

CHAPTER TWENTY FIVE

Then again Abraham took a wife, and her name was Keturah. And she bare him Zimran, and Jokshan, and Medan, and Midian, and Ishbak, and Shuah. And Jokshan begat Sheba, and Dedan. And the sons of Dedan were Asshurim, and Letushim, and Leummim. And the sons of Midian; Ephah, and Epher, and Hanoch, and Abida, and Eldaah. All these were the children of Keturah.

Ketura actually had six of these children. The rest were her grandchildren but were counted as hers. Ketura is called a wife here but is referred to as a concubine in other scriptures. This is not to be regarded as a contradiction in scripture because concubine is common usage for wives married after the first. Concubine, as far as I can tell, is never used for the first wife. It should be noted that all of Ketura's six children, with the possible exception of Shuah are fathers of Arabian tribes and their descendants have become bitter enemies of Israel.

And Abraham gave all that he had unto Isaac. But unto the sons of the concubines, which Abraham had, Abraham gave gifts, and sent them away from Isaac his son, while he yet lived, eastward, unto the east country.

By this time Abraham would have been filthy rich so that the "gifts" he gave to his sons would have been substantial. They no doubt received flocks of sheep, goats and camels to take with them as they journeyed to the east. Abraham wanted them no where near the "son of promise", Isaac. The great bulk of Abraham's estate went to Isaac. Notice that the word concubines in verse six is plural so it may be that Abraham had other wives as well. God does not tell us everything.

And these are the days of the years of Abraham's life which he lived, an hundred threescore and fifteen years. Then Abraham gave up the ghost, and died in a good old age, an old man, and full of years; and was gathered to his people. And his sons Isaac and Ishmael buried him in the cave of Machpelah, in the field of Ephron the son of Zohar the Hittite, which is before Mamre; The field which Abraham purchased of the sons of Heth: there was Abraham buried, and Sarah his wife.

Abraham dies at the age of one hundred and seventy five years. It is likely that God "rolled back the clock" on both Sarah and him so that they could produce Isaac. It is apparent that Isaac and Ishmael stayed "in touch" since they are both here at Abraham's funeral. None of the children of Ketura are mentioned as being at the funeral. Abraham dies being one of the most important men in the Bible. He is mentioned seventy times in the New Testament. Only Moses is mentioned more often.

And it came to pass after the death of Abraham, that God blessed his son Isaac; and Isaac dwelt by the well Lahairoi.

Abraham had now passed on God's promise of the land to Isaac. This is why he sent the sons of Ketura away to the east.

Now these are the generations of Ishmael, Abraham's son, whom Hagar the Egyptian, Sarah's handmaid, bare unto Abraham: And these are the names of the sons of Ishmael, by their names, according to their generations: the firstborn of Ishmael, Nebajoth; and Kedar, and Adbeel, and Mibsam, And Mishma, and Dumah, and Massa, Hadar, and Tema, Jetur, Naphish, and Kedemah: These are the sons of Ishmael, and these are their names, by their towns, and by their castles; twelve princes according to their nations. And these are the years of the life of Ishmael, an hundred and thirty and seven years: and he gave up the ghost and died; and was gathered unto his people. And they dwelt from Havilah unto Shur, that is before Egypt, as thou goest toward Assyria: and he died in the presence of all his brethren.

The points here are the length of Ishmael's life which was one hundred thirty seven years. The fact that he was the father of twelve princes as God had promised Hagar, his mother. While there doesn't seem to have been much jealousy between Ishmael and Isaac once they were past childhood his descendants were another matter. More of the modern Arabs.

And these are the generations of Isaac, Abraham's son: Abraham begat Isaac: And Isaac was forty years old when he took Rebekah to wife, the daughter of Bethuel the Syrian of Padanaram, the sister to Laban the Syrian. And Isaac intreated the LORD for his wife, because she was barren: and the LORD was intreated of him, and Rebekah his wife conceived. And the children struggled together within her; and she said, If it be so, why am I thus? And she went to enquire of the LORD. And

the LORD said unto her, Two nations are in thy womb, and two manner of people shall be separated from thy bowels; and the one people shall be stronger than the other people; and the elder shall serve the younger.

Notice that Isaac and Rebekah prayed for nearly twenty years before Rebekah conceived. She had a really rough pregnancy in that there were twins and they apparently fought even in the womb. That phrase "struggled together" seems to indicate that. Rebekah "went to inquire of the Lord" seems to indicate that she went to a prophet,(probably Abraham), for help but the following phrase,"And the LORD said unto her"shows that God spoke to her directly. Take your choice.

And when her days to be delivered were fulfilled, behold, there were twins in her womb. And the first came out red, all over like an hairy garment; and they called his name Esau. And after that came his brother out, and his hand took hold on Esau's heel; and his name was called Jacob: and Isaac was threescore years old when she bare them.

And the boys grew: and Esau was a cunning hunter, a man of the field; and Jacob was a plain man, dwelling in tents. And Isaac loved Esau, because he did eat of his venison: but Rebekah loved Jacob.

Both parents have their favorites. That old saying,"the way to a man's heart is through his stomach"must have started right here. The word Jacob means heel catcher and is not a compliment. It also means trespasser,poacher and deceiver.

And Jacob sod pottage: and Esau came from the field, and he was faint: And Esau said to Jacob, Feed me, I pray thee, with that same red pottage; for I am faint: therefore was his name called Edom. And Jacob said, Sell me this day thy birthright. And Esau said, Behold, I am at the point to die: and what profit shall this birthright do to me? And Jacob said, Swear to me this day; and he sware unto him: and he sold his birthright unto Jacob. Then Jacob gave Esau bread and pottage of lentiles; and he did eat and drink, and rose up, and went his way: thus Esau despised his birthright.

So,what did Esau give away by selling his birthright? He does not get a double portion of the inheritance which he would have been entitled to as firstborn. This now goes to Jacob. He does not get the Abrahamic blessing of

Genesis 12 1-4. This is the blessing where he would be made a great nation etc. This now goes to Jacob. The firstborn is entitled to be in the lineage of Jesus. This now goes to Jacob. He does not get the gift of prophecy as head of the family. This passes to Jacob. Instead, Esau and his land, have incurred the disfavor of God to the point where God says "Esau have I hated".

So, do we as born again Christians have a birthright? We do and we find ours in Ephesians ch1 vs 1-14. Keep in mind that we can sell ours buy selling out to the world and choosing "things" over our Lord and Savior Jesus.

Following is the quote from Ephesians.

Paul, an apostle of Jesus Christ by the will of God, to the saints which are at Ephesus, and to the faithful in Christ Jesus:

Grace be to you, and peace, from God our Father, and from the Lord Jesus Christ.

Blessed be the God and Father of our Lord Jesus Christ, who hath blessed us with all spiritual blessings in heavenly places in Christ:

According as he hath chosen us in him before the foundation of the world, that we should be holy and without blame before him in love:

How is that last possible? This happens at the new birth. The soul and spirit are "cut away" from this body of flesh. This operation is performed by the Holy Spirit at the moment of salvation. Simply put, your body can sin, your soul and spirit can not.

Having predestinated us unto the adoption of children by Jesus Christ to himself, according to the good pleasure of his will, To the praise of the glory of his grace, wherein he hath made us accepted in the beloved.

In whom we have redemption through his blood, the forgiveness of sins, according to the riches of his grace;

Most of the new translations leave out the most important phrase in that verse, "**through his blood**". None of the Bible changers like the blood.

Wherein he hath abounded toward us in all wisdom and prudence; Having made known unto us the mystery of his will, according to his good pleasure which he hath purposed in himself:

How has he made known the mystery of his will? The Book. It's all in there and it's your responsibility to get it.

That in the dispensation of the fulness of times he might gather together in one all things in Christ, both which are in heaven, and which are on earth; even in him: 11 In whom also we have obtained an inheritance, being predestinated according to the purpose of him who worketh all things after the counsel of his own will: 12 That we should be to the praise of his glory, who first trusted in Christ. 13 In whom ye also trusted, after that ye heard the word of truth, the gospel of your salvation: in whom also after that ye believed, ye were sealed with that holy Spirit of promise, 14 Which is the earnest of our inheritance until the redemption of the purchased possession, unto the praise of his glory.

Of course the purchased possession is us.

CHAPTER TWENTY SIX

And there was a famine in the land, beside the first famine that was in the days of Abraham. And Isaac went unto Abimelech king of the Philistines unto Gerar. And the LORD appeared unto him, and said, Go not down into Egypt; dwell in the land which I shall tell thee of: Sojourn in this land, and I will be with thee, and will bless thee; for unto thee, and unto thy seed, I will give all these countries, and I will perform the oath which I sware unto Abraham thy father; And I will make thy seed to multiply as the stars of heaven, and will give unto thy seed all these countries; and in thy seed shall all the nations of the earth be blessed;

God makes sure that Isaac receives the same promises, first hand, that Abraham received. The famine mentioned here is famine number two out of a total of twelve mentioned in scripture. Isaac is warned not to go down into Egypt and has to depend on God's provision. He does move to Gerar, the land of the Philistines and runs into our old friend Abimelech. There are three very different dealings, concerning Egypt, with Abraham, Isaac and Jacob. Abraham is left freedom as to whether or not, to go down, Isaac is forbidden to go down and Jacob is commanded to go down to Egypt. Keep in mind that Egypt is always a place of trial and misery for God's people. It was, and is, a type of the world.

Because that Abraham obeyed my voice, and kept my charge, my commandments, my statutes, and my laws. And Isaac dwelt in Gerar: And the men of the place asked him of his wife; and he said, She is my

sister: for he feared to say, She is my wife; lest, said he, the men of the place should kill me for Rebekah; because she was fair to look upon.

Isaac falls into the same sin of lying as Abraham. Like father ,like son, in this case. Perhaps Isaac learned the trick to let his wife pass as his sister from Abraham. Abraham had tried it twice. If Isaac's direct communication with God had any effect upon his life, it evidently did not influence his moral judgment.

And it came to pass, when he had been there a long time, that Abimelech king of the Philistines looked out at a window, and saw, and, behold, Isaac was sporting with Rebekah his wife. And Abimelech called Isaac, and said, Behold, of a surety she is thy wife: and how saidst thou, She is my sister? And Isaac said unto him, Because I said, Lest I die for her. And Abimelech said, What is this thou hast done unto us? one of the people might lightly have lien with thy wife, and thou shouldest have brought guiltiness upon us. And Abimelech charged all his people, saying, He that toucheth this man or his wife shall surely be put to death.

Abimelech sees Isaac caressing Rebekah and must have been thinking back to the time of Abraham and what happened to his household when this same thing occurred. Remember that Abraham and Sarah did the sinning but Abimelech paid the price. No doubt he did not wish for this to happen again. A decree is issued making adultery with Rebekah a capital crime.

Then Isaac sowed in that land, and received in the same year an hundredfold: and the LORD blessed him. And the man waxed great, and went forward, and grew until he became very great: For he had possession of flocks, and possession of herds, and great store of servants: and the Philistines envied him. For all the wells which his father's servants had digged in the days of Abraham his father, the Philistines had stopped them, and filled them with earth. And Abimelech said unto Isaac, Go from us; for thou art much mightier than we.

Keep in mind that there was a severe famine but in spite of that, Isaac continued to add to the fortune left to him by his father. His herds, and servants, and other wealth increased so much that the Philistines began to fear and envy him. Isaac is the only one of the patriarchs that does not leave the promised land.

And Isaac departed thence, and pitched his tent in the valley of Gerar, and dwelt there. And Isaac digged again the wells of water, which they had digged in the days of Abraham his father; for the Philistines had stopped them after the death of Abraham: and he called their names after the names by which his father had called them. And Isaac's servants digged in the valley, and found there a well of springing water. And the herdmen of Gerar did strive with Isaac's herdmen, saying, The water is ours: and he called the name of the well Esek; because they strove with him.

The problems seem to be ongoing even though Isaac has left the immediate vicinity of the Philistines. Notice also that they did not lay claim to the well but to the water. Isaac's men had done the work but the water was under land claimed by the Philistines. This is spoken of as a well of "springing" water. To us that's an artesian well. It seems that Isaac did not contend for the well but moved to another nearby site and dug another well.

And they digged another well, and strove for that also: and he called the name of it Sitnah. And he removed from thence, and digged another well; and for that they strove not: and he called the name of it Rehoboth; and he said, For now the LORD hath made room for us, and we shall be fruitful in the land.

Have you ever stopped to consider the enormous numbers of cattle that Isaac must have had by this time? Many thousands which, at some point, become more trouble than they are worth. These cattle are necessary to pay for the many servants which, in turn, are necessary for defense. It was for this reason that the Philistines were afraid of him. What he had, in effect, was a large standing army.

And he went up from thence to Beersheba. And the LORD appeared unto him the same night, and said, I am the God of Abraham thy father: fear not, for I am with thee, and will bless thee, and multiply thy seed for my servant Abraham's sake. And he builded an altar there, and called upon the name of the LORD, and pitched his tent there: and there Isaac's servants digged a well.

Isaac took his people and flocks and left the area. It's apparent that God uses Abimelec to keep Isaac moving. His relationship with the Philistines was not a pleasant one. Even after the expulsion from the country, they continue to

make life miserable for Isaac. There had been a agreement between Abraham and Abimelech before in which the right to several wells in the country had been given to Abraham but these wells had been stopped up out of spite.

Then Abimelech went to him from Gerar, and Ahuzzath one of his friends, and Phichol the chief captain of his army. And Isaac said unto them, Wherefore come ye to me, seeing ye hate me, and have sent me away from you? And they said, We saw certainly that the LORD was with thee: and we said, Let there be now an oath betwixt us, even betwixt us and thee, and let us make a covenant with thee; That thou wilt do us no hurt, as we have not touched thee, and as we have done unto thee nothing but good, and have sent thee away in peace: thou art now the blessed of the LORD. And he made them a feast, and they did eat and drink.

Isaac makes a covenant with Abimelec exactly as his father had done except that he adds a feast to the mix. The Philistines are afraid of Isaac and his people for two reasons. He had what amounted to a large army and he was supernaturally blessed by God. Since they could not fight him they insisted on a treaty. Notice that in all these run ins with the Philistines Isaac never resisted nor fought back. He simply moved out of the way.

And they rose up betimes in the morning, and sware one to another: and Isaac sent them away, and they departed from him in peace. And it came to pass the same day, that Isaac's servants came, and told him concerning the well which they had digged, and said unto him, We have found water. And he called it Shebah: therefore the name of the city is Beersheba unto this day.

Isaac sent away Abimelec in friendship and the same day his servants brought him the good news that they had found water. Nothing lives very long in that country without a plentiful supply of water.

And Esau was forty years old when he took to wife Judith the daughter of Beerli the Hittite, and Bashemath the daughter of Elon the Hittite: Which were a grief of mind unto Isaac and to Rebekah.

Esau marries two Canaanite women ,apparently at the same time. He is guilty of polegamy and race mixing(the Jews were forbidden to marry outside the Jewish race).The Cannanites are not a part of the promise and,in fact are part

of the curse placed on Ham. He is called a fornicator in Hebrews ch 12 vs 16. The last verse in this chapter doesn't even need a comment.

GENESIS CHAPTER TWENTY SEVEN

And it came to pass, that when Isaac was old, and his eyes were dim, so that he could not see, he called Esau his eldest son, and said unto him, My son: and he said unto him, Behold, here am I. And he said, Behold now, I am old, I know not the day of my death: Now therefore take, I pray thee, thy weapons, thy quiver and thy bow, and go out to the field, and take me some venison; And make me savoury meat, such as I love, and bring it to me, that I may eat; that my soul may bless thee before I die.

In this chapter we are going to see people manipulating God's commands to their own purposes. We see plenty of this going on today as religious leaders set up their own little collection of "laws" for their people to go by. This is the reason we all must study and read God's instruction manual. Do not ever trust what someone else says about God's word. Learn how to rightly divide the word and study it for yourselves. When I say something wrong up here a red flag should go up in your mind. Always check things out for yourselves. Apparently Isaac and Rebekah did not communicate well and were not in agreement on most things except for Esau's choice of wives. Isaac is about one hundred thirty seven years old at this point and is almost completely blind. He decides to do what we would now call a will. There is a difference. You can change a will but blessings made in the name of God are irrevocable. It is interesting that Isaac did not die anywhere near this point in time but lived on to one hundred eighty. He apparently lived for forty years blind and almost bedridden. Ch35 vs28 says 180. Remember here that Isaac is in direct disobedience to God's instructions regarding the blessing. There is no doubt that Isaac knew what God had said to Rebekah. Yet for all this, Hebrews ch 11 vs 20 says **By faith Isaac blessed Jacob and Esau concerning things to come.**

And Rebekah heard when Isaac spake to Esau his son. And Esau went to the field to hunt for venison, and to bring it. And Rebekah spake unto Jacob her son, saying, Behold, I heard thy father speak unto Esau thy brother, saying, Bring me venison, and make me savoury meat, that I may eat, and bless thee before the LORD before my death. Now therefore, my son, obey my voice according to that which I command thee. Go now to the flock, and fetch me from thence two good kids of the goats; and I

will make them savoury meat for thy father, such as he loveth: And thou shalt bring it to thy father, that he may eat, and that he may bless thee before his death.

Unless Jacob was already a liar, Rebekah certainly teaches him how at this point. I assume that savoury meat mentioned is well seasoned and cooked in gravy. That sounds pretty good. Rebekah acts on her own, not trusting the promise God gave her in ch 25 vs23. Whatever love there had been between Isaac and Rebekah seems to have died long ago. Isaac is determined to get around God's promise concerning Jacob and Rebekah has no problem deceiving her husband.

And Jacob said to Rebekah his mother, Behold, Esau my brother is a hairy man, and I am a smooth man: My father peradventure will feel me, and I shall seem to him as a deceiver; and I shall bring a curse upon me, and not a blessing. And his mother said unto him, Upon me be thy curse, my son: only obey my voice, and go fetch me them.

Do not fail to notice that Jacob is over seventy years old at this point so he isn't a boy. He is just as guilty as his mother in these dealings. No one in this household seems to take the word of God seriously, and they all pay a heavy price. Isaac is tricked into blessing his least favorite son, Jacob later has to work extra years to get the wife he wanted and Rebekah never sees her son again after he leaves.

And he went, and fetched, and brought them to his mother: and his mother made savoury meat, such as his father loved. And Rebekah took goodly raiment of her eldest son Esau, which were with her in the house, and put them upon Jacob her younger son: And she put the skins of the kids of the goats upon his hands, and upon the smooth of his neck: And she gave the savoury meat and the bread, which she had prepared, into the hand of her son Jacob. And he came unto his father, and said, My father: and he said, Here am I; who art thou, my son?

You can see God's hand in this. There is no way Isaac could have been fooled by this charade except that God caused him to be deceived. In this case God used the deception to bring things back into the way they should have been had his instructions been followed in the first place. Jacob and Esau look different, they smell different, they feel different, they sound different, and goat meat does not taste like venison. Except for God's intervention Isaac would have had to be totally senile as well as blind for this scheme to work.

And Jacob said unto his father, I am Esau thy firstborn; I have done according as

thou badest me: arise, I pray thee, sit and eat of my venison, that thy soul may bless me. And Isaac said unto his son, How is it that thou hast found it so quickly, my son?

And he said, Because the LORD thy God brought it to me. And Isaac said unto Jacob, Come near, I pray thee, that I may feel thee, my son, whether thou be my very son Esau or not. And Jacob went near unto Isaac his father; and he felt him, and said, The voice is Jacob's voice, but the hands are the hands of Esau. And he discerned him not, because his hands were hairy, as his brother Esau's hands: so he blessed him.

Jacob seems to have no trouble lying to his father. We also see from this that Isaac was not bedridden. He may well have voluntarily taken to his bed because of his blindness. Isaac is doubting and suspects something since the voices do not match. It amazes me that Jacob and Rebekah seem to have no fear of God. It may even be that Rebekah believes she is "helping" God in getting the blessing on the right son.

And he said, Art thou my very son Esau? And he said, I am. And he said, Bring it near to me, and I will eat of my son's venison, that my soul may bless thee. And he brought it near to him, and he did eat: and he brought him wine, and he drank. And his father Isaac said unto him, Come near now, and kiss me, my son. And he came near, and kissed him: and he smelled the smell of his raiment, and blessed him, and said, See, the smell of my son is as the smell of a field which the LORD hath blessed:

The blessing follows in the next verses.

