

## Patriarchal Period: Genesis 12-25

### Belcroft Bible Church: Lesson 4



Lesson Numbers	Wednesday Night Pentateuch Lesson Titles	Class Dates
1	Pentateuch Introduction: From Paradise to the Promised Land	2/11
2	Primeval Period: Genesis 1-11 and the Noahic Covenant	2/18
3	Primeval Period: Genesis 1-11 and the Noahic Covenant	2/25
4	Patriarchal Period: Genesis 12-25	3/4
5	The Abrahamic Covenant	3/11
6	Genesis 26-50 and God's Faithfulness	3/18
7	Q & A with Pastor Matt	3/25
8	Exodus Overview	4/15
9	Leviticus Overview	4/22
10	Numbers Overview	4/29
11	Deuteronomy Overview	5/6

This class begins a *Bible Overview Series* where the elders will be systematically teaching us through the Old Testament over the next few years during the Wednesday night winter/spring semester. The goal for this semester will be to gain a clear overview of the Pentateuch, the first five books of the Bible. Thus, we will seek to understand the foundational nature of the Pentateuch while also seeing the purpose, main theme, some interpretative issues along with the historical setting of each individual book. This teaching time will also seek to help you better understand the critical nature of some of the primary Biblical covenants and how they fit into God's overall plan for His people in Christ. Have you ever wondered what all those sacrifices were about and why God gave all those laws to Israel? Have you ever been perplexed by God's covenant with Abraham or wondered how God's covenant with Noah fits into God's plan for the ages? Well, it is the goal of this class to wrestle with those questions and many more as we work through the Pentateuch together!

# Rabbinic Writings

## Torah-Written Law

WRITING	SECTIONS	DATES	CONTRIBUTORS	CONTENTS
<b>MIDRASH</b>	Halakah	100 B.C. to A.D. 300	Tannaim*	Legal sections commenting only on Torah
	Haggada			Narratives, homilies, and parables on whole Old Testament
<b>BABYLONIAN TALMUD</b>	Mishnah	A.D. 200	Tannaim	Digest of oral laws; interpretations of Torah by the Great Rabbis
	Gemara	A.D. 500	Amoraim	Commentary on the Mishnah by later Rabbis
<b>PALESTINIAN TALMUD</b>	Gemara	A.D. 200	Amoraim <sup>†</sup>	Commentary on the Mishnah
<b>TOSEFTA</b>		A.D. 100 to A.D. 300	Tannaim	Teachings omitted from Mishnah

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\*Tannaim: from Ezra, through Hillel, Akiba, and Meir, to Judah Hanasi

†Amoraim: The later Rabbinic scholars

(Zondervan Charts: Chronological and Background Charts of the Old Testament, 1994; John Walton)

## Early Jewish Writings

Title	Type	Date	Purpose
Sopherim	Textual	400 B.C.—A.D. 200	Standardization of pure text
Midrash	Textual interpretation and commentary	100 B.C.—A.D. 300	Doctrinal and homiletical exposition
Tosefta	Addition or supplement	A.D. 100–500	Teachings and traditions of the Tannaim
Talmud	Textual instructions	A.D. 100–500	Contains the Mishnah and the Gemarah
Mishnah	Repetitions, teaching	A.D. 200	Oral laws and traditions
Gemara	Commentary	A.D. 200–500	Supplement or expanded commentary on the Mishnah
Masoretes	Commentary	A.D. 500–950	Inserted vowel points—moderate textual criticism

### THE TALMUD

Following the first period of Old Testament scribal tradition, the period of the Sopherim (c. 400 B.C.-c. A.D. 200), there appeared a second, the Talmudic period (c. A.D. 100-c. 500), which was followed by the better-known Masoretic tradition (c. 500-c. 950). Ezra worked with the first of these groups, and they were regarded as the Bible custodians until after the time of Christ.<sup>25</sup> Between A.D. 100 and 500, the Talmud (instruction, teaching) grew up as a body of Hebrew civil and canonical law based on the Torah. The Talmud basically represents the opinions and decisions of Jewish teachers from about 300 B.C. to A.D. 500, and it consists of two main divisions: the Mishnah and the Gemara.

*Mishnah.* The *Mishnah* (repetition, explanation, teaching) was completed at about A.D. 200, and was a digest of all the oral laws from the time of Moses. It was regarded as the Second Law, the Torah being the First Law. This work was written in Hebrew, and it covered traditions as well as explanations of the oral law.

*Gemara.* The *Gemara* (to complete, accomplish, learn) was written in Aramaic rather than Hebrew, and was basically an expanded commentary on the Mishnah. It was transmitted in two traditions, the Palestinian Gemara (c. A.D. 200), and the larger and more authoritative Babylonian Gemara (c. A.D. 500).

