

FAITHFUL MEN LIBRARY · STUDY OUTLINE

Genesis: A Study Outline

Old Testament Digest, Volume 1

From the *Old Testament Digest* of William MacDonald

*Outline based on Old Testament Digest, Volume 1: Genesis–Deuteronomy by William MacDonald.
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Genesis

A study outline from William MacDonald's *Old Testament Digest, Volume 1* · online: kee-ministry-library.netlify.app/.../outline/genesis

Overview of Genesis

Genesis is the book of beginnings: God's creation of the heavens, the earth and man, the fall into sin, the flood and Babel. MacDonald then follows the story as it narrows to one man, Abraham, and his family line through Isaac, Jacob and Joseph. It opens with a perfect creation and closes with a coffin in Egypt, and its 48 chapters of biography show that God is chiefly interested in people.

Key themes

- God as Creator and Christ as the agent of creation
- The fall and the first gospel promise
- Grace and judgment in the flood
- God's unconditional covenant with Abraham
- Justification by faith
- Reaping what we sow
- Separation from the world
- God overruling evil for good
- Types of Christ in people and events

Christ in Genesis. MacDonald sees Christ as Creator, as the woman's Seed who crushes Satan, and as pictured by the coats of skin, Abel's lamb, the ark, Melchizedek, Isaac and the ram on Moriah, and Isaac receiving his bride. Joseph, loved, rejected, exalted and revealed to his brothers, is to him one of the fullest pictures of Christ in the Old Testament.

Read Genesis in the NET Bible: [Genesis 1](#) · MacDonald's full commentary: [Genesis in the Digest](#)

MacDonald's Outline of Genesis

- I. I. Creation ([Genesis 1-2](#))
- II. II. The Fall of Man ([Genesis 3-5](#))
- III. III. Noah and the Flood ([Genesis 6-10](#))
- IV. IV. The Tower of Babel ([Genesis 11](#))
- V. V. Abraham ([Genesis 12-25](#))
 - A. A. Call ([Genesis 12:1](#))
 - B. B. The Covenant ([Genesis 12:2-3](#))
 - C. C. To Egypt and back ([Genesis 12:10-13:4](#))
 - D. D. Experiences with Lot and Abimelech ([Genesis 13:5-14:24; 18:1-20:18](#))
 - E. E. Ishmael and Isaac ([Genesis 15:1-17:27; 21:1-34](#))
 - F. F. Offering of Isaac ([Genesis 22](#))
 - G. G. Purchase of Cave of Machpelah ([Genesis 23](#))
 - H. H. A bride for Isaac ([Genesis 24](#))
- VI. VI. Isaac ([Genesis 25:19-27:46](#))
- VII. VII. Jacob ([Genesis 28:1-36:43](#))
 - A. A. Blessed by Isaac ([Genesis 28:1-9](#))
 - B. B. Sent to Haran: his vision and vow ([Genesis 28:10-22](#))
 - C. C. The years spent working for Laban, including marriage to Leah and Rachel, and birth of the twelve sons ([Genesis 29:1-30:43](#))
 - D. D. Return to Canaan and reconciliation to Esau ([Genesis 31:1-33:17](#))
 - E. E. Calamities and crises ([Genesis 33:18-36:43](#))
- VIII. VIII. Joseph ([Genesis 37:1-50:26](#))
 - A. A. Rejected by brethren and sold into Egypt ([Genesis 37:1-36](#))
 - B. (Parenthetical chapter on Judah's sin) ([Genesis 38](#))
 - C. B. Promotion in Egypt and personal integrity ([Genesis 39:1-40:23](#))
 - D. C. Famine brings his brethren to Egypt for food ([Genesis 41:1-44:34](#))
 - E. D. Joseph's identity made known to his brethren and to his father, Jacob ([Genesis 45:1-47:31](#))
 - F. E. Joseph's sons blessed by Jacob ([Genesis 48:1-22](#))
 - G. F. Jacob's blessing of his own sons ([Genesis 49:1-33](#))
 - H. G. Death of Jacob, then later of Joseph ([Genesis 50:1-26](#))

I • God Creates the Heavens and the Earth

[Genesis 1](#)

Starting from God Himself, MacDonald walks through the six days that made the earth ready for man, God's

crowning work.

- I. The opening words are the bedrock of faith: Scripture takes God's existence for granted – [Genesis 1:1](#)
 - A. Believe the first verse and the rest of the Bible follows – [Genesis 1:1](#)
 - B. Those who deny God are called fools in [Psalm 14:1](#) and [Psalm 53:1](#)
- II. The gap (creation-reconstruction) view of verses 1–2 – [Genesis 1:1–2](#)
 - A. A catastrophe, perhaps Satan's fall, may have left the earth waste and empty – [Genesis 1:2](#)
 - B. God did not create it waste ([Isaiah 45:18](#)); "was" may mean "had become" – [Genesis 1:2](#)
 - C. The Spirit moved over the waters to prepare for the work that followed – [Genesis 1:2](#)
- III. The six days that prepared the earth for people – [Genesis 1:3–25](#)
 - A. Day 1: light out of darkness, a picture of conversion ([2 Corinthians 4:6](#)) – [Genesis 1:3–5](#)
 - B. Day 2: the waters divided and the sky (the birds' heaven) formed – [Genesis 1:6–8](#)
 - C. Day 3: dry land and plants; Day 4: sun, moon and stars for light and calendar – [Genesis 1:9–19](#)
 - D. Days 5–6: fish, birds, animals, each reproducing "after its kind" – [Genesis 1:20–25](#)
- IV. Man made in God's image, the crown of creation – [Genesis 1:26–31](#)
 - A. Man is God's representative, a three-part being like the triune God – [Genesis 1:26–27](#)
 - B. "Let us make" hints at the Trinity – [Genesis 1:26](#)
 - C. Male and female are God's creative act, which evolution cannot explain – [Genesis 1:27](#)
 - D. "Replenish" means fill; man and beast first ate plants – [Genesis 1:28–30](#)
- V. The days were best understood as literal 24-hour days – [Genesis 1:5–31](#)
 - A. "Evening and morning" and numbered days mean ordinary days
 - B. The Sabbath command rests on God's six days of work ([Exodus 20:8–11](#))
 - C. The genealogies leave no room for man's existing millions of years
- VI. The Lord Jesus was the active Agent in creation and deserves endless worship – [Genesis 1:1](#)
 - A. See [John 1:1–3](#), [Colossians 1:16](#), [Hebrews 1:2](#)

CROSS REFERENCES

[Psalm 14:1](#) [Isaiah 45:18](#) [2 Corinthians 4:6](#) [Exodus 20:8–11](#) [John 1:1, 14](#) [Colossians 1:16](#) [Hebrews 1:2](#)

LESSONS

- God's word in the first verse is the foundation; trust it and the rest of Scripture stands.
- The wonders of creation should move us to worship Christ the Creator.

RELATED READING

- *The Book of Genesis* (Dan Snaddon) — Snaddon on the creation week
- *Creation in Genesis and in Geology* (F. W. Grant) — Grant on what Genesis 1 actually states
- *The Book of Genesis* (James Gunn) — Gunn on God's work in the first chapter

ALSO DISCUSSED IN THE LIBRARY

- *Through the Scriptures: Sunday School Lesson Outlines* (Alfred P. Gibbs)
- *Articles by James Naismith* (James Naismith)
- *Everyone Has a Psalm* (R. Edward Harlow)

Read MacDonald on Chapter 1 →

2 · God's Rest, Eden, and the First Marriage

Genesis 2

MacDonald shows God resting in a finished work, then gives a closer look at the making of man, the garden test, and the gift of the woman.

- I. God rested on the seventh day in satisfaction, not weariness — [Genesis 2:1–3](#)
 - A. No Sabbath command yet, but the pattern of one day in seven — [Genesis 2:3](#)
- II. The name LORD God shows God in covenant with man — [Genesis 2:4–6](#)
 - A. Elohim is Creator; Jehovah is the covenant name, not a sign of another author — [Genesis 2:4](#)
 - B. Verse 5 looks back to the time before plants grew; mist watered the earth — [Genesis 2:5–6](#)
- III. Man formed from dust and made a living soul by God's breath — [Genesis 2:7](#)
 - A. "Adam" means red or ground, from the earth he came from — [Genesis 2:7](#)
- IV. Eden and the tree that tested obedience — [Genesis 2:8–17](#)
 - A. The garden lay east, near the Tigris and Euphrates — [Genesis 2:8–14](#)
 - B. Eating was wrong only because God said so; that fruit still tempts in new forms — [Genesis 2:17](#)
 - C. The penalty: spiritual death at once and physical death in time — [Genesis 2:17](#)
- V. The woman formed from Adam's side, a picture of Christ and His Bride — [Genesis 2:18–23](#)
 - A. Naming the animals showed Adam his need of a fitting partner — [Genesis 2:19–20](#)
 - B. As Adam slept, his bride came from his side; Christ won His Bride by His blood — [Genesis 2:21–22](#)
 - C. Taken from his side to be protected and loved
- VI. God instituted lifelong, one-man-one-woman marriage — [Genesis 2:24](#)
 - A. It cannot be broken without harm
 - B. It pictures Christ and the church ([Ephesians 5:22–32](#))

CROSS REFERENCES

[Ephesians 5:22–32](#)

LESSONS

- Marriage is God's gift for our good, and violating it brings sure consequences.
- Obedience matters simply because God has spoken.

RELATED READING

- *The Book of Genesis* (Dan Snaddon) — Snaddon on man, woman, Eden and marriage
- *The Book of Genesis* (Dan Snaddon) — Snaddon on the creation of man
- *Genesis in the Light of the New Testament* (F. W. Grant) — Grant on Eden and God's relationship with man

ALSO DISCUSSED IN THE LIBRARY

- *The Book of Genesis* (James Gunn)
- *Through the Scriptures: Sunday School Lesson Outlines* (Alfred P. Gibbs)
- *Articles by James Naismith* (James Naismith)

Read MacDonald on Chapter 2 →

3 · The Fall of Man and the First Gospel Promise

Genesis 3

MacDonald traces how Satan led the first couple into sin, the shame and judgment that followed, and God's

gracious promise of the woman's Seed.

- I. The fall is literal history, not myth – [Genesis 3:1](#)
 - A. The serpent is Satan ([Revelation 12:9](#); [Revelation 20:2](#)) – [Genesis 3:1](#)
 - B. Paul ([2 Corinthians 11:3](#)) and Peter ([2 Peter 2:16](#)) treat such accounts as fact
 - C. To deny it is to deny the inspiration of Scripture
- II. The steps that plunged the race into sin – [Genesis 3:1–6](#)
 - A. Satan cast doubt on God's word and misstated His command – [Genesis 3:1](#)
 - B. Eve added "touch" to what God said – [Genesis 3:3](#)
 - C. Satan denied judgment and painted God as withholding good – [Genesis 3:4–5](#)
 - D. Lust of the flesh, of the eyes, and pride of life; Eve deceived, Adam willful ([1 Timothy 2:14](#)) – [Genesis 3:6](#)
- III. Sin brought shame, fear and excuses; God came seeking – [Genesis 3:7–13](#)
 - A. Fig-leaf aprons picture a bloodless religion of works – [Genesis 3:7](#)
 - B. Adam blamed the woman (and God); Eve blamed the serpent – [Genesis 3:12–13](#)
 - C. "Where art thou?" shows man lost and God's grace seeking – [Genesis 3:9](#)
- IV. The curse on the serpent and the first gospel (protevangelion) – [Genesis 3:14–15](#)
 - A. The woman's Seed would crush Satan's head at Calvary – [Genesis 3:15](#)
 - B. Satan would bruise His heel: suffering and death, but not defeat – [Genesis 3:15](#)
 - C. "Her seed" may hint at the virgin birth; the promise comes before the sentence – [Genesis 3:15](#)
- V. Sin's sure consequences for the woman and the man – [Genesis 3:16–19](#)
 - A. Pain in childbirth; the wife still under her husband – [Genesis 3:16](#)
 - B. Cursed ground, toil and sweat, then return to dust – [Genesis 3:17–19](#)
 - C. Work itself is not the curse; the toil and frustration are
- VI. God's covering and mercy – [Genesis 3:20–24](#)
 - A. Adam showed faith in naming Eve mother of all living – [Genesis 3:20](#)
 - B. Coats of skin through a death picture the robe of righteousness through the Lamb's blood – [Genesis 3:21](#)
 - C. Barring the tree of life kept them from living forever in decaying bodies – [Genesis 3:22–24](#)
 - D. They believed Satan over God and are missing from [Hebrews 11](#)

CROSS REFERENCES

[Revelation 12:9](#) [2 Corinthians 11:3](#) [Numbers 22](#) [2 Peter 2:16](#) [1 Timothy 2:14](#) [Proverbs 19:3](#) [Hebrews 11:6](#)

LESSONS

- Satan still works by questioning God's word; guard what God has actually said.
- Man cannot cover his sin with his own works; only a covering God provides through sacrifice will do.
- God takes the first step to seek the lost, proving the very love Satan made Eve doubt.

RELATED READING

- *The Book of Genesis* (Dan Snaddon) – Snaddon on the fall, seed-plot of the Bible
- *The Book of Genesis* (Dan Snaddon) – Snaddon on the coats of skin as gospel picture
- "Aprons of Leaves" (Steve Hulshizer, plymouthbrethren.org) – Hulshizer on Adam's fig-leaf aprons

ALSO DISCUSSED IN THE LIBRARY

- *Articles by James Naismith* (James Naismith)
- *Through the Scriptures: Sunday School Lesson Outlines* (Alfred P. Gibbs)

4 · Cain and Abel: Two Ways of Worship

Genesis 4

MacDonald contrasts Abel's blood sacrifice of faith with Cain's bloodless offering, follows Cain's murder and wandering, and introduces the godly line of Seth.

