

GENESIS

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Genesis 1

On our first edition of Kids Bible Breakdown, we are going to be discussing Genesis Chapter 1.

In the beginning, God created the heavens and the earth. The word “create” means to “make new”. God is the only one that can make something from nothing. Seeing that God created the heavens and the earth tells us that right from the beginning, God has always been. He is the start of everything!

Chapter 1 goes on to tell us the order in which God created things. Although the Bible says “day”, this might not actually mean 24 hours like the type of “day” you and I are used to. It could just represent a period of time. Either way, this information doesn’t impact the overall truth of who God is and what He has done for us, so we are not going to get hung up on the details.

Day 1– God created light and separated it from darkness, calling the light “day” and the darkness “night”.

Day 2 – God separated the waters to make space above the waters and called the space heaven or sky.

Day 3 – God gathered the waters, so that dry land appeared. He then told the land to grow all kinds of plants and trees and flowers, and vegetables and fruits. God saw it was good.

Day 4 – God created light in the heavens to separate day from night. The greater light, the sun, ruled the day. And the lesser light, the moon and stars, ruled the night. God said it was good.

Day 5 – God created all living things in the water and birds in the sky. He told them to be fruitful, which means to have a lot of babies, to fill the air and water. God saw it was good.

DAY 6 – God created all creatures that move on the land and God said it was good.

Then God said, “Let US make man in OUR image. He didn’t say my image. He said OUR image. This shows us that God the Father, God the Son, who later came to earth as Jesus, and the Holy Spirit were all there! Right from the very beginning!

When God said OUR image, this does NOT mean He made us to be like gods. We are far from that. It means God gave us a soul and a conscience and the ability to reason, which means to think through things and work through problems and issues, and the ability to make a decision.

The Bible says He then blessed them, and told them to have babies and fill the earth. Then He told them to rule over all things and gave them green plants for food. He gave them everything they needed and much, much more. This time the Bible states, God said it was VERY good.

Genesis 2

On this episode of Kids Bible Breakdown, we are breaking down Genesis Chapter 2.

Yesterday we started off with everything that God created for the first six days. Genesis 2 starts off with day 7. God completed His work creating everything and He rested. This is huge for us! God is setting an example for us. God, who spoke everything into existence and needs nothing, took the time to rest! So, how much more important is it for us to ensure we take time to rest?

Chapter 2 then jumps back to go into detail about God creating Adam and Eve. This is the first time that we see the word LORD all in capital letters. When it is written like this, it is the personal name of God. In Hebrew it's pronounced something like Yahweh. Other times when the word Lord is used with just a capital "L" and the rest is lower case, it's referring to a master. When the word "lord" is all lower case, it's just talking about someone who's in a position of authority. Like dad is the lord of the household or when you call somebody sir. The fact that God tells us His name, means He doesn't just want to be some unknown "wizard behind the curtain"; He wants to have a personal relationship with us.

So, Chapter 2 goes on to say that there was no one to work the ground. So, Yahweh, the LORD God, formed man from the dust of the ground and breathed life into him. God put the man in the garden and filled it with trees and plants and delicious food. In the middle of the garden was the tree of life and the tree of the knowledge of good and evil.

From Eden came a river that split into four rivers. It is almost certain that I am not going to pronounce these correctly, so bear with me. The first river was named Pishon and it flowed through the land of Havilah, where there was gold. The second river was named Gihon, and it flows through the land of Cush. The third river was Tigris and ran along the east of Ashur. The fourth was the river Euphrates.

Now God told man that he could eat from any tree, except the tree of the knowledge of good and evil, because IN the day that man ate from it, he would die. Notice God said, IN the day that he eats from it, not IF he eats from it. God is not taken by surprise! He didn't sit there and think, "Oh well these people messed up! Better come up with a plan "B". God knows we are going to mess up before we do and guess what, the plan He has laid out incorporates our screwups. When God told man, "You will surely die", He was not just talking about a physical death, He was talking about spiritual death. Disobeying God is sin, and the cost of sin is death.

Moving on, at this point, life was good and God and the man had a close relationship and there was no sin. Then God said it was not good for man to be alone. So, God wanted to make him a helper. God brought all living creatures to the man, who is now named Adam, so that the man could name them. But the animals were not suitable helpers for Adam. So, God made Adam go into a deep sleep, and took a rib from him

and made a woman from his rib and brought her to him. Adam said, “She is ‘bone of my bone and flesh of my flesh’ and her name should be wo-man because she came out of man.”

So, man was made to unite with a woman to become one flesh. Meaning, the married couple should act as one person instead of two separate people. If a couple acts as one person, there’s no reason to think you deserve more than your spouse, or to compete with them, or act hateful to them, because it would be the same thing as if you would be competing with yourself or being mean to yourself. That doesn’t make any sense.

So, Adam and Eve were happy, and there was no sin or shame. They walked around like the animals did, with no clothes on, and they were not embarrassed because they felt nothing bad.

Genesis 3

In this episode of Kids Bible Breakdown, we are going to be talking about Genesis Chapter 3.

Guys, this chapter is heartbreaking. This is where we first see the fall of man, meaning the first time sin came into the world. The devil takes on the form of a snake and begins to talk to the woman, but he is deceitful about it. The snake asks her, "Is it true that God said you couldn't eat from ANY tree in the garden?" The devil is trying to paint God in a negative light and create doubt about His goodness and His love for us. At first it looks like Eve doesn't fall for it because she corrects the snake and responds, "No, He said we could eat from any of the trees in the garden. God just said we couldn't eat OR TOUCH the tree in the middle of the garden, or you will die."

That IS NOT what God said. Because God loves them, He sets boundaries telling them not to eat from the tree. But Eve exaggerated God's instructions to them. This kind of shows that EVE actually had some doubt set in her heart about the motives of God and His kindness. Maybe God wasn't looking after them after all. Maybe God was just being selfish and looking out for HIS own best interest.

The devil used this opportunity to grow Eve's doubt. He told Eve, "You won't die if you eat from the tree! God just knows if you do, you will be like Him, knowing good from evil." Basically, telling Eve that God just wants to keep her down because He's so controlling.

So, Eve saw that the fruit looked good, so she ate some. Then she took some to her husband, Adam and he ate some. And their eyes were opened and they did see the difference between good and evil. This is an AWFUL decision on so many levels! Until now, they had seen nothing but good! But now they introduced evil into their life and now they saw and experienced the bad in the world. One of the bad things they were now feeling was shame. Maybe after eating the fruit, Adam noticed his arms looked a little twiggy and Eve had eaten so much good food that day that she looked down and saw a little poochy belly and suddenly, God's perfect creation no longer looked so perfect. So, they became ashamed that they were naked, and they sewed fig leaves together to hide themselves. Then they heard God walking through the garden. God loved them SO MUCH, that He would spend personal time with them in the garden. But now, they were afraid of God, so they hid. God called for Adam asking where he was, like He didn't already know. And Adam told God he was hiding because he was naked. God replied, "Who told you that you were naked? Did you eat from the Tree of the Knowledge of Good and Evil, the one I told you not to eat from?"

Adam, clearly not willing to take ownership for what he did wrong, tries to put the blame back on God by saying the woman that YOU gave me, gave me the fruit; so, I ate it. As if to say, "Well God, this is really all your fault, because You gave me this woman and she gave me this fruit and mmm..."

Then God then turns to the woman and asks, “What have you done?” and just like her husband, she doesn’t want to admit she did wrong either and tries to put all the blame on the snake. “The snake deceived me, so I ate?”

But now it's consequence time. There are ALWAYS consequences to sin. Many times, sin not only hurts you, it hurts those around you too and the negative consequences can continue for a LONG TIME. It's very important not to take sin lightly.

God told the snake that he would spend all eternity on his belly eating dust. He also told the snake that there would be strife, (which means trouble or not a good relationship) between him and the woman. Then God said something that shows His amazing grace and love for us. Like we discussed earlier, it also showed us God already knew this was going to occur and He already had a plan in place to save us from our own bad decisions and sin. God told the snake that the strife between the snake and the woman would continue through their offspring. According to the NIV version of the Bible, God told the snake the woman's offspring would crush his head, and the snake would bruise His heel.

Any idea who God could be talking about here? Do we know someone who had His body wounded because of the schemes of the devil, but then He crushed sin and the devil by coming back to life after dying on the cross? Heck yeah we do, and His name is Jesus. We haven't even finished Chapter 3 of the 1st book of the Bible and Jesus is everywhere! God's plan to save His people was already determined!

But again, even though God already had a plan in place to bless us and save us, does not mean we get to escape the consequences of our sin. So, God then told the woman that having babies would be painful. And as a mom who has had 4 babies, I can tell you this is still true today. Eve's sin had negative consequences for others and for all of eternity.

God also told the woman that her ideal marriage they had because they were one flesh, was not going to be so easy anymore. The woman would desire her husband but they would fight among themselves for control over one another. And the man would rule over her. This is still a consequence from sin that we can see today.

For man, God said, because he followed the bad advice from His wife, the ground would not give food so easily anymore; he would have to work hard to get the land to produce food. This would be an ongoing struggle until man returned to the ground from which God made him. Otherwise, until the man died, he would have to work hard to get what he needed to stay alive.

It's actually not until this point in the Bible that Adam named the woman Eve,” because she was the mother of all living things”. Maybe he didn't do it till now because up until now he felt connected to her like they were one flesh, but he no longer felt that way. Or maybe he just didn't want to claim her as much as before, so he wanted to call her something besides “from man”. But it's this next verse that really stuck out to me about

God's nature and His love for us. He made people and gave them everything and they basically spit in His face. It doesn't even tell us that Adam and Eve felt bad about what they had done at this point. But the Bible says the LORD God made garments for Adam and Eve out of skin. Our loving and forgiving God is still there for us and helps us and blesses us even when we are at our worst and sin and feel there is no way we are worthy of His love. God didn't need us to have clothes, but He still met Adam and Eve on their level to show them that He still personally loves and cares for them.

Despite God's love and forgiveness, Adam and Eve still had to face their consequences. The LORD GOD said that Adam and Eve, like them, now had knowledge of good and evil. Before they decided to indulge in the tree of life, they were sent from the garden where they would no longer have an easy life. Once God drove them out, He placed a Cherubim with a flaming sword on the East side of the garden to keep watch so they were never allowed to return.

Genesis 4

In this episode of Kids Bible Breakdown, we are breaking down Genesis Chapter 4.

Adam and Eve are now banned from the garden. The Bible tells us about their life outside of the garden, and how sin continues to grow with their children. Through physical acts of love, and God's help, Eve became pregnant and she had a baby boy and named him Cain. Eve said, "With the help of the LORD, I have brought forth a man." Later, Adam and Eve had another baby boy named Able.

Able was a caretaker for animals and Cain worked the soil to grow food. At one time, Cain brought some fruit as an offering to the LORD. Abel also brought an offering of some fat from the animals of his flock. The LORD accepted Abel's offering, but He did not accept Cain's offering and this made Cain very angry.

God doesn't accept or reject anything based on what you're giving Him. God does not need anything. God wants your heart and your love and your devotion. He knows what's inside of a man. So, God didn't just reject Cain's because He doesn't like vegetables and fruits. He rejected Cain's, because of Cain's heart.

But regardless, this made Cain angry, and the LORD, knowing everything, asked Cain "Why are you angry? If you actually do what you're supposed to do and what is right, you know I'll accept your offering." God warned Cain that his heart was in the wrong place and sin was just waiting to take hold of it.

Unfortunately, Cain does not listen to this and he became so jealous of his brother that one day when they were out in the field, Cain killed his brother Abel. God confronted Cain and said, "Where is your brother Abel?" God is not asking this because He doesn't know what happened to Abel; God sees everything. God knows everything, we cannot hide anything from God. God is asking this to confront Cain. He's basically letting Cain know that he's not going to get away with this and giving Cain the opportunity to confess what he did.

But still being stubborn, Cain replies, "Am I my brother's keeper?" Like he's asking God, "Oh, I'm sorry, was it my job to keep up with my brother, because I didn't get that memo?" But God doesn't let him get away with this. He basically calls Cain out and tells him your brother's blood is crying out from the ground. God put a curse on Cain and said because of what he did, the ground would no longer give him food like it did before, and he will have to roam the earth. Since Cain can no longer hide what he did, he starts to cry out and tells God that his punishment is way too mean.

The interesting thing here, without anybody telling Cain that murder is wrong, he seems to already know that it is. And apparently everyone else knows that murder is wrong too because Cain is worried that others will kill him because he killed his brother. But God basically tells Cain, "You did the crime, now you do the time." However, God did put a

mark on Cain that warned everyone else that if they killed Cain in vengeance, they will suffer seven times greater.

Cain then left and lived in a land called Nod. Although Cain didn't stay at this location, because like God said, he was restless and had to wander the earth. Cain had a wife and through physical acts of love, she became pregnant.

We're going to take another story pause here to talk about how Cain had a wife, and who she might have been since everyone seems to have come from Adam and Eve. This is another place in the Bible where we do not have all the answers. But one belief is that he could have married one of his sisters or nieces. This sounds really bad to us because that is not something we accept nowadays. However, one of the main reasons it is bad to marry and have babies with someone related to you is because of the fact that it causes problems genetically. Which means, the babies would not be made healthy and they would have physical or mental problems. But it is possible since Adam and Eve were made so perfectly by God, that these genetic concerns were not an issue back then. Only God can know when it started to become dangerous for family members to make babies together. The thought of it still sounds weird but again, this is not something that changes who God is and what He has done for us. So, we are not really going to spend too much time worrying about or trying to figure it out. We are going to run into this multiple times throughout the Bible so instead of repeating the same thing every time, we're just going to start saying it's not "God Insight Information". And if you still have questions about it, go ahead and write them down. And if you still care when you get to heaven and see God face to face, be sure to ask Him. Or you can just pray that He helps you focus your mind and gives you understanding on things that are important to Him. Your choice.

Well back to the story. So, Cain and his wife had a baby named Enoch. And Cain builds a city, and names it after his son, Enoch. Then the Bible goes on to list some of the kids, grandkids, and great grandkids and so on.

At one point, it tells of the skills and lifestyles humans developed by telling about three different brothers. One who was the father of all who played string instruments and pipes. One was the father of all who lived in tents and raised livestock, meaning animals, like horses and cows, then one made all kinds of tools out of different metals. This doesn't seem like any important or life-changing, like need-to-know information, but the amazing thing is, once again, these few little sentences show us God's character and His amazing grace and love He has for us. All skills and abilities are a gift from God. These humans that continuously sin and disappoint and make life hard for themselves, God still blesses them by giving them the skill & knowledge they need to be able to survive in the difficult situations they created for themselves.

The story goes on to tell of how one of Cains' relatives followed in his footsteps by killing a guy he claims hurt him first, and then announces, "If the person who kills Cain had seven times the suffering, anyone who kills me will have 70 x 7 the suffering." I don't think that's the way it actually works. The first curse involving Cain, came from

God. He has full authority to enforce this. This guy just kind of spoke it like it was true. It kind of seems like declaring yourself king when you have no way to actually make that happen.

Although it's believed that Adam and Eve had a lot of kids, Chapter 4 ends by introducing us to one named Seth. When Eve had Seth, she said, "God has granted me another child in place of Abel, since Cain killed him." And at that time, people began to call on the name of the LORD.

Genesis 5 & 6

On today's episode of Kids Bible Breakdown, it's a twofer! We are going to be covering Genesis Chapters 5 & 6!

In chapter 5, we get a rundown of Adam's family line through his son Seth, all the way to Noah, who happens to be the main character in the next chapter! We are not going to go through all the names of all the people in the family tree, but there are some things to note; chapters like this show genealogy. This means it shows the family line to help historians (people who study history), determine when things took place and helps prove that the people and stories in the Bible are real.

Also, look at how long people lived back then! Today the average person in the United States lives to be 79 years old. Back then people lived to be 800, 900 years old! Methuselah is the oldest living man ever written about and he lived to be 969 years old before he died.

Something else that sticks out to me in this chapter is what it says about Enoch. Now this isn't the same Enoch as Cain's son from yesterday. It appears they weren't really creative in naming their kiddos because there are a lot of duplicate names in the Bible, so it's important to make sure you know who you're talking about. That's another way these genealogy chapters can help!

Verse 21 says that Enoch walked faithfully with God for 300 years. It says he walked faithfully with God a second time in verse 24, and that because of this, God took him away. This implies that he actually never had a physical death, but God just took him to heaven. How amazing is that?! Chapter 5 goes on to say that Methuselah was the father of Lamech and Lamech was the father of Noah, (again, that's not the same Lamech we talked about who proclaimed himself a murderer in the previous chapter). After Noah was 500 years old, he became the father of Shem, Ham and Japheth.

Genesis Chapter 6, shows that humans began to increase in number and fill the earth. But they were choosing to do wrong things and God said He wasn't going to tolerate them forever. So, God decided to limit their days, so they would not live as long as they previously did.

This next section can be a bit confusing. The Bible says that the Nephilim were on earth, and that the sons of God went to the daughters of the humans and had children with them. This may have you scratching your head and saying, "Hmmm, what are we talking about here?" There are many different ideas about what this could mean, but let's talk about one of them. The Bible tells us at one point in time the devil was actually an angel. Instead of faithfully serving God, he wanted to become God, so he gathered others to start a war with God. Newsflash, he lost. Him and the others were cast out of heaven, and it was believed in the Hebrew culture that the term sons of God, otherwise known as the Nephilim, were these fallen angels. So, then you wonder, why would these demonic creatures want to take on human form to come have babies with human

women? Well, if you were an enemy of God, and you wanted His plan to fail, one of the things you might try is take over mankind by making the world full of evil people. One of the ways you can make sure people are evil is to make them half demon. There are different theories on this, but one thing is for sure, this is not God insight information. None of this is critical to learning who God is, His personality, and His love for us. So, we are going to keep moving on.

Continuing on with chapter 6, it says the LORD saw how wicked the human race had become, and that He regretted making human beings. The fact that the Bible says, "God regretted making human beings", does not mean that God made a mistake. God doesn't make mistakes and He always knows what's going to happen before it happens. The way regret is used here means that seeing evil grow through His creation troubled God's heart, and even though He knew humans would choose to take this path, it saddened Him. This is kind of the same thing as when your parents tell you to stop doing something or you're going to get hurt, but you choose to continue to do it anyway. When you get hurt, your parents regret that you got hurt because it hurts their heart to watch you hurt. But they knew it was going to happen. They told you it was going to!

So, God said that he would destroy what He had created - all creatures, humans, animals, birds and even the earth. However, there was one man named Noah, who walked faithfully with God. God told Noah of His plan to destroy everything on earth and told him to make an ark, because He was going to bring floodwaters to destroy all life under the heavens. But he told Noah I will establish my covenant with you and you will be safe on the ark with your wife, your sons and their wives.

This is the first time we see God make a covenant or an agreement with a man. Later in the Bible, God does this with Abraham. God tells Noah exactly how he's supposed to build this boat. It was to be one and a half times the length of a football field and five stories tall. That's huge! Especially since Noah is almost 600 years old and they had no power tools. God tells him to take seven pairs of every type of clean animal, seven pairs of every type of bird, and one pair of every kind of unclean animal.

Later in the Bible it discusses what animals are considered clean and unclean. I know this is going to come as a shock, but a pig is considered an unclean animal. Who would have thought?!? God also tells Noah to take every kind of food that is to be eaten and store it away for them. And Noah did everything just as God commanded.

Genesis 7

In this episode of Kids Bible Breakdown, we are breaking down Genesis Chapter 7.

The LORD said to Noah “Go into the ark, because I have found you righteous.” It says throughout the Bible “that none are righteous” and “we have all sinned.” God is not saying that Noah is without sin, or that he is actually even worthy of being saved. But once again, God knows Noah’s heart, and Noah loves God! So, God shows him an abundance of mercy by saving him and his family.

Then God tells him that “In seven days I will send rain to wipe from the face of the earth every living creature.” Noah was 600 years old when he and his family entered the ark. God having control over everything had all the pairs of living creatures COME TO Noah to enter the ark. After seven days, just like God said, flood waters came, and all the springs of the great deep burst forth and floodgates opened and rain fell on the earth for 40 days and 40 nights.

Noah and his wife, and his sons and their wives, were all safely on the ark, and the LORD shut them in. For 40 days, the floods kept coming and the waters increased so that the ark started to float. Even the highest mountain was covered with at least 15 cubits of water, which is more than 22 feet of water. And every living thing on land died; only Noah and those on the ark with him were left. And the waters flooded the earth for 150 days.

Genesis 8

In this episode of Kids Bible Breakdown, we are going to be breaking down Genesis Chapter 8.

The chapter starts by saying that God did not forget Noah, his family and all the animals in the ark. God finally stopped the rain and He made a wind blow over the entire earth, and the waters started to dry up. After 150 days, on the 17th day of the 7th month, the waters had lowered enough that the ark came to rest on the mountains of Ararat.

We're going to take a story pause to talk about numbers. The meaning of numbers is HUGE in the Hebrew culture. Sometimes when they list numbers in the Bible, it doesn't actually mean that exact number, but instead, it means what the number represents. For instance, the number 40 frequently represents a trial period or a difficult period of time that a person or group of people are experiencing. The number 7 frequently represents perfection or completion. Like after God completed creating all things, He rested on the 7th day. So, although I'm all for throwing a "Touchdown Party" for Noah every July 17th, that might not actually be the date the ark touched dry land.

So back to Noah's family and the zoo. The waters continued to recede, (which means to lower) and about 2 ½ months later, they could see the tops of the mountains. After 40 more days, Noah opened the window of the ark and sent out a raven. It flew back and forth because the water on the land had not dried up. Then Noah sent out a dove to see if the earth had dried up enough for them to go out of the ark, but the dove couldn't find anywhere to land, so it came back.

Noah waited another 7 days, and again he sent a dove out of the ark. And that evening the dove came back with a freshly plucked olive leaf in her beak. Good news for Noah and his family!! This means things have dried up even more and they might be able to leave the boat soon! Noah waited another 7 days and sent the dove out again, and this time the dove did not come back because the water had lowered so much that the bird was able to make a home in the trees!

Finally, the earth was dried up and Noah removed the cover from the ark and looked out and he was glad to see the earth was dry. Then God told Noah, "Everyone out of the boat; you, your wife, and your sons and their wives. Bring out all the animals and let them go, so they can start making babies and fill the earth again." I'm willing to bet they did not have to be told twice!

Then Noah went out and built an altar to the LORD and took some of all the clean animals and birds and offered it on the altar to God. And when the LORD smelled the sweet aroma, He was pleased. Typically, when someone cooks meat, it doesn't smell

sweet, especially if they are just lighting it on fire. But God knows the hearts of people, and when a person with a grateful heart, that loves God and wants to please Him offers a sacrifice to God, the smell of burnt meat smells more like freshly baked cookies to God.

So, being pleased, God said in his heart “I will never again curse the ground because of humans, even though every inclination of the human heart is evil from childhood. Never again will I kill every living creature. While the earth remains, there will always be planting and reaping, cold and heat, summer and winter, day and night.”

2 things jump out to me here:

1. The fact God made this promise, despite the fact that right from childhood we are evil and selfish, shows His unfailing mercy and love. We were born into this world broken and flawed and The Creator of Heaven and Earth not only accepts us, He actually chases after us to have a personal relationship with HIM. WOW!

2. No matter how much doom and gloom people spread about all the ways people are killing the earth, God promises us that there will always be planting and reaping and seasons and days. God is in control of the world and it will come to a crashing halt only when God says it can. Nothing we do can change that. Now that doesn't give us permission to just do whatever we want. God has also called us to be good stewards (or caretakers) of everything He has given us. So, keep recycling that plastic!

Genesis 9

On this episode of Kids Bible Breakdown, we are going to be breaking down Genesis Chapter 9.

God blessed Noah and his sons saying to them, “Be fruitful and multiply and increase in number and fill the earth.” So, they were to have lots of kiddos.

Up until now, people only ate plants, but God told them, “Everything that lives and moves about, will be food for you. Just as I gave you the green plants, I now give you everything. But you must not eat meat that has its lifeblood still in it.”

Meaning that:

- 1 They were to make sure the animal was dead, which is a definite if you drain all the blood from the animal.
- 2 God didn’t want them eating or drinking the blood.

Blood is very important throughout the Bible because it represents life. Not to give away the end of the Bible (that’s a joke), but we learn that we can be forgiven of our sins because of the blood Jesus shed for us, meaning He gave His life for us. The Bible also refers to this as being washed clean by the blood of Christ. Again, meaning we are washed clean of our sins because Jesus paid the price for us through dying on the cross.

God also states that because man was made in the image of God, people have qualities that make them different from animals. So, He warns that he will hold both animals and man accountable (or responsible) if they kill a man. God warns them all, that there will be consequences for killing a man.

God then makes a covenant with Noah, his sons, and all that were on the ark. Just like He promised before, He said He would never again destroy the earth with a flood. He then put a rainbow in the sky to remind them of the promise He made.

