

Chronology of the Bible #3

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[0 : 00] Turn to the first of the Bible, Genesis, and this morning we'll be looking at Genesis chapter 12.

Genesis chapter 12, verses 1 through 5. Now the Lord said to Abram, Go forth from your country, and from your relatives, and from your father's house, to the land which I will show you.

And I will make you a great nation, and I will bless you, and make your name great. So you shall be a blessing.

And I will bless those who bless you, and the one who curses you, who I will curse. And you, all the families of the earth, will be blessed.

So Abram went forth as the Lord had spoken to him, and Lot went with him. Now Abram was seventy-five years old when he departed from Haran.

[1 : 23] Abram took Sarah his wife, and Lot his nephew, and all their possessions which they accumulated, and the persons which they had acquired in Haran.

And they set out for the land of Canaan. Thus they came to the land of Canaan. And we will be returning shortly to Genesis chapter 12.

But before we do, we have some unfinished business to attend to. And a chronologically connected period of time found in the book of Job. So if you would turn, please, to Job chapter 35.

Most of the scholars are in agreement that the setting that is described and gives us information about Job in this book makes him a contemporary of the book of Genesis.

Now I know it doesn't look like that as you work your way through the Bible in the typical arrangement of the books that we have because Job is a lot further down the line.

[2 : 44] But insofar as exactly when these events transpired in connection with each other, in other words, when did all of the events in the Bible actually take place chronologically?

And Job comes right in there with Genesis, and I think there are good reasons to believe that. Now how it is and why it is that those who arranged the books of the Bible as we have them now arrived at the particular arrangement they did is debatable.

And some consider it adequate and some consider it, of course, inadequate. But from the standpoint of understanding the events and the significance of them and the flow of human history, the chronology is really important.

And that's why we are doing this in a chronological way. And as I mentioned earlier, as we move through our study, which we intend to complete within a year, I think there will be the proverbial light bulbs come on all over the congregation as people start making connections and seeing things that perhaps they had not seen before.

So in the book of Job, which is described as one of the poetical books, we also need to be advised, and this is a little bit of a review from the earlier session this morning, for which some of you were not here.

- [4 : 03] But the point was made that there is a distinction that needs to be made in the Bible between everything the Bible records as opposed to everything the Bible affirms. Because it records a lot of things that are not true. It records the sayings of a lot of people who made utterances that were not found on fact at all. In fact, they were fiction. And for starters, you could simply look at something that the adversary said. God said, you will die. You will not surely die. God knows that in the day that you eat thereof, your eyes will be opened and you will be as God. Well, the Bible says that. The Bible records that. But the Bible doesn't teach that. The Bible just quotes something that the adversary was saying. And the one who was speaking is one in whom there is no truth at all. So he is the father of a lie. And deception is the name of the game that he plays.
- [5 : 02] So you must make a distinction. And especially is this true in the poetical books. Because in the poetical books, there is a lot of literary license that is taken. There is a lot of intentional exaggeration or hyperbole. All kinds of figures of speech are found, especially in the poetical books. So that has to be taken into consideration as well. In dealing with the person of Job, there is no one in all of human history that has been so connected with the subject of human suffering and of righteousness. And dealing with the dilemma of how or why do the righteous suffer. And sometimes we might look at this from a purely human standpoint, which is the only one that we can look at it with, unless we get into the scriptures and then we get a much elevated standpoint. It looks like God should really take care of and look out for those whom he loves. After all, you would do as much for your children.
- [6 : 12] And sometimes we find ourselves in a dilemma to try and understand why it is that good things or bad things happen to good people. There was a book written a number of years ago by a Jewish rabbi, and that was the title of it. Why do bad things happen to good people? And the upshot of the book and the conclusion that the good rabbi reached was, it's just the way life is, and God doesn't like it any better than you do, but there isn't anything you can do about it. So that's why bad things happen to good people. And there is a certain amount of truth to that, but there's also a certain amount of error to it. And the error is in the fact that God does indeed work all things together for good for those who love him and who are called according to his purpose. We referred to a verse in Romans chapter 15 and verse 4, of which Job is a perfect example that whatsoever things were written aforetime were written for our learning, that we through patience and comfort of the scriptures might have hope. And all of those things were written before time, the apostle Paul was referring to, the Old Testament, the whole record that God has given through those whom he inspired in the Old Testament, and the one who stands out perhaps more than anyone else when it comes to the subject of suffering is this man Job.
- [7 : 38] Lost everything. Lost his wealth. Lost his family. Lost his health. Ends up sitting on a pile of ashes. Covered from head to toe. With boils all over his body. Scraping the pus and the sores of his body. With broken pieces of pottery. You just can't imagine such utter misery as that. And then, it gets worse. He has three friends. And you want to put quotation marks around friends? They are those whom Job describes as miserable comforters are you all. And one of his outstanding lines is, as he speaks to one of those miserable comforters, Surely, when you die, wisdom will die with you.

