



**KINGDOM
PATRIARCHS
PART 1**

Forty Daily Devotions
from Genesis Chapters 1 - 25
(Based on the NKJV)

Introduction

Genesis is a book about "beginnings." It tells us about the beginning of the heavens and the earth and all that is contained therein. This is also a book about our "beginnings" in the sense that it is the record of man's ancestry all the way back to Adam and Eve. These early ancestors of the Christian faith are referred to as "patriarchs" in the New Testament. Acts 2:29 identifies David as a "patriarch" and Hebrews 7:4 specifically speaks of Abraham as being a patriarch. Patriarch means "father" or "head." The people that we will meet in Genesis are people that became the fathers, or heads, of all the nations of the earth. Enjoy your time in Genesis as you meet more of your extended family!

Daily Reading Schedule

Day	Scripture Reading	Date
1	Genesis 1:1-19	05/01/26
2	Genesis 1:20-31	05/02/26
3	Genesis 2:1-25	05/03/26
4	Genesis 3:1-24	05/04/26
5	Genesis 4:1-16	05/05/26
6	Genesis 4:17-5:14	05/06/26
7	Genesis 5:15-32	05/07/26
8	Genesis 6:1-22	05/08/26
9	Genesis 7:1-24	05/09/26
10	Genesis 8:1-22	05/10/26
11	Genesis 9:1-17	05/11/26
12	Genesis 9:18-29	05/12/26
13	Genesis 10:1-32	05/13/26
14	Genesis 11:1-25	05/14/26
15	Genesis 11:26-12:9	05/15/26
16	Genesis 12:10-20	05/16/26
17	Genesis 13:1-18	05/17/26
18	Genesis 14:1-16	05/18/26
19	Genesis 14:17-15:16	05/19/26
20	Genesis 15:17-16:15	05/20/26

Day	Scripture Reading	Date
21	Genesis 17:1-14	05/21/26
22	Genesis 17:15-27	05/22/26
23	Genesis 18:1-15	05/23/26
24	Genesis 18:16-33	05/24/26
25	Genesis 19:1-20	05/25/26
26	Genesis 19:21-38	05/26/26
27	Genesis 20:1-18	05/27/26
28	Genesis 21:1-21	05/28/26
29	Genesis 21:22-34	05/29/26
30	Genesis 22:1-12	05/30/26
31	Genesis 22:13-24	05/31/26
32	Genesis 23:1-20	06/01/26
33	Genesis 24:1-11	06/02/26
34	Genesis 24:12-24	06/03/26
35	Genesis 24:25-38	06/04/26
36	Genesis 24:39-51	06/05/26
37	Genesis 24:52-67	06/06/26
38	Genesis 25:1-11	06/07/26
39	Genesis 25:12-18	06/08/26
40	Genesis 25:19-34	06/09/26

Day 1: Genesis 1:1-19

“And God saw the light, that it was good; and God divided the light from the darkness.” (Genesis 1:4)

“Good”

To believe that “in the beginning God created the heavens and the earth” (v. 1), is to assume that God existed even *before* the beginning. He is the God Who has always been and Who will always be. He is God! Today’s Scripture reading includes the story of the first four days of God’s creative work. In these verses we read the word “good” four times (vs. 4, 10, 12, and 18). The Hebrew word for “good” here is translated in at least 16 different ways in the Bible, but it is most often translated “good” or “better.” Can’t you just imagine God sitting back and examining His work at the end of the days and saying, “That’s good!” Or can’t you see Him finishing one of the phases of this great creation, then knocking the dirt off of His mighty hands while taking a careful look at what He had just formed and saying, “That’s better!” Not everything that goes on in the world is good. But this world is good in the sense that it is the source from which we receive many of our blessings from God. In many older copies of the Bible, you will see that the words “it was” are in italics. Italics were used to indicate the places where words were added for clarification in our English Bible. In the Hebrew, it would read, “And God saw good.” He saw the “good” in the world when He first created it, and He can see the “good” that He has placed in each and every one of us!

Prayer Emphasis: Practice seeing the “good” in people and situations. **Strive** to be a positive witness for the Lord every day of your life. **Speak** something “good” to someone that you meet today!

Day 2: Genesis 1:20-31

“Then God saw everything that He had made, and indeed it was very good. So the evening and the morning were the sixth day.” (Genesis 1:31)

“Very Good”

Just as He did after His first four days of creating, God finished His work on day five and then declared it to be “good” (v. 21). Day six appears to have been God’s busiest day with Him declaring His handiwork “good” once more (v. 25). He then crowned His great creative work with quite a jewel! He decided to make man in His “image” and “likeness” and place Him on the earth to “have dominion” over the earth and all of the creatures that He made (v. 26). After that busy day, God looked at all He had made and declared it to be “very good” (v. 31). The Hebrew adverb that is translated “very” in our focus verse is a word that means “extremely.” This word is not used again in the Bible until it is used to tell us that Cain was “very” angry with his brother Abel. Cain’s anger led him to take an extreme action and kill his own brother (4:5). It was also used to describe Sarah as being more than simply beautiful. She was said to be “very” beautiful (12:14). In the same sense, we learn that Abram was more than just rich when we read that he was “very” rich (13:2). I do not think it is by coincidence that this is the seventh time the word “good” was spoken by God in the record of His creation work. Since seven is a number closely associated with perfection throughout the Bible, it is clear that God is indicating that He considered the work of His hands to be “perfect.”

Prayer Emphasis: Imagine living in a perfect world that was created for you by our Mighty God! **Realize** that we will someday live in such a world – one that is called Heaven! Tell someone about it today!

Day 3: Genesis 2:1-25

“This is the history of the heavens and the earth when they were created, in the day that the LORD God made the earth and the heavens,” (Genesis 2:4)

“His” Story

Genesis two has been used by many scholars to add confusion to what is a very succinct and clear story of God’s creative work. Although it may appear to some that the Bible contains two different accounts of creation, you can rest assured there is only one. Most translations mention the “day” that God created the heavens and the earth in our focus verse. A very few translations translate this Hebrew word as “when” or “at the time.” This is the same word we read when we read about the “days” of creation. It is a word with a dual meaning. It can mean a “day” (as in a 24-hour period) or it can mean a “day” (as in a period of time). We do this same thing today. We speak of “days” that are of the 24-hour period type, and we speak of “days” that represent the “good old days” or some other period of time. When you read Genesis 2 you are reading God’s own record of His creation work. The NKJV translates this word as the “history of the heavens and the earth” (v. 4). What is summarized in the first accounting (chapter 1) is described in greater detail in this second accounting (chapter 2) that focuses mostly on the work done on the sixth day and provides much greater detail about the creation of mankind. Rest assured that Genesis two does not *contradict* anything that was said in Genesis one, but, rather, it *complements* it!

Prayer Emphasis: Believe God’s Word to be absolutely true. **Read** it daily and **speak** of it often. Since God was the only eyewitness to what happened in the beginning, **accept** “His” story over all others!

