

# The Love of God; Abraham & Jacob

## Genesis 15:1-21 (NIV)

The LORD's Covenant With Abram. This occurs after the battle of the Kings, and follows Abram's subsequent meeting with Melchizedek.

<sup>1</sup> After this, the word of the LORD came to Abram in a vision: "Do not be afraid, Abram. I am your shield, your very great reward."

<sup>2</sup> But Abram said, "Sovereign LORD, what can you give me since I remain childless and the one who will inherit my estate is Eliezer of Damascus?" <sup>3</sup> And Abram said, "You have given me no children; so a servant in my household will be my heir."

<sup>4</sup> Then the word of the LORD came to him: "This man will not be your heir, but a son who is your own flesh and blood will be your heir." <sup>5</sup> He took him outside and said, "Look up at the sky and count the stars—if indeed you can count them." Then he said to him, "So shall your offspring be."

<sup>6</sup> Abram believed the LORD, and he credited it to him as righteousness.

<sup>7</sup> He also said to him, "I am the LORD, who brought you out of Ur of the Chaldeans to give you this land to take possession of it."

<sup>8</sup> But Abram said, "Sovereign LORD, how can I know that I will gain possession of it?"

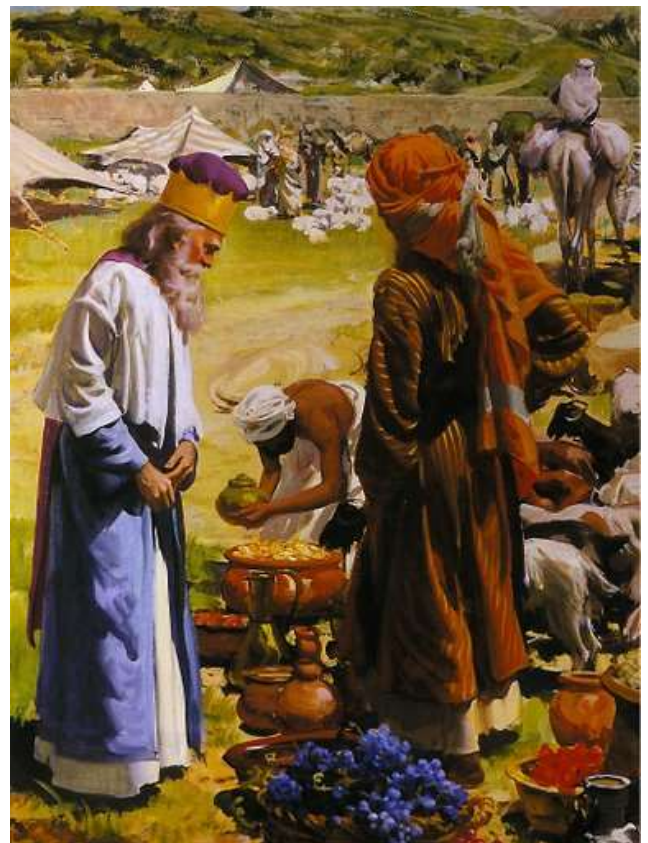
<sup>9</sup> So the LORD said to him, "Bring me a heifer, a goat and a ram, each three years old, along with a dove and a young pigeon."

<sup>10</sup> Abram brought all these to him, cut them in two and arranged the halves opposite each other; the birds, however, he did not cut in half. <sup>11</sup> Then birds of prey came down on the carcasses, but Abram drove them away.

<sup>12</sup> As the sun was setting, Abram fell into a deep sleep, and a thick and dreadful darkness came over him. <sup>13</sup> Then the LORD said to him, "Know for certain

that for four hundred years your descendants will be strangers in a country not their own and that they will be enslaved and mistreated there. <sup>14</sup> But I will punish the nation they serve as slaves, and afterward they will come out with great possessions. <sup>15</sup> You, however, will go to your ancestors in peace and be buried at a good old age. <sup>16</sup> In the fourth generation your descendants will come back here, for the sin of the Amorites has not yet reached its full measure."