I feel like this is another moment where God shows us His patience and grace and love. God didn’t need a symbol to remind Him of His promises to us. He doesn’t forget; He’s God. But if I were Noah or one of his family members, and I just lived through watching everything on earth get wiped out while I was stuck on a boat for a **really long** time, I imagine that I might start to feel a little fearful or nervous when I saw some dark clouds roll in or when I felt raindrops fall on me. But instead of God being irritated by their fear and doubt, God used a symbol that only shows up at the moment when they might have felt the most fear and doubt. Rainbows only show up when there is rain. God used the perfect symbol to remind them of His perfect love at the perfect time.

Chapter 9 goes on to talk about life for Noah and his sons, (Shem, Ham and Japheth) after the flood. Noah was kind of like a farmer and he had a huge garden of grapes (called a vineyard) that he used to make wine. Noah drank too much wine one night and he became drunk. When people become drunk, they don’t typically make the best

decisions, and Noah took off all his clothes and fell asleep in his tent. Now Ham, (who became the father of the land of Canaan and the Canaanites) came into the tent and saw his father. Instead of covering up his father, he decided to leave the tent, find his brothers, and basically make fun of his dad and be disrespectful. But when Shem and Japheth heard of their father's situation, they got clothing or a blanket, and they each took a side and walked in the tent backwards so they could cover their father without seeing him naked.

When Noah woke up and found out what Ham had done, he was VERY angry. He cursed Ham and his descendants, the Canaanites, saying they would be "The lowest of slaves to his brothers." Then Noah blessed the other two brothers stating, "Blessed be the Lord God Of Shem (spoiler alert - Guess who comes from Shem's family line?!?! Born in a manger, Savior of the world, hint, hint... Yep! It's Jesus!)

Noah went on to bless Japheth by asking God to give him lots of land. Then again, Noah said that, "The descendants of Ham would be their slaves." What makes this even more amazing, is we find out later that Canaan was a wicked nation and although there were a few who chose to love and follow God, most of them became enemies of God.

And Genesis goes on to say after the flood Noah lived another 350 years for a total of 950 years, and then he died.

Genesis 10

In this episode of Kids Bible Breakdown, we are going to be discussing Genesis Chapter 10.

Genesis 10 talks about nations that were descendants or came from the line of Noah. They start with the sons of Noah – Shem, Ham, and Japheth, and go on to list many of their sons, but we are going to just talk about a few of them. Now you are all going to have to bear with me because I have a real hard time even saying easy words correctly and now we are facing all these Bible names which is a whole new challenge of its own. We are going to start with Japheth who had Gomer and Gomer had Javan and Javan had four sons. The Bible jumps the gun a little here and tells us these people were the maritime peoples that spread out over their territories by their clans with their nations, each with their own language. These were basically people who traveled the sea and lived on the coastline. Tomorrow we'll find out why they spread out and why they each had their own language!

Back to chapter 10!

Now we get to the sons of Ham which were Cush, Egypt, Put and Canaan. Cush was the father of Nimrod who was the first on earth to be known as a mighty warrior. The Bible says He was a mighty hunter before the LORD. But just because he did it before the LORD doesn't mean he did FOR the LORD. In Hebrew, Nimrod means Rebel (who is someone that goes against other people or things or even possibly what God wants). He was such a mighty hunter, other men wanted to be like him. However, one of the first centers of Nimrod's kingdom included Babylon. You will hear a lot about Babylon later because they were enemies of Israel and God. From that land Nimrod went to Assyria where he built Nineveh and other cities. You will hear more about those cities too because they were also against Israel and God. Nineveh will become the capital of Assyria where God told Jonah to go to. Ya know... the belly of the whale guy. If you don't know, you will find out more about him later.

Another son of Ham's that we mentioned earlier, Canaan, was the father of the Hittites, Jebusites, Amorites, Girgashites, and a few more "ites". They too became enemies of Israel and God. Which just to make it clear, Israel was selected by God to be His people. Even though they didn't always do what God wanted them to do, any enemy of Israel was an enemy of God. The Canaanite clans scattered, and the borders of Canaan reached from Sidon toward Gerar as far as Gaza and then toward Sodom and Gomorrah, which is the setting of another story we are going to talk about.

Although this chapter doesn't go into a ton of detail, Shem and Japheth (Ham's brothers who did the right thing) also had many, many sons. Since Jesus comes from the line of Shem, and since we are here to learn about Him, let's go through some of the names that ultimately led to His birth. Starting back with Noah, Noah had Shem, Shem had Arphaxad, Arphaxad had Shelah, Shelah had Eber, and Eber had Peleg (whose name means division because in that time the earth was divided). This is referring to what's

going to occur in the next chapter when God divides people. Stay tuned to find out more!

Genesis 11

On this episode of Kids Bible Breakdown, we are going to be breaking down Genesis Chapter 11.

Chapter 11 tells us that at this time the whole world only spoke one language, and the men moved east and they settled in Shinar. Remember, God told them to fill the earth, which means to spread out!!! But the men did not want to do that. Instead, they decided, "HEY, let's make some bricks, and let's build ourselves a city with a tower that reaches to the heaven so that we might make a name for ourselves and NOT scatter over the whole face of the earth." This is exactly the opposite of what the LORD told them to do!! And not only did they want to stay in one place, they wanted to bring glory to themselves and NOT God by making this massive tower, but the LORD wasn't having it. So, the LORD came down to see the city and said, "As if one people speaking the same language, they have begun to do this, then nothing they plan to do will be impossible for them." Now God isn't saying that they can do whatever they put their minds to; they're not gods. He's just saying they will think that they can do whatever they want and they will try to do whatever they want.

So God said, "Come, let US (there's the Us again - meaning God the Father, God the Son and the Holy Spirit were all on the field trip together). Let US go down and confuse their language, so they will not understand each other". And that's exactly what they did. And the people stopped building the city. And the city was known as Babel, because it was there that the LORD confused all their language, and scattered the people over the face of the earth.

What's important to note here is that it was God's will that people be scattered all over the face of the earth. The people chose to rebel, but either way, God's plan is going to be done with or without you OR anyone else supporting it. Following God's plan can lead to blessing and peace even in the middle of craziness. However, trying to fight God's plan will always put you on the losing team. God is ALWAYS GOING TO WIN and His will, will ALWAYS be done.

Chapter 11 then goes on to discuss some genealogy from Shem to Abraham. As you probably remember from the previous chapters, Shem was Noah's son. We discussed some of the line that led to Jesus in the previous chapter, so we're going to skip right on through to where we left off which was at Peleg whose name meant division. Peleg was the father of Reu and Reu was the father of Serug, Serug was the father of Nahor, Nahor was the father of Terah. Terah had 3 sons which the Bible tells us about, Abram (who later becomes Abraham), Nahor (named after his grandfather), and Haran.

Before we move on, quick side note, remember when God said He was going to shorten how long people lived? Look at the ages; they're dropping! No more 800, 900 year olds!

Haran became the father of Lot, and while Terah was still alive, Haran died in Ur of the Chaldeans. This was a pretty thriving city at the time. Nahor was married to Milka and Abram was married to Sarai. Sarai was barren, which means she had no children and was not able to have children which was a **really** big deal back in those days. Terah took Abram and his wife, Sarai, and his grandson Lot, since Lot's father had died, and together they set out from their homeland to go to Canaan. But, when they came to Harran the place Harran, not the son who had died, Haran, they settled there, and Terah died in Harran.

Genesis 12

In this episode of Kids Bible Breakdown, we are breaking down Genesis Chapter 12.

God makes a promise to bless Abram, later known as Abraham, but Abram has to do what the LORD tells him to do. The LORD said to Abram, “Leave your country, your people, and your father’s household and go to the land I will show you. He continues on to say one of the most beautiful blessings that you could ever hear from God. God said to Abram, “I will make you into a great nation, and I will bless you, I will make your name great, and you will be a blessing. I will bless those who bless you and whoever curses you I will curse. And all the peoples on earth will be blessed through you.” I don’t know how you can ask for more than that! Not only is God promising to give him all these amazing things, but He also tells Abram that He’s got his back and if anyone tries to curse him, they are basically going to get a God smack-down! Pretty great to hear if you are going into wicked territory!

Which brings up another point. This had to be scary for Abram! He was leaving his family and friends and nice comforts of home to travel across the dessert to an area with not-so-nice people. I bet you before he left some of his friends pulled him aside to ask him if he lost his mind. But Abram had faith in God; he trusted God. And a lot of times, God instructs us to walk in faith and do things that don’t seem to make a lot of sense or He asks us to do things that take us out of our comfort zone before He blesses us. He’s more interested in making sure our hearts are seeking Him and His will above all else. And praise God for that because sometimes the hardest situations draw us closer to God and bring us more peace and joy than if we were sitting comfortably on our sofa eating ice cream and watching a movie!

So Abraham did just what the LORD told him. He was about 75 years old when he set out from Harran with his wife, Sarai (who later becomes Sarah) and his nephew Lot for the land of Canaan. At the time, the Canaanites were still in the land, and if you’ll remember, they were known as the enemies of God, but the LORD appeared to Abram and said, “To your offspring, I will give this land!” So Abram went east of Bethel, pitched his tent, and made an altar to the LORD, and called on the name of the LORD. Abram frequently built altars to ensure he was taking the time to praise God and remind himself of who God is & God’s promises to him. When we spend time praising God and drawing closer to Him, God gives us the strength, peace & courage to do what He has called us to do. It is especially important to do this frequently when we are going through difficult times.

Then Abram set out and continued toward Negev. Then a famine came across the land, which means there was very little food, so Abram went to live in Egypt for a while. Just to recap – Abram traveled from the UR of the Chaldean up to Harran down to Bethel, continued to Negev and then went to Egypt. For anyone keeping track, that’s almost

2,200 miles! That's like walking from the West coast all the way to the East coast. If Abram was wearing an Apple Watch that counted up steps, he would be whipping all of us for sure!! No way would I challenge him to a fitness competition!

Sarai, Abram's wife, was extremely beautiful and Abram was afraid that when the Egyptians saw how beautiful she was, they would kill him so that they could take her. So, Abram told his wife, "Tell them that you are my sister so my life will be spared." Although Abram is clearly being deceitful, Sarai was Abram's half-sister, so maybe he thought it would be OK. However, instead of being untruthful, Abram should've trusted God because his plan backfired.

When the Egyptians saw how beautiful Sarai was, they took her to Pharaoh. Pharaoh, not realizing that it was actually Abram's wife, treated Abram very well in exchange for what he thought was Abram's sister, and gave Abram all kinds of sheep and cattle and donkeys and servants and camels. But God was not having it. He had big plans for Sarai. The Lord inflicted serious diseases on Pharaoh and on all his household, because he had taken Abram's wife, Sarai, as his wife. God must have given Pharaoh the knowledge to know why all this was all happening, because he called for Abram and said, "What have you done to me? Why didn't you tell me she was your wife." He then gave Sarai back to Abram and said, "Take your wife and all the stuff I gave you and get out of here." And he sent him away.

I find it amazing here that even though Abram doubted God, God still blessed him!!! Instead of Pharaoh just getting mad and killing Abram for his deceit, he sent him away with his wife and all sorts of animals and servants and all the stuff he gave him! Abram got to keep it all!

God continues to show us an abundance of mercy, grace and love even when we don't fully trust Him like we should. Now that is a God I want to spend my time getting to know more about and drawing closer to. He is an Amazing God!

Genesis Chapter 13

On this episode of Kids Bible Breakdown, we are going to be discussing Genesis Chapter 13.

After Abram got kicked out of Egypt, he went up to the Negev with his wife, Sarai and his nephew Lot. From there he went to the place between Bethel and Ai where earlier he had made an altar to the LORD, and once again he called on the name of the LORD. Abram made this a regular occurrence. I love the fact that after leaving Egypt, and knowing that he messed up, he still knew God's character and he knew that instead of being ashamed and running away from God, the best thing he could do is run towards God.

Now Abram had become very wealthy, and his nephew Lot who was with him, also had lots of flocks and herds and tents, but the land did not have enough resources to support everybody and everything. So, Lot's herdsmen and Abram's herdsmen started fighting. And Abram said, "Let's not have all this fighting between you and me and between our herdsmen because we're family. We have the whole land in front of us to choose from."

I think it's interesting that the fighting that was taking place is because of an abundance of blessings; they had too many things. I wonder how many times we see our blessings as problems in our life, and instead of fully appreciating them, we whine about them. Like maybe when we have to pick up our toys, or take care of the animals we wanted, or put up our clothes.

Then Abram told Lot, "You choose first. If you go left, I'll go right." So, Lot looked around and he saw the whole plain of Jordan was well watered and looked like a garden. So, Lot chose the land for himself because it looked the best. So, the two parted ways and Lot went up to live near Sodom, where there were wicked men who were sinning against the LORD. And Abraham went to go live in the land of Canaan, which had Canaanites and Perizzites living there as well.

What amazes me here is that God's promise was with Abram. God promised Abram that He would give him all the land. And Abram must have had a renewed faith in God's promise because even though he was the one chosen by God, he let Lot choose first and let him take the best LOOKING land. The best LOOKING land. I say best looking land because there's another lesson to be learned. That land looked like a garden; it looked like it would be the best choice, hands-down, but sometimes what looks the most

amazing at first, turns out to be really bad. Like, have you ever seen one of those display cakes that at first looks so delicious, but then when you go right up to it and it's made out of styrofoam and clay!! Gross!!! Nobody actually wants to eat that!!! That's exactly how the land that Lot chose was. It looked beautiful, but it was surrounded by wicked people who did awful things. This is a good reason to make sure that you are always praying and asking the LORD to help you make good decisions and lead you to where He wants you to go. God always knows which cake is fake and which one will actually taste delicious. He is never taken by surprise!!!

After Abram and Lot separated, God renewed His promise to Abram by telling him to look around in every direction, and even though Lot just claimed and moved into the most lush looking land, God was going to give it all to Abram and his offspring FOREVER! Then he told Abram, who had no children at the time, that He was going to make his offspring like the dust of the earth, so many that nobody could even count them all. What an amazing encouragement that had to be to Abram!!

He is such an amazing God.

Genesis 14

On today's episode of Kids Bible Breakdown, we are going to be talking about Genesis 14. So grab your Bibles; we are still in the first book of the Bible, and find chapter 14 of Genesis. Guys, there are a lot of long, big names both of cities and kings all through this chapter. There is no way I can pronounce all of these correctly, so I just picked out a few main characters that I will probably still pronounce incorrectly, but you will get the idea.

King Kedorlaomer had been the dominant king in the area for 12 years; all the surrounding kings did what he wanted. But in the 13th year, five kings decided to rebel against him including the kings of Sodom and Gomorrah. In the 14th year three other kings decided to join with King Kedorlaomer. So, four kings vs five. The five kings went to the Valley of Siddim and drew up battle lines, which basically means they challenged them to a battle.

The valley of Siddim was full of tar pits and when the kings of Sodom and Gomorrah fled, because they were losing, some of the men fell into the tar pits and the rest ran for the hills. So, the four kings took everything they wanted in Sodom and Gomorrah and anything of value including Lot and all his possessions. That land choice Lot chose isn't looking so good anymore. One person escaped and came to tell Abram that his nephew Lot had been taken captive.

Abram gathered 318 trained men that had been born in his household, wow that is a lot of mouths to feed, along with his neighbors, Mamre the Amorite and his brothers Eshkol and Aner and during the night they attacked the four kings and their armies. Team Abram won. They won a battle that five kings and all their armies could not win. Why?! Because they had One on their team that the others did not have. They had GOD and HIS approval and His blessing!! That makes all the difference!! Sometimes God asks us to do things that look impossible, and that there's no way that we can come out successful, but with God on our side, there is no one who can fight against us successfully. God makes all the difference!! Abram and his men recovered all the goods and people and all the stuff the kings had taken along with Lot and all his possessions. When Abram returned, kings came out to meet him. King Melchizedek, who was also a priest of the God Most High, came out to him with bread and wine to bless Abram.

Story pause!!! King Melchizedek (whose name also means righteousness) was both a king and a priest. That was a really uncommon combination back then. Also, he was kind of Salem, which means peace. He also came out to meet Abram with bread and

wine. Can you think of a righteous king? The King of Peace? Who was also both a king and a priest?! Someone who, jumping forward in The Bible, said this bread is my body which I give for you. This wine is my blood that I shed for you....? YES!! Jesus!!! Melchizedek is a symbol for Jesus!!! He is foreshadowing, which means telling what is coming in the future, that God is going to send His Son, Jesus to be our King and our Priest forever. Melchizedek blessed Abram saying, "Blessed be Abram by God Most High, Creator of heaven and earth. And blessed be God Most High, who delivered your enemies into your hand. "Abram responded by giving him a 10th of everything. Which is what we are called to give to God.

Speaking of which we don't tithe because God needs our money, we do it:

1. To show God that he is more important to us than money.
2. And to help support his mission by supporting the church to spread His word.

Back to chapter 14. In a HUGE contrast, the king of Sodom came to Abram and said, "Give me the people and keep all the goods, and anything that is worth money for yourself." Abram, knowing how evil the king and his people were, stated that he had taken an oath, or promised God, that he will not accept anything belonging to the evil king. Because he didn't want the evil king to be able to say that Abram was rich or successful because of him. Abram wanted to be sure that all of the credit and glory went to God alone. The only thing he let King Sodom do, was give part of the goods, everything they gathered that was worth anything from the people they defeated to Mamre the Amorite and his brothers, Eshkol and Aner, since they helped Abram win the battle. God asked Abram to do something that looked like it was no way he was going to be able to do, but once again God's will is always going to be done. What an amazing God!

Big Picture View (BPV) & Genesis 15

In today's episode of Kids Bible Breakdown, we are going to be talking about Genesis Chapter 15. But first, let's get a big picture view of where we are in the story.

God made everything! He made a beautiful world for us to live in filled with beautiful and delicious plants and all kinds of creatures. Then He made man in His image and wanted to have a personal relationship with Him. Humans didn't take long to mess things up by sinning. It started by Eve eating from the tree that God told them not to eat from. She made matters worse by giving some to her husband Adam to eat. Now there is sin in the world. God has already said that the penalty for sin is death, but this doesn't change God's plan. God already knew this was going to happen! He actually already had a plan in place to account for what He knew humans would mess up! He was going to send his son Jesus to earth to pay the price for our sin by dying on the cross and crushing sin and the devil. But that's a few thousand years from now in the big picture of view.

Even though God forgave Adam and Eve, there are still consequences for sin. God forced Adam and Eve out of the garden and told them they would have a life that's full of pain and hard work. Adam and Eve, then had children and we can see sin multiply on the earth with the story of Cain and Abel. Cain gets jealous of his brother Abel and kills him. When God came to ask Cain where Abel was, he tries to cover it up and acts like he doesn't know what happened to his brother, but God sees everything. And He told Cain he would be forced to roam the earth.

Adam and Eve had another son named Seth. Jumping forward a couple of thousandish years, one of Seth's descendants' name, Noah, is the only righteous man still found on earth. God tells Noah to build an ark. And at the right time, God tells Noah to board the ark along with his family and two of all different kinds of animals, because God was going to destroy the world, and all the evil people in it by sending a flood. Noah does as he is told, and after a really long time at sea, the earth dries up, and God tells Noah, his family, and all the animals to come out of the ark. God tells them to increase in number and fill the whole earth. God makes a promise that he will never destroy the earth with a flood again, and uses a rainbow as a reminder of His promise.

The people didn't do exactly as God instructed regarding spreading out to fill the earth at first, but God kind of forced them to do what He told them to do. God's will, will always be done.

Moving on, one of Noah's sons, Shem, goes on to have many children and some generations down the line Abram is born. God chooses to make a covenant with Abram and his offspring and promises to bless them and that He would give them all the land in and surrounding Canaan.

So now **chapter 15**

God comes to Abram to make an official covenant with him. Now He had already chosen Abram at this point and promised He would multiply all of his offspring and give him all the blessings already, but Abram expressed some doubt. So, God comes and makes a huge display to help restore Abram's faith. The word of the LORD came to Abram in a vision, He said, "Do not be afraid Abram. I am a shield, your very great reward." But, Abram said, "O Sovereign God what can you give me? I still don't have any children right now & everything I possess will go to Eleazar of Damascus, a servant in my household." The word of the LORD came to him and said, "Your servant will not inherit everything, you will have your own son." Then God had Abram go outside and looked up and said, "Do you see all the stars, I will give you that many offspring."

The Bible says that Abram believed the LORD and the LORD credited it to him as righteousness. This does not mean that on his own Abram is righteous, no one is righteous except for God. Here the Bible is saying that Abram was right with the LORD, not because of his actions. We can never do enough to earn our way into heaven. The LORD considered Abram righteous, because of the fact that Abram had faith and believed in the LORD and what He was saying.

The LORD went on to say, I am the LORD, who brought you out of Ur of Chaldeans to give you this land. Abram questioned God again about how he could be sure what God was saying was true. God instructed Abram to gather different animals, a heifer, a goat, a ram and some birds and told Abram to cut all the large animals in half and lay them opposite of each other. Then the LORD had Abram fall to a deep sleep, and a thick and dreadful darkness came over him, meaning he felt very heavy and disturbed. But the LORD said to him, "Know for certain that your descendants will be strangers in this country, and they will be enslaved and mistreated for 400 years, but I will punish the nation who enslaves them, and afterwards they will come out with great possessions. God told Abram that in 4 generations, which means 4 sets of parents having kids, his descendants would come back to the land God promised to give them, "because the Amorites had not yet reached full wickedness".

The fact that God gives the Amorites time to change their ways and repent, even though He knew they wouldn't, shows us God's patience and mercy. And the fact that

God says He will allow Abram's descendants to take their land and conquer them, shows us that God will judge sin. Like we talked about before, there are ALWAYS consequences to sin. God then told Abram, despite the hardship that's going to come on your descendants, you will die in peace at an old age.

Then a smoking fire pot with the blazing torch appeared and passed between the pieces of the animals. And on that day, the LORD made a covenant with Abram. So, this sounds a little bit bizarre, but things were different back then. One of the things that people did when they were going into a covenant or promise with each other, is they would cut animals in half and the people involved in the commitment would walk between the animals, as if to say, if either of us break this covenant or promise, they were to be cut in half much like the animals in that path. The smoking pot and blazing torch represents God and His holiness. The amazing thing here is God Himself walked through the path while Abram slept. It was telling Abram that God was the one who was going to make this happen. Short of just believing in God and doing what God said, there was nothing Abram needed to contribute to ensure God's plan and promise was fulfilled. God didn't need Abram, He just wanted him. What an amazing God!

Genesis 16

In this episode of Kids Bible Breakdown, we are going to be discussing Genesis 16.

Genesis 16 discusses how Sarai, Abram's wife, still didn't have any children. So, she told Abram, "Take my Egyptian maid servant, (named Hagar) as your wife and have children with her. Perhaps I can build a family through her." This is horribly upsetting all the way around. Back in those days, the ability to give your husband children was very important. A husband's name was passed on through his son. Having children also meant that the wealth and land that the husband had obtained, stayed within the family. This is the equivalent, meaning the same thing, as children who are born today, taking their father's last name. If there are no sons, typically, the family name will not continue.

A wife who could not give children to her husband was shamed and expected to give her husband a maid servant to have children with so he could have an heir, or child, that would maintain the family name and property after he died. Also back in those days, maid servants were considered property. So, any babies that the servant Hagar had would technically belong to Sarai. Let me clarify, God does not condone or approve of owning other people. After all, men are made in His image. God has already made it very clear that He very much values human life. Later, this is discussed more in the Bible, but at that time, slavery was an acceptable practice. In most situations, it also was NOT like the type of slavery you or I are familiar with today. Back then, many times people sold themselves as a way to support themselves for life. Or, they did it for a set amount of time, called an indentured servant, in order to pay off a debt. This was part of their economic system.

In this chapter, we see Sarai getting frustrated with God's timeline and losing faith. Because of this, she does something God does not approve of, by telling her husband to go have a baby with her servant. Later, we will see numerous negative consequences that occurred due to Sarai's lack of faith and patience.

But much like Adam, Abram listened to his wife's poor advice, and took Hagar for a wife and conceived a child with her, this means they were going to have a baby together. When Hagar found out that she was pregnant, she started to despise or hate Sarai. Sarai, instead of taking responsibility for the fact that it was her who instructed Abram to take Hagar as a wife and make a baby with her, blamed it all on Abram!! Sarai said Abram was responsible for her suffering because Hagar was treating her poorly. Abram then tells Sarai that she can do whatever she thinks is best with Hagar. All three of these people are acting horribly and none of them wanted to take responsibility for their

own actions. But once again, God knows we are all broken and sinful and His will is always going to be done, no matter what.

Sarai began to treat Hagar so hatefully, that Hagar decided to run away. When she was near a spring in the desert, the angel of the Lord, which is a term that is believed to be used when we are talking about God the Son, who later came to earth as Jesus, came to question her. The angel of the Lord said, "Where have you come from and where are you going?" God already knew the answers, but just like He did with Adam and Eve in the garden, He is patient with us and gives us time to think through the situation, and be honest with him and ourselves. Hagar said that she was running away from her mistress Sarai. The angel of the Lord told Hagar to go back to her mistress and submit to her, which means to follow what she says to do instead of being hateful and mean. He then promised Hagar that her descendants would also be too numerous to count.

The angel of the Lord went on to say to Hagar, "You are now with child, and you will have a son and you will name him Ishmael, for the LORD has heard your misery. He will be a wild donkey of a man and his hand will be against everyone and everyone's hand against him, and he will live in hostility toward his brothers. Hagar then spoke to the Lord and named Him, the God who sees me.

