

## Genesis: The Promise

After confusing the language of the descendants of Noah for not obeying God to “be fruitful and multiply and fill the earth” (*Gen 9:1*) “the LORD dispersed them from there (*Babel: Heb.894- confusion*) over the face of all the earth, and they left off building the city” (*Gen 11:8*). With the birth of Abram in the Ur of the Chaldees, Noah would have lived another 60 years, after which Abram, then Abraham as in our last lesson, would have had his two sons, his first (*Ishmael*) to Hagar and his second (*Isaac*) to Sarah in her old age. Thus fulfilling God’s promise to Abraham that Sarah would conceive and bear Abraham a son in **his** old age (*Gen 21:2*). Of course Abraham had other sons to a wife named Keturah (*Gen 25*) and went on to live to be 175 years old (*v. 7*). But that promise had a twofold aspect to it: the seed promise and the land promise.

### Seed Promise

**Gen 15:5** And [God] brought [Abraham] outside and said, "Look toward heaven, and number the stars, if you are able to number them." Then He said to him, "So shall your offspring be." **6** And he believed the LORD, and He counted it to him as righteousness.

**Gal 3:16** Now the promises were made to Abraham and to his offspring. It does not say, "And to offsprings," referring to many, but referring to **One**, "And to your Offspring," **Who is Christ**.

- The promise to Abraham went from Abraham to Isaac to Jacob to Judah, down through to Jesse and David, all the way down through the lineage of Christ to Jesus Himself. Neither brother of Isaac (*Ishmael*) or of Jacob (*Esau*) were included in the seed promise. It was narrowed thus in order for Paul to make the true statement concerning a singular seed. Christ was always the focus of the promise but in order for Him to receive it, there had to be a narrowed, providential lineage through whom He would come. When such was finally fulfilled, according to “the fulness of time” (*Gal 4:4*), the Seed (*singular*) to Whom the promise was ultimately meant, came. Only through Jesus, the physical “Offspring” of Abraham, would “all the nations of the earth be blessed, because [Abraham] obeyed [God’s] voice” (*Gen 22:18*). Christ brought about forgiveness which can only be accessed by having the same “righteousness of faith” (*Rom 4:13*) that Abraham had, thus our ultimate reliance on Jesus becoming necessary for our salvation. Jesus became the ultimate sacrifice that God could give since “not by means of the blood of goats and calves but by means of His own blood, thus securing an eternal redemption” (*Heb 9:12*). And since God expected sacrificial perfection from the Israelites under the Mosaic law, as Deity, He could not give anything less than “the precious blood of Christ, like that of a lamb without blemish or spot” (*1 Pet 1:19*). Abraham saw this, whether through prophesy or when he met the pre-incarnate Christ “in the plains of Mamre” (*Gen 18:1*).

**Joh 8:56** Your father Abraham rejoiced that he would see My day. He saw it and was glad." **57** So the Jews said to Him, "You are not yet fifty years old, and have You seen Abraham?" **58** Jesus said to them, "Truly, truly, I say to you, before Abraham was, I Am."

*"I was" would simply have expressed priority, but "I am" marks timeless existence. It draws the contrast between the created and the uncreated, the temporal and the eternal.*  
McGarvey

We can see here where Jesus equated Himself with Deity (*Php 2:6 ...did not count equality with God a thing to be grasped.*) as with God when He told Moses in response to his question "What is Your Name?". God responded "I AM WHO I AM" and that Moses was to tell Israel "I AM has sent me to you" (*Ex 3:14-15*).

### Land Promise

**Gen 15:18** On that day the LORD made a covenant with Abram, saying, "To your offspring I give this land, from the river of Egypt to the great river, the river Euphrates, **19** the land of the Kenites, the Kenizzites, the Kadmonites, **20** the Hittites, the Perizzites, the Rephaim, **21** the Amorites, the Canaanites, the Girgashites and the Jebusites."

