

Hello everyone,

PERCENT OF BIBLE COMPLETED: 2.6%

Weekly Readings will cover: Genesis 32 – Gen 38 & 1 Chronicles 1:35 - 1 Chr 2:8

Sunday: Genesis 32

Monday: Genesis 33

Tuesday: Genesis 34

Wednesday: Genesis 35

Thursday: Genesis 36 & 1 Chronicles 1:35 – 1 Chr 2:2

Friday: Genesis 37

Saturday: Genesis 38 & 1 Chronicles 2:3-2:8

Current # of email addresses in group: 520

I hope everyone has had a good week and enjoyed this week's reading.

In this week's study, we will read about Jacob wrestling with God, his reunion with Esau, the violation of Dinah, Jacob's new name and we will briefly start into the story of Joseph.

3 YEAR CHRONOLOGICAL STUDY: Week 5

Read the following passages & the Daily Deep Dive on the daily reading.

Day 29 - SUNDAY: November 20th

Genesis 32

Daily Deep Dive:

Verse 1 – In our study of Genesis we've already encountered "angels". The Old Testament Hebrew word for Angel is "Malak" and like it's New Testament counterpart (Greek: Aggelos) it means "Messenger or representative". These words (OT: malak or NT: aggelos) can be applied to physical people or spirit beings. When applied to men, the Bible translators typically translate the word "messenger" and when a spirit being is the context, they typically translate it "angel" (taken from the Greek aggelos). Sometimes, by context, we understand that this "Messenger of the Lord or God" is no ordinary "messenger/angel" but is actually the pre-incarnate Jesus Christ, who was known as "the Word" (a title meaning He was in the role of God's Spokesman).

Here are some examples where the Angel of the Lord was the Word (pre-incarnate Jesus Christ): Genesis 16:10-13; Genesis 22:11-12; Exodus 3:2-6; Judges 13:3-22

And here are some examples where the Angel of God was also the Word (Exodus 14:19, Exo 23:20).

Verse 2 – He calls this place “Mahanaim” meaning “double camp” or “two camps” because he understood that both his family and spirit messengers (angels) were there. The name of this place will be used another 12 times in the Old Testament.

Verse 3 – Here in this verse, as well as in verse 6, we again see the word “malak” (angel) but both of these verses it’s left as “messengers” meaning the translators believe these to be physical messengers not spirit messengers. I think this is likely correct, as I’m not sure that Jacob would have had the authority to send spiritual messengers to Esau on his behalf, but I wanted to point this out nonetheless.

Verses 9 through 12 – Jacob is afraid and knows the right thing to do. He prays. In this prayer, he shows humility, recognizes where his blessings come from, asks for God’s deliverance and reminds God of His promises to him.

Verses 13 – 21 – Jacob not only prays for God’s help, he then does his part to try to soften Esau’s heart toward him.

The UCG reading program states the following about Jacob:

“Meeting Esau was a fearsome prospect. Jacob knew his elder brother to be an impetuous man who acted first and thought later. Would his rash nature explode in wrath? Would Esau avenge himself by slaughtering Jacob and all he had? If Esau still entertained thoughts of vengeance, Jacob would attempt to appease him with gifts. Perhaps showing deference and humility before Esau, addressing him as “Lord”

and sending him presents, would turn Esau's wrath away. Jacob sent out messengers to respectfully inform Esau of his approach. The messengers returned and told Jacob that Esau was coming—with 400 men! Jacob prepared for the worst, dividing his family and possessions into troops to send out one after the other with himself at the forefront (Genesis 33:3), hoping in this way to preserve as much of his family as possible should Esau attack. Ahead of them he sent troops of men bearing gifts, hoping waves of gifts would cool Esau's hot head. For the moment, however, Jacob remained at the ford of Jabbok.

What happens next at Jabbok is of profound importance for understanding the character development of Jacob. Before examining the details of the story, though, we must look at Jacob's prayer.

In reading the life of Jacob, we have seen him develop from a cultured and physically imposing young man—who relied on his own cunning and skill to obtain what he wanted, manipulating those around him—into a man who learned that real prosperity, security and peace depends on one's righteousness before God. That in itself is a great growth in character. But by the time Jacob arrives in Jabbok after years of service for Laban's flocks, he has made a quantum leap in character growth. The prayer in verses 9-12 shows that Jacob had now come to see that even complete righteousness before God does not entitle one to God's goodness. "I am not worthy of the least of all the steadfast love and all the faithfulness that you have shown to your servant," he confessed (verse 10, New Revised Standard Version). Jacob now sees himself as he truly is—an unworthy man wholly dependent on the mercy and undeserved grace of God. Now, to bring his character to maturity, while Jacob is alone at Jabbok, the strangest wrestling match in history will be played out in the darkness, without a single spectator." [END]

Verses 24 & 25 – This is the only place in the bible we find this Hebrew word translated “wrestled” used. It comes from a root word meaning “dust” and here means “to cover with dust” or “get dusty”.

