

From Darkness into Light

The Eastern Christadelphian Bible School

Family Life Lessons in Genesis



Class 1: Adam & Eve

Trust in the Lord with all your heart, and lean not on your own understanding; In all your ways acknowledge Him, and He shall direct your paths. (Proverbs 3:5-6)

**God already
has a family**



and He loves to add to it!

God is Expanding His Family

Ephesians 3:14-21



14 For this reason (inclusion of the Gentiles) I bow my knees to the Father of our Lord Jesus Christ, 15 **from whom the whole family in heaven and earth is named**, 16 that He would grant you, according to the riches of His glory, to be strengthened with might through His Spirit in the inner man, 17 that Christ may dwell in your hearts through faith; that you, being rooted and grounded in love, 18 may be able to **comprehend with all the saints** what is the width and length and depth and height-- 19 to know the love of Christ which passes knowledge; **that you may be filled with all the fullness of God.**

God's family has been around for a long time & He intends to add to it!

**What better way to come
to know & understand
God than to live in
families ourselves?**



**God allows us to experience His divine family
and character through our families & ecclesias**

Contains most of our key
doctrinal teachings

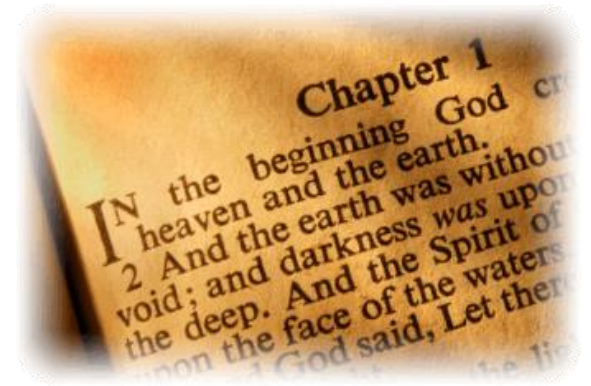
GENESIS

THE BOOK OF BEGINNINGS

Also has practical lessons about
living as a member of God's Family

Genesis Contains:

- 1) Most fundamental doctrines
- 2) Counsel on most fundamental family (and ecclesial) issues
- 3) History of good & bad choices written for our learning



Now all these things happened to them as examples, and they were written for our admonition, on whom the ends of the ages have come. Therefore let him who thinks he stands take heed lest he fall. (1 Cor 10:11-12)

Genesis 2:18 (Marriage)

And the LORD God said, "It is not good for the man to be alone; I will make him a helper suitable to him." (NASB)



- **God didn't intend us to be alone** – like isolationists – He expects us to work with others.
- **In families, we help others and ourselves** at the same time
- **Helper “comparable to him”** (NKJ) or “suitable for him” (NASB) → we must look for spouses who will help our spiritual life!
- **Animals were formed from the ground**, Eve was formed out of Adam.

The Creator of our world designed marriage to help us learn how to live in His family forever

1 Timothy 2:11-15 (RSV)



11 Let a woman learn in silence with all submissiveness.

12 **I permit no woman to teach or to have authority over men; she is to keep silent.**

13 For **Adam was formed first, then Eve;**

14 and **Adam was not deceived, but the woman was deceived** and became a transgressor.

15 Yet **woman will be saved through bearing children**, if she continues in faith and love and holiness, with modesty.

- Paul draws general conclusions from Adam & Eve and one of them pre-dates sin
- This is not cultural - it's God's view of how He wants His family to operate in the ecclesia - He knows best!
- Not about who is greater or more important
- Roles for men & women were established by God for our good, so we can be members of His family

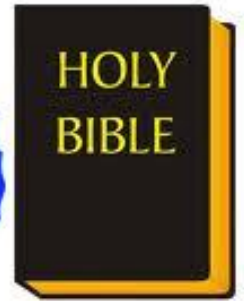
Today's society is confused



- **Some claim boys & girls are equal & demand the same roles**
 - Biology doesn't support this
 - Creates confused, over-worked & over-stressed people
- **Some women seem to be better leaders than their husbands**
 - “better” is not the issue
 - God doesn't need “the best”
 - High priests, kings, etc show that!



The Bible is Clear:



- **Men are responsible** to lead, provide, save, teach and give their lives for their spouses – show the life of Christ!
 - Many families struggle when men do not come through
 - Men must read, study, pray & be involved in their families – all aspects!
- **Look to Christ** for the ultimate example!



God, our designer, knows what He's doing!

Every husband's
goal should be...
to help save
his wife



**Real Men...
Serve Their Wives**

"Husbands, love your
wives, just as Christ also
loved the church and gave
Himself for her"
- Ephesians 5:25

So aim
at the
target!

Don't get out of focus

1 Timothy 5:14

Therefore I desire that the younger widows marry, bear children, **manage the house**, give no opportunity to the adversary to speak reproachfully.



- “rule (oikodespoteo) the household” (RSV)
- God wants a house that runs in peace, where everyone helps and encourages one another

Symbol of authority

1 Corinthians 11:7-11

7 For a man indeed ought not to cover his head, since he is the image and glory of God; but woman is the glory of man.

8 **For man is not from woman, but woman from man.**

9 **Nor was man created for the woman, but woman for the man.**

10 For this reason the woman ought to have a symbol of authority on her head, because of the angels.

11 Nevertheless, neither is man independent of woman, nor woman independent of man, in the Lord.

12 **For as woman came from man, even so man also comes through woman; but all things are from God.**

The relationship of men and women, and their respective roles before God, were designed by God & His angels from the beginning of creation - before sin - for the spiritual development of His family

God uses our families to train us to join His family

Evolution destroys God's Design

- **Evolution is random** – God's design has purpose behind it – He is designing an immortal family that will reflect His glory
- **Evolution is humanistic** – what works best for humans. God's design is built around developing children who learn to live like God.

**You can't have both –
they are mutually exclusive**



Key traits God must develop in His Children



- **Faith** – without it's impossible to please God – marriage allows us to practice this everyday
- **Faithfulness to covenant** – practice with spouse
- **Submission** – wives to husbands, children to parents, everyone in ecclesias (Eph 5)
- **Obedience** – children obey your parents – we had years to practice! Other mammals don't.
- **Mercy** – lots of opportunities in families

God designed roles that help us learn these concepts and practice them

God designed marriage to be for life

Mark 10:6-9

6 "But from the beginning of the creation, God 'made them male and female.' 7 'For this reason a man shall leave his father and mother and be joined to his wife, 8 'and **the two shall become one flesh**'; so then they are no longer two, but one flesh. 9 "Therefore what God has joined together, let not man separate."



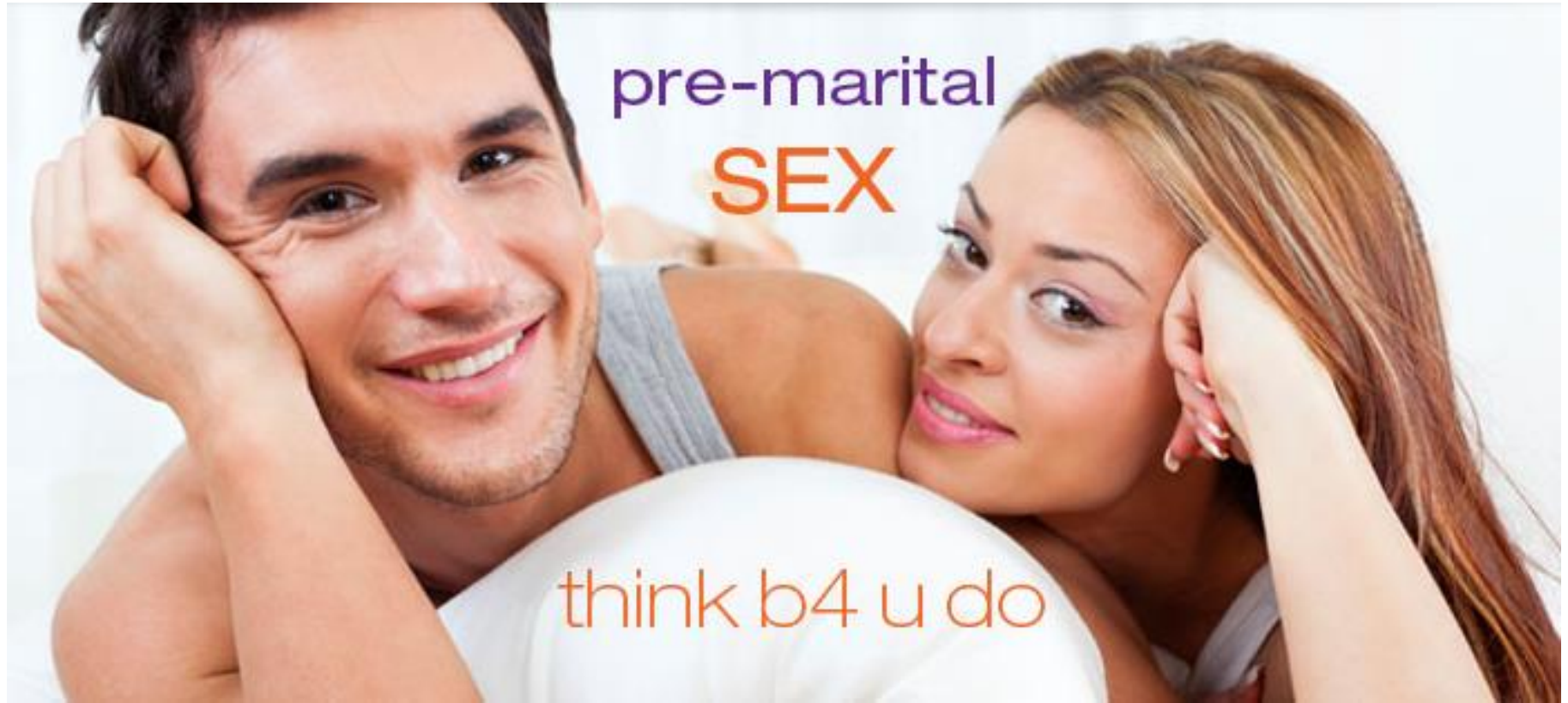
Malachi 2:15

And did not he make one? Yet had he the residue of the spirit. **And wherefore one?** **That he might seek a godly seed.** Therefore take heed to your spirit, and let none deal treacherously against the wife of his youth. *[many people were breaking their covenants]*



God designed marriage to be a one man - one woman relationship for life because He knows this is the best way to develop godly children!

Our morality begins before Marriage



If we cheat God before marriage,
what's to stop us cheating after?

Flee Immorality: 1 Cor 6

- 1) Those who practice Immorality won't be in Kingdom (9-10)
- 2) You were washed from immorality at baptism (11)
- 3) Your body is for the Lord (13)
- 4) Immorality is against your own body (18)
- 5) Body is temple of Holy Spirit (19)
- 6) You have been purchased (20)



Don't be conformed to
this world, but be
transformed by the
renewing of your mind

God can influence our minds!

Psalm 119:9-11 (NIV)

9 How can a young man keep his way pure? *By living according to your word.*

10 I seek you with all my heart; do not let me stray from your commands.

11 *I have hidden your word in my heart* that I might not sin against you.

God's guidance in our minds can help us to live according to His will

God wants children

Genesis 1:27-28

27 So God created man in His own image; in the image of God He created him; male and female He created them.
28 Then God blessed them, and **God said to them, "Be fruitful and multiply; fill the earth and subdue it;** have dominion over the fish of the sea, over the birds of the air, and over every living thing that moves on the earth."

God intended marriage as a pathway to producing children for Him

Children are a blessing from God

Psalm 127:3-5

3 Behold, **children are a heritage from the Lord, the fruit of the womb is a reward.** 4 Like arrows in the hand of a warrior, so are the children of one's youth. 5 **Happy is the man who has his quiver full of them;** They shall not be ashamed, but shall speak with their enemies in the gate.

Children are the future of our ecclesias

Raising Godly Children is the Goal



- **We need someone at home** instructing our children
- **The focus is on our children!** When we get this right, many other problems dissolve.
- **What we do with our children is very similar to what the angels do with us** – This is our practice time! We are learning now so we can become like angels in the kingdom.

God's family members are committed to helping others join God's family forever

God views childrearing as one of
the most important roles we can fill
- You are raising His children



Genesis 3:16-17

16 to the woman He said: "I will greatly multiply your sorrow and your conception; in pain you shall bring forth children; your desire shall be for your husband, and he shall rule over you."



17 Then to Adam He said, "Because you have heeded the voice of your wife, and have eaten from the tree of which I commanded you, saying, 'You shall not eat of it': "Cursed is the ground for your sake; in toil you shall eat of it all the days of your life.

- The Hebrew word for **“pain”** is the same word translated **“toil”** in v. 17
- Just as men struggle all their lives with bringing food out of the ground, so women struggle in bringing forth children fruitful to God
- **1 Tim 2:15** Yet woman will be saved through bearing children, if she continues in faith and love and holiness, with modesty. (RSV)



Genesis 3:16

“your desire shall be for your husband, and he shall rule over you”



- **Husbands** should direct their families towards God – this is the responsibility of every husband!
- **Wives** should be able to look to their husbands for spiritual direction – and follow it. This way our children learn how to submit, so they will one day submit to God.
- **This is how God and His angels** designed the family to work
- **This does fail sometimes** [Abigail & Nabal] and we must make the most of a bad situation – praying God will bring good out of the bad

Ephesians 5:30-32

30 For we are members of His body, of His flesh and of His bones.

31 "For this reason a man shall leave his father and mother and be joined to his wife, and the two shall become one flesh."

32 **This is a great mystery, but I speak concerning Christ and the church.**

Everything God did in Gen 1-3 was about redeeming His family through His son. Our families today are designed to clearly teach us about redemption in Christ Jesus.

It was all about Christ & his bride



**God designed families,
marriage and children so
he could redeem us into
His family through His Son**

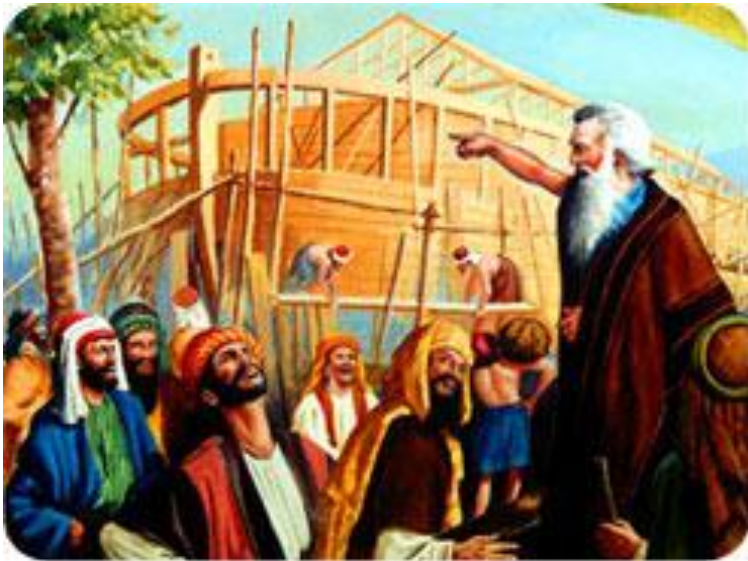
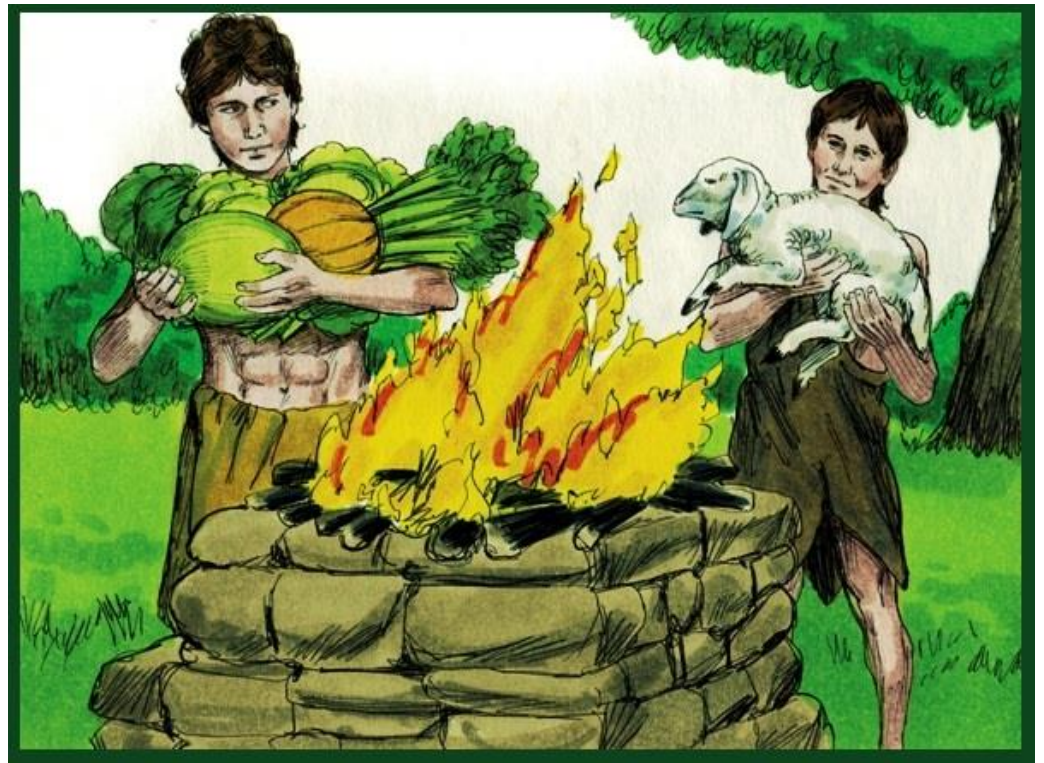
Lessons from Adam & Eve

- God uses families to develop His family – use your family opportunities to grow in God’s character
- Not good to be alone – don’t be isolated from God’s family
- Look for spouse who is a “helper fit” for you in God’s family
- Our goal: help save our spouse
- Marriage is for life! Not ours to break.
- Parents: Focus on developing Godly children
 - Dads: Be a spiritual leader for spouse and children
 - Moms: Be available, be home for your kids
- Men & women have different God-given strengths & weaknesses: therefore, different roles – appreciate each other! Don’t fight against God’s design.