- I. The first births and Eve's hope – [Genesis 4:1-3](#)
 - A. Eve owned the Lord's help; she may have thought Cain was the promised seed – [Genesis 4:1](#)
 - B. The passing of time allows for a growing population – [Genesis 4:3](#)
- II. Two offerings: faith brings blood, unbelief brings fruit – [Genesis 4:3-5](#)
 - A. Sinners may come to God only on the ground of a substitute's blood
 - B. Abel's offering showed faith and his acceptance ([Hebrews 11:4](#)) – [Genesis 4:4](#)
 - C. It points to the Lamb of God who takes away sin
- III. God's loving warning to angry Cain – [Genesis 4:6-7](#)
 - A. Sin crouched at the door, ready to destroy him – [Genesis 4:7](#)
 - B. Grant: a sin offering lay at the door, if he would take it – [Genesis 4:7](#)
- IV. Murder, judgment and departure from God's presence – [Genesis 4:8-16](#)
 - A. Jealous anger grew into the murder of Abel – [Genesis 4:8](#)
 - B. Cain was sorry for the penalty, not the sin – [Genesis 4:13](#)
 - C. God still protected him with a mark – [Genesis 4:15](#)
 - D. Going out from the Lord's presence is the saddest departure – [Genesis 4:16](#)
- V. Cain's line and its many "firsts" – [Genesis 4:17-24](#)
 - A. Cain married a sister or close relative ([Genesis 5:4](#)) – [Genesis 4:17](#)
 - B. First city, polygamy, herding, music, metalwork – [Genesis 4:17-22](#)
 - C. Lamech's song of violence and self-defense – [Genesis 4:23-24](#)
- VI. The godly line of Seth, through whom Messiah would come – [Genesis 4:25-26](#)
 - A. In Enosh's day men began to call on the name of Jehovah – [Genesis 4:26](#)

CROSS REFERENCES

[Hebrews 11:4](#) [Genesis 5:4](#) [John 1:29](#)

LESSONS

- The life of faith is the life that counts; Abel still speaks.
- Unchecked anger is the seed of murder; God warns before He judges.

RELATED READING

- *The Book of Genesis* (Dan Snaddon) – Snaddon on sin's progress in Genesis 4
- *Typical Foreshadowings in Genesis* (William Lincoln) – Lincoln on the two seeds in Genesis 4-5

ALSO DISCUSSED IN THE LIBRARY

- *Articles by James Naismith* (James Naismith)
- *Through the Scriptures: Sunday School Lesson Outlines* (Alfred P. Gibbs)
- *Men of the Mountains & Valleys* (T. Ernest Wilson)

Read MacDonald on Chapter 4 →

5 • The Line from Adam to Noah

Genesis 5

MacDonald reads this genealogy as Messiah's bloodline, marked by death, yet brightened by Enoch's walk with God.

- I. The tolling of the death bells: Messiah's line from Adam to Shem — [Genesis 5:1-32](#)
 - A. Compare [Luke 3:36-38](#)
 - B. Adam made in God's likeness; Seth born in Adam's fallen image — [Genesis 5:1-3](#)
 - C. Adam's death fulfilled [Genesis 2:17](#) physically — [Genesis 5:5](#)
- II. Enoch walked with God and was taken to heaven — [Genesis 5:21-24](#)
 - A. His son's birth seems to have changed his life — [Genesis 5:22](#)
 - B. Walking with God is a lifelong, steady fellowship ([Hebrews 11:5](#)) — [Genesis 5:22-24](#)
 - C. A picture of the church caught up before the tribulation — [Genesis 5:24](#)
- III. Methuselah and Noah — [Genesis 5:25-32](#)
 - A. Methuselah may mean "it shall be sent"; the flood came the year he died — [Genesis 5:27](#)
 - B. Noah ("rest") points to the comfort Christ brings — [Genesis 5:29](#)
 - C. Lifespans shrink toward 70 years ([Psalm 90:10](#))

CROSS REFERENCES

[Luke 3:36-38](#) [Hebrews 11:5](#) [Psalm 90:10](#)

LESSONS

- It is good to start well, but better to keep walking with God to the end.

RELATED READING

- *The Book of Genesis* (Dan Snaddon) — Snaddon on Genesis 5 and the line of Seth
- *The Patriarchs* (J. G. Bellett) — Bellett's meditation on Enoch
- "The Lord's Way With Enoch, the Saint for Heaven" (William Lincoln, plymouthbrethren.org) — Lincoln on Enoch, the saint for heaven

ALSO DISCUSSED IN THE LIBRARY

- *Articles by James Naismith* (James Naismith)
- *Articles by W. Ross Rainey* (W. Ross Rainey)
- *Through the Scriptures: Sunday School Lesson Outlines* (Alfred P. Gibbs)

Read MacDonald on Chapter 5 →

6 • Corruption on Earth and the Ark Commanded

Genesis 6

MacDonald weighs the views of the "sons of God," shows God's patience nearing its end, and describes the ark Noah built by grace and obedience.

- I. Two views of the "sons of God" and "daughters of men" — [Genesis 6:1-4](#)
 - A. Fallen angels who left their sphere ([Job 1:6](#); [Jude 6-7](#)) — [Genesis 6:2](#)
 - B. Or the godly line of Seth marrying the line of Cain — [Genesis 6:2](#)
 - C. The Nephilim may have been unnatural offspring of such unions — [Genesis 6:4](#)
- II. God's patience has a limit: 120 years — [Genesis 6:3](#)
 - A. He is not willing that any perish, yet judgment will come

- III. God's grief over sin is His holy response to man's change – [Genesis 6:5–7](#)
 - A. His "repenting" is not a whim but a reaction to evil – [Genesis 6:6](#)
- IV. Noah found grace and built the ark – [Genesis 6:8–16](#)
 - A. The ark: about 450 by 75 by 45 feet, three decks, a long opening for light – [Genesis 6:15–16](#)
 - B. Saved by grace (sovereignty), he obeyed fully (responsibility) – [Genesis 6:8, 22](#)
 - C. Noah and Enoch alone are said to walk with God – [Genesis 6:9](#)
- V. Noah pictures the faithful Jewish remnant carried through the tribulation – [Genesis 6:9](#)
 - A. Enoch pictures the church taken up before it
- VI. The first mention of covenant in the Bible – [Genesis 6:18–22](#)
 - A. Scofield's eight covenants, from Edenic ([Genesis 2:16](#)) to the New ([Hebrews 8:8](#)) – [Genesis 6:18](#)
 - B. The ark held the basic kinds, with ample room – [Genesis 6:19–21](#)

CROSS REFERENCES

[Jude 6–7](#) [Job 1:6](#) [Matthew 22:30](#) [Genesis 18:1–5](#) [2 Peter 3:9](#) [Hebrews 8:8](#)

LESSONS

- God is long-suffering, but His patience has a limit.
- Divine sovereignty and human responsibility work together, not against each other.

RELATED READING

- *The Book of Genesis* (Dan Snaddon) — Snaddon on the giants and Noah's day
- *The Book of Genesis* (Dan Snaddon) — Snaddon on the ark as a type of Christ
- *The Book of Genesis* (James Gunn) — Gunn on the Nephilim and the sons of God

ALSO DISCUSSED IN THE LIBRARY

- *Through the Scriptures: Sunday School Lesson Outlines* (Alfred P. Gibbs)
- *Articles by James Naismith* (James Naismith)
- *Men of the Mountains & Valleys* (T. Ernest Wilson)

[Read MacDonald on Chapter 6](#) →

7 • Into the Ark: The Flood Comes

[Genesis 7](#)

MacDonald hears a gospel invitation in God's call to come into the ark, defends a worldwide flood, and sees the ark as a picture of Christ.

- I. "Come into the ark": the Bible's first gracious invitation – [Genesis 7:1](#)
- II. Clean and unclean animals, and the rain begins – [Genesis 7:2–12](#)
 - A. Seven pairs of clean animals, likely for food and sacrifice – [Genesis 7:2–3](#)
 - B. Forty days and nights: forty is the number of testing – [Genesis 7:12](#)
- III. The flood was worldwide, not local – [Genesis 7:19–24](#)
 - A. All high mountains under heaven were covered – [Genesis 7:19–20](#)
 - B. A huge ark would be needless for a local flood
 - C. God's rainbow promise ([Genesis 9:15](#)) would be broken if it were local
 - D. Peter uses it as a picture of judgment by fire ([2 Peter 3:6](#))
- IV. The ark is a picture of Christ – [Genesis 7:23](#)
 - A. Christ went under the waters of God's wrath at Calvary
 - B. Those in Christ are safe; those outside are lost

CROSS REFERENCES

[Genesis 8:20](#) [Genesis 9:15](#) [2 Peter 3:6](#)

LESSONS

- Safety from judgment is found only inside Christ, as Noah's family was safe inside the ark.

RELATED READING

- *Typical Foreshadowings in Genesis* (William Lincoln) — Lincoln on Noah before and during the deluge
- *The Patriarchs* (J. G. Bellett) — Bellett's meditation on Noah

ALSO DISCUSSED IN THE LIBRARY

- *Articles by James Naismith* (James Naismith)
- *Through the Scriptures: Sunday School Lesson Outlines* (Alfred P. Gibbs)
- *The Book of Genesis* (Dan Snaddon)

[Read MacDonald on Chapter 7](#) →

8 • The Waters Recede and Noah Worships

[Genesis 8](#)

MacDonald sets out the flood's timeline, sees the raven and dove as the believer's two natures, and points to Noah's altar as the right response to salvation.

I. The chronology of the flood — [Genesis 7:10–8:14](#)

- A. 7 days of waiting; 40 days of rain; 150 days till the ark rested — [Genesis 7:10–8:4](#)
- B. Mountaintops seen; raven and dove sent out at 7-day intervals — [Genesis 8:5–12](#)
- C. The covering removed at 314 days; earth dry at 371 days — [Genesis 8:13–14](#)

II. The raven and the dove picture the old and new natures — [Genesis 8:6–12](#)

- A. The old nature feeds on carrion and death — [Genesis 8:7](#)
- B. The new nature rests only on resurrection ground — [Genesis 8:8–12](#)

III. Noah came out and built an altar — [Genesis 8:15–20](#)

- A. Those saved from wrath should bring God heartfelt worship — [Genesis 8:20](#)

IV. God's promise never again to curse the ground this way — [Genesis 8:21–22](#)

- A. Seasons will continue as long as the earth remains — [Genesis 8:22](#)

LESSONS

- Our worship, like Noah's altar, is still a pleasing response to God's saving grace.

RELATED READING

- *The Book of Genesis* (Dan Snaddon) — Snaddon on Noah's altar after the flood
- *The Book of Genesis* (James Gunn) — Gunn on the deluge's accomplishments, chapters 7–8

ALSO DISCUSSED IN THE LIBRARY

- *Through the Scriptures: Sunday School Lesson Outlines* (Alfred P. Gibbs)
- *Men of the Mountains & Valleys* (T. Ernest Wilson)
- *Isaiah* (F. C. Jennings)

[Read MacDonald on Chapter 8](#) →

9 • A New Start: Government, Rainbow, and Noah's Fall

[Genesis 9](#)

MacDonald explains the new rules given after the flood, the rainbow covenant, and the curse on Canaan

after Noah's drunkenness.

- I. Meat permitted, but blood forbidden – [Genesis 9:3–4](#)
 - A. The blood is the life, and life belongs to God – [Genesis 9:4](#)
- II. Capital punishment and human government instituted – [Genesis 9:5–6](#)
 - A. Only rightful authority may avenge murder
 - B. The New Testament keeps the sword in government's hand ([Romans 13:4](#))
- III. The rainbow, God's pledge never to flood the earth again – [Genesis 9:8–17](#)
- IV. Noah's drunkenness and the curse on Canaan – [Genesis 9:20–25](#)
 - A. Even a man shown grace can fall – [Genesis 9:21](#)
 - B. Canaan may have shared or exceeded Ham's evil, or done the deed himself – [Genesis 9:24–25](#)
 - C. The curse gives no support to the enslaving of black people
- V. Blessings on Shem and Japheth – [Genesis 9:26–27](#)
 - A. Canaan's servitude fulfilled ([Joshua 9:23](#); [Judges 1:28](#)) – [Genesis 9:26](#)
 - B. Japheth may share in blessing through Shem's line – [Genesis 9:27](#)
 - C. Shem was likely the oldest son ([Genesis 10:21](#))

CROSS REFERENCES

[Romans 13:4](#) [Joshua 9:23](#) [Judges 1:28](#) [Genesis 10:21](#) [1 Chronicles 1:4](#)

LESSONS

- Great grace does not make a believer immune to falling; Noah sinned after his deliverance.

RELATED READING

- *The Book of Genesis* (James Gunn) – Gunn on events right after the deluge
- *The Book of Genesis* (James Gunn) – Gunn on God's covenant with Noah

ALSO DISCUSSED IN THE LIBRARY

- *Articles by James Naismith* (James Naismith)
- *Through the Scriptures: Sunday School Lesson Outlines* (Alfred P. Gibbs)
- *The Bible* (James Gunn)

Read MacDonald on Chapter 9 →

10 · The Table of the Nations

[Genesis 10](#)

MacDonald surveys how the families of Shem, Ham and Japheth spread into the nations, with the story narrowing toward Shem.

