

Old Testament Basics

Genesis 32-50

Chapters 32-36

Jacob Is Reunited With Esau

- God told Jacob to return to Canaan and God would protect him (Gen.31:3).
- God greatly blessed Jacob in the land of Haran.
- As Jacob came closer to Canaan he sent some messengers to tell his brother, Esau, he was coming.
- Jacob still remembered the threat of Esau 20 years earlier (Gen. 27:41-42).
- The messengers returned and reported that Esau was coming with four hundred men. (Needless to say, Jacob's blood pressure rose).
- Genesis 32:9-12 shows us a much humbler Jacob.
- Even though God had promised Jacob He would bring him safely into Canaan, Jacob still devised a way of pacifying Esau through gifts.
- The evening before Esau's arrival, Jacob wrestled with God (Genesis 32: 22-28).
- God changed his name from Jacob (trickster) to Israel ("he fights or persists with God").
- It is interesting to note the nation of Israel has always fought with God.
- They went as far as to crucify His son.

Chapters 34-36

Simeon and Levi

- Leah's daughter, Dinah, left her family and went out to visit the foreign people of the land.
- Leah was raped by Shechem, a Hivite. Word reached Jacob's sons Simeon and Levi and they plotted revenge.
- After the men of the Shechem's city were circumcised, Simeon and Levi ravaged the city and killed all the males.
- This act brought shame and disgrace upon Jacob.
- As a result of this act, Simeon and Levi were given a curse instead of a blessing (Gen. 49:5-7).
- It is interesting to note the tribe of Levi will eventually become the holy priesthood for the nation of Israel.
- The Levites opposed the idolatry connected with the golden calf during the exodus from Egypt (Ryrie)-Exodus 32:26.
- God will always provide a way for forgiveness.
- Every person must decide whether to accept God's grace and forgiveness.
- The tribe of Simeon never possessed land but was given land within the tribe of Judah (Joshua 19:1).
- God instructed Jacob to depart and return to Bethel (*house of God*) where God had visited him in a dream 20 years earlier (Gen. 35:1).
- Jacob built an altar and God appeared to him again.
- God changed Jacob's name to "Israel" (Gen. 35:10-12).
- Scripture records Esau had taken foreign wives and departed from his brother to another land.

- Esau will eventually become the father of the Edomites.

Ch. 37-38

Joseph's Trip Into Egypt

- Joseph was the avored son since he was Rachael's firstborn.
- Benjamin was Rachael's second son.
- Rachael died giving birth to Benjamin. Rachael was the favorite wife of Jacob.
- Chapter 37 states Joseph had two dreams which foretold he would be ruler over his father, mother, and brothers.
- For whatever reason, Joseph felt it necessary to tell the dreams to his family. Due to jealousy, Joseph's brothers sold him into slavery where he was taken to Egypt.
- God gave Joseph favor and he became a servant to Potiphar, the captain of Pharaoh's body guard.

Chapter 38

A Break in the Story

- Judah was Leah's 4th son.
- Judah departed from his brothers and went to the Adullamites, particularly to a man named Hirah.
- While there, Judah took a Canaanite for a wife. She bore three sons.
- Judah took a wife for his oldest son, Er.
- Her name was Tamar.
- Er was evil in the sight of the Lord and the Lord took his life.
- Judah told his second son, Onan, to take his brother's wife.
- This was a widely practiced custom of the day.
- This practice would later be incorporated into the Law of Moses (Ryrie-Deut. 25:5-10).
- Onan did not allow Tamar to conceive since the child would inherit his father's (Er's) blessing.
- Onan wanted the inheritance since his older brother was dead.
- Because of this act, the Lord took his life.
- Judah promised when his 3rd son was old enough to marry, he would be given to Tamar.
- However, Judah did not give his son to Tamar.
- Tamar disguised herself as a harlot and slept with Judah.
- Tamar became pregnant and was condemned to death for harlotry.
- When it became known that Judah was the father, he repented for not giving Tamar to his 3rd son.
- Tamar bore twins.
- At the time of birth, the first twin's hand came out and the midwife tied a scarlet thread on his hand.
- However, the other brother was born first. His name was Perez, meaning "breach" or "forging through".
- The son who had the scarlet thread tied on his hand came second and was named Zerah.
- Perez is listed in the genealogy of Christ (Matt. 1:3).