You guys have all the answers. You know everything. These miserable friends were being judgmental toward Job. And they were telling him as much as Job.

[8 : 43] On the surface and outwardly, you really look like an upstanding guy. Good citizen of the community. Loved and admired by everybody. But, God knows your true character.

And you're a rat. And you're getting what you deserve. It's payback time. And God's justice is finally caught up with you. And that's why you're suffering all of this.

Well, Job knew that that wasn't true. He wasn't living a double life. He was living a life that was as righteous as anyone before the Lord. And if that's the case, then why is it all of this rain is falling upon him?

God has a methodology that Job knew not of. And the point is, God has a perspective that Job knows not of.

And I don't think there is anything. I don't think there is anything that can be or should be so comforting to us believers with our limited perspective and understanding that.

[9 : 54] God never does anything. God never allows anything without taking everything into consideration. And he's able to do that. And he has only kindly disposed toward us, even when sometimes it really, really hurts.

How many times have believers asked themselves, What have I done to deserve this? Why am I going through this? Why is God not giving me some relief from this pain, whether it's emotional or physical?

Why am I being subjected to this? Doesn't God love me? Am I some kind of a second-class citizen? Has he got it in for me? Is this retribution? Is this payback? Is there anything to that Indian thing called karma?

Maybe I was... Could I have been a real stinker in a previous life and now I'm suffering? And people think all kinds of weird things because we all have such a limited perspective.

And I don't think there is any word that is so comforting. And I'm speaking now from a personal standpoint. One who buried a mentally retarded 30-year-old daughter and buried a wife of nearly 50 years.

[11 : 12] And in the midst of all that grief and heartache, which is indescribable. I won't try to describe it.

It's indescribable. Isn't it, Gary? Yeah. It's indescribable. Holly knows it's indescribable, too. My wife, Marie, knows it's indescribable.

When she gave up Dave, to whom she'd been married over 50 years. And that one word is perspective.

If you can develop the perspective that you need, and where are you going to get it? You won't find it in any place other than in the scriptures. You won't find it in your own heart.

Because there's where you have limited perspective. But God gives us the full picture. And he really is kindly disposed toward us, no matter how much it hurts.

[12 : 12] No matter how great the disappointment. No matter how agonizing the pain. God is still only kindly disposed toward you. I know we would say things like, well, he sure has a funny way of showing it.

But God works all things after the counsel of his own will. And he really does know what he's doing. And no, your little corner of the universe is not lost to him.

He's very much aware. And he does care. And as he did with Job. He's going to make everything the way it ought to be.

Our problem is, even for many of us who believe that, we want him to do it no later than the day after tomorrow. But included with God's perspective is God's timing.

He's never one minute late. And he's never one minute early. It's just like in the fullness of time. God sent forth his son, made of a woman, made under the law, to redeem those that were under the law. In the fullness of the time.

[13 : 18] And that means when the time was just right. Jesus wasn't born a week early or weekly, but just the right time. God's perspective allows him to be very, very accurate in everything that he does.

And, put this down, God's timetable never, ever coincides with yours.

How many times have I told you, God has never done anything as quickly as I wanted him to. He has his own time frame. And, it is perfect.

You know what you need to do with that? Just relax. Rest. The Father does all things well.

Just rest in that. That's where the real peace and security comes from. Just be at rest. In chapter 35 of Job, in verses 12 through 16, one of these miserable comforters says that Job cries out, but doesn't get an answer.

[14 : 34] And, he's talking about here. The birds. In verse 11, he's talking about birds. Beasts of the earth. Who teaches us more than the beasts of the earth?