- I. The three sons became fathers of the nations – [Genesis 10:1–32](#)
 - A. Japheth: Medes, Greeks, peoples of Europe and northern Asia – [Genesis 10:2–5](#)
 - B. Ham: Egyptians, Ethiopians, Canaanites, Philistines – [Genesis 10:6–20](#)
 - C. Shem: Hebrews, Arabs, Assyrians, Arameans and others – [Genesis 10:21–31](#)
- II. Three notes on the dividing of the peoples – [Genesis 10:5, 25, 32](#)
 - A. Peleg's day saw the division at Babel – [Genesis 10:25](#)
- III. Nimrod the rebel and the first kingdom – [Genesis 10:8–12](#)
 - A. He built Babel and Nineveh, both enemies of God's people – [Genesis 10:10–11](#)

IV. A key to later place names – [Genesis 10:4-22](#)

A. Tarshish (Spain), Kittim (Cyprus), Mizraim (Egypt), Cush (Ethiopia)

B. Asshur (Assyria), Elam (Persia), Aram (Syria and Mesopotamia)

ALSO DISCUSSED IN THE LIBRARY

- *Confirming Accuracy* (Jean Gibson)
- *Isaiah* (F. C. Jennings)
- *Men of the Mountains & Valleys* (T. Ernest Wilson)

Read MacDonald on Chapter 10 →

11 • The Tower of Babel and the Line to Abram

[Genesis 11](#)

MacDonald sees Babel as man's proud self-effort, judged by confused languages, then follows Shem's line down to Abram.

I. Babel: a policy of pride and defiance – [Genesis 11:1-4](#)

A. They wanted a name and refused to scatter – [Genesis 11:4](#)

B. A picture of man trying to reach heaven by his own works

II. God confused their language – [Genesis 11:5-9](#)

A. Pentecost reversed Babel ([Acts 2:1-11](#))

III. The story narrows from the race to Shem to one man, Abram – [Genesis 11:10-26](#)

A. "Hebrew" may come from Eber, meaning to pass over – [Genesis 11:16-17](#)

IV. Abram, a mighty man of faith – [Genesis 11:26-32](#)

A. Honored by three world religions; named in 27 books of the Bible

B. Terah's age and [Acts 7:4](#): Abram need not have been the oldest son – [Genesis 11:26, 32](#)

C. The family left idolatrous Ur and stopped at Haran – [Genesis 11:31](#)

CROSS REFERENCES

[Acts 2:1-11](#) [Acts 7:4](#) [Genesis 12:4](#)

LESSONS

- Salvation is a free gift, not a tower built by human effort.

RELATED READING

- *The Book of Genesis* (James Gunn) – Gunn on the Tower of Babel
- *Abraham* (Dan Snaddon) – Snaddon introduces Abraham from [Genesis 11:31-32](#)

ALSO DISCUSSED IN THE LIBRARY

- *Confirming Accuracy* (Jean Gibson)
- *Through the Scriptures: Sunday School Lesson Outlines* (Alfred P. Gibbs)
- *Revelation: A Complete Commentary* (William R. Newell)

Read MacDonald on Chapter 11 →

12 • The Call of Abram and His Lapse in Egypt

[Genesis 12](#)

MacDonald unfolds God's covenant promises to Abram, his faithful altars in Canaan, and his costly lie in

Egypt.

- I. God's call to a life of pilgrimage – [Genesis 12:1](#)
 - A. The call first came in Ur ([Acts 7:2](#))
 - B. Leave country, kin and father's house ([Hebrews 11:9](#)) – [Genesis 12:1](#)
- II. The Abrahamic covenant's great promises – [Genesis 12:1-3](#)
 - A. A land, a great nation, a great name, prosperity – [Genesis 12:1-2](#)
 - B. Blessing for friends of Israel, curse on its enemies – [Genesis 12:3](#)
 - C. All families blessed in him, pointing to Christ – [Genesis 12:3](#)
 - D. Later renewed in chapters 13, 15, 17 and 22
- III. Tent and altar in Canaan – [Genesis 12:4-9](#)
 - A. Hostile Canaanites did not stop a man of faith – [Genesis 12:6-7](#)
 - B. A tent for himself, an altar for God: his priorities – [Genesis 12:8](#)
- IV. Faith's lapse: flight to Egypt and the half-truth about Sarai – [Genesis 12:10-20](#)
 - A. Egypt pictures the world; fear bred deceit – [Genesis 12:10-13](#)
 - B. A half-sister, but still a lie meant to deceive – [Genesis 12:13](#)
 - C. Pharaoh acted more righteously and sent him away in disgrace – [Genesis 12:17-20](#)

CROSS REFERENCES

[Acts 7:1-2](#) [Hebrews 11:9](#) [Genesis 20:12](#)

LESSONS

- Spiritual warfare is not fought with fleshly weapons; the end does not justify the means.
- We cannot sin and escape the results, though God does not forsake His own.

RELATED READING

- *Abraham* (Dan Snaddon) – Snaddon on Abraham's call, [Genesis 12:1-9](#)
- *Abraham* (Dan Snaddon) – Snaddon on Abraham in Egypt, [Genesis 12:10-20](#)
- “The Call of God - Abraham and Lot” (C H Mackintosh, [plymouthbrethren.org](#)) – Mackintosh on the call of Abraham and Lot

ALSO DISCUSSED IN THE LIBRARY

- *Through the Scriptures: Sunday School Lesson Outlines* (Alfred P. Gibbs)
- *Articles by James Naismith* (James Naismith)
- *The Book of Genesis* (James Gunn)

[Read MacDonald on Chapter 12](#) →

13 · Abram and Lot Part Ways

[Genesis 13](#)

MacDonald shows Abram restored at Bethel and acting unselfishly, while Lot drifts step by step toward Sodom.

- I. Back to Bethel: a return to fellowship – [Genesis 13:1-4](#)
- II. Abram's generous offer and Lot's worldly choice – [Genesis 13:5-11](#)
 - A. Strife between herdsmen; Abram let Lot choose – [Genesis 13:7-9](#)
 - B. Lot, a true believer ([2 Peter 2:7-8](#)), chose the well-watered plain – [Genesis 13:10-11](#)

III. Lot's steps down into worldliness — [Genesis 13:7–13](#)

A. Strove, beheld, chose, pitched toward Sodom — [Genesis 13:7–12](#)

B. Then dwelt in it and sat in its gate ([Genesis 14:12](#); [Genesis 19:1](#))

IV. God gave Abram all the land and a countless seed — [Genesis 13:14–18](#)

A. Abram's third altar at Hebron: always an altar, never a house — [Genesis 13:18](#)

CROSS REFERENCES

[2 Peter 2:7–8](#) [Genesis 14:12](#) [Genesis 19:1](#)

LESSONS

- "Back to Bethel" is the call for every believer who has wandered.
- Lot got grass for his cattle; Abram got grace for his children.

RELATED READING

- *Abraham* (Dan Snaddon) — Snaddon on Abraham's restoration in Genesis 13
- *The Book of Genesis* (Dan Snaddon) — Snaddon on Lot's choice
- "Lot's Choice" (Donald Norbie, plymouthbrethren.org) — Norbie on Lot's choice

ALSO DISCUSSED IN THE LIBRARY

- *Articles by James Naismith* (James Naismith)
- *Through the Scriptures: Sunday School Lesson Outlines* (Alfred P. Gibbs)
- *The Book of Genesis* (James Gunn)

[Read MacDonald on Chapter 13](#) →

14 • Abram Rescues Lot and Meets Melchizedek

[Genesis 14](#)

MacDonald follows the war of the kings, Abram's rescue of Lot, and the meeting with Melchizedek, a picture of Christ's greater priesthood.

I. The war of the kings and Lot taken captive — [Genesis 14:1–12](#)

A. Chedorlaomer of Elam crushed the rebel kings of the plain — [Genesis 14:1–11](#)

B. Backslidden Lot was carried off with the spoil — [Genesis 14:12](#)

II. Abram rescues Lot with 318 men — [Genesis 14:13–16](#)

A. Backsliders bring trouble on others too

B. Here by the sword; later by prayer (chapters 18–19)

III. Melchizedek strengthens Abram with bread and wine — [Genesis 14:17–20](#)

A. Temptation (the king of Sodom) often follows a great victory — [Genesis 14:17](#)

B. Bread and wine call to mind the Savior's suffering — [Genesis 14:18](#)

C. King of righteousness and peace, a picture of Christ our High Priest — [Genesis 14:18](#)

IV. Melchizedek's priesthood is greater than Aaron's — [Genesis 14:19–20](#)

A. No recorded beginning or end of his priesthood ([Hebrews 7:3](#))

B. He blessed Abram, and the lesser is blessed by the greater — [Genesis 14:19](#)

C. Abram's tithe shows Levi's line honoring a greater priest — [Genesis 14:20](#)

V. Abram refused Sodom's reward: not a thread or shoelace — [Genesis 14:21–24](#)

A. Satan still offers us things while people perish — [Genesis 14:21](#)

CROSS REFERENCES

[Hebrews 7:1–10](#) [Hebrews 7:3](#) [Psalm 110:4](#)

LESSONS

- Remembering the price Christ paid strengthens us to resist temptation.
- Do not be occupied with toys of dust while souls around us perish.

RELATED READING

- *The Book of Genesis* (James Gunn) — Gunn on Abraham's rescue of Lot
- *The Book of Genesis* (James Gunn) — Gunn on Melchizedek's priestly blessing
- *Typical Foreshadowings in Genesis* (William Lincoln) — Lincoln on Abraham, Genesis 12–14

ALSO DISCUSSED IN THE LIBRARY

- *Collected Messages of Dan Snaddon* (Dan Snaddon)
- *Articles by James Naismith* (James Naismith)
- *The Messianic Psalms* (T. Ernest Wilson)

Read MacDonald on Chapter 14 →

15 • Justified by Faith: God's Covenant with Abram

Genesis 15

MacDonald shows Abram believing God's promise of a seed and being counted righteous, then God alone ratifying an unconditional covenant.

- I. God Himself is Abram's shield and great reward — [Genesis 15:1](#)
 - A. The answer to refusing Sodom's goods
- II. The promised son and a seed like the stars — [Genesis 15:2–5](#)
 - A. Eliezer would have been heir by custom — [Genesis 15:2–3](#)
 - B. Dust pictures natural Israel; stars, the spiritual seed ([Galatians 3:7](#)) — [Genesis 15:5](#)
- III. Abram believed God and was counted righteous — [Genesis 15:6](#)
 - A. Justification by faith, repeated in [Romans 4:3](#), [Galatians 3:8](#), [James 2:23](#)
- IV. An unconditional covenant ratified by God alone — [Genesis 15:7–17](#)
 - A. Normally both parties passed between the pieces ([Jeremiah 34:18–19](#)) — [Genesis 15:9–10](#)
 - B. Only the furnace and lamp, God's presence, passed through — [Genesis 15:17](#)
 - C. Another view: the pieces are Israel, the birds the Gentiles — [Genesis 15:9–11](#)
- V. Israel's future affliction and the Amorites' iniquity — [Genesis 15:13–16](#)
 - A. God lets evil ripen so His judgment is seen to be righteous ([2 Peter 3:9](#)) — [Genesis 15:16](#)
 - B. 400 years of affliction vs. 430 years ([Exodus 12:40–41](#); [Galatians 3:17](#)) — [Genesis 15:13](#)
 - C. Four generations: Levi, Kohath, Amram, Moses ([Exodus 6:18–20](#)) — [Genesis 15:16](#)
- VI. The land's borders still await Christ's reign — [Genesis 15:18–21](#)
 - A. Solomon ruled it but Israel never occupied it ([1 Kings 4:21](#))
 - B. The river of Egypt is likely Wadi el Arish — [Genesis 15:18](#)

CROSS REFERENCES

[Romans 4:3](#) [Galatians 3:8](#) [James 2:23](#) [Galatians 3:7](#) [Jeremiah 34:18–19](#) [2 Peter 3:9](#) [Exodus 12:40–41](#) [Galatians 3:17](#)

LESSONS

- What God has promised is as sure as if it had already happened.
- Righteousness comes by believing God, not by our deeds.

RELATED READING

- *Abraham* (Dan Snaddon) — Snaddon on Abraham justified by faith
- *Abraham* (Dan Snaddon) — Snaddon on Genesis 15:1–6

- **"Fear Not"** (Elliott Van Ryn, plymouthbrethren.org) — Van Ryn on God's "Fear not" to Abram

ALSO DISCUSSED IN THE LIBRARY

- *God's Sacred Secrets: Mystery Doctrines of the New Testament* (T. Ernest Wilson)
- *The Book of Genesis* (James Gunn)
- *Romans: Verse by Verse* (William R. Newell)

[Read MacDonald on Chapter 15](#) →

16 · Hagar and Ishmael

Genesis 16

MacDonald shows the trouble that came when Sarai and Abram ran ahead of God, and the Angel of the Lord's care for Hagar.

I. The restless flesh will not wait on God — [Genesis 16:1-6](#)

- A. Sarai gave Hagar, probably acquired in Egypt, to Abram — [Genesis 16:1-2](#)
- B. Scripture records such irregularities without approving them
- C. Contempt, blame and harsh treatment followed — [Genesis 16:4-6](#)

II. The Angel of the Lord meets Hagar — [Genesis 16:7-12](#)

- A. A preincarnate appearance of the Lord Jesus (a theophany) — [Genesis 16:7](#)
- B. "Return and submit": a turning point for many — [Genesis 16:9](#)
- C. Her son would head a great nation, the Arab peoples — [Genesis 16:10-12](#)

III. The God who sees and the well Beer-lahai-roi — [Genesis 16:13-14](#)

IV. Ishmael ("God hears") born when Abram was 86 — [Genesis 16:15-16](#)

- A. Hagar stands for law, Sarai for grace ([Galatians 4](#))

CROSS REFERENCES

[Galatians 4:21-31](#)

LESSONS

- Running ahead of God to fulfill His promises brings sorrow.

