20:9–11;
31:17; Heb.
4:4, 10

3 ^a [Is. 58:13]

4 ^a Gen. 1:1; Ps.
90:1, 2 ¹ Heb.
toledoth, lit.
generations

27 So God created man ^ain His *own* image; in the image of God He created him; ^bmale and female He created them.

28 Then God blessed them, and God said to them, “Be fruitful and multiply; fill the earth and ^bsubdue it; have dominion over the fish of the sea, over the birds of the air, and over every living thing that ¹moves on the earth.”

29 And God said, “See, I have given you every herb *that* yields seed which *is* on the face of all the earth, and every tree whose fruit yields seed; ^ato you it shall be for food.

30 “Also, to ^aevery beast of the earth, to every ^bbird of the air, and to everything that creeps on the earth, in which *there is* ¹life, *I have given* every green herb for food”; and it was so.

31 Then ^aGod saw everything that He had made, and indeed *it was* very good. So the evening and the morning were the sixth day.

2 Thus the heavens and the earth, and ^aall the host of them, were finished.

2 ^aAnd on the seventh day God ended His work which He had done, and He rested on the seventh day from all His work which He had done.

3 Then God ^ablessed the seventh day and sanctified it, because in it He rested from all His work which God had created and made.

4 ^aThis is the ¹history of the heavens and the earth when they were created, in the day that the LORD God made the earth and the heavens,

EXPLAINING THE FAITH ♦ Genesis 1:26

Image of God

The “Image of God” (*imago Dei*) harkens back to royal terminology. Humans were to be God’s special representatives, given authority (“dominion”) over the rest of creation. Adam and Eve were to act out the wishes of their King on earth, which meant caring for, not abusing, the natural order. Much of our modern understanding of human rights is also based on this concept. Humans are intrinsically valuable, at all stages of life, not due to any measurable physical or mental aptitudes, but because

they reflect their Creator in a unique way and have been given a special purpose by Him. God acknowledged all of this as “very good” (Gen. 1:31). Although sin mars the image of God within every person, humans retain their special value because of that image (see James 3:9). Jesus was the perfect “image of the invisible God” (Col. 1:15). He said, “He who has seen Me has seen the Father” (John 14:9). The more we come to reflect the character of Jesus, the better we will reflect the image of our Creator.

1:22 “Blessed”: This is the first mention of this important word. It is found eighty-eight times in Genesis, more than any other book in the Bible. God blesses animals (1:22), mankind (1:28), the Sabbath (2:3), Adam (5:2), Noah (9:1), and the patriarchs (12:3; 17:16).

1:26 “Our” has historically had various explanations: (1) the Trinity, (2) a grammatical device indicating the plural of majesty, and (3) deliberation among the heavenly courts.

1:28 “Subdue” literally means “to bring into bondage.”
2:2 “Rested”: God rested because His work was finished, not because He was weary.

2:2 This scene is reflected in Exodus when Moses finished the work of setting up the tabernacle for worship (see Ex. 40:33). God’s presence came to reside within the tabernacle among His people (Ex. 40:34), similar to how He “rested” among His creation once it was completed.

5 before any ^aplant of the field was in the earth and before any herb of the field had grown. For the LORD God had not ^bcaused it to rain on the earth, and *there was* no man ^cto till the ground;

6 but a mist went up from the earth and watered the whole face of the ground.

7 And the LORD God formed man of the ^adust of the ground, and ^bbreathed into his ^cnostrils the breath of life; and ^dman became a living being.

ENCOUNTER NOTE

Gen. 2:7

Breath of Life

God is the only source of life. Into whatever God breathes, there is life and vibrancy. Intimacy with God involves God breathing life into His people.

LIFE IN GOD'S GARDEN

8 The LORD God planted ^aa garden ^beastward in ^cEden, and there He put the man whom He had formed.

9 And out of the ground the LORD God made ^aevery tree grow that is pleasant to the sight and good for food. ^bThe tree of life *was* also in the midst of the garden, and the tree of the knowledge of good and ^cevil.

10 Now a river went out of Eden to water the garden, and from there it parted and became four riverheads.

11 The name of the first *is* Pishon; it *is* the one which skirts ^athe whole land of Havilah, where *there is* gold.

5^a Gen. 1:11, 12
^b Gen. 7:4; Job 5:10; 38:26–28
^c Gen. 3:23

7^a Gen. 3:19, 23; Ps. 103:14 ^b Job 33:4 ^c Gen. 7:22 ^d 1 Cor. 15:45

8^a Is. 51:3 ^b Gen. 3:23, 24 ^c Gen. 4:16

9^a Ezek. 31:8 ^b [Gen. 3:22; Rev. 2:7; 22:2, 14] ^c [Deut. 1:39]

11^a Gen. 25:18

12^a Num. 11:7

14^a Dan. 10:4
¹ Or *Tigris*
² Heb. *Ashshur*

15¹ Or *Adam*
² cultivate

17^a Gen. 3:1, 3, 11, 17 ^b Gen. 3:3, 19; [Rom. 6:23] ^c Rom. 5:12; 1 Cor. 15:21, 22
¹ Lit. *dying you shall die*

18^{a1} 1 Cor. 11:8, 9; 1 Tim. 2:13

12 And the gold of that land *is* good. ^aBdellium and the onyx stone *are* there.
 13 The name of the second river *is* Gihon; it *is* the one which goes around the whole land of Cush.

14 The name of the third river *is* ^aHiddekel;¹ it *is* the one which goes toward the east of ²Assyria. The fourth river *is* the Euphrates.

15 Then the LORD God took ¹the man and put him in the garden of Eden to ²tend and keep it.

16 And the LORD God commanded the man, saying, “Of every tree of the garden you may freely eat;

17 “but of the tree of the knowledge of good and evil ^ayou shall not eat, for in the day that you eat of it ^byou¹ shall surely ^cdie.”

18 And the LORD God said, “*It is* not good that man should be alone; ^aI will make him a helper comparable to him.”

WORD STUDY

Helper

Gen. 2:18 Adam was designed for relationship; he was not created to live in isolation. Therefore, God gave him a “helper.” God created a companion who was comparable to him. “Helper” literally means “a help as opposite to him” and means “corresponding to him.” The same term “helper” is used to describe God’s assistance to His people (Ex. 18:4; Deut. 33:7, 26, 29; Ps. 20:2; 121:1–2; 124:8). Being formed from Adam’s side may symbolize a partnership of equals.

EXPLAINING THE FAITH ♦ Genesis 2:18–25

Men and Women

The two complementary genders allow humans to fulfill God’s command to “be fruitful and multiply” (Gen. 1:28). Men and women are alike in many ways, but also uniquely different. The human reproductive system requires both male and female to complete its intended function. Coming together in the “one flesh” union of sex naturally leads to procreation. God placed this act within the special covenant relationship of marriage, where husband and wife

need not be “ashamed” (Gen. 2:25). The fruit of this union leads to the formation of new families (Gen. 2:24) who become the foundation of society. The emotional connection sex and pregnancy establishes between husband, wife, and child strengthens their relational bond and helps provide a healthy foundation for nurturing that child to adulthood. Jesus Himself pointed back to Genesis as authoritative on issues of gender and sexuality (see Matt. 18:1–10).

2:7 “Formed” is a word used to describe the work of a skilled craftsman (Ps. 94:90). “Breathed” describes the intimacy of a face-to-face relationship.

2:8 “Eden” means “Delight.”

2:14 Hiddekel: this river was also known as the Tigris River.

2:15 “To tend and keep it” shows that work has been a part of our calling from the beginning. Work, even when difficult or unpleasant, can be viewed as a form of worship to God (see Col. 3:23).

19 ^aOut of the ground the LORD God formed every beast of the field and every bird of the air, and ^bbrought them to ^cAdam to see what he would call them. And whatever Adam called each living creature, that *was* its name.

20 So Adam gave names to all cattle, to the birds of the air, and to every beast of the field. But for Adam there was not found a helper comparable to him.

21 And the LORD God caused a ^adeep sleep to fall on Adam, and he slept; and He took one of his ribs, and closed up the flesh in its place.

22 Then the rib which the LORD God had taken from man He ^cmade into a woman, ^aand He ^bbrought her to the man.

23 And Adam said:

“This is now ^abone of my bones
And flesh of my flesh;
She shall be called ^cWoman,
Because she was ^btaken
out of ^dMan.”

24 ^aTherefore a man shall leave his father and mother and ^bbe^c joined to his wife, and they shall become one flesh.

19^a Gen. 1:20, 24

^bPs. 8:6
^cOr *the man*

21^a Gen. 15:12;
1 Sam. 26:12

22^a Gen. 3:20;
1 Tim. 2:13
^bHeb. 13:4 ^cLit.
built

23^a Gen. 29:14;
Eph. 5:28–30
^b1 Cor. 11:8, 9
^cHeb. *Ishshah*
^dHeb. *Ish*

24^a Matt. 19:5;
Eph. 5:31
^bMark 10:6–8;
1 Cor. 6:16 ^cLit.
clinging

25^a Gen. 3:7, 10
^bIs. 47:3

CHAPTER 3

1^a 1 Chr. 21:1;
[Rev. 12:9; 20:2,
10] ^b2 Cor. 11:3

2^a Gen. 2:16, 17

3^a Ex. 19:12, 13;
Rev. 22:14

4^a John 8:44;
[2 Cor. 11:3;
1 Tim. 2:14]

6^a 1 John 2:16
^b1 Tim. 2:14
^cLit. *a desirable thing*

25 ^aAnd they were both naked, the man and his wife, and were not ^bashamed.

THE TEMPTATION AND FALL OF MAN

3 Now ^athe serpent was ^bmore cunning than any beast of the field which the LORD God had made. And he said to the woman, “Has God indeed said, ‘You shall not eat of every tree of the garden?’”

2 And the woman said to the serpent, “We may eat the ^afruit of the trees of the garden;

3 “but of the fruit of the tree which is in the midst of the garden, God has said, ‘You shall not eat it, nor shall you ^atouch it, lest you die.’”

4 “Then the serpent said to the woman, “You will not surely die.

5 “For God knows that in the day you eat of it your eyes will be opened, and you will be like God, knowing good and evil.”

6 So when the woman ^asaw that the tree *was* good for food, that it *was* ^cpleasant to the eyes, and a tree desirable to make *one* wise, she took of its fruit ^band ate. She also gave to her husband with her, and he ate.

ENCOUNTERING A CREATIVE GOD ♦ Genesis 2:19

God's Creative Invitation

God created Adam and placed him in the garden to tend and keep it. The first task God gave Adam was to name the animals. That job might seem like tedious busywork, but it was significant. God was extending an amazing invitation for humans to join Him in His creative activity. During the initial six days of creation, God completed His creative acts by naming what He had

made (day, night, land, seas, etc.). But when it was time to name the animals, God deferred to Adam. God was obviously capable of completing the task Himself, but He empowered Adam to use his own God-given creativity from the very first day. How might God be inviting you to use your creative gifts?

EXPLAINING THE FAITH ♦ Genesis 3:5

Morality and Ethics

The desire to “be like God” is at the root of every sin. It is an attempt to remove God from a position of moral authority and seek to become autonomous rulers of our own lives, rather than image-bearers of our King. This often takes the form of pride, which Scripture condemns (see Is. 2:12; Prov. 8:13; James 4:6). For the Christian, the foundation of morality resides within the character of God Himself (see Luke 18:19). This

is perfectly displayed in the person of Jesus, who is the “image of the invisible God” (Col. 1:15). Thankfully, the fall is not the end of our story! We can be made righteous, not because of our own good works (see Eph. 2:8–9), but because “He made Him who knew no sin to be sin for us, that we might become the righteousness of God in Him” (2 Cor. 5:21).

2:19 In the original Hebrew, “Adam” is preceded by an article and could be translated “the man.”

3:1 Serpents were often associated with both death and wisdom in ancient cultures.

3:6 The terms “good,” “pleasant,” and “desirable” reflect the outward attractiveness of sin, though sin leads to death.

7 Then the eyes of both of them were opened, ^aand they knew that they *were* naked; and they sewed fig leaves together and made themselves ^c'coverings.

8 And they heard ^athe 'sound of the LORD God walking in the garden in the ²cool of the day, and Adam and his wife ^bhid themselves from the presence of the LORD God among the trees of the garden.

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

ENCOUNTER NOTE

Gen. 3:9

God Calls

Sin separates us from God and others. Yet God does not remain indifferent to our deserved fate. He calls after us. He pursues us. He refuses to give up on us. He breaks down barriers to redeem us.

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

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

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

13 And the LORD God said to the woman, "What *is* this you have done?" The woman said, ^a"The serpent deceived me, and I ate."

14 So the LORD God said to the serpent:

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

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

7^a Gen. 2:25
^c'girding
coverings

8^a Job 38:1
^b Job 31:33;
Jer. 23:24 ¹Or
voice ²Or
wind, breeze

10^a Gen. 2:25; Ex.
3:6; Deut. 9:19;
1 John 3:20

12^a [Prov. 28:13]

13^a Gen. 3:4;
2 Cor. 11:3;
1 Tim. 2:14

14^a Deut. 28:15–
20; Is. 65:25;
Mic. 7:17

15^a John 8:44;
Acts 13:10;
1 John 3:8 ^bIs.
7:14; Luke 1:31,
34, 35; Gal. 4:4
^cRom. 16:20;
[Rev. 12:7, 17]

16^a Is. 13:8; John
16:21 ^bGen. 4:7
¹1 Cor. 11:3; Eph.
5:22; 1 Tim.
2:12, 15 ¹Lit.
toward

17^a 1 Sam. 15:23
^bGen. 2:17
^cGen. 5:29;
Rom. 8:20–22;
Heb. 6:8 ^dJob
5:7; 14:1; Eccl.
2:23

18^a Ps. 104:14
¹'cause to grow

19^a 2 Thess. 3:10
^bGen. 2:7; 5:5
^cJob 21:26; Eccl.
3:20

20^a 2 Cor. 11:3;
1 Tim. 2:13 ¹Lit.
Life or Living

WORD STUDY

Seed

Gen. 3:15 "Seed" can mean the seed sown in the ground, or it can refer to offspring. When speaking of descendants, it can refer to an individual, such as the Messiah (Gen. 3:15; Num. 24:7; Gal. 3:16) or to a group of people such as the nation of Israel.

16 To the woman He said:

"I will greatly multiply your
sorrow and your conception;

^aIn pain you shall bring
forth children;

^bYour desire *shall be* ^cfor
your husband,
And he shall ^c'rule over you."

17 Then to Adam He said, ^a"Because you have heeded the voice of your wife, and have eaten from the tree ^bof which I commanded you, saying, 'You shall not eat of it':

^c"Cursed *is* the ground
for your sake;

^dIn toil you shall eat *of* it
All the days of your life.

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

19 ^aIn the sweat of your face
you shall eat bread
Till you return to the ground,
For out of it you were taken;
^bFor dust you *are*,
And ^c'to dust you shall return."

20 And Adam called his wife's name
^a"Eve," because she was the mother of all
living.

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

22 Then the LORD God said, "Behold, the
man has become like one of Us, to know
good and evil. And now, lest he put out

3:8 "Cool" literally means "wind."

3:8 Sin immediately introduced shame into humanity (3:9). "Presence" literally means "face."

3:14–19 Sin ushered in a curse on nature and humanity. Sin leads to death (Deut. 28:15–68).

3:15 "Bruise" can also be translated "crush" or "strike."
3:20 "Eve" is only mentioned in the Old Testament by

name here and in Genesis 4:1. Her name may mean
"Living."

3:21 Adam and Eve's sin, resulting in the need for skins to cover them, immediately meant death for animals that were presumably in the garden.

3:22 God kept humanity from living forever in a state of sin by barring access to the tree of life.

ENCOUNTER NOTE

Gen. 3:23

Sin's Impact on Relationships

The sin described in chapter 3 impacted three relationships: God and humanity, man and woman, and humanity and nature. Sin will always bring separation within relationships.

his hand and take also of the tree of life, and eat, and live forever”—

23 therefore the LORD God sent him out of the garden of Eden ^ato till the ground from which he was taken.

24 So ^aHe drove out the man; and He placed ^bcherubim ^cat the east of the garden of Eden, and a flaming sword which turned every way, to guard the way to the tree of ^dlife.

CAIN MURDERS ABEL

4 Now Adam knew Eve his wife, and she conceived and bore ¹Cain, and said, “I have acquired a man from the LORD.”

2 Then she bore again, this time his brother ¹Abel. Now ^aAbel was a keeper of sheep, but Cain was a tiller of the ground.

3 And ⁱin the process of time it came to pass that Cain brought an offering of the fruit ^aof the ground to the LORD.

4 Abel also brought of ^athe firstborn of his flock and of ^btheir fat. And the LORD ^crespected Abel and his offering,

5 but He did not respect Cain and his offering. And Cain was very angry, and his countenance fell.

6 So the LORD said to Cain, “Why are you angry? And why has your countenance fallen?

23^a Gen. 4:2; 9:20

24^a Ezek. 31:3, 11
^b Ex. 25:18–22; Ps. 104:4; Ezek. 10:1–20; Heb. 1:7
^c Gen. 2:8
^d Gen. 2:9; [Rev. 22:2]

CHAPTER 4

1¹ Lit. *Acquire*

2^a Luke 11:50, 51
¹ Lit. *Breath* or *Nothing*

3^a Num. 18:12
¹ Lit. *at the end of days*

4^a Num. 18:17
^b Lev. 3:16
^c Heb. 11:4

7¹ Lit. *toward*

8^a Matt. 23:35; Luke 11:51; [1 John 3:12–15]; Jude 11
¹ Lit. *said to*
² Sam., LXX, Syr., Vg., add “Let us go out to the field.”

9^a John 8:44
^b 1 Cor. 8:11–13

10^a Num. 35:33; Deut. 21:1–9; Heb. 12:24; Rev. 6:9, 10

11^a Gen. 3:14; Deut. 11:28; 28:15–20; Gal. 3:10

13¹ *iniquity*

14^a Ps. 51:11
^b Deut. 31:18; Is. 1:15
^c Gen. 9:6; Num. 35:19, 21, 27

7 “If you do well, will you not be accepted? And if you do not do well, sin lies at the door. And its desire is ¹for you, but you should rule over it.”

8 Now Cain ¹talked with Abel his ²brother; and it came to pass, when they were in the field, that Cain rose up against Abel his brother and ^akilled him.

9 Then the LORD said to Cain, “Where is Abel your brother?” He said, ^a“I do not know. Am I ^bmy brother’s keeper?”

10 And He said, “What have you done? The voice of your brother’s blood ^acries out to Me from the ground.

ENCOUNTER NOTE

Gen. 4:10

Our Sin Cries Out

We may lie to God and ignore His inquiries, but we cannot hide our sin from His eyes. Our sin cries out to God’s holy ears. None escapes His attention. God is ever aware of our fallen, sinful condition.

11 “So now ^ayou are cursed from the earth, which has opened its mouth to receive your brother’s blood from your hand.

12 “When you till the ground, it shall no longer yield its strength to you. A fugitive and a vagabond you shall be on the earth.”

13 And Cain said to the LORD, “My ¹punishment is greater than I can bear!

14 “Surely You have driven me out this day from the face of the ground; ^aI shall be ^bhidden from Your face; I shall be a fugitive and a vagabond on the earth, and it will happen *that* ^canyone who finds me will kill me.”

CHARACTER STUDY ♦ Gen. 4:1

Cain

Was the first child born to Adam and Eve. Cain’s name may carry the meaning “Obtain” or “Acquire.” An alternative meaning might be “Brought Forth.” Cain provides many of history’s firsts: he was the first person born of a mother; the first person to commit pre-

meditated murder when he killed his brother Abel and the first person to lie to God when confronted with his sin. Cain’s life provides graphic evidence of sin’s destructive and insidious consequences.

3:24 Cherubim were special angelic beings (see Ex. 25:18–22; 26:1; 36:8, 35; 37:7–9; Ps. 18:10; Ezek. 10).

4:2 The word “Abel” is the same as the Hebrew word signifying “breath” or “vapor.” It could also mean “son.”

4:7 “Rule over it” comes from the same word used to describe the taming of a wild beast.

4:9 Sin elevates our personal autonomy and rejects our connectedness to others.

4:9 God’s question “where” parallels His question to Adam and Eve (3:9). Sin separates us from God. Yet God continually calls out to us.

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

THE FAMILY OF CAIN

16 Then Cain ^awent out from the ^bpresence of the LORD and dwelt in the land of ^cNod on the east of Eden.

17 And Cain knew his wife, and she conceived and bore Enoch. And he built a city, ^aand called the name of the city after the name of his son—Enoch.

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

19 Then Lamech took for himself ^atwo wives: the name of one *was* Adah, and the name of the second *was* Zillah.

20 And Adah bore Jabal. He was the father of those who dwell in tents and have livestock.

21 His brother’s name *was* Jubal. He was the father of all those who play the harp and ^aflute.

22 And as for Zillah, she also bore Tubal-Cain, an instructor of every craftsman in bronze and iron. And the sister of Tubal-Cain *was* Naamah.

23 Then Lamech said to his wives:

“Adah and Zillah, hear my voice;
Wives of Lamech, listen
to my speech!

For I have ^akilled a man
for wounding me,

Even a young man ^afor hurting me.

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

A NEW SON

25 And Adam knew his wife again, and she bore a son and ^anamed him ^cSeth, “For God has appointed another seed for me instead of Abel, whom Cain killed.”

26 And as for Seth, ^ato him also a son was born; and he named him ^cEnosh. Then *men* began ^bto call on the name of the LORD.

THE FAMILY OF ADAM

5 This is the book of the ^agenealogy of ^cAdam. In the day that God created man, He made him in ^bthe likeness of God. 2 He created them ^amale and female, and ^bblessed them and called them Mankind in the day they were created.

15^a Gen. 4:24; Ps. 79:12 ^b Gen. 9:6; Ezek. 9:4, 6 ^c So with MT, Tg.; LXX, Syr., Vg. Not so;

16^a 2 Kin. 13:23; 24:20; Jer. 23:39; 52:3 ^b Jon. 1:3 ^c Lit. Wandering

17^a Ps. 49:11

19^a Gen. 2:24; 16:3; 1 Tim. 3:2

21^a pipe

23^a slain a man for my wound ^b for my hurt

24^a Gen. 4:15

25^a Gen. 5:3 ^b Lit. Appointed

26^a Gen. 5:6 ^b Gen. 12:8; 26:25; 1 Kin. 18:24; Ps. 116:17; Joel 2:32; Zeph. 3:9; 1 Cor. 1:2 ^c Gr. Enos, Luke 3:38

CHAPTER 5

1^a Gen. 2:4; 6:9; 1 Chr. 1:1; Matt. 1:1 ^b Gen. 1:26; 9:6; [Eph. 4:24; Col. 3:10]

2^a Gen. 1:27; Deut. 4:32; Matt. 19:4; Mark 10:6 ^b Gen. 1:28; 9:1

3^a 1 Cor. 15:48, 49 ^b Gen. 4:25

4^a 1 Chr. 1:1–4; Luke 3:36–38 ^b Gen. 1:28; 4:25

5^a Gen. 2:17; 3:19; 6:17; [Heb. 9:27]

6^a Gen. 4:26

9^a Heb. Qenan

ENCOUNTER NOTE

Gen. 4:26

Calling on the Name of the Lord

Calling on the name or character of the Lord does not come naturally to people. It originates from a desire for God’s holiness and love. It follows the recognition and acknowledgment of our own inability and God’s all-sufficiency.

ENCOUNTER NOTE

Gen. 5:3

God’s Purposes Prevail

God purposed for Adam and Eve to populate the earth with their offspring. Their children soon experienced deceit, treachery, and murder. Sin sought to destroy every plan God had for His people. Yet God’s purposes prevailed over the worst that sin could do.

3 And Adam lived one hundred and thirty years, and begot *a son* ^ain his own likeness, after his image, and ^bnamed him Seth.

4 After he begot Seth, ^athe days of Adam were eight hundred years; ^band he had sons and daughters.

5 So all the days that Adam lived were nine hundred and thirty years; ^aand he died.

6 Seth lived one hundred and five years, and begot ^aEnosh.

7 After he begot Enosh, Seth lived eight hundred and seven years, and had sons and daughters.

8 So all the days of Seth were nine hundred and twelve years; and he died.

9 Enosh lived ninety years, and begot ^cCainan.

10 After he begot Cainan, Enosh lived eight hundred and fifteen years, and had sons and daughters.

11 So all the days of Enosh were nine hundred and five years; and he died.

12 Cainan lived seventy years, and begot Mahalalel.

13 After he begot Mahalalel, Cainan lived eight hundred and forty years, and had sons and daughters.

14 So all the days of Cainan were nine hundred and ten years; and he died.

4:16 “Nod” means “Wandering.”

4:24 Lamech boasted he would gain revenge seventy-sevenfold on his enemies. This is the antithesis to Jesus’ command to forgive seventy times seven (Matt. 18:21–22).

5:3 Just as Adam’s son bears the likeness of his father, so also do we bear the likeness of our Creator (see Gen. 1:26).

15 Mahalalel lived sixty-five years, and begot Jared.

16 After he begot Jared, Mahalalel lived eight hundred and thirty years, and had sons and daughters.

17 So all the days of Mahalalel were eight hundred and ninety-five years; and he died.

18 Jared lived one hundred and sixty-two years, and begot ^aEnoch.

19 After he begot Enoch, Jared lived eight hundred years, and had sons and daughters.

20 So all the days of Jared were nine hundred and sixty-two years; and he died.

21 Enoch lived sixty-five years, and begot Methuselah.

22 After he begot Methuselah, Enoch ^awalked with God three hundred years, and had sons and daughters.

23 So all the days of Enoch were three hundred and sixty-five years.

24 And ^aEnoch walked with God; and he *was* not, for God ^btook him.

25 Methuselah lived one hundred and eighty-seven years, and begot Lamech.

18 ^a Jude 14, 15

22 ^a Gen. 6:9; 17:1; 24:40; 48:15; 2 Kin. 20:3; Ps. 16:8; [Mic. 6:8]; Mal. 2:6; 1 Thess. 2:12; [Heb. 11:39]

24 ^a 2 Kin. 2:11; Jude 14 ^b 2 Kin. 2:10; Ps. 49:15; 73:24; Heb. 11:5

29 ^a Luke 3:36; Heb. 11:7; 1 Pet. 3:20 ^b Gen. 3:17–19; 4:11 ¹ Lit. Rest

32 ^a Gen. 6:10; 7:13 ^b Gen. 10:21

CHAPTER 6

1 ^a Gen. 1:28

2 ^a Deut. 7:3, 4

3 ^a Gen. 41:38; [Gal. 5:16, 17]; 1 Pet. 3:19, 20 ^b 2 Thess. 2:7 ^c Ps. 78:39 ¹ LXX, Syr., Tg., Vg. *abide*

4 ^a Num. 13:32, 33; Luke 17:27 ¹ Heb. *nephilim*, fallen or mighty ones

26 After he begot Lamech, Methuselah lived seven hundred and eighty-two years, and had sons and daughters.

27 So all the days of Methuselah were nine hundred and sixty-nine years; and he died.

28 Lamech lived one hundred and eighty-two years, and had a son.

29 And he called his name ^aNoah,¹ saying, “This *one* will comfort us concerning our work and the toil of our hands, because of the ground ^bwhich the LORD has cursed.”

30 After he begot Noah, Lamech lived five hundred and ninety-five years, and had sons and daughters.

31 So all the days of Lamech were seven hundred and seventy-seven years; and he died.

32 And Noah was five hundred years old, and Noah begot ^aShem, Ham, ^band Japheth.

THE WICKEDNESS AND JUDGMENT OF MAN

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

3 And the LORD said, ^a“My Spirit shall not ^bstrive¹ with man forever, ^cfor he is indeed flesh; yet his days shall be one hundred and twenty years.”

4 There were ^agiants on the earth in those ^adays, and also afterward, when the sons of God came in to the daughters of men and they bore *children* to them. Those

ENCOUNTER NOTE

Gen. 5:24

Walking with God

God dearly loves to walk with His children. Walking with God is living with the constant awareness of God's presence. Walking intimately with God in this life brings us naturally and seamlessly into fellowship with God in the next life.

CHARACTER STUDY ♦ Gen. 5:29

Noah

Noah was the oldest son of Lamech. Noah's name means “Rest” and may carry with it the idea of “comfort.” He lived in an extremely wicked age when people's thoughts dwelled continually on evil. Yet despite the corruption of his day, Noah lived blamelessly before God and men (Gen. 6:9). When God gave him the enormous and peculiar task of building an ark, Noah thoroughly obeyed though the as-

signment lasted one hundred years (Gen. 6:22). While Noah constructed the ark, he preached to his contemporaries, but without effect (2 Pet. 2:5). Noah's obedience saved him and his family and set a biblical example of faith for future generations (Heb. 11:7). His obedience also led God to initiate a new covenant with Noah and his descendants, one that would remain in effect for all time (Gen. 8:20–22).

5:15 “Mahalalel” means “Praise of God.”

5:18 “Jared” may mean “descent.”

5:25 “Methuselah” may mean “man of the javelin.”

5:32 “Shem” means “Name.” “Ham” later became

a synonym for Egypt (Pss. 78:51; 105:23, 27; 106:22).

“Japheth” means “May God Enlarge.”

6:4 “Giants” literally means “Nephilim” which may designate a particular race of people known for their large size. “Nephilim” means “Fallen Ones.”

ENCOUNTER NOTE

Gen. 6:5

God Sees Our Heart

God relates to us not on the basis of what we say or what we intend but according to what He sees in our heart. Our sin naturally influences us toward evil and away from God.

were the mighty men who *were* of old, men of renown.

5 Then ¹the LORD saw that the wickedness of man *was* great in the earth, and that every ⁴intent² of the thoughts of his heart *was* only evil ³continually.

6 And ⁴the LORD was sorry that He had made man on the earth, and ⁵He was grieved in His ⁴heart.

7 So the LORD said, "I will ⁴destroy man whom I have created from the face of the earth, both man and beast, creeping thing and birds of the air, for I am sorry that I have made them."

8 But Noah ⁴found grace in the eyes of the LORD.

NOAH PLEASES GOD

9 This is the genealogy of Noah. ⁴Noah was a just man, ¹perfect in his generations. Noah ⁵walked with God.

10 And Noah begot three sons: ⁴Shem, Ham, and Japheth.

11 The earth also was corrupt ⁴before God, and the earth was ⁵filled with violence.

12 So God ⁴looked upon the earth, and indeed it was corrupt; for ⁵all flesh had corrupted their way on the earth.

⁵a Gen. 8:21; Ps. 14:1-3; Prov. 6:18; Matt. 15:19; Rom. 1:28-32 ¹So with MT, Tg.; Vg. God; LXX LORD God ²thought ³all the day ⁶a Gen. 6:7; 1 Sam. 15:11, 29; 2 Sam. 24:16; Jer. 18:7-10; Zech. 8:14 ^bPs. 78:40; Is. 63:10; Eph. 4:30 ^cMark 3:5 ⁷a Gen. 7:4, 23; Deut. 28:63; 29:20; Ps. 7:11 ⁸a Gen. 19:19; Ex. 33:12, 17; Luke 1:30; Acts 7:46 ⁹a Gen. 7:1; Ezek. 14:14, 20; Heb. 11:7; 2 Pet. 2:5 ^bGen. 5:22, 24; 2 Kin. 23:3 ¹blameless or having integrity ¹⁰a Gen. 5:32; 7:13 ¹¹a Deut. 31:29; Judg. 2:19; Rom. 2:13 ^bEzek. 8:17 ¹²a Ps. 14:2; 53:2, 3 ^bPs. 14:1-3; Is. 28:8 ¹³a Is. 34:1-4; Jer. 51:13; Ezek. 7:2, 3; Amos 8:2; 1 Pet. 4:7 ^bGen. 6:17 ^c2 Pet. 2:4-10 ¹⁴1 Lit. compartments or nests ¹⁵1 A cubit is about 18 inches. ¹⁷a Gen. 7:4, 21-23; 2 Pet. 2:5 ^b2 Pet. 3:6 ^cLuke 16:12

THE ARK PREPARED

13 And God said to Noah, ⁴"The end of all flesh has come before Me, for the earth is filled with violence through them; ⁵and behold, ⁴I will destroy them with the earth.

14 "Make yourself an ark of gopherwood; make ¹rooms in the ark, and cover it inside and outside with pitch.

15 "And this is how you shall make it: The length of the ark *shall be* three hundred ¹cubits, its width fifty cubits, and its height thirty cubits.

16 "You shall make a window for the ark, and you shall finish it to a cubit from above; and set the door of the ark in its side. You shall make it *with* lower, second, and third *decks*.

17 ⁴"And behold, I Myself am bringing ⁵floodwaters on the earth, to destroy from under heaven all flesh in which is the breath of life; everything that is on the earth shall *die*.

18 "But I will establish My ⁴covenant with you; and ⁵you shall go into the ark—you, your sons, your wife, and your sons' wives with you.

19 "And of every living thing of all flesh you shall bring ⁴two of every *sort* into the ark, to keep *them* alive with you; they shall be male and female.

20 "Of the birds after their kind, of animals after their kind, and of every creeping thing of the earth after its kind, two of every *kind* ⁴will come to you to keep *them* alive.

18 ^a Gen. 8:20—9:17; 17:7 ^b Gen. 7:1, 7, 13; 1 Pet. 3:20; 2 Pet. 2:5 ¹⁹ ^a Gen. 7:2, 8, 9, 14-16 ²⁰ ^a Gen. 7:9, 15

EXPLAINING THE FAITH ♦ Genesis 6:1

The Flood

There are several other flood accounts in ancient literature, though their differences outnumber their similarities. This event has been interpreted in various ways, obviously having a great impact on the collective imagination of the world and has been remembered and passed down in multiple cultures. One of the unique elements of the biblical account is the purpose for which God brings the flood: judgment against human sin. The famous "problem of evil" asks,

"How could God allow evil in the world?" This account reveals God's holy opposition toward evil. He is not arbitrarily bringing destruction; He is acting against the universal corruption of humanity. As God, He is within His rights to bring judgment upon sin in this way. However, the Flood was not meant to solve the problem, and God would ultimately judge human sin by having Jesus bear the guilt of all our sins on the cross (see 1 Pet. 2:24).

6:6 "Sorry" literally means "repented."

6:8 While grace is often emphasized in the New Testament, it is a constant theme in the Old Testament as well. 6:9 "Perfect" can also be translated "blameless." It involves being complete, being sound, being morally upright, and having integrity.

6:14 "Gopherwood" is probably pine or cypress.

6:15 A cubit is approximately 18 inches. The dimensions of the ark would have been approximately 450 feet long, 75 feet wide, and 45 feet high.

ENCOUNTER NOTE

Gen. 6:22

Consistent Obedience Serves as an Example to Others

Noah's obedience is mentioned frequently throughout this account (7:5, 9, 16). He actively does "everything" the Lord commanded and became an example to the future Israelites for how they were to walk in covenant with God. His example of faith to obey and build an ark on dry land continues to challenge God's people.

21 "And you shall take for yourself of all food that is eaten, and you shall gather it to yourself; and it shall be food for you and for them."

22 "Thus Noah did; ^baccording to all that "God commanded him, so he did.

THE GREAT FLOOD

7 Then the "LORD said to Noah, ^b"Come into the ark, you and all your household, because I have seen that "you are righteous before Me in this generation.

2 "You shall take with you seven each of every "clean animal, a male and his female; ^btwo each of animals that are unclean, a male and his female;

3 "also seven each of birds of the air, male and female, to keep ^tthe species alive on the face of all the earth.

4 "For after "seven more days I will cause it to rain on the earth ^bforty days and forty nights, and I will ^tdestroy from the face of the earth all living things that I have made."

5 "And Noah did according to all that the LORD commanded him.

ENCOUNTER NOTE

Gen. 7:1

Righteous Before Me

Our righteousness is lived out among people, but it is measured before God. Our holiness is not based on how we compare to others or on peoples' impression of us. It is determined by how we measure up to God's perfect standard.

22^a Gen. 7:5; 12:4, 5; Heb. 11:7
^b Gen. 7:5, 9, 16
^c [1 John 5:3]

CHAPTER 7

1^a Matt. 11:28
^b Matt. 24:38;
Luke 17:26;
Heb. 11:7; 1 Pet.
3:20; 2 Pet.
2:5 ^c Gen. 6:9;
Ps. 33:18; Prov.
10:9; 2 Pet. 2:9

2^a Lev. 11; Deut.
14:3–20 ^b Lev.
10:10; Ezek.
44:23

3^t Lit. seed

4^a Gen. 7:10; Ex.
7:25 ^b Gen.
7:12, 17 ^t Lit.
blot out

5^a Gen. 6:22

6^a Gen. 5:4, 32

7^a Gen. 6:18; 7:1,
13; Matt. 24:38;
Luke 17:27

11^a Matt. 24:39;
Luke 17:27;
2 Pet. 2:5; 3:6
^b Gen. 8:2; Prov.
8:28; Is. 51:10;
Ezek. 26:19
^c Gen. 8:2; Ps.
78:23

12^a Gen. 7:4, 17;
1 Sam. 12:18

14^a Gen. 6:19
^b Gen. 1:21

15^a Gen. 6:19,
20; 7:9

16^a Gen. 7:2, 3

ENCOUNTER NOTE

Gen. 7:5

Paying Attention to the Details

Noah is affirmed throughout the entire account for carefully completing every task that God has set before him. With all that God was about to accomplish, Noah's faithful obedience was essential for the survival of himself and his family. We will not know all that God is doing around us; however, carefully completing all God's instructions ensures that He can accomplish His plans through our lives.

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

7 "So Noah, with his sons, his wife, and his sons' wives, went into the ark because of the waters of the flood.

8 Of clean animals, of animals that are unclean, of birds, and of everything that creeps on the earth,

9 two by two they went into the ark to Noah, male and female, as God had commanded Noah.

10 And it came to pass after seven days that the waters of the flood were on the earth.

11 In the six hundredth year of Noah's life, in the second month, the seventeenth day of the month, on "that day all ^bthe fountains of the great deep were broken up, and the "windows of heaven were opened.

12 "And the rain was on the earth forty days and forty nights.

13 On the very same day Noah and Noah's sons, Shem, Ham, and Japheth, and Noah's wife and the three wives of his sons with them, entered the ark—

14 "they and every beast after its kind, all cattle after their kind, every creeping thing that creeps on the earth after its kind, and every bird after its kind, every bird of every ^bsort.

15 And they "went into the ark to Noah, two by two, of all flesh in which is the breath of life.

16 So those that entered, male and female of all flesh, went in "as God had commanded him; and the LORD shut him in.

7:1 Just as Adam's sin caused suffering for his family and descendants, so Noah's righteousness brought salvation to his entire household.

7:11 Ancient cultures viewed oceans as the realm of chaos. God was taking order back to a state of chaos so that He might start over. This is a reversal of what we see at creation (see Gen. 1:2).

7:16 The phrase "the LORD shut him in" reflects God's fatherly concern for Noah and his family even as God was bringing judgment on those who were rebelling against Him.

17 ^aNow the flood was on the earth forty days. The waters increased and lifted up the ark, and it rose high above the earth.

18 The waters prevailed and greatly increased on the earth, ^aand the ark moved about on the surface of the waters.

19 And the waters prevailed exceedingly on the earth, and all the high hills under the whole heaven were covered.

20 The waters prevailed fifteen cubits upward, and the mountains were covered.

21 ^aAnd all flesh died that moved on [']the earth: birds and cattle and beasts and every creeping thing that creeps on the earth, and every man.

22 All in ^awhose nostrils *was* the breath [']of the spirit of life, all that *was* on the dry *land*, died.

23 So He destroyed all living things which were on the face of the ground: both man and cattle, creeping thing and bird of the air. They were destroyed from the earth. Only ^aNoah and those who *were* with him in the ark remained *alive*.

24 ^aAnd the waters prevailed on the earth one hundred and fifty days.

NOAH'S DELIVERANCE

8 Then God ^aremembered Noah, and every living thing, and all the animals that *were* with him in the ark. ^bAnd God made a wind to pass over the earth, and the waters subsided.

ENCOUNTER NOTE

Gen. 7:22

The Result of Sin

The death that resulted from the Flood was not God's original intention. Beginning in the garden (Gen. 2:17; 3:3–4), there had been a warning that disregarding God and sin would bring death. When sin reigns over people's hearts, there will always be a response from God.

ENCOUNTER NOTE

Gen. 8:1

God Remembers

Regardless of how evil a generation may be, God always remembers and watches over those who are righteous. When sin is rampant and destruction is everywhere, the righteous take comfort in knowing that God keeps them constantly in His sight and always near His heart.