Makes us wiser than the birds of the heavens. There they cry out, but he does not answer. Because of the pride of evil men. Surely God will not listen to an empty cry.

Nor will the Almighty regard it. How much less, Job, when you say you do not behold him. The case is before him, and you must wait for him. And now, because he has not visited in his anger, nor has he acknowledged transgression well.

So, Job opens his mouth empty. He multiplies words without knowledge. So, Job, what you're saying and you're protesting and everything is just so much hot air.

That's what they're accusing him of. And Elihu continued this miserable comforter. And continues on in chapter 36 and in verse 2. He says, The implication is, God does not withdraw his eyes from the righteous, but he has withdrawn his eyes from you.

[16 : 09] Hasn't he, Job? Ergo, you are not one of the righteous. And that's why. They are found in fetters, caught in the cords of affliction.

He declares to them their work and their transgressions, that they have magnified themselves. And on and on and on. And who really is it that's cranking out the hot air? It's not Job. It's Job's miserable comforters.

And in chapter 38, God finally speaks to Job. And it is here all about perspective.

Throughout this whole book, Job has been agonizing and saying things like, God, if you would just, if you would just, if you would just talk to me. If you would just let me talk to you and explain the situation.

If you would explain to me where I have offended you and how I have gone wrong, I will do everything in my power to make it right. I will repent. I will apologize.

[17 : 06] I will apologize. Just let me know. And all he got was silence. Agonizing, deafening silence.

And that added to his misery. And now, God is prepared to answer. Very often, in the very primitive time of humanity, God spoke face to face with a number of the patriarchs, as we will see he did with Abraham.

And he certainly did with Adam and Eve. And when God walked with them in the cool of the day, he walked, I am convinced, as a Christophany.

He walked as a human being. He appeared as a pre-incarnate Christ and communed with Adam and Eve. He was responsible in the creation of Adam, from the dust of the earth, breathed into his nostrils the breath of life, and so on.

And he's going to do the same with Cain. He will talk face to face with Cain. This is deity and humanity. We do not communicate with God that way today.

[18 : 22] The methodology has changed. But in the infancy of humanity, this is often the way it was, particularly in the Old Testament. So, God is here going to speak out of a whirlwind.

I don't know what that's like. I can't imagine. Obviously, with some kind of an audible voice, that Job was clearly capable of understanding. And I have no idea what the voice sounded like, whether it was a booming bass voice, or what it was, or whether it was a still small voice.

But at any rate, Job was able to hear it and get the message. And the Lord answered him out of a whirlwind and said, Who is this that darkens counsel?

By words without knowledge. What does it mean to darken counsel? Well, it means to speak without a proper perspective. There you are again.

And Job was speaking out of an inferior perspective, a limited perspective. And when we apply our perspective to any situation, if we get it right, that's an exception.

[19 : 38] Because there are usually elements to it that we don't even understand or take into consideration or we're not even aware of. And this, again, is this limitation that belongs to humanity.

If only we could come to grips with that. If only we could be at peace with the fact that not only do we not know everything, we don't have to and we aren't supposed to.

And is on this where faith comes in? Isn't that thing called faith designed to at least in part make up that which we do not know? Of course it is.

Darkens counsel. By words without knowledge. We could also say by words without a perspective. Now gird up your loins like a man and I will ask you and you instruct me.

Job, where were you when I laid the foundation of the earth? Tell me if you have understanding. Who set its measurements since you know? Or who stretched the line on it?

[20 : 41] On what were its bases sunk? Or who laid its cornerstone when the morning stars sang together? And all the sons of God shouted for joy. Who enclosed the sea with doors when bursting forth it went out from the womb?

When I made a cloud its garment and thick darkness its swaddling band. I said, place boundaries on it. Set a bolt on doors. And I said, thus far you shall come but no further.

Where were you, Job, when I did all of that? Now what is happening is God is explaining and reminding Job that he is essentially without knowledge and without understanding.

And yet, he is pretending as though he has some answers. He doesn't have any answers at all. But he doesn't know that. And God is going to inform him. And all the while God is speaking to Job, he may have started out.

We don't know his stature. We don't know if Job was 5'6 or 6' tall. But all the while God is speaking to Job, Job is shrinking.

[21 : 48] He is becoming smaller and smaller and smaller. And he is beginning to appreciate the incredible difference that separates deity from humanity.