Here’s what the UCG reading states about this Being & wrestling match: “In the middle of the night, a supernatural Being comes down and wrestles with Jacob. This Being, identified as God, must have been the preincarnate Jesus Christ, who, as the “Word” with God the Father from the beginning, was also God (John 1:1-3, John 1:14). It could not have been God the Father since Jacob saw Him and, as the apostle John later stated, “No one has seen God at any time” (John 1:18)—clearly referring to the Father in this verse. (To learn more about the nature of God the Father and Jesus Christ, request or download our free booklet [Who Is God?](#))

At first Jacob may not have known who his opponent was—but before the match was over, Jacob discerned His identity, for he later calls Him God (verse 30). Now why did God want to wrestle Jacob? A better question would be, why did Jacob continue to wrestle once he figured out he was wrestling with God? What would be the point of wrestling with God? God could easily beat His opponent. Or God could simply match His opponent move for move and produce a draw. Or God could deliberately lose. In *any* case, to continue the match would seem pointless. So why did Jacob continue to wrestle? We can’t know for sure of course. But perhaps it was simply because *God* wanted to wrestle—as a test of Jacob’s perseverance and attitude. The wrestling match, viewed in this context, would seem to have been a test of submission: Would Jacob submit to continuing to wrestle, even when it seemed pointless, just because God wanted it that way? Also, from the conclusion, it is evident that Jacob wanted God’s blessing. And God, it seems, wanted to know just how *much* he wanted it. In the end, Jacob demonstrated his deep feeling of total reliance on God’s blessing. And he showed that he would hold on to whatever God was doing in his life

in order to receive that blessing. In confronting Esau and whatever other obstacles he would later face, his own cunning and ingenuity would not deliver him. He knew that he had to trust in God alone.

As the match progresses, Christ sees that He is not prevailing against Jacob. This does not mean that Jacob was winning and Christ was losing. It simply means that Jacob had not yet given up. He was still wrestling. Then Christ makes it far more difficult for Jacob to continue by striking his hip socket. In pain and even in tears (Hosea 12:3-4), Jacob *still* does not give up. Finally, Christ tells Jacob to release Him as the day is dawning. But Jacob says he will not let go until Christ blesses him. This is almost certainly not disobedience, as it might appear to be. Rather, it is apparent that Jacob understood his holding on until receiving the blessing to be the reason God engaged him in the contest to begin with. In faith, we are to hold God to His promises to bless us until He does so—for that is what He has told us to do. In doing this, Jacob prevailed with God and was renamed Israel, meaning “Prevailer with God.” This does not mean that Jacob won and Christ lost. Indeed, the match ended before either of them was pinned. Of course, Christ could have pinned Jacob at any moment. But that was not His desire—nor was it the point. The point was to see if Jacob could persevere with God in the face of adversity. And he did. So who won the match, Jacob or Christ? The truth is that both won. God *always* prevails. And now Jacob prevailed *with* Him. It must be the same with us.” [END]

Day 30 - MONDAY: November 21st

Genesis 33

Daily Deep Dive:

Verse 2 – Over the years I often wondered why we don’t see clearly critical comments from God about men taking multiple wives/concubines, etc... I have come to believe that God doesn’t always provide these clear comments, but instead provides clear instructions in His Word of His intent and also provides clear examples

where the opposite doesn't lead to happiness and positive outcomes. We clearly see in Genesis that God created one wife for Adam, not a whole series of women. We clearly see in Paul's instructions to both Timothy and Titus (younger pastors in the church – see (1 Timothy 3:2, Titus 1:6) that a qualification for an elder was to be a husband of one wife. We also see the clear negative outcomes that came to families where jealousy, animosity, contention, loneliness, family separation, etc...resulted. Here in verse 2 must have been another in a long series of very hurtful situations for the concubines and Leah. A very clear order of value and love is demonstrated. Marriage wasn't designed by God to bring shame and hurt to those involved. This to me is a clear example again, where man within their God-given freewill, has chosen a path that is outside God's intent and design.