Day 4: Genesis 3:1-24

“So when the woman saw that the tree was good for food, that it was pleasant to the eyes, and a tree desirable to make one wise, she took of its fruit and ate.” (Genesis 3:6)

Temptation and Sin

Our Scripture reading reveals that very bad things can sometimes happen to very good people, even if they live very good lives and are in very good places. As you read the story of the fall of Adam and Eve, remind yourself that this all happened to people who lived in an environment that God described as “very good.” We can be sure that nothing that happened with Adam and Eve caught God by surprise or that He was not fully prepared for what was going to take place when Satan came to tempt mankind to sin. Never forget that Jesus is described as the One who was slain before the “foundation of the world” (Revelation 13:8). (Some translations use the word “creation” in that verse.) So, before God even began His creation work, He created a way to restore a sinful mankind unto Himself. Our focus verse describes a three-fold attraction to the one tree that God declared off limits to Adam and Eve. Satan used these attractive enticements to lure Eve to disobey God. John describes this same three-fold attraction when he wrote about “the lust of the flesh, the lust of the eyes, and the pride of life” in 1 John 2:16. You can see these same three enticements in what happened to Eve in the garden. We are told Eve “saw” the tree (lust of the eyes), that it was “good for food” (lust of the flesh), and able to “make one wise” (the pride of life).

Prayer Emphasis: You may recall that Satan used the same three-fold approach to temptation when he tempted Christ in Matthew 4. **Look** for the words that describe “the lust of the flesh, the lust of the eyes, and the pride of life” in that account. **Determine** to follow the example of Christ and stand strong!

Day 5: Genesis 4:1-16

*“Then Cain went out from the presence of the LORD and dwelt in the land of Nod on the east of Eden.”
(Genesis 4:16)*

Cain and Abel

There are several times in the Bible that God chose to use a story of two brothers to teach us great truths about choices and the consequences that they introduce to our lives. This is the first of these stories. As a “tiller of the ground” Cain became a man who was content with staying close to the dirt from which man was first formed (4:2). Abel aspired to higher things and chose to exercise man’s dominion over the “every living thing” that was promised to man back in Genesis 1:28. When we read that, “Cain went out from the presence of the LORD” (v. 16), we cannot help but recognize that Satan has a process for destroying God’s children. This story may be recorded in just a few verses in the Bible, but the actual events related in this story took place over the course of many years. Cain was first angry, then he was a murderer. As a matter of fact, the Bible says he was “very angry” (4:5). This is the same Hebrew adverb that was used when God saw His created world as being “very” good. Be careful to notice that the first murder came over spiritual differences. These brothers did not disagree over worldly matters, but over their differing perspectives about worship. Satan had a process, and in it, he made great progress. Soon Cain’s spiritual disagreement that led to his separation from his brother, led to his separation from his entire family and the God whom he had been created to serve.

Prayer Emphasis: Determine to make the right choices about how you treat those that God has placed in your life. **Refuse** to allow anger to control your thinking. **Realize** that soon after anger has taken control of your mind, it will lead to destructive action in your life.

Day 6: Genesis 4:17-5:14

“And Cain knew his wife, and she conceived and bore Enoch. And he built a city, and called the name of the city after the name of his son – Enoch.” (Genesis 4:17)

A Fair Question

If I had a nickel for every time I have heard someone ask, “Where did Cain get his wife?” I would have a whole lot of nickels! We must not forget that there were many other children born to Adam and Eve whose stories are not told in the pages of the Bible. If you find that hard to believe, then ask yourself why every person’s history is not included in the encyclopedias. There is only one reasonable answer as to where Cain got his wife. He was married to someone within his own family. We clearly read today that Adam and Eve had other “sons and daughters” (5:4). Of all those sons and daughters, only Cain, Abel, and Seth are mentioned by name in the Bible. Given the longevity of life at that time in human history, it is possible that Cain married a sister or even a niece. Since Adam and Eve had no brothers or sisters, leaving their children with no aunts or uncles, we can be certain that Cain did not marry his cousin.

Prayer Emphasis: Respond to spiritual questions with Biblical answers. **Study** God’s Word so that you will have something to say when you hear people questioning the validity of the Bible. **Believe** that the Bible contains all that we need to know about how to live here – and how to know that we will live in the hereafter.

Day 7: Genesis 5:15-32

“After he begot Methuselah, Enoch walked with God three hundred years...” (Genesis 5:22)

Enoch

Just as there is not sufficient time in a document the size of the Bible to name and discuss, in detail, the lives of every person who ever existed on earth, there is certainly not enough time in a devotional guide to even mention every person about whom we will read in Genesis. However, there are some of our ancestors whose stories demand our attention. Enoch is one of those people. Enoch was, in the true sense of the word, a patriarch. He was the father of an order of people who “walked with God” (5:22). “Walk” is a biblical expression for fellowship and obedience. It meant to “be in step” with God and God’s way of thinking. *Enoch was a parent.* Our focus verse indicates that Enoch began his “walk” with God after the birth of his son, Methuselah. There is no greater responsibility for any man than that of walking with God in full view of his family! *Enoch was persistent!* The Bible states that he walked with God for 300 years! He surely would have walked many years more if he had not become a picture of one of the greatest biblical events that is the next big thing on God’s timetable. Enoch was a picture of the rapture! The Bible describes his mysterious disappearance like this: “And he was not, for God took him” (v. 24). When we understand the meaning of the word “took” in verse 24, we then understand that *Enoch was also a prisoner.* The Hebrew word translated “took” means to “snatch away, capture, or seize.” It was often used to describe prisoners or spoils “taken” in war. You can rest assured that Enoch’s disappearance may have come suddenly, but his ultimate capture came as a result of a long process of time as he walked with God.

Prayer Emphasis: Allow God to capture you as you walk with Him on a daily basis. **Believe** that, just like He did with Enoch, God desires to draw you to a closer walk with Him – one day at a time!

Day 8: Genesis 6:1-22

“But Noah found grace in the eyes of the LORD.” (Genesis 6:8)

Noah

As I think about the many sermons, books, and movies that have tried to tell the story of the life of Noah, I shudder at the challenge of describing him in just a short devotional. If there is one phrase that best tells the story of this great man, it is the one found in our focus verse today, “Noah found grace.” If that one phrase had to be shortened into one word, the word would have to be “grace.” Noah’s name means “rest” and it comes from a Hebrew root word that is translated “resting place” several times in the Bible. While the vast majority of the world’s inhabitants seemed to be in spiritual darkness and confusion (6:5), this man found “rest” from the struggles of life and, by the grace of God, found a “resting place” for himself and his family when he obeyed God in the preparing of the Ark. Although there are many remarks that could be made about the verses we read today, I will have to limit them to one very basic statement, that being Noah was a very good example of grace and works and how they must coexist in the lives and hearts of believers. The first verse of our reading states that “Noah found grace” while we will see tomorrow that, even while living in a state of grace, Noah “did...all that the LORD commanded him” (7:5).

Prayer Emphasis: Enjoy your grace, but do not forget about the good deeds that are to be born from it! **Experience** God’s grace flowing through you by **exhibiting** His grace to others today by your good works!

Day 9: Genesis 7:1-24

“So those that entered, male and female of all flesh, went in as God had commanded him; and the LORD shut him in.” (Genesis 7:16)

A Safe Place

Once Noah, his family, and the selected animals were in the ark, we are told that “the LORD shut him in.” From what we read yesterday in the Scripture, there seems to have been only one door through which the ark could be entered (6:16). After Noah, his family, and all the animals were safely in the ark, God Himself “shut” the door, assuring the safety of all who were inside. There are only three arks ever mentioned in the Bible, and all three were designed to be a place of safety. The first is the one that we are reading about today. The second was the little ark in which Moses was temporarily hidden in Exodus 2:3. That ark was obviously created for the safety of young Moses! The third was the Ark of the Covenant in which the tables of the Law were kept safely stored. While the construction of all three of these arks was inspired by God, both Noah’s ark and the Ark of the Covenant were built to the exact specifications that God provided for their construction. All three of the arks were designed with safety in mind. Two were designed for the safety and security of God’s *people* while the other was designed for the safety and security of God’s *promises*. Both are extremely important to Him! I want to remind you that the name, “Noah,” means “rest.” I am sure that Noah could “rest” assured that His God was going to provide him, and his family, refuge from the ravaging flood!