**Now is the time to
practice living as a
member of God's Family**

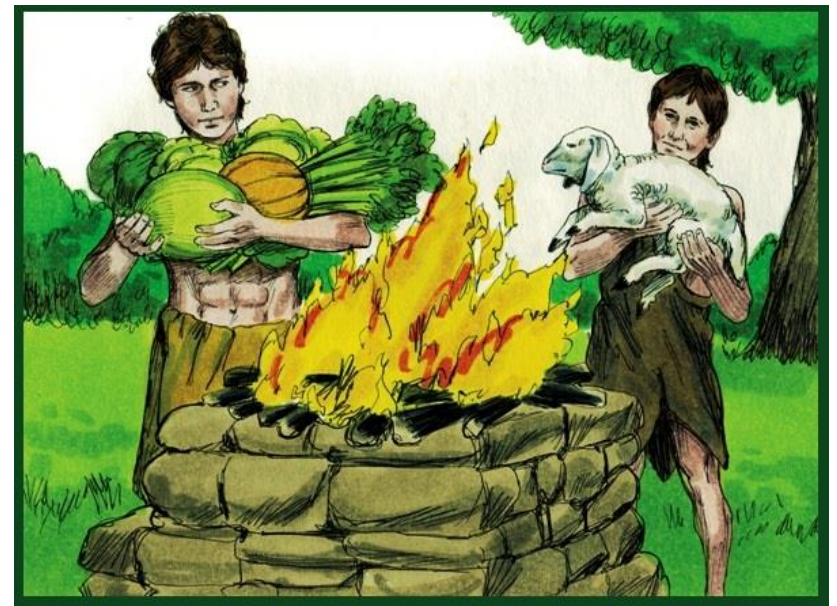


Next Class



We'll look at
lessons from Cain
& Abel and Noah

Family Life Lessons in Genesis



Class 2: Cain & Abel & Noah

Trust in the Lord with all your heart, and lean not on your own understanding; In all your ways acknowledge Him, and He shall direct your paths. (Proverbs 3:5-6)

Cain & Abel

(Siblings & Brothers & Sisters
in Ecclesial life)

Genesis 4:3-5

3 And in the process of time it came to pass that Cain brought an offering of the fruit of the ground to the LORD.

4 Abel also brought of the firstborn of his flock and *of their fat [shows rules for offerings were already established]*. And **the LORD respected Abel and his offering,**

5 but **He did not respect Cain and his offering.** And Cain was very angry, and his countenance fell.



God is Spirit,
and those who
worship Him
must worship in
spirit and truth
(Jn 4:24)

God cares about how
we worship

We can't dream up our own
way to worship God and
expect Him to accept it!



This incident deals with the root cause of many family problems



What will we do when we make mistakes?

- Admit our mistake, learn a lesson, and get right with God

OR

- Blame others, refuse to grow, get angry with God and others, become an unhappy person



Don't shoot the messenger!



It's hard to grow spiritually when we get angry at the people who help us understand our weaknesses and mistakes

Mistakes

Are The

Stepping Stones

To Learning!

If we acknowledge them

Proverbs 9:8

Do not correct a scoffer, lest he hate you; Rebuke a wise man, and he will love you.

Proverbs 17:10

Rebuke is more effective for a wise man than a hundred blows on a fool.

How do we respond when we are rebuked for our mistakes?

How do we deal with people who are in the right, when we are in the wrong?

MOST PEOPLE
WOULD LEARN FROM
THEIR MISTAKES
IF THEY WEREN'T SO BUSY
DENYING THEM

We cannot change anything unless we accept it.

James 3:1-2 (RSV)

Let not many of you become teachers, my brethren, for you know that we who teach shall be judged with greater strictness. 2 **For we all make many mistakes**

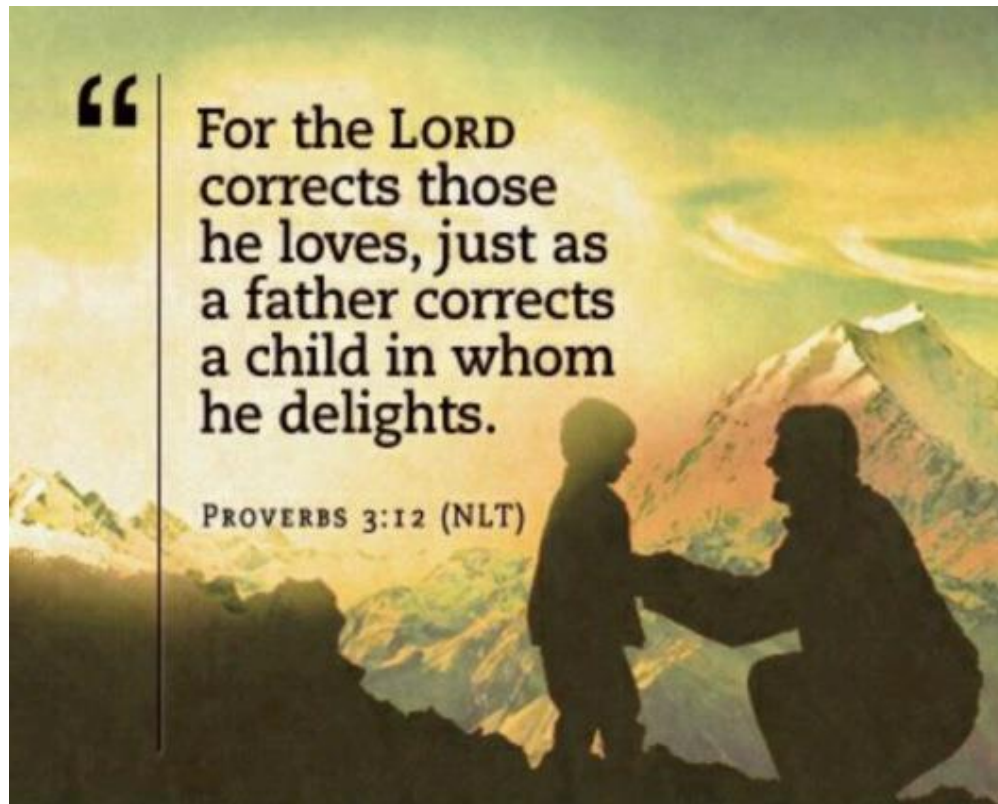
James 5:16-17 (RSV)

16 Therefore **confess your sins to one another (personal issues), and pray for one another, that you may be healed.** The prayer of a righteous man has great power in its effects.

Many times God
makes us face
our mistakes
and weaknesses



Otherwise we
might choose
not to deal
with them



“ For the LORD
corrects those
he loves, just as
a father corrects
a child in whom
he delights.

PROVERBS 3:12 (NLT)

God makes us face our mistakes and weaknesses

- **Face our weakness in another person** we deal with at work, school or our ecclesia
(Jacob the schemer has to deal with Laban)
- **Face our weakness in issues with our children** (David had to face the immorality of Amnon with Tamar, and then had to accept the murder of Amnon by Absalom, and the murder of Absalom by Joab)
- **Deal with our weaknesses by taking away the source**
(Samson finally matured his spiritual character when he lost his sight)

If we walk away from God's discipline, He cannot continue to develop us into His children



God Tests Asa

2 Chronicles 16:1-12

In the thirty-sixth year of the reign of Asa, Baasha king of Israel came up against Judah and built Ramah, that he might let none go out or come in to Asa king of Judah. 2 **Then Asa brought silver and gold from the treasuries of the house of the Lord and of the king's house, and sent to Ben-Hadad king of Syria, who dwelt in Damascus, saying, 3 "Let there be a treaty between you and me, as there was between my father and your father. See, I have sent you silver and gold; come, break your treaty with Baasha king of Israel, so that he will withdraw from me."**

4 So Ben-Hadad heeded King Asa, and sent the captains of his armies against the cities of Israel. They attacked Ijon, Dan, Abel Maim, and all the storage cities of Naphtali. 5 Now it happened, when Baasha heard it, that he stopped building Ramah and ceased his work. 6 Then King Asa took all Judah, and they carried away the stones and timber of Ramah, which Baasha had used for building; and with them he built Geba and Mizpah.

Asa schemed a plan without God's help and it appeared as if it worked

Hanani's Rebuke of Asa

2 Chronicles 16:1-12

Hanani's Message to Asa

7 And at that time Hanani the seer came to Asa king of Judah, and said to him: **"Because you have relied on the king of Syria, and have not relied on the Lord your God, therefore the army of the king of Syria has escaped from your hand.** 8 Were the Ethiopians and the Lubim not a huge army with very many chariots and horsemen? Yet, because you relied on the Lord, He delivered them into your hand. 9 **For the eyes of the Lord run to and fro throughout the whole earth, to show Himself strong on behalf of those whose heart is loyal to Him.** In this you have done foolishly; therefore from now on you shall have wars." 10 **Then Asa was angry with the seer, and put him in prison, for he was enraged at him because of this. And Asa oppressed some of the people at that time.**

Illness and Death of Asa

11 Note that the acts of Asa, first and last, are indeed written in the book of the kings of Judah and Israel. 12 And in the thirty-ninth year of his reign, Asa became diseased in his feet, and his malady was severe; yet in his disease he did not seek the Lord, but the physicians.

**The way we react under pressure
indicates our real spiritual character**

Hanani's Rebuke of Asa

2 Chronicles 16

Hanani is the father of the prophet Jehu (1 Kgs 16:1)



- **Asa's Mistake:** relied on king of Syria (v.7)
- **Past Lessons:** Defeat of Zerah's million man army should have convinced Asa to rely on God (v.8) – He did many reforms after that!
- **Consequence:** King of Syria escaped and will cause trouble in future. More wars to come (v.9)
- **Future Decisions:** God's angels are available to help those who trust in God (v.9)

Asa's Challenge: After this mistake and his public rebuke, how will Asa respond?

Asa turns to Evil

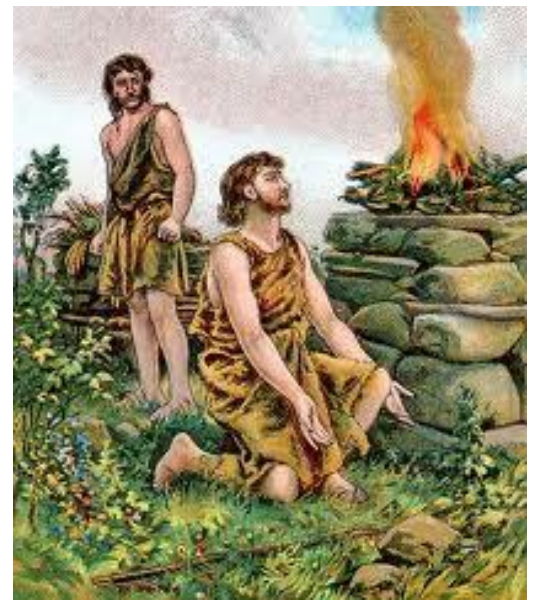
- Anger drove him to imprison Hanani (10)
- Did not accept God's rebuke. He blamed Hanani
- Oppressed other people
- Could not accept rebuke for his mistakes



God understands that “we all make many mistakes” (James 3:2 RSV), but He expects us to learn from our mistakes, repent of our sin, and treat others kindly.

How could Abel “fix” the problem?

- He probably couldn't
- Same problem Joseph later ran into with his brothers
- Continue to be kind, gracious, helpful and keep the door open!
- This was Cain's problem – not Abel's!
- Pray for one another



Don't let issues like this ruin your effectiveness in family & ecclesial life. Turn it over to God and let God work in the situation!



Choices for us: **Which one will we make when things go wrong?**

- 1) **Get angry and be unkind.** Get jealous of others who make good choices. Decide “it’s not fair”.
- 2) **Admit mistakes.** Look for God’s influence and respond with kindness. Look for the lesson God wants us to learn. Appreciate the good in one another that God develops.



But the fruit of the Spirit is love, joy,
peace, longsuffering, kindness, goodness,
faithfulness, gentleness, self-control.
Against such there is no law. (Gal 5:22-23)

Humility is the key

Philippians 2:1-5 (NASB)

Therefore if there is any encouragement in Christ, if there is any consolation of love, if there is any fellowship of the Spirit, if any affection and compassion, 2 make my joy complete by being of the same mind, maintaining the same love, united in spirit, intent on one purpose. 3 **Do nothing from selfishness or empty conceit, but with humility of mind regard one another as more important than yourselves;** 4 do not merely look out for your own personal interests, but also for the interests of others. 5 Have this attitude in yourselves which was also in Christ Jesus,

If Cain considered Abel as more important than himself, he would have humbly admitted Abel was right! The same is true for Asa.

God tried to work with Cain!

Genesis 4:6-7

6 So the LORD said to Cain, "Why are you angry? And why has your countenance fallen?"

7 "If you do well, will you not be accepted? And if you do not do well, sin lies at the door. And its desire is for you, but you should rule over it." *(the war with sin!)*

God wanted to extend mercy to Cain, but Cain failed to join God in the war against Sin

A close-up photograph of a lioness lying on the ground, looking directly at the camera with a somber expression. The lioness has light brown fur with darker stripes on its back. The background is a blurred natural setting.

**SIN IS
COUCHING
AT THE
DOOR.
(CRSV)**

**It's
DESIRE
IS FOR
you!**

**But you
must
master it!**

This is the 1st personification of "Sin"

We tend to pick the easy battles

Genesis 3:16

Your **desire** shall be for your husband, and he shall **rule** over you.



Genesis 4:7

And if you do not do well, sin lies at the door. And its **desire** is for you, but you should **rule** over it.

Many men like to quote “he shall rule over you” to their wives, but fail to rise to God’s challenge that “its (Sin’s) desire is for you, but you should rule over it.” *[you must master it (NASB)]*

Romans 6:12-14

12 Therefore **do not let sin reign** in your mortal body, that you should obey it in its lusts.

13 And do not present your members as instruments of unrighteousness to sin, but present yourselves to God as being alive from the dead, and your members as instruments of righteousness to God.

14 For **sin shall not have dominion over you**, for you are not under law but under grace.

If husbands (boys) spent more time fighting this war, their relationships with wives (girls) would bond and strengthen as God's power changes their lives

Why Cain murdered Abel

1 John 3:10-12

10 In this the **children of God** and the children of the devil are manifest: Whoever does not **practice righteousness** is not of God, nor is **he who does not love his brother.**

11 For this is the message that you heard from the beginning, that **we should love one another,**

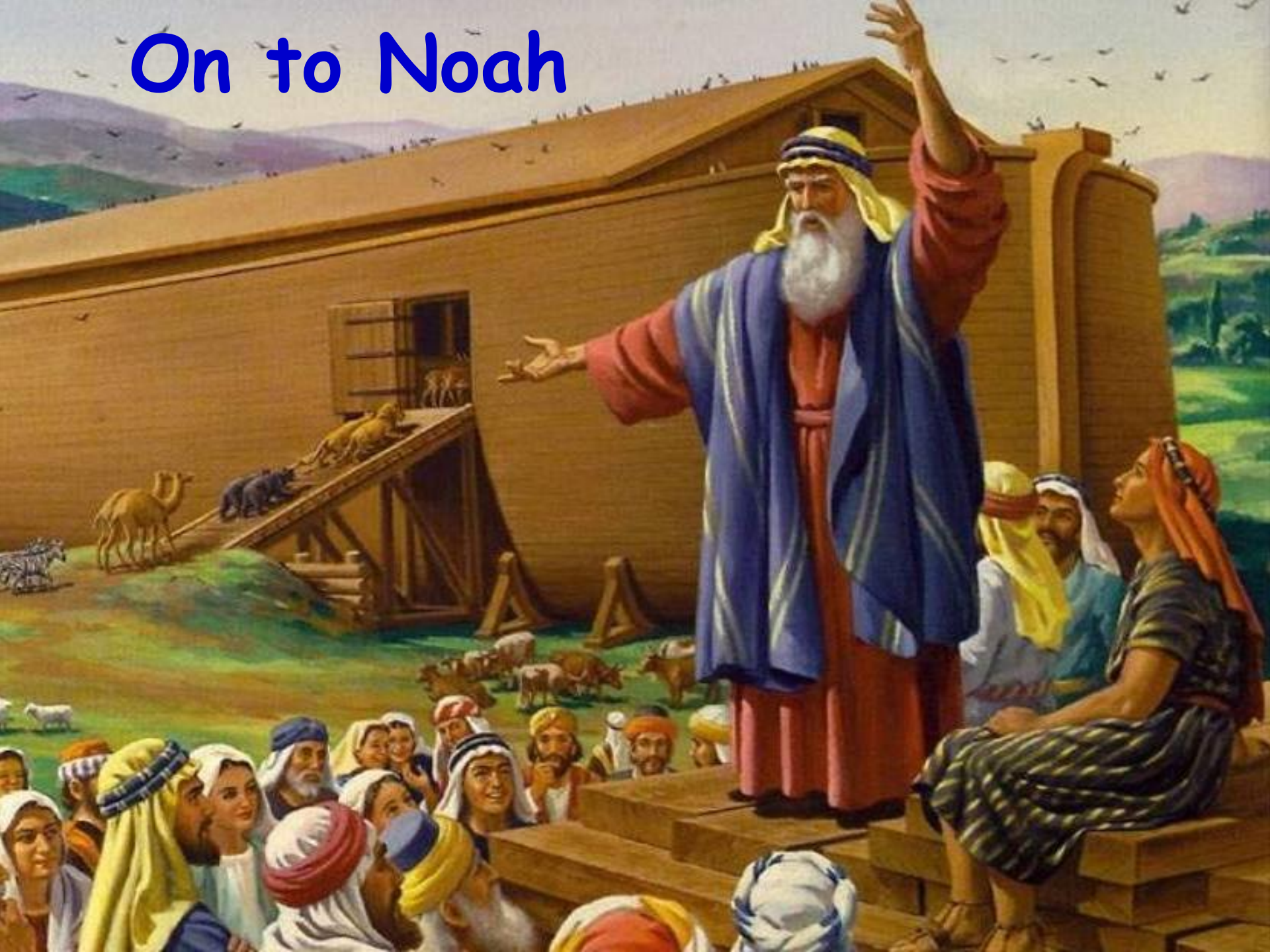
12 not as Cain who was of the wicked one and murdered his brother. And why did he murder him? ***Because his works were evil and his brother's righteous.***

We must “practice righteousness” every day. This means loving God's family, laying down our lives for them, and forgiving their mistakes against us.

