

## GENESIS

In the beginning God created:

- Heavens and the earth – formless, void, empty and dark
- Light – darkness ended now day and night
- Expanse – the cosmos - terrestrial and sidereal
- Division of water and earth, no longer formless – now dry ground and water needed for living things
- Vegetation – all kinds of edible food for animals and birds
- Expanse separated – terrestrial from sidereal. Stars, sun, moons from and earth's atmosphere.
- Living creatures – birds of the air, fish of the sea and land-dwelling animals
- Man – a being in God's image or likeness. God is love, righteous, kind merciful, peaceful – all good is from God.

Comment: At the beginning of creation there was no time. As God is eternal. Time appears to have begun when man sinned and was removed from Eden.

Comment: Darkness prevailed as light was not needed as there were no animals or plants, only God who is light.

Comment: Heavens is plural – the celestial, the abode of God and spirit beings; the sidereal, the solar system that consists of the sun, moon, stars, and planets; and the terrestrial, the atmosphere where the fowls of the heaven have their habitation.

Adapted from [bereanbiblesociety.org](http://bereanbiblesociety.org).

### **Adam**

God said let US make man in OUR likeness of love, righteous, kind, merciful, peaceful, NOT our exact nature or essence. They also created a companion, woman, for the man. Adam named her Eve. God placed them in a special place on the earth, Eden, which He had created for them. Adam and Eve were given three instructions; e.g.,

- a) Do not eat from the tree of the knowledge of good and evil or you will die - obey Me.
- b) Till the ground in Eden - work.
- c) Be fruitful and multiply - reproduce other human beings.

Man was able to reason and discern as evidenced by God's command that they were not to eat from the fruit of the tree of good and evil and if they did they would die. The Bible does not tell us how long they lived in their righteous situation with their Creator. But at some point, Satan, a rebellious celestial being, tempted them with a lie stating "God knows if you eat of forbidden fruit of the tree, you will be as wise as God."

Following their decision to disobey they suffered the consequences of their actions including the removal from paradise, painful work for man and painful childbirth for woman. But God did not abandon them. He gave hope for redemption, restoration and reconciliation stating that an offspring of woman would crush Satan, the devil. The offspring of woman would be Jesus – the Savior, redeemer and atoning sacrifice required for forgiveness of sin.

After removal from Eden, Cain and Abel were born. As they grew, they both brought offerings to God. It is reasonable to assume they knew what God desired, either from parent instructions or action or direct

from God. Abel's offering was accepted but Cain's was not. Cain's became angry with God for rejecting his offering and killed his brother. Unaccepted offering, anger, and murder are not God's image, they are of the Devil, the deceiver and liar. Cain's consequences were that his farming would not yield crops and he would be a restless wander. So, Cain went out from the presence of God. (Genesis 1 – 5)

#### Key Point from Adam

- Adam and Eve sinned, became mortal, suffered much pain, caused physical and spiritual death to enter the world.
- Sin has unpleasant consequences.
- Death brings time to earth. Eternity has no time barriers.
- God gave hope for forgiveness, redemption and reconciliation.
- Cain took no responsibility for his actions, but blamed God.

#### **Noah**

Noah was born 1056 years following the creation of Adam and 126 years after Adam died. Genesis states that the sons of God married the daughters of men. God was very displeased with the evil, violence and wickedness of men even their thoughts were evil, but not Noah. God gave Noah specific and exact instructions for him to construct an ark. Noah built it according to God's plan while proclaiming to those around him God's message for them to change from their evil way of life. Animals and Noah's family entered their ark of safety, God shut the only door, the only hope for the wicked to be saved. He then destroyed by flood all living who chose not to accept God's message proclaimed by Noah. Following the cleansing of the earth, Noah removed the covering, went out from the ark and built an altar and worshipped God. (Genesis 6 – 10)

Comment: "Sons of God" are the righteous whereas the daughters of men were not.

#### Key Points from Noah

- Noah was given specific commands regarding what he must do to save himself and his family.
- While building of the ark Noah proclaimed God's message for the evil people to change from their evil lifestyle.
- Unlike Adam, Noah obeyed thus he and his family were saved by God's grace, after he obeyed.
- Following his deliverance Noah worshipped God.
- Christ is the only door, way, for sinful man to be forgiven and saved.