17^a Gen. 7:4, 12; 8:6

18^a Ps. 104:26

21^a Gen. 6:7, 13, 17; 7:4 [']*the land*

22^a Gen. 2:7 [']*LXX, Vg. omit of the spirit*

23^a Matt. 24:38, 39; Luke 17:26, 27; Heb. 11:7; 1 Pet. 3:20; 2 Pet. 2:5

24^a Gen. 8:3, 4

CHAPTER 8

1^a Gen. 19:29; Ex. 2:24; 1 Sam. 1:19; Ps. 105:42; 106:4 ^b Ex. 14:21; 15:10; Job 12:15; Ps. 29:10; Is. 44:27; Nah. 1:4

2^a Gen. 7:11 ^b Deut. 11:17 ^c Gen. 7:4, 12; Job 38:37

3^a Gen. 7:24

6^a Gen. 6:16

16^a Gen. 7:13

17^a Gen. 1:22, 28; 9:1, 7

2 ^aThe fountains of the deep and the windows of heaven were also ^bstopped, and ^cthe rain from heaven was restrained.

3 And the waters receded continually from the earth. At the end ^aof the hundred and fifty days the waters decreased.

4 Then the ark rested in the seventh month, the seventeenth day of the month, on the mountains of Ararat.

5 And the waters decreased continually until the tenth month. In the tenth *month*, on the first *day* of the month, the tops of the mountains were seen.

6 So it came to pass, at the end of forty days, that Noah opened ^athe window of the ark which he had made.

7 Then he sent out a raven, which kept going to and fro until the waters had dried up from the earth.

8 He also sent out from himself a dove, to see if the waters had receded from the face of the ground.

9 But the dove found no resting place for the sole of her foot, and she returned into the ark to him, for the waters *were* on the face of the whole earth. So he put out his hand and took her, and drew her into the ark to himself.

10 And he waited yet another seven days, and again he sent the dove out from the ark.

11 Then the dove came to him in the evening, and behold, a freshly plucked olive leaf *was* in her mouth; and Noah knew that the waters had receded from the earth.

12 So he waited yet another seven days and sent out the dove, which did not return again to him anymore.

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

14 And in the second month, on the twenty-seventh day of the month, the earth was dried.

15 Then God spoke to Noah, saying,

16 "Go out of the ark, ^ayou and your wife, and your sons and your sons' wives with you.

17 "Bring out with you every living thing of all flesh that *is* with you: birds and cattle and every creeping thing that creeps on the earth, so that they may abound on the earth, and ^abe fruitful and multiply on the earth."

18 So Noah went out, and his sons and his wife and his sons' wives with him.
19 Every animal, every creeping thing, every bird, *and* whatever creeps on the earth, according to their families, went out of the ark.

GOD'S COVENANT WITH CREATION

20 Then Noah built an ^aaltar to the LORD, and took of ^bevery clean animal and of every clean bird, and offered ^cburnt offerings on the altar.

21 And the LORD smelled ^aa soothing aroma. Then the LORD said in His heart, "I will never again ^bcurse the ground for man's sake, although the ^c'imagination' of man's heart *is* evil from his youth; ^dnor will I again destroy every living thing as I have done.

22 "While the earth ^aremains,
Seedtime and harvest,
Cold and heat,
Winter and summer,
And ^bday and night
Shall not cease."

9 So God blessed Noah and his sons, and said to them: ^a"Be fruitful and multiply, and fill the earth.

2 ^a"And the fear of you and the dread of you shall be on every beast of the earth, on every bird of the air, on all that move on the earth, and on all the fish of the sea. They are given into your hand.

3 ^a"Every moving thing that lives shall be food for you. I have given you ^ball things, even as the ^c'green herbs.

4 ^a"But you shall not eat flesh with its life, *that is*, its blood.

5 "Surely for your lifeblood I will demand a *reckoning*; ^afrom the hand of every beast I will require it, and ^bfrom the hand of man. From the hand of every ^cman's brother I will require the life of man.

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

7 And as for you, ^abe fruitful
and multiply;

20 ^aGen. 12:7;
Ex. 29:18, 25
^bGen. 7:2; Lev.
11 ^cGen. 22:2;
Ex. 10:25

21 ^aEx. 29:18, 25;
Lev. 1:9; Ezek.
20:41; 2 Cor.
2:15; Eph. 5:2
^bGen. 3:17;
6:7, 13, 17; Is.
54:9 ^cGen.
6:5; 11:6; Job
14:4; Ps. 51:5;
Jer. 17:9; Rom.
1:21; 3:23; Eph.
2:1–3 ^dGen.
9:11, 15 *intent
or thought*
22 ^aIs. 54:9
^bPs. 74:16; Jer.
33:20, 25

CHAPTER 9

1 ^aGen. 1:28, 29;
8:17; 9:7, 19;
10:32
2 ^aGen. 1:26, 28;
Ps. 8:6
3 ^aDeut. 12:15;
14:3, 9, 11; Acts
10:12, 13 ^bRom.
14:14, 20; 1 Cor.
10:23, 26; Col.
2:16; [1 Tim. 4:3,
4] ^cGen. 1:29

4 ^aEx. 7:26;
17:10–16; 19:26;
Deut. 12:16, 23;
15:23; 1 Sam.
14:33, 34; Acts
15:20, 29
5 ^aEx. 21:28
^bGen. 4:9, 10;
Ps. 9:12 ^cActs
17:26

6 ^aEx. 21:12–14;
Lev. 24:17; Num.
35:33; Matt.
26:52 ^bGen.
1:26, 27

7 ^aGen. 9:1, 19
9 ^aGen. 6:18 ^bIs.
54:9 ^cLit. *seed*
10 ^aPs. 145:9

11 ^aGen. 8:21; Is.
54:9
12 ^aGen. 9:13,
17; 17:11

13 ^aEzek. 1:28;
Rev. 4:3

15 ^aLev. 26:42,
45; Deut. 7:9;
Ezek. 16:60

16 ^aGen. 17:13, 19;
2 Sam. 23:5; Is.
55:3; Jer. 32:40;
Heb. 13:20

Bring forth abundantly
in the earth
And multiply in it."

8 Then God spoke to Noah and to his sons with him, saying:

9 "And as for Me, ^abehold, I establish ^bMy covenant with you and with your ^c'descendants after you,

10 ^a"and with every living creature that *is* with you: the birds, the cattle, and every beast of the earth with you, of all that go out of the ark, every beast of the earth.

11 "Thus ^aI establish My covenant with you: Never again shall all flesh be cut off by the waters of the flood; never again shall there be a flood to destroy the earth."

12 And God said: ^a"This is the sign of the covenant which I make between Me and you, and every living creature that *is* with you, for perpetual generations:

ENCOUNTER NOTE

Gen. 9:12

Reminders

God always upholds His promises. It is we who often forget what He pledged to us, so God seeks to regularly remind us of His intentions toward us. There is evidence of God's love and grace all around us, if we have spiritual eyes to see it.

13 "I set ^aMy rainbow in the cloud, and it shall be for the sign of the covenant between Me and the earth.

14 "It shall be, when I bring a cloud over the earth, that the rainbow shall be seen in the cloud;

15 "and ^aI will remember My covenant which *is* between Me and you and every living creature of all flesh; the waters shall never again become a flood to destroy all flesh.

16 "The rainbow shall be in the cloud, and I will look on it to remember ^athe everlasting covenant between God and every living creature of all flesh that *is* on the earth."

8:20 Although Noah faced the daunting task of establishing a new home after disembarking from the ark, his first act was to worship God.

8:22 God does not promise that natural disasters will never occur but promises that the global cycle of nature will not be dramatically disrupted again.

9:1, 7 "Be fruitful and multiply" is an echo of the command given to Adam and Eve (see Gen. 1:28) and represents a new beginning.

9:6 Human life is intrinsically valuable because humans bear the image of God. This is why murder has such strong consequences.

9:9 "Descendants" literally means "seed."

9:9 This is the first formal covenant in Scripture. It is universal, permanent, and unconditional.

17 And God said to Noah, “This *is* the sign of the covenant which I have established between Me and all flesh that *is* on the earth.”

NOAH AND HIS SONS

18 Now the sons of Noah who went out of the ark were Shem, Ham, and Japheth.

^aAnd Ham *was* the father of Canaan.

19 ^aThese three *were* the sons of Noah, ^band from these the whole earth was populated.

20 And Noah began *to be* ^aa farmer, and he planted a vineyard.

21 Then he drank of the wine ^aand *was* drunk, and became uncovered in his tent.

22 And Ham, the father of Canaan, saw the nakedness of his father, and told his two brothers outside.

23 ^aBut Shem and Japheth took a garment, laid *it* on both their shoulders, and went backward and covered the nakedness of their father. Their faces *were* ¹turned away, and they did not see their father's nakedness.

24 So Noah awoke from his wine, and knew what his younger son had done to him.

25 Then he said:

^a“Cursed *be* Canaan;
A ^bservant of servants
He shall be to his brethren.”

26 And he said:

^a“Blessed *be* the LORD,
The God of Shem,
And may Canaan be
his servant.

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

28 And Noah lived after the flood three hundred and fifty years.

29 So all the days of Noah were nine hundred and fifty years; and he died.

18 ^aGen. 9:25–27; 10:6

19 ^aGen. 5:32
^bGen. 9:1, 7;
10:32; 1 Chr. 1:4

20 ^aGen. 3:19,
23; 4:2; Prov.
12:11; Jer. 31:24

21 ^aProv. 20:1;
Eph. 5:18

22 ^aEx. 20:12;
Gal. 6:1 ¹Lit.
backwards

23 ^aDeut. 27:16;
Josh. 9:23, 27
^bJosh. 9:23;
1 Kin. 9:20, 21

24 ^aGen. 14:20;
24:27; Ps. 144:15;
Heb. 11:16

25 ^aGen. 10:2–5;
39:3; Is. 66:19
^bLuke 3:36;
John 1:14; Eph.
2:13, 14; 3:6

CHAPTER 10

1 ^aGen. 9:1, 7, 19

2 ^a1 Chr. 1:5–7

3 ¹Diphath,
1 Chr. 1:6

4 ¹Sam. *Rodanim*
and 1 Chr. 1:7

5 ^aGen. 11:8; Ps.
72:10; Jer. 2:10;
25:22

6 ^a1 Chr. 1:8–16
¹Or *Phut*

8 ^aMic. 5:6

9 ^aJer. 16:16; Mic.
7:2 ^bGen. 21:20

10 ^aMic. 5:6
^bGen. 11:9

11 ^aGen. 25:18;
2 Kin. 19:36;
Mic. 5:6

14 ^a1 Chr. 1:12

ENCOUNTER NOTE

Gen. 10:1

Our Heritage

God is intimately familiar with your history. He knows everything that has gone in to shaping you into who you are. He knows all your ancestors. God understands the challenges you face because of those who preceded you. God always relates to you with your history in view.

NATIONS DESCENDED FROM NOAH

10 Now this *is* the genealogy of the sons of Noah: Shem, Ham, and Japheth. ^aAnd sons were born to them after the flood.

2 ^aThe sons of Japheth *were* Gomer, Magog, Madai, Javan, Tubal, Meshech, and Tiras.

3 The sons of Gomer *were* Ashkenaz, 'Riphath, and Togarmah.

4 The sons of Javan *were* Elishah, Tarshish, Kittim, and 'Dodanim.

5 From these ^athe coastland *peoples* of the Gentiles were separated into their lands, everyone according to his language, according to their families, into their nations.

6 ^aThe sons of Ham *were* Cush, Mizraim, 'Put, and Canaan.

7 The sons of Cush *were* Seba, Havilah, Sabtah, Raamah, and Sabtechah; and the sons of Raamah *were* Sheba and Dedan.

8 Cush begot ^aNimrod; he began to be a mighty one on the earth.

9 He was a mighty ^ahunter ^bbefore the LORD; therefore it is said, “Like Nimrod the mighty hunter before the LORD.”

10 ^aAnd the beginning of his kingdom was ^bBabel, Erech, Accad, and Calneh, in the land of Shinar.

11 From that land he went ^ato Assyria and built Nineveh, Rehoboth Ir, Calah, 12 and Resen between Nineveh and Calah (that *is* the principal city).

13 Mizraim begot Ludim, Anamim, Lehabim, Naphtuhim,

14 Pathrusim, and Casluhim ^a(from whom came the Philistines and Caphtorim).

9:25 Just as Noah's righteousness proved to be a blessing to his sons, so Ham's sin would bring disaster upon his descendants (Gen. 9:25–27). Honoring one's parents is the only commandment that comes with a blessing (Ex. 20:12).

10:2 Gomer may have been the Cimmerians (Ezek. 38:6). Magog, Tubal, and Meshech are said to have come from the far north in Ezekiel 38:2, 6. Madai may have been the Medes (Is. 13:17; 21:2; Dan. 5:28). The Javans may have been the Ionian Greeks.

10:3–4 Ashkenaz may have been the Scythians (Jer. 51:27). Kittim may be identified with Cyprus.

10:10 The land of Shinar is generally understood to have been Babylonia (see Gen. 11:2). The beginning of Nimrod's kingdom was Babel (Babylon). It will factor in the climactic end of history (Rev. 18).

10:13 Mizraim signifies Egypt.

10:14 Pathrusim refers to people of southern Egypt. Caphtorim refers to Cretans.

15 Canaan begot Sidon his firstborn, and ^aHeth;
 16 ^athe Jebusite, the Amorite, and the Girgashite;
 17 the Hivite, the Arkite, and the Sinite;
 18 the Arvadite, the Zemarite, and the Hamathite. Afterward the families of the Canaanites were dispersed.
 19 ^aAnd the border of the Canaanites was from Sidon as you go toward Gerar, as far as Gaza; then as you go toward Sodom, Gomorrah, Admah, and Zeboiim, as far as Lasha.
 20 These *were* the sons of Ham, according to their families, according to their languages, in their lands *and* in their nations.
 21 And *children* were born also to Shem, the father of all the children of Eber, ⁱthe brother of Japheth the elder.
 22 The ^asons of Shem *were* Elam, Asshur, ^bArphaxad, Lud, and Aram.
 23 The sons of Aram *were* Uz, Hul, Gether, and ⁱMash.
 24 ⁱArphaxad begot ^aSalah, and Salah begot Eber.
 25 ^aTo Eber were born two sons: the name of one *was* ⁱPeleg, for in his days the earth was divided; and his brother's name *was* Joktan.
 26 Joktan begot Almodad, Sheleph, Hazarmaveth, Jerah,
 27 Hadoram, Uzal, Diklah,
 28 ⁱObal, Abimael, Sheba,
 29 Ophir, Havilah, and Jobab. All these *were* the sons of Joktan.
 30 And their dwelling place was from Mesha as you go toward Sephar, the mountain of the east.
 31 These *were* the sons of Shem, according to their families, according to their

15^a Gen. 23:3
 16^a Gen. 14:7; 15:19–21; Deut. 7:1; Neh. 9:8
 19^a Gen. 13:12, 14, 15, 17; 15:18–21; Num. 34:2–12
 21ⁱ Or *the older brother of Japheth*
 22^a Gen. 11:10–26; 1 Chr. 1:17–28 ^b Gen. 10:24; 11:10; Luke 3:36
 23ⁱ LXX *Meshech* and 1 Chr. 1:17
 24^a Gen. 11:12; Luke 3:35 ⁱ So with MT, Vg., Tg.; LXX *Arphaxad begot Cainan, and Cainan begot Salah* (cf. Luke 3:35, 36)
 25^a 1 Chr. 1:19 ⁱ Lit. *Division*
 28ⁱ *Ebal*, 1 Chr. 1:22
 32^a Gen. 10:1 ^b Gen. 9:19; 11:8

CHAPTER 11

1ⁱ Lit. *lip*
 2^a Gen. 10:10; 14:1; Dan. 1:2
 3ⁱ Lit. *burn*
 4^a Deut. 1:28; 9:1; Ps. 107:26 ^b Gen. 6:4; 2 Sam. 8:13 ^c Deut. 4:27
 5^a Gen. 18:21; Ex. 3:8; 19:11, 18, 20
 6^a Gen. 9:19; Acts 17:26 ^b Gen. 11:1

languages, in their lands, according to their nations.

32 ^aThese *were* the families of the sons of Noah, according to their generations, in their nations; ^band from these the nations were divided on the earth after the flood.

THE TOWER OF BABEL

11 Now the whole earth had one language and one ⁱspeech.

2 And it came to pass, as they journeyed from the east, that they found a plain in the land ^aof Shinar, and they dwelt there.

3 Then they said to one another, “Come, let us make bricks and ^bbake *them* thoroughly.” They had brick for stone, and they had asphalt for mortar.

4 And they said, “Come, let us build ourselves a city, and a tower ^awhose top *is* in the heavens; let us make a ^bname for ourselves, lest we ^cbe scattered abroad over the face of the whole earth.”

5 ^aBut the LORD came down to see the city and the tower which the sons of men had built.

6 And the LORD said, “Indeed ^athe people *are* one and they all have ^bone language,

ENCOUNTER NOTE

Gen. 11:4

Corporate Pride

God created us for interdependence, and we can find strength in numbers. Yet God will jealously guard His position as our source of strength lest we substitute other relationships for our dependence on Him.

ENCOUNTERING A CREATIVE GOD ♦ Genesis 11

Human Achievement Is Fleeting

The Tower of Babel is perhaps the most famous architectural building in human history, yet little is known about it. Many Bible scholars suggest the tower was likely a form of ziggurat, a prominent architectural form in ancient Mesopotamia. The human builders sought to make a name for themselves with the grand and ambitious tower. However, while undoubtedly impressive structures at the time, arguably no architectural form has left as insignificant

a mark on later cultures or in the history of art as the ziggurat. The style was almost wholly abandoned by later cultures. Although size was to be a defining quality of the tower, the use of the anthropomorphic language that God “came down to see” emphasizes its true insignificance from a heavenly perspective. What may appear impressive from our earthly perspective is only temporary and insignificant when compared to the timeless and sublime creation of God.

11:4 This tower was likely a ziggurat. Many such remains have been uncovered in the Middle East. Ziggurats were tall religious buildings meant to entice gods to come down from heaven to earth. The God of the Bible is unlike other ancient gods in that He chose to come to

humanity on His own accord out of love, not because of human ingenuity or summoning.

11:6 There was a reversal of “one language” at Pentecost (see Acts 2:1–4).

and this is what they begin to do; now nothing that they ^cpropose to do will be withheld from them.

7 “Come, ^alet Us go down and there ^bconfuse their language, that they may not understand one another’s speech.”

8 So ^athe LORD scattered them abroad from there ^bover the face of all the earth, and they ceased building the city.

9 Therefore its name is called ‘Babel,’ ^abecause there the LORD confused the language of all the earth; and from there the LORD scattered them abroad over the face of all the earth.

SHEM’S DESCENDANTS

10 “This is the genealogy of Shem: Shem was one hundred years old, and begot Arphaxad two years after the flood.

11 After he begot Arphaxad, Shem lived five hundred years, and begot sons and daughters.

12 Arphaxad lived thirty-five years, ^aand begot Salah.

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

14 Salah lived thirty years, and begot Eber.

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

16 “Eber lived thirty-four years, and begot ^bPeleg.

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

18 Peleg lived thirty years, and begot Reu.

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

20 Reu lived thirty-two years, and begot ^aSerug.

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

22 Serug lived thirty years, and begot Nahor.

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

24 Nahor lived twenty-nine years, and begot ^aTerah.

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

^{6c} Deut. 31:21;
Ps. 2:1

^{7a} Gen. 1:26
^b Gen. 42:23;
Ex. 4:11; Deut.
28:49; Is. 33:19;
Jer. 5:15

^{8a} Gen. 11:4;
Deut. 32:8; Ps.
92:9; [Luke 1:51]
^b Gen. 10:25, 32

^{9a1} Cor. 14:23
¹ Lit. *Confusion*,
Babylon

^{10a} Gen. 10:22–
25; 1 Chr. 1:17

^{12a} Luke 3:35

^{16a1} Chr. 1:19
^b Luke 3:35

^{20a} Luke 3:35

^{24a} Gen. 11:31;
Josh. 24:2; Luke
3:34

^{26a} Josh. 24:2;
1 Chr. 1:26
¹ *Abraham*,
Gen. 17:5

^{27a} Gen. 11:31;
17:5

^{29a} Gen. 17:15;
20:12 ^b Gen.
22:20, 23; 24:15
¹ *Sarah*, Gen.
17:15

^{30a} Gen. 16:1, 2;
Luke 1:36

^{31a} Gen. 12:1
^b Gen. 15:7; Neh.
9:7; Acts 7:4
^c Gen. 10:19

CHAPTER 12

^{1a} Gen. 15:7; Acts
7:2, 3; [Heb.
11:8] ^b Gen. 13:9

26 Now Terah lived seventy years, and ^abegot ¹Abram, Nahor, and Haran.

TERAH’S DESCENDANTS

27 This is the genealogy of Terah: Terah begot ^aAbram, Nahor, and Haran. Haran begot Lot.

28 And Haran died before his father Terah in his native land, in Ur of the Chaldeans.

29 Then Abram and Nahor took wives: the name of Abram’s wife was ^aSarai,¹ and the name of Nahor’s wife, ^bMilcah, the daughter of Haran the father of Milcah and the father of Iscah.

30 But ^aSarai was barren; she had no child.

31 And Terah ^atook his son Abram and his grandson Lot, the son of Haran, and his daughter-in-law Sarai, his son Abram’s wife, and they went out with them from ^bUr of the Chaldeans to go to ^cthe land of Canaan; and they came to Haran and dwelt there.

32 So the days of Terah were two hundred and five years, and Terah died in Haran.

PROMISES TO ABRAM

12 Now the ^aLORD had said to Abram:

“Get ^bout of your country,
From your family
And from your father’s house,
To a land that I will show you.

ENCOUNTER NOTE

Gen. 11:31

Previous Beginnings

If you examine God’s present activity in your life, you will see it as a continuation of what He has been doing for years and even for generations. Your walk with God is a dramatic reflection of the faithfulness of those who went before you.

ENCOUNTER NOTE

Gen. 12:1

God Calls

God is the divine initiator in our lives. God’s call on a life is specific, extensive, thorough, and eternal. A life set apart by God cannot remain the same. Moreover, when we respond to God’s call, the kingdom of God will not remain the same.

11:9 “Babel” means “Confused.”

11:26 “Abram” means “Exalted Father” or “The Father Is Exalted.”

11:29 “Sarai” means “Princess.”

12:1 Abram and his family, reflecting the surrounding cultures, would likely have been polytheists before encountering God.

2 ^aI will make you a great nation;

^bI will bless you

And make your name great;

^cAnd you shall be a blessing.

3 ^aI will bless those who bless you,
And I will curse him

who curses you;

And in ^byou all the families of
the earth shall be “blessed.”

4 So Abram departed as the LORD had spoken to him, and Lot went with him. And Abram *was* seventy-five years old when he departed from Haran.

5 Then Abram took Sarai his wife and Lot his brother's son, and all their possessions that they had gathered, and ^athe 'people whom they had acquired ^bin Haran, and they ^cdeparted to go to the land of Canaan. So they came to the land of Canaan.

6 Abram ^apassed through the land to the place of Shechem, ^bas far as ^cthe terebinth tree of Moreh. ^dAnd the Canaanites *were* then in the land.

7 ^aThen the LORD appeared to Abram and said, ^b“To your 'descendants I will give this land.” And there he built an 'altar to the LORD, who had appeared to him.

8 And he moved from there to the mountain east of Bethel, and he pitched his tent *with* Bethel on the west and Ai on the east; there he built an altar to the LORD and ^acalled on the name of the LORD.

9 So Abram journeyed, ^agoing on still toward the 'South.

2^a [Gen. 17:4–6];
18:18; 46:3;
Deut. 26:5;
1 Kin. 3:8
^b Gen. 22:17;
24:35 ^c Gen.
28:4; Zech. 8:13;
Gal. 3:14

3^a Gen. 24:35;
27:29; Ex.
23:22; Num.
24:9 ^b Gen.
18:18; 22:18;
26:4; 28:14; Ps.
72:17; Matt. 1:1;
Luke 3:34; Acts
3:25; [Gal. 3:8]
^c Is. 41:27

5^a Gen. 14:14
^b Gen. 11:31
^c Gen. 13:18
^d Lit. *souls*

6^a Heb. 11:9
^b Deut. 11:30;
Judg. 7:1 ^c Gen.
10:18, 19 ^d Heb.
Alon Moreh

7^a Gen. 17:1;
18:1 ^b Gen.
13:15; 15:18; 17:8;
Deut. 34:4; Ps.
105:9–12; Acts
7:5; Gal. 3:16
^c Gen. 13:4, 18;
22:9 ^d Lit. *seed*

8^a Gen. 4:26;
13:4; 21:33

9^a Gen. 13:1,
3; 20:1; 24:62
^b Heb. *Negev*

10^a Gen. 26:1
^b Ps. 105:13
^c Gen. 43:1

11^a Gen. 12:14;
26:7; 29:17

12^a Gen. 20:11;
26:7

13^a Gen. 20:1–
18; 26:6–11
^b Gen. 20:12
^c Lit. *my soul*

16^a Gen. 20:14
^b Gen. 13:2

17^a Gen. 20:18;
1 Chr. 16:21;
[Ps. 105:14]

18^a Gen. 20:9,
10; 26:10

is his wife'; and they ^awill kill me, but they will let you live.

13 ^a“Please say you *are* my ^bsister, that it may be well with me for your sake, and that 'I may live because of you.”

14 So it was, when Abram came into Egypt, that the Egyptians saw the woman, that she *was* very beautiful.

15 The princes of Pharaoh also saw her and commended her to Pharaoh. And the woman was taken to Pharaoh's house.

16 He ^atreated Abram well for her sake. He ^bhad sheep, oxen, male donkeys, male and female servants, female donkeys, and camels.

17 But the LORD ^aplagued Pharaoh and his house with great plagues because of Sarai, Abram's wife.

18 And Pharaoh called Abram and said, ^a“What is this you have done to me? Why did you not tell me that she *was* your wife?

19 “Why did you say, ‘She *is* my sister’? I might have taken her as my wife. Now therefore, here is your wife; take *her* and go your way.”

ENCOUNTER NOTE

Gen. 12:17

A Faithful God

Amid Abram struggling to work out his faith in God, God was faithful to protect and remain faithful to the promise He had made to Abram.

ENCOUNTER NOTE

Gen. 12:8

Building Altars

Altars are holy places set apart for communion with God. Establishing an altar takes deliberate effort; those who continually seek to worship and to hear from God will not be led astray.

ABRAM IN EGYPT

10 Now there was ^aa famine in the land, and Abram ^bwent down to Egypt to dwell there, for the famine *was* ^csevere in the land.

11 And it came to pass, when he was close to entering Egypt, that he said to Sarai his wife, “Indeed I know that you *are* ^aa woman of beautiful countenance.

12 “Therefore it will happen, when the Egyptians see you, that they will say, ‘This

CHARACTER STUDY

Gen. 12:14

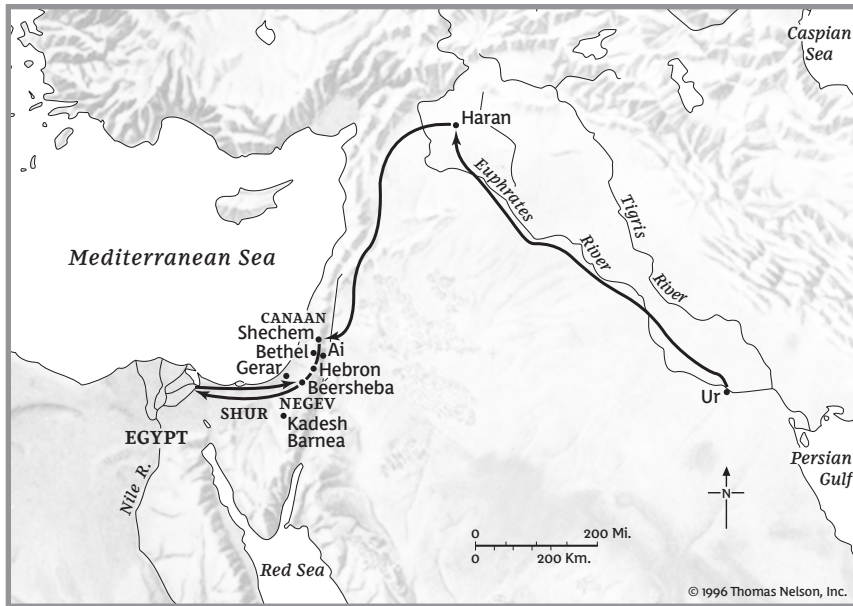
Sarah

Originally named Sarai (“princess”), Abram's wife accompanied him from Ur to Haran to Canaan, trusting in God's promise to make them the founders of His people. Sarai had been unable to bear children, but God changed her name to Sarah to signify that she would become the mother of nations. At the age of ninety she gave birth to her son Isaac. Scripture upholds Sarah as a woman of faith who trusted God even though His promises were humanly impossible (Heb. 11:11).

12:4 It is important to note that Abram did not know God before this encounter; however, his response was to obey. With limited instruction but confidence in

the God who had promised, he set out to a new land. 12:6 Shechem is located between Mounts Ebal and Gerizim.

THE JOURNEYS OF ABRAM ♦ Gen. 12:5



THE ABRAHAMIC COVENANT

	God's Promise	God's Command	Reaction
Gen. 12:1–3	God promises to make Abram into a great nation and bless all others through him.	Leave your country. Be a blessing.	Abram leaves Ur and goes to Canaan.
Gen. 13:14–18	God promises to multiply Abram's descendants and give Canaan to them forever.		Abram worships God by building an altar.
	God's Covenant	God's Command	Reaction
Gen. 15:1–21	God makes a formal covenant by passing through sacrificial animals. He promises to multiply Abram's descendants and give them the land.	Do not be afraid.	Abram believes.
Gen. 17:1–27	God promises to establish an everlasting covenant with Abram's descendants and promises to give the land as an everlasting possession.	Walk before Me and be blameless. Keep the covenant and circumcise all males as a sign of the covenant.	Abraham circumcises all males in his household.
Gen. 18:1–18	God promises to give Sarah a son.		Sarah laughs.
Gen. 22:1–19	God promises to make Abraham's descendants numerous and to bless all nations through them.	Sacrifice your son, Isaac. (Then God provided a ram to sacrifice instead.)	Abraham obeys.
Gen. 26:23–25	God promises to increase Isaac's descendants.	Do not be afraid, for I am with you.	Isaac builds an altar and calls on God.
Gen. 35:9–15	God promises to multiply Jacob's descendants and give them the land.		Jacob sets up a stone pillar and pours oil on it.

20 “So Pharaoh commanded *his* men concerning him; and they sent him away, with his wife and all that he had.

ABRAM INHERITS CANAAN

13 Then Abram went up from Egypt, he and his wife and all that he had, and ^aLot with him, ^bto the ¹South.

2 ^aAbram *was* very rich in livestock, in silver, and in gold.

3 And he went on his journey ^afrom the South as far as Bethel, to the place where his tent had been at the beginning, between Bethel and Ai,

4 to the ^aplace of the altar which he had made there at first. And there Abram ^bcalled on the name of the LORD.

5 Lot also, who went with Abram, had flocks and herds and tents.

6 Now ^athe land was not able to ¹support them, that they might dwell together, for their possessions were so great that they could not dwell together.

7 And there was ^astrife between the herdsmen of Abram’s livestock and the herdsmen of Lot’s livestock. ^bThe Canaanites and the Perizzites then dwelt in the land.

8 So Abram said to Lot, ^a“Please let there be no strife between you and me, and between my herdsmen and your herdsmen; for we *are* brethren.

ENCOUNTER NOTE

Gen. 13:8

Seeking Peace

Abram’s faith in God was expressed in how he chose to avoid conflict with Lot. He was confident that God would care for him and that there was no need to fight for the best land.

20 ^a[Prov. 21:1]

CHAPTER 13

^{1a} Gen. 12:4;
14:12, 16 ^b Gen.
12:9 ¹ Heb.
Negev

^{2a} Gen. 24:35;
26:14; Ps. 112:3;
Prov. 10:22

^{3a} Gen. 12:8, 9

^{4a} Gen. 12:7, 8;
21:33 ^b Ps.
116:17

^{6a} Gen. 36:7
¹ Lit. *bear*

^{7a} Gen. 26:20
^b Gen. 12:6;
15:20, 21

^{8a} 1 Cor. 6:7;
[Phil. 2:14, 15]

^{9a} Gen. 20:15;
34:10 ^b Gen.
13:11, 14 ^c [Rom.
12:18]

^{10a} Gen. 19:17–
29; Deut. 34:3
^b Gen. 19:24
^c Gen. 2:8, 10;
Is. 51:3 ^a Gen.
14:2, 8; 19:22;
Deut. 34:3

^{12a} Gen. 19:24,
25, 29 ^b Gen.
14:12; 19:1

^{13a} Gen. 18:20,
21; Ezek. 16:49;
2 Pet. 2:7, 8
^b Gen. 6:11; 39:9;
Num. 32:23

^{14a} Gen. 13:11
^b Gen. 28:14

^{15a} Gen. 12:7;
13:17; 15:7, 18;
17:8; Deut.
34:4; Acts 7:5
^b 2 Chr. 20:7; Ps.
37:22 ¹ Lit. *seed*

^{16a} Gen. 22:17;
Ex. 32:13; Num.
23:10

9 ^a“Is not the whole land before you? Please ^bseparate from me. ‘If *you take* the left, then I will go to the right; or, if *you go* to the right, then I will go to the left.”

10 And Lot lifted his eyes and saw all ^athe plain of Jordan, that it *was* well watered everywhere (before the LORD ^bdestroyed Sodom and Gomorrah) ^clike the garden of the LORD, like the land of Egypt as you go toward ^dZoar.

11 Then Lot chose for himself all the plain of Jordan, and Lot journeyed east. And they separated from each other.

12 Abram dwelt in the land of Canaan, and Lot ^adwelt in the cities of the plain and ^bpitched *his* tent even as far as Sodom.

13 But the men of Sodom ^awere exceedingly wicked and ^bsinful against the LORD.

ENCOUNTER NOTE

Gen. 13:13

Against the Lord

Our sin, whether private or public, is a personal affront to Holy God. The Lord Almighty is keenly and painfully aware of every sin we commit.

14 And the LORD said to Abram, after Lot ^ahad separated from him: “Lift your eyes now and look from the place where you are—^bnorthward, southward, eastward, and westward;

15 “for all the land which you see ^aI give to you and ^byour ¹descendants forever.

16 “And ^aI will make your descendants as the dust of the earth; so that if a man could number the dust of the earth, *then* your descendants also could be numbered.

17 “Arise, walk in the land through its length and its width, for I give it to you.”

CHARACTER STUDY ♦ Gen. 13:1

Abraham

Originally named Abram (“Exalted Father”), Abraham was from Ur of the Chaldees. He departed with his father Terah, his wife Sarai, and his nephew Lot for Canaan. When Terah died in Haran, God promised to lead Abram to a new land and to multiply his descendants. Despite his advanced age, Abraham believed God, and God “counted it to him as righteousness”

(Gen. 15:6). Yet Abraham had to wait twenty-five years until he was 100 years old before his wife gave birth to their son Isaac. Abraham proved his unwavering faithfulness by his willingness to sacrifice his only son (Gen. 22). Because of Abram’s faith, God renamed him Abraham (“father of a multitude”) and he became a model of trust in God (Heb. 11:8–10).

13:9 Abraham’s faith was in an unseen God. He did not make choices based on what looked most attractive to him, as Lot did (13:10).

18 ^aThen Abram moved *his* tent, and went and ^bdwelt by ^cthe terebinth trees of Mamre, ^cwhich *are* in Hebron, and built an ^aaltar there to the LORD.

LOT'S CAPTIVITY AND RESCUE

14 And it came to pass in the days of ^aAmraphel king ^aof Shinar, Arioch king of Ellasar, Chedorlaomer king of ^bElam, and Tidal king of ^cnations,

2 *that* they made war with Bera king of Sodom, Birsha king of Gomorrah, Shinab king of ^aAdmah, Shemeber king of Zeboiim, and the king of Bela (that is, ^bZoar).

3 All these joined together in the Valley of Siddim ^a(that is, the Salt Sea).

4 Twelve years ^athey served Chedorlaomer, and in the thirteenth year they rebelled.

5 In the fourteenth year Chedorlaomer and the kings that *were* with him came and attacked ^athe Rephaim in Ashteroth Karnaim, ^bthe Zuzim in Ham, ^cthe Emim in Shaveh Kiriathaim,

6 ^aand the Horites in their mountain of Seir, as far as El Paran, which *is* by the wilderness.

7 Then they turned back and came to En Mishpat (that is, Kadesh), and attacked all the country of the Amalekites, and also the Amorites who dwelt ^ain Hazezon Tamar.

8 And the king of Sodom, the king of Gomorrah, the king of Admah, the king of Zeboiim, and the king of Bela (that is, Zoar) went out and joined together in battle in the Valley of Siddim

9 against Chedorlaomer king of Elam, Tidal king of ^cnations, Amraphel king of Shinar, and Arioch king of Ellasar—four kings against five.

10 Now the Valley of Siddim *was full of* ^aasphalt pits; and the kings of Sodom and Gomorrah fled; *some* fell there, and the remainder fled ^bto the mountains.

11 Then they took ^aall the goods of Sodom and Gomorrah, and all their provisions, and went their way.

12 They also took Lot, Abram's ^abrother's son ^bwho dwelt in Sodom, and his goods, and departed.

13 Then one who had escaped came and told Abram the ^aHebrew, for ^bhe dwelt by ^cthe terebinth trees of Mamre the Amorite, brother of Eshcol and brother of Aner; ^cand they *were* allies with Abram.

18 ^aGen. 26:17

^bGen. 14:13

^cGen. 23:2;

35:27 ^aGen.

8:20; 22:8,

9 ¹Heb. *Alon*

Mamre

CHAPTER 14

1^a Gen. 10:10; 11:2

^bIs. 11:1; 21:2;

Dan. 8:2 ¹Heb.

goyim

2^a Gen. 10:19;

Deut. 29:23

^bGen. 13:10;

19:22

3^a Num. 34:12;

Deut. 3:17;

Josh. 3:16

4^a Gen. 9:26

5^a Gen. 15:20

^bDeut. 2:20

^cNum. 32:37;

Deut. 2:10

6^a Gen. 36:20;

Deut. 2:12, 22

7^a 2 Chr. 20:2

9¹ Heb. *goyim*

10^a Gen. 11:3

^bGen. 19:17, 30

11^a Gen. 14:16, 21

12^a Gen. 11:27;

12:5 ^bGen.

13:12

13^a Gen. 39:14;

40:15 ^bGen.

13:18 ^cGen.

14:24; 21:27,

32 ¹Heb. *Alon*

Mamre

14^a Gen. 19:29

^bGen. 13:8; 14:12

^cGen. 12:5; 15:3;

17:27; Eccl. 2:7

^dDeut. 34:1;

Judg. 18:29;

1 Kin. 15:20

15^a Is. 41:2, 3

¹Lit. *on the left*

hand of

16^a Gen. 31:18;

1 Sam. 30:8,

18, 19

17^a 1 Sam. 18:6

^b 2 Sam. 18:18

^cHeb. 7:1 ¹Lit.

striking

18^a Ps. 110:4;

Heb. 7:1–10

^bGen. 18:5;

Ex. 29:40; Ps.

104:15 ^cPs.

110:4; Heb. 5:6

^dActs 16:17

19^a Ruth 3:10

^bGen. 14:22;

Matt. 11:25

20^a Gen. 24:27

^bGen. 28:22;

Heb. 7:4 ¹one-

tenth

21¹ Lit. *souls*

22^a Gen. 14:2, 8,

10 ^bDan. 12:7

^cGen. 14:19

23^a 2 Kin. 5:16;

Esth. 9:15, 16

14 Now ^awhen Abram heard that ^bhis brother was taken captive, he armed his three hundred and eighteen trained *servants* who were ^cborn in his own house, and went in pursuit ^aas far as Dan.

15 He divided his forces against them by night, and he and his servants ^aattacked them and pursued them as far as Hobah, which is ^cnorth of Damascus.

16 So he ^abrought back all the goods, and also brought back his brother Lot and his goods, as well as the women and the people.

17 And the king of Sodom ^awent out to meet him at the Valley of Shaveh (that is, the ^bKing's Valley), ^aafter his return from the ^cdefeat of Chedorlaomer and the kings who *were* with him.

ABRAM AND MELCHIZEDEK

18 Then ^aMelchizedek king of Salem brought out ^bbread and wine; he *was* ^cthe priest of ^aGod Most High.

19 And he blessed him and said:

^a"Blessed be Abram of
God Most High,
^bPossessor of heaven and earth;
20 And ^ablessed be God Most High,
Who has delivered your
enemies into your hand."

And he ^bgave him ^aa tithe of all.

ENCOUNTER NOTE

Gen. 14:20

Proper Recognition

In the midst of our most magnificent victories, we must hasten to acknowledge the source of our success. All our success comes from God. To think otherwise is to risk losing God's favor.

21 Now the king of Sodom said to Abram, "Give me the ^cpersons, and take the goods for yourself."

22 But Abram ^asaid to the king of Sodom, "I ^bhave raised my hand to the LORD, God Most High, ^cthe Possessor of heaven and earth,

23 "that ^aI *will* take nothing, from a thread to a sandal strap, and that I will not take anything that *is* yours, lest you should say, 'I have made Abram rich'—

13:18 The terebinth trees of Mamre were twenty miles south of Bethlehem.