Lessons from Cain & Abel

- Faith demands we live God's way
- Sin would like to devour us – We must use God's power to master it
- Try to face our mistakes so we can learn from them and grow our faith
- Our attitude towards others must be one of love & forgiveness
- Holding on to hatred & envy will ruin our lives and can lead to major sins

On to Noah



Noah: Saved his Household

Genesis 6:5-6

5 Then the LORD saw that **the wickedness of man was great in the earth, and that every intent of the thoughts of his heart was only evil continually.**

6 And the LORD was sorry that He had made man on the earth, and He was grieved in His heart.

7 So the LORD said, "I will destroy man whom I have created from the face of the earth, both man and beast, creeping thing and birds of the air, for I am sorry that I have made them."

8 But **Noah found grace** in the eyes of the LORD.

**Noah found grace because
he loved God's ways**

As it was in the days of Noah....

Luke 17:26-30

26 And as it was **in the days of Noah**, so it will be also in the days of the Son of Man:

27 **They ate, they drank, they married wives, they were given in marriage**, until the day that Noah entered the ark, and the flood came and destroyed them all.

28 Likewise as it was also in the days of Lot: **They ate, they drank, they bought, they sold, they planted, they built;** *(all normal activities during a day!)*

29 but on the day that Lot went out of Sodom it rained fire and brimstone from heaven and destroyed them all.

30 Even so will it be in the day when the Son of Man is revealed.

People were too busy for God!
That led to their immorality

What was it like?

- Immoral (6:1, 11-12)
- Violence (6:11; 9:6)
- Extremely corrupt – like today!
- Too busy for God (Luke 17) – *Be careful today!*



Ezekiel 14:14 Even if these three men, Noah, Daniel, and Job, were in it, they would deliver only themselves by their righteousness, says the Lord GOD.

So how did God bring a faithful family through all this corruption?

A Family Witness Project

Genesis 6:13-14

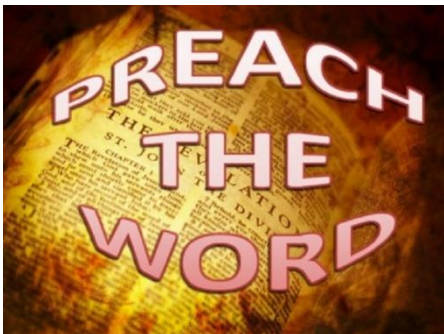
13 And God said to Noah, "The end of all flesh has come before Me, for the earth is filled with violence through them; and behold, I will destroy them with the earth.

14 **"Make yourself an ark** of gopherwood; make rooms in the ark, and cover it inside and outside with pitch.



Noah didn't make any new converts, but his obedience & faithfulness did save his

household. Don't judge your witnessing projects by the number of converts God gives you!



Projects must start with committed Parents

- **Noah had a living faith** – drove him to be involved. Led by example.
- **“only Noah and those** who were with him” (7:23)
- **God saved 4 human couples** (even the animals came 2 by 2)
- **God saves families** for the sake of committed parents
- **Parents must lead by example** – Bible readings, building up your ecclesia, witnessing, visiting sick, doing for others, acknowledging the work of God in your lives!



Lessons from Noah

- Continue strong in faith, even in the midst of a corrupt generation
- Get the family involved in ecclesial projects – Lot could have learned a bunch from Noah!
- Make time for God! Don't let this world eat up all your time.
- The son of man is coming at an hour you do not expect, so be ready at all times!
- Get in the ark before the door closes!

Next Class



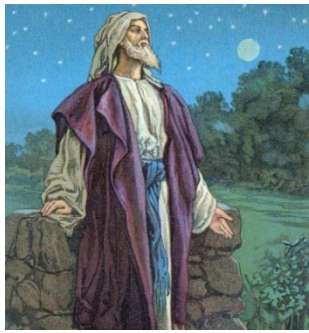
We'll look at lessons from
Abraham & Sarah – the
parents of the faithful

Family Life Lessons in Genesis

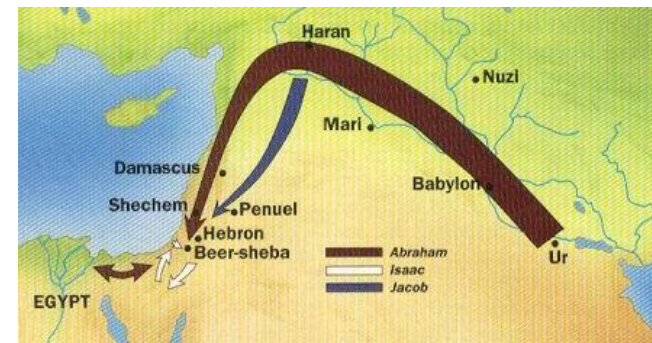


Class 3: Abraham & Sarah & Lot (Faith Leading to Obedience)

Trust in the Lord with all your heart, and lean not on your own understanding; In all your ways acknowledge Him, and He shall direct your paths. (Proverbs 3:5-6)



Genesis 12



1 Now the LORD had said to Abram: "*Get out of your country, from your family and from your father's house,* to a land that I will show you.

Abraham's faith in action:

- He separated from his larger family & only took his immediate family
- There are times when we need to separate from some of the people of this world
- Requires wisdom, courage, faith and prayer

Good behavior under pressure

Genesis 12:10-13

10 Now there was a famine in the land, and Abram went down to Egypt to dwell there, for the famine was severe in the land.

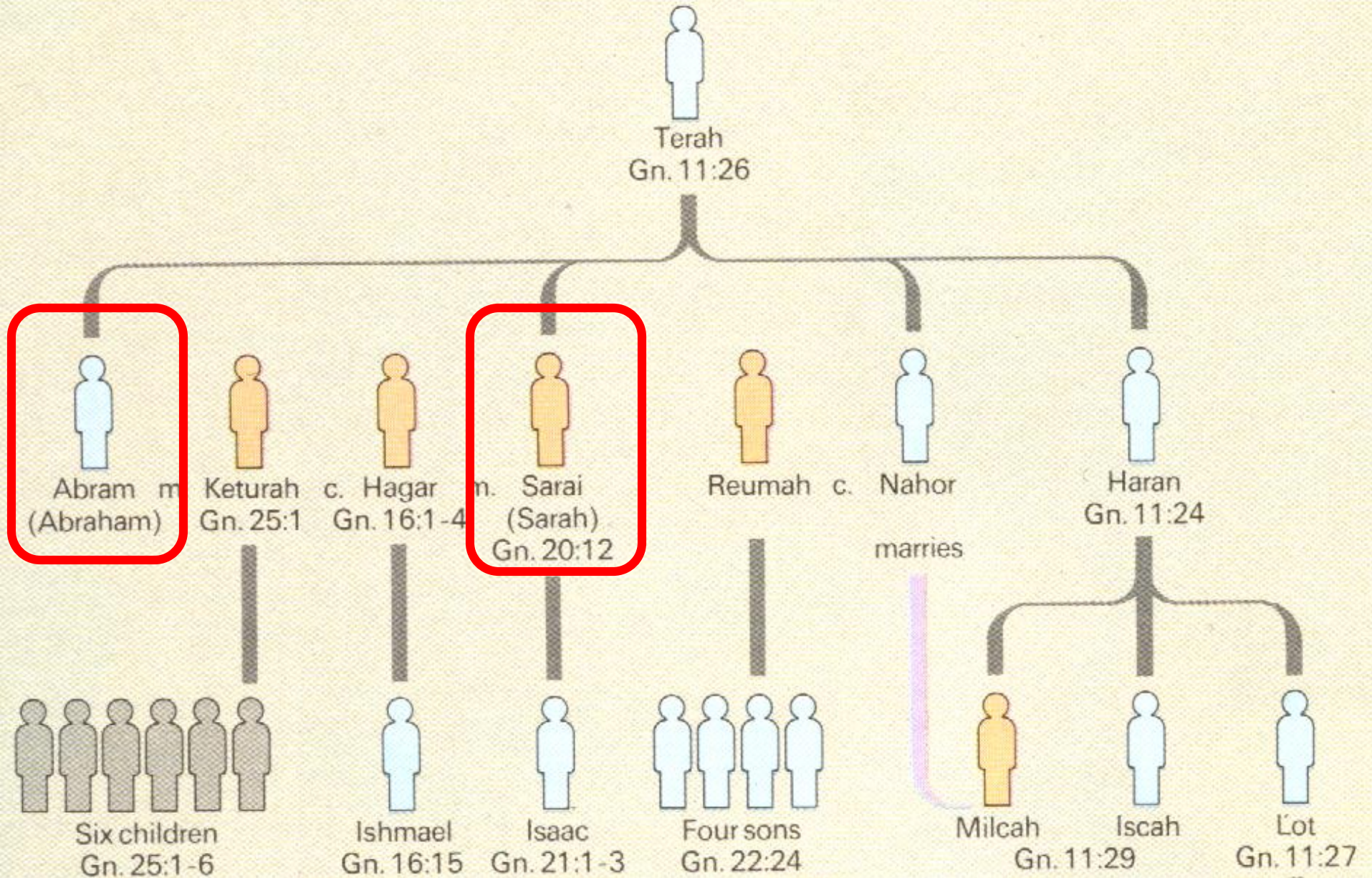
11 And it came to pass, when he was close to entering Egypt, that he said to Sarai his wife, "Indeed I know that you are a woman of beautiful countenance.

12 "Therefore it will happen, when the Egyptians see you, that they will say, 'This is his wife'; and they will kill me, but they will let you live.

13 "Please say you are my sister, that it may be well with me for your sake, and that I may live because of you."

In a challenging time, Abraham was kind

Terah's Family





Abram & Sarah work together



- Show kindness to each other:
 - “**please**” (NKJV & NASB) [12:13; 16:2]

1 Peter 3:7 (RSV)

7 Likewise you husbands, *live considerately with your wives*, bestowing honor on the woman as the weaker sex, *since you are joint heirs of the grace of life, in order that your prayers may not be hindered.*



Resolving Strife:



Genesis 13:2-8



2 Abram was very rich in livestock, in silver, and in gold.

5 Lot also, who went with Abram, had flocks and herds and tents.

6 **Now the land was not able to support them, that they might dwell together, for their possessions were so great that they could not dwell together.**

7 ***And there was strife between the herdsmen of Abram's livestock and the herdsmen of Lot's livestock.*** The Canaanites and the Perizzites then dwelt in the land.

8 So Abram said to Lot, "**Please let there be no strife between you and me**, and between my herdsmen and your herdsmen; **for we are brethren.**

Blessed are the peacemakers, for they will be called Sons of God (Mat 5:9)

Every family,
ecclesia & CYC
needs some!

blessed are the
peacemakers



Leadership Responsibilities for Parents and Ecclesial Leaders

- Must discuss big issues and then make decisions that will be ***best for the family or ecclesia***
- **Pray**: Ask for God's direction and blessing
- Commit to finding a solution ***so the children and sheep will not be lost***



Solution doesn't have to be equal
- find a compromise! It's better
to have a peaceful solution, but
can't compromise God's truth!

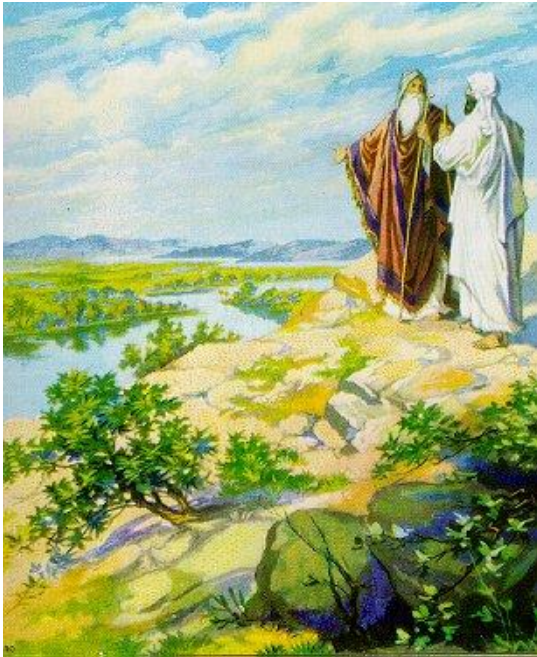
Making Choices

Genesis 13:10-11

10 And Lot lifted his eyes and saw all the plain of Jordan, that it was well watered everywhere (before the LORD destroyed Sodom and Gomorrah) like the garden of the LORD, like the land of Egypt as you go toward Zoar.

11 Then *Lot chose for himself* all the plain of Jordan, and Lot journeyed east. And they separated from each other.

Lot failed to choose for the long term good of his family!



Choices need to be made in prayer. Keep the spiritual welfare of everyone in mind. Think about the future. Pray for God's blessing.

Abraham's faith

Genesis 13:14-15

14 And the LORD said to Abram, after Lot had separated from him: "Lift your eyes now and look from the place where you are-- northward, southward, eastward, and westward;

15 **"for all the land which you see I give to you and your descendants forever.**



Abraham knew God would provide. Faith sees beyond the present. God will provide for you too!

The Power of Faith

Hebrews 11:1-2, 6

1 Now **faith** is the *substance of things hoped for*, the *evidence of things not seen*.

2 For by it the elders obtained a good testimony.

6 But *without faith it is impossible to please Him*, for he who comes to God must believe that He is, and that He is a rewarder of those who diligently seek Him.

Faith allows us to make hard choices for the future & accept what God brings into our lives - because we need it. Let others choose first: at home, at work, in the ecclesia. Faith empowers us to accept what God gives us. Faith believes God gives each of us what we need to be in His family

Genesis 14:1-3

1 And it came to pass in the days of Amraphel king of Shinar, Arioch king of Ellasar, Chedorlaomer king of Elam, and Tidal king of nations,

2 that they made war with Bera king of Sodom, Birsha king of Gomorrah, Shinab king of Admah, Shemeber king of Zeboiim, and the king of Bela (that is, Zoar).

3 All these joined together in the Valley of Siddim (that is, the Salt Sea).



God gave Lot a warning! Get out of Sodom!
We need to learn to read the signs of life.

Abraham immediately set out to rescue Lot (at night). No hesitation! No "I warned you" or "I told you so!" or "Lot got what he deserved!"

This was faith and love in action!



Abraham was motivated by Love

1 Corinthians 13:4-7 (RSV)

4 *Love is patient and kind;* love is not jealous or boastful;

5 *it is not arrogant or rude. Love does not insist on its own way; it is not irritable or resentful;*

6 it does not rejoice at wrong, but rejoices in the right.

7 Love bears all things, believes all things, hopes all things, endures all things.

Love is not an academic research topic! It is part of God's character that must be revealed in us. "We know love because He first loved us" (1 Jn 4:19)





Abraham paid Tithes



Genesis 14:16-24

16 So he brought back all the goods, and also brought back his brother Lot and his goods, as well as the women and the people.

18 Then Melchizedek king of Salem brought out bread and wine; he was the priest of God Most High.

19 And he blessed him and said: "Blessed be Abram of God Most High, Possessor of heaven and earth;

20 And blessed be God Most High, who has delivered your enemies into your hand." *And he gave him a tithe of all.*



Tithes should not be exacted, because they represent our appreciation to God for all He has done for us. We need to decide in advance, or we might just give very little on the spot.

