

DIVINE DESIGN



A Relational Study of the
Book of Genesis
by Sue LeBoutillier

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~ Divine Design ~
God's Unfolding Plan Through the Book of Genesis

Dear Friend,

Welcome to our study in the Scriptures entitled **Divine Design**, which starts at the very beginning of our Bible! Studying the Bible is like accessing a library. We think of our Bibles as one book from start to finish, but our Bible is really a small library of 66 books — each one part of the whole; each one contributing a significant piece to understanding the whole — which is **God's Unfolding Plan** from the beginning of creation to the new re-creation that we're waiting for.

In this nine-week study, we'll look into the first book of that library, the book of **Genesis**. It is a book of beginnings, a book of origins and it explains many of the mysteries of life:

- Marriage, gender and human sexuality
- Sin and its consequences
- Relational pain, occupational pain, and death
- God's rescue mission from sin and pain
- How God uses broken people to bless the world

It's all in the first book of the library with real people and sometimes raw relationships that all help us understand God's unfolding plan.

The Psalmist wrote in **Psalm 119:130**:

*"The unfolding of your words gives light;
it imparts understanding to the simple."*

I hope this study will bring understanding in some new way to each one of us!

Rather than study each chapter and verse (which would not fit a nine-week format), we've crafted this Bible Study to move swiftly through Genesis, pausing to study family units and people of interest relevant to God's unfolding plan. (Note the table of contents on the next page for a roadmap of our journey.)

What we're seeking to discover in this study is a blueprint of *God's Divine Design* that will enable us to:

- *Combat cultural confusion*
- *Understand the anticipated story of Jesus*
- Investigate our own attitudes

At the conclusion of each week's lesson, you'll find questions related to the above subjects. I hope these will be useful for both personal reflection and conversation in your discussion groups.

The TRUTH of God's Word is what triumphs when we live in a culture of confusion and decay and it's the church's privilege and responsibility to affirm God's TRUTH. The Word of God must always stand above the word of man. We're not to judge His Word, but rather allow it to judge us and the ideas we absorb in the normal course of life in a broken world. In order to do that, we'll lay aside our pre-determined ideas and allow the God-breathed living Word to impart His wisdom to us.

May the Lord richly bless you as you study His Word—

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To watch the video teachings for this Bible study go to:
ccontario.com/wow-genesis
or
[YouTube.com/calvarychapelontario](https://www.youtube.com/channel/UCvYUwUwUwUwUwUwUwUwUwUw)

*The best translation of the Bible to use is the one you understand the most easily—and using more than one translation can be a great aid to study! This study guide was created using the ESV (English Standard Version) which may be a helpful tool as you work through your study.



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Week Two—ADAM & EVE

God's Design for Gender and for Marriage

Adam and Eve! The first people who ever lived! They've been the subject of jokes and anecdotes, they've been blamed for our broken world; but they hold a unique place in history as the only couple to walk with God in both the perfection of His creation and also experience its frustration.

Their story covers several chapters of Scripture. We're going to spend our first two weeks studying their place in *God's Unfolding Story*—one week in the perfection of relationship with God and the next week in the frustration of a broken relationship.

Most of their story with God starts in chapter two, but since Genesis is a book of beginnings — we should begin at the beginning. Chapter one chronicles the first six days of creation as God crafted a habitat perfectly suited for the humans who would bear His Divine image.

Perhaps you are a woman who has been shaped by secular rather than sacred thought. Maybe your education taught you to discount the idea of a creator altogether, or at least conveniently toss this chapter upon the pile of interesting but untrue myth. Or, maybe you approach this study having walked with God since you were a small child and you have every confidence in its historic accuracy.

Regardless of how we arrived, we can leave knowing that God has met our seeking heart with understanding. As we approach each Bible passage and each question in our Study Guide with sincere hearts, the Holy Spirit will teach us and transform us.

Here is our outline for this week:

- Day 1: **Genesis 1** Creation of Environments and Inhabitants
- Day 2: **Genesis 2:1-17** Adam in his Environment
- Day 3: **Genesis 2:18-23** Creation of the Woman
- Day 4: **Genesis 2:24-26** Creation of Marriage

DAY ONE: *Creation of Environments and Inhabitants*

READ **Genesis 1** (the whole chapter)

Don't you love beginnings? There's something fresh about turning the calendar to a new year, starting school in the fall, or starting a new job. In the same way, there's something fresh about studying Genesis.

Many of you in this Bible Study know a bit about God's plan to redeem and save those He created—you've read your Bible through! I find it so intriguing, having learned the *end of the story*, to go back to the *beginning* and discover clues and insights that enliven our understanding and usher us into a state of awe and wonder at God's plan.

We're actually going to focus on the sixth day when God finally created man; but first, let's observe the order we see in God creating *homes or environments* on Days 1,2,3 and then filling those *environments* with *inhabitants* on Days 4,5,6. What do you discover?

Environment created:		Inhabitants created:	
Day 1	_____	Day 4	_____
	(Genesis 1:3-5)		(Genesis 1:14-19)
Day 2	_____	Day 5	_____
	(Genesis 1:6-8)		(Genesis 1:20-23)
Day 3	_____	Day 6	_____
	(Genesis 1:9-13)		(Genesis 1:24-27)

What did you learn in **v.27** that was unique about the creation of man compared to everything else God created?

We said that we're particularly interested in *sound doctrine* throughout this study. Therefore, as we approach certain foundational verses, we'll make room in our Study Guide to actually transcribe them.

One of those verses is **v.27**. Write it out here:

Note that the Hebrew word used for *man* in **v.27** is the word *Adam*. Let's just tuck that away for future reference.

Finally, in **v.28** God pronounced a blessing on the *Adam* He created. What two assignments did God give him?

-
-

*And God saw everything that he had made,
and behold, it was very good.*
Genesis 1:31

DAY TWO: *Adam in his Environment*

READ Genesis 2:1-17

☞ About the Man— to Inhabit the Garden

Chapter two completes the seven-day creation narrative by revealing the last day as a grand day of rest, completion, and the enjoyment of God and man dwelling together! The Sabbath is worthy of a lengthy study—but we'll save that for another time. Right now we want to continue to press ahead to the details of the sixth-day.

Chapter one was a fly-over of the creation of environments and inhabitants, something like a list or a genealogy. In fact, **v.4** even says:

*“These are the generations of the heavens and the earth
when they were created”.*

Now we'll revisit the sixth day with the intent of coloring in important details that weren't explained in chapter one.

Remember the Hebrew word introduced in chapter one — *Adam* (man)? Well, in **v.7** we learn that *Adam* was made from *Adamah* (ground). Explain the process by which the man (*Adam*) was created:

- What were the building blocks or raw materials used?
- How was life imparted to the man?

*Man was created by a mingling of dust and deity —
the dust of the ground and the breath of God.
No other creature was created in such a fashion.*

This gives us an understanding that there is a strong link between the *environment* that God created and the *inhabitant*. *Adam* and *Adamah* are connected and we'll see the impact of this next week.

But for now, let's talk about the comparison and contrast of the creation of man and the creation of animals.

- Based on what you've previously read, and reading ahead to **2:19**, how was the creation of man (*Adam*) *similar* to the other animals?
- How was he created *differently* from the animals (**1:27 & 2:7**)?
- What was to be his *relationship* with the animals (**1:28**)?

Knowing humans were created in a unique manner, different than the other animals AND man was to have dominion over every living thing,

what types of current cultural confusion about man and animals should these truths confront and correct?

☞ *About The Garden — the environment for the man*

V.8-15 provide detailed information about the garden that God planted for the man to tend. The writer points out trees, rivers, and precious stones. List the two trees that are named in **v.9**.

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In **v.16-17** God explained a very important command to Adam. Write out **v.17** since it is also important in our quest for sound doctrine:

The original, perfectly created, environment contained trees, rivers and precious stones. You may know without even studying the next chapter that the original man and woman corrupted that perfect environment by their disobedience. You may also guess that God has been unfolding a plan to *redeem* and *restore* His creation ever since.

READ **Revelation 22:1-5** which tells us what we can expect when that redemption is complete. What are all the similarities in this passage to what you read in **Genesis 2** about the original Garden of Eden?

DAY THREE: *Creation of Woman*

READ **Genesis 2:18-23**

Six times in chapter one — after every element that God created — we read “*and God saw that it was good.*” Now, in **v.18** we come to the phrase “*not good*” for the first time.

- What is *not good*?

- What is God’s solution to that which was *not good*?

Almost as if to help Adam come to the realization of what was *not good*, God gave Adam a task.

- Explain that task given in **v.19-20**

When God said ‘*it is not good that the man should be alone*’ He wasn’t looking at his creation and noticing a fault. God’s words create! He was speaking a need into Adam specifically, and into every man in general for a companion.

—*Paul David LeBoutillier*

Now we observe a new method in creation, something we haven’t seen before. Read **v.21-22** and, in your own words, jot down the things you notice about God’s creation of the woman:

What is the one most glaring difference in the creation of the man and the woman?

...After Adam spent time naming all of the animals;
...After he realized there was not found a helper fit for him;
...After his deep sleep culminated in the creation of a woman
NOW... this female is presented to him and he *names her!*

“She shall be called _____ (Hebrew *ishah*)
because she was taken out of _____ “ (Hebrew *ish*)

Names have meaning and they can help us understand design. We already learned *Adam*, taken from the *Adamah* (ground) is a term for all of mankind. Now, these specifically gendered Hebrew names (noted above) help us understand that even the names for man and woman are *similar yet different*. *Ishah* was taken out of *Ish*. God’s unfolding story teaches us that the two genders He created remain *similar yet different*. Men and women are not the same and they are not interchangeable. We are **complementary**, as we’ll see in a few verses.

And while we’re speaking of Hebrew words, in **v.18** when God says:

“I will make him a helper fit for him”

the Hebrew word here for helper is *ezer* (pronounced ay’-zer). *Helper* doesn’t denote inferiority of worth (like we might consider a maid as the *helper* around the house). Rather it describes *function* and it’s the same word God used to describe Himself as *helper* to Israel.

Note what you find in the following examples where that same Hebrew word is used to describe God in relation to His own people:

- Deuteronomy 33:7
- Psalm 33:20-22
- Psalm 115:9

Adam was put to sleep and his side opened that he might have a *wife*, but Jesus died on a cross and His blood shed that He might have a *bride* — the church.