Verse 4 – Imagine the emotional release from this moment. Due to your deceitful stealing of your father's blessing, you had to flee from your home for your life. You were separated not only from your parents, but also from your twin brother. You had gotten married and had children with no relationship and connection to your parents or twin. Now after 20 years, you are greeted so warmly by your brother that you still very much feared and worried still hated you. You can almost read over at the end of this verse that "they wept!", but that makes perfect sense. What an amazing moment of reconciliation!

Verse 20 – He builds an altar and names it "El Elohe Israel" meaning "the mighty God of Israel" (Strongs/Brown-Driver-Briggs).

Here's the commentary from the UCG Bible Reading program:

"In the morning, Jacob departed, and after a short journey he caught sight of Esau advancing with 400 men. Jacob had ordered his family, dividing the children among their mothers, placing the concubines first, followed by Leah, with Rachel trailing the caravan. This was done to provide maximum protection for Rachel (possibly pregnant with

Benjamin) and Joseph. For if Esau attacked, perhaps he would have had enough of slaughter by the time he reached Rachel. Jacob positioned himself at the head of the caravan, alternately walking and prostrating himself as he approached Esau, thereby showing the highest regard and deepest humility.

The meeting with Esau, however, was anything but hostile. Esau was genuinely glad to see Jacob. Twenty years had significantly moderated his feelings and, given the size of the fighting force accompanying him, it appears that Esau had achieved a good deal of personal success—enough, at least, for him to feel sufficiently blessed. Jacob presented gifts and introduced his family, but wisely begged-off accompanying Esau back to Seir, perhaps anticipating that Esau’s mercurial nature would once again change and he would revert to his former embitterment over the evil Jacob had done to him.

After departing from his encounter with Esau, Jacob came to Shechem (verses 18-19). Here he bought a parcel of land and dug a well. This is apparently the same well at which, long afterward, Jesus Christ met and talked with a Samaritan woman—the place at this much later time being known as Sychar (John 4:5-6), near today’s city of Nablus in the West Bank. Jacob, renamed Israel, also built an altar to God here, which he named El Elohe Israel, meaning “God, the God of Israel” (Genesis 33:20). Jacob’s “conversion process” is well underway at this point. No longer does he look upon God as simply the God of His fathers. Rather, he sees God as *his* God—seeming to indicate that he has developed a personal relationship with Him.” [END]

Day 31 - TUESDAY: November 22nd

Genesis 34

Daily Deep Dive:

Verse 1 – Leah had six sons Reuben, Simeon, Levi, Judah, Issachar, & Zebulun. After these six sons, she bore a daughter Dinah (Gen 30:21). This is the only daughter that is listed as being born to Jacob.

Commentaries (like Adam Clarke, John Gill) state that it is believed that Dinah is approximately 14 years old. Verse one also states that Dinah went out to “see the daughters of the land”. Being the only girl in the family, she likely was quite curious about how other girls dressed and acted. There is not even a hint of her going off looking for a relationship with a man.

Verse 2 – Depending on how you would use commas, you might conclude that Hamor is the prince or Hamor is king and his son Shechum is the prince. Jewish historian Josephus records that Hamor is a king and Shechum his son is the prince.

What occurred at the end of verse 2?

NKJV states “saw her, he took her and lay with her, and violated her.”

ERV states “took Dinah and raped her.”

NLT – “saw Dinah, he seized her and raped her.”

LSV (Literal Standard Version) states – “sees her, and takes her, and lies with her, and humbles her;”

ISV – “saw her, he grabbed her and raped her, humiliating her.”

Let’s consider the Hebrew:

He saw – “To see, look at, inspect, consider” (Brown-Driver-Briggs)

He took – “To take, get, lay hold of, seize, acquire, buy, marry, take a wife, snatch, take away”

This word (found 966x in the Bible) is used in a wide variety of ways. Most of the time it’s used for “take (747x)” and only 4x is it translated “Married”.

He lay with her – “to lie down”. When used with the opposite sex, it’s typically used for having “sex” (sometimes with consent, sometimes without).

He violated her – Strong’s says “idea of looking down or browbeating, to depress, afflict, deal hardly with, defile, force, hurt, ravish (and other

definitions)” This word is used 83x in the Bible. 50x it’s translated “afflict”, 11x “to humble”, 5x “force” (then some various one-off ways). Nothing about that final Hebrew word doesn’t leave me feeling gross and that young Dinah was sexually assaulted by the prince of the country.

Josephus states “But when Shechem, the son of Hamor the king, saw her, he defiled her by violence.”

I think it’s the next verse that adds confusion.

