**The Story of the Old Testament**

**Lecture #2 – Genesis**

**Creation, Fall, Promise & The Beginnings of Fulfillment**

1. **Worship**

Video of How He Loves Us W/ Matt Chandler & John Piper.

1. **Quick Review of Last Week**

We worked through some **preliminary questions** together and decided that:

* there was enough **unity** within the Old Testament to understand the big-picture story,
* that it was **necessary** to understand the big-picture story of the Old Testament because:
	+ You can’t understand the different parts of the Old Testament until you understand the whole; and
	+ Once you understand the big-picture story you will experience is significant shift in your worldview; namely, that it is all about him, everything is his, and the story is long and over the span of eternity, rather than the brief span of our lives.
* Then we talked about some **nuts and bolts** of how we were going to go about understanding the big-picture story of the OT during the short time that we have together.
	+ There are copies of the **Syllabus** on the table outside and posted on the class site:
	+ **thestoryoftheoldtestament.wordpress.com.**
	+ The materials will be posted there each week, in lieu of a weekly class email.

I then gave you guys a couple of **words of encouragement** as we begun reminded us that this is not just a quest for knowledge but, rather, a quest for transformation through the process of encountering the Lord through his word and the power and presence of the Holy Spirit.

Then, we spent the rest of our time painting a **broad picture** of the story of the Old Testament by walking through each book, from Genesis to Malachi. We pointed out all of the Covenants as we walked through the story, how they related to one another, in a broad sense, and how they are all ultimately fulfilled in the person and work of Jesus Christ.

Does anyone remember the **6 covenants**? Let’s review them. You will find me repeating myself over and over again on the main parts of the story because that is the only way that I can learn and, I believe, that anyone can learn (unless you have a photographic memory, and, in that case, I don’t like you very much!). So, here they are:

* **The Adamic Covenant (#1) - Genesis**
* **The Noahic Covenant (#2) - Genesis**
* **The Abrahamic Covenant (#3) - Genesis**
* **The Mosaic Covenant (#4) - Exodus**
* **The Davidic Covenant (#5) – 2 Samuel 7**
* **The New Covenant (#6) – Hint in Deuteronomy 30:6, Jeremiah 31:31-34, Ezekiel 36:22-32**
1. **Where We Are Going This Morning – Genesis: Creation, Fall, Promise & The Beginnings of Fulfillment**

This morning we are going to take a closer look at the big-picture story by slowing down a bit and focusing on the book of **Genesis**. If we were at a 10,000 ft level last week, we are going to descend to about a 5,000 ft level this morning.

If you are doing the math, you might wonder why we are taking an entire week to look at nothing other than the book of Genesis. After all, there are 39 books that we have to cover and we only have 8 weeks left.

It is a valid question, and a short answer can be offered by thinking back on the 6 covenants in the Old Testament. Does anyone remember how many covenants of the 6 were located in Genesis? That’s right – 3 out of 6. A proper understanding of Genesis is crucial to a proper understanding of the Old Testament, and the Bible as a whole.

So, let’s get started.

1. **Brief Summary of Genesis**

The story of Genesis begins with the Lord **speaking all things into existence**. The chief of his creation is man and woman, whom he made in his image to have intimate fellowship with him and to rule over the creation under his authority. This creation and ongoing offer of intimacy is known as the **Adamic Covenant**. The only requirement of this covenant was that Adam and Eve obey the Lord’s command not to eat of the tree of the knowledge of good and evil. But, rather than enjoying the offered intimacy and fulfilling their prescribed roles in the created order, man and woman **rebelled** against the Lord, ate of the forbidden fruit, and instituted the unraveling of the perfect order that was established by the Lord through his act of creation.

The scope and nature of the unraveling of this order was outlined by the **curses** that flowed from the Fall. But, the Lord’s **promise** and means of restoration was also outlined in the midst of these curses. For, in **Genesis 3:15**, the Lord promises that an offspring of the woman would one day defeat the serpent and restore all things lost because of the Fall. But, this restoration would come through severe **conflict** between a **line of rebellion** (those who rebel against the Lord and his acts of restoration) and a **line of restoration** (those who are partakers of the Lord’s grace and are used to bring about his acts of restoration).

As the narrative of Genesis moves forward, we see this conflict play out. At several points it seems that the line of rebellion has the upper hand. Before the judgment of the flood it appears that everyone except **Noah** and his immediate family has been included within the line of rebellion. But, the Lord preserves the line of restoration through Noah and his family and enters into a **covenant** with him that the world would be preserved until the promised restoration becomes a reality. But, after the flood it appears that all of humanity once again has been aligned with the line of rebellion at the tower of **Babel**.

But, just when all seems lost, the Lord again speaks and appears to **Abraham** promising him land, children and blessing that would reach all the nations of the world. Through the Lord’s covenant with Abraham, known as the **Abrahamic Covenant** we see that the promised offspring of the woman in Genesis 3:15 will be an offspring of Abraham. Thus, the line of restoration is aligned with Abraham and his descendants. But, not all of his descendants. For the line of restoration is carried forward by **Isaac**, not Ishmael. And by **Jacob**, and not Esau. The Lord’s great promise of restoration will come through the line of restoration that is aligned with Abraham, Isaac, and Jacob.

Jacob’s name is changed to **Israel** and he has **twelve sons** whose descendants become the **twelve tribes** of Israel. We learn however that the tribe of **Judah** is the one chosen to bring about the restoration promised in Genesis 3:15. So, the promised offspring of the woman in Genesis 3:15 will be an offspring of Abraham, an offspring of Isaac, an offspring of Jacob, and an offspring of Judah.

As is clear from the foregoing summary, Genesis is primarily concerned with tracing the progressive fulfillment of the Lord’s promise to Abraham of children. We do not see the Lord fulfilling the promise of land or blessing in Genesis. It is to the promise of land that the next book of the Old Testament primarily turns – the book of Exodus.

1. **Broad Textual Outline – Genesis**
	1. Genesis 1-2 - Creation
	2. Genesis 3 - Fall
	3. Genesis 4-11 – The Line of Restoration and Line of Rebellion Prior to the Abrahamic Covenant
	4. Genesis 12-50 – Patriarchal Narratives
		1. Abraham
		2. Isaac
		3. Jacob
		4. Joseph
2. Lecture Manuscript
	1. **Creation (Genesis 1-2)**

The story of the Old Testament begins at the beginning of time with the ultimate character performing the ultimate act that begins everything. Open your bibles to **Genesis 1:1**: “**In the beginning, God created the heavens and the earth.**” There is a lot of disagreement and debate that surrounds the next two chapters of Genesis, but take a break from all of those concerns for just a moment and ponder this first book of our bibles: “**In the beginning, God created the heavens and the earth.**” Whatever interpretation of these chapters is correct regarding the way and duration of God’s creative act of everything that has been created – the reality remains that God is the one who created it all and that as creator, he is the only uncreated one and the one who is sovereign over all he has made and alone worthy of worship, honor and praise.

As Christians, we are hard pressed to reflect on the hugeness of this verse without our minds wandering to the central role of Jesus Christ in the act of creation. For example:

**John 1:1-3** – “In the beginning was the Word, and the Word was with God, and the Word was God. He was in the beginning with God. All things were made through him, and without him was not any thing made that was made.

**Colossians 1:16-17** – “[B]y him all things were created, in heaven and on earth, visible and invisible, whether thrones or dominions or rulers or authorities-all things were created through him and for him.”

 As I mentioned, there are many different views on how Genesis 1-2 are read together. Without having time to adequately address the different interpretive options (many of which are valid), I will propose a possible way of viewing these two chapters. This is not to say that this is the only viable view, but the view that I have come to adopt and one that I do believe is a valid interpretive approach.

 I believe there are three divisions within these two chapters that tell of God’s creative act from three different perspectives. The **first division** is **Genesis 1:1**. In this first division, we see God creating everything. The phrase “heavens and earth” is, as Sailhamer helpfully notes: “a figure of speech for the expression of totality.”[[1]](#footnote-1) The second division is **Genesis 1:3-2:3** where we see a narrowing of focus centered upon the earth and a retelling of the creative act from that narrower focus. The third division is **Genesis 2:4-25** were we see again a further narrowed focus and another retelling of the creative act from this even narrower focus.

 Rather than these creative accounts being in conflict with one another, as some incorrectly claim, these accounts are in **perfect harmony** with one another and complement each other. In **Gen. 1:1** we see the lens expanded as broadly as possible – billions of galaxies and trillions of stars. Then, in **Gen. 1:2-2:3**, we see the lens focused in on God’s work of creation as it pertains to the earth specifically. Then, in **Gen 2:4-25**, we see the lens focused even more closely on the chief work of all God’s creative activity – man and woman. **Moses** is interesting in telling the reader that **God created everything**, but he is even more interested in telling us of the **particular place of humanity** in God’s overarching creative activity and the implications of that particular place.

 There are two passages in these chapters that we have to discuss before moving on from these two incredible chapters as they play a crucial role in the unfolding narrative of the Old Testament going forward. The first is **Genesis 1:26-28**; turn there with me:

 **Genesis 1:26-28** – “Then God said, ‘*Let us* make man *in our image*, after our likeness. And let them have dominion over the fish of the sea and over the birds of the heavens and over the livestock and over all the earth and over every creeping thing that creeps on the earth.’ So God created man in his own image, in the image of God he created him; male and female he created them. And God blessed them. And God said to them, ‘Be fruitful and multiply and fill the earth and subdue it, and have dominion over the fish of the sea and over the birds of the heavens and over every living thing that moves on the earth.’

Much has been written about these verses. While interpreters have different ways of getting to the conclusion, most evangelical interpreters believe that the “*Let us*” in these verses refers to the **Trinity**. From the beginning of the Old Testament then, we see the triune God working in harmony to accomplish His purposes!

The fact that man was made in the image of God makes it clear that the creation of humanity serves as a **climax of the creation narrative**. Schreiner rightly notes that: “The importance of human beings being created in God’s image can scarcely be exaggerated. Indeed, the central three themes of this book appear right here. God is the sovereign creator who extends his kingship over the world. But he extends his rule through human beings, for as God’s image-bearers they must govern the world for God’s glory and honor.”[[2]](#footnote-2)

This is certainly not all that can be said about humanity being made in the image of God, but being made in God’s image is certainly inclusive of the concept of being his **agents of authority over the created order**. As Schreiner helpfully notes: “man and woman, as those who image God, are to display his image as they rule the world for God.”[[3]](#footnote-3) The fact that man and woman rule over the world for God further points to the reality that **as it goes with humanity, so it goes with the rest of the created order**. This reality will be of crucial effect when we get to Genesis 3 – the Fall narrative.