Therefore God give thee of the dew of heaven, and the fatness of the earth, and plenty of corn and wine: Let people serve thee, and nations bow down to thee: be lord over thy brethren, and let thy mother's sons bow down to thee: cursed be every one that curseth thee, and blessed be he that blesseth thee.

Notice that these blessings are all earthly blessings. The Jews are a people of the Earth and the Earth will be theirs one day. We Christians get the Heavenly City. This is the Abrahamic blessing of Genesis ch 12 vs 1-3. This is the first example where the father blesses the son. The writer of Hebrews says, " By faith Isaac blessed Jacob and Esau", in regard to their future. This confirms God's prophecy to Rebekah.

And it came to pass, as soon as Isaac had made an end of blessing Jacob, and Jacob was yet scarce gone out from the presence of Isaac his father, that Esau his brother came in from his hunting. And he also had made savoury meat, and brought it unto

his father, and said unto his father, Let my father arise, and eat of his son's venison, that thy soul may bless me. And Isaac his father said unto him, Who art thou? And he said, I am thy son, thy firstborn Esau.

Isaac falls apart completely when he learns he has been tricked. He would be pitied if there was anyone there to pity him. Esau is too full of himself and his loss to feel any pity.

Let me chase a rabbit for a minute. People who are full of themselves are completely useless to God. We all know at least one of these people. We have one of our own. She is constantly posting pictures of herself on Facebook, fishing for compliments. Though she professes to be a Christian, she lives like hell and is totally useless to God and humankind. This is Esau's problem that makes him useless to God and prompts the statement, "Esau has God hated".

And Isaac trembled very exceedingly, and said, Who? where is he that hath taken venison, and brought it me, and I have eaten of all before thou camest, and have blessed him? yea, and he shall be blessed. And when Esau heard the words of his father, he cried with a great and exceeding bitter cry, and said unto his father, Bless me, even me also, O my father.

The statement in Hebrews that Esau was godless shows that he had no care for the things of God. He had sold his birthright and now had lost the parental blessing. His tears were not tears of repentance but tears of loss. Isaac does make the statement that Jacob shall be blessed in spite of the trickery. It seems apparent that the blessings could not be undone and that they were actually binding on God. Otherwise they would not matter.

And he said, Thy brother came with subtilty, and hath taken away thy blessing. And he said, Is not he rightly named Jacob?,(the deceiver), for he hath supplanted me these two times: he took away my birthright; and, behold, now he hath taken away my blessing. And he said, Hast thou not reserved a blessing for me? And Isaac answered and said unto Esau, Behold, I have made him thy lord, and all his brethren have I given to him for servants; and with corn and wine have I sustained him: and what shall I do now unto thee, my son?

Both men are thinking as fast as they can, trying to come up with another blessing for Esau. Notice how the close relationship that Abraham had with God has gone steadily downhill. Neither Isaac or Rebekah nor their sons have a good relationship with God. Just the opposite, they seem to lack faith altogether. We tend to focus on Esau's lack but it

applied to them all to a lesser degree.

And Esau said unto his father, Hast thou but one blessing, my father? bless me, even me also, O my father. And Esau lifted up his voice, and wept. And Isaac his father answered and said unto him, Behold, thy dwelling shall be the fatness of the earth, and of the dew of heaven from above; And by thy sword shalt thou live, and shalt serve thy brother; and it shall come to pass when thou shalt have the dominion, that thou shalt break his yoke from off thy neck.

This last actually has come to pass over the centuries. Israel no longer has dominion over the Muslim nations descended from Esau. Some of the Arabs now do dwell on the fatness of the earth. Think large deposits of oil.

41 And Esau hated Jacob because of the blessing wherewith his father blessed him: and Esau said in his heart, The days of mourning for my father are at hand; then will I slay my brother Jacob. And these words of Esau her elder son were told to Rebekah: and she sent and called Jacob her younger son, and said unto him, Behold, thy brother Esau, as touching thee, doth comfort himself, purposing to kill thee.

Notice that Esau "said in his heart", that he would kill Jacob as soon as the time of mourning for his father had passed. This was not spoken out loud so how did Rebekah hear it? Answer...God spoke to her again. He knows what is in the heart. Both Isaac and Esau are expecting Isaac to die shortly but he lives another 34 years. Isaac now begins to fade from the scene as Jacob's star rises. After sending Jacob away, he is mentioned only once more in chapter 35 when he dies.

Now therefore, my son, obey my voice; and arise, flee thou to Laban my brother to Haran; And tarry with him a few days, until thy brother's fury turn away; Until thy brother's anger turn away from thee, and he forget that which thou hast done to him: then I will send, and fetch thee from thence: why should I be deprived also of you both in one day?

Rebekah is wrong again. She never sees Jacob again. He is gone for more than twenty years. Pay attention to that last statement in verse forty five. Rebekah is well aware of the death penalty if Esau should kill Jacob. She could lose them both.

And Rebekah said to Isaac, I am weary of my life because of the daughters of Heth: if Jacob take a wife of the daughters of Heth, such as these which are of the daughters

of the land, what good shall my life do me?

Finally,when it is too late to change anything,they talk and both agree that Esau's wives are terrible and life will not be worth living if Jacob marries one of these.

Before we leave this chapter think about this. Rebekah is a Gentile and a "type" of the present Gentile church. She is a terrible example of Christians not trusting God,of not being close to God and just not caring in general. Is not our Church today,meaning the whole body of Christ,just like Rebekah? Heresy is everywhere,even in our own denomination.

GENESIS CHAPTER TWENTY EIGHT

And Isaac called Jacob, and blessed him, and charged him, and said unto him, Thou shalt not take a wife of the daughters of Canaan. Arise, go to Padanaram, to the house of Bethuel thy mother's father; and take thee a wife from thence of the daughters of Laban thy mother's brother. And God Almighty bless thee, and make thee fruitful, and multiply thee, that thou mayest be a multitude of people; And give thee the blessing of Abraham, to thee, and to thy seed with thee; that thou mayest inherit the land wherein thou art a stranger, which God gave unto Abraham.

Notice the difference. Isaac is now cheerful and readily confirms the blessing. Jacob is sent to the same household to get his wife that Eliazar had gone to get the wife for Isaac. Apparently Rebekah and Isaac are communicating again as they are both in agreement on this.

And Isaac sent away Jacob: and he went to Padanaram unto Laban, son of Bethuel the Syrian, the brother of Rebekah, Jacob's and Esau's mother.

Jacob apparently goes away alone and empty handed except for provisions for his journey. There is no mention of any servants accompanying him. He goes out with only God for company.

When Esau saw that Isaac had blessed Jacob, and sent him away to Padanaram, to take him a wife from thence; and that as he blessed him he gave him a charge,

saying, Thou shalt not take a wife of the daughters of Canaan; And that Jacob obeyed his father and his mother, and was gone to Padanaram; And Esau seeing that the daughters of Canaan pleased not Isaac his father; Then went Esau unto Ishmael, and took unto the wives which he had Mahalath the daughter of Ishmael Abraham's son, the sister of Nebajoth, to be his wife.

Esau still doesn't get it. He goes out and marries another descendant of Ham. Now, you can like this or not. It certainly isn't politically correct these days. Throughout the Jewish history God has forbidden the Jews to marry outside the Jewish race. God protects the lineage of Jesus. God does bring in some odd people into the line...a prostitute Rahab,

an adultress, Tamar, a gentile, Ruth, a murderer, David and so on. God does this for his reasons and I believe one of those reasons is so we can look back and see that God can use us no matter where we come from. As for the men and women he has forbidden them the choice. Now as to the Gentiles choice in the New Testament church, you can make up your own mind. I happen to agree with Pastor Danley's personal stand on that issue.

And Jacob went out from Beersheba, and went toward Haran. And he lighted upon a certain place, and tarried there all night, because the sun was set; and he took of the stones of that place, and put them for his pillows, and lay down in that place to sleep. This is why I believe he went out alone with only personal provisions. And he dreamed, and behold a ladder set up on the earth, and the top of it reached to heaven: and behold the angels of God ascending and descending on it. And, behold, the LORD stood above it, and said, I am the LORD God of Abraham thy father, and the God of Isaac: the land whereon thou liest, to thee will I give it, and to thy seed; And thy seed shall be as the dust of the earth, and thou shalt spread abroad to the west, and to the east, and to the north, and to the south: and in thee and in thy seed shall all the families of the earth be blessed. And, behold, I am with thee, and will keep thee in all places whither thou goest, and will bring thee again into this land; for I will not leave thee, until I have done that which I have spoken to thee of.

This is the Abrahamic covenant being reaffirmed, in person, to Jacob. God has been careful to reaffirm the covenant with each of the patriarchs so that they do not have to get the information second hand. That statement about all the nations of the earth being blessed is referring to the Lord Jesus. I really think it has a double meaning. In addition to our Saviour we have great advances in medicine, science, art, and music all coming from Jews. In addition to that we have the Bible. Remember that the "oracles of God are given to the

Jews". Notice also that the angels are ascending the ladder before they descend. This indicates that Jacob had some divine protection traveling along that road with him.

And Jacob awaked out of his sleep, and he said, Surely the LORD is in this place; and I knew it not. And he was afraid, and said, How dreadful is this place! this is none other but the house of God, and this is the gate of heaven.

Jacob still doesn't have much of a relationship with God. He is fearful and calls the place dreadful.

And Jacob rose up early in the morning, and took the stone that he had put for his pillows, and set it up for a pillar, and poured oil upon the top of it. And he called the name of that place Bethel: but the name of that city was called Luz at the first.

The name Bethel means house of God. It should be pronounced as two distinct syllables....Beth El. Jacob anointed the stone that had served as his pillow. Oil is a "type" of the Holy Spirit and anointing, with oil, is common in both Old and New Testaments.

And Jacob vowed a vow, saying, If God will be with me, and will keep me in this way that I go, and will give me bread to eat, and raiment to put on, So that I come again to my father's house in peace; then shall the LORD be my God: And this stone, which I have set for a pillar, shall be God's house: and of all that thou shalt give me I will surely give the tenth unto thee.

Jacob is trying to make a deal with God. If you will do all this for me I will do these things for you. Implying, if you don't I won't. He even offers to tithe though there is no record of his ever doing so. You do not make deals with God as you have nothing with which to deal. That said, one can make a vow but if you do, be sure you are able to keep it.

GENESIS CHAPTER TWENTY NINE

Then Jacob went on his journey, and came into the land of the people of the east.

The people of the east. This is Mesopotamia and the people are descendants of Shem. One commentator says, and I quote, "The original is very remarkable: And Jacob lifted up his

feet and he traveled unto the land of the children of the east. There is a certain cheerfulness marked in the original which comports well with the state of mind into which he had been brought by the vision of the ladder and the promises of God. He now saw that having God for his protector he had nothing to fear, and therefore he went on his way rejoicing". Now, what is remarkable about that? Simply put, he is lying. This is a mark of a bible changer. No one, not you, or I, nor our pastor or any other living person has seen the originals or even copies of the originals. That is one of the many reasons we accept the King James authorized version as the preserved word of God for our generation.

Furthermore, I believe the Holy Spirit guided the translators.

And he looked, and behold a well in the field, and, lo, there were three flocks of sheep lying by it; for out of that well they watered the flocks: and a great stone was upon the well's mouth. And thither were all the flocks gathered: and they rolled the stone from the well's mouth, and watered the sheep, and put the stone again upon the well's mouth in his place.

There are already three flocks gathered yet no one is watering the animals. The stone covering had not been removed. These flocks do not belong to Laban but to three other chieftains. The stone covering is probably a large flat stone with a smaller stone covering a hole in the middle for access to water when only a small amount was needed. Notice the difference in this well and the one Rebekah used. Remember, in that one she had to go down into the well to bring water to Eliezer's camels.

And Jacob said unto them, My brethren, whence be ye? And they said, Of Haran are we. And he said unto them, Know ye Laban the son of Nahor? And they said, We know him. And he said unto them, Is he well? And they said, He is well: and, behold, Rachel his daughter cometh with the sheep.

The language of these shepherds, and of Laban's family is Caldee but there are enough words in common that Jacob is able to converse with them. It is also possible that Jacob had learned some of the language from his mother. In verse five son is used for grandson.

By the way, the name Rachel means "an ewe lamb".

And he said, Lo, it is yet high day, neither is it time that the cattle should be gathered together: water ye the sheep, and go and feed them. And they said, We cannot, until all the flocks be gathered together, and till they roll the stone from the well's mouth; then we water the sheep.

Jacob gives the shepherds some unasked for advice and gets a lesson in the customs of the country. No one waters the cattle until they are all there. The commentators give several different reasons why the shepherds waited. Some say the well was Laban's but the Book doesn't say that. Some say it took everyone to move the stone but Jacob moved it in verse ten. I think these commentators are from New York City. Since I am a country hick I can tell you the real reason. This was one of those wells that refills from seepage from the sand and from crevices in the rock. In other words, it takes a while. As they removed the water and poured it into stone troughs for the cattle the well would go dry after a time. By waiting until everyone was there each flock had an equal chance at the available water. Anyone who felt his flock did not get enough water could wait until the well refilled itself. This was also probably the reason they watered at midday. That way, anyone who needed to wait for more water, to come into the well, had time to do so.

And while he yet spake with them, Rachel came with her father's sheep: for she kept them. 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 rolled the stone from the well's mouth, and watered the flock of Laban his mother's brother. And Jacob kissed Rachel, and lifted up his voice, and wept.

Jacob realizes that he has found his people. He may also have seen in Rachel the woman of his dreams. He was apparently able to move the stone by himself. The kiss would have been a kiss on the cheek by way of greeting. You still see this used today in Arab countries. He is lifting up his voice in thanksgiving that he has found what he came for.

And Jacob told Rachel that he was her father's brother, and that he was Rebekah's son: and she ran and told her father. And it came to pass, when Laban heard the tidings of Jacob his sister's son, that he ran to meet him, and embraced him, and kissed him, and brought him to his house. And he told Laban all these things. And Laban said to him, Surely thou art my bone and my flesh. And he abode with him the space of a month.

After Jacob had been with Laban a month Laban was ready to hire him. He may have also been looking ahead to unloading one of his daughters. If he can keep Jacob around then there is a good chance he will want to marry one of the daughters.

And Laban said unto Jacob, Because thou art my brother, shouldest thou therefore serve me for nought? tell me, what shall thy wages be? And Laban had two

daughters: the name of the elder was Leah, and the name of the younger was Rachel. Leah was tender eyed; but Rachel was beautiful and well favoured.

I read this passage differently from most. As I see it the beauty of the two women is being compared. Leah has beautiful eyes and not much else. Rachel is a knockout.

And Jacob loved Rachel; and said, I will serve thee seven years for Rachel thy younger daughter. And Laban said, It is better that I give her to thee, than that I should give her to another man: abide with me. And Jacob served seven years for Rachel; and they seemed unto him but a few days, for the love he had to her. And Jacob said unto Laban, Give me my wife, for my days are fulfilled, that I may go in unto her.

Since Jacob is destitute he can not give anything but his time for Rachel. Remember when Eleizer went for Sarah the large amount of riches he took as a "dowry". Now the dowry is reversed and young women put together a couple of sheets and some dish towels in their "hope" chest and call that a dowry. Seven years seem a long time to wait but there you have it.

And Laban gathered together all the men of the place, and made a feast. And it came to pass in the evening, that he took Leah his daughter, and brought her to him; and he went in unto her. And Laban gave unto his daughter Leah Zilpah his maid for an handmaid.

Probably some alcoholic wine being passed around at this feast. I'm sure Laban saw to that. At the marriage the handmaid was given to the bride and became her property. The husband had no control over the handmaid except at the will of the wife.

And it came to pass, that in the morning, behold, it was Leah: and he said to Laban, What is this thou hast done unto me? did not I serve with thee for Rachel? wherefore then hast thou beguiled me? And Laban said, It must not be so done in our country, to give the younger before the firstborn. Fulfil her week, and we will give thee this also for the service which thou shalt serve with me yet seven other years. And Jacob did so, and fulfilled her week: and he gave him Rachel his daughter to wife also.

Now, this is another of those places where the commentators are all over the place. In my King James Bible it clearly says, both by letter and spirit that Rachel was given to Jacob seven days after he married Leah. That is a short honeymoon. Don't feel too sorry for Leah

in all this. Remember that she was a big part of the deception.

And Laban gave to Rachel his daughter Bilhah his handmaid to be her maid. And he went in also unto Rachel, and he loved also Rachel more than Leah, and served with him yet seven other years.

Seven more long years of servitude for Jacob but at least this time he gets the woman he wanted. In the next few verses we get to see God's sense of humor.

And when the LORD saw that Leah was hated, he opened her womb: but Rachel was barren. And Leah conceived, and bare a son, and she called his name Reuben: for she said, Surely the LORD hath looked upon my affliction; now therefore my husband will love me. And she conceived again, and bare a son; and said, Because the LORD hath heard that I was hated, he hath therefore given me this son also: and she called his name Simeon. And she conceived again, and bare a son; and said, Now this time will my husband be joined unto me, because I have born him three sons: therefore was his name called Levi. And she conceived again, and bare a son: and she said, Now will I praise the LORD: therefore she called his name Judah; and left bearing.

Leah can't win. She has given Jacob four sons but still can't win his affection. But in all this Leah at least gets to lord it over Rachel who has had no children.

GENESIS CHAPTER THIRTY

And when Rachel saw that she bare Jacob no children, Rachel envied her sister; and said unto Jacob, Give me children, or else I die. And Jacob's anger was kindled against Rachel: and he said, Am I in God's stead, who hath withheld from thee the fruit of the womb?

Rachel seems to blame Jacob for her lack of children which is odd considering he has no trouble producing children with Leah. He tosses it right back to her by suggesting that God is displeased with her and is withholding children.

And she said, Behold my maid Bilhah, go in unto her; and she shall bear upon my knees, that I may also have children by her. And she gave him Bilhah her handmaid

to wife: and Jacob went in unto her. And Bilhah conceived, and bare Jacob a son. And Rachel said, God hath judged me, and hath also heard my voice, and hath given me a son: therefore called she his name Dan.

Notice that Rachel is claiming the child as she has the right to do. Rachel believes that God has answered her prayer and that she is now back in God's favor.

And Bilhah Rachel's maid conceived again, and bare Jacob a second son. And Rachel said, With great wrestlings have I wrestled with my sister, and I have prevailed: and she called his name Naphtali.

Can you see the bitterness between these two sisters. They would have lived in separate tents and the husband would have spent alternate days with each one. Now there would have been three tents and soon there would be four. There is no harmony here, just hatred and bitterness. The evil is that they have gone completely away from God's plan of one man, one woman. In addition to that God probably intended for Leah to be the only wife as she is the one who bore Judah and is in the Messianic line.

When Leah saw that she had left bearing, she took Zilpah her maid, and gave her Jacob to wife. And Zilpah Leah's maid bare Jacob a son. And Leah said, A troop cometh: and she called his name Gad. And Zilpah Leah's maid bare Jacob a second son. And Leah said, Happy am I, for the daughters will call me blessed: and she called his name Asher.

Leah seems to be satisfied with the fact that she is outperforming Rachel. God continues to bless her with sons.

And Reuben went in the days of wheat harvest, and found mandrakes in the field, and brought them unto his mother Leah. Then Rachel said to Leah, Give me, I pray thee, of thy son's mandrakes. And she said unto her, Is it a small matter that thou hast taken my husband? and wouldest thou take away my son's mandrakes also? And Rachel said, Therefore he shall lie with thee to night for thy son's mandrakes.

The mandrake was thought to be an aphrodisiac and one that would promote pregnancy. There is probably nothing to that but in this case it seems to have worked. Rachel farms Jacob out in exchange for the mandrakes. Jacob doesn't seem to have much say in the matter.