Verse 3 – NKJV states “His soul was strongly attracted to Dinah the daughter of Jacob, and he loved the young woman and spoke kindly to the young woman.”

First, as Dinah is stuck in this awful situation, there is not so much a hint that she felt feelings toward him and after the event of verse 2, she remains stuck in this situation.

We read in this verse that this prince was in the Hebrew “clinging to her, staying close, sticking close” to Dinah, and that he loved her. This Hebrew word is commonly translated love, but the Strong’s definition says “To have affection for (Sexually or otherwise)”. There appears to be no relationship here, it seems to be that the prince is drawn to her sexually and ends by saying that he was talking kindly, or from the heart to her. It calls her a “damsel” or “a young woman”. Strong’s defines this word as “a *girl* (from infancy to adolescence)”, indicating further that she was young at this time.

Verse 4 – The prince says to the king, “get me this damsel (girl) as my wife”.

Verse 5 – Word gets somehow back to Jacob, and he has heard that the prince had “defiled Dinah”. This is a different Hebrew word for “defiled” than the one used at the end of verse 2. This word means “to be foul, defile, pollute, to make unclean”.

Verse 6 – The king went to Jacob to arrange the deal with him.

Verse 7 – The sons find out and they are both “grieved” and “very angry”. This word for very angry means “to glow, to blaze up, to be incensed”. They are smoking mad.

Verse 9 & 10 – The king wants them (the sons) to enter into a relationship that he sees will benefit everyone in a business sense.

Verse 19 in the NKJV states “He *was* more honorable than all the household of his father.”

This seems again to contradict the situation where he acted very dishonorably.

The Hebrew for honorable means “to be heavy, to be rich, to have honor or glory”.

ERV states “Shechem was the most honored man in his family. “

NLT states “Shechem was a highly respected member of his family,”

ISV states “Now Shechem was the most important person in his father's household. “

It's my conclusion that this verse isn't talking about him being honorable in the sense of morality, but that he had power and position and had the influence to get all the men to get circumcised so that he could get married to Dinah.

Verse 25 – In their deceptive plan, Simeon and Levi, two of Dinah's six brothers, kill all the males of the city, they also (verse 26) kill the king and prince. They take back their sister and leave. I had never noticed until today that their sister has been kept at this home the whole time. She did not speak to her father/mother or her brothers during this whole event.

Verse 27 – Commentaries seem to agree that the rest of the brothers now join in and come plunder the city, taking all of it's wealth.

Verse 30 – Jacob is concerned that the people of this land will unite against them and destroy them.

Verse 31 – This chapter ends with this term “harlot”. The meaning of this word often is harlot, but in this sense, it also means “cause to be a

whore, fall to whoredome”. This is the first time this word is used in the Bible, but obviously was an already established concept and word at that time.

If you would like to read further, the UCG commentary contains a number of thoughts at the following link:

<https://www.ucg.org/bible-study-tools/bible-commentary/bible-commentary-genesis-34>

Day 32 - WEDNESDAY: November 23rd

Genesis 35

Daily Deep Dive:

Verse 1 – You’ll remember at the end of yesterday’s reading that Jacob was concerned that the Canaanite tribes around them would hear what Simeon and Levi had done and would destroy his family. We see at the beginning of this next chapter that God tells Jacob to leave and go to Bethel. John Gill’s commentary says this is about 28 miles from Shechem.

Verse 2 – Jacob instructs everyone under his household to get rid of foreign gods and to both purify themselves and to change clothes. It is worth noting that coming into God’s presence is not something we should ever take lightly. God wants us to have a close and intimate relationship with Him, but it would be a mistake to take coming into the presence of the Almighty God lightly. For this reason, when we go to church, we should strongly consider our outward attire, recognizing we are dressing to go before the Almighty, and also consider our inward thoughts and attitudes. We will see these two themes develop more as we move through the Bible.

Verse 5 – It appears that Jacob was right to fear these surrounding cities, but with God’s intervention, great fear falls upon those cities and they do not pursue Jacob’s family.

