

structural theme, woven throughout the book of Genesis is origin of the nation of Israel, God’s seed of righteousness, through His divine calling, through which He plans to accomplish the redemption of mankind. God will call several men who fulfilled their divine destinies to create the nation of Israel. These patriarchs, Adam, Noah, Abraham, Isaac, Jacob and Joseph, will play leading roles in preparing for the establishment of this nation in much the same way the Gospels and the book of Acts reveals the origin of the Church and how men like Jesus Christ, Peter, Stephen, Philip the evangelist and Paul the apostle played leading roles in the establishment of the early Church. Thus, the book of Genesis is structured around the genealogies of these men of righteousness in order to explain its theme of the lineage of the nation of Israel. We can even find Paul comparing Adam to Christ. He says in Romans 5:14 that Adam served as a figure of the coming Messiah. He takes a number of comparisons between Adam and Jesus Christ in Romans 5:6-21 and 1 Corinthians 15:1-50.

Romans 5:14, “Nevertheless death reigned from Adam to Moses, even over them that had not sinned after the similitude of Adam's transgression, who is the figure of him that was to come.”

1 Corinthians 15:22, “For as in Adam all die, even so in Christ shall all be made alive.”

1 Corinthians 15:45, “And so it is written, The first man Adam was made a living soul; the last Adam was made a quickening spirit.”

The book of Genesis will explain man’s fallen state and show us God’s plan to restore man to his original state of righteousness. Thus, to bring mankind to his destination of righteousness and eternal rest seen in the book of Revelation, God must produce a righteous offspring. Thus, the theme and emphasis of God’s divine calling in Genesis shows how He intervened in the lives of righteous men to become fruitful and multiply, through which He will accomplish the founding of the nation of Israel, a holy people of God.

C. Imperative Theme – Walking in the Steps of the Faith of our Father Abraham – God calls mankind to faith and obedience to Him. Under the old and new covenants, man’s initial response to God is to follow in the steps of Abraham, the father of our faith. Phil Edwards sums up the third theme of the book of Genesis by telling the story of when he was first given a pastorate at the age of twenty-seven. As he cried and prayed unto the Lord for help in this new position, the Lord said to him, “Walk in fellowship with me, stay humble, and you will bear seed after your kind.”⁴⁷

IX. Literary Structure

The book of Genesis is made up of an introduction (1:1 to 2:3), which is often called The Creation Story, followed by a collection of ten distinct genealogies that serve to explain the origin of the nations, and in particular, the nation of Israel (2:4 to 50:26). These ten genealogies seem to link vast expenses of time together. They confirm the lineage of Jesus in Matthew 1:1-17 and Luke 3:23-38. Thus, God’s plan of redemption was taking place through the lineage of Israel during these generations. The story of Genesis tells us the origin of the Gentile nations, with special emphasis upon the origin of the Hebrew nation, a people who are the descendants of Abraham and chosen by God to bear the Messiah. The divisions of each of these generations are distinctly marked within the text. The important generations of Abraham, Isaac and Jacob make up the largest portion of the book of Genesis.

Introduction: The Creation of the Heavens & the Earth	1:1 to 2:3
1. The Generation of the Heavens and the Earth	2:4 to 4:26
a. The Creation of Man	2:4-25
b. The Fall	3:1-24
c. Cain and Abel	4:1-26
2. The Generation of Adam	5:1 to 6:8
3. The Generation of Noah	6:9 to 9:29
4. The Generation of the Sons of Noah	10:1 to 11:9

⁴⁷Phil Edwards, “Meeting with Volunteers,” First Assembly of God, Panama City, Florida, 12 December 2010.

5. The Generation of Shem	11:10-26
6. The Generation of Terah (& Abraham)	11:27 to 25:11
7. The Generation Ishmael	25:12-18
8. The Generation of Isaac	25:19 to 35:29
9. The Generation of Esau	36:1-46
10. The Generation of Jacob	37:1 to 50:26 ⁴⁸

The rest of the Pentateuch (Exodus to Deuteronomy) will show how God raised up this nation as a witness of His redemptive plan for mankind, who had been gathered into nations and scattered throughout the earth.

We can find two major divisions within the book of Genesis that reveal God's foreknowledge in designing a plan of redemption to establish a righteous people upon earth. Paul reveals this four-fold plan in Romans 8:29-30: predestination, calling, justification, and glorification.