The second passage is **Genesis 2:15-17** in which we find the stipulation (or requirement) of our first *covenant*, what is commonly referred to as the **Adamic Covenant**. While there are different ways to track the covenants in the Old Testament, we will look at them through a fairly common listing: (1) the Adamic Covenant, (2) the Noahic Covenant, (3) the Abrahamic Covenant, (4) The Mosaic Covenant, (5) the Davidic Covenant, and (6) the New Covenant.

As we encounter our first *covenant*, it will make sense to provide some sort of working definition of what the term *covenant* means. While some people look to the examples that were contemporary to the time in which the Old Testament texts were written and get technical as to the different components of such a covenant and how that technical structure is utilized in the Old Testament texts, I like to take a simpler approach. I think **Michael Lawrence** captures the main essence of the meaning of an Old Testament covenant when he says: “a covenant is not merely a ‘contract’ or a ‘promise’ as we understand such things. Rather, it is a bond that establishes an all-encompassing relationship. . . . It’s a claim on someone’s total loyalty and allegiance. It has an authority structure to it, with ongoing obligations, blessings, and curses.”[[4]](#footnote-4)

**God’s claim upon Adam and Eve’s total loyalty and allegiance is set forth in his command not to eat of the tree of the knowledge of good and evil**. Look at **Genesis 2:15-17** with me:

**Genesis 2:15-17** – “The Lord God took the man and put him in the garden of Eden to work it and keep it. And the Lord God commanded the man, saying, ‘You may surely eat of every tree of the garden, *but of the tree of the knowledge of good and evil you shall not eat, for in the day that you eat of it you shall surely die*.”

 The authority structure set froth in the Adamic Covenant is clear. God, as creator, has complete authority over his creation. As long as this authority structure is honored and recognized, we see, as Graeme Goldsworthy notes, a picture of “creation in which there is perfect harmony. By harmony we mean that there is no conflict in the creation between its various parts.”[[5]](#footnote-5) What Goldsworthy is saying is that, **through the provision of the Adamic Covenant, we see humanity perfectly related to God and, significantly, all the parts of creation perfectly related to each other**. Everything was as it was meant to be. Deeper than any glimpse of perfection, harmony, and peace that we have ever experienced or can even imagine experiencing, was the constant experience of Adam and Eve through the provision of the Adamic Covenant within the context of the Garden of Eden.

 But, alas, **the perfection of the Garden of Eden would not hold**. As soon as the perfection of Eden is described in the narrative, it is lost. And, that brings us to the Fall narrative recorded in Genesis 3.

* 1. **The Fall and the Promise (Genesis 3)**

The **devastation** of what occurs in Genesis 3 cannot be overstated. It has been said that “the **unthinkable** and terrible is described as simply and unsensationally as possible.”[[6]](#footnote-6) The Lord had created everything perfectly and everything existed in **perfect order, harmony, and peace**. The Lord had **defined what was “good”** for Adam and Eve in his command not to eat of the tree of the knowledge of good and evil. In essence, the Lord was communicating to Adam and Eve that to continue in perfect relationship with him, they would have to trust him and his definition of what was good for them over any other alternative, including their own ideas about what might be best. Goldsworthy helpfully notes that: “[I]t is important to recognize that if God is the creator of everything, he is also the source of all truth. There is no truth apart from his truth, which he communicates to us by his Word. God is the final and absolute authority and, since he has chosen to communicate by his Word, his Word has absolute and final authority.”[[7]](#footnote-7)

The **serpent’s** introduction into the narrative is somewhat shocking. The author of Genesis is not concerned with explaining where the serpent came from, how it had the ability to talk, and why it was actively seeking to deceive and turn Adam and Eve away from the Lord.[[8]](#footnote-8) However, we do learn latter in the Bible (the last book, in fact) that this serpent is none other than **Satan**.[[9]](#footnote-9)

We see the **nature of the serpent’s deception** is the injection of doubt into the truth of God’s word. Recall that the Lord made it clear that death would flow from disobedience. The framework of God’s reality was quite plain. Life flows from obedience; death flows from disobedience. Into this beautifully clear framework of reality, the serpent injects confusion and deception: “**You will not surely die. For God knows that when you eat of it your eyes will be opened, and you will be like God, knowing good and evil.**”[[10]](#footnote-10)

**Eve responded to the serpent’s deception with disobedience**. Meredith Kline summarizes the essence of Eve’s rebellion as follows: “she arrogated to herself the divine prerogative of final judgment in discerning between good and evil and in defining the meaning of reality in general. Here new theology was evidenced in her assumption of a critical stances over against the word of God.”[[11]](#footnote-11) The shockingly illogical nature of this rebellion, and the thought process underlying the rebellion, is captured well by Goldsworthy: “**The assumption was being formed that the word not only could be analyzed and evaluated, but probably needed to be. But on what basis could Eve evaluate God’s word? Any standard for testing the truth of God’s word would have to be the word of an even greater authority than God, which is impossible.**”[[12]](#footnote-12)

In siding with the serpent and assuming a posture over and against the Word of God, paradise was lost with the first bite of the forbidden fruit: **“[W]hen the woman saw that the tree was good for food, and that it was a delight to the eyes, and that the tree was to be desired to make one wise, she took of its fruit and ate, and she also gave some to her husband who was with her, and he ate. Then the eyes of both were opened, and they knew that they were naked. And they sewed fig leaves together and made themselves loincloths.”**[[13]](#footnote-13)

Rather than seeing the world through the eyes of faith, Eve saw the world through the eyes of deception. What was forbidden became desired. What was good became a source of shame. As Goldsworthy notes: “**Instead of knowing good and evil by rejecting evil and remaining good, they choose rather to reject good and become evil.”**[[14]](#footnote-14) In the shameful aftermath of their rebellion, Adam and Eve hid from the Lord rather than walking with him in the cool of the day.[[15]](#footnote-15) Though the Lord knows where they are, he graciously asks: “Where are you?”[[16]](#footnote-16)

The attempt at self-justification and blame shifting that occurs next forms the basis of the natural response to humanity’s sin for the rest of history. Adam blames Eve (and really God who gave Eve to Adam) and then Eve blames the serpent for deceiving her.[[17]](#footnote-17) God sees through the self-justification and blame shifting and pronounces curses that outline the manner in which the perfect order that was instituted through God’s act of creation would be unraveled and undone. Schreiner summarizes the **all-encompassing nature of the curses** as follows: “[T]heir rejection of God’s lordship [not only touched] upon their relationship with God. The created world, with all its beauty, was also, as the apostle Paul later noted, ‘subjected to futility’ (Rom. 8:20). The ground that was fertile and yielded fruitful trees now sprouted ‘thorns and thistles’ (Gen. 3:18). The exercise of dominion over the world was now marred by sin so that frustration, pain, and boredom were part and parcel of work. Similarly, the joy of bearing children was now tarnished by the pain that accompanies childbirth (3:16). Adam and Eve were evicted from the garden and now lived east of Eden (3:22-24).”[[18]](#footnote-18)

But, not all was lost. For, in the midst of the curses that spelled out the death that flowed from disobedience comes the **promise** that serves as the foundation for all of God’s redemptive and restorative purposes and actions throughout the rest of the Old Testament. In fact, the **rest of the Bible is God’s progressive fulfillment of the redemptive promise made in the midst of his curse upon the serpent and recorded in Genesis 3:15**: “**I will put enmity between you and the woman, and between your offspring and her offspring; he shall bruise your head, and you shall bruise his heel.”** The ultimate battle that is announced here is between Christ and Satan.[[19]](#footnote-19) As certain as the ever-present reality of the battle is the certainty of its outcome – Christ will prevail. However, as Schreiner notes: “The victory will not be easy, however, for it will come through intense conflict with the offspring of the serpent.”[[20]](#footnote-20)

**The remainder of the story of the Old Testament is tracing the battle between the offspring of the woman and the offspring of the serpent**. While the ultimate fulfillment of God’s redemptive promise in Genesis 3:15 is found in Christ’s victory over Satan on the cross, the battle is waged in the context of the Old Testament long before Christ bore our sins on that brutal cross. And that is the battle that we turn to as we leave the Fall narrative and look at Genesis 4-11. We will see the offspring of the Serpent and the offspring of the woman developed and the conflict between the two lines expressed as we examine these chapters.

* 1. **The Beginnings of Fulfillment: The Conflict Between the Two Lines of Humanity Ensues (Genesis 4-11)**

We begin **Genesis 4** with the **births of Cain and Abel**. The natural question from the reader’s perspective is whether Cain or Abel is the **promised offspring** of the woman that will crush the head of the serpent and bring the restoration promised in Genesis 3:15.

In Genesis 4:8 we learn that neither Cain nor Abel is the one through whom God’s promise of restoration will be fulfilled. **Cain is shown not to be the promised offspring by his murder of Abel**. Schreiner helpfully describes the consequences of Cain’s act of murder and the allegiance that it betrayed: “Cain demonstrated that he belonged to the children of the serpent (1 John 3:12; cf. John 8:44; Rev. 12:15-17) by slaying Abel, the offspring of the woman.”[[21]](#footnote-21) The apostle John recognizes Cain’s act of murder as proof that he is the serpent’s offspring: “We should not be like Cain, *who was of the evil one* and murdered his brother. And why did he murder him? Because his own deeds were evil and his brother’s righteous.”[[22]](#footnote-22)

The **genealogy of Cain** set forth in **Genesis 4:17-24** is thus the recordation of the offspring of the serpent that will be in conflict with the offspring of the woman through whom God’s promised redemption will come. The narrative turns back to the **promised offspring of the woman** in **Genesis 4:25-26**: “And Adam knew his wife again, and she bore a son and called his name Seth, for she said, ‘God has appointed for me another offspring instead of Abel, for Cain killed him.’ To Seth also a son was born, and he called his name Enosh. **At that time people began to call upon the name of the Lord**.” As Goldsworthy notes: “To call on God’s name means to express trust and confidence in the God who has revealed his character.”[[23]](#footnote-23)

Genesis 4 makes it clear that there are two lines of people. Cain is the representative head of the first line – the offspring of the serpent. For the remainder of this study, we will refer to this line as the “*line of rebellion*.” Seth is the representative head of the second line – the offspring of the woman. For the remainder of this study, we will refer to this line as the “*line of restoration*.” Genesis 3:15 makes it clear that these two lines will be at conflict with each other until the ultimate victory is accomplished through the line of restoration. Again, this ultimate victory and promised restoration ultimately comes through the person and work of Jesus Christ. Jesus died on the cross, but overcame death through his resurrection through which he crushed the serpent’s head and brought about the ultimate victory promised in Genesis 3:15.

