



# Genesis

February 1-February 22, 2022

# Welcome

- What is our goal? To learn more about who Jesus Christ is and His purpose for each of us. He wants us to become an updated and new version of ourselves. We are familiar with iPhone updates and newer versions. Jesus wants to do an update in our souls....for me... a Saranna 2.0. An updated and newer, more alive version of myself. Which in the end, results in me serving others. The same applies to the rest of us!
- Where to find resources and schedule for meetings  
[www.graceannproject.com](http://www.graceannproject.com)
- The Epic of Eden by Dr. Sandra Richter is a great resource for diving in to Old Testament. Most of my material is based on her work.

# My Background

- Various school, home and work bible oriented study groups, 1999-2016
- Bible Elective Course, 2014, RZIM Academy
- Camp Y-one week bible study course for children, 2015-2019
- Moody Bible Institute, Series Course Completion, 2019
- Introduction to Hebrew Bible Course Completion, 2020  
[www.thebibleproject.com](http://www.thebibleproject.com)
- Facilitator, Out of Eden, Book of Isaiah Bible Study, March 2020
- Facilitator, The Epic of Eden Bible Study, September 2020
- Book of Daniel Course, [www.udemy.com](http://www.udemy.com), NT Wright lecture series, in progress
- Heaven and Earth Course, [www.thebibleproject.com](http://www.thebibleproject.com), in progress
- Genesis-Deuteronomy Zoom bible study faciliatory, 2021