—Warren Wiersbe ¹

DAY FOUR: *Creation of Marriage*

READ **Genesis 2:24-26**

Sound Doctrine Scripture time!!! Write **v.24**: _____

The final concept we read in Scripture before everything turns dark in the next chapter is that of a **wedding**. The Father of the bride brought the bride He created to her groom and they became a united entity. *Ish* and *Ishah* are no longer two — they have become one — they have been united in marriage.

- How did they become one flesh?

Adam and Eve were created in different ways and they had different anatomy — they were *complementary*. Every man and woman that has been procreated since shares these distinctions — each one is designed for a purpose.

The commentary in **v.24** provides this pattern for future marriages:

*“Therefore a _____ shall leave his _____ and his
_____ and hold fast to his _____.”*

Read these passages and note the context and speaker in each:

- **Mathew 19:1-6**
- **Mark 10:6-9**
- **1 Corinthians 6:16**
- **Ephesians 5:31-32**

Marriage is a huge topic and yet our introduction to the marriage of a man and woman came with little fanfare and great simplicity.

- Marriage is part of God’s plan for His creation. Do you think this passage suggests that every woman must marry to fulfill her created function? (Read **1 Corinthians 7:1-11** for the Apostle Paul’s thoughts on the matter.) Explain...
- If we *do* marry, explain what a Biblical role for a wife would look like based on the meaning of the word *helper*.
- Reinforce your answers with Scriptures that support your thoughts:



What is the ultimate point of studying how men and women were created? Why does the significance of marriage matter? So we can vote properly and check the *evangelical* box “*marriage is between one man and one woman*”?

While it’s good for us to understand AND be able to defend sound doctrine, there’s something bigger for us to understand — that is the nature of God’s unfolding plan. God is very relational. His initial creation was based on *home* and *inhabitants* where God himself walked among them. We see this in the creation account and this will be the reality in the new kingdom as well.

God established His initial pure kingdom on earth in a relational manner —our Bible begins with a wedding and it ends with a wedding! That is the nature of our God.

☞ Culture Confusion ☞

Let's begin with creation itself. What types of cultural confusion surround you with regard to a creator God?

Have you considered a way to express your beliefs to skeptics?

How does our culture promote the idea that gender doesn't matter, or genders are interchangeable?

What do you observe in Scripture regarding God's design that teaches us that gender *does* matter and they're not interchangeable?

In what ways does our culture *shame* the maleness out of men?

Are there ways that *you* have shamed the maleness out of a man?

In what ways is our culture confused about the concept of marriage between two unique genders—male and female?

What portions of Scripture would you use as a foundation for your belief in marriage between a man and a woman?

Would you hold on to that belief if someone dear to you challenged you?

Read **Malachi 2:15**. What does this add to your understanding?

Read **Ephesians 5:31-32**. Paul quotes the Genesis passage we studied this week. Why is an understanding of human marriage important to understand God's plan for His Church?

☞ God's Unfolding Story of Jesus ☞

Although we didn't mention it on Day One while reading the first chapter of Genesis, we do see the activity of the second person of the triune God in action from the first pages of our Bible.

Read **John 1:1-3, 14** and share how we see Jesus in **Genesis 1:**

Read **Genesis 2:7** along with **John 20:21-22**. What are the similarities and implications?

☞ Heart Assessment ☞

You may come from a place of skepticism regarding the Biblical view of creation, genders, and marriage and/or your opinions may have been formed from your culture. Can I challenge you today to find a source of authority for what you believe? The Christian church believes in the authority of the Bible as God's revelation of the relationship He intends to have with the people He created. One of the ways we understand this is through the beautiful communion that our Creator has with His creation in the opening passages of the Bible — communion rather than commands.

You too are part of His creation. Have you accepted this reality? Do you have a relationship with the one who created you? Do you seek to honor the one who created you?



Week THREE—ADAM & EVE Implications of Disobeying God's Design

As we study the *first couple* for a second week, let me remind you that we're studying their life in two parts. Last week portrayed the bliss of the garden, the perfection of God's created order, and the most effortless wedding you ever heard of. Now, in part two, there is a shockingly small distance in the printed Word from perfection to turmoil as we realize they will never again enjoy the same beauty and effortless fellowship with their Creator.

Eve's part-one name was *Ishah* (for she was taken out of man). In part-two, Adam will call his wife *Eve* (meaning *living*). Her choice to walk contrary to God's Design began by listening to a crafty serpent and ended by trying to cover her naked body from the guilt she felt.

When it comes to *sound* doctrine, this chapter is crucial to study, understand, and revisit often to see what God might reveal to us.

In the first two chapters of Genesis, the Bible reveals God's original and benevolent order and design. In chapter three we find humanity's distortion of that design as Eve and then Adam refuse God's order.

Here is our outline for this week:

Day 1: Genesis 3:1-6	Listening to the Lie
Day 2: Genesis 3:7-13	Participating with the Lie
Day 3: Genesis 3:14-24	The Impact of the Lie
Day 4: Genesis 4:1-11	Family Life After the Lie



DAY ONE: *Listening to the Lie*

READ **Genesis 3:1-6**

- Describe the serpent in your own words:
- The entire conversation in this passage is between whom?
- The first question posed by the serpent was a misrepresentation of God's command to Adam. Compare v.1 with **Genesis 2:16-17** and explain the serpent's error:

- Once the serpent opened the door with his word-twisting, Eve walked right through and participated in it. Explain her addition to God's command by comparing v.2 with **Genesis 2:16-17**:

Boy, isn't that the way Satan still deals with us today? He can suggest something slightly contrary to God's Word and we seem to be willing participants to follow his lead and take it the distance!

V.6 contains a useful parallel between Eve's temptation to disobey God and our patterns of enticement to sin today. Let's identify these three lures by completing these sentences:

1. "...the woman _____ that the tree was _____ for _____"
 - representing the lust of the **flesh**
2. "...and that it was a _____ to the _____"
 - representing the lust of the **eyes**
3. "...and that the tree was to be _____ to make one _____"
 - representing the pride of **life**

The Apostle John warned of the same thing — **Read 1 John 2:15-17**. Elaborate on what John was trying to convey in those verses and how they should be applied in our lives:

In Eve's case, what she thought would improve her life was a actually a specific *limitation of liberty* set by God. God said they could partake of any tree in the garden except that one. She reasoned however, that God was being restrictive and maybe even holding something back from her. Perhaps she knew better than God on this one!

- In what ways is this a potential for sin in your life — thinking that God is too restrictive, even withholding something from you?

DAY TWO: *Participating with the Lie*

READ **Genesis 3:7-13**

- What was Adam and Eve's first realization (**v.7**)?
- What was the first task they attempted to accomplish (**v.7**)?
- What was their response to God now (**v.8**)?

Doesn't this generate a strong urge to go back in time and warn them? "*NO, don't do it!*" And yet, even though we want to warn A&E to make different choices, we realize these same temptations have succeeded in our own lives.

Have we not also bent to the suggestion that God's design isn't quite right, it's restrictive, we know better. Maybe we've desperately wanted something and so we sin. Sin makes us self-centered, self-focused, egocentric, however you want to phrase it — we exalt ourselves and think we possess *all* the knowledge of good and evil. Our sin also makes us ambitious rather than at rest, as we now want to *do* something to cover our sin; and it creates a distance between us and God.

- What did God say the first time He spoke directly to Eve in **v.13**?

Do you feel the weight of that? Has anyone ever said to you: "*what have you done?*" If so, you know that terrible sinking feeling! None of those emotions were part of her experience before this day and now her **emotions** will be changed forever—boy will they be changed!

One last observation:

- Who did the man blame in **v.12**?
- Who did the woman blame in **v.13**?
- Was either justified in who they blamed?

- Who or what do you often blame when you sin?

The Tree of Knowledge causes us to focus our attention on ourselves. Sin is empowered by the law; not just because the evil is revealed but the good as well. It drives us either to corruption or self-righteousness, both lead to death. — Rick Joyner²

DAY THREE: *The Impact of the Lie*

READ **Genesis 3:14-24**

When Adam and Eve acted in agreement with the lie of the serpent, which was in disagreement with God, it had a swift impact on everyone.

- In what order did God speak to those who participated in the lie (v.14, 16, 17)?
 -
 -
 -
- Retell the curse upon the Serpent in verses **14-15**:
- How do you see the very first glimpse of the Gospel in that curse?
- What were the two main areas that would be adversely affected in the woman's life? (v.16)
 -
 -

- In what general area would the man now experience much more difficulty in his life? (v.17-19)

You've probably observed that men are generally more *occupational*. They gain more satisfaction from what they do and accomplish; and women are generally more *relational*, spending greater energy in nurturing both family relationships and friendships.

As God was telling Adam and Eve about the affects their sin would now have in their lives, what insights do you see related to this?

Since we're a Bible study of women, we want to learn as much as possible about how Eve fits into *God's Divine Design* — even the newfound pain in her life. Remember, we carry her DNA and what became painful for her will affect our experience in life.

☞ *"I will surely multiply your pain in childbearing"*

This statement doesn't impact merely the process of child-birthing, but all relational aspects that go with it! List any areas of raising children that you can think of that has been made more difficult:

☞ *"Your desire shall be for your husband and he shall rule over you"*

There is a compelling meaning of the word desire here that literally means 'stretching out after'. In other words, 'Eve, you will always want to stretch out after your husband, but **HE** will **rule** over you.'

- Does this make you think that it will come naturally for a wife to embrace the created order of being a helpmate to her husband?
- If you are married, or if you have been able to observed marriage relationships, list elements of married life that you believe are now difficult because of this desire:

In the very next chapter we see the repetition of these same two words — *desire* and *rule* — Read **Genesis 4:7**.

- What is it that is wanting to ‘*crouch at the door*’ in this verse?
- Who must rule over it?
- What can we learn from understanding these words and how do they apply to our tendencies today?

READ **Genesis 3:20-24**. (We finally have our familiar name for Eve!)

- In **v.21** how was God’s mercy displayed toward Adam and Eve?
- What had to happen to an animal in order for its skin to be used to cover them?
- How do you think this prefigures the ministry of Jesus to us?
- In **v.23-24** what is the final relational status of the *environment* God created and the *inhabitants* He created?

DAY FOUR: *Family Life After the Lie*

READ **Genesis 4:1-11**

The sacrifice of life to cover sin—

The segregation of man from His glorious environment—

The separation between the Creator and His created—

In this chapter the fruit of sin springs to life in a relational-tragedy between the first two sons of Adam and Eve. It's all at once disturbing to see family dysfunction so early in human experience; but also strangely reassuring to realize it's just the same old sinful nature that afflicts us today. There is truly nothing new under the sun.