Until this ultimate victory is accomplished by the resurrection, however, there is conflict between the two lines. And it is to the story of this conflict that we again turn. The story continues by providing a genealogy of the line of restoration from Adam to Noah. As Goldsworthy notes: “It seems that the writer of this account has chosen and arranged his material in order to impress upon us the theological significance of the line. There is a direct link from Adam through Seth to Noah, and this whole line contrasts with the godless line of Cain in Genesis 4.”[[24]](#footnote-24) As Goldsworthy notes, the line of restoration progresses as follows:

Adam



Seth



Enosh



Kenan



Mahalalel



Jared



Enoch



Methuselah



Lamech



Noah

The birth of **Noah** gives hope to the line of restoration. This hope is expressed through Lamech’s statement surrounding Noah’s birth: “**Out of the ground that the Lord has cursed, this one shall bring us relief from our work and from the painful toil of our hands**.”[[25]](#footnote-25) Despite this glimmer of hope, the story at this point suggests that the line of rebellion is experiencing the upper hand in the battle.

In **Genesis 6:5-7** the depth of the darkness brought about by the line of rebellion is made clear: “The Lord saw that the wickedness of man was great in the earth, and that every intention of the thoughts of his heart was only evil continually. And the Lord regretted that he had made man on the earth, and it grieved him to his heart. So the Lord said, ‘I will blot out man whom I have created from the face of the land, man and animals and creeping things and birds of the heavens, for I am sorry that I have made them.”

**These are devastating verses**. The **downward progression** fueled by the line of rebellion is astonishing. This downward spiral has been described as “a movement from disobedience to murder, to reckless killing, to titanic lust, to total corruption and violence, to the full disruption of humanity.”[[26]](#footnote-26) It seems that the line of rebellion has won the battle in this announcement of judgment that will, per its own terms, destroy both the line of rebellion and the line of restoration.

But, the preservation of the line of restoration is assured in the very next verse: “**But Noah found favor in the eyes of the Lord**.”[[27]](#footnote-27) As God’s promise of restoration in Genesis 3:15 is found in the midst of the pronouncement of judgment, so is the pronouncement of the preservation of the line of restoration. To say that Noah found favor in the eyes of the Lord is to say that Noah found God’s grace. As Goldsworthy notes: “God’s grace is the cause of sinful people becoming righteous. Grace . . . is an attitude of God for the good of those who do not deserve the good.”[[28]](#footnote-28) Schreiner further observes that “salvation is of the Lord and is due entirely to his grace. Human beings naturally side with the serpent, but the Lord will triumph over evil and reclaim the world for his glory and for the good of human beings.”[[29]](#footnote-29)

 God’s grace upon Noah is expressed through the preservation of his family through the flood, thus preserving the line of restoration. After the flood subsides, “Noah built an altar to the Lord and took some of every clean animal and some of every clean bird and offered burnt offerings on the altar. And when the Lord smelled the pleasing aroma, the Lord said in his heart, ‘I will never again curse the ground because of man, for the intention of man’s heart is evil from his youth. Neither will I ever again strike down every living creature as I have done. While the earth remains, seedtime and harvest, cold and heat, summer and winter, day and night, shall not cease.”[[30]](#footnote-30)

 After Noah’s sacrifice and God’s promise not to recreate the devastation of the flood, the Lord again instructs Noah, like Adam before him, to “be fruitful and multiply” and to “increase greatly on the earth and multiply in it.”[[31]](#footnote-31) The Lord also enters into a covenant with Noah, his offspring, and the living creatures that were preserved through the flood with them: “Behold, I establish my covenant with you and your offspring after you, and with every living creature that is with you, the birds, the livestock, and every beast of the earth with you . . . . I establish my covenant with you, that never again shall all flesh be cut off by the waters of the flood, and never again shall there be a flood to destroy the earth.”[[32]](#footnote-32) The Lord then designates the rainbow as the sign of the covenant – a testimony that the Lord will be faithful to his word.[[33]](#footnote-33)

**Schreiner** sums up the significance of the promise and sign of the Noahic covenant as follows: “**The preservation of the world means that the saving promises for the world will be realized before the end comes. God’s creation of human beings will not end up being a failed experiment where the world ends up being destroyed.** The ‘bow’ that God sets in the sky is the sign of the covenant, standing here for a weapon of war that God will not unleash on human beings.”[[34]](#footnote-34)

As Sailhamer notes, the breadth of the scope of the Noahic covenant shows “that God’s plan to restore lost humanity was not focused narrowly on saving human souls. It was rather aimed at the salvation and restoration of all creation.”[[35]](#footnote-35) The restoration promised in Genesis 3:15 is shown to be cosmic in scope. Everything that was lost in the Fall will be restored by the ultimate victory accomplished through the line of restoration! The flood, then, shows the triumph of the line of restoration over the line of rebellion. However, that triumph is not complete. For, the line of rebellion survives the flood and is represented by Ham, one of Noah’s sons.

That the basis of God’s favor upon Noah was based upon grace rather than merit is made clear in Genesis 9:20-21: “Noah began to be a man of the soil, and he planted a vineyard. He drank of the wine and became drunk and lay uncovered in his tent.” This is a theme that will pervade the narrative of the Old Testament. Noah’s drunken stupor, and the apparent act of rebellion of Noah’s son Ham who “saw the nakedness of his father and told his two brothers outside,” shows that “[t]he condition of humanity after the cataclysmic judgment remains the same after the flood as it was before; so the judgment has not altered or changed the condition of the human heart. The implication is that God would be completely justified in wiping out every generation of humanity by means of a great judgment. There is only one reason why he does not: because of his own grace and mercy towards us. The earth is maintained and preserved in spite of the human situation.”[[36]](#footnote-36)

As Cain’s allegiance to the line of rebellion was shown through his murder of Abel, so Ham’s allegiance to the line of rebellion is shown through his exposure of Noah’s nakedness. The **curses** that are imposed upon Canaan, Ham’s son, and the **blessing** of Shem and Japheth clearly identify Ham’s descendants with the line of rebellion and Shem and Japheth’s descendants with the line of restoration. The tension between the two lines promised by Genesis 3:15 will continue beyond the flood’s devastation.

The narrative continues in **Genesis 10** with a genealogy of Noah’s sons – Shem, Ham, and Japheth. In this genealogy, we see a tracing of the **line of rebellion** in Ham and Canaan’s descendants (Genesis 10:6-20) and a tracing of the **line of restoration** primarily through Shem’s descendants (Genesis 10:21-31). The **cast of characters** that appears in the line of rebellion is quite stunning and will play a significant role in the opposition of, and judgment upon, the line of restoration. This cast of characters and places includes, for example, the city of **Babel**, the city of **Nineveh**, **Egypt**, the **Philistines**, the **Jebusites**, the **Amorites**, the **Hivites**, and, more generally, the **Canaanites**. **Keep those names and peoples in your mind** as the story progresses – they will play an important role in the line of rebellion.

The line of restoration, we see, will process through the descendants of Shem. The brief genealogy set forth in Genesis 10:21-31 is expounded upon in Genesis 11:10-26, where the line of restoration is traced to Abram (later Abraham). This genealogy from Genesis 11:10-26 is, in turn, utilized again in the genealogy of Jesus Christ in Luke 3:23-38. The Biblical authors evidently believed the tracing of the line of restoration was of crucial importance. Not, as is clear from the brutally honest accounts of failure contained in the narrative accounts, to show the merit of those in the line of restoration but, rather, to show the grace and mercy of the God who continues to protect and preserve the line of restoration.

Sandwiched in between the shorter and longer genealogies of Shem’s descendants, the line of restoration, is the account of the **tower of Babel in Genesis 11:1-9**. The placement of the account is significant for it shows another spike in the apparent victory of the line of rebellion. For, rather than living for the glory of the Lord and calling upon his name (Gen. 4:26), the line of rebellion is seen shamelessly seeking its own glory and basking in the pride of their own accomplishments and ambitions. This perverse reality is vividly captured in Genesis 11:4: “Come, let us build ourselves a city and a tower with its top in the heavens, and let us make a name for ourselves, lest we be dispersed over the face of the whole earth.”

Goldsworthy summarizes the essence of the Babel account when he observes: “The narrative (Gen 11:1-9) indicates that the human race had plans for unity and power based on self-interest. Unity in itself is not a bad thing, in fact it is a mark of the people of God when they conform to God’s purpose. But unity under God is one thing, and unity as proud independence from God is another. At Babel we see a collective expression of the original attempt of Adam and Eve to displace God from his rightful place as Lord of the universe.”[[37]](#footnote-37) The line of rebellion appears to have the upper hand in the struggle with the line of restoration. But, God once again intervenes and brings judgment upon the line of rebellion: “So the Lord dispersed them from there over the face of all the earth, and they left off building the city. Therefore its name was called Babel, because there the Lord confused the language of all the earth. And from there the Lord dispersed them over the face of all the earth.” (Genesis 11:8-9)

The take-away message of the Babel account is that the line of rebellion will not prevail. They may appear to have the upper hand at times, but the victory of the line of restoration has been decreed in Genesis 3:15, and that victory is sure. With that message and certainty in the back of our minds, we return to the genealogy of the line of restoration. The line of restoration is traced from Shem to Abram (later Abraham) as follows:

Shem



Arpachshad



Shelah



Eber



Peleg



Reu



Serug



Nahor



Terah

 

 Abram Nahor

 

 Lot

 The line of restoration is carried forward from Shem to Abram (Abraham), but I included Nahor and Lot in the graphic because of the role that Lot will play later in the story. Genesis 11:27-32 serves as the final backdrop of the call of Abram and informs the reader that at the time of Abram’s call, (1) he was married to Sarai (later Sarah), (2) Sarai was barren, and (3) Abram’s family was already on the move from Ur of Chaldeans to the land of Canaan (although they got sidetracked in Haran and settled there). It is with the benefit of these biographical facts that we begin Genesis 12-50, commonly called the patriarchal narratives.

