

# BASIC TRAINING: THE SOLDIER'S MANUAL

## Lesson Two: The Patriarchs

### Introduction:

1. From The Soldier's Manual Of Common Tasks, Warrior Skills Level One
  - a. "The Soldier training publications (STPs), also known as Soldier's manuals (SMs), provide the critical individual tasks for each military occupational specialty (MOS) that support the unit's full spectrum of missions. The NCO leadership uses the tasks in the SMs to train the Soldiers and measure the Soldier's proficiency on these unit-critical tasks. The manuals provide task performance and evaluation criteria and are the basis for individual training and evaluation in the unit and for task-based evaluation during resident training." (1)
  - b. "This Soldier's Manual of Common Tasks (SMCT), Warrior Skill Level (SL) 1, contains the individual tasks that are essential to the Army's ability to win on the modern battlefield. In an operational environment, regardless of job or individual MOS, each Soldier risks exposure to hostile actions. This manual contains the warrior skills that Soldiers must be able to perform to fight, survive, and win in combat. This SMCT gives the commander, NCO trainer or first-line supervisor, and individual Soldiers the information necessary to support integration and sustainment training in their units. This information allows trainers to plan, prepare, train, evaluate, and monitor individual training of warrior tasks. Using the appropriate mission training plan (MTP), MOS-specific STPs, and this manual helps provide the foundation for an effective unit-training plan." (SIC)
2. God's spiritual army, soldiers of the cross, also have a manual. This manual is vital to our mission and victory. We read it and commit to our hearts minds (**2 Timothy 3:16-17**)
3. The last Sunday of every month will be devoted to getting to know the spiritual soldier's manual better. Last month we began by looking at three periods... Before The Flood, The Flood, and The Scattering Of The People. Today we will continue on to the time of the Patriarchs. I want to accomplish three goals: (1) Help us learn the Bible storyline better (2) Learn important lessons from each time period (3) See how the theme of God's word is woven throughout the story of the Bible... salvation in Jesus. I hope to help those who don't know these stories well to learn them and those who do know them to look at them with fresh eyes and appreciate them more.

### A. THE BIBLICAL NARRATIVE (A PERIOD OF ABOUT 300 YEARS)

NOTE: The term patriarch is not a word specifically used by the Bible, but the concept is certainly Biblical. It refers to the time before the Law of Moses when God spoke and dealt directly with the fathers of families. It was a time when people existed more in family clans. The term "patriarch" means "Ruling Father." Some identify three patriarchs in the Bible story line: Abraham, Isaac, and Jacob. I include Joseph as a patriarch as well since he fits the mold.

#### 1. Scene One: Abraham

- a. 10 generations after Noah, we are introduced to Abraham. He is 75 years old when we first are introduced to him. God tells Abraham to get move from Ur, he and family, and travel to a different land. God didn't say where he was going, just that God would lead him there. God then promised Abraham to make a great nation out of him, a remarkable promise since Abraham and his wife Sarah were childless. God also promised to give Abraham a great land. Last, God promised him that in his seed all nation of the earth would be blessed. This great seed

- promise is a continuation of the promise made to Sarah in the Garden of Eden. Abraham & Sarah along with his nephew Lot traveled on. God showed him the land of promise but Abraham was to continue his nomadic life (**Gen 12:1-5**)
- b. As they journeyed, Abraham and Lot realized the land could not support both of them since they both were wealthy and had much livestock. So Abraham suggests they separate and he gives Lot the first choice of where to go. Lot chose to “pitch his tent” toward Sodom because it looked the most appealing and beneficial. Abraham went to the more difficult & mountainous region. Lot’s decision would come back to haunt him. He found himself the victim of war, was taken captive, and Abraham had to rescue him. The lands of Sodom and Gomorrah proved to be insanely wicked. God decided to destroy these cities with fire and brimstone, but Abraham interceded for Lot and God delivered him safe. But sin corrupted his wife & daughters (**Gen 13:10-11; 14:11-12; 19:24-26**)
  - c. During this time, God appeared to Abraham again and repeated the promise that he would be the father of great nation. His descendants would number as the stars of heaven! He is now 86 and still childless. Abraham trusted God’s promise and God declared him righteous based on his faith. But as time passes with no child, Sarah suggests Abraham have his son through her handmaid Hagar. Abraham does, and Ishmael is born. God tells Abraham that is not how it is supposed to work and that Sarah would give birth. A year later, Sarah gives birth to a son and they name him Isaac. Abraham was 100 years old (**Genesis 15:5-6; 21:1-7**)
  - d. Some time passes, some suggest 15 years, and God gives Abraham the most difficult command of his life. Take Isaac and sacrifice him on the mountain. Abraham gets up early in the morning and takes Isaac to worship. Abraham had offered many sacrifices before and one thing he knew, sacrifices die. But Abraham believed God would do something about this because Isaac was the son of promise. So as they go up, Abraham says he and the boy would come back. He told Isaac God would provide the offering. Abraham reasoned that God could even raise Isaac from the dead if necessary. He builds the altar, lays Isaac, and raises his knife. Suddenly God stopped him and a ram emerged in the bushes as a substitute. God provided just as Abraham said! (**Gen. 22:1-3, 7-8, 15-18**)
  - e. Sarah died at 127 years of age. Abraham married Keturah and had more children before he died at the age of 175 years of age. He lived a good long life.

