

*God guides us even
through the messy-
Rachel's story*

Genesis 29..

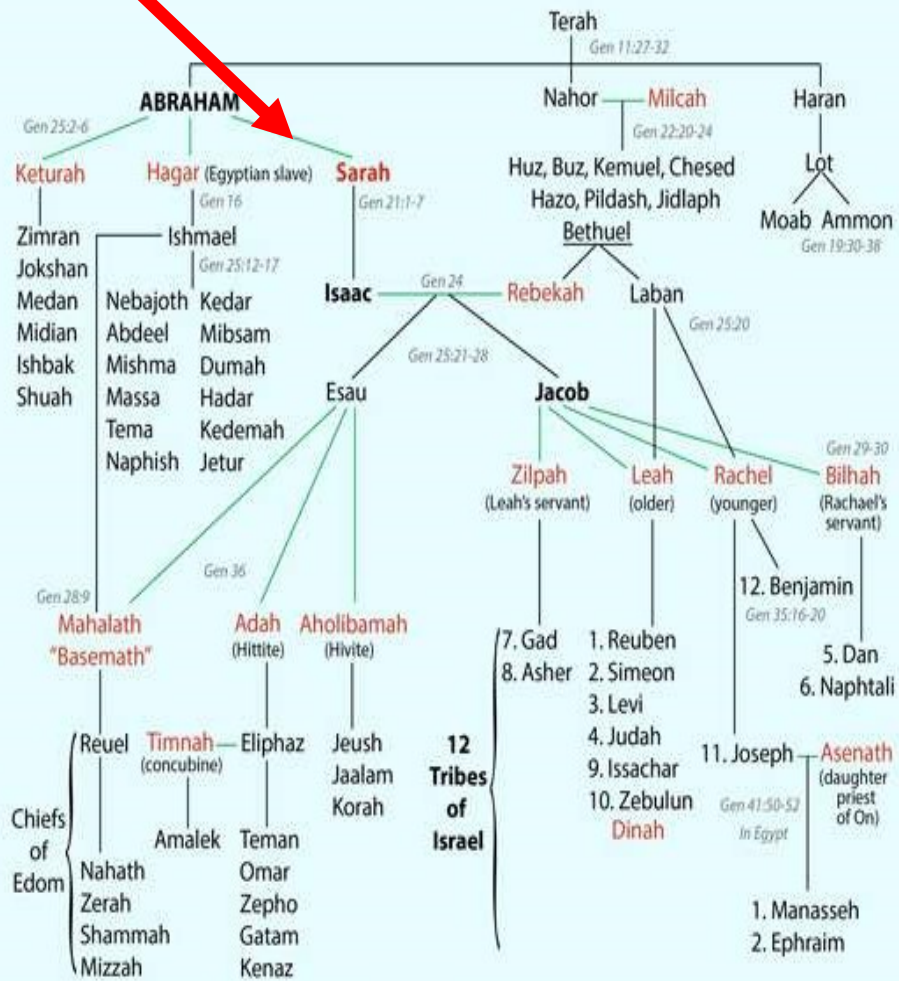
Ruth 4:11

Jeremiah 31:15

Matthew 2:16



GENEALOGY OF ABRAHAM



God's promises persist in spite of human messiness

1. Abram and Sarai

Genesis 12:1 The LORD had said to Abram, "Leave your country, your people and your father's household and go to the land I will show you.

2 "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.

3 I will bless those who bless you, and whoever curses you I will curse; and all peoples on earth will be blessed through you."

4 So Abram left, as the LORD had told him; and Lot went with him. Abram was seventy-five years old when he set out from Haran.

Gen 16:1 Now Sarai, Abram's wife, had borne him no children. But she had an Egyptian maidservant named Hagar;

2 so she said to Abram, "The LORD has kept me from having children. Go, sleep with my maidservant; perhaps I can build a family through her." Abram agreed to what Sarai said.

3 So after Abram had been living in Canaan ten years, Sarai his wife took her Egyptian maidservant Hagar and gave her to her husband to be his wife.