* 1. **The Beginnings of Fulfillment: The Patriarchs (Genesis 12-50**)

The transition that occurs between Genesis 11 and 12 is striking. As Goldsworthy notes: “The first eleven chapters of Genesis compress the history of mankind from creation to the early second millennium B.C. into a brief overview that is written from a theological perspective. The rest of Genesis, thirty-nine chapters in all, deals with only four generations of one family: Abraham, Isaac, Jacob and Joseph. Their history is also written with the theological significance in view, but the greater detail is demanded by the unique significance of the family within the plan of God for the human race. All of world history is related to the promises that God makes to Abraham. The final meaning of history will be found in the person of Jesus of Nazareth, a descendant of Abraham.”[[38]](#footnote-38)

As Genesis 1 told the creation account from a wide-lens perspective and Genesis 2 told the creation account from a narrow-lens perspective focusing on man as the apex of creation, so Genesis 1-11 provides a wide-lens perspective on God’s restorative acts and Genesis 12-50 provides a narrow-lens perspective on God’s restorative acts through the line of restoration, which is shown to be identified with Abraham and certain of his descendants.

As indicated above, the importance of the Lord’s promises to Abram (later Abraham) and the covenant between the Lord and Abram (Abraham) set forth in Genesis 12, 15, and 17 cannot be overstated. Schreiner notes that: “The promises made to Abraham were the means by which God would undo the devastation wrought by Adam and would bring in his kingdom.”[[39]](#footnote-39) Before we look at these promises and the covenant within which these promises are made, it is important to note that: “As with Noah there is nothing special about Abraham that deserves the goodness of God in calling him into these blessings. All we know of him is that he lives among pagan peoples and responds with obedience and faith to the call of God. We know nothing of Abraham’s faith and knowledge of God before this. There is no hint that God was responding to Abraham’s goodness.”[[40]](#footnote-40)

There are, however, hints that God was acting in grace despite Abraham’s lack of goodness. When Joshua gathers the tribes of Israel together after they had come into possession of the Land of Promise, he describes the beginnings of the nation of Israel as follows: “Long ago, your fathers lived beyond the Euphrates, Terah, the father of Abraham and of Nahor; and they served other gods. Then I took your father Abraham from beyond the River and led him through all the land of Canaan, and made his offspring many.”[[41]](#footnote-41) Further, as we will see, the author of Genesis is not shy about laying bare Abraham’s weaknesses and failings.

With this reminder of grace, we are prepared to examine the Lord’s gracious interactions with the fathers, beginning with Abraham. Genesis 12:1-3 makes it clear that the victorious line of restoration promised in Genesis 3:15 will be carried forward through Abraham and his descendants. As the creation account abruptly begins in Genesis 1 with the Lord speaking all things into existence, so Genesis 12 abruptly begins with the Lord speaking words of restoration/re-creation to Abram: “Now the Lord said to Abram, ‘Go from your country and your kindred and your father’s house to the land that I will show you. And I will make of you a great nation, and I will bless you and make your name great, so that you will be a blessing. I will bless those who bless you, and him who dishonors you I will curse, and in you all the families of the earth shall be blessed.”

The promises to Abram in these verses have been understood as follows: (1) God will give Abraham many descendants, (2) Abraham’s descendants will possess the Promised Land (see also Genesis 12:7), and (3) all the nations of the world will be blessed through Abraham’s descendants. When we went through the book of Exodus together as a church, we summarized these promises as follows: (1) *multiply* descendants, (2) *move* to Promised Land, and (3) *make* a blessing. I think this summary is a helpful way to keep these key promises straight in your mind so you can keep them in your mind going forward. Keeping these promises at the forefront of our minds is crucial going forward as the rest of the Old Testament, as the Bible as a whole, is the account of the Lord’s faithfulness to, and fulfillment of, these great promises!

While the story is free with Abram’s faults, at this crucial point the author of Genesis notes Abram’s obedience. As soon as Genesis completes setting forth the Lord’s promises in Genesis 12:1-3, it records Abram’s obedience in Genesis 12:4: “So Abram went, as the Lord had told him.” The author of Hebrews comments on the significance of Abram’s response to the Lord’s promises: “By faith Abraham obeyed when he was called to go out to a place that he was to receive as an inheritance. And he went out, not knowing where he was going. By faith he went to live in the land of promise, as in a foreign land, living in tents with Isaac and Jacob, heirs with him of the same promise. For he was looking forward to the city that has foundations, whose designer and builder is God.”[[42]](#footnote-42)

But, again, Abraham’s obedience is not produced by some quality within himself, but rather is birthed out of God’s grace. For faith is a gift of God’s grace. As Goldsworthy notes: “The key is not the strength or perfection of Abraham’s faith, but the strength and perfection of the God he trusts. Abraham learns that God is utterly reliable and faithful to his word. And since Abraham deserves nothing of what he is promised, it must be seen as a pure and unmerited gift.”[[43]](#footnote-43) In other words, Abraham has found grace rather than what he deserves.

The author does not wait very long to make this reality clear. For, in Genesis 12:10-20, just a couple verses later, he clearly speaks of Abram’s weakness and failings. In these verses Abram lies about Sarai being his wife so that no harm will come to them. While it is hard to blame Abram for taking such a pragmatic approach, it clearly expresses a lack of faith in the Lord’s ability to make good on his promises. Rather than negating the early expression of Abram’s faith, this narrative helps to illustrate what a life of faith looks like in the context of the Fall. The life of faith is not a life of strength with periodic slumps of weakness but, rather, a lifetime of weakness through which the strength, faithfulness, and grace of the Lord is manifested. The apostle Paul makes this exact point when he explains his own journey of weakness to the church at Corinth: “Three times I pleased with the Lord about this, that it should leave me. But he said to me, ‘My grace is sufficient for you, for my power is made perfect in weakness.’ Therefore I will boast all the more gladly of my weaknesses, so that the power of Christ may rest upon me. For the sake of Christ, then, I am content with weaknesses, insults, hardships, persecutions, and calamities. For when I am weak, then I am strong.”[[44]](#footnote-44)

 Genesis 12:17-20 again makes the point that the Lord of the line of restoration is greater than the people included therein. The Lord again directly intervenes and sends plagues upon the Pharaoh of Egypt because of Sarai, who was taken into his house because of Abram’s deception. Sarai is delivered from the house of Pharaoh and returned to Abram because of these plagues and Abram is kicked out of Egypt because of his deception. It is hard not to see the parallels to the plague narratives in Exodus 7-12! But, we are not there yet!

 Exodus 13 tells the story of the parting of Abram and Lot because of the greatness of their respective possessions and households. (Genesis 13:2-13) The folly of Lot’s decision to reside near Sodom is noted in Genesis 13:13: “Now the men of Sodom were wicked, great sinners against the Lord.” Lot is seen here parting from the line of restoration and joining company with the line of rebellion.

 On the other hand, the Lord confirms that the line of restoration will be continued through Abram and his descendants. The author notes that Abram settles in the land of Canaan. It is in Canaan, the Land of Promise, that the Lord once again appears to Abram and reminds him of his great promises: “The Lord said to Abram, after Lot had separated from him, ‘Lift up your eyes and look from the place where you are, northward and southward and eastward and westward, for all the land that you see I will give to you and to your offspring forever. I will make your offspring as the dust of the earth, so that if one can count the dust of the earth, your offspring also can be counted. Arise, walk through the length and the breadth of the land, for I will give it to you.’” (Genesis 13:14-17)

 Genesis 14:1-16 tells a curious story about Abram defeating several kings and rescuing Lot, his wayward nephew. This curious story is followed by an even more curious interaction between Abram and Melchizedek king of Salem in Genesis 14:18-20: “And Melchizedek king of Salem brought out bread and wine. (He was a priest of God Most High.) And he blessed him and said, ‘Blessed be Abram by God Most High, Possessor of heaven and earth; and blessed be God Most High, who has delivered your enemies into your hand!’ And Abram gave him a tenth of everything.” While we can not delve more into the significance of these verses here, it should be noted that this curious individual, Melchizedek, and the priesthood that he symbolizes in contrast to the priesthood established under the Mosaic/Old Covenant play a significant role in the book of Hebrews and in Psalm 110.[[45]](#footnote-45)

 While Genesis 12 helps us understand the promises that will be fulfilled within the context of the Lord’s covenant with Abraham, Genesis 15 helps us understand the nature of the covenant between the Lord and Abram, commonly referred to as the Abrahamic Covenant. The Abrahamic Covenant is the third covenant that we have encountered to this point in the Genesis narrative. We have already examined the Adamic Covenant and the Noahic Covenant. Sailhamer rightly notes the relative importance of the Abrahamic Covenant: “Hardly a text in Scripture bears a comparable weight to the importance to that of Genesis 12:1-3 . . . . As important as the Noahic covenant is for establishing the outside perimeters of God’s plan of salvation, the Abrahamic covenant provides the focus. In it God takes the necessary steps to restore all humanity to himself.”[[46]](#footnote-46) Blaising and Bock similarly note: “[T]o understand the Bible, one must read it in view of the Abrahamic covenant, for that covenant with Abraham is the foundational framework for interpreting the Scripture and the history of redemption which it reveals.”[[47]](#footnote-47)