Prayer Emphasis: Thank God for the spiritual security He provides against even the greatest storms in life. **Share** a testimony of His blessings with someone you meet today. **Trust** God to keep you safe once you have entered His one door to salvation.

Day 10: Genesis 8:1-22

“Then Noah built an altar to the LORD, and took of every clean animal and of every clean bird, and offered burnt offerings on the altar.” (Genesis 8:20)

Noah Builds Again!

Just for the record, the Scriptures never actually say that Noah “built” the ark. Genesis 6:14 records God commanding Noah to “make” an ark for the safety of his family. While these words are very similar, the first (“make”) has more to do with assembly, while the second (“build”) has to do with acquisition and assembly. It is fair to say that God provided Noah with the materials and Noah was to “make” the ark from them. However, when Noah left the ark and built an altar to the LORD, he did it on his own initiative and, therefore, was left to gather his own materials. There is a great spiritual application to be made here, and a devotional will not allow the time to fully develop it. In a nutshell, when God has the idea for what He wants us to do, He always makes every provision for us to complete His plan. When we have our own ideas as to what we want to do for God, He often leaves us to our own initiative and ingenuity. The ark was a gift to Noah from God, and the altar was a gift to God from Noah. As far as we know, this is the first altar ever built. Offerings are mentioned in the story of Cain and Abel, but an altar is not mentioned.

Prayer Emphasis: If Noah was going to build an altar for God he was going to have to do more than just pray about it! He was going to have to be very intentional in his actions if he was to honor God in that way. **Be** intentional in your personal walk with God today and **do** something to express your love for Him.

Day 11: Genesis 9:1-17

“So God blessed Noah and his sons, and said to them: ‘Be fruitful and multiply, and fill the earth.’”
(Genesis 9:1)

A New Beginning

If you do not think God intended for Noah to see this as a new beginning, then you only have to go back and reread Genesis 1:28, where God’s actions and words to Adam and Eve were identical to the message He had for Noah on this day. Just like Adam and Eve, Noah was “blessed” and then commanded to “be fruitful, and multiply, and fill the earth.” For the record, Noah became the recipient of only the third blessing that is recorded thus far in the Bible. First, God blessed Adam and Eve (1:22 & 28). He then “blessed” the seventh day (2:3). And, now He “blesses” Noah. (By the way, we do not read of anyone ever “blessing” God until we get to Genesis 9:26!) The word that is translated “blessed” in today’s focus verse is translated “greet” at least five times in some translations of the Bible. A good example of this is found in 1 Samuel 13:10 where, when Samuel was approaching the place where King Saul was, the king went out to “greet” him. Noah built an altar to God and God, in return, “saluted” Noah’s action by giving him a new beginning but with the same marching orders He had given Adam and Eve. Times and people change, but God never changes His plan for those who love and serve Him.

Prayer Emphasis: Live by God’s marching orders today! **Learn** to see every day as a new beginning that is filled with new opportunities to serve the Lord. Like Noah, **let** this new beginning originate at an altar of prayer and thanksgiving to God.

Day 12: Genesis 9:18-29

“And Noah began to be a farmer, and he planted a vineyard.” (Genesis 9:20)

A New Career?

The Bible gives us no indication as to what Noah was before he became a boat builder. Peter told us that Noah was a “preacher of righteousness” (2 Peter 2:5), but that was probably not his full-time job. When we read that Noah “began” to be a “farmer” it may not actually imply that this was a new career for Noah. The word used to describe what Noah “began” to do immediately after he built an altar to God can also be used to describe the act of “beginning again.” The word that is translated “farmer” in the NKJV or “husbandman” or “man of the soil” in other translations, is the same word that was used to describe the work God assigned to Adam in, and after, the Garden of Eden (see Genesis 3:23). However, it did not take Noah long to realize that some things were going to be different after the flood than they were before the waters came. Soon after his first harvest, Noah drank of the wine from his grapes and became drunk. Of all the sins named for those who rebelled against God before the flood came, drunkenness was not one of them. It could be that Noah did not realize that the wine was fermented. He could have become drunk because of an error in his thinking or an error in his living. One thing is for sure, in its very first mention in the Bible, wine immediately begins to have some wrong actions associated with its use.

Prayer Emphasis: Be careful to **avoid** the things in this world that can lead you to be or do things that are not pleasing to God. **Set** an example for your children, and others, by abstaining from imprudent actions that lead to wrong behavior.

Day 13: Genesis 10:1-32

“Cush begot Nimrod; he began to be a mighty one on the earth.” (Genesis 10:8)

“Nimrod”

Nimrod was a descendant of Ham, who was one of the three sons of Noah. He became a “mighty one on the earth.” Nimrod left the working of the ground to others and became a hunter and a builder of cities. His “kingdom” (v. 10) included many cities, one of which was Babel. Many notable cities were born as a result of the leadership of this man, but we cannot help but notice that Nineveh was also a result of his efforts (v. 11). Today’s Scripture is not limited to the descendants of Ham alone. The descendants of Shem are also listed. The last verse in our reading discloses that it is from the descendants of the three sons of Noah that all of the world’s population was born. Genesis 10 is the first chapter in the Bible to include the word “nations” (10:5 & 32). Those two verses are the first verses in the Bible that include the word “separated” (v. 5) and “divided” (v. 32) in reference to people. The only time this word was used before this chapter was when God described the river that ran out of Eden by saying that it “parted” and became four other rivers (2:10). Although God may have meant for these people to part ways with one another, that was not all that they did. Some of them, like Nimrod, also parted ways with God and God’s ways. When we look at the constant tumult among the nations of today, we see that “separated” and “divided” are good words to best describe and explain what happened then and what is happening in the world now.

Prayer Emphasis: Attempt to bring glory and honor to God in all that you do in life. **Avoid** selfish behaviors that can become divisive even among the best people. **Ask** God to help you be a source of help and healing to any division that exists today.

Day 14: Genesis 11:1-25

“Then they said to one another, ‘Come, let us make bricks and bake them thoroughly.’...And they said, ‘Come, let us build ourselves a city, and a tower whose top is in the heavens; let us make a name for ourselves, lest we be scattered abroad over the face of the whole earth.’” (Genesis 11:3 & 4)

The Tower of Babel

I hope you will find it interesting that today’s focus verses are the first in the Bible to contain the words “they said.” It is not a stretch to see that these men were attempting to sound very god-like in their speaking. A quick look will reveal that this is the first time that the words “let us” are used in the Bible since God first said, “Let Us make man in our image” back in Genesis 1:26. These men wanted to build a tower that’s “top (was) in the heavens” (v. 4). However, it wasn’t long after man decided to undertake such an ignoble task that God said, “Let Us go down” (v. 7) and confound this man-made plan and make a quick end to their futile efforts. The word “Babel” means “confusion.” God brought such an immediate and full end to this ridiculous effort that this is the last time we will read the word “Babel” again in the book of Genesis. There is no better way to explain what happened than the way that God did when He said, “Therefore its name is called Babel, because there the LORD confused the language of all the earth” (v. 9).