- As we will see later, Judah offers himself as a ransom in the place of Benjamin.
- Because of this act, Christ would eventually come from Judah's lineage. (Gen. 49: 10).
- This is another example of God's willingness to bless those who have a repentant heart.

Chapters 39-49

Joseph In Egypt

- Joseph was imprisoned because Potiphar's wife's falsely accused him of impropriety.
- As a result, Joseph was thrown into prison.
- God blessed Joseph while in prison and he was made head over all the prisoners.
- While in prison, Joseph interpreted the dreams of Pharaoh's baker and chief cupbearer.
- Joseph explained the cupbearer would be reinstated to his position, while the baker would be executed.
- Both prophecies came to pass.
- Joseph asked the cupbearer to remember him when released.
- The cupbearer forgot about Joseph.
- Meanwhile, Pharaoh has a dream and does not understand its meaning.
- The cupbearer remembered Joseph and told Pharaoh about Joseph's ability to interpret dreams.
- Pharaoh sent for Joseph who in return interpreted the dream.
- Joseph told Pharaoh there would be seven good years of great abundance and then seven years of severe famine.
- Joseph instructed Pharaoh to look for someone wise to be in charge of storing the food.
- Pharaoh made Joseph the second most powerful person in Egypt.
- Joseph had two sons, Manasseh (one who causes to forget-Ryrie); and Ephraim (fruitful-Ryrie).
- These two sons will play an important part in Israel's future.

Joseph's Brothers

- Because of the famine Joseph's brothers came into Egypt to buy food.
- Joseph recognized them and accused them of being spies.
- Joseph kept Simeon and told the others to go home and to return with Benjamin, the youngest brother.
- Benjamin was not allowed to go to Egypt since he was the only living son of Rachael.
- The brothers returned to their father, Jacob, and told him of the circumstances in Egypt.
- Jacob does not want to let Benjamin go in fear he might not return.
- Judah pledged his life and assumed blame if he did not return with Benjamin.
- This act would symbolize Christ's atonement for our sins.
- Christ will ultimately come from the line of Judah.
- Joseph sent the brothers away after putting his silver cup in Benjamin's sack.
- Joseph was testing the brothers.
- After the brothers left, Joseph ordered the brothers stopped and searched.
- Joseph's house steward found the cup in Benjamin's sack and the brothers are brought back to Joseph.
- Judah, realizing Benjamin must pay the price for the "stolen" cup offers himself for payment in the place of Benjamin.

- This will be another foreshadowing of Christ's sacrifice for our sins.
- Joseph revealed himself to his brothers.
- The brothers returned and brought Jacob to **Egypt**.
- Pharaoh gave them the land of Goshen, the best land in Egypt.

Chapters 49-50

The Death of Jacob

- Before Jacob's death, he blessed Joseph's two sons Manasseh and Ephraim.
- Jacob stated the two boys were his, which indicated Joseph's boys were equal with his other sons.
- This blessing assured Joseph's descendants a double inheritance (Ryrie).
- "Apparently Jacob transferred the rights of the firstborn from Reuben to Joseph..." (Ryrie).
- Jacob blessed the youngest over the oldest (Ephraim over Manasseh).
- Jacob blessed each of his sons in chapter 49. Verses 8-12 indicated the Messiah would come from the line of Judah.
- Joseph died at the age of 110. He instructed his brothers to carry his bones from Egypt into the land promised to Abraham, Isaac, and Jacob.
- Joseph promised his brothers God would be faithful to bring their descendants back into the Promised Land.