Let's look at these two sons:

First-born:

Second-born:

Names:

Occupation:

Offerings Given:

God's Response:

The sacrifice was the point of conflict. How did Cain feel about God accepting his brother's offering while having no regard for his own?

Just as Cain could not tolerate Abel, those who seek to stand by their own righteousness find the presence of those who stand by faith in Jesus intolerable. — Rick Joyner ²

Read **Psalms 36:1-4** and share how this passage is relevant to Cain's emotional and mental state and his response:

Read **1 John 3:11-13**. What does this explain about Cain's motives?

Well, Genesis chapter four could be an entire sermon, but, we simply want to acknowledge the link between Eve's curse and the ultimate tragedy with her first two sons.

- Was Eve culpable at all for this murder?
- Could she have *raised them* differently to have prevented it?

Read **v.25-26**. What is the name of A&E's third son? _____

From **Seth's** line will come the Messiah who will *bruise the serpent's heel*. God has a plan and it will unfold in His own time. Next week we'll study a couple eight generations down from Seth and see how God wove them into His Divine Design. In the meantime, let's just end with this amazing last line of the chapter:

"At that time people began to call upon the name of the Lord".

❧ Culture Confusion ❧

Our culture tends to see people as basically good. We believe people *do evil* because of a lack of education, opportunity, or the like. From the Genesis record along with **Romans 5:12** share what the Bible teaches:

Do you think the history of man has proven or disproven the idea that we are all born with a sinful nature?

Do you think the history of man has proven or disproven the reality of the male and female difficulties expressed after the fall?

☞ God's Unfolding Story of Jesus ☞

These chapters introduced us to death and sacrifice for the first time. First, God offered an illustration of sacrifice in the animal who was slain to cover Adam and Eve with its hide.

- Read **Romans 4:7-8**. How does this point to what Jesus will accomplish through His own sacrifice?

Then, in chapter four, we read about Abel offering an animal sacrifice that was pleasing to God.

- Read **Hebrews 9:22**. What do you think his sacrifice was picturing?

Finally, Read **1 Corinthians 15:45-49** and **Romans 5:18-19**. Share how you see God's unfolding plan make sense from Creation to Christ.

☞ Heart Assessment ☞

Read **Psalms 53:1-3**. Have you come to agreement with God that, by nature you have a wicked heart and it needs to be cleansed? That any good or benevolent things you might do will never be able to compensate or tilt the scales in your favor?

Read **Psalms 51**. What is our remedy?



Week FOUR—Noah & His Wife God’s Design to be set Apart from our Culture

Noah was a man ten generations from Adam. As we step into the history of *his world* we read the commentary:

“The LORD saw that the wickedness of man was great in the earth, and that every intention of the thoughts of his heart was only evil continually.” Genesis 6:5

That was Noah’s world, and it was his wife’s world. How would *you* like raise a family in that culture? Everyone around them was saturated in evil thoughts and violence — yet, God had a plan and they were willing to be used in His plan.

Noah is well known, but his wife is an unsung hero. They were both undoubtedly reliable, helpful, dedicated, and yet her part in the work is mostly invisible; her name is absent and her contributions are neither noted nor praised. Yet, she is clearly found among the First Ladies of Faith! I don’t think anyone gets into the Hebrews 11 **Hall of Faith** without the supporting role of an amazing faith-filled wife!

“By faith, Noah, being warned by God concerning events as yet unseen, in reverent fear constructed an ark for the saving of his household. By this he condemned the world and became an heir of the righteousness that comes by faith.” Hebrews 11:7

Here is our outline for this week:

- | | |
|---------------------------------|-----------------------|
| Day 1: Genesis 6:1-13 | The Man of Rest |
| Day 2: Genesis 6:14—7:16 | The Obedience of Rest |
| Day 3: Genesis 7:17—8:19 | The Method of Rest |
| Day 4: Genesis 8:20—9:17 | The Covenant of Rest |



DAY ONE: *The Man of Rest*
READ **Genesis 6:1-13**

One of the first things we learn in **v.1** is that, after ten generations, there was now probably quite a population on the earth. The next

thing you realize is that there was quite a contrast between the man Noah and the remaining population of the earth:

- From **v.5, 11-13** how would you characterize the earth's population? (What negative words do you see repeated in these verses?)
- From **v.9** how would you characterize Noah?
- From **v.6-7** how would you describe God's response to the general population of people?
- From **v.8** what was God's response to Noah?
- From **v.7, 13** what do you see as God's remedy?

If you were to think of a word or phrase to sum up the focus of **v.5-13**, what would it be?

Remember, names mean something. Noah's name means *rest (or comfort)*. That's why this day's study is entitled **The Man of Rest**. Go back to **Genesis 5:28-30** and read how his father named him, hoping he would bring rest to a weary world.

You may be wondering about the opening verses of this chapter. Here are useful insights from Warren Wiersbe:

*The most likely interpretation of **Genesis 6:2-4** is the intermarrying of the godly line of Seth (the sons of God) with the ungodly line of Cain (the daughters of men). God viewed the people of that day as fallen ones (Nephilim), while their fellow man perceived them as mighty men. When the Sethites compromised by mingling with the Cainites, they fell from God's blessing. God was grieved that they married godless Cainites, choosing wives as they pleased without considering God's will. In doing this, they endangered the fulfillment of the Genesis 3:15 promise; for how could God bring a Redeemer into the world through an unholy people? Even today, much of what is admired by the world is rejected by the Lord.¹*

In **v.9** we read, *These are the generations of* _____. It's a great benchmark for helping us understand God's unfolding plan. Let's review other *generations* that we were given previously:

- **Genesis 2:4**— _____
- **Genesis 5:1**— _____

(As we note more *generations* in passages to come, you can complete the chart found in Activity "A" at the end of this Study Guide)

And just for the sake of *order*, let's make a list of the generations from **Adam** to **Noah** from **Genesis 5**:

Adam _____

_____ Noah

List the names of Noah's three sons:

DAY TWO: *The Obedience of Rest*

READ **Genesis 6:14 — 7:16**

Due of the corrupted condition of man, coupled with God's desire to bring forth a redeemer, God determined to bring destruction over the face of the earth and retain only those who had remained *holy* unto the Lord. He *may* have revealed to Noah *when* this would happen (**6:3**), but He clearly revealed *how* they would be kept safe (**v.14**):

- Noah was to make an:
- With multiple:
- And cover it with:

We think of an *ark* as a boat, but the word means *chest*. God instructed Noah to make an enormous treasure chest that would hold them safe during the destruction—that was God's plan!

When we study Biblical accounts like *The Flood*, we first need to clear away coloring books images, memories of Fisher Price plastic figures, and nursery fabric themes to ensure the realities of Noah's world don't get tossed into the fairy tale or legend categories of our mind.

Read **Matthew 24:36-42** and **Luke 17:26-31**

- Who is speaking in this passages?
 - What is the context of the passages?
 - What likenesses to the days of Noah are being made? List all of the similarities you see:
-
- What do you think of Jesus' statement that people were "*marrying and giving in marriage*" (**Matthew 24:38**) in light of Mr. Wiersbe's comments on **Genesis 6:2-4** (on the previous page)?

Do you think Jesus would have spoken of these events in such a manner if the account of Noah and the Flood had not been an actual event?

Read **2 Peter 2:5**. It seems incredible, but both Peter and the Genesis narrative tell us that **only Noah** and his family believed and obeyed God when everyone around them was ignoring and disobeying God.

Genesis 6:8 says “*Noah found favor in the eyes of the Lord.*” Noah’s favor wasn’t because of his obedience, but his obedience was probably because he favored God. Record what you find in these verses:

- **Gen. 6:22**
- **Gen. 7:5**
- **Gen. 7:9**
- **Gen. 7:16**

*We too can find favor in the eyes of the Lord by trusting that
His plan is good, His timing is right, His method is best.
Our part is to **trust, obey and rest!**
— Sue LeBoutillier*

Read **Psalms 73**. The Psalmist’s observations seem parallel to Noah’s day. Have you ever felt that the ungodly seem to prosper mightily and even unfairly?

In your world right now, would you consider yourself more like Mr. & Mrs. Noah, believing and obeying God’s voice; or more in line with the general population of the earth, eating, drinking and marrying as you please? (tough question...but important to ask of ourselves.)

God’s Spirit was striving with lost people in Noah’s day. We know this because that is God’s revealed character. Why did they resist? Why do people around us today resist? Read **1 Thessalonians 5:1-10** and record your insights:

DAY THREE: *The Method of Rest*

READ **Genesis 7:17-8:19**

We read in **7:12** "*rain fell upon the earth forty days and forty nights.*"

The final verse of chapter seven says the waters prevailed on the earth ____ days. Describe the effect the flood had upon the earth from **7:17-23**:

The focus of our study **isn't** to count days—but you may enjoy calculating how many days these eight people spent together.

Our focus **is** to ponder the *method of God's grace* in preserving Noah in order to ultimately fulfill the promise made in **Genesis 3**.

What was the meaning of Noah's name again? _____

What did we say the word *ark* meant? _____

What did God tell **Mr. & Mrs. Rest** to do in **7:1**?

What did God tell **Mr. & Mrs. Rest** to do in **8:16**?

Was there any other means Noah *could have used* to rescue himself?
Anything else he could have *done*?

We could summarize this passage by saying: "God's method of rescuing Noah was having him simply rest in the _____"

Read **Matthew 11:25-30** — **Hebrews 4:1-2** — **Romans 4:16**

Describe *our* modern day rest and method of escape from judgement in your own words:

Let's consider for just a moment the implications for Noah's wife.

- Did she work by his side in complete trust?
- Was it difficult to *tune out* the voices of her ungodly neighbors?
- Did she encourage him on the days when he grew tired?
- Who encouraged her on days when she grew tired?
- Did she fear what life *after the storm* would be like?
- Did she understand the implications; that she would become the new *Mother of all the Living*?

Finally, let's read one verse in tomorrow's text—**Gen. 8:20**. What was Noah's first action once out of the ark and on dry ground?

DAY FOUR: ***The Covenant of Rest***

READ **Genesis 8:20-9:17**

What did God promise about the ground (**v.21**)?

What did God promise about future flood-like destruction (**v.21b**)?

What did God promise about the rhythms/cycles of the earth (**v.22**)?

What comfort, security and *rest* must have been fostered by God's promise! Comfort enough that God was able to give them instructions and insights for their new life.

