

CHALLENGE 2014: BIBLE IN A YEAR

WEEK 2: GENESIS 17-40 (JANUARY 5-11)

Summary:

Our reading this week begins with God giving Abram the covenantal sign of circumcision — a sign that will be replaced in the New Testament by covenantal baptism. In this same context, God also changes Abram's name to Abraham and Sarai's name to Sarah. The covenant is renewed and God promises once again a son through whom the covenant shall be fulfilled.

Chapters 18 and 19 combine to tell the story of God's covenantal blessing and cursing. To Abraham and Sarah will come a child (Isaac) but to the wicked people of Sodom, judgment will befall them. God sends The Angel of Yahweh to bring Lot and his family out of the city and call them to flee to the hills for God is going to not only destroy the cities of Sodom and Gomorrah, but also the whole valley around them — a valley today known as "The Dead Sea." Lot is afraid to run to the mountains so God permits him and his family to stop in Zoar though the people of that town resent Lot and he and his daughters end up hiding out in the hills where the girls ultimately get their father drunk and commit incest with him, giving birth to Moab and Ben-ammi, the fathers of the Moabites and the Ammonites.

As we move into chapter 20, for a second time Abraham fears the people of the land and tells folks that Sarah is his sister. And once again God delivers Sarah from a wicked king. And later at the age of 90, Sarah gives birth to Isaac. In chapter 22, when Isaac is a boy (probably a pre-teen or young teenager), God commands Abraham to do the unthinkable, to sacrifice his son — something God would ultimately do himself. But Isaac serves as a foreshadow of what God would do with Jesus.

Sarah passes away in chapter 23 and in the following chapter, Abraham sends his trusted servant to find a wife from his homeland for his son, Isaac. Isaac would end up marrying Rebekah, his cousin and Abraham would remarry and this time have several children with his new wife, though none of those children would inherit God's covenantal promises.

As we move from the account of Abraham, we find ourselves with Isaac and Rebekah's children, Esau and Jacob. Jacob, the favorite of Rebekah, successfully steals the birthright from his brother and flees to his uncle Laban's home where he meets Rachel. Desiring to marry Rachel, he labors for 7 years to earn that privilege only to be duped by his future father-in-law and ended up marrying Leah, her older sister. Jacob works an additional 7 years for the right to marry Rachel as well. There seems to be a baby birthing contest and Jacob ends up with 12 sons and a daughter.

Jacob's eventual flight from Laban would leave him crossing paths with his brother, Esau again, though Esau has forgiven him. Yet, in the midst of all of this, there is a wrestling

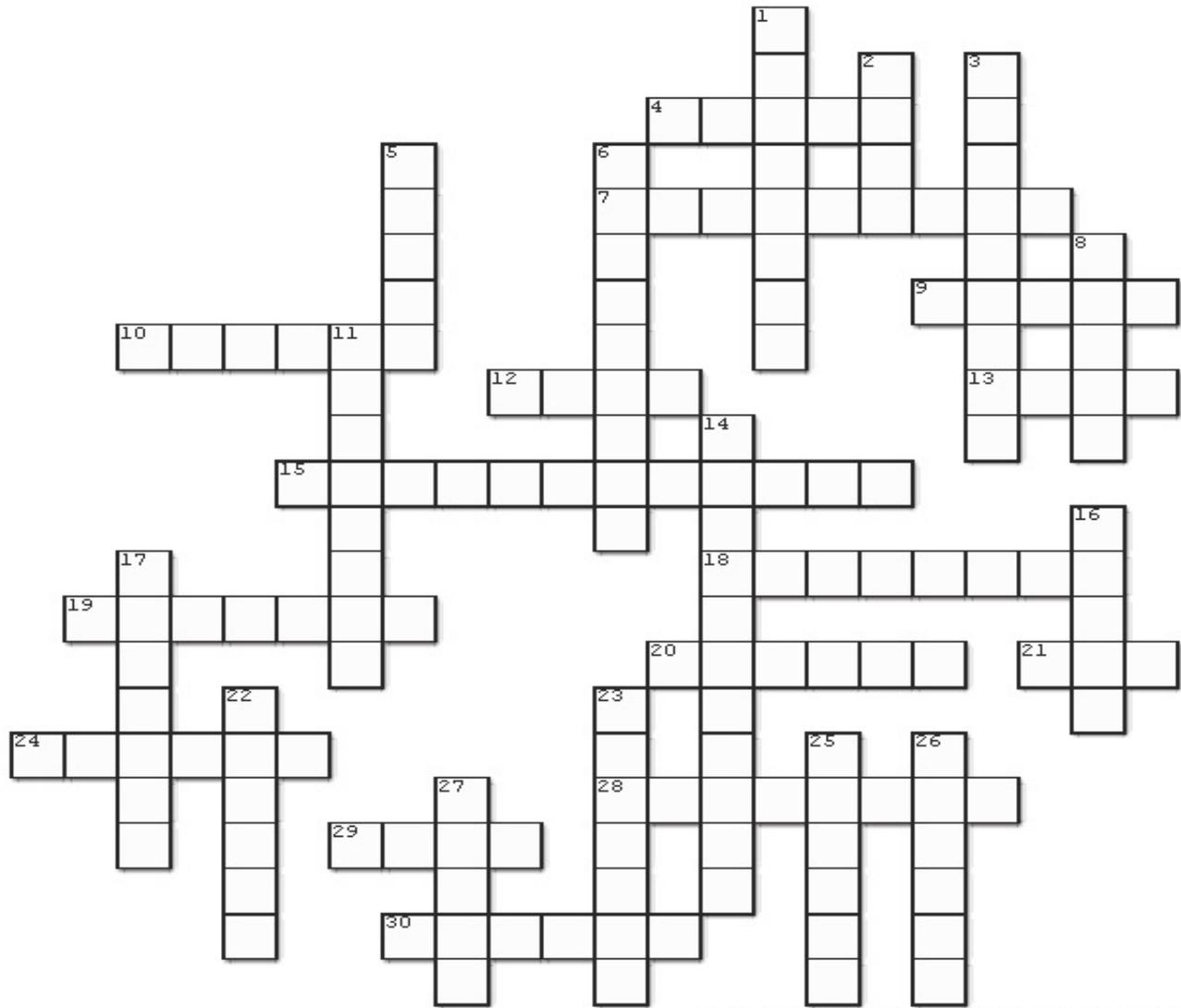
match with The Angel of the Yahweh that leaves Jacob with a limp and a new name: Israel (the one who strove with God).