4 He slept with Hagar, and she conceived. When she knew she was pregnant, she began to despise her mistress.

Gen 16:17 Abraham fell face down; he laughed and said to himself, "Will a son be born to a man a hundred years old? Will Sarah bear a child at the age of ninety?"

18 And Abraham said to God, "If only Ishmael might live under your blessing!"

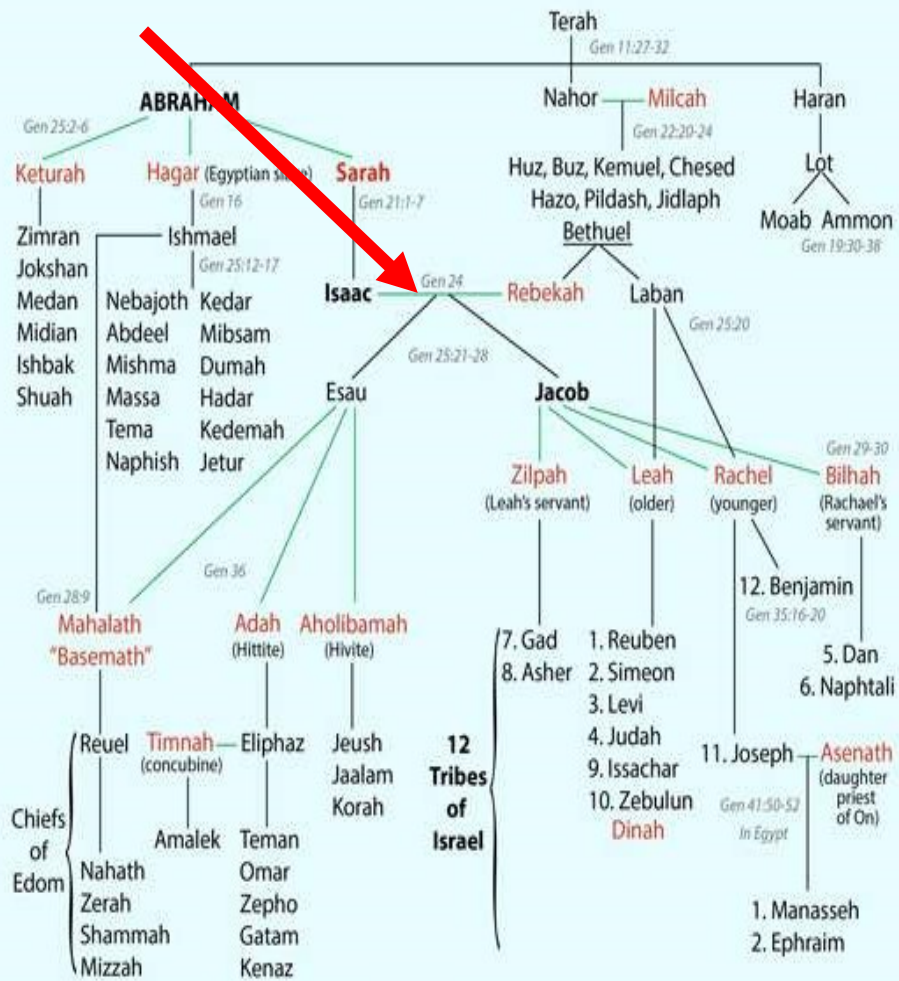
19 Then God said, "Yes, but your wife Sarah will bear you a son, and you will call him Isaac. I will establish my covenant with him as an everlasting covenant for his descendants after him.

20 And as for Ishmael, I have heard you: I will surely bless him; I will make him fruitful and will greatly increase his numbers. He will be the father of twelve rulers, and I will make him into a great nation.