#### **God calls Abram**

Abram appears to have been born less than 900 years after Noah's birth and less than 352 years following the flood. Abram's father, Terah, with Abram and Sarai left their home in Ur of the Chaldeans, the general area where the tower of Babel was located and moved to Haran. Here God told Abram to leave father's house, go to a distant land and God would make his descendants a great nation and make his name great. Abram trusted God and obeyed not knowing where God would lead. When he came to Canaan God told Abram that this land would be given to his offspring.

As a result of a famine in Canaan he went to Egypt but returned to Canaan and was greatly blessed materially. He and his nephew, Lot, separated with Abraham allowing Lot to take the most fertile land. (Genesis 12-13)

#### Key Point from God Calls Abram

- God called Abram to go. Abram trusted, obeyed and went.
- God promised to make him great and through him all people of the earth would be blessed. Ultimately through Christ.
- Abram was not always truthful but always trusted and obeyed God.
- Lot thinking of himself selected the best land while Abram took the least desirable, what was left.

#### New Testament reference to Abram

“By faith Abraham obeyed when he was called to go out to a place that he was to receive as an inheritance. And he went out, not knowing where he was going. By faith he went to live in the land of promise, as in a foreign land, living in tents with Isaac and Jacob, heirs with him of the same promise. For he was looking forward to the city that has foundations, whose designer and builder is God. By faith Sarah herself received power to conceive, even when she was past the age, since she considered him faithful who had promised. Therefore, from one man, and him as good as dead, were born descendants as many as the stars of heaven and as many as the innumerable grains of sand by the seashore.” (Hebrews 11:8-12)

#### **Abram Gives Tribute to Melchizedek**

Abraham had obeyed God and was now living in Canaan, the area we know as Palestine. This land was between the Mediterranean Sea and separated by desert from the valley of Shinar or Ur of the Chaldees.

Lot had selflessly chosen the most fertile land and was gradually lured into the city of Sodom. Area kings rebelled against the king of Sodom, defeated his army, and took Lot as a prisoner. Abram took a few men and went to rescue Lot. He defeated the armies of the area kings and brought Lot back, along with his possessions and the women and children.

Melchizedek, king of Salem and priest of God, went out to Abram on his return home, blessed him stating, “Blessed be Abram by God Most High, Possessor of heaven and earth; and blessed be God Most High, who has delivered your enemies into your hand!” (Genesis 14:19-20) Abram gave Melchizedek a tenth or tithe, freed those captured, returned their possessions to the King of Sodom and gave God the glory for the victory. (Genesis 14 and Hebrews 7)

#### Key Points from Tribute to Melchizedek

- Melchizedek, the priest of God, gave Abram God’s blessing.
- Abram gave to Melchizedek one tenth [tribute] of what he had taken from the battle.
- Abram refused to retain possessions and people of Sodom.
- Abram gave God the glory for his victory.
- There were priests of God before the Covenant with Israel.

#### **Ishmael, the Natural Son**

God promised Abram that he and Sarai would have a son resulting in many nations being blessed. They were old and Sarai beyond child bearing age. She became impatient waiting on God to fulfill His promise. She and Abram agreed to help God fulfill His promise by having a son through natural reproductive means through Sarai's handmaiden Hagar. Through Abram's relationship with Hagar Ishmael was born. But God's promise was not to Hagar but to Sarai, so Ishmael was not the son of promise. Thirteen years later God spoke to Abram promising if he walked blameless, He would make a covenant with him and his offspring and make him the father of a multitude of nations. God changed his name from Abram, meaning high father, to Abraham, meaning father of multitudes, and Sarai's, meaning quarrelsome, to Sarah, meaning princess. God restated His promise that Sarah and Abraham would have a son – he would be the son of promise. (Genesis 15-17) The significance of son of promise and natural son is discussed in Galatians 1:1-7.

Comment: A covenant is a binding agreement.

Key Point from Ishmael

- God is in control. Man's attempt to be in control results in harm.
- Abraham showed he believed God and acted on that belief which was credited to him as righteousness.
- God's blessing to man can only come through the son of promise.

### **Covenant with Abraham**

Ishmael was around 12 or 13 years old and Isaac was still just a promise. At the age of 99 and Sarah beyond the age of having children God spoke to Abraham stating "I will establish my covenant between me and you and your offspring after you throughout their generations for an everlasting covenant, to be God to you and to your offspring after you. ... Every male among you shall be circumcised. You shall be circumcised in the flesh of your foreskins, and it shall be a sign of the covenant between me and you." (Genesis 17:7; 10-11)

Then God said that Sarah shall have a son. Abraham thought shall Sarah in her old age birth a child? Then he said "Oh that Ishmael might be acceptable to you" and God replied "no, but Sarah your wife shall bear you a son." Thus, a promise of a son would be kept and a covenant established.