Romans 8:29-30, "For whom he did foreknow, he also did predestinate to be conformed to the image of his Son, that he might be the firstborn among many brethren. Moreover whom he did predestinate, them he also called: and whom he called, them he also justified: and whom he justified, them he also glorified."

The book of Genesis will reflect the first two phase of redemption, which are predestination and calling. We find in the first division in Genesis 1:1 to 2:3 emphasizing predestination. The Creation Story gives us God's predestined plan for mankind, which is to be fruitful, multiply, and fill the earth with righteous offspring. The second major division is found in Genesis 2:4 to 50:25, which gives us ten genealogies, in which God calls men of righteousness to play a role in His divine plan of redemption.

I. Introduction: The Story of Creation (Predestination) (1:1 to 2:3) – The book of Genesis opens with an introductory passage giving the story of the creation of the heavens and the earth (1:1 to 2:3). The Story of Creation in the book of Genesis tells us that God created the heavens and the earth in six days and rested upon the seventh day. Hebrews 11:3 reveals the central message in this genealogy that stirs our faith in God when it says, announcing that God created all things by the power of His spoken word, saying, "Through faith we understand that the worlds were framed by the word of God, so that things which are seen were not made of things which do appear." While the Story of Creation reveals God's plan for all of creation to be fruitful and multiply, particular emphasis is given to His charge to mankind to multiply and fill the earth. In this introduction, God commanded the plant kingdom to procreate (Gen 1:11); He also commanded the creatures to be fruitful and multiply (Gen 1:22); and He commanded Adam and Eve to be fruitful and multiply in order to take dominion over the earth (Gen 1:28). God created life in a progression of higher order with each order receiving a more important command. Thus, God's original destiny for each order of His creation was to be fruitful and to multiply with the lower orders serving the higher orders. The law of multiplication is still a fundamental law governing His eternal destiny for creation. One preacher said that if a person can believe the story of Creation, then he can believe the rest of the Bible.

Everything that God does, He does for a purpose. The calling and destiny of the plant kingdom was to procreate after itself (1:11). The calling and destiny of the animal kingdom was to be fruitful and to multiply (1:22). Man's calling and destiny was to be fruitful, and to multiply and to take dominion over the earth (1:28). It is interesting to note that God did not command the plant kingdom in the same way He did the animals and man plants do not have a mind and reasoning faculties as do the higher kingdoms. The next section of the book of Genesis called the Genealogy of the Heavens and the Earth (3:1 to 4:26) will show how man failed in his calling and brought all of creation into vanity and travail. While each of the ten genealogies recorded in the book of Genesis open with a divine commission and end with the fulfillment of that commission, the divine commission that God gave Adam in the Story of Creation remains incomplete

⁴⁸Note that there are other genealogies contained within the Holy Bible: the genealogy of Moses and Aaron from twelve sons of Jacob to Moses and Aaron (Ex 6:14-27), the genealogy of Moses and Aaron (Num 3:1-4), the genealogy of Pharez to David the king (Ruth 4:18-22), the numerous genealogies found in the book of 1 Chronicles, the genealogy of Jesus Christ (Matt 1:1-17), the genealogy of Jesus Christ (Lk 3:23-38).

until the fulfillment of biblical prophecy and the new heavens and earth restore man to his original purpose and intent.

In addition, everything that God created was designed to give in order to fulfill its destiny and purpose. The sun gives its light in order to sustain life on earth. The land was created as a habitat for creeping creature and the beasts of the earth. The waters were created as a habitat for fish. The sky was created to serve as a habitat for birds. Thus, the sun, moon, stars, earth, seas and sky were created to serve and support life on earth as well as to serve as signs and wonders. The plant kingdom was created to serve the animals and man. The animal kingdom was created to serve man. In fact, every plant species and animal species was created to serve mankind in a unique way. Finally, man was created to serve God.

In addition, life was created in order to produce life. Each plant was created to produce seed after its kind. Each animal was commanded to be fruitful and multiply. The flowers were created to give forth beauty. Mankind was created to give God fellowship. Thus, each form of life was created with a role to play in God's overall creation.

Since Adam serves as a type and figure of Jesus Christ (Rom 5:14), the message of Genesis 1:1 to 2:3 to the New Testament Church is for the believer to be conformed unto the image of God's Son (Rom 8:29). Every believer is predestined to become like Jesus Christ, and the writings of the New Testament take the believer on a spiritual journey in order to fulfill this divine destiny.