RELATED READING

- *The Book of Genesis* (Dan Snaddon) — Snaddon on the Angel of the Lord meeting Hagar

ALSO DISCUSSED IN THE LIBRARY

- *Collected Messages of Dan Snaddon* (Dan Snaddon)
- *Articles by James Naismith* (James Naismith)
- *Through the Scriptures: Sunday School Lesson Outlines* (Alfred P. Gibbs)

[Read MacDonald on Chapter 16](#) →

17 · New Names and the Sign of Circumcision

Genesis 17

MacDonald shows God renewing His covenant, renaming Abram and Sarai, and giving circumcision as the covenant sign.

I. Stop striving and let God work — [Genesis 17:1](#)

II. Abram renamed Abraham, father of a multitude — [Genesis 17:2-8](#)

III. Circumcision, the sign of the covenant – [Genesis 17:9-14](#)

- A. A mark of belonging to God's earthly people, on the eighth day – [Genesis 17:12](#)
- B. "Cut off" here means banned from the people – [Genesis 17:14](#)
- C. A seal of the faith Abraham already had ([Romans 4:11](#))
- D. Believers today are sealed by the Holy Spirit ([Ephesians 4:30](#))

IV. Sarai renamed Sarah and promised a son – [Genesis 17:15-17](#)

- A. Abraham laughed in joyful wonder, not unbelief ([Romans 4:18-21](#)) – [Genesis 17:17](#)

V. The covenant through Isaac, blessing for Ishmael – [Genesis 17:18-22](#)

- A. Isaac a picture of Christ, in whom the covenant is fulfilled – [Genesis 17:19](#)

VI. Prompt obedience: "the selfsame day" – [Genesis 17:23-27](#)

CROSS REFERENCES

[Exodus 31:14-15](#) [Romans 4:11](#) [Ephesians 4:30](#) [Romans 4:18-21](#)

LESSONS

- Obey promptly, as Abraham did the same day.

ALSO DISCUSSED IN THE LIBRARY

- *Abraham* (Dan Snaddon)
- *Romans: Verse by Verse* (William R. Newell)
- *Articles by James Naismith* (James Naismith)

[Read MacDonald on Chapter 17](#) →

18 • The Lord's Visit and Abraham's Intercession

[Genesis 18](#)

MacDonald tells of the Lord visiting Abraham with the promise of a son, then of Abraham's bold, humble prayer for Sodom.

I. Abraham entertains the Lord and two angels – [Genesis 18:1-8](#)

- A. He entertained angels unawares ([Hebrews 13:2](#))

II. Sarah's laugh and God's question – [Genesis 18:9-15](#)

- A. "Is anything too hard for the Lord?" – [Genesis 18:14](#)
- B. A brief lapse; she was a woman of faith ([Hebrews 11:11](#))

III. Abraham's great intercession for Sodom – [Genesis 18:16-33](#)

- A. From fifty down to ten righteous – [Genesis 18:24-32](#)
- B. Based on God's character: "Shall not the Judge of all the earth do right?" – [Genesis 18:25](#)
- C. Bold yet humble, born of knowing God
- D. The Lord left only when Abraham stopped asking – [Genesis 18:33](#)

CROSS REFERENCES

[Hebrews 13:2](#) [Hebrews 11:11](#)

LESSONS

- Effective prayer rests on God's character and joins boldness with humility.
- For life's mysteries, "the Judge of all the earth will do right" is the only satisfying answer.

RELATED READING

- *Abraham* (Dan Snaddon) – Snaddon on Abraham's intercession, 18:22-33
- *The Book of Genesis* (James Gunn) – Gunn on Abraham as intercessor, 18:16-33

ALSO DISCUSSED IN THE LIBRARY

- *Articles by James Naismith* (James Naismith)
- *Through the Scriptures: Sunday School Lesson Outlines* (Alfred P. Gibbs)
- *Articles by W. Ross Rainey* (W. Ross Rainey)

Read MacDonald on Chapter 18 →

19 • The Fall of Sodom and the Ruin of Lot

Genesis 19

MacDonald describes Sodom's wickedness and destruction, Lot's rescue for Abraham's sake, and the heavy losses of a worldly believer.

- I. Sodom's sins: perversion, plus pride, plenty and ease – [Genesis 19:1–11](#)
 - A. See [Ezekiel 16:49–50](#)
 - B. Lot sheltered the angels but shamefully offered his daughters – [Genesis 19:8](#)
 - C. The angels struck the men with blindness – [Genesis 19:11](#)
- II. Rescue from the doomed city – [Genesis 19:12–25](#)
 - A. Lot's sons-in-law thought he was joking: lost testimony – [Genesis 19:14](#)
 - B. Even then he lingered and chose Zoar – [Genesis 19:16–22](#)
 - C. God remembered Abraham and brought Lot out – [Genesis 19:29](#)
- III. Lot's wife: out of the city, but her heart still in it – [Genesis 19:26](#)
 - A. "Remember Lot's wife" ([Luke 17:32](#))
- IV. The cave, incest, and the origin of Moab and Ammon – [Genesis 19:30–38](#)
 - A. His daughters had absorbed Sodom's standards
- V. What worldliness cost a just man ([2 Peter 2:7–8](#)) – [Genesis 19:14–38](#)
 - A. His testimony, wife, fellowship, property, character, nearly his life

CROSS REFERENCES

[Ezekiel 16:49–50](#) [Luke 17:32](#) [2 Peter 2:7–8](#)

LESSONS

- A worldly believer may be saved yet lose almost everything else.
- Leaving the world outwardly is not enough if the heart still clings to it.

RELATED READING

- *Abraham* (Dan Snaddon) — Snaddon on Lot's escape, 19:12–26
- “While He Lingered” (Steve Hulshizer, [plymouthbrethren.org](#)) — Hulshizer on Lot lingering in Sodom

ALSO DISCUSSED IN THE LIBRARY

- *The Book of Genesis* (James Gunn)
- *Articles by W. Ross Rainey* (W. Ross Rainey)
- *The Pilgrim's Progress* (John Bunyan)

Read MacDonald on Chapter 19 →

20 • Abraham and Abimelech

Genesis 20

MacDonald notes with sorrow that Abraham repeated his old lie about Sarah, yet God overruled to protect

the promised line.

- I. The same sin again, twenty years later — [Genesis 20:1-2](#)
 - A. A replay of the deceit in Egypt ([Genesis 12:10-17](#))
 - B. We too are always prone to sin
- II. God stepped in to guard the birth of Isaac — [Genesis 20:3-7](#)
 - A. He overrules His people's failures, even through unbelievers
- III. Rebuked by a man of the world — [Genesis 20:8-13](#)
 - A. A half-truth presented as the whole truth is a lie — [Genesis 20:12](#)
 - B. Abraham even shifted blame toward God — [Genesis 20:13](#)
- IV. Still God's man: Abraham prayed and Abimelech's house was healed — [Genesis 20:14-18](#)
 - A. "A covering of the eyes": a gift to show the wrong was righted — [Genesis 20:16](#)

CROSS REFERENCES

[Genesis 12:10-17](#)

LESSONS

- It is shameful when a believer must be justly rebuked by an unbeliever.
- Humbly confess your guilt instead of excusing it.

RELATED READING

- *The Book of Genesis* (James Gunn) — Gunn on Abraham's deceit at Gerar

ALSO DISCUSSED IN THE LIBRARY

- *Articles by James Naismith* (James Naismith)
- *Through the Scriptures: Sunday School Lesson Outlines* (Alfred P. Gibbs)
- *Abraham* (Dan Snaddon)

[Read MacDonald on Chapter 20](#) →

21 • Isaac Born, Ishmael Sent Away

[Genesis 21](#)

MacDonald rejoices in Isaac's birth, follows Paul's lesson from Hagar's expulsion, and records the well at Beersheba.

- I. Isaac, "laughter," the promised son — [Genesis 21:1-7](#)
- II. Ishmael mocks; Hagar and her son are cast out — [Genesis 21:8-13](#)
 - A. Law persecutes grace; the two cannot mix ([Galatians 4:29](#))
 - B. Isaac alone is the covenant son — [Genesis 21:12](#)
- III. God hears and saves Hagar and Ishmael — [Genesis 21:14-21](#)
 - A. Ishmael's name, "God hears," echoed twice — [Genesis 21:17](#)
- IV. Covenant with Abimelech at Beersheba — [Genesis 21:22-34](#)
 - A. The well of the oath, later the land's southern border — [Genesis 21:31](#)
 - B. A tamarisk tree planted as a memorial — [Genesis 21:33](#)

CROSS REFERENCES

[Galatians 4:29](#)

LESSONS

- Spiritual blessing never comes on the principle of law.

RELATED READING

- *The Book of Genesis* (James Gunn) — Gunn on Isaac's birth, law and liberty

ALSO DISCUSSED IN THE LIBRARY

- *Articles by James Naismith* (James Naismith)
- *Through the Scriptures: Sunday School Lesson Outlines* (Alfred P. Gibbs)
- *Romans: Verse by Verse* (William R. Newell)

Read MacDonald on Chapter 21 →

22 · The Offering of Isaac on Moriah

Genesis 22

MacDonald sees in Abraham's offering of Isaac the clearest Old Testament picture of God giving His beloved Son at Calvary.

- I. The supreme test of Abraham's faith — [Genesis 22:1-2](#)
 - A. God never meant him to go through with it; He opposes human sacrifice
 - B. Moriah, where Jerusalem and Calvary stand ([2 Chronicles 3:1](#)) — [Genesis 22:2](#)
 - C. "Thine only son ... whom thou lovest": the unique son of promise — [Genesis 22:2](#)
- II. First mentions of "love" and "worship" — [Genesis 22:2, 5](#)
 - A. Abraham's love pictures the Father's love for the Son — [Genesis 22:2](#)
 - B. The Savior's self-sacrifice is the greatest act of worship — [Genesis 22:5](#)
- III. Faith that God could raise the dead — [Genesis 22:5-10](#)
 - A. "We will come again" ([Hebrews 11:19](#)) — [Genesis 22:5](#)
 - B. No resurrection had yet happened in history
 - C. Justified by faith ([Genesis 15:6](#)), shown real by works ([James 2:21](#))
- IV. "God will provide himself a lamb" — [Genesis 22:7-8](#)
 - A. Fulfilled not by the ram but by the Lamb of [John 1:29](#)
- V. Two pictures of Christ: Isaac and the ram — [Genesis 22:9-14](#)
 - A. Isaac: only son, loved, willing, received back as from the dead
 - B. The ram: innocent substitute, blood shed, wholly burnt for God — [Genesis 22:13](#)
 - C. God spared Abraham a pang He would not spare Himself
 - D. The Angel of the Lord is Christ — [Genesis 22:11, 15](#)
- VI. Jehovah-jireh and the other compound names of God — [Genesis 22:14](#)
 - A. Rapha ([Exodus 15:26](#)), Nissi ([Exodus 17:15](#)), Shalom ([Judges 6:24](#))
 - B. Ra-ah ([Psalm 23:1](#)), Tsidkenu ([Jeremiah 23:6](#)), Shammah ([Ezekiel 48:35](#))
- VII. God's oath and the enlarged promise — [Genesis 22:15-18](#)
 - A. He swore by Himself, having none greater ([Hebrews 6:13](#)) — [Genesis 22:16](#)
 - B. Abraham's seed will possess the gate of his enemies — [Genesis 22:17](#)
- /III. Nahor's twelve sons, and Rebekah named — [Genesis 22:20-24](#)
 - A. "Abraham, Abraham" is the first of ten name-doublings in Scripture — [Genesis 22:11](#)

CROSS REFERENCES

[2 Chronicles 3:1](#) [Hebrews 11:19](#) [James 2:21](#) [John 1:29](#) [Hebrews 6:13](#) [Exodus 3:4](#) [Acts 9:4](#)

LESSONS

- Real faith is proven by obedience, even when God asks for what we hold dearest.

- Isaac was spared, but God did not spare His own Son; that should move us to worship.

RELATED READING

- *Abraham* (Dan Snaddon) — Snaddon on Genesis 22 as faith's climax
- *Abraham* (Dan Snaddon) — Snaddon on Isaac's offering as a type of Calvary
- “Abraham's Test” (Daniel C Snaddon, plymouthbrethren.org) — Snaddon on Abraham's test

ALSO DISCUSSED IN THE LIBRARY

- *Articles by James Naismith* (James Naismith)
- *Through the Scriptures: Sunday School Lesson Outlines* (Alfred P. Gibbs)
- *The Messianic Psalms* (T. Ernest Wilson)

Read MacDonald on Chapter 22 →

23 • Sarah's Death and the Cave of Machpelah

Genesis 23

MacDonald describes Abraham's courteous Eastern bargaining for a burial cave, his only land purchase as a pilgrim.

- I. Sarah died at 127 — [Genesis 23:1-2](#)
- II. The courteous bargaining with the Hittites — [Genesis 23:3-16](#)
 - A. Offered a free tomb, Abraham insisted on buying — [Genesis 23:6-9](#)
 - B. Ephron's "gift" was only a polite gesture — [Genesis 23:11](#)
 - C. Abraham paid the inflated 400 shekels without haggling — [Genesis 23:15-16](#)
- III. His only real estate: a grave — [Genesis 23:17-20](#)
 - A. Later the tomb of Abraham, Isaac, Rebekah, Jacob and Leah

LESSONS

- Don't be indebted to unbelievers.