### THE MIDRASH

The Midrash (textual study, textual interpretation) was actually a formal doctrinal and homiletical exposition of the Hebrew Scriptures written in Hebrew and Aramaic. Midrashim (plural) were collected into a body of material between 100 B.C. and A.D. 300. Within the Midrash were two major parts: the *Halakah* (procedure), a further expansion of the Torah only, and the *Haggada* (declaration, explanation), being commentaries on the entire Old Testament. These Midrashim differed from the Targums in that the former were actually commentaries, whereas the latter were paraphrases. The Midrashim contain some of the earliest extant synagogue homilies on the Old Testament, including such things as proverbs and parables.

Top chart is from *A Survey of Old Testament Introduction*, Gleason Archer, pg 57; 2007

Bottom Chart from *A General Introduction of the Bible*, Norman Geisler & William Nix, pg 502-03;1986

<b>THE TWO SEEDS OF GENESIS 3:15<sup>1</sup></b>	
The Woman's Seed	The Serpents Seed
Mediated Revelation	Godless Civilization
Leading to the Redeeming Lamb Rev 1:6-12; 17:13-14	Leading to the Rebel Beast Rev 13; 17:13-14
Abel Seth Enoch Noah Shem	Cain Lamech Japheth Ham Nimrod

### **Introduction:<sup>2</sup>**

Genesis can be broken down into two clear sections (Simple break down)

1. Primeval History (Gen 1:1-11:26)... consider the four great events

- Creation (Gen 1-2)
- Fall (Gen 3-5)
- Flood (Gen 6-9)
- Babel (Gen 10-11)

2. Patriarchal History (Gen 11:27-50:26)... consider the four great men

- Abraham (Gen 12-24)
- Issac (Gen 25-26)
- Jacob (Gen 27-36)
- Joseph (Gen 37-50)

(note: some of these chapters in this simple outline crossover between characters)

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<sup>1</sup> The Unfolding Drama of Redemption Vol 1 Old Testament, W. Graham Scroggie, pg 88

<sup>2</sup> I am indebted to my seminary notes and faithful professors whose diligent work and investment into my life serve as the foundation to all the material presented in this class. I want to publically acknowledge one of my favorite teachers Dr Keith Essex as his course notes in *Old Testament Studies* serve as my outline for this class material. Also, Dr Michael Grisanti is an OT scholar and was my professor in *Old Testament Introduction* which has also helped to shape this class. I will also be drawing from multiple resources throughout our study and will strive to acknowledge that when it is appropriate.

**The Patriarchal History:** The Abrahamic Covenant as the Means of God’s Blessing to the Nations [the Noahic Covenant] and the Foundation to the Sinaitic Covenant (11:27- 50:26)

- A. The *Toledot* of Terah: Yahweh’s Making of His Covenant with Abraham (11:27- 25:11)
- B. The *Toledot* of Ishmael: The Non-covenantal Son of Abraham (25:12-18) <sup>[L]</sup><sub>[SEP]</sub>
- C. The *Toledot* of Isaac: Yahweh’s Reaffirmation of the Abrahamic Covenant with <sup>[L]</sup><sub>[SEP]</sub> Isaac and Jacob/Israel (25:19-35:29) <sup>[L]</sup><sub>[SEP]</sub>
- D. The *Toledot* of Esau: The Non-covenantal Son of Isaac (36:1-37:1) <sup>[L]</sup><sub>[SEP]</sub>
- E. The *Toledot* of Jacob: Yahweh’s Sending of His Covenantal Family from Canaan to Egypt (37:2-50:26) <sup>[L]</sup><sub>[SEP]</sub>

**The Patriarchal History (11:27-50:26):**

The narrative now moves from the general survey of humanity to the specific family from which Israel comes. The narrative style becomes severely matter of fact. The narrator devotes much more time to describing the lives of the characters: whereas chapters 1-11 cover many generations in only 11 chapters, the patriarchal history deals with only generations in 39 chapters. It begins with Abraham and goes on to his son Isaac, and Isaac’s two sons Jacob and Esau; the final section focuses on Jacob’s sons, especially Joseph. Here the specifics of being Israel are made clear: the land, the people, the blessing, and the calling. The Sinai (Mosaic) covenant, which the first audience for these chapters receives, will provide the setting in which Israel is to put these patriarchal promises into to practice. Throughout these chapters the readers will see how God has preserved the members of his chosen family, whose calling it is to walk in him, to be the headwaters of a special people and to be the channel by which blessing comes to the entire world.<sup>3</sup>

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<sup>3</sup> Crossway Bibles. (2008). [The ESV Study Bible](#) (p. 70). Wheaton, IL: Crossway Bibles.