14:18 Salem is probably Jerusalem. Melchizedek means "King of Righteousness." As both a priest and a king, he was a forerunner of the Messiah (Ps. 110:4).

14:23 Abraham refused to accept a reward from the king of Sodom, even though it was customary to receive one. Abraham's trust for his future and his prosperity were placed in the Lord. He knew God was responsible for his success and God would reward him in His own time.

24 “except only what the young men have eaten, and the portion of the men who went with me: Aner, Eshcol, and Mamre; let them take their portion.”

GOD’S COVENANT WITH ABRAM

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

2 “But Abram said, “Lord GOD, what will You give me, *‘seeing I ‘go childless, and the heir of my house is Eliezer of Damascus?”*

3 Then Abram said, “Look, You have given me no offspring; indeed *‘one’ born in my house is my heir!”*

4 And behold, the word of the LORD came to him, saying, “This one shall not be your heir, but one who *‘will come from your own body shall be your heir.”*

5 Then He brought him outside and said, “Look now toward heaven, and *‘count the ‘stars if you are able to number them.”* And He said to him, *“So shall your ‘descendants be.”*

ENCOUNTER NOTE

Gen. 15:1

A Shield and Reward

There is a vast difference between believing God will protect you and actually experiencing God’s protection. We know much about God intellectually, but God wants us to also know Him experientially. What divine truths do we only know second hand?

ENCOUNTER NOTE

Gen. 15:4

God’s Promises

God is a covenant God. He graciously makes promises to us and then is meticulous in keeping them. God has never forsaken His word to His people.

CHAPTER 15

1^a Gen. 15:4; 46:2; 1 Sam. 15:10; Dan. 10:1 ^b Gen. 21:17; 26:24; 15. 4:10; Dan. 10:12 ^c Deut. 33:29; Ps. 3:3; 84:11; 91:4 ^d Num. 18:20; Ps. 58:11; Prov. 11:18 ^e Or *your reward shall be very great*
2^a Gen. 17:18 ^b Acts 7:5 ^c 1 am childless
3^a Gen. 14:14 ^b a servant
4^a 2 Sam. 7:12; Gal. 4:28
5^a Gen. 22:17; 26:4; Deut. 1:10; Ps. 147:4 ^b Jer. 33:22 ^c Ex. 32:13; Rom. 4:18; Heb. 11:12 ^d Gen. 17:19
6^a Gen. 21:1; Rom. 4:3, 9, 22; Gal. 3:6; James 2:23 ^b Ps. 32:2; 106:31
7^a Gen. 12:1 ^b Gen. 11:28, 31 ^c Gen. 13:15, 17; Ps. 105:42, 44
8^a Gen. 24:13, 14; Judg. 6:36–40; 1 Sam. 14:9, 10; Luke 1:18
10^a Gen. 15:17; Jer. 34:18 ^b Lev. 1:17
12^a Gen. 2:21; 28:11; Job 33:15
13^a Ex. 1:11; Acts 7:6 ^b Ex. 12:40
14^a Ex. 6:6 ^b Ex. 12:36
15^a Job 5:26 ^b Gen. 25:8; 47:30 ^c Gen. 25:8 ^d Die and join your ancestors
16^a Gen. 15:13; Ex. 12:41 ^b Gen. 48:22; Lev. 18:24–28; 1 Kin. 21:26 ^c 1 Kin. 11:12; Matt. 23:32
17^a Jer. 34:18, 19
18^a Gen. 24:7 ^b Gen. 12:17; 17:8; Ex. 23:31; Num. 34:3; Deut. 11:24; Josh. 1:4; 21:43; Acts 7:5

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

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

8 And he said, “Lord GOD, *‘how shall I know that I will inherit it?”*

9 So He said to him, “Bring Me a three-year-old heifer, a three-year-old female goat, a three-year-old ram, a turtledove, and a young pigeon.”

10 Then he brought all these to Him and *‘cut them in two, down the middle, and placed each piece opposite the other; but he did not cut ‘the birds in two.*

11 And when the vultures came down on the carcasses, Abram drove them away.

12 Now when the sun was going down, *‘a deep sleep fell upon Abram; and behold, horror and great darkness fell upon him.*

13 Then He said to Abram: “Know certainly *‘that your descendants will be strangers in a land that is not theirs, and will serve them, and ‘they will afflict them four hundred years.*

14 “And also the nation whom they serve *‘I will judge; afterward ‘they shall come out with great possessions.*

15 “Now as for you, *‘you shall ‘go ‘to your fathers in peace; ‘you shall be buried at a good old age.*

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

17 And it came to pass, when the sun went down and it was dark, that behold, there appeared a smoking oven and a burning torch that *‘passed between those pieces.*

18 On the same day the LORD *‘made a covenant with Abram, saying: ‘To your descendants I have given this land, from the river of Egypt to the great river, the River Euphrates—*

19 *“the Kenites, the Kenezites, the Kadmonites,*

20 *“the Hittites, the Perizzites, the Rephaim,*

21 *“the Amorites, the Canaanites, the Girgashites, and the Jebusites.”*

15:1 God’s promise to be Abraham’s “exceedingly great reward” came after Abraham declined a reward from the king of Sodom and instead trusted in God (Gen. 14:22–24).

15:2 It was the custom for a childless man to adopt a servant as his heir. Abraham’s response resembles that of Mary (Luke 1:34).

15:6 Abraham’s righteousness came not from his works but from his faith (Rom. 4:3; Gal. 3:6; Heb. 11:8–12; James 2:23).

15:13 The Israelites’ cruel bondage in Egypt was not a

hindrance to God’s will. God always intended for the Israelites to spend time in bondage to the Egyptians.

15:16 In His mercy God granted the Amorites an additional four centuries to repent before He finally brought judgment upon them at the hands of Joshua and his army.

15:17 The smoke and fire were a theophany, or a representation of God’s presence.

15:18–21 Only during King David’s time did the Israelite territory approach the dimensions promised by God to Abraham.

WORD STUDY

Covenant

Gen. 15:18 A covenant is a solemn, binding promise. Often people in biblical times would “cut a covenant”: They would pass through dismembered animals before pronouncing a curse on themselves if they did not fulfill every detail of their commitment. At times there were obligations for both parties in keeping the covenant. At other times the stronger party in the agreement would voluntarily promise to do something without any specific corresponding obligation by the weaker party.

HAGAR AND ISHMAEL

16 Now Sarai, Abram’s wife, ^ahad borne him no *children*. And she had ^ban Egyptian maidservant whose name was ^cHagar.

2 ^aSo Sarai said to Abram, “See now, the LORD ^bhas restrained me from bearing *children*. Please, “go in to my maid; perhaps I shall ^cobtain children by her.” And Abram ^dheeded the voice of Sarai.

3 Then Sarai, Abram’s wife, took Hagar her maid, the Egyptian, and gave her to her husband Abram to be his wife, after Abram ^ahad dwelt ten years in the land of Canaan.

4 So he went in to Hagar, and she conceived. And when she saw that she had conceived, her mistress became ^adespised in her ^beyes.

5 Then Sarai said to Abram, “My wrong *be* upon you! I gave my maid into your

CHAPTER 16

^{1a} Gen. 11:30;
15:2, 3 ^b Gen.
12:16; 21:9
^c Gal. 4:24

^{2a} Gen. 30:3
^b Gen. 20:18
^c Gen. 30:3;
9 ^d Gen. 3:17
¹ Lit. *be built up*
from

^{3a} Gen. 12:4, 5

^{4a1} Sam. 1:6, 7;
[Prov. 30:21, 23]
¹ sight

^{5a} Gen. 31:53;
Ex. 5:21 ¹ *The*
wrong done to
me be

^{6a1} Pet. 3:7
^b Gen. 16:9;
Ex. 2:15

^{7a} Gen. 21:17, 18;
22:11, 15; 31:11
^b Gen. 20:1;
25:18 ^c Ex. 15:22

^{9a} [Titus 2:9]

^{10a} Gen. 17:20

^{11a} Luke 1:13, 31
¹ Lit. *God Hears*

^{12a} Gen. 21:20;
Job 24:5; 39:5–
8 ^b Gen. 25:18

^{13a} Gen. 31:42
¹ Heb. *El Roi*
² Seen the
back of

^{14a} Gen. 24:62
^b Gen. 14:7;
Num. 13:26
¹ Lit. *Well of the*
One Who Lives
and Sees Me

ENCOUNTER NOTE

Gen. 16:6

Cause and Effect

Sin has both immediate and lasting consequences. God has no favorites; those who sin will live with the consequences. The result of some sins linger for many generations.

embrace; and when she saw that she had conceived, I became despised in her eyes. ^aThe LORD judge between you and me.”

6 ^aSo Abram said to Sarai, “Indeed your maid *is* in your hand; do to her as you please.” And when Sarai dealt harshly with her, ^bshe fled from her presence.

7 Now the ^aAngel of the LORD found her by a spring of water in the wilderness, ^bby the spring on the way to ^cShur.

8 And He said, “Hagar, Sarai’s maid, where have you come from, and where are you going?” She said, “I am fleeing from the presence of my mistress Sarai.”

9 The Angel of the LORD said to her, “Return to your mistress, and ^asubmit yourself under her hand.”

10 Then the Angel of the LORD said to her, ^a“I will multiply your descendants exceedingly, so that they shall not be counted for multitude.”

11 And the Angel of the LORD said to her:

“Behold, you *are* with child,

^aAnd you shall bear a son.

You shall call his name ^bIshmael,
Because the LORD has
heard your affliction.

12 ^aHe shall be a wild man;

His hand *shall be* against every man,
And every man’s hand against him.

^bAnd he shall dwell in the
presence of all his brethren.”

13 Then she called the name of the LORD who spoke to her, You-Are-^athe-God-Who-Sees; for she said, “Have I also here ²seen Him ^awho sees me?”

14 Therefore the well was called ^aBeer Lahai Roi; ^bobserve, *it is* ^bbetween Kadesh and Bered.

ENCOUNTER NOTE

Gen. 16:2

God’s Word Challenged

Contrary counsel will always come after God speaks. Human reasoning and counsel from others will appear reasonable, but they must never supersede God’s clear instruction. Encounters with God stretch our faith, for His ways are not our ways.

16:4 Even though Abraham had trusted God in arduous circumstances, he proved that even great people of faith can suffer lapses that cost them dearly.

16:7 Shur was on Egypt’s northeast frontier.

16:8 We are each living out our own story, which includes where we are, where we have come from, and where we are going. God meets us where we are, despite our past, to bring us into the wonderful future He has planned for us!

16:11 “Ishmael” means “God Hears.” Though outcast with his mother, Hagar, he was dearly loved by Abraham (Gen. 17:18). He became the father of the Ishmaelites. The Muslim Arabs today claim their descent from Ishmael.

16:13 El Roi is a name of God that means “The Lord Who Sees.” Hagar recognized that God saw her desperate plight.

16:14 “Beer Lahai Roi” means “Well of the One Who Lives and Sees Me.” This is the place where God encountered

15 So ^aHagar bore Abram a son; and Abram named his son, whom Hagar bore, Ishmael.

16 Abram *was* eighty-six years old when Hagar bore Ishmael to Abram.

THE SIGN OF THE COVENANT

17 When Abram *was* ninety-nine years old, the LORD ^aappeared to Abram and said to him, ^b*"I am 'Almighty God; 'walk before Me and be 'blameless.*

2 *"And I will make My 'covenant between Me and you, and 'will multiply you exceedingly."*

3 Then Abram fell on his face, and God talked with him, saying:

4 *"As for Me, behold, My covenant is with you, and you shall be 'a father of 'many nations.*

ENCOUNTER NOTE

Gen. 17:4

God's Offer

God always initiates a relationship and sets the terms according to His standard. He is always faithful; our response determines if we will see His blessing.

5 *"No longer shall 'your name be called 'Abram, but your name shall be 'Abraham; 'for I have made you a father of 'many nations.*

6 *"I will make you exceedingly fruitful; and I will make 'nations of you, and 'kings shall come from you.*

7 *"And I will 'establish My covenant between Me and you and your descendants after you in their generations, for an everlasting covenant, 'to be God to you and 'your descendants after you.*

8 *"Also 'I give to you and your descendants after you the land 'in' which you are a stranger, all the land of Canaan, as an everlasting possession; and 'I will be their God."*

9 And God said to Abraham: *"As for you, 'you shall keep My covenant, you and your descendants after you throughout their generations.*

10 *"This is My covenant which you shall keep, between Me and you and your descendants after you: 'Every male child among you shall be circumcised;*

15^a Gal. 4:22

CHAPTER 17

1^a Gen. 12:7; 18:1 ^b Gen. 28:3; 35:11; Ex. 6:3; Job 42:2 ^c 2 Kin. 20:3 ^d Gen. 6:9; Deut. 18:13 ^e Heb. *El Shaddai*

2^a Gen. 15:18; Ex. 6:4; [Gal. 3:19] ^b Gen. 12:2; 13:16; 15:5; 18:18

4^a [Rom. 4:11, 12, 16] ^b Lit. *a multitude of nations*

5^a Neh. 9:7 ^b Rom. 4:17 ^c Lit. *Exalted Father* ^d Lit. *Father of a Multitude* ^e *a multitude of*

6^a Gen. 17:16; 35:11 ^b Matt. 1:6

7^a [Gal. 3:17] ^b Gen. 26:24; 28:13; Lev. 11:45; 26:12, 45; Heb. 11:16 ^c Rom. 9:8; Gal. 3:16

8^a Gen. 12:7; 13:15, 17; Acts 7:5 ^b Gen. 23:4; 28:4 ^c Ex. 6:7; 29:45; Lev. 26:12; Deut. 29:13; Rev. 21:7 ^d Lit. *of your sojournings*

9^a Ex. 19:5 ^b John 7:22; Acts 7:8

11^a Ex. 12:13, 48; [Rom. 4:11]

12^a Lev. 12:3

14^a Ex. 4:24–26

15^a Lit. *Princess*

16^a Gen. 18:10 ^b Gen. 35:11; Gal. 4:31; 1 Pet. 3:6 ^c Gen. 17:6; 36:31; 1 Sam. 8:22

17^a Gen. 17:3; 18:12; 21:6

18^a Gen. 18:23

19^a Gen. 18:10; 21:2; [Gal. 4:28] ^b Gen. 22:16; Matt. 1:2; Luke 3:34

20^a Gen. 16:10 ^b Gen. 25:12–16 ^c Gen. 21:13, 18

21^a Gen. 26:2–5 ^b Gen. 21:2 ^c Gen. 18:14

ENCOUNTER NOTE

Gen. 17:10

Visible Relationship

Although a relationship with God is an internal decision, it also has external expression. Covenant people are visible to the world. The new covenant in Jesus is expressed through baptism, righteous living, and visible devotion.

11 *"and you shall be circumcised in the flesh of your foreskins, and it shall be 'a sign of the covenant between Me and you.*

12 *"He who is eight days old among you 'shall be circumcised, every male child in your generations, he who is born in your house or bought with money from any foreigner who is not your descendant.*

13 *"He who is born in your house and he who is bought with your money must be circumcised, and My covenant shall be in your flesh for an everlasting covenant.*

14 *"And the uncircumcised male child, who is not circumcised in the flesh of his foreskin, that person 'shall be cut off from his people; he has broken My covenant."*

15 Then God said to Abraham, *"As for Sarai your wife, you shall not call her name Sarai, but 'Sarah shall be her name.*

16 *"And I will bless her 'and also give you a son by her; then I will bless her, and she shall be 'a mother 'of nations; 'kings of peoples shall be from her."*

17 Then Abraham fell on his face ^aand laughed, and said in his heart, *"Shall 'a child be born to a man who is one hundred years old? And shall Sarah, who is ninety years old, bear 'a child?"*

18 And Abraham ^asaid to God, *"Oh, that Ishmael might live before You!"*

19 Then God said: *"No, 'Sarah your wife shall bear you a son, and you shall call his name Isaac; I will establish My 'covenant with him for an everlasting covenant, 'and with his descendants after him.*

20 *"And as for Ishmael, I have heard you. Behold, I have blessed him, and will make him fruitful, and 'will multiply him exceedingly. He shall beget 'twelve princes, 'and I will make him a great nation.*

21 *"But My 'covenant I will establish with Isaac, 'whom Sarah shall bear to you at this 'set time next year."*

Hagar as she fled from Sarah, signifying His care for the ill-treated bondservant.

17:1 "Almighty God" comes from the Hebrew *El Shaddai*. *Shaddai* signifies divine might in contrast to human weakness. It may refer to "mountain." It denotes power.

17:15 "Sarah" means "Princess."

17:19, 21 "Isaac" means "Laughter" or, said as a prayer, "may He smile (upon him)." This refers to the special circumstances of his birth, leaving no doubt he was the result of God's covenant promise.

22 Then He finished talking with him, and God went up from Abraham.

23 So Abraham took Ishmael his son, all who were born in his house and all who were bought with his money, every male among the men of Abraham's house, and circumcised the flesh of their foreskins that very same day, as God had said to him.

24 Abraham *was* ninety-nine years old when he was circumcised in the flesh of his foreskin.

25 And Ishmael his son *was* thirteen years old when he was circumcised in the flesh of his foreskin.

26 That very same day Abraham was circumcised, and his son Ishmael;

27 and ^aall the men of his house, born in the house or bought with money from a foreigner, were circumcised with him.

ENCOUNTER NOTE *Gen. 17:23–27*

Unified Diversity

God's covenant includes people diverse in age, status, and experience. Our relationship with God automatically brings us into relationship with all of His people.

THE SON OF PROMISE

18 Then the LORD appeared to him by ^athe ^bterebinth trees of Mamre, as he was sitting in the tent door in the heat of the day.

2 ^aSo he lifted his eyes and looked, and behold, three men were standing by him; ^band when he saw *them*, he ran from the tent door to meet them, and bowed himself to the ground,

3 and said, "My Lord, if I have now found favor in Your sight, do not pass on by Your servant.

4 "Please let ^aa little water be brought, and wash your feet, and rest yourselves under the tree.

5 "And ^aI will bring a morsel of bread, that ^byou may refresh your hearts. After that you may pass by, ^cinasmuch as you have come to your servant." They said, "Do as you have said."

27 ^aGen. 18:19

CHAPTER 18

1 ^aGen. 13:18; 14:13 ^bHeb. *Alon Mamre*

2 ^aGen. 18:16, 22; 32:24; Josh. 5:13; Judg. 13:6–11; Heb. 13:2 ^bGen. 19:1; 1 Pet. 4:9

4 ^aGen. 19:2; 24:32; 43:24

5 ^aJudg. 6:18, 19; 13:15, 16 ^bJudg. 19:5; Ps. 104:15 ^cGen. 19:8; 33:10

8 ^aGen. 19:3

9 ^aGen. 24:67

10 ^a2 Kin. 4:16 ^bGen. 17:19, 21; 21:2; Rom. 9:9

11 ^aGen. 17:17; Luke 1:18; Rom. 4:19; Heb. 11:11, 12, 19 ^bGen. 31:35 ^cLit. *the manner of women had ceased to be with Sarah*

12 ^aGen. 17:17 ^bLuke 1:18 ^c1 Pet. 3:6

14 ^aNum. 11:23; Jer. 32:17; Zech. 8:6; Matt. 3:9; 19:26; Luke 1:37; Rom. 4:21 ^bGen. 17:21; 18:10; 2 Kin. 4:16

16 ^aActs 15:3; Rom. 15:24

17 ^aGen. 18:22, 26, 33; Ps. 25:14; Amos 3:7; [John 15:15]

18 ^a[Gen. 12:3; 22:18]; Matt. 1:1; Luke 3:34; [Acts 3:25, 26; Gal. 3:8]

19 ^a[Deut. 4:9, 10; 6:6, 7]

20 ^aGen. 4:10; 19:13; Ezek. 16:49, 50 ^bGen. 13:13

6 So Abraham hurried into the tent to Sarah and said, "Quickly, make ready three measures of fine meal; knead *it* and make cakes."

7 And Abraham ran to the herd, took a tender and good calf, gave *it* to a young man, and he hastened to prepare it.

8 So ^ahe took butter and milk and the calf which he had prepared, and set *it* before them; and he stood by them under the tree as they ate.

9 Then they said to him, "Where is Sarah your wife?" So he said, "Here, ^ain the tent."

10 And He said, "I will certainly return to you ^aaccording to the time of life, and behold, ^bSarah your wife shall have a son." (Sarah was listening in the tent door which *was* behind him.)

11 Now ^aAbraham and Sarah were old, well advanced in age; *and* ^aSarah ^bhad passed the age of childbearing.

12 Therefore Sarah ^alaughed within herself, saying, ^b"After I have grown old, shall I have pleasure, my ^clord being old also?"

13 And the LORD said to Abraham, "Why did Sarah laugh, saying, 'Shall I surely bear *a child*, since I am old?'"

14 ^a"Is anything too hard for the LORD? ^bAt the appointed time I will return to you, according to the time of life, and Sarah shall have a son."

15 But Sarah denied *it*, saying, "I did not laugh," for she was afraid. And He said, "No, but you did laugh!"

ABRAHAM INTERCEDES FOR SODOM

16 Then the men rose from there and looked toward Sodom, and Abraham went with them ^ato send them on the way.

17 And the LORD said, ^a"Shall I hide from Abraham what I am doing,

18 "since Abraham shall surely become a great and mighty nation, and all the nations of the earth shall be ^ablessed in him?"

19 "For I have known him, in order ^athat he may command his children and his household after him, that they keep the way of the LORD, to do righteousness and justice, that the LORD may bring to Abraham what He has spoken to him."

20 And the LORD said, "Because ^athe outcry against Sodom and Gomorrah is great, and because their ^bsin is very grave,

17:23 By circumcising every male, Abraham was dramatically entering a new stage in the covenant with God; it was not just with Abraham but with all his family and their descendants. Each male would carry a physical mark indicating he belonged to God.

18:7 Abraham "ran" to the herd. This apparent lack of decorum for a Middle Eastern man was because he

understood the majesty of his guests.

18:12 Sarah's laughter indicates she had not come to believe God's promises.

18:17 "Shall I hide" reflects the friendship God shared with Abraham (Is. 41:8). God shared His will and heart with His friend.

21 “I will go down now and see whether they have done altogether according to the outcry against it that has come to Me; and if not, ^bI will know.”

22 Then the men turned away from there ^aand went toward Sodom, but Abraham still stood before the LORD.

23 And Abraham ^acame near and said, ^b“Would You also ^cdestroy the ^drighteous with the wicked?”

ENCOUNTER NOTE *Gen. 18:22–23*

Right to Intercede

A person in a covenant relationship with God has special privileges to intercede on behalf of those outside the covenant. It is a two-way relationship, a partnership, where God invites His people to join in His activity.

24 “Suppose there were fifty righteous within the city; would You also destroy the place and not spare *it* for the fifty righteous that were in it?”

25 “Far be it from You to do such a thing as this, to slay the righteous with the wicked, so ^athat the righteous should be as the wicked; far be it from You! ^bShall not the Judge of all the earth do right?”

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

27 Then Abraham answered and said, “Indeed now, I who *am* ^abut dust and ashes have taken it upon myself to speak to the Lord:

28 “Suppose there were five less than the fifty righteous; would You destroy all of the city for *lack of five*?” So He said, “If I find there forty-five, I will not destroy *it*.”

29 And he spoke to Him yet again and said, “Suppose there should be forty found there?” So He said, “I will not do *it* for the sake of forty.”

30 Then he said, “Let not the Lord be angry, and I will speak: Suppose thirty should be found there?” So He said, “I will not do *it* if I find thirty there.”

31 And he said, “Indeed now, I have taken it upon myself to speak to the Lord: Suppose twenty should be found there?” So He said, “I will not destroy *it* for the sake of twenty.”

21^a Gen. 11:5; Ex. 3:8; Ps. 14:2
21^b Deut. 8:2; 13:3;
Josh. 22:22;
Luke 16:15;
2 Cor. 11:11

22^a Gen. 18:16;
19:1

23^a [Heb. 10:22]
23^b Ex. 23:7; Num. 16:22; 2 Sam. 24:17; Ps. 11:4–7
23^c Job 9:22
23^d Gen. 20:4

25^a Job 8:20; Is. 3:10, 11
25^b Deut. 1:16, 17; 32:4;
Job 8:3, 20;
34:17; Ps. 58:11;
94:2; Is. 3:10, 11;
Rom. 3:5, 6

26^a Jer. 5:1; Ezek. 22:30

27^a [Gen. 3:19];
Job 4:19; 30:19;
42:6; [1 Cor. 15:47, 48]

32^a Judg. 6:39
32^b James 5:16

CHAPTER 19

1^a Gen. 18:2,
16, 22
18:1–5

2^a Gen. 24:31;
[Heb. 13:2]
2^b Gen. 18:4;
24:32
2^c Luke 24:28

3^a Gen. 18:6–8;
Ex. 23:15; Num. 9:11; 28:17
3^b Ex. 12:8

5^a Is. 3:9
5^b Judg. 19:22
5^c Gen. 4:1; Rom. 1:24,
27; Jude 7

6^a Judg. 19:23

8^a Judg. 19:24
8^b Gen. 18:5

9^a 2 Pet. 2:7, 8
9^b Ex. 21:14
9^c 1 As a resident alien

11^a Gen. 20:17, 18

32 Then he said, ^a“Let not the Lord be angry, and I will speak but once more: Suppose ten should be found there?” ^bAnd He said, “I will not destroy *it* for the sake of ten.”

33 So the LORD went His way as soon as He had finished speaking with Abraham; and Abraham returned to his place.

SODOM'S DEPRAVITY

19 Now ^athe two angels came to Sodom in the evening, and ^bLot was sitting in the gate of Sodom. When Lot saw *them*, he rose to meet them, and he bowed himself with his face toward the ground.

2 And he said, “Here now, my lords, please ^aturn in to your servant’s house and spend the night, and ^bwash your feet; then you may rise early and go on your way.” And they said, ^c“No, but we will spend the night in the open square.”

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

4 Now before they lay down, the men of the city, the men of Sodom, both old and young, all the people from every quarter, surrounded the house.

5 ^aAnd they called to Lot and said to him, “Where are the men who came to you tonight? ^bBring them out to us that we ^cmay know them *carnally*.”

6 So ^aLot went out to them through the doorway, shut the door behind him,

7 and said, “Please, my brethren, do not do so wickedly!

8 “See now, I have two daughters who have not known a man; please, let me bring them out to you, and you may do to them as you wish; only do nothing to these men, ^bsince this is the reason they have come under the shadow of my roof.”

9 And they said, “Stand back!” Then they said, “This one ^acame in to ^bstay *here*, ^band he keeps acting as a judge; now we will deal worse with you than with them.” So they pressed hard against the man Lot, and came near to break down the door.

10 But the men reached out their hands and pulled Lot into the house with them, and shut the door.

11 And they ^astruck the men who *were* at the doorway of the house with blindness, both small and great, so that they became weary *trying* to find the door.

18:23 This was Abraham’s second intervention on behalf of Sodom (Gen. 14:14). God had promised to make Abraham a blessing to all the families of the earth (12:2–3).

19:5 Ancient cultures placed extremely high value on hospitality. Since it was Lot’s home, he was responsible as host to defend his guests. His solution, however, was to act immorally as a father.

SODOM AND GOMORRAH DESTROYED

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

13 "For we will destroy this place, because the ^aoutcry against them has grown great before the face of the LORD, and ^bthe LORD has sent us to destroy it."

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

ENCOUNTER NOTE

Gen. 19:13

Judgment Inevitable

God deals with all people, not just those in covenant. There are limits to His patience, and He judges sin both on earth and for eternity.

15 When the morning dawned, the angels urged Lot to hurry, saying, ^a"Arise, take your wife and your two daughters who are here, lest you be consumed in the punishment of the city."

16 And while he lingered, the men ^atook hold of his hand, his wife's hand, and the hands of his two daughters, the ^bLORD being merciful to him, ^cand they brought him out and set him outside the city.

17 So it came to pass, when they had brought them outside, that ^bhe said, ^a"Escape for your life! ^bDo not look behind you nor stay anywhere in the plain. Escape ^cto the mountains, lest you be ²destroyed."

18 Then Lot said to them, "Please, ^ano, my lords!

19 "Indeed now, your servant has found favor in your sight, and you have increased your mercy which you have shown me by saving my life; but I cannot escape to the mountains, lest some evil overtake me and I die.

20 "See now, this city *is* near *enough* to flee to, and it *is* a little one; please let me

12 ^aGen. 7:1; 2 Pet. 2:7, 9

13 ^aGen. 18:20
^bLev. 26:30-33; Deut. 4:26; 28:45; 1 Chr. 21:15

14 ^aMatt. 1:18
^bNum. 16:21, 24, 26, 45; Rev. 18:4
^cEx. 9:21; Jer. 43:1, 2; Luke 17:28; 24:11

15 ^aPs. 37:2; Rev. 18:4

16 ^aDeut. 5:15; 6:21; 7:8; 2 Pet. 2:7
^bEx. 34:7; Ps. 32:10; 33:18, 19; Luke 18:13
^cPs. 34:22

17 ^a1 Kin. 19:3; Jer. 48:6
^bGen. 19:26; Matt. 24:16-18; Luke 9:62; Phil. 3:13, 14
^cGen. 14:10
¹LXX, Syr., Vg. they ²Lit. swept away

18 ^aActs 10:14

21 ^aJob 42:8, 9; Ps. 145:19

22 ^aEx. 32:10; Deut. 9:14
^bGen. 13:10; 14:2
¹Lit. Little or Insignificant

24 ^aDeut. 29:23; Ps. 11:6; Is. 13:19; Jer. 20:16; 23:14; 49:18; 50:40; Ezek. 16:49, 50; Hos. 11:8; Amos 4:11; Zeph. 2:9; Matt. 10:15; Mark 6:11; Luke 17:29; Rom. 9:29; 2 Pet. 2:6; Jude 7; Rev. 11:8
^bLev. 10:2

25 ^aPs. 107:34
¹devastated

26 ^aGen. 19:17; Luke 17:32

27 ^aGen. 18:22

28 ^aRev. 9:2; 18:9

29 ^aGen. 8:1; 18:23; Deut. 7:8; 9:5, 27

30 ^aGen. 19:17, 19

31 ^aGen. 16:2, 4; 38:8, 9; Deut. 25:5

32 ^a[Mark 12:19]
¹Lit. seed

escape there (*is it not a little one?*) and my soul shall live."

21 And he said to him, "See, ^aI have favored you concerning this thing also, in that I will not overthrow this city for which you have spoken.

22 "Hurry, escape there. For ^aI cannot do anything until you arrive there." Therefore ^bthe name of the city was called 'Zoar.

23 The sun had risen upon the earth when Lot entered Zoar.

24 Then the LORD rained ^abrimstone and ^bfire on Sodom and Gomorrah, from the LORD out of the heavens.

25 So He ¹overthrew those cities, all the plain, all the inhabitants of the cities, and ^awhat grew on the ground.

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

27 And Abraham went early in the morning to the place where ^ahe had stood before the LORD.

28 Then he looked toward Sodom and Gomorrah, and toward all the land of the plain; and he saw, and behold, ^athe smoke of the land which went up like the smoke of a furnace.

29 And it came to pass, when God destroyed the cities of the plain, that God ^aremembered Abraham, and sent Lot out of the midst of the overthrow, when He overthrew the cities in which Lot had dwelt.

THE DESCENDANTS OF LOT

30 Then Lot went up out of Zoar and ^adwelt in the mountains, and his two daughters were with him; for he was afraid to dwell in Zoar. And he and his two daughters dwelt in a cave.

31 Now the firstborn said to the younger, "Our father *is* old, and *there is* no man on the earth ^ato come in to us as is the custom of all the earth.

32 "Come, let us make our father drink wine, and we will lie with him, that we ^amay preserve the ¹lineage of our father."

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

19:14 Lot's sons-in-law did not take him seriously. Lot had treated his faith too casually, so at a time of crisis his spiritual life had no credibility.

19:24 Natural ingredients of the destruction were abundant in this region: petroleum, bitumen, salt, and sulfur. This, however, was not a natural disaster but divine judgment on sin.

19:31 In ancient times, motherhood brought great value to women in the eyes of society. Lot's daughters were worried and confused about what their purpose

and contribution would be if left in their current state. However, their father, in fear and desperation had offered them to the lustful men in Sodom and showed no remorse for his iniquity. Now Lot's daughters, in their own fear and desperation, participate with lust, resulting in sexual sin.

19:33 Lot had begun by taking matters into his own hands (13:10). By this time he no longer had sovereignty over even his own body.

34 It happened on the next day that the firstborn said to the younger, “Indeed I lay with my father last night; let us make him drink wine tonight also, and you go in *and* lie with him, that we may preserve the ‘lineage of our father.’”

35 Then they made their father drink wine that night also. And the younger arose and lay with him, and he did not know when she lay down or when she arose.

36 Thus both the daughters of Lot were with child by their father.

37 The firstborn bore a son and called his name Moab; *“he is the father of the Moabites to this day.”*

38 And the younger, she also bore a son and called his name Ben-Ammi; *“he is the father of the people of Ammon to this day.”*

ABRAHAM AND ABIMELECH

20 And Abraham journeyed from *“there to the South, and dwelt between ^bKadesh and Shur, and ^cstayed in Gerar.”*

2 Now Abraham said to Sarah his wife, *“She is my sister.”* And Abimelech king of Gerar sent and *“took Sarah.”*

ENCOUNTER NOTE

Gen. 20:2

Shaped Through Failure

Failure to consult with God in a time of crisis puts you and those you love into danger. God uses our blunders to reveal our character. For faith to grow it must pass through moments of choices.

3 But *“God came to Abimelech ^bin a dream by night, and said to him, ‘‘Indeed you *are* a dead man because of the woman whom you have taken, for she is *‘a man’s wife.’*”*

4 But Abimelech had not come near her; and he said, “Lord, *“will You slay a righteous nation also?”*

5 “Did he not say to me, ‘She is my sister’? And she, even she herself said, ‘He is my brother.’ *“In the ‘integrity of my heart and innocence of my hands I have done this.”*

34¹ Lit. seed

37^a Num. 25:1; Deut. 2:9

38^a Num. 21:24; Deut. 2:19

CHAPTER 20

1^a Gen. 18:1
^b Gen. 12:9; 16:7;
 14^c Gen. 26:1, 6

2^a Gen. 12:11–13;
 26:7^b Gen. 12:15

3^a Ps. 105:14
^b Job 33:15
^c Gen. 20:7
¹ Lit. married to a husband

4^a Gen. 18:23–25;
 Num. 16:22

5^{a1} Kin. 9:4;
 2 Kin. 20:3;
 Ps. 7:8; 26:6
¹ innocence

6^a Gen. 31:7;
 35:5; Ex. 34:24;
 1 Sam. 25:26;
 34^b Gen. 39:9;
 2 Sam. 12:13

7^{a1} Sam. 7:5;
 2 Kin. 5:1; Job 42:8; James 5:14, 15^b Gen. 2:17^c Num. 16:32, 33

9^a Gen. 26:10;
 39:9; Ex. 32:21; Josh. 7:25^b Gen. 34:7¹ sinned against

11^a Gen. 42:18;
 Neh. 5:15; Ps. 36:1; Prov. 16:6
^b Gen. 12:12;
 26:7

12^a Gen. 11:29

13^a Gen. 12:1–9,
 11; [Heb. 11:8]
^b Gen. 12:13;
 20:5

14^a Gen. 12:16

15^a Gen. 13:9;
 34:10; 47:6

ENCOUNTER NOTE

Gen. 20:6

God’s Character Revealed

God always reads the heart and treats us accordingly. God deals justly with those who do not walk with Him, and He provides protection toward His covenant people.

6 And God said to him in a dream, “Yes, I know that you did this in the integrity of your heart. For *“I also withheld you from sinning ^bagainst Me; therefore I did not let you touch her.”*

7 “Now therefore, restore the man’s wife; *“for he is a prophet, and he will pray for you and you shall live. But if you do not restore her, ^bknow that you shall surely die, you ^cand all who *are* yours.”*

8 So Abimelech rose early in the morning, called all his servants, and told all these things in their hearing; and the men were very much afraid.

9 And Abimelech called Abraham and said to him, “What have you done to us? How have I ^ooffended you, *“that you have brought on me and on my kingdom a great sin? You have done deeds to me ^bthat ought not to be done.”*

10 Then Abimelech said to Abraham, “What did you have in view, that you have done this thing?”

11 And Abraham said, “Because I thought, surely *“the fear of God is not in this place; and ^bthey will kill me on account of my wife.”*

12 “But indeed *“she is truly my sister. She is the daughter of my father, but not the daughter of my mother; and she became my wife.”*

13 “And it came to pass, when *“God caused me to wander from my father’s house, that I said to her, ‘This is your kindness that you should do for me: in every place, wherever we go, ^bsay of me, ‘He is my brother.’”*

14 Then Abimelech *“took sheep, oxen, and male and female servants, and gave them to Abraham; and he restored Sarah his wife to him.”*

15 And Abimelech said, “See, *“my land is before you; dwell where it pleases you.”*

19:36 The Moabites and Ammonites, two pagan nations who opposed Israel’s entry into the Promised Land, were birthed as a direct result of the incest of Lot’s daughters.

19:37 From the Moabites would come one of the most disastrous moral failures in Israel’s history (Num. 25)

and the worship of Molech, one of humanity’s most depraved religions (Lev. 18:21).

20:2 “Abimelech” means “The King (God) Is My Father” and may have been a royal title.

20:7 God came to the rescue of Abraham after having rescued Lot (19:15).

16 Then to Sarah he said, “Behold, I have given your brother a thousand *pieces* of silver; ^aindeed this ^vindicates you ^bbefore all who *are* with you and before everybody.” Thus she was ²rebuked.

17 So Abraham ^aprayed to God; and God ^bhealed Abimelech, his wife, and his female servants. Then they bore *children*; 18 for the LORD ^ahad closed up all the wombs of the house of Abimelech because of Sarah, Abraham’s wife.

ISAAC IS BORN

21 And the LORD ^avisited Sarah as He had said, and the LORD did for Sarah ^bas He had spoken.

2 For Sarah ^aconceived and bore Abraham a son in his old age, ^bat the set time of which God had spoken to him.

ENCOUNTER NOTE

Gen. 21:2

Promise Fulfilled

Faith is the greatest inheritance one can offer the next generation. Each generation must pass on a legacy to those who follow. When people examine your faith, are they inspired to adopt it themselves?

3 And Abraham called the name of his son who was born to him—whom Sarah bore to him—^aIsaac.¹

4 Then Abraham ^acircumcised his son Isaac when he was eight days old, ^bas God had commanded him.

5 Now ^aAbraham was one hundred years old when his son Isaac was born to him.

6 And Sarah said, ^a“God has ^vmade me laugh, and all who hear ^bwill laugh with me.”

7 She also said, “Who would have said to Abraham that Sarah would nurse children? ^aFor I have borne *him* a son in his old age.”

HAGAR AND ISHMAEL DEPART

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

9 And Sarah saw the son of Hagar ^athe Egyptian, whom she had borne to Abraham, ^bscoffing.¹

10 Therefore she said to Abraham, ^a“Cast out this bondwoman and her son; for the

16 ^aGen. 26:11
^bMal. 2:9 ¹Lit. is a covering of the eyes for you to all ²Or justified

17 ^aNum. 12:13; 21:7; Job 42:9; [James 5:16]
^bGen. 21:2

18 ^aGen. 12:17

CHAPTER 21

1 ^a1 Sam. 2:21
^bGen. 17:16, 19, 21; 18:10, 14; [Gal. 4:23, 28]

2 ^aActs 7:8; Gal. 4:22; Heb. 11:11, 12 ^bGen. 17:21; 18:10, 14; Gal. 4:4

3 ^aGen. 17:19, 21
¹Lit. *Laughter*

4 ^aActs 7:8
^bGen. 17:10, 12; Lev. 12:3

5 ^aGen. 17:1, 17

6 ^aGen. 18:13; Ps. 126:2; Is. 54:1
^bLuke 1:58 ¹Lit. *made laughter for me*

7 ^aGen. 18:11, 12

9 ^aGen. 16:1, 4, 15 ^b[Gal. 4:29]
¹Lit. *laughing*

10 ^aGen. 25:6; 36:6, 7; Gal. 3:18; 4:30

11 ^aGen. 17:18
¹*distressing*

12 ^aMatt. 12; Luke 3:34; [Rom. 9:7, 8]; Heb. 11:18

13 ^aGen. 16:10; 17:20; 21:18; 25:12–18 ¹*descendant*

14 ^aJohn 8:35
¹A water bottle made of skins

17 ^aEx. 3:7; Deut. 26:7; Ps. 6:8
^bGen. 22:11

18 ^aGen. 16:10; 21:13; 25:12–16

19 ^aGen. 3:7; Num. 22:31; 2 Kin. 6:17; Luke 24:31

20 ^aGen. 28:15; 39:2, 3, 21
^bGen. 16:12

21 ^aGen. 24:4

22 ^aGen. 20:2, 14; 26:26
^bGen. 26:28; Is. 8:10

23 ^aJosh. 2:12; 1 Sam. 24:21
¹*take an oath*

son of this bondwoman shall not be heir with my son, *namely* with Isaac.”