Even though on earth, Hagar was a servant and everyone saw her as having very little value and did not care about her feelings or thoughts, God still cared and took the time to meet with her. So, Hagar went back and gave birth to a son, which she named Ishmael just as the angel of the Lord told her to.

Abram was 86 years old when Ishmael was born. Despite our best efforts to mess everything up, God's will, will always be done and He still takes the time to meet with us on a personal level.

What an amazing God!

Genesis 17

In this episode of Kids Bible Break Down, we're going to be looking at Genesis 17.

When Abram was 99 years old, the Lord appeared to him. GUYS! This is Yahweh, God the Father. He actually came HIMSELF and appeared to Abram. God the Father said, "I am God Almighty; walk before Me and be blameless. I will confirm my covenant between Me and you, and will greatly increase your numbers."

When the LORD is telling Abram to be blameless, He is telling Abram to follow Him and be obedient to Him. Abram then fell face down because he was in the presence of the LORD, and it was overwhelming. God reminded Abram of His covenant with him, and said because he was going to be the father to many nations, he was no longer going to be named Abram; he was now going to be named Abraham (which means "father of many").

God continues by saying, I will make you very fruitful and kings will come from your descendants. God said the covenant would be with Abram and Abram's descendants and it would be ever-lasting, which means it would last forever. God again promised that Abram's descendants would be given the whole land of Canaan. God told Abraham that he and his descendants must keep His covenant. He said that as a sign of the covenant every male related to Abraham or that lives in their household should be circumcised.

Let's stop and talk about that for a minute. Do you know when a man and woman get married, they typically put a ring on their finger to show that they made a commitment to one another. The problem with the ring is that it can be taken off. God's covenant with Abraham and his descendants was an everlasting one, so God wanted the sign of their covenant to be permanent. So, instead of just having them wear a piece of jewelry that could be taken off, God had to make a permanent mark involving their skin; one that can never be undone. God said every male 8 years and older was to have this sign of the covenant. God said whoever doesn't have this sign has broken the covenant with Him and they should be cut off from their people.

God also said that from now on, Abraham's wife was to be called Sarah instead of Sarai and that He would bless her and give Abraham a son through her. Sara was 90 years old by this time, so the thought of her and Abraham having a son when they are so old seemed ridiculous to Abraham and He fell face down again, but this time in laughter because what God was saying seemed impossible. But Abraham must have forgotten for a moment who he was talking to. With God, nothing is impossible.

Abraham suggested to God that it made more sense if God just used Ishmael as the chosen one for God's blessing. But God knows no limits and He was sticking to His plan. He basically told Abraham, "I hear what you're saying, but No. You are going to have a son with Sarah. You will name him Isaac (which means laughter... how fitting) and I will establish My covenant with him and his descendants. God went on to tell Abraham that even though His covenant is with Isaac, He would still bless Ishmael too. God stated that Ishmael would be the father of 12 rulers and he will also be the father of a great nation.

Unfortunately, we learn later that this nation was wicked and an enemy of God's people. In fact, the descendants of Isaac and Ishmael are still enemies to this day. And if you remember, it all comes back to Sarai losing faith and sinning by having her husband have a baby with her maid servant, Hagar. Once again, we see that there are consequences to sin, and it can have lasting effects that negatively impacts others.

God stated that this time next year, Sara will give birth to Abraham's son, Isaac. Then God went up from him. The Bible says that on that very day, Abraham went down and both him and his son Ishmael, who was 13 at the time, were circumcised to show their covenant with God. Abraham then had everybody in his household do this as well.

One of the things that blows my mind is God chooses to make a covenant with this family, and before they even really get started, they lose faith and make sinful decisions. And yet God doubles down on His promise and tells them that He will give them and their descendants an abundance of blessings FOREVER! He even has them perform a permanent marking on their bodies that could never be undone to symbolize God's everlasting commitment. All we have to give God is brokenness, and He gives us unfailing love and blessings. What amazing God.

Genesis 18

On this episode of Kids Bible Breakdown, we'll be talking about Genesis 18.

In this chapter, the LORD appears to Abraham again. The LORD and two others are near the trees of Mamre and Abraham looked up and saw the three men standing there. He must've recognized right away that it was the LORD, Yahweh Himself, because he hurried over to Him and bowed down.

Abraham started pleading with the LORD saying, "If I have found favor in your eyes, please do not pass your servant by." He asked them to rest while he ran and got water so that they could wash their feet. Then he said, "Let me get you something to eat so you can be refreshed and then go on your way." "Very well", they answered, "do as you say."

The Bible says Abraham hurried to Sarah and said, "Quick, make some bread". He ran out to the herd and selected a choice tender calf. Then he told the servant to hurry up and butcher and prepare it for him. After this was done, he brought out some curds and milk and the prepared calf to the LORD and the two that were with him.

Y'all let me say right now... God obviously has an abundance of patience, because if somebody invites me to dinner and then I find out they haven't even butchered the cow yet, I'm not sure I'm gonna be too happy. They better be bringing out some snacks to hold me over till dinner time!

Anyhow...

While they ate Abraham stood under a tree and they asked him, "Where is your wife, Sarah?" Abraham said, "There in the tent." Then the LORD said, "I will surely return to you about this time next year and Sarah, your wife, will have a son."

We heard this in the last chapter also. And I am not 100% sure if this is just a different version of the same story, or sometimes people don't actually believe something until they hear it for themselves. So maybe God decided to come back and say it all again in earshot of Sarah so that she knew for a fact that Abraham wasn't just making up the whole baby story. God Himself said that she would have a son.

So, Sarah, who had heard God say that she would have a son, laughed to herself because she was far past the age of being able to have children. Then, the LORD said to Abraham, "Why did Sarah laugh and say, 'Will I really have a child, now that I'm old?'" God continued by saying, "Is anything too hard for the LORD?" He reconfirmed what He

said before by saying it again, "I will return to you at the appointed time next year and Sarah will have a son." Sarah was afraid so she lied and said, "I didn't laugh!" But God said, "Yes you did".

Sarah lied to God out of either fear or embarrassment for doubting Him. Either way, she should have been honest with herself and God because God just straight called her out on it. He didn't let her get away with lying. I love that God does this!! If I'm being honest, I hate when He does this to me, in that moment, but later on, when I take the time to reflect, or think back on my actions, if God actually let me get away with doing something He doesn't approve of, I might think that my actions were ok and I might feel ok about doing it again. But when God uses the Holy Spirit to convict me, like someone tapping me on the shoulder saying, "You shouldn't have done that." It leaves no doubt on what God finds acceptable. And since our goal is to be more like Him, this is need to know information!

After eating, the men got up to leave and looked down towards Sodom. The LORD said, "Shall I hide from Abraham what I am about to do?" He went on to remind Abraham of his promise to him by stating, "Abraham will surely become a great and powerful nation and all nations on earth will be blessed through him. But I have chosen him so that he will direct his children and household after him, to keep the ways of the LORD, by doing what is right and just so that the LORD will bring about for Abraham what He has promised."

The two men with the LORD turned away and went towards Sodom, but Abraham remained, standing before the LORD. Abraham must have understood that the LORD was going to destroy Sodom because he began to plead with God. After all, his nephew Lot lived there. Abraham said, "Will you really sweep away the righteous with the wicked????!! What if they're only 50 righteous people in the city? Would you really destroy it and not spare the place for the sake of the 50 righteous people in it?" The LORD responded by saying that He would spare the city, if 50 righteous people were found in it. Abraham kept pleading and bargaining back-and-forth with the LORD saying, "Well, what about 45 then?" And the LORD said, "I would spare it for 45." "Then, how about 40?" To which the Lord replied, "I'll spare for 40." Abraham continued to plead with the Lord, all the way down to 10 people. And God said that He would not destroy the city for the sake of 10 righteous people.

The fact that Abraham kept pleading with the LORD does not mean that the LORD changed His mind. In fact, in verse 17, it's written: The LORD said, "Should I hide from Abraham what I AM about to do." The LORD did not say, "What I might do." He said, "What I am about to do."

This shows us that God already knew how the story would end. He took the time to listen to Abraham in order to show Abraham that He is a merciful and just God. Abraham needed to know that God is not a God who unleashes His wrath (or extreme anger) on those who follow Him and love Him. He is a merciful and patient and loving God. But He is also a just God who will punish sin. Abraham was not changing God's mind. God, with His abundance of patience and love, took the time to help change Abraham's mind, so he could better understand and know God. What an amazing God!

Genesis 19

In this episode of Kids Bible Breakdown, we will be going over Genesis 19.

Buckle up for this one! We've seen sin increase over the earth throughout the stories, but this one is chock-full of it!

We left the last chapter with Abraham asking the LORD not to destroy Sodom and Gomorrah out of concern for his nephew Lot. He pleaded, which is kind of like asking in a begging manner, for God to not destroy the cities if 10 righteous men could be found. And God agreed. Of course, God already clued us in that 10 righteous men were NOT going to be found because He had stated earlier, "What I AM about to do," instead of saying, "What I might do"

So, after this, two angels taking the appearance of human men, arrived at Sodom in the evening. Lot saw them sitting in the gateway of the city, which is where everybody met for important events. Lot bowed with his face to the ground and asked them to come stay in his house so they could wash their feet and spend the night and they could leave early in the morning. The two angels responded, "No, we will spend the night in the town square." But Lot continued to insist that they come with him.

Lot made them a meal, and before they went to bed, men from all parts of the city surrounded Lot's house. They called Lot saying, "Where are the men who came to you tonight? Bring them out to us so we can mistreat them!" Lot went outside and shut the door behind him. He said to the men of the town, "No my friends. Don't do this wicked thing." Lot then offered his two daughters to the men and said that they could treat his daughters badly, but to leave his visitors alone.

This is absolutely horrible. Lot, the man who chose this land because it looked so lush and beautiful, had now become so used to being around evil and sinful people, that he offered his own daughters to be mistreated by evil men. Abraham was begging the Lord not to destroy these cities for the sake of a few righteous men and it looks like his own nephew is not even one of them! The wicked men were not interested in Lot's daughters. They yelled at Lot to get out of their way and threatened to treat him worse than how they planned to treat his visitors! They kept moving forward to try to break down the door to the house, when the angels inside reached out and pulled Lot back into the house and shut the door. Then they caused all the men outside to become blind, so they could not see where they were going or find the door.

The angels then warned Lot that if he had any family members in the cities, such as son-in-laws, or children, to get them out of the city because the LORD had heard many cries about how evil the city was, and He had sent the angels there to destroy it. So, Lot went and spoke to the men who were going to marry his daughters, and said, “Hurry and get out of this place, because the LORD is going to destroy the city!” But the men thought he was joking, and would not leave.

As morning was coming, the angels told Lot to hurry and take his wife and his daughters, or they too would be punished with the city. Lot hesitated to leave, so the angels grabbed his hand and the hands of his wife and his two daughters, and they led them safely out of the city because the LORD was merciful to them.

It absolutely breaks my heart that the nephew of Abraham became so surrounded by sin, that nobody believed him when he stated he knew what the LORD had planned. This implies he wasn't seen as a person who had a relationship with God. It's also heartbreaking to see that, even though Lot saw the wickedness of that town up close and personal that night, to the point that his own life was being threatened, he still was hesitant to leave all his wealth and his house, despite the fact that he was warned he would be destroyed along with the city. The angels had to basically drag him and his family to safety! His eyes were so far off God, and on earthly things that either:

1. He was willing to die to keep his earthly belongings or
2. He didn't recognize or believe God's truth about what was going to occur.

Once the angels led them safely out of the city, they told Lot and his family to flee for their lives to the mountains. They warned Lot and his family saying, “Don't look back.” Once again, Lot, who was clearly focused on the comforts of life, told the men that he would die if he had to live in the mountains and begged them to let him go to a small city nearby called Zoar. Lot was shown grace and allowed to go to the city instead of the mountains.

Once Lot and his family reached the city of Zoar, the sun had started to come up, and the LORD rained down burning sulfur on Sodom and Gomorrah and killed everything and everyone in the land. Despite the warning the angels had given to Lot and his family, Lot's wife looked back and turned into a pillar of salt. The Bible doesn't state if she looked back out of curiosity, or because she longed to be able to return to her life and her things in the city, but either way, much like the cities, she acted defiantly, (which means she made a clear choice not to follow God's instructions) and this time she had to pay the consequence for her actions.

The next morning, Abraham got up and went back to the place where he was talking to the LORD and he looked down and saw that Sodom and Gomorrah were smoking. He knew that the LORD had destroyed it. But God remembered Abraham when He destroyed the land, and had shown an abundance of mercy by saving Lot.

Just to clarify terms, grace is when God gives you something you do not deserve. Mercy is when God doesn't give you something you DO deserve. God showed an abundance of both to Lot and his family

Lot and his daughters wound up leaving the town of Zora, because they were afraid. They ran to the mountains just as they had been originally told to do, and lived in a cave. One day, the older daughter said to the younger daughter, "There are no men around to marry and have children with. Let's get our father to drink lots of wine, so that we can make a baby with him and have the family name continue." We already talked about people drinking too much wine and that this can cause them to become drunk and make bad decisions, just like we saw with Noah. Also, we discussed that back in those days, having a baby with a family member may not have been frowned upon like it is now. And we also discussed how important it was a man to have sons to carry on their family name.

Regardless of all of that, this was definitely not the right thing to do. Lot's daughters clearly knew that it was sinful to have a baby with their father, because they felt they had to get him drunk in order for him to participate. That suggests that if he was thinking clearly, he would not have approved. Lot's daughters pretended they were doing something good by saying, it was "to preserve the family name", but they clearly were just saying this to try to convince themselves this was ok thing to do, because they knew in their hearts it was wrong!

Regardless, that night they got their father so drunk that the oldest girl was with him and he did not even remember. The next day, the older daughter told the younger one, "Let's get him drunk again so that tonight you can go in with him and we can preserve the family line." These girls are still lying to themselves, to justify their sinful actions. Once again, Lot made the poor choice of drinking too much wine, and once again, the daughter was with him, and he was not even aware. And both of the daughters became pregnant and had baby boys. The older daughter had a son named Moab, who became the father of the Moabites. The youngest daughter's son was named Ben-Ammi, and became the father of the Ammonites. Both of these nations were enemies of God's people.

God was merciful to Lot and protected him and his daughters from His wrath when he destroyed the city, despite the fact that many of his decisions were clearly not godly. Lot was given the opportunity to make the right decision to flee from the city, but he STILL hesitated! And God still had His angels intervene again and they basically had to drag Lot and his family out of the city. How patient, merciful and loving must our God be?! I have to be real honest, at the point when I warned Lot that the whole city was going to be burned up and he was going to be burned up with it if he didn't leave and he was still goofing around and not leaving town, I would be like, "Well bye buddy! Have fun going down with the ship!" But not our God! We fail Him over and over and He is still loving enough to drag us to where we need to be, sometimes kicking and screaming even.

What an Amazing God!!

Genesis 20

In this episode of Kids Bible Breakdown, we're going to be breaking down Genesis Chapter 20 or what I'm going to refer to as Genesis chapter 2.0, because we've heard this story before; we just have a few changes with the characters and setting

So, Abraham moved into the region of the Negev, and for a while he stayed in Gerar. While he was there, Abraham told others that Sarah was his sister and he did not claim her as his wife. So, King Abimelech, who is the king of Gerar, sent for Sarah and took her as his wife. Guys, she is like ninety years old now, she must have been a stunning woman. Moving on, God came to Abimelech in a dream and told him that you are as good as dead. The woman you took for your wife, she's married to Abraham.

King Abimelech had not gone near Sarah yet, so he pleaded with the LORD saying, "Will you destroy an innocent nation?" He went on and basically said, "Listen!! This isn't my fault! Abraham and Sarah both said that they were brother and sister. I had no idea that I was taking his wife. My hands are clean! (Meaning, he did nothing to intentionally sin in this situation. He just didn't know.) God replied back to Abimelech, "Yes, I know you did this with a clear conscience, (meaning God knew he did not do it on purpose.) God continued, "And so I have kept you from sinning against Me. That is why I did not let you touch her. Now return the man's wife, for he is a prophet and will pray for you and you will live, but if you do not return her, you may be sure that you and yours will die."

Early the next morning Abimelech called all his officials and told them what had happened and they were terrified. Then Abimelech called Abraham and said, "Why have you done this to us? How have I wronged you that you have brought such great guilt upon me and my kingdom? You have done things to me that should not be done!" Then he asked Abraham, "What was your reasoning for doing this?" Abraham told him that he didn't believe that they feared God and he was afraid he would be killed because of his wife. Then he pulled his line again, "Oh and besides, she really is my half-sister so I'm just kind of lying."

Then, just like Pharaoh, Abimelech gave Abraham his wife back and also gave him sheep and cattle & male & female servants. But unlike Pharaoh, instead of kicking him out, Abimelech told him that he could live wherever he wanted to in his land. Abimelech also gave Abraham 1000 shekels of silver and said to Sarah in front of everyone, "This is to cover the offense against you." Then he made a statement so that everybody could hear that she was completely vindicated, which means blameless for everything that happened. Then Abraham prayed to God and God healed Abimelech's wife, and all his

servant women because God would not allow any of them to become pregnant because of Sarah.

There are so many interesting things in this chapter, even though it's a lot like the story we heard before with Pharaoh. But the thing that just jumped out at me was when God said he knew Abimelech was not acting defiantly and trying to sin; so, God kept him from sinning. How awesome is that!? He actually intervened and saved Abimelech from sinning. Otherwise, Abimelech would have been a dead man!! Just to see those words written, "That is why I kept you from sinning," reminds me of God's sovereignty!! He is in control of everything!! Even our choices!! This is one reason it's so important that we pray for Him to intervene and help us make choices that glorify Him. He will NEVER steer us wrong!

God saving Abimelech from sin also reminds me that He didn't just do this for Abimelech, He did this for all of us! Years later, He intervened by sending His Son Jesus, to die on the cross for us!! We were dead men!! But Jesus paid the price for OUR sin and took the punishment for us!! He saved us from our sin!!

What an AMAZING God we have!!!

Genesis 21

In this episode of Kids Bible Breakdown, we are going to be discussing Genesis Chapter 21.

The chapter starts by saying, “The LORD was gracious to Sarah and did for Sarah what He had promised.” She became pregnant and when Abraham was 100 years old, she gave birth to a son, which they named Isaac. When Isaac was eight days old, Abraham circumcised him as God had commanded. Sarah said, “God has brought me laughter, and everyone who hears about this will laugh with me! Who would have said to Abraham that Sarah would nurse a child, and yet I bore him a son in his old age!”

The child grew and was weaned, (which means he no longer needed to drink his mother’s milk.) On the day that Isaac was weaned, Abraham threw a huge party, but Ishmael, Abraham’s other son that he had with Hagar, was making fun of him. Sarah went to Abraham and said, “Get rid of that slave woman and her son, for the slave woman’s son will never share the inheritance with my son Isaac.”

Now remember, the only reason Abraham had another son was because Sarah told him to make a baby with her servant Hagar. Sarah is still suffering the consequences of her lack of faith and patience. Abraham was really upset because Ishmael was his son, but God said to him, “Don’t be upset about sending away the boy and his mother. Listen to whatever Sarah tells you to do because My promise and covenant is through Isaac.” God reconfirmed what he told Abraham before, and stated that he would also make Ishmael into a great nation because he was the son of Abraham.

Early the next morning, Abraham got some food and a bag of water and gave them to Hagar and sent them away. And they wandered through the desert. Now the desert is very hot and dry and they ran out of water. Hagar put her son under one of the bushes and she went off to sit by herself a little way away because she did not want to watch her son die. As she sat there, she began to cry because things were not looking good for her and her son. But God heard Ishmael crying and the Angel of God called down to Hagar and said, “What is the matter Hagar? Do not be afraid; God heard the boy crying. Go, get him up and take him by the hand because I still have plans for him. I am going to make him into a great nation.” Then God opened Hagar’s eyes and she saw a well of water in the desert. She went and filled the bags with water and gave some to the boy. The Bible states God was with Ishmael as he grew up and he lived in the desert and became an archer, (which is someone who is really good with a bow and arrow); and his mother got a wife for him in Egypt.

Chapter 21 goes on to discuss a treaty that was made between Abraham and King Abimelech. King Abimelech saw that God was with Abraham and wanted to make a deal with him, because he had seen the power of Abraham's God. He wanted Abraham to promise that he would deal kindly with his children and his descendants just as He (he being King Abimelech) had shown Abraham kindness. I find it amazing that the king of a whole nation who had armies was worried about Abraham because he recognized that God was with Abraham and Abraham's God was very powerful.

Abraham then complained to Abimelech that he had dug a well and some of Abimelech's servants had seized it from him. Once again, Abimelech wants Abraham and his God to know that he is blameless in this situation. He fires back, "I don't who did this to you! You didn't tell me about it till today!" He definitely sounds like a person that fears God's wrath. He wants none of it. So, Abraham then bought sheep and cattle and seven lambs from the flock and made a treaty, or a deal with Abimelech. Abimelech asked what the purpose was of the seven lambs and Abraham stated it was so that King Abimelech would acknowledge that Abraham had dug the well and it belonged to him. King Abimelech, with the leader of his forces, returned to the land of the Philistines and Abraham remained in Beersheba (which means the well of seven because of the 7 lambs), then he planted a tree and Abraham called on the name of the LORD. Abraham stayed in the land of the Philistines for a long time.

So, what can we learn from this chapter? One of the things that stood out to me is that both Hagar and King Abimelech knew of the God of Abraham, and they believed that He was powerful. This is one of the reasons Abimelech wanted to have a treaty with Abraham. However, we have no evidence that either Hagar or King Abimelech saw Abraham's God as their God. They knew OF God but it doesn't appear they KNEW HIM. But God still looked after all these people.

In the last chapter, we saw that God kept Abimelech from sinning, which would have been a sure death sentence. In this chapter, God saves Hagar and Ishmael. This appears to be the same case with Ishmael as well. The Bible says, "God was with the boy as he grew up" but we know that Ishmael grew up to be the father of a nation who was the enemy of God's people.

Which brings up another point, knowing that God exists and is powerful does NOT mean that you are a Christian. Even the devil knows God exists and He is powerful! Christians recognize that Jesus died on the cross to pay for THEIR sin, that He took the punishment that we deserve. There is NOTHING we can do to earn our way into heaven. And much like the covenant God made with Abraham, God promises to be our

God and give us blessings, such as peace and understanding, if we follow His will for us and seek a relationship with Him. We have already seen, over and over, how our gracious God cared for individuals that don't even follow Him. If He's willing to do that for them, how much more do you think He is willing to do for those who He considers his children?!? He is so gracious and patient and merciful.

What an amazing God!

Genesis 22

In this episode of Kids Bible Breakdown, we are going to be breaking down Genesis Chapter 22.

Guys this is one of my FAVORITE chapters!! I LOVE it! Now when I was younger, this chapter kinda freaked me out a little bit. But this is one of the reasons it's SO important to read and study the Bible instead of just learning Bible stories.

The chapter starts with: Some time later God tested Abraham. God called Abraham to which Abraham responded, "Here I am." God told Abraham "Take your son, your only son, whom you love, and go to the region of Moriah. Sacrifice him there as a burnt offering on the mountains I will tell you about."

All over, this makes God look like a cruel God. What kind of God would tell a father to kill their son! And then to top it off, He seemed to almost rub it in by saying "your only son who you love." I mean, this would be mean even if we did this to someone with food! Think about it! Who would say, "Hey, do you see that last piece of moist and delicious chocolate cake? Oh, it's so rich and yummy! I know this is your favorite dessert, but hand it over. You can watch me eat it?" I mean, that's just wrong! Who does that?! So, why would God even say this? But we learned why in the 1st sentence of the chapter; God was testing Abraham.

Abraham didn't even stall. The next morning, Abraham got up, saddled the donkey, got wood for an offering and set off with Isaac and some servants for the three-day trip to Mount Moriah. When they finally reached the mountain, Abraham told the servants to stay with the donkey and he and Isaac would worship and then WE would be back.

Abraham took the wood for the offering and placed it on his son for Isaac to carry. Abraham carried the knife and the fire. As they walked, Isaac asked his father, "The fire and the wood are here, but where is the lamb for the burnt offering?" Abraham replied, "God Himself will provide the lamb." When they reached the spot, Abraham built an altar, arranged the wood on it, and then tied up his son and placed him on it. He reached for his knife to kill his son, but the Angel of the Lord, God the Son, called out from Heaven, "Abraham!!! DO NOT lay a hand on the boy! Do not do ANYTHING to him! Now I know that you fear God because you have not withheld your only son from Me." Then Abraham looked up and saw a ram caught in a bush by his horns. Abraham sacrificed the ram and called that place "The Lord will provide."

The Angel of the Lord called to Abraham again and declared, "Because you have done this and have not withheld your only son from me, I will bless you and make your descendants as numerous as the stars. Your descendants will take possession of the land of their enemies and through your offspring, all people on earth will be blessed." Then Abraham and Isaac, along with the servants, returned to Beersheba.

Sometime later, Abraham was told that Milkah, his brother Nahor's wife, had given Nahor eight sons. One of the sons was named Bethuel. He became the father of Rebekah. We're going to hear more about this later.