For God loves a cheerful giver (2 Cor 9:7)



Giving Back to God

Genesis 28:20-22

20 Then Jacob made a vow, saying, "If God will be with me, and keep me in this way that I am going, and give me bread to eat and clothing to put on,

21 "so that I come back to my father's house in peace, then the LORD shall be my God.

22 "And this stone which I have set as a pillar shall be God's house, and of all that You give me I will surely give a tenth to You."

1 Corinthians 16:2

2 On the first day of the week let each one of you lay something aside, storing up as he may prosper, that there be no collections when I come.



Under the Law: 10% off the top + gifts of kindness + voluntary offerings. Opportunity to help the poor.

We can give more than we think. Involves changes to our lifestyle. Best to start when we are young!

Sarah's Plan

Genesis 16:1-4

1 Now Sarai, Abram's wife, had borne him no children. And she had an Egyptian maidservant whose name was Hagar.

2 So Sarai said to Abram, "**See now, the LORD has restrained me from bearing children. Please, go in to my maid; perhaps I shall obtain children by her.**" And Abram heeded the voice of Sarai.

3 Then Sarai, Abram's wife, took Hagar her maid, the Egyptian, and gave her to her husband Abram to be his wife, after Abram had dwelt ten years in the land of Canaan.

4 So he went in to Hagar, and she conceived. And when she saw that she had conceived, her mistress became despised in her eyes.



Both Abraham & Sarah agreed on the plan. Sarah had a good motive (offspring to fulfill the promises), but it backfired! Note how Abraham & Sarah worked it out!



Abraham & Sarah work it out together

Genesis 16:5-6

5 Then Sarai said to Abram, "My wrong be upon you! I gave my maid into your embrace; and when she saw that she had conceived, I became despised in her eyes. The LORD judge between you and me."

6 So Abram said to Sarai, "**Indeed your maid is in your hand; do to her as you please.**" And when Sarai dealt harshly with her, she fled from her presence.

Great opportunity for Abraham to blame Sarah! Abraham doesn't demand his "right way to handle it". He allows Sarah to deal with Hagar as she pleases. Lets Sarah work it out and accepts her solution.



Choices when things go bad:

1) Point our finger and blame.

Criticize: *“I told you so”,*

refuse to talk, but talk a lot to others

2) Accept mistakes, respond in love,

Be supportive in finding a solution



James 3:2 (RSV)

“for we all make many mistakes”



Mistakes are an opportunity for us to extend kindness and compassion. Someone else may have made a mistake, but God is watching to see how we will respond! Don't sit around and condemn - get involved to help!



Forgiveness isn't something you do
for others, you do it so you can
get well and move forward



Forgiveness
Sets You Free!





The Angels visit

Genesis 18

1 Then the LORD appeared to him by the terebinth trees of Mamre, as he was sitting in the tent door in the heat of the day.

2 So he lifted his eyes and looked, and behold, three men were standing by him; and when he saw them, **he ran from the tent door to meet them**, and bowed himself to the ground,

3 and said, "My Lord, if I have now found favor in Your sight, do not pass on by Your servant.

4 "Please let a little water be brought, and wash your feet, and rest yourselves under the tree.

5 "And I will bring a morsel of bread, that you may refresh your hearts. After that you may pass by, inasmuch as you have come to your servant." They said, "Do as you have said."

Continued...

The Angels visit

Genesis 18

6 So Abraham hurried into the tent to Sarah and said, "Quickly, make ready three measures of fine meal; knead it and make cakes."

7 And Abraham ran to the herd, took a tender and good calf, gave it to a young man, and he hastened to prepare it.

8 So he took butter and milk and the calf which he had prepared, and set it before them; and he stood by them under the tree as they ate.

Continued...

Note the teamwork of Abraham & Sarah. Both support each other

The Faith of Abraham & Sarah

Genesis 18:10-12

10 And He said, "I will certainly return to you according to the time of life, and behold, Sarah your wife shall have a son." (Sarah was listening in the tent door which was behind him.)

11 Now Abraham and Sarah were old, well advanced in age; and Sarah had passed the age of childbearing.



12 Therefore Sarah laughed *within herself*, saying, "After I have grown old, shall I have pleasure, my lord being old also?"

Abraham took the spiritual lead. He did not weaken in faith, and he was fully convinced that God was able to do what He had promised (Rom 4:19-21)



1 Peter 3:1-7

1 Wives, likewise, *be submissive to your own husbands*, that even if some do not obey the word, they, without a word, may be won by the conduct of their wives,

2 when they observe your chaste conduct accompanied by fear.

3 Do not let your adornment be merely outward--arranging the hair, wearing gold, or putting on fine apparel--

4 rather *let it be the hidden person of the heart*, with the incorruptible beauty of a gentle and quiet spirit, *which is very precious in the sight of God*.

Continued...

**God knows how to make
relationships work! Trust Him!**

1 Peter 3:1-7

5 For in this manner, in former times, the holy women who trusted in God also adorned themselves, *being submissive to their own husbands,*

6 *as Sarah obeyed Abraham, calling him lord,* whose daughters you are if you do good and are not afraid with any terror.

7 Husbands, likewise, *dwell with them with understanding, giving honor to the wife,* as to the weaker vessel, and as being heirs together of the grace of life, *that your prayers may not be hindered.*



Sarah's relationship with Abraham is an example to follow. She thought of him as her "lord" - not just some lip service. Bad relationships hinders our prayers!

Abraham, the Friend of God

Genesis 18:17-19

17 And the LORD said, "Shall I hide from Abraham what I am doing,

18 "since Abraham shall surely become a great and mighty nation, and all the nations of the earth shall be blessed in him?

19 "For I have known him [*"I have become his intimate friend" (Roth)*], in order that he may command his children and his household after him, that they keep the way of the LORD, to do righteousness and justice, that the LORD may bring to Abraham what He has spoken to him."



Abraham was "the friend of God" (James 2:23). True friends let each other know what they are doing and don't hide their plans.



"No longer do I call you servants, for a servant does not know what his master is doing; but I have called you friends, for all things that I heard from My Father I have made known to you. (John 15:15)

Lessons from Abraham & Sarah

- Try to work as a team
- Live by faith – it will influence all our decisions and attitudes
- Do the right thing, regardless of past events
- Become a generous financial contributor
- God reads our thoughts on how we think about each other
- Accept mistakes...learn from them...help each other through them

Lot's bad Choices & God's Mercy



- **13:12** Pitched his tent as far as Sodom
- **14:12** dwelt in Sodom
- **19:1** sitting in the gate of Sodom

Probably had a large group originally

- **13:7** herdsmen quarreled with Abraham's
- **14:14** Abram had over 318 trained servants born in his house
- **18:24** Suppose there were 50 righteous

Lot knew the right way to go, but he lacked the foresight to see what his bad choices would cost!

Consequences of Lot's bad Choices: Genesis 19



- All that's left is:
 - Lot & his wife
 - 2 virgin daughters
 - 2 Sons-in-law (were to marry)
- Too late to influence his family (v.14)
- God shows Lot mercy (Vs 15-16)
- Lot's wife looks back (v.26)



Due to poor choices and bad planning, only Lot & his 2 daughters made it out of Sodom!

Pray for your Families!

Genesis 19:29

29 And it came to pass, when God destroyed the cities of the plain, that *God remembered Abraham, and sent Lot out* of the midst of the overthrow, when He overthrew the cities in which Lot had dwelt.



God does respond to prayers for the families of His saints. Job prayed for his family too (Job 1:5)

More bad choices for Lot

Genesis 19:30



30 Then Lot went up out of Zoar and **dwelt in the mountains**, and his two daughters were with him; for he was afraid to dwell in Zoar. **And he and his two daughters dwelt in a cave.**

- **Lot should have returned to Abraham**
 - Hard to admit bad choices to others – but it is very effective! (*Naomi when she returned*)
 - Make it easy for people to return!!!
- **Lot chooses to hide in a cave – away from all influences – another bad choice**
 - Ends up fathering 2 children by his daughters

[Home](#) [U.S.](#) [Business](#) [World](#) [Entertainment](#) [Sports](#) [Tech](#) [Politics](#) [Science](#) [Health](#) [Travel](#) [Most Popular](#)[Weight Loss](#) [Sexual Health](#) [Medications/Drugs](#) [Parenting/Kids](#) [Seniors/Aging](#) [Diseases/Conditions](#)

Search:

All News

Search

Advanced

Teens binge drink, government study finds

REUTERS 

Reuters Photo: Beer mugs are seen in a table in a file photo. Nearly half of all...

1 hour, 38 minutes ago

WASHINGTON (Reuters) - Nearly half of all U.S. high-school students admit to recently drinking alcohol illegally, and most of them were binge drinkers, according to a government survey published on Tuesday.

These binge drinkers -- who had five or more drinks in a row -- were more likely to have sex, fight, smoke or use drugs, the study by the Centers for Disease Control and Prevention found.

"Our study clearly shows that it's not just that students drink alcohol, but how much they drink that most strongly affects whether they experience other health and social problems," said Dr. Jacqueline Miller of the CDC's Alcohol Team, who led the study.

"It also underscores the importance of implementing effective strategies to prevent underage and binge drinking, such as enforcing the minimum legal drinking age and reducing alcohol marketing to youth, which can help us change social norms regarding the acceptability of underage and binge drinking."

Points worth noting:

- About half of high-schoolers drink illegally
- How much you drink at one time matters
- Binge drinkers more likely to

NEWS ALERTS

Get an alert when there are new stories about:

☐ CDC[Add Selected Alerts](#)[» More Alerts](#)

ELSEWHERE ON THE WEB

CNN.COM

Physical abuse leads to adult depression, study



Alcohol in Genesis

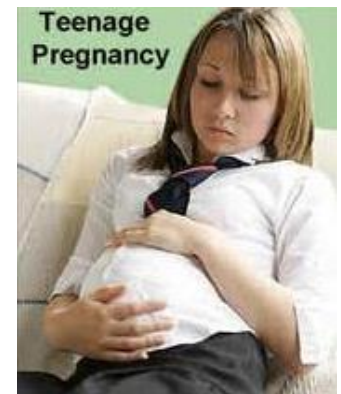
It clouds judgment &
removes inhibitions



- **Gen 9:21** Noah became drunk and Ham came in his tent
- **Gen 19:33** Lot's daughters got him drunk and he fathered children by them
- **Gen 29:22** Probably involved in Jacob not realizing that he had gone in to Leah



God can forgive us of our
mistakes, but we still live
with the consequences of our
actions when our judgment is
clouded by alcohol





Consequences of Lot's bad choices



- 1) Lost his wife, most of his household
- 2) Lost his home and possessions
- 3) Lost touch with Abraham (the ecclesia)
- 4) Became depressed and wanted isolation
- 5) Impregnated his own two daughters



Achan



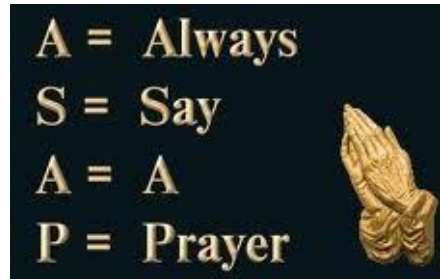
Prodigal
Son



Dinah &
Shechem

It's hard to make Good Choices

- **Must overcome our embarrassment & pride** – (like prodigal son)
 - Like Naomi returning home (Ruth 1)
- **May need to pull out of depression,** discouragement and despair from other bad choices
- **Turn to God** – pray for His help!
- **Turn to your ecclesia** – Ask for help!



True children in God's family rejoice when struggling family members return. They are helpful, supportive and understanding. This is their opportunity to show God's love!

*"Your friendship is a gift
I enjoy opening every day."*



Help your friends make good choices!



Contrast Lot's Wife & Sarah:

Genesis 19 and 20



Righteous men with totally different wives

- **Lot's wife**: hanging on to Sodom, dragging the family down with her
- **Sarah**: willing to put her life on the line to save her husband

He who finds a wife finds a good thing,
And obtains favor from the Lord.
(Proverbs 18:22)

Family-Life Lessons from Lot

- Learn to think long-term - not quick, easy decisions
- Watch and learn from the events of our lives. God does talk to us through experiences and warn us.
- If things go bad....get back involved in the ecclesia
- Spiritual influence on our family must happen now!
- God is merciful....but there is a limit
- Bad spiritual decisions can cost us our Family!
- If we don't actively seek spiritual friendships... we slowly migrate away from the family of God

Next Class



We'll look at lessons
from the lives of
Isaac & Rebekah

Family Life Lessons in Genesis



Class 4: Isaac & Rebekah

Trust in the Lord with all your heart, and lean not on your own understanding; In all your ways acknowledge Him, and He shall direct your paths. (Proverbs 3:5-6)

Isaac had a rough beginning!



Maybe you have too!



Childhood Persecution

Genesis 21:8-10

8 So the child grew and was weaned. And Abraham made a great feast on the same day that Isaac was weaned.

9 And Sarah saw the son of Hagar the Egyptian, whom she had borne to Abraham, scoffing.

10 Therefore she said to Abraham, "Cast out this bondwoman and her son; for the son of this bondwoman shall not be heir with my son, namely with Isaac."

Ishmael probably made fun of Isaac all along as son of "old woman & old man".

Persecution can have Positive Results:

Depends on our attitude



- Reminds us we are not in control
- Forces us to consider what really is important
- Teaches us to rely on God
- Develops faith when we trust God knows what He is doing & will bring good out of bad situations



And we know that God causes all things to work together for good to those who love God, to those who are called according to His purpose. (Rom 8:28 NASB)

God chastens His children

Hebrews 12:5-7, 11

5 And you have forgotten the exhortation which speaks to you as to sons: **"My son, do not despise the chastening of the Lord, nor be discouraged when you are rebuked by Him;**

6 For whom the Lord loves He chastens, and scourges every son whom He receives."

7 If you endure chastening, God deals with you as with sons; for what son is there whom a father does not chasten?

11 Now no chastening seems to be joyful for the present, but painful; nevertheless, **afterward it yields the peaceable fruit of righteousness to those who have been trained by it.**

God uses chastening like our Parents did, for our good, that we might share His holiness

Abraham & Sarah worked together



- Sarah wants Hagar & Ishmael out
- Abraham is distressed
- God assures Abraham
- Abraham does what Sarah wants

Galatians 4:28-30

28 Now we, brethren, as Isaac was, are children of promise.

29 But, as he who was born according to the flesh then persecuted him who was born according to the Spirit, even so it is now.

30 ***Nevertheless what does the Scripture say?*** "Cast out the bondwoman and her son, for the son of the bondwoman shall not be heir with the son of the freewoman."

Genesis 22 - Obedience

1 Now it came to pass after these things that God tested Abraham, and said to him, "Abraham!" And he said, "Here I am."

2 And He said, "Take now your son, your only son Isaac, whom you love, and go to the land of Moriah, and offer him there as a burnt offering on one of the mountains of which I shall tell you."

3 So Abraham rose early in the morning and saddled his donkey, and took two of his young men with him, and Isaac his son; and he split the wood for the burnt offering, and arose and went to the place of which God had told him.



Abraham was obedient to his Heavenly Father, and Isaac followed with his obedience to his Father.

**Obedience to Parents is the basis
later for obedience to God**

Ephesians 6:1-3

1 Children, obey your parents in the Lord, for this is right.

2 "Honor your father and mother,"
which is the first commandment with
promise:

3 "that it may be well with you and
you may live long on the earth."

**Applies to our parents' guidance on friendships,
school, Bible readings, dating, college, etc.**

Obedience - Parents

1 Samuel 15:22-23

22 Then Samuel said: "Has the LORD as great delight in burnt offerings and sacrifices, as in obeying the voice of the LORD? Behold, *to obey is better than sacrifice*, and to heed than the fat of rams.

23 *For rebellion is as the sin of witchcraft*, and stubbornness is as iniquity and idolatry. Because *you have rejected the word of the LORD*, he also has rejected you from being king."

Obedience is the best gift we can
offer our heavenly Father



God expects obedience!



Acts 5:29 Obey God rather than men

Rom 6:10 Slaves: of Sin or of God

Heb 5:9 Salvation to all who obey Him

Heb 3:18 those who did not obey

1Pet 1:14 As obedient children



**Faith: Obey God even when we don't
understand! Ask for wisdom to
understand our trials (James 1:5)**

Obedience has always been God's goal

Jeremiah 7:21-24 (NIV)

21 "This is what the Lord Almighty, the God of Israel, says: Go ahead, add your burnt offerings to your other sacrifices and eat the meat yourselves!

22 For when I brought your forefathers out of Egypt and spoke to them, **I did not just give them commands about burnt offerings and sacrifices,**

23 but I gave them this command: **Obey me, and I will be your God and you will be my people.** Walk in all the ways I command you, that it may go well with you.

24 **But they did not listen or pay attention; instead, they followed the stubborn inclinations of their evil hearts.**

God expects obedience from us!

Jesus is our ultimate example of Faith

Hebrews 12:1-4 (NASB)

Therefore, since we have so great a cloud of witnesses surrounding us, **let us also lay aside every encumbrance and the sin which so easily entangles us, and let us run with endurance the race that is set before us, 2 fixing our eyes on Jesus, the author and perfecter of faith (NOT “our faith”),** who for the joy set before Him endured the cross, despising the shame, and has sat down at the right hand of the throne of God.