RELATED READING

- *The Book of Genesis* (James Gunn) — Gunn on Genesis 23: Sarah's death and burial

ALSO DISCUSSED IN THE LIBRARY

- *Bible Commentary on Joshua* (H. L. Rossier)
- *Romans: Verse by Verse* (William R. Newell)
- *Articles by James Naismith* (James Naismith)

Read MacDonald on Chapter 23 →

24 • A Bride for Isaac

Genesis 24

MacDonald reads the servant's mission to find Rebekah as a picture of the Holy Spirit winning a Bride for Christ.

- I. Abraham's charge and the ancient oath — [Genesis 24:1-9](#)
 - A. No Canaanite wife, and Isaac must not go back to Mesopotamia — [Genesis 24:3-6](#)
 - B. Hand under the thigh: swearing by posterity — [Genesis 24:2, 9](#)
- II. The servant pictures the Holy Spirit seeking a bride for the heavenly Isaac — [Genesis 24:10-14](#)
 - A. Careful preparation, gifts, and a sign to know God's choice — [Genesis 24:10-14](#)
 - B. The sign would reveal a generous, serving heart — [Genesis 24:14](#)

III. Rebekah fulfills the sign – [Genesis 24:15-27](#)

- A. She watered ten thirsty camels as well as the man – [Genesis 24:19-20](#)
- B. The servant worshiped, knowing the Lord had led him – [Genesis 24:26-27](#)

IV. The family sees the Lord's hand – [Genesis 24:28-60](#)

- A. Laban and Bethuel: "The thing proceedeth from the Lord" – [Genesis 24:50-51](#)
- B. Gifts sealed the engagement – [Genesis 24:53](#)
- C. Rebekah's "I will go" settled the matter – [Genesis 24:58](#)

V. Isaac goes out to meet his bride – [Genesis 24:61-67](#)

- A. First seen after Moriah meeting his bride, as Christ will come for His church ([1 Thessalonians 4:13-18](#)) – [Genesis 24:63](#)
- B. He loved her, and took no other wife – [Genesis 24:67](#)

CROSS REFERENCES

[Genesis 46:26](#) [1 Thessalonians 4:13-18](#)

LESSONS

- A willing heart to serve others marks the one God chooses.

RELATED READING

- *Abraham* (Dan Snaddon) – Snaddon on Eliezer as type of the Holy Spirit
- *Abraham* (Dan Snaddon) – Snaddon on the Spirit's leading in Genesis 24
- *The Book of Genesis* (James Gunn) – Gunn on Eliezer as a type of the Holy Spirit

ALSO DISCUSSED IN THE LIBRARY

- *Articles by James Naismith* (James Naismith)
- *Men of the Mountains & Valleys* (T. Ernest Wilson)
- *Articles by S. Lewis Johnson* (S. Lewis Johnson)

[Read MacDonald on Chapter 24](#) →

25 • Abraham's Death and the Birth of Esau and Jacob

[Genesis 25](#)

MacDonald closes Abraham's life, records Ishmael's princes, and shows Esau despising the birthright that Jacob valued.

I. Keturah, a lesser wife – [Genesis 25:1-6](#)

- A. Called a concubine in [1 Chronicles 1:32](#)

II. Abraham's death and Ishmael's twelve princes – [Genesis 25:7-18](#)

- A. Buried in the cave at Hebron at 175 – [Genesis 25:7-10](#)
- B. Fulfilling the promise of [Genesis 17:20](#) – [Genesis 25:12-16](#)

III. Twins in answer to prayer – [Genesis 25:19-26](#)

- A. Rebekah barren almost twenty years – [Genesis 25:21](#)
- B. Two nations, Israel and Edom, in her womb – [Genesis 25:23](#)
- C. Esau "hairy"; Jacob "supplanter," grasping his brother's heel – [Genesis 25:25-26](#)

- IV. The birthright sold for a bowl of red stew — [Genesis 25:27–34](#)
- A. Birthright: double portion, family headship, the Messianic line
 - B. Esau nicknamed "Red" (Edom) — [Genesis 25:30](#)
 - C. Jacob's dealing not approved, but he valued spiritual things — [Genesis 25:31–33](#)
 - D. Esau chose appetite over blessing; Edom's doom in Obadiah — [Genesis 25:34](#)

CROSS REFERENCES

[1 Chronicles 1:32](#) [Genesis 17:20](#)

LESSONS

- Never trade lasting spiritual blessing for a moment's appetite.

RELATED READING

- *Typical Foreshadowings in Genesis* (William Lincoln) — Lincoln on Isaac, [Genesis 25:11–27](#)
- *The Book of Genesis* (James Gunn) — Gunn on Abraham's last days, [25:1–10](#)

ALSO DISCUSSED IN THE LIBRARY

- *Articles by James Naismith* (James Naismith)
- *Isaiah* (F. C. Jennings)
- *Bible Gems: Gospel Light* (Milton Haack)

[Read MacDonald on Chapter 25](#) →

26 • Isaac at Gerar and the Wells

[Genesis 26](#)

MacDonald shows Isaac repeating his father's failures under famine and fear, then finding blessing as he separates and reopens the wells.

- I. Famine: God forbids Egypt and renews the covenant — [Genesis 26:1–5](#)
 - A. Told to sojourn in Gerar, Isaac settled there instead — [Genesis 26:3, 6](#)
- II. A father's weakness repeated in his son — [Genesis 26:6–11](#)
 - A. Isaac called Rebekah his sister — [Genesis 26:7](#)
 - B. Exposed, he confessed, and confession led to blessing — [Genesis 26:9–11](#)
- III. Wealth, envy, and the strife over wells — [Genesis 26:12–22](#)
 - A. The Philistines had stopped Abraham's wells — [Genesis 26:15](#)
 - B. Esek and Sitnah, then Rehoboth: room at last — [Genesis 26:20–22](#)
- IV. Altar, tent and well at Beersheba — [Genesis 26:23–25](#)
- V. Separation brings the world seeking blessing — [Genesis 26:26–33](#)
 - A. Abimelech sought a treaty once Isaac separated — [Genesis 26:26–31](#)
 - B. Isaac renamed the place Beersheba — [Genesis 26:33](#)
- VI. Esau's pagan wives grieve his parents — [Genesis 26:34–35](#)

LESSONS

- The Christian helps the world best by living separate from it.
- Unequal yokes bring grief, as Esau's marriages did.

RELATED READING

- “Isaac at Gerar (Genesis 26)” (Mark Kolchin, [plymouthbrethren.org](#)) — Kolchin on Isaac at Gerar
- *The Book of Genesis* (James Gunn) — Gunn on Isaac's wells, [26:12–24](#)

ALSO DISCUSSED IN THE LIBRARY

- *Articles by James Naismith* (James Naismith)

• *Confirming Accuracy* (Jean Gibson)

• *Proverbs* (H. A. Ironside)

[Read MacDonald on Chapter 26](#) →

27 · Jacob Steals the Blessing

[Genesis 27](#)

MacDonald recounts Rebekah and Jacob's deception of blind Isaac and the bitter harvest Jacob reaped for it.

- I. Isaac, old and expecting death, sends Esau for venison – [Genesis 27:1-4](#)
 - A. He would live 43 more years
- II. Rebekah's plot and Jacob's disguise – [Genesis 27:5-29](#)
 - A. Needless trickery: God had already promised the blessing ([Genesis 25:23](#))
 - B. Isaac trusted his feelings, and they deceived him – [Genesis 27:21-23](#)
- III. Jacob equally guilty, and he reaped what he sowed – [Genesis 27:18-29](#)
 - A. A life of trouble followed: flight, Laban, family sorrows, exile
- IV. The patriarchs' blessings were prophetic – [Genesis 27:27-29](#)
- V. Esau's tears could not reverse the blessing – [Genesis 27:30-40](#)
 - A. See [Hebrews 12:16-17](#)
 - B. Edom: desert dwelling, the sword, servitude, then revolt ([2 Kings 8:20-22](#)) – [Genesis 27:39-40](#)
- VI. Esau's murderous plan and Jacob's flight to Haran – [Genesis 27:41-46](#)
 - A. He expected a short stay; it lasted over twenty years

CROSS REFERENCES

[Genesis 25:23](#) [Hebrews 12:16-17](#) [2 Kings 8:20-22](#)

LESSONS

- Do not trust feelings in spiritual matters; trust the Word of God.
- We reap what we sow; deceit came back to Jacob again and again.

RELATED READING

- *The Book of Genesis* (James Gunn) – Gunn on the stolen blessing, 27:18-40
- *The Book of Genesis* (James Gunn) – Gunn on Jacob chastened, 27:41-46

ALSO DISCUSSED IN THE LIBRARY

- *Through the Scriptures: Sunday School Lesson Outlines* (Alfred P. Gibbs)
- *Studies in Hebrews* (Dan Snaddon)
- *Articles by James Naismith* (James Naismith)

[Read MacDonald on Chapter 27](#) →

28 · Jacob's Ladder at Bethel

[Genesis 28](#)

MacDonald shows God meeting lonely Jacob at Bethel with a dream of heaven's ladder and a gracious covenant, and weighs Jacob's vow.

- I. Isaac sends Jacob to Paddan-aram for a wife – [Genesis 28:1-5](#)
- II. Esau marries Ishmael's daughter to please his father – [Genesis 28:6-9](#)
 - A. Doing evil that good may come

III. The ladder: real fellowship between heaven and earth — [Genesis 28:10–12](#)

A. The Lord linked it to His coming glory ([John 1:51](#))

IV. God's covenant promises to Jacob — [Genesis 28:13–15](#)

A. Companionship: "I am with thee" — [Genesis 28:15](#)

B. Safety, guidance, and God's personal guarantee — [Genesis 28:15](#)

V. Luz renamed Bethel, house of God — [Genesis 28:16–19](#)

A. Jacob's first personal meeting with God

VI. Jacob's vow: bargaining or a standard Hebrew oath? — [Genesis 28:20–22](#)

A. He asked for less than God had promised

B. Or the "if" is normal oath form ([Numbers 21:2](#); [1 Samuel 1:11](#))

CROSS REFERENCES

[John 1:51](#) [Numbers 21:2](#) [Judges 11:30–31](#) [1 Samuel 1:11](#)

LESSONS

- God meets us in loneliness and regret with promises of His presence.

RELATED READING

- *The Book of Genesis* (James Gunn) — Gunn on the open heavens, 28:10–22
- *The Book of Genesis* (James Gunn) — Gunn on Jacob bartering with God

ALSO DISCUSSED IN THE LIBRARY

- *God's Sacred Secrets: Mystery Doctrines of the New Testament* (T. Ernest Wilson)
- *Articles by James Naismith* (James Naismith)
- *The Book of Genesis* (Dan Snaddon)

[Read MacDonald on Chapter 28](#) →

29 • Jacob Meets Rachel and Is Deceived

[Genesis 29](#)

MacDonald follows Jacob's arrival in Haran, his love for Rachel, Laban's trick with Leah, and the birth of Leah's sons.

I. God's perfect timing at the well — [Genesis 29:1–14](#)

A. Rachel arrived just as Jacob talked with the shepherds — [Genesis 29:6–9](#)

II. Seven years that seemed but a few days — [Genesis 29:15–20](#)

III. The deceiver deceived — [Genesis 29:21–30](#)

A. Leah given in place of Rachel — [Genesis 29:23–25](#)

B. Another seven years for Rachel — [Genesis 29:27–30](#)

C. Jacob sowed deceit and reaped it

IV. God's compensation for unloved Leah — [Genesis 29:31–35](#)

A. From her came the priesthood (Levi), the kings (Judah), and Christ

B. Reuben, Simeon, Levi, Judah — [Genesis 29:32–35](#)

V. The twelve sons and the meanings of their names — [Genesis 29:32–35:18](#)

A. Leah's six, the handmaids' four, Rachel's two

LESSONS

- God's law of compensation: those lacking in one area are given extra in another.

RELATED READING

- *The Book of Genesis* (James Gunn) — Gunn on Jacob reaping the flesh, 29:15–30

ALSO DISCUSSED IN THE LIBRARY

- *Through the Scriptures: Sunday School Lesson Outlines* (Alfred P. Gibbs)
- *Studies in Prophecy* (Dan Snaddon)
- *Articles by James Naismith* (James Naismith)

Read MacDonald on Chapter 29 →

30 • Rivalry, Children, and Jacob's Flocks

Genesis 30

MacDonald describes the rivalry of Rachel and Leah that gave Jacob more sons, and Jacob's growing wealth under Laban.

- I. Rivalry for children through the handmaids — [Genesis 30:1–13](#)
 - A. Such arrangements, though common, were not God's will
 - B. Dan and Naphtali, then Gad and Asher — [Genesis 30:6–13](#)
- II. The mandrakes and more sons for Leah — [Genesis 30:14–21](#)
 - A. Issachar, Zebulun and Dinah — [Genesis 30:18–21](#)
- III. Joseph born to Rachel — [Genesis 30:22–24](#)
- IV. Jacob's wage deal with Laban — [Genesis 30:25–36](#)
 - A. Laban learned by divination he was blessed for Jacob's sake — [Genesis 30:27](#)
 - B. Laban moved the marked animals three days away — [Genesis 30:35–36](#)
- V. The peeled rods and Jacob's increase — [Genesis 30:37–43](#)
 - A. A miracle ([Genesis 31:12](#)), skilled breeding, or a cover
 - B. Either way, his wealth grew in his last six years

CROSS REFERENCES

[Genesis 31:12](#)

RELATED READING

- *The Book of Genesis* (James Gunn) — Gunn on God's discipline of Jacob, 29:31–31:3

ALSO DISCUSSED IN THE LIBRARY

- *Through the Scriptures: Sunday School Lesson Outlines* (Alfred P. Gibbs)
- *Collected Messages of Dan Snaddon* (Dan Snaddon)
- *Articles by James Naismith* (James Naismith)

Read MacDonald on Chapter 30 →

31 • Jacob Leaves Laban

Genesis 31

MacDonald traces how God guided Jacob home, Rachel's theft of the household gods, and the uneasy pact at the heap of witness.