# Chronology of the Patriarchs

EVENT	AGE	DATE	GENESIS REFERENCE	AGE	DATE	GENESIS REFERENCE
<b>ABRAHAM 2166-1991</b>						
Entrance into Canaan	75	2091	12:4			
Ishmael born	86	2080	16:3			
Isaac born	100	2066	21:5	<b>ISAAC 2066-1886</b>		
Mt. Moriah (?)	115	2051	22	15	2051	22
Isaac marries Rebekah	140	2026	25:20	40	2026	25:20
<b>JACOB 2006-1859</b>				60	2006	25:26
Abraham dies	15	1991	25:7	75	1991	25:7
Jacob goes to Haran	77	1929	28:5	137	1929	28:5
Jacob marries Leah and Rachel	84	1922	29:21-30 30:1, 22-26	144	1922	29:21-30 30:1, 22-26
Joseph born	91	1915	30:25 31:38-41	<b>JOSEPH 1915-1805</b>		
Jacob & family move to Canaan	97	1909	31:17-21	6	1909	31:17-21
Joseph sold into slavery	108	1898	37:2-36	17	1898	37:2-36
Isaac dies	120	1886	35:28-29	29	1886	35:28-29
Joseph given high position	121	1885	41:39-40	30	1885	41:39-40
Jacob and family move to Egypt	130	1876	45:6 47:9	39	1876	45:6 47:9
Jacob dies	147	1859	47:28	56	1859	47:28
Joseph dies	—	—	—	110	1805	50:26

Note: This particular chronological framework with the early dates is presented here as representative of the clear reading of the Masoretic text. Any of the other frameworks can be derived from this.

## The Patriarch Abraham:

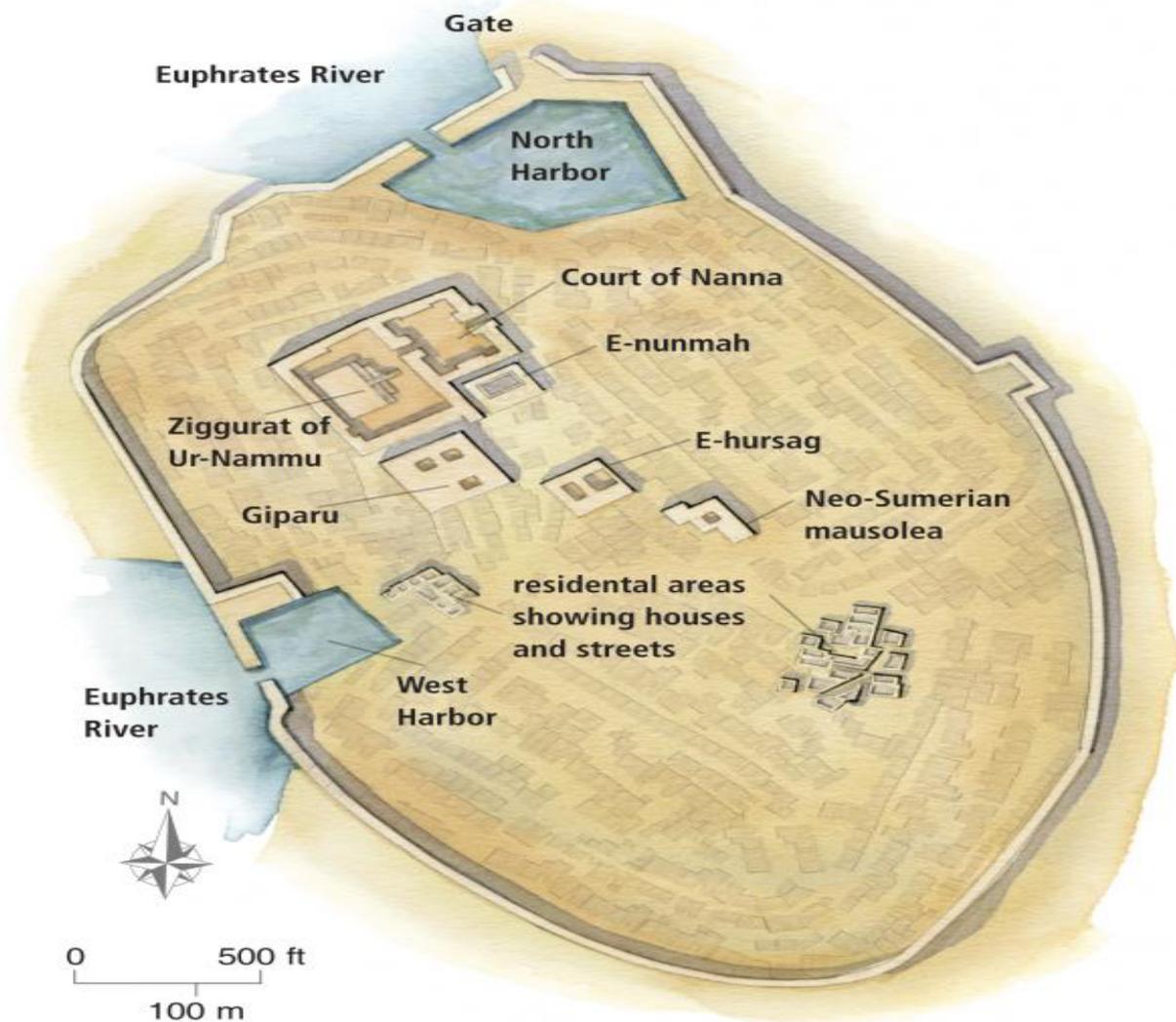
Abraham is a very important figure in the Bible and the eternal plan of God. One only has to consider how Abraham's personal story in God's unfolding plan of redemption takes up fourteen chapters in Genesis. Abraham is the father of God's chosen people Israel (Gen 12:1-3; Josh 24:3), a father and model to the faithful because of his obedience even in the face of impossibility and uncertainty (Rom 4:1-25; Gal 3:6-9; Heb 11:17-22), even offering up his one and only son to God in faithful obedience (Gen 22), and thus he is called a friend of God three different times in the Scriptures (2 Chron 20:7; Isa 41:8; Js 2:23).