Verse 8 – We aren't told when Deborah, Rebekah's nurse, joined Jacob's family. According to Jarchi, he records that Rebekah sent Deborah to bring Jacob home, according to Rebekah's promise in Gen 27:45. About that, John Gill's commentary states: "it is not very probable that she should send a woman, and one so ancient, on such an errand: rather, this nurse of hers, after she had accompanied her to Canaan, and stayed awhile with her there, returned to Haran again, and being very useful in Jacob's large family, and having a great respect for them, returned again with them, and which she might choose in hopes of seeing Rebekah once more, whom she had a strong affection for; or, when Jacob was come into the land of Canaan to Shechem, he might send for her from Hebron to be assisting in his family; or going to visit his parents, which he might do before he went with his whole family to them, might bring her with him to Shechem, who travelling with him to Bethel died there" [END]

Jamieson-Faucet-Brown has this to say about Deborah "Deborah (*Hebrew*, a "bee"), supposing her to have been fifty years on coming to Canaan, had attained the great age of a hundred eighty. When she was removed from Isaac's household to Jacob's, is unknown. But it probably was on his return from Mesopotamia; and she would have been of invaluable service to his young family. Old nurses, like her, were not only honored, but loved as mothers; and, accordingly, her death was the occasion of great lamentation. She was buried under *the* oak - hence called "the terebinth of tears" [END]

Verse 11 – God tells Jacob that He is "El Shadday" (meaning God Almighty or God Most Powerful). This is now the third time this name has been used for God.

The first time was in Genesis 17:1 when Abram was 99 years old and in that chapter, God changed Abram's name to Abraham and required them his family to be circumcised and promised that a year later he would have a son with Sarah.

The second time was in Genesis 28:3 when Isaac used this name “God Almighty” when both blessing Jacob & sending Jacob off to Laban. Here in verse 11 we see a new piece added in to this promise. The UCG reading program states the following: “. God seems pleased with Jacob’s faith and obedience, as He reaffirms with Jacob the promises made to Abraham and Isaac. God even repeats His renaming of Jacob with the new name of Israel, having originally done so in chapter 32.

God gives again the promise of a line of kings (given before in Genesis 17:4-6). But in giving the promise of national blessing, God adds something mentioned for the first time in Scripture—the promise of a single nation *and a company* (or “group” in the Moffatt Translation) of nations. The Ferrar Fenton Translation says, “a Nation and an Assembly of Nations.” The New International Version reads, “a nation and a community of nations.” We will see more about this prophecy when we get to Genesis 48, where the birthright blessing passes on to Joseph’s sons Ephraim and Manasseh—Manasseh becoming the great single nation and Ephraim becoming the company or group of nations. (These prophecies are fully explained in our free booklet [The United States and Britain in Bible Prophecy.](#))” [END]

Verse 14 – This is the first time we are introduced to a “drink offering”. It’s interesting to me how many various practices we see subtly woven into God’s Word, long before there is a nation of Israel, or Mt. Sinai. We won’t see this word for “drink offering” used again until Exodus 29:40 when the Priests were being consecrated and where wine was used as a drink offering.

John Gill Commentary: “of wine, of which drink offerings under the law were, thereby consecrating it to the worship and service of God. Aben Ezra says it was either of water or of wine, with which he washed it, and after that poured oil on it; and the Targum of Jonathan says, he poured a drink offering of wine, and a drink offering of water:” [END]

Drink offerings throughout the Old Testament were usually wine, and the amount of wine varied due to which animal was being sacrificed. This wine was poured upon the altar or the object of worship. This pointed to the total devotion to the one who being worshiped. We ultimately understand that like the rest of the sacrifices, the drink offerings pointed to & were fulfilled by Jesus Christ (see Isaiah 53:12, Luke 22:20, John 19:34, Phil 2:7-8).

Besides Jesus Christ, the New Testament uses this idea of the drink offering to how a Christian is to give their whole life in service to the Almighty God! (See Phil 2:17-18, 2 Tim 4:6).

The question for us is, are we doing that? Are we really pouring out our lives for God & Jesus Christ? In part, you and I are doing that right now. You could be watching TV or posting on Facebook (and there is time and place for those things), but instead you are prioritizing the study of God's Word when you have many demands on your time. Let's continue to pour out our lives in our daily choices and commitment.

We also see Jacob pour olive oil on the stone, as he had also did back in Gen 28:18.

Verse 16 – It's incredibly sad to me how many women have died during childbirth down through time. A moment that is meant to be exciting and a blessing, is so terribly marred by the enemy death. Rachel, Jacob's beloved wife, dies in giving birth to her second son.

Verse 18 – As she is dying, Rachel names her son Benoni meaning "son of my sorrow" but Jacob called him Benjamin meaning "son of the right hand". Adam Clarke's commentary says that the intended meaning of "son of the right hand" is "the son peculiarly dear to me" and signifies one much loved and regarded.