- I. How Jacob knew it was time to go — [Genesis 31:1–16](#)
 - A. Desire, changed circumstances, God's word, his wives' agreement
 - B. God overruled Laban's ten wage changes — [Genesis 31:7–9](#)
- II. Rachel steals the household gods — [Genesis 31:17–21](#)
 - A. They implied the right to Laban's estate — [Genesis 31:19](#)

III. Laban's pursuit and fruitless search – [Genesis 31:22–35](#)

- A. God warned Laban in a dream – [Genesis 31:24](#)
- B. Jacob rashly vowed death for the thief – [Genesis 31:32](#)
- C. Rachel hid the gods under her saddle – [Genesis 31:34–35](#)

IV. Jacob's protest: twenty years of faithful work – [Genesis 31:36–42](#)

V. A pact between two cheats – [Genesis 31:43–55](#)

- A. Mizpah: the Lord watch while we are apart – [Genesis 31:49](#)
- B. Jegar-sahadutha and Galeed: heap of witness – [Genesis 31:47](#)
- C. Laban swore by ancestral gods; Jacob by the Fear of Isaac – [Genesis 31:53](#)

CROSS REFERENCES

[Genesis 28:20–22](#)

LESSONS

- Are we faithful to our employers, and does God's blessing rest on our work?
- God's guidance often comes through desire, circumstances, His word and the counsel of others.

RELATED READING

- *The Book of Genesis* (James Gunn) – Gunn on Jacob kept by God in chapter 31

ALSO DISCUSSED IN THE LIBRARY

- *Articles by James Naismith* (James Naismith)
- *Through the Scriptures: Sunday School Lesson Outlines* (Alfred P. Gibbs)
- *The Book of Genesis* (Dan Snaddon)

[Read MacDonald on Chapter 31](#) →

32 · Jacob Wrestles at Peniel

[Genesis 32](#)

MacDonald follows Jacob's fearful preparations to meet Esau, his prayer, and the night God crippled him and named him Israel.

I. Mahanaim: God's host meets Jacob – [Genesis 32:1–2](#)

II. Fear of Esau and careful planning – [Genesis 32:3–8](#)

- A. Esau coming with 400 men – [Genesis 32:6](#)
- B. He split his camp in two – [Genesis 32:7–8](#)

III. A model prayer in distress – [Genesis 32:9–12](#)

- A. Based on covenant relationship – [Genesis 32:9](#)
- B. In humility, pleading God's promises – [Genesis 32:10–12](#)

IV. Gifts to appease Esau: faith mixed with unbelief – [Genesis 32:13–21](#)

V. Wrestling with the Lord at Peniel – [Genesis 32:22–30](#)

- A. The Man was the Angel of the Lord ([Hosea 12:4](#)) – [Genesis 32:24](#)
- B. A crippled thigh, but a spiritual victory – [Genesis 32:25](#)
- C. Confessing "Jacob," he was named Israel – [Genesis 32:27–28](#)
- D. Peniel: "the face of God" – [Genesis 32:30](#)

VI. The sinew still avoided by Jews today – [Genesis 32:32](#)

CROSS REFERENCES

[Hosea 12:4](#)

LESSONS

- We triumph through defeat and are made strong through weakness.

RELATED READING

- *The Book of Genesis* (Dan Snaddon) — Snaddon on the Lord's appearing to Jacob
- *The Book of Genesis* (James Gunn) — Gunn on Jacob's faith and fear, 32:1–23
- “Man's Diplomacy and God's Discipline (Jacob)” (F B Hole, plymouthbrethren.org) — Hole on God's discipline of Jacob

ALSO DISCUSSED IN THE LIBRARY

- *Through the Scriptures: Sunday School Lesson Outlines* (Alfred P. Gibbs)
- *Revelation: A Complete Commentary* (William R. Newell)
- *Articles by James Naismith* (James Naismith)

Read MacDonald on Chapter 32 →

33 · Jacob and Esau Reconciled

Genesis 33

MacDonald shows a warm Esau and a fearful, scheming Jacob, who then settles at Shechem instead of going on to Bethel.

- I. Jacob slips back into fear and fleshly planning — [Genesis 33:1–3](#)
 - A. Those he loved most placed at the back — [Genesis 33:2](#)
 - B. Bowing seven times — [Genesis 33:3](#)
- II. Esau's warm welcome — [Genesis 33:4–11](#)
 - A. Jacob's servility and perhaps flattery — [Genesis 33:5, 10](#)
- III. Excuses and evasion — [Genesis 33:12–16](#)
 - A. Promised to meet in Seir with no intent to go — [Genesis 33:14](#)
 - B. Real reasons: fear and suspicion — [Genesis 33:15](#)
- IV. Settling at Shechem instead of Bethel — [Genesis 33:17–20](#)
 - A. Altar El-elohe-Israel — [Genesis 33:20](#)
 - B. His Bethel vow ([Genesis 28:20–22](#)) left undone
 - C. Chapter 34's tragedy followed

CROSS REFERENCES

[Genesis 28:20–22](#)

LESSONS

- Partial obedience leaves us exposed; Jacob stopped short of Bethel.

RELATED READING

- *The Book of Genesis* (James Gunn) — Gunn on Jacob's reconciliation with Esau
- *The Book of Genesis* (James Gunn) — Gunn on partial obedience at Shechem

ALSO DISCUSSED IN THE LIBRARY

- *Proverbs* (H. A. Ironside)
- *Articles by James Naismith* (James Naismith)

Read MacDonald on Chapter 33 →

34 • Dinah and the Massacre at Shechem

Genesis 34

MacDonald notes that God's name is absent from this dark chapter of compromise, deceit and revenge.

- I. A chapter without God's name – [Genesis 34:1–31](#)
- II. Dinah mingles with the heathen and is violated – [Genesis 34:1–3](#)
 - A. A breach of separation – [Genesis 34:1](#)
- III. Hamor's offer of intermarriage – [Genesis 34:8–12](#)
 - A. One of Satan's attempts to corrupt the godly line – [Genesis 34:9](#)
- IV. Deceit with the covenant sign, then slaughter – [Genesis 34:13–29](#)
 - A. Circumcision wickedly misused – [Genesis 34:13–17](#)
 - B. Simeon and Levi murdered and plundered – [Genesis 34:25–29](#)
- V. Jacob's self-centered rebuke – [Genesis 34:30–31](#)
 - A. Eight uses of "I/me/my" in one verse – [Genesis 34:30](#)

LESSONS

- Mixing socially with the ungodly opens the door to tragedy.

RELATED READING

- *The Book of Genesis* (James Gunn) – Gunn on Jacob's disgrace at Shechem

ALSO DISCUSSED IN THE LIBRARY

- *The Pilgrim's Progress* (John Bunyan)
- *Proverbs* (H. A. Ironside)
- *Facts and Theories as to a Future State* (F. W. Grant)

[Read MacDonald on Chapter 34](#) →

35 • Back to Bethel

Genesis 35

MacDonald shows Jacob finally obeying God's call to Bethel after cleansing his house, followed by renewed promises and three funerals.

- I. God's call to keep the old vow – [Genesis 35:1](#)
 - A. God named some 20 times here, none in chapter 34
- II. Cleansing before worship – [Genesis 35:2–5](#)
 - A. Strange gods put away, clothes changed – [Genesis 35:2–4](#)
 - B. A terror fell on the nations around – [Genesis 35:5](#)
- III. Altar at Bethel and covenant renewed – [Genesis 35:6–15](#)
 - A. His name confirmed as Israel – [Genesis 35:10](#)
 - B. Pillar raised; the place named Bethel again – [Genesis 35:14–15](#)
- IV. Rachel dies bearing Benjamin – [Genesis 35:16–20](#)
 - A. Benoni and Benjamin picture Christ's sufferings and glory – [Genesis 35:18](#)
 - B. Perhaps not buried at Hebron because she brought idols
- V. Reuben's sin and the twelve sons – [Genesis 35:22–26](#)
 - A. He lost the birthright ([Genesis 49:3–4](#)) – [Genesis 35:22](#)

VI. Isaac's death; three funerals in the chapter — [Genesis 35:27-29](#)

A. Deborah, Rachel and Isaac — [Genesis 35:8, 19, 29](#)

CROSS REFERENCES

[Genesis 28:20-22](#) [Genesis 49:3-4](#)

LESSONS

- Put away idols and be cleansed before going up to worship.
- God sometimes uses painful events to bring us back to our vows.

RELATED READING

- *The Book of Genesis* (James Gunn) — Gunn on Jacob's prompt obedience, 35:1-8
- *The Book of Genesis* (James Gunn) — Gunn on trials and disappointments, 35:8-29

ALSO DISCUSSED IN THE LIBRARY

- *Articles by Edwin Fesche* (Edwin Fesche)
- *Articles by S. Lewis Johnson* (S. Lewis Johnson)
- *Bible Commentary on Joshua* (H. L. Rossier)

[Read MacDonald on Chapter 35](#) →

36 · The Descendants of Esau

[Genesis 36](#)

MacDonald sees Esau's line as earthly greatness without eternal worth, fulfilling God's word that he would become a nation.

I. Esau's family in Edom fulfills [Genesis 25:23](#) — [Genesis 36:1-19](#)

A. Three or four wives, depending on double names — [Genesis 36:2-3](#)

B. Anah found hot springs, not mules — [Genesis 36:24](#)

II. Kings in Edom, written in prophetic foresight — [Genesis 36:31-39](#)

A. Moses knew Israel would have kings ([Genesis 35:11](#)) — [Genesis 36:31](#)

B. Seven kings, as with Cain's seven generations — [Genesis 36:33-39](#)

III. Fame and riches, but nothing for eternity — [Genesis 36:40-43](#)

CROSS REFERENCES

[Genesis 25:23](#) [Genesis 35:11](#)

LESSONS

- Earthly riches and fame without God leave nothing for eternity.

RELATED READING

- *The Book of Genesis* (James Gunn) — Gunn on the generations of Esau

ALSO DISCUSSED IN THE LIBRARY

- *Expository Notes on Ezekiel* (H. A. Ironside)
- *Everyone Has a Psalm* (R. Edward Harlow)
- *Men of the Mountains & Valleys* (T. Ernest Wilson)

[Read MacDonald on Chapter 36](#) →

37 · Joseph Loved, Hated, and Sold

[Genesis 37](#)

MacDonald introduces Joseph as a rich picture of Christ: loved by his father, hated by his brothers, and sold to strangers.

I. Jacob's history resumes, centered on Joseph — [Genesis 37:2](#)

II. Joseph, one of the finest types of Christ – [Genesis 37:1–36](#)

- A. Pink lists 101 likenesses, Habershon 121
- B. Loved by his father; rebuked his brothers' sin – [Genesis 37:2–3](#)
- C. Hated and sold to enemies – [Genesis 37:4, 28](#)

III. The robe and the dreams – [Genesis 37:3–11](#)

- A. The robe showed favor and stirred jealousy – [Genesis 37:3–4](#)
- B. Sheaves and stars bowing to Joseph – [Genesis 37:5–10](#)

IV. The plot, the pit, and the sale – [Genesis 37:12–28](#)

- A. Reuben urged the pit; Judah urged the sale – [Genesis 37:21–27](#)
- B. Ishmaelites and Midianites are the same traders ([Judges 8:22–24](#)) – [Genesis 37:28](#)

V. The deceiver deceived by a goat – [Genesis 37:29–35](#)

- A. Jacob tricked Isaac with goat skins; now goat's blood tricked him – [Genesis 37:31](#)

VI. God makes man's wrath praise Him ([Psalm 76:10](#)) – [Genesis 37:36](#)

CROSS REFERENCES

[Judges 8:22–24](#) [Psalm 76:10](#)

LESSONS

- The pain of deceit comes back on the deceiver.

RELATED READING

- *The Patriarchs* (J. G. Bellett) – Bellett's meditation on Joseph
- *The Book of Genesis* (James Gunn) – Gunn on the brothers' jealousy, 37:18–36
- “Joseph” (F W Grant, [plymouthbrethren.org](#)) – F. W. Grant's outline of Joseph's story

ALSO DISCUSSED IN THE LIBRARY

- *Articles by James Naismith* (James Naismith)
- *The Book of Acts* (Dan Snaddon)
- *The Messianic Psalms* (T. Ernest Wilson)

Read MacDonald on Chapter 37 →

38 • Judah and Tamar

[Genesis 38](#)

MacDonald uses this sordid story to magnify God's grace in Christ's line and to warn of mixing with the world.

I. Grace magnified in Messiah's line – [Genesis 38:1–30](#)

- A. Tamar in Christ's genealogy with Rahab, Bathsheba, Ruth, Mary ([Matthew 1](#))
- B. Contrast makes Joseph's purity shine

II. A typical interlude: Israel's history while Christ is absent – [Genesis 38:1](#)

- A. Joseph in Gentile hands pictures Christ rejected by Israel

III. Judah's Canaanite marriage and his sons – [Genesis 38:1–11](#)

- A. Er slain for wickedness – [Genesis 38:7](#)
- B. Onan's sin: persistent selfish refusal to raise an heir – [Genesis 38:8–10](#)
- C. Judah stalled Tamar with Shelah – [Genesis 38:11](#)

- IV. Tamar's trap and Judah's exposure — [Genesis 38:12-26](#)
 - A. Signet, cord and staff as pledges — [Genesis 38:18](#)
 - B. The judge condemned by his own pledges — [Genesis 38:24-26](#)
- V. Perez and Zerah — [Genesis 38:27-30](#)
 - A. Messiah's line through Perez ([Matthew 1:3](#))

CROSS REFERENCES

[Luke 3:33](#) [Matthew 1:3-6](#) [Joshua 7:1](#)

LESSONS

- God is a God of separation; fraternizing with the world exacts a terrible price.
- God can weave even tangled threads into His own pattern.

