

Study 1. Eve

READ: Genesis 1: 26-27, 2: 18, 3: 1-20



KEY VERSE: 1 Timothy 2: 14

“Adam was not deceived, but the woman being deceived, fell into transgression.”

1. GOD'S CREATION

In the book of Genesis we have the account of God's creation. His word and His power brought into being our universe. On the sixth day God crowned His work with the creation of human life, man and woman made in His own image. (1: 27)

Adam was created out of the dust of the earth but Eve was made out of Adam, from a rib. She was given to him as a perfect companion, able to share in his responsibilities and privileges. Together they were complete and fulfilled. **“Therefore a man shall leave his father and mother and be joined to his wife, and they shall become one flesh.”** (Genesis 2: 24, Matthew 19: 4-6) Marriage was determined by God in the Garden of Eden and is therefore more than a legal contract. It pre-dates the Christian era and is very much more than a pagan ritual! God's purpose was not to restrict the relationship between the sexes but to provide what is necessary for the security and well-being of family life. (Ephesians 5: 31-33)

2. GOD'S COMMAND

Adam and Eve were moral beings, not mere puppets of their Creator. This means they were capable of understanding a situation and making choices. God had given them a simple command. They were forbidden to eat the fruit of the tree of the knowledge of good and evil. (2: 16 & 17) This prohibition was to teach them the value of obedience, and to strengthen their trust in the wisdom and love of God. Similarly, all good parents make rules, not to spoil their children's lives, but to develop their ability to make right choices.

3. SATAN'S DECEPTION

In the New Testament we read that Eve was deceived by the serpent, **“... as the serpent deceived Eve by his craftiness ...”** (2 Corinthians 11: 3) Eve was completely misled and more than ready to listen to his words. They were subtle words, planting small seeds of doubt in Eve's mind as to what God had actually said. They led on to a suspicion that God was spoiling things for them. Because Eve listened to the serpent and did not believe that God had their good at heart, she fell into temptation. She reached out for something which was not hers to take! Even more serious was the fact that she chose to act independently of God!

Eve thought she knew best and was prepared to believe the poisoned words of Satan. Having taken the forbidden fruit, she immediately gave it to her husband. Eve was deceived by Satan, but Adam acted in deliberate disobedience to God and brought sin and death into our world; **“... through one man sin entered the world, and death through sin ...”** (Romans 5: 12) Both Adam and Eve had to bear the consequences of their wrong choice, which sprang from their wrong attitude towards God. They had failed to trust Him, failed to believe in His love, which in wisdom restricts as well as gives.

4. EVE'S MOTHERHOOD

Eve is important in the Bible for at least three reasons:-

- i) She is the first mother. Her name means **“mother of all living”**. (See Genesis 3: 20)
- ii) She was first in disobeying God's command. (Genesis 3: 6)
- iii) She was the first link in the long chain by which God's promise of a Saviour was fulfilled. (See Genesis 3: 15) Her first son, Cain, murdered her second son, Abel. In this distressing event God's word to Eve, **“I will greatly multiply your sorrow”** came true! However, she bore another son whom she called Seth (which means 'compensation'). (Genesis 4: 25) Seth, in turn, became the head of the race from which the Lord Jesus Christ was eventually born.

Study 1. Eve

1 A) WHY DID GOD MAKE EVE?

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B) ADAM AND EVE WERE UNIQUE IN THAT THEY WERE PLACED ON EARTH AS MATURE ADULTS. WRITE OUT A VERSE FROM GENESIS 1, WHICH WILL SUPPORT THIS.

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2 SUGGEST POSSIBLE REASONS WHY GOD MADE ADAM AND EVE AS HE DID. WHY DID HE NOT MAKE THEM AS ANDROIDS PROGRAMMED TO OBEY HIM?

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3 A) WHY DID ADAM CALL HIS WIFE 'WOMAN'? (SEE GENESIS 2: 23)

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B) WHY WAS ADAM'S WIFE ALSO CALLED 'EVE'?

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C) NAME THREE OF EVE'S SONS.

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4 ANSWER TRUE OR FALSE:-

a. The woman was created on the seventh day.

b. Marriage was determined by God.

c. Eve disobeyed God's command.

d. Eve was not deceived by the serpent.

e. God promised that the woman's seed would bruise the serpent's head.

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5 SATAN WAS VERY CRAFTY IN HIS HANDLING OF EVE. WE ARE ADVISED IN JAMES 4: 7 TO "RESIST THE DEVIL AND HE WILL FLEE FROM YOU". HOW CAN WE DO THIS IN PRACTICE?

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6 READ AGAIN GENESIS 3 AND LIST SOME OF THE CONSEQUENCES OF ADAM AND EVE'S DISOBEDIENCE.

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7 WRITE OUT THE VERSE FROM MARK 10: 1-12 IN WHICH THE LORD JESUS CHRIST TELLS US THAT MARRIAGE SHOULD BE A LIFETIME COMMITMENT.

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This study sheet belongs to:

Study 4. Rachel and Leah

READ: Genesis 29: 10-30: 2 and 31: 17-21

 **KEY VERSE: Genesis 29: 20**
“So Jacob served seven years for Rachel, and they seemed but a few days to him because of the love he had for her.”

I. MARRIAGE

When Jacob left home to avoid his brother Esau's threat to kill him (**Genesis 27: 41**), he travelled to Haran, where Rebekah's brother Laban lived. He wanted to find himself a wife. His plan was to return home when Esau's anger had cooled. But **“God is not mocked; for whatever a man sows, that he will also reap”**. (**Galatians 6:7**) Both Jacob and Rebekah had done wrong, and both would 'reap' what they had 'sown'. In Haran, Jacob, the deceiver, would himself be deceived; back at home, Rebekah would die without ever seeing her favourite son again!

It was love at first sight for Jacob! He was determined to have Rachel as his wife, whatever the price! And there was a price! Jacob offered Laban seven years' work for her, and to this Laban agreed. But this man was just as crafty as Jacob. He devised a plan by which he could get both his daughters married - the plain, unattractive Leah, as well as Rachel, whom Jacob loved passionately.

So Rachel and Leah became Jacob's wives. Such an arrangement fell far short of God's ideal! **Genesis 2: 24** clearly teaches that God's way is that each man should have only one wife. (**See also Mark 10: 5-9 and Ephesians 5: 31 & 33**) Besides, the very necessary 'ingredient' of love was missing in Jacob's marriage to Leah. (**Genesis 29: 30 & 31**)

2. HOME

Very soon Rachel and Leah found themselves in a home which was divided by resentment and jealousy. The sisters became rivals, rather than companions. Their relationship was spoiled by three main factors:-

- i) The greed of their father, Laban, who had used them like ready cash in the hiring of Jacob.
- ii) The thoughtlessness of Jacob, who multiplied the problems by taking two additional wives - Bilhah and Zilpah. (**See Genesis 30: 4 & 9**)
- iii) The inability of Rachel to have children. (**See Genesis 30: 1 & 2**)

In such a situation, envy and unhappiness flourished. How different things might have been if there had been more love and less favouritism! Prayer, patience and tolerance could have quietened the situation! For Christians these are vitally important, especially in the marriage bond. (**See 1 Peter 3: 7**)

3. FAMILY

After twenty years, God directed Jacob to return to Canaan. By now he was a rich man with eleven sons. When they left, Rachel secretly took with her the household gods. (**See Genesis 31: 34**) Perhaps she was trusting in them as she faced an unknown future. How much better if she had put her faith in the living God!

Rachel eventually had two sons. **“God remembered Rachel, and God listened to her ... and she bore a son ... she called his name Joseph.”** (**Genesis 30: 22-24**) Her other son was Benjamin; sadly, Rachel died at his birth, and was buried near Bethlehem. (**See Genesis 35: 16-20**)

It would seem that Leah remained faithful to God and to her husband. She was laid to rest in the family tomb along with Abraham, Sarah, Isaac and Rebekah. Later, Jacob himself was buried there. (**See Genesis 49: 29-33**)

The special place of Rachel and Leah in the Bible story is that they are **“the two who built the house of Israel”**. (**See Ruth 4: 11**) This refers to the fact that their sons became the fathers of the twelve tribes of Israel. In spite of all human failure, God's plans were worked out!

NewLife WorkSheet

Study 4. Rachel and Leah

1 A. WRITE OUT GALATIANS 6: 7.

B. EXPLAIN, AS CLEARLY AS YOU CAN, WHAT THIS VERSE MEANS.
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2 A. WHAT MADE THE SEVEN YEARS' WORK WHICH JACOB DID, SEEM SO SHORT TO HIM?
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B. IN WHAT WAY DID LABAN DECEIVE JACOB WHEN THE SEVEN YEARS WERE UP?
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3 "JEALOUSY IS AS CRUEL AS THE GRAVE." (SEE SONG OF SOLOMON 8: 6)

a. Mention the main causes of jealousy in Jacob's household.
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b. Suggest some situations, in a young Christian's life today, in which jealousy, or envy, could arise.
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c. How could such problems be solved? (You may find help in GALATIANS 5: 22 & 23 and 1 PETER 2: 1 & 2)
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4 WRITE OUT CORRECTLY THE FOLLOWING SCRAMBLED WORDS WHICH ARE THE NAMES OF SOME OF JACOB'S SONS, CHOSEN FROM GENESIS 29 AND 30.

- a. vile
- b. atanhlip
- c. dajuh
- d. moines
- e. buneer
- f. phjeso

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5 RACHEL WANTED TO HOLD ON TO HER OLD GODS! READ EPHESIANS 4: 30-32.

a. Write out FOUR things which Christians should "put away".
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b. According to verse 32, what should Christians now develop in their lives, in place of these evil things?
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c. If we follow the teaching of verse 32, what effects do you think it would have on our home and family life?
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6 USING YOUR OWN WORDS, EXPLAIN WHY RACHEL AND LEAH ARE IMPORTANT IN THE BIBLE.
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ROMANS 15: 4 AND 1 Corinthians 10: 11 & 12 TEACH US THAT
THE OLD TESTAMENT IS FOR OUR LEARNING AND FOR OUR WARNING.
THINK ABOUT THE SPECIFIC LESSONS YOU HAVE LEARNED FROM THESE FOUR STUDIES.

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100
Total marks for this Unit

Return your study sheets to:
PBS Centre or to:

25
Total marks for this study

READ: Genesis 11: 27-31, 12: 1-9 and 16: 1-16



KEY VERSE: Hebrews 11: 11

“By faith Sarah ... bore a child when she was past the age, because she judged Him faithful who had promised.”

SARAH - THE HOME

If Eve was the mother of the human race, then Sarah, the wife of Abraham, became the mother of the Jewish race. It was Abraham, called by God, who left his home, in present day Iraq in the Middle East, and travelled to Canaan, the modern country of Israel. Sarah went with him. It was a nomadic lifestyle, but she accepted it and created a home wherever they travelled. Her relationship with Abraham - loyal, supportive and obedient - reflected her relationship with God. She trusted Him for the future, and with Abraham, believed His promises.

SARAH - THE FAMILY

Sarah's great disappointment was the fact that, in spite of God's promises that Abraham's descendants would be a great nation, they had no child. Sarah grew old and past the time for having children and decided to press for her own solution to the problem. After all, even Abraham had questioned the Lord. Should his own servant become his heir? (15: 1-6) Childlessness was a reproach - something to be ashamed of - and Sarah's faith was not strong enough to endure the long waiting to see God's promise fulfilled. She took matters into her own hands, and giving her servant Hagar to Abraham, she said, **“Perhaps I shall obtain children by her”**. Surrogate motherhood was not God's way and resulted in real problems for all concerned. (16: 1-6)

But there came the day when the promise of a son was renewed and Sarah was specifically named as the mother. She laughed at the thought, and was reproved by the Lord for her cynical attitude. (18: 10-15) From then on, she believed with Abraham that the impossible is possible with God. A year

later, her son Isaac, which means 'laughter', was born. Perhaps this experience represents the high point of her personal faith in God, as indicated in the **Key Verse**. Her laughter reflected her joy that she had, at long last, given Abraham a son. God gave Sarah another 37 years in which to enjoy their family life together.

Abraham and Sarah enjoyed a long and happy marriage - it had its times of crises, days of tedium and disappointment, times when faith was at a low ebb, but when his wife died, we read that **“Abraham came to mourn for Sarah and to weep for her”**. (23: 1-2) Just as God intends for all marriages, Sarah had been a true companion and friend. (2: 18)

HAGAR AND ISHMAEL

Hagar, a slave girl from Egypt, became a victim of her circumstances. Although it was not God's will for Hagar to be given to Abraham, in order to produce an heir, Hagar may have counted it an honour! Unfortunately her success in becoming pregnant produced feelings of contempt for Sarah. This, in turn, caused Sarah to treat Hagar harshly, which resulted in Hagar running away. (16: 3-16) In spite of this, God saved her life and she returned to Sarah. The absolute reality of His presence and of His deliverance is expressed in the name of Hagar's expected child, Ishmael, **“God hears”**.

But the household never returned to its former harmony, and after the birth of Isaac circumstances demanded that Hagar and Ishmael leave forever. Hagar was not without blame and the result of her union with Abraham can be seen today. The Arab nations, which are the descendants of Ishmael, continue in their hostility towards Israel, descendants of Isaac. (21: 8-21) God, in His love and understanding, continued to watch over Hagar - not in some abstract way but by name, (21: 17) with specific guidance as to the future. Again, God proved that He is the God who sees and hears, the One who is able to provide in all the varied circumstances of life.

Study 2. Sarah and Hagar

1 READ *GENESIS 17: 15 & 16* AND SUMMARIZE WHAT GOD SAID TO ABRAHAM ABOUT HIS WIFE.

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2 SARAH FOUND THE TIME WAITING FOR GOD'S PROMISE TO BE FULFILLED TO BE VERY LONG.

a) What action did she take because of her impatience?

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b) How did this action bring sadness rather than joy?

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3 READ *GENESIS 18: 10-15* AND ANSWER THESE QUESTIONS.

a) How did Sarah react when she heard what the Lord was telling Abraham?

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b) By what supernatural event in Sarah's life did the Lord answer His own question, "*Is anything too hard for the Lord?*"?

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c) According to the *Key Verse*, what part did faith in God play in these events?

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d) Why should faith in God be important in your everyday life?

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4 IN *GENESIS 21: 14-21* ABRAHAM SENT HAGAR AND HER SON AWAY.

a) Where did they go and what difficulties did they encounter?

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b) In what way did God show His care and protection?

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c) Write out a verse which promises God's constant presence with YOU.

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5 GOD DOES NOT ALWAYS FULFIL HIS PROMISES STRAIGHT AWAY.

a) Write out a verse from *Psalms 37: 1-8* which would help us to wait for His time.

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b) How do we benefit from waiting for God's time in our lives?

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This study sheet belongs to:

Study 3. Rebekah

**READ: Genesis 24: 1-28, 60-67,
25: 24-28
and 27: 8-17**



KEY VERSE: Genesis 24: 58

“Then they called Rebekah and said to her, ‘Will you go with this man?’ And she said, ‘I will go’ .”

1. THE BEAUTIFUL BRIDE

The first Bible Reading brings us to the point where Isaac, God’s promised son to Abraham and Sarah, receives his bride - chosen for him by a trusted servant of his father. It was the normal thing in those days to have an arranged marriage. Abraham lived among people who did not know or worship the living God. He wanted to see that his son had for his wife, a woman who came from a suitable background, and had a knowledge and love of God. Abraham’s servant had been successful in bringing the beautiful Rebekah back as a bride for his master’s son.

Who is this Rebekah and what kind of young woman is she?

- She is a distant relative of Abraham and Isaac. **(24: 15)**
- She is industrious and helpful. **(24: 19-20)**
- She is attractive in appearance. **(24: 16)**
- She is eligible for marriage and is a virgin. **(24: 16)**

The young lady would surely be a good wife for Isaac and equal to the responsibilities of a large nomadic household.

Even her father and brother acknowledged that God’s hand was clearly in this marriage. **(24: 50)** But would Rebekah go back with the servant? It was a tense moment when the question was put to her. Her answer was definite! **(See Key Verse)**

2. THE MOTHER OF TWINS

Like Abraham and Sarah, Isaac and Rebekah had to wait many years for children. But unlike the former, they did not become impatient and use other

means to obtain a family. **“Now Isaac pleaded with the Lord for his wife . . . and Rebekah his wife conceived.” (25: 21)** In fact, she conceived twins and received a promise from the Lord that the older twin would serve the younger. But sadly, over the years, the children caused division between the parents. Esau, a rough, outdoor man who loved hunting, was his father’s favourite, while Jacob, a quieter, home loving person, was favoured by Rebekah. It was a situation which led to a weakening of faith and family life. Favouritism and rivalry led to deceitful actions which were quite outside of God’s will.

3. THE DECEITFUL WOMAN

Sadly, it seems that Rebekah had never taught Jacob the virtues of patience and faith because she herself had failed over the years to develop her own trust in God. As a result, Jacob stole the birthright, although God had already declared that it would be his. **(25: 23 & 29-34)** The birthright was a great privilege for the first-born son - a double share of the inheritance and a place of dignity and power within the family. No wonder Jacob wanted to make sure of it. When Isaac decided it was time to bless his son Esau instead of Jacob, Rebekah flew into a panic and encouraged Jacob to deceive his father in order to obtain the blessing for himself. This blessing was seen as a mark of favour for the first-born son, who would take up the responsibilities passed on by his father. It was already Jacob’s, on account of God’s promise, so Rebekah really had no need to act as she did. Rebekah and Jacob together were guilty of shamefully deceiving the aged and blind Isaac. The deception in a sense was a success **(See 27: 18-29)**, but the cost was high! Esau was so angry that Jacob’s life was in danger, and Rebekah was forced to send her favourite son away. It is most likely that she never saw him again. **(See 27: 41-45)**

Study 3. Rebekah

1 SUGGEST SOME REASONS WHY ABRAHAM WAS ANXIOUS THAT ISAAC'S WIFE SHOULD BE FROM AMONG HIS OWN PEOPLE.

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2 ANSWER TRUE OR FALSE:-

- a. Abraham's servant knew from the start, who Isaac's bride would be.
- b. Rebekah was beautiful.
- c. Abraham's servant asked God to guide him to the right person.
- d. The servant gave Rebekah expensive gifts.
- e. Rebekah was unwilling to leave home.

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3 "ACTIONS SPEAK LOUDER THAN WORDS."

i) List the things that Rebekah did for the servant.

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ii) What made him sure she was the bride for Isaac?

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4 ABRAHAM'S SERVANT PRAYED, "LET HER BE THE ONE WHOM YOU HAVE APPOINTED FOR YOUR SERVANT ISAAC". (24: 14)

a) Why is it important for a young Christian today to find the right partner for life - 'the one God has appointed'?

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b) Write out 2 Corinthians 6: 14.

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5 A. WHAT WERE THE NAMES OF REBEKAH'S SONS?

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B. READ CAREFULLY GENESIS 25: 25-27. HOW WERE THEY DIFFERENT IN:

(i) LOOKS?

(ii) PERSONALITY?

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6 A. WHAT WERE THE CONSEQUENCES OF FAVOURITISM IN THE UPBRINGING OF JACOB AND ESAU?

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B. WHAT LESSONS MIGHT PARENTS, TODAY, LEARN FROM THE STORY OF JACOB AND ESAU?

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7 " OH WHAT A TANGLED WEB WE WEAVE, WHEN FIRST WE PRACTICE TO DECEIVE."

OUTLINE BRIEFLY HOW THE LIVES OF REBEKAH AND HER SONS ILLUSTRATE THE TRUTH OF THESE WORDS.

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