Verse 22 – Here we have another sad example, this time of Reuben, Jacob’s oldest child through Leah, lying down with (having sex) with Bilhah. Why? We aren’t told. This is pure speculation, but this may have been a power play of sorts, or some sort of revenge. While Rachel was alive, it would have been no secret that she was Jacob’s preferred wife. It must have been hard for Leah’s sons to see their mother loved so little. With Rachel’s death, maybe they had hoped that Leah would rise in status. Bilhah was Rachel’s maid. Maybe Bilhah was now Jacob’s preferred companion. Did Reuben do this to humble and dishonor Bilhah? I don’t know. Again, that’s just speculation.

The UCG reading program adds this as well: “Reuben was Jacob’s firstborn by Leah, which bestowed on him the double-portion birthright inheritance. Yet as just mentioned, the birthright would actually pass to the sons of Joseph. According to 1 Chronicles 5:1-2, this sin of Reuben is what caused Israel to give the birthright to Joseph instead. So not only was this a sin of defilement and adultery, it had long-lasting consequences on future events, determining the ultimate recipients of the promises of wealth God made to Abraham.” [END]

Verse 23 – 26: With the birth of Benjamin, Jacob now had 12 sons and 1 daughter.

Verse 27 – 29: Jacob now is reunited with his father. Isaac is now 180 years old and he dies, and is buried by Jacob & Esau.

From the UCG reading program: “When Jacob returned to Hebron, his father Isaac was still alive and would live another 15 years or so before dying at the age of 180.

When Isaac died, Esau and Jacob came together again to bury him with his father, mother and wife—that is, Abraham, Sarah and Rebekah—at

the cave of Machpelah (compare Genesis 49:31). Leah and Jacob would later be buried there also (49:29–50:13).” [END]

Day 33 - THURSDAY: November 24th

Genesis 36 & 1 Chronicles 1:35 – 1 Chr 2:2

Daily Deep Dive:

Esau had 5 sons (1 Chr 1:35).

Genesis 36:6-7: Similarly to Abraham and Lot, the land can not hold both Jacob and Esau’s families. Esau takes his whole household and moves far away to another country.

Here is what the UCG reading program states about Genesis 36: “All of chapter 36 is a record of what happened to the line of Esau. As far as the birthright was concerned, Esau was rejected. But he was not forgotten. Indeed, it is interesting to consider that Moses, though of the line of Israel, had this record of Esau’s family descent in hand hundreds of years later in order to set it down as part of the book of Genesis. (Of course, it is possible that Moses did not have the record and that God wholly inspired him in producing it—but this would only demonstrate God’s interest and concern with Esau’s descendants even more.)

Sadly, the descendants of Esau—or Edom (verse 1)—would come into frequent conflict with the descendants of Israel over the ages. We will see more about this in the book of Exodus and then as we continue through other books of the Bible. It might be surprising to know that the conflict has persisted even up to modern times. Later in the Beyond Today Bible Commentary, while covering the book of Obadiah (a prophecy about Edom), we will consider the identity of the Edomites today.” [END]

1 Chronicles 1:35 – 1 Chronicles 2:2 – Today we also have some genealogy readings. While we've read a bit from chapter 1 on previous days, I don't think I've talked about the book of Chronicles yet.

This book came last in the Old Testament according to the traditional Hebrew arrangement. It is believed that this book was put together by Ezra. Chapters 1 through 9 contain the genealogies that can sometimes be difficult to read. Chapter 10 starts the story flow of the book.

Today we'll read over the genealogies of Esau & Jacob (Israel)

Here's an excerpt from the UCG reading program on the why the genealogies are important but also that they are not required to be read for devotional purposes:

"Beyond the reasons mentioned above, is there more to the scriptural incorporation of these incessant lists that go on for nine chapters at the beginning of the book of Chronicles? *The Bible Reader's Companion* states in its notes on 1 Chronicles 1-3: "At least eight different purposes of Old Testament genealogies have been suggested. (1) To show relationships between Israel and neighboring peoples. (2) To show relationships between elements in the story of Israel's origins. (3) To link periods of time not covered by other material. (4) As a means of organizing Israel's men for warfare, by tribe and family. (5) To demonstrate the legitimacy of a person or family's claim to a particular role or rank. (6) To preserve the purity of the chosen people and/or its priesthood. (7) To affirm the continuity of the people of God despite expulsion from the Promised Land. (8) To demonstrate progress toward achieving God's revealed purposes; to show that the Lord is sovereignly shaping history in accord with His own plan. The genealogies of the Old Testament play a vital role in maintaining the integrity, and showing the continuity, of Scripture's story of salvation" (Lawrence Richards, 1991).