- There are presently, groups of misguided people who are claiming that they can prompt the second coming by persuading all known Jews to return to Palestine. But how can anyone claim to be descendants from either of the twelve tribes of Israel since all records that would prove such have been destroyed by the Romans in 70 AD. Those "endless genealogies" (*1 Tim 1:4*) no longer exist and no Jew today can claim a pure blood line because of it. Also, without the priestly tribe of Levi, the nation of 'physical' Israel cannot worship God as they were commanded under the Mosaic law. Anyone who claims to be a Levite can't, just as they couldn't when Ezra was in charge of rebuilding the temple

**Ezr 2:62** These sought their registration among those enrolled in the genealogies, but they were not found there, and so they were excluded from the priesthood as unclean.

But one of several passages they refer to in order to promote their claim of a scriptural return is **Eze 20:34**.

**Eze 20:34** I will bring you out from the peoples and gather you out of the countries where you are scattered, with a mighty hand and an outstretched arm, and with wrath poured out.

Passages such as this have been taken way out of their original context. This had to do with the scattered Israelites of Ezekiel's time when they "[offered up their] children in fire, [they defiled themselves] with all [their] idols" (*v. 31*), and with their returning from places where they "thought, 'Let us be like the nations, like

the tribes of the countries, and worship wood and stone.' (v. 32)" What nation exists today that would fit this description where any Jew would be held in such bondage?

And since a covenant is a contract between at least two parties, it takes only one side to make it null and void by going against anything agreed to therein. God cannot go back on His word, so it was Israel that dishonored the agreement and thus cancelled out the promises written. Besides, God did keep His promise to Israel by giving them all that He had sworn.

1Ki 8:56 "Blessed be the LORD Who has given rest to His people Israel, according to all that He promised. Not one word has failed of all His good promise, which He spoke by Moses His servant.

### Abraham's Faith

Gen 22:1 After these things God tested Abraham and said to him, "Abraham!" And he said, "Here am I." 2 He said, "Take 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, saddled his donkey, and took two of his young men with him, and his son Isaac. And he cut the wood for the burnt offering and arose and went to the place of which God had told him.

- Since God had already told Abraham that "through Isaac shall your offspring be named" (Gen 21:12) Abraham knew God would have to resurrect Isaac from the dead in order to keep His promise.

Jas 2:19 You believe that God is One; you do well. Even the demons believe--and shudder! 20 Do you want to be shown, you foolish person, that faith apart from works is useless? 21 Was not Abraham our father justified by works when he offered up his son Isaac on the altar? 22 You see that faith was active along with his works, and faith was completed by his works; 23 and the Scripture was fulfilled that says, "Abraham believed God, and it was counted to him as righteousness"--and he was called a friend of God.

- Abraham "believed" God. It's not enough to just believe in God. To believe God then, is to accept His word on "all things that pertain to life and godliness, through the knowledge of Him Who called us to His own glory and excellence" (2 Pet 1:3). Abraham was serious about offering his son Isaac up until he was prevented by another appearance of the pre-incarnate Christ.

Gen 22:11 But the Angel of the LORD called to him from heaven and said, "Abraham, Abraham!" And he said, "Here am I." 12 He said, "Do not lay your hand on the boy or do anything to him, for now I know that you fear God, seeing you have not withheld your son, your only son, from Me."

For the **Angel** in this passage to state that **Abraham** feared **God** and go on to say that he didn't withhold his son from **Him** (*the Angel*) says a lot about **Who** it was that **Abraham** was dealing with. The sacrifice **Abraham** offered that day was one that "**God** [had provided] for **Himself**" (*v. 8*), "a ram, caught in a thicket by his horns" (*v. 13*). So, in time the promise was to be passed down through **Isaac** and time, as we know of it, marches on and along the way pages turn and loved ones go by the way of the world.

**Gen 23:1** **Sarah** lived 127 years; these were the years of the life of **Sarah**. **2** And **Sarah** died at Kiriath-arba (that is, **Hebron**) in the land of **Canaan**, and **Abraham** went in to mourn for **Sarah** and to weep for her.

**Gen 23:19** After this, **Abraham** buried **Sarah** his wife in the cave of the field of **Machpelah** east of **Mamre** (that is, **Hebron**) in the land of **Canaan**. **20** The field and the cave that is in it were made over to **Abraham** as property for a burying place by the **Hittites**.

- As stated earlier, **Abraham** went on to marry **Keturah** and have other sons. And, as the promise went, he "gave all that he had unto **Isaac**" (*Gen 25:5*). But before he died, he wanted to make sure **Isaac** married from among his own kindred.