The prominence Abraham plays in the Scripture is really seen as one considers the unilateral and eternal covenant God makes with Abraham by which Yahweh will bless the entire globe through the Seed of Abraham to come which is Christ and through the nation of Israel (Gen 12-22). Many have traced these 14 chapters in Genesis through God's work on and through Abraham. Here are some examples... *Yahweh Awakens Abraham's Faith (Gen 11:27-14:24)*, *Disciplines Abraham's Faith (Gen 15-21)*, and *Perfects Abraham's Faith (Gen 22-25)*, (Graham Scroggie); or how *God Discovers His Man, God Detaches His Man, God Develops His Man, God Displays His Man* (John Phillips). Still others have pointed to some powerful lessons in or through the life of Abraham on what obedient faith looks like *When We are Called to an Unknown Future, When We are Called to Take Second Place, When We are Called to Rescue Someone Who May Not Deserve It, When We are Called to Wait, When We are Called to Sacrifice What We Love, When We are Called to Weep, and When We are Called to Die* (Warren Wiersbe). This section of Genesis is rich with theology as well as life lessons for all of us to learn!

### Abraham's Timeline<sup>4</sup>

Event	Age of Abraham	Genesis
Abram departs from Haran, enters Canaan	75	12:4-5
Abram fathers Ishmael with Hagar	85-86	16:3-4
Abraham fathers Isaac with Sarah	100	21:5
Abraham's wife Sarah dies	137	23:1
Abraham's son Isaac marries Rebekah	140	25:20
Abraham dies	175	25:7

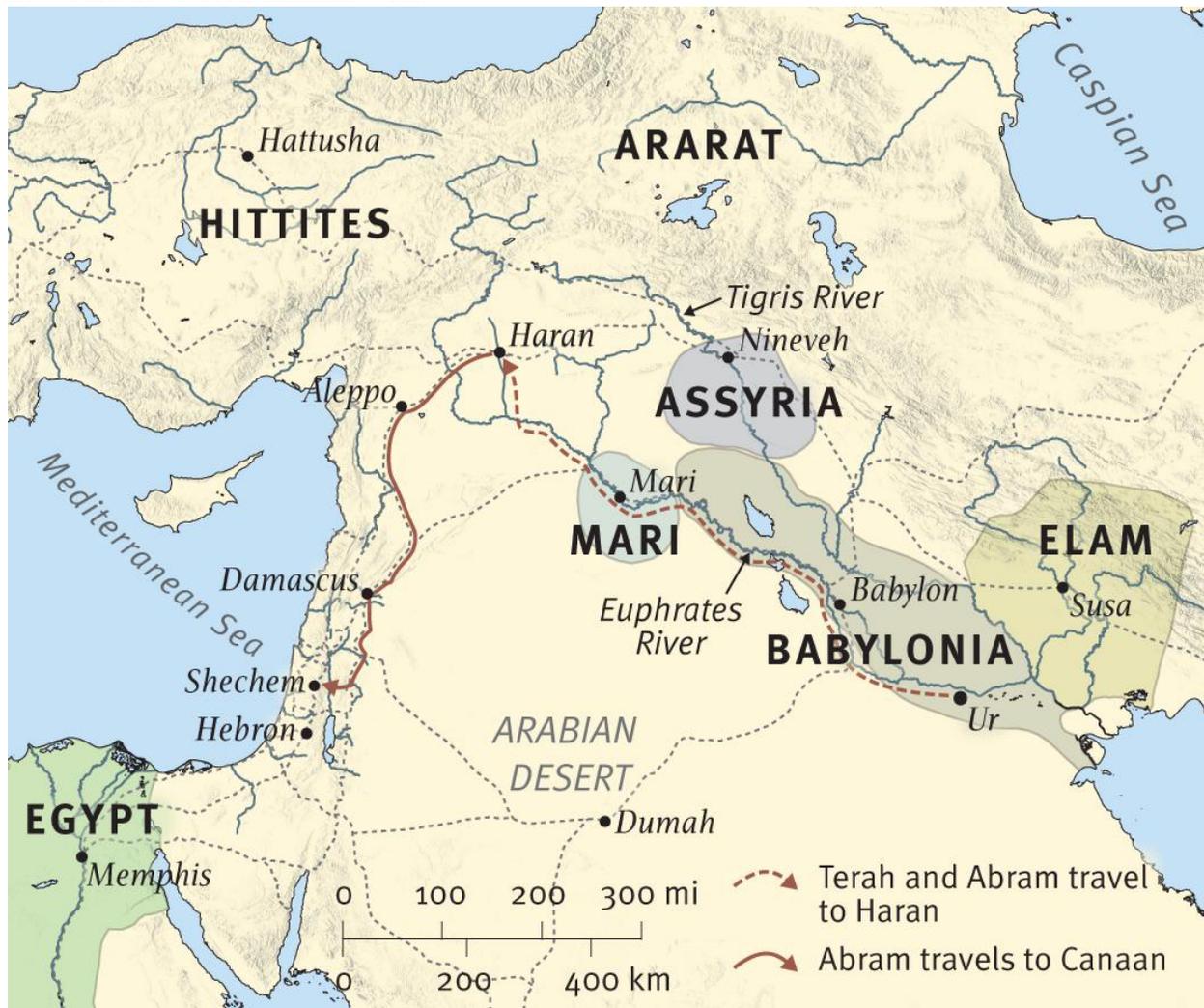
<sup>4</sup> Crossway Bibles. (2008). [The ESV Study Bible](#) (p. 73). Wheaton, IL: Crossway Bibles.