Key Point from Covenant with Abraham

- Abraham lived a life before God based on righteousness, integrity, truthful, innocent and unimpaired - so should we.

Sodom and Gomorrah

A short time following the covenant of circumcision God appeared once again to Abraham to tell him that Sarah would have a child promised long ago. God told Abraham about His wrath toward the citizens of Sodom and the surrounding cities because of their wickedness. He was going to destroy both people and their property. Now Lot lived in Sodom. Abraham pleaded with God to save the city but to no avail. However, He sent angels in human form to remove Lot and his family. The men of Sodom wanted to have sex with the men visiting the city. Sexual acts between men, homosexual, is not natural which God considers evil and wicked. If a man lies with a man as one lies with a woman, both of them have done what is detestable. They must be put to death; their blood will be on their own heads. Homosexuality is discussed in Living Liberated in [thebiblewayonline.com/](http://thebiblewayonline.com/)

Key Point from Sodom and Gomorrah

- God detest wickedness.

### **Isaac, the Son of Promise**

Before the birth of Isaac, Abraham moved near Gerar in the country of Abimelech. Not trusting God and fearing for his life he deceived Abimelech about Sarah being his wife which led Abimelech to take her for his wife. God intervened "Behold, you are a dead man because of the woman whom you have taken, for she is a man's wife." He returned Sarah to Abraham who prayed to God on Abimelech behalf.

Sometime afterward, the Lord visited Sarah and she conceived and bore Isaac, the son of promise. Hagar, Sarah's handmaiden, was forced to leave. But God heard Hagar's cry and was with Ishmael.

It is through Isaac, the son of promise, not Ishmael, the son of man's nature, that another promise would be kept; e.g., all nations would be blessed. That blessing would come through Jesus of Nazareth who would offer Himself as the atoning sacrifice to save all trusting and obedient people from their sins. (Genesis 20 – 21)

Key Points from Isaac

- God is always faithful. His promises are always fulfilled.
- Deception is a lie.
- Men losses trust in God when they satisfy their fleshly desires.

### **Testing Abraham's Faith**

No doubt Isaac was very dear to Abraham as he was Sarah's only child and the child God had promised to them. Abraham's righteousness and faithfulness did not waiver in his relationship with God. He was willing, in fact, he was stopped by God from offering his only son as a sacrifice to please the God he loved and trusted. Note the similarity with Jesus. "For God so loved the world that he gave his only and unique Son, so that everyone who trusts in him may have eternal life, instead of being utterly destroyed." (John 3:16-17)]

When our faith is being tested, do we trust God and show our love by our actions? Do we help our neighbors in their time of need? Is most of our free time spent on pleasing self? Do we blame God for getting cancer, losing a job or the death of a parent or child? (Genesis 22)

Key Point from Testing Abraham's Faith

- God knows our love of him by our actions, what we give to Him or what we withhold from Him.
- Abraham did not withhold Isaac.
- God gave Jesus to be our atoning sacrifice.
- Abraham knew God was able to bring Isaac back to life.

Abraham's Final Days

In his time Abraham desired to selected a wife for Isaac – in some countries this is still the practice. So, Abraham sent his servant to the land of the Chaldeans where Abraham lived before God called him. He did not want Isaac to have a wife from among the idol worshipers in Canaan. Here Abraham's trusted servant

at God's direction selected Rebekah, the daughter of his nephew, Bethuel (the son of Abraham's brother Nahor) to be Isaac's wife. (Genesis 24 - 25:18)

#### Key Points from Abrahams Final Days

- Isaac marries one who believes in God and not some idol worshipper.
- Relationships, including marriage, will help or hurt our relationship with God on our journey to eternity.

#### **Isaac's Life and Jacob's Deception**

Abraham died the age of 175 and was buried in Canaan. Isaac and Rebekah's had twin sons. They each showed favoritism with Isaac favoring Esau as he was an outdoorsman while Rebekah favored Jacob. Favoritism always causes strife. Esau's appeared to have an attitude of satisfying his present desires with no regard of their consequences or the future. Jacob at the direction of his mother, Rebekah, conspired to get the firstborn's double portion birthright and blessing from Isaac. They were able to deceive Isaac because he was blind. Jacob fled to Rebekah's family fearing for his life. On the way God said to Jacob "I am the Lord, the God of Abraham your father and the God of Isaac. The land on which you lie I will give to you and to your offspring. Your offspring shall be like the dust of the earth, and you shall spread abroad to the west and to the east and to the north and to the south, and in you and your offspring shall all the families of the earth be blessed. Behold, I am with you and will keep you wherever you go, and will bring you back to this land. For I will not leave you until I have done what I have promised you."