RELATED READING

- *The Book of Genesis* (James Gunn) — Gunn on Judah and Tamar, chapter 38
- “Careless Choices” (John Gifford Bellett, [plymouthbrethren.org](#)) — Bellett on careless choices in marriage

ALSO DISCUSSED IN THE LIBRARY

- *Our Lord Jesus Christ, "A Plant of Renown"* (Leonard Sheldrake)
- *Articles by S. Lewis Johnson* (S. Lewis Johnson)
- *Revelation: A Complete Commentary* (William R. Newell)

Read MacDonald on Chapter 38 →

39 · Joseph in Potiphar's House and in Prison

[Genesis 39](#)

MacDonald shows Joseph resisting temptation, falsely accused, yet blessed by the Lord even in prison.

- I. Overseer in Potiphar's house — [Genesis 39:1-6](#)
- II. Steadfast against temptation — [Genesis 39:7-12](#)
 - A. He refused again and again — [Genesis 39:8-10](#)
 - B. Lost his coat but kept his character, and later gained a crown — [Genesis 39:12](#)
- III. Framed and imprisoned — [Genesis 39:13-20](#)
 - A. Potiphar may not have fully believed his wife — [Genesis 39:19-20](#)
- IV. Above the circumstances: God at work — [Genesis 39:21-23](#)
 - A. [Romans 8:28](#) on display
 - B. In chains ([Psalm 105:17-19](#)): training time for reigning time

CROSS REFERENCES

[Romans 8:28](#) [Psalm 105:17-19](#)

LESSONS

- Flee temptation and avoid occasions for sin.
- Live above circumstances by seeing God's hand in them.

RELATED READING

- *The Book of Genesis* (James Gunn) — Gunn on Joseph's adversities, 39:1-14
- “Stewardship” (Steve Hulshizer, [plymouthbrethren.org](#)) — Hulshizer on stewardship, including Joseph

ALSO DISCUSSED IN THE LIBRARY

- *Articles by James Naismith* (James Naismith)
- *Proverbs* (H. A. Ironside)
- *Through the Scriptures: Sunday School Lesson Outlines* (Alfred P. Gibbs)

Read MacDonald on Chapter 39 →

40 • The Butler's and Baker's Dreams

Genesis 40

MacDonald recounts Joseph interpreting two prisoners' dreams and being forgotten by the butler, though not by the Lord.

- I. Two dreams in prison — [Genesis 40:1-8](#)
 - A. Interpretations belong to God — [Genesis 40:8](#)
- II. Restoration for the butler, death for the baker — [Genesis 40:9-22](#)
 - A. Pharaoh would "lift up the head" of each — [Genesis 40:13, 19](#)
- III. The butler forgot, but the Lord did not — [Genesis 40:23](#)
- IV. "Remember me": the Savior's words too — [Genesis 40:14](#)
 - A. Obeyed in the bread and wine of the Lord's Supper

LESSONS

- Christ asked to be remembered; we obey Him at His table.

RELATED READING

- **"Remember Me"** (H P Barker, plymouthbrethren.org) — Barker on "Remember me"
- *The Book of Genesis* (James Gunn) — Gunn on Genesis 40

ALSO DISCUSSED IN THE LIBRARY

- *Articles by H. P. Barker* (H. P. Barker)
- *Proverbs* (H. A. Ironside)
- *The Bible* (James Gunn)

[Read MacDonald on Chapter 40](#) →

41 • Joseph Exalted over Egypt

Genesis 41

MacDonald shows Joseph humbly interpreting Pharaoh's dreams and being raised to rule, a picture of Christ dispensing bread to the world.

- I. Pharaoh's dreams and the butler's memory — [Genesis 41:1-13](#)
- II. Seven years of plenty, seven of famine — [Genesis 41:14-32](#)
 - A. A doubled dream means God has settled it ([Daniel 2](#); [Daniel 7](#)) — [Genesis 41:32](#)
 - B. "It is not in me": humility fit for power — [Genesis 41:16](#)
- III. Joseph's plan and his promotion — [Genesis 41:33-45](#)
 - A. Store grain in the good years — [Genesis 41:33-36](#)
 - B. The king's heart is in the Lord's hand ([Proverbs 21:1](#)) — [Genesis 41:40](#)
 - C. A Gentile bride, Asenath — [Genesis 41:45](#)
- IV. Manasseh and Ephraim born — [Genesis 41:50-52](#)
- V. All the world comes to Joseph for bread — [Genesis 41:53-57](#)
 - A. Christ dispenses God's blessings to the hungry — [Genesis 41:55-57](#)
- VI. God's purpose: save the family and isolate it from Canaan — [Genesis 41:57](#)
 - A. See [Genesis 43:32](#)

CROSS REFERENCES

[Daniel 2](#) [Daniel 7](#) [Proverbs 21:1](#) [Genesis 43:32](#)

LESSONS

- Humility makes it safe for God to entrust us with great responsibility.

RELATED READING

- *The Book of Genesis* (James Gunn) — Gunn on humility exalted, 41:17–40
- *The Book of Genesis* (James Gunn) — Gunn on Joseph in the day of prosperity

ALSO DISCUSSED IN THE LIBRARY

- *Articles by James Naismith* (James Naismith)
- *Through the Scriptures: Sunday School Lesson Outlines* (Alfred P. Gibbs)
- *The Book of Acts* (Dan Snaddon)

Read MacDonald on Chapter 41 →

42 · Joseph's Brothers Come to Egypt

Genesis 42

MacDonald shows Joseph's stern testing of his brothers, which awakens their guilt, as a picture of Christ dealing with His Jewish brethren in the coming tribulation.

- I. Famine drives Jacob to send ten sons for grain — [Genesis 42:1–5](#)
 - A. Benjamin, Rachel's only son as far as Jacob knew, stayed home — [Genesis 42:4](#)
- II. Joseph deals roughly with his brothers — [Genesis 42:6–20](#)
 - A. They bowed before him, not knowing him — [Genesis 42:6–8](#)
 - B. Accused as spies and put in prison — [Genesis 42:9–17](#)
 - C. Their youngest brother must be brought — [Genesis 42:20](#)
- III. Conscience wakes and Joseph's love shows through — [Genesis 42:21–25](#)
 - A. "We are verily guilty concerning our brother" — [Genesis 42:21–22](#)
 - B. Joseph turned away and wept; Simeon held as hostage — [Genesis 42:24](#)
 - C. Grain, provisions and their money secretly returned — [Genesis 42:25](#)
- IV. Joseph pictures Christ dealing with Israel in the tribulation — [Genesis 42:6–24](#)
 - A. His aim was to bring them to confess their guilt
 - B. Few stories give so full a picture of Christ
- V. Money in the sacks, fear, and Jacob's refusal — [Genesis 42:26–38](#)
 - A. One found his money on the way, the rest at home — [Genesis 42:27, 35](#)
 - B. Reuben offered his two sons as a guarantee — [Genesis 42:37](#)
 - C. Jacob would not risk Benjamin — [Genesis 42:38](#)

LESSONS

- God's loving dealings may feel harsh while He is bringing us to confess our sin.

RELATED READING

- *The Book of Genesis* (James Gunn) — Gunn on Joseph's purposeful testing of his brothers

ALSO DISCUSSED IN THE LIBRARY

- *Proverbs* (H. A. Ironside)
- *Through the Scriptures: Sunday School Lesson Outlines* (Alfred P. Gibbs)
- *Articles by James Naismith* (James Naismith)

Read MacDonald on Chapter 42 →

43 • Judah's Pledge and Joseph's Feast

Genesis 43

MacDonald shows Judah becoming surety for Benjamin, a picture of Christ, and Joseph deeply moved as he feasts with his unknowing brothers.

- I. Judah offers himself as surety for Benjamin – [Genesis 43:1–10](#)
 - A. The governor's condition could not be dodged – [Genesis 43:3–5](#)
 - B. Judah pictures Christ, who became our Surety at Calvary – [Genesis 43:9](#)
- II. Jacob's gift and double money – [Genesis 43:11–15](#)
 - A. Balm, honey, spices, myrrh and nuts, untouched by famine – [Genesis 43:11](#)
 - B. Double money in case the refund was a mistake – [Genesis 43:12](#)
- III. Fear at Joseph's house relieved – [Genesis 43:16–25](#)
 - A. They feared trouble over the money – [Genesis 43:18](#)
 - B. The steward: your account is paid; Simeon released – [Genesis 43:23](#)
 - C. The money was found in two stages ([Genesis 42:27](#); [Genesis 42:35](#)) – [Genesis 43:21](#)
- IV. The banquet in Joseph's house – [Genesis 43:26–34](#)
 - A. Joseph overcome on seeing Benjamin – [Genesis 43:29–30](#)
 - B. Joseph, the brothers and the Egyptians ate apart – [Genesis 43:32](#)
 - C. Seated in birth order, to their amazement – [Genesis 43:33](#)
 - D. Special favor shown to Benjamin – [Genesis 43:34](#)

CROSS REFERENCES

[Genesis 42:27](#) [Genesis 42:35](#)

RELATED READING

- *The Book of Genesis* (James Gunn) – Gunn on Benjamin sent, 43:1–14
- *The Book of Genesis* (James Gunn) – Gunn on the brothers' further tests, 43:15–34

ALSO DISCUSSED IN THE LIBRARY

- *Through the Scriptures: Sunday School Lesson Outlines* (Alfred P. Gibbs)
- *The Continual Burnt Offering* (H. A. Ironside)
- *Proverbs* (H. A. Ironside)

[Read MacDonald on Chapter 43](#) →

44 • The Silver Cup and Judah's Plea

Genesis 44

MacDonald shows Joseph's test of the silver cup bringing the brothers to own their guilt, and Judah, changed by grace, offering himself as a slave for Benjamin.

- I. The silver cup hidden in Benjamin's sack – [Genesis 44:1–13](#)
 - A. The cup Joseph drank from and "divined" with, likely his dream-reading – [Genesis 44:5](#)
 - B. A rash vow of death for the guilty one – [Genesis 44:9](#)
 - C. Found with Benjamin; they tore their clothes and returned – [Genesis 44:12–13](#)

- II. Joseph's design: to bring their sin to light – [Genesis 44:14-17](#)
 - A. Would they again ignore a captive brother and a grieving father?
 - B. His sternness and kindness led them to repentance
 - C. Foreshadows Israel mourning for the Messiah ([Zechariah 12:10](#))
- III. Judah's moving plea before Joseph – [Genesis 44:18-34](#)
 - A. He retold the whole story of Benjamin – [Genesis 44:18-29](#)
 - B. Their father would die without the lad – [Genesis 44:30-31](#)
 - C. Judah offered to stay as a slave in Benjamin's place – [Genesis 44:33](#)
- IV. The change grace worked in Judah – [Genesis 37:26-44:34](#)
 - A. Chapter 37: sold his brother for profit
 - B. Chapter 38: deceit and immorality
 - C. Chapters 43-44: surety, intercessor, substitute

CROSS REFERENCES

[Zechariah 12:10](#)

LESSONS

- God's grace can turn a callous heart into a sacrificial one; Judah is the proof.

RELATED READING

- *The Book of Genesis* (James Gunn) – Gunn on Judah's changed character, 44:18-34

ALSO DISCUSSED IN THE LIBRARY

- *Through the Scriptures: Sunday School Lesson Outlines* (Alfred P. Gibbs)

Read MacDonald on Chapter 44 →

45 • Joseph Makes Himself Known

[Genesis 45](#)

MacDonald sees Joseph revealing himself to his brothers and freely forgiving them as a happy preview of Christ revealing Himself to Israel.

- I. "I am Joseph": the great self-revealing – [Genesis 45:1-3](#)
 - A. He cleared the room and wept aloud – [Genesis 45:1-2](#)
- II. God overruled their evil for good – [Genesis 45:4-8](#)
 - A. "God did send me before you to preserve life" – [Genesis 45:5-7](#)
- III. Come down to Goshen for the five years left – [Genesis 45:9-15](#)
 - A. "Tell my father of all my glory": we too tell God of His Son's glories – [Genesis 45:13](#)
 - B. Embracing Benjamin and kissing them all – [Genesis 45:14-15](#)
 - C. A preview of Israel's joy when the Christ of Calvary reveals Himself
- IV. Pharaoh's provision and Joseph's gifts – [Genesis 45:16-24](#)
 - A. Wagons provided; leave the heavy goods – [Genesis 45:17-20](#)
 - B. Benjamin's special gifts – [Genesis 45:22](#)
 - C. "See that ye fall not out by the way" – [Genesis 45:24](#)
- V. Jacob's heart revives – [Genesis 45:25-28](#)
 - A. The wagons convinced him Joseph lived – [Genesis 45:27](#)

VI. Joseph's love for his father mirrors Christ's love for the Father — [Genesis 45:3, 9, 13, 23, 27](#)

A. Five mentions of his father in the chapter

B. Love for the Father brought Christ to redeem us

LESSONS

- We can rehearse before God the glories of His beloved Son.
- Free forgiveness, like Joseph's, reflects the heart of Christ.