### The City of Ur

The ancient city of Ur lies 186 miles (300 km) southeast of modern Baghdad on a bend of the original course of the Euphrates River. Major excavations took place at the site in 1922–1934 under the direction of Sir Leonard Woolley. Ur became an important city in Mesopotamia near the end of the third millennium B.C. The governor of Ur, a man named Ur-Nammu (c. 2113–2095 B.C.), brought the city to great prominence. He took the titles “King of Ur, King of Sumer and Akkad.” Thus, was founded the Third Dynasty of Ur (2113–2006 B.C.). This period was one of great peace and prosperity, the high point of the city’s existence. This diagram of the city represents the Third Dynasty of Ur, and it includes a central palace and a temple complex. The latter has as its center the Ziggurat of Ur-Nammu that is dedicated to the moon god Nanna. Ur was the birthplace of the Hebrew patriarch Abraham (Gen. 11:27–32), and the plan represents the city that

he would have been familiar with.<sup>5</sup>



### Abram Travels to Canaan

According to the ESV Study Bible Abram was born in Ur, a powerful city in southern Babylonia. Abram's father, Terah, eventually led the family toward the land of Canaan but decided to settle in Haran (see Gen. 11:27–31). After Terah's death, the Lord called Abram to go "to the land that I will show you" (Canaan), which he promises to give to Abram's descendants.<sup>6</sup>

However, I believe God first calls Abram while he is in the city of Ur as Acts 7:2-3 says plainly. Also I believe you can see in Gen 15:7 and Neh 9:7 that God is said to have "brought" Abram up out of Ur. Seems best to see Gen 12:1-3 as a call that happens in Haran as a repeat of the original call that happened while in Ur. See the MacArthur Study Bible notes in Acts 7:2-4 and the ESV Study Bible notes on Gen 11:32 for answers in dealing with the perceived dating difficulty of Terah's death, Abram's age and his departure from Ur.

<sup>5</sup> Crossway Bibles. (2008). *The ESV Study Bible* (p. 71). Wheaton, IL: Crossway Bibles.

<sup>6</sup> Crossway Bibles. (2008). *The ESV Study Bible* (p. 72). Wheaton, IL: Crossway Bibles.

## Overview of Genesis 11:26-25:11:

### 1. The Call of Abram (Gen 12)

~ Abram lived in a world marked by self-centeredness, polytheism and idolatry as Genesis 11 makes clear with the Babel episode. Genesis 11:27-32 introduces the reader to the cities of Ur and Haran which were both in a region of Mesopotamia that was inundated with the pagan worship of false gods. No doubt that Nimrod's idolatry and paganism were propagated throughout the region after the people were dispersed by God (Gen 11:9). It seems clear from Joshua 24:2 (cf. 1Thess 1:9) that Abraham and his father served some of those gods with Ur being a city and center for worship to the false moon god called Nanna or Suen also known as "Sin." God's call on Abram was not simply to leave a land but to leave behind the false gods of this world and follow Yahweh alone.

