

Genesis 12-50

Review of Structure	The structure of the Pentateuch (Gen-Deut) is entirely composed of 2 narratives. The first is Genesis 1-11. We call this proto-history (i.e., before civilization). The second narrative starts in Genesis 12 and runs through the end of Deuteronomy. We call this the first main narrative of <u>salvation history</u> even though there are elements of God's redemptive purposes in Gen 1-11 (ex: Noah)
Review of Gen. 1-11	God created the world, and it was good. Man was his crowning glory. Then the fall happened, and creation spiraled, from the first murder to the wickedness that was pervasive in the time of Noah. To recreate again, God sent a flood. Noah, by faith, was saved. He gives us a glimpse as to God's redemptive purposes and how it will come in the rest of the Bible (by faith alone). Even after recreation, Noah's descendants (mankind) are still affected by the fall. We see this most clearly in the construction of the Tower of Babel. The rest of the Bible tells us what God is going to do about the sin problem mankind now finds itself in.
Preview of Gen 12-50	Genesis 12-50 is the first major episode of the first major narrative in salvation history. It is the episode of the Patriarchs, or more specifically, the descendants of Noah's son Shem. Shem's descendants are going to be the people God chooses for his redemptive purposes for all of humanity, ultimately in the person of Jesus Christ.
Unique Features of Gen 12-50	<ol style="list-style-type: none"> 1. Not all of Shem's descendants will be the chosen instruments of God's redemptive purposes for humanity. Abraham's sons, Isaac and Ishmael, were both descendants of Shem. Isaac, the youngest, however, will be the line God chooses to bring redemption to the world. 2. Abraham, Isaac, Jacob, and Joseph are the descendants of Shem that get the most ink. The first three are tremendously flawed characters. We don't see that with Joseph, and we must ask, "why?" The reason is Joseph functions as a Messianic type. We call this "typology," where a person/place in the Scriptures represents something greater in God's redemptive work (ex. Melchizedek, Mt. Zion). 3. Some of the sins repeat. Abraham deceives Abimelech, as does Isaac. Jacob deceives everybody, it seems. Even though God uses these deceptions for a greater good, the deceptions demonstrate a lack of faith in the ultimate outcome of God to do as he Promised. This is important because the story of God among his people is not about our ability to get it right. It's about God. 4. The wars between brothers repeat (which sets the stage for biblical problems that still persist today)
Theme	God will fulfill his Promises in his time and his way. He will do it in spite of us, not because of us.

Abraham

1. It All Began with Two Promises and a Journey (12:1-7)

The Lord had said to Abram, "Go from your country, your people and your father's household to the land I will show you." ² "I will make you into a great nation, and I will bless you; I will make your name great, and you will be a blessing. ³ I will bless those who bless you, and whoever curses you I will curse; and all peoples on earth will be blessed through you." ⁴ So Abram went, as the Lord had told him; and Lot went with him. Abram was seventy-five years old when he set out from Harran. ⁵ He took his wife Sarai, his nephew Lot, all the possessions they had accumulated and the people they had acquired in Harran, and they set out for the land of Canaan, and they arrived there. ⁶ Abram traveled through the land as far as the site of the great tree of Moreh at Shechem. At that time the Canaanites were in the land. ⁷ The Lord appeared to Abram and said, "To your offspring I will give this land." So he built an altar there to the Lord, who had appeared to him.

2. But Then in the Very Next Scene, We See a Flaw (12:10-13)

¹⁰ Now there was a famine in the land, and Abram went down to Egypt to live there for a while because the famine was severe. ¹¹ As he was about to enter Egypt, he said to his wife Sarai, "I know what a beautiful woman you are. ¹² When the Egyptians see you, they will say, 'This is his wife.' Then they will kill me but will let you live. ¹³ Say you are my sister, so that I will be treated well for your sake and my life will be spared because of you."

** This will repeat in ch20 with Abimelech.

3. But God's Covenant with Him Gives Us a Clue About What He Is Looking For (15:1-6)

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." ² But Abram said, "Sovereign Lord, what can you give me since I remain childless and the one who will inherit^[c] my estate is Eliezer of Damascus?" ³ And Abram said, "You have given me no children; so a servant in my household will be my heir." ⁴ 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." ⁵ 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." ⁶ Abram believed the Lord, and he credited it to him as righteousness.

4. But Then in the Very Next Scene, Abraham's Flaw Yet Again (16:1-2)

Now Sarai, Abram's wife, had borne him no children. But she had an Egyptian slave named Hagar; ² so she said to Abram, "The Lord has kept me from having children. Go, sleep with my slave; perhaps I can build a family through her." Abram agreed to what Sarai said.