Halley's Bible Handbook concludes in its notes on 1 Chronicles 1-9: "These 9 chapters of genealogies form the generation-to-generation tie up of all preceding Biblical history. They need not be read, for devotional purposes, as often as some other parts of Scripture. But in reality these, and similar genealogies, are the skeleton framework of the Old Testament, the thing that binds the whole Bible together, and gives it unity, and makes it look like real *history*, not legend." [END]

Day 34 - FRIDAY: November 25th

Genesis 37

Daily Deep Dive:

Here in Genesis 37 we come to the much beloved story of Joseph. Verse 2 – Sometimes we don't know how old someone was when events happen (sometimes in our minds we make them much younger or older than they are), here we find out that Joseph is 17 years old when this story begins. How will he act like a teenager? How will he start to become a man?

We aren't told what kind of "bad report" he brought and there are a variety of ideas out there, some very strange, of what the brothers were doing that they shouldn't have been doing. Either way, the Bible doesn't say, but we can understand that it's a part of the reason for why Joseph and his brothers have tension.

Verse 3 – Tells us that Joseph was the "son of his old age". We know Benjamin was born after Joseph and Benjamin is described in a similar manner later in Genesis 44:20. Here however, it seems it's simply a statement that Joseph was born to Jacob at an old age, Jacob being 91 years old when Joseph was born (John Gill commentary). This favoritism brings extra problems to Joseph and his brother's relationship.

Tunic of *many* colors – Jamieson-Faucet-Brown commentary states "formed in those early days by sewing together patches of colored cloth, and considered a dress of distinction" We see this also in 2 Samuel 13:18 where we are told the virgin daughters of the king wore

them (this one specifically telling us that Tamar was wearing one when she was raped by Amnon).

Verse 36 – Potiphar is called “an officer of Pharaoh, and captain of the guard”. This word for “officer” is more commonly translated “eunuch” in the Bible because it comes from the word “to castrate” (Strong’s). Adam Clarke’s commentary says this: “The word סָרִיס *saris*, translated officer, signifies a eunuch; and lest any person should imagine that because this Potiphar had a wife, therefore it is absurd to suppose him to have been a eunuch, let such persons know that it is not uncommon in the east for eunuchs to have wives, nay, some of them have even a harem or seraglio where they keep many women, though it does not appear that they have any progeny; and probably discontent on this ground might have contributed as much to the unfaithfulness of Potiphar’s wife, as that less principled motive through which it is commonly believed she acted.” [END]

A wife can be unfaithful without her husband being a eunuch, but I thought this was worth sharing the possibility.

Captain of the guard – “Captain” meaning “a head person”, could be a captain, chief, general, governor, etc...

“Guard” properly means “a butcher” (Strongs). Again, here’s what Adam Clarke’s commentary states about this title: “chief of the butchers; a most appropriate name for the guards of an eastern despot. If a person offend one of the despotic eastern princes, the order to one of the life-guards is, Go and bring me his head; and this command is instantly obeyed, without judge, jury, or any form of law. Potiphar, we may therefore suppose, was captain of those guards whose business it was to take care of the royal person, and execute his sovereign will on all the objects of his displeasure.” [END].

We will finish today with the UCG reading program: “Chapter 37 of Genesis details the story of how Joseph’s brothers became jealous and sold him into slavery. Jacob’s favoritism of Joseph is the obvious cause

of this jealousy, and the many-colored tunic he gives to Joseph is not well received by the others at all (verse 4). But what seems to be the final straw for the brothers is Joseph's recounting of his dreams, perhaps with some haughtiness. Not only are the *brothers* incensed at Joseph, but even his father rebukes him.

As the story eventually unfolds, the dreams come true and Joseph's family is eventually subject to him. And since the dreams come true, we know that they are no ordinary dreams—they are sent by God as prophecies. Yet the dreams are not only significant for the specific events they foretell, but for their instigation of further circumstances leading to one of the most renowned events in history. For these dreams of Joseph serve as a catalyst that sets in motion events that will not culminate until more than 250 years later with the Exodus from Egypt.

Remember Genesis 15. There God conveyed a prophecy regarding the descendants of Abraham—still called Abram at the time. God told Abram that his descendants would be strangers in a land that was not theirs and, further, that for a time they would be made slaves and afflicted (verse 13). So not only will Joseph's dreams set in motion events that will enable the family of Israel to survive a future famine, but these same events will provide the means for bringing Israel and his sons to Egypt, where their descendants will eventually be made slaves, become a large nation, and ultimately be delivered in great miraculous power.

