

Genesis: Patriarchs

Review

- How is the “Patriarchs” section of Genesis related to the “Prehistory” section?
- How does the Tower of Babel story end? What does this tell us about the rest of Genesis? What does this tell us about the rest of the Bible?
- How does Abraham fit into God’s overall plan taught in the entire Bible? What is the climax of this plan?

Background

- What archeological evidence do we have for the patriarchs? Why? What does this tell us?
- What is the physical location where all the events of the patriarchs took place?

Outline

- What are the four divisions of the Patriarchs narrative? How is this section of Genesis divided? What does this tell us about this overall section? What is unique about the final division? Why does this matter?

Content

- Describe each of the four patterns to look for in Genesis using your own words. What does each pattern tell us about the content of the Patriarchs section? What difference does this make?
- What does the promise tell us about God and the way He interacts with the Patriarchs? What difference does this make?
- What is meant by “characterization by contrast”? What does this teach us? How does this apply?
- Why should we pay attention to the way the characters try to “help” God in the Patriarch stories? How does this apply?
- What is the significance of Abraham’s journeys? Where did he travel?
- What are the key verses of the Patriarchs? What does each highlight? What does each tell us about the overall content and message of the Patriarchs?
- How does Abraham’s life affect the nations? What does this tell us about God’s overall plan? Why does this matter?
- Why is Abraham’s faith significant? How is this applied later in the Bible? What does this tell us about how God relates to His people? How does this apply?
- How are God’s promises to Abraham related to the idea of SCRUB?
- What did God command Abraham to do? How did Abraham respond?
- What did God promise Abraham? What was the long term purpose and result of all of these promises? What does this tell us about the character of God? Why is this important?
- How does God’s work through Abraham “divide humanity”? Why is this significant?
- What is the significance of the phrase “God’s universal intention works through historical particularity”? What does this tell us about God’s overall plan and our place in it? How should we respond?

- What does it mean that the promise is “tested”? What does it mean that the promise is “confirmed”? How are these seen throughout the rest of Genesis? What can we learn from this about what we can expect in our own lives? Why does this matter?
- How is Abraham contrasted with Lot? What does this teach us?
- How does chapter 14 demonstrate God’s blessing on Abraham?
- In chapter 15, how does God confirm and elaborate on His promises to Abraham? How did Abraham respond? Why is this important?
- How did God give Abraham proof and assurance that His promises would come to pass? What is the meaning and significance of this ritual? How is this related to the idea of a covenant? What does this tell us about the character of God and the way He relates to His people?
- How did Abraham try to “help” the promise? Did this turn out to be actually helpful? Why or why not? What should we learn from this?
- What is the significance of the name changes God gave to Abraham and Sarah? How is the promise confirmed and clarified at this time? How does this move the story forward?
- How did God make Himself known to Abraham in chapter 18? How was God’s mercy shown even in the midst of His righteous judgment? What should we learn from this? How should we respond?
- How does the destruction of Sodom demonstrate God’s character?
- What is the significance of the contrast with Sodom, Lot, Moab, and Ammon?
- How is the birth of Isaac a partial fulfillment of God’s promises? How did this overcome all the testing and seeming impossibility of the promise before that time?
- What is the significance of the testing of the promise in chapter 22? What does this tell us about the way God interacts with His people and how we should respond to Him?
- What is the significance of the story of Isaac? How does he demonstrate the continuation of the promise and of the blessing?
- How is Jacob contrasted with Esau? Why did the promise and blessing go with Jacob and not with Esau? Why is this significant?
- How did Jacob try to “help” the promise? Was this actually productive or counterproductive? What was the immediate result of his trickery?
- How is God’s promise confirmed and renewed to Jacob? Why is that significant?
- What happened to Jacob in relation to Laban? How is this related to the way Jacob treated Esau?
- How is the fulfillment of the promise partly seen in the birth of Jacob’s sons? What significance will they have in later history?
- What is the significance of Jacob’s name change? What is the evidence for Jacob’s conversion and life change?
- How does the story of Joseph demonstrate the testing and eventual fulfillment of God’s promises? How does this demonstrate God’s character?
- How does the Joseph story also demonstrate the conversion and leadership of Judah? Why is this significant?
- How does Genesis end? What is left unfinished in this story? What promises are not yet fulfilled? How does this set up for the rest of the Pentateuch?

Themes

- Explain each of the theological themes in your own words. What does each tell about the content, message and significance of the Patriarchs? How should each idea be applied in current life?

- How does the process by which the promise was fulfilled in Genesis relate to how we should expect God's promises to be fulfilled in our lives?
- What does the Patriarch story teach us about the idea of election? What is the purpose of election?
- How does the Patriarch story demonstrate the idea of covenants? What does this teach us about the way God relates to us? How should we respond?

Review

Review the outline of the Patriarchs and work toward committing this to memory.

Review the key themes of the Patriarchs and work toward committing them to memory.