But for right now -

OH MY GOODNESS!!! There is SO MUCH happening in this chapter! It's mind blowing! Now really focus in and follow along with me. God does not approve of human sacrifice. It's sinful. Period. Also, as we have seen already, God is the EXACT opposite of cruel. The Bible has already shown us that He is loving and merciful. So, what in the world is going on here? God wanted to make sure Abraham's heart was in the right place. God wanted to know that Abraham trusted Him and was willing to follow His commands. And Abraham passed with flying colors! Just look at verse 6 when Abraham told the servants that WE, referring to both him and Isaac, will return. Abraham fully trusted God in this situation. He knew who God was and that He keeps His promises. God had already said that the covenant was with and through Isaac. So, Abraham either believed God would stop him from killing Isaac, which He did, or God was going to bring Isaac back to life. But one thing he knew for sure, was he was coming back with Isaac.

Also, despite the fact that most pictures of the story show Isaac as a young boy. That doesn't appear to be the case. This was a three-day journey, not a walk in the park. Also, Abraham had Isaac carry the wood for the altar, wood isn't light. He probably had Isaac carry the wood because he was well over 100 years old by this point! So, what it appears we have here is a son who could have probably easily overthrown his elderly father, was willing to let his father bind him and was willing to be sacrificed. Looks like Abraham wasn't the only one with strong faith.

Not only did God do this to test Abraham, He also did this to show us what was going to occur in the future. Let's zoom out a little and look at the story again.

A father was willing to sacrifice His one and only son, who he loved. This son was to be the sacrificial lamb. He carried the wood on his back to the place where he was willing to lay down his life. Does this story sound familiar? Guys, this is the story of God the Father and Jesus!! He gave his only Son to be sacrificed FOR US!! And Jesus was

willing to do it!! That is just overwhelming to think about! What makes this more mind blowing, is Mount Moriah, the mountain that Abraham named “God will provide”, it's the same mountain as Golgotha, the place where Jesus sacrificed His life to pay for OUR SINS!! Abraham had no clue when he named the mountain, “God will provide” how true that was!!! Not just for Abraham, but for ALL OF US!!!
WHAT AN AMAZING GOD!!!

Genesis 23

In this episode of Kids Bible Breakdown, we are breaking down Genesis Chapter 23.

Sarah lived to be 127 years old and then she died at Kiriath Arba in Canaan. Abraham mourned and wept over her. Then Abraham went to the Hittites at the city gates to request he be able to purchase property to bury Sarah. The Hittites replied to Abraham, “Sir, you are a mighty prince among us. Bury your dead in the choicest (or the best) of our tombs. None of us will refuse you his tomb for burying your dead.” The Hittites knew Abraham wasn’t actually a prince. They said this because of Abraham’s reputation and wealth.

Abraham bowed down to show respect and said he wanted to purchase the cave of Machpelah, which belonged to a man named Ephron, at full price. Ephron was sitting in the crowd and offered to give Abraham the cave and the field the cave was in. Abraham said no, I will purchase it at full price. Ephron stated that the field was worth 400 shekels of silver. Abraham weighed out the money and purchased both the field and the cave for the full asking price. So the field in Machpelah, which was near Mamre, along with the cave that was at the end of it, was now owned by him. He then buried his wife, Sarah there.

This chapter seems pretty clear cut, but it isn’t really. The Hittites didn’t really say what they meant. They said false things to make them look more generous than what they actually were. In their culture, they bartered for things, which means the person buying and the person selling would go back and forth naming prices until they could agree on the final price. The Hittites often started this process by offering the item for free. However, they didn’t really mean it. If Abraham would have actually said, “Ok! Great! I’ll take it for free!” This would have been an insult. To further show they really didn’t mean what they said, after Abraham actually said, “No, I am going to pay for it.” Ephron actually stated a price that was WAY TOO MUCH for that piece of land. But the fact that the Hittites were accepting of him and even willing to even sell him land, was a blessing. They were not very accepting of outsiders purchasing their land.

But unlike the Hittites, God says what He means. God said He would bless Abraham and He did. Not only did God ensure Abraham found favor with these people even though he was an outsider, He gave Abraham an abundance of wealth. Abraham knew he could trust exactly what God said and that God would continue to bless him. Because of this, Abraham didn’t feel the need to try to talk Ephron into lowering the price. He just paid the named price, which I’m sure went a long way to ensuring he and the Hittites continued to have a good relationship.

I love that we can trust God and what He says. The Bible tells us in Jeremiah 29:11, “For I know the plans I have for you,” declares the Lord, “plans to prosper you and not to harm you, plans to give you a hope and a future.”. Now these plans may not always be what we want, but God, who knows everything and is in control of everything, has a Big Picture View all the time. He knows WAY better than we do what is in our best interest. And we can always trust Him, because He is an amazing God!

Genesis 24

On today's episode of Kids Bible Breakdown, we're going to be breaking down Genesis Chapter 24.

Abraham was very old and the Lord had blessed him. He wanted to ensure his son was taken care of, so he called his lead servant and Abraham had him place his hand under his thigh. Putting a hand under someone's thigh was the equivalent, meaning the same thing, as shaking hands when making a deal with someone. Abraham told his servant to go back to the land of his family and find a wife for Isaac and to swear that he will not allow Isaac to marry a Canaanite woman.

The servant asked, "What if the woman will not come back with me? Should I take your son back to your home country?" Abraham was adamant that Isaac was to not go back to his home land. Abraham stated that God had brought him to this land and promised to give it to his offspring so Isaac was to stay in the land God had promised. Abraham assured his servant that the Lord would send an Angel to go before him to find a wife for his son. Although, to ease the servant's mind, Abraham told his servant, if the woman was not willing to come back with him, he would be released from his oath. The servant took the oath and then left with 10 camels loaded with goods.

This was no easy trip! It was about 400 miles and took about two weeks to journey. The servant made his way to Nahor when it was almost evening and the women would be coming out to draw up water at the well. He had his camels kneel down beside the well that was just outside of the town. He began to pray to the Lord to please continue to show his master kindness by making his trip successful. He prayed that the Lord would make it clear who he was to approach to become Isaac's wife by her willingness to give him and the camels water. He prayed when he asked a young woman for water, the one who said, "Drink, and I will water your camels too," would be the one God chose to be Isaac's wife.

As he was still praying, a beautiful young woman named Rebekah, came to get water from the well. The servant asked her for water and Rebekah replied, "Drink, and I will water your camels too!" When she was done, Abraham's servant pulled out gold jewelry and coins to give to Rebekah and asked her, "Whose daughter are you and do you have room for me to spend the night?" Rebekah replied that she was the daughter of Bethuel, who was the son of Nahor (Abraham's brother) and his wife Milka and that they had room for him and the camels to spend the night. The servant bowed down and began to worship God saying, "Praise be to the Lord! The God of my master Abraham, who has not abandoned His kindness or faithfulness to my master Abraham!"

Rebekah ran home to tell her household about what happened, and her brother, Laban, hurried out to meet the man. Laban said to Abraham's servant, "Come, you who are blessed by the Lord! Why are you standing out here? I have prepared the house and a place for the camels." So, the man entered the house and was given water for him and the men with him, to wash their feet while the camels were cared for. They had just traveled a long distance with sandals on and back in those days, they didn't really have tables and chairs like we have today. They typically had a low table that they would half lay/half sit at while keeping their feet away from the table because without indoor plumbing, they were quite dirty.

Carrying on with the story, they set food before the servant, but he refused to eat until he told them why he had come. Laban said, "Tell us then!" Abraham's servant told them of how successful Abraham had become and that he had given everything to his son, Isaac, who he had with Sarah. However, Isaac needed a wife. He told them all about Abraham's request and God going before him to find the right woman for Isaac, along with his prayer that God help him identify her. He then went on to tell of his encounter with Rebekah at the well. The servant went on to basically ask if Rebekah could come back with him to be Isaac's wife. Both Laban and Bethuel replied, "This is from the LORD; we can say nothing to you one way or the other. Here is Rebekah; take her and go, and let her become the wife of your master's son, as the LORD has directed."

When Abraham's servant heard this, he bowed low and brought out gold and silver and clothing to give to Rebekah. He also gave costly gifts to her brother and mother. Then he ate and drank and spent the night there. The next morning, the servant was ready to start the long journey back home with Rebekah, but her brother and mother wanted Rebekah to stay with them a little longer prior to leaving. The servant said, "Do not detain me. The Lord has granted me a successful journey. Send me on my way so I may go see my master." They decided to ask Rebekah what she wanted to do and she stated she was willing to go. But first her family blessed her stating, "Our sister, may you increase to thousands among thousands. May your offspring possess the cities of their enemies." Then, Rebekah left along with her attendants.

Now Isaac was living in the Negev and went out to the field one evening. He looked up and saw the camels coming. Rebekah saw Isaac as well and asked the servant who was the man that was in the field and coming to greet them. The servant replied, "The man in the field is my master, Isaac." The servant told Isaac all that had happened. Isaac took Rebekah into his mother's tent and made Rebekah his wife. He loved her very much and was comforted after His mother's death.

Unlike some others that we discussed in previous chapters, it appears that Abraham's servant actually knew the God of Abraham. I feel like I could learn a lesson from this guy! So often, I exhaust myself trying to accomplish something. It's only when I'm at the end of my rope that I cry out to God and ask for help. But this servant, as soon as he got to Abraham's home country, didn't waste any time going from tent to tent trying to find the perfect wife for Isaac. He immediately went to the ONLY ONE that could ensure he was successful and asked Him for help! And even before he was done praying, God answered his prayers. He knew the God of Abraham was kind and faithful and in control of EVERYTHING! He knew Abraham's God is an amazing God!

Genesis 25

In this episode of Kids Bible Breakdown, we're breaking down Genesis Chapter 25.

Abraham married another woman named Keturah, and she gave him six sons. Abraham left everything to Isaac. But while Abraham was still alive, he gave gifts to his other sons and sent them to the east to live away from Isaac.

Abraham lived to be 175 years old and then he died. Isaac and Ishmael buried him in the cave in Machpelah next to Sarah. After Abraham's death, the LORD blessed Isaac, who was living near Beer Lahai Roi.

Ishmael, Abraham's son who he had with Sarah's Egyptian maid servant Hagar, had 12 sons. Just like God said, these 12 sons grew to be the rulers of 12 tribes. Ishmael lived to be 137 years old and then he died. Ishmael's descendants lived in the area from Havilah to Shur near the border of Egypt. And just like God said, they lived in hostility towards all their brothers. Which means they fought them and they did not get along.

The chapter goes on to tell about Isaac. As we learned in the last chapter, when Isaac was 40 years old, he married Rebekah. Much like Sarah, Rebekah was unable to get pregnant, so Isaac prayed to the Lord and God answered his prayers. Rebekah got pregnant and the babies moved around a lot in her belly because they were fighting. Of course, Rebekah didn't have all the medical technology we have today, so she didn't know she had two babies in her belly and she didn't understand what was going on or why she had so much movement in her belly. So, she went to ask the Lord, "Why is this happening to me?" The Lord responded, "Two nations are in your womb, and two peoples from within you will be separated; one will be stronger than the other and the older will serve the younger."

When it was time for Rebekah to have her babies, the first one came out with red hair all over his body, so they named him Esau (which means hairy). After this, his brother, Jacob, came out holding onto Esau's heel. Isaac was 60 years old when Rebekah had babies. The boys grew up and Esau was a skillful hunter. Jacob was quiet and kind of a homebody. Isaac loved the taste of wild game and he loved Esau, but Rebekah loved Jacob.

One day, Esau spent the day outdoors and when he came home, Jacob was cooking stew. Esau came in VERY hungry and asked Jacob to give him some stew. Jacob, taking total advantage of the situation, told Esau to sell him his birthright and he would give him a bowl of stew. Esau basically said, "What good is a birthright when I'm about to die of starvation?" So, Esau traded his birthright for stew and bread.

A birthright was typically given to the 1st born and gave them a larger portion of the inheritance and put them in a position of leadership in the family. It was a pretty big deal. But Esau was so worried about his immediate feelings, he didn't even think through the long-term consequences of making a hasty decision, like selling his birthright to his brother for a bowl of stew. He

exaggerated his situation by saying he was starving to death, but it sounds like something he just said to help him justify making a foolish choice. He may have felt good about his decision while he was eating the stew, but a few hours later, when he was starting to become a little hungry again, I bet he began to see things a little more clearly and probably felt sick to his stomach that he made such a hasty and awful decision.

One of the ways God helps us learn patience and discernment, (which means making wise decisions) is by not giving us everything we want or just not giving it to us right away. Just like Abraham and Sarah, Isaac and Rebekah wanted children, but they couldn't have any. Isaac prayed to God, who is the ONLY one that could fix the problem, but just like his parents, their prayers weren't answered right away. God has perfect timing and only He knows when is the right time to give us what we are asking for, but it's still important to continue to pray and take our request to Him or ask Him to change our desires to align with His will for us. Just like any good father, He wants to bless us, but He also wants us to ask and have hearts that love and trust Him above all else. He is an amazing God!

Genesis 26

In this episode of Kids Bible Breakdown, we are breaking down Genesis Chapter 26.

There was a famine in the land and Isaac went to King Abimelech in Gerar. The Lord appeared to Isaac and told him not to go to Egypt, but to stay in the land of Gerar. The Lord said He would be with Isaac and bless him. Then He reconfirmed His promise that He would give all the land to Isaac's descendants and make them as numerous as the stars.

So, Isaac stayed in Gerar. When the men in that place asked him about Rebekah, he pulled the same stunt his father did and said, "She is my sister." Because she was so beautiful, he was afraid the men would kill him so they could have her all to themselves; only this time, it wasn't even half true. Sometime later, King Abimelech looked out from his window and saw Isaac caressing Rebekah, which is something you do to your wife, not your sister. King Abimelech called for Isaac and said, "She is really your wife! Why did you say she is my sister?!" Isaac told him that he thought he might be killed on account of Rebekah. Just like before, the King stated, "What is it that you have done to us? One of my men might have been with her and brought guilt upon us." And once again, a king that seems to not even claim Isaac's God as his God, seems to have more faith in God's abilities than Isaac. So King Abimelech declared, "Anyone who touches this man or his wife will be put to death." And just like before with his father, God still blessed Isaac even though he didn't trust God to handle the situation. Isaac planted crops that year and God had them yield hundred-fold. Isaac became so wealthy with so many flocks and servants that the Philistines started to envy him (which means they were jealous of him) so they filled all the wells that his father Abraham had dug.

Then King Abimelech said to Isaac, "Move away from us; you have become too powerful for us." So, Isaac moved to the Valley of Gerar and settled there. His servants dug back open the wells that his father had dug and the Philistines had filled in. But the herdsmen of Gerar argued with Isaac's herdsmen and said, "That water is ours!", so they moved on. They dug another well, but the herdsmen of Gerar argued over that one too! So, Isaac had his men dig a third well. There was no argument over this one so Isaac said, "Now the LORD has given us room and we will flourish over the land."

Isaac then went to Beersheba, where the LORD appeared to him and said, "I am the God of your father Abraham. Do not be afraid, for I am with you; I will bless you and increase the number of your descendants for the sake of my servant Abraham." Then, much like his father, Isaac built an altar and called on the name of the LORD and then Isaac had his servants try to dig a well at that location.

In the meantime, King Abimelech traveled out to Isaac with his personal advisor and the commander of his armies. Isaac asked them, "Why have you come out to see me when you were hostile to me and sent me away?" Much like King Abimelech did with Isaac's father, he was wanting to make a deal with Isaac saying "We saw that the LORD is with you and we want

to make a deal with you so you will not bring any harm to us. He was basically telling Isaac, “I mean, you remember when I told the people that they weren’t to touch you or your wife? And I did send you away, but I did so in peace! And clearly the LORD has continued to bless you out here, so, we’re good - Right? We’re buddies?” Isaac responded by making them a feast! The next day, Isaac took an oath with them, much like making a promise, that he would leave them in peace and then send them on their way. That same day, Isaac’s servants came to tell him that they had finally found water at the well they were digging at the site where Isaac had made the altar.

The chapter ends by telling us when Esau was forty, (Jacob’s hairy brother that we were introduced to yesterday) he married two Hittite women. The Bible says they were a source of grief to Esau’s parents, Isaac and Rebekah; which means he caused them lots of problems and issues.

Back in those times in that area, water was as good as gold. Clearly Isaac had lots of resources and could have easily fought the Gerar herdsmen for the well. But he showed his faith in the LORD and his humility by moving on and trusting God with the issue. God led Isaac exactly where he wanted him to be so he could continue to be blessed. Esau, on the other hand, doesn’t seem to have a lot in common with his father. He seems to make hasty and bad decisions instead of going to the Lord for direction. He even married pagan women instead of seeking a wife that believed in the God of his father and grandfather. And as we have seen time and time again, his sin negatively affected others.

One thing that is just extremely comforting to me, is how the last two chapters remind us that God is ALWAYS in control! In the last chapter, we saw Jacob be deceitful and steal his brother Esau’s birthright. And even though God doesn’t approve of Jacob’s behavior, Jacob didn’t mess up God’s plan! God knows that all He has to work with are flawed humans and it doesn’t matter because He’s in control, not us! We can’t mess up His plans! He even used Jacob’s bad behavior FOR His plans! He told Rebekah when she was pregnant, that the older would serve the younger! Which turned out to be a really good call since Esau seemed to continuously make hasty and bad decisions! God knew EXACTLY what was going to happen!

Then in this chapter, Isaac kept having people steal his water well which was a REALLY big deal when you’re living on the edge of the desert. But once again, God was in control and led Isaac to where He wanted him to be to give him a new well! And because we know God is in control of EVERYTHING, we don’t have to get upset when things don’t go our way because we can trust that God will handle it! He is in control, He has good plans for us and He is an amazing God!

Genesis 27

On this episode of Kids Bible Breakdown, we are breaking down Genesis Chapter 27.

This episode starts off with Isaac being old and he could no longer see well. He called for Esau, his oldest son, and told him to go hunting and then prepare a meal for him so that he could bless him before he died. So Esau went to do as his father had instructed him, but his mother Rebekah overheard what Isaac said. When Esau left, Rebekah said to Jacob, Esau's twin brother, "Go out to the flock and bring me two choice young goats, so I can prepare some tasty food for your father. Then take it to your father so he will give you his blessing instead of Esau before he dies."

Jacob seemed to have more of an issue with the details of his mother's plan rather than the downright deceit of it because he said, "My brother Esau is hairy. What if my father touches me? Then he would realize I was tricking him and I would be cursed instead of blessed." Rebekah was fully invested in her lie and told Jacob, "Do what I say. May the curse fall on me." So Jacob did as his mother said and he got two choice goats and then his mother prepared food for Isaac, which was her husband and the father of Jacob and Esau. Rebekah then got some of her oldest son's clothes which is Esau's clothes and put them on Jacob. She then put goat's hair on Jacob's hands and the back of his neck; that way Jacob would smell and feel like Esau. She then gave him food and bread that she prepared to take to his father.

Jacob went to his father Isaac and said, "My father." Isaac replied, "Yes my son," but then it seems he was confused right away because he then said, "Who is it?" Jacob lied to his father and said, "I am Esau, your firstborn. I did what you requested. Eat so you can give me your blessing." Isaac questioned how he could have hunted and cooked food so quickly. Jacob lied again by telling His father it was because the Lord gave him success. Isaac still wasn't really buying it because he told Jacob, "Come closer so I can touch you and know if you really are my son Esau or not." Since Rebekah put goat hair on Jacob to disguise him as Esau, when Isaac touched his hands, he said, "The voice is the voice of Jacob, but the hands are the hands of Esau." Isaac questioned again asking, "Are you really my son Esau?" Jacob lied again and said, "I am."

At that point, Isaac finally started to go with it and told the fake Esau (otherwise known as Jacob) to bring the food so he could eat it and then bless him. So Jacob brought him food and wine and he ate and drank. Isaac then decided to try one more time to confirm that the person with him was Esau by saying, "Come here my son and kiss me."

When Jacob went to kiss his father, Isaac smelled Esau because Jacob was wearing his clothes, and that was confirmation enough for Isaac. He blessed Jacob, thinking it was Esau, saying, "Ah, the smell of my son is like the smell of a field that the Lord has blessed. May God give you heaven's dew and earth's richness- an abundance of grain and new wine. May nations serve you and peoples bow down to you. Be lord over your brothers, and may the sons of your mother bow down to you. May those who curse you be cursed and those who bless you be blessed."

Isaac finished blessing him and shortly after he left, Esau went to Isaac with food he had prepared from what he had hunted. Esau said to his father Isaac, "My father, sit up and eat some of my game, so that you may give me your blessing." Isaac, clearly confused, asked, "Who are you?" Esau responded, "I am your son, your first born, Esau." Isaac, realizing he had been tricked, began trembling violently and asked, "Then who came in here before you and brought me food that I blessed, and indeed he will be blessed." In those days, once someone gave you a blessing, even if they were tricked into doing it, they couldn't take it back. Their word was binding.

When Esau heard what his father said, he burst out with a loud and bitter cry and begged his father, "Bless me - me too, my father!" Isaac told Esau that his brother had come and tricked him into giving him Esau's blessing. Esau said, "Isn't he rightfully named Jacob? (Because Jacob means someone who takes something by force or by scheming, which is kind of like tricking) Esau went on to say, "He had deceived me two times! He took my birthright and now he's taken my blessing (which wasn't really true. It was Esau's own bad decision that caused him to lose his birthright. However, it was 100% true that Jacob stole his blessing by lying and deceiving their dad.) Esau then asked his father, "Haven't you reserved any blessing for me?" Isaac said, "I have made him lord over you and all his relatives, his servants and I have sustained him with grain and new wine. So what is there left that I can possibly bless you with?"

Esau continued to cry and beg his father, "Do you only have one blessing? Bless me too, my father!" Isaac answered Esau, "Your dwelling will be away from the earth's richness, away from the dew of heaven above. You will live by the sword and you will serve your brother. But when you grow restless, you will throw his yoke from off your neck." A yoke was something that was put over the neck of an ox or cow to control them and have them pull heavy equipment.

Overall, this doesn't sound much like a blessing. But as Isaac had said, he already gave everything good to his brother Jacob, so he didn't have much to work with. The only somewhat positive thing he could say to Esau was that at one point, he will break out from being under his brother's control. As you can imagine, Esau was beyond mad at

Jacob. He knew his father was getting near death, so he planned to wait until after his father passed away, then he was going to kill his brother Jacob.

Rebekah was told of her son Esau's plan to kill his brother Jacob. So Rebekah sent for Jacob and told him to run away and stay with her brother Laban in Haran (We were introduced to Laban a few chapters ago when Abraham's servant went to find a wife for Isaac). Rebekah told Jacob that once Esau was no longer angry, she would send for him so he could come back home. Then Rebekah said to Isaac, "I'm disgusted with living because of these Hittite women that Esau married. If Jacob takes a wife from the women of this land, like these women, my life will not be worth living." Rebekah is still trying to control the situation by trying to trick Isaac into sending Jacob away. Although I'm sure Rebekah definitely did not want Jacob marrying a woman, who was like one of Esau's wives, she really wanted to send Jacob to her brother's house to save him from his own brother Esau.

The sad part about all of this is, Rebekah didn't have to do any of this! God already told her when she was pregnant that eventually Esau was going to serve Jacob. Like other women we have seen, Rebekah decided to take matters into her own hands instead of trusting God to work it out in His timing. Because of her actions, a family was torn apart and she compromised her own character. I doubt sincerely that the men in her family saw her as a wise and patient woman after that whole situation. But enough focusing on these lying and hasty humans who are continuously screwing up. What does all this tell us about God? Above all else, it shows me that even though God is in control over everything, He is SO patient and loving!! How do we know this? 1) Despite all the mistakes the people in this story made, God still blessed them. And 2) All of this took place close to 4000 years ago, and guess what? God has been showing grace and love to screwed-up humans, and pursuing a relationship with them ever since then! How do I know you ask?! Because I'm one of them!! I have taken matters into my own hands and argued or just flat ignored God more times than I ever want to admit. And yet our loving Father still gently nudges me (and sometimes maybe gives me a good and well-deserved knock over the head) to get me back on track and in the center of His will so He can bless me! What an Amazing God we have!!

Genesis 28

On this edition of Kids Bible Breakdown, we're breaking down Genesis Chapter 28.

But first, a quick recap of the last chapter since this chapter is a continuation. In the last chapter we learned Rebekah and Jacob schemed to steal Esau's blessing from Isaac, who is Rebekah's husband and Jacob and Esau's dad. Esau was so angry, he planned to kill his brother Jacob after his father passed away. Rebekah learned of Esau's plan and wanted to send Jacob away to stay with her brother Laban so Esau couldn't kill him. She went to her husband Isaac to talk to him about sending Jacob back to the home country so that he could find a wife from within their people instead of marrying a Hittite woman.

Genesis 28 starts with: So Isaac called for Jacob and blessed him and commanded him, "Do not marry a Canaanite woman, but go to the house of your mother's father and take a wife from the daughters of Laban." If you will remember, Laban was Rebekah's brother. He was the one who Abraham's servant talked to when he went to find a wife for Isaac.

