

Dear all in Jesus Christ, our Lord and Saviour. I get many requests as to what Genesis tells us in the Bible. Also, soon I shall be putting some short 5 minute conversations about small teachings. Hope this helps. I am happy to try and answer emailed questions and to correct any mistakes. Nag Ou Grote, Fluit-fluit, my storie is uit. **Br. T v d Nest, Ph.D.**

Genesis 12-50 (Abraham, Isaac and Jacob)

As stated before, the Book of Genesis contains 50 chapters and can be grouped into two sections. The first section, Genesis 1-11, focusses on God and His relationship with His creation (Flor, 2013), and Genesis 12-50, which deals with God's relationship with Abraham and his descendants. Genesis 1-11 is the starting point. I normally advocate if a believer cannot get past the first verse in the Bible, everything else becomes difficult to understand.

Out of all the difficulty that precedes Genesis 12, God in Genesis 12 undertakes to save and redeem mankind and calls Abraham to leave his land and move to the land of Canaan (+/- 2091BC). This calling is accompanied by promises of blessings of land, nationhood and many descendants. These blessings reflect the blessings right at the start given to Adam and Eve and is given so that through Abraham and his descendants God will bless all the families of the earth. So the emerging theme in this part of Genesis reveals God's plan to save and redeem his rebellious people through Abraham. The descendants of Abraham later become formed in the nation of Israel, through which God wishes to show all the nations of the earth what He is like. This will be fulfilled through the coming of the Messiah, when God raises up another prophet as Moses to lead his people (Deut. 18:15 see also Isaiah 11; Psalm 72).

The rest of Genesis deals with Abraham's descendants being that of Isaac and Jacob and Jacob and his 12 sons, whose stories all indicate some level of failure of living up to the expectations that God placed in their hearts. However, God continuous to bless his people.



(Philmoser, 2012).

Abraham-In Genesis 15 and 17 God makes a covenant with Abraham that his descendants will be as many as the stars in the sky. God makes a promise that Abraham will become the father of many nations so that the whole earth can be blessed through his descendants. The sign of this covenant is circumcision of all the males in Abraham's family.

Isaac-(meaning “he laughs”) second son of Abraham, by wife Sarah, despite her old age (17:15-21; 21:1–35:29); marries Rebekah, who has twin sons, Esau & Jacob (Just, 2014). Known as a man of peace later in life, as a young boy he was taken by his father to Mount Moria to be offered up in sacrifice, and from whither he returned after his life had been miraculously spared (Gen. 21:33; 22:19)