Despite such a perilous and helpless situation God's sovereign grace through His specific election of Abram displays God's power to propel and fulfill His plans even in the face of rebellion and wickedness. Acts 7:1-4 gives further information to what we see in Genesis 12 as God calls Abram to Himself and Abram obeys this gracious call of God as he leaves his homeland for unknown place. Abram heard the voice of God and wisely obeyed the Lord and even though he was clearly called, the destination was unclear but that did not inhibit Abram's faith (Gen 12:4). Of course, this call came with some massive even global promises to Abram that serve as the foundation to what will become the Abrahamic Covenant (Gen 15, 17, 22). However, the end of chapter 12 demonstrates that God will sovereignly protect this man as He personally deepens Abram's faith which is clearly needed as demonstrated by Abram's man centered decisions. What God promised at the beginning of chapter 12 gets partially manifested in how God responds to Pharaoh.

### 2. Strife between Abram and Lot (Gen 13-14)

Chapter thirteen introduces some family strife into the narrative when the herdsmen of Lot and Abram begin to dispute over how they were going to travel, shepherd, and live together since both Abram and Lot were growing wealthier on this journey. Abram, the older man, shows great humility toward his nephew Lot and gives him the right to choose where he wants to go with the whole land before him and Abram will go in the opposite direction. Abram shows great integrity and a growing faith even if Lot chooses the land that God had clearly promised to Abram (Gen 12:7). Again, God will show Himself sovereign over the plans and choices of man in the fulfillment of the eternal decree of the Lord! No man can ever thwart the plans and purpose of God not even a relative of Abram!

Lot makes a wise choice by the world's standards (Gen 13:10-11) but clearly a disastrous decision as it pertains to God's ways and the spiritual protection of Lot's family (Gen 14:13-26; 19:1-38). Lot chooses what is personally pragmatic instead of what is God's priority! Following Lot's decision God speaks to Abram and shows him the whole land of Canaan and promises that all of this will be his and his offspring (Gen 13:14-16). Abram continues to build alters to the Lord and worship God wherever he goes further demonstrating his trust and focus on the Lord (Gen 12:8; 13:4; 18). The next chapter shows strife not only between Abram and Lot but the

international strife between four powerful kings from the east and five minor kings from the Dead Sea area. Again, we see God's blessing, as previously promised, upon Abram as he rescues Lot who has been held hostage during the war between the kings (Gen 14:12). Abram with a small force of 318 men is able to rescue Lot further demonstrating God's goodness and protection over His man Abram (Gen 14:13-16). That the Lord's blessing was undeniably on Abram as was declared emphatically by Melchizedek, the king of Salem and priest of God Most High (Gen 14:17-20). Abram, like Melchizedek, gave God all the glory for the victory and Abram further shows His allegiance to the Lord and his growing wisdom by refusing any help from the king of Sodom lest the Lord be robbed of the honor due His holy name (Gen 14:21-24).



### **The Battle at the Valley of Siddim**

When five Canaanite cities rebelled against their four Mesopotamian overlords, the four kings led a campaign to reassert their control over the region. The campaign culminated in a battle in the Siddim Valley, and Abram's nephew Lot, who was living in Sodom, was captured and carried off. When Abram was informed of Lot's capture, he and his men pursued the four kings to Dan, where they recaptured Lot and chased the fleeing forces as far as Hobah, north of Damascus.<sup>7</sup>

### 3. God's Covenant with Abram (Gen 15)

As already stated in these notes, one cannot overestimate the importance of the Abrahamic covenant to the whole sovereign storyline of Scripture and Genesis fifteen is a pivotal point in that narrative. God encourages Abram by reiterating His promises to care for, protect, and propagate a nation through Abram's offspring (Gen 15:1-2). However, it is here that Abram points to the dilemma (Gen 15:3-4) that he has no offspring, but God is sovereign over every situation and reassures Abram that while he has yet to have personal offspring they will one day be as numerous as the stars in the sky (Gen 15:5). With full faith in the promise of God Abram believes God and the Lord counted it as righteousness to him (Gen 15:6)! Long before any sign is given, or act of circumcision is followed Abram simply trusts the Lord and is counted as righteous before the Lord being justified by faith alone (Rom 4:1-25)! Thus, Abram proves to be a clear example of salvation by grace through faith alone!

**The surety of this covenant with Abram will not rest on Abram's faith but with the faithfulness of God!** This pivotal reality becomes clear as God demonstrates how this whole covenant is unilateral resting totally upon the promise and character of God. The contract was not signed, so to speak, by Abram but by God alone as God puts Abram to sleep so that God alone is the one to walk through the cut animals signifying that it is God alone who will see that this covenant is ultimately fulfilled (Gen 15:7-21). This covenant will not only deal with an heir and offspring most also clearly a land for the people, a land that will further establish them as God's chosen people (Gen 15:18-21). While Abram and his offspring could forfeit the personal enjoyment of the blessings of the covenant through disobedience, they could not thwart the plan of God because He made it clear this contract is unilateral and thus ultimately unconditional!