<sup>17</sup> When the sun had set and darkness had fallen, a smoking fire pot with a blazing torch appeared and passed between the pieces. <sup>18</sup> On that day the LORD made a covenant with Abram and said, "To your descendants I give this land, from the Wadi of Egypt to the great river, the Euphrates— <sup>19</sup> the land of the Kenites, Kenizzites, Kadmonites, <sup>20</sup> Hittites, Perizzites, Rephaites, <sup>21</sup> Amorites, Canaanites, Girgashites and Jebusites."



## Genesis 32:3-31 (NIV)

Jacob prepares, with fear, to meet his brother Esau.

<sup>3</sup> Jacob sent messengers ahead of him to his brother Esau in the land of Seir, the country of Edom. <sup>4</sup> He instructed them: "This is what you are to say to my lord Esau: 'Your servant Jacob says, I have been staying with Laban and have remained there till now.

<sup>5</sup> I have cattle and donkeys, sheep and goats, male and female servants. Now I am sending this message to my lord, that I may find favour in your eyes.'"

<sup>6</sup> When the messengers returned to Jacob, they said, "We went to your brother Esau, and now he is coming to meet you, and four hundred men are with him."

<sup>7</sup> In great fear and distress Jacob divided the people who were with him into two groups, and the flocks and herds and camels as well. <sup>8</sup> He thought, "If Esau comes and attacks one group, the group that is left may escape."

<sup>9</sup> Then Jacob prayed, "O God of my father Abraham, God of my father Isaac, LORD, you who said to me, 'Go back to your country and your relatives, and I will make you prosper,' <sup>10</sup> I am unworthy of all the kindness and faithfulness you have shown your servant. I had only my staff when I crossed this Jordan, but now I have become two camps. <sup>11</sup> Save me, I pray, from the hand of my brother Esau, for I am afraid he will come and attack me, and also the mothers with their children. <sup>12</sup> But you have said, 'I will surely make you prosper and will make your descendants like the sand of the sea, which cannot be counted.'"

<sup>13</sup> He spent the night there, and from what he had with him he selected a gift for his brother Esau: <sup>14</sup> two hundred female goats and twenty male goats, two hundred ewes and twenty rams, <sup>15</sup> thirty female camels with their young, forty cows and ten bulls, and twenty female donkeys and ten male donkeys. <sup>16</sup> He put them in the care of his servants, each herd by itself, and said to his servants, "Go ahead of me, and keep some space between the herds."

<sup>17</sup> He instructed the one in the lead: "When my brother Esau meets you and asks, 'Who do you belong to, and where are you going, and who owns all these animals in front of you?' <sup>18</sup> then you are to say, 'They belong to your servant Jacob. They are a gift sent to my lord Esau, and he is coming behind us.'"

<sup>19</sup> He also instructed the second, the third and all the others who followed the herds: "You are to say the same thing to Esau when you meet him. <sup>20</sup> And be sure to say, 'Your servant Jacob is coming behind us.'" For he thought, "I will pacify him with these gifts I am sending on ahead; later, when I see him, perhaps he will receive me." <sup>21</sup> So Jacob's gifts went on ahead of him, but he himself spent the night in the camp.

<sup>22</sup> That night Jacob got up and took his two wives, his two female servants and his eleven sons and crossed the ford of the Jabbok. <sup>23</sup> After he had sent them across the stream, he sent over all his possessions. <sup>24</sup> So Jacob was left alone, and a man wrestled with him till daybreak. <sup>25</sup> When the man saw that he could not overpower him, he touched the socket of Jacob's hip so that his hip was wrenched as he wrestled with the man. <sup>26</sup> Then the man said, "Let me go, for it is daybreak."

But Jacob replied, "I will not let you go unless you bless me."

<sup>27</sup> The man asked him, "What is your name?" "Jacob," he answered.

<sup>28</sup> Then the man said, "Your name will no longer be Jacob, but Israel, because you have struggled with God and with humans and have overcome."

<sup>29</sup> Jacob said, "Please tell me your name." But he replied, "Why do you ask my name?" Then he blessed him there.

<sup>30</sup> So Jacob called the place Peniel, saying, "It is because I saw God face to face, and yet my life was spared."

<sup>31</sup> The sun rose above him as he passed Peniel, and he was limping because of his hip.



## Questions and discussion

- What do you think of God, who promises an inheritance of offspring as numerous as the stars?

Jesus was the 56<sup>th</sup> generation after Abraham. This is summarised in the genealogy in Luke 3:23-38.