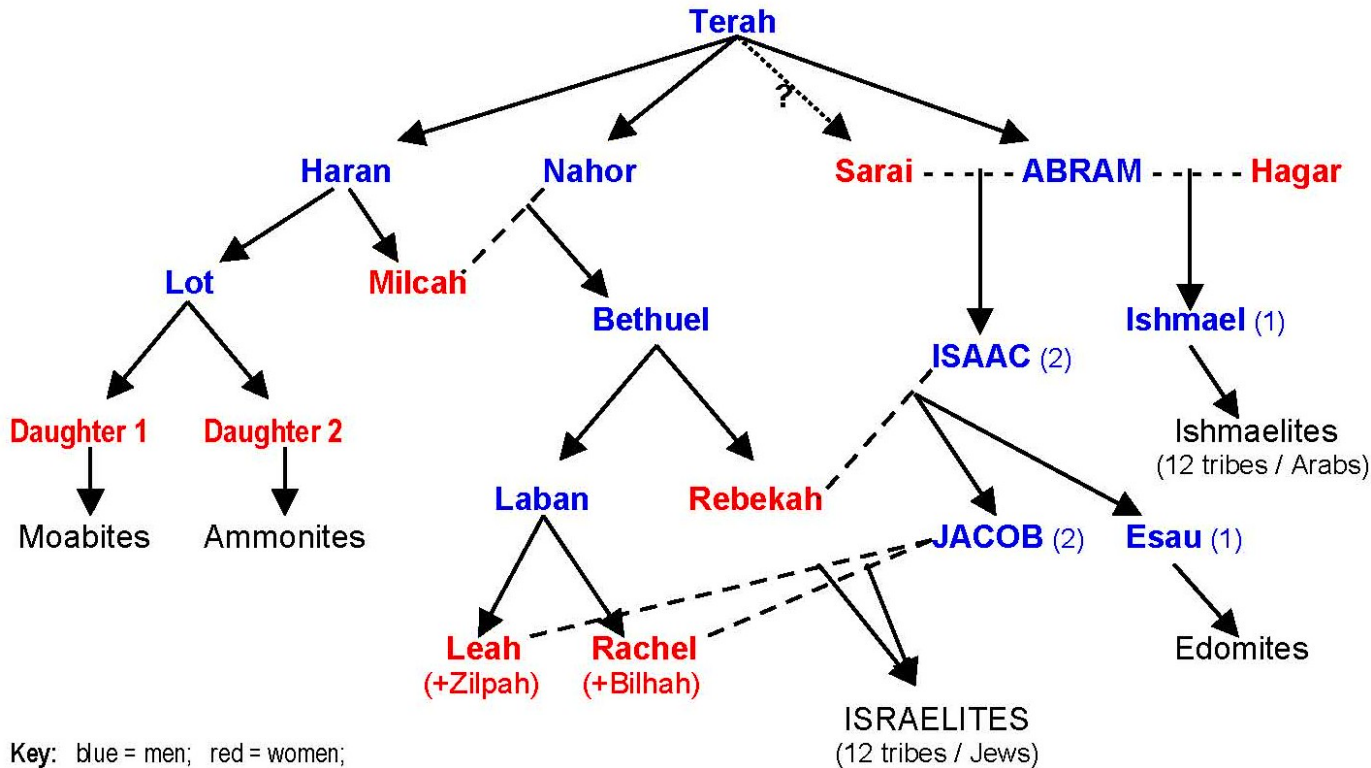
Jacob (today represents all that are led by the Holy Spirit (Flor, 2010))-Steals his brother, Esau’s birth right, by deceiving his old and blind father Isaac. When he runs away, he falls asleep on a stone at Luz and dreams of a ladder going from the earth to heaven, with angels ascending and descending with God as Lord standing above it (Gen 28:12). This ladder would later in New Testament theology be seen to represent Jesus Christ as this ladder, this also ready foreshadowing the coming of the Messiah. The next morning, Jacob arose and called the place Bethel. As he continues to run away from his vengeful brother Esau, he marries 2 wives but is deceived and humbled by his uncle Laban. After many years and on his return to his brother, he one night wrestles with a man such as those who visited Abraham in Chapter 18 and he demands that this man (God) bless him. God relents and gives Jacob a new name, Israel (meaning “wrestles with God”). He eventually re-unites with Esau.

Jacob's twelve sons are first mentioned in the order of their births, in Genesis 29:31–30:24 & 35:16-20 (Just, 2014):

- Leah (elder wife): 1) Reuben, 2) Simeon, 3) Levi, 4) Judah; later also 9) Issachar, 10) Zebulun;
- Bilhah (Rachel's slave): 5) Dan, 6) Naphtali;
- Zilpah (Leah's slave): 7) Gad, 8) Asher; and
- Rachel (younger wife): 11) Joseph, 12) Benjamin.

Jacob loves his second youngest son, Joseph, more than any of the other. The 10 ten older sons come to hate Joseph as Jacob favours him and gives him a special coat. So the older brothers kidnap him in order to kill him but then sell him into slavery in Egypt. God remains with Joseph, giving him the ability to interpret dreams through which the Pharaoh raises him to the second highest position in all of Egypt where Joseph saves the nation of his ancestors, including his brothers and family, in a famine.

Family of Abraham



Key: blue = men; red = women;
 dashes = spouses; arrows = children

(Just, 2014)

So even though Abraham and his family fails in many instances, God remains faithful and rescues them, showing His love and care as well as His commitment to His covenant with Abraham. The theme of God’s plan to subdue evil in man is summed up in the words of Joseph to his brothers in Genesis 50:20, “But as for you, ye thought **evil** against me; but God meant it unto **good**, to bring to pass, as it is this day, to **save much people** alive.”