11 And the matter was very ^vdispleasing in Abraham’s sight ^abecause of his son.

12 But God said to Abraham, “Do not let it be displeasing in your sight because of the lad or because of your bondwoman. Whatever Sarah has said to you, listen to her voice; for ^ain Isaac your seed shall be called.

13 “Yet I will also make ^aa nation of the son of the bondwoman, because he *is* your ^vseed.”

14 So Abraham rose early in the morning, and took bread and ^va skin of water; and putting *it* on her shoulder, he gave *it* and the boy to Hagar, and ^asent her away. Then she departed and wandered in the Wilderness of Beersheba.

15 And the water in the skin was used up, and she placed the boy under one of the shrubs.

16 Then she went and sat down across from *him* at a distance of about a bowshot; for she said to herself, “Let me not see the death of the boy.” So she sat opposite *him*, and lifted her voice and wept.

17 And ^aGod heard the voice of the lad. Then the ^bangel of God called to Hagar out of heaven, and said to her, “What ails you, Hagar? Fear not, for God has heard the voice of the lad where he *is*.

18 “Arise, lift up the lad and hold him with your hand, for ^aI will make him a great nation.”

19 Then ^aGod opened her eyes, and she saw a well of water. And she went and filled the skin with water, and gave the lad a drink.

20 So God ^awas with the lad; and he grew and dwelt in the wilderness, ^band became an archer.

21 He dwelt in the Wilderness of Paran; and his mother ^atook a wife for him from the land of Egypt.

A COVENANT WITH ABIMELECH

22 And it came to pass at that time that ^aAbimelech and Phichol, the commander of his army, spoke to Abraham, saying, ^b“God *is* with you in all that you do.

23 “Now therefore, ^aswear¹ to me by God that you will not deal falsely with me, with my offspring, or with my posterity; but that according to the kindness that I have done to you, you will do to me and to the land in which you have dwelt.”

21:5 It took many years for God’s promise of a son to be completed. God fulfills His promises on His own timeline, not ours.

21:12 For the biblical view of slavery, see the notes on

Leviticus 25:39–55 and verse 16 of Philemon.

21:16 In the original Hebrew, Hagar said, “It is a covering of the eyes to you.”

ENCOUNTER NOTE *Gen. 21:22*

A Visible Promise

When God enters a covenant with His people, it will be obvious to others. His presence makes a visible difference.

WORD STUDY

Kindness

Gen. 21:23 Is often translated “loyal love” and is a common term used for God’s character. It is properly understood in the context of God’s covenant loyalty to His people as He expresses His love to them.

24 And Abraham said, “I will swear.”
25 Then Abraham rebuked Abimelech because of a well of water which Abimelech’s servants ^ahad seized.
26 And Abimelech said, “I do not know who has done this thing; you did not tell me, nor had I heard of it until today.”
27 So Abraham took sheep and oxen and gave them to Abimelech, and the two of them ^amade a covenant.
28 And Abraham set seven ewe lambs of the flock by themselves.
29 Then Abimelech asked Abraham, ^a“What is the meaning of these seven ewe lambs which you have set by themselves?”
30 And he said, “You will take *these* seven ewe lambs from my hand, that ^athey may be my witness that I have dug this well.”
31 Therefore he ^acalled that place ‘Beersheba, because the two of them swore an oath there.
32 Thus they made a covenant at Beersheba. So Abimelech rose with Phichol, the commander of his army, and they returned to the land of the Philistines.
33 Then Abraham planted a tamarisk tree in Beersheba, and ^athere called on the name of the LORD, ^bthe Everlasting God.
34 And Abraham stayed in the land of the Philistines many days.

ABRAHAM’S FAITH CONFIRMED

22 Now it came to pass after these things that ^aGod tested Abraham, and said to him, “Abraham!” And he said, “Here I am.”

25^a *Gen. 26:15, 18, 20–22*

27^a *Gen. 26:31; 31:44; 1 Sam. 18:3* ¹*treaty*

29^a *Gen. 33:8*

30^a *Gen. 31:48, 52*

31^a *Gen. 21:14; 26:33* ¹*Lit. Well of the Oath or Well of the Seven*

33^a *Gen. 4:26; 12:8; 13:4; 26:25*
^b*Gen. 35:11; Ex. 15:18; Deut. 32:40; 33:27; Ps. 90:2; 93:2; Is. 40:28; Jer. 10:10; Hab. 1:12; Heb. 13:8*

CHAPTER 22

1^a *Deut. 8:2, 16; 1 Cor. 10:13; Heb. 11:17; [James 1:12–14; 1 Pet. 1:7]*

2^a *Gen. 22:12, 16; John 3:16; Heb. 11:17; 1 John 4:9* ^b*John 5:20* ^c*2 Chr. 3:1* ^d*Gen. 8:20; 31:54*

5^a [*Heb. 11:19*] ¹*Or young man*

6^a *John 19:17*

7¹ *Or goat*

8^a *John 1:29, 36*
^b*Ex. 12:3–6*

ENCOUNTER NOTE *Gen. 22:1–2*

Faith Displayed

At times our faith is weighed against common sense, human affection, and our deepest desires. When we trust God regardless of our circumstances, God is glorified by our faith, which He has nurtured within us.

ENCOUNTER NOTE *Gen. 22:2*

Mount Moriah

The place where Abraham took Isaac is thought to be one of the hills of Jerusalem where Solomon later built the temple. The Jews believed the altar of burnt offerings in the temple was on the site where Abraham built the altar to offer Isaac.

2 Then He said, “Take now your son, ^ayour only son Isaac, whom you ^blove, and go ^cto the land of Moriah, and offer him there as a ^aburnt offering on one of the mountains of which I shall tell you.”
3 So Abraham rose early in the morning and saddled his donkey, and took two of his young men with him, and Isaac his son; and he split the wood for the burnt offering, and arose and went to the place of which God had told him.
4 Then on the third day Abraham lifted his eyes and saw the place afar off.
5 And Abraham said to his young men, “Stay here with the donkey; the ^alad and I will go yonder and worship, and we will ^acome back to you.”
6 So Abraham took the wood of the burnt offering and ^alaid it on Isaac his son; and he took the fire in his hand, and a knife, and the two of them went together.
7 But Isaac spoke to Abraham his father and said, “My father!” And he said, “Here I am, my son.” Then he said, “Look, the fire and the wood, but where is the ^alamb for a burnt offering?”
8 And Abraham said, “My son, God will provide for Himself the ^alamb for a ^bburnt offering.” So the two of them went together.

21:31 “Beersheba” means literally “Well of the Oath” or “Well of the Seven.”

21:33 “Everlasting God” is the meaning of the Hebrew name *El Olam*. This is a series of names through which

God revealed aspects of His nature to the patriarchs: *El Elyon* (14:18), *El Roi* (16:13), *El Shaddai* (17:1), *El Eloh Israel* (33:20), *El Bethel* (35:7).

22:5 “Lad” could also be “young man.”

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

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

11 But the ^aAngel of the LORD called to him from heaven and said, “Abraham, Abraham!” So he said, “Here I am.”

12 And He said, ^a“Do not lay your hand on the lad, or do anything to him; for ^bnow I know that you fear God, since you have not ^cwithheld your son, your only son, from Me.”

ENCOUNTER NOTE

Gen. 22:12

Godly Fear

To fear God means that one truly knows the full nature of God and responds to Him accordingly. As we obey God, we experience His nature, and as we come to know God, we cannot help but love Him.

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

9^a [Heb. 11:17–19; James 2:21]

11^a Gen. 16:7–11; 21:17, 18; 31:11

12^{a1} Sam. 15:22
^b Gen. 26:5;
James 2:21, 22
^c Gen. 22:2, 16;
John 3:16

14ⁱ Heb. YHWH Yireh

16^a Ps. 105:9;
Luke 1:73; [Heb. 6:13, 14]

17^a Gen. 17:16;
26:3, 24 ^b Gen. 15:5; 26:4;
Deut. 1:10; Jer. 33:22; Heb. 11:12
^c Gen. 13:16;
32:12; 1 Kin. 4:20 ^d Gen. 24:60

18^a Gen. 12:3;
18:18; 26:4;
Matt. 11; Luke 3:34; [Acts 3:25, 26]; Gal. 3:8, 9, 16, 18 ^b Gen. 18:19; 22:3, 10; 26:5

ENCOUNTER NOTE

Gen. 22:14

Ours and His

When God gives a command, our responsibility is to obey, and His is to provide for our obedience.

15 Then the Angel of the LORD called to Abraham a second time out of heaven, 16 and said: ^a“By Myself I have sworn, says the LORD, because you have done this thing, and have not withheld your son, your only son—

17 “blessing I will ^b“bless you, and multiplying I will multiply your descendants ^bas the stars of the heaven ^cand as the sand which is on the seashore; and ^dyour descendants shall possess the gate of their enemies.

18 ^a“In your seed all the nations of the earth shall be blessed, ^bbecause you have obeyed My voice.”

ENCOUNTER NOTE

Gen. 22:18

Impact of Obedience

God’s blessing is never isolated to an individual. The blessings our obedience brings always overflow to countless people around us.

EXPLAINING THE FAITH ♦ Genesis 22:1–19

Abraham and Isaac

How could a loving God ask Abraham to commit such a terrible act? 1) God is not testing Abraham’s *morality*; He is testing His *faith* (see Heb. 11:17–19). Child sacrifice was common in Abraham’s world, practiced by many nearby people groups. Would he display the same devotion to his God as the surrounding pagans did to theirs? Would he trust God’s promise to raise up a nation from Isaac, even in the face of an impossible situation? 2) Abraham did not know all that we know today. God’s law had not yet been spelled out at Sinai and Jesus had not yet come to fully embody God’s

righteousness. We should not judge Abraham by our own hindsight. 3) God never intended for Isaac to be killed, which is why He stopped it from happening. 4) This was a specific test for Abraham, not a normative or sanctioned practice commanded by God for all people. 5) This story points towards the future when God Himself would allow *His Son*—born through the family tree of Isaac—to be sacrificed on behalf of all humanity. God alludes to this when he tells Abraham, “In your seed all the nations of the world will be blessed, because you obeyed my voice” (Gen. 22:18).

22:14 The Hebrew name *Jehovah Yireh* means “The Lord Will Provide” or “The Lord Will See to It.” This name marks the completeness of God’s care for Abraham in particular and for His people for eternity. As God provided a ram as a substitute for Isaac, so He would provide a

Savior as a substitute for all people. Jesus, God’s only Son, would be sacrificed near this site in Jerusalem.

22:16 God has nothing greater to swear by than Himself. This attached the assurance of His promise to the steadfastness of His unchanging character.

19 So Abraham returned to his young men, and they rose and went together to ^aBeersheba; and Abraham dwelt at Beersheba.

THE FAMILY OF NAHOR

20 Now it came to pass after these things that it was told Abraham, saying, “Indeed ^aMilcah also has borne children to your brother Nahor:

21 ^a“Huz his firstborn, Buz his brother, Kemuel the father ^bof Aram,

22 ^a“Chesed, Hazo, Pildash, Jidlaph, and Bethuel.”

23 And ^aBethuel begot ¹Rebekah. These eight Milcah bore to Nahor, Abraham’s brother.

24 His concubine, whose name was Reumah, also bore Tebah, Gaham, Thahash, and Maachah.

SARAH’S DEATH AND BURIAL

23 Sarah lived one hundred and twenty-seven years; *these were* the years of the life of Sarah.

2 So Sarah died in ^aKirjath Arba (that is, ^bHebron) in the land of Canaan, and Abraham came to mourn for Sarah and to weep for her.

3 Then Abraham stood up from before his dead, and spoke to the sons of ^aHeth, saying,

4 ^a“I am a foreigner and a visitor among you. ^bGive me property for a burial place among you, that I may bury my dead out of my sight.”

5 And the sons of Heth answered Abraham, saying to him,

6 “Hear us, my lord: You *are* ^aa ¹mighty prince among us; bury your dead in the choicest of our burial places. None of us will withhold from you his burial place, that you may bury your dead.”

ENCOUNTER NOTE

Gen. 23:6

Honor Bestowed

Abraham had a lifetime of faith and trust in the Lord. As he walked with the Lord, God had blessed him in ways that were obvious to the surrounding people. When Abram was in a time of need, those who had watched God bless him welcomed the opportunity to show their respect and bless him as well.

19^a Gen. 21:31

20^a Gen. 11:29; 24:15

21^a Job 1:1 ^b Job 32:2

23^a Gen. 24:15 ¹ Rebecca, Rom. 9:10

CHAPTER 23

2^a Gen. 35:27; Josh. 14:15; 15:13; 21:11 ^b Gen. 13:18; 23:19

3^a Gen. 10:15; 15:20; 2 Kin. 7:6

4^a [Gen. 17:8]; Lev. 25:23; 1 Chr. 29:15; Ps. 39:12; 105:12; 119:19; [Heb. 11:9, 13] ^b Acts 7:5, 16

6^a Gen. 13:2; 14:14; 24:35 ¹ Lit. prince of God

8¹ entreat

9^a Gen. 25:9

10^a Gen. 23:18; 34:20, 24; Ruth 4:1, 4, 11

11^a 2 Sam. 24:21–24

15^a Ex. 30:13; Ezek. 45:12

16^a 2 Sam. 14:26; Jer. 32:9, 10; Zech. 11:12

17^a Gen. 25:9; 49:29–32; 50:13; Acts 7:16

20^a Jer. 32:10, 11

7 Then Abraham stood up and bowed himself to the people of the land, the sons of Heth.

8 And he spoke with them, saying, “If it is your wish that I bury my dead out of my sight, hear me, and ¹meet with Ephron the son of Zohar for me,

9 “that he may give me the cave of ^aMachpelah which he has, which is at the end of his field. Let him give it to me at the full price, as property for a burial place among you.”

10 Now Ephron dwelt among the sons of Heth; and Ephron the Hittite answered Abraham in the presence of the sons of Heth, all who ^aentered at the gate of his city, saying,

11 ^a“No, my lord, hear me: I give you the field and the cave that is in it; I give it to you in the presence of the sons of my people. I give it to you. Bury your dead!”

12 Then Abraham bowed himself down before the people of the land;

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

14 And Ephron answered Abraham, saying to him,

15 “My lord, listen to me; the land is *worth* four hundred ^ashekels of silver. What is that between you and me? So bury your dead.”

16 And Abraham listened to Ephron; and Abraham ^aweighed out the silver for Ephron which he had named in the hearing of the sons of Heth, four hundred shekels of silver, currency of the merchants.

17 So ^athe field of Ephron which *was* in Machpelah, which *was* before Mamre, the field and the cave which *was* in it, and all the trees that *were* in the field, which *were* within all the surrounding borders, were deeded

18 to Abraham as a possession in the presence of the sons of Heth, before all who went in at the gate of his city.

19 And after this, Abraham buried Sarah his wife in the cave of the field of Machpelah, before Mamre (that is, Hebron) in the land of Canaan.

20 So the field and the cave that is in it ^awere deeded to Abraham by the sons of Heth as property for a burial place.

23:10 Ephron conducted this business at the gates of the city where all such business was handled. The elders sat at city gates to judge disputes; there were always many people present to serve as witnesses.

23:17–20 Though his descendants would possess much territory, the only land Abraham owned was this burial spot for his wife, a place where he would later be laid (Gen. 25:10).

A BRIDE FOR ISAAC

24 Now Abraham ^awas old, well advanced in age; and the LORD ^bhad blessed Abraham in all things.

2 So Abraham said ^ato the oldest servant of his house, who ^bruled over all that he had, “Please, ^cput your hand under my thigh,

3 “and I will make you ^aswear’ by the LORD, the God of heaven and the God of the earth, that ^byou will not take a wife for my son from the daughters of the Canaanites, among whom I dwell;

ENCOUNTER NOTE

Gen. 24:3

Of Heaven and Earth

The oath was to the God of heaven and earth. This task was part of God’s plan and had eternal and cosmic significance. Remember that our actions have significance far beyond our understanding as we fulfill God’s plans.

4 “but you shall go ^bto my country and to my family, and take a wife for my son Isaac.”

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

6 But Abraham said to him, “Beware that you do not take my son back there.

7 “The LORD God of heaven, who ^atook me from my father’s house and from the land of my family, and who spoke to me and swore to me, saying, ^b“To your ‘descendants I give this land,’ ‘He will send His angel before you, and you shall take a wife for my son from there.

8 “And if the woman is not willing to follow you, then ^ayou will be released from this oath; only do not take my son back there.”

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

10 Then the servant took ten of his master’s camels and departed, ^afor all his master’s goods *were in his hand*. And he

CHAPTER 24

1^a Gen. 18:11; 21:5
^b Gen. 12:2; 13:2;
 24:35; Ps. 112:3;
 Prov. 10:22;
 [Gal. 3:9]

2^a Gen. 15:2
^b Gen. 24:10;
 39:4–6 ^c Gen.
 47:29; 1 Chr.
 29:24

3^a Gen. 14:19, 22
^b Gen. 26:35;
 28:2; Ex. 34:16;
 Deut. 7:3; 2 Cor.
 6:14–17 ^c take
 an oath

4^a Gen. 28:2
^b Gen. 12:1; Heb.
 11:15

7^a Gen. 12:1; 24:3
^b Gen. 12:7;
 13:15; 15:18; 17:8;
 Ex. 32:13; Deut.
 1:8; 34:4; Acts
 7:5 ^c Gen. 16:7;
 21:17; 22:11; Ex.
 23:20, 23; 33:2;
 Heb. 1:4, 14
^d Lit. seed

8^a Josh. 2:17–20

10^a Gen. 24:2, 22
^b Gen. 11:31, 32;
 22:20; 27:43;
 29:5

11^a Ex. 2:16;
 1 Sam. 9:11

12^a Gen. 24:27;
 42, 48; 26:24;
 32:9; Ex. 3:6, 15
^b Gen. 27:20;
 Neh. 1:11; Ps.
 37:5

13^a Gen. 24:43
^b Ex. 2:16

14^a Judg. 6:17;
 37; 1 Sam. 14:10;
 16:7; 20:7; 2 Kin.
 20:9; Prov.
 16:33; Acts 1:26

15^a Is. 65:24
^b Gen. 24:45;
 25:20 ^c Gen.
 22:20, 23
^d Rebecca, Rom.
 9:10

16^a Gen. 12:11;
 26:7; 29:17

18^a Gen. 24:14,
 46; 1 Pet.
 3:8, 9]

arose and went to Mesopotamia, to ^bthe city of Nahor.

11 And he made his camels kneel down outside the city by a well of water at evening time, the time ^awhen women go out to draw *water*.

12 Then he ^asaid, “O LORD God of my master Abraham, please ^bgive me success this day, and show kindness to my master Abraham.

13 “Behold, *here* ^aI stand by the well of water, and ^bthe daughters of the men of the city are coming out to draw water.

14 “Now let it be that the young woman to whom I say, ‘Please let down your pitcher that I may drink,’ and she says, ‘Drink, and I will also give your camels a drink’—*let her be the one* You have appointed for Your servant Isaac. And ^aby this I will know that You have shown kindness to my master.”

15 And it happened, ^abefore he had finished speaking, that behold, ^bRebekah, ^cwho was born to Bethuel, son of ^dMilcah, the wife of Nahor, Abraham’s brother, came out with her pitcher on her shoulder.

16 Now the young woman ^awas very beautiful to behold, a virgin; no man had known her. And she went down to the well, filled her pitcher, and came up. 17 And the servant ran to meet her and said, “Please let me drink a little water from your pitcher.”

18 “So she said, “Drink, my lord.” Then she quickly let her pitcher down to her hand, and gave him a drink.

19 And when she had finished giving him a drink, she said, “I will draw *water* for your camels also, until they have finished drinking.”

ENCOUNTER NOTE

Gen. 24:19

A Generous Life

A generous life is highly valued by God and often a notable characteristic of those whom God chooses to use in His work. Therefore, our gratitude for God should be exemplified by a generous life towards others.

24:2 The “oldest servant” may have been Eliezer mentioned in Genesis 15:2, due to his high position over all Abraham possessed.

24:3 Throughout the Scriptures, God’s people are instructed to marry within their own religious family (Deut. 7:3–4; 1 Kin. 11:4; Ezra 9; 1 Cor. 7:39).

24:3 Marriage in ancient cultures often meant adopting the gods of your spouse. Throughout the Old Testament

we see the danger of bringing idols into a family (most notably in King Solomon’s downfall, see 1 Kin. 11:1–6). This is not a *racial* issue but a *religious* concern.

24:10 The possession of camels in this time indicated great wealth.

24:15 “Rebekah” means “Rope” or “Noose,” as one who “ensnares with her beauty.” She was from Abraham’s relatives.

20 Then she quickly emptied her pitcher into the trough, ran back to the well to draw *water*, and drew for all his camels.
21 And the man, wondering at her, remained silent so as to know whether ^athe LORD had made his journey prosperous or not.

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

23 and said, “Whose daughter *are* you? Tell me, please, is there room *in* your father’s house for us ^tto lodge?”

24 So she said to him, “*I am* the daughter of Bethuel, Milcah’s son, whom she bore to Nahor.”

25 Moreover she said to him, “We have both straw and feed enough, and room to lodge.”

26 Then the man ^abowed down his head and worshiped the LORD.

27 And he said, “^aBlessed *be* the LORD God of my master Abraham, who has not forsaken ^bHis mercy and His truth toward my master. As for me, being on the way, the LORD ^aled me to the house of my master’s brethren.”

28 So the young woman ran and told her mother’s household these things.

29 Now Rebekah had a brother whose name *was* ^aLaban, and Laban ran out to the man by the well.

30 So it came to pass, when he saw the nose ring, and the bracelets on his sister’s wrists, and when he heard the words of his sister Rebekah, saying, “Thus the man spoke to me,” that he went to the man. And there he stood by the camels at the well.

31 And he said, “Come in, ^aO blessed of the LORD! Why do you stand outside? For I have prepared the house, and a place for the camels.”

32 Then the man came to the house. And he unloaded the camels, and ^aprovided straw and feed for the camels, and water to ^bwash his feet and the feet of the men who *were* with him.

33 *Food* was set before him to eat, but he said, “I will not eat until I have told about my errand.” And he said, “Speak on.”

34 So he said, “*I am* Abraham’s servant.

35 “The LORD ^ahas blessed my master greatly, and he has become great; and He has given him flocks and herds, silver and gold, male and female servants, and camels and donkeys.

21^a Gen. 24:12–14, 27, 52

22^a Gen. 24:47; Ex. 32:2, 3; Is. 3:19–21

23^t to spend the night

24^a Gen. 22:23; 24:15

26^a Gen. 24:48, 52; Ex. 4:31

27^a Gen. 24:12, 42, 48; Ex. 18:10; Ruth 4:14; 1 Sam. 25:32, 39; 2 Sam. 18:28; Luke 1:68
^b Gen. 32:10; Ps. 98:3 ^c Gen. 24:21, 48

29^a Gen. 29:5, 13

31^a Gen. 26:29; Judg. 17:2; Ruth 3:10; Ps. 115:15

32^a Gen. 43:24; Judg. 19:21
^b Gen. 19:2; John 13:5, 13–15

33^a Job 23:12; John 4:34; Eph. 6:5–7

35^a Gen. 13:2; 24:1

36^a Gen. 21:1–7
^b Gen. 21:10; 25:5

37^a Gen. 24:2–4

38^a Gen. 24:4

39^a Gen. 24:5

40^a Gen. 24:7
^b Gen. 5:22, 24; 17:1; 1 Kin. 8:23
ⁱ make your way successful

41^a Gen. 24:8

42^a Gen. 24:12

43^a Gen. 24:13

45^a Gen. 24:15
^b 1 Sam. 1:13

48^a Gen. 24:26, 52 ^b Gen. 22:23; 24:27; Ps. 32:8; 48:14; Is. 48:17

49^a Gen. 47:29; Josh. 2:14

36 “And Sarah my master’s wife ^abore a son to my master when she was old; and ^bto him he has given all that he has.

37 “Now my master ^amade me swear, saying, ‘You shall not take a wife for my son from the daughters of the Canaanites, in whose land I dwell;

38 ^abut you shall go to my father’s house and to my family, and take a wife for my son.’

39 ^a“And I said to my master, ‘Perhaps the woman will not follow me.’

40 ^a“But he said to me, ‘The LORD, ^bbefore whom I walk, will send His angel with you and ⁱprosper your way; and you shall take a wife for my son from my family and from my father’s house.

41 ^a“You will be clear from this oath when you arrive among my family; for if they will not give *her* to you, then you will be released from my oath.’

42 “And this day I came to the well and said, ^a“O LORD God of my master Abraham, if You will now prosper the way in which I go,

43 ^a“behold, I stand by the well of water; and it shall come to pass that when the virgin comes out to draw *water*, and I say to her, ‘Please give me a little water from your pitcher to drink,’

44 ‘and she says to me, ‘Drink, and I will draw for your camels also,’—*let her be* the woman whom the LORD has appointed for my master’s son.’

45 ^a“But before I had finished ^bspeaking in my heart, there was Rebekah, coming out with her pitcher on her shoulder; and she went down to the well and drew *water*. And I said to her, ‘Please let me drink.’
46 “And she made haste and let her pitcher down from her *shoulder*, and said, ‘Drink, and I will give your camels a drink also.’ So I drank, and she gave the camels a drink also.

47 “Then I asked her, and said, ‘Whose daughter *are* you?’ And she said, ‘The daughter of Bethuel, Nahor’s son, whom Milcah bore to him.’ So I put the nose ring on her nose and the bracelets on her wrists.

48 ^a“And I bowed my head and worshiped the LORD, and blessed the LORD God of my master Abraham, who had led me in the way of truth to ^btake the daughter of my master’s brother for his son.

49 “Now if you will ^adeal kindly and truly with my master, tell me. And if not, tell me, that I may turn to the right hand or to the left.”

24:20 Camels would have required an enormous amount of water after such a sojourn. For Rebekah to have run back to fetch enough water for them revealed a tremendous servant’s heart.

50 Then Laban and Bethuel answered and said, ^a“The thing comes from the LORD; we cannot ^bspeak to you either bad or good.

51 ^a“Here is Rebekah before you; take her and go, and let her be your master’s son’s wife, as the LORD has spoken.”

52 And it came to pass, when Abraham’s servant heard their words, that ^ahe worshiped the LORD, *bowing himself* to the earth.

ENCOUNTER NOTE

Gen. 24:52

All Around Us

God is at work all around us. Yet we often fail to recognize what is happening in our lives as His activity. When we perceive His handiwork, we must immediately take time to worship and thank Him for His goodness.

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

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

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

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

57 So they said, “We will call the young woman and ask her personally.”

58 Then they called Rebekah and said to her, “Will you go with this man?” And she said, “I will go.”

59 So they sent away Rebekah their sister ^aand her nurse, and Abraham’s servant and his men.

60 And they blessed Rebekah and said to her:

“Our sister, *may you become*
“The mother of thousands
of ten thousands;

50^a Ps. 118:23;
 Matt. 21:42;
 Mark 12:11
 51^b Gen. 31:24, 29

51^a Gen. 20:15

52^a Gen. 24:26,
 48

53^a Gen. 24:10,
 22; Ex. 3:22;
 11:2; 12:35
 52^b Chr. 21:3;
 Ezra 1:6

54^a Gen. 24:56,
 59; 30:25

56^c *delay*

59^a Gen. 35:8

60^a Gen. 17:16
 59^b Gen. 22:17;
 28:14

62^a Gen. 16:14;
 25:11

63^a Josh. 1:8; Ps.
 1:2; 77:12; 119:15,
 27, 48; 143:5;
 145:5

64^a Josh. 15:18

67^a Gen. 25:20;
 29:20; Prov.
 18:22 59^b Gen.
 23:1, 2; 38:12

CHAPTER 25

1^{a1} Chr. 1:32, 33

2^{a1} Chr. 1:32, 33

5^a Gen. 24:35, 36

6^a Gen. 21:14
 59^b Judg. 6:3

8^a Gen. 15:15;
 47:8, 9 59^b Gen.
 25:17; 35:29;
 49:29, 33

^bAnd may your descendants possess
 The gates of those who hate them.”

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

62 Now Isaac came from the way of ^aBeer Lahai Roi, for he dwelt in the South.

63 And Isaac went out ^ato meditate in the field in the evening; and he lifted his eyes and looked, and there, the camels *were* coming.

64 Then Rebekah lifted her eyes, and when she saw Isaac ^ashe dismounted from her camel;

65 for she had said to the servant, “Who is this man walking in the field to meet us?” The servant said, “It is my master.” So she took a veil and covered herself.

66 And the servant told Isaac all the things that he had done.

67 Then Isaac brought her into his mother Sarah’s tent; and he ^atook Rebekah and she became his wife, and he loved her. So Isaac ^bwas comforted after his mother’s *death*.

ABRAHAM AND KETURAH

25 Abraham again took a wife, and her name *was* ^aKeturah.

2 And ^ashe bore him Zimran, Jokshan, Medan, Midian, Ishbak, and Shuah.

3 Jokshan begot Sheba and Dedan. And the sons of Dedan were Asshurim, Le-tushim, and Leummim.

4 And the sons of Midian *were* Ephah, Ephes, Hanoah, Abidah, and Eldaah. All these *were* the children of Keturah.

5 And ^aAbraham gave all that he had to Isaac.

6 But Abraham gave gifts to the sons of the concubines which Abraham had; and while he was still living he ^asent them eastward, away from Isaac his son, to ^bthe country of the east.

ABRAHAM’S DEATH AND BURIAL

7 This is the sum of the years of Abraham’s life which he lived: one hundred and seventy-five years.

8 Then Abraham breathed his last and ^adied in a good old age, an old man and full of *years*, and ^bwas gathered to his people.

24:58 Women were not given a choice in who they married. This was the case in many cultures until recently in human history. Allowing Rebekah a say in whether she would go with Abraham’s servant was not repeated for her nieces when they were later given to Jacob in marriage.

24:67 It is rare for the Bible to talk of romantic love between a husband and wife. Their marriage would begin the fulfillment of the promise given to Abraham, that he would be the father of many nations.

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

ENCOUNTER NOTE *Gen. 25:11*

Good to His Word

Do not overlook this simple note, “God blessed His son.” God had faithfully kept His promise to Abraham, and now He would faithfully continue the blessing to the next generation (Gen. 26:2–5).

THE FAMILIES OF ISHMAEL AND ISAAC

12 Now this is the ^agenealogy of Ishmael, Abraham’s son, whom Hagar the Egyptian, Sarah’s maidservant, bore to Abraham.

13 And ^athese *were* the names of the sons of Ishmael, by their names, according to their generations: The firstborn of Ishmael, Nebajoth; then Kedar, Adbeel, Mibsam,

14 Mishma, Dumah, Massa,

15 ¹Hadar, Tema, Jetur, Naphish, and Kedemah.

16 These *were* the sons of Ishmael and these *were* their names, by their towns and their ¹settlements, ^atwelve princes according to their nations.

17 These *were* the years of the life of Ishmael: one hundred and thirty-seven years; and ^ahe breathed his last and died, and was gathered to his people.

18 ^a(They dwelt from Havilah as far as Shur, which is east of Egypt as you go toward Assyria.) He ¹died ^bin the presence of all his brethren.

19 This is the ^agenealogy of Isaac, Abraham’s son. ^bAbraham begot Isaac.

20 Isaac was forty years old when he took Rebekah as wife, ^athe daughter of Bethuel the Syrian of Padan Aram, ^bthe sister of Laban the Syrian.

9^a Gen. 35:29; 50:13 ^bGen. 23:9, 17; 49:30

10^a Gen. 23:3–16 ^bGen. 49:31

11^a Gen. 16:14

12^a Gen. 11:10, 27; 16:15

13^{a1} Chr. 1:29–31

15¹ MT Hadad

16^a Gen. 17:20 ¹camp

17^a Gen. 25:8; 49:33

18^a Gen. 20:1; 1 Sam. 15:7 ^bGen. 16:12 ¹fell

19^a Gen. 36:1, 9 ^bMatt. 1:2

20^a Gen. 22:23; 24:15, 29, 67 ^bGen. 24:29

21^{a1} 1 Sam. 1:17; 1 Chr. 5:20; 2 Chr. 33:13; Ezra 8:23; Ps. 127:3 ^bRom. 9:10–13

22^{a1} 1 Sam. 1:15; 9:9; 10:22

23^a Gen. 17:4–6, 16; 24:60; Num. 20:14; Deut. 2:4–8 ^{b2} Sam. 8:14 ¹Gen. 27:29, 40; Mal. 1:2, 3; Rom. 9:12

25^a Gen. 27:11, 16, 23 ¹Lit. *Hairy*

26^a Hos. 12:3 ^bGen. 27:36 ¹Supplanter or Deceitful, lit. *One Who Takes the Heel*

27^a Gen. 27:3, 5 ^bJob 1:1, 8 ^cHeb. 11:9 ¹Lit. complete

28^a Gen. 27:4, 19, 25, 31 ^bGen. 27:6–10

30¹ Lit. *Red*

ENCOUNTER NOTE *Gen. 25:21–22*

Renewed Covenant

God’s promises are sure, but He may wait on the recipient to cry out for its fulfillment. Blessing is not automatic; members of each generation must seek their own relationship with the Lord.

21 Now Isaac pleaded with the LORD for his wife, because she *was* barren; ^aand the LORD granted his plea, ^band Rebekah his wife conceived.

22 But the children struggled together within her; and she said, “If *all is well*, why *am I like this*?” ^aSo she went to inquire of the LORD.

23 And the LORD said to her:

^a“Two nations *are* in your womb,
Two peoples shall be separated
from your body;
One people shall be stronger
than ^bthe other,
“And the older shall serve
the younger.”

24 So when her days were fulfilled *for her* to give birth, indeed *there were* twins in her womb.

25 And the first came out red. *He was* ^alike a hairy garment all over; so they called his name ¹Esau.

26 Afterward his brother came out, and ^ahis hand took hold of Esau’s heel; so ^bhis name was called ¹Jacob. Isaac *was* sixty years old when she bore them.

27 So the boys grew. And Esau was ^aa skillful hunter, a man of the field; but Jacob was ^ba ¹mild man, ^cdwelling in tents.

28 And Isaac loved Esau because he ^aate of his game, ^bbut Rebekah loved Jacob.

ESAU SELLS HIS BIRTHRIGHT

29 Now Jacob cooked a stew; and Esau came in from the field, and he *was* weary.

30 And Esau said to Jacob, “Please feed me with that same red *stew*, for I *am* weary.” Therefore his name was called ¹Edom.

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

25:21 Rebekah experienced a time of barrenness, as did Sarah.

25:25–26 “Esau” means “Hairy”; he was Isaac’s favorite. “Jacob” means “Supplanter” or “Heel Catcher,” and he was Rebekah’s favorite. Esau later taunted Jacob because of his name (Gen. 27:36). Eventually, the Lord would change Jacob’s name to “Israel,” meaning “Prince with God” (Gen. 32:28).

25:30 “Edom” means “Red.”

25:31 A person’s “birthright” was a double portion of the inheritance given to the oldest child. If there were two sons, then the older would get 2/3 and the younger 1/3 of the inheritance. Throughout the Old Testament, God often chose to use the younger in place of the customary older.

32 And Esau said, “Look, I *am* about to die; so ^awhat is this birthright to me?”
 33 Then Jacob said, “Swear to me as of this day.” So he swore to him, and ^asold his birthright to Jacob.

34 And Jacob gave Esau bread and stew of lentils; then ^ahe ate and drank, arose, and went his way. Thus Esau ^bdespised his birthright.

ENCOUNTER NOTE

Gen. 25:34

Passed Over

If people “despise” God’s purpose for their lives, He may give their assignments to others.

ISAAC AND ABIMELECH

26 There was a famine in the land, besides ^athe first famine that was in the days of Abraham. And Isaac went to ^bAbimelech king of the Philistines, in Gerar.

2 Then the LORD appeared to him and said: ^a“Do not go down to Egypt; live in ^bthe land of which I shall tell you.

3 ^a“Dwell in this land, and ^bI will be with you and ^cbless you; for to you and your descendants ^dI give all these lands, and I will perform ^ethe oath which I swore to Abraham your father.

4 “And ^aI will make your descendants multiply as the stars of heaven; I will give to your descendants all these lands; ^band in your seed all the nations of the earth shall be blessed;

5 ^a“because Abraham obeyed My voice and kept My charge, My commandments, My statutes, and My laws.”

32^a Matt. 16:26; Mark 8:36, 37

33^a Heb. 12:16
¹Take an oath

34^a Eccl. 8:15; Is. 22:13; 1 Cor. 15:32^b Heb. 12:16, 17

CHAPTER 26

1^a Gen. 12:10
^b Gen. 20:1, 2

2^a Gen. 12:7; 17:1; 18:1; 35:9
^b Gen. 12:1

3^a Gen. 20:1; Ps. 39:12; Heb. 11:9
^b Gen. 28:13, 15
^c Gen. 12:2
^d Gen. 12:7; 13:15; 15:18
^e Gen. 22:16; Ps. 105:9

4^a Gen. 15:5; 22:17; Ex. 32:13
^b Gen. 12:3; 22:18; Gal. 3:8

5^a Gen. 22:16, 18

7^a Gen. 12:13; 20:2, 12, 13
^b Prov. 29:25
^c Gen. 12:11; 24:16; 29:17

8^a caressing

10^a Gen. 20:9

11^a Ps. 105:15

12^a Matt. 13:8, 23; Mark 4:8
^b Gen. 24:1; 25:8, 11; 26:3; Job 42:12; Prov. 10:22

13^a Gen. 24:35; [Prov. 10:22]

6 So Isaac dwelt in Gerar.

7 And the men of the place asked about his wife. And ^ahe said, “She is my sister”; for ^bhe was afraid to say, “*She is my wife,*” *because he thought,* “lest the men of the place kill me for Rebekah, because she is ^cbeautiful to behold.”

8 Now it came to pass, when he had been there a long time, that Abimelech king of the Philistines looked through a window, and saw, and there was Isaac, ¹showing endearment to Rebekah his wife.

9 Then Abimelech called Isaac and said, “Quite obviously she *is* your wife; so how could you say, ‘She is my sister?’” Isaac said to him, “Because I said, ‘Lest I die on account of her.’”

10 And Abimelech said, “What is this you have done to us? One of the people might soon have lain with your wife, and ^ayou would have brought guilt on us.”

11 So Abimelech charged all *his* people, saying, “He who ^atouches this man or his wife shall surely be put to death.”

12 Then Isaac sowed in that land, and reaped in the same year ^aa hundredfold; and the LORD ^bblessed him.

13 The man ^abegan to prosper, and continued prospering until he became very prosperous;

ENCOUNTER NOTE

Gen. 26:12–14

Inherited Blessing

The children of faithful parents will always have the opportunity to enjoy God’s blessing. But every generation is responsible for how it responds to the covenant of faith.

CHARACTER STUDY ♦ Gen. 25:26

Jacob

Jacob, “the supplanter,” was the second son of Isaac and Rebecca, twin brother to Esau. He tricked his older brother out of his firstborn birthright and later deceived Isaac into giving him a blessing intended for Esau. As Jacob passed through Bethel, God appeared to him and foretold the great nation Jacob’s descendants would become and the blessing they would be to all nations. Jacob married Leah and Rebecca

and fathered twelve sons who would later become the twelve tribes of Israel. After a night of wrestling with God at Jabbok, Jacob’s name was changed by the Lord to Israel, meaning “Prince with God.” Jacob died in Egypt at 147 years old and was buried with his fathers in the cave of Machpelah in Canaan. Jacob’s life shows how God can work through people, in spite of serious character flaws, to accomplish His will.

26:1 The Philistines were a powerful sea people who settled in the coastlands in southwest Canaan. They became mortal enemies of the nation of Israel.

26:2 This is the first recorded encounter of the Lord with

Isaac. He had come to Rebekah previously (Gen. 25:22).

26:7 The sins of the father are often repeated in the next generation.

14 for he had possessions of flocks and possessions of herds and a great number of servants. So the Philistines ^aenvied him. 15 Now the Philistines had stopped up all the wells ^awhich his father's servants had dug in the days of Abraham his father, and they had filled them with earth.

16 And Abimelech said to Isaac, "Go away from us, for ^ayou are much mightier than we."

17 Then Isaac departed from there and ^apitched his tent in the Valley of Gerar, and dwelt there.

18 And Isaac dug again the wells of water which they had dug in the days of Abraham his father, for the Philistines had stopped them up after the death of Abraham. ^aHe called them by the names which his father had called them.

19 Also Isaac's servants dug in the valley, and found a well of running water there.

20 But the herdsmen of Gerar ^aquarreled with Isaac's herdsmen, saying, "The water is ours." So he called the name of the well ^aEsek, because they quarreled with him.

21 Then they dug another well, and they quarreled over that *one* also. So he called its name ^aSitnah.

22 And he moved from there and dug another well, and they did not quarrel over it. So he called its name ^aRehoboth, because he said, "For now the LORD has made room for us, and we shall ^abe fruitful in the land."

