



The bible refers to the original fathers of the Hebrew culture as the "Patriarchs". This begins with Abram and follows his lineage through Isaac, Jacob, and the 12 sons of Jacob who defined the Israelite tribes. These men were not chosen by God for any reason other than it was His will. They were great, strong, faithful men and at the same time they were broken sinful men. Their lives are traced from **Genesis (11:27)** where we're told of Abram's birth in Ur of the Chaldeans through **Genesis (50:26)** where we're told of Joseph's death in Egypt. All of the Jewish traditions today are rooted in the travels, trials, and adventures of the Patriarchs. God used them as examples to the world of how wonderful things can be when we trust in God and follow His direction as well as how bad things can be when we purposely deviate from the will of God and try to run our lives with our flesh and self-will. See **Galatians (4:21-31)**, **Romans (9:1-29)**, and **Hebrews (11)**.

Abram (Abraham)

- Abram was born to Terah and took a wife, Sarai and they moved from Ur in Babylonia to Haran. (**Genesis 11:27-32**)
- Abram was 75 years old and God called him to go to the land of Canaan. God promised to make him a great nation, bless him, and bless those that blessed him and curse those that cursed him. (**Genesis 12:1-9**)
- There was a great famine forcing Abram and Sarai to go South to Egypt. He lied to Pharaoh and said Sarai was his sister resulting in them being sent out of Egypt. (**Genesis 12:10-20**)
- Abram separated from Lot (his brother's son). Lot went East into Sodom and Abram stayed in Canaan. **Genesis (13)**
- Lot was kidnapped and Abram rescued him. This resulted in the blessing of Abram by Melchizedek (King & Priest). **Genesis (14)**
- God promised Abram land and descendants and an heir that would come from his own body. **Genesis (15)**
- Abram was 86 years old and due to a lack of faith, he conceived an illegitimate child (**Ishmael**) by the servant Hagar. **Genesis (16)**
- Abram was 99 years old and God made the "Abrahamic Covenant" with him. The sign was circumcision on the 8th day. God changed Abram to Abraham and Sarai to Sarah and promised them **Isaac** to carry on the covenant. All males were circumcised (Ishmael was 13 years old and was promised 12 princely descendants). **Genesis (17)**
- Abraham interceded for Sodom and God saved Lot. **Genesis (18-19)**
- Abraham lied to Abimelech about Sarah. **Genesis (20)**
- Isaac was born, Ishmael scoffed him after he was weaned, Hagar and Ishmael were sent away and went to Egypt. Abraham also contended with Abimelech over some wells. **Genesis (21)**
- God "tested" Abraham's faith with the sacrifice of Isaac. This story mirrors Jesus [Abraham = God, Isaac = Unsaved mankind, Ram = Substitutionary Sacrifice for mankind (Jesus).] **Genesis (22)**
- Sarah died at 127 years old and was buried at the cave of Machpelah in Hebron which he purchased for 400 shekels of silver from Ephron (one of the sons of Heth). **Genesis (23)**
- Abraham sent his oldest servant to Mesopotamia (City of Nahor) to find a wife for Isaac. He found Rebekah who was the daughter of Nahor (Abraham's brother). Isaac married Rebekah. This story mirrors the rapture [Abraham = God the Father, Servant = Holy Spirit, Rebekah = Christian, Isaac = Jesus] **Genesis (24)**
- Abraham married Keturah and she bore 6 sons (Zimran, Jokshan, Medan, Midian, Ishbak, and Shuah). Abraham died at the age of 175 and was buried in the cave of Machpelah. **Genesis (25:1-10)**
- Ishmael died (137) with many descendants. **Genesis (25:11-18)**