Prayer Emphasis: Ask God to forgive you for hurtful speaking and divisive words. **Seek** forgiveness from others, if necessary, and be willing to **forgive** those who have hurt you – even without ever receiving an apology. Politely **separate** yourself from conversations that are destructive and divisive. **Refuse** to repeat gossip and slander.

Day 15: Genesis 11:26-12:9

“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.’” (Genesis 12:1)

God Calls Abram

The first three verses of Genesis 12 comprise one of the most significant *passages* in the Bible, and they introduce us to one of the most significant *people* in the Bible. As you read through the Bible, you will see this man’s name, either as Abram or Abraham over 300 times! The words “had said” are explained for us in Acts 7:2, where we are told that God spoke to Abram while he was still in Mesopotamia, before he ever lived in Haran. How long God had been speaking to Abram, we are not told, but at some point in time, what might have seemed like a suggestion became a clear command, and at age 75, Abram left Haran for parts unknown (12:4). Although Abram left Haran with no specific destination in mind, he did have some specific promises that motivated him to obey God. Take a moment and locate the five “I will” promises that God made to Abram in chapter 12, verses one through three, and mark them in your Bible. As you read through Genesis, look for the fulfillment of these promises. There are two main commands to Abram – one about “going” and one about “being.” Apparently, it took Abram some time to get around to “going,” and he would, over time, learn that the “being” part would not come any easier.

Prayer Emphasis: Listen for God’s voice in this very loud and busy world. **Remind** yourself that God still speaks to His people today through the Bible and the Holy Spirit. **Obey** what you already know and see how much more God will show you about following and serving Him!

Day 16: Genesis 12:10-20

“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.” (Genesis 12:10)

“Down to Egypt”

In today’s focus verse we read the phrase, “down to Egypt” for the first time in the Bible. This is a phrase that will be repeated three more times in Genesis, six additional times in the remainder of the Old Testament, and then one last time in Acts 7:15. There is no mention of God telling Abram to go “down to Egypt.” His motivation for doing so was based on physical needs and not spiritual leading. Note that Abram intended only to “dwell there.” It doesn’t take long to see that Abram’s decision to go “down to Egypt” led to his going “down” to a very low place in his life. Read verses 11 through 13 again and note that it was before he even reached Egypt that he, fearing for his own life, asked his wife to lie about who she was in order to save his own hide! What makes this strange behavior even worse is that we will see him do the same thing again, later in chapter 20! It will then break your heart to see this man’s son fall into this same, cowardly behavior later in chapter 26! How could this God-called man do such a thing? Note the power of the half-truth! A careful reading of Genesis 20:12 will reveal that Abram was not lying when he said that his wife was his sister! However, he did not speak the whole truth when he did not say that she was also his wife!

Prayer Emphasis: Recognize the danger of the dreaded half-truth! Satan can use a half-truth to do more damage than the most imaginative lie! **Realize** that, when we go “down to Egypt,” we can usually come “up” with some pretty good excuses for doing so! **Refuse** compromise when it courts you today!

Day 17: Genesis 13:1-18

“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.” (Genesis 13:10)

Meet Lot

Although we have already read his name several times before, we learn more about Lot in today’s Scripture and some of what we read today is not favorable. But would we expect any more from him? Look closely at verse five and mark the words, “with Abram” in your Bible. Lot was Abram’s nephew (12:5) but lived with Abram almost as a son. When strife arose between their two camps, Abram suggested that they go their separate ways and allowed Lot to have first choice as to which land he wanted to enter. When we read in our focus verse that Lot, “lifted his eyes and saw all the plain of Jordan” and its abundance of water, we cannot help but to be reminded of Eve and *her* reliance on the visual when making her choices back in the garden (3:6). But note carefully the two phrases, “like the garden of the LORD” and “like the land of Egypt.” Neither of these men had ever seen the “garden of the LORD” but, I am sure they had heard many stories about it. However, they had seen Egypt, and Lot must have liked what he saw there because he made a very important life choice here based on a comparison to a place where it might not have ever been God’s will for him to be!

Prayer Emphasis: Choose to base even the most basic decisions on what you read in the Bible. Avoid living according to the world’s standards. Listen for God’s leadership in your life and be willing to wait for Him to speak before you act.

Day 18: Genesis 14:1-16

“They also took Lot, Abram’s brother’s son who dwelt in Sodom, and his goods, and departed.” (Genesis 14:12)

Trouble in “Paradise”

Whether it was the “as the garden” part, or the “like the land of Egypt” thing, we are not told, but something kept drawing Lot toward Sodom! In 13:12 we read that he “pitched his tent even as far as Sodom.” In today’s focus verse we find that Lot eventually “dwelt” in that wicked city (see 13:13). While there, he got caught up in the middle of a war between four other kingdoms and Sodom and Gomorrah and was eventually taken captive by the invading armies. Apparently, the devastation was great, and many of the inhabitants of Lot’s new home were killed. Note that “one” who escaped came with word to Abram that Lot had been taken captive (v. 13). Verse 14 says Abram armed his 318 “trained servants” to rescue Lot and his family. “Servants” is a good translation of the word that defines the men that made up Abram’s “Special Forces!” These were not highly trained warriors. These were the herders and shepherds that had probably never seen much more of a fight than the quarrels they had with Lot’s herdsmen in 13:7! But God used them to win a mighty victory and save Lot and his family from their captors.

Prayer Emphasis: Remind yourself that the pleasures of sin are only for a season – and a short one at that! Refuse to allow any sin to lead you to make decisions that can harm you or those you love. Stand strong against sin’s enticements and do everything you can to save others from it.

Day 19: Genesis 14:17-15:16

“Then Melchizedek king of Salem brought out bread and wine; he was the priest of God Most High.” (Genesis 14:18)

Meet Melchizedek

There is far too much to say about Melchizedek to include it all in a one paragraph devotion. However, there are several words that I want to associate with what we learn about this man from this brief encounter with Abram. The first word is *peace*. Melchizedek was the king of Salem and Salem means peace. The second word is *pardon*. This man came to Abram bearing bread and wine – symbols of the Lord’s sacrifice on the cross for all mankind and the two elements that make up our memorial, communion supper. The third word is *priest*. Melchizedek was said to be “the priest of the Most High God.” The fourth word associated with this man is *protection*. Verse 19 states that Melchizedek reminded Abram that it was God that delivered his enemies into his hands. This was, no doubt, referring to the great victory that the 318 shepherds had just won over the armies of four kings! The fifth word that comes to mind is *provision*. After his meeting with Melchizedek, Abram – the same man that earlier headed “down to Egypt” when food became scarce – now declines an offer from the king of Sodom to share in the bounty after the recent defeat of the four enemy kings by saying, “I will take nothing” (v. 23). The final word that I will mention in this devotion is *praise* because verse 20 declares that Abram gave him a “tithe of all” he had.

Prayer Emphasis: Consider the evident change that the recent events have made in Abram’s life. He is now willing to trust God with everything and to give to God generously. Melchizedek is a type (picture) of Christ and was most likely Christ Himself. His story helps us to see all that is available to those who enter into a relationship with Him.