23 Then he went up from there to Beersheba.

24 And the LORD ^aappeared to him the same night and said, ^b"I am the God of your father Abraham; ^cdo not fear, for ^dI am with you. I will bless you and multiply your descendants for My servant Abraham's sake."

25 So he ^abuilt an altar there and ^bcalled on the name of the LORD, and he pitched his tent there; and there Isaac's servants dug a well.

26 Then Abimelech came to him from Gerar with Ahuzzath, one of his friends, ^aand Phichol the commander of his army.

27 And Isaac said to them, "Why have you come to me, ^asince you hate me and have ^bsent me away from you?"

28 But they said, "We have certainly seen that the LORD ^ais with you. So we said, 'Let there now be an oath between us, between you and us; and let us make a ^acovenant with you,

14^a Gen. 37:11; Eccl. 4:4

15^a Gen. 21:25, 30

16^a Ex. 1:9

17^a camped

18^a Gen. 21:31

20^a Gen. 21:25
¹Lit. Quarrel

21^a Lit. Enmity

22^a Gen. 17:6;
28:3; 41:52;
Ex. 1:7 ¹Lit.
Spaciousness

24^a Gen.
26:2 ^b Gen.
17:7, 8; 24:12;
Ex. 3:6; Acts
7:32 ^c Gen. 15:1
^d Gen. 26:3, 4

25^a Gen. 12:7, 8;
13:4, 18; 22:9;
33:20 ^b Gen.
21:33; Ps. 116:17

26^a Gen. 21:22

27^a Judg. 11:7
^b Gen. 26:16

28^a Gen. 21:22,
23 ¹ treaty

29^a Gen. 24:31;
Ps. 115:15

30^a Gen. 19:3

31^a Gen. 21:31

33^a Gen. 21:31;
28:10 ¹ Lit.
Oath or Seven
² Lit. Well of the
Oath or Well of
the Seven

34^a Gen. 28:8;
36:2

35^a Gen. 27:46;
28:1, 8

CHAPTER 27

1^a Gen. 35:28
^b Gen. 48:10;
1 Sam. 3:2

2^a [Prov. 27:1;
James 4:14]

3^a Gen. 25:27, 28

4^a Gen. 27:19, 25,
27, 31; 48:9, 15,
16; 49:28; Deut.
33:1; Heb. 11:20
¹ tasty

29 'that you will do us no harm, since we have not touched you, and since we have done nothing to you but good and have sent you away in peace. ^aYou are now the blessed of the LORD.'"

30 ^aSo he made them a feast, and they ate and drank.

31 Then they arose early in the morning and ^aswore an oath with one another; and Isaac sent them away, and they departed from him in peace.

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

33 So he called it ¹Shebah. ^aTherefore the name of the city is ²Beersheba to this day.

34 ^aWhen Esau was forty years old, he took as wives Judith the daughter of Beeri the Hittite, and Basemath the daughter of Elon the Hittite.

35 And ^athey were a grief of mind to Isaac and Rebekah.

ISAAC BLESSES JACOB

27 Now it came to pass, when Isaac was ^aold and ^bhis eyes were so dim that he could not see, that he called Esau his older son and said to him, "My son." And he answered him, "Here I am."

2 Then he said, "Behold now, I am old. I ^ado not know the day of my death.

3 ^a"Now therefore, please take your weapons, your quiver and your bow, and go out to the field and hunt game for me.

4 "And make me ^asavory food, such as I love, and bring it to me that I may eat, that my soul ^amay bless you before I die."

5 Now Rebekah was listening when Isaac spoke to Esau his son. And Esau went to the field to hunt game and to bring it.

WORD STUDY

Blessing

Gen. 27:4 The term here comes from the Hebrew, *barak*, meaning "to kneel." It was a prophetic word for a positive future. Once spoken, it could not be retracted, and had the power of its own fulfillment as God allowed. Before a father died, he would declare a blessing upon his children that was believed to be fulfilled in their lifetime.

26:20 "Esek" means "Quarrel."

26:21 "Sitnah" means "Enmity."

26:22 "Rehoboth" means "Spaciousness."

26:33 "Shebah" means "Oath." "Beersheba" means "Well of the Oath."

27:4 The elderly Isaac enjoyed satisfying his physical appetites.

6 So Rebekah spoke to Jacob her son, saying, "Indeed I heard your father speak to Esau your brother, saying,
7 'Bring me game and make 'savory food for me, that I may eat it and bless you in the presence of the LORD before my death.'

8 "Now therefore, my son, ^aobey my voice according to what I command you.
9 "Go now to the flock and bring me from there two choice kids of the goats, and I will make ^asavory food from them for your father, such as he loves.

10 "Then you shall take *it* to your father, that he may eat *it*, and that he ^amay bless you before his death."

11 And Jacob said to Rebekah his mother, "Look, ^aEsau my brother *is* a hairy man, and I *am* a smooth-skinned man.

12 "Perhaps my father will ^afeel me, and I shall seem to be a deceiver to him; and I shall bring ^ba curse on myself and not a blessing."

13 But his mother said to him, ^a"Let your curse *be* on me, my son; only obey my voice, and go, get *them* for me."

14 And he went and got *them* and brought *them* to his mother, and his mother ^amade 'savory food, such as his father loved.

15 Then Rebekah took ^athe choice clothes of her elder son Esau, which *were* with her in the house, and put them on Jacob her younger son.

16 And she put the skins of the kids of the goats on his hands and on the smooth part of his neck.

17 Then she gave the savory food and the bread, which she had prepared, into the hand of her son Jacob.

18 So he went to his father and said, "My father." And he said, "Here I am. Who *are* you, my son?"

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

20 But Isaac said to his son, "How *is it* that you have found *it* so quickly, my son?" And he said, "Because the LORD your God brought *it* to me."

21 Isaac said to Jacob, "Please come near, that I ^amay feel you, my son, whether you *are* really my son Esau or not."

22 So Jacob went near to Isaac his father, and he felt him and said, "The voice *is* Jacob's voice, but the hands *are* the hands of Esau."

7¹ *tasty*

8^a Gen. 27:13, 43

9^a Gen. 27:4

10^a Gen. 27:4;
48:16

11^a Gen. 25:25

12^a Gen. 27:21,
22 ^b Gen. 9:25;
Deut. 27:18

13^a Gen. 43:9;
1 Sam. 25:24;
2 Sam. 14:9;
Matt. 27:25

14^a Prov. 23:3;
Luke 21:34
¹ *tasty*

15^a Gen. 27:27

19^a Gen. 27:4

21^a Gen. 27:12

23^a Gen. 27:16

25^a Gen. 27:4, 10,
19, 31

27^a Gen. 29:13
^b Song 4:11; Hos.
14:6

28^a Heb. 11:20
^b Gen. 27:39;
Deut. 33:13,
28; 2 Sam.
1:21; Ps. 133:3;
Prov. 3:20; Mic.
5:7; Zech. 8:12
^c Gen. 45:18;
Num. 18:12
^d Deut. 7:13;
33:28

29^a Gen. 9:25;
25:23; Is. 45:14;
49:7; 60:12,
14 ^b Gen. 37:7,
10; 49:8 ^c Gen.
12:2, 3; Zeph.
2:8, 9

31^a Gen. 27:4
¹ *tasty*

33^a Gen. 25:23;
28:3, 4; Num.
23:20; Rom.
11:29

34^a [Heb. 12:17]

23 And he did not recognize him, because ^ahis hands were hairy like his brother Esau's hands; so he blessed him.

24 Then he said, "Are you really my son Esau?" He said, "I *am*."

25 He said, "Bring *it* near to me, and I will eat of my son's game, so ^athat my soul may bless you." So he brought *it* near to him, and he ate; and he brought him wine, and he drank.

26 Then his father Isaac said to him, "Come near now and kiss me, my son."

27 And he came near and ^akissed him; and he smelled the smell of his clothing, and blessed him and said:

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

28 Therefore may ^aGod give you
Of ^bthe dew of heaven,
Of ^cthe fatness of the earth,
And ^dplenty of grain and wine.

29 ^aLet peoples serve you,
And nations bow down to you.
Be master over your brethren,
And ^blet your mother's sons
bow down to you.

^cCursed *be* everyone
who curses you,
And blessed *be* those
who bless you!"

ESAU'S LOST HOPE

30 Now it happened, as soon as Isaac had finished blessing Jacob, and Jacob had scarcely gone out from the presence of Isaac his father, that Esau his brother came in from his hunting.

31 He also had made 'savory food, and brought it to his father, and said to his father, "Let my father arise and ^aeat of his son's game, that your soul may bless me."

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

33 Then Isaac trembled exceedingly, and said, "Who? Where *is* the one who hunted game and brought *it* to me? I ate all of *it* before you came, and I have blessed him—^aand indeed he shall be blessed."

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

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

27:34 Esau's bitter cry would go unheeded as he could not undo the consequences of his sin (Heb. 12:16–17).
27:37 The spoken word of blessing or cursing was

considered extremely powerful in the ancient world. Once Isaac's blessing was inadvertently spoken to Jacob, Isaac could not change it or give it again.

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

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

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

39 Then Isaac his father answered and said to him:

“Behold, ^ayour dwelling shall be of the ^{‘fatness} of the earth, And of the dew of heaven from above.

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

JACOB ESCAPES FROM ESAU

41 So Esau ^ahated Jacob because of the blessing with which his father blessed him, and Esau said in his heart, ^b“The days of mourning for my father ^{‘are} at hand; ^cthen I will kill my brother Jacob.”

42 And the words of Esau her older son were told to Rebekah. So she sent and called Jacob her younger son, and said to him, “Surely your brother Esau ^acomforts himself concerning you *by intending* to kill you.

43 “Now therefore, my son, obey my voice: arise, flee to my brother Laban ^ain Haran.

44 “And stay with him a ^afew days, until your brother’s fury turns away,

36^a Gen. 25:26, 32–34 ^{‘Supplanter} or Deceitful, lit. One Who Takes the Heel

37^a 2 Sam. 8:14 ^b Gen. 27:28, 29 ^{‘provided} support for

38^a Heb. 12:17

39^a Gen. 27:28; Heb. 11:20 ^{‘fertility}

40^a Gen. 25:23; 27:29; 2 Sam. 8:14; [Obad. 18–20] ^{‘2} Kin. 8:20–22

41^a Gen. 26:27; 32:3–11; 37:4, 5, 8 ^b Gen. 50:2–4, 10 ^c Obad. 10 ^{‘are soon here}

42^a Ps. 64:5

43^a Gen. 11:31; 25:20; 28:2, 5

44^a Gen. 31:41

46^a Gen. 26:34, 35; 28:8 ^b Gen. 24:3

CHAPTER 28

1^a Gen. 27:33 ^b Gen. 24:3 ^{‘commanded}

2^a Hos. 12:12 ^b Gen. 25:20 ^c Gen. 22:23 ^d Gen. 24:29; 27:43; 29:5

3^a Gen. 17:16; 35:11; 48:3 ^b Gen. 26:4, 24

4^a Gen. 12:2, 3; 22:17; Gal. 3:8 ^b Gen. 17:8; 23:4; 36:7; 1 Chr. 29:15; Ps. 39:12 ^{‘Lit. Of your sojournings}

8^a Gen. 24:3; 26:34, 35; 27:46

9^a Gen. 26:34, 35 ^b Gen. 36:2, 3 ^c Gen. 25:13

10^a Gen. 26:23; 46:1; Hos. 12:12 ^b Gen. 12:4, 5; 27:43; 29:4; 2 Kin. 19:12; Acts 7:2

45 “until your brother’s anger turns away from you, and he forgets what you have done to him; then I will send and bring you from there. Why should I be bereaved also of you both in one day?”

46 And Rebekah said to Isaac, “I am weary of my life because of the daughters of Heth; ^bif Jacob takes a wife of the daughters of Heth, like these *who are* the daughters of the land, what good will my life be to me?”

28 Then Isaac called Jacob and ^ablessed him, and ^{‘charged} him, and said to him: ^b“You shall not take a wife from the daughters of Canaan.

2 ^a“Arise, go to ^bPadan Aram, to the house of ^{‘Bethuel} your mother’s father; and take yourself a wife from there of the daughters of ^aLaban your mother’s brother.

3 “May ^aGod Almighty bless you, And make you ^bfruitful and multiply you, That you may be an assembly of peoples;

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

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

ESAU MARRIES MAHALATH

6 Esau saw that Isaac had blessed Jacob and sent him away to Padan Aram to take himself a wife from there, *and that* as he blessed him he gave him a charge, saying, “You shall not take a wife from the daughters of Canaan,”

7 and that Jacob had obeyed his father and his mother and had gone to Padan Aram.

8 Also Esau saw ^athat the daughters of Canaan did not please his father Isaac.

9 So Esau went to Ishmael and ^atook ^bMahalath the daughter of Ishmael, Abraham’s son, ^cthe sister of Nebajoth, to be his wife in addition to the wives he had.

JACOB’S VOW AT BETHEL

10 Now Jacob ^awent out from Beersheba and went toward ^bHaran.

ENCOUNTER NOTE

Gen. 27:41

Matters in Our Hands

The great temptation is to take control of our own life and destiny. It takes steady faith to leave our lives and future in God’s hands. Yet when we seize control of our lives, disaster inevitably ensues.

28:2 “Padan Aram” means “Plain of Aram” and was in northwest Mesopotamia near Haran.

28:3 “God Almighty” is *El Shaddai* in Hebrew.

28:5 “Syrian” could also be translated “Aramean.”

11 So he came to a certain place and stayed there all night, because the sun had set. And he took one of the stones of that place and put it at his head, and he lay down in that place to sleep.

12 Then he ^adreamed, and behold, a ladder *was* set up on the earth, and its top reached to heaven; and there ^bthe angels of God were ascending and descending on it.

13 ^aAnd behold, the LORD stood above it and said: ^b*"I am the LORD God of Abraham your father and the God of Isaac; the land on which you lie I will give to you and your descendants."*

14 *"Also your ^adescendants shall be as the dust of the earth; you shall spread abroad ^bto the west and the east, to the north and the south; and in you and ^cin your seed all the families of the earth shall be blessed."*

15 *"Behold, ^aI am with you and will ^bkeep¹ you wherever you go, and will ^cbring you back to this land; for ^dI will not leave you ^euntil I have done what I have spoken to you."*

16 Then Jacob awoke from his sleep and said, *"Surely the LORD is in ^athis place, and I did not know it."*

17 And he was afraid and said, *"How awesome is this place! This is none other*

12 ^aGen. 31:10; 41:1; Num. 12:6
^bJohn 1:51; Heb. 1:4, 14

13 ^aGen. 35:1; 48:3; Amos 7:7
^bGen. 26:24
^cGen. 13:15, 17; 26:3; 35:12

14 ^aGen. 13:16; 22:17 ^bGen. 13:14, 15; Deut. 12:20 ^cGen. 12:3; 18:18; 22:18; 26:4; Matt. 12; Luke 3:34; Gal. 3:8

15 ^aGen. 26:3; 24; 31:3 ^bGen. 48:16; Num. 6:24; Ps. 121:5, 7; 8 ^cGen. 35:6; 48:21; Deut. 30:3 ^dLev. 26:44; Deut. 7:9; 31:6, 8; Josh. 1:5; 1 Kin. 8:57; Heb. 13:5
^eNum. 23:19
¹protect

16 ^aEx. 3:5; Josh. 5:15; Ps. 139:7–12

18 ^aGen. 31:13, 45
^bLev. 8:10–12

19 ^aJudg. 1:23, 26 ^bLit. *House of God*

20 ^aGen. 31:13; Judg. 11:30; 2 Sam. 15:8
^bGen. 28:15
^c1 Tim. 6:8

21 ^aJudg. 11:31; 2 Sam. 19:24, 30
^bDeut. 26:17; 2 Sam. 15:8

22 ^aGen. 35:7, 14 ^bGen. 14:20; [Lev. 27:30]; Deut. 14:22
¹tithe

CHAPTER 29

1 ^aGen. 25:6; Num. 23:7; Judg. 6:3, 33; Hos. 12:12

2 ^aGen. 24:10, 11; Ex. 2:15, 16

4 ^aGen. 11:31; 28:10

5 ^aGen. 24:24, 29; 28:2

6 ^aGen. 43:27
^bGen. 24:11; Ex. 2:16, 17

7 ^aearly in the day

than the house of God, and this is the gate of heaven!"

18 Then Jacob rose early in the morning, and took the stone that he had put at his head, ^aset it up as a pillar, ^band poured oil on top of it.

19 And he called the name of ^athat place ^bBethel; but the name of that city had been Luz previously.

20 ^aThen Jacob made a vow, saying, *"If ^bGod will be with me, and keep me in this way that I am going, and give me ^cbread to eat and clothing to put on,*

21 *"so that ^aI come back to my father's house in peace, ^bthen the LORD shall be my God."*

22 *"And this stone which I have set as a pillar ^ashall be God's house, ^band of all that You give me I will surely give a ^ctenth to You."*

JACOB MEETS RACHEL

29 So Jacob went on his journey ^aand came to the land of the people of the East.

2 And he looked, and saw a ^awell in the field; and behold, there *were* three flocks of sheep lying by it; for out of that well they watered the flocks. A large stone *was* on the well's mouth.

3 Now all the flocks would be gathered there; and they would roll the stone from the well's mouth, water the sheep, and put the stone back in its place on the well's mouth.

4 And Jacob said to them, *"My brethren, where ^aare you from?"* And they said, *"We ^aare from ^aHarar."*

5 Then he said to them, *"Do you know ^aLaban the son of Nahor?"* And they said, *"We know him."*

6 So he said to them, *"^aIs he well?"* And they said, *"^aHe is well. And look, his daughter Rachel ^bis coming with the sheep."*

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

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

ENCOUNTER NOTE

Gen. 28:16

Surprised by God

We are not always aware of God's presence with us, but that does not mean He is not near. God never abandons us, though we are often disoriented with regard to Him.

ENCOUNTER NOTE

Gen. 28:17

God's Presence

When we do not see God at work around us, we must never assume He is not active. Rather we should pray for Him to open our spiritual eyes so we can see His activity.

28:12 This is similar imagery to what the builders of the Tower of Babel intended. This ladder (or staircase) represented a place where heaven and earth connected. God is taking the initiative to come to Jacob, whereas pagan religions would have sought to summon the gods on their own.

28:15 God's great promise to His people is His presence. When God is present, no other resource is needed.

28:19 "Bethel" means "House of God."

28:20–22 Jacob is still displaying his characteristic selfishness. He is attempting to make a deal with God. Later, after he has gained more experience with God, his speech reveals a maturity and is more focused on God than on himself (see Gen. 32:9–12).

28:22 God's people often created physical monuments representing commitments made at a particular place and time, to serve as a reminder to themselves and to future generations of what God said and did.

9 Now while he was still speaking with them, ^aRachel came with her father's sheep, for she was a shepherdess.
10 And it came to pass, when Jacob saw Rachel the daughter of Laban his mother's brother, and the sheep of Laban his mother's brother, that Jacob went near and ^arolled the stone from the well's mouth, and watered the flock of Laban his mother's brother.

ENCOUNTER NOTE

Gen. 29:10

No Coincidences

What may seem like a fortunate coincidence could actually be God at work carrying out His plans. Always look for God's activity in the seemingly ordinary events of your life.

11 Then Jacob ^akissed Rachel, and lifted up his voice and wept.
12 And Jacob told Rachel that he *was* ^aher father's relative and that he *was* Rebekah's son. ^bSo she ran and told her father.
13 Then it came to pass, when Laban heard the report about Jacob his sister's son, that ^ahe ran to meet him, and embraced him and kissed him, and brought him to his house. So he told Laban all these things.
14 And Laban said to him, ^a"Surely you *are* my bone and my flesh." And he stayed with him for a month.

JACOB MARRIES LEAH AND RACHEL

15 Then Laban said to Jacob, "Because you *are* my relative, should you therefore serve me for nothing? Tell me, ^a"what *should* your wages be?"
16 Now Laban had two daughters: the name of the elder *was* Leah, and the name of the younger *was* Rachel.
17 Leah's eyes *were* ^cdelicate, but Rachel *was* ^abeautiful of form and appearance.
18 Now Jacob loved Rachel; so he said, ^a"I will serve you seven years for Rachel your younger daughter."
19 And Laban said, ^a"It is better that I give her to you than that I should give her to another man. Stay with me."
20 So Jacob ^aserved seven years for Rachel, and they seemed *only* a few days to him because of the love he had for her.
21 Then Jacob said to Laban, "Give *me* my wife, for my days are fulfilled, that I may ^ago in to her."

⁹ Ex. 2:16

10^a Ex. 2:17

11^a Gen. 33:4; 45:14, 15

12^a Gen. 13:8; 14:14, 16; 28:5
^b Gen. 24:28

13^a Gen. 24:29–31; Luke 15:20

14^a Gen. 2:23; 37:27; Judg. 9:2; 2 Sam. 5:1; 19:12, 13

15^a Gen. 30:28; 31:41

17^a Gen. 12:11, 14; 26:7 ¹Or *weak*

18^a Gen. 31:41; 2 Sam. 3:14; Hos. 12:12

20^a Gen. 30:26; Hos. 12:12

21^a Judg. 15:1

22^a Judg. 14:10; John 2:1, 2

24^a Gen. 30:9, 10

25^a Gen. 27:35; 31:7; 1 Sam. 28:12

26¹ Lit. *place*

27^a Gen. 31:41; Judg. 14:2

29^a Gen. 30:3–5

30^a Gen. 29:17–20; Deut. 21:15–17 ^b Gen. 30:26; 31:41; Hos. 12:12

31^a Ps. 127:3
^b Gen. 30:1 ¹ Lit. *hated*

32^a Gen. 16:11; 31:42; Ex. 3:7; 4:31; Deut. 26:7; Ps. 25:18 ¹ Lit. *See, a Son*

33¹ Lit. *hated*
² Lit. *Heard*

22 And Laban gathered together all the men of the place and ^amade a feast.
23 Now it came to pass in the evening, that he took Leah his daughter and brought her to Jacob; and he went in to her.
24 And Laban gave his maid ^aZilpah to his daughter Leah as a maid.
25 So it came to pass in the morning, that behold, it *was* Leah. And he said to Laban, "What is this you have done to me? Was it not for Rachel that I served you? Why then have you ^adeceived me?"

ENCOUNTER NOTE

Gen. 29:25

Facing Deceit

There will be times when people deceive us. However, others' deceptions do not exempt us from fulfilling our obligations. As we deal with others, our character and integrity are on display before God and those around us.

26 And Laban said, "It must not be done so in our ^ccountry, to give the younger before the firstborn.
27 ^a"Fulfill her week, and we will give you this one also for the service which you will serve with me still another seven years."
28 Then Jacob did so and fulfilled her week. So he gave him his daughter Rachel as wife also.
29 And Laban gave his maid ^aBilhah to his daughter Rachel as a maid.
30 Then *Jacob* also went in to Rachel, and he also ^aloved Rachel more than Leah. And he served with Laban ^bstill another seven years.

THE CHILDREN OF JACOB

31 When the LORD ^asaw that Leah *was* ^cunloved, He ^bopened her womb; but Rachel *was* barren.
32 So Leah conceived and bore a son, and she called his name ^c'Reuben; for she said, "The LORD has surely ^alooked on my affliction. Now therefore, my husband will love me."
33 Then she conceived again and bore a son, and said, "Because the LORD has heard that I *am* ^cunloved, He has therefore given me this *son* also." And she called his name ²Simeon.
34 She conceived again and bore a son, and said, "Now this time my husband

29:28 The Mosaic law would later forbid a man from marrying two sisters while both were living (Lev. 18:18).
29:31 Although Leah was not to be a part of the holy

lineage of the Messiah, God loved her and sought to comfort her.

will become attached to me, because I have borne him three sons." Therefore his name was called 'Levi.

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

30 Now when Rachel saw that ^ashe bore Jacob no children, Rachel ^benvied her sister, and said to Jacob, "Give me children, ^cor else I die!"

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

3 So she said, "Here is ^amy maid Bilhah; go in to her, ^band she will bear *a child* on my knees, ^cthat I also may ^dhave children by her."

4 Then she gave him Bilhah her maid ^aas wife, and Jacob went in to her.

5 And Bilhah conceived and bore Jacob a son.

6 Then Rachel said, "God has ^ajudged my case; and He has also heard my voice and given me a son." Therefore she called his name 'Dan.

7 And Rachel's maid Bilhah conceived again and bore Jacob a second son.

8 Then Rachel said, "With ¹great wrestlings I have wrestled with my sister, ^{and} indeed I have prevailed." So she called his name ²Naphtali.

9 When Leah saw that she had stopped bearing, she took Zilpah her maid and ^agave her to Jacob as wife.

10 And Leah's maid Zilpah bore Jacob a son.

11 Then Leah said, "^aA troop comes!" So she called his name ²Gad.

12 And Leah's maid Zilpah bore Jacob a second son.

13 Then Leah said, "I am happy, for the daughters ^awill call me blessed." So she called his name 'Asher.

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

15 But she said to her, "^aIs it a small matter that you have taken away my husband? Would you take away my son's mandrakes also?" And Rachel said, "Therefore he will lie with you tonight for your son's mandrakes."

34¹ Lit. Attached

35^a Gen. 49:8; Matt. 1:2 ¹Lit. Praise

CHAPTER 30

1^a Gen. 16:1, 2; 29:31 ^b Gen. 37:11 ^c 1 Sam. 1:5, 6; [Job 5:2]

2^a Gen. 16:2; 1 Sam. 1:5

3^a Gen. 16:2; ^b Gen. 50:23; Job 3:12 ^c Gen. 16:2, 3 ¹ Lit. *be built up by her*

4^a Gen. 16:3, 4

6^a Gen. 18:25; Ps. 35:24; 43:1; Lam. 3:59 ¹ Lit. Judge

8¹ Lit. *wrestlings of God* ² Lit. *My Wrestling*

9^a Gen. 30:4

11¹ So with Qr., Syr., Tg.; Kt., LXX, Vg. in *fortune* ² Lit. *Troop or Fortune*

13^a Prov. 31:28; Luke 1:48 ¹ Lit. Happy

14^a Gen. 25:30

15^a [Num. 16:9, 13]

18¹ Lit. *Wages*

20¹ Lit. *Dwelling*

21^a Gen. 34:1 ¹ Lit. *Judgment*

22^a Gen. 19:29; 1 Sam. 1:19, 20 ^b Gen. 29:31

23^a 1 Sam. 1:6; Is. 4:1; Luke 1:25

24^a Gen. 35:16–18 ¹ Lit. *He Will Add*

25^a Gen. 24:54, 56 ^b Gen. 18:33

26^a Gen. 29:18–20, 27, 30; Hos. 12:12

27^a Gen. 26:24; 39:3; Is. 61:9

28^a Gen. 29:15; 31:7, 41

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

17 And God listened to Leah, and she conceived and bore Jacob a fifth son.

18 Leah said, "God has given me my wages, because I have given my maid to my husband." So she called his name 'Issachar.

19 Then Leah conceived again and bore Jacob a sixth son.

20 And Leah said, "God has endowed me *with* a good endowment; now my husband will dwell with me, because I have borne him six sons." So she called his name 'Zebulun.

21 Afterward she bore a ^adaughter, and called her name 'Dinah.

22 Then God ^aremembered Rachel, and God listened to her and ^bopened her womb.

ENCOUNTER NOTE

Gen. 30:22

God Remembers

God knows our troubles. He does not hesitate to address them in His own way and time to accomplish His will and to glorify Himself in the process. His help may not come as soon as we would like, but it will come when it is best.

23 And she conceived and bore a son, and said, "God has taken away ^amy reproach."

24 So she called his name 'Joseph, and said, "^aThe LORD shall add to me another son."

JACOB'S AGREEMENT WITH LABAN

25 And it came to pass, when Rachel had borne Joseph, that Jacob said to Laban, "^aSend me away, that I may go to ^bmy own place and to my country.

26 "Give *me* my wives and my children ^afor whom I have served you, and let me go; for you know my service which I have done for you."

27 And Laban said to him, "Please *stay*, if I have found favor in your eyes, ^{for} ^aI have learned by experience that the LORD has blessed me for your sake."

28 Then he said, "^aName me your wages, and I will give *it*."

30:3 The phrase "on my knees" meant "children considered my own." They would be viewed as belonging to Rachel.

30:8 "Great wrestlings" is literally "wrestlings of God."

30:14 Mandrakes were believed to increase fertility.

30:24 "Joseph" means "He Will Add."

30:39 Jacob's plot was based on the belief he could affect the sheep's embryo to his advantage. It was God who intervened on Jacob's behalf to give him success.

29 So *Jacob* said to him, “You know how I have served you and how your livestock has been with me.

30 “For what you had before I *came* was little, and it has increased to a great amount; the LORD has blessed you ‘since my coming. And now, when shall I also “provide for my own house?”

31 So he said, “What shall I give you?” And Jacob said, “You shall not give me anything. If you will do this thing for me, I will again feed and keep your flocks:

32 “Let me pass through all your flock today, removing from there all the speckled and spotted sheep, and all the brown ones among the lambs, and the spotted and speckled among the goats; and ^a*these* shall be my wages.

33 “So my ^a‘righteousness will answer for me in time to come, when the subject of my wages comes before you: every one that is not speckled and spotted among the goats, and brown among the lambs, will be considered stolen, if *it* is with me.”

34 And Laban said, “Oh, that it were according to your word!”

35 So he removed that day the male goats that were ^a‘speckled and spotted, all the female goats that were speckled and spotted, every one that had *some* white in it, and all the brown ones among the lambs, and gave *them* into the hand of his sons.

36 Then he put three days’ journey between himself and Jacob, and Jacob fed the rest of Laban’s flocks.

37 Now ^a‘Jacob took for himself rods of green poplar and of the almond and chestnut trees, peeled white strips in them, and exposed the white which *was* in the rods.

38 And the rods which he had peeled, he set before the flocks in the gutters, in the watering troughs where the flocks came to drink, so that they should conceive when they came to drink.

39 So the flocks conceived before the rods, and the flocks brought forth streaked, speckled, and spotted.

40 Then Jacob separated the lambs, and made the flocks face toward the streaked and all the brown in the flock of Laban; but he put his own flocks by themselves and did not put them with Laban’s flock.

41 And it came to pass, whenever the stronger livestock conceived, that Jacob placed the rods before the eyes of the livestock in the gutters, that they might conceive among the rods.

42 But when the flocks were feeble, he did not put *them* in; so the feeble were Laban’s and the stronger Jacob’s.

29^a Gen. 31:6, 38–40; Matt. 24:45; Titus 2:10

30^a [1 Tim. 5:8] ¹Lit. *at my foot*

32^a Gen. 31:8

33^a Ps. 37:6

35^a Gen. 31:9–12

37^a Gen. 31:9–12

43^a Gen. 12:16; 30:30 ^b Gen. 13:2; 24:35; 26:13, 14

CHAPTER 31

1^a Ps. 49:16

2^a Gen. 4:5 ^b Deut. 28:54

3^a Gen. 28:15, 20, 21; 32:9 ^b Gen. 46:4

5^a Gen. 31:2, 3 ^b Gen. 21:22; 28:13, 15; 31:29, 42, 53; Is. 41:10; Heb. 13:5 ¹Lit. *face*

6^a Gen. 30:29; 31:38–41

7^a Gen. 29:25; 31:41 ^b Num. 14:22; Neh. 4:12; Job 19:3; Zech. 8:23 ^c Gen. 15:1; 20:6; 31:29; Job 1:10; Ps. 37:28; 105:14

8^a Gen. 30:32

9^a Gen. 31:1, 16

ENCOUNTER NOTE

Gen. 30:43

Prosperity

When God chooses to bless, He does so abundantly. When people submit to Him, He turns their negative character traits into positive attributes. Thus Jacob’s cunning deceitfulness became creative industry.

43 Thus the man ^a‘became exceedingly prosperous, and ^b‘had large flocks, female and male servants, and camels and donkeys.

JACOB FLEES FROM LABAN

31 Now *Jacob* heard the words of Laban’s sons, saying, “Jacob has taken away all that was our father’s, and from what was our father’s he has acquired all this ^a‘wealth.”

2 And Jacob saw the ^a‘countenance of Laban, and indeed it *was* not ^b‘favorable toward him as before.

3 Then the LORD said to Jacob, ^a‘“Return to the land of your fathers and to your family, and I will ^b‘be with you.”

ENCOUNTER NOTE

Gen. 31:3

Time to Leave

We tend to grow comfortable in familiar surroundings. God has a purpose and plan for our lives. He will make it clear when it is time to leave where we are and go to the next assignment He has for us.

4 So Jacob sent and called Rachel and Leah to the field, to his flock,

5 and said to them, ^a‘“I see your father’s ‘countenance, that it *is* not ^b‘favorable toward me as before; but the God of my father ^b‘has been with me.

6 “And ^a‘you know that with all my might I have served your father.

7 “Yet your father has deceived me and ^a‘changed my wages ^b‘ten times, but God ^a‘did not allow him to hurt me.

8 “If he said thus: ^a‘“The speckled shall be your wages,’ then all the flocks bore speckled. And if he said thus: ‘The streaked shall be your wages,’ then all the flocks bore streaked.

9 “So God has ^a‘taken away the livestock of your father and given *them* to me.

10 “And it happened, at the time when the flocks conceived, that I lifted my eyes and saw in a dream, and behold,

the rams which leaped upon the flocks *were* streaked, speckled, and gray-spotted.

11 “Then ^athe Angel of God spoke to me in a dream, saying, ‘Jacob.’ And I said, ‘Here I am.’

12 “And He said, ‘Lift your eyes now and see, all the rams which leap on the flocks *are* streaked, speckled, and gray-spotted; for ^aI have seen all that Laban is doing to you.

13 ‘I *am* the God of Bethel, ^awhere you anointed the pillar *and* where you made a vow to Me. Now ^barise, get out of this land, and return to the land of your family.’”

14 Then Rachel and Leah answered and said to him, ^a“Is there still any portion or inheritance for us in our father’s house?

15 “Are we not considered strangers by him? For ^ahe has sold us, and also completely consumed our money.

16 “For all these riches which God has taken from our father are *really* ours and our children’s; now then, whatever God has said to you, do it.”

17 Then Jacob rose and set his sons and his wives on camels.

18 And he carried away all his livestock and all his possessions which he had gained, his acquired livestock which he had gained in Padan Aram, to go to his father Isaac in the land of ^aCanaan.

19 Now Laban had gone to shear his sheep, and Rachel had stolen the ^a“household” idols that were her father’s.

20 And Jacob stole away, unknown to Laban the Syrian, in that he did not tell him that he intended to flee.

21 So he fled with all that he had. He arose and crossed the river, and ^a“headed” toward the mountains of Gilead.

LABAN PURSUES JACOB

22 And Laban was told on the third day that Jacob had fled.

23 Then he took ^ahis brethren with him and pursued him for seven days’ journey, and he overtook him in the mountains of Gilead.

24 But God ^a“had come to Laban the Syrian in a dream by night, and said to him, “Be careful that you ^bspeak to Jacob neither good nor bad.”

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

11^a Gen. 16:7–11; 22:11, 15; 31:13; 48:16

12^a Gen. 31:42; Ex. 3:7; Ps. 139:3; Eccl. 5:8

13^a Gen. 28:16–22; 35:1, 6, 15
^b Gen. 31:3; 32:9

14^a Gen. 2:24

15^a Gen. 29:15, 20, 23, 27; Neh. 5:8

18^a Gen. 17:8; 33:18; 35:27

19^a Gen. 31:30, 34; 35:2; Judg. 17:5; 1 Sam. 19:13; Hos. 3:4
¹ Heb. *teraphim*

21^a Gen. 46:28; 2 Kin. 12:17; Luke 9:51, 53
¹ Lit. *set his face toward*

23^a Gen. 13:8

24^a Gen. 20:3; 31:29; 46:2–4; Job 33:15; Matt. 1:20
^b Gen. 24:50; 31:7, 29

26^a 1 Sam. 30:2

28^a Gen. 31:55; Ruth 1:9, 14; 1 Kin. 19:20; Acts 20:37
^b 1 Sam. 13:13

29^a Gen. 28:13; 31:5, 24, 42, 53
^b Gen. 31:24

30^a Gen. 31:19; Josh. 24:2; Judg. 17:5; 18:24

31^a Gen. 26:7; 32:7, 11

32^a Gen. 44:9

34¹ Heb. *teraphim*
² Lit. *felt*

35^a Ex. 20:12; Lev. 19:32
¹ Heb. *teraphim*

36^a *transgression*

ENCOUNTER NOTE

Gen. 31:23

God Speaks to Our Enemies

God works on behalf of His people to protect them, including working in the lives of their enemies. We cannot know all God is doing in the hearts and minds of those around us.

26 And Laban said to Jacob: “What have you done, that you have stolen away unknown to me, and ^a“carried away my daughters like captives *taken* with the sword?

27 “Why did you flee away secretly, and steal away from me, and not tell me; for I might have sent you away with joy and songs, with timbrel and harp?

28 “And you did not allow me ^a“to kiss my sons and my daughters. Now ^b“you have done foolishly in so doing.

29 “It is in my power to do you harm, but the ^a“God of your father spoke to me ^b“last night, saying, ‘Be careful that you speak to Jacob neither good nor bad.’

30 “And now you have surely gone because you greatly long for your father’s house, *but* why did you ^a“steal my gods?”

31 Then Jacob answered and said to Laban, “Because I was ^a“afraid, for I said, ‘Perhaps you would take your daughters from me by force.’

32 “With whomever you find your gods, ^a“do not let him live. In the presence of our brethren, identify what I have of yours and take *it* with you.” For Jacob did not know that Rachel had stolen them.

33 And Laban went into Jacob’s tent, into Leah’s tent, and into the two maids’ tents, but he did not find *them*. Then he went out of Leah’s tent and entered Rachel’s tent.

34 Now Rachel had taken the ^a“household idols, put them in the camel’s saddle, and sat on them. And Laban ²“searched all about the tent but did not find *them*.

35 And she said to her father, “Let it not displease my lord that I cannot ^a“rise before you, for the manner of women *is* with me.” And he searched but did not find the ^a“household idols.

36 Then Jacob was angry and rebuked Laban, and Jacob answered and said to Laban: “What *is* my ^a“trespass? What *is* my sin, that you have so hotly pursued me?”

31:19 Idols were so predominant in the ancient world that Rachel may be struggling to give them up, as Jacob’s relationship with God is still relatively new.

31:25 Gilead is a mountainous region east of the Jordan River.

37 “Although you have searched all my things, what part of your household things have you found? Set *it* here before my brethren and your brethren, that they may judge between us both!

38 “These twenty years *I have been* with you; your ewes and your female goats have not miscarried their young, and I have not eaten the rams of your flock.

39 “That which was torn *by beasts* I did not bring to you; I bore the loss of it. ^bYou required it from my hand, *whether* stolen by day or stolen by night.

40 “*There I was!* In the day the drought consumed me, and the frost by night, and my sleep departed from my eyes.

41 “Thus I have been in your house twenty years; I ^aserved you fourteen years for your two daughters, and six years for your flock, and ^byou have changed my wages ten times.

42 “Unless the God of my father, the God of Abraham and ^bthe Fear of Isaac, had been with me, surely now you would have sent me away empty-handed. ^cGod has seen my affliction and the labor of my hands, and ^drebuked *you* last night.”

LABAN'S COVENANT WITH JACOB

43 And Laban answered and said to Jacob, “*These daughters are* my daughters, and *these children are* my children, and *this flock is* my flock; all that you see is mine. But what can I do this day to these my daughters or to their children whom they have borne?

44 “Now therefore, come, ^alet us make a ^bcovenant, ^byou and I, and let it be a witness between you and me.”

45 So Jacob ^atook a stone and set it up as a pillar.

46 Then Jacob said to his brethren, “Gather stones.” And they took stones and made a heap, and they ate there on the heap.

47 Laban called it ^aJegar Sahadutha, but Jacob called it ^bGaleed.

48 And Laban said, “*This heap is* a witness between you and me this day.” Therefore its name was called Galeed,

49 also ^aMizpah, ^bbecause he said, “May the LORD watch between you and me when we are absent one from another.

50 “If you afflict my daughters, or if you take *other* wives besides my daughters, *although* no man is with us—see, God is witness between you and me!”