21 But my covenant I will establish with Isaac, whom Sarah will bear to you by this time next year."

22 When he had finished speaking with Abraham, God went up from him.

GENEALOGY OF ABRAHAM



God's promises persist in spite of human messiness

2. Isaac and Rebekah

2. Isaac and Rebekah

God's call and promises

Blessed offspring

Nation

Land

The messy

Favoured sons

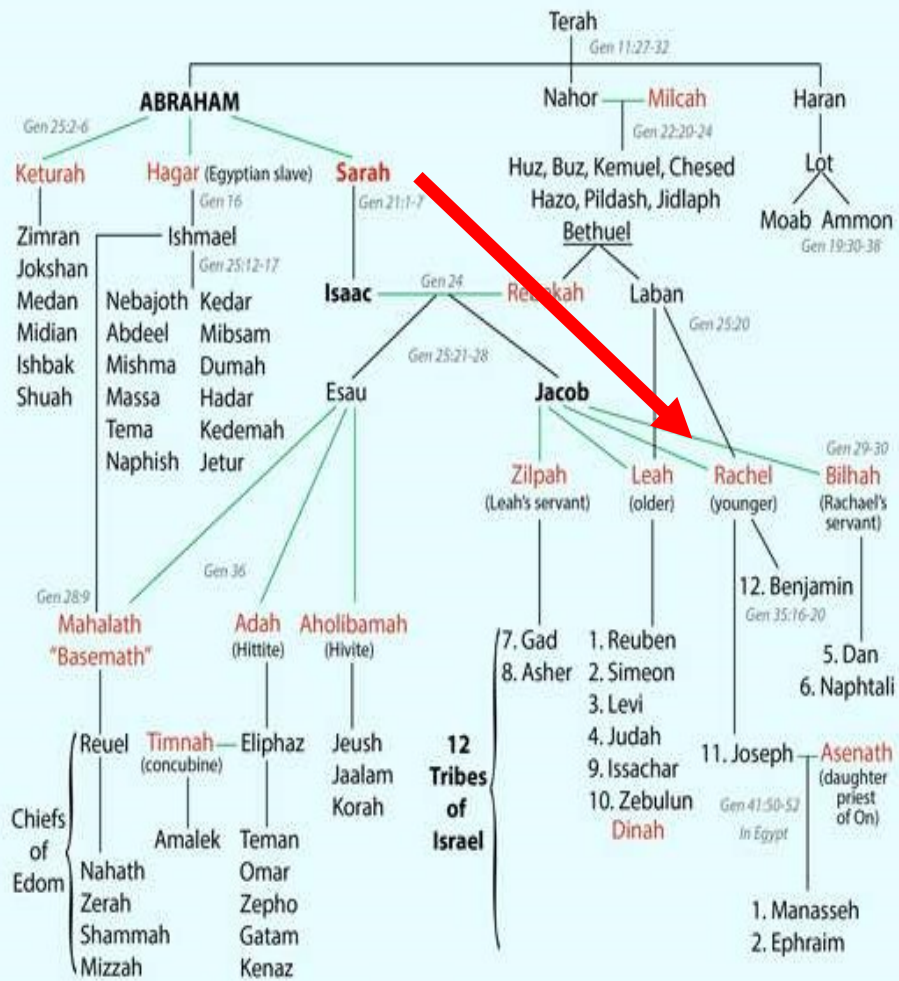
Jacob deals birthright from Esau

*Rebekah and Jacob deceive and lie to steal
the blessing*

*Rebekah protection of Jacob via scheme to
get him a wife from afar*



GENEALOGY OF ABRAHAM



God's promises persist in spite of human messiness

3. Jacob

3. Jacob

God's call and promises continue (Gen 28:11)

Jacob's dream of ladder to heaven, surely the Lord in the dream, altar of worship

