



Weekly Bible Study Resources

Bible Characters for Your Weekly Bible Study

Compiled by Lt Gen C. Norman Wood, USAF (Ret)

For week of December 26 – January 1, 2012

SUBJECT: GOD

WAGERS, RALPH E. (CSB, Lecturer, Associate Editor, President, and Normal Class Teacher), "God, the Divine Principle of Man," EDITORIAL, Journal, Vol. 82 (March 1964), p. 150.

--Is there a God?

- Because one is conscious of his own existence, he must admit that there is a cause of his being.

--Christian Science declares that

God exists as cause and effect;

God is the Mind of man and man is the reflection of divine Mind;

God, man's Father-Mother, is Spirit, and man, God's expression, is spiritual.

--Each manifestation of creation is original, the direct outcome of divine Principle, not of another identity.

--Man has no source, substance, or intelligence other than God, divine Principle.

- The understanding of this fact enables one to demonstrate progressively his freedom from sin and to see himself now as a son of God.

Name: the underlying concept—

“In biblical thought a name is not a mere label of identification; it is an expression of the essential nature of its bearer. A man’s name reveals his character....to know the name of God is to know God as he has revealed himself.

“The uses of the word ‘name’ in the OT are all related to the central conception of name as denoting essential being. This applies with regard to both man and God.”

“The name in the OT is the essence of personality, the expression of inner-most being....a name is regarded as possessing an inherent power which exercises a constraint upon its bearer: he must conform to his essential nature as expected in his name.” (Interpreter’s Bible Dictionary)

GOLDEN TEXT: Blessings will come in the name of God (Ex 20: 24 In)

TIME LINE AND AUTHOR: Passed down by oral traditions but attributed to Moses, 1445-1405 BC.

“An altar of earth, a simple structure, or of stone (unhewn), was to be constructed only in those places where I record my name [v.24], and then only for the purpose of worship by the specified offerings. Rather than steps, a ramp was apparently used.” (King James Bible Commentary)

Laitner, Mrs. Jeanne Steele (CSB, Gross Pointe Park, MI), “In God’s name,” Journal, Vol. 119 (May 2001), p. 18.

--In Bible times, the names of individuals were more than an identification—names indicated character and nature.

- Sometimes an individual's name was changed when he went through a transforming experience.

---Jacob, for example, became Israel after his experience at Peniel. [See Gen. 32:24-30]

--It was natural...to place great emphasis on God's name as denoting his nature.

- God revealed Himself to Moses as "*I AM*" when He told Moses to lead the children of Israel out of Egypt.

---Later, the growing perception of God's nature was expressed in names such as "*the Holy One of Israel*," "*Shepherd*," "*Father*," "*Love*."

- Of course, an expanding understanding of God's nature expands our perception of our own identity as His likeness.

Cawte, Vera G., "[The Name of God](#)," *Sentinel*, Vol. 46 (9 September 1944), p. 1451.

--"*Thou shalt not take the name of the Lord thy God in vain; for the Lord will not hold him guiltless that taketh his name in vain.*"

--In the Glossary of "Science and Health with Key to the Scriptures" Mary Baker Eddy gives us the following definition of God (p. 587), "*The great I AM; the all-knowing, all-seeing, all-acting, all-wise, all-loving, and eternal; Principle; Mind; Soul; Spirit; Life; Truth; Love; all substance; intelligence.*"

--If it is true that we dishonor God by using His great name of I AM unworthily, then it is equally true that by using that name honorably we are helping to reveal the glory of God and the perfection of the divine nature.

- In Christian Science we know man to be the image and likeness of God; therefore we recognize that man's true, individual self-hood has only the qualities of the I AM.

--Thus, because the I AM, the off-spring of that Mind can claim with humility that he is intelligent and capable of forming correct judgments.

- He is possessed of understanding and endowed with an infinite range of ideas which will continue to unfold throughout eternity.