Day 20: Genesis 15:17-16:15

“And it came to pass, when the sun went down and it was dark, that behold, there appeared a smoking oven and a burning torch that passed between those pieces.” (Genesis 15:17)

“A Smoking Oven and a Burning Torch”

At a time of great concern for Abraham, God sent a sign to assure Him of His presence and to bolster Abraham’s faith in His promises. In today’s verses, God reaffirms His promises that He had made to Abram in the earlier verses of this chapter. The LORD even took Abram outside and pointed out the stars in the heavens and reminded Abram that He was going to have descendants that outnumbered those very stars. Abram asked God for a sign of confirmation. So, after Abram brought an offering to the LORD, God sent Abram a miraculous sign. In the darkness, Abram saw “a smoking oven and a burning torch” appear and pass between the two pieces of his sacrifices. In this time of great darkness, God sent a special sign to His servant to encourage him to continue in the faith. If compared to some of the things we have read in the Bible, this may not seem like such a great miracle but try telling that to Abram!

Prayer Emphasis: Watch for God’s acts of confirmation in your own life. The same God that cared for His servant Abram is the same God that cares for you! **Believe** that God will keep His promises. **Obey** Him when He asks for a sacrifice and see if God doesn’t reveal His presence to you!

Day 21: Genesis 17:1-14

“No longer shall your name be called Abram, but your name shall be Abraham; for I have made you a father of many nations.” (Genesis 17:5)

A New Name!

At age 99, some 24 years after Abram left Haran at God’s command, and 13 years after the birth of Ishmael, God decided to give Abram a new name, telling him that he will now be called Abraham. This name may have seemed quite inappropriate to Abram since he and Sarah were childless, and Abraham means “father of many nations” or “father of a great multitude.” One can only imagine how Abraham must have felt when he reintroduced himself to people by informing them of the new name that God had given him! Here he was, at age 99, claiming to be the “father” of a great multitude of descendants. Little did this man in his 99th year realize that someday the Apostle Paul would refer to him as, “the father of us all” (Romans 4:16)! We are told in verse one that the LORD “appeared” to Abram to bring this good news personally. This is the second time we are told that the LORD “appeared” to His servant (see 12:7). The word that is translated “appeared” here is the same word that was used to describe the moment when the Egyptians “saw” the beauty of Sarah (12:14) and the time where Lot “saw” the well-watered plain of Jordan that he chose for his own (13:10). One would have to think that such news as God had for his servant on this day deserved to be delivered in person!

Prayer Emphasis: **Expect** God to do amazing things and to do them in a very personal way! God has given us a new name in the word “Christian.” **Strive** to live up to that name in every sense of the word and in every situation that you face.

Day 22: Genesis 17:15-27

“Then God said to Abraham, ‘As for Sarai your wife, you shall not call her name Sarai, but Sarah shall be her name.’” (Genesis 17:15)

From Sarai to Sarah

After Abram received a new name, God gave his wife a new name too! I find it very interesting that this woman received only the slightest change in her name, with her new name having a difference found in only the last letter. There is something wonderful to be said about a person whom God seems to admire on a “just as you are” basis! This new name was slightly more fitting for a woman who was to become the mother of “nations” and “kings” (v. 16). Though both names meant basically the same thing, “princess,” this new name added the idea of nobility to that name and would be pronounced something more like “Noble Princess.” From all that we have read about Sarah until this point, and from all that we will read about her as we continue our journey through the book of Genesis, we will see that this is a very appropriate name for this godly woman. Verse 17 tells us that Abraham was “one hundred years old” and that Sarah was “ninety years old” when God reaffirmed His promise that she would “bear a child” to Abraham.

Prayer Emphasis: **Pray** for the women of our church. **Lift** them up before the Lord and **ask** Him to give them the strength to serve Him, and our church, in the ways that godly women should. **Make sure** that the godly women in your own family know that you love and appreciate them.

Day 23: Genesis 18:1-15

“Therefore Sarah laughed within herself, saying, ‘After I have grown old, shall I have pleasure, my lord being old also?’” (Genesis 18:12)

No Laughing Matter!

The first verse of today’s reading states that God “appeared” to Abraham a third time. This will be the last time we will see this word used this way in the story of Abraham. It happened while Abraham was sitting in the doorway of his tent seeking refuge from the heat of the day. And there, in broad daylight, he saw what appeared to be three men standing nearby. When he saw them, he ran and fell at their feet. When you read the Bible, you will find times that people met with angels and fell at their feet to worship them only to be commanded not to do such a thing. I think it is important to note that these three men never tried to stop Abraham from worshipping them. Verse nine states that “they” asked Abraham about Sarah and where she was. Abraham responded that she was in their tent. But note that verse 10 says that “He” said, “I will certainly return to you according to the time of life, and behold, Sarah your wife shall have a son!” The NIV translators clearly believed this “he” to be the “He” (God) because verse 10 reads, “Then the LORD said”! Our focus verse tells us that, as Sarah stood in the tent and heard these words, she laughed! Now, she was too polite to laugh out loud, so she laughed to herself – but the LORD heard her and asked Abraham for an explanation as to why she laughed. Before Abraham could answer, the LORD repeated His promise to this aging couple that they would indeed have a son. When God makes a promise to His people, we are to understand that His Word to us is no laughing matter!

Prayer Emphasis: Believe that the Bible is God’s divine Word to man and treat it like a personal letter from God. **Organize** and **prioritize** your life and schedule so that there can be adequate time for reading from God’s Word every day. **Believe** God’s promises – no matter how impossible they may seem.

Day 24: Genesis 18:16-33

“Far be it from You to do such a thing as this, to slay the righteous with the wicked, so that the righteous should be as the wicked; far be it from You! Shall not the Judge of all the earth do right?”
(Genesis 18:25)

A Poor Excuse for a Missionary

As the LORD turned His attention toward Sodom, Abraham began to intercede for Lot and his neighbors by appealing to God’s own righteousness. He referred to the LORD as “*the* Judge” and not merely as “*a* judge.” Abraham then began to bargain with God, asking God if He would spare Sodom for a few righteous persons. Abraham began at 50 and then negotiated down to 45, 40, 30, 20, and finally, 10 before the LORD was “finished speaking with Abraham (v. 33). But unfortunately, we will soon read that Lot had been a much poorer missionary and witness for the LORD than Abraham could have ever imagined. After all the years that Lot spent in Sodom, he had not even won 10 people, including his wife, his own daughters, or his sons-in-law (19:14, 26, 30-36) over to the way of righteousness.

Prayer Emphasis: **Seek** out opportunities to witness for Christ in your own world – to your own family and friends. **Share** a personal testimony about your own salvation experience with someone today. **Allow** God to shine His glorious light to others through the way you live and speak. In other words, be a good missionary!

Day 25: Genesis 19:1-20

“Now the two angels came to Sodom in the evening, and Lot was sitting in the gate of Sodom. When Lot saw them, he rose to meet them, and he bowed himself with his face toward the ground.” (Genesis 19:1)

Politically Correct Lot

When we read that Lot sat “in the gate of Sodom” we are to understand that Lot and his family had become legal “citizens” of that morally bankrupt city and Lot had become involved in the local political scene. Many believe that Lot had become a member of Sodom’s ruling council, since the gate area of a city served as the judicial center where legal matters were discussed, debated, and ultimately decided. It is obvious that Lot was not oblivious to the sinful nature of his new hometown, because when the two angels stated that they were going to sleep outside in the square, Lot urged them to stay within the presumed safety of his own home instead (v. 3). But, even there, we read that the two angels were not safe from the lustful desires of Lot’s fellow citizens. This story is sad and difficult to believe. Yet, even more difficult to believe is the fact that Lot and his family literally had to be forced to flee from this city – even when they knew God’s judgment had been pronounced against it. Verses 14 and 15 reveal that, even after the angels emphatically commanded him to take his family and leave, he “lingered” (v. 16). How sad it is that Lot would not respond immediately to God’s commands, especially when he knew that his disobedience could lead to great sorrow for his family.

