# TABLE OF CONTENTS

Foreword by Tim Keller ................................................................. xx  
Essay: Faith and Work by David Kim ............................................... xx  
Introduction .................................................................................. xx  
Storyline Introduction ................................................................... xx  
Preface ........................................................................................... xx  

## OLD TESTAMENT

<p>| | |</p>
<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th></th>
<th></th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Genesis ................................................................. xx</td>
<td>2 Chronicles ................................................................. xx</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Exodus ................................................................. xx</td>
<td>Ezra ................................................................. xx</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Leviticus ................................................................. xx</td>
<td>Nehemiah ................................................................. xx</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Numbers ................................................................. xx</td>
<td>Esther ................................................................. xx</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Deuteronomy .............................................................. xx</td>
<td>Job ................................................................. xx</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Joshua ................................................................. xx</td>
<td>Psalms ................................................................. xx</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Judges ................................................................. xx</td>
<td>Proverbs ................................................................. xx</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Ruth ................................................................. xx</td>
<td>Ecclesiastes ........................................................... xx</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>1 Samuel ................................................................. xx</td>
<td>Song of Songs .......................................................... xx</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>2 Samuel ................................................................. xx</td>
<td>Isaiah ................................................................. xx</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>1 Kings ................................................................. xx</td>
<td>Jeremiah ................................................................. xx</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>2 Kings ................................................................. xx</td>
<td>Lamentations ........................................................... xx</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>1 Chronicles .............................................................. xx</td>
<td>Ezekiel ................................................................. xx</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

## NEW TESTAMENT

<p>| | |</p>
<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th></th>
<th></th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Matthew ................................................................. xx</td>
<td>Ephesians ............................................................... xx</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Mark ................................................................. xx</td>
<td>Philippians ............................................................ xx</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Luke ................................................................. xx</td>
<td>Colossians ............................................................ xx</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>John ................................................................. xx</td>
<td>1 Thessalonians ........................................................ xx</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Acts ................................................................. xx</td>
<td>2 Thessalonians ........................................................ xx</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Romans ................................................................. xx</td>
<td>1 Timothy ............................................................. xx</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>1 Corinthians .......................................................... xx</td>
<td>2 Timothy ............................................................. xx</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>2 Corinthians .......................................................... xx</td>
<td>Titus ................................................................. xx</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Galatians ................................................................. xx</td>
<td>Philemon ............................................................. xx</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

Table of Weights & Measures .......................................................... xx  
Essay: The Gospel and Work by Jon Tyson ........................................ xx  
Essay: Our Need for Theology by Richard Mouw ............................ xx  
Essay: Finding Our Story in God’s Story by Nancy Ortberg ............... xx  
Index of Storylines Feature ............................................................. xx  
Index of Doctrines Feature ............................................................. xx  
Index of Deeper at Work Feature ..................................................... xx  
Bibliography .................................................................................... xx
Why do we need to understand how to integrate the Christian faith with our daily work? Why is there a need for a Bible like this? Some would say that it isn’t necessary. The job of the church is to make disciples, not to try to change the culture, they say. I agree with the former, but we need to be clear about what we mean by “the church” and by “make disciples.”

First, what is the church? Theologians and church leaders distinguish between the gathered church and the scattered church. The gathered church comes together, especially on the Lord’s Day, for corporate worship and instruction, and to enjoy the communion of the saints. It is organized and led by its officers and ministers, and is called to preach the gospel, baptize, and make disciples. The scattered church is the body of believers any time they are not gathered together in a singular place, which is undoubtedly most of the time.

Second, what does it mean to make disciples? Does it mean we simply equip Christians to be Christians within the walls and programs of the gathered church? Or are we, for example, to walk them through the book of Proverbs and show them how the wisdom of God’s Word can shape their business practices, civic relationships, use of money, relationships with people of other races and classes, and with other believers? To make disciples in the gathered church is, then, to make disciples who also know how to live as the scattered church outside of the Christian community.

Christians do not cease to be the church when the public gatherings are over. They are called to be the church and to represent their Lord throughout the week in every area of life, including the workplace. We should not think of Christians out in the world as merely distinct and detached individuals. They are the body of Christ—thinking and working together, banding together in creative forms, being the scattered church that the gathered church has discipled them to be.

This distinction between the gathered and scattered church is critical for understanding how the church should engage culture. American church history reveals the opposing mistakes that can be made. On one hand, in the 19th century, the particular teachings led many Southern U.S. churches to support slavery. These churches taught that the church should not get involved in politics nor try to change the culture, but rather should just build up the church. But in this disastrous move, they failed to disciple people as Christian citizens who could understand Biblical justice and apply it in society. On the other hand, in the 20th century, many mainline Protestant denominations became so deeply and institutionally involved in politics that they discarded evangelism and calling people to conversion and faith in Christ.

The gathered-scattered church distinction helps us maintain Biblical discipleship. A church that educates and discipless people to act justly in the public sphere has to be sensitive to social issues in
its teaching and preaching. Yet it cannot make the fatal mistake of becoming a lobbying group and losing sight of its main mission of preaching the gospel and making disciples. The gathered church is called to disciple Christians to integrate their faith with their public life, and that makes believers salt and light in society (see Mt 5:13–16).

The gathered-scattered church distinction also helps us answer the question “What does it mean to be ‘in the world but not of it’ (see Jn 17:14–18)?” Most Christians know this phrase and that it should be true of them. But they usually don’t know what it means for day-to-day Christian life. Generally, they think it means evangelism—sharing one’s faith with neighbors and colleagues. The phrase certainly includes that, but it means so much more. When we think out the implications the gospel bears on our work—how it changes our motivations for work, relationships at work, and the way we imagine the work itself—we are better enabled to live distinctively Christian lives in the world.

Some people think that we should not put so much emphasis on being Christian in our vocation—that this blunts or de-emphasizes the importance of directly evangelizing and sharing the gospel. But learning how to be a Christian in our work—that is, learning to work in a Christian manner by creating more humane workplaces, being more generous in our transactions, treating people as persons rather than as cogs in a machine, and acting with integrity even when to our personal disadvantage, for example—substantiates our personal evangelism. Our coworkers and clients—whoever we encounter in our work—will be more willing to listen to us and will think us more credible when we share what we believe. Not only that, they will want to know what we believe.

And so the concepts of the gathered and scattered church help us impress on Christians that they are always on mission in every area of their lives, not only when they are sharing their faith. It helps us to overcome clericalism and lay passivity, and to recover the Reformation doctrine of the priesthood of all believers. To be on mission requires that lay Christians be discipled by their churches to do three things: (1) be a verbal witness to their friends and colleagues; (2) serve the needs of their neighbors, and especially the poor, whether they believe as we do or not; (3) integrate their faith with their work and engage culture through their vocations.

While I believe the distinction between the gathered and scattered church has always been valid and important, it has never been more crucial than it is today. We live in a politically polarized society. Christians who are committed both to fearless calls to repentance and belief in Jesus as the only Savior as well as to social justice and the common good do not fit the contemporary categories. Such Christians are profoundly counterintuitive to American observers, for they do not appear to be either truly “liberal” or “conservative.” I believe that only this kind of church has any chance in the post-Christian West today. Only this kind of Christianity will get a hearing—and it is Biblical Christianity.

The kind of in-depth discipling that this vision requires is critical. Previously, churches in the West could function as loose fellowships within a wider semi-Christian culture. “Discipling” meant learning some basic doctrine, how to study the Bible, how to pray, and how to serve in the church. Today, becoming a Christian involves a much more radical break with the surrounding non-Christian culture. The church must help Christians think out the implications of their faith for a host of places and relationships in which ordinary Christian beliefs and ethics are now seen as irrelevant, inexplicable, or even dangerous. Most vocational fields are dominated now by the values and narratives of therapy, bureaucracy, and consumerism. Normal Christian behavior is now truly counter-cultural. Navigating a Christian life with integrity in such settings takes a lot of instruction, reflection, training, and support. Sex and family, wealth and possessions, racial identity and power must all be conducted and used in ways that fit Biblical themes and values rather than baseline cultural narratives.
And yet, despite how differently they live, and how weird they will look to many people, Christians must constitute a servant society, sacrificially pouring out their time and wealth for the common good. The sacrificial service of the church will then show the world a third way between the individualistic self-absorption that secularism can breed on the one hand and the tribal self-righteousness that religion can breed on the other.

This study Bible is a great step in this direction. Most Christians have not learned to read the Scriptures while always asking “How does this text inform my public life and vocation?” Over the years, some Christians have complained that the Bible doesn’t really give much help for how to be a believer on the job. Within these pages, your eyes will be opened to how God’s Word does give “everything we need for a godly life” (2 Pe 1:3).
It is easy to say the gospel changes everything. But what does this really mean, especially when it comes to work?

As the Director for the Center for Faith and Work, I am asked one question time and again by both Christians and non-Christians alike: How do you integrate your faith with your work? Sometimes I respond by asking them the same question. It is tough for some to answer, especially those who do not have an explicit religious commitment. But I try to signal to them that everyone brings faith into their work—whether they have faith in the work of Christ or faith in their own abilities. We all integrate faith into our work, but most of the time we’re completely unaware of what faith underlies our work.

Faith is an indispensable part of work, whether that work is paid or unpaid. All work flows from some system of belief, and the content of that faith dramatically changes the way we approach work. For example, philosopher Gary Gutting, in a New York Times article titled “What Work Is Really For,” argued a position he attributed to Aristotle: “We work to have leisure, on which happiness depends.” He later stated, “Leisure, not work, should be our primary goal.” Countless people share his belief: that work has no greater meaning than the paycheck it provides. One ramification of this thinking is that even mediocre work helps you enjoy your true passions. On the flip side, if you believe the gospel changes everything, you must wrestle through the implications of what it means for the gospel to change everything about work.

GOD’S RESPONSE TO OUR BROKEN WORLD

For many Christians, the practical reality of bringing one’s faith into the workplace means that the emphasis funnels into two main categories: evangelism and ethics. Being a faithful Christian at work involves looking for opportunities to tell non-Christians about the saving work of Jesus, and also being a “good example” of a morally upright person in our daily tasks and decisions. This approach to work often leaves Christians feeling under pressure, as if they might be labeled a failure or a hypocrite if they fail to do either well. While Christians should certainly be eager to share their faith with anyone who asks about it, and while we hope that we as Christians will be known as trustworthy, ethical people, are there other ways in which the gospel transforms our work?

To answer this question, we need to consider God’s response to the brokenness of our world. As he unfolded his strategy to renew creation, God chose one seemingly average man, Abram, and pledged to him a series of promises. Genesis 12:2–3 outlines God’s three-fold covenant to Abram: 1) to bless him, 2) to make him into a great nation and 3) to bless all the families of the earth through him. The rest of the Biblical narrative, then, can be viewed as the unfolding fulfillment of God’s promises to Abraham, which are ultimately fulfilled in Jesus Christ. Because of Christ, God’s grace and power are dynamically at work in transforming individuals, communities and everything

2 Ibid.
3 Ibid.
else we know. This means that the gospel is intended to penetrate our motivations, relationships and the very world we engage with day-in and day-out.

This three-fold expression of motivations, relationships and world broadens our conception of how God wants to renew not just our world, but also our work. From a distinctly Christian perspective, faith and work integration must encompass all three of these interconnected aspects of life. Otherwise, we minimize the full scope of the gospel’s transformative power. This broader conception of the gospel, beyond evangelism and ethics and toward a deeper understanding of our daily, Spirit-inspired mission, helps us see work in a whole new way, and often gives us fresh hope and excitement for our calling.

THE REDEMPTION OF OUR MOTIVATIONS

Starting with our motivations, the gospel challenges the reasons why we work. For most people, the surface-level answer to the question of why we work is to make a living. But in today’s Western society, many of us have ability to choose which job to take or which career path to pursue. Our choices, therefore, reveal our deeper motivations for work. What do we want our work to give us? What do we believe it must give us? A sense of financial security? A sense of meaning and purpose? Status and fame? The answer varies from person to person, but each of us has an answer if we dig deep enough.

We were created to work, and this work was meant to be an expression of our bearing God’s image. The work of our hands was intended to display God’s glory. Yet because of the fall (Ge 3:1–20), humans were separated from God, the source of our identity. In this alienated state, many of us now look to work as the source of our identity instead of the expression of it. In our brokenness, we are motivated to work in order to regain what we lost in the fall—that instinct toward building meaning and purpose that without God’s direction can only turn inward. Instead of trusting God’s call upon our lives, in our rebellion we are driven by deep pride and insecurity. In this state, we attempt to navigate the dizzying choices of life, desperately trying to establish a sense of self-worth and stability through our own efforts and accomplishments.

The fundamental problem with us is not our abilities or the opportunities we have or don’t have. It is how we have turned away from God to trust in ourselves and not in him. Deep within our hearts, we fashion our own gods as an expression of our rebellious autonomy and self-sovereignty. But we have deceived ourselves: We are never really autonomous or sovereign over own lives, and the gospel exposes our idolatry and false assumptions. Idols such as money, success, power and sex can never satisfy our deeper hunger for status and security. These idols, and our attempts to feed and keep them, slowly dehumanize us and often hurt others. We were made in God’s image, which means we were made to find our deepest contentment and expression in him alone, not in created things.

The good news is that Christ has reconciled humanity to God, and this renewed relationship can utterly transform our deepest motivations for work. In the gospel, work again becomes an expression of our identity as God’s children. Instead of us trying to earn a sense of worth, security, and meaning from our work, our work becomes the opportunity for us to demonstrate in big and small ways the beauty and wonder of what it means to be created in God’s image. To borrow a phrase from John Calvin, the world is a “dazzling theater” of God’s glory. Work is a stage on which we can act out the wonder and great privilege of being created in the image of God.

This reality has a profound effect upon our motivations for work. Martin Luther King Jr. expressed the fruit of this transformation when he said, “If a man is called to be a street sweeper, he should sweep streets even as Michelangelo painted, or Beethoven composed music, or Shakespeare wrote poetry. He should sweep streets so well that all the host of heaven and earth will pause to say,”

---

here lived a great street sweeper who did his job well.” What inspires people to participate in this kind of work? It is not the result of a motivation to earn a living or to gain some privileged status, but rather it is the fruit that manifests in our lives when, after our striving for self-worth is exhausted, we are reunited with and perform our work for the One who has loved us and made us in his image.

The gospel transforms our all of our motivations so that we may work to bring God glory, and so that when others see the work of our hands—whether that be a brilliantly designed spreadsheet, a perfectly brewed cup of coffee or a well-nurtured child—they might gaze upon and experience a tangible expression of who God is. Work, therefore, provides an incredible opportunity for us to share the gospel—to name the God to whom this work ultimately points, and to explain the splendor and magnificence of his redemptive work in Christ.

The Redemption of Our Relationships
Second, the gospel transforms our relationships in such a way that we can begin to honor everyone we encounter, knowing that they too are created in God’s image. Many people often feel dehumanized at work, as they are treated as simply a means to an end. We often don’t see our colleagues or co-workers through the lens of the gospel, which reveals God’s immense love for all people, even though they and we have all rebelled against him.

In his classic work Life Together, Dietrich Bonhoeffer highlights the revolutionary importance of seeing our relationships mediated through Christ and his love: “Human love constructs its own image of the other person, of what he is and what he should become. It takes the life of the other person into its own hands. Spiritual love recognizes the true image of the other person which he has received from Jesus Christ; the image that Jesus Christ himself embodied and would stamp upon all men.”

Renewing our relationships at work begins with a transformation of how we view and love those with whom we work. While we might pause at the notion of expressing Christian love to our co-workers, this transformed perspective is influenced and sourced by God’s love and the profound wisdom and discernment his loving Spirit brings. The gospel reveals to us the depths of God’s love even as it exposes how limited our own love is. Christ’s love compels us to push the boundaries of what it means to love the people with whom we work, even while respecting the appropriate boundaries of a workplace relationship. Christ’s love challenges us to consider what it means to care for others, seeking their good as well as our own.

As Christians, we are called to see others through Christ’s eyes and not our own. How unfortunate that we so often have to remind ourselves that the individuals with whom we work are not a means to an end. They are not merely fellow employees paid to do work or resources that we can exploit in order to climb the corporate ladder. Rather, they are fellow image-bearers. Work provides a significant arena for people to experience what it means to be created in God’s image—to experience the value, dignity, worth, creativity and imagination inherent in this immense privilege of mirroring who God is.

When people are treated as wonder-filled expressions of God and his immense creativity and handiwork, then work—where people spend most of their waking hours—can be transformed to provide a meaningful context for people to flourish.

The Redemption of Our World
This leads us to the third and final perspective of the work. Of the three perspectives, renewal of our world is often the most difficult for people to grasp. How does the gospel transform the world through work?

Throughout Western history, the church, in caring for its constituents, created new organizations and moved into new sectors of business and society, from social service nonprofits to healthcare to educational institutions. The formation of hospitals and universities, taken for granted today as indispensable parts of society, arose in large part because of the church’s call to care for fellow divine image-bearers, recognizing the full humanity of even those societal outcasts who were perishing with fatal diseases.

Society as we know it today has been shaped and significantly influenced by faithful Christians living out their faith in their daily work. For many, unbeknownst to them, God has been at work through them to renew larger societal structures in our world. The church has given rise to entrepreneurs and innovators who saw particular areas of brokenness in our world and chose to act through the creative use of resources and talents available to them. The hope of the gospel in the renewal of all things fuels our imagination to consider how God’s Spirit might be at work in our respective areas of work. The gospel reminds us of the abundance of God’s grace to counter the prevailing brokenness and injustice that we experience every day, and to consider what our part might be in that renewal process.

But why would God care about the renewal of this world, including the work of our hands? One answer to this question goes back to the concept that work is an expression of our identity as people created in God’s image. As humans are the expression of God’s glory (see 1Co 11:7), our work by extension is also an expression of God’s glory. If this is true, then it is easy to understand why our work matters so much to God. As God is jealous for his own glory, he desires that our work in all the varying sectors of society display his manifold glory in concrete ways.

For example, when a person grows up in a society where the legal system affords due process, they come to know and experience a bit of what it means that God is just. In contrast, an individual growing up in a totalitarian society where “might makes right” does not come to experience the glory of God’s just governance. Likewise, when people live in a society where the arts are valued and flourish, people are inspired by God’s immense imaginative faculties. When entrepreneurs grow up in a context where there are efficient and established financial systems, they have access to the kind of capital that enables them to give rise to something new and create opportunities for others to participate in cultivating this amazing world God created.

In other words, work allows people to experience the astounding diversity of God’s glory. When people make this connection between everyday work and God’s glory, our work becomes utterly transformed.

God cares about our work because he cares about his glory. He desires to make known his glory in this world, and for that reason he will continue to seek those whose eyes are opened to see the work of his Spirit preserving and renewing every facet of this world that belongs to him. Christians should be the people who care most deeply about the work they do, because they care deeply about God’s glory being made known in all the world.

The articles and notes in this Bible are directed toward a faith and work revival that takes seriously how the gospel actively transforms and renews all three of these areas—our motivations for work, our relationships in work, and how our work renews and impacts this world. The gospel gives us incredible hope for and in our work. One day, all that we have done in our lives, including our work, will culminate in the glorious return of Christ, when his bride and the New Jerusalem—a city beautifully adorned with the cultivated works of humanity—is presented to the Bridegroom. The treasures that will be brought into this glorious city will be nothing less than the treasures of the nations (Rev 21:23–26).
The NIV Faith and Work Bible is a unique and exciting combination of doctrine, application, and community experience. It is the product of decades of research and development undertaken with the goal of equipping Christians to meaningfully engage their work with a renewed sense of the power and relevance of the gospel of Jesus Christ. These pages are the fruit of real communities that have wrestled and experimented with the profound question, “How does my faith relate to my work?”

As you open the pages of this Bible, it may appear similar to other specialty Bibles you may have seen, but we believe these pages reveal a novel approach to the growing question of faith and work that takes both doctrine and application seriously.

What you will learn in these pages is not a list of “do’s and don’ts” for your work; rather, you will learn theology that will hopefully rewire the way you understand the gospel and how it has everything to do with your work. Once your eyes are open to understanding the connection between faith and work, the work of Christ will become all the more beautiful and necessary to you.

DOCTRINAL FRAMEWORK OF MOTIVATION (M), RELATIONSHIPS (R), WORLD (W)

For Biblical truth to be meaningfully understood, it has to be applied; however, theology is often presented in a way that makes application challenging. Theological truths are frequently delivered without a real sense of how they are relevant. A robust yet simple framework is needed to help users apply the doctrines presented in the Bible. We will explore how Biblical doctrines affect our (1) motivations, (2) relationships and (3) world.

Another important premise of this Bible is that the gospel is central to all of Scripture. Each book, each narrative, each verse points us to the person and work of Jesus Christ, and it is this gospel that alone has the power to transform all of life and all of creation, including our work. The gospel therefore deeply transforms our motivations for work, our relationships at work, and how we engage with the world of our work.

Motivation. The gospel changes individuals, and at the core of this change is a new heart motivated by what Christ has done in giving us a new identity. Out of this new identity flows new desires, the greatest of which are loving God and loving our neighbor. Yet, this profound work of the gospel can be completely overlooked in the work context. The motivations and reasons behind why we work can be devoid of the gospel’s power. We can work to secure a sense of our own identity, worth, security, belonging, and comfort; yet work was never designed to ultimately provide these things. It is only in Christ that we as individuals can be rightly motivated to work in a manner that brings full glory to God. This Bible will make its readers more aware of the critical role of our motivations and desires and how the gospel is able to renew and reorder our desires, freeing us to work in a manner that releases the power of the gospel.

Relationships. The gospel has profoundly reconciled relationships among human beings because of the restored relationship between humanity and God. The work of Christ in our lives through the Holy Spirit enables us to relate differently with all people. Co-workers, bosses, managers and colleagues are not just people who help us get our work done or who evaluate our work. They are
people created in the image of God, and we are called to love them in ways appropriate to our workplace context. Relationships at work can often be a source of great discomfort, dysfunction, anxiety and toxicity. This Bible will help its readers see how the gospel can powerfully shape how we interact with those in our workplaces to promote healthy, effective workplace environments that unleash the potential and joy of people working together toward a common purpose.

**World.** The gospel also changes the world of our work. When people consider the scope of the gospel’s impact, often it is limited to individuals and relationships. The narrative of Scripture makes clear that the work of Christ is “making everything new” (Rev 21:5) which includes both people and the initial call of humanity to cultivate and subdue the earth. The gospel is at work to renew things much larger than communities—it is able to transform dysfunctional companies, unjust processes, ineffective systems, broken industries, and directionless spheres of society. This Bible will help its readers make connections between the world of the Bible and our complex world today so that they can see what it means to be people called to seek the prosperity of the world around us.

These three perspectives of motivation, relationships and world provide a robust framework that allows individuals to experience the gospel at different levels. You’ll find them in the Core Doctrine features and also the Deeper at Work notes.

**THEOLOGICAL FOUNDATIONS**

**The Centrality of the Gospel.** Grasping the gospel of Jesus Christ is the main point of this Bible. Every page of Scripture points to the significance of the person and work of Christ and how this gospel renews everything. Yet, we can lose sight of this amazing news if we fail to understand the overarching narrative of the Bible. It is easy to get lost in the details of each story and each book, and to lose the big picture that God is faithfully at work to fulfill the covenant he has made with his people.

**Calling and Work: Definitions.** This Bible will address both the concepts of calling and work. It is important to differentiate these concepts because they are often used interchangeably; however, there is an important distinction to be made. Calling (and its Latin-derived synonym, vocation) is a larger category describing God’s purposes for humanity. As the Caller, God has given to us a new identity and a new purpose in the gospel, which is the foundation of our calling. God has called a people, his church, as people called to follow him. One of the fundamental premises of this book is that God has in a sense called his people out of this world—a world characterized by sin, disbelief, pride, self-preservation and other ills—so that he can call them back into the world to seek its peace and prosperity.

This larger call includes but is not limited to the daily work that we do. This work is what we might call our occupation or job—it is the thing we spend most of our day doing. Maintaining this distinction between calling and work allows us to understand how our larger calling can powerfully inform and shape how we approach our work. Our daily work has been significantly impacted by the fall and its far-reaching effects on our world. This larger calling gives us reason to pursue work with redemptive hope and meaning. This Bible addresses both the larger concepts of calling and the more mundane aspects of our daily work.

**KEY FEATURES**

**Storylines**

This Bible features a 31-day journey through the Biblical narrative so that those who have never read the Bible in its entirety can begin to grasp this incredible story line that ties together these seemingly disconnected 66 books. The Bible will, therefore, no longer seem to be a mere manual
for Christian living, but rather the revelation of what God has done in history to redeem his people and his creation.

An introduction to and overview of the 31 Biblical narrative readings can be found on page XXXX, and a complete index of the readings is located on page XXXX.

**Core Doctrines**

The end goal of this Bible is to help users deepen their understanding and experience of the gospel, and to make them excited to engage their work in a new way. It is the work of Christ alone that has the power to renew our motivations, our relationships and the world.

As we begin to understand the message of the gospel, there still remains the challenge of connecting this ancient story to our daily lives today. There is a significant cultural and historical gap between the context of the Bible and our modern world that makes meaningful application challenging. Theology embodied in particular doctrines becomes essential to bridging this gap. What does the death, resurrection and glorification of Christ have to do with my work today?

There are two possible approaches to answering this question. One can start with specific work situations and try to find verses or passages that seem to apply to the situation. While this approach can be useful, it is often difficult to find the “right” passages that seem applicable to the complex situations in which we find ourselves. The other approach begins with Scripture and seeks to understand significant doctrines that can lead to a growing spiritual discernment. Given the complexities of our increasingly globalized world, there is a need for rich and robust theology to guide us in understanding how we might apply the Bible to specific workplace situations.

This Bible features historic doctrines that help connect the Bible to our current work context. These doctrines are further divided into subtopics that are applied to the areas of motivation, relationships and world. By focusing on these doctrines, you will learn significant theological truths that provide a framework for deeper understanding rather than simply finding “the right Christian answer.” Studying these core doctrines will equip you to meaningfully apply, in a nuanced way, the gospel to various workplace situations and contexts.

For a complete listing of the historic doctrines that covered in this study Bible, please turn to page XXXX.

This major feature is designed to guide your study. Each of these 45 features has the following aspects:

**Deeper in Truth.** One of the goals of this Bible is to expose its readers to historic and influential writings that have shaped key doctrines of the evangelical faith. To that end, the editors of this Bible have curated a list of excerpts from the works of various writers to elaborate on each doctrine. Though some of the readings can be a bit challenging, we believe that primary source materials help clarify the depth of these doctrines. What’s more, the excerpts from these works are meant to point readers to the larger works themselves, which provide much deeper instruction in each of the doctrines. Most of these works have withstood the test of time, and their value warrants repeated reading.

**Connecting.** This brief section helps you connect the excerpt to your life today by highlighting key ideas and presenting questions that will illuminate its relevance in your workplace.

**Deeper at Work.** The Bible provides wisdom for all ages and all work. Throughout this study Bible you will encounter applications that present real stories of people from various vocations and demographics who have wrestled with the implications of a given doctrine in their work. These stories are not meant to give you the “right” answer or model what the “ideal” Christian looks like; rather, they highlight real people wrestling with what it means to live faithfully, day by day, in their
work. These are part of the Core Doctrine articles so that you will see the practical application of the Scripture to the issue at hand.

Deeper at Work Feature
We’ve also included more of the Deeper at Work articles outside of the Core Doctrine features throughout this Bible so that you can see how real-life individuals apply the truths of the Bible to your life. These “Deeper at Work” articles will inspire you to see the full range of how the gospel can be applied, and how it is at work in your work. Here you will be encouraged and challenged to see the modern-day implications of the Scripture text and to consider how timeless Biblical truths can be applied in diverse work settings. For a complete index of these additional Deeper at Work articles, see p. XXXX.

Essays
In the front of this Bible is included a thoughtful essay by Dr. David Kim, the General Editor of the study materials in this Bible (see p. XXXX). You’ll also find three more insightful essays that apply the concepts within the study notes to your daily life in the end matter. The essays in the back of this Bible begin on page XXXX.

Book Introductions
Introductions for each book of the Bible speak to the many ways that each book is applicable to the daily work that you engage in. Reading these will give you the perspective that is needed as you approach each book of the Bible with a view toward the sometimes-daunting task of living for God in the midst of your workplace.

Summary
Our hope and desire is that as you engage with the study materials in this book, you will come to a deeper understanding of and appreciation for a doctrinal approach that will bring a new perspective to the way the gospel impacts your daily life. Again, our hope is that once your eyes are open to understanding the connection between faith and work, the gospel will come alive for you in brand new ways. We hope that this Bible will make you excited to engage not only your work, but also the world around you with a renewed sense of purpose, grounded in the unique hope of the gospel.

David H. Kim
and the editors at Christianity Today
The Bible reveals the story of this world as seen through the eyes of our Creator. This grand narrative provides an essential and invaluable context to help us address life’s big questions—perennial issues such as personal identity and the meaning of life. But the Bible is a big book. Many of us who try to read through the entire Bible often struggle to get through the first five books. Those who manage to read beyond these books can easily lose sight of the bigger picture or get distracted by the strange-sounding names and places.

The Story Line feature in this Bible is designed to help you comprehend the whole narrative of Scripture while keeping you engaged in the Biblical text. By reading these 31 landmark features, you will journey through the story of the entire Bible. You’ll see how familiar Biblical texts take on heightened meaning as you begin to grasp the overall flow of God’s redemptive plan as it unfolded in history.

How you approach this feature is up to you. You can read one per day for a month or one per week, depending on how much time you have and how much of the Biblical text you want to read. Each is anchored to the surrounding Scripture text and provides an overview to help you understand the context and significance of the chapters at hand, tying together significant themes—such as covenant, for example—that run throughout the Biblical narrative.

The Bible has been and continues to be the guiding light for the Christian life. Below each Story Line you will see either a map or a piece of art that correlates with the events highlighted in the feature. The maps serve to provide a geographical context for the Biblical narrative, while the visual depictions offer a sense of how Christians throughout history have understood and interpreted these Biblical passages. These images are intended to stretch your imagination in relation to these texts.

Behind this grand narrative is a God who wants to reveal not only his purposes but also himself. The Author of this story has written himself into the narrative, and each page of Scripture points to the culmination of God’s self-revelation in Jesus Christ. As you read each Story Line, my hope and prayer is that you become increasingly enamored with the beauty of Scripture and come to realize more every day how your life fits within God’s story.

David H. Kim

1. Genesis 1: Introduction to the Sovereign King
2. Genesis 3: A Cataclysmic Rebellion
5. Exodus 1–3: God Raises a Deliverer: Moses
6. Exodus 12: The Exodus from Egypt
7. Numbers 14: Rebellion and Judgment in the Wilderness
8. Deuteronomy 5: Covenant Renewal in the Next Generation
9. Joshua 1: Conquering the Promised Land
10. Judges 2: The Decline of Israel and the Rise of the Judges
11. 1 Samuel 1–3: The Rise of a New Prophet
12. 1 Samuel 8: Israel Demands a King
13. 2 Samuel 7: Samuel Anoints of King David
14. 1 Kings 3: King Solomon Builds the Temple
15. 1 Kings 11: A Divided and Idolatrous Kingdom
16. 2 Kings 17: Israel's Rebellion Leads to Exile
18. 2 Kings 18–20: A Righteous King in Judah: Hezekiah
19. Jeremiah 1: Judah's Prophet of Judgment and Hope: Jeremiah
20. 2 Kings 25: Judah Is Taken into Exile
22. Nehemiah 9: Covenant Renewal and the Restoration of Jerusalem
23. Malachi 3: Words of Hope before Silence
24. John 1: The Word Becomes Human
25. Mark 1: Jesus Begins His Public Ministry
26. Matthew 5: Jesus: True Teacher of the Law
27. Matthew 27: Jesus' Suffering and Death
30. Acts 15: Controversy and the First Church Council
31. Revelation 21: The Return of the King
The goal of the New International Version (NIV) is to enable English-speaking people from around the world to read and hear God’s eternal Word in their own language. Our work as translators is motivated by our conviction that the Bible is God’s Word in written form. We believe that the Bible contains the divine answer to the deepest needs of humanity, sheds unique light on our path in a dark world and sets forth the way to our eternal well-being. Out of these deep convictions, we have sought to recreate as far as possible the experience of the original audience—blending transparency to the original text with accessibility for the millions of English speakers around the world. We have prioritized accuracy, clarity and literary quality with the goal of creating a translation suitable for public and private reading, evangelism, teaching, preaching, memorizing and liturgical use. We have also sought to preserve a measure of continuity with the long tradition of translating the Scriptures into English.

The complete NIV Bible was first published in 1978. It was a completely new translation made by over a hundred scholars working directly from the best available Hebrew, Aramaic and Greek texts. The translators came from the United States, Great Britain, Canada, Australia and New Zealand, giving the translation an international scope. They were from many denominations and churches—including Anglican, Assemblies of God, Baptist, Brethren, Christian Reformed, Church of Christ, Covenant, Evangelical Free, Lutheran, Mennonite, Methodist, Nazarene, Presbyterian, Wesleyan and others. This breadth of denominational and theological perspective helped to safeguard the translation from sectarian bias. For these reasons, and by the grace of God, the NIV has gained a wide readership in all parts of the English-speaking world.

The work of translating the Bible is never finished. As good as they are, English translations must be regularly updated so that they will continue to communicate accurately the meaning of God’s Word. Updates are needed in order to reflect the latest developments in our understanding of the biblical world and its languages and to keep pace with changes in English usage. Recognizing, then, that the NIV would retain its ability to communicate God’s Word accurately only if it were regularly updated, the original translators established the Committee on Bible Translation (CBT). The Committee is a self-perpetuating group of biblical scholars charged with keeping abreast of advances in biblical scholarship and changes in English and issuing periodic updates to the NIV. The CBT is an independent, self-governing body and has sole responsibility for the NIV text. The Committee mirrors the original group of translators in its diverse international and denominational makeup and in its unifying commitment to the Bible as God’s inspired Word.

In obedience to its mandate, the Committee has issued periodic updates to the NIV. An initial revision was released in 1984. A more thorough revision process was completed in 2005, resulting in the separately published TNIV. The updated NIV you now have in your hands builds on both the original NIV and the TNIV and represents the latest effort of the Committee to articulate God’s unchanging Word in the way the original authors might have said it had they been speaking in English to the global English-speaking audience today.