SECTION I: *Abram's name is changed to Abraham* (Gen 17: 1, 2, 5)

RELATED SCRIPTURE: Gen 12: 1-3; 15: 13-21

TIME LINE AND AUTHOR: Ascribed to Moses, written after the Exodus c. 1445 BC. The events occurred almost three centuries before.

"Genesis 17 is the P version of God's covenant with the patriarch, involving promises of a son and of the eternal possession of the land of Canaan." (HarperCollins Bible Commentary) "In the P account, the covenant is sealed by the circumcision of its male members, and any who are not circumcised are excluded from the covenant community (17:9-14)." (Theological Bible Commentary)

"17:1-8 begins with the Lord introducing himself as El Shaddai, God Almighty [v.1], the older name of God according to Exod 6:3." (Eerdmans Commentary)

"This [*my covenant between me and thee*, v.2] is another reaffirmation of God's unilateral covenant with Abram, which did not mean that there would be no responsibilities falling upon its recipients." (MacArthur Bible Commentary)

In verse 5, “the new name, meaning ‘father of many nations,’ reflected Abraham’s new relationship to God as well as his new identity based on God’s promise of seed. Cf. Romans 4:17.” (MacArthur Commentary)

Abram/Abraham

[Ā’bră hăm] (Heb. “father is exalted”)

“**ABRAHAM.** Fidelity; faith in the divine Life and in the eternal Principle of being.

This patriarch illustrated the purpose of Love to create trust in good, and showed the life-preserving power of spiritual understanding.” (S&H 579: 10-14)

TIME LINE: c. 2166-1991 BC

2112-2095	First Ziggurats built by Ur-Nammu
2080	Covenant revealed
	Ishmael born
2066	Isaac born
2005	Jacob born
2004	Ur falls

Shem



Terah (Father)

Abram (Abraham)	=	Sarai (Sarah) (1 st wife)	Lot (nephew)
		Isaac (2 nd son) =	Rebekah
		Jacob	
		Esau	
	⇒	Hagar (Sarah’s handmaiden)	
		Ishmael (1 st son)	
	=	Keturah (2 nd wife)	
		Zimran (son)	
		Jokshan (son)	
		Medan (son)	
		Midian (son)	
		Ishbak (son)	
		Shuah (son)	

Haran

Lot	=	wife
	=	Terah (2 nd wife)

Sarai (Abram’s half-sister and wife)

Other brothers

Bethuel
Rebekah
Laban

Abraham was the first patriarch and was founder of the Hebrew nation. He is “the earliest biblical character who is delineated clearly enough to be correlated, to a limited extent, within world history. His homeland on the Fertile Crescent (possibly at Haran) and movements southeast toward Chaldean Ur, then west to Canaan and Egypt, corresponded to known Amorite migratory and commercial routes.” (Oxford Guide to People & Places) In Jewish, Christian, and Moslem tradition, he

emerges as a father-figure— dignified, firm in his faith, humane, respected by the local rulers wherever he went. He moves slowly and majestically across the Near Eastern world of nearly four-thousand years ago, from Mesopotamia [**Iraq**] to Egypt. The main setting for his story is the central hill country in the Land of Canaan [**Israel**] promised to him and his seed by God.

Abram (as he was first called) came originally from “Ur of the Chaldeans,” a Sumerian city in the Euphrates valley, near the head of the Persian Gulf. With his father, Terah, his wife Sarai, and his nephew Lot, he moved up the river till they came to rest in Haran, a trading center in northern Aram [**as Syria was then called**]. The family settled in this area, and here Terah died.

“When Abram was seventy-five years old, God spoke to him and commanded him to leave his country, his people, and his father’s household, and go to a new land that he would give him (Gen 11:31ff).” (All the People in the Bible) The Lord appeared to Abram and told him to leave “*for the land I will show you,*” where he would make of Abram “*a great nation.*” Thirteen years elapsed, during which Abram still dwelt in Hebron, when the covenant was renewed, and the rite of circumcision established as its sign.