Romans 5:14, "Nevertheless death reigned from Adam to Moses, even over them that had not sinned after the similitude of Adam's transgression, who is the figure of him that was to come."

II. Ten Genealogies (Calling) (2:4 to 50:26) - *The Genealogies of Righteous Men and their Divine Callings (To Be Fruitful and Multiply)* - The ten genealogies found within the book of Genesis are structured in a way that traces the seed of righteousness from Adam to Noah to Shem to Abraham to Isaac and to Jacob and the seventy souls that followed him down into Egypt. The book of Genesis closes with the story of the preservation of these seventy souls, leading us into the book of Exodus where we see the creation of the nation of Israel while in Egyptian bondage, which nation of righteousness God will use to be a witness to all nations on earth in His plan of redemption. Thus, we see how the book of Genesis concludes with the origin of the nation of Israel while its first eleven chapters reveal that the God of Israel is in fact that God of all nations and all creation.

The genealogies of the six righteous men in Genesis (Adam, Noah, Shem, Abraham, Isaac, Jacob) are the emphasis in this first book of the Old Testament, with each of their narrative stories opening with a divine commission from God to these men, and closing with the fulfillment of prophetic words concerning the divine commissions. This structure suggests that the author of the book of Genesis wrote under the office of the prophet in that the prophecy is given and fulfilled, noting that all the books of the Old Testament were written by men of God who moved in the office of the prophet. We find a reference to the fulfillment of these divine commissions by the patriarchs in Hebrews 11:1-40. The underlying theme of the Holy Scriptures is God's plan of redemption for mankind. Thus, the book of Genesis places emphasis upon these men of righteousness because of the role that they play in this divine plan as they fulfilled their divine commissions. This explains why the genealogies of Ishmael (Gen 25:12-18) and of Esau (Gen 36:1-46) are relatively brief, because God does not discuss the destinies of these two men in the book of Genesis. These two men were not men of righteousness, for they missed their destinies because of sin. Ishmael persecuted Isaac and Esau sold his birthright. However, it helps us to understand that God has blessed Ishmael and Esau because of Abraham although the seed of the Messiah and our redemption does not pass through their lineage. There were six righteous men did fulfill their destinies in order to preserve a righteous seed so that God could create a righteous nation from the fruit of their loins. *Illustration* – As a young school child learning to read, I would check out biographies of famous men from the library, take them home and read them as a part of class assignments. The lives of these men stirred me up and placed a desire within me to accomplish something great for mankind as did these men. In like manner, the patriarchs of the genealogies in Genesis are designed to stir up our faith in God and encourage us to walk in their footsteps in obedience to God.

There is much more history and events that took place surrounding these individuals emphasized in the book of Genesis, which can be found in other ancient Jewish writings, such as *The Book of Jasher* and *The Book of Jubilees*. However, the Holy Scriptures and the book of Genesis focus upon the particular events that shaped God's plan of righteousness. Thus, it was unnecessary to include many of these historical events that were irrelevant to God's plan of redemption.

In addition, if we see that the ten genealogies contained within the book of Genesis show to us the seed of righteousness that God has preserved in order to fulfill His promise that the "seed of woman" would bruise the serpent's head in Genesis 3:15, then we must understand that each of these men of righteousness had a particular calling, destiny, and purpose for their lives. We can find within each of these genealogies the destiny of each of these men of God, for each one of them fulfilled their destiny. These individual destinies are mentioned at the beginning of each of their genealogies.

It is important for us to search these passages of Scripture and learn how each of these men fulfilled their destiny in order that we can better understand that God has a destiny and a purpose for each of His children as He continues to work out His divine plan of redemption among the children of men. This means that He has a destiny for you and me. Thus, these stories will show us how other men fulfilled their destinies and help us learn how to fulfill our destiny. The fact that there are ten callings in the book of Genesis, and since the number "10" represents the concept of countless, many, or numerous, we should understand that God calls out men in each subsequent generation until God's plan of redemption is complete.