3 For consider Him who has endured such hostility by sinners against Himself, so that you will not grow weary and lose heart.

Jesus' faith motivated his obedience

Faith that leads to obedience

Romans 1:1-6 (NASB)

1 Paul, a bond-servant of Christ Jesus, called as an apostle, set apart for the gospel of God, 2 which He promised beforehand through His prophets in the holy Scriptures, 3 concerning His Son, who was born of a descendant of David according to the flesh, 4 who was declared the Son of God with power by the resurrection from the dead, according to the Spirit of holiness, Jesus Christ our Lord, 5 **through whom we have received grace and apostleship to bring about the obedience of faith among all the Gentiles for His name's sake,** 6 among whom you also are the called of Jesus Christ;

Paul understood that God's grace is what stimulates our Faith to generate obedience to God

Romans 3:26 (KJV)

To declare, I say, at this time his righteousness: that he might be just, and the justifier of *him which believeth in Jesus.*



Romans 3:26 (Greek)

"Him who is of the faith of Jesus;" (see NASBmg)

Everyone is saved
by faith



Romans 4:12, 16



12 and the father of circumcision those who not only are of the circumcision, but who also **walk in the steps of the faith which our father Abraham had** while still uncircumcised.

16 Therefore it is of faith that it might be according to grace, so that the promise might be sure to all the seed, not only to those who are of the law, but also to **those who are of the faith of Abraham,** who is the father of us all.

Abraham had the faith of Jesus

God justifies those who have the faith of Jesus

Rom 4:16

τῷ	ἐκ	πίστεως	Ἀβραάμ,
to that	of	the faith	of Abraham;
<u>3588</u>	<u>1537</u>	<u>9999</u>	<u>4102</u> <u>11</u>
toó	ek	písteoos	Abraám

Rom 3:26

τὸν	ἐκ πίστεως	Ἰησοῦ.
of him	which believeth	in Jesus.
<u>3588</u>	<u>9999</u>	<u>1537</u> <u>4102</u> <u>2424</u>
tón	ek písteoos	Ieesoú

Faith has always been the key!

Hebrews 11:6

6 But without faith it is impossible to please Him, for he who comes to God must believe [“be faithing”] that He is, and that He is a rewarder of those who diligently seek Him.

[faith that motivates us to do God's will]

God has always only had one method of salvation – faith in His ability to do what is impossible for us – turn us into His children



THE POWER OF FAITH

To change us!

A Wife for Isaac (Genesis 24)

23:2 Sarah is now dead

24:2-3 Abraham has Eliezar swear he won't let Isaac marry a Canaanite

27:46; 28:1 Rebekah later on reminds Isaac to do same for Jacob

26:34 Esau had already married 2 Hittite women

24:6 Don't take Isaac back there! (Abraham knew)

Isaac was the only patriarch to not leave the land

24:12 Eliezar prays, Abraham prays, Isaac prays (24:63)



**Good choices & Godliness
requires effort, planning and
lots of prayer by Godly parents
- it doesn't happen by itself!**

Exhortations to Parents

- We must plan for the spiritual health of our children
- We must get Bible readings done at home
- We must get our kids out to Sunday School, CYC, weekend gatherings
- We must invite kids from meeting over to our homes
- We must make it clear to our children that doing God's will is the most important goal of **our** lives



Work out your own salvation with fear and trembling; for it is God who works in you both to will and to do for His good pleasure. (Phil 2:12-13)

Marriages should be "in the Lord"

2 Corinthians 6:14-18 (RSV)

14 Do not be mismatched with unbelievers. For what partnership have righteousness and iniquity? Or what fellowship has light with darkness?

15 What accord has Christ with Be'lial? Or what has a believer in common with an unbeliever?

18 I will be a father to you, and you shall be my sons and daughters, says the Lord Almighty."

**God wants our marriages to
help us live as His children**



Eleazer travelled a long way so Isaac could marry a believer!

1 Corinthians 7:39

A wife is bound by law as long as her husband lives; but if her husband dies, she is at liberty to be married to whom she wishes, **only in the Lord.**



This is the goal for our children to grow up with both Mom and Dad directing them in the ways of the Lord. Remember what God said of Abraham:

"For I have known him, in order that he may command his children and his household after him, that they keep the way of the LORD, to do righteousness and justice, that the LORD may bring to Abraham what He has spoken to him." (Gen 18:19)

Marriages should be "in the Lord"

Then what does this mean about Dating?



- God wants us to marry a believer
- God expects us to date believers



Dating unbelievers is not Biblical.
It is playing with fire and
dynamite, and then expecting
God to save us out of the
resulting explosion!

Dating is not a game or recreation! Our spiritual future is at stake. Pray for help & guidance!

To the Unmarried (but considering marriage)



- Look and date among Godly believers
- Look for a spiritual partner who will love God (and you), no matter what happens
- Pray about it constantly
- Enter marriage knowing it will require daily work & compromise
- Don't expect a "Cinderella" marriage!



Do not be mismated with unbelievers. For what partnership have righteousness and iniquity? Or what fellowship has light with darkness? (2 Cor 6:14-16 RSV)

Marriages should be “in the Lord”

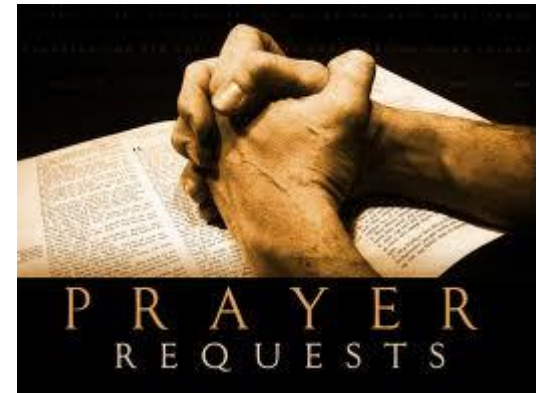


- The Family Unit is the basis for ecclesial life and life in God's family
- The aim is to get both Mom and Dad striving together for the hope of the gospel
- Marriages work best when you are heirs together of the grace of life.



Don't give up if mistakes are made. Pray for God to bring something good out of the situation and be ready to help.

Good Marriages are the result of Daily Prayer and effort!



- Pray for God's help and blessing
- Recognize it takes daily effort
- Read the Bible together
- Work on projects together
- Don't try to change your partner!
Change yourself
Let God change your partner



Marriage is a
work in progress!



Thank God for success!

Proverbs 19:14

Houses and riches are an inheritance from fathers, but **a prudent wife is from the LORD.**

Thank God daily for success in marriage. One plants, another waters, but it is God who gives the growth!

Notice the marriage commitment of both Isaac and Rebekah



- Accept unseen & unknown partners
- Motivated by faith in the God of Abraham
- Completely depended on God to make it work – not their own efforts



Successful marriages don't come by chance! Both partners are first committed to God, then depend on Him to bring forth fruit in their marriage.

Goals & emphasis today may be in the wrong place

- Lot's of looking and choosing by us
- Later leads to 2nd guessing: "I made a mistake"
"I married the wrong person"
- Too much emphasis put on expensive, elaborate weddings
 - The wedding doesn't make the marriage
 - 24:67 Isaac simply "brought Rebekah into his mother Sarah's tent"



RELAX!
GOD IS IN
CONTROL!!
PROVERBS 3:5

**Godly partners let
God make it work!**



Why Couples Don't Tie the Knot

Detroit News: April 12, 2000

*Many
longtime
partners
today
choose
to commit
without the
marriage
certificate,
and
make no
apologies*

By Rene Wisely
Special to The Detroit News

Kim Abruscato, 29, and Jeff Thompson, 28, have most of the trappings of a young professional couple: two college degrees, a house in the suburbs and a Great Dane named Spencer.

But one thing the pair from Redford Township doesn't have is a marriage certificate. They're among the growing number of couples who live together without the benefits of marriage.

"It has, in fact, become so prevalent that the majority of marriages and remarriages now begin as cohabiting relationships," says Pamela J. Smock, a sociologist at the University of Michigan Institute for Social Research.

The percentage of marriages preceded by cohabitation rose from about 10 percent for those marrying between 1965 and 1974 to more than 50 percent between 1990 and 1994, she says.

This "indicates how family life in the United States is being transformed, some argue radically, with legal marriage losing

its primacy as the manifest center of family ties," she says.

Marriage was once considered a rite of passage from adolescence to adulthood, says Dr. Joe Bavonese, a clinical psychologist and co-founder of the Relationship Institute, a Royal Oak counseling center. But now with half of marriages ending in divorce, couples approach it cautiously.

"I think you're seeing such an increase because living together is an opportunity to take marriage for a test drive," Bavonese says.

Abruscato and Thompson's test drive has lasted five years. While they are engaged, no wedding date is set.

"Marriage was never the goal of moving in together," Abruscato says. "We just loved each other and wanted a life together."

Still, she has difficulty explaining why they live like a married couple, complete with routines like going out for dinner every Friday, but have yet to tie the knot.

Times are changing

Once you review the facts of life in the '60s and '90s, it's clear we've changed tremendously.

Married couple households:

1960 74% 

1998 53% 

Female-headed households:

1960 8% 

1998 12% 

Average family size:

1960 3.70 

1998 3.18 

Households with two cars:

1960 19% 

1997 39% 

Median income for families:

1960 \$28,449* 

1998 \$46,737 

*1998 adjusted dollars

Married couple households

Average number of children:

1960 2.34 

1998 1.90 

Average number of children under age 18:

1960 1.39 

1998 .88 

Source: Population Reference Bureau,
U.S. Census Bureau

Please see Couples, Page 3E

Marriage is not like buying a car!



Trust in the Lord with all your heart,
and lean not on your own understanding



In all your ways acknowledge him, and
He will direct your paths (Prov 3:5-6)

God's way
requires Faith
that He will
keep it running!

Genesis 24:56-58

56 And he said to them, "Do not hinder me, since the LORD has prospered my way; send me away so that I may go to my master."

57 So they said, "We will call the young woman and ask her personally."

58 Then they called Rebekah and said to her, "Will you go with this man?" And she said, "**I will go.**"



- Rebekah lives “by faith”
- She responds to God’s work in her life
 - Leaves her family, home and friends
 - Accepts her new family & friends
 - Accepts her husband from God



Take it to God in Prayer

Genesis 25:21

Now Isaac pleaded with the LORD for his wife, because she was barren; and the LORD granted his plea, and Rebekah his wife conceived.

- Isaac pleads with God for Rebekah
- Didn't mistreat her, get angry at her, didn't ruin their marriage!
- Isaac took the problem direct to God
- **Patiently waited 20 years for the solution!** Godly solutions sometimes take time.



Isaac married Rebekah at 40 & Jacob born at 60



Favorite Children

Genesis 25:28



And Isaac loved Esau because he ate of his game, but Rebekah loved Jacob.

- Isaac shows parental weakness
- Favors the child who provides him with meat
- Some parents favor children who excel in school, work, sports, art, hobbies, etc – rather than Godliness!

**Appreciate
Godly Children!**



Copying the mistakes of others

Genesis 26:7



And the men of the place asked about his wife. And he said, "She is my sister"; for he was afraid to say, "She is my wife," because he thought, "lest the men of the place kill me for Rebekah, because she is beautiful to behold."



- Isaac & Rebekah try the same tactic Abraham & Sarah used
- May have been half-truth for Abraham & Sarah, but not for Isaac & Rebekah
- Be careful not to copy poor strategies of others – might not be right for us
- Rebekah does risk her life – for Isaac's sake



David wanted to treat Nabal the way Saul treated David



God blessed Isaac

Genesis 26:12

Then Isaac sowed in that land, and reaped in the same year a hundredfold; and the LORD blessed him.

- God blessed Isaac even during the famine (v.1)
- Gave Isaac 100-fold
- Philistines envy, angry, hate Isaac & then send him away



Isaac trusted God & looked for direction

Genesis 26:18



And Isaac dug again the wells of water which they had dug in the days of Abraham his father, for the Philistines had stopped them up after the death of Abraham. He called them by the names which his father had called them.

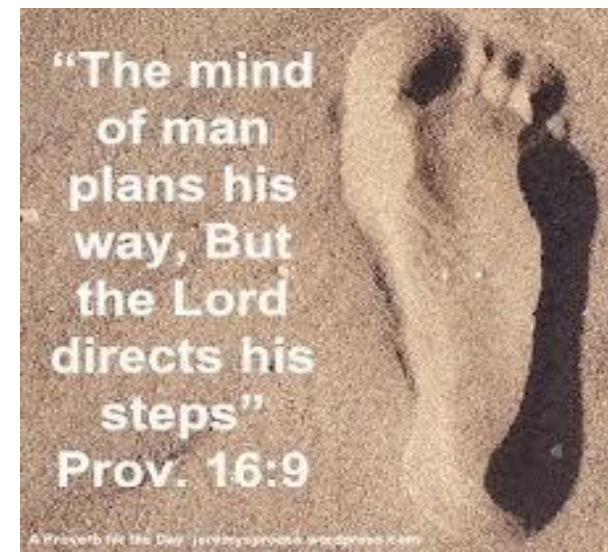
Trust in the Lord with all your heart.
And don't lean upon your
own understanding,
in all your ways acknowledge him,
and he will direct your paths.

Proverbs 3:5-6

- Isaac re-digs Abraham's wells
- Discovers well of running water – even better! (v.19)
- Herdsmen argue....so Isaac moves on!

Isaac's Wells: Reveal his approach to Life

- Tries to find a place to locate
- Doesn't demand his "rights"
- No fight, no lawyers – just keeps moving on
- Turned the other cheek! (Mat 5:39)
- Why? Believed God influenced his daily life
- Same for us: job, school, ecclesia, family, health, accidents, friendships,



Learn to look for God's influence in your life. Then, don't fight it!

Lessons from Isaac & Rebekah

- Persecution can have a good impact on us – if we respond in faith
- God wants obedience – not sacrifices and promises
- Obedience to parents is an opportunity to practice obedience to God
- Parents: we need to get our kids out to activities
- Look to date and marry “in the Lord”
- Take your problems to God, then patiently wait on Him.
- Remember Isaac’s wells – Look for God’s direction in the events of our lives

Next Class



We'll look at family
struggles through
the life of Jacob

Family Life Lessons in Genesis



Class 5: Jacob the Schemer

Trust in the Lord with all your heart, and lean not on your own understanding; In all your ways acknowledge Him, and He shall direct your paths. (Proverbs 3:5-6)

Showing Favoritism come us again!

Genesis 25:28

And Isaac loved Esau because he ate of his game, but Rebekah loved Jacob.

Romans 9:12-13

it was said to her, "The older shall serve the younger." As it is written, "Jacob I have loved, but Esau I have hated."



- **Warning to parents:** tendency to favor children who excel in things of this world!
 - We might enjoy their success
 - We might be reaching out to save them
- Creates rivalries among children
- Emphasizes the wrong goals



Jacob's scheming

- **Gen 25:33** Got Esau to sell his birthright
 - Jacob cared, Esau despised (Heb 12:16)
- **Gen 27** Jacob & Rebekah trick Isaac for the blessing
 - V.19 “I am Esau your firstborn”
 - V.20 The Lord your God brought it to me
 - V.24 Are you really Esau? “I am”
 - V.35 your brother came with deceit



Consequences: “So Esau hated Jacob” and wanted to kill him (v.41)



Rebekah reminds Isaac (46)

Genesis 27:46

And Rebekah said to Isaac, "I am weary of my life because of the daughters of Heth (26:34-45); if Jacob takes a wife of the daughters of Heth, like these who are the daughters of the land, what good will my life be to me?"

- Last recorded words of Rebekah
- She was a spiritual conscience for Isaac
- Discussed issue in private with Isaac
- Let Isaac handle the issue, but does speak up about the direction to go



Isaac's charge to Jacob

Genesis 28:1-4

1 Then Isaac called Jacob and blessed charged him, and said to him: "You shall wife from the daughters of Canaan.

2 "Arise, go to Padan Aram, to the house of Bethuel your mother's father; and take yourself a wife from there of the daughters of Laban your mother's brother.

3 "May God Almighty bless you, and make you fruitful and multiply you, that you may be an assembly of peoples;

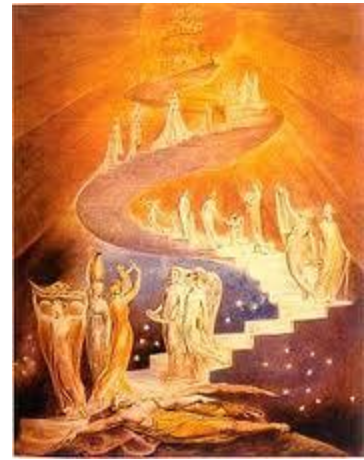


- Isaac steps up with spiritual counsel
- Children need loving direction
- Some situations need a geographic change - we may need to move our children to a better location for them
- May involve some self-sacrifice. Rebekah never sees Jacob again!

**you the blessing of Abraham, to you and
ants with you, that you may inherit the
you are a stranger, which God gave to**

God is working for us!