And it will not be long until he arrives at a position of shame, regret, remorse.

He apologizes to God for even having questioned in any way. He tells the Almighty, I was completely out of line.

I know that now. And I don't know about you. But I've been out of line a number of times in the 80 plus years that I've learned, lived. And I've come to realize that some of the things that I thought I knew, I wasn't nearly as smart as I thought I was.

And now, the longer I live, the older I get, the more convinced I am that I really don't know very much at all. And yet, it is one of the characteristics of youth that we tend to think we know so much.

[23 : 05] And kind of like the young man who applied for a job for a prospective employer. And he said, how old are you, son? And he said, well, I'm 19.

And he says, 19. Okay, well, okay, I think I'll hire you and put you to work right away while you still know everything. And that kind of tells the tale about the foolishness of youth, you know.

And when we get some years of maturity on us, we recognize that we weren't nearly as smart as we thought we were. And Job is going to learn that lesson. He asks him a whole list of the whole plethora of questions here about eternity and about times past and about creation.

And all Job can muster to all of these questions is a duh, because he knew nothing about it. He was completely clueless. And God was graciously condescending to let Job in on the upshot of all of this.

And he does so. And in the conclusion, in chapter 40, the Lord says to Job and continues the questioning in verse 6, And answered out of the storm and said, Gird up your loins like a man, and I will ask and instruct you, and so on.

[24 : 23] And when they come over to Job 42 at the close of this, after having asked all these questions that were unanswered by Job, Then Job answered the Lord and said, I know that thou canst do all things.

If I were going to change that at all, and I don't want to take the liberty of changing Scripture, But by way of a little bit of interpretation, I think I would insert the word now.

I now know that thou canst do all things, and that no purpose of thine can be thwarted. Who is this that hides counsel without knowledge?

Therefore I have declared that which I did not understand, Things too wonderful for me, which I did not know.

Hmm. I, I, listen to that. I have declared that which I did not understand. I didn't understand it, but that didn't keep me from declaring it.

[25 : 33] Or trying to. This again is the brashness of humanity. And we think we know so much. Hear now, and I will speak. I will ask thee, and do thou instruct me?

I have heard of thee by the hearing of the ear. But now my eye sees thee. Therefore, I retract.

I take it all back. I was wrong. I take it all back. And I repent. In dust and ashes.

And Job's fortunes are all restored, beginning with verse 10. And you know, some of you are going through a lot of pain.

Emotional pain. Maybe physical pain. All kinds of reversals. Adversity. Heartache. Unanswered questions. Just pain. Pain. One kind or another. And you don't sit restored.

[26 : 39] And you may take it to your grave. It isn't going to be restored on this side. But God does have a way of compensating whatever it is that he knows is needed to equal the situation.

And if you can believe him, that he does and will do all things well, but in his own time frame, may well be eternity before you realize these things.

And the question is, can you believe him for that? Or do we insist that whatever it is I have coming and however God is going to right these wrongs needs to be done here and now while I'm alive and able to enjoy it?

But again, you know what that is speaking? It's a very limited perspective. If we only knew. If we only knew. I remember one time years ago when we were going through a little Bible class and we were studying Larry Crabb's book on broken dreams.

And it was quite a revelation. And the whole thing was based on the story of Ruth. And Ruth had undergone all of these, Naomi, I'm sorry, Naomi had undergone all of these heartaches and everything.

[28 : 07] Moving to the land of Moab. When he got down there, her husband died. And then her son died. And then her second son died. And here she is left widowed and childless of her two sons.

And all she has to show for it is two daughters-in-law. And one of them is Orpah and the other is Ruth.

And Orpah decides to stay there in Moab with her countrymen. And Ruth makes this tremendous, tremendous decision that she's going to go with Naomi.

And it is the equivalent of a conversion to the God of Israel. When she says, your God will be my God.

And your people will be my people. And she was turning her back on Chemosh, the God of the Moabites. And embracing Yahweh, the God of the Israelites.

[29 : 06] And she went with her mother-in-law, Naomi, back to the land. And when they got back in the land, everybody was welcome to see her. Welcoming her home. And she said, welcome home.

Welcome home, Naomi. And she said, don't call me Naomi. Call me Mara. Mara. Mara in Hebrew means bitter.

For the Lord has dealt with me bitterly. That was her perspective. That's all she could see through her pain. And lost her husband.