And Jacob came out of the field in the evening, and Leah went out to meet him, and said, Thou must come in unto me; for surely I have hired thee with my son's mandrakes. And he lay with her that night. And God hearkened unto Leah, and she conceived, and bare Jacob the fifth son. And Leah said, God hath given me my hire, because I have given my maiden to my husband: and she called his name Issachar. And Leah conceived again, and bare Jacob the sixth son. And Leah said, God hath endued me with a good dowry; now will my husband dwell with me, because I have born him six sons: and she called his name Zebulun.

Both Leah and her handmaid continue to have one son after another.

And afterwards she bare a daughter, and called her name Dinah.

Look at that. Dinah gets one line and nothing else. I'm guessing though, with all those older brothers Dinah must have been spoiled rotten.

And God remembered Rachel, and God hearkened to her, and opened her womb. And she conceived, and bare a son; and said, God hath taken away my reproach: And she called his name Joseph; and said, The LORD shall add to me another son. And it came to pass, when Rachel had born Joseph, that Jacob said unto Laban, Send me away, that I may go unto mine own place, and to my country. Give me my wives and my children, for whom I have served thee, and let me go: for thou knowest my service which I have done thee.

Jacob is ready to go home and at this point he would have gone penniless and would have had this huge family to take care of. God works things out.

And Laban said unto him, I pray thee, if I have found favour in thine eyes, tarry: for I have learned by experience that the LORD hath blessed me for thy sake. And he said, Appoint me thy wages, and I will give it. And he said unto him, Thou knowest how I have served thee, and how thy cattle was with me. For it was little which thou hadst before I came, and it is now increased unto a multitude; and the LORD hath blessed thee since my coming: and now when shall I provide for mine own house also?

Laban knows a good thing when he has it. He fully realizes that the increase in his herds is due to Jacob and is supernaturally brought about by God. He is willing to agree to most

anything in order to keep Jacob with him.

And he said, What shall I give thee? And Jacob said, Thou shalt not give me any thing: if thou wilt do this thing for me, I will again feed and keep thy flock: I will pass through all thy flock to day, removing from thence all the speckled and spotted cattle, and all the brown cattle among the sheep, and the spotted and speckled among the goats: and of such shall be my hire. So shall my righteousness answer for me in time to come, when it shall come for my hire before thy face: every one that is not speckled and spotted among the goats, and brown among the sheep, that shall be counted stolen with me.

Most sheep are white, so brown or colored sheep would be a bit rare. Most of the mid-east goats are solid in color so the speckled and spotted would be less in number. Laban thinks he has outfoxed Jacob again.

And Laban said, Behold, I would it might be according to thy word. And he removed that day the he goats that were ringstraked and spotted, and all the she goats that were speckled and spotted, and every one that had some white in it, and all the brown among the sheep, and gave them into the hand of his sons. And he set three days' journey betwixt himself and Jacob: and Jacob fed the rest of Laban's flocks.

So Jacob has taken all the speckled, spotted and brown and moved them three days away from Laban's flocks. Some of his grown sons are put in charge of his flocks while he stays with Laban's.

And Jacob took him rods of green poplar, and of the hazel and chesnut tree; and pilled white strakes in them, and made the white appear which was in the rods. And he set the rods which he had pilled before the flocks in the gutters in the watering troughs when the flocks came to drink, that they should conceive when they came to drink. And the flocks conceived before the rods, and brought forth cattle ringstraked, speckled, and spotted.

This stuff does not work. It has now been tried by shepherds for thousands of years with absolutely no results. What you see here is clearly the hand of God at work.

And Jacob did separate the lambs, and set the faces of the flocks toward the ringstraked, and all the brown in the flock of Laban; and he put his own flocks by themselves, and put them not unto Laban's cattle. And it came to pass, whensoever

the stronger cattle did conceive, that Jacob laid the rods before the eyes of the cattle in the gutters, that they might conceive among the rods. But when the cattle were feeble, he put them not in: so the feebler were Laban's, and the stronger Jacob's.

One thing does work. Jacob is selecting for the stronger animals.

And the man increased exceedingly, and had much cattle, and maidservants, and menservants, and camels, and asses.

So now Jacob can go home in style. He has more than enough riches to insure his family a comfortable life. All he has to do now is get away from Laban and face Esau when he gets home.

GENESIS CHAPTER THIRTY ONE

And he heard the words of Laban's sons, saying, Jacob hath taken away all that was our father's; and of that which was our father's hath he gotten all this glory. And Jacob beheld the countenance of Laban, and, behold, it was not toward him as before.

These words were either overheard by eavesdropping or they were passed to Jacob through gossip. This caused him to pay more attention to Laban and that is when he noticed that he had fallen out of favor with him. This is pure envy on the part of Laban and his sons. Until now Laban's other sons had not even been mentioned. Now they are full of jealousy and spreading rumors that Jacob was not dealing honestly.

And the LORD said unto Jacob, Return unto the land of thy fathers, and to thy kindred; and I will be with thee.

God says get out while you can!

And Jacob sent and called Rachel and Leah to the field unto his flock, And said unto them, I see your father's countenance, that it is not toward me as before; but the God

of my father hath been with me.

Jacob called his two wives to tell them of his decision to leave. Notice that the other two wives were not called to this meeting. The other two wives were still in a state of servitude and so were not consulted. Proverbs 31 vs 11 gives us a good example. In fact chapter 31 of Proverbs gives us God's picture of the perfect wife. This being Mother's Day I just thought I would mention that.

And ye know that with all my power I have served your father. And your father hath deceived me, and changed my wages ten times; but God suffered him not to hurt me. If he said thus, The speckled shall be thy wages; then all the cattle bare speckled: and if he said thus, The ringstraked shall be thy hire; then bare all the cattle ringstraked.

Thus God hath taken away the cattle of your father, and given them to me.

Don't you love that last phrase? That's like robbing the corner grocery and saying, the devil made me do it. Blame it on God. That said, the rest of his statements are true. Laban probably had changed his wages once every two years. Laban had certainly deceived him and probably would have killed him if God had not protected him.

And it came to pass at the time that the cattle conceived, that I lifted up mine eyes, and saw in a dream, and, behold, the rams which leaped upon the cattle were ringstraked, speckled, and grisled. And the angel of God spake unto me in a dream, saying, Jacob: And I said, Here am I. And he said, Lift up now thine eyes, and see, all the rams which leap upon the cattle are ringstraked, speckled, and grisled: for I have seen all that Laban doeth unto thee.

Did you notice the time problem here? We know from the previous chapter that Jacob had already cut and placed the rods before the cattle conceived. Either God is approving of what Jacob had already done or, much more likely, Jacob is lying to get his wives approval on the trip. Lying is certainly not a new thing with him. He is pretty good at it.

I am the God of Bethel, where thou anointedst the pillar, and where thou vowedst a vow unto me: now arise, get thee out from this land, and return unto the land of thy kindred.

God is reaffirming his order to get out and return to the promised land. He is also reminding Jacob of the vow he had made at Bethel. We are always talking about types in the book of Genesis and Jacob is no different in that respect. Jacob is a type of the Jew in

exile. He leaves on his own but God brings him back to the promised land and he brings him back wealthy.

And Rachel and Leah answered and said unto him, Is there yet any portion or inheritance for us in our father's house? Are we not counted of him strangers? for he hath sold us, and hath quite devoured also our money. For all the riches which God hath taken from our father, that is ours, and our children's: now then, whatsoever God hath said unto thee, do.

Rachel and Leah are ready to go. They are fed up with Laban and are accusing him of stealing from themselves and their children. Rachel and Leah were sold for fourteen years of Jacob's labor. Going according to custom, Laban should have kept the bride price. It was kept in case the wife was divorced and returned to her father. In that case it was to be for her support. Apparently both women were aware that Laban had spent their dowry money.

Then Jacob rose up, and set his sons and his wives upon camels; And he carried away all his cattle, and all his goods which he had gotten, the cattle of his getting, which he had gotten in Padanaram, for to go to Isaac his father in the land of Canaan.

Jacob is sneaking away and probably with good reason. Laban might have kept his daughters and grandchildren by violence. The phrase "the cattle of his getting" means that he took only his own livestock and nothing more.

And Laban went to shear his sheep: and Rachel had stolen the images that were her father's. And Jacob stole away unawares to Laban the Syrian, in that he told him not that he fled. So he fled with all that he had; and he rose up, and passed over the river, and set his face toward the mount Gilead.

Jacob waits until Laban is miles away before he leaves. This is evident because it took Laban seven days to catch him even though he could travel much faster than Jacob's caravan. This also gave Rachel an opportunity to steal the images. It goes without saying that graven images and idol worship are clearly forbidden. Yet, for all that, Rachel keeps the idols for seven years before they were buried under an oak tree near Shechem (Gen 35 vs 4).

And it was told Laban on the third day that Jacob was fled. And he took his brethren with him, and pursued after him seven days' journey; and they overtook him in the mount Gilead. And God came to Laban the Syrian in a dream by night, and said unto

him, Take heed that thou speak not to Jacob either good or bad.

No doubt Laban was planning all sorts of bad things for Jacob when he caught him but God's message, to Laban, was brief. You had better not touch him.

Then Laban overtook Jacob. Now Jacob had pitched his tent in the mount: and Laban with his brethren pitched in the mount of Gilead. And Laban said to Jacob, What hast thou done, that thou hast stolen away unawares to me, and carried away my daughters, as captives taken with the sword? Wherefore didst thou flee away secretly, and steal away from me; and didst not tell me, that I might have sent thee away with mirth, and with songs, with tabret, and with harp? And hast not suffered me to kiss my sons and my daughters? thou hast now done foolishly in so doing. It is in the power of my hand to do you hurt: but the God of your father spake unto me yesternight, saying, Take thou heed that thou speak not to Jacob either good or bad.

Does anyone here think that Laban would have sent him away with a big party? The only thing holding him back now is God's threat from the night before.

And now, though thou wouldest needs be gone, because thou sore longedst after thy father's house, yet wherefore hast thou stolen my gods? And Jacob answered and said to Laban, Because I was afraid: for I said, Peradventure thou wouldest take by force thy daughters from me. With whomsoever thou findest thy gods, let him not live: before our brethren discern thou what is thine with me, and take it to thee. For Jacob knew not that Rachel had stolen them.

Jacob would have dumped these gods along the way if he knew that Rachel had stolen them. I also don't think he would have been so quick to pronounce a death sentence on the thief if he knew the thief was Rachel.

And Laban went into Jacob's tent, and into Leah's tent, and into the two maidservants' tents; but he found them not. Then went he out of Leah's tent, and entered into Rachel's tent. Now Rachel had taken the images, and put them in the camel's furniture, and sat upon them. And Laban searched all the tent, but found them not. And she said to her father, Let it not displease my lord that I cannot rise up before thee; for the custom of women is upon me. And he searched, but found not the images.

Laban searched the tents of all four wives and did a thorough job until he came to Rachel

sitting on the camel's pack saddle. Some of the commentators, trying to excuse Rachel say that these images were simply good luck pieces and were not to be worshiped. My Bible says gods so they were graven images, of silver or gold, intended to be worshiped. Rachel must have been sweating by this point.

And Jacob was wroth, and chode with Laban: and Jacob answered and said to Laban, What is my trespass? what is my sin, that thou hast so hotly pursued after me? Whereas thou hast searched all my stuff, what hast thou found of all thy household stuff? set it here before my brethren and thy brethren, that they may judge betwixt us both. This twenty years have I been with thee; thy ewes and thy she goats have not cast their young, and the rams of thy flock have I not eaten. That which was torn of beasts I brought not unto thee; I bare the loss of it; of my hand didst thou require it, whether stolen by day, or stolen by night.

Jacob is now angry or pretending to be. He gives this long rant about how he has taken care of Laban's flocks. He has not even taken Laban's male sheep and goats for food but has used his own. The females were kept for increase unless they were barren. Jacob took the loss of any cattle killed by wild beasts. That bit about the ewes and she goats never casting their young is a little hard to believe. He must have been the best shepherd ever to have that much success.

Thus I was; in the day the drought consumed me, and the frost by night; and my sleep departed from mine eyes. Thus have I been twenty years in thy house; I served thee fourteen years for thy two daughters, and six years for thy cattle: and thou hast changed my wages ten times. Except the God of my father, the God of Abraham, and the fear of Isaac, had been with me, surely thou hadst sent me away now empty. God hath seen mine affliction and the labour of my hands, and rebuked thee yesternight.

This is just more of Jacobs venting but at least he gives God the credit for protecting him and giving him the tremendous increase.

And Laban answered and said unto Jacob, These daughters are my daughters, and these children are my children, and these cattle are my cattle, and all that thou seest is mine: and what can I do this day unto these my daughters, or unto their children which they have born? Now therefore come thou, let us make a covenant, I and thou; and let it be for a witness between me and thee.

Laban gives up. He can not take his rage out on Jacob or he will have to deal with God. He can do nothing to Rachel or Leah because they are his daughters. He can't help but make the statement that all this is his but he is giving it to Jacob. Now he wants to make a covenant.

And Jacob took a stone, and set it up for a pillar. And Jacob said unto his brethren, Gather stones; and they took stones, and made an heap: and they did eat there upon the heap. And Laban called it Jegarsahadutha: but Jacob called it Galeed. And Laban said, This heap is a witness between me and thee this day. Therefore was the name of it called Galeed; And Mizpah; for he said, The LORD watch between me and thee, when we are absent one from another. If thou shalt afflict my daughters, or if thou shalt take other wives beside my daughters, no man is with us; see, God is witness betwixt me and thee.

This is probably a circle of stones for seats with a large stone in the center for an altar. A sacrifice was probably made. God is called on to be a witness to the pact. Notice that Laban called it by the Syrian name and Jacob by Hebrew names.

And Laban said to Jacob, Behold this heap, and behold this pillar, which I have cast betwixt me and thee; This heap be witness, and this pillar be witness, that I will not pass over this heap to thee, and that thou shalt not pass over this heap and this pillar unto me, for harm. The God of Abraham, and the God of Nahor, the God of their father, judge betwixt us. And Jacob swore by the fear of his father Isaac. Then Jacob offered sacrifice upon the mount, and called his brethren to eat bread: and they did eat bread, and tarried all night in the mount. And early in the morning Laban rose up, and kissed his sons and his daughters, and blessed them: and Laban departed, and returned unto his place.

Another sacrifice is offered. Everything ends well and Laban departs for his place. This is the third covenant that a Hebrew makes with a Gentile. Notice that Laban gets in a final shot. He kisses everyone in the party goodbye except for Jacob.

GENESIS CHAPTER THIRTY TWO

And Jacob went on his way, and the angels of God met him. And when Jacob saw them, he said, This is God's host: and he called the name of that place Mahanaim.

The name Jacob gives to this place ,Mahanaim means "This is God's armed camp. These are probably the same angels Jacob had seen ascending and descending the ladder in Chapter 32. Notice that the angels met him only after he had separated from Laban.

And Jacob sent messengers before him to Esau his brother unto the land of Seir, the country of Edom. And he commanded them, saying, Thus shall ye speak unto my lord Esau; Thy servant Jacob saith thus, I have sojourned with Laban, and stayed there until now: And I have oxen, and asses, flocks, and menservants, and womenservants: and I have sent to tell my lord, that I may find grace in thy sight.

Jacob wants Esau to know that he is returning a wealthy man and will need nothing from him. What Jacob does not know at this point is that Esau has prospered in spite of losing the blessing and birthright. Since Esau is a picture of a carnal man he probably thinks, by now, that they amounted to nothing anyway. Jacob is still not trusting God but fears Esau will kill him as he promised to do when Jacob left.

And the messengers returned to Jacob, saying, We came to thy brother Esau, and also he cometh to meet thee, and four hundred men with him. Then Jacob was greatly afraid and distressed: and he divided the people that was with him, and the flocks, and herds, and the camels, into two bands; And said, If Esau come to the one company, and smite it, then the other company which is left shall escape.

Jacob is hoping that if Esau destroys one company that the other may run away in the confusion. There is still absolutely no trust in God's promises. Jacob must be about in cardiac arrest when he hears that Esau is coming with four hundred men.

And Jacob said, O God of my father Abraham, and God of my father Isaac, the LORD which saidst unto me, Return unto thy country, and to thy kindred, and I will deal well with thee: I am not worthy of the least of all the mercies, and of all the truth, which thou hast shewed unto thy servant; for with my staff I passed over this Jordan; and now I am become two bands. Deliver me, I pray thee, from the hand of my brother, from the hand of Esau: for I fear him, lest he will come and smite me,

and the mother with the children. And thou saidst, I will surely do thee good, and make thy seed as the sand of the sea, which cannot be numbered for multitude.

Jacob finally does what he should have done at the beginning. He admits his own unworthiness, thanks God for his provision and reminds God of his promise. In spite of all that, he is still scheming and planning and trying to take care of things himself.

And he lodged there that same night; and took of that which came to his hand a present for Esau his brother; Two hundred she goats, and twenty he goats, two hundred ewes, and twenty rams, Thirty milch camels with their colts, forty kine, and ten bulls, twenty she asses, and ten foals. And he delivered them into the hand of his servants, every drove by themselves; and said unto his servants, Pass over before me, and put a space betwixt drove and drove. And he commanded the foremost, saying, When Esau my brother meeteth thee, and asketh thee, saying, Whose art thou? and whither goest thou? and whose are these before thee? Then thou shalt say, They be thy servant Jacob's; it is a present sent unto my lord Esau: and, behold, also he is behind us. And so commanded he the second, and the third, and all that followed the droves, saying, On this manner shall ye speak unto Esau, when ye find him. And say ye moreover, Behold, thy servant Jacob is behind us. For he said, I will appease him with the present that goeth before me, and afterward I will see his face; peradventure he will accept of me. So went the present over before him: and himself lodged that night in the company.

He is still scheming and planning. Still not trusting God. That is quite a bribe he is sending before him. This is about five hundred and fifty animals plus their young. If Jacob was trusting God he would be at the head of this procession instead of the last man in line. I suppose that by separating these into five droves he is hoping Esau will be softened up by the time he has come through all five droves. The Holy spirit only lists three men in charge of the droves but the rest are covered in the phrase, "all that followed the droves".

And he rose up that night, and took his two wives, and his two womenservants, and his eleven sons, and passed over the ford Jabbok. And he took them, and sent them over the brook, and sent over that he had.

God now has Jacob alone. He needed him alone in order to deal personally with him. Notice that from the next morning and moving forward from that Jacob has completely changed and is now God's man. But for now, Jacob has put everything he owns as well as

his wives and children between himself and Esau. We can busy ourselves with a thousand different things but in order to get close to God we need to be alone with Him.

And Jacob was left alone; and there wrestled a man with him until the breaking of the day. And when he saw that he prevailed not against him, he touched the hollow of his thigh; and the hollow of Jacob's thigh was out of joint, as he wrestled with him.

And he said, Let me go, for the day breaketh. And he said, I will not let thee go, except thou bless me.

This is an all night wrestling match with Jesus himself. This is another of those prior appearances of Christ. It is always important to remember that Jehovah of the Old Testament is Jesus in the New. When you see that term "Angel of the LORD" in capital letters it is referring to Jesus. When we keep that in mind then we do not give in to that popular heresy that Jesus is only a God of love. He is a god of love but also, by his own testimony, a wrathful and a jealous God. Believe it. Jacobs thigh is put out of joint permanently and he walks with a limp for the rest of his life. This is his continuing, personal reminder of his encounter with God.

And he said unto him, What is thy name? And he said, Jacob. And he said, Thy name shall be called no more Jacob, but Israel: for as a prince hast thou power with God and with men, and hast prevailed. And Jacob asked him, and said, Tell me, I pray thee, thy name. And he said, Wherefore is it that thou dost ask after my name? And he blessed him there.

Jacob is reduced to the place where all he can do is cling to God and beg for His blessing. Actually, that is not a bad place to be. Overnight, Jacob has gone from a man trusting in his own works to a man depending only on God.

And Jacob called the name of the place Peniel: for I have seen God face to face, and my life is preserved. And as he passed over Peniel the sun rose upon him, and he halted upon his thigh.

Jacob is well aware that he could have been killed last night. The phrase, "and he halted upon his thigh" is simply the old way of saying he limped.

Therefore the children of Israel eat not of the sinew which shrank, which is upon the hollow of the thigh, unto this day: because he touched the hollow of Jacob's thigh in

the sinew that shrank.