 Genesis 15 makes it clear that the fulfillment of the Abrahamic Covenant depends upon the Lord alone. That is not to say that Abram’s obedience was irrelevant, it was profoundly so. Schreiner helpfully explains this apparent tension: “Was the covenant with Abraham conditional or unconditional? In one sense it was conditional, for it depended upon Abraham’s obedience. The logic of Gen. 26:4-5 is clear: ‘I will multiply your offspring as the stars of heaven and will give to your offspring all these lands. And in your offspring all the nations of the earth shall be blessed, because Abraham obeyed my voice and kept my charge, my commandments, my statues, and my laws.’ The text specifically says here that the blessings were granted to Abraham because he obeyed the Lord’s directives. In a more profound sense, however, the covenant was unconditional. The decisive text here is Gen. 15. The Lord promised Abraham that his children would be as uncountable as the stars. In the latter part of Gen. 15 we find a covenant ceremony where the Lord pledged to Abraham that he would possess the land of Canaan. Abraham brought animals and cut them in half. Sleep and darkness descended upon Abraham. Typically, the covenant partners walked through the divided animals together, symbolizing the truth that they would be cut off if they violated the provisions of the covenant. . . . But in the Abrahamic covenant the Lord alone ‘passed between these pieces’ as a ‘smoking fire pot and a flaming torch.’ (Gen. 15:17) The Lord alone passing between the pieces symbolizes that the fulfillment of the covenant depends upon him alone. . . . Ultimately, the covenant will be fulfilled. God himself pledges that it will be so. The unconditionality of the covenant does not remove the need for human obedience. Any person who fails to obey will not enjoy the covenant blessings, and hence the demand for obedience remains in all its starkness. Nevertheless, the grace of God, not the obedience of human beings, remains central, for God will see to it that the covenantal demands are fulfilled by grace.”[[48]](#footnote-48)

 Genesis 15:6 serves as a crucial verse in the explaining Abram’s relationship with the Lord (and, by extension, ours): “And he believed the Lord, and he counted it to him as righteousness.” It is through the lens of this verse that we can see clearly that Abram did not partake of the Lord’s grace because of his obedience but, rather, he partook of the Lord’s grace through faith, through which his obedience was produced. Paul puts it this way in Romans 4: “[W]hat does the Scripture say? ‘Abraham believed God, and it was counted to him as righteousness.’ Now to the one who works, his wages are not counted as a gift but as his due. And to the one who does not work but believes in him who justifies the ungodly, his faith is counted as righteousness . . . . That is why it depends on faith, in order that the promise may rest on grace . . . . [T]he words ‘it was counted to him’ were not written for his sake alone, but for ours also. It will be counted to us who believe in him who raised from the dead Jesus our Lord, who was delivered up for our trespasses and raised for our justification.”[[49]](#footnote-49)

 That Abram’s relationship with the Lord is based upon grace rather than merit is again highlighted in Genesis 16. In this chapter, we see Abram doubting the Lord’s ability to keep his promises and attempting to fulfill the Lord’s promises according to the ‘wisdom’ of man. Like Adam and Eve trusted in their own ability to discern the best course of action, so Abram and Sarai thought they knew the best way to fulfill the Lord’s promises.[[50]](#footnote-50) Sarai gives Hagar, her Egyptian servant, to Abram as a wife and Hagar conceives and gives birth to Ishmael. But, rather than being the child of promise who would carry forward the line of restoration, Ishmael is identified with the line of rebellion[[51]](#footnote-51)

 In Genesis 17:1-14, the Lord again appears to Abram, confirms his covenant with him, changes his name to Abraham, and institutes the practice of circumcision as the sign of the Abrahamic Covenant. Again, we are reminded that the line of restoration will be carried forward by Abraham and his descendants. The author of Genesis is intentionally memorializing the repetition of the Lord’s promises. This memorialization is for us. It is good to saturated our minds with the Lord’s promises and to remind ourselves of his faithfulness to fulfill them all. In that vein, let’s read Genesis 17:4-8 together: “Behold, my covenant is with you, and you shall be the father of a multitude of nations. No longer shall your name be called Abram, but your name shall be Abraham, for I have made you the father of a multitude of nations. I will make you exceedingly fruitful, and I will make you into nations, and kings shall come from you. And I will establish my covenant between me and you and your offspring after you throughout their generations for an everlasting covenant, to be God to you and to your offspring after you. And I will give to you and to your offspring after you the land of your sojournings, all the land of Canaan, for an everlasting possession, and I will be their God.”

God promised the restoration of all things in Genesis 3:15. It is now clear that this restoration will be accomplished through Abraham and his descendants who have been clearly identified as the line of restoration. But, since Ishmael is rejected as the one through whom the line of restoration will be carried forward, we are still waiting for a descendant(s) of Abraham who will do so. It is to this issue that the narrative now turns and, in fact, the rest of Genesis is concerned. Recall that the Lord’s promises to Abraham were threefold: (1) the multiplication of Abraham’s descendants, (2) giving Abraham’s descendants the possession of the Promised Land, and (3) making Abraham’s descendants a blessing to all the nations of the world. The latter two promises are not fulfilled in Abraham’s day. As Schreiner notes: “The promise of receiving the land was not fulfilled in Abraham’s day. . . . In addition, the promise of universal blessing, through it was reiterated to Abraham several times (Gen. 18:18; 26:4), was not fulfilled during Abraham’s life. The drama of the story, then, focuses on the promise of offspring, but the promise that Abraham will have children becomes a reality only through conflict (3:15).”[[52]](#footnote-52) Indeed the conflict is great: (1) Sarai (later Sarah) was barren at the time of Abram (later Abraham’s call), (2) Sarai (later Sarah) was included in the harem of Pharaoh and Abimelech, (3) Sarai and Abraham attempted to fulfill the promise of offspring through their own “wisdom, resulting in the birth of Ishmael, (4) Abraham and Sarah were very old and still had no children together in fulfillment of the Lord’s promise, and on and on. There is no shortage of drama in the progressive fulfillment of God’s promises!

The drama continues with the promise of Isaac’s birth in Genesis 17:15-16: “And God said to Abraham, ‘As for Sarai your wife, you shall not call her name Sarai, but Sarah shall be her name. I will bless her, and moreover, I will give you a son by her. I will bless her, and she shall become nations; kings of peoples shall come from her.” Abraham pleads for Ishmael to be the one through whom the line of restoration will be carried forward. (Gen. 17:18) But, the Lord rejects Abraham’s request and makes it clear that Isaac is the one through whom the line of restoration will be carried forward: “Sarah your wife shall bear you a son, and you shall call his name Isaac. I will establish with him as an everlasting covenant for his offspring after him.” (Gen. 17:19) Paul emphasizes the alignment of Isaac with the line of restoration and Ishmael with the line of rebellion in Romans 9:6-9: “[N]ot all who are descended from Israel belong to Israel, and not all are children of Abraham because they are his offspring, but ‘Through Isaac shall your offspring be named’ This means that it is not the children of the flesh who are the children of God, but the children of the promise are counted as offspring. For this is what the promise said; ‘About this time next year I will return, and Sarah shall have a son.’”

Genesis 17 concludes with Abraham being painfully obedient to fulfill the sign of the covenant. (Genesis 17:22-27) Again, we are reminded that “the unconditionality of the covenant does not remove the need for obedience.”[[53]](#footnote-53) For, it is those who are obedient who are shown to be aligned with the line of restoration and, therefore, participants in the covenant promises.

Genesis 18:1-15 contains an interesting story wherein the promise of Isaac’s birth is restated: “I will surely return to you about this time next year, and Sarah your wife shall have a son.” (Gen. 18:10) The Lord is graciously restating his promises and making it clear that he will fulfill them and preserve the line of restoration. As Goldsworthy notes: “For twenty-five years after God made these promises Abraham remains childless. At critical times during that period God reminds Abraham of his promises to sustain him in the face of the seemingly impossible odds against their coming true (Gen 15:4-6, 13-21; 17:1-21; 18:16-19).”[[54]](#footnote-54)

Genesis 18:16-19:38 shifts from the preservation of the line of restoration to the Lord’s victory over the line of rebellion. The story of the Lord’s destruction of Sodom and Gomorrah shows the wickedness that flows naturally from the line of rebellion and the justice of the Lord’s judgment upon that line. It is a tragic story, one reminiscent of the destruction brought about by the Flood, and one that reminds the reader of what is at stake in one’s alignment with the line of restoration or rebellion. For, judgment follows the line of rebellion and blessing follows the line of restoration. As the Lord made clear to Abraham in Genesis 12:3: “I will bless those who bless you, and him who dishonors you I will curse.”

Genesis 19 concludes with the tragic story of Lot getting drunk and sleeping with his two daughters. From these depraved encounters are birthed the Moabites and the Ammonites. (Gen. 19:30-38) Again, peoples that are clearly aligned with the line of rebellion.[[55]](#footnote-55) The promised enmity between the two lines continues to unfold and continue.

Lest we fall into the temptation of thinking that an individual’s merit has anything to do with whether he or she falls within the line of restoration, Genesis 20 continues the narrative by again exposing the weaknesses and flaws of Abraham, the identified head of the line of restoration. In this chapter wee see Abraham, once again, telling people that Sarah is his sister so that no harm would come upon him or his family. The Lord again preserves the line of restoration by restoring Sarah to Abraham. The author of Genesis is making it clear that Abraham was chosen to be the head of the line of restoration on the basis of grace alone. And, so it is with us!

Genesis 21 begins with the Lord fulfilling his promise to Abraham: “The Lord visited Sarah as he had said, and the Lord did to Sarah as he had promised. And Sarah conceived and bore Abraham a son in his old age at the time of which God had spoken to him. Abraham called the name of his son who was born to him, whom Sarah bore him, Isaac.” (Gen. 21:1-3) But, nearly as soon as the promised son is given through his miraculous birth, Abraham is called to give him back to the Lord.

Genesis 22 begins with the Lord appearing to Abraham not to assure him of his promises, as has been the case so far in the narrative, but, rather, to test Abraham’s faith in his promises: “After these things God tested Abraham and said to him . . . “Take your son, your only son Isaac, whom you love . . . and offer him there as a burnt offering . . . .” (Genesis 22:1-2) As Schreiner notes: “The command is astonishing, for it is only through Isaac that the offspring of the woman who would slay the serpent would come.”[[56]](#footnote-56) Goldsworthy similarly notes: “The most significant challenge to Abraham’s trust in the God of the covenant comes with the demand that he offer the boy as a sacrifice.”[[57]](#footnote-57)

While Abraham’s failures have been clearly presented by the author of Genesis, so is his faith and resulting obedience. Abraham left the next morning with his son to offer him as a sacrifice. But, the narrative gives significant reminders that Abraham’s obedience was grounded in his faith in the Lord’s promises. In Genesis 22:4, Abraham tells the young men with him to “Stay here with the donkey; I and the body will go over there and worship and come again to you.” In Genesis 22:8, Abraham responds to Isaac’s observation of the lack of a lamb for the burnt offering as follows: “God will provide for himself the lamb for a burnt offering, my son.”

