

Abelardo Llamas
Professor Helman
Cultures and Traditions

Abraham and Jacob Discussion

February 19, 2007

Points Discussed:

- Genesis 22 Did Abraham know his son wouldn't be sacrificed?
- Genesis 22 Jesus Prophecy
- Genesis The men are insanely old
- Genesis 30 "Dan" is rather important
- Genesis 30 Deceit and retribution with flock
- Genesis 12 Honest mistake
- Genesis 28 Canaanite Women
- Genesis 12 Not all, but just Israelites
- Genesis 17 Name Change
- Genesis Circumcision
- Genesis 18 Royal "We"

- 1) The first thing that was discussed was the long life of the men in this period of time. It was discussed that they had a long life because they were blessed by god. Healthy and good people live long. The destruction of Sodom and Gomorrah shows that people are becoming more and more "evil" so the life span is slowly starting to decrease for these people. Perhaps also, the environment was better and so there were no people getting sick and could live longer. It was also thrown out there that maybe they had a different calendar so maybe they could have lived long because of this. The general agreement, however, was that these characters had a long life because it was an easier way to keep the stories continuous and without breaks.
- 2) We then discussed Abram's first deceit. Abram presents his wife Sarai as his sister and not as his wife for fear of Pharaoh killing him to make Sarai his wife. Pharaoh makes her his wife and after he is plagued he realizes that something is wrong. He pleads with Abram asking why he lied. Why did he lie was our next discussion? We had trouble answering this other than the fact that Abram was obviously looking out for himself. Perhaps it was because Pharaoh was a non-believer and this was God's way of getting around to punishing him for his lack of faith.
- 3) We then moved on to discuss the "special" people of God. Not ALL people were God's chosen people, but specifically the Israelites. To symbolize this, the Israelites begun circumcision and it was one of the first "laws". It was a symbol of the covenant made with God and it was a way to instill law that humans needed.

- 4) This went into the discussion of Abram's name change to Abraham. Abraham meant "the father of many nations" and God told him that from him the nations of the earth would come from his procreating. His name change symbolizes a new beginning or re-birth like that of the Catholic faith when you get a Confirmation name for your new beginning into your new life. Again the emphasis is in the idea that this is a new outward change to symbolize a change within.
- 5) We then shortly discussed the "Royal We". It was discussed that the "Royal We" seemed to foreshadow of the eventual view of "3 persons in 1 God".
- 6) Our discussion then stemmed to God's interaction with Abraham. God is always appearing before Abraham and speaking with him. From God's talk with Abraham regarding Sodom and Gomorrah we felt that God sought to please Abraham. We got this impression because he was gradually becoming more and more forgiving of the people in Sodom and Gomorrah. It didn't change their fate, but it appeared as though God sought to make Abraham happy. We came to the conclusion that Abraham was so close to God because he was the most faithful and righteous person in this time.
- 7) Our discussion then followed on to God's test of Abraham's faith. God wanted to test the lengths Abraham was willing to go to for a greater purpose and wanted to test his unwavering faith. However, it would be hard for anyone to sacrifice their child so we then discussed the idea that Abraham may have known that God would not allow Abraham to sacrifice his son. If he knew this, perhaps this is why he never flinched when it came to sacrificing his son.
- 8) Stemming from this we discussed a possible foreshadow of Jesus. The son of Abraham never struggled when he was being tied down as Jesus never struggled when he was being nailed to the cross. The son was blind folded similar perhaps to the blind faith in Jesus. Also, the son was being sacrificed as a lamb. Jesus' sacrifice is like that of a lamb and he is referred to as the Lamb of God.
- 9) Our last discussion was about the reading of the Bible. We discussed the literal and allegorical ways of reading the Bible. We discussed that by reading the Bible allegorically, the power of God is reduced considerably. It was discussed that you probably can't take everything in the Bible too literally, but to loose of an interpretation of the Bible can end up in a less effective and powerful meaning and story.