GENESIS CHAPTER THIRTY THREE

And Jacob lifted up his eyes, and looked, and, behold, Esau came, and with him four hundred men. And he divided the children unto Leah, and unto Rachel, and unto the two handmaids. And he put the handmaids and their children foremost, and Leah and her children after, and Rachel and Joseph hindermost.

Jacob sees Esau and four hundred men coming and he puts his family in order of their priority in his mind. He values the handmaids and their children least so they go first. Leah and her children are next in importance, to him, so they go next. Finally Rachel and Joseph. He is still not trusting God to protect them. Maybe it is just like many of us in that we pray for something and then immediately start working every angle we can to make it happen while what we really need to do is wait on God.

And he passed over before them, and bowed himself to the ground seven times, until he came near to his brother. And Esau ran to meet him, and embraced him, and fell on his neck, and kissed him: and they wept. And he lifted up his eyes, and saw the women and the children; and said, Who are those with thee? And he said, The children which God hath graciously given thy servant. Then the handmaidens came near, they and their children, and they bowed themselves. And Leah also with her children came near, and bowed themselves: and after came Joseph near and Rachel, and they bowed themselves.

Jacob finally comes to the head of the procession and finds that all his worry had been for nothing. Esau is delighted to see him and meets the wives and children. Jacob has quite a group of children, eleven at this point. Here Esau seems to have honestly had a change of heart and this was, no doubt, influenced by God himself.

And he said, What meanest thou by all this drove which I met? And he said, These are to find grace in the sight of my lord. And Esau said, I have enough, my brother;

keep that thou hast unto thyself. And Jacob said, Nay, I pray thee, if now I have found grace in thy sight, then receive my present at my hand: for therefore I have seen thy face, as though I had seen the face of God, and thou wast pleased with me.

Take, I pray thee, my blessing that is brought to thee; because God hath dealt graciously with me, and because I have enough. And he urged him, and he took it.

Esau refuses Jacobs gift of the herds of cattle but Jacob insists and Esau takes the gift. I see this as Jacob wanting to be completely sure he has appeased Esau. There are still those four hundred men to consider.

And he said, Let us take our journey, and let us go, and I will go before thee. And he said unto him, My lord knoweth that the children are tender, and the flocks and herds with young are with me: and if men should overdrive them one day, all the flock will die. Let my lord, I pray thee, pass over before his servant: and I will lead on softly, according as the cattle that goeth before me and the children be able to endure, until I come unto my lord unto Seir.

These verses are self explanatory but it is worth noticing that Jacob is lying again. He has no intention of following Esau but wants some distance between them. We do not know why Esau has moved out of the promised land but he has. Jacob has been told by God to go to Canaan and that is where he is heading.

And Esau said, Let me now leave with thee some of the folk that are with me. And he said, What needeth it? let me find grace in the sight of my lord. So Esau returned that day on his way unto Seir.

That one was a near miss. Jacob has to refuse the offer of an honor guard. One has to wonder what Esau thought when he reached home and Jacob did not show up.

And Jacob journeyed to Succoth, and built him an house, and made booths for his cattle: therefore the name of the place is called Succoth. And Jacob came to Shalem, a city of Shechem, which is in the land of Canaan, when he came from Padanaram; and pitched his tent before the city. And he bought a parcel of a field, where he had spread his tent, at the hand of the children of Hamor, Shechem's father, for an hundred pieces of money. And he erected there an altar, and called it Elelohe-Israel.

On a positive note, Jacob has parted from Esau on friendly terms. When he arrives in Shalem he purchases a field in order to build. He builds pens for his cattle and an altar to

God. The name he gives God is Elelohe which means "the God of Israel. This purchase is the "parcel of a field "where Joseph and the twelve patriarchs are buried. Never confuse the two burial sites. One was purchased by Abraham for 400 pieces of money and this one was purchased by Jacob for 100 pieces.

GENESIS CHAPTER THIRTY FOUR

And Dinah the daughter of Leah, which she bare unto Jacob, went out to see the daughters of the land. And when Shechem the son of Hamor the Hivite, prince of the country, saw her, he took her, and lay with her, and defiled her. And his soul clave unto Dinah the daughter of Jacob, and he loved the damsel, and spake kindly unto the damsel.

To put it bluntly, Dinah was raped. To make matters worse she is below the age of consent being thirteen to fifteen years old at this point. This is Leah's daughter, the one who got only one line a couple of chapters back. Shechem no doubt, was a spoiled brat, used to having his own way. He is described as a prince of the country. Shechem expected no retaliation for his crime. Jacob's failure to make sure Dinah was properly chaperoned led to this event as did his poor choice of a place to live. Jacob wanted to live near a city even if the city was full of ungodly Canaanites. There is something to be said for Shechem in that he actually loved the girl and wanted to marry her. No one consults Dinah in the matter.

And Shechem spake unto his father Hamor, saying, Get me this damsel to wife. And Jacob heard that he had defiled Dinah his daughter: now his sons were with his cattle in the field: and Jacob held his peace until they were come.

Jacob is careful, as he always is where his skin is concerned. He waits until his sons come in from the fields and tells them. Remember that Jacob and his family are in a position of weakness here. They are greatly outnumbered. Dinah, meantime, is staying in Shechem's house.

And Hamor the father of Shechem went out unto Jacob to commune with him. And

the sons of Jacob came out of the field when they heard it: and the men were grieved, and they were very wroth, because he had wrought folly in Israel in lying with Jacob's daughter; which thing ought not to be done. And Hamor communed with them, saying, The soul of my son Shechem longeth for your daughter: I pray you give her him to wife. And make ye marriages with us, and give your daughters unto us, and take our daughters unto you. And ye shall dwell with us: and the land shall be before you; dwell and trade ye therein, and get you possessions therein.

This is the first time Israel has been used in a collective sense and indicates that Shechem has brought dishonor on the whole family. As far as intermarrying with the Canaanites, remember that Israel has always been forbidden to intermarry with other races. This is God's way of keeping his people separate and ready for his purposes. They are the only people in history to be dispersed among the nations and yet retain their national identity and language. This is why God insists they keep separate.

And Shechem said unto her father and unto her brethren, Let me find grace in your eyes, and what ye shall say unto me I will give. Ask me never so much dowry and gift, and I will give according as ye shall say unto me: but give me the damsel to wife.

To give Shechem the tiny bit of credit he deserves here at least he wants to marry the girl and we have no evidence here that Dinah wasn't a willing participant. Shechem is willing to pay any price asked to appease Dinah's father and brothers.

And the sons of Jacob answered Shechem and Hamor his father deceitfully, and said, because he had defiled Dinah their sister: And they said unto them, We cannot do this thing, to give our sister to one that is uncircumcised; for that were a reproach unto us: But in this will we consent unto you: If ye will be as we be, that every male of you be circumcised;

Now, notice here that Jacob almost certainly present while this was going on and he has nothing to say. He is still being Jacob. They used the word defiled and that indicates the state Dinah would be in if Shechem did not marry her. A woman who was not a virgin in that society was considered not marriage material. She had no real "proper" future. I am not saying that was fair but just the way it was in that society. Notice also that in all this, neither Shechem nor his father had apologized for Shechem's actions. I think that what had happened was that this was more or less, normal behavior in that culture.

Then will we give our daughters unto you, and we will take your daughters to us, and we will dwell with you, and we will become one people. But if ye will not hearken unto us, to be circumcised; then will we take our daughter, and we will be gone.

They are absolutely lying here as they have no intention of intermarrying with the Canaanites.

And their words pleased Hamor, and Shechem Hamor's son.

I have a problem with that verse. I know that God said it so it is true but how can two grown men possibly be pleased with the condition they had just been given. Shechem must have really loved Dinah.

And the young man deferred not to do the thing, because he had delight in Jacob's daughter: and he was more honourable than all the house of his father. And Hamor and Shechem his son came unto the gate of their city, and communed with the men of their city, saying, These men are peaceable with us; therefore let them dwell in the land, and trade therein; for the land, behold, it is large enough for them; let us take their daughters to us for wives, and let us give them our daughters. Only herein will the men consent unto us for to dwell with us, to be one people, if every male among us be circumcised, as they are circumcised.

This is amazing. A whole city of men agree to submit to circumcision so they can marry the daughters of the Israelites. I can clearly see Satan's hand in this as he tries again to destroy the purity of the Jewish race. This is just one more of his attempts to destroy the line leading to Jesus. If the Israelites intermarried they would have soon been worshipping the idols of the Canaanites who were much greater in number.

Shall not their cattle and their substance and every beast of theirs be ours? only let us consent unto them, and they will dwell with us.

This is more than a subtle hint that the men of the city want more than just to marry the daughters they also want the riches that Jacob has accumulated. Riches, in these times was measured in cattle as well as gold and silver. Cattle, sheep and goat herds basically double in size every two to three years even allowing the occasional losses to wild animals and the use of the males for food. This is exactly what happened in our American west.

And unto Hamor and unto Shechem his son hearkened all that went out of the gate of

his city; and every male was circumcised, all that went out of the gate of his city. And it came to pass on the third day, when they were sore, that two of the sons of Jacob, Simeon and Levi, Dinah's brethren, took each man his sword, and came upon the city boldly, and slew all the males. And they slew Hamor and Shechem his son with the edge of the sword, and took Dinah out of Shechem's house, and went out.

Simon and Levi have now disgraced God's covenant of circumcision. They do not go unpunished for their actions. God deals with this in the next chapter and what he does to Simon and Levi is serious. Be aware here of a couple of things. No one has asked Dinah's opinion about anything. As far as the scripture is concerned she never says a word. I'm sure she had plenty to say but it isn't recorded. The other thing is all the business about circumcision. Circumcision is a picture of what happens to the New Testament Christian when he ,or she,is saved. The Holy Spirit cuts our spirit away from the body. Remember the "Sword of the Spirit"? Our dead spirit becomes alive again. This is why we can say that our spirit does not sin even though our body does.

The sons of Jacob came upon the slain, and spoiled the city, because they had defiled their sister. They took their sheep, and their oxen, and their asses, and that which was in the city, and that which was in the field, And all their wealth, and all their little ones, and their wives took they captive, and spoiled even all that was in the house.

This now,would be the other sons of Jacob helping with the "mopping up" and carrying away the wealth of the city. They now share in the blame.

And Jacob said to Simeon and Levi, Ye have troubled me to make me to stink among the inhabitants of the land, among the Canaanites and the Perizzites: and I being few in number, they shall gather themselves together against me, and slay me; and I shall be destroyed, I and my house. And they said, Should he deal with our sister as with an harlot?

I love Jacob's phrase ,"you have made me to stink among the inhabitants of the land". Now he and his family have to move again and this time he finally goes to where God wanted him in the first place. He goes to Beth-el. You may remember that this was the place where he first met God when he fled from Esau. Beth (house) El (God)so house of God.

GENESIS CHAPTER THIRTY FIVE

And God said unto Jacob, Arise, go up to Bethel, and dwell there: and make there an altar unto God, that appeared unto thee when thou fleddest from the face of Esau thy brother. Then Jacob said unto his household, and to all that were with him, Put away the strange gods that are among you, and be clean, and change your garments: And let us arise, and go up to Bethel; and I will make there an altar unto God, who answered me in the day of my distress, and was with me in the way which I went. And they gave unto Jacob all the strange gods which were in their hand, and all their earrings which were in their ears; and Jacob hid them under the oak which was by Shechem.

This is the same Bethel where Jacob first met God. Remember the ladder with the angels ascending and descending. Jacob now calls for all the strange gods to be put away. This is where Rachel finally gets rid of her fathers idols. It is hard for me to believe that Jacob did not know she had these gods after all this time. There were certainly many other idols in the camp as is indicated by the text. These were buried under an oak near Shechem. This Shechem is now a place and not the rapist in the last chapter. I admit I have no clue as to the reason for getting rid of the earrings. Earrings were a common adornment in Old Testament times and were made of gold and could be used for money in an emergency. These earrings may have had a pagan connection but no reason is given here.

And they journeyed: and the terror of God was upon the cities that were round about them, and they did not pursue after the sons of Jacob. So Jacob came to Luz, which is in the land of Canaan, that is, Bethel, he and all the people that were with him. And he built there an altar, and called the place Elbethel: because there God appeared unto him, when he fled from the face of his brother.

Now, since Jacob had required both himself, his household and all of his followers to clean themselves up, God is giving him personal, divine protection again. No city dared to challenge him as his group passed on the way to Bethel. Even the cities outraged by the slaughter of Shechem and his people were in terror of them.

But Deborah Rebekah's nurse died, and she was buried beneath Bethel under an oak: and the name of it was called Allonbachuth.

We have not heard of Deborah until this time. She probably came out of Haran with Rebekah and was obviously well thought of and loved as the place they buried her was named Allon Bachuth which means "Oak of Weeping". She was probably a member of Jacob's household by this time. I can't help but wonder if she is somehow related to the later Deborah who was a prophetess and judge of Israel. That Deborah was a brave woman. She led the armies of Israel when the generals were afraid to do so. Read Judges chapter four and following for more on that lady. That is a beautiful story by the way.

These next verses are a flashback to a former chapter **And God appeared unto Jacob again, when he came out of Padanaram, and blessed him. And God said unto him, Thy name is Jacob: thy name shall not be called any more Jacob, but Israel shall be thy name: and he called his name Israel. And God said unto him, I am God Almighty: be fruitful and multiply; a nation and a company of nations shall be of thee, and kings shall come out of thy loins; And the land which I gave Abraham and Isaac, to thee I will give it, and to thy seed after thee will I give the land. And God went up from him in the place where he talked with him. And Jacob set up a pillar in the place where he talked with him, even a pillar of stone: and he poured a drink offering thereon, and he poured oil thereon. And Jacob called the name of the place where God spake with him, Bethel.**

We covered all of this in a previous chapter when Jacob was fleeing from Esau. This was where he had the dream of "Jacob's ladder" and where he first became aware that God was protecting him.

And they journeyed from Bethel; and there was but a little way to come to Ephrath: and Rachel travailed, and she had hard labour. And it came to pass, when she was in hard labour, that the midwife said unto her, Fear not; thou shalt have this son also. And it came to pass, as her soul was in departing, (for she died) that she called his name Benoni: but his father called him Benjamin.

This is one of those verses that is super important because you will not find this truth anywhere else in the bible. Others have had their spirit depart and return. Think of Apostle John for instance. This is the only instance where we are told that the spirit and soul can leave the body before death and not return. Rachel knew she was dying and we know that

because of the name she gave to the child as she was departing; Ben-oni which means "son of my sorrow.

And Rachel died, and was buried in the way to Ephrath, which is Bethlehem. And Jacob set a pillar upon her grave: that is the pillar of Rachel's grave unto this day.

A love story comes to a close. For all their faults, these two loved each other. Jacob put Rachel before everything else in his life. Do not fail to notice the name that Jacob gives the child. He over rides the name Rachel gives and names the son Benjamin which means "son of my right hand". The commentators are all over the place on this one but to me it means what it says. He regarded Rachel as his right hand.

And Israel journeyed, and spread his tent beyond the tower of Edar. And it came to pass, when Israel dwelt in that land, that Reuben went and lay with Bilhah his father's concubine: and Israel heard it. Now the sons of Jacob were twelve: The sons of Leah; Reuben, Jacob's firstborn, and Simeon, and Levi, and Judah, and Issachar, and Zebulun:

There is another nugget here in these verses. The three oldest of Leah's sons have lost their birthright due to their horrible sins. They had murdered Shechem and his people and now Ruben had dishonored his father. These three are taken out of the line of the Messiah and the birthright now goes to Judah and Jesus will be "The Lion of the Tribe of Judah".

The sons of Rachel; Joseph, and Benjamin: And the sons of Bilhah, Rachel's handmaid; Dan, and Naphtali: And the sons of Zilpah, Leah's handmaid; Gad, and Asher: these are the sons of Jacob, which were born to him in Padanaram.

This is not an all star family. It is a wonder God uses them at all but he does through his grace. These sons are a messed up group and it only gets worse in the next chapters.

And Jacob came unto Isaac his father unto Mamre, unto the city of Arbah, which is Hebron, where Abraham and Isaac sojourned. And the days of Isaac were an hundred and fourscore years. And Isaac gave up the ghost, and died, and was gathered unto his people, being old and full of days: and his sons Esau and Jacob buried him.

More than twenty years before, Jacob left his fathers house and ,so far as we know,he had

not seen him since. I see this as one last blessing for Isaac in that God allows him to see his son once more before he dies. Jacob and Esau work together to bury their father. Everybody seems to be getting along at this point in their lives.

GENESIS CHAPTER THIRTY SIX

We are going to do chapter thirty six differently. Since this is basically a genealogical list of Esau and Seir the Horite we will skip the reading of most of the verses. If I read them all most of you would be asleep soon or simply get up and leave. Scattered through here are a few points that need to be made.

1 Now these are the generations of Esau, who is Edom.

Remember the last part of that verse. Esau is Edom. Edom is now in the country we call Jordan and it is here the Israelites will flee for protection in the great tribulation.

Esau took his wives of the daughters of Canaan; Adah the daughter of Elon the Hittite, and Aholibamah the daughter of Anah the daughter of Zibeon the Hivite; And Bashemath Ishmael's daughter, sister of Nebajoth. And Adah bare to Esau Eliphaz; and Bashemath bare Reuel; And Aholibamah bare Jeush, and Jaalam, and Korah: these are the sons of Esau, which were born unto him in the land of Canaan.

Esau either had three wives, two of whom were called by different names at different times or he had five wives, two of whom had no children. Take your choice. It doesn't matter.

6 And Esau took his wives, and his sons, and his daughters, and all the persons of his house, and his cattle, and all his beasts, and all his substance, which he had got in the land of Canaan; and went into the country from the face of his brother Jacob. For their riches were more than that they might dwell together; and the land wherein they were strangers could not bear them because of their cattle. Thus dwelt Esau in mount Seir: Esau is Edom.

This is the same situation Abraham and Lot were in earlier. It is likely that Esau gave Jacob the choice in this case as it was necessary that Jacob remain in Canaan anyway. God

would have worked it out that way.

And these are the generations of Esau the father of the Edomites in mount Seir: These are the names of Esau's sons; Eliphaz the son of Adah the wife of Esau, Reuel the son of Bashemath the wife of Esau. And the sons of Eliphaz were Teman, Omar, Zepho, and Gatam, and Kenaz. And Timna was concubine to Eliphaz Esau's son; and she bare to Eliphaz Amalek: these were the sons of Adah Esau's wife. And these are the sons of Reuel; Nahath, and Zerah, Shammah, and Mizzah: these were the sons of Bashemath Esau's wife. And these were the sons of Aholibamah, the daughter of Anah the daughter of Zibeon, Esau's wife: and she bare to Esau Jeush, and Jaalam, and Korah. These were dukes of the sons of Esau: the sons of Eliphaz the firstborn son of Esau; duke Teman, duke Omar, duke Zepho, duke Kenaz, Duke Korah, duke Gatam, and duke Amalek: these are the dukes that came of Eliphaz in the land of Edom; these were the sons of Adah. And these are the sons of Reuel Esau's son; duke Nahath, duke Zerah, duke Shammah, duke Mizzah: these are the dukes that came of Reuel in the land of Edom; these are the sons of Bashemath Esau's wife. And these are the sons of Aholibamah Esau's wife; duke Jeush, duke Jaalam, duke Korah: these were the dukes that came of Aholibamah the daughter of Anah, Esau's wife.

19 These are the sons of Esau, who is Edom, and these are their dukes.

Notice that this is the third time the Holy Spirit has stressed that Esau is Edom. He intends for us to get that. The following verses are the lineage of Seir the Horite. They are included in this chapter since the line of Esau had intermarried with them and thus diluted the purity of their line.