- **Gen 28:** Jacob was looking for God's help in his life – he dreamed about the ladder
 - V.15 God's assurance "I am with you"
 - V.20 Jacob's commitment (vow) – If you bring me back in peace, then Yahweh will be my God" [promises to give 10% back]
- **Gen 29** Jacob stops at a well, and Rachel (Rebekah's niece) just happens to be coming!



We don't need to do it all! Commit to God's service and he will do the impossible – "For it is God who works in you, both to will and to do for His good pleasure" (Philip 2:13)

Jacob waited 7 years for Rachel



Genesis 29:18-21

18 Now Jacob loved Rachel; so he said, "I will serve you seven years for Rachel your younger daughter."

19 And Laban said, "It is better that I give her to you than that I should give her to another man. Stay with me."

20 So Jacob served seven years for Rachel, and they seemed only a few days to him because of the love he had for her.

21 Then Jacob said to Laban, "Give me my wife, for my days are fulfilled, that I may go in to her."



- Sex should wait! Jacob was engaged for 7 years and waited for marriage. This should be the goal. *God knows what's best!*
- If young people mess up, we need to show patience, kindness & compassion – God will take care of the rest!

Reality check: 95 percent of Americans had premarital sex

POSTED: 8:42 p.m. EST, December 20, 2006



The likelihood of Americans having sex before marriage has remained stable since the 1950s, researchers said.

Adjust font size:

NEW YORK (AP) — More than nine out of 10 Americans, men and women alike, have had premarital sex, according to a new study. The high rates extend even to women born in the 1940s, challenging perceptions that people were more chaste in the past.

"This is reality-check research," said the study's author, Lawrence Finer. "Premarital sex is normal behavior for the vast majority of Americans, and has been for decades."

Finer is a research director at the Guttmacher Institute, a private New York-based think tank that studies sexual and reproductive issues and which disagrees with government-funded programs that rely primarily on abstinence-only teachings. The study, released Tuesday, appears in the new issue of Public Health Reports. ([Sex by the numbers](#))

The study, examining how sexual behavior before marriage has changed over time, was based on interviews conducted with more than 38,000 people — about 33,000 of them women — in 1982, 1988, 1995 and 2002 for the federal National Survey of Family Growth. According to Finer's analysis, 99 percent of the respondents had had sex by age 44, and 95 percent had done so before marriage.

Even among a subgroup of those who abstained from sex until at least age 20, four-fifths had had premarital sex by age 44, the study found.

Finer said the likelihood of Americans having sex before marriage has remained stable since the 1950s, though people now wait longer to get married and thus are sexually active as singles for extensive periods.

ADVERTISER LINKS

- [Natural Weight Loss](#)
- [Rapid Weight Loss](#)
- [Anti Aging Cream](#)
- [Dietary Supplements](#)

The Special K[®] Challenge

Kick start your weight loss journey with the Special K[®] Challenge.

www.specialk.com/challenge

[Pur-Hoodia Plus - South African Hoodia](#)

Seen nationally. Pur-Hoodia Plus - complete

God teaches Jacob about scheming

Genesis 29:25

So it came to pass in the morning, that behold, it was Leah. And he said to Laban, "What is this you have done to me? Was it not for Rachel that I served you? Why then have you deceived me?"

- God will make us face our weaknesses
 - Don't react in anger to God or others
 - Thank God that He is helping us to change
- We don't need to avenge ourselves on others
- We don't need to change others – we can only change ourselves





Jacob makes a choice!

Genesis 29:26-28

26 And Laban said, "It must not be done so in our country, to give the younger before the firstborn.

27 "Fulfill her week, and we will give you this one also for the service which you will serve with me still another seven years."

28 Then Jacob did so and fulfilled her week. So he gave him his daughter Rachel as wife also.

- He could have just accepted Leah as his only wife – tough choice after 7 years!
- God's flexibility – God worked through Jacob's decision to take Rachel too.
- Some choices are not easy or clear – but God can work in a situation either way





God is at work



Genesis 29:30-31

30 Then Jacob also went in to Rachel, and he also loved Rachel more than Leah. And he served with Laban still another seven years.

31 When the LORD saw that Leah was unloved, He opened her womb; but Rachel was barren.

- Jacob may have blamed Leah for going along with Laban's deceit
- God works behind the scenes – don't fight it, look for his direction, and then go with it
- Even during rough situations, be sure to treat everyone with love, kindness and compassion – this is our practice time for eternal life!



Envy & Jealousy will destroy us



Genesis 30:1

Now when Rachel saw that she bore Jacob no children, Rachel envied her sister, and said to Jacob, "Give me children, or else I die!"

Genesis 37:11

And his brothers envied him, but his father kept the matter in mind.

- Envy & jealousy can drive us to hate – and even murder
- This IS the devil – and must be fought
- Stem from a failure to believe that God has brought the situation on us – or a failure to accept we need it
- When it happens, look inside, rather than blaming others



And Jacob's anger was aroused against Rachel, and he said, "Am I in the place of God, who has withheld from you the fruit of the womb?" (Gen 30:2)



Scheming leads to Anger, Jealousy and Envy



Gen 27:41 Esau hated Jacob

Gen 29:31,33 Leah was hated

(Same Hebrew word in both verses)

Scheming is a short term solution, with bad long term consequences

Scheming stems from a belief that God needs us to work everything out because he can't or won't do it himself

Scheming leads to anger & hatred because the other parties know we set out purposely to deceive them





What a mess Jacob's life is!

- He had to leave those who loved him
- His brother Esau hates him
- He has 2 wives and 2 handmaids
- He has 12 children by 4 different women
- His family is full of jealousy, envy and anger
- He lives with an uncle who sells his daughters for profit and deceives his own family
- His children don't love God

Out of all this, God will grow a family
of faithful people who will be included
in God's family forever!



To Every Thing there is a
☆ ♥ Season, and ☆
A Time to every Purpose
☆ ♥ under Heaven.

God intervenes

Genesis 31:3-5

3 Then the LORD said to Jacob, "Return to the land of your fathers and to your family, and I will be with you."

4 So Jacob sent and called Rachel and Leah to the field, to his flock,

5 and said to them, "I see your father's countenance, that it is not favorable toward me as before; but the God of my father has been with me.

- When family issues were at their worst, God stepped in and told Jacob to go home
- Jacob met with both Rachel and Leah
- Jacob clearly gave God the credit for prospering him while with Laban (v.42)
- God warned Laban not to harm Jacob (v.24)



God makes Jacob face his past

Genesis 32:6-8

6 Then the messengers returned to Jacob, saying, "We came to your brother Esau, and he also is coming to meet you, and **four hundred men are with him.**"

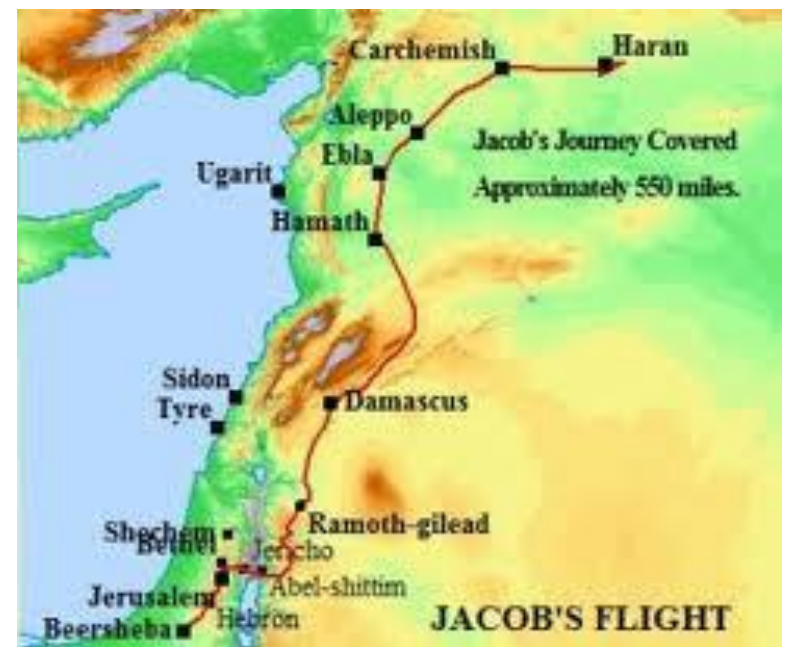
7 So Jacob was greatly afraid and distressed; and he divided the people that were with him, and the flocks and herds and camels, into two companies.

8 And he said, "If Esau comes to the one company and attacks it, then the other company which is left will escape."

- Angels bring events into our lives that make us face our past mistakes
- We must admit our mistakes and pray God will provide a mechanism to move forward
- Try to be helpful in moving forward, not arguing about the past



Jacob at the Jabbok River



From Haran to Bethel
was about 500 miles!



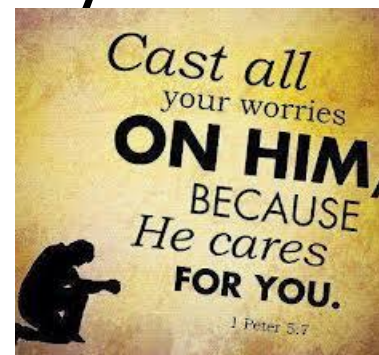
Jacob is in trouble!



- Laban is behind him
- Esau is in front of him
- His family is divided
- His children don't want God
- Rachel stole the household gods
- He's moving back home with a big family



When things get bad,
we need God the most!





Jacob wrestles with an Angel

Genesis 32:24-26

24 Then Jacob was left alone; and a Man wrestled with him until the breaking of day.

25 Now when He saw that He did not prevail against him, He touched the socket of his hip; and the socket of Jacob's hip was out of joint as He wrestled with him.

26 And He said, "Let Me go, for the day breaks." But he said, "I will not let You go unless You bless me!"



- **In Gen 28:14-15**, God had promised to bring Jacob back and give him the blessing of Abraham
- Now Jacob holds the angel all night and refuses to let go until He blesses Jacob's family



Hosea 12:2-5

2 The LORD also brings a charge against Judah, and will punish Jacob according to his ways; according to his deeds He will recompense him.

3 He took his brother by the heel in the womb, and in his strength he struggled with God.

4 Yes, **he struggled with the Angel and prevailed; he wept, and sought favor from Him.** He found Him in Bethel, and there He spoke to US--

5 That is, the LORD God of hosts. The LORD is His memorable name.

- Jacob pleaded with this angel to bless him and would not let go
- He prevailed, not by strength, but with tears
- This is the pattern for us – pleading with God to bless our families & ecclesias
- Same experience Jesus had (Heb 5:7)
 - Offered up prayers with loud cries & tears to Him who could save him from death



Don't forget to give God the credit!

Genesis 33:3-5, 11



3 Then he crossed over before them and bowed himself to the ground seven times, until he came near to his brother.

4 But Esau ran to meet him, and embraced him, and fell on his neck and kissed him, and they wept.

5 And he lifted his eyes and saw the women and children, and said, "Who are these with you?" And he said, "***The children whom God has graciously given your servant.***"

11 "Please, take my blessing that is brought to you, because ***God has dealt graciously with me***, and because I have enough." And he urged him, and he took it.

- God will help us face the issues of our past
- We must act in faith, but the victory belongs to God
- Be sure to thank God, and give him the praise and honor for helping us through our troubles

Every good gift and every perfect gift is from above.

James 1:17
(King James Version)

Lessons from Jacob's Life

- Give up scheming, take up praying for God's help
- Fathers: give good spiritual counsel to your children (Isaac to Jacob)
- God is actively working behind the scenes
- Make your choices with prayer and faith, asking God to make them work
- Give up the envy & jealousy – accept what God has given you
- Face the issues of the past – with God's help you will move forward
- When progress is made, be sure to give God the credit

Next: Class



We will look at how God caused bad events to work out for good in the life of Joseph & his brothers

Family Life Lessons in Genesis



Class 6: Joseph & his brothers

Trust in the Lord with all your heart, and lean not on your own understanding; In all your ways acknowledge Him, and He shall direct your paths. (Proverbs 3:5-6)

Have you ever considered?

Why did God allow Abraham to have two sons by two different women (Hagar & Sarah), and then make sure Isaac had twins by Rebekah?

Without Paul's NT commentary we may never have known!

Not all of Abraham's offspring are children of Abraham by Faith



Romans 9:6-8

6 But it is not that the word of God has taken no effect [God's plan has not failed!]. **For they are not all Israel who are of Israel,**

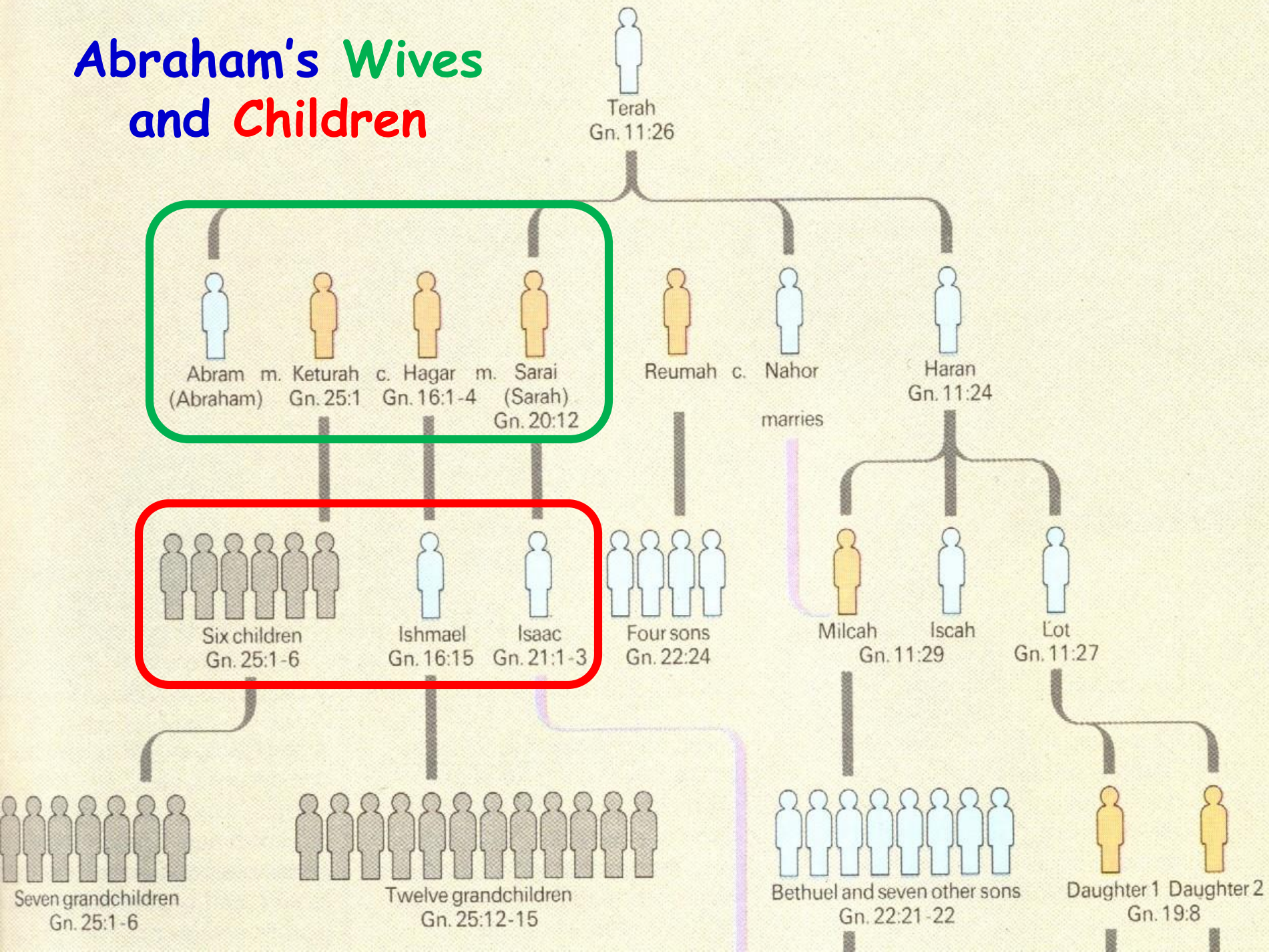
7 nor are they all children because they are the seed of Abraham; but, *"In Isaac your seed shall be called."*

8 That is, those who are the **children of the flesh**, these are not the children of God; but the **children of the promise** are counted as the seed.