Schreiner rightly observes that these passages make it clear that: “Abraham was convinced, even though God commanded that he sacrifice Isaac, that Isaac would return with him from the sacrifice.”[[58]](#footnote-58) Abraham had learned at this point of the story to trust that the Lord could fulfill his promises in ways that were beyond his understanding. Abraham’s faith was well founded. For, as “Abraham reached out his hand and took the knife to slaughter his son . . . the angel of the Lord called to him from heaven and . . . . said, ‘Do not lay your hand on the boy or do anything to him, for now I know that you fear God, seeing that you have not withheld your son, your only son, from me.’” (Gen. 22:10-12) After sparing Isaac, the Lord provided a ram to be scarified in his place.

The author of Hebrews provides the following reflection on this amazing story in Hebrews 11:17-19: “By faith Abraham, when he was tested, offered up Isaac, and he who had received the promises was in the act of offering up his only son, of whom it was said, ‘Through Isaac shall your offspring be named’ He considered that God was able even to raise him from the dead, from which, figuratively speaking, he did receive him back.” Schreiner rightly notes the ultimate significance of the story in the light of the story of the Bible: “The sacrifice of the ram in place of Isaac anticipates the final fulfillment of the promise of the offspring, where the true offspring of Abraham, Jesus Christ, fulfills what Isaac only forecasts typologically (Gal. 3:16). The atonement provided by the Lord becomes a reality in the sacrifice of Jesus Christ, who is the beloved Son of God (Rom. 8:32).”[[59]](#footnote-59)

In the wake of Abraham’s faith-fueled obedience, the Lord, once again, reminds Abraham of his promises in Genesis 22:16-18: “By myself I have sworn, declares the Lord, because you have done this and have not withheld your son, your only son, I will surely multiply your offspring as the stars of heaven and as the sand that is on the seashore. And your offspring shall possess the gate of his enemies, and in your offspring shall all the nations of the earth be blessed, because you have obeyed my voice.”

Genesis 22 ends with a genealogy of Nahor’s descendants which seems strange until it becomes clear in Genesis 24 that the author is providing the lineage of Rebekah – Isaac’s wife through whom the line of restoration would be carried forward! (Gen. 22:20-24)

Chapter 23 records Sarah’s death and Abraham’s purchase of a burial plot for Sarah in the Land of Promise. Sarah’s death signifies the shift of the focus of the story from Abraham to Isaac. Chapter 24 records Abraham’s quest for Isaac’s bride. It is crucial to Abraham that Isaac’s bride not be from the land of Canaan but, rather, from his land and his kindred. (Gen. 24:2-4) Abraham’s servant goes Mesopotamia to the City of Nahor and is supernaturally led to Rebekah, whose genealogy was given at the end of Genesis 22, who Isaac takes as his wife. (Gen. 24:67)

Genesis 25 records Abraham’s death and burial of Abraham with Sarah and makes clear, once again, that the line of restoration will be carried forward through Isaac and not Ishmael for “Abraham gave all he had to Isaac” (Gen. 25:5) and “After the death of Abraham, God blessed Isaac his son.” (Gen. 25:11)

The narrative quickly shifts focus to the next generation of the line of restoration in Genesis 25:19-28 in the birth account of Jacob and Esau. As the Lord’s promise of offspring was greater than Sarah’s barrenness, his promise of offspring was greater than Rebekah’s barrenness. For, “Isaac prayed to the Lord for his wife, because she was barren. And the Lord granted his prayer, and Rebekah his wife conceived.” (Gen. 25:21)

The Lord’s answer to Isaac’s prayer came in the form of twins – Esau and Jacob who personify the enmity that was promised in Genesis 3:15 between the two lines. The Lord declared the following over Esau and Jacob prior to their birth: “Two nations are in your womb, and two peoples from within you shall be divided; the one shall be stronger than the other, the older shall serve the younger.” (Gen. 25:23)

Esau was the older; Jacob the younger. The story of Esau and Jacob follows the script set forth by the Lord. The older indeed serves the younger. The narrative makes clear that the Esau is aligned with the line of rebellion and Jacob is aligned with the line of restoration. Esau’s alignment with the line of rebellion is evidenced by the selling of his birthright, which is memorialized only a few verses after his birth. (Gen. 25:29-34) To be sure, however, the narrative makes it abundantly clear that Jacob’s alignment with the line of restoration is not based upon his merit but despite his lack of merit.

As Schreiner notes: “The choice of Jacob could not be ascribed to Jacob’s virtue or moral heroism; rather, it finds its roots in the grace and election of God. Jacob’s deception and manipulation verify his moral impoverishment . . . . Since all people are children of the serpent by nature, the promise of victory over the serpent will become a reality only by virtue of God’s mercy.”[[60]](#footnote-60) Paul provides the following reflection of the Lord’s choice of Jacob over Esau in Romans 9:11-13: “[T]hough they were not yet born and had done nothing either good or bad – in order that God’s purpose of election might continue, not because of works but because of him who calls – she was told, ‘The older will serve the younger.’ As it is written, ‘Jacob I loved, but Esau I hated.’”

Genesis 26 begins by turning the focus back upon Isaac and confirming the fact that the line of restoration will be carried forward through Isaac. The Lord makes this clear in the restatement and application of his promises to Isaac in Genesis 26:3-5: “I will be with you and will bless you, for to you and to your offspring I will give all these lands, and I will establish the oath that I swore to Abraham your father. I will multiply your offspring as the stars of heaven and will give to your offspring all these lands. And in your offspring all the nations of the earth shall be blessed, because Abraham obeyed my voice and kept my charge, my commandments, my statutes, and my laws.”

Again, we see that Isaac’s inclusion in the line of restoration is because of God’s grace for we see him repeating the weakness of his father and lying about Rebekah being his wife. (Gen. 26:6-11) But, the Lord’s calling and election is greater than Isaac’s weakness. The Lord again appears to Isaac in Genesis 26:24 and graciously restates his promises: “I am the God of Abraham your father. Fear not, for I am with you and will bless you and multiply your offspring for my servant Abraham’s sake.” The author of Genesis is reminding us again and again that the line of restoration promised in Genesis 3:15 as the offspring of the woman is carried forward through Abraham, Isaac, and Jacob.

The passing of the blessing from Isaac to Jacob is accomplished, as Schreiner aptly notes: “[d]espite (not because of!) their machinations.”[[61]](#footnote-61) The transfer of the blessing symbolizes the alignment of Jacob with the line of restoration and is given in Genesis 27:28-29: “May God give you the dew of heaven and of the fatness of the earth and plenty of grain and wine. Let peoples serve you, and nations bow down to you. Be lord over your brothers, and may your mother’s sons bow down to you. Cursed by everyone who curses you, and blessed be everyone who blesses you!”

As a result of Jacob’s treacherous deception, Esau is naturally enraged. Genesis 27:41 captures Esau’s hatred well: “Now Esau hated Jacob because of the blessing with which his father had blessed him, and Esau said to himself, ‘The days of mourning for my father are approaching; then I will kill my brother Jacob.’” The promised enmity between the line of rebellion and the line of restoration continues. As Schreiner observes: “Immediately God’s promise was in peril, for Esau was enraged and vowed to kill Jacob (27:41) But . . . Jacob fled from Esau and traveled to his relatives in Haran (Gen. 27:42-46). Jacob’s life was preserved, and unlike Esau, he did not intermarry with Hittite woman who worshipped false gods (27:46). Esau’s murderous intentions became the means by which Jacob would marry women who were devoted to the Lord, so that the parents of the children to come were devoted to Yahweh.”[[62]](#footnote-62)

Jacob’s flight to Haran was initiated with a restatement of Isaac’s blessing: “God Almighty bless you and make you fruitful and multiply you, that you may become a company of peoples. May he give the blessing of Abraham to you and to your offspring with you, that you may take possession of the land of your sojournings that God gave to Abraham!” (Gen. 28:3-4) Jacob’s flight to Haran was interrupted by a restatement of the Lord’s blessing upon him: “I am the Lord, the God of Abraham your father and the God of Isaac. The land on which you lie I will give to you and to your offspring. Your offspring shall be like the dust of the earth, and you shall spread abroad to the west and to the east and to the north and to the south, and in you and your offspring shall all the families of the earth be blessed. Behold, I am with you and will keep you where you go, and will bring you back to this land. For I will not leave you until I have done what I have promised you.” (Gen. 28:13-14)

Genesis 29:1-30 continues the narrative by telling the story of how Jacob came to marry both Leah and Rachel. Genesis 29:31-30:24 tells the dysfunctional tale of how the 12 tribes of Israel came to be. If there had been any doubt as to the basis of grace for one’s inclusion into the line of restoration, it must be swept away by these verses. Tension and jealousy led both Leah and Rachel to give their servants to Jacob for the purpose of having children through them. The narrative must be read closely to glean all of the pain and dysfunction contained within it, but the following chart of the origin of the 12 tribes gives a rough picture:

Jacob

Zilpah

Bilhah

Leah

Rachel

Joseph (11th)

Gad (7th)

Dan (5th)

Reuben (1st)

Naphtali (6th)

Benjamin (12th)

Asher (8th)

Simeon (2nd)

Levi (3rd)

Judah (4th)

Issachar (9th)

Zebulun

(10th)

 In addition to the dysfunctional nature of Jacob’s family, Jacob’s relationship with Laban, his Uncle was contentious from the beginning and in a constant state of deterioration. Both Jacob and Laban were deceptive and quick to twist the truth in their favor. Laban tricked Jacob into marrying Leah, thus requiring him to serve another seven years for Rachel. (Gen. 29:1-30) Jacob deceptively marked the lambs to add to the number of his flock according to the deal he worked out with Laban (Gen. 30:37-43)

 The relationship between Jacob and Laban got so bad that the Lord made it clear that it was time for Jacob to return to Canaan and Esau from which he had fled: “Return to the land of your fathers and to your kindred, and I will be with you.” (Gen. 31:3) Jacob, like Abraham before him, obeyed the call of the Lord and fled Laban. When Laban heard that Jacob had fled, he pursued him. But, the Lord protected the line of restoration and appeared to Laban in a dream making it clear that he was to do Jacob no harm. (Gen. 31:24) The Lord was indeed with Jacob, protecting him and giving him victory in the conflict with the line of rebellion.