Lost son number one. Lost son number two. Now she's living in poverty. Comes back to the land. And she's going to have to glean from the fields. Where you go out and pick up a strand of grain to live on.

Don't call me Naomi. Call me Mara. God has dealt bitterly with me. And she had no idea of knowing. That she was going to be instrumental in Ruth meeting Boaz.

[30 : 15] And Boaz. And Ruth would beget a baby. And his name would be Obed. And Obed would marry and beget a baby.

And his name would be Jesse. And Jesse would marry and have seven boys. And the seventh boy would be David the king. Now.

Naomi bless her heart. Whose name was Mara. Had no idea. She was going to be the grandmother. Or the great grandmother. Of David the king.

Had she been able to know that in advance. Do you think that would have changed her attitude? Well of course it would have. But she had a limited perspective. And she made herself live. Out of that limited perspective.

And all it did. Was produce pain. And anger. And bitterness. And questioning. And doubting. And I remember at the time. When Barb made the observation. This was.

[31 : 17] When we were going through this material. Shattered Dreams. By Larry Crabb. Recommend the book. And she made the observation. She said. You know. When we're going through heartache.

And disappointment. And adversity. And all kinds of questions. And doubts. And everything. If we only knew. This thing.

This pain. Has some real redeeming quality to it. That on down the road. There will be a payoff. If we could see that.

And know that. And believe that in advance. What an impact that would have. On our present disposition. If we could see in advance.

Oh. Now I know. Now I see. Okay. It's all right. I had no idea. That's where this was going. But now that I understand.

[32 : 13] It's okay. But we don't have that. And because we don't have that. There is a thing. There is a thing we do have in place of that.

And it's called. Faith. Faith. Is the belief. The conviction. That God is going to deliver in accordance with his promise.

No matter how much it hurts at the present. That. That. Is what honors God. And you know. Job wouldn't charge God foolishly. He cursed the day that he was born.

And his wife bailed out on him early. Because. And I'm satisfied. That. That Mrs. Job. Was. Terribly upset. And overwrought. Because she was.

Witnessing. Her husband. Going through all of this. Agony. And pain. And you know. She was dying with him. That's what marriage does. When one.

[33 : 15] Mate. Is beset with adversity. The other feels it. So keenly. Because the two are one. And you agonize right along with them. And Mrs.

Job. Was probably up to here with it all. All of these losses. These were her kids. That were lost too. Her wealth. That was lost too. Her fortune.

That was lost too. And she'd had enough. Curse God. And die. Get it over with. She just. Didn't want to see him. Go through it anymore.

You speak as a foolish woman. Ought not we. Who have received. Goodness from the Lord. Receive adversity.

As well. God. God. God. God. God. Has given. And God. Has taken away. Blessed be the name. Of the Lord. Would you hurry off. With me to. Genesis chapter 12.

[34 : 13] To a chronologically. Related passage. Having to do with Abraham. And this is by the way. One of the most significant. Chapters. In all of the Bible. And it is.

It is just. Of incalculable. Importance. I cannot stress too much. How critical this is. Because. Abraham.

Abraham. Ham. Is a direct descendant. Of. Shem. And Shem. One of the three sons of Noah.

Shem. Ham. And Japheth. Shem. Is going to be. The head. Of the Semitic tribe. You just drop the H. Off of Shem.

And it's Sem. And it's Semites. They are Semites. And. There are people. Who are. Anti-Semitic. Adolf Hitler. Was one of those. And there are.

[35 : 07] Others as well. Who. Who have it in. For the Jew. And Abraham. Is referred to. As the father.

Of the faithful. And when God. Called him. He set in motion. Something that is. So incredible. Listen. A couple of times. I've been here. In the. I think. In the last. Forty five years.

Maybe I've preached. This message. Twice. And it goes. Something like this. What everything. Is all about. And.

This. Is kind of like. A beginning. Of what everything. Is all. Well actually. It even goes. Back to Genesis. Three. Where God. Promised. The seed. God. God promised. To. Eve.

That the seed. Of the woman. Would bruise. Or would crush. The head. Of the serpent. And that this conflict. Would be set in motion. All the way back. In Genesis.

[36 : 02] Three. And as you go through. The. Whole Bible. From old. The new testament. There is this thread. Of redemption. And it moves. From. From.