So far: Not all of Abraham's children are God's children



Abraham's Wives and Children



God's Election

One man,
two women,
(Hagar was a
bondswoman)

God doesn't call
Ishmael

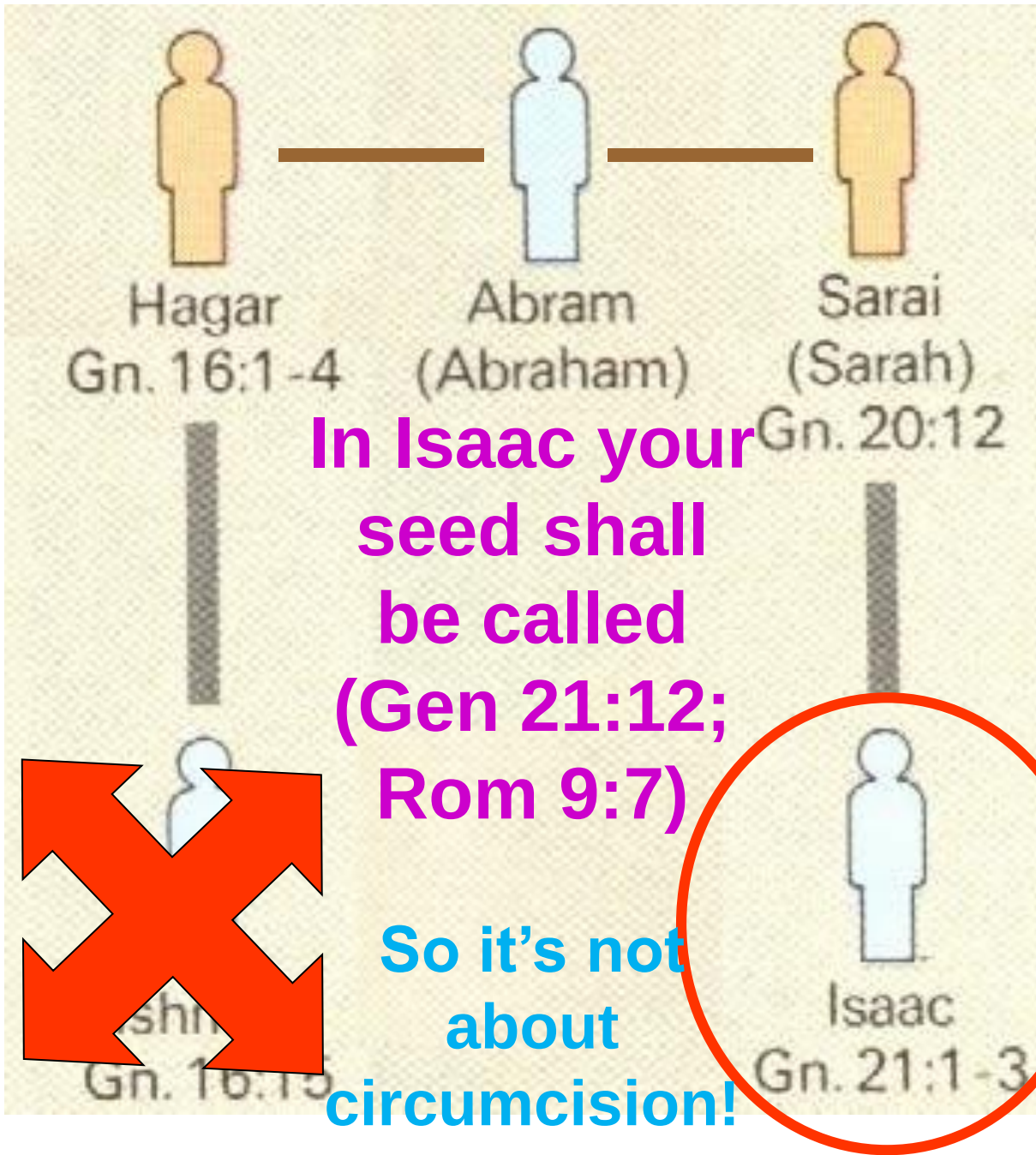
Abraham's son
(Gen 21:11-14)

Which one was
circumcised?

BOTH!

In Isaac your
seed shall
be called
(Gen 21:12;
Rom 9:7)

So it's not
about
circumcision!



God can choose who He wants

Romans 9:9

9 For this is the word of **promise**: "At this time **I will come** and Sarah shall have a son."

It's all of God! It's His election!
It's God's family.
He chose to include Isaac.

God tried to make His point clear

Romans 9:10-13

10 And not only this, but when Rebecca also had conceived by **one man**, even by our father Isaac

11 **(for the children not yet being born, nor having done any good or evil, that the purpose of God according to election might stand, not of works but of Him who calls),**

12 it was said to her, "The older shall serve the younger."

13 As it is written, "**Jacob I have loved, but Esau I have hated.**"

God made His choice before the kids
had done anything good or evil

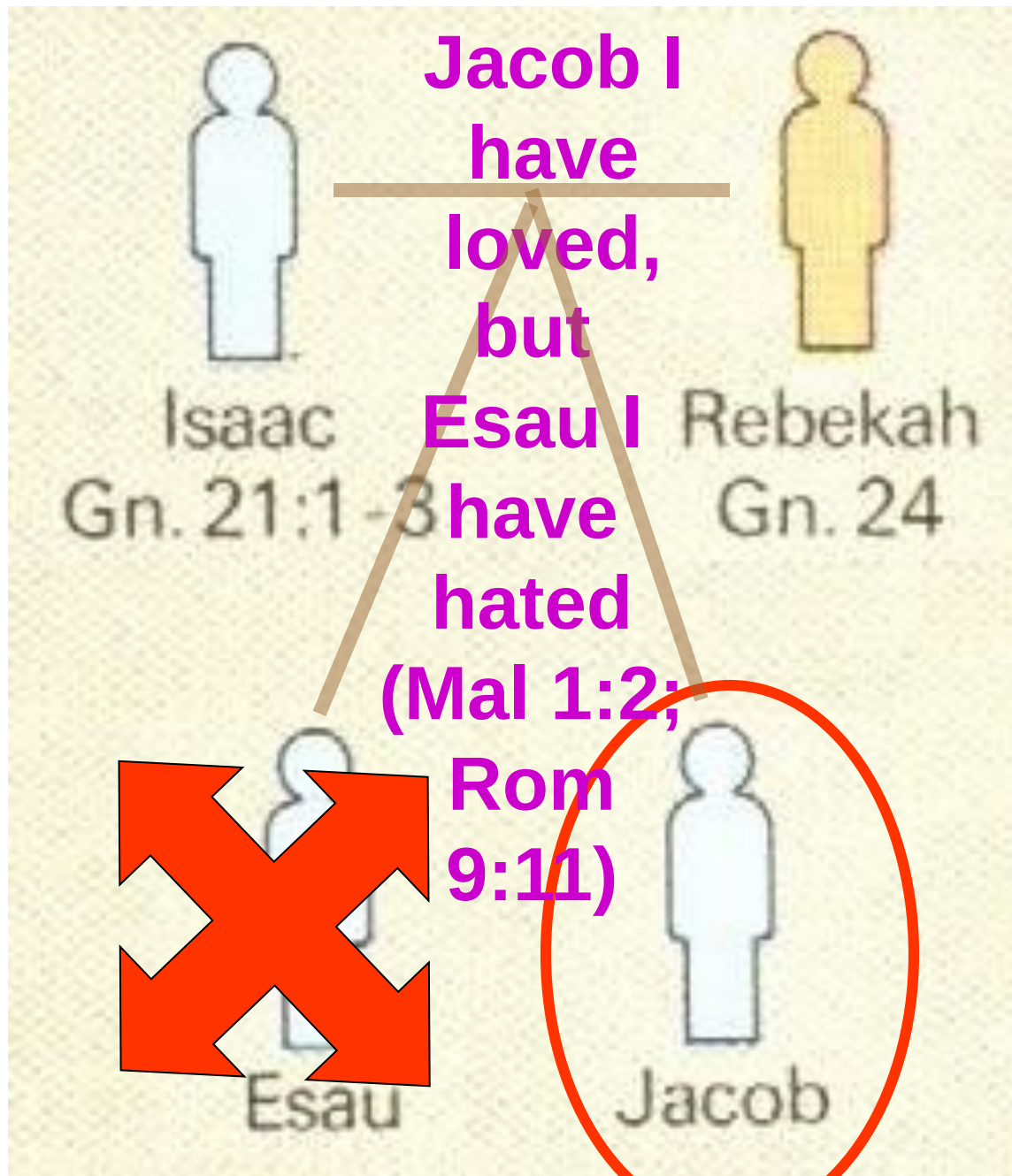
God's Election

One man,
one wife

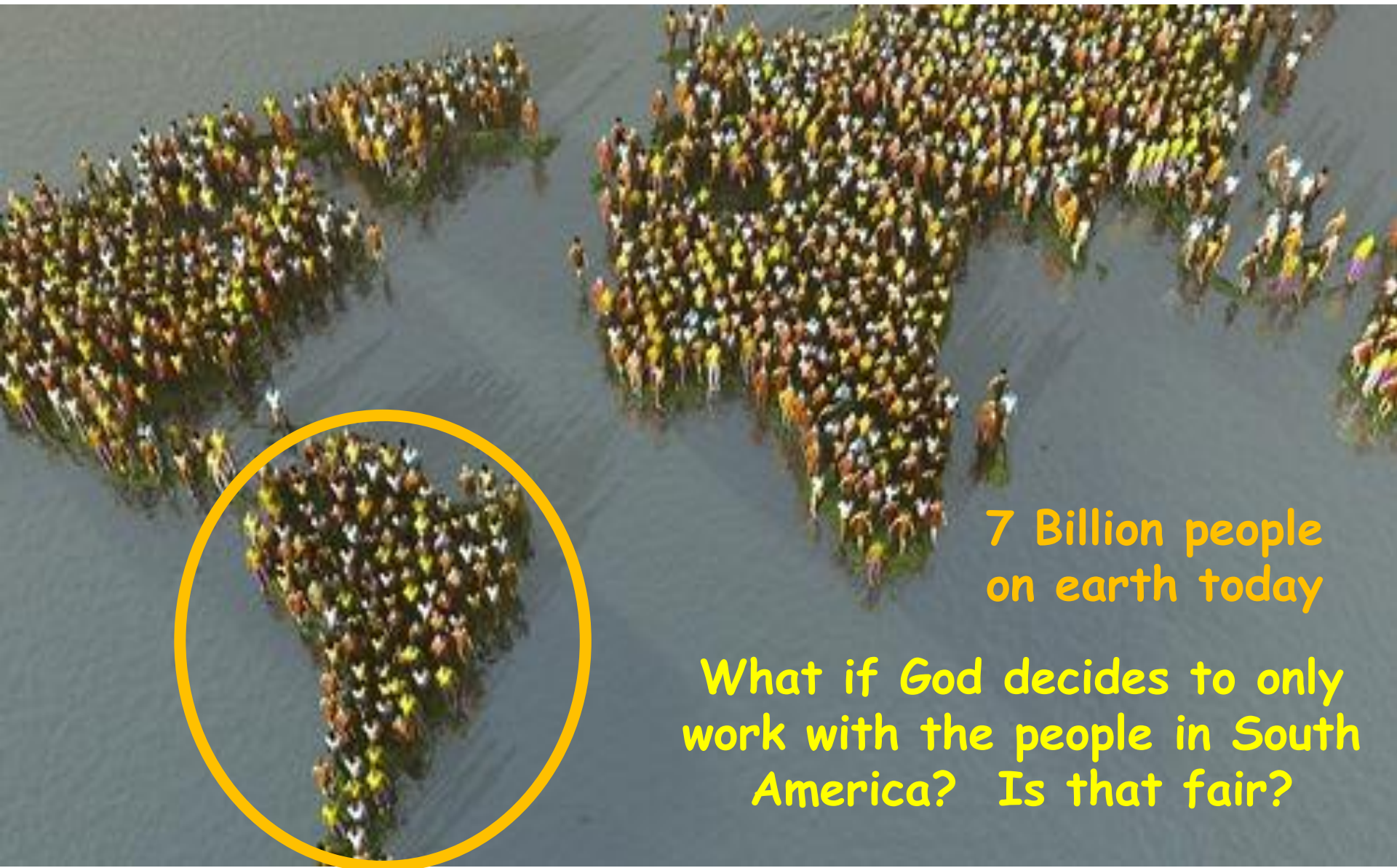
Two boys born at
the same time!

God made his
selection before
they had done
anything!

His selection
involved 2 nations!
Not just 2 boys!
(Malachi 1:2-3)



God's Election: He's the potter



7 Billion people
on earth today

What if God decides to only
work with the people in South
America? Is that fair?

God's Family.....God's Choice

Romans 9:14-18 (NIV)

14 **What then shall we say? Is God unjust? Not at all!** 15 For he says to Moses,

"I will have mercy on whom I have mercy, and I will have compassion on whom I have compassion."

16 **It does not, therefore, depend on man's desire or effort, but on God's mercy.** 17 For the Scripture says to Pharaoh: "I raised you up for this very purpose, that I might display my power in you and that my name might be proclaimed in all the earth." 18 **Therefore God has mercy on whom he wants to have mercy, and he hardens whom he wants to harden.**

Paul got it right because he had lived through it

Implications for our children

- **Always pray for them,** that God will choose to include them in His family
- **Do everything you can to teach them God's ways,** but also realize that it's God's choice
- **If they do choose God's family,** thank God and appreciate what He has done for them
- **Never give up!** God sometimes waits till later in life to open the eyes of our children

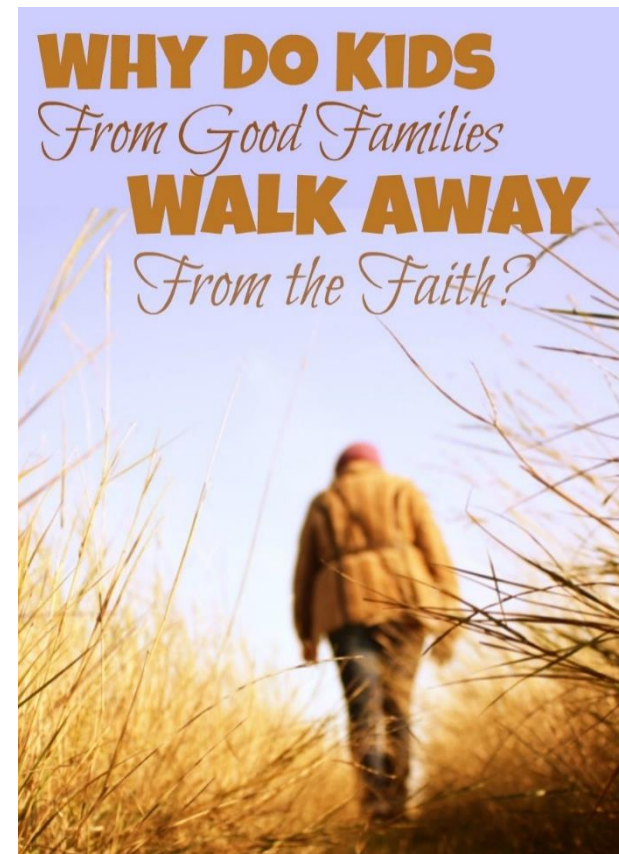


Remember Abraham's & Isaac's families!

Brings some peace to those whose children have not all accepted God's Truth

- Abraham pleaded for Ishmael
- Isaac loved Esau and wanted him included
- David's family was a disaster
- God has to remind every generation that it's His family and He will call who He wants

**This is not the same as Cain & Abel.
God tried to work with them both!**



Pray for your
family, ecclesia
and friends!



Ask God to
graciously include
them in His election!



Joseph's Family Background

- **29:31-30:24 Rachel & Leah:** envy, jealousy
 - Not happy with what God gave them
- **32:1 Dinah:** went out to see daughters of Canaan – taken by Shechem
 - Get too close to this world & it will get us
- **34:13 Brothers** “spoke deceitfully”
- **34:25 Simeon & Levi** killed males in Shechem, plundered city
 - 34:30 Jacob said: you make me obnoxious





Joseph's Family Background



- **35:1-2** put away foreign gods – go to Bethel
- **35:22** Reuben had sexual relations with Bilhah (Jacob's concubine)
- **38:1** Judah – business man, immoral, unkind, quick to condemn

Joseph could have made all the excuses in the world for why he could not make godly decisions, but he resisted, and did God's will!



Joseph's Early Life

- He grew up with jealous Moms.
- His sister wanted to try the world.
- His brothers were violent, and quick to judge and condemn
- He had foreign gods in the family.
- His brothers were immoral.
- His brothers were lost in business.
- His brothers hated him.
- His brothers envied him.



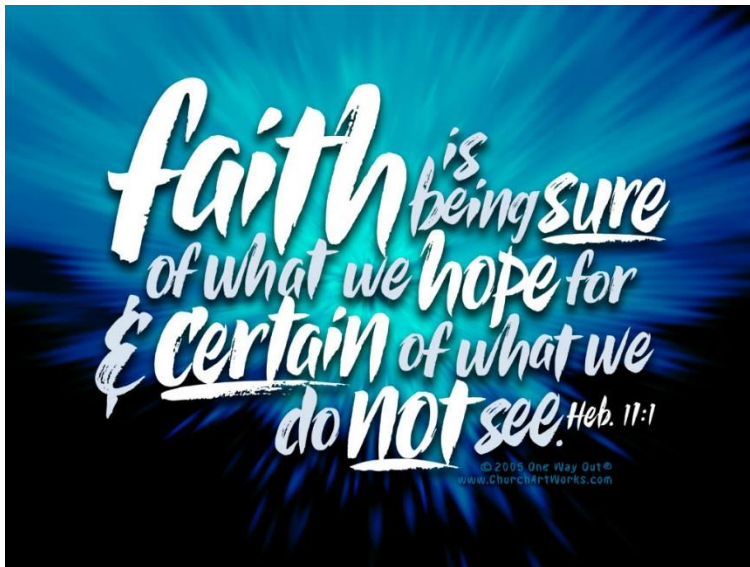
Maybe your
family is not
so bad!



Joseph's Attitude



- Didn't use bad family as excuse for
- Didn't pout and feel sorry for himself
- Didn't hate his brothers, Dad or Mom
- Didn't take out his frustrations on others



Through the eye
of faith, he saw
God working in his
life, & He set out
to save his family!