With Sarai and Lot he traveled to Canaan, and reached Shechem (**the modern Nablus**). Abram built an altar there, and another near Bethel (**a little north of Jerusalem**). The Lord again appeared to him and said: “*To your descendants I will give this land.*” This promise was repeated during Abram’s lifetime. “Abraham’s...descendents fall into three groups: those who descended from Ishmael (Ishmaelites or Arabs), those descended from Isaac (Edomites and Israelites), and those descended from the various sons of Keturah (a collateral line of Arabs).” (Eerdmans Dictionary)

As Abram and Sarai had remained without issue, she proposed that he should have a child with her Egyptian maid, Hagar, who bore him a son called Ishmael. When Abram was ninety-nine and Sarai ninety, the Lord appeared to him again and said that henceforth his name would be Abraham. Sarai’s name was changed to Sarah.

“The promise that Sarah should have a son was repeated in the remarkable scene described in chapter 18.” (Peloubet’s Dictionary) “By remaining faithful in the face of such an improbable promise, Abraham was awarded further approval.” (Interpreter’s Dictionary) “Three men stood before Abraham as he sat in his tent door in the heat of the day. The patriarch, with true Eastern hospitality, welcomed the strangers, and bade them rest and refresh themselves. The meal ended, they foretold the birth of Isaac, and went on their way to Sodom. Abraham accompanied them, and is represented as an interlocutor in a dialogue with Jehovah, in which he pleaded in vain to avert the vengeance threatened to the devoted cities of the plain (Gen 18: 17-33).” (Peloubet’s Dictionary)

“Even after another covenantal assurance (Gen 17:1-21) in which the rite of circumcision was made a covenantal sign, Abram and Sarai still questioned God’s promise of an heir.” (Holman Dictionary) “...in due course Isaac (meaning ‘he laughed’) was born, as had been foretold. Abraham gave a great feast when the infant was weaned.” (Who’s Who in the Old Testament) A feeling of jealousy now arose between Sarah and Hagar, whose son, Ishmael, was no longer to be regarded as Abraham’s heir. “Sarah was stung by the mockery of Hagar and her son Ishmael, and demanded that Abraham cast them out.” (Ibid)

“Abraham’s greatest test of faith occurred near the end of his life. God commanded him to offer Isaac as a human sacrifice. This was a test not only of Abraham’s faith but also of Isaac’s.” (All the People of the Bible)

“Abraham...concerned himself with finding a wife for Isaac. He sent for the trusted old retainer who managed his household, and confided in him that he did not want Isaac to marry a local Canaanite girl. The servant was instructed to travel to the Haran area from which Abraham had come to Canaan, and to seek a bride for Isaac among his kindred there. He returned with Rebekah, the young granddaughter of one of Abraham’s brothers.” (Who’s Who in the Old Testament)

“Abraham is second only to Moses among New Testament mentions of biblical heroes.” (Oxford Guide to People and Places) “The name Abraham, while occurring nowhere else in the Johannine writings, is found ten times in John 8:31-59. Throughout the account Jesus points out that although the questioning Jews are descendents of Abraham in a physical sense (Jn 8:37), they deny it by their actions.” (Dictionary of Jesus and the Gospels)

"Dynamic though Abraham's covenant was, sheer physical descent from the revered patriarch did not of itself guarantee an individual's salvation, as John the Baptist pointed out (Matt 3:9)." (Baker's Evangelical Dictionary)

At the age of 175 he was “gathered to his people,” and laid beside Sarah in the tomb of Machpelah by his sons Isaac and Ishmael (Gen 25: 7-10).

THREE PROMISES (Covenants) FROM GOD

“And I will make of thee a great nation, and I will bless thee, and make thy name great; and thou shalt be a blessing:” (Gen 12: 2)

“And the Lord appeared unto Abram, and said, Unto thy seed will I give this land:” (Gen 12: 7 to:)

“And, behold, the word of the Lord came unto him, saying, This shall not be thine heir; but he that shall come forth out of thine own bowels shall be thine heir.” (Gen 15: 4)

Pabst, Michael, “**Abraham: a blessing to many**,” INTRODUCTION TO THE BIBLE: For Kids, Sentinel, Vol. 100 (23 February 1998), p. 19. (**Activity for Abraham Map**)

--Nearly four thousand years ago, long before Jesus, even long before Moses, lived a man called Abram, who was later known as Abraham.