Later Jacob's future father-in-law deceived him. Sin always has consequences even though God forgives those who put their trust in Him and obey because of their love for Him. (Genesis 25:20 – 28)

#### Key Point from Jacob's Deception

- God told Abraham and repeated to Jacob that He would make his descendants as numerous as the stars in the sky and give them Canaan, their "Land of Promised."
- Through Jacob's offspring (Jesus) all nations on earth will be blessed because Abraham obeyed me.

#### **Jacob Arrives in the East Country**

Jacob had deceived Isaac, taken advantage and angered his brother Esau, so he fled to his mother's home which was back in the land of the Chaldeans. Upon arriving he inquired of Laban, his mother's brother, the son of Nahor, the brother of Abraham. At the watering well he saw Rachel, a shepherdess and Laban's daughter. Jacob agreed to work for Laban for 7 years for Rachel to become his wife. After 7 years Laban deceived Jacob and gave Leah to him as a wife. Jacob then agreed to work another 7 years for Rachel. During his stay with Laban God prospered him greatly. (Genesis 29 – 30)

#### Key Point from Jacob Arrives in the East Country

- Rebekah and Jacob deceived Isaac and now Jacob is being deceived. Oh, the consequences of sin.

#### **Jacob Flees Laban**

Jacob's four wives who bore several children to him while they lived with Laban. At least 14 years had passed. Laban began to have less regard for Jacob and Laban's sons had become jealous of Jacob's prosperity. The time had come for Jacob to return home where Isaac lived and where Abraham was buried. So, Jacob with his family and livestock left without telling Laban. When Laban became aware of Jacob's

departure, he pursued them. On his way God warned Laban not to do anything against Jacob. Laban and Jacob met, made an agreement not to do harm to each other. Laban then return home.

As Jacob approached the land where Esau dwelled, he was fearful of what Esau might do because of his earlier deception in obtaining Esau's blessing from Isaac. Jacob repented of his past evil, gave thanks for the prosperity God had provided and pleaded to be delivered from Esau. When Esau saw Jacob, he ran and embraced him. (Genesis 31 -33)

#### Key Points from Jacob Flees Laban

- Jacob with the help of his mother deceived his father in getting the blessing of the firstborn son. Sin has consequences.
- Repentance and giving thanks to God for His blessings, pleased God.

#### **Jacob Returns to Bethel**

Jacob has returned home and made things right with Esau. He then returned to the place where God appeared to him when he fled for his life. At God's instructions he went to Bethel, where God previously gave him the same promise He gave to Abraham and Isaac. Jacob draws closer to God by requiring all idols be removed. At Bethel he built an altar and worshipped God. Here God appeared again changed his name from Jacob, meaning supplanted, to Israel, and said "I am God Almighty: be fruitful and multiply. A nation and a company of nations shall come from you, and kings shall come from your own body. The land that I gave to Abraham and Isaac I will give to you, and I will give the land to your offspring after you." (Genesis 35:11-13)

#### Key Point Jacob Returns to Bethel

- One's actions shows if one has repented (changed).
- By turning to God, removing false gods, giving thanks and worshiping God clearly indicates Jacob had truly changed - repented.
- Thanks, praise and worship pleases God and brings joy.

#### **Jacob's Trouble**

After Jacob returned to Canaan and he made peace with Esau, their father Isaac died. Jacob, now Israel, had 12 sons and a daughter. Dinah, the daughter, was rape by a Hivite in the land of Canaan. Rebekah died giving birth to Benjamin. Israel showed favoritism toward Joseph because he was Rachel's firstborn son, for whom he labored 14 years. This causes much jealousy among his other sons. Now Joseph had unusual dreams which he related to his brothers and father. These dreams indicated they would all bow down to him. This changes jealousy into hatred which was displayed when his brothers sold him into slavery to a caravan of Ishmaelites going to Egypt. They slaughter a goat dipped into Joseph's cloak in its blood, took it to their father deceiving him into believing Joseph had been killed by some wild animal. (Genesis 36:16 – 38)

#### Key Point from Jacob's Trouble

- The consequences of the sins of favoritism, anger, hatred, and deception and causes pain. God used a terrible situation to His glory and to the saving of Jacob and his family and ultimately salvation by the life and atoning sacrifice of Jesus of Nazareth, the Christ.