The messy (Gen 28:20) Jacob tries to make deal with God

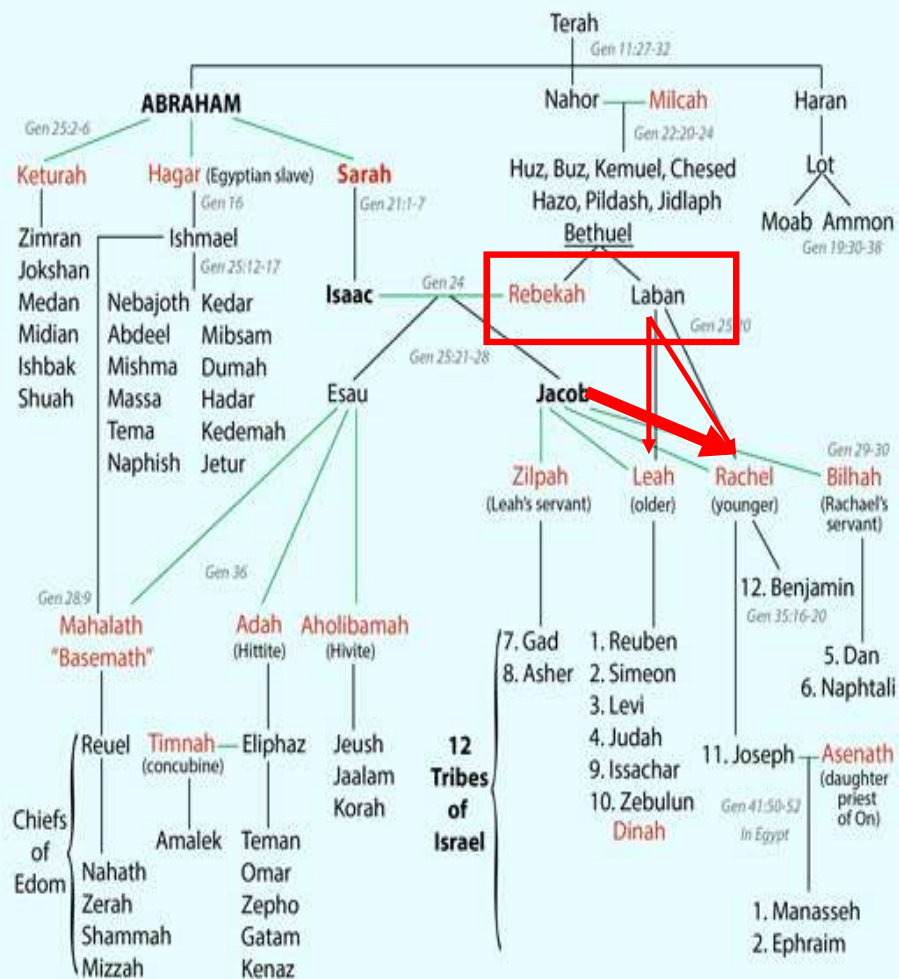
20 Then Jacob made a vow, saying, "If God will be with me and will watch over me on this journey I am taking and will give me food to eat and clothes to wear

21 so that I return safely to my father's house, then the LORD will be my God

22 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."



GENEALOGY OF ABRAHAM



*God's promises persist
in spite of human messiness*

4. Rachel

*God's plan continues via
His providence*

*God's plan continues via
His providence*

*Rebekah's brother Laban
Daughter of Laban comes
Romance from God begins well
with a male's strength
with an early connection
with a kiss of Rachel*

*Jacob conveys God's promise and his role to Laban
Goes well for 7 years*



God's patience prevails

Laban

*from trusted father to powerful
betrayal*

Leah replaced on wedding night

*His servant Zilpah the cohort in
deception*

Jacob's decision point, takes

Leah as wife, agreement for 7 more years

*Laban's power to enforce polygamy on his
daughters and weak Jacob*

*Laban a man with token recognition of God
mixed with idolatry and divination*



God's patience prevails

Dimensions of messiness

*Competition between
sisters for Jacob*

Jealousy of child bearing

*Trying to win greater
share of Jacob's attention*

*Attributing God for winning
their competitions*



God's patience prevails

Insights into Rachel's struggles

1. To Jacob, **give me** children or I will die
2. To Jacob, take Bilhah my servant for children
3. To God, **give me** children, has vindicated me
4. To Leah, **give me** your mandrakes
5. To God, who "has taken away my disgrace"
6. To LORD, Joseph named (He will add) ,
give me another son

Interlude: Jacob asks Laban to allow him to return, after wages of part of Laban's flocks; The Lord tells him to return to the land of his family; Jacob calls Leah and Rachel; God's call for them to leave



Genesis 31: Jacob heard that Laban's sons were saying, "Jacob has taken everything our father owned and has gained all this wealth from what belonged to our father."