Isaac then blessed Jacob again by stating, "May God bless you and give you lots of descendants, and may God give you and your descendants the blessing of Abraham, that you will one day possess the land we now live in as aliens." When Isaac said "alien", he wasn't talking about little green men from outer space. Alien is a term that is used when someone is living in a location that they are not originally from. Isaac then sent Jacob on his way.

When Esau learned that Isaac had again blessed Jacob and sent him back to his homeland to find a wife and commanded Jacob NOT to marry a Canaanite woman, (which is exactly what Esau's Hittite wives were), he realized how displeasing the women that he married were to his father. Esau thought, well heck! I better get me a wife from our relatives too so I can be on dad's good side! But, Esau being Esau, didn't quite think through things before he rushed out to find another wife. I guess maybe the trip back to the home country to find a wife seemed like too much effort, because Esau decided to marry a relative closer to home. He went to his half-uncle Ishmael to marry one of his daughters. Ya know, the Ishmael that was sent away so his father Isaac could inherit everything. The same Ishmael that God said would be a "wild donkey of a man and would live in hostility with his brothers and others." Yeah, that Ishmael. I don't really think that's what his father had in mind when he was giving Jacob the "what to look for in a wife" speech.

The chapter then jumps back to Jacob and his travels back to Harran. It was starting to get dark outside, so Jacob stopped for the night. He took a stone and used it for a pillow, (I think I would rather use nothing, but to each his own) and then he fell asleep. He had a dream that he saw a stairway. The bottom of the staircase was on earth and the top of the stairway reached into the heavens. Angels were going up and down the stairs and the LORD stood above it and said, "I am the LORD, the God of your father Abraham and the God of Isaac. I will give you and your descendants the land on which you are lying. Your descendants will be like the dust of the earth and you will spread out to the west and to the east, to the north and to the south. All peoples on earth will be blessed through you and your offspring. I am with you and I will watch over you wherever you go, and I will bring you back to this land. I will not leave you until I have done what I promised."

When Jacob woke up, he thought, "Surely the LORD is in this place and I was not aware of it!" He was afraid and said, "How awesome is this place!" But he said it more like a statement, not like a question. Also, the word "afraid" here doesn't mean scared. Frequently in the Bible the term "fear" or "afraid" means "having respect". Jacob wasn't afraid of God, he was amazed and astonished at God's power and awesomeness. He was in awe of Him. Jacob felt he was in the house of God, the gate of heaven. So the next morning, he took the stone that was under his head and set it up as a pillar and poured oil on top of it. Jacob called that place "Bethel" which means "House of God".

Oil was frequently used throughout the Bible in ceremonies to anoint people or things. They would smear oil on someone, like a priest, to symbolize that he had been set apart by and for God. Although, we haven't seen this done in the Bible yet, so I'm not sure if Jacob poured the oil over the rock to signify the holiness of that place because of what he just experienced or for another reason. But it seems Jacob wanted to set up something to commemorate that location, which means he wanted to do or build something to celebrate and respect what had occurred there. I can totally see why Jacob would want to mark that area as special. Here he was basically on the run from his brother who wanted to murder him for the fact one he and his mother just pulled on his brother and father, and the LORD of all creation, comes to give him a blessing that He had given to his grandfather Abraham. That's pretty mind blowing!

But then we get a few mixed signals from Jacob because instead of just falling on his face, completely humbled by what God just told him, he actually tries to bargain with God. Jacob made a vow, but it had conditions attached to it. He said, "IF God will watch over me on this journey I am taking and will give me food to eat and clothes to wear so that I can return safely to my father's household, THEN the LORD will be my God and

this stone that I have set up as a pillar will be God's house and of all that You give me, I will give you a tenth."

Now, don't get me wrong, I 100% believe that Jacob was in awe of the LORD and believed God was in control. I also believe that Jacob was 100% human and sometimes those not-so-great human qualities that we struggle with show themselves. As we have seen, Jacob is used to manipulating situations to get his way. It seems like he had a knack for being a little tricky to get what he wanted. We will see this again in upcoming chapters. And guess what, this is GREAT news for us! Why, you ask? Because God has a knack for using very human people to do amazing things and making them unlikely heroes. This is a recurring theme for God that we see throughout the Bible. And that means that our very patient and loving God can use any of us! We don't have to be the best or the brightest to be used by God; we just have to be willing! As we've talked about before, God doesn't NEED us to do anything. He's God. He's got this with or without us. But He chooses to use us so that we can be blessed by Him in the process. Ya know why? Because He is an amazing God!

Genesis 29

In this episode of Kids Bible Breakdown, we are breaking down Genesis Chapter 29.

Jacob continues on his journey and makes it to his father's home country. He saw a well in a field and there were three flocks of sheep laying near it. There was a large stone laying over the mouth of the well because in those days they would gather all the flocks, move the stone that covered the well, water all the flocks, and then move the stone back. Jacob asked the shepherds where they were from. The shepherds said they were from Harran. Then Jacob asked if they knew Laban, Nahor's grandson, and if so, was he well? They said, "Yes, we know him and look, here comes his daughter Rachel with the sheep." because she was a shepherdess.

Jacob must have seen Rachel and wanted to be alone with her because he said to the shepherds, "Look! The sun is still high; it's not time for the flocks to be gathered. Water your sheep and take them back to pasture." They responded, "We can't until all the flocks have been gathered and the stone has been rolled away from the well." While the shepherd was still talking, Jacob saw Rachel and went to roll away the stone from the mouth of the well and watered all her sheep that were with her. Then Jacob kissed Rachel and began to weep out loud. He told Rachel that he was a distant relative. Rachel ran to tell her father Laban. As soon as Laban heard the news, he hurried to meet Jacob. He embraced and kissed him and brought him home. Then Jacob told him everything that had occurred. Laban responded, "You are my own flesh and blood."

After Jacob had stayed there for a month, Laban said, "Just because you are my relative doesn't mean you shouldn't get paid. Tell me what your wages should be." Laban had two daughters. Jacob wasn't attracted to Leah, but Jacob was in love with Rachel and thought she was beautiful. Jacob told Laban he would work seven years in order to be able to make Rachel his wife. Laban said, "Better I give her to you than some other man." So Jacob worked for Laban for seven years but he was so in love with Rachel that it seemed only like a few days.

At the end of the seven years, Jacob told Laban, "Give me my wife." So Laban gathered people and had a feast to celebrate the marriage. But when night came, Laban gave Leah to Jacob. Because it was dark and they didn't have electricity, Jacob thought it was Rachel, so he laid with her. It wasn't until morning that Jacob discovered he had been tricked and he actually took Leah as a wife instead of Rachel, the one he loved.

It's becoming apparent where Jacob's deceitful nature came from! Although Jacob was much more supportive of deceitful actions when he was the one performing them

instead of being on the receiving end. When Jacob discovered he married Leah instead of Rachel, he was upset and asked Laban, "What have you done to me?" Laban replied, "It is not our custom to marry the youngest daughter before the oldest. Finish this bridal week with Leah, then I will give you Rachel as well in return for another seven years of work." He also gave Leah a maid servant named Zilpah. Jacob did what Laban said and finished the week with Leah and then married Rachel. Laban gave Rachel Bilhah as a maidservant. And Jacob loved Rachel more than Leah.

When the LORD saw that Leah was not loved, He allowed Leah to have children but did not allow Rachel to have any. Leah had a baby boy and named him Ruben. She said, "It is because the LORD has seen my misery that He has given me a son. Surely my husband will love me now that I have given him a son." She then had another son and Leah said, "Because the LORD heard that I was not loved, He gave me this son as well." She named him Simeon. She then had a 3rd son and named him Levi saying, "Now at last my husband will become attached to me because I have given him three sons. She became pregnant a 4th time and with this one she said, "This time I will praise the LORD." So she named him Judah. Then she stopped having children.

I LOVE how God has a heart for the underdog. Leah was not set up for success. Not only is Rachel the one Jacob wanted to marry but he got tricked into having to take Leah as a wife. No one likes being tricked. Especially after working so hard for something you wanted just to be schemed out of it. That was seven years of hard work for a wife he not only didn't want, he probably despised at this point.

When I think of this situation, two visuals come to mind. Do you know when you are really craving a specific food, let's say like chocolate pudding for instance, and when you go to take a bite of that pudding, fully expecting it to be sweet you realize as soon as it hits your taste buds that it's not what you thought! It's actually beef gravy! Your automatic reaction is to spit it out. Not necessarily because you hate beef gravy, but it wasn't at all what you were wanting or craving at the time. Now imagine that the fake chocolate pudding was served to you on a trash can lid. This was poor Leah's situation. While Isaac had a craving for Rachel, he was served Leah on a trash can lid. And she was not loved by Jacob. But she was loved by God. And He saw her and her misery and the desire to be loved, so He gave her children. A way to kind of one up her sister Rachel and have something she felt proud about. As we discussed, being able to have children for your husband was SO important. So the fact that she was able to do it, through God's help, and Rachel could not, probably earned her respect even if it didn't get her Jacob's love.

And it appears Leah finally started to focus on the only One that could actually meet her needs and continuously showed her love. She went from hoping for her husband's love, to focusing on praising the LORD when He gave her a 4th son. When we focus on the Lord, He helps turn our hearts to what is truly important and gives us a sense of peace and contentment, (which means being happy with our situation and what we have). God loves us and He wants to bless us and all He asks for in return is our hearts and our commitment to follow His path for us. Which guess what, is better than any path we could possibly do on our own! Even though Leah may not have been loved by Jacob, she was used by God to bless all the Nations. Jesus came from the descendants of Judah. Once again, God didn't use the best looking or most desirable for His plan. He is an amazing God!

Genesis 30

On this episode of Kids Bible Breakdown, we are breaking down Genesis Chapter 30.

When Rachel saw that she was not having any children, she became jealous of her sister and went to Jacob saying, "Give me children or I will die." Jacob became angry with her and said, "Am I in the place of God, who has kept you from having children?". Then she walked the same bad path as her distant relative Sarah, and gave her maidservant Bilhah to her husband to take as a wife saying, "Maybe I can start a family through her." So Bilhah became pregnant and had a son. Rachel said, "God had vindicated me and listened to my plea and gave me a son." So she named him Dan, which means, "He has judged me." Rachel's servant Bilhah got pregnant again. Rachel said, "I have had a great struggle with my sister and I have won." So she named him Naphtali, which means "struggle".

This is a good time to take a story break to talk about different parts of the Bible. There are some sections of the Bible that are descriptive, because they are describing to us how life was back in those days. It does not mean God approves of what is being done. Then there are prescriptive areas where God is giving us direction in what we should do and how we should live. The above section is totally descriptive. We never have any reason to believe that God actually approves of this behavior. In fact, we have reason to believe He doesn't approve of this behavior since most of the time when things like this occur, it comes with negative consequences or is done due to not so godly reasons, like a fight with your sister due to jealousy. However, this is also a good time to point out that some of what I say is opinion based. Which means, it is always important to not just take what I say as the final word. The final say is God. You should ALWAYS take everything you hear from me or anyone else, back to the Bible and ask God for wisdom. And if we disagree on something, that's ok! We can still be friends! Back to the story.

When Leah saw she stopped having children, she gave her maidservant Zilpah, to Jacob to take as a wife also. Zilpah gave Jacob a son and Leah said, "What good fortune!" and named him Gad (which means good fortune). Zilpah then gave Jacob a second son and Leah said, "How happy am I! All the women will call me happy!" So she named him Asher (which means happy).

One day, Ruben, Leah's son, found some mandrake plants and brought them back to his mom. Rachel said to her sister Leah, "Please give me some of your son's mandrakes." Leah, in a not so gracious response, said, "You already took my husband, now you want to take some of my son's plants too?" Rachel said that if she could have some of the plants, Leah could lay with Jacob that night. When Jacob came in from the

field that night, Leah ran out to meet him and told him that he must spend the night with her. She said, "I have paid to have you spend time with me tonight." The Bible said that God listened to Leah and she became pregnant again and gave Jacob a 5th son. She thought God blessed her for giving her maidservant to Jacob so she named him, Issachar. Again, there is no evidence that actually supports that the reason Leah had another child was because God approved of her giving her maid servant to her husband. In fact, the Bible doesn't say, "God 'rewarded' Leah, so she became pregnant. It says, God listened to Leah and she became pregnant. Then, Leah became pregnant again with another son and she said, "This time my husband will show me honor because I have given him six sons, so she named him Zebulun. Sometime later, Leah also had a daughter named Dinah.

The Bible goes on to say that the LORD remembered Rachel and allowed her to have children and she finally got pregnant and gave Jacob a son. She named him Joseph saying, "The LORD has taken away my disgrace and may the LORD add to me another son."

Then, Jacob went to Laban and said, "Give me my wives and my children who I have worked for and send me on my way. Jacob wanted to go back to his father's household in Canaan. But Laban said he had seen how he was blessed through Jacob because the LORD was with Jacob. So he asked him to stay, and told Jacob to name his wages. Jacob stated that he had cared for Laban's flocks and they have increased greatly and have done well because God was with him. But so far, Laban is the only one who has grown his wealth from this. Jacob said he wanted to start growing his own wealth for his household. Jacob said he would continue to stay there and care for Laban's flock if he could go through Laban's flock and set aside every speckled or spotted sheep, every dark colored lamb, and every speckled or spotted goat. These would then be Jacob's so he could also start growing a flock for himself. Also, Jacob wanted to remove the animals that were marked in a particular way, because they could easily identify which animals belonged to which man and they couldn't steal from each other.

There is clearly a lack of trust between Laban and Jacob. And rightfully so because Laban agreed, but then immediately went to remove all the animals that would have been considered Jacob's and had his sons go hide them at a location that was a three-day journey between them and Jacob so Jacob couldn't claim any of the animals for himself. But that didn't stop Jacob. He got some branches and peeled back part of the bark to make the branches look striped. Then, whenever the strongest of the flock went to make babies, he would lay the branches near where they ate so they would be close to them. And all the animals that were near the branches when they made babies, all gave birth to babies with the markings on them which meant they belonged to Jacob.

Jacob took these marked animals and set them aside to start his own flock away from Laban's.

This all sounds a little weird and we are not quite sure where Jacob came up with this plan. But, since we know God is in control, we know that what it all comes down to is, God continued to bless Jacob. Which again shows us God's character. Jacob, Laban, Rachel and Leah all took matters into their own hands to try to solve what they saw a problem. God had blessed them, yet they turned to deceitful behavior to try to obtain more.

Rachel and Leah were locked in a battle of jealousy and discontentment (which again means they weren't happy with their current situations or their current blessings). They wanted more! Well, one more than their sister had at least!. Their choice to focus on what each other had, rather than God and all the blessings He had already given them, caused them to rob themselves from joy. They may have been happy for a moment or two, but as soon as the other sister had another child to add to their collection, it was right back to focusing on finding a way to get one more to add to their collection.

The amazing thing is, God continued to bless all of them! He saw their deceitful ways and unbelief and He loved them and blessed them despite all of this. His patience with us and His love for us is mind-blowing! He's an amazing God.

Genesis 31

In this episode of Kids Bible Breakdown, we're breaking down Genesis 31.

Jacob heard that Laban's sons were starting to grumble saying, "Jacob has taken everything our father owned and has gained wealth from what belonged to our father!" Jacob also noticed that Laban's attitude toward him had changed, and not in a good way.

Just to recap... Laban had an abundance of wealth he didn't have before, because God was with Jacob and the blessings overflowed to Laban. But since Laban tried to be tricky with the whole animal situation, God intervened to increase Jacob's wealth instead of Laban's.

The LORD told Jacob, "Go back to the land of your father and relatives and I will be with you." So Jacob sent for Rachel and Leah to have a family huddle out in the fields. He said to them something like, "Listen, it's clear I'm no longer on your dad's good side. You both know I've worked for your father with all my strength but he keeps changing my wages and keeps trying to find ways to cheat me. But God has been with me and hasn't let your father harm me. When your dad says, you only get the speckled babies, then God steps in and makes sure the whole flock only has speckled babies. Then when your dad sees all the babies being born are speckled, then he changes it and says, "Well now you only get striped babies." But God steps in again and ensures all the animals being born in the flocks now have stripes instead of speckles.

He went on to tell them that he had a dream where the angel of God said that He had seen what Laban was doing and that God was controlling what markings the flock babies would have in order to ensure Jacob continued to be blessed. Jacob also told them that in the dream, he was told, "I am the God of Bethel where you anointed a pillar and where you made a vow to Me. Now leave this land at once and go back to your native land."

In a rare occasion, Rachel and Leah both agreed! They said they doubt that there was any inheritance for them from their father because he even spent some money that was supposed to go to them. They said that their father was treating them like some foreigners (meaning he was treating them like people that were from some distant land instead of his own household). They agreed that whatever wealth God took away from their father, belongs to them and their children, so they told Jacob, "Do whatever God told you to do." So Jacob packed up his family and put them on camels and drove all his livestock and belongings ahead of him to head back to Canaan.

Before they set off, Rachel went into her father's household while Laban was shearing sheep and stole his household gods (which were little idols or statues). Then without telling Laban, Jacob and his crew fled. They crossed the Euphrates River and headed for the hill country of Gilead. Three days later, Laban was told that Jacob fled. (I would think you would still have to have a considerable amount of property and belongings not to notice that 20ish people along with all their belongings have been gone for three days). But when Laban found out he grabbed some of his relatives and went to pursue Jacob. It took them seven days to catch up with Jacob's clan in the hill country of Gilead. Then God came to Laban in a dream and told him, "Do not say anything to Jacob good or bad."

Jacob and his group had set up tents and Laban's group went to camp there also. Laban said to Jacob, "What have you done? You deceived me and carried off my daughters like captives of war," which we know isn't true. Rachel and Leah were totally on board with leaving. Laban continued by asking, "Why did you run off and deceive me? Why did you not tell me so I could have sent you off with a party? You didn't even let me kiss my grandchildren or daughters goodbye. You have done a foolish thing. I have the power to harm you; but last night the God of your father came to me and said, 'Do not say anything to Jacob either good or bad.' You have gone off because you wanted to go back to your father's land, but why did you steal my gods?" Jacob replied that he left quietly because he was afraid that Laban would take his daughters from him by force. Jacob went on to say, "But if you find anyone who took your gods, that person should not live." Then he encouraged Laban to look around for anything that belonged to him because Jacob was not aware that Rachel had stolen Laban's gods.

So Laban went around to all the tents and searched for his belongings but found nothing because Rachel had taken the idols and put them in her camel's saddle and then she was sitting on top of them. When her father approached her, she told him something along the lines of, "Don't be angry at me my lord that I can't stand up in your presence because I'm not feeling my best" So Laban found nothing. Then Jacob was angry. He confronted Laban asking, "What is my crime? How have I wronged you that you hunt me down? Now that you searched through all of our stuff, what have you found that belongs to you? Put it here in front of your relatives and mine and let them be the judge between us." I have a feeling Jacob wasn't really expecting an answer to any of these questions or even allowed enough time in between questions for Laban to answer. He was mad!

He went on to tell Laban that he had taken good care of his flock for 20 years, out in the heat of the day and the cold of the night, sacrificing sleep to make sure all the animals were cared for. Jacob said he didn't use any of Laban's flock for his food and every time an animal was stolen or killed by another animal, Jacob paid for it, not Laban. Jacob continued by basically saying to Laban, "And yet you kept trying to cheat me and you would have most likely sent me away with nothing. But God saw my hard work and all that happened and God intervened for me, and last night He rebuked you."

I feel like Laban starts pushing the boundaries of not saying anything negative, but he responds, "The women are my daughters, the children are my children, the flocks are my flocks. All you see is mine. (which side note- It's not Laban's, Jacob worked for years to earn all of it and the only reason Laban has what he does is because that he got the blessings of God being with Jacob... but moving on) Laban continued, "But what can I do about my daughters or these children that they had. Come, let's make a covenant (or promise) between you and I." So Jacob took a stone and set it up as a pillar and Laban gathered stones to set up. Then Laban said, "May the LORD keep watch between you and me when we are away from each other. If you mistreat my daughters or take any wives besides my daughters, even though no one is with us, remember that God is a witness between you and me." Laban also said, "This heap of stones that I have placed and this pillar that you have placed also is a witness to the promise that you will not go beyond your pillar to harm me and I will not go beyond my heap of stones to harm you." He ended by saying, "May the God of Abraham and the God of Nahor and the God of their father judge between us. (which means they are asking God to punish whoever doesn't keep the promise.) Jacob then took an oath and he offered a sacrifice. He then invited his relatives to a meal. The next morning, Laban kissed his grandchildren and daughters and blessed them and he returned home.

The thing that stands out to me here is God's faithfulness. God said that He would watch over Jacob and would return him to the land of his fathers and he did. Even though Jacob didn't do things exactly right, God can be trusted to keep His promises Always. He's so faithful, even when we're not. He's an amazing God.

Genesis 32

On this episode of Kids Bible Breakdown, we are breaking down Genesis Chapter 32.

Jacob continued on with his journey back to Canaan. On his way, the angels of God met him. When Jacob saw them, he said, "This is the camp of God!" So, he named that place Mahanaim.

When they got closer to where Esau was living, Jacob sent messengers ahead of him to go to his brother Esau who lived in Seir in Edom. He told his servants to say, "Your servant Jacob says, 'I have been staying with Laban and have remained there until now. I have cattle and donkeys, sheep and goats, man servants and maidservants.' Now I am sending this message to my lord that I may find favor in his eyes." Again, lord used here, is all lower case, which is just saying that Jacob sees Esau as someone who is in a position of authority. The messengers went to Esau and when they returned back to Jacob they said, "We went to your brother Esau and now he's coming to meet you with 400 men." Jacob started to panic! Last time he was with his brother Esau, Esau was making plans to kill him! And now he's headed his way with 400 men!!

Jacob divided all the people and his flocks and herds and camels into two separate groups. He thought if Esau comes in to attack one group, the other group may be able to escape. Then Jacob prayed, "Oh God of my father Abraham, God of my father Isaac, Oh LORD, You said to me, 'Go back to your country with your relatives, and I will make you prosper (which means to continue to grow in wealth and blessings.)'" Jacob continued on to say, "I am unworthy of all the kindness and faithfulness you have shown your servant. I had only my staff when I crossed the Jordan, but now I have become two groups. Save me, I pray, from the hand of my brother Esau, for I am afraid he will come and attack me and also the mothers with their children." Then Jacob reminds God, and himself of the promise that God made to him, saying, "You have said, 'I surely will make you prosper, and I will make your descendants like the sand of the sea, which cannot be counted.'"

Jacob spent the night there and went through what he had to select gifts for his brother Esau. Jacob, set aside 200 female goats, 20 male goats, 200 ewes and 20 rams, 30 female camels and their young, 40 cows and 10 bulls and 20 female donkeys and 10 male donkeys. Jacob assigned a servant to each herd of animals, and then instructed them to go ahead of him and keep some space between each herd. He instructed each servant that when my brother Esau meets you and ask to whom do you belong and where are you going and who owns all these animals in front of you, then you are to say to him, "They belong to your servant Jacob they are a gift, sent to my lord Esau; Jacob

is coming behind us.” One after another, the servant was to say the same thing to Esau when they met him. Jacob told them, “Make sure you say YOUR SERVANT Jacob is coming behind us.” Jacob thought surely giving him all these gifts and one after another will lessen his anger and maybe by the time he gets to me, he will be accepting of me. So Jacob sent the servants and the gifts ahead of him. Later that night, Jacob got up and took his two wives, his two maid servants, and his 11 sons and sent them across the shallow part of the Jabbok River. After he sent them across the streams, he sent all of his possessions, which is another way of saying everything he owned.

So Jacob was left alone and a man came and wrestled with him all night till the sun started coming up. When the man saw that he could not overpower Jacob, he touched Jacob’s hip socket and caused it to be injured. The man told Jacob to let him go, but Jacob replied, “I will not let you go unless you bless me.” The man asked him, “What is your name?” “Jacob”, he answered. Then the man said, “Your name will no longer be Jacob, but it will be Israel, because you have struggled with God and with men and have overcome.” Then Jacob said, “Please tell me your name.” The man replied, “Why do you ask my name?” And then he blessed Jacob. Jacob called that place Peniel, saying, “It is because I saw God face to face, and yet my life was spared.”

The Bible goes on to say that while the sun was rising Jacob passed through that land, and he was limping because of his injured hip. Then it tells us that Israelites do not eat the tendon (which is part of your body that attaches the muscle to your bone) that is attached to the socket of the hip because that is near the location that Jacob was touched.

Oh my gosh guys, look how Jacob has changed!!! He used to be a deceiver with his sense of entitlement, which means he seemed to think that he deserved a lot. He obviously thought he deserved Esau’s birthright. He continued to think that he deserved Esau’s blessing, and then when he was running away from Esau, so he wouldn’t be killed, and God appeared to him and promised him all of these amazing things, he then in a roundabout way, was trying to get more out of God. But look at him here! When he hears that his brother is coming to him with 400 men, he turns to God and asks God for help. He even tells God in verse 10 that he knows he isn’t worthy of all of the kindness and the faithfulness that God has shown him. Then Jacob is humble enough to tell his servants to refer to him as Esau’s servant anytime they talk to Esau and gave him gifts. Now this was probably a method just to try to get Esau to be less angry, but still.