Adam. And Eve. And. That line. That is going to be. Realized. As the line. Of. Shem. Of Shem. Ham. And Japheth. It's going to come through.

The line of Shem. That's going to be. The line. Of the Israelites. Abraham. Is a direct descendant. Of that. And if you fast forward. From Abraham. Two thousand years. You arrive at.

Jesus Christ. Born. And the genealogy. That's recorded. In Matthew. And in Luke. He is a direct descendant. Of Abraham. Isaac.

And Jacob. These three. Constitute. The patriarchs. Of Israel. And they are. The principal ones. Through whom. God is going to.

[36 : 56] Write. The world. And their descendant. Of course. Will be none other. Than the redeemer. The Lord. Jesus Christ. And he is going to. Complete that.

Which is set in motion. All the way back here. In Genesis 12. I will make your name great. Make. I make you a great nation. I will bless you. Make your name great.

You shall be a blessing. I will bless those who bless you. And the one who curses you. I will curse. And in you. All the families of the earth. Should be blessed. And you know. There is no family.

In all of the earth. That has been so vilified. So persecuted. So tortured. So punished. As the Jewish people.

How do you account for that? God says. These are his chosen people. Remember. If you saw the movie. Fiddler on the roof. Remember.

[37 : 51] Tabia the milkman. Said something to the effect. That we're really. Glad and proud. To be your chosen people. But maybe. Could you just choose. Somebody else. For a while. They were under all kinds of stress.

And displacement. And agony. And everything. And the adversary. Is behind all of this. People don't understand that. But it is. It is Satan.

Who is the God of this world. And. That's a. That's a hard sell. For a lot of people. Even. Even for Christians. Because we like to think that. That. That God is in charge of everything.

And. And in a sense he is. But as I said earlier. Satan is like a mad dog on a leash. And God is the one. Who holds the other end of the leash. And sometimes he has free room. To do some pretty hurtful things.

Sometimes he can instigate people. And end up. End up killing 3,000 people. With two airplane crashes. Within minutes of each other.

[38 : 54] The adversary is behind so much of this. And scripture talks about Satan. Having devices. Wiles. Schemes. Plans. And he works them very well.

And he works through deception. And he is behind all of this. And in the midst of what God is doing here. With Abraham. There is going to be conflict.

All the way through. And it won't be culminated. Until the revelation. And the second coming of Jesus Christ. And Satan is going to have a field day.

During this tribulation period. All of these things are connected. You see. This book. This book. Though it is so diverse. And has so many different elements to it.

There is cohesion in all of it. Everything in this book. Is connected with everything in this book. It is a marvelous document. There is nothing like it in the world. This. Is the word.

[39 : 49] Of God. And Abraham. Is going to. Undergo. Severe testing. All of which. Is contributing to that dynamic.

That whatsoever things were written before time. Were written for a learning. That we through patience and comfort of them. Scriptures might have hope. That includes Job. It includes Abraham. And Abraham starts out.

Getting this. Blessing from God. And this promise. It's called the Abrahamic covenant. And we see it as unconditional. And God is going to do all of these wonderful things. Through Abraham. And his children.

But he goes year after year. After year. Childless. And here is a man. That is not going to father. The child of promise.

He'll father. He'll father. Ishmael. Through Hagar. But that's not what God intended. And this whole thing. Having.

[40 : 44] Who. Made this promise to God. And Abraham and Sarah. Go year after year. Year after year. And unsure. When the time of month. Came around for Sarah. She knew.

Not going to be a baby this month. And that went on. For years. Years. Years. And. Abraham's beginning to have doubts.

I mean. After all. He's not getting any younger. His wife. Sarah. Is 90. And he's going to be. He's going to be a hundred years old.

Now. I know we have a different chronology. For people who live back then. The age factor. Than what we have today. With a different environment. And everything. But still. That's cutting pretty close.

And finally. You know. Sarah. Bless her heart. And she feels like. You know. She. She probably feels like. She's let down her husband. God has closed her womb.

[41 : 44] What have I done to deserve this? And women who were childless. In the Bible. Looked upon. As being under the curse of God. They considered themselves. As God having it in for them. That's why they closed my womb.

God won't give me a baby. He's. I've done something wrong. I've offended him somewhere. Hannah thought that. Before she had. Samuel. Now. There's no truth to it.