#### Isaac and Rebekah

**Gen 24:1** Now **Abraham** was old, well advanced in years. And the **LORD** had blessed **Abraham** in all things. **2** And **Abraham** said to his servant, the oldest of his household, who had charge of all that he had, "Put your hand under my thigh, **3** that I may make you swear by the **LORD**, the God of Heaven and God of the earth, that you will not take a wife for my son from the daughters of the **Canaanites**, among whom I dwell, **4** but will go to my country and to my kindred, and take a wife for my son **Isaac**."

- There must be something about the thigh in making a covenant.

**Rev 19:16** On **His** robe and on **His** thigh **He** has a **Name** written, **King** of kings and **Lord** of lords.

**Gen 24:9** So the servant put his hand under the thigh of **Abraham** his master and **swore to him** concerning this matter.

- As the story goes, this servant, **Abraham's** oldest, did as he was instructed and "went to **Mesopotamia** to the city of **Nahor**" (*v. 10*) to secure a wife for **Isaac**. He prayed that **God** would give him a sign as to who this "young woman" (*v. 14*) might be and **God** answered his request when **Rebekah** arrived, **Abraham's** grand-niece (*Gen 22:20-23*). She "was very attractive in appearance, a maiden whom no man had known" (*v. 16*). Her brother was **Laban** (*v. 24*) who would later be the father-in-law to her own son **Jacob**. After some discussion on when it

was that **Rebekah** would leave, the servant of **Abraham** convinced them that she should return with him immediately.

**Gen 24:61** Then **Rebekah** and her young women arose and rode on the camels and followed the man. Thus the servant took **Rebekah** and went his way. **62** Now **Isaac** had returned from **Beer-lahai-roi** and was dwelling in the **Negeb**. **63** And **Isaac** went out to meditate in the field toward evening. And he lifted up his eyes and saw, and behold, there were camels coming. **64** And **Rebekah** lifted up her eyes, and when she saw **Isaac**, she dismounted from the camel **65** and said to the servant, "Who is that man, walking in the field to meet us?" The servant said, "It is my master." So she took her veil and covered herself. **66** And the servant told **Isaac** all the things that he had done. **67** Then **Isaac** brought her into the tent of **Sarah** his mother and took **Rebekah**, and she became his wife, and he loved her. So **Isaac** was comforted after his mother's death.

### The Birthright

**Gen 25:21** And **Isaac** prayed to the **LORD** for his wife, because she was barren. And the **LORD** granted his prayer, and **Rebekah** his wife conceived. **22** The children struggled together within her, and she said, "If it is thus, why is this happening to me?" So she went to inquire of the **LORD**. **23** And the **LORD** said to her, "Two nations are in your womb, and two peoples from within you shall be divided; the one shall be stronger than the other, the older shall serve the younger."

**Gen 25:24** When her days to give birth were completed, behold, there were twins in her womb. **25** The first came out red, all his body like a hairy cloak, so they called his name **Esau** (*Heb.6215- rough [that is, sensibly felt]*). **26** Afterward his brother came out with his hand holding **Esau's** heel, so his name was called **Jacob** (*Heb.3290- heel catcher*). **Isaac** was sixty years old when she bore them.

**Gen 25:27** When the boys grew up, **Esau** was a skillful hunter, a man of the field, while **Jacob** was a quiet man, dwelling in tents. **28** **Isaac** loved **Esau** because he ate of his game, but **Rebekah** loved **Jacob**.

**Gen 25:29** Once when **Jacob** was cooking stew, **Esau** came in from the field, and he was exhausted. **30** And **Esau** said to **Jacob**, "Let me eat some of that red stew, for I am exhausted!" (Therefore his name was called **Edom** [*Heb.123- red*].) **31** **Jacob** said, "Sell me your birthright now." **32** **Esau** said, "I am about to die; of what use is a birthright to me?" **33** **Jacob** said, "Swear to me now." So he swore to him and sold his birthright to **Jacob**. **34** Then **Jacob** gave **Esau** bread and lentil stew, and he ate and drank and rose and went his way. Thus **Esau** despised his birthright.