Prayer Emphasis: Love people enough to speak the truth to them, but love truth enough to always speak it in love. **Stand** firm for what you believe but **refuse** to allow your own personal feelings to stand in the way of an opportunity to speak the truth about sin and salvation.

Day 26: Genesis 19:21-38

“But his wife looked back behind him, and she became a pillar of salt.” (Genesis 19:26)

Lot’s Wife

You know the story about Lot’s wife. The angels commanded Lot and his family to not even look back as they fled from Sodom and the destruction that God was to bring upon it (19:17). Lot might have finally succeeded in getting his family out of Sodom, but he had not succeeded in getting Sodom out of his family! Even after being commanded not to do so, Lot’s wife looked back and “became a pillar of salt” and a constant reminder to all of the dangers associated with sin. Luke 17:32 is one of the shortest verses in the Bible. It consists of only three words: “Remember Lot’s wife!” Ancient history states that there was a peculiar formation of crystalline rock that was associated with the story of Lot, his wife, and the destruction of Sodom. In his “Antiquities,” Josephus declared that the pillar remained until his day and that he had personally seen it. Clement of Rome, Irenaeus, and other historians also wrote of this strange formation as being visible in their day. Since both of these men lived until some 70 years after the death of Christ, it is entirely possible that Jesus and His disciples had seen or heard of this “Statue to Disobedience” and used it as an illustration to others.

Prayer Emphasis: **Refuse** to become too attached to this world! **Obey** God’s commands to be a separate people. **Memorize** 1 John 2:15: “Do not love the world or the things in the world. If anyone loves the world, the love of the Father is not in him.”

Day 27: Genesis 20:1-18

“Now Abraham said of Sarah his wife, ‘She is my sister.’ And Abimelech king of Gerar sent and took Sarah.” (Genesis 20:2)

Not Again!!!

It is so sad to see Abraham repeating the terrible sin that he committed when he first went to Egypt. After making a similar comment about Lot’s wife, I now have to say, “You can get Abraham out of Egypt, but you cannot get Egypt out of Abraham!” However, we have noticed more than once that God does not hide the darker side of His people’s stories from us. If we consider this sinful act of Abraham to be unbelievable, we only have to examine our own lives to see that it is very believable indeed that a believer can fall more than once, and even repeatedly, into the same sinful activity. It is sad to note that this second, selfish lie about his wife comes over 20 years after his first failure in this area and almost 25 years after he began his journey for God. God blessed Abraham in many ways since that time of their first meeting. Verse 12 reminds us again that this was more of a “half-truth” in Abraham’s mind than a lie. Sarah was, indeed, the daughter of his father but not the daughter of his mother. This half-sister eventually became his wife. Abraham may have been able to justify this lie in his own mind, but I am sure that he could not justify it in the eyes of Sarah or God! Look closely at verse 13 and you will see that this lie was something that he asked Sarah to agree to “in every place” they went in their travels.

Prayer Emphasis: **Learn** well the lessons that accompany your failures and **refuse** to repeatedly fall into the same traps that Satan lays before you. **Seek** God’s help in every situation and **ask** for the guidance that only He and His Word can provide.

Day 28: Genesis 21:1-21

“And God heard the voice of the lad. Then the angel of God called to Hagar out of heaven... ‘What ails you, Hagar? Fear not, for God has heard the voice of the lad where he is.’” (Genesis 21:17)

Hagar and Ishmael

Our Scripture begins with Sarah conceiving a child. Say what you will, but a woman giving birth at age 90 is nothing less than a miracle! But, at the same time that we read of this joyous event, we are reminded that there was a time when Abraham and Sarah were not willing to wait for their promised child and they “conceived” a plan to try to do for themselves what God had already promised to do for them. As a result of their impatience, two people who trusted God enough to leave their home on only a promise, became two people who did not trust God enough to deliver on a personal promise that he made to them. What was the result of their impatience? Hagar and Ishmael! When Isaac was still a young man, Sarah observed his older, step-brother teasing him and demanded that Abraham send Ishmael and his mother away. With God’s assurance that He would also make a great nation of Ishmael, Abraham complied with Sarah’s wishes and sent Hagar and Ishmael away. At a time when Hagar was probably most convinced that no one cared for her or her child, God spoke to her and assured her that He would not neglect her child and He would make of him a great nation. God immediately *stepped in* where Abraham *stepped out* and made provisions for this woman and her child.

Prayer Emphasis: **Observe** the danger of not waiting on the Lord. **Refuse** to take matters into your own hands because you have become impatient with God. **Trust** Him to honor His promises to you.

Day 29: Genesis 21:22-34

“Then Abraham planted a tamarisk tree in Beersheba, and there called on the name of the LORD, the Everlasting God.” (Genesis 21:33)

An Expression of Abraham’s Faith

Before commenting on our focus verse, I want to point out a great truth that is found in the first verse of today’s Scripture, verse 22. God had obviously blessed Abraham, and even his unbelieving neighbors recognized God’s blessings on Abraham’s life. This thought should provide even greater incentive for us to live in obedience to God’s commands so His responsive blessings can be seen by those around us. Water was a sure sign of blessing in the land that Abraham travelled and lived, and nothing was more welcome to the human eye than the sight of a well! Our focus verse provides some indication that Abraham responded to this blessing with appreciation and expectation. The *appreciation* is evidenced by the fact that he planted a “tamarisk tree” in Beersheba and called on the name of the LORD there. The *expectation* is evidenced by the fact that his planting of a tree implied that he expected to receive a constant flow of water from that well and he also expected to dwell in that land for an extended period of time.

Prayer Emphasis: **Expect** God to be the faithful provider that He has promised to be and **express** appreciation for every gift that you receive at His merciful hand! **Share** some of the ways God has blessed your life with someone you speak with today.

Day 30: Genesis 22:1-12

“Then 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.’” (Genesis 22:2)

Love’s Greatest Test

Verse one of our Scripture says that “God tested Abraham.” The test was to ask him to fulfill the almost unbelievable request that is made in verses two and three. There God “said” to Abraham, “Take now your son, your only son Isaac, whom you love, and go to the land of Moriah and offer him there.” Note that the Word does not say that God “asked” this of Abraham, but that He “said” that he was to do it. Some translations choose to use the word “sacrifice” rather than “offer” in our focus verse. We know that Isaac was not actually Abraham’s only son. We know all about Ishmael and how he came to be a part of Abraham’s family. But Isaac was the only son of promise. Hebrews 11:17 refers to Isaac as Abraham’s “only begotten son.” The same words were used to identify the relationship between Abraham and Isaac that were used to identify the relationship between God the Father and Jesus (John 3:16). He was the son of whom God had spoken to Abraham many times. And now God was asking this weary, often weak traveler to give his son back to Him. Note that God was again asking Abraham to travel some uncharted waters. Back in 12:1 God asked this man to get up and go to a land that “I will (future tense) show you.” Now He asks Abraham to take his son and offer him on, “One of the mountains of which I shall (future tense) tell you.” Abraham was able to face this seemingly impossible test because he believed God would provide another sacrifice (v. 8).