We can even examine the meanings of each of their names in order to determine their destiny, which was determined for them from a child. Adam's name means "ruddy, i.e. a human being" (*Strong*), for it was his destiny to begin the human race. Noah's name means, "rest" (*Strong*). His destiny was to build the ark and save a remnant of mankind so that God could restore peace and rest to the fallen human race. God changed Abram's name to Abraham, meaning, "father of a multitude" (*Strong*), because his destiny was to live in the land of Canaan and believe God for a son of promise so that his seed would become fruitful and multiply and take dominion over the earth. Isaac's name means, "laughter" (*Strong*) because he was the child of promise. His destiny was to father two nations, believing that the elder would serve the younger. Isaac overcame the obstacles that hindered the possession of the land, such as barrenness and the threat of his enemies in order to father two nations, Israel and Esau. Jacob's name was changed to Israel, which means "he will rule as God" (*Strong*), because of his ability to prevail over his brother Esau and receive his father's blessings, and because he prevailed over the angel in order to preserve his posterity, which was the procreation of twelve sons who later multiplied into the twelve tribes of Israel. Thus, his ability to prevail against all odds and father twelve righteous seeds earned him his name as one who prevailed with God's plan of being fruitful and multiplying seeds of righteousness.

In order for God's plan to be fulfilled in each of the lives of these patriarchs, they were commanded to be fruitful and multiply. It was God's plan that the fruit of each man was to be a godly seed, a seed of righteousness. It was because of the Fall that unrighteous seed was produced. This ungodly offspring was not then nor is it today God's plan for mankind.

A. The Genealogy of the Heavens and the Earth (2:4 to 4:26) – The first genealogy of the book of Genesis after its introduction (1:1 to 2:3) is called "The Generations of the Heavens and the Earth" (2:4 to 4:26). In this passage, the Scriptures record the account of the creation of man (2:4-25), his fall (3:1-24), and the immediate progression of human depravity (4:1-26). Hebrews 11:4 reveals the central message in this genealogy that stirs our faith in God when it says, "By faith Abel offered unto God a more excellent sacrifice than Cain, by which he obtained witness that he was righteous, God testifying of his gifts: and by it he being dead yet speaketh." While the divine commission of the Story of Creation is God's charge for man as well as the plant and animal kingdoms to be fruitful and multiply (Gen 1:26-28), the divine charge for man in the Genealogy of the Heavens and the Earth (2:4 to 4:26) is to tend the Garden and name the animal, which is method by which mankind was to take dominion over the plant and animal kingdom in fulfillment of man's divine commission. Thus, the plants and animals would work in harmony with mankind as life

multiplied across the earth. Thus, the title “Genealogy of the Heavens and the Earth” shows us the original harmony of all of creation that existed prior to the Fall, being a part of this divine commission, and its subjection to vanity with the fall of man. The Heavens are included because they were to serve mankind as well, serving as light and as signs and seasons for mankind, and the Scriptures tell us that all of creation was subjected to vanity (Rom 8:20), which included the heavens as well as the earth.

Romans 8:20, “For the creature was made subject to vanity, not willingly, but by reason of him who hath subjected the same in hope,”

1. The Divine Commission of Adam and Eve (2:4-25) – The passage in Genesis 2:4-25 emphasizes the divine commission of Adam and Eve in their respective roles, which are to take dominion over the earth. After the Scriptures tells us about the creation of the world in chapter one, it then focuses upon the creation of man and his role in God’s creation. This is because man was the highest order in God’s creation and it is through man that His creation will be able to fulfill its purpose. Since the theme of Scriptures is the redemption of mankind, it quickly focuses upon the issues surrounding man’s fall and ultimate redemption, for He will redeem His creation through mankind because of the Fall of Adam and Eve.

Thus, after the Scriptures open with the story of God’s creation (Gen 1:1 to 2:3), we then read a second but more detailed account of the creation of man (2:4-25). Although Genesis 1:26-28 mentioned the creation of man and woman on the sixth day of creation, then why are we given a second, more detailed, account of the creation of man and woman in chapter two; perhaps because this sets the stage for the genealogy of Adam, which takes us on a journey towards the fulfillment of the genealogy of Jesus Christ and His work of redemption on Calvary? Therefore, the book of Genesis will continue to narrow its stories down to the people Israel as His chosen people to carry out His plan of redemption for mankind. The New Testament will narrow God’s focus to the Church of Jesus Christ. We then we find the nation of Israel being brought back into focus in Romans 9-11 and the book of Revelation, which shows us that God will use this plan to bring redemption and restoration back to His entire creation. Thus, the Scriptures have taken us full circle in God’s plan of redemption, for mankind first, then for His entire creation.

In Genesis 2:4-25 God called Adam to begin taking dominion over the earth. He was charged to dominion over the plant kingdom by tending the Garden of Eden (2:15), and he was charged to take dominion over the animal kingdom by naming each one of them as he determined their respective roles in serving mankind. Thus, Adam began to fulfill his divine calling.