TRANSLATION PHILOSOPHY

The Committee’s translating work has been governed by three widely accepted principles about the way people use words and about the way we understand them.
First, the meaning of words is determined by the way that users of the language actually use them at any given time. For the biblical languages, therefore, the Committee utilizes the best and most recent scholarship on the way Hebrew, Aramaic and Greek words were being used in biblical times. At the same time, the Committee carefully studies the state of modern English. Good translation is like good communication: one must know the target audience so that the appropriate choices can be made about which English words to use to represent the original words of Scripture. From its inception, the NIV has had as its target the general English-speaking population all over the world, the “International” in its title reflecting this concern. The aim of the Committee is to put the Scriptures into natural English that will communicate effectively with the broadest possible audience of English speakers.

Modern technology has enhanced the Committee's ability to choose the right English words to convey the meaning of the original text. The field of computational linguistics harnesses the power of computers to provide broadly applicable and current data about the state of the language. Translators can now access huge databases of modern English to better understand the current meaning and usage of key words. The Committee utilized this resource in preparing the 2011 edition of the NIV. An area of especially rapid and significant change in English is the way certain nouns and pronouns are used to refer to human beings. The Committee therefore requested experts in computational linguistics at Collins Dictionaries to pose some key questions about this usage to its database of English—the largest in the world, with over 4.4 billion words, gathered from several English-speaking countries and including both spoken and written English. (The Collins Study, called “The Development and Use of Gender Language in Contemporary English,” can be accessed at http://www.thenivbible.com/about-the-niv/about-the-2011-edition/.) The study revealed that the most popular words to describe the human race in modern U.S. English were “humanity,” “man” and “mankind.” The Committee then used this data in the updated NIV, choosing from among these three words (and occasionally others also) depending on the context.

A related issue creates a larger problem for modern translations: the move away from using the third-person masculine singular pronouns—“he/him/his”—to refer to men and women equally. This usage does persist in some forms of English, and this revision therefore occasionally uses these pronouns in a generic sense. But the tendency, recognized in day-to-day usage and confirmed by the Collins study, is away from the generic use of “he,” “him” and “his.” In recognition of this shift in language and in an effort to translate into the natural English that people are actually using, this revision of the NIV generally uses other constructions when the biblical text is plainly addressed to men and women equally. The reader will encounter especially frequently a “they,” “their” or “them” to express a generic singular idea. Thus, for instance, Mark 8:36 reads: “What good is it for someone to gain the whole world, yet forfeit their soul?” This generic use of the “distributive” or “singular” “they/them/their” has been used for many centuries by respected writers of English and has now become established as standard English, spoken and written, all over the world.

A second linguistic principle that feeds into the Committee’s translation work is that meaning is found not in individual words, as vital as they are, but in larger clusters: phrases, clauses, sentences, discourses. Translation is not, as many people think, a matter of word substitution: English word \( x \) in place of Hebrew word \( y \). Translators must first determine the meaning of the words of the biblical languages in the context of the passage and then select English words that accurately communicate that meaning to modern listeners and readers. This means that accurate translation will not always reflect the exact structure of the original language. To be sure, there is debate over the degree to which translators should try to preserve the “form” of the original text in English. From the beginning, the NIV has taken a mediating position on this issue. The manual produced when the translation that became the NIV was first being planned states: “If the Greek or Hebrew syntax has a good
parallel in modern English, it should be used. But if there is no good parallel, the English syntax appropriate to the meaning of the original is to be chosen.” It is fine, in other words, to carry over the form of the biblical languages into English—but not at the expense of natural expression. The principle that meaning resides in larger clusters of words means that the Committee has not insisted on a “word-for-word” approach to translation. We certainly believe that every word of Scripture is inspired by God and therefore to be carefully studied to determine what God is saying to us. It is for this reason that the Committee labors over every single word of the original texts, working hard to determine how each of those words contributes to what the text is saying. Ultimately, however, it is how these individual words function in combination with other words that determines meaning.

A third linguistic principle guiding the Committee in its translation work is the recognition that words have a spectrum of meaning. It is popular to define a word by using another word, or “gloss,” to substitute for it. This substitute word is then sometimes called the “literal” meaning of a word. In fact, however, words have a range of possible meanings. Those meanings will vary depending on the context, and words in one language will usually not occupy the same semantic range as words in another language. The Committee therefore studies each original word of Scripture in its context to identify its meaning in a particular verse and then chooses an appropriate English word (or phrase) to represent it. It is impossible, then, to translate any given Hebrew, Aramaic or Greek word with the same English word all the time. The Committee does try to translate related occurrences of a word in the original languages with the same English word in order to preserve the connection for the English reader. But the Committee generally privileges clear natural meaning over a concern with consistency in rendering particular words.

**TEXTUAL BASIS**

For the Old Testament the standard Hebrew text, the Masoretic Text as published in the latest edition of *Biblia Hebraica*, has been used throughout. The Masoretic Text tradition contains marginal notations that offer variant readings. These have sometimes been followed instead of the text itself. Because such instances involve variants within the Masoretic tradition, they have not been indicated in the textual notes. In a few cases, words in the basic consonantal text have been divided differently than in the Masoretic Text. Such cases are usually indicated in the textual footnotes. The Dead Sea Scrolls contain biblical texts that represent an earlier stage of the transmission of the Hebrew text. They have been consulted, as have been the Samaritan Pentateuch and the ancient scribal traditions concerning deliberate textual changes. The translators also consulted the more important early versions. Readings from these versions, the Dead Sea Scrolls and the scribal traditions were occasionally followed where the Masoretic Text seemed doubtful and where accepted principles of textual criticism showed that one or more of these textual witnesses appeared to provide the correct reading. In rare cases, the translators have emended the Hebrew text where it appears to have become corrupted at an even earlier stage of its transmission. These departures from the Masoretic Text are also indicated in the textual footnotes. Sometimes the vowel indicators (which are later additions to the basic consonantal text) found in the Masoretic Text did not, in the judgment of the translators, represent the correct vowels for the original text. Accordingly, some words have been read with a different set of vowels. These instances are usually not indicated in the footnotes.

The Greek text used in translating the New Testament has been an eclectic one, based on the latest editions of the Nestle-Aland/United Bible Societies’ Greek New Testament. The translators have made their choices among the variant readings in accordance with widely accepted principles of New Testament textual criticism. Footnotes call attention to places where uncertainty remains.

The New Testament authors, writing in Greek, often quote the Old Testament from its ancient Greek version, the Septuagint. This is one reason why some of the Old Testament quotations in the
NIV New Testament are not identical to the corresponding passages in the NIV Old Testament. Such quotations in the New Testament are indicated with the footnote “(see Septuagint).”

**FOOTNOTES AND FORMATTING**

Footnotes in this version are of several kinds, most of which need no explanation. Those giving alternative translations begin with “Or” and generally introduce the alternative with the last word preceding it in the text, except when it is a single-word alternative. When poetry is quoted in a footnote a slash mark indicates a line division.

It should be noted that references to diseases, minerals, flora and fauna, architectural details, clothing, jewelry, musical instruments and other articles cannot always be identified with precision. Also, linear measurements and measures of capacity can only be approximated (see the Table of Weights and Measures). Although Selah, used mainly in the Psalms, is probably a musical term, its meaning is uncertain. Since it may interrupt reading and distract the reader, this word has not been kept in the English text, but every occurrence has been signaled by a footnote.

As an aid to the reader, sectional headings have been inserted. They are not to be regarded as part of the biblical text and are not intended for oral reading. It is the Committee’s hope that these headings may prove more helpful to the reader than the traditional chapter divisions, which were introduced long after the Bible was written.

Sometimes the chapter and/or verse numbering in English translations of the Old Testament differs from that found in published Hebrew texts. This is particularly the case in the Psalms, where the traditional titles are included in the Hebrew verse numbering. Such differences are indicated in the footnotes at the bottom of the page. In the New Testament, verse numbers that marked off portions of the traditional English text not supported by the best Greek manuscripts now appear in brackets, with a footnote indicating the text that has been omitted (see, for example, Matthew 17:[21]).

Mark 16:9–20 and John 7:53—8:11, although long accorded virtually equal status with the rest of the Gospels in which they stand, have a questionable standing in the textual history of the New Testament, as noted in the bracketed annotations with which they are set off. A different typeface has been chosen for these passages to indicate their uncertain status.

Basic formatting of the text, such as lining the poetry, paragraphing (both prose and poetry), setting up of (administrative-like) lists, indenting letters and lengthy prayers within narratives and the insertion of sectional headings, has been the work of the Committee. However, the choice between single-column and double-column formats has been left to the publishers. Also the issuing of “red-letter” editions is a publisher’s choice—one that the Committee does not endorse.

The Committee has again been reminded that every human effort is flawed—including this revision of the NIV. We trust, however, that many will find in it an improved representation of the Word of God, through which they hear his call to faith in our Lord Jesus Christ and to service in his kingdom. We offer this version of the Bible to him in whose name and for whose glory it has been made.

The Committee on Bible Translation
Introduction to

GENESIS

Genesis, a Greek word meaning “origin” or “beginning,” was the title given to this book by the translators of the third-century BC Greek Old Testament known as the Septuagint. The first word in the Hebrew text, bereshith, means “in [the] beginning” and is the Hebrew name for this book. This book is about many beginnings—the beginning of the universe, of man and woman, of human sin, of God’s promises and plans for salvation, and of a special relationship between God and Abraham.

Although this book begins with the creation of the universe, the focal point is the creation of human beings. As the human race multiplies, the account narrows to specific individuals and families. The contents of Genesis, divided on this basis, are: the creation of the heavens and the earth (2:4), the story of the generations of Adam (5:1), of Noah (6:9), of the sons of Noah (10:1), of Shem (11:10), of Terah (11:27), of Ishmael (25:12), of Isaac (25:19), of Esau (36:1), and of Jacob (37:2).

The book of Genesis introduces God’s progressive self-revelation to humanity. It is quoted or referred to more than sixty times in the New Testament, where God’s revelation culminates in the person of Jesus Christ. In this way, Genesis provides the history of the beginning of God’s relationship with humankind, and thus the book is essential for a proper understanding of God’s subsequent dealings with his people.

Genesis is resolutely monotheistic, telling the acts of one sovereign God who created all that exists. It also begins telling the story of God’s judgment against sin and his plan to save humans—who he made in his image—from the consequences of their rebellion against him. Finally, Genesis introduces us to the way God initiates a relationship with humankind and how he remains faithful to his promises.

The major themes in Genesis that we can apply to our work are creation, fall, sin and faith. As God’s image bearers, we were made to work alongside him in bringing continued order to creation. However, as a result of the fall, sin has disrupted our relationship with God, with others and with all creation. Our work to develop and rule over the earth is now frustrated. Yet in Genesis we also learn about God’s grace and how faith in him is a doorway to experiencing redemption and peace in every area of our lives—including our work.
The Beginning

In the beginning God created the heavens and the earth. ²Now the earth was formless and empty, ³darkness was over the surface of the deep, and the Spirit of God was hovering over the waters.

³And God said, “Let there be light,” and there was light.⁴God saw that the light was good, and he separated the light from the darkness.⁵God called the light “day,” and the darkness he called “night.”⁶And there was evening, and there was morning — the first day.

⁶And God said, “Let there be a vault between the waters to separate water from water.”⁷So God made the vault and separated the water under the vault from the water above it.⁸And it was so.⁹God called the vault “sky.” And there was evening, and there was morning — the second day.

⁹And God said, “Let the water under the sky be gathered to one place, and let dry ground appear.” And it was so.¹⁰God called the dry ground “land,” and the gathered waters he called “seas.” And God saw that it was good.

¹¹Then God said, “Let the land produce vegetation: seed-bearing plants and trees on the land that bear fruit with seed in it, according to their various kinds.” And it was so.¹²The land produced vegetation: plants bearing seed according to their kinds and trees bearing fruit with seed in it according to their kinds. And God saw that it was good.¹³And there was evening, and there was morning — the third day.

¹⁴And God said, “Let there be lights in the vault of the sky to separate the day from the night, and let them serve as signs to mark sacred times,¹⁵and days and years,¹⁶and let them be lights in the vault of the sky to give light on the earth.” And it was so.¹⁶God made two great lights — the greater light to govern the day and the lesser light to govern the night. He also made the stars,¹⁷God set them in the vault of the sky to give light on the earth,¹⁸to govern the day and the night,¹⁹and to separate light from darkness. And God saw that it was good.¹⁹And there was evening, and there was morning — the fourth day.

²⁰And God said, “Let the water teem with living creatures, and let birds fly above the earth across the vault of the sky.”²¹So God created the great creatures of the sea and every living thing with which the water teems and that moves about in it,³ according to their kinds, and every winged bird according to its kind. And God saw that it was good.

²²God blessed them and said, “Be fruitful and increase in number and fill the water in the seas, and let the birds increase on the earth.”²³And there was evening, and there was morning — the fifth day.

²⁴And God said, “Let the land produce living creatures according to their
The first thing we learn about God when we open the Bible is that he is Creator. As Creator, he is eternal, all-powerful and all-present. Yet the focus of Genesis 1 is his work of creating through words. And we see that he reveals himself through his action, for everything he creates is good. Creation is a reflection of his very being, as Paul writes in Romans 1:20: “For since the creation of the world God’s invisible qualities—his eternal power and divine nature—have been clearly seen, being understood from what has been made.” All of creation reveals something about who God is, and at the climax we learn that humans especially reflect God—we were made “in his image” (see 1:27).

In his monumental *Reformed Dogmatics*, Herman Bavinck highlights how all of nature is a tangible revelation of God’s power and majesty. Creation not only reveals who God is but also “finds its goal in his glory.” And human beings—God’s image bearers—were created to especially reflect God’s glory. Bavinck explains:

> God created man after his image and for his glory (Ge 1:26; Isa. 43:7). He glorified himself in the Pharaoh of the Exodus (Ex 14:17) and in the man born blind (Jn 9:3), and made the wicked for the day of trouble (Pr 16:4; Ro 9:22). Christ came to glorify God (Jn 17:4), and he bestows all the benefits of grace for his name’s sake: redemption, forgiveness, sanctification, and so forth (Ps 105:8; 78:9ff.; Isa 43:25; 48:11; 60:21; 61:3; Ro 9:23; Eph 1:6ff.).

According to Bavinck, the final goal of all creation is to give glory to God. Yes, we enjoy God’s good creation as a gracious gift from him, and he created the world to supply our needs. But that is not an end in itself. All creatures were made to point to him and display his goodness. To be sure, God is already given glory by his people (see Ps 115:1). But, as Bavinck explains, “someday God alone will be great (Isa. 2:2–22) and receive glory from all his creatures (Rev 4:11; 19:6). He is the First and the Last, the Alpha and the Omega ( Isa 44:6; 48:12; Rev 1:8; 22:13). Of him, through him, and to him are all things (Ro 11:36).”

Connecting

God’s creativity has profound implications for human work. Scripture tells us that humans are a unique expression of God’s glory, being his unique image bearers. Part of bearing the image of God is reflected in our working. Our God is a working God, and he made us his workers. When we work, we reflect who God is. Not only that, but our work is also an expression of who we are. Just as God’s work visibly expresses his nature, so also our work reflects who he made us to be. And the end goal, of course, is that God will be glorified. For he intended that everything we do will
ultimately point to him. Thus, God’s creativity—his being the Creator—is the starting point for understanding the dignity and grandeur of human work.

How does seeing yourself as God’s image bearer shape the way you think about work? Do you see your work as an expression of your identity?

CABINETMAKER

I’m a lawyer by trade, but I love working with my hands. I grew up helping my dad on the farm and in his cabinet shop. Building cabinets and remodeling kitchens and bathrooms taught me how to use my hands to construct objects and to use my mind to overcome obstacles. Over the years, I have used these skills in many ways and in different contexts.

My wife of over forty years has come to realize that I will always have a project to work on—whether it’s adding a feature to our home or buying another house that needs renovating. My latest project: remodeling our utility room.

I wanted to design and construct a laundry table. My initial concept was simple. I was going make a basic table on which to fold clothes. My wife, however, would have been satisfied if I had purchased a plastic fold-up table. Instead, after many hours in the garage, I crafted a piece of fine furniture with soft-closing drawers for cat food, pull-out laundry racks and a solid-surface countertop. She loves it.

I enjoyed every aspect of designing and building the table. I didn’t even mind the hours I spent on it when I could’ve been playing golf. I now find myself turning the lights on as I walk past the laundry room so I can admire my work, which leaves me wondering, “Why does this make me feel so good?”

I realized that this creation, as well as my other projects, is a visible expression of my nature—much like God’s work reflects his nature. Unlike God, however, my resources are limited, and so is my imagination.

Still, the process of transforming an idea into something concrete that is more beautiful and useful than I initially imagined, is rewarding beyond measure, especially when it’s for someone else. The table is not just an object made from wood, metal and plastic. It’s my creation and an expression of my love for my wife. Just as the universe is a revelation of God’s immense love for us, so also our work can be an expression of our love for God and others.
kinds: the livestock, the creatures that move along the ground, and the wild animals, each according to its kind.

And it was so. God made the wild animals according to their kinds, the livestock according to their kinds, and all the creatures that move along the ground according to their kinds. And God saw that it was good.

Then God said, “Let us make mankind in our image, in our likeness, so that they may rule over the fish in the sea and the birds in the sky, over the livestock and all the wild animals, and over all the creatures that move along the ground.”

So God created mankind in his own image, in the image of God he created them; male and female he created them.

God blessed them and said to them, “Be fruitful and increase in number; fill the earth and subdue it. Rule over the fish in the sea and the birds in the sky and over the livestock and all living creatures that move along the ground.”

Then God said, “I give you every seed-bearing plant on the face of the whole earth and every tree that has fruit with seed in it. They will be yours for food.

And to all the beasts of the earth and all the birds in the sky and all the creatures that move along the ground — everything that has the breath of life in it — I give every green plant for food.” And it was so.

God saw all that he had made, and it was very good. And there was evening, and there was morning — the sixth day.

Thus the heavens and the earth were completed in all their vast array.

By the seventh day God had finished the work he had been doing; so on the seventh day he rested from all his work. Then God blessed the seventh day and made it holy, because on it he rested from all the work of creating that he had done.

Adam and Eve

This is the account of the heavens and the earth when they were created, when the LORD God made the earth and the heavens.

Now no shrub had yet appeared on the earth and no plant had yet sprung up, for the LORD God had not sent rain on the earth and there was no one to work the ground, but streams came up from the earth and watered the whole surface of the ground. Then the LORD God formed a man from the dust of the ground and breathed into his nostrils the breath of life, and the man became a living being.

Now the LORD God had planted a garden in the east, in Eden; and there he put the man he had formed.

The LORD God made all kinds of trees grow out of the ground — trees that were pleasing to the eye and good for food. In the middle of the garden were the tree of life and the tree of knowledge of good and evil.

A river watering the garden flowed from Eden; from there it was separated into four headwaters. The name of the first is the Pison; it winds through the entire land of Havilah, where there is gold. (The gold of that land is good; aromatic resin and onyx are also there.) The name of the second river is the Gihon; it winds through the entire land of Cush.

The name of the
Introduction to the Sovereign King

Read God’s Story: Genesis 1–2; Psalm 8, 104

Key Verse: “In the beginning God created the heavens and the earth.”

Genesis 1:1

The Bible is fundamentally the narrative of God’s redeeming work in the world. It begins with creation, revealing the eternal God who existed before anything was made. He is the sovereign King and Lord of all that exists, and creation displays his glorious character.

Genesis 1 tells the paramount truth that “In the beginning God...” God created with his words, and he is dynamically and intimately involved in his creation. Through creation he reveals himself to be both transcendent (beyond physical human experience) and immanent (operating within our world), holy and intimate. Although the act of creation is ultimately a mystery we cannot fully comprehend—and discussions of its details often raise controversial questions—Genesis 1 presents a God who is sovereign over all creation.

At the pinnacle of creation, God created Adam and Eve. Unlike creation accounts from other religions and cultures, Genesis 1 presents humans not as slaves subject to whimsical gods, but as bearers of God’s divine image who have inherent dignity. Human beings are called to care for creation as God’s vice-regents in the world. As a result of this great privilege, humans fulfill their call when they steward, nurture, protect and cultivate God’s awe-inspiring creation and when they worship him for his power, wonder, wisdom and love.

The Story continues: Genesis 3, p. 0.
third river is the Tigris; it runs along the east side of Ashur. And the fourth river is the Euphrates.

15 The Lord God took the man and put him in the Garden of Eden to work it and take care of it. 16 And the Lord God commanded the man, “You are free to eat from any tree in the garden; 17 but you must not eat from the tree of the knowledge of good and evil, for when you eat from it you will certainly die.”

18 The Lord God said, “It is not good for the man to be alone. I will make a helper suitable for him.”

19 Now the Lord God had formed out of the ground all the wild animals and all the birds in the sky. He brought them to the man to see what he would name them; and whatever the man called each living creature, that was its name. So the man gave names to all the livestock, the birds in the sky and all the wild animals.

But for Adam no suitable helper was found. 21 So the Lord God caused the man to fall into a deep sleep; and while he was sleeping, he took one of the man’s ribs and then closed up the place with flesh. 22 Then the Lord God made a woman from the rib he had taken out of the man, and he brought her to the man.

23 The man said, “This is now bone of my bones and flesh of my flesh; she shall be called ‘woman,’ for she was taken out of man.”

24 That is why a man leaves his father and mother and is united to his wife, and they become one flesh.

25 Adam and his wife were both naked, and they felt no shame.

The Fall

3 Now the serpent was more crafty than any of the wild animals the Lord God had made. He said to the woman, “Did God really say, ’You must not eat from any tree in the garden?’”

2 The woman said to the serpent, “We may eat fruit from the trees in the garden, 3 but God did say, ’You must not eat from the tree that is in the middle of the garden, and you must not touch it, or you will die.’”

4 “You will not certainly die,” the serpent said to the woman. 5 “For God knows that when you eat from it your eyes will be opened, and you will be like God, knowing good and evil.”

6 When the woman saw that the fruit of the tree was good for food and pleasing to the eye, and also desirable for gaining wisdom, she took some and ate it. She also gave some to her husband, who was with her, and he ate it. 7 Then the eyes of both of them were opened, and they realized they were naked; so they sewed fig leaves together and made coverings for themselves.

8 Then the man and his wife heard the sound of the Lord God as he was walking in the garden in the cool of the day, and they hid from the Lord God among the trees of the garden.

9 But the Lord God called to the man, “Where are you?” 10 He answered, “I heard you in the garden, and I was afraid because I was naked; so I hid.”

11 And he said, “Who told you that you were naked? Have you eaten from the tree that I commanded you not to eat from?”

12 The man said, “The woman you put here with me — she gave me some fruit from the tree, and I ate it.”

13 Then the Lord God said to the woman, “What is this you have done?” The woman said, “The serpent deceived me, and I ate.”

14 So the Lord God said to the serpent, “Because you have done this, “Cursed are you above all livestock and all wild animals! You will crawl on your belly and you will eat dust all the days of your life.

---

*a 20 Or the man  b 21 Or took part of the man’s side  c 22 Or part*
CULTURAL MANDATE (Genesis 1:28)

After God created humanity, he gave them a series of commands: be fruitful and multiply, fill the earth, subdue it and have dominion over other living things. This call to cultivate the world and exercise dominion is often called the cultural mandate. As God’s image bearers, our vocation is to reflect his nature—as modeled for us in his work of creating—by bringing increased order, structure, vibrancy and flourishing to this world that’s so full of potential. God wants us to steward what he has lovingly given to us as a gift, to responsibly harness nature’s power and innovate for his glory and the good of all creation.

DEEPER IN TRUTH

When we read that God rested on the seventh day, we shouldn’t take this to mean that creation was entirely finished or no longer in need of development. Rather, he made humans in his image to continue his work and bring creation to its God-given potential. Albert Wolters explains this in his book *Creation Regained: Biblical Basics for a Reformational Worldview*:

Although God has withdrawn from the work of creation, he has put an image of himself on the earth with a mandate to continue. The earth had been completely unformed and empty; in the six-day process of development God had formed it and filled it—but not completely. People must now carry on the work of development: by being fruitful they must fill it even more; by subduing it they must form it even more. Mankind, as God’s representatives on earth, carry on where God left off. But this is now to be a *human* development of the earth. The human race will fill the earth with its own kind, and it will form the earth for its own kind. From now on the development of the created earth will be *societal* and *cultural* in nature. In a single word, the task ahead is *civilization.*

Creation is not a static quantity. Rather, there is “a growing up . . . an unfolding of creation.” Wolters explains. “This takes place through the task that people have been given of bringing to fruition the possibilities of development implicit in the work of God’s hands.” This mandate is not reserved for “elites”—politicians, pastors, entrepreneurs and so on. No, we all—no matter our rank, ethnicity, age or vocation—are called to continue God’s work in bringing order and vibrancy to our world. God has entrusted humans with the inordinate privilege of continuing his work of creation “to be God’s helper in executing to the end the blueprint for his masterpiece.”

Connecting

This cultural mandate gives our work incredible significance, since it is meant to be an extension of God’s work in creation. Still, many of us do not sense that the work we perform each day has a
significant meaning or purpose. Some of us even see work as torment and a curse, an obstacle to what's really important: whether it be friends, family, hobbies—you name it. But the Bible says that work is good, and the cultural mandate reminds us that the work we participate in points to something far greater than ourselves, even if we can’t see the bigger picture. Sure, work is tainted now because of the fall, and we are incredibly limited. But as God's image bearers, we work to contribute to human flourishing and the development of the earth.

How does your work bring order and flourishing to your company or community? How does it contribute to the common good, the well-being of others and the improvement of the world?

**City Planner**

I’m a city planner for New York City. When a developer wants to build something that is not currently allowed, he or she has to submit a proposal to the city. My job is to understand the project, review the application and sign off on the proposal when it’s complete.

At a deeper level, though, I want to make good decisions that contribute to the *shalom*—a Hebrew word meaning “peace, harmony, wholeness and welfare”—of the city, which means I need to understand God's original vision for human flourishing. The cultural mandate in Genesis affirms the importance of cultivating the earth and subduing it for God's glory. Realizing that God’s vision for human flourishing includes development, cultivation and order has brought excitement to my work.

In order to determine whether a particular proposal contributes to the welfare of a particular place, I must look closely at the surrounding community—its people, personality and passions. Only then can I judge how to best support new investment and development. In theory, my job is quite simple. Yet in reality I face many competing goals and values that sometimes contradict my faith. For example, New York City real estate development usually favors people with deep pockets and impressive platforms. Wealthy neighborhoods have clout and, therefore, the ability to frame the conversation in their favor. Yet my faith calls me to care for the poor and vulnerable. Working with this tension frequently challenges me.

I get lost in a world that measures flourishing differently than Christianity does. I cringe on the inside when I see backroom dealings or bad projects that harm neighborhoods. I know the stakes for these communities, and most of the time I am powerless to act justly without jeopardizing my job.

At other times, however, my work gives me a glimpse of the coming redemption of place. Recently, for example, after I presented a plan for a large rezoning project, a woman approached me at a community board meeting. She passionately accused me of being “the single most destructive force” in her neighborhood, “the harbinger of gentrification” and the developer who will cut down her trees. I then explained the complicated and counterintuitive zoning proposal and reassured her that I was there to protect, not harm, her neighborhood. We eventually came to a mutual understanding, and then she hugged me.

I'm comforted when I remember my individual limitations in altering the landscape of development in the city, yet I realize that this is my role in God’s plan for redeeming creation—in which the cultural mandate plays a critical part. While I can’t right every wrong, I can try my hardest, trusting in God's gracious involvement in my work.
And I will put enmity between you and the woman, and between your offspring and hers; he will strike your head, and you will strike his heel.  

To the woman he said, “I will make your pains in childbearing very severe; with painful labor you will give birth to children. Your desire will be for your husband, and he will rule over you.”  

To Adam he said, “Because you listened to your wife and ate fruit from the tree about which I commanded you, ‘You must not eat from it,’ “Cursed is the ground because of you; through painful toil you will eat food from it all the days of your life.  

It will produce thorns and thistles for you, and you will eat the plants of the field.  

By the sweat of your brow you will eat your food until you return to the ground, for dust you are and to dust you will return.”  

Adam named his wife Eve, because she would become the mother of all the living.  

The LORD God made garments of skin for Adam and his wife and clothed them. And the LORD God said, “The man has now become like one of us, knowing good and evil. He must not be allowed to reach out his hand and take also from the tree of life and eat, and live forever.”  

So the LORD God banished him from the Garden of Eden to work the ground from which he had been taken. After he drove the man out, he placed on the east side of the Garden of Eden cherubim and a flaming sword flashing back and forth to guard the way to the tree of life.  

Cain and Abel  

Adam made love to his wife Eve, and she became pregnant and gave birth to Cain. She said, “With the help of the LORD I have brought forth a man.” Later she gave birth to his brother Abel.  

Now Abel kept flocks, and Cain worked the soil. In the course of time Cain brought some of the fruits of the soil as an offering to the LORD. And Abel also brought an offering — fat portions from some of the firstborn of his flock. The LORD looked with favor on Abel and his offering, but on Cain and his offering he did not look with favor. So Cain was very angry, and his face was downcast.  

Then the LORD said to Cain, “Why are you angry? Why is your face downcast? If you do what is right, will you not be accepted? But if you do not do what is right, sin is crouching at your door; it desires to have you, but you must rule over it.”  

Now Cain said to his brother Abel, “Let’s go out to the field.” While they were in the field, Cain attacked his brother Abel and killed him.  

Then the LORD said to Cain, “Where is your brother Abel?” “I don’t know,” he replied. “Am I my brother’s keeper?”  

The LORD said, “What have you done? Listen! Your brother’s blood cries out to me from the ground. Now you are under a curse and driven from the ground, which opened its mouth to receive your brother’s blood from your hand. When you work the ground, it will no longer yield its crops
A Cataclysmic Rebellion

Read God’s Story: Genesis 3–4

Key Verse: “. . . your eyes will be opened, and you will be like God, knowing good and evil.”

God intended to share intimate and eternal fellowship with humanity. This plan was traumatically disrupted when Adam and Eve succumbed to the temptation to be like God. Their act of disobedience inflicted unimaginable consequences on all of humanity and the rest of creation. The wily serpent deceived Adam and Eve into thinking they could prioritize their prideful desires above God’s commands. As a result they—and all of humanity—lost their intimate relationship with God. Sin settled into God’s created order and eventually led to murder (see Ge 4).

Ever since the fall, sin has distorted and perverted every part of our existence. But God had mercy on humanity. Despite Adam and Eve’s rejection of God, he mercifully clothed them through the sacrifice of an animal. Thus, Genesis 3 establishes the themes of judgment and mercy that reverberate throughout the rest of Scripture.

The Story continues: Genesis 6, p. 0.
him Seth, d saying, “God has granted me another child in place of Abel, since Cain killed him.” e 26 Seth also had a son, and he named him Enosh.

At that time people began to call on e the name of the Lord. u

From Adam to Noah

This is the written account of Adam’s family line.

When God created mankind, he made them in the likeness of God. v 2 He created them male and female w and blessed them. And he named them “Mankind” f when they were created.

3 When Adam had lived 130 years, he had a son in his own likeness, in his own image; a and he named him Seth. 4 After Seth was born, Adam lived 800 years and had other sons and daughters. 5 Altogether, Adam lived a total of 930 years, and then he died. v

6 When Seth had lived 105 years, he became the father g of Enosh. 7 After he became the father of Enosh, Seth lived 807 years and had other sons and daughters. 8 Altogether, Seth lived a total of 912 years, and then he died.

9 When Enosh had lived 90 years, he became the father of Kenan. 10 After he became the father of Kenan, Enosh lived 800 years and had other sons and daughters. 11 Altogether, Enosh lived a total of 905 years, and then he died.

12 When Kenan had lived 70 years, he became the father of Mahalalel. 13 After he became the father of Mahalalel, Kenan lived 840 years and had other sons and daughters. 14 Altogether, Kenan lived a total of 910 years, and then he died.

15 When Mahalalel had lived 65 years, he became the father of Jared. 16 After he became the father of Jared, Mahalalel lived 830 years and had other sons and daughters. 17 Altogether,
When Adam and Eve deliberately disobeyed God, they severed their relationship with him. As a result, their sense of identity, security and purpose was confused. Their rebellion negatively impacted their relationships and, as a result, creation itself was changed. They no longer loved God first and foremost. Rather, other desires began to rule over and enslave them. Instead of loving and serving others, they exploited others, intensifying alienation and estrangement. This is the case not just for Adam and Eve, but for all humans. Paul tells us that, as descendants of Adam, we have all sinned in him (see Ro 5:12). We all have forfeited our rightful place as God’s vice-regents and have subjected creation to frustration and bondage. Even work, which was originally intended to give humans purpose and nobility, is marked by toil and pain. The fall of humanity has corrupted every aspect of our lives and our world.

The Bible teaches that Adam and Eve’s fall into sin was not an isolated act of disobedience. Rather, it was an event of catastrophic significance, impacting all of creation—both the human and nonhuman world. The corrosive effects of the fall are inescapable at every level—societal, familial, cultural and individual. As Albert Wolters explains, “We discover that the good handiwork of God has been drawn into the sphere of human mutiny against God.”

Wolters says this “distortion” of God’s good creation is most obvious “in our personal lives, where the effects of the fall are most readily recognized by Christians. Murder, adultery, theft, blasphemy, and many other vices are obvious and widespread infringements on God’s creational design for human life.” Perhaps less obvious are violations at the emotional and mental levels. “[T]hese too,” says Wolters, “are distortions of creaturely human functions and participate in the groaning of creation. The Bible even ties bodily sickness, the causes of which so often lie outside the sphere of our personal responsibility, to the root cause of human sinfulness (see, for example, 1Co 11:30).”

Humanity’s dire situation and all the evil and perversity in the world is ultimately the result of our sin—our refusal to live according to God’s good ordinances. Sin and death entered through one man, says Paul (see Ro 5:12), and all creation groans for redemption (see Ro 8:22).

Connecting

Many of us tend to think our sin affects only us as individuals. But the Bible teaches that the fall has vast implications: Adam and Eve’s sin led to a broken relationship with God and to brokenness throughout society. No one and no place in our world is unaffected. Even the “secret” sins we commit are not isolated. Sin has a remarkable ripple effect, touching those around us and everything we do. That means sin affects our work. Not only is our work marked by toil and frustration as a
result of the fall, it is also tainted by our particular personal sins. Yet because of Christ’s work, work will not always be taxing and stressful, corrupted by sin. We still live with the effects of sin, but one day we’ll be free of them.