 As soon as Jacob escapes without any harm from his encounter with Laban, the narrative turns to Jacob’s encounter with Esau in Genesis 32. The last Jacob (and the reader, for that matter) had heard from Esau was his thread to kill Jacob because of his deceptive activities. When Jacob hears that Esau is coming to meet him with 400 men, he was understandably “greatly afraid and distressed.” (Gen. 32:7). But, it is in this moment of great fear that the narrator gives us great insight into the faith of Jacob in his prayer recorded in Genesis 32:9-12: “O God of my father Abraham and God of my father Isaac, O Lord who said to me, ‘Return to your country and to your kindred, that I may do you good,’ I am not worthy of the least of all the deeds of steadfast love and all the faithfulness that you haves shown to your servant, for with only my staff I crossed this Jordan, and now I have become two camps. Please deliver me from the hand of my brother, from the hand of Esau, for I fear him, that he may come and attack me, the mothers with the children. But you said, ‘I will surely do you good, and make your offspring as the and of the sea, which cannot be numbered for multitude.” In the time of his greatest fear, Jacob clings to the covenant promises of the Lord. While deeply flawed, Jacob is seen as a man of faith.

 Genesis 32:22-32 contains the mysterious story of Jacob “wrestling” with “a man” who Jacob appears to identify as God himself or one of his angels. As Sailhamer notes: “There are many unanswered questions in this brief narrative of Jacob’s wrestling with an angel.”[[63]](#footnote-63) Whatever the identity of Jacob’s adversary or the exact meaning of “wrestling” in this text, Jacob is renamed as the Israel. (Gen. 32:28) The renaming of Jacob makes clear that this was a divine encounter.

 Jacob’s journey from Paddan-aram to Canaan has been perilous from the beginning. He flees only be to overtaken by Laban and spared only because of the Lord’s intervention. He then engages in a mysterious wrestling match that had significant implications and resulted in a name change. Now, the narrative shifts to the dreaded encounter between Jacob and Esau. But, again, the Lord is with Jacob and turns Esau’s heart from hatred against Jacob, to loving acceptance of him. The Lord again is shown faithful to his covenant promises in preserving and carrying forward the line of restoration. (Gen. 33:1-20)

 Genesis 34 contains a disturbing story of Dinah’s (Leah’s daughter) defilement and the brutal revenge taken by Simeon and Levi. The author of Genesis does not expressly condemn the brutal actions of Simeon and Levi at this point in the narrative, but the “blessings” upon Simeon and Levi in Genesis 49:5-7 make it clear that their actions were not sanctioned by the Lord: “Simeon and Levi are brothers; weapons of violence are their swords. Let my soul come not into their council; O my glory, be not joined to their company. For in their anger they killed men, and in their willfulness they hamstrung oxen. Cursed by their anger, for it is fierce, and their wrath, for it s cruel! I will divide them in Jacob and scatter them in Israel.”

 Jacob’s response to Simeon and Levi’s actions in Genesis 34:30 makes it clear that their actions were not the means by which the Lord was preserving and protecting the line of restoration but, rather, resulting in a greater need for the Lord’s protection: “You have brought trouble on me by making me stink to the inhabitants of the land, the Canaanites and the Perizzites. My numbers are few, and if they gather themselves against me and attack me, I shall be destroyed, both I and my household.” But, the Lord, in his great grace, acted in conformity with his covenant promises and preserved and protected the line of restoration. For, “as they journeyed, a terror from God fell upon the cities that were around them, so that they did not pursue the sons of Jacob.” (Gen. 35:5)

 In Genesis 35:9-12 the Lord again appears to Jacob to remind him of his great promises and to make it clear, once again, that the line of restoration would be carried forward through Jacob: “Your name is Jacob; no longer shall your name be called Jacob, but Israel shall be your name . . . I am God Almighty: be fruitful and multiply. A nation and a company of nations shall come from you, and kings shall come from your own body. The land that I gave to Abraham and Isaac I will give to you, and I will give the land to your offspring after you.”

 Genesis 35:16-29 records the death of Rachel as she gave birth to Benjamin and the death of Isaac. The narrative then shifts from Jacob and the line of restoration to Esau and the line of rebellion. The extensive genealogy of Esau’s (referred to also as Edom) descendants in Genesis 36 shows the continues presence of the line of rebellion and the continuing tension between the two lines, for Esau “went into a land away from his brother Jacob. For their possessions were too great for them to dwell together. The land of their sojournings could not support them because of their livestock.” (Gen. 36:6-7) The allusion to the parting of Abraham and Lot is clear and again confirms the delineation of the two lines.

 Genesis 37-50 provides, with the exception of Genesis 38, an extensive account of Joseph and his role in preserving the line of restoration. There are many fascinating details that are contained in these chapters, but the big picture is rather clear. Joseph is sold into slavery because of the jealousy of his brothers. (Gen. 37:12-36) He becomes the slave of Potiphar, “an officer of Pharaoh, the captain of the guard.” (Gen. 37:36)

 Genesis 38 interrupts the Joseph narratives to give the scandalous account of Judah and Tamar. Judah initially took Tamar as a wife for his firstborn, Er. But Er was struck down by the Lord because of his wickedness. (Gen. 38:7) Given the level of wickedness that is otherwise expressed in Genesis 38, one can only wonder at what level of wickedness merited the death penalty on Er’s account. In the wake of Er’s abrupt death, Judah gave Onan, his other son, to Tamar as a husband. But, Onan refused to fulfill his marital obligations with respect to Tamar (“he would waste the semen on the ground”) and was also put to death by the Lord. (Gen. 38:10)

 Judah then promises Tamar that he would give his other son, Shelah, to Tamar when he was of age, but when it was clear that Judah was not going to make good on this promise (for somewhat understandable reasons!), Tamar took matters in her own hands. She dressed as a prostitute and Judah slept with her without a second thought. (Gen. 38:16) It was from this scandalous union that Perez and Zerah were born and through whom the one who would ultimately bring the final restoration promised in Genesis 3:15 was brought forth. For, the beginning of the genealogy of Jesus Christ in Matthew 1:1-3 the following: “The book of the genealogy of Jesus Christ, the son of David, the son of Abraham. Abraham was the father of Isaac, and Isaac the father of Jacob, and Jacob the father of Judah and his brothers, and Judah the father of Perez and Zerah by Tamar, and Perez the father of Hezron . . . .” In the wake of this radical expression of grace, one can do nothing other than join the hymnist in declaring: “How deep the Father’s love for us, how vast beyond all measure . . . .”[[64]](#footnote-64)

The answer to why this is so becomes quite clear in the context of the Bible as a whole. As a general matter, we are reminded once again that inclusion in the line of restoration is based solely upon God’s grace. But, more particularly, we see in Genesis 49:8-10 that the line of restoration will be primarily carried forward through Judah: “Judah, your brothers shall praise you; your hand shall be on the neck of your enemies; your father’s sons shall bow down before you. Judah is a lion’s cub; form the prey, my son, you have gone up. He steeped down; he crouched as a lion and as a lioness; who dares rouse him? The scepter shall not depart from Judah, nor the ruler’s staff from between his fee, until tribute comes to him and to him shall be the obedience of the peoples.” Schreiner rightly comments on the significance of these verses: “The writer clarifies here that from Judah will come the ruler who will defeat the Lord’s enemies. The promise that the offspring of the woman will triumph over the serpent will be obtained through the family of Judah. The blessing promised to Abraham through all the nations will be realized finally through Judah’s family.”[[65]](#footnote-65)

Sailhamer describes the significance of Judah’s blessing as follows: “Jacob foretold a future for the tribe of Judah that pictured him as the preeminent son. . . . As the writer of Psalm 78 later put it, the Lord ‘rejected the tents of Joseph, he did not choose the tribe of Ephraim, but he chose the tribe of Judah . . . . [T]he words of Jacob regarding Judah in Genesis 49 anticipated in many details the future rise of David to Israel’s throne. . . . Judah is described as a victorious warrior who returns home from battle and is greeted by the shouts of praise from his brothers . . . He is the one who holds the ‘scepter’ and the ruler’s staff’ . . . . The most startling aspect of the description of this one from the tribe of Judah comes next: ‘and the obedience of the nations is his’ (49:10b). The use of the plural word nations rather than the singular suggests that Jacob had in view a kingship that extended beyond the boundaries of the Israelites to include other nations as well. . . . Later biblical writers drew heavily form the imagery of this short text in their portrayal of the reign of the coming Messiah . . . . The book of Revelation applies this same image to the victorious return of Christ.”[[66]](#footnote-66)

Genesis 39 returns the narrative back to Joseph and his slavery in Egypt. Despite Joseph’s faithfulness to walk in the Lord’s ways, he is wrongly charged with attempting to seduce Potiphar’s wife. (Gen. 39:19-20) Joseph is thrown into prison and things look pretty bleak for Joseph. However, Joseph is delivered from prison and lifted to high position in the Egyptian government because of his God-given ability to interpret dreams. (Gen. 39:21-41:57) It is through his ability to interpret dreams that the Lord preserves his line of restoration, as well. For, Jacob and all of his descendants eventually find food and a home in Egypt during a devastating famine. (Gen. 42:1-47:27)

On Israel’s journey to Egypt the Lord once again appears to him and comforts Israel with his promises: “I am God, the God of your father. Do not be afraid to go down to Egypt, for there I will make you into a great nation. I myself will go down with you to Egypt, and I will also bring you up again, and Joseph’s hand shall close your eyes.” (Gen. 46:3-4) Despite the bleak circumstances, the Lord is reminding Israel that he will fulfill his promises on his timeline and according to his plan and ways. And, we see in Genesis 47:27 that the Lord is indeed faithful to his covenant promises for: “Thus Israel settled in the land of Egypt, in the land of Goshen. And they gained possessions in it, and were fruitful and multiplied greatly.”

 Genesis 49 sets forth Israel’s blessings upon his sons, the 12 tribes of Israel. We have already looked at the blessings that carry the greatest significance in the story going forward. The most significant blessing being that given to Judah.