Also, do you all have any guesses on who Jacob was wrestling with? Let’s look at some of the things that clue us in. This man was able to injure Jacob’s hip just by touching it. So clearly, he could’ve won the battle at any point if He wanted to. This man also has the

authority to bless Jacob and change his name, which we learned that Israel means to struggle with God and with men. Yeah! It's God! God already knew Jacob's name; He didn't have to ask him and God could have won the battle at any time. But sometimes God lets us struggle in order for us to develop certain personalities or traits that He needs us to develop for His plan to be fulfilled and in the end, He uses all of it to bless us. What an amazing God!

Genesis 33

On this episode of Kids Bible Breakdown, we're breaking down Genesis Chapter 33.

Jacob looked up and saw Esau was coming with 400 men, so he divided his children among Leah and Rachel and the two maid servants. He then kind of put them in order according to who he felt was the least important to most important. The maid servants with their children were first, then Leah with her children were next, and last in line was Rachel and Joseph.

Then Jacob ran ahead of all of them and bowed down to the ground seven times as his brother Esau came closer. But in an answer to Jacob's prayers, when Esau ran to meet Jacob, he hugged him and they cried. Then Esau looked up and saw the women and children and asked, "Who are these with you?" Jacob answered, "They are the children God has graciously given your servant." Sidenote, Jacob is still showing humility. Can you imagine the old Jacob saying anything like that?? OK carrying on...

Then Jacob had his maid servants and their children approach and bow down to Esau. Next, Leah and her children approach and bow down. Last of all came Joseph and Rachel, and they too bowed down.

Then, Esau asked, "Why did you send me all these gifts?" Jacob replied, "To find favor in your eyes, my lord." (which basically means to get Esau to like him and not be angry with him.) Esau said, "I already have plenty, my brother; you keep that for yourself." Jacob replied back to Esau, "No please, if I have found favor in your eyes, accept these gifts from me and just seeing your face is like seeing the face of God now that I know you have accepted me back!" (that's probably a bit of an exaggeration since he just saw God's face last night, but still, it sounds like a really nice compliment to say to kinda thank someone for not killing you and your whole family)

Anyways...

Jacob continued to insist that Esau take all the gifts saying that God has been very gracious to him, so Esau finally accepted the gifts.

Then Esau told Jacob, "Let's be on our way, and I'll keep you company on the journey. But Jacob said to him, "I have young children and all of these flocks with babies to care for. They have traveled a really long journey and they need to sit and rest for a while. So go ahead and go on your way and we will come up behind you at our own slow pace. Esau replied, "Then let me leave some of my men with you." But Jacob replied, "Oh why do that? All I really need to know is that I have found favor with you." So Esau started on his way back to Seir.

However, Jacob went to Sukkoth where he made a shelter for his family and his livestock. Jacob continued traveling on until he reached the city of Shechem in Canaan, and he camped in a location where he could see the city. He purchased that land for 100 pieces of silver from the sons of Hamor, who was the father of Shechem, both the city and the man. There he set up an altar and called it El Elohe Israel, which means the God of Israel.

I love that Jacob, now named Israel, is claiming God as his God. Also, God's faithfulness is astounding! Jacob obviously still didn't trust his brother, but he trusted God; something that a younger Jacob didn't necessarily do! But God can ALWAYS be trusted to keep His promises! He blessed Jacob and brought him back to the land of his fathers, just like He said He would do. God doesn't change based on His mood or because we aren't faithful. He is the same God! And He will be the same today and tomorrow and every day after that, just like He was in the Old Testament. He loves us, He is faithful to keep His promises. He has good plans for us. And He's an amazing God!

Genesis 34

This episode of Kids Bible Breakdown, we're breaking down Genesis Chapter 34.

Dinah, who was the daughter of Leah and Jacob, went out to visit some of the women in the land near where they lived. Shechem, who is the son of Hamor, a ruler in that area, saw her and his heart was drawn to her and he loved her, or he loved the way she looked at least, because he forced her to do physical acts with him that you would do with a husband. However, they were not married so doing those things was not allowed. Shechem went to his father Hamor and said, "Get me this girl as my wife!"

When Jacob heard what had happened to his daughter, he decided to wait until his sons came in from the field where they were looking after all the livestock. In the meantime, Shechem's father, Hamor, went to talk with Jacob. Jacob's sons had rushed home because they had heard what had happened to their sister. They were beyond mad because Shechem had done such a horrible thing that should not have been done. But Hamor said to them, "My son Shechem has a heart set on Dinah. Please give her to him as a wife. Intermarry with us, give us your daughters and take our daughters for yourself. You can settle among us. The land is open to you, live and trade in it and buy property in it." If you'll remember from previous chapters, intermarrying with the people that lived in that land was not a good thing. That's why both Abraham's servant and Jacob went back to the home country of Abraham to find a wife.

Then Shechem decided to speak, and basically said to Jacob and Dinah's brothers, "Look I really want this woman for my wife. You name whatever price you want and I will pay it." But because they were mad that their sister Dinah had been assaulted, Jacob's sons replied deceitfully, meaning they were about to get tricky. Clearly, they got the deceitful, tricky trait from their father and grandfather. Dinah's brothers replied, "We can do no such thing. We can't give our sister to a man who is not circumcised. That would be a disgrace to us." In previous chapters, we discussed this. This was the permanent mark that God required of all of Abraham's descendants. And to be quite honest, getting this permanent mark is not very comfortable.

The brothers continued to say, "We will enter into this agreement and give you Dinah as a wife on one condition: You and everybody in your town will need to be circumcised. Only then will we give you our daughters and take your daughters for ourselves. Then we will settle and become one people with you. But if you do not agree to this, we will take our sister and go."

This plan sounded like a good one to Hamor and his son Shechem, which, if you haven't realized by now, Shechem was kind of a big deal in the city of Shechem and he was most honored in his father's family. So, the two went to the gate of the city where business was done, and spoke to all the men to tell them the deal. They said, "Look! These guys have been really nice to us. We should let them settle among us and marry their daughters and let their men marry our daughters. And look at all the flocks and livestock and stuff they have! If we become one people with them, surely, we'll benefit from that and it will become ours! But they have one little condition, all of our men need to be circumcised like they are." And guess what? They got all the men in town to agree! So all the men permanently marked their skin so that they can be like the descendants of Abraham.

Now, as I said earlier, this mark was not a real comfortable procedure. In fact, it was kind of painful. So three days later while all the men of the town were still resting, two of Jacob's sons, Simeon and Levi, who were Dinah's brothers, took their swords and went into the unsuspecting town killing all the men. They killed Hamor and Shechem with their swords too, and then took Dinah from Shechem's house and left.

The sons of Jacob came and took everything that was of any value in the city, including the flocks and women and children. Then Jacob said to Simeon and Levi, "You have brought trouble on me by making me look bad to the other people living in this area. If they all decided to join forces, we would be destroyed!" The brothers replied, "Should he have treated our sister like that?"

It appears that Jacob was more upset about the potential consequences that may occur from his sons' actions more than he was really upset about them murdering a whole town full of men. But this is another good time to remember stories like this, they're just telling us what happened, it never says God approved of any of it. In fact, it seems pretty hard to find God in this chapter at all. So, what could we possibly learn about God from any of this? How about God's patience and forgiveness? I mean, I feel like at this point, at the VERY least, I would be rolling my eyes and huffing saying, "I just can't with you all! I'm DONE! I am so out of here." But not God. Now, He is a just God, and there are always consequences for our actions, but He is so patient with us. He doesn't just give up on us and turn away. He lovingly disciplines us and corrects us and continues to work on us to draw us closer to Him. What an amazing God!

Genesis 35

In this episode of Kids Bible Breakdown, we're breaking down Genesis 35.

God told Jacob to go back to Bethel, where God had appeared to him when he was running away from Esau, and build an altar there to God. Then Jacob said to his household and all that were with him, "Get rid of any foreign gods you have with you and purify yourselves and change clothes. Then we will go to Bethel where I will build an altar to God who has answered me when I'm distressed (which means worried or upset) and has been with me wherever I go." So they gave Jacob all their foreign gods and the jewelry that they had in their ears and he buried them.

As they set out to go to Bethel, God put terror, or extreme fear, in the towns surrounding them so they were too afraid to chase after Jacob and his group. When they reached Luz, which Jacob had named Bethel because this is the place God showed Himself to Jacob, Jacob built an altar.

The chapter takes a little side step here and tells us that Rebekah's nurse died and was buried under an oak outside of Bethel and they named that oak Allon Bakuth, or the oak of weeping. Clearly, she was very important to the family to get this mentioned in the Bible. The chapter goes on to tell us that after Jacob returned from Paddan Aram, God appeared to him and blessed him again, saying once more, "You will no longer be called Jacob, you will be called Israel." God went on to say, "I am God Almighty, be fruitful and increase in number" (which again means have a lot of babies) God continued saying, "A nation and a community of nations will come from you and kings will be among your descendants. The land I gave to Abraham and Isaac, I now give to you and I will give it to your descendants after you." Then God went up from him. Once again, Jacob set up a stone pillar at the place where God had talked to him and he poured out a drink offering on it and some oil. An offering is something we give God. Not that God needed a drink or anything for that matter, He just wants our hearts to love Him more than our belongings and be willing to give up anything for Him if He asks us too.

Then they moved on from Bethel and while they were on their way to Ephrath, Rachel began to have a baby. She was having a really hard time having the baby and when she had him, the woman helping her told her, "Do not be upset, you have another son." But Rachel was dying, and with her last breath, she named the baby boy Ben-Oni, which means "son of my trouble". But Jacob named him Benjamin, which means "son of my right hand."

This is very sad and sweet all at the same time, most people in the world are right-handed. That is the hand they use the most and can control the most, so that makes it their most helpful hand and they depend on it. Losing your right hand, if you are right-handed, makes life really challenging. So when someone refers to someone else as their “right hand”, they are saying that they depend on them and losing them would make their life more difficult. That’s what Rachel was to Jacob. So instead of Jacob calling his son, “son of my troubles” and focusing on the negative of his son existing, meaning focusing on the fact that Rachel died to bring him into the world, Isaac chose to name his son something that focused on the fact that he loved and depended on Rachel and that Benjamin is kind of an extension of her. He buried Rachel and set up a pillar over her tomb.

Israel, once known as Jacob, moved again and pitched his tent beyond Migdal Eder. Ruben, Israel/Jacob’s oldest son that he had with Leah, slept with Bilah, Israel’s maid servant wife, and Israel heard of it.

The Bible moves on to recap all of Jacob’s sons.

The sons he had with Leah were Ruben, Simeon, Levi, Judah, Issachar and Zebulun.

The sons he had with Rachel were Joseph and Benjamin.

The sons he had with Rachel’s servant Bilhah were Dan and Naphtali.

The sons he had with Leah’s servant Zilpah were Gad and Asher.

Jacob then went home to his father, Isaac, in Mamre. Turns out his father wasn’t on his deathbed after all when Jacob stole Esau’s blessing. Isaac lived to be 180 years old and then he died and his sons Esau and Jacob buried him.

In this chapter we see that sometimes bad things happen to those even chosen by God. God loved Jacob and yet, Jacob’s love and right hand, Rachel, died. We don’t know why God allows bad things to happen sometimes, but this is where faith comes in. God has a big picture view. He knows what is going to happen and what is best and sometimes, we just have to trust that His plans are good even though it doesn’t feel like that. It kind of makes me think of one of my sons when he was about 2 years old. He LOVED his pacifier or maybe you call them binkeys or some other fun name. Obviously, you can’t or shouldn’t suck on a pacifier forever. In fact, it’s actually bad for you if you do it for too many years. It can mess up your mouth and teeth. So, my little kiddo had one last pacifier left. I said I wasn’t buying any more of them. And we were in a really dirty public restroom when he dropped it, right next to the not-so-clean toilet. I snatched it up and threw it in the trash. He screamed like the world was coming to an end! He was so mad at me. But I had a bigger view of the situation than he did and I knew even though

it was going to upset him, it was the best thing for him. In comparison to God, we don't even have the knowledge of a 2 year old. So sometimes we just have to trust Him and remember that no matter what, He's an amazing God.

Genesis 36 & 37

In this episode of Kids Bible Breakdown, we're double downing and looking at Genesis 36 & 37.

Chapter 36 is a rundown of Esau's descendants. They also refer to Esau as Edom, because he is the father of the Edomites which were enemies of God. Esau had three wives. Two of them were the Hittite women and the third wife is the one he got from his Uncle Ishmael once he realized how much his mom and dad didn't like the Hittite wives. These three wives gave him five sons.

Esau took his wives and children and moved away from his brother Jacob to the hill country of Seir because he and Jacob had so many possessions and flocks that the land couldn't support both of them. Esau/Edom had many grandsons and great grandsons. From his descendants came kings that reigned over Edom.

Then we move on to chapter 37 which goes back to Jacob who was living in Canaan where his father had lived. Joseph, Jacob's 17 years old son which he had with Rachel, was tending to the flocks with his brothers from Bilhah and Zilpah, his father's maidservant wives. Joseph went back to his father and kind of tattled about his brothers. Jacob loved Joseph more than any of his other sons and he made a fancy robe for him. When his brothers saw how their father loved Joseph more than them, they hated Joseph.

Joseph, clearly not knowing when to keep his mouth shut, had a dream and decided to tell his brothers about it. He told them, we were all out tying up some grain and all the grain you all tied up surrounded my bundle of grain and all the grain bundles bowed down to my bundle of grain. Needless to say, his brothers hated him even more than they did before. They started to say to him, "Oh, so you plan to rule over us?" Then Joseph had another dream and again, he thought telling his brothers and father about it would be a good idea. He told them that in this dream, the sun and moon and 11 stars (being his 11 brothers and apparently this time his father and mother also) all bowed down to him. This time his father got mad at him and said to him, "Will your mother and I and all your brothers bow down to you?"

One day his brothers were out with the flocks and Jacob sent Joseph out to check on them. Joseph went to where his brothers were, but when he got there, he just found a man wandering in the field that told him his brothers had moved to another location. So Joseph headed to that location to see if he could find his brothers. But his brothers saw him coming and said, "Here comes that dreamer! Let's kill him and say an animal killed

him. Then we'll see if those dreams of his ever come true." When Ruben, Jacob's oldest son heard of this, he tried to save Joseph by telling his other brothers, "Don't kill him, just throw him in a well and let the desert take care of the rest." Because Ruben was actually planning on coming back later and getting Joseph to return him to his father.

So Joseph's brothers took Joseph's fancy robe and threw him in an empty well. When the brothers sat down to eat, they saw a group of Ishmaelites (descendants from their great Uncle Ishmael) traveling to Egypt with a whole bunch of spices and other valuables. Judah said to his brothers, "We aren't going to get anything if we kill our brother, and do we really want the guilt of knowing we killed our own brother? We should sell him instead." So they pulled Joseph back out of the well and sold him to the Ishmaelites for 20 shekels of silver.

When Reuben, who wasn't around when the "let's sell Joseph" conversation took place, came back to the well to get Joseph and return him to his father, he saw that Joseph was gone, he tore his robe, which is something they used to do when they were upset. He went to his brothers and asked them what they did with Joseph. Then to cover up the whole situation, they decided to take Joseph's robe and put goat's blood on it and take it to Jacob where they said, "Umm hey Dad, we found this robe. Is this Joseph's?" Then they let their father come to his own conclusion about what happened. And just like they planned, Jacob thought his son had been killed by an animal. So Jacob tore his clothes and put on a sackcloth (which was something people back then did when they were mourning or sad about the loss of someone they loved.) Jacob was upset and mourned for many days and all his children tried to comfort him but he refused to be comforted and said that he would continue to mourn the loss of Joseph until he died.

Meanwhile, the Ishmaelites sold Joseph in Egypt to a man named Potiphar, who was the captain of the guard for Pharaoh's army.

Remember the last episode where we talked about how God has a Big Picture view all the time and sometimes things happen to us that don't seem great and we don't understand why God allows it but we have to have faith that He knows what is best? This story is a perfect example of that! In this story we are going to see God's sovereignty, (meaning God's control over EVERYTHING!) We are also going to see how God can use for good what others meant for harm! So stay tuned for the rest of the story because we are going to see again how our God is an AMAZING GOD!

Genesis 38

In this episode of Kid Bible Breakdown, we're breaking down Genesis 38.

This chapter takes a little break from the story of Joseph to tell us about his brother Judah. Ya know, the one who came up with the "Let's sell our brother idea". So Judah left his brothers and went to stay with a man of Adullam named Hirah. There Judah met the daughter of one of the Canaanite men, and he married her. He then had sons with her. The first son was named Er. She had another son that she named Onan, and then she had a third son named Shelah.

Judah got a wife for his first born and her name was Tamar. But Er was a wicked man so the Lord put him to death. Then Judah told his second son, Onan, to take Tamar, his former brother's wife as his wife so that they could have children together.

Time for a story pause. As we discussed in previous chapters, it was very important back in those days to have children and especially sons. Sons ensured the family name was carried on and they would get their father's inheritance or all of their father's belongings once their father died. It was also very important for a woman to have sons because men had a lot more opportunities to gain wealth back then. So, if a woman did not have any sons and her husband died, not only did she typically not get most of the belongings her husband had owned because it was expected to stay within the man's family, she also had a hard time getting money to pay for basic things needed to stay alive like food and clothes.

In order for the family bloodline to be continued and for the wife of the dead brother to be cared for, the rule was, if one brother died and his wife had no children, the next brother in line would marry their brother's wife in order to have children with her. And the children that he had with her would be considered the first brother's children. Then that son would receive all the possessions that had belonged to the brother who died. A little whacky sounding, but these people didn't watch Disney movies and getting married back in those days was done more as a business move for wealth and peace more than it was for love.

So, since Tamar did not have any children when Er died, Onan was expected to take Tamar as a wife and give her a son that would be considered Tamar and Er's son. However, Onan was selfish and he did not want to make a son he could not claim as his own, so he did everything he could not to have a baby with Tamar. The Lord saw Onan's selfish heart and the Lord punished him and Onan died as well.

Now Judah is running out of sons quickly. His last son Shelah was still young, and Judah was worried this one would die too. So Judah told Tamar to live as a widow, which means someone who has lost their husband, in her father's house until the youngest son grew up, then Jacob promised to have Shelah marry Tamar.

So Tamar went back to live with her father. She remained there a long time. However, Judah did not give Tamar to Shelah as a wife even though he was a grown man. Then Judah's wife died and when Judah had recovered from his grief and mourning, he went to the town of Timnah to see men who were shearing his sheep. Tamar found out that her father-in-law was on the way to Timnah, so she took off her widow's clothing that she had worn since her husband's death and disguised herself. Then she sat down at the entrance to one of the cities which was on the road to Timnah.

When Judah saw her, he did not realize that it was his daughter-in-law, and he wanted to lay with her. She asked him what will you give me if I lay with you? Judah promised her that He would send a young goat back from his flock. He still didn't realize that he was talking to his daughter-in-law. Tamar asked that Judah give her something as a pledge that could identify him until he kept his word and sent the goat to her. Judah asked Tamar, "What should I give you?" Tamar asked for Judah's seal and its cord and the staff that was in his hand. Back then people used their seal as a way to sign or identify themselves on documents. Each person or family had a seal that identified them. So Tamar laid with Judah, and she became pregnant. She then left and went back to her father's house and put back on her widow's clothes.

Meanwhile, Judah sent one of his friends back with a young goat to give to Tamar just as he had promised. Of course, at the time he still didn't know that it was his daughter-in-law Tamar. And the man was unable to find her. He asked around town trying to find her so he could pay her what Judah owed her but nobody knew who he was talking about so he went back to Judah and told him, "I cannot find the woman."

About three months later, Judah was told that his daughter-in-law Tamar was pregnant. Judah was upset that his first son's wife was pregnant with someone else's child and said, "Bring her out and have her killed." But when they brought Tamar out, she said, "I am pregnant by the man who owns these things." And she showed Judah's seal and cord and his staff to him. Judah recognized them and knew that the baby Tamar was carrying was his. He was not mad at her because he knew that he did not have Shelah marry her like he was supposed to.

When it came time for Tamar to have the babies, they were twin boys. One boy reached his hand out, and the nurse tied a scarlet thread to his wrist saying, "This one was born

first.” That way they could tell the babies apart when they both came out. But after she tied the thread to the baby’s wrist, the baby pulled his arm back in and his brother came out first. The first baby to be born was named Perez. Then his brother, who had the scarlet thread on his wrist, came out, and he was named Zerah.

We have talked a lot about how patient and loving God is, but He’s not just some teddy bear. He’s also a Just and a Holy Judge who will punish those He sees fit to punish. And let’s be honest, we all deserve His judgment and punishment, because we have all sinned. Our God is a powerful force. An F5 tornado looks like child’s play compared to what our God can do. Our God spoke the universe into existence. So, He can definitely split the earth in half with a single word. He holds life and death in His hand. To try to even understand what He can do should strike fear in the heart of every person. But, imagine this - imagine a little 5 year old boy; he is all alone when a bigger 8 year old bully comes up to him and starts to pick on him and push him. Soon, some of the bullie’s friends surround him and start to join in. This little 5 year old boy is terrified, when all of a sudden, this huge mountain of a man approaches! This man is the world’s strongest man! And he has a black belt in martial arts and he is the world’s heavyweight boxing champion, not to mention the fact he is an expert with every kind of weapon. He has a look on his face that strikes fear into the hearts of the bullies. The bullies look up at the man and cower in fear, running away because they are afraid for their lives! The little 5 year old looks up at the man and smiles because the man is his father!

God’s power is breathtaking and is absolutely terrifying... UNLESS... He is your father. Then what others find terrifying, is the source of comfort. He is our Father and our protector to those that know Him. He is willing to give His life for us! How do I know that you ask? Cause He already did. God the Son came to earth as Jesus, with all the power of the universe, and gave His life to take the punishment we deserve. His life for ours. Our protector and our amazing God!

Genesis 39

In this episode of Kids Bible Breakdown, we're breaking down Genesis 39.

We're back to the story of Joseph and we're going to be staying with Joseph for the rest of Genesis! When we last left Joseph, he had been sold to Potiphar, who was one of Pharaoh's officials, like the captain of his army. Joseph lived in the house of his master and the LORD was with him. When Potiphar realized that the LORD made Joseph successful in everything he did, he made Joseph his attendant and put him in charge of the household and all he owned. Because of Joseph, the blessing of the LORD was on everything Potiphar owned both in his house and in the field. So Potiphar didn't worry himself with anything because he knew it was in good hands with Joseph. He must have been a foodie though because the Bible says the only thing Potiphar concerned himself with was what he was going to eat!

Now Joseph grew up to be a well-built handsome man and Potiphar's wife started to take notice of him. She started to try to get Joseph to do things that she should only be doing with her husband. Joseph told her, "HECK NO! Have you lost your mind, woman?" Well, those weren't his exact words, but he did say, "My master has put me in charge of everything he owns and he trusts me. He doesn't concern himself with anything. He has made me the most powerful man in the household and has withheld nothing from me but you! How could I do such a wicked thing and sin against God?" But Potiphar's wife didn't give up. Day after day she tried to get Joseph to do wrong, but Joseph continued to refuse.

One day, Joseph was doing his work and found that the only people around were him and Potiphar's wife. Not a good situation. She grabbed the cloak he was wearing and tried to get him to do wrong again. But again, Joseph refused and got out of there as fast as he could, leaving his cloak in her hands. At this point Potiphar's wife was starting to get mad at Joseph for not doing what she wanted. So she decided to get even. She called her servants and said, "Look! This Hebrew is trying to make fun of us! He tried to come in here to attack me, but I screamed so he ran out leaving his cloak behind." She stayed there keeping Joseph's cloak beside her and acting all drama until her husband, Potiphar got home. Then she told her made up sob story to her husband. And guess what? Potiphar bought into her lies - hook, line and sinker. He was furious! He snatched up Joseph and threw him in prison where the king's prisoners were held. But God was still with Joseph and God made the prison warden (who is the guy who runs the prison) like Joseph. And just like Potiphar did, the prison warden put Joseph in charge of everything and did not worry about anything because Joseph was successful in everything he did because the LORD was with him.

We have talked about how God is sovereign, meaning He is in control of everything. We also talked about how God sometimes allows bad things to happen to those He loves, but He has a much bigger view than we do and He can use those things for good, as we are going to see in this story. But let's talk about some instruction that God gives His people that we see Joseph display. If we fast forward in the Bible to the New Testament, Colossians 3:23 says, "Whatever you do, do it wholeheartedly, as if you are doing it for the LORD and not men." This is how God's people are to do all things. We may not like our teacher, or our earthly boss, or the owner of that store down on the corner, but when it comes down to it, we aren't doing what we do to make them happy. We are doing it for God.

As Christians, we don't cut corners and try to get away with whatever we can. We know that our God has given EVERYTHING for us, including God the Son giving His life for us. We also know that all of our blessings come from God because he has control over everything. So in everything we do, we are to try our best and work hard. Not only does this make God happy, it helps us earn other people's respect, which then gives us an opening to tell them about our amazing God.

Genesis 40

In this episode of Kids Bible Breakdown, we're breaking down Genesis 40.