*Summer and winter and springtime and harvest,
Sun, moon and stars in their courses above
Join with all nature in manifold witness
To Thy great faithfulness, mercy and love.
—Thomas Obadiah Chisholm³*

- What instruction did He give in **9:1** and **9:7** about procreating life?
 - What does that remind you of?
- What instructions did God give about animal life (**v.2-4**)?
 - What limitations were placed on the eating of animals?
- What did God reinforce about human life (**v.6**)?

What was the *sign* of the covenant God made with Noah (**v.13-16**)?

In **v.15** God said “I will _____ *my covenant that is between me and you*” and in **v.16** God said “*when the bow is in the clouds I will see it and _____.*” Note also in **Genesis 8:1** “God _____ Noah.”

The word **remember** does not mean the opposite of forget in this verse, but rather the fulfillment of a commitment. God fulfilled his commitment to Noah as He safely carried him through the deluge. We also have a covenant of rest. We rest in God’s plan. We rest in God’s Redeemer who will be born to the line of Noah and eventually crush the head of the serpent. God will **remember**!

God’s plan was for Noah to be carried through the storm and become a **‘herald of righteousness’** (2 Peter 2:5). And God called his wife along with him. Even though we don’t know her name, they were a team, and together they became a second *Adam and Eve* of God’s choosing.

☞ Culture Confusion ☞

It's impossible to completely dismiss the historical evidence of a world-wide flood. Not only do we have geological evidence, but almost every culture from every continent has an oral tradition of a flood. Still, some deny that it even happened, or that it was a judgment of God.

We live in a world where people are very challenged by the idea of a coming judgment. Since both Jesus and Peter used the flood to illustrate events that involve the whole world, how should someone who follows Christ view the coming judgment?

Do you find it interesting that certain segments of our culture use the symbol of a rainbow — which God gave as a promise declaring He would never again destroy the earth with a flood — to celebrate acts of immorality against God's design that contributed to the flood in the first place?

☞ God's Unfolding Story of Jesus ☞

Adam and Eve were *covered* by means of a sacrifice, Noah and his wife were *carried* to by means of resting in God's provision. How does **Hebrews 4:1-2** give insight about resting in the work Jesus has done?

Take a peek at the last page of this Study Guide to see how God infused an understanding of His plan into names of the first ten generations.

☞ Heart Assessment ☞

It's easier for some people to pay more attention to *climate change* than *heart change*. Noah's day was filled with people who would not change their hearts. Read **1 Timothy 2:4** and explain God's desire:

We have a New Testament word—*repent*—that means *to change, to go a different direction*. **2 Timothy 2:25** talks about ***repentance leading to the knowledge of the truth***. Even in a history-based Bible study like this one, the Holy Spirit is speaking to our consciences. Is there an area in your life today that requires repentance?

God's plan is not always easy to obey. Noah believed God's plan, took action, and obeyed His instructions.

- Is there a part of your life that is scary, perplexing or confusing?
- Commit this area to prayer and expect God to show you specific actions, even if it is waiting quietly. Journal what you believe God is showing you:

Patience is so hard! 100 years to build! 40 days of constant rain! Over a year in a confined space! Not one of us has had to endure that much stress on our patience. Patience is a fruit of the Holy Spirit. When we allow that fruit to develop in our lives, we are seeing Christ formed within us. (God patiently bore with the wicked people of Noah's day and even gave them over a century to repent.)

Read these verses of inspiration on patience and note anything the Lord speaks to you about this virtue:

- **Proverbs 14:29**
- **Colossians 1:11-14**
- **Hebrews 6:10-12**



Week FIVE—Abram & Sarai God's Design to Choose a Family

Our next lessons about Abraham and Sarah are twenty generations into the recorded history of man. Although we usually refer to this couple by their *God-given* names of Abraham and Sarah, they began life with their *natural-given* names of Abram and Sarai from Ur of the Chaldeans.

Just as we studied Adam and Eve's *part-one* life of perfection and *part-two* life of problems; we'll study **Abram** and **Sarai** this week (**chapters 11-16**) and **Abraham** and **Sarah** next week (**chapters 17-23**).

It was God's plan to choose Abraham and Sarah and establish a covenant with them and their offspring to continue His unfolding plan.

We saw Adam and Eve *covered by God's grace* through the hide of a sacrificed animal. We observed Noah and his wife *rest inside God's grace* as He provided the shelter in the storm. And now with Abraham and Sarah we wait with them for the child of promise, *the child of grace* to emerge miraculously and live out a drama that will point to another miraculously-born Seed of Abraham.

Genesis tells their life story; Romans and Hebrews declare their faith, and Peter's first letter holds Sarah as an example of God's design for wives who are *heirs together in the grace of life*.

***By faith Sarah herself received power to conceive,
Even when she was past the age, since she considered him
Faithful who had promised. Hebrews 11:11***

Here is our outline for this week:

Day 1: Genesis 11:10-32	The Family Chosen
Day 2: Genesis 12	The Travel Necessary
Day 3: Genesis 13, 15	The Land Promised
Day 4: Genesis 16	The Mistake Made

DAY ONE: *The Family Chosen*

READ **Genesis 11:10-32**

We journaled the ten generations from Adam to Noah last week, and now **v.10** announces a new set: *“These are the generations of Shem”*. So it seems like a great idea for us to journal the next ten generations from Noah’s son **Shem** to **Abram**. Use **v.10-26** as your guide:

Shem _____ _____ _____ _____
_____ _____ _____ _____ Abram

Journal a few more family relationships:

- Who were the brothers of Abram? _____
- Who was Abram’s wife? _____
- What is revealed about her in **v.30**? _____

Names have meaning, right?

- **Abram’s** given name meant *Exalted Father*
- **Sarai** may have meant *princess*, or it may have meant *contentious*, or *stubborn*. We won’t claim to know for sure, but we *will* find some validation in both meanings as we work through her story.

Where was their original family location? _____

Read **Joshua 24:2**. What do these words of Joshua tell us about what religious life was like in that location?

It was God’s unfolding plan to call a man and his wife, and through them build a family. From that family would come a great nation, through whom all the nations of the earth would be blessed!

DAY TWO: *The Travel Necessary*

READ **Genesis 12**

In this chapter we understand the necessity for A&S to leave the influences of their culture and set themselves apart for God's service.

Read **Acts 7:2-5**. Now with insights from that passage, along with **Genesis 12:1-6**, let's track the movements of Abram and Sarai.

Phase One: From Ur to _____

- Who was with them?

Phase Two: From _____ to _____

- Who was with them?
- How old was Abram when he left Haran?
- Who was living in that land? (v.6)

Sound Doctrine time! Write out **Genesis 12:3** _____

- What specific promise is given in v.7?
- How did Abram respond to God's appearance (v.7-8)?

- Contrast Abram's response with the actions seen in **Genesis 11:4**.

Sarai journeyed with her husband from the small community in Mesopotamia, where she undoubtedly had friends and family, to the land where the descendants of Canaan lived. It was probably all at once frightening and thrilling to be her husband's partner in life on this great adventure of faith.

- In **v.10**, what type of testing of their faith developed?
- From **v.11-20** explain their choices, their journey and whether or not they employed the same choices of simple faith as when they left Ur:

DAY THREE: *The Land Promised*

READ **Genesis 13:1-13**

God protected his family of choice alright, and at the time it probably looked like they completely dodged a bullet. But let's investigate their situation upon leaving Egypt.

- From **Genesis 12:16**, list everything Abram was given:

- How did **v.2** describe Abram?
- In **v.6-7**, we learn *their possessions were so great that they could not dwell together...there was strife between their herdsman*. How do you think the extra *stuff* from Egypt played into the inevitable separation of Abram and Lot?

There are times when we don't immediately feel the consequences of failed trials in our lives. They may exist, but we don't recognize them as such right away. This was the case with Abram.

- From **v.11** where did Lot settle?
- From **v.12** where did Abram settle?
- If you know the story, can you think of a certain maid-servant that may be among them at this point from Egypt?

READ **Genesis 13:14-18**. God's mercies are truly new every morning—God visited Abram again to affirm His plan. In **v.14-15**:

- What did God speak about the **land**?
- What did He say about his **offspring**?

In **v.7-16**:

- How did God point to the past as a testimony of His guidance?
- What was His prophecy about the future of Abram's offspring?
- What was a reason given in **v.16** that the sons of Abraham would not possess the land of promise in the near future:
- How does this speak of God's justice?

At this point both **land** and **descendants** were still in the promise stage — not yet reality. Sarai found herself needing to trust the God that was making promises to her husband, even though He had not personally revealed Himself yet to her. Abram and Sarai were God's choice for His unfolding plan and He would continue to lead them, guide them and remind them of His promises...because He is faithful!

DAY FOUR: *The Mistake Made*

READ **Genesis 16**

On this final day of study, Sarai takes center stage and I think we may find the *contentious* meaning of her name well suited to this chapter.

Certainly Sarai knew of God's promise to Abram for a son, certainly they were both waiting and wondering how that could ever happen.

- Was there any indication that Abram was impatient in waiting?

- Who did Sarai blame for her barrenness?
- What was her solution to this dilemma?
- Note the age of both Abram and Sarai at this point:

How did the fruit of Sarai’s impatience and manipulation affect all the relationships involved? List any consequences you observe in **v.4-6**:

Remember we’ve focused on all that happened to Abram and Sarai *before* the Covenant of Circumcision — before God changed their names. Perhaps we can say *while they were walking in the flesh*. The Apostle Paul was given great understanding about this.

Read **Galatians 4:22-31**. Since this family represents *two covenants* (v.24), let’s make a chart of all of these relationships:

	<u>OLD COVENANT</u>	<u>NEW COVENANT</u>
Son’s name	_____	_____
Mother’s name	_____	_____
Relationship to Abraham	_____	_____
Method of birth	_____	_____
Relational Reality	FLESH	PROMISE
Spiritual Reality	FLESH	SPIRIT

Circle which wife came first, then circle which son came first. God did not begin with the work of the flesh, He began with the promise, and fulfilled it by His Spirit.

☞ Culture Confusion ☞

The man Abraham is the beginning of what we know today as the Jewish nation. There's only one country in the world whose very legitimacy is questioned, only one country that is openly threatened with annihilation, and it is Israel. Why do you think this is the case?

☞ God's Unfolding Story of Jesus ☞

Romans 4:11 tells that Abraham is *the Father of all who believe* and *he grew strong in his faith as he gave glory to God* (v.20). Faith is a critical component in our relationship with God, but God has gone to great lengths to help us know Him and *have* faith in Him.

God reached out to Abraham, God directed him in the way he should go, God gave him the promises...*in order that the promise may rest on grace*. (v.16). Think about ways in which God's grace toward Abraham mirrors the grace of Jesus shown to you.

