

● Understanding the First Five Books of the Bible

The first five books of the Bible are called the “Book of Moses” or “The Pentateuch,” a Greek term deriving from “five” combined with “books.”

● Narrative and Development of the Pentateuch

At least four major sources may have gone into the composition of the Pentateuch.

● How We Read the Pentateuch

The Pentateuch contains mainly two kinds of writing: narrative stories and collections of Mosaic Laws.

● Ancestor Stories in the Book of Genesis

The ancestor stories in the Book of Genesis are divided into two main sections: primeval stories and the stories of the patriarchs and matriarchs.

● The Beginning of God’s Revelation

God’s Revelation to humans came about when he made himself known to our first parents.

● The Great Flood

The covenant God made with Noah, centering on the story of the Great Flood, is part of the next stage of Revelation.

● Abraham and the Patriarchs

Abraham was the “father of a multitude,” God’s Chosen People, who led his people to a new land.

● The Blessing of Jacob

The patriarch Jacob tricks his brother into receiving a blessing, and then later humbles himself to seek reconciliation.

● Joseph and His Brothers

Genesis 37, 39-50 is a literary masterpiece that revolves around Jacob’s twelve sons, especially his favorite son, Joseph.

● The Book of Exodus

The Book of Exodus focuses on the call and life of Moses, Israel’s liberation, the Passover event, and the Sinai Covenant.

● The Wandering of the People in the Wilderness

Exodus 15-18 details a story cycle of traditional stories—including the establishment of the Sinai Covenant—while God’s People were wandering in the wilderness.

● The Mosaic Law Codes

The Covenant Code, Deuteronomic Code, and Levitical Code are three different collections of the Law in the Pentateuch.

Catholic Bibles: Nihil Obstat: (Example) Rev. William M. Becker, S.T.D. - Censor Deputatus
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The nihil obstat and imprimatur are official declarations that a book or pamphlet is free of doctrinal or moral error. No implication is contained therein that those who have granted the nihil obstat or imprimatur agree with the contents, opinions, or statements expressed

What are the Apocrypha Books? Non-Catholics usually call the Deuterocanonical Books of the Old Testament, *the Apocrypha*. These are the seven “extra” books that the Catholic Bible contains, but the Protestant Bible does not. The reason the Catholic Bible has seven extra books, is because when the Catholic church originally put together the 73 books of the Bible, these books were included as part of the canon. However, when the Protestant reformation occurred, Martin Luther removed these books from the Catholic Bible because he did not believe they were divinely inspired. In recent times, however, many Protestant editions of the Bible now include these books and call them the Apocrypha.

The seven books that the Protestant Bibles do not include are:

**Sirach, Wisdom, Judith, Tobit, Baruch, 1 Maccabees, 2 Maccabees, Longer version of Daniel
Longer version of Esther**

The Name of God: JEHOVAH (Yahweh), in the Bible, the God of Israel. "Jehovah" is a modern mispronunciation of the Hebrew name, resulting from combining the consonants of that name, Jhvh, with the vowels of the word *ādōnāy*, "Lord," which the Jews substituted for the proper name in reading the scriptures.

The Jewish Encyclopedia states: "Of the names of God in the Old Testament, that which occurs most frequently (6,823 times) is the so-called Tetragrammaton, Yhwh (), the distinctive personal name of the God of Israel. This name is commonly represented in modern translations by the form "Jehovah," which, however, is a philological impossibility." jewishencyclopedia.com (as of 25/09/2005)

Rebekah (Rebecca רבקה—"Captivating") was the wife of the patriarch Isaac and mother of Jacob and Esau in the Bible. She was the daughter of Bethuel and the granddaughter of Nahor, Abraham's brother. She was also the sister of Laban, who later became the father-in-law of Jacob.

Rebekah was assertive in a time when women were expected to be submissive. This quality helped her become Isaac's wife but caused trouble when she pushed one of her sons ahead of the other.

Abraham, father of the Jewish nation, did not want his son Isaac to marry one of the pagan Canaanite women in the area, so he sent his servant Eliezer to his homeland to find a wife for Isaac. When the servant arrived, he prayed that the right girl would not only offer him a drink of water from the well but offer to water his ten camels too.

Rebekah came out with her water jar and did exactly that! She agreed to go back with the servant and became Isaac's wife.

In time, Abraham died. Like her mother-in-law Sarah, Rebekah was also barren. Isaac prayed to God for her and Rebekah conceived twins. The Lord told Rebekah what would happen to her sons:



"Two nations are in your womb, and two peoples from within you will be separated; one people will be stronger than the other, and the older will serve the younger." (Genesis 25:24, NIV)

They named the twins Esau and Jacob. Esau was born first, but Jacob became Rebekah's favorite. When the boys grew up, Jacob tricked his older brother into selling his birthright for a bowl of stew. Later, as Isaac was dying and his eyesight had failed, Rebekah helped Jacob deceive Isaac into blessing him instead of Esau. She put goatskins on Jacob's hands and neck to imitate Esau's hairy skin. When Isaac touched it, he blessed Jacob, thinking it was really Esau.

Rebekah's deception caused strife between Esau and Jacob. Many years later, however, Esau forgave Jacob. When Rebekah died, she was buried in the family tomb, a cave near Mamre in Canaan, the resting place of Abraham and Sarah, Isaac, Jacob, and her daughter-in-law Leah.

Accomplishments: Rebekah married Isaac, one of the patriarchs of the Jewish nation. She bore two sons who became leaders of great nations.

Strengths: Rebekah was assertive and fought for what she believed was right.

Weaknesses: Rebekah sometimes thought God needed her help. She favored Jacob over Esau and helped Jacob deceive Isaac. Her trickery led to a split between the brothers that has caused turmoil to this day.

The Death of Sarah: "Sarah lived to be a hundred and twenty-seven years old. 2 She died at Kiriath Arba (that is, Hebron) in the land of Canaan, and Abraham went to mourn for Sarah and to weep over her." - Genesis 23:1-2

Life Lessons: Impatience and lack of trust made Rebekah interfere with God's plan. She did not consider the consequences of her action. When we step out of God's timing, we can sometimes cause a disaster we have to live with.

Hometown: Haran

Referenced in the Bible: Genesis 22:23; Chapter 24; 25:20-28; 26:7-8, 35; 27:5-15, 42-46; 28:5; 29:12; 35:8; 49:31; Romans 9:10.

Occupation: Wife, mother, homemaker

Family Tree: Grandparents - Nahor, Milcah - Father - Bethuel- Husband - Isaac- Sons - Esau and Jacob
Brother - Leban

Key Verses

Genesis 24:42-44: "'When I came to the spring today, I said, 'LORD, God of my master Abraham, if you will, please grant success to the journey on which I have come. See, I am standing beside this spring. If a young woman comes out to draw water and I say to her, "Please let me drink a little water from your jar," and if she says to me, "Drink, and I'll draw water for your camels too," let her be the one the LORD has chosen for my master's son.'"

Genesis 24:67: "Isaac brought her into the tent of his mother Sarah, and he married Rebekah. So she became his wife, and he loved her; and Isaac was comforted after his mother's death."

Genesis 27:14-17: "So he went and got them and brought them to his mother, and she prepared some tasty food, just the way his father liked it. Then Rebekah took the best clothes of Esau her older son, which she had in the house, and put them on her younger son Jacob. She also covered his hands and the smooth part of his neck with the goatskins. Then she handed to her son Jacob the tasty food and the bread she had made"

Source: Catholic Bible Encyclopedia.