2. The Corruption of Mankind: The Fall of Adam and Eve (3:1-24) and Cain Kills His Brother Abel (4:1-26) - Since God’s divine destiny for His creation would be fulfilled in the creation of mankind, emphasis is, therefore, given to their creation. However, two sinful events hindered God’s plan, which are the Fall in the Garden (3:1-24), and the murder of Abel by Cain his brother (4:1-26). The fall of Adam and Eve brought God’s creation into mortality and its subsequent vanity. Although Adam and Eve repented of their sins and produced a righteous offspring, they did bring all of creation into corruption and vanity. The murder of Abel caused sin to take root into humanity; for Cain was unrepentant of his sin and produced unrighteous offspring that sowed unrighteousness into the earth. Now we have two types of men living upon the earth, those who are righteous and those unrighteous before God.

This genealogy (2:4 to 4:26) reveals God’s original purpose and plan for creation, as well as showing us why it has been corrupted. This passage shows how corruption subjected all of Creation to vanity by emphasizing the two major sinful events that shaped the earliest history of the heavens and earth and brought sin and death upon the human race. This serves to explain why God’s creation

has fallen out of its original order. It was these two events that also brought the rest of God's creation into travail and vanity until the redemption of mankind as is discussed in Romans 8:18-23. Each of the subsequent genealogies making up the book of Genesis shows us how God is pursuing a seed of righteousness in order to fulfill His plan of redemption for mankind.

B. The Genealogy of Adam (5:1 to 6:8) – The second genealogy found in the book of Genesis is entitled “The Genealogy of Adam” (5:1 to 6:8), which emphasizes the fact that God preserved for Himself a righteous seed in Noah (5:1-32) while mankind in general became exceedingly wicked until God repented that He had made man as a part of His creation (6:1-8). Hebrews 11:5-6 reveals the central message of this genealogy that stirs our faith in God when it describes Enoch's translation into Heaven and his acceptance by God. Adam's destiny, whose name simply means “mankind,” was to begin the multiplication of mankind, which divine commission is seen in 5:2, “Male and female created he them; and blessed them, and called their name Adam, in the day when they were created.” Of course, God's plan was for Adam to produce a godly offspring. Thus, we see in the genealogy of Adam this seed of righteous men whom he fathered (5:1-32), in which the author of Hebrews particularly Enoch as a fulfillment of this divine commission, who walked with God (Heb 11:5), and which list in Genesis closes with Noah, another blessed man (Gen 5:29-32). Adam's genealogy also reveals that many other people were born during this time-period who became exceedingly wicked (6:1-8), particularly from the seed of Cain; however, this list emphasizes the fulfillment of God's divine commission to bless Adam and his offspring, who were to father righteous offspring. Thus, the fulfillment of Adam's genealogy is found in the man Noah, whom God would use to repopulate the earth after destroying all of mankind for their wickedness. In a sense, we have to look far down the generations to see how Adam fulfilled his destiny in the man Noah, so that Adam succeeded in populating the earth with a righteous seed.

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| 1. The Descendants of Adam | 5:1-32 |
| 2. The Wickedness of Mankind | 6:1-8 |

C. The Genealogy of Noah (6:9 to 9:29) – The third genealogy in the book of Genesis is entitled “The Genealogy of Noah” (6:9 to 9:29), which gives us the account of the Noah's fulfillment of the divine commission to be fruitful and multiply. Hebrews 11: 7 reveals the central message in this genealogy that stirs our faith in God when it describes Noah's obedience to God in building the ark. Noah's destiny, whose name means “rest,” was to be fruitful and bear a righteous offspring. His genealogy opens with a divine commission to build the ark and save a remnant of mankind so that God could restore peace and rest to the fallen human race. Immediately after the Flood, Noah built an altar and God spoke to him and commanded him to “be fruitful and multiply and fill the earth” (9:1). Hebrews 11:7 tells us how Noah fulfilled his divine commission by building the ark and saving his household.

Hebrews 11:7, “By faith Noah, being warned of God of things not seen as yet, moved with fear, prepared an ark to the saving of his house; by the which he condemned the world, and became heir of the righteousness which is by faith.”