39^a Ex. 22:10
^b Ex. 22:10–13

41^a Gen. 29:20,
27–30 ^b Gen.
31:7

42^a Gen. 31:5,
29, 53; Ps. 124:1,
2 ^b Gen. 31:53;
Is. 8:13 ^c Gen.
29:32; Ex. 3:7
^d Gen. 31:24, 29;
1 Chr. 12:17

44^a Gen. 21:27,
32; 26:28
^b Josh. 24:27
^c treaty

45^a Gen. 28:18;
35:14; Josh.
24:26, 27

47^a Lit., in
Aram., *Heap of*
Witness ^b Lit.,
in Heb., *Heap*
of Witness

48^a Josh. 24:27

49^a Judg. 10:17;
11:29; 1 Sam. 7:5,
6 ^b Lit. *Watch*

53^a Gen. 16:5
^b Gen. 21:23
^c Gen. 31:42 ^d A
reference to
God

55^a Gen. 29:11,
13; 31:28, 43
^b Gen. 28:1
^c Gen. 18:33;
30:25; Num.
24:25

CHAPTER 32

1^a Num. 22:31;
2 Kin. 6:16, 17;
[Ps. 34:7; 91:1;
Heb. 1:14]

2^a Josh. 5:14; Ps.
103:21; 148:2;
Luke 2:13 ^b Lit.
Double Camp

3^a Gen. 14:6;
33:14, 16 ^b Gen.
25:30; 36:6–9;
Deut. 2:5; Josh.
24:4 ^c Lit. *field*

4^a Prov. 15:1

5^a Gen. 30:43
^b Gen. 33:8, 15

6^a Gen. 33:1

7^a Gen. 32:11;
35:3

WORD STUDY

Witness

Gen. 31:51–52 This term signifies a physical memorial, often of stone, set up as evidence of an agreement or verbal contract.

51 Then Laban said to Jacob, “Here is this heap and here is *this* pillar, which I have placed between you and me.

52 “This heap is a witness, and *this* pillar is a witness, that I will not pass beyond this heap to you, and you will not pass beyond this heap and this pillar to me, for harm.

53 “The God of Abraham, the God of Nahor, and the God of their father ^ajudge between us.” And Jacob ^bswore by ^cthe ^dFear of his father Isaac.

54 Then Jacob offered a sacrifice on the mountain, and called his brethren to eat bread. And they ate bread and stayed all night on the mountain.

55 And early in the morning Laban arose, and ^akissed his sons and daughters and ^bblessed them. Then Laban departed and ^creturned to his place.

ESAU COMES TO MEET JACOB

32 So Jacob went on his way, and ^athe angels of God met him.

2 When Jacob saw them, he said, “This is God’s ^acamp.” And he called the name of that place ^bMahanaim.

3 Then Jacob sent messengers before him to Esau his brother ^ain the land of Seir, ^bthe ^ccountry of Edom.

4 And he commanded them, saying, ^a“Speak thus to my lord Esau, ‘Thus your servant Jacob says: “I have dwelt with Laban and stayed there until now.

5 ^a“I have oxen, donkeys, flocks, and male and female servants; and I have sent to tell my lord, that ^bI may find favor in your sight.””

6 Then the messengers returned to Jacob, saying, “We came to your brother Esau, and ^ahe also is coming to meet you, and four hundred men *are* with him.”

7 So Jacob was greatly afraid and ^adistressed; and he divided the people that *were* with him, and the flocks and herds and camels, into two companies.

31:47–48 “Galeed” means “Heap of Witness.” This reflected the belief in having a tangible witness to transactions made between people, even if the witness was an inanimate object.

31:49 “Mizpah” means “Watch.”

32:1–2 “Mahanaim” means “Double Camp.” The phrase “on his way” is significant. God met Jacob and gave him assurance as he was going.

8 And he said, "If Esau comes to the one company and ¹attacks it, then the other company which is left will escape."

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

10 "I am not worthy of the least of all the ^amercies and of all the truth which You have shown Your servant; for I crossed over this Jordan with ^bmy staff, and now I have become two companies.

11 ^a"Deliver me, I pray, from the hand of my brother, from the hand of Esau; for I fear him, lest he come and ¹attack me and ^bthe mother with the children.

ENCOUNTER NOTE

Gen. 32:11

Fear

We all encounter frightening circumstances. Yet children of God never face their fears alone. God goes with them, and He keeps His promises to guide and protect them.

12 "For ^aYou said, 'I will surely treat you well, and make your descendants as the ^bsand of the sea, which cannot be numbered for multitude.'"

13 So he lodged there that same night, and took what ¹came to his hand as ^aa present for Esau his brother:

14 two hundred female goats and twenty male goats, two hundred ewes and twenty rams,

15 thirty milk camels with their colts, forty cows and ten bulls, twenty female donkeys and ten foals.

16 Then he delivered *them* to the hand of his servants, every drove by itself, and said to his servants, "Pass over before me, and put some distance between successive droves."

17 And he commanded the first one, saying, "When Esau my brother meets you and asks you, saying, 'To whom do you belong, and where are you going? Whose *are* these in front of you?'

18 "then you shall say, 'They *are* your servant Jacob's. It is a present sent to my lord Esau; and behold, he also *is* behind us.'"

8 ¹Lit. *strikes*

9 ^a[Ps. 50:15]
^bGen. 28:13;
31:42 ^cGen.
31:3, 13

10 ^aGen. 24:27
^bJob 8:7

11 ^aPs. 59:1,
2 ^bHos. 10:14
¹Lit. *strike*

12 ^aGen. 28:13-15
^bGen. 22:17

13 ^aGen.
43:11 ¹he had
received

20 ^a[Prov. 21:14]

22 ^aNum. 21:24;
Deut. 3:16;
Josh. 12:2

23 ¹across

24 ^aJosh. 5:13-
15; Hos. 12:2-4
¹dawn

25 ^aMatt. 26:41;
2 Cor. 12:7
¹struck

26 ^aLuke 24:28
^bHos. 12:4

28 ^aGen. 35:10;
1 Kin. 18:31;
2 Kin. 17:34
^bHos. 12:3,
4 ^cGen. 25:31;
27:33 ¹Lit.
*Prince with
God*

29 ^aJudg. 13:17,
18 ^bGen. 35:9

30 ^aGen. 16:13;
Ex. 24:10, 11;
33:20; Num.
12:8; Deut. 5:24;
Judg. 6:22; Is.
6:5; [Matt. 5:8;
1 Cor. 13:12]
¹Lit. *Face of God*

19 So he commanded the second, the third, and all who followed the droves, saying, "In this manner you shall speak to Esau when you find him;

20 "and also say, 'Behold, your servant Jacob *is* behind us.'" For he said, "I will ^aappease him with the present that goes before me, and afterward I will see his face; perhaps he will accept me."

21 So the present went on over before him, but he himself lodged that night in the camp.

WRESTLING WITH GOD

22 And he arose that night and took his two wives, his two female servants, and his eleven sons, ^aand crossed over the ford of Jabbok.

23 He took them, sent them ¹over the brook, and sent over what he had.

24 Then Jacob was left alone; and ^aa Man wrestled with him until the ¹breaking of day.

25 Now when He saw that He did not prevail against him, He ¹ouched the socket of his hip; and ^athe socket of Jacob's hip was out of joint as He wrestled with him.

26 And ^aHe said, "Let Me go, for the day breaks." But he said, ^b"I will not let you go unless You bless me!"

27 So He said to him, "What *is* your name?" He said, "Jacob."

28 And He said, ^a"Your name shall no longer be called Jacob, but 'Israel'; for you have ^bstruggled with God and ^cwith men, and have prevailed."

29 Then Jacob asked, saying, "Tell *me* Your name, I pray." And He said, ^a"Why *is* it *that* you ask about My name?" And He ^bblessed him there.

30 So Jacob called the name of the place 'Peniel: "For ^aI have seen God face to face, and my life is preserved."

ENCOUNTER NOTE

Gen. 32:28

Wrestling with God

Wrestling with God always brings consequences. Desiring a blessing is one thing, refusing to yield to God is another. There are many who carry with them the permanent reminders of their stubbornness before God.

32:22 The Jabbok River flowed westward through Gilead to the Jordan River.

32:24 By sending his family ahead of him, Jacob was not using them as shields (see 33:3). Rather, it appears that since he was facing a crisis far beyond his capacity

to handle, he wanted to be alone. Once Jacob found solitude, God met with him.

32:28 "Israel" means "Prince with God." The name comes from the verb that means "strive" or "persevere."

31 Just as he crossed over 'Peniel the sun rose on him, and he limped on his hip.

32 Therefore to this day the children of Israel do not eat the muscle that shrank, which is on the hip socket, because He 'touched the socket of Jacob's hip in the muscle that shrank.

JACOB AND ESAU MEET

33 Now Jacob lifted his eyes and looked, and there, "Esau was coming, and with him were four hundred men. So he divided the children among Leah, Rachel, and the two maidservants. 2 And he put the maidservants and their children in front, Leah and her children behind, and Rachel and Joseph last.

3 Then he crossed over before them and bowed himself to the ground seven times, until he came near to his brother.

4 "But Esau ran to meet him, and embraced him, and fell on his neck and kissed him, and they wept.

5 And he lifted his eyes and saw the women and children, and said, "Who are these with you?" So he said, "The children whom God has graciously given your servant."

6 Then the maidservants came near, they and their children, and bowed down.

7 And Leah also came near with her children, and they bowed down. Afterward Joseph and Rachel came near, and they bowed down.

8 Then Esau said, "What do you mean by all this company which I met?" And he said, "These are to find favor in the sight of my lord."

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

10 And Jacob said, "No, please, if I have now found favor in your sight, then receive my present from my hand, inasmuch as I have seen your face as though I had seen the face of God, and you were pleased with me.

11 "Please, take my blessing that is brought to you, because God has dealt graciously with me, and because I have enough." So he urged him, and he took it.

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

31¹ Lit. Face of God; same as Peniel, v. 30

32¹ struck

CHAPTER 33

1^a Gen. 32:6

3^a Gen. 18:2; 42:6

4^a Gen. 32:28
b Gen. 45:14, 15

5^a Gen. 48:9;
[Ps. 127:3]; Is. 8:18

8^a Gen. 32:13-16
b Gen. 32:5

10^a Gen. 43:3;
2 Sam. 3:13;
14:24, 28, 32

11^a Judg. 1:15;
1 Sam. 25:27;
30:26 b Gen. 30:43; Ex. 33:19
c 2 Kin. 5:23
d Lit. all

14^a Gen. 32:3;
36:8 'can stand

15^a Gen. 34:11;
47:25; Ruth 2:13

17^a Josh. 13:27;
Judg. 8:5; Ps. 60:6 'shelters
b Lit. Booths

18^a John 3:23
b Gen. 12:6;
35:4; Josh. 24:1; Judg. 9:1;
Ps. 60:6 'Or to Shalem, a city of

19^a Josh. 24:32;
John 4:5 'Lit. the field

20^a Gen. 35:7
b Lit. God, the God of Israel

CHAPTER 34

1^a Gen. 30:21

2^a Gen. 20:2

3¹ Lit. clung to
2 tenderly

ENCOUNTER NOTE

Gen. 33:11

Take My Blessing

Acts of restitution may be a sign of genuine repentance. Contrition is evidence of a transformed nature and a servant heart.

13 But Jacob said to him, "My lord knows that the children are weak, and the flocks and herds which are nursing are with me. And if the men should drive them hard one day, all the flock will die.

14 "Please let my lord go on ahead before his servant. I will lead on slowly at a pace which the livestock that go before me, and the children, are able to endure, until I come to my lord in Seir."

15 And Esau said, "Now let me leave with you some of the people who are with me." But he said, "What need is there? Let me find favor in the sight of my lord."

16 So Esau returned that day on his way to Seir.

17 And Jacob journeyed to Succoth, built himself a house, and made booths for his livestock. Therefore the name of the place is called Succoth.

JACOB COMES TO CANAAN

18 Then Jacob came safely to the city of Shechem, which is in the land of Canaan, when he came from Padan Aram; and he pitched his tent before the city.

19 And he bought the parcel of land, where he had pitched his tent, from the children of Hamor, Shechem's father, for one hundred pieces of money.

20 Then he erected an altar there and called it El Elohe Israel.

THE DINAH INCIDENT

34 Now Dinah the daughter of Leah, whom she had borne to Jacob, went out to see the daughters of the land.

2 And when Shechem the son of Hamor the Hivite, prince of the country, saw her, he took her and lay with her, and violated her.

3 His soul was strongly attracted to Dinah the daughter of Jacob, and he loved the young woman and spoke kindly to the young woman.

32:30 "Peniel" means "Face of God." This may be the town mentioned in Judges 8:8 and 1 Kings 12:25.

32:32 Old Testament law did not formally specify such a restriction although it was found in Rabbinic Judaism.

33:4 This moving description of reconciliation anticipates Jesus' parable of the prodigal son (Luke 15:20).

33:14 Despite the joyful reunion, Jacob apparently deceived Esau again. For instead of traveling south to Seir, he traveled north to Succoth.

33:17 "Succoth" means "Booths."

33:20 "El Elohe Israel" means "God, the God of Israel." Jacob was affirming both his earlier vow (28:21) and his new name.

4 So Shechem ^aspoke to his father Hamor, saying, "Get me this young woman as a wife."

5 And Jacob heard that he had defiled Dinah his daughter. Now his sons were with his livestock in the field; so Jacob ^a'held' his peace until they came.

6 Then Hamor the father of Shechem went out to Jacob to speak with him.

7 And the sons of Jacob came in from the field when they heard *it*; and the men were grieved and very angry, because he ^ahad done a disgraceful thing in Israel by lying with Jacob's daughter, ^ba thing which ought not to be done.

8 But Hamor spoke with them, saying, "The soul of my son Shechem longs for your daughter. Please give her to him as a wife.

9 "And make marriages with us; give your daughters to us, and take our daughters to yourselves.

10 "So you shall dwell with us, and the land shall be before you. Dwell and trade in it, and acquire possessions for yourselves in it."

11 Then Shechem said to her father and her brothers, "Let me find favor in your eyes, and whatever you say to me I will give.

12 "Ask me ever so much ^a'dowry' and gift, and I will give according to what you say to me; but give me the young woman as a wife."

13 But the sons of Jacob answered Shechem and Hamor his father, and spoke ^a'deceitfully, because he had defiled Dinah their sister.

14 And they said to them, "We cannot do this thing, to give our sister to one who is ^auncircumcised, for ^bthat *would be* a reproach to us.

15 "But on this *condition* we will consent to you: If you will become as we *are*, if every male of you is circumcised,

16 "then we will give our daughters to you, and we will take your daughters to us; and we will dwell with you, and we will become one people.

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

18 And their words pleased Hamor and Shechem, Hamor's son.

4^a Judg. 14:2

5^{a,2} Sam. 13:22
¹kept silent

7^a Deut. 22:20-30; Josh. 7:15; Judg. 20:6
^b Deut. 23:17; 2 Sam. 13:12

12^a Ex. 22:16, 17; Deut. 22:29
¹bride-price

13^a Gen. 31:7; Ex. 8:29

14^a Ex. 12:48
^b Josh. 5:2-9

19^{a,1} Chr. 4:9

20^a Gen. 19:1; 23:10; Ruth 4:1, 11; 2 Sam. 15:2

24^a Gen. 23:10, 18

25^a Gen. 29:33, 34; 42:24; 49:5-7

26^a Gen. 49:5, 6

30^a Gen. 49:6
^b Josh. 7:25
^c Ex. 5:21; 1 Sam. 13:4; 2 Sam. 10:6
^d Gen. 46:26, 27; Deut. 4:27; 1 Chr. 16:19; Ps. 105:12

19 So the young man did not delay to do the thing, because he delighted in Jacob's daughter. He *was* ^amore honorable than all the household of his father.

20 And Hamor and Shechem his son came to the ^agate of their city, and spoke with the men of their city, saying:

21 "These men *are* at peace with us. Therefore let them dwell in the land and trade in it. For indeed the land *is* large enough for them. Let us take their daughters to us as wives, and let us give them our daughters.

22 "Only on this *condition* will the men consent to dwell with us, to be one people: if every male among us is circumcised as they *are* circumcised.

23 "Will not their livestock, their property, and every animal of theirs *be* ours? Only let us consent to them, and they will dwell with us."

24 And all who went out of the gate of his city heeded Hamor and Shechem his son; every male was circumcised, all who ^awent out of the gate of his city.

25 Now it came to pass on the third day, when they were in pain, that two of the sons of Jacob, ^aSimeon and Levi, Dinah's brothers, each took his sword and came boldly upon the city and killed all the males.

26 And they ^akilled Hamor and Shechem his son with the edge of the sword, and took Dinah from Shechem's house, and went out.

27 The sons of Jacob came upon the slain, and plundered the city, because their sister had been defiled.

28 They took their sheep, their oxen, and their donkeys, what *was* in the city and what *was* in the field,

29 and all their wealth. All their little ones and their wives they took captive; and they plundered even all that *was* in the houses.

30 Then Jacob said to Simeon and Levi, ^a"You have ^btroubled me ^cby making me obnoxious among the inhabitants of the land, among the Canaanites and the Perizzites; ^dand since I *am* few in number, they will gather themselves together against me and kill me. I shall be destroyed, my household and I."

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

34:5 Jacob's silence at his daughter's disgrace foreshadows David's later silence at the rape of his daughter Tamar (2 Sam. 13:21).

34:15 The demand for circumcision would not have been unrealistic. Various peoples required circumcision for a groom to be eligible for marriage.

34:30-31 This was the type of revenge that the later "eye for eye, tooth for tooth" laws were meant to limit (Lev. 24:19-21). When families or tribes sought out revenge (personal) rather than retribution (communal), it could escalate quickly, often leading to blood feuds that might continue for generations.

JACOB'S RETURN TO BETHEL

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

2 And Jacob said to his ^ahousehold and to all who *were* with him, “Put away ^bthe foreign gods that *are* among you, ^cpurify yourselves, and change your garments.

3 “Then let us arise and go up to Bethel; and I will make an altar there to God, ^awho answered me in the day of my distress ^band has been with me in the way which I have gone.”

4 So they gave Jacob all the foreign ¹gods which *were* in their hands, and the ^aearrings which *were* in their ears; and Jacob hid them under ^bthe terebinth tree which *was* by Shechem.

5 And they journeyed, and ^athe terror of God was upon the cities that *were* all around them, and they did not pursue the sons of Jacob.

ENCOUNTER NOTE

Gen. 35:5

The Terror of God

God will protect His people by striking fear in their enemies. Enemies are not always afraid of God's people, but they do fear the God who empowers His people.

6 So Jacob came to ^aLuz (that *is*, Bethel), which *is* in the land of Canaan, he and all the people who *were* with him.

7 And he ^abuilt an altar there and called the place ¹El Bethel, because ^bthere God appeared to him when he fled from the face of his brother.

8 Now ^aDeborah, Rebekah's nurse, died, and she was buried below Bethel under the terebinth tree. So the name of it was called ¹Allon Bachuth.

CHAPTER 35

^{1a} Gen. 28:19; 31:13 ^b Gen. 28:13 ^c Gen. 27:43
^{2a} Gen. 18:19; Josh. 24:15
^b Gen. 31:19, 30, 34; Josh. 24:2, 14, 23 ^c Ex. 19:10, 14; Lev. 13:6
^{3a} Gen. 32:7, 24; Ps. 107:6
^b Gen. 28:15, 20; 31:3, 42
^{4a} Hos. 2:13
^b Josh. 24:26; Judg. 9:6
¹ Idols
^{5a} Ex. 15:16; 23:27; [Deut. 2:25; 11:25]; Josh. 2:9; 1 Sam. 14:15
^{6a} Gen. 28:19, 22; 48:3
^{7a} Gen. 33:20; 35:3; Eccl. 5:4
^b Gen. 28:13
¹ Lit. God of the House of God
^{8a} Gen. 24:59
¹ Lit. Terebinth of Weeping
^{9a} Josh. 5:13; Dan. 10:5
^b Gen. 32:29; Hos. 12:4
^{10a} Gen. 17:5
^b Gen. 32:28
^{11a} Gen. 17:1; 28:3; 48:3, 4; Ex. 6:3 ^b Gen. 9:1, 7 ^c Gen. 17:5, 6 ^d 28:3; 48:4
^{12a} Gen. 12:7; 13:15; 26:3, 4; 28:13; 48:4; Ex. 32:13
^{13a} Gen. 17:22; 18:33 ¹ de-parted
^{14a} Gen. 28:18, 19; 31:45
^{15a} Gen. 28:19
^{17a} Gen. 30:24; 1 Sam. 4:20
^{18a} Lit. Son of My Sorrow ² Lit. Son of the Right Hand
^{19a} Gen. 48:7
^b Ruth 1:2; 4:11; Mic. 5:2; Matt. 2:6
^{20a} 1 Sam. 10:2
^{21a} Mic. 4:8
^{22a} Gen. 49:4; 1 Chr. 5:1

9 Then ^aGod appeared to Jacob again, when he came from Padan Aram, and ^bblest him.

10 And God said to him, “Your name *is* Jacob; ^ayour name shall not be called Jacob anymore, ^bbut Israel shall be your name.” So He called his name Israel.

11 Also God said to him: “*I am* God Almighty. ^aBe fruitful and multiply; ^aa nation and a company of nations shall proceed from you, and kings shall come from your body.

12 “The ^aland which I gave Abraham and Isaac I give to you; and to your descendants after you I give this land.”

13 Then God ^awent¹ up from him in the place where He talked with him.

14 So Jacob ^aset up a pillar in the place where He talked with him, a pillar of stone; and he poured a drink offering on it, and he poured oil on it.

15 And Jacob called the name of the place where God spoke with him, ^aBethel.

DEATH OF RACHEL

16 Then they journeyed from Bethel. And when there was but a little distance to go to Ephrath, Rachel labored *in childbirth*, and she had hard labor.

17 Now it came to pass, when she was in hard labor, that the midwife said to her, “Do not fear; ^ayou will have this son also.”

18 And so it was, as her soul was departing (for she died), that she called his name ¹Ben-Oni; but his father called him ²Benjamin.

19 So ^aRachel died and was buried on the way to ^bEphrath (that *is*, Bethlehem).

20 And Jacob set a pillar on her grave, which *is* the pillar of Rachel's grave ^ato this day.

21 Then Israel journeyed and pitched his tent beyond ^athe tower of Eder.

22 And it happened, when Israel dwelt in that land, that Reuben went and ^alay with Bilhah his father's concubine; and Israel heard *about it*.

35:1–4 Here we see Jacob fulfilling what he said in Genesis 28:20–22. In the ancient world, people would often add gods into their lives, but rarely did they remove or replace them. All throughout the Old Testament, God commanded people to choose Him over every other god. This would be formally addressed in the Ten Commandments (see Ex. 20:3).

35:1 “Bethel” means “House of God.”

35:4 Many years later Joshua would lead his people to make a similar commitment to God in that place (Josh. 24:23).

35:7 “El Bethel” means “God of the House of God.”

35:8 “Allon Bachuth” means “Terebinth of Weeping.”

35:10 Names were important in the ancient world and often represented (1) the circumstances of birth,

(2) a characteristic trait displayed, or (3) a goal to live up to in the future. Here, “Israel” means “Wrestles with God,” describing the situation that had just unfolded. In modern Judaism, the value placed on asking questions and debating ideas comes from this name. In the New Testament, Jesus changed Simon's name to Peter (see Matt. 16:16–18). Previously, God had changed Abram and Sarai's names to Abraham and Sarah (see Gen. 17:5, 15).

35:16 Ephrath is Bethlehem. It was twelve miles from where Rachel was buried.

35:18 “Ben-Oni” means “Son of My Sorrow”; “Benjamin” means “Son of the Right Hand.”

35:18 Jacob changed Benjamin's name to something more hopeful. We can choose to have a negative or positive view of every situation, no matter how difficult.

JACOB'S TWELVE SONS

Now the sons of Jacob were twelve:

23 the sons of Leah *were* ^aReuben, Jacob's firstborn, and Simeon, Levi, Judah, Issachar, and Zebulun;

24 the sons of Rachel *were* Joseph and Benjamin;

25 the sons of Bilhah, Rachel's maid-servant, *were* Dan and Naphtali;

26 and the sons of Zilpah, Leah's maid-servant, *were* Gad and Asher. These *were* the sons of Jacob who were born to him in Padan Aram.

DEATH OF ISAAC

27 Then Jacob came to his father Isaac at ^aMamre, or ^bKirjath Arba' (that is, Hebron), where Abraham and Isaac had dwelt.

28 Now the days of Isaac were one hundred and eighty years.

29 So Isaac breathed his last and died, and ^awas ^bgathered to his people, *being* old and full of days. And ^bhis sons Esau and Jacob buried him.

THE FAMILY OF ESAU

36 Now this is the genealogy of Esau, ^awho is Edom.

2 ^aEsau took his wives from the daughters of Canaan: Adah the daughter of Elon the ^bHittite; ^cAholibamah' the daughter of Anah, the daughter of Zibeon the Hivite;

WORD STUDY

Edom

Gen. 36:1 Also called Mount Seir and Idumea, Edom it is a mountainous tract of land approximately 100 miles long by twenty miles wide. It lies between the southern end of the Dead Sea and the Gulf of Aqabah where Esau's descendants, the Edomites, settled. Edom was another name for Esau.

3 and ^aBasemath, Ishmael's daughter, sister of Nebajoth.

4 Now ^aAdah bore Eliphaz to Esau, and Basemath bore Reuel.

5 And ^aAholibamah bore Jeush, Jaalam, and Korah. These *were* the sons of Esau who were born to him in the land of Canaan.

6 Then Esau took his wives, his sons, his daughters, and all the persons of his

23^a Gen. 29:31–35; 30:18–20; 46:8; Ex. 1:1–4

27^a Gen. 13:18; 18:1; 23:19
^b Josh. 14:15
^c Lit. *Town* or *City of Arba*

29^a Gen. 15:15; 25:8; 49:33
^b Gen. 25:9; 49:31
^c Joined his ancestors

CHAPTER 36

1^a Gen. 25:30

2^a Gen. 26:34; 28:9
^b 2 Kin. 7:6
^c Gen. 36:25
^d Or *Oholibamah*

3^a Gen. 28:9

4^a 1 Chr. 1:35

5^a Or *Oholibamah*

7^a Gen. 13:6; 11
^b Gen. 17:8; 28:4; Heb. 11:9

8^a Gen. 32:3; Deut. 2:5; Josh. 24:4
^b Gen. 36:1, 19

10^a 1 Chr. 1:35

11^a *Zephi*, 1 Chr. 1:36

12^a Ex. 17:8–16; Num. 24:20; Deut. 25:17–19; 1 Sam. 15:2, 3

14^a Or *Oholibamah*

16^a Sam. omits *Chief Korah*

18^a Or *Oholibamah*

20^a 1 Chr. 1:38–42
^b Gen. 14:6; Deut. 2:12, 22

household, his cattle and all his animals, and all his goods which he had gained in the land of Canaan, and went to a country away from the presence of his brother Jacob.

7 ^aFor their possessions were too great for them to dwell together, and ^bthe land where they were strangers could not support them because of their livestock.

8 So Esau dwelt in ^aMount Seir. ^bEsau is Edom.

9 And this is the genealogy of Esau the father of the Edomites in Mount Seir.

10 These *were* the names of Esau's sons: ^aEliphaz the son of Adah the wife of Esau, and Reuel the son of Basemath the wife of Esau.

11 And the sons of Eliphaz were Teman, Omar, ^aZepho, Gatam, and Kenaz.

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

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

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

THE CHIEFS OF EDMO

15 These *were* the chiefs of the sons of Esau. The sons of Eliphaz, the firstborn son of Esau, were Chief Teman, Chief Omar, Chief Zepho, Chief Kenaz,

16 ^aChief Korah, Chief Gatam, and Chief Amalek. These *were* the chiefs of Eliphaz in the land of Edom. They *were* the sons of Adah.

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

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

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

THE SONS OF SEIR

20 ^aThese *were* the sons of Seir ^bthe Horite who inhabited the land: Lotan, Shobal, Zibeon, Anah,

36:11 Mention of "Eliphaz" and "Teman" may suggest the Book of Job was centered near Edom where "Eliphaz the Temanite" is prominent (Job 2:11).

36:12 Amalek may have been the founder of the Amalekites. The Amalekites would become bitter foes of the Israelites (Ex. 17:8–16).

21 Dishon, Ezer, and Dishan. These *were* the chiefs of the Horites, the sons of Seir, in the land of Edom.

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

23 These *were* the sons of Shobal: 'Alvan, Manahath, Ebal, ²Shepho, and Onam.

24 These *were* the sons of Zibeon: both Ajah and Anah. This *was* the Anah who found the 'water in the wilderness as he pastured ^athe donkeys of his father Zibeon.

25 These *were* the children of Anah: Dishon and 'Aholibamah the daughter of Anah.

26 These *were* the sons of 'Dishon: ²Hemdan, Eshban, Ithran, and Cheran.

27 These *were* the sons of Ezer: Bilhan, Zaavan, and 'Akan.

28 These *were* the sons of Dishan: ^aUz and Aran.

29 These *were* the chiefs of the Horites: Chief Lotan, Chief Shobal, Chief Zibeon, Chief Anah,

30 Chief Dishon, Chief Ezer, and Chief Dishan. These *were* the chiefs of the Horites, according to their chiefs in the land of Seir.

THE KINGS OF EDM

31 ^aNow these *were* the kings who reigned in the land of Edom before any king reigned over the children of Israel:

32 Bela the son of Beor reigned in Edom, and the name of his city *was* Dinhabah.

33 And when Bela died, Jobab the son of Zerah of Bozrah reigned in his place.

34 When Jobab died, Husham of the land of the Temanites reigned in his place.

35 And when Husham died, Hadad the son of Bedad, who attacked Midian in the field of Moab, reigned in his place. And the name of his city *was* Avith.

36 When Hadad died, Samlah of Masrekah reigned in his place.

37 And when Samlah died, Saul of ^aRehoboth-*by*-the-River reigned in his place.

38 When Saul died, Baal-Hanan the son of Achbor reigned in his place.

39 And when Baal-Hanan the son of Achbor died, 'Hadar reigned in his place; and the name of his city *was* ²Pau. His wife's name *was* Mehetabel, the daughter of Matred, the daughter of Mezahab.

THE CHIEFS OF ESAU

40 And these *were* the names of the chiefs of Esau, according to their families

22 ¹Homam, 1 Chr. 1:39

23 ¹Alian, 1 Chr. 1:40 ²Shephi, 1 Chr. 1:40

24 ^aLev. 19:19 ¹So with MT, Vg. (hot springs); LXX Jamin; Tg. mighty men; Talmud mules

25 ¹Or Oholibamah

26 ¹Heb. Dishan ²Hamran, 1 Chr. 1:41

27 ¹Jaakan, 1 Chr. 1:42

28 ^aJob 1:1

31 ^aGen. 17:6, 16; 35:11; 1 Chr. 1:43

37 ^aGen. 10:11

39 ¹Sam., Syr. Hadad and 1 Chr. 1:50 ²Pai, 1 Chr. 1:50

40 ¹Aliah, 1 Chr. 1:51

41 ¹Or Oholibamah

43 ¹Heb. Edom

CHAPTER 37

¹a Gen. 17:8; 23:4; 28:4; 36:7; Heb. 11:9 ¹sojourner, temporary resident

²a Gen. 35:25, 26; 1 Sam. 2:22–24

³a Gen. 44:20 ^bGen. 37:23, 32; Judg. 5:30; 1 Sam. 2:19

⁴a Gen. 27:41; 49:23; 1 Sam. 17:28; John 15:18–20

and their places, by their names: Chief Timnah, Chief 'Alvah, Chief Jetheth, 41 Chief 'Aholibamah, Chief Elah, Chief Pinon,

42 Chief Kenaz, Chief Teman, Chief Mibzar, 43 Chief Magdiel, and Chief Iram. These *were* the chiefs of Edom, according to their dwelling places in the land of their possession. Esau *was* the father of 'the Edomites.

ENCOUNTER NOTE

Gen. 36:43

Father of Edom

We can invest our lives in doing God's will. If we strive to make our plans successful, we may temporarily impress people around us, but our efforts will not last. Moreover, we will have missed the privilege of investing in God's great work.

JOSEPH DREAMS OF GREATNESS

37 Now Jacob dwelt in the land ^awhere his father *was* a 'stranger, in the land of Canaan.

2 This *is* the history of Jacob. Joseph, *being* seventeen years old, *was* feeding the flock with his brothers. And the lad *was* with the sons of Bilhah and the sons of Zilpah, his father's wives; and Joseph brought ^aa bad report of them to his father.

3 Now Israel loved Joseph more than all his children, because he *was* ^athe son of his old age. Also he ^bmade him a tunic of *many* colors.

4 But when his brothers saw that their father loved him more than all his brothers, they ^ahated him and could not speak peaceably to him.

5 Now Joseph had a dream, and he told *it* to his brothers; and they hated him even more.

WORD STUDY

Dreams

Gen. 37:5 God sometimes used dreams to inform people of future events, to warn them of impending danger, or to provide information they would need to accomplish His will. While some people sought to enhance their prestige by attempting to interpret dreams, only those God enabled could correctly interpret a dream given by Him.

37:2 The Bible is full of examples of God using the lives of young people (Joseph, Ruth, Hannah, Samuel, Esther, David, Josiah, Mary, Timothy, etc.) for His purposes.

37:3 Jacob learned favoritism from his own parents (see Gen. 25:28).

6 So he said to them, "Please hear this dream which I have dreamed:

7 "There we were, binding sheaves in the field. Then behold, my sheaf arose and also stood upright; and indeed your sheaves stood all around and bowed down to my sheaf."

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

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

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

11 And his brothers envied him, but his father kept the matter in mind.

JOSEPH SOLD BY HIS BROTHERS

12 Then his brothers went to feed their father's flock in Shechem.

13 And Israel said to Joseph, "Are not your brothers feeding the flock in Shechem? Come, I will send you to them." So he said to him, "Here I am."

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

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

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

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

18 Now when they saw him afar off, even before he came near them, they conspired against him to kill him.

19 Then they said to one another, "Look, this dreamer is coming!

20 "Come therefore, let us now kill him and cast him into some pit; and we

7^a Gen. 42:6, 9;
43:26; 44:14

9^a Gen. 46:29;
47:25

10^a Gen. 27:29

11^a Matt. 27:17, 18;
Acts 7:9 ^b Dan.
7:28; Luke
2:19, 51

12^a Gen. 33:18–
20

14^a Gen. 13:18;
23:2, 19; 35:27;
Josh. 14:14, 15;
Judg. 1:10

16^a Song 1:7

17^a 2 Kin. 6:13

18^a 1 Sam. 19:1;
Ps. 31:13; 37:12,
32; Matt. 21:38;
26:3, 4; 27:1;
Mark 14:1; John
11:53; Acts 23:12

19¹ Lit. master of
dreams

20^a Gen. 37:22;
Prov. 1:11

21^a Gen. 42:22

23^a Matt. 27:28

25^a Prov. 30:20
^b Gen. 16:11, 12;
37:28, 36; 39:1
^c Jer. 8:22

26^a Gen. 37:20

27^a 1 Sam. 18:17
^b Gen. 42:21
^c Gen. 29:14

ENCOUNTER NOTE

Gen. 37:20

Our Dreams

Whenever God gives you a dream, there will be those who seek to rob you of it. At times your God-given dream may seem impossible, yet what God initiates He completes.

shall say, 'Some wild beast has devoured him.' We shall see what will become of his dreams!"

21 But Reuben heard it, and he delivered him out of their hands, and said, "Let us not kill him."

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

23 So it came to pass, when Joseph had come to his brothers, that they stripped Joseph of his tunic, the tunic of many colors that was on him.

24 Then they took him and cast him into a pit. And the pit was empty; there was no water in it.

WORD STUDY

Pit

Gen. 37:24 Also "cistern." Pits were reservoirs, cavities in the ground intended to store rainwater for later use by people and livestock. In dry climates, conservation of rainwater was essential. This cistern was dry.

25 And they sat down to eat a meal. Then they lifted their eyes and looked, and there was a company of Ishmaelites, coming from Gilead with their camels, bearing spices, balm, and myrrh, on their way to carry them down to Egypt.

26 So Judah said to his brothers, "What profit is there if we kill our brother and conceal his blood?"

27 "Come and let us sell him to the Ishmaelites, and let not our hand be upon him, for he is our brother and our flesh." And his brothers listened.

37:17 Dothan was near a branch of the Way of the Sea, one of the ancient Near Eastern trade routes through Canaan to Egypt.

37:25 Ishmaelites were the descendants of Ishmael, son of Abraham and Hagar, who populated the north and west of the Arabian Peninsula.



JOSEPH AND HIS BROTHERS

Gen. 37:17

Joseph followed his shepherd brothers from Hebron to Dothan, where they sold him to a caravan of Ishmaelites on their way to Egypt.

SPIRITUAL DECLINE IN THE PATRIARCHAL AGE

First Generation	Second Generation	Third Generation	Fourth Generation
Abraham	Ishmael and Isaac	Esau and Jacob	Joseph and his eleven brothers
Abraham: man of faith believed in God	Ishmael: not son of promise Isaac: called on God believed God	Esau: unspiritual little faith Jacob: at first compromised, later turned to the Lord	Joseph: man of God showed faith brothers: treacher, immorality, lack of separation from Canaanites
Abraham: built altars to God (Gen. 12:7, 8; 13:4, 18; 22:9)	Isaac: built altar to God (Gen. 26:25)	Jacob: built altars to God (Gen. 33:20; 35:1, 3, 7)	No altars were built to God in the fourth generation

28 Then ^aMidianite traders passed by; so *the brothers* pulled Joseph up and lifted him out of the pit, ^band sold him to the Ishmaelites for ^ctwenty *shekels* of silver. And they took Joseph to Egypt.

29 Then Reuben returned to the pit, and indeed Joseph *was* not in the pit; and he ^atore his clothes.

30 And he returned to his brothers and said, “The lad ^ais no *more*; and I, where shall I go?”

31 So they took ^aJoseph’s tunic, killed a kid of the goats, and dipped the tunic in the blood.

32 Then they sent the tunic of *many* colors, and they brought *it* to their father and said, “We have found this. Do you know whether it *is* your son’s tunic or not?”

33 And he recognized it and said, “*It is* my son’s tunic. A ^awild beast has devoured him. Without doubt Joseph is torn to pieces.”

34 Then Jacob ^atore his clothes, put sackcloth on his waist, and ^bmourned for his son many days.

35 And all his sons and all his daughters ^aarose to comfort him; but he refused to be comforted, and he said, “For ^bI shall go down into the grave to my son in mourning.” Thus his father wept for him.

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

JUDAH AND TAMAR

38 It came to pass at that time that Judah departed from his brothers, and ^avisited a certain Adullamite whose name *was* Hirah.

2 And Judah ^asaw there a daughter of a certain Canaanite whose name *was* ^bShua, and he married her and went in to her.

3 So she conceived and bore a son, and he called his name ^aEr.

4 She conceived again and bore a son, and she called his name ^aOnan.

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

6 Then Judah ^atook a wife for Er his firstborn, and her name *was* ^bTamar.

28^a Gen. 37:25; Judg. 6:1–3; 8:22, 24 ^b Gen. 45:4, 5; Ps. 105:17; Acts 7:9 ^c Matt. 27:9

29^a Gen. 37:34; 44:13; Job 1:20

30^a Gen. 42:13, 36

31^a Gen. 37:3, 23

33^a Gen. 37:20

34^a Gen. 37:29; 2 Sam. 3:31 ^b Gen. 50:10

35^a 2 Sam. 12:17 ^b Gen. 25:8; 35:29; 42:38; 44:29, 31

36^a Gen. 39:1 ¹ MT *Medanites*

CHAPTER 38

1^a 2 Kin. 4:8

2^a Gen. 34:2 ^b 1 Chr. 2:3

3^a Gen. 46:12; Num. 26:19

4^a Gen. 46:12; Num. 26:19

5^a Num. 26:20

6^a Gen. 21:21 ^b Ruth 4:12

7^a Gen. 46:12; Num. 26:19 ^b 1 Chr. 2:3

8^a Deut. 25:5, 6; Matt. 22:24

9^a Deut. 25:6

10^a Gen. 46:12; Num. 26:19 ¹ Lit. *was evil in the eyes of*

11^a Ruth 1:12, 13 ^b Lev. 22:13

12^a 2 Sam. 13:39

13^a Josh. 15:10, 57; Judg. 14:1

14^a Prov. 7:12 ^b Gen. 38:11, 26

7 But ^aEr, Judah’s firstborn, was wicked in the sight of the LORD, ^band the LORD killed him.

8 And Judah said to Onan, “Go in to ^ayour brother’s wife and marry her, and raise up an heir to your brother.”

9 But Onan knew that the heir would not be ^ahis; and it came to pass, when he went in to his brother’s wife, that he emitted on the ground, lest he should give an heir to his brother.

10 And the thing which he did ¹displeased the LORD; therefore He killed ^ahim also.

ENCOUNTER NOTE

Gen. 38:10

Deterrents

God makes the consequences of sin and evil abundantly clear. Yet we can convince ourselves that though God punished others for their sin, we will be exempt. Believing such thoughts leads to our peril.

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

12 Now in the process of time the daughter of Shua, Judah’s wife, died; and Judah ^awas comforted, and went up to his sheep-shearers at Timnah, he and his friend Hirah the Adullamite.

13 And it was told Tamar, saying, “Look, your father-in-law is going up ^ato Timnah to shear his sheep.”

14 So she took off her widow’s garments, covered *herself* with a veil and wrapped herself, and ^asat in an open place which *was* on the way to Timnah; for she saw ^bthat Shelah was grown, and she was not given to him as a wife.