- To sell a birthright was almost unheard of since it was to be considered a gift from **God**. This was such an act of sacrilege that **Esau** committed that the N.T. Hebrew writer made mention of it as being on the same level of a person who is "sexually immoral or unholy like **Esau**, who sold his birthright for a single meal. For you know that afterward, when he desired to inherit the blessing, he was

rejected, for he found no chance to repent, though he sought it with tears" (*Heb 12:16-17*).

**Gen 27:1** When **Isaac** was old and his eyes were dim so that he could not see, he called **Esau** his older son and said to him, "My son"; and he answered, "Here I am." **2** He said, "Behold, I am old; I do not know the day of my death. **3** Now then, take your weapons, your quiver and your bow, and go out to the field and hunt game for me, **4** and prepare for me delicious food, such as I love, and bring it to me so that I may eat, that my soul may bless you before I die."

- Of course **Rebekah** had heard all that **Isaac** had said to **Esau** and she made sure that **Jacob** received the inheritance he had swindled **Esau** out of. She had **Jacob** prepare "two young goats" (*v. 9*) and then "took the best garments of **Esau**" (*v. 15*) and "the skins of the young goats she put on his hands and on the smooth part of his neck" (*v. 16*). Even though **Isaac** in his blindness was still perceptive, he wasn't prepared for what his own wife and younger son were about to do. He felt something wasn't right so he questioned **Jacob** whom he thought was **Esau** on how he was so successful in his hunt, in that he returned so quickly with the prepared game.

**Gen 27:20** But **Isaac** said to his son, "How is it that you have found it so quickly, my son?" He answered, "Because the LORD your God granted me success." **21** Then **Isaac** said to **Jacob**, "Please come near, that I may feel you, my son, to know whether you are really my son **Esau** or not." **22** So **Jacob** went near to **Isaac** his father, who felt him and said, "The voice is **Jacob's** voice, but the hands are the hands of **Esau**." **23** And he did not recognize him, because his hands were hairy like his brother **Esau's** hands. So he blessed him.

- Still not completely convinced, **Isaac** told **Jacob** to come even closer so he could smell him. At that point he was convinced it was **Esau** because of the "smell of his garments" and he said "See, the smell of my son in as the smell of the field that the LORD has blessed" (*v. 27*). Then, after **Jacob** had scarcely left, his brother **Esau** came in with the game he had prepared as his father **Isaac** liked it. **Isaac** then realized the deception but could not give the birthright blessing that had already been given.

**Gen 27:41** Now **Esau** hated **Jacob** because of the blessing with which his father had blessed him, and **Esau** said to himself, "The days of mourning for my father are approaching; then I will kill my brother **Jacob**." **42** But the words of **Esau** her older son were told to **Rebekah**. So she sent and called **Jacob** her younger son and said to him, "Behold, your brother **Esau** comforts himself about you by planning to kill you. **43** Now therefore, my son, obey my voice. Arise, flee to **Laban** my brother in **Haran** **44** and stay with him a while, until your brother's fury turns away-- **45** until your brother's anger turns away from you, and he forgets what you have done to him. Then I will send and bring you from there. Why should I be bereft of you both in one day?"

- It wasn't long before Isaac accepted the fact that he had given the blessing to Jacob.

Gen 28:1 Then Isaac called Jacob and blessed him and directed him, "You must not take a wife from the Canaanite women. 2 Arise, go to Paddan-aram to the house of Bethuel your mother's father, and take as your wife from there one of the daughters of Laban your mother's brother. 3 God Almighty bless you and make you fruitful and multiply you, that you may become a company of peoples. 4 May he give **the blessing of Abraham** to you and to your offspring with you, that you may take possession of the land of your sojourning that God gave to Abraham!"

- Isaac knew Esau's wives had caused him to stray away from the Lord and when Esau knew of his displeasure he "went to Ishmael and took as his wife, Mahalath, the daughter of Ishmael, Abraham's son" (v. 9) who would have been his cousin. In the meantime, "Jacob went on his journey and came to the land of the people of the east" (29:1). There he met the love of his life and would work 14 years total to have her for his bride.