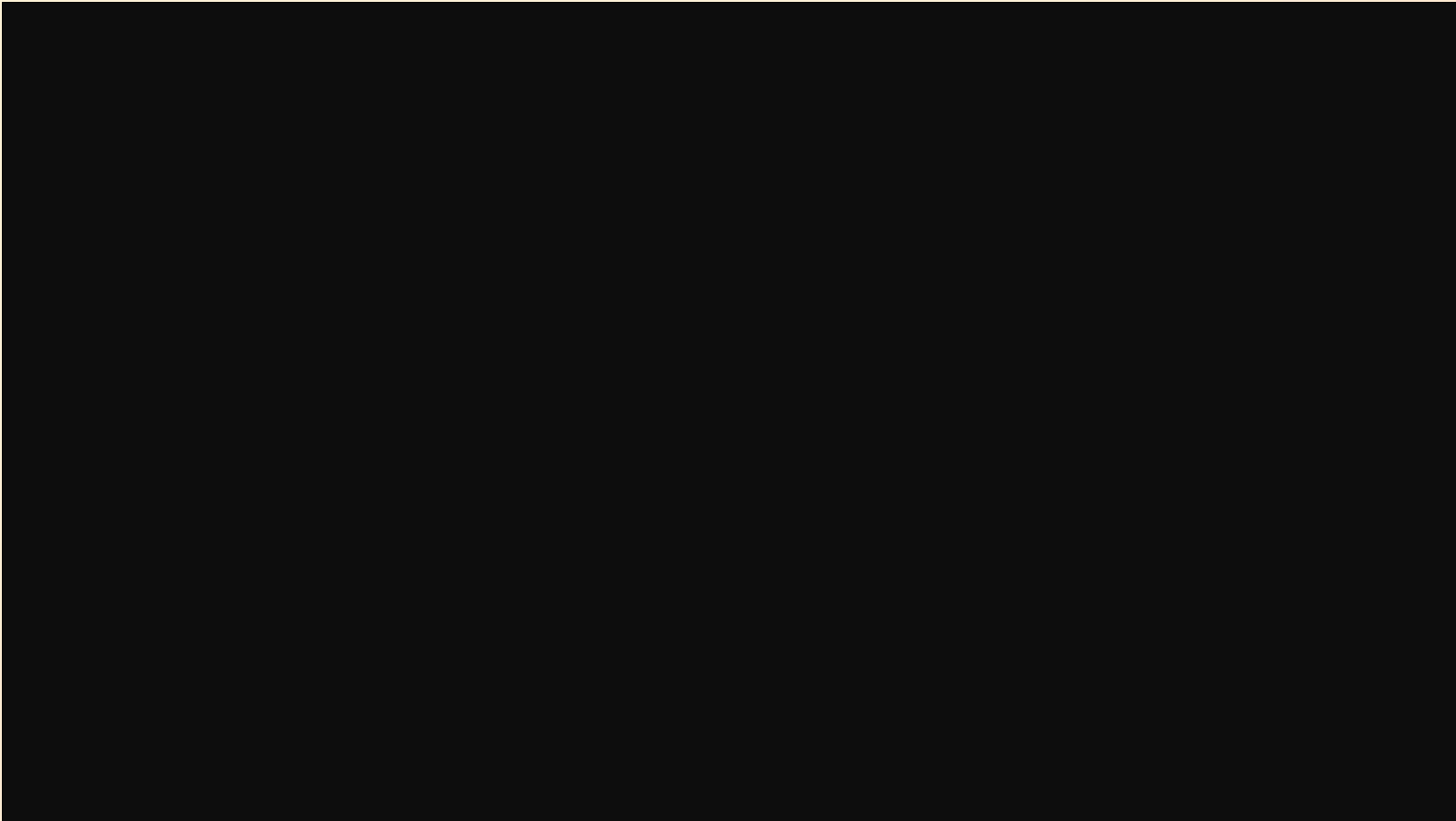


## Before We Get Started

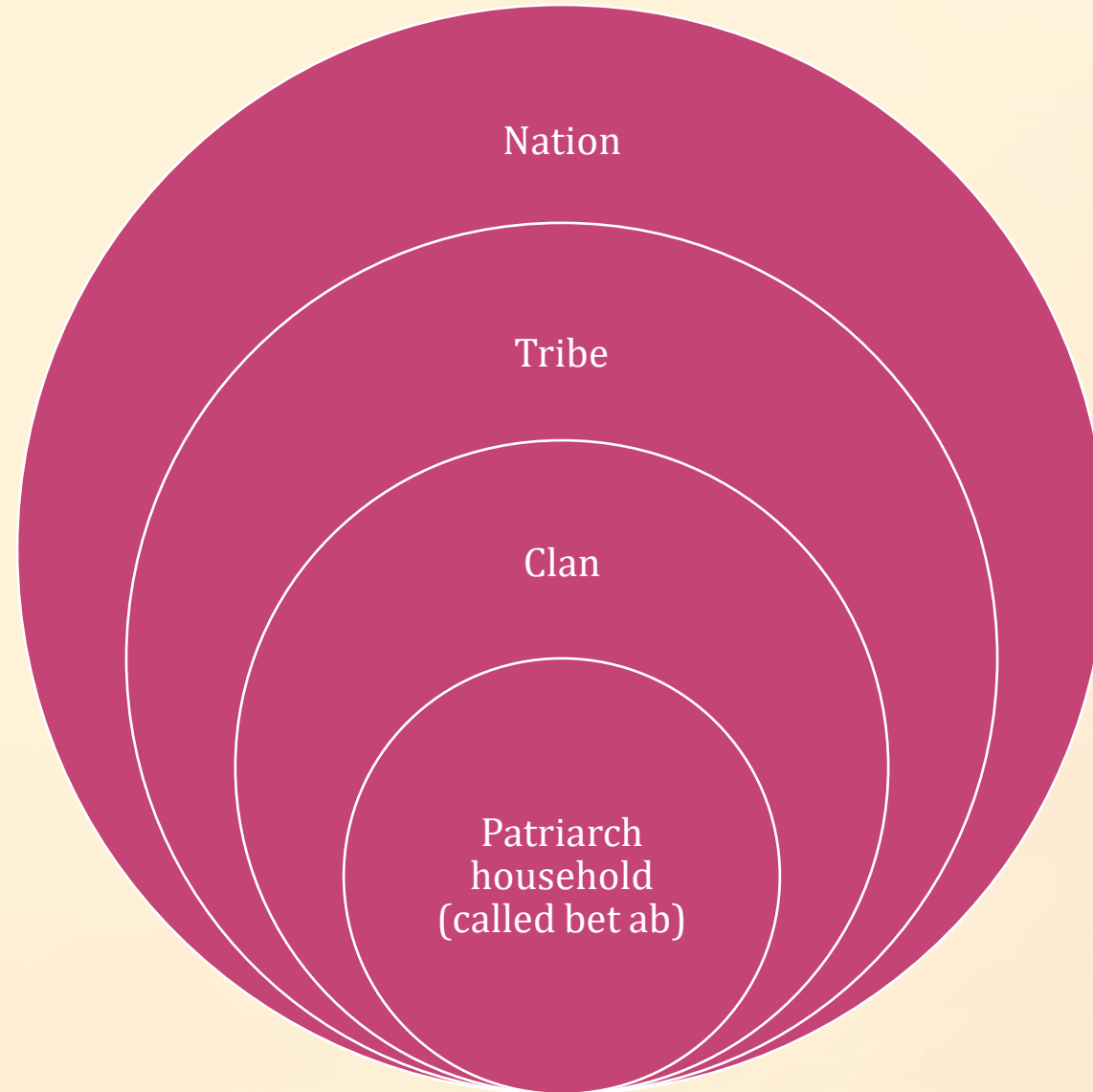
Take 2 mins to answer these questions. Feel free to send your answers to me directly (if you feel comfortable). I will not share your name.

- When you think of Jesus Christ, what comes to your mind?
- What do you think the bible is?