☞ Heart Assessment ☞

There are so many personal applications in our lives that correspond with this lesson. You may want to jot down additional thoughts to share with your group that aren't even represented below:

- Have you experienced a time when God directed you to make a big change or even a move like He did with Abram? Leaving people and things behind isn't easy. How did/would you respond?

- Are you currently waiting on God’s plan—even though you don’t know how long it may be? Is there anything from the account of Abram that inspires you?

- Sarai really messed things up, not only for their marriage, but for history! A wife has a significant influence over her husband—for better or worse. If you happen to have the dominant personality in your marriage, it can present a real challenge to learn how to wait on your husband and also empower him to lead. Consider how this passage applies to *your* marriage.

- Have you been tempted to take matters into our own hands recently? Share what you learn from Sarai’s story that may save you heartache today:

- Have you experienced the necessity for humility and repentance *after* you took matters into your own hands? How did you find that grace?

*Now faith is the assurance of things hoped for,
the conviction of things not seen. Hebrews 11:1*



Week SIX—Abraham & Sarah God’s Design for a Promised Messiah

Abram and Sarai were a couple who learned, over the course of their life, the art of waiting on God. It didn’t come easy, they weren’t without their bumps in the road — okay, their mountains in the road; but just like you and me, they grew in faith and grew in their understanding of God’s unfolding plan to once again draw mankind near to Himself through the means of a substitutionary sacrifice.

What they didn’t know at the beginning of these chapters was that, through the miraculous conception and birth of their own promised son, they were living out a drama that would help turn the faces of their descendants to another Promised Son. One that would be birthed in a different miraculous way. One that would be the fulfillment of God’s promises. One that would arrive after many years of waiting and longing by the sons of Abraham.

Here is our outline for this week:

Day 1: Genesis 17	The Covenant Renewed
Day 2: Genesis 18	The Promise Made
Day 3: Genesis 20—21:7	The Son Born
Day 4: Genesis 22	The Sacrifice Provided



DAY ONE: *The Covenant Renewed*
READ **Genesis 17**

As you read this chapter, you may have thought some sentences sounded strangely familiar. You’re right! It’s been about thirteen years since God made his initial covenant with Abraham, (**Genesis 15**) when the animals lay in halves at sunset and the smoking fire pot and flaming torch passed between those pieces.

But there is something more than just a repetition of those promises going on in this chapter. Something is about to *change*! One of the most noteworthy aspects of this chapter is the change of names.

In our culture, *marriage* often means a change of name for a woman. Changing her name is a sign that she has made a commitment to, and now belongs to her husband. Isn't it interesting then that God chose this moment as a time for a change in names?

- Abram — meaning *Exalted Father*, was changed to:
_____ which means *Father of Multitudes*
- Sarai — meaning *princess* or *contentious* was changed to:
_____ meaning *princess*

It's abundantly clear that God had chosen Abraham and Sarah to **be-long** to HIM and that the whole world would be blessed through their family. Go through the conversation in this chapter and list everything God said **He** would do...whether He used past tense or future tense:

V.5 I have _____

V.6 I will _____

V.6 I will _____

V.7 I will _____

V.8 I will _____

V.8 I will _____

Now, what is Abraham's part in this covenant?

V.9 You shall _____

- What was to be the **sign** of that covenant (**v.10-14**)? How would Abraham and his descendants be *marked* as belonging to God?

Even though God was speaking to Abraham, He made promises specifically related to Sarah as well. Identify them:

V.16 I will _____

V.16 I will _____

What was Abraham's response (v.17)?

What alternative suggestion did Abram offer in v.18 that might help this laughable situation?

In v.19-21, what was God's response to that suggestion?

DAY TWO: *The Promise Made*

READ **Genesis 18**

Now Sarah got a chance to hear about this promise herself.
Summarize the details of v.1-8:

Being told that Sarah was in the tent (and probably within ear-shot) what did the Lord tell Abraham again in v.10?

And what was Sarah's response in v.12?

Now both Abraham and Sarah have laughed as they heard God's plan means a real conception between the two of them and a real birth. In **Genesis 17:19** God told Abraham to name his son **Isaac**, meaning *he laughs*. The concept of *laughter* is repeated four times in these chapters and becomes a bit of a sub-theme, so it's probably worth exploring. Read these passages and write the motivation and attitude behind each participant's *laughter*:

- Abraham laughed (**Gen. 17:15-17**) because:

- Sarah laughed (**Gen. 18:10-12**) because:

- Sarah laughed (**Gen. 21:6-7**) because:

- Ishmael laughed (**Gen. 21:9**) because:

What about you? Have you engaged in one of these types of *laughter* as you have found your place in God's unfolding story?

Write out God's response—(the first sentence in **18:14**) _____

Consider the reminder in v.19 "***I have chosen him***". Abraham was God's choice. God made the promise first to Abraham, then in the hearing of his wife. When God chooses a man, he chooses his wife along with him. It was the family that Abraham and Sarah would create that God was going to use to reconcile all mankind to Himself.

DAY THREE: *The Son Born*

READ **Genesis 20—21:7** (we'll study the skipped passages next week)

When we come into a close relationship with our Creator God, He changes us! God had set out to CHANGE both Abraham and Sarah. It began with the change of their names at age 99 and 89; then the sign of circumcision; then in this chapter, we see that God even used a pagan to show Abraham the error of his ways. Yep! God doesn't stop until He changes us into His likeness.

To what location did Abraham and Sarah travel (**V.20:1**)?

What did Abraham say about his wife (**v.2**)?

What did King Abimelech feel free to do with Sarah (**v.2**)?

What was Abraham's motivation (**v.11**)?

Describe how God intervened to protect Sarah:

Let's look at this situation — nestled between the *promise of the son* and the *fulfillment of the son* — from Sarah's perspective. After all, SHE needed to be a willing participant for God to bring forth His plan.

- Rephrase Abraham's request to Sarah:

- Recount the effect of her Abraham's plan on his wife:

- What would have been the result if Sarah had said, *“That’s it...he’s pulled this sister-shenanigan for the last time...I’m not going to put up with this one more day!”*?

It’s not easy to follow a husband who is either fearful or disobedient. Yet, if you find yourself in this very place, maybe this portion of God’s unfolding plan can give you comfort and inspiration.

Read **1 Peter 3:1-6**. Perhaps this is the very portion of God’s plan that Peter had in mind when he wrote:

“...just as Sarah obeyed Abraham, calling him lord, you have become her children if you do what is right without being frightened by any fear.” 1 Peter 3:6 (NASB)

What was the outcome of the whole Abimelech situation for Sarah?

As we move into chapter 21, the first seven verses are pure delight:

- God did just what He promised
- Sarah gave birth just as she was enabled
- Abraham circumcised Isaac just as he was commanded

DAY FOUR: *The Sacrifice Provided*

READ **Genesis 22**

This chapter can be perplexing to read and understand. What’s up with a God who tests our allegiance by asking if we’ll sacrifice our son? Before we investigate the Scriptures more, think about and answer these two questions:

- Was this test so Abraham could demonstrate his faithful obedience to God?

- Was this test so God could demonstrate His faithful provision to Abraham?

Summarize God's instructions to Abraham (v.1-2):

What was Abraham's response (v.3-5):

Consider how unreasonable God's request seemed. Isaac was Abraham's only son, and the future of the covenant rested in him. He was a miracle child, the gift of God to Abraham and Sarah in response to their faith. They loved Isaac very much and had built their whole future around him. When God asked Abraham to offer his son, He was testing Abraham's faith, hope, and love; and it looked on the surface like God was wiping out everything Abraham and Sarah had lived for.

There is a phrase in v.8 that reveals the significance of this event, write it out: _____

It's a relief to read "**do not lay your hand on the boy**" (v.12). But you might ask, 'could Abraham have done this?' 'Could he have actually gone through with slaying his only son?'

Let's draw on what God had already done in Abraham's life. He experienced a type of resurrection power in his own body that enabled a man 'as good as dead' to father a child. Read **Hebrews 11:17-19**.

- What was Abraham's reasoning regarding this event:

Abraham had learned to walk with God, to know God's character, to know His power and His intentions. When a person comes to know God in this way, they can be assured that God is trustworthy and that His plan is good. Do you think Jesus also needed to rest in His own Father's good plan on His way to the cross? What did Abraham call this place of worship (v.14)?

The point of story is not to convince you that you must be willing to sacrifice what is precious to you, but that God is willing to sacrifice what is precious to Him!

Many years later, another Son would climb another hill, carrying wood on his back. Like Isaac, he would trust his Father and do what his Father asked. He wouldn't struggle or run away. Who was he? God's Son, his only Son, the Son he loved. The Lamb of God. — The Jesus Storybook Bible ⁴

☞ Culture Confusion ☞

Conflict in the Middle Eastern countries has been a reality for all of our lives and for centuries before we came on the scene. What parts of our study this week explain the root of some of this conflict?

☞ God's Unfolding Story of Jesus ☞

List all of the ways you can see that the story of Abraham and Isaac parallels our Heavenly Father and His Son, Jesus Christ:

'Where is the Lamb?' (v.7) is a question that would be asked again and again throughout the centuries. Even though blood was spilled through a sacrifice to cover Adam and Eve and both Noah and Abraham offered sacrifices, this is perhaps one of the earliest and clearest pictures of the *Lamb of God* offered as a sacrifice.

Read **John 1:35-37** and share your thoughts about the link between these two passages:

Turn to **Activity "B"** near the end of this Study Guide.
This may be a good time to prepare your own graph of the men God chose to be part of His Story of Redemption.

☞ Heart Assessment ☞

Let's think back over the whole narrative of Abraham and Sarah's life.

- What reasons did Abraham give Sarah to fear?

- Aside from her manipulation in the episode with Hagar, in general, how did she rate as a help-mate to her husband?

- What was her reward for her steadfast support?

Read **Hebrews 11:8-16** and note *what* Abraham was commended for and perhaps how it might apply to your life:

Notes for Teaching
on Week 6



Date: _____



Week SEVEN—Lot and his Wife plus Hagar God’s Design for Justice

It’s a bit risky to allow this week’s lesson to separate the *son of promise* — Isaac, and *his bride* — Rebekah. But I’m confident in your ability to hang onto our storyline while we cover some important lessons on God’s justice.

This week’s Scriptures are mostly passages that we left behind in our narrative of Abraham and Sarah. The first two days we’ll study **Lot and his wife** and the second two days we’ll look back on **Hagar**, her situation and how her descendants play into God’s plan.