Soon we will see a new major figure introduced, that of Jacob's son, Joseph, the dreamer. Earning the enmity of his brothers, he ends up being sold to the Ishmaelites and taken to Egypt as a slave. Originally, Joseph begins as the house manager for Potiphar until Potiphar's wife takes an interest in Joseph, landing him in prison, though the scriptures are clear that God never abandons him. Our readings end with Joseph interpreting the dreams of a Baker and a Cupbearer for Pharaoh.

Chromatic Notes:

- Note that in Galatians 3:16, Paul points out that the "seed" promised to Abraham is ultimately Christ, making believers in Christ children of Abraham.
- Three "men" approach Abraham while he is resting in the midday (Genesis 18). If you look closely at the things these angels do and how they are referred to, it is considered by many people that these are the angels Michael and Gabriel along with the pre-incarnate Christ.
- Abraham cannot successfully intercede for Sodom as he is not a Sodomite and has no authority to be their mediator.
- We often lose track of time for the Biblical account does not always give us information as to how much time transpires between chapters, but Isaac is 37 years old at the death of his mother and 65 years old when his father, Abraham passes away.
- As Jacob leaves his homeland to find a bride, he retraces his grandfather, Abraham's steps, essentially entering into Abraham's story of promise and God renews his covenant with Jacob at Beersheba, a significant place in Abraham's journeying.
- The dream that Jacob had of the ladder to heaven is mentioned again in John 1:51 and Jesus is referred to as the ladder.
- In Jacob's interaction with Laban, both men are tricksters, but Jacob is God's trickster, making all of the difference.
- Joseph is 28 years old at the beginning of chapter 40. Notice also, the Baker states to Joseph, "I had a dream." When it comes time for Joseph to interpret Pharaoh's dream, Pharaoh states, "I was in my dream," making it more personal, ominous, and urgent.

Week 2: Genesis 17-40



Created on TheTeachersCorner.net Crossword Maker

Across

4. Abraham lived by the 'oaks of' this place.
7. Abraham makes a covenant with Abimelech over wells at this place.
9. Isaac's brother-in-law and Jacob's father-in-law.
10. The name of Rachel's first son (hint: he was a dreamer).
12. Lot's wife turned into a pillar of this.
13. Jacob's twin brother.
15. This was the sign of the covenant placed on young boys.
18. One of the tribes that would descend from Lot's incestuous relationship with his daughters.
19. Isaac's wife.
20. The name of Jacob's firstborn.
21. This was the substitute for Isaac when Abraham was to sacrifice him.
24. This is the land that contains the mountain on which Abraham was to sacrifice Isaac.
28. Abraham bought a burial plot for Sarah from these people.
29. The city to which Lot originally fled.
30. Jacob renamed Beersheba this because of a dream.

Down

1. One of two major cities that God destroyed by fire.
2. Jacob's first wife.
3. Joseph interprets the dream of this prisoner favorably.
5. Jacob's only daughter.
6. For a second time in his life, Lot was afraid and told this man that Sarah was his sister.
8. The ill-fated wife of Er who would be the mother of Perez.
11. Joseph's first master in Egypt.
14. These people bought Joseph and took him to Egypt.
16. The child of Abraham through which the covenant would be given.
17. The wife of Abraham after Sarah's death.
22. Jacob's second wife.
23. God hears the voice of this boy crying in the wilderness and promises to make a great nation from him.
25. The mother of Dan and Naphtali.
26. The place where Jacob had his famous wrestling match.
27. This prisoner's dream proved a foreshadow of death.