These are the sons of Seir the Horite, who inhabited the land; Lotan, and Shobal, and Zibeon, and Anah, And Dishon, and Ezer, and Dishan: these are the dukes of the Horites, the children of Seir in the land of Edom. And the children of Lotan were Hori and Hemam; and Lotan's sister was Timna. And the children of Shobal were these; Alvan, and Manahath, and Ebal, Shepho, and Onam. And these are the children of Zibeon; both Ajah, and Anah: this was that Anah that found the mules in the wilderness, as he fed the asses of Zibeon his father. And the children of Anah were these; Dishon, and Aholibamah the daughter of Anah. And these are the children of Dishon; Hemdan, and Eshban, and Ithran, and Cheran. The children of Ezer are these; Bilhan, and Zaavan, and Akan. The children of Dishan are these; Uz, and

Aran. These are the dukes that came of the Horites; duke Lotan, duke Shobal, duke Zibeon, duke Anah, Duke Dishon, duke Ezer, duke Dishan: these are the dukes that came of Hori, among their dukes in the land of Seir. And these are the kings that reigned in the land of Edom, before there reigned any king over the children of Israel. And Bela the son of Beor reigned in Edom: and the name of his city was Dinhabah. And Bela died, and Jobab the son of Zerah of Bozrah reigned in his stead. And Jobab died, and Husham of the land of Temani reigned in his stead. And Husham died, and Hadad the son of Bedad, who smote Midian in the field of Moab, reigned in his stead: and the name of his city was Avith. And Hadad died, and Samlah of Masrekah reigned in his stead. And Samlah died, and Saul of Rehoboth by the river reigned in his stead. And Saul died, and Baalhanan the son of Achbor reigned in his stead. And Baalhanan the son of Achbor died, and Hadar reigned in his stead: and the name of his city was Pau; and his wife's name was Mehetabel, the daughter of Matred, the daughter of Mezahab. And these are the names of the dukes that came of Esau, according to their families, after their places, by their names; duke Timnah, duke Alvah, duke Jetheth, Duke Aholibamah, duke Elah, duke Pinon, Duke Kenaz, duke Teman, duke Mibzar, Duke Magdiel, duke Iram: these be the dukes of Edom, according to their habitations in the land of their possession: he is Esau the father of the Edomites.

All of that lineage above is included to show that God did keep his promise to Esau. The word Duke is used to describe some of those in the list. You can substitute leader or governor if that makes it easier. It is good to remember that while we may skip over some of these long list, in class, you should read them
Man does not live by bread alone but by every word that proceedeth out of the mouth of God.

GENESIS CHAPTER THIRTY SEVEN

And Jacob dwelt in the land wherein his father was a stranger, in the land of Canaan. These are the generations of Jacob. Joseph, being seventeen years old, was feeding the flock with his brethren; and the lad was with the sons of Bilhah, and with the

sons of Zilpah, his father's wives: and Joseph brought unto his father their evil report.

Joseph is now seventeen years old and a tattletale. He was both loved and hated; loved by his father and hated by his brothers. In spite of what seem to us to be a lack of character in Joseph he never seemed to lose his trust in God. Contrast this with his father Jacob who never seemed to fully trust God.

Now Israel loved Joseph more than all his children, because he was the son of his old age: and he made him a coat of many colours. And when his brethren saw that their father loved him more than all his brethren, they hated him, and could not speak peaceably unto him.

Josephs carrying of tales and the obvious favoritism by their father had caused his brothers to hate him so much that they would not even speak peacefully to him.

And Joseph dreamed a dream, and he told it his brethren: and they hated him yet the more. And he said unto them, Hear, I pray you, this dream which I have dreamed: For, behold, we were binding sheaves in the field, and, lo, my sheaf arose, and also stood upright; and, behold, your sheaves stood round about, and made obeisance to my sheaf.

This is Josephs first dream and he would have been wiser to keep it to himself. It is interesting that the dream was about wheat and wheat figured prominently in feeding his family later in Egypt.

And his brethren said to him, Shalt thou indeed reign over us? or shalt thou indeed have dominion over us? And they hated him yet the more for his dreams, and for his words. And he dreamed yet another dream, and told it his brethren, and said, Behold, I have dreamed a dream more; and, behold, the sun and the moon and the eleven stars made obeisance to me.

This could get on anyone's nerves. Joseph must have known how much his brothers hated hearing this dream.

And he told it to his father, and to his brethren: and his father rebuked him, and said unto him, What is this dream that thou hast dreamed? Shall I and thy mother and

thy brethren indeed come to bow down ourselves to thee to the earth?

Now he has gone too far. His father rebukes him for telling these dreams. Notice also that verse ten has Rachel still alive at this point.

And his brethren envied him; but his father observed the saying. And his brethren went to feed their father's flock in Shechem. And Israel said unto Joseph, Do not thy brethren feed the flock in Shechem? come, and I will send thee unto them. And he said to him, Here am I.

Maybe all the blame for being a tattletale doesn't belong to Joseph. Jacob seems to be constantly putting him up to spying on his brothers. It almost sounds like Jacob does not trust his other sons.

And he said to him, Go, I pray thee, see whether it be well with thy brethren, and well with the flocks; and bring me word again. So he sent him out of the vale of Hebron, and he came to Shechem. And a certain man found him, and, behold, he was wandering in the field: and the man asked him, saying, What seekest thou? And he said, I seek my brethren: tell me, I pray thee, where they feed their flocks. And the man said, They are departed hence; for I heard them say, Let us go to Dothan. And Joseph went after his brethren, and found them in Dothan.

Maybe it is with good reason that Jacob doesn't trust his sons. They have the flock far from where they were supposed to be. Dothan was probably the "big city" in that area.

And when they saw him afar off, even before he came near unto them, they conspired against him to slay him. And they said one to another, Behold, this dreamer cometh. Come now therefore, and let us slay him, and cast him into some pit, and we will say, Some evil beast hath devoured him: and we shall see what will become of his dreams. And Reuben heard it, and he delivered him out of their hands; and said, Let us not kill him.

Reuben finally does something right but then leaves the scene for some reason. At any rate, he saved Joseph from being killed immediately. Remember that Reuben was one of the ring leaders in the murders at Shechem so maybe he is trying to redeem himself.

And Reuben said unto them, Shed no blood, but cast him into this pit that is in the

wilderness, and lay no hand upon him; that he might rid him out of their hands, to deliver him to his father again. And it came to pass, when Joseph was come unto his brethren, that they stript Joseph out of his coat, his coat of many colours that was on him;

The brothers could not stand the sight of that coat of many colors. It was a reminder of how much their father preferred Joseph over them. Some of the commentators want to change this and make it a coat of many pieces. In those days most coats were probably made of many pieces of whatever material was handy. A coat of many pieces would not have been special. Why not just accept what the Book says and let it be of many colors.

And they took him, and cast him into a pit: and the pit was empty, there was no water in it. And they sat down to eat bread: and they lifted up their eyes and looked, and, behold, a company of Ishmeelites came from Gilead with their camels bearing spicery and balm and myrrh, going to carry it down to Egypt. And Judah said unto his brethren, What profit is it if we slay our brother, and conceal his blood? Come, and let us sell him to the Ishmeelites, and let not our hand be upon him; for he is our brother and our flesh. And his brethren were content.

This might be a little confusing. Were they Ismeelites or Midianites? They were both. They were Midianite descendants of Ismael, Abraham's son by Hagar.

Then there passed by Midianites merchantmen; and they drew and lifted up Joseph out of the pit, and sold Joseph to the Ishmeelites for twenty pieces of silver: and they brought Joseph into Egypt.

Remember that Joseph is a "type" of Jesus Christ. Here we see him sold for twenty pieces of silver whereas our Lord as sold for thirty pieces. Twenty pieces was probably the going price for a young slave boy. We will compare some of the other similarities of Jesus and Joseph at the end of this chapter.

And Reuben returned unto the pit; and, behold, Joseph was not in the pit; and he rent his clothes. And he returned unto his brethren, and said, The child is not; and I, whither shall I go?

You can almost feel sorry for Reuben at this point. He is the oldest and will have to face

his father with the news that Joseph is gone. Nevertheless, evil always finds a way.

And they took Joseph's coat, and killed a kid of the goats, and dipped the coat in the blood; And they sent the coat of many colours, and they brought it to their father; and said, This have we found: know now whether it be thy son's coat or no. And he knew it, and said, It is my son's coat; an evil beast hath devoured him; Joseph is without doubt rent in pieces.

It appears that the brothers hated their father as well as their brother. This was an outrageous lie and an especially heartless way to bring their father the news.

And Jacob rent his clothes, and put sackcloth upon his loins, and mourned for his son many days. And all his sons and all his daughters rose up to comfort him; but he refused to be comforted; and he said, For I will go down into the grave unto my son mourning. Thus his father wept for him.

Summing up, Jacobs story fades and ,beginning with the next verse, Josephs story comes to the front. God's hand is in every bit of this. He uses the sinful brothers to accomplish his purpose which is to get Joseph down into Egypt so that his family can later be saved from starvation and for the greater purpose of building the Hebrew nation in a rich and fertile land.

And the Midianites sold him into Egypt unto Potiphar, an officer of Pharaoh's, and captain of the guard.

Now that we have Joseph in Egypt let's look at some of the similarities between Joseph and our LORD Jesus. There re over one hundred similarities but we will look at only a few.

He is a beloved son of a father.

He brought his father an evil report of his brethren.

He is sent ahead by God to provide for his people.

He was hated by his brethren.

His brethren would bow down to him.

His brethren were eventually brought to him for salvation.

GENESIS CHAPTER THIRTY EIGHT

We leave Joseph for a while and focus our attention on Judah.

And it came to pass at that time, that Judah went down from his brethren, and turned in to a certain Adullamite, whose name was Hirah. And Judah saw there a daughter of a certain Canaanite, whose name was Shuah; and he took her, and went in unto her.

Here we go again. Judah, who is the head of the tribe of Judah, is disobeying God and fornicating with Canaanites. Remember that these Canaanites are descendants of Ham and are still under the Hamitic curse. Also keep in mind that Judah is a direct ancestor of our Lord Jesus. Judah is messing up the line but God has a purpose and we will see that in the next few verses.

And she conceived, and bare a son; and he called his name Er. And she conceived again, and bare a son; and she called his name Onan. And she yet again conceived, and bare a son; and called his name Shelah: and he was at Chezib, when she bare him.

This is a fertile pair but none of these sons turn out well.

And Judah took a wife for Er his firstborn, whose name was Tamar.

Remember Tamar. She is a direct ancestor of Jesus in spite of the fact that she was a Canaanite and an adulteress. I think these examples are put into the lineage of Jesus for two reasons. First, to show us that God can use anyone and second to show us just how far God's grace extends.

And Er, Judah's firstborn, was wicked in the sight of the LORD; and the LORD slew him. And Judah said unto Onan, Go in unto thy brother's wife, and marry her, and raise up seed to thy brother. And Onan knew that the seed should not be his; and it

came to pass, when he went in unto his brother's wife, that he spilled it on the ground, lest that he should give seed to his brother. And the thing which he did displeased the LORD: wherefore he slew him also.

It was a common practice in those days for a surviving brother to marry the dead brother's wife. This kept the family name alive and took care of the widow. Also worth noting is the fact that God took Er's life due to his wickedness. That is still done by God today in extreme cases. He also destroyed Onan for his wickedness. Let's take a modern example, Elvis Presley. Now, most pastors I have heard believe Elvis was lost and good riddance. I see it differently. Elvis professed to be saved. He was raised in a Pentecostal church by a Christian mother. He sang in the choir. He continued to sing Christian hymns after he became famous but his life went steadily downhill with adultery, drugs and general loose living. God did what he has promised Christians he would do. He took him home.

Then said Judah to Tamar his daughter in law, Remain a widow at thy father's house, till Shelah my son be grown: for he said, Lest peradventure he die also, as his brethren did. And Tamar went and dwelt in her father's house.

Tamar is sent home to wait for Shelah to grow to manhood so she can be married again. When she sees that Shelah has no desire to marry her she takes matters into her own hands.

And in process of time the daughter of Shuah Judah's wife died; and Judah was comforted, and went up unto his sheepshearers to Timnath, he and his friend Hirah the Adullamite. And it was told Tamar, saying, Behold thy father in law goeth up to Timnath to shear his sheep. And she put her widow's garments off from her, and covered her with a vail, and wrapped herself, and sat in an open place, which is by the way to Timnath; for she saw that Shelah was grown, and she was not given unto him to wife.

Notice here that every time Judah is close to Hirah the Adullamite he gets in trouble. Since Judah was reluctant to give his last son to Tamar, she is now taking matters into her own hands. She intends to have a child no matter what. Judah was probably thinking that the last son would die as the others had. It did not seem to occur to him that his sons were the problem. Judah's time of mourning is past so he now feels free to party.

When Judah saw her, he thought her to be an harlot; because she had covered her

face. And he turned unto her by the way, and said, Go to, I pray thee, let me come in unto thee; (for he knew not that she was his daughter in law.) And she said, What wilt thou give me, that thou mayest come in unto me? And he said, I will send thee a kid from the flock. And she said, Wilt thou give me a pledge, till thou send it? And he said, What pledge shall I give thee? And she said, Thy signet, and thy bracelets, and thy staff that is in thine hand. And he gave it her, and came in unto her, and she conceived by him.

Tamar has set her trap and Judah falls for it. No doubt she had her time of conception down to the day. She wanted a child and if it had to be an illegitimate child at least it would be by one of the most powerful men in the area. Both Judah and Tamar were wrong in what they did; Judah by not allowing Shelah to marry Tamar and Tamar by deliberately deceiving Judah. The seal and staff were hand made items and easily recognized as belonging to Judah. Judah no doubt had experience dealing with prostitutes as he went through these negotiations without any bargaining. Tamar took the pledge not because she was concerned about payment but only so she could later prove who the father was.

And she arose, and went away, and laid by her vail from her, and put on the garments of her widowhood.

Tamar put back on her widows clothing and settles down at home while Hirah searches for her. One more thing before we move on. Tamar was posing as a religious prostitute judging by the price Judah agrees to pay. This makes Judah's sin even worse as he would know that part of the money he paid would go to the temple of the false gods Ashtoreth and Baal.

And Judah sent the kid by the hand of his friend the Adullamite, to receive his pledge from the woman's hand: but he found her not. Then he asked the men of that place, saying, Where is the harlot, that was openly by the way side? And they said, There was no harlot in this place. And he returned to Judah, and said, I cannot find her; and also the men of the place said, that there was no harlot in this place.

Hirah has searched high and low but cannot find the harlot. That last phrase is almost funny. When Judah hears this he has to be alarmed. She has items that can easily be proven to be his and now might go around claiming he did not pay what he owed.

And Judah said, Let her take it to her, lest we be shamed: behold, I sent this kid, and

thou hast not found her. And it came to pass about three months after, that it was told Judah, saying, Tamar thy daughter in law hath played the harlot; and also, behold, she is with child by whoredom. And Judah said, Bring her forth, and let her be burnt.

"Let her be burnt". That is harsh since the usual punishment would have been death by stoning. Judah may have seen this as a convenient way to get rid of Tamar since he had no intention of letting her marry Shelah.

When she was brought forth, she sent to her father in law, saying, By the man, whose these are, am I with child: and she said, Discern, I pray thee, whose are these, the signet, and bracelets, and staff. And Judah acknowledged them, and said, She hath been more righteous than I; because that I gave her not to Shelah my son. And he knew her again no more.

This amazes me for a couple of reasons. One, Tamar is subdued and does not cause a fuss.

Most of us in that situation would be screaming from the rooftops. Second, Judah immediately assumes responsibility. This must have come as a shock to Judah since he had no reason to think he was the father. This is one instance where Judah acted in exactly the right way.

And it came to pass in the time of her travail, that, behold, twins were in her womb.

And it came to pass, when she travailed, that the one put out his hand: and the midwife took and bound upon his hand a scarlet thread, saying, This came out first. And it came to pass, as he drew back his hand, that, behold, his brother came out: and she said, How hast thou broken forth? this breach be upon thee: therefore his name was called Pharez. And afterward came out his brother, that had the scarlet thread upon his hand: and his name was called Zarah.

The first born gets the blessing and the birthright so that scarlet thread was important, in the case of twins, to show which was born first. In this case the scarlet thread was on the wrong child as Pharez was the actual first born and is in the Messianic line. Who would think that God could take the sinful mess that was Judah and use him to work out his purpose.

GENESIS CHAPTER THIRTY NINE

We now transfer back to Joseph. He has been sold into slavery by his brothers. He now seems to be a changed person as the tattletale issues have gone away. He is seventeen years old when sold into slavery.

And Joseph was brought down to Egypt; and Potiphar, an officer of Pharaoh, captain of the guard, an Egyptian, bought him of the hands of the Ishmeelites, which had brought him down thither. And the LORD was with Joseph, and he was a prosperous man; and he was in the house of his master the Egyptian. And his master saw that the LORD was with him, and that the LORD made all that he did to prosper in his hand. And Joseph found grace in his sight, and he served him: and he made him overseer over his house, and all that he had he put into his hand.

Potiphar was quick to notice that everything Joseph did prospered. He realized that this came from his relationship with his God. Though Potiphar was not a religious man he did recognize God's hand in Joseph's dealings. To Joseph's credit he did not take credit for the way things increased but gave God the glory.

And it came to pass from the time that he had made him overseer in his house, and over all that he had, that the LORD blessed the Egyptian's house for Joseph's sake; and the blessing of the LORD was upon all that he had in the house, and in the field. And he left all that he had in Joseph's hand; and he knew not ought he had, save the bread which he did eat. And Joseph was a goodly person, and well favoured.

Potiphar was wise enough to let Joseph have charge of everything he owned. He concerned himself with nothing except his food. It reached the point where Potiphar did not even know what, or how much, he owned. Joseph was completely trusted.

And it came to pass after these things, that his master's wife cast her eyes upon Joseph; and she said, Lie with me. But he refused, and said unto his master's wife, Behold, my master wotteth not what is with me in the house, and he hath committed all that he hath to my hand; There is none greater in this house than I; neither hath he kept back any thing from me but thee, because thou art his wife: how then can I do this great wickedness, and sin against God? And it came to pass, as she spake to

Joseph day by day, that he hearkened not unto her, to lie by her, or to be with her.

Potiphar's wife makes her play for Joseph. This is Satan's handiwork. Joseph is a young man now, probably in his mid twenties since he came there at seventeen and it took several years to rise to his present position. From Joseph's arrival at Potiphar's house until his appointment to Pharaoh's staff at age thirty there is a period of thirteen years. We know that he spent more than two of those thirteen years in prison so his rise was not a quick one. Joseph was faced with a married woman who had thrown herself at him over and over. He had little to gain and everything to lose.

And it came to pass about this time, that Joseph went into the house to do his business; and there was none of the men of the house there within. And she caught him by his garment, saying, Lie with me: and he left his garment in her hand, and fled, and got him out.

This sounds like Joseph had always made sure that there were others around when he had to be near Potiphar's wife. Why everyone else was absent this time is easy to guess. Potiphar's wife had sent them away in order to have privacy with Joseph. She probably felt that he would do as she wished if they were in private.

And it came to pass, when she saw that he had left his garment in her hand, and was fled forth, That she called unto the men of her house, and spake unto them, saying, See, he hath brought in an Hebrew unto us to mock us; he came in unto me to lie with me, and I cried with a loud voice: And it came to pass, when he heard that I lifted up my voice and cried, that he left his garment with me, and fled, and got him out. And she laid up his garment by her, until his lord came home.

Joseph had tried reasoning with the wife, he tried avoiding her and now he ran away from her. Now she calls in the men of the household and accuses Joseph of attempted rape.

And she spake unto him according to these words, saying, The Hebrew servant, which thou hast brought unto us, came in unto me to mock me: And it came to pass, as I lifted up my voice and cried, that he left his garment with me, and fled out.

Now she accuses Joseph to her husband and the Bible does say that "his anger was kindled". He certainly had the power to put Joseph to death so why not do that? I believe he did not completely believe his wife but put Joseph in prison to keep peace in the

household as well as to keep up appearances since the entire household knew the story by now.

And it came to pass, when his master heard the words of his wife, which she spake unto him, saying, After this manner did thy servant to me; that his wrath was kindled. And Joseph's master took him, and put him into the prison, a place where the king's prisoners were bound: and he was there in the prison.

It appears, from verse 3 of chapter forty that the prison was a dungeon in Potiphar's basement or at least was in some way attached to his house. Remember that Potiphar was captain of the guard. This was a place to keep important prisoners such as the two sent there by Pharaoh.