2 And Jacob noticed that Laban's attitude towards him was not what it had been.

*3 Then **the LORD said to Jacob**, "Go back to the land of your fathers and to your relatives, and I will be with you."*

4 So Jacob sent word to Rachel and Leah to come out to the fields where his flocks were.

*5 He said to them, "I see that your father's attitude towards me is not what it was before, but **the God of my father has been with me**.*

6 You know that I've worked for your father with all my strength,

*7 yet your father has cheated me by changing my wages ten times. However, **God has not allowed him to harm me**.*

8 If he said, 'The speckled ones will be your wages,' then all the flocks gave birth to speckled young; and if he said, 'The streaked ones will be your wages,' then all the flocks bore streaked young.

9 So God has taken away your father's livestock and has given them to me.

10 "In the breeding season I once had a dream in which I looked up and saw that the male goats mating with the flock were streaked, speckled or spotted.

*11 **The angel of God** said to me in the dream, 'Jacob.' I answered, 'Here I am.'*

12 And he said, 'Look up and see that all the male goats mating with the flock are streaked, speckled or spotted, for I have seen all that Laban has been doing to you.

*13 **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."*

14 Then Rachel and Leah replied, "Do we still have any share in the inheritance of our father's estate?

15 Does he not regard us as foreigners? Not only has he sold us, but he has used up what was paid for us.

16 Surely all the wealth that God took away from our father belongs to us and our children. So do whatever God has told you."

God's patience prevails

Insights into Rachel's struggles

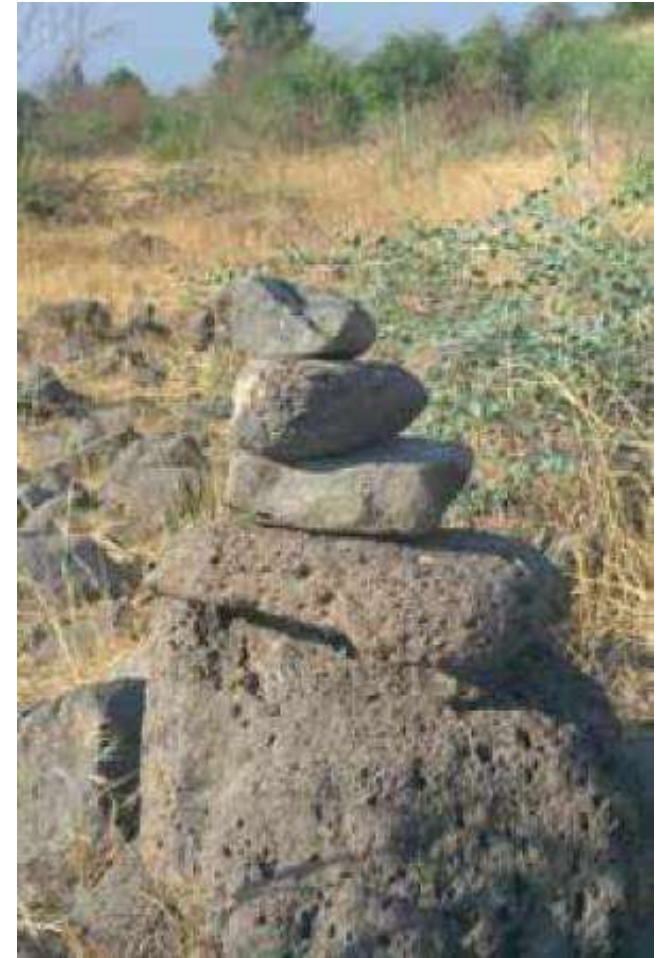
7. *With Leah, to Jacob, we will go with you (and God)*
8. *To herself, I will bring our families gods (?)*
9. *Jacob's journey back to Canaan, Bethel and removal of all foreign gods*
10. *Rachel's final struggle, birth of Benoni "son of my pain" (Benjamin "son of right hand, south")*
11. *Rachel's enduring testament to us*



11. Rachel's enduring testament to us

Genesis 35:19 And Rachel died, and was buried in the way to Ephrath, which is Bethlehem.