- Abraham’s high moral standards and remarkable spiritual insights shaped people’s understanding of God for generations after him. In a sense, we could say that Abraham prepared the way for Moses and Jesus by getting people’s thought ready for their teachings.

--Eventually, Abraham helped Isaac find a wife, Rebekah.

--Abraham is the cornerstone or father of the Jewish faith.

- He is also an important spiritual leader for Christians and Muslims.

--Both before and after his death, Abraham was widely respected because of his radiant trust in God. A thinker ahead of his time, Abraham turned out to be, just as God promised, a “father of many nations” and a blessing.

Barkhurst, Cosette E., “**Covenant**,” POEM, Journal, Vol. 106 (January 1988), p. 19.

From distant lands,
traveling by different routes,
impelled by diverse needs and circumstances,
we, who have reached
this central core of clarity,

this Science of Christ,
are joined together in
the greatest of all causes:
to heal the world.

If we have learned enough to care
(having ourselves been healed,
redeemed and blessed abundantly),
to give the cup, to break the bread,
to bind the open wound, to share
the Comforter, to *heal*,
our strength is formidable....

O world! We must not fail you!

SECTION II: Jacob's name is changed to Israel (Gen 32: 24-29)

TIME LINE AND AUTHOR: Written by Moses 1445-1405 BC; the event occurred c. 1739 BC at Peniel.

"This story has provoked extended commentary (the earliest being Hos 12:3-4 and Wisd of Sol 10:10-12)." (Eerdmans Commentary) "This incident, which interrupts the account of Jacob's concluding encounter with Esau, is of central importance in the story of Jacob, even more significant than Jacob's experience at Bethel (28:10-22)." (Oxford Bible Commentary) It is "the most fascinating and theologically intriguing story in all of the Jacob narratives." (Theological Bible Commentary)

"The conflict [vv.25-32] brought to a head the battling and groping of a lifetime, and Jacob's desperate embrace vividly expressed his ambivalent attitude to God, of love and enmity, defiance and dependence. It was against Him, not Esau or Laban, that he had been pitting his strength, as he now discovered; yet the initiative had been God's as it was this night, to chasten his pride and challenge his tenacity. The crippling and the naming show that God's ends were still the same: He would have all of Jacob's will to win, to attain and obtain, yet purged of self-sufficiency and redirected to the proper object of man's love, God, himself." (King James Bible Commentary)

"Jacob's personal name changed [*no more Jacob, but Israel*, v.28] from one meaning 'heel-catcher' or 'deceiver' to one meaning 'God's fighter' or 'he struggles with God' (cf. 35:10)." (MacArthur Bible Commentary)

Jacob finally realizes that "he has been locked in a struggle with God, and has seen him face to face (*pěni'el* means 'face of God')." (Oxford Bible Commentary)

Jacob/Israel

[Jay'kuhb] (Heb. "supplanted")

"JACOB. *A corporeal mortal embracing duplicity, repentance, sensualism. Inspiration; the revelation of Science, in which the so-called material senses yield to the spiritual sense of Life and Love.*" (S&H 589: 4)

TIME LINE: @2005-1958 BC (possibly 1950-1800 BC)

Isaac = Rebekah

Esau

Jacob (Israel)

=Leah

Reuben

Simeon

Levi

Judah

Issachar

Zubulun

Dinah

=Rachel

Joseph=Asenath

Benjamin

Zilpah (Leah's maid)

Gad

Asher

Bilhah (Rachel's maid)

Dan

Naphtali

“Jacob is the most complex of Israel’s ancestors.” (Theological Bible Commentary)

“In its broadest reaches the Jacob story comprises half the book of Genesis. The account of his birth comes in ch. 25 and his burial in ch. 50.” (Interpreter’s Dictionary)