How might your sin affect your coworkers, and even the quality of your work? In what ways do you see Christ’s redemption in your work, despite the frustrations you experience as a result of the fall?

Civil Service Employee
I work for the federal government on issues concerning threat finance. That means I develop, manage and oversee initiatives that make the government better at combating illicit activities like drug trafficking and weapons proliferation. In my work, I try to include decision-makers from both the private and public sectors, who have an in-depth understanding of the threats facing our nation and possible resolutions to those threats.

I see my work as one way in which God brings justice to the world and provides security for his people. With this perspective, I find my work exhilarating. Yet on a daily basis my work does not always feel lofty and important. I spend most of the time reading e-mails and talking on conference calls.

I can’t tell many stories from my work in great detail, since they’re confidential, but I can say my work feels most meaningful when the papers and insights I provide produce tangible results—an illegal activity thwarted, money for violent activities frozen or a policy changed. At these times, I feel like I’m carrying out God’s will to care for his creation.

Yet I am keenly aware that my job exists only because sin—pervasive, predatory and intentional sin—exists in the world. The depth of depravity, the unbelievable dehumanization of God’s image-bearers and the enslavement of those most vulnerable, have grieved me.

While my line of work attempts to find solutions to these enormous problems, no human resolution can ultimately solve our world’s deepest problem—sin. We need Christ, “for he himself is our peace” (Eph 2:14). Only Christ can break down the “dividing wall of hostility” that exists between people groups, because only he can destroy the barrier between us and God.

In one sense, Christ has already done this through the cross (see Eph 2:16). Yet we await the fullness of God’s kingdom, when “nation will not take up sword against nation, nor will they train for war anymore” (Isa 2:4). This already-but-not-yet tension instills in me a greater passion to see Christ glorified in my work so that hearts, institutions and nations can find true peace—a peace that points to the redemption of creation. ■

Mahalalel lived a total of 895 years, and then he died.

18 When Jared had lived 162 years, he became the father of Enoch. 19 After he became the father of Enoch, Jared lived 800 years and had other sons and daughters. 20 Altogether, Jared lived a total of 962 years, and then he died.

21 When Enoch had lived 65 years, he became the father of Methuselah. 22 After he became the father of Methuselah, Enoch walked faithfully with God a 300 years and had other sons and daughters. 23 Altogether, Enoch lived a total of 365 years. 24 Enoch walked faithfully with God, b then he was no more, because God took him away. c

25 When Methuselah had lived 187 years, he became the father of Lamech. 26 After he became the father of Lamech, Methuselah lived 782 years and had other sons and daughters. 27 Altogether, Methuselah lived a total of 969 years, and then he died.

28 When Lamech had lived 182 years, he had a son. 29 He named him Noah d and said, “He will comfort us in the labor and painful toil of our hands caused by the ground the LORD has cursed.” e 30 After Noah was born, Lamech lived 595 years and had other sons and daughters. 31 Altogether, Lamech lived a total of 777 years, and then he died.

32 After Noah was 500 years old, he became the father of Shem, Ham and Japheth.

Wickedness in the World

6 When human beings began to increase in number on the earth e and daughters were born to them, f the sons of God saw that the daughters of humans were beautiful, and they married any of them they chose. g Then the LORD said, “My Spirit will not contend with humans forever, h for they are mortal; i their days will be a hundred and twenty years.”

4 The Nephilim h were on the earth in those days — and also afterward — when the sons of God went to the daughters of humans and had children by them. They were the heroes of old, men of renown.

5 The LORD saw how great the wickedness of the human race had become on the earth, and that every inclination of the thoughts of the human heart was only evil all the time. i 6 The LORD regretted that he had made human beings on the earth, and his heart was deeply troubled. j So the LORD said, “I will wipe from the face of the earth the human race I have created — and with them the animals, the birds and the creatures that move along the ground — for I regret that I have made them.” k But Noah found favor in the eyes of the LORD. l

Noah and the Flood

9 This is the account of Noah and his family.

Noah was a righteous man, blameless among the people of his time, m and he walked faithfully with God. n 10 Noah had three sons: Shem, Ham and Japheth. o

11 Now the earth was corrupt in God’s sight and was full of violence. p 12 God saw how corrupt the earth had become, for all the people on earth had corrupted their ways. q 13 So God said to Noah, “I am going to put an end to all people, for the earth is filled with violence because of them. I am surely going to destroy both them and the earth.” r

6:15 This is how you are to build it: The ark is to be three hundred cubits long, fifty cubits wide and thirty cubits high. s

a 29 Noah sounds like the Hebrew for comfort. b 3 Or My spirit will not remain in c 3 Or corrupt
d 14 The meaning of the Hebrew for this word is uncertain. e 15 That is, about 450 feet long, 75 feet wide and 45 feet high or about 135 meters long, 23 meters wide and 14 meters high
At this point in history, humanity’s sinful nature had become increasingly apparent and destructive. God was so grieved by sin that he decided to exercise his judgment on all of creation—with the exception of one righteous man, Noah, and his family. In what is perhaps one of the Bible’s most well-known stories, one family was shielded from God’s judgment. Noah and his family were spared so that they could start a new creation, as it were. Noah’s faithful obedience to God—even when those who thought he was crazy ridiculed him—saved himself, his family and all the creatures God placed on the ark that Noah had built at God’s command. When the floodwaters receded, God made a covenant with this new first family, promising—with the sign of a rainbow—to preserve the earth from total destruction.

However, the flood was not enough to change people’s sinful hearts. Soon humanity’s prideful nature reemerged, as was seen at Babel (see Ge 11:1–9). This monumental tower represented humanity’s short-sighted desire for glory and independence from God. Yet God responded by once again bringing judgment on humanity’s foolish arrogance—this time by confusing their language and scattering them across the earth.

The Story continues: Genesis 12, p. 000.

Key Verse: “... every inclination of the thoughts of the human heart was only evil all the time.”

Genesis 6:5
below the roof an opening one cubita high all around.b Put a door in the side of the ark and make lower, middle and upper decks. 17I am going to bring floodwaters on the earth to destroy all life under the heavens, every creature that has the breath of life in it. Everything on earth will perish.18 But I will establish my covenant with you, and you will enter the ark— you and your sons and your wife and your sons’ wives with you. 19You are to bring into the ark two of all living creatures, male and female, to keep them alive with you. 20Two of every kind of bird, of every kind of animal and of every kind of creature that moves along the ground will come to you to be kept alive. 21You are to take every kind of food that is to be eaten and store it away as food for you and for them.”

22Noah did everything just as God commanded him.x

7The LORD then said to Noah, “Go into the ark, you and your whole family,y because I have found you righteousz in this generation. 2Take with you seven pairs of every kind of cleana animal, a male and its mate, and one pair of every kind of unclean animal, a male and its mate, zand also seven pairs of every kind of bird, male and female, to keep their various kinds alive throughout the earth. 4Seven days from now I will send rain on the earth for forty days and forty nights, and I will wipe from the face of the earth every living creature I have made.”

5And Noah did all that the LORD commanded him. b

6Noah was six hundred years old when the floodwaters came on the earth. c And Noah and his sons and his wife and his sons’ wives entered the ark to escape the waters of the flood. dPairs of clean and unclean animals, of birds and of all creatures that move along the ground, e male and female, came to Noah and entered the ark, as God had commanded Noah. 10And after the seven days the floodwaters came on the earth.

11In the six hundredth year of Noah’s life, on the seventeenth day of the second month— on that day all the springs of the great deepc burst forth, and the floodgates of the heavensd were opened. 12And rain fell on the earth forty days and forty nights.e

13On that very day Noah and his sons, Shem, Ham and Japheth, together with his wife and the wives of his three sons, entered the ark. 14They had with them every wild animal according to its kind, all livestock according to their kinds, every creature that moves along the ground according to its kind and every bird according to its kind, everything with wings. 15Pairs of all creatures that have the breath of life in them came to Noah and entered the ark.f 16The animals going in were male and female of every living thing, as God had commanded Noah. Then the LORD shut him in.

17For forty daysg the flood kept coming on the earth, and as the waters increased they lifted the ark high above the earth. 18The waters rose and increased greatly on the earth, and the ark floated on the surface of the water. 19They rose greatly on the earth, and all the high mountains under the entire heavens were covered. h 20The waters rose and covered the mountains to a depth of more than fifteen cubits.c d

21Every living thing that moved on land perished— birds, livestock, wild animals, all the creatures that swarm over the earth, and all mankind. i

22Everything on dry land that had the breath of life in its nostrils died. j 23Every living thing on the face of the earth was wiped out; people and animals and the creatures that move along the ground and the birds were wiped from the earth.k Only Noah was left, and those with him in the ark.l

---

a 16 That is, about 18 inches or about 45 centimetersb 16 The meaning of the Hebrew for this clause is uncertain.
c 20 That is, about 23 feet or about 6.8 metersd 20 Or rose more than fifteen cubits, and the mountains were covered
The waters flooded the earth for a hundred and fifty days.  

But God remembered Noah and all the wild animals and the livestock that were with him in the ark, and he sent a wind over the earth, and the waters receded.  

Now the springs of the deep and the floodgates of the heavens had been closed, and the rain had stopped falling from the sky.  

The water receded steadily from the earth. At the end of the hundred and fifty days the water had gone down, and on the seventeenth day of the seventh month the ark came to rest on the mountains of Ararat.  

The waters continued to recede until the tenth month, and on the first day of the tenth month the tops of the mountains became visible.

After forty days Noah opened a window he had made in the ark and sent out a raven, and it kept flying back and forth until the water had receded from the surface of the ground.  

But the dove could find nowhere to perch because there was water over all the surface of the earth; so it returned to Noah in the ark. He reached out his hand and took the dove and brought it back to himself in the ark.  

He waited seven more days and sent out the dove from the ark. When the dove returned to him in the evening, there in its beak was a freshly plucked olive leaf! Then Noah knew that the water had receded from the earth.  

He waited seven more days and sent the dove out again, but this time it did not return to him.

By the first day of the first month of Noah’s six hundred and first year, the water had dried up from the earth. Noah then removed the covering from the ark and saw that the surface of the ground was dry.  

By the twenty-seventh day of the second month the earth was completely dry.

Then God said to Noah, “Come out of the ark, you and your wife and your sons and their wives.  

Bring out every kind of living creature that is with you — the birds, the animals, and all the creatures that move along the ground — so they can multiply on the earth and be fruitful and increase in number on it.”

So Noah came out, together with his sons and his wife and his sons’ wives.  

All the animals and all the creatures that move along the ground and all the birds — everything that moves on land — came out of the ark, one kind after another.

Then Noah built an altar to the Lord and, taking some of all the clean animals and clean birds, he sacrificed burnt offerings on it.  

The Lord smelled the pleasing aroma and said in his heart: “Never again will I curse the ground because of humans, even though every inclination of the human heart is evil from childhood. And never again will I destroy all living creatures, as I have done.

As long as the earth endures, seedtime and harvest, summer and winter, day and night will never cease.”

God’s Covenant With Noah

Then God blessed Noah and his sons, saying to them, “Be fruitful and increase in number and fill the earth.  

The fear and dread of you will be on all the beasts of the earth, and on all the birds in the sky, on every creature that moves along the ground, and on all the fish in the sea; they are given into your hands.  

Everything that lives and moves about will be food for you. Just as I gave you the green plants, I now give you everything.

But you must not eat meat that has its lifeblood still in it.  

Or humans, for
DOCTRINE OF HUMANITY

IMAGE OF GOD (Genesis 9:6)

The Bible has a lot to say about humanity. It tells us we were made male and female (Gen 1:27), that we are “fearfully and wonderfully made” (Ps 139:14), are frail (see Ps 103:14–16), that we are sinful (Ps 143:2)—the list goes on. Perhaps the most profound thing it says about humanity is that we all have been given the unfathomable honor of bearing the image of God (imago dei). When we view another human being, we see God reflected in them. Even after the fall, despite the sin that resides in all people, humans continue to bear God’s image (see Gen 9:6). And Christ—the perfect image of God (see Col 1:15)—came to redeem us so that we might reflect in greater fullness God’s glory.

As divine image bearers, we have a deep sense of purpose in this world: we are called to reflect God’s character and continue his work. This also shapes how we view and treat others. Each person—whether a stranger, neighbor or co-worker—must be given the dignity, respect and love due them as God’s image bearer.

DEEPER IN TRUTH

One way to think about imaging God is to think about a mirror. In his book Created in God’s Image, Anthony A. Hoekema explains:

As a mirror reflects, so man should reflect God. When one looks at a human being, one ought to see in him or her a certain reflection of God. Another way of putting this is to say that in man God is to become visible on earth. To be sure, other creatures, and even the heavens, declare the glory of God, but only in man does God become visible. [Theologians] speak of God’s general revelation, in which he reveals his presence, power, and divinity through the works of his hands. But in the creation of man God revealed himself in a unique way, by making someone who was a kind of mirror image of himself.1

But this discussion is only one side to the coin. Humans not only reflect God but also represent him. Ancient rulers often erected images of themselves in various parts of their realms, to represent their authority to their subordinates. That’s what we see in Daniel 3, where King Nebuchadnezzar sets up an image—likely of himself—and commands his subjects to fall down before it and worship.

We were created in God’s image so we could represent him here on earth, much like an ambassador represents a foreign country. Hoekema further explains:

As an ambassador represents his country’s authority, so man (both male and female) must represent the authority of God. As an ambassador is concerned to advance the best interests of his country, so man must seek to advance God’s program for this world. As God’s representatives, we should support and defend what God stands for, and should promote what God promotes.2

What a great honor and privilege this is. Through us God works out his purposes on earth. Yet it is also a great responsibility. When others look at us, they “should be able to encounter God, to
hear his word and to experience his love." We were created to represent who God is and what he stands for.

**Connecting**

While we all were created to mirror God, not all of us represent God well. In fact, we all do it imperfectly. This is an important distinction that helps us in two ways. First, it helps us understand how we should view all people—as divine image bearers, loved by God. Second, it highlights the challenge we have of representing God in the world.

When you think of your coworkers, do you see them as people created in the divine image—worthy of dignity and worth that this reality brings with it? Or do you see them as merely a pathway to your own personal gain, even sometimes treating them as sub-human? And how does the truth of the gospel and the grace of God help you better represent God to those with whom you interact each day?

---

**DEEPER AT WORK**

**Pediatric Occupational Therapist**

I arrive at the hospital to begin my work day and enter the room of my first patient. She weighs less than three pounds, and the tubes, wires and hoses connected to her outnumber the days since she was born. I observe her and notice her rib cage retracting, straining for each breath. She is premature, fragile, not equipped for life outside the womb. I use my hands to provide containment and flexion. I tenderly reposition and massage her.

I move to my next patient: a teenage girl who is recovering from brain surgery. Part of her brain was removed in hopes that it would stop, or at least reduce, her epileptic seizures. Her surgery has left her hemiplegic, unable to use her left side. She is disheartened that simple tasks now take immense focus and time. I want to make her feel like a normal teenager, so I get several bottles of nail polish, and we practice coordination tasks by doing something that is both familiar and important to her.

In my work, I arrange brain pathways, promote healing in bones, stretch muscles and calm fears. And mostly, I play. I am a pediatric occupational therapist, and I play for the glory of God.

Often the world of medical billing and reimbursement favors patients who heal quickly. I see every child as having been made in the image of God and, therefore, valuable and worthy of respect and dignity. God did not equate human worth with giftedness. He loved us while we were still sinners and provided redemption for us, even though we did not—and do not—deserve it. Jesus frequently healed those who were chronically ill. He saw their needs and heard their stories. He gave them healing and hope. In him, I can follow his example and treat all my patients with respect—no matter what their “rehab potential” may be.

So when I arrive at the end of my day to stretch my little friend—a sweet nine-year-old girl who can’t talk, will always be wheelchair bound and has intense difficulty controlling her movements—I stretch her lovingly. Biomechanically, I am preventing contractures. But theologically, I am affirming her status as God’s image bearer, showing her that she is worthy of my best work.

---

The Sons of Noah

18 The sons of Noah who came out of the ark were Shem, Ham and Japheth. (Ham was the father of Canaan.) 19 These were the three sons of Noah, and from them came the people who were scattered over the whole earth. 20 Noah, a man of the soil, proceeded to plant a vineyard. 21 When he drank some of its wine, he became drunk and lay uncovered inside his tent. 22 Ham, the father of Canaan, saw his father naked and told his two brothers outside. 23 But Shem and Japheth took a garment and laid it across their shoulders; then they walked in backward and covered their father’s naked body. Their faces were turned the other way so that they would not see their father naked. 24 When Noah awoke from his wine and found out what his youngest son had done to him, 25 he said, “Cursed be Canaan! The lowest of slaves will he be to his brothers.

26 He also said, “Praise be to the LORD, the God of Shem! May Canaan be the slave of Shem. 27 May God extend Japheth’s territory; may Japheth live in the tents of Shem, and may Canaan be the slave of Japheth.” 28 After the flood Noah lived 350 years. 29 Noah lived a total of 950 years, and then he died.

The Table of Nations

10 This is the account of Shem, Ham and Japheth, Noah’s sons, who themselves had sons after the flood.
The Japhethites

2 The sons of Japheth:
   Gomer, 1 Madai, Javan, Tubal, Meshekh and Tiras.

3 The sons of Gomer:
   Ashkenaz, Riphath and Togarmah.

4 The sons of Javan:
   Elishah, Tarshish, the Kittites and the Rodanites. (From these the maritime peoples spread out into their territories by their clans within their nations, each with its own language.)

The Hamites

6 The sons of Ham:
   Cush, Egypt, Put and Canaan.

7 The sons of Cush:
   Seba, Havilah, Sabtah, Raamah and Sabteka.
   The sons of Raamah:
   Sheba and Dedan.

8 Cush was the father of Nimrod, who became a mighty warrior on the earth. He was a mighty hunter before the Lord; that is why it is said, “Like Nimrod, a mighty hunter before the Lord.” The first centers of his kingdom were Babylon, Uruk, Akkad and Kalneh, in Shinar. From that land he went to Assyria, where he built Nineveh, Rehoboth Ira, Calah and Resen, which is between Nineveh and Calah — which is the great city.

13 Egypt was the father of the Ludites, Anamites, Lehabites, Naphtuhites, Pathru­sites, Kasluhites (from whom the Philistines came) and Caphtorites.

15 Canaan was the father of Sidon his firstborn, and of the Hittites, Jebusites, Amorites, Girgashites, Hivites, Arka­ites, Sinites, Arvedites, Zemarites and Hamathites.

Later the Canaanite clans scattered and the borders of Canaan reached from Sidon toward Gerar as far as Gaza, and then toward Sodom, Go­morrah, Admah and Zeboi­m, as far as Lasha. These are the sons of Ham by their clans and languages, in their territories and nations.

The Semites

21 Sons were also born to Shem, whose older brother was Japheth; Shem was the ancestor of all the sons of Eber.

22 The sons of Shem:
   Elam, Ashur, Arphaxad, Lud and Aram.

23 The sons of Aram:
   Uz, Hul, Gether and Meshek.

24 Arphaxad was the father of She­lah, and Shelah the father of Eber.

25 Two sons were born to Eber: One was named Peleg, because in his time the earth was divided; his brother was named Joktan.

26 Joktan was the father of Almodad, Sheleph, Hazarma­veth, Jerah, Hadoram, Uzal, Diklah, Obal, Abimael, Sheba, Ophir, Havilah and Jobab. All these were sons of Joktan.

30 The region where they lived stretched from Mesha toward Sehar, in the eastern hill country.

---

1 Sons may mean descendants or successors of nations; also in verses 3, 4, 6, 7, 20-23, 29 and 31.  
4 Some manuscripts of the Masoretic Text and Samaritan Pentateuch (see also Septuagint and 1 Chron. 1:7); most manuscripts of the Masoretic Text Dodanites.  
8 Father may mean ancestor or predecessor or founder; also in verses 13, 15, 24 and 26.  
10 Or Uruk and Akkad — all of them in Babylonia  
11 Or Nineveh with its city squares  
14 Or of the Sidonians, the foremost  
15 Or Shem, the older brother of  
18 Or Shem, the older brother of  
20 Or the founder of  
21 Or of the Sidonians, the foremost  
23 Or Septuagint and 1 Chron. 1:17; Hebrew Mash.  
24 Hebrew; Septuagint father of Cainan, and Cainan was the father of  
25 Or Peleg means division.
31 These are the sons of Shem by their clans and languages, in their territories and nations.

32 These are the clans of Noah's sons, according to their lines of descent, within their nations. From these the nations spread out over the earth after the flood.

The Tower of Babel

11 Now the whole world had one language and a common speech. 2 As people moved eastward, they found a plain in Shinar and settled there.

3 They said to each other, “Come, let’s make bricks and bake them thoroughly.” They used brick instead of stone, and tar for mortar. 4 Then they said, “Come, let us build ourselves a city, with a tower that reaches to the heavens, so that we may make a name for ourselves; otherwise we will be scattered over the face of the whole earth.”

5 But the LORD came down to see the city and the tower the people were building. 6 The LORD said, “If as one people speaking the same language they have begun to do this, then nothing they plan to do will be impossible for them. 7 Come, let us go down and confuse their language so they will not understand each other.”

8 So the LORD scattered them from there over all the earth, and they stopped building the city. 9 That is why it was called Babel—because there the LORD confused the language of the whole world. From there the LORD scattered them over the face of the whole earth.

From Shem to Abram

11:10-27pp — Ge 10:21-31; 1Ch 1:17-27

10 This is the account of Shem’s family line.

11:2-3 These are the sons of Shem by their clans and languages, in their territories and nations. 11:4-6 They used brick in stead of stone, under stand each oth er.

11:7-9 The city and the tower the people were build ed there.

11:10-27pp — Ge 10:21-31; 1Ch 1:17-27

11:10 The Tower of Babel

11:11-24 From Shem to Abram

11:12-13, 21-24 The Tower of Babel

11:25-32 From Shem to Abram

2 Or from the east; or in the east 2 That is, Babylonia 3 That is, Babylon; Babel sounds like the Hebrew for confused. 4 10 Father may mean ancestor; also in verses 11-25. 5, 12, 13 Hebrew; Septuagint (see also Luke 3:35, 36 and note at Gen. 10:24) 35 years, he became the father of Cainan. 13 And after he became the father of Cainan, Arphaxad lived 430 years and had other sons and daughters, and then he died. When Cainan had lived 130 years, he became the father of Shelah. And after he became the father of Shelah, Cainan lived 330 years and had other sons and daughters.

12 When Arphaxad had lived 35 years, he became the father of Shelah. 13 And after he became the father of Shelah, Arphaxad lived 403 years and had other sons and daughters.

14 When Shelah had lived 30 years, he became the father of Eber. 15 And after he became the father of Eber, Shelah lived 403 years and had other sons and daughters.

16 When Eber had lived 34 years, he became the father of Peleg. 17 And after he became the father of Peleg, Eber lived 430 years and had other sons and daughters.

18 When Peleg had lived 30 years, he became the father of Reu. 19 And after he became the father of Reu, Peleg lived 209 years and had other sons and daughters.

20 When Reu had lived 32 years, he became the father of Serug. 21 And after he became the father of Serug, Reu lived 207 years and had other sons and daughters.

22 When Serug had lived 30 years, he became the father of Nahor. 23 And after he became the father of Nahor, Serug lived 200 years and had other sons and daughters.

24 When Nahor had lived 29 years, he became the father of Terah. 25 And after he became the father of Terah, Nahor lived 119 years and had other sons and daughters.

26 After Terah had lived 70 years, he became the father of Abram, and Haran.
Abram’s Family

27 This is the account of Terah’s family line.

Terah became the father of Abram, Nahor and Haran. And Haran became the father of Lot. 28 While his father Terah was still alive, Haran died in Ur of the Chaldeans, 1 in the land of his birth. 29 Abram and Nahor both married. The name of Abram’s wife was Sarai, 3 and the name of Nahor’s wife was Milka; 4 she was the daughter of Haran, the father of both Milka and Iskah. 30 Now Sarai was childless because she was not able to conceive. 5

31 Terah took his son Abram, his grandson Lot son of Haran, and his daughter-in-law Sarai, the wife of his son Abram, and together they set out from Ur of the Chaldeans 6 to go to Canaan. 7 But when they came to Harran, they settled there.

32 Terah lived 205 years, and he died in Harran.

The Call of Abram

12 The Lord had said to Abram, “Go from your country, your people and your father’s household to the land I will show you.” 2 “I will make you into a great nation, 5 and I will bless you; 7 I will make your name great, and you will be a blessing. 3 I will bless those who bless you, and whoever curses you I will curse; 8 and all peoples on earth will be blessed through you.” 9

4 So Abram went, as the Lord had told him; and Lot went with him. Abram was seventy-five years old when he set out from Harran. 5 He took his wife Sarai, his nephew Lot, all the possessions they had accumulated and the people 7 they had acquired in Harran, and they set out for the land of Canaan, and they arrived there.

6 Abram traveled through the land as far as the site of the great tree of Moreh 2 at Shechem. At that time the Canaanites 3 were in the land. 7 The Lord appeared to Abram 8 and said, “To your offspring I will give this land.” 9 So he built an altar there to the Lord, 9 who had appeared to him.

8 From there he went on toward the hills east of Bethel 8 and pitched his tent, with Bethel on the west and Ai on the east. There he built an altar to the Lord and called on the name of the Lord.

9 Then Abram set out and continued toward the Negev.

Abram in Egypt

10 Now there was a famine in the land, and Abram went down to Egypt to live there for a while because the famine was severe. 11 As he was about to enter Egypt, he said to his wife Sarai, “I know what a beautiful woman you are. 12 When the Egyptians see you, they will say, ‘This is his wife.’ Then they will kill me but will let you live. 13 Say you are my sister, 9 so that I will be treated well for your sake and my life will be spared because of you.” 14 When Abram came to Egypt, the Egyptians saw that Sarai was a very beautiful woman. 15 And when Pharaoh’s officials saw her, they praised her to Pharaoh, and she was taken into his palace. 16 He treated Abram well for her sake, and Abram acquired sheep and cattle, male and female donkeys, male and female servants, and camels.

17 But the Lord inflicted serious diseases on Pharaoh and his household 18 because of Abram’s wife Sarai. 19 So Pharaoh summoned Abram. “What have you done to me?” 19 he said. “Why didn’t you tell me she was your wife? 20 Why did you say, ‘She is my sister,’ so that I took her to be my wife? Now then, here is your wife. Take her and go!” 20 Then Pharaoh gave orders about
The Power of Faith

Read God’s Story: Genesis 12:1–7, 15, 17, 22:1–19

Key Verse: “... all peoples on earth will be blessed through you.”

Genesis 12:3

The story of Abram reveals God’s desire to bless the world through a nation, and ultimately through one person—the Messiah, Jesus Christ. God called Abram to be the recipient of his blessings, with the intention that these blessings would flow to the surrounding nations and, in time, to all the earth. Abram demonstrated remarkable faith in God’s promises: He obeyed when God told him to leave his homeland; he trusted God despite having doubts and fears regarding the future; he was even willing to make an unthinkable sacrifice—giving his only son, Isaac, as an offering to God. God commended Abram’s faith and made a covenant with Abram (whose name means “father of nations”), promising to bless the entire world through him. As part of this covenant, God changed his name to Abraham (“father of many nations”). As God’s plan unfolded, Abraham became the father of a great nation: Israel.

The Story continues: Exodus 1, p. 0.

Map by International Mapping. Copyright © by Zondervan. All rights reserved.
Abram to his men, and they sent him on his way, with his wife and everything he had.

**Abram and Lot Separate**

13 So Abram went up from Egypt to the Negev, with his wife and everything he had, and Lot went with him. Abram had become very wealthy in livestock and in silver and gold.

3From the Negev he went from place to place until he came to Bethel, to the place between Bethel and Ai where his tent had been earlier and where he had first built an altar. There Abram called on the name of the LORD.

5Now Lot, who was moving about with Abram, also had flocks and herds and tents. But the land could not support them while they stayed together, for their possessions were so great that they were not able to stay together. And quarreling arose between Abram’s herdsmen and Lot’s. The Canaanites and Perizzites were also living in the land at that time.

8So Abram said to Lot, “Let’s not have any quarreling between you and me; or between your herdsmen and mine, for we are close relatives. Is not the whole land before you? Let’s part company. If you go to the left, I’ll go to the right; if you go to the right, I’ll go to the left.”

10Lot looked around and saw that the whole plain of the Jordan toward Zoar was well watered, like the garden of the LORD, like the land of Egypt. (This was before the LORD destroyed Sodom and Gomorrah.) So Lot chose for himself the whole plain of the Jordan and set out toward the east. The two men parted company: Abram lived in the land of Canaan, while Lot lived among the cities of the plain and pitched his tents near Sodom. Now the people of Sodom were wicked and were sinning greatly against the LORD.

14The LORD said to Abram after Lot had parted from him, “Look around from where you are, to the north and south, to the east and west. All the land that you see I will give to you and your offspring forever. I will make your offspring like the dust of the earth, so that if anyone could count the dust, then your offspring could be counted. 17Go, walk through the length and breadth of the land, for I am giving it to you.”

18So Abram went to live near the great trees of Mamre at Hebron, where he pitched his tents. There he built an altar to the LORD.

**Abram Rescues Lot**

14 At the time when Amraphel was king of Shinar, Arioch king of Ellasar, Kedorlaomer king of Elam and Tidal king of Goym, these kings went to war against Bera king of Sodom, Birsha king of Gomorrah, Shinab king of Admah, Shemeber king of Zeboiyim, and the king of Bela (that is, Zoar). All these latter kings joined forces in the Valley of Siddim (that is, the Dead Sea Valley). For twelve years they had been subject to Kedorlaomer, but in the thirteenth year they rebelled.

5In the fourteenth year, Kedorlaomer and the kings allied with him went out and defeated the Rephaim in Ashteroth Karnaim, the Zuzites in Ham, the Emites in Shaveh Kiriathaim and the Horites in the hill country of Seir, as far as El Paran near the desert. Then they turned back and went to En Mishpat (that is, Kadesh), and they conquered the whole territory of the Amalekites, as well as the Amorites who were living in Hazazon Tamar.

8Then the king of Sodom, the king of Gomorrah, the king of Admah, the king of Zeboiyim and the king of Bela (that is, Zoar) marched out and drew up their battle lines in the Valley of

---

*a 15 Or seed; also in verse 16  
b 1 That is, Babylonia; also in verse 9*
The king of Sodom said to Abram, “Give me the people and keep the goods for yourself.”

22 But Abram said to the king of Sodom, “With raised hand I have sworn an oath to the Lord, God Most High, Creator of heaven and earth, that I will accept nothing belonging to you, not even a thread or the strap of a sandal, so that you will never be able to say, ‘I made Abram rich.’ I will accept nothing but what my men have eaten and the share that belongs to the men who went with me — to Aner, Eshkol and Mamre. Let them have their share.”

The Lord’s Covenant With Abram

15 After this, the word of the Lord came to Abram in a vision:

“Do not be afraid, Abram.
I am your shield, your very great reward.”

2 But Abram said, “Sovereign Lord, what can you give me since I remain childless and the one who will inherit my estate is Eliezer of Damascus?”

3 And Abram said, “You have given me no children; so a servant in my household will be my heir.”

4 Then the word of the Lord came to him: “This man will not be your heir, but a son who is your own flesh and blood will be your heir.”

5 He took him outside and said, “Look up at the sky and count the stars — if indeed you can count them.” Then he said to him, “So shall your offspring be.”

6 Abram believed the Lord, and he credited it to him as righteousness.

7 He also said to him, “I am the Lord, who brought you out of Ur of the Chaldeans to give you this land to take possession of it.”

8 But Abram said, “Sovereign Lord, how can I know that I will gain possession of it?”

a 13 Or a relative; or an ally
b 1 Or sovereign
c 1 Or shield; your reward will be very great
d 2 The meaning of the Hebrew for this phrase is uncertain.
e 5 Or seed

Siddim against Kedorlaomer king of Elam, Tidal king of Goyim, Amraphel king of Shinar and Arioch king of Ellasar — four kings against five. Now the Valley of Siddim was full of tar pits, and when the kings of Sodom and Gomorrah fled, some of the men fell into them and the rest fled to the hills. The four kings seized all the goods of Sodom and Gomorrah and all their food; then they went away. They also carried off Abram’s nephew Lot and his possessions, since he was living in Sodom.

13 A man who had escaped came and reported this to Abram the Hebrew. Now Abram was living near the great trees of Mamre the Amorite, a brother of Eshkol and Aner, all of whom were allied with Abram. When Abram heard that his relative had been taken captive, he called out the 318 trained men born in his household and went in pursuit as far as Dan.

15 During the night Abram divided his men to attack them and he routed them, pursuing them as far as Hobah, north of Damascus. He recovered all the goods and brought back his relative Lot and his possessions, together with the women and the other people.

17 After Abram returned from defeating Kedorlaomer and the kings allied with him, the king of Sodom came out to meet him in the Valley of Shaveh (that is, the King’s Valley).

18 Then Melchizedek king of Salem brought out bread and wine. He was priest of God Most High, and he blessed Abram, saying,

“Blessed be Abram by God Most High,
Creator of heaven and earth.
And praise be to God Most High, who delivered your enemies into your hand.”

Then Abram gave him a tenth of everything.
9 So the LORD said to him, “Bring me a heifer, a goat and a ram, each three years old, along with a dove and a young pigeon.”

10 Abram brought all these to him, cut them in two and arranged the halves opposite each other; 11 then birds of prey came down on the carcases, but Abram drove them away.

12 As the sun was setting, Abram fell into a deep sleep, 13 and a thick and dreadful darkness came over him.

13 Then the LORD said to him, “Know for certain that for four hundred years your descendants will be strangers in a country not their own and that they will be enslaved and mistreated there. 14 But I will punish the nation they serve as slaves, and afterward they will come out with great possessions. 15 You, however, will go to your ancestors in peace and be buried at a good old age. 16 In the fourth generation your descendants will come back here, for the sin of the Amorites has not yet reached its full measure.”

17 When the sun had set and darkness had fallen, a smoking firepot with a blazing torch appeared and passed between the pieces. 18 On that day the LORD made a covenant with Abram and said, “To your descendants I give this land, 19 from the Wadi of Egypt to the great river, the Euphrates — the land of the Kenites, Kenizzites, Kadmonites, Hittites, Perizzites, Reph­phites, Amorites, Canaanites, Girgashites and Jebusites.”

