

Old Testament Basics

Genesis: Chapters 12-31

Chapters 12-17

Abraham's Pilgrimage

- Terah, Abraham's father, was a descendant of Shem, one of Noah's sons.
- Shem was righteous before Noah and was promised to be blessed by God.
- Christ would ultimately come from Shem's line.
- Terah had moved his family from the region of Ur of the Chaldeans to enter Canaan.
- The family, however, stopped part way at Haran.
- God called Abram in chapter 12 to leave Haran and to enter Canaan.
- God promised to bless Abraham and to make him a great nation.
- Chapter 12:3 gives a prophetic blessing and a warning for nations of the world.
- This blessing and warning applies to nations today.
- Genesis 12:7 states the Lord appeared to Abram and proclaimed the land would be given to him.
- Abram built an altar to the lord and settled in the land between Bethel and Ai.

Abraham in Egypt

- A famine took the land, thus forcing Abram into Egypt.
- When Abraham entered Egypt, he devised a scheme in order to save his life.
- Abraham pretended to be Sarai's brother.
- This was a half truth.
- Sarai was the daughter of Terah, Abram's father, but of a different mother.
- Abram left Egypt and returned to Bethel.

Abraham and Lot

- Because the Lord had prospered both Abram and Lot, trouble arose between their heard masters.
- As a result, Abraham and Lot parted ways.
- Lot settled in the valley of the Jordan while Abram settled in Canaan.
- Again, God affirmed His promise to Abram in Genesis 13:14-16.
- After Abram delivered Lot from Chedorlaomer (Chapter 14) and the kings, he was met by Melchizedek, king of Salem (Gen. 14:18-20).
- Melchizedek was a priest and king and was possibly Christ (Psalm 76:2; 110:4).
- Melchizedek blessed Abram and Abraham gave a tenth of all his possessions to Melchizedek.

God Promises a Son to Abraham

- Ten years had passed since God gave Abram a promise of a son.
- God affirms Abram again in Genesis 15:1-21.
- Abram “believed” and it was reckoned to him as “righteousness” (believed-“*aman*”; “*amen*” to affirm or confirm; righteousness-“*not guilty*”).
- Genesis 15:13-18-prophecies of Israel’s Egyptian captivity (400 years) and God making a covenant with Abram.
- In making a covenant, an animal would be cut in half and those making the covenant would walk between the halves.
- The symbolism indicated that if one should break the covenant, then the same fate of the animal would fall upon the transgressor.
- God placed himself as the one to walk among the animal halves.
- Ishmael was born to Abram by Hagar, the Egyptian maid of Sarai.
- Genesis 16:10 states an angel of the Lord spoke to Hagar and told her to return to Sarai and to be submissive to her.
- The phrase, *the angel of the Lord* is a theophany, a self-manifestation of God (Ryrie).
- The phrase, “*the angel of the Lord*” refers to Christ incarnate.
- Hagar recognized the angel as God (Christ) vs. 13.
- God changed Abram’s name to Abraham, meaning “father of many.”
- God gave Abram the covenant of circumcision.
- An uncircumcised male would be cut off from Abraham’s line.
- God changed Sarai’s name to Sarah (Sarai means “my princess” and Sarah means “princess-Ryrie).

Chapters 18-24

Sodom and Gomorrah

- Destruction of Sodom and Gomorrah
- Three men approach Abraham in chapter 18. In verse 3, Abraham refers to one of the angels as “Lord.”
- Abraham did not recognize who this angel was until verse 13 when he refers to the angle as *Lord* (Yahweh-God’s holy name).
- Vs. 22 also gives an indication that Christ was probably one of the three men who visited Abraham.
- God saw the sin in Sodom and Gomorrah and sent two of the three men (angels) to destroy the cities.
- Lot and his two daughters escaped the city.
- After the escape, Lot’s daughters, being virgins, got their father drunk and committed incest with him.
- The firstborn daughter had a son and named him Moab. He became the father of the Moabites. Jeremiah 48 and Amos 2 tells of the destruction of the Moabites.
- The second daughter had a son and named him Ben-ammi who becomes the father of the Ammonites.
- The Ammonites were cursed in Amos 1:13-15 for their wicked deeds.

The Birth of Isaac

- God told Abraham to offer his son Isaac in the land of Moriah. “Moriah was a general area that included the hills on which Solomon later built his Temple in Jerusalem” (Ryrie).
- This was also the area in which Jesus would be crucified.
- Genesis 22: 11-12 states *the angel of the Lord* called to Abraham saying, “Do not stretch out your hand against the lad, and do nothing to him; for now I know that you fear God, since you have not withheld your son, your only son, from Me.”
- Ishmael was also considered a son; however, the inheritance would go to Isaac.
- Jesus is also referenced as God’s only son; meaning that Jesus is the inheritor of all things (John 3:16).
- As God provided a ram to be used as the substitute sacrifice, so was Jesus the substitute sacrifice for our sins.

The Marriage of Isaac

- Abraham instructed his servant to take a wife for Isaac from the area of Haran.
- Haran was where Abraham’s father, Terah, was located.
- It is worthy to note the clarity of the servant’s prayer for God’s divine help (Gen. 24:12-15).
- Genesis 24:60 affirms Isaac’s blessing (Gen. 22:17) through Rebekah.
- Abraham gave all he had to Isaac, while he sent the sons of his concubines away.
- Though gifts were given to them, the inheritance was given to Isaac.

Chapters 25-31

The Birth and life of Jacob

- Rebekah gave birth to twins; the older was red and hairy and was named Esau.
- The younger son was named Jacob, which meant trickster.
- Jacob was born holding on to Esau’s heel.
- God spoke to Rebekah and said the older son would serve the younger son.
- Years later, Esau came in from the fields and asked for some of the “red stuff” or stew that Jacob was preparing.
- Esau’s name was called Edom (father of the Edomites). Esau sold his birthright for the stew.
- God affirmed his promise again to Isaac in Genesis 26:4-5 and again in vs. 24.
- God had told Abraham he would be blessed for his obedience.
- Genesis 26:4 states all nations of the world would be blessed, thus indicating the eventual outpouring of salvation to all people.
- Genesis 27:2 states Isaac wanted to bless Esau since he was old and did not know the day of his death.
- Little did Isaac know he would live another 40 years.
- Genesis 27 tells of Jacob’s deception in inheriting Esau’s blessing (27:28-29).

Jacob Flees Canaan

- As Jacob fled from Esau, God gave him a dream (Jacob’s ladder).
- The dream indicated the land and his descendants would be the ladder between earth and heaven.

- Jacob realized the importance of the dream and named the place Bethel, meaning “house of God.”
- This dream gave a prophesy that salvation for the world would come through Jesus Christ.
- Jacob married Rachel and Leah and became the father of 11 children.
- Jacob would eventually have a 12th child.
- From these children, came the 12 tribes of Israel.
- Genesis 31:13 affirms God’s promise to Isaac.
- God also told Isaac to leave the land of Abraham’s father (Haran).

Conclusion

- As difficult as it may seem, God has a wonderful plan for each one of us.
- Isaac thought his life was almost over and yet he lived another 40 years.
- Jacob fled the Promised Land only to be humbled and groomed to enter years later.
- Abraham, Isaac, and Jacob knew God and yet displayed times of doubt.
- God made a blood covenant with Abraham and promised to make his lineage prosperous and continuous.
- God has made a blood covenant with us through the sacrifice of Jesus Christ.
- Hebrews states God will never desert us nor forsake us (Heb. 13:5-6)
- Wait, be strong and patient; the Lord will provide.