# Story of the Bible

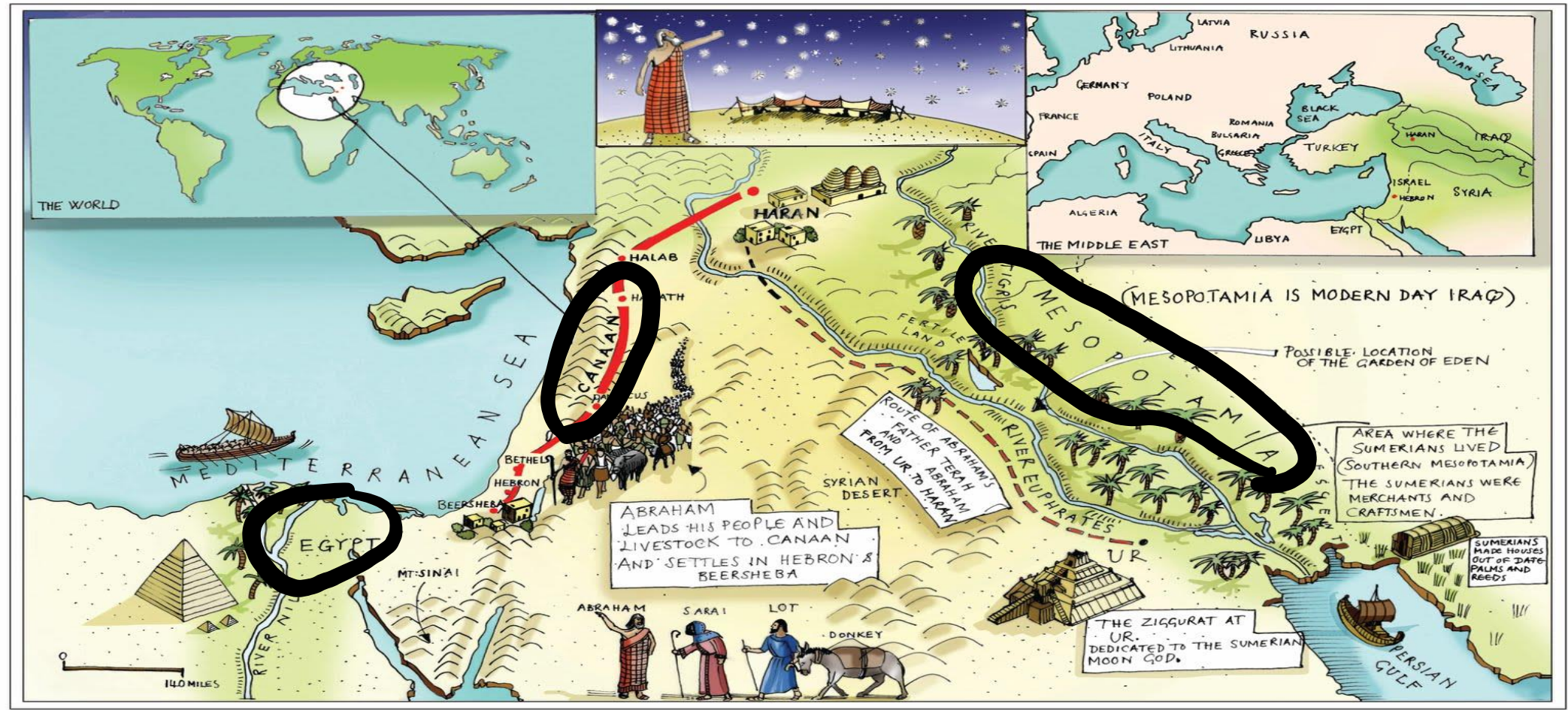


This is an OLD Story! Old Culture! Different Norms!