Hagar and Ishmael

16 Now Sarai, Abram’s wife, had borne him no children. 2 But she had an Egyptian slave named Hagar; 3 so she said to Abram, “The LORD has kept me from having children. Go, sleep with my slave; perhaps I can build a family through her.”

4 So after Abram had been living in Canaan ten years, Sarai his wife took her Egyptian slave Hagar and gave her to her husband to be his wife. 4 He slept with Hagar, and she conceived.

When she knew she was pregnant, she began to despise her mistress. 5 Then Sarai said to Abram, “You are responsible for the wrong I am suffering. I put my slave in your arms, and now that she knows she is pregnant, she despises me. May the LORD judge between you and me.”

6 “Your slave is in your hands,” Abram said. “Do with her whatever you think best.” Then Sarai mistreated Hagar; so she fled from her.

7 The angel of the LORDa found Hagar near a spring in the desert; it was the spring that is beside the road to Shur. 8 And he said, “Hagar, slave of Sarai, where have you come from, and where are you going?”

9 “I’m running away from my mistress Sarai,” she answered.

10 Then the angel of the LORD told her, “Go back to your mistress and submit to her.” 10 The angel added, “I will increase your descendants so much that they will be too numerous to count.”

11 The angel of the LORD also said to her:

“You are now pregnant and you will give birth to a son. You shall name him Ishmael, b for the LORD has heard of your misery. 12 He will be a wild donkey of a man; his hand will be against everyone and everyone’s hand against him, and he will live in hostility toward all his brothers.”

13 She gave this name to the LORD who spoke to her: “You are the God who sees me,” for she said, “I have now seen 14 the One who sees me.”

14 That is why the well was called Beer Lahai Roi; it is still there, between Kadesh and Bered.

---

a 18 Or river  b 11 Ishmael means God hears.  c 12 Or live to the east of  d 13 Or seen the back of  e 14 Beer Lahai Roi means well of the Living One who sees me.
15 So Hagar bore Abram a son, k and Abram gave the name Ishmael to the son she had borne. 16 Abram was eighty-six years old when Hagar bore him Ishmael.

The Covenant of Circumcision

17 When Abram was ninety-nine years old, the LORD appeared to him and said, “I am God Almighty, l I will walk before you and make you fruitful and will greatly increase your numbers.”

3 Abram fell facedown, and God said to him, m “As for me, this is my covenant with you: n You will be the father of many nations. p q No longer will you be called Abram; r your name will be Abraham, s q since I have made you the father of many nations. r s I will make you very fruitful; t t I will make nations of you, and kings will come from you. t t I will establish my covenant as an everlasting covenant between me and you and your descendants after you for the generations to come, to be your God and the God of your descendants after you. t The whole land of Canaan, w where you now reside as a foreigner, x I will give as an everlasting possession to you and your descendants after you; x y and I will be their God.”

9 Then God said to Abraham, “As for you, you must keep my covenant, you and your descendants after you for the generations to come. 10 This is my covenant with you and your descendants after you, the covenant you are to keep: Every male among you shall be circumcised. z 11 You are to undergo circumcision, a and it will be the sign of the covenant b between me and you. 12 For the generations to come every male among you who is eight days old must be circumcised, c including those born in your household or bought with money from a foreigner — those who are not your offspring. d Whether born in your household or bought with your money, they must be circumcised. My covenant in your flesh is to be an everlasting covenant. e 14 Any uncircumcised male, who has not been circumcised in the flesh, will be cut off from his people; f he has broken my covenant.”

15 God also said to Abraham, “As for Sarai your wife, you are no longer to call her Sarai; her name will be Sarah. 16 I will bless her and will surely give you a son by her.’ g I will bless her so that she will be the mother of nations; h kings of peoples will come from her.”

21 Abraham fell facedown; he laughed g and said to himself, “Will a son be born to a man a hundred years old? Will Sarah bear a child at the age of ninety?” h i And Abraham said to God, “If only Ishmael might live under your blessing!”

19 Then God said, “Yes, but your wife Sarah will bear you a son, h and you will call him Isaac. d j I will establish my covenant with him k as an everlasting covenant for his descendants after him. 20 And as for Ishmael, I have heard you: I will surely bless him; I will make him fruitful and will greatly increase his numbers. l He will be the father of twelve rulers, m and I will make him into a great nation. n 21 But my covenant I will establish with Isaac, whom Sarah will bear to you by this next year.” m n 22 When he had finished speaking with Abraham, God went up from him.

23 On that very day Abraham took his son Ishmael and all those born in his household or bought with his money, every male in his household, and circumcised them, as God told him. 24 Abraham was ninety-nine years old when he was circumcised, n 25 and his son Ishmael was thirteen; 26 Abraham and his son Ishmael were both circumcised on that very day. 27 And every male in Abraham’s household,
including those born in his household or bought from a foreigner, was circumcised with him.

The Three Visitors

18 The Lord appeared to Abraham near the great trees of Mamre while he was sitting at the entrance to his tent in the heat of the day. 2Abraham looked up and saw three men standing nearby. When he saw them, he hurried from the entrance of his tent to meet them and bowed low to the ground.

3He said, “If I have found favor in your eyes, my lord, do not pass your servant by. 4Let a little water be brought, and then you may all wash your feet and rest under this tree. 5Let me get you something to eat,’ so you can be refreshed and then go on your way — now that you have come to your servant.”

“Very well,” they answered, “do as you say.”

6So Abraham hurried into the tent to Sarah. “Quick,” he said, “get three seahs of the finest flour and knead it and bake some bread.”

7Then he ran to the herd and selected a choice, tender calf and gave it to a servant, who hurried to prepare it. 8He then brought some curds and milk and the calf that had been prepared, and set these before them. 9While they ate, he stood near them under a tree.

9Where is your wife Sarah?” they asked him.

“There, in the tent,” he said. 10Then one of them said, “I will surely return to you about this time next year, and Sarah your wife will have a son.”

Now Sarah was listening at the entrance to the tent, which was behind him. 11Abraham and Sarah were already very old, and Sarah was past the age of childbearing. 12So Sarah laughed within herself as she thought, "After I am worn out and my lord is old, will I now have this pleasure?"

13Then the Lord said to Abraham, “Why did Sarah laugh and say, ‘Will I really have a child, now that I am old?’ 14Is anything too hard for the Lord? I will return to you at the appointed time next year, and Sarah will have a son.”

15Sarah was afraid, so she lied and said, "I did not laugh."

But he said, “Yes, you did laugh.”

Abraham Pleads for Sodom

16When the men got up to leave, they looked down toward Sodom, and Abraham walked along with them to see them on their way. 17Then the Lord said, “Shall I hide from Abraham what I am about to do? 18Abraham will surely become a great and powerful nation, and all nations on earth will be blessed through him. 19For I have chosen him, so that he will direct his children and his household after him to keep the way of the Lord by doing what is right and just, so that the Lord will bring about for Abraham what he has promised him.”

20Then the Lord said, “The outcry against Sodom and Gomorrah is so great and their sin so grievous that I will go down and see if what they have done is as bad as the outcry that has reached me. If not, I will know.”

22The men turned away and went toward Sodom, but Abraham remained standing before the Lord. 23Then Abraham approached him and said: “Will you sweep away the righteous with the wicked? 24What if there are fifty righteous people in the city? Will you really sweep it away and not spare the place for the sake of the fifty righteous people in it? 25Far be it from you to do such a thing — to kill the righteous with the wicked, treating the righteous and the wicked alike. Far be it from you! Will not the Judge of all the earth do right?”

\[a\] Or eyes, Lord  
\[b\] That is, probably about 36 pounds or about 16 kilograms  
\[c\] Or will use his name in blessings (see 48:20)  
\[d\] Masoretic Text; an ancient Hebrew scribal tradition but the Lord remained standing before Abraham  
\[e\] Or forgive; also in verse 26
The LORD said, “If I find fifty righteous people in the city of Sodom, I will spare the whole place for their sake.”

Then Abraham spoke up again: “Now that I have been so bold as to speak to the Lord, though I am nothing but dust and ashes, what if the number of the righteous is five less than fifty? Will you destroy the whole city for lack of five people?”

“If I find forty-five there,” he said, “I will not destroy it.”

Once again he spoke to him, “What if only forty are found there?”

He answered, “For the sake of forty, I will not do it.”

Then he said, “May the Lord not be angry, but let me speak. What if only thirty can be found there?”

He answered, “I will not do it if I find thirty there.”

Abraham said, “Now that I have been so bold as to speak to the Lord, what if only twenty can be found there?”

He said, “For the sake of twenty, I will not destroy it.”

Then he said, “May the Lord not be angry, but let me speak just once more. What if only ten can be found there?”

He answered, “For the sake of ten, I will not destroy it.”

When the LORD had finished speaking with Abraham, he left, and Abraham returned home.

Sodom and Gomorrah Destroyed

The two angels arrived at Sodom in the evening, and Lot was sitting in the gateway of the city. When he saw them, he got up to meet them and bowed down with his face to the ground. “My lords,” he said, “please turn aside to your servant’s house. You can wash your feet and spend the night and then go on your way early in the morning.”

“No,” they answered, “we will spend the night in the square.”

3 But he insisted so strongly that they did go with him and entered his house. He prepared a meal for them, baking bread without yeast, and they ate. Before they had gone to bed, all the men from every part of the city of Sodom — both young and old — surrounded the house. They called to Lot, “Where are the men who came to you tonight? Bring them out to us so that we can have sex with them.”

6 Lot went outside to meet them and shut the door behind him and said, “No, my friends. Don’t do this wicked thing.

8 Look, I have two daughters who have never slept with a man. Let me bring them out to you, and you can do what you like with them. But don’t do anything to these men, for they have come under the protection of my roof.”

9 “Get out of our way,” they replied. “This fellow came here as a foreigner, and now he wants to play the judge! We’ll treat you worse than them.” They kept bringing pressure on Lot and moved forward to break down the door.

10 But the men inside reached out and pulled Lot back into the house and shut the door.

11 Then they struck the men who were at the door of the house, young and old, with blindness so that they could not find the door.

12 The two men said to Lot, “Do you have anyone else here — sons-in-law, sons or daughters, or anyone else in the city who belongs to you?” Get them out of here, because we are going to destroy this place. The outcry to the LORD against its people is so great that he has sent us to destroy it.”

14 So Lot went out and spoke to his sons-in-law, who were pledged to marry his daughters. He said, “Hurry and get out of this place, because the LORD is about to destroy the city!” But his sons-in-law thought he was joking.

15 With the coming of dawn, the angels urged Lot, saying, “Hurry! Take
your wife and your two daughters who are here, or you will be swept away when the city is punished.  

16 When he hesitated, the men grasped his hand and the hands of his wife and of his two daughters and led them safely out of the city, for the LORD was merciful to them.  

17 As soon as they had brought them out, one of them said, “Flee for your lives! Don’t look back, and don’t stop anywhere in the plain! Flee to the mountains or you will be swept away!”  

18 But Lot said to them, “No, my lords, please!  

19 Your servant has found favor in your eyes, and you have shown great kindness to me in sparing my life. But I can’t flee to the mountains; this disaster will overtake me, and I’ll die.  

20 Look, here is a town near enough to run to, and it is small. Let me flee to it — it is very small, isn’t it? Then my life will be spared.”  

21 He said to him, “Very well, I will grant this request too; I will not overthrow the town you speak of.  

22 But flee there quickly, because I cannot do anything until you reach it.” (That is why the town was called Zoar.)  

23 By the time Lot reached Zoar, the sun had risen over the land.  

24 Then the LORD rained down burning sulfur on Sodom and Gomorrah — from the LORD out of the heavens.  

25 Thus he overthrew those cities and the entire plain, destroying all those living in the cities — and also the vegetation in the land.  

26 But Lot’s wife looked back, and she became a pillar of salt.  

27 Early the next morning Abraham got up and returned to the place where he had stood before the LORD.  

28 He looked down toward Sodom and Gomorrah, toward all the land of the plain, and he saw dense smoke rising from the land, like smoke from a furnace.  

29 So when God destroyed the cities of the plain, he remembered Abraham, and he brought Lot out of the catastrophe that overthrew the cities where Lot had lived.

Lot and His Daughters  

30 Lot and his two daughters left Zoar and settled in the mountains, for he was afraid to stay in Zoar. He and his two daughters lived in a cave.  

31 One day the older daughter said to the younger, “Our father is old, and there is no man around here to give us children — as is the custom all over the earth.  

32 Let’s get our father to drink wine, and then sleep with him and preserve our family line through our father.”  

33 That night they got their father to drink wine, and the older daughter went in and slept with him. He was not aware of it when she lay down or when she got up.  

34 The next day the older daughter said to the younger, “Last night I slept with my father. Let’s get him to drink wine again tonight, and you go in and sleep with him so we can preserve our family line through our father.”  

35 So they got their father to drink wine that night also, and the younger daughter went in and slept with him. Again he was not aware of it when she lay down or when she got up.  

36 So both of Lot’s daughters became pregnant by their father.  

37 The older daughter had a son, and she named him Moab; he is the father of the Moabites of today.  

38 The younger daughter also had a son, and she named him Ben-Ammi; he is the father of the Ammonites of today.

Abraham and Abimelek  

20:1-18Ref — Ge 12:10-20; 26:1-11  

20 Now Abraham moved on from there into the region of the Negev and lived between Kadesh and Shur. For a while he stayed in Gerar,  

21 and there Abraham said of his wife
Sarah, “She is my sister.” Then Abimelek king of Gerar sent for Sarah and took her.  

3 But God came to Abimelek in a dream one night and said to him, “You are as good as dead because of the woman you have taken; she is a married woman.”

4 Now Abimelek had not gone near her, so he said, “Lord, will you destroy an innocent nation?  

5 Did he not say to me, ‘She is my sister,’ and didn’t she also say, ‘He is my brother’? I have done this with a clear conscience and clean hands.”

6 Then God said to him in the dream, “Yes, I know you did this with a clear conscience, and so I have kept you from sinning against me. That is why I did not let you touch her.  

7 Now return the man’s wife, for he is a prophet, and he will pray for you and you will live. But if you do not return her, you may be sure that you and all who belong to you will die.”

8 Early the next morning Abimelek summoned all his officials, and when he told them all that had happened, they were very much afraid.  

9 Then Abimelek called Abraham in and said, “What have you done to us? How have I wronged you that you have brought such great guilt upon me and my kingdom? You have done things to me that should never be done.”  

10 And Abimelek asked Abraham, “What was your reason for doing this?”

11 Abraham replied, “I said to myself, ‘There is surely no fear of God in this place, and they will kill me because of my wife.’  

12 Besides, she really is my sister, the daughter of my father though not of my mother; and she became my wife.  

13 And when God had me wander from my father’s household, I said to her, ‘This is how you can show your love to me: Everywhere we go, say of me, “He is my brother.”’”  

14 Then Abimelek brought sheep and cattle and male and female slaves and gave them to Abraham, and he returned Sarah his wife to him.  

15 And Abimelek said, “My land is before you; live wherever you like.”

16 To Sarah he said, “I am giving your brother a thousand shekels of silver. This is to cover the offense against you before all who are with you; you are completely vindicated.”

17 Then Abraham prayed to God, and God healed Abimelek, his wife and his female slaves so they could have children again, for the Lord had kept all the women in Abimelek’s household from conceiving because of Abraham’s wife Sarah.

The Birth of Isaac

21 Now the Lord was gracious to Sarah as he had said, and the Lord did for Sarah what he had promised.  

2 Sarah became pregnant and bore a son to Abraham in his old age, at the very time God had promised him.  

3 Abraham gave the name Isaac to the son Sarah bore him.  

4 When his son Isaac was eight days old, Abraham circumcised him, as God commanded him.  

5 Abraham was a hundred years old when his son Isaac was born to him.  

6 Sarah said, “God has brought me laughter, and everyone who hears about this will laugh with me.”  

7 And she added, “Who would have said to Abraham that Sarah would nurse children? Yet I have borne him a son in his old age.”

Hagar and Ishmael Sent Away

8 The child grew and was weaned, and on the day Isaac was weaned Abraham held a great feast.  

9 But Sarah saw that the son whom Hagar the Egyptian woman’s son will never share in the inheritance with my son Isaac.”  

10 And she said to Abraham, “Get rid of that slave woman and her son, for that woman’s son will never share in the inheritance with my son Isaac.”  

11 The matter distressed Abraham greatly because it concerned his son.
But God said to him, “Do not be so distressed about the boy and your slave woman. Listen to whatever Sarah tells you, because it is through Isaac that your offspring will be reckoned. I will make the son of the slave into a nation also, because he is your offspring.”

Early the next morning Abraham took some food and a skin of water and gave them to Hagar. He set them on her shoulders and then sent her off with the boy. She went on her way and wandered in the Desert of Beersheba.

When the water in the skin was gone, she put the boy under one of the bushes. Then she went off and sat down about a bowshot away, for she thought, “I cannot watch the boy die.” And as she sat there, she began to sob.

God heard the boy crying, and the angel of God called to Hagar from heaven and said to her, “What is the matter, Hagar? Do not be afraid; God has heard the boy crying as he lies there. Lift the boy up and take him by the hand, for I will make him into a great nation.”

Then Hagar opened her eyes and she saw a well of water. So she went and filled the skin with water and gave the boy a drink.

God was with the boy as he grew up. He lived in the desert and became an archer. While he was living in the Desert of Paran, his mother got a wife for him from Egypt.

The Treaty at Beersheba

At that time Abimelek and Phicol the commander of his forces said to Abraham, “God is with you in everything you do. Now swear to me here before God that you will not deal falsely with me or my children or my descendants. Show to me and the country where you now reside as a foreigner the same kindness I have shown to you.”

Abraham said, “I swear it.”

Then Abraham complained to Abimelek about a well of water that Abimelek’s servants had seized. But Abimelek said, “I don’t know who has done this. You did not tell me, and I heard about it only today.”

So Abimelek brought sheep and cattle and gave them to Abimelek, and the two men made a treaty. Abraham set apart seven ewe lambs from the flock, and Abimelek asked Abraham, “What is the meaning of these seven ewe lambs you have set apart by yourselves?”

He replied, “Accept these seven lambs from my hand as a witness that I dug this well.”

So that place was called Beersheba, because the two men swore an oath there.

After the treaty had been made at Beersheba, Abimelek and Phicol the commander of his forces returned to the land of the Philistines. Abraham planted a tamarisk tree in Beersheba, and there he called on the name of the LORD, the Eternal God. And Abraham stayed in the land of the Philistines for a long time.

Abraham Tested

Some time later God tested Abraham. He said to him, “Abraham!”

“Here I am,” he replied.

Then God said, “Take your son, your only son, whom you love — Isaac — and go to the region of Moriah. Sacrifice him there as a burnt offering on a mountain I will show you.”

Early the next morning Abraham got up and loaded his donkey. He took with him two of his servants and his son Isaac. When he had cut enough wood for the burnt offering, he set out for the place God had told him about.

On the third day Abraham looked up and saw the place in the distance. He said to his servants, “Stay here with the donkey while I and the boy go over there. We will worship and then we will come back to you.”

\[a\] Or seed  \[b\] Hebrew; Septuagint the child  \[c\] Beersheba can mean well of seven and well of the oath.
Isaac, an altar there and arranged the wood him on the altar, you and make your descendants done this and have not withheld your son, your only son,
said, “but where is the lamb to his father Abra ham, “Father?” Abra ham from heaven a second time numerous as the stars in the sky descendants will take possession of the land of Ca naan, and Abraham went to mourn for Sara h and to weep over her.

7 Then Abraham rose and bowed down before the people of the land, the Hittites. He said to them, “If you are willing to let me bury my dead, then listen to me and intercede with Ephron son of Zohar on my behalf so he will sell me the cave of Machpelah, which

The Death of Sarah

23 Sarah lived to be a hundred and twenty-seven years old. She died at Kir iath Arba (that is, Hebron) in the land of Canaan, and Abraham went to mourn for Sarah and to weep over her.

24 Then Abraham rose from beside his dead wife and spoke to the Hittites. He said, “I am a foreigner and stranger among you. Sell me some property for a burial site here so I can bury my dead.”

5 The Hittites replied to Abraham, “Sir, listen to us. You are a mighty prince among us. Buy your dead in the choicest of our tombs. None of us will refuse you his tomb for burying your dead.”

7 Then Abraham rose and bowed before the people of the land, the Hittites. He said to them, “If you are willing to let me bury my dead, then listen to me and intercede with Ephron son of Zohar on my behalf so he will sell me the cave of Machpelah, which

The Death of Sarah

23 Sarah lived to be a hundred and twenty-seven years old. She died at Kir iath Arba (that is, Hebron) in the land of Canaan, and Abraham went to mourn for Sarah and to weep over her.

24 Then Abraham rose from beside his dead wife and spoke to the Hittites. He said, “I am a foreigner and stranger among you. Sell me some property for a burial site here so I can bury my dead.”

5 The Hittites replied to Abraham, “Sir, listen to us. You are a mighty prince among us. Buy your dead in the choicest of our tombs. None of us will refuse you his tomb for burying your dead.”

7 Then Abraham rose and bowed down before the people of the land, the Hittites. He said to them, “If you are willing to let me bury my dead, then listen to me and intercede with Ephron son of Zohar on my behalf so he will sell me the cave of Machpelah, which

The Death of Sarah

23 Sarah lived to be a hundred and twenty-seven years old. She died at Kir iath Arba (that is, Hebron) in the land of Canaan, and Abraham went to mourn for Sarah and to weep over her.

24 Then Abraham rose from beside his dead wife and spoke to the Hittites. He said, “I am a foreigner and stranger among you. Sell me some property for a burial site here so I can bury my dead.”

5 The Hittites replied to Abraham, “Sir, listen to us. You are a mighty prince among us. Buy your dead in the choicest of our tombs. None of us will refuse you his tomb for burying your dead.”

7 Then Abraham rose and bowed down before the people of the land, the Hittites. He said to them, “If you are willing to let me bury my dead, then listen to me and intercede with Ephron son of Zohar on my behalf so he will sell me the cave of Machpelah, which

The Death of Sarah

23 Sarah lived to be a hundred and twenty-seven years old. She died at Kir iath Arba (that is, Hebron) in the land of Canaan, and Abraham went to mourn for Sarah and to weep over her.

24 Then Abraham rose from beside his dead wife and spoke to the Hittites. He said, “I am a foreigner and stranger among you. Sell me some property for a burial site here so I can bury my dead.”

5 The Hittites replied to Abraham, “Sir, listen to us. You are a mighty prince among us. Buy your dead in the choicest of our tombs. None of us will refuse you his tomb for burying your dead.”

7 Then Abraham rose and bowed down before the people of the land, the Hittites. He said to them, “If you are willing to let me bury my dead, then listen to me and intercede with Ephron son of Zohar on my behalf so he will sell me the cave of Machpelah, which

The Death of Sarah

23 Sarah lived to be a hundred and twenty-seven years old. She died at Kir iath Arba (that is, Hebron) in the land of Canaan, and Abraham went to mourn for Sarah and to weep over her.

24 Then Abraham rose from beside his dead wife and spoke to the Hittites. He said, “I am a foreigner and stranger among you. Sell me some property for a burial site here so I can bury my dead.”

5 The Hittites replied to Abraham, “Sir, listen to us. You are a mighty prince among us. Buy your dead in the choicest of our tombs. None of us will refuse you his tomb for burying your dead.”

7 Then Abraham rose and bowed down before the people of the land, the Hittites. He said to them, “If you are willing to let me bury my dead, then listen to me and intercede with Ephron son of Zohar on my behalf so he will sell me the cave of Machpelah, which

The Death of Sarah

23 Sarah lived to be a hundred and twenty-seven years old. She died at Kir iath Arba (that is, Hebron) in the land of Canaan, and Abraham went to mourn for Sarah and to weep over her.

24 Then Abraham rose from beside his dead wife and spoke to the Hittites. He said, “I am a foreigner and stranger among you. Sell me some property for a burial site here so I can bury my dead.”

5 The Hittites replied to Abraham, “Sir, listen to us. You are a mighty prince among us. Buy your dead in the choicest of our tombs. None of us will refuse you his tomb for burying your dead.”

7 Then Abraham rose and bowed down before the people of the land, the Hittites. He said to them, “If you are willing to let me bury my dead, then listen to me and intercede with Ephron son of Zohar on my behalf so he will sell me the cave of Machpelah, which
belongs to him and is at the end of his field. Ask him to sell it to me for the full price as a burial site among you."

10 Ephron the Hittite was sitting among his people and he replied to Abraham in the hearing of all the Hittites who had come to the gate of his city. "No, my lord," he said. "Listen to me; I give you the field, and I give you the cave that is in it. I give it to you in the presence of my people. Bury your dead."  

12 Again Abraham bowed down before the people of the land and he said to Ephron in their hearing, "Listen to me, if you will. I will pay the price of the field. Accept it from me so I can bury my dead there."

14 Ephron answered Abraham, "Listen to me, my lord; the land is worth four hundred shekels of silver, but what is that between you and me? Bury your dead."

16 Abraham agreed to Ephron’s terms and weighed out for him the price he had named in the hearing of the Hittites: four hundred shekels of silver, according to the weight current among the merchants.

17 So Ephron’s field in Machpelah near Mamre—both the field and the cave in it, and all the trees within the borders of the field—was deeded to Abraham as his property in the presence of all the Hittites who had come to the gate of the city. 18 Afterward Abraham buried his wife Sarah in the cave in the field of Machpelah near Mamre (which is at Hebron) in the land of Canaan. So the field and the cave in it were deeded to Abraham by the Hittites as a burial site.

Isaac and Rebekah

24 Abraham was now very old, and the Lord had blessed him in every way. 2 He said to the senior servant in his household, the one in charge of all that he had, "Put your hand under my thigh. 3 I want you to swear by the Lord, the God of heaven and the God of earth, that you will not get a wife for my son from the daughters of the Canaanites, among whom I am living, but will go to my country and my own relatives and get a wife for my son Isaac."

5 The servant asked him, "What if the woman is unwilling to come back with me to this land? Shall I then take your son back to the country you came from?"

6 "Make sure that you do not take my son back there," Abraham said. 7 "The Lord, the God of heaven, who brought me out of my father’s household and my native land and who spoke to me and promised me on oath, saying, ‘To your offspring I will give this land’—he will send his angel before you so that you can get a wife for my son from there. 8 If the woman is unwilling to come back with you, then you will be released from this oath of mine. Only do not take my son back there." 9 So the servant put his hand under the thigh of his master Abraham and swore an oath to him concerning this matter.

10 Then the servant left, taking with him ten of his master’s camels loaded with all kinds of good things from his master. He set out for Aram Naharaim and made his way to the town of Nahor. 11 He had the camels kneel down near the well outside the town; it was toward evening, the time the women go out to draw water.

12 Then he prayed, "Lord, God of my master Abraham, make me successful today, and show kindness to my master Abraham. 13 See, I am standing beside this spring, and the daughters of the townspeople are coming out to draw water. 14 May it be that when I say to a young woman, ‘Please let down your jar that I may have a drink,’ and she says, ‘Drink, and I’ll water your camels too’—let her be the one you
have chosen for your servant Isaac. By this I will know that you have shown kindness to my master.”

15 Before he had finished praying, Rebekah came out with her jar on her shoulder. She was the daughter of Bethuel son of Milkan, who was the wife of Abraham’s brother Nahor. The woman was very beautiful, a virgin; no man had ever slept with her. She went down to the spring, filled her jar and came up again.

17 The servant hurried to meet her and said, “Please give me a little water from your jar.”

18 “Drink, my lord,” she said, and quickly lowered the jar to her hands and gave him a drink.

19 After she had given him a drink, she said, “I’ll draw water for your camels too, until they have had enough to drink.” So she quickly emptied her jar into the trough, ran back to the well and came up again.

20 “Then tell us,” Laban said. “You who are blessed by the Lord, what do you want?”

21 “Come, you who are blessed by the Lord, send your angel with me. I will go to my clan and to my own father’s family and to my own clan, and get a wife for my son.”

22 When the man had finished drinking, the man took out a gold nose ring weighing a beka and two gold bracelets weighing ten shekels.

23 Then he asked, “Whose daughter are you? Please tell me, is there room in your father’s house for us to spend the night?”

24 She answered him, “I am the daughter of Bethuel, the son of Milkan; and he has become wealthy. He has given him sheep and cattle, silver and gold, male and female servants, and camels and donkeys. My master’s wife Sarah had bore the son in her old age, and he has given him everything he owns. And my master made me swear an oath, and said, ‘You must not get a wife for my son from the daughters of the Canaanites, in whose land I live, but go to my father’s family and to my own clan, and get a wife for my son.’

25 “Then I asked my master, ‘What if the woman will not come back with me?’

26 “He replied, ‘The Lord, before whom I have walked faithfully, will send his angel with you and make your journey a success, so that you can get a wife for my son from my own clan and from my father’s family. You will be released from my oath if, when you go to my clan, they refuse to give her to you — then you will be released from my oath.’

27 “Before he had finished praying, Rebekah came out with her jar on her shoulder. She was the daughter of Bethuel son of Milkan, who was the wife of Abrahan’s brother Nahor. The woman was very beautiful, a virgin; no man had ever slept with her. She went down to the spring, filled her jar and came up again.

28 The young woman ran and told her mother’s household about these things. Now Rebekah had a brother named Laban, and he hurried out to the man at the spring. As soon as he had seen the nose ring, and the bracelets on his sister’s arms, and had heard Rebekah tell what the man said to her, he went out to the man and found him standing near the camels near the spring. “Come, you who are blessed by the Lord,” he said. “Why are you standing out here? I have prepared the house and a place for the camels.”

29 So the man went to the house, and the camels were unloaded. Straw and fodder were brought for the camels, and water for him and his men to wash their feet. Then food was set before him, but he said, “I will not eat until I have told you what I have to say.”

30 “Then tell us,” Laban said.

31 So he said, “I am Abraham’s servant. The Lord has blessed my master abundantly, and he has become wealthy. He has given him sheep and cattle, silver and gold, male and female servants, and camels and donkeys. My master’s wife Sarah has borne him a son in her old age, and he has given him everything he owns. And my master made me swear an oath, and said, ‘You must not get a wife for my son from the daughters of the Canaanites, in whose land I live, but go to my father’s family and to my own clan, and get a wife for my son.’

32 “Then I asked my master, ‘What if the woman will not come back with me?’

33 “He replied, ‘The Lord, before whom I have walked faithfully, will send his angel with you and make your journey a success, so that you can get a wife for my son from my own clan and from my father’s family. You will be released from my oath if, when you go to my clan, they refuse to give her to you — then you will be released from my oath.’

a 22 That is, about 1/5 ounce or about 5.7 grams b 22 That is, about 4 ounces or about 115 grams
42 "When I came to the spring today, I said, 'LORD, God of my master Abraham, if you will, please grant success to the journey on which I have come.' 43 See, I am standing beside this spring. 44 If a young woman comes out to draw water and I say to her, "Please let me drink a little water from your jar," and if she says to me, "Drink, and I'll draw water for your camels too," let her be the one the Lord has chosen for my master's son.'

45 "Before I finished praying in my heart, Rebekah came out, with her jar on her shoulder. She went down to the spring and drew water, and I said to her, 'Please give me a drink.'

46 "She quickly lowered her jar from her shoulder and said, 'Drink, and I'll water your camels too.' So I drank, and she watered the camels also.

47 "I asked her, 'Whose daughter are you?'

48 "She said, 'The daughter of Bethuel son of Nahor, whom Milkah bore to him.'

49 "Then I put the ring in her nose and the bracelets on her arms, and I bowed down and worshiped the LORD. I praised the LORD, the God of my master Abraham, who had led me on the right road to get the granddaughter of my master's brother for his son. Now if you will show kindness and faithfulness to my master, tell me; and if not, tell me, so I may know which way to turn."

50 Laban and Bethuel answered, "This is from the LORD; we can say nothing to you one way or the other. Here is Rebekah; take her and go, and let her become the wife of your master's son, as the LORD has directed."

52 When Abraham's servant heard what they said, he bowed down to the ground before the LORD. Then the servant brought out gold and silver jewelry and articles of clothing and gave them to Rebekah; he also gave costly gifts to her brother and to her mother. Then he and the men who were with him ate and drank and spent the night there.

When they got up the next morning, he said, "Send me on my way to my master."

55 But her brother and her mother replied, "Let the young woman remain with us ten days or so; then you may go."

56 But he said to them, "Do not detain me, now that the LORD has granted success to my journey. Send me on my way so I may go to my master."

57 Then they said, "Let's call the young woman and ask her about it." So they called Rebekah and asked her, "Will you go with this man?"

58 "I will go," she said.

59 So they sent their sister Rebekah on her way, along with her nurse and Abraham's servant and his men. And they blessed Rebekah and said to her,

"Our sister, may you increase to thousands upon thousands; may your offspring possess the cities of their enemies."

61 Then Rebekah and her attendants got ready and mounted the camels and went back with the man. So the servant took Rebekah and left.

62 Now Isaac had come from Beer Lahai Roi, for he was living in the Negev. He went out to the field one evening to meditate, and as he looked up, he saw camels approaching. Rebekah also looked up and saw Isaac. She got down from her camel and asked the servant, "Who is that man in the field coming to meet us?"

64 "He is my master," the servant answered. So she took her veil and covered herself.

66 Then the servant told Isaac all he had done. Isaac brought her into the tent of his mother Sarah, and he married Rebekah. So she became his wife, and he loved her; and Isaac was comforted after his mother's death.
The Death of Abraham
25:1-4pp — 1Ch 1:32-33

25 Abraham had taken another wife, whose name was Keturah. 2 She bore him Zimran, Jokshan, Medan, Midian, Ishbak and Shuah. 3 Jokshan was the father of Sheba and Dedan; the descendants of Dedan were the Ashurites, the Letushites and the Leummites. 4 The sons of Midian were Ephah, Epher, Hanok, Abida and Eldaah. All these were descendants of Keturah.

5 Abraham left everything he owned to Isaac. 6 But while he was still living, he gave gifts to the sons of his concubines 7 and sent them away from his sons Isaac and Ishmael to the land of the east.