### 4. Ishmael or Isaac (Gen 16-17)

These chapters demonstrate the disaster of taking matters into your hands as Sarai after 10 years of childlessness decides to follow the way of the cultural which was normal for barren women to seek children through a maid servant (Gen 16:1-4). However, this was not according to God's plan, and the pregnancy only brought controversy and contempt between Sarai and Hagar. Is there any connection here to what Eve did in the garden and how Adam passively followed his wife? Stop and consider that!

Yet, God would be gracious to Hagar in her time of deep trouble (Gen 16:7-14) and need being the God "Who sees" and He would still bless the boy to be born as his offspring would be many (Gen 16:10). This child's name would be Ishmael, and he would be an aggressive and independent man but he would not be the covenant son promised to Abram (Gen 16:11-15).

<sup>7</sup> Crossway Bibles. (2008). [The ESV Study Bible](#) (p. 75). Wheaton, IL: Crossway Bibles.

In chapter seventeen God sovereignly comes to Abram and reiterates (again) the promises of the covenant to bless Abram and multiply his offspring so that nations and kings come from Abram and they will possess the land of Canaan as an everlasting possession (Gen 17:1-8). However, it is also at this time, fourteen years after Ishmael is born, that it becomes clear that Ishmael will not be the covenant son as God speaks to Abram and tells him he will have another son and that son is the one that God has chosen (Gen 17:18). God chose Isaac before Isaac was born and thus before Isaac did anything that would predispose God to choose him! Stop and consider the impact of this and illustration of this as it pertains to the gospel!

It is during this time that God establishes the covenant sign of circumcision (Gen 17:9-14) and **changes Abram's name to Abraham meaning "the father of many nations"** (Gen 17:1-8). God once again proves His power and how His ways are not like man (Gen 18:14) when He declares that Sarah, in her barren state (Gen 18:11), will become pregnant with a son through Abraham, who is 100 years old, and this son will be named Isaac (Gen 17:15-21). While Abraham pleaded with the Lord for Ishmael the Lord makes it clear that the boy Isaac has been chosen by God to be the covenant son (Gen 17:18-21)!

### The Destruction of Sodom and Gomorrah

At Abraham's request, the Lord spared Lot and his family from the destruction that came upon Sodom and Gomorrah. Afterwards, Lot's two daughters feared that their isolation would result in the end of their family line and they plotted to get their father drunk in order that they might conceive children by him. Each daughter bore a son, from whom the Moabites and the Ammonites were descendants.<sup>8</sup>



<sup>8</sup> Crossway Bibles. (2008). [The ESV Study Bible](#) (p. 82). Wheaton, IL: Crossway Bibles.

### 5. Sodom and Gomorrah (Gen 19-20)

These two chapters teach us much about the sinfulness of man, the holiness of God and the graciousness of God even amidst wickedness and judgement to save the undeserving. The first part of chapter 18 is where the Lord comes and meets with Abraham and talks about how Sara, even in her barren state, will bear a son (Gen 18:11-15). The last part of this chapter is where the Lord speaks to Abraham about what he is about to do in judging Sodom and Gomorrah because the sin of that place is very grave (Gen 18:20). God fully intends to make Abraham into a great nation that will have influence and impact on all nations and He wanted to show Abraham the justice of God's righteous judgment in dealing with sin (Gen 18:20-21). This reality is picked up by Abraham's questions regarding the righteous being swept away with the wicked in God's judgment (Gen 18:22-33) as Abraham was no doubt concerned for Lot who lived in Sodom (Gen 19:1)!

God's compassion to send the angels to Sodom to rescue Lot is a clear picture of His sovereign grace as the Word says in the face of Lot's sad hesitation, "...the Lord being merciful to him...", the angels brought Lot safely out of the city (Gen 19:17). This sad episode shows how sin can cloud the mind and desensitize the decisions of man so that he makes foolish choices in the face of open wickedness (Gen 19:1-14). Lot's choice to plant his family in Sodom only divided and destroyed his family as he was sucked into the sin cursed society (Gen 19:23-38).

While the Bible says that Lot was right with God (2 Pet 2:7-8) it is clear that his weak faith only bore the fruit of pain and sadness because of his unwillingness to flee the sin around him (Gen 19:15-22). Failing to follow the warning of the angels Lot's wife turns back to look on the city and turns into a pillar of salt (Gen 19:26) and Lot's two daughters, out of what they saw as complete desperation, they trick their father into impregnating them. Out of this sick and sinful decision comes the two nations of "Moab" and "Ammon" who become the two longest standing enemies of Israel (Gen 19:30-38)!

### 6. Isaac is Born and Offered Up (Gen 20-22)

Twenty-five years after leaving Egypt in disgrace for lying about Sarah we see in chapter 20 the same story repeat itself once more with Abraham's response to Abimelech (Gen 20:1-2). However, just like before, God protects this family despite their sin as Yahweh makes known to Abimelech what has happened to which he responds to the Lord with submission (Gen 20:3-8). Interestingly, after being blessed by Abimelech, Abraham prays for him and God heals Abimelech, his wife, and his female slaves so that they can have children. Something that Abraham still cannot do!