But people think. Those kind of things. You know why? Because they have. A limited perspective. And they have. Faulty assumptions. If God's the one.

Who opens. The womb. And I'm childless. It's got to be. Because. God's got it in for me. I've offended him. I've done something wrong. I'm not a good person. Blah blah blah blah. And all of that nonsense.

But it's very real to them. And they have. A limited perspective. And they draw conclusions. Out of their limited perspective. That leads to a faulty assumption. And then they act on that. And that adds to their pain.

[42 : 40] And their misery. And their heartache. So. Sarah. Not willing to deal with her husband Abraham. Being disappointed. Month after month after month.

Because she can't deliver a baby. She said. You know what? It just occurred to me Abraham. God gave that promise to you. He didn't give that promise to me.

He said. You would be the father. Of the mighty nation. Therefore. All that matters is that. You be the papa. You go in.

To my handmaiden. Sarah. Hagar. Sarah said. You go into Hagar. Hagar. Hagar. Was a slave girl.

And they were probably functioning under the law of Hammurabi. That was pretty prevalent at that time. And this is before. Any of the Old Testament was given. Hagar. Hagar.

[43 : 38] Hagar. And the societal law at the time. That was in force. Made it culturally acceptable. If you marry a woman. And she does not deliver.

A child to you. For seven years. After marriage. It is perfectly acceptable. For you to go into. A bond woman. Have a baby by her. And the baby becomes.

The legal child. Of the wife. That could not have a child. A child. And Abraham. How willing was he to do that?

We don't know. Text doesn't say. But I can see him having mixed feelings about it. And when he went into Hagar. How often did he have to do that?

How long was it before she conceived? Eventually she had a child. And it was going to be. Of course. Ishmael. And now. Abraham is happy.

[44 : 37] He thinks God has fulfilled his promise. And then when he visits them. In chapter 19. In the plains of Mamre. The thing is back on again.

On the front burner. And I'm sure they probably thought. That Ishmael was the one. And Abraham tells God. And God says. It's going to be out of your long. No. Listen. God.

God. It's okay. It's okay. You don't have to give me another son. Ishmael will be just fine. And God said. No. Ishmael is not the one. The child is going to come.

From. Your loins. And here. God is respecting. The marriage relationship. With Sarah. And Sarah.

Will have a son. This 90 year old woman. With a womb. That obviously was. Dried up. And passed upon. And that's exactly.

[45 : 34] What God is going to do. And then when this boy. Is about 12 or 14 years old. God says. Now this child. That you've waited for. All this time. I want you to sacrifice him.

What? Abraham had already. Failed the test of faith. On two different occasions. Once. When we went to Abimelech. And once. When he went to Pharaoh. Down in Egypt.

And in both cases. He was afraid. That the. People who lived there. In that land. Would take a look. At Sarah. She must have been a dish. Beauty queen type.

And Abraham says. When she. When she is seen. By the Egyptians. She's going to end up. In Pharaoh's harem. He's going to want. So. Honey.

Here's what I want you to do. You. Are to tell them. That you. Are. My sister. Well. Truth be told. She was his half sister.

[46 : 32] She was his half sister. But the lie. Was in the deception. Because she was passed off. As a sister. When in actuality. She was his wife. Abraham.

Abraham. Is called. The father. Of the faithful. And he failed. He did not. Believe God. Because. If he had believed God.

He would have simply said. I know you're a gorgeous babe. Honey. And. You're really hot. And all that good stuff. And when they see you. They're going to walk. And the name of the game was. You don't take another man's wife.

In Egypt. It's okay to kill her husband. You kill her husband. Then she's a widow. Then you can take her. And that was the game plan. And that's what they were going to do. And Abraham knew that. And she.

Went along with it. Now. There is a failure of faith. Because. Abraham. All he had to do. Was put two and two together. God promised that. That I'm going to have a son.

[47 : 29] But we've never had any children. How am I going to have a child. If I'm dead. They kill me to get her. Or. How am I going to be a father. So.

I don't have to worry about that happening. Because God will make good on his promise. Well. That was a failure of faith. On the part of Abraham.

And you know what. He's going to do the very same thing. With Abimelech. Years later. Same old shenanigan. Yeah. She's my sister. And that too. Will turn out to be a thing of embarrassment.