How did Joseph get such a great attitude?



- Daily prayer: took problems to God
- Developed a great relationship with God
- Probably had good discussions with Jacob
- Drove jealousy, envy, condemnation away
- Trusted God to do the impossible – faith!



With God's help,
we can do it too!

Joseph's attempts to help only backfire!

Genesis 37:3-11

Now **Israel loved Joseph more than all his children**, because he was the son of his old age. Also he made him a tunic of many colors. 4 But **when his brothers saw that their father loved him more than all his brothers, they hated him and could not speak peaceably to him.**

5 Now Joseph had a dream, and he told it to his brothers; and **they hated him even more.** 6 So he said to them, "Please hear this dream which I have dreamed: 7 There we were, binding sheaves in the field. Then behold, my sheaf arose and also stood upright; and indeed your sheaves stood all around and bowed down to my sheaf."

His brothers misread his motives

Joseph's attempts to help only backfire!

Genesis 37:3-11

8 And his brothers said to him, "Shall you indeed reign over us? Or shall you indeed have dominion over us?" **So they hated him even more for his dreams and for his words.**

9 Then he dreamed still another dream and told it to his brothers, and said, "Look, I have dreamed another dream. And this time, the sun, the moon, and the eleven stars bowed down to me."

10 So he told it to his father and his brothers; and his father rebuked him and said to him, "What is this dream that you have dreamed? Shall your mother and I and your brothers indeed come to bow down to the earth before you?" 11 **And his brothers envied him, but his father kept the matter in mind.**

God's way requires lots of patience!

His brothers Hated and Envied him



- Joseph was Jacob's favorite – so his brothers hated him even more (Gen 37:3-4)
- Joseph's dreams may have eventually encouraged him, but it made his brothers hate & envy him even more (37:8, 11)
- Jacob kept the dreams in his mind, but didn't know what they meant
- Joseph had to patiently wait for God to slowly change his brothers – He didn't give up!

**Trust in the Lord with all your heart &
lean not on your own understanding**

God tested Joseph thru suffering

Psalm 105:17-19

17 He sent a man before them —
Joseph — who was sold as a slave.

18 They hurt his feet with fetters, He
was laid in irons.

19 Until the time that his word came to
pass, **the word of the Lord tested him.**

**God was chastening Joseph as God does
to all His children (Heb 12:5-6)**

Joseph was faithful to God's morals

Genesis 39:8-9

8 **But he refused** and said to his master's wife, "Look, my master does not know what is with me in the house, and he has committed all that he has to my hand. 9 There is no one greater in this house than I, nor has he kept back anything from me but you, because you are his wife. **How then can I do this great wickedness, and sin against God?"**

All on his own, in a foreign land, Joseph maintained God's high moral standards, fully aware of the angels who were with him



*Do not be
deceived....*

**Your character is
who you are when no
one else is watching**



**Faith
allows us
to see the
invisible
and act
on it**

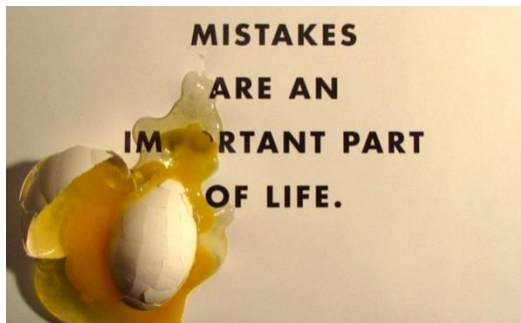
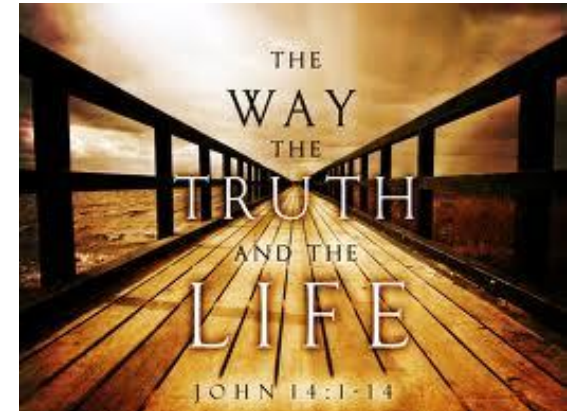


**The eyes of the Lord are in
every place, keeping watch on
the evil and the good**



God brings the Famine (Gen 42)

- **Jacob sends 10 to Egypt**
 - Simeon has to stay, others go home
- **42:15 Joseph starts the test**
 - V. 16 “any truth”
 - V. 19 “if you are honest”
 - V. 20 “verified”
 - V. 21 “in truth we are guilty” (RSV)
 - V. 28 God has done to us



Finally Joseph's brothers have to
deal with Truth, and begin to see
the hand of God in their lives!

The 2nd Trip to Egypt

- **42:37** Reuben says “kill my 2 sons”
- **43** – **Judah’s spiritual** life begins to bloom
 - V. 3 Dad...the man warned us
 - V. 8 with me, “we & you & our little ones”
 - V. 9 “I myself will be surety”,
“let me bear the blame forever”



The painful, depressing, discouraging events of life are finally having their full effect on Judah's spiritual mind. God knew all along it would all be worth it!

Joseph doesn't let his power go to his head!

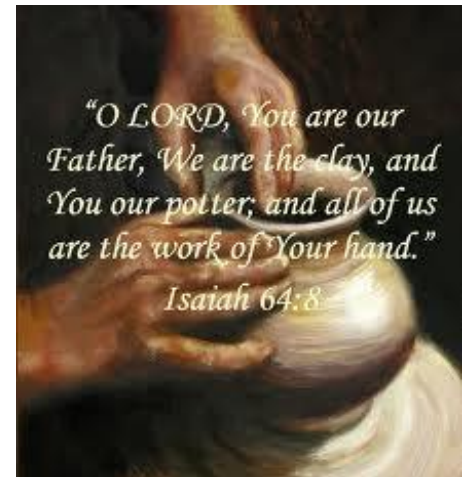
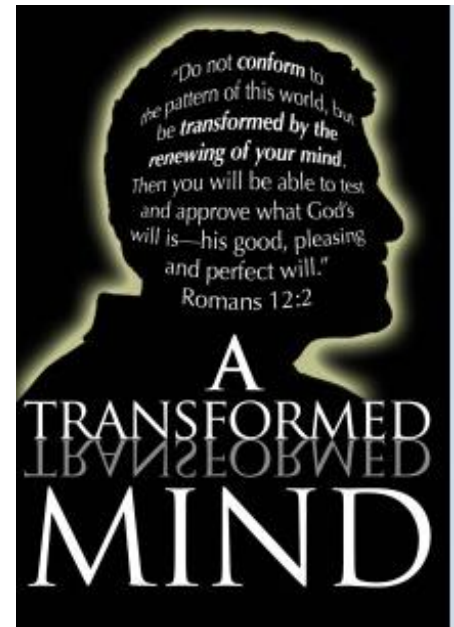
- He rose from prisoner to ruler
- He's 2nd to Pharaoh himself
- His family was far from him
- He lived in total isolation
- He could have thought no one was watching!
- He could have used his power to benefit himself and harm others



Yes, all of you be submissive to one another, and be clothed with humility, for "God resists the proud, But gives grace to the humble." 6 Therefore humble yourselves under the mighty hand of God, that He may exalt you in due time (1 Peter 5:5-7)

Genesis 44: Joseph finally sees God's victory in Judah

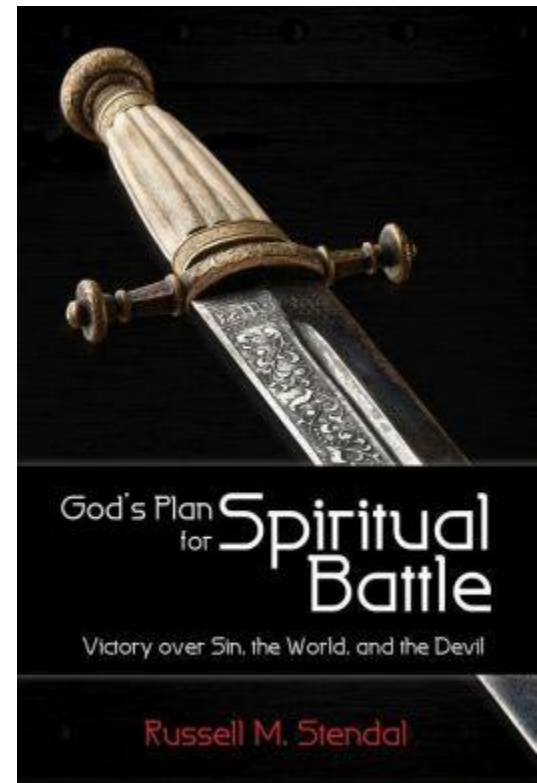
- **V.12** Silver cup is found
- **V.14** “Judah & his brothers”
- **V.16** Judah confesses: “God has found out the iniquity”, “both we and he”
- **V.17** No – all go home except Benjamin
- **V.18** Judah risks his life to speak up
- **V.19** You asked....we told you the Truth
- **V.20** Dad is old, has special son, loves him (Judah's envy is gone!)



God patiently molds us
into the image of His Son

Genesis 44: Joseph finally sees God's victory in Judah

- **V.20-29** Father....brother
- **V.30** Dad's life is bound up in the lad's life
- **V.31** He will die
- **V.32** Judah: "I will bear the blame"
- **V.33** Let me stay instead
- **V.34** Can't bear to see the evil on Father



Joseph broke down when he witnessed what God had accomplished in the life of Judah



God was always working in Joseph's Family



- God accomplished everything Joseph & Jacob had prayed for in their family, but God did it through a life of suffering, far away from home.
- Not at all the way Joseph or Jacob had wanted it, nor expected it to happen!



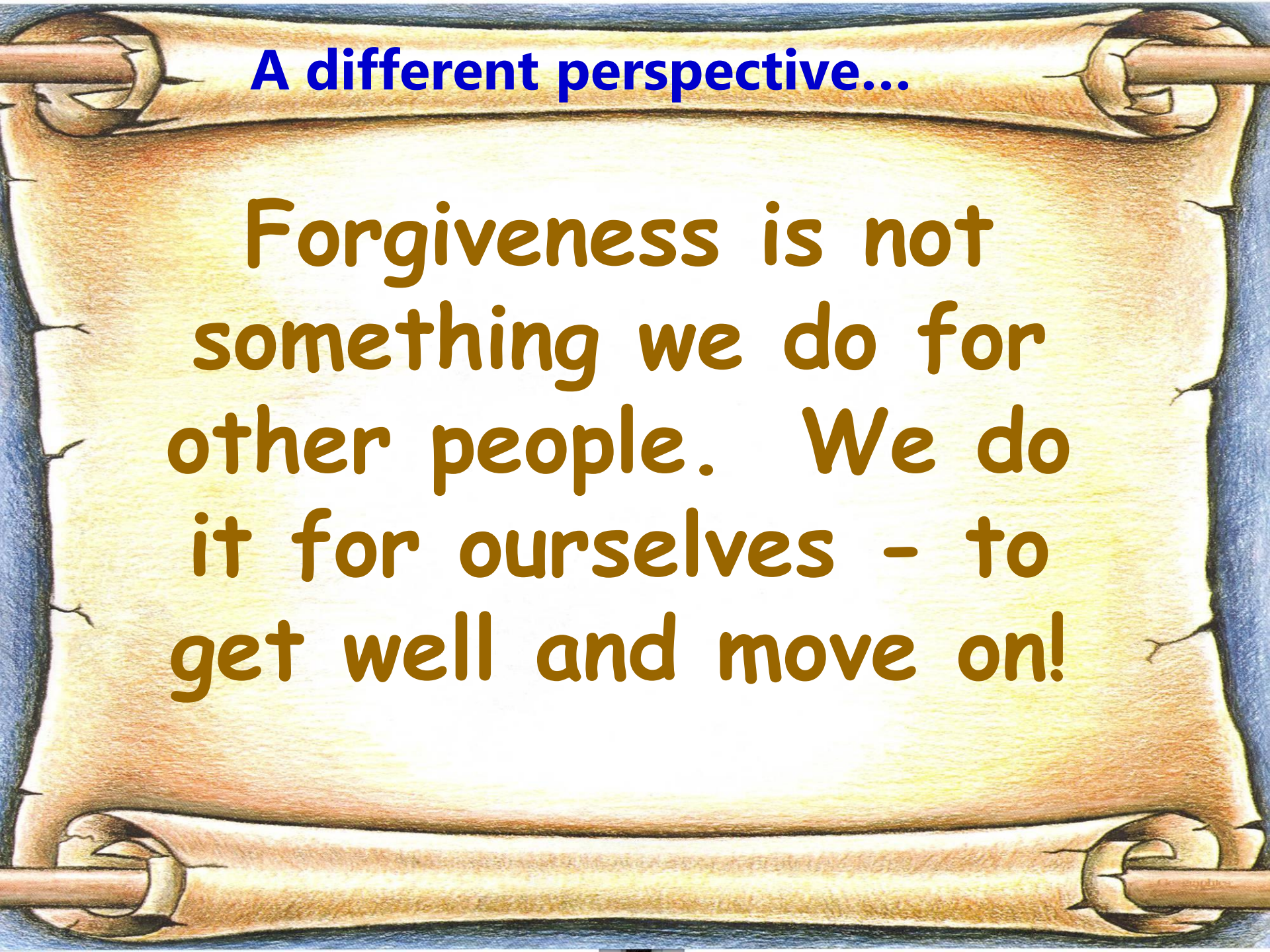
It's no different today!
God is still working, but
there may be days when we
find it hard to see.

How did Joseph forgive his brothers?

- **Clearly saw the big picture** – it's more important where God brings us in the end, than how we got there.
- **Complete confidence that God is in control**, no matter what anyone does to us
- **Love for his Father** – knew that Jacob wanted all his children in God's family
- **Love for the family** – really did love each brother and sister

Hatred stirs up strife,
but love covers all sins.
(Proverbs 10:12)



A scroll with a light brown, textured surface, held by four wooden pegs at the corners. The scroll is unrolled, showing a central rectangular area with text. The text is written in a bold, brown, sans-serif font. The background is a dark blue, textured surface.

A different perspective...

**Forgiveness is not
something we do for
other people. We do
it for ourselves - to
get well and move on!**

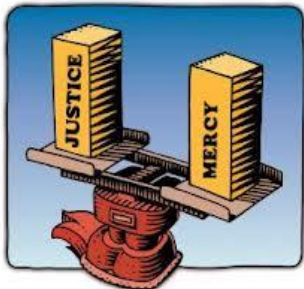
Forgiveness is unlocking the door
to set someone free

and...

realizing you were the prisoner!

Sometimes you have to let God deal out the consequences!

- He knows exactly what will be best for everyone involved
- He is far more merciful than we are!
 - **1 Chron 21:13** Please let me fall into the hand of the Lord, for His mercies are very great; but do not let me fall into the hand of man."
- Who would you rather have deal out the consequences for your mistakes!



Whatever you want men to do to you, do also to them (Mat 7:12)

Learning to forgive is essential

Matthew 6:14-15

14 "For if you forgive men their trespasses, your heavenly Father will also forgive you. 15 **But if you do not forgive men their trespasses, neither will your Father forgive your trespasses.**

Forgive us our debts, as we also have forgiven our debtors (Mat 6:12)

When you forgive, you in
no way change the past....

but you sure
do change
the future!



Faith trusts that God can bring good out of evil

Genesis 50:19-21

Joseph said to them, "Do not be afraid, for am I in the place of God? But as for you, *you meant evil against me*; but *God meant it for good*, in order to bring it about as it is this day, to save many people alive. Now therefore, do not be afraid; I will provide for you and your little ones." And he comforted them and spoke kindly to them.

Love your enemies. Do good to those who hate you. (Luke 6:27)

Adopt Joseph's way of Godliness (it was just like Christ's!)

- Obedient to his father
- Concern for all his family
- Complete cooperation with God's decisions in his life
- Forgave all those who sinned against him



Give God time to influence
and save His family! Don't
give up on anyone. Keep
praying for everyone!

Faith & Trust in God's ways changes the way we treat people



"Commit your way to the Lord;
trust in Him and He will do this:
He will make your righteousness
shine like the dawn,
the justice of your cause
like the noonday sun."
Psalm 37:5-6

- This is how “faith in God” changes our lives
- It motivates us to treat brothers & sisters with kindness & compassion – no matter how they have treated us.
- Faith believes that God can bring good out of the worst situations, because He IS in control.

**Trust in the Lord with all your heart
and lean not on your own understanding**

Lessons to Take Home & Implement

- God makes sure we grow up in the right family
- Never give up on your family or ecclesial members – God doesn't – be patient!
- Families aren't perfect – don't expect yours to be
- Be aware of the heartache we can cause our family & heavenly Father by bad decisions we make
- Learn to forgive: so you can get well & move on
- Be aware of God's daily involvement.

Pray for God's help to become more patient
and kind.



Let's leave here,
thankful for our
Loving Heavenly
Father & His Son
Jesus Christ, who
have called us into
their eternal family

And we know that God causes all things
to work together for good to those who
love God, to those who are called
according to His purpose. (Rom 8:28)