<sup>23</sup> Now **Jesus** himself was about thirty years old when he began his ministry. He was the son, so it was thought, of Joseph, Heli, Matthat, Levi, Melki, Jannai, Joseph, Mattathias, Amos, Nahum, Esli, Naggai, Maath, Mattathias, Semein, Josek, Joda, Joanan, Rhesa, Zerubbabel, Shealtiel, Neri, Melki, Addi, Cosam, Elmadam, Er, Joshua, Eliezer, Jorim, Matthat, Levi, Simeon, Judah, Joseph, Jonam, Eliakim Melea, Menna, Mattatha, Nathan, David, Jesse, Obed, Boaz, Salmon, Nahshon, Amminadab, Ram, Hezron, Perez, Judah, **Jacob**, Isaac, **Abraham**, Terah, Nahor, Serug, Reu, Peleg, Eber, Shelah, Cainan, Arphaxad, Shem, Noah, Lamech, Methuselah, Enoch, Jared, Mahalalel, Kenan, Enosh, Seth, Adam, God.

- Do you see God’s plan for salvation through the prophets and His only Son?
- Do you have difficulty relating a finite genealogy with a much more ancient fossil record?
- What does the Bible teach us about giants before and after the flood of Noah?
- Do you think, as with Jacob’s wrestling, we too sometimes have to struggle with God?
- Why do Christian mystics very often go experience a Dark night of the Soul?

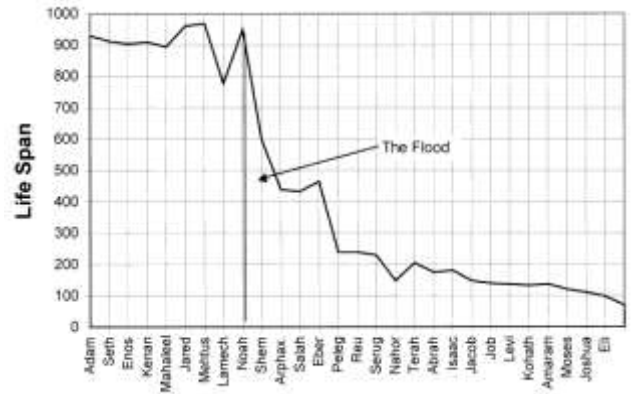
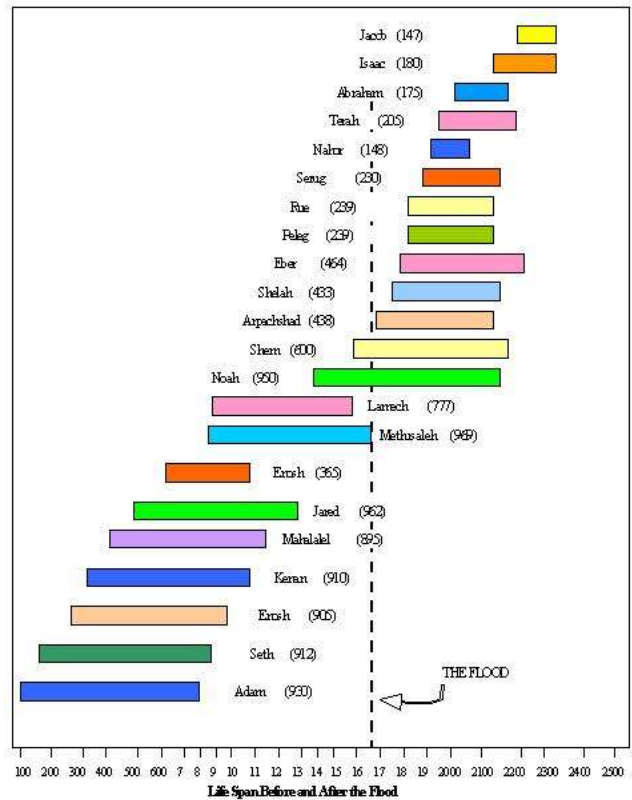


Figure 5 – Life Span Before and After the Flood



## The Grace

*The Grace of our Lord Jesus Christ,  
and the Love of God,  
and the Fellowship of the Holy Spirit,  
be with us all evermore. Amen*