So here in Genesis 37, we get a glimpse of how God does His work and how He brings prophecy to pass. He takes an existing situation (Jacob's favoritism and the resultant family jealousy) and then introduces a new element (Joseph's dreams) to steer events toward His ultimate plan (Israel to Egypt and the Exodus). In this way, He brings prophecy about,

all the while allowing those involved to make their own decisions along the way. It is truly amazing to see His power in action.

Incidentally, though there appears to be some confusion in the chapter as to whether Joseph is sold to Midianites or Ishmaelites, a simple explanation is given in the *Jamieson, Fausset & Brown Commentary's* note on verse 25: "a company of Ishmaelites—They are called Midianites (vs. 28), and Medanites, *Hebrew* (vs. 36), being a travelling caravan composed of a mixed association of Arabians."

Also of note concerning this passage are facts uncovered by archaeology that argue against the idea that early Bible stories like that of Joseph were made up many hundreds of years after they were supposed to have occurred, as the biblical "minimalists" argue. Notice this from a recent book titled *Is the Bible True?* by a writer for *U.S. News & World Report*, Jeffery Sheler:

In Genesis 37:28... Joseph, a son of Jacob, is sold by his brothers into slavery for twenty silver shekels. That, notes [professor Kenneth] Kitchen, matches precisely the going price of slaves in the region during the eighteenth and nineteenth centuries BCE, as affirmed by documents recovered from ancient Mesopotamia and from Mari, in what is now modern Syria. Other documents show the price of slaves rising steadily during later centuries. By the eighth century BCE, the price of slaves, as attested in ancient Assyrian records, had risen to fifty or sixty shekels, and to ninety to 120 shekels during the Persian Empire in the fifth and fourth centuries BCE. If the story of Joseph had been dreamed up by a Jewish scribe in the sixth century, as some skeptics have suggested, argues Kitchen, "why isn't the price in Genesis also ninety to one hundred shekels? It's more reasonable to assume that the biblical data reflect reality." (1999, pp. 73-74)" [END]

Day 35 - SATURDAY: November 26th

Genesis 38 & 1 Chronicles 2:3-2:8

Daily Deep Dive:

For this final day of the week, I would like to start with the UCG reading program that gives a lot of good information on the placement and importance of this chapter, and then I'll make a few comments:

UCG reading plan states "The story of Judah and Tamar is of notable significance. It is placed here in the middle of Joseph's story, not because it is directly related, but because the events took place after Joseph was sold into slavery and before the sons of Jacob traveled to Egypt. As can be seen, the end of the account is the birth of twin sons, Perez and Zerah, to Tamar. These two boys become important fathers in the lineage of future kings. If Onan and Judah had had their way, Tamar would not have given birth to the very son whose descendants include both King David and Jesus Christ.

Although the account does prominently show some of Judah's shortcomings, that is not its main purpose. This account is about proving lineage. Both Luke 3:33 and Matthew 1:3 show that Perez is the son of Judah through whom Jesus was descended. The Messiah would be a descendant of Judah (see Genesis 49:10). But why the detailed version of this lineage? Many of the other lineages in Genesis simply list who fathered whom—wouldn't that suffice? No, for without the story of how Tamar conceived and Judah's subsequent public acknowledgment of fatherhood, the Jewish heritage of the descendants of Perez, including Jesus, may have been unknown or disputed.

(For further information on the descendants of Perez and Zerah, including the significance of the breach and the scarlet thread, please see ["The Throne of Britain: Its Biblical Origin and Future".](#))

Another interesting item in the account is Judah's statement: "She has been more righteous than I." This was certainly true. Notice that although Tamar did dress as a prostitute, it was Judah who solicited

her. Yet later, Judah sentenced Tamar to be burned as punishment, even though he had been very willing to go into one whom he thought was a harlot and participate in such a sin himself. In contrast, Tamar was ensuring that an heir would be raised up to her husband (compare Deuteronomy 25:5-6), a responsibility that Judah had willfully abandoned (Genesis 38:14).” [END]

To wrap up this chapter, here are a few more comments:

Verse 7 – Men did and do evil all the time, but God doesn’t step in and immediately kill them. We aren’t told what Er did, however the words used here are meant to express “exceedingly wicked”. It was some very great evil.

2 Chronicles 2:3-8

The reading doesn’t have us read all the way to verse 15, but I’m going to go just a bit further to show the importance of Perez who Tamar bore Judah. (We’ll come back to these verses at a later date).

I will simplify the family line of King David.

Judah → Perez (through Tamar) → Hezron → Ram → Amminadab →
Nashon → Salma → Boaz → Obed → Jesse → King David