7 Abraham lived a hundred and seventy-five years. 8 Then Abraham breathed his last and died at a good old age, an old man and full of years; and he was gathered to his people. 9 His sons Isaac and Ishmael buried him in the cave of Machpelah near Mamre, in the field of Ephron son of Zohar the Hittite, 10 the field Abraham had bought from the Hittites. 11 There Abraham was buried with his wife Sarah. 12 After Abraham’s death, God blessed his son Isaac, who then lived near Beer Lahai Roi.

Ishmael’s Sons
25:12-16pp — 1Ch 1:29-31

12 This is the account of the family line of Abraham’s son Ishmael, whom Sarah’s slave, Hagar, the Egyptian, bore to Abraham.

13 These are the names of the sons of Ishmael, listed in the order of their birth: Nebaioth the firstborn of Ishmael, Kedar, Adbeel, Mibsam, 14 Mishma, Dumah, Massa, 15 Hadad, Tema, Jetur, Naphish and Kedemah. 16 These were the sons of Ishmael, and these are the names of the twelve tribal rulers according to their settlements and camps. 17 Ishmael lived a hundred and thirty-seven years. He breathed his last and died, and he was gathered to his people.

18 His descendants settled in the area from Havilah to Shur, near the eastern border of Egypt, as you go toward Ashur. And they lived in hostility toward all the tribes related to them.

Jacob and Esau
19 This is the account of the family line of Abraham’s son Isaac.

Abraham became the father of Isaac, 20 and Isaac was forty years old when he married Rebekah, daughter of Bethuel the Aramean from Paddan Aram and sister of Laban, the Aramean.

21 Isaac prayed to the LORD on behalf of his wife, because she was childless. The LORD answered his prayer, and his wife Rebekah became pregnant. 22 The babies jostled each other within her, and she said, “Why is this happening to me?” So she went to inquire of the LORD.

23 The LORD said to her,

“No two nations are in your womb, and two peoples from within you will be separated; one people will be stronger than the other, and the older will serve the younger.”

24 When the time came for her to give birth, there were twin boys in her womb. 25 The first to come out was red, and his whole body was like a hairy garment; so they named him Esau. 26 After this, his brother came out, with his hand grasping Esau’s heel, so he was named Jacob. 27 Isaac was sixty years old when Rebekah gave birth to them.

28 The boys grew up, and Esau became a skillful hunter, a man of the open country, while Jacob was content to stay at home among the tents. 29 Isaac, who had a taste for wild game, loved Esau, but Rebekah loved Jacob.
Once when Jacob was cooking some stew, Esau came in from the open country, famished. He said to Jacob, “Quick, let me have some of that red stew! I'm famished!” (That is why he was also called Edom.)

31 Jacob replied, “First sell me your birthright.”

32 “Look, I am about to die,” Esau said. “What good is the birthright to me?”

33 But Jacob said, “Swear to me first.” So he swore an oath to him, selling his birthright to Jacob.

34 Then Jacob gave Esau some bread and some lentil stew. He ate and drank, and then got up and left.

So Esau despised his birthright.

Isaac and Abimelech

26:1-11 Ref — Ge 12:10-20; 20:1-18

Now there was a famine in the land — besides the previous famine in Abraham's time — and Isaac went to Abimelech king of the Philistines in Gerar. The LORD appeared to Isaac and said, “Do not go down to Egypt; live in the land where I tell you to live. Stay in this land for a while, and you will bless you. For to you and your descendants I will give all these lands and will confirm the oath I swore to your father Abraham. I will make your descendants as numerous as the stars in the sky and will give them all these lands, and through your offspring all nations on earth will be blessed, because Abraham obeyed me and did everything I required of him, keeping my commands, my decrees and my instructions.” So Isaac stayed in Gerar.

7 When the men of that place asked him about his wife, he said, “She is my sister,” because he was afraid to say, “She is my wife.” He thought, “The men of this place might kill me on account of Rebekah, because she is beautiful.”

8 When Isaac had been there a long time, Abimelech king of the Philistines looked down from a window and saw Isaac caressing his wife Rebekah. So Abimelech summoned Isaac and said, “She is really your wife! Why did you say, 'She is my sister'?”

Isaac answered him, “Because I thought I might lose my life on account of her.”

Then Abimelech said, “What is this you have done to us? One of the men might well have slept with your wife, and you would have brought guilt upon us.”

11 So Abimelech gave orders to all the people: “Anyone who harms this man or his wife shall surely be put to death.”

12 Isaac planted crops in that land and the same year reaped a hundredfold, because the LORD blessed him. The man became rich, and his wealth continued to grow until he became very wealthy. He had so many flocks and herds and servants that the Philistines envied him. So all the wells that his father’s servants had dug in the time of his father Abraham, the Philistines stopped up, filling them with earth.

16 Then Abimelech said to Isaac, “Move away from us; you have become too powerful for us.”

17 So Isaac moved away from there and encamped in the Valley of Gerar, where he settled. Isaac reopened the wells that had been dug in the time of his father Abraham, which the Philistines had stopped up after Abraham died, and he gave them the same names his father had given them.

19 Isaac’s servants dug in the valley and discovered a well of fresh water there. But the herdsmen of Gerar quarreled with those of Isaac and said, “The water is ours!” So he named the well Esek, because they disputed with...
him. 21 Then they dug another well, but they quarreled over that one also; so he named it Sitnah. 22 He moved on from there and dug another well, and no one quarreled over it. He named it Rehoboth, saying, “Now the LORD has given us room and we will flourish in the land.”

23 From there he went up to Beersheba. 24 That night the LORD appeared to him and said, “I am the God of your father Abraham.” Do not be afraid, for I am with you; I will bless you and will increase the number of your descendants for the sake of my servant Abraham.”

25 Isaac built an altar there and called on the name of the LORD. There he pitched his tent, and there his servants dug a well.

26 Meanwhile, Abimelek had come to him from Gerar, with Ahuzzath his personal adviser and Phicol the commander of his forces. 27 Isaac asked them, “Why have you come to me, since you were hostile to me and sent me away?”

28 They answered, “We saw clearly that the LORD was with you; so we said, ‘There ought to be a sworn agreement between us’ — between us and you. Let us make a treaty with you that you will do us no harm, just as we did not harm you but always treated you well and sent you away peacefully. And now you are blessed by the LORD.”

29 Isaac then made a feast for them, and they ate and drank. 30 Early the next morning the men swore an oath to each other. Then Isaac sent them on their way, and they went away peacefully.

31 That day Isaac’s servants came and told him about the well they had dug. They said, “We’ve found water!” 32 He called it Shibah, and to this day the name of the town has been Beersheba.

Jacob Takes Esau’s Blessing

33 When Esau was forty years old, he married Judith daughter of Beeri the Hittite, and also Basemath daughter of Elon the Hittite. 34 They were a source of grief to Isaac and Rebekah.

27 When Isaac was old and his eyes were so weak that he could no longer see, he called for Esau his older son and said to him, “My son.”

“Here I am,” he answered.

2 Isaac said, “I am now an old man and don’t know the day of my death. 3 Now then, get your equipment — your quiver and bow — and go out to the open country to hunt some wild game for me. 4 Prepare me the kind of tasty food I like and bring it to me to eat, so that I may give you my blessing before I die.”

5 Now Rebekah was listening as Isaac spoke to his son Esau. When Esau left for the open country to hunt game and bring it back, Rebekah said to her son Jacob, “Look, I overheard your father say to your brother Esau, 7 ‘Bring me some game and prepare me some tasty food to eat, so that I may give you my blessing in the presence of the LORD before I die.’

8 Now, my son, listen carefully and do what I tell you; 9 Go out to the flock and bring me two choice young goats, so I can prepare some tasty food for your father, just the way he likes it. 10 Then take it to your father to eat, so that he may give you his blessing before he dies.”

11 Jacob said to Rebekah his mother, “But my brother Esau is a hairy man while I have smooth skin. 12 What if my father touches me? I would appear to be tricking him and would bring down a curse on myself rather than a blessing.”

13 His mother said to him, “My son, let the curse fall on me. Just do what I say; go and get them for me.”

14 So he went and got them and brought them to his mother, and she
prepared some tasty food, just the way his father liked it. 15 Then Rebekah took the best clothes of Esau her older son, which she had in the house, and put them on her younger son Jacob. 16 She also covered his hands and the smooth part of his neck with the goat-skins. 17 Then she handed to her son Jacob the tasty food and the bread she had made.

18 He went to his father and said, “My father.”

“Who are you?”

19 Jacob said to his father, “I am Esau your firstborn. I have done as you told me. Please sit up and eat some of my game, so that you may give me your blessing.”

20 Isaac asked his son, “How did you find it so quickly, my son?”

“The Lord your God gave me success,” he replied.

21 Then Isaac said to Jacob, “Come near so I can touch you, d my son, to know whether you really are my son Esau or not.”

22 Jacob went close to his father Isaac, who touched him and said, “The voice is the voice of Jacob, but the hands are the hands of Esau.” 23 He did not recognize him, for his hands were hairy like those of his brother Esau; e so he proceeded to bless him. 24 “Are you really my son Esau?” he asked.

“I am,” he replied.

25 Then he said, “My son, bring me some of your game to eat, so that I may give you my blessing.”

Jacob brought it to him and he ate; and he brought some wine and he drank. 26 Then his father Isaac said to him, “Come here, my son, and kiss me.”

27 So he went to him and kissed him. When Isaac caught the smell of his clothes, h he blessed him and said,

“Ah, the smell of my son is like the smell of a field that the Lord has blessed.”

28 May God give you heaven’s dew j and earth’s richness k — an abundance of grain and new wine. l

29 May nations serve you and peoples bow down to you. m Be lord over your brothers, and may the sons of your mother bow down to you. n May those who curse you be cursed and those who bless you be blessed. o

30 After Isaac finished blessing him, and Jacob had scarcely left his father’s presence, his brother Esau came in from hunting. 31 He too prepared some tasty food and brought it to his father. Then he said to him, “My father, please sit up and eat some of my game, so that you may give me your blessing.” p

32 His father Isaac asked him, “Who are you?” q

“I am your son,” he answered, “your firstborn, Esau.”

33 Isaac trembled violently and said, “Who was it, then, that hunted game and brought it to me? I ate it just before you came and I blessed him — and indeed he will be blessed!”

34 When Esau heard his father’s words, he burst out with a loud and bitter cry r and said to his father, “Bless me — me too, my father!”

35 But he said, “Your brother came deceitfully s and took your blessing.”

36 Esau said, “Isn’t he rightly named Jacob t u? This is the second time he has taken advantage of me: He took my birthright, v and now he’s taken my blessing!” Then he asked, “Haven’t you reserved any blessing for me?”

37 Isaac answered Esau, “I have made him lord over you and have made all his relatives his servants, and I have sustained him with grain and new wine. w So what can I possibly do for you, my son?”

38 Esau said to his father, “Do you have only one blessing, my father?
Bless me too, my father!” Then Esau wept aloud. x

38 His father Isaac answered him, “Your dwelling will be away from the earth’s richness, away from the dew y of heaven above.

40 You will live by the sword and you will serve z your brother. a

But when you grow restless, you will throw his yoke from off your neck, b”

41 Esau held a grudge c against Jacob d because of the blessing his father had given him. He said to himself, “The days of mourning e for my father are near; then I will kill my brother Jacob.” f

42 When Rebekah was told what her older son Esau had said, she sent for her younger son Jacob and said to him, “Your brother Esau is planning to avenge himself by killing you. 43 Now then, my son, do what I say: g Flee at once to my brother Laban h in Harran. i

44 Stay with him for a while j until your brother’s fury subsides. 45 When your brother is no longer angry with you and forgets what you did to him, k I’ll send word for you to come back from there. Why should I lose both of you in one day?”

46 Then Rebekah said to Isaac, “I’m disgusted with living because of these Hittite women. If Jacob takes a wife from among the women of this land, from Hittite women like these, my life will not be worth living.” l

28:4 4 Ge 12:2, 3
28:5 4 Hos 12:12
28:6 4 Ge 24:29
28:8 4 Ge 24:3
28:9 4 Ge 25:13
28:10 4 Ge 26:34
28:12 4 Ge 20:3
28:13 4 Ge 12:7; 35:7, 9; 48:3
28:14 4 Ge 26:4
28:15 4 Ge 26:3

28:18 4 Ge 26:1
28:19 4 Nu 6:24; Ps 121:5, 7-8

28:20 4 Ge 13:15; 35:12

28:21 4 Ge 26:4
28:22 4 Ge 13:14; Ge 12:3; 18:18; 22:18; Gal 3:8
28:23 4 Ge 26:3
28:24 4 Nu 6:24; Ps 121:5, 7-8

Come a community of peoples. 4 May he give you and your descendants the blessing given to Abraham, q so that you may take possession of the land where you now reside as a foreigner, r the land God gave to Abraham.” 5 Then Isaac sent Jacob on his way, and he went to Paddan Aram, s to Laban son of Bethuel the Aramean, the brother of Rebekah, t who was the mother of Jacob and Esau.

6 Now Esau learned that Isaac had blessed Jacob and had sent him to Paddan Aram to take a wife from there, and that when he blessed him he commanded him, “Do not marry a Canaanite woman,” u and that Jacob had obeyed his father and mother and had gone to Paddan Aram. 8 Esau then realized how displeasing the Canaanite women v were to his father Isaac; w so he went to Ishmael and married Mahalath, the sister of Nebaioth x and daughter of Ishmael son of Abraham, in addition to the wives he already had. y

Jacob’s Dream at Bethel

10 Jacob left Beersheba and set out for Harran. z 11 When he reached a certain place, he stopped for the night because the sun had set. Taking one of the stones there, he put it under his head and lay down to sleep. 12 He had a dream a in which he saw a stairway resting on the earth, with its top reaching to heaven, and the angels of God were ascending and descending on it. b 13 There above it c stood the Lord, d and he said: “I am the LORD, the God of your father Abraham and the God of Isaac.” e I will give you and your descendants the land f on which you are living. 14 Your descendants will be like the dust of the earth, and you’ will spread out to the west and to the east, to the north and to the south. g All peoples on earth will be blessed through you and your offspring. h i Am I with you j and will watch over you k wherever you go,

a 2 That is, Northwest Mesopotamia; also in verses 5, 6 and 7  b 3 Hebrew El-Shaddai  c 13 Or There beside him  d 14 Or will use your name and the name of your offspring in blessings (see 48:20)
and I will bring you back to this land. I will not leave you until I have done what I have promised you." 16 When Jacob awoke from his sleep, he thought, “Surely the LORD is in this place, and I was not aware of it.” 17 He was afraid and said, “How awesome is this place! This is none other than the house of God; this is the gate of heaven.”

18 Early the next morning Jacob took the stone he had placed under his head and set it up as a pillar and poured oil on top of it. 19 He called that place Bethel, though the city used to be called Luz.

20 Then Jacob made a vow, saying, “If God will be with me and will watch over me on this journey I am taking and will give me food to eat and clothes to wear so that I return safely to my father’s household, then the LORD will be my God 22 and this stone that I have set up as a pillar will be God’s house, and of all that you give me I will give you a tenth.”

Jacob Arrives in Paddan Aram

29 Then Jacob continued on his journey and came to the land of the eastern peoples. 2 There he saw a well in the open country, with three flocks of sheep lying near it because the flocks were watered from that well. The stone over the mouth of the well was large. 3 When all the flocks were gathered there, the shepherds would roll the stone away from the well’s mouth and water the sheep. Then they would return the stone to its place over the mouth of the well.

4 Jacob asked the shepherds, “My brothers, where are you from?”

“We’re from Harran,” they replied.

5 He said to them, “Do you know Laban, Nahor’s grandson?”

“Yes, we know him,” they answered.

6 Then Jacob asked them, “Is he well?”

“Surely the LORD is in this place, and I was not aware of it.” 17 He was afraid and said, “How awesome is this place! This is none other than the house of God; this is the gate of heaven.”

8 “We can’t,” they replied, “until all the flocks are gathered and the stone has been rolled away from the mouth of the well. Then we will water the sheep.”

9 While he was still talking with them, Rachel came with her father’s sheep for she was a shepherd. 10 When Jacob saw Rachel daughter of his uncle Laban, and Laban’s sheep, he went over and rolled the stone away from the mouth of the well and watered his uncle’s sheep. 11 Then Jacob kissed Rachel and began to weep aloud. 12 He had told Rachel that he was a relative of her father and a son of Rebekah. So she ran and told her father.

13 As soon as Laban heard the news about Jacob, his sister’s son, he hurried to meet him. He embraced him and kissed him and brought him to his home, and there Jacob told him all these things. 14 Then Laban said to him, “You are my own flesh and blood.”

Jacob Marries Leah and Rachel

After Jacob had stayed with him for a whole month, 15 Laban said to him, “Just because you are a relative of mine, should you work for me for nothing? Tell me what your wages should be.”

16 Now Laban had two daughters; the name of the older was Leah, and the name of the younger was Rachel. 17 Leah had weak eyes, but Rachel had a lovely figure and was beautiful. 18 Jacob was in love with Rachel and said, “I’ll work for you seven years in return for your younger daughter Rachel.”

19 Laban said, “It’s better that I give her to you than to some other man.
Stay here with me." 20 So Jacob served seven years to get Rachel, but they seemed like only a few days to him because of his love for her. 21 Then Jacob said to Laban, “Give me my wife. My time is completed, and I want to make love to her." 22 So Laban brought together all the people of the place and gave a feast. 23 But when evening came, he took his daughter Leah and brought her to Jacob, and Jacob made love to her. 24 And Laban gave his servant Zilpah to his daughter as her attendant.

25 When morning came, there was Leah! So Jacob said to Laban, “What is this you have done to me? I served you for Rachel, didn’t I? Why have you deceived me?” 26 Laban replied, “It is not our custom here to give the younger daughter in marriage before the older one. 27 Finish this daughter’s bridal week; then we will give you the younger one also, in return for another seven years of work.” 28 And Jacob did so. He finished the week with Leah, and then Laban gave him his daughter Rachel to be his wife. 29 Laban gave his servant Bilhah to his daughter Rachel as her attendant. 30 Jacob made love to Rachel also, and his love for Rachel was greater than his love for Leah. 31 And he worked for Laban another seven years.

Jacob’s Children

32 When the LORD saw that Leah was not loved, 1 he enabled her to conceive, 2 but Rachel remained childless. 32 Leah became pregnant and gave birth to a son. She named him Reuben, 4 for she said, “It is because the LORD has seen my misery.” 33 She conceived again, and when she gave birth to a son she said, “Because the LORD heard that I am not loved, he gave me this one too.” So she named him Simeon. 34 Again she conceived, and when she gave birth to a son she said, “Now at last my husband will become attached to me, 5 because I have borne him three sons.” So he was named Levi. 35 She conceived again, and when she gave birth to a son she said, “This time I will praise the LORD.” So she named him Judah. 36 Then she stopped having children.

30 When Rachel saw that she was not bearing Jacob any children, 6 she became jealous of her sister. 7 So she said to Jacob, “Give me children, or I’ll die!” 2 Jacob became angry with her and said, “Am I in the place of God, who has kept you from having children?” 8 Then she said, “Here is Bilhah, my servant. Sleep with her so that she can bear children for me and I too can build a family through her.” 9 So she gave him her servant Bilhah as a wife. 10 Jacob slept with her, 11 and she became pregnant and bore him a son. 11 Then Rachel said, “God has vindicated me; 12 he has listened to my plea and given me a son.” Because of this she named him Dan. 13 Rachel’s servant Bilhah conceived again and bore Jacob a second son. 14 Then Rachel said, “I have had a great struggle with my sister, and I have won.” 15 So she named him Naphtali. 16 When Leah saw that she had stopped having children, she took her servant Zilpah and gave her to Jacob as a wife, 17 Leah’s servant Zilpah bore Jacob a son. 18 Then Leah said, “What good fortune!” 19 So she named him Gad. 20 Leah’s servant Zilpah bore Jacob a second son. 21 Then Leah said, “How happy I am! The women will call me happy.” 22 So she named him Asher.

---

a 32 Reuben means one who hears. b 34 Simeon probably means he has seen my misery; the name means see, a son. c 33 Levi means he has vindicated. d 35 Judah probably means who hears. e 28 For praise. f 6 Dan means he has vindicated. g 8 Naphtali means my struggle. h 11 Gad means good fortune. i 13 Asher means happy.
14. During wheat harvest, Reuben went out into the fields and found some mandrake plants, which he brought to his mother Leah. Rachel said to Leah, “Please give me some of your son's mandrakes.”

15. But she said to her, “Wasn’t it enough that you took away my husband? Will you take my son's mandrakes too?”

16. “Very well,” Rachel said, “he can sleep with you tonight in return for your son's mandrakes.” So he slept with her that night.

17. God listened to Leah, and she became pregnant and bore Jacob a fifth son. Then Leah said, “God has rewarded me for giving my servant to my husband.” So she named him Issachar.

19. Leah conceived again and bore Jacob a sixth son. Then Leah said, “God has presented me with a precious gift. This time my husband will treat me with honor, because I have borne him six sons.” So she named him Zebulun.

21. Some time later she gave birth to a daughter and named her Dinah.

22. Then God remembered Rachel; he listened to her and enabled her to conceive. She became pregnant and gave birth to a son and said, “God has taken away my disgrace.”

24. She named him Joseph, and said, “May the Lord add to me another son.”

**Jacob’s Flocks Increase**

25. After Rachel gave birth to Joseph, Jacob said to Laban, “Send me on my way so I can go back to my own homeland. Give me my wives and children, for whom I have served you, and I will be on my way. You know how much work I’ve done for you.”

27. But Laban said to him, “If I have found favor in your eyes, please stay. I have learned by divination that the Lord has blessed me because of you.”

28. He added, “Name your wages, and I will pay them.”

29. Jacob said to him, “You know how I have worked for you and how your livestock has fared under my care. The little you had before I came has increased greatly, and the Lord has blessed you wherever I have been. But now, when may I do something for my own household?”

31. “What shall I give you?” he asked.

32. “Don’t give me anything,” Jacob replied. “But if you will do this one thing for me, I will go on tending your flocks and watching over them. Let me go through all your flocks today and remove from them every speckled or spotted sheep, every dark-colored lamb and every spotted or speckled goat. They will be my wages. And my honesty will testify for me in the future, whenever you check on the wages you have paid me. Any goat in my possession that is not speckled or spotted, or any lamb that is not dark-colored, will be considered stolen.”

34. “Agreed,” said Laban. “Let it be as you have said.” That same day he removed all the male goats that were streaked or spotted, and all the speckled or spotted female goats (all that had white on them) and all the dark-colored lambs, and he placed them in the care of his sons. Then he put a three-day journey between himself and Jacob, while Jacob continued to tend the rest of Laban's flocks.

37. Jacob, however, took fresh-cut branches from poplar, almond and plane trees and made white stripes on them by peeling the bark and exposing the white inner wood of the branches. Then he placed the peeled branches in all the watering troughs, so that they would be directly in front
of the flocks when they came to drink. When the flocks were in heat and came to drink, 39 they mated in front of the branches. And they bore young that were streaked or speckled or spotted. 40 Jacob set apart the young of the flock by themselves, but made the rest face the streaked and dark-colored animals that belonged to Laban. Thus he made separate flocks for himself and did not put them with Laban’s animals. 41 Whenever the stronger females were in heat, Jacob would place the branches in the troughs in front of the animals so they would mate near the branches, 42 but if the animals were weak, he would not place them there. So the weak animals went to Laban and the strong ones to Jacob. 43 In this way the man grew exceedingly prosperous and came to own large flocks, and female and male servants, and camels and donkeys.

**Jacob Flees From Laban**

31 Jacob heard that Laban’s sons were saying, “Jacob has taken everything our father owned and has gained all this wealth from what belonged to our father.” 2 And Jacob noticed that Laban’s attitude toward him was not what it had been.

3 Then the Lord said to Jacob, “Go back to the land of your fathers and to your relatives, and I will be with you.” 4 So Jacob sent word to Rachel and Leah to come out to the fields where his flocks were. 5 He said to them, “I see that your father’s attitude toward me is not what it was before, but the God of my father has been with me. 6 You know that I’ve worked for your father with all my strength, 7 yet your father has cheated me by changing my wages ten times. 8 However, God has not allowed him to harm me. 9 If he said, ‘The speckled ones will be your wages,’ then all the flocks bore speckled young. 10 So God has taken away your father’s livestock and has given them to me. 11 “In breeding season I once had a dream in which I looked up and saw that the male goats mating with the flock were streaked, speckled or spotted. 12 The angel of God 7 said to me in the dream, ‘Jacob.’ I answered, ‘Here I am.’ 13 I am the God of Bethel,’ where you anointed a pillar and where you made a vow to me. Now leave this land at once and go back to your native land.” 14 Then Rachel and Leah replied, “Do we still have any share in the inheritance of our father’s estate? 15 Does he not regard us as foreigners? Not only has he sold us, but he has used up what was paid for us. 16 Surely all the wealth that God took away from our father belongs to us and our children. So do whatever God has told you.”

17 Then Jacob put his children and his wives on camels, 18 and he drove all his livestock ahead of him, along with all the goods he had accumulated in Paddan Aram, 9 to go to his father Isaac 10 in the land of Canaan. 19 When Laban had gone to shear his sheep, Rachel stole her father’s household gods. 20 Moreover, Jacob deceived Laban the Aramean by not telling him he was running away. 21 So he fled with all he had, crossed the Euphrates River, and headed for the hill country of Gilead.

**Laban Pursues Jacob**

22 On the third day Laban was told that Jacob had fled. 23 Taking his relatives with him, he pursued Jacob for seven days and caught up with him in the hill country of Gilead. 24 Then God came to Laban the Aramean in a dream at night and said to him, 25
“Be careful not to say anything to Jacob, either good or bad.”

29 Jacob had pitched his tent in the hill country of Gilead when Laban overtook him, and Laban and his relatives camped there too. Then Laban said to Jacob, “What have you done? You’ve deceived me, and you’ve carried off my daughters like captives in war. Why did you run off secretly and deceive me? Why didn’t you tell me, so I could send you away with joy and singing to the music of timbrels and harps? You didn’t even let me kiss my grandchildren and my daughters goodbye. I have done a foolish thing. I have the power to harming you; but last night the God of your father said to me, ‘Be careful not to say anything to Jacob, either good or bad.’

30 Now you have gone off because you longed to return to your father’s household. But why did you steal my gods?”

31 Jacob answered Laban, “I was afraid, because I thought you would take your daughters away from me by force. But if you find anyone who has your gods, that person shall not live. In the presence of our relatives, see for yourself whether there is anything of yours here with me; and if so, take it.” Now Jacob did not know that Rachel had stolen the gods.

32 So Laban went into Jacob’s tent and into Leah’s tent and into the tent of the two female servants, but he found nothing. After he came out of Leah’s tent, he entered Rachel’s tent. Now Rachel had taken the household gods and put them inside her camel’s saddle and was sitting on them. Laban searched through everything in the tent but found nothing.

33 Rachel said to her father, “Don’t be angry, my lord, that I cannot stand up in your presence; I’m having my period.” So he searched but could not find the household gods.

34 Jacob was angry and took Laban to task. “What is my crime?” he asked Laban. “How have I wronged you that you hunt me down? Now that you have searched through all my goods, what have you found that belongs to your household? Put it here in front of your relatives and mine, and let them judge between the two of us.

38 “I have been with you for twenty years now. Your sheep and goats have not miscarried, nor have I eaten rams from your flocks. I did not bring you animals torn by wild beasts; I bore the loss myself. And you demanded payment from me for whatever was stolen by day or night.

39 This was my situation: The heat consumed me in the daytime and the cold at night, and sleep fled from my eyes. It was like this for the twenty years I was in your household. I worked for you fourteen years for your two daughters and six years for your flocks, and you changed my wages ten times. If the God of my father, the God of Abraham and the Fear of Isaac, had not been with me, you would surely have sent me away empty-handed. But God has seen my hardship and the toil of my hands, and last night he rebuked you.”

43 Laban answered Jacob, “The women are my daughters, the children are my children, and the flocks are my flocks. All you see is mine. Yet what can I do today about these daughters of mine, or about the children they have borne? Come now, let’s make a covenant, you and I, and let it serve as a witness between us.”

45 So Jacob took a stone and set it up as a pillar. He said to his relatives, “Gather some stones.” So they took stones and piled them in a heap, and they ate there by the heap. Laban called it Jegar Sahadutha, and Jacob called it Galeed.

48 Laban said, “This heap is a witness between you and me today.” That is why it was called Galeed. It was also called Mizpah, because he said,
Jacob Prepares to Meet Esau

32 Jacob also went on his way, and the angels of God met him. When Jacob saw them, he said, “This is the camp of God!” So he named that place Mahanaim.

Jacob sent messengers ahead of him to his brother Esau in the land of Seir, the country of Edom. He instructed them: “This is what you are to say to my lord Esau: ‘Your servant Jacob says, I have been staying with Laban and have remained there till now. I have cattle and donkeys, sheep and goats, male and female servants. Now I am sending this message to my lord, that I may find favor in your eyes.

When the messengers returned to Jacob, they said, “We went to your brother Esau, and now he is coming to meet you, and four hundred men are with him.”

In great fear and distress Jacob divided the people who were with him into two groups, and the flocks and herds and camels as well. He thought, “If Esau comes and attacks one group, the group that is left may escape.”

Then Jacob prayed, “O God of my father Abraham, God of my father Isaac, LORD, you who said to me, ‘Go back to your country and your relatives, and I will make you prosper,’

I am unworthy of all the kindness and faithfulness you have shown your servant. I had only my staff when I crossed this Jordan, but now I have become two camps. Save me, I pray, from the hand of my brother Esau, for I am afraid he will come and attack me, and also the mothers with their children.

But you have said, ‘I will surely make you prosper and will make your descendants like the sand of the sea, which cannot be counted.’”

He spent the night there, and from what he had with him he selected a gift for his brother Esau: twelve hundred female goats and twenty male goats, two hundred ewes and twenty rams, thirty female camels with their young, forty cows and ten bulls, and twenty female donkeys and ten male donkeys. He put them in the care of his servants, each herd by itself, and said to his servants, “Go ahead of me, and keep some space between the herds.”

He instructed the one in the lead: “When my brother Esau meets you and asks, ‘Who do you belong to, and where are you going, and who owns all these animals in front of you?’ then you are to say, ‘They belong to your servant Jacob. They are a gift sent to my lord Esau, and he is coming behind us.’”

He also instructed the second, the third and all the others who followed.}

---

51 Laban also said to Jacob, “Here is this heap, and here is this pillar. I have set up between you and me. This heap is a witness, and this pillar is a witness, that I will not go past this heap to your side to harm you and that you will not go past this heap and pillar to my side to harm me. May the God of Abraham and the God of Nahor, the God of their father, judge between us.”

So Jacob took an oath in the name of the Fear of his father Isaac. He offered a sacrifice there in the hill country and invited his relatives to a meal. After they had eaten, they spent the night there.

Early the next morning Laban kissed his grandchildren and his daughters and blessed them. Then he left and returned home.

a In Hebrew texts this verse (31:55) is numbered 32:1.

b In Hebrew texts 32:1-32 is numbered 32:2-33.

c Mahanaim means two camps.

d Or camps

e Or camp
the herd. “You are to say the same thing to Esau when you meet him.
20 And be sure to say, ‘Your servant Jacob is coming behind us.’” For he thought, “I will pacify him with these gifts I am sending on ahead; later, when I see him, perhaps he will receive me.”
21 So Jacob’s gifts went on ahead of him, but he himself spent the night in the camp.

Jacob Wrestles With God
22 That night Jacob got up and took his two wives, his two female servants and his eleven sons and crossed the ford of the Jabbok. 23 After he had sent them across the stream, he sent over all his possessions. 24 So Jacob was left alone, and a man wrestled with him till daybreak. 25 When the man saw that he could not overpower him, he touched the socket of Jacob’s hip so that his hip was wrenched as he wrestled with the man. 26 Then the man said, “Let me go, for it is daybreak.”

But Jacob replied, “I will not let you go unless you bless me.”

27 The man asked him, “What is your name?”

“Jacob,” he answered.

28 Then the man said, “Your name will no longer be Jacob, but Israel, because you have struggled with God and with humans and have overcome.”

29 Jacob said, “Please tell me your name.”

But he replied, “Why do you ask my name?” Then he blessed him there.

30 So Jacob called the place Peniel, saying, “It is because I saw God face to face, and yet my life was spared.”

The sun rose above him as he passed Peniel, and he was limping because of his hip. Therefore to this day the Israelites do not eat the tendon attached to the socket of the hip, because the socket of Jacob’s hip was touched near the tendon.

a 28 Israel probably means he struggles with God. variant of Peniel
b 30 Peniel means face of God. c 31 Hebrew Penuel, a
If they are driven hard just one day, all the animals will die. \(^{14}\) So let my lord go on ahead of his servant, while I move along slowly at the pace of the flocks and herds before me and the pace of the children, until I come to my lord in Seir.\(^{15}\)

15 Esau said, “Then let me leave some of my men with you.”

“But why do that?” Jacob asked. “Just let me find favor in the eyes of my lord.”\(^{16}\)

16 So that day Esau started on his way back to Seir. 17 Jacob, however, went to Sukkoth, where he built a place for himself and made shelters for his livestock. That is why the place is called Sukkoth.\(^{a}\)

18 After Jacob came from Paddan Aram,\(^{b}\) he arrived safely at the city of Shechem\(^{c}\) in Canaan and camped within sight of the city. 19 For a hundred pieces of silver,\(^{c}\) he bought from the sons of Hamor, the father of Shechem,\(^{a}\) the plot of ground where he pitched his tent. 20 There he set up an altar and called it El Elohe Israel.\(^{d}\)

Dinah and the Shechemites

34 Now Dinah,\(^{c}\) the daughter Leah had borne to Jacob, went out to visit the women of the land. 2When Shechem son of Hamor the Hivite, the ruler of that area, saw her, he took her and raped her. 3 His heart was drawn to Dinah daughter of Jacob; he loved the young woman and spoke tenderly to her. 4 And Shechem said to his father Hamor, “Get me this girl as my wife.”

5 When Jacob heard that his daughter Dinah had been defiled, his sons were in the fields with his livestock; so he did nothing about it until they came home.