D. The Genealogy of the Sons of Noah (10:1 to 11:9) – The fourth genealogy in the book of Genesis is entitled “The Genealogy of the Sons of Noah” (10:1 to 11:9), which tells us how the sons of Noah fulfilled the divine commission to be fruitful and multiply. The previous genealogy of Noah tells us that the calling and destiny of Noah was to multiply and to replenish the earth (9:1). This genealogy shows the fulfillment of this commission in his sons. This passage of Scripture contains the Table of Nations, which show us that God divided mankind up into seventy nations in order to fulfill this commission. This table lists the genealogies of the sons of Noah, but only one of them would carry the seed of righteousness, which was Shem. All of their genealogies are listed briefly in this table because Noah had favor with God, so that God's blessings would come upon his children; however, only Shem fulfilled his divine destiny that was a part of God's eternal plan of redemption in that the seed of righteousness descended from him through Abraham. The other sons of Noah failed to fulfill their destinies, bearing wicked seed that continued the seed of corruption upon the

earth. After reading in the Table of Nations concerning the seventy nations that were divided by their families and their tongues (10:1-32), we read the story of Babel of how the tongues of man were divided, which caused in the division of the nations (11:1-9). The Genealogy of the Sons of Noah closes by saying that God spread the seventy nations upon the earth (Gen 11:9), which would be to fulfill the divine commission for mankind to be fruitful and multiply.

E. The Genealogy of Shem (11:10-26) – The fifth genealogy in the book of Genesis is entitled “The Genealogy of Shem” (11:10-26), which reveals the role of Shem in producing Abraham has a descendant, through which God would produce a righteous seed. Shem’s destiny was not marked by a personal, divine intervention. He simply was called to be fruitful and multiply a righteous seed. Thus, his genealogy culminates with the birth of the sons of Terah, one of which was Abraham.

The Calling of the Patriarchs of Israel (11:27 to 50:26) – The foundational theme of Genesis 2:4 to 11:26 is the divine calling for mankind to be fruitful and multiply, which commission was given to Adam prior to the Flood (1:28-29), and to Noah after the Flood (9:1). The establishment of the seventy nations and the genealogy of Shem prepares us for the calling out of Abraham and his sons, being a descendant of Shem, which history fills the rest of the book of Genesis. Thus, God’s calling through His divine foreknowledge (11:27 to 50:26) will focus the calling of Abraham and his descendants to establish the nation of Israel. God will call the patriarchs to fulfill the original purpose and intent of creation, which is to multiply into a righteous nation, for which mankind was originally predestined to fulfill.

The generations of Abraham, Isaac, and Jacob take up a large portion of the book of Genesis. These genealogies have a common structure in that they all begin with God revealing Himself to a patriarch and giving him a divine commission, and they close with God fulfilling His promise to each of them because of their faith in His promise. God promised Abraham a son through Sarah his wife that would multiply into a nation, and Abraham demonstrated his faith in this promise on Mount Moriah. God promised Isaac two sons, with the younger receiving the first-born blessing, and this was fulfilled when Jacob deceived his father and received the blessing above his brother Esau. Jacob’s son Joseph received two dreams of ruling over his brothers, and Jacob testified to his faith in this promise by following Joseph into the land of Egypt. Thus, these three genealogies emphasize God’s call and commission to Abraham, Isaac, and Jacob, and their response of faith in seeing God fulfill His word to each of them.

F. The Genealogy of Terah (and Abraham) (11:27 to 25:11) – The genealogies of Abraham, Isaac, and Jacob have a common structure in that they open with God speaking to a patriarch and giving him a commission and a promise in which to believe. In each of these genealogies, the patriarch’s calling is to believe God’s promise, while this passage of Scripture serves as a witness to God’s faithfulness in fulfilling each promise. Only then does the genealogy come to a close.

Genesis 11:27 to 25:11 gives the account of the genealogy of Terah and his son Abraham. (Perhaps the reason this genealogy is not exclusively of Abraham, but rather of his father Terah, is because of the importance of Lot and the two tribes descended from him, the Moabites and the Ammonites, who will play a significant role in Israel’s redemptive history.) Hebrews 11:8-19 reveals the central message in this genealogy that stirs our faith in God when it describes Abraham’s acts of faith and obedience to God, culminating in the offering of his son Isaac on Mount Moriah. The genealogy of Abraham opens with God’s promise to him that if he would separate himself from his father and dwell in the land of Canaan, then God would make from him a great nation through his son (12:1-3) and it closes with God fulfilling His promise to Abraham by giving Him a son Isaac. However, this genealogy records Abraham’s spiritual journey to maturity in his faith in God, as is typical of each child of God. We find a summary of this genealogy in Hebrews 11:8-19. During the course of Abraham’s calling, God appeared to Abraham a number of times. God reappeared to him and told him that He would make his seed as numerous as the stars in the sky (15:5). God later appeared to Abraham and made the covenant of circumcision with him and said, “I will make My covenant between Me and you, and will multiply you exceedingly.” (Gen 17:2) After Abraham offered Isaac his son upon the altar, God reconfirmed His promise that “That in blessing I will bless thee, and in multiplying I will multiply thy seed as the stars of the heaven, and as the sand which is upon the sea