Last we left Joseph he got thrown in jail because Potiphar's wife had told a bunch of lies. So jails back then, they weren't great places. And there was no guarantee that you got a court date to plead your case within a certain period of time. So if you got accused of something, you could just be in prison forever without ever getting to argue your case.

But even in prison God was with Joseph, so he was still successful and basically ran the prison. So sometime later, the Pharaoh got upset with two of his officials, the cup bearer (the man who poured his drinks) and his baker. Pharaoh threw them both in prison. The same prison that Joseph was in, and Joseph was assigned to them.

After they had been in prison for a while, both the cupbearer and baker had a dream and when Joseph came around the next morning, he noticed they both looked a little sad and stressed. Joseph asked them, "Why do you both look so down today?" Both the cupbearer and the baker said, "We both had dreams, but there is no one who can tell us what they mean." Joseph responded, "Can't God tell you what all dreams mean? Tell me your dreams."

The chief cupbearer started. "I had a dream where I saw three vine branches that budded, then blossomed, then turned into a cluster of grapes very quickly. Then I had Pharaoh's cup in my hand and I squeezed the grapes into the cup and I put the cup in Pharaoh's hand." Joseph told him, your dream means that in three days, Pharaoh will lift your head and restore you to your position. Then Joseph asked, "But when he does, please remember me. I was forced into being a servant and taken from my father's land and now even in this dungeon, I have done nothing wrong."

When the chief baker saw that Joseph had given the cupbearer a happy ending to his dream, he decided to share his dream with Joseph. The baker told Joseph, "I had three baskets on top of my head and in the top basket was filled with all kinds of baked goods for Pharaoh, but the birds were swooping down and eating all the baked goods out of the basket." Unfortunately for the baker, his dream didn't have such a good ending as the cupbearers. Joseph told the baker that in three days Pharaoh was going to have him killed.

Three days later it was Pharaoh's birthday. He had a feast (which is a party with a lot of food) for all his officials. He brought in the chief cupbearer and baker that had been in

jail with Joseph. And just as Joseph had said, he restored the cupbearer to his position but he killed the baker. But the cupbearer forgot Joseph.

The fact that the cupbearer forgot Joseph is heartbreaking. Especially considering that except for being kind of arrogant, meaning full of himself, and telling his brothers his boring, arrogant dreams, Joseph hasn't done anything wrong. I mean yeah, any sibling would find him annoying, but he didn't break any laws. And there he was stuck in prison. But God has perfect timing and everything happens in His perfect timing for our good. Because He loves us and He's an amazing God.

Genesis 41

On this episode of Kids Bible Breakdown, we're breaking Genesis Chapter 41.

Two years had passed since the cupbearer forgot about Joseph, but he was about to get his memory jogged. Pharaoh had a dream that he was standing by the Nile when out of the river came seven fat and healthy cows. They were hanging out and eating grass when seven scrawny, sick looking cows came out of the river and ate the fat cows! But even after they ate the fat cows, they still looked skinny and sick! Then Pharaoh woke up! He fell back asleep again and had another dream. This time seven heads of plump grain sprouted on a single stalk. Then seven heads of withered and scorched (which means burnt by the sun) grains grew and swallowed up the seven plump grains. Then Pharaoh woke up again!

In the morning, Pharaoh was troubled by his dreams so he called his magicians and wise men and told them about his dreams. But no one could tell Pharaoh what they meant. Then the cupbearer remembered! He told Pharaoh, "Today I am reminded of my shortcomings. There was a time that you were angry with me and the chief baker and you threw us in prison. There we both had dreams. There was a young Hebrew man there with us and we told him our dreams and he was able to tell us what they meant. And everything turned out just like he said it would; I was given back my position as cupbearer and the baker was killed."

So Pharaoh sent for Joseph. Joseph was brought from the dungeon and he shaved and changed his clothes and was taken to see Pharaoh. Pharaoh then said to Jacob, "I had a dream and no one can interpret it. I was told that you can tell people the meaning of their dreams." Joseph told Pharaoh, "I cannot do it, but God can give Pharaoh answers he's seeking" So Pharaoh went on to tell Joseph about the seven fat healthy cows that were swallowed up by seven skinny cows and then about the seven plumb heads of grain that were swallowed by the seven scorched and withered heads of grain. Joseph told Pharaoh, the dreams are one in the same. God is telling Pharaoh what he is about to do. There will be seven years of great abundance followed by seven years of famine. The seven years of famine will be so terrible, that everyone will forget the days when they had plenty to eat. God showed Pharaoh His plan in two different dreams because it has been firmly decided by God that this will happen and it's going to happen soon.

Joseph went on to tell Pharaoh, "Find a wise man and put him in charge of all the land. Then assign people to collect 1/5th of all the harvest during the good years and store the food so that when the seven years of famine come, Egypt will not be ruined by the famine." The plan seemed good to Pharaoh and to all his officials so Pharaoh asked

them, "Can we find anyone more qualified than this guy? He has the spirit of God in him!" Then Pharaoh said to Joseph, "Since God has made all this known to you, there is no one more wise than you. You are to be in charge of my palace and everyone will do what you tell them. Only when it comes to the throne will I be greater than you." So, Pharaoh said to Joseph, "I hereby put you in charge of all of Egypt".

Now back then, they didn't have Twitter or Instagram or any other social media, so they couldn't just blast a message to the whole country saying, "Hey everyone! Meet the new commander of the whole country! Pharaoh assigned him and Pharaoh has got his back, so do whatever he tells ya!" So they had to spread the word a different way and give something to Joseph that would prove that Pharaoh put him in charge. So Pharaoh took off his signet ring, which is the ring that carries Pharaoh's symbol. As we talked about a few chapters ago, people had their own symbols to identify who they were and what family they were from. By having Pharaoh's symbol on him, everyone would know that Joseph had the power to make rules and to give orders that were supported by Pharaoh and would be enforced by Pharaoh's army if need be. Then Pharaoh dressed Joseph in fancy clothes and put a gold chain on him and put him in a chariot and drove him all throughout the land while others with him announced to everyone, "This man was put in charge by Pharaoh! Do what he says!" That way, everyone would know! Pharaoh told Joseph, "I am Pharaoh, but without your word, no one will lift hand or foot in all of Egypt."

Then Pharaoh named Joseph "Zaphenath-Paneah". After all, we can't have a Hebrew with a Hebrew name telling everyone in Egypt what to do.. Ya gotta Egyptian him up a little! I'm still going to refer to him as Joseph though. Pharaoh also gave Joseph a woman named Asenath as his wife, who happened to be the daughter of one of the priests of one of the Egyptian gods named On.

Joseph was 30 years old when he began to work for Pharaoh and he traveled throughout Egypt during the seven years of abundance. He collected food and stored it away in every city. Joseph stored up so much grain that it was like the sand of the sea and he could no longer keep record of it all because it was beyond measure. Before the years of famine came, Asenath gave Joseph two sons. Joseph named the 1st son Manesseh, which is believed to have come from the Hebrew word for "forget" because he said God has made me forget all my troubles and all my father's household. Joseph names his 2nd son Ephraim, which means "twice fruitful" saying that, "God has made me fruitful in the land of my suffering."

When the seven years of abundance ended and the famine came, there was famine in all the other lands, but in Egypt there was food. When the people of Egypt began to feel

the effects of the famine, the people cried out to Pharaoh for food. Pharaoh told all the people, "Go to Joseph and do what he tells you." The famine spread all throughout the whole country. Joseph opened the storehouses and sold grain to all the Egyptians. And all the world came to buy grain from Joseph because the famine was so severe everywhere.

Look at God's amazing timing! Can you imagine how sad Joseph must have been when he realized the cupbearer forgot him?! He was stuck in a dungeon for nothing! But just at the right time, the cupbearer remembered Joseph! All in God's perfect timing! And after learning humility and all the other character traits he needed to be successful as a leader, God aligned EVERYTHING to take Joseph from the prison, to the 2nd most powerful man in all of Egypt in a single day, and God used him to save countless people! What an AMAZING GOD!

Genesis 42

On this episode of Kids Bible Breakdown, we're breaking down Genesis Chapter 42.

Last we left Joseph, Pharaoh made him second in control of all of Egypt and he had collected food during the seven years of abundance to prepare for the seven years of famine that was to follow. And sure enough, just like God said, the famine came and it was really bad. Not just in Egypt but throughout all the land.

In this chapter, we jump back to see what's happening in Joseph's home country. When Jacob, Joseph's father, learned there was grain in Egypt, he said to his son's, "Why are you all just standing there looking at each other? I heard there was grain in Egypt. Go get some so we don't die!" Sounds like someone is a little cranky when he's hungry; I can relate to that. So ten of Joseph's brothers went to Egypt to go buy grain and probably get a little breather from their hangry dad. But Jacob kept Benjamin with him because he didn't want anything bad to happen to him. If you remember, Rachel was the only wife that Jacob really loved. He had two sons with Rachel, Joseph, who was Jacob's favorite but Jacob thought he was dead, and Benjamin, which was the son Rachel died giving birth to. Jacob thought, I already lost Joseph, no way am I risking losing Benjamin too!

Since Joseph was governor over all the land of Egypt, he was the one who sold grain to all the people. So when Joseph's brothers arrived, they all bowed down to him with their faces to the ground. Kinda sounds like a dream we heard about once, doesn't it? But the brothers didn't recognize Joseph! After all, it had been 20 years since they sold their Hebrew kid brother and now, they were in front of the second in command of all of Egypt. Plus like I said before, Pharaoh "Egyptianed" Joseph up a little bit to make him blend in with their culture instead of looking like a long haired, bearded shepherd.

As soon as Joseph saw his brothers, he recognized them but either he was still a little mad about getting sold or kinda wanted to feel out the situation to see how his brothers would act or maybe a little of both, but he decided to treat his brothers as strangers and spoke harshly to them. "Where did you come from?" he said. The brothers answered, "We came from the land of Canaan to buy food." Joseph fired back, "No! You are spies to see where our land is unprotected!" The brothers, I'm sure starting to get a little nervous, said, "No my lord! Your servants have come to buy food. We are all the sons of one man! Your servants are honest men, not spies!" I wonder if Joseph rolled his eyes a little when they said they were honest men. Joseph fired back again. "No, you are spies trying to see where our land is unprotected!" The brothers replied again saying, "No! Your servants were 12 brothers all from one man who is in Canaan! The youngest is still

there with our father and one brother is no more!” They were talking about Joseph with that last, “brother is no more” statement. And maybe that made Joseph a little angry because he fired back again. “You are spies. And this is how you will be tested: As surely as Pharaoh lives, you will not leave this place until your younger brother is brought here. Send one of you to go get your younger brother. The rest of you can wait it out in prison.” Joseph then threw them all in prison for three days. I imagine he needed some time to cool down and think through the situation.

On the third day, Joseph said to them, “Do this and you will live, for I fear God.” (notice this time he said God and not Pharaoh or some other Egyptian god). Joseph continued, “If you really are honest men, leave one brother here in prison and the rest of you can go back and take grain back with you so that your household will not starve. But you must bring back your younger brother to me to prove all that you have told me is true.” In order to help keep his brothers from recognizing him, Joseph said all this to them in Egyptian and used an interpreter; someone that could speak both Egyptian and Hebrew, to tell his brothers what he was saying in a language that his brothers could understand.

The brothers started saying to one another, “Surely, we are being punished because of what we did to Joseph! We saw how distressed he was when he was begging us for his life, but we didn’t listen! That’s why all this is happening!” I mean, the brothers weren’t wrong. That’s exactly why all of this was happening. What they didn’t know was Joseph was listening and could understand every word they were saying. Ruben, the oldest brother that tried to come back to save Joseph only to find that the other brothers sold him said, “Didn’t I tell you not to sin against the boy? But you wouldn’t listen! Now we must pay for his blood.” The truth is, even though they had sold Joseph into slavery instead of killing him, they fully did not expect him to live very long. So they assumed Joseph was dead already.

Joseph couldn’t take listening to them anymore. It was all too overwhelming! Especially since he was trying to pretend he didn’t speak or understand their language. He turned away and started to weep. But then he pulled himself together and had Simeon tied up before their eyes. But then Joseph showed compassion to the others. He told the Egyptians that worked for him to fill his brothers’ bags with grain, but then to put all their money back in the sack also and even to give them extra to help them on their journey back.

After this was done, the brothers loaded up and headed back. When they stopped for the night, one of the brothers opened up one of the sacks to feed grain to his donkey and he saw the silver that was supposed to pay for the grain was still in his sack. He ran

and told the others and when they heard, their hearts sank and they were fearful saying, "What has God done to us?"

I don't think I have ever come across extra money and thought it was a punishment, but I see their point. This guy in Egypt, who is the ONLY ONE in the whole area that has food, just imprisoned their brother and more than likely, they were going to have to deal with him again, either to get more food or get their brother out of jail, and he already thought they were spies! And now, through some awful misunderstanding, they didn't pay for all the food you just got. NO WAY is this guy going to believe it was an accident. He's totally going to think you stole from him.

When they got back to their father, Jacob, they told him everything that happened. About how the man who was lord over all the land spoke harshly to them and accused them of being spies. And they tried to tell him that they were 12 brothers from one man, but he didn't really believe them and so he imprisoned Simeon and told them that they would have to bring back their younger brother Benjamin before he would allow them to buy more food or release their brother from prison. They went on to tell him, "But wait, it gets worse; when we went to check our bags, all the money was still there! So now that guy is REALLY going to think we are thieves and spies. Jacob was upset! He told the brothers, "You are taking my children away from me! Joseph is no more, and now Simeon is basically gone and you want to take Benjamin from me too? Everything is against me!" Ruben told his father, "Let me take Benjamin. If I do not bring him back, you can put both my sons to death." But Jacob said, "You are not taking Benjamin. His brother is dead and if anything happens to him, it will be the death of me."

There are so many amazing things that God is doing in this story. But I can't help but to think about Joseph's brothers. I actually feel a little sorry for them. Years ago, they had an annoying, arrogant brother and it didn't make them happy. In fact, it made them down right mad and in the heat of the moment they thought, if we just get rid of him things would be SO MUCH BETTER! So they did; they got rid of him. But I don't think things ever got better. For the first couple weeks, they were probably scared their father would find out what they did. Then, they probably felt guilty when their father could not be comforted by anyone. Then we see that more than 20 years later, they are still consumed with guilt for what they did to their brother.

Because they were unhappy, they made a horrible decision based on what they were feeling at that moment instead of going to God and asking for help. Acting on emotion instead of acting on what God wants us to do is not a good plan. Emotions change rapidly. It's ok to have emotions, but letting them control what we do often leads to poor choices.

Joseph appeared to be mad at his brothers when they first came to him in Egypt. Kinda understandable considering what they did. And maybe he was a little hasty at first by throwing them all in jail, but he must have taken time to pray about the situation because he came back and let the rest of them go because as he said, he was a God-fearing man and clearly, he didn't think his actions were ones God would approve of, so he changed his actions.

Which leads me to another point - Joseph may not have been happy that God laid it on his heart to let the rest of his brothers go, but it reminds me of something my mother has told me multiple times throughout my life when I was upset or sad and was looking for support to do what I wanted to do instead of seeking what God wanted me to do. These words are not very accepted or liked in today's world that tells everyone, "Just do what makes you happy" or "you deserve it". So brace yourself, God never promised us happiness. Go ahead, search your Bible for it. It's not there. God promises that He has good plans for us. He promises to be there for us and that all things are possible with Him. He promises that He will give us peace when it seems impossible to have peace. But happiness doesn't make His list of promises. But as I stated above, all emotions, including happiness, can change so quickly. What makes us happy one minute, won't be enough to put a smile on our face the next minute. But you know what never changes, and can ALWAYS be trusted? Our God! And when we are right in the center of His will, exactly where He wants us to be, there is a peace and joy that is with us no matter what situation we're in because He loves us and He's an amazing God.

Genesis 43

On this episode of Kids Bible Breakdown, we're breaking down Genesis Chapter 43.

Some time had passed since Joseph's brothers had come to buy grain, (which I'm sure Simeon, who was the one still locked up in Egypt, didn't really appreciate) but the famine was still really bad. So when they had eaten all the grain they had, Jacob (also known as Israel) said to his sons, "Go back to Egypt and buy us more grain." But Judah told his father, "Look dad, we told you that the man said to not even bother coming back there unless your youngest brother Benjamin is with you. If you will let Benjamin go with us, then we'll go. But if you won't let him go, then we aren't going because there's no point! We won't be able to buy any food!"

Jacob/Israel said, "Why did you bring this trouble on me by telling the man you had another brother?" The brothers fired back, "The man kept asking us all sorts of questions about our father and if we had other brothers! How were we supposed to know he was going to insist on us bringing Benjamin?" Judah told his father, "Send the boy with me and we will go get food at once. Otherwise, we are all going to die. I guarantee I will bring him back safely to you or you can hold me accountable for it and blame me. If you would have agreed to let us take Benjamin earlier, we could have made the trip twice by now."

Jacob/Israel responded, "If this is the way it must be, then do it. Take the boy. Take some of the best products our land has to offer, some balm and honey, some spices and myrrh, and some pistachio nuts and almonds and give them to the man in Egypt as a gift. Also take double the amount of silver with you so you can give them the silver for the last time. Maybe they made a mistake by putting it back in your bags with the grain. And may God grant you mercy with the man so that you will come back with both Benjamin and Simeon. As for me, if I lose my sons and experience sadness, then so be it." So the brothers, along with their youngest brother Benjamin, took the gifts and double the silver and rushed to Egypt to see Joseph.

When Joseph saw Benjamin was with them, he said to one of the caretakers of his house, "Take these men to my house and prepare a meal. They are to eat with me at noon." The man did as Joseph instructed but the brothers were scared. They thought that Joseph was bringing them to his house so he could attack them and take their belongings and turn them into slaves. So the brothers went up to Joseph's caretaker and said, "Listen, there seems to have been some misunderstanding. Last time we came to buy grain, it wasn't until we had left that we noticed that all the silver was somehow back in our bags! We don't know who did it but we weren't trying to steal. We brought that money back to pay for last time's grain along with grain for this time and even brought some gifts!" Joseph's caretaker told the brothers, "Don't be afraid, your God, the God of your Fathers, can take the credit for the silver that was in your sacks. I received the silver from you all to pay for the grain you purchased." Then he brought Simeon out to them.

The men were taken into Joseph's house and given water to wash their feet while their donkeys were fed. They started to prepare the gifts they had purchased for Joseph's arrival because they were told that they were going to be eating there with him. When Joseph arrived, they presented their gifts to him and they bowed down low. Joseph asked them how they were doing and how their aging father was doing. Bowing down again, they told him that their father was alive and well.

Joseph saw Benjamin, the only brother that had the same mother as he did, and said, "Is this your youngest brother? The one you told me about?" Then Joseph said to Benjamin, "God be gracious to you, my son." Then Joseph became overwhelmed so he ran off to his private room to weep. After he regained control of his emotions, he washed his face and came out and ordered that the food be served.

The Bible says they served Joseph by himself, the brothers by themselves, and the Egyptians by themselves because Egyptians would not eat with Hebrews because the Egyptians found it detestable, which means extremely not acceptable. Basically to the point that the Egyptians found eating with Hebrews to be disgusting. Kinda interesting since that Hebrew is the second in command in all the land and has the power to basically put any other Egyptian to death or in jail. Guess that's one way God helped keep Joseph humble in his powerful position. The brothers were amazed when they realized they were all seated in their birth order from oldest to youngest. When Benjamin was served, he was given five times more food than anyone else. So the brothers feasted and they drank freely with Joseph, still not knowing that he was their brother.

It's a little confusing when the Bible keeps jumping back and forth between the names Jacob and Israel for the same man. Some believe that the name the Bible uses for him lets us know what was going on in his heart at the time. When the Bible calls him Israel, He is trusting in God and putting forth more effort to seek His will. And when He is referred to as Jacob, his faith isn't as strong. I have no idea if that is true. But either way, it is pretty awesome to see the way God has used different situations, sometimes not so great ones, to change both Jacob and Joseph from pretty self-absorbed young men into great humble leaders.

One thing worth noting is even after these men dedicated their life to following God, they lost faith at times and made decisions based on what they were feeling instead of asking God what to do. In other words, they still messed up, just like we are going to. The important thing to remember is once you realize you messed up, don't let the guilt and shame push you further away from God. God knows we are going to mess up. There was only one perfect man to walk this earth and that was Jesus. So instead of running from God, run to Him and ask for forgiveness. He will be there with open arms waiting for you. And even though you might have to live through some of the consequences of your actions, He will even help you get through them and can still use the whole situation to bring glory to Him, because He loves us and He's an amazing God.

Genesis 44

In this episode of Kids Bible Breakdown, we're breaking down Genesis 44.

In the last chapter, Joseph had his brothers over for dinner. But Joseph wasn't quite done feeling out the situation and trying to figure out what his brothers were really like now. So Joseph told the keeper of his house, otherwise known as his steward, to fill his brothers' sacks with as much grain as they could carry and then to put each man's silver back in the sack. But then, also, to put his drinking cup in the youngest one's sack, which was Benjamin.

When morning came, the men were sent on their way with their donkeys. They had not gotten very far out of the city when Joseph instructed his steward to go after them. Joseph told him, "When you catch up to them, say to them, 'Why have you repaid good with evil and stolen the cup my master drinks from and that he uses to help him know the future? This is a wicked thing you have done!'"

Side note- Joseph probably told the steward to say that part about Joseph using the cup to learn what's going to take place in the future, to continue the cover-up about who Joseph really was. And probably also to freak his brothers out a little bit by pretending he had some powers that allowed him to see into the future. But Joseph already told us in previous chapters that being able to interpret dreams to tell what was going to happen in the future came from God, not anything he did. Ok, carrying on.

So the steward chased after them and when he caught up with them, he said exactly what Joseph told him to say and accused them of stealing Joseph's cup. The brothers replied back, "Why does my lord say such a thing? We would never do anything like that! We even tried to give back the money we found in our bags from last time so why would we steal from your master's house this time? If any of us are found here to have the cup, that man will die and the rest of us will become my lord's slaves." Much like when Jacob told Laban that he would kill anyone found to have taken his household idols, not knowing that Rachel had taken them. It's really not a good idea to make promises based on other people's actions. Many times, what you think you know and what you actually know are very different.

The steward responded, "Very well. Let it be as you said." But then he dialed it back a little and said, "Whoever is found to have the cup will become a slave and the rest of you will be blame free." They all quickly lowered their sacks and the steward started to search each one starting with the oldest and working his way down to the youngest. And of course, the cup was found in Benjamin's sack; really no surprise to the steward

since he's the one who placed it there. When the cup was found in Benjamin's sack, all the brothers tore their clothes in sorrow and loaded back up on their donkeys to return to Joseph's house.

When they got there, they all threw themselves to the ground in front of Joseph. Joseph said to them, "What is it that you have done? Don't you know that a man like me has the power to see things that have happened and will happen?" Judah spoke up saying, "What can we say? How can we prove our innocence? God has uncovered your servants' guilt!" Which was kinda true. I mean, they weren't guilty for the whole cup situation, but this whole situation of them having to go to Egypt to buy grain did uncover their guilt about what they had done to Joseph. Judah continued, "We and the one that was found with the cup are now all your lord's slaves." Joseph replied, "Oh, I wouldn't do such a thing! Only the one found with the cup is to be my slave. The rest of you go home."

Then Judah went up to Joseph and said, "Please don't be angry, but allow me to speak to you even though I am your servant and you are equal to Pharaoh himself. Remember when you asked us about our father and if we had any other brothers and we told you about our aging father and our youngest brother Benjamin? Well, his brother is dead and he is the only one left of his mother's sons. Our father really loves him and our father's life is tied to the young boy. So, we really didn't want to bring him down to Egypt but you told us we couldn't buy more food unless we brought him with us. So when our father told us to go buy more food, we said that we would only go if he let our younger brother go with us because you said we would not see your face unless he was with us." Judah continued, "Your servant, our father said, 'You know my wife gave me two sons and one was killed by animals. If you take this one and harm comes to him, I will go to my grave in misery!' So if the boy isn't with us when we return, my father will die. Your servant guaranteed the boys safety. I told my father that if I do not bring back the boy, I will bear the blame all my life. So please, let me stay here as your slave in place of the boy and let the boy return home to his father. How could I go back if the boy isn't with me? I cannot watch my father die in misery."

Guys, this is Judah saying all this! The same Judah that convinced his brothers to sell Joseph as a slave! He is now trying to take his brother's place and basically begging Joseph to make him a slave instead of Benjamin! Looks like God's been working to change more than just Joseph. That is definitely not the act of a selfish man! And as we'll see, all of the pieces of this puzzle are falling exactly where they need to for a beautiful ending in God's perfect timing. He's an amazing God.

Genesis 45

On this episode of Kids Bible Breakdown, we're breaking down Genesis Chapter 45.

In the last chapter Judah was begging Joseph to let him be his slave in place of his younger brother Benjamin. Joseph couldn't take it anymore. He cried out for all his attendants (the people that cared for him and his house) to leave. So it was only Joseph and his brothers and Joseph was crying so loudly that the Egyptians outside heard him and word got back to Pharaoh's household.