6 Then Shechem’s father Hamor went out to talk with Jacob.\(^d\) 7 Meanwhile, Jacob’s sons had come in from the fields as soon as they heard what had happened. They were shocked and furious, because Shechem had done an outrageous thing in\(^e\) Israel\(^e\) by sleeping with Jacob’s daughter — a thing that should not be done.\(^f\)

8 But Hamor said to them, “My son Shechem has his heart set on your daughter. Please give her to him as his wife. 9 Intermarry with us; give us your daughters and take our daughters for yourselves. 10 You can settle among us;\(^g\) the land is open to you.\(^h\) Live in it, trade in it,\(^i\) and acquire property in it.”

11 Then Shechem said to Dinah’s father and brothers, “Let me find favor in your eyes, and I will give you whatever you ask. 12 Make the price for the bride and the gift I am to bring as great as you like, and I’ll pay whatever you ask me. Only give me the young woman as my wife.”

13 Because their sister Dinah had been defiled, Jacob’s sons replied deceitfully as they spoke to Shechem and his father Hamor. 14 They said to them, “We can’t do such a thing; we can’t give our sister to a man who is not circumcised.\(^{k}\) That would be a disgrace to us. 15 We will enter into an agreement with you on one condition only: that you become like us by circumcising all your males.\(^l\) 16 Then we will give you our daughters and take your daughters for ourselves. We’ll settle among you and become one people with you. 17 But if you will not agree to be circumcised, we’ll take our sister and go.”

18 Their proposal seemed good to Hamor and his son Shechem. 19 The young man, who was the most honored of all his father’s family, lost no time in doing what they said, because he was delighted with Jacob’s daughter.\(^m\) 20 So Hamor and his son Shechem went to the gate of their city\(^n\) to speak to the men of their city. 21 “These men are friendly toward us,” they said. “Let them live in our land and trade in it;
the land has plenty of room for them. We can marry their daughters and they can marry ours. 22But the men will agree to live with us as one people only on the condition that our males be circumcised, as they themselves are. 23Won’t their livestock, their property and all their other animals become ours? So let us agree to their terms, and they will settle among us.”

24All the men who went out of the city gate agreed with Hamor and his son Shechem, and every male in the city was circumcised.

25Three days later, while all of them were still in pain, two of Jacob’s sons, Simeon and Levi, Dinah’s brothers, took their swords and attacked the unsuspecting city, killing every male. They put Hamor and his son Shechem to the sword and took Dinah from Shechem’s house and left. 27The sons of Jacob came upon the dead bodies and looted the city where their sister had been defiled. They seized their flocks and herds and donkeys and everything else of theirs in the city and out in the fields. They carried off all their wealth and all their women and children, taking as plunder everything in the houses.

30Then Jacob said to Simeon and Levi, “You have brought trouble on me by making me obnoxious to the Canaanites and Perizzites, the people living in this land. We are few in number, and if they join forces against me and attack me, I and my household will be destroyed.”

32But they replied, “Should he have treated our sister like a prostitute?”

Jacob Returns to Bethel

Then God said to Jacob, “Go up to Bethel and settle there, and build an altar there to God who appeared to you when you were fleeing from your brother Esau.”

2So Jacob said to his household and to all who were with him, “Get rid of the foreign gods you have with you, and purify yourselves and change your clothes.” Then come, let us go up to Bethel, where I will build an altar to God, who answered me in the day of my distress and who has been with me wherever I have gone. 4So they gave Jacob all the foreign gods they had and the rings in their ears, and Jacob buried them under the oak at Shechem. 5Then they set out, and the terror of God fell on the towns all around them so that no one pursued them.

6Jacob and all the people with him came to Luz (that is, Bethel) in the land of Canaan. 7There he built an altar, and he called the place El Bethel, because it was there that God revealed himself to him when he was fleeing from his brother.

8Now Deborah, Rebekah’s nurse, died and was buried under the oak outside Bethel. So it was named Allon Bakuth.

9After Jacob returned from Paddan Aram, God appeared to him again and blessed him. 10God said to him, “Your name is Jacob, but you will no longer be called Jacob; your name will be Israel.” So he named him Israel.

And God said to him, “I am God Almighty; be fruitful and increase in number. A nation and a community of nations will come from you, and kings will be among your descendants. 12The land I gave to Abraham and Isaac I also give to you, and I will give this land to your descendants after you.”

Then God went up from him at the place where he had talked with him.

14Jacob set up a stone pillar at the place where God had talked with him, and he poured out a drink offering on it; he also poured oil on it. 15Jacob called the place where God had talked with him Bethel.
The Deaths of Rachel and Isaac
35:23-26pp — 1Ch 2:1-2

16 Then they moved on from Bethel. While they were still some distance from Ephrath, Rachel began to give birth and had great difficulty. 17 And as she was having great difficulty in childbirth, the midwife said to her, “Don’t despair, for you have another son.” 18 As she breathed her last—for she was dying—she named her son Ben-Oni. 19 But his father named him Benjamin. 20 So Rachel died and was buried on the way to Ephrath (that is, Bethlehem). 21 Israel moved on again and pitched his tent beyond Migdal Eder. 22 While Israel was living in that region, Reuben went in and slept with his father’s concubine Bilhah, and Israel heard of it.

Jacob had twelve sons: 23 The sons of Leah: Reuben the firstborn of Jacob, Simeon, Levi, Judah, Issachar and Zebulun. 24 The sons of Rachel: Joseph and Benjamin. 25 The sons of Rachel’s servant Bilhah: Dan and Naphtali. 26 The sons of Leah’s servant Zilpah: Gad and Asher.

These were the sons of Jacob, who were born to him in Paddan Aram.

27 Jacob came home to his father Isaac in Mamre, near Kiriath Arba (that is, Hebron), where Abraham and Isaac had stayed. 28 Isaac lived a hundred and eighty years. 29 Then he breathed his last and died and was gathered to his people, old and full of years. And his sons Esau and Jacob buried him.

Esau’s Descendants
36:10-14pp — 1Ch 1:35-37
36:20-28pp — 1Ch 1:38-42

36 This is the account of the family line of Esau (that is, Edom).

2 Esau took his wives from the women of Canaan: Adah daughter of Elon the Hittite, and Oholibamah daughter of Anah and granddaughter of Zibeon the Hivite—also Basemath daughter of Ishmael and sister of Nebaioth. 4 Adah bore Eliphaz to Esau, Basemath bore Reuel, and Oholibamah bore Jeush, Jalam and Korah. These were the sons of Esau, who were born to him in Canaan.

6 Esau took his wives and sons and daughters and all the members of his household, as well as his livestock and all his other animals and all the goods he had acquired in Canaan, and moved to a land some distance from his brother Jacob. 7 Their possessions were too great for them to remain together; the land where they were staying could not support them both because of their livestock.

8 So Esau (that is, Edom) settled in the hill country of Seir.

9 This is the account of the family line of Esau the father of the Edomites in the hill country of Seir.

10 These are the names of Esau’s sons: Eliphaz, the son of Esau’s wife Adah, and Reuel, the son of Esau’s wife Basemath.

11 The sons of Eliphaz: Teman, Omar, Zepho, Gatam and Kenaz.

12 Esau’s son Eliphaz also had a concubine named Timna, who bore him Amalek. These were grandsons of Esau’s wife Adah.

a 18 Ben-Oni means son of my trouble. b 18 Benjamin means son of my right hand.
13 The sons of Reuel:
   Nahath, Zerah, Shammah and Mizzah. These were grandsons of Esau’s wife Basemath.
14 The sons of Esau’s wife Oholibamah daughter of Anah and granddaughter of Zibeon, whom she bore to Esau:
   Jeush, Jalam and Korah.
15 These were the chiefs among Esau’s descendants:
   The sons of Eliphaz the firstborn of Esau:
      Chiefs Teman, Omar, Zepho, Kenaz, Korah, Gatam and Amalek. These were the chiefs descended from Eliphaz in Edom; they were grandsons of Adah.
17 The sons of Esau’s son Reuel:
   Chiefs Nahath, Zerah, Shammah and Mizzah. These were the chiefs descended from Reuel in Edom; they were grandsons of Esau’s wife Basemath.
18 The sons of Esau’s wife Oholibamah:
   Chiefs Jeush, Jalam and Korah. These were the chiefs descended from Esau’s wife Oholibamah daughter of Anah.
19 These were the sons of Esau (that is, Edom), and these were their chiefs.
20 These were the sons of Seir the Horite, who were living in the region:
   Lo tan, Sho bal, Zib e on, Anah, Di shon, Ezer and Di shan. These sons of Seir in Edom were Horite chiefs.
22 The sons of Lotan:
   Hori and Homam. Tim na was Lotan’s sister.
23 The sons of Sho bal:
   Al van, Manahath, Ebal, She pho and Onam.
24 The sons of Zibeon:
   Aiah and Anah. This is the Anah who discovered the hot springs in the desert while he was grazing the donkeys of his father Zibeon.
25 The children of Anah:
   Dishon and Oholibamah daughter of Anah.
26 The sons of Dishon:
   Hemdan, Eshban, Ishran and Keran.
27 The sons of Ezer:
   Bilhan, Zavan and Akan.
28 The sons of Dishan:
   Uz and Aran.
29 These were the Horite chiefs:
   Lotan, Shobal, Zibeon, Anah, Dishon, Ezer and Dishan. These were the Horite chiefs, according to their divisions, in the land of Seir.

The Rulers of Edom
36:31-43pp — 1Ch 1:43-54
31 These were the kings who reigned in Edom before any Israelite king reigned:
32 Bela son of Beor became king of Edom. His city was named Dinhabah.
33 When Bela died, Jobab son of Zerah from Bozrah succeeded him as king.
34 When Jobab died, Husham from the land of the Temanites succeeded him as king.
35 When Husham died, Hadad son of Bedad, who defeated Midian in the country of Moab, succeeded him as king. His city was named Avith.
36 When Hadad died, Samlal from Masrekhah succeeded him as king.
37 When Samlal died, Saul of Rehoboth on the river succeeded him as king.
38 When Saul died, Baal-Hanan son of Abbor succeeded him as king.

---

a 16 Masoretic Text; Samaritan Pentateuch (also verse 11 and 1 Chron. 1:36) does not have Korah.  
b 22 Hebrew Hemam, a variant of Homam (see 1 Chron. 1:39)  
c 24 Vulgate; Syriac discovered water; the meaning of the Hebrew for this word is uncertain.  
d 26 Hebrew Dishan, a variant of Dishon
When Baal-Hanan son of Akbor died, Hadad\textsuperscript{a} succeeded him as king. His city was named Pau, and his wife’s name was Mehetabel daughter of Matred, the daughter of Me-Zahab.

These were the chiefs descended from Esau, by name, according to their clans and regions:

- Timna, Alvah, Jetheth, Oholibamah, Elah, Pinon
- Kenaz, Teman, Mibzar, Magdiel and Iram. These were the chiefs of Edom, according to their settlements in the land they occupied.

This is the family line of Esau, the father of the Edomites.

**Joseph’s Dreams**

37 Jacob lived in the land where his father had stayed,\textsuperscript{g} the land of Canaan.\textsuperscript{h}

2This is the account of Jacob’s family line.

Joseph, a young man of seventeen, was tending the flocks\textsuperscript{i} with his brothers, the sons of Bilhah\textsuperscript{j} and the sons of Zilpah,\textsuperscript{k} his father’s wives, and he brought their father a bad report\textsuperscript{l} about them.

Now Israel loved Joseph more than any of his other sons,\textsuperscript{m} because he had been born to him in his old age;\textsuperscript{n} and he made an ornate\textsuperscript{b} robe\textsuperscript{o} for him.

4When his brothers saw that their father loved him more than any of them, they hated him.\textsuperscript{p} and could not speak a kind word to him.

5Joseph had a dream;\textsuperscript{q} and when he told it to his brothers, they hated him all the more.\textsuperscript{r} He said to them, “Listen to this dream I had: 7We were binding sheaves of grain out in the field when suddenly my sheaf rose and stood upright, while your sheaves gathered around mine and bowed down to it.”

8His brothers said to him, “Do you intend to reign over us? Will you actually rule us?”\textsuperscript{s} And they hated him all the more because of his dream and what he had said.

9Then he had another dream, and he told it to his brothers. “Listen,” he said, “I had another dream, and this time the sun and moon and eleven stars were bowing down to me.”

10When he told his father as well as his brothers,\textsuperscript{t} his father rebuked him and said, “What is this dream you had? Will your mother and I and your brothers actually come and bow down to the ground before you?”\textsuperscript{u} His brothers were jealous of him,\textsuperscript{v} but his father kept the matter in mind.\textsuperscript{w}

**Joseph Sold by His Brothers**

12Now his brothers had gone to graze their father’s flocks near Shechem.\textsuperscript{13} and Israel said to Joseph, “As you know, your brothers are grazing the flocks near Shechem. Come, I am going to send you to them.”

“Very well,” he replied.

14So he said to him, “Go and see if all is well with your brothers and with the flocks, and bring word back to me.” Then he sent him off from the Valley of Hebron.\textsuperscript{x}

When Joseph arrived at Shechem, a man found him wandering around in the fields and asked him, “What are you looking for?”

16He replied, “I’m looking for my brothers. Can you tell me where they are grazing their flocks?”

17“They have moved on from here,” the man answered. “I heard them say, ‘Let’s go to Dothan.’”

So Joseph went after his brothers and found them near Dothan.\textsuperscript{18} But they saw him in the distance, and before he reached them, they plotted to kill him.\textsuperscript{z}

19“Here comes that dreamer!” they said to each other.\textsuperscript{20} “Come now, let’s

\textsuperscript{a} 39 Many manuscripts of the Masoretic Text, Samaritan Pentateuch and Syriac (see also 1 Chron. 1:50); most manuscripts of the Masoretic Text Hadar
\textsuperscript{b} 3 The meaning of the Hebrew for this word is uncertain; also in verses 23 and 32.
kill him and throw him into one of these cisterns and say that a ferocious animal devoured him. Then we’ll see what comes of his dreams."

21When Reuben heard this, he tried to rescue him from their hands. “Let’s not take his life,” he said. "Don’t shed any blood. Throw him into this cistern here in the wilderness, but don’t lay a hand on him.” Reuben said this to rescue him from them and take him back to his father.

23So when Joseph came to his brothers, they stripped him of his robe — the ornate robe he was wearing — and they took him and threw him into the cistern. The cistern was empty; there was no water in it.

25As they sat down to eat their meal, they looked up and saw a caravan of Ishmaelites coming from Gilead. Their camels were loaded with spices, balm and myrrh, and they were on their way to take them down to Egypt.

26Judaiah said to his brothers, “What will we gain if we kill our brother and cover up his blood?” 27Come, let’s sell him to the Ishmaelites and not lay our hands on him; after all, he is our brother, our own flesh and blood.” His brothers agreed.

28So when the Midianites came by, his brothers pulled Joseph up out of the cistern and sold him for twenty shekels of silver to the Ishmaelites, who took him to Egypt.

29When Reuben returned to the cistern and saw that Joseph was not there, he tore his clothes. He went back to his brothers and said, “The boy isn’t there! Where can I turn now?”

31Then they got Joseph’s robe, slaughtered a goat and dipped the robe in the blood. 32They took the ornate robe back to their father and said, “We found this. Examine it to see whether it is your son’s robe.”

33He recognized it and said, “It is my son’s robe! Some ferocious animal has devoured him. Joseph has surely been torn to pieces.”

34Then Jacob tore his clothes, put on sackcloth and mourned for his son many days. 35All his sons and daughters came to comfort him, but he refused to be comforted. “No,” he said, “I will continue to mourn until I join my son in the grave.” So his father wept for him.

36Meanwhile, the Midianites sold Joseph in Egypt to Potiphar, one of Pharaoh’s officials, the captain of the guard.

Judah and Tamar

38At that time, Judah left his brothers and went down to stay with a man of Adullam named Hirah. There Judah met the daughter of a Canaanite man named Shua. He married her and made love to her; she became pregnant and gave birth to a son, who was named Er.

4She conceived again and gave birth to a son and named him Onan. She gave birth to still another son and named him Shelah. It was at Kezib that she gave birth to him.

6Judah got a wife for Er, his first-born, and her name was Tamar. But Er, Judah’s firstborn, was wicked in the LORD’s sight; so the LORD put him to death.

8Then Judah said to Onan, “Sleep with your brother’s wife and fulfill your duty to her as a brother-in-law to raise up offspring for your brother.”

9But Onan knew that the child would not be his; so whenever he slept with his brother’s wife, he spilled his semen on the ground to keep from providing offspring for his brother. What he did was wicked in the LORD’s sight; so the LORD put him to death.

11Judah then said to his daughter-in-law Tamar, “Live as a widow in your father’s household until my son Shelah grows up.” For he thought, “He may..."
die too, just like his brothers.” So Tamar went to live in her father’s household.

12 After a long time Judah’s wife, the daughter of Shua, died. When Judah had recovered from his grief, he went up to Timnah, to the men who were shearing his sheep, and his friend Hirah the Adullamite went with him.

13 When Tamar was told, “Your father-in-law is on his way to Timnah to shear his sheep,” she took off her widow’s clothes, covered herself with a veil to disguise herself, and then sat down at the entrance to Enaim, which is on the road to Timnah. For she saw that, though Shelah had now grown up, she had not been given to him as his wife.

15 When Judah saw her, he thought she was a prostitute, for she had covered her face. Not realizing that she was his daughter-in-law, he went over to her by the roadside and said, “Come now, let me sleep with you.”

17 “I’ll send you a young goat from my flock,” he said.

18 “Will you give me something as a pledge until you send it?” she asked.

19 He said, “What pledge should I give you?”

“Your seal and its cord, and the staff in your hand,” she answered. So he gave them to her and slept with her, and she became pregnant by him. After she left, she took off her veil and put on her widow’s clothes again.

20 Meanwhile Judah sent the young goat by his friend the Adullamite in order to get his pledge back from the woman, but he did not find her.

21 He asked the men who lived there, “Where is the shrine prostitute who was beside the road at Enaim?”

“There hasn’t been any shrine prostitute here,” they said.

22 So he went back to Judah and said, “I didn’t find her. Besides, the men who lived there said, ‘There hasn’t been any shrine prostitute here.’”

23 Then Judah said, “Let her keep what she has, or we will become a laughingstock. After all, I did send her this young goat, but you didn’t find her.”

24 About three months later Judah was told, “Your daughter-in-law Tamar is guilty of prostitution, and as a result she is now pregnant.”

Judah said, “Bring her out and have her burned to death!”

25 As she was being brought out, she sent a message to her father-in-law. “I am pregnant by the man who owns these,” she said. And she added, “See if you recognize whose seal and cord and staff these are.”

26 Judah recognized them and said, “She is more righteous than I, since I wouldn’t give her to my son Shelah.” And he did not sleep with her again.

27 When the time came for her to give birth, there were twin boys in her womb. As she was giving birth, one of them put out his hand; so the midwife took a scarlet thread and tied it on his wrist and said, “This one came out first.” But when he drew back his hand, his brother came out, and she said, “So this is how you have broken out!” And he was named Perez. Then his brother, who had the scarlet thread on his wrist, came out. And he was named Zerah.

Joseph and Potiphar’s Wife

39 Now Joseph had been taken down to Egypt. Potiphar, an Egyptian who was one of Pharaoh’s officials, the captain of the guard, bought him from the Ishmaelites who had taken him there.

2 The LORD was with Joseph so that he prospered, and he lived in the house of his Egyptian master. When his master saw that the LORD was with him and that the LORD gave him success in everything he did, Joseph found favor in his eyes and became his

---

\(^{a29}\) Perez means breaking out. \(^{b30}\) Zerah can mean scarlet or brightness.
attendant. Potiphar put him in charge of his household, and he entrusted to his care everything he owned. \(^5\) From the time he put him in charge of his household and of all that he owned, the LORD blessed the household of the Egyptian because of Joseph. \(^v\) The blessing of the LORD was on everything Potiphar had, both in the house and in the field. \(^8\) So Potiphar left everything he had in Joseph’s care; with Joseph in charge, he did not concern himself with anything except the food he ate.

Now Joseph was well-built and handsome, \(^w\) and after a while his master’s wife took notice of Joseph and said, “Come to bed with me!” \(^x\) But he refused. \(^y\) “With me in charge,” he told her, “my master does not concern himself with anything in the house; everything he owns he has entrusted to my care. \(^9\) No one is greater in this house than I am. \(^2\) My master has withheld nothing from me except you, because you are his wife. How then could I do such a wicked thing and sin against God?” \(^e\) And though she spoke to Joseph day after day, he refused to go to bed with her or even be with her.

One day he went into the house to attend to his duties, and none of the household servants was inside. \(^12\) She caught him by his cloak and said, “Come to bed with me!” But he left his cloak in her hand and ran out of the house.

When she saw that he had left his cloak in her hand and had run out of the house, \(^14\) she called her household servants. “Look,” she said to them, “this Hebrew has been brought to us to make sport of us! He came in here to sleep with me, but I screamed. \(^c\) When he heard me scream for help, he left his cloak beside me and ran out of the house.”

She kept his cloak beside her until his master came home. \(^17\) Then she told him this story: \(^d\) “That Hebrew slave you brought us came to me to make sport of me. \(^18\) But as soon as I screamed for help, he left his cloak beside me and ran out of the house.”

When his master heard the story his wife told him, saying, “This is how your slave treated me,” he burned with anger. \(^e\) Joseph’s master took him and put him in prison, \(^1\) the place where the king’s prisoners were confined.

But while Joseph was there in the prison, \(^21\) the LORD was with him; he showed him kindness and granted him favor in the eyes of the prison warden. \(^g\) So the warden put Joseph in charge of all those held in the prison, and he was made responsible for all that was done there. \(^h\) The warden paid no attention to anything under Joseph’s care, because the LORD was with Joseph and gave him success in whatever he did. \(^i\)

The Cupbearer and the Baker

Some time later, the cupbearer and the baker of Egypt offended their master, the king of Egypt. \(^2\) Pharaoh was angry with his two officials, the chief cupbearer and the chief baker, \(^3\) and put them in custody in the house of the captain of the guard, \(^1\) in the same prison where Joseph was confined. \(^4\) The captain of the guard assigned them to Joseph, \(^m\) and he attended them.

After they had been in custody for some time, \(^8\) each of the two men — the cupbearer and the baker of the king of Egypt, who were being held in prison — had a dream the same night, and each dream had a meaning of its own. \(^n\)

When Joseph came to them the next morning, he saw that they were dejected. \(^7\) So he asked Pharaoh’s officials who were in custody with him in his master’s house, “Why do you look so sad today?” \(^o\)

“’We both had dreams,” they answered, “but there is no one to interpret them.” \(^p\)

Then Joseph said to them, “Do not interpret my dreams.”
So the chief cupbearer told Joseph his dream. He said to him, "In my dream I saw a vine in front of me, and on the vine were three branches. As soon as it budded, it blossomed, and its clusters ripened into grapes. Pharaoh’s cup was in my hand, and I took the grapes, squeezed them into Pharaoh’s cup and put the cup in his hand."

"This is what it means," Joseph said to him. "The three branches are three days. Within three days Pharaoh will lift up your head and restore you to your position, and you will put Pharaoh’s cup in his hand, just as you used to do when you were his cupbearer. But when all goes well with you, remember me and show me kindness; mention me to Pharaoh and get me out of this prison. I was forcibly carried off from the land of the Hebrews, and even here I have done nothing to deserve being put in a dungeon."

When the chief baker saw that Joseph had given a favorable interpretation, he said to Joseph, "I too had a dream: On my head were three baskets of bread. In the top basket were all kinds of baked goods for Pharaoh, but the birds were eating them out of the basket on my head."

"This is what it means," Joseph said. "The three baskets are three days. Within three days Pharaoh will lift off your head and impale your body on a pole. And the birds will eat away your flesh."

Now the third day was Pharaoh’s birthday, and he gave a feast for all his officials. He lifted up the heads of the chief cupbearer and the chief baker in the presence of his officials. He restored the chief cupbearer to his position, so that he once again put the cup into Pharaoh’s hand — but he impaled the chief baker, just as Joseph had said to them in his interpretation. The chief cupbearer, however, did not remember Joseph; he forgot him.\(^a\)

**Pharaoh’s Dreams**

When two full years had passed, Pharaoh had a dream. He was standing by the Nile, when out of the river there came up seven cows, sleek and fat, and they grazed among the reeds. After them, seven other cows, ugly and gaunt, came up out of the Nile and stood beside those on the riverbank. And the cows that were ugly and gaunt ate up the seven sleek, fat cows. Then Pharaoh woke up.

He fell asleep again and had a second dream: Seven heads of grain, healthy and good, were growing on a single stalk. After them, seven other heads of grain sprouted — thin and scorched by the east wind. The thin heads of grain swallowed up the seven healthy, full heads. Then Pharaoh woke up; it had been a dream.

In the morning his mind was troubled, so he sent for all the magicians and wise men of Egypt. Pharaoh told them his dreams, but no one could interpret them for him.

Then the chief cupbearer said to Pharaoh, "Today I am reminded of my shortcomings. Pharaoh was once angry with his servants, and he imprisoned me and the chief baker in the house of the captain of the guard. Each of us had a dream the same night, and each dream had a meaning of its own. Now a young Hebrew was there with us, a servant of the captain of the guard. We told him our dreams, and he interpreted them for us, giving each man the interpretation of his dream. And things turned out exactly as he interpreted them to us: I was restored to my position, and the other man was impaled.\(^m\)

So Pharaoh sent for Joseph, and he was quickly brought from the dungeon. When he had shaved and changed his clothes, he came before Pharaoh.

Pharaoh said to Joseph, "I had a dream, and no one can interpret it.\(^n\)

\(^a\) Or three wicker baskets
But I have heard it said of you that when you hear a dream you can interpret it.\textsuperscript{a}  

\textbf{16} “I cannot do it,” Joseph replied to Pharaoh, “but God will give Pharaoh the answer he desires.”\textsuperscript{p}  

Then Pharaoh said to Joseph, “In my dream I was standing on the bank of the Nile, \textsuperscript{18} when out of the river there came up seven cows, fat and sleek, and they grazed among the reeds. \textsuperscript{19} After them, seven other cows came up — scrawny and very ugly and lean. I had never seen such ugly cows in all the land of Egypt. \textsuperscript{20} The lean, ugly cows ate up the seven fat cows that came up first. \textsuperscript{21} But even after they ate them, no one could tell that they had done so; they looked just as ugly as before. Then I woke up.  

\textbf{22} “In my dream I saw seven heads of grain, full and good, growing on a single stalk. \textsuperscript{23} After them, seven other heads sprouted — withered and thin and scorched by the east wind. \textsuperscript{24} The thin heads of grain swallowed up the seven good heads. I told this to the magicians, but none of them could explain it to me.”\textsuperscript{q}  

Then Joseph said to Pharaoh, “The dreams of Pharaoh are one and the same. God has revealed to Pharaoh what he is about to do. \textsuperscript{r} The seven good cows\textsuperscript{t} are seven years, and the seven good heads of grain are seven years; it is one and the same dream. \textsuperscript{s} The seven lean, ugly cows that came up afterward are seven years, and so are the seven worthless heads of grain scorched by the east wind: They are seven years of famine.\textsuperscript{t}  

\textbf{28} “It is just as I said to Pharaoh: God has shown Pharaoh what he is about to do. \textsuperscript{29} Seven years of great abundance\textsuperscript{u} are coming throughout the land of Egypt, \textsuperscript{30} but seven years of famine\textsuperscript{v} will follow them. Then all the abundance in Egypt will be forgotten, and the famine will ravage the land.\textsuperscript{w}  

\textbf{31} The abundance in the land will not be remembered, because the famine that follows it will be so severe. \textsuperscript{32} The reason the dream was given to Pharaoh in two forms is that the matter has been firmly decided\textsuperscript{x} by God, and God will do it soon.  

\textbf{33} “And now let Pharaoh look for a discerning and wise man\textsuperscript{y} and put him in charge of the land of Egypt. \textsuperscript{34} Let Pharaoh appoint commissioners over the land to take a fifth\textsuperscript{z} of the harvest of Egypt during the seven years of abundance. \textsuperscript{a} They should collect all the food of these good years that are coming and store up the grain under the authority of Pharaoh, to be kept in the cities for food. \textsuperscript{b} This food should be held in reserve for the country, to be used during the seven years of famine that will come upon Egypt,\textsuperscript{c} so that the country may not be ruined by the famine.”  

The plan seemed good to Pharaoh and to all his officials.\textsuperscript{d} So Pharaoh asked them, “Can we find anyone like this man, one in whom is the spirit of God\textsuperscript{e}?“  

Then Pharaoh said to Joseph, “Since God has made all this known to you, there is no one so discerning and wise as you. \textsuperscript{40} You shall be in charge of my palace, and all my people are to submit to your orders.\textsuperscript{f} Only with respect to the throne will I be greater than you.”  

\textbf{Joseph in Charge of Egypt}  

So Pharaoh said to Joseph, “I hereby put you in charge of the whole land of Egypt.”\textsuperscript{g} Then Pharaoh took his signet ring\textsuperscript{h} from his finger and put it on Joseph’s finger. He dressed him in robes of fine linen and put a gold chain around his neck.\textsuperscript{i} He had him ride in a chariot as his second-in-command,\textsuperscript{j} and people shouted before him, “Make way!\textsuperscript{k}” Thus he put him in charge of the whole land of Egypt.  

Then Pharaoh said to Joseph, “I am Pharaoh, but without your word no
one will lift hand or foot in all Egypt.”

45 Pharaoh gave Joseph the name Zaphenath-Paneah and gave him Asenath daughter of Potiphera, priest of On, a to be his wife. 1 And Joseph went throughout the land of Egypt.

46 Joseph was thirty years old m when he entered the service of Pharaoh king of Egypt. And Joseph went out from Pharaoh’s presence and traveled throughout Egypt. 47 During the seven years of abundance the land produced plentifully. 48 Joseph collected all the food produced in those seven years of abundance in Egypt and stored it in the cities. In each city he put the food grown in the fields surrounding it.

49 Joseph stored up huge quantities of grain, like the sand of the sea; it was so much that he stopped keeping records because it was beyond measure.

50 Before the years of famine came, two sons were born to Joseph by Asenath daughter of Potiphera, priest of On. 51 Joseph named his firstborn Manasseh b and said, “It is because God has made me forget all my trouble and all my father’s household.” 52 The second son he named Ephraim c and said, “It is because God has made me fruitful in the land of my suffering.”

53 The seven years of abundance in Egypt came to an end, 54 and the seven years of famine began, just as Joseph had said. There was famine in all the other lands, but in the whole land of Egypt there was food. 55 When all Egypt began to feel the famine, the people cried to Pharaoh for food. Then Pharaoh told all the Egyptians, “Go to Joseph and do what he tells you.”

56 When the famine had spread over the whole country, Joseph opened all the storehouses and sold grain to the Egyptians, for the famine d was severe throughout Egypt. 57 And all the world came to Egypt to buy grain from Joseph, e because the famine was severe everywhere.

---

**Genesis 42:15**

42 When Jacob learned that there was grain in Egypt, f he said to his sons, “Why do you just keep looking at each other?” 2 He continued, “I have heard that there is grain in Egypt. Go down there and buy some for us, so that we may live and not die.”

3 Then ten of Joseph’s brothers went down to buy grain from Egypt.

4 But Jacob did not send Benjamin, Joseph’s brother, with the others, because he was afraid that harm might come to him. z 5 So Israel’s sons were among those who went to buy grain, a for there was famine in the land of Canaan also.

6 Now Joseph was the governor of the land, c the person who sold grain to all its people. So when Joseph’s brothers arrived, they bowed down to him with their faces to the ground. d 7 As soon as Joseph saw his brothers, he recognized them, but he pretended to be a stranger and spoke harshly to them.

“Where do you come from?” he asked.

“From the land of Canaan,” they replied, “to buy food.”

8 Although Joseph recognized his brothers, they did not recognize him. 9 Then he remembered his dreams about them and said to them, “You are spies! You have come to see where our land is unprotected.”

10 “No, my lord,” they answered.

“Your servants have come to buy food. 11 We are all the sons of one man. Your servants are honest men, not spies.”

12 “No!” he said to them. “You have come to see where our land is unprotected.”

13 But they replied, “Your servants were twelve brothers, the sons of one man, who lives in the land of Canaan. The youngest is now with our father, and one is no more.”

14 Joseph said to them, “It is just as I told you: You are spies! 15 And this is how you will be tested: As surely as Pharaoh
lives, you will not leave this place unless your youngest brother comes here. 16 Send one of your number to get your brother; the rest of you will be kept in prison, so that your words may be tested to see if you are telling the truth. If you are not, then as surely as Pharaoh lives, you are spies!” 17 And he put them all in custody for three days.

18 On the third day, Joseph said to them, “Do this and you will live, for I fear God: If you are honest men, let one of your brothers stay here in prison, while the rest of you go and take grain back for your starving households. But you must bring your youngest brother to me, so that your words may be verified and that you may not die.” This they proceeded to do.

21 They said to one another, “Surely we are being punished because of our brother. We saw how distressed he was when he pleaded with us for his life, but we would not listen; that’s why this distress has come on us.”

22 Reuben replied, “Didn’t I tell you not to sin against the boy? But you wouldn’t listen! Now we must give an accounting for his blood.” They did not realize that Joseph could understand them, since he was using an interpreter.

24 He turned away from them and began to weep, but then came back and spoke to them again. He had Simeon taken from them and bound before their eyes.

25 Joseph gave orders to fill their bags with grain, to put each man’s silver back in his sack, and to give them provisions for their journey. After this was done for them, they loaded their grain on their donkeys and left.

27 At the place where they stopped for the night one of them opened his sack to get feed for his donkey, and he saw his silver in the mouth of his sack. “My silver has been returned,” he said to his brothers. “Here it is in my sack.”

Their hearts sank and they turned to each other trembling and said, “What is this that God has done to us?”

29 When they came to their father Jacob in the land of Canaan, they told him all that had happened to them. They said, “The man who is lord over the land spoke harshly to us and treated us as though we were spying on the land. But we said to him, ‘We are honest men; we are not spies. We were twelve brothers, sons of one father. One is no more, and the youngest is now with our father in Canaan.’

33 Then the man who is lord over the land said to us, ‘This is how I will know whether you are honest men: Leave one of your brothers here with me, and take food for your starving households and go. But bring your youngest brother to me so I will know that you are not spies but honest men. Then I will give your brother back to you, and you can trade in the land.’

35 As they were emptying their sacks, there in each man’s sack was his pouch of silver! When they and their father saw the money pouches, they were frightened. Their father Jacob said to them, “You have deprived me of my children. Joseph is no more and Simeon is no more, and now you want to take Benjamin. Everything is against me!”