shore; and thy seed shall possess the gate of his enemies.” (22:17) The event on Mount Moriah serves as a testimony that Abraham fulfilled his part in believing that God would raise up a nation from Isaac, his son of promise. Thus, Abraham fulfilled his calling and destiny for his generation by dwelling in the land of Canaan and believing in God’s promise of the birth of his son Isaac. All of God’s promises to Abraham emphasized the birth of his one seed called Isaac. This genealogy testifies to God’s faithfulness to fulfill His promise of giving Abraham a son and of Abraham’s faith to believe in God’s promises. Romans 9:6-9 reflects the theme of Abraham’s genealogy in that it discusses the son of promise called Isaac.

G. The Genealogy Ishmael (25:12-18) - Genesis 25:12-18 gives the account of the genealogy of Ishmael, Abraham’s son. The book of Genesis lists the genealogies of the Abraham’s two first-born sons Ishmael and Isaac, but as with Esau and Jacob, only the second-born would carry the seed of righteousness. Because God loved Abraham, and because Ishmael was his firstborn, God promised to bless him also with twelve sons to become a nation (Gen 17:20; 21:13). Ishmael saw his father Abraham’s faith and knew about his God; yet, he chose not to serve him. There is no record of Ishmael building an altar and worshipping the God of his father Abraham. Therefore, this genealogy records no event of God giving Ishmael a divine commission, since Ishmael did not seek the Lord, and the Lord knew that his heart was not set on fulfilling it. Because of his wicked heart, Ishmael failed to receive a divine commission as a part of redemptive history. He and his offspring did not produce a righteous offspring, but rather persecuted Isaac and his offspring. Therefore, Ishmael’s genealogy is only briefly listed in the book of Genesis because of its prophetic role in God’s plan of redemption. The descendants of Ismael did not contribute to the propagation of God’s plan of redemption for mankind, rather, they hindered it; yet, his seed contained a promise from God that would be fulfilled, as recorded in Ishmael’s genealogy. The angel of the Lord promised Hagar that God would make a nation from the loins of Ishmael (Gen 21:9-21), and the fulfillment of this divine promise is revealed within this genealogy, just as God’s promise is fulfilled within the other genealogies recorded in the book of Genesis.

Genesis 17:20, “And as for Ishmael, I have heard thee: Behold, I have blessed him, and will make him fruitful, and will multiply him exceedingly; twelve princes shall he beget, and I will make him a great nation.”

Genesis 21:13, “And also of the son of the bondwoman will I make a nation, because he is thy seed.”

The fact that God records the names of the twelve sons of Ishmael testifies to the honor that God has given Ishmael as the son of Abraham. Such a list of names may be compared to the acknowledgments that an author often includes in a book by listing the names of those who contributed to the work in an effort to honor them.

H. The Genealogy of Isaac (25:19 to 35:29) – The genealogies of Abraham, Isaac, and Jacob have a common structure in that they open with God speaking to a patriarch and giving him a commission and a promise in which to believe. In each of these genealogies, the patriarch’s calling is to believe God’s promise, while this passage of Scripture serves as a witness to God’s faithfulness in fulfilling each promise. Only then does the genealogy come to a close.