### Rachel and Leah

Gen 29:10 Now as soon as Jacob saw Rachel the daughter of Laban his mother's brother, and the sheep of Laban his mother's brother, Jacob came near and rolled the stone from the well's mouth and watered the flock of Laban his mother's brother. 11 Then Jacob kissed Rachel and wept aloud. 12 And Jacob told Rachel that he was her father's kinsman, and that he was Rebekah's son, and she ran and told her father. 13 As soon as Laban heard the news about Jacob, his sister's son, he ran to meet him and embraced him and kissed him and brought him to his house. Jacob told Laban all these things, 14 and Laban said to him, "Surely you are my bone and my flesh!" And he stayed with him a month.

Gen 29:16 Now Laban had two daughters. The name of the older was Leah (*Heb.3812- wearied*), and the name of the younger was Rachel (*Heb.7354- a ewe [the females being the predominant element of the flock]*). 17 Leah's eyes were weak, but Rachel was beautiful in form and appearance. 18 Jacob loved Rachel. And he said, "I will serve you seven years for your younger daughter Rachel." 19 Laban said, "It is better that I give her to you than that I should give her to any other man; stay with me." 20 So Jacob served seven years for Rachel, and they seemed to him but a few days because of the love he had for her.

- Jacob had worked seven years in order for Laban to grant him his wish to have Rachael for his own. But, Jacob was about to get a taste of his own medicine.

Gen 29:21 Then Jacob said to Laban, "Give me my wife that I may go in to her, for my time is completed." 22 So Laban gathered together all the people of the place and made a feast. 23 But in the evening he took his daughter Leah and brought her to Jacob, and he went in to her.

- The custom then was that the bride be veiled until the first evening of the week long wedding feast. **Jacob**, like a child on Christmas morning, was in such a hurry that he was unaware beforehand that his gift was not what he had expected until he beheld **Leah**, instead of **Rachel**, in the light of day.

Gen 29:24 (Laban gave his female servant Zilpah [*Heb.2153- to trickle as myrrh; fragrant dropping*] to his daughter **Leah** to be her servant.) 25 And in the morning, behold, it was **Leah**! And **Jacob** said to **Laban**, "What is this you have done to me? Did I not serve with you for **Rachel**? Why then have you deceived me?" 26 **Laban** said, "It is not so done in our country, to give the younger before the firstborn. 27 Complete the week of this one, and we will give you the other also in return for serving me another seven years." 28 **Jacob** did so, and completed her week. Then **Laban** gave him his daughter **Rachel** to be his wife.

*"Rather than lose Rachel altogether, Jacob consents to comply with Laban's terms."*  
Albert Barnes

*"The marriage feast, it appears, lasted seven days; it would not therefore have been proper to break off the solemnities to which all the men of the place had been invited, [Gen 29:22](#), and probably Laban wished to keep his fraud from the public eye; therefore he informs Jacob that if he will fulfill the marriage week for Leah, he will give him Rachel at the end of it, on condition of his serving seven other years. To this the necessity of the case caused Jacob to agree; and thus Laban had fourteen years' service instead of seven: for it is not likely that Jacob would have served even seven days for Leah, as his affection was wholly set on Rachel, the wife of his own choice. By this stratagem Laban gained a settlement for both his daughters. What a man soweth, that shall he reap. Jacob had before practiced deceit, and is now deceived; and Laban, the instrument of it, was afterwards deceived himself."*  
Adam Clarke

Gen 29:29 (Laban gave his female servant **Bilhah** [*Heb.1090- timid*] to his daughter **Rachel** to be her servant.) 30 So **Jacob** went in to **Rachel** also, and he loved **Rachel** more than **Leah**, and served **Laban** for another seven years.

*"Rachel was the wife of Jacob's affections and intentions. The taking of a second wife in the lifetime of the first was contrary to the law of nature, which designed one man for one woman [Gen 2:21-25](#). But the marrying of a sister-in-law was not yet incestuous, because no law had yet been made on the subject."*  
Albert Barnes

Lev 18:18 And you shall not take a woman as a rival wife to her sister, uncovering her nakedness while her sister is still alive.

Ultimately there were twelve sons born to Jacob between his two wives and his wives' maid servants. But even before his last son Benjamin was born he still had to deal with the birthright issue and his brother Esau's vengeance. He feared what Esau would do to his family but Jacob then remembered the promise God made to him.