## **Joseph, The Slave**

Joseph's jealous brothers sold him to a caravan of Ishmaelites. Upon arrival in Egypt, he was sold to one of Pharaoh's officials. He performed his duties as a trusting servant in such a way that his owner gave him greater responsibilities. Because he did not yield to the temptations of Potiphar's wife, he was imprisoned. Even in prison he found favor with the keeper of the prison. In all his adversities he continued to trust and serve God. While there, he befriended Pharaoh's cup bearer, who much later recall what Joseph had done for him. (Genesis 39 - 41:40)

### Key Points from Joseph, The Slave

- In the most difficult times God's servants are always to be godly.
- God tests the faith of those who love Him.
- Times of adversity one can blame God and turn away from Him.
- Prosperity can encourage one to put their trust in themselves.
- Always refrain from sinning even in harsh and unfair times.

## **Joseph, The Ruler**

Suffering the consequences of living righteously, Joseph was sent to prison. While in prison he was abandon by those he helped but not by God. Living as God's faithful servant, he allowed God to use him in His plan to bring redemption to all mankind if they would trust and obey HIM. Pharaoh's cup bearer finally remembered Joseph and told Pharaoh about Joseph interpreting his dreams when he was in prison. Pharaoh called Joseph from prison to interpret his dream. Joseph told Pharaoh he could not interpret but God could.

Pharaoh believed God's interpretation through Joseph and put Joseph in charge of preparing for the disaster of a famine. Joseph was now second in command of all Egypt and prepared for the famine.

Famine reached Joseph's family in Canaan. Upon hearing that food was in Egypt, Jacob sent his sons there to purchase food on two occasions. Joseph did not take vengeance on his brothers instead he recognized God's hand working in him for good. (Genesis 41:41 – 44)

### Key Point from Joseph, The Ruler

- Joseph allowed God to use him for His purposes even through there was much pain and hardship.
- God is always faithful but man is not always able to understand.
- An eternal life with God in Heaven is always worth any pain or any heartache here on earth.

## **Jacob Goes to Egypt**

Joseph's brothers were sent to Egypt in search of food because of a famine. In fear of their lives because they were being accused of stealing form the second most powerful of Egypt, they bowed down to him, paying homage, Joseph's dream he had as a youth had foretold. Judah acknowledges his guilt of selling him into slavery. Then Joseph reveals himself to his brothers how their treacherous act was used by God to save them and Jacob. Joseph sends for Jacob and all his family and possessions. Upon arrival Joseph and Jacob are reunited. Pharaoh gave Jacob the choice land of Goshen. Jacob may have intended to remain until the famine over, but his descendants remained in Egypt for 400 years. (Genesis 45-47)

### Key Points from Jacob Goes to Egypt



- God used the sons of Jacob to accomplish His will.
- Joseph recognized God's hand in his life by stating, "He sent me ahead of you to preserve for you a remnant on earth and to save your lives by a great deliverance."

### **Jacob and Joseph Die in Egypt**

After 17 years in Egypt, Jacob dies. Joseph and his brothers' mourn during the 40 days required to embalm. Then Jacob was taken back to Canaan and buried alongside Abraham, Sarah, Isaac, Rachel and Leah, his first wife and mother of Judah. "Joseph went up to bury his father. With him went up all the servants of Pharaoh, the elders of his household, and all the elders of the land of Egypt, as well as all the household of Joseph, his brothers, and his father's household. Only their children, their flocks, and their herds were left in the land of Goshen. There went up with him both chariots and horsemen. It was a very great company." (Genesis 50)

Much later "Joseph said to his brothers, 'I am about to die, but God will visit you and bring you up out of this land to the land that he swore to Abraham, to Isaac, and to Jacob.' Then Joseph made the sons of Israel swear, saying, 'God will surely visit you, and you shall carry up my bones from here.'" Joseph died in Egypt, was embalmed, not buried but put in a coffin to be taken back to Canaan when God delivered them from Egypt. (Genesis 50)

### **Key Points from Jacob and Joseph Die in Egypt**

- From a slave to the second most powerful person in Egypt, righteous Joseph still allowed God to use him to fulfill His plans.
- Judah who had suggested selling Joseph into slavery now offers himself as a slave to keep Jacob from suffering. People can change.
- It is interesting that Jesus of Nazareth is from the tribe of Judah.