But the LORD was with Joseph, and shewed him mercy, and gave him favour in the sight of the keeper of the prison. And the keeper of the prison committed to Joseph's hand all the prisoners that were in the prison; and whatsoever they did there, he was the doer of it. The keeper of the prison looked not to any thing that was under his hand; because the LORD was with him, and that which he did, the LORD made it to prosper.

The keeper of the prison already knew Joseph and he knew a good thing when he had it. I have no doubt that Potiphar came down from time to time to find out how well his stock portfolio was doing. Notice that nowhere is Potiphar's wife's name given. She is unimportant and simply a tool of Satan.

GENESIS CHAPTER FORTY

And it came to pass after these things, that the butler of the king of Egypt and his baker had offended their lord the king of Egypt. And Pharaoh was wroth against two of his officers, against the chief of the butlers, and against the chief of the bakers. And he put them in ward in the house of the captain of the guard, into the prison, the place where Joseph was bound. And the captain of the guard charged Joseph with them, and he served them: and they continued a season in ward.

We are not told what the butler and baker were thrown into prison for. It could have been as little as the Pharaoh having a bad day. We do know, from the last chapter and from verse three of this chapter that the "prison" was somehow attached to Potiphar's house and that they were put under the care of Joseph.

And they dreamed a dream both of them, each man his dream in one night, each man according to the interpretation of his dream, the butler and the baker of the king of Egypt, which were bound in the prison.⁶ And Joseph came in unto them in the morning, and looked upon them, and, behold, they were sad.

How different is this from the Joseph we saw in the previous chapters? Here we have a young man who has become completely dependent on God and who makes the best of his bad situation. He obviously had compassion for the others there with him in the prison. He has also quickly risen to a position of some importance in the prison. We are told that the officer in charge of the prison placed complete trust in him. No doubt he knew Joseph well while he was running Potiphar's household.

And he asked Pharaoh's officers that were with him in the ward of his lord's house, saying, Wherefore look ye so sadly to day? And they said unto him, We have dreamed a dream, and there is no interpreter of it. And Joseph said unto them, Do not interpretations belong to God? tell me them, I pray you.

Notice here that Joseph gives God credit for the interpretation of dreams. He also has complete confidence that he, with God's help, can interpret those dreams.

And the chief butler told his dream to Joseph, and said to him, In my dream, behold, a vine was before me; And in the vine were three branches: and it was as though it budded, and her blossoms shot forth; and the clusters thereof brought forth ripe grapes: And Pharaoh's cup was in my hand: and I took the grapes, and pressed them into Pharaoh's cup, and I gave the cup into Pharaoh's hand.

The chief butler tells Joseph the dream and expects an interpretation based on Joseph's confidence in his God. This differs from the baker's reason which we will see later. Notice that this is "new" wine, freshly pressed from the grapes. There is no alcoholic content in this. This is the same "wine that Jesus produced in his miracle at the marriage feast. There is always discussion of whether the wine Jesus made was alcoholic or not. It was not, as it was freshly made and therefore "new" wine.

And Joseph said unto him, This is the interpretation of it: The three branches are three days: Yet within three days shall Pharaoh lift up thine head, and restore thee unto thy place: and thou shalt deliver Pharaoh's cup into his hand, after the former manner when thou wast his butler. But think on me when it shall be well with thee, and shew kindness, I pray thee, unto me, and make mention of me unto Pharaoh, and bring me out of this house: For indeed I was stolen away out of the land of the Hebrews: and here also have I done nothing that they should put me into the dungeon.

Joseph does the interpretation and asks for nothing in return except that he be remembered to Pharaoh when the time was right. Notice that he uses the phrase "land of the Hebrews" when there was no real "land of the Hebrews" at that time. The land had been promised by God but the Jewish nation was not yet in the land. They became a real nation when they left Egypt in the Exodus. All that said, the phrase is correct since the land was promised by God and God does not break his promises.

When the chief baker saw that the interpretation was good, he said unto Joseph, I also was in my dream, and, behold, I had three white baskets on my head: And in the uppermost basket there was of all manner of bakemeats for Pharaoh; and the birds did eat them out of the basket upon my head.

Notice here that the chief baker based his request for an interpretation on the fact that Joseph had been able to interpret the butler's dream and not on the fact that Joseph had confidence in his God. His dream is very similar to the butler's dream but there is a difference. The difference is the birds. When you have extra time run the scriptures containing the word "bird" or "birds". You will find, for the most part, that birds are mentioned in a negative way. This isn't always true but occurs enough to make you say hmmm.

And Joseph answered and said, This is the interpretation thereof: The three baskets are three days: Yet within three days shall Pharaoh lift up thy head from off thee, and shall hang thee on a tree; and the birds shall eat thy flesh from off thee.

That is a gruesome interpretation and I am quite sure that the baker just laughed it off. On the other hand, if he did believe it he now had time to get himself right with God. It is better to be warned of the coming judgment" and to prepare for it than to not know and

face it unprepared. Are you beginning to see some parallels in our modern society? We need to warn people of the coming judgment.

And it came to pass the third day, which was Pharaoh's birthday, that he made a feast unto all his servants: and he lifted up the head of the chief butler and of the chief baker among his servants. And he restored the chief butler unto his butlership again; and he gave the cup into Pharaoh's hand: But he hanged the chief baker: as Joseph had interpreted to them.

So, the interpretations are correct and Pharaoh gives himself a birthday party and as a party favor he hangs the baker and leaves his body hanging for the birds. Many Christians want to share with the good news of the gospel with the unsaved but do not want to share the bad news of the gospel and yes, there is bad news. The good news is that salvation is through faith in the finished work of Jesus Christ on the cross. While this is true, and necessary, it is not the whole story. The warning must also be given that to reject Christ is to go to Hell. Another way of putting it; use John chapter 3 verse 16 but also be sure to use verse eighteen.

Yet did not the chief butler remember Joseph, but forgot him.

So, we leave Joseph in prison for another two long years. God did get him out eventually and even brought his bones out of Egypt four hundred years later.

GENESIS CHAPTER FORTY ONE

And it came to pass at the end of two full years, that Pharaoh dreamed: and, behold, he stood by the river. And, behold, there came up out of the river seven well favoured kine and fatfleshed; and they fed in a meadow. And, behold, seven other kine came up after them out of the river, ill favoured and leanfleshed; and stood by the other kine upon the brink of the river. And the ill favoured and leanfleshed kine did eat up the seven well favoured and fat kine. So Pharaoh awoke. And he slept and dreamed the second time: and, behold, seven ears of corn came up upon one stalk, rank and

good. And, behold, seven thin ears and blasted with the east wind sprung up after them. And the seven thin ears devoured the seven rank and full ears. And Pharaoh awoke, and, behold, it was a dream. And 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 the wise men thereof: and Pharaoh told them his dream; but there was none that could interpret them unto Pharaoh.

Two full years had passed, and Joseph is still in Potiphar's prison. He has been, forgotten by the cupbearer of the Pharaoh despite Joseph's plea to be remembered after his predictions came to pass. God chose to work through a lost person so He spoke to Pharaoh in two dreams. Both dreams were very real and troubling. After each dream Pharaoh was awakened so that he would be sure to remember the dreams. Notice that the cows come out of the Nile and the Nile is the lifeblood of Egypt. The dream was distressing to the Pharaoh because it was experienced twice in slightly different forms. The dreams were strange, for the seven lean cows remained lean and gaunt, even after consuming the fat cattle. Something was wrong since cows do not normally eat cows nor does grain eat grain. Also notice here that the east wind comes into Egypt from the deserts of Arabia and would be hot and dry.

Then spake the chief butler unto Pharaoh, saying, I do remember my faults this day: Pharaoh was wroth with his servants, and put me in ward in the captain of the guard's house, both me and the chief baker: And we dreamed a dream in one night, I and he; we dreamed each man according to the interpretation of his dream. And there was there with us a young man, an Hebrew, servant to the captain of the guard; and we told him, and he interpreted to us our dreams; to each man according to his dream he did interpret. And it came to pass, as he interpreted to us, so it was; me he restored unto mine office, and him he hanged.

The king's magicians, could not interpret the meaning of the dream and for good reason; the two dreams were a revelation from God, and the things of God can only be revealed by His word or His Spirit.

Joseph was finally brought to the cupbearer's mind, and Pharaoh was told of the Hebrew slave who had interpreted his, the cupbearer's dream. He does not mention Joseph's religious faith nor the fact that he was wrongly imprisoned. These things did not matter to Pharaoh nor the cupbearer.

Then Pharaoh sent and called Joseph, and they brought him hastily out of the dungeon: and he shaved himself, and changed his raiment, and came in unto Pharaoh.

Here we see something of the difference in cultures. Before going to Pharaoh Joseph washed himself and changed his clothes. Notice that he also shaved. The beard that was a mark of dignity on a Hebrew was an abomination to the Egyptians who were clean shaven.

Joseph is conforming to the culture.

And Pharaoh said unto Joseph, I have dreamed a dream, and there is none that can interpret it: and I have heard say of thee, that thou canst understand a dream to interpret it. And Joseph answered Pharaoh, saying, It is not in me: God shall give Pharaoh an answer of peace.

Again Joseph gives God credit for the interpretation of dreams. He takes none of the credit for himself.

And Pharaoh said unto Joseph, In my dream, behold, I stood upon the bank of the river: And, behold, there came up out of the river seven kine, fatfleshed and well favoured; and they fed in a meadow: And, behold, seven other kine came up after them, poor and very ill favoured and leanfleshed, such as I never saw in all the land of Egypt for badness: And the lean and the ill favoured kine did eat up the first seven fat kine: And when they had eaten them up, it could not be known that they had eaten them; but they were still ill favoured, as at the beginning. So I awoke. And I saw in my dream, and, behold, seven ears came up in one stalk, full and good: And, behold, seven ears, withered, thin, and blasted with the east wind, sprung up after them: And the thin ears devoured the seven good ears: and I told this unto the magicians; but there was none that could declare it to me.

Kine is just an old fashioned word for cattle. This is the same dream we discussed earlier in the chapter. The dream is essentially the same and is told this way to reinforce the seriousness of it.

And Joseph said unto Pharaoh, The dream of Pharaoh is one: God hath shewed Pharaoh what he is about to do. The seven good kine are seven years; and the seven good ears are seven years: the dream is one. And the seven thin and ill favoured kine

that came up after them are seven years; and the seven empty ears blasted with the east wind shall be seven years of famine. This is the thing which I have spoken unto Pharaoh: What God is about to do he sheweth unto Pharaoh. Behold, there come seven years of great plenty throughout all the land of Egypt: And there shall arise after them seven years of famine; and all the plenty shall be forgotten in the land of Egypt; and the famine shall consume the land; And the plenty shall not be known in the land by reason of that famine following; for it shall be very grievous.

Joseph, with God's help, interprets the dream but he doesn't stop there. He goes on to give Pharaoh advice and Pharaoh heeds the advice. Joseph has managed Potiphar's household wisely and has managed the affairs of the prison wisely and now will be given complete charge of the land of Egypt. Do not think that any of this is by chance. Joseph does not get "lucky breaks". He works hard and long for everything and the "breaks" come directly from God. God brought him to exactly where he is at this point.

And for that the dream was doubled unto Pharaoh twice; it is because the thing is established by God, and God will shortly bring it to pass. Now therefore let Pharaoh look out a man discreet and wise, and set him over the land of Egypt. Let Pharaoh do this, and let him appoint officers over the land, and take up the fifth part of the land of Egypt in the seven plenteous years. And let them gather all the food of those good years that come, and lay up corn under the hand of Pharaoh, and let them keep food in the cities. And that food shall be for store to the land against the seven years of famine, which shall be in the land of Egypt; that the land perish not through the famine.

Notice that phrase, "a man discreet and wise". That had to come from God as Joseph could not have had any idea that he was the one to be chosen. The phrase, came from God, and the idea in Pharaoh's mind came from God. Now the phrase, "take up the fifth part of the land"; this was a twenty per cent tax. It is likely the tax was only ten percent before this but the land was producing so abundantly that the people probably did not object to the tax increase.

And the thing was good in the eyes of Pharaoh, and in the eyes of all his servants.

And Pharaoh said unto his servants, Can we find such a one as this is, a man in whom the Spirit of God is? And Pharaoh said unto Joseph, Forasmuch as God hath shewed thee all this, there is none so discreet and wise as thou art: Thou shalt be over

my house, and according unto thy word shall all my people be ruled: only in the throne will I be greater than thou. And Pharaoh said unto Joseph, See, I have set thee over all the land of Egypt.

Pharaoh makes two references to God in these verses but we are not to think that he suddenly was converted to the Hebrew God. No, he did though, recognize that Joseph had special powers from his God.

And Pharaoh took off his ring from his hand, and put it upon Joseph's hand, and arrayed him in vestures of fine linen, and put a gold chain about his neck; And he made him to ride in the second chariot which he had; and they cried before him, Bow the knee: and he made him ruler over all the land of Egypt. And Pharaoh said unto Joseph, I am Pharaoh, and without thee shall no man lift up his hand or foot in all the land of Egypt. And Pharaoh called Joseph's name Zaphnathpaaneah; and he gave him to wife Asenath the daughter of Potipherah priest of On. And Joseph went out over all the land of Egypt.

Joseph is made second in command in all the land of Egypt. This made him the second most powerful man in the known world as Egypt was the leading world power at this time. I think the important part of that verse is the part dealing with the new wife. There are a couple of things to keep in mind concerning this. First, there was no where else for Joseph to get a wife. His choices were limited. Second, it would have offended the Pharaoh and third there was no prohibition from God at this time. God had only commanded that they not take a wife of the Canaanites to this point. The command not to take a wife outside the Jewish nation came later.

And Joseph was thirty years old when he stood before Pharaoh king of Egypt. And Joseph went out from the presence of Pharaoh, and went throughout all the land of Egypt. And in the seven plenteous years the earth brought forth by handfuls. And 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: the food of the field, which was round about every city, laid he up in the same. And Joseph gathered corn as the sand of the sea, very much, until he left numbering; for it was without number.

Joseph was thirty years old, so, since he was seventeen years old when he was sold into Egypt, and was now thirty, he was thirteen years in slavery. Now he is in charge of Egypt

and goes about over the land seeing to the building of granaries and other storage buildings for the crops.

And unto Joseph were born two sons before the years of famine came, which Asenath the daughter of Potipherah priest of On bare unto him. And Joseph called the name of the firstborn Manasseh: For God, said he, hath made me forget all my toil, and all my father's house. And the name of the second called he Ephraim: For God hath caused me to be fruitful in the land of my affliction.

It would seem from the names Joseph gave his sons that God had allowed him to forget all the years of toil and disgrace as a slave. He was now the second most powerful man in the world, he had a wife and two sons that he loved. He was now on the mountaintop after thirteen years in the valley.

And the seven years of plenteousness, that was in the land of Egypt, were ended. And the seven years of dearth began to come, according as Joseph had said: and the dearth was in all lands; but in all the land of Egypt there was bread. And when all the land of Egypt was famished, the people cried to Pharaoh for bread: and Pharaoh said unto all the Egyptians, Go unto Joseph; what he saith to you, do.

God is setting the stage here for the four hundred years of captivity that the Jews were to endure. God is going to use the wealth of Egypt to build the Hebrew nation. At the same time the Canaanites would be building Canaan land into a land of milk and honey. Little did they know that they would spend four hundred years building it for the Jewish nation.

And the famine was over all the face of the earth: and Joseph opened all the storehouses, and sold unto the Egyptians; and the famine waxed sore in the land of Egypt. And all countries came into Egypt to Joseph for to buy corn; because that the famine was so sore in all lands.

God works in mysterious ways and takes a long time to do it. In this case he had a child, hated by his brothers, thrown into slavery, so he could build a nation.

GENESIS CHAPTER FORTY TWO

Now when Jacob saw that there was corn in Egypt, Jacob said unto his sons, Why do ye look one upon another? And he said, Behold, I have heard that there is corn in Egypt: get you down thither, and buy for us from thence; that we may live, and not die. And Joseph's ten brethren went down to buy corn in Egypt. But Benjamin, Joseph's brother, Jacob sent not with his brethren; for he said, Lest peradventure mischief befall him.

Jacob is still showing favoritism to his youngest son since he believes the other favorite, Joseph, to be dead from an attack by wild beasts. This famine is said to be world wide but is caused by God to force Jacob's family down into Egypt. This is where God intends to build Jacob's family into the Jewish nation. The families will grow from twelve sons to the millions of Hebrews who come out of Egypt four hundred years later. Keep in mind as we study these chapters that the things that happen to Joseph, good and bad, are not the result of "luck" or coincidence but rather a direct result of guidance by God.

And the sons of Israel came to buy corn among those that came: for the famine was in the land of Canaan. And Joseph was the governor over the land, and he it was that sold to all the people of the land: and Joseph's brethren came, and bowed down themselves before him with their faces to the earth. And Joseph saw his brethren, and he knew them, but made himself strange unto them, and spake roughly unto them; and he said unto them, Whence come ye? And they said, From the land of Canaan to buy food. And Joseph knew his brethren, but they knew not him.

This passage is almost amusing. Jacob says to his sons "why are you standing around? Get down into Egypt and buy grain. His favoritism is still showing since he keeps Benjamin, Rachel's son with him. Joseph knows his brothers but they do not recognize him. Notice here that Joseph's brothers bow down to him just as he had seen in the dream that got him in trouble to start with. It is no wonder that Joseph's brothers did not recognize him. It had been twenty years and here he was clean shaven and dressed in fine Egyptian clothing.

And Joseph remembered the dreams which he dreamed of them, and said unto them, Ye are spies; to see the nakedness of the land ye are come. And they said unto him, Nay, my lord, but to buy food are thy servants come. We are all one man's sons; we

are true men, thy servants are no spies. And he said unto them, Nay, but to see the nakedness of the land ye are come.

Joseph well knows that they are not spies. What he is really doing here is fishing for information about his family. That phrase "Joseph remembered his dreams" is loaded. Joseph can now see God's hand in all this. He suddenly realizes the reason for his being sold into slavery and for the trials he had been through. Understand that Joseph was only pretending this severity as he sought a way to bring all of his family down to Egypt. Accusing them of being spies caused them to blurt out more facts than they would have otherwise given.

And they said, Thy servants are twelve brethren, the sons of one man in the land of Canaan; and, behold, the youngest is this day with our father, and one is not. And Joseph said unto them, That is it that I spake unto you, saying, Ye are spies: Hereby ye shall be proved: By the life of Pharaoh ye shall not go forth hence, except your youngest brother come hither. Send one of you, and let him fetch your brother, and ye shall be kept in prison, that your words may be proved, whether there be any truth in you: or else by the life of Pharaoh surely ye are spies. And he put them all together into ward three days.

This confinement of the brothers was not punishment but simply a way to hold them there and make them understand the gravity of their situation. He is really giving the brothers two choices. Either produce the younger brother or you really are all spies. If all this seems a little harsh just remember what these brothers had done to him.

And Joseph said unto them the third day, This do, and live; for I fear God: If ye be true men, let one of your brethren be bound in the house of your prison: go ye, carry corn for the famine of your houses: But bring your youngest brother unto me; so shall your words be verified, and ye shall not die. And they did so.

Now Joseph's dealings with his brothers is less harsh than at first. He will now keep only one of them and let the others go home with grain for their families. He does demand that they bring Benjamin down to Egypt and that is going to be a problem.

And they said one to another, We are verily guilty concerning our brother, in that we saw the anguish of his soul, when he besought us, and we would not hear; therefore is

this distress come upon us. And Reuben answered them, saying, Spake I not unto you, saying, Do not sin against the child; and ye would not hear? therefore, behold, also his blood is required.

It amazes me that the brothers now seem to regard this as a punishment from God for what they had done to Joseph years earlier. They are right of course but the sin had been done years before and given man's ability to quickly forget his past sins, it is still amazing.

Usually, with us, if it's more than a week old it doesn't count anymore.

And they knew not that Joseph understood them; for he spake unto them by an interpreter. And he turned himself about from them, and wept; and returned to them again, and communed with them, and took from them Simeon, and bound him before their eyes.

There must have been relief among the brothers since now only one of them would be held in prison until they could return with Benjamin. The main obstacle now would be convincing Jacob to let Benjamin return with them. Notice before we leave these verses that the brothers now began to talk among themselves not being aware that Joseph understood every word. Why did Joseph choose Simeon as the one to remain in prison? That is an easy one. With Reuben gone when Joseph was sold into slavery, Simeon was the one in charge of the sale.