- After sending messengers to Esau, ahead of his great company of family, servants and livestock, they returned with news that Esau was “coming to meet [Jacob], and there [were] four hundred men with him (v. 6).

Gen 32:7 Then Jacob was greatly afraid and distressed. He divided the people who were with him, and the flocks and herds and camels, into two camps, 8 thinking, "If Esau comes to the one camp and attacks it, then the camp that is left will escape." 9 And Jacob said, "O God of my father Abraham and God of my father Isaac, O LORD Who said to me, 'Return to your country and to your kindred, that I may do you good,' 10 I am not worthy of the least of all the deeds of steadfast love and all the faithfulness that You have shown to Your servant, for with only my staff I crossed this Jordan, and now I have become two camps. 11 Please deliver me from the hand of my brother, from the hand of Esau, for I fear him, that he may come and attack me, the mothers with the children. 12 But You said, 'I will surely do you good, and make your offspring as the sand of the sea, which cannot be numbered for multitude.'"

- God did not forget His promise that He made to Abraham, to Isaac, and now to Jacob. Isn't it interesting, even today, how we so often forget in times of distress that He is still with us?

Heb 13:5 Keep your life free from love of money, and be content with what you have, for He has said, "I will never leave you nor forsake you." 6 So we can confidently say, "The Lord is my helper; I will not fear; what can man do to me?"

### Jacob Wrestles

Gen 32:22 The same night he arose and took his two wives, his two female servants, and his eleven children, and crossed the ford of the Jabbok. 23 He took them and sent them across the stream, and everything else that he had. 24 And Jacob was left alone. And a man wrestled with him until the breaking of the day. 25 When the man saw that he did not prevail against Jacob, he touched his hip socket, and Jacob's hip was put out of joint as he wrestled with him. 26 Then he said, "Let me go, for the day has broken." But Jacob said, "I will not let you go unless you bless me." 27 And he said to him, "What is your name?" And he said, "Jacob." 28 Then he said, "Your name shall no longer be called Jacob, but Israel, for you have striven with God and with men, and have prevailed."

Gen 32:30 So Jacob called the name of the place Peniel, saying, "For I have seen God face to face, and yet my life has been delivered."

- Whether an angel or a theophany of God that Jacob wrestled with, this being had the authority to change Jacob's name from one that meant “heel catcher” (Heb.3290), to Israel, which means “he will rule as God” (Heb.3478). Why would a name change make any difference in the scheme of things? After all, what's in a name? Name, in the Hebrew here, (Heb.8034) has to do with “position” which

implies “honor, authority” and/or “character”. Thus Jacob’s new name. We see name changes all the time, when we marry and wives take on the names of husbands, thus proclaiming that they belong to each other. So, like when the lunchbox of a grade schooler bears the name of its owner, we either belong to one of two spiritual entities, God or Satan. Every one of us have been given an opportunity to change our “positions”. From “sinner” to “saint”, from “lost” to “saved” and from “child of Satan” to “child of God”. Jesus became the “Son of man” (*Mk 10:45*) at His baptism (*Mat 3*) so that we can be given “the right to become children of God” (*Jn 1:12*) as we “are led by the Spirit of God” (*Rom 8:14*) after ours. Our last lesson from Genesis will have to do with “The Twelve Patriarchs”, the twelve sons of Israel before they all move into the land of Egypt because of the famine that affected the then known world.

- So who do you belong to? Are you a disciple of Christ?

*Act 11:26* ... And in Antioch the disciples were first called Christians.

If you are a disciple you are one who is learning to become a Christian. If you haven’t made the decision yet to become a Christian, by having your sins remitted in baptism, for your soul’s eternal sake, please do.

*Mat 28:18* And Jesus came and said to them, "All authority (*Gk.1849- delegated influence:- jurisdiction*) in Heaven and on earth has been given to Me. 19 Go therefore and make disciples (*Gk.3101- a learner, pupil*) of all nations, baptizing them in the Name (*Gk.3686- authority*) of the Father and of the Son and of the Holy Spirit, 20 teaching them to observe all that I have commanded you. And behold, I am with you always, to the end of the age."

Charli Yana  
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