Jacob was the second twin son of Isaac and Rebekah. In all, Jacob would have twelve sons (and a daughter), each of which would eventually rule one of the twelve tribes. “The Bible presents Jacob in a double light. On the one hand, he is the revered ancestor of the people of Israel, and indeed the name Israel is said to have been given him by God after he had wrestled with God himself at Peniel; on the other, he is a trickster, who deceives his brother into parting with his birthright and his father into giving him the blessing of the firstborn that should have belonged to Esau.” (Oxford Guide to People & Places)

"Rebekah heard [Esau's threat to kill Jacob] and, to give time for Esau's wrath to cool, Jacob was sent away to her relatives in Haran, in Paddan-aram, where he could also obtain a wife." (Westminster Dictionary) As he passed through Bethel [**Israel**], God appeared to him at night and he dreamt he saw a ladder rising from earth up to heaven with angels going up and down a ladder. The Lord stood at the top and reaffirmed the promise to Abraham. "The vision at Bethel has all the pathos and intensity of a personal experience; the tender love for Rachel, lasting through the long years of a strenuous life, has little significance as a racial memory; but the names of the sons and the mimetic etymologies appear like the efforts of a later age to account for groupings, antipathies, and characteristics which antedated the historians' memory." (Funk and Wagnalls Dictionary)

After 21 years he returned to the land of his father with two wives, Leah and Rachel; two concubines; and eleven sons and one daughter. Later, a son, Benjamin, was born to Rachel, making a total of twelve sons who became the namesakes for the twelve tribes of Israel.

“When he was alone in the wilderness, Jacob had an experience that is one of the great puzzles of the Old Testament. During the night ‘a man’ came to him and wrestled with him all night.” (All the People of the Bible) Jacob wrestled along the way with the deceptive and less-than-good life he had lived. When all had crossed the Jabbok River [**a river in Jordan**], “*Jacob was left alone.*” It was night, and he found himself suddenly engaged in a wrestling match in the darkness. This match lasted until the breaking of dawn....When asked to identify himself in the darkness, he confessed he was

Jacob—the 'heel-grabber.' But Jacob's struggling earned him a new name." (Who Was Who in the Bible) And, at Peniel, he “*saw the face of God,*” and was transformed by receiving the name, Israel.

"Although [Genesis] Chapters 37-50 revolve around Joseph, Jacob is still the central figure." (Holman Bible Dictionary) "Jacob's favourite son was Joseph, born in his old age of his beloved Rachel, and the youngest of the twelve brothers except for...Benjamin. His father pampered him and dressed him in a coat of many colours; but he incurred the envy and dislike of his brothers." (Who's Who in the Old Testament)

"Outside of the Pentateuch Hosea refers to the Jacob narrative, presenting a slightly different version of Jacob's encounter at Peniel with God, who is now represented as an angel (Hos.12:2-4[3-5])." (Eerdmans Dictionary)

Deborah and Rachel died before he reached Hebron [**southern West Bank**]; Joseph, the favorite son of Jacob, was sold into Egypt eleven years before the death of Isaac.

After being reunited with his brother Esau, he went to Egypt when he was 130 years old to live for 17 years in the care of his son, Joseph.

At the end of his life, Jacob—now an aged man—gathered his 12 sons about his bed to tell them what should befall them “*in the last days.*”

Words of warning were addressed to Dan, called “*a serpent*” and “*a viper,*” a life that would be marked by violence.

He died in his 147th year, and was carried back to the land of Canaan [**coastal area of Israel**] and was buried in the family burial ground in the cave of the field of Machpelah. Jacob not only embodies and represents the nation, Israel, but also typifies the settler-farmer, the trickster, the reverent worshiper of God, the man of gallantry, the successful émigré and herder, the penitent brother, and the benevolent father.

Bumpus, Linda, “**Jacob at Peniel: a lesson in perseverance,**” *Sentinel*, Vol. 85 (30 May 1963), p. 925.

--Jacob had had a remarkable experience.