Prayer Emphasis: **Realize** that the truest test of our love is whether or not we are willing to make sacrifices. **Trust** God and be faithful even when you are not sure of what He is doing! **Believe** that God is always working in your best interest and that He will provide all that you need to be obedient to Him.

Day 31: Genesis 22:13-24

“So Abraham returned to his young men, and they rose and went together to Beersheba; and Abraham dwelt at Beersheba.” (Genesis 22:19)

Back to Beersheba

Remember Beersheba? That was the place with the well where Abraham planted a tree, worshipped God, and settled down for what he thought was going to be a nice, long stay amidst the blessings of God! However, it was while Abraham was in this place of blessing that God allowed him to face the toughest test of his life. Beersheba means, “Well of promise.” I am sure that Abraham dwelled there, watching his son Isaac grow into early manhood and counting his many blessings. It must have been nice to finally settle somewhere for a while. There may have been moments when Abraham believed that his traveling days were over and that he now had his promised son and his promised place in the world. One can only imagine how much more beautiful the tree, the well, and the people of Beersheba must have looked to Abraham as he returned there with Isaac still at his side! I am sure that this appreciative father never forgot that he was once again in this place of great blessing with his son only because the Father provided His own sacrifice in the place of Isaac. That sacrifice was a prophetic glance ahead into what God would one day do for the people of the world when He gave His only begotten Son, Jesus, to die on the cross in our place.

Prayer Emphasis: Refuse to allow an occasional test to cause you to believe that God is not blessing your life. **Believe** that obedience to God only serves to intensify our appreciation for all that He does for us.

Day 32: Genesis 23:1-20

“Sarah lived one hundred and twenty-seven years; these were the years of the life of Sarah.” (Genesis 23:1)

The Death of a “Princess”

Sarah’s name literally meant “princess.” I am sure that she was a princess in the eyes of her family and her friends. Isaac was only 37 years old when his mother died (see 17:17). I am also sure Isaac’s grief was heavy after the loss of his godly mother. Verse two indicates that Abraham mourned and wept over the loss of his wonderful wife. One can only imagine that some of his tears were in regret for the many trials she faced at the hands of his selfish and cowardly ways. However we may feel about Abraham, it is obvious that his neighbors held him in high esteem and even referred to him as a “prince” (v. 6). Verses 15 and 16 tell us that Abraham purchased some land and a cave from Ephron the Hittite for 400 shekels of silver (a large sum of money in those days) and buried his wife there. As we read on through the book of Genesis, we will see that this later became the burial place for Abraham, Isaac and his wife Rebekah, and Jacob and Leah. Canaan was to be Abraham’s Promised Land, but, interestingly enough, the only part of the land that Abraham ever actually owned was this cave that he bought for a burial place for his family. At the same time, we can clearly see how this first piece of land bound them to the Promised Land forever.

Prayer Emphasis: Express kindness and sympathy for someone who has recently lost a loved one. **Send** a card or make a call to let them know that you care about them and that you are praying for them. **Include** them in something, even if it is to simply offer to sit with them in church.

Day 33: Genesis 24:1-11

“and I will make you swear by the LORD, the God of heaven and the God of the earth, that you will not take a wife for my son from the daughters of the Canaanites, among whom I dwell;” (Genesis 24:3)

A Bride for Isaac

Our reading begins by telling us that Abraham had grown old and God had blessed him “in all things” (v. 1). There was one thing, however, that Abraham did not have – grandchildren! Abraham called the “oldest servant of his house” (v. 2), to him and commissioned him to go and find a bride for Isaac from his own country and family. Depending on what translation you are reading from, this “servant” was referenced by that title as many as 13 times in this story. Besides that, he is mentioned as the “man” an additional eight times. If you include the times that this “servant man” is referenced by pronoun in this entire story, you will find that this very special “servant man” is mentioned at least 80 more times! How amazing that this “servant man” – who is such an important part of this story of the finding of a bride for Isaac – is never once mentioned by name. Scholars often assume that this servant is Eliezer who is mentioned as being the steward of Abraham’s house back in Genesis 15:2. This is speculation, but there is some ground for it. However, I think there is a reason why this “servant man” is never referred to by name in this story. Abraham represents the Father. Isaac, of course, represents the Son. So, who does that leave “the servant man” to represent but the Holy Spirit, the only Person of our Triune God that is never once mentioned by name in the Bible.

Prayer Emphasis: Realize that without the divine assistance of the Holy Spirit we will never be able to help anyone in their becoming a part of the Bride of Christ. **Rely** on God’s Spirit to guide you into situations that will allow you to know that it is the right time to witness. **Trust** Him to help you encounter people that are ready and willing to become a part of the Lord’s Bride.

Day 34: Genesis 24:12-24

“Then he said, ‘O LORD God of my master Abraham, please give me success this day, and show kindness to my master Abraham.’” (Genesis 24:12)

A Tried and True Strategy

I want to discuss some things about the strategy of this unnamed “servant” who was commissioned to go and bring back a bride for Isaac. If this person was to accomplish the goal assigned to him, he was going to have to do so by developing a plan for finding the bride that God intended for his master’s son. The strategy included *dependence*. The servant prayed and asked God to show him “kindness” (v. 12). His strategy also included *determination*. The word translated “stand” in verse 13 is a word that means “to station oneself” or “to take a position.” The servant’s plan would also require *discipline*. He determined to “stand” by the well of water until God revealed the right person for Isaac. Lastly, this strategy was based on *devotion*. In almost every translation of the Bible, the last two words in Genesis 24:14 are, “My master.” In some translations you can read this entire chapter and find the words “his master” or “my master” 20 times!

Prayer Emphasis: Make some mental notes as to whom you speak to people about today. **Review** your conversations at the end of the day and see if celebrities got more “air time” than Christ or if athletes received more mention than the Almighty. **Mention** something about your “Master” to someone today.

Day 35: Genesis 24:25-38

“Then the man bowed down his head and worshiped the LORD.” (Genesis 24:26)

The Importance of Worship

We often find people worshipping the Lord after some great blessing or accomplishment. We sometimes find people worshipping the Lord even before setting out on some mission for Him. In our focus verse today, we find Abraham’s servant worshipping the Lord in the middle of his performance of the task to which he had been assigned. This is the sixth occurrence in the Bible of this Hebrew word that is translated “worship.” Four of those six times it is translated “bowed” or “bowed down” in both the KJV and the NIV. This is the second time that the word is translated “worship.” And, just like the first time that it is translated “worship” (22:5), it is once again associated with sacrifice and supernatural provision. Look back at verse 15, and you will see that it was before this man “had finished speaking” to God (some translations say “finished praying”) that Rebekah arrived on the scene and met every stipulation of his prayer. You might call what this servant did as “worship in advance!” It seems that he became so excited about what he believed God was going to do that he had to stop and worship the Lord in his expectation of God’s great provision!

Prayer Emphasis: Practice worshipping God *before* you set out to fulfill His great commission and *after* you have opportunities to serve Him in any way. **Include** some time for worship during your time of service and you will be worshipping God, in advance, for the mighty things that He is going to do for you.