37 Then Reuben said to his father, “You may put both of my sons to death if I do not bring him back to you. Entrust him to my care, and I will bring him back.”

38 But Jacob said, “My son will not go down there with you; his brother is dead and he is the only one left. If harm comes to him on the journey you are taking, you will bring my gray head down to the grave in sorrow.”

The Second Journey to Egypt

43 Now the famine was still severe in the land. So when they had eaten all the grain they had
brought from Egypt, their father said to them, “Go back and buy us a little more food.”

3But Judah said to him, “The man warned us solemnly, ‘You will not see my face again unless your brother is with you.’ 4If you will send our brother along with us, we will go down and buy food for you. 5But if you will not send him, we will not go down, because the man said to us, ‘You will not see my face again unless your brother is with you.’”

6Israel asked, “Why did you bring this trouble on me by telling the man you had another brother?”

7They replied, “The man questioned us closely about ourselves and our family. ‘Is your father still living?’ he asked us. ‘Do you have another brother?’ We simply answered his questions. How were we to know he would say, ‘Bring your brother down here?’”

8Then Judah said to Israel his father, “Send the boy along with me and we will go at once, so that we and you and our children may live and not die. I myself will guarantee his safety; you can hold me personally responsible for him. If I do not bring him back to you and set him here before you, I will bear the blame before you all my life.” As it is, if we had not delayed, we could have gone and returned twice.”

11Then their father Israel said to them, “If it must be, then do this: Put some of the best products of the land in your bags and take them down to the man as a gift⁹—a little balm⁹ and a little honey, some spices¹⁰ and myrrh, some pistachio nuts and almonds. 12Take double the amount of silver with you, for you must return the silver that was put back into the mouths of your sacks. Perhaps it was a mistake. 13Take your brother also and go back to the man at once. 14And may God AlmightyGrant you mercy before the man so that he will let your other brother and Benjamin come back with you. As for me, if I am bereaved, I am bereaved.”

15So the men took the gifts and doubled the amount of silver, and Benjamin also. They hurried down to Egypt and presented themselves to Joseph.

16When Joseph saw Benjamin with them, he said to the steward of his house, “Take these men to my house, slaughter an animal and prepare a meal; they are to eat with me at noon.”

17The man did as Joseph told him and took the men to Joseph’s house. 18Now the men were frightened when they were taken to his house. They thought, “We were brought here because of the silver that was put back into our sacks the first time. He wants to attack us and overpower us and seize us as slaves and take our donkeys.”

19So they went up to Joseph’s steward and spoke to him at the entrance to the house. “We beg your pardon, our lord,” they said, “we came down here the first time to buy food. But at the place where we stopped for the night we opened our sacks and each of us found his silver—the exact weight—in the mouth of his sack. So we have brought it back with us.”

22We have also brought additional silver with us to buy food. We don’t know who put our silver in our sacks.”

23“It’s all right,” he said. “Don’t be afraid. Your God, the God of your father, has given you treasure in your sacks; I received your silver.” Then he brought Simeon out to them.

24The steward took the men into Joseph’s house, gave them water to wash their feet and provided fodder for their donkeys. 25They prepared their gifts for Joseph’s arrival at noon, because they had heard that they were to eat there.

26When Joseph came home, they presented to him the gifts they had brought into the house, and they bowed down before him to the ground. He asked them how they

---

⁹ Hebrew El-Shaddai
were, and then he said, “How is your aged father you told me about? Is he still living?”

28 They replied, “Your servant our father is still alive and well.” And they bowed down, prostrating themselves before him.

29 As he looked about and saw his brother Benjamin, his own mother’s son, he asked, “Is this your youngest brother, the one you told me about?” And he said, “God be gracious to you, my son.” 30 Deeply moved at the sight of his brother, Joseph hurried out and looked for a place to weep. He went into his private room and wept there.

31 After he had washed his face, he came out and, controlling himself, said, “Serve the food.”

32 They served him by himself, the brothers by themselves, and the Egyptians who ate with him by themselves, because Egyptians could not eat with Hebrews, for that is detestable to Egyptians.

33 The men had been seated before him in the order of their ages, from the firstborn to the youngest; and they looked at each other in astonishment.

34 When portions were served to them from Joseph’s table, Benjamin’s portion was five times as much as anyone else’s. So they feasted and drank freely with him.

A Silver Cup in a Sack

44 Now Joseph gave these instructions to the steward of his house: “Fill the men’s sacks with as much food as they can carry, and put each man’s silver in the mouth of his sack. Then put my cup, the silver one, in the mouth of the youngest one’s sack, along with the silver for his grain.” And he did as Joseph said.

3 As morning dawned, the men were sent on their way with their donkeys.

4 They had not gone far from the city when Joseph said to his steward, “Go after those men at once, and when you catch up with them, say to them, ‘Why have you repaid good with evil?’”

5 Isn’t this the cup my master drinks from and also uses for divination? This is a wicked thing you have done.”

6 When he caught up with them, he repeated these words to them. But they said to him, “Why does my lord say such things? Far be it from your servants to do anything like that! We even brought back to you from the land of Canaan the silver we found inside the mouths of our sacks. So why would we steal silver or gold from your master’s house? If any of your servants is found to have it, he will die; and the rest of us will become my lord’s slaves.”

10 “Very well, then,” he said, “let it be as you say. Whoever is found to have it will become my slave; the rest of you will be free from blame.”

11 Each of them quickly lowered his sack to the ground and opened it. Then the steward proceeded to search, beginning with the oldest and ending with the youngest. And the cup was found in Benjamin’s sack.

13 At this, they tore their clothes. Then they all loaded their donkeys and returned to the city.

14 Joseph was still in the house when Judah and his brothers came in, and they threw themselves to the ground before him. Joseph said to them, “What is this you have done? Don’t you know that a man like me can find things out by divination?”

16 “What can we say to my lord?” Judah replied. “What can we say? How can we prove our innocence? God has uncovered your servants’ guilt. We are now my lord’s slaves—we ourselves and the one who was found to have the cup.”

17 But Joseph said, “Far be it from me to do such a thing! Only the man who was found to have the cup will become my slave. The rest of you, go back to your father in peace.”

18 Then Judah went up to him and said: “Pardon your servant, my lord, let me speak a word to my lord. Do not be angry with your servant, though you
are equal to Pharaoh himself. 19 My lord asked his servants, ‘Do you have a father or a brother?’ 20 And we answered, ‘We have an aged father, and there is a young son born to him in his old age. 9 His brother is dead, 8 and he is the only one of his mother’s sons left, and his father loves him.’

21 ‘Then you said to your servants, ‘Bring him down to me so I can see him for myself.’ 22 And we said to my lord, ‘The boy cannot leave his father; if he leaves him, his father will die.’ 23 But you told your servants, ‘Unless your youngest brother comes down with you, you will not see my face again.’ 24 When we went back to your servant my father, we told him what my lord had said.

25 ‘Then our father said, ‘Go back and buy a little more food.’ 26 But we said, ‘We cannot go down. Only if our youngest brother is with us will we go. We cannot see the man’s face unless our youngest brother is with us.’

27 ‘Your servant my father said to us, ‘You know that my wife bore me two sons.’ 28 One of them went away from me, and I said, “He has surely been torn to pieces.” 29 And I have not seen him since. 30 If you take this one from me too and harm comes to him, you will bring my gray head down to the grave in misery.’

31 ‘So now, if the boy is not with us when I go back to your servant my father, and if my father, whose life is closely bound up with the boy’s life, 32 sees that the boy isn’t there, he will die. Your servants will bring the gray head of our father down to the grave in sorrow. 33 Your servant guaranteed the boy’s safety to my father. I said, ‘If I do not bring him back to you, I will bear the blame before you, my father, all my life!’

34 ‘Now then, please let your servant remain here as my lord’s slave in place of the boy, and let the boy return with his brothers. 35 How can I go back to my father if the boy is not with me? No! Do not let me see the misery that would come on my father.’

Joseph Makes Himself Known

45 Then Joseph could no longer control himself before all his attendants, and he cried out, “Have everyone leave my presence!” So there was no one with Joseph when he made himself known to his brothers. 2 And he wept w so loudly that the Egyptians heard him, and Pharaoh’s household heard about it.

3 Joseph said to his brothers, “I am Joseph! Is my father still living?” 4 But his brothers were not able to answer him, 5 because they were terrified at his presence.

4 Then Joseph said to his brothers, “Come close to me.” When they had done so, he said, “I am your brother Joseph, the one you sold into Egypt!

5 And now, do not be distressed or do not be angry with yourselves for selling me here, 6 because it was to save lives that God sent me ahead of you. 7 For two years now there has been famine in the land, and for the next five years there will be no plowing and reaping. 8 But God sent me ahead of you to preserve for you a remnant on earth and to save your lives by a great deliverance.

8 “So then, it was not you who sent me here, but God. He made me father to Pharaoh, lord of his entire household and ruler of all Egypt. 9 Now hurry back to my father and say to him, ‘This is what your son Joseph says: God has made me lord of all Egypt. Come down to me; don’t delay.’ 10 You shall live in the region of Goshen and be near me — you, your children and grandchildren, your flocks and herds, and all you have. 11 I will provide for you there, because five years of famine are still to come. Otherwise you and your household and all who belong to you will become destitute.’

---

* Or save you as a great band of survivors
“You can see for yourselves, and so can my brother Benjamin, that it is really I who am speaking to you. Tell my father about all the honor accorded me in Egypt and about everything you have seen. And bring my father down here quickly.”

Then he threw his arms around his brother Benjamin and wept, and Benjamin embraced him, weeping. And he kissed all his brothers and wept over them. Afterward his brothers talked with him.

When the news reached Pharaoh’s palace that Joseph’s brothers had come, Pharaoh and all his officials were pleased. Pharaoh said to Joseph, “Tell your brothers, ‘Do this: Load your animals and return to the land of Canaan, and bring your father and your families back to me. I will give you the best of the land of Egypt and you can enjoy the fat of the land.’”

“You are also directed to tell them, ‘Do this: Take some carts from Egypt for your children and your wives, and get your father and come. Never mind about your belongings, because the best of all Egypt will be yours.’”

So the sons of Israel did this. Joseph gave them carts, as Pharaoh had commanded, and he also gave them provisions for their journey. To each of them he gave new clothing, but to Benjamin he gave three hundred shekels of silver and five sets of clothes. And this is what he sent to carry him back, the spirit of their father Jacob revived.

Then he sent his brothers away, and as they were leaving he said to them, “Don’t quarrel on the way!”

So they went up out of Egypt and came to their father Jacob in the land of Canaan. They told him, “Joseph is still alive! In fact, he is ruler of all Egypt.” Jacob was stunned; he did not believe them.

But when they told him everything Joseph had said to them, and when he saw the carts Joseph had sent to carry him back, the spirit of his father Jacob revived. And Israel said, “I’m convinced! My son Joseph is still alive. I will go and see him before I die.”

Jacob Goes to Egypt

So Israel set out with all that was his, and when he reached Beersheba, he offered sacrifices to the God of his father Isaac.

And God spoke to Israel in a vision at night and said, “Jacob! Jacob!”

“Here I am,” he replied.

“I am God, the God of your father,” he said. “Do not be afraid to go down to Egypt, for I will make you into a great nation there. I will go down to Egypt with you, and I will surely bring you back again. And Joseph’s own hand will close your eyes.”

Then Jacob left Beersheba, and Israel’s sons took their father Jacob and their children and their wives in the carts that Pharaoh had sent to transport him. So Jacob and all his offspring went to Egypt, taking with them their livestock and the possessions they had acquired in Canaan.

Jacob brought with him to Egypt his sons and grandsons and his daughters and granddaughters—all his offspring.

These are the names of the sons of Israel (Jacob and his descendants) who went to Egypt:

Reuben the firstborn of Jacob.

The sons of Reuben:

Hanok, Pallu, Hezron and Carmi.

The sons of Simeon:

Jemuel, Jamin, Ohad, Jakin, Zohar and Shaul the son of a Canaanite woman.

The sons of Levi:

Gershon, Kohath and Merari.
12 The sons of Judah: Er, Onan, Shelah, Perez and Zerah (but Er and Onan had died in the land of Canaan). The sons of Perez: Hezron and Hamul.

13 The sons of Issachar: Tola, Puah, Jashub and Shimron.

14 The sons of Zebulun: Sered, Elon and Jahleel.

15 These were the sons Leah bore to Jacob in Paddan Aram, besides his daughter Dinah. These sons and daughters of his were thirty-three in all.

16 The sons of Gad: Zophon, Haggi, Shuni, Ezbon, Eri, Arodi and Areli.

17 The sons of Asher: Imnah, Ishvah, Ishvi and Beriah.

18 These were the sons born to Joseph by Asenath daughter of Potiphera, priest of On.

19 The sons of Jacob’s wife Rachel: Joseph and Benjamin.

20 In Egypt, Manasseh and Ephraim were born to Joseph by Asenath daughter of Potiphera, priest of On.

21 The sons of Benjamin: Bela, Beker, Ashbel, Gera, Naaman, Ehi, Rosh, Muppim, Huppim and Ard.

22 These were the sons of Rachel who were born to Jacob — fourteen in all.

23 The son of Dan: Hushim.

24 The sons of Naphtali: Jahziel, Gunni, Jezer and Shillem.

25 These were the sons born to Jacob by Bilhah, whom Laban had given to his daughter Rachel — seven in all.

26 All those who went to Egypt with Jacob — those who were his direct descendants, not counting his sons’ wives — numbered sixty-six persons.

27 With the two sons who had been born to Joseph in Egypt, the members of Jacob’s family, which went to Egypt, were seventy-eight in all.

28 Now Jacob sent Judah ahead of him to Joseph to get directions to Goshen. When they arrived in the region of Goshen, Joseph had his chariot made ready and went to Goshen to meet his father Israel. As soon as Joseph appeared before him, he threw his arms around his father and wept for a long time.

30 Israel said to Joseph, “Now I am ready to die, since I have seen for myself that you are still alive.”

31 Then Joseph said to his brothers and to his father’s household, “I will go up and speak to Pharaoh and will say to him, ‘My brothers and my father’s household, who were living in the land of Canaan, have come to me. The men are shepherds; they tend livestock, and they have brought along their flocks and herds and everything they own.’ When Pharaoh calls you in and asks, ‘What is your occupation?’ you should answer, ‘Your servants have tended livestock from our boyhood on, just as our fathers did.’ Then you will be allowed to settle in the region of Goshen, for all shepherds are detestable to the Egyptians.”

47 Joseph went and told Pharaoh, “My father and brothers, with their flocks and herds and everything they own, have come from the land of Canaan and are now in Goshen.” He chose five of his brothers and presented them before Pharaoh.
3 Pharaoh asked the brothers, “What is your occupation?”

“Your servants are shepherds,” they replied to Pharaoh, “just as our fathers were.” 4 They also said to him, “We have come to live here for a while, because the famine is severe in Canaan and your servants’ flocks have no pasture. So now, please let your servants settle in Goshen.”

5 Pharaoh said to Joseph, “Your father and your brothers have come to you, and the land of Egypt is before you; settle your father and your brothers in the best part of the land. Let them live in Goshen. And if you know of any among them with special ability, put them in charge of my own livestock.”

7 Then Joseph brought his father Jacob in and presented him before Pharaoh. After Jacob blessed Pharaoh, 8 Pharaoh asked him, “How old are you?”

And Jacob said to Pharaoh, “The years of my pilgrimage are a hundred and thirty.” My years have been few and difficult, and they do not equal the years of the pilgrimage of my fathers. 10 Then Jacob blessed Pharaoh and went out from his presence.

11 So Joseph settled his father and his brothers in Egypt and gave them property in the best part of the land, the district of Rameses, as Pharaoh directed. 12 Joseph also provided his father and his brothers and all his father’s household with food, according to the number of their children.

Joseph and the Famine

13 There was no food, however, in the whole region because the famine was severe; both Egypt and Canaan wasted away because of the famine. 14 Joseph collected all the money that was to be found in Egypt and Canaan in payment for the grain they were buying, and he brought it to Pharaoh’s palace.

15 When the money of the people of Egypt and Canaan was gone, all Egypt came to Joseph and said, “Give us food. Why should we die before your eyes? Our money is all gone.”

16 Then bring your livestock,” said Joseph. “I will sell you food in exchange for your livestock, since your money is gone.” 17 So they brought their livestock to Joseph, and he gave them food in exchange for their horses, their sheep and goats, their cattle and donkeys. And he brought them through that year with food in exchange for all their livestock.

18 When that year was over, they came to him the following year and said, “We cannot hide from our lord the fact that since our money is gone and our livestock belongs to you, there is nothing left for our lord except our bodies and our land. Why should we perish before your eyes — we and our land as well? Buy us and our land in exchange for food, and we with our land will be in bondage to Pharaoh. Give us seed so that we may live and not die, and that the land may not become desolate.”

20 So Joseph bought all the land in Egypt for Pharaoh. The Egyptians, one and all, sold their fields, because the famine was too severe for them. The land became Pharaoh’s. 21 And Joseph reduced the people to servitude, from one end of Egypt to the other. 22 However, he did not buy the land of the priests, because they received a regular allotment from Pharaoh and had food enough from the allotment Pharaoh gave them. That is why they did not sell their land.

23 Joseph said to the people, “Now that I have bought you and your land today for Pharaoh, here is seed for you so you can plant the ground. 24 But when the crop comes in, give a fifth of it to Pharaoh. The other four-fifths you may keep as seed for the fields and
as food for yourselves and your households and your children."

25 "You have saved our lives," they said. "May we find favor in the eyes of our lord; we will be in bondage to Pharaoh."

26 So Joseph established it as a law concerning land in Egypt — still in force today — that a fifth of the produce belongs to Pharaoh. It was only the land of the priests that did not become Pharaoh’s. h

27 Now the Israelites settled in Egypt in the region of Goshen. They acquired property there and were fruitful and increased greatly in number. i

28 Jacob lived in Egypt seventeen years, and the years of his life were a hundred and forty-seven. 29 When the time drew near for Israel to die, k he called for his son Joseph and said to him, "If I have found favor in your eyes, put your hand under my thigh l and promise that you will show me kindness and faithfulness. m Do not bury me in Egypt, n but when I rest with my fathers, carry me out of Egypt and bury me where they are buried." o

"I will do as you say," he said.

31 "Swear to me," o he said. Then Joseph swore to him, p and Israel worshiped as he leaned on the top of his staff. aq

Manasseh and Ephraim

48 Some time later Joseph was told, "Your father is ill." So he took his two sons Manasseh and Ephraim along with him. 2 When Jacob was told, "Your son Joseph has come to you," Israel rallied his strength and sat up on the bed.

3 Jacob said to Joseph, "God Almighty appeared to me at Luz in the land of Canaan, and there he blessed me t and said to me, 'I am going to make you fruitful and increase your numbers. u I will make you a community of peoples, and I will give this land as an everlasting possession to your descendants after you.'

5 "Now then, your two sons born to you in Egypt w before I came to you here will be reckoned as mine; Ephraim and Manasseh will be mine, w just as Reuben and Simeon are mine. x Any children born to you after them will be yours; in the territory they inherit they will be reckoned under the names of their brothers. y As I was returning from Paddan, z to my sorrow Rachel died in the land of Canaan while we were still on the way, a little distance from Ephrath. So I buried her there beside the road to Ephrath" (that is, Bethlehem). x

8 When Israel saw the sons of Joseph, he asked, "Who are these?"

9 "They are the sons God has given me here," v Joseph said to his father.

Then Israel said, "Bring them to me so I may bless them."

10 Now Israel’s eyes were failing because of old age, and he could hardly see. a So Joseph brought his sons close to him, and his father kissed them b and embraced them.

11 Israel said to Joseph, "I never expected to see your face again, and now God has allowed me to see your children too." c

12 Then Joseph removed them from Israel’s knees and bowed down with his face to the ground. 13 And Joseph took both of them, Ephraim on his right toward Israel’s left hand and Manasseh on his left toward Israel’s right hand, d and brought them close to him. 14 But Israel reached out his right hand and put it on Ephraim’s head, though he was the younger, and crossing his arms, he put his left hand on Manasseh’s head, even though Manasseh was the firstborn. e

15 Then he blessed f Joseph and said,

"May the God before whom my fathers Abraham and Isaac walked faithfully,
Jacob Blesses His Sons

49: Then Jacob called for his sons and said: “Gather around so I can tell you what will happen to you in days to come.”

49:1-28 Ref — Dt 33:1-29

49:1-2  “Assemble and listen, sons of Jacob; listen to your father Israel.”

49:3-4 “Reuben, you are my firstborn; my might, the first sign of my strength, excelling in honor, excelling in power.

49:5-6 “Simeon and Levi are brothers — their swords are weapons of violence.

49:7-8 “Let me not enter their council, nor the ruler’s staff from between my brothers; I will scatter them in Jacob and disperse them in Israel.

49:9-10 “Judah, your brothers will praise you; your hand will be on the neck of your enemies; your father’s sons will bow down to you.

49:11-12 He will tether his donkey to a vine, his colt to the choicest branch;
he will wash his garments in wine, his robes in the blood of grapes. His eyes will be darker than wine, his teeth whiter than milk.

13 “Zebulun will live by the seashore and become a haven for ships; his border will extend toward Sidon.

14 “Issachar is a rawboned donkey lying down among the sheep pens. When he sees how good is his resting place and how pleasant is his land, he will bend his shoulder to the burden and submit to forced labor.

16 “Dan will provide justice for his people as one of the tribes of Israel.

17 Dan will be a snake by the roadside, a viper along the path, that bites the horse’s heels so that its rider tumbles backward.

18 “I look for your deliverance, LORD.

19 “Gad will be attacked by a band of raiders, but he will attack them at their heels.

20 “Asher’s food will be rich; he will provide delicacies fit for a king.

21 “Naphtali is a doe set free that bears beautiful fawns.

22 “Joseph is a fruitful vine, a fruitful vine near a spring, whose branches climb over a wall.

23 With bitterness archers attacked him; they shot at him with hostility.

But his bow remained steady, his strong arms stayed limber, because of the hand of the Mighty One of Jacob, because of the Shepherd, the Rock of Israel,

25 because of your father’s God, who helps you, because of the Almighty, who blesses you with blessings of the skies above, blessings of the deep springs below, blessings of the breast and womb.

Your father’s blessings are greater than the blessings of the ancient mountains, than the bounty of the age-old hills.

Let all these rest on the head of Joseph, on the brow of the prince among his brothers.

27 “Benjamin is a ravenous wolf; in the morning he devours the prey, in the evening he divides the plunder.”

28 All these are the twelve tribes of Israel, and this is what their father said to them when he blessed them, giving each the blessing appropriate to him.

The Death of Jacob

29 Then he gave them these instructions: “I am about to be gathered to my people. Bury me with my fathers in the cave in the field of Ephron the Hittite, near Mamre in Canaan, which Abraham bought along with the field as a burial place from Ephron the Hittite. There Abraham and his wife Sarah were buried, there Isaac and his wife Rebekah were buried, and there I was buried. I will not go down into the grave of my fathers. You will bury me there, for I have bought a burial place for myself in the field of Ephron the Hittite.”

12 Or will be dull from wine, / his teeth white from milk. 14 Or strong 14 Or the campfires; or the saddlebags 16 Dan here means he provides justice. 19 Gad sounds like the Hebrew for attack and also for band of raiders. 21 Or free; / he utters beautiful words 22 Or Joseph is a wild colt, / a wild colt near a spring, / a wild donkey on a terraced hill. 23 Or archers will attack . . . will shoot . . . will remain . . . will stay 24 Hebrew Shaddai 26 Or of my progenitors, / as great as
50 Joseph threw himself on his father and wept over him and kissed him. Then Joseph directed the physicians in his service to embalm his father Israel. So the physicians embalmed him, taking a full forty days, for that was the time required for embalming. And the Egyptians mourned for him seventy days. 

4When the days of mourning had passed, Joseph said to Pharaoh’s court, “If I have found favor in your eyes, pay us back for all the wrongs we did to him?” So they sent word to Joseph, saying, “Your father left these instructions before he died: m Now let me go up and bury my father, then I will return.”

6Pharaoh said, “Go up and bury your father, as he made you swear to do.”

7So Joseph went up to bury his father. All Pharaoh’s officials accompanied him—the dignitaries of his court and all the dignitaries of Egypt—besides all the members of Joseph’s household and his brothers and those belonging to his father’s household. Only their children and their flocks and herds were left in Goshen. Chariots and horsemen also went up with him. It was a very large company.

8When they reached the threshing floor of Atad, near the Jordan, they lamented loudly and bitterly; n and there Joseph observed a seven-day period of mourning for his father. When the Canaanites who lived there saw the mourning at the threshing floor of Atad, they said, “The Egyptians are holding a solemn ceremony of mourning.” That is why that place near the Jordan is called Abel Mizraim.

9The field and the cave in it were bought from the Hittites. a

10So Jacob’s sons did as he had commanded them: They carried him to the land of Canaan and buried him in the cave in the field of Machpelah, near Mamre, which Abraham had bought along with the field as a burial place from Ephron the Hittite. After burying his father, Joseph returned to Egypt, together with his brothers and all the others who had gone with him to bury his father.

Joseph Reassures His Brothers

15When Joseph’s brothers saw that their father was dead, they said, “What if Joseph holds a grudge against us and pays us back for all the wrongs we did to him?” a

16So they said to Joseph, “Your father left these instructions before he died: ‘This is what you are to say to Joseph: I ask you to forgive your brothers the sins and the wrongs they committed in treating you so badly.’ Now please forgive the sins of the servants of the God of your father.” When their message came to him, Joseph wept.

18His brothers then came and threw themselves down before him. “We are your slaves,” they said.

19But Joseph said to them, “Don’t be afraid. Am I in the place of God? 20You intended to harm me, but God intended it for good, to accomplish what is now being done, the saving of many lives.x 21So then, don’t be afraid. I will provide for you and your children.” And he reassured them and spoke kindly to them.

The Death of Joseph

22Joseph stayed in Egypt, along with all his father’s family. He lived a hundred and ten years 23 and saw the third generation of Ephraim’s children. Also the children of Makir, son of Manasseh were placed at birth on Joseph’s knees. d
“I am about to die. c But God will surely come to your aid d and take you up out of this land to the land e he promised on oath to Abraham, Isaac and Jacob. f

25 And Joseph made the Israelites swear an oath and said, “God will surely come to your aid, and then you must carry my bones up from this place.” g

26 So Joseph died at the age of a hundred and ten. And after they embalmed him, h he was placed in a coffin in Egypt.
# TABLE OF WEIGHTS AND MEASURES

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Biblical Unit</th>
<th>Approximate American Equivalent</th>
<th>Approximate Metric Equivalent</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td><strong>Weights</strong></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>talent (60 minas)</td>
<td>75 pounds</td>
<td>34 kilograms</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>mina (50 shekels)</td>
<td>1 ¼ pounds</td>
<td>560 grams</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>shekel (2 bekas)</td>
<td>½ ounce</td>
<td>11.5 grams</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>pim (⅓ shekel)</td>
<td>¼ ounce</td>
<td>7.8 grams</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>beka (10 gerahs)</td>
<td>⅕ ounce</td>
<td>5.7 grams</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>gerah</td>
<td>⅕₀₀ ounce</td>
<td>0.6 gram</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>daric</td>
<td>⅕₃ ounce</td>
<td>8.4 grams</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td><strong>Length</strong></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>cubit</td>
<td>18 inches</td>
<td>45 centimeters</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>span</td>
<td>9 inches</td>
<td>23 centimeters</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>handbreadth</td>
<td>3 inches</td>
<td>7.5 centimeters</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>stadion (pl. stadia)</td>
<td>600 feet</td>
<td>183 meters</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td><strong>Capacity</strong></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td><em>Dry Measure</em></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>cor [homer] (10 ephahs)</td>
<td>6 bushels</td>
<td>220 liters</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>lethek (5 ephahs)</td>
<td>3 bushels</td>
<td>110 liters</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>ephah (10 omers)</td>
<td>⅓ bushel</td>
<td>22 liters</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>seah (⅓ ephah)</td>
<td>7 quarts</td>
<td>7.5 liters</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>omer (⅞ ephah)</td>
<td>2 quarts</td>
<td>2 liters</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>cab (⅞₁₀ ephah)</td>
<td>1 quart</td>
<td>1 liter</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td><em>Liquid Measure</em></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>bath (1 ephah)</td>
<td>6 gallons</td>
<td>22 liters</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>hin (⅔ bath)</td>
<td>1 gallon</td>
<td>3.8 liters</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>log (⅓₂ bath)</td>
<td>⅓ quart</td>
<td>0.3 liter</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

The figures of the table are calculated on the basis of a shekel equaling 11.5 grams, a cubit equaling 18 inches and an ephah equaling 22 liters. The quart referred to is either a dry quart (slightly larger than a liter) or a liquid quart (slightly smaller than a liter), whichever is applicable. The ton referred to in the footnotes is the American ton of 2,000 pounds. These weights are calculated relative to the particular commodity involved. Accordingly, the same measure of capacity in the text may be converted into different weights in the footnotes.

This table is based upon the best available information, but it is not intended to be mathematically precise; like the measurement equivalents in the footnotes, it merely gives approximate amounts and distances. Weights and measures differed somewhat at various times and places in the ancient world. There is uncertainty particularly about the ephah and the bath; further discoveries may shed more light on these units of capacity.
Have you ever arrived at the end of an exhausting week at work and asked yourself what it was all for? Have you ever neglected your relationships so you could accomplish more at work? Have you ever let the pressure and pace of life drown out the quiet longings of your soul? Or have you ever been to church with these questions weighing on your mind only to leave feeling guilty and confused, with no answers in sight? If so, you’re not alone.

Dorothy Sayers famously said, “How can anyone remain interested in a religion which seems to have no concern for nine-tenths of his life?”¹ Many of us sense a disconnect between the good news we hear at church and what we do all week. Sure, we hear that our sins are forgiven, and that we anticipate life with God in eternity. But what does the gospel have to do with God in the workplace? How does the atonement impact office culture? How does regeneration impact the way we think about revenue? What does it mean to be great in the kingdom by becoming a servant, yet bear the responsibility of leading a firm?

I felt this tension early in my faith journey. I became a Christian at a Pentecostal revival when I was 16. I sensed that God was doing something powerful and unique at the time. The church services were electric. I felt God’s presence so tangibly that I did not want to leave. I was transformed by the gospel and I wanted the whole world to know.

My world, however, did not reciprocate. I had recently dropped out of high school to work as a butcher in a meat factory, and no matter how hard I tried, I couldn’t get any of the other butchers to come to church. After months of pleading with them, I became deeply discouraged. What was my value in the world if I wasn’t winning souls? Why did I even bother having a job if I couldn’t recruit people to come to church? This kick-started my theological journey to try to understand how the gospel and work connect with each other.

THE GOSPEL’S PERVERSIVE INFLUENCE

In Colossians, Paul says, “God was pleased to have all his fullness dwell in [Christ], and through him to reconcile to himself all things, whether things on earth or things in heaven, by making peace through his blood, shed on the cross.” (1:19–20). What God was doing in Christ impacts, and draws into redemption, every aspect of human life. Paul Marshall says,

The gospel is for all things, and he makes a threefold statement about the Lordship of Christ. Everything was made by and for Jesus Christ. Everything holds together in Jesus Christ. Everything will be reconciled by Jesus Christ. The “everything” that is reconciled is the same everything that was made. The scope of redemption is the same as the scope of creation. The Creator and Redeemer are one and the same. Things in heaven, things in earth, things visible and invisible, dominions, and authorities will be reconciled by the cross of Jesus Christ.²

---

¹ Dorothy Sayers, Creed or Chaos? (Manchester: Sophia Institute Press, 1974), 106.
The apostle Paul says elsewhere that the reason for Christ’s ascension was “to fill the whole universe” (Eph 4:10). Christ not only saves us from sin; he also saves us for his mission of renewal and redemption, so that the universe may be filled with the beauty of Christ. This means that our jobs are key to the way we live out the gospel and advance God’s kingdom.

The gospel informs our work by giving us a context for the work we do. Scottish philosopher Alasdair MacIntyre said, “I can only answer the question ‘What am I to do?’ if I can answer the prior question ‘Of what story or stories do I find myself a part?’” In order to understand how the gospel relates to our work, we need a broad theological base that is grounded in Scripture. Much of evangelical theology starts with sin and ends with salvation. We start with Genesis 3 and end with Revelation 20. This is like entering a movie 15 minutes late and leaving 15 minutes early. As a result, we struggle and strain to make sense of what is happening in the overall story. Knowing that we were created in the image of God and given dominion over the earth helps us see work as central to what it means to be human. As Steve Garber has said, “Vocation is integral, not incidental, to the missio dei.”

The gospel calls us not to retreat from the world into the church, but to embody the values of God’s kingdom wherever we are, especially in the workplace.

**RELIEF FROM THE “WINNER’S SCRIPT”**

The gospel also gives us a new, secure identity in Christ. So much of what happens in the workplace is driven by competitiveness and people trying to prove their worth. Locating our identity in our performance can get exhausting. People are only as secure as their current results. People living in this way are following what Richard Rohr calls the “winners script.” The winner’s script demands that we raise ourselves up out of nothing and make ourselves into something to which the world aspires and that it envies. Thus, life becomes as a series of straining for vocational accomplishments that will move us toward us acceptance and worth in the eyes of those around us.

The winner’s script has at times crept into the church. We often desire to win the esteem and praise of others. But in so doing, we construct fragile identities for ourselves and tire out our souls. The gospel liberates us from the winner’s script. We do not have to build our own identity in our work. Rather, our work stems from our identity in Christ.

Think about the order of the life of Jesus. If our modern society wrote the gospel, it would order it as follows: Christ would live his life of compassion and love. He would confront the Pharisees, teach his disciples, cast out demons, heal the sick and then go to the cross. After his victory, he would rise in glory and restore his disciples. And right at the moment of his ascension, the heavens would open and the Father would say, “This is my son, whom I love. With him I am well pleased.” In other words, God’s approval would come as a result of Jesus’ work.

But that is not the gospel. Before Jesus does any of these things, the Father announces his love for him. Jesus is given his baptismal identity before he begins his ministry, not after he accomplishes it. And in a similar way, in Christ God accepts us as his children, not on the basis of our works but on the basis of Christ’s redeeming work on our behalf.