- Referring to it, he said, “*I have seen God face to face, and my life is preserved.*” [Gen 32:30]

---As a result his nature was transformed and his name was changed from Jacob (understood by the Bible writers to mean “supplanter”) to Israel (thought to mean “he strives with God”).

--Jacob became Israel—one who strives and wins, with God.

- We’re familiar with the challenges presented by panic, ambition, pride, indifference, and especially discouragement.

---But we can prove that a demand of Love, though it may sometimes seem to wound the heart, can only end in blessing.

- Lest we let this blessing slip away and fail to realize its full import, we should declare, as Jacob did, “*I will not let thee go, except thou bless me.*” [Gen 32:26]

Haworth-Booth, Ben, “**Peniel,**” POEM, *Journal*, Vol. 30 (November 1912), p. 444.

Upon the rugged field the wrestlers fought

Till far into the night, and Jacob wrought
For mastery, till his foe for mercy sought.

And still they strove, and still with brave intent,
Though torn his thigh, the sinews reft and rent,
Our father bore his baneful chastisement.

But, while they fought, an angel came between,
And showed him who his fearsome foe had been—
His own dark self, untruthful and unclean.

He held the evangel in his arms of might,
And would not let him pass beyond his sight,
But gazed enraptured on that child of light.

SECTION III: I AM THAT I AM is the name of God (Ex 3: 14, 15, 17)

RELATED SCRIPTURE: Gen 10: 17; Deut 7: 1; I Chron 1:15

TIME LINE AND AUTHOR: Written by Moses, after the 1445 BC Exodus.

“Here [vv.13-15] the god in the bush, so far nameless to Moses, reveals his name.” (Oxford Bible Commentary) “God further outlined his plan [vv.15-17] for Moses to approach *the elders of Israel* to inform them of God’s plans.” (King James Bible Commentary)

“The famous declaration [*I AM THAT I AM*, v.14] signifies that God is known in his dynamic confrontation of man and in man’s active response to God.” (Interpreter’s One-volume Commentary) “This name for God points to His self-existence and eternity; it denotes ‘I am the One who is/will be,’ which is decidedly the best and most contextually suitable option from a number of the theories about its meaning and etymological source.” (MacArthur Bible Commentary)

“In 15, E represents the message as to be passed on to the whole people, but here [v.17] J restricts its communication to ‘the elders,’ the heads of families and clans, or their representatives.” (Peake’s Commentary)

Canaanites
(Heb. Kəna’anî)

“The origin of the name Canaan and Canaanite is obscure. The obvious Semitic root seems to be *kn* which appears in Hebrew and Aramaic in secondary verbal stems, meaning ‘to bow down.’

“There are two border descriptions for the geographical entity known as the land of Canaan. The southern border is identical with that assigned to the tribal inheritance of Judah; it begins at the southern end of the Dead Sea and reaches the Mediterranean shore at the ‘Brook of Egypt’....The northern border has two crucial anchor points [at the] Lebanese Beqa’ Valley. The other site is...N of Damascus.

“It is not possible to define an ethnic group as the ‘Canaanites,’ but a social entity recognized in the Bible as the ‘inhabitants of Canaan’ (Ex 15:15) is distinct from the Philistines...,Edomites and Moabites.” (Eerdmans Dictionary)

Hittites

(Heb. Hitti)

“One of the greatest political powers of antiquity who during the 2nd millennium B.C. controlled much of the area comprising modern Turkey. During their heyday the Hittites built a powerful empire with its capital... W of Ankara...and stretching from the Aegean Sea as far east as the Euphrates River and into the northern Levant.