Then Joseph commanded to fill their sacks with corn, and to restore every man's money into his sack, and to give them provision for the way: and thus did he unto them. And they laded their asses with the corn, and departed thence. And as one of them opened his sack to give his ass provender in the inn, he espied his money; for, behold, it was in his sack's mouth. And he said unto his brethren, My money is restored; and, lo, it is even in my sack: and their heart failed them, and they were afraid, saying one to another, What is this that God hath done unto us?

Apparently the other brothers did not bother to check their sacks at this time. Why would they not check? There was an inn? I confess that I completely missed that little nugget in the other times I read Genesis. For some reason I always assumed they camped out under the stars during their journey. The brothers must have been very puzzled at finding their money restored to them. Now they had to wonder even more what Joseph was up to.

Joseph's statement that he feared God may have given them a little encouragement.

And they came unto Jacob their father unto the land of Canaan, and told him all that befell unto them; saying, The man, who is the lord of the land, spake roughly to us, and took us for spies of the country. And we said unto him, We are true men; we are no spies: We be twelve brethren, sons of our father; one is not, and the youngest is this day with our father in the land of Canaan. And the man, the lord of the country, said unto us, Hereby shall I know that ye are true men; leave one of your brethren here with me, and take food for the famine of your households, and be gone: And bring your youngest brother unto me: then shall I know that ye are no spies, but that ye are true men: so will I deliver you your brother, and ye shall traffick in the land.

So here it is. Bring Benjamin down to Egypt. Joseph probably remembered his father well enough to know that the only way he would ever get the whole family down to Egypt would be to get Benjamin down first. The rest would follow. If Joseph didn't realize this, God certainly did.

And it came to pass as they emptied their sacks, that, behold, every man's bundle of money was in his sack: and when both they and their father saw the bundles of money, they were afraid. And Jacob their father said unto them, Me have ye bereaved of my children: Joseph is not, and Simeon is not, and ye will take Benjamin away: all these things are against me. And Reuben spake unto his father, saying, Slay my two sons, if I bring him not to thee: deliver him into my hand, and I will bring him to thee again.

Now all the brothers find money in their sacks. I still can't imagine their lack of curiosity back at the inn. None of them understand this. As far as Jacob is concerned both Joseph and Simeon are now dead and he is not going to risk Benjamin. Reuben offers his two sons as hostages probably knowing full well that Jacob would not have his grandsons killed. The only question left is why did Joseph have the money returned in the grain sacks. Either it could have been a test of their honesty, and it turned out that way. Or, it could simply have been that Joseph did not wish to charge his family for helping them.

Given Joseph's obviously changed character, I am going with the last one.

And he said, My son shall not go down with you; for his brother is dead, and he is left alone: if mischief befall him by the way in the which ye go, then shall ye bring down

my gray hairs with sorrow to the grave.

One thing jumps out immediately. Jacob was willing to sacrifice Simeon to save Benjamin. I think the discussion must have gotten heated at this point. Jacob is old and the brothers have reached the point where they run things under the direction of their father. Given Jacob's actions all his life, and his serious lack of spirituality, the brothers may have had little respect for him and now he is refusing to let them rescue Simeon. This can not have been an easy conversation. In other words, you are willing to let one son die since you aren't willing to take a small chance of losing Benjamin.

GENESIS CHAPTER FORTY THREE

And the famine was sore in the land. And it came to pass, when they had eaten up the corn which they had brought out of Egypt, their father said unto them, Go again, buy us a little food. And Judah spake unto him, saying, The man did solemnly protest unto us, saying, Ye shall not see my face, except your brother be with you.

The first fifteen verses are about the debate between Jacob and Judah as to whether or not Benjamin will be allowed to go with his brothers to Egypt. Jacob procrastinates and continually looks for ways around doing the right thing. After all that God has done for Jacob he still lacks faith. See the heroes of the faith in Hebrews chapter eleven verse 21. Though the Holy Spirit included Jacob in the heroes of the faith this is apparently all He could say about Jacob and that when he was dying.

If thou wilt send our brother with us, we will go down and buy thee food: But if thou wilt not send him, we will not go down: for the man said unto us, Ye shall not see my face, except your brother be with you.

Notice here that Judah has replaced Reuben as the leader of the brothers and by default, the head of the family in everything except title. Judah, for all his problems is a spiritual giant compared to Jacob.

And Israel said, Wherefore dealt ye so ill with me, as to tell the man whether ye had yet a brother? And they said, The man asked us straitly of our state, and of our kindred, saying, Is your father yet alive? have ye another brother? and we told him according to the tenor of these words: could we certainly know that he would say, Bring your brother down?

There is a lesson here. The brothers, as well as Jacob, are afraid and are depending on works to satisfy, and impress, Joseph. Keep in mind that Joseph is a type of Christ. Faith in God, not works, would be the proper thing in these cases. Notice here also that Jacob is asking why his sons did not just lie to Joseph when he asked about the family. I find it strange that no one suspected anything when Joseph began asking these personal questions. In the real world why would an Egyptian ruler care anything at all about a family of nomadic Jews?

And Judah said unto Israel his father, Send the lad with me, and we will arise and go; that we may live, and not die, both we, and thou, and also our little ones. I will be surety for him; of my hand shalt thou require him: if I bring him not unto thee, and set him before thee, then let me bear the blame for ever: For except we had lingered, surely now we had returned this second time.

Here Judah is chiding his father for his stalling and indecision. Notice that phrase, "we could have returned twice". Judah's offer is different from Reuben's offer in the last chapter. Reuben offered to let Jacob kill two of his sons, knowing full well that Jacob would not do that. That was not a realistic offer whereas this offer by Judah was. Judah would be giving up all blessing from his father as well as any inheritance he might have later.

And their father Israel said unto them, If it must be so now, do this; take of the best fruits in the land in your vessels, and carry down the man a present, a little balm, and a little honey, spices, and myrrh, nuts, and almonds: And take double money in your hand; and the money that was brought again in the mouth of your sacks, carry it again in your hand; peradventure it was an oversight: Take also your brother, and arise, go again unto the man:

This is almost funny. If Benjamin has to go then take some of all these presents to give to the Egyptian leader. He did not offer these gifts as long as it was the other brothers going.

I can almost imagine Jacob's spirit walking around heaven and being avoided by his family for all his wrongdoing. And yes, we will have memory there. Remember the rich man in hell in the book of Luke. God does not wipe away the tears, and presumably the memories, until later.

And God Almighty give you mercy before the man, that he may send away your other brother, and Benjamin. If I be bereaved of my children, I am bereaved. And the men took that present, and they took double money in their hand and Benjamin; and rose up, and went down to Egypt, and stood before Joseph.

Here are works again. Jacob is trying to buy favor by sending presents and double money. Jacob refers to God but this is not a prayer but just a fatalistic statement. In other words, whatever will be will be. At any rate, now that the family is facing starvation again he finally agrees to let Benjamin go.

And when Joseph saw Benjamin with them, he said to the ruler of his house, Bring these men home, and slay, and make ready; for these men shall dine with me at noon. And the man did as Joseph bade; and the man brought the men into Joseph's house. And the men were afraid, because they were brought into Joseph's house; and they said, Because of the money that was returned in our sacks at the first time are we brought in; that he may seek occasion against us, and fall upon us, and take us for bondmen, and our asses.

There is still no faith in God's promises here. The brothers are now afraid they will be made slaves as they made Joseph a slave. To their credit they are now repentant for what they had done to their brother.

And they came near to the steward of Joseph's house, and they communed with him at the door of the house, And said, O sir, we came indeed down at the first time to buy food: And it came to pass, when we came to the inn, that we opened our sacks, and, behold, every man's money was in the mouth of his sack, our money in full weight: and we have brought it again in our hand. And other money have we brought down in our hands to buy food: we cannot tell who put our money in our sacks.

The fact that they were invited into the ruler's house no doubt reinforced that fear that they would be made slaves. Joseph's brothers were desperate. They would buy their salvation

with a gift of some of Canaan's best products , and with money.

And he said, Peace be to you, fear not: your God, and the God of your father, hath given you treasure in your sacks: I had your money. And he brought Simeon out unto them. And the man brought the men into Joseph's house, and gave them water, and they washed their feet; and he gave their asses provender. And they made ready the present against Joseph came at noon: for they heard that they should eat bread there.

And when Joseph came home, they brought him the present which was in their hand into the house, and bowed themselves to him to the earth.

I think they put a great deal of effort into the preparation and presentation of the gift. For one thing, it appeared that they had gained some favor in the eyes of Joseph, to be invited for a meal. and then the other. They supposed this gift would win them favor with Joseph but as it turned out he hardly looked at it. It was brushed aside just as their attempt to return the money had been.

And he asked them of their welfare, and said, Is your father well, the old man of whom ye spake? Is he yet alive? And they answered, Thy servant our father is in good health, he is yet alive. And they bowed down their heads, and made obeisance.

Joseph isn't interested in the gifts but he is interested in the people. He first inquires about his father. This is that "type of Christ" popping up again. Jesus is interested in people, not things.

And he lifted up his eyes, and saw his brother Benjamin, his mother's son, and said, Is this your younger brother, of whom ye spake unto me? And he said, God be gracious unto thee, my son. And Joseph made haste; for his bowels did yearn upon his brother: and he sought where to weep; and he entered into his chamber, and wept there. And he washed his face, and went out, and refrained himself, and said, Set on bread.

Here Joseph pronounced a blessing on Benjamin and that must have sounded strange to the other brothers. We are given a glimpse into the heart of Joseph. He is so unsettled by Benjamin and his other brothers that he has to excuse himself. This is a far cry from the

bratty kid they sold into slavery thirty years ago.

And they set on for him by himself, and for them by themselves, and for the Egyptians, which did eat with him, by themselves: because the Egyptians might not eat bread with the Hebrews; for that is an abomination unto the Egyptians. And they sat before him, the firstborn according to his birthright, and the youngest according to his youth: and the men marvelled one at another. And he took and sent messes unto them from before him: but Benjamin's mess was five times so much as any of their's. And they drank, and were merry with him.

At least as we finish this chapter everyone is happy. Notice that Joseph seated the brothers in order of their age. This would have been strange but remember that the brothers believed Joseph had special powers of divination.

GENESIS CHAPTER FORTY FOUR

And he commanded the steward of his house, saying, Fill the men's sacks with food, as much as they can carry, and put every man's money in his sack's mouth. And put my cup, the silver cup, in the sack's mouth of the youngest, and his corn money. And he did according to the word that Joseph had spoken.

It has now been over a year and Joseph has still not revealed himself to his brothers. The brothers have now recognized that God has a hand in these dealings but they have not demonstrated to Joseph true repentance for their past deeds. I think Joseph is setting them up to see if they will throw Benjamin under the bus.

As soon as the morning was light, the men were sent away, they and their asses. And when they were gone out of the city, and not yet far off, Joseph said unto his steward, Up, follow after the men; and when thou dost overtake them, say unto them, Wherefore have ye rewarded evil for good? Is not this it in which my lord drinketh, and whereby indeed he divineth? ye have done evil in so doing. And he overtook

them, and he spake unto them these same words.

The servant is now accusing the brothers of thievery. They know they are innocent and suggest that the one who has the cup be put to death and all be put into slavery. These guys are so sure they are innocent that they can hardly wait to open their sacks.

And they said unto him, Wherefore saith my lord these words? God forbid that thy servants should do according to this thing: Behold, the money, which we found in our sacks' mouths, we brought again unto thee out of the land of Canaan: how then should we steal out of thy lord's house silver or gold? With whomsoever of thy servants it be found, both let him die, and we also will be my lord's bondmen. And he said, Now also let it be according unto your words: he with whom it is found shall be my servant; and ye shall be blameless.

The servant has a lot of leeway here. He is probably guessing at what his master would do.

Then they speedily took down every man his sack to the ground, and opened every man his sack. And he searched, and began at the eldest, and left at the youngest: and the cup was found in Benjamin's sack. Then they rent their clothes, and laded every man his ass, and returned to the city.

This begins the final test of Joseph's brothers. They had initially insisted that the thief die and the others remain as slaves, the steward wisely adjusted the penalty as slavery only for the culprit. At this point they could have left Benjamin there as a thief and gone on their way. But the character of these men had changed in the twenty years since they sold Joseph. Leaving Benjamin never seemed to cross their minds. Each one of the brothers was expressing grief and each prepared to return to the city and into possible slavery.

And Judah and his brethren came to Joseph's house; for he was yet there: and they fell before him on the ground. And Joseph said unto them, What deed is this that ye have done? wot ye not that such a man as I can certainly divine? And Judah said, What shall we say unto my lord? what shall we speak? or how shall we clear ourselves? God hath found out the iniquity of thy servants: behold, we are my lord's servants, both we, and he also with whom the cup is found. And he said, God forbid that I should do so: but the man in whose hand the cup is found, he shall be my servant; and as for you, get you up in peace unto your father.

Here Joseph is giving them the final test and they pass with flying colors. Before he reveals himself to them he must know that their character has changed completely and that they are truly repentant for what they did years ago.

The verses that follow show Judah's true repentance.

Then Judah came near unto him, and said, Oh my lord, let thy servant, I pray thee, speak a word in my lord's ears, and let not thine anger burn against thy servant: for thou art even as Pharaoh. My lord asked his servants, saying, Have ye a father, or a brother? And we said unto my lord, We have a father, an old man, and a child of his old age, a little one; and his brother is dead, and he alone is left of his mother, and his father loveth him. And thou saidst unto thy servants, Bring him down unto me, that I may set mine eyes upon him. And we said unto my lord, The lad cannot leave his father: for if he should leave his father, his father would die. And thou saidst unto thy servants, Except your youngest brother come down with you, ye shall see my face no more.

Notice that in these verses and the ones following that the brothers, through Judah who has become the real leader, are no longer seeking justice but are simply pleading for mercy.

And it came to pass when we came up unto thy servant my father, we told him the words of my lord. And our father said, Go again, and buy us a little food. And we said, We cannot go down: if our youngest brother be with us, then will we go down: for we may not see the man's face, except our youngest brother be with us. And thy servant my father said unto us, Ye know that my wife bare me two sons: And the one went out from me, and I said, Surely he is torn in pieces; and I saw him not since: And if ye take this also from me, and mischief befall him, ye shall bring down my gray hairs with sorrow to the grave.

The brothers no longer have concern for themselves. Their concern now seems to be completely focused on Benjamin and their father Jacob.

Now therefore when I come to thy servant my father, and the lad be not with us; seeing that his life is bound up in the lad's life; It shall come to pass, when he seeth that the lad is not with us, that he will die: and thy servants shall bring down the gray hairs of thy servant our father with sorrow to the grave. For thy servant became

surety for the lad unto my father, saying, If I bring him not unto thee, then I shall bear the blame to my father for ever. Now therefore, I pray thee, let thy servant abide instead of the lad a bondman to my lord; and let the lad go up with his brethren.

Judah offers the ultimate sacrifice. He offers himself in place of Benjamin.

For how shall I go up to my father, and the lad be not with me? lest peradventure I see the evil that shall come on my father.

Judah's appeal did not make Joseph feel sorry for them so much as it revealed that Judah was truly repentant. Joseph was now able to reveal his identity because genuine repentance had been shown. Until this moment there was insufficient evidence of repentance. The brothers did recognize the fact that their troubles were brought on by God for their previous sins. In other words they showed regret but not repentance.

GENESIS CHAPTER FORTY FIVE

Then Joseph could not refrain himself before all them that stood by him; and he cried, Cause every man to go out from me. And there stood no man with him, while Joseph made himself known unto his brethren. And he wept aloud: and the Egyptians and the house of Pharaoh heard.

This chapter of the book of Genesis illustrates forgiveness better than any other chapter in the Old Testament. Those years which Joseph spent in slavery and prison could have caused anger and resentment. Joseph could have been angry with God as well as with his brothers. Imagine the difference in the meetings with his brothers if Joseph had allowed his anger to grow instead of yielding to God and allowing forgiveness to rise to the top. But Joseph recognized that God was guiding things in his life. Complete reconciliation is brought about between them, made possible on the brothers' part by their genuine repentance and on Joseph's part by his total forgiveness of his brothers for selling him into slavery. Forgiveness is necessary in terms of our relationship with God: For if you forgive men for their transgressions, your heavenly Father will also forgive you. This also

indicates the reverse; if you refuse to forgive others, then your Father will not forgive you. Now, let me hasten to say, our salvation does not depend on forgiving others but on belief. Still, it's a good practice. See (Matthew 6:14-15).

And Joseph said unto his brethren, I am Joseph; doth my father yet live? And his brethren could not answer him; for they were troubled at his presence. And Joseph said unto his brethren, Come near to me, I pray you. And they came near. And he said, I am Joseph your brother, whom ye sold into Egypt.

Imagine the terror the brothers felt when they heard this. At this point they did not realize they were forgiven.

Now therefore be not grieved, nor angry with yourselves, that ye sold me hither: for God did send me before you to preserve life. For these two years hath the famine been in the land: and yet there are five years, in the which there shall neither be earing nor harvest. And God sent me before you to preserve you a posterity in the earth, and to save your lives by a great deliverance. So now it was not you that sent me hither, but God: and he hath made me a father to Pharaoh, and lord of all his house, and a ruler throughout all the land of Egypt.

Joseph is reassuring his brothers and stressing the fact that the fault is not theirs but the things that were done to him were the direct will of God. I believe that the reason that Joseph commanded everyone to leave except his brothers was in order to deal with the matter of the sin of his brothers in privacy. If Joseph intended for no one but his brothers to observe his emotional outburst, it didn't work, for "the Egyptians heard it", and this report even reached Pharaoh's ears.

Haste ye, and go up to my father, and say unto him, Thus saith thy son Joseph, God hath made me lord of all Egypt: come down unto me, tarry not: And thou shalt dwell in the land of Goshen, and thou shalt be near unto me, thou, and thy children, and thy children's children, and thy flocks, and thy herds, and all that thou hast: And there will I nourish thee; for yet there are five years of famine; lest thou, and thy household, and all that thou hast, come to poverty.

Remember the prophecy given to Abraham back in chapter fifteen. **And he said unto Abram, "Know for a surety that thy seed shall be a stranger in a land that is not**

theirs, and shall serve them; and they shall afflict them four hundred years. And also that nation, whom they shall serve, will I judge: and afterward they shall come out with great substance.

And, behold, your eyes see, and the eyes of my brother Benjamin, that it is my mouth that speaketh unto you. And ye shall tell my father of all my glory in Egypt, and of all that ye have seen; and ye shall haste and bring down my father hither.

Approximately a year had passed since Joseph's brothers had first arrived in Egypt. Now Joseph urges his brothers to quickly bring their father down to Egypt where they would live near him in the land of Goshen. Goshen was some of the most fertile land in all Egypt. You can see the hand of God at work here. Goshen was also well away from the urban areas so that the Egyptians would not have to closely associate with the Hebrew shepherds. Here his family could live in peace and be able to pasture their flocks.

And he fell upon his brother Benjamin's neck, and wept; and Benjamin wept upon his neck. Moreover he kissed all his brethren, and wept upon them: and after that his brethren talked with him.

This is quite a family reunion. With all the weeping they must have all been soaking wet when this was over.

And the fame thereof was heard in Pharaoh's house, saying, Joseph's brethren are come: and it pleased Pharaoh well, and his servants. And Pharaoh said unto Joseph, Say unto thy brethren, This do ye; lade your beasts, and go, get you unto the land of Canaan; And take your father and your households, and come unto me: and I will give you the good of the land of Egypt, and ye shall eat the fat of the land. Now thou art commanded, this do ye; take you wagons out of the land of Egypt for your little ones, and for your wives, and bring your father, and come. Also regard not your stuff; for the good of all the land of Egypt is your's.

There are two reasons why Pharaoh should be pleased to hear of the arrival of Joseph's brothers. First, Pharaoh had the greatest respect for Joseph. Joseph had saved his kingdom and anything that pleased Joseph would make Pharaoh happy. It would also seem that Joseph had never told Pharaoh of the wrong done to him by his brothers.