15 When Judah saw her, he thought she *was* a harlot, because she had covered her face.

16 Then he turned to her by the way, and said, “Please let me come in to you”; for he did not know that she *was* his daughter-in-law. So she said, “What will you give me, that you may come in to me?”

37:36 Midianites were descendants of Midian, son of Abraham and Keturah, living primarily in the northern regions of the Arabian Peninsula. They caused God’s people great harm over the years and were finally defeated by Gideon.

38:7 Er’s sin is not specified but it was apparently grievous, because God took his life for it.

38:8 Giving an heir to one’s widowed sister-in-law was a common practice (Deut. 25:5). He retained the deceased brother’s name and lineage and provided for the widow in her old age.

38:15 Tamar may have dressed as a cult prostitute used by pagan religions, making Judah’s sin even more deplorable.

17 And he said, *“I will send a young goat from the flock.”* So she said, *“Will you give me a pledge till you send it?”*

18 Then he said, *“What pledge shall I give you?”* So she said, *“Your signet and cord, and your staff that is in your hand.”* Then he gave *them* to her, and went in to her, and she conceived by him.

19 So she arose and went away, and *laid* aside her veil and put on the garments of her widowhood.

20 And Judah sent the young goat by the hand of his friend the Adullamite, to receive *his* pledge from the woman's hand, but he did not find her.

21 Then he asked the men of that place, saying, *“Where is the harlot who was ‘openly by the roadside?’* And they said, *“There was no harlot in this place.”*

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

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

24 And it came to pass, about three months after, that Judah was told, saying, *“Tamar your daughter-in-law has ‘played the harlot; furthermore she is ‘with child by harlotry.’* So Judah said, *“Bring her out and let her be burned!”*

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

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

27 Now it came to pass, at the time for giving birth, that behold, twins *were* in her womb.

28 And so it was, when she was giving birth, that *the one* put out *his* hand; and the midwife took a scarlet *thread* and bound it on his hand, saying, *“This one came out first.”*

29 Then it happened, as he drew back his hand, that his brother came out unexpectedly; and she said, *“How did you break through? This breach be upon you!”* Therefore his name was called *“Perez.”*¹

30 Afterward his brother came out who had the scarlet *thread* on his hand. And his name was called *“Zerah.”*

17^a Judg. 15:1; Ezek. 16:33
^b Gen. 38:20

18^a Gen. 38:25; 41:42

19^a Gen. 38:14

21ⁱ in full view

24^a Judg. 19:2
^b Lev. 20:14;
21:9; Deut. 22:21
ⁱ pregnant

25^a Gen. 37:32; 38:18

26^a Gen. 37:33
^b 1 Sam. 24:17
^c Gen. 38:14
^d Job 34:31, 32

29^a Gen. 46:12; Num. 26:20;
Ruth 4:12; 1 Chr. 2:4; Matt. 1:3
ⁱ Lit. *Breach* or *Breakthrough*

30^a Gen. 46:12; 1 Chr. 2:4; Matt. 1:3

CHAPTER 39

1^a Gen. 12:10; 43:15
^b Gen. 37:36; Ps. 105:17
^c Gen. 37:28; 45:4

2^a Gen. 26:24, 28; 28:15; 35:3; 39:3, 21, 23;
1 Sam. 16:18; 18:14, 28; Acts 7:9

3^a Ps. 1:3
ⁱ to be a success

4^a Gen. 18:3; 19:19; 39:21
^b Gen. 24:2, 10; 39:8, 22; 41:40
ⁱ Lit. *in his hand*

5^a Gen. 18:26; 30:27; 2 Sam. 6:11

6^a Gen. 29:17; 1 Sam. 16:12
ⁱ Care
² Food

7^a 2 Sam. 13:11
ⁱ Lit. *lifted up her eyes toward*

9^a Lev. 20:10; Prov. 6:29, 32
^b Gen. 20:6; 42:18; 2 Sam. 12:13; Ps. 51:4

10^a Prov. 1:10

JOSEPH A SLAVE IN EGYPT

39 Now Joseph had been taken *down* to Egypt. And *Potiphar*, an officer of Pharaoh, captain of the guard, an Egyptian, *bought* him from the Ishmaelites who had taken him down there.

2 *The LORD* was with Joseph, and he was a successful man; and he was in the house of his master the Egyptian.

ENCOUNTER NOTE

Gen. 39:2

Success

The key to success is not skill, luck, or wealth, but God's presence. God's presence will determine how your life is used to influence those around you.

3 And his master saw that the *LORD* *was* with him and that the *LORD* *made* all he did *to* prosper in his hand.

4 So Joseph *found* favor in his sight, and served him. Then he made him *overseer* of his house, and all *that* he had he put *under* his authority.

5 So it was, from the time *that* he had made him overseer of his house and all that he had, that *the LORD* blessed the Egyptian's house for Joseph's sake; and the blessing of the *LORD* was on all that he had in the house and in the field.

6 Thus he left all that he had in Joseph's *hand*, and he did not know what he had except for the *bread* which he ate. Now Joseph *was* handsome in form and appearance.

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

8 But he refused and said to his master's wife, *“Look, my master does not know what is with me in the house, and he has committed all that he has to my hand.*

9 *“There is no one greater in this house than I, nor has he kept back anything from me but you, because you are his wife. How then can I do this great wickedness, and sin against God?”*

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

11 But it happened about this time, when Joseph went into the house to do his work, and none of the men of the house *was* inside,

38:29 “Perez” means “Breach” or “Breakthrough.”

39:10 Potiphar's wife constantly pressured Joseph

to sin with her. Similar temptation caused men like Samson to succumb (Judg. 14:17; 16:16).

12 that she “caught him by his garment, saying, “Lie with me.” But he left his garment in her hand, and fled and ran outside.

13 And so it was, when she saw that he had left his garment in her hand and fled outside,

14 that she called to the men of her house and spoke to them, saying, “See, he has brought in to us a “Hebrew to ‘mock us. He came in to me to lie with me, and I cried out with a loud voice.

15 “And it happened, when he heard that I lifted my voice and cried out, that he left his garment with me, and fled and went outside.”

16 So she kept his garment with her until his master came home.

17 Then she “spoke to him with words like these, saying, “The Hebrew servant whom you brought to us came in to me to mock me;

18 “so it happened, as I lifted my voice and cried out, that he left his garment with me and fled outside.”

19 So it was, when his master heard the words which his wife spoke to him, saying, “Your servant did to me after this manner,” that his “anger was aroused.

20 Then Joseph’s master took him and “put him into the ^bprison, a place where the king’s prisoners *were* confined. And he was there in the prison.

21 But the LORD was with Joseph and showed him mercy, and He “gave’ him favor in the sight of the keeper of the prison.

ENCOUNTER NOTE

Gen. 39:21

Unstoppable Blessings

Difficult circumstances cannot thwart God when He wishes to put His favor on you. God tenaciously blesses whom He chooses.

22 And the keeper of the prison “committed to Joseph’s hand all the prisoners who *were* in the prison; whatever they did there, it was his doing.

23 The keeper of the prison did not look into anything *that was* under ‘Joseph’s authority, because “the LORD was with

12^a Prov. 7:13

14^a Gen. 14:13;
41:12 ‘laugh at

17^a Ex. 23:1; Ps.
120:3; Prov.
26:28

19^a Prov. 6:34, 35

20^a Ps. 105:18;
[1 Pet. 2:19]
^b Gen. 40:3, 15;
41:14

21^a Gen. 39:2;
Ex. 3:21; Ps.
105:19; [Prov.
16:7]; Dan. 1:9;
Acts 7:9, 10
¹ Caused him to
be viewed with
favor by

22^a Gen. 39:4;
40:3, 4

23^a Gen. 39:2, 3
¹ Lit. *his hand*

CHAPTER 40

1^a Gen. 40:11, 13;
Neh. 1:11

2^a Prov. 16:14

3^a Gen. 39:1, 20,
23; 41:10

5^a Gen. 37:5; 41:1

6^a dejected

7^a Neh. 2:2

8^a Gen. 41:15
^b [Gen. 41:16;
Dan. 2:11, 20–
22, 27, 28, 47]

him; and whatever he did, the LORD made it prosper.

THE PRISONERS’ DREAMS

40 It came to pass after these things that the “butler and the baker of the king of Egypt offended their lord, the king of Egypt.

2 And Pharaoh was “angry with his two officers, the chief butler and the chief baker.

3 “So he put them in custody in the house of the captain of the guard, in the prison, the place where Joseph *was* confined.

4 And the captain of the guard charged Joseph with them, and he served them; so they were in custody for a while.

5 Then the butler and the baker of the king of Egypt, who *were* confined in the prison, “had a dream, both of them, each man’s dream in one night *and* each man’s dream with its *own* interpretation.

6 And Joseph came in to them in the morning and looked at them, and saw that they *were* ‘sad.

7 So he asked Pharaoh’s officers who *were* with him in the custody of his lord’s house, saying, ““Why do you look so sad today?”

8 And they said to him, ““We each have had a dream, and *there is* no interpreter of it.” So Joseph said to them, “^b“Do not interpretations belong to God? Tell *them* to me, please.”

ENCOUNTER NOTE

Gen. 40:8

Confusing Times

Believers ought to be a source of wisdom during confusing times. Do you know the Lord well enough to confidently offer help to those who are troubled?

9 Then the chief butler told his dream to Joseph, and said to him, “Behold, in my dream a vine *was* before me, 10 “and in the vine *were* three branches; it *was* as though it budded, its blossoms shot forth, and its clusters brought forth ripe grapes.

11 “Then Pharaoh’s cup *was* in my hand; and I took the grapes and pressed them

39:13 Fleeing the temptation was a sign not of weakness but of strength and wisdom (2 Tim. 2:22; 2 Pet. 1:4). 39:20 Joseph could have expected the death penalty for such an alleged offense. Yet his master showed him mercy. Ultimately God was preserving Joseph for His purposes.

40:1 The butler was Pharaoh’s cupbearer. This person ensured both the quality as well as the safety of his master’s wine. Later in history, Nehemiah used this position to further the causes of his people (Neh. 1:11). 40:3 The captain of the guard was Potiphar (37:36).

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

12 And Joseph said to him, *"This is the interpretation of it: The three branches are three days.*

13 "Now within three days Pharaoh will lift up your head and restore you to your place, and you will put Pharaoh's cup in his hand according to the former manner, when you were his butler.

14 "But remember me when it is well with you, and please show kindness to me; make mention of me to Pharaoh, and get me out of this house.

15 "For indeed I was stolen away from the land of the Hebrews; and also I have done nothing here that they should put me into the dungeon."

16 When the chief baker saw that the interpretation was good, he said to Joseph, "I also was in my dream, and there were three white baskets on my head.

17 "In the uppermost basket were all kinds of baked goods for Pharaoh, and the birds ate them out of the basket on my head."

18 So Joseph answered and said, *"This is the interpretation of it: The three baskets are three days.*

19 *"Within three days Pharaoh will lift off your head from you and hang you on a tree; and the birds will eat your flesh from you."*

20 Now it came to pass on the third day, which was Pharaoh's birthday, that he made a feast for all his servants; and he lifted up the head of the chief butler and of the chief baker among his servants.

21 Then he restored the chief butler to his butlership again, and he placed the cup in Pharaoh's hand.

22 But he hanged the chief baker, as Joseph had interpreted to them.

23 Yet the chief butler did not remember Joseph, but forgot him.

PHARAOH'S DREAMS

41 Then it came to pass, at the end of two full years, that Pharaoh had a dream; and behold, he stood by the river.

2 Suddenly there came up out of the river seven cows, fine looking and fat; and they fed in the meadow.

3 Then behold, seven other cows came up after them out of the river, ugly and gaunt, and stood by the other cows on the bank of the river.

12^a Gen. 40:18; 41:12, 25; Judg. 7:14; Dan. 2:36; 4:18, 19 ^b Gen. 40:18; 42:17

13^a 2 Kin. 25:27; Ps. 3:3; Jer. 52:31 ¹ position

14^a 1 Sam. 25:31; Luke 23:42 ^b Gen. 24:49; 47:29; Josh. 2:12; 1 Sam. 20:14, 15; 2 Sam. 9:1; 1 Kin. 2:7

15^a Gen. 37:26–28 ^b Gen. 39:20

16¹ Or baskets of white bread

18^a Gen. 40:12

19^a Gen. 40:13 ^b Deut. 21:22 ¹ Lit. up

20^a Matt. 14:6–10 ^b Mark 6:21 ^c Gen. 40:13, 19; 2 Kin. 25:27; Jer. 52:31; Matt. 25:19

21^a Gen. 40:13 ^b Neh. 2:1

22^a Gen. 40:19; Deut. 21:23; Esth. 7:10

23^a Job 19:14; Ps. 31:12; Eccl. 9:15, 16; Is. 49:15; Amos 6:6

CHAPTER 41

1^a Gen. 40:5; Judg. 7:13

6^a Ex. 10:13; Ezek. 17:10

8^a Dan. 2:1, 3; 4:5, 19 ^b Ex. 7:11, 22; Is. 29:14; Dan. 1:20; 2:2; 4:7

^c Matt. 2:1

9^a Gen. 40:1, 14, 23

10^a Gen. 40:2, 3 ^b Gen. 39:20

11^a Gen. 40:5; Judg. 7:15

12^a Gen. 39:14; 43:32 ^b Gen. 37:36 ^c Gen. 40:12

13^a Gen. 40:21, 22

14^a Ps. 105:20 ^b Dan. 2:25 ^c [1 Sam. 2:8] ^d 2 Kin. 25:27–29

15^a Gen. 41:8, 12; Dan. 5:16

ENCOUNTER NOTE

Gen. 41:1

Divine Timing

We can overestimate our capacity to serve God. We can also misjudge the timing of our service, but God's timing is always perfect. Be willing to wait on God until He has prepared you for His purposes.

4 And the ugly and gaunt cows ate up the seven fine looking and fat cows. So Pharaoh awoke.

5 He slept and dreamed a second time; and suddenly seven heads of grain came up on one stalk, plump and good.

6 Then behold, seven thin heads, blighted by the east wind, sprang up after them.

7 And the seven thin heads devoured the seven plump and full heads. So Pharaoh awoke, and indeed, it was a dream.

8 Now it came to pass in the morning that his spirit was troubled, and he sent and called for all the magicians of Egypt and all its wise men. And Pharaoh told them his dreams, but there was no one who could interpret them for Pharaoh.

9 Then the chief butler spoke to Pharaoh, saying: "I remember my faults this day.

10 "When Pharaoh was angry with his servants, and put me in custody in the house of the captain of the guard, both me and the chief baker,

11 "we each had a dream in one night, he and I. Each of us dreamed according to the interpretation of his own dream.

12 "Now there was a young Hebrew man with us there, a servant of the captain of the guard. And we told him, and he interpreted our dreams for us; to each man he interpreted according to his own dream.

13 "And it came to pass, just as he interpreted for us, so it happened. He restored me to my office, and he hanged him."

14 Then Pharaoh sent and called Joseph, and they brought him quickly out of the dungeon; and he shaved, changed his clothing, and came to Pharaoh.

15 And Pharaoh said to Joseph, "I have had a dream, and there is no one who can interpret it. But I have heard it said of you that you can understand a dream, to interpret it."

41:8 The expression concerning Pharaoh "that his spirit was troubled" following the dreams is the same expression used when King Nebuchadnezzar was disturbed

by a dream (Dan. 2:1). In both instances, God used the interpretation of a ruler's dream to place one of His servants in a significant leadership role.

ENCOUNTER NOTE

Gen. 41:16

Infinite Wisdom

All truth comes from God. God's servants have access to His infinite wisdom every time they face a difficult challenge. They never have to rely on their own limited strength. Those who are wise know God alone is worthy of honor when He provides wisdom.

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

17 Then Pharaoh said to Joseph: "Behold, ^ain my dream I stood on the bank of the river.

18 "Suddenly seven cows came up out of the river, fine looking and fat; and they fed in the meadow.

19 "Then behold, seven other cows came up after them, poor and very ugly and gaunt, such ugliness as I have never seen in all the land of Egypt.

20 "And the gaunt and ugly cows ate up the first seven, the fat cows.

21 "When they had eaten them up, no one would have known that they had eaten them, for they *were* just as ugly as at the beginning. So I awoke.

22 "Also I saw in my dream, and suddenly seven 'heads came up on one stalk, full and good.

23 "Then behold, seven heads, withered, thin, *and* blighted by the east wind, sprang up after them.

24 "And the thin heads devoured the seven good heads. So ^aI told *this* to the magicians, but *there was* no one who could explain *it* to me."

25 Then Joseph said to Pharaoh, "The dreams of Pharaoh *are* one; ^aGod has shown Pharaoh what He is about to do:

26 "The seven good cows *are* seven years, and the seven good 'heads *are* seven years; the dreams *are* one.

27 "And the seven thin and ugly cows which came up after them *are* seven years, and the seven empty heads blighted by the east wind *are* "seven years of famine.

28 ^a"This is the thing which I have spoken to Pharaoh. God has shown Pharaoh what He is about to do.

29 "Indeed ^aseven years of great plenty will come throughout all the land of Egypt;

30 "but after them seven years of famine will ^aarise, and all the plenty will be forgotten in the land of Egypt; and the famine ^bwill deplete the land.

16 ^aDan. 2:30; Acts 3:12; [2 Cor. 3:5] ^bGen. 40:8; 41:25, 28, 32; Deut. 29:29; Dan. 2:22, 28, 47

17 ^aGen. 41:1

22 ^aHeads of grain

24 ^aGen. 41:8; Ex. 7:11; Is. 8:19; Dan. 4:7

25 ^aGen. 41:28, 32; Dan. 2:28, 29, 45; Rev. 4:1

26 ^aHeads of grain

27 ^a2 Kin. 8:1

28 ^a[Gen. 41:25, 32; Dan. 2:28]

29 ^aGen. 41:47

30 ^aGen. 41:54, 56 ^bGen. 47:13; Ps. 105:16

32 ^aGen. 41:25, 28; Num. 23:19; Is. 46:10, 11

34 ^a[Prov. 6:6–8] ^boverseers

35 ^aGen. 41:48 ^bLit. hand

36 ^aGen. 47:15, 19 ^bLit. supply ^cbe cut off

37 ^aPs. 105:19; Acts 7:10

38 ^aNum. 27:18; [Job 32:8; Prov. 2:6]; Dan. 4:8, 9, 18; 5:11, 14; 6:3

40 ^aPs. 105:21; Acts 7:10 ^bIn charge of

41 ^aGen. 42:6; Ps. 105:21; Dan. 6:3; Acts 7:10

42 ^aEsth. 3:10 ^bEsth. 8:2, 15 ^cDan. 5:7, 16, 29

31 "So the plenty will not be known in the land because of the famine following, for it *will be* very severe.

32 "And the dream was repeated to Pharaoh twice because the ^athing is established by God, and God will shortly bring it to pass.

33 "Now therefore, let Pharaoh select a discerning and wise man, and set him over the land of Egypt.

34 "Let Pharaoh do *this*, and let him appoint 'officers over the land, ^ato collect one-fifth of the produce of the land of Egypt in the seven plentiful years.

35 "And ^alet them gather all the food of those good years that are coming, and store up grain under the 'authority of Pharaoh, and let them keep food in the cities.

36 "Then that food shall be as a 'reserve for the land for the seven years of famine which shall be in the land of Egypt, that the land ^amay not ^bperish during the famine."

JOSEPH'S RISE TO POWER

37 So ^athe advice was good in the eyes of Pharaoh and in the eyes of all his servants.

38 And Pharaoh said to his servants, "Can we find *such a one* as this, a man ^ain whom is the Spirit of God?"

ENCOUNTER NOTE

Gen. 41:38

Only God

Joseph's plans were so farsighted that Pharaoh recognized that only God could have provided such insight. As we plan for days ahead, never forget that our current understanding may limit us, but God has a clear view of the future. The best way to prepare for the future is to obey God's direction in your current situations.

39 Then Pharaoh said to Joseph, "Inasmuch as God has shown you all this, *there is* no one as discerning and wise as you.

40 "You shall be 'over my house, and all my people shall be ruled according to your word; only in regard to the throne will I be greater than you."

41 And Pharaoh said to Joseph, "See, I have ^aset you over all the land of Egypt."

42 Then Pharaoh ^atook his signet ring off his hand and put it on Joseph's hand; and he ^bclothed him in garments of fine linen ^cand put a gold chain around his neck.

43 And he had him ride in the second ^achariot which he had; ^band they cried out before him, “Bow the knee!” So he set him ^cover all the land of Egypt.

44 Pharaoh also said to Joseph, “I am Pharaoh, and without your consent no man may lift his hand or foot in all the land of Egypt.”

45 And Pharaoh called Joseph's name 'Zaphnath-Paaneah. And he gave him as a wife ^aAsenath, the daughter of Poti-Pherah priest of On. So Joseph went out over *all* the land of Egypt.

46 Joseph was thirty years old when he ^astood before Pharaoh king of Egypt. And Joseph went out from the presence of Pharaoh, and went throughout all the land of Egypt.

47 Now in the seven plentiful years the ground brought forth ^aabundantly.

48 So he gathered up all the food of the seven years which were in the land of Egypt, and laid up the food in the cities; he laid up in every city the food of the fields which surrounded them.

49 Joseph gathered very much grain, ^aas the sand of the sea, until he stopped counting, for *it was* immeasurable.

50 ^aAnd to Joseph were born two sons before the years of famine came, whom Asenath, the daughter of Poti-Pherah priest of On, bore to him.

51 Joseph called the name of the first-born 'Manasseh: “For God has made me forget all my toil and all my ^afather's house.”

52 And the name of the second he called 'Ephraim: “For God has caused me to be ^afruitful in the land of my affliction.”

53 Then the seven years of plenty which were in the land of Egypt ended,

54 ^aand the seven years of famine began to come, ^bas Joseph had said. The famine was in all lands, but in all the land of Egypt there was bread.

55 So when all the land of Egypt was famished, the people cried to Pharaoh for bread. Then Pharaoh said to all the Egyptians, “Go to Joseph; ^awhatever he says to you, do.”

56 The famine was over all the face of the earth, and Joseph opened ^aall the

43^a Gen. 46:29
^b Esth. 6:9
^c Gen. 42:6

45^a Gen. 46:20
¹ Probably Egyptian for *God Speaks and He Lives*

46^a 1 Sam. 16:21;
¹ Kin. 12:6, 8;
Dan. 1:19

47¹ Lit. *by handfuls*

49^a Gen. 22:17;
Judg. 7:12;
¹ Sam. 13:5

50^a Gen. 46:20;
48:5

51^a Ps. 45:10
¹ Lit. *Making Forgetful*

52^a Gen. 17:6;
28:3; 49:22
¹ Lit. *Fruitfulness*

54^a Ps. 105:16;
Acts 7:11 ^b Gen. 41:30

55^a John 2:5

56^a Gen. 42:6
¹ Lit. *all that was in them*

57^a Ezek. 29:12
^b Gen. 27:28,
37; 42:3

CHAPTER 42

1^a Acts 7:12

2^a Gen. 43:8;
Ps. 33:18, 19;
Is. 38:1

4^a Gen. 42:38

5^a Gen. 12:10;
26:11; 41:57;
Acts 7:11

6^a Gen. 41:41, 55
^b Gen. 37:7–10;
41:43; Is. 60:14

7^a Gen. 45:1, 2
¹ *harshly*

9^a Gen. 37:5–9
¹ Exposed parts

storehouses and ^asold to the Egyptians. And the famine became severe in the land of Egypt.

57 ^aSo all countries came to Joseph in Egypt to ^bbuy *grain*, because the famine was severe in all lands.

JOSEPH'S BROTHERS GO TO EGYPT

42 When ^aJacob saw that there was grain in Egypt, Jacob said to his sons, “Why do you look at one another?”

2 And he said, “Indeed I have heard that there is grain in Egypt; go down to that place and buy for us there, that we may ^alive and not die.”

3 So Joseph's ten brothers went down to buy grain in Egypt.

4 But Jacob did not send Joseph's brother Benjamin with his brothers, for he said, ^a“Lest some calamity befall him.”

5 And the sons of Israel went to buy *grain* among those who journeyed, for the famine was ^ain the land of Canaan.

6 Now Joseph *was* governor ^aover the land; and it was he who sold to all the people of the land. And Joseph's brothers came and ^bbowed down before him with *their* faces to the earth.

ENCOUNTER NOTE

Gen. 42:6

Going Before

God often goes ahead of His children to prepare the way for them. This is true even when His people are unaware of His activity or are not following Him.

7 Joseph saw his brothers and recognized them, but he acted as ^aa stranger to them and spoke ¹roughly to them. Then he said to them, “Where do you come from?” And they said, “From the land of Canaan to buy food.”

8 So Joseph recognized his brothers, but they did not recognize him.

9 Then Joseph ^aremembered the dreams which he had dreamed about them, and said to them, “You *are* spies! You have come to see the ^anakedness of the land!”

41:51–52 The naming of the two sons was meaningful, providing insight into Joseph's life. The name Manasseh (meaning “Making Forgetful”) marked the end of a difficult time. The birth of this son closed the door to all the harsh treatment of the past thirteen years. The goodness of God overshadowed the harsh times and Joseph was freed from years of turmoil. The name Ephraim (“Fruitfulness”) signifies that God had turned a place of affliction into a place of blessing. The sons’

names indicate first a God who preserves and second a God who blesses. In the prophetic writings “Ephraim” is used to designate the northern kingdom of Israel because it was located in the heartland of Israel (Is. 7:2, 5, 8, 9, 17; Jer. 31:9, 18, 20; Ezek. 37:16, 19).

42:4 The fact that Jacob did not send Benjamin with his brothers might indicate his suspicion of his older sons. While they had concealed their deed, they could not hide their character.

10 And they said to him, "No, my lord, but your servants have come to buy food.
 11 "We *are* all one man's sons; we *are* honest *men*; your servants are not spies."
 12 But he said to them, "No, but you have come to see the nakedness of the land."
 13 And they said, "Your servants *are* twelve brothers, the sons of one man in the land of Canaan; and in fact, the youngest *is* with our father today, and one *is* no more."
 14 But Joseph said to them, "It *is* as I spoke to you, saying, 'You *are* spies!'
 15 "In this *manner* you shall be tested: "By the life of Pharaoh, you shall not leave this place unless your youngest brother comes here.
 16 "Send one of you, and let him bring your brother; and you shall be 'kept in prison, that your words may be tested to see whether *there is* any truth in you; or else, by the life of Pharaoh, surely you *are* spies!"
 17 So he 'put them all together in prison "three days.
 18 Then Joseph said to them the third day, "Do this and live, *for* I fear God:
 19 "If you *are* honest *men*, let one of your brothers be confined to your prison house; but you, go and carry grain for the famine of your houses.
 20 "And 'bring your youngest brother to me; so your words will be verified, and you shall not die." And they did so.
 21 Then they said to one another, "*We are* truly guilty concerning our brother, for we saw the anguish of his soul when he pleaded with us, and we would not hear; *therefore* this distress has come upon us."
 22 And Reuben answered them, saying, "*Did I* not speak to you, saying, 'Do not sin against the boy'; and you would not listen? Therefore behold, his blood is now *required* of us."
 23 But they did not know that Joseph understood *them*, for he spoke to them through an interpreter.
 24 And he turned himself away from them and *wept*. Then he returned to them again, and talked with them. And he took *Simeon* from them and bound him before their eyes.

THE BROTHERS RETURN TO CANAAN

25 Then Joseph *gave* a command to fill their sacks with grain, to *restore* every

13^a Gen. 37:30; 42:32; 44:20; Lam. 5:7

15^{a1} Sam. 1:26; 17:55

16¹ Lit. *bound*

17^a Gen. 40:4, 7, 12 ¹Lit. *gathered*

18^a Gen. 22:12; 39:9; Ex. 1:17; Lev. 25:43; Neh. 5:15; Prov. 1:7; 9:10

20^a Gen. 42:34; 43:5; 44:23

21^a Gen. 37:26–28; 44:16; 45:3; Job 36:8, 9; Hos. 5:15 ^bProv. 7:13; Matt. 7:2

22^a Gen. 37:21, 22, 29 ^bGen. 9:5, 6; 1 Kin. 2:32; 2 Chr. 24:22; Ps. 9:12; Luke 11:50, 51

24^a Gen. 43:30; 45:14, 15 ^bGen. 34:25, 30; 43:14, 23

25^a Gen. 44:1 ^bGen. 43:12 ^c[Matt. 5:44; Rom. 12:17, 20, 21; 1 Pet. 3:9]

27^a Gen. 43:21, 22

28¹ *sank*

30^a Gen. 42:7 ¹*harshly*

33^a Gen. 42:15, 19, 20

34^a Gen. 42:20; 43:3, 5 ^bGen. 34:10

35^a Gen. 43:12, 15, 21

36^a Gen. 43:14 ^bGen. 35:18; [Rom. 8:28, 31]

38^a Gen. 37:22; 42:13; 44:20, 28 ^bGen. 42:4; 44:29 ^cGen. 37:35; 44:31

man's money to his sack, and to give them provisions for the journey. "Thus he did for them.

26 So they loaded their donkeys with the grain and departed from there.

27 But as "one of *them* opened his sack to give his donkey feed at the encampment, he saw his money; and there it was, in the mouth of his sack.

28 So he said to his brothers, "My money has been restored, and there it is, in my sack!" Then their hearts 'failed *them* and they were afraid, saying to one another, "What *is* this *that* God has done to us?"

29 Then they went to Jacob their father in the land of Canaan and told him all that had happened to them, saying:

30 "The man *who is* lord of the land "spoke 'roughly to us, and took us for spies of the country.

31 "But we said to him, 'We *are* honest *men*; we are not spies.

32 'We *are* twelve brothers, sons of our father; one *is* no *more*, and the youngest *is* with our father this day in the land of Canaan.'

33 "Then the man, the lord of the country, said to us, "By this I will know that you *are* honest *men*: Leave one of your brothers *here* with me, take *food* for the famine of your households, and be gone.

34 'And bring your "youngest brother to me; so I shall know that you *are* not spies, but *that* you *are* honest *men*. I will grant your brother to you, and you may *trade* in the land."

35 Then it happened as they emptied their sacks, that surprisingly "each man's bundle of money *was* in his sack; and when they and their father saw the bundles of money, they were afraid.

36 And Jacob their father said to them, "You have "bereaved me: Joseph is no *more*, Simeon is no *more*, and you want to take *Benjamin*. All these things are against me."

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

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

42:21 Only after experiencing hardship did the ten brothers begin to feel remorse for their evil deed. Their brother's tears and their father's anguish had

not moved the brothers' consciences, but their own suffering did.

42:38 "Grave" can be translated "Sheol."

JOSEPH'S BROTHERS RETURN WITH BENJAMIN

43 Now the famine *was* “severe in the land.

2 And it came to pass, when they had eaten up the grain which they had brought from Egypt, that their father said to them, “Go “back, buy us a little food.”

3 But Judah spoke to him, saying, “The man solemnly warned us, saying, ‘You shall not see my face unless your “brother is with you.’

4 “If you send our brother with us, we will go down and buy you food.

5 “But if you will not send *him*, we will not go down; for the man said to us, ‘You shall not see my face unless your brother is with you.’”

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

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

8 Then Judah said to Israel his father, “Send the lad with me, and we will arise and go, that we may “live and not die, both we and you *and* also our little ones.

9 “I myself will be surety for him; from my hand you shall require him. “If I do not bring him *back* to you and set him before you, then let me bear the blame forever.

10 “For if we had not lingered, surely by now we would have returned this second time.”

11 And their father Israel said to them, “If *it must be* so, then do this: Take some of the best fruits of the land in your vessels and “carry down a present for the man—a little ^bbalm and a little honey, spices and myrrh, pistachio nuts and almonds.

12 “Take double money in your hand, and take back in your hand the money “that was returned in the mouth of your sacks; perhaps it was an oversight.

13 “Take your brother also, and arise, go back to the man.

14 “And may God “Almighty ^bgive you mercy before the man, that he may release your other brother and Benjamin. “If I am bereaved, I am bereaved!”

15 So the men took that present and Benjamin, and they took double money

CHAPTER 43

1^a Gen. 41:54, 57; 42:5; 45:6, 11

2^a Gen. 42:2; 44:25

3^a Gen. 42:20; 43:5; 44:23

6¹ Lit. *wickedly*

8^a Gen. 42:2; 47:19

9^a Gen. 42:37; 44:32; Philem. 18, 19

11^a Gen. 32:20; 33:10; 43:25, 26; [Prov. 18:16] ^bGen. 37:25; Jer. 8:22; Ezek. 27:17

12^a Gen. 42:25, 35; 43:21, 22

14^a Gen. 17:1; 28:3; 35:11; 48:3 ^bGen. 39:21; Ps. 106:46 ^cGen. 42:36; Esth. 4:16

15^a Gen. 39:1; 46:3, 6

16^a Gen. 24:2; 39:4; 44:1 ¹Lit. *a slaughter*

18^a Gen. 42:28 ¹Lit. *roll himself upon us*

20^a Gen. 42:3, 10

21^a Gen. 42:27, 35

23^a Gen. 42:24

24^a Gen. 18:4; 19:2; 24:32

26^a Gen. 37:7, 10; 42:6; 44:14

in their hand, and arose and went “down to Egypt; and they stood before Joseph.

16 When Joseph saw Benjamin with them, he said to the “steward of his house, “Take *these* men to my home, and slaughter ‘an animal and make ready; for *these* men will dine with me at noon.”

17 Then the man did as Joseph ordered, and the man brought the men into Joseph’s house.

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

19 When they drew near to the steward of Joseph’s house, they talked with him at the door of the house,

20 and said, “O sir, “we indeed came down the first time to buy food;

21 “but “it happened, when we came to the encampment, that we opened our sacks, and there, *each* man’s money *was* in the mouth of his sack, our money in full weight; so we have brought it back in our hand.

22 “And we have brought down other money in our hands to buy food. We do not know who put our money in our sacks.”

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

24 So the man brought the men into Joseph’s house and “gave *them* water, and they washed their feet; and he gave their donkeys feed.

25 Then they made the present ready for Joseph’s coming at noon, for they heard that they would eat bread there.

26 And when Joseph came home, they brought him the present which *was* in their hand into the house, and “bowed down before him to the earth.

ENCOUNTER NOTE

Gen. 43:23

God’s Surprising Provision

Many times when difficult circumstances envelope our lives, we are the last ones to recognize the way God is providing for us. Others may perceive God’s activity in our lives before we do.

43:8 Judah succeeded in accomplishing what his older brother Reuben had failed to do (42:37–38).

43:11 Common courtesy demanded the brothers bring a gift when approaching a person of higher rank.

27 Then he asked them about *their* well-being, and said, “Is your father well, the old man ^aof whom you spoke? Is he still alive?”

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

29 Then he lifted his eyes and saw his brother Benjamin, ^ahis mother’s son, and said, “Is this your younger brother ^bof whom you spoke to me?” And he said, “God be gracious to you, my son.”

30 Now ^ahis heart yearned for his brother; so Joseph made haste and sought *somewhere* to weep. And he went into *his* chamber and ^bwept there.

31 Then he washed his face and came out; and he restrained himself, and said, “Serve the ^abread.”

32 So they set him a place by himself, and them by themselves, and the Egyptians who ate with him by themselves; because the Egyptians could not eat food with the ^aHebrews, for that *is* ^ban abomination to the Egyptians.

33 And they sat before him, the firstborn according to his ^abirthright and the youngest according to his youth; and the men looked in astonishment at one another.

34 Then he took servings to them from before him, but Benjamin’s serving was ^afive times as much as any of theirs. So they drank and were merry with him.

JOSEPH’S CUP

44 And he commanded ¹the ^asteward of his house, saying, ^b“Fill the men’s sacks with food, as much as they can carry, and put each man’s money in the mouth of his sack.

2 “Also put my cup, the silver cup, in the mouth of the sack of the youngest, and his grain money.” So he did according to the word that Joseph had spoken.

3 As soon as the morning dawned, the men were sent away, they and their donkeys.

4 When they had gone out of the city, *and* were not *yet* far off, Joseph said to his steward, “Get up, follow the men; and when you overtake them, say to them, ‘Why have you ^arepaid evil for good?’

5 ‘Is not this *the one* from which my lord drinks, and with which he indeed practices divination? You have done evil in so doing.’”

27^a Gen. 29:6; 42:11, 13; 43:7; 45:3; 2 Kin. 4:26

28^a Gen. 37:7, 10

29^a Gen. 35:17, 18
^b Gen. 42:13

30^{a1} 1 Kin. 3:26
^b Gen. 42:24; 45:2, 14, 15; 46:29

31^a Gen. 43:25

32^a Gen. 41:12; Ex. 1:15 ^b Gen. 46:34; Ex. 8:26

33^a Gen. 27:36; 42:7; Deut. 21:16, 17

34^a Gen. 35:24; 45:22

CHAPTER 44

1^a Gen. 43:16
^b Gen. 42:25
¹Lit. *the one over*

4^{a1} Sam. 25:21

8^a Gen. 43:21

9^a Gen. 31:32

12¹ *finished with*

13^a Gen. 37:29, 34; Num. 14:6; 2 Sam. 1:11

14^a Gen. 37:7, 10

16^a [Num. 32:23]
^b Gen. 44:9

17^a Prov. 17:15

6 So he overtook them, and he spoke to them these same words.

7 And they said to him, “Why does my lord say these words? Far be it from us that your servants should do such a thing.

8 “Look, we brought back to you from the land of Canaan ^athe money which we found in the mouth of our sacks. How then could we steal silver or gold from your lord’s house?

9 “With whomever of your servants it is found, ^alet him die, and we also will be my lord’s slaves.”

10 And he said, “Now also *let it be* according to your words; he with whom it is found shall be my slave, and you shall be blameless.”

11 Then each man speedily let down his sack to the ground, and each opened his sack.

12 So he searched. He began with the oldest and ¹left off with the youngest; and the cup was found in Benjamin’s sack.

13 Then they ^atore their clothes, and each man loaded his donkey and returned to the city.

14 So Judah and his brothers came to Joseph’s house, and he *was* still there; and they ^afell before him on the ground.

15 And Joseph said to them, “What deed is this you have done? Did you not know that such a man as I can certainly practice divination?”

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

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

ENCOUNTER NOTE

Gen. 44:16

Dealing with Our Sin

God will ultimately reveal the sin of our past and He will provide an opportunity for repentance. God’s Spirit forces us to deal with our past sins so we can experience God.

43:33 By seating the brothers in their proper birth order, Joseph would have caused his brothers’ alarm that their lives were exposed to God, who knew them and who had seen all their actions.

44:5 This may indicate Joseph allegedly used a cup for divination (Ezek. 21:21), or it may be saying that Joseph, who could interpret dreams, would certainly have discovered who had stolen his cup.

JUDAH INTERCEDES FOR BENJAMIN

18 Then Judah came near to him and said: “O my lord, please let your servant speak a word in my lord’s hearing, and ^ado not let your anger burn against your servant; for you *are* even like Pharaoh.
19 “My lord asked his servants, saying, ‘Have you a father or a brother?’
20 “And we said to my lord, ‘We have a father, an old man, and ^aa child of *his* old age, *who* is young; his brother is ^bdead, and he ^calone is left of his mother’s children, and his ^dfather loves him.’
21 “Then you said to your servants, ‘Bring him down to me, that I may set my eyes on him.’
22 “And we said to my lord, ‘The lad cannot leave his father, for *if* he should leave his father, *his* father would die.’
23 “But you said to your servants, ^a‘Unless your youngest brother comes down with you, you shall see my face no more.’
24 “So it was, when we went up to your servant my father, that we told him the words of my lord.
25 “And ^aour father said, ‘Go back *and* buy us a little food.’
26 “But we said, ‘We cannot go down; if our youngest brother is with us, then we will go down; for we may not see the man’s face unless our youngest brother is with us.’
27 “Then your servant my father said to us, ‘You know that ^amy wife bore me two sons;
28 ‘and the one went out from me, and I said, ^a“Surely he is torn to pieces”; and I have not seen him since.
29 ‘But if you ^atake this one also from me, and calamity befalls him, you shall bring down my gray hair with sorrow to the grave.’
30 “Now therefore, when I come to your servant my father, and the lad is not with us, since ^ahis life is bound up in the lad’s life,
31 “it will happen, when he sees that the lad is not *with* us, that he will die. So your servants will bring down the gray hair of your servant our father with sorrow to the grave.
32 “For your servant became surety for the lad to my father, saying, ^a‘If I do not bring him *back* to you, then I shall bear the blame before my father forever.’