“Though presumed to have been part of an Indo-european migration that arrived in Anatolia [**central uplands of modern Turkey**] ca. 2300, the exact origins of the Hittites and their route into Anatolia are still disputed.” (Eerdmans Dictionary)

Amorites

[Am'uh rits] (“highlanders” or “hillmen”)

"The early history of the Amorites is obscure, but they played an important part of the Fertile Crescent." (Westminster Dictionary) Amorites was the name given to the descendants of one of the sons of Canaan (Gen 14:7), called Amurra or Amurri in the Assyrian and Egyptian inscriptions. They were "among the original inhabitants of Canaan before the Israelite conquest, along with Hittites, Canaanites, Jebusites, and others." (Oxford Guide to People & Places) "The designation is imprecise, as the word Amorite was used differently in different times and places." (Eerdmans Dictionary)

Perizzites

(Heb. Pērizzî)

“A population group occupying Palestine from patriarchal times, encountered by the emerging nation of Israel. A plausible etymology links Perizzite to [the Hebrew word for] ‘rural person.’ In such case, the Perizzites would originally have been country folks as opposed to city dwellers.” (Eerdmans Dictionary)

Hivites

(Heb. Hiwwî)

“According to the Table of Nations (Gen 10:17) and its corresponding genealogy (1 Chr 1:15), a people descended via the Canaanites from Ham, the second son of Noah. Hivites were indigenous inhabitants of the Promised Land before the Israelite settlement. Their name appears usually in the stereotypical lists of nations decreed for dispossession by the Israelites (Deut 7:1).” (Eerdmans Dictionary)

Jebusites

(Jē'buhsites)

Jebus “was a Canaanite village in central Palestine. The Jebusites were children of Canaan (Gen 10:16)...since the Jebusites were in Jerusalem then [some argue that] Jebus was the same as Jerusalem....The origin of the city remains obscure. Nevertheless, it is clear...that they were a powerful force in the hill country.” (HarperCollins Bible Dictionary)

Messler, Elsa Christen, “**The Nowness of ‘I AM THAT I AM,’**” *Sentinel*, Vol. 47 (28 July 1945), p. 1163.

--When Moses was commissioned to lead the children of Israel out of Egyptian bondage, he felt the need of a definite name for God which would be comprehensible to the state of their thought.

- God supplied this need when he declared (Ex 3:14): “*I AM THAT I AM...Thus shalt thou say unto the children of Israel, I AM hath sent me unto you.*”

---This name may have enabled the Israelites to catch a glimpse of the scientific fact that their discordant experiences were not the product of the great “*I AM*” who “*spake and it was done,*” who “*commanded, and it stood fast*” (Ps 33:9).

--The “*I AM*” is God, infinite Truth, Mind, Love, the substance of all.

- “*I AM*” gives understanding, immortality, bliss, eternal life.

---Thus “*I AM*” includes all and gives us dominion over all our yesterdays, past months, past, past years, and even past centuries.

McCandless, Mrs. Ethel M. (CS), “**Get thee down,**” *Sentinel*, Vol. 15 (14 December 1918), p. 284.

--When the heavenly inspiration came to Moses telling him that he was the one through whom God would work to lead the children of Israel out of Egypt, the false sense of self began to suggest all manner of excuses.

- Self-depreciation, doubt, and fear clamored loudly for recognition, but each time they were silenced by the stronger argument of divine Principle.

--The sooner we refuse to admit the evidence of material sense and, clad in the armor of Spirit, face the enemy, just that much sooner will the various types of error, typified by the Amorite, the Canaanite, the Hittite, the Perizzite, the Hivite, and the Jebusite, be driven forever from the land.

- Then will the law of Truth and Love be revered and obeyed.

SECTION IV: Jabez prays to be blessed by God (I Chron 4: 9 *Jabez*, 10)

TIME LINE AND AUTHOR: “Jewish tradition strongly favors Ezra the priest (cf. Ezra 7:1-6) as the ‘chronicler.’ These records were most likely recorded c. 450-430 BC.” (MacArthur Bible Commentary) The record itself is from c. 1000 BC.