However, in chapter 21 we see the Lord visits Abraham and Sarah conceives a child just as God said would happen (Gen 21:1-2). Isaac is born and circumcised, but Ishmael and Hagar become outcasts at Sarah's request, but Abraham is not pleased with this (Gen 21:9-12). However, God once more reminds Abraham that Isaac not Ishmael will be the covenant son, yet God will still make a nation out of Ishmael because he is connected to Abraham (Gen 21:14). After a treaty with Abimelech concerning water and proper interactions between their posterity we are confronted by the call of God for Abraham to sacrifice Isaac (Gen 22). This whole episode not

only tests Abraham's faith (Gen 22:12) but more importantly it demonstrates God's faithfulness once again to provide (Gen 22:14). This all-encompassing truth about God will continue manifest itself throughout the Old Testament but will find its greatest fulfillment on this same mountain in the future where God will provide for the sin of man by sacrificing His one and only Son (Isa 53)!

### Journeys to Paddan-aram

When Isaac was 40 years old, Abraham sent his eldest servant back to Paddan-aram, the land of his relatives, to obtain a wife for Isaac. The servant found Rebekah, the granddaughter of Abraham's brother Nahor, and brought her back to Isaac, who was living in the Negeb. Later, Jacob would make this same journey as he fled from his brother Esau.<sup>9</sup>



<sup>9</sup> Crossway Bibles. (2008). [The ESV Study Bible](#) (p. 90). Wheaton, IL: Crossway Bibles.

### 7. *Sarah's Death, Isaac's Marriage, and Abraham's Burial* (Gen 23-25)

This final section of this first part of the patriarchal history we see the death of Sarah who dies at 127 years old (Gen 23:1). Abraham buys some property with a cave on it to bury Sarah in the land of Canaan from the Hittites (Gen 23:12-20). This property would now stay with his family and become the burial spot for Isaac, Rebekah, Leah, and Jacob (Gen 25:9; 49:31; 50:13). Now, with Abraham well advanced in years he sends out his servant back to the land of Mesopotamia, to the city of Nahor, in order to find a wife for Isaac (Gen 24:1-10). The servant agrees and even prays to God for His help to find the right wife for Isaac and the daughter of Nahor, Abraham's brother just happens to show up (Gen 24:11-15)! The servant knows that God has led him to the right house and woman and he praises God for His divine providence (Gen 24:22-28). The servant takes Rebekah to meet Isaac, and they are married and she brings much comfort to Isaac after his mother's death (Gen 24:34-67).

This section finishes out with Abraham's marriage to Keturah (Gen 25:1-4) who is clearly categorized in different way from Sara as Keturah was part of the "concubine" of Abraham (Gen 25:6 cf. 1 Chron 1:32). The children from Katurah, much like Hagar, are considered sons of Abraham but the Scripture makes it clear that none of these children would receive the covenant blessing promised to Abraham as that was rightfully reserved by God for Isaac (See notes below from the ESV Study Bible). Therefore, Abraham gives these other sons gifts but sends them away from Isaac (Gen 25:5-6). Abraham dies and is buried with Sarah back in the cave that he bought from the Hittites, but God continued to bless Isaac (Gen 25:7-11).

#### Notes Regarding Keturah as Abraham's Wife: (Take from ESV Study Bible)

**25:1–4 Abraham took another wife.** Only minimum information is given regarding Abraham's relationship with **Keturah**. Like Hagar, she has the status of a "concubine" (see 1 Chron. 1:32; also note on Gen. 25:5–6). No indication is given as to when this relationship was established; it possibly existed before the death of Sarah, but this remains uncertain. Reflecting the culture of the ancient Near East, it was not unknown for men to take "second" wives, but this was usually an action of those who were wealthy. The precise status of the "second" wife could vary, depending on the nature of the relationship; she might, e.g., be the maidservant of the first wife (see 16:1–3; 29:24, 29; 30:3, 9).

**25:5–6** These verses highlight Isaac's position as Abraham's main heir by noting that (1) **Abraham gave all he had to Isaac** (v. 5), and (2) **the sons of Abraham's concubines** were sent away (v. 6). "Concubines" probably refers to Hagar and Keturah, who both bore Abraham children, although neither woman shares the status of Sarah, Abraham's first wife. The term "concubine" (Hb. *pilegesh*) may give the impression that no formal relationship existed between Abraham and these women. Yet since their sons are publicly recognized as Abraham's children, some type of formal relationship evidently existed. In Judg. 19:9, the father of a man's concubine is designated as his "father-in-law," suggesting that a form of marriage has taken place between the man and the woman. But the sons of Hagar and Keturah are clearly distinguished from Isaac (see also 1 Chron. 1:28–34).<sup>10</sup>

<sup>10</sup> Crossway Bibles. (2008). [The ESV Study Bible](#) (p. 93). Crossway Bibles.