In Christ, every spiritual blessing is ours. We therefore can be freed from the impulse to prove or impress others, because we know that God has already accepted us. So instead of using our jobs to prove our worth, we can use our jobs to love, serve and bless others. Our identity does not stem from the size of our portfolio, the impressiveness of our job description or the quality of our peer

---

6 See Richard Rohr, Falling Upward: A Spirituality for the Two Halves of Life (Sanctuary, 2001).
reviews. And our identity is not destroyed by the loss of a job, the decline of our accounts or the lack of recognition. Knowing we are secure lets us work for God’s glory and serve others.

SEEKING GOD’S GLORY IN OUR WORK
The gospel reveals God’s glory. Not only do we come to know God’s glory—how awesome he is—by being in relationship with him, we are also called to seek God’s glory—his honor—in everything we do. Paul urges, “So whether you eat or drink or whatever you do, do it all for the glory of God” (1Co 10:31). But how do we approach this challenge? Are some areas of life more God-glorifying than others? Are some things sacred while others are secular?

The Jewish Rabbis used to teach that the key to glorifying God in the world was through the power of holy intent. This practice was called kavanah. Abraham Heschel says, “Kavanah is direction to God and requires the involvement and redirection of the whole person. It is the act of bringing together the scattered forces of the self; it means the participation of heart and soul, not only of will and mind.”

One of the meanings of the word glory is “weight or significance.” When we take our ordinary, everyday work and with holy intent seek to make it an act of worship before God, the mundane is transformed into something weighty and sacred. We infuse the ordinary stuff of life with holy intent and so make even the most trivial tasks artifacts and objects of glory.

Martin Buber articulates this vision well. He quotes a Hasidic anecdote and points out the interrelation between direction and redemption:

Enoch was a cobbler, and with every stitch of his awl that drew together the top and bottom of the leather, he joined God and the Shekinah. . . . Man exerts influence on the eternal, and this is not done by any special works, but by the intention with which he does all his works. This is the teaching of the hallowing of the everyday. The issue is not to attain to a new type of acting which, owing to its object, would be sacred or mystical; the issue is to do the one appointed task, the common, obvious tasks of daily life, according to their truth and according to their meaning.

One of the congregants in my church used to work as a barista in a coffee shop. For him, this was a temporary job that caused him to wrestle to find meaning and joy in his work. But the concept of redeeming the ordinary through holy intent deeply inspired him. One day, I got a coffee from him, and instead of my name written on the cup, the word kavanah was written. He smiled and told me, “When I place the cup on the lid, I consciously do it as an act of worship and blessing, and it has transformed what I do here.” Imagine if Christians had this vision of glory in every part of life. Buildings would be designed with holy intent, food would be cooked with holy intent, children would be taught with holy intent and court cases would be tried with holy intent. And slowly but surely, in every sphere of our world, life would take on a new weight and significance as the stuff of life became the stuff of glory.

REDEEMING WORK
The gospel is also about redemption. Despite our rebellion against him, God has redeemed and restored us. He has liberated us from sin and called us his children. Not only that, but he has also redeployed us into the world as his laborers, who work with him to usher in the redemption of all things.

First, he redeems our hearts. He gives us new life and reorients our desires so that we now seek to

---

8 Quoted in Frost and Hirsch, The Shaping of Things to Come, 130.
please him and advance the spread of his kingdom. This isn’t simply a personal matter. God wants the change we experience inwardly to flow out to the world around us. As Henry Van Til has said, culture is religion externalized.\(^9\) This means that God is not just about the redemption of our hearts alone, but also the entire world—and he wants to use us in his plan to do that.

James K. A. Smith put it well: “Redemption includes the reorientation of our culture-making capacities.”\(^{10}\) Our world and culture is in desperate need of redemption. It is broken. What we do in our work can have a significant impact not only on those we work with but also in the world. We can contribute to either renewal or decline. In our work, we can participate in God’s plan to move the world toward its intended end.

What would the world look like if Wall Street had people working according to Biblical stewardship rather than greed? If the people in fashion worked to reveal true beauty rather than surface-level exploitation? If food was processed for health rather than convenience? If educators prepared students for real-life flourishing rather than tests?

I remember when I first started to grasp the link between the gospel and my work. Instead of seeing the butcher shop as an outgrowth of the curse, plagued by thorns and labored in sweat, I began to see it as a place of opportunity. I began to see it as a place for formation, contribution and worship. I would go into work early, and get down on my knees and silently hold my knives up to God. With holy intent, I would ask him to use them for his glory, and my life for his kingdom, so my small part of the world could move toward redemption. And over the course of time, by God’s grace, it did. I can’t help but imagine how things would change in the world if this became a common practice. What if seamstresses and restaurant servers, analysts and artists, mechanics and moms all saw their work as sacred, and held it to God with holy intent, and did things for his glory so that the mundane became miraculous because it all played a part in the story of redemption?

So at the end of your next work week, rather than questions, may you find hope. And as you find your place in the story of God, serve from a secure identity, work with holy intent and seek redemption where you are. May you savor the joy of joining with God as he is making all things new.

---


The Imitation of Christ, written by Thomas à Kempis in the fifteenth century, is a spiritual classic. I have read it several times, always to my spiritual profit.

There is one point in the book, however, where the writer makes me uneasy. In arguing that an intellectual understanding of some basic Christian teaching does you no good unless that teaching is an integral part of your personal relationship with God, Kempis uses the doctrine of the Trinity to bring home his point. “What use is it to you to argue loftily about the Trinity,” he says, “if by your lack of humility you are displeasing to the Trinity? For lofty words make no man holy or just; but a life of virtue endears a man to God.”

It’s not that I disagree with the basic point he is making. Kempis is certainly right to impress upon us the need to live in ways that please the triune God. This means that simply being able to say some true things about the Trinity doesn’t do us any spiritual good unless we also have a heartfelt personal relationship with God.

My uneasiness has to do with the either/or manner in which he argues his case. It is dangerous, I think, to pit personal spirituality over against doctrinal formulation. My own view is that a vital relationship with the triune God has to be grounded in a solid understanding of the doctrine of the Trinity. Not that every lover of the Trinity must be skilled in theological argumentation. But a healthy Christian community will want to be sure that our spiritual devotion is supported by sound thinking.

Actually, it is significant that Kempis uses the Christian’s relationship to the Trinity as his example in making his point. The Bible itself never uses the word Trinity. Theologians invented the term to capture the sense of the Bible’s portrayal of the God who calls us to a life of obedience. If you see the Bible as nothing more than a book of disconnected sayings or laws, you might get the impression that there are three different gods: one who created the world, one who came into the world to die on the cross and rise to life again, and one who arrived later as a spirit who empowers believers to do important spiritual and religious things.

But, as the great theologians of the church throughout the ages have argued, the Bible does not present us with three different gods, each doing his own thing. Nor does the Bible allow us, on the other extreme, to conclude that “Father,” “Son” and “Holy Spirit” are simply three different names for one divine person. We have not understood the overall message of the Scripture, Christian theologians tell us, unless we see that there is one God in three Persons—a blessed Trinity to whom we direct our worship and service.

THE IMPORTANCE OF DOCTRINES
Doctrines are important. While they are not more important than our lives of spiritual devotion, they play a vital role in helping us understand not just who we are, but also what truths are necessary to guide us in living lives that please the Lord.
A doctrine is fundamentally a *teaching*. It is often said that the Bible is not a textbook of do-
ctrines, and that is correct. The Bible contains many writings that are not in themselves teachings: prayers, dreams and visions; accounts of battles and journeys; letters; proverbs; poems and hymns; and genealogies.

However, it is important for us to ask what the Bible intends to *teach* us in its various modes of expression. Isaiah 11:12, for example, says that the earth has four quarters, or corners. It may *say* that, but it does not intend to *teach* that. The real point of that verse is not to tell us something important about the shape of the earth, but rather that God will gather together again his people who have been scattered in many different nations after a period of exile. The *teaching* here is that God is faithful to his promises.

There have been many arguments about doctrine throughout church history. Christians have not always treated each other with love, grace and respect while engaging in theological arguments. The history of our doctrinal disputes has been characterized by much mean-spiritedness—and even worse, the differences sometimes have led to actual wars and persecutions. But the arguments have often been about extremely important matters.

Take, for example, the questions about Christ’s divinity that led up to the famous Council of Nicea in 325, where the great Nicene Creed was formulated, and which continues to be a key doctrinal reference point for traditional Christianity. Some Christian thinkers had begun to teach that Christ was not fully God. He was, to be sure, a savior who came from heaven to accomplish our redemption. But he was not fully divine like the Father. He was more like a highly exalted angel—much greater than a human being but not quite “up there” with the Father.

Gifted theologians saw this as a serious deviation from Biblical teaching, and church leaders gathered at Nicea to settle the dispute. In reflecting on the many things the Bible actually says about Jesus, they decided that it was necessary, if Jesus was able to accomplish what the New Testament says he accomplished, that Jesus be—and this is the great passage on the subject from the Nicene Creed—“God from God, Light from Light, True God from True God, begotten, not made, of one Being with the Father.”

In one sense, of course, that wonderful formulation went “beyond” the actual words of the Bible. And it *had* to do so, because it was giving authoritative guidance in a situation where people had gotten into a lengthy argument about how to put together—into one coherent understanding—the core meaning of a variety of verses in the Bible that talk about the person and work of Jesus. Beyond all the many things the Bible *says* about Jesus, Nicea tells us what the Bible *teaches*.

**DOCTRINE AND OUR WORK**

This Bible on faith and work highlights for us many doctrinal emphases and themes that are im-
portant for understanding God’s call to us to serve the goals of his kingdom in our daily lives. The kinds of doctrinal emphases spelled out in these pages have meant much to me in my own journey of discipleship.

In the kind of evangelicalism in which I was raised, when preachers and Bible teachers used the word *world*, they typically were referring to something dangerous. We were warned against “world-
liness.” Out there—beyond the walls of the church—there were forces at work in “the world” that were bent on destroying our faith.

And the folks who spoke in this way could easily find Bible verses to support their point. The apostle John told the early Christians that they ought “not love the world or anything in the world” (1Jn 2:15). Jesus himself is recorded as warning his disciples that since they “do not belong to the world” they should not be surprised if “the world hates you” (Jn 15:19). And in one of the most poignant asides in his epistles, Paul tells us that his friend Demas had “deserted me and has gone to
The bad sense of “world” nagged at me as I grew older because there were so many things in the larger culture, beyond the walls of churches, that I became convinced God cared about: novels written by non-Christians, Hollywood films, chamber orchestras, race relations, the environment. Was all of that the stuff of “the world” that God wanted me to avoid?

One of my most important discoveries on this subject was that in John 3:16–17, verses that I knew well as an evangelical, the word for world in the Greek was kosmos, which referred to the created order. God loved the original created order so much that he sent his only Son into that creation to save sinners. But there was more: verse 17 tells us that Jesus came into the cosmos—creation—not to condemn the cosmos, but that the cosmos might be saved through him.

That opened up a whole new “world” for me—the world, the original creation, that God still loved so much that he sent Jesus into that world to reclaim it. And that idea fit nicely with the opening verses of the Bible. In Genesis 1, God creates many things before he gets around to creating human beings. And each time he creates something, he sees that it is good. Light—“That’s good!” Rivers and creeks—“That’s good!” Birds and insects—“That’s good!” Chipmunks and otters—“That’s good!”

And then, when the Lord God gets around to creating human beings, his first instructions to the man and the woman are that they take care of all of those good things on his behalf. Human beings are given the assignment in the creation to be caretakers of all the wonderful things that the Lord God has made (see Ge 1:26–28).

Of course, sin messes that up in significant ways. But when God calls Israel to be his special people, he gives them detailed instructions about how to farm, how to deal with finances, how to engage in family life, how to do politics, music and art. God still cares about how human beings take care of the world that he originally made and declared “good.”

To be sure, those negative teachings in my youth about “the world” still make good sense. We are to avoid “the world,” in the sense of the sinful rebellious way of living in God’s creation. But we ought also to do our part to honor God’s continuing purposes for the good creation that Jesus came to reclaim.

Thinking about what the Bible teaches us about “the world” means not just focusing on a particular verse in which world appears. It means getting the overall sense of what the Bible says on the subject. God’s original purposes for creation have become corrupted and distorted as a result of our sinful rebellion. To love that disordered “world” is to be attached to those things that are, from the perspective of Christ’s kingdom, transitory and illusionary—it is to adopt the values of the sinful social order.

But God himself is still a lover of the world as he originally fashioned it—a place of goodness and beauty. So he now sends us into the sinful order, not to conform to it, but to confront its rebellion. As Jesus prayed to the Father on behalf of his disciples, “My prayer is not that you take them out of the world but that you protect them from the evil one” (Jn 17:15). God wants us to identify with all that is good in the cosmos, the good creation. The psalmist’s proclamation was not limited to a specific period of time: “The earth is the Lord’s, and everything in it, the world, and all who live in it” (Ps 24:1).
I love the opening words of the Westminster Shorter Catechism in this regard: Our “chief end” as human beings “is to glorify God and to enjoy him forever.” That is rich doctrine—a good capturing of an important teaching of Scripture. We were created to honor God’s creating purposes for the world that he declared to be good. We are to enjoy him—and all that he enjoys. This is the vision—informed by sound doctrines—that should inspire us in relating our faith to our daily work.
The Bible is far more than a collection of stories. That may seem obvious, but it is an important aspect for us to grasp, and it is often overlooked. Weaving together what can seem like a collection of random stories, teachings, propositions and other kinds of literature in an overarching narrative is critical to understanding God’s revelation of himself in Scripture, as well as our own sense of calling. And the story of God is the thread that ties all of our stories together.

Sitting cross-legged on a braided rug in Sunday school, I was captivated by the story—and stories—of Scripture. Whether on a flannelgraph, through a song or simply by the telling of Mr. Yarborough, these stories enthralled me. And I saw the truths and values conveyed in them being lived out in the lives of the seventy-some folks who made up Pioneer Baptist Church. Over time, I began to understand that the stories of Adam and Eve, Abraham and Sarah, Moses and Miriam, Deborah, Samuel, David and so many others all anticipated Jesus. They were the prequel, as it were.

After Adam and Eve disobeyed God and subjected our world to sin and death, God promised a redeemer (see Ge 3:15). With Abraham, God began to form a nation of people. He gave Abraham the land of Canaan, the eventual promised land and place where the Savior of the world would be born.

When I went to seminary, I was in danger of thinking that a more doctrinal or systematic framework was what I needed to truly understand Scripture. While I certainly needed those, I quickly realized that those perspectives served to help me understand the story of Scripture. Taken all together, the accounts, teachings, propositions and other forms of literature communicate a grand narrative that many are surprised exists in the Bible.

While in seminary, I found it interesting that three-point and expositional sermons were the model that my instructors prescribed for us. But when I read and re-read the Gospels, I realized that the literary tool of story was Jesus’ consistent go-to for communicating to his listeners about the kingdom of God.

All of the various forms of literature in the Bible impact us in different ways. But of all of them, story often does more to capture our imagination. It challenges our mind and touches our heart. It forces us to integrate the message of God with our lives.

To be sure, the systematic and doctrinal approach to Scripture study helps us to draw critical elements and principles from the story. But I find it is the overall story of Scripture that connects most deeply with us in our current situations. Stories tend to linger with us longer, and they shape and transform us.

I learned many important truths from my grandmother, but what remains with me most was her story. Similarly, truths about God are important to know and teach. But I feel that truths about God stick with us and impact us most deeply when we encounter stories of how those truths were manifested in history, in our world and in our lives.
GOD’S STORY AND WORK

God’s story starts with the intersection of creativity and work: the creation of all things. And this story sets into motion the human epic. God creates humanity to participate in his story—to work alongside him in cultivating the earth—which is both a gift and a responsibility. It is a way of continuing and developing the story of God that has already begun.

Often when we’re introduced to new characters in this grand story, we learn about their occupation soon after we learn their name. Time and again I’ve heard people say they wish conversations with people they’ve just met didn’t begin with the question “What do you do?” I understand that these sorts of interactions can quickly devolve to subconscious and comparative assessments of “How important are you?” But in fact what we do says a lot about who we are.

Jesus spent 33 years, give or take, on earth to do what he came to do. And he probably spent all but the last three years under his parents’ roof, and much of his adulthood working alongside Joseph as a carpenter. His story means something for our story. In the incarnation, God the Son embraced all of humanity in order to redeem it. If it was fitting for him to embrace ordinary and often mundane human work, then it’s fitting for us, too. He affirmed the goodness of human work.

MY STORY

I started college as a laser-focused pre-med major and kept on that track through my sophomore year. But as a junior, I changed my major to nursing and picked up a minor in speech communications. I was planning to start my seminary education part-time while I worked as a nurse.

After college, I began working as a nurse at a large Catholic hospital 30 minutes from where I lived. Since I was new to the profession, I was watched very closely. I was placed in a three-month apprentice program and was never let out of sight of my mentor. I worked the day shift so they could watch me even more closely. I had classroom experience, but they wanted to ensure I could do real work on real people—and that I didn’t accidentally kill someone.

Toward the end of my three-month program, I knew that I would be placed on either the second or third shift for my permanent position. But that didn’t present a problem for me. My then-boyfriend was still in school, and I wouldn’t see him till Christmas break. My biggest dilemma, however, was asking the director of nursing—who was also a nun, a formidable one who caused the neurosurgeons to scramble and hide when they saw her walking down the hallway—if I could have a two-week extension on the day shift so I could spend time with my long-distance boyfriend in the evenings during his break. I practiced my speech, and it took me several attempts to approach her, but I finally mustered the courage to intercept her and mutter, “Sister Judy, my name is Nancy Berg, and I work on 3East. You don’t know me, but . . .” and then she interrupted me: “I know who you are.”

“Really?” I thought to myself.

She continued, “From the reports I’ve received, I’m guessing we will consider you for a head nurse position in the next year if you continue learning and working like you are.”

I was shocked. And she graciously approved my request. But after all these years, what has stood out to me most is that phrase: “I know who you are.” Every day when I showed up to work as a new and terrified young nurse, learning the ropes from a mentor, the director of nursing was paying attention. That knowledge deeply impacted my work from then on, and to this day it has shaped my work ethic and my own leadership.

Can you imagine a phrase more poised to locate you in God’s own story? “I know who you are.” God knows who we are, individually, and he wants us to participate in his story.

When I feel alone, even at work, I am reminded by the gospel that I am not actually alone. When I need help, I know I can turn to the One who knows me much more completely than I know
myself. Jesus embraced our humanity in its fullness and can relate to us no matter where we are or how we feel. My relationship with God is not based on fear or even obedience. It is based on his knowing me and accepting me.

A MEMORABLE PATIENT

Four years into my nursing career, I took a position in the hospital emergency department. Late one night, I was assigned a new patient just before my shift ended at 11:30 p.m. I was tired and I did not want a new patient. Taking a new patient meant adding 20 to 30 minutes to my shift before I could hand her over to the nurses coming in. Additionally, the attending physician had ordered some preliminary lab work, which meant that I would need to stay until those results came back.

I don’t think I let my unhappiness leak out, but I was fairly cursory in my questions, not paying much attention to my new patient. And it seemed to me that she had the flu. I wondered to myself, “Who comes to the ER for the flu? Just wait until the morning and go see your doctor. This is the ER, where people with serious conditions are treated.”

As I recorded her vital signs, she talked to me even though I wasn’t asking her many questions. She had been feeling weak and achy for a few days. Her husband and her two young children had left the day before for a vacation in Tahoe. She was planning to meet them in a day or two, after she had finished a work project. But tonight she felt “weird.” She couldn’t pinpoint exactly what she was feeling, so she thought she had better get examined before she left for Tahoe. I smiled and nodded at her as she told me this, but inside I thought again, “Why couldn’t you have waited until the morning to see your primary doctor? This doesn’t seem like an emergency to me.”

I quickly recorded her blood pressure, pulse and temperature. I helped her change into a hospital gown, instructed her to give us a urine sample and then left the room. On my way to hand over her chart to the nurse who would be taking over, I tore off the incoming lab reports.

I scanned the numbers and remember feeling like I had walked in to a brick wall. Her blood count results looked like a ridiculous mistake and made no sense at all after my initial read. Then as my brain frantically started registering what I saw, the doctor, who was reading over my shoulder, told me, “Set up a bone marrow biopsy tray.” It appeared that she had Leukemia. In a moment, I was setting up a tray without telling my patient what the procedure was for or what it would be like. I then thought to myself, “Do I know who she is?”

In the next 30 minutes, before the doctor would arrive at her bedside to do the painful biopsy, I pulled up a chair so I was eye level with her. I then asked her some questions—about her family, where she grew up, her job and so on. She was intermittently animated and nervous, but she didn’t have a clue as to what was going on.

Six weeks later she died. She never left the Intensive Care Unit room that we sent her to later that night.

That night, I stayed at her bedside until 3 a.m., after clocking out much earlier, not getting paid for this volunteer time. I stayed with her during the procedure and when the doctor explained the most likely diagnosis. I stayed with her when she asked me to dial a phone number that woke up her husband in Tahoe.

I stayed with her as we wheeled her on a gurney up to the ICU, with an oxygen tube in her nose, an IV in her arm and an electrocardiogram monitor beeping away.

I visited her almost daily. I was with her when her husband burst through the curtain to see her, and later that day I brought their two little girls in, against ICU rules, to see their momma.

I watched her body bloat and turn dusky, and become unresponsive to any treatment. And I watched as her body began to shut down, system by system, and eventually die. I watched two little girls and a crushed husband weep over her.
By the end of those six weeks, I knew who she was.

Our jobs, as Dallas Willard was fond of saying, “are our primary places of discipleship.” Joining God’s creative work in this world means we not only participate in what he is doing, but also are known and shaped by him. My skills and my impatience, my contributions and my pride are all part of my story. And when it intersects with God’s story, I can truly delight in my skills and contributions—for I know he does.

Every one of the 66 books of the Bible tells God’s story of “I know who you are.” He is the Creator of all that is, and he knows us intimately—better than we know ourselves. He sent his Son to be with us and die for us because he knows us and wants us to know him. This truth helps us not only understand God’s Word but also who we are and how our work fits into his grand story.

---

STORYLINE INDEXES

STORYLINE LOCATIONS: NUMERICAL ORDER
1. Genesis 1: Introduction to the Sovereign King
2. Genesis 3: A Cataclysmic Rebellion
5. Exodus 1–3: God Raises a Deliverer: Moses
6. Exodus 12: The Exodus from Egypt
7. Numbers 14: Rebellion and Judgment in the Wilderness
8. Deuteronomy 5: Covenant Renewal in the Next Generation
9. Joshua 1: Conquering the Promised Land
10. Judges 2: The Decline of Israel and the Rise of the Judges
11. 1 Samuel 1–3: The Rise of a New Prophet
12. 1 Samuel 8: Israel Demands a King
13. 2 Samuel 7: Samuel Anoints of King David
14. 1 Kings 3: King Solomon Builds the Temple
15. 1 Kings 11: A Divided and Idolatrous Kingdom
16. 2 Kings 17: Israel’s Rebellion Leads to Exile
18. 2 Kings 18–20: A Righteous King in Judah: Hezekiah
19. Jeremiah 1: Judah’s Prophet of Judgment and Hope: Jeremiah
20. 2 Kings 25: Judah Is Taken into Exile
22. Nehemiah 9: Covenant Renewal and the Restoration of Jerusalem
23. Malachi 3: Words of Hope before Silence
24. John 1: The Word Becomes Human
25. Mark 1: Jesus Begins His Public Ministry
26. Matthew 5: Jesus: True Teacher of the Law
27. Matthew 27: Jesus’ Suffering and Death
30. Acts 15: Controversy and the First Church Council
31. Revelation 21: The Return of the King

STORYLINE LOCATIONS: CANONICAL ORDER
Genesis 1: Introduction to the Sovereign King
Genesis 3: A Cataclysmic Rebellion
Genesis 6: Judgment and Mercy: Noah
Genesis 12: The Power of Faith
Exodus 1–3: God Raises a Deliverer: Moses
Exodus 12: The Exodus from Egypt
Numbers 14: Rebellion and Judgment in the Wilderness
Deuteronomy 5: Covenant Renewal in the Next Generation
Joshua 1: Conquering the Promised Land
Judges 2: The Decline of Israel and the Rise of the Judges
1 Samuel 1–3: The Rise of a New Prophet
1 Samuel 8: Israel Demands a King
2 Samuel 7: Samuel Anoints of King David
1 Kings 3: King Solomon Builds the Temple
1 Kings 11: A Divided and Idolatrous Kingdom
2 Kings 17: Israel's Rebellion Leads to Exile
2 Kings 18–20: A Righteous King in Judah: Hezekiah
2 Kings 25: Judah Is Taken into Exile
Nehemiah 9: Covenant Renewal and the Restoration of Jerusalem
Jeremiah 31: Judah's Prophet of Judgment and Hope: Jeremiah
Ezekiel 37: Hope in Exile: Ezekiel
Hosea 11: The Prophetic Voice of the North: Hosea
Malachi 3: Words of Hope before Silence
Matthew 5: Jesus: True Teacher of the Law
Matthew 27: Jesus' Suffering and Death
Mark 1: Jesus Begins His Public Ministry
Luke 24: Christ's Resurrection and Ascension
John 1: The Word Becomes Human
Acts 15: Controversy and the First Church Council
Revelation 21: The Return of the King

STORYLINE LOCATIONS: ALPHABETICAL ORDER

Cataclysmic Rebellion, A: Genesis 3
Christ's Resurrection and Ascension: Luke 24
Conquering the Promised Land: Joshua 1
Controversy and the First Church Council: Acts 15
Covenant Renewal and the Restoration of Jerusalem: Nehemiah 9
Covenant Renewal in the Next Generation: Deuteronomy 5
Decline of Israel and the Rise of the Judges, The: Judges 2
Divided and Idolatrous Kingdom, A: 1 Kings 11
Exodus from Egypt, The: Exodus 12
God Raises a Deliverer: Moses: Exodus 1–3
Hope in Exile: Ezekiel: Ezekiel 37
Introduction to the Sovereign King: Genesis 1
Israel Demands a King: 1 Samuel 8
Israel's Rebellion Leads to Exile: 2 Kings 17
Jesus Begins His Public Ministry: Mark 1
STORYLINE INDEXES

Jesus’ Suffering and Death: Matthew 27
Jesus: True Teacher of the Law: Matthew 5
Judah Is Taken into Exile: 2 Kings 25
Judah’s Prophet of Judgment and Hope: Jeremiah: Jeremiah 31
Judgment and Mercy: Noah: Genesis 6
King Solomon Builds the Temple: 1 Kings 3
Power of Faith, The: Genesis 12
Prophetic Voice of the North: Hosea, The: Hosea 11
Rebellion and Judgment in the Wilderness: Numbers 14
Return of the King, The: Revelation 21
Righteous King in Judah: Hezekiah, A: 2 Kings 18–20
Rise of a New Prophet, The: 1 Samuel 1–3
Samuel Anoints King David: 2 Samuel 7
Word Becomes Human, The: John 1
Words of Hope before Silence: Malachi 3
CORE DOCTRINES

CORE DOCTRINES: CANONICAL ORDER

Genesis 1:1: God—Creator
Genesis 1:28: Humanity—Cultural Mandate
Genesis 3:6: Humanity—The Fall
Genesis 9:6: Humanity—Image of God
Leviticus 23:3: Humanity—Sabbath
Joshua 7:20–23: Humanity—Sin
1 Kings 5:1–12: Church—Cultural Engagement
Esther 4:14–16: God—Sovereignty
Job 19:25–27: Redemption—Faith
Job 33:4: Holy Spirit—Cosmic Pneumatology
Psalm 45:16–17: Humanity—Vice-Regents
Isaiah 6:3: God—Glorious
Isaiah 44:24: God—Creation
Jeremiah 17:9: Church—Antithesis
Ezekiel 37:1–14: Redemption—Regeneration
Habakkuk 3:17–19: God—Prayer
Matthew 5:45: Church—Common Grace
Mark 1:10: God—Trinity
John 1:14: Christ—Incarnation
John 13:34: Church—Community
Acts 1:9: Church—Ascension
Acts 7:56: Christ—The Son of Man
Romans 1:20: God—Sphere Sovereignty
Romans 3:24: Redemption—Justification
Romans 6:11: Redemption—Vivification
Romans 8:14–17: Redemption—Adoption
Romans 15:19: Holy Spirit—Empowerment
1 Corinthians 2:13: Holy Spirit—Discernment
Ephesians 1:3: Redemption—Union with Christ
Ephesians 4:1: Humanity—Calling
Ephesians 4:22: Redemption—Repentance
Philippians 2:12–13: Redemption—Sanctification
Colossians 3:5: Redemption—Mortification
2 Thessalonians 2:15: Redemption—Perseverance
2 Timothy 3:16: God—Scripture
Titus 2:13: Redemption—Glorification
Hebrews 4:14: Christ—High Priest
Hebrews 11:1: Humanity—Imagination
James 3:16: Humanity—Sin and Disordered Desires
1 Peter 1:1: Church—Exile
1 Peter 2:9: Church—Priesthood of all Believers
2 Peter 3:10–13: Future—Last Judgment
1 John 4:8: God—Love
Revelation 21:2: Future—New Jerusalem

**CORE DOCTRINES: ALPHABETICAL ORDER**

Christ—High Priest: Hebrews 4:14
Christ—Incarnation: John 1:14
Christ—The Son of Man: Acts 7:56
Church—Antithesis: Jeremiah 17:9
Church—Ascension: Acts 1:9
Church—Common Grace: Matthew 5:45
Church—Community: John 13:34
Church—Cultural Engagement: 1Kings 5:1–12
Church—Exile: 1 Peter 1:1
Church—Priesthood of all Believers: 1 Peter 2:9
Future—Last Judgment: 2 Peter 3:10–13
Future—New Jerusalem: Revelation 21:2
God—Creation: Isaiah 44:24
God—Creator: Genesis 1:1
God—Glorious: Isaiah 6:3
God—Love: 1 John 4:8
God—Prayer: Habakkuk 3:17–19
God—Scripture: 2 Timothy 3:16
God—Sovereignty: Esther 4:14–16
God—Sphere Sovereignty: Romans 1:20
God—Trinity: Mark 1:10
Holy Spirit—Cosmic Pneumatology: Job 33:4
Holy Spirit—Discernment: 1 Corinthians 2:13
Holy Spirit—Empowerment: Romans 15:19
Humanity—Calling: Ephesians 4:1
Humanity—Cultural Mandate: Genesis 1:28
Humanity—The Fall: Genesis 3:6
Humanity—Image of God: Genesis 9:6
Humanity—Imagination: Hebrews 11:1
Humanity—Sabbath: Leviticus 23:3
Humanity—Sin: Joshua 7:20–23
Humanity—Sin and Disordered Desires: James 3:16
Humanity—Vice-Regents: Psalm 45:16–17
Redemption—Adoption: Romans 8:14–17
Redemption—Faith: Job 19:25–27
Redemption—Justification: Romans 3:24
Redemption—Regeneration: Ezekiel 37:1–14
Redemption—Union with Christ: Ephesians 1:3
Redemption—Vivification: Romans 6:11
Redemption—Repentance: Ephesians 4:22
Redemption—Sanctification: Philippians 2:12–13
Redemption—Mortification: Colossians 3:5
Redemption—Perseverance: 2 Thessalonians 2:15
Redemption—Glorification: Titus 2:13
DEEPER AT WORK

DEEPER AT WORK IN CANONICAL ORDER
1 Kings 5:18: Church—Common Grace
1 Chronicles 29:11: Future—New Jerusalem
Ezra 3:7: Church—Cultural Engagement
Job 38:4: God—Creator
Psalm 22:28: God—Sovereignty
Psalm 24:7: God—Glory
Psalm 73:27–28: Church—Antithesis
Psalm 100:3: Humanity—Sin and Disordered Desires
Proverbs 17:24: Holy Spirit—Discernment
Ecclesiastes 3:11: Humanity—Image of God
Isaiah 1:17: Humanity—Image of God
Isaiah 11:8–9: Humanity—Vice Regents
Jeremiah 29:4–7: Church—Exile
Lamentations 3:40: Redemption—Repentance
Ezekiel 36:26: Redemption—Sanctification
Daniel 1:17: Church—Exile
Mark 15:16: Humanity—Cultural Mandate
John 15:13: Christ—Sacrificial Love
1 Corinthians 4:5: Future—Final Judgment
1 Corinthians 15:12–28: Christ—Resurrection
2 Corinthians 5:12: Humanity—Calling
Galatians 4:7: Humanity—Adoption
Ephesians 6:10–18: Redemption—Faith
Colossians 3:5: Redemption—Mortification
1 Thessalonians 5:17: Humanity—Prayer
Hebrews 7:3: Christ—High Priest
James 1:2: Redemption—Perseverance
James 5:16: Redemption—Freedom from Sin
2 John 5–6: God—Love
Revelation 5:10: Priesthood of All Believers

DEEPER AT WORK IN ALPHABETICAL ORDER
Christ—High Priest: Hebrews 7:3
Christ—Resurrection: 1 Corinthians 15:12–28
Christ—Sacrificial Love: John 15:13
Church—Antithesis: Psalm 73:27–28
Church—Common Grace: 1 Kings 5:18
Church—Cultural Engagement: Ezra 3:7
Church—Exile: Daniel 1:17
Church—Exile: Jeremiah 29:4–7
Future—Final Judgment: 1 Corinthians 4:5
Future—New Jerusalem: 1 Chronicles 29:11
God—Creator: Job 38:4
God—Glory: Psalm 24:7
God—Love: 2 John 1:5–6
God—Sovereignty: Psalm 22:28
Holy Spirit—Discernment: Proverbs 17:24
Humanity—Adoption: Galatians 4:7
Humanity—Calling: 2 Corinthians 12:10
Humanity—Cultural Mandate: Mark 15:16
Humanity—Sin and Disordered Desires: Psalm 100:3
Humanity—Image of God: Ecclesiastes 3:11
Humanity—Image of God: Isaiah 1:17
Humanity—Prayer: 1 Thessalonians 5:17
Humanity—Vice Regents: Isaiah 11:8–9
Priesthood of All Believers: Revelation 5:10
Redemption—Faith: Ephesians 6:10–18
Redemption—Freedom from Sin: James 5:16
Redemption—Mortification: Colossians 3:5
Redemption—Perseverance: James 1:12
Redemption—Repentance: Lamentations 3:40
Redemption—Sanctification: Ezekiel 36:26
BIBLIOGRAPHY