Isaac

- Isaac married Rebekah at the age of 40. **Genesis (25:19-20)**
- When Isaac was 60, Rebekah gave birth to twins (Esau (red) was 1st and Jacob (heel catcher/contender) was 2nd). **Genesis (25:21-26)**
- The boys grew... Esau was a skillful field dwelling hunter loved by Isaac and Jacob was a mild tent dweller loved by Rebekah. Esau sold Jacob his birthright for a bowl of red stew. **Genesis (25:27-34)**
- God commanded Isaac to dwell in Gerar during a famine. He lied about Rebekah to Abimelech and contended over wells and land; However, he prospered greatly due to God. **Genesis (26)**
- Esau married 2 Hittite women when he was 40. **Genesis (26:34-35)**
- Isaac blessed Jacob over Esau. **Genesis (27)**
- Isaac sent Jacob to Rebekah's brother for a wife. **Genesis (28:1-5)**
- Isaac died at 180 years old. **Genesis (35:28-29)**

Jacob (Israel)

- Jacob went to Padan-Aram to find a wife from Laban. On his way he had a dream about a ladder to heaven and saw God. **Genesis (28)**
- Jacob worked 7 years for Laban in order to marry Rachel; However, Laban gave him Leah instead so he worked 7 more years to marry Rachel. He worked 7 more years (21 total). **Genesis (29:1-30)**
- 11 sons and 1 daughter were born to Jacob. **Genesis (29:31-30:24)**
- After Joseph was born, Jacob wanted to leave Laban and he made a deal for goats and lambs as a gift of prosperity. **Genesis (30:25-43)**
- Jacob fled from Laban, Laban pursued and they formed a covenant that neither would pass a pile of stones setup. **Genesis (31)**
- Jacob continued and saw angels. He then sent messengers ahead to his brother Esau due to fear of retribution. He also sent his family over a brook and was left alone for the night. **Genesis (32:1-21)**
- Jacob wrestled with God all night and prevailed so God broke his hip and renamed him "**Israel**". **Genesis (32:22-32)**
- Jacob met Esau and it went well then, they separated. **Genesis (33)**
- Dinah was defiled so Simeon and Levi took revenge. **Genesis (34)**
- God met Jacob leaving Padan-Aram and re-confirmed his name to be "Israel". Rachel gave birth to Joseph and died. **Genesis (35)**
- Joseph was betrayed by his brothers and sold into slavery in Egypt. There are several important stories about Joseph. **Genesis (37-47)**
- Jacob blessed Ephraim (younger) and Manasseh. **Genesis (48)**
- Jacob blessed his sons and prophesied their futures. **Genesis (49)**
- Jacob died at 147 buried in the cave at Machpelah. **Genesis (47:28)**

The 12 Tribes of Israel

The 12 tribes of Israel are named after the direct male descendants of Jacob after he was renamed "Israel" (He struggles with God) by God.

Born through Leah (1st wife):

1. **Reuben** means "The LORD has surely looked on my affliction. Now therefore, my husband will love me." (**Genesis 29:32**).
2. **Simeon** means "Because the LORD has heard that I am unloved, He has therefore given me this son also." (**Genesis 29:33**).
3. **Levi** means "Now this time my husband will become attached to me, because I have borne him three sons." (**Genesis 29:34**).
4. **Judah** means "Now I will praise the LORD." (**Genesis 29:35**).

Born through Bilhah (Rachel's hand maiden):

5. **Dan** means "God has judged my case; and He has also heard my voice and given me a son." (**Genesis 30:6**).
6. **Naphtali** means "With great wrestlings I have wrestled with my sister, and indeed I have prevailed." (**Genesis 30:8**).

Born through Zilpah (Leah's hand maiden):

7. **Gad** means "A troop comes!" (**Genesis 30:11**).
8. **Asher** means "I am happy, for the daughters will call me blessed." (**Genesis 30:13**).

Born through Leah (1st wife):

9. **Issachar** means "God has given me my wages, because I have given my maid to my husband." (**Genesis 30:18**).
10. **Zebulun** means "God has endowed me with a good endowment; now my husband will dwell with me, because I have borne him six sons." (**Genesis 30:20**). Daughter Dinah was born later to Leah.

Born through Rachel (2nd "desired" wife):

11. **Joseph** means "God has taken away my reproach." (**Genesis 30:24**). Sons Ephraim and Manasseh are later tribe designees.
12. **Benjamin** (Ben-Oni) means "Do not fear; you will have this son also." (**Genesis 35:17-18**). Rachel died during child birth.