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Classical Liberal Arts Academy
Chronological Narrative 1
(3500 BC – 750 BC)

The ancient world ‘begins’ in 3500 BC because this is about as far back as human records goes. Most of the writings that we have from this time are from the ancient Sumerians. The Sumerians occupied Mesopotamia (modern day Iraq), which is located between the Tigris and Euphrates rivers. From Ur, one of the small villages in Mesopotamia came one of the greatest heroes the world has ever know, Abraham.

Abraham is a descendant of Shem, Noah’s faithful son. Abraham was known as Abram (exalted father) until God rewarded him for his faith and named him Abraham (father of a multitude). Abraham and Sarah (his wife) had a son named Isaac when they were around 100 years old. When Isaac was still a boy, God tested Abraham’s faith by asking him to sacrifice his only son. Although this brought great sadness to Abraham’s heart, he wished to be faithful to God. So he brought his son to the top of a mountain. God sent an angel stopping Abraham from killing Isaac just as he was about to strike the boy. God then promised Abraham that he would have as many descendants as the stars in the sky and the sands of the seashore.

When the time came for Isaac to marry, he married Rebekah. They had two sons, Esau and Jacob. From the moment that they were conceived, these twins were fighting. Because Esau was older than Jacob, he was to inherit the birthright. Instead of cherishing this gift though, Esau sold his birthright to Jacob for a bowl of soup. When the time came for Isaac to give Esau his blessing, Rebekah and Jacob tricked Isaac into giving Jacob his blessing. After hearing about this, Esau was angry with Jacob. He sought to kill him. Jacob then fled to his uncle, Laban, where he fell in love with Laban’s daughter ,Rachael. He then worked for his uncle for seven years in order to marry her. But on his wedding night, Jacob was deceived by his uncle. Laban had his oldest daughter Leah dressed into Rachael’s wedding garments. When Jacob awoke to find Leah next to him, he was angry at Laban. After most of Jacob’s anger had vanished, Laban calmly told him that it is necessary for the eldest daughter of the family to be married before their younger sisters can wed. Jacob was still mad, but he understood the ancient tradition. He then worked seven more years for Laban in order to marry his true love, Rachael. When Jacob married Leah and Rachael, he also married their maids. From all four of his wives, Jacob had a total of twelve sons. Although he loved all of his sons, Jacob favored Rachael’s two sons Joseph and Benjamin the most. Joseph was given an extraordinary gift from God-the ability to interpret dreams. Joseph’s brothers became jealous of Joseph’s talent and Jacob’s great love for him. They began plotting to kill him. One day when they were out in the fields, a slave caravan heading towards Egypt passed by. Because his brothers were so envious of him, they sold Joseph to the slave traders. When they returned home, they told Jacob that Joseph had been killed by a wild animal. The sad news broke Jacob’s heart.

In Egypt, Joseph ended up in the service of one of the king’s officers. The wife of this officer was attracted to Joseph and tried to have him commit adultery with her. When Joseph refused to sin with this woman, she lied to her husband telling him that Joseph had hurt her. The officer believed this lie and had Joseph thrown into prison. While in prison, Joseph interpreted two of his fellow prisoners’ dreams. A few years later, the Pharaoh of Egypt had a confusing dream. All of the fake dream interpreters that the Pharaoh hired could not interpret his dream. When the Pharaoh heard that the prisoner, Joseph, had interpreted a dream, he sent for him. Joseph, with

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the help of God interpreted the dream and was set in a high position in the service of the Pharaoh. The Pharaoh's dream foretold that there would be a great famine in Egypt. With this knowledge, all of Egypt began conserving for the famine. When the famine did occur, Joseph's brothers came to Egypt for food. Joseph immediately recognized them and forgave them. He also gave them the food that they had asked for, free of all charges.

Once the famine was over, a new king came to power and enslaved all of Egypt. For 400 years the Israelites called to God for help. God heard their cry and made Moses His servant. Moses convinced the Pharaoh of the time to set the Israelites free by performing several miracles. Unfortunately, the free Israelites continued to sin even after all of the miracles Moses performed. Their sin caused them to wander for 40 years in the desert. When Moses died, Joshua rose up to govern the people in the Promised Land.

In the Bible, we learn that Noah had three sons, Japheth, Sem, and Ham. We can all trace back our family tree to one of Noah's sons because everyone else in the world was destroyed by the flood. Noah blessed Sem and Japheth and cursed his son Ham. Shem and his people settled in the Fertile Crescent (modern day Iran). He and his people were known as the Semites. Japheth and his tribe moved away from the Middle Eastern lands to the islands of The Mediterranean Sea. The Greeks and Romans are descendants of Japheth. About two hundred years after the Israelites were freed from the cruel Egyptians hands, a war took place between the descendants of Japheth and the descendants of Ham. This war was known as the Trojan War.