RELATED READING

- *The Book of Genesis* (James Gunn) — Gunn on Joseph revealing himself, 45:1–27

ALSO DISCUSSED IN THE LIBRARY

- *Articles by James Naismith* (James Naismith)
- *The Patriarchs* (J. G. Bellett)
- *Through the Scriptures: Sunday School Lesson Outlines* (Alfred P. Gibbs)

Read MacDonald on Chapter 45 →

46 • Jacob Goes Down to Egypt

[Genesis 46](#)

MacDonald shows God encouraging Jacob at Beersheba, records the family that went down, and explains Goshen as God's incubator for the nation.

I. Worship and God's word at Beersheba — [Genesis 46:1–4](#)

A. A place of past meetings with Abraham and Isaac — [Genesis 46:1](#)

B. The last of God's seven appearances to Jacob — [Genesis 46:2–3](#)

C. "I will bring thee up again": fulfilled in his burial and his descendants' return — [Genesis 46:4](#)

D. Joseph's hand closing his eyes foretold a peaceful death — [Genesis 46:4](#)

II. The family register of Jacob — [Genesis 46:5–27](#)

A. 66, then 70 ([Exodus 1:5](#)), then 75 ([Acts 7:14](#)) — [Genesis 46:26–27](#)

B. The numbers widen from direct descendants to wider family

III. Jacob and Joseph reunited in Goshen — [Genesis 46:28–30](#)

IV. Goshen: God's incubator for Israel — [Genesis 46:31–34](#)

A. Shepherds were despised by Egyptians — [Genesis 46:34](#)

B. Separated by nationality ([Genesis 43:32](#)) and occupation

C. Kept there until strong enough to take the land

CROSS REFERENCES

[Exodus 1:5](#) [Acts 7:14](#) [Genesis 43:32](#)

LESSONS

- God may set His people apart for a season to make them strong for what lies ahead.

RELATED READING

- *The Book of Genesis* (James Gunn) — Gunn on Jacob's arrival in Egypt, 46:28–47:6

ALSO DISCUSSED IN THE LIBRARY

- *Abraham* (Dan Snaddon)
- *Typical Foreshadowings in Genesis* (William Lincoln)
- *Proverbs* (H. A. Ironside)

Read MacDonald on Chapter 46 →

47 • Jacob Before Pharaoh

Genesis 47

MacDonald shows aged Jacob blessing mighty Pharaoh, Joseph's wise handling of the famine, and Jacob ending his life as a worshiper.

- I. The family settled in Goshen — [Genesis 47:1–6](#)
 - A. Some made overseers of Pharaoh's herds — [Genesis 47:6](#)
- II. Jacob blesses Pharaoh — [Genesis 47:7–10](#)
 - A. The lesser is blessed by the greater ([Hebrews 7:7](#)) — [Genesis 47:7](#)
 - B. "Few and evil" days, much of it his own doing — [Genesis 47:9](#)
- III. Joseph provides for his family — [Genesis 47:11–12](#)
 - A. The best of the land: a truly abundant life
- IV. Joseph's administration of the famine — [Genesis 47:13–26](#)
 - A. Money, then livestock, then land exchanged for food — [Genesis 47:14–20](#)
 - B. Priests' land excepted — [Genesis 47:22](#)
 - C. Seed given; one-fifth rent, a fair arrangement — [Genesis 47:23–26](#)
- V. Jacob's charge and his worship — [Genesis 47:27–31](#)
 - A. Joseph must bury him in Canaan — [Genesis 47:29–30](#)
 - B. Bowed on his bed's head or staff ([Hebrews 11:21](#)) — [Genesis 47:31](#)
 - C. The only hero of [Hebrews 11](#) praised as a worshiper

CROSS REFERENCES

[Hebrews 7:7](#) [Hebrews 11:21](#)

LESSONS

- By God's grace, a supplanter can finish his life in worship.

RELATED READING

- *The Book of Genesis* (James Gunn) — Gunn on Joseph's administration, 47:7–26
- *The Book of Genesis* (James Gunn) — Gunn on Jacob's last days, 47:27–48:22

ALSO DISCUSSED IN THE LIBRARY

- *The Trend of Life* (James Gunn)
- *Through the Scriptures: Sunday School Lesson Outlines* (Alfred P. Gibbs)
- *Current Issues* (Dan Snaddon)

Read MacDonald on Chapter 47 →

48 • Jacob Blesses Ephraim and Manasseh

Genesis 48

MacDonald explains how Jacob adopted Joseph's two sons, giving Joseph the double portion, and by faith set the younger before the elder.

- I. Jacob adopts Joseph's sons as his own — [Genesis 48:1–7](#)
 - A. Joseph's tribe gets a double share of land: the birthright in territory — [Genesis 48:5](#)
 - B. Later sons would be counted under Ephraim or Manasseh — [Genesis 48:6](#)
 - C. For love of Rachel, who died too soon — [Genesis 48:7](#)

II. The younger blessed above the elder — [Genesis 48:8–20](#)

A. Joseph tried to correct the crossed hands — [Genesis 48:17–18](#)

B. Isaac blessed the younger unknowingly; Jacob did it knowingly, by faith ([Hebrews 11:21](#)) — [Genesis 48:19–20](#)

III. Faith in Israel's return to the land — [Genesis 48:21–22](#)

A. A slope taken from the Amorites, perhaps near Jacob's well ([John 4:5](#)) — [Genesis 48:22](#)

CROSS REFERENCES

[Hebrews 11:21](#) [John 4:5](#)

RELATED READING

- *The Book of Genesis* (James Gunn) — Gunn on Jacob's blessing of Ephraim and Manasseh
- *The Book of Genesis* (James Gunn) — Gunn on Jacob's last days, 47:27–48:22

ALSO DISCUSSED IN THE LIBRARY

- *The Epistle of James* (James Gunn)
- *Articles by S. Lewis Johnson* (S. Lewis Johnson)
- *Proverbs* (H. A. Ironside)

[Read MacDonald on Chapter 48](#) →

49 • Jacob's Prophetic Blessing of His Sons

[Genesis 49](#)

MacDonald walks through Jacob's last words over each son as prophecy, giving special weight to Judah and Shiloh and to Joseph the fruitful bough.

I. Jacob's last words: prophecy and blessing — [Genesis 49:1–2, 28](#)

II. Reuben loses the firstborn's place — [Genesis 49:3–4](#)

A. Unstable as boiling water; his sin with Bilhah ([Genesis 35:22](#)) — [Genesis 49:4](#)

III. Simeon and Levi scattered for their cruelty — [Genesis 49:5–7](#)

A. Simeon absorbed into Judah ([Joshua 19:1–9](#))

B. Levi spread over 48 cities

C. Their cruelty cursed, not the tribes themselves — [Genesis 49:7](#)

IV. Judah: the lion, the scepter, and Shiloh — [Genesis 49:8–12](#)

A. Praised by his brothers; a lion at rest — [Genesis 49:8–9](#)

B. Judah gets the birthright in government — [Genesis 49:10](#)

C. Rule until Shiloh, the Messiah, comes, and in Him forever ([Ezekiel 21:27](#)) — [Genesis 49:10](#)

D. Abundance of wine and milk — [Genesis 49:11–12](#)

V. Zebulun, Issachar and Dan — [Genesis 49:13–18](#)

A. Zebulun's sea trade may look to the Millennium — [Genesis 49:13](#)

B. Issachar, the contented donkey, takes the yoke — [Genesis 49:14–15](#)

C. Dan the judge: idolatry ([Judges 18:30–31](#)) or Antichrist ([Revelation 7:3–8](#)) — [Genesis 49:16–17](#)

D. Jacob's prayer for final deliverance — [Genesis 49:18](#)

VI. Gad, Asher and Naphtali — [Genesis 49:19–21](#)

A. Gad raided but victorious; Asher's royal dainties — [Genesis 49:19–20](#)

B. Naphtali a freed doe, swift with good news — [Genesis 49:21](#)

VII. Joseph, the fruitful bough – [Genesis 49:22–26](#)

- A. Blessing beyond his borders through Ephraim and Manasseh – [Genesis 49:22](#)
- B. Strengthened by the Mighty One, source of the Shepherd, the Stone of Israel – [Genesis 49:24](#)
- C. Rain, springs and children in abundance – [Genesis 49:25–26](#)

/III. Benjamin, and Jacob's death – [Genesis 49:27–33](#)

- A. A warlike tribe, dividing the spoil – [Genesis 49:27](#)
- B. Burial charge for Machpelah, then he breathed his last – [Genesis 49:29–33](#)

CROSS REFERENCES

[Genesis 35:22](#) [Joshua 19:1–9](#) [Ezekiel 21:27](#) [Judges 18:30–31](#) [Revelation 7:3–8](#)

RELATED READING

- *The Book of Genesis* (James Gunn) — Gunn on Jacob's blessings, 49:1–7
- *The Book of Genesis* (James Gunn) — Gunn on Judah through Benjamin, 49:8–33

ALSO DISCUSSED IN THE LIBRARY

- *Revelation: A Complete Commentary* (William R. Newell)
- *Through the Scriptures: Sunday School Lesson Outlines* (Alfred P. Gibbs)
- *Archaeology and the Bible* (Gordon Franz)

[Read MacDonald on Chapter 49](#) →

50 • Jacob's Burial and Joseph's Death

[Genesis 50](#)

MacDonald follows Jacob's great funeral, Joseph's gracious forgiveness of his fearful brothers, and Joseph's death in faith, closing a book centered on people.

I. Jacob mourned and buried in Canaan – [Genesis 50:1–14](#)

- A. Embalmed; Egypt mourned seventy days – [Genesis 50:1–3](#)
- B. Abel-mizraim, the mourning of Egypt – [Genesis 50:10–11](#)
- C. Buried in the cave of Machpelah – [Genesis 50:13](#)

II. Joseph's forgiveness of his fearful brothers – [Genesis 50:15–21](#)

- A. They feared revenge now Jacob was gone – [Genesis 50:15–17](#)
- B. Judgment belongs to God, not to Joseph – [Genesis 50:19](#)
- C. "Ye thought evil against me; but God meant it unto good" – [Genesis 50:20](#)

III. Joseph's death and his faith ([Hebrews 11:22](#)) – [Genesis 50:22–26](#)

- A. Probably first of the twelve to die, 54 years after Jacob
- B. His bones to be carried to Canaan – [Genesis 50:25](#)

IV. From a perfect creation to a coffin in Egypt – [Genesis 1–50](#)

- A. Two chapters on creation, 48 on people's lives
- B. God's chief interest is people

CROSS REFERENCES

[Hebrews 11:22](#)

LESSONS

- God turns what others mean for evil into good for His people.
- God's chief interest is people, which is both a comfort and a challenge to those who know Him.

RELATED READING

- *The Book of Genesis* (James Gunn) — Gunn on 49:33–50:15

- *The Book of Genesis* (James Gunn) — Gunn on Joseph's last days, 50:15–26

ALSO DISCUSSED IN THE LIBRARY

- *Articles by W. Ross Rainey* (W. Ross Rainey)
- *Truths to Live By: One Day at a Time* (William MacDonald)
- *The Trend of Life* (James Gunn)

Read MacDonald on Chapter 50 →

Further reading on Genesis

In the Faithful Men Library

- *The Book of Genesis* (Dan Snaddon)
- *The Book of Genesis* (James Gunn)
- *Abraham* (Dan Snaddon)
- *Typical Foreshadowings in Genesis* (William Lincoln)
- *The Patriarchs* (J. G. Bellett)
- *Genesis in the Light of the New Testament* (F. W. Grant)
- *Creation in Genesis and in Geology* (F. W. Grant)

On plymouthbrethren.org

- “Stewardship” (Steve Hulshizer, plymouthbrethren.org)
- “The God of Abraham” (Robert Gessner, plymouthbrethren.org)
- “Abraham's Test” (Daniel C Snaddon, plymouthbrethren.org)
- “Types of the Temple” (Thomas Newberry, plymouthbrethren.org)
- “The Lord's Way with Abraham, the Believer.” (William Lincoln, plymouthbrethren.org)
- “Joseph” (F W Grant, plymouthbrethren.org)
- “Careless Choices” (John Gifford Bellett, plymouthbrethren.org)
- “God's Call out of the Earth” (John Gifford Bellett, plymouthbrethren.org)
- “The Lord's Way with Isaac, the Typical Son” (William Lincoln, plymouthbrethren.org)
- “Isaac at Gerar (Genesis 26)” (Mark Kolchin, plymouthbrethren.org)
- “Fear Not” (Elliott Van Ryn, plymouthbrethren.org)
- “Remember Me” (H P Barker, plymouthbrethren.org)
- “The Call of God - Abraham and Lot” (C H Mackintosh, plymouthbrethren.org)
- “Lot's Choice” (Donald Norbie, plymouthbrethren.org)
- “Man's Diplomacy and God's Discipline (Jacob)” (F B Hole, plymouthbrethren.org)
- “While He Lingered” (Steve Hulshizer, plymouthbrethren.org)
- “The Church Age” (Steve Hulshizer, plymouthbrethren.org)
- “Are You a Withered Leaf” (John Gifford Bellett, plymouthbrethren.org)
- “The Lord's Way With Adam, the Type of Him That is to Come.” (William Lincoln, plymouthbrethren.org)
- “Aprons of Leaves” (Steve Hulshizer, plymouthbrethren.org)
- “Where Art Thou?” (D L Moody, plymouthbrethren.org)
- “The Origin of Sin” (David Dunlap, plymouthbrethren.org)
- “The Lord's Way With Enoch, the Saint for Heaven” (William Lincoln, plymouthbrethren.org)

Every library book that cites Genesis: [Scripture index](#) — [Genesis](#)

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