20 And Jacob set a pillar upon her grave: that is the pillar of Rachel's grave unto this day.



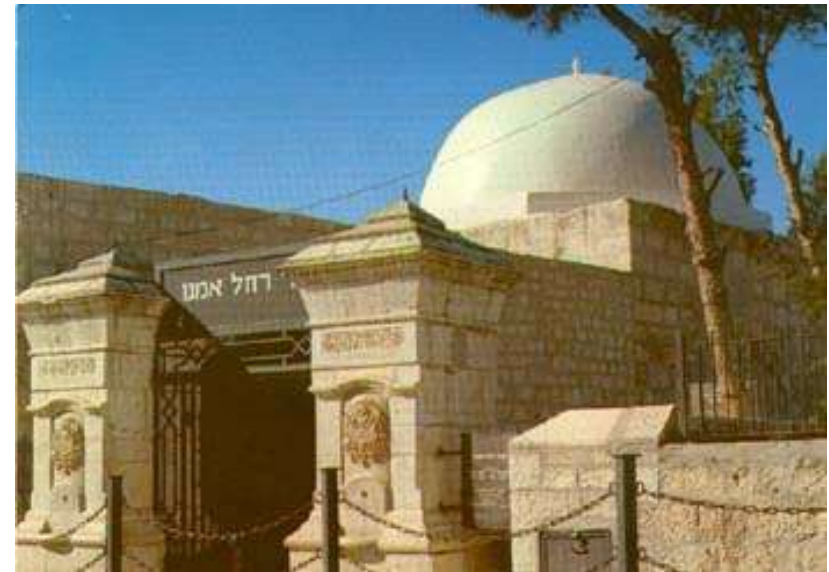
God's promises and plans prevail through the stories of the faithful

Rachel's enduring testimony

The elders in Bethlehem in response to Boaz

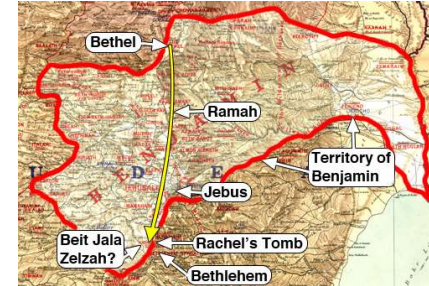
Ruth 4: 11 Then the elders and all those at the gate said, "We are witnesses. May the LORD make the woman who is coming into your home like Rachel and Leah, who together built up the house of Israel. May you have standing in Ephrathah and be famous in Bethlehem.

12 Through the offspring the LORD gives you by this young woman, may your family be like that of Perez, whom Tamar bore to Judah."



God's promises and plans prevail through the stories of the faithful

Rachel's enduring testament



Jeremiah 31:15 This is what the LORD says: "A voice is heard in Ramah, mourning and great weeping, Rachel weeping for her children and refusing to be comforted, because her children are no more."

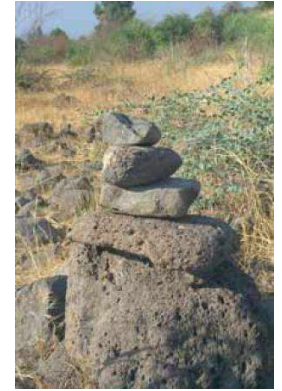
16 This is what the LORD says: "Restrain your voice from weeping and your eyes from tears, for your work will be rewarded," declares the LORD. "They will return from the land of the enemy.

17 So there is hope for your future," declares the LORD. "Your children will return to their own land.

Matthew 2:16 When Herod realised that he had been outwitted by the Magi, he was furious, and he gave orders to kill all the boys in Bethlehem and its vicinity who were two years old and under, in accordance with the time he had learned from the Magi.

17 Then what was said through the prophet Jeremiah was fulfilled:

18 "A voice is heard in Ramah, weeping and great mourning, Rachel weeping for her children and refusing to be comforted, because they are no more."



In spite of human messiness..

*God and His covenant promises
is Who we are to rise up to*

God's plan via His providence is Who we are to align to

God's patient grace is Who we are to be alive to

God's glory for now and forever is Who we are live for