But do you know what God does. In the midst of all of this. And it's a beautiful thing. It's a beautiful thing. Abraham could be thankful. That I'm not God. Because I'd have probably said.

Abraham. I've asked you to believe me. And twice. You fumbled the ball. You really messed up. You insulted me. By not believing me. Either time. The deal's off. I'm going to find myself.

[48 : 24] Another boy. But he didn't do that. God is so gracious. And so condescending. That he's going to be forgiving.

Of Abraham. And hang with him. And you know why? Because he earlier gave that promise. Back in chapter 12. And what God did was. God locked himself in.

To that promise. And there's no way he could bail out on Abraham. Because he was committed to him. Abraham wasn't committed to him.

But God was committed to Abraham. And after that son of Warren is promised. Then he's asking him to sacrifice him. Take him to Mount Moriah. Mount Moriah is where the Jewish temple is located right now.

That's where he was taking him in. To sacrifice him. And let me close with this. Because this is so very, very important. And this whole concept of sacrifice.

[49 : 25] In this case it was going to be human sacrifice. Not animal sacrifice. And the fact that Abraham was willing to do that.

Demonstrates the enormous strides. That Abraham had made in his faith. Since his earlier failures. He had matured and developed in his faith.

Where he was willing actually. To go through with the sacrifice of Isaac. Knowing. That if necessary. God would raise him from the dead.

I just need to be obedient to what God told me to do. And when I fulfill what God tells me to do. Then it's. The ball is in God's court. For him to come through with what he said.

And you must understand. That the whole principle of Christianity. And for that matter. Of Judaism. Is linked.

[50 : 23] To sacrifice. It's the innocent. Dying for the guilty. Someone has said that Christianity. Is the only faith.

Where the hero. Is put to death. For the guilty. Think of that. And in establishing this. That is forever going to embed the principle.

In the mind of the Jew. That sacrifice. Sacrifice. Sacrifice. Because that's what evens the score.

And when Jesus Christ. Was sacrificed. On Mount Calvary. He balanced. The moral scales. Of the universe. And he made it possible.

For God. To extend. Forgiveness. Free. And already paid for. In the death of Jesus Christ. And in establishing.

[51 : 19] That whole concept. Of sacrifice. It is designed. To give meaning. And purpose. And understanding. To the one final sacrifice. That would be made. When Christ came.

And it's all wrapped up. In having instilled that. In the minds of people. In ancient days. So that when Christ was on that cross. Paying the penalty. For our sins.

The connection could be made. Between. He. Who knew no sin. Was made to be sin for us. That we might be made.

The righteousness of God. In him. Abraham. And what he started. And what God is going to do. Through Abraham. Abraham. Is the lynchpin.

Of all human history. This is where it's going. Abraham. Abraham is such. A very. Very. Important. Key factor. This. Is why.

[52 : 15] Satan. Hates. The seed. Of Abraham. Abraham. Because. God. Has a thing. For the Jew. And he is going to bring to pass.

All that he has promised. Would you pray with me please. Father. There's so much here. That is unsaid. And unknown. And not understood. To the extent that we would like.

To the degree that we do understand. Our hearts swell with gratitude. And thanksgiving. For you. Having orchestrated all of this.

Beginning thousands of years ago. And you are so very much involved. Right now. Perhaps in ways we do not see. As clearly as they saw back then. But you are a God.

Who is very much in the forefront. Of the picture. And you are going to bring to pass. All that you promise. Jesus. We see this. As we move through. The scriptures. Here even in the earlier parts.

[53 : 13] As we go on through. The development of humanity. And see the threat of redemption. Played out. Time and time again. In the lives of these characters. That you raise up.

Look forward to the culmination. Of it all. When we will gather around that throne. And sing praises unto you. And we would say even now. Come Lord Jesus.

Thank you for the truth. That is set before us. We wish we had better grasp. And understanding of it. But we trust that you will allow us.

To use what we have learned. To build on what is yet to come. Thank you for the presence. Of each one here this morning. If there is anybody here. Who does not have the peace and joy.

That comes from knowing the Lord Jesus Christ. As their Savior. For their sake. We pray you will give them no peace. No rest. Until they come to know the only one.

[54 : 08] Who really matters. In Christ's name we pray. Amen. Thank you.