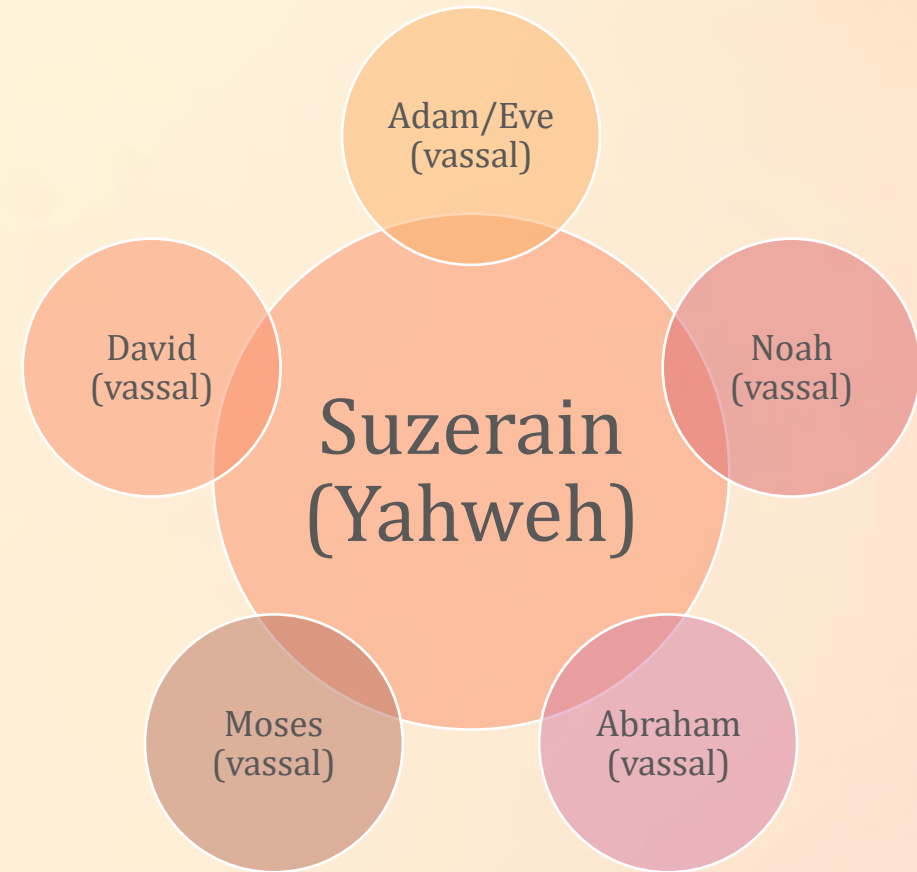
# Basic Geography: Mesopotamia, Canaan/Palestine, Egypt (what we call the Middle East and Africa)

The Faith of Abraham.



# Concept of Covenant or Contracts in Ancient World

- An agreement between two parties, where one or both make promises under oath to perform or refrain from agreed upon actions, outlined in advance. Not a “religious” thing in ancient culture. This was a common practice outside of Israel. God used this concept to reveal Himself to people.
- Usually between a stronger party (suzerain) and weaker party (vassal). The suzerain would take care of the vassal, usually with land and protection. The vassal usually paid tribute/taxes and military support to suzerain. Usually read “cut a covenant” in scripture
- “Cutting” had to do with ritual sacrifice of an animal. Symbolic of: “if I break covenant with you, you can kill me just like this animal.”
- **Usually the vassal performs the “cutting” part of ceremony. You will notice something out of order in Genesis 15 with the “cutting” ceremony. God Himself, “cut the covenant” and performs the ritual for Abraham-to demonstrate His faithfulness to him.**
- You will see instances of God’s protection of His vassal even when they are not holding up their end of the bargain.





# The Great Time/Culture Divide is REAL

- We all remember George Floyd. We remember the video footage, the marches, the pain. We were there. We can describe this.
- The scriptures stories are far from us...it's ancient, in a different area of the world, different customs/language/family structure, etc. Yet, it can still speak to us today.
- The scriptures were not written TO you, but are written FOR you.
- Approach the text humbly and with a motivation to understand the original audience intent and context.
- A lot of details may be missing from some of the stories. That's on purpose. You have to keep reading to fill in some of the pieces.
- God transforms hearts and minds with this story. You will start to see yourself in the story. It's at that point, the Spirit will begin a great work in your heart.



# Strategy for Difficult Texts



- What about when you read something you don't understand?
  - **Are we not understanding the cultural context?**
    - Example: we see Abraham with male and female servants/slaves. **Do not read the transatlantic slave trade into this.** Think employee/employer relationship, unless the text is communicating something else.
    - People sold themselves into slavery for survival. Joseph's brothers sold him into slavery, without Joseph's consent.
    - Remember, the main storyline of the bible is about God rescuing Israel from slavery and defeating a powerful empire of it's time.
  - **Is God a meany?**

If God is love, He will judge what is evil. This may be uncomfortable for us. We want a God who will judge murders, rapist, mass killers, etc. We especially have difficulty with God's judgment that seems "over the top". The God of the bible is committed to doing something about evil (his definition of what is evil, not ours). It's ok to struggle with this. You are supposed to.
  - **Abraham lied and gave his wife away to other men- 2 times. Does this mean that God is ok with lying husbands who try to protect themselves by any means necessary? Should we imitate Abraham?**

NO! The bible characters are flawed. God's dealing with flawed people is a key part of the story. Do not try to emulate the bible characters.
  - **What is God's final intent for humans?**

To get back to the Garden of Eden. This is where we are headed. The story is like a messy road trip that ends in a new heaven and new earth. God and humans living in together. No more war. No more death. No more tears. No more pain. No more division. **Keep this in mind!**

# Community Guidelines

1. We are all learning. Some of us are new to bible stuff, some are not. We will learn how to talk about very deep ideas. Together. Fumbling is ok.



2. Be Curious. Ask questions.