18^a Gen. 18:30, 32; Ex. 32:22

20^a Gen. 37:3; 43:8; 44:30
^b Gen. 42:38
^c Gen. 46:19
^d Gen. 42:4

21^a Gen. 42:15, 20

23^a Gen. 43:3, 5

25^a Gen. 43:2

27^a Gen. 30:22–24; 35:16–18; 46:19

28^a Gen. 37:31–35

29^a Gen. 42:36, 38; 44:31

30^a [1 Sam. 18:1; 25:29]

32^a Gen. 43:9

33^a Ex. 32:32

34¹ Lit. *find*

CHAPTER 45

1^a Acts 7:13

2^a Gen. 43:30; 46:29

3^a Gen. 43:27; Acts 7:13

4^a Gen. 37:28; 39:1; Ps. 105:17

5^a Gen. 45:7, 8; 50:20; Ps. 105:16, 17

6^a Gen. 43:1; 47:4, 13

7^a Gen. 45:5; 50:20 ¹*remnant*

8^a [Rom. 8:28] ^bJudg. 17:10; Is. 22:21

33 “Now therefore, please ^alet your servant remain instead of the lad as a slave to my lord, and let the lad go up with his brothers.

34 “For how shall I go up to my father if the lad is not with me, lest perhaps I see the evil that would ^ccome upon my father?”

JOSEPH REVEALED TO HIS BROTHERS

45 Then Joseph could not restrain himself before all those who stood by him, and he cried out, “Make everyone go out from me!” So no one stood with him ^awhile Joseph made himself known to his brothers.

2 And he ^awept aloud, and the Egyptians and the house of Pharaoh heard it.

3 Then Joseph said to his brothers, ^a“I *am* Joseph; does my father still live?” But his brothers could not answer him, for they were dismayed in his presence.

4 And Joseph said to his brothers, “Please come near to me.” So they came near. Then he said: “I *am* Joseph your brother, ^awhom you sold into Egypt.

5 “But now, do not therefore be grieved or angry with yourselves because you sold me here; ^afor God sent me before you to preserve life.

ENCOUNTER NOTE

Gen. 45:5

God’s Perspective

Joseph had a choice to be angry and seek revenge or see his suffering as service to a God who was using him to preserve life. Rather than hold unforgiveness and retaliation for what others have done, we can be set free to experience joy from the outcome of faithful obedience to God. It’s a matter of exchanging a selfish perspective for God’s perspective.

6 “For these two years the ^afamine *has been* in the land, and *there are* still five years in which *there will be* neither plowing nor harvesting.

7 “And God ^asent me before you to preserve a ^bposterity for you in the earth, and to save your lives by a great deliverance.

8 “So now *it was* not you *who* sent me here, but ^aGod; and He has made me ^ba father to Pharaoh, and lord of all his

44:20 Although Benjamin is called young, he would have been at least in his twenties or perhaps even his thirties, as Joseph would have been in his forties by this time (37:2; 41:46, 53).

44:33 Judah does not beg for mercy or challenge Joseph’s assumptions. He sacrificially offers to suffer

for the alleged crimes of his brother, much as Moses would later offer to suffer the penalty for his people (Ex. 32:32).

45:5 Joseph saw the divine perspective. Although his brothers sold him into slavery, God used him to prepare the way for his brothers in Egypt.

ENCOUNTER NOTE

Gen. 45:7

Hard Places

If you are presently in a difficult place, it may be that God is using you to prepare the way for others. Are you willing to let God walk you through a difficult time so others can be saved?

house, and a ^cruler throughout all the land of Egypt.

9 “Hurry and go up to my father, and say to him, ‘Thus says your son Joseph: “God has made me lord of all Egypt; come down to me, do not ^ttarry.

10 ^a“You shall dwell in the land of Goshen, and you shall be near to me, you and your children, your children’s children, your flocks and your herds, and all that you have.

11 “There I will ^aprovide for you, lest you and your household, and all that you have, come to poverty; for *there are* still five years of famine.”

12 “And behold, your eyes and the eyes of my brother Benjamin see that *it is* ^amy mouth that speaks to you.

13 “So you shall tell my father of all my glory in Egypt, and of all that you have seen; and you shall hurry and ^abring my father down here.”

14 Then he fell on his brother Benjamin’s neck and wept, and Benjamin wept on his neck.

15 Moreover he ^akissed all his brothers and wept over them, and after that his brothers talked with him.

16 Now the report of it was heard in Pharaoh’s house, saying, “Joseph’s brothers have come.” So it pleased Pharaoh and his servants well.

17 And Pharaoh said to Joseph, “Say to your brothers, ‘Do this: Load your animals and depart; go to the land of Canaan.

18 ‘Bring your father and your households and come to me; I will give you the best of the land of Egypt, and you will eat ^athe ^tfat of the land.

19 ‘Now you are commanded—do this: Take carts out of the land of Egypt for your little ones and your wives; bring your father and come.

20 ^aAlso do not be concerned about your goods, for the best of all the land of Egypt *is* yours.”

8 ^c Gen. 41:43; 42:6

9 ^d delay

10 ^a Gen. 46:28, 34; 47:1, 6; Ex. 9:26

11 ^a Gen. 47:12

12 ^a Gen. 42:23

13 ^a Gen. 46:6–28; Acts 7:14

15 ^a Gen. 48:10

18 ^a Gen. 27:28; 47:6; Deut. 32:9–14 ^tThe choicest produce

21 ^a Gen. 45:19; 46:5 ^t‘*wagons*

22 ^a 2 Kin. 5:5 ^b Gen. 43:34

26 ^a Job 29:24; Ps. 126:1; Luke 24:11, 41

27 ^a Judg. 15:19; Is. 40:29

CHAPTER 46

1 ^a Gen. 21:31, 33; 26:32, 33; 28:10 ^b Gen. 26:24, 25; 28:13; 31:42; 32:9

2 ^a Gen. 15:1; 22:11; 31:11; Num. 12:6; Job 33:14, 15

3 ^a Gen. 17:1; 28:13 ^b Gen. 12:2; Ex. 1:9; 12:37; Deut. 26:5

21 Then the sons of Israel did so; and Joseph gave them ^a‘carts,’ according to the command of Pharaoh, and he gave them provisions for the journey.

22 He gave to all of them, to each man, ^a‘changes of garments; but to Benjamin he gave three hundred *pieces* of silver and ^bfive changes of garments.

23 And he sent to his father these *things*: ten donkeys loaded with the good things of Egypt, and ten female donkeys loaded with grain, bread, and food for his father for the journey.

24 So he sent his brothers away, and they departed; and he said to them, “See that you do not become troubled along the way.”

25 Then they went up out of Egypt, and came to the land of Canaan to Jacob their father.

26 And they told him, saying, “Joseph is still alive, and he is governor over all the land of Egypt.” ^aAnd Jacob’s heart stood still, because he did not believe them.

27 But when they told him all the words which Joseph had said to them, and when he saw the carts which Joseph had sent to carry him, the spirit ^aof Jacob their father revived.

28 Then Israel said, “*It is* enough. Joseph my son is still alive. I will go and see him before I die.”

JACOB’S JOURNEY TO EGYPT

46 So Israel took his journey with all that he had, and came to ^aBeersheba, and offered sacrifices ^bto the God of his father Isaac.

2 Then God spoke to Israel ^ain the visions of the night, and said, “Jacob, Jacob!” And he said, “Here I am.”

3 So He said, “*I am* God, ^athe God of your father; do not fear to go down to Egypt, for I will ^bmake of you a great nation there.

ENCOUNTER NOTE

Gen. 46:3

Limiting God’s Promises

God is faithful. Don’t put limits on the promises of God, but trust that if God gave His word He will certainly fulfill it regardless of the circumstances.

45:9 The first word of Joseph to his father was “God.” Joseph had a godly perspective on his life.

45:10 The location of Goshen was in the land of Ramses, which may have been in the eastern section of the Nile Delta near Tanis.

46:2 As Jacob built an altar and sought the Lord, God spoke to him and gave him guidance for his future (46:3–4).

4 ^a"I will go down with you to Egypt, and I will also surely ^bbring you up *again*; and ^cJoseph ^dwill put his hand on your eyes."

5 Then ^aJacob arose from Beersheba; and the sons of Israel carried their father Jacob, their little ones, and their wives, in the ^e'carts ^fwhich Pharaoh had sent to carry him.

6 So they took their livestock and their goods, which they had acquired in the land of Canaan, and went to Egypt, ^aJacob and all his descendants with him.

7 His sons and his sons' sons, his daughters and his sons' daughters, and all his descendants he brought with him to Egypt.

8 Now ^athese *were* the names of the children of Israel, Jacob and his sons, who went to Egypt: ^bReuben *was* Jacob's firstborn.

9 The ^asons of Reuben *were* Hanoch, Pallu, Hezron, and Carmi.

10 ^aThe sons of Simeon *were* ¹Jemuel, Jamin, Ohad, ²Jachin, ³Zohar, and Shaul, the son of a Canaanite woman.

11 The sons of ^aLevi *were* Gershon, Kohath, and Merari.

12 The sons of ^aJudah *were* ^bEr, Onan, Shelah, Perez, and Zerah (but Er and Onan died in the land of Canaan). ^cThe sons of Perez *were* Hezron and Hamul.

13 The sons of Issachar *were* Tola, ¹Puvah, ²Job, and Shimron.

14 The ^asons of Zebulun *were* Sered, Elon, and Jahleel.

15 These *were* the ^asons of Leah, whom she bore to Jacob in Padan Aram, with his daughter Dinah. All the persons, his sons and his daughters, *were* thirty-three.

16 The sons of Gad *were* ¹Ziphion, Haggi, Shuni, ²Ezbon, Eri, ³Arodi, and Areli.

17 ^aThe sons of Asher *were* Jimnah, Ishuah, Isui, Beriah, and Serah, their sister. And the sons of Beriah *were* Heber and Malchiel.

18 ^aThese *were* the sons of Zilpah, ^bwhom Laban gave to Leah his daughter; and these she bore to Jacob: sixteen persons.

19 The ^asons of Rachel, ^bJacob's wife, *were* Joseph and Benjamin.

20 ^aAnd to Joseph in the land of Egypt *were* born Manasseh and Ephraim, whom Asenath, the daughter of Poti-Pherah priest of On, bore to him.

21 ^aThe sons of Benjamin *were* Belah, Becher, Ashbel, Gera, Naaman, ^bEhi, Rosh, ^cMuphim, ^dHuphim, and Ard.

22 These *were* the sons of Rachel, who *were* born to Jacob: fourteen persons in all.

^{4a} Gen. 28:15; 31:3; 48:21; Ex. 3:12 ^b Gen. 15:16; 50:12, 24, 25; Ex. 3:8 ^c Gen. 50:1 ^d Will close your eyes when you die

^{5a} Gen. 47:9; Acts 7:15 ^b Gen. 45:19–21 ^c wagons

^{6a} Deut. 26:5; Josh. 24:4; Ps. 105:23; Is. 52:4; Acts 7:15

^{8a} Ex. 1:1–4 ^b Num. 26:4, 5; 1 Chr. 2:1

^{9a} Ex. 6:14 ^b Num. 26:12 ^c Nemuel, 1 Chr. 4:24 ^d Jarib, 1 Chr. 4:24 ^e Zerah, 1 Chr. 4:24

^{11a} Ex. 6:16, 17; 1 Chr. 6:1, 16 ^{12a} Num. 26:19, 20; 1 Chr. 2:3; 4:21 ^b Gen. 38:3, 7, 10 ^c Gen. 38:29

^{13a} Puvah, Num. 26:23; 1 Chr. 7:1 ^b Jashub, Num. 26:24; 1 Chr. 7:1 ^c Num. 26:26

^{15a} Gen. 35:23; 49:31 ^b Sam., LXX Zephon and Num. 26:15 ^c Ozni, Num. 26:16 ^d Arod, Num. 26:17

^{17a} Num. 26:44–47; 1 Chr. 7:30 ^b Gen. 30:10; 37:2 ^c Gen. 29:24

^{19a} Gen. 35:24 ^b Gen. 44:27 ^c Gen. 41:45, 50–52; 48:1

^{21a} 1 Chr. 7:6; 8:1 ^b Num. 26:38 ^c Num. 26:39; 1 Chr. 7:12 ^d Hupham, Num. 26:39

^{23a} Shuham, Num. 26:42 ^b Num. 26:48 ^c Jahziel, 1 Chr. 7:13 ^d Shallum, 1 Chr. 7:13

^{25a} Gen. 30:5, 7 ^b Gen. 29:29 ^c Ex. 1:5 ^d Gen. 35:11

^{27a} Ex. 1:5; Deut. 10:22; Acts 7:14 ^b Gen. 31:21 ^c Gen. 47:1

^{29a} Gen. 41:43 ^b Gen. 45:14, 15 ^c Luke 2:29, 30

^{31a} Gen. 47:1 ^b Gen. 47:3 ^c Gen. 47:2, 3 ^d Gen. 47:3 ^e Gen. 30:35; 34:5; 37:17

^c Gen. 43:32; Ex. 8:26 ^d loathsome

23 The son of Dan *was* ¹Hushim.

24 ^aThe sons of Naphtali *were* ¹Jahzeel, Guni, Jezer, and ²Shillem.

25 ^aThese *were* the sons of Bilhah, ^bwhom Laban gave to Rachel his daughter, and she bore these to Jacob: seven persons in all.

26 ^aAll the persons who went with Jacob to Egypt, who came from his body, ^bbesides Jacob's sons' wives, *were* sixty-six persons in all.

27 And the sons of Joseph who were born to him in Egypt *were* two persons.

^aAll the persons of the house of Jacob who went to Egypt *were* seventy.

JACOB SETTLES IN GOSHEN

28 Then he sent Judah before him to Joseph, ^ato point out before him *the way* to Goshen. And they came ^bto the land of Goshen.

29 So Joseph made ready his ^achariot and went up to Goshen to meet his father Israel; and he presented himself to him, and ^bfell on his neck and wept on his neck a good while.

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

31 Then Joseph said to his brothers and to his father's household, ^a"I will go up and tell Pharaoh, and say to him, 'My brothers and those of my father's house, who *were* in the land of Canaan, have come to me.

32 'And the men *are* ^ashepherds, for their occupation has been to feed livestock; and they have brought their flocks, their herds, and all that they have.'

33 "So it shall be, when Pharaoh calls you and says, ^a"What is your occupation?"

34 "that you shall say, 'Your servants' ^aoccupation has been with livestock ^bfrom our youth even till now, both we *and* also our fathers,' that you may dwell in the land of Goshen; for every shepherd is ^can' abomination to the Egyptians."

47 Then Joseph ^awent and told Pharaoh, and said, ^a"My father and my brothers, their flocks and their herds and all that they possess, have come from the land of Canaan; and indeed they *are* in ^bthe land of Goshen."

2 And he took five men from among his brothers and ^apresented them to Pharaoh.

CHAPTER 47

^{1a} Gen. 46:31 ^b Gen. 45:10; 46:28; 50:8 ^{2a} Acts 7:13

46:21 Benjamin could have been old enough to have ten children (Gen. 44:20), although it may be that some of those listed were actually his grandchildren (Num. 26:38–40; 1 Chr. 7:6–12).

3 Then Pharaoh said to his brothers, *a*“What is your occupation?” And they said to Pharaoh, *b*“Your servants *are* shepherds, both we *and* also our fathers.”

4 And they said to Pharaoh, *a*“We have come to dwell in the land, because your servants have no pasture for their flocks, *b*for the famine *is* severe in the land of Canaan. Now therefore, please let your servants *dwell* in the land of Goshen.”

5 Then Pharaoh spoke to Joseph, saying, “Your father and your brothers have come to you.

6 *a*“The land of Egypt *is* before you. Have your father and brothers dwell in the best of the land; let them dwell *b*in the land of Goshen. And if you know *any* competent men among them, then make them chief herdsmen over my livestock.”

ENCOUNTER NOTE

Gen. 47:6

Blessing Your Family

God may choose to express His pleasure with you by blessing your family. Some of our encounters with God may come as a result of another family member's faithfulness.

7 Then Joseph brought in his father Jacob and set him before Pharaoh; and Jacob *a*blessed Pharaoh.

8 Pharaoh said to Jacob, “How old *are* you?”

9 And Jacob said to Pharaoh, *a*“The days of the years of my *'pilgrimage are b*one hundred and thirty years; *c*few and evil have been the days of the years of my life, and *d*they have not attained to the days of the years of the life of my fathers in the days of their pilgrimage.”

10 So Jacob *a*blessed Pharaoh, and went out from before Pharaoh.

11 And Joseph situated his father and his brothers, and gave them a possession in the land of Egypt, in the best of the land, in the land of *a*“Rameses,” *b*as Pharaoh had commanded.

12 Then Joseph provided *a*his father, his brothers, and all his father's household with bread, according to the number in *their* families.

JOSEPH DEALS WITH THE FAMINE

13 Now *there was* no bread in all the land; for the famine *was* very severe, *a*so that

3 *a* Gen. 46:33; Jon. 1:8 *b* Gen. 46:32, 34; Ex. 2:17, 19

4 *a* Gen. 15:13; Deut. 26:5; Ps. 105:23 *b* Gen. 43:1; Acts 7:11 *c* Gen. 46:34

6 *a* Gen. 20:15; 45:10, 18; 47:11 *b* Gen. 47:4

7 *a* Gen. 47:10; 48:15, 20; 2 Sam. 14:22; 1 Kin. 8:66; Heb. 7:7

9 *a* Ps. 39:12; [Heb. 11:9, 13] *b* Gen. 47:28 *c* [Job 14:1] *d* Gen. 5:5; 11:10, 11; 25:7, 8; 35:28 *'* Lit. *sojourning*

10 *a* Gen. 47:7

11 *a* Ex. 1:11; 12:37 *b* Gen. 47:6, 27

12 *a* Gen. 45:11; 50:21

13 *a* Gen. 41:30; Acts 7:11

14 *a* Gen. 41:56; 42:6

15 *a* Gen. 47:19

17 *'supplied*

19 *a* Gen. 43:8

20 *a* Jer. 32:43

21 *'* So with MT, Tg.; Sam., LXX, Vg. *made the people virtual slaves*

22 *a* Lev. 25:34; Ezra 7:24 *b* Gen. 41:45

the land of Egypt and the land of Canaan languished because of the famine.

14 *a*And Joseph gathered up all the money that was found in the land of Egypt and in the land of Canaan, for the grain which they bought; and Joseph brought the money into Pharaoh's house.

15 So when the money failed in the land of Egypt and in the land of Canaan, all the Egyptians came to Joseph and said, “Give us bread, for *a*why should we die in your presence? For the money has failed.”

16 Then Joseph said, “Give your livestock, and I will give you *bread* for your livestock, if the money is gone.”

17 So they brought their livestock to Joseph, and Joseph gave them bread *in exchange* for the horses, the flocks, the cattle of the herds, and for the donkeys. Thus he *'fed* them with bread *in exchange* for all their livestock that year.

18 When that year had ended, they came to him the next year and said to him, “We will not hide from my lord that our money is gone; my lord also has our herds of livestock. There is nothing left in the sight of my lord but our bodies and our lands.

19 “Why should we die before your eyes, both we and our land? Buy us and our land for bread, and we and our land will be servants of Pharaoh; give us seed, that we may *a*live and not die, that the land may not be desolate.”

20 Then Joseph *a*bought all the land of Egypt for Pharaoh; for every man of the Egyptians sold his field, because the famine was severe upon them. So the land became Pharaoh's.

21 And as for the people, he *'moved* them into the cities, from *one* end of the borders of Egypt to the *other* end.

22 “Only the land of the *b*priests he did not buy; for the priests had rations *al-lotted to them* by Pharaoh, and they ate their rations which Pharaoh gave them; therefore they did not sell their lands.

23 Then Joseph said to the people, “Indeed I have bought you and your land this day for Pharaoh. Look, *here is* seed for you, and you shall sow the land.

24 “And it shall come to pass in the harvest that you shall give one-fifth to Pharaoh. Four-fifths shall be your own, as seed for the field and for your food, for those of your households and as food for your little ones.”

47:6 God's ability to bless overrides obstacles such as prejudice.

47:20 In theory Pharaoh already owned the land, but now through Joseph's shrewd policy, Pharaoh owned it in reality.

25 So they said, “You have saved ^aour lives; let us find favor in the sight of my lord, and we will be Pharaoh’s servants.”

26 And Joseph made it a law over the land of Egypt to this day, *that* Pharaoh should have one-fifth, ^aexcept for the land of the priests only, *which* did not become Pharaoh’s.

JOSEPH’S VOW TO JACOB

27 So Israel ^adwelt in the land of Egypt, in the country of Goshen; and they had possessions there and ^bgrew and multiplied exceedingly.

28 And Jacob lived in the land of Egypt seventeen years. So the length of Jacob’s life was one hundred and forty-seven years.

29 When the time ^adrew near that Israel must die, he called his son Joseph and said to him, “Now if I have found favor in your sight, please ^bput your hand under my thigh, and ^cdeal kindly and truly with me. ^aPlease do not bury me in Egypt,

30 “but ^alet me lie with my fathers; you shall carry me out of Egypt and ^bbury me in their burial place.” And he said, “I will do as you have said.”

31 Then he said, “Swear to me.” And he swore to him. So ^aIsrael bowed himself on the head of the bed.

JACOB BLESSES JOSEPH’S SONS

48 Now it came to pass after these things that Joseph was told, “Indeed your father *is* sick”; and he took with him his two sons, ^aManasseh and Ephraim.

2 And Jacob was told, “Look, your son Joseph is coming to you”; and Israel ^astrengthened himself and sat up on the bed.

3 Then Jacob said to Joseph: “God ^aAlmighty appeared to me at ^bLuz in the land of Canaan and blessed me,

4 “and said to me, ‘Behold, I will ^amake you fruitful and multiply you, and I will make of you a multitude of people, and ^bgive this land to your descendants after you ^cas an everlasting possession.’

5 “And now your ^atwo sons, Ephraim and Manasseh, who were born to you in the land of Egypt before I came to you in Egypt, *are* mine; as Reuben and Simeon, they shall be mine.

6 “Your ^aoffspring ²whom you beget after them shall be yours; they will be called by the name of their brothers in their inheritance.

25^a Gen. 33:15

26^a Gen. 47:22

27^a Gen. 47:11

^b Gen. 17:6;
26:4; 35:11; 46:3;
Ex. 1:7; Deut.
26:5; Acts 7:17

29^a Deut. 31:14;
1 Kin. 2:1 ^b Gen.
24:2–4 ^c Gen.
24:49; Josh. 2:14
^a Gen. 50:25

30^a 2 Sam. 19:37
^b Gen. 49:29;
50:5–13; Heb.
11:21

31^a Gen. 48:2;
1 Kin. 1:47; Heb.
11:21

CHAPTER 48

1^a Gen. 41:51, 56;
46:20; 50:23;
Josh. 14:4

2¹ Collected his
strength

3^a Gen. 43:14;
49:25 ^b Gen.
28:13, 19; 35:6, 9

4^a Gen. 46:3
^b Gen. 35:12; Ex.
6:8 ^c Gen. 17:8

5^a Gen. 41:50;
46:20; 48:8;
Josh. 13:7; 14:4

6¹ children
² Who are born
to you

7^a Gen. 35:9, 16,
19, 20

9^a Gen. 27:4;
47:15

10^a Gen. 27:1;
1 Sam. 3:2
^b Gen. 27:27;
45:15; 50:1

11^a Gen. 45:26

14^a Matt. 19:15;
Mark 10:16
^b Gen. 48:19
^c Gen. 41:51, 52;
Josh. 17:1

15^a Gen. 47:7, 10;
49:24; [Heb.
11:21] ^b Gen.
17:1; 24:40;
2 Kin. 20:3

16^a Gen. 22:11,
15–18; 28:13–15;
31:11; [Ps. 34:22;
121:7] ^b Amos
9:12; Acts 15:17

7 “But as for me, when I came from Padan, ^aRachel died beside me in the land of Canaan on the way, when *there was* but a little distance to go to Ephrath; and I buried her there on the way to Ephrath (that is, Bethlehem).”

8 Then Israel saw Joseph’s sons, and said, “Who *are* these?”

9 Joseph said to his father, “They *are* my sons, whom God has given me in this *place*.” And he said, “Please bring them to me, and ^aI will bless them.”

10 Now ^athe eyes of Israel were dim with age, *so that* he could not see. Then Joseph brought them near him, and he ^bkissed them and embraced them.

11 And Israel said to Joseph, “I had not thought to see your face; but in fact, God has also shown me your offspring!”

12 So Joseph brought them from beside his knees, and he bowed down with his face to the earth.

13 And Joseph took them both, Ephraim with his right hand toward Israel’s left hand, and Manasseh with his left hand toward Israel’s right hand, and brought *them* near him.

14 Then Israel stretched out his right hand and ^alaid *it* on Ephraim’s head, who *was* the younger, and his left hand on Manasseh’s head, ^bguiding his hands knowingly, for Manasseh *was* the ^cfirst-born.

15 And ^ahe blessed Joseph, and said:

“God, ^bbefore whom my fathers Abraham and Isaac walked,
The God who has fed me all
my life long to this day,

16 The Angel ^awho has redeemed
me from all evil,

Bless the lads;
Let ^bmy name be named
upon them,
And the name of my fathers
Abraham and Isaac;

ENCOUNTER NOTE

Gen. 48:15

Prayers of Blessing

When we pray for God’s blessing on others we offer a prayer of commitment to God, a confession of faith, and a petition to God for His blessing. Those who have experienced God’s blessing have a heartfelt desire for others to know the same joy.

47:30 Jacob knew of God’s promise, but he did not receive it (Heb. 11:13).

48:14 The writer of Hebrews identified Jacob’s blessing of Joseph’s sons as the testimony to his faith (Heb. 11:21).

And let them ^cgrow into
a multitude in the
midst of the earth.”

17 Now when Joseph saw that his father ^alaid his right hand on the head of Ephraim, it displeased him; so he took hold of his father's hand to remove it from Ephraim's head to Manasseh's head.

18 And Joseph said to his father, “Not so, my father, for this *one* is the firstborn; put your right hand on his head.”

19 But his father refused and said, “I know, my son, I know. He also shall become a people, and he also shall be great; but truly ^bthis younger brother shall be greater than he, and his descendants shall become a multitude of nations.”

20 So he blessed them that day, saying, “By you Israel will bless, saying, ‘May God make you as Ephraim and as Manasseh!’” And thus he set Ephraim before Manasseh.

21 Then Israel said to Joseph, “Behold, I am dying, but ^aGod will be with you and bring you back to the land of your fathers.

22 “Moreover ^aI have given to you one ^cportion above your brothers, which I took from the hand ^bof the Amorite with my sword and my bow.”

JACOB'S LAST WORDS TO HIS SONS

49 And Jacob called his sons and said, “Gather together, that I may ^atell you what shall befall you ^bin the last days:

2 “Gather together and hear,
you sons of Jacob,
And listen to Israel your father.

3 “Reuben, you are ^amy firstborn,
My might and the beginning
of my strength,
The excellency of dignity and
the excellency of power.

4 Unstable as water, you
shall not excel,
Because you ^awent up to
your father's bed;
Then you defiled it—
He went up to my couch.

5 “Simeon and Levi *are* brothers;
Instruments of ^ccruelty *are*
in their dwelling place.

16 ^cNum. 26:34,
37

17 ^aGen. 48:14

19 ^aGen. 48:14
^bNum. 1:33, 35;
Deut. 33:17

20 ^aRuth 4:11, 12

21 ^aGen. 28:15;
46:4; 50:24

22 ^aGen. 14:7;
Josh. 24:32;
John 4:5
^bGen. 34:28
^cLit. *shoulder*

CHAPTER 49

1 ^aDeut. 33:1,
6–25; [Amos
3:7] ^bNum.
24:14; [Deut.
4:30]; Is. 2:2;
39:6; Jer. 23:20;
Heb. 1:2

3 ^aGen. 29:32

4 ^aGen. 35:22;
Deut. 27:20;
1 Chr. 5:1

5 ^cviolence

6 ^aPs. 64:2; Prov.
1:15, 16 ^bPs.
26:9; Eph. 5:11
^cGen. 34:26
^dlamed

7 ^aNum. 18:24;
Josh. 19:1, 9;
21:1–42; 1 Chr.
4:24–27

8 ^aDeut. 33:7;
Rev. 5:5 ^bPs.
18:40 ^cGen.
27:29; 1 Chr. 5:2

9 ^aDeut. 33:22;
Ezek. 19:5–7;
Mic. 5:8; [Rev.
5:5] ^bNum.
23:24; 24:9
^ccouches

10 ^aNum. 24:17;
Jer. 30:21; Matt.
1:3; 2:6; Luke
3:33; Rev. 5:5
^bPs. 60:7 ^cIs.
11:1; [Matt. 21:9]
^dDeut. 18:15; Ps.
2:6–9; 72:8–11;
Is. 42:1, 4; 49:6;
60:1–5; [Luke
2:30–32] ^eA
symbol of
kingship

13 ^aDeut. 33:18,
19; Josh. 19:10,
11 ^bGen. 10:19;
Josh. 11:8

ENCOUNTER NOTE

Gen. 49:5

Cruelty's Reward

A person characterized by anger and violence should not expect to receive God's blessings.

- 6 ^aLet not my soul enter
their council;
Let not my honor be united
^bto their assembly;
^cFor in their anger they slew a man,
And in their self-will they
^dhamstrung an ox.
- 7 Cursed *be* their anger,
for *it* is fierce;
And their wrath, for it is cruel!
^aI will divide them in Jacob
And scatter them in Israel.
- 8 “Judah,^a you *are he* whom your
brothers shall praise;
^bYour hand *shall be* on the
neck of your enemies;
^cYour father's children shall
bow down before you.
- 9 Judah *is* ^aa lion's whelp;
From the prey, my son,
you have gone up.
^bHe ^bbows down, he lies
down as a lion;
And as a lion, who shall
rouse him?
- 10 ^aThe ^ascepter shall not
depart from Judah,
Nor ^ba lawgiver from
between his feet,
^cUntil Shiloh comes;
^dAnd to Him *shall be* the
obedience of the people.
- 11 Binding his donkey to the vine,
And his donkey's colt to
the choice vine,
He washed his garments in wine,
And his clothes in the
blood of grapes.
- 12 His eyes *are* darker than wine,
And his teeth whiter than milk.
- 13 “Zebulun^a shall dwell by the
haven of the sea;
He *shall become* a haven for ships,
And his border shall
^badjoin Sidon.

48:17 Jacob had also been the younger son who received the greater blessing over his older brother Esau (27:23).

49:4 Reuben would never achieve his potential due to his sin against his father (35:22).

49:7 The tribe of Simeon would eventually be dispersed among the tribes of Israel (Josh. 15:26–32; 19:2–9; 2 Chr. 34:6; Neh. 11:25). The Levites would serve as priests and would have no tribal territory of their own (Ex. 32:26, 29; Num. 18:20, 23; 35:2–8).

- 14 "Issachar^a is a strong donkey,
Lying down between two burdens;
15 He saw that rest *was* good,
And that the land *was* pleasant;
He bowed ^ahis shoulder
to bear *a burden*,
And became a band of slaves.
- 16 "Dan^a shall judge his people
As one of the tribes of Israel.
17 ^aDan shall be a serpent by the way,
A viper by the path,
That bites the horse's heels
So that its rider shall fall backward.
18 ^aI have waited for your
salvation, O LORD!
- 19 "Gad,^a a troop shall
²tramp upon him,
But he shall triumph at last.
- 20 "Bread from ^aAsher *shall be* rich,
And he shall yield royal dainties.
- 21 "Naphtali^a is a deer let loose;
He uses beautiful words.
- 22 "Joseph is a fruitful bough,
A fruitful bough by a well;
His branches run over the wall.
23 The archers have ^abitterly
grieved him,
Shot *at him* and hated him.
24 But his ^abow remained
in strength,
And the arms of his hands
were ¹made strong
By the hands of ^bthe
Mighty God of Jacob
^c(From there ^ais the Shepherd,
^ethe Stone of Israel),
25 ^aBy the God of your father
who will help you,
^bAnd by the Almighty ^cwho
will bless you
With blessings of heaven above,
Blessings of the deep
that lies beneath,
Blessings of the breasts
and of the womb.
26 The blessings of your father
Have excelled the blessings
of my ancestors,
^aUp to the utmost bound of
the everlasting hills.
^bThey shall be on the
head of Joseph,

14^a 1 Chr. 12:32
15^a 1 Sam. 10:9
16^a Gen. 30:6;
Deut. 33:22;
Judg. 18:26, 27
17^a Judg. 18:27
18^a Ex. 15:2; Ps.
25:5; 40:1-3;
119:166, 174; Is.
25:9; Mic. 7:7
19^a Gen. 30:11;
Deut. 33:20;
1 Chr. 5:18 ¹Lit.
raid
20^a Deut. 33:24;
Josh. 19:24-31
21^a Deut. 33:23
23^a Gen. 37:4,
24; Ps. 118:13
24^a Job 29:20;
Ps. 37:15 ^bPs.
132:2, 5; Is. 1:24;
49:26 ^cGen.
45:11; 47:12
^d[Ps. 23:1; 80:1]
^e[Ps. 118:22];
Is. 28:16; [1 Pet.
2:6-8] ¹Or
supple
25^a Gen. 28:13;
32:9; 35:3;
43:23; 50:17
^bGen. 17:1; 35:11
^cDeut. 33:13
26^a Deut.
33:15; Hab. 3:6
^bDeut. 33:16
27^a Judg. 20:21,
25 ^bNum.
23:24; Esth. 8:11;
Ezek. 39:10;
Zech. 14:1
29^a Gen. 15:15;
25:8; 35:29
^bGen. 47:30;
2 Sam. 19:37
^cGen. 23:16-20;
50:13
30^a Gen.
23:3-20
31^a Gen. 23:19,
20; 25:9 ^bGen.
35:29; 50:13

CHAPTER 50

1^a Gen. 46:4, 29
^b2 Kin. 13:14
2^a Gen. 50:26;
2 Chr. 16:14;
Matt. 26:12;
Mark 16:1; Luke
24:1; John
19:39, 40
3^a Gen. 37:34;
Num. 20:29;
Deut. 34:8
¹Lit. wept
4^a Esth. 4:2
5^a Gen. 47:29-31
^b2 Chr. 16:14;
Is. 22:16; Matt.
27:60

And on the crown of the head
of him who was separate
from his brothers.

- 27 "Benjamin is a ^aravenous wolf;
In the morning he shall
devour the prey,
^bAnd at night he shall
divide the spoil."

28 All these *are* the twelve tribes of Is-
rael, and this *is* what their father spoke to
them. And he blessed them; he blessed
each one according to his own blessing.

JACOB'S DEATH AND BURIAL

- 29 Then he charged them and said
to them: "I ^aam to be gathered to my
people; ^bbury me with my fathers ^cin
the cave that *is* in the field of Ephron
the Hittite,
30 "in the cave that *is* in the field of
Machpelah, which *is* before Mamre in the
land of Canaan, ^awhich Abraham bought
with the field of Ephron the Hittite as a
possession for a burial place.
31 ^a"There they buried Abraham and
Sarah his wife, ^bthere they buried Isaac
and Rebekah his wife, and there I buried
Leah.
32 "The field and the cave that *is* there
were purchased from the sons of Heth."
33 And when Jacob had finished com-
manding his sons, he drew his feet up
into the bed and breathed his last, and
was gathered to his people.

50 Then Joseph ^afell on his father's
face and ^bwept over him, and
kissed him.

- 2 And Joseph commanded his servants
the physicians to ^aembalm his father. So
the physicians embalmed Israel.
3 Forty days were required for him,
for such are the days required for those
who are embalmed; and the Egyptians
^amourned¹ for him seventy days.
4 Now when the days of his mourning
were past, Joseph spoke to ^athe household
of Pharaoh, saying, "If now I have found
favor in your eyes, please speak in the
hearing of Pharaoh, saying,
5 ^a"My father made me swear, saying,
"Behold, I am dying; in my grave ^bwhich
I dug for myself in the land of Canaan,
there you shall bury me." Now therefore,
please let me go up and bury my father,
and I will come back."

49:16 In the description of Israel in the Book of Reve-
lation, the tribe of Dan is missing (Rev. 7:5-8).
49:31 This is the only mention of Leah being buried
in Canaan.

50:3 Egyptians would mourn for a deceased pharaoh
for seventy-two days. The mourning for Jacob was
seventy days.

6 And Pharaoh said, “Go up and bury your father, as he made you swear.”

7 So Joseph went up to bury his father; and with him went up all the servants of Pharaoh, the elders of his house, and all the elders of the land of Egypt,

8 as well as all the house of Joseph, his brothers, and his father’s house. Only their little ones, their flocks, and their herds they left in the land of Goshen.

9 And there went up with him both chariots and horsemen, and it was a very great gathering.

10 Then they came to the threshing floor of Atad, which is beyond the Jordan, and they ^amourned there with a great and very solemn lamentation. ^bHe observed seven days of mourning for his father.

11 And when the inhabitants of the land, the Canaanites, saw the mourning at the threshing floor of Atad, they said, “This is a deep mourning of the Egyptians.” Therefore its name was called ‘Abel Mizraim, which is beyond the Jordan.

12 So his sons did for him just as he had commanded them.

13 For ^ahis sons carried him to the land of Canaan, and buried him in the cave of the field of Machpelah, before Mamre, which Abraham ^bbought with the field from Ephron the Hittite as property for a burial place.

14 And after he had buried his father, Joseph returned to Egypt, he and his brothers and all who went up with him to bury his father.

JOSEPH REASSURES HIS BROTHERS

15 When Joseph’s brothers saw that their father was dead, ^athey said, “Perhaps Joseph will hate us, and may ¹actually repay us for all the evil which we did to him.”

^{10 a} Acts 8:2
^{b 1} Sam. 31:13;
Job 2:13

^{11 1} Lit. Mourning of Egypt

^{13 a} Gen. 49:29–31; Acts 7:16
^b Gen. 23:16–20

^{15 a} [Job 15:21]
¹ fully

^{17 a} [Prov. 28:13]
^b Gen. 49:25

^{18 a} Gen. 37:7–10;
41:43; 44:14

^{19 a} Gen. 45:5
^b Gen. 30:2;
2 Kin. 5:7

^{20 a} Gen. 45:5, 7;
Ps. 56:5 ^b [Acts 3:13–15]

^{21 a} [Matt. 5:44]
¹ Lit. to their hearts

^{23 a} Gen. 48:1;
Job 42:16
^b Num. 26:29;
32:39

16 So they sent *messengers* to Joseph, saying, “Before your father died he commanded, saying,

17 “Thus you shall say to Joseph: ‘I beg you, please forgive the trespass of your brothers and their sin; ^afor they did evil to you.’” Now, please, forgive the trespass of the servants of ^bthe God of your father.” And Joseph wept when they spoke to him.

18 Then his brothers also went and ^afell down before his face, and they said, “Behold, we are your servants.”

19 Joseph said to them, ^a“Do not be afraid, ^bfor *am* I in the place of God?

20 ^a“But as for you, you meant evil against me; *but* ^bGod meant it for good, in order to bring it about as *it* is this day, to save many people alive.

21 “Now therefore, do not be afraid; ^aI will provide for you and your little ones.” And he comforted them and spoke ¹kindly to them.

DEATH OF JOSEPH

22 So Joseph dwelt in Egypt, he and his father’s household. And Joseph lived one hundred and ten years.

23 Joseph saw Ephraim’s children ^ato the third generation. ^bThe children of Machir,

ENCOUNTER NOTE

Gen. 50:20

God’s Intentions

God overrides and uses the evil intentions of people to accomplish His purposes. When you face difficult circumstances do not grow discouraged, but always look at your situation from God’s perspective. Allow Him to take painful events and use them for His good.

HISTORICAL ENCOUNTER ♦ Gen. 50:20

Samuel Logan Brengle (1860–1936)

Samuel Brengle was a beloved Salvation Army Commissioner. While he ministered on Boston’s skid row, a drunken man struck Brengle with a paving brick. As he recuperated from the blow, Brengle wrote a series of articles for the Salvation Army’s publication, *The War Cry*. Later these articles were

compiled into a popular book, *Helps to Holiness*. When someone thanked him for his book, he would reply, “Well, if there had been no little brick, there would have been no little book!” Brengle’s wife saved the brick and had the words of Genesis 50:20 printed on it. What man meant for evil, God used for good.

50:11 “Abel Mizraim” means “Mourning of Egypt.”

50:22 The age of 110 was considered the ideal age to reach in Egypt.

50:23 Machir would develop into a strong clan in the tribe of Manasseh (Josh. 17:1; Judg. 5:14).

the son of Manasseh, ^cwere also brought up on Joseph’s knees.

24 And Joseph said to his brethren, “I am dying; but ^aGod will surely visit you, and bring you out of this land to the land ^bof which He swore to Abraham, to Isaac, and to Jacob.”

25 Then ^aJoseph took an oath from the children of Israel, saying, “God will surely

23 ^cGen. 30:3

24 ^aGen. 15:14; 46:4; 48:21; Ex. 3:16, 17; Josh. 3:17; Heb. 11:22
^bGen. 26:3; 35:12; 46:4; Ex. 6:8

¹visit you, and ^byou shall carry up my “bones from here.”

26 So Joseph died, *being* one hundred and ten years old; and they embalmed him, and he was put in a coffin in Egypt.

25 ^aGen. 47:29, 30; Ex. 13:19; Josh. 24:32; Acts 7:15, 16; Heb. 11:22 ^bGen. 17:8; 28:13; 35:12; Deut. 1:8; 30:1–8
^cEx. 13:19 ¹give attention to