We find in Genesis 25:19 to 35:29 the genealogy of Isaac, the son of Abraham. Hebrews 11:20 reveals the central message in this genealogy that stirs our faith in God when Isaac gave his sons redemptive prophecies, saying, “By faith Isaac blessed Jacob and Esau concerning things to come.” As Abraham’s genealogy begins with a divine commission when God told him to leave Ur and to go Canaan (Gen 12:1), so does Isaac’s genealogy begin with a divine commission predicting him as the father of two nations, with the elder serving the younger (Gen 25:23), with both nations playing roles in redemptive history, Jacob playing the major role. The first event in Isaac’s genealogy has to do with a God speaking to his wife regarding the two sons in her womb, saying that these two sons would multiply into two nations. Since his wife Rebekah was barren, Isaac interceded to God and

the Lord granted his request. The Lord then told Rebekah that two nations were in her womb, and the younger would prevail over the elder (25:21-23). Isaac, whose name means laughter (Gen 21:6), was called to establish himself in the land of Canaan after his father Abraham, and to believe in God's promise regarding his son Jacob. During the course of his life, Isaac's genealogy testifies of how he overcame obstacles and the enemy that resisted God's plan for him. Thus, we see Isaac's destiny was to be faithful and dwell in the land and father two nations. God's promise to Isaac, that the elder will serve the younger, is fulfilled when Jacob deceives his father and receives the blessings of the first-born. The fact that Isaac died in a ripe old age testifies that he fulfilled his destiny as did Abraham his father. Romans 9:10-13 reflects the theme of Isaac's genealogy in that it discusses the election of Jacob over Isaac. We find in Hebrews 11:20 that Isaac expressed his faith in God's promise that two nations were born through Rebekah because he blessed his sons regarding the future promises of God. We read in Hebrews 11:20 how Isaac expressed his faith in God's promise of two nations being born through Rebekah because he blessed his sons regarding these future promises.

I. The Genealogy of Esau (36:1-43) - Genesis 36:1-43 gives the account of the genealogy of Esau, Isaac's son and the twin of Jacob. The book of Genesis lists the genealogies of the two sons of Isaac, but only one of them would carry the seed of righteousness, which was Jacob. Because these were the sons of Isaac, God blessed Esau so that he became a nation, and He gave him the land of Edom (Deut 2:5, Josh 24:4). Isaac their father also blessed both sons with prophetic utterances (Heb 11:20). Because of his wicked heart, Esau failed to fulfill his divine destiny. Like Ishmael, he did not produce a righteous offspring, but rather persecuted Jacob. Therefore, his genealogy is only briefly listed in the book of Genesis because these people did not contribute to the propagation of God's plan of redemption for mankind; rather, they hindered it. However, God gave Esau a promise, which fulfillment is reflected in this genealogy.

J. The Genealogy of Jacob (37:1 to 50:26) - The genealogies of Abraham, Isaac, and Jacob have a common structure in that they open with God speaking to a patriarch and giving him a commission and a promise in which to believe. In each of these genealogies, the patriarch's calling is to believe God's promise, while this passage of Scripture serves as a witness to God's faithfulness in fulfilling each promise. Only then does the genealogy come to a close.

Genesis 37:1 to 50:26 gives the account of the genealogy of Jacob, Isaac's son. Hebrews 11:21-22 reveals the central message in this genealogy that stirs our faith in God when Jacob and Joseph gave redemptive prophecies, saying, "By faith Jacob, when he was a dying, blessed both the sons of Joseph; and worshipped, leaning upon the top of his staff. By faith Joseph, when he died, made mention of the departing of the children of Israel; and gave commandment concerning his bones." As Abraham's genealogy begins with a divine commission when God told him to leave Ur and to go Canaan (Gen 12:1), and Isaac's genealogy begins with a divine commission predicting him as the father of two nations (Gen 25:23), so does Jacob's genealogy begin with a divine encounter in the form of his son Joseph's two dreams. These dreams make it clear that Jacob's divine commission was to bring his clan of seventy souls into Egypt through Joseph for four hundred years while the people multiply into the nation of Israel. This genealogy closes with the fulfillment of Joseph's dreams. Jacob's name was changed to Israel, which means "prince of God," because his destiny was to father a multitude of godly seed. He fathered the twelve sons, or "princes," who multiplied into the twelve tribes of Israel. His ability to father twelve righteous seeds earned him his name as a prince of God, as a man who ruled over a multitude of godly seed. The Scriptures testify to Jacob's faith in God's promise that Joseph would rule over his brethren by the fact that he followed his son into Egypt (Gen 49:22-26), and he blessed the two sons of Joseph, Ephraim and Manasseh (Heb 11:21-22). The fact that Jacob died in a ripe old age testifies that he fulfilled his destiny as did his fathers, Abraham and Isaac.

Comments on Purpose of Ten Genealogies Recorded in Genesis - The ten genealogies given in the book of Genesis will shape the destiny of the rest of the children of God found within the Scriptures. For each of the heads of these genealogies, their primary destiny and calling was to be fruitful and to multiply a righteous