“The first part of this chapter deals with the sons of Judah (vv.1-23)....” (Oxford Bible Commentary)

“Since most of the names and the incidents referred to are otherwise quite unknown to us, it is impossible to place this material within our overall picture of ancient Israel....It seems as if a variety of fragmentary information has been assembled here as part of the larger intention of showing the significance of the whole community.” (Eerdmans Commentary)

“This [vv.5-10] is supplemental information on the families [of Judah]....Jabez, a place name in 2:55, is a personal name here (lit., he giveth pain). This note on Jabez emphasizes that God answers the prayer of faith, for Jabez was able to triumph over his name.” (King James Bible Commentary)

Jabez

[Jā’biz] (Heb. “trouble, sorrow”)

Jabez was the head of a family of the tribe “of Judah, of whom it is recorded that ‘*God granted him that which he requested.*’” (Easton Bible Dictionary) He was “noted for his honorable character.” (Who Was Who in the Bible) “He illustrates the power of prayer.” (Holman Dictionary)

Bayless, Mary Gertrude (CSB), “**Enlarge my coast’**,” Journal, Vol. 85 (February 1967), p. 73.

--Hidden in the middle of nine chapters of genealogical lists in I Chronicles, almost as if to show a way out of genealogical boundaries, is an account of a man, Jabez, whose prayer averted the curse of an ominous name.

--Jabez in Hebrew means “trouble” or “sorrow.”

- His mother had named him thus, “because,” she said, “*I bare him with sorrow.*”

---By giving him the ominous name which identified him wherever he went, she bound him with her own concept of him.

- Like Jabez, little mortals are conceived by other mortals—their form, size, and intelligence partly determined by a genetic code before they know enough to protest.

---Physical conception forms one of the limits bounding the mortal self.

--We are told that Jabez was more honorable than his brothers.

Pogson, Reuben, “**The Prayer of Jabez**,” Sentinel, Vol. 7 (25 February 1905), p. 404.

--It is quite possible that no man has ever had his history written so tersely and yet so fully as Jabez.

- The very brevity and sweet simplicity of the story as told in...two verses fixes it in ones memory, where a longer narration would have defeated the purpose desired by the narrator....The first line tells of his high aspiration and attainment, and its reward appears in the last. The value of the story is increased in view of the complexity and falsity of much of our modern civilization.

--The story of Jabez is told so briefly, the answer to his prayer is placed so close to the cry for help, that one might easily run away with the idea that the result came very quickly; but I don’t think it did.

- Personally I know that the real reward for faithful work is not in the mere outward manifestation, although this receives prominence in our testimony meetings. The true recompense is in growth Godward which has been achieved through working for the result.

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*The weekly Bible Lessons are made up of selections from the King James Version of the Bible and the Christian Science textbook, *Science and Health with Key to the Scriptures* by Mary Baker Eddy, the Discoverer and Founder of Christian Science.

The Golden Text this week is from the *Amplified Bible*.

œThis character study is designed to illustrate this character trait using verses, stories, consequences of sin and blessings of obedience found throughout the Bible. Each day you will learn a verse, read a story where this sin is illustrated, then discuss the consequences of this sin followed up by the blessings of obedience. We have thoroughly enjoyed these lessons. We focus on one theme over 4 days, covering it in 4 different Bible stories, and discuss the Bible character's choices and their consequences. I use Erika's discussion points and many of her suggested family challenges that suit... You may freely download these pages for your own personal use. I humbly ask you to respect my copyright. Please link back to my blog when you share with others. Join our weekly Bible study! Click here to sign up. Click here to sign up. At least that's how Bible stories are presented to children. In this video, we'll explore the ways biblical authors present characters as more complex and morally compromised than we usually imagine. Video Details. Explore How to Read The Bible. How to Read the Bible: Character. Most of us think of characters in Bible as either sinners or saints, good or bad. At least that's how Bible stories are presented to children. In this video, we'll explore the ways biblical authors present characters as more complex and morally compromised than we usually imagine. How to Read the Bible: Setting. With the YouVersion Bible App, you can read, watch, listen, and share on your smartphone or tablet, and online at Bible.com. When you see stats we share and celebrate about Bible engagement around the world, we make sure to analyze the data in a way that protects your privacy. When this information is published, it is only in an aggregated form that does not disclose your personally identifiable information. In addition, we implement industry standard security safeguards designed to protect your data. It's your experience. Our policies make it clear what rights you have when using YouVersion, including accessing, sharing, changing and deleting your personal data.