Joseph finally told his brothers, "I am Joseph! Is my father still alive?" His brothers were absolutely frozen in terror so they didn't answer. They just sat there looking at him. So Joseph said to them, "Come closer to me." When the brothers inched their way closer to Joseph, Joseph said, "I am your brother Joseph, the one you sold into slavery into Egypt. Do not be afraid or upset with yourself for selling me because it was to save lives the God sent me here. There has been a famine for two years, but it will last for another five years. God has sent me here before you to ensure our family stays alive during this time. So it wasn't you who sent me here, but God. God made me a father to Pharaoh, lord over his household and ruler of Egypt. Now hurry back to my father and tell him I said, 'God has made me lord over Egypt. Come down to me and don't delay. You will live in Goshen and live near me and all your relatives and flocks and herds. I will provide for you because there are still five years of famine left. Otherwise, you and all who belong to you will be ruined.'" Joseph continued, "Brothers look at me, you can see for yourself and so can my brother Benjamin, that I really am Joseph. Tell my father about my place of honor in Egypt and about everything you have seen. And bring my father down here quickly." Then Joseph threw his arms around Benjamin and wept. Then Joseph kissed the rest of his brothers and cried with them and they all talked together.

When news reached Pharaoh that Joseph's brothers had come, Pharaoh and his officials were happy. Pharaoh told Joseph, "Tell your brothers, 'Load your animals and return to Canaan and bring your father and your families back to me.' I will give you the best of the land of Egypt and you can enjoy the fat of the land. (which means everything good that comes from the land.) Also, take some carts for your children and wives and to get your father and come to Egypt. Tell them not to worry about their belongings because the best of Egypt will be theirs."

Joseph's brothers did as he instructed. Joseph gave them carts and supplies for the trip home as Pharaoh had commanded. Joseph also gave each brother a new set of clothes but to Benjamin he gave five new sets of clothes and 300 shekels of silver. Joseph also

sent his father 10 donkeys loaded with the best things of Egypt and 10 female donkeys loaded with grain and bread and other supplies for the journey. Then he sent his brothers away and told them, "Do not fight on the way."

So they left Egypt and went to their father in Canaan. They told their father, "Joseph is still alive! In fact, he is the ruler of Egypt." Jacob was stunned and didn't believe what they were saying. But when they told him everything that Joseph had said and then he saw the carts that Joseph had sent to carry them back, their father Jacob revived, which means he had more energy and was alive again. Israel, also known as Jacob in the previous sentence, said, "I believe my son Joseph is alive! I will go and see him before I die."

Remember when we talked about how God has a big picture view all the time and how He can even use our sinful decisions to carry out His will? This is a perfect example!!! Joseph's brothers sinned by selling him into slavery and Joseph had to experience bad things, like being accused of things he didn't do and being in prison. But God used ALL OF IT to carry out His will, which was to bless all of them by saving them from a famine. So, it's so important to remember that even when we are facing difficult times, we need to have faith that God has good plans for us because He is a loving God and He's an amazing God.

Genesis 46

On this episode of Kids Bible Breakdown, we're breaking down Genesis Chapter 46.

In the last chapter, Joseph's brothers returned home to gather the whole family and bring them back to Egypt in order to survive the five more years of famine. It took Israel/Jacob some convincing, but he finally believed Joseph was still alive and agreed to relocate to Egypt.

This chapter begins with - So Israel/Jacob set out with all that was his. When he reached Beersheba, he offered sacrifices to God. God spoke to Israel/Jacob in a vision at night and said "Jacob! Jacob!" He replied to God, "Here I am." God said, "I am God. The God of your father. Do not be afraid to go down to Egypt for I will make you into a great nation there. I will go down to Egypt with you and I will surely bring your people back again. Joseph's own hand will close your eyes when you die."

Then Jacob/Israel left Beersheba and he and his sons, along with their children and wives, loaded the carts that Pharaoh had sent to transport them. They also took with them their livestock and all their possessions that they had acquired in Canaan. And Jacob and all his offsprings went with him to Egypt.

The Bible goes on to tell us the names of Jacob's sons and grandsons that went with him to Egypt. It lists the offspring that came from Leah first. In addition to their daughter Dinah, their sons were:

Ruben, the firstborn, who had 4 sons.

Simeon had 6 sons.

Levi had 3 sons.

Judah was the father to Er, Onan, Shelah, Perez and Zerah. But Er and Onan died in Canaan because as a previous chapter told us, they were evil so the LORD put them to death. The Bible then goes on to tell us the sons of Perez, who were Hezron and Hamul. This is one of the few times this chapter tells us the names of some of Jacob's great grandsons because something extraordinary comes from the line of Judah through Perez and his son Hezron, and that's Jesus!

The chapter continues on with Leah and Jacob's other sons. Issachar had 4 sons. And Zebulun had 3 sons. All the sons and daughters from Leah's line totaled 33 people in all. The sons of Zilpah, Leah's maid servant, were Gad, who had 7 sons and Asher, who had 4 sons and a daughter. The offspring of Jacob through Zilpah were 16 people in all.

The sons of Jacob's wife Rachel were Joseph, who had 2 sons in Egypt by Asenath, the daughter of the Priest of On and Benjamin who had 10 sons. The offspring of Jacob through Rachel were 14 in all. The sons of Bilhah, Rachel's maid servant, were Dan, who had 1 son and Naphtali, who had 4 sons. The offspring of Jacob through Bilhah were 7 in all.

All of these went to Egypt with Jacob/Israel. Including the wives of Jacob's direct offspring, there were 70 in all. Jacob/Israel sent Judah ahead of them to get directions to Goshen from Joseph. Joseph got in his chariot and went to meet his father at Goshen. As soon as Joseph was in front of his father, he threw his arms around him and wept. Israel said that he was now ready to die since he got to see Joseph alive and well again.

Then Joseph said to his father and brothers, "I will go to Pharaoh and tell him that my family has finally arrived. And that they are shepherds and tend livestock and they have brought all their flocks and herds and everything they own. Then when Pharaoh asks you what you do for a living? You should answer, 'Your servants have tended livestock from our boyhood just as our fathers did.' Then Pharaoh will allow you to live in Goshen because Egyptians find shepherds detestable." Which, as we discussed in an earlier chapter, means they found them kinda disgusting.

We still have a few more chapters to talk about Joseph and Jacob in Egypt. But the thing that stands out to me in this chapter is actually the genealogy, or list of descendants. Do you remember how when Judah's sons died, they both left behind Tamar? The one that Judah was supposed to have Shelah marry but he didn't so, Tamar tricked Judah into having babies with her. That whole situation was obviously not filled with God approved actions. But once again, God's sovereignty over everything is displayed and He used sinful people and their sinful actions to carry out His will. His Son, Jesus, was one of the descendants of Tamar and Judah. Sin and broken people can't stop God's plan. Heck!! It can't even slow it down by 1/2 a second! Just like we saw in this story with Joseph and how God used horrible actions to carry out His plan of saving a family from famine and starvation, God is in control. He was then and He is today. He's an amazing God.

Genesis 47

On this episode of Kids Bible Breakdown, we're breaking down Genesis Chapter 47.

This chapter picks up right where the last one left off. Joseph went to Pharaoh, just like he said he would, and told Pharaoh, "My father and brothers, along with their flocks and herds and everything they own, have come from Canaan and are now in Goshen." Joseph had chosen five of his brothers to present to Pharaoh. Pharaoh asked them, "What is your occupation?" Which is another term for a job. The brothers replied just as Joseph had instructed them to and said, "Your servants are shepherds just as our fathers were. We have come to live here for a while because the famine is severe in Canaan and your servants' flocks have no pasture. So now please let your servants settle in Goshen. Pharaoh said to Joseph, "Your father and brothers have come to you and the land of Egypt is before you; settle them in the best part of the land and let them live in Goshen. And if you know any among them that are really good herdsmen, put them in charge of my livestock too."

Then Joseph brought his father Jacob in and presented him to Pharaoh. Jacob blessed Pharaoh and then Pharaoh asked, "How old are you?" Jacob said to Pharaoh, "I am 130 years old. My years have been few and difficult and I have not lived as long as my fathers. Then Jacob said a parting blessing and left. So Joseph settled his father and brothers in the best part of the land as Pharaoh directed, which was the district of Rameses. Joseph also provided his father and brothers and their whole household with food.

The famine continued and was severe in the whole region. Joseph had collected all the money that was found to be in Egypt and Canaan in payment for the grain they were buying. When the people spent all their money, they came to Joseph and said, "Give us food. Why should we die before your eyes? All our money is gone!" Joseph told them, "Bring me your livestock. I will sell you food in exchange for your livestock since your money is gone." Which kinda makes sense because if they can't afford to buy enough grain to keep themselves alive, they sure as heck aren't going to be able to afford enough to keep their animals alive. So for a year, the people brought their horses, sheep, goats, cattle and donkeys to Joseph and exchanged them for grain.

When that year was over, they came to him and said, "We cannot hide the fact that all our money and livestock now belong to you. There is nothing left for us to exchange for seed except our bodies and our land. Why should we die before your eyes? Buy us and our land in exchange for food and seed and we will serve Pharaoh." As we discussed before, many times people would sell themselves into slavery for a set amount of time

to pay for something. Slaves in this situation were also called indentured servants. So Joseph bought all the land in Egypt for Pharaoh and from one end of Egypt to the other, all the people became servants. However, he did not buy the land from the priest because they were regularly given a portion from Pharaoh, so they had food to eat.

Joseph then gave the people seed to plant in the ground since he had purchased the people and their land for Pharaoh. Joseph told the people, "When the crops from the seed come in, give one-fifth to Pharaoh and the other four-fifths you all may keep to replant the fields and for food for you and your household." The people replied, "You have saved our lives. May we find favor in the eyes of our lord and serve Pharaoh." So, Joseph established a law that one-fifth of all the land produced went to Pharaoh since he owned all the land in Egypt except for the land that belonged to the priest.

And the Israelites settled in Egypt in Goshen and purchased property and increased greatly in number. Jacob/Israel lived in Egypt for 17 years. He lived to be 147 years old. When Israel/Jacob was getting near death, he called for his son Joseph and said to him, "If I have found favor in your eyes, put your hand under my thigh (which we discussed was something people did when they were making a promise, kinda like a handshake). Israel/Jacob continued saying to Joseph, "Promise me you will show me kindness and faithfulness. Do not bury me in Egypt, but when I die, carry me to the place where my fathers rest and bury me with them." Joseph said, "I will do as you say." So Joseph swore he would do this for his father and then Israel/Jacob worshiped.

We are now about 12 years past the famine but the Israelites did not return to Canaan. They stayed in Egypt. Which seems a little odd because for the most part, Egyptians were enemies of God and really didn't like shepherds. But God told Jacob/Israel to go to Egypt and that He would be there with him, so the Israelites were doing well there. The Bible makes a point out of saying that they "increased greatly in number." This is because we are going to learn how all of this leads to another event that our All-Knowing God told Abraham was going to occur way back in chapter 15! But for now, God's presence made them fruitful and successful in the land of their enemy. What an amazing God!

Genesis 48

On this episode of Kids Bible Breakdown, we are breaking down Genesis Chapter 48.

So Joseph, Jacob and the whole fam are still in Egypt. And sometime later, Joseph was told that his father was sick. So he took his two sons, Manasseh and Ephraim, and went to go see him. When Jacob/Israel was told that Joseph had come to see him, he gathered strength to sit up in bed. Jacob/Israel said to Joseph, “God Almighty (which in Hebrew is the name El-Shaddai) appeared to me at Luz in Canaan (the place Jacob renamed Bethel) and there He blessed me saying, “ I am going to make you fruitful and increase your numbers. I will make you a community of peoples, and I will give you this land as an everlasting possession to your descendants after you.”

Jacob/Israel continued saying to Joseph, “Your two sons born to you in Egypt will be considered mine just like Reuben and Simeon are mine. Any other children you have will be yours.” So Jacob/Israel basically adopted Manasseh and Ephraim; which seems a little odd, but it was actually really kind because it ensured they got a portion of Jacob/Israel’s inheritance just like the rest of Joseph’s brothers. AND that they were a bigger part of the promises that God had made to Israel/Jacob’s descendants. We will hear more about this later, so put a pin in it.

Israel/Jacob continued, “As I was returning from Paddan and on our way to Ephrath, to my sorrow, your mother Rachel died. So I buried her there beside the road to Ephrath (which is also known as Bethlehem.) When Israel/Jacob saw the sons of Joseph he asked, “Who are these?” The Bible uses the term “saw” here very loosely because it says that Israel/Jacob’s eyes were failing and he could hardly see because of his old age. When Joseph told his father that the two with him were his sons, Manasseh and Ephraim, Israel/Jacob told Joseph, “Bring them to me so I can bless them.” So Joseph brought his sons closer, and his father kissed and embraced them. Israel/Jacob said, “I never expected to see your face again, and now God has allowed me to see your children too!”

Then Joseph got his boys up, who were probably in their early 20’s by now, and Joseph bowed low with his face to the ground. Joseph put Ephraim on his right and Manasseh on his left so that when they approached Israel/Jacob, Manasseh, the oldest son, would be in front of Israel/Jacob’s right hand, which is the hand of the most abundant blessing. But when Israel/Jacob reached out his hands, he crossed them and put his right hand on the youngest son.

Then he blessed Joseph saying, “May the God, who my fathers Abraham and Isaac walked with faithfully and the same God that has been my shepherd all my life to this day, the angel who has delivered me from all harm, may He bless these boys.” (When Israel/Jacob uses the term angel here, it’s believed he was referring to The Angel of the LORD, which is believed to be a term for God the Son.) Israel/Jacob continued, “May these boys be called by my name and the names of my fathers Abraham and Isaac, and may they increase greatly on earth.”

When Joseph realized his father had put his right hand on his younger son, Ephraim’s head, instead of on Manasseh’s head, he was upset. So he grabbed his father’s hand and started to move it saying, “No, my father, this one is the firstborn; put your right hand on his head.” But Israel/Jacob refused saying, “I know my son. Manasseh will also become a people and he too will become great. But his younger brother will be greater than him and his descendants will become a group of nations.” Then Israel/Jacob continued with his blessing saying, “In your name will Israel pronounce this blessing: ‘May God make you like Ephraim and Manasseh.’” So he put Ephraim ahead of Manasseh even though he was the younger one.

Also, the use of the same words for different things can be a little confusing at times, but when Israel/Jacob said, “In your name Israel will pronounce this blessing,” He is saying that Ephraim and Manasseh will become great to the point that his future offspring, known as the nation of Israel, will bless one another saying basically, I pray God will make you as great as he made Ephraim and Manasseh. Then Israel/Jacob said to Joseph, “I am about to die but God will be with you and take you back to the land of your fathers. And I will give you one more ridge of land than to your brothers, the ridge I took from the Amorites with my sword and bow.

So even though Joseph wasn’t the oldest, Israel/Jacob gave him a bigger portion of the land inheritance. This is a repeating theme in The Bible. The oldest, who should get the biggest blessing is bypassed and a younger brother gets the biggest blessing. One belief of why this theme keeps repeating is because Jesus is the Son of God, the first born, our older brother. Yet He willingly laid down His life so that we could receive the ultimate blessing of Him paying the price for our sins. Now unlike most situations in the Bible where the oldest son really had no intention of giving up their blessings for their younger brother’s benefit, our older brother coming to die on the cross for our sins and blessing us was God’s plan all along! Which is why we can see throughout the whole Old Testament where He points to it on multiple occasions. He shows us different things to show us what is going to happen. He is a loving God and He is an amazing God.

Genesis 49

On this episode of Kids Bible Breakdown, we're breaking down Genesis Chapter 49.

In the last chapter, Jacob/Israel blessed Joseph's sons. In this chapter, he called for his sons and told them to gather around so he could tell them what was to happen to them in the future. A lot of this uses metaphors and symbolism, kinda like poetry. So we are just going to summarize.

Also, I'm going to throw a disclaimer here. Since Jacob/Israel does speak to his sons in poem form, different people have different beliefs on the meaning of some of the things he says. If you fast forward in the Bible some and look at what happens to these sons, it helps bring some understanding to what Jacob/Israel is saying. However, nothing he says affects our view of who God is so if we get some things wrong, no need to lose sleep!

Now on with the chapter.

He starts with Reuben saying that he is the 1st born and was his father's strength with honor and power. Sounding good so far, but then Israel/Jacob says "turbulent as the waters, you will no longer excel." You know how people use the saying, "smooth sailing" when everything is going well and according to plan? Well, turbulent waters are the exact opposite. They throw the boat around and make things rough, making it hard to control or to know what will happen next. That's what Reuben has to look forward to from now on. Why would Israel/Jacob say this to his first born? Remember back in chapter 35 when the Bible had a little blurb about Reuben laying with Jacob's maidservant wife Bilhah? And then it moved on. Well apparently, Israel/Jacob didn't ever really move on. So Reuben gets bypassed for the main blessing.

Israel/Jacob then moves on to Simeon and Levi saying that they are brothers and their swords are weapons of violence. Ummm, not looking so great for these two either. Israel/Jacob basically says he doesn't want to be in their company or listen to what they have to say because they have killed in their anger and they are fierce and cruel. This goes back to when their sister Dinah was mistreated by Shechem so Simeon and Levi killed all the men in town. Their father wasn't happy about it then and he's still not. Because of this, Israel/Jacob says that their descendants will be scattered.

Then Israel/Jacob moves onto Judah. The same Judah who had babies with his daughter-in-law after her husbands died. So obviously there are some serious flaws here too. But as we discussed, we all have flaws and Judah's were more on a personal

level than ones that negatively affected others. So after bypassing the 1st three sons, Israel/Jacob gave the blessing that would typically go to the 1st born, to Judah, the 4th in line. Although, the double portion of inheritance that typically accompanies this blessing went to Joseph, the oldest son of Rachel who was the most loved by Jacob. (Both Rachel and Joseph) So Israel/Jacob told Judah that his brothers will praise him and his hand will be on the neck of his enemies. Then he compares him to a lion and says the scepter will not depart from his hand. Which is something that kings carry. And the ruling staff will remain between his feet till the one who owns the ruling staff comes and then nations will obey Him. Israel/Jacob goes on to describe the owner of the ruler's staff. He says that He is basically the best of the best and He will wash His garments in wine and His robes in the blood of grapes. As we discussed, wine is a symbol for the blood of Jesus, who is exactly who Israel/Jacob is talking about! As we said earlier, Jesus comes from the descendants of Judah! Not only is this an amazing blessing for Judah, it is for ALL OF US!

Israel/Jacob moved onto Zebulun stating that he will live by the sea and be a safe place for ships. Next is Issachar who he says is strong and will have really nice land. He will start off enjoying it but then basically becomes a slave to non-important things so he will wind up working hard for all the wrong reasons. Dan will provide justice for his people and be a leader. Unfortunately, he will not be a good leader and instead of leading his people to God, he causes them to stumble and turn from God. Gad will be attacked but will attack them back. This is most likely because Gad's descendants settled in an area where they were frequently attacked by others. In response, they became fierce warriors. Asher will be rich and have yummy foods. Naphtali will experience freedom like a deer and have beautiful offspring.

And then we get to Joseph, who gets another extended blessing. Israel/Jacob says Joseph is like a vine that is really fruitful and near water. Basically saying that he is successful all the way around. He goes on to talk about how Joseph was attacked, and had bad things happen to him, but he remained steady and continued to make good choices and do great things because God was with him. Israel/Jacob refers to God in multiple ways calling him "The Shepherd", "The Rock of Israel", "The God who helps you", and the "Almighty" who has blessed Joseph all over the place. He continues on stating how great God's blessings are and how all of them should be on Joseph who is a prince among his brothers.

Israel/Jacob then goes to the youngest, Benjamin, and says he is like a ravenous wolf, which means an extremely hungry wolf. In the morning he gobbles up his prey and in the evening, he divides everything he took from his prey. He may be the baby of the brothers, but he doesn't really sound like a guy ya wanna mess with.

Israel/Jacob gave each son a blessing (or non-blessing) that was specific to each one. These 12 sons of Israel/Jacob become the 12 tribes of the Nation of Israel. Then Jacob/Israel gave these instructions to his sons: "I am about to die. Bury me with my fathers in the cave in the field of Ephron the Hittite, which is the cave and field that my grandfather Abraham purchased from the Hittites to bury his wife, Sarah. My father and mother, Isaac and his wife Rebekah are buried there also and that is where I buried Leah." When Jacob finished giving instructions to his sons, he pulled his feet up on the bed and breathed his last breath and died.

I LOVE how Israel/Jacob called God by all different names that tells us so much about who God is. This is a man that talked with God and had a relationship with Him! He knew God and listen to the names he called God! The Shepherd - The whole job of a shepherd is to watch after his flock and to keep them safe. Jacob/Israel comes from a long line of shepherds! He more than anyone knows what a good shepherd does. He calls God "The Rock of Israel". Every builder knows the foundation is the most important part of the building! You can build a magnificent building made out of the best materials, but if it's built on sand, when the storms and crashing waves come, it's going down. But our God is a rock! He is a firm foundation. Building our life on the foundation of God ensures we will continue to stand no matter what waves come crashing against us. The God who helps. Jeremiah 29:11 says, "For I know the plans I have for you," declares the Lord, "plans to prosper you and not to harm you." If we stay in the middle of God's plans for us, which are good, we know that He will always be there to help us. No matter how impossible the task looks! The Almighty - Our God is in control of everything! He is the Creator of all, powerful and mighty. He has complete power. This is our God. Our Father. And He's an amazing One!!!

Genesis 50

On this episode of Kids Bible Breakdown, we're breaking down Genesis Chapter 50. This is the last chapter in the book of Genesis!! WOOT WOOT!

In the last chapter, Jacob passed away. This chapter starts right after Jacob died. Joseph threw himself on his father and wept and kissed him. Then Joseph told the physicians, which are doctors that worked for him, to embalm his father. Embalming is a process that was used to help preserve a body and the Egyptians were really good at it! They took a full 40 days to embalm Jacob and the Egyptians mourned and wept for him for 70 days. When the days of mourning were over, Joseph said to Pharaoh's court, "If I have found favor in your eyes, please talk to Pharaoh for me and tell him that my father made me swear to bury him in a tomb he had dug for himself in Canaan. So please let me go up and bury my father and then I will return." Pharaoh said, "Go up and bury your father as he made you swear to do."

So Joseph went to bury his father. And all of Pharaoh's officials and all of the dignitaries of the court (which is an important person because of their high position) and all the dignitaries in Egypt joined Joseph, along with chariots and horsemen and all the members of Joseph's household and all the others that were in Jacob's household. Only the children along with the flocks and herds were left in Goshen. It was a very large group!

When they reached the threshing floor of Atad (which is a place they would beat hay to separate the grain from the stalk), they began to cry and mourn loudly and bitterly. There Joseph had another seven-day mourning period for his father. When the Canaanites who lived there saw and heard all the mourning of the Egyptians, they named that place Abel Mizraim, which means Mourning of the Egyptians. Then the sons of Jacob did as their father directed them and carried his body to bury him in the cave in the field of Machpelah near Mamre which Abraham had bought from the Hittite. After burying his father, Joseph and the rest of the group returned to Egypt.

After the death of their father, Joseph's brothers started to worry that maybe Joseph was still mad at them for what they had done to him and he was just waiting until after their father passed away to pay them back. So, they sent a messenger to Joseph and told the messenger to say, "Your father left these instructions for you before he died: I ask you to forgive your brothers for the sins and wrongs they did by treating you so badly. Please forgive them." Since Jacob didn't seem to have a problem instructing Joseph on all the things before he died, I have a feeling Joseph saw right through this. But when he heard the message, he cried. His brothers then came to him and threw

themselves down in front of him saying, "We are your slaves." But Joseph said to them, "Don't be afraid! What am I, God? You tried to harm me but God meant it for good so that I could save many lives. So then don't be afraid. I will provide for you and your families." So Joseph spoke kindly to them letting them know everything was going to be ok.

Joseph continued to live in Egypt along with all his father's family. He lived to be 110 years old and got to see three generations of Ephraim's children, so his great-great grandkids. He also got to meet some of his great-grand kids on Manasseh's side of the family. Then Joseph told his brothers, "I am about to die, but God will surely come to help you and take you from this land to the land that He promised Abraham, Isaac and Jacob. And Joseph made the Israelites, which were the descendants of Jacob/Israel, swear an oath that when God took them from this land, they would take his bones with them to the promised land. Then Joseph died at 110 years old. After they embalmed him, he was placed in a coffin in Egypt.

GUYS! We did it!! We finished the 1st book of the Bible!! Give yourself a hand!

So what did we learn? We heard a lot about the Son of God and how He has always been, even before He came to earth as Jesus and we learned a lot about who God is! We also heard a lot of stories about a bunch of sinful and broken people. I don't think we even had one chapter where we didn't hear about people losing faith, or making sinful decisions, or just being downright cruel to each other! But there's a saying: Don't miss the forest through the trees. It means, don't be so focused on each individual tree that you don't even realize that you are looking at a whole forest. And that's what we need to do here. If we look at individual stories, we can see a lot of evil and sin, but the forest, the whole book of Genesis, this is a love story! God created man and almost immediately we messed things up. But He loved us SO MUCH, He already had a plan in place to save us from our sins so that we could be with Him. He chose a certain family for this promise to be fulfilled through and even though they were sinners and made mistakes like the rest of us, He loved them and guided them and blessed them. He saved them and He saved us. He's an amazing God!