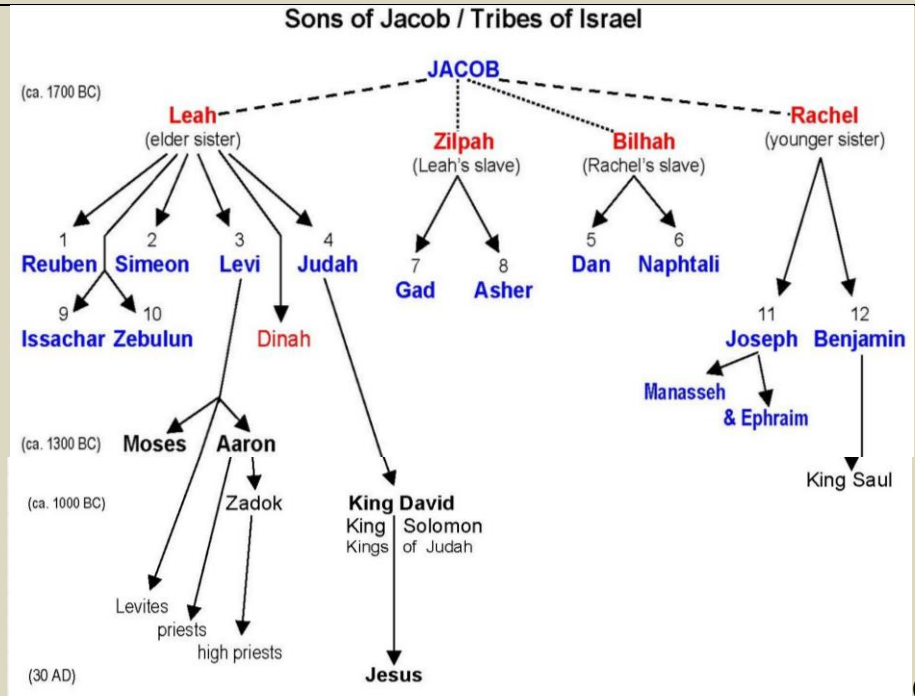
Although it is clear that since the fall, humans involve themselves constantly with evil and sin, God will not allow them to destroy themselves as he made all things good, and continues to bless people despite their failures.

In Genesis 3:15 God promises to destroy evil, “And I will put enmity between thee and the woman, and between thy seed and her seed; it shall bruise thy head, and thou shalt bruise his heel.” The ultimate seed of Eve would be Jesus Christ, the promised Messiah of later in the Bible who will restore the people of Israel, gather the tribes together and cleanse the temple.

There is more in this text than merely hatred between snakes and humans. The snake, representing the cunningness of the d(evil) would be conquered and crushed, an understanding supported in 1John 3:8 which states that, “he that committeth sin is of the devil; for the devil sinneth from the beginning. For this purpose, the Son of God was manifested, that he might destroy the works of the devil.” In Christian art Mary is sometimes depicted with her foot on the head of the serpent (USCCB, 2016).

This seed from Eve is then connected to Abraham, whose grandson blesses his son Judah to be the one from which the royal nationhood of God’s people will come (Genesis 49:8), “Judah, thou art he whom thy brethren shall praise: thy hand shall be in the neck of thine enemies; thy father’s children shall bow down before thee.” The tribe of Judah becomes known as the “royal tribe,” since all later Kings of Judah were descendants of King David, also from the tribe of Judah. (Just, 2014). The tribe of Levi is uniquely important, not only because of Moses and Aaron, but since they become the priestly tribe (all the sons of Levi are priests, while members of any other tribe cannot be priests (Just, 2014). The Levites do not receive a separate territory of their own, but rather live scattered among all the other tribes, where they serve as priests for the whole people (Just, 2014).

Although the first king of Israel (Saul) is from the tribe of Benjamin, the tribe of Judah becomes known as the royal tribe, due to the promise God makes to King David that his descendants will rule over Israel forever (2 Sam 7).



(Just, 2014)

More on Moses next time...

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