** Important here is that this now will become the basis for the hostility in the land that will unfold between the offspring of Ishmael and the offspring of Isaac.

Isaac

1. **The Promises and Covenant God Made with Abraham are Extended to Isaac (26:1-4).**

Now there was a famine in the land—besides the previous famine in Abraham’s time—and Isaac went to Abimelek king of the Philistines in Gerar.² The Lord appeared to Isaac and said, “Do not go down to Egypt; live in the land where I tell you to live. ³ Stay in this land for a while, and I will be with you and will bless you. For to you and your descendants I will give all these lands and will confirm the oath I swore to your father Abraham. ⁴ I will make your descendants as numerous as the stars in the sky and will give them all these lands.

2. **But Then in the Very Next Scene, We See a Flaw — the Same Flaw His Father Had (26:7)**

⁷When the men of that place asked him about his wife, he said, “She is my sister,” because he was afraid to say, “She is my wife.” He thought, “The men of this place might kill me on account of Rebekah, because she is beautiful.”

Jacob

1. **As with Abraham’s sons, Another Battle Between Isaac’s Sons Takes Place. This One Comes Entirely Through the Deception of Jacob (25:29-34)**

²⁹Once when Jacob was cooking some stew, Esau came in from the open country, famished. ³⁰He said to Jacob, “Quick, let me have some of that red stew! I’m famished!” (That is why he was also called Edom.^[1]) ³¹Jacob replied, “First sell me your birthright.” ³²“Look, I am about to die,” Esau said. “What good is the birthright to me?” ³³But Jacob said, “Swear to me first.” So he swore an oath to him, selling his birthright to Jacob. ³⁴Then Jacob gave Esau some bread and some lentil stew. He ate and drank, and then got up and left. So Esau despised his birthright.

2. **And Then Again (27:21-24)**

²¹Then Isaac said to Jacob, “Come near so I can touch you, my son, to know whether you really are my son Esau or not.” ²²Jacob went close to his father Isaac, who touched him and said, “The voice is the voice of Jacob, but the hands are the hands of Esau.” ²³He did not recognize him, for his hands were hairy like those of his brother Esau; so he proceeded to bless him. ²⁴“Are you really my son Esau?” he asked. “I am,” he replied.

3. **And Then Deception Again, This Time with Laban, His Father-in-Law (31:2-1)**

²⁰Moreover, Jacob deceived Laban the Aramean by not telling him he was running away. ²¹So he fled with all he had, crossed the Euphrates River, and headed for the hill country of Gilead.

4. **Then When It Appears God’s Promises Will Fail Because of the Deceit of Jacob, the Deceiver Becomes an Overcomer (32:24-28)**

²⁴So Jacob was left alone, and a man wrestled with him till daybreak. ²⁵When 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. ²⁶Then the man said, “Let me go, for it is daybreak.” But Jacob replied, “I will not let you go unless you bless me.” ²⁷The man asked him, “What is your name?” “Jacob,” he answered. ²⁸Then the man said, “Your name will no longer be Jacob, but Israel,^[1] because you have struggled with God and with humans and have overcome.”

****Important here is how grace is introduced to us and how it’s received. It will become the basis for how God will deal with Israel in the future and how Jesus will deal with his disciples and us, by extension, in the NT.**

Joseph

1. **Now a Battle Between Jacob’s Sons (Israelites) Brews. But Not Because of the Deception of Joseph (i.e., Jacob). But Because of the Jealousy of His Brothers. (37:5-8)**

⁵Joseph had a dream, and when he told it to his brothers, they hated him all the more. ⁶He said to them, “Listen to this dream I had: ⁷We were binding sheaves of grain out in the field when suddenly my sheaf rose and stood upright, while your sheaves gathered around mine and bowed down to it.” ⁸His brothers said to him, “Do you intend to reign over us? Will you actually rule us?” And they hated him all the more because of his dream and what he had said.

2. **Consequently, the Promise Again Seems Like It Will Be Thwarted Through a Host of Things.**

- a. Joseph sold into Slavery.
- b. Potiphar’s Wife

3. **But God Had a Plan to Preserve His Promises: The Suffering of Joseph. His Mistreatment Would Lead to His Elevation in Egypt, Where His Brothers Travel To Because of a Famine.**

¹⁹But Joseph said to them, “Don’t be afraid. Am I in the place of God?²⁰ You intended to harm me, but God intended it for good to accomplish what is now being done, the saving of many lives. (50:19-20)