And the children of Israel did so: and Joseph gave them wagons, according to the commandment of Pharaoh, and gave them provision for the way. To all of them he gave each man changes of raiment; but to Benjamin he gave three hundred pieces of silver, and five changes of raiment. And to his father he sent after this manner; ten asses laden with the good things of Egypt, and ten she asses laden with corn and bread and meat for his father by the way. So he sent his brethren away, and they departed: and he said unto them, See that ye fall not out by the way.

Joseph is warning his brothers not to become quarrelsome on the journey home. He knows how easy it would be to start blaming each other for their past sins. Joseph has forgiven all and for them to now fall out would be dishonoring to God. We are charged by our Lord Jesus that we love one another, that we live in peace, that whatever occurs, or whatever former occurrences are remembered, we do not fall out.

And they went up out of Egypt, and came into the land of Canaan unto Jacob their father, And told him, saying, Joseph is yet alive, and he is governor over all the land of Egypt. And Jacob's heart fainted, for he believed them not. And they told him all the words of Joseph, which he had said unto them: and when he saw the wagons which Joseph had sent to carry him, the spirit of Jacob their father revived: And Israel said, It is enough; Joseph my son is yet alive: I will go and see him before I die.

It is interesting that Joseph is never commanded his brothers to confess to their father, and there is no record of any such confession in scripture. This was a private family matter and was dealt with in private. The loaded wagons were enough to convince Jacob that Joseph was alive. He now wished only to see his son before his death. His statement "I will go and see him before I die" is more than a little on the dramatic side since he lived another seventeen years in Egypt.

GENESIS CHAPTER FORTY SIX

We will go through this chapter quickly as a good bit is another of those genealogies we all love so much. A few of these names will need mentioning as they are ancestors of

people who crop up later.

And Israel took his journey with all that he had, and came to Beersheba, and offered sacrifices unto the God of his father Isaac. And God spake unto Israel in the visions of the night, and said, Jacob, Jacob. And he said, Here am I. And he said, I am God, the God of thy father: fear not to go down into Egypt; for I will there make of thee a great nation: I will go down with thee into Egypt; and I will also surely bring thee up again: and Joseph shall put his hand upon thine eyes.

Now Jacob has done what he should have been doing all along. Before deciding on his course of action he offers sacrifices and consults God. He offers sacrifices at Beersheba which is on the direct route to Egypt and is the place that both Abraham and Isaac offered sacrifices. Jacob probably has some reservations even though he wants to see Joseph. He no doubt remembers that his father had been forbidden to go down into Egypt. He may also have known of the prophecy to Abraham that his people would be slaves in a strange land for four hundred years. In light of all that the direct word of reassurance from God was needed. Notice here that he is also told that he will die in Egypt; the phrase "**Joseph shall put his his hand upon thine eyes**" shows that.

And Jacob rose up from Beersheba: and the sons of Israel carried Jacob their father, and their little ones, and their wives, in the wagons which Pharaoh had sent to carry him. And they took their cattle, and their goods, which they had gotten in the land of Canaan, and came into Egypt, Jacob, and all his seed with him: His sons, and his sons' sons with him, his daughters, and his sons' daughters, and all his seed brought he with him into Egypt.

As Dinah was his only daughter the plural daughters must include the daughters -in-law. They are taking their cattle and all of their goods except heavy furniture. The old man is riding in the wagons with the women and children while the sons take care of the heavy work and with some ranging out ahead of the caravan. This begins to look like one of our old western wagon trains. Now comes the list of those going into Egypt.

And these are the names of the children of Israel, which came into Egypt, Jacob and his sons: Reuben, Jacob's firstborn. And the sons of Reuben; Hanoch, and Phallu, and Hezron, and Carmi. And the sons of Simeon; Jemuel, and Jamin, and Ohad, and

Jachin, and Zohar, and Shaul the son of a Canaanitish woman. And the sons of Levi; Gershon, Kohath, and Merari. And the sons of Judah; Er, and Onan, and Shelah, and Pharez, and Zarah: but Er and Onan died in the land of Canaan. And the sons of Pharez were Hezron and Hamul. And the sons of Issachar; Tola, and Phuvah, and Job, and Shimron. And the sons of Zebulun; Sered, and Elon, and Jahleel. These be the sons of Leah, which she bare unto Jacob in Padanaram, with his daughter Dinah: all the souls of his sons and his daughters were thirty and three. And the sons of Gad; Ziphion, and Haggi, Shuni, and Ezbon, Eri, and Arodi, and Areli. And the sons of Asher; Jimnah, and Ishuah, and Isui, and Beriah, and Serah their sister: and the sons of Beriah; Heber, and Malchiel. These are the sons of Zilpah, whom Laban gave to Leah his daughter, and these she bare unto Jacob, even sixteen souls. The sons of Rachel Jacob's wife; Joseph, and Benjamin. And unto Joseph in the land of Egypt were born Manasseh and Ephraim, which Asenath the daughter of Potipherah priest of On bare unto him. And the sons of Benjamin were Belah, and Becher, and Ashbel, Gera, and Naaman, Ehi, and Rosh, Muppim, and Huppim, and Ard. These are the sons of Rachel, which were born to Jacob: all the souls were fourteen. And the sons of Dan; Hushim. And the sons of Naphtali; Jahzeel, and Guni, and Jezer, and Shillem. These are the sons of Bilhah, which Laban gave unto Rachel his daughter, and she bare these unto Jacob: all the souls were seven. All the souls that came with Jacob into Egypt, which came out of his loins, besides Jacob's sons' wives, all the souls were threescore and six; And the sons of Joseph, which were born him in Egypt, were two souls: all the souls of the house of Jacob, which came into Egypt, were threescore and ten.

The number of people is given here as 66. There were only sixty-six who went to Egypt; but to these add Joseph and his two sons, and Jacob the head of the clan, and the whole number amounts to seventy. In the speech of Stephen (Acts 7:14) the number is stated to be seventy-five; but as that estimate includes five sons of Ephraim and Manasseh (1 Chronicles 7:14-20), born in Egypt, the two accounts coincide. So how about that, the Holy Spirit got the count right in all three places and the Bible changers missed it.

And he sent Judah before him unto Joseph, to direct his face unto Goshen; and they came into the land of Goshen. And Joseph made ready his chariot, and went up to meet Israel his father, to Goshen, and presented himself unto him; and he fell on his neck, and wept on his neck a good while. And Israel said unto Joseph, Now let me

die, since I have seen thy face, because thou art yet alive.

What a reunion this must have been. He sent Judah before him unto Joseph. This was done as a precautionary measure and to get instructions from Joseph as to where they were to settle.

And Joseph said unto his brethren, and unto his father's house, I will go up, and shew Pharaoh, and say unto him, My brethren, and my father's house, which were in the land of Canaan, are come unto me; And the men are shepherds, for their trade hath been to feed cattle; and they have brought their flocks, and their herds, and all that they have.

Joseph now needs to make a courtesy call to Pharaoh to let him know that his family has arrived. This is only a courtesy call because if Pharaoh was worth his salt he already knew that a large group of people had entered his territory.

And it shall come to pass, when Pharaoh shall call you, and shall say, What is your occupation? That ye shall say, Thy servants' trade hath been about cattle from our youth even until now, both we, and also our fathers: that ye may dwell in the land of Goshen; for every shepherd is an abomination unto the Egyptians.

In other words, tell Pharaoh the truth. This is one of the reasons for picking Goshen. It was far from the urban centers and was a fertile land. The Egyptians looked down on the Hebrews and hated shepherds. No Blood of the Lamb for them.

GENESIS CHAPTER FORTY SEVEN

Then Joseph came and told Pharaoh, and said, My father and my brethren, and their flocks, and their herds, and all that they have, are come out of the land of Canaan; and, behold, they are in the land of Goshen. And he took some of his brethren, even five men, and presented them unto Pharaoh.

The five brothers are probably the oldest as this would be the usual way of selecting. I very much doubt that Benjamin would have been in the five as they would not want to risk him in any way.

And Pharaoh said unto his brethren, What is your occupation? And they said unto Pharaoh, Thy servants are shepherds, both we, and also our fathers. They said moreover unto Pharaoh, For to sojourn in the land are we come; for thy servants have no pasture for their flocks; for the famine is sore in the land of Canaan: now therefore, we pray thee, let thy servants dwell in the land of Goshen.

One important thing to notice here is that the brothers are careful to let Pharaoh know that their stay will be temporary and only until the famine is over. They intend to return to Canaan as soon as they can. The word that shows this is "sojourn" which indicates a temporary stay.

And Pharaoh spake unto Joseph, saying, Thy father and thy brethren are come unto thee: The land of Egypt is before thee; in the best of the land make thy father and brethren to dwell; in the land of Goshen let them dwell: and if thou knowest any men of activity among them, then make them rulers over my cattle.

Joseph has always impressed Pharaoh and now his brothers seem to have made a good impression. He wants them to train men to manage his own herds.

And Joseph brought in Jacob his father, and set him before Pharaoh: and Jacob blessed Pharaoh. And Pharaoh said unto Jacob, How old art thou? And Jacob said unto Pharaoh, The days of the years of my pilgrimage are an hundred and thirty years: few and evil have the days of the years of my life been, and have not attained unto the days of the years of the life of my fathers in the days of their pilgrimage.

What Jacob is saying here is that he has not accomplished what his father and grandfather did. I feel sure he is referring to his spiritual growth and closeness to God. Jacob wasted too many years. Notice also that Jacob has finally become what God wanted him to be. Jacob has come a long way. There is no cringing before Pharaoh as there was before Esau. He isn't hatching any schemes to try and get away with something. He meets Pharaoh face to face as the leader of a large clan. Finally he is trusting God. Jacob is now one hundred

thirty years old and lives to be one hundred forty seven. This is interesting because he is the last to live this long. When they enter Egypt the age at death drops down to 70-110 years.

And Jacob blessed Pharaoh, and went out from before Pharaoh.

Jacob blessed Pharaoh twice. Once when he came in and again when he left.

And Joseph placed his father and his brethren, and gave them a possession in the land of Egypt, in the best of the land, in the land of Rameses, as Pharaoh had commanded. And Joseph nourished his father, and his brethren, and all his father's household, with bread, according to their families.

////////// And there was no bread in all the land; for the famine was very sore, so that the land of Egypt and all the land of Canaan fainted by reason of the famine. And Joseph gathered up all the money that was found in the land of Egypt, and in the land of Canaan, for the corn which they bought: and Joseph brought the money into Pharaoh's house. And when money failed in the land of Egypt, and in the land of Canaan, all the Egyptians came unto Joseph, and said, Give us bread: for why should we die in thy presence? for the money faileth. And Joseph said, Give your cattle; and I will give you for your cattle, if money fail. And they brought their cattle unto Joseph: and Joseph gave them bread in exchange for horses, and for the flocks, and for the cattle of the herds, and for the asses: and he fed them with bread for all their cattle for that year.

This must have been in the third year of the famine. With four years of famine left all the money has come into the Egyptian treasury so now Joseph begins to take livestock in exchange for grain. I hope you notice that the people of Egypt are now in a welfare state and are headed for complete socialism. Soon the state will own everything.

When that year was ended, they came unto him the second year, and said unto him, We will not hide it from my lord, how that our money is spent; my lord also hath our herds of cattle; there is not ought left in the sight of my lord, but our bodies, and our lands: Wherefore shall we die before thine eyes, both we and our land? buy us and our land for bread, and we and our land will be servants unto Pharaoh: and give us

seed, that we may live, and not die, that the land be not desolate.

First thing to notice is that the second year mentioned is not the second year of the famine but the two years after verse thirteen. The state now has all the money and all the cattle and will now begin to take the land and the people themselves.

And Joseph bought all the land of Egypt for Pharaoh; for the Egyptians sold every man his field, because the famine prevailed over them: so the land became Pharaoh's.

And as for the people, he removed them to cities from one end of the borders of Egypt even to the other end thereof. Only the land of the priests bought he not; for the priests had a portion assigned them of Pharaoh, and did eat their portion which Pharaoh gave them: wherefore they sold not their lands.

Now the state owns and has the people in slavery. The people of Egypt are now moved off the land and into the cities. Some are left on the land as sharecroppers. The priests, and their lands, are left alone as they have direct grants from Pharaoh. It's always best to pick your battles and Joseph chose wisely here.

Then Joseph said unto the people, Behold, I have bought you this day and your land for Pharaoh: lo, here is seed for you, and ye shall sow the land. And it shall come to pass in the increase, that ye shall give the fifth part unto Pharaoh, and four parts shall be your own, for seed of the field, and for your food, and for them of your households, and for food for your little ones. And they said, Thou hast saved our lives: let us find grace in the sight of my lord, and we will be Pharaoh's servants. And Joseph made it a law over the land of Egypt unto this day, that Pharaoh should have the fifth part, except the land of the priests only, which became not Pharaoh's.

The famine must have been really bad to make the people accept a 20% tax and be happy to get it. At least now they can eat. In case you think 20 % is too much tax, think of how much many people in our country pay. At some levels the income tax is over thirty five per cent. Add to that sales tax, state income tax, excise tax on manufactured goods, gasoline tax, social security tax and on and on. Whether you realize it or not, if you work an hourly job you are likely paying over 50% in taxes, many of them hidden so you do not see them.

Think of fees. Those are just taxes by another name.

And Israel dwelt in the land of Egypt, in the country of Goshen; and they had possessions therein, and grew, and multiplied exceedingly. And Jacob lived in the land of Egypt seventeen years: so the whole age of Jacob was an hundred forty and seven years. And the time drew nigh that Israel must die: and he called his son Joseph, and said unto him, If now I have found grace in thy sight, put, I pray thee, thy hand under my thigh, and deal kindly and truly with me; bury me not, I pray thee, in Egypt: But I will lie with my fathers, and thou shalt carry me out of Egypt, and bury me in their buryingplace. And he said, I will do as thou hast said. And he said, Swear unto me. And he sware unto him. And Israel bowed himself upon the bed's head.

Give attention to a couple of things in these last verses. Israel is kneeling by the head of his bed, which would have been a mat on the floor. He has Joseph swear to bury him in Canaan where his ancestors are buried. I feel this is because he is remembering the promise and knows that at some future point God will bring his people out of Egypt and back to Canaan. Notice also the similarity of the oath to the one Abraham required of Eliezer when he sent him out to find a bride for Isaac.

GENESIS CHAPTER FORTY EIGHT

vs 1-4

Now Jacob is sick and this appears to be the sickness unto death. Jacob calls for Joseph and Joseph responds along with his two sons. Jacob now passes on the blessing he received from God. Do keep in mind that all through the book of Genesis God has repeatedly reaffirmed his promise, concerning the land, given to the Hebrew nation. Joseph may have known this already but repetition, at a time when there was no written record, was always necessary.

From this point, Jacob begins to prophesy. This was a right of the Patriarchs as they neared death.

Vs 5

Jacob now claims his grandsons as his own. Notice that last part of the verse. It is easy to misinterpret this but comparing it to what follows it means that he is claiming the two grandsons as a replacement for Reuben and Simeon in the matter of the

inheritance and of the blessing.

Vs 6-7

Verse six includes any other future children of Joseph in the blessing. Then Jacob's mind goes back to his first love, and favorite wife, Rachel. This verse is why we know that the cave where Sarah, and Rachel are buried is at the place we now know as Bethlehem, the birthplace of our Savior. This can't be a coincidence.

Vs 8-11

Jacob is almost blind and even though he is passing the blessing to these two he can not tell, for certain, who they are. I think it is likely that they just entered the room at this point. I believe that even though Jacob is on his deathbed he is overcome with joy at the fact that he has not only seen Joseph alive and prospering but that God has also allowed him to see his grandsons as well.

Vs 12-14

Jacob is now blessing the grandsons and notice what he does. He blesses the second son Ephraim, with the real blessing. This he does knowingly, and deliberately. Notice here that Jacob is now in prayer almost constantly.

This is a great change from when we first met Jacob the deceiver.

Vs 14-19

In these verses Joseph tries to correct his father's crossed hands but Jacob refuses. Jacob knows what he is doing. We know this by what happens later in Jewish history. The half tribe of Manasseh settles on the other side Jordan. In other words outside the promised land while the tabernacle is set up at Shiloh, inside Ephraim.

Vs 20-22

Jacob reaffirms the promise that the Israelites will be brought back, by God, to the promised land. He again places Ephraim ahead of Manasseh. Finally verse 22 which I completely confess to not understanding. As far as scripture is concerned, Jacob never took anything by bow and sword. This can not be a reference to chapter 34 because Jacob had no part in that and sharply rebuked his sons for what they had done.

GENESIS CHAPTER FORTY NINE

1-7

Jacob is preparing to die and calls his sons together to tell them what is coming in the future.

No ruler, prophet or judge or king ever came from the tribe of Reuben. They are the first tribe permanently disinherited—see 2 Kings 10-33. The material blessings of Reuben go to Joseph, the priestly blessings go to Simeon, then to Levi. Levi loses the priestly blessings in Gen 49 vs 5 then gets them back in Num 25 vs 11-12. The kingly blessings go to Judah and Reuben is left with nothing. Reuben is described as “unstable as water”. We would say “wishy washy”

verses 5, 6 and seven show Jacob distancing himself from the crime committed by Simeon and Levi at Shechem.

The first three prophecies are negative. Levi, Simeon and Reuben are not given the benefit of a Joel Osteen sermon.

8-12

In these next few verses Judah comes to the top and stays there. In spite of Judah's behavior in the past, God now places him as leader of the twelve tribes. In verse nine we have a lion's whelp referred to. Taken with verse ten which speaks of the scepter not departing from Judah till Shiloh comes, we know this is a prophecy concerning the Messiah. This is also obviously God speaking through Jacob as Jacob would have no way of seeing into the future.

The word Shiloh is a way of speaking of the Messiah. It is composed of parts of three Hebrew words and is NOT a name of Jesus. Verse ten is actually speaking of the second coming of Jesus for that is when he will be the lawgiver and the gatherer of His people.

13—27

Most of the prophecies concerning the other brothers are not too bad with a couple of exceptions. Dan, in verse seventeen is spoken of as a serpent, spotted and with horns. Dan is the first tribe to go into apostasy and goes through the tribulation unsealed. Remember that twelve thousand of each tribe were sealed. Dan was not in the list. Benjamin is another who stands out. Saul, Saul of Tarsus and Ehud are from this tribe. Ehud, in case you don't remember, is the one God called a deliverer. He killed the fat king of the Moabites when Israel was trying to gain their freedom. See Judges 3 vs

“Ravens wolf” refers to the tribes fighting ability. This tribe beats eleven others in Judges 20 13-14. They do it again in Judges 20 21-25 though outnumbered eighteen to one.

28-33

self explanatory but do notice that Jacob is finally in complete submission to God in that he instructs the sons to bury him with Leah instead of his favorite Rachel. He is yielding to the right of the first born and to God's selection of his wife. Notice also that Jacob is gathered to his people at least seventy days before he is finally buried. In our New Testament time we would say, “to be absent from the body is to be present with the LORD.

GENESIS CHAPTER FIFTY

1-6

Jacob died at one hundred forty seven years of age. His is the last of the long lives of the patriarchs. From that point forward the normal lifespan is 70-110 years. Jacob and later Joseph were embalmed which brings up the possibility that their bodies could someday be found. After the 70 days of mourning were past Joseph takes Jacob's body back to Canaan and buries it in the cave of Machpelah where Abraham, Isaac and Leah are buried.

7-13

The Canaanites observed the mourning that took place at the threshing floor of Atad and were impressed by the large company of horsemen and chariots that accompanied Joseph. Jacob's wishes are carried out and he is buried with Leah.

14-21

Now that Jacob is dead the brothers are afraid Joseph will now try to get even with them for their selling him into slavery. I like Joseph's reply “fear not, for am I in the place of God?” He fully realizes that God is the one who has guided these things from the beginning. He promised to take good care of them and their families while they are in Egypt. It seems from the text that everyone was expecting to go back to Canaan as soon as the famine was over.

22-26

Joseph lives to see his children and some of his great grandchildren. He dies at the age of

one hundred ten and is embalmed. He makes his people promise to take his bones out of Egypt when they go. So the book of Genesis ends with a solemn reminder of the curse of sin that brings death.