Day 36: Genesis 24:39-51

“And I said to my master, “Perhaps the woman will not follow me.” But he said to me, “The LORD, before whom I walk, will send His angel with you and prosper your way; and you shall take a wife for my son from my family and from my father’s house.”” (Genesis 24:39-40)

Confidence!

As Abraham’s servant was explaining his mission to Rebekah’s family, he told them about a question he had for his master after Abraham first commissioned him to go out in search of a bride for Isaac. He had commented to Abraham, “Perhaps the woman will not follow me.” It seems clear to me that he was actually asking what he should do if the woman did not want to go with him. He then told them how Abraham responded to his question. Abraham assured him that he would not be going alone, and that God would “prosper (his) way.” Abraham went on to tell his servant that, “you shall take a wife for my son.” Why did Abraham have such confidence? I like to think that Abraham’s *present* confidence was based on his *past* experiences with God. He spoke from personal knowledge about the God “before whom” he had walked. The “walk” to which Abraham was referring is the same “walk” that God had when he came down to the Garden of Eden to visit with Adam and Eve (3:8) and the same kind of “walk” that Enoch and Noah experienced with God (5:24 & 6:9). The word used is not one that simply describes “living.” It is a word that describes a very intentional way of living, or walking, with God. After his many years of service, Abraham realized that, although he had not always been the most dependable servant, he had always served a most dependable God!

Prayer Emphasis: Never doubt whether or not God will always be there for you when you need Him! Confidently **rely** on some of the occasions when He has been there for you with someone today.

Day 37: Genesis 24:52-67

“And it came to pass, when Abraham’s servant heard their words, that he worshiped the LORD, bowing himself to the earth.” (Genesis 24:52)

More Worship!

Rebekah’s family agreed to allow Rebekah to return with Abraham’s servant and to marry his master’s son. (Note that verse 58 informs us that Rebekah did have a say in this matter and she agreed to go back with this man and marry his master’s son.) Upon receiving this good news the servant, once again, worshipped the LORD. If you recall, he had already been worshipping God as he went about his mission to find a bride for Isaac. Now, his mission, although not fully complete, is marked by even more worship to Almighty God! How much more enjoyable would our own journey be if we were careful to be worshipping God all along the way? Imagine the joy of this faithful man as he drew near his home and saw the reaction of Rebekah when she got her first look at her intended! Imagine his excitement as he “told” Isaac (v. 66) the whole story about his trip and, undoubtedly, how God had made what might have first appeared to be a difficult journey, a very simple and successful one. The word translated “told” in verse 66 is a word that means to “count” or “recount” and is even translated “accounted” once in the Bible. How exciting it will be for us to return to our own Master and give an “accounting” of our efforts to bring lost people into His bride.

Prayer Emphasis: Learn how to explain to people how they can be a part of the bride of Christ by learning how to explain the plan of salvation. **Begin** with a testimony of your own salvation experience and then take them to the Scripture. You will never regret having been a faithful witness to Christ!

Day 38: Genesis 25:1-11

“Abraham again took a wife, and her name was Keturah.” (Genesis 25:1)

Keturah

After Sarah’s death, Abraham married Keturah. There are some who would like for us to think that Keturah was already Abraham’s concubine and that he already had children with her even before Sarah died and that Keturah was elevated to the status of being a full wife after Sarah was gone. However, the word “took” is a strong indication that she was not his wife until this moment and that she became his wife after his marriage to Sarah had ended. Notice that this new wife bore him six more sons! You can count their names in verse two! Don’t forget that Abraham was 100 years old when Isaac was born and that Isaac was 37 years old when Sarah died. That means that Abraham was at least 137 years old when he started having more children with his new wife. Some scholars speculate that whatever God did for Abraham so that he and Sarah could conceive must have continued for some years. Between Ishmael, Isaac, and these new sons, it is clear to see that God kept His promise to Abraham and truly made him the father of many nations. Verse seven tells us that Abraham died at the age of 175. He was buried in the same cave that he purchased almost 40 years earlier when Sarah died. Don’t feel like you are saying goodbye to Abraham. You will read his name 27 more times as we finish the book of Genesis and 44 more times in the rest of the Old Testament. He is also mentioned by name 73 times in the New Testament.

Prayer Emphasis: Believe that God keeps His promises, even when they are beyond our human comprehension. **Pray** for those who have lost their marriage partners. **Encourage** such a person today.

Day 39: Genesis 25:12-18

“Now this is the genealogy of Ishmael, Abraham’s son, whom Hagar the Egyptian, Sarah’s maidservant, bore to Abraham.” (Genesis 25:12)

Remember Ishmael?

Ishmael was just as much a son of Abraham as Isaac was, so God gives an accounting, however brief, of his life and descendants. If you recall, we read earlier that this boy would grow to become a “wild man” and he would live “against every man” and “every man’s hand (would be) against him” (16:12). Just as God predicted (17:20), he had 12 sons. He died at age 137 (v. 17) “in the presence of all his brethren” (v. 18). Some translations indicate that the final phrase of verse 18 is referring to Ishmael’s descendants. One thing is for sure, the hostility that Ishmael felt toward Abraham, and probably Isaac, continued for as long as he lived – and then long after he lived. In fact, that hostility still exists between the descendants of those two men today! The children of this angry man became angry men themselves. Verse 16 speaks of the “towns” and “settlements” that Ishmael’s descendants founded. We are not sure of all of them, but we do know that Nineveh was one of them. I did not mention this in yesterday’s devotional, but Genesis 25:9 tells us that Ishmael was there with Isaac when Abraham was buried.

Prayer Emphasis: Refuse to be an angry person. And, if you ever do become angry, **refuse** to remain so. **Search** your heart and see if there is someone that you should finally forgive for some past offense. If so, **forgive** them. I assure you that it will mean as much to you as it will mean to them.

Day 40: Genesis 25:19-34

“And the LORD said to her: ‘Two nations are in your womb, two peoples shall be separated from your body; one people shall be stronger than the other, and the older shall serve the younger.’” (Genesis 25:23)

Meet Jacob and Esau

A devotional on Jacob and Esau is a good way to end this 40-day study and to introduce the remaining chapters of Genesis, which we will study in our next devotional guide. The struggle for supremacy between these two brothers began even before their birth (v. 22) and continued throughout the remainder of their lives. Just as it was with his father’s wife, Sarah, Isaac’s own wife was barren. But Isaac approached that problem in a much better way than his father. Isaac prayed to God about the problem rather than taking matters into his own hands (v. 21). It is amazing to read that Rebekah sensed a conflict even while the babies were in her womb, so she talked with God about it. What a lesson this is for all of us – that it is never too soon to begin praying for our children! God’s answer was not easy to understand, but as time passed, His prediction about these two brothers began to be fulfilled before her eyes. Jacob’s descendants (the Israelites) and Esau’s descendants (the Edomites) fought continuously. As you read the rest of the chapter, it will seem only natural to you that Esau would hate his brother for seemingly tricking him out of his birthright. One thing is clear; the birth of Jacob (Israel) was supernatural. His descendants became God’s chosen people, and they remain His chosen people to this day.

Prayer Emphasis: Pray for Israel, God’s chosen people. **Pray** that America will be a faithful friend and ally to Israel. **Pray** for your children – even if they are children that God is waiting to send to you! Thank you for reading with us and please contact us at gary@seminolebc.com or at 850-562-8069 if we can serve you in any way!