 Israel is portrayed in the final days before his death as clinging to faith in the Lord’s promises in his statement to Joseph in Genesis 48:21: “Behold, I am about to die, but God will be with you and will bring you again to the land of your fathers.” This faith is portrayed again in Genesis 49:28-33 in his instructions to bury his body with Abraham, Sarah, Isaac, Rebekah, and Leah in the Land of Promise.

Joseph beautifully captures the reality of God’s sovereignty which worked through his brother’s depravity to accomplish his restorative purposes in protecting and carrying forward the line of restoration: “As for you, you meant evil against me, but God meant it for good, to bring it about that many people should be kept alive, as they are today.” (Gen. 50:19-20)

As the book of Genesis ends, were are we in the fulfillment of the Lord’s promises to Abraham? Schreiner rightly provides the following observation in response to the question: “Genesis ends with Israel in the wrong place. The kingdom is the Lord’s, but Egypt is not where they were supposed to be. The offspring of Abraham were scarcely as many as the stars. They did not live in the land of Canaan, and worldwide blessing was not even close. Still, the family of the patriarchs survived and was even beginning to thrive. The Lord had preserve them even though they were small and weak, even while they were sojourners in the land promised to them (Ps. 105:11-15). He had showered his grace on Abraham, Isaac, and Jacob by making a covenant with them and showing them grace again and again. The preservation of the offspring clearly was the Lord’s work, for Abraham’s family survived despite barrenness, sin, stupidity, squabbles, and famine. Genesis teaches that the kingdom will come, for ultimately it depends upon the Lord. It will be realized through is promise rather than human virtue.”

1. John H. Sailhamer, *The Pentateuch as Narrative: A Biblical-Theological Commentary* (Grand Rapids: Zondervan, 1992), 84. [↑](#footnote-ref-1)
2. Thomas R. Schreiner, *The King in His Beauty: A Biblical Theology of the Old and New Testaments* (Grand Rapids: Baker Academic, 2013), 6. [↑](#footnote-ref-2)
3. Schreiner, *The King in His Beauty*, 7. [↑](#footnote-ref-3)
4. Michael Lawrence, *Biblical Theology In the Life of the Church: A Guide for Ministry* (Wheaton: Crossway, 2010), \_\_\_. Lawrence cites Meredith Kline’s work on the covenants and adopts his alternative, but similar, listing of the Old Testament covenants, namely, (1) Covenant of Creation, (2) Covenant of Redemption, (3) Noahic Covenant, (4) Abrahamic Covenant, (5) Mosaic Covenant, (6) Davidic Covenant, and (7) New Covenant. Meredith Kline, *Treaty of the Great King* (Grand Rapids: Eerdmans, 1965). As you can see, the only difference is the way that Kline describes the relationship between God and Adam and the promise of redemption contained in Genesis 3:15. [↑](#footnote-ref-4)
5. Graeme Goldsworthy, *According to Plan: The Unfolding Revelation of God in the Bible* (Downers Grove: IVP Academic, 1991), 92-93. [↑](#footnote-ref-5)
6. Schreiner, *The King in His Beauty*, 9 (quoting Gerhard Von Rad, *Genesis: A Commentary* (Philadelphia: Westminster, 1972), 90). [↑](#footnote-ref-6)
7. Goldsworthy, *According to Plan*, 103. [↑](#footnote-ref-7)
8. Schreiner, *The King in His Beauty*, 9. [↑](#footnote-ref-8)
9. Revelation 12:9: “And the great dragon was thrown down, that ancient serpent, who is called the devil and Satan, the deceiver of the whole world-he was thrown down to the earth, and his angels were thrown down with him.”; Revelation 20:2: “And he seized the dragon, that ancient serpent, who is the devil and Satan, and bound him for a thousand years.“; Goldsworthy, *According to Plan*, 102. [↑](#footnote-ref-9)
10. Genesis 3:4-5. [↑](#footnote-ref-10)
11. Schreiner, *The King in His Beauty*, 9 (quoting Meredith Kline, *Kingdom Prologue* (South Hamilton: Gordon-Conwell Theological Seminary, 1993), 78). [↑](#footnote-ref-11)
12. Goldsworthy, *According to Plan*, 103. [↑](#footnote-ref-12)
13. Genesis 3:6-7. [↑](#footnote-ref-13)
14. Goldsworthy, *According to Plan*, 104. [↑](#footnote-ref-14)
15. Genesis 3:8. [↑](#footnote-ref-15)
16. Genesis 3:9. [↑](#footnote-ref-16)
17. Genesis 3:12-13. [↑](#footnote-ref-17)
18. Schreiner, The King in His Beauty, 10. [↑](#footnote-ref-18)
19. Goldsworthy, According to Plan, 106. [↑](#footnote-ref-19)
20. Schreiner, The King in His Beauty, 10. [↑](#footnote-ref-20)
21. Schreiner, The King in His Beauty, 11. [↑](#footnote-ref-21)
22. 1 John 3:12. [↑](#footnote-ref-22)
23. Goldsworthy, According to Plan, 113. [↑](#footnote-ref-23)
24. Goldsworthy, According to Plan, 113. [↑](#footnote-ref-24)
25. Genesis 5:29. [↑](#footnote-ref-25)
26. Schreiner, The King in His Beauty, 12. [↑](#footnote-ref-26)
27. Genesis 6:8. [↑](#footnote-ref-27)
28. Goldsworthy, According to Plan, 114. [↑](#footnote-ref-28)
29. Schreiner, The King is His Beauty, 17-18. [↑](#footnote-ref-29)
30. Genesis 8:20-22. [↑](#footnote-ref-30)
31. Genesis 9:7. [↑](#footnote-ref-31)
32. Genesis 9:9-11. [↑](#footnote-ref-32)
33. Genesis 9:12-17. [↑](#footnote-ref-33)
34. Schreiner, The King in His Beauty, 13. [↑](#footnote-ref-34)
35. John H. Sailhamer, *Biblical Prophecy* (Grand Rapids: Zondervan, 1998), 37. [↑](#footnote-ref-35)
36. Genesis 9:22; Schreiner, The King in His Beauty, 13 (quoting Peter J. Gentry and Stephen J. Wellum, Kingdom through Covenant: A Biblical-Theological Understanding of the Covenants (Wheaton: Crossway, 2012), 170). [↑](#footnote-ref-36)
37. Goldsworthy, According to Plan, 116. [↑](#footnote-ref-37)
38. Goldsworthy, According to Plan, 120. [↑](#footnote-ref-38)
39. Schreiner, The King in His Beauty, 17. [↑](#footnote-ref-39)
40. Goldsworthy, According to Plan, 122. [↑](#footnote-ref-40)
41. Joshua 24:2-3. [↑](#footnote-ref-41)
42. Hebrews 11:8-9. [↑](#footnote-ref-42)
43. Goldsworthy, According to Plan, 123. [↑](#footnote-ref-43)
44. 2 Cor. 12:8-10. [↑](#footnote-ref-44)
45. See, e.g., Psalm 110:4; Heb. 5:6, 5:10, 6:20, 7:1, 7:10, 7:11, 7:15, and 7:17. [↑](#footnote-ref-45)
46. Sailhamer, *Biblical Prophecy*, 38. [↑](#footnote-ref-46)
47. Craig A Blaising & Darrell L. Bock, *Progressive Dispensationalism* (Grand Rapids: Baker Books, 1993), 135. [↑](#footnote-ref-47)
48. Schreiner, The King in His Beauty, 18-19. [↑](#footnote-ref-48)
49. Rom. 4:3-5, 16, 23-25. [↑](#footnote-ref-49)
50. Sailhamer, Pentateuch as Narrative, 154. [↑](#footnote-ref-50)
51. This fact is evidenced by Genesis 16:12: “He shall be a wild donkey of a man, his hand against everyone and everyone’s hand against him . . . .” The identification of Ishmael with the line of rebellion is further confirmed by the narratives clear identification with Isaac as the one through whom the line of restoration will be carried forward. [↑](#footnote-ref-51)
52. Schreiner, The King in His Beauty, 20. [↑](#footnote-ref-52)
53. Schreiner, The King in His Beauty, 19. [↑](#footnote-ref-53)
54. Goldsworthy, According to Plan, 122. [↑](#footnote-ref-54)
55. See Deuteronomy 23:3: “No Ammonite or Moabite may enter the assembly of the Lord.” But see Sailhamer’s warning against taking the contrast between the two lines to an extreme: “It is not entirely clear what ‘entering the assembly’ means in this passage. It may have the limited sense of exclusion from public service or marriage into a Israelite family; or, more generally, it may mean exclusion from Israel’s covenant relationship with God altogether. In light of the fact that other biblical texts state quite clearly that foreigners were to enjoy the same privileges in Israel’s worship as native Israelites (e.g., Nu 15:15), a more limited interpretation of this passage is warranted.” It is always important to recall that one of the promises made within the Abrahamic Covenant was that the nations would be blessed through Abraham and his descendants. The nature of the gospel, to which the entirety of the Old Testament points, is the Lord acting to restore those in active rebellion against him. As Paul notes in his letter to the church at Colossae: “And you, who once were alienated and hostile in mind, doing evil deeds, he has now reconciled in his body of flesh by his death, in order to present you holy and blameless and above reproach before him . . . .” (Col. 1:21-22) [↑](#footnote-ref-55)
56. Schreiner, The King in His Beauty, 21. [↑](#footnote-ref-56)
57. Goldsworthy, According to Plan, 123. [↑](#footnote-ref-57)
58. Schreiner, The King in His Beauty, 21. [↑](#footnote-ref-58)
59. Schreiner, The King in His Beauty, 21. [↑](#footnote-ref-59)
60. Schreiner, The King in His Beauty, 22. [↑](#footnote-ref-60)
61. Schreiner, The King in His Beauty, 23. [↑](#footnote-ref-61)
62. Schreiner, The King in His Beauty, 23. [↑](#footnote-ref-62)
63. Sailhamer, Pentateuch as Narrative, 198. [↑](#footnote-ref-63)
64. How Deed the Father’s Love For Us. [↑](#footnote-ref-64)
65. Schreiner, The King in His Beauty, 25. [↑](#footnote-ref-65)
66. Sailhamer, Pentateuch as Narrative, 234-236. [↑](#footnote-ref-66)