One statement that is certainly true and has great implications is found in **Genesis 18:25**. “*Shall not the Judge of all the earth do what is just?*” THAT is a great question. Do we believe that the Creator and judge of the earth will deal justly with His creation?

Both of the women in this lesson were *outsiders* in a manner of speaking. One will cling to the past and be swept away, and one will trust God’s provision for the future and not only survive, but thrive.

Here is our outline for this week:

Day 1: Genesis 13, 18:16-33	Lot’s Chosen Home
Day 2: Genesis 19	Justice Rains over Lot’s Wife
Day 3: Genesis 16	Hagar’s Chosen Home
Day 4: Genesis 21:9-21, 25:12-18	Justice Reigns over Hagar



DAY ONE: *Lot’s Chosen Home*

Read **Genesis 13**

Lot accompanied his Uncle Abraham from Ur of the Chaldees to Haran and then ultimately to Canaan. He probably followed Abram’s sojourn in Egypt as well. When they left Egypt, they possessed large herds and eventually the pastureland wasn’t sufficient to support all their stock, and workers got crabby in tight quarters.

The two men separated (as you read in week 5). Lot settled among the cities of the valley near Sodom and Abraham, settled in the land of Canaan. We didn't hear about Lot having a wife until *after* he pitched his tent near Sodom. Most scholars believe Lot took a wife from the people where he settled in the plains—probably from Sodom.

Our second reading today is a small slice of **Genesis 18** that happened on the heels of the Lord visiting Abraham by the Oaks of Mamre:

READ Genesis 18:16-33

- What was the Lord's assessment of the population of Sodom and Gomorrah?

- After the two angels turn to head toward Sodom, Abraham stayed to talk with the Lord about '**what he is about to do**' (v.17). Summarize the dialog between Abraham and God:

- What number did they settle on that would be a sufficient amount of Godly people to spare the whole city?

Angels are created spiritual beings charged with caring for people and serving them in times of need. They also guide and instruct as well as meet a variety of human needs, including relieving hunger, overcoming loneliness and dread, and delivering God's people from danger.
—Nelson's Bible Dictionary ⁶

DAY TWO: **Justice Rains over Lot's Wife**

READ **Genesis 19**

The chapter opens with two angels entering Sodom. These were the same two angels that accompanied the Lord in talking to Abraham.

- Where did the angels find Lot?
- Where did Lot want the angels to spend the night?
- Describe the actions of the men of the city at evening time:
- Do you think this was a surprise to Lot? From **Genesis 13:13** note what the character of this city was when Lot moved there:

Lot tried his best to *reason* with the townsmen to protect his guests. I wonder if he perceived them to be godly messengers and was actually embarrassed by the actions of those whom he called *brothers* (v.7).

- How was Lot saved from the men of Sodom?
- Describe what happened to the men of Sodom:

Well, the whole visit went from bad to worse and the angels told Lot to pack up any family that was willing to leave with him. Since we mentioned *laughter* in our last lesson — note the response of Lot's sons-in-law at this dire time (v.14).

- Who actually left the town with Lot?
- What type of help did Lot need in the rescue attempt and why?
- What was the fate of Lot's wife?

- Based on the angel's instructions "***do not look back or stop anywhere in the valley***" and the ultimate fate of Lot's wife—what do you think her actions were as they were leaving?

It had been only 400 years since the flood, almost within the memory of men then living. Yet men had forgotten the lesson of the cataclysmic destruction of the race. God rained fire on these two cities to refresh men's memories and to warn of the wrath of God that is in store for wicked men and perhaps to serve as a token of earth's final doom in a holocaust of fire.

— *Halley's Bible Handbook* ⁵

The story surrounding Lot's wife is distasteful to our generation. We center our theology on the love of God and squirm when passages of His justice surface. But Jesus didn't squirm. He likened the time of His Return to both the days of Sodom and the Global Flood.

Read **Luke 17:26-32** and write out **v.32** _____

This is one reason we've included Lot and his wife in our study. Continue reading **v.33**. How do the words of Jesus connect the dots between the lesson of Lot's wife and your life and choices?

The day will come when God's justice will prevail. We want to be found *covered by* Jesus (like Adam & Eve), *resting in* Jesus (like Noah & his Wife), and not entangled or in love with the wickedness of the world around us.

DAY THREE: *Hagar's Chosen Home*

READ **Genesis 16**

Lot chose a home in Sodom and chose his wife from among the wicked people living in the plains. Abraham gave him the gift of first choice in whatever place he wanted to live.

Hagar had no choice in where she would live. She began life in Egypt and was likely re-assigned a home when she was gifted to Abraham by Pharaoh (**Genesis 12:16**).

We'll see in the comparison and contrast of Mrs. Lot and Hagar that their location didn't matter—it was the *condition of their hearts* and how they viewed their actions in light of Almighty God.

We read this chapter two weeks ago, but we are now reading it through the eyes of Hagar.

Sarah came up with the idea of using her maid servant as a surrogate. Surrogacy was widely popular with eastern people, it was even mentioned in the Laws of Hammurabi. However, a child birthed by a different mother wasn't God's plan. God had promised them a son and He was going to deliver on that promise. The difficulty was in the waiting. We can all empathize with Sarah on that score!

- After Hagar realized she had conceived, what was her new attitude toward her boss?
- Who did Sarah blame for this new source of pain?
- Which other Genesis woman does that remind you of? What is the comparison?

- What action did Hagar take (v.7)?

When Hagar ran away, I would suppose Sarah was relieved. It often feels good, at least initially, to have pressure relieved from a bad situation.

But Hagar’s body contained the life of Abraham’s offspring
 God honors life, God cares about life
 Even when it’s not conceived in the best of situations!

So, God reached out to Hagar in the wilderness, by a spring of water, maybe on her way back to Egypt. The text says “*the angel of the LORD found her.*” This is amazing, as it is the first appearance in Scripture of the *angel of the LORD*, who is generally identified as our Lord Jesus Christ—and he appeared to *Hagar*, the servant girl that often takes the hit for ruining the family tree.

- What were God’s instructions to Hagar regarding:
 - Her home (v.9):
 - The name of her son (v.11): (God hears)

These pre-incarnation visits of Jesus Christ were to meet special needs and to accomplish special tasks. The fact that the Son of God took on a temporary body, left heaven, and came down to help a rejected servant-girl surely reveals His grace and love.
 — Bible Exposition Commentary ¹

- What was His prophecy regarding her offspring (v.10,12)?

Hagar addressed the *angel of the Lord* as *El Roi*.

- Write out what that means from v.13:

- Write out Hagar's assessment of her meeting with God from **v.13**:

God extended His grace to a humble servant girl. He's still in the business of extending His grace, of *seeing* and *hearing*: Read these passages and note any thoughts:

- **1 Samuel 16:7**
- **2 Chronicles 16:9**
- **Psalm 34:17**

DAY FOUR: *Justice Reigns over Hagar*
READ **Genesis 21:9-21, Gen. 25:12-18**

About 15 years have passed and Sarah has birthed Isaac. Again we have a relational conflict brewing between the two women and the two sons.

- What seemed to be Ishmael's attitude at the feast for Isaac?
- What was Sarah's demand regarding Ishmael?
- This time Abraham seemed to have more of an opinion. How did he feel about Sarah's demand?
- God intervened between Sarah and Abraham in a surprising way. What did He tell Abraham?

- What was the comfort/assurance God gave Abraham in **v.13**?

Hagar and Ishmael left Abraham's home with some water and bread:

- Chronicle their actions and emotions (it's a bit dramatic):

- What things did the Angel of God speak to Hagar (**v.17-18**)?
- How did God refresh Hagar and give her encouragement?
- From where did Hagar get a wife for Ishmael?

God's promise to both Hagar and Abraham with regard to the descendants of Ishmael was fulfilled. Read **Genesis 25:12-18** to find out *the generations of Ishmael*. Twelve princes and twelve tribes that *settled over against all his kinsmen* (**v.18**).

☞ Culture Confusion ☞

What we just read explains the beginning of the Arab people; who for 4000 years have settled *near* and been *against* the Jewish people.

It's fascinating that God's interaction with Hagar and Ishmael began with His sovereign appearance to them. To this day we hear accounts of God reaching out to the Arab population, perhaps more than any other people group on earth, in a similar way—through dreams and visions.

☞ God's Unfolding Story of Jesus ☞

Even though His grace extended to Ishmael, God's plan of saving mankind would be through the seed that would come from Eve, via Noah's son Shem, through Abraham and Sarah, to bless the whole earth.

☞ Heart Assessment ☞

There are so many things to *take to heart* with the account of Lot's Wife and Hagar.

- Although God was bringing judgment on the very ungodly culture of Sodom, he provided a way of escape for any who would take it. Read **Jude 1:18-20**. Process what this may mean for your life today.

- The existence of Ishmael became inconvenient for Sarai and so she chose to dispose of the child. It's a harsh statement—but true. In our culture the presence of children can become inconvenient too. What does it say about God's character that He went to such lengths to save them? What does it imply about the character that God may want to cultivate in us?

- Although Hagar was marginalized in her day, God went out of His way to reach her. She called Him "*The God who sees.*" It can be either a comfort or a disturbance knowing God sees our *every* move. (Consider the dozens of times we read about the Kings of Judah and Israel '*he did evil in the eyes of the Lord.*') How does this affect you today? Comfort or disturbance?



Week EIGHT—Isaac & Rebekah God’s Design to Reveal His Church

After our detour last week, we’re getting back to the continuing story of God’s plan to rescue mankind through Abraham’s Seed. Our first chapter this week is the longest chapter in Genesis—67 verses. It’s a beautiful and moving story with an intriguing spiritual parallel.

Remember that we pointed out our Bible opens with a marriage in the garden of Eden and closes with a marriage between Christ and His Bride in another garden. Maybe that gives us a little insight into why this week’s chapter is so long and why it’s so important. If Isaac is a type of Jesus Christ, then the acquisition of his bride must in some ways be a type of the church. Let’s discover how...

Here is our outline for this week:

Day 1: Genesis 24:1-48	The Search for a Bride
Day 2: Genesis 24:49-67	The Choice of the Bride
Day 3: Genesis 25:19-24	The Children of the Bride
Day 4: Genesis 27	The Legacy of Brokenness



DAY ONE: *The Search for a Bride*

READ **Genesis 24:1-48**

Abraham was now 140 years old and was determined to finish his course by making sure his son Isaac had a wife that would enable him to continue to fulfill God’s rescue mission.

