



Patriarchs of the Old Testament

(Abraham, Isaac, Jacob,
and Joseph)



Abraham

Abraham's sacrifice of Isaac –
c. 1880

Abraham

- Abraham is from Ur in Mesopotamia. God spoke to Abram and told him to leave his country and father's house to a "land that I will show you".
 - This definitely showed a lot of trust in God!
- God promised to make Abraham a great nation through the covenant found in Genesis 15:12-21; 17:1-14.
- Abram ends up taking his nephew Lot and his wife Sarai to the land of Canaan.

Abraham – Important Episodes

- Sarai / Hagar Story (Genesis 16; 21) –
 - Hagar gives birth to Ishmael
 - Sarai/Sarah gives birth to Isaac

- Name change
 - Abram is called Abraham (Genesis 17:5)
 - Sarai is called Sarah (Genesis 17:15)

- Sacrifice of Isaac (Genesis 22)

Abraham – Sacrifice of Isaac

- God tests Abraham and tells him to “take your son, your only son Isaac (although Isaac is not his only son), and go to the land of Moriah, and offer him there as a burnt offering on one of the mountains that I shall show you.” ~ Gen. 22:2
- Abraham takes Isaac to the mountain, binds him, and holds the knife above him to kill/sacrifice him when an angel of the Lord stopped Abraham. Abraham saw a ram stuck in the thicket and offered the ram as a burnt-offering instead of his son.



Isaac

Isaac blesses Jacob - c. 1490

Isaac (Genesis 24-28)

- Do not know much about Isaac as a child.
- Marries Rebekah – daughter of Abraham's brother
- Rebekah was barren (Gen. 25:11). (Initial barrenness is a theme found throughout the patriarchal history)
 - Rebekah ends up having twins who struggled together in the womb (Jacob and Esau)

Isaac

- Isaac is tricked by Jacob (youngest of the twins) to give Esau's blessing to Jacob.
- Characteristics of Isaac: Passive character, little is known about him, more of a character to introduce Jacob than on himself.



Jacob

Jacob wrestling with an angel –
c. 1400/1425

Jacob

- Youngest of the twins
- Esau was a man of the bow/hunter while Jacob was “a quiet man, living in tents.”
- Jacob was Rebekah’s favorite son
- Jacob barter for Esau’s birthright (Gen. 25:29-34)

Jacob

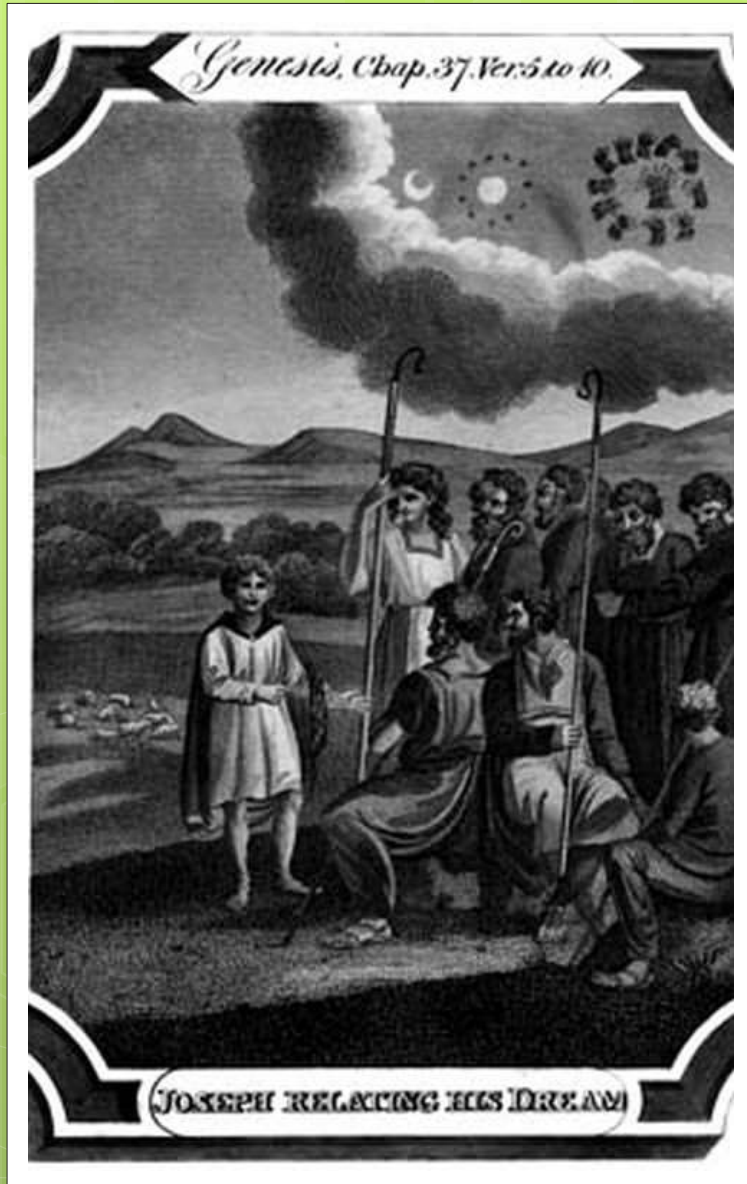
- Jacob tricks his father (Isaac), with the help of his mother, to obtain his father's blessing
 - Rebekah makes a savory stew and also puts skins of kids (goats) on Jacob's hands to disguise Jacob as Esau. Esau was hairy while Jacob was smooth.
- Jacob receives the blessing and then escapes to Haran because Esau planned on killing Jacob. Haran is where Rebekah's brother Laban lived.

Jacob

- Jacob meets Rachel, the youngest daughter of Laban, and falls in love with her at the well. Jacob works for seven years for Rachel's hand in marriage.
- Laban tricks Jacob (reversal of Jacob's trick to Esau) and Jacob actually marries Leah, Rachel's older sister (Gen. 29:21-27)
- Jacob works another seven years for Rachel's hand in marriage
 - Leah's womb was opened because she was unloved but Rachel's womb was barren

Jacob

- Jacob has twelve sons and a daughter, Dinah, by four different women: Leah, Rachel, Zilpah, and Bilhah
- Jacob flees from Laban
- Jacob's name is changed to Israel (Gen. 35:10)
 - Rachel, although initially barren, gives birth to Joseph and Benjamin
- Jacob finally settles in the land of Canaan
- Characteristics of Jacob: trickster, active character



Joseph

Joseph retelling his dream – c.
1850

Joseph

- Joseph is Jacob's favorite son and interprets dreams
- Joseph has a dream of his brothers bowing down to him so his brothers become jealous/angry and decide to sell Joseph into slavery in Egypt.
- Sold to Potiphar

Joseph

- Because Joseph was so talented under Potiphar, Joseph moves up in charge of all of Potiphar's estate.
- However, Potiphar's wife finds Jacob very attractive and tries to seduce him. When Joseph refuses, Potiphar's wife screams out and accuses him of attempted rape.
- Joseph is put in jail

Joseph

- Joseph is known for his dream interpretations so when Pharaoh has some troubling dreams, Joseph is brought before him
- Joseph interprets the dream that there will be seven years of plenty and then seven years of famine so Joseph is put in charge of the food storehouses in Egypt.

Joseph

- Jacob sends an envoy of his sons to Egypt for food during the famine
- Joseph recognizes his brothers, but they do not recognize him
- In the end, all of Jacob's children move to Egypt from Canaan