The Trojan War took place between the Trojans and the Greeks around 1200 BC. The war began when Paris (prince of Troy) stole the wife of Agamemnon (king of Sparta) when he was visiting Sparta. Helen (wife of Agamemnon) returned to Troy with Paris while Agamemnon was traveling throughout Sparta. News of this crime reached Agamemnon. He became angry with Paris, and sought revenge. He and his Greek army set sail as soon as possible. The fighting went on for 10 years in Troy until the Greeks decided to trick the Trojans instead of fighting it out. Knowing that they worshipped the false god Athena (the goddess of peace), the Greeks built a large horse as a sign of peace to end the war. The Trojans foolishly accepted the gift and rejoiced about their victory. Little did they know though that the smart Greeks had left the Stomach of the horse hollow for some of their best warriors to fit inside. As the Trojans partied the night away, the Greek warriors slipped out of the horse and opened the gates for their entire army. The Greeks burned the city and everything in it that night. Only one Trojan survived the horrible ambush, his name was Aeneas. He later became the ancestor of the Romans in Italy.

In 1000 BC another great leader rose up in the Fertile Crescent. His name was David. He was the 8th boy born to Jesse. David grew up in the fields of Israel, where he tended his father's sheep and played the lyre. He played the lyre so beautifully that one time he was summoned to calm the king's spirits with his playing. During his childhood a war was going on between the Philistines and the Israelites. David was sent from home by his father to bring his older brothers some food. When he arrived at the battle field, he noticed that the battling had stopped and the Israelites were hiding in fear. When he asked what was wrong, all that the soldiers could do was point toward the Giant on the other side of the battle field. Goliath challenged Israel's best fighter to a dual over and over again, but the Israelites were too afraid to meet the challenge. David, however was not afraid at all. He asked the king (Saul was king at the time) if he could fight Goliath. The king was skeptical, but gave him permission. David gathered five smooth stones for his sling-shot and went out to face the giant. He hit Goliath square in the temple with

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one of the stones, causing him to lose consciousness. He then took Goliath's sword from his belt and sliced off his head. The Philistines fled in fear. After his awesome fight, David became wealthy and famous. Because of his fame, King Saul became jealous of him. David fled out of fear and dwelt in the desert and among other nations for most of his life. During this time, David endured many evils. After all of this suffering, God fulfilled his promise to David, (that he would become king) and he ruled over Israel for forty years. David sinned greatly towards the end of his life by stealing the wife of one of his officers. With her, David had Solomon. Because of his great sin, David wanted to make up with God. He decided that he would build a temple in honor of him. God spoke to David saying, 'It is your son whom I will put upon your throne, in your place who shall build the temple in my honor'. Before David died, he named Solomon his heir.

When David died, Solomon sat on the throne of Israel. Solomon honored his mother just like Christ did. When Bathsheba came to visit her royal son, Solomon stood up for her and paid her homage. Because of his kindness and love toward all people, God granted Solomon one wish. Many people in today's world would ask for something such as fame, riches, and a long life, but Solomon asked for wisdom. Because God was so happy with his choice, He also rewarded him with all of the other gifts that he could have asked for. He became wiser than any many of his time and his fame spread throughout all of the neighboring nations. When Hiram (king of Tyre) heard that Solomon was king, he sent an embassy to him because Hiram had been a great friend of David. Solomon sent a message back to Hiram saying that he wished to build a temple and would enjoy it if Hiram would help him. Hiram and his slaves helped build the magnificent temple in Jerusalem. The temple was finished in 960 BC.

About two hundred years after Solomon and Hiram built the temple in Jerusalem, Aeneas' (Trojan who escaped the Greek army on the night that they burned down the city of Troy) ancestors founded the city of Rome. We can learn about the city of Rome from two famous Roman Poets, Virgil and Livy. Although they did not live around the time that the city was founded, they were able to use their human reason and the help of Muses (spirits) to tell the story of how the city began.

Just as Livy and Virgil did not live around the time that the city of Rome was founded, but they wrote about it; Homer wrote about the Trojan War that had occurred many years before he lived. Homer was a blind poet that lived around the year of 750 BC. He wrote about two of the major heroes of the Trojan War, Odysseus and Achilles. Both men are written about in one of Homer's sets of poems-the Iliad and The Odyssey. The Iliad is named after the city of Troy, whose Greek name was Ilion. Homer tells about the Greek soldier, Achilles, who was known for his wrath in fighting. The Odyssey is named after the main character, Odysseus. Odysseus experienced many tragedies in his life time such as being stuck on an island with a giant Cyclops. Besides being stuck with a giant, he was also captured and imprisoned by a nymph for seven years. The writings of Homer end a long dark period from the Trojan War until the founding of Rome. Homer's life concludes the Ancient World.