- Make a list of the specific dos and don’ts for Abraham’s servant as he headed to the territory of Abraham’s birth family (**v.3-8**):
 -
 -
 -
 -

The servant of Abraham was never mentioned by name, but some think it may have been **Eliezer (Genesis 15:2)**, who was so close to Abraham that he was even considered the heir of his estate before Isaac arrived on the scene. (We'll talk more about Eliezer tomorrow.)

The journey from Canaan to the city of Nahor in Mesopotamia would have been about 500 miles. By the time Abraham's servant got there, he would have been fairly travel weary.

- In order to know which one would be the right girl, what *sign* did he ask God for in **v.12-14**?
- How quickly did God answer his prayer?
- Describe Rebekah's physical appearance and her actions:
- What was her actual relationship to Isaac (**v.24**)?
- Who invited Abraham's servant to stay in their home?
- How did the servant credit the God of Abraham for his success?

To summarize today's reading, we see the **desire of the father**, coupled with the **dedication of the servant**, bringing about a successful encounter with the potential bride for Isaac. But, Abraham said she must be willing to return to Canaan... We'll see...

DAY TWO: *The Choice of the Bride*

READ **Genesis 24:49-67**

This matchmaking episode moves along fairly swiftly. But who could argue with a story backed up by all those costly treasures? In the evening, both Laban and Bethuel agreed to let Rebekah return and become the wife of Isaac.

- What slight change presented itself in the morning (v.55)?
- What was Rebekah's response when they ask for HER choice?

The **determination of the bride** — affirmed by her *yes*, lead to the **delight of the groom** and some of the most romantic verses in the Bible (v.63-67).

- What is your impression of that scene?

Rebekah's name means *to tie firmly or secure*. It's an interesting meaning by itself, but if we remember there is a drama going on with bigger implications than just a guy in the Middle East getting a wife, her name becomes fascinating. Could it be that she herself is an image of the Bride of Christ who would be *secured* or *firmly tied* to the bridegroom?

What a delight that God laid out his rescue mission in every chapter of Scripture so that, when the *real* man of rescue appeared, people would recognize Him. Isaac himself is clearly a shadow of Jesus Christ and it's easy to see Father Abraham as a shadow of Father God.

- Who do you think this servant may be a shadow of?

If Abraham's servant was indeed **Eliezer**, then we have another intriguing name. Eliezer comes in two parts: *el* and *ezer*. Do you remember *ezer* from Genesis? Helper? His name literally means *Helper of God*; and we know from the New Testament that the Holy Spirit is, among other things, our Helper.

- How about Rebekah herself? Who might she represent?
- Journal all of the elements in this chapter that you think might have potential meaning between Jesus Christ and His Bride:

DAY THREE: *The Children of the Bride*
READ **Genesis 25:19-24**

Today's passage begins with the fifth occurrence (out of ten) of the phrase "***these are the generations of...***" This time it's very short—one generation—but great detail is given us about Isaac's wife Rebekah.

- Rebekah had what similar physical limitation as her aunt Sarah?
- What did Isaac do about that (v.21)?
- What was the result?

This was the first instance of intercession and answered prayer in the Scriptures. I've often referenced this to inspire married couples on

how effective their prayers are toward one another since they are a one-flesh entity. What a blessing it was to Rebekah that Isaac was insightful enough to ask for God’s favor on their behalf.

- Peter also concurred with the blessing of a husband’s prayers. Read **1 Peter 3:7** and write the gist of it:

- What was unusual about Rebekah’s pregnancy (v.22)?
- What did *she* do about it?
- What did God reveal to her about her children?

Complete this chart:

	Birth-Order	Occupation	Favored by Which Parent
Jacob	_____	_____	_____
Esau	_____	_____	_____

READ **Genesis 25:25-34**. Esau’s name meant *hairy*, which isn’t very deep or prophetic. Jacob’s name, on the other hand, stemmed from his actions at birth as he was holding onto his older brother’s heel. So his name meant ‘*he takes by the heel*’ or ‘*he cheats*’.

This chapter chronicles the continuation of a life-long reputation of *cheating* or *supplanting*. But, let’s not be too hard on Jacob—it takes two to transfer a birthright and the boys couldn’t have felt more differently about it!

- What value did Esau place on his God-given position in the world?

Esau also had the nickname **Edom** meaning *red*, probably referring to the *red lentil stew*. His descendants were the Edomites.

- How do you think he must have felt when people called him Edom (with a mental picture of lentil stew in his head)?

Before we leave this lesson, read also **Genesis 26:34-35**.

- In what other areas did Esau neglect to seek God or understand the importance of choosing well? What effect did it have on the family?

DAY FOUR: ***The Legacy of Brokenness***

READ **Genesis 27**

It often happens that certain choices don't seem like a big deal at the moment, but later, as we walk out the consequences, we can see the enormity of those decisions! I think the episode of the *stew for birth-right* exchange is certainly one of those times.

Remember, before her boys were born, God had told Rebekah, "***the older shall serve the younger***" (**Genesis 25:23**). This chapter begins a legacy of *brokenness* that carries into the rest of the story of our Messiah. How redemptive of our God that He chooses to use broken things for His purpose of blessing!

- In **v.1-4**, Isaac requested preparations be made for a bit of a feast that would accompany what important event?
- In **v.5-10**, how did Rebekah become involved in this event?
- Why do you think she went to all of this effort since God had told her 40 years earlier that Esau would serve Jacob anyway?

- What was Jacob's reservation with his mother's plan (v.11-13)?

So the ruse was set in action with Rebekah's stew, Esau's garments, and the skin of a goat. It was one thing for Jacob to make a birthright *trade* with Esau face-to-face — that was almost like a business deal; but this event raises the bar of deception to an all-time high!

...Deceiving an elderly and dying father!

...Lying about his identity not once, but multiples times!

...Even employing the name of the LORD!

- What were some of the elements of Isaac's blessing in v.28-29?

- What was Isaac's reaction when he realized he had not blessed Esau?

- It's heartbreaking to read v.34-38 and watch Esau realize what he had despised, rather than cherished, was now gone forever. What personal lesson does this convey in your life right now?

- What was Esau's emotional state toward his brother after this event, and what was he plotting?

- Where did Rebekah suggest Jacob to go (v.43)?

You may or may not already know Laban's character, but we'll find out in our next lesson that Mr. Deceiver is about to meet his match.

- What were the consequences of Rebekah's (and Jacob's) action in the family dynamic?
- Suggesting that Jacob move to Laban, Rebekah seemed to think Esau's *fury would turn away*. Why would she even think that was a possibility? Was that realistic or was she in denial?
- Controllers and manipulators usually become expert at *spinning* stories or decisions in the most favorable light for themselves. What spin did Rebekah put on her idea to send Jacob away (v.46)?

☞ Culture Confusion ☞

Are you repelled at the thought of an arranged marriage? It's certainly not how we do things, but many cultures around the world still operate this way — some with success. Since there are many different cultural practices, what would you list as Biblical absolutes for choices in a life partner?

☞ God's Unfolding Story of Jesus ☞

We've already pointed out so many of the beautiful illustrations from Genesis: being *covered* by God's grace, *resting* in God's grace, the *substitutionary sacrifice* of God's grace...and now the compelling *pursuit* by God's grace.

Read these passages about the work of the Holy Spirit. Comment on how they bring substance to the shadows of the story we've studied:

- John 6:65
- John 15:16
- John 15:26

🌀 Heart Assessment 🌀

Rebekah turned into quite the manipulator as she aged.

- Contrast how Rebekah's and Sarah's manipulation factor increased or decreased as they aged.
- Do you have any thoughts as to what causes a woman to increase or diminish in being a controller/manipulator?
- On a scale of 1—10, where do you land on the *control or manipulation* meter right now in your life?
- Parental favoritism can be a problem and it certainly played into these events. Is there an application to your life?



Week NINE—Jacob & His Wives God’s Design to Bless Despite Blunders

We’re starting our landing cycle for the *generations* listed in Genesis. All that we’ve studied points to a day when God will make all things new—from the first marriage in the garden to the final marriage in Revelation. God’s story will continue unfolding from the closing of Genesis to the entrance of Jesus Christ, born of the virgin Mary in the New Testament. It is the *Regeneration* that is our hope.

The word *generation* doesn’t only mean a group of people born around the same time, it also refers to the beginning of something. (*He generated many questions with his report.*) So let’s observe, by way of overview, the *generation* story of Genesis:

Chapters 1-2	Generation (the beginning—perfect)
Chapters 3-11	Degeneration (the fall—falling apart)
Chapters 12-50	Regeneration (the process of restoring)

God has been in the process of restoring what was originally His ever since the fall of man, the judgment of man and the calling of Abraham. As Jesus said, “*Salvation is from the Jews*” John 4:22!

By the end of this week’s study, we should be absolutely sure that God has a planned kingdom and His kingdom is forcefully advancing!

Here is our outline for this week:

Day 1: Genesis 28	The Man and His Dream
Day 2: Genesis 29:1-30	The Man and His Two Brides
Day 3: Genesis 29:31-35 & 30:1-24	The Man and His Twelve Children
Day 4: Genesis 32:22-31	The Man who Became Israel



DAY ONE: *The Man and His Dream*

READ **Genesis 28**

As this chapter opens, at least one thing has been agreed upon between Isaac and Rebekah—they *both* really, really don’t want Jacob

to take a wife from the Canaanite women surrounding them. Isaac offered a *second* blessing to Jacob and off he went! The home-body boy was out on his own. He was thought to be about 77 years old at that time. Probably time to get married—don't you think?

We're really finished with the story of Esau, but let's take one last look at his attempts to please his father in **v.6-9!**

- Why do you think it wasn't an option for Isaac and Rebekah to suggest that Jacob find a wife from Ishmael's descendants?

On Jacob's journey to Haran, probably about three days in, he ***came to a certain place and stayed there that night*** (v.11)

- What did he call the place (v.19)?
- Describe his dream that night:

God met Jacob there for the first of several times.

- List the main points that God spoke to Jacob:

Do you wonder if Abraham or Isaac had shared those promises with Jacob? Even if they had, how do you think Jacob must have felt hearing God confirm those promises alone in the desert that night?

Maybe those thoughts played into his excitement in **v.16-17**.

How did Jacob respond in the morning?

- Physical expression?
- Verbal expression?

DAY TWO: *The Man and His Two Brides*

READ **Genesis 29:1-30**

Jacob's trip from Bethel to Haran was successful. He stopped at a well in the field and, almost as if *on cue*, Laban's daughter approached.

- Describe Jacob's chivalrous actions from **v.9-10**:
- What emotions do you think were behind **v.11**?
- Is there another *find-a-bride-at-the-well* story that this reminds you of?

Rachel ran to tell her dad that someone from Rebekah's family had come to Haran. "***As soon as Laban heard the news about Jacob...he ran to meet him.***" Do you remember the ten camels loaded with goodies that Eliezer brought all those years ago?

- What were the possible motives that Laban might have had to run and greet Jacob?

As it turned out, Jacob had no camels or dowry with him, so Laban put him to work. After about a month, it came to him that maybe he should be paying Jacob and so the negotiations began.

Laban and Jacob made an agreement that Jacob would serve him seven years in exchange for Rachel.

- Explain what happened following the wedding feast:

- How long did Jacob wait in order to marry Rachel?

COMPLETE THIS CHART:			Check which wife was loved more
Birth-Order	Appearance		by Jacob
Rachel (meaning <i>Ewe</i>)	_____	_____	_____
Leah (meaning <i>Cow</i>)	_____	_____	_____

So much of this story is outside the realm of our experience, or even imagination. If we, by some strange set of circumstances married the wrong person, we would quickly annul the marriage; but their method of solving the problem was to keep multiple wives. That was NOT an ideal arrangement, it was NOT God's intention for a man and a woman from the beginning. And yet, in His mercy, God forged ahead and continued to build the offspring of Abraham (who would bless the whole earth) through the brokenness of Jacob's family.

DAY THREE: *The Man and His Twelve Children*
READ **Genesis 29:31-35 & 30:1-24**

- The compassion expressed by the Lord in **v.31** is heart-warming.
- What did God do for Leah and why?

Leah ended up birthing more than double the number of sons as any of the other wives or servants, God's mercy was abundant toward her. It's strange to study about God's family of promise and realize there

were four *women* involved — that was *not* God’s intention for marriage, and we know that from lesson #1. But again, it highlights God’s mercy and longsuffering in that he used the blunders of Jacob, Laban, and the women to bring forth a nation to bear His name.

Let’s make a chart of the children born to Jacob from today’s reading:

	Son’s name	Meaning (if given)
Leah:	#1 _____	
	#2 _____	
	#3 _____	
	#4 _____	
	#9 _____	
	#10 _____	
Zilpah:	#7 _____	
	#8 _____	
Rachel:	#11 _____	
	#12 _____	
Bilhah:	#5 _____	
	#6 _____	

We see from our chart that Leah bore the first four children.

- What was Rachel’s plea in **chapter 30 v.1**?

- What was her husband’s response?

- Contrast Jacob’s and Isaac’s responses given the same situation (**Genesis 25:21**).

In order to complete the chart, read also **Genesis 35:16-20** for the account of the twelfth son.

☞ Heart Assessment ☞

The book of Genesis is quite transparent about bittersweet relationships between brothers and sisters. From murder between brothers in the first generation, to the segregation of Noah's sons, to the deceptive relationship between Jacob and Esau, the jealousy between Rachel and Leah — and we don't even begin to scratch the surface of the twelve sons of Jacob and their underhanded dealings with Joseph.

- Knowing this type of rivalry is a natural result of the fall, what proactive steps will you take with YOUR siblings...even if you're older?

- What inspiration does this provide for both prayer and purposeful parenting with your children's generation?

DAY FOUR: *The Man who Became Israel*

READ **Genesis 32:22-31**

I hope you're not disappointed that we are finishing our study of Genesis right here. For one thing, we had a nine-week time frame to work with; so we'll end with this final passage where God meets with Jacob and changes his name.

We learned in **30:25** that as soon as *Rachel had borne Joseph*, Jacob planned his exit strategy from Laban's realm. It's another event filled with drama and an impending rendezvous with Esau (which put emotions on red-alert). But it's the meeting with the Lord that's of interest to us. Twenty years ago, Jacob had met God at Bethel, and this is a similar encounter.

- How many other people spent the night with Jacob (**v.24**)?

- Who appeared to him?

God meets us at whatever level He finds us in order to lift us to where He wants us to be. To Abraham the pilgrim, God came as a traveler (Genesis 19); and to Joshua the general, He came as a soldier (Joshua 5:13-15). Jacob had spent most of his adult life wrestling with people — Esau, Isaac, Laban, and even his wives — so God came to him as a wrestler.
 —Bible Exposition Commentary¹

- As day break approached, Jacob asked for a blessing and what did the *wrestler* ask him (v.27)?
- Now the last time he had been asked that question “*who are you?*”, he gave a different response. Go back to **Genesis 27:18-19** and note the circumstances and Jacob’s answer:
- How did he respond this time?

Do you remember our study of Ruth? In the same way that Naomi asked her daughter-in-law “*who art thou?*” to get HER to think about her answer, the man wrestling with Jacob is not asking the question to receive information, but to get Jacob to think about his answer.

Would Jacob admit who he was in order to clear the slate and allow a change in his life? Or would he deceive and manipulate once again? His reply was, “Jacob!”

And the response of the man was “***Your name shall no longer be called Jacob, but _____ for you have striven with God and with men, and have prevailed.***”

Many scholars interpret Israel’s name to mean ‘*one who wrestles with God.*’ G. Campbell Morgan translates it ‘*a God-mastered man*’, which I rather like.

☞ God's Blessing to Israel ☞

There is a phrase in **v.29** that says *...and there He blessed him*, which brings us full circle to God's original promise to Abraham in **12:3**: *I will bless you...so that you will be a blessing.*

Read and comment on these additional passages of blessing for Israel.

Isaiah 41:8-10

Isaiah 43:1-3

Isaiah 43:10-13

☞ God's Unfolding Story of Jesus ☞

As we wrap up our study, we can see that God had a Divine Design for His creation and even though that creation was frustrated by sin, God's plan was to redeem creation by bringing forth a seed from the woman that would crush the serpent.

What God chooses to use in His Plan can sometimes can be totally beyond belief. Like this polygamous family for instance — steeped in deception and drama. They were chosen by God to propagate the Twelve Tribes of Israel, which became the Messianic Nation, which would bring salvation to the whole world.

Some closing thoughts we can learn from these Scriptures:

- God uses human beings just as they are, to serve His purposes.
- God will use both the righteous and the unrighteous to carry out His plan.
- The Bible is a transparent and honest work, sharing with complete candor the weaknesses of its heroes and the circumstances God used to further His purpose.

You can be assured that you too have a purpose to fulfill in your generation, just as each of these people did in their generations. You may not be in the history books, but you have a unique calling in your generation (**Acts 13:36**).

Notes for Teaching
on Week 9



Date: _____

ACTIVITY "A"

☞ *The Ten Generations of Genesis* ☞

If you want to understand something long or complex fairly quickly, a chart can be helpful. Genesis represents the first 2000 years of man's history, and it's actually organized into a chart-like format that helps us compartmentalize the history and see the big picture.

There are ten sections in the book of Genesis. Each begins with the Hebrew phrase *elleh toledot*, which is translated in the ESV as *the generations of*. These not only provide structure for the book but help us see that family is a central structure of God's plan of relating to man.

It will probably stick with us better if we look up these headings and complete the following chart:

- 2:4 These are the generations of the _____ and the _____ when they were created,
- 5:1 This is the book of the generations of _____. When God created man, He made him in the likeness of God.
- 6:9 These are the generations of _____ who was a righteous man, blameless in his generation.
- 10:1 These are the generations of the sons of Noah, _____, _____, and _____.
- 11:10 These are the generations of _____.
- 11:27 Now these are the generations of _____ who fathered Abram, Nahor, and Haran; and Haran fathered Lot.
- 25:12 These are the generations of _____, Abraham's son, whom Hagar the Egyptian, Sarah's servant, bore to Abraham.
- 25:19 These are the generations of _____, Abraham's son.
- 36:1 These are the generations of _____ (that is, Edom).
- 37:2 These are the generations of _____.

ACTIVITY "B"

☞ *The Lives of the Patriarchs* ☞

One activity that can be very insightful is to make your own graph of the lifespans of the patriarchs from Adam to Jacob. It's always more enlightening to actually produce your own graph than to merely look at one in a book. This is also a superb activity to do with your children as well.

To get started grab some graph paper and decide how many years each square will stand for (100 years per square often works well with small grids). Now place the names of the patriarchs from Adam to Noah down the left side of the page. You will begin each man's life with his birth and end at his death. For example, Adam's line begins in year 1 and Seth's line begins at Adam's 130th year.

You'll want to use Genesis 5 and Genesis 11. (To figure Abram's birth, use Genesis 11:32 and 12:4 along with Acts 7:4, then calculate 75 years backward from Terah's death to find Abram's birthdate.)

Once your chart is complete, it's amazing to observe the overlap of lifespans and consider things like:

- How many descendants Noah may have met.
- How many generations Shem may have preached to.
- The shortening of lifespans.

I hope you enjoy the project!

☞ The Names of the Patriarchs ☞

We've pointed out time and again through this study that names mean something. You may enjoy this condensed chart of what the given names of the men chosen to bear the seed of the Messiah meant in their day:

Name:	Meaning:
Adam	<i>Man</i>
Seth	<i>(Is) Appointed</i>
Enosh	<i>Mortal Man (of)</i>
Kenan	<i>Sorrow</i>
Mahalalel	<i>The Blessed God</i>
Jared	<i>Shall Come Down</i>
Enoch	<i>Teaching</i>
Methuselah	<i>His Death Shall Bring</i>
Lamech	<i>The Despairing</i>
Noah	<i>Comfort (Rest)</i>

REFERENCES

ESV Bible verses...

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Women of the Word Bible Studies

The following WOW Bible Studies written by Sue LeBoutillier are available through the **Calvary Chapel Ontario bookstore**, and through our online store at **www.ccontario.com**.

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- **Numbers** —The Wilderness Way, From Sinai to the Jordan
- **Joshua** —The Path of Promise, From the Jordan into Canaan
- **Judges** — A Time of Turning
- **Ruth** —Rescue and Rest
- **1 Samuel** — the Coming King
- **Jonah** —The Call of Compassion

New Testament:

- **The Way of Jesus** —The Sermon on the Mount (Matthew)
- **Simply Jesus** —The “I AMs” of Christ (John)
- **Acts** —Walking in the Spirit, The First Days of the Last Days
- **Galatians** —Finding Grace in a Demanding World
- **Philippians** —Finding Joy in a Disjointed World
- **Colossians** —Walking in Strength and Power
- **Titus** —While We Wait
- **James** —Real Faith for Daily Life
- **1 & 2 Peter** —Hope, Holiness and Humility in a Hostile World
- **1,2,3 John** —Light, Love and Logic, Lessons from the Apostle John