

January 16-22

<u>January 16</u> Genesis 24-25
<u>January 17</u> Genesis 26-27
<u>January 18</u> Genesis 28-29
<u>January 19</u> Genesis 30-31
<u>January 20</u> Genesis 32-34
<u>January 21</u> Genesis 35-37
<u>January 22</u> Genesis 38-40

This week's reading covers approximately the next 130 years and four generations of Israel's history. At the beginning, Abraham has God's promise that the Land of Canaan would belong to his descendants, and an unmarried 40-year-old son.

During these chapters, Abraham sends for a bride for Isaac (chapter 24), and the promise is passed on to him (26:3). He has meanwhile had twin sons, Esau and Jacob (25:24–26). The promise is subsequently given to Jacob instead of the older Esau (28:13).

Jacob flees in fear from Esau, who wants to kill him, and spends 20 years with his brother-in-law, Laban, in Padam-aram. There he has eleven sons and a daughter and accumulates a sizeable flock while working for Laban. He returns to the Promised Land, stopping near Shalem for a time. While there, his daughter, who was almost certainly not a teenager and possibly not yet ten years old, is defiled by an inhabitant, leading to the cruel and deceitful destruction of the city by Jacob's sons. They leave for the

Canaan, and just as he is arriving, a twelfth son is born, costing Rachel's life in childbirth.

The first eleven brothers (born of four different mothers) are approximately six years of age apart—meaning that when Joseph is 17, Reuben is only 23. The other nine are between them. Rivalry was natural, and when Joseph was favored, the jealous brothers sold him as a slave into Egypt.

Joseph is falsely accused there and put into prison, where he hears and interprets the dreams of two of Pharaoh's servants who had fallen out of favor. Things don't seem to be going favorably for the chosen family, but later chapters will show that all of this is brought about in God's plan for their preservation and success.

Hardships and reversals in life are often the manner in which God brings about His will. Jacob is able to expand his family and fortune without danger from Esau. When things are ready to move forward, God is able to get Jacob back to where he belongs.