## 2. Scene Two: Isaac

- a. Right before Abraham died, he sent his senior servant to find a wife for Isaac among their people. Eliezer went to Nahor, Isaac’s uncle where he meets Rebekah. After explaining his intentions they let her go and be Isaac’s wife. When Isaac was 40, Rebekah gave birth to twins, Jacob & Esau. God alluded to a struggle that would take place & how two nations would emerge (**Gen 24:67; 25:23**)
- b. A while later, in the midst of a famine, God repeated to Isaac the promises He had made to Abraham. He promised him a great land, nation, and blessing. Even though time had passed & Abraham died, God had not forgotten (**Gen 26:3-5**).

- c. When Esau looked for a wife, he married a woman from among the Hittite people. Her family made life bitter for Isaac and Rebekah. Before his death, Isaac instructed Jacob to make sure he married from among his own people, from the people of his uncle Laban. He then repeated the promises to Jacob (**Gen 28:2-5**)

### 3. Scene Three: Jacob

- a. As Jacob and Esau grew up, their parents played favorites. Rebekah loved Jacob more and Isaac loved Esau more. This created fertile ground for animosity & jealousy. One day Isaac sent Esau hunting to get some wild game which Isaac loved. Esau came back hungry & exhausted. He found Jacob cooking some stew and was craving. So Jacob agreed to give Esau some, if Esau would give him his birthright. The birthright meant twice the inheritance, the ability to lead the family clan, and spiritually... the ancestry of the seed promise. Esau didn't value his birthright so he agreed. Later, he deeply regretted this (**Gen 25:29-34**)
- b. Sometime later, Isaac was old and nearing death. Rebekah convinced Jacob to trick Isaac into giving him the blessing that belonged to Esau. So Jacob put animal hair on his arms and prepared a wild game meal like Esau would and presented it to Isaac. Isaac fell for it and gave Jacob the blessing that belonged to Esau. Esau hated Jacob and waited for Isaac to die so he could kill his brother. Rebekah caught word and sent Jacob away to his uncle Laban's house until things subsided. Jacob was told to marry from among his people (**Gen 27:43-45**)
- c. As Jacob was traveling, he camped toward Haran. There he slept, using a stone as a pillow. God used a dream to speak to him. He dreamed of a ladder that extended from Earth to Heaven. Angels were descending and ascending on it. God was certainly showing Jacob that He would be with Jacob, but there was more... God gave him the promises made to Abraham & Isaac (**Gen 28:13-15**)
- d. When Jacob arrived at the territory of his uncle Laban, he sees Rachel his daughter. They go back to Laban's house and Jacob falls in love with Rachel. He agrees to work for Laban for 7 years as dowry for marrying Rachel. On their wedding day, Laban tricked Jacob into marrying her older sister, Leah, instead. So Jacob worked another 7 years to marry Rachel. Jacob, who had manipulated & lied to take advantage of Esau, suffered the same thing from Laban. Through his wives Jacob would go on to have 12 sons and 1 daughter. These sons would eventually become the fathers of the 12 tribes of Israel. (**Gen 29:23, 25, 30**)
- e. When Jacob leaves Laban, he heads for him and a dreaded reunion with Esau. Along the way, God reveals to Jacob that angels were with him. This gave Jacob great comfort and he named the place Mahanaim, which means two camps (one for Jacob and one for the angels of God). But Jacob still struggled to trust that everything would turn out okay. He divided his family up into two groups, his own Mahanaim, thus taking matters into his own hands. After sending them away, Jacob is alone and God sends an angel to wrestle with him. This strange event was a micro chasm of his life... He had been wrestling with God and man. Jacob gets the point, rises to meet Esau, and still braces himself for the worst. But Esau sees him, loves him, hugs him, and rejoices! (**Gen. 32:1-2, 28; 33:3-4**)

#### 4. Scene Four: Joseph

- a. One of Jacob's 12 sons was named Joseph. Jacob loved Joseph and Joseph became his favorite child. Jacob made him a robe, or coat, of many colors. It was not only something of great cost, it was a symbol of his favoritism. This caused great trouble among the brothers. Familiar? Joseph had a dream where 11 sheaves & stars bowed before him. He told it to his brothers (**Genesis 37:3-4**).
- b. Joseph's brothers were filled with jealousy. They conspired together at first to kill him. They mocked him calling him "The Dreamer." Reuben stepped up to save his life. Instead they decided to sell him to some traders as a slave. They dipped his colorful coat in animals blood and showed it to their father. They let him to assume Joseph was dead & mourned him. These traders made their way to Egypt. Joseph was sold as a slave there (**Gen. 37:18-19, 27-28, 31-33**)
- c. For Joseph, life in Egypt was a roller coaster ride. He was bought by Potiphar, an officer of Pharaoh. He served Potiphar faithfully and nothing was kept from Joseph. Potiphar's wife wanted to commit fornication with Joseph, but he refused, running away. She grabbed his coat and concocted a lie claiming Joseph raped her. He was thrown in jail. There he served faithfully and even interpreted some dreams by the power of God. Eventually news of this came to Pharaoh who had his own dreams that needed interpreted. Joseph interpreted them, again by God's power, and showed how Egypt would soon face 7 years of plenty followed by 7 years of famine. Pharaoh promoted Joseph to second in command and gave him charge over preparing for these events (**Gen. 41:37-41**)
- d. Back in Canaan, Joseph's brothers have no clue what's gone on with him. They suffer the famine too. They hear Egypt had prepared and had plenty of food, so they come there. They appear before Joseph, but don't realize it is him at first. Joseph tests them, to see how they had changed, and get them to bring their father up. When he finally revealed himself to his family, there was weeping and joy. Joseph completely forgave them. He brought them to appreciate the way God had used their evil act to do something incredible (**Genesis 45:5-8**)
- e. Joseph gets his family to move to Egypt and settle in the land of Goshen. He continued to be a pillar of faith for his family. Before his death, he made his family promise that when they left Egypt for the promised land that they would carry his bones with them. Joseph still trusted God's promises! (**Gen. 50:24-26**)

#### 5. Post-Credit Scene: Job

- a. The book of Job is placed in the Bible where it is because of its literary style and not because of the time in which it took place. It is poetry, where Genesis is history. There is no direct statement within the book of Job identifying when he lived, however there are some clues. Two of the biggest clues are the ways God spoke and dealt directly with Job & his work of intercession as a father. So most people believe Job lived sometime during the days of the patriarchs (**Passage**)
- b. As the story opens, it sounds like the dream life. A righteous man, a wife, 7 sons & 3 daughters, a large estate, & profitable livestock. He had it all, including close fellowship with God. He loved God & loved his family deeply (**Job 1:1-3**)

- c. The opening scene of a perfect family cuts away to reveal a showdown between God and Satan. A showdown Job had no clue about. Satan brought an accusation claiming the only reason Job served God was that God had blessed him. If God took away the blessings, Satan believed Job would curse God. God refused, but allowed Satan to afflict Job. Job seemed to lose everything in life **(Job 1:11-12)**
- d. Job wrestled the whole time with his faith, but never turned his back on God. He stayed true even when his wife advised him to give up. He kept his faith even when his best friends argued to him that God must be punishing him. Job was not perfect, God even corrects him, but never gave up! **(Job 1:21-22)**
- e. At the height of his despair, God took Job on a tour of nature so to speak. God pointed out the way all nature worked so well together. Job could see the incredible design and purpose. God showed Job all kinds of animals, including two dinosaurs, that were impressive and creative. These animals were more proof of God's providence and purpose. Message? Through it all God was in control. God knows best, God's wisdom far surpasses man's wisdom, & God can be trusted in every circumstance. God never told Job what took place. He just needed to know God was in control & would do what is right **(Job 42:1-6)**
- f. Finally, God restored what Job had lost & blessed him more. Even corrected his friends
- g. This narrative isn't just about Job, but also us. Satan didn't just challenge Job that day, but all people who would serve God. Do we just serve God because He has blessed us or is our devotion deeper? Do we serve God because it is right and because God is God? Do we see the evidence of His wisdom & power & trust?

## **B. TIMELESS LESSONS FROM THE NARRATIVE**

1. We learn from the patriarchs what real obedience looks like. When God called Abraham to get up and leave his home, he obeyed. He didn't have to have all the answers or to first pass it through the sifter of his own logic. He obeyed. When God told him to offer his own son, Isaac, Abraham obeyed. He obeyed immediately, rising early in the morning. He obeyed without complaint. He obeyed completely. How do I obey? **(Heb. 11:17-22)**
2. These patriarchs show us what faith means. Faith is not simply saying God exists. Faith trusts God's promises, even when the passing of time or difficult situations would cause us to doubt. Faith is willing to follow God wherever He leads, trusting His way is best. Faith is submitting to God instructions and God's will in everything **(Hebrews 11:1, 6, 8-9)**
3. While the word grace isn't in this story line, the idea of grace is all over it. Abraham lied, twice. Isaac lied. Isaac and Rebekah played favoritism. Jacob did as well. Joseph's brothers plotted to kill and then deceived their father. Joseph appears to be arrogant at times early on. These men had their problems, but God stayed faithful. They had their problems, but God still considered them faithful. Their faithfulness was not defined by the moment, but by the life. We should thank God for this! We should show this same consideration when we evaluate the lives of others as well! **(Rom 4:1-4, 23-25)**
4. The lives of these patriarchs remind us of the danger of sin. Abraham lied twice about Sarah being his wife to save his own neck... next thing you know Isaac was lying too. Isaac and Rebekah played favorites and it destroyed their children's relationship. Then Jacob acts

with manipulation and deceit toward Esau, only to see his sons acting that way toward him. Jacob repeated the favoritism he saw in his parents with his son Joseph, which led to much heartache and ruin. We deceive ourselves when we think that our sin & worldly decisions only affect me. Sin spreads. Sin infects. Sin is always serious! **(1 Cor 5:6-7)**

5. Finally, these patriarchs remind us to live for Heaven while living in this world. Abraham, Isaac, Jacob, and Joseph were nomads. Their physical reality was a representation of who they were spiritually. This world was not their home & knew it. They lived for the eternal. Have we gotten too comfortable? Have we lost focus? **(Heb 11:10, 13-16)**

When Abraham doubted, God gave him a sign to confirm his faith (Genesis 15:8-21)

### **C. THE MESSIANIC THREAD WOVEN THROUGHOUT THE NARRATIVE**

1. Remember, there is a scarlet thread woven throughout the entire Bible. It is thread of Jesus, of redemption and of salvation. If you cut the Bible open at any point, it will bleed Jesus. The Bible is HISTORY, His-Story... Even in the historical narratives like the patriarchs
2. One thing that binds the patriarchs together is the presence of the three promises. A great nation, a great land, and a great blessing. In the Garden of Eden God promised Eve that her seed would crush the head of Satan. Now, these patriarchs have the promise given to them that in their seed all nations of the Earth would be blessed. A descendant would come through them who would do something incredible for ALL people. That seed, that descendant, was Jesus. The blessing? Salvation for all! **(Gal. 3:8; Rom 4:11-12)**
3. Another part of the scarlet thread is found in Abraham's sacrifice of Isaac. Perhaps we think, "How could God ask Abraham to do that?" God told Abraham to take his son, his only son, Isaac, whom he loved and sacrifice him on that mountain. Fast forward 2,000 years and it would be God who would be taking His Son, His only Son, Jesus, whom He loved and sacrificing Him for our sins. With Abraham, that ram was a sacrifice for His Son. For God, Jesus was the Lamb of God, the One who died in our place. Additionally, there is good evidence the place Abraham took Isaac was the place Jesus died! **(2 Cor. 5:14-15)**

References:

- (1) [https://www.atu.edu/rotc/docs/16\\_stp21\\_1.pdf](https://www.atu.edu/rotc/docs/16_stp21_1.pdf)

Notice the connections between the song of Rebekah's brother and mother and God's promise to Abraham. How did they know this? Was it an